RIC S. BASTASA
- poems -

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RIC S. BASTASA()
there is something in other
people that we all love

adore
even unreasonably that we like
to touch and caress with our own
hands
only to put dirt on their
clean skins

even without talking
we like to undress
and scrutinize every hidden
corner and see
what is there

it makes our heart beat
jump,
dive
collide
burst,
explode

it can even make us
dangerous as
some of them may
be the cause of
untimely deaths
of some of us
who cannot
bear
the agonies of
our
flesh

we keep on saying
'no regrets!' :
no hurt feelings,

this is the lifetime
of joy

there is so much
thinking
spending
more whole nights
about wishing,
and dreaming even
if in the process we also
shrink ourselves
into minute particles of
insignificance

of brittleness
that make our eyes
shatter

nerves cut off
systems turn off

when the first morning light
however
comes
through the leaks of our
awakening
walls

we wake up
rise from
our positions
of defeat &
we proclaim incessantly
through a murmur:

'forget it,
it is not me! '
' I Am Not Lonely' He Quipped.

drunk.

there is something really wrong with you,
you have cut yourself off from the intestines of mankind,

what is it that makes you stay?
that makes you look like a closed jar,
what made you cut off that tongue
what sharp difference have you made out of that lonely self?

' i am not lonely' he quipped.
and the room fell silent, the wall embarrassed about its nature.
and the window, compromised with a smile, perhaps 'well said'.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Dance Of Your Life

i

you don't really have to mind death
what power do you have for it

when it comes
it comes
none can prevent it
from sitting beside you

the doctors are honest
and sometimes
too stupid to give you a promise
for another extension of life

a hope that poisons the mind instead
and makes
our recent stand rigid and unreasonable

for those who have seen the light
on one hand
sees death as
a welcome experience
in fact a festivity
another coming experience
another full moon
at the bay

another bus that has arrived in a far away town

another train that honks proudly its arrival
in another station

another flight to a distant sky that dresses the world
and puts it to a very silent sleep

and this time
whether you like it or not
you are set upon this journey
that gives you fear
because there is no ticket
for your coming back

it is the false notion that
you can never come back

ii

you don't have to panic
take this as easy
as unbuttoning a shirt

zippering a pair of pants
and unzipping it when
the evident and the inevitable comes
when the urge signifies
an unloading

well, it looks like
we simply have to pull a string
let the curtain fall
and just be ready for the next show
of the garden blooming
on the month of
May

just the same
make the best out of it
dance, dance
till you tire

but fall if you must, slip if you can
have no shame
there is still another chance
really
&
they call it
a surprise to nowhere
upon
somewhere.....

RIC S. BASTASA
HE'D BEEN there
he likes it
he will be coming over
to stay quite longer
he loves every nook
of it
he has memories there
and will always wish
to be there
he knows he will die there
and it will be a great shame
not only for
him but for his family
as well
he is set to be there again
come June
till July
despite the storms
or whatever
he loves the place and will
always be loving it

same dirty place
for such a clean man
that he is known to be

same lust
same desire
same shame
but this is it
the truth...

RIC S. BASTASA
'What Is Life? Let Us Talk About It'

ok, let us talk about life

my cat Kuting has just given birth
to three kittens
she must have loved their fathers
too much
three for i love you

the bitch in the house is pregnant again
we are sad
she is having a relationship with a native
dog
the one that takes trash for breakfast
no definite master
and house
a vagabond
she loves

i think and that is what we too believe
a cat has nine lives
and with her three kittens she gets
an extended twenty-seven lives

wow, that is amazing
cats indeed know how to live a longer time
than us
people who is into
birth controls

life is an early morning tea
a view from the veranda to the sea
a sunrise
a run to take the dip of the salt of the sea
closing your eyes
and see everything that this world is offering

life is a march of the ants
keeping an empire stable
feeding the queen
to ensure a birth of a hundred or more soldiers

life is what we are here for
who thinks about death tomorrow? Nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do People Keep Saying, I'M Sorry, For Things They Know They'LL Do Again?

because people always forgive them
again and again and again and again and again and again and again...

a form of autism,
a hybrid of dyslexia.

RIC S. BASTASA
a woman dreams that she turns
into an orange bird
and on the other hand the orange
bird seeing her so beautiful and complete
less the orange wings and feathers
dreams of having woman-hands
soft and a flowing body like a slender
river curving through along
the side of a big mountain where
the orange bird perches on a branch
of an olive tree beside it

convoluted, the thoughts unwind
themselves in sleep wanting rest
from all these warping of time
and seasons and images and swapping
between reality and dream
surreal and mundane

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light

to the light
we aim ourselves
away from darkness
we swear

but i guess
not too much light
in the same manner
that i do not
have so much of
this darkness

to both
we shall be blinded
let us settle
midway

to dusk let us toast
this drink
of gray

RIC S. BASTASA
Watashi Wa Wakarimasen.

until then
the moon never says
that it understands
the language of the
night
she is immersed
in the darkness
she is floating
in that immense
space
she is inside something
that does not
too understand
the meaning of
its light...

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry in Perfection

I am waiting for the time
When everything in me would
Turn to poetry, when I breathe
Nothing but the rhythm of
Poetry, when I perspire poetry,
When I cry poetry, when I laugh
Poetry, when I sleep in poetry,
When everything in me is poetry,

That would be perfect poetry. and I
Would not be
Myself anymore, I would be perfect
Poetry,

There is no me, no soul no body, no mind,
No name, no personality, no knowledge,
There is just poetry, and that would
Be perfect, I would not
Be me,

There is no such I as me, anyway,
The wise man, so very well say, that is
The perfection
Of poetry, there is no self in there
But only perfection.

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Дождь울 ивреним, когда всютмо ясловы истанет, ислов бесхотрошны ховодаСоздасттиховкленигиграны?
Толедли, сталь? Теслыль, смех?
Топотли, кровь? Тоблагол, грез?
Ведьтопоэзиясама, имогутатьлиюдии?
Безтела, душиру иумы.
Мы просто жить итого будем.
Акакжеслововокакстих?
Какрифма, стиль ивершенство?
В седьмых, нитковых, над прозой музыке - главенство о. Пoesия в людском обличье - Седой мудрый, познавший языков ученье, без имени и без значенья.

RIC S. BASTASA
The sun is harsh, the winds are cruel
The trees unfeeling, the soil so unsympathetic
The stones lack the courage, the grasses lose the enthusiasm
The clouds spiritless
The moon is devoid of compassion
The stars are pitiless
You are unkind and I am disheartened
My heart is broken

You are heartless
the ruler of my body

i have longed
to touch you
to kiss you even
just once

yet you are so high
and far
you are with the stars
on my darkest skies

RIC S. BASTASA
a bonsai poem of love
designed not to grow taller
and wider inside
my miniature heart

or
too small
and

pruned like
a midget

the sun
laughs
one hot summer's day

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not only the mind
they promise you if you agree
it is also the heart

that is washed clean.
now, into the cult, say your name.

RIC S. BASTASA
to see the world
crying
to hear the sweet sound
of its rain

you are alone
by the window
not being
wet by the rain
outside
you

home sweet home
as always

RIC S. BASTASA
a small orifice
with a stalagmite
is this a cave?
i ask and then
desire boils in
my head, i have
to enter, guilt is
born, this is not
mine, but owned
by someone else,
i dream of red
cherry inside my
tongue, ahh, i must
reason out in order
to forget, this is
nothing but a
speleothem;
purely nothing
but calcium
carbonate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep talking while I sing

My heart

We bask under the sun

The two of us

but not so close please

Where there is still a space for me to smile

RIC S. BASTASA
( X X X)

you leave an empty space
when you left
and no one fills that empty
space since then...

RIC S. BASTASA
((Hurting Realities))

no dispute about it, marvin boy
realities hurt

but what hurt worse
are illusions

what hurt worst
are delusions about the grandeur

that was never there

RIC S. BASTASA
(a Fantasy At The Train Station)

the white man dropped the newspaper
lay it aside
seeing this woman with bangles
and brightly colored clothes
he sees beauty and she amazes him

he goes near her and asks for her name
he looks at her gently like he's a man in love
for the first time in his life

she looks down and then changes her mind
she looks at him
tells her name and asks of his origin

(and now back to reality)

the white man lights his cigarettes and puffs up some smoke
in the air
she never likes the masculine pollution
the train arrives at the station
hurriedly she gets off the train
he stays looks at his watch and goes back to his vacant seat
he read the papers again
no longer amazed at the bright colors outside the train's window

RIC S. BASTASA
(is Cheating A Virtue?)

on that
examination day
i caught her
cheating and she
can no longer
look at me
straight in my
eyes

so she transferred
to another law school
oceans away

today the bar
exam is released and
she passed

(time passes too
quickly)

voila, she is
seemingly,

i could be biased
but this is the
truth,

she is one of
the best lawyers
in my court today

(is cheating
a virtue?)

RIC S. BASTASA
(princess Revised) ...

for looking
back
nostalgia
fails

you feel
to long
because you
stare

RIC S. BASTASA
three stars in the heavens
one for you
another for her
and the last one
for you again

i am accustomed
to having nothing

in my heavens i like it without stars

RIC S. BASTASA
***just One Thing***

just,
one,
thing,

start with being just
i know what fair is,
sportsmanship,
give me
what is due me
think of me
when i am sad
drink with me
when i am
happy,
be just to me

one, i am one,
and will always be
one with myself,
one with nature,
one with you
just me, this one
nothing less
nothing more,

and for one more thing,
you like flowers
and call them things
their scents, their colors
the way they touch
you on a certain
closeness

and just one thing more,
do not forget

i am still here
writing for you.
Pain

Like an uninvited
Wind, building strength
Gathering more winds
To make a storm

Pain comes not like
A tear dropping
Pain comes in waves
In flood

But I am a very wide
Shore of sands
And paths of pebbles

But I am the sky and
Empty Space

No pain contains me
No pain destroys me
I am always unfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
.. Under The Most Stressful Circumstances....

before mother died
she had turned into a very sensitive old woman.

neighbors call her cranky but i know she was just too concerned
about the needs of those who cannot afford it.

going to the city she saw a very silent man whose vision went beyond
the jeepney windows towards the far away shores perhaps to another island of
the peninsula.

' i have money from my son. If you need it you can have it' she offers.

the man smiles, wryly, telling her, 'my wife just died in the hospital and i am
looking for a cheaper coffin'

the family had always been at war with each other. Brother suspects that
sister is taking advantage of an old mother, not telling the rest of the siblings
about the true financial state and the expenses would have to be justified item
per item.

the refrigerator is not filled with fruits, most are meat stuffed in the freezer and
red wine is not found there. Father is a drunkard and kicks mother when she
passes by the door.

Age is cruel. It does not remember love. Memory fades and never asks what is
happening.

before mother died i held her hand and told her an angel is waiting to serve as
her guide when she enters the gates of heaven.

then she smiles, tightly gripped my hand, and then finally loosening it, as though
i was the butterfly which she is setting free for me to flutter finally outside the
glass window of the government hospital.

i always remember this matter.
the family cracks. shattered. and most of us
wish each other dead.

however, i understand all these.
This is the law of nature.
we are meant to scatter, otherwise there is no world.

no stars will be born unless there shall be a big bang
of whatever we do not really understand.

meanwhile, the house has to be sold, money to be shared
and then we all part ways.

as simple as that, my brother says it as though he had studied fully
well what history is and where it must matter.

when my sister got crazy, we all visited her inside her room.
and then we feel one family again. I think, we are crazier than her.

we need to take the wrong medication, have the prescription of
the notorious physician. It will be a class suit. A family one once again in
defending its common interest.

for what is true is that, we are enemies now, but when you have another enemy,
we become brothers again against that common enemy.

this i love. coping up with all of you. always re-configuring what is best under the
most stressful circumstances.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is a
1599 word
from the
latin facetiae

facetieux from
facetie jest

a joker a jester
waggish

it is meant
to be humorous or funny

and witty
like you Robert
like what i said before
like someone who is not
meant to be a faucet

where water goes out
by force
and then we want
stopped after
a certain use

after we outlive
its usefulness
we close it
and make it
silent

after a thirst
has been duly satiated.

RIC S. BASTASA
... So Much

at the second look you feel wasted
that beautiful face seemingly should not have been yours
it does not fit
the wrinkled soul
that you are

how unlucky is this body
to have you
how sad is the turn of events
how miserable has the other become
because she loves you
so much

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa on the horse

As I remember,
Papa rode on the horse
the White horse

He was so cruel
And he would not
Feed
The white horse
For days

One day
They went to the
Sea
The white horse
And papa

I wished the
White horse
Would swim
To the other island
And leave
Papa for good

He was so cruel
And he would beat
The white horse
For days

But the white horse
Stayed
she was not fed
For days

One day
The White Horse
Got mad
And bit
Papa to death.

I did not wish
The horse
Would eat
Papa whole.

I too would be
Cruel then.

RIC S. BASTASA
.... A Beautiful Life....

while you are still
half asleep tired of the last night's

thrill having engulfed so many drinks
with friends and kin

this early morning you hear the house-help
sweeping the yard which is littered with
paper and leaves and grass

you hear the music of the sweeping and the
the rolling pebbles and the leaves and grass and
those wasted paper now forming into a heap

and then you begin to remember the past years
how the sweeping was made, how nature cleans its face
the tsunami, the earthquake, the wars, the killing of the tribes,
the bombing of cities, the mass evacuation of people away from
their own countries,
the flood and the wiping out of a village
the bushfire somewhere in australia
the huge conflagration in indonesia
the black smoke reachign singapore
and lots of other calamities

deaths of famous philosophers, politicians,
actors, etcetera etcetera

and you reflect upon what the Lord has been saying,
the sweeping of the yard, the weeding out in the garden,
the separation of the goats from the sheep
the slaughter and the punishment and rewards
and the burning in hell

how the weeds soon shall be taken out dried and burned
how the goats should be slaughtered

and in your bed you feel the grass growing on your chest
crawling to your body and you touch your forehead trying to feel 
the goat's horn growing like a tree

and you wake up rush to the bathroom and look at yourself in the mirror asking yourself:

where is the grass? where is the horn? have i become another goat 
fit to be slaughtered and burned?

and you open the window now seeing the house-help burning 
the wastes of last night's thrills,

how the fire glare 
how she sits there smiling at you wanting to greet you 
about

a bright day, a beautiful morning 
a beautiful life....

RIC S. BASTASA
.... And Then I Fly Away....

do not make
writing a big thing

it is just another
routine

an early morning
breathing

breakfast matter
of words in plates and
cups

make it a conversation
between you and another
stranger

do not mind if it does not
reveal any name or address

keep going keep going
let the hands busy on
something

and you will never be lost
and you will never beg

for a bucket of relationships
for another date in the calendar

i breathe, i delete
i put some more what i think is
there

i draw a horse
i put the word wings

and then i fly away....
Will Just Be Forgotten
	sometimes you ask
why is happiness so nil?

why are the waves of
misfortune coming to the
shores of our lives?

who was that killed at
the early years of his life?
who was the mother who mourned
for all those years?

that beautiful girl has cancer
and she has only a month to live
that beautiful boy had nothing
to eat

the village was erased from the
face of the earth
all the houses burned and no
one is left there

and you, what have you done
to change all these?
you sit there, contemplating,
going inside the chambers of
your heart
losing yourself in the tranquility
of your soul

why sacrifice for a carpet when
you can only have a pair of shoes?
why change the world when you
cannot even change yourself?

let and let live
let go, let go, let life take its
own course
just watch, just be amazed
for life has its own life to live
and you are just
at the end one of its own stories
which, you have to accept,
cannot last, and just like every
story, every anecdote, every note,
will just be forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
there should be no secrets
what for are they?
i go for mysteries, those that
still make me wonder
how beauty can still exist
how glory can still be found
when you tell me what happens
do not keep me detained
to the secrecy of your apprehensions
i cannot make myself mum
or isolated
i am part of this whole universe
in this symphony i am one small note
but i make a sound just the same
not heard
but still uttered.

RIC S. BASTASA
......That Compassion

let me take
first the flesh
and blood
and most specially
the bones and
skin
something that
makes all these
matters
hold together
as one

let me not worry
about what to
wear
what to smell
what to touch or
what to see

after this
i shall leave
i am in a rush
for something
more important

we'll go for the
essence
the quintessence
of our
existence

it is not the fashion
but the passion
and most of all
do not forget that
compassion

RIC S. BASTASA
When the big tree falls
Hit by lightning
Roared by thunder

When the big tree finally falls
And I was there
A big sound
Of a giant old tree
Falling finally to the ground

The arrogance
That used to be

By that big old tree
We all looked upon
It was so high
And we did not
Climb it anyhow

For fear
And
Perhaps respect for its grandeur

And today this big tree falls
Hit by lightning and roared by thunder

The universe claps upon the
Fall of arrogance and pride
And a tree's belief about
Its hugeness and
Strength

Now this tree falls
And I am here watching it

You are not here
You are in some foreign country

How can I tell you
That this tree has fallen
And there is nothing to fear anymore?
When a tree falls and you are not there
Your logic tells
There is no tree
There is no tree of such strength and posture
There is no tree like that
That can ever fall
All because a lightning hits it
And all because the thunder roared
Without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
.....Expect Nothing......Just Scrabble

when you finally decide not to take life seriously you go into a scrabble as you play with someone who is also bored with life and clings to no hope but wander. This wander makes you choose a letter and relate it with what letters are there at the moment available and then you form the word to show that this time you manage only with what is given. Expect nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
.....I Am Imitating You

.... let me flatter a friend (or is she.... a foe?)

....i am imitating him. Oh i want a color....red?

or......blue? I'll take something else........green?

how about trees? apple trees for a background.
how about sighs? for some sounds.
how about... yes.....moans.... lots of moans.....
sex? could you?

.....you are bored and old and.....dying? ....are you?

how about cheese? lots of cheese
oh i love fumodoro tomatoes? lots of sauce.

i love being with you.
I love doing things with you inside the room.
Let me have you.
Please stay.
I still have lots of cheese, and tomatoes,
and apple trees, and reds and greens, and...

sighs.....

RIC S. BASTASA
even in the middle of
a calamity
a poet should still
be who and what he is
as he must still sound
poetic

amidst the rubble and the
the squabble for space and
place, despite the chaos the
poet must still be poetic

gracious under too much pressure
watchful of his metaphors and
perhaps even still be conscious
of his poise and rhyme, the poet
must at all times still be poetic.

rearrange facts, pick out what is
still hopeful and beautiful.
repaint what is horrendously real.
choose the colors, put the scents.
make this world poetic and still
much and even better be...livable.

RIC S. BASTASA
.....Neat And Clean........

a clean sheet of paper
on the table and a waiting pen

i prefer it clean now, as clean as
i too want to be
nothing written, nothing thought

i leave them as they are
in their own state of affairs
as i have to go somewhere else
a place they will not know
as i too shall do my own thing
neat and clean.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Really Enduring

it becomes a child
playful, and you love
it since it has too
become you, ball and
seesaw, playing top, and
a doll's fake eyelashes

you take a gun, remembering
childhood, you pull the trigger
to erase what was once
so beautiful and nostalgic,

all mothers are memories,
all memories turn into mothers'
skirts and tender hands

the sight of tendrils of red
flowers on the wall and a blue
butterfly where the air is
transparent like a cobweb,

the little boy climbs a tree
the branch falls creating laughter
to the grass

a horse comes running creating
an eddy of dusts, the tall man
watches all these like a mirage

grandfather had been a street
full of landmarks, i remember
he married a girl without a mind.

i hear a door forcibly opened.
blood oozed from a broken head,
all over the floor red liquid,
sticky to the memory of the boy.
no one remains disturbed forever,
 i tell you, here i am writing
 whatever flows like ants carrying
 a morsel of bread to their dead queen.

 i guess something must also be beautiful
 or made beautiful, a mess arranged and
 rearranged to create beauty from the rags
 and tumble.

 colors need not be black and white, i tell
 you, Gary made the color gay and bright. i
 am not saying that he lived happily ever
 after for he did not even reach twenty when
 he met his eternity, feigned as a poseur-buyer
 drugging him to his extinction.

 life begins now, i tell you, sitting on a place
 mat like a cup of tea, brewing to the ceiling
 a hazy smoke of images, awesome, original, pure
 and well, i tell you, not really enduring.

 RIC S. BASTASA
the time has come for this
when every road be it in iceland
or sinaman
looks the same

same edge, same horizon, same rock
same tree, same air

which means that now is the time
to quit
stay put, relax, chill out

sip coffee
sit on a chair
turn on mozart
and hum the sacred music
within your heart

alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
....And Birds......

polish an old coin
soon it will shine against
the light

train an old dog another
trick, do not stereotype

remind grandpa that it is
never late to feel young again

take the dove into your hand
throw it in the air

give rebirth of old anguish
let it cry out old scripts

paint the wall white and
then be a child again: take

the box of crayons, draw your
hills and mountain and birds...

RIC S. BASTASA
....And I Think I Am Not Dying.

I am the opposite.
everyday i thin about
my next vacation,

at night i think about
the next tryst,

the next date with my
woman in a the restaurant
that newly opened in
town

the next picnic in a faraway
beach with all white sand,

the next movie this coming
thursday,

the vacation in korea this
september,

all the nice things to come.

and i think i am not dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
....And I Think I Am Not Dying.(Revised)

I am the opposite.
everyday i think about
my next vacation,

at night i think about
the next tryst,

the next date with my
woman in a the restaurant
that newly opened in
town

the next picnic in a faraway
beach with all white sand,

the next movie this coming
Thursday,

the vacation in Korea this
September,

all the nice things to come.

and i think
i am not dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
....And Then An Empty Morning Sky

leaves float on the
calm river

the wind did not
come

birds hover on
a tree

and then all of
them flies away

leaving you behind
and empty sky

RIC S. BASTASA
....And Why

To grow and mature
in solitude

like an only tree
upon a high mountain

to be a part of no cloud
to be not a friend to the wind

to bathe light under the sun
to fold leaves

in the coldness of the night
to stay afoot in its

engulfing darkness
to sing no song

to whisper nothing
to be content on what i am

on where i am
and why.

RIC S. BASTASA
consider these: doubts are perfectly normal
and it takes time to feel that
God is not logic or reason

but a mystery, and all his ways
are not that comprehensible,

you retreat, surrender,
now, you are at peace with God,

your journey is
perfected

RIC S. BASTASA
because there are too many
sand becomes sand to you
each grain taken for granted

dusts are just dusts at the
butt of the bus in that faraway
village, so insignificant

but try to remember what we did
there: how the sands have assumed
the shape of our bodies, how the
dusts left by the bus in that
faraway village had become the
left overs of our memories, the
way that goodbye was said, the
way all things settle down on the
road, on matters which we have
no control anymore. The silence
after...

each molecule of dust
each grain of sand
because of you has become
too memorable to me

so beautiful and sad to recall...

RIC S. BASTASA
....Because They Are Never Written

so many things happen

thunder arrives years ago
and lightning too like spears of light
piercing the ears of this earth

no one talks about it

first they were not there

but i go for the second
we were there but we keep it to ourselves
and they never exist to the eyes of another generation

because they are never written

RIC S. BASTASA
....But Perfection

neither happiness nor
sadness
neither pain nor pleasure
neither earth nor
sky
neither flesh
nor spirit
neither you nor
i,

this is what it is
all about
this is where we are
and they are naming
it
not numbness but
perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
...Death Is Well Taken......

at this hour of my life,
please understand that everyone is
beautiful

i am not telling anybody
i am this master of secrets and strictness

there is no secret between two people.
know that.

i am bored inside my room letting go of
my suppressed desires,

in that party i dance like crazy
you say, it is understandable, for i am a believer

of spontaneity, i could have loved all of you
for i am desirable, i could have made love splendidly

you look at me, i look at you, beyond this,
the world must not be careless,

to kill you with love is my heroism.
i am a martyr, death is well taken....

RIC S. BASTASA
sooner they all become our personal confessions, and after reading some lines, we begin to hate ourselves, this betrayal of self, this having to expose some secrets into the open, though with some twists and turns, hoping to cover a little bit of the head, to confuse the hair, or to lose what is original, so much so, that like a trip you arrive at a lonely place where everyone has learned the happiness of being silent, and you wonder, what is this place? this horrible place which we at first deny, and then bargain, and then met with anger, and finally being attuned to depression, one enters into the door of submission, that acceptance of what, who and where and when, when by simply sitting there and not doing anything, everything is accomplished.

RIC S. BASTASA
you sit there
it is time that
we shall tell you
about your kindness
of the past, as you
are told to desist
from gaining access
to the present and
the future.
i am glad that
you are sleepy like
a stray cat
if you hear us
we are not that pleasing.
goodbye. we give you
an alarm clock, you have
to wake up still at
those desired hours.
outside the clouds
are dark, it will rain
and we are in a hurry
to be home again.
just sit there
death is coming graciously
for you alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
....Hairy

is it my hair?
or my flair?
is it my chair?
or my glare?
come closer
whisper to my ear
be mine, dear.

RIC S. BASTASA
to you
that touch was like
anything else

to me when
it landed on my hand
it was
a burst of all my
emotions

i am weak and
lost
and the rest of
the people there
are
saying, 'what a
waste'

you cannot dictate
feelings
they are there and
are waking...

and you are the
child again
curious as to what
is happening

happy without any
explanation at
all....

RIC S. BASTASA
....How Foolish Could Love Be.....

the one you love
always stand out against
the rest

in the company of friends
in a black and white picture
the face of the beloved
is as red as a rose
the body as fragile as
a petal
the eyes as gentle as
an early morning sunrise

if the beloved were a pigeon
among the rest of the pigeons
the feathers are not white
but as red as a red rose
that just bloomed on that
early spring

and when all of them have
flown away from you the one
that you love most
leaves its shadow
its perfume
its color
its shape, like a memory that
you cherish
despite the passing of all the
years and those who watch you
in anger and pity
deep within still say
how foolish can your love be
how foolish indeed
for you to destroy a self
and banish a world which should have
been yours
forever....
it ended
dismally.

how sad
the start
was superb.

smooth life
longer than expected
clear and clean
until it ended
with all disgust.

you fell in love
with the wrong person
at the wrong time and
everything is wrong.
all very wrong they
all swear to God.

and you died
without the flowers.
and then they bury
you the next day
all thinking that
without you now
they will all live
with dignity
happily ever after.

how ungrateful
you made them live
you dress them
you feed them
you shelter them.
and then they tell
you how you should love
how you should live
how you should die.
how should you be
buried and how you
deserve to be forgotten.
vanished from the very
minds you have created.

RIC S. BASTASA
try to imagine
how adam and eve looked like
after eating the
forbidden fruit

and how the snake reacted
afterwards

how the forbidden fruit
tasted all throughout the taste buds
of those
who were finally tempted

how the world looked like a day after
when God pretended that He did not know
what they just did

RIC S. BASTASA
....Just Dust......

and that is the fact
my dear
you were alone when you
arrive
and alone you must
sooner leave

friends simply
become blurred memories
families mere pictures
kin but passing days

and here you are
at eighty-five coming to the house
for a breakfast of egg and bread
and coffee

where are your children?
did you not brag about them?
did you not say that the more kids
you have the happier life can be?

you are alone now in that black dress
and pearl accessories
and a very much useful handkerchief
to wipe your
tears

did i not tell you correctly what is this
all about?
there is a way to be happy and the earlier
you accept what real happiness is
the happier you can be

just be yourself. do not gather much.
do not think much. do not expect much.
there is much wisdom in being alone
opening the window of the house
sitting on one of those chairs at the veranda
watching the trees and the clouds
slowly sipping coffee
not rushing with the sweetness of
a little bitterness
for coffee is good the lesser sugar
you put on it
its coffeeeness more savored
without much mixing to dote
it is just dust.

RIC S. BASTASA
that early morning
the wind was strong
and i flew a kite
in the sky against
the sun, ...it comes
to mind, reflecting
upon our lives, that
i have to cut the cord,
and let my hand free
from any hold....and
the kite flies by
itself against the
blue sky, falling
somewhere, and i
tell myself i am
not anymore
responsible for
what it is....i left
the cord on the grass
and went home alone
feeling what freedom
is.....it is the
separation that makes
us free...it is mostly
departure, and not
hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
for i cannot keep you
and i really like this to go
this ambivalence that loops
from hate to love and back
to love and hate again and
there's this euphemism for indifference
that sweetness of a pretension that
you are you and you are strong and
cannot be affected anymore, i like this
finished, but how can i? for there you
are in that simplest splendor, innocence
which i love since i lost it moons ago
with someone who can never love me for
what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
....Red Presence

now that you see
something red in me

read my lips
utter the word
and then taste it

you are right
it is bloody.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Possibility In Us.....

dreams

and yet the mouth speaks
a name and yet the heart
keeps carefully
another

and yet one still dreams
of a happiness that is not
yet there?

as the mind roams in space
wandering like a molecule of
dust without a
definite destination?

RIC S. BASTASA
....Why Worry? .....  

dark heavy clouds 
hang in the sky 
i did not mind, then 
the storm comes, 
people left taking 
refuge in other far 
shelters, i did not 
mind at all, - 
these, will pass away, 

love was there once, 
oh, it was here for a while, 
then gone, i did not mind 
too, when it comes back, 
i do not know when, i 
do not mind. All these 
come and go. No problem. 
Guests are we, and so 
are they, so why worry? 

RIC S. BASTASA
....Wordlessly Into The Magical Woods....

whatever happened to him
could happen to you and
i do not the least doubt
how time behaves when you
both are gone into a kind
reclusive experimentation.

in this field one must
realize the real purpose.
it is not to please them
but really to only please
ourselves in this wordy
undertaking. Do not expect

hands to clap to your liking.
we are never entertainers.
we are seekers of who we are.
we are taking off from the
busy hours of our questioning.

we are under the trees silenced
by silence itself and no other.
we are gazers never actors.
we only tell about what we see.
if there are additions, which
by our own sound discretion are
added in another stanza, it is
what we cannot restrain because
we really feel it.

after all these, we receive no
payment. We pay the price of our
choice. We are doing what we want.
and then we leave, wordlessly.

RIC S. BASTASA
a puppy rushes out of the house upon a negligently opened door

it rushed further into the the careless gate into the busy road of the city

wagging its tail jumping happily over its newly found freedom until it is run over by a mindless truck heading towards the forest

and the puppy lies crushed dead on the busy road where passersby do not mind what is happening

and you who had carelessly opened the door still reads a book while munching on fish chips and white wine inside your lonely room.

RIC S. BASTASA
before i leave
let me say it.

you are a liar.
a profiteer.

you deceive people
even those lowly ones

you deprive a client
of his landholding

protector you are not
never was it

it is all about your
having money

you have never served
at all

you have all the reasons
marks of your eloquence

money spent for your
education was wasted

you are never an ideal
you are a curse of

mankind, all mankind
wish for your perdition

when you die all those
monsters will take a bite

of your flesh and take
finally with them your only
soul. And the you have

your eyes will be
taken from your sockets

your bones will be
chopped into tiny pieces

your mouth will be
burned

your ears sliced into
bits

and all these will never
be enough

to pay for your cruelty and
deceptions....

RIC S. BASTASA
...A Dome Of Pebbles

it is a shame
now how love
begs
how age bows
down
into submission

there is a
time for recollection
a posture of
composure
that compassion
you finally lend
to yourself and
then you say
finally
i quit
i shall not
humiliate myself
ever and
ever again
even if it means
getting back into
the house of
shell and be
another hermit
upon a castle of
sand
a dome of
pebbles

RIC S. BASTASA
in the middle of all
these struggles
to live
we must abide by that
myriad compromises

a little of courage
a little of rashness
a little of cowardice
a little of attack
and by all means
sometimes we try the
betterment of
surrender

take a little of myself
not much
in the same manner that
i do that to you

a grain of sand
a drop of rain
a chunk of wood
a pebble for a dabble

by the window
a little of sunshine
not that much for
it could be blinding

a bit of love from you
a pinch of mine
the rest remains in
that beautiful dread
of empty moments

and then we take the
fill
and start again for
another maze of mess

'what a lovely night
to such a bland wine!
what dry lips are these
that shall kiss mine'

RIC S. BASTASA
...Agony In The Garden Of Desire...

i have a perfumed
body which you never smell

lips ready for your kiss

you never feel what i feel

you have what i do not like
logically

but which my heart all its
life longs for

it has no perfume and i
wonder why i like its smell
why i dream of it
in all the nights of my life

RIC S. BASTASA
...Alive And So Beautiful....

it does not matter
what death had so well
taken

a video is left of that
beauty
which we watch with dignity
still

it will be here
remains of what was gone
dust blown
but you are here still
desirable and so
beautiful..

here death cannot touch you
we own you now
we watch you now
alive and so beautiful...

RIC S. BASTASA
...Always For The First Time....

it is not a new thing
not a discovery
neither an invention to know
that at the lowest point
of your life
at the ebbing of breaths
you conclude
you write 30
and it is where the word
begins to take life
in so many ways
in so many forms
of wings and twigs
and leaves and
the hushes of the winds,
and you are there
outside the window
of the box
simply watching intently
seeing all these new,
always for the
first time.....

RIC S. BASTASA
always unaffected

time ends
searching for love
it, to gets, tired,
rests upon
an emptiness that
behaves like
a jar
under the rain
in the middle
of a lush
garden

everything
water and sunshine
gets in there

always
unaffected.

Ric s. bastasa
An Insane Man

man is
i think,
insane

he kills
and invokes
humanity

war can make
heroes

war is an
instrument of
peace

great nations
make war
over a mole

invoking
principles of
pride

the leaders
stay in their
mansions
watching on screen
how many
are dead

it is all about
numbers
and statistics
and
collateral
damages

RIC S. BASTASA
...And Then I Fly Away...

do not make
writing a big thing

it is just another
routine

an early morning
breathing

breakfast matter
of words in plates and
cups

make it a conversation
between you and another
stranger

do not mind if it does not
reveal any name or address

keep going keep going
let the hands busy on
something

and you will never be lost
and you will never beg

for a bucket of relationships
for another date in the calendar

i breathe, i delete
i put some more what i think is
there

i draw a horse
i put the word wings

and then i fly away....
...And You Do Not Know It.

we all want speed.
blame the slow puts.
the Lilliputians prove
that size does not
matter. It is the will.
The mind. Small hands do
much better with the will.

falling stars do it well.
and so dreams come true.
the galaxies move with
the speed we know not
about. Planets are born.
QUICK explosions unheard
of.

i am pointing to a part
of me. You are here.
And you do not know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Another Beginning.....

you climb the mountain
up to its peak
and on the cliff you
stand and then
scream

the mountains beyond
spread like the ocean
like the sky like the
space into an eternity
of fullness

you shout at the top of
your voice
in an emptying prelude
nature's desire

nothing is changed
the mountains are mountains
still like the skies and the
ocean and the vastness of an
occupying space

and then the silence that
fills you again that ripples
inside you like those
winds entering the window
vibrating to the silky curtains

the much needed
break, the pause, the beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
...At The Shore....

the way the sea
speaks to the trees
the way the sands
sing its silence
on a Sunday afternoon

endlessly amazing
your soul too sings

RIC S. BASTASA
...Backtracking....

at a certain age
of expected stability

where locks of hair
shine in the whiteness of
its acquired
wisdom

a love poem becomes
funny to the taste of those
beside you
and of your same age
who had graduated from the
hazards of love
calling it even a boring subject
matter

perhaps what they remember
is the pain
and the stupidity having given
much without
the desired returns of the day

but today i am writing a love
poem
for youth
a haiku for tight skin
and peach
cheeks and long black hair
less the stars

afraid of this shame
i keep this to myself like
a forbidden tattoo between my
legs

there is this secret to
life
retracing the tracks of
youth
and for once retaking the
grandeur of its
beliefs and hopes

no matter what.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Because You Are Still Too Young To Do It.....

you may have written
the best poem now in your life

but your age will deny it
it is yet not too ripe

the mango is raw and time
says it will be more tomorrows

salt has not crystallized it
and there is rain coming

the thread is not that long
and the torn garment is old

the boat has no sail
and the storms are still coming....

RIC S. BASTASA
...Because You Expect Much

you expected too much from life
as though
life owed you a lot

so many things
from the time
you were born
and

so here you are angry
about
the non fulfillment
of your dreams
which
if you really mind
have become
part of the hefty garbage

in the
the history of
mankind.
you bet,

there is more coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Because You Expects Much

you expected too much from life
as though
life owed you a lot

so many things
from the time
you were born
and

so here you are angry
about
the non fulfillment
of your dreams
which
if you really mind
have become
part of the hefty garbage

in the
the history of
mankind.
you bet,

there is more coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Beyond Beliefs....

the apprehension from
nighttime till daybreak
was gone upon the assurance
that you are that kind
who keeps secrets as
sacred mantra in the
search for beauty and peace.

what the night did leave it
there. Welcome the coming of
the light slit from the darkness
of the soul. We who long for
love. We who refuse to die.

the heart rests and looks
out the window where a garden
of doves are drawing in the
whiteness of the feathers.

i see you and you look at me.
we have no need for words.
I touch your hand and you smile.
i do not need for you to say it.
I know you understand and it is
enough. Love is not the issue here.

it is a way against the rope.
It is the path towards a new vision.
people need to touch even without love.
people sleep together even without it.
dream together. Live together.
beyond body and age. beyond beliefs.

RIC S. BASTASA
...By You Alone....

THERE is this longing
(well-defined like a completed
portrait of
the beloved, the only one
loved and desired)

there is this love unrequited
like hands opening to space waiting
for another hand to hold it
tightly and be taken
in to the window of the sky

there is this empty space still unfilled,
and hence the night is lonely and the room is
dark

with a candle waiting to be lit by you alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
oftentimes the cage
is like an egg
imprisoning a yolk
between
something that
is opaque
mistaken as a clear
layer of water

you wait
for the hatch

that is the
catch

RIC S. BASTASA
...Compulsion 5

it is there
it goes out
you want to hide it in your palm
in your clenched fist
it escapes
as perfume

as smoke
from the chimney
of the house
whose windows and doors you have closed

RIC S. BASTASA
you say you will not do it
never again
this sickness this sickening thing
inside you

you smile
you breathe
your stomach begins to deliver a speech
this cannot be
denial, denial, denial of the natural color of your hair
one that blends
with your skin
one that speaks the words that your tongue
has been keeping

the one that you hide
and pretend it is not there
it grows
and becomes big and so visible

you knife it out
never shall it heal
this wound this life
this is what you are
and ever shall be

forever, and yet you keep it hidden
funny, because they are all seeing it
and speaking about it

it seems, you are the only one
mute, deaf, blind and so dumb

RIC S. BASTASA
it happens
truth on both sides
truth on extreme ends
truth on the left
and truth on the right
what you thought was
false has become true
by now.

and so truth becomes
two faced. each face is
ture. Nothing is false
there, you know it by
heart. You love this and
you love that. Both are
truly loved.

you are not false and
they are not too. Love
is here with both hands
and happy feet.
dancing to everyone.
Not just two but everyone.

both doors are true.
the house is true. There
is no false door here
or a false window.
each serves what truth is.

you enter by that door.
i leave on this door.
I look over this window.
You stay there.

now, are you still
discerning whether
what is claim is false?
hold my hand.
not one of us is false.
even if love has left
us both. we remain to be
true. Departure.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Destined To Be Gone.....

once i want to be like them
they were on the streets
raising fists,

they keep on saying
the system is all wrong
and all they need is
reformation

to a certain extent they
killed those leaders
they want reforms
they all want change

then they win and take over
properties are taken
those who do not belong
are executed

here they are
another set of oppressors
they are the change
that need to be changed again
a cycle of executions
back to the barracks

oh yes, those who kill by the sword
now also perish by the sword.
and i watch all these by my window
from the house they burned before
which i have reconstructed

it is the same set of men
with blood in their veins
hearts of steel, bones of iron
minds of rocks, all mortals
destined to be gone.
...Dog Talk

and so too
i have a dog
whose only
language is

bow. and
wow.

and true to
the limits of
his language

as he walks
and sways
and rolls
and runs like
a dog, and

true indeed to
his nature
this dog comes
before him

and then it makes
the bow and then
believing in his
power and glory

this patriotic and
loyal dog keeps
on saying: wow wow wow

RIC S. BASTASA
looking for a cure
for this
undetermined sickness
unto
death, the foundation
of all
philosophies combined
trying to find a door
as escape
into another house another
door
into another escape after
escape

this is eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Even Before We Are Born....

the world knows what it wants.
what it wants to hear.
and you know that.

so speak only of hope, and happiness.
listen carefully.
it rejects what is bitter.
it frowns upon those who suffer.
those who are hateful, it shies away.

you must listen.
you must obey and comply with what it wants.
History is not poor.
It is rich with all its blotting.
How a village of sufferers is buried.
How a continent of blasphemers sinks to
the bottom of the ocean.

Gone.

Speak cleanly. Write what is good.
Sculpt what is beautiful

You may skip the truth.
the one which hurts, the one which shakes us.
the one that kills
even before we are born.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Flush, Flush...Flush...

bleach the bowl
into the whiteness
of sky

the flavor of vanilla
sit in there and feel
your kind of heaven

flush.
flush.
flush.

feel the cleanliness of
your soul

flush.
flush.
flush.

do you talk about the other
toilet bowls?

RIC S. BASTASA
...For All Is Fair In Love....

all is fair in love
repeat it to yourself
when you find yourself
empty again, alone with
all your failures
alone with all your
longings unsatisfied by
fate and time

for here i have seen
a king beg for love to a
native, like a lion pulling
all his teeth in exchange
for a handful of cares
surrendering a kingdom only
for a kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
...For I Am No Longer There......

if you read
this
you must disown
me

you must throw
this
and take back
what i
was

you have your
own
idea about what
i must be

what i should
become
and what happens
next is
the way you choke
me to death

you keep that
stuffed toy
as me
pleasing inside
your
glass cage

when you go back
to the house
where i live
when you open the
door
and switch on the
light

the night will be
perfectly empty
for i am no longer there.

RIC S. BASTASA
...For I Still Love You...

i spread feathers
in the air
filling some space
in the neighbor's
yards
and they start talking
like parakeets

something about you
which i have never
touched

but i have no regrets
for i still rely on feelings
which never lie to me

perhaps i was misled
and betrayed
but it does not matter
for i still love you

RIC S. BASTASA
...For Mama.....

i wonder
mama why the fire
i put on
the empty jar
dies?

and so mama
i fill it with
water
since we both
never liked
the howling
air....

RIC S. BASTASA
that was the moment
when value was put to a letter

one which you read so many times
alone always remembering that kiss

that hug, the sleeping together
in one room one rainy night when

home is far away, when there is
only the two of you not remembering

what passed, that land which landed
on her breast, that foot on hers,

the paper went yellow, like a pencil
with a cut head, which you do not wish

sharpened, and there was that night,
when everything was thrown in the dark

the window did not wink, the stars were not
there, and you are alone, mumbling

going crazy over nothing, remembering
that which does not remember you that

which has no love, cannot love and never
ever ever was any kind of love, foul and stinking.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Free And Happy

at night under
the stars
dancing with
my own shadow

as you watch
me with all
contempt and

i perfectly
understand it

tomorrow i
build a house
of my own
where i can just
be myself

free and happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
my elder sister has chosen a blond hair as she aged.

she is dying, and she finally got her wish, a blonde hair.

the die is cast she said. she gambled her life and she lost.

i pause to consider fate. we never really had choices or

if we had, what happened was always beyond our control

for instance her wish before was only to be a teacher to

follow mother's footsteps but she got sick and had to stay

at home and just watch her life flow like a river while she

remains a leaf carried to any direction as the wind pleases.

at the peak of this hot month of june on a tuesday we felt

that it is really the first time that we talked. No pity this time.

nothing about regrets just the trivial matters about nothing

for instance the fact that her leche flan is not that sweet to
cause me my tonsilitis and that
i may have bactridol again or

another round of ten days for
antibiotics or that it is surprising
to know that wonder woman is
hercules' sister? oh my, they never

taught us that. We are at the surface
of things, glossy and artificial.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Hence The Sadness....

i have so many dreams
i gather them inside my cup
of hands and then i throw them
away
spread them like seeds of
sunflowers for soon

i create a landscape while i
am away on a trip faraway like
the one that you cannot see anymore
from where you
are undressing in that garden of
longings,

there is one dream that i want to
share with you
i hope you are there

it is the sun rising from the sea
of despair
spreading its hands to the forest
of hopes

inside the darkness there i find you,
we are naked, we fuse, and then we
do not know which of us is us....

i do not know who penetrated home
inside that room of illusion...

many forget this. and hence the sadness.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Hope You Understand....

you it is fake.
what you are watching is just a film.
actors playing roles.
making love. for fame and money
and even survival.

life is recreated. sadness is veiled.
happiness is a confetti and all the children
with their mothers watch.

you know that it is not true.
but you are carried just the same.
you cried. you laughed. you remember.
even during sleep
within it, you are pilfered.

you know it is true. You want to be true.
nothing is true.

on this sorrow, you invent.
what is not true become true.
and it does not matter.
everything is passing away.
everyone is dying.

this is temporary. so
does it matter if it is fake?

i watch it too and i do not mind.
it is made with so much
artistry and make-believe, if
you wouldn't mind, is a necessity.

it is fake, hope you understand.
just let it go, relax, and then
have a good night sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Human Nature......

the fruit is high
up the tree with all the
dangers
when you climb it to
finally
get that dream

once you get it
however
it becomes so insignificant
that you finally
throw it away

from fruit to stone to
nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
...I Love You.....

what i touch
i love
it is not what
i have touched
that i love
it is you in there
as always
i love
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
...I Will Perish....

you should not be
ashamed of me

for i am simply the
mirror of you

i strip myself and
you must like it.

do not turn off the light.
i will perish.

RIC S. BASTASA
...In Bed With Our Bodies...

today i remember you lady
and why? it was you who said you
shed tears on what i have written
and you always ask how i am doing

then i told you just like the rest that
i also tell when they ask, i am not my
poems

and you do not believe me, i am someone else
i give you mary poppins and the sound of music
is not the world a happy place?

i am always fluid, a man with a hundred eyes
and a thousand hands,
not literally though, since i pay
attention, even to the minutest detail about the
lives and feelings of other people

papa mistakes me for a priest and mother too thinks
that i could make a good dramatic actor

as a child i 've been drawing a lot of faces
am i the portraitist?
and i got clay and shaped a mermaid and mama
shook her head, saying these are all not true

i never stop writing though, it is a must,
if i do not do it, the theresias in the nipa hut
is telling me that i will die a violent death

i keep notes, songs, poems in my head.
if i crack the one who can find it first will surely
adore me for that

it does not matter, i have multitasked so well
dabbling from law to anti matter to chemistry and
philosophy and mind you
this is the jack of all trades speaking
in pain but who believes me? nobody nobody

when we talk it will be the top of our happy voices
on some silly stories and sorties,
who would believe me about the castle and the ponytail?

papa is dead and so is mama. They suffered, but how did
we really know? they always quarrel and so the truths of their
pains were never really exposed.

now we are facing a door. IF it opens watch out.
we will be sucked in and they will not be looking for us.

space is limited and they need that.
what we occupy shall then be theirs and they will say
we did all so well, and finished all our missions.

they are gone for good. and they will offer flowers and even
cupcakes, and expensive blue colored candles, saying

thank you, now everything shall be ours.
sorry, we easily forget. Goodbye everybody.

the world stays. for the meantime we shall enjoy it.
goodbye philosopher, we are just eaters and drinkers.

happy, just happy. in bed with our bodies.

so where are you now? stay safe and be happy.
and what is your name again?

RIC S. BASTASA
In Finding True Love

the way to my heart
she says is through my stomach

for years this will work
but soon it will not anymore

to live this life and never
finding true love

to die with all bitterness
and please the last worm

give the choice i shall choose
to be born again

hoping to find true love
hoping that it is still you

hoping still that i may know
what true love really is.....

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Circle Of Life

in this circle of
life
where we are like
caterpillars
moving on each
others' ass
it does not really
matter who leads
who follows
who dies ahead or
who is born
for now

RIC S. BASTASA
...In This Stay Of Sanity

every moment
is a learning
experience
every weave
on that tapestry
of hate
and love
every thread
of angst
every needle of
need
every
separation and
union
everything and
everyone
every rush and
rest
every touch
and breath
emptiness and fulness
to and fro
in this pendulum of
madness
in this
stay of
sanity

RIC S. BASTASA
...In Vegas.....
	hey warn you
and you believe them
in vegas

that what happened
there remains there

what was felt was
meant only to be felt
there

everything, dirt or gem
flipflopping
waste or precious

you all leave it there
because you know what?

ty they are meant to be
nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
...It Need Not Be Said Actually, But The Heart Knows.....

i know you understand what is not said
or not even seen yet
that is what love does when betrayal starts
which the other keeps on denying,

your eyes do not have to look at the way
the hands are moving inside the shirt
your heart knows what is not done yet
the other keeps on rationalizing nothing
is done in the haze or in the darkness

it is feeling, yes that feeling which tells
you that there is really something wrong
and those who do not want it ended keep
on looking to the other side of the river
seeing white herons feeding on the tadpoles.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Janet's Apple Of Her Eyes

all her life janet
has devoted all her time
to the apple of
her eye

on her wedding day as i remembered
it clearly
her mother cried
her father did not attend it
for the man that she married
has remained to be
unacceptable to their family
of wealth and comfort

love is hard-headed and it always
follows the reasons of the heart
like the way janet finds her way
towards this mess

for she loves her man, and husband
above all
and now that she has a son, back to
square one
janet denies herself of the luxuries
that would have been showered on
her

they all think that she had chosen
misery rather than bliss
that she picks up pain rather than
joy
that she had taken the wrong direction
in her life
that she is wrong and a complete
failure

but no, Janet thinks otherwise
as she looks at the apple of her eyes
now

her son, her one and only son
the fruit of her love
the joys of all her labors
the reason of her living.

RIC S. BASTASA
now you wonder 
why for all those night 
when we made love 
we never really kissed?

it could be that the kiss 
is not that important 
the lips so insignificant 
the tongue irrelevant 
it could be that we are not 
so concerned about what to say 
to us 
for perhaps who we are and 
what we are doing 
(in the name of love) 
is not worth telling

but it could be that if the mouth 
is love 
and the thighs and legs are lust 
it could be 
that we really preferred to take the 
latter

or it could be that we are now 
shying away from words from the moans and 
the drama 
from unnecessary romance 
for it could be that we just want this done 
quick and easy and without much fuss 
and less the involvement just the indulgence 
for we still have some more things to do 
lies to tell later 
and more important characters to meet 
in the stage of life

and as soon as the curtain falls 
there is nothing to carry 
like guilt and regrets and we live life again
as though nothing regrettable happens

and as soon as we are prepared for the next play
as soon as the curtains rise up
we wear other faces again
entertain the audience and tell them
'it's show time again! ' and to be exact about it

less the feelings
it is nothing more and nothing less
but just another jest.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Just The Splash....

to keep abreast
we shorten it
to finish it
we end it.

and then you become
silent.

and this is the problem.

there is no sound which
can be heard in this silence.

its depth which we want to
measure
is like a well when we
drop the coin

it is just the splash which
we remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Like Forgiven

Sipping coffee
is a way of
provoking thought

sometimes a
seduction really

the slow sound
savored as the
tongue catches
with something

which is sweet now
and later bitter

hot too, and
to cope with it

you blow, you breathe
and in between these

kind rituals you
begin to remember

love and breaking
love
collecting the pieces
and then
breathing again
sighing

what if? what if?
waste of time

'keep on moving!'
wait, someone is

knocking the door,
'open it!'

don't hide, keep calm, it could be

love that you broke, which

upon itself has taken the burden

of self-repair and now ready

to have you again like..forgiven.

RIC S. BASTASA
...May Those Who Are Still Alive Always Remember

the church bells
are tolling early dawn

the dogs are howling
on the lamp posts

as usual upon cold winds
an old woman departs

opens the door and the
gate of the house

covers her face with
a bandanna and then walks

the lonely streets of
her ancestry

enters the usual church of
all the old scented candles

prays for her kin and kids
and grand children

may life be good
may the years of life be long

may the dead have eternal life
may those alive always remember...

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no
such thing as you
can have everything
there is always something
missing: a link, a key,
a thought,
always, always something
is slipping
on the tongue, someone
you love
sometimes forgotten,
someone you miss is
left alone, there is
no such thing as the
complete me, as always
there is an emptiness
which you say, can only
be filled by God, can
only be taken, and
returned and found by

God, and sometimes it
is God which is missing,
forgotten, left out,
unfound, uncalled.

RIC S. BASTASA
...My Little Sparrow....

you are
just one the variations of
my mind

a creation of my own
time, another pattern of this
embroidery

another emotion, a hand of a fan,
at the middle of these fingers is
love, next is the ring, of fire, and wind,

you are the smallest i play with
early morning
when the church bells stop tolling

do not ever think of love
it is not here
think simply of the the passing wind
that hushes to my ear
that cools a portion of my cheek

to be exact
it is nothing more and nothing less

the sparrow is more like it
roosting a night on a twig by the
front of the window of this house
as soon as you hold my hand
it flies away and gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
beloved
here we are on the same
sad fate

you detest me
and the one you love
detests you too
in the same
and even almost
identical manner

and so here i am
with the cuckoos and
the eagles

admiring the sky
believing in the power of the
desert winds

i never blame you
for now i have stopped
hurting anybody
myself included....

RIC S. BASTASA
...Neon Lights....

i cannot leave this
place
i will miss the sounds
of birds

i can sacrifice the loneliness
of bird seeds

i can sit here for hours listening
to bird angsts

grief is shared here, miseries divided
the glory of lives shared and spread like

air in the forest trees like breaths of
butterflies on those wild flowers amid the stones

and rocks and mountain peaks as the morning sun
begins its usual peek.

city creature, leave me here for good
i am no longer the slave of your neon lights.

RIC S. BASTASA
...No Regret...

love, i descend
i can even descend
some more, to reach
the floor of
death, and i do not
mind, for the pleasure
is even greater still
even if i perish.

love, count me in,
i am knocking at
the door of your
heart, let me in,
i am ready to be
taken into this
oblivion, i, can,
remember, or even
if not, i have
lived and loved
you to the
fullest.

RIC S. BASTASA
...No Regrets For Freedom....

does not care
what freedom's name

we kill and be killed
we never talk about love
not even this love of
country
which has fooled too many

t here may be regret for love
but there must never be any regret
for freedom
here we eat even raw flesh
we chop even the hardest bone
what is this price that we pay for?
butterflies coming out of their cocoons
ants breaking away from their hills
leaving the queen bee to its death
black birds roaming the skies
snakes spitting venom to each other
houses falling, continents rising
a woman giving birth and the
child spilling its first cry.

t this feeling of freedom is horrendous.
it can kill me but it does not matter.
meaning is here and i am grabbing it.
between our country's lovely legs.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Nostalgia....

rushing to the sunset
when the jeep broke down

marking book lines that
breaks his heart at midnight

still wishing for the meeting
of an old flame

back to the university where
no one knows him anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
you have power
in your hands
you promise to change
this world, but not

without any bloodshed
and lots of x
the one you use to
mark those who
are dead, or who had

been murdered, whatever
is the right term,
they all end up, pursuant
to plan, and one afternoon

i had an appointment with
you and i have to pass three
doors, and have to wait for
hours just to speak to you, busy

figure, a very important man
in this country, and then you
arrive and we talk, you keep
on talking i prefer to listen,

this time, you claim, the needed
reforms are not finished yet,
it is just an inch of your finger,
the whole body of this country
needs a total repair, again you

emphasize, not without a bloodshed,
because this is war, this is a
revolution and the wheels of change
do not need gas, they need blood,

of all our brothers, and fathers and
even mothers, and you use the word,
damn, damn all these demons, these
devils who do nothing but destroy this
country. I look at my watch, it is already
5 pm. and traffic will be heavy, and i
really have to go back to my hotel, and
i said, i am going and you said you can
go,

i expect a little amusement, i’d say a
little courtesy, for i am your friend and
buddy, with our sense of personal history,
i never got it, not even a cup of coffee.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Not Finding Love At All.....

what was kept
as a secret was
not that we
made love, where it
is forbidden

we bring both to
our graves that
fact that in there
there was no love
at all, but just the
purest of all
lusts

the needs of the flesh
the demands of our
well pressured times
the longings and all
the cravings of lonely
people

wanting to erase pain
with pleasure
not finding love at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Not Your Fault?

when there is no love
there is only you

no matter who sits there
the chair is still an empty chair

the water you drink is as bitter
as you

the moon by the window
is just a floater

when you walk alone on that beach
this morning you are more of a philosopher than a poet

where there is no love
all trees have no fruits

i know what you will say
it is not your fault.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Of Letting Things Go....

we discipline words
that is why we become writers
she likes to say that
as a disciplinarian in the literature
and arts
perhaps i must have taken the
wrong direction
having pampered words which have
become spoiled children
roaming in the part without the
prescribed directions
and one looks at this with this
awareness that this child is not
your child
but of their own universes
and so there is goes in the
spontaneity of merely watching and
letting things grow and go.

RIC S. BASTASA
...One Sky....

i see you in that body
it is not that body
it is you that is in my mind
in that other body
it is you which i do not have
but i will have that body
since i cannot have you
that is why there is a need for
me to switch off the light

close my eyes and inside my mind
i must, by all means, make you
my one and only poem from the thousands
of my scribbling.

you do not realize how hard it is
to make a poem as you, one which i
cannot touch, not because i cannot,
but because it should be not.

so i live in the darkness of my hours
in the middle of this world's light.
so i have to live in my mind in the
hypocrisy of all flesh and bones that
keep on saying things which are not.

i do not invite you to be with me.
my world is exclusive. all doors are closed.
and there is only one window, into my soul,
the exit of which goes up to only one blue sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Out Like A Dry And Wasted Lang Where Fear Begins To Grow...

you know how time runs
like a sprinter
at first it does not bother

you, the busy man with all
his art and politics combined
like a bouquet of flowers for

a wedding day, but then the
flower girl has become a bride
and your hair has thinned...

RIC S. BASTASA
...Phenixes......

i got
dreams that
never fulfill
themselves
and i attribute
it to
bad luck or
even
fate.

i know how
to handle
all these and
learned to
live with all
of them

for i am the
father of
broken dreams

they all look
like broken bricks
red with
dried blood all
over

dead dreams are
my silent
victories
and i see all
of them
through their
dust and ashes

 tomorrow
all rising
like a hundred
phoenix(es)
RIC S. BASTASA
...Prison

too much brevity too
can be a prison

you are choked
inside a guess

because she speaks
less and then leaves

you without anything.
you wish she said it.

RIC S. BASTASA
and this is the irony of love. 
ever mind.

i like you, perhaps i love you 
but i do not sleep with you. 
i am sleeping with another 
whom i do not love anymore.

i look at you, and i regret having 
so much time. 
time is a lonely clock ticking and ticking. 
there is no reason.

i love you. i like to kiss you and make 
love with you. 
but i cannot simply do it. there are rules of this 
game.

so i sleep with the one that i do not really love 
or like, but i am a very compromising lover.

i imagine you. i have this power to be with you 
in another body.

what i do is just to close my eyes, change images, 
travel, make my own scene, you and i, all in love, 
every bit, every moment.

when it is over, how simple it is. 
life is simple indeed. we sleep and dream again.

did someone older and wiser tell us that after all, 
reality is another illusion?

RIC S. BASTASA
...Romanticism.....
	sing for me
do not talk
kiss me
do not fret

do not show me
love which i cannot
see which i cannot
feel

touch my hair
whisper to me
even those
sweet nothings

be near me
be mine for i am
yours...

RIC S. BASTASA
i envy the hands that
touch your lips, your hands
actually,
you have been strict with
yourself
and too selfish not to have my
hands even caress your hair
as though Eros has no place in
your soul,
i beg you, in the uneasiness of my
soul, pacify me,
let me, at least, stay beside you,
allow my shyness to overcome itself,
allow my finger to wipe the blood
in your lips,
allow me to heal that wound,
sad soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Same Things......

if you ask me
how i am
i always refer
you to my
fingers

they have learned
well the
art of touch

the art of speech
without the use of syllables

running slowly into
your spine

you soon shall forget
everything that you
want to remember

if you mind enough
there is bud, and there are
tendrils

it is a beautiful morning
and the sunshine and the tendrils
and the fingers
all refer to the same things

RIC S. BASTASA
...Sands And Pebbles.....

writing smoothly
on one hand trying to get away
with the rules
of this game one does only have
to remember and
jot
like picking shells on the shore
and viewing them against the sun
gleaming
and then putting one them to your
ears
listening to that music that the
wind is
composing only for you

moving on to the other side
thoughts are emptied like the ebbing
of the waters
clearly for a while scrutinizing
what the sands and pebbles could
offer.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Seeing All Things Anew With All Awe......

how to end
is a set of many
choices

one takes the
rope
the other takes
the jump

one does not
necessarily take
that kind
of sad ending

someone simply
leaves and be
gone away and

if there be
changes, he may
come back again

and then begin
as if he is a stranger
to the place

seeing everything new
with all awe....

RIC S. BASTASA
...Simple Sharing...
	hey found
an egg
and both of
them are
equally hungry
and so they
fought about
what they found
what he thought
belongs exclusively
to him, and
in the course of
their fight
the egg was broken
the yolk splattered
on the ground
and what they have
is the
eggshell...yes,
just the eggshell
for such
stupid fools who
did not think about
the peace that
can be found in
simple sharing.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Sin, Society

to keep you from harming them
they invent sin, make a society,
build a kingdom, and surround
you with soldiers and spies

they put gods around you
and you worship them
they instill guilt, remorse,
and since then love is overshadowed

now, we are still looking for it
seemingly it is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
there is also a gift
of being not interested

seldom it happens but
it happens

like when the sun rises
and someone stops to admire it

and you keep on walking
rushing for something more important

disregarding what is poetic
and looking forward to what gives you
something to survive: money

you know you cannot live by bread alone
they keep on hammering that to you

but here you are hungry and thirsty
for food and water and

looking for what satisfies your affection
and this gift of being uninterested

works for you, going back to that unpoetic
self, and those old friends of yours treat

you for a drink, here comes a friend telling
you, welcome back to reality...make money

away from psychological weaknesses and
personal whims, and anxieties, take back yourself

stone, pillar, no clouds, no rivers, rock,
soil, sand, scorpion, viper, venom,

the other more candid, says, be the man you are.
make money, support your family, solid, smart.
...Some Thoughts Of History

if you wish
let there be a big
bang of
this universe
again

do you hate the
war that it
has given at itself?

do you also lose
patience over the
dormancy for
a hundred million
years?

forest to forest
nonspeaking
of its wanton
wilderness?

a spread of the
dry desert for
another billion years?

layers and layers
of forgotten
existence?

sometimes a seed
grows
and creates another
world?

an egg gets hatched
to begin life
again

have you figured out
for now
the DNA of
this universe?

RIC S. BASTASA
...Somewhere In California.....

old mother is
wearing a crown of
leaves
her head half covered
as some white locks
peep like a shy child
from a window
as the rain keeps
on falling
from a dark sky

old mother writes
about broken bridges
loosened bearings
caught by rivers
composing many ships

somewhere in california
you hum a song
play the piano
beside no one...

RIC S. BASTASA
...Square

please stop
don't do it sir

please stop
i don't like it sir

please stop
i am leaving sir

i am not queer
i am square

RIC S. BASTASA
...Stereotypes....

when you told her
that you are a poet
she opted silence

she remembers if you
tavel inside her mind
James, the village poet
who recites poems
of praise for the
village queen who wins
her crown through a bidding

where money is poured
and counted and the one
who obtains the highest
cash becomes the queen of
the sea

the pearl, the moon and
the stars all that they
are used to saying even
without meaning

in their village the poet
works for a pay
and hence cannot have
poems without your money

you are not distinct
from the genetic pool of
liars and flatterers and
so when she finally takes
a look at you

she just smiles and keeps
on keeping that bad opinion
to herself

until you responded too with
deep silence, that poem within
which you have kept for years
not meant to be shared for
the nincompoops and stereotypes.

RIC S. BASTASA
the fact is that
when you are too tired
after a hard day's work
and when you arrive at the
house finally
after a heavy
city traffic you just drop
dead on your bed and
when you wake up
and everyone had already
left for their
personal endeavors
you do not mind being alone
you do not even
remember whether you
had dreams
or even nightmares for here
the devil could do nothing
for your
divine situation: tired
helpless
but still wanting to do more.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Stnking Rusts....

if only
you look outside the window
you will
find no one

it is not wrong
to just stay inside
and think that
the world thinks about you
and that some are looking
forward to meet you
at the party

if that is the only cue
for your survival
by all means
take it.

if you walk outside the
neighborhood is at odds
with each other over
minor concerns
over bloated problems which
they think
have no reconcilable solutions

if you sail to the other
side
you will find an island of graveyards
dead bodies on their
shallow graves
without flowers without any widow
or children grieving over them

it is such a lonely world outside
your room
so, there is no use going over there
after all
at the end of the day the weapons of mass destruction inhibit this earth embraced by fungus and moss and stinking rusts

RIC S. BASTASA
...Stupid....

the pencil is a mongol
which for the past had served you well
and if it were your soldier
you could have decorated it like hell.

now its head is cut and needs well
the desired sharpening but what's the use?
you discard it, you don't have use for it
anymore.

you quit what you love. No, not the mongol.
it is this writing, stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Agony Of Waiting

to take the most
essential
matters of the heart
you really need
time

to rush is to
spoil it

savor the taste of
life
make a way to always
remember the taste

of love, of happy moments
of hopes and dreams

give yourself more space
occupy each inch
when love is there
gently embrace it
whisper, gasp, grasp,

do not prolong the
agony of waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Controversial Sermon Of The Parish Priest In The Sleepy Town.

lazy juan who waited
for the ripe guava to
fall on his mouth lays
asleep under the tree

while sleeping a naughty
boy, son of his hardworking
neighbor stealthily grabbed
the ripe guava from that
dwarfish tree and ran away

out of extreme depression
juan died while the child
bragged about what he did
to the other children of
the sleepy neighborhood.

that following morning
the parish priest delivered
his controversial sermon.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Debtor....

when i wrote this
it is 9: 59 in zurich
wednesday and
i know that she is
there lurking in her
bed

still trying to
avoid me and
i am asking:

what did she owe
me and may family
why she is behaving
like a fugitive
being chased by the
arms of the law?

she knows it and now
she is gone

as we wait for the
right time for her to
see the light and then
perhaps

pay.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Glass....

what we desire  
we buy and take in our house  
keep in a cabinet  
we seldom use if ever  
only on very  
special occasions

for instance  
on anniversaries of weddings  
and births

no, no we do not use it for  
deaths  
we use something else which  
is dispensable

this is something expensive  
and beautiful  
and glassy and gleams against  
the sun

we are too careful  
like we are always on guard with our  
toes

today, it fell.  
it broke.

and since then we are  
not speaking.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Life Of Alexander Papa.....

his name is alexander papa
no, not pope, not the pope in your
literary mind, and he died
in 1887, no not 1987, it was
a long time ago, you see, this
alexander papa, who lived a
short life, living it to the max,
in rage, engaged, betrayed, stabbed
to death by the lover of his wife,
not my mama, but their mama, a
woman hailed from Paris, well bred
highly educated, restrained for years,
and finally got stuck with a gardener
who took a bath by the river, naked
and well built, to the amazement of
the restrained woman, not so well loved
by her husband, yes, alexander papa, the
man of culture, adored poet of his time,
revered man of science, who preferred
entomology than making love under the
moon lit by a million stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Boy Is Back At You

now you seek the silence
de the city
which you can no longer
find

the tiny room is a choker
and it does not look good
does not sound that good enough
for you

you have changed into a boy
seeking the arms of mother
in that old town by the sea
the silence of the birds nesting
laying the eggs for the next
generation

this is the season of longing
where you wake up at dawn trying
to listen
what time had hidden from you
because once you refused to know

the seasons are changing
people move from here to there
as the sun keeps drawing what is up
there and down here
the moon as usual still peeps by your
window

ah you must have remembered the little
boy
scolded by his mother
because till the night he was still
outside playing.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Man Of Peace....

he lived in peace
he rested in peace.

remember him who
was much afraid to
hold a gun and
pull the trigger.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Narcissistic Self.....

i refused
going with you	onight

i justify that
a balding man
(or one in his
middle fifties)
would rather
stay in the house
sleep in bed
if made to choose
whether to attend
a friend's birthday
party,

i am a liar
he once said,
and lies are
not that bad,
he says again,
if the main
reason is
to survive,

know what,
the real reason is
that
there is this
narcissism of the
self which
finds pleasure
at home
alone and no
longer begging
for another
hand or
another's mind.
The Simpleton....

a simple thinking
from a simpleton, forgive
me for the term, says
that there are only
two people in this country,
(or say this world)
the killer and the killed.

like a man or a woman.
day or night, such a simple
division, without any
complication or sophistication,
why should one befuddle a
simpleton?
why should there be too many
colors of this rainbow?
there should only be black
or white, nothing in between
that is how simple things
are: do not confuse a
simpleton. Life is simple.
There are only two division.

dark and light, evil and good.
and going back to his two
classifications: dead or alive
killer or killed...what about
those who wee and do not weep?
those who carry the coffin
without weeping, or the children
of the poor in the cemetery who
are not involved except to wait
for the free food that are given
by those badly affected?

i am glad i met a simpleton.
there is a house without a door.
and he lives there.
...The Stony Poem

A poem stays to be a poem even if you never read it

it is stony
it stays on the road despite the passage of all cars

until it hits you on the head....

RIC S. BASTASA
many still wonder why
Sisyphus till now
keeps on pushing that
round and heavy rock
on that mountain for
quite a long time
uphill and backhill,
unceasingly
those who watch him
have aching eyes and
they are crying and those
who love him broke their
hearts into pieces and
someone who suffers like
him could not longer hold
this matter for granted
went near him wanting to
help and ask him:

'why are you doing this
sisyphus? '

and the philosophical
creature answers:

'..because i love
doing it'.

in the same manner that one
answers why he still keeps on
writing
poetry

besides the undeniable fact
that indeed it is a very
thankless endeavor.
lots and lots of these and those
everyday, every minute, every second,
at first we lose the it
and then the he and she
and then the you

and you think about regrets and remorse
but how can i ever tell you to change
now you are back
to a certain beginning about this and that

i give up. i close my ears. i listen to my i-pod.
i see you talking. i will not hear you.

you are far away, like a newly discovered planet still unnamed.
indeed, even that, you are still a controversy, a rumor, to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
i always laugh
at the idea
that i matter
to you

but i do not need
it, or the laughter,
or that matter

i may matter, but it is
not what matters,

there is no us, in the first
place,
nothing matters actually,
all shall pass, everything,
everything shall always pass
and we are
not even some kind of memories
that they need
to move on, to step forward
and live their lives the
way we once did

it is sad, but it is true,
nothing matters, we do not matter
i do not matter

so what we can do is just live,
and live and live, until there is
nothing of us to live
until there are no more reasons
for living
until we accept this temporary
sojourn
this tavern, this night, this
matter.
...To Care About Nothing.....

we have chameleons here
and every time we meet
they do not just change their colors
oh, they change their names,
adopt another kind of personality,
enter your door and walk out
without much fuss,
and when you finally say that you do not mind at all,
they change back to their original selves and then
tell you their real names, where they were born
and where they really like to live,
but preoccupied with your own confusion, you too do the same walk out from their lives
and care about nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
...To Change The Name Of The Author Of The Poem

to change a name from time
to time
may not change the color and
texture of a poem

the one i have read and
noted
still opens its body to me

it will be the same sadness
but rereading it somehow creates
a certain superficiality

for it is a poem denied the dignity
of its writer
disowned, and given away
it becomes another stranger in my page
and i have decided not to talk to
it or

about it, for seemingly it is hard
to expose myself unnecessarily to another
insensitive soul

looking itself in another body
in another layer of time

RIC S. BASTASA
...To Papa Who Died In 1887

papa i still
remember your anger
and what you
did with it

and here i am
angry too and imitating
you

and perhaps, yes perhaps,
i, now, understand you.

the horror in us
the harrowing pain,
a love so huge
and flaming
betrayed by wind and
fire
and to our feet this
ashes of disdain.

RIC S. BASTASA
...True Love....

here is
your flower
red and shiny
fresh and
dainty

you love it
still
even without
its scent

a day from
now
it wilts.

RIC S. BASTASA
…Until He Found Out That He Never Had The Wisdom….

Ferris once
with a loud voice
enunciated
what wisdom is

the student enumerates
different swim strokes from
butterfly to
breast to
back to dog to
mixed

he speaks and
describes how the body swims

until one day
he was thrown by Ferris in
the middle of the sea

only to find out
that he never had the wisdom
to swim and
survive and live
though not happily ever after….

RIC S. BASTASA
of course
you choose the
lesser evil
where good is
not there

it is not easy
when sometimes
what seems to be
good
hurts both of you

and so you choose
yourself
the lesser evil
between the two
of you

the waiting is
over
and we have discovered
the answer

i have tasted
the best in you
once, twice, thrice
and last night
i realized
how love can be
too deceiving

what seems to be
my pain
becomes your pleasure
vice
versa.....

RIC S. BASTASA
...We Are In The Middle Of This Desert.....

last night i punished you.
you came home very late.
you have a cell phone you
did not tell me where you
are and why you are late.
i deserve to know all these.
i waited for hours with all
my worries.

we all suffer for these.
we did not sleep. we felt the
emptiness of our longings.
i was burned by my guilt feelings.
i think of the mosquitoes all over
your body.
My bed is soft, my room is cool.
i have a think blanket around me.

we are in the middle of this
mirage misleads us
into believing that at the end
is the shoreline of the sea
that will take us inside a boat
into another land of bounty.

here, death has no meaning. Life
too has no meaning at all.
this desert of vengeance, and guilt
and loveless state.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Weakening

do hands are willing
but the eyes are weak

do mind is the football player in the field
but the body is this bird without wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
...What Do I Have Here, Anyway? ..... 

a mysterious voice from the crevice 
softy, gently teases him, it will be 2017

your time to go, and he listens intently like 
a child to his mother holding his hand

with the strength of an iron pole and he smiles 
to the air, gently, softly, like a wind to his

hair, it is time to go, i know, he keeps saying, 
and muttering later, at any rate, what do i have here?

RIC S. BASTASA
...What Do You Have To Lose? .......

the moral
immoral and the amoral
all die
together in one ride
of life

the hope and your hope
is that
they go to different destinations
wherever that be

i am not so sure i must admit
but it is this gut this voice within
that keeps telling

keep a good life
what do you have to lose?

RIC S. BASTASA
...What I Saw In The Problem....

the solution to
their modern problem

(which cannot be
solved either by
legislation
much more by
war or
by arbitration)

is a woman between
two men who finds pleasure
in such a silly
conversation

one beautiful body
soon rejected by four arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
things are not
what they appear
to be
not what you think
they really are
and not
what we expect
them to end.

they are not
definitely what
we are not.

not only that
not even that
this world is not
what it is too
that cave is not
a cave
that moron is not
at all a moron
as color is not
the property of
that object
but accordingly the
property of light
which is not the
property of
color itself.

and so it is not
what it is not really
as words are not
that words at most
the way how they
are not used.

RIC S. BASTASA
...When I Am Finally On Top Of You....

What i imagine
Is a sun at noon
On top of the earth

I can be that
On top of you
Linked like a chain

And then like the
Sun at midday
I shall burst with
So much sunshine

And then face away
At the ripe time
When all the grass
Are hungry no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
language is waiting
in broken parts, mostly,
not new, but disassembled
waiting for you
missing you as always
on early mornings before
you have taken that needed
deep breaths.

it is not feeling anything
unless you begin taking it
one by one, creating and
recreating meaning using
the letters like blocks of
a system, a house, a vehicle,
red corpuscles gathered in
one container with labyrinthine
thoughts, trying to tell you
what and who you are.

now in a paragraph you read
yourself, deciphering where you
are finally heading.

RIC S. BASTASA
...Without Speaking

forget about it
it is nothing
do not think about
it anymore
it is gone
tonight, just tonight
it must be nothing
it is gone
and it will be another
forgotten thing

who cannot ever
refuse going back there
who cannot resist
taking another chance
who cannot resist
ever holding these hands
again
kissing you from behind
and feeling your neck
against mine

it is a beautiful feeling
oh it is cold and damp and
dark
but it is always beautiful
and for now
we must forget but tomorrow
when light fades away again
we will see each other
same time same place

without speaking

RIC S. BASTASA
...Worst As Ever....

that beast
though a part of it is eaten
it simply
turned a blank face against
the moon

something is missing
is hurting
yet that brute shows
nothing to see

after the meal
the brutish beast leaves
the table
goes out of the house
and plays
the game

out there it eats
another
someone is missing
and lost
it consumes it
and goes back home
without any hint
at all

you ask and there
is no answer
you insist and
what you get is just
that wry smile

you think it is innocent
it is never
it is more than you
worst as ever....
...Wound

a wound will always be a wound.

a scar may come to say you are healed but soon it will remember the wound.

perhaps you have not loved enough to learn from those whose hearts are broken, they

say: forgive and forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
...You Beside Me....

just tell me my dear
if i wasted the whole morning
trying to figure out
how i want to live the rest of my
life
with you and this
little poetry

sun rising above the hills
birds flying toward the sea
winds caressing the curtains
of this house
and you beside me.

RIC S. BASTASA
...You Wander Still....

some storied
which you do not finish
writing
help themselves with
their own words
and so they finish themselves
with their own choices
which from now on is called
freedom.

usually the end is that these
stories live happily ever after
which all readers of course love
to read over and over again.

seldom do storied end with their
own sadness, their everlasting
sorrows, their unsolved problems,
and there is that which confronted
itself with eternal damnation
which no one liked but which is
the truest of them all.

it is a bad story. they all fear it.
how can they read? someone tritely
retorts, 'when they are all inside
that collection of stories inside
a book, where their souls are kept
dog-eared, reserved for the dusts
that settle there till eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
...You, The People

why do you fear
about the unqualified and
the inexperienced?

isn't everything an
experiment? did not all
start with it?

why worry about the
incompetent? did not everyone
start with being one?

after all, my dearest,
these leaders merely reflect
their electors

after all, my dearest,
you make them, you put them

and there they are
despite their mistakes

still work that hard
to please you people...

RIC S. BASTASA
...Your Hubris....

to say
that you never needed
help

or that you are not
into praise

to behave like a
whale

to feel electricity
without source

to turn fists
into stones

to close the door and
windows and

to believe that you
can live with
just a book....

RIC S. BASTASA
...Your Nature....

you wish and then dream
but it is not enough
you move on to touch and caress
and kiss and hug
but they are still not enough
you do more but they are still not enough
until it hurts

from a flicker to a heart of fire
to a wild fire until your whole world burns unceasingly until
you become another eternally burning sun star in the vast universe of this
vacuous emptiness

and yet it is still not enough, never, never enough....

RIC S. BASTASA
..A Floating Rock

as soon as you find
the truth
you find peace
it is like words turning
into air
and what you see is
the infinity of this wisdom
where beginnings have
no more endings
and you are there under
a tree
a floating rock

RIC S. BASTASA
..A Legal Story....

the mother who killed her boy in 2013
the uncle who wounded a nephew on his head in 2015
have reasons to be happy.

there are no more witnesses.

the prosecutor is a lazy bone focused more on his new projects
a new house, another car, a summer vacation in the Maldives.

the public defender is happier with nothing in mind but to ease his
case folder.

the old judge thinks of his retirement package. A home far from the noise of the
city. A reunion with his grandchildren and successful children.

two cases are dismissed. One soul is still searching for a goddess and her name
is justice.

RIC S. BASTASA
..A Little Note On Sin....

the trick is always
in the losing

when everything has
no importance

the self for instance
at this point is not

afraid to die, to travel,
to be stranded to fall into

an unknown landscape without
asking for help or

any saving mechanism for here
it is the letting go

letting life take itself
into life or even death

this is the trick
to have no sense of self

everything turns out fine
even if you do not remember

where is life? death are you
here? they look the same

with their scarred faces your
scared face your trembling body

boneless and without flesh
air as you want it, more than

what you feel, what you scream
what you silence
above the skies are skies
birds below them

butterflies wingless on
some grass of cruelty

a can is a pandora's box
releasing all the toxins

a worm comes out from that
apple that Adam had eaten

it is calling eve, eve,
calm the viper.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Sublime

the sound of rain
the smell of pine trees

the mist by the window
the dim light from the lamp

the night getting colder
in this we are together

in another place in another time
we meet again for a love sublime.

RIC S. BASTASA
..A Poem...

something
that gathers
inside your
mouth
and it keeps
on growing
and you spit it
out
with utter relief
and
pleasure.....

RIC S. BASTASA
..About Robert, The Fly

so there you are robert
inside your room still writing
the poems that no one cares to read

one time at the party of your mama
someone asks what do you do in life and
you said that you write poems and they
fell silent as though keeping to themselves
that idea that it is not a way to make a living
and that there is no money to it

but you are alone robert and you have no one
and you think that that is the only way for you to live
and they keep on drinking until they are all drunk and
told you finally that you are nobody a no good lazy bone
and a liability to the family and to the clan

and so there you are robert without any regret
still writing the poems that no one reads and that
you keep them to yourself as another fuel
for another living and this you have always thought
for yourself and this they can never understand for
they belong to the world and you didn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
I congratulate you
for that newly-found freedom
of yours

the way you refuse to open
the car door of His Eminence
the candid way by which you
said that he better have fun
and go outside to see the sun
feel the beats and pulse of
the ordinary man.

i love the way you say it.
And we reflect upon the times
of our lives
when were we born?
what did we do?
what dreams did we murder?
what words did we suppress?
what restraints made us
hypocrites and sociopaths and
schizophrenic?

we have always written the metaphors
for fear of the candid
which doubtless had punished those
who were so young before us
and those who were not able to bloom
like the flowers in the wild fields.

i admire you my dear.
Keep the liveliness of dissent
keep the honesty of your faith
we cannot follow you any longer
we had long been dead and buried
in those undisclosed places of
our blank-eyes chambers and blinded
rooms where we are embalmed and stuffed
like the heads of the prized hunter..
RIC S. BASTASA
..Adam And Eve Inside Us...

now adam
you have taken
the forbidden
fruit in the
garden that you
never own

now eve
ask if you have
not been instrumental
too in this
eating about what is
forbidden

God is still
asking where are you
and why are you
feeling
shame when it
was never
taught you

RIC S. BASTASA
..And So I Chose You...

some have become so clean  
and yet so unhappy  
others have chosen the mundane  
the filth, and remained true  
to what cheers this world  
flaming it with the usual fire  
of humanity  

and so i chose you.

RIC S. BASTASA
..And Then.....

..and then you
discover another self
lurking
from the very beginning
you learned
breath
which you do not name
it will be unlikely
that they would like it
and you stare at it
touch it as
it touches you since
you are strangers
to each other
you do not love it
but it loves you more
and wants always
to be with you
forever....

RIC S. BASTASA
..As The Numbers Keep Rising

the world is telling
you what is happiness
where to get it and when
and why

it never thinks about you
what happiness is where to get it
and why

you always have your own definition
and it does not fit
the definition of the world
and it watches you closely
inside a fence
a cell a box a chain and once

you go out from the box
or jump over the fence or break
that chain

you better have wings to make you fly
far far away
the world has a gun for a freak like you
and they never mind whom to shoot
whom to kill
as the numbers keep rising....

RIC S. BASTASA
..At The End Of You....

the shadow
always lurks
in the dark side
of you

it fears light
for it will be
gone by then

it is just like
your two faces
one looking at
the light the other
to the dark

this time you realize
one can't live without
the other

and so here you are
loving both light and
darkness
not that you really
want all of them

along the journey
towards your final
destination
not one must perish
all must see
what happens at the
end of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Reunion.....

last night
we had a reunion.

twenty five years
ago we were teaching
in a science
high school to the
best of our
abilities.

tonight we met
some of the brightest
students we had.

one has become
a judge in a higher
court, the other a lawyer
and an accountant.

the other has become
another teacher like
us and he sits silently
at one of the corner
chairs

the conversations
are overlapping and
laughter reigns as
we remember the good
times

our lapses too
and shortcomings which
we suppress as we
want to forget them
all

in one corner i pick
up a book about an
adulterer who could not
sleep that night
when he read somewhere
that it is not happiness
which matters
but the passions that
you are living in your
life
thus taking all the risks
of losing a job
a family and even
the sad past.

RIC S. BASTASA
..At This Hour...

all the nerves
meet, and they all entangle,
in such a mess,

the little boy
watching intently
cannot find which is
the beginning and
the end of these
nerve threads

it is dreaming of a kite
one summer
where it can fly and run
and fly again

on those green fields under
blue skies....

meanwhile the nerves
are at war with each other

not remembering that they
are all those roots
coming from the same tree

RIC S. BASTASA
..Battery Failure....

you are
right about the need to be alone again

after that early departure
the blanket lies flat on the floor like a dead body

your eyes are nailed at the ceiling
and light is just too glaring

then another story comes up again linking the
one which was cut shortly with another emptiness
like metallic chains

and here you are again
meeting yourself again in another telling

blocks of memories fall and begin to break on
the floor

like another engine breakdown and there you are
looking for people to push the car

hoping for an ignition for it to run again
as though nothing is wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Because They Are Never Real....

the last poem
for tonight, here in
the place where
ideas live, is dedicated to
a beautiful body, the one,
which i could have touched
or caressed, but which too,
exists only in the mind,
and what are dedications for?
that which we only dream
because they are never real.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Bloody Muddy Mary....

look at that one
written by a skypoet
tasting like
heaven

this one is different
tasting like mud
it is written by you

earthling, bloody muddy
mary....

RIC S. BASTASA
..Bombs.....Everywhere

some persons are prohibited to love.
if they love, or make love, they will die.
IF they will not die, they will be cursed.
If the curse is not effective, they will be excluded from the circle,
they have to go away, or they will be dragged away from the village.

and you ask what is this all about? love is everyone. Love is love,
and it is encompassing. Love is care. Love is sweet. Love is all that is desired for.

There is a kind of love which is ostracizing. It is exclusive only for those who are loved by the world, its rules and its laws.

There are so many people already murdered in the name of love.
Many territories taken away because they love. Because they love only themselves and their own people.

Love should have been much nobler, much better,
most divine.

But it is not, here, here,
and there, it is not.
and will never be.

Your hands are broken.
Fingers are severed. And
you are headless on
the mirror. You cannot
see because your eyes
are plucked out from your
sockets.

And this is the journey
which only the Sphinx can
ask, to the unwary traveler,
whose head shall fall
a few meters away from here.

unless, they detonate their
bombs, hidden everywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
..But Life Is Not As Simple As You Think

really?

as you sit on a chair enjoying the place
new guests come in, and let me enumerate them

unpaid rental of the house
the credit card that is due
threats of foreclosure
a death threat
some thoughts about the pain on your left side
(can it be a cancerous mass?)
family feud, soon cases will be filed,
a possible criminal prosecution for
tax evasion
a brother caught as drug mule
a cousin committing suicide
secret sins, mortal enemies

tears fall, thoughts of suicide come
fast heart beats, pulse drumming
heart failure, you cannot think clearly
problems tripling, begetting more problems
than solutions

so, is this chair comfortable
the coffee is cold now, and it is raining heavily

you run back to the house
you are embraced by dead arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Dislocations....

note the
dislocation

words on the
water

love is not
in the air

principles on
the bottom

and truth is
nowhere to be
found

where are my
eyes?

i cannot feel
my very own
hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Ecstasy

slowly gently
light penetrates
dusk

as twilight explodes
on the mountains

RIC S. BASTASA
memories flash
like falling rain

makes you wet
and then makes you dance

you get cold
you shiver upon a
loss

under the skies
flashes of lightning

you meet the child
in you
begging for what should
not have been

on one sees you crying
in the rain
thunder hides the sob
of the woman

ripe mangoes fall
the child in you runs to
pick them up

you hear mother calling
father is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Floating On The Water....

since it is a holiday here
we have decided to go to the beach
to enjoy sun and sand and shade of
trees beside the shores,

two dogs, a gray poodle and a dachshund
fish for dinner and melon for dessert
exchange of pleasantries and then the dip.

i float in the water looking at the sun
thinking about nothing for hours and hours.

i feel like i am emptying myself to the sun
and the sea and the vast space before me.

and then i hear nothing about you and the island.
the dogs wait on the shore yelping for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Foolish Love....

if you only knew
it would have been
different
you would have taken
the hands of
compassion

but it does not matter
to me
i, this sufferer

my words are not
bound for explanations
silence is the cradle
of grief

for how long shall desire
inflict
and pierce the flesh of
my love?

this love is a bus bound
to an endless road ending upon
a cliff at night and then
falls off to its own destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
..Giving In....

i am giving in to you
finally
and here i am without
much thoughts anymore

i am filled and yet how
come i am still so empty?

RIC S. BASTASA
..Going To Sleep....

the eyes
are falling asleep
and thoughts are
leaves falling
at dusk
softly to the grassy
part of the
ground....

RIC S. BASTASA
i touch your face
i ask you questions
rooting down to the kiss
if you really like it
too

am i the only one remembering it?
was i the only one who likes its taste?
did you fake the smile
hiding in your silence?

is silence a suffering inside you?
i got a nod and it was enough for me
to stop loving you

i myself doubt love. i doubt if i love
you. was it just my loneliness which
made you mine? a property, a thing to use.
a chattel of the roman period.

my temporary winter is gone.
comes spring with all the flowers and the
the butterflies
comes now the world of colors
and scents
and you have become one of those
insignificant choices that i leave
on the grass

the last bit of the cone
the wrapper of my burger
the tissue that i wipe my face with
to dry my sweat
and to keep me from foul smell

i regain my silence now
as i walk away not even wanting to remember you
i could not hate myself that long
got to go.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Hands As Chains

no one can
be both
eyes and ears
you cannot
be both
head and feet
someone has
to be
something
and this is how
we must
exist
one upon the
other
upon certain
dependencies
at the end of
this tunnel
is the light
of interdependency

empathize
brother, sister,
our hands are
our chains

RIC S. BASTASA
..Honestly Without Us....

if you remember
try to. If you believe
try deja vu.
a shadow relates to
a rainbow
and envies color.
you identify with
someone who enters
the same
restaurant that you
frequent
wearing the same shoes
that you are wearing.
you take a glance and
a glance is reciprocally
given, less the
conversation, as shyness
or perhaps
restraint out of civil
courtesy
is seemingly the rule of
this game.

and then it happened.
honestly, without us.

RIC S. BASTASA
..In The Middle Of These Hours...

it is past midnight here
where i live and sleepless
i write a poem without a
purpose it is thoughtless
but i write it as i write it
as though it is a dictation
from someone else from somewhere
i do not really know where
someone without a name yet
somehow without rhyme or reason
it is a way to check on me and
you too why you are reading me
why we are here meeting in the
middle of a poem at the middle of
these hours and we must admit
we are lost but never afraid we
are confident that in so doing
we may find ourselves but we
never give it any significance at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
..In The Mood For Love....

in the mood for love
amidst so much love
what more could you ask
perhaps the intimacy
in so much secrecy in
this world where words
are nothing but useless
chips meant to fall on
the thick carpet without
even the slightest sound
of the needle pines.

RIC S. BASTASA
with an italian song
in his heart
imagining the canal waters of venice
the gondola and the
woman beside him

he walks out the
busy street
struts around and hums

life is beautiful
the city is alive

he feels the pain on
his shoulder
the flesh is trembling
the eyes blur
at a distance he only
sees outlines
like a Manet painting

the buttons of his
shirt are not complete
something is missing
always something is missing
in between all these

there is nothing to hold now
not even a cane
not even a child's hand
or someone who knows you
and takes a glance about
what you feel
for his stability

the old man is weak
and burdened

the city sees him as
everyone else's

for in this corner of
the world
amidst the crowd the rubble and
the babble

no one is significant.

RIC S. BASTASA
..In Your Own Poetry....

early morning
she was asking for
good health

i do not ask for
what i have

then she prays for
wealth

i still do not ask
for it

and then finally
she asks for wisdom

and i join her
since after all those years
despite all the
efforts exerted
obviously i still do not
have it

no wise man is
stuck in his own
poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Into Anonymity....

he knows he is
lost but he knows
too well the
excitement of being
lost much greater
that the feeling o
not finding the way
to home again

you lose nothing
nothing is there anymore

all the bridges are
burned
all paths are covered
with water

out there a new door
is opened
you are reborn into
the amazement of
anonymity.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Into Stones...

to each his foolishness
there is no perfection without that
stain of stupidity
how can i be human without this
blemish? forgive me for loving you.
you will get what you see.
all i have is this honesty.
you are stupid too, as love is stupid.
takes time to understand what is
this stupidity all about.
takes time to accept how we lose
how pride had eaten us
and turned us all into stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Leaves Of Grapes....

they will never
know that when i left
the house
inside my car
it is raining heavily

outside the sun is hot
as ever
the leaves of the grapes
are withering...

RIC S. BASTASA
you said it well
you just cut one of her fingers
that play the piano

one key is taken
the piano never sings again
the woman had lost her voice
her heart
her only love
the only lively feeling she has

and you keep the threat
you shall cut another finger again
another finger

and do you really think
that love shall go away scared
and trembling?

no, she says, with blood
oozing from her hands
no, no, no.
her love will always be true
and not for him
again.....

RIC S. BASTASA
..Little Bud....

virginia
do not mind them
stay as a bud
keep it
never mind the pain
do not be tempted
to that flowering
the pain is there
and will always be
there
keep it
you are more beautiful
as you are now
little bud.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Loving The Young One....The Tragedy Of The Rose Bud

the magnificent sun
has arrived
confessing its secret
to the rose bud

kisses it and burns it.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Mist And Wind....

what is in you
that teaches this
lame heart to
dance again
to the rhythm of
light and rain?

i am wrong thinking
all these times
that i am complete
and needing nobody

i am in love with you
and here i am helpless
to your indifference

i realized how blind
am i
i am a leaf falling from
a twig
taken by the surge of
the mist and wind...

RIC S. BASTASA
if you cut her fiver fingers simply because she no longer loves you in her pain she can still play the piano much beautiful this time that the whole universe stops to listen

if you break the piano or throw away everything that resembles the piano the earth offers all the trees and wind and leaves to be her piano

you cannot blame her for changing for she never did it it is love that changes her it is love that tricks her into loving another which she cannot prevent from happening

she will be mute and never learn how to speak to ask for forgiveness she will die without having to regret how she had loved another

love has its own ways of betrayal love has its own ways of putting frailties in so much grief in tragedies that become immortal
..Nothing To Save....

takes time to learn this
harsh truth
what you took for love
is just trash to the other

you're so serious and stupid
the other is wise and rabid.

be a dog to the dogs
if need be kill for the bone
run wildly and feel the stone
make love then leave
there is nothing to save.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Of Madness And Atrocity

some have been
looking for the exact spot
of happiness

where is it? to a snake where
does it lie?

sometimes that very spot
is beside death itself

which keeps on reminding
not to touch it unless you too
are willing to pay the
price

a boy about to reach manhood
touches it with his finger and
he becomes ill

her mother had gone to consult the
witch doctor who tells about the exact
spot where death lies
beside a brief moment of pleasure
that every boy wants to become

the men have become accustomed to this
and having earned so much money
they pay the price for other to die
for them

and the women who dream of power love
this event that had taken a toll on the lives
of ambitious poor men
from faraway lands whose villages are nothing
but dots
in the map of madness and atrocity.

RIC S. BASTASA
..On The Left Foot And The Solo Tree....

there is this sea tree
standing on a rock alone

the color of the sea is
bluish and silvery

and he writes blue is
perhaps the warmest color

and he remembers how he
put his left foot

on the sands where she
left hers once

RIC S. BASTASA
your poetry
have become my shadow

as mine too
had always been

and so we have
become more of shadows
to ourselves

lost in darkness
we talk about something
else

oh, reality is not
fun at all
as we touch our bodies
feeling like
stones

or if we are those
roses
on a frosty night
we have grown
more thorns

RIC S. BASTASA
i am telling you
and i will always tell you this

it is the pain that makes it beautiful
and the more pain there is the more beautiful it becomes

do not ask what is it
what it is
it is just as it is
and nothing else

and here comes the ultimate thing that i must tell you that
ultimate beauty in pain that perfects what beauty is there left in the course of the
flow of all these, all these, all these

they you lie with eyes closed and a half smile surrounded by a cloud of flowers in
perfect beauty in perfect peace as they say the prayers allegedly for you but
without their knowing that they say these prayers for themselves who still think
that there is another exit other than this....

RIC S. BASTASA
..Parasite To My Skin...

dthis came to me
when i have so many things to do
and i do not know where
to start

you arrive at the point when
i am numb and senseless
but we try to manage somehow
we are normal and alive

the ugliness is not well arranged
which could have been done by the
skills of art and contained emotions
when beauty came the door already
closed itself for the much needed sleep

and you make dreams as tools as you
claim something spiritual in you
mist in my eyes, sweat to my brow,
scar of my heart, parasite to my skin.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not suffer
the ache of my own tooth

lest you be too assuming
it is your hypocrisy that
repels me

look at me, carefully look
at the creases of my peace
words of grief are not well
kept in place

sobs scatter like mosquitoes
on the swamps
sadness crumples like waste
paper in the screen basket

you have suffered the same
curling inside a room like a
cocoon

it is always a sigh of relief
that 'when' is a word that invites
the 'period'

write 30 on the diary
and in one of those pages note
a reminder, 'i was once in love
the feeling reels like a snake
on my neck

and when it bites and i feel
the trigger of electric emotions
i know, i never had the antidote
for love, if it was hate or
indifference, it never cured me,
and here lies the epitaph of
not thinking, just living and loving
and then the dying'
life is short, it was either boredom or grief. The new born child cries, perhaps, it knows from the very beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
for all you know
just be honest, as i am.
when i decide to go
i go, and i do not come
back to take back what
once was mine.
you once said i am unreasonable,
fragile ego, arrogant,
with a pride as high
as a mountain,
i myself cannot control all
these frailties,
once offended, i leave.
and i do not really come back
begging, even if i die.
i hurt most mother.
you cannot forget that.
i welcome hate. i am free.
i have no one, and i do not
belong to anyone.

i am into feelings of course,
but i always rise from there
to go back to square one again.

i love beginnings, know that.
i am into new places of my heart.
know that.
i am not frightened about ending
a relationship.
For i always know how to start
all over again.

perhaps mother when she
conceived me had an eye
on the lizard which when its
tail is cut
knows how to grow its tail
again.
you do not know the pain.
just like the lizard in the
ceiling.

well, i guess, this having
no fear of losing, whatever,
losing you, and losing
everyone else,
is actually not my cup of
te.

in fact, i have managed
to stay with you for, say,
nineteen years?

i must be too foolish to
stick it out, but it is true,
i have so many choices,
and i am too foolish to be
stuck, like iron fillings to
your magnet.

was i really in love?
am i really that lost in you?

years, if you have mouths,
please speak to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Poesy.....

when you prepare
for the worst to come
when you are made
aware of what is
most essential
what is ultimate

and he blames you
for what you are doing
right now

yes, right now, what
are you doing and what i
am doing.....

as others claim that now
it is the end of the world.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the guise of
educating a very
young heart
what love is all
about

a fertile field where
migrating birds spread
the seeds

tall grasses and nesting
herons on the lilies

a boy paddles its way
in the middle of this chaos
dreaming of all the eggs
for the hunger of a family
darkness soon falls and
the mating begins
tonight the rain falls
heavily soon

a cleansing flood
creates another beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
what is the matter with us?  
we are shaken but none has fallen.  
we are tickled but none has exploded.  
we are normal we keep on assuring  
ourselves our community our God.  
yet the matter is here  
our thirst remains, our hunger is still here  
we drink without satisfaction  
we eat without being full  
we make love all night and we end up  
looking at the shapes of faces in the smoke  
inside the room  
we look for eyes in the ceiling  
the geckos do not live here anymore  
the lizards fall to the ground  
the floor shapes our footprints on the dust  
the window is a whore letting in  
whatever air is there.  
there is something good in this prostitution.  
we are given much leeway to breath  
and we breathe deeply and we feel  
this sense of humanity.  
the air that feels our lungs.  
the blood that keeps on running inside our veins.  
the aches are here and we no longer feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
the betrayal is quick
the fear is great
but the pleasure has always been greater

you repeat it twice
then thrice
and you say there is nothing wrong about this thievery

oh, they are just affections
oh they are just emotions which you cannot see

the pleasure is much greater
when you are almost get caught

and you keep on saying the only thing wrong is when you are caught

red-handed, and there with your stoic looks always ready to be hanged.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering You....

i will not
forget it when you humiliated me

though you may not have been too aware
about it, because you are a senseless, insensitive ugly woman
whose lust started when you were still even fourteen i think and so you have a
grand daughter at the age of 25
could be like mother like daughter.

sometimes i wonder myself why i did not react to that.
i must have been too patient to simply disregard it or
perhaps

you are just too insignificant for me, but why is it that i
remember you now?

you are foolish, to love me, and i am foolish to refuse you.
i detest you. And i keep on remembering that hell hath no fury than
a woman scorned.

in my class you daughter sits at the back of the room with her daughter. She
looks like you.

the past is a mirror. and we all walk through it.
at the other side is the good side of our longings.

i touch clarity with a finger. I feel the coldness of logic.
ultimately, i like walking all alone by myself back to the seashore
where hermit crabs live in the silence of their old familiar songs.

it is just the wind. Just as always the wind blowing here and there
as i take a look at the side of my body, wondering, if i still love living my life
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Rest In Peace..Power Woman

she used
people

power woman
exploiter

what i know
recently is

and you know
it too...

sad, but
no one wants

to ever
remember her
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Sleep Well In The Morning

take care my friend
those around you are looking
up the sky and then look down the
ground trying to measure
the height of your fall

take care my friend you are not surrounded by friends but by your traitors

keep the calm of the still pond keep eyeing on those vultures they will surely like the taste of your cadaver

take care my friend shy away from blind trusts and blanket authorities at night keep that third eye waking
sleep well in the morning when they are all gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a way
to deal with separation

a game of departure sometimes
is not unusual

you say you want to leave
but there will be no leaving

you decide to stay but in the
house you are not a part of it
anymore

alright you sing, i do not like
to leave but i cannot stay

which of course befuddles the one
who thinks still loves you

there is mud all over the floor
and the windows are shut

so you cannot see the stars so
the moon cannot take a peep in the
room

and what happens next still remains
to be a mystery between the bed and

the ceiling, a haggle between the pillows
and the blankets

all these sorts of inconsistencies and
ironies which play well with the audience

inside a dark theater where you can hear
the drooping of a pincushion, where a camel goes
through the eye of the needle
that is the show of course of your 56 years
acting and keeping up with the script

what to say, and how to act your lines
so well, without expecting any reward

except the hope perhaps that this would
soon be over, and that you finally find

the one whom you love so truly despite
the tragedies that it had given you and

so here we are back to our lonely lines
always ending with soon, soon, soon, soon.....

RIC S. BASTASA
..Star Of The Night Sky

It is in darkness
where you are most
beautiful

very far away when
your silence is appreciated
most

it is at that time
when you fall
when all their wishes are
said
and then come true

RIC S. BASTASA
..That I Have Lied....

i pretend to teach you
about love
i was behind you and
then my hands are telling
you to stand still as they
slide from your breast to
your navel, and must to
my disgust you blocked my
arms and faced me with such
a merciful face begging
for a kiss which i have
never imagined for even
once in the entire humdrum
of my life.

and then i tell those who
want to listen that i
have lied.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Apple Vendors Of Galas

we stopped
to hear apple vendors
in Galas
talking about politics

one talks of federalism
and the other asks what is it
and she responds
it will make us rich.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Crocodiles Feast.....

the houseboy is patient with me.
perhaps, he is angry why we care for the flowers.
These are the things that we cannot eat there.
His face is grumbling like a hungry pig.
In the mountains where hunger is the law
the flowers are not even grown for the few who die
at an early age.
there is a need to change the soil in the pot.
The magnolias are pale. The roses are dying.
One has to remove the roots, leave only a few
to give room for growth and later lushness.
His hands are sturdy. They are ready for plows
and the buffaloes. When they swim in the river
it is not for pleasure but to catch fish.
Time to stroll on the mountain sides to have
another view of the daffodils.
He is in doubt. Walking in the mountains was
never for daffodils. You walk to fetch water or
to pasture the cows.
You run to escape the tulisanes.
Come, sharpen the bolo, we have to graft the
sampaguita bush.
No, he said, we sharpen this bolo to let the
enemy know that we are ready to kill and
be killed.
There is no common ground between the poor
and the rich. The native is here to be paid
his dues. He plants your song of india for a wage
Not for anything else.

Then he was asked to sit beside him.
He did not like had been dreaming of his dead
mother and his sick brother who has no medicine
in Marupay. His father is infected with malaria
and here he is planting more flowers along the
road leading to the old house of a master.

He admires the sunset. He curses it.
They were never the same. Though made of the
same materials: flesh and bones, one has
a dream, the other has the nightmare.

When you die, i will bury you.
When we die, the river takes us.
The deep water swallows us all.
The crocodiles feast.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Exit.....

early
morning you must learn
how is it really
to live and survive
the whole day

time is a circle

you can go in and
be a part of
its cycle or you can
go out and be
simply beyond its
touch

there is a secret door
i know where is it

you just don't take off
your clothes

it is not easy but it is
certain
you have to take off your
body

and then you forget everything
about you

that is the exit.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Fury Of The Eyes Of One Who Does Not Believe In Love Anymore

Anna, you should know
how it is to kiss dead lips

how to find where love has gone
mad into streets without names

how it feels to be in the desert
again in the middle of nowhere

at this coldest night
where my heart has found no shelter

you could have seen the fury of
protest from the eyes of one

who does not believe in love anymore
who is dead and has no choice left

what to do with coldness
how to be a friend of an angry wind?

RIC S. BASTASA
anger is not at all bad. You say it.

at times when peace does not arrive
why not entertain anger.

it makes you alive.
takes you away from self-pity and regret or remorse

welcome the storm rage against it with all your anger.

set to sail. Live or die. it is the anger that propels you.

if you survive, pass this on

RIC S. BASTASA
to repeat, remember when we once
met, years ago, facing the sun setting as we
have nothing to offer but our silence,

that golden silence which we take pride of
because it healed us, for we were sick and then
no one was telling for fear that we be taken into
that isolated island where only shadows live

i have nothing to say as always. I live with my mouth
shut. It is like mama's door and the only noise was when papa
kicked it to force it open because he wanted to keep the family
whole

never mind, that is not what i want to recall,
i am here. The rain just stopped. Someone has arrived singing
trying to please the house for whatever it is worth.

i am not myself but i no telling the wall.
it has scattered ears on the floor.

sometimes actually you write to kill the hours.
and you kill the hours because you cannot kill anybody
at least for now.

the murder is done. Now you feel comfortable. Unlike everybody
else, who by their most normal selves, feel the horror which
you have already mastered.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Interstices

the interstices
had given us a view
of the other place
beyond us

too, it has provided
the paths for air
which come and go
to make us breathe
and thus live.....

RIC S. BASTASA
i saw the one
drooping with white hair

mouth covered to avoid
infection

she says he needs
more sessions for the chemotherapy

she lost hope but he insists
there is

first time to see him
after two years and then

i sit on one of those
breakfast tables of the center

thinking like the way my wife does
everything in life is fair

what you took shall be always,
as always, given back

your hands cannot hold anything
you body cannot.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Lonely Man In The Making

and so he gave money
to the owner of happiness
which also
by years of poverty has
learned to trade it
to those who badly needs
it inorder to survive

and so he paid
gave the money and got a hand
and then the whole body
and then a memory

happiness understands
what is necessary
it too understands what
is surplusage
much more about waste

deep in his heart
there is nothing and he knows
this and so he went there
again
to ask from more which is
also hurriedly given

nights and nights and more
nights of seeking pleasure
and presumably also having taken
it with all ease
and

secrecy, but in the silence of
dawn
he can hear his heart sobbing
which he tries evading
always telling him, that it is
wrong, that it is a very horrible wrong
to seek happiness using money
but he said, i am tired of love
which hurts
i am only asking for the shallow part
of it where i do not have to swim anymore

tonight the stars are coming out again
trying to draw a story in the sky and he
will be there watching them all

in contempt and disbelief

the years had been rough and the stars
have never told him
the best story ever

not yet, perhaps.

RIC S. BASTASA
...The Love Of Self....

this day i have seen
the other side of my island
it is ugly but it is beautiful
you will not understand it
in my island there is only
one coconut tree and it
understands only me

it is ugly but it is beautiful
if you really know what i mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The One That You Really Love Is Not This....Stone

you finally find
what the other loves
a stone, glossy and golden
but not gold, still with
the warmth of the palm,
smooth to your tongue,
tasking like salt, but it
is not salt, just a stone,
but it is not a stone
completely, it has the
imprint of a recent hold,
not to you but from the
other, still bearing the
scent of recency which you
want to put into eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
now look at me
my friend my love
i am a broken shell
egg yolk spilled
on the plate ready
for your frying.

it is the breaking
that gives me the sense
of freedom
now i am free
i surrender to be
eaten at your
breakfast table

i wish you were alone
in the loneliness of
your own morning
when you slice me
into bits of fine pieces
into the mouth of your
pleasures.

do not tell me about love
i am but an egg shell
cheap, and all markets have
me taken for granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Poor Creatures...

everything in me the wind
shall take
and there is no need to bury
the wind eats
what it once vomited

me...and you.

RIC S. BASTASA
to tread upon a path of
less excitement
less joy but there you
are with your mouth
closed
hands confident
and feet strong about
what you really believe in.

after all
it is not the happiness you have
that gauges who you are
your worth as a man

among the choices there is
only one which is right
it is not the happiness
it is what is right

in a place where you stay
proud for what you are
you appreciate yourself and
believe in you
more than ever

RIC S. BASTASA
..The Sadness That Has Come....

did to sa gawas
mora kag malumos sa
kangitngit

outside the house
you are like drowning
in the darkness

ang kalibotan lapad
dako
unya ikaw rang usa
gamiting nga walay
pulos

the world is wide and
big
then you are alone
tiny
and insignificant

madungog mo ang
pagbangutan sa imong
kasingkasing

you can hear the grief
of your heart

ang imong pulso
nagluksolukso nga
morag mga baki
sa pag-abot sa ting-ulan

your pulse is jumping
like the frogs when the
rain has arrived

apan lahi
dili kini sa kalipay
mahitungod kini sa
kasakit
nga wala pa nagpaila
sa iyang
tinood nga ngalan

happiness has nothing
to do with it
it is about the sadness
that comes and who has
not yet told you
what is its name

RIC S. BASTASA
there were those
who were constrained to take
the opaque world,
embrace the metaphors
and take hints from simple
things like a grain of sand,
or a speck of light
or the flint of a collisions,
the spectacular firefly,
the farthest star, because
if you understand and if you
utter the correct word of
their state, the way they ought
to live and be happy themselves
or just be the way they
are, being born and concealed,
growth suppressed like a seed
inside a can, a peeping hole for
its existence,
then you may finally find a
way to annihilate them, and
proclaim that they are the
hazards of this world who must
be eliminated at once.

you sleep with them you work
with them, but you will never
know them.

in poetry they are your
metaphors, for they too are
metaphors themselves, which
take meaning depending on the
shape of your taste,
the truth in you, the mirror
of your projections,
the scope of your own
imagination.
The Seven Heads Of The Dragon In The Place Where We Live....

in where we stay there is a dragon with seven heads

the first head has an apprehending hand a net

the second has a pen and it writes what is wrong how it should be punished or corrected

the third head has no eyes only ears and its hands are holding a knife and a scale

the fourth head is the listener always protective like all mothers to their children

the fifth head is the keeper of the key of the door of the big house without windows

the sixth spits fire and gives off toxic gas the usual dragon that you have known since the birth of movies
the seventh is the most
casual and ordinary,
the man and woman in the
streets
who smoke and drink beer
and who may choose
not to speak about
anything or
they may indulge in your
liking
speak the truth
and then be
heard.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Bleeding Rose And The Dying Child

on the first day
you are the white bleeding rose

even the vase at the living room does not wish to have you in

who wants pain anyway? and so the lady of the house has only disgust for you white bleeding rose

thrown away into the bin until a child finds you in the garbage place

treasuring you as its one and only flower that cheers it for the rest of his life

and that is where meaning is found which wilting has not destroyed

the white bleeding rose bleeds no more to the happy face of the dying child....

RIC S. BASTASA
i know how fast are the days moving. flashes of night and day. it is all about walking and sleeping all over again, like calendar pages that we tear month by month. Rolled.

forgive my preoccupation about all these mundane matters of liberty and seclusion. A pile of paper works.

i look forward to that day when you tell me that i am dead, which i may have missed knowing. Know that i have always told you, how always happy am i. Meaning is self-made. Your art is a shape and color of endless definitions. an empty wall, a smudge of paints. Bottle of colors and scents of flower petals by the window. There you are emptying again.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Those That See The Sorrow....

the temptation in poetry
is its self-centeredness

most of it, is about the i,
me, and myself thing

it is here where the earth
becomes the center of the universe

the sun cannot complain and the
stars fully understand this matter

there is another option however
when you as the earth emits fire

to light the sun and yet be not mocked
or be subject as their laughing matter

the earth is trying to light its own path
and the sun understands and the stars do not complain

for it is here where the earth grieves in its darkness
and those who see the sorrow, just let it go.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Till I Finally Sleep....

you know i have always wanted to tell you about the story of conching.

i have already planned everything, from that nice beginning to that sad ending.

but i changed my mind. i decided to keep the story to myself.
i cannot share what breaks hearts.

it is the beautiful pain of my dear cousin which i want to keep and hence finally decided not to share.

it is more beautiful in its private box. I rewind constantly its song, over and over again. Till i finally sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
..To A Love That Must Remain Not Uttered Even In The Graves

it has been my wish today
to write you a poem of love
like a slight rain on the grass
a tap on your shoulder
not a wink from my eye it will
be vulgar
i like to send you a gentle hush
from my breaths
i could have told you in whisper
that i am ready for this moonless
night, where it will be dark, where
we do not speak, where our hands
are lovely in the cold, our bodies
wrapping up a present for our
two longing hearts.

you must understand that i am
never allowed by these rules to
even put your name.

RIC S. BASTASA
..To All Those Concerned

if example
cannot teach
you,

how can
words ever?

RIC S. BASTASA
..To Dance Again....

and then it was learned
oh, they're back to each other's arms
once again
and not one of them has told you
what's love all about
that it 's lovelier the second time
around

their smiles grow that flower of envy
like a willow, like a cattail,
and the lovely air hums its sound
that can kill what's is there in your ear

philosophy comes in with a succor
life is like that
you cannot take everyone you cannot
have everything

what you love does not love you
and the one that loves you more
you do not ever care.

and then tomorrow comes like
everyone else
you move into these facts of life
with burdens in your head

and you live life as though nothing
happens
everything comes and goes like
everybody else

here comes the rain
and your feet are ready to dance
again

RIC S. BASTASA
..To Find My Lamb.....

wolf
i cannot feed you
all the time

i like your song
and i sing it sometimes
i love your tail
and your teeth
i wish i had them too

but you know that i cannot
be you
for i am still human
and we had been friends for
quite a time

but this time i am on
my own
i travel alone
and i am taking you out
of my mine

i cannot feed you now
wolf
i am getting away
to find my lamb.

RIC S. BASTASA
..To Love....... 

ang paghigugma
sa wala nahigugma kanimo
balaanon
dili mo matabag nga
paghikog ang
sama sa ingon

to love someone who does
not love you
is sacred
you cannot say that there
you are
committing suicide

ang paghigugma sa
dili angayan nga higugmaon
usa ka pagsukod
sa kalawmon sa gugma

to love someone who does not deserved
to be loved
to measure the depth of love

higugmaon mo ang
nahigugma nimo
kasagaran maoy makalumos
nimo sa kahaw-ang
kay mao man god kini ang
kasagarang naandan

to love someone who loves you
most of the times is the one
that drowns you into emptiness
because this is usual this is
traditional
most likely as they all say

usa ka gamayng kalibotan
napuno sa kabulakan
bug-at, makalanag na ang
pangalimyon
pagkadaghan sa mga buyog
nga mamaak
naglibotlibot kamong duha
dayog kalilong

a small world
full of flowers
heavy on its scent which
has become toxic
there will be so many
bees
circling to take a bite
and there you are
too close and crowded
drowsy and tired

RIC S. BASTASA
To Save Me Away From You

now i still write about love
but this will not last that long

soon i will go beyond all these
illusions
like a child running away from
a mad dog
i will jump higher
over this fence
into the wild grasses and forest
away from that old house

i know about a black bird
who was once myself
and it is coming back to save
me away from you

RIC S. BASTASA
..To The Old Woman Who Is Greedy And Shrewd

old woman take
what you have to
abuse the power
that you have
now
grab and grab
whatever is
to you a much
needed luxury
another new car
more money
another mansion
in the suburb
continue being the
shrew
the devil is waiting
for the taking
of your
wicked soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
To You The Angry One...

KNOW THAT
when i begin writing these lines
i am exhausted for this day’s work
for i have overworked myself
drag myself beyond the prescribed
limits
i am thinking despite all these
sadness, pain and anxieties if
there is still something in poetry
which appeases, or pleases or makes
us redeem ourselves from beast to bird,
from rock to seed,
if there is still hope in the tenderness
of words,
the comfort of syllables
the beauty of imagination, the coyness
of the literal dove
which even without wings still struggle
to fly towards its one legged house
up in the hill where the clouds
have already retreated to the nearby
mountain as night hovers in like
an eagle with glowing eyes
like the embers of your
anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
to capture
beauty with your bare hands
the fingers
have to be hurt

to hold peace
you cannot do it with your
hands in the
shape of a fist

to be king
you only have to be
alone

to regain speech
one must take the cudgel
of silence

yes, it is this sacrifice
that gathers the pieces
back to the treasure box
of the self
again

RIC S. BASTASA
..Turns Sweet Thereafter.....

attuned for quite
a long time about the taste
of a failing love,

time finally teaches us more
to its realistic menu,

bitterness often repeated
turns sweet thereafter.....

RIC S. BASTASA
..Under The Sun

it is unfair
you realize
how you give a world
and yet
how selfish is the other
not even lending you
a glimpse
of his piece, a shadow
a sound
a moonlit room

you grab love
undeserved
you see a face
of grimace
as you ask for a
just a feather
of affection
which no one, no one
is willing
to pluck out from
a body of
birds

it is time now
for a gathering
of fallen hairs

wear a hat and roam
the daisy fields
under the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
..Unsung As You Named It....

i will be a song
old one kept in a trunk
written on a dusty paper.
ink is fading and soon
i will be gone.
you have to sing.
you must.
you have to sing me.
you must love me.

if you won't and if you
can't another will
in another time
i could be sweet
i could not be
for then i will become
an uncertain song
not one will remember
so sing me now
sing me, sing me
if you can.

RIC S. BASTASA
time passes  
without our knowing  

the sunrise turning  
into sunset  

the plane finally on  
a touchdown  

without our knowing it  
music and poetry did it  

movies and memories  
songs and dances  

our conversations from  
home to home  

without our knowing it  
we just lived.  

RIC S. BASTASA
..We Never Really Made It....

i can still remember
though honestly i do not
wish to anymore

that port where the boat
was leaving and there you
were waiving your hand as
though we still love each
other, and that was the last.

when we see each other again
this summer, i wish i cannot
remember, foremost that pain
of having loved you truly but
we were never really meant for
each other, we just didn't make
it through our dark nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
..We Tipsy....

the one we love
is not
reason
it is beyond
behind
or in the middle of
that reason
which is not exactly reason
for we are
tipsy even without the
first drink
and we shake like a boat
amidst a very calm weather
upon a bright
day.

RIC S. BASTASA
..We'll Wait With A Drink.

day you predict it
many times the world is about to end
and hell is coming
for those who have fallen short of
prayers

it is always a calling for repentance
people must
i imagine myself, what if i have
to wear a sack for a dress and
hit my head on the wall so that
the blood of my own redemption
shall come,

as always on the date of the ending
the world still is rotating and
revolving without bullets of the gun
no one is hit, no one falls dead on the
floor, no one dies on the street,
no balls of fire, no choir of angels,

the traffic is getting worse, the haze
comes, there is a need for masks,
we still eat our meals and snacks
drink coffee and engage in talks

i like it this way, just listening to you
(but i guess not that seriously enough
when we were once kids deciding for
a jump to the river from the coconut tree

or killing doves with our slings using
our magic stones, or the way we believe
that we can be david to the goliaths
of our dreams...

well, life goes on and on, and if you
still be the doomsday prophet of my time
i still feel free, not to take you seriously,
if sooner we die, and we know it's certain,  
let death do its work, ..we'll wait with a drink.

RIC S. BASTASA
..What The Song Did For You....

because you love that
song
you keep on singing it

the lyrics give you
life
the melody makes you
fly

and your lips change
to a hum
your gums more alive
like a newly found friend
your tongue
is marvelous in its
new outfit of desire

the truth about that song
is that it is
owned by air and you know
what it is

how air is, how fleeting
and in the morning you find yourself
with that truth littering
the floor

your mouth bleeds
your tongue is dead
a tooth is missing

RIC S. BASTASA
..What Was....

i may say
i love you
when you are
inside my
own box

in my own
terms
and conditions

outside the
box
i free you
and you fly
away

how can i
say i love
you when
you fear me?

how can love
love someone
whom it cannot
tame?

so go away
find what you love
and in the same
manner
let it kill you
too

firely, moth,
fire, light
hand, and the
snap....
at the end
death claims
what you love
what loves you
what does not
love
what cannot love
what was

RIC S. BASTASA
..What You Want From Me, To Please You Finally

i say, i have learned
the trick
of living, in order to live
one must keep on moving

one place to another, one forgetting
another forgetting,
and more shall come for remembering

all the bluebirds are here
on the tree that we have chosen
in another place like this
they become more beautiful
their songs more pleasing

the rock on the cliff faces
the sea of storms
it is not the same from where
we stood, or once sat on top
of its head

the boats sail at a distance
seagulls hover upon a school of fish
the sea is silky
and the sun is a woman with a golden
hair spread across the shores

let me hold your hand, please,
do not fear me, i assure you,
in a moment, i soon, shall leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
the one you married
loves you more than you do
and you know it too well
from the very first day

you never change
suspicious of all people
not trusting
because of the past pains

in the crowd you are always
alone
in the house you feel the
same
as dinner is served as wine
is drank
as food is consumed as guests
leave

in bed you make love like
everyone
the gasps and gaps are still
there as usual
exhausted you take yourself
into sleep carrying you
to the recesses of your mind
into the depths of your
angry past

you wake up sweating for the
truth
journeying again into the labyrinths
of what you still do not know
until you arrive at a certain
dead-end

and it is here where you sit and talk
to yourself again
beside a wall
under the sky where black birds
begin to fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
..Who Knows....

until then
i have never wished that
you be me
or i be you

it is simply impossible
the years are telling
their heads are shaking

and so we walk separate
ways in our
lonely choices

if at all we meet again
it is only desire which decides
that, if ever it is still there
in the house of our
longings

let us wait for the birth of
another year
let us hear its cry
and it if recovers its wisdom
or just even its consciousness
let us keep our fingers
crossed

who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
..With All Those Spilled Pail Of Water.....

just like any jack
and jill you also fall
down from the hill

it's not surprising
what you say about any
spilled water from the
pail

the best part however
and this you shall not
be ashamed of is

when you rise from the
fall and sing again
about jack and jill falling
from the hill
with all those spilled
pail of water

RIC S. BASTASA
..Without Questions Asked....

inside this body
is something unseen

soul if you believe
mind if you ever think

bouquets of intangible
desires
blooming and cut like
flowers for a
wedding

thrown, all thrown
away after an occasion
wilting somewhere
without questions asked.

RIC S. BASTASA
..You Do Not Love Me....

i find your arms
hanging
to the floor
when i kiss your
lips
i try to bring
them back
on my neck
and shoulder
and there they
are still hanging
on a clothesline
cold waters
dripping
and some are
blown by the
wind away
from me....

RIC S. BASTASA
When I join in a journey with you
I never ask for the destination
I never ask when will this end
Or when shall we begin again

When I walk with you
I hope that this will never end
I wish that this journey never ceases
When you are with me

I float in so much space
With the stars and meteors
In the darkness we have so much light
In our hearts in this journey we have so much joy

RIC S. BASTASA
already Taken

No one is ever taken
Since no one is ever given

Life lives and thrives upon itself
And death dies upon its shift

In love no one is taken
Everything is simply freely given

I love so much and so many more
Yet I was never really taken

I have been given and giving still
Yet I am whole and always full

RIC S. BASTASA
.can’t Transfer To The Other Side

I am broken, scattered
Can’t simply transfer to the other side
Where more than half of me
Is already there
Less is here
But I cannot really go there
There is not much air.

I am here,
Lonely but alive

RIC S. BASTASA
.facing This Wall

I see this face
My face
I like it
it is still my face as it was
When I first saw it

No regrets
Time has been true to me
Despite
I can tell the loss and gains
I can hold them all again
Somehow
Nosedive and eyeblink
Tongue curling
To my teeth
Greet the day without misgivings
Everything is alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
.i Like The Sound Of Violin

Sharp and probing
Pricking like needles
My heart is numb and painful
Acupuncture violin
Pricking my heart my soul

I become lost too unbecoming
My defined peace
It is here in settled absences
Nothing fills it

Now it must be something coming new
Filling pricking needles of violins
Make me live make me pain some more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ja Sam Tek Danas Ovo Otvorila

, taman mi je pasalo vidjet ovu ljepotu i sklad nakon sivila kojim me ispunil kineski film kojeg sam gledala ovaj vikend 'Zvijezda koja nedostaje '...putovanje kroz unutrašnjost Kine koje mi je totalno ubilo volju da idem to ikad vidjeti...prašina, prljavština, bijeda....jedina ziva boja u cijelom filmu su crveni šljemovi radnika u &amp;#269; eli&amp;#263; ani: D...no, ono po &amp;#263; emu ga zelim pamtiti je..... 'Kinezi te prvo sruše a onda ti pomognu da ustaneš'

Kinezi jesu gadni, jako su krvolo&amp;#269; ni i zivot ne zna&amp;#269; i puno. al imaju jaku reakciju na to, Lao-Tsea, sli&amp;#269; no kak i Japanci imaju Zen kak reakciju na njihov gadni zivot. Japanci su kak Niemci, sam kaj su Niemci ostali bez te reakcije ljudskosti, bez profinjesti Zena.
Isto tak se i Kinezi gadno trude prevladati vse te pese koje tisu&amp;#269; lje&amp;#269; ima kolju i jedu, kroz sakralizaciju svieta oko sebe na vse te vsoje razne na&amp;#269; ine, i ta sakralizacija je jako jaka.

Mene v zadnjej vrieme drzi Nick Drake, imam ta 4 cdeja od njega,3 albuma i 1 demoi i neizdano, i od gda sem nabavl ove kable sam gitara i glas, i malo gudala v pozadini...nevjerojatna svezina neposrednosti.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life In The Islands.....

we easily forget
with one glass
of coconut wine
we have
easily forgotten

what his father
did to all of us

your uncle was
killed in broad
daylight
his body thrown
into the murky river
and was gone

your mother was
robbed
and she roams the
street
screaming
like a mad woman

your brother was
taken
and has since been
not found
listed as another
victim

how easily do
we forget
what he did to us
what cruelty was
there
now his son is
here
smiling
offering a glass of
wine
seeking reconciliation
and we drink with
him
as another found
friend

how easily do we
forget
he was with his father
when your sister
was raped

the houses of our
relatives were burned
by the bodyguards
of his father

how easily do we
forget
how shallow
how small are our brains
how twisted
are our visions

with just a glass of
wine
how easy is it for us
to believe
that things are better now
that our enemies have
changed
and that we ought to
forget and then
move on with our lives....
how twisted!
how shallow!
how poor!

RIC S. BASTASA
.when Love Is Dead

You cut a twig
The leaves wilt
And then you say
Love is dead

I plant the twig
And bury the leaves
I dream of flowers
I wait for days

A bud springs
Then love is alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Snake Pit/
i could have
died
from asphyxiation
but i did not because
of you as
i laugh looking at you
looking for
a dictionary
skimming trying to find
out what i really meant
about the word with an
x on it.
you are fat and proud
and people love you for that
on the other hand
your being dumb and helpless
and on the positive side of it
your being innocent
and guileless
ah, that is it,
not being like them
they will love you for that
for most of them have
turned to snakes, poisonous
and lethal
biting each other in the
snake pit of their
temples.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Air

i got caught in a corner
for quite a time
pondering
why? i glance on all
its side, out and in,
right and left, and
i begin to write what
i have not thought of
for a while, no rabbit
from a black hat, but there
is a white mouse that
my hand has followed suit
like a curiosity which is
always unsatisfied and
being so
i left the corner to regain
what i have lost for hours
the air i
breathe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Promise Me

make me a promise
let us talk about the sunrise
those lively hills
a flock of seagulls
a bloom of bromeliads
winging butterflies
and ripe mangoes

promise me a new day
for us
a fulfilling sunset
fading gold
a lovely evening
a glass of champagne

RIC S. BASTASA
i still wonder
why benjamin was there
how come? where did he
enter?
i know, these eyes,
have been
too deceiving,
these fingers too
daring,
and moving faster
than what i see
there, there
benjamin has entered
the scene
murdering what i
really mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quick And Brief....

i've sown the seed  
on the barren ground  
cracks of rocks and  
desert sand

the joy was so little  
a moment of sprouting  
then death, a quick one  
nothing lingering  
so brief, then gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
in this life
there will be more questions than answers
everything seems to start with a what
followed up with when
and where but the most intriguing of course,
that which is unquenchable
that which demands the intervention of some
divinification
is the.....why?

so it is common: why me? why me?
why this? why did this happen to me?

fly to this world like a bird and gather the leaves
of whys
or just see them
they are like dusts, like sands of the shore, they are like
the particles in space, some meteors that they shoot
some planets unrevealed
some other galaxies unknown to us,

why? why?
it goes back again to why, it is true, this world is filled more
with questions
and the answers are getting less and less credible,
somehow others have given up the quest for answers
drowning in wine
and drugged themselves to this puzzle, this confusion,
this unknowables,

it is true, there must be a reason why,
we demand an explanation for the whys in our lives,
but then think somehow,

who are we to ask why?
we must go back to the basics of what, again for another start.

what are we? who are we?
we are but specks of light in the ocean of space
we are but the pebbles of the great rock
we are but fine granules of sand in the shore of this great universe.

i, think, let us be humble enough
to bow our heads, then look to the skies with awe and wonder,

then wait for a while
till the right when comes, then let us ask, why?

RIC S. BASTASA
a halo
and four wings

angels and demons
a head

you give a wing clipped
dipped
rage,

why do you mistake the rage
of the sea
as her anger?

you sing. it is the singing sea
that sings
when you finally left her,

the rage is yours,
on four wings

the halo fades
and turns into the sun

the sun surrenders
its rays

to the petals of the
china flower

four wings, a halo, an angel
falling

it bears the initials of my name

RIC S. BASTASA
three flowers &amp;#1689; &amp;#1689; &amp;#1689;  
and two worms ~ ~  
and some cloudy complaints&amp;#1691; &amp;#1692; &amp;#1693;

and there you are giving this advice &amp;#8594;

i am worried about the 
three flowers &amp;#1689; &amp;#1689; &amp;#1689;

i need some birds 
to take the two worms 
away from me ~ ~

RIC S. BASTASA
¿puede Hablar Más Despacio?

at the time
of the breaking
and that was
before the falling

of everything glass
between us
i only ask of you to
speak all these
quietly

because i can understand
everything perfectly

most of those that you
did not ever say...

RIC S. BASTASA
“where Do I Go Now? ” He Asks The Young Man

He says ask me young man
Not what places I have gone to

Ask me what place have i
Not gone.

Antarctica.

Now, I have no other place to
Go
Except inside myself,

There is no jet
No cruise
Not even a raft

Inside me, and this will be
Young man
The hardest travel that
I must take,

Alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
• Little Packages

• 'Evil things
• come in
• little packages'

• Buffy, Giles, Xander, Willow, Dawn, Anya and Tara

The little evil things that they do
Are sent in little packages

You receive them and
You do not notice

Two little horns hidden
growing inside
your black thick hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
my mind drifts
in the space of
thoughts
passing by
some trees
i gather thoughts
bunches
of gloss and
refinement,
every morning
i take the pleasure
of putting them
here, lest they
go away, like
fading light
like a voice
suppressed
in silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
1,000,000,000 Periods Per Second

This is one gigahertz
Speaking, listening
Now at 256 gigahertz
With you writing poems
What can be achieved?

To answer my call from
Your ordinary telephone
You need only 5.8 GHz
And 2.4 for wireless phones
And other computers &
In fact other machines

Now at 256 GHz,
What do you feel?

RIC S. BASTASA
1: 21

guess the hour
of my madness

when loneliness
begins to rise
and move

like a smoke
from the
chimney

it is dark and there is
nowhere to go

RIC S. BASTASA
inside my mind
is the moon with you
i am lighted heart
filled with so much
love, desire like
blood rushing through
my veins: sin and life
pleasure and survival
rose buds and fingers
sky and sun, we are
here now, we shall
take most of what
is left our time is
up. Let me stay
like dew to a blade
of this
moment. Let me
be. I was not once
even before. Sin
and life, i must
embrace my own.

then on an early
morning, i shall ask
for another
forgiveness.

RIC S. BASTASA
1: 38 Dawn...

inside the room
divided by the light brown drapes
between me and the window
beyond the steel gates
is the world... it is cold and dark
and there is no one
walking on the road...i peep
and let the cold wind
enter the orifice of
my nostrils...it is cold and dark
and there is no one in this house...
everyone is either asleep
or gone away for good,
their names are listed and
there are some
short biographies...this must
be a little scary
says the listening wall...

it is. Sickness confronts
the eyes of those who want to
write some short notes
of their brief stay
or visit as you want to call it...
Eye to eye, in the most silent
silence, the man in his usual
black robe,
through his hands
speak.

and the world trembles
we want to kneel and ask for more
but nothing
shall be given.... that is a
fact.

RIC S. BASTASA
1: 55 A.M.

the cicadas still sing
that early
in this small town and
everyone is

in fact everything is
so quite that if you
are awake at this hour
unholy as they call it

(but so holy to me
i think)

i can still hear
the voice wanting
to be spoken
deep inside the
linings of my
esophagus

there is this mummy
of the sarcophagus
wanting to be
reborn

honestly the name
still slips
in my tongue

perhaps this could
be the poem
about cicadas
and their songs

or the sound of
quiet
the murmur
of peace
long gone
now

trembling at the
tip of my lips

who knows?
if at a little stare
on the wall
soon i shall understand
and decipher
what slime is there
that wants to speak
inside my
throat
but still wanting to
be swallowed
honestly

RIC S. BASTASA
what i am

time erases from time to time
what i write
the letters fade and what
comes back to my mind
is the blankness
of the wall

i have no complain about
the ways of this
eraser
in fact
that is the way how i want
myself to be

fresh to the waking up
of all hours
new to every eyes
horizons stretching
without end
roads flying roads
birds with four
to eight wings

RIC S. BASTASA
10 Minutes More

10 minutes more to go
please say 'i love you so'
then i will repay you

RIC S. BASTASA
10: 29 P.M.

between us
are these glass window panes
dusty and
misty combined

i see a body
above it profuse light
it is facing me
as i write
my story and this
poem

i know there is no one
living in this house
all are in the monotony
of abandon

i am not afraid of you
another sculpted space
i call it
emptiness still
unaccepted

he calls himself
ghost
but i do not really mind
i too
have unfinished business
and by all means
i must finish it
now....

RIC S. BASTASA
i've read your poem.
had a hard time understanding it.
i feel like wasting my time.
perhaps i am too shallow
i do not have your depth.
you are deep and i do not
have those gears and
other props
or perhaps i am just too
lazy to jump into your
water
or perhaps i just want to
have fun
reading

the words you use are
bellicose, too much
blood in there, the scenes
are deadly
so many are drowning,
and no help is coming

getting to know you
is cumbersome
you are trying to confuse
my state of hibernation
am but a simple
catfish frozen in mud
it is drought time here
and everybody is
leaving

i do not have your feet
i have my own fins
captured in suspension
i feel like a block of
soil, pushed and
abandoned
i may envy you but
i do not understand why

you are new, and original
i am old and wobbled
i am frozen in my own
hibernating world of
a block of soil, solidified
petrified, but in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
imagine a face
a silhouette of nose and eyelashes and forehead
black shadow against the afternoon sun
dark orange turning into
black
a journey towards a night

all the birds in your hair have gone
they are all home now
in the place that you want to remember
but you
just can't

because the word departure which was once too painful
has been erased in the glossary of your memories

but you remember
as always home

arms, and breasts and the silence of
togetherness
because you are home now and it is as always
sweet and
peaceful

RIC S. BASTASA
another insomniac song
from a hard bone

wooing the softness
of your lightness

feather floating
on the winds of chances

let me sit and watch
when your feather
finally lands
on my lap

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this sickness that compels me to write. There is this nausea that makes me capture the words. There is this pain that opens me up to images all images that soon appear like shadows of birds on the side of a hill above the full moon.

there is this void that behaves like a big mouth but cannot speak. there is this silence that dignifies my loneliness.

It is like an old woman waiting for no one by the stairs facing the dusty road in an old country.

i have these eyes that look for nothing like a dead man staring without feeling what lies there in front of those who scrutinize an event.

there is this trembling of the flesh in the arms while facing the monitor inside a closed room.

there is this peace in exhaustion. there is this knowledge of a dead end and there are no cars there. No doors but only walls.

der is this walk without a definite direction. there is this purpose that you cannot describe.

there are lots of lost meanings that slip from our tongues and which we cannot utter.

there is this game of boredom where we are all losers. there is this acceptance without question because there is nothing worth asking anymore.

after all these years when we age and we do not care.
you brag that life is not complicated
everything is simple

like, baring yourself, nothing hidden,
speaking, shying away from silence
because silence is strange
it is not named specifically like
a goat with horns, a bird with claws
a fish with fins,

you speak your mind,
a square is a square
a spade is a spade
not a thing is the same,
everything unique
simplify, simplify, is that a hard
thing to do? i say it is not.

you grow, you experience pain,
you shed tears on people they do not really
consider important

time and pressure are two twins now
you like to die, you once tell me
as candid as tomorrow you will take your like away

like jumping from the 12th floor or
simply, as you put, withholding breath
or pulling the trigger
'bang!' is that complicated? i say it is not
since life, your life, is always your hands

there is meaning to all these, i tell you,
you look for it like standing by and looking at the faces of people
who suffer like us,

then life unfolds with so many petals,
it becomes a tree with so many rings worn inside its body
so many twigs, branching out as though it is following an edict

you follow the veins of a dried leaf
or listen to the stories of the child
you begin to count the stars in the dark skies
or lull yourself with the eternal numbers that the waves of the sea
are carrying to the shore

endless, moon to moon, sun to sun, horizons that tire your eyes
deserts that make you feel the thirst
numerous deaths, births and rebirths of thoughts and
memories of windchimes

it is now simple to accept, sometimes one cannot tell a person that
you love and that your love is something that you cannot really grasp
beyond speech,
beyond hold,
beyond feeling, it is what you see at noon when you stare at the sun

hurting, you cannot attack that long,
lest you get blinded by so much light

now i know how is it to write to someone and you try hard that you cannot be
understood
because

life is not simple, and saying i love you is not just to utter the word and then
everything turns to be alright

it is more than that
honestly, until now, i cannot say it, or if i say it, until now i have never
understood it

do not attempt to understand what i too have not understood
it is like this: when i tell you that i love you, everything in me vanishes
day turns to night, and i will be lost forever
denying what i am
destroying what i have built from the beginning

my love is a nihilist.
you, as always, can be my sun, without you
feeling it.
When he was insulted, he returned no insult

some questions i will ask for you today,

did you show your left cheek when your right was slapped?
did you walk another extra mile when you were ordered to
walk the required mile?
did you take his eye because your eye was taken away?
did you take his teeth because your teeth were removed by him?

did you insult him because he insulted you?
did you fight him because he started the fight himself?

did he oppress you and you remained silent?
did he steal from you and you tell the police that you freely gave the
stolen thing from you to him?

please answer me.

Did it now occur to you that it is hard to be a christian?

please answer me.

RIC S. BASTASA
101

Do you remember?

The river where we bathed
As children
Innocent in our nudity
The fish we caught
The fire we made
When we all ate together
As friends as neighbors
So close like bees in the hive.

RIC S. BASTASA
beauty

i agree what you say about inner beauty

the windows of your soul
through your eyes
to the secret chambers of your heart
holiness and peace
glow like burning fire in your head
as you evoke your presence

forgive me, but i am more tempted
as usual
to the external
the flesh that wraps your bones
the curves that travel around your body
the warmth of your arms
the softness of your touch
your lips
and breasts your thighs and groins
i see them more now as i kiss you

i am young. so young to see to want these all.
i do not bother about your soul

RIC S. BASTASA
To rise from where I fall

Subdued, I lost, I have no choice
But to surrender my own voice

Now I have to go to places
Missing your embraces

I am but just a shadow
In a nook without tomorrow

I walk under the rain
Where I am wet & drained

And cold in the night
In darkness I lose my sight

This is the time of losing
In his arms you are smiling

And you will not be with me
With him you can only be

I understand perfectly what losing is
you are not mine, you are all his

This is not the end however,
This is just another kind of fever

I must go out from this wall.
I must rise from where I fall

RIC S. BASTASA
This is the house of my father
The termites eat every wall
The beams fall
And the roofs shatter
And the ceiling splits with the gutter

I come back today to remember
The past
And here I am to reconstruct better
The future i must

The present
Shall be this condiment this complement

Now, these hands shall be the hammer
To every nail in the mind of this dreamer

This house shall stand again
Proud against the wind & rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
105

Waiting

I wait for the cogon door
To lay your name on the floor

After a time you transform into a cloud
wearing that crimson shroud

you like to gleam
Like my new dream

Regally dressed in my sleep
As I fathom words so deep

RIC S. BASTASA
the celebration

In the morning we shall find ourselves
Many of us
Babies in slow swinging cradles
Still drunk of the night’s lullaby

We shall find out
Waking with poems in our palms
We shall chant together

The sun has come
In the manner of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
at dawn break

i open the windows on the rear
pale lights from the eastern side of the window pane enter

i stretch my arms and hands
rub my eyes like sands
the cock has crowed
the church bells toll, i bow

it is the paleness of light, the color of sadness
landing slowly like a tiny wind in my emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
young poetess, ignis fatuus

come with me, come with me
we shall be silent under a sky full of stars

come with me come with me
and be so so silent like me

we will be seeing a dark sky full of stars
we shall be silent without their wars

we will only be the wisps of the winds
whispering whims and hymns

RIC S. BASTASA
a view of this place that i remember

the back space of this house
used to be a green ricefield
and there was that tall mango tree
where i used to sit underneath
shading me from the scourging sun
i always remember
the view
of the carabaos grazing
with white herons standing on their back
and blue cottony clouds drifting above

the place is now cemented
with a wall as high as three men added-up
high buildings rise from here
reaching the cottony clouds out there

and the river is no longer a hype
but a big silent hard steel pipe.

RIC S. BASTASA
we keep on untangling
the vines
that choke us
each hand has
no place on the
secrecy of old time's
breast

it is the season of
freedom
freedom from roots
and barks
tasting the bitterness
of what this self
has inflicted upon
its flesh

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a coat
that covers a seed

it is thick
and dry and the seed is
safe inside it

the seasons are
inviting
one time, there is so much
rain

and it would have been a good time
to throw the seed and let
it grow

but you have decided not to

it is not the kind of seed that they know
by tradition

it did not come from their
own familiar farms established with
strict adherence to rules
and penalties

you keep the seed as a symbol of
your
eternal restraint

you are a good man
and they think of you and will always do
until you die

the seed is in your body
swallowed
like your pride in self-denial

because you will always be a good man
until they die.

RIC S. BASTASA
inside our pockets
is the privacy of our own stones

outside our faces are the familiarities of
our traditions

when we party
we say the same words actually
we fear
other people's anger
we cannot afford to disappoint the
visitors of our
common faith

the usual mess will be there
part of the party you know
sometimes we let go
we let loose what is too tight in our necks
we spit what is bitter outside the windows of our
tongues

there is always time for restraint in a few glasses of
alcohol
there is a time to make our mouths shut up
tying our tongues like ropes on
the railings of the house
of civility

personally i do not like this party where we become
decent fools
choosing the words
afraid of the truth
always fearing that we should have broken some rules
of engagements

most of the time we deny what our hearts are looking for
cold hands hold another set of cold hands
empty heads bang with other empty heads
on hollow sounds of flattery

one time i left the room where the party is going on
it is 11: 10 in the evening and it has become too intolerable

i need to be alone in order to be free
i imagine you and i love this atonement when you still do not mind
how i feel

i am complicating it so much restraint
because even if i am now outside everybody
i still retain
the decency of what is right and wrong which i always
carry around.

RIC S. BASTASA
now that i have fed all the mosquitoes
i think, i must
go to sleep, and this is the last poem
for all the female mosquitoes
that i have
loved before
and still love
tonight

all of them
have sucked
my skin
and all of them
are now
silent

contented perhaps
and so happy
that there is still
a man
as generous
and understanding
as i

on said gesture
i can now
have my sound
sleep

good night, my darlings
may you give
birth
to a thousand baby mosquitoes
tomorrow
morning

may all of you
spread my genes
manyfold
like the sands
in the sahara desert

RIC S. BASTASA
when i tell you that i have loved you since i first saw you,
i know what you will give me: a quizzical look, a sense of disbelief,
it will be milder, but i expect greater than that: that shock in war,
that vomit in gluttony, that feeling of having a snake in your bed,
i must have overate this, but i know what consequences are there:
like a mother you will cut an umbilical cord that connects me to you,
i am that helpless premature baby inside your womb,
i will die and you will like seeing that slow death like a boa
constricting my body,

i can imagine the horror of the Vietnam war, the massacre of
innocent lives, blood is the river, bodies rotting on the banks,
worms everywhere, a no man's island,

you will laugh, and you will see the Frankenstein in me loving
screws and bolts, and junks and rusts and useless parts

i always look at myself in the mirror of your eyes, i see that i am
a gentle moon traversing the placid lake of our junctures,

i do not wish to disturb the peace between our two countries,
i remain a diplomat in my own chosen field of silence.

soft winds blowing the reeds upon the Nile
shadows of pyramids fading with the sun and now embracing the golden
like of the moon
a Bedouin riding on his camel still dreaming of a home
of oasis in the desert of his
unrequited love, an emptiness unfilled, a self unrealized
agonizing in the silence of the tumor
that keeps growing inside his head

do not nod, i perfectly understand why it should be this way.

RIC S. BASTASA
11: 37 A.M.

autumn
from the Four Seasons

the violins are
crying like mourning women
all for the honor of the death
of a revolutionary

who loved them all equally
and gave them
all the children that they all
deserve

after the funeral the women
talk
and they all agree that all
in the name of love
is forgiven

that betrayal and deceit
only exist in war
that it is love
that can only thrive
in their lust
and passion that what they remember most of all is only

the kiss
lingering still in their tongues and throats and
parting teeth

RIC S. BASTASA
11: 53 In The Evening

goodnight to you my blue butterfly
i have to go now
back to my leafy friends in the mountains

now that you are still angry at me
i, this red dragonfly
have to take my hiding in the forest
i shall pass my night there
in the middle of exotic orchids
with all my lovely, wild flowers

goodnight to you my blue butterfly

i shall not say 'i love you' anymore
you don't believe me, - am i a boar?

RIC S. BASTASA
because i cannot
sleep
does not mean
that i think of
you

there is more about me
and it goes beyond
you

or even us

it is the nausea of
selfishness
that makes my eyes
open
till dawn

the nausea of
an existence that is folded
many times

until such time
that there is no possibility to
find
where the centerfold
is

until such time that
what you face is an eternal wall
as you grope
for an infinite edge

there are no more reasons
and the waking
continues

on and on and on
and on

on and one and on and on

no numbers
no images
no measure
no beat

RIC S. BASTASA
my secret love

I look at you again today for the same
Question, this boring repetition,

Why do I really love you?
(And why can’t you love me?)

Your face is beautiful
I make glimpses; your arms tickle me,
To the bone, your hair makes me shake,
Your lips make my heart beat,
Your eyes, they make me melt
Your nose makes me gosh

The way you walk makes me hungry
For love tonight,
And then you look at me
I shy away, this cannot be

Why do I love you?
(How can I ever tell you?)

I have not. I cannot.
I am crazy. I am mute. I am patient.
I am angry. But I will be always silent
In loving you,

Shall I call it forever? .....Cool.
(You will never know, this fool)

RIC S. BASTASA
The useless poem

He knows that his poetry
Is a useless endeavor
As you put it,
There is no money for a poet,
Not even fame when he is alive
Or even dead, perhaps for some,
Whose lines are judged for greatness

His poetry is nothing but a way of laundering
His emotions,
Not even read
Nobody really cared
How many nights did he spend to make a poem?
His heart bleeds
For more pain, his stomach acidifies for more
Harmful corrosive liquids rising to his brain
Through all his intestines and veins

And he goes groggy
Nauseous,
Till dawn breaks he makes his lines
Like a fool
He wants to stop and put an end to everything
He is suffering
He knows the end

Cannot refer to this poem
But to his life
He ends it
His poetry may live on some pages
But (again) not even read because nobody

Nobody really cared

Perhaps someday when another useless poet
Comes accidentally along
Surfing
Or
Writes the same useless
Lines like the way he wrote his
By a slim chance
He shall then
Be read for once
Through this poem

Again
And again
Because in fact
There are many of them
More than you will expect
Rereading the useless poems
Still bleeding asking for care and even forgiveness

(The vice of asking for attention
The uselessness of recognition)

Another one reads it this time
It is, I will not mind, You

RIC S. BASTASA
I used to like gardens, putting flowers on the row,
Tending the soil, cutting the grass,
Removing the weeds,
Pruning the lush greenery of trees
And making the flor-de-luna vines
Create a certain impression
Of a landscape,
A certain motif
A theme of gladness
Something to cherish

I take a good look around my
Little garden
And then I would sit under the shade of flowering champaca trees throwing
fragrance
Sprinkling perfume
The neighbors say that the scent of ylang-ylang even reaches their houses
And the white sampaguitas so exuding
I used to dirty my hands putting soil on the flower pots
Designing landscapes of love
And patience, curves and hills,
And tend to all the colors mixing in space,

I used to

I am telling you I stopped
When I married,
My wife comes to my garden
And rearranges everything
She puts what she wants
And pulls what she
Thinks repels her
She cuts the flowers
Puts them on the vase
And uproots some species
That I love
And soon the garden has not become mine
Crowded, and strange
And what used to be my little garden
Green Bermuda grass and patterns
Red Anthuriums heart shaped
Pink Dahlias praying to the sun
Orange Gumamelas dancing in the wind
And yellow dancing ladies beaming with pride
Olive Palms waiving to passers by with all cheers
Violets so assuming
White lilies in pure dignities
Lotuses in meditation moods
Husky Cactuses confident with thorns
Finger Ferns so fine and cool

My garden
Now is a forest
The wanton chaos
My garden is gone
All the patterns changed
Drastically

And she asks me
She asks me
Why I don’t tend the garden anymore
She asks me
If something is wrong
If everything has gone wrong
She asks me if I still love my garden
She asks me if I can begin planting some seeds again

She asks me if I still love her,

AND THIS IS HOW I PRUNED IT:

I like gardens
I don’t tend the garden anymore
I still love her,
She is the only one that moves now
Her soundless feet keen on the floor
Her silence seeps
In empty corners where all the sorrows sleep

She dances in the grace of afternoon petals falling off
Her cold breath hovers
In the roofs that vigil the death of the noisy crowd

A loner
A curious clone of a black ghost
She visits abandoned rooms
And cracks stories concealed by the muted angers

She drops a secret like a feather
Floating and I though awake
Throughout her wakings and walk-ins
Could not recall having caught one
In such slowness
What she really says amidst the silence
Or meant in all these dark passages

The mirror on the wall stares
And glares at me with anger
One must have just died
The killer fled
Hidden by her black capes
Another secret I supposed
And though I thought
I knew

She had already flown away
Like a black bird into the night

I want to make some rains for her
Or offer her a lace of my tears
But by then another morning has come

Gently touching me
With flowers
And dove on my palms.

RIC S. BASTASA
from a distance
misery is nothing but rectangles
and squares
and just even lines, and dots,
and
blotches

or smears of
mental constructs

no wonder
you have successfully
maintained
that fortitude of
detachment

no one feels
what is hazy
no one cries for
a shadow

shadows are
doubts
and haze is
confusion

RIC S. BASTASA
the clown

the black eye of society
underneath the heavy paints
of faces
the teary eye
and the bruises
the gritting teeth
inside a cup
of ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
ESCAPE ROUTES

I've seen yours
you open a door on a page of a book
and you are gone

been there
and i am back

Yours too
there is a door on the cork of a bottle of wine
you open it and there you are
pretending to be lost
in your own hideaway

yours is dangerous
into that door into that labyrinth where
explosives are adornments
of your chosen confidences

and yours too
a crystal and there too is the tiny door
of your chosen freedom
if you come back
everyone becomes strangers
in a new world
of hallucinations

been to dangers to and bubbles
and a little of that crystal world
and i am back

all escapes are always useless
at the end we are caught and those that catch us
always returns us to ourselves

at long last we have no choice
but to be responsible
i am telling you, i am back
and this is what i mean

i am back to the open
wandering again looking to the stars for directions
and still tripping from one stone to another
as if everything is real

there is only one exit
and none of them are those escape routes
which i have mentioned.

RIC S. BASTASA
listening to a child singing

another innocence
preaches
In a sweet song
From tight lips
A song of love
She barely knows
perhaps
Only has the feel of
A world new to her eyes

Such a song
such fantasy
Good for children
Shall cure a little of this
Big wound that
keeps rotting
In poisonous odors
Such pains
that keep pinning
Hearts that curse
almost
Learning all
blasting blasphemy

Such song for us
all living
Every breakfast time
We dread to remember
we
Who are dumped
in a damp
Loveless locomotion

I hear her sing
to a world
That I already
misunderstood
My tired eyes are wanting
of escape-dreams
My dirty feet shiver
for these rough
Foundations

Ah, sweet song yet
only a child-song
Who can stop such
a short swing to eternity?
And forget
everything
everything
everything
... We can do noting for her
and for her song
we can do nothing too
so we just listen
and go back to our
work
work
work
and
work again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your escapades and your having to wear red

So you have gone to Burma
Blending with the natives in the jungle there
You trembled in East Timor
Afraid that you cannot return home
You were like a louse
Hiding in the eye of the storm
In the middle of their war
In your escapades

Shocks!

And all the rest were also shocked
Mr. Takahashi
Has become your new name
While you bade goodbye
To the French journalist
At the airport
If the plane somehow crashes
Your name on the list is
Takahashi

“it is no longer funny” you said

Now you are wearing red
Your way of supporting
The oppressed monks of Burma
Who were tied on the posts
In Rangoon
And gunned by the soldiers there
Balding themselves
Pretending to be monks

And some were cremated
Alive

And you quipped
“Hello, what I am doing
Is both a political and
Fashion statement”
A joke and
Something serious
Like you and i
Just like chatting
Could be true
Could be false
I have no trust
What if the person beside me
Is only faking
Cheating me
What if what he said
Were all lies
We are just playing games
Hide and seek
Catching flies because
Everything is merely
To cover
Boredom

Sandwich fillings
Closing and opening
This lust
Close open
Close open
A baby’s game
Could be also because of missing the
Feeling of having to love again
Returning to the past
The shells long ago broken
Near the white thighs of the
Sea..

“Crazy”
“Fool”

That is actually what life is all about
True and false
Playful
Fate

Sometimes we travel to far places
East Timor, Burma, china, united states of America even the sierra madre, the malindang mountains

Got urinated by a tarsier
Got pecked by a monkey-eating eagle
The white cobra spat on me>

I have always flown away
On a plane
Always riding on a bus
On train, fast crafts, chopper and even
On a submarine then take the pick-up
On a pedicab on a motorcycle
Went down got on my worn-out sneakers
Walk again for hours and hours
Always crossing rivers
Eight or the ninth crossing the same river
Winding on the same mountain and the same forest and valleys
Then again crossing the same river
Sometimes too shallow on my heel then deeper up to my neck and chin and
sometimes I have to swim
On the murky river and trip on big boulders
Walk, swim, and walk,
Trek again on the footpaths under the cogon grasses
Climb the cliffs
Take narrowing footpaths
Sharp stones
And then comes the muddy paths
Places which had much rain
And get flooded
Because of the rain
But there is another rain
I tell you
The rain of bullets
The rain of screams
For those who died here
Rain of sighs
Rain of cries of brains
I have seen much of this sort
Of rain
Shouting, crying, running, hiding,
Catch, hold, squat, dropp to the ground,
Jump, fall, run, catch, run,
Tie, beat, tie, and beat,
Slap, questions
There are no answers
Threat, ask, threat,
Convince,
Hit, box,
Wounds, bruises,
Inflamed, blood,
The wide expanse and the deepening depths
Of silence
Diffusing
All walked away
They left, they journeyed
And what was left on the river
Was the sound of a crying child
Looking for mother and father
And his three siblings

The wind caressed the leaves of the ipil-ipil
Stained by blood
Sticking
And diffusing on the roots
The Nipa huts
Are dead
Muted by all the sounds of pain
A while ago its doors
Were kicked and forced open
And there were holes on its windows
Where the bullets went through
With sparks

I have seen many of those who cried in my journeys
The cry of the widow sounding like cows bridled
Cries of children sounding like goats caught by their own rope
The cry of the beautiful maiden
Tears falling on her cheeks absorbed by her long and thick black hair
Sometimes with the many cries I heard and saw
The constancy and the frequency
Seemingly endless

And other ambiances or funeral senses>

Sometimes sometimes I begin to hear nothing
Sometimes I do not see anymore
Even if I have to face them
I seem to look much farther
And see nothing at all near me
My thoughts have gone to a very far journey
Away from them
Just like you
My thoughts will be traveling far, far away
Away from all these that face me

< I HAVE BECOME NUMB TO ALL THESE
MELODRAMA OF STRATEGIES AND RETALIATION
THIS ENDLESS WAR OF IDEOLOGIES
THESE MEANINGLESS STRUGGLES
ALL THESE
CRAP>

I am now in the faraway jungles of Burma
In East Timor, in the United States of America
I always have this dream
I have always traveled in this dream

I have to journey towards myself
I have to get inside my own brain
And I ask

For everything, for the places I have gone,
Have I gone to myself?
Have I ever gone to myself?
Where is this place?
Where is this going to be?
What ride will I take?
Going towards myself?

Hey pedicab driver,
Pedal me, take me
Towards myself
Please take me there
And dropp me by.

AND so in wearing red
And for those, those which you want to do and say
And the other thousand things you want done
Surely, There are, surely, still many of them
That my fingers cannot count and the other toes included

I will see you and your dreams
And your hopes
A face complete with a nose, a mouth,
Eyelids and ears
Cheeks and lashes &
Hair

I HAVE UNDERSTOOD NOTHING
I AM SEEING FARAWAY THINGS
YET I HAVE NOT SEEN ANYTHING
I HAVE TRAVELED FAR
YET I HAVE NOT ARRIVED ANYWHERE

These are what I have cried for
The cries
I have heard
More horrible than the cries
I heard on that river
On that river
Where my friends were gunned
And killed
Worst

WORST THAN THE SOUND OF THE SHOVELS
THAT DUG THE SHALLOW GRAVES
For ALL OF THEM
THE SOUND MUCH LOUDER
_THAN THE BULLETSTM THAT RIPPED
THEIR HEARTS
THAT TORE THEIR CHEEKS
THAT PENETRATED THEIR SKINS AND FLESH

Had the chance to bite
Because mother and father
Had kept watch
Throughout the night>

This is my cry
Loud cry
Loud crying
Tears flooding from my eyes
Like the flood from the mountains
Where the tornado fell
But in that thunderous
Loud sound
Nonetheless

It is only I
Who heard it

This is
This is
This the cry
Of myself
I am
I am the only
It is only me
Mine alone
I am the only one hearing it.

RIC S. BASTASA
the sounds of my day

it is four o' clock in the morning

this computers hums the loudest
the dogs howl on the road seeing strangers pass that early
i can hear the winds of dawn break
the engine of the bus
on the highway going to faraway Zambezi
the first trip i suppose

the clock is ticking
the door is clicking

some footsteps
on the road going away from me

they are all
sounds of departure

RIC S. BASTASA
mozart overture

this is quite different from
a trance
the music that curled in my sleep
on that soft blue sofa
foam, cotton, kapok softness
on my head some notes of
a lullaby
some notes getting into
my ears and my nostrils
a deep sleep
inhaling

this overture is quite different
it is the rising from this deep sleep of
kapok,
foamy softness

i rise and
stretch my hands to the ceiling

i wake up and
i hear
the notes come again like
dripping morning rain
from the nipa roof
falling on
some white pebbles
on my pavement

like my tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Death

i

The wake up call in the morning
Telling you
It is time to go

ii

The taxi driver taking you to the airport
Early morning
Without any conversation
To keep the trip alive

iii

The pilot that you cannot see
In the cockpit
Taking you to your destination

iv

Then another story shall be told
That is the surprise
And you cannot help it
So just take your seat
Relax and sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
11thousandth...

i vow my head
to myself and put laurels to my head
and clap my hands
to honor me...

no one offers and no
one dares.

one must understand perfectly
the lonely journey
the little stop on the 11thousandth

poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
what appears is what it is
that is how simple it is
and how beautiful can it be

a petal of a flower is nothing
but a petal of a flower
falling to the ground on a
windless day
caused by no other than
this pull of gravity

we watch a world unfolding
we only use words because there is a need to write
what beautiful thing we have seen

but there is more to the simplicity of all these things
those that we have seen and felt and
cannot completely tell you
even in the most simple words of our poetry

the experience of beauty is so personal
like how i experience the poetry of the heart
it is like this, no, it is like this... words fail now

(........)

RIC S. BASTASA
12 Midnight

Now the master sleeps
Leaving you some of his poems
Now it is midnight
Now the master has to sleep
Take care yourselves
Take care of his poems
They are now yours,
All his disciples
The master sleeps.

Now, see, how the master breathes
Listen to the rhythm of his sighs
Some poems are coming out from
His nostrils some poems are coming out
From his mouth and ears

The master poet is asleep
Even in dreams he weaves some images
Dreamy, surreal, ephemeral, his sleep
Has rhyme & rhythm, he is a soul breathing

RIC S. BASTASA
i am
Aquarius

the dawning
of a
new world

i am
water ever flowing

i believe
in

a world
without end

amen

RIC S. BASTASA
12: 11 Noon (Office Break)

three cases disposed
and a chat of a friend from Bohol is finished

it has been a very busy morning
more files are coming

i composed this poem and posted it
just to mark a moment

everything is welcome here
the poetic, the non-poetic and the a-poetic

publication is free
and life after this goes on as usual as yesterday

you are afraid that soon a writer's block sets in
because you expect more from you

we are but witnesses and we write what we have seen
and felt

in fact, as you can see, when we begin to talk to ourselves
when everyone left at this hour

you will realize
there is even no audience to speak of

and that comforts us once again
that when no one is reading or watching
the dance as though it is your last
sing as though
no one likes to listen
live life
the way life wants itself to be lived

in such a short moment
let there be no rules, let every line be free
let there be only you
in this office break, and say to yourself
now i am king and now
this is my universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
the last drop,
the tongue crawls and licks
the reddish mound
living its life to the
last drop, deliciously
taking in
what this beating life
has to offer, this last drop
still the best,
in sleep still dream
the last drop, the last
of the moaning drop,
an ode to
the delicious offering
of the pink mound,
glistening dew
this rose of a woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
at this hour the sound of the
electric fan is at its loudest
everything has surrendered to the
much needed silence
it is the reign of the dark
and there is no wind and the dog is fast asleep
i am the new spectator and i speak inside myself
like a stranger asking so many questions
what is this place? why is it going deeper?
where have all the people gone?
why are the trees shedding off all its leaves?
it boils down to who i am
and what i am doing at this very late hour
i watch a scene
i pay attention to the flashes of shapes and colors
there is no scent
there is no flavor
the sound of the fan screams
i am so patient and i still listen
to keep myself preoccupied
i keep on talking but i know for sure
that at this hour
no one listens

RIC S. BASTASA
The theory and remedy

Time in a billion years after
Shall cease
And everything grinds to a halt,

Do you not feel the distant stars
Moving faster away from you?

Things move away rapidly
Stars explode
On the fringes of this universe
Shooting through space

Jump then to another
Universe
Before ours gets used up

The luxury of worrying
About our age

Shall now dissipate
On a rundown universe

At any rate why
Worry? I do not intend
to go 60
33 was just perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
the fisherman and his wife

she waits on the shore
while he goes to the sea

the full moon comes
the seagulls fly on the horizon

he arrives and hands her
a basket of fish
with a follow-up kiss
then he whistles
as he ties his boat
to the coconut tree

then they both go home
hand in hand together

RIC S. BASTASA
simplicity

before a table
a cup of rice and
few pieces of fish

you put your knee
near your mouth
as you mold
sticky white rice
with your bare hands

you open your mouth
and swallow what
you have in order
to live.

(shall i say
poverty?)

RIC S. BASTASA
when a star falls

when you said that a star falls in your home
i beg
to be clarified that you are just in any manner
speaking
poetically

otherwise
in plain, simple understandable language
what you are speaking
will mean a catastrophe
that will not just be in any way particular but in the gross sense
a universal explosion not just of your house
or home
but of this rotten world where you and i both live.

RIC S. BASTASA
after making love

After making love
We split
Our bodies
Into
Perfect halves
We hold hands
Kiss
Then close
Our eyes

We dream
Something
Very peaceful
Everything
Is so calm
So perfectly
Quiet.

We hear
The footprints
Of ants
Journeying
On the ceiling,

Dreamy
Red ants
On chocolate
& bread
Crumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
dancing in the rain

Let the children dance
In the rain
They are free!
Let them run on the
Green grass in the rain
They are free!
Let us hear their sounds
Of excitement
They are free!
Let us see them drink
Raindrops
They are free!
Their shoulders caressed
By rain dropping from
Roof tops to their toes
Let us see them
Play in the rain and in the
Mud
Let them get dirty
Let them be washed by the rain again
They are free!

Don’t you see we are all
These children dancing
In the rain?

We are free!

RIC S. BASTASA
izza on a merry-go-round

izza is my my niece
she rides on a merry-go-round
at the carnival
today

before riding it
however
she raises her eyebrow
puzzled
whether to ride
or not to ride
thinking that
if all these horses
run in circles
it will not
be arriving at any place
pointless
futile

on the other hand
all the other cousins
her age
are riding
and she too must ride it
for fifteen minutes

i see
she is enjoying every minute
of the ride
she finally decides to
mount herself
like the rest
waiving her hand
to her mother
taking pictures
on her first ride
on the merry go round
when it ends
she dismounts
at last

i ask her
how does it feel
to ride
in circles

she says
'it is so wonderful'

she claps her hands
and i tell her
'good! '

in silence
i could have told her this,
izza
that is what life is all about
a merry go round
where
we are all children
enjoying our ride
in circles
arriving at nowhere
arriving at no ends
and
your mother is
just like God
taking the pictures
of us waiving
our hands with joy
the joy of life
that joy
on that merry go round
too short
for fifteen minutes......

RIC S. BASTASA
bring back the good old times

cousin, let us bring back the good old times

climbing trees
gathering mangoes on the green hills
bathing nude on light brown rivers
basking in the sun on that big rock
fishing on ponds for mud fish
with earthworms as baits

jumping from tree trunks
to rivers below
riding on carabaos
barefoot on mud holes
swinging on half-fallen coconut trees
chasing dragonflies
making ripples on the blue seas
sailing on wooden boats
paddling on clear days
suns shining full
and moons glowing cool

cousin, let us bring back the old glorious times
we go back
to where we once were children, where our innocence like
incense in the Taoist temples
glows and spreads
a certain pure perfume in
nature back united
to us

we are awed
we now wander....

RIC S. BASTASA
Always dissatisfied with what one has,
The power of nothingness
Engulfs
Whatever you also engulf
Or take as a possession,

What comes into you
Goes out of you and everything
Goes in there only to
Go out later,

There is nothing you can hold,
It is simply meant that way,
The flow
Life, birth, life, death, rebirth,
And then back to Nothingness

Unless you believe
In something Else
To cling to
Like a moss to an old stone
Albeit,

The stone rolls just the same
In an ancient flowing river

Then while here
We do not really know
What happens

There are many stories
That the bird outside us
Cannot yet sing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps to Basho the twins are boring

He himself does not want
To be imitated

Too boring like
A melon cut into half
Mirroring each other

Aren’t these twins
Boring?

Or Basho was just envious
He may be a poet of his age

But his poems never bore
Him a son

Or a mirror of his own face.

RIC S. BASTASA
ONE That tells me
the true color of my soul
intimacies like vine
to a tree
faithfulness like
the sun to the mountain
shining on early mornings
without fail
one that i am at home with
with others are
taken by the storms of
my confusions
and needs
one who takes me for
what i am
identifies with me
during my
crucifixions
one who stands by me
when i sink as a ship
abandoned by
all the rats
and cockroaches
water to my pail
air to my lungs
sugar to my coffee
lemon to my
honey.

RIC S. BASTASA
a possible explanation for the cause of chest pain

The pain is on the left side of my chest
And runs to the other half of my arm
Sometimes it settles in my hand

I think I know why
On the left side is the woman who lives
With me
On the other half of my arm
Is another one

She runs to my hand so I may hold her
For all the days of my life
But I can’t I just can’t,
It is not simply possible

But above all these
The pain lingers at the center
Of my heart
Because I have not offered
My heart
Like a ripe mango, my heart,
To the real one
Who deserves it because
She came first
Before I have known
The meaning of lust
Forever she will last
And the pain is never gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
When you are rejected

When finally you are rejected
Just go, don’t feel busted
Find another place
Be with someone else
Forget the scar
Whatever you are

Go to a place
Where you are an ace
Where you smell the air
Of love everywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
i had no money then
so i dated her along Gomez street
walking under the trees
when the moon was full

we were holding hands
and i thought she was ready
for the kiss

a hopeless romantic
and too afraid
i recited my love poem
instead

the following morning
in one of those university halls
she introduced me to
her new boyfriend

ah, i knew then
how love could die.

RIC S. BASTASA
to reminisce

to reminisce is not to surrender
to the past
and be defeated

it is to indulge
in what you had been with the people
you loved
and who loved you truly in the past

they are the everlasting flowers
from Baguio
that you put in your altar

to make your prayers warmer
so that the morning in its coldness
may also be delighted

RIC S. BASTASA
when you read a poem do not expect too much

when you read a poem do not expect too much
from every word

my words too falter and fall short
of strength like the runner who always wins his sprint
and now in his worst state
mourns for his knee
which is broken

my images too wilt like some red roses that
a lover offered once to his true love
but now deserted
and looks at them in the state of dryness

when you read this poem do not therefore expect too much
this is just a sigh
looking for an opening in the crevices of an understanding heart

this poem is just a mirror and you will be the face who must
give your smile
the light from the window shall provide the glimmer

RIC S. BASTASA
i will try to write a poem like Li Po
i will write the poem like Li Po
a poem that does not need an axe
to break a coconut to eat the meat
it will just need your soft hands
to cut half the water apple *
and so easily you will hand it to your mouth
to quench your thirst & savor its watery flavor
the seeds are not even necessary
to be kept
you simply throw them away
for the next season of summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
i know you live a very simple life
i know my friend that
you live a very simple life out there
waking up in the morning
working in the office
buying food in the market
watch tv
sleep early at night
wake up early again
listen to the morning news
a visit in the chapel
work in the office again
a chat with friends
a little drink of cali with them
sometimes
and no broken heart to nourish
like a wound that does not heal.

RIC S. BASTASA
diminishing

you do not have to obey the law of diminishing returns
on your material resources
that limit themselves
to their utility & unbreakability

you are not the harsh object of the law
you are human
and miracles are made & meant
for you

and so today do not think of your hurt feet & scarred hands
dream of the gossamer wings that will make you fly

your eyes in truth do not only see
they also feel
like your heart that does not only beat for this kind of life

all that is found in you
is not only darkness and dampness
if you only open your heart
hard enough
you have always been designed & meant for what is beyond

the ordinary grasps of humanity
these miracles of dreams & hopes & anticipations

they do not diminish, they add & grow
and they even multiply as many as you wish

RIC S. BASTASA
in friendship
distances
get shortened
and even cut
like stalks of roses
scorn of thorns
only the red
petals and
their sweet scents
stay close in
my heart
still beating
for your
presence

RIC S. BASTASA
to a friend this moment
you ask me if i am
nowhere to be found
why am i nowhere
to be seen,
whether you lose me
whether i am lost
no, my friend,
i am always in this nook
mysterious as i want it
silently watching......
i like staying in this
corner where my
silence is comfortable
like some mildew
allow me to grow.

RIC S. BASTASA
thank you
sweet words
sweeter than chocolates
not even like ice cream
cool to the tongue
sweetest to the heart
that the mind will always
remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
13th Of February

he was born
on that day. her mother's heart was not full.
it was torn apart.
and then he was crying
just like any boy
being born
without a father
beside him.

he grew up to be the most normal man
that you see
except the things he kept inside him.
hate. anger.

one day he had to choose.
to kill those who are responsible
for his extreme silence

or to kill the silence within him
forever.

he had chosen.
and this is all about him.
this poem,

RIC S. BASTASA
for i am empty
my song is as blank as the
desert sand

there are no lyrics yet
except some
memories of us

there is no tune except
the passing of the wind

come beside me
and i will sing it with you

our distance
makes it a song of
despair

your promise
puts the notes in anticipation
like birds
on the telephone wire

you give me rain
on a song drying up
under the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
now i am that chicken
that lays all those fourteen thousand eggs,

this small chicken
has tiny feathers
it cannot fly away but

it cannot lay its butt upon all these
fourteen thousand eggs

it is sad,
these fourteen thousand eggs
shall not hatch

how i wish i can hear the songs of
fourteen thousand chicks

what can their tiny voices be
to God? to those higher skies?

what cant they be?
shall they be angelic like those seraphims and cherubmims?
or shall they be the sounds of wailing
of grieving widows
of dissatisfied workers
of disappointed humanity

of men and women loveless upon the tracks of life
of children abandoned
of marriages in shackles and shattering

soon i shall retrace
what i have said
open the pages of this journal
and find out again
what life is,
if i have lived in
vain.
jumping to the other side of the fence

i always love the thought of jumping
to the other side of the fence
where the grass is greener
and the air is fresher

my heart beats for all the excitement
when i will be there
on the other side with you

i ask if you will walk beside me
when i am there finally
but you did not say a word

i know i am not welcome
but i still dream of going there
for other possibilities of loving
and be loved without any condition

at all, not necessarily you,
i am a fast learner, you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
In love
I lose my reason
I become
An illusion
I can’t figure
Out what to do
Where to go
I will let
Someone
Do the explaining
For me

RIC S. BASTASA
A METAPHOR OF STRENGTH

what i have is strong
but it lifts no one

some will say i have
a mirror

for it reflects light
in the dark under my bed

but i doubt it
when i throw it on the floor

it is never broken
it is still strong and whole

what i have is strong
i know this from the start

RIC S. BASTASA
What you leave
Is an impression
I look at the moon
I look at the river
I look at the sky
Your face is there
My love is forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone in my room
Her face blooms
I see her body
Growing
I feel it smooth
In the fingers
Of my
Imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
Surprising
The grasses
Are flowering
So seldom
Do we
Notice

People
Pass and
Step upon
Them
And they
Just wither

RIC S. BASTASA
All year
Round
I flow like
A shallow
River
This time
It will
Be the last
Of this
Round
I will
Be deep
So there
Will be
No rapids
Just depths
And silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
It is like
I dive in
The depth
Of the sea
I stop breathing
And all
Of them
Are waiting
Time
And tide
Go on
And on

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusk finally falls
Off
I shall look
Up the sky
To see
The full moon
All shining

RIC S. BASTASA
In this lonely island
I will go
Where the hermit
Crabs
Dry their
borrowed shells
As they bathe
Themselves
Under
The sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye,
Like all things
those that are sensational

Humans

I go I pass
Like the dew

On the leaf
That you
View

As pearls
Or
Tears and

Then
Gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
14th February 2011

do not tempt me with
forever,
just hand me
the
here and now

it is enough for
me.
there is no future in
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
THERE is still light
piercing the
blinds,

it settles on the
soft spot
of the pillow

it hits the iris
of my eye

it says there is
a reason for
mornings

for mourning
for sorrow
for wings and buds
for rivers that keep on flowing
for the rain that finally stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
I am sick
And tired
I let go
My dreams
Resting
On the
Cliff
so they
may jump
and kill
themselves

RIC S. BASTASA
If you speak
To me
Your parting
Words
Let it be
Tasteless
Like
The water
From the
Mountain
Spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
The river runs
Cool on my feet
Underneath
I feel
The discomfort
Of pebbles

RIC S. BASTASA
Over the earth
And in the skies
There are
Trapped dusts
And mists
I see clouds
And rainbows
Arching
After the
Rain at the
Foot
Of the hill.

RIC S. BASTASA
154

I will miss you my Friend

On the other hand
I will loathe you
In due time

i like to
Leave you again

It is the end
Of my rainy days

RIC S. BASTASA
The final view
I will not see
It is the end
Of this gossamer
dream

RIC S. BASTASA
The rain dripping from this
Old nipa roof
Wakes me up from
This drunkenness.

RIC S. BASTASA
My companion to this
Last journey

A cicada shell

RIC S. BASTASA
On a summer’s
day
Bright is the
sun
To make this
last journey

RIC S. BASTASA
On the daffodils
The morning dews
Dry out slowly

Now, blow if you will
Humid wind
The daffodils are gone

RIC S. BASTASA
my mind drifts
in the space of
thoughts
passing by
some trees
i gather thoughts
bunches
of gloss and
refinement,
every morning
i take the pleasure
of putting them
here, lest they
go away, like
fading light
like a voice
suppressed
in silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
I leap from
this shallow
River
To the deep
To find out
where I am
really going

RIC S. BASTASA
On the hour of my death
The rice fields are empty
The grasses wilt in summer

RIC S. BASTASA
Riding on the moon
I am bound to the stars
Without any backpack

RIC S. BASTASA
Avoiding me
You get wet
In the rain
Under the tree
At the foot
Of the hill

How I wish
I were the
Rain
The tree
And the foot
Of the hill

RIC S. BASTASA
16373

THE LOTUS IN US

we're different
if you notice it

our roots are not in the soil
but on the water

we float
above the mud

we flower
we drift with the air

we live in peace
that is what they think

RIC S. BASTASA
the night
comes handing
darkness
in Mt. Apo
where the
monkey-eating eagle
cries out
calling
for the rain to come

RIC S. BASTASA
The summer breeze
Rises on the shore
Of Olingan
And those white
And red china roses
That you see
Are they really flowers
Or not?
Or only your
Usual dreams
That fade out
On the beach
When you wake
Up?

RIC S. BASTASA
The red and orange hues
Of sunset
Fade too quickly
As you see
Once all
So beautiful
Then nothing
But darkness
Even with
The stars and
The moon
Just like these
Memories
In my mind
Growing old
Thoughts like rain
Ceaselessly
Dripping

RIC S. BASTASA
On the old trees
The dancing ladies are clinging
On its barks
They are all yellow and blooming
From My heart too
Shall spring forth
Renewed vows & commitments.

RIC S. BASTASA
You may feel
That your life
Is full of sorrow
And sometimes
Unbearable
But you just
Cannot fly away
When you
Feel
Like flying
In any instant
Since you
Are not a bird

I may feel the
Same way
Too
And want
To swim
And slip away
In any instant
To my liking
In the deepest
Sea
But I am
Not a fish

so why
not just
stay and
wait
and see? .

RIC S. BASTASA
This is me,
In a photograph,
The same number of
Senses as you have,
Look at me
With your eyes,
Touch me
& hear me
do not use
your heart yet

this is me again
she tells you
philanderer
lying bastard
unfaithful
you will listen
and you too will speak
about me
touch, retouch,
view, review,
impressions of me
beyond the photograph
what you believe
from what I am
how you perceive
some slides
of me
presented to you

this is me
this is not me
there will be
doubts

and I will die
laughing in
my forest dream
with your dwarfs
but soon
I will stop
What am
I and what I am
Not, what is
True from
What is fake
Finally when
I find
What true
Love is and
What it can
Really do

With my own
Dwarfs now
In my own
Dreams in
My own time

Even without
Your wishes.

RIC S. BASTASA
i guess i am too vain  
(handsome and naughty  
to their tastes  
sweet to their tongues  
accommodating to  
their mouths  
caving in for some  
pungent pleasures)  
it is love that gets inside  
my house  
as i open the door and  
let it in  
too kind, i let love  
undress my coyness  
dinner is ready  
served right above my  
abdomen  
down the most  
wanted  
and demanded part,  
it is me now  
moaning, the sun shining  
inside my chest,  
as soft fingers roll  
like spiders,  
i am patient to love  
and those love-deprived  
all giving to  
their fantasies and adventures  
i am love  
conquered and yet  
all over triumphant  
to the sound  
of the thousand  
Arabian nights  
love belly dancing  
love water to the oasis  
camel to the desert  
Moon above
the sleepy sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
On a summer break
Do not read your law books
It is a chance for you
To the see the moon
In Boracay beach

RIC S. BASTASA
to see loneliness
a mango tree
just one leaf

RIC S. BASTASA
The sounds of jeepneys are gone
The champaca trees bloom
This evening with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bringing home
overripe Durian
I arrive home
full of regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I like to return
To my home
I left years ago
To see the mango trees
Flowering again

RIC S. BASTASA
My restless friend
If only you were here
Seeing the limpid river
Sleeping
On top
Of Malindang Mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
It is a lovely thing to see
In this room
My sun spreading its light
In your dark galaxy

RIC S. BASTASA
177

hopelessness - a coiled
Water hose has forgotten
That it should whoosh

RIC S. BASTASA
Look at your pride
Flaming with bitterness
On the brink of this cliff

RIC S. BASTASA
I will do only what is necessary
i can walk alone
without need of you,

i have a room that i am renting
i lock my door

The night will be long and tense
and awkward
but i have wisely chosen it
and i will be responsible for my silence.

i bleed alright, but it is my own blood.
please, it is none of your business.

i am only doing what fits, what ought to be
Let me pass. Let me sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfulfilled dreams
Become freckled rice
To produce
The foul wine

RIC S. BASTASA
IT is election time
and the powers that be
paves the way to Tabon

gravel is hauled and poured
fitting the wider version of the road

everything is slippery during the rain
the farmer slides and his basket of fruits roll on the hill

after election time
the road shall be what it used to be
no one cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quiet around the aquamarine park
In Clarin
I see dolphins playing
Up to the skies
The nuclear jets are roaring
Towards Gaza
Onward moving

RIC S. BASTASA
181

Looking in the night skies
Alone in the park
I see this monstrous space
Pass by.

RIC S. BASTASA
On the rainy season
I see some tadpoles
On the pond
Near the house
When mother-in-law arrives
I hear all of them croaking

RIC S. BASTASA
I and the internet

Sensitive nerves
Concentrate in
My finger tips

Making sweet sounds
in silence

RIC S. BASTASA
A sad song I whistle in the air
Like a river floating
And then the strong wind comes
My hat flies away

RIC S. BASTASA
A flashlight
I point to the night
Above me
To measure the depth
the distance
Of this darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
Another strong typhoon on the brink
It is asking
Which boat is next to sink?

RIC S. BASTASA
I say two words
She replies with ten
Summer is hot
And bickering
Like a flame

RIC S. BASTASA
A dead dog long buried
And yet-
Some yelps are still heard
Near the doormat
Even without a bee
Stinging
or anybody coming
back home

RIC S. BASTASA
when i get to be an old man
i shall not speak of any regret
about the past that i buried
in the silent city of my ancestors

i carry with me a poem in my heart
as i look forward to the coming of the black horse
that will carry me to the shore
and i shall wait for the boatman
to carry me to another island

my heart is expectant like a child
waiting for mother from the market
like a man in love waiting for his woman
under the trees beside a silvery river
under the moon kissing and knowing
beforehand destined eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The lightning flashes
The thunder roars
I hear old family voices
I see sudden memories

RIC S. BASTASA
The summer is hot
He crosses the river through
Teasing the bridge
With his water buffalo

RIC S. BASTASA
The sky darkens
As clouds slowly
Make the rain
While I wait for you
On a cold wind

RIC S. BASTASA
A poor village
Covered with dust
Then the sound
Of first rain
Comes from
The mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
a child takes a single bite of
Jolibee chicken

she offers what remains
To the dog beside her

RIC S. BASTASA
To death]
On top of my roof
I can not sleep
In the middle of this
Cold night

RIC S. BASTASA
I want to sleep now]

Please switch off
The computer

And stop thinking

About death & poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
1967, March

i looked to the left side to see those
who were watching us
i was sitting on your lap as you focus on
the one taking the picture
it was 1967 when i was barely 5
i did not know then what was the significance
of the taking
i was crying for attention
and no one cared
childish they all complained
why i was there
disturbing the mood of that occasion
when school ends
when parting could have been cheerful

RIC S. BASTASA
The rice planters
Are all muddy
Except their dreams
of rain and songs
of summer loves

RIC S. BASTASA
From the mountain
I will throw this stone
To the nearby river
Try to see if the
River gets murky

RIC S. BASTASA
I can kill
A fly
On the dining table
With all of you
Watching

RIC S. BASTASA
squeezing
what dropp is left
from the mind
it is not blood
nothing like
pus, it is air,
this emptiness
that keeps
giving off
what i have not
seen before,
it is crying to be
let out, so i may
give room for
the unknown,
the mysterious
and glorious,
the x and y,
until there is
meaning, a
solution, a
redemption.

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 20 P.M. Roxas

you are first
if you keep on searching, you will know more than what is necessary for tomorrow

you are the first to know and will tell those who know
to obey the dictates of silence for a while

there is no more argument possible in this
but only that silence that rifts what flesh is found in the bone

do not worry that much, there is no need after all
because i will be next

and i am not telling you
you will not be glad, but you will not be alone anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 21 A.M.

at 2: 21 a.m.
the right hand corner of my computer shows that you are offline
or at least you pretended to be offline
i know you like me you sometimes want to choose being invisible
then another poem speaks another poem is born and it bites it kisses you in such a distant silence that always asks why?
goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are things that do not jibe
round peg to a square hole for instance

birds that dive and fly in the belly of the sea
or fish that swim in the molten lava of the earth

us, for instance, is another thing
we have ceased to be human tired of the power of words in our lips

we should have kissed as often as we signify a love that does not change
but, we are some of these things that do not jibe at last

our dances have become awkward
people are watching and they just couldn't say it honestly that we have to stop

us, scarecrows
not scared but powerless over the vultures that feed on our flesh

over those birds that steal the grains of our youth
over time that is too cruel

us, feeding upon us,
about to puke.

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 26......

Upon an aching heart,
flinging arms, pause of fingers,
someone says
it's time to sigh off.

bye baby,
take care yourself.

be good, avoid evil,
live and let live.

grab the best and
disregard the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
waking up from a dream
this one says, i am making love with my neighbor's wife

i rise from bed and drink a glass of cold water
and then i sigh
it is not true after all and i have not sinned indeed
why such a subconscious train of thought inside the tunnel of
secret desire and where shall this map lead me?

i shiver to this, i sense a snail breaking its own shell
i hear the cracking sound of popcorn
and smell the butter from the kitchen window

my wife wakes up and follows me in the wind screen of
dawn. It is cold she says and she lands on my lap and
kisses me.

there is nothing wrong i tell her.
there is really nothing wrong, i assure myself as i type the last word
for this poem.

love is better in the silent mode.

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 53 A.M.

loudest is the sound of the
cock crowing
though far from this house
of hay

it cannot hear us somehow
on another cock crowing
on your hands
of cotton

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 55 A.M.

at this hour
the exhaust fan of the computer
sounds loudest

second to that
is the murmur of each key
as i press upon
a letter

to make this
waking poem
make
its faintest sound

it is like
the sigh of the pin
dropping
on the carpeted
floor
of an empty room
with doors and
windows
closed.

RIC S. BASTASA
2: 58 A.M.

he has seen
blunt dreams and he
wishes that one may
finally opt for
a change,

he has seen insistent
dreamers
praying
for the realization of their
own deaths

slow deaths,
painful ones that they can
boast before
their suffering gods

somehow he thinks
that this masochism must be
stopped
but no one listens
the blunt dreamers
thrive

multiplied in millions
almost stopping
the earth's capacity for
more revolutions

he hopes somehow
that beyond this global blunting
and lengthening of sorrows
thickening of the veins
of wrong blood flowing
all creatures
the earth included
is sick only for a certain time
trembling in heat
and panicky about syndromes

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
feverish

and then it begins to
auto-heal itself
back to its fighting form
back to serving
those who doubt themselves
and those
who live despite
the aftermath of that
self-destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
2:15 P.M. Roxas

we smile because they tell us to smile
we project what this world must be

or ought to be, but after that last click
we go back to the

beginning when we were going somewhere without a definite direction
when it was raining so hard and we found no shelter

when every part of us, present and future is wet with
anxiety, and there is no sign that

the rain will stop, that the door will open showing us the way
to the fire

no two persons with separate arms and legs will have to stay in one room forever
the feet walk away

the eyes fly
thoughts roam the world and will be glad to know each cloud

of doubt
each sting an education each wound

a seed of growth
we shall soon know this and we give way to our soul

traveling, traveling, until you become so strange as a creature i have not ever
met before

a myth, a story,
and then you smile realizing the truth of being blown by the wind
dusts, yes dusts,

that is what we are
and will always be, into the nothingness of what we have
not ever
thought before
a pen that you just keep
but you have no time using,
an outmoded cell phone
that you are not willing to give up,
a creaky bed, a rusty pin,
a handkerchief with an embroidered
name of your someone special
a old diary, a tiny wild flower
between the pages of your
favorite book, locks of hair,

what do i really need these things for?
ah, memories, rotten memories,
so sweet still.

RIC S. BASTASA
The rain of March suddenly falls
It catches me naked
In Diwan river

RIC S. BASTASA
201

On a very peaceful night
Like this
My neighbor sings again
Her videoke
Is still out of tune

RIC S. BASTASA
On a summer's day
I look at my face
Into the mirror
Finding Grandpa’s
Stricter face

RIC S. BASTASA
From a leafless siniguelas tree
The black crow flies away
Then the swaying ends
As the rain begins to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
So he refuses to talk
He twirls a flower
Instead between
His fingers

Then the other said
I must speak
For words to be
Passed on

Then the heavens
Speak by
Changing the seasons
A hundred more
Are born

He fears
That when the heavens
Speak some more
There will be
No more justice
To the words
Of Men

RIC S. BASTASA
your poem is young

dress it up
with an armor
and a helmet
let it go to the battlefield
and fight its own wars
do not give it tranquility

that is not
its real color

RIC S. BASTASA
Lose your mind
Do not tie your mind
Lose it
Set it free
Do not strain it
Let it go
Alone
It comes back
Wherever
It wills

RIC S. BASTASA
If the poem is really yours

It will come back
Like your cat
Which has run off
Somewhere sometime
It will come back
You are the master
You are his home

RIC S. BASTASA
When you write poetry
Do not be preoccupied
With writing one

The metaphors
Will be confused

And will not settle

With the words
You are choosing

RIC S. BASTASA
of course
he knew too well

He heard Of this path That we all
Must tread]

But he did Not really expect that
He is going To walk

On it Today.

RIC S. BASTASA
There will be rain here
We normally run for shelter
Who wants to be wet in the rain
And look like a helpless chick in the drain?

There will be rain
And we will be seeking shades under the trees
And run towards waiting sheds where the rain
Cannot harm our sensibilities,

There will be rain and more rains to come
In our lives, and we always run for secure
Shelters, and we always have umbrellas,
And raincoats, and closed cars, we hide to places
Where The rain cannot harm us,

But today, there is rain, and I will take
Another action, I will not run for shelter,
Or take shades in trees, or be in waiting sheds,
I will not even open my car, get into it and close it,

I am not afraid of rain now; I have no fears getting wet
And look like a helpless chick, I will run in the
Middle of the rain, I will play in the rain, I will
Be with the rain throughout its pouring,
I will be wet, and it will rain and rain,
Let it rain and rain and rain
You will not see, my tears falling, tears hiding in the rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
whatever she says
be it about sadness
or peace
or war and unhappiness

he did not mind
he is in the mountain
thinking
how the mosquitoes
are pestering him
and he cannot sleep

soon she will
be silent and then
he begins to write

his shorter poems

RIC S. BASTASA
he now prefers
the caterpillar
to bring the
news of his
death

RIC S. BASTASA
He knows his end is near
He dreams last night that
There is a big river flowing
In the Sahara

RIC S. BASTASA
Hey, froggie!

Why are you
Jumping in
An asphalted road?

There will be no
Sound of water

RIC S. BASTASA
it is no longer
you whom I
wait
by my window

time passes....

my beard
all white
reaches
the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
to while the hours away

Without you
I lie among the grasses
In the backyard
Listening to
The twinkling
Of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
letting go of sadness
I let go
All my sadness
to the edge of dusk
Among disappearings
twilight
RIC S. BASTASA
to our youngest

in leaving this place
I shall recall
You wearing your Sunday’s best
With mama & papa
Still holding hands

RIC S. BASTASA
early fears

there is no moment of peace
for a heart that loves
the scent of
the blooming
white sampaguitas
when the wind starts
to blow its breath tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
I still love you

How can I not love
This world
And be sad
When I soon leave

When my heart still
Beats for you

RIC S. BASTASA
21st Year

Papa lets you go
at this age you are free
now marry
have kids and love
the woman
that you can have
do not regret
do not blame anyone
all the opportunities have
been served like
your regular meals
and you were give
time to savor
the salt and sugar and
the whiteness of rice
like pearls
if you are confused
by all means that is normal
now go
Papa sets you free
do not be lonely
do not be frightened
by that ocean of freedom
by that space of options
course your own orbit
spin
revolve
make your own number of
nights and days
embrace the darkness
as well as the light
do not just be an asteroid
be the comet

explode if you may
to create your own
new universe......
As I cannot touch you
With my fingers, as I cannot take a longer
Gaze at you without being condemned
As I cannot be always with you even longer than a minute, as I cannot sit beside
you without being
Despised, as I cannot talk to you about
How people love and love so true
Without being ridiculed,
As I cannot
Offer you fresh white flowers as symbols of my affection,
As I cannot send you a greeting card wishing you well,

As I cannot hold your hand even in casual friendship,
As I cannot
Take you to dinner and be myself sharing
What I can give you,
As I cannot
Hug you and kiss you and make love to you even in the wildest of my dreams
imaginations without me dying in sin and guilt

As I cannot walk with you in a park
Without being

Ostracized by this decent society

I will just think of you in milder forms in decent thoughts,
And write about you in clean and clear words,

That will just be enough.

I always look at you on this one-way mirror tinted with silver,
And so you do not notice
And so no one knows.
Because,
Strictly, I am prohibited
And that to me is loud and clear.
And by all means within my powers, I have to gently obey.
on your fifth birthday
you will begin to know
what happiness is
you will soon grow
reaching your eleventh
then sorrows begin to show

RIC S. BASTASA
221

As the coldness of the night
Comes over my window
I know deep in my heart
Your loneliness in the big city

RIC S. BASTASA
caregiver leaving again

The children of Punta
Sing you a sad song
We hear the whirring
Sounds of dragonfly wings
Then the plane flies you
To Chicago
As you make
Many flying kisses

RIC S. BASTASA
sweet rumors

Deserted house
With thatched roof
Along the Dicayo River
Rumors are sweet
On a swarm of bees
Who now live there

RIC S. BASTASA
the day you left me

Through my reading glasses
Smears of my fingerprints
I see you blur
With my falling tears

RIC S. BASTASA
AS WE LEAVE A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

I am riding in my car
driving it myself but i am not alone

the mountains are green this time
rain has not been remiss

the trees along the streets
are having a show of their fruits

i open the window and breathe
such a very fresh air

i know this is a beautiful morning
but how sad, we are leaving.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the embrace of another man

.........................she left
Where the pastures are greener
.........beyond my boundary lines

RIC S. BASTASA
what the white owl does besides flapping its wings

The white owl flaps its wings
Deep in the night
Hovers on the trees
I think the leaves
I hear the sparrows chirping
In the morning
Some dead feathers are falling

RIC S. BASTASA
do not believe what your friend says, think

Are you my friend? .............
Messenger of good and evil?
Hmmm, ..........Let me think
You are stepping on my feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
a poem for the highest leader of our land

Quiapo Underpass
Some blossoms of graffiti
We are tired of lies
The whole year round
Chasing tails
The cats and dogs.

RIC S. BASTASA
poem for the keeper of my heart

This heart
of mine

Must not be
Given to
Others

it will explode

RIC S. BASTASA
what is right can sometimes be wrong,
like the right of a state to kill,
that to me is wrong,
like the right to have slaves
that was wrong, but they once
thought it was right,

something that feels so right
may, sometimes, be also be wrong,
like feeling love, and too much love
for a neighbor or yourself,
it can be intoxicating at times,
and it can kill you,

because what is right exists only
in our human minds,
limited, too narrow, too
confined in our flesh and blood,
in the context of our culture,
in the frames of our time,
to the dictates of religion
the liberality of our education,
to our biases and prejudices,

what we believe in, what we
touch with faith in dark places
what we try to light with candles,
or see in microscopes or see in
telescopes, or see with our eyes
and hearts wide open,

may still be wrong, or

still be not right,

so what is right after all?
Possibly, this can be right,
But possibly this can also be wrong,
We can always pray. But the doubt
Is always there. Cogito ergo sum.

Who can really be sure?

RIC S. BASTASA
teardrops from
My eyes
to my cheek
slowly
to my lips
my tongue
licks it
my mouth
swallows

I need tears
to drink
To become
The salt
Of this
Earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Press Statement

46 million Filipinos
Go hungry everyday
3.8 million Filipino
Families experienced
Having nothing
To eat in 2009
Now, the price of rice
Has increased

So?

I am just writing
Upon Ariel’s prodding.

RIC S. BASTASA
So many poems
in this world remain
unwritten,
unsaid,
undone.

So many poets cry out,
each one longing
for a masterpiece -
words strung
emotive,
expressive,
true.

Poems, poets
Linger they must
in the colonnades of time
under trees in the sky
waiting, straining
for birth.

Unfortunately
they at sunrise seek
A bosom mother -
from whom they must spring
eternal at first light;
sorry for now
but unwritten she is,
unsaid too,
unborn.

Wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flor de luna

White flower
Blooming
Only at night
When no
one is
Watching

And so easily
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
maria theresa leonora

I drink water
From this well
Using my
Bare hands

My shirt gets
Wet
Your dryness
Now
Is what I need.

RIC S. BASTASA
the reason why pain is inflicted sometimes

Feeling the need
To have pearls
Around your neck
I will give you pain
To make you cry

Now you have all
The pearls gleaming
In your eyes, cheeks
Then around your
white slender neck

RIC S. BASTASA
Conversations of Tess and her light and my darkness

i
Come to the light
And let yourself be known
Shine

ii
I live in the dark
I glow there
I am not visible
In your light

iii
Do take pride
About light
I will take
Darkness

iv
I have seen your light
It still looks dark to me

v
No, go out
See the light
And be uplifted

vi
Ah, I bask in the light
Of my poetry
There is enough moonlight
For me

RIC S. BASTASA
An open letter to Filipino Artists by Emmanuel Lacaba

A poet must also learn
how to lead an attack
- Ho Chi Minh

I
Invisible the mountain routes to strangers:
For rushing toes an inch-wide strip on boulders
And for the hand that's free a twig to grasp,
Or else we headlong fall below to rocks
And waterfalls of death so instant that
Too soon they're red with skulls of carabaos.

But patient guides and teachers are the masses:
Of forty mountains and a hundred rivers;
Of plowing, planting, weeding, and the harvest;
And of a dozen dialects that dwarf
This foreign tongue we write each other in
Who must transcend our bourgeois origins.

South Cotabato
May 1, 1975

II

You want to know, companions of my youth
How much has changed the wild but shy young poet
Forever writing last poem after last poem;
You hear he's dark as earth, barefoot,
A turban round his head, a bolo at his side,
His ballpen blown up to a long-barreled gun:
Deeper still the struggling change inside.

Like husks of coconut he tears away
The billion layers of his selfishness.
Or learns to cage his longing like the bird
Of legend, fire, and song within his chest.
Now of consequence is his anemia
From lack of sleep: no longer for Bohemia,
The lumpen culturati, but for the people, yes.

He mixes metaphors but values more
A holographic and geometric memory
For mountains: not because they are there
But because the masses are there where
Routes are jigsaw puzzles he must piece together.
Though he has been called a brown Rimbaud,
He is no bandit but a people's warrior.

South Cotabato and Davao del Norte
November 1975

III

We are tribeless and all tribes are ours.
We are homeless and all homes are ours.
We are nameless and all names are ours.
To the fascists we are the faceless enemy
Who come like thieves in the night, angels of death:
The ever moving, shining, secret eye of the storm.

The road less traveled by we've taken-
And that has made all the difference:
The barefoot army of the wilderness
We all should be in time. Awakened, the masses are Messiah.
Here among workers and peasants our lost
Generation has found its true, its only home.

Davao del Norte
January 1976

RIC S. BASTASA
Homeward again under foreign stars, 
history was a strange gush of wind from memory 
that came to echo waterfalls of those years: 
home to find the place lost among 
galaxies of signs. The hills were gone. The river 
trail was forgotten... Trying to remember meadowlark 
and those who perished in the vanishing land 
(bones in the earth where our parents died poor) , 
the journey fell into heavy tides of flowing 
scorn that echoed and reechoed time there.

The sun was most unkind to the place: 
history: names of men: patterns of life: 
all that distant floodtide heaved and moved, 
breaking familiar names that immortal tongues 
clipped for the heart to cry, 'Home is a foreign address, 
every step toward it is a step toward three hundred years 
of exile from the truth...'

It was not homeward 
to the first known land, nor escape 
to white sea sprays blossoming on inland shore, 
nor love leaping the boundaries naked in the soul, 
but a vast heritage of war and destruction breaking 
too soon for the living and willing to die.

Life is a foreign language. Every man mispronounced it...

RIC S. BASTASA
I.
I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
The simple words first
And last.
They are hardest to learn.
Words like home,
Or friend, or to forgive.
These words are relations.
They are difficult to bear;
Their fruits are unseen.
Or words that promise
Or dream.
Words like honor, or certainty,
Or cheer.
Rarest of sound,
Their roots run deep;
These are words that aspire,
They cast no shade.
These are not words
To speak.
These are the words
Of which we consist,
Indefinite,
Without other ground.

II.
My child
Is without syllables
To utter him,
Captive yet to his origin
In silence.
By every word
To rule his space,
He is released;
He is shaped by his speech.
Every act, too,
Is first without words.
There's no rehearsal
To adjust your deed
From direction of its words.
The words are given,

But there's no script.
Their play is hidden,
We are their stage.
These are the words
That offer to our care
Both sky and earth,
These same words
That may elude our acts.
If we speak them
But cannot meet their sound,
They strand us still
In our void,
Blank like the child
With the uphill silence
Of his words' climb.
And so,
I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
The simple words first
And last.

RIC S. BASTASA
in reply to jean's theory of asexuality

Once you ask me
Why I live among
The distant hills
I just smile
I do not make replies
I do not really care
I stare in your eyes
Like you are a river
And I have no fear
And my thoughts
Flow like leaves
Falling from tall, old,
Trees
Blown into the unknown
I realize and
You too must
I have a world of my own
Apart from yours
And the rest
Of Everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
in a crowd of people, in a sea of people
you can just be a wooden sail, and sail like
there are no people in there, in the sea of people,
you can just be yourself, like they do not exist,
you can even just be any kind of wave in there,
a small gentle wave with the usual sea cap, a white
foamy sea cap, indistinguishable like the rest of the
people in the sea of people, and in this sea where you
are just one of them, there is really no problem, you are
just like them, behaving just like anyone of them, and you can always be with
them, lonely, lonely like them, always being like them, in a crowd, in this
uniformity, in this
anonymity, but once it may occur to you, that there is
something in yourself that simply shouts, I can be out
from here, out of here, from this cacophony, from this loneliness,

I cannot wait anymore, in the sea of people, I can be out,
An outcast, and it does not matter, deep within I know I can feel it now,

my mother was a seagull, and I have always known how to fly.
The time is now to spread the wings that I have been hiding.

RIC S. BASTASA
a reunion

Often a man's life is such
that he seldom sees his friends,
like the night and day
never sharing the same hours
In the skies
Seldom does he share
His evenings with friends
Or his mornings
His lamp light unshared
His mornings unspent
How long will this
Distance last?

Hairs have turned
White and lesser
As we inquire about
Friends and other
Acquaintances only
To find out that half of
Them have turned
To ghosts,

Shocks and torments
Of this heart, cries
But I will try again
To enter your home
Twenty five years
And now you have
Two sons and three
Daughters to greet
Me by the door
I thought you never
Married and they all
Kiss my hands and
Before I can ask the
Questions you drive
Them off to the grounds
To play away from us
As we talk about
Lasting friendships
And how we have
Almost forgotten them

Tomorrow I will be drunk
Again back to my own
Affairs in the big city
We will be separated
Again by these peaks
Of mountains and we
Shall again lose each
Other’s friendly views.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight his wife shall watch the full moon
Alone over the hills in Marupay
He will think sadly though of her
Too young to understand this sudden separation

Remembering once again their love in Cagayan
In fragrant mist, her black hair was perfumed
In the clear moonlight, her hands were cold

In the distant mountain of Tabon
She leans over this bamboo grove
While the moonlight tries to dry some tears

RIC S. BASTASA
then the tears shall start to fall

Another year has ended
Summer has come for us to bask in the sun
In sandy white beaches with friends,
But I must now take leave
My time has come
Alas, the ylang-ylang trees in our garden
Without me
Shall still bloom and spread its scents
When the wind comes again
Tonight
Then the tears shall start
To fall

RIC S. BASTASA
THE NORMAL PASSAGE OF A HUMAN BEING

there was this friend
who wrote sonnets in high school

it was the first time that he fell in love
with a girl with thick glasses and fists like stones

i saw how she hit him and he did not do anything
except perhaps to write more sonnets

their love did not make it
they did not marry for love

Life did teach them many lessons
sometimes marriage is not love

profession is not daily bread
survival is not a struggle but simply numbness

living is just a day to day waking up and sleeping
and nights are even not for sleeping anymore

if you are my age you will know that this is not madness
but something that everyone in their normal lives

undergo, like a communion, a confession, a crucifixion
and a redemption

sometimes you are enlightened
like a yogi, you only live for the moment

your children are not yours
your properties are just passing things

like leaves blown away
like memories that no matter how you keep in photographs

all, all still fade away
and that one day, someone asks, ' what is this all about?

who is this? ' and someone who has a tight skin
and a small lit eye says

and lightly, utters, ' i don't really know'

but if they only care enough
the one who was forgotten was the one who wrote sonnets

and the one who said
i do not know is the youngest daughter of

the girl with thick glasses and fists of stones
who died not for love but only for the money.

RIC S. BASTASA
contrasts

The food in the ref
Of the wealthy
Spoil themselves
unnecessarily

Outside the door

A child begs because
He has
Nothing
to eat

RIC S. BASTASA
In our old house made of limestone
Many ferns and moss Grow

But though how lush
And numerous have
They become

My memories
Still outnumber them

RIC S. BASTASA
like the dry cogon in flames

Like the dry cogon
That I burn
This evening
On the ricefield
All myself
Is flaming

Waiting for
You

Who never
Comes

I understand
Now
the meaning

Of instant flames

And the ash
They are leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lovers Get Married Today

because they claim
to be in heaven

i still have to convince
myself that
i can see stars in their
skies

RIC S. BASTASA
It is not the flowers
That wilt
It is not the wind
That whirls
And goes

It is not the world
That ends

In this place

But it is
We ourselves

It is I

That wither
And pass away

RIC S. BASTASA
all i did was hide my love for you

Like an iron gate
That rusts

Weakened by the
Salt from the sea,

So I must
I live on

To hide my love
At last I have

Staled and
Failed.

RIC S. BASTASA
till my life ends

After one brief tryst
A night as short

A blade of grass
Briefly cut

In Silliman-

Must I long for her
Forever?

With my whole heart
Till my life ends?

RIC S. BASTASA
the dignity of my tears

I will not blame the moon
For bringing me this

Pale sadness

On some pictures of grief

I lift up my face
To present the dignity
Of my tears

RIC S. BASTASA
If I speak of love, it is because love speaks
To me, like we are having this conversation
About love itself, and I ask love that if I speak
Of love, will love believe me?
And love sighed, and finds this question
Too self-serving for itself, for love could
Be biased too, telling me that if I speak
Of her, she will believe me, oh, that would
Be too unnecessary of love, to speak about itself,
For love to believe in love from love itself
Who is asking about love,
About me and telling me, she will believe me,
In fact, this would be too confusing, too confusing,
But I speak of her today, and I speak of myself
Too, believing about this love of mine,
And so confused we see each other eye to eye,
The eye of love to my eye of true love,
Talking heart to a true heart,
The heart of love talking to the heart of true love,
and finally, though confused, and still taking breaths,

love, she finally,
Said, yes, love believes me, love believes my love,
love speaks of love, love believes in love,
In my love, and there is no other. Love begets love.

RIC S. BASTASA
some birds' cries

There is nowhere
To escape
From the
Harshness of
This world

That is what I think

In the mountains'
Farthest

In the forests'
deepest

I still hear
Some birds’
cries

RIC S. BASTASA
251

When in distress
Through life's blows

So Cruel
My life

Still sticks with me
In fidelity
And dignity

You may
Say I am brave
and strong

But when I am
Alone

Some tears
cannot help
falling

Breaking forth
From my
sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
loneliness

When I turned my
Eyes to the place
Where I heard
Someone calling
The only one I see
Is my own shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
When I ask her
If her love will
Last forever

She does not
Answer

Now, my thoughts
Are in disarray

Like your books
When you

Transferred
To another house.

RIC S. BASTASA
Though the rapid waters
Are divided by this
Big rock

At the end
The waters are united
Again

Like this love
Of ours
For now

RIC S. BASTASA
A single dew
On the leaf
Shall promise
Life to this
Plant still
Wanting to
Grow,

So will
Does this
New vow
That I
Make for
You

Let this
Year pass
And let
The drought
Come again

Let us see.

RIC S. BASTASA
In our distance
In my heart
This love
Shall bloom
Like a flower

Please,
Do not let
Your doubts
Be the mists
To hide
This view

RIC S. BASTASA
Let me thank the fish bone stuck in my throat
Let me praise the tooth aching throughout the night
Let me write about the rusty nail that pierced my stupid foot in that dark garden
Let me remember a white horse which died because the grass arrived late
Let me recall the treatise of the gnat biting the donkey's ear
Let me check the fruit fly trapped in the empty wine bottle tightly corked
Let me know if the rabid dog which bit a neglected child in the neighborhood is dead.

I have not learned my lessons by heart

Give me another time for me to nail another beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sooner my life shall end
And when I am gone
Beyond this world
And I am forgotten
Let it be remembered
That I have met you
And loved you through
sincerely & truly

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping all alone
Through the long hours
Of the night

Then the day comes
Morning light

I still cannot figure out
How I survived

The loneliness
The emptiness

Of such much?

RIC S. BASTASA
Surely there is no one
Who speaks with
Authority
Or pity
About the pain
Of my lost love

Now is the time
To kick out
This feeling of
Pain &
Emptiness

Go on
Get out
Self-pity.

RIC S. BASTASA
25th Of June, Dawn

a dream is so beautiful
at dawn,
it comes wounding me
but it is alright
it is the most usual thing that happens
in my life
and so here i am again
licking my wounds
nurturing it
so that i may heal
again and again

deep within i do not wish this wound
to heal
somehow it is this orifice
that creates
an opening to my life
day to day

RIC S. BASTASA
That veil was the first symbolism
Of her lies, it covered
The truth of her origin,

Her face underneath, you never really
Saw the truth of her eyes,

You were blinded by the cloth
You were tempted by the part that was still covered,

When the veil was lifted
It was then that you saw, the truth, of what was felt,

You wanted to back out,
And stop the ceremony of a commitment

But there were lots of people in the church
Ready to clap their hands, after the much awaited kiss

You kissed her, and the people clapped in
Jubilation of your beginnings

You did not really mean it,
But it was too late; you have already sealed the contract

With that kiss and all the people in the church clapped their hands
The rest in your life to come shall be without the participation
Of your senses.

RIC S. BASTASA
How can I hide
From my face
This fondness
This secret love
When she comes
To face me
She asks
If there is
Something
Wrong
As I leave
and say
Nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like a cold dawn
Your love is
Uncompromising
I ask for pity
When we parted
There was none
The morning comes
I say I do not like
Any coffee or tea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer loneliness
In my mountain
Grows lonelier
When friends
Are gone like
Leaves and grasses
All withered and
Finally burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
What is broken
scatters

a glass that you
throw on the window
feeds the splinters

diamond like
to the mornings of
my life

i guess
one can still
have faith
even in the breaking
of whatever

when, for instance,
this morning
breaks into
splinters of
twilight

i too break into
pieces of amazement
after the darkness
of my night

RIC S. BASTASA
If all the mahogany leaves
In Tabon mountain
Are hearts
Like the way I bleed
When you left
The rivers below
Will surely flood
With blood

RIC S. BASTASA
If a friend
true to her
Is you

Is there any way
Hidden from me

A gaze
perhaps

That you can do
To draw her back
To me?

RIC S. BASTASA
Well, I see this moon
And I am sad

My thoughts are sadder still
The dark night comes

Not just for me
Alone, I know

but for all of us..

RIC S. BASTASA
As of this time
I bring you no offering

Here I am
Bringing nothing

Just lies...
A bouquet of beautiful lies

RIC S. BASTASA
This poem shall remember
The port of Dumaguete
The gentle waves of the boulevard
Where we once walked
Under the moon and stars
Where the wind was fresh and cool
Where time was once eternal

To your children and husband
And to my wife
And even to our friends
This poem is nothing
After all we never made it

But to me
This poem is more than significant
This is a love poem
To be recited again
In Dumaguete

The moon and stars
shining at night
And the waves of the sea
Bouncing on the boulevard
Still so excited

Like how I feel today as I write
This poem

I am not sure
Somehow somewhere
sometime
If it is still
With you

***************************************************************************
and if by chance
you read this
do not blame
me or anybody
or yourself

do not even
blame the stars
they are just
taking their
own course

************************

this is nothing but just
another poem for you

RIC S. BASTASA
Can you keep a secret?
I ask you
I will test you
About my loneliness
It is a secret
That I keep
And I want to share
It with you
If you can keep
A secret

You cannot
Keep a secret
Today a friend
Calls
911
For me

And so
my loneliness
Has spread
From one mouth
To another
Throughout the world

And all my friends
And acquaintances
Call today
Telling me

We share the same secrets

But I am lonelier
ever
I have another secret
That I can no longer
Share with you

You cannot keep a secret
You never knew
what delicate means

RIC S. BASTASA
love life my friend
it is the only one
you've got

you have loved
love once
it did not love you

so now my friend
learn to love life
it shall live with you
through and through

RIC S. BASTASA
see the path of life
in opaqueness, learn to breathe
through the eyes,
do not trust love that much
for it, like everything else,
comes and goes,
bliss, hatred,
rottenness,
each man stands
by the side of his doorway
and hides his hands
inside his pocket
some however learns
to shove or
hold their hands out
to be free.

RIC S. BASTASA
What shall I tell this great mountain?
That I have seen everything from here?
I breathe thin air here
Day and night
I stretch my hands to the clouds
I touch
I tire my eyes to the sun above
I follow the birds flying to the other island
But I shall not rest
I shall climb this great and high mountain some more
To see everything
In a single glance
Without even moving an eyelash.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slanting rays of the morning sun
Carabaos, goats, and pigs
Along the grassy lane
An old man with a staff
Sits by the door
Of his thatched hut
Waiting for his grandson,

Chickens, ducks, and pigeons
Scatter on the backyard
He feeds them
All he has now
Is this simple life
In a farm house in Dicayo River
Waiting for an angel
To sing his final song

He sighs soon he shall die
the river flows nearby

RIC S. BASTASA
after betrayal
of trust you have the
nerve
to ask if i am
angry

i am not
i am
hurt and that makes
the difference

between you and me
there shall be a chasm

an abyss
but you will never hear
me shouting

RIC S. BASTASA
try to look at it from a different
perspective
dexter

when your prayers are not granted
it is not because
you do not deserve to be there
it is not because
you are lesser that those who are now
seated in the front
handshaking with greatness

it is simply because
God has barred the door
where you are going to enter
the room of your
perdition

just wait
the right door for you
is yet unfinished
the room there
is suited for you
and for no other

soon, you will understand
but i know for sure
God has always heard you

RIC S. BASTASA
we were talking under the talisay tree
about our future
one summer
when the leaves are brown
and falling to the ground

where the red ants
are busy taking their food
under a heap of
dry leaves

we will be there
to reach our destinies

but we may not be there
together

there is always a season for me
and for you
the wisdom lies in the waiting
the goodness in the waiting

and the beauty that we will see
lies in the content of our eyes
the tranquility of the pond
where the moss begins
to grow again
in stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
what you got from me are lies
and it was a test

wrong informations were passed
by you to all my friends

and they will now ask me
if these are true

i will tell them
about your lies now, not mine

and now
it is you who is in hot water

as i relax in my bed
figuring out what to do next

RIC S. BASTASA
you have all the reasons to be sad
and be afraid

like a tree
you have no roots
and where you grow
around are rocks

when the typhoon comes
you have nowhere to hold
and you cannot stand
against the harsh winds

you will be uprooted
and blown away
you will be washed away
to the river and then to the sea

because you have
not really loved
truly.

RIC S. BASTASA
you sent the slideshow
of the little white daisy
contented in the
forest where all the
other plants are confused

the oak wanting to be a lilac
the lilac wanting to be a pine
the pine wanting to be a daisy

you are the daisy
i suppose so

how can i ever believe you
when all the while
you have been dreaming
of wings to fly away?

RIC S. BASTASA
with your big mouth

Silence-

Devour me

Whole

I want to be eaten

And be peaceful

Inside your belly

RIC S. BASTASA
you have shown me
how to convert
this newspaper strips
into money

how this flower
turns into a white
rabbit

how the rabbit turns
into a hat

then back to a newspaper
strips again

magician, i am tired
of your illusions
how your hands
deftly deceived my
weaker eyes

now i have my last request
please perform this magic:

make yourself disappear.

RIC S. BASTASA
I will always be here, here in this place
Worshiping you, remembering you
Always, even if you forget, even if you do not anymore remember
A trace of my presence

I will always be here, here in this place
Because I made a promise to always remember
A trace of your memory.

RIC S. BASTASA
now you are here
alone
facing me
singing your own songs
smiling at me
as i clap my hands

you are so beautiful
your voice magical
and it is so nice
of you

to be here again
as i hear
your voice

pure, and diffused
inside
what we call our very own

welcome to originality
to you and nothing
but just you

i am listening

RIC S. BASTASA
the reason why i want to be you
is because you like to be me too

we become mirrors then
i to you
and you to me

what i do you shall do
and what you do i shall do too

it happens all the time
and all the people in the neighborhood
talk and laugh

about this mimicry
they call it crazy

we look like a melon cut into
perfect halves

how boring, how nauseating
because you are still a woman
and i have remained my own man

RIC S. BASTASA
For my love is like ice
Put it in your armpit
It will melt
And make you wet

Put it in the coldness
of the freezer
in your ref
It will harden
And even crack

Put it under the
Sun and it will
Evaporate

Put me in your
Mouth and let
Me melt in your
Tongue
I become the water
drink me
To quench your
Thirst and i will

make You live

RIC S. BASTASA
When I look at you
Oh my lovely tree
Alone on a hill
How I wish that
I may become
A honeysuckle
A clinging vine
That from your
Root to top
I may entwine

But I am just
A bookworm

Still trapped
In this book

That she is
still Reading.

RIC S. BASTASA
hey mister poet
find me a poem
that i will read
this sunday upon
the behest of
our chapel chaplain,

hey mister poet
find me a death
poem to be read
this sunday evening

and mister poet answered

hey lady i will make
a death poem for you

but it shall be read
by me this sunday

and you will be there
but you cannot hear

you will be there
and they will be there

because of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the rain and storms of my life
My father is the boat
And my mother is the lighthouse
My country is the land
Where I am safe and fine

RIC S. BASTASA
Of what use shall the
Saudi riyal
That Japanese yen be

When you are no longer by my side?

RIC S. BASTASA
you are up
and i am down

i am down
and you are up

i get bored
and tired
with this routine

so i give you
the surprise
of your life

i step away
suddenly
and you fall
to the ground

now i am
happy to see
so angry

and so alive
on this see-saw
of our lives

RIC S. BASTASA
There is nothing
Exceptional,
Nothing special
With me,

I am just ordinary

In decency, in status,
I am what you call
the average man,
Of no special rank
Of lesser significance

I am found
In the most common
Places, undistinguished
in the most common men
in the market, in the mall,
in the park, in the beach,
in the streets, in the church,
in anywhere in everywhere

I am what you see
As plain, the usual
The most customary
that you meet &
easily forget

I am the
Normal person that you
Shake hands with,
whose name
does not linger
long enough in your mind

I live in the many
I am the numerous
I breathe the common Air
I drink the water
For everyone
I smell like the
Sweat of the rest
I look like everyone
Because I am the average
Because I am the ordinary

But without me
You will never be
Special

In truth it is us
The common ones
In this whole world
The background
These ordinary
Occurrences and
Resemblances

That make you
Exist,

We, the average,
We, the people of this world
We are the ordinary
And you cannot
Disregard us,

We are the many,
And we can always
Disregard you
If we really want to

we make you
and we can always unmake you

mister special..

RIC S. BASTASA
Read the poems and meet the words
Like they are strangers
They do not know you
And you do not know them
But then you
Get to know each other
With how you feel
And what they feel for you
They flow into your mind
And float there
Then they sink because
You rock them in your
Blood and thirst and
Loneliness, and you ask
If it is you in the poem?

Did I not tell you the magic
Of my poetry? Or of poetry itself?

I will tell you again
You read them and then feel them,
Then they become you
Because now you see yourself
Inside them
And the poems own you
Because now you own them too.

is it you? yes, it is also us.

RIC S. BASTASA
you have nowhere to go
your heart is trapped
locked in the gates of her cares,
your eyes are covered
by the gentleness of her gaze,
you are now caught in the truth of her love
you hands bound by her desires
your lips lost in her sweetness,
now you dwell in your weaknesses,
now you surrender to her longings
you now belong entirely to her,

with nowhere to go
you are doomed
to die in her bosom
as her chattel
her prized possession
her love mind you
has turned you
into a thing, a property

but you did not mind
your heart is made of wood
that which was real at first
was already taken
and this one does not matter
anymore any longer
there is no beating.

RIC S. BASTASA
29 January

Aquarius goes on to acquire
50 hands

more faces, water, droplets of rain,
more fingers, twigs of trees
more feet, roots and more roots and more capillaries

more of these nonsense, foolishness of men
wisdom of God

less reason, junk food, broken computer chairs, dragging hours,
more emotions, flowers on my bed, candles by the side of my bathroom

stay more on the left side of the brain, giving justice for the lost moments,
striking the chords of despair and repairing the broken strings of awe,

why not? why limit myself to usual possibilities of office, home, church, work,
honor, position, pedestal

when the mountain ranges are waiting, less trodden paths where only my two
feet fit,
muddy rivers, pigs, doghouses, bee hives, chase and chase myths

on the 29th, i like being away from me.
i will meet myself as a stranger, offer it hot tea on cold morning,
no asking of where it hails from, and where it is going,
just being together, mirroring, no teasing, no guilt,
no comparisons,

i keep on writing for no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
because of what happens in the night
(a night full of love
a night full of passion)
you hum at dawn break
you sing in the morning
you dance at noon
and you laugh in the afternoon
and then with so much
happy anticipation
you look forward to
the coming night
with another ready passion
because you love her
and she loves you too

RIC S. BASTASA
as you cook breakfast today
for him
thinking about the menu
that he loves most
you will sing again
the songs of love
that you once sang
only in the bathroom
when the summer
gets so hot when
once he was not
with you but in some
other person's arms
in another's warmer
embraces.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not demand much
that you give me so much
love,
i have lots of love to give

i am love myself
overflowing
and if i love you
and tell you so
that i love you
i do not demand much

i am in love with you
and i do the loving
because in truth
it is the loving that
is the giving and
it is not the taking
that matters to
the one who truly
loves to the one
who loves to love
being loved is not
really that important

when i love
i give
i do not take

RIC S. BASTASA
Dance, dance
Mister ordinary
If you won’t
I shall junk you

Sing, sing,
Mister ordinary
If you won’t
I shall leave you

Obey, obey
Mister ordinary
Listen to me
And follow what I say

I will trample you
I will tread upon you
You will do what
I want you to do

I may even humiliate
And tamper you
Because you allow
It to be so.

RIC S. BASTASA
i ask the old man
of our neighborhood
sitting on a chair
in his yard
just in front
our house
as i water
the plants
in my garden,

his answer
is simple enough

'well, i like to die
because my friends
and classmates
are all gone, and
what use will this
life be? '

i agree.

RIC S. BASTASA
And we shall not leave
This country we shall build

Because it is ours
Throughout the golden hours

Here we belong
For quite long

Our great forefather
Was buried here

And though in poverty
We must stay

As we enjoy what we have
Under the sun we love

The coolness of the moon
We all swoon and don

We shall be proud as a tree
We enjoy our liberty

We shall live we shall die
There is no reason to cry

RIC S. BASTASA
This love of mine
That you always doubt
Despite the passion
We always have,

Is not always strong
To keep you warm
Of course, you soon
Will grow cold as ice
In my hand and so soon
You shall melt like
Water slipping through
My fingers,

I am ready for this
I have kept the other
Hand warm to hold
My other hand when
The night gets
Colder and you are
No longer there.

RIC S. BASTASA
I bought you a dress
Wear it
You are so beautiful
In it
You stand
And I will look
At you
You turn to the left
And to the right
And then
I ask you
To raise your head
With dignity
You will speak
To me
The words
I write on the letter
I sent with the
Money
You must say
You love me
Then I will
Bow before you
Inside this room
I will ask you
To take out the dress
Again
I want to see
This time
If you are
Already real
But you may
Not
If you don’t
Really like
It, so I can
Now take
my honest
exit..
you will have a chance seeing
the sunflower
poetess
only
once,

a glimpse
you love it but you can only love it once
when it faced the sun so bravely
chanting

singing her one and only song
then she goes away
like the sunflower
wilting

bowing to the ground
surrendering her many seeds
falling scattering

it is only the rain that comes
to bring her back to life again

her seeds sprouting again
not just with a mother song
but children poems
all along.

RIC S. BASTASA
at first i contemplate about the sunflower as a princess
but it will not do her justice
because she is the queen
of the sun,
she rules the fields of green
and blue
and red too, these sunsets and even sunrises playing well
tagging her along to paths of joys & sorrows

she stands flower high to the clouds
to storms and tempests she yields
like any flower still queenly to her bowing only to rise again with her seeds

yes, her many princesses by her side wilted yellowed petals and withered stalk

some soft winds sad some drops of rain still about to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
as usual
it is just you and the moon
ever mute and blind
but wide awake
together the night
giving you
that much needed light
though dim
but light just the same
do not be hopeless 2nyt
wait
there is always a sun
though little and far
tomorrow
tomorrow morning
for each
and everyone
hold on to your self
even it be
another lie
do not damn that
life
return the gift
as nicely wrapped as when
you first received it

2nyt
i must see you again
please wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
when he wakes up
his thoughts are heavy
like ripe plums,

java he remembers,
big waves, and
volcanic eruptions,
humanity running away
to save what is it
that values themselves
to the right to live

java plums, violet, darker
than that, miserable,
covered by magma,
heights and disbelief
it happened in one
wink, and then one buries
all to forget, like a book
one goes to the next
chapter: this one is about
discovery, happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
3 O'Clock In The Morning

the rain stopped
and i have just awakened from a deep sleep

it was earlier than usual
and what i heard are the raindrops leaving the last words of their lives

a tapping of the roof
a heave of a sigh

some monotonous sounds of the waves of the shore
not far from where i am writing

the last whispers of the winds from the trees about to shed their last leaves
the sounds of wild ducks leaving knowing that another storm is coming

i think of you
i think of your search of yourself
i think of myself
how i was once broken and destroyed by the changes of the winds
how i picked up the pieces like some leaves scattered in the forest

beyond repair, i write some memories.
weary, i imagine some moments that i may have been at rest with myself.

i think of you. I think about when the rain shall stop forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
the rain finally stops,
soothing silence hushes

until
the main door of the neighbor's house
fronting ours
is banged

the usual drunkard husband
and the nagging wife

midnight, dawn,
banging.

RIC S. BASTASA
3: 22 A.M.

it is funny if you give a smile at this hour
in the mirror by that cemented wall

no one is awake here
to testify about it and tell the world that once
and for all
you have become another happy man

God's child who knows by heart the meaning
of happiness

but just the same, smile somehow,
keep the image of your white teeth aligning
inside your pink gum

RIC S. BASTASA
i waited for this moment
and it has come, this awakening,
of your mind, you and i, still waking up,
when the rest of the world
is sleeping, this is the moment,
i will seize it,
like the way the chameleon
strikes the approaching fly
with its tongue

you ask me, 'are you still awake, sir? '
and i answer, ' yes, i slept early last night'

on the surface of things
there is this shallowness in our casualness
you only see my shirt and notice the particulars
at first glance: color, shape, the sound of my voice,
the posture of the person
against the window
amidst the morning light

how can we trap the inner cravings?
what about me? and what about you?
the reason why thoughts wake up
because they have been unsaid
wanting to breathe
and be in the open

surely, i still have many words to say
and to keep
to write them, like opening a bottle of champagne
removing the cork finally

and you will be trembling with the sound
of popping out of letting go
what was trapped so beautifully inside
the bottle
but it will only be for a while
soon you will taste the flavor
of the sparkle and i hope you wil soon like it

RIC S. BASTASA
3: 36 A.M.

just doing something
that touches
the deeper part of the
marrow of my bone

the spirit is alive
the body is weak

there are questions
popping up like
mushrooms after
a rainy night

you ponder upon each
shape and color
round and pale and
expanding
and still tough like
a question begging for
an answer

there is this emptiness
that even a poem
at dusk cannot fill

it exists and its duty
is not to disappear
it enters your heart
and makes its home there

God says
he dwells there as well

RIC S. BASTASA
3: 40 A.M.

i am not alone
you are there too
talking to yourself
and i am hearing
every word that you
are uttering

i am not alone
there is this cock crowing
three times six times
there is this dog barking
without a sign
that it will be stopping

there is this howl
and it is inside my heart

there is this prison
without an opening

there is this leaf
about to fall

there is this river
always running

there is this bird
wanting to fly away

there is this island
still undiscovered by you

there is this pebble
staring at you

there is this silence
always pervading

there is this word
still unspoken

there is this anger
surrounded by thick walls

there is this emptiness
never filled

there is this longing
on its journey towards eternity

there is this wish
wanting to be blessed

there is this death
sitting beside your sadness

there is this happiness
still waiting to be harnessed

RIC S. BASTASA
3: 51 A.M.

the cocks in the neighborhood
inside their fences are crowing
others answer the call as though
telling we are already awake and
ready for the day's fights,

one cock however remains rested
between his two ash-colored hens.

RIC S. BASTASA
“I write what comes to mind.  
It is like sharing a piece of yourself.  
I guess I am just a lover of words”

We call it spontaneity, something that  
Comes from an impulse

Effortlessly,  
There is nothing premeditated,  
Like a burst of applause

Indigenous, something that grows  
Without any cultivation like some ferns  
And lichens or moss on the rocks  
Of our watered paths

That which nature gives  
Freely and unconstrained  
Like sunshine like rain

In fact, this spontaneity  
Is the highest and best form of efficiency

it is Not forethought  
it is As instinctive as breathing  
As involuntary as  
Suspense and surprise  
Combined less the promptitude

An ad-lib,  
is that what you are,  
My friend, and automatic hi  
And automatic hello?

A spontaneous combustion,  
A spontaneous propulsion?

Like the three Princes of Serendip
Whose discoveries are made
By accident and sagacity and not
By an old quest, or conquest

Yes, I agree, the poems work that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
she had her storms the past few months

her husband
sired a baby with another woman

and she cried in all these blunders
events she cannot accept at first

the seas will be rough
and she will be in a boat where she will find it hard
to move and breathe

she sails and she is now back home
to her senses

it is her birthday today and my brother-in-law greets her
with a kiss and perhaps more promises

she will smile with the guests
us and the rest will cheer for her and sing her
a birthday song

all along we pretend that we do not know a thing
about the storm
whether there were those who sank and drowned

and counted as a number
a casualty

who wins who loses
we cannot count with our fingers the
minuses and the pluses

the party goes on with more food,
desserts and
hard liquor

we pretend all along that we do not know a thing
like life
my dear sister, life goes on
stick with it, let them those who hurt you

sink and be forgotten
the sea is calm you might as well decide to take your happy swim

or just take a dip and wet
a part of your lip

see? nothing happened and those that happened have become stories merely not even wanting to be told repeatedly,

we are merry
we have decided to be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
301
	sweet chocolates
who will ever resist
sweet chocolates

we take with
our bare fingers
handing these
chocolates inside
our mouths melting

sweetly these
chocolates in
our tongues

putting heaven
sweet chocolate
so sweet inside
our mouths

playing with
our tongues

guilt food and
sin how do you
really love the
sweetness inside
our mouths
melting with
our tongues
these sweet
chocolates of
hidden sins

burning our souls.....

RIC S. BASTASA
everything has been concealed
for years
i have lived with the pigs
in the mud
and ate the left-over foods
of our masters

but then today
i feel the feathers growing on my side
i have strong wings
my claws are pushing in my feet
no longer hoofs
and hair

the wind from the sea
breaks the truth it brings

on my beak is the break
once upon a time a seagull lost an egg in the pigsty
unaccounted

i was that egg

i am a seagull now
to the full
of my potentials

goodbye brother pigs now i must fly away to the farther seas
to the higher skies

my destiny

RIC S. BASTASA
be silent now, do not ever mention my name
the connotations of my name
the one i talk about me about you
and us,
the rumors are always sweet
and you like them and you cannot hold yourself
from spreading them
to everyone who knows the power of my name
its magic spell
its sweetness like a coconut dessert
with you now
my name shall have its stains and i will be in ruin

ssssssssssssshhh, stop
do not talk about my name now,
the rumors may be sweet to the ears of my enemies
and false friends
they will have the dose now, of their own medicines,
thinking that i am down, depressed, or even dead
to the last detail of my own perdition,

i will rise to save myself and tell them all
that the rumors are not true,

i will show them a happy face and some dancing steps
some pictures of my big smile

no, they will not believe me
they will believe you, as expected, i have anticipated all these

today, i will die
laughing....

RIC S. BASTASA
when i write about beauty
i always have the
sunflower in mind
and the sun
and the soft winds from the evergreen mountains

i will add some chromatic butterflies
and a very beautiful morning
like some petals of
red roses

and i will also think of tiny round leaves
like drops of rain
showering
falling on
the spreading patches of glimpses
of grass

and then when everything beautiful is in their proper places
with matching colors
bright
and scents all pleasing to my senses and emotions
like to dance
with the wind and rays of the sun
when feelings are so tranquil like a very calm sea
on an early morning
when everything now is so lovely
there
then
will i invite you,

come, my friend!
come, my love!

i will be here
waiting for you
it will be beautiful indeed!
alone on a hill
stands a cherry tree
without leaves
only twigs
stretching to the
the moon
on this cold
and damp
night
like some kind of
human hands
and thin body
in the act
of a very deep
prayer

(except for
me
it does not
know you)

RIC S. BASTASA
she is a doctor and he is a lawyer
looks like they are sweet after three years
of marriage
compatible, super, she says
as she takes a sip of her pineapple juice
while he prefers not beer
but just plain water,

well, he knows more about
asthma and heart disease
but i do not know more about
legal terms, she tells me again,

one time, he tells me
in the email, he cannot live without her
even for a minute

super, really super, this lovey-dovey couple
i like them

but sometimes, i couldn't help thinking
they are still new on this

trade, this marriage, and still there will be
more storms to come

superstorms

i still have yet twelve years
i and emma, and we still need more storms
to shake this boat

this marriage
and if there are none to come

i will rock it, let me see how anger
makes her more human
and strong and true
and perhaps even more
beautiful,

then soon, when these couple for three blissful years
comes again

it will now be a nicer dinner for four.

RIC S. BASTASA
well she starts with hello how are you
i say, i am fine how about you?

she is not, perhaps, she has a quarrel
with her boyfriend
and they will soon be married this september
then to be changed this june

is she confused? i ask myself as i type
my messages, she says, maybe,

then we shifted to movies,
wings, chicago, as good as it gets,
the corny titanic, and i recommended

il postino, i tell her, watch it tonight
and you will like neruda
and this postman and this love

how a poet makes love
more open and visible and
expressable
to the lips of a seasick man in an island
that does not move with time

slow, and almost forgotten
until, the son of a dead man
who thanked the poet
talks to him

his father gone
but the love still lingers
in the island
where some poems were born
because
one must love
and be loved and the poems must give the tongue

for that expression.
more readers
write you, i like your poems, excellently written
i can feel them,
i can relate to them,

true you tell yourself, how these poems are written with
all simplicity and humility
experience-based years ago and now coming back
in metaphors as a matter of remembering

what happened, how, and
importantly why,

but sometimes he has regrets with some other poems
written and
not so appreciated because they are too deep and
need a lot of deciphering,

too personal,
metaphors too well derived
from some darkness
when he was all alone gripped with fear and trembling
to ghosts that do not exist

a beautiful mind,
the crazy mind he had in the dormitory
in the cemetery, haunting him

his passions on some squeaky beds
and foul rooms
cheap motels having a love affair
with a woman he never loved
but whom he pitied,

makes him feel
so inhuman and he writes them again
with a sense of betrayal
and self
humiliation
they do not like them
people ordinarily do not like
such poems,

bad poems, not relational, but more of

selfish, selfcentered, egotistical
like my mirror,
my walls,
my fences,
my closed windows,
a closed train station where the trains are all grounded
broken wheels

well, he bleeds for all these
but what can he do

they find them irrelevant,
the poems he likes most
are unpopular

the readers junked.

RIC S. BASTASA
sunset
weak rays of the sun
not so warm
dying

a brown dog plays in the sunset of grass
taking a jaw bone of
a pig from the farm nearby

a white dog comes to play with
him, but there is no more time
for this silly
thing to do,

this time all quarrels end
it is dimmer
now and all the children have to go home
now,
sunset, the white and brown dogs
find comfort in the dark with their glowing eyes in the dark
tonight

not just the jaw bone, the hind legs and the ears
and the belly of another pig

come astray.

RIC S. BASTASA
A fish that drinks like a fish, that is a fish in excess
A fish that fishes in troubled waters, that is a fish taking advantage of another fish in trouble
A fish that fishes or cuts bait, well, to be or not to be, to retreat or to attack, that is the fishy question
A fish that is neither fish nor fowl, is a fish that is neither one nor the other, lacking some convictions
A fish out of water, is a fish feeling left out, no longer in his accustomed environment

Do you have other fish to fry for now?

Is there other matter requiring my attention?

Poor fish,
the lake is finally fished out from his fishy mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
sleep now baby it is late

dreams, have some dreams

you need dreams to appease you
i will not be with you
anymore

come summer time
the sun shines in full glory

and i will be with my sunflowers
the wind
and the moon and some stars to carry me away

from my previous rainy days,

so sleep now,
dream about the sunflowers and let your hair flow freely
with the wind,

forget him for a while, think some more,
destiny awaits you
with so much anticipation,

without plans.

RIC S. BASTASA
today the cat and the dog of this house
have a holiday of their eternal quarrel
and jealousy

none speaks a bad word for each other
none of them
initiates an argument about whom
of them the master
loves better

none of them
speaks ill about the other neighboring cats
or dogs

the dog does not speak about the bone
the cat does not speak about the rats

both of them are silent and sad
and none wants to speak
beside their master

he is sick and dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
pity, sympathy,  
illwill, backbites,  
fear, rage, anger,  
envy,

need you utter them?  
to the man drunk with his failures  
(or even success)

do not, they serve no purpose  
but to make pain more serious,  
intoxicating  
seeping, penetrating pain  
grief,  
lamentations

just a tap,  
a hug,  
an embrace, a gentle gaze,  
a shake of the hand,  
or just sitting beside him

in silence, , , , , , , , , ,
you think that i should be excluded
because i opposed you

it is natural tendency to crush an
opposition

but you should have remembered about the
bow and arrow

without the strong string of opposition
where can the arrow be?

it is the string in me that pushed you to
a distance

i made you win and that is enough satisfaction
that i get from this

usual rejection. I have not explained myself.
I do not wish to be understood.

Let your fate be your own confusion.
without my laws of gravitation you could have

not fallen to the solid ground of your stability
you could have floated in space forever

and find for yourself forever lost in that
black hole of an uncertain existence.

Everyone will know, except you, who shall
continue blowing that horn of arrogance.

Soon it will be worthless. As i have predicted.

RIC S. BASTASA
the voice
the conscience
the interpreter,
she is

Nadine, not naive,
the African
lover of words,

the loot,

to pick things from life
from reality

land politics,
fractured human relationships,
AIDS,
violence,
belonging,
identity,
corruption,
education,
the situation of refugees in Africa,
ecology
globalization.
third birth.

what now,
Nobel prize?

RIC S. BASTASA
of this
she had too much
of that
she had too little
and of this and of that
i am a little bit confused
what to take
what to discard
what to leave
what to believe
buy this buy that
throw this throw that away
i take a step forward i am told to take another step backward
i think it must be this
but i think it can also be that
of this and that
of these and those
it does not matter what she really thinks
i have my own thoughts now
about this and about that
i will take this
and only this
from far away London
i shall have thoughts of my own
now.............................................

RIC S. BASTASA
the whirlpools of my mind
on a narrow strip my thoughts shall flow
and then strangely enough
the path widens unnecessarily from this
island
some whirlpools
giant whirlpools in fact i see from a distance
where i stand
but
i have no fears
because i am with you
and you are always silent
i take your hands
to my hands
and bring the mirror in the ship
sailing west
bound for England
perhaps there we will see some images
but not of ourselves
theirs
shall we be sad?

there is no bother
they are our brothers too.

RIC S. BASTASA
stained,  
you find a place there  
in that nook where you can be alone and find some  
solutions  
cleaning some stains  
sticking to your arms and hands, but it will not be long  
i smell chlorine  
concentrated chlorine from where she works  
day and night  
graveyard shifts  
and other extra hours uncomplaining  

she will join you  
for the cleansing, it will not really take that long  
just a matter of one hand  
then it will be over  

but your eyes will be hurt a little bit  
you know it.  

RIC S. BASTASA
you do not start at the end
you will not be understood
but you insist
to start from the end itself
it will be interesting you say
and they will follow you through
confused
they will mind every word
because they cannot understand
it is the end
you say is the most important
the most dramatic part
and that is all that they want
so you start from there
and end from the very beginning
inverted
but not really perverted
not for the fun
but for the run, now i understand you
like rashomon
more arguments shall come
like battered wives
complaining about their husbands
like children lost
finding their home in the streets
like some of us
wanting to start with nice endings
always finding hard
to end with new beginnings
for a start
but indeed, there is nothing
that is so hard
that cannot really be learned

RIC S. BASTASA
here they all come
beaming with pride
and solid hopes
the upcoming generation,
and i give them
all my respect
what is due them
now they shall take
i have given them
all that i have
all that i am
and all that i will
ever be

here they all come
i am giving way
i am all fed-up
now is their time
to feed us too

here they all come
and so i will go away....

RIC S. BASTASA
a common plague here
how a fly hovering on
a carabao's back
now behaves and feels like that
big black carabao itself?

not uncommon yet everyone speaks to no one about
this discrepancy as the carabao grazes on the pastureland stupidly as usual

RIC S. BASTASA
His fingers are strong and determined
And when he loves you
He chases, and follows you wherever you go
Like a river flowing like a brown river flooding
Scurrying its way to the mouth
Of the sea
Taking the least of resistance
But if obstructed
Like the river
There will be an overflowing
A strong raging of the waters
Of his fury
Taking everything
Houses trees fowls
Children, men, and women
And boulders
And lands
Those that block his way

His arms embrace you
And he suffocates you with the pungent odor
Of his masculine love
He breathes deeply saving all his strength
He holds you tight
His chiseled muscled body pressed
Against yours
He bends he stands he kneels he bends
Again he bows to you
Touches you from the
Tip of your toe
To the tip of you
Hair and he surveys
Every inch of
Your flesh-territories
Obeys your wishes
Takes your command
And your desires
In full obeisance
Like a slave
He breathes deeply taking the strengths
Of a hundred bulls
He breathes in the force of the forests
And the trees
And taking all the grace in you
He thrusts at you like a storm
A strong wind
You are at the center of his power
You are loved you are not destroyed
You are one beautiful weakness giving in
To this force his strength his thrusts
And when this coiling
These bombardments
These lovely conquests
Are over
As he eats whatever
He needs to make
His fill
Of your love
Famished as he is
To his longings
Of you
Like an overfed boa
He lies next to you
His eyes gentle
His hands so tender
Resting on your breast
Caressing your thighs like a soft wind
A soft breeze from the green trees of the valleys
His lips to your nipples
You are warm and wet
In so sweet still warm embrace
It is over
He is exhausted
And you are
Satiated.

RIC S. BASTASA
it happens all the time
when the right man feels
that he has wed the wrong woman
when the wrong woman too
feels that he has
wed the wrong man,
mutuality of affections
on errors

i sometimes feel that too
and i ask again
have i married the wrong woman?

have i been the right man
claiming all along that i am
the right man?

why? did the trials not work
for both of us?

twelve years
the feeling about right and wrong is over now

i wake up early dawn
still sleeping beside her
at least in the silent lonely hours of my life
i have this companion
and she is warm beside me
and then i think again
she can be right
and i can be wrong

who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
your picture had long been
taken out from my pocket
i have thrown it
in the river that flows to the sea
who knows where
it may be

i care not to know
i have long forced myself to forget you

but then true love no matter what
even with forceful forgetting
comes to you again
whispering her name

it seems that even without your picture
you name is still
embedded in my brain
your face is a memory
that cannot be forgotten
in the deepest crevice
of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
on that night i slipped on the snow
and fell upon
a certain coldness
with the depth
of a thousand silences
and then
i experienced the pain
so much pain
that i heard a certain
howling
of my soul

nobody hears
perhaps only the ears
with the wisdom
of nothingness

RIC S. BASTASA
some travel far and wide
sailing the oceans
flying the skies
from edge to edge
shore to shore
to find the meaning
of their lives

some just stay
and listen
and be so silent
listening to
the beatings of their hearts
and find something
steady inside
a flame
alive

and they say
they found
themselves
there

without even using
any word
or even
a sigh

because
there is nothing there to see and speak

RIC S. BASTASA
somewhere silence came in
between them
creating a space of indifference
though they want to fill
the space again
with desire

love if love is true cannot just
leave them in emptiness
they have imagined
this fullness
but it isn't there
they claim it was there but
they made it leave and so they want

another round of courtship of asking
that love may come again

she insists that a condom is a must
and that they cannot just romanticize love
and have regrets later
as she enumerates a list of possibilities: AIDS, Hepatitis A, B, C, D
and STDs
(she is the doctor and he is a lawyer and both are married)

and he argues, 'when you make love do you imagine diseases?
what kind of lover are you? '

and she says, ' I am just a practical lover, i don't take risks'

' I don't mind the disease. I only mind the face and body and soul of the person i
make love with. We all die anyway, and i don't want quantity
i am contented with quality! '

she demands that he use the condom still
and he dismisses the order, as it was no longer a request
and he said
as a matter of conclusion
'honey, i am ready for what you can infect me',
he kisses her and tears begin to fall from her eyes.
she kisses him back forgetting her past, her present and his future.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are so many paths
and there is only me
and with you
there are only two of us

please do not take mine
it is too narrow
please do not go with me
i am simply
not comfortable with you

RIC S. BASTASA
the sweetness
lies
when the two of us
simply wish
upon a single star

when we look forward
in the same
direction to one sky
no matter
how dark

when we wish
for the moon
to shine
upon us

when we do not have
time
to look for the speck
of dust in each
other's eye

when we close our eyes
and dream
we we lose ourselves
in us
without asking why

RIC S. BASTASA
what is it that the vacuum cleaner
takes from you? dust and dirt and scattered pieces
on the floor
in your room and in your kitchen
from the carpets

and what is that the cotton takes too?
or the sponge? or the rags?
they will take in water, moisture,
and stains
from the walls
and your ears

and what does my heart take from you?
it will take your gaze
your smiles
your breaths and your whispers and your kisses
and your warm memories
it will take even your rivers
your sea
your world your universe
the stars and the moon
even your suns

RIC S. BASTASA
i like the irony of you talking to me and me listening to you but then when i start on an initiative of getting to know you, you tell me you prefer it that way at first when we remain as nothing but acquaintances that is you have no name i have no name we keep on living without touching i know this kind of mentality, you are this island that touches no one and i am an island too that must not touch you like men without fingers and hands and yet we take pride that we still have the heart to live with our hurts, i perfectly understand the meaning of distance this privacy elevating itself to a mystery

in short, i like it when you become
another very important hypocrite in my list worthy to be placed in the category of those who must be avoided.

RIC S. BASTASA
you cannot blame me
if i have not touched your
cheek with my fingers
you were too high for my
reach and my hands are
feeling short of that distance
now that i am alone you
cannot blame me if i
touch myself with my own
hands and rub it like an
Aladdin's lamp when
i even have to stretch
myself and giggle and
then something in me
explodes and for all the
the women whom i have
not kissed i am none of
your goddamn business

RIC S. BASTASA
A woman’s passion is easy to understand
The usual silence is her overwhelming
Yes,
It is her no that is consuming her really
A no to a kiss
A no to a hug
A no to a holding of her hand
A no to the fondle of her plump breast

A monster eating her
Longings and whims
Her desire
To spread to love against the skies

She will tell you
And she means it
She will kiss you with a
Spider’s kiss
Her hug would mean your surrender
And when she holds your hand she
Says there will be no stopping
There will be no excuses
There will be no reservation anymore
And when you fondle her breasts
She will rub your muscled chest
Her manner of hitting back
She would kill you if you would not
Go down under
And dig deeper
To her soul
Her fragility
Her unique nuances
Her calling sounds
Her moaning
Her way of loving you
A manner of reciprocating
Your advances
She is true too
In thoughts and in deeds
For what God has joined together
Let the man go further under.

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lies
when the two of us
simply wish
upon a single star

when we look forward
in the same
direction to one sky
no matter
how dark

when we wish
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and stains
from the walls
and your ears

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it will take your gaze
your smiles
your breaths and your whispers and your kisses

and your warm memories
it will take even your rivers
your sea

your world your universe
the stars and the moon
even your suns

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you talking to me
and me listening
to you but then
when i start on
an initiative of
getting to know
you,
you tell me you
prefer it that way
at first when we
remain as nothing
but acquaintances
that is
you have no name
i have no name
we keep on living
without touching
i know
this kind of men-
tality, you are this
island that touches
no one and i am
an island too that
must not touch you
like
men without fingers
and hands and yet
we take pride that
we still have the
heart to live with
our hurts, i perfect-
ly understand the
meaning of distance
this privacy elevating
itself to a mystery

in short, i like it
when you become
another very important hypocrite in my list worthy to be placed in the category of those who must be avoided.

RIC S. BASTASA
i like you
you are candid and smart and outspoken
we are afraid to know that you are dying
it is obvious
and you are speaking clearly with your words
chosen from the
courage of the veins in your heart
with so much
bravery with so much brevity
you are penning
this
requiem
without a dent of regret
whatsoever

RIC S. BASTASA
'Poetry has a great digestive system and can consume and recycle almost anything. It's the poet's persona that gives meaning to the process. The first important act of the imagination is to create the person who will write the poems. And that's not the end of it. We have to invent and reinvent who we are until we arrive at the self we can bear to live with and die with. Art demands of the artist the capacity for self-renewal. Without it, art withers. And so does the life.'
- STANLEY KUNITZ

what you were is not enough.
what you are is not enought either.
what you will be will always not suffice.

if you are a sigh
turn yourself into a word
if you are a word
reinvent reconvert
recycle
be not just a word
be a phrase
be this sentence
be this paragraph
be this short story
be this novel
be this universal prayer
of marvel

do not just be a nail but be a hammer
do not just be snail but be sparrow

what if you are nothing at all at the end?
then be the perfection of nothing
just be the best
of this reinventing

RIC S. BASTASA
Do not stand at my grave and weep;
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there. I did not die.

Written at least 50 years ago, this poem has been attributed at different times to J.T. Wiggins (an English emigre to America), two Americans: Mary E. Fry and Marianne Reinhardt, and more recently to Stephen Cummins, a British soldier killed in Northern Ireland who left a copy for his relatives. Others claim it is a Navajo burial prayer.

RIC S. BASTASA
the main entry
of course in tonight’s activity
is the
crotch

I like it as a noun
And will always
Be itself a
Very hot noun

They say it
Might probably be an
Alteration
Of a crutch

In 1563
It was a pole with a forked end
A prop of old men

Actually as we see it
A crotch
Is just an angle formed by
The parting of two legs

This is the one
That I like best
An image of parting legs
Now this becomes
My favorite verb: parting.

RIC S. BASTASA
tonight is a parting of
two legs and the meeting
of another two legs

tonight it is dark
and we shall provide the fire
that gives the heart
a hearth

it will be filled with light
and warmth inside our
armpits and hairs
and sweat

there is no reason to be sad
and be depressed
in a darkness that we do
not make

inside our minds we must
make the sun shine
we must make our own mornings
and clouds and
grassy grounds

RIC S. BASTASA
grief, sadness,
loneliness, devastation,
ruin

scene: a barren wasteland
time: the final hours of the night
character: Aldo alone
song: all by myself
recommendations: write more poems, stroll the park early morning and take your xanor drugs. Do not forget to wear tight jeans.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are telling me about a stone
who refuses to admit anyone simply
because it has no door, no room and no space
for someone like you,

you who does not even know what knowing someone
really means. you ask the stone for a space and it says no
and you tell the stone that it has a space
where the leaf and a dropp of water live

the stone says no, and you insist because of the state you are in
you are dying and you need a place
perhaps a burial space where you may finally lay yourself
to rest, but the stone still says no, telling you that it has
no feelings that for centuries it has always been its nature

stony, stony silence, stony stares, unfeeling, that in its
house of stone, there exists no word for sympathy
that it is simply living up to the demands of its true nature
its tradition, and you finally understand, yet somehow you
tell the stone about what it does not know

inside it there is this leaf with dew, there is dropp of water
coming from the rain, that until now it has not fully known,
that inside its stony silence, there is still this song
that it has a heart that it keeps denying.

RIC S. BASTASA
you begin your story about the birds
walking on telephone wires
or are they just there holding on
with their lives
intact with the clouds at their
claws and beaks

and then you tell your story
about a man walking on top of the water
and the many ways you can really do
it like some miracles they all remember

jesus!

i cannot be beaten. i write a poem
about a drifter who names his two kids
clouds and fog

i bring a cat for you to see to listen
to its paws

how silent they are.
like a cloud. like a fog on the harbor of the city

this crap about Robert
frost. we know them.

so please do not tell me again that it was you
who walk on top of the water
and i will not tell you about my kind of kid
poetry, cat's paws and harbors and fogs

and the silence in my room that i have chosen
as a delicacy for your
kind of escape, to the windmills, and to Miguel
his pony and his Spanish
prison.
dramatic spans
years and years of waiting
to get exactly what you want
in what you do

you reflect the need to wait for the return
of a particular quality of light,
time of day,
or time of year,
in order to proceed

selecting the mood
waiting for the right
time to unfold

about your struggles
with uncooperative weather
or other alterations in your chosen motifs,
in your effort to record faithfully
what you see and feel

all very impressive
such excessive literalness
your only aim,
devoid of interest

early surrealistic images
to recent staccato cityscape
and suave sculptures
and refined poetry

you were never literal
because at the end
you put the last line

exactly,
truth is never exact as they always
want to see and
write about it

RIC S. BASTASA
The river in you moves
Taking the least resistance
You shall be the water
That seeks your own level
In calm and still moments
Let me fish
In your moments of rage
I shall be the rock
In the moments of your dryness
I shall be the river bed nearby
We shall be always here
I shall be the bamboo grove
And you shall be the waters of the creek
Slowly passing, gently flowing by

RIC S. BASTASA
It is the moment when you kiss me
And hug me that I feel the pain
Thinking all the while
In said close, tender moment
The shortness of space
Between us
The acceptance that the kiss
The passion shall be short
Time kills
Time buries me again
On the widening space of emptiness
We left behind us
When you close your eyes
And without a word
You shall go
And be in the arms that own you

RIC S. BASTASA
You have seen my face
You have seen the way I smile the way I bend my back
My shoulder leaning on the door
As though greeting you
A nice day a promising future
The glow of sun
The coolness of the moon
The splash on the clear blue waters
By the pool
By the sea
The sail boat passing by
The ship on anchor
By the wharf
And the cotton clouds hanging
By the green mountains

The poems I write are sad
You read them and you cry
You say you relate
You say you feel
The sadness of my lines

Now you ask me
Who am i?
Was I the butterfly dreaming about the sad man?
Or was I the sad man dreaming about the butterfly?

You are confused
I am not; I choose what I want to be
I am what I am
This moment,
And the moments that you imagine me to be

I write what I want
I am what I am
The lines may be lying
But read them again
I may be somewhere in the lines between
if you search me if you love me that enough
you will find me in the rain
without an umbrella
you do not find me rushing
i have no reason to rush
and take the safety of a shed
you will find me shivering
my hair wet and uncombed
you will find me cold
my lips are pale
my arms are shaking
you will find me helpless
and weak and almost dying

you have to find me
i have no reason to live

please....

RIC S. BASTASA
we shall meet again on the shallow banks of
the running river on mossy rocks greener
and water drenched by the constant rain
darker horizons colder air and shivering silence

we meet again as wrinkled skin and white hair
bent and weak and surrendering to whatever that comes
and finally goes passing us by

we will just take a glimpse and confirm the reasons for
what happened and why it happened
it is enough, we shall take the last look of ourselves
and then we close our eyes and die

RIC S. BASTASA
our themes are always
revivals

how did i spend my summer
vacation?

what can i tell you about myself?

Lies i tell to mother are the same lies i tell to
friends

Truths that we keep to ourselves are the same
truths forever

The longer they are kept private
the more sober we become

our themes remain us
how soon we realize that we are just a theme

written and rewritten
copy and paste.

RIC S. BASTASA
when i left her i left no note
she was in that state of suspension what to really believe
there were words on the table but they were vague
she had kiss marks but they were confused
and she had reasons to be sad at first
then she was lost and then she said she was angry
to the laziness of time to its withholding of what could have been
easily said and should have been
well said and well meant

life was not easy and life need not be clear
to be blunt and be understood with so much pain
it is better hanging
like a leaf waiting for the gracious wind to pluck it off
and fall without so much knowing as though it was merely riding
on its puff and huff and then dry, and rot and be gone

we shall meet again when our minds are calm and strong
when our hearts are toughened by extant sorrows
when our faces have thickened when our smiles are smoothed
i have already prepared my self with what words to say
for 25 years or more that i too have suffered
and what she might say i have rehearsed my ears what to hear
and be not guilty and be not pained anymore

life is easier now i have enough space for guilt
a stronger heart to carry them all and then leave
and move on with my life as though nothing really happened

RIC S. BASTASA
the water is getting too hot.
it is inside a glass. The sun is at its highest.

There is hot coal beneath it.
You know what happens.
A glass is about to break into pieces.

It is your own making.
It is the kind of thing that you watch.
You like it. You expect it.

You have no choice later
but to leave it. You have planned this.

You go somewhere else.
It is not your place anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
so you have proclaimed freedom
you have said it all: no food, no shelter, no clothing, no nothing
except freedom
just the feel of being free and being freed from everything

naked, and homeless, and hungry,
and then so

unfree.....

freedom, what is freedom, there is more to be learned
there is more to be done
there is more to be responsible about it

this freedom from need, from want, from being so ignorant
and shackled with that limitless desire to be free from feelings

without the mind?

RIC S. BASTASA
You have grown well
Soft hands
A Tender heart
A reflective mind
Going over the past
And finding something
Some gems
And they glitter
In your memory
Now, you shall write about them
They shall speak to you
And you shall listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Some are not really causes
But just symptoms
And we misdiagnose
A sickness
For a symptom
Of the real sickness

The cause
And the effect
Are often interchanged

For instance
Is poverty the cause
Of crime
Or is poverty
Only the symptom
Of it?

For instance
Is ignorance
The cause of poverty
Or is it simply
An effect of poverty?

Or is poverty
Nothing but an effect
Of ignorance?

Or is poverty
Just an effect
Of an oppression
Of the rich
Taking much
From the poor
Who gets poorer
Everyday
Because there
Are no reforms
Coming
To solve
His poverty
His ignorance
His having to commit a crime
To survive
His poverty
His ignorance
His being a crime
Of
Society itself
who never cared
And wanted him
Who never
Instituted the much
Promised reforms?

And so you doubt
The cause and effect
The effect from cause
And if you did not mind so
Well
They may always be
Interchanged
And mistaken
For the symptoms
The conditions
That always
Are
there deceiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
35 Degrees Centigrade

at 35 degrees
girl! it is hot

and i am sweating

at 45 degrees
i am ready

on to bed
i am sleepless

i am a log rolling
trying to catch moss

i am a stone
silent and hardened

i look at the moon
and i ask for wisdom

what's love got to do with this?
i am hot and loveless

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowly you shall let them see your eyes
Lifting some veils and setting aside the curtains
To let in some light
The air to freshen a bit of this
Twosome Discomfort
This hiding and pretending not to seek
What lies ahead
The two of us
You dream you are a butterfly
And you tell them one night
That you have known how to flutter
Away from me
Into the world of your own dreams
I have no cause to hold you now
On your powdered wings
You shall go to farther places
Even without me
Mapping out your destinations
I will be sad for a while
But I will be happy soon
I have let you be
I shall set you free
To be yourself again
Now you must tell me
How the nectars of your chosen flowers taste

RIC S. BASTASA
the flowers of youth are growing brown around your garden
the leaves fall and the buds grown tight, no longer unfolding
bridges lose their bearings and rivers catch them falling
the splintered wood float like so many boats drifting
things decay, strength is forgotten in the face of weakness
loneliness conquers even the memory of brighter hours
soon your face will be a small photograph almost like a stamp
on a very important letter that i mailed to someone very far away

RIC S. BASTASA
sad indeed,

there are other freedoms
still

freedom from having no ideas, from this dryness,
freedom from having you
as a poet on forced wit and half-cooked cleverness
freedom from a reader
who has nothing to offer
except his own loneliness
his having nothing to do
freedom from being bored
to death
freedom from having nothing
to say and comment
freedom from this feeling of emptiness
this bigotry
this indigestion of dumb thoughts
freedom
from impertinence, immateriality, irrelevance,
freedom from thinking about freedom
freedom from freedom itself
there are more

freedom from pain
is useless now

that you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
i see you walking on the snowy land
alone
there is no shining sun
the paths too slippery
for your asian
feet

you feel the world is too narrow for you
and you do not fit
like thread
to the eye of the needle

you have cried
more than many times that your fingers
can no longer count them
you have put too much
salt
on the snow

the air is dry and everything
is humid
there are no leaves on the trees
no birds singing
on this harsh foreign land
you are still
alone

on a broken heart you shall thrive
on broken wings you shall try
to fly away again
but for how long
my friend?

my friend do not be lonely
your home is waiting
warmer
the sun is always there
to caress your cold skin
and the moon at night
awaits you
for some more poems
that i make
to appease the
anger in your heart

come home my friend
they have been waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
reedom
what shape is freedom?
a flicker
on the candle in the dark night
the wind blows
and the flicker moves anywhere
the wind goes

freedom?
the strong wind puts the light out
on a single blow

freedom?
the candle knows how to make its own flame
and lets go some of its melting matter
freely flowing its own body
consuming itself
down the drain
to its foot

like tears
the molten drops slide
and solidify

taking some shapes
misconceived
unassigned by us

freedom?
the freedom to take our own shapes
the freedom to consume ourselves
the freedom to be finally
extinguished

freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
i see you rise from the ashes
to become a star

up there in the skies
you glitter
in the deep black night
you are glorious in your light

the distance between us
this separation
stone am i in this garden
star you are to the heavens

there is only silence
and up there you do not see me
you do not even remember perhaps
the significance of any stone

or dust
you were once just a dust
on a leaf
you once were but a patch of me

oh, i watch you tonight
oh, you glorious star in the heavens
you have been given a place with the gods and goddesses
but in a sense
i do not envy you
in truth i may have missed you
and i may have followed you
the ways and means that i have taught you

how to be a star how to be a shining glory
but i didn't
i like it here
i love it here in this little garden of earth
where i am but a stone
for these little ants where they are building a home
measure my love
i will love you without measure
there you shall fail
this love has no number
unquantifiable

your measure cannot measure
this love immeasurable
this love so
unbearable

you measure me again
this love like a flame on your oil lamp
shall then die

RIC S. BASTASA
tomorrow is another day
where you mark another boundary of awareness
your mind adds another layer
the layers of the past like onions that you peel
with your fingers
your eyes staring
taking each peeled reality as a must
the tears fall
your eyes dry
tomorrow you shall say thank you
you have lived and shall live some more
you shall be sorry for those who died
for those who left you
empty halls and empty rooms
you have more reasons to live and continue
what they have really wanted to do
but didn’t have the time
hastily cut and utterly wasted by untimely deaths
tomorrow my friend
you must start wearing beautiful eyes those that smile
those that must assure the world
about a fulfillment of its dreams and wishes
those that must affirm beauty and wisdom and truth
shed off old skins and take the new ones
a brave mind, a calm spirit, a determined body
take a self that can hold much
because others are weak and failing
look out for dreams that shall make you whole
gather the fragments, make this mosaic of love and happiness
take the petals of happy moments one by one in your hands
put them in the bowl of your emptiness
put there the cool waters of your composure
take all sense and scents and sit in solitude
be not disturbed about sadness and insecurities
all these are now under the soles of your feet
all these are now taking their own defeat

you stand facing the sun, brave and bold
there is more to hold and to mold
there is more to be done in this world
there is more to be written and spoken to behold!

(happy birthday, one day more, another destiny)

RIC S. BASTASA
you once said
you are unhappy
you live on this hard shell
of a tortoise
and your burden
is such that you cannot
really move freely
as a bird with its wings

you wish the burden
melts into your skin
and it is done

then you say
the skin binds you
and the flesh and bone
are burdens too

you want something
lighter like the feathers
of a free bird
something light and easy
and verily free
and it is done

i am happy to see
you flying in the skies
doing some acrobatics
in space
chirping some melodies
under the trees
diving in the sea
teasing the rivers
and this hovering
on the cows

and today i hear
a different song
a sad song from a bird
by my window
it is you
you want to return
to the hard shell of
the tortoise
you miss the silence
and the privacy
of your hiding

now, you have doubts
what burdens are
what freedom is
and this cannot just
be easily done

RIC S. BASTASA
take this empty paper cup
i have in my hand
it is empty
and you will fill it
i ask of you

you think of the hot water
and coffee
so i may not sleep for days

you change your mind
you take the cup
and fill it with coldness
like chunks of ice

no i will not crack
on this sudden change
like the empty cup
in your hand
i am simply made of paper

throw me crumple me
i am prepared and i really
do not mind at all

i have always felt
the same love for you
even in the midst
of a frosty day
on thick fogs
on cold tin roofs

RIC S. BASTASA
a metaphor is easy to make
and so easy to recall

remember the cat's feet like a fog
leaving softly the harbor in the city?
remember a misery that jumps like a flea &
bites you and you cannot sleep
and you say life is like that
a flea

remember
you think of time as a growing child
a man,
a wild man running and chasing
virgins that must make most of their time
because
time is a-flying and
the rose that blooms today
tomorrow
may be dying

remember time in a bottle

remember life like a fruit fly trapped
trying to figure
out how to escape
and you say life is like that
a fruit fly

remember death
like a woman sleeping in her chambers
closing the curtains
and you say
death is like that
a mere closing of a curtain

just like that

remember how
loneliness is like a steel tunnel
you get in there,
some birds hover and fly away from you
you get in there,
and there seems to be no light visible
at the end

loneliness

life is like that

you see
metaphors and dissect every vein
every artery
every bone and
cartilage of
these metaphors that you
say do not exist
in prose

, , , , , , , , , , that you say do not exist in my prose

mine is not poetry
mine is a poverty of poetry
and you claim
yours is the basket the cornucopia of true poetry

good for you, you are the prima donna
of this
dance
this quibble in poetry

it does not matter

give me some metaphors
about poverty, discrimination, meaninglessness,
purposelessness,
non-being, the metaphysics of early death
a being-in-distress
an addict
a streetchild
a battered wife
a cruel father
a hypocrit priest
an embittered professor
a disgruntled student
give me some metaphors about
corruption, lying presidents, secret killings

you are the master of metaphor
you are the queen of slave
metaphors

so be it.
make me a poem to the strictures of metaphor
give poems a strange face
a hybrid of dog and man

make them read and not understand
delude them
give them illusions
confusions

make them baffled, submissive, uncritical, uncomplaining complacent,

bewilder them to your secret,
derivative and too personalized
metaphors

and you are happy
they do not understand a thing

and they will believe that you are God.

for those that we do not understand
we call it mystery
we call it metaphor
we call it

unquestionable.

let the oppression stay.
let the discrimination live in the metaphors that you have made.

RIC S. BASTASA
hair blown by the wind the two of us in the morning meadows
laughing and light as the air that carries us to the sea
you hold my hand you lead me you pull the kite with you
colors of blue and white spreading in the skies
you tie the kite on a tree and we lay ourselves on the grass
softness is you and my heart beats the notes of our love song
we sit side by side we feel we own this wide world
we hear the birds sing we listen to the flow of the river
we see how free are the fish riding on the currents

we look at each other's eyes, then we by instinct close
what was once open, we go inside us, gently our lips touch

there is so much color when our eyes closed
it tastes so sweet that our souls are like tongues licking
the sweetest honey on our skins on our whole bodies

we write happiness not in the usual words that they use
the ink is invisible the pen moves not with the hand but

with the heart with the soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Here is a man who cannot tell a lie anymore.

You surely will not like him.

He is this

Dead man in the coffin.

RIC S. BASTASA
r Pig And Her Piglets

The mother walks ahead with so much pride
While the children lower their heads in shame

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Blame Your Father

it is you
my dear child
who is the father
of man

learn to
grow
and feel
how it was
when
your father
too
was younger

RIC S. BASTASA
Greed And Corruption

he deceives
the lowly turtle
taking all the
ripe bananas
that the
slow put
planted

up there
where he situates
his stinking hairs
he puts
the bananas

in his belly
his cheeks
his feet
his tail

this monkey
and his two friends
see
the title
for better
reference

RIC S. BASTASA
War The Cost Is Great

and by all means
plain citizen of this
republic

the cost
shall be added
as another burden
on your backs

RIC S. BASTASA
366. In Fifteen Lines

you write
2. a poem
fifteen lines

4. i always look
rd
the fifteenth line

best line
there
it will just be the line
10. i read

last line

is deigned
dignity

15. condescendingly, a respect to the brevity of poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
we need a smile
give it
we need a hug
give it
we need a happy
disposition
give it
just the same

that is the spirit
tonight
you may cry
alone
we are tired
of tears
we are bored
with sadness

tonight
inside our respective
hideaways

we suffer alone
that my dear
is patriotism

RIC S. BASTASA
Geese, Wild Geese

when was it that
you started to fly?

when was it
when you learned
the power
of the V-formation?

tell us
humans, we who also
want to fly

using the power
of our poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Dark Like The One Last Night

a dark rose growing from a dark
concrete crevice of
this deserted building
on a dark night
spreading its dark petals
for dark dreams

on a fine morning
when darkness
is gone
the dark rose
comes out in the open
to meet the sun
embracing it
with so much light
turning into something
sort of a blood reddish
colored rose
something like
glowing

but still dark
like the one last night.

RIC S. BASTASA
A dance in the dark Is a nude dance
Two forms Fuse as one

Shades in the Dark with some Specks of light
A dance of Coming and going

One that tells me Out you go And yet takes Me by her hand

And without a Word the two Forms kiss
and Lose themselves In an empty space

Where the specks Of light may Turn into fire
a wild fire A burning dance A wild dance

And it stops only As the Two Lovely Forms
Become the dark And an empty space.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart Is Stained With Utter Loneliness

departure has no color

but when you leave me
my heart
is stained with the utter
blot of
loneliness

it's color is black
it is night

RIC S. BASTASA
371. A Fan Of Basho

From the 15th floor of this building
You said you will jump
Do not expect the sound of water

Now, stop acting like a frog
Death is not poetic

RIC S. BASTASA
To let go
Off the disturbing ripples of doubts inside my heart
I will sit beside this placid pond
To see the full moon
Sitting at its throne.

RIC S. BASTASA
People come and go
Moving away
To new places
Looking for conformity

I am here
Allured by the sweet scent
Of sampaguita

On this mountain
Of tranquility

And like the tender
Flowers of Dove Orchids

Clinging to
The barks tenaciously

I have decided
To stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
tell me honey
how does it feel to be lonely
to be faceless
to be loveless
in a crowd
of people, thousands of them walking
roaming this earth
all looking for love and not finding any
in a crowd of namelessness
always looking at each other
in short glimpses
without saying
hello?
tell me how does it feel now
when he left you and when you told him
i do not need you

when your heart
calls for his name saying
i still love you,
but you didn't
tell me how to tell myself when i have pretended too much
not needing anyone
when alone in my room now
i wish
i in an instant dies,
begging for company
for someone
to touch
warmth
tell me how to breathe now
tell me how to live
tell me how to love and keep love and live
this broken
heart
in this faceless, loveless
locomotion in a
crowd
where there is practically no one
to say
hello

not even goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Along the rough mountains
Passing a winding river
Crossing some forests
You shall pass
To meet me
For this night of rendezvous

In my little hut
The night may be cold and damp
This love between us
Shall build a fire
To withstand coldness
And destroy distances

RIC S. BASTASA
when he sits beside her
she knows what she wanted

him

and she pretends that she is just
nothing but a girl
whose hands are small and so fragile
and he of course
will be tender to any kind of girl like

her

but she is more than a girl now that
he must know
she knows where to touch him
and tell him
you are sitting beside this

woman

he must take a look some more
her eyes are not innocent
he will remember the eyes
of the woman
who slept in bed with him
last night
this smell that she has stolen
this smell
of a woman, now she looks at him again
lingering
if he still sees the same little girl
whose hands he thought
are innocent

and so fragile.

RIC S. BASTASA
i enjoy

the reflections of your light

from a distance

where you burn

when you see me

looking at you

i enjoy your flame

it is warm

from where i stand

i go near you

i may burn

like you and may hurt myself

but it does not matter now

i have no name

to protect i have nobody

to comfort me

i have no choice but to burn

myself with you

and they will not remember
anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
when you step in my garden
of earth
water
and fire

you are the woman there
looking softly
daintily whispering to the
cherry blossoms

that now they must bloom
because love is here
and for the moment
it will be full
whole,

stay there
and let the cherry blossoms
take a moment with you
in excitement
some of them dance with the
wind and sadly
now you shall watch them
softly
daintily falling like some
tiny white butterflies
still learning
how to flutter.....................

RIC S. BASTASA
how small and far can we be
when love
breaks,
how small is our way of looking
at love's other possibilities
when love is lost
and gone away,
we shrink in pain
and we become so insignificant like a
dropp of rain to the ocean
or a granule of sand
on the shore

yet love is vast
its domain is encompassing the earth
and space
the whole of this expansive universe
so why cry
when one love is gone when this or that love leaves you
it is just one moment
come to think
a little higher and be lighter to reach the feelings of the stars
the foresightings of the moon
learn to love again
and be stronger in every loss
rise higher from every fall
mend that broken heart
and embroider in there the golden threads
of another love
even lovelier than before
because for once you know what love is
when it dies
it is reborn
resurrects itself always lovelier that ever before.....
wipe your tears and let you eyes glow
brightly to another soul
another face waiting for you,
he loves you so....
Seeing you my love my heart begins to burn and burn and burn
Unstoppable to fire
I pause and look at you and take a hard look at you some more

You are simply beautiful!

So beautiful to behold in my burning burning burning heart
Unstoppable to fire
I take another hard look
I stop the world revolving
To see you again and again and my heart burns and burns and burns
Till I am consumed
Looking

Just the mere idea of looking at you

You look at me
Our eyes meet

I am speechless
And look away to the other side of dangling things

The world revolves again and I with it
Leaving you because you can never be with me

In this
Revolution

Meanwhile you wonder why the place where our eyes just met smells ash
I said something just burned sometime somewhere perhaps last night or so

And so

You will never ever know

RIC S. BASTASA
i will be sad today
a new road is constructed
sort of shortcut leading to my village
direct to the veins of the city
gloom rules my day
the sun dips below the eaves
no tree is spared
old
and many of the new ones too are felled
in the name of
progress,
i revolt to this
but i bow to that

i am helpless,
i will be one of the steps going away
back
to that old road
where the trees shall grow freely, taller and proud
on this long and
winding road
intense going inwards to the tranquility
of the mind's
intimate intricacies

RIC S. BASTASA
Many kiss the hand they wish cut off

we despise the pleasure of pleasing people whom we despise

The lips are smiling, but is the heart?

A hypocrite is the kind of politician who would cut down a redwood tree, then mount the stump and make a speech for conservation

The value of an idea has nothing to do with the success of the man who expresses it.

It is with pious fraud as with a bad action; it begets a calamitous necessity of going on.
Every man alone is sincere;  
at the entrance of a second person  
hypocrisy begins.

The wolf was sick,  
he vowed a monk to be-  
But when he got well,  
a wolf once more was he.

It is a trick among  
the dishonest to offer  
sacrifices that are not needed,  
or not possible,  
to avoid making

For neither man  
nor angel can discern hypocrisy,  
the only evil  
that walks invisible.  
those that are required.

RIC S. BASTASA
your face
it is not beautiful

but nonetheless
your face
fills my mind

yet i think
of you everyday
in my mind

this love persists
i cannot explain somehow
this foolishness
of my dumb heart

i am in love to an ugliness
that i cannot explain

my brain is angry though
but nonetheless

it manages to fabricate
an explanation

to kill this love so true

RIC S. BASTASA
a word from you, then you stop
something choppy
i like to listen more from you
another word, cut into half
i am having a hard time
figuring out what is there
with you that wants to hold
me, i stop to listen again,
some scratches from your
tongue, some gnashing from
your teeth, i am listening still,
some more words, more of
pauses, like some commas
are constructed by you on
purpose, i am tired in this,
i am impatient, you stretch
your arms to reach me again,
as i go nearer tapping my ears,
for you, yet there is this
suppression of meaning,
i am listening still, you
close your eyes and then
open them, this time some
tears fall, like ripe drops
of rain from dark clouds,

i see, your heart is broken
and your mind cannot
understand perfectly,
your mouth haggles
with words that your
tongue cannot form

simply because love is always misunderstood.

RIC S. BASTASA
how i wish the world is blind to see me naked and broken
they always say
ever since i was small
this little boy is ugly
he will not have a promising future

(did they think that i better be thrown
to the sea and be eaten by sharks
or to the forest so i can be the prey
to those predators?)

they let me live, however,
thanks, nonetheless, and i have grown to be what i am

ugly
learning to live this way
ugly

time however has told me a different story
about the ugliness that lies only on the surface of
things, and living memories have grown in me
the seeds

some possibilities
for beauty

like i can grow a mind of my own
like i can be cultivated like a beautiful flower
of my choosing
in my own garden

like i can have the possibility of
a sweet scent
or i can be a slender plant that will bear
some luscious fruits
to feed the world and make it feel
that i can
quench its thirst
or satisfy its hunger
i have learned patiently
how to be a better possibility and long time ago
when i undressed myself
removing some layers of sadness
and confusion
skin upon skin upon skin

i was once afraid of everything
the windows
the cracks and the crevices
i was once afraid of the hundred eyes of this world
those walls barring me
those writings on the fences of my existence
shouting that

i am ugly
(that i do not have the right to live
or anything to live with)

i go naked again
time places another mirror at the center of my
thoughts,

to see another me
i am beautiful
in my nakedness

now, i do not wish anymore a blind world
so it can see the unfolding
the coming of my
thousand possibilities like some kind winds
white sea caps and gentle sands,

i am beautiful and i really know it now
by heart

this confident soul undressed and still so beautiful.

that you, my lovely world,
must start to see.
i like you and i am not that naive
so i tell you frankly i like you but i am honest enough
not to use the word
love
it is too early to use that in this brief meeting
and there will be no meaning
at all

time
let time walk with us
for long
you may hold my hand and then tell what do you feel
when we see leaves falling

let us wait what goodbye
tells us
if it says it hurts if time mentions the word
longing
then sooner i may tell you the word
love
and then i will tell the right way to say this word

us, or
we

perhaps it will be very lovely

RIC S. BASTASA
if there is no place that can accommodate
your sadness,
i know how sweet is the
feeling of departure

you are prepared to spread your wings
but your heart is still as heavy as the weight
of your legs
but then you have the right to fly away
from sorrow
to drift away from lament

happy trip my friend
i send you my blessings
i wish you all the luck to finally reach your destination
happy flying with your wings
but before you finally go
let me know
the secret of your having grown
those pair of big and strong wings
tell me which part of your body
are you hiding your hands
for soon if i have some
i may fly away from
sadness too.

RIC S. BASTASA
how i wish to put my world
in the four corners of a can
where i can be at peace
in such smallness

but i know that cannot be done
it is not only me
it is also you and such a space
will be too small

we cannot fit there anymore
so open up
let us try the world where the river flows
where our vast dreams
may sail

you and i
and these uncertainties of murky waters
of hazy clouds
of morning mists
dark nights
and
howling dogs

RIC S. BASTASA
it is the rain once again
that keeps this conversation alive
even if we do not intend
to like it

the road is muddy
and this rain continues to fall heavily
on the roof of my house

the river along the path
that you shall take
shall rise and may threaten
you

there is no choice for you
but to stay a while
and keep this conversation alive
about the rain

the rain that we are not making
they come
not from the clouds
they come
deep within our hearts
they gather

to give way to tears

RIC S. BASTASA
August 6, 1945, 
B-29...... 
Enola Gay..... 
the island of Tinian

headed north by northwest.....
on the deltas..... 
Honshu Island

.....civilian population of 300,000 and 
....43,000 soldiers.

Little Boy, The bomber, 509th...Colonel Paul Tibbets, ....31,000 
8: 15 a.m. Hiroshima 
released 'Little Boy, ' 
9,700-pound uranium bomb,

over the city. Tibbets dove away 
avoid the anticipated shock wave.

Forty-three seconds later, 
a huge explosion 
lit the morning sky

Japanese Second Army 
were doing calisthenics.

'The city was hidden 
by that awful cloud... 
boiling up, 
mushrooming, 
terrible and 
incredibly tall, ' Tibbets recalled.

RIC S. BASTASA
This knot which binds us
Is killing me
You just don’t know
And I cannot tell you
I am choked
And you are kissing me.
Please, please
Do not close your eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
her name is marjorie and she locks herself in a room
for seven days

to make a poem, weaving her dreams, folding an empty paper

to make her crane, carefully, folding distances between the seasons as she gathers wind
and fire

she takes a plant to survive and water it

care, she must care
lest she too dies

she opens a window one day to let her crane fly away

pure
& empty, the crane unfolds its wings as she watches her years go by

like the way she wants some things to be unclear and undefined because they are simply meant
to be that way, like the way that I try to confine her in my frame of mind

she is and she will be, always, pure and then empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
we stand
at the scrub board
of a laundry sink filled
with soaking sheets

strangely moving,
close-cropped images

banal becoming eloquent
the tension between

the baroque folds of crumpled
white cloth
the geometry of the unremarkable
the transparent plane
of the water's surface
transforming the space
in another dimension

we stand and watch
in Spain.

RIC S. BASTASA
despot rants - no trust
bestowed on boudoir and chest
leech beast beaten

RIC S. BASTASA
Do not be surprised now in these dark times
I have no fears
Nothing is late for you to play with me
In this dark room
Or outside where there is no moon
Where the only presence we know
Are our words without our bodies
Our sounds of endearment
There are no eyes not even the nose
Sometimes the hands
When occasionally
You learn to touch me

When mothers celebrate life
Or fathers take pride in their posterity
The names of their children and grandchildren
Their grand place in this world
We cannot take part
We cannot even watch
We turn into moles
They belong to the center stage of life
And the sun shines on all of them
Except us

Did we choose this place
Where the trees do not have fruits
Where the shrubs do not have flowers
Where the root crops do not have any flesh?
Where the vines do not have the perfect tendrils?

We did not
We wanted to live just like them
Or anybody else
We have asked the questions
They do not have the answers
I see your face blankly staring at the window
On this dark night
I pity you
I have the answers but I will not tell you
It is getting late and we need
The sound sleep we too deserve
We have more nice places inside our dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
incense, sweat
flower-scent and
candle smoke
and yes, burnt good years
charred goodbyes
mortar fire
rotten hellos
and tear gas

earthy tobacco
from cigars lit
in a four-star mouth

stench of fear
the smell of terror
from a furious horde
reeking of dying heroes
of these domestic wars
and splattered brains
of us
poets
the ones
whom you do not
know
the ones whom you
do not notice

RIC S. BASTASA
he taught me this one thing, that pain knows
no size
no breadth
it understands no bigger no smaller no more no less

it is the same thing
for men and women and children
the rich
and the poor feel it

with pain everyone
becomes the saddest person in this world

(i know you are feeling it, now)

RIC S. BASTASA
this will be confrontational
life-size views of grimy bathrooms -
a glimpse of a toilet,
a window,
and a shower pan,
or of a bathroom sink

In the last, he plays tricks with perspective
kind and gentle
i, stand before the fictive sink;
the mirror returning my image,
i see the blank tile wall behind me,

as if i had become invisible
your expectations
at once dislocated and defeated
how can you paint
a confrontation like this?

RIC S. BASTASA
when we are far away from each other
at continent's length
we want to reach each other's arms and
when we cannot we always have someone
some other cause to blame
like the zodiac, or the alignment of the stars
and the planets, or the society or even
the structures like some falling pillars
and blasted walls

but in truth when we meet and become
so near like a dinner for two
or a dance where our cheeks lean over
each other we soon realize this feeling of

i detest you and you detest me
we soon realize, that this feeling of indifference
has stayed within our hearts

for truly we have identified with the world in pain
and to take revenge for a sickness without cure

we pretend we are humans missing another likeness.
it happens, right there where we exchanged words
we must accept, another relationship has ended
and we in fact, really do not care less.

RIC S. BASTASA
words like a forest hide me
and you will not see me crying
because my eyes have become leaves
without tearglands

words like a wall of rain cover
my weeping with the sound of its heavy rainfall
and you cannot hear me anymore
except the tender sound of a shower
and the rolling of the accompanying thunder

now i have grown words like a garden of grass
and some seeds are groomed to become trees
now i have kept my words like wild vines
and climbers and they cover everything about
my grief and lamentations

now you ask me where i am, ask my words
oh they will not tell you. You are my pain.
And there is no word equivalent to your name
anymore in this forest, in this grassy garden.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a crisis in faith
because one has looked up there where the stars
are faithless themselves

their doubts are as myriad as their
twinklings
their being lost are shown with the
way they die
one by one in an explosion
that is missed by your
limited eyes

try moving inward, into the caves of your heart
where the silence of the veins
and arteries are found

where red blood of life passes
in and out of the valves without much complaint
where the heart works all its lifetime
to tell you about love
and tenderness

and care and patience and passion
to love the words of God till the end of its own time.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are things that
do not last, wood,
what with termites,
and metal, what with
the salt and the
sea that gives us
more memories,
yes, memories too
same thing with love
unrequited, pain, same
manner with temporary
joys, success, same thing
with failures....
ah, nothing lasts forever,
something that still comes
may outlast
us...

RIC S. BASTASA
on a spell of awe,
something is written,
with regret, something that
is borne out of a heavy
heart, a weary mind,
like a stranger moving
into another land,
broken houses, sad homes,
a lost teen-age son,
there are lines that
show them,
but still on another
show
like a beach with a
blue umbrella
a woman with a
straw hat and
a man with his pipe
and sunglasses....

RIC S. BASTASA
a flood of love
who can stop it?
don't ask
i will, i am strong,
i can stop a rush of
waters inside
my chest, the storms
rage on
i am sailing
without the motors,
but i stopped it
though
with so much
collateral damage,
but i did,
at noon, i shrug
my shoulders
and laugh out loud,
but at night
when i am weak
and asleep
the flood of love
rush inside
a dream
you cannot see it
somehow
and that is the most
important matter

everything is well
in that dream
i am an open
highway
with cactus on
the side
of the road
and sun above
my head
do not blame me
as i also understand myself
passionate
but not ultimately crazy
on some
calculated risks and
tiptoe dances,
i have some compromises
to make
i dream of you and hug you
and make love with you
there in haze
and misty scenes
hot, torrid, and
elusive as a
eel

slimy feeling, brutish touches,
lips on fire, cinder hands,

i shall never tell you that i love you
because it will be a comedy of errors,
a circus, forget it,
there are strangers of the night
that settle for shadows,

the poems are useful in all these
there is a vent, air passes in there
the room gets freshened,
breathe, breathe, life exhales like a
smoke

live, and be happy like a fly on some
kind of dung....

RIC S. BASTASA
even if she flies away
inside that plane for
eighteen hours, the memory
of his love
still lingers like it is a woman
inside a plane for eighteen
hours and arriving on
that land of coldness he
still lingers like a scar on
her cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
inside this room
many sweet moments
carpet, glossy reds,
scented oranges,
coolest greens,

they do not have
to be all here
to be remembered

sands
steps waves of amber
foamy sighs
it was never the
madness of wolves
never

furious ecstasies
wandering lusts
settled
love was there
it was love
why can't you learn
to accept the
fact of scars and
deformities
parts of inner
longings too

do not pretend
there was love
there was love too....

RIC S. BASTASA
this is the nook
some of the words here
are pleasing
prostitutes
they are all well dressed
for the occasion
of loneliness
but they know how to give
the best of
what is here
we toast for thoughts
we murmur the metaphors
all products of
our drunkenness
we shake hands with the
hands of ideas that
we know for the first
time
exist
the dancers are naked
we watch and gaze
we salivate
as they paginate
this is a soft bound world
cheap and
papery
dusts abound because it
cannot be read
the spiders make their homes here
weaving lies....
RIC S. BASTASA
when you wear a thong
love begins to love you
you imitate its nudity
and look for intimacy
like some stings and strings
when you go naked all the way
with pubic hairs in some array
on an island of light
nipples protruding and
legs on a graceful spread
in bed
dim lights and scents of
magnolias
things perhaps shall make
some changes
departures turning into
welcomes
arms into wings
feet into ponds
how peaceful after love
how caressing time becomes
why not?

RIC S. BASTASA
to go to you
i must enter a room

i open a door
of dreams

when i am there
finally
i try to touch your
face
your body

i long again
to make love with
you

you are a mirage
on such pretenses

a shadow from the
moon

a mist on a very
cold morning

you have not
withstood the crucible
test
of light.....

RIC S. BASTASA
throughout these years
do not mind the tempest
what is important is that
we remain as teas
pleasing to the taste buds
of the gods,
it is not us anymore that
matter
it is the idea about us
it sticks as carbonates
inside the bottom
no one sees it
but its weight creates
that fact...

RIC S. BASTASA
THERE is still light
piercing the
blinds,

it settles on the
soft spot
of the pillow

it hits the iris
of my eye

it says there is
a reason for
mornings

for mourning
for sorrow
for wings and buds
for rivers that keep on flowing
for the rain that finally stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
4 O'Clock In The Afternoon

a small maroon van
is parked beside an unfinished pillar
along a gray road

a pile of rocks stands still
at the other side

a thin woman with short blond-dyed hair
is wiping the roof of a yellow painted pedicab

and then she pedals away
towards an old cemetery

the rain begins to pour heavily

the sonorous sound of the rain amplifies itself on the rusty galvanized roof

of this building where i am writing

the ceiling at the typing room
leaks some drops of rain

as though it is crying

RIC S. BASTASA
4 O'Clock In The Morning

missing mother
i play the 'ili-ili tulog anay'
at the You-tube

at dawn when
the world is still sleeping
mama comes again
singing to me
the 'ili-ili'

i close my eyes
and there she is
smiling.

RIC S. BASTASA
my day is over
i will not die, i shall take my rest
i will brush my teeth
and check my face
about the suspicion of another wrinkle
of another white lock of hair
or another loss of
a beard
or an encroachment of more
hairless forehead to the
center of my head
i have no fear of these changes now
that my day is over
i am anticipating a mellowed self
one that makes a sigh
and care for nothing less and
nothing more
something perhaps that will give
the excitement of a riddle
a puzzle
something to solve inside a dream
in complete multicolor
like a hybrid rainbow
whatever that be
before i sleep tonight
i shall remember you
whoever you are
My God.

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 00 A.M.

a little cat
is crying in the rain
in the middle of the road
not far from where
i am seated

down this is thrown
away by its mother
because it has
no milk to
feed it

and its mother is
thrown away by
the owner
because
there is no more
food in the kitchen
to feed
it

there is no more
free meal to speak of
these days

and feeding cats
is not an
exception to this new rule

meanwhile the rain
has become stronger
the typhoon has come
as predicted

i can hear the
little cat no more
tomorrow
perhaps the road
will be empty
and clean

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 02 Am

Sunday
forgive my having
to work on
a Sunday
a call for duty
this kind of
putting hopes
on those who
desire to climb
the steep mountain
of ambition

at what cost?
body, mind, soul,
stretch, stress
testing
elasticity
till it snaps

RIC S. BASTASA
i am imagining two blue whales
far away from each other
one in the deep oceans of
South Africa
the other one in
the deep trenches
of the Philippines
they still communicate
with what or why?
who knows? something magical
or mysterious
they still have to know
what signals are there
to be clearly
deciphered
from extreme distances

a call for help?
but perhaps something more or
just a feeling for something
they want
to be familiar with

do you ever believe
in previous lives?
if so, what were we?
were we together once?
or are we just ordinary
strangers meeting
on a train on a short trip
on temporary
acquaintances?
we glance, look down,
and then
go away

tell me
before i end this writing
let me not forget those hypocrites who make
the procession at dawn
announcing their prayers on speakers
on the streets of this
little town

disturbing the peace of Moslems
and pagans

do they not see how the trees stretch their arms
in prayer
to the boundless skies
all in the silence of its thousand leaves?

or the sea
with boundless shores extending far beyond its narrow confines
praying to God
for the calm seas?

or the air
that merely whispers?

or the footprints following God
less the noise of
the wheels and the machines?

i miss the clear pond
tranquil
mirroring the clouds and the sun
all in
the perfect harmony of silence
and isolation
yet upon so much clarity....

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 16 A.M.

the rain begins

to fall

on the nipa roof

of the house

soothing sounds

solemn song of the

humble house to

God

this early morning

as one reads silently

a Matin....

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 39 A.M.

the strong wind keeps on blowing
howling
above the house and the trees bending
in different directions

there is this sound of tin roofs
about to be blown away
i hear them
and feel the fury
of someone
coming

to the mind of my wife
it is nothing
but a typhoon coming
on schedule
as predicted by the weather bureau
yesterday

and to her
i am just overdoing thoughts
and things
playing always
the role of the poet
even when
the wind is the wind
and nothing
but the wind

and nothing else

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 45 P.M. Office

i call it another form of
familiarity between a superior
and a subordinate

trivial matters like how can
a married woman betray
a husband?

the clerk knows how to
make the story more interesting
on such a small place as this
where each knows every lock
of hair before it falls

the husband knows what is
the real score
but keeps a blind eye
he does not love the wife anyway
and he does not value honor
loves to curl and just be
henpecked and economically
dependent

talks move on to politics
who the probable senators are
and what this new crop of
party list can possibly do to
change the state of this nation

until then,
the clock strikes for the closing of the office
i think i was babbling
and they were not really listening
just that

RIC S. BASTASA
katulgon pa baya unta ko
apan unsaon ta man
alas kwatro man ang iyang
gi-set sa iyang alarm

og dayon niyag mata
og pamalak sa atubangan
sa mga altar sa tanan
niyang mga santos
balik-balik og basa
anang iyang moingon kag
pulo ka klase-klaseng
nobenahan
nga imported pa niya
sa kilid sa simbahan
sa Baclaran

mimata na lang sab ko
og ania nagmugna ning
balak sa 4: 50 sa
kaadlawon

managlahi usahay
ang among ginabuhat
kagahapon gipang-ibot
niya ang akong tinanom
nga mga camote
kay giaisan niyag
dama de noche

ug ang akong paboritong
firetree
kalooy sa Dyos
iyang gipatutol
kay ang bulok kuno
sa mga bulak
isog ra kaayo
sa iyang panglantaw
og gidaog ang mga
kaputi sa iyang mga
pangadlaw

managlahi na usab
ang among mga agianan
ako gustong
mogawas sa sala
apan mas ganahan siya
anang exit sa kusina

ang akong gikahadlokan mao
ang pag-abot sa
panahon nga managlahi
na ang among padulngan

siya paingon kaniya
og ako paingon na unya
kanimo

amo lang jud kining sa hinay-hinay sabot-sabotan
kanang dili pa tagad manglood ang among mga bugan

RIC S. BASTASA
and so it will be that
i will give you the flesh that you love
and you shall live well
and i will keep the bones
those cranky ones that you set aside
and i will listen to the sounds
of old age
and i will keep what i have learned from
this experience
you are the geek
that keeps what splices of happiness is there
those that are temporary
and i am the outmoded that keeps
what i think shall last forever
but at the end
we are even
beyond these musings
and callings
along the roads of our choices
these patches and parches
we all shall turn into nothing
but dusts
and i shall take pride no more
of what i am and
what i had been
neither shall you whose name
must i have
also forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
4: 59 In The Early Morning

the church bells nearby
toll
for whom, for you,
some prayers
broadcast on the microphone
in this place of
little christianities,

you wash your face
put on your clothes
church this morning
i forget, we used to
have church every
morning when we
were newly married,

changes, time,
ebb, high tides,
moons and more moons,
moorings and more moorings
mornings and lots of boring mornings,

i have changed and you have changed too.
i walk, i walk away, and you will pray,
i will pray too but in other silent places
far away from us, from you, from everything
familiar

too boring, but not sad yet, we are anticipating sadness
like noontime
lunch with so much chili and pepper,
and cold rice, the one we had
for breakfast,
these kinds, you know, are not my favorites....

yet without any word, you will serve them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three dark
Shadows lurking
In the dark park
On a dark night
One leads
The two others
Follow wearing
Black raincoats
On a dark road
I lead
I tell them
My name
My work
My place

The two
Did not follow
Since then
They realized
Perhaps that
With what
I tell them
I am blacker
Than black
On a dark
Raincoat
On a dark
Park
On a dark
Road
&
In my dark
Mind
It would
Be so hard
For them
To follow
Through &
Through.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
They quit
They split
&
So I
Walk alone
In the dark
As one lonely
Shadow
Darker than
Dark
&
Now
It is you
Here
Following me?
In fact
We change
And it is
You
In effect
Who is
Leading me
Through
These lines
Flowing
Slowly
Gradually
Getting
Darker than
Dark

You have
Indulged &
Surely
You are
Involved
Deeply
Long enough

You win
& lose...
her blond hair unkempt
her eyes looking at the side of this page
and she does not say it
as she holds her piece of burnt pancake
with her tiny hands
all too dirty for a child
like her

why not do a good turn for me?
i am helpless.

RIC S. BASTASA
this summer she wears her pink kimono
and she will walk under the pink blossoms of the pink sakura
she will carry a pink umbrella
and she will cross the pink bridge of kokoma

pink leaves on her feet
pink fingernails on her pink wooden shoes

in honor of her love
that never bloomed to complete red
she will sit on a pink bench
praying for pink clouds to drift
on the pink skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
402

snow melts
in the river
a maple leaf
begins its travel

RIC S. BASTASA
bird on wing
again
air whispers
another name
a distant island

RIC S. BASTASA
the cold front of
February
Siberian winds
in confusion

RIC S. BASTASA
white samurai
falling to the ground
a hush of wind
some stories to tell again

RIC S. BASTASA
406

he mistakes
the depth of
the river
by the ducks
on the surface floating

RIC S. BASTASA
breakfast with
my sister today

she is broke

we talk about
childhood

clouds and
frost

RIC S. BASTASA
truth is naked
before my eyes

i am naked
before you

RIC S. BASTASA
on a trip to Chiba
snowflakes
falling on my shoulder
i am bare

RIC S. BASTASA
by being not confident
at first you may wear masks
lots of them
in different sizes
and colors

and you face yourself
with mirrors around you
and you laugh
this is very
interesting
I will not be hurt
I will even hurt
Them

Then
Someone comes
She loves you
And wants
The real you

And you love
Her

When the time
To make love
& kiss you
remove the masks
both of you
it is more exciting
than interesting

this time
the pain is stronger
too

it is the fairness
of hide and seek
that tells
about pain and pleasure

wearing masks and
removing them
making love and
undressing

naked both of
you feel something
more is concealed

this time
you go beyond
you peel skins
subcutaneously

the soul demands
no bodies as masks

and as you close
both of your eyes
and see what is
beyond these bodies
these subcutaneous masks

tell yourselves
beyond these bodies
there is still more
as true love so demands

some spaces some silences
between you and him
where God must dwell.

RIC S. BASTASA
that winter
i close the window
behind me

Mt. Fuji

RIC S. BASTASA
your picture had long been
taken out from my pocket
i have thrown it
in the river that flows to the sea
who knows where
it may be

i care not to know
i have long forced myself to forget you

but then true love no matter what
even with forceful forgetting
comes to you again
whispering her name

it seems that even without your picture
you name is still
embedded in my brain
your face is a memory
that cannot be forgotten
in the deepest crevice
of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
i

remember
when you love you swallow
your words

you even take back
what you vomit

you're foolish
but you like it

ii

when you love what you do
you become even more foolish

you do not mind being diminished
even if you perish you simply go on

doing what you love and dying
happily ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
on that night i slipped on the snow
and fell upon
a certain coldness
with the depth
of a thousand silences
and then
i experienced the pain
so much pain
that i heard a certain
howling
of my soul

nobody hears
perhaps only the ears
with the wisdom
of nothingness

RIC S. BASTASA
full moon
lying low on the lake
kissing the
treetops

RIC S. BASTASA
paper room
lamplight
two shadows
struggling for love

RIC S. BASTASA
WE are lovers
always on the run
for myriad pleasures
and to every friend
we are proud
keeping that in
mind we are
always lovers on
the go

we get old and
we start diminishing
we lose friends
they're always moving

we miss what was
there a long time ago
we want to go back
we cannot
nevertheless we tell
them we are friends
at night we have long
stories to tell
and we laugh and
wake up at dawn and
tell stories again

our kind of pleasures
change
we have chosen what
lasts with us
we have become our
very own homes.

RIC S. BASTASA
dark night
in the woods

house lamplight
peace and quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
the things that we do
are simply done

is there a need of putting
a name on the plate that you have washed?

is there a need for the tree that bore the fruit
to put the name of the owner
and the grower of the fruit that falls
on the ground

that you pick and pickle?

the giver, the real giver does not have a name
he simply gives because when he does not

he gets hurt and dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
the genius in each of us
lies in the ordinariness of the clothes we wear
and the ordinary walk that we take on ordinary lanes

the genius of air, and sunlight, and wind
the one that gets inside us without notice
yet makes everyone live

the one that caresses us without feeling
so important and yet makes us survive

the one that refreshes us in the shores
along ships that we are in
taking us to our destinations

tell me if they have special names and special
functions

the ordinary air, the ordinary sunlight, the ordinary wind
is that not the genius of the earth

the fire, the land, the sky
are they not so ordinary for us to take and use and love?

they are the strokes of the genius of the Lord
and yet they never have names of their own

they are everywhere, they are anywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
tonight you wrap me like a blanket
to your body,

you use me again
i know how is it not to be really loved

and yet pretend that love
exists inside the circle of your arms

i keep on saying
you love me, you love me

i am in your embrace.
you sleep and dream

of her somewhere in the
place you know

just between you and her
but i do not really mind

this stolen moment
is my lifetime.

RIC S. BASTASA
tonight she takes us to Dubai
the place where new dreams are woven
from sand

they left the lands of their birth
to work in the land where
the color of gold is black

my friend writes:
the pot of gold is found right here

come, come and be with us
there is nothing in the land where you live

the promise is broken
there is no token

come, come and be with us
let us partake of this sadness

from the sand and sun of Dubai
you must say goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
silliman memory
twenty five years ago
at the port in dumaguete
my boat arrived
from Cebu
from Davao
and there was a little shower of rain
so fine and
my hair was wet
and damp

and there she was waiting
as i went down the stairs of the boat
lowered down
she held me
by her hand
telling me that her love
was true
and i kissed her
telling her
that my love
was as true as hers

+++++++++++++++++
outside the rain begins
and it will never end
+++++++++++++++++

that was twenty five years ago

for a love that never pushed through
for a love that should have been true.

RIC S. BASTASA
the touch you give me
is the feel of silk today

the color is pink
and the scent is this link

between you and i
sweet and high

you are so soft
how can i be aloof?

you are so beautiful
naked and full.

RIC S. BASTASA
these tiny leaves falling from my hair
on this day warm and fair

are yours
all yours

you shake my body
this tree of energy

your fingers run through me
i moan, i am happy

i close my eyes
and time slowly flies

you kiss my lips
i die in dips.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am tired of the rhyme
and rhyme just to rhyme with you
at the expense of my thoughts
at the loss of my spirit
at the defeat of my spontaniety
my streams flowing and stopping looking for the proper word that sounds
like the previous word
until i am drowned by the rage and upsurge of my emotions
just let me be myself
let me flow like a river without the banks restraining me

in the canalization of my dreams
i will be nothing
but a line
parallel
to yours and they do not really look and sound right
i am afraid to say i am sorry
i will not be beautiful with you
i will be beautiful alone so alone in my own peaceful solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
our instinct is always
to look at the color of the
butterfly first

we do not bother if it is
lost in our room and anxious
to find where is the exit window
which you closed beforehand

if it is black it could mean death
the brown one means money

what i have today is a white one
fluttering like a dream
it is so beautiful
but i have no right to kill it
by letting it stay

there is no nectar for a flower in my room
to survive for at least this day
its admired purity has to go
outside my window

RIC S. BASTASA
1,2, Buckle my shoe.
3,4 Shut the door.
5,6 Pick up sticks.
7,8 Lay them straight.
9,10 A big fat hen!

i know you like the rhyme.
i mean it, the nursery rhyme.

RIC S. BASTASA
it must be really cold
out there
as your picture shows

my fingers on the keys
are frozen

RIC S. BASTASA
one more day papa
for me to get to know you more
how the days and years have built a wall between us
how you kept on telling me that after mama died the years had become so
hollow and even so cruel
one day more papa
you have always repeated that we are destined to be split
like a bamboo
and that sharp bolo does it with nothing but seconds

i leave back to where i am
and you will be staying to where you are
you tell me your heart is broken
but i will not tell you that mine too is bleeding

one day more papa and there will be no other days
i have long been dead away from your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
thank you for drinking with me
for days gone by
thank you for all the kindness
and in my emptiness
something gets filled
somehow
something reborn after
a little shedding
of an old skin

thank you, i like this tea
in fact, the red one
it tastes much strong
much bitter now

RIC S. BASTASA
All of her days have gone soft and cloudy
All of her dreams have gone dry
All of her nights have gone sad and shady
She’s getting ready to fly

Fly away, fly away, fly away

Life in the city can make you crazy
For sounds of the sand and the sea
Life in a high-rise can make you hungry
For things that you can’t even see

Fly away, fly away, fly away

In this whole world there’s nobody as lonely as she
There’s nowhere to go and there’s nowhere that she’d rather be

She’s looking for lovers and children playing
She’s looking for signs of the spring
She listens for laughter and sounds of dancing
She listens for any old thing

Fly away, fly away, fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
ignite me with just a spark
from you in the dark

and i will be this fire that burns
that lights from day till night

to warm your body
and guide you in your way

and when i am ashed
tell them if they ask

i have done my duty
i had it my little own way

from the spark of your love that never dies
i have become the constant fire of sacrifice

RIC S. BASTASA
in my room the window is open
as i sleep tonight

you shall be the moon
as i wait for your shining light

in my room the window is open
come tonight

wrap me with the warmth of the
fullness of your moonlight

RIC S. BASTASA
It is an afternoon
Walk by the
Beach

An orange sunset
Follows me
Like
I am closely
Guarded for some
Unknown
Danger

I walk alone
The sea foams
surging

from
Time to time
Touch my
heels and toes

An alternate
Of sand
Foam
And sea
And sunset
Rinsing
My footsteps

I am looking
For some
Shells of
My past

On a sunset shore
Retracing
It to
The mouth
Of the river
At the
Other end

River
Meets
Sea as
I closely watch

The sunset closely guarding.

RIC S. BASTASA
as i wait for you
i shall hear the wind blowing
from the sea
to the mountains

i shall hear the gentle hush
of the leaves falling

i am listening
for the coming of your steps

by the side of my door
and then with all my pleasure

i shall have it opened
because tonight i am all yours

come inside my room
and i will tell you the magic of the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
431 To A Friend Who Died As Poet

I Have Seen The Power Of Your Poems
Those That
Make The Blind See
The Mute Finally Speaking About Beauty
The Deaf Hearing The Songs Of Love
And The Crippled Finally Dancing To The
Rhythm Of Your
Lines

I Am Amazed And So Convinced
About The Magic Of The Poems That You Wrote
When You Were Once Alive
Before They Buried You On A Shallow Grave
With Their Anger
And Hatred

They Were Not Able To Cut
Your Tongue And Tear Your Mouth
And Break The Bones
Of The Body Of
Your Poetry

Now Let Me Ask You
If These Poems Come From
The Deepest Chamber Of Your Heart

Are Its Roots Your Pains And Unfathomable Sorrows
Or Is It Grown From The Seeds Of
Your Bliss
That When Summer Comes They Bloom Into
Sunflowers?

I See You In Your Images Smiling
And I Can Hear That Suppressed Laughter
On The Lake On A Clear Morning

What Is This All About My Friend?
Tell Me, For They Do Not Like
My Sadness Neither Do They Share
My Joys And Happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Got In
I Went Out
Such Is The Wrong Timing
Of Your
Compassion

Then We Talk
About The Proper Timing
Of Our Desires

You Set The Time, The Place, And The Mood
Now It Is Not Just Desire But
Love

Yes, Love,
But Sometimes I Still Wonder
What Love Is
When Two People Meet At The Proper Time
The Proper Place, And The Proper Mood

When Everything Seems Right
And Yet
Feels So Wrong
When Everything Is Supposedly Proper
And Yet
There Is Still This
Feeling Of Impropriety

I Am 48 Years Old And You Are 49
And I Am Just Asking
When We All Want To Be Inside The Room Of
Ecstacy

And Yet
They All Want Us
Out

Just Because They Also Feel
That The Timing May Be Right
But It Simply Does Not
Look All Right

And Then You Are A Little
Bit Irritated And You Ask
Finally

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture In Black And White Always Brings Nostalgia
For Instance The Picture Of Mama And Papa
Beside Their Daughters
Named Leonor With The Pony Tail
Betty With The Tiny Curls
And Delia
With Her Expensive Smile
(She Seems To Frown In All The Other Pictures)
And There Was This Bouncy, Plump Boy
Wrapped With Silky Cloth
That Mama Held So Tightly In Her Arms
As Papa Sat On A Big Rosewood Chair
Like General Mcarthur
Not Afraid Of The War
His Left Hand Inside His Pant Pocket While
The Other Hand Was Holding Mama’s Waist
I Know That Boy
With A Big Smile As Though Life Is A Big Joke
That Boy Was Supposedly Their Only Boy
It Was Me
And Then Ten Years Later My Brother Came
I Did Not Know Why There Was No Other Picture Like That
A Family, For The Time Being
Let My Brother Tell You
We Are Never Close And I Do Not Like
To Tell The Truth

RIC S. BASTASA
She Writes A Poem She Also Wears
Her Shades
For What Reason That Is Something That We All Have To Figure Out
But I Remember Something About What She Once Said
While We Were Walking At The Park
Her Ratiocination
Of Wearing Shades

She Looks At People In Detail
Without Them Knowing That She Is Looking

In Short, Manny, She Goes Out But She Never Lets
Others In
Just Like In Her Life, It Has Always Been This One-Way Drive
She Pops Out
And Then She Closes Everything

Her Mouth Shut
And Her Heart Closed Tightly
And Coldly
Like The Sweet Honey
(I Meant The Sweet Person That She
Is Or Was)

Stiff And Hardened
In The Freezer Frozen

RIC S. BASTASA
The Police Officer Arrested Them
Last Night While They Were Strolling On The Park
And This Is The Story:
He Asks For Their Names And They Say They Have None

He Asks From Where They Come From And They Say
They Do Not Really Know
He Asks Them Where They Are Going And They Tell Him
They Are Still Undecided

He Asks Them What Is In Their Bags And They Say They Are Just Nothing
He Asks Them Some More And They Say
They Have Nothing To Say Of Themselves
They Come From Nowhere

And They Are Heading Nowhere
And The Police Handcuffed Them
These Vagrants
These Potential Terrorists Of This Rural Place
Where The People Still Love Peace

And This Afternoon The Police Officer Brings Them All To Me
And He Tells Me About The Whole Story
About His Questions And Their Answers

And I Am Looking At Them And They Look At Me
Straight In My Eyes
With Dignity And Without Shame
With All Pride

That They Are Telling The Truth, The Whole Truth And Nothing But The Truth
That This One Whose Age Is 16 And This Other One Whose Age Is 18
Are Simply Talking About
Themselves And About Us
And About The Policeman Himself

And Surely, I Agree
We Have No Names, We Do Not Know Where We Come From And We Do Not
Really Know Where We Are Going
We Are All Like That, In TheStrictest Sense Of The Word, Except
For Our Little Pretensions
And So I Ordered The Policeman To Release Them All
And Let Them Be Themselves
And Let Them Go In Peace And Finish Their Journey With All Ease

RIC S. BASTASA
we are fools
listen we are really foolish
we have been deceived
for quite long they have been
stealing from us right in
the front of our faces
when we discover this
we go mad and run on the streets
make noise and shout for
their ouster
we cannot be appeased
but only for a while

now, we like to see them
again dancing before us
and we say we are wrong
we miss them and we want
them still to proceed with
the show, they walk on the rope
they spit fire they sing and
they look beautiful with all our
money

back home be ready with what
the mirror will show:
we look like them
foolishly incurable

RIC S. BASTASA
NOSTALGIA

AN old friend of mine is bringing
me to the place where he received the yes of his
wife

it will take us a day of travel, then we walk another
three kilometers until we reach a grassy portion of the hill
overlooking a little town far north

when we arrived there he fell silent
closed his eyes and recited silently his prayers

we only spent twenty minutes there as i gaze
on the grass, the trees and the clouds

now at 54 i think i know what he felt
saying prayers for the dead right in the spot where life was taken away

where love did not die.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Hug That You Need
When Some Parts Of You Dangle
On Your Shoulder
Like The Way Your Your Hair

Shouts For Help
For Fear Of Falling
And Here I Am Coming
To Hug You

This Kind Of Hug That Sings
The Song Of
Apple Pickers
And

Garbage Collectors
Whose Hands
Are Sworn
To Clean The Mess
And Keep The Pieces

To Put Them All Away
And Burn Them
As Often As Necessary

I Will Hug You Baby
But Only For
A While

I Am Both
This Apple Picker Somewhere
In The North
And A Garbage Collector
Some Place In The South

Let Us Talk About
Love Some Other Time
I Am Still
Learning The Art Of Loving
THE OLDER YOU ARE THE MUTER YOU BECOME

it is true
and let me speak from experience

when you grow old
after you have read so many books

in fact a corridor of books
looking like the catacombs of Allan

you realize that what you know
is too small
from what you have learned

they are nothing but
freckles of your
youth

but this time you do not
raise any eyebrow
for a question

there is that old man who keeps on
saying yes to life

i ask him why and he says
the answers are in the years

but how they talk
is measured in their silence

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Trip Well Planned
When Most Of The Hours
Are Spent Inside The Car
Where You Dream

About What Lies There
On The Place Of Your Destination
Some Flowers
And Treks On Mountain Trails

And Bridges
And Rivers Where You Look Down Below
Cloud-Filled Skies
And Big Mountains With Enormous
Shadows And Cold Places
At Their Peaks

You Find Rest Somewhere
On A Rock Under A Big Pine Tree
High On This Plateau
Where You Can See
The Green Valley Below

You Think Of Home
Your Bed And Your Room
And The Poetry Books
And Some Love Poems
Of Friends That You
Miss Reading

You Realize You Are Getting Old
And Your Taste For The World Has Gone Cold

Inside Another Long Journey Is Waiting
And You Think It Is More Exciting

RIC S. BASTASA
To Choose Between A
Hot Breakfast Ready On The Table
And Finishing Another Poem
I Choose The Breakfast
Together With My Wife

This Poem Can Be Suspended
In Time
And Become Another Unfinished
Act Of Creation
By A Man Wanting To Fill This
World With Poems

After A While
When I Have My Fill And When
I Make Some Nice Conversations With My Wife
And My Dog Beside The Table
Looking At Me
For A Piece Of Fried Pork
When The Sipping Of Coffee Is Over
When I Finally Wipe My
Chin With The Sky Blue Napkin
When I Consider
Eating As Finally Over

As Promised
I Will Come Back Again
And Finish This Poem

And There Is Something
Nice In This
Act Of Creation
You Feel It

It Is Warm Like The Hand Of
A Beautiful Woman
It Is As Hot As Ever
Like This Wanton Desire
Lovely,
As Lovely As You Love Each Letter
Of The Word
Of Your Poetry

I Am Feeling It In The Bone
Of My Soul

RIC S. BASTASA
I Hear The Body Speak Through Its Mouth  
There Is No God There Is No God

I See The Body Wasting Itself  
Like A Tree Whose Roots Are Eaten By The Fungus

But Inside That Body Is The Soul That Raises His Hands  
To The Skies Looking At God And Calling His Name

My God Why Have You Abandoned Me?

There Is Only The Usual Silence And The Soul Is Restless  
Anticipating To Get Out From The Body That Is Killing And Wasting Itself

And The Time Has Come For The Soul To Be Liberated To Be Alone  
In Itself Moving Towards The Light, Dancing In The Dark, And Singing Out Aloud

My God Here I Am Back To You  
It Is Only In You That I Find Back Peace And Happiness & Bliss.  
Let That Soul Be Me My Lord

RIC S. BASTASA
when the big tree falls
hit by lightning
roared by thunder

when the big tree finally falls
and i was there
a big sound
of a giant old tree
falling finally to the ground

the arrogance
that used to be

by that big old tree
we all looked upon
it was so high
and we did not
climb it anyhow

for fear
and
perhaps respect for its grandeur

and today this big tree falls
hit by lightning and roared by thunder

the universe claps upon the
fall of arrogance and pride
and a tree's belief about
its hugeness and
strength

now this tree falls
and i am here watching it

you are not here
you are in some foreign country

how can i tell you
that this tree has fallen

and there is nothing to fear anymore?

when a tree falls and you are not there
your logic tells

there is no tree
there is no tree of such strength and posture
there is no tree like that

that can ever fall
all because a lightning hits it
and all because the thunder roared

without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Accept the fact
The fear that you have nothing to tell anymore
To amuse yourself

writers' block, shutting up, windows closing,
doors locked, mind shrinking,

like the fish vendor who sells rumors & rotten stories
To the streets
You go to the fish market today
Not buying any fish or selling any or even touching gills
so you can breathe

You’re looking for some
Salt
Taking notes of the fish scales discarded
Trashed
Some fish bones & broken fins

some fishermen catching
Broken hearts on their small eyed nets

You go back with fish fins
And fish tails, thick lips and round moving eyes

You will start with a mermaid story today.

RIC S. BASTASA
THEY call it family

not one less
of this family that must stick together and always save
one another, be it
whatever, a financial distress
emotional stress, societal imbalance,
technological displacements
the family shall be first
even in crime
passion, the family is one
in all conspiracies
not one less, each must be saved from shame
from destruction

i am tired of this,
i am getting out, i am now a stranger, alone
against this family, i speak my mind, i blow the whistle
now, kill me

i am a corpse, i have long been dead in the dark chambers
of this family
the secrets too deadly,

kill me now, i dare, only if you can....

RIC S. BASTASA
This is my life Life defines in Metabolism, In reproduction, we make our miniature selves, our look alike In the power of adaptation, like what is in now, What is fashionable, how I blend with all of you How I mimic you, how I become a clown to you, Life in being nice This is my life A short and a merry one This my life In the middle of my own life To life, a life, in the hope of discovering the meaning of my life, My speech my poetry Come to life with me To the life, for the life of one like me, Not taking this life in my own hands, Never, never, To life, this is life As big as life as large as life is large In resiliency, in elasticity Animations, cartooning, animate, I vivify I vilyf I quicken I liken The life force in my life’s functions Drawn from life to life drawn Dream to life a life full of dreams This liveliness, this sparkle This effervescence of life, this bubbling life like wine This sprightliness like soft Drink like energy drinks This verve, this vigor this vivacity Of life to life as big as life My life This is my life This me I am life I am energy I am in this poem trying to run away from everything in my life, running in life to life and life, because of life, for life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faith and love

He knows your hands
And arms too well

One day she falls
From a cliff
Freely

Like a stone
To a rocky ground

She knows what
You will do

She closes her
Eyes
And not feel any
Sense of harm
At all.

RIC S. BASTASA
the way we do things
may look easy. For instance painting
or doing a portrait may simply be a
stroke of the brush, a tapping of color here and there

or to a woman baking a cake, it could simply
be a mixing of one ingredient to another
putting them in a molder, turning on the oven, waiting, and then
you have a cake for everybody

or writing a novel or a poem or your biography,
it is just a scribbling of words, putting them on paper,
spontaneously not even thinking what next to write
and then putting a finish to the work

the children will be amazed and they will do the same
and when they grow up to be like us
they too will also amaze us without end

until we reach the point of dying
as easy as that
just closing your eyes and then not waking up anymore

but before that
you write a note, or perhaps on your last breath you
whisper to your confidante

' it was never easy, never'.

And the confidante
knows that too, but he will never tell.

with all these concealment, the song will go on

Life is beautiful. This world is a wonder.
Death is nothing but sleep.
Am i not right, after all?

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 1

How can you ever
Leave someone
Who cannot live
Without you?

Look at her eyes
The moment she
Hears the word
Goodbye

Her eyes start
To bleed
Blood.

I cannot kill
Someone with
The use
Of the word goodbye.

I can’t.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I think of leaving you

One day
I think I must leave.

This is not my
World
I said silently
To myself

As I face
You. I say further
I do not like
What is happening
Between us.

We are trees
Without fruits.

We are ponds
Without
Any moss
Or fish

We are a night
Without stars

We are mornings
Without the sun.

And I keep
On saying
To myself this must
Be ended
For once for good

I look at the road
And they are
So inviting

They narrow down
Somewhere to
The foot of a rainbow

The horizon
Calls my name

I look at you again
A long glance
And your face
Looks so innocent

Asking me:
(1) Where are you taking
Me?
Telling me:
(2) I am going where
You will take
Me

(3) I have nowhere
To go
(4) When you leave
I will die

(5) When you leave
I will kill
Myself.

There are more
Enumerations.
I can recall them.
Always.

And so I am
Staying with you.

I am so afraid
I am everything to you.
And you have been
All too pleasing
For any kind
Of betrayal

RIC S. BASTASA
You and I

I see a glass
Half empty
And I see your hands
Filling an emptiness
That I have
Invented.

I am empty now
And then
You fill me
Up to the brim

I am overflowing
And here you
Are
In the full blast
Of your lust
That you
Invented
Licking me
From the
Bottom
Beyond the brim.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I wish I were not a part of you
My feet are pinched
With needles.
Your hands are not there.

I try to relieve myself from pain.
It is not happening.
There is no miracle.
There is no cure.

The world is a big space.
I can leave anytime and
Take the shape
Of air.

I can be gone.
How come that I become
A part of you
And her?

I do not remember myself coming
Here and sitting on this chair.
Fate.
Cruel fate.
I want to leave but I cannot go
I do not want to stay but I am staying.

How I wish I were not a part
Of this mess:
This cruelty inflicted
From your hand
To my hand.

How I wish I were
Someone else
Here I am.
I am your hair to your head.
Your fingers to your hand.
Your toes to your feet.

I guess. We must learn to live
With each other.
Dislikes disregarded
We begin
Our silent wars.

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RIC S. BASTASA
Walls

I know your name from what they are telling me.
They say that cruelty is born. That cruelty has a tendency to stay.
It is you. They mention the name of your husband. He died with a forlorn heart.
It is you. They say you never mentioned his name. Not even once. You are cruel.

We meet today in this room. I am not afraid. I am prepared. I will not be fooled.
When you call me. You mention my name. You appear sweet. Like some candy bar.
I cannot be fooled. I tell myself. I am a wall. I am inside a very thick wall. I cannot hear you.
I do not wish to be a part of you. No matter how sweet you call my name.

They say that cruelty repeats itself. And that I can be a fool sometimes.
I am a wall. I do not believe this to happen to myself too.

You look at me. I leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
I empty myself of the smell of others. I empty my bags.
I empty my glasses and leave them beside the sink
At night I turn back the alarm;
I open the ref and look at myself as a hungry man

It does me no good. The nights have done their task.
I say your name. I say hello.
The verbs do not follow each other up road
I love my wife. I keep her in the house.

My parents still hide in their graves
into the foggy corners of the hills. How can I be silent?
History reminds me who I am. I am unchanged, I am still
the same man in town.
I get rid of my life

and everything remains the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
How can these eggs  
Break a stone?

And how can your  
Spread fingers  
Be a spoon?

How can you hold  
Two watermelons  
With one hand?

How can you be  
Happy with  
A thousand  
Desires?

How can your  
One hand  
Eclipse the sun?

RIC S. BASTASA
We're stranded here
it is raining outside
i am here beside you
you are always somewhere
a place you do not want to
even describe for me
you are always lost
and, no matter how i tried,
you are never found.

RIC S. BASTASA
she, too, dislikes it, because it gives her the feeling as though
her head is taken off, makes her body cold so no fire can ever
warm her again. One does not look on poetry as a closed work, the poems go on
and on
at all times on one’s head, and snip off a length.

You mush remember the homely definition,
Poetry is the best words in their best order, words in their nth power.

Bony ideas, bloody nerves, held together by the delicate
Tough skin of words...

Words...words...

I agree, I have never started a poem where I know the ending
Always the ending is unpredictable.
Poetry is your personal
Expression making it public, a revelation, a revolution of sort, you throw a pebble
to the world.

In essence, poetry is an emotion, said, written in measured motion,
And that motion is an art.

Drip pity, drip pity, drip drip drip drip

Like a dripping rain, from a leaking roof, while one sleeps
To its rhythm.

A wording of highest thoughts, appearing as a
Remembrance, it does not really mean anything, it is simply magical...

But be.

You make a poem, but the reader recognizes it as his own,
But there is no accusation of thievery or plagiarism

A sea animal, evacuating to land, and now wanting to fly in the sky, that is
poetry.
Making familiar things rare, as though they are
Not familiar anymore.

Giving habitation to airy nothing.
Giving nothing to everything.

Giving a nobody a nice home like he is now a somebody.
The invisible, made visible, and the visible made invisible.

A quarrel within himself.
In his tranquility, he recollects powerful feelings, and give in
To an spontaneous flow of giving.

That is poetry. Giving, and always giving, no taking, nothing taken.

I, too, dislike it at first.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep it for a while, it will not go anyway
Let it stay with you and let both of you talk awhile

Give it the warmest bed and the softest pillow
And pray that it will have the soundest sleep for the night

Both of you will soon understand each other
Why it is here, why it is painful, what is the rationale of its existence?

How it is that it must be with you, and how is it that you do not understand at first,
You and pain become friends now, it explains itself, and hugs you

It will sooner understand you and you will understand it
Then it leaves gently, and you wake up the following morning

You cry, you have understood it completely and crazy
You miss it somehow; you even wait when it will come back again.

RIC S. BASTASA
You are not even my father

the birds peck on the rice grains
the children take turns in hitting them with their
stored stones
i tell them 'i never hit a bird with a stone during
my entire life'

'we never intend to kill them,
we cannot eat them anyway
they're too small' a child explains

'we are just doing it for fun' another child added.

'do not stone a bird, you are hurting it. It is not hurting you' i answered.

'who are you? You are not even my father' he reasons out and

without saying any word further
he left scorn in one of those dead birds
which none of them picks
from the bloodied ground.

RIC S. BASTASA
48

48 is not just any number.
fourty-eight with a dash is much more.
four is for the legs of the table.
ty is thank you, and eight is the octagonal
side of the circle chipped on some extras,
unnecessary peripheries,
undisclosed portions, they are removed.
48 is more than a number to me,
they are years that i cannot simply explain
in a day. Years that i cannot compress in an hour.
fifty is a boundary and eight is a bonus
with you.
ty is not just thank you. it is also
truly yours.
i remain with you. yes,48 may now just be
a number. it does not really matter, i look forward
to another 48, and i love it when you say,
49 is waiting and 50 is wholesome
in fact, half only of what we lack.

RIC S. BASTASA
You lose this time Victoria
And you hide yourself in a room
Like a puppy frightened by some
Firecrackers,

Is this your first time
Losing what you wish
And love?

I see you shrink in the park
On thick black sunglasses
Your fingers fidgety
Beside your hips

You were walking fast
Almost running
In steps rushing like
Elevator stairs,
Away from everyone
Who knows you,

This must be your first time,
Losing,
But you will soon recover,
Tears will dry
And the trembling will soon be over,
You will calm down
On some anti-anxiety drugs,

Relax,
you will soon recover,
But there will be more
Losses to follow,

The thing is
We cannot avoid learning this art
Of losing & recovering,

This is life, Victoria
Welcome, and learn with me,
I will lead you and tell more stories
About myself,
When I was your age
Of questioning and resistance
Like a little child
So confused.

RIC S. BASTASA
49 Years

it's been a time
49 years
i have been with you
and dealt
what you are and what
you wish to become

i have looked at you
eye to eye
on the very same mirror
where i many a time cried
and swore
that i must move on and be
what i want to become at all cost
keeping this life
and living it well

i have kept the lies just that you may live
and i will not change it
time indeed has mustered all the courage
and faith
time indeed has made me the master of
this self

and now i look at you eye to eye again
and i am not afraid to blink
and then to stare

long and live
consistent and confident

RIC S. BASTASA
tongue-tied winds
on sturdy trees

sea weaving waves
log-rolling on the shores

moon floating weakly
on the murky river

nights without neon lights
brokenhearted

rivers on their usual journeys
towards the sea of options

RIC S. BASTASA
one cannot iron out
air perhaps you may
cover out a
delineation with
some euphemisms
denial does not
lead you
to light you are like
the moon
wanting to conceal
its pain
in those dark nights
only to
suffer efflorescence
as the
frogs worship it
as goddess
chanting throughout
the rain

sorrow too is
like gold
one cannot hide in
mud
each moment is
gleam
pain glimmers
like a star in
that indifferent sky

amidst the flow of
black wings
the moon is
carried on....

RIC S. BASTASA
one takes the path
(indecisive yet) between
the house of darkness and
the dwelling place of light
in there
between, amidst
the path is winding
as though between two
mountains
breasts, leak,
bleak, break, slit,
betwixt
alive, one walks through
this path between two choices
black
&
white one sometimes compromises
taking
the other colors between
shades of gray

but until when?

ah, when one loses grasp
of air,
crumpled space, crumbling self,
the die must ultimately be cast

where are you?
there is fence out there
and you are
told to jump but where?

footnote
do not choose what you are
choose what is
right.
white hair
more furrows on the forehead
less agility
loss of memory
probing
forgetting and
insecurities
abandonment
and
pills and more
therapies
and less care
of those
we love
they who are also
searching
for their destiny
chasing the good
they have in mind

sunset
we have become
fading
and embracing
another night
of our lives

flame
and ashes
gray and
foul.

RIC S. BASTASA
5 6 7 8 9 10

5 letters, pride
6 syllables, i will be missing you
7 cigarette sticks
8 days of summer together
9 months again of waiting
10 years of discerning
whether i deserve you or not.

RIC S. BASTASA
5 A.M. Port Of Pulawan

the port of pulawan
is insomniac,
it is the meaning of its name,
it does not sleep,
people here, even the children have
deep sunken eyes
like an old deep
well,

when you call a name,
it echoes deep down there and it comes back
to you after
a while, telling you

'there is no water here!'

when you arrive here,
you call a name, and it is the same answer,
like what their eyes
are saying,

in fact, shouting,
you hear it well,

a friend of yours with long hair
disembarked immediately

the sound of arrival faded with the smoke of the ship,

he is met by your student who flunked the bar this year,
the first time that you notice
that this guy is limping,

she carried a bag full of clothes,
dirty ones from the hospital
her mother has cancer of the lymph nodes
and at terminal stage
she has her only daughter
who drops her samsung tablet on the floor of the boat
nothing is broken,

they invite you for a ride in their old
black car,
you shake your head, you want to wait
somebody is coming,

the one you doubt you love says that she is coming to fetch you.

you want to go back to your way.
The sun shines. The sea is very calm.

The children are now wearing their deep sunken eyes.
Deep dry wells,
running out of water.

Pretty much like
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
late afternoon at 5: 10  i look at my watch.
darkness is coming like a grey blanket to the mountain. 
i walk on this narrow path.
Grassy.
It means no one passes here as often.
Secluded path.
Less entered.
Or maybe forgotten.
Or maybe avoided.
Dangerous perhaps.
I walk on it for a time now.
No sound of birds.
Just darkness trying to steal every light of day.

And then i meet you.
My eyes are poor to sight now.
I see a shadow meeting me,
and when we are too  near
i see your smile. It is met with my smile too,
like lovers.
I like them.
these smiles to be lovers anyhow.
I am thirsty.
I am hungry, for love.
Or even lust.
I am very hungry.Indeed i am very thirsty.

Then you pass by my shoulder on this narrow path.
You smell like a big basket of flowers,
the champaca that i grow
right in my own backyard that i always smell at night
in my .

The cold air carries your perfume inside my nostrils.
It rebounds within the corners of my mind.
It seeps in my soul.It is absorbed like urine to a pamper.
It stays in my heart.
I am reborn.
My heart is restless again.
IT is you that i meet.
It is your perfume pervading on that narrow path
deep down into the bonemarrow of my soul.

I like the dark clouds to, unstopping.
I like to run.
Anywhere.
I like to bathe
under the rain. I like to get wet all over.
I like to play a game under
the rain. I like to be a child again. Hardheaded. Sick.
The ground where i stand is dry. My chest is empty and my
body is fuming with hot lava like a volcano.
I like to erupt.

I like to undress and be naked.
I like to throw my hat to the trees.
My jacket to the wind.
My shoes to the forest.
My socks to the creeks.
My watch to the farthest skies.

I like to throw away this book of poetry that i keep inside my armpit.
I like to burn it even. I like its pages to be blown like leaves
anywhere. Anywhere. I like them lost forever.

I like to jump into the river. I like to drown. I like to be lost
at the bottom.I like to close my eyes. I like to be carried away.

i do not like to go back to the narrow path.
I do not like to meet you
again and pass me by.
It is always like that.
Meeting. Opposite ways.
Perfumes that do not leave me.

Where does love live? what is her name?
I do not know you, Love.
Why is it always like that?
Opposite ways. Repulsion. I never felt
what true love is. Obstructed. I don't know.
I was never embraced with the warmth of its armpits.
I am the air gushing, going and going, arriving at nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
the Catholic's church bells
toll and the cocks are crowing
the hens come down from their nests
the songs of birds start
to chatter

i am not through with these yet
these lines
these musings

the morning is calling
that i must get out from these convolutions
undecided
i stay put
sit on a chair
and for a moment
close my eyes

and then i rise
and prepare my shoes
and cap
and coat
and then i say

yes!

RIC S. BASTASA
departure,
a rush of people
escaping
the narrow door

bursting on the
road
towards home

you are here
with no place to go

the home
has turned into a mere house
plain stairs
with closed door
unwashed window panes
the lawn a stranger
to mowers

the dusts live here
and some
wishbones crushed
by a black dog

RIC S. BASTASA
5: 22 P.M.

in here
the insomniacs
start to wake up
and ask the world

where the hell
is ice cream?

RIC S. BASTASA
5: 28 In The Morning

ideas keep rushing like some leaves blown by the wind,
this is different, i must agree, there is no choice,

there is this bee that keeps on hovering on top of me and
then suddenly stops to settle on my hair
and stings my head

and here, here, it must have mistaken me as a flower
it stops asking for some nectar to sip

i said, i don't have any for i am a man, not this flower in your mind
and hey, look at this bee, it stings me, and i am swollen, and then it says,

o my, indeed, you're human
i am sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
5: 31a.M.

i am again listening to the sound
of the cock crowing

the silence of the jalousie window
still closed from the morning light

the faint sound of the radio in
the kitched where the housemaid does
the cooking and the cleaning

the sound of the broom
cleaning the garage and the sliding
of the rags wiping the car

the little brown dog arrives
from a kitchen door that just opened
letting it in and here it comes
as i write this
licking my lap and wagging
its short tail

i am feeling like i am the master
of my world and i am not letting
it go like some sand slipping
through my fingers

i will take a bite of my own day
like the way i take the slice
of the sweet papaya
laid on a glass table
beside a toasted sandwich
a slice of bacon and a hot
black brewed coffee.
inside a chocolate porcelain cup.

RIC S. BASTASA
Years ago you climbed the mango tree
On an alibi to see both of them

They talked in the sala of your house
And went inside your room
After they kissed
You did not wait for reason
Before they
Can undress
You shot him dead
You spared her
Your wife because you loved her

15 years in prison
You were released to find yourself

In this bigger prison
Without love

All that you can find in her
And her children are barbed wires

Uncle John, tell me
Which do you prefer now?

RIC S. BASTASA
i sit beside you, i am a little drunk on this birthday party of
an influential man
and i remember you years ago
you lectured on marriage and how marriage should be preserved
not in a jar
but in a social millieu where everyone looks at you with respect

you just retired from government service and your husband shall have his last
year and you will be happier together on a planned cruise, a trip to israel, hongkong, thailand, and possibly europe
and the united states of america,

pure leisure, and i am a little drunk with fundador, and i had the courage to
ask you in a joke

madam, what makes a marriage work?
my friends have already lived their own lives,
broken marriages,
(and repaired the wounds of their heart)

and you lifted a finger and made the
f sign....

i don't believe it, you are saying, in a loud voice, overpowering the ballroom
music,

it is all about sex, take note, she did not laugh at all,
have a good sex life
and everything will work out right.

i think i must believe her.
her face looks like a V.

RIC S. BASTASA
50th...

you like the way your hair
denies yo
ur age,
the way your language takes more
color, the sunrises and
rainbows
you like your silence
nothing incriminates you
to the murder of

old age

at 50, you gain more par
value,

antique gold
bowl

sharp sword displayed
still on glass cabinets

useless...

RIC S. BASTASA
You are fed up
of being A little green turtle,

Wanting to fly
Seeing the clouds in the skies
Drifting,

Pray for nature to change you
Extend your tail much longer like
The braided hair Of rapunzel,

Get off the house
above you
And be a little bigger than
what turtles are supposed to be
And nothing greenish now,

Little green turtle
You can be white & flimsy
and even taller

On some cellophane wings
On a longer paper swinging tail
On a proposed compromise
Of become a summer kite

Inanimate

but steadily flying by a strong string
with a boy pulling
wherever you go

You still want it?

RIC S. BASTASA
many people who died old, have suggested to us how life should have been lived

'i should not have worked so hard
i should have lived a life i desired
i should have confessed my true love to my true object of my affection
i should have taken the risk
i should have expressed my truest feelings'

then he died.

and we, and i, who heard all these in a whisper wanted to hear some more

what ought to be what should have been what could have been

i could have been happier but it does not matter anymore i am left here to live

my own style, my own recipe, my own cooking my own taste,

and even if i die, it will remain
definitely
not for mass consumption.

i live this life, honestly or dishonestly,
what matters most is i live

and i shall not make any whispers
even in my deathbed.

RIC S. BASTASA
father kills the black chicken
and marks a cross of blood
on the temple of the birthday celebrant

he claims life is a matter of sacrifice
a chicken dressed for something

The blood from the neck
of the chicken gushes forth

there is silence in this
bloody ritual

between father and son
inside both of them they

hold that the spirits understand
how they must be appeased

from all ills and bad luck
the son must be protected

a father then washes the knife
that killed the black chicken

he is ready to kill someday
somehow when

another human being just in case
kills a son, that brute that base.

RIC S. BASTASA
My sister saw the black cat inside my monitor
Black fur and sharp eyes
Piercing like sharp claws
Whiskers like catfish
In the mud,
It was staring at her
And felt its anger,

Of course, she did not like it,
She complains
Why of all screensavers

Anthurium (oh she loves Anthurium
Red and white anthuriums)

Or four horses, white grazing horses, brown galloping horses
For some screensavers’ lucky charm,

Why the black cat
As screensaver?

It was just the head of the black cat,
Nothing else
Nothing more, popping up in the screen,
A black cat as wallpaper

(Like one that unzips automatically
The zipless type)

And I am afraid she may not like
The sudden popping up,
She fears it may jump in front of her
And scratch her and totally scare her off
Her years of
Prudence,

And easy submission,
And her tradition,
Her sense of
Propriety
And piety
It is indeed a delicate
Issue

She had not seen, to my mind,
Anything yet,
The way I scratch my head
And turn it sidewise
Once or twice to say no
Ordinarily

And inside myself, I was laughing,
She is scared
And funny
Skinny sister
Emaciated by too much
Keeping
& unforgiving

I was not scared because
Anyway
She cannot understand
Me
My trauma at 2
My love at 15
My longings for all those years
Carefree days in the river bathing naked
With some brusque
Friends and their passion for
Carabaos
& then there were

Some sad stories about the cats in the alleys
Black and white
Those that I really love and caress &
Died and
Those I cannot really mourn
& love
In the open
What will our neighbors say?
It is always the favorite question of my sister
They would think that I am crazy
I am cheap
I am an embarrassment
I am a burden
And deserve nothing
The whole family will be hurt
& suffer incessantly
Unnecessarily

As a matter of compromise
The cat, the black cat as screensaver
Shall be changed tonight,
But frankly, I love its
Sharp black eyes
Warm long black furs
I would still touch them
In a dream
Slide its furs in my armpits
And I would giggle, giggle, giggle, and giggle
Alone
Away
The whole night giggles, giggles, giggles and giggles
Deep and
Dark

It is the being of giggling, the giggling,
Yes
My dear sister
It is the giggling
That counts in my being
The whole being

And I am telling no one
And I can’t tell anyone

Who is really interested about
Dead black, foul cats, with black furs
For jinx?
Anyway, I’ll save
In the ‘shared pictures”
The
Black cat, and in nocturnal
Dreams I’ll have scratches
All over my body
Of this black cat

My decision to be unwise for once
Is now

I am laughing inside myself
(ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!)

I face her,
My skinny sister
Un-giving
She faces the black cat
Sharp eyes facing her,
She sees the head of the black cat
And she can even touch
My face because of that
Certain closeness,

But she will never, never,
Never know
The real name of that black cat
And the new name I call myself

(Me, a name I call myself
Fa a long long way to run)

Because, oh well, she never asked,
In the first place

RIC S. BASTASA
no word can abuse you
you who is an expert in the resonances
of any syllable
bled, bled, until there is no blood
bloody, in the revolutions of silence
you can look at words, they do not make any sound
but oh, oh, how can they ever scream
in death how loud, how loud can the wailing be
how long the sobbing
how patient the walls with more ears now
how now can be so long
how waiting can be so unfair
with no one coming
to be the same as the one
whom you have lost
in the cruel arms of lonely times..

RIC S. BASTASA
there are hiding places where people suffer authentically alone, where they learn to find nooks as temporary solutions. they have secret passages. Mantras of their own inventions. They have secret doors. Enigmatic selves learning the games of living.

There is an open park where we meet. Share moments. Buy popcorn. See kids, wait for sunsets. There are trees where we take shade. Where we have the illusion that we are one in this journey. We comfort our sorrows. Share our miseries.

There is a photograph of us. Wacky. There are times when some people are out of fashion. It is summer and they wear thick leather jackets. Boots where it could have been more comfortable with slippers.

There is a time not to talk about suffering. We choose law for its neutrality. Then we forget the left side of our brains. And that is where the small wars begin to swell.

It would have been wiser if we were monkeys. Playing with ropes and then staying on trees. Making love on branches and pushing partners to the edge.

When we leave those who are no longer useful. When we continue living with those whom we have started to hate.

I say, Life is like that. It is too hard to understand. No maps. Nothing straight. Not predictable. Not logical at all. Incoherent, and so...i can only have compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
MY FRIEND

do not regret the wars we waged
we lost

losing is just one step of the stair
just one

be satisfied that we felt the pain
everyone is avoiding

it is the pain that makes us stronger
it did not kill us, right?

RIC S. BASTASA
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Whiskers like catfish
In the mud,
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And felt its anger,

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And funny
Skinny sister
Emaciated by too much
Keeping
& unforgiving

I was not scared because
Anyway
She cannot understand
Me
My trauma at 2
My love at 15
My longings for all those years
Carefree days in the river bathing naked
With some brusque
Friends and their passion for
Carabaos
& then there were

Some sad stories about the cats in the alleys
Black and white
Those that I really love and caress &
Died and
Those I cannot really mourn
& love
In the open
What will our neighbors say?
It is always the favorite question of my sister
They would think that I am crazy
I am cheap
I am an embarrassment
I am a burden
And deserve nothing
The whole family will be hurt
& suffer incessantly
Unnecessarily

As a matter of compromise
The cat, the black cat as screensaver
Shall be changed tonight,
But frankly, I love its
Sharp black eyes
Warm long black furs
I would still touch them
In a dream
Slide its furs in my armpits
And I would giggle, giggle, giggle, and giggle
Alone
Away
The whole night giggles, giggles, giggles and giggles
Deep and
Dark

It is the being of giggling, the giggling,
Yes
My dear sister
It is the giggling
That counts in my being
The whole being

And I am telling no one
And I can’t tell anyone

Who is really interested about
Dead black, foul cats, with black furs
For jinx?
Anyway, I’ll save
In the ’shared pictures”
The
Black cat, and in nocturnal
Dreams I’ll have scratches
All over my body
Of this black cat

My decision to be unwise for once
Is now

I am laughing inside myself
(ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!)

I face her,
My skinny sister
Un-giving
She faces the black cat
Sharp eyes facing her,
She sees the head of the black cat
And she can even touch
My face because of that
Certain closeness,

But she will never, never,
Never know
The real name of that black cat
And the new name I call myself

(Me, a name I call myself
Fa a long long way to run)

Because, oh well, she never asked,
In the first place

RIC S. BASTASA
I went out early this morning to take a walk and see the world
At its unfolding, Skies grey and moving slowly away from light,
The dim lights, Pushing away dark clouds vice versa tugging each other Perhaps
not wanting to part (Whatever happened last night? Nobody wants to recall)

Towards an edge on the right corner of the gym, Everything is shadowy (Like a
dawn tryst In a tight room so foul
Filled with cheap perfume Beating warmth like Pink baby rats)

A black outline of coconut trees, Some houses appearing as smoke
Rising to the skies Like men smoking, Letting go off The sighs inside
their hearts
They are huge and keeps a chest full of Frogs wanting to jump
Into the pond, their dreams croak and croak
Throughout this hot summer Pleading to the white heronFor rain and more rain
Lest they die

What arrived instead is the plow, Their territories cut into small pieces
And some will have no place to live, I am referring to the frogs
like men And the children Of the little space This pond drying itself
To death. The air is thin and sharp to the feel Of guts
Gathering the early dusts of the south bound road, And few raindrops
Fell on the chalky pathways some two or Three farm children running for cover,

I walk fast, trying to outrun The children, the frogs, the men,
And the shadowy coconut trees, Fast and faster still Like my thoughts running
and running In circles Oval to this gym

The first ray is coming out From the edge of a grey cloud Pushed towards a
darker side To my eyes Lights stab and light
With more light Gushing forth from the stomach
Of dawn.

Someone just performed The ritual of morning The birth Of another day, I walk
past time And must go home on time
I have my lover for breakfast Waiting And some thoughts
Running and running thoughts wanting To stop.
he is in the middle of something
Painful
Choosing between slashing his wrist with a blade
Or firing a bullet in his head
In the middle ambiguities
he stopped

You called.

What if the blade slashed his wrist?
And blood squirted on the Floor like a basin of water
Like falling tears On his cheeks

What if the gun fired?
And his brain spills on his chest

What if you did not call?

It is the middle of pain It is the middle of confusing things

Sometimes, it is the middle That saves.

Luck.

RIC S. BASTASA
HOPE FROM THE CRACKS

from all the
cracks of
our misfortunes

a seed will
grow

the cracks are
the spacious
rooms

for roots
to spread and
hold on
to.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hell is Other people
So now rise up Lazarus and Just Be yourself learn learn
To talk and laugh at Yourself, Lazarus
From the dead of the commons From the rotten flesh of the others among the rest Rise up Rise up And be yourself again
A pine among the redwoods A duck among the geese
Don’t bother now Being yourself is redemption enough

RIC S. BASTASA
Riding on winged lines
We shall flock like doves
In the rain
So the fire in our breasts
Shall not die

In the hideout of flowers
Soft reeds and singing marshes
Where the moon sleeps
Throughout the night
We are all watchful eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
BECAUSE YOU LOVE HER, DESPITE

when someone tells you that you are dumb
be dumber
when someone treats you like a poor being
be poorer
when someone treats you like a flower vase
or a wall
be the flower vase or the wall

you are not dumb, you are not poor, you are a flower
and you are a stair
not just a vase or a wall

tell that someone exactly about what you are in all
smartness, agility and beauty

tell her, you just want to make her happy.
even by being what you are not.

RIC S. BASTASA
for you to know

I am lonely here like a deserted room
In the city
My windows refuse the orange moon
The sad calls only
Of the sea
Keep penetrating

My writing table has not grown words
Of beautiful shapes
Stunted scribblings only
By the wooden walls
And the lizards’ trails
On the hot ceiling
Keep streaking

such weird
acidity
stinking sticking
the day rains detest
this happening

i am waste liquid
splattered on cold floors
fetid urine
slowly drying throughout summer

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes the wasted time
of regret
one that is always done on the
very first hour of
the morning
are the favorite times of
vacillation
procrastinate, procrastinate
perhaps because you do not really like to do
the oughts
of your life, the bread and butter things,
unartistic, unpleasing to your senses
and so you do always what you do not want to be done
(under a state of sinfulness)
stammering, stumbling upon a shit
and still composed
poised
as though nothing annihilating
happens

RIC S. BASTASA
when it rains
you worry none
for you always
bring the umbrella
with you

there are those who
brave the rain
and will not open
an umbrella to
show their
dissent
	hey are those
whom you call different
for unlike you
you studied well the laws
of comfort
and subservience
not minding the
ways of the
abusive Rain
the faulty Canals
the acidity of the clime
the foulness of
the Ruins.

RIC S. BASTASA
6 O'Clock In The Morning At Knas Gym

i sit on the tenth stair of this public gym
of this university overlooking an oval
a field of green grass
circled by this road of sand and gravel
and muddy on some occasional rains

three men all covered, head and body and feet
from a distance carry the sprayers
on their backs, the usual pesticide
to kill the army worms that attack the rice plants

the air has turned poisonous, i can see the killer mist
around them as they keep on pumping the tubes at their backs
i ponder on the significance of men
poisoning its atmosphere, adulterating the freshest air in the morning
that nature has freely given

some white herons come flying on some green spots of the field
perhaps eating the worms and bugs killed by the poisoned droplets
i guess with the poisoned worms for their diet
i have read sometime
their eggs will turn off-white, and the shells are weakened
and the chicks feed by their poisoned blood
may not even grow to be stronger birds

some eggs will not experience hatching and the white herons
cannot do a thing about their misery

some dogs too come by perhaps curious about the smell of the
morning air,
a black dog runs around the oval, a white dog stays lying
on one of the manmade dikes

the poisoning takes about an hour and when it is over
the men take of their clothes and wipe their bodies
on the same clothes

some of them i heard have suffered diseases
like bloated livers and soft bones and they die without having
seen the right doctors,
they are poor hired workers of this college

i look around me, the sun finally comes out
it is still a very fine day i suppose, the mist is gone, the rice plants
are greener than ever,

and then i take my usual walk, thinking again,
for all that men do, poisoning and destroying nature,

will there be revenge? retaliation? repercussion?
i am crazy. How can nature ever speak?

RIC S. BASTASA
6: 25 P.M.

it is dark now
another war shall be fought

not between the muslims
and the christians

not the New People's Army
and this government

these wars never end
like a circle of violence
begetting another
violence outside
and inside

us.

this is the war of myself
to myself
on a night that ends
on the light
that comes on another dusk
and early mornings
and noons
and afternoons

like this circle without beginning
without end
this violence upon myself
unto myself
and from myself

this inability to find the tunnel
and the light
at the end

that opening
night murmurs

1. You cannot lock the door
Now, night shall open it
For fireflies to come in
They slept in hiding

Like you, fireflies fly away
Pallid cowards from rain
Lest their lights die in the mist

You wait by the door

As true stars come again
Lighting night skies
My Fireflies shall reveal
Inferior flickers under
The now, brimming
Skies bursting
II.
How many full moons passed
Past your sad window?
Your fingers cannot tell
They’re used to gripping
Rusty doorknobs
A great deal to ancestry
Our human hands corroded
We cannot reach nor outrun
Rust becomes us

III.
If we listen to dawn dreams
We shall hear prophets scream
Nothing
To a mutter

One speaks of the underworld so endless
Unmoving as the sky stretches a distance of lies
No farther
Or it will break

There are no skies no caves
No edges no space
Nothing
To whisper

IV.
We are shooting stars in space
Shot into nothing
Yet we keep on shooting

For the moment
We close down
We set strong feet on land
Like steel gates stilled

We look into our eyes
Tears are dwindling
Thus far, we cannot cease fearing
For nothing

V.
There is God
As the world keeps ears
For each earthworm in the void

He shall hear us
Shouting the questions
Dinning,
Rocking the ruckus of cumulus
In this outcry

He shall know us
By eyes and mouth
By hand by footprints
And the grasses covering all

RIC S. BASTASA
alcoholic drinks
are measured by their
percent proof,

For example,
a 'six proof' beer
would have 3% alcohol,
barely any,
while a strong liqueur
that advertised it was 80 proof
would have
40% alcohol.

It isn't, however, quite that simple...

there are other
complications, but that
is not my point
here,

what about poetry?

what kind of
proof is this
poetry that makes
you drunk?

or do you want
something to make
you sober?

you get high?
you want to?
ah, try putting
alcohol in your
words,
give it the
kind of proof
needed,
then say, ahh,
this is real poetry
this certain relief
from the harsh
realities of our lives,

dthis ahhh,
ahhhh, ahhhh
oh God!

RIC S. BASTASA
TRANSFORMATION

A bud sighs a question into the air
The question
Diffuses
Layer by layer
Into another sphere

The bud
Blooms
Into flower

Waiting sadly
It wishes to wither faster
To trace the question
Gone away

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping a Journal

i have long wanted to read you
complicated as whodunnit story
mysterious as the catacombs their silence
tied to the blueness of their lips

but you are never written yet
syllables are chained inside your fingers
slaves of your self chosen idleness
what crazy mind will admit that you have
gone where you ought not to be
i myself cannot be frank enough to tell you
the situation will always be the same
as i write my intention is always not to
be clearly understood so as to keep you
interested in the haze, the fog, the mist
that covering that keeps you safe in your
foxhole

these are our dangerous times and the
only way to be safe is to be ambiguous

i have long wished to hear from your
storms but you are spreading them some other
place

i could have been happy reading nothing
hearing nothing
but my own storms have their own ways
too.

here they are. I am standing strong by
the port by the sea
i am meeting all of them
and i am writing not for you to know
but only to keep myself posted as to
what is really happening
for words have their own way of putting
things and places and people in their stillness
now, i myself can see. i can view what i feel.
The x-ray plates are there. Behind is the light.
I am sitting in front. I have, too, a way of
clearly reading myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
father and son

For quite a time you sail
Like a paper boat on this river
Then you want a change
In these little things you get
You feel you deserve
To fly and be this kite
On air and face the
Rage of storms
You are proud of it
Claiming you have managed
Yourself so well

Sufficient, until the cord was
Cut,
Now I have to find you
where You landed
With some broken bones
From this cliff
To the rugged terrains
Of that mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
after the storm
we see two dead trees drifting on the river

dead trees move in the same direction
always towards the sea

we are on the same river
drifting too with time

we are too light we have set aside our burdens

i am like the black crow flying towards the
blue mountain searching
for what i do not yet know i like

you are the seagull towards the sea
looking for fish that delights you
in your dream

RIC S. BASTASA
THE KIND OF SILENCE THAT I NEED

In the naked light
i only want to see you
if it pains you
i do not have to touch
what light is there
let me kiss the darkness
and then leave it
waiting for the silence
of the kind of light
that you love.

RIC S. BASTASA
To them he is an engineer
and she is a lawyer

at first glance they are statutes of stable vocations

the boat is steady on the water and there is no storm coming

both are lonely in their thirties

they are thirsty and sit on the same table at the canteen

i am not a lawyer she tells him
i am a woman

me too, he answers her i am not an engineer i am a man

from the window the sea hums a new song to the hot coffee and toasted bread

the go inside the cabin the storm arrives and the boat rocks to the
surface of the sea
like a
woman on top of a man.

RIC S. BASTASA
but sorry, i have a soul, i have a life of my own,
it's never the same without you
oh i will miss your beautiful anger

but sorry, i have a soul, i have a life
of my own,

i change heart, and i am listening
to another beat this time

you have effectively set me free
and i like it better now: i am myself

again.

RIC S. BASTASA
stained and even

It was only one dirty word
You had thrown in my face
My right eye caught it like it
Were a hand
My tears carried the word
Like a virus to my veins
Infecting all my organs
As I got sick the following days
Of my life

I know what happens next
But I cannot just die until
I vomit that dirty word
That now I throw back
At you, then the rest becomes
History,

Some eulogies are written
As a compromise
Of this hate,
This one is for you
That you rest in peace
As I wait
For my own peace too
In my own time sooner
Than tomorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
WISDOM

there is wisdom in the birds
the sky
there is wisdom on the grass
wisdom in the river
there is wisdom in the sea
even in the stone
there is wisdom in the leaves
so much wisdom underneath
the trees
treasure in their roots

those that do not speak
there is so much wisdom in them
in their natural silence

there is, and this is what we think,
so much wisdom in ourselves
gifted as we are with mouths that speak
but the more we open our mouths
the less wise we become

to them, to those who never speak a word
to us
perhaps all they do is listen to us
as we appear too foolish to them
in our noise

there is so much wisdom in God

and like them, those
who like the trees and the posts with their
lights shining at night,
and
the sun and the moon
who stand still amid the chaos,

He has not spoken ever since.
Him i have not heard
Speaking to a man
named Moses
burning once as a bush
never consumed by its own
fire
telling once that
in a holy place we have
to leave our sandals
and go barefoot
for once.

RIC S. BASTASA
FACEBOOK

This is a collection of happy faces
most of the time
on a vacation, a tour you say,

china, hongkong, macau,
the U.S.A.
Phuket, bali,
budapest, brazil
vienna, london,

on poses like yaki-yaki
selfie-selfie,
flyie-flyie in the airie airie

no one wants to confront reality
of a disease,
a weak heart, a pain in the ass,
a dying situation,
a life in prison, a life in waste,

it seems then that happiness is everybody's business

not sadness or misfortune
not death or decay

when you start crying,
true to the saying, you cry alone

when you are lucky
wins a lotto, or gains on a venture

now, you've got what you have to do
flow with the mob
have facebook.

better than having drinks that go beyond
the limits of your sanity
better than suicide.

Cheers!

RIC S. BASTASA
Myself with you.

You cannot stop this engine
From running
Fed as it is with the nuclear energy
Of self-determination

You cannot block this again with
Any call for kindness your face of sobriety & propriety
Sustained as it is with the pride
Of its sufficiency, this engine of life

Away from human drama this engine
Of love and belief of self
Plunges into an eternal destination
Or damnation, or whatever

This engine must go, on and on
Unstoppable unconquered unhindered
This engine I call

Myself with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
My hands holding some shadows
On white laces and flowing
Whiteness of dress
You walk towards a breezy
Shore on some dreams
Your black long hair flowing
Blown against your direction
Your soft hands touch your face
In disbelief
Why this sadness must come and
Happen and linger
In your almond eyes

Sadness like the night
Hovers you except for a surprise
You hum our song
From your heart
And though faraway I will always
Be there
My hands holding some shadows
To comfort you

RIC S. BASTASA
a boy looks at the little bird inside a cage.
it is perhaps thinking that it is too beautiful to hold.
to touch the feathers, and feel its beak and claws.

i am looking at the little boy's face
he is another innocent angel trapped too in the cage of this earth

there will be happy moments but soon when he grows up he will
make a sum of everything

i do not want him to agree with my negative summation.
i, too was trapped, like a fly unable to move in the bounds of the spider.

i once saw that spider inside my dreams.
it was about to eat me when i finally wake up.

so this is it: a boy looks at the bird inside a cage
i look at the boy's face, a spider looks at me, and then we keep summing up things.

we all fall short of what is expected.
the spider has not eaten the fly. The fly has not escaped.
Like the bird. Like the boy who is getting inside the cage.
Like me who is finding a way to open another cage myself.

we all dream that we soon shall wake up.

RIC S. BASTASA
What are we? what can we become?

We can be just snails if we want to,
But we can be sparrows too,
We must choose, we cannot just be silent
& undecided
Forever,
If we choose to be snails
Then we will know what we want
We want a river and some palms
To plan our slow travels,
If we choose to be sparrows then
We at least know what to do next,
We shall grow beaks, and wings, and
Soon we need the sharp claws too
To defend ourselves

At least we also know what we need,
Just nests to lay our small eggs,
Twigs of trees to rest upon
Our weary bodies,

We choose what we are
To become what we can be,
We start on that decision, and then
We will see what suits us
To be the best from the rest,
Who still ask

What are we? what can we become?

RIC S. BASTASA
The true the good and the beautiful

They go together
& so even if you are good but not true
then you are not beautiful,

and even if you are beautiful
but you are not true then you are not good

or even if you are true but then you are not good
then you are not beautiful

always remember that
they always go together so for you to be beautiful
and really beautiful
you must be also good and you must be always true,

this is the goodness of truth and its beauty
that all depends on you, now i can go, so please be

the true, the good and the beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
staring at you

We sound the same
I mimicked you for twelve years
Like a mynah bird
Your choice of words
Your accent
Nasal like the American guest professor
of ateneo de manila university

To a certain point
I wanted to be like you.

One night I went out
Of my body
Like a wind
I went into you as you breathe
For air

I took the tours
In your mind and detours in your heart
And even in the sensitive
Places of your loins
& groins
To find what is in you
That I love

I stayed longer in the chambers
Of your heart
On a closer scan of your arteries
a closer, careful look

I did not find you there
I did not even see
My picture of my face that you said
You really love

We sound the same I thought
We were never alike
We have never really spoken
i am shaken

Now I am back in my body
To be myself, this time just be myself

Staring at you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A FRIEND'S POEM FOR SOMEONE

do not love me
i have nothing to give

not even the honesty
that you expect

do not follow me
i have no direction

do not say that because
you love me

then everything will be
alright, far from it

when you force love
upon my hair

what do i have? a crown
of thorns

when you insist that things
will be as they will be

i begin to wish
that i become air again

invisible, cold, and
wandering.

RIC S. BASTASA
ONE That tells me
the true color of my soul
intimacies like vine
to a tree
faithfulness like
the sun to the mountain
shining on early mornings
without fail
one that i am at home with
with others are
taken by the storms of
my confusions
and needs
one who takes me for
what i am
identifies with me
during my
crucifixions
one who stands by me
when i sink as a ship
abandoned by
all the rats
and cockroaches
water to my pail
air to my lungs
sugar to my coffee
lemon to my
honey.

RIC S. BASTASA
7,8,9....

and why is six afraid of seven?

(pause)

because seven ate nine.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am wrong going back to all
those old pictures

about youth, smiles, hugs, kisses
romance, fair weather, seagulls, ports,
mountain climbs, spring dips,
ice cream licks, grapes in my hands,
pillows on warm beds,
walk in the countryside
river baths, home cooking,
grandma's sweets,
papa's horses, old furniture
clan parties, December breaks

i am trying to shake old and dying hands
trying to talk to the dead ancestors
asking them where i have gone wrong
and what i am to do next

my head aches, my heart is anxious,
it is midnight and i cannot sleep

i am back to something to appease
myself
whatever that is and i do not care if
it is fake
if it is an illusion

what i need is something tranquil
something that old solitude can offer

how much is peace? how much is love?
you are right, i can't afford it.

RIC S. BASTASA
I know you are there and I know you understand

What I am saying,
I say from my heart
Two faces, happy & sad, Hate & love in one body,
And you see them
In the mirror as you shake your hair
For some lies, combing some truths
For me to gaze upon like I am
This woman asking from your crystal ball

What happens tomorrow?
When I am alone and he is gone,
Do I have to speak in riddles for you to
Really find the answers? No, I don’t because

I am candid about feelings,
Ask me again if I am happy
And I will show you some scars.
I know you are there and I know you understand

When I tell you that I am crying and sobbing
On a laptop of stories,
He will neither hear me nor you, but we will all be here,
In this tragedy of the hearts

Of two faces, happy & sad, and hate & love, and hate & love,
Wanting to go but also wanting to stay
I know you are there and I know you understand, stay, and stay

I will be going away but only for a while.

RIC S. BASTASA
the time has come
when each of you shall be designated
by a mere number

and just like what happens to those
who die
without a name without a face
so shall each of you also die
without a trace

the gas chambers of Auschwitz
again shall send the foul odored smoke
to the clear serene skies

i see all of you
silently weeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
DIRTY POLITICS

for one to live as smoothly
as it used to be

one must be three monkeys

hear nothing, say nothing
and see nothing

the three monkeys live
inside you

see yourself in the mirror
what a huge tree!

RIC S. BASTASA
SHAPELESS

i will be leaving
places,
places where the dwellers
always live on rules
i feel like
dammed, you know what
a dam is?
it prevents waters
from falling naturally
walls have always
something or someone to protect
and rules are made
by masters
am no slave.
and i protect no one.
i am water. i take
shape in my own thoughts.
anyway, if you are
free, your shape is
shapeless.

RIC S. BASTASA
for how did each of them here care for you?
they only think of themselves and their
children and their mothers and
fathers
their land, their memories, their vacations,
themselves and their reflections
in their mirrors

how selfish have they become
unlike what their roots have done to their soils

now what they must take are nothing but numbers
there are no scents there are no colors

but numbness and they all deserve that
their indifference must go back to their houses
and their kitchens shall have neither salt nor sugar
neither flame nor ice

now they must thrive on their own hatred and
being lost they shall not find their way back home

RIC S. BASTASA
i have nothing to ask of you
or of myself
i have been here and have slept on the coolness of grasses
and i have seen the rainbow all complete with its array of colors
i heard the black bird sing
and so is that white bird on the roof of my house
doves and crows
and cars and wheelbarrows

i have loved and lost and loved and won
there is nothing to prove there is nothing to show
time tells us in the dusk that it will end somewhere someday
like a fortuneteller covering her head with a black headdress

i am not awed and neither i ask
i am not curious anymore

i listed to the flow of the river
it is the music to my ear

i am fed up with all these big and little things in my palms
let them all be birds and butterflies
let them all fly away and let them all not come back

RIC S. BASTASA
someone out there
is awake, even in the middle of the night
inside a room
all alone

i know it. i do not see it. i can feel it.
you are with me
one in this, one in this silence, one in this

pressing of keys, without looking at the letters
riding on the memory of our fingertips

someone out there wants to be free, from the walls of his
self-imposed unhappiness

someone out there is asleep, beside someone who is awake
staring at the ceiling, not wanting any light from any bulb

someone out there travels, beyond,
beyond the limitations of dreams, beyond dreams

in chant, repeating, and repeating, hoping to just forget
what is pain in everything.

RIC S. BASTASA
you ask me what is happening
what am i doing
where and why?

follow the numbers, and let the numbers tell you with words
each word

fathom the depths and wallow in the shallow portions
rinse and then die

believe in the glow of suds their lightness
and then float yourself away

RIC S. BASTASA
THE MAN WHO LOVES BOOKS

he did not have
courage
to tell you
that he is in love
with his books
his body spent
in his readings
his mind lost
in the pages of
a story

but keep in hoping
for fire

may it burn his
library
may it make him
run away from
his books

may he see you again
like the first time

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't give in to discouragement.
If you are discouraged it is a sign of pride
because it shows you trust
in your own powers.

Never bother about people's opinions.
Be obedient to truth.
For with humble obedience,
you will never be disturbed.

- Bl. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

RIC S. BASTASA
and He regretted
having made him
for in his hearth
there is nothing but
ever and arrogance

except for Noah and
so the Ark
was made, and be
glad you're one
of them still here
writing your poem
and be sad
you have forgotten
the gospel
and you have set
aside the
psalms

are they not poems
too?

come to think of it
how much time
has been wasted
in your
doggerel?

RIC S. BASTASA
something will always be new
one which you have forgotten
you make it come back
and it becomes alive
and it will be new again
and what a pity
when you yourself inflict
that sweet pain again.

RIC S. BASTASA
actually i do not talk much about this and that

if you ask me now, this moment, forgive me but i am ready
with a sack
of lies filled with rice grains of excuses to feed my
hunger for truth, sorry

but i need to feed my lean days and you will see
how hard it is when summer comes
with nothing but tin roof on our heads
for shelter,

hot we are familiar about what hot is,
how hot is it when we mean hot
this Philippine summer
in this city
and you must not have the nerve to tell me
to cool my skin
like i am your tamed reptile
a snake perhaps or the turtle that you once knew me to be,

time has changed my shape and way of looking
at the river
you do not know how i have made ties with the frogs
wishing for the heron to come to eat us
and we learned our lesson so well,

we made more slime, and poisonous
tumors in our skins to protect us, they tell you this story
i was there then
and compromised a little with how my life has to be managed,

chameleon, iguana, hot days, sandstorms, some easy preys
to our feeding times,
dark lonely nights with the timid moon
heavy rains at times and flood that
forced us to stay on cliffs
for months, i have learned these all
years, we have not met and one day
we meet again on the hills filled with flowers
and friendly air,

you are so confident, and you touch me
but i am already harmful,
the way i make you feel
sends you the signals of second thoughts
there is a little distance
between you and me
and in between is the doubt and questions

you touch me again
i feel so cold and you felt the danger of this reptile

RIC S. BASTASA
how do you go away?

going away may mean what means you use in
going away
a truck where you also leave some dusts for them to remember
as they wipe out their tears and
dust off their feet, or you take a boat
where all the chances of waving your hands after a long story
is told,
when the bells of the boat make the sound of
warning for the well-wishers to take their time out
of the floating moment,
then the loud siren shouts, a boat load of memories taken
a bag ful of hidden resentments
sails aways with you,
or you take the jetplane where some sentiments are
written on air,
clouds not necessarily bursting with joy
as you leave
suddenly, away from them
someone you do not like to see anymore
something you
want discarded from your life: the pain inside your heart

cease, that is your word for going away,
but most of the time you just slam the door
pick yourself, carry what you have not spoken,
and walk away, just like that
never looking back

you only have a handkerchief to comfort you
and you go on with your life
surviving on the salt of your dried tears

the unkind words you keep with you
to support you
for the coming days, you are sad for a while, and then

you are free.
pretenses

this is what
they want to see of you

a handsome face, strong arms, clean fingernails,
broad shoulders,
determined eyes that look always forward
scented ears
the best feet and
good standing,

to please them
you give those parts to all to them
and what you will get
in return is the
applause,

everybody is happy,
except you,
it was not you,
it will never be you,
you are in truth not the one that you really are
you only comply what what they want to see
and surely they will get them
they will get
what they see

you go inside your room
slowly disassemble yourself
all those beautiful parts

a handsome face, strong arms, clean fingernails,
broad shoulders,
determined eyes that look always forward
scented ears
the best feet and
good standing,
you lie in your bed without looking at the mirror
it takes only the rattling of your bones
to tell you who you really are
then you close your weary eyes
and sleep

the dream will join you in these truths

RIC S. BASTASA
what appears is what it is
that is how simple it is
and how beautiful can it be

a petal of a flower is nothing
but a petal of a flower
falling to the ground on a
windless day
caused by no other than
this pull of gravity

we watch a world unfolding
we only use words because there is a need to write
what beautiful thing we have seen

but there is more to the simplicity of all these things
those that we have seen and felt and
cannot completely tell you
even in the most simple words of our poetry

the experience of beauty is so personal
like how i experience the poetry of the heart
it is like this, no, it is like this... words fail now

(........)

RIC S. BASTASA
8 Steps More

8 steps more
and this little stone
hurting my
feet
7
6
5
there is a
black bird
hovering on
my head
4
3
2
1

at last i am with you
kissing your feet

and then you kick
me out

i hold on to a twig
i am this
cliffhanger

then you kick me again
until i fall

1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
and ten

i am back in your arms now
taking revenge
inside your heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
8: 45 P.M.

i had this chance
of seeing you
eating
in my favorite restaurant

you have beer
and some chicken barbecue
and chili sauce
and some
sticks of cigarettes

i know you
have seen me
first
and in hiding your greed
and selfishness

you got hold
of your cellphone
press some
numbers
and letters
and pretend
you are so engrossed
with something
else

i very well understand
how the hardtimes
convinced
you
to take the shame
of eating
alone

and simply forget
all the hungry
children
in our home
the new light has come from on my jalousie windows

the first thing i do in the morning is write my new poem
borne of the night
too weary to dream
but this poem keeps on stalking
always wanting to be written

write,
stare to space and let that stare linger for a while
like gathering some dust in air
or spraying the air with your shower of thoughts
speak
to yourself
like reminding yourself with words that have become too unfamiliar
because they are not spoken
words too get impatient and jealous
because of unuse
and furious too because of abuse
words too have lives of their own
and even feelings of their own
so you are telling me

be cautious be too patient and considerate
be compassionate
be strong
be happy be prayerful

i write the words again
on the positive side of things
the happier
hopeful categories

i open some shutters
slide some thoughts
inser my gaze and
spread some scrutinies

i am seeing a new light
from the jalousies

it is the soft morning light
and i really like it

i stand still and look
above this room
down to the things
below me

i see people moving
wearing the uniform
to their offices
they go

i almost forget,
it is a working day also for me.
the morning light has enticed me again,
i repeat, my friend, i still like it

here.

RIC S. BASTASA
WHEN JUSTICE FAILS

when justice fails because the constable has blundered
do not be surprised, do not even be discouraged,
proceed in procuring justice still with the way how you are trained
to do so,
get the fingerprints of your thoughts and present the same
to those who doubt and wavered, show them the intricate lines
of your own determinations
this is how it must be done
there is still a map of this destination,

when justice fails because the judge and justices have also lost
their sense
what justice is and how it should be dispensed like a blindfolded lady
that you misunderstand with her scales on one hand and a sword
on the other,
do not be shaken, do not lose hope, heave a sigh and breathe
the remaining clean air,
there are still those who in silence still remain steadfast
holding on to truth
and keeping their hands clean and hearts pure and minds active
to the pursuit of this eternal approximation
of fairness
there are still those whose eyes still daze to the glitters not of gold
but of truth, beauty, and goodness,
i will count you in
please count me in too

and how about you?
i ask, please be counted
we shall stand on the good side of things
we shall look for the brightest star
the ideal from among the blunders in the darkness of our nights

let the hammer fall and let it fall everyday
let those in the dark side have their houses full
there are walls there are ceilings

there are wall here and there are ears who listen so well
and eyes who see too clearly
you,
there are ceilings too
there are limits to what you can do
there are floors
between
you
now the cup has overflowed the dams break out
a flood
will cover you, the floor meets the ceiling and you are sandwiched
like a witch,

see..how you crumple?

RIC S. BASTASA
THE VIRTUE OF NON-REPETITION

I like to love without traces
to sing without any echo
and just to be myself without
a name tag

To be lost without fear
To be a question without an answer

To be found again without my knowing it
To stay put in my chosen prison

To write a poem without a period
To be and just another speck to eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
you must know i only uttered i love you once

speaking of love, yes, love, what can i say about love,
i cannot speak it without using the word
you,
it is always you, because without you, love cannot even exist
as a word,
or even a thought or even a waft of air to cool my senses,
without you,
love cannot even exist as a blood cell in my heart
or a vein or a chamber
where love usually sleeps,
it is you,
always it is you that i will always equate with love,
you must know
i only uttered i love you
once, and it was true, and it is still true,
the rest
are the words of the drunk man, the broken heart trying
to relive what was once truly uttered,
reenacting,
imitating but always falling short of the truth
years ago
again the words kneeled before God in an old church
with you
our hands may have clasped in prayer
if you remember
our hands finally found each other
touching and holding tight as i said

i love you

as you said

i love you too

that was many years ago,
truth does not know how to die,
true love lives in that
i love you,

forever, always,
you,

i love you,

wherever you are now,

you
must know,
that is the truth that until now

i live

that until now

i am living and thinking still only of you...........

RIC S. BASTASA
my silence shall be

i find this in the forest of trees
long trees, shady, such that what you can see
are only shadows of leaves
and what you hear is only the sound of the wind
choked between tight walls,
this is my silence,
moist, and soft, between a growth of wild
ferns
rotten leaves heaps and heaps of
rotten leaves
layer after layer of rotten leaves
thick and pushed still to the roots
smashed to the ground
some seeds from the oaks
or maybe from the flowers of the orchids
or some sweet fruits and red berries fall
in there
and they begin to grow
rich as humus is this soil down
the darkness of this forest,
this is my silence
deep inside me
moist, rotten, but soon
lots shall grow
seeds turning into sprouts
to trees again
perhaps taller than ever
some fruits so sweet and colored and shiny
some flowers scented and so lovely,
this my silence
shall be, i am keeping it for years

RIC S. BASTASA
i wish i have a mouth that knows how to speak my love

i wish i have this kind of mouth that knows to speak
about my love
one that opens so easily and dashes with words like

you know i love you, tell me, do you love me too?

a candid mouth, like a shrew who gambles with words and
will not mind losing
a mouth who kisses your mouth without
shame and if shamed because you slap it
does not bother at all,

one who says, why hide love, why not pour love like a
strong wine to a chalice and let it warm
the glass and let the glass
be nothing but a glass

one that does not mind at all, one that loves and if not loved in
return takes the other possibilities
without regrets
or pain,

the mouth that i have is closed and will not open
afraid
i have kept the words

i love you only for you

like a worm inside my tongue,
wriggling
turning into a little butterfly
that never had the chance to see what is outside
and feel the freedom of air,
yesterday
it died and i keep it for the whole night

now, i spit it out
and my mouth closed again
eating only silence
while you just watch there
asking me
and i said there is nothing to worry
nothing at all
i just don't feel anything and there is nothing

worth saying, i look at you as you go, i hold only to your shadow
and you will never never never know,

this

RIC S. BASTASA
my heart is yours but it is destined to wander far

my heart is yours, all yours,
it beats to the beating of your heart
feeling nothing but you
all those
all these years
it has the hands of your hands
it sees what your eyes see
it was born for you
it will stay for you and die for you
only if you ask
but you didn't
you did not entice it with the breath of your heart
and so slighted
my heart shall wander faraway gasping for breath
wanting to die
this moment
but you
do not really mind
you think it is nothing there inside me
like it is a tumor
malignant
malignant, it is dying and you see it
wandering away gasping for breath
while you look
away
and find someone else among the stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
this is the time
for silence

we pause for a
while

a minute of silence
will do

as tribute for
the dead

a minute of silence
too

for ourselves
as we give our

hands a chance
to do their works.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember that time you made the wish?

I make a lot of wishes.

The time I lied to you about the butterfly. I always wondered what you wished for.

What do you think I wished for?

I don't know. That I'd come back, that we'd somehow be together in the end.

I wished for what I always wish for. I wished for another poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
i just had the number
88
inside my head.

it is not a grade
not money.

it is a mark of what i have done
on the other side
of my life.

i outlive 3,000
going on to 4,000
i clap my hands, give myself a toast
of red wine
when i had my first 1,000

you must remember my 1,000 cranes
paper cranes
paper poems on cranes and other creatures
like butterflies and birds and wind and dust

they have taken upon themselves the burden of flight
they promise me
and i have it now.

88, is my new number now.
i am inside an elevator and i am going up with you
to the nth floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
WE'RE NOT THE ELITE

whatever little we have
we give to everyone:

the old man without a cane,
a woman without a face, a seaman without a compass,
a child without a crib,
even to the rich man without a heart
or those who without feet dance with the gods
nymphs without wings
satyrs without their hoofs,
to the dogs without voices
some left-overs,

whatever word we have we sow
even to hostile fields of snow
whatever warmth we have we dissipate
even to rails whose arms are numb to the winds

we are nobody
we have names that do not ring a bell to you
yet we give
we do not store
we spread

we suffer
and in the hope that whatever flies away from us
shall diminish
these pains
we dream of wings
we acquire them
only to be given away
to birds
whose wings
are clipped
by you.
Gone Were The Days

when you were a child
and you told the emperor without second thoughts
no holds bar
that he is wearing no clothes at all

that his ass is too small
and that his brain is even smaller

RIC S. BASTASA
ask me

ask me what i wish for in my life

ask me what i do everyday

i will have lots of answers, my wish to be with you at the end
as she once wrote it, was a lie, my wish to hold your hand when
we meet again, as she once confessed was also a lie,
my wish is a lie, i will tell you now, my wish to love you forever,
still a lie, ask me then what is it that is true?
it is only me that is true, from the very beginning of my birth
it is only me
that is true, loving myself, working out to love myself first, so that
i may love you as my first wish, then you must ask me what i do
everyday,
office work, 7:30 to 11:30, back to office work, 1:30 to 5:00
it is not me there,
we talk, it is not me there in that conversation,
it is all work, it is all this obligations to my earth,
i owe my birth,
but i go back in my hole, this home, one day, and everyday,
face the computer, plant my feet on the floor, glue my bottoms
on the chair, bind my finger on every letter of the keyboard
where i heave some sighs,
hurl my words, run the lines that never stop, and mimic some great
men and women,
i sit all night shunning sleep, i write, ask me what is happening,

i am making myself a self, now look at me carefully,
i may be true at least when i begin writing
the first word in this
poem,

ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
if you leave
leave at once
for i have nothing
to say,

others ask
what to say when someone
you love says
about leaving?

i say
go, go, find what is lacking
find that which must complete you
and if you are empty still
do not come back to me
for i am empty too

how can emptiness fill another
emptiness?
mine will always be an invitation
i care
but once refused
there is no where
where you can find me
i am also gone
searching what you have been searching
but now it
shall not be you
i'll have someone else
who can fill
my own emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
there will be so much ruin, if i change,

there is no need or if there be i do

not wish that this too can ruin you

let the days pass like routine

old buses, worn out cabs, rusty jeepneys

same parks, dusty roads, littered seas,

watch capsized boats easy-rides turning turtles

chaos is fun, disorder is order

the menu for the day is always always

expect some stars tonight hope for the full moon

you see, it is a matter of seeing, and what matters is

the moment feeling feeling this always as always

this sense of forever that we sense we know
shall come and take us
like passing days

RIC S. BASTASA
your eyes in that picture insist on asking why

well, i was yet 15 but i already keep a photograph of you in my pocket,
you are the face of my heart beat in black and white
i often kiss your tiny lips and put you on my chest as though i feel you one with me
in my sleep,
that was long time ago and the picture suffered with the way i was keeping it inside my old poetry books
in those pages eaten by bookworms
some scratches ultimately are inflicted in your cheeks and even your lips have become empty spaces blurred by time
what keeps insistent however are your eyes stripped of a nose and lips and even a neck thriving on lesser hair and thin ears

yhey float in that picture still looking at me asking

why?

RIC S. BASTASA
about the ash from Yuri N., she writes it

I once knew
a lady at our church
who played the piano -
Her name was Naomi...
she was quiet,
maybe insignificant...
but I knew her
(only from church) ...
when I heard one Sunday
that she had died
and had been buried
without me knowing,
I grieved for days....
that was 8 years ago...
I still sometimes
think of her,
thinking that,
in some way
she enriched my life -
I cannot remember
her piano-playing,
but I still grieve
nevertheless....

RIC S. BASTASA
when i wrote the words i love you i miss you i want you

you will by chance read these ordinary lines that a lover says to another lover faraway,

oh! My God! you really tore your heart out of your chest and threw on the computer stand when you write these lines

they are ordinarily said, let me tell you again, i love you i miss you i want you on my side,

the musings sound like you and i have met and kissed in the subway of strangeness as i hold your hands like you are a train bar so i may not fall away

and die like a stupid bum, but i write lines of love and missing as i am born to love and miss those unloved and unfound, what for too is my loneliness and being messy,

got to go now, you did not tell me your name, and i did not tell mine, we do not find any importance about knowing each other at all, we just meet, i say i love you i say i miss you, and you listen attentively and pretend you like each word,

we recall the rules of our game, for those who believe there is heaven for those who don't keep your little space of earth,

and live, wiser, cautious, and better adjusted this time, easy come, easy go, there is not much pain, there is no bargain, and well

what is the gain?

now you are learning now you are saying when i go away i miss you i love you i want you and i will not
look back at you, your tongue is so adept in your cheek.

RIC S. BASTASA
i like it here

this is my place, insignificant, small,
fleeting even, like a soft breath coming out of my mouth when
i utter the word
you and
i, but you are still confused unable to understand each letter
like chopped string beans so disconnected
from each piece
i understand myself now as intimately as my nose
to my lips to smell and sound touching each other
this moment,
i still say convinced as i am like how the window pane
agrees to entertain a morning chill and then
the light coming,
i still say, i like it here, the view from here,
green mountains hairy with forest trees
rivers running like children in the parks
clouds drifting like butterflies all in the hues of pastel blue
and some scratches of white and gray,
i like the sea here
friendly salt to my tears, i like the gardens here,
so alive with flowers and bees and blades of grass,
i like it here
and i have no plans ever to leave even with you telling me that you love
me till the end of days and nights,
you are lying and there is no sense dying
in the beds of your dreams so far away like
a mythical kingdom.

RIC S. BASTASA
compulsive

a tattoo in your body crawling your thoughts
of the past
reflected in the lines of your skin those violent ones
and bloody ink tracing what they did to you when you were
just but a kid,
you cannot stop the tattoo
tattooing you, a matter of obsessive
compulsive body writing,
these too are the makings of depression,
the doctor says, you do it and you want it done, like you cannot stop
tattoo tattooing you,
in your arms,
and legs
and tomorrow your chest

you wish some pictures of God and gods
no, no, not the monsters that you want extricated,
i watch you
in this compulsion and you are relating why,
how,
what
explaining the meanings of these figures when they confront you,
i am listening,
i am not lost, i am analyzing bits and pieces of your world
to mine,
i am amazed how the changes come,
like some scribbles
becoming
angels
and saints,
i am trying to get what the
doctor is saying,
compulsive neurosis
schizophrenia,
obsessive,
dominant
recessive,
i am looking
for a space to put you
and make you my guinea pig,
but i stopped,

you are human and i must respect you,
now, i have to deal with my compulsive state too,
this poetry,
i cannot stop and it is hammering me everyday,

crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
sitting, waiting

sitting, as simple as sitting on a stair
you look around through dragonfly eyes
from higher places
like a cliff overlooking a village
closer to cotton clouds
patches of hissing
winds up here,
alone,
you sit, sitting is simple, it is not complicated
as waiting which is heavier sometimes with a person who is not
showing some shadows for the coming,
sit,
i sit,
i am sitting viewing a wide horizon, a vast expanse of a field,
some white herons heaving leaves blown from dead trees this summer,
they fly away
from you, they fly away from where you are seated, from your country,
you remain sitting,
sit, like a dog to his master telling him to sit,
sit,
it is simple as being yourself alone, not even waiting
things end in darkness
dust settles finally on the ground after a truck fully loaded with almost
everything leaves
the road heading far away from you,
you are not waiting for anything
you have no time
left for waiting, everything leaves and goes away, always everybody
utters the word goodbye
except these, the rain, the rain, there are many of them,
these hordes of rains

they are coming and you sit and do the last thing possible
listen

RIC S. BASTASA
if i heave a sigh, what will i do with what i did not heave?

if i heave a sigh
into the air, and i keep some other more inside myself,
unconsumed, unspent,
what will i do with it?
keep it
like a secret in my closed fingers and pretend i am angry
with this clenched fist
when in truth i have nothing
no plan of keeping things that long because my arms
my soon go
into the river and be lost floating like a log from a hill?

i heave a sigh, that is enough relief,
i am emptied of something heavy
in my nose
i become an island losing air
but keeping sand and
stones
to keep my balance with the coconut trees
still
making landmarks to lost directions,

but it is my way of making my senses alive
i heave a sigh
and i want you to really hear it at a very close distance
just you and me
for you to know where i have situated myself
in this vast
nothingness,

i am here, touch me,
i am warm, i am fire,

you have been taking the forms of water
cold, damp,
having the face of the night, where the moon lost its light,
what are you doing to me?
i am taking you but you are the one taking me nowhere
i am lost by your promises
of a raft
i lost track of your waft, and here i am lost again as i

heave a sigh, deeper
this time....

RIC S. BASTASA
even on the late hour of the night

even when late,
try getting in, they will not notice, you are not famous,
try being a nobody
and they won't bother, so get inside the room and pretend
you are not a part of them in this
discussion,
behave like you are the waiter bringing them a glass
of water,
no excuses this time, do not talk, do not bother them,
and they too will not bother you,
try being nothing
just be the ordinary you, and they will not notice,
even on the late hour of this night
they still have eyes only for themselves
within their circle
and you are still an outcast, simply because from the very
first day of this meeting
you are just being yourself
and you remain being so,
you have not become like them,
mimicking each other
into conformity
for fear of rejection, so at this hour of the night when they seem
to enjoy each other's likeness
get inside,
just be yourself and take your own kind of drink
your self-identity
your name that they will never know
when tomorrow
you will soon part and they will be themselves again
alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
kick kick kick
when bored kick
when hurt kick
when ignored kick
when lost kick
when you're listed out
kick
when you're dead
kick
if you can.
what are those feet for?
kick, kick, kick,
if you still can

RIC S. BASTASA
overcoming a writer's block

Stretch!
If you can't stand up,
stretch as many muscle groups
as possible while
staying seated.

Try tensing and
releasing various
muscle groups.
Starting from your toes,
tense up for perhaps
five to ten seconds
and then let go.

Relax and
then go on to
another muscle group.

Breathe deeply.
Close your eyes;
then,
fill your chest cavity
slowly by taking
four of five short deep breaths.

Hold each breath
until it hurts,
and then let it
out slowly.

Use a calming word
or mental image
to focus on while relaxing.

If you choose a word,
be careful not
to use an imperative.
Don't command yourself to

'Calm down!'

or 'Relax!'

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hint On Some Tales

some flowers bloom late, some buds just wilt
the rain makes no promises - and so there goes some stories
of johnny-come-latelies and pretentious marriages.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Romantic Place In July

the men have arrived to plant
the seeds

on the fields the women are
singing

it is a sunny day and

the shades of
the old mango trees are

too tempting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A  White Woman With Pink Two-Piece Suit

text

A  White Woman With Pink Two-Piece Suit

she has blonde hair
a perfect body
white against the dark
she walks alone
along the white sands of this beach

i follow her and she knows
i am following her
she stops. she stoops to pick up a shell.
she looks at it carefully.

i stop and look at her too.
she smiles. i smile too.
we exchange no word.
for this meeting.

i change my direction.
she does not follow me.
the message becomes clear.
there is no meeting
of our minds.

i remove my shorts.
and shirt.

i go to the sea and
plunge my body.
the sea is hot.
the sun is up.

i dive deeper.
i have not seen
anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Babble...

the goodness that good does
to you, your greed come blocking,
you haven't measured yet
goodness with goodness, you lie
and all the excuses are recited,
and i do not listen, my goodness
does what good can do to you,
i shall ambush, your conscience,
i wait, my goodness can kill you,
then shall you be good forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bad Day

burnt toasted bread beside a moldy marmalade bland coffee and bad news on tv

welcome a world in recession.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bad Day, That Is What It Is

there is no gas for the stove
and the fish is half-cooked
the rice smells like rotten worms
and the kitchen looks like
a garage full of junk

she is still praying
and you wonder if breakfast still exists
you pack your things
and move out trying to spell out
other women's names

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bad Ending

you write something
you choose the words
the feelings are there
oozing
the memories are sticky
flashbacks like
scenes of a
play

you like it at the beginning
crispy and
onion flavored

you take the bite and chew
honestly

at the middle you shake
your head
your chair trembles
something is so wrong

you're impatient
you want to go to the ending
it is very bad
someone dies and people love the
murderer

it is very bad
society hates this kind of story
very unbecoming of
a narrative

but what is important
is just this plain honesty that sometimes
everything can be bad
just bad
and perhaps even so bad

gives you that feeling that you are right
and then
at the end you put a stop to words proclaiming that
a bad ending
can be so beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Banaba Leaf

this banaba leaf falls from its branch
a child gathers it
and hands it to me
and i keep it
on top of my study

each day i look at it
like it is something so different
from the rest of the leaves

time shrinks it
time browns it
until its cells begin
to show its veins

until it turns to thread
crumpled pieces
until it turns to dust
until it becomes like the sands
of the shore

nothing lasts
in such a short time
the leaf returns to ash

on its last day
i gather what remains are there
on my palm

outside i sprinkle the leaf that
returns to dust
to air back to the empty space
back to the nothingness
our place of final destination

the world is hungry for this
dusts and sands
death to everything living
A Banana And The Cadena De Amor

a vine of small hearts
running up
towards a big
purple heart
clasped by
hands fruits

a crown
of pink petals
greets the
blue
sky
the sun is one
big halo

this morning

RIC S. BASTASA
A Barking Dog

a barking dog
they say does not bite
but it will always have
its mouth
and sharp teeth
and you that moves
closer to this
strangeness prepares
yourself for the
unexpected bite
contrary to what they
had always said.
a barking dog is still
a dog
its weapon remains
that bite
it has no fists
no tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful And Just World

when Paul Walker died
at 40, many shall mourn

Jesus died at 33 and so did
Rizal, much younger

they did not die riding a
Porsche
and only a few mourned
and even in hiding
for fear of
retaliation.....

what a beautiful
and just world indeed

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a beautiful bird caged in my house
its flumes are red
its beak of course is black
its claws neat and clean
and cannot scratch
its eyes blank
its feathers dull
(perhaps she is bored to death
but she is still that beautiful bird caged in the heart
of my house)
when she sings
usually in the night before everyone sleeps
everyone hears
what sadness lies in the heart of its
throat
i know that it wants to escape from the cage in the heart of the house
but someone more cruel
wants it caged
forever

tere is a beautiful red bird caged in my heart
i want it set free
she understands it well
she wants to be free
i know it too well
but things will just be what it is
there is nothing we can do
she is the beautiful red feathered bird caged
and shall never be free

like the stairs, like the walls, like the beams like the stars
shall this red bird be.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Body Will Have A Hard Time Convincing You That It Is Suffering

a handsome face can tell a thousand lies.

because when it starts to tell the truth
you will not believe it.

a beautiful body will have a hard time
convincing you that it is suffering

a good career will find it hard to tell you that it wants to quit.

a fortune cannot brag that it does not enjoy spending.

so many more. someone cries and yet still hides
in the luxury house of its privacy.

safe house, well fenced, the screams inside cannot be heard.
a palace where fools live. a yacht where only rats enjoy.

a poetry stripped of the beauty of its sound.

a short story that keeps you away from a happy ending.

a hero turning out to be a fraud. a picture that is mute and deaf.

words that do not live in dictionaries anymore.

a dog with feathers. a bird with walls.

a word of water and no land at all no rock to hold into a magnetism.

a universe deprived of planets. a starless and sunless armory of horizons.

you soon learn this trick. a grope for meaning and reason

where there is none.
A Beautiful Day

the fields are empty now
the grains have been harvested
the clouds drift and stay a while
on the side of the green mountain
still dressed with mists and fog
the trees line the path
the leaves are green and lush
i take as usual this morning walk
towards a hut beside a graveled path

a white heron arrives and lands
on a drying pond
the sun just shines to mark a
beautiful day
the pale horizon turns pastel blue

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Day (2)

no rain
dews have dried up
no ripples from the pond
air still
leaves are glossing
to the sun
sky is clear
fogs gone
the window opens
to the garden
of daffodils

the sea is silky blue
no foams
seagulls fly to the north
boats sail to
deep oceans

the ants gather
morsels
and the grasshoppers
and crickets
join in the singing

welcome a brighter new day
for the darkness is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Jar

a beautiful jar
always gapes its mouth
open to the emptiness
of the world taking in
the silence of the air
and not bloating

it is as though its arms
were taken and its feet
and its eyes and nose
simply because they are
no longer important

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Language Is Evasive

a beautiful language is
evasive
shaped like the curve of a
street
along the high cliff beside the
sea
zigzagging itself away from a point
like a snake river avoiding a
fatal bite
to anyone that crosses its way
as it inches its way toward the
fulfillment of a
common dream
it is nothing but to live
nothing but to breathe
nothing possessive but just a description
to see a place and never name it
to love without the use of
words
no judgments but just a long gaze
like a road in that
dessert of red sands
faraway

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Mind

a beautiful mind is a loving mind
words as
anger, filth, dirt, sordid, squalid,
hate, indifference, murder
curse, envy
are not found
in a beautiful mind

what have i in my mind then to call my mind a beautiful mind

God, please be there
Saints please be all there
Angels please please be all there

i look at this mind with all honesty because i claim it to be one
beautiful mind

i am crazy
i am not a beautiful mind
as i claim to be
i am afraid all that is found in there is

just you

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful Rainbow

i've seen a rainbow
this bridge of different colors
makes you feel
the ease that beauty
gives

whether there is
a pot of gold at its end
or its tail
i don't really care

i am just
a pilgrim of the hill
a spectator of
the passing wind
a deafening silence
a stab of the
stare

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beautiful World....

That night the
flowers of kamuning
bloomed

White perfume was
spread
as the cool air of
June
was playful with
the tiny
green leaves

I sat under it
there were no stars in the skies
no moon

Dark clouds covered
what the sky could have
offered

It was your Light
that illuminated my
dark world &

With You i had no reasons
for fear

What a scented world!
how beautiful it is!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bed

when my feet are
taller than your bed
will you cut
them to fit
them?

if it happens to you
i will do
the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bed On The Water

a bed floats in the middle of the river
you swim
to catch sleep

the bed is taken by the rage of the river
on a flood that rises
up to your chin

you sleep on the water
the cruel bed is gone
the rage of the river subsides
there is peace now
among the lilies

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beef Steak

i know you have decided to take the
code of the vegetarian
in the party
the host is warned to serve
veggies, not to disappoint you
the important one
the celeries, the lettuce
apples and peaches
pineapples and papayas
spinach and cabbages
your taste of the leaves
and the pulp
and some fresh juices
your body has become
frail less the bulk
of the muscle and the
meat
somehow, you glitter
and glow like a
traffic light when
you see me alone
with my fitting blue jeans
and my bulging
spare parts
you like it
i give the signal
i am blank
you can fill me up
with an answer
true, yes, go,
take me

i am your beefcake
i taste like your
irresistable beef steak
take me tonight
i am obliging in love
eat me
take me to the warmest
part of
your throat

i am your man
i keep your secret

on some expensive
equivalents, you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beginning Of All Beginnings

The walls are suffocating,

so you remove some planks to make a window

it becomes your window to the world outside you

but what you see (if you remain enclosed) is still yourself out there and it will not make any difference

you close your eyes and open your mind

there is another window that opens endlessly towards all the possibilities

spaces of suspended beliefs awakenings of what you have taken for granted

you shrink into a littleness a baby talk a mother's hum

you do not know what a sun is
or a moon

that first feeling of
the wind
that face that you have
ever seen

this sense of awe and
wonder
a beginning of all
beginnings
is here now

looking at you
and then you smile....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Beginning Of Our Chase

a little bird
has become one of your
cliches

overused, crass,
and sensitivities do
not mind it
at all

let it fly away from you
and feel the silence of
the iron rail
its coldness is like
the finger of
a dead man

now, let us talk a little bit
about the death of
justice

and the escape of that
little bird
as a beginning of our
chase.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Belief Of Eternity

when i get to be fifty
i begin to know the nature of the hours
i am getting familiar with its hands
that i cannot really hold them
even as friends and so i have become
tolerant about its
vices the way it is giving me another
color of my hair
the wrinkles in my hands
the weakness of my knees
and the early exhaustion of my feet
when i try to walk farther distance again
in the same manner
as it is not giving me much favor
i learn to simply accept it
as a fact
and i let it go like the way how
a lover junks me sometimes
giving me the feeling that somehow
i am no longer desirable
but i am not the kind that surrenders easily
thus when time betrays me
i too
give it what it deserves
i begin to forget it
and the hours are spilled like i do not
need it too
and then when they are all consumed
and i am all consumed
i register in my mind all the memories i had
many years back
there is no regret
i have loved all the way
when i was younger
and i take them all with me in my final journey
where time itself
is not a part because in there it does not exist at all
because i have always believed
that i am not just this
flesh and bone and skin and skull
i am more than all these
and i am no slave of time
not its subject
i am into eternity where time too does not end
i am into timelessness
so filled now with all happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Belief Of The Merry Go Round

it is another beginning
we do not know exactly where we shall mark it

don't be a ring
a circle a sphere
turning and turning
round and round
in ecstasy
and pain

terrible no end
we do not exactly know where we shall mark it

don't be a ball
round and bouncing

don't be the Ferris wheel
the May pole

don't be another ride for another year
merry, merry, merry go round

how shall we feel it?
when we are too preoccupied
with what we are
and what shall we become?

don't be the circle of love
and hate and love and hate
a plain of concern
and indifference

these are dances of many lifetimes
and cycles and repetitions

i see a face and make love with a body
i live in a house and walk on a path

who are you now? what place is this?
and why are we here?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bicycle Poem

do not worry how the bicycle looks
ride it.
do not think how the wheel and its spokes work
do not attempt to understand its structure
ride it.

do not think how the other people looks at you with your bicycle
just ride it.

when you are riding it already
just feel the joy of the air that meets your face
the speed by which it takes you to another destination

just ride it, disembark when you get there
you do not even have to own it and keep it for the rest of your life

when you get old
remember that bicycle that once gave you all the joys of riding

before you die
give it to the young

they shall have their own joys too
riding it

and perhaps they will write a poem about you
or if not
about the bicycle at least
who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Big Panel

a big panel truck
is parked
beside the store
it is socializing with
a big

hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Big Secret

how can i
not tell you
about my big secret?
the one that
makes you happier
than i am
the one that can make
you cry
because you shall be
in bliss
a rose on the table
beside the phone
a note sealed
inside
my lips
how can i not tell
you about it?
you know it well
my dear
words find no use
in this
revelation is of
no use.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Big Wall Between Privacy And Poetry

There is a big separate
wall between myself and
my poem

you may cry on those
sad ones
but you cannot equate
that as me

i may have written a
love poem
but it may not after all
refer you you

do not be disappointed
but realize that poetry is but
a creation of an
imagination

it can be empathy, or
a shot in the wind using
the universal arrow of humanity
from one who feels
that the angst must be expressed
because there are those
without the courage to do so
without the words to say
without the privilege of having
been educated in universities like you

so calm down, read and feel and
take what affects you

do not put me there. I live somewhere else
and live a life that is still to be
created by me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bigger Vision Of The World

we just talked about
an opening of a lid of a magic lamp

genie comes out
and here i am still undecided about my

three wishes

more about the rainbow after the rain
the silver lining behind the thick clouds

no, it is not a Pandora's box
or a can of worms

that light at the end of the tunnel
the bad that dissipates in time

that spout spewing bounty and mercy

a war that is not about a person
but a bigger vision of the world

a wholesome talk that makes us
closer

and soon by God's time
we will be seeing each other again.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bio

Inside our pockets
is the privacy of our own stones

outside our faces are the familiarities of
our traditions

when we party
we say the same words actually
we fear
other people's anger
we cannot afford to disappoint the
visitors of our
common faith

the usual mess will be there
part of the party you know
sometimes we let go
we let loose what is too tight in our necks
we spit what is bitter outside the windows of our
tongues

there is always time for restraint in a few glasses of
alcohol
there is a time to make our mouths shut up
ty ing our tongues like ropes on
the railings of the house
of civility

personally i do not like this party where we become
decent fools
choosing the words
afraid of the truth
always fearing that we should have broken some rules
of engagements

most of the time we deny what our hearts are looking for
cold hands hold another set of cold hands
empty heads bang with other empty heads
on hollow sounds of flattery
one time i left the room where the party is going on
it is 11: 10 in the evening and it has become too intolerable

i need to be alone inorder to be free
i imagine you and i love this atonement when you still do not mind
how i feel

i am complicating it so much restraint
because even if i am now outside everybody
i still retain
the decency of what is right and wrong which i always
carry around.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird

a bird has wings
wings are nothing if they are not used
for flying

like you
what use have you for your wings?

chicken!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird Escaping Finally From Its Cage

Let me not speak about
This bird that finally finds a way
Out of its cage

New to its freedom
It whirls and circles the skies
A tryst with the wind
A feast with the sun
A dive to the sea
A rising up to the limitless
Space around it

Let me not speak about its
Final regret
Its wanting to be back in the cage
Again
Because for a time
It thinks again
It is really its home
Forever

The bird shall soon ask you
To open the cage
To spend its nights there
All its lifetime

Soon it will have the courage to say it
Freedom sometimes
Home it is not

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird Flying Into Freedom....

At night alone in bed
I hear music in my ears
Flute reverberating around my walls
I fly like a bird
Spreading my wings throughout a blue sky
Days of summer
Brighter days
Newer visions
Freeing myself from the clutches of
our memories
On top of the cliff i land my feet
and see the world
In a more beautiful way
Fresh, invigorating
Pulsating

Love i pray
More strength today
Break my spirit
Blithe!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird Sometimes Does Not Sing

like you
beautiful woman, a bird on the window sill
sometimes gets tired of singing,
there is not usual tune
and the day becomes darker
than the usual night,
the sun not brighter and the
grass not green
as they are wont to be
there is no hope for flowers
that wilt today
the buds are falling.

i want to talk, but i cannot
like the bird that decides not to sing
because there is nothing
worth singing anymore
in my case
because nothing seems to be
worth living anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird Story, The Hint...

watching you in full beauty
is an attempt of my hand to set myself free
i have the key and the door is not locked
there is no use for the key even
no one is locking me in and i am always
free at any time of the day to go
and be the wings of the bird that
my mind imagines every hour of the
waking day

there was once a bird captured by an enemy
put inside a cage and well feed
and well attended
it sings of freedom and love and beauty
in one sad song
the enemy decides to open the cage to set it free
the bird doubts this time
the enemy has become a loyal friend
the cage has become its sweetest home

the words are the same as arranged in that desired ending
ah, they all live happily ever after....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird...

the cockatoo
plays basketball
and then
Laura (and that is her
name)
is fed with white
grains
she turns 360 degrees
and shoots the
green ball
to the ring

the people clap
and Laura flies away
again to the hands
of its feeder

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bird's Song

some bird's seeds
on a platter in the garden
after a short moment
a bird takes its pick
and soon three, four,
five birds came and
they made some sort
of choir songs as
thanksgiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Black Box, A Key And The Stinking Guest.

do you know how to live
inside
a black box?
tell me. Are you the
seed inside that black box,
you sprout?
and look for an
opening of light?
Helios, you love Helios.
Do you know
this God named Helios?
you are not
a bug, you do not move
like a cockroach
you stink a bit
and you are here beside me

i live inside this black box
for years
i am not a seed,
neither a tweed,
there is no need for you to know
it will not be significant

and i am not stinking like you
you wonder what is this
all about asking you
if you too live in here?
or who you are and why are you
here
inside this tinder black box
it is dark here and we are
talking, you can hear me
and smell me but
you shall not feel me
i am not alive.

i am the key.
A Black Cat, A Woman And A Shadow

a black cat goes inside the room
in the steps of his own feline silence
looks at the body of the naked woman
laying on the floor leaning on the wall

between them a glassful of wine
and a shadow

then the cat walks away slips through the window
and jumps to the other side of the building

then the woman screams. The night is long and crazy.
Tomorrow morning, another number is added

IT numbs the senses of the city
The cat understands that it has nothing to do with all these.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Black Day

words are choppy
one afternoon like
a telegram
from a far country
they are old and
torn like an old dress
of a woman
seduced and raped

you ask how can
these words exist?
how can that woman
not exist?

you are with that
woman last night
she is old and
tattered
a broken memory
a choppy story
stuttering before
you and you listen
to this record of
history and you
cannot sleep and
you look at the sky
it is black and closed
and there is no opening
for the sun to come out
tomorrow morning

RIC S. BASTASA
A Blackout

Was it just two
or four powerlines
bombed in Iligan?

They say four.
Yes, another four powerlines
are bombed by
their freedom fighters
and they get what they want now

We begin to live our darkest days
Powerless
In our poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Blank Sheet

pick the crayons
and color
those empty spaces
on the clean
sheet of paper
beside you
under your
lamp shade
tonight

draw the rainbows
in your mountains
sprinkle it with rain
make the clouds
blue and fill the
rivers with the color
of its waters

sing a tune
give your world
a beautiful sound

spray some perfume
on that paper
to give your world
the scent of musk
and muffin

RIC S. BASTASA
A Blind Spot

there is a certain point in life
that you arrive at
not knowing what to do and you
decide

on a question without an answer
relying on the
auto-resolution of the problematic
proposition,

sick minds get well without
medication sometimes,

lizards grow the tail that you cut
when you were so angry

wounds heal without notice
days provide them time
to take care of their own bleeding

on a certain day i am struck with so much light
only to find
that i cannot really see what is in there

its color particularly
mistaking red for blue
white for beige

even black for white
and people who rely on my vision
become so disappointed

this sense of injustice sometimes blinds
we go for the murky water hoping to find a fish
without gills

it is traumatic not to be understood
it is scheming for me to see to it that you will not understand
but this is my game and your game too,
exploring the senses of letting things go

intriguing biographies, taking too many names that at the end
confront us too with
having no meaning at all,

what is this? pure baloney.
yet so interesting, let the day pass without so much worry

relaxing, unknown, and so colorful, red and yellow trying to capture
the essence of an afternoon, even without you

and then there is only darkness and silence
and a star so near the moon, like love blossoming into a flower.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Blue Bird...

THERE is a blue bird
nesting inside my belly
there are butterflies in
there too,

THERE is nothing that
comes out from my belly
there is nothing that
flutters in there
nothing flies away
there is nothing
that comes out from
my mouth

THERE is only a blue bird
in my belly
the butterflies do not
last
only the blue bird
yes
this blue bird
this silence

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boast To Kill

I can kill
A fly
On the dining table
With all of you
Watching

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boat By The Silent Pond

a boat stays on the silent pond
beneath the trees with wide branches
it is tied
not so tight
any child can let it loose
and release it and soon
it will go and
we wonder
what is it that it is waiting for
and for whom shall
this boat go

there is this ride that each shall take
no one wants to take it earlier
always one says later
later
there is no hurry

the children have grown and they wear
faces like yours
they go away and you are left alone
with the person you love
you have a conversation
time goes like a stranger

the friends you know have either grown old
or have died and their coffins pass by your house
you remember
memories and you smile at the youth you once had

you remember the boat
the child in you has loosened it
you pick up on what was easily forgotten
you cope up
you say you want the ride now
it is dark
and the silence spreads on the paddle
the ripples exude the essence of the journey
you hold a hand
and you sit comfortably without worry

it is time to go.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boatful....

tell me not about departures
i have had them all

the first time was melodramatic
i even cried in the attic

the second time was a little
more than Hippocratic
someone so critical even said
it was like a sprikitik

then the rest came like falling leaves
making a bigger heap
and all those summers
were hot as i put fire on them

offerings for the gods
in the clouds who had no time
even to peek at those boatload
of waving pods

RIC S. BASTASA
A Body

a boat lays adrift
finally on the shore
of the far away
island

the sail is broken
the rudder is damaged
the side of the boat leaks

its head appears like
the head of a very weary man

staring at the trees fronting it
while undergoing repair

RIC S. BASTASA
A Body In An Island Of Light

the left hand holds the glass of wine
another hand on the table
someone dances
gyrates and signals with a finger
that the show of lust begins
you have only your eyes
and your silence
the rest moves like a war of conquest
inside your mind
you pretend you are a rock
unmoved by the rage of the big water
a hard heart
gazing, until when? until when?

you take the wine inside your throat
you begin to forget but it will not be over

someone there gyrates
like a planet sucking your orbit.

RIC S. BASTASA
frankly, i do not need
a lot of dawning light
for me to see clearly
your body of lies.....

i do not wish to see
each curve and whiteness
of each soft skin and
smooth edge of your
fingers,
your neck that
smells like perfume
of those night
blooming flowers...

it is so beautiful when
felt than seen...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bomb Explodes 20 Or So

are dead
inside a bus where
most passengers
are school bound

they want to accentuate
a cause
mark a point

whoever you are
you shall be condemned to
a thousand deaths

splinters of your body
cannot be whole again

you shall never find
where you are

you shall roam
forever restless in Hades

RIC S. BASTASA
i, too, am guilty
of this fact that
this world in my birth
has given
me all
innocence and in my youth
has given
me all the energy
then wisdom and wealth
and then what have i given in
return?

despair? a lecture on the philosophy of
nothingness?
lethargy? an article of faithlessness?
a book of cruelty?
a bang of my head on the wall
the collision of my car on the
dead end street of hopelessness?

Life shall judge me
with condemnation if i take it away
as it should not have been

raw mango that i harvest with
sourness upon its pulp
stains upon its skin
on a premature
picking

For like must pluck itself upon itself
and of course,
should not be my own decision,

As you did it,
Yours is next to tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bookworm Wanting To Be A Vine

When I look at you
Oh my lovely tree
Alone on a hill
How I wish that
I may become
A honeysuckle
A clinging vine
That from your
Root to top
I may entwine

But I am just
A bookworm

Still trapped
In this book

That she is
still Reading.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boring Day

as he opens the window
there is only the shadow of leaves on the trees
on a gray background
it is twilight, midway between night and day

sounds of a cold wind from the forest
the rooster crows and some chirping birds

you sit and gaze through the window
light comes in

this happens everyday and there is nothing significant
after 49 years, and this time a hole is bored inside your heart

you fear that love is gone.
that the birds do not chirp musical notes
the wind much colder now and you shiver
light seeps in trickles like rain on your wrinkled skin

it is the same morning, and it will be same mornings all over again.
you do not move. You let time go and your hands are frozen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boring Issue About A Demise....

somehow the fear of
our end
becomes too familiar and boring
it occurring
almost daily when we are flogged
like donkeys
as we carry our loads of bricks

dead gets boring sometimes
like that same movie that we watch
all the days of the week

when we finally meet it in the street
or in the room
you say nothing at all

it's not a pest, it is just an ordinary dust
a tiny frog that gets inside your room from nowhere

you pick it up and say alright
' i have no right to refuse, take me, i am ready'

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boring Routine Actually....

they are my flowers
roses and carnations
they teach me well
how to die without much effort
everyday, everyday.
and death makes

no sense to me, a boring routine.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bow To Simplicity

you go to church every morning
model catholic of this town
you listen to the sermon of the priest
you take the body of Christ
in your body
somehow these matters give you
comfort and so you have no time to
ask for more answers
because there are no questions asked
anyway

in any way, you dwell in the comfort zone of
religion
you are not a philosopher with all the wrinkles
on his forehead
you do not envy all these
search for wisdom
you do not need it anyway in your everyday
morning existence
about those joys you claim you have
the contentment of an achievement
no wars
no confusion even in small matters about
real happiness
in some ways you smile
and by all means we think that you are the child of God
smiling to everyone

sometimes i envy you
as i tremble over my thoughts
grinding every bean of coffee
in the machine of my mind
hot temperatures here
like hell

are questions part of hell?
doubts and regrets
they come together
trying to hit me with their fists
me, the philosopher
still unable to hold the beautiful arms of an
answer

i talk within and there are many selves talking
within
you pity me
for thinking too much
on such a simple existence
as breakfast and lunch and dinner
that you serve on my table
and for which
due to my self-inflicted fever
on a trembling mouth
i cannot eat

and then
i decided to keep silence in the middle of this
turbulence
i wash my face
comb my hair
and face you
saying the words that i do not mean
just to please you
like
i love you and then you smile

and you do not bother
what wisdom is
nothing bothers you

what more? what more is there?
you tell me
there is nothing more between the two of us
not even space

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boy And A Girl

summer
in 1970, a boy
takes of its cap
and puts it on
the head of the
girl
to protect her
hair from the sun
and that was
how it started
the rest he keeps
inside his aching
heart, the other half
of the pain
she keeps
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boy And The Snake And The Tree That Cures...

a snake is bitten by another snake
it is bleeding and leaves and looks for a tree
to take some sap
for its own cure,

a boy sees what the snake is doing
waits and when the snake leaves
the boy bites the tree
to take the sap

the boy is cured of its long sickness
the tree had long been there near him
but it is the snake that points to him
the tree that can cure his own malady.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Boy In The Water

a boy
wades in the sea
on the shallower part
he dips his feet
and feels the rocks
beneath

the deep waits
danger lurks

the mother is complacent
and busy
with the weaving of her dreams

the boy goes deeper
and the mouth of the
sea waits
in hunger

the mother sings
to the clouds
as the father pounds the
earth for
his corn ears

the boy goes deeper and deeper
wading through the
water

the sea opens its mouths
and breathes
and becomes so silent

the mother weaves her dreams
the father pounds the earth for corn

the winds pass by
the clouds become heavy and gray
the tears of the sky
The waters of the river rise
The mother screams
The father stabs the earth
With the sharpness of his bolo

Regrets and mourning reign
The complacent village

The boy is now at peace
In the belly of the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Brand

if i were to
make a brand
of life
for an ad,

i will put
something
that you must
not forget

not levi's, not victoria's secret,
not chardin, not wrangler,
not even 707

i like something
that i always tell you

i like this brand:
life is beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Brand New Day....

THAT feeling that you are nothing
we must admit, comes in a while
like a drought in April,
you feel like a Sahara though you have never been there
but it is more real
that dryness of the river of the soul
that runs without a water
winding its way into the labyrinths of your heart
you feel like hanging yourself upon a tree and
saying: this is it
i am swallowed by the mouth of emptiness,
on the other hand, in time you come to your senses
imagining the gardens, and lakes and mountains
the youthful days with friends
as though you wake up from a deep stupor with
the sleep inducing drug
you pinch yourself, ' i am still alive
and there is still a use for my hands and
the whole body'
you open your eyes to see the morning light.

it is a brand new day. it is. it really is.
why must emptiness carry you as though you are a powerless piece
of floating paper in air?
damn it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Breakfast That We Cannot Eat Together

this is the breakfast that we cannot eat together a fish fried in an oil with so much heat, like 'who cares?' a rice not well cooked which says 'it is the maid again!' a coffee which has gone cold which says 'you come late again!' a egg which is not sunny side up a ham that does not roll a dirty table with an unwashed table cloth which says 'change it yourself!'

how can i eat all these?

i am late for the office and i have to go.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Breakfast....

ey is fried
sunny side up
a cup of
java rice on
the wooden
plate from
Bali
the spanish chorizo
red and shiny
beside this solo slice
of cucumber
plus a glass of orange
juice
and a cup of hot
barako coffee
and the
fresh papaya sitting
on the saucer

the glass cover of
the table
presses the saffron
mantel

the sun has come and
you turn off
the light on the
breakfast room

RIC S. BASTASA
A Breather

i know
no one reads this
attentively like
a boarding pass
of the plane
to know clearly
what gate
what seat

this is just a
memorandum of
a past experience
not really mine
but perhaps
of some other
passenger of this
life's aircraft
towards another
journey

you do not read
because you are
preoccupied with
something else:
a study
a letter from a friend
or mother
who is sick from
the province
or a brother who is
seeking
financial help
or a directive from
a boss in the
office where you
are working
for most of the time
of your life
however, if you read
this one
somehow you pass
a certain place
that reminds you about
nothing
and makes you
empty minded for a while
void
and then you become
ready for
another fill

all you need
is another breath
for each word
the air that fills
your lungs
because you
are getting
too crowded
with almost
every chatter
deep within
that grave that
slowly buries you
in a soil
layer by layer

RIC S. BASTASA
A Breather....

tired but not
giving up
the realities
are that
much
dreams died
hope hang
visions blur
time to teach
this self its lessons
expel those
expectations
do not aim for
the peaks
live like a hopper
breathe....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Brief Rendering About Love

love me
just do it
as i too
love you

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bright And Happy Day For Me

a boy throws the kite that his papa made
   to the air
his little sister follows him

the playful dog with big black spots
bark and chases them both

the skies are blue
white clouds drift
the grasses are greener
and the mountains are
majestic with its foggy top

it is a bright day and a happy one for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Heart

a broken heart

you search
for metaphor
to begin with
collins?

yes, you got
it
a broken
wing

it cannot fly
but i prefer
a wing
clipped
like paper

or a wind
without wings

or a wing
without
the wind

or wingless winds
or windless
wings

the point
is
one can always be right
for as long
as one feels
for as long
as one
still writes
for as long as one still attempts to write what one feels
and feels what he writes for as long as longing still longs
a broken wing
can always be a broken heart

a metaphor to always begin with

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Heart Inside Me

i remember that time
when we were finally torn apart
people watched me with that broken heart
and said that time shall heal the pain
and that i shall learn to love another one again

well yes, in some ways they are right
i have loved another one, that 's right

on the other hand, time must not have
healed completely the pain
it is still there when your name
patters in the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Heart Recovered.....

upon my eyes
tonight shall hang
dead stars upon my
heart shall shed off
dead skins
scars are vanishing
like fog concealing
sharp cliffs pointed
stones
trees without leaves
twigs without buds

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Heart?

most of the times
like those heavy rainy days
you accept
life with a heavy heart
such a situation as
having to feel the wetness of the weather
when you have no other
place to stay
except a park that does not offer you
any good view of the sea
or the mountain
as if
yes, there is no choice but to either
sit or run
and it does not really matter
what to do
when the rain keeps on pouring on you
and you simply
let the water rush and fall on your hair
down to your neck
and then to your chest
just to relieve the pain of a
broken heart

there is no surprise
no one experiences none of it
common stories that do not bother us anymore
because they are too plain
all ruggedness accepted
with resignation
like
it is fair and we did nothing about it
there is no saving
plan

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Heart's Request

on that bright morning
when the birds peck upon the grains
of rice spilled
upon the rugged pavement
as the leaves of the bushes
are drying themselves
from the wetness
of dews
she left without leaving a note

what a contrast of life
what could have been a very beautiful world
what a sad life
how a heart can that be broken

how this world continues its spins and revolutions
how can a woman be so indifferent
to a man who should not have given up

when i meet you again
please be kinder

RIC S. BASTASA
A Broken Piece Of A Jalousy Window

the culprit is this broken
piece of a jalousy window

broken glass
an exit
and entrance of the
criminal cat

and yes
bloody ink spills on the floor

and drinks the traces of
it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Brother

he stirs away from the flock
and you want to take him back
but he pushes you away
and you can do nothing about it
he reaches the cliff
and then jumps...

he must not have ended
you keep on hearing the silence after the big event.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Brown Lady Asserting Her Right To Take A Seat

and so this brown lady
inside a cafe
asserted her right
to sit where she wants
to

invoking her
constitutional right

a la rosa
sub rosa
parks

a white woman
enters
and tells her
to move a little
bit farther

and the brown woman
says

you don't tell me to move
because you don't own this place

i have the right to be here
i am no less than the trees and the stars

the white woman is 65
the brown woman is 35

and i see,
as you feel the sting,
there is a bite somewhere inside your heart

and now you tell me the story
of this guilt.
A Bruised Reed He Shall Not Break, And A Smoldering Wick He Shall Not Quench,

reflection
upon the clear pond of the mind
at dawn

someone so gentle
meek
renders justice upon
the earth
all the trees and wind
bow

he comes without a kill
no devastation as a flood
or fire
no nuclear leaks
no quakes

he does not shut off
the light
neither grass or
weed
he shall not remove
burn

he is a word
but he will last forever
he is eternity
he dies but death has not conquered him

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bunch Of Ripe Guavas

on a basket
is a bunch of
ripe guavas

the birds
early this morning
shall be
envious about us

every fruit
is love waiting
to be slowly chewed
savored and
swallowed

RIC S. BASTASA
A Burden....

countless years
this is this and
now must you
realize that there
must be a change

remodel a pillar
take just one and
the rest of this
shall fall

bear the weight
it is temporary
soon this will be
over...over, don't

think, it will just
pass away.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Bursting Of Ideas, Tired Eyes, But Alert Fingers On The Keyboard....

my eyes
are into sunsets
hiding behind
the vales,

my spirit burns
itself
into a huge
campfire

my mouth shuts like
a dam
of a big river

my tongue wants to
be free like
a bird

my fingers do
the circus
a trapeze a
mono cycle
monologue

blindly they shoot
the knives
to that confident
lady
her back against
the wall
her face like a
half-moon
smiling.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Busy Life

THE busy days are here
crowding themselves
packed like sardines
but there is still joy somehow
in this fast paced
life,

reading between the lines
amidst this crowd,
the poems keep on whistling
they have a beautiful world
within and

i keep on listening
still abreast
as alive as
a fledgling about
to fly
away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Busy Mind...

i drown myself
in work
morning till
nighttime and
this i tell my
wife,

dear, i got no
stress

hypochondria
just left me
and
neurosis
didn't wait
that long

the book is
right..
keep busy, keep busy

it is the idleness
which had caused it
all

a busy mind
has no time
for
psychosis...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Butterfly In The Garden

a pig in the pigsty
fat and dirty is
beautiful.

a butterfly in the
garden, black one,
with only one wing
left, dead on the
grass, is also
beautiful. Though
sad. It is also
beautiful in itself.

a man beating his
wife, using his fists,
standing by the door
of the house,
cursing himself,
lacking still in
understanding
and contemplating
of ending his life,
is also a thrill,
and thrill is also
beautiful,

and the wife still
bleeding to death
on the floor, on
the side of a
wooden bed,
crying but not
asking for help,
missing her kids
taken by her mother-in-law
same thing,
wanting to end all
these miseries,
is also beautiful.
everything happens
no matter how we
detest, ...that, that
is also beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cage In The Bird

he was out of the cage
as he was treated as a bird
and he sings
to the sky

but then he had loved the cage so well
and the hands of the master
that feed him
that every morning listens to his song
he had missed sorely so well

and so back into that cage
he flies in
for the master had left it all open

he sings again
concluding that the cage must also
be the home
for freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cage Is Not A Good Site To See At The Balcony.

nena say she wants to leave.
takes her two nights to say the
word that she is finally leaving.
and without any question as
to where she is going you give
her money and the permission.
the house will be empty again.
back to its closing when you
leave it. You hold the key to
its emptiness and fullness.
nena has been crying on the bus.
she is far away now. she remembers
you and your kindness. she does not
want to forget. but she does not
want to return either. she has not
place yet. but she is going somewhere
to find her destiny. she is now 50 years
old with no one to love and no one to love
her. she thought you love her. you give her
the impression that you love her.
you sent her food and flowers. she cleans
the house and feeds the dog and sweeps
the floor and changes your blankets and
dust your furniture. you never told her
that you love another and she was dead.
and that you can love other women your age.
nena cries and sobs and people inside the
bus become disturbed.

your new lover is asking ' where is your
bird in the cage? '

' oh, i set her free. i do not like
to hear a bird song', you answered.

deep inside yourself, a bird is a good riddance
actually. You have no time to feed it sesame seeds.

and a cage is not a good site to see at the balcony.
A Call For Love...

i choose to be happy
on a new year's day

i am watching you
walking along the fields of hay

the sun is shining brightly
it's a beautiful day

i call your name my dear lady
come inside my house today

let us have a cookie and hot coffee
let me cure a little of your malady.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Call From Jolo

the general calls from jolo
he keeps the war at ease like a soldier at rest
there is no exact information
about how many bodies are dumped
into the raging sea
or the ever silent mountain

you see wars are fought like emotions
you keep it inside yourself
the face must not show the struggle
the mouth does not speak
about casualties
the dead are buried on the night
and the missing soldiers are like names canceled on the list
the widows weep and their children look at
their memories but soon the sorrows pass
like a storm
and then it is calm again

children swim in the sea
the fishermen ride on their boats and cast their nets

tonight the general has briefed his men
there is an emergency
and the killing must, as a necessity, begin again

RIC S. BASTASA
A Calm Mind

beside the house
he sits on an inclined rattan chair
his feet rest on a graveled ground
his head focuses on
a rooster beside
a chicken leading its chicks
to feed on rice hulls
spread under the
mahogany tree

how many months pass
when the two were
put here?

oh the rooster has
fathered a dozen chicks
and proud perhaps
he crows loudly
announcing his
paternal joy!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Candle

all i need is a single candle
to light my way
in this dark alley
where at the end of this crooked black-outed cajolery
you said you would be there waiting for me

RIC S. BASTASA
A Candlestick

darkness sets in our place
and from time to time
we lurk without having
to do anything about it
we wait to a distress
we live in distress
we embrace the darkness

tonight i have decided
to light a candlestick
there shall be no cursing
of darkness no living in
the hopelessness of
its useless embrace

i sit watching its light
and start to scribble some
lines for my poetry about
the triumph of light over
the harshness of darkness.

somehow in the middle of
darkness that we find so hard
to explain and live with
we still have something to
do, to tell, and make a difference
from among those who simply
sleep and snore and then
let go with their lives dying
without having to know
what and where meaning lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
sunshine falls upon the leaves of
a mango tree

under it is a man wearing blue long sleeves
yellow shorts
twirling the key of his red motorcycle

he is talking to another man with short hair
denim pants, beside a wall with moss

it is a carefree day
it is life that is moving too slowly

to each and every living human being
in this sleepy community

a sparrow hovers and stops over my window
as i take my gaze, my long, long gaze to a faraway horizon.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cat Sleeping On A Printer

a cat sleeps on top of
the printer
and bloody ink spills
on the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cat's Answer

i like it here.

i am just taking a nap
so i wouldn't snap

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cat's Curiosity

a cat taking a nap
might ask you one day:

why are you curious about me?

(yes, this poor, little me,
just a cat trying to get some
sleep on one of your
unlighted corridors)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cat's Tale...

it comes back again
i have shooed it away yesterday
it walks on top of the roof
silently it sits there
at noon,

it stares at passersby
when i return from work
it is still there
waiting

i do not know where it comes from
and i do not like it
it is white and does not make any sound at all
i shooed it away still
and has no plan feeding it

there is something disturbing
not about this insistent cat
it's this struggle within, the storms that people do not see
perhaps, this cat
and i will still drive it away

RIC S. BASTASA
you may consider this:

we become extinct because of anger, we kill other people's dream,
we forget
we too need to dream, and without dreams we become extinct
anger extinguishes dreams

this is the caution
this site may love dreams too of other people who simply want to dream
and it does not want anger because anger kills dreams

now you are angry and you must suffer,
to extinction you become and you cannot be heard
because now nobody listens

goodbye,
scream in your posts, no one minds reading you anymore
demand an explanation
no explanation shall be written...

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a way to
reach other minds

teaching can be
a tool
to let them show
how mushrooms
grow
on fields of rotten
hay

there are more than
other ways
to make our coldness
felt

not growing hands
not having to add
more feet
on such a grotesque
alternative

funny clowns
at a certain time can be
entertaining

but we get bored of
what happens
almost every time
when they please us
again with the
usual images of
thick lips and
curly hair

i tell you about
Plato's midwife
and the woman
who conceived and
gave birth
to new ideas

it is this
teaching, this medium
to make minds open
like some
peaceful corals
untouched by
our hands

an open heart
arms that always mimic
an embrace
blinking lights
of towers
asking ships to
dock away
from storms

as i type all these
please take note
i demand nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cautious Listener

when i speak to you
i always keep my own eyes

sometimes when i speak to
some sort of people like you
i am afraid that after i have spoken
my eyes are no longer in their sockets
i get blinded
and then i find myself lost in the
labyrinth of our thoughts
and then i tell you that you are such
a cruel chatter
leaving me trembling with my fingers
trying to find my way back
home

and you tell me
where is home my friend? is there a home for you?
basic as what is home? depends on what home is

and then i begin to bite my nails
i shrink
a small child
asking where mom is where dad is
when house and home are gone
when the stairs are too high
when the lights are turned off and i am outside the door
when all the friends are saying their prayers with their moms
and when it begins to rain
and i have nothing to run to

and so now i am careful when you start talking to me
i touch my eyes feel my eyelashes
for a touch of home

my tongue gets twisted before
but now as careful as a cat, my tongue is a rope tied on a tree
the other end open ended
like a fork of the snake
spelling each word correctly
when you speak i listen
and i will not let you know that i do not easily believe you
i have a book in my head
and it is enough
it is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cave Where Dimness Thrives

it is raining and its sounds
soothe the arrival of another darkness
in life
which has become a cave where dimness
thrives
where we utter a word and it echoes on
all walls
which we mistake as another crowd
in our lonely
existences

at an hour where sleep refuses us
the much needed
solace

we hear the sound of our own voice
and we doubt if it is us
until we accept the monotonous sound of
its sorrow
as part of our own
nuances

our fingers touch the stillness of our skin
making us feel the home
of our built-in
isolation

RIC S. BASTASA
A Celebration

the flowers open their buds
the crickets sing beneath the grass
the sun is here putting on the lights of this earth.

a rat is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Doubt

it has been here
do you see it? she points to a
black spot
on the white mantel

it's been there i said
never shall it be removed
it is part of the landscape on the table
and without which,
 mind you
this table would be incomplete

she feels uneasy about it
there is this certain doubt if she really knows
about me

it is enough that she sits by my side
lays her head on my shoulder and then we enjoy
most the silence
between our concerns

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Form Of Autism

rain man
sun woman goddess
moon
stars night skies
crickets and yellow rivers
stones and sand
clocks and pearls
wind sons and chime daughters
all fools
in harmony.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Gentleness In Departure

what choice do you have? to stop saying a word?
use the period finally to your conversations with her?

come to think of it, there is already a link between her world and your world

she plants the stars and you bring some planets
you put this little galaxy in motion and there is this movement upon space
like a haze disappearing

remember how hands hold each other
grappling for the meaning of touch

remember how thoughts entwine
to define what caress and endearment are all about

this is not a game anymore
this is dust giving a name to another speck of dust
they burst in the color of the clouds in celebration

we plant love, she takes in her will to live,
you must give her what is due to her wishes

if love does not grow, try compassion
let there be a little flower in her desert garden

if there is nothing left, just be the fog, the wind
leave silently without the door knowing it

let there be gentleness even in departures
she is asleep, let her finish with that last dream

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Happening

the hours come to you like a train

you are not any of those passengers
waiting to be taken somewhere else

you are upon a different situation
as the train loses its body from its tracks

rams its existence upon a mountain
on some sparks of surprises creating fire

and explosion that shocks the city
with all of them dead

you are not one of them but you are
the one who watches the scene without any emotion

the hours come to you like a body completely numb
there are no more feelings except that peace

that stillness of space like a canvass empty
all white and frame-less against the silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Loss

to compromise
one suffers a certain loss
I've lost a face once, and then a mouth
and then my feet
they cut me to invisible pieces
until what is left of me
is my voice
the one that talks to you
now
but this one will not be speaking
for any compromise
it will speak about
the truth
the loss, that certain loss
that you can only see
in my words
here, they who are with me in the house
where only a part of me thrives
cannot ascertain it

the smile of the lips are still there
but there is nothing there anymore
about myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Preference On Early Mornings...

sometimes forgive me
but i do not like to hear bird chirping by my window
on early mornings for honestly i prefer
the silent sounds of the wind
from the sea,

and so when i hear those chirping birds
perching on the tree
those still feeding their fledgelings
i exercise that right of having to close my
glass windows
preferring once again
the privacy of my room and the exclusion of the
outside world
by the curtains and then i begin to sip my coffee
reading a poem
listening to the words seeping like rain to the
hair of my own soul.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Quiet

As I sit upon the grass
a white butterfly flutters by
slowly on
fragile wings

it is
synonymous to a
white feather

the world is
so quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Redness

a certain redness

shamed and humiliated
before the mob

rubifacient
you face them
head held high

so what?

an iridescent existence
to hues of blue
& purple
sins

you are attuned
unmoved by mob’s dictates of morals

like a peacock’s feather
spread yourself
shamelessly

efflorescent, let
them try touching you?

Sooner you
Share them
rubifacient embrocations
Of high esteem
As domestic
remedy

and they will learn to ease

RIC S. BASTASA
A Certain Ripeness

we hold on
to what makes us feel
alive

we keep a tight
hand in the form
of rooting
fingers
like some vines
upon an
old tree

or an orchid
hanging there
with so much
color and
beauty

we sometimes
take the shape of a
fist
on the other
hand
if
needed
just to keep
it
going

but life has its
own life
its own time
frame too

and death has its
own
unique contour
that arrives
at you
sometimes
as a
surprise

i can call it
ripeness

some call it
inevitability

or reality from
a philosophical
point of view

i see it as a very ripe fruit
that falls from a tree of bounty

and then a child comes running
to pick it up and begins to peel it and bite
and swallow

because it is luscious because it is so sweet.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chair Is No Longer Just A Chair

it is your experience that
gives you more meaning to all those which
you think
have been too common and
insignificant,

perhaps
now you must have realized as you sit upon a chair
that someone used to sit there

and that someone waited for another to be with her
that on the same chair
there were some fears
and pains and even longings
and hopes
unrealized and by then

you see that chair not just a chair
you sit there
and you ask it
for this chair though muted by wood
will always have
a story to tell....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Challenge For You....

tell me, ask,
kneel down, and beg

that everything that i am
telling you is not true

that these are all the fabrications
of a fertile mind

all imaginations
of a man who is tired of having to do nothing in his life

crazy, mad, name me
psychologically imbalanced,

beg, you must beg,
that death cannot be true

let that man who stand in the middle of the busy road shout

that we too
are false.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Challenge In The Dark

have a dose of
anonymity
undress, and be
comfortable with
the coldness
and wait,

someone that you
do not see clearly
offers
nothing but the self
no words
just a shadow
no touch but
just
being beside you
watching
what darkness does upon
darkness
hours melting
on the floor
no one picks up
anything
that is frozen
not one must mention
any hint
about the light of
dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
find me
a word
to catch
the beauty
of the silence
of a lone
leaf
falling from
its
mother
tree
to the embrace
of
dead earth

RIC S. BASTASA
A Challenge....

notice that
after seeing something
now, you
expect something beyond
this, but
for the meantime you
scrutinize every
corner
all details, then you
try grasping the
whole of this
creation,
of words, that sometimes
does not give you
a picture of anything
like a zebra for instance
transforming into a
man in his pajamas

you invent a scent
like jasmine or something
forceful like
pepper or
chloroform as a hint
for those
who died ahead of you
weird, , , ,

sigh, you stop
and express a disappointment
saying
this thing is not leading
me to something
greater than myself
something redeeming like
the good works
of Christ
precisely, this is what is
intended to be said
everything is incomplete
unfinished
truth is a growing tree
a climbing vine
a flower blooming
a fan opening in a warm season
to give you the
message of
fresh air

what do you get from this
useless piece?
ah, that feeling of incompleteness
of being unfinished

like the way i feel now
i ask: will you complete me?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chance To Ask A Question

your family name shows that you also come
from my old hometown up north where the hills
rise like giants in the mythical sea
yo must have known all the recent news of town
how is my brother? Did he survive the war there?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Change

agreements and promises
that was how we know beginnings,
a knowing of green leaves
and expecting the blooms one day,
we were talking about a harvest
of some days and some fruits
the commitment to give myself to you
and you in return dying for me,
the enclosures that open and
tell you these are all that i have

a stone's language is harsh in its silence
the bird perching on a twig looks curious
the river sings the songs of the sea
we float there facing the bright moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Change Of Color

white has become the symbol
of war
green no longer verdant
yellow for fidelity
and black for life

you changed it,
in a little while my poems
shall change
some moods too

pain overpowered
by joy

a tree having a shadow
filled with
red leaves
and the whitest flowers for the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
A Change Of Color Of The Wind And The Sun

earlier there is this color of comfort
soft light spreading on the grass
pastel green to light green and then
deeper, like a pond covered with
floating moss
stone coated with greenish
river and driftwood floating
in silence

i sit patiently waiting for the coming of the changes
faint light getting stronger the sun rises from the twin peaks
peeping tom between two breasts of green hills

light spreads getting stronger
the lady walking on the path begins to wear her turban

noonday, the shadow becomes short and compressed
flashed against a rock
scorched the grasses stiffen short of the water
the moisture is gone
and then the hot air reigns
there is this silence that keeps running
to the places of the heart
fanning leaves comforting a grieving
man under a mango tree
someone left him
someone is shattered like a very dry leaf
crumpled and cracked and calling for help
the plain is dry and wide
there is no shadow of a horse coming
on the other side of the road
far to the edge of the mirage
there are only watery illusions.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Change Of Plan....

a heavy rain at night
gives us
a sage for morning
it teaches.
this sage of a tunnel of trees.
a bench
in the middle of green
space.

i wake up this morning
destroying all itineraries.
there is something
more to
what i dream of when i am
awake.

i deny this body.
i flower thoughts.

i tend a garden of justifications
life is not a single line along the edge of a clean sheet of paper.

we are supposed to meet today and mend those broken segments.
finally, i send the signal.

Red.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Change Of Priority

at dawn i feel you
touch my hands
i do not think now
of roses in springtime
i do not have
thoughts like a river
i am caught
in this quagmire of
other priorities

myself above all
wanting something
new and strange

in the morning
you tell me that the
roses in the garden
all wilted

i must not be dreaming
of death.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chat Last Night

i am good at words.
familiar with metaphors, and you stumble
upon an
oxymoron that i offer you and which you by
confusion, have so lightly taken,
i do have to say, how much is your smile,
what is the price of your kiss,
i will be too abrupt, and blunt and you may
not like them,
though that is what it
really is: love cost this amount
per unit of convergence
divisible moments, maximizing income.

beautiful killer, you are,
tremendously slow, in conclusions,
i buy you some confounding,
this is or this is not, to be or not to be,
you this, and you do not know about that,
how time consuming
to woe and yet not to let you know
that we are not really talking and i am not
taking you for

love: a commodity, a trade in for dignity,
an excuse to gallivant like
an etherized valentino,
stuffed juliet, and frozen romeo, undressed
they all appear like
dressed chickens in a row, for sale,
three for two,
a little tete a tete, something for a bric and brac,
guess some more,

'i love you'
i really love you, and i said oh i love you too

webcams off. what kind of face did you wear then?
was it the mask? is it the face with a crown of thorns
Jesssez! for God's sake! stop talking about love,
i am freezing in coldness. Love is strange now
as we age, we do not believe about its value anymore,
wrinkled skins, and hollow bones,
empty promises of the salvific nature of
divine love,

what for? this i can say. I do not think anymore like
a philosopher, i live like a an ant now,
following pheromones, doing and doing, and hauling and hauling,
just a creature on this anthill
nothing more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chat Of Hope

brb.

i am attending a party of a friend who brings his prince charming from Puerto Rico whose name is Ludivico and who promises her marriage after she gets widowed a month ago.

she brings that news to all her Filipino friends who say they are happy too

brb.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chat With A Friend Whose Name You Need Not Know

well she starts with hello how are you
i say, i am fine how about you?

she is not, perhaps, she has a quarrel
with her boyfriend
and they will soon be married this september
then to be changed this june

is she confused? i ask myself as i type
my messages, she says, maybe,

then we shifted to movies,
wings, chicago, as good as it gets,
the corny titanic, and i recommended

il postino, i tell her, watch it tonight
and you will like neruda
and this postman and this love

how a poet makes love
more open and visible and
expressable
to the lips of a seasick man in an island
that does not move with time

slow, and almost forgotten
until, the son of a dead man
who thanked the poet
talks to him

his father gone
but the love still lingers
in the island
where some poems were born
because
one must love
and be loved and the poems must give the tongue
for that expression.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chat With A Lady Lawyer Invisible On The Other Line

u (no answer)
i know you're on line (no answer, deadma)

how u been? busy? how is your new house?
and your kids? and your husband?
(he left you or u junked him?)
he left you, ok, he left you,
and don’t bother asking,
i am not asking, (but i am interested
because i may say, he is my friend
at least once in those summer seminars
in physics,1980, long time ago, when
i really think he is straight and religious
and well composed, and calm and
cautious, but you finally revealed, he's on drugs
left you for a woman not of your level
or caliber, but enough with pain,
and misery, i will shift to oher things)

and how is your career? making more money
with your university research and writing
and lawyering at the same time,
coping up with motherhood, and other
important matters in your life?
you snobbed me, and you told me
when i ask you if you know this lady judge
who is married to a school mate and you
said you know her, and you do not want to
be disturbed as your boyfriend is with you
and having a good time on that time of the day,

and you think i believe you? shall i swallow you hook, line and sinker?

i like to, but i don't really, you are just
mad about life, and you finally shut your mouth
hide in a shell, keep your fences high, and
declare to the world, this manifesto, that you are not talking
to anybody,

to include me, and i perfectly understand,
and so here i am talking to myself, because
you prefer to be invisible, suffer alone and
have more time, to think, to be yourself,
and just be plain woman of the soul and body,
looking for openings
somewhere, to be free, to be honest, in the pursuit of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Checkpoint On Despair

who is despair?
do i know her face again?
she was with me for years and years
and she was too cruel
beating me with her
paddles and piercing my skin with her needles
my body has pins and pains everywhere
until i get tired of her
and rejected her

honest
despair can be rejected
i have done it
once and i shall do it again
many times

Tina says
i am on my denial stage
she is wrong
i am in this state of freedom
i have a checkpoint
and i am the soldier
that screens who goes in
and who goes out
from my system

despair is out
happiness is in
it is not a matter of fate
it is a matter of choice
for now i have declared
my freedom

i choose
and i always win

RIC S. BASTASA
Some sugar for my lips to sweeten our kiss
Some mint in my tongue to add
some herb or spice in French delights
A little salt and pepper on my cheek,
you lick me there sometimes

We close our eyes
From our million cells we generate and separate
The necessary substances

Some estrogens from you
Some androgens from me

Some digestive juices
some Adrenalines in all corners
Of our bodily organs
Needed for ecstasy and
Multiple orgasms

Do not dream, do not inject
Something like love
something Like affection,
do not involve The elements of the heart

This is just plain mixing of chemicals
Reacting, exploding in so short a time

We open our eyes; we do not ask our names
We are strangers in this chemical romance

It is over in a few minutes and then we
Leave and close gently the door behind us.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chicken's Life

we watch it from the beginning
an egg, plus days
hatching into a chick
seeing the first light
of the bulb
and the hen pushes
each chick into
the ground to feed
by themselves
until some feathers grow
beaks and claws
now we view a full grown
chicken,

at least, i am not talking
about a coward, do you understand?

do not, please,
chicken out from life's bitter days
we were babies
not chicks

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chick's Computation Of His Detention Inside The Eggshell

the chick must have been so impatient
though it admits it still lacks the strength
to open the shell
of its existence
when it went out finally to walk the world of chickens
its markings of the days of detention are clear
in four vertical lines and the usual cross
in sets of tens

RIC S. BASTASA
A Child's Game

the games that you play
are the same games that i am playing

writing poems
watching movies
reading stories
reading poems
taking the night
out with not so
close friends
enjoying the
music at the bar
some beer and
some barbecue
a little laughter
some pretenses
some truths to
tell sometimes
going home late
and wanting some
sleep till noon,

what is it that i am doing?
i am hiding from misery
this program on pain reduction
this art of losing and finding
and losing till it hurts no more

these children games
of hide and seek
breaking up and
becoming friends again
in such a short
time

RIC S. BASTASA
A Chip Of Earth

doesn't have to be

big to be beautiful

miniscule structures

are often the most

intriguing.

a tiny moon

floats in the vast

darkness of the

universe.

millimeter men inching toward

the foot of a miniature

Buddha,

trying to catch a glimpse

of the

minute gods looking down

upon

demeter earth

RIC S. BASTASA
A Choice

My feet are heavy
To an early church mass
And my hands caress them

When she is gone finally

My feet become lighter
And my hands stopped pretending

Then the real loving begins
Alone, this window opens
There my love
Lurks posing as a nude woman

Her arms opening to take me in
& through this window

Some yellow butterflies with black edges on its wings
A little larger than my thumb

Circle over my head.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Choice For Life.....

there are wrong inspirations
nails rusty
hinges on doors that
scream

daily one idolizes
the wrong picture of a naked
deity

the body longs for
what is vibrating like
a tuning fork

looking for the
satisfying glory of
an ecstasy

there will be consequences for
all these
ruins and fall outs

but who cares? one edges like a snail
for another place to
stick it out and speak a language
of survival

daily i must watch it and
daily must i write like a barbarian
riding upon a black horse
and fighting the wind
with its own sword

two heads in my body
gnashing teeth to teeth
banging
same head to another same
head
until skulls crack until blood
spits out from hair

but who cares? i am into this
and this is a choice
for life...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Choice For Specifics....

take a little
of this
crispiness,

throw that creepy
creature over the window

smell violets, feel
smooth porcelain

taste honey and
a grain of this universe

found in salt

spill sour,
nibble.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Choice For The Moment In Boracay

Beside a glass window
facing the sea
you sit upon a mahogany chair
doing nothing but
just gazing into nowhere

enjoy the quiet and feel
that salty taste that the breeze is bringing
to your face to your tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
A Choice Of What Shall I Be Later

shall i pretend to you that i have only one face forever?
you are silent
you think like a deep river making no sound at all
despite the storm when the waters from the mountains come
and force you to rise and run and rage and they accuse
you of having caused the flood
as i watch in sadness

you are my night and day and you have seen the changing of my hues
i turn red like a rose
become white like a carnation
become sturdy like a bark of the oak tree
sometimes i turn into stone
hard and unmoving
you see me and touch me with your wind and mist

like a diamond i wear some corners some faces
for me to glitter
for me to find meaning in the life that i carry within my arms
a lull sometimes
almond eyes a rocking of my feet
these are the mechanisms of my coping up
to be a man

in your silence i set aside my masks and face you
shed off some faces and look at you
with the eyes of my soul
oh, i become so vulnerable to the truth of this one and only face
as you kiss me
in my lips

i quiver i become so light i become so alive i become so real
as all the other faces fade like the poisonous fumes from the funnel

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cicada Shell

My companion to this
Last journey

A cicada shell

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cigarillo

a friend of mine
has fully bloomed into
a rare
rafflesia

no longer a
raffleo
but a cigarillo

bred in the U.S.
Works there for years
and comes back
to Dohinob to recall
those old feelings

unburdening himself
unloading money

Dakak and Solinog
and Aliguay
and a feast in Polanco

old and bitchy still
but as he appropriately worded it

'I'm free! ! ! '

(was he in bondage in Dohinob?
was it his prison in his mind?)

just wondering early
at 6 a.m.
without coffee and
bread

RIC S. BASTASA
A Circle Within

this afternoon
we see each other

i remember love
but i do not want it
here

i notice you have
gotten too old earlier
that i expected

there must be some
kind of depression

or the hurry which
i think i understand

i remember loving you
once. Yes, just once.

and i understand now
why we never made it

here, or some place else
it is my love

of self that makes me
look younger

i have thrown away hope
from someone

and all these years
i have only relied

on my capacity for
loving myself

my capacity to just
be me, move on, and

expect nothing, no one
is made for me

i am a circle without
an end, without a leak.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Circular Motion

circular motion
the murky sea
tells the truth about the
chaos of rain
on the high mountains

those who are unlucky
remain buried
some are carried
to be swallowed by
the fish and the
shrimps and the
squids
feasting on the body
of the rotten
kid

on our tables
for lunch
we are lucky to have
same fish, shrimps
and squids

the sea clears itself
of the mess from those rivers
and we are the first
guests here
dipping...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Clear Day

lady clouds
on for a party
on a clear day
taking time
glimpsing
on a mirror
river

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cliche On Aging

Fine as wine,
Long in the tooth
Over the hill
Old as dirt

RIC S. BASTASA
A Clink For A Drink

Nick thinks and winks
Drinks his finks and makes a
Sync of what stinks
After seeing his shrink

Life is zinc
Not a pink mink
Had a hard dick
And a lip stick

The sky is rosy pink
And this is the data link
Rethink with a soft drink
What happens next
On that skating rink

A marking ink spic
The missing link
salmon pink prick
what a freak!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Closed Mouth A Closed Set Of Eyes.

you will catch
me aghast
red-handed i
did not side with
sleep

it is getting rare
this restfulness

the tiresome thought
has come as a respected
guest in my house

there are playful kids
all around
without their mothers
watching them

some have wings
and tails and they appear
to be like
their dreams of dragonflies

you will catch me
in surprise

i am not myself
i am like them playful spirits

i have set aside
reason for i am tempted with the
rain

the room is vague
and the door is misty

the windows are spaces
where we connect with the
scenery of
trees and roads and
to the end
is the sea and the last
horizontal line
of all existences

a very silent line
straight like your silence

concluding like peace
a closed mouth a closed set of eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Closer Look At Adela

she is white skinned
at a closer look she is pale like dawn
her skin at a much closer scrutiny
is dry like paper ready for the write
a blue ink can provide a color
a story

she just broke up with an old flame
and to forget
(that is what she is telling me) she
immediately said yes to a new boyfriend
this time short but not timid and not
so square jawed

she says the new one is oozing with sex appeal
and seeing him is enough for her to salivate a bit

she is happy, she assures herself that
prepared to forget the ex
whose feet drags slowly to the Italian church

she smiles at me and no matter what
all i can say is that
despite the curves of her lips
she is still looks very very sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cloud In My Mind That I Still Love That Much....

changed
course, trying
to find
out, if, i will
not touch anything,
you,
you will miss me
if you will
find a way, to touch
me, if,
i could see you,
blank to the
the overwhelming
beauty of the
mountains,
cliffs,
skies, seas, and
stars.

changed course,
trying to get away
from that bermuda
triangle of
sinking, aboard this
boat of
sin, which i call love,
as i
want once to confide
with you,

you still have
no word for it,
whatsoever, no
word for me
no word
for that
moment

you are a puzzle
a riddle,
and i still have not
figured out
what you really are

a cloud in my mind
that i still
confess loving
that much....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Clue Early Dawn, For Me Alone.

sin
after you
reverence....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cocoon

it is the ease
that comes afterward
when you
finally vomit that
pain

it is the ease of truth
and the bitter part
of the lie
somehow that one must
eject and one
must swallow
which is it
finally is what must
you decide

there is an implant in our
mind
that longing that we
can never forget
that guides and
tells us
what to do
with dignity

it is you, and no one else
that makes a world
that is happier to live with

what they say
may hurt temporarily...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cockroach

a cockroach flies above my head
and lands
near my feet

my instinct kills it outright
with a sudden stamp and there
the cockroach lies
smashed and dead

i smell stink
and never felt any regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cocky Morning

don't be malicious

the cocks are sounding off their horns
to greet the hens out there
good morning

and of course the hens crackle and giggle

RIC S. BASTASA
it is the ease
that comes afterward
when you
finally vomit that
pain

it is the ease of truth
and the bitter part
of the lie
somehow that one must
eject and one
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that longing that we
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with dignity

it is you, and no one else
that makes a world
that is happier to live with

what they say
may hurt temporarily...

cocoon....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Coiled Water Hose

hopelessness - a coiled
Water hose has forgotten
That it should whoosh

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cold Coffee Mug

eye're all happy: man beside a woman
holding hands, smiling, behind them a snowy mountain,

ea kid blowing candles on a chocolate cake, it is his birthday,
behind him
his dad, and mom and guests, balloons in colors, and
and some gifts,

at the mall you and some friends pose in front of a huge
Christmas tree, your hands having a hard time with the stuff
you bought for yourself,

oh, they're all happy, and here you are alone in your room
writing a poem, outside your window, shadows of trees, a distant
sound of a dog howling,

coffee mug for one, and it has gone cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cold Cup Of Coffee...

must i know now the
significance of a coffee getting cold
after it is being served
on my table?
how do i not notice time passing?
like a breeze from the sea
because i have been preoccupied
looking at the horizon
anticipating the glory of the
sunrise that
i am waiting for most of my time
having spent
nights on isolated veranda
away from friends
and relatives?

a cold coffee now
that i regret having asked
and just like the rest of
my other coffees
it shall remain as it is

coffee on its brim
returned
untouched.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cold Night

cold of the earth
the leaves fall silently
like sighs

RIC S. BASTASA
A Collage Of The Front Page

it stirred my soul
about the dead man's meeting
i can't describe it

but let me try

it is like a yellow rose
a humming bird

if only walls could talk
tears would have been saves by
time

living in the country
hope rising
you choose harmony or chaos?
pray reality

you pay for what never fade

RIC S. BASTASA
A Collective Mosaic Of Existence

as i sit here something diffuses in my head
like light in the glass wall
where blue is electric
where red is bloody,

i let things simmer inside my skin
molecules keep penetrating inside the pores
in sensitivity
the vibrations are felt and they are so exciting

molecular silence
atomic defenses

the rationalization this time is that everything is a sail boat
on the sea
a flux and influx
everything fluid, airy, nothing stops
all of me
float like dust against the light escaping from a slit
early morning

existence is like a random dance
but they always claim
nothing happens like that

the intentionality becomes obvious when the dust settles on the ground
the woman sweeps them all
in one stroke

the self now is spread in its own kind of universe
all dust nothing individual

RIC S. BASTASA
A Comeback

takes time to realize
that the place you hate
the place you left years ago
now on your return
becomes your hiding place
away from sorrow
the place where you bury
your past
now becomes your future
story.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Comma For An Ending,

i know and i know that you have noticed
that i have developed a style of my own
the way i look at things and take them with me
the way i describe a moment and makes this moment last
no, it has nothing with imagery anymore
or metaphors, these have become passe and cliched by
too much use, and they
those great ones like you in your pedestal and crown and
scepter finally get bored with all these repetitions

i am talking and i keep talking and i write with all these
fingers my eyes focused on each letter transformed into words
into this long sentence without any marking sign at all
except for a few commas until i finally have to use an end
to all these monotonous lines searching for a happy ending
perhaps not in a period but in another comma,

RIC S. BASTASA
A Commentary

while, it, is true,
that i empathize with
what, you are now,

are there rough
storms inside
your mind?

are you a ship
without an anchor?

or an ant crushed
by a stone?
still breathing
the last

whatever,

there is a must still
to learn
this craft of survival
through
poetry as medium
of angst,

of internal wars
unseen
by any human
ordinary eye

RIC S. BASTASA
A Commentary On The Face Of A Young Boy

his cheek just bore a single pimple.
it is the mark of his puberty
this face of a young boy hidden halfway
between the window and the white curtain
his lips, his mouth
indeed
so virginal, neither woman nor man has kissed
he has no vision of himself
his future is thin like a thread that one reckless being
can easily cut
he is silent like a white lotus on the pond
he has no voice yet to speak for himself

in the crowded city, Arnel, who used to love women
but hurt and defiled
loves the face of this young boy and
tonight, his puberty shall be shared with a strange man
in that condo, where the young boy for the meantime
that he has no home
shall stay

i am shocked about this news but
i have to admit
this truth, this predator and prey thing
for their mutual survival, one who is too lonely and confused
and the other who is in deep need
for shelter and affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Community

her eyes shed the lost
tear
when the community of hands
finally buries
her son

the grief settles on the
the hearts of many
the tears dry up from the eyes
of many
to the thousand handkerchiefs
of this community

always one in sorrow
together in joys.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Companion On The Impossible...

on finished paths
i shy away, the stones there look the same
but no one is complaining
and all attempts to find new ones
seem to be nothing but a respect for
the trivial,

i am faced with forest trees
those that do not know how a man looks like
or how a woman tastes

all they know are the winds from the sea
and the clouds from across the islands of despair

i do not have a cutter on my hand
and i only have my fingers and tongue
i squat under the sun and begin my work
there is so much to cut and clean

been here for years and there is nothing much
that changed

the trees have grown so tall and cannot even see me
the grasses sheltered more snakes and have their party

i am alone with nothing but hope....

and then you come.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Complete Poem

i like to start it with a naughty word
like the one that slaps your butt
and you smile and even giggle
(you like it too
you like to simply start with lust)

and then i write more words
something that cares and worries
about you
our future about us in the middle of
this long and lonely journey

and i will put some pauses
a little stop here and there
but i will not be staying for long
there will be interjections
and even emotional bursting
no sobbing
but exclamations of joy
nothing to annoy
but definitely there will be no questions

and then we will be there somewhere
until the strong light begins to slowly fade

and then, of course, you must agree,
and this will be free
surely, i will put a happy ending
red curtains falling with matching music marching
and then later something romantic live a violin playing with flute accompanying
this fugue of love

yes,
it is all about love & passion
those that conquer all
age and wisdom
and monotony
and then i put on the finishing undertones of faith
this final fidelity

and the color of sunset
and then on a peaceful night
you shall hear
a white dove that coos in its cozy nest
deep down into a very sound sleep....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Complication

it is your eyes, the problem points to the sensitivity of your eyes to beauty, what is seen is always beautiful and touch seems to be not just the craving of the fingers those hands keep on groping and holding on to someone else's body perfumed neck and soft white skin poems that run all over a woman's body and feeling what it takes to reach the apex of the skies, revolting and exploding, and bursting forth in the so many hues, love oh love, love on top of love, and love searching for the perfect orgasmic affection, what a night! ~`~ ~ ~
corrugated moans like an art of wrought iron on the rails of the upper floor, there the stars are kissing the full moon and the sky is so silent filled with understanding about love and its erogenous doings, unbreaking...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Composition

i don't really think that it is just a sound,

well, it could be a song, a singsong,

of sweet groans and lusty moans,

a sigh perhaps a hush in the middle of the night

some buds that open to the tickle of the sun ray

one morning from a slit of a violet venetian blind

open hands, lips gaping for gaping lips

a tongue searching for taste eyes

half-closed waiting for your caress that unforgotten kiss

hair freely falling like winds dancing in the field of white tulips
A Composition In A Ricefield

The white herons
Are commas
The carabaos are periods

An eagle flying over my head
Is the head note

The trees are the margins
And the fences

The nipa huts
Are footnotes

The rice field is one big
Pad of paper

And so this is the composition
Of a ricefield

Commats on top of periods
Two head notes will do
Four footnotes
Can make a story of a village

My hand is always the ampersand
And I think
Like there are no carabaos on this pad of paper.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Compromise

the lesbian in her
says that she will love a few men
who love
too her
few women

RIC S. BASTASA
A Conclusion

far from it,
how can he be
a richard brautigan?
tried Bukowski
but at the end
he repeats the
line: who the hell
is Bukowski?

he begins again
saying: hey i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Concoction

sky-blue glass

ice cubes
floating

your white hands
pouring my
coca-cola

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confession

i am tired
of anger
and have
tried revenge
and i have
been
successful
in both
ways

it is time now
for love

let me try it
now

let me start
forgive me

let me continue
i have always
loved you

let me continue some more:
love me for what i am

let me leave you the question
for you have not answered my plea:

shall i leave now?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confession For El Cabir

you have been immersed
in a pond filled with the holiest of all the
purified waters blessed by
all the saints in your mind
by all the angels in your books

yet you are still silenced by your restraints
every morning you stand by your window watching nothing

yes the wind that sweeps away the mahogany leaves
on the roof of the catwalk where no one is walking because the semester
just ended and you have no home to
go

the apartment is another lonely room
it serves you no good
you never had sex there with a stranger

you have been growing money in your bank
and it is giving you more grief

it is not greed, but it is the inability to be open to yourself
and give yourself a break by stepping out of the university and
be
happy,

you have many definitions about what happiness is
and it is a waste of deliberation
alone in your room
where the papers are mute and as usual
dead

do not define happiness
just grab it
be blind
set aside your eyes for a while
have a leaping heart
be a frog
or a reptile, that snake with red lines and black lines alternating on its scaled belly

or the grasshopper that sings on summer teasing the ants.

i look at you with scrutiny as i make myself comfortable on that velvet sofa inside your well kept philosophy office

it is a field of sadness
and i pity you

but what can i do? you are the wise man and i am the loose jackal.
you are shrinking like hell
and i am bloating like heaven.

what a conceit i have? never mind, call me a typographical error of the university

nevertheless, i must tell you, i am not real.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confession Of Guilt

i am not throwing all the pages
but just the same i am not reading them
and you say they are all important for my
meaningful existence
i make a compromise
alright they stay pile upon pile inside my
study room where
i do things that i should not have done
where i prioritize those that
do not feed me
a junk of this bread and butter thing
grabbing air and space and
gobbling nothingness like
food and stuff like that

i wonder what is happening to me now
shying away from those that i ought to love
and cultivate
my mind wonders like a meteor in space
like a tennis ball that you hit and
goes away as a point in darkness
gone

i sleep the whole day and write the whole night
i wake up when everyone is asleep
i entertain thoughts that destroy me
i write those that do not make me alive
sometimes i make a conclusion that i am getting to be
a machine without any perceived use
a hen cackling yet without eggs
a house abandoned
a polluted lake
a broken toy a torn rag doll a train whose tracks are stolen
i feel so deprived and i work hard to fill myself
this void that expands like a balloon
that lifts me up to an atmosphere near the sun
expecting an outburst where i will surely fall
like a torn condom this rubber thing that does not bounce at all
perhaps i need a break perhaps i need to be broken
to be shaken so i may wake up and feel the brokenness of a champagne
cork lid.

i've been broken you know and i have mended myself
repaired every part but i guess this is just a cycle that i have to pass through
this circuitous route
this spherical world
this ring without an end

like love, perhaps, like love perhaps that i once missed
it is messy, i know but i keep on talking and writing you should know better

well, i guess, this is therapy on the going
it is free, as i am
free.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confession Of Help For A Beloved

i must be in
a danger zone

when you kiss
my lips

i feel nothing
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confession...

today i post some old pictures of mine
in facebook,
it is actually one way of going back to the past
and checking
if i am still part of it,
they say the past is gone
and in some ways we do not live there anymore
and so i search for my old face
when i was so young then
and vibrant about what my future brings,
there i was, so alive,
believing that this world has
integrity and
that every man rises to a certain height
pursuant to merit
and for the valid reasons
fit for a cause,
they say i was too handsome for my present
and i agree
time has scarred my face, the injustice has
scared me much,
and then i look at myself in the mirror again
i have succeeded
i am scarred but i have survived
i am alive and shall move on with the challenges of my life
nothing hinders me
because i am real, i have sided with the truth
and shall sacrifice some more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confusing Story

forgetting you makes her
think of jumping out
of the window from
the 10th floor,

she is
so depressed like a
house blown by a tornado,
she thinks she is dying
she can be like her friend
one time
when finally she jumped
out and killed herself in
an instant like a water
melon crushed on the
pavement of the road.

there are 13 women who
died on this county in the
name of men, love, hate,
despair, denial, ambiguities,

she can't be the 14th
of this story,

enough of
these! she like to have a happy
ending,

wait, she is trying to find
an exit
the exit of yes,

and 'they live happily ever
after'

yes. yes. yes.
that is what forgetting means, she finally lives happily ever after, and the man is free and the other woman dies of grief.

The man is killed in her story.

she betrays him too the author, and even God.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Confusion

do not ask
if on the darkness
of the night
he will
make you
a star

do not
also ask
if he will make
you the
queen
of the throne
of his
dreams

do not
ask
yourself
for you
know that
you
have no
answer

do not
ask
the comets
they will
just pass
at the
blink
of your
eye

do not
ask
confusion
is deaf
and
blind

RIC S. BASTASA
A Constant Falling

sometimes you feel being sucked
down to the bottom of the earth

and you try to hold on to the protrusions
of the rocks and even the clinging vines

just near you and all of them seem to be
so useless as you go on to this falling

and falling and falling, and then you let go,
you fall and then you accept and then the

little miracles come, and then you simply
enjoy the falling and falling and you are

no longer surprised but amazed and
then you tell yourself: what a ride!

RIC S. BASTASA
it will be too
unlikely
for one at this prime age
his pink
youth
to start glimpsing about
the face of
extinction

one says it will be
unbecoming
in fact, too premature
and simply
sad

when one tumbles however
and bleeds
and feels the pain
of an injury
one realizes a hint
into the possibility of
an incoming
death

one contemplates upon it
like a folded
letter
whose miserable content
makes you
read it over and over again

deep in your heart
you tell yourself

'this is real and i will
be next'....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Contrast

outside there is this old brown short dog barking
to a stranger

three motorbikes are making a lot of noise
on the city street
some children, one bigger than the other two small children
look like they are quarelling over some toys

the trees lining the road are pruned and some stacks
of leaves are left to dry
on this hot noonday

then a brownout: the computer shuts down
blipping and blipping for a warning to save

your last poem

RIC S. BASTASA
A Contrast Of The Sands And The Pebbles...

tread along the shores
of the sea
feel the sand and the pebbles
try sitting down all
these things in your
mind and find a way to look
towards the horizons as
the planets align today
without your knowing trying
to save you from this mess.

hold a handful of sand
pick each color of the pebbles
bring them back to the home
of your past: variations,
a break from the chain
an irregularly shaped one
along the line of an absurdity
a deviant line has a reason
during the storm a ship has
to anchor where it is not
used to be, an accepted route

find a reason between the
uniformity of the sands and
the breaking streaks among
the myriad colors of the pebbles.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Conversation

the meeting of words
familiarity winding through each letter
at first

everyday makes the conversation
lovelier
each syllable plunging
deeper
into the abyss of our souls

and then we
lightness and darkness
meet halfway

in the corridors of our silence
missing the meaning
of each origin

RIC S. BASTASA
A Conversation With Desire

desire, i know you
when i look at you and you look at me
we know what we really mean
even without the use of a word

desire, we can fit together,
for my name is a longing unsatisfied
we may
but for the time being i cannot
for my hands are chained
to morality and civility and courtesy
of my past
and for the pleasure of my future

desire, go, pass me by
i am not yet prepared to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Conversation....

she cannot accept the fact that a good poetry is just another form of imagination

Me
Mercy Temple

is she AC? 7:16 AM

Me
Shirley Bassey

me too hehehehe 7:16 AM

and begin to ask if my life, my marriage, my toes, my knees, my fingernails, my shoulders are okay 7:17 AM
Me
Victoria Vega

I still do believe they were ur unconscious mend
A dream

And so my song this morning is
My toes, my knees

RIC S. BASTASA
there is someone
inside me that
knows how to fly

and having no issues
with the earth

i go away with
this resolve not
to return

time is not my
master
neither outbursts
of glory
my premonition,

and mind you,
you are forever,
alone, in that
kingdom of despair

you are a slave of
time
and bound by it
each second.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Couple For The Night

submission
is her

hers to give
as she spreads

her legs
dominion is his

his is the power
to conquer

and subdue
as he throbs upon her

she opens
as he pushes in

and they
whatever you say

brutal or rude
passive or stupid

they
are the collaborating
artists

in God's
new creation

RIC S. BASTASA
A Couple's Choice

last night was nice
there was a blackout
and the house was
so silent, it was hot
and so we opened
the windows and
above the trees
fronting our room
was the full moon

lunatic nights with
nothing but the moon
and our smooth
conversation

at times you realize
marriage is not at all
about sex, sometimes
it is the conversation
that makes the better
bond, soul to soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Covenant Among Ourselves...

i know i am good
i know i am beautiful
and you know that too and we meet in a party
full of friends
and i see love and hope and the zest for life
among us in this small circle

we know what love is
we do it somehow in giving and laughing and in the
slow sips of our drinks
like the way we handle each moment of our lives
what we had kept and treasured
what we have not wasted and thrown away

i know you are good
and i know how wonderful have you become
i have noted each moment
each change for the better
i always love to see you
confident in your ways
and gentle in your actions

i salute you for all the respect and dignity
we keep this accord among ourselves
in this circle of life
and it won't be long and we all part ways
but it will just be for this moment
of joys marked and bliss drawn

we believe in the life after
the eternal and the perfect ending
and so we never worry
about the here and then
we are human, we are divine
we have loved, we love and we shall never cease.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Crack Where A Ray Of Light May Pass Through

a door long closed if you try opening it
rusty and worn makes the squeaking sound
of antiquity slipping through a crack of the
walls that fit too closely with time
its frames too tight for a breaking light

but we must open it this time of need
when words do not wish to be given birth
to a casual utterance in an intimate conversation

i push and you pull and we must move towards
a different direction at least only for a while
you see, some rays of light start to come inside
the boredom and the monotony of the sounds of our
lonely days touching the lines of our palms

this time there are changes on the way things
Aline themselves to a certain harmony
not alienating, some boundaries, a little distance
space, more space, you move and i do not get near you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Crisis In Faith

there is a crisis in faith
because one has looked up there where the stars
are faithless themselves

their doubts are as myriad as their
twinklings
their being lost are shown with the
way they die
one by one in an explosion
that is missed by your
limited eyes

try moving inward, into the caves of your heart
where the silence of the veins
and arteries are found

where red blood of life passes
in and out of the valves without much complaint
where the heart works all its lifetime
to tell you about love
and tenderness

and care and patience and passion
to love the words of God till the end of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Criterion For Uselessness

how big is
that tree
how lush the leaves
how strong
the twigs and
trunks
how profuse are
the roots
how deep its
penetration to
earth

yet how useless
you’ll say
for it bears
no fruit

RIC S. BASTASA
A Crying Poem

a crying poem
mourns for its words
and lost rhythm

it is lost some more
because it reasons out
and tries to explain
and enumerate
its lament its sorrows

its cheeks have teardrops
following the
flow of its sadness

a crying poem keeps
a name of its
lover, and listens to
no one.

it asks that you
must leave it
at once.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cup Of Coffee

Neither am i
happy nor sad
that is the truth for now.

i am a cup of coffee
abandoned and when you come back
and you're so thirsty
you shall take me cold.
i don't mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Cyber Friend

she keeps saying that she is ugly
and so she keeps the secret about her name
her existence
she insists she does not exist for she is air
but she is everywhere
she is the laughter of those who mock her
she is short, dark, thick lipped bow legged
she is nothing she is a blank page
a stain for the moment dirt
i tell her, i am not a discriminating bug
i am like her
once without courage for what i am
but i learned by heart the virtue of honesty
yes whatever that is
i love myself and i am open
for those who can
have the courage of loving me for what i am

the freedom gives me what beauty there is
it is in the heart not in the arm not in the body
not in the brain.

emote, that 's me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dadada Poem

It is not a fine morning, a storm this June
Sunk a boat killing some of my brothers
And they are not accounted by this government,
Complaints are made and they are not heard,
And remedies are not afforded, and always this
Event happens with everybody from the senator
To the Mayor of the town gets a babble,
And so what has been done? I do not read the papers
I do not take a pair of scissors, I do not choose any article
And cut it and put all the pieces on a bag and close the bag
And shake all the cut pieces and then I throw all the
Pieces from the top of the building in the city
Like a confetti and there I shout, at the top of my voice

This is what is happening and nothing is done
We are all falling like pieces like pieces like

da da da ado
do do do ada
da da da da

Arriving at nothing at all, babbles getting out of the bag
Now emptied of words.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dagger In Silence....

the silence in the room
is like a dagger stabbing each heart
each stab followed by another stab
until the body is numb
to the pain that silence brings

the first one that utters the word
becomes the murderer
of peace...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dance

on the silver railings
lining the side of the stairs
she presses
her thighs and breasts
the poles
unaffected
my eyes gaze like the sun
surprising the
blackness of
her hair
i am light penetrating
the tightness
of unbelief

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dance In Circles

you must have seen how life is painted
by one great artist

a dance in circle
where we hold our hands and
then we keep
revolving around
the axis that we
ourselves form

a merry-go-round on this side
a ferris wheel going up

arm to arm and face to face
we like it
each of us feeling like a ring
without an end without a beginning

we project to the very least
our sense of love for something that is eternal

we say we are not meant just to be here
we are meant for something higher

not rectangular, no longer circular
but something else, we even say this

is something felt and yet unspeakable
something so near us and yet still so far

like how we see the stars as tiny specks
so far away and yet so true and real

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dance In The Dark

A dance in the dark Is a nude dance
Two forms Fuse as one

Shades in the Dark with some Specks of light
A dance of Coming and going

One that tells me Out you go And yet takes Me by her hand

And without a Word the two Forms kiss
and Lose themselves In an empty space

Where the specks Of light may Turn into fire
a wild fire A burning dance A wild dance

And it stops only As the Two Lovely Forms
Become the dark And an empty space.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Date

three red chilis
on top of two sliced calamansi
beside the cup of white rice
inverted in form
the chicken barbecue is glazed
with butter
above a banana leaf

we have nothing to talk about
we eat

RIC S. BASTASA
A Date In Cyberspace

would a date in cyberspace
acceptable to you? my body is taken,
but my heart is still in the power
of my hands, and it is beating
like a ball of fire, the sun, shining
with its rays, prepared to hold
anything that is cold and weary
and lovely still to behold.

are you one of those colder planets
out there waiting for the warmth
of my distant heat?

let me caress your face
let my rays run like thai massage
to your weary flesh
let me kiss you lips
let me in on a hot noon day
affair on valentine's day

take my light to your room
let me see your naked body
let me feel it like i am all light

let me see you spin in happiness
let me see you as a heavy cloud about to pour your rain
let me see you as a dry soil absorbing all rain
and bathing in all my sunshine

let me hear you moan tonight in cyber space
let there be twinkling stars let there be the most silent moon
gentle to our secrets like a mother seeing his son happy with his toy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Date On The Tube

the hands of loneliness
grope for the pictures on
the tube

a world is created full of
colors and conversations

what you love to hear is the
moan of a lovely life

a romantic prelude of the
river of electrical currents

byte per byte you enjoy what
this technological fantasies can offer

because you are having so many wounds
the sting of guilt stings no more

there are walls that wall you in
and you feel so protected

in the jungle of lust you water
the maladies of your broken dreams

you comfort yourself somehow that just
like your past moments of happiness

this misdirected journey in a maze
is not a place of no return

you keep the lighthouse beckoning
other lost ships back

and so everyone finds everybody
back to their strong arms again

RIC S. BASTASA
do not forget to wear
your wedding ring
for they will check it
as i too shall bring mine
got a room reserved for us
at Eddie's
a marital bed with a
hot and cold shower
and a love chair
and a jacuzzi and a
complimentary swiss
massage for both
of us
a sumptuous dinner
for two inside the room
with a classical music
of mozart at the
background
the pillows are strawberry
scented and the floors
on carpet soft
there is a mirror at the
ceiling
you surely will like it
anyhow
and then my dear
we shall make love the
whole night long
don't you ever tell
your true name at the
Information Desk
my name is Johnny
and yours is Honey.
RIC S. BASTASA
A Date One Day In April

First time for me to be inside a jacuzzi

nice place with an ambiance of bonsai pines

a rock garden beside us and a fountain singing the tune of water at the other side of the glass window

where the sun just set and then the fading color of orange permeates the room when you said that it is time to light the lamp of Aladdin which you bought from Siem Riep

you undress and then join me in the bubbling water

i couldn't help but jack off too early as you landed the first kiss in the wet planks of my lips

that port of my being where lonely ships take rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Date With Myself....

i just arrived
from a long vacation
in cebu city

had lots of fun there
ate in some fabulous
restaurants,
grew shopping for a
camera and some socks
and underwear, and
another pair of new
shoes for myself,

you called and asked
me if i am with somebody
if i invited a niece or
a friend,

i answered, i met myself
and we are enjoying each
other's company,
we're into our own party
and we learned to dance
and sing by ourselves,

for the first time
in my life, and you
are not with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Day In Summer

perhaps only some of you
knew what really happened

tings that we did
at the prime of our youth

the one at the river was not true
neither was the one at the cogon grasses

the rumors were too advanced
and bent like a misshapen twig

perhaps this time you must have known
what joys we shared

picking ripe mangoes on that huge tree
at the foot of the hill

we drove no monkeys away
and no monkeys did give us any bother

the mangoes were too juicy
too ripe for our hands

too fragile for our wantonness
we never brought you any.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Day In Summer In The Mountain

the rainbow is a dome
behind the blue horizon
a bridge carries a jeep
loaded with ordinary people
the story is true
below there is no water
rocks and pebbles and grasses and
then the emptiness of space

RIC S. BASTASA
A Day In Your Lifetime...

make a day
like an embroidered
handkerchief
personalized for your
favorite kid

the colors mix
blue sky
golden sunrise
green fields of hay
shimmering
glossy streams

at the left side
there is a red breasted bird
chirping

all silk
smooth so smooth like
your love.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Day On The Internet

the early birds
are not perching on
the trees
or flying in the
skies

oh, they're all here
chirping
on internet lines.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dead Man

He is a man who cannot tell a lie anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dead Songbird

one sings

i am nothing
i am nothing

if i do not have you

and we remember her
we realize as always

fame is short

in space are
shooting stars

they fall and
appear no more

gone

gone

how short the song
upon the lips of a dead songbird

RIC S. BASTASA
A Deadlock

I can always go away
& live my life even
Alone

But you do not say
Any word

You told me on
The very first day

You will die without me

How can I forget
That?

You always tell the
Truth

A woman of

One

word.

I could have gone away
& live my own
Life

How can you disappear?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Death Wish Of The Unfortunate Stand-By

sometimes, when i stand waiting for someone who does not come
i whistle

for death, as though it is a friend and i am the willing one to go with it in  its new
journey hoping that perhaps i may like it

finally, when i do not have to go back and retrace my origin and then regret,

and death hears it and comes to me and asks me if i am going with him
to an escapade,

an adventure,

for death is an escape,
a closing of a door,
a making of a wall,
a locking of a window,
a stopping of a noise of an engine
on the street,

and when death is nearer, i begin to fear and ask myself,

what shall happen next?

and i deny i whistled for it, and i assure it that it is simply a mistake, a wrong
call,
a slip of my tongue

and death believes me,

for death is a respecter of our own misfortune,

our errors, our negligence and even pretensions,
a keeper sometimes of our own lies,

and death leaves me, and i have sighs, i doubt what i really want,
and sadly, i wish i had told it the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Death Wish....

when you fell
on the floor that
day
when you bumped your
head on the
cemented pavement
and you bleed and
the doctor made six
stitches
on your skin
and we keep on telling
each other
that we are afraid
that you may have
blood clots and
eventually succumb
finally to said
tragedy
i may have been a little
bit hypocritical saying
my heartfelt concern
that you get well soon
and recover,

sometimes i hate
myself for wishing that
you disappear
from my sight wishing
that someone younger
than you may
come and please me more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decent Goodbye

i know very
well that you

oh beautiful creature!

tickle me
make my spirit
rise
to the skies

and you like
to touch me
and you coddle
my weakness

my tongue and
thighs

yet i cling to the
rigid
rituals of logic

i know what
my future brings
when i respond
it will be
horrible

(i think too well
of your
hidden poison
and fatal
bite and i know
it will not
be too soon that
when i agree and
cater to your
temptations
i shall die)

and so i must
set you aside

i must look forward
towards the
light

and sorry
i have to say
my decent goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decent Man

da decent man comes out
from a room: black shiny coat
red tie, a diamond pin, a white polo shirt

a well cut hair a la james bond
eyes covered with a reading glass

you get the impression that he is well-read
and trained to the gentleness of a well-bred
progeny, he is cool and calm and
always gives you the sense of
a deep listener
his wisdom flows from his
attentive eyes
keen and ponderous

you think he has no capacity for
sin or mischief
you feel that he is elevated from
the rest of us

but that is not exactly true.

one night, a cold air blows from
the sea and feels his room with
quivers. He has entertained thoughts
about the woman in Bahamas.
Or the girl from Ipanema.
He rings the phone asking for
the name of a woman. Cathy.
He needs a night. He is hot
as a cinder, as an iron rod
red as flame.

and then the woman comes
barely dressed and well scented
lushious lips and abundant bosom.
soft hair and sleepy eyes.
he opens the door and she closes it.
he asks her to undress and dance
before him. and they made love
in front of the mirror by the wall.

the man has assumed the shadow
of a mad dog as he makes
the push and pull until he is
through. At that moment the decent
man has become a mad dog just like
any mad dog with saliva flowing
along the streets of the slums.

for in truth, a decent man is as decent
only as he is dressed under the sun.
As soon as he gets naked inside his room,
this decent man faces the truth of his being.
in the secret of a moonlit night,
the shadow of the decent man
is just this dog, and nothing more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decision

today i give up mending
other people's fences
fixing their gutters and
mowing their lawns,

it is time for me to just
sit back and relax to just
stand and watch,

it is time to tell myself,
' hey, i got my own life to live! '

it is time to be alone and
treat myself a party of its own.
i am packing. The island is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decision To Be Up

i have thrown the same
question to him
but the usual answer
had always been
his silence,

i guess he works
by the principle that the
emperor does not
talk to his subject

this time
i am the emperor
and he cannot
talk without my
permission

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decision...

for 31 years
he fucked her
she left her
parents who are
catholics
and very angry
at this
immoral stance

she gave her
two daughters
they sing and dance
for them
after dinners

now he has white
hairs
too young to have them
with all
the stress
and anguish

now they appear
for marriage
ripe time
to compensate the
lost years

the children to have
his family name
the school will be happy
and the community
would be appeased

she does not ask for
anything
except his love
not even the money
they have had a house
that as you know
has now become a home

RIC S. BASTASA
A Decision....

i thought it should have been
better if i lived in an island.
it would have been too peaceful for me.
I have already learned to live that way,
before you came into my life.
i do not have to account for chunks of skies.
or drops of rain or
my share of the air i breathe.
now in this sharing i have more questions unanswered.
If love is true why does it have to be concerned with money?
why do you have to ask me for reasons?
if love is good why is it causing me pain now?
perhaps, there is a time for rivers to divide islands.
for lands to be carried away for islands to sink and then we do not ask questions anymore.

i am waiting for the right time.
Ripe guavas fall and then i shall know what rotten is.
I shall summon ants.
I will never pick you up.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Deduction Of Sort

the ordinary person that you meet
in our town
you do not even know my real name
other than Hey mister
but i do not really mind
i like it that way
just being another ordinary person
the one that smiles when you smile
at me
as i pass by you and you too pass by me
i do not stare
not that it is unethical but because i have my own thoughts
to ponder for the day

how i live my life in privacy
away from the mob
the wisdom of the crowd
the many
the extraordinary demands of the society
like how the ocean dissolves me
like a drop
in anonymity

i like just being myself
a glistening dew on the petal of a rose
that i put on the glass vase
all alone on the table

yes alone but not really lonely
just being special
to myself

this solitude
regaining strength from the past,

those old days
when my mind was murdered
because i did not bother to guard it
from the multitude
from them
not me

RIC S. BASTASA
A Definition Of Life....

it is the feeling
of a desert that we
feel sometimes
deep in our
hearts on
some nights
following

completely dark
the stars are not
there

you miss the howl
of the jackal

or the strong sounds
of the sandstorm

you hate this
void
you want to expel
it
you draw the desert
and then
erase it

you paint a cactus
and you wash it
away on the
canvass

what remains
is the coarse
cloth and the
frame of
silver

tabula rasa
you begin again
on the blankness
and the bluntness
of your
thinking

you stop
and ponder and
make a definition
of life...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Deja Vu, , , , , , 

it is my soul
that senses your
soul

smoke of incense
scent of wet earth
sonorous sound of
little rain
falling on the
treetops of the
forest

my lips do not want
to say
i love you
i am in the wrong place
and you
are the wrong person
i look at myself in the
mirror
my naked body is
a stranger
i speak its name out
of convenience but
i never know myself
completely

the length of light-years
have made me forget
but there is this palpitations
of feelings
that make me remember
love

it is not your body
it is you in that body
it my soul that senses
your soul
about a previous passion
that we still
to date
cannot yet remember

i am like river to your rocks
rain to your earth
mist to your lips
moon to your darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
A Deliberate Movement

you plan it
and think about it for nights and nights
precisely
the reason why you cannot sleep

you draw on paper your schemes
for escapes
you put the arrows there
and mark the ultimate
freedom where light
is
with an x,

a big
X,

there are caves there
and secret
doors and canopies
and false windows

and even quicksands
where a mistake
can mean
deaht,

and there are gardens too
which look like
a prelude to castles
where seemingly
a princess lives

your ideas are plots
always plots
your theme is freedom
and always
it has always been freedom
you are never free
so you always
dream what you do not have

you wish of today
as the beginning towards
z, the point z, the
ultimatum of
this deliberate move
to escape,

i am tired of your
schemes and plots
and dialogues about
freedom

all i did to make you
think a little
before i sleep

is to put
the letter 'Y',

perhaps, it will calm you
down.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Delicious Food

When asked
he said he wrote what he did not understand

he said it is the surface of the table
the facade of a wall
the back of the shoe
and the ripple only of the pond

there must be a good explanation and
you are hiding it away from us

there is. And I have lied about its true meaning.
sadly, it is about the pain that I found in the things that please only you

he scratched his head successful on that hiding
he gave a smile for secrets that we too have sharing it like a delicious food unnamed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dengue-Free Kind Of Love

a heart that is filled with
smoke
can not be a haven
for mosquitoes

RIC S. BASTASA
A Depressed Friend

breath as heavy as brick
sighs as light as feather
shoulder burden as heavy as steel
abs corrugated like roof
a face as thick as elephant skin
bones rattling like a snake
thirst as dry as sand
wrinkles like waves of the sea
jaws drooping like a fall

that is what you are my friend.
you need badly a
bath.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Description Of A Life Alone In The Mountain

as you reach a place
where wild grass grow as
tall as you
you wonder
if there is a secret
that that may open its
arms to you
to show you wanton
beauty

it is the first day

as you go near
birds fly away from you
the wind stops blowing
clouds become heavy
and soon
the rain begins to fall

it seems that sadness knows
where you are
and it is following you

you put up a tent and then
at night you build a fire

you watch the fire grow
as though it has grown so many hands
trying to reach the sky
and grab some stars

everything seems so far away
so far away like a darkness beyond you
without an end

RIC S. BASTASA
A Description Of Sunrise

the day is over
we clap our hands

in the dark we remember
those deeds of the night

dusk comes with a surprise
on to what is next

the sun rises again
we clap our hands again

hoping that this brand new day
shall give us progress and even eternity

oh, the cycle is here again
another man of the sun loses face to the moon

in the dark we seek shelter to the night
we sleep and dream

tomorrow as the sun rises
we shall have learned: this is nothing but a vicious cycle

we then go to our own affairs
not minding whether it is morning or evening

the faces of the days
do not matter anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Description Of The Camera-Poet

the little boy from the city takes a ride
on a cemented buffalo beside a nipa hut surrounded by
coconut palms on top of
greed grass

dhe little girl wants to share the ride just right before the
camera finally clicks

RIC S. BASTASA
A Descriptive Attempt To Happiness....

once in a while
you learn their cumulative passing,

these cancers are working hard
to eliminate friends, erase good memories,
nay, even change the landscape,
for with those who perish, houses are
sold, or even demolished, and those
who still deny the tragedy even burn,
create a pyre, chant resentments, and
leave the place, paving the way for
the new ones, strangers to grief.

learning is like climbing a mountain.
going up is hard, but when you reach the
top you go down, it will be as easy
as sliding on those slippery hills.

to the plains, another village is built.
men build houses, babies are born, wives
attend to a garden of flowers.
bird migrate here, and begin again to
share their songs.

those that you do not know make life
bearable. the feast tonight, the dancing.
the revelry over an anticipated romance,
the moonlight reverie, the midnight silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Destination

one day

such is the short span
of this creature

but there is no sadness
on its leaving

on such a short time
everything was
accomplished

it gave the
best shot.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Destiny Of Dinner For Two

when it is meant to be yours
it will be yours and it simply happens
without you doing anything as though

chairs move by themselves with the table
too and the plates and saucers and forks and
spoons and mantels and in a synchronized
motion they make a table for you and

there you sit with me with a rose
at the center with the candle lighting
us thorough: 'it is dinner time, my love'.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Destroyed Niche

what we have here
are trees without leaves

upon these bald mountains
lay those fingers stretching

trying to hold the softness
of blue clouds

the rivers gone
what gazes us is this pool of stones

it is a scene of either
or,

we pack too
looking for another

more, wanting to escape
what we have destroyed

RIC S. BASTASA
A Deviation

aFTER HAVING
read and listened to all of you
Those who are Dead
and Yet speaking too loudly
IN PRINT
IET me say that i am amazed
at no wit's end
I am David missing you all
Hit Goliaths
I am not afraid for in your
Hugeness
Surely must my stone from my
Sling hit you
Dead

How grotesque
and Horrible is this Feeling of having
to slay the GREAT fishes
in that magical pool of fame
No, that is not what i mean
I think i have to be a deviation
from all of you
You shall be shocked by my
Originality
and you will all smirk and snob me
This DUMB nitwit, who is he?
My name is Nobody
Just Someone that No One knows
My family name is
Happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dialogue Between Two Predators

it starts like this: hello

is hello that important? yes
is dinner important to you? no, i just had one

dinner must be important to you
since you have had no dinner yet, yes

can i have you for dinner? me> for food?
i am not delicious.

but you may swallow me alive...big shark!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dialogue With Life

Life you are too precious to be wasted by me.
I am sorry.
I have not lived up to the promises of your partner: Time
My body is weakened by your enemies: Disease,
And abuse.
My soul is silent, like a stranger to this Place
This Heart and Mind
There is this Inability to cope up with responsibilities.
I am sorry.
Life I made you miserable.
I paired you with Regret
I am making you meet too early
Your wisdom: Death.

I am sorry. Morbid, brother of Death
A friend of Mind, An acquaintance of the Heart.
I am seeking his Caution.

Life is not giving the bother.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Diamond

Two sides of
the earth
two faces: romantic
darkness
and abundant light

one face for
all mankind
one face for
myself alone

two sides of a coin
four sides of a square

you demand that
i shall have only
one,

i'll say yes
in such a simple word

inside my heart
the words rumble
too many
to capture but only
one face?

in silence
i keep my fingers crossed
it is impossible

to one light
i glitter a thousand
times

RIC S. BASTASA
today, i commune with nature.

the trees are talking and the grasses
are not sleepy, and the sun shines like it
is its last day

and the moon comes and shines too
like it is the last night of its life.

the silvery river flowed like a big worm
and the stars played fireflies

i heave a sigh and then release it like a bird
from a cage.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dichotomy Of Lovers Asleep

what i like about you
is the strangeness
that which i cannot understand
because you are
too near
that which i cannot hold
because you are so fragile
that which i cannot love
because you have
kept the distance
between two worlds
that prefer to be independent
and indifferent

what i like about you
is what you like about me too
and when we meet
we understand
that we have to take our separate ways
just to be happy i guess

RIC S. BASTASA
A Different Flow Of Indifference....

inside the room are
the carnivorous kind.

outside it is cold as
it is winter time.

something inside makes
them all feel hot...and
so they undress themselves,
tired of their clothing, and
even underwear, too tight
for their fitting, hurting
their turgid skins.

i am surprised why they hate
wine and shy away from the rest
of the celebrators of the season.

outside the songs are being sung.
the dances dance, and the camaraderie
of hands are touching bones.

there are mad men and the madness is kept
to the certain level of tolerance.
society is a head shaker. Hands bound.
Minds closed. The winds of change are
laughing, too advanced for the age of
hardened so the babies are not
born. The plow and sickle rusted.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Different Kind Of Love....

the time has
arrived
when our kind of love
takes another
form of endearment

you cook my
breakfast as i take my
shower
early morning

i smell good and you
call my name
and then after i am done

we take time
to pray and eat
our breakfast together

we both feel good talking
about all those sorts
of things

we have nothing in particular
as time passes
so slowly
without our knowing
that we have
arrived to a place
where we have
come from a long long
time ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Different Point Of View

I realize that what you see
These things
About life
So differently

From what I once saw
And still see
From my own point of view

This paper boat of yours
Floats on its shadow
The clouds underneath it
Like the waves of the sea

You tell me
This paper boat is going to
Heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
A Different Sunset

sometimes there will be a sunset
different from the rest of the usual sunsets
the one that threatens us
of a darkness that does not give anymore
the hint of another day

we shiver to this idea
of an irreversible rule of evil

darkness in eternity
disorder forever

but come to think of it
that sunset cannot be true by all mean of our logic

hope sets the mold of the triumph of the good
the just and the sanity of reason

the hands of love keeps holding the light to our freedom
from despair

we do not mind all these doomsday prophets
we keep the boat sailing
under the moon we shall hear more of the songs
of the happy angels

we have nothing to lose now
since everything is taken

what we keep is only ourselves
that promise that must take us to the other side of our world

there they say
what is eternal is a sunrise.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Different Walk This Time

come for you to stand upright, and they like it too
because that is the way
how life should and must be lived
in maturity in
independence
in knowing how to manage life
defining and illustrating
what real walking
coping with the coming
and leaving
the constant changing of the seasons and

you learn how to dress up and comb your hair
and walk your talk and listen more
and sometimes pretend
that all is well with you
inorder not to frustrate them
because they have their
own lives
their own private quests
and hidden
sorrows too

and then the real things confront you on the face
beyond the four seasons
you go back to the ancient beginning where you are

naked where you must walk again and even crawl
if need be but
this time you do not crawl and
you are not cute anymore
you still stand upright, always trying your best
though a little bit bent now and
shaking

your eyes are all failing
and you cannot see
your feelings too are flinching as they skin you out
and even your mind
sags like a useless piece of appendix

you walk alone through all the seasons
determined, unmoved, unaffected
sometimes looking back and then moving finally forward
towards the place
that you think you know because it sounds so familiar
as though you have been there
with all of them

RIC S. BASTASA
A Digital Photo Of The Ricefields

ripe ricefields early one morning
as i take my walk

it is a wide rectangular field
and on its tip on the right side
from this gravelled road
is an island of banana shrubs
bamboo grasses
and mahogany trees

and there is an old well there
that survives the past droughts
for scores of years
a little focusing will show
that there are bathers
there and one of them
is lovely.

Zoom in.
Never mind, she is too shy
and she is just for me.
Her eyes are soft
not like the almonds
her skin is smooth
like a ripe mango.

Zoom in.
She is bathing now.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dignity

as the peacock
struts its fan of feathers
like a rainbow
in the barnyard

the hen keeps its
own home
protecting its chicks
around its feathers
from the invasion of
the rat

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dilemma

I am hungry
my stomach growls like a lion caged for days

I am thirsty too
my mouth and tongue miss a glass of water like hell

I cannot eat and i cannot drink
there is food on the table
there is water in a bowl

When i think of all these that i want and i cannot have
everything turns into stone

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dinner For Two

the candle light
between us
is the sun

you and i
are the only two planets
revolving

you spin on your
own orbit
and so do i

we look at each
other
i hold your hand

the moon shines
arrayed by stars

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dirty Mind

it is just a lamp
you can turn it off
anytime

be agile
know what you want
and what you don't

know when to stop
when to switch it on

know how to unplug
and plug it

it is all in the mind
do not force it

come to me
let us be there

hold my hand
gently like a marsh floating in the water

let us see the world
without our minds on

let the worlds see us
as part of its garden

flowers with white petals
bees without stings

molting snakes
helpless to the kiss of the worms

what do you really want from me?
what?

i am naked
do not dress me up

RIC S. BASTASA
someone writes about
a rebellion, a struggle of a set of native still not free
even in this age of
a shrinking world
where everything seems to be a text away
or that distance
which curls and tells you
they are all there and happy in green
and white
hands in prayer and minds in peace
and mouths speaking about abundance and wellness
and paradise thriving in skyscrapers
and parks

someone writes about the death of civilians under
oppressive regimes
brought about by leaders who refuse to step down
or someone exposes the trafficking of women somewhere in southeast Asia
and brought in bulgaria or
a black island

someone writes about a strike of workers whose wages are
below survival
about the hardships of exploited laborers
while their employers are enjoying so much of the profits
wasting it in the beaches of
Thailand and
the shopping malls of Singapore

i could have been that someone
but i am here stacked in the haystacks of my own silly dreams
stuffed like a bear
and dressed in black robe
hammering my days like
a metal smith
sweating it out beside a big fire
but still unable to decide what shape to make out of this metal
what sharpness is needed
in this sword without a
luster.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Discernment

once it was the clarity that i sought
and there was none and all i had is doubt

once i was sure of myself
and believed it to be so such stuff that is stiff
until i became a river of stool
and everything in there is foul

and i slept and i wake up and i thought
about what are those that landed in my spout

perhaps clarity is not what must be sought
neither doubt
for who wants doubt to rule our lives
as though we do not live in a world of lies
upon some layers of
historical rocks and socks?

and then i simply look around me
simply describing what comes and what passes on a day

a bus loading passengers
hands waiving gears
a very calm sea
a wharf where boats are free
a house by the mountain
fireflies feasting on the rain
a tree crown at night
beside a river up tight
sounds of owls and
ghouls
a rain that starts
pouring
on the roof of the house
listening
simply listening
much about nothing
about these things
as they are
disregarding who we are

every moment is an act to be done
spic and span
every hour
an spectator
every second simply
passing line
beyond the edge
of a clean page

i do not think for the future now
in the same manner that i let the past sleep like it were dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Disciple Of Freud

he is basically Freudian
sickness, any sickness is explainable

for instance
insanity is caused by denying the woman

of a man, in that empty hole of her flesh
something hard and stiff must fill it

something rainy must fill the cracks
of the summer heat

one must taste the paste of life
the thrushes of man's power over woman's softness

nothing must be left unexplained
even the usual slips of the tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
A Disciple Writes

a poem.
not a legal treatise

surprisingly a poem
that she posts in a blog

spots of her own blood
staining

spits of her own mouth
streaking

circles and triangles of
stories of her

longings and anxieties
though some speak of her

simple joys in life
and when we meet again

in class
we forget what we are

on the other hand
we go back to serious business

law and order
rights and obligations

cases to read
points to argue

perhaps a poem
i could have told her

could simply be a diversion
tactic
for what we shy away
and then we target the real thing

bow and arrow
bullet and gun for a kill

to get at the top
and be silent again.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not wonder why we are empty cups of coffee today
last night the mugs were full of
bubbling beer and the conversations flowed like
spilled beans from a rattan tray
the shadows of the night
they were not illusions
they were real since you touched them with your hands
smelled them and
love every molecule of them all

are we empty because we have been filled and we overflowed
and we simply have to renew our vows
to a divine emptying of ourselves
to become whole again
to start anew
and be humans again?

it is only your head, wrapped with skin, the skull that i feel
when i kiss you
that i have
i want to believe that these are all i have
for the keeping
but that is not at all true
there are still those that remain invisible to my eyes
more important than what you seem to appear

i do not wish to reduce them into a frame
nothing can be boxed
everything has always the capacity to escape
from my hold
from yours too
all these surprises, we wait, we try to grasp
that pain
that we must let go
because they can never be ours

RIC S. BASTASA
A Discourse On Real Chaos

so many words, thousands of thoughts
minted, printed,
so many lines running and running
to an endless destination

do you believe in me? have you noticed
that never ending story? this never ending road?
these endless musings like days and days that
never stop making and grinding time?

dois the restless world
the wriggling worms of our existence
our way of sounding life to the universe

people want to stop to listen
all these restless people who cannot rest on the nights
they want to die but couldn't
they want to live but can't

what a mess? orderliness, flitting and so temporary
change is always there and always changing
and waning and fading and shining and glowing

you cannot stop because if you will
you are not yourself anymore

do you take shelter in the house of logic?
look! it is crumpled by the battle of light and darkness
parallel lines swerve and fuse at the end when the speed of light
triples and tipsy at the black holes of misunderstanding

you will tell me, i am trembling, short of what i should have
given you in a silver platter of common understanding
that i am just confusing you and making you miserable

sad to say, there is no order in this universe,
the molecules move in random, the atoms are in disarray
like the air, but how can you really see?
you feel only the wind, and see the leaves swaying
you feel the joy, but always, and always, the disorder is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am extremely worried
about you
for you think that we are the cause
of your
sufferings

we shall give you that cure

we shall leave you
and we give you that choice
you may leave us
for good
it all depends on what light
you have
what dew is there
on the carpet's
leaf

for we do not want us to be your suffering
we know how to manage sorrow
we have outlived grief
we know the labyrinths of lamentations
we have gone beyond
sadness and joys
in fact, they do not have meaning anymore
except perhaps
a flower on our ears
a garland on our necks
a pair of slippers on our feet

when we do not have you
we know how to shut ourselves like doors
but we always leave you the key
and when the right time comes when you have learned
to go beyond the fences of those dark horizons
or of the walls of the threshold of tolerances
you may open the door again
do not knock
but we cannot assure you
that we shall be here forever
waiting for you
that will be too much for us to
give to you

we are the winds
and we always take chances somewhere
where we are loved
where we are not the cause of sufferings

and we have this trait of always
going somewhere

for us to stay
if you only know
is another suicide
of natural born
reason....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Discovery

this is what he found: that the more you evade
something that you fear
the more it stays and threatens you more
adds more fears
on this stance of denial

ah, confront it
head on
bounce and pounce
and sip and swallow and take in
whatever
digest and let it stay
whenever it wants to

things get boring
events want to roam
incidents are mere incidents
not wanting to stay any longer
memories dissolve
trauma escapes
there is no eternity to all these longings
and haphazard

let go
expel, forget and then move on
that is what life is all about
and death too

RIC S. BASTASA
A Discovery

NOW IT It has become
certain that the ants are saving
almost anything
from crumbs of bread to
cut pieces of leaves
and shreds of earthworms

not because they expect
to live for the rainy days
or survive the
storm
but because
they all want to escape
from the oppression
of the
Grasshopper.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Disposition....

i

when we were on that island
in sum
we were treated with indifference

to my companion it was not just
bad manners but bad taste
even cruelty to an invited guest

ii

when we were in the boat i focused
on the good times
i always forget what i do not like

iii

this day both of them arrive in my city
and they announced it

iv

i am not indifferent
i dislike bad taste and bad manners
and so i decide
to drive them around
bring them to the best pizza parlor
and bring them back to
this sense of history
of our traditions

v

i guess they like it
but i am just human and i
promise myself
that after i have shown all my kindness
and hospitality
it will be their last.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Disturbed Child

For hours and days we talked, and there was that portion
Of that honest conversation when he opened a certain
Cabinet where a black-covered diary contains a page of the story

About a disturbed child,
A confused child, not because he was not born like
Any other new born child, on a package-deal of innocence
For a start of his existence,

A happy child, a normal child with a
Loving and caring ma and pa and excited siblings
To receive him as another playmate added to their house,

At most, the conversation changed to a slow motion
In that portion,
He showed some serious indications, a gaze of a man,
Undistracted by her poise for casualness and
A consideration that this is nothing but another kind
Of a light conversation unlike no other,

It is not, this is serious, he said, because this is true and this really
Happened, the cabinet and the diary are nothing but
Fronts to fictional realities,

He was the disturbed child, and he is going to tell her about it,
Today,
He did not have a happy childhood, as he once told the Jesuits,
Who accepted him to their fold,

And for which he, of course took his graceful exit,
Because he is a liar,
He began talking about some bamboo sticks which hit him,
The sack which enclosed him, the rope which hanged him
On the kitchen beam,

The ants that bit him while he
Kneeled on mongo beans under a scorching sun, and the mother
He still very well remembers,
She was not able to do anything to save him.

She too was part of
That disturbance, the slap that still left a mark of humiliation on his
Left cheek,

A scar on his childhood, forever. She died earlier than expected.
He, the villain, did not.

Not the child, who later escaped from hell.

that child though disturbed by his past, is now given the right to speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dog Long Buried

A dead dog long buried
And yet-
Some yelps are still heard
Near the doormat
Even without a bee
Stinging
or anybody coming
home

RIC S. BASTASA
A Doggerel In Siam...

and so there was this Indet
who had a very acidid armpit
he enjoyed the tour in Sinamit
while the rest finally quit

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dog's Life

the way you cry
for spilled milk is
too much

cry for spilled milk is
too much

the dog with a leash
at the street post is
looking at you with
anger....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dog's Nightmare

even dogs
dream, and the
reverse is true too
they have nightmares
this white poodle
under my feet
is barking
while asleep
and too surprising
when it coughs
it takes the
sound
of sadness....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Door Closed

door closed 
upon me and i am left out 
with no one

i bleed but soon 
this will stop 
for i shall not die 
or if i die
i must carry that 
meaning 
with me

i left the place 
carrying nothing & 
i am going somewhere

where i can be another 
interesting 
virgin again

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dot In The Sky

i am used to being
a lone eagle in that highest sky

my eyes are sharp
my claws sharper and more agile

my wings are silver
my feathers platinum

when i met you
i begin to understand what pity is all about

the weakness of the scents of flowers
on those days of May

bathed me and wrapped me into a
prison of sympathy

i tried to lift you up to make you feel the power of wings
the independence of claws

the self-sufficiency of radar eyes
the vision of eternity

i learn love but with all these
i can always unlearn everything

and be back to my own wings again
now merciless, sharp, and ready to forget

you are you
that purple flower clinging to the cracks of the rocks

i am myself
in another journey without any memory

i guess this is what happens
always to that eagle in the highest sky

a dot that you see
and then erased in space.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Cut Half

i have a dream
last night i conceived it
as though i am
a woman,

the dream becomes
a touch,
taking shape
it has weight
and needs more space

one night
it comes out with its feet first
and they were all worried
i scream

the man with a black robe
gets a sword and
cuts out
what is coming out from me

and so i have half of this dream
and it is dead

that man's work
seems to me
is to kill dreams and
want to leave us all
dying
upon our own whim

the following day
i heal myself
and i make a promise
that there will be no
dream anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Escape

confronted with a harsh reality of his daily existence on skin unfeeling any pain neither happiness, and this too harsh, when nothing is felt whatever be that, he.... finally finds a escape inside his dream, it was a lazy afternoon in an island where his lover is waiting behind them the sun sets like an egg yolk scrambled into settled doubts.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Gone By

where is the dream cottage
of the years
gone by?

that nook of cool trees
hidden in one of those valleys

that dog that sleeps on the bamboo slats
on that verandah that faces the
green lagoon

the road that goes upon a dead end
the hope of greenness

the lavender venetian blinds that you close
one cold evening?

the emptiness has caught us
and we do not look around anymore
confined in a room
thinking about the next worse thing
that we
expect shall happen

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream In Atlantis

In the distance you notice a flickering light.
It grows brighter and larger as you slice your way through the cold water.

What can it be?
Soon a glowing coral reef reveals itself.
You can almost compare the light it emits to daylight, so strong is it.

Much to your astonishment you find the reef molded into what seems to be buildings.
There are arch ways, what seems to be windows and wait... what’s that?
A person?
You’ve spotted a merman!

Someone like you now.
And there are more of them!
They notice you and suddenly several of them torpedo towards you at great speed.

For the first time in your dream you are frightened.
They come bearing smiles however, each one of them funnelling around you as they swim up, twisting their bodies around yours without touching you and finally halting above of you as they conclude what seems to be a greeting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of A Map Of Fortune

One day i write about
A poem that looks like
A map
For some directions
To a location
Of a hidden rock
Of gold and i
Who dream of
One day getting
Rich read it,

Only to find
These little red ants
Inside my pants

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of Darkness

this house
where you live
has no door
the window is
as thin as
a Chinese eye
and it
does not open
despite
the heat inside
the bedroom

how can you
blame them
if they mistake you
for a coffin?

and so they mourn
for you
and just like any
repeated ritual
it ends and
then they
forget you

i know that
it is your last dream
before
the night goes as
black
as the ocean
on the trench

totally dark and
still undefiled

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of Dusk

feathery clouds scatter
like water color spatter
beyond are the blue mountains
near us are the twin silhouette of trees
at the left side is the moon
resting upon the shoulder
of a hill on this dreamy scene
everything blue and black

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of Evolution....

shall a seed be
a seed forever?

do you not dream
someday that it shall
be planted
so that it can sprout
and grow
and then finally see
its flower
and fruit?

must the flower and fruit
be just the same
like the rest of the histories of
the other seeds
of their own form and kind?

must i hope
for an evolution
a seed turning
into a bee
a bee into
a butterfly into wind
into star?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of Silence.....

You are naked inside
the boat that i am riding
under the moon
beside the reeds
a choir of frogs are
badly singing
it is raining so hard
we are shielded with
our own illusions
we are never wet with
tears
we never speak
silently we arrive
to the catacombs of
our private silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dream Of The Flesh

we are in the river
naked
our bodies meet
like
one body
missing
another body
and the river
becomes
one warm
water
trickling down
our two bodies

body to body
flesh to flesh
hands
to hands and
arms entwine
like some
chains of
daisies
to our necks

this oneness
that we
finally make

eyes to eyes
closing
and lips to lips
searching
tongues

we dare
search
our souls
if they
are there
too
in this
fusion

for the
meantime
we have no time
to ask

the river
has no name
even

RIC S. BASTASA
A Drift Wood Wants To Tell A Story

a pale white driftwood
on beige sands
wants to tell a story

the river has a mouth
the sea has a tongue
the island has a face

but all of them
have no ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Drop Of Rain It Is. Quickly.

beauty and grace
shape taking the form
that escapes the fences of
your mind

the heard understands
why rules are asphyxiating
there is no rule in what
beauty is
there is simply no standards
for grace

beauty sleeps and wakes up
in another form in another time
grace flies like butterflies
but their wings are not
that gossamer anymore

gone were the times of
dragonflies or kites
the slippery fins find themselves
in the wings of birds

oh, how time surprises us
how seasons come and show us
what ought not to be

do not predict the flow of
any poet's poetry
what used to be the lyrics of
some have become the
lemons of the other

just feel, oh, just feel,
listen to the rhythm of your soul
transcending time
jumping out from the windows of
prisons
a drop of rain it is.
quickly.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dry Land

days and years
lump together and humans
pack up

rivers convert themselves
to cities for need of space

this one shall follow
it is not the sun that has
taken what it has

a tractor builds a dike
and takes all the water here

this is dry land
no fish, no water,
no moss, sand is filled
and rocks
delivered to make
out of this river
a new housing subdivision
at a higher cost
than money

RIC S. BASTASA
A Duck Point Of View

when a man feeds a number of ducks
on the river
he thinks of the money and the meat
and the eggs
setting aside the noisy quacks
and the pestering constant
call for attention,

i wonder how the ducks see the man
his demonstrative care and charity?

did they see him as God?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dying Declaration

there are three requisites:
one, it shall talk about my death,
the cause, and the culprit,
second, i am conscious
about my impending death,
and third, that i finally die
at that instant.

i will not do it.
am i foolish? who in this world
would declare something
only to know that to successfully say it,
one must first be dead?

but my friend that is the rule,
an evidentiary rule.

well anyway, let us start with you.

where were you when he shot you?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Dying Man

tell the truth
gives up everything
and prepares
his final trip
without having to carry
anything

he sits there
waiting for the final shutting of
the light

at the core of his
heart
there is perfect peace

his hands grasp
the hands of death
in total harmony

like the way the
sun sets on the west
like the way the moon
enters
the hallways of
darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
A Failure

i tried to be myself
a self-made man
all the way
through from womb to
tomb only to find at the end
of the whiff that there is no self

how poor
on this failure
what a waste of time therefore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Failure Is An Opportunity

You fail today; I know how it feels to be a failure. It will be sad. You mourn alone, nobody mourns for you. It will be silent. The noise of failure is too much inside Your ears, lots of evil voices speak, like you are A nobody A failure A disservice, a uselessness, the smallness of you Like a miniature plastic soldier toy in the cabinet Set aside for being so unattractive, You shrink in society, and friends shy away now, In failure you are alone, and you cry alone, if you Will it that way, If you will it, You fail and forever you are a failure, a loser, A sore loser,

But think a little deeper this time, Who in this world never had a failure once in a while? Isaac Newton, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Give me a name, and I will cite their failures, Give me a name of a man who never failed And I will show you that dead man in his grave.

My friend, failure is an opportunity to be great Learn, learn, and learn, take the failure as your Platform to catapult you to something higher than yourself, Jump and rise to some other better opportunities, Learn and be a new person again, stronger and wiser this time.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
A Family Circle Thing

it was something moderate
and yet your coldness
was penetrating

the effect was shivering
enthusiasm dampened
this dread
and numbing
fear that sends
a pallor
on spirit's skins

this bad news
you received it
on paper
and read it alone

one that suffices
to kill the meaning
of celebration

one that defaces
joy and
thanksgiving

it is the arrival
of death
in one's family
where someone
lays so silent
in the living room

and life was but
something
that was nice

a chill of the day
that one sips
from an ice cold
green tea

i guess i should
not have given
you any hint about it

but you have the right
to know
you are part
of this circle
that wishes
to forget
and simply
chill down a little
bit meeting
sunrise on
the porch
where we must
keep composed

RIC S. BASTASA
A Family Landmark

It did not start with us. we are smooth as the outer skin of did not make us their problems. we followed the rules. we bowed to the faces of authorities.

it was grandpa, who at the age of 79 decided to marry a woman of 19. She was not decent at all. Her hair hid some snakes. We saw it once when we had dinner together in that old house.

grandpa was blinded by his lust. we were patient for light. since he had the money and the power we did nothing but attend to his wedding ceremony.

the woman had black lips. her hands were gnarled so she kept on wearing gloves.

everyday she wore masks, always choosing the angry ones. I guess she was angry with her childhood and her family.

grandmother died early. She had fats all over her body, and then she lost her reason to live. When she died i was only 5 years old, but i had a sharp memory of her then when she kept all the best bread in her room.

after the marriage took place in the famous church of the city, we left the honeymooners in their chosen room. It was expensive.

Aunt who was from Manila decided that we better see the Shrine where Rizal was under the custody of a military general.

Then the news broke out. Grandpa was murdered by his second wife. Inside his room the woman was gone. Taking all the money and his shotgun.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Family Picture Of Fools......

a family picture
suggests perfection

mother beside father
between them
a son and daughter

another picture has
grandpa holding his cane
sort of scepter as
grandma holds a bouquet
of roses
her lifetime

one who sees it says
what a happy family
just perfect just perfect

i tell you it is not
exactly true, not really

what was behind the house
behind that picture
behind those smiles?

dead rats smell like dead rats
behind the house
behind those smiles are
concealed misfortunes

you just don't know
you were not there when all
those bad things happened

for the family still sticks
to that tradition not to display
dirty linens on the road
to warn all those servants
to keep silent, what you see here
what you hear here, leave it here.

a family picture does not say it all.
to inspire you, if not to make you
more miserable with what you are.

yes, it is true.
the farther the pasture,
the greener it appears.

mend the fences. keep the good things.
love the pretentious. smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Family Reunion

the genes stopped at us
we of the childless category
enjoying this luxury
as others come in numbers
with their new names
and members

eye talk a lot
we remain silent
we party
on this family reunion
we think of the memories
of ma and pa
and when we were children

it is dark and light
surrenders and then
they turn on the light

we become shadows
and mere words
we become laughter
there are no places
for the tears

then we go home
to the places of our hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Family Sailing The Same Boat

we sail the same boat
on same sea
but our minds are having
different storms

we take side with silence
and lean towards
numbness

we see the same sun but
feel a different coldness

we should have coddled each
others' loneliness

huddled with each much needed
warmth

but as usual what prevails
is our chosen field of
privacy

as we choose
to maim our souls
what we have never spoken
for once.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Family Tradition Of Restraint...

papa is not
fond of hugging his children

perhaps it is part
of family restraint
a culture which shies away
from affection
perhaps for fear of pain
when finally departures
come

i was never embraced by
papa
and so did my sister
and i had not seen him
hug mama either

was there something wrong
with the family?
grandpa too was like him
not saying a word or so
in the happiness of the home

there is no big head in the
family
nothing flattery
when someone is sick when
someone dies
there, there, all of them
are crying

orange is served
with a biscuit
a glass of water
and the parakeet.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Famous Man

he was observing from the
upper part of his terrace
an old woman down the street
eating a ripe mango
without slicing them
using her bare hands
peeling it and sucking
the pulp
savoring every sap

she is enjoying it
she is enjoying it
she is enjoying it

that is what he says
he writes, she is enjoying it

and yet he is so famous
in this city
munching what fame is
there
tailored for him

RIC S. BASTASA
this is a fan
in the manipulation of my hands
her hands hold another fan
making the signals of
our tryst
this is another fan of hers
for my manipulation
this will give the signals too
what time
where and when
and then we fan ourselves together
much to the dismay of
those who still think that this world
spins
because of love alone
no
there are other reasons which lust knows
apart from the reasons
of the propriety of an intimacy

there is this emptiness that must be filled
at least temporarily with the desires of the body
the curiosity of he mind
the button-less reality
of holes and bones and quivers
of the flesh

i am into this and you call me
quits.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fan And A Stick

Imagine a fan
keep it, it is a stick

if you want air
spread it

and it has fingers
and you
sway it

to have air you
must vibrate

to know what
it can give you
you must spread
it like
a wall and not
just a door

truths are not
sticks

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fan Of Basho

From the 15th floor
You said you will jump
Do not expect the sound of water

Flok!

Now, stop acting like a frog
Suicide is not poetic

RIC S. BASTASA
A Faraway Light.....

light always amazes
me in the dark,

like a firefly that is lost
in the night
it flickers to the view
of my tired eyes

and relaxes me a bit,

like a lighter of a cigarette
in the dark alley of
the slums,

the light that gives me the much needed smoke
to allay some fears
of our
series of deaths,
to appease these
internal wars
unseen by the eyes of
fading humanity

it is the same light that is promised
us
'at the end of the tunnel'

when in the middle of this lost-ness
we have nothing to drink and eat
and no one to talk to

when we see not even the shadow of a bat
of a leaf
because it is too dark and damp
and damn
dead silent,

when i think that it is only i that exist
and no one else
when in the extreme coldness of the silence
like the tip of a metallic knife

one can only remember
abandonment and
betrayal
and killing of one's own brother
kin and
friend and child

every bad thing has always been possible
they all happened and they can never leave you again
they are the tattoos of your
soul

it is only light that can comfort you
and it is very faraway.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Farm House In Dicayo River

Slanting rays of the morning sun
Carabaos, goats, and pigs
Along the grassy lane
An old man with a staff
Sits by the door
Of his thatched hut
Waiting for his grandson,

Chickens, ducks, and pigeons
Scatter on the backyard
He feeds them
All he has now
Is this simple life
In a farm house in Dicayo River
Waiting for an angel
To sing his final song

He sighs soon he shall die
the river flows nearby

RIC S. BASTASA
A Favorite View From Here

something so human
very much like us
or myself,
i see from here and i always come back for it
wishing that i get fed up
and become free
but no
it is always in my mind and no matter how many times i view it
it is still a favorite
it tickles every nerve
makes me alive

so forgive me
soon i must leave what you think is best for me
i go and sit and watch and wait
the suspense for a lifetime
something that grows inside myself
stands up and strong
makes me alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Feast Of Bitterness

we all have
a share of this bitter
concoction
in this cup of
life
there is no reason
to complain
it is only a matter
of ' i have mine
and you shall have
yours'

i am not saying
anything
you shall not hear
from me
and this is the reason
why
i have resorted to this
art.....

i do not write
with a fist.
How can i?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Feast Of Lights

when you were born
mom did not tell you that the stars in the sky
made a thousand winks

a feast of lights
and a rendezvous of universal droplets of
distances

all the planets however maintain
there respectful distances
trying to show how dignity works

what they did not tell you however
was the silence of the world
tiptoeing not to disturb you with your
first cry

RIC S. BASTASA
A Feather

i met a
feather today
in air

it introduces
itself
as one with
just
a few parts....
a rachis,
a vane,
barbs,
and

the quill,

which in the evolution of
mankind
has made
life, society,
civilization,
countries,

amazingly
complicated.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Feeling Of Half-Ness

i had long known that i cannot be full
i am always a glass half full.
This feeling of not having gone at length
to the place where i want to put all my legs and my hands
and let them do something that is so complete.
My cheeks are blushing.
My ears do not fully hear what I am saying to my heart.
My heart beats but always in half notes
In Whispers so that You may not hear everything
That I want to say. Always concealing.
Hiding the true color of this state: halfway
Half asleep. Half awake.

At the middle of things, I shall always be.
I am neither the beginning
Nor the End. I want to speak, but there are no words coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Few Advices To A Nephew Studying The Science Of Psychology

you say you want noise
so much noise in fact
in the middle of the night
to bury the boredom reigning in yourself.

i wonder if you have consulted the gods and goddesses of poertry.
if you have gone at the entrance of its temples.
one does not need noise to expunge boredom.
one needs only silence.

you tell me i am different. Sort of telling me you are different
and you belong to the wonders of your youth.
i am telling you, you are wrong my dear nephew.

you have taken so much noise, and you are lost.
you have disregarded the voice of your heart
and the furies will take the revenge.

the noise will take you like the Pied Piper of Hamelin
to the sea with all the rats and there
they will drown with you.

Take your time. Have fun with so much noise.
When this fails, and i know it will, please come back
and drink the lovely potion of silence.
This is the beginning
of poetry.

Some things are so real, in this poetic imagination.
As she once puts it: an imaginary garden with real toads in them.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Few Things

mother's black and white picture
on the wall,

father's leather belt kept
in an old cabinet now dusty

too dusty memories
about a family long splintered by time

about pain
about happiness suppressed
about its ability to survive despite the odds

siblings come to a reunion party
wanting to remember more names

RIC S. BASTASA
A Few Words Of Praise

to a child who must feel the constant need to be loved
a few words of praise is all enough

you cannot give him a car or a chick
he isn't old enough to drive or to be driven

touch his hair, giggle his armpits
and you will hear his childish laughter

a few words of praise and a heart beat
to a child his day is already complete

RIC S. BASTASA
A Filipino Fed Up In Chicago

AND so one day he got fed up
Worrying about his bills
Light, cell phones,
Apartment rents
Meals and what to eat
Next month
No money to
Send to the
Philippines

There is no work coming
And the old man he took care of
Died a month ago

Bad luck

He is vacant
He could not go to the malls
There is no money left for the week
And there is no work coming
No one is offering to help
And he worries

About his telephone bills
His credit card
His rent
His SSS
His unrenewed passport
His expiring visa
His debts

One day he goes outside
It is quite cold
Colder now
The snow is coming

He smokes his cigarette packs on the park
A middle-aged American woman stares and tells her
“Smoking is bad for your health
You are polluting the earth”

Just a little advice

But his head is hot and
Hot temper is what is steaming inside
He is fuming mad to that middle aged American woman
He is also fuming mad about
Himself to be honest
About it

“Shit shit shit, I smoke if I want to
I use my own money to kill myself
F###k YOU!
Mind your own American business
In this free country I can smoke anytime I want! ”.

He knows how to curse now
In the most American way
For just a year or two
he was a timid Filipino
he was the meek citizen
of this world

And he smokes all day in the park
his packs of cigarettes in the park
Puffing and puffing and breathing and breathing
Releasing all his dismays in cold air

He can see his bleeding heart
His cursing

“f##k you! ”
‘f$$k you! ’

in the freezing air
his cursing is a big bold font
in the atmosphere
His cell phone does not have any load
And he cannot call anybody

And he remembers well the latest old
Jewish rich man which he took care of
who died a month ago

One day the old man fell on the floor
The one who shitted him all day
he still could remember
fully well
all the old man's yell

call: F$$$K YOU!'

The old man could not stand
back
He was big, fat, and dying

He did not help him stand
He merely stood there askance
And the old man shouted and growled

"Shit shit you Filipino
Help me stand from here"

'F$$$K YOU FILIPINO!'

And he said
WITH ALL STRICT COMPOSURE
SO SURE OF HIMSELF NOW
with a little authoritative
moral advice
like he was a wise man

"Rich American now is the time
for you to
Command all your mighty dollars

your mighty dollars
your mighty dollars
your mighty dollars

To help you rise and make
You, young and strong again! “

The old Jewish rich man died
Due to cardiac arrest.

And now he is out of job
No money
No promises

And one day now
He finds himself smoking himself to death

On this cold dark wildlife park south of
Chicago.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Filipino Writes From Chicago

Dear Juana,

I am here in Chicago
And I have to wear a thicker jacko
It is very cold here you know

Even without the snow

I am staying with another cousin
In his apartment I chip in
As he is also renting
And I am simply gallivanting

It will take me time
To find work this time

To find work here is still hard
I have to stay longer in the pad

Could be next month perhaps
When cousin Rey gets some mishaps
I will have his work
And hold his fork

I could be working
Probably working
In the home of a Jewish American
Taking care of their old man

I have to tell you
I have to hold his big thing
While He is urinating
I have to wash his anus
And chop his huge “pus”
So it would
In the toilet flush

Just imagine how
The American dung would smell somehow
It wouldn’t smell chocolaty
As you would think it to be

I wish to come back
And forget this life’s lack
But who would pay
My debts in our country?

I wish you all well there
I will have my deals here
To earn for my dollars
And pay for my scholars.

Pray in Jesus name,
It’s me your only flame.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fine Life

today is a Sunday
and i will be visiting a farm

of native chickens and
ferns and

cocoanut wine for
lunch.

She says have fun

Life is short so make
the most

while it is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fire Escape

imagine
one night

when you are
alone

inside a room
with windows

secured with
iron grills

the fire starts
from that only

doors and there is
no other exit

imagine that
electricity is cut

the smoke
enters your room

crawling on the
floor

you panic
and you do not remember

where escape is
where to find again

the entrance to the
next life

blame yourself
how you hated the thief
A Firewood House

living on a firewood
house one gets to understand well
the essence of conflagration
a spark
a flint if taken for granted
can cause
what you do not expect to happen at all
so do not ever talk about
a matchbox
or even a candlelight
it will be too dangerous

to dream about you
you're hot
and flaming
and you may want a light
after a tryst
i guess once is enough
of you
the firewood house is about to burn itself
and soon i will be
lying helpless along the road
enough
of this ash

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fish Bone In Your Throat...

now as a final episode
of this learning
you must learn to remove
a fish bone in
your throat and repeat after me

'everything is fiction! '

slowly
and with one stroke of your
learned hand
take away the fish bone
burn it

it is what is rightly
termed as
fictional
cremation

you must believe
that someone just died and
that happily
he was buried pursuant to
his last wish
as written in his
last will and
testament.......
A Fixation

between two islands
of my life
i set upon a swim
this middle portion
of clear calm waters

it is not deep
no storms not even a wave
it is crystal clear
and beneath
a white sandy floor

some fish lick my legs
and tickle my pelvis
some sea grass massage
the soles of my feet

and so i like it here
and i am not going somewhere
or anywhere

the other island
which they call eternal bliss
for a while
can wait

it is between day and night
it is between heaven and earth
it is between life and death
it is what you call
my sinfulness.

in here i am very happy
and that is all enough for me

the sky blue waters are so cool
& the surroundings simply beautiful
A Flow

when we are in bed
we become like two rivers
flowing with each other.

when my face gets too
near your face we become
like two mountains separated
by a moon rising from
a deep forest

my tongue becomes roots
and looks for the place
where water freely falls
on a ground that is
wet and soft

and you too become like me
flowing, wanting for an opening
wanting to fill a space
of our common emptiness

when we fuse like profuse
lights from opposite directions
on a very faint rainfall
we make a rainbow
between two cliffs

when we hold hands we are
like two creeks meeting and
then forming a channel
that fuse looking for the entrance
towards the sea

and when we start to kiss and
make love and letting go every
worry and anxiety that we have
when we are finished we feel

we have found the gateway to
the sea and there we lose ourselves
to the vastness of the oceans
to the deepest of its floors

and then we are complete.
we become entwined with the universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Flow Of An Idea....

two words no matter how farfetched
like two opposing poles of the earth

when you for once give them meaning
can give you the link for life,

it is You who is the bridge
of the paradox

your left hand meets your right hand
in prayer

in an embrace of the sweetest moment
clasping

a union of mutuality which was not there
when you first wake up

that morning...it was dark at first when
twilight comes to bring you a glimpse

of another budding perfection, and you
walk an extra mile to get hold of yourself

lost in the labyrinths of your self made
doubts, ...it is you who makes the ripples

but shall you blame yourself for being honest
and candid about what life has handed you?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Flower And A Bird

My hands create
a flower and a bird

my mouth opens uttering
what you want to hear
i presume beauty

as usual you are the one but you are not here

my hands offer flowers for you
my mouth waits for your kiss

just an imagination i suppose

and then i finally know

you've been dead and buried.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Flower For Her

it is not a fresh flower
cut from the garden of my love

it is a dried flower
inserted between the pages
of my book

it was the first flower she ever
gave me
when we escaped class
to walk hand in hand
on that nearby hill
filled with the memories
of our youth

i am giving it back to her now
that she is moving on
with her own life

same with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Flower Story...

when you are inside a very tight bud
if you do not compromise with the night
the choking sepal becomes painful
the receptacle argues with the peduncle
on the matter of an overstaying stigma

nature rules and at dawn you have to bloom
on a lesser risk towards ecstatic pleasures

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fly Trapped In An Empty Bottle Corked And Sealed

if you see
the fly trapped
inside an
empty bottle
corked and
sealed and
gasping for
breath

oh my
recall the love
of wisdom!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Food Called Cesarini

been in Italy for five days
but i have not tasted a cesarini.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fool Out Of Myself

i always think
of you

don't forget
that
i always think
of you

though i doubt
if you
also think of me

i like to think
that you also think of me

upon a hill
under the moon
and stars

i always think of you
even inside my dream
i always think
of you

i dream that
you also think of me
as i always think
of you

i realize i am a fool
until last night
at the mall

when i see you in the
arms of another
like a vine clinging
to a tree
like a straitjacket to his body.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Fool's Game

it is just a
heartache
don't bother

just a heartache
that always sleeps

in pain and

wakes up the following morning
thinking

that it has forgotten
every pain

don't bother
it's not my heartache

it's yours
now.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Footnote To Air Asia Flight

the gecko sounds in consistency
now on the side of the house where the sun just set

the rain has not stopped
darkness arrives slowly like a drop of ink spilled
in a beaker of water

the sound of the pan is heard from the kitchen where
the house-help is frying fish for dinner

the dog barks in play with another dog in the veranda
then light is switched on in the middle of the house

the TV is too loud for the latest news about
the plane that in a blessing-in-disguise the family of ten
missed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Form Of Injustice

a tall child
is angry
picks a pebble
on his sling
and hits the
eye of the
the short
child on the
road

the eyeball explodes
blood flows
the short child
screams

the tall child
runs away
laughing loudly

he is far away now
and nowhere to
be seen

the short child keeps
on screaming
some people in the market
hear
run towards the
site
go near to ask
what happened

and then one by one
leave
to do their
respective chores
for the
ordinary day
A Form Of Purification

the cyclone that hits Myanmar the earthquake that hits China
they come
they all come too swiftly, too decisive of what to do
swiftly sweeping swiftly swallowing

it is the purgation of the earth
a manner of purifying itself

i am not saying there is dirt
or so much rubbish on man's cruelty towards this earth

i am not saying anything at all
my sympathies for those who perished
i am into this silence
a tribute to death

on the other hand, i am thinking of something else
i have hinted you on this

but just the same, let us move on and pick up the trash
sweep the yard, collect the leaves, rebuild the house,

plant more flowers and perhaps not to cut the trees
and spit on our seas again

RIC S. BASTASA
A Formalist

In coat and tie
Black suit
Well arranged hair
Well cut
Well suited
No air must come
To disarrange
Some hair
Or other parts of
Him,
He is stiff
He is stuffed
He is

A perfect gentleman

How can he ever
Dance this
Hip-hop
Of life?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Formation Of One's Personal Philosophy In Life...

sometimes, this is what is the usual
beginning, sometimes,

we are conditioned upon a pattern
of behavior,
upon a common definition of who is
the successful
what is life and how it must be lived
to the fullest...

and not having followed this pattern
we fall into desolation

remember the room where a shadow lurks
projected by a secret lamp of our privacy

somehow, this is another word that signifies
survival, we learn to live life the way
we have it,

our resources are limited of course,
we thrive on what is here, and not on what comes next
we enclose our house with a fence, we define our
parameters of hope and losing

this time, this is another way to summarize,
we begin to learn our own language,
the language of self-determination, about who we are,
and what we can be, based on how we see
ourselves in the mirrors of our very own eyes,

you hear the child say, ' i am a lizard and the ceiling is
created for me'

the other ' i have wings, i am a moth, and i must be careful
about lamps'

and the other, ' i am a fly, spiders cannot be my friends,
neither are the lizards, who are hungry and makes my
body as their food'

'i am a firefly, i shine in the dark' another creature sighs..

there are differences, one must know.
and one must of course, learn to avoid what is harmful
or destructive....

there is more yet, which i have not spoken.
but i need rest. And i turn off the lights
and in my room, beneath the skies, under the moon

i put myself to rest....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Formula

loneliness that dissolves
in a glass of smile
sadness that fades
in the lights of your laughter
sorrows that leave a space
of rising hope

grief that does not stay long
lament not overwhelming
a contentment that knows
what is the meaning of quiet

self that knows the place
beyond the self
up there, a finger points
to heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
A Frame

a square a rectangle four corners
of wood or steel or just bold strokes
to make a corner a frame to put
my face in, and there i am safe
i am enclosed i am situated i am
myself in a certain context in a
certain world. There i am found.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Frame Of Reference

we did not buy
a new fabric
it is too expensive
and we have
no money

what we did
we opened our trunks
and remember

we took all those old
clothes
that of our ancestors
who died
with all their own sorrows
too

we cut them into small pieces
we do not remove the dusts
and stains

we assemble them into one
collage
including our tattered pieces
too

and then we see the whole picture
of who we
are
what this family is all about
what humanity is

then we frame
this creation
and from there we move on
as though
nothing happened
A Free Meal?

you like free meals	hey taste so well
nothing is bitter
everything is sweet

why do you like a free meal?
you save much for yourself.
why do you save much and not
spend anything for yourself?
you are into the vice of misery.
You are the miser storing much
and still beg for more
hence the free meal.

there is no such thing as a free meal
if you only know the real score
you could not have eaten that free meal on the table.
everyday you eat this unnecessary gratitude
tomorrow you shall pay it

with what? your dignity,
even your whole life.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Free Vacation In China

while you enlist the soldiers
train them and prepare them
for war
on a supposedly consensus
a decision
to kill terrorism

she was in China
with the First Gentleman
playing golf

and taking pictures
in front of the
Great Wall

with her friends
and some grandchildren

then they had the lauriat
and the ballroom
and then they were
laughing
on the recent jokes
about a soldier
henpecked by
his wife

RIC S. BASTASA
A French Woman Is Singing A Song

at the bar
somewhere in France
a woman is singing her love song

i can't understand a word
but i have always understood the feelings

the song is sad
and i know, what we are up to

the next thing that happens...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend

a friend is just a friend
a patching somewhere
on some empty spaces
where such being
may fill

the shape of a flower
for accent of a vase
or a fluttering butterfly
to decorate a shrub
or a substitute for
someone who left
and left another
emptiness

a friend is just a friend
do you expect some more?

let the friendship be nothing
but be brief and concise
like some answers to
life's questions

let it not be beyond
yourself and your loved one

a friend is just a memory
that comes and goes
like the wind that for a time
cools your face

you just let them pass
and be themselves, ...

friends, have some,
but come to think,

they may also be expensive
A Friend And Company..

we'll walk
and go tired and
rest and
sit upon a
stone
look up to the sky
and sing

you provide
me the tune
i'll make the
lyrics of our
song

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend From Nevada

she got divorced and moving on with her life
for a third husband and she says she is careful now

not about love, because there is none since the first husband
but about money

outsmarted she goes bankrupt and now moving on in another place
las vegas, the city that never sleeps

the insomniac
keeps her accounts intact, from now on she tells herself while
sleeping alone in her new apartment

there shall only be use, abuse, disuse, and uselessness
sad, bad news i suppose

but she's real, her tears are salty and her sobs sounding like
a dog howling at midnight

not looking for another mate but who knows?
she's full time American now, and no one stops her from doing what
could have been, but not yet, she says, can be must be and will be
soonest

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend From New York

he learns the years
of living alone in a cozy apartment
works on the day as nurse
and makes most of the money
through overtimes and other
part time jobs

it is the money, the love of money,
that makes him move
it does not matter if he is loveless
with anyone
he is fed up with broken hearts
and wasted times

he learns to live his life
with his brown dog

that to him is love without
any condition
always devotional and painless
and constant
and nothing too personal in-between.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend From Utah

she finally finds her way in Utah
watching the sunset there on a desert

she sent me a letter telling me that she never saw such a beautiful sunset as that
in Utah but i was not really amazed with what she thinks she saw as beauty
because i still believe
that beauty still lies to the beholden
(i know you may think i am wrong, you think of the beholden)
a cliche of the almost forgotten)

but that is not really the point
that is,
a dog must know the hands of the person who feeds it
and wag its tail
to manifest gratitude and admiration

what amazes me still is the last poem she sent me while i also watch the most beautiful sunset at the Dipolog Boulevard

she says she has nothing to prove to herself
she burns everything
she is finally quitting and whatever that means i refuse to make any conclusion

i still love it here because it is home and i too agree, i have nothing to prove to myself
or anybody else, alien or otherwise

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend Has Hurt Me Behind My Back

A friend betrays
Stabs me behind my back
Using her shadows
She held my neck with her arms
Sealed the friendship with her last hug
And left my bleeding heart in cold blood
Then she went away
Following the road to her dreams
I have no regrets
Repairing what I have
What is left of me
She too will die soon
In her guilt and emptiness
Her heart dead
Her own soul gone away.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend In Chicago Is In Relationship

on a cold winter
a friend in Chicago finally
opens up like
a clam and grabs
a sand that pricks
his tongue
so he can make a
pearl
this Christmas

i ask two questions
which i think are
intrusions to his
privacy

honestly, i am not
interested
he's happy and it is
enough to know
that

what i realize is that
he is happy and he is
no longer interested
about what i ask
or what i say

i quit.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend In Egypt

it's nice to see him
finally in Egypt
smoking shisha hookah
with three
handsome young men
as he treats them
for dinner
as one artist plays
the joombosh mandolin

he says he gladly
refused his offer

but Egypt is still great!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend In New York Shot In An Art Exhibition

big round glasses
chinese eyes framed in black
curly black hair
pigtailed
protruding scarlet lips
closed
mustache untrimmed
you are the mouse of modern art

RIC S. BASTASA
in facebook i did not
let him know that i keep
on reading about his posts
concerning the doom of this
world. First it was
September, that was last year.
Then it would be
November, there will be
a major quake, a continent
will go down to the depths
of the sea, the landscape of
the earth would change.
It did not happen somehow
so he had christmas with
friends and families,
at any rate, perhaps he
never really liked how life
is going, for by then
on january he posted that
a meteor will strike the
earth and crumble it to
small pieces.
It seems that he will
never stop imagining
the end of this world.

he was once a religious
guy, practicing catholic,
one a manager of a bank,

i do not wish to judge him.
or perhaps recommend that
he should see his shrink
or get help from his close
relatives.

i am alone here sitting
on the sands of the shore
on a moonlit night with
all the stars in heaven.

it is so beautiful and i
wonder how can one ever
think of all the bad things
coming, or a dismal ending.

i am into a happy world.
and i do not really think
that it will end, or if it
will, i guess, it should
be a happy ending.

at least i am seeing stars.
tonight, and i still wonder
if i would tell him this.

a friend is a friend is a friend.
if he chose horror, i would not
mind it. it is his choice which
matters. I just let him be.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend Of A Hum

tonight i am going home
i feel so alone as though i am living
inside a house with very thick
walls, i am
inside my car and as usual
i drive alone
for an hour passing uninhabited places
along the road
and then i hum an old song
that pleases me
and i realize this time that i have a companion
this hum which through time
has assumed another voice
separate
from mine
it sounds strange
deep, monotonous, husky, and
comforting like a lullaby of mother

it is a friend's voice
jibing with mine
inside the silence of this car

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend Of An Enemy....

it was wrong for you to talk
to the cats to help you eliminate
the rats

the rats keep on eating your clothes
and your furniture

they hate you for asking help
from their oppressor

befriend the cats and they soon will
take revenge

as the old adage says, a friend of their
enemy is their enemy

you should not have meddled in their
affairs, kept your clothes inside a glass
cage and slept on your furniture

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend Of Mine...

she spent
ten months in federal prison
in Waseca, Minnesota
lost 40 pounds
and had her
spiritual upliftment
to her delight

nothing's changed
and now
welcome back to
facebook

because Time flies
Life moves on
and No One remembers

But somehow
Everyone cares
And Loves a Friend
who shall be a friend
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend Of Sorrow....

from my luxury bed
you have awakened me again

thank you very much,

Sorrow, you are still
my
sweetest friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend To A Friend Asking For A Favor

a friend finds himself in a mess
with himself, a room filled with waste papers
and shit, he got a little dog to care but he is always
drunk somehow, beer bottles under the bed,
he has not been brushing his teeth
or shaving is not a part of his vocabulary,
goes in another friend's house,
about five meters away from his
and takes a hitch
for lunch, a glass of water will do him
for the night till morning,
on diet for poverty, the world is too dusty
for him, but he does not bother wetting
the plants with water,
there is no water anyway, he has not paid his bills,
there is one thing missing in his life
and he admits it when he
for the last nth time
asks his friend
to help him find back his
dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend, A Woman, A Widow, The Old One

where have we gone
on those years that dance in the music
of hushes and whispers?

those merry widows
painted their faces
as they grow into
the folds of their old age

she is one of those
who dreamed
from nipa huts to the
ice castles of her
fantasies

she thought she can
stay forever
like that... forever

but no woman stays a woman
throughout her journey
she assumes some shapes
to survive
some have turned into camels
in the arid desert
some polar bears bear the earmark
of womanhood in their cold
noses

her body knows when
the right time is right there in her mind
but there is one thing that makes the sound
of her permanence...

that she must always be free to be
...forever

RIC S. BASTASA
A Friend...

You are there,
BUT you are here too
because
You are a friend
and a friend is always here
despite being there

In the heart
A friend lives

Sometimes you hide away from me
Inside your mind

Your head shows somehow
Like a nail stuck in soft sandal wood

I am listening
As always....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Funeral In The Barrio

it is a long line of people
like a snake
winding itself on a
hill towards the spot
where a big tree
stands
the snake's mouth
opens and
spits you
right in the hole
six feet below
the ground

and then the women
then the clouds
pay its tribute
with a little rain.

and then you are
forgotten. another boy
wears your name
and starts life all over
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Game

a bird embraces
the wings of the winds
its beak sips
a cloud

a cloud pours its
burdens

hence the rain
runs through the furrows
of your skin

the contours of your cheeks
the lines of your body

it is all a game
the cards we play
the words we say
we do not really
mean it

but departures sometimes
though usual and routinized
still hurt

there is no complete familiarity
with pain

even though we agree
that this is all a game
that tonight is just a moment
of breathless expectations
when you utter the last word
finally

i think i still cry
my heart still knows pain
a little prick
at the bottom of things
quintessential

RIC S. BASTASA
A Game Of Hearts

you toggle
pain and joy
the silence and the noise
of yourself
butting between us
in this game
of the hearts
i keep myself away
even wanting to put it off
just to give way
for that which lies
between us
and then you finally say
there is no us
stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Game Of Words In Any Place At Any Time...

this is my favorite game of words
that i engage in at any hour of the day
and in any other place

i can create them outside the paper and
without the use of pen

sometimes it happens that way when i ride
in a bus and the destination is 36 hours away

or even in a span of minutes
when sleep does not come

or when nap is nil

my fingers help to put music by tapping its nails
on the metal rail

and there is dancing and singing and some speeches in between

soliloquies
silhouettes

six-shooters
jailbirds

farmers reaping
hay on a sunny day

as though the room is a place where
party and conversations co-exist

i do not put more than what is necessary
it is enough to just survive the hours of pressure
the little training of torture

the principle has always been
i only use what is here
i discard what is not found here

there are no expectations from the beams
there is no show of shadows

i let imagination go
and let reality stay for a while

one by one i enumerate what i can contain by the numbers of my fingers

i think of the names
of friends

i gaze upon myself
i am glad i give myself a smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Game Of Words In Circles

dismiss these words as nothing but fireflies moving in circles around the crown of a tree on a very dark night,

for these works of the wind are nothing but images of ghosts whirling on top of my head all

for nothing but a play of mental drawings moving and moving in circles in imaginary skies

believe me not, i am just a poet, and a beginner at that,

move on with your life, and think of something else, your future

your ambitions, your love and desire, keep moving on

and leave me, i am drunk with poetry, and i whirl on top of

my table, filled with words, that i touch with my hands

something that i cannot tell you because i know, you too from the start, understands them all, like my face in the dark, that

you have always loved, and yet can never hold.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Garden For All....

they will bury
you at the hero's place
but what evil you
did
cannot be forgotten

let the law praise you
but the divine
still frowns at you

today i put an end to
all misery
let the grass do its
work

it is a new place now
a garden for all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Gate Made Of Steel.....

you have
always prepared

for this. Words
are kept inside a
cabinet.

dreams are ironed
out.

hope is silent.
and stars are remembered.

plans are sealed.
private matters of the
heart.

leaving is an
ultimatum but always
reserved.

the sun has not
completely come out yet.

the mountains are keeping
their shadows.

soon is sooner, and
you are always learning.

the pride is there.
money is saved.

somewhere the plan
for another house is made.

it will be walled.
and the gate is made of steel.
A Gaze Upon Myself

the possibilities of a body
are all here: luscious lips, contours
of my arms
the promises of my butt
and the courage of
my chest,
so much is here
all these resources
laying bare wanting to be used
even abused
come... let us meet secretly
the wonders of our youth
tonight
when i am alone again
inside my room, when the hotels
are closed,
when the cafes are cruel,
when the roads are emptied
of children
when the skies have no stars
come to me then, youth to my youth
inside my room
where my heart is numb
when the only possibility is the pleasure
that our bodies can offer
when intimacy is not the question anymore
when commitment is out of the issue
we are here
at this point we shall only discuss
how our skins
can accommodate all the pleasures
therein.
come to me when i am alone again
let us make pleasures
under the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
A General Statement About Those Who Spread The Mess...

deep red like confetti from a tall dark red building
in the middle of the city

it is not the ordinary mess that you see on the streets
it is professional and too deceiving
authorized as it is with
the validity of the laws of their own creation

we who are below and who watch these makings
grit our teeth like we are grilled in hell
as a matter of internalization
it becomes evident that we who want to be clean
are the most unhappy people on this patch of the earth

perhaps that is the nature of this world
it is more of the scattering rather than the keeping
it is more of the destruction rather than the intricacy of the web of creation
trigger-happy are the murderers of the master plan
and those who want to keep things alive and intact
neat and beautiful
are always the mourners of the morgue.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Gift Of Silence

a
tangerine
moon

above
me

a quiet
spot
at night

feeling
rocky

RIC S. BASTASA
A Glass Of Water Please

and so the story wants to end itself with a glass of water.

those who cry after always need a glass of water.

those whose hearts are broken
those who sob
those who close the window of the niche
those who have nightmares
those who wake up at 3 o'clock in the morning
those who sit on bed and cannot sleep back
always go to the kitchen
open the refrigerator
get a glass and splash
a cold glass of water

this time, i am asking for a glass of water
for i could be
all of the above or you could be one of those
i have described

but who knows we are not one of those
who knows
we are but just anyone who is normally thirsty
and with nothing to ask
simply ask
for a glass of cold water.

and cheerfully, we do not forget to say please....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Glimpse...

in my youth i saw flying plates
broken glass lamps, wasted rice grains,
invectives and curses were always
the sounds of the house,

i promise not to copy and paste
those things, sad,
disappointing, unfortunate human
conflagrations of the innocence
of some souls,

now i am free.

i listen to nobody but only the voices within me
they are peaceful, every tapestry embroidered with logic
and reason,

searching for more wisdom
listening more than talking

i am staying and i like it this way now

the shells of the past were burned
the ashes thrown at the feet of Dipolog river.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Golden Shield For My Future...

dear mama
do not make me dream anymore
about your worries
i am a man and will always be strong as you brought me to be
i can manage
grief, like you did a thousand times when you were here on earth,

when i am junked, i do not force my way in
i keep my own ground, i know how to make my own doors
if locked, i can find always a way
whether it be up or
down
to the left or
to the right

if i may cry, but it will be short
and brief
and concise as my explanation for worry
i do not spill myself
i take a piece of absorbing cloth
and recollect
all those blood and sweat

mama, i am not a helpless child
do not make me dream that you're going to wage another
bloody revolution

times have changed
sometimes mama, we stoop to the feet of our enemies
in order to cut their heads

rest in your grave mama
i still have more tomorrows to remake

my future is as bright
as the golden shield
of Parmenifid
A Good Beginning

getting to know you is a good beginning
i may look for love like you do
look for it and we hope somehow to find
what love is
as a beginner after riding on that train of pain

sooner, as i know your name, and your sorrows,
i stop and look at my past summers too
the drought we once had,
when all the leaves of my trees
shed off,
and all i have are just my fingers
and my stares,

i sigh,
and from there i look for an end
to all these
an exit, where no one feels anything again
someone must keep all the love
and make it grow
and have all the fruits and flowers

it is not me. I am numb.

i am looking for another opening,
where i can have another
good beginning and then finally find a happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Good Poem

a good poem is as good as it makes you feel
good,
about yourself and your world, your pains
and joys, your sorrows and pains, all mixed up
into one salad
a bowl of greens and reds
a slice of lemon, black olives,
a little pinch of salt, a garnishing
of olive oil, and some
cheese.

and of course, the purple onions
that you peel one by one
tears and the lasting smile

RIC S. BASTASA
A Good Poem Never Ends

ahh, i have seen and felt
the words of that poem
that never ends,

the moment
you put the last breath
like death
it simply breathes upon itself
a new life
for another beginning
it shifts its meanings
to another soul
another place
and time

at the other side
of this globe
the reader that glances
only for a while
comes back and asks

am i there?
are you talking to me?
am i part of you?
are we not together in this?
are you myself?
how come that we feel
the same
angst?
the same joys?
this bliss?

and so, the words escape and fly away
like birds and build a nest
on the next tree nearby
where another lonely soul
is taking shelter
in his solitude,
for in truth a good poem
never dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Good Sleep

the linens are cool grasses
the air as breezy as the sea
the room gives the ambiance of
silence resting on soft cotton pillow

RIC S. BASTASA
A Good Voice Keeps Singing, Life Goes On, My Dear, And It Is Beautiful.

before that
i had fever, i was
chilling,
and then you come
with a good news
which you brought yourself
inside my room,
and i said, you give me
a nice chill, and you
sit beside me, and
touch my nape and rub
the oil, and i feel so light
that i still think that
love is still
existent.

the way i talk is prophetic
someone deep within us wants
to die,
always looking for suffocation,
but the mornings are
assurances, and mirrors are
good advisers,
and a good voice keeps singing,
life goes on, my dear,
and it is beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Graden Of Sand

centric circles of

the sand garden and

some parallel lines and

a world so silent

serene so fine

RIC S. BASTASA
A Great Man........

you are a
great man.

sometimes
if you are
really true

you agree
that beyond
this greatness
is an extension
wire of madness

at some point
water from the sky
falls upon a leaking
roof of your
existence and what
happens as predicted
accurately by science
in between those
cut moments, a short
circuit occurs
putting a series of
sparks, a weird sound,
and someone who is
in touch, and those
that really take
pride about skin and
intimacy, find
themselves electrocuted
and burn and
die.

if you are a great
man, do not forget,
you will go mad,
you will go cold
you will die.

and then you
are forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Greek Island Of M.

YELLOW moon
with orange stains
islands of saffron

electric blue skies
marine blue horizon
shadows of islands
a black dome
light
inside a house of
prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
A Green Sour Orange....

first i get an orange
a green orange, the young one
sour, but still
citrus, not pungent
but inviting, not a cure for the
wound, not easing,
it penetrates pain and
makes it more painful,

then i cut the orange,
press it
and press it some more
to get all its juices....

i do not drink it
i leave it in the glass
for all those dark nights

till every juice dries,
till what you see and feel
is the same
emptiness....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Group In Prayer

today the five of us
inside this house
are holding doves
in a little while after
a short prayer
we shall release our doves
free in the air
now, our neighbors will
see what we have
inside our hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
if you really want to be with me
i can sacrifice your presence like a lamb burned so the gods may smell the reality
of the smoke of death and pain and
sorrow

we can be together in all these realities
the first pact is: acceptance
you see what you get and you get what you see
as simple as that
no tricks no magic
plain hands nothing rubbery or plastic

we do not expect anything
in here there is no disappointment of what should have been or ought to be anyway
the agreement reached is the voluntarism of our two wills
you invite yourself
and i invite you to invite me in return

we live in one house with only one door the getting in
we have two windows our two views on every matter presented by nature everyday
the sun in the morning the moon at night and some stars as bonus or the wind and the trees, all these cliches of reality less the complicating ones those sophistication of sophistry and those fingers of an octal arguments
we are tired we ought to know better than tired

we make a river of course to justify our thirst for bridges
and some boats for easy rides
the paddles can come later when we are ready to learn to swim whatever that comes first in our mind shall all be welcome guests
no barrier no social mores no restrictions no exclusions that is the rule here openness of the roof and soon there will be no roof even

then we have a garden of grass and stones delineated well by the aid of the grace of our imagination

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
more words that do not really help
but we tolerate it anyway to keep things going like a line of cars waiting for the
go signal

did you hear the drivers sing? did you notice the silent passengers afraid that
we will cheat them into these useless endeavor to keep on talking
though
we really mean nothing?
stupidity is a trail a tail of the rainbow where actually there is no pot of gold out
there
it is trail that we all are taking now and yet
we refuse to stop we refuse to recognize that we are all fools
who take pride that we are the only ones who change our minds
and then we call ourselves
wise people.
i step out of the line and i am going somewhere because as you see
i am all dressed up as though i am dying.
do not follow me, you do not know me, i may be dangerous.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Guilty Feeling

a happy dream
you do not wish to
elaborate
where i am
part

it makes me
guilty
what i did there

RIC S. BASTASA
A Guilty Woman

guilt has a pair of eyes
and you who have nothing to hide
look straight to his iris
that shuts down a bit
to lessen the flow of light
as though hiding
something in the dark
that it still treasures
in its back

you are the sun that shines
early morning to kiss the new flowers of the day
she is the afternoon
that slowly fades away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Habit

waking up the morning
with some ideas popping

another boring day?
with nothing to play?

i look to the world inside me
and say

oh! there is so much to do
there is another tornado

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hammock, A Dream, A White Butterfly

i was relaxing on a hammock

there was this little white butterfly

fluttering and fluttering
no hovering ever
no stopping

it rises up over the fence
of my house
and then it is gone away....

i slept and dreamed about a little white butterfly

fluttering and never stopping
it flew away from my mind...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hand Of Light

however it is not saying really that a hand of light
 can give life back to the dead grasses
 under those dead trees
 upon an abandoned mountain,

sometimes i imagine that what if i were
 a flash of lightning bringing a loud sound of
 thunder
 can i not possibly
 create another Frankenstein

finally telling me that i can be wrong
 in giving life to the dying?

whose pleasure is it is really to die?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Handsome Man

i am a handsome face
long black hair
aquiline nose
slim body
kissable lips
sharp eyes
white teeth
smooth brown skin
lean and muscular body

i promise you nothing
i have no time
and i do not know what
love is
i am the vagabond of
this earth
a wanderer of its bosom
no one owns me
and i own no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not know what happens next. 
My heart is palpitating like the wings of a robin against the cage.   

i see you leaving wearing a new dress. Your shoes glisten 
on the floor. Your bag is silk. Your lips scarlet.   

When the last step sounded on the fifth stair I get another glimpse of you. 
I am lousy. I break the best plate in the house 
as i am trying to wash it with soap and water from the faucet.   

I am in hurry too. I do not collect broken pieces for now.   

I am wearing my new shirt, a blue tie, a leather belt. White pants. 
I comb my hair. It will be glossy too, like your shoes against the floor.   

I will close the door. I am the last one to leave. 
I have given away the dog of the house.   

There is no one barking now.   

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happening Within

there is something in us that grows
into a complication,
the sophistication of the labyrinths that
we create in every word and line,
it used to be just a simple house with
one door without walls and ceiling
a theater for the dance of the wind
and the fireflies & perhaps
one window and a little patio to appease the senses
of simplicity
dressed like a rag doll
but it can't be prevented
as time grows more hands and feet and even wings
and horns
many subways are built
secret chambers
foxholes and slaughter houses
or tea tables
restricted areas and hidden homes
and buried cemeteries
and lost treasures
that will never be found
perhaps that is our nature
and also the nature of our poetry
there is a room where we make love
and there is only one person there
name not revealed
no one has a hint
there is a kitchen where no cooking is done
for fear of smoke and fire
where firewood is taboo and where cigarette speaks
a language of puffs

like Indian warriors communicating to
themselves
in the smoke of their palms

i, myself, create signs
that are designed more to confuse
than to
make bridges

the rivers are happier
and the clouds celebrate the success of
the floating

i am into this again
this chasm between two selves
split carrot stick

that falling that is endless
that bliss that is as silent as the star at night

when you are alone
and missing no
one.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Birthday Surrounded By Percents

i may have seen the wrong
greeting posted
on your birthday today

i have not seen
the presents
or the cake
or the smile of friends
surrounding you
as you blow
the candles and make
your last wishes

correct my eyes
but i have seen
you surrounded
with percentages

%%%%%happy%%%%%
%%%%%birthday%%%%%

lots of percents, huh?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Death....

i just learned
she has leukemia and
she writes her poem
about her loss of hair

how precious these locks
of hair
but now she will be losing
them one by one

she writes so well
convincingly and
artistically,

but here in this sick hour
she is powerless to let the
fall stop.

another sad poem in the making,
and then
by acceptance, another happy ending,

my mom used to say a prayer to
God for a happy death.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Ending

i cannot always be a new broom that must sweep well your old floors

please take note of this

i cannot always be your new broom that must sweep well your garbage floors

please take note of this

time will make me an old broom and you my dirty and old floor overladen with scratch papers and pens with dried inks and litters and crumpled newspapers and torn fashion pages scattered on your rough floors,

time makes me a old, dirty broom and now, ruined and stained, we shall stay together, we now belong to each other

please take note of this happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Family Of The Past....

i am not anymore attuned
to drama
he declares, so, the
chopsticks do not appease
family affairs
that old feud which shattered
glass houses
the bickering about land
and inheritance

you ask if i remember mother
feeding the youngest daughter
and there was happiness there
about a helpless baby
and a caring mother

how chino had to wait for grandpa
to bless the food before
taking one bite of the pork chop

and grandpa keeps on calling all the
children to the dining table
it is dinner it is christmas and
everyone is having new clothes and
new toys

it is snow time in beijing and
some are still on the trains coming back home
cellphones are ringing and anticipation
is too many to count.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Landscape

waterfall on the cliff
white doves flying low
the plains grassy and
flowers blooming and

a brook runs beside
a shade of this big tree
where you and your
beloved are so close

his head resting on
your breast his hand
holding your hand as
you move your face
closer to kiss him and

his kisses you back
on the lips and you
gaze to this happy
landscape of peace
and quiet:

love fills the air,
and both of
you say the words

'i love you very much'
'i love you too....'

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Moment

inside an old restaurant
i order hot choco
and sweet rice cake

not so expensive
and we are not so hungry

but oh my
when we finally take the glances
of our faces

the glow of our eyes
burning like fire
we want to consume more
we want to be consumed the more

hungry for love we leave the place
the fires still burning in our hearts

the rain outside
can never put off what was burning inside us

love is always and shall always be
unstoppable,
unquenchable, insatiable like a burning ball of fire

in the space of our desires

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy One, Loving And Beloved.

I know what happens
after I express my liking to your creations

I can imagine how happy you can be
reading back your work and rediscovering how beautiful it can still be
tomorrow, and then again tomorrow
you can feel that there is something in there that amazes you

how did you make it? how come you have ever thought of those words?
how beautiful is the music between those syllables?

tonight you will dream of trees and birds and clouds and high mountains
you will hear the laughter of your beloved
you will even kiss and make love there

when you wake up you are filled with inspiration again
you will write more and be conscious of the beauty inside you that wants to escape

from the landscape of your mind like some butterflies and birds
and then they hover on those trees by your window and they look at you

you smile as they smile at you and then they disappear like the wind
you are now alone and then you write again

something that we will all like
because they are your dreams and they all come from you

a happy one, loving and beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Poem

a little boy free from mama's hold
to the backyard with his marbles
shooting them in the holes then
he calls his friends and hides
in the bushes where he cannot be found

to the hills he catches his dragonflies
he climbs and gathers ripe mangoes
he goes to the river with his peers
catches fish and jumps to swim

you hear him laugh and sing
till it is dark he thinks of home
his hot soup and dinner
then his mother kisses him
tells him stories and then he soundly sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Poem (2)

a baby poem grows into
a lady poem
and one day at the port
she disembarks
sees her old mother poem
and they hug so tight
and kiss and
cry
all the tears of joy
on their first meeting
after
a separation
something they cannot
explain why
all those years
fate and prose
did not meet them
until the metaphor-ships
find them in

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Poem....

something which i did
which you need not know
'twas something which made
me happy though

(some religious mien
may call it sin
but no, it felt like
aspirin)

much blood passed through
the veins of my brain
all happy memories are
then well contained

someone is always staying
in my mind
thought of love and nothing
but love to find

outside i may look sad like
a wilted raisin
but deep within this silence
am a happy shining sheen

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Reunion During The Death Of Their Mother

when mrs. rabosab died
a picture was taken together
with her surviving heirs,

i sent my condolence of flowers
and a little amount of money

the picture was posted in facebook
and they are all happy....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Room When You Come In

i like to imagine
how his face has become one
lighted room
when you come in...

it must be a bright day
amidst the storm

i must say i am happy for you
you light up his face
and keep him burning

(ha ha ha ha)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy Soul.....

i sit there
alone,

around me are the
trees
tall ones,
with hands reaching
the clouds,
streaks of light
fall on my
face

for a while it is
this silence

like a door without
a knob
always opening to
something beyond

it is great
i feel light and then

i fly away
in too much pleasure

this, my dear,
is my happy soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Happy World

the little boy inside the box
is about to get mad, and prelude to this madness,
he fabricated a nail
and a hammer, and then
he made a hole in one corner
to first see light,

the little girl outside hears the noise
opens the box and sees the little boy who is pale and still blinded
with so much light

the little girl laughs at the pale and fragile creature

you expected that they will soon like each other and play in the garden

the reverse happens, the girl hates the boy for he was never like her by all means

she closes the box, the boy has no means of breathing
and eventually dies of asphyxiation

it is a sad ending of course,
but both of them are happy in their own ways,

the state with which the boy is in, he has only one wish, and that is
to die, and the girl who does not need any company, has given it to him.

that is tragic, and that is what you really wanted.
now you are happy too.

you get what you wish.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Haven....

being is so light
lighter than burnt leaf
lifting itself
to the shoulder of air
then having felt
that gift of flying
it accepts the moment
of having to settle
back to earth
as another crafted
word of art

my being is so light
i could not think of something
lighter than air
perhaps this soul
that is so intimately
entwined
like an invisible vine
inside my wooden
body?

i feel this dropping
unto an abyss
that seems to be
a rising higher
than the sea
the sky
the limitless space
between you
and
i.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Headache

the mind is so huge
the thoughts widely embracing
the skull is embarrassing
the eyes inhospitable
ideas close and open
enclosed and
the brain begins to ache
so much for all these
and yet
least compensating

the day ends without
fruits on its hands
the night talks of dreams
no longer
receptive the eyelashes
restive upon
a line of the slit
nothing much
but silly talk
flak, plaque and
bubble

RIC S. BASTASA
A Heart Broken Into Pieces

piecing together the broken pieces
takes so much of my time
this heart is broken and the pieces
shattered pieces
are too tiny to be pieced again
i am a very impatient man
on love
on matter of the heart
i give up, i cannot piece the broken pieces again
too much pain
guess what? i have just thrown my heart away
look at me?
my eyes are calm, my body stable
pierce my skin with a needle
it does not hurt anymore
my eyes have no tears
my mouth does not tremble
my legs are tall and stable

heartless, i shall love no one this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Heavy Rain

the rain falls heavily
at six o'clock in the evening
you are stranded in an
island of the city road
you have no umbrella
your car got stuck
with the flood and your
cell phone is dead

you have no plans
you think of the past.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Heavy Sigh One Evening Under The Stars

too many people to love
and yet
too short a time......

RIC S. BASTASA
A Helpless Situation
	here is a fire in your room
the stairs are burned and the windows
have fallen to the ground
you are alone and all the while
there is only one imagination you have
in your mind
all the firemen are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hidden Note For The Fearful

what he is saying
could be this that in searching
peace
one has to offer as many lives
as possible

he lost his father

but the people are impatient
he lost his temper

he may wage war against his own
people
to obtain this peace
from the murderers
he may even disregard the sufferings
of the widows and children
and he will do this
in the name of peace

he wants to grab this chance
of a lifetime
to hold on to peace

everyday however the killings
and kidnappings and ambushes
continue

he still wants peace
he still wants to grab the tail of peace
for once in his lifetime

the people looks at him with dismay
and he has become
their own enemy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hideaway

the house of
the pigeon assures
that you are
at a certain
safe height

on the beam of
the ceiling
two sparrows
are singing

you rock yourself
on the hammock
you are chasing
sleep who is
always far away
from you

it is carrying your
bundle of dreams
slippery as an ell

the sea breeze
comes always
pregnant with
some songs from
the other island

you walk barefoot
on the floor with
cracks and you
assure yourself
this is my home.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hint To My Arrival

when i was born
in this world
someone was not
happy with
my smile

my cries during
nighttime till dawn
call the
hard liquor in the house

the drunkards come
teasing
a forlorn man

my mother is still
the most beautiful woman
in the village

rumors come like
storms
the house falls to
the ground

RIC S. BASTASA
A Holy Man

in the middle of the rice fields
a holy man stands
looks around and then
pees.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Holy Thursday

tradition finally diminishes
its stature
slowly its promise for fasting
and self-restraint
has become another
non-fulfillment

someone is crucified
for tourism purposes

there are those who roam
not for the quest of God
but for sight-seeing

this is another form of global change
people do not believe easily anymore
each stone is upturned
with another kind of question

the consciousness is higher now
as faith sits behind the scenes

RIC S. BASTASA
A Home

no matter what there is
always a place called home
at least you finally decide
to call it that way,
you have been away from
this home
for many years

those were the years of the
struggle of
what you are and what they think you are
which is the place
and this is not where
you want to die
you want to live somewhere else
though you do not really know
where
but it has always been a dream
of somewhere
a house by the river
a place where hills grown into
mountains
your hair turns white
and ankles ache and names become
haze and places become
smoky
you stop, right here, you declare
this is home
this moment when you do not
give yourself the right to choose anymore
it is here
right here
you place yourself like a backpack
and mark a spot with
your bamboo cane
and then
you claim the right to be here
your home
yourself.
A Home (After Watching Fiddler On The Roof)

people are moving out
from what they once call
their homes,
daughters wanting to go
with their new found lover
so he may not be lonely
so she can help him
in his work

on the train she tells her
father she is going home
to where her heart is,

away from those
who are once close to her

the train moves on
snow falls
and the father stares the
departing
melting into a shadow
in the air

RIC S. BASTASA
A Home (Revised)

no matter what there is
always a place called home
at least you finally decide
to call it that way,
you have been away from
this home
for many years

those were the years of the
struggle of
what you are and what they think you are
which is the place
and this is not where
you want to die
you want to live somewhere else
though you do not really know
where
but it has always been a dream
of somewhere
a house by the river
a place where hills grow into
mountains
your hair turns white
and ankles ache and names become
hazy and places become
smoky
you stop, right here, you declare
this is home
this moment when you do not
give yourself the right to choose anymore
it is here
right here
you place yourself like a backpack
and mark a spot with
your bamboo cane
and then
you claim the right to be here
your home
yourself.
A Home For Me....

i have not met someone who says that this is clean.

the majority says, it is filthy and must be thrown away.

i know others keep it, hide it inside their hearts and

lives with it like the way one accepts a disease, like the

way you take something unclean as part of your daily routine.

i have to be honest, i am one of those that keep a secret.

this secret makes my heart sing with the wind, lifts my spirit

to the sky, makes those dead in me alive again, and i hear someone

saying, ' why should something which makes me alive be so wrong? '

i travel inward, i set aside rules, i have questions for the makers

of history, i am challenging the norms, the fences of traditions,

and like a prisoner, i find solace in the darkness of the night

when the guards are asleep and dreaming, i escape.

i go beyond the borders of an old country and try the untrodden

paths of the new land, sail the one still not on the map and

arrive there without any longing of going back home.

when i land there, and see the forests, i shall name it home.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hope In Being Lost

i love being
lost

it is another
adventure
of my lifetime

to be lost
is a plan
it is a kind of
desire
like summer

it is a place
where you have
never been
you plunge
upon a darkness
upon a depth
into something
narrow
and uncertain

it is not a
kind of road that
is clean
and smooth and
unending

and free from
the mess of the
forest
and its trees

tall grasses
compete there
snake pits
are abounding
venomous bites
are impending possibilities

moss and lichens crowd upon a tree trunk
lizards and wild butterflies and frogs are cautious upon each others' preying the seconds are some kind of twist and turns of their lifetimes

deadly bees and exciting canopies create the combination of fright and frills and instant kills

being lost is an excitement i feel this despite the tension

you do not know where to find yourself there is no map yet created in this personal situation

you cannot name a place
you cannot simply
write an address
or email a
pic to someone
else
on the net

you become a new
man yourself
renewed to all these
anxieties
you may be killed
in the process
and that will be
so unfortunate
for one who has only
one life to live

it will take time
to adjust
sleeping under
the moon
the trees at
night
and listening to
all these
sounds of horror
and animal calls of
survival

you hope
and this is the
real cue

to find someone
new
like you
someone who can
give you
another exciting
beginning....
A Horde

i do not wish
to fight the
horde

neither shall
i be with
the horde

follow the horde
and be part
of the anonymous
hordes

i am staying.
i am myself.
i am free.
and i like being
left alone

says the
stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A House

rusty galvanized iron
as roof
barely a third of the space
mixed with the
nipa shillings

this is the house
by the side of the sea
with bamboo slats
as walls

the sea is not calm today
the bamboo fences are shaky
to the strong wind

i am inside a house of glass
i see all these
but i hear nothing

leaves of the jackfruit are blown
to the other side of the
fenced area

beyond this frame of mind
i cannot say anything

i am caged.
Our vision is caged.
We do not see
the whole picture
and people think that
we are wrong
that we are blind.

RIC S. BASTASA
A House Full Of Peace

no laughter from children
no conversations from visitors
a couple not on terms with each other
closed doors and windows
dusty slippers
empty thermos bottles
rusty door knobs
unused toothpaste
hard water

unfolded blankets
cold pillows

RIC S. BASTASA
A House Without Stairs

do not say
that without the stairs
the house is not a house anymore

without the ceiling
the more the house becomes to me

take the roof
if you want

or the beams
or even the floor and window frames

my house will still be a house
the sky its roof
the stretching grassy plain its floor
all the stars become
my magnificent ceiling

whatever is taken
we must imagine that all things are still there
lest we only have a house
that crashes on the floor
with all of us
dead

crushed to the death of
our imaginations

a door without an exit
because you have not seen hope coming

the lock and key
are all in the mind and heart

RIC S. BASTASA
A Human Obligation....

the enemy calls for your help
upon a self-made distress
and you want to digress
from that obligation to help all
foes and friends

you extend your hand
and say those assuring words
everything is alright
nothing is wrong
nothing shall go wrong

to the enemy though saved
he still considers you his enemy
you leave him safe
your heart weeps
you have never saved a soul
from the prison of his
inhumanity

with a sigh you move away
there is no regret you say

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hummingbird...

and so to level up
at a certain compromisable comfort
i settled for less, do not be dismayed.
between the strictness of the mind
and the unreasonableness of the heart
halfway, there is this couch
made of softest bird
feathers, pastel blue, lighter green,
shallow orange, dimmer yellow,
between their hushes and my
whispers,
i hum.

RIC S. BASTASA
sad. i must tell you it is sad
and there is a reason for me, for us, to be sad
on this sad day bringing the saddest news

you work on it a hundred days
it is read, their heads shaking, they could have told you,
you are wasting your time, you could have spent it planting
potatoes, yes potatoes in your backyard,
you emote, this is my life, these are the lines of my life,
authentic, deep, true, sincere, earthy, mundane,
and too divine, God given, Spirited, conscientiously worded
deep from the heart of me, a prayer, my innermost
my heart, my soul, chasm of pure intentions
honest,

they shake their heads of your piece of shit,
junk, scratch, crumple, into the wastebasket of your days.

a hundred years of work, in a second junked, discarded.
they're honest, you're no good salamagan salamander.

think and be quiet. Hmmmmmmmmmm...who cares?
whisper this to yourself: om om om i am good, i am good,
i am beautiful. i am great.

consolaton price. consuelo de bobo.
you're ggggggggggggggrrrrrrrrrrrreat. amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hungry And Feastive Imagination

The rest of the work here is
sedentary, boring, and if it were a piece of bread
so bland and tasteless
fit for the molds,

but there is an instance in our lives
where we see a scenery that makes our soul fly like a butterfly
soft to the wind
silent in space
fluttering in utter calmness

i grab it
and focus my attention to this moment
when by mere looking
at some particulars, colors of green, hues of red,
shades of brown

scents of flowers spreading at night
full moon
fresh wind, sea breeze
silence and that state of being complete

and then looking back at you
missing me (i may so think)
and i thinking of you again
(as loving me)

the distance cannot provide that space
of loneliness
the heart longs,
the mind fills in
through its
imagination

about us again, reunited in love,
and then feast on the gifts of lust.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hungry And Thirsty Soul

a hungry and thirsty soul

how can a body then look so beautiful?

how can you satisfy a hungry and thirsty soul?

how can it die? the body asks

how can a soul so beautiful and forgiving be

in such a dirty, emaciated and bleeding body?

how can this body conceal such a hungry and thirsty soul?

look into the pool of my soul, and find if your light

can penetrate therein without bending

RIC S. BASTASA
A Husband's Regret

she got pregnant only once
on the third month yet
they still made love on the
hard floor of the house
and the lights were on
to see their beautiful
bodies soaked with sweat
and she moaned and blood
flowed and what she got
was not an orgasm but
an abortion

she recovered in the hospital
after a papsmear
and he bought a puppy all
white to mark the beginning
of his regret
on that sad day

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hush

as i wait for you
i shall hear the wind blowing
from the sea
to the mountains

i shall hear the gentle hush
of the leaves falling

i am listening
for the coming of your steps

by the side of my door
and then with all my pleasure

i shall have it opened
because tonight i am all yours

come inside my room
and i will tell you the magic of the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
A Husky Voice

when waking up signals
the first warning of light

you must rise immediately
and ready your palm to write

what is being told to you
lest, you shall delay and

then forget and then be lost
forever on what should have

been written. Look at you now
crazy over nothing seeing upon

light that comes to you but
makes every remembering as

hazy as a cloud laden day
a river murky, a voice husky

which you cannot really figure out
the source, the meaning,

look at you. How miserable
a dog with a missing bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hypnosis Into Sleep....

the river of life
is taking me to nowhere

i have no complaint
i am using no feet of this earth
i am sailing on its waters

the river of life is raging
and raging like a bull with its long horns and smoke on its nose

i am sitting on a raft
sleepy, very very sleepy, and i hear no more the screams of mankind.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Hypothesis About Our Afterlife

The purpose of the study
Is to eliminate the weak
And the unfit.

You spend more hours now
 Burning every belief
 Checking every dogma
 Testing the hypothesis
 Whether it can withstand
 The crucible test of truth

Because truth is exacting
 You stretch everything possible
 Nights become days
 And the hours drag like
 A ball of steel

The Day of Judgment comes
 Your were measured
 And you fall short of their
 Expectations

"You are out! " that is what they say.
 You pack up your things
 You take back your wits
 You swallow that wisdom
 In defeat

You go where fate takes you.
 Now it is the wind that works for you.
 It is your feet that carries you
 Your mind your wings
 Your body your vessel

Now you have faith.
 Now there is no worry.
 Now you know the truth.
 There is no work.
Just heaven.
There is no Hell.
Just love. Just love.
It is all there is.
Nothing more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Jar's Story

from the start
the hands that shaped you
designed you to be empty
you were named
Jar,

someone so
beautiful and rich
takes you
away from your
maker

those hands
cannot hold you for long
because they are
empty and hungry
hands

and then she fills
you with perfume
and all those who attend
the parties of the
world
dip their fingers
in your scent

they crowd around you
and you are loved
not for what you are
but what you
can give

scents, scents,
all scents

you begin to miss
your original form
the beauty that you
possess
when you were
once empty

you miss the whisper
of space inside
your belly

the hush of the wind
that rests in
your heart

you forget the name
that was given to you

Jar is your name
but are not one of them
anymore

you are the scent
of their necks
hanging on their
jaws and navels

your contents
fill now their fantasies

your hollowness
they now discard

RIC S. BASTASA
A Johnny Come Lately

yes i did get what i really
wanted from this life,

to call you sweetheart, to make myself
feel being loved by you

(despite the fact
that in truth, you are never here)

to love you more that i can ever think of.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Johnny-Come-Lately

a johnny come-lately
that is what i am
to her
but what she is to me
is always an early morning sun
that i set aside
because she is always giving
me lots of love
and i am

so so
exhausted
always in the trance
of everyday
dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
A Joke

a joke makes me laugh
because of the twist that i have not anticipated

sometimes it is not that way
we may not want it but we even laugh without the twist
without the joke

we laugh because it has become too bitter
and there is no other possible option

RIC S. BASTASA
A Joke One Evening

as we dined
he cracked a joke
about crackheads
and there was
this one ugly man
who did not
like it.

he must be the one.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Journey Away From Words

trees, lakes, sea,
boats and paddles, and smoke

and shiploads of
hands,

and feet on mud,
and cows grazing on the pastureland
and dragonflies still on the blades of grass,
when you are here and wandering,
you become
detached from words,
when they become

real, when you touch them
bathe with them, live with them,
when you do not think about how to put them
together
within the four corners of your paper.

you caress your hair.
it is not a word anymore.
it is soft hair,
soft hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Journey Back To Ourselves

as i stare at the
rain
i remember
trees

transparent and
cold

trees without
leaves

i imagine
twigs

or roots or
trunks

they are never
there

no matter how
trees are tears

without leaves
without roots

with so much
salt in each

and then you
touch the waves

of the imaginary
sea and then

your journey back
to you begins
A Journey Of Honing Words And Wasps...

i hone myself, and i honing i am honed, 
like a drone like one drowning drone who wants to master the art of 
drinking water, he must have to drown himself first 
or even die, 

but that will not be the end of it, 
dying does not end, 

it gives you a start, an upstart of what lies ahead 
perhaps 
a new beginning, but let us pretend that we do not die 

we just hone and keep honing until the honing is perfected 
until we become nothing but honers of this craft of living life 
like 
crazy drones that drown themselves in the water to drink the 
whole ocean of thirst and hunger 

do not think that i want you to feel what death is and make you 
understand about it, 
i am just talking and keep on talking to myself because 

i want to hone myself into dying, because dying does not actually die itself but 
simply keeps on dying 
until it gets perfected. 

and how is it to be perfect? continue talking, i am tired and 
i am still as broken as you are. 

do you see wasps in the air? 

RIC S. BASTASA
A Journey Of Writing.....

i once wrote
about a national struggle

about this sick country
this ailing people
they say there is no more
cure
and we are all left out
like scrap
that as they move forward
to another Medellin
in that gigantic rocket of
progress
we were stuck inside the
cave of a
rock
without light and
short of water

Time wearies me somehow
i feel the waves of wrinkles
in the sea of my forehead
my voice fading like a water
ceasing the cascade of
history

until then
i become an individual with
no other concern
except my own flight
towards my own
seemingly tragic ending

i dread at first
but dread can be so familiar
in every encounter in
every life of every man

i dread no more and
set myself to that pretty surrender

like incense slowly burning
sending its perfume
filling the room with its beautiful sadness

i see finally the peace of the ash
silent on the foot of the stick

RIC S. BASTASA
A Journey Towards The Self

you may have gone to Rome
and had the shower of the holy water
to the churches of France
to the hamlets of Galilee
to the holy places of Iran
and Israel
kiss the imprint of the foot of
Abraham
taste the dried blood of Jesus
along the streets
to the mountain of the skulls

des are the last places
of your absolution
as you ask forgiveness for all your sins

but there is this journey
that you have to finally take
inward to yourself

no popes, no cardinals,
no holy water, no incense,
no alms, no offerings
no prayers no incantations

the longest journey
on that feetless world
you leap the chasm of darkness
and with closed eyes
you take the chronicles of faith
ask for undeserved mercy
and arrive at myriad doubts
and feel the perfect void
of your innate nothingness
your worthlessness

hope you will find
yourself
nearer to God's embrace
in the silent waters
of your soul

the sacred law says
you must die to yourself
for you to be alive

RIC S. BASTASA
A Joyous Morning

you walk in the garden
and you find that the
seed that you have
planted has become
a tree, and today
you can see
it is bearing so many fruits

its twigs are like
hands wearing
jewelries studied
with diamonds
glittering at night

it is not for you
as it will always be for
all of them
they shall pick those fruits and
relish the sweetest taste of life.

you smile and then
you walk away
to plant another tree.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Judge That You Must Know

He wears a black robe
To cover his burning heart
It is burning to
The fires of justice

He carries a hammer
Of wood
Not steel
Not iron
It cannot really kill
It is only for the keeping of
Peace and order
To all men
Who want to listen to
Reason
To all those who believe
That conflicts can
Be resolved
In calm dispositions

He sits on his bench
His eyes
Weighing
The evidence on
Fair scales of justice

There shall be no bias
There shall be no prejudice

After a hearing
After a patient listening
This man of proven
Competence, possessing
Integrity, probity of mind,
And independence in thought
Lets the hammer fall
Wealth may shift
Liberties may be lost
Properties forfeited
Positions lost

Litigations end
The guilty is sent to prison
The innocent is set free
Those who have less in life
Shall have more in law

Justitia nemini neganda est

Justice is to be denied to none.
And justice shall have been rendered

This is the judge that I want you to know

He carries no gun no bodyguards to
Secure his life, not much money to
Buy him his flashy car or build his mansion
No large sums in secret accounts
No free vacations to the Bahamas Islands
No free meals no free plane tickets

He is rich with justice he breathes justice
His every atom in his body embodies

Justice and the fair rules of this eternal quest

Justice
equity
compassion
understanding

& above all

Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Juggling...

emptiness like
instant time

a word by mouth
in a second

the lips receive
the comfort

like instant milk
on chili gum

sadness comes
there is a welcome

time forbids
a communion

sorrow lives beneath
the armpit

there is an itch
a discomfort but

it will not be for long
there is always a departure

you have seen her face
sadness is beautiful

loneliness creates meaning
poems come forth like

flowers opening in spring
like sunlight bursting early morning

rivers have songs
birds in circus dance
the clouds make the show
of stories

there are too many now
for the juggle

how can life be so
dry? unless you have only sands

welcome the rain
forget the sprain...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kidnap For Ransom Only In The Island Of Jolo
	hey kidnap them
International Red Cross Volunteers
for days they keep them
in hiding still figuring out
what use could their bodies be

for beheading
for international fame

tyhey say they have a noble cause
for the world to know
that they are not terrorists
but freedom fighters

and after about a month or two
of constant prayers and
daily reflection
they finally decided that these two volunteers
have no use for their cause anymore

and so now in good faith
they demand that they pay one million pesos
in cold cash

what for? for their board and lodging.
religion, logic, and humanitarian affections

they have their own noble cause you know
for the international world to really know

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kind Of Happiness

do not define it
do not defend it
do not attempt to prevent it
i comes
unexpectedly, and goes beyond plans,
no stars draw a map
to where it can be found

an evening talk, an
early frost, it comes surprisingly
even on mornings
when you take
breakfast alone, it is sexless,

it assumes a face
the moment you see it
inside your heart
or on the highway on evergreen Volkswagen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kind Of Sorrow, A Secret Suffering

to lose you i know is one kind sorrow
for i claim a loss that i never had even once owned.

a play of words, and i know you do not understand
what each word means, what a punctuation is.

this heart that grieves for what it cannot even touch
with its fragile hands, its trembling fingers
for what i see is but a glimmer
a faint light, a shadow, a hush, a slight glimpse

no one knows what secret suffering is all about
(secret so to say, i give it a language of its own)
a heart that bleeds without drops of blood
a heart injured yet without the bruises and wound

i mix with the crowd just like what we do when we go malling.
i smile like the way all people smile. i always have a glimpse of you.
yet i know, i do not wait for anybody, or anything, this is simply
an impossible endeavor. Clouds that dissipate. Air that vanish.

a door that closes. a bus that leaves. a plane turning into a dot in space.
i look up actually for nothing. i pretend sometimes that there are stars where
there are none but black clouds and tree tops.
i look down and only see suffering. Pebbles and gray sands.

i sleep without remembering my dreams. i wake up not thinking
about what to do specifically with my life. I have everything you say.
but since i do not have you, i am still nothing. I am simply arms emptied
of its embrace. I am hands groping with nothing but space.

it does not matter. i touch my chest and feel that i am strong.
i give up the gift of speech. I take in the gift of words written in utter silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kind Of Story

a red cliff stands beside
a running creek

from a distance it looks like
a hand
C-shaped trying to give
a view of spring

fluffy clouds hang there
like friends
wanting to save someone
from an impending harm

the valley presents a shadow
of a gray land
offering the promises of
a bumpy harvest

meanwhile everyone watches
how a creek dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kind Of Traveler

how evasive has fate been with me
now that i have given up what i have in mind

i have become a traveler without a destination
i have no intention of stopping somehow

all these is just a matter of intuition as
i, the passive railing, nailed, and keeps on waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kindness...

drkm hand
reach for water
bearing
a cup to fetch
for another

fates twist

the thirst
suspects
kindness

thinking about
another poison

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kingfisher On A Dead Tree

on a glass pond
a dead tree stands
perched is a kingfisher
on one of its weak twigs

i sit alone on a
rock thinking about nothing
i must have been lost
this day

blue wings and some
white feathers on the neck
black sharp beak
the kingfisher looks at me

a leaf falls on the glass pond
the eyes of the kingfisher
and my eyes ride on the ripple
like small paper boats
going nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kiss

when your lips
touch my lips
you do not
have to see
the flash
the gleam
the glitter
the shimmer
the spark in my eyes
that slides
through
my soul
i am glowing with fire
i am burning
i am burning
my heart is restless
and asking more

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kiss (1)

when i fill in the empty space
between your lips

you too breathe an air of life
into my emptiness

and then i close my eyes
and lose myself in such a beautiful darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kiss Is Planted On Your Hair

i am glad
that you are reading poems.

i hope you like the snow
now,
enjoying the blizzard
understanding the
primary reasons for
catastrophies

i hope that you savor
each word
go thoroughly to each
imagery

you travel and
do not have to spend.

there are cathartic
moments.
like a thorn is taken
slowly from your
throat or

a kiss is planted on
your hair
a hug that is so tight
that you
forget the necessity
of breathing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Kit For Survival

there is a time in your life
you feel
when no one believes you
anymore
and so
you must volunteer now
to believe in yourself
because if no one can
you must
because there is no other
more knowing and understanding
more loving
and passionate
than yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
A La Sappho

was it she who lives on an island alone whose desires

flow like a river and yet the pain persists on every

rock that blocks its rush towards the sea where

her lover on almond eyes and tissue soft

fingers await her to be subdued by the strength

of her touch and kisses that glow with sapphire fire this a la

sappho form of love woman to woman grace to grace limb to limb until

all her desires are lost
when the fire
of her womanly
form

subsides
between the
skinny arms
of her

beloved naked
facing her
with nothing
but fresh flowers
covering
her hair

RIC S. BASTASA
A Landscape In My Mind

clouds hanging on a
mountain peak with snow caps

deep blue sky
like a lake in space

on the other side
lies the wilting grasses
of the valley

twin towers on top
of a hill
like two Tibetan monks
meditating
to a very clear sky

the winds howl
from the plains
like wolves in confusion

RIC S. BASTASA
A Landscape Of A Woman Sleeping Naked In Bed

a woman faces her bed
forming a landscape of
hills and shadows
a forest of long hair
contours of the body
curves of roads
without the usual cars

RIC S. BASTASA
A Landscape Unnamed

I cannot deny that what comes through my mouth has always originated from my heart, and i am getting emotional with you, which until now you still refuse to believe, but i keep my composure in this little polite conversation,

how many times did i sigh? countless, because have not really told you directly about i really mean and want,

it is the heart, i will stab it many times, and it will bleed and i keep telling myself that i will never be destroyed,

that i must live, so i can be true again, for i have never once touched my mouth with the truth of my fingers,

oh how my heart grieved, how it has been restrained by a canopy of evasions, here and there, and finally still in this journey of not really arriving at the truth of my destination

i am tired of the parables that i have been telling you i know that you understand but we have the same dilemma

two headed dragons, four footed beasts, soft-hearted worms. eight wings, nocturnal bats with four eyes, landscape unnamed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lazy House...

Mommy's having her manicure
the fingers of the right hand hang in air
to dry the red paint on the nails
she is very sleepy
the housemaid is feeding the baby with bottled milk
her diaper is wet and stinking

Aunt is having Facebook on her notebook giggling to her chatmates'
latest gossip in town
Jinky is pregnant to an undisclosed gambler

breakfast consists of chinese noodles and fried egg
you an either have steamed rice or congee
you have to boil your own water

the floors are not mopped yet
and it is about 10 o'clock in the morning of a supposedly manic Monday
Daddy is still asleep
still on a hangover on last night's drinking spree with fellow drunkards

Outside the dogs wait beside the door
for their missing beef bones
The big gray cat sits on the
beam of the house looking at all of them
seemingly pondering but nothing
to meow meow...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf

to a non-poet a leaf is just a leaf
and when it falls
on the ground, there is nothing but a fall

but to us who claim this art
a leaf is not just a leaf
but it can be you or i
falling and when i reach the ground
you feel the heart of the leaf
beating

for its falling, its failure as a leaf,
its surrender to a certain death
its claiming a portion of this earth
to rest and be part of this
world, it rots, and it speaks some line
before it rots

a poem, a valediction on an anthill,
an eulogy of the other leaves that fell before the great falling

it can be a story of humanity written
on the lines of its face, it will have flesh
on its layers, some mouths on its seams, and it will tell too

about the tree where it comes from
how the clouds drifted so close to its stalk
how the sun kissed it on top of everything

a leaf is a world. just as a poem is.
we live inside it. Through it. Even outside it. Even in circles.

we make understanding so complicated.
yet we are so simple as you see us.
A Leaf Painting Hanging On The Wall Last Winter.....

about to become old
like my grandfather
i know how unbecoming
is it for me to write
a love poem,

you yourself do not
like it, for i may be
to daring into another
melodramatic sentimentality
which is too unlikely for
a man whose concern should
have been a place of
confinement, a site for
another solitude to think
over such an erroneous past.

yet here i am getting old
about a love which never
really realized itself-
an open line, an unfinished
business, a woman caught
open mouthed to a kiss
which should have been
planted on the lips years
ago,

you have kept her hanging
like a painted leaf on the
wall last winter.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf Song (Imitating V. A.)

the song of the
fallen leaf
remains on the
bank of the river
despite its
sojourn
in the heart of the
sea

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf Springing Forth On A Tree Thought To Be Dead

a leaf springs forth
from the side of
a tree that we
thought must
have been
dead due
to a deadly
moss

a bud comes out
from its ailing side

and the sun comes
and smiles

there is still
hope inside my heart

and then you hold
my hand and grip it

and then the days pass by
and nights come
with rain

and stars and
full moon

and then we repeat
what we keep telling to each other
in times like these

life is beautiful.
life is always beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf, A Sparrow, A Cloud, Sun And Wind

this is it
this is it now
without you
without me even

a new day
will always be here
even
without us

it does not make any bother
it does not say a word
it simply makes
itself with the others
who also make
themselves

unfolding.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf, A Twig, A Little Bird

Adam, am i,
i got this only fig
leaf to
cover my
insufficiency,
this deficiency
of the
centerfold
in me.

Adam am i,
i have this little twig,
attached to
my upper leg,

and Adam am i,
i have this little bird,
so coy like a turtle dove,
yet so fierce
and shrewd
like a fox, like a snake,
one eyed

it sees the main entrance
in that dark hole
where happiness

and pleasure
of my being
Adam of the flesh
am i
surely lies.

i throw away the fig leaf,
hold unto this twig,
and then like happiness

i fly to you like
my little shrewd bird.
catch me, if you can,
barehanded, if you will.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leaf.....A Way To Forget Yourself...

a leaf is
one universe of
veins and
guard cells and
you move in there
tracing
its labyrinths
until you are
lost and
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Leap Of Faith

at the very moment when he gave up God
he closes his eyes
he leaps from the top of the cliff
feeling the wind and the hands of the clouds
he stretches his arms
his hands groping for nothing
his feet no longer trembling
he feels the ground
he crushes with an impact
that he had never known
	here is only darkness
and then a faint light and then he feels
the arms of God finally embracing him
he opens his eyes and there he sees God
the eyes of true compassion
love eternal

RIC S. BASTASA
A Least...

when the night is darkest
because the rains are heavier
when we are packed like
sardines inside this cave
uncertain about what happens
next, fears pile, and beats of
the heart get too tense,
let us not talk about the future
set aside the past and
suspend the present, at least,
we can speak about the moon and
the stars
how the stars drink space
and how the moon wades
on the waves of time
and then perhaps we shall be
ready about the storms
that are still coming
lest one of you, once lovers
tell the love of
soft sunshine.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lemon Still.

taste me and tell me
tell me more that i am
sweet

feel my comfort
sip my sap
my juices savor
down to its
last drop

then after all these
sleep and dream

i stay awake and
hide my sourness

for i am, despite these years,
a lemon still.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lemonade

IF the new born
could have been given
the choice

it could have chosen
Me as its father

It stares and looks
confused
why it is beside you
and why you are looking
at it
as though you are
the new owner of
a calf

But taste my tongue
it is as sour as
as a newly picked
lemon
from an arid garden
in that war torn
city

What i told God
is that
I am not choosing
any

I do not like its
neck
It is too short for
my musing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Letter From A Friend

kombanwa!

Tommorow is my day off.
It's not a busy time now at the office.
So I take one day off a week.
Our busy times are in May, August, and year end.

You know, we used to be superbusy a couple of years ago.
My boss is a workaholic.
He has no other life but his company.
My officemates frequently worked overtime.
I could get away from it because of my children.
Then, maybe, because of overwork, he almost dropped dead!
Since then, medyo nagaan ang among load.

I hope she is feeling better now.
Medicine/Science has progressed a lot these days,
and age is really no longer a big obstacle now to childbearing.
I have a cousin in Australia.
Late pod sila nakaanak.
The problem was with the husband.
Blocked ang tube for sperm cells.
He had laser surgery, after which, nagkababy sila.

So, don't give up hope (nozomi).

I've been reading your poems.
Whether you call them your lies, empathies, whatever, they all boil down to life's truths.
Life is poetry for you, that's why,
you'll never run out of ideas to write about as long as you live.
I don't understand all of them though - maybe due to lack of empathy on my part or my brain is simply dulled!

You also write beautiful visayan poems!
They made me miss my father - he can be very poetic.
He used to criticize me and my mother that we couldn't speak good Cebuano.
My mother was Chavacana, and
I actually spoke that language first before Cebuano.

You lately write about war,
young men dying in conflicts these days.
Is peace and order getting worse there?
Are there more of summary killings these days?

You wrote about Silliman/ Dumaguete.
A beautiful place. I studied there one year and I loved it there.
You know, I had a bit of colonial mentality,
and to me at that time it felt like
I had a taste of a bit of American life -
rodeos,
square dancing..
I enjoyed watching stage plays and
cultural shows there.
So I had a school culture shock when
I transferred to UP Los Banos.
There were lots of school demos
and there wasn't much art in their stage plays.
They were more concerned about getting the message across:

'Down with Marcos! ',
'Down with imperialism! '

Goodness, I didn't even truly understand 'imperialism' then.
After some time, I learned to appreciate
the liberal atmosphere there.

I liked 'The songs of the geisha'.
Made me think of the Japayukis here,
rather than the Japanese geisha.

After seeing the cherry blossoms here,
I don't think I can ever associate it
with autumn anymore,
even in the poetic sense

('Cherry blossoms fading and falling') .

It blooms in spring and
the peak of its beauty is only
a couple of days or so.
The petals don't fade
and fall.
They fall while still at the peak of their beauty.
They look beautiful even when they've fallen on the ground,
looking like snow from a distance.
They symbolize glorious death at the peak
of their beauty
youth.
That's why the sakura also
symbolizes the kamikaze pilots -
most of them were so young!

I backed track to some of your old poems
and I found that of Kazu!
Thank you, that was nice!
I'll show it to him.

Can't say much about my love being stronger than his. I
'm very far from being an ideal wife.
And no, his origins are not samurai.
He traced it some lowly Korean blacksmiths.
Centuries ago, Korea was more advanced
than Japan, and
Japan invited Korean craftsmen
to learn from them.
Funny thing is that his father is a fierce nationalist
(he was trained to be a kamikaze pilot),
and he looks down on Koreans!
He won't even try and eat any Korean food!

So long for now. Please give my regards to her.
Again, I'm not expecting your response.
I'll just be reading your poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello (to whom it may concern),

It's been awhile since we exchanged messages. Sorry, I'm not much of an 'onliner' these days. I resigned from my job. I'm, in the process of soul searching. Funny but I don't really know why I'm looking for a soul, my soul, when I cannot even see it. I'm on an unplanned vacation in some quaint town some miles outside the city while writing this email.

I guess I never had the chance to tell you how you took the glint from my eye. To write from the soul and not for the awards. I have overlook that writing is an Art. Thus it is priceless. A gold medal does not define you as an artist. Write until it ceases to become a more than just stringing words after words, conscious of your weary grammar, punctuations, right words, and subject matter. To write is to turn your heart inside out.

Beyond 'writing' and its technical definitions, it is actually a journey - a self surrender - towards the oblivion you are willing to traverse with your pen. And you find yourself in another state.

To write is to 'see' but not with your eyes. To 'feel' but not with your hands. And at the end of it all, you know that it's there. Writing takes over you. Thus, I often wonder: am i writing with the pen? Or is it the pen using me to write? But I know somewhere deep inside, there is a thing mightier than the pen that prompts me to write. And that is the soul.

I want to find my center. My creative process in writing. Ironic, but to find it, I must lose myself.

hahahahaha. whew. I know i sound stupid. Sorry. Thanks for bearing with me. Hope it's not too late to greet you a Happy New Year! ! ! ! =)

Always,
(name withheld, but this could be you)
It is time for us to leave San Diego 
and head back to Portland 
starting on Valentines Day.

I hear it has been snowing in Portland, 
I guess that rules out outdoor yoga classes. 
That doesn’t sound good compared 
to San Diego where it is usually sunny 
and the activities included yoga, 
aerobics, tennis, biking to shop, 
kayaking, and fish tacos.

We have a great spot here 
at Campland with a water view out front. 
It is much nicer 
than last year because 
no one is occupying 
the spots on either side of us.

We brought nicer bikes 
with big baskets and racks for groceries. 
The motor home only moved 
once since we arrived 
and all our activities 
have been via bike or kayak.

When we first arrived 
I hooked two ten foot sewage hoses 
together and the connection failed.

We had sewage everywhere. 
We called the hazmat team 
but by the time 
they got here the ducks had eaten 
what Ray and I didn’t clean up 
with newspapers.

The ducks are everywhere 
and I find it annoying stepping
around duck poop.

Ray likes their personality
but I only see the poop..

Vancouver Bob came to visit us.
We had fun searching
Pacific Beach for a house
he lived in fifty years ago.

He brought the rain with him
and we realized the motor home
gets smaller in bad weather
and with each person.
Overall it has been
the best weather
I’ve ever seen in San Diego.

Ray enjoyed golfing with Bob Perry
two or three times each week.
His other golf buddy,
Malcolm died last year.

Foxy is quite the character on drugs.
She thinks she’s super dog jumping in
and out of the motor home.
Her legs fail
so we lift her now against her will.
She loves sunrise
and sunset walks on the beach
as well as begging for drugs.

Sorry this letter is so boring,
but such is life.

Hope you all have a great valentines day.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Letter To The People You Love.....

in the deep of the woods  
you take rain checks with you

and a basket, not too big,  
for you to gather words,

you bring with you an empty  
cloth, a canvass,

and a spinning jenny, some  
cotton, and a song

or simply a whistle, or  
a whisper to the mists

and there you weave your  
own tapestry of words

and memories and whatever  
and then you write that letter.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lie To Lie

you whisper a lie

to a friend

and instructs him
to keep it

as a secret and

the same

procedure is repeated

from ear to

ear

from mouth to mouth

from cell phone
to cell phone

and wait

till tomorrow morning

the lie knocks

at your door and

it introduces

its name to you

and its

background

how it came into

being

you are amazed

and you shake

its hand

and hug it

and you give it

a new name

the truth

they all believe

in

without doubt

now mind you

why do you complain

that you are maligned?
there is this subsumed
self that is reserved for a misinterpretation

that which must be tolerated
otherwise the personality breaks into pieces

multi-sided, and can be dangerous
what it needs is just a little time

perhaps a minute for it to exist
the rest must cooperate because

though minute, it can destroy the eye
give it time, give it what it deserves

then go back to the strong self that
you introduce and keep

the days have many hours
like a merry-go-round take a cycle

life is always a compromise
for without it, the ward opens.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Life Of Self-Restraint

RESTRAINT becomes a wall between us, and i have kept myself behind this thick wall,
always loving you, but always denying it,
i cease to be a dropp of water, neither moss,
every layer of my days covers this softness making
another rock, and i am fortified into another roadblock
to my dreams, it is here that indifference hardens
into a fortress of dignity, which the ocean even has not fathomed
this is it, this is it, denial, restraint, punishment, redemption
you drive me into a destiny you look straight as i look at you
passionately.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Life Span

it will live only
for one day
yet no one talks
about it

dey accept it
as a fact
no one cries
no one says something

except for the child
playing in the garden

wanting to chase it
to hold it in his fingers

so fragile
so soundless

to his mind
this thing is so beautiful!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Life That Is Exciting

let life be
a way of meeting new friends
guests that come
to your party
those with no names
people who are strangers
coming to your home
befriending your dogs
asking about the names of
your garden flowers
gazing to your world
their mouths gaping
on the wonders
of your world
in the same manner
that you too
enter their worlds
with amazement
let the days come without
marked appointments
blank calendars
brand new days
let life be
a celebration

RIC S. BASTASA
A Life That Is Full

your palms open
your heart
some more
desire drips like
drops of
melting vanilla
ice cream

simply joys
like buds
pleasures like
palms spreading
leaves like
umbrellas under
the sun

merry, merry
dancing feet
hands holding
side by side
alleluia!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lift

you lift me up
you are air and i am a wilted blade of grass
cut from the the manicured lawn
i felt i was thrown
and there you are
the morning wind
just passing by
you lift me up to be carried by your transparent wings
i am as light as your feathers
learning the art of drifting
going places taking silences
always arriving always departing
you lift me up
you give me the meaning of my existence
i am dressed with air and i am going anywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
A Light Bulb To Light Our Dark World That I Wish
Painted In Red And Black

yes, a light bulb to light our world
these dark worlds
outside and inside us
yes, a light bulb, a single light bulb
to brighten these dark worlds
inside and outside us

it is only the Great God
who can switch it on
who can switch it right.
and so, okay, okay, let there be light
from this single bulb
of my innocence

Let there be light forevermore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lttle Note On The Window Of The World

the vain heavens
mirror
on the pond
that early morning
as the boat slowly
traverses
the water
as i keep myself
still
my eyes focused
on the next port
of my
destination

RIC S. BASTASA
A Litany

recall the years
what do you remember? those baggy pants of college years
and leather belts tight around your waist

a grassy soccer field
some husky men playing their games

a bench where five women are sitting
each hand with ice cream melting on each cone

the corridor where she waits for you
and the corner where you evade her gaze

the stairs leading you to the fourth floor
and the silent people who dwell there

the harsh microphone on the first year
welcoming you from that far mountain

a room filled with books and notes
a lampshade that blinks without end

a coconut bed with bugs that bite him
as he sleeps soundly without minding

some empty rooms on the left wing
teeth are gnashing there and your silence
tiptoeing feet of drunken roomates
hiding the empty bottles under their beds

it is a litany of images of the past
like some fireflies at night i shall let them go

i close this jar and there is nothing inside it
nothing to entice at all but just to remember

and then forget and then i move on
my feet with its new shoes are always ready to go
A Little Advice From An Unknown Philosopher

in fear seek the wisdom of the whistle hum
in confusion keep the pillow
have a little warmth in the coldness of our minds
in doubt be a pillar keep that strength of your still silence
in joy sing like the waves of the sea in adversity keep the faith of the sands
in love be like a storm rage, rage in the ecstasy of your dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Anchor, After Silence Fills Me Up....

the whole morning
i was listening

there is no need
to talk until silence

fills me, and i feel
so light, and i

float and i need an
anchor, yes, it is

our talk, that anchors
me back to the

ports of myself,
to the pillars of my

home, to the familiarity
of life, taking once

again, a little meaning,
a crash definition.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Argument About What We Have Been Doing

these are just notes
of a journey

eye are like stones that i
put upon
a boundary

sands that i spread
sometimes
over my body under the sun

tese are just markings
of a page

but when you follow each note
each stone
each sand
and which could be so agonizing
and tiresome

then you will begin to see
what others have not yet seen

we shall call these not notes
or marking anymore

who knows, these are all
tee lives
we all once had

and as they all tell you
tere is no going back

because there is no end

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Bird

da little brown bird
walks on the ground
hops like a kangaroo
unable to fly

it fell from the tree
from a nest
on wings still not fit
for flying

i try to pick it up
and i hear a bird chirping
watching

oh, a mother
perhaps...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Bit Uncomfortable

honestly, it felt like
i was a little bit
uncomfortable but
you know too well
where i have to
go and what i have
to do to do it well
and smartly
i finished just in
time a minute
before you
and you lay there
asleep
in the heavens of
your dreams
as i cover myself
on this nakedness
the first time
i really like to say
thank you
but i didn't but you
know how thankful
i was when you
first made me
feel that i am
what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Boy Paddling His Boat In The River

who had seen the little child paddling a boat
along this old river?
he drifted silently along the river weeds,
picking white lotuses along the way
the water hides his tracks
as duckweed opens him another path.

i was that boy, now, wanting to go back
in that old river.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Comment About Greatness

all she did was
write about a leaf, or a bird perching
one rainy day upon a grain
of wheat,
voila! she is great
just like the way Picasso uses only two lines
to draw a breast of a feeding woman
how foolish can you be!
searching for the golden ant with silver wings
trying to please them
with it
all toil,
suffering yourself like
a Sisyphus,
you are still nothing but a
trying hard, copycat
forget about it,
junk them
discover the great self within you
believe me, Shakespeare was
a slave of his audience
and the king....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Difference

day is
change
little difference
in the morning
in this town
when the bell
tolls
after the flood
the people
begins
to pray again
a new life
perhaps
or fear
that God may
send
another flood
again

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a little pain
that goes on and on
and on,

a prick at the finger
tip, a pressure on the
toe, something steps
at you,

an idea

a discomfort of your
mind,
you write it

it rebels

the description is
short of what it
really is

and this is always
everyday

at dawn you wake
up

some luminous
letters are dancing
above your
head

glowing like

fireflies
tumbling and
whirling and

staring

at times

you write about it
again

but they melt
like your
dreams

on the floor

there is nothing
left

some dusts you
breathe
from the
dark carpet

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Discourse On This Journey With Me

i carry no light
i am crawling in this tunnel of dimness
bats hang on the ceiling of
wet stones
they do not sing
they're too preoccupied with their
silence
nothing about stares or
glances,
i carry with me the burden
of loneliness
morbid so they say
i have nothing to give except the truth
of the malady of
our chopped existences
sometimes i speak to the glowing
worm
i am not crazy though to expect
any logical
or sound response
this is the truth of our
living life
in the folds of indifference
i wonder though
why are you following me?

do you find joy in my shadows?
i look at my back
in truth there is none

so many are following
and now i know why
i know what it is

you nod.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Disturbed

at 2: 01 in the morning
you switch on the light
a little bit dim
not to hurt your eyes
and you get out of bed
naked

you open the door
towards the kitchen
and get a glass of water

you drink
you want to satisfy thirst
wetting your tongue
and gargling the coldness
swallowing it gently
feeling this creeping
coldness to your
throat down
to your abdomen

something is burning
inside
and the water is
not killing it

you sit and think
a while and stare
at the light

there is nothing there
except the glare

now you wonder
sleep is still nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Doubt Can Be Helpful Too....

sometimes it is better
halfway

a door half-open is
perfect for our endless
possibilities

a half-hearted love can
only hurt that half

loving that full can be
so threatening

mama had always been too
wise not to put all those

chicken eggs in one basket
which papa did and for which

he utterly failed. The world
had always been safer

with its islands and scattered
seas. You cannot have it all

and so you cannot also lose all.
A hand hall closed. A little doubt.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Gift From A Sunday Morning

it rained last night
the earth is moist and the garden
is misty

under the old mango tree
lies a soul relaxed upon its free flowing ponder

some birds too perch upon a branch
and merrily sing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Humility

boxed in a system
a bee has forgotten to fly

it tries to do it again
but its wings have become sturdy

like the barks of a tree
its feet have forgotten the shape of a rudder

the radar has become strange to
its system

stuffed inside this box
this system the bee has nothing
to be.
just a showcase of what flight could have been.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Imagination Before Sleeping To Bed

up my bed
last night beside my lampshade
i see a moon with a mouthful of stars giving up all its light for a magical evening inside my room

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Imagination Of Where I Am Heading

as i walk at dawn on the night streets
of your big city, i meet you, too, walking alone
like myself on the narrow alley
in the dark where the lights are not
functioning. Just blinking. On and off.
i see you walking towards me.
you stop a while. i have no fear.
for like you i am accustomed to
walking these same streets
even before you. you stop, as though
you have something to say. But i move
a little step farther. Not stopping.
i see the wind blowing your hair.
it is hinting that we talk a while.
but that cannot be. You are heading
north. i am heading south. You turn
towards the Left and I made my
abrupt turn to the Right.
You regain the strength to walk
a little faster. You dissolve in the
dark, i move on towards an island of
light. I am walking faster too. As though
my loved ones are waiting
back to my home in the
jagged slums.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Kind Of Depression....

you turn on the light
at your headboard
it serves as your little moon
you stand to get a glass of water
in that mini-fridge
it serves as your brook
to cool your throat
that path to your heart
you go back to bed
take a glance at your watch
it is 7: 30 in the morning
you prolong the night
you need sleep because you are
not yet through with your much
need dreams
you close your eyes
you shut yourself away from a
beautiful morning
that the world outside your room
is freshly giving.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Learning As Time Goes By...

someday you will realize
there is no use of a name
influences fade like rust eating you inside your bones
there are parasites
residing inside your skin
someday you will know
how they survived all these
and then you begin to hate them
then yourself

there is this interlude of despair
the regret of having been born

between us the sea
the sound of the waves
monotonous all day
amidst us is this silence
of the shells
the smooth flow of the sand
that starts
comforting our chaos
deep within our
ears

someday you will learn to blend
with whatever color
and you will no longer search
what you are
and where you are

you are simply here and there
without a fixed point
you are boat designed with no anchor
fearing no ports
neither measureless oceans

someday you realize
that the only reason why we are here is that
we are moving
this departure that knows so well
where hello begins...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Mathematics Of Life

we sum up our little lives
less the disagreements
we stick to each other
despite the odds
only then do we really make
a difference...

RIC S. BASTASA
i went in
watched how black has turned into grey and
how grey changes from one shade to another
believe me
it was erotic and sadistic
the woman says
she has experienced so much pleasure
at the end however
she leaves, totally hurt and changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Note For Syria....

we are one with the world
in its peace and chaos
what is happening there
too, is our concern,
the wars they make
the pains they caused
the people they have driven away
the children killed
the buildings crumbled
the dusts and the silence of
the city
the death of civilization
the leaders we have chosen
we are one with the world
in its peace and chaos
we are victims too of this
illusion
governance and civilization

RIC S. BASTASA
you should have known that this poem is written
because the loading of the surfed murder cases sometimes takes that long
enough
as though i am waiting for a date that has no hope
to come
as though i am waiting for the final fading of
a beautiful sunset

makes me impatient at time but this is the matrix
of my being
i am here and will always do what is
tasked
what is written

that categorical imperative still works
in my system
despite all my failures and
series of disappointments

and so here i am
composing these line, there are no images,
no seagulls,
nothing about the stars and moon,
you hear nothing about the flow of rivers
or the surging sounds of the swarming bees
whose cells are recently smoked and
finally burned

these seems to nothing that must mean
nothing as significant as a plane crash with 105 passengers all dead
to include a baby

without much meaning really and
nothing serious as sudden deaths as cars slamming a rock
and then fall from a high cliff
and then
explode like the hell that bad and violent movies
always feature
and if you only know,
these are what they always love to watch
and tell on one of their office breaks
when the pressure rises up.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Note Of Her Life

she is my wife
she is not a little note of my life
she is occupying the full page
of my ads

for one thing
she keeps cutting all the leaves of the palms in my garden
and it is getting hot in here

when some of the bushes begins to flower
she cuts them all again
leaving my garden empty
except for the bleeding twigs of the tree
leaving the little life of others in misery

she is my wife
when she dies she will still be my wife
that little note of my life
my garden shall be full of flowers
my bushes shall bear more
and all the leaves of the palms in my garden
shall be green till the end of their spans

opps don't take this against me
she is my wife
and she will always be my wife
a little note of my life

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Note To My Wife

success creates
the noise
but it was silence
which made it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Note To The Papaya Tree

the papaya
tree had long been silent
to its suffering

somehow you see the
tears on the smoothness
of its fruit

the scars left every
shedding of its leaves

the emptiness kept
inside the hollowness of
its trunk

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Paradox Spoken Tonight Aroused By Extreme Pressure

the gods of the little nook
universe
has cursed me
not to be happy and not to be able
to say
what i really want in order to live fully.
i know my hands
i know the significance of each line in my palm
but the words are like forceps
that are pulling my nerves

the pains are indescribable
but it only my silence that is the clue
to my redemption

i am put in a box
where i am fed some trickles of light from leaks
like pores
of my skin

i know what to say but when i say the first word
the box starts to tremble
it is forbidden

i tried it once and some of my roots were cut
fate is treating me like a tree without leaves

out there in the fields
i see images that please me
shadows of love and bliss and
immeasurable joy

i am sure if i touch one of those
my back shall grow its wings

i have never done the things i did in dreams
i am powerless as an ant whose legs are cut
i boast to those who follow me
that i am a black bird with shiny feathers and that i have flown
both edges of the world
that i am bringing with me
all songs of happiness

they have never seen my heart
they only heard how it sings so well
i am glad

sometimes i wish that i have a mastery of who i really am
i am free i am chained.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Patience, More Time

soon, they will stop laughing,
continue the molting
be like the snake
always have rebirths

soon this will be over,
this beating and kicking
and spitting

a little time, eat the silence
then bite.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Philosophy
	hey think
less is better

to cut this part
is to
commit the whole
of me

trim the bushes
flowers soon
shall bloom on this
part of
a branch or twig

undress
cover only what is

ugly

what is
not art
we hide.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Reflection

early this morning just
when the sun is rising
i sit on a reclining chair
in the garden

i see the sun rising
and its rays reaching
my skin

warm as a caressing
hand of my beloved

i close my eyes
and see the calm
inside my heart

how beautiful
how warm

i sit under the sun
and hear a bird singing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Reflection This Morning

touching a soul is always a personal matter
the travel inward is always mine
when Jesus touches me it was him alone and mine alone
no one feels for anybody
no one feels for everybody

my truths are personal and so are yours
relating on the I-Thou, we thrive
no one preaches no one listens

to the eye of the needle we ride our own camels.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Remembering

from the old trunk at the cellar
he finds again
her old letter
telling him where to meet
her

the time and the
lovely mood for that day
all contained on a scented paper

the words written
on blue pen

the strokes well
made like
the tendrils of
the honeysuckle
that blooms so well
during summer

he did not go
and it was the last time
that she ever saw
him.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Request To The Magician Who Pleased Me For A While

dear magician
i thank you for your tricks
indeed your hands
are skilled and my eyes
are failing me
i am amazed by the rabbit
popping out from your
black hat
the roses blooming
from your palms
the staff that turned
to rope
the newspaper cutting
becoming peso bills
but with due respect
may i ask you to perform
the last magic for the day
and hope that this may
not be a form of request
that may cause you
sorrow
for parting is such
between us

please make yourself
disappear.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Rest Away From Work At Noonlife

as you go out your way
for the meantime away from
books and piles of paper on the working table
you leave your mind blank gazing through the door
as you stand to see the trees well lighted by the sun at noon
when silence comes as people go into hiding again
in their nooks refilling their stomachs with food
their souls with nothing for who in these hard
times at noon when heat is fierce
can think of the coolness
of saints and God

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Story

once i like the rage of love,
was a rock, and it rained.

once i got entangled into
the unthinkable lust
only felt, only felt
the lovely filth,
not the gentleness of
soft winds on my hair
the slow eternity of touch

oh, it arrives at the meaninglessness
of motorcycle motions arriving
at places where no one meets me
as a friend, but as a tool
with meaning attached only
to utility

one feels like a junk,
a broken tire, flat on the road
lacking air

everything stops, and you wait
and there is no one there

it is dark and the road is empty
and the mountainside is full of fog
and the wind howls like hungry dogs
looking for the prey...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Sunshine

a grain of rice
on a table cloth
beside
a cup of hot
coffee

imperceptible
but when a connection is found
soon
the spoon and fork
shall understand

some pieces
no matter what
do not fit
on a reasonable landscape

what is the grain of rice
doing on a breakfast table?

your mind is furious
i think it is cool

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Talk

while the examination in civil law
was going on
i went out the room tired of my role
as inspector
and there i saw the two of you
talking under a tree
with leaves lush like the curly hair
of a healthy boy

we were talking about irrelevance
priesthood and perhaps marriage

the vagabond images of things
fleeting and fleeing from our grasps
like birds seeking warmer places
in the East as winter approaches

then there was silence
perhaps we were having second thoughts
about the words we let go off our mouths
perhaps we do not believe really what was in our minds

regrets, these feelings that waste us
things-ought-to-be-this and that

silently the hours sat with us
groping for a hold about why
and then the leaves fell because the wind blew
and then we saw the moon
exuding light

upon us the truths had long left
and we find ourselves grappling with the fake delicacy of our lies.

we wanted to understand and be so discriminating
we ought to be and yet we never did
and something so misunderstood kept beating around the bush

we chose not to
because we really cannot.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Talk With A Silly Friend

someone is so unimportant
and so you devote a tinge of time
a splash of a gaze
not making any noise
you make some nods
to acknowledge her
your hands are uneasy
grasping for something to touch
inside your pocket
your feet are wary
there is no way that waiting is significant
there is nothing in here
except a silly talk
your mind has wings and claws
you hover for a while
and then leave
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Thought Of You

sometimes i think
i can love again
how i wish
to have that spark
of this engine
this machinery of
eternity
this love that must
make me
travel more into
ecstasy

sometimes i give up
love and even hope

until you come into the
domains of my life
until i break all my walls
until i shatter like
a great wall
until the moon begins
to speak to me
until the grass has become
green again
and then the rivers flow again
filling the bed
with its abundant water

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Treatise On Writing

if your problem is about what to write
or how to write

if you still have the wish to be one good damn
writer
aiming for awards imagining
the night that is set for your
recognition
on center stage adorned by their loud applause
and standing ovations

i understand
you are young, full of hope,
you are dressed with ambition
your eyes are two suns
your eyelashes
sleeping willows dancing with the chinese
if not american winds

if your problem is how to begin
then you are lucky enough to be another beginner

i am different
i have turned sour
and bitter
i have become all that you do not wish
to be with

my problem is how to stop writing
i am being grabbed by words
i am being snatched by ideas who have become monsters
to my existence
on my head hangs the little devils
biting my scalp
pulling my hair
commanding me to write every word
hastily

when i was young i have mistaken them as
cherubims

i have become a slave of all these letters
they whip me as they ride upon their horses
my wish is to stop
but i just can't
my wish is to die
but i just can't
it is not that smooth and easy
to insult myself with
a stab or a shot
or drown myself
with that kind of stuff

shit on my hair
rocks in my heart
gnats on my bottom
worms in my skin
scars on my bones
bats in my eyes
leeches all over my body

what do you see now?

i am skin and bones
my cheeks shrink to my gums
my teeth are falling
i am humiliated by my previous
ambitions
i am turning into dust

i am different
i am addicted to this stuff
and i cannot stop
like

a train moving on unknown tracks
without brakes
a plane flying in unknown skies
with the knowledge that its fuels
are diminishing yet
with nowhere to land
forgetting what a perfect touchdown
could have
sounded
to the ears of the
world

young as you are
be happy that you are trying to begin
that you are trying to think
about what to write and when to start

you are choosing beans from their pods
diamond from sand
gold from mud
you are making bread from ordinary flours

you shall drink the potion of time
and it shall poison you

do not be like us
do not be like me

because we have known our beginnings
it does not mean that we know where our destinations shall be

we have regrets having taken that beginning

i shall not talk about them
those ahead of me who to some horrible extent have taken their lives
by their own hands
blood spilling down to their bellies kissing the soles of their feet

writing is a personal thing
a matter that is kept a secret until the right moment comes

i shall talk about myself
i am getting old, i am weary
if you know my one and only wish
you should not have started writing.

i know what you shall say
ah, i can anticipate that
I've been there. I am not crazy. I assure you, I've been, and shall always be real
like the sun of your youth, oh like the moon of your dreams, oh like your usual stars of your ambitions
like all your cliches, your redundancies, your misspelled words, your wrong choice of periods and commas, your doubts about the next line your way of screening your thoughts like sieves and sifts hoping that THEY may finally like you....

and your hopes that something in this world is not really that bad and empty and unkind

AFTER ALL.....it is now your turn. i wish all your best. regards to compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Valentine's Treat For Her

we overslept
it is 7: 30 am
and she is still
asleep

tired of last night's
activity, a chain
of conversations
but mostly about
nothing at all,

i go to the kitchen
to have my coffee
and then put it aside

got to scramble two eggs
put the sandwich in the oven
another mug on the table
two plates
a knife and fork

a leaf of lettuce
fried chicken breast from
jolibee

when she wakes up
breakfast is ready.

then i tell her
it is a lovely day.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Little Wonder

the place just below the wind
trees undisturbed for so many generations
a pool from the eye of the deer
pine trees lining on the eyelids of the day
you are not around
and that is the time when i begin
to discover these things
solitude is the path that i have to tread now
wondering
where shall this silence take me

RIC S. BASTASA
A Locator, Father And Son

The way this little brown boy places
Himself under a noonday sun

Is aesthetic, in such a way
That his black hat shadows

His eyes like he is batman
And his father so fond of

Him feels so happy like
He is his buddy robin.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lofty Undertaking....

Friday morning
the mists have not left yet
the nipa groves

let us go to the sea
and soak our bodies with its salt

there is no wrong which we have to
talk about

my head at the surface
my body immersed

the crystal clear water
shows the colors of its fish

the coral simmer in refraction
the ripples show a journey

here we do not talk
we are like pilgrims immersed in the

temple of our dreams
how to love life i ask

the sea is speechless
the sun slowly rises....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lonely Bird On The Electric Wire

this afternoon i take a walk leading to the farm
it is harvest time
and i see the harvesters cutting the rice stalks filled with golden grains
they would group what they gather at a certain place
mounds and mounds of rice grains this time of a bumper year

on the other side are carabaos grazing
lots of grass to graze adding the recently cut rice stalks

i look at the clouds white and blue and shades of both
my attention is however caught by a single bird perched on the electrical wire
connecting two poles about 30 meters apart

it is alone there
and i move closely to see whether it is really a bird

indeed it is one of the sparrows in the ricefield
but so unlike the rest it
it is sitting there alone.

our eyes met.

and i tell my wife about this lonely bird.

she says i am just making a metaphor

i sit alone in my garden now after dining

and i wonder if the bird flew back to its nest or to some territory of its own
where their species also live
and i wonder if the bird must be also telling the other birds that it saw
a man walking alone on that path leading to the farm
and unlike other men he prefers to walk alone
and i also think that perhaps the bird would also take issue about the fact that
indeed

our eyes met
and i know the other birds would say
that it is nothing but also a sort of metaphor and to the least that
it is nothing but a kind of fable.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lonely Child

Carlo Betocci's child
sits on a table and looks at the world
outside through a glass window

the view is too beautiful not to be touched
the high distant mountains
garnished by bluish clouds
and fingers of the sun
cressing the grassy plains

too far and yet too beautiful
the child couldn't help but caress the
glass window with his palms

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lonely Reminder...

because i am a seed
i sprout
i make the bud
and then
i flower facing the sun
i grow and
i reach the apex
of time and i
know what follows
next is
the wilting of
my flowers
the rotting of
my roots
until i am gone
i know
i shall be back again
into nothing

the seed in me comes
again
i know

i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lonely Woman

she sings her songs
in the desert
time and again
those that hear her
under the moon
remember oasis
bridges and rivers
and seagulls and
date palms
wild birds in the safari
tigers and lions
with cubs
and forests never
before imagines

such a sad woman
wanting to free her people
from the loneliness
of the dunes
the cruelty of the sun at
noon

RIC S. BASTASA
A Long Long Time Ago

a long long time ago
i agree with you
is a long long time ago
things perish
and those fragile like porcelain
shatter into negligible pieces
and on the ground
everything may cover and conceal
like the grass
or the dust or even a heap of leaves
and i
on this day of our meeting may also pretend
that those of the past
are of the past
and shall no more arise and be ghosts that shall haunt me
but no, you are face to face with me and we do not mention the word about it
yet the lines of our thoughts show
on the eyebrows
and they speak about the pain
the broken piece
staying like a thorn, a fish bone,
it is still refusing to leave
and you are scratching it wanting for cure

RIC S. BASTASA
A Long Poem After A Tryst...

in my island
somewhere in
Kota Kinabalu
lies my
heart

if you go there
take the
backdoor
do not bring any
papers
hide your name
lest there will
be utter
shame

if you find me
there
prepare for the curse
it may find you

to lose this curse
wear a mask of a
decent woman trader

use another common
name
just be an ordinary
lover
or concubine

take the kitchen door
do not
take the entrance gate
do not step on the
garden
avoid the garage
the light at the kitchen
is constantly open
like anything ready
for another forgiving
do not mind it
do not attempt to switch
it off
someone may die

take the secret passage
direct to my room
it is never locked

it is not so well lighted
it smells like
a salad of chili and
mint
do not be tempted by
it

come to me
kiss me at the back of my
body
at the side of my ear
let the kiss drop there
let it run
and be fragile like
a new born
butterfly
let it crawl
towards my spine
do not stop
it

let this ecstasy of
hidden outbursts of
island joys
run
to the tips of my
toe
so that i can be another
running river
towards the
stormy sea....

do not attempt to use
words
for they are not necessary
at least at this time
of losing
my sanity

do not utter my name
since you have no power over
me
i do not have to know you
in this darkness of our
hours

after this love
this fire this smoke and
haze

(if we want to see it that way)

take what i have
for you
then leave me
on your tiptoes bringing
with you
your coverings and
pair of shoes

you have not seen my face
and you cannot say anything about
this

this agony of secret joys
this secret of our pains and longings

still hidden from the scandals of
your civilization
from the books of
love and lust

it will just be another
poem that you cannot understand
but you must have felt it
like the sound of a closing door
or the last page of a book

like something that you can easily throw away
dismiss like a story
the way you
shrug off your shoulders
and then walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Long Time Ago

we were children splashing water
on the river
our dialogues are nothing but laughter
we put no blame
on anybody

the wind our allies and the sun our god
the moon our mother
the caves our secret homes
the sea our ancestors
the land our father

that was long time ago
now we have different names
and we made them our enemies

we shall miss those times
we sit here gritting our teeth
we sit here
on such loud noise
we wait for the promised destruction.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Long, Straight Line

it is a boring long, straight line
you walk upon it like you are an emoticon
changing the faces of a circle
finding a way to find your true self

you wish a blackout so the computer turns itself off.
a blur happens.
everything ends.

it is still a boring long, straight line in your mind.
because you will it to be.
try sitting down, settle like a little bird perched on a twig
on a sunny day

just watch what happens next.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Longer Poem For A Class Reunion

the latest picture we had
at the beach
in the afternoon of December 30

we have all changed
into old people sort of saying
we have deteriorated

Celina is loose
her tight skin gone
some teeth
except for the protruding
one which makes her
look like a rabbit
is proud as the only
surviving
hard object in her
worn body

Rosario is another story
of failure
her lover left her at the
point where she needed him most
but what can she do
he had also gone old
and had to be back to an
ancestral house where her
accommodating sister lives

Zuric is emaciated
his eyes are like fallen grapes
overripe
rotten but still sour

his arms are weak and sometimes
he does not really listen
to what we are talking

on the other hand i keep this denial
did i not tell you that in my town
only water buffaloes grow old?

it is a matter of happy disposition
wearing a mask in a public place
keeping that smile and activity

but honestly when i arrive in the house
i shed off everything
and all i can do is kneel and pray
that soon all these quibbling about life
will soon be over.

at the beach the sun had began to set
and we marvel at the beauty of its deep red hue
changing to gray as it surrenders and
dissolves in the horizon of dark blue

and the coldness of the
wind and the silence of the night
as i begin to switch on the light in the
wooden cottage

for us to finally see
how an end looks like.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Look At Nature's Magnificent Painting

i see a slope of a hill filled with trees
and grass
a pathway of human footprints
climbs the hill in concentric circles
a man leads his ass
carrying a bundle of clothes
a pregnant woman follows him
above them is the full moon

on the top of the hill is a little house
roof of hay and walls of bamboos
a tiny light flickers on the window
it is wrapped by the coldness of the wind
and somewhere you feel
a certain orifice
of hope
you cannot just pinpoint exactly where

RIC S. BASTASA
from a high mountain
a valley lies where the angels have just started singing
as a choir
i hear the the strings of the lyre
and then the trumpets and the flute in between
the innocent lyrics of the angelic voices
penetrating the chambers in our hearts

we feel so light
we are saved from the wreck of the sinking ships of the past
we look forward to the refreshing gales
to the touch of the gentle tendrils

a certain sadness somehow starts to pain us a bit
we are looking for you
why are you not here with us?
why did you abandon us? why are you listening to the sound of death?
there must be answers and we are sad and waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lost Bird Hovering In The Middle Of Your Valley

for i am a lost bird
that hovers in the middle of your valley
there finding rest
in your stoic
non-mindedness where i am but
an ordinary lost bird
and just all the other birds
that hover in the middle of your hidden valley
i am but another
shadow of a bird that comes for the moment
and then
gone forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lousy Day

got a neck collar
afraid of the water
the soap snugs
the shampoo seals
like a mouth not
wanting a word

there is no comb
for the hair
strangled last night
by hefty hands

half naked one
faces the monitor
without blinking

the toothbrush is dry
the toothpaste is bitter

coffee is cold
and the rice smells
the bacon is not crisp
the table is dirty

three flies make a feast
of the sunny side up egg

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Affair

i will not utter those words,
i will be too cunning and barbarically
dishonest,

i will be candid
all i have for you is lust

the one that likes you today
but throws you like a cigarette butt in
a minute

the point is i like to touch
every part of you and take it with me
but it will only be for a while
i know myself

i always throw something as garbage
after i have tasted a little bit of this and that

you are the sun now
and i am the worhiper
you are too near
and i will be burned but i will touch you just the same

i know myself
and i know my limits

i am a wall myself
impenetrable by your unintentional
seduction

i ride with time with you
and i have feasted in you even without looking
i know myself
i have my own selfish ways

i eat you and i have swallowed
every piece of you
and you do not know it
now you are a part of my body
and all my organs are shouting
victorious

you dissolve in me
i am a wide and winding river
duodenal

but it will only be for a very short time
i am always quick to discard you

and no one
no one really
knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Forbidden

it is about a love
forbidden
when the two
of us
decided to break
the rules
written in stone
by our
ancestors

we dare
them all
one night
we do not
speak any
word
yet we understand
what we
both want
we both
need it
we wait
for the
mutual release
of feelings
inside us

we release
them like
doves
deep in the night

we are restless
then
we finally
find this
bliss and do
its dictates
like a hidden
code
pre-stitched
in our skins

there is
no word
to describe
it, there is no word that we can utter

we feel justice
is now inside us, there is no regret, there is no feeling
of being wasted

we are inside this dream
and we do no wish waking up again

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Gone

and so she looks
at an old picture
again
telling me
that whatever it was
there is nothing anymore

love is gone
not even pity
but just plainly lookin'
& usin'

like a tissue
for her daily ritual
with the bowl
on early
mornings

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Life

after the short tryst
he leaves her and she is left alone

to reminisce
his sweat sticking to her skin

his perfume
on her breast and thighs

her tears
do not have the intention

to wash all these memories away
her tears of joy

again on a soliloquy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Poem #1

I really like
To write you
A love poem
Someday
One that
Looks like the
Shadow of
A young man
Fishing out
To the sea
And spreads
His net and
Paddles his
Way around
A school of
Fish and then
He waits
For a while
Dreaming
Only about
You

Then he
Sees a seagull
Encircling
Above his
Head flying
Over him
And then

Hovers
On the side
Of his
Boat like
Looking for a
Fish

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Poem For My Wife

When the time comes
That I become a very sick man,
Unable to do the usual things
Expected of myself and the demands
Of your sweet society, when I no longer smell
What men smell of women
Their underwear and underarm
Deodorants titillating to our masculine
Desires, when I no longer find
Motels as interesting places
To make more stories or
Those dark secret places of two hearts
Where names and age and reputations
Are irrelevant, when the time comes
For me to kneel and pray and
Find the usual places for solitary
Old men facing the final curtains
Of the play, please my dear
Be gentle with me,
I may have lied, and pursued
What made you mad
But you must know the eulogies
Of the rotten flesh and
Distinguish it from the hymnal truth
Of the spirit
I am not afraid to profess
I have not loved so true
Other women than you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Poem For Today

we were meant to be,
we made a pledge of love
under the fullness of the moon
the North Star is our witness

we got separated
Fate has its reasons
we do not know
how it happened

how could i love you
and yet decide to leave and love another?
how could i betray you
and marry another one instead?

Fate has its reasons
I do not know how it happened.

All i know is this: You will be happier
If it were not me.

I have less and i cannot give you more.
I have loved you more and cannot afford to give you less.

You deserve to be happy. I don't.
Forget me then for I have hurt you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Scene

let me hold your hand so i can take you there
on a chair
i spread my legs and look up to the sun above us
you kneel and i be your god for this moment
you root yourself to earth like a sunflower
you shed your leaf you bow down like a slave
you find my treasure my dews
for now i became the shape of another

a leaf am i
consume me, you worm!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love So Short Of Time

when we kiss
i close my eyes
and think
of you not as
forever

how i wish to have
immortality

no, the warmth
of your lips
does not last
a lifetime

no, the hold of
your arms
will be lost
in a minute

no, this ecstasy
will only be
for a second

i smell you
i feel you
running all over me
like a river
you cover all of me
like you are the sea
and the sky

for a while i am
lost in vast space
with me are
all the stars in
heaven

and then when
this kiss is over
i look at you
your face is all
flesh and cheekbone
and you lips close
there is no word
there is no need
to say anything

how short
love can be
yet i feel it
throughout my universe!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Song...

before the lights are turned off
in their bedroom
he sings her a love song....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Story

it came, and i was blinded
with so much lovely light,
when i was already bound
to the bonds of matrimony,
but i want it, and i call it a new
home, but i do not want to
destroy an old home, where
i have invested so much of
myself, where pain and
pleasure mated, but this
is a very nice feeling, taking
me back to an age of sixteen,
i whistle the tune of a lover
like a bird on a tryst somewhere
in a forest tree, where there is
complete secrecy, this is it,
another form of love, another
encounter, back to a new line,
i am myself again, full of life,
but retaining a duality of
two homes, old and new,
in one self, with you with her
with us: trois!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love Story Retold That Perhaps You Have Read Before

i: seed sprouts, a head cover removed detached
he recalls an island and two shadows entwined under the spell of the full moon mesmerized, exhausted, dreaming, sweet sleep, lovers passionate about sweat and tight flesh
she remembers the embers and the cold darkness the emptiness filled by his moans and the quivers of her desires silenced all her senses awakening to the wonders of togetherness and wanton touches lips upon lips weight upon her helplessness amidst the ruins of her seduction

ii: time flies as a swift bird stones covered with dust and humus
he said she was part of his past now that he is old and ugly and helpless in poverty with a young, native woman caring for him he remembers something sad as separation of two intimacies a distance of two words opposed meanings
she said she had forgotten him
her first love
she said she lives alone in the land of many winters
and knows how to take care of herself
she said she is happy
and now so free
she says the apple trees in time shall bloom
a daughter sits under it and she takes her picture

iii: the sun rises in the east, that is a fact
the storm subsides, one gropes for therapeutic metaphors
along the silent nooks of the shores
and then the reunion of clauses and phrases
wanting to have complete thoughts

he told her things may be lost and people may be hurt
but chances are
there are rainbows sometimes that reconnect hearts
bridges that dissolves distances

he told her that some missing pieces are found
some chains of love become a necklace of reunions
and reconciliations

he did not tell her though because it is so hurting
that
he did not really love her that whole enough
when he made love to her on that island of desire
he was thinking of another one
his true love
that once broke his heart many years ago
when once he
was whole and true and young and
honest and real
when he met her
he did not tell her he was such a shattered glass
with splinters all spread
on the bottom of the ocean floor

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love That Cannot Be Forgotten

i switched you off
like a light bulb at eleven
o'clock in the
evening

the sofa and the
carpet on the floor
are dead
asleep

you still shine brightly
blinking like neon lights in the
Christmas park

inside
my mind
in the middle of my
own darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
A Love That Does Not Die

early morning
how can birds be seen inside this room?
how can an agnostic be so definite about
the blueness of the skies?

early morning
there is no sun here
where i have sacrificed so much
about writing

and i think of you
because i have loved you

such thoughts
grow flowers in the fertile fields of my tongue
my eyes become suns
my ears twin mountains
from my palms birds nest and lay their eggs
in my heart
another universe is born

inside this room
the door shall not be opened

RIC S. BASTASA
A Loveless Poem

on top of me
you proclaim your glory

you moan
in sweet agony

you hold my hair
like i am your slave

you lay your soul
like i am only
a thigh

you push me
like two legs
of a male body

you close your eyes
and claim
myself as another
conquered territory

i look at the ceiling
looking for leaks

i grip the blanket
on the side of the bed
groping for
confidences

i go inside myself
asking my soul
if a love poem
is possible.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lovely Evening

when you finally give up
and put the ring on the table
and you shed some tears
and say a goodbye and when
i am finally left alone
staring at the darkness
when the moon is covered
by the storm when i cannot
hear anything because the
typhoon begins to rage
i can decide and always
say upon myself that despite
all these things
i can still look forward to
another lovely evening

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lovely Pair

i think i shall never see
a lovely pair as be
Ms. Tai Chi of Italy
& Mr. Taylor Butts of the USA,

When she comes
he utters her name
to heaven he goes

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lovely Thing To See

It is a lovely thing to see
In this room
My sperm spreading like a cloud
In your dark galaxy

RIC S. BASTASA
the story of our meeting is quite a long one
i do not even know where to start it:
the mall, or the beach
or the lobby of this hotel by the sea
where you have seen my body
and i know
with the way you look at me
from the tip of my hair
to the tip of my toe
you desire
what i have

you think
i have so much to give you for the night where we can just be two
exploring the contours
and curves and islands of some hairs and rivers in our arms
and soft grasses on our bellies
hills on your breasts, plains on my chest

and i look at you too, i am fond of deep seated eyes that twinkle
like some tiny stars, chinky, and warm
i gaze at your face, shining gently like the moon of the night
over the cool marshes
the sound of geese subsiding finally
inside my heart

of course, your body too is one island filled with desire and bursting energy, like
volleyball players under the sun

and i confess i like it
and want to taste it and even eat it,
like i have turned into one
cannibal or wanting to be one, at least on that first meeting
at the lobby of the hotel by the sea
(was it named Caprice?
or Escape or Hideaway?)

yes, the lobby of this hotel by the sea, and we decide to share
a room, get some drinks, you like the vodka, and you want me to want
the vodka and i take the vodka from your hand, and we all drink
the vodka, and we were carried by the vodka like hypnotized
kids by this magician
to the heavens,

we do what we can to give meaning to the meeting and the mating
and the loving (though we suspect this matter, takes time i suppose,
takes time, you tell me, this is just a matter of sharing bodies,
sort of)
that was nice, i like it, and you are telling me, your first time, and you
really like it too, sipping not spitting, lipping and licking,
and caressing hair, mostly hair, and running fingers on my loins,
night, dawn, dusk, early morning, where boats still dock
on the white sandy shore,
coconut trees, leaves no ripples of the wind
cigarette butts wet by lips
unwashed by the tide

then it is over, it ends at the lobby of the hotel by the sea, you wear
a bleached buri hat with a blue ribbon,
and thick sunglasses, and you are carrying a bag, checking out
talking to the billing section
while the van waits taking you to the airport

and me too, by the lobby of the hotel by the sea, and we part
i'll take the boat back home

we tell each other finally, not looking intently now
(what intent really? on diminishing interest after the sharing
of some natural resources)
take care.

(i do not even bother to say: till we meet again)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Lute By Edward Martin

did i ever see mother
dance like a
little girl
when she was alive?
did i ever see her
laugh like
a lovely little girl
once when she was
alive and was
with us all
in that small house?
did we ever wonder
why we did not see
her at all smile
as though we were friends
and not as her children

all i remember was that
she told us stories
before we sleep and
crowd in that small bed
covered by a white
cloth mosquito net
she was telling us
about some ghosts
who will eat all of us
because we refuse
to sleep early

because she still had
a lot of other things
to do
some lesson plans
to write
some letters for
her mother
some loan applications
to accomplish
some prayers
to recite
while father
waits for her
in another room.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man

he is a young man. Tall and smooth
and admired by Time and
favored by tolerance. He walks briskly along
the city street, and goes inside a place
where the flowers of his youth
are being admired.

young women recite him as a
love verse, his eyes become their visions
his muscled sensuality, his tight body
stir the imagination of those who
want to be beautiful too
till the end of this busy day.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man By Emma Z.

this is a picture of you
my man, on white brief,
masculine body, strong,
firm arms, gentle eyes
determined eyelashes,
bold fingers, drinking
a hot cup of coffee,
well cut hair, shaven face,
smooth skin, hair on the
slab of his skin, firm legs
easy on the floor, calm nipples,
peaceful on the sofa,
waiting for me.

yet i still ask for more

when he steps out of my door
i may cry a little bit
three or four tears are enough
for a decent parting
a little time for mourning
a pint of vodka to shake him off from my system

tonight, i'll make a call
another man enters my door
into my womb, my system filled with his spurts
i stoop, i kneel, i worship this man
i lick every dropp of him
and then he goes again
at dawn, fitting in his black underwear
back to his pants and polo
sliding his belt
buttoning his pants
zip his pocket

yet i ask still for more
to fill this emptiness of my being

they are all men that step in and out of my door

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
hinges still strong and intact
i am suspended so well between the space and the frame

i am a woman. They are just men.
I swallow and spit them all.
i vomit and swallow them all again.
this is the cycle of my skepticism.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man In A Small Town

a man in a small town
is easy to spot
less this two front
teeth he stares at you
busy wit a laptop checking g in for the next
cebu pacific flight for
manila

it is funny he looks
at as though you are another
rich god in his
dusty world which perhaps
he wants to escape

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man In Red Shirt

day morning
a man in red shirt
balancing a pole
with pails on both ends
is making calls
for those who want
to buy
his delicacies.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man Like Me

last night
under the moon
the black bird
sings again

it is predicting
chaos
i drive it away
and it senses
that a man like
me is
crazy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man Of Few Words

i wish that
today i will be a man of
few words,

and if there be fewer than a
man of few words,

i will grab it still,

but we were already born with
all the inconsistencies

i was once a small baby
with that loudest cry

my mother said when i was
still in the hospital room

perhaps this wish is nothing
but an affirmation of what i want to be
and what i am
really not.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man That Of Course You Do Not Know

after having read a lot of books
and written a novel
and a thousand poems
even nominated for the Nobel
he comes home
gathers us all
in his big new house
gives us our drinks and
come slices of cakes
and he begins his first lecture
on how to perform
a funeral

RIC S. BASTASA
A Man, And Something Within

a man cannot say about

what he sees, sometimes, he merely

gazes at it, and then

either he stays or leaves,

he touches the hand of the wind

and does not tell you

what he feels, his mouth is dry

and his hair follows where the wind goes

he keeps a lot of somethings inside,

one that makes

him feel a stone

nothing drips, nothing flowing

steady as a post

without light

during the night, without fear

he expels shame

and then he goes back

takes that.... something
and does not say

at all anything

RIC S. BASTASA
it is just three days
but here i am
and it is like three long years
this absence

shall remember the intensity of
not being
incomplete

the sad room cannot put to sleep
the restless sea
as it enters invincibly
in a closed door

something is choking being
and being has to walk away and be with the crowd
on those city lights
along the multitude
of lonely people who at 2 o'clock dawn
still roams
the corners of the mind

one must see a shrink
they advise you
that need to lie down on a sofa
and to begin talking about
anything

it is like a thread and you are crawling like
an insect
like a dropping teardrop
feeling the
dryness of the cheek

finally i give up sleep
and till morning
i think upon what is happening

the sad fact is that nothing really happens from the way they are seeing you
calm, clueless see without a rock
a fish
placid, brown skin without a crease of a trauma
someone looks at you
like a god
but there you are
a wall

you accept and then you put silence in your pockets
the sockets sink
you are getting nonsensical
talking without a clue
as to the meaning
of your
sighs

all these are but the conversations of the soul
losing its faith about
a body
a map that is found in paper
spread on the floor
and being washed away by the rain that seeps
and penetrates
the holes of the roof

RIC S. BASTASA
A Marble Head Of A Handsome God In The Museum

only those who
have the money can afford this trip.
now we are all guided to the
site of an old and famous
country
somewhere in
Europe.
inside the museum is the head
of David
(is he a god? someone asks)
i am amazed
to the stone curl of his hair
and the smooth
white marble stature
before me.

there is no crack.
the greatness persists.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Marriage Ceremony

i know even for the very first time that i have seen them. when the groom lifted the white veil to kiss her lips she hesitated to close her eyes his lips did not tremble in excitement at the last second when his lips touched hers he closed his eyes but very briefly the touch was minimal and then he took away love back into his mouth reverberating to his heart where indifference is beginning to seed.

how i wish i could understand this ritual this institution of fusion where energy can not and can never be stored potential at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Matter Of Decision

the black bird of loneliness
hovers over the window of the house
and stops to look at
our roof

we shoo it away
there is no place here
where it can build its own nest

we still wait for the bird of bounty
the one that brings us
the eggs of grace
the feathers of happiness

it is the only bird that we welcome here
as a matter of our own decision

RIC S. BASTASA
A Matter Of Perspective, Actually...

they are all ahead of you
they think so
but you are heading to
the opposite direction
and you look back and
you are all far,
far and far behind you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Matter To Choose To Write This Morning

guess
i want something simple
and yet something beautiful
worth an hour or
less than that for my morning

i think
i shall take the usual walk
and take a look at the
flowers
not picking any
along the road

i promise myself
a little rest in my mind
something relaxing
something to unwind
my tangled nerves
a smooth breath
to fill the cravings
of my lungs

this time
nothing to mention
about the
affairs of my
heart

nothing
about the two of us

RIC S. BASTASA
A Meaningful And Happy Morning

what brought you here
to this meaningful day?
what smile has been given
to your blissful morning?

ahh! it was about last night
that was filled with love
that brought my morning singing

ahh! it was you beside me
cressing my body
watering it with love
that brought me here
to this whistling morning

it is only a matter of linking
a wonderful night to a promising day
an exciting night to a lively morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Meaningless War....

I've seen
how a jet

(was it a fighting
jet?
or a missile perhaps?)

cuts a wound in the sky

leaving a bleeding
smoke

of emptiness
of this

world which is
always on its

fighting mood

i shake my head
like a pendulum

reminding us of
the wasted hours

this meaningless
wars

over lands that
float in space.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Memorable Strawberry

a strawberry in my hand
is just another strawberry in the farm
nothing special
there is no bliss in there
inanimate red berry
and even if i am hungry
and i eat it
it is still nothing to me
and you who see it
shall notice nothing and
just let another day pass
like a number in a page
of your calendar,

but that strawberry on the floor
from your lips
which you once held tenderly
between your fingers
as you lay naked in bed
teasing me on that night of
the lonely hearts
and when you bit it a little
leaving what is more luscious
juicy
and sweet in your mouth
your tongue peeping
like a snail

and you let it go
like a red butterfly from your
soft hands
and it falls and rolls on the
floor and
then stops near you
lingerie

that strawberry half consumed
still lingers in my mind,
perhaps forever unforgotten
it is special, very special.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Memory

my white hair
always speak of you

it is your beauty
that it brags

to my forehead
whose furrows

lead me to a pond
of sweet memories

the ripples there
speak of the rain

and the rain sings
about this pain

the pain shows me
a scar

the scar remembers
the wound

that you inflicted
and i was that man

who believed
that once love existed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Memory Of 1980, 14th Day Of February

14th, February, 1980

at the university
chemistry laboratory
the last experiment
of the year

loveless and too
careless

she sent a rose
i did not bother

she called on the phone
i was not there

she was loveless
in an island

i was too busy
in my thesis for my last year

i sent her the card
without telling her that it's goodbye

her friends had to leave her
each had the love partner on that day

i was alone in the lab
without any love

too many sacrifices
not worth remembering

a heart broken
beyond repair

a soul wandering
still lost with the black raven
too many years of pain
nothing really gained

RIC S. BASTASA
A Memory Of A Red Strawberry

remember me as summer
better still a refreshing summer wind
from a green mountain
remember me as summer
summer strawberry
red, red strawberries
from your fingers to your
mouth to your tongue
sweet, sour, and luscious,
remember me, better remember me
as summer, wind, green mountain,
strawberry, red and luscious
staying in the grassy fields of your
heart and mind

remember me as past summer wind
as a mountain gone, as grass wilting,
as strawberry consumed
each flesh digested all within

RIC S. BASTASA
A Message For The Mourning Beloved...

every morning
i write

but not for you
today

every morning is
a sacrifice

an offering for
the goddess of
truth

every morning is
an exercise of honesty

the night may still
be on that stage of
denial

i may write for you
soon

i do not wish you
to read for now

it will be
incredible
nothing is
worth believing

for the meantime that
the words are
still constructed

what you see actually
is not what you get
there is a ripe fruit
for the season &
it will be for your personal
picking

tomorrow is the best
place for you
to fathom the depths of
my suffering

you lay in bed crying
and you wipe your tears

the thoughts will come
like sunshine on the window

then you will have a hint
of me

and you follow it
like a bird
flying away to a
faraway hill

towards a cave
where darkness is a little bit
mixed

with light and shadows and
creeping sounds of
bats
& glowing worms

then you shall understand
what everything in me is all about

you see
you can only understand the past
when you have arrived
at the room of the
future
when what you remember of me is only the wind
what what i am to you is no longer a star.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Message For You

fly me a pigeon
to show me land,

draw me again
the tilted world

send me words,
winged birds,

sound the pulse
show me life.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Message From Us All Here

with childhood memories
our hearts shall grow tender
this christmas season
of the year

rekindle this love
of kindred
and even foe

we shall become
like children again
in spirit, in kindness
this time of
christmas

RIC S. BASTASA
A Message To B.

you break the cordon
i try to reconnect
but you have decided
to break it just the same

i do not force myself
i am the uninvited but

i am not at fault
it is you
and so what time
shall i waste
again with you?

precious things are lost
not mea culpa
relationships are broken
not mea culpa

i am back to the hills of
my childhood
flying kites
picking pebbles

and
catching cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Messy Life...

this house where we live
is just a train station and we are the trains always leaving to places
leaving smoke and
splinters of our
steel wheels

then when the real time comes for change
we only become passengers moving and moving and waving hands
the train station becomes a mark
that we soon forget in the books
on broken ears
and folded pages but we do not remember any page
not even the idea
of the character that we claim to have loved that much

things are messy really
but who cares? we look forward to the flashes of hills and towns
everything fades
like overused denims.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For 59

when i do not
enter the door of the house
the lady There
goes mad and tells me
that
i am the most useless
man in the world

as a gentleman i keep
my mouth shut
enters the door of my dreams
and then
take my most needed
sleep

AND there my Angel says
Life is Beautiful....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For A Funeral

indeed it is wonderful to entertain
that constant idea that beds are made for
sex,
but i must be deluding myself for a long time
as time
swiftly corrects me
and so shortly,
that beds in fact are made more for the resting place
of the sick and the dying,
the anxious and the depressed,
the restless people engulfing one pill to another
to get the blessings of sleep
soon it will become
another metaphor for
a funeral
and euphemism
for death.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Dedication.

here he is trying to hone a craft,
like, grinding the knife on a stone

thinking of an enemy, its name is boredom
trying to sharpen the tongue, in the name

of accuracy, like the lashes of the sticks
upon a rock, its style is punishment, but

surely, there is always a reason why, like
loving someone, suffering and ready for the

next cut, the breaking of another morning,
from a dark room, where two shadows dance alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Gentle Secrets

the clothes are washed
and hanged
and dried and ironed
and then
folded neatly inside
the cabinet inside
your room
and then locked.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Happiness

i throw morsels
of rice
in the golden pond
where
orange spotted
kois
satisfy their
hunger

rings of restlessness
after a while gone

silky water

upon a reed a red and blue
dragonfly
rests

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Lando

he never attends a
kid's party in Lincolnshire

he has no story to share
there

when he took time scurrying
in Phil looking for
a solution

he wanted to buy the kid
and then the elder one bade goodbye
while caressing the hair
of the little sibling

he went back to England
empty handed and
crying

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Lent

get the broom
and the duster and the
trashcan

my dear,
it is time to sweep
and clean our rooms....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Love

love is not like the river
that moves on the banks of the mountains
seeking that
convenience of least resistance

love rushes in
like a flood that takes everything that it takes
and loses them
all to the big ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For My Face....

i pass by the wall
where a picture of
a face is hung,

something that i
cannot just pass
through towards
the door and not
look back at it
again

just a few seconds
i tell myself
i touch the face again
and sigh

it is mine
it was a face then
when i was at your
young age

i was reckless
in that one
it was a set of
wasted eyes
of luscious lips
that took so many
kisses
and let go
all not keeping
one

i leave the picture now
another time wasted
on such a beautiful face
as mine

i must go
to places then
where all mirrors
are broken

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Myself.....

early afternoon
i undress and walk towards the water

it is a gray moment
i wade into the water
it is clear
and i can see some fish and
sand at the bottom

i am alone
it is too peaceful away
from everyone

the water is lukewarm
derived from noon
and the shore is too private
to myself

the trees are still and the cottage
has an eye
staring at me from afar

i swim farther, into the depths
floating

there are no seagulls
a ship with a smoke shears the
far horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Platonic Love...

between Sam and
Rey is a dog named Jude
a greyhound

ey cannot leave the house
together
or else the dog will die inside
the bathroom

in bed
Jude lies between them
it is the beast
that separates them
for a while

it is this beast
that has given them
temporary
pleasure

no, do not misinterpret
this story
for a bestial ecstasy
it is not in their minds
neither in their acts

if one has to leave
then one must stay
come winter
come spring

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor For Weariness

Our distance is getter farther
like an old weary boat departing from the ruined port of
Neither/Nor
to a journey that will take it
ten years
or even more,

the irony is that
we still sleep together in the same
water
bed our butts meeting sometimes
and toes
slowly crawling like ants back to
their hill.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor Is Easy To Make

a metaphor is easy to make
and so easy to recall

remember the cat's feet like a fog
leaving softly the harbor in the city?
remember a misery that jumps like a flea &
bites you and you cannot sleep
and you say life is like that
a flea

remember
you think of time as a growing child
a man,
a wild man running and chasing
virgins that must make most of their time
because
time is a-flying and
the rose that blooms today
tomorrow
may be dying

remember time in a bottle

remember life like a fruit fly trapped
trying to figure
out how to escape
and you say life is like that
a fruit fly

remember death
like a woman sleeping in her chambers
closing the curtains
and you say
death is like that
a mere closing of a curtain

just like that

remember how
loneliness is like a steel tunnel
you get in there,
some birds hover and fly away from you
you get in there,
and there seems to be no light visible
at the end

loneliness

life is like that

you see
metaphors and dissect every vein
every artery
every bone and
cartilage of
these metaphors that you
say do not exist
in prose

, , , , , , , , , that you say do not exist in my prose

mine is not poetry
mine is a poverty of poetry
and you claim
yours is the basket the cornucopia of true poetry

good for you, you are the prima donna
of this
dance
this quibble in poetry

it does not matter

give me some metaphors
about poverty, discrimination, meaninglessness,
purposelessness,
non-being, the metaphysics of early death
a being-in-distress
an addict
a streetchild
a battered wife
a cruel father
a hypocirte priest
an embittered professor
a disgruntled student
give me some metaphors about
corruption, lying presidents, secret killings

you are the master of metaphor
you are the queen of slave
metaphors

so be it.
make me a poem to the strictures of metaphor
give poems a strange face
a hybrid of dog and man

make them read and not understand
delude them
give them illusions
confusions

make them baffled, submissive, uncritical, uncomplaining
complacent,

bewilder them to your secret,
derivative and too personalized
metaphors

and you are happy
they do not understand a thing

and they will believe that you are God.

for those that we do not understand
we call it mystery
we call it metaphor
we call it

unquestionable.

let the oppression stay.
let the discrimination live in the metaphors that you have made.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Metaphor Of Shared Joy

two little girls
sharing a red lollipop

as the little girl with a
kinky hair
licks the top
the other girl with
two dimples
giggles

inside my mind
i laugh thinking dirty
(grrr)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Microcosm

inside your room
you grow something dark and dry
every day you water it with your sighs
you do not want to make yourself
a part of the other worlds outside you
they lurk and they had always harmed you
for once
they have taken all that you have
and it is enough

there is a new lock and it is safe you tell yourself
there is a leak and light finds itself in your hand
it stays there for a while and it looks at you
you look at it again
it is telling you something

that outside there is so much light that you have not seen yet
there is a world more beautiful than yours
that it is waiting

that all these simply depends on the decision of your
ten fingers.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Microcosm Of Maunday Thursday's Murder

on a maunday Thursday
my goat was badly bitten by the dog
of my sister-in-law

dead upon their arrival from church,

my nephew reports that they were lax
into believing that a domesticated dog
can still kill an innocent goat,

my sister did not bother saying oh it is
just a goat and you can never blame the dog
because it is simply doing it by instinct

i told my neighbor who likes goat meat
to eat it and asks him if he likes dog meat
too

my nephew blames the church
my sister blames the dog

i do not like goat meat and so
i never blame anybody.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Microwave Oven

breakfast
microwaved
sandwich and
coffee. it is
flat like
sylvia.

plath, sick
genius.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Minute

a minute late
is a year of waiting
for the woman
that i love

RIC S. BASTASA
A Minute Ago

just a minute ago
i hear the church bell ringing
inviting me
to hear mass this Sunday

i decide to just stay in the house
sit on an easy chair
open my personal computer
read the news of the day
about the typhoon coming
somewhere in Luzon
learning about a wannabe president
of this republic
advised by a rival to quit smoking
have some charm
talk like a leader and walk like
a true leader
to pause on some speeches
not to cough in between
and marry.

something unpoetical too early
in my cold morning
is creeping in the marrow of my bones

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mirror Of You

I make a mirror
of you
and you see me
naked

i am beautiful
in the dusk
as beautiful as
you in the
dark

sooner, we become
dogs
in love with our
tails

we spin around
the corners of our
dreams

i follow you and then
i hold you
my tongue is yours
my hands too

later, we shall feel
how dams break out
how waters escape
how pools of water
become rivers
how swamps become
flooded waters

this is the journey of
two wooden boats
without rudders
without sails.
A Mission For You

oppression is
a ring

you want to
solve it?

trace its beginning
so you can
figure out its end

pinpoint the cause
so that you may find
the cure

segregate effects from
causes

find a ring and
feel it

locate the mark
find the boundaries

if you can.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Misunderstanding

night comes like
a zombie and
it sleeps with
you and
though the bed
has been cleaned
and perfumed
the hours turn
into stinking
skunks

somehow you
know how to maintain
that poise
of a creature
with beautiful eyelashes
and soft hands
still skin to the
pillows
madly in love
with
that gift of
sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mockery

how does it feel to be mocked at?
children chase you and laugh at you,
and call you crazy

you react, you want to be a child
and wanting to play and they mock you further
you're big enough to be their monster cookie

your friends say there is something wrong with you
in fact, everything is wrong
your nose not in its place and your face is twisted
at your back they say
this man is crazy
he must be reported to the police

one day you find your family disregarding you
you have become Kafka's cockroach and shall suffer
the same fate
as his short story

you are shooed
and outside you go
you walk by the side of the river and still whistle like
a man disregarded by the world

a cockroach, a pig, a crazy man on the street
returning to the big mountain deep in the forest
where no one sees you

you look at yourself on that still pond in the middle of this valley
you wonder

it is their face
you are the children playing
you are the image of your family
and they all look crazy too

in that solitude
you become yourself away from them
sane and yes, too poetic to behold
laurels on your head
flowers in your hair
dews on your skin
song in your lips

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mole In My Face

with what is happening
in our political arena

(i am speaking of my
philippines my philippines)

the mole in my cheek
has become a curse

whatever good i do
becomes suspect.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Moment

dressed up
you step out of the door
waiting...

you stand
lean of the light post
for an hour,

that is the moment
of your life

waiting...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Moment Of Bliss...

lazily he
bathes his body with
morning sunlight,

tinking about nothing

it's cool.

to be just a floater
a leaf with
nowhere to land

feeling so light
like a joyful emotion

smooth and clear
blending with air

and space and
nowhere

it's cool and it is making him feel
so good

RIC S. BASTASA
A Monochrome Poem

IT will talk about
an absence in the same manner
that he talks about it
when you are together

about a job about to come
when
he does not know
but for the meantime
he stays with you
for support

he once tells about a woman
who jumped from atop the
cathedral
hitting her head on the
lamppost below
not only sad
but horrible
brains scattered on the pavement
blood spurting like
a fountain

so much self-inflicted
violence

one thinks about the noise
of the monochromatic life
outside the window
thinking that there is someone
there that you know
who like you
also looks for life

a job that did not come
the decision to come home
but when
that i do not really know
with you
for the meantime
everything is still on the meantime
we wait
hopefully for something not
as violent
not as horrible as
the cathedral story.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Monologue To Love

love
i like to love you like love
why do you hurt me
at the end?

love?
what do you expect of me?
why do you give me hope?
only to push me at the edge
of the cliff
and then i fall and get
crushed
like a splattered melon
on the ground

love
i had once an ecstasy of you
love i have loved you
and you loved me too

just once
just once
a long time ago
and then it was over

RIC S. BASTASA
A Monologue To Sadness

you touch me and i shiver and i feel so shaken
i am like a building of light materials
bamboo-like, i feel that i am falling
to the ground, you're an earthquake
my clouds are heavy and i am about to rain.
i hold things on a grip, like bolt and screw, not giving
up, not letting go, you're sadness
and i am your favorite object, a pebble to your palm,
a flower to your hair,
a hand gripped by the hand of another,

'why do you always go with me? ' i am a nobody.
'i love you', you answer me.

I want to run away, i want to have the feet of a gazelle.
and you become the wind behind me.
I shed tears, i never expect to be weak, and then you give up on me.

' i miss you' i send you flying kisses.
' Hypocrite' she says. She packs up her clothes.
'Be happy! ' my last words.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Moral Poem....

the sound of rain
heavy on my brain

double pleasures
inside these fissures

the insistence of quiet
the urge of flight

another episode of avoidance
in preference of this dance

neuter to the world of lust
morality is still the must.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Chat With You

a morning chat with you
sweet nothings
words of concern
like the simplest hello
and little talks about
anything
something that has nothing
to do with burdens
something so light
like a trivial
nonsense, a casual
conversation beside my
cup of coffee
at the veranda
on a window overlooking
the sea
with outlines of the mountains
stretching a line
on a horizon of blue and
gray

like sunshine on my shoulder
and then i dress myself
and face my own wars
out there

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Flash

it comes as a flash.
A body.

At first it is just lines and curves. 
There is no minding at all about anything else.

Then follows the scent that compliments 
its newly acquired existence 
its desirability enhanced by the warmth of morning hues 
by the window of the house.

The scent brings in some memories of youth 
some places of the heart like a grassy hill and an abandoned hut faraway.

After a while it is not just the body but the tongue and palms.

The mind starts to creep in 
like a cloud and sunshine from the south.

IT demands something more 
It is not just these memories and feelings those touches of hues
and colors and
scents
and eventually taste.

And then the movement.

It coils around you
This psyche
This soul and then you go deeper
into a form
of regret.

This is not the body that you like
But the lines and curves
of some long forgotten
circumstances that want to be
repeated
too often
but can never be

Because there is only one body
one soul
and it is not there
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning From The Top Of The Mountain

it is like i am ashore
with waves of mist and clouds
reversing and then

upon a clear sky
the sun arrives with its golden cloak of silk
spreading on the face of this mountain
where i slept
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Greeting

good morning, my friend

hope you're fine like the smooth morning rays of the sun
on soft hands caressing the shiny brown skin of my face

did you sleep well last night? let me ask if you have dreams
that make waking up a regretful event

i am out now for my usual walk to see the usual rising of the sun
on the golden ricefields on the road leading to a group of nipa huts

i am asking myself today: is there meaning to this usualness
this routine that comes to us without any break?
is there something new to the sun that we always expect to shine?
is there a twist to the usual chirps of birds, the usual white color of their wings?
is there something better to do than walk and think the usual
thoughts of how to make a living and be the fit person to survive

this war on boredom
this struggle for meaning
this monotonous routine of this and that and this and that and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that and this and that

there is no stuttering here, nothing symptomatic of sickness
and even death, there is this boredom again that will make us

not sleep the nights
and make us uneasy and restless and asking some more

what is this life? what is it giving me?
what am i giving it? how long?
just asking, i am returning to the house from this short walk
there is no music in my ears
more questions popping

i will just take tea
i need really to pee.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Idea

when you arrive this morning
i am already prepared
for whatever you say and would want me to do
i have changed clothes, washed my face
combed my hair, and ready to go with you
wherever and whatever happens
I am waiting
and you are so silent
looking over the window
facing the sky blue sea
and the flying white seagulls,

since i respect you
i sit beside you and
i will not ask
why

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Moment

the old woman wrapped in
wrinkled skins
passes by the garden of
daffodils
tended by my wife
in her mid-forty
the usual good morning are exchanged

she is shaky and i think her bones
rattle her back arched perhaps
like a gate of the chinese temple
in macau

the daffodils do not appease her
anxieties anymore
her children gone on lives of their own
their own children and affairs
are their own concerns now

she walk away carefully and slowly
to avoid another fall
i can see and hear
my wife has again sighed three times
to the wind
as she looks upon
one wilting daffodil which she thinks
is infested by
a fungal colony...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Poem

darkness again fades away
slowly light comes as a dilution
the leaves turn from gray to green
and what is hazy becomes jazzy.

the crowing of the cocks and the
silence of the pavements
the shadows of the trees and
the silhouettes of the mountains
the opening of the windows
the coming of the breeze
your hands stretch to embrace

another day another beauty
your heart sings a prayer

God is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Poetry Ritual

what comes in
let it enter

i always will
each precious hour in the morning

these are guests
that feed us and not us
feeding them

these are the carriers of bounty
the harbingers of good news

the doors are open
and so are the arms

the hands are ready
the monitor is awake

and then the fingers
start to press the words.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Resolution

to wake up so early
and then sit idly by the window
contemplating upon the
gray world outside;
the shadows of trees
the coldness of air
the sweet scent of
the coming light

reinventing life
for another
start.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Reunion

we keep dogs out
at night
as they are guards of the house

the morning is always a reunion
of my dachshund
waiting at the door
jumping for my tap of the hand
and eventual embrace

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Song (2) ...

a sparrow
lands upon
a twig
of the guava
tree
beside a bunch
of ripeness
and then i hear
the song
this morning

a sparrow flies
away
and then i begin
to remember

luscious sweetness
light wings
the coolness of
green......

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Song...

a sparrow
lands upon
a twig
of the guava
tree
besides a bunch
of ripeness
and then i heard
the song
this morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Talk

the sounds of the cicada
at dawn,

the buzzing sound of the
computer,

the wind outside
the coldness of the mountain breeze

within my mind,
comes rushing the music of the next lines

predominant is still the
silence
of this being

within us
always wanting to be heard

RIC S. BASTASA
A Morning Walk Along The Boulevard Of New Dreams

the fresh air
sea breeze of hope
hands freely stretched
synchronized with
the fallen feet
this morning walk
in the boulevard of
new dreams

begin again
like what you did always
before.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mosquito....

a mosquito bites my toe
but i am busy looking at the stars

let it bite suck some of my blood,
let its thirst be quenched and let it go away

and breed and live in the places of the heart
let there be no dots and dashes

and commas and periods
a semicolon may even destroy the existence of
my colon

my hands do not strike a mosquito
they are my pillows my maps of destinations
my fingers my words

let not that mosquito see the giants
we're not

let it live and find its gods
we're not

we're just here as the outpouring of our rain
as factual mountains

we are ' living trying to distinguish
creativity from self-destruction'

who placed us there is never our wish
who put our names is never our command

we are but landslides of our weaknesses
slips of our rashness
morning soliloquy
evening's parting words

if we have harmed your transparent wings
must you forgive and define for once what could be worst than worse?
A Mother's Day Prayer

Dear Lord
My mother died
so lonely

Grant her
eternal happiness

Dear Lord
May their mothers
be happier than my mother
May their fathers love their mothers true
May they as children love their mother now

than remember loving them more
when they are all gone and dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Motorcycle Speeds

it speeds its way up the hill
and down
the plain and then goes
on that narrow path
leading to the cliff
he does not know about this twist
of his journey
he falls and makes his last
breath
and there is no other way to capture
this tragedy
except through the words
of the story
or that poem that speaks of death
and resurrection
of twists
and the fall of no return

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mountain Skyline

from the town of Kolambugan
you face the old city of Ozamis

and from where I stand
I see a skyline of colors
sad colors

I see a line of mountains
as the sun departs

leaving this pain of those who died here
on one explosion
many, and many of them
did not know that they will die on that day

some were to cross the sea
to attend a wedding
some a baptism
of their first born

in a sudden, a large sound is heard
and flesh showered a splinter
in the skies
blood flowed on steel floors

some eyes remained closed
in disbelief
others shouted for revenge
they call for justice

and yet today
there is never one

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mountain Trek

summer is idle, as an African tulip falls
gently on the hillside
the place is quite overlooking an old city
the mountains are brown and empty
at night the moon comes out
a gun bursts sometimes and startles the black birds
on the tree alone beside the long
winding river of Bulawan
the black birds scream calling all
the deep ravines.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mouse Is Killed Today

a mouse is killed today
by an artist
who got mad because
the mouse ate his painting
of the nude woman

that evening while he got so furious
the mouse was at his hole
on the floor eating his usual cheese

the artist mumbled and murmured
and grumbled
and the mouse heard it
and called it
slapstick poetry
a doggerel,

the artist was not able to hold his temper
anymore

got an armalite and shot the hole with the mouse in it

in the name of art
the artist invokes his right to kill the mouse

he says it was
' clearly an artistic expression
and protected by the First Amendment. '

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mouthful Of Poetry

i sometimes put
words in my nipple
and you who love words
and chew them well
lick and chew my
nipple,

poetry is tickling
and you can but close your
eyes and
put on a luscious
smile

i have your words
too in a mouthful
i drink them all

we have words for love
and letters for caresses
we are simply poets in this
corner
choosing love, loving love
living in love
in mouthfuls....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Multiple Orgasm

she lets pain enter her system
like a guest in her room
asking what it wants
how long will it stay and for
what reason does it exist

it will stay forever and she who
can do nothing
gets the love-your-kidnapper syndrome
she writes a poem
how one day she gets ripped by pain
how she welcomes it finally
like a multiple orgasm

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mumble....

how i wish to be just everything
a tree full of leaves where some stars hang out tonight
or just fireflies if there be no stars
that will suffice or if there are no fireflies at all
perhaps a candlelight
a lonely candle put upon one of its roots
or if there be none at all
no tree or leaf or ground
or worm
i still just wish that i be everything in that nothing
a space
an echo a dust a wind
i just want to dissipate in everything that comes my way
a memory of you in a minute
or just a crumpled paper
a dew that dries up in air
a mark on the leaf
a scratch of the stone
a left over moss
i just want to have an image of myself
something to think about
for the meantime that you are not here
i simply want to explode
scatter
till no one finds me here

RIC S. BASTASA
A Murderous Mind....

there are so many things unfinished
you keep on saying that
so many missions yet unaccomplished
i noted that

i pity you
i invite your for a drink
only for a minute

all i want is for you to put that sanity back
like an underwear to your naked body

you are cold and dying
and you keep on pretending

i pity you
you are lost
your are screaming
no one hears you
except myself

and you keep on pretending
about unaccomplished missions
all these unfinished business of yours
are fake

here i am
i have poisoned a concoction for you
to kill these pretenses
to make you alive for once
in the world
beyond.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Mystery

I have not seen you but you are felt
and feelings are more than touch
though fleeting

and all those that we have not seen
and just touched
are but fleeting

shall i tell you that it is what the leaves sing about
when the wind passes by?

shall i tell you that these are what mysteries are all about?
wind so cold hushing
smoke from the nostrils of the earth fuming
is this what mysterious anger is all about?

something wants to erupt but keeps on postponing
the people have gone away
and you wait in ambush when they all come back

ah, the wind is silent again passing without uttering the words of the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
A Naked Song

it is the song
of truth

call it naked
there is no shame

about it, dress it
it will refuse it

it sings itself
all naked

to the sun
to the wind

the the world
that is not minding

at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Narrative About Masks And Love

somehow the mask has become my own face
you lift it up with your hands and there are no more stories
to be told: about love? there is none anymore, if you insist,
there might be one, but it was about the love that did not die,
and for which i have told you once, and for me to live some more
years, as i insist, i wore a mask full of love and laced with
lust, and then i met you and you say
i am beautiful.
you say you love me, and i fall on an abyss of silence,
and i keep on falling, and i should have told you about
a story that i keep on telling but which you have not heard,
some twists, a clinch, a pinch, an inch of truth
that could have reached you,
but you do not want to listen anymore,
this is a love story,
but at the scene when you begin to unrobe me,
i tell you the truth,
this is not about you and I,
this is still about my past,
about pain and sin,
how could you be so unkind?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Narrative Of The War

The soldiers are nearly all young men,
and far more Filipino than is generally supposed -
I should say nine-tenths are native-born.

Among the arrivals from Luzon
I find a large proportion of tagalogs and bicolanos

men. As usual, there are all sorts of wounds.
Some of the men fearfully burnt
from the explosions.
One ward has a long row of officers, some with ugly hurts.
Yesterday was perhaps worse than usual.
Amputations are going on -
the attendants are dressing wounds.
As you pass by,
you must be on your guard
where you look.
I saw the other day a gentleman,
a visitor apparently from curiosity,
in one of the wards,
stop and turn a moment
to look at an awful wound
they were probing.

He turn'd pale, and in a moment more
he had fainted away
and fallen
on the floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Naughty Girl's Reaction To Shakespear's Hamlet

To be or not To be
That is the question.

Beeeeeeeeeeeee!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Need For A New House....Or Home...

early morning
when the doors are still closed and the windows still tipsy
like the whole house

you fly away

the sun comes out with the clouds
early morning you fly away
away from it all

the clouds are floors and grasses
and you are a lonely bird among a flock of chairs

early morning you fly away
thinking about nothing

you fly away and you feel like a leaf inside
that gentle beast

it is a ride- away
among the paradoxes of life
and its ironies

early morning there is this flight that takes you to a stop-over
of your life

no one knows that you are grieving
over a search for what you feel

the one you had which you lost
intentionally

among the flock of chairs landing early morning
on unstable floors

early morning you take a cab
you choose still

which house
RIC S. BASTASA
A Need For Redemption

the world opens a door
lets you in
makes you feel at home
and gives you love
and you give it children
it wants itself
populated and that is
what it only
wants from you and once
the progeny are
there the reality comes
in batches of
sorrows and
regrets and then the world
having taken what it
wants from you, soon,
excludes you
it closes the door
takes away air, chokes you
and then
you are gone for good

the world opens its doors
again
to populate itself with
innocent people
fooled into desire and lust
and then
finally expurgated into
the depths of
hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Neighbor

there is always
hammering
windows are changing
every day
a restless neighbor's house
wanting to change
luck
what ever needs to be
changed
must be done right
away
superstition sometimes
is summing
up the life of
this neighborhood
the feng sui
the arrangement of
the flow of
yin and yang
the color of the walls
the scent of the day
what number
what more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Neighbor

you live in the clouds
below all these drifters
are the stones
flowers of the earth
children of the
chipped cliffs

we are the progeny
of the rocks
from our cracks
waters flow
thirsts are quenched
and strangers
spread the news about
us: from our hardness
and painless existence
comes out
the softness and kindness
of the waters
of this earth

you shift and gather
somewhere
soundlessly
looking down upon us
in the hardness of
our silenced
existence

you predict weathers
you tell us you own the rain
and the sun

we look forward
adapt to the changes
for one thing
we do not drift and gather
somewhere
still asking for the
correct directions

we are blind
and so we know what is within us
we have no other option
we are the stones
we ask no more
about those questions
neither do we keep those answers
we are here
we do not move
we do not blink
we welcome the moss
we are never tossed....

neighbor cloud
nebulous, oh how infamous
now, tumultuous
fatuous...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Neighbor Named Tony Somewhere In The Philippines

a neighbor named tony
is a Filipino and he just arrived yesterday
from the U S of A

we're happy to have him back
so the neighborhood can have his music and art back
(for he is a musician and a
visual artist
sculpture and painting
his skill
beside his expertise
in flowers and
gardening)

he says he is coming for good
in the US of A
he lost his work
and his Jewish master
has finally let him go
due to recession

he brings no money
and he meets no honey

his wife left him and took
all his children

at night he drinks himself
almost to death
he takes rock
and rocks himself all night

we have no way stopping him
we understand
what sorrow is
what life is
we wait how tony shall explain
his own death

we wish somehow
that he recovers
and then we may never
have any peace
in the Philippines.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Neither/Nor Situation

neither rain can wash our sins
nor sunshine can launder
our souls
we are in this neither/nor situation
choked by our own hands

they say
those who wear white during those ceremonies
and those who are fond
of reenacting the old rituals
that we need an outside force
to remedy this
kind of delimma

i am in no position to say
any word
i am an observer
and i keep on waiting

meanwhile, i hear the rain
i feel the sunshine
again, i am not saying anything

this world is too big for me to be heard anyway
it is those giants who may have
the final say

RIC S. BASTASA
A Network

if the wind is your friend
then you will have wings
if it happens that the rock gets angry
because you are the friend of the wind
then you have nothing to rest upon
on a weary trip
somehow you ask the help of the trees
on the condition that you must hate the sky
but then without the sky
what use is your pair of wings?
you compromise with the help of the moon
to light you dark night
and the sun who is more powerful is mad
for it has long severed itself from the moon
if you have nothing to hide your head tomorrow
the rays of the sun like swords shall cut you
into shatters
the sea promises something
but the islands warn you about a catastrophe
now you must take note of all these
find a way to please all
and you end up
begging for more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Awareness This Time...To A User

now you greet me
a sweet hello because you need
something from me

and i know that

and so i respond with a hello too
but this time

it is more of an awareness of my
humility

whatever you need somehow
(and this i say with honesty)

on the principle of an eye to an eye
(of course) shall be promised

but definitely not given.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Beginning

the rain falls heavily
on the brown fields
the cracks of drought
heal and soften for
a new beginning

the farmer arrives
bringing his plow
the white herons
hover

the frogs croak
the fish are awake after
a long hibernation

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Beginning...

every sprouting seed
preaches hope
every new leaf says
i am an evidence
every fruit manifests
we are ready to serve
and when everything
is ripe and luscious and
ready
when no hand picks them
when there is no child
the inevitable happens
each fruit rots and falls
and gets foul and
conquered by molds
and moss and will finally
be gone
except the seed
who has the last say again
about hope and its
new beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Day....

let not the words deceive you further
step outside the room
at twilight, do you see the star fading?

do not just stop there
walk farther and see the magnificent
sun rising.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Definition Of What Is Poetry

now i think i know
what poetry is

it is
everyday

it is not
a form
but a thought

it is beyond thoughts
even

it is a stream
of emotions

and there is a boat
that sails beneath them

there is no rudder
neither sail

there are only hands
that feel
the cascading waters

feet that dangle on the
river
straining the coldness
of the eddies

there is the peace
of the sky
there is the freedom
of the drifting
of the clouds

it is foremost
a dedication and hence
it is as i am telling you
and everyday
affair

here
is the ordinariness of poetry
that most men
do not take seriously

that the world
cannot really believe
thinking that this is talent
and tact

no,
it is everyday
it is defecation
it is breathing
it is strolling
it is eating breakfast
and smoking at the park

it is sleeping and running
and holding hands
it is everyday
it is everything
it is not peculiar
or extraordinary

this is my
poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Direction

the winds change
and i change too
always against it
always against
the water in the river
always against
the common mind
for no reason at all

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Door

i remember
this door was made
12 years ago
the day when i married you.

we chose clear lacquer
to keep its original
mahogany grain
we keep the gloss
and we were never
at loss.

there were loud slams
oh, i hate to remember
but there were also gentler closes
of this door
with all the tender intents
of not having to disturb
a single soul.

then the hinges begin to rust
and the door creaks and
screams getting louder
like the madness of the one
who fears
that love is finally gone.

the termites came
and the frames get hollow as
time pierces it
showing the emptiness
inside it as though
it was mere kind
of a seashell

the knob is finally broken
and the key to open it again
was lost
then we come back to our senses
after twelve years
the door has to be replaced
with a new one

this time white in paint
the hinges glossy copper
the knob in shining silver
and the key fits in without any sound

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Economic Theory

the sea has so much water
and so
has the rivers and ponds
and creeks too

you are the mighty sun
and you activate all your rays
like hands generating heat
from your self-energizing body

you take in
all their potable waters and keep
them in all your friendly clouds
and then by your power
as the all-kind all-giving sun
you order all the clouds to shower
to all the land the much needed rain

even the tiniest moss and algae
the underprivileged worms
the hibernating creatures
the dried seeds shall have the share
of all wondrous waters of the earth
this gather-all-and-trickle down
economic theory of mine

at the end
all shall have their share
all shall grow and bear fruit
throughout the years of their lives
where shall hunger be?
and wars and chaos?

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Flair

and so the peacock having
survived from a
broken wing

(sigh! it could have
been a broken heart)

now rises up
from the bushes

struts head high on the
park
under the trees

and fans herself with her
multicolored tail

i could not help

(identifying
myself with her)

and i said directly from
spontaneous
instinct,

' I like this
beautiful bird'

how i wish somehow that like
an eagle
it can also learn the art of flying

and trick the
air
with its new
flair.
A New Generation Of Dishonest People

Our denials
are what make us move

for instance we deny
the hardness of the stone
and the rope

we deny that we have
heads
and that make us
more adaptable
here

our denials
constant as they are
make us all alive

we keep mumbling
we pay the price
for this

we look around
honest people are hanged
and their remaining
children
keep asking

what did you teach them?
honesty kills.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Haircut

all i need today is a new haircut
my thick hair is covering my head
and i do not really like it

like a carabao dung

it is giving me a certain feeling of a hat
a buri hat with lots of protruding fibers
untrimmed

what do i need a hat for?
when there is no rain
when there is no sun
when there is no
heavy debris falling on me

i just wanna be free
i want my brain open
washed by the rain
bleached by the sun
true to its nature
& form

thinking
w/o
any covering

without the bias
without the prejudice
of
scalp
of
hair

plain brain
exposed to all the elements

it will tolerate a certain form
of fungal infection
a certain
brain longing to be

brain dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Home Of The Heart....

Last night
I remembered you

Such a sweet memory
About us

I am beside another
soul
beside another warm body
her hands are on my
arms
in circles are the thoughts of you
running in the water
flying over the hills
drift ing
vivid and in the colors
of rainbows

And the soundly i sleep
Beside someone who does not even know your name
I am glad i have gone beyond the wooden fences of my mind
Towards another pasture
Crossed the river

And then i walk towards
My new Home....

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Learning

the sea and the waves
the sun and sunlight
the singer and the song

how did i ever miss all these?
not one, not two.
how foolish can i be?

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Learning Of An Old Man...

i am so sorry
i just wake up from a very deep sleep

it is now
fifty years ago, and i do not remember you

i am so sorry
my heart beats for another

it is not our fault
we were inside that dream

we did not intend to
stay there either

this is another season
i will miss the sun, i am here for autumn

i am old, and i have learned too late to love
myself again

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Life

you slept on your
years like rip van winkle
and you come
to me
unable to say
what time
is it where you
are what the heck
is this place
so new to you

your hair white
begging on your
knees your teeth
yellowed by
unbrushed years
your eyes
blankly trying
to know
what this world
brings you

wake up
to a new day

a new life,
welcome

lost brother
this is my hand
that you have
long forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Life.....

the way we sleep
tonight and the other past nights
speak of the usual story

how time makes us bores
and how we have decided not to touch
what is so usual

we have finally decided to look
the other way around
our backs facing each other

how we see other worlds out there
how we should forget the past
how we should meet the future as a stranger
how we start shaking hands again
to create a world anew
before our eyes
a new life.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Light

if you call it
death
no one, no one
likes to grab
it.

pretend that
it is a
beginning
only to float
and
still not accept
that you
have ended

there is no
choice
actually

a strong ray
of light
absorbs you
sucks you

like a vacuum cleaner
and

pooo! you're out
you're in.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Meeting

make my life
easy
i shall flow as lightly as a feather
in the sky without rain

and the only way to do it
is you make yours busy
stay away from the house
and let all those details
do not destruct you

nor distract me with your
complaints for the hardness of words
the dis-edifying structures of our
faiths

think: we dignify ourselves too with
distance
we erect walls and pillars apart
for the space to
breathe
the nearness of you sometimes
is actually
a contempt of so much
intimacy

think: love is always sweeter the third
time around
the second did not work that well
we have abused
love that much with
promises
of independence

so? go and i too go my way
tonight we meet as a new set of strangers
asking names
for new brands of coffee
when i look at you again
pretend
there is none of us and only then
can we be true again

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Morning

life needs a confirmation
after a night sleep
breathe! breathe!
savor the fresh air
from the fans of the
banana leaves

feel the fresh air
invading the veins
the passages of
the lungs
the beats and throbbing
of the heart

it is another morning
different from the rest

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Saying At Ph

a poem a day
keeps your shrinks away.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Season

i welcome the new season
when i do not like to do the usual things i do,

and they look for me
on places they always see me
the lecture room is full but i will not be there
my cell phone rings but i will not answer
i turn everything off

it is a new season of my life
for them to see me die outside
for me to make life anew inside
away from the crowd
into the solitude of my soul

into the calm pond
lotus like i sit
seeking myself, long lost, and weary

molting like a snake, in hibernation, like a mud fish
hiding its head on mud
cracking soil in summer
till the next rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
A New Version Of My Life

life comes in my room
fresh from the rain
stripteasing me
so how can i not possibly embrace it
and forget
death?

oh, life is too forgiving
fleshy and sweet as cantaloupe and
supple as fresh
strawberry
how can i not take this irresistible
bite?

RIC S. BASTASA
A New World Found

i watch it
first
how love is made
how souls
mix
how a new world
gives birth
to the sun
and then i look
at the mirror
of myself
stares at this
beauty
and i know what i
want
this just this
and then i am at peace
with all
these broken pieces
coming back at
me in a collage
of a beautiful
pattern
full of colors
shining
and alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nice Conversation

last night a nice conversation
was made between two
people who claim
to be friends, they were talking
about pain and sorrow
and how they must
be resolved
solved and eradicated
like dirt and warts

existential angst
making her tipsy like she was drunk
of vodka mixed with champagne
she keeps on asking
why

why people get sad and sadder and
sadder still despite
a heavy meal
and a surrounding of friends that come
to her house on sundays

it is hard to understand life
and suddenly by impulse
one says: the key to understanding life
is art,
your art that conquers this pain
that mimics
its wiles and bites and pinch

come then, let us imitate it
and mimic it and mock it
life with art
let us see let us feel
let us dance let us sing
let us chant
let us have poetry

let us forget time
let us forget who hurts us

come let us not be ourselves
let us be someone else

and life shall now be deluded
there is no us, there is no ego now that we have smashed it
like fragile glasses shattered in the gutters

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nice Day

bird with a yellow
feather
chirping on a branch
of a tree
fronting my glass
window

i rub doubt away
from my eyelids.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nice Idea To Begin The Year With...

it is a nice idea to hear from you that
you are lonely, , , , tonight, i added, , ,
what is nicer than that
is that you start to think if you
will start writing a poem.....tonight, i always add that,

it is indeed nice to know that somewhere
far away from me
another lonely soul is planting some seeds in that garden of
the spirit

that somehow, sometime, more flowers will be blooming there
away from me, away from everyone

and that a soul, begins to sing a very lonely song....
tonight, and it is, as i expect that always to be...

so beautiful...so so beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nickname....

on early dawn
while you are writing those letters
(still on the grip of tradition
emails are impersonal and lack
the sentimentality of distance
and the grace of the
strokes and
tendrils)

you hear those chirping birds
cocks crowing
sounds of the streets being swept
and occasional hushes of the wind
from the sea

your letters sound as though
they are anticipating the birth of the world
on the seventh day
when the Lord said he finally rested

at the end you say what they always write
Sincerely yours,

your nickname.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Neighbor Singing Out Of Tune

at first one feels that this disturbance is killing all the
the animate things
alive in this small community

singing out of tune, again, but no one really has the temerity
to make him stop, for he is at the height of recreating himself
recomposing
from an old form of sadness, we all understand his art of
reverberating what destroys him and now
he sings

that is the most important thing, look they say, do you hear him singing?
loving neighbors, oh, how happy their hands are, clapping clasping
for another broken heart has healed itself
after days and days of bleeding
profusely

i am listening, and deep within my own feelings of woe
woe relating to woe,
there is this light though dim,
yet it appears so bright
to the incalculable depth of the
heart

and too pleasing to the heart is the sound of a broken song,
the soul of the out of tune, we always say
welcome, welcome, we're with you, in all these.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Night Conversation

it is your
right to have lifestyle of your own
and you may
keep it as i ponder upon
my own

50 years
there is a zero in it
i know

you are discreet
with your favorite websites
that give you
maximum erection

soon they will trace it
when you become a star

for the meantime
no one is concerned with lowly worms
feeding on carcass

there is no envy here
as i have already written my conclusions
there are principles
that are not uncompromisable
your hands are waves
and your words are like tassel of a white dress

sometimes i could not help laughing
but i know how to pocket smiles like some secrets

you bloomed last night
like cadena de amor
ah, the dama de noche is
more like it

i have seen the genie in you
you bet the pink mustache is too revealing
i give a hint that you must leave
you refuse to take it

and so i simple keep my mouth shut
your words are undressing you
it is ugly
but it is the truth

i take a chair from the other room
sit there

look away from the fourth floor into
the far trees as the wind gets colder
the night digging deeper
and soon the paths which were visible before
turned into a
dark river

i do not wander what fish swims in your head
i do not wish to see bones
i am simply feeling the flow
i guess i simply pity you

in this usual pretense of happiness
there is actually no one there
like a tv show of canned laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
A Night Of Rain

wrapped with
a thick blanket
our bodies together
listening
to the whole night
rain
train of thoughts
trickles of
happy moments
intertwined

RIC S. BASTASA
A Night Of Rendezvous

Along the rough mountains
and winding rivers
some forests
he shall pass
and cross &
get wet and dry
to meet her
on this rendezvous

In her little hut
the night is so cold and damp
the love
they have been keeping
shall build a fire
to dissolve fog and mist
and dissipate the coldness
to destroy whatever distance
has this world made against them
whatever walls whatever rain

RIC S. BASTASA
A Night Without Love....

when we are too
tired

we take the bed
and lose ourselves in the labyrinths of sleep

it is another night
without love

as a matter of consequence
the morning turns into a chicken's
intestinal crookedness

you are still asleep
perhaps dreaming about love

when i left for work
without tasting breakfast

RIC S. BASTASA
A Night Without The Wind And The Stars

just have the moon
at least

you have no choice
what are you?

a speck of dust
in the galaxy

envy the still pond
where the moon
sits

cope up
breathe and be
the wind
for a while

create the ripple
tell the
water lily

you are alive
and can
disturb

a little
and tell the night
you eat
fears

that you can sleep
with
or without its
dark covers

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nighthmare

i take the plane
at 2 a.m.
cebu bound, and
i dream that
the plane crashed
and that
we are all dead

our souls look
down upon our
torn flesh
some are burnt
unidentifiable

we are so silent
like stones without
winds

x x x x x x

the plane touches down
perfectly well
at the airport

silently we line up
to step out

from a nightmare that
i only know

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nihilist

so everything is nothing,
a thing becomes a no-thing
they all disappear
they become nowhere

when a man dies
he becomes nothing

something that i cannot
really understand
these words are here
and you read them
they must not be nothing

yet i feel nothing too
and this must be something
yet to prove
this nihilism

there is this circle
and i do not know where
at what particular point
now, am i.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nipa Shack

a nipa shack
in all appearances of it
unwalled and
defloored

about to fall and kiss
the ground of
rotten hay and
wilting grass

stop and look at it
even for a short while
and it has a lot of stories
to tell

shocked
you will be
finding that from its nipa shingles
there is
this upsurge of emotions
bursting thoughts
restlessness moving to and from
beside the clouds just a tree
above it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note About Her

I ALWAYS think that she is more beautiful with her dress on when her hair is hanging free down to her waist like words in a flowing poem,

but she prefers the usual mode of seduction by undressing herself slowly and when she has nothing on she walks towards that steps of stone leading to the famed hot spring at the foot of the extinct volcano

and then she plunges her body like a young fish,

there is nothing to imagine, as everything has been fully seen,

she calls me to join her in the heat of the water and i start to compromise about everything that i am,

the night is so silent and the waters create the happiest ripples on that moment,

i am mute and blind

this is now the imagination,

another pagination of a bookish self, now flashing with pictures with multicolor and lustful scents, to include the stars and meteors which are not supposed to be there

happiness has an ending. it is muted the way it must be for
a married man
like me....

i recall again,
when she could have been more beautiful if we only
talk and exchange metaphors
when we should have simply exchange
pleasantries or

even just
biographies

or the latest news
on showbiz....

(shift)
(cough)
(hesitation to say something more about it*)

even if i do not have to hold her hands
and squeeze her supple body
or tickle
her nipple...
.
even if we do not have to close
our eyes
and then imagine someone else
somewhere
or
for those which we have never
seen
before the sun finally
sets....

the oral intercourse,
to my clean mind,
would have been more meaningful (if)

i should have told her
about a story
or about bukowski
that
it would have been more poetic

if we did nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note About Sunset....

there is always something
that you have not seen about the sunset

you always evaded it
when you capture it with words

what was she wearing when she left you?
when your mom died miles away from you, what color did you see?

when you mourn upon love, what coldness was there?
when your friend betray you, what was it that faded inside you?

was it not the orange in sunset? was it not the darkness that it left
after it faded into a wordless space?

oh, it was you alone, as always, and yet you have failed to
record it exactly, the way passion paints a picture of itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note About The Old Woman Friedn In Facebook

ten thousand
nautical miles away
an old woman
is asking me pictures
of Disneyland
and i sent her so many
pictures of Minnie
and mickey
and the rest of the
cartooning gangs
for i can sense how
lonely could she be
chatting with me in
facebook
and i have seen her
posts of
a big house with no
one there
and i do not ask where
her children are
or her husband
for he must have died
ahead of her
and there is nothing
left except her
dreams of childhood
the way she used to like
Minnie and mickey
on TV.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note Before The Plane Touches Down

thick clouds
nothing to see
the plane pierces
a haze

all the passengers
are so silent

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note By The Door

he leaves today for
bacolod go straight by fast craft
to ilo-ilo
another boat shall take him to the island of
Guimaras
where he shall be with the Trappist
monks
on a three-day retreat

he badly needs it
to repair what is broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For An Ex

if there is no
love anymore in there
i guess
there must be hate
do you survive
on this?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For Franz Kafka

one morning
when i discover
that i have turned
into a cockroach
you may write
what i will
do
you may theorize
that since i will be
to shy to go out
of my room just like
what your character did
then i may lock my
room, not eat,
and only talk to
my sister
that i may soon hate
my father
and will soon forget
my mother
i can relate to all
these based on my
readings
but i can see
what i can do
when i stink and
soon fear light
when even the air
which is suppose to
hush a lullaby
now hurts too
just like the rest
of those who
are close to me
and turn themselves
into disgusting monsters
more disgusting
than my being a
human-cockroach
you know very well
that i am brave enough
to force the door
to the other room
the one that none of
you has ever entered
i can use a knife
an ax or a hand grenade
i can even use a bomb
to break this
back door open
i am brave and
will always be restless
on a broken wing
of a bird i can
always still manage
to fly
away.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For Hakim

there is always One God
who created the air and the trees and
lakes and seas
and whatever is it that you want me to think
there is always a humanity
divided by all those centuries
of conflict that roots its way deeper
into our misunderstanding
but have faith
each man is working his heart way out
from hate
and unnecessary division
like islands looking for the missing bridges
that have long existed
before we have began to know each other

assala'am mulaykum!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For Michael...

i could have told Michael that his
despair is the fruit of his poisoned tree.

that there is no sense crying over love
which has failed for all those years to respond
to tears.

that if there is someone whom you should love more
and make it last perhaps forever is this love of self.

one whom you can talk with forever
until you die, and if you died well enough

when your soul rises higher from your body
by then, you could have told yourself, how
elevating death is, but how can i ever tell him now
when he had anticipated it so well

he is up there (perhaps with wings and halo on his head)
while here i am, scribbling another note for him.

too young to be brave enough
too young to die without having grasped so well
the meaning of his life.

(how do i really know? i never will)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For Peace

i like to wake up
when everyone is asleep,

and when they all leave
i take a good sleep myself

i guess this is the only way
to make peace in this world

perhaps i want to be alive when all of them or dead or be dead myself when they all live for long.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For Siblings...

da rotten boat
da neglected machine
bathed in rust
docked
at the other side of
the river
perhaps, shall now tell
you
that even brothers or
sisters for that matter
live in separate rooms
and there perhaps
hatch some explanations
for the
betrayal
which of course
you cannot accept or
at least on the
level of
belief
somehow you have to
learn
living too inside
your room
make a map
of your life
discover the treasure
and keep it
all for yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note For The Inadvertent...

he drops a word or two
which sentenced many
and for the whole week
or even more months
he will be talked about.

Hiphip says it will be
free advertisement and
soon he will be on the
top list as future prince.

his words do not deserve
the dignity of your comments.
Leave him to Oblivion since
He is out of touch. See, i
do not even mention his name.

RIC S. BASTASA
my heart is made of glass
transparent
and too fragile
and if you love me
just in case
please know how to
really care
not to break it
for once shattered
i cannot pick a piece
without an
injury.....

RIC S. BASTASA
and this time  
whether you like it or not  
you are set upon this journey  
that gives you fear  

because there is no ticket  
for your coming back  

RIC S. BASTASA
A Note On Friendship

Friendship sometimes is

' i scratch your back
and you scratch mine'

someone asks
' what does that solve? '

one responds
' what is your problem? '

none, none

that is what friendship sometimes is

none, none, nothing

it just makes you feel at home.

RIC S. BASTASA
before i embark on another trip today
i depart from the usual

silence, there is something inside me that wants
to

say something, like a note that i have written last night
which i put

inside my pocket and if by chance my tongue cannot get away
from its sealed

lips, i may just take that note and put it beside your table while
you are

still asleep, and if i had to, if i shall not forget, I'll put
a rose beside it,

the one that i pick from your garden, still fresh with dew on its
petals,

it is like, i only give what i take from you, a rose from your garden,
and a note from me, that despite all those stormy days,

i think, and this you must treasure like all the flowers that grow
in your garden, that which you water and nurture,

that it is my fault, that even if you cannot forgive me,
as i pack my bag, to give your flowers more space, and for you to be at peace, i,
too, shall take a deep breath, saying

i still love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nude Story

the light blue sea marks a boundary with a mild wave and foam
along the sands of the shore two white empty benches hold a pink bikini and a
white swimming trunk
at the other side of another empty beach chair,
is the bra
the calm sea erases the footsteps towards it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nugget Of Gold

congratulations my friend
for despite the anger of the past
here you are
entertaining an enemy
making him feel at home with you
serving him bread and coffee and
a good transportation for the night
to take him where he can stay
have a nice sleep and dream....

congratulations, you have lived
your faith
always being good despite their
indifferent and even devilish
attitudes.....

congratulations for you are unique
in the midst of mud you are still
a nugget of gold....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Numbered Poem

2. the mantle is heavy in white.
3. the white cup is not fuming.
4. the lover does not come tonight.
5. an empty vase keeps a shallow
6. conversation with the black clock.
7. there is no flower to brighten
8. the night without a tryst.
9. it is the black clock that ticks
10. time. It is this lament. A cup
11. without tea. A vase without
12. a rose, a daffodil, a white lily.
13. the black clock ticks. There
14. is no hint that it will stop.

That big shell knows it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Numbness From My Arm To My Heart

this is the trip of boredom.

it starts from the tip of my toe as a ripple of a clear pond from a fish that just died of suffocation

too much water less air the fish dies too

then it crawls like a worm higher to my arm near my neck

and then it moves down to my chest finding a heart

long dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nursery Rhyme For The Kid Wanting A Poem While His Mother Is Away Looking For Work

The rain is loudly pouring
and the roof is noisy
i have a song not messy
and i want to sing foolhardily
but how can you be hearing
when the loud rain is pouring?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Nut.....

i hear the sound of the big waves
arriving on the shores of Katinka.
the people are not afraid.
the dogs are asleep.
dreams continue growing in the
fields of sleep.
flowers of hope are spreading
on the bed sheets of forgiving.
this is a mountain. and the very reason
why we think we should climb it someday
is that it is still there.
this is a beetle. And i am a nut.

RIC S. BASTASA
A One Man's Show

now, this is my last instruction for you
hear it well: when you travel in this boat
you paddle, there is no machine
your hands are paddles
your boat your body
your steer your foot
now they do not mind you but you speak a lot
and laugh a lot
they will not comment somehow
trusting you
that you know where to go
and what to bring
and when and where to finally stop
the boat and keep it
on the other side of this big river
the point is
you will never know whether you have arrived or not
they just keep on watching
and they will hear every groaning and moaning
that your are making
as though you are making love with
someone invisible
things are complicated finally
at first you proclaim
this is a simple matter and i know fully well what is happening
but that is not the case really

when you arrive there
there will be big changes
clothes change from blue to white
you will grow a beard
and your fingers are no longer proportional to your arms
some things appear smaller than normal
and you being to
shy away from everybody who keeps on seeing you
stalking you
but their mouths are shut
like a wall
that once was a door
things are different now
very complicated
harrowing experiences of doves and bats begin to unfold
some worms scream finally
they shout your name
and you close your ears and
sleep.

the life that they call a stage
lets the curtain fall
it is the end of your show
and they all begin to leave you
alone again.

(For Erye... )

RIC S. BASTASA
A One-Way Traffic

he is here again
on this one-way street
going straight ahead
on his monologue

this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pact Within You

a bouquet of white roses
a red ribbon that
ties the stems
disregard the thorns
smell the scents
jump for joy
declare that war
against sadness

RIC S. BASTASA
A Page Of Poems For You

i tried to dismiss thoughts of you like a blank page torn off from the notebook and crumpled and thrown over the window

i look back i have written a lot of poems for you, and oh

my heart speaks again about love so broken....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pain In The Heart

this is nothing
tell you when you ask
this is nothing
assure you
this is just a pain in the heart
and everyone has it
so this must be nothing
like everyone's suffering
this is nothing special
hearts break
person die
hearts bleed
people heal themselves
hearts are broken
and there are no heroes
no nobel laureates
for this common occurences
so why bother

your heart is broken too?
don't bother

i am shutting up.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pain In The Neck

too many words,
too many promises,
too many loves
meant to be forgotten,
too many woes
these telling and retelling,
how can i be so submissive
to these literatures of lament, these incantations of madness?

a pain in the neck
a migraine, somehow, i lack sleep and the dogs keep on barking
on the streets of sorrow,
on the boulevard of broken dreams,
lights shutting off slowly like fireflies dissolving in the horizon.

it is morning,
and a yellow bird with a black beak is chirping on a twig
just beside my window.

i breathe the breeze from the sea.
The seagull pass by.
A yacht with a white sail and white banners is approaching the port.
My loneliness like an island

A broken port, a history of a typhoon, a rope, and a fallen coconut.
Someone farther from this house is waiving a hand.
A white handkerchief. A truce.

I am sleepy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Painful Back

if i had gone to Freud
he must have explained to me
the cause of this painful back
i think i know what he
will say
and that he will tell me always
that i am highly qualified for
my calculated risks
for my educated guess
for my tongue that knows how
it is
when it begins to slip

RIC S. BASTASA
A painter on study
sketched two nudes
In canvass, a nude

Man & woman

The man in hard
Solid lines his torso
His thighs his legs
Well chiseled by
The dark colors
Of his brush, and

The woman in
Smooth lines, her
Fragile hands, her
Soft breasts, her
Thin lines in light
Feminine colors,

He so admired
His nude creations,
And he stared
At the magic
He just painted,

And tired for
Hours, he just
Blinked a while
Wanting a little
Slip, he faltered,

He blinked and
Winked for a second,

Surprised, only to
Find out that the two
Are suddenly missing
not looking for food
A Painting

a boat carries
a man with a long white beard

the boat moves silently
in the middle of a very wide river

an angel guides him
towards the strong rage of light at the other end

surrounded by these clouds with an array of angels
in the formation of stairs

the waters are so still and the place is so quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Painting Of Pink Lips

pink lips
melting like
ice cream
from a
pastel brown
canvass

i feel desire
you feel
the toxicity of
dripping
the uselessness of
drifting
i feel the deep sense
of falling
into a dream
of drips of
sweet strawberry
flavored
ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pantomime

I WANT to make a poem
that must rhyme
spicy like a thyme
with value like
a dime
without much words
like a mime.

RIC S. BASTASA
on your hand is a paper boat
you made last night

on a rainy day like this
you put on a gray rain coat

the river rises
perfect for your scheme

you put the boat gently
on the brown water

white paper boat
carried by this murkiness

your hands push
the paper boat leaves

tonight you sleep on
the wooden floor

it is mahogany brown and you
become the paper boat

sailing inside your dream
the floor becomes the big river

your thoughts become the wind
your eyes become two moons

the room is as dark as the night
the dream is so alive like a mother's song.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Papillon

a dog with
butterfly ears
who wants
more to
stay inside
the house

no chicks
in there

RIC S. BASTASA
A Parable

a frog, always the frog
has always been a frog
servant to the fog, but
one frog one day decides
to be a bull to the dismay
of the frogs in that little pond
to the ridicule of the bulls
nearby but the frog learns
to be a bull and bully has
he become until one day
he gains the respect of the
other bulls to the pleasure
of the sun to the disdain
of the fog on the hills

nothing is impossible
to the power of the mind
this the frog follows
through and through

RIC S. BASTASA
A Paradox Of Joy...

a boy was hurt  
but he could not just be a boy forever

a man too is hurt  
but he could not just be a man forever

and so the hurt or whatever you name it  
pain, grief, trauma  
psychosis

or simply sadness  
with the poetic twist of a gentle lamentation

cannot be forever that boy or that man  
there is something divine in all these  
gifts as you may wish  
there is something that polishes that rough stone  
turn it into a very precious diamond  
like the story of the clam and  
its pearl

that sadness exist  
but sadness cannot be sadness forever

hope, that is the wish  
there is no permanence in all of these

wait, from this door to the stair and to the horizon of a black line  
someone comes, it is something bringing everything for you

exalt, exalt  
in extreme silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Parody.....

we make things last
without minding, a relationship

for instance, we disregard what
wrong details are there, we keep it hung
like a Mona Lisa painting on the wall,
everyday

she smiles we come and go we live life
the way time passes by
unperturbed by the wind and

not caring what tomorrow brings just
the way
that tree grows into a shade for all
crawling things like

us.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Parrot

A beautiful parrot I like to see
On a cage
Paying attention to
My every word
And
Then
Retells them all back to me

Faithfully
Although
With some little lapses

Lively little lapses
Little slips of the bird’s belittled tongues

She is not arrogant.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Part Of Kunwari

when someone dies
like Lady Diane
i try to imitate that gay guy
blowing a candle in the dark
instead of lighting it
and i will oblige myself with
a very sad song
that a part of my kunwari
died

but honestly, i am not
affected at all

i am an island that
everyone has not yet found.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Part Of The Big Family Tree

retrace the steps
finding the footprints of my ancestors
their fingers carved in the limestones
of old spanish churches and
municipal halls

howling sounds of their sufferings
on forced labor and constant whippings
they found the escape on wooden boats
paddling their way
tossed by big waves
and uncertain dark nights
towards the Sulu sea

they found land where they are free
built their houses and made love all the way
bathe in the wide and long winding rivers
embraced the sea and acquired their territories
for years the wrote their names on the long lists
on tombstones

i am here and they are pleased
i am writing about them
and what they started once
i shall continue
what they have seen i shall see again
on this big tree with roots down the deepest earth
and branches and twigs like a hundred hands and fingers
strecthing out to the skies
i am one of the buds
coming out from its bark
i have tiny breathing cells spreading looking out for more openings

RIC S. BASTASA
A Partner In Life

one does not just
look for a kiss

a kiss can be more than
what it literally is

it can be a strawberry
that your lips offer to mine

one finds not just love
but also tenderness

not just the word but
the silence in between

one does not just look for
someone beside

something is beyond affection
i feel it with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Party

On her 60th birthday
she had her hair dyed red
had a face life
and had her body
bleached

she wears her skimpy
outfit
with yellow flowers
on the fabric
her lips are thick
red
her body still makes
the swing
she dances the whole
night
does the tango and boogie

we cheer for her strength
still making it
without her husband
who left her for another
woman
in America

RIC S. BASTASA
A Passion Gone

things that we like to
do never tire us

it is the tiredness
that surrenders

this passion makes us
alive

desire stirs us like
a big whirlpool after a tsunami

it is this quest
that makes us indefatigable

but when every passion is gone
every desire consumed

what is left is nothing
there is no reason to live

and we find ourselves
dying to be dead...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Path Of Brown Stain...

the heavy rain from the sky
pours upon the heads of the mountains

the rain takes upon its feet the rivers on a journey to the mouth of the sea

it escapes and creates a brown island that spreads on the belly of the sea

it is not beautiful to see

how stains are made

the sea is sinful and it will always be

RIC S. BASTASA
A Patriotic Stance

i have decided now, i will not go to another place
there is no other place than this

i am singing here and writing poems for my loved ones
whatever i do here turns out to be pleasing
and my heart beautifully sings for the living

what can i ask more of myself, or of this place where i was born
wherever i look or turn my gaze
i always see the blooming flowers and green bushes

my years are spent but not wasted, nothing is ever destroyed
whatever is sown, grows here
whatever is built remains strong

i can't find another country
this country has been so good to me

i will walk its streets, i may grow old in the same neighborhood
there are always ships and roads but i am not going anywhere
i have chosen now & this
i live here and shall die here
there is no other.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pause

i close my eyes
hurt by the light
i nod my head
and ask for
more ideas
from God
i beg for more
silence
from the storms
of my troubled
heart
i dream of a calm sea
a raft
a fisherman
a catch
a rope a rudder
a blue sail
a seagul an island
a tower of light
a blade of grass
a ring
a truckload of rocks
a navel a while skin
an arm a butt

i want an imagination
of wingless birds
stranded in an island
a shadow
a dream of liberation
of bodies
trapping souls

RIC S. BASTASA
A Peaceful Day

they say i am a sad man
living in a mournful house
with no one

the windows look
like stooping eyelids

the door like the backbone
of an old woman with
osteoporosis

the wall are blank like
a blackboard with nothing to say

those who visit my place
feel the loneliness of the air

as though someone is recently buried
when you come back to the house

and do nothing but gaze
at the bleakness of the hours

i am confident about my
existence

and i tell them
that they are all wrong about me

i like this day
with no one around me

It is the most peaceful
day i ever had.

i feel so rested like a
man sleeping on a rocking chair
while watching a Love Story
with the sound in the Off mode.
i am contemplating on the sounds of
the footsteps of the souls

of those who had long departed
most interestingly of those who
want to stay

RIC S. BASTASA
A Peaceful Mind

when they begin to throw stones against each other
i am no longer there
i hear nothing breaking
i see nothing bleeding

and then they follow me wondering why is this man so strange?
why does he talk only to himself?
why is he so broken despite the quiet?

there is this hollowness that spreads like a space upon itself
beyond the edges of the blanket
within the softness of the pillows

there is this irony of believing and not believing at the same time
a puzzle that we make and ultimately we cannot solve ourselves

there is this particular quiet that stabs those who care to listen
there is this life that takes life upon itself and escapes what death offers

there are tantrums of the spirits in the dawning of the end of times
the tongues of fire descends upon us and there is no moment of misunderstanding

we theorize that these, all these possibilities can exist
a quiet that conquers and devours what evils we have stored beneath our bellies

a quiet that can not be bought or sold or squander
the soft rain during a sunny day hovering upon a thick grass spreading
in every nooks of our humanities....

this is a peaceful mind speaking unfiltered what comes and says what comes
genuinely unedited on meanings still to be captured

decipher then if you can in the quietest moment of your mind
falter not, perhaps flatter a little, flip, flop and flap those wings unimagined...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Peacock

a peacock meets a peahen
on a grassy garden

'what the hell' says the peahen
to the peacock

the peacock asks
'why the hell?'

and the peahen
snobs the peacock
and says

'yours is just a peasize!'

and the peahen leaves
the peacock for good

and they know
they cannot live
happily ever after
for sure

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pebble

inanimate,
the pebble is just perfect for me.
it does not feel, it has no color of the sun or any flower.
it is steady, and numb
and stays just where it is unless moved
by the force of a hand or of the surging water
it feels nothing
and looks dignified
you look at it
and it stares at you.
when it is thrown
away, it does not come
back.
and there it is, always, saying nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pebble As Concise As It Is Small And Round Inside Your Palm

consider me as a pebble
concise inside your palm

complete in its roundness
always willing to be thrown

away any minute from now
when you feel the necessity

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pebble In My Shoe

a pebble in my shoe
i want it removed

a pebble in my shoe
a disturbance
in my mind

a pebble in my shoe
an enemy
in my feet

yet wait
let me recall
a grain of sand
inside the clam

a pearl
in my hand

once a pebble
in my shoe

let me walk again
let me remember

the pearl
in the clam

RIC S. BASTASA
A Peek Of Moonlight

when i am alone tonight
when the moon is full
when the wind is so gentle

i take a peek
of moonlight
from the love
slowly coming
our from the
curtains of
your heart

i am waiting
for you to call
me and start
with you
this dance
of passion
and love

just the two
of us
under the shadow
of the moon

just the two of us
and the light
of the moon
painting
the lines of
our naked
bodies

RIC S. BASTASA
A Peom For K. (The Banker With All The Conflicting Interests)

i shall now write
a poem for my happiest day,

it is all about an old, scheming and fraudulent woman
stacking all her money and the money of the other people

inside her room
inside her house and inside
her bigger storehouses

she says
these are all for her children

and grandchildren and the children
of all her grandchildren and

all the coming children of more grandchildren & great great grandchildren

what is mad about this is
that she is taking the money due
to other people who are hungry and innocent and gullible

but she is a very wise woman and she gets what she wants
she gets what she all wants
practically everything that her hands can hold her eyes can see

perhaps

forgetting that soon she will be
made to pay for the price of her greed
and avarice and dirty schemes and
foul techniques and it will be for all

her children and grandchildren and the children
of all her grandchildren and

all the coming children of more
grandchildren all the coming children of more
great grandchildren &
great great grandchildren

...and then justice shall reign

but when it comes
i shall not see this event anymore
but i will be happy

>>>ii<<<

i will ask the seagulls to sing
for me
and you who will be alone and sick and dying
shall hear
and then be happy and die
happily too

you, who believe with me
that our place is not here
and that the real treasure is
still somewhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Perfect Family....

one of those
pretty lies
which we keep on
pricing,

something we
embrace as truth
is this

perfect family,
successful kids
honorable fathers
and understanding
mothers,

a strong house
a new car,
open communication
lines,

but no matter how
we all try
there is no such
thing.

last night at
the family dinner
two are missing
and most of us
are no longer talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Perspective Of Rain....

i have thought about this once
keeping it to myself
but i must tell you now
because perhaps it has relevance

that the rain is our only link to the heavens
that when it touches our body
we too have touched the hands of God....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Philosophy

it is not how tall the buildings have grown
the presence of three elevators
that is not what progress is all about

you are telling me about how ateneo
has become an ivory tower rising above
the silence of Mt. Apo

so unlike our times
when rooms are crowded when noise
grow like grasses on the wild fields
uninhabited

let me ask you what happened to the playgrounds
of the children
and the chapel where Fr. Dot says mass all day
is the pine tree still there
and the pond beside
where the gold fish are swimming?

let me sense the essence of our lives
not getting much not accumulating power
not really going back to dusty chairs
but just being here
without acquiring
and yet still feeling so whole and complete

in that peace and quiet inside our hearts
under that tree that they have cut
twenty years ago

RIC S. BASTASA
A Philosophy About The Wall

his philosophy is absurd
that this world is a big wall
and we all bump on it
and then we die and so

one day to prove his philosophy
he rides in his car starts the engine
and on a full speed bumps the wall of his house
indeed his car like paper
folded upon his head
crushed and bloody
he instantaneously died

for one thing i agree with him
death is never a lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Philosophy In Life

when you read that poem about deleting Maureen
i regret to have given you the wrong spelling for delet...

i know it lacks an e.
but i do not wish to delet it anymore or even edit it.

i have this philosophy in life you know
do not go back
leave all your tracks as they were once made

do not edit life
let them see how mistakes were made and how they need not be corrected

simply because you know that
people are patient and they understand the common ground of our humanity

effects, not eros.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Philosophy, And This Sense Of Respect For The Other.

for a poem to be real
he is lecturing me
like i am one of his students in class

it must have
political color
like a student leader put to prison
the one with
balls
fighting against an oppressive system
raging against the tide

it must be a questioning poem
one that lives in
quarter storms

it must have the love story of a rebel
war torn places
secret codes
and not subservient

love is not an issue in poetry
or identity crisis
these are all nothing but foolishness

existentialism? what for?
intellectual masturbation that gives you
nothing
but selfish ejaculation

i have respect for him
he is alive and fighting and kicking and revolting
soon he will be caught
and killed and his families
massacred
perhaps
God forbids
To me however,
Life is too short for all these
and so
here i am writing anything that comes to my mind
topics range
whatever comes along
ants, or reptiles or sun or
urination
or filial pity or
envy,
or premature deaths
or mourning widows
lost kids and
even about the lost cents
that the houseboy keeps on looking

This is life.
A phenomenon, it does not matter
if nothing is important.

I see, and so i write,
There are feelings, nearest to my heart
and i hear all the sounds

I echo,
This is the resounding.

Life ends, sometimes, others do not like it.
I welcome everything.
My arms are always open, like a port at sea
Like a cave less the vines.

RIC S. BASTASA
a picture in black and white always brings nostalgia
for instance the picture of mama and papa
beside their daughters
named leonor with the pony tail
betty with the tiny curls
and delia
with her expensive smile
(she seems to frown in all the other pictures)
and there was this bouncy, plump boy
wrapped with silky cloth
that mama held so tightly in her arms
as papa sat on a
big rosewood chair
like general mcarthur
not afraid of the war
his left hand inside his pant pocket while
the other hand was holding mama's waist
i know that boy
with a big smile as though life is a big joke

that boy was supposedly their only boy

it was me

and then ten years later
my brother came
i did not know why there was no other picture
like that

a family, for the time being
let my brother tell you
we are never close and i do not like
to tell the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of A Bound Man

one time
by chance i see a man bound
with ropes
all over his body
that even his toes and
fingers cannot move

i recall the feeling once
when i let time bound me
when i let time pass by me
and i have done nothing
to change
who i am
and what i am supposed to be
when my being
is simply left to the winds
and the seasons
to the blackness of the night
and to the bleakness of my days
when i just lay on the floor
crying
when i just let the door close upon
its face
when the windows are useless
without its hands
when the floor has no mouth to make the
sound at all that
even the termites shy away
when i feel the nearness of death
hushing upon my ears
when i simply close my eyes
and let things
hop and hover upon
my being
when i have forgotten
even to say
to hell with
life....
A Picture Of A Bound Man Who Forgot To Say...

one time
by chance i see a man bound
with ropes
all over his body
that even his toes and
fingers cannot move

i recall the feeling once
when i let time bound me
when i let time pass by me
and i have done nothing
to change
who i am
and what i am supposed to be
when my being
is simply left to the winds
and the seasons
to the blackness of the night
and to the bleakness of my days
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even the termites shy away
when i feel the nearness of death
hushing upon my ears
when i simply close my eyes
and let things
hop and hover upon
my being
when i have forgotten
even to say
to hell with
life....
A Picture Of A Cat

a gray cat on a brown window sill
blue bird on a green twig against a white sky

black man on a red chair
white butterfly against a white eye

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of An Engaged Couple

i had the chance of looking
again at the old picture of an engaged couple
on a marriage that did not push through
on a separation that was
so sudden like the horses of a race track
i have seen their eyes
they were so in love
i have seen their closeness
like a vine on a trellis
like the freshness of a morning glory
facing the new sun

somethings seemingly are not
what they really are
and i ask myself: where is that possibility of a wrong?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Geese Landing On The Water

those who had
taken the heights
who had wings
who must
go back home
still shall use
the same feet
to land
on the water

it is this grace of
defeat that
i see

to be back home and
not to drown

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Greed

on one hand
he carries a
big loaf of bread
on the other
he carries a
basket
of the same
loaf of bread

on his head
is another
basket of
the same loaf
of bread

a little child
spreads his
hands for
a loaf of bread

then he speeds
his way
as he bites
a loaf of
bread in
his mouth

the little child
follows him
and there he
is closing the
door of his
house all
made of bread

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Me

i can easily draw
myself
if i have a pencil and a paper
i could have easily given you a picture of me,
i have the eyes of a Chinese immigrant
my eyelids thicker than the bush that
you always trim along the fence
my lips are thin like the petals
of a rose
some men mistake them
for that of a woman's
but that will be so much of a misleading
fact like the direction of the road
that they changed days ago
some visitors have gone astray.
i am still in the middle of this journey
so my cheeks are smooth with only a few
scratches like the one that you see
when the cat scratches the wall
of the kitchen when it gets hungry
and shouts and yet you do not really mind at all.
my face is black and white
nothing gray
there is no color like a landscape of
fields and pathways.
you have seen me once but you never recognize
me because you relied more on the picture i had
on the poems that you read.
i like to see myself
less the distortions of the modern abstract art.
But i am more of the Gothic
Grecian-roman eclectic type.
You see you want to put me as a portrait in the canvass
like what everyone wants.

Look, look carefully, finally this is the portrait of me.
A dip your finger in my eyes.
It is cold and it is passing like the ordinary wind
one boring day.
A Picture Of Mountains And Mist

The mountains
too have moods
in its shadows and
hues

and look at the mists
on its bodies
it could be their
souls

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Papa

here is papa's picture
before he died
30 years ago

beside his izuzu pick-up
carrying a bottle of gin on one hand
and a gun on his holster
his right hand holds
the waist of a young woman
in white shorts

he has a pipe on his mouth
a smoke over his head
and he is grinning like a
macho lover

that young woman is not my mother
he says she was his true love
but she was taken away
by the rebels

mother died when i was six
but i already understood what was really going on
papa was very proud of me
he liked my drawings and my games

i am the only boy
i do not smoke and i do not drink
and i married
the only woman that i really love.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Papa Bear And Baby Bear

our weakness
is to see a Madonna in
every creature

a mama bear
and a baby bear

the skin of the earth
is cold
and melting

the sun that watches all
these
can manipulate warmth
and then
exploit

the heels of Achilles
are exposed

how many of us
shall die without
noticing it?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Roger Y.

he falls asleep
rocking himself on
a molave
chair

he is the model
of life in
old exhaustion

his mouth is open
the wind enters freely

his hands on the arm
of a chair

his feet on the marble
railing of the
veranda of the house

hard and cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Survival

on the shallow lake
lies a red rubber boat
abandoned beside
a dead coral

far from here is a very long bridge
that connects two islands

now what we have here is only a picture
of the possibility of survival

there is no assurance that life
cannot be a misery and properly a subject for another literature.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of Two Farm Kids

the little girl
knows how to stare
at the camera
she does not know
how to smile
on her old tattered
clothes

you think the little boy
at her side
knows how to make
that compromising
smile

neither,
nor,
that is the truth

at the time when the
camera clicked
his wisdom
tooth was aching.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Picture Of You On The First Day Of Autumn

wearing a blue sweater
black pair of pants &
a white undershirt

you smile standing upon a
road of asphalt

behind you are the trees
letting go
their leaves of yellow

RIC S. BASTASA
A Piece Of Joclimara

“I write what comes to mind.
It is like sharing a piece of yourself.
I guess I am just a lover of words”

We call it spontaneity, something that
Comes from an impulse

Effortlessly,
There is nothing premeditated,
Like a burst of applause

Indigenous, something that grows
Without any cultivation like some ferns
And lichens or moss on the rocks
Of our watered paths

That which nature gives
Freely and unconstrained
Like sunshine like rain

In fact, this spontaneity
Is the highest and best form of
efficiency

it is Not forethought
it is As instinctive as breathing
As involuntary as
Suspense and surprise
Combined less the promptitude

An ad-lib,
is that what you are,
My friend, and automatic hi
And automatic hello?

A spontaneous combustion,
A spontaneous propulsion?

Like the three Princes of Serendip
Whose discoveries are made
By accident and sagacity and not
By an old quest, or conquest

Yes, I agree, the poems work that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Piece Of Myself... And For Myself

people in my place worry about me
why i do not worry about next year
the next planting season after this year's bumpy harvest where every room in
the house is filled with corn.

people in my place ask me where shall i live after next year
and you should soon inherit the house that i built for 50 years.

they all worry about me with all those particular items like what shall happen
to the glasses in my cabinet
or the white car in my blue garage
or my gold watch and my silver spoons and my china plates

they worry about my gold fish in my aquarium
who shall feed them when i am no longer home

people worry a lot about me
and i begin sometimes when i get tired listening to all the questions
asking: why me? why do you worry all about me?

i am not even dead yet and have no plans retiring from life's works
like the arts and this
pottery and this poetry

people worry about me
and never about us.

i am tired and all i need is sleep.
and i do not worry at all.

because i know that if i am dead
then i am dead
and i do not ask for more

not even on extended dreams
not even on anything

perhaps they worry about me because they all worry about themselves
perhaps i am their mirror
or perhaps they think that with my behavior
i should not have lived
in the first place.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Place Of The Heart

this place is not a room for sadness
sorrow is a stranger here
and cannot stay that long
there are no sonorous eyes here
not a place for emaciated cheeks
and unshaven beards
this is not the place for mourning
no one comes here wearing the black shirt
of fasting
this is the place for passion
(not promiscuity)
this is a private place for our shared whispers
the zip-less reunion
of two souls not wearing any name tags on their bones
when you come here
it is because
you have decided to be free
from morality from the mortality of your prisoners
welcome, bare yourself, brace yourself
for another experience
someone you love shall be summoned
to completely make you
home again.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Place To Go

there must be a place between
life and death

not the purgatory
for it is they say between hell and heaven

there is a place between sadness and happiness
between being famous and being so ordinary

there is this place where you are so safe and unaffected
Aristotle said it:

the middle, that backbone.

be with me there, between life and death,
this floater between heaven and earth, this feather, this leaf

falling without having to reach the bottom of things
this suspension this silence this lovely solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Place...

an important tool breaks 
and you make do with what is available 
disregard comfort 
and face what is in front of you 

you are brief but need not be 
concise 

the situation demands it 
this is the hiding 

RIC S. BASTASA
A Plan...

in bed the rich
and old couple is preoccupied with
their plans for
their death and
discussions on who should be heir
is finalized

meanwhile those outside the house
pretending to clean this and
that are thinking too plainly about
burial and
claims

they have also secret plans
of their own
because their own respective futures are
waiting

like someone without any backpack
at the train station
heading to the fun promised by the big city

RIC S. BASTASA
A Plate For The Much Needed Ecstasy

a lengthy poem is unfair.

it takes half of my coffee
and a fourth size of my cookie

deprieves me of my morning walk
and makes me rush
and gives me shame why i
am late in my office again

i blame it for my misery
when it could have been short
and yet provide
me a plate for the much needed
ecstasy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Platonic Affair....

it is evening and it is cold.
the table is alone with its four feet intact.
on top of the roof is the moon, and it is too
alone, just like my own thought of you,
alone,

i wait for you and then you come.
i am sitting and you stand there
and i am thinking
if you are thinking about me
or that you are here because i told you to be here
like i am one kind of
compulsion, like i am an order

i do not wish more about this matter
because all i need is
the voluntary hand, you gaze at me
and i let my eyes fall to the ground,
i am embarrassed,
and you suggest something that i must take off
i do not shed my skin
or my underwear and this is what you have misunderstood
from the beginning of our
meeting,

i do not want you to undress
me or me undressing you
this time, all i need is words, soothing ones, calm syllables,
love that once i lost
because i have given it to another
because for some time, long time ago,
i have been
too foolish.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Playhouse

glass angels
tin can soldiers
house of sticks
japanese cotton dolls
plastic miniature beds
bears and small trees
princess with laces
queens and kings with
their golden crowns
fantasy castles
children's hands
and chinky eyes
and the sounds of
their laughters

we mix truths with lies
we put gold in mud
we sew dirty rugs
with silver threads
our dreams laden
with some harsh realities
you and me
and some of those
not like us
hazy, and foggy
and too thin to be air

RIC S. BASTASA
A Plea To Poetry

poetry please
please,

be true to me
as i have always
been true to you,

when you leave me
i shall surely die.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pledge Of The Heart....

i am sworn to the
flocks of
silence

only my hands
speak for me

i bleed
but my mouth is cursed

when i begin to speak
the world trembles

the storms begin
to rage like a mad dog

the rain pours heavily
on the roof

and the paths
camouflage as thick grass

there is only one way
back

through the silent flocks of
the heart

nature has done
what is best

to keep the order
sun and moon must not meet

RIC S. BASTASA
memories pour out like
the rains of july
you are drenched
fully wet

you stay put and feel the cold
you do not run away for shelter
cars are blowing their horns
you are in the middle of the traffic
people look at you
with horror

do not expect pity
or concern
there is no sympathy available in the middle
of a very busy road in the city
there is nothing that stays focused on you
on a heavy downpour

memories keep falling
and you are carried away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem

i like to read your poem
and i like to say it is a poem
there is a difference
of course
between the two statements
i like to read
it is your poem but i may
after reading
that
saying that i am honest though
and can distinguish a poem
from one that is not a poem
that your poem is one that i only
like to read
and may
say that it is not your poem
but it is yours you are sure of that
but what i am saying is that
i am reading your poem
but i feel that it is not
a poem after all
i can say one when i read one
so i just say i like reading your poem
which could not really be a poem
not even prose
i just like it
but it is not anything about what
i feel i like it to be
a poem or prose
i am reading it, it isn't
like this one for instance
you know that
now.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem A Day

a poem a day
is a pain in my neck.
and that
is everyday.
and everyday is
also a pain
in my neck.
and my neck
however,
has no mouth
to complain.
i need a massage.
i need a little
pampering.
perhaps a kiss
in my
ass from
an innocent
moral
religious
woman

no, do i have really
to be banal
about my
search for the
holy?

never felt
immaculate
but i will try
not to be vile
and irreverent
to emotions

into the sacrosanct
the righteous
seraphic saintly
sublime self
into the valley of death
i will still sing my song.

truly, i must be
in this daily dose
of pain in the neck
poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem About A Dream

i live in a dream
because every time i am there
you are there too,

you are silent
you look at the ceiling
you glimpse at me
with so much understanding

i try to understand myself
too,
on this harsh journeys
in a boat, with rough waves
docking on a land
leading to a path
where the door is too narrow
for me to get inside

it is the dream that has
become more real
it has become my true desire
and you are always there

you do not look at me that long
there is still this shame
this fear about what happens next
after an encounter

you shed off norms
and even without completely understanding
what is this all about
you give in

there is no love here
there is only a transition of feelings
there is nothing that will last long here
commensurate with the lifespan
of this dream
when we wake up
we do not know who we are
we are complete strangers
but we sometimes remember
not completely though
about that mutual sharing

i have been good, and so are you
in that strangeness of
our silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is stored force
in your hands running through
your fingers

it is erotic.

there are eight hills below
those sturdy hands
there is tiny circular pond
deprived of water

nearby is a forest with bushes
black and bereft of leaves

pygmy hair

you see a bone but you
rather call it a tree of life

it is so erotic

there are no clouds which are heavy
some drops of rain pour down

there is an explosion inside the mind
it is not yet on the month of July

it is so erotic
it is life.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem About Death

Is still early

the sun is still crazy

over aridity

one gets bored with a hat

and uneasy now with the usual shade of an old tree

what choice is there?

that desert has killed so many travelers

and no one came back to tell the exact story

how it happened

the usual thing is curiosity

and restlessness

and then finally because of too much loneliness

one finally ignores the sun

and embarks on the unanswered questions that lie in that desert

where death tells its own story

and then you will like it

and so like the rest

you too, do not come back

and when finally the sun sets

and darkness comes
there is peace in those lights that spring
from the windows of houses
and then after a moment
too, die, in the serenity of the silence
of the night.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem About Emptiness

there is word that is written
and it does not stop there as a word
it becomes a syllable
it wriggles and duplicates itself like
a viral infection
(sadly, for this may be the cause of death
and suffering)
and having translated itself into
a multiplicand
it threatens you with bifocal words
acquiring a scent and sound
a siren's call
the sound of the broken shell losing its voice
(not the wind, do not intrigue the wind
with this
for it's free and indifferent
to its independence)
speak about the sea and the waves that
it is giving
all for free and a show of hellos and goodbyes
of to and fro
of come and go
(this may make sense now)
it is a journey never ending
pretending to finish it on the shore
but no
it simply reaches there and leave a mark
of the blankness of the sand
wet and dries again
the laps of the land
which also makes a gimmick of its own
mimicking the sea
it throws the sands back to it
kisses it too
and then goes back to its still state
staring but not really minding what is too ordinary
to behold
this union and separation
this thing that happens all the time
seemingly
there is no joy in this
not even sorrow
just a repetition of what must happen
and what shall happen all over again
it is never ending
a circle
much like a hole
this emptiness that God only fills.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem About Excitement To Something Huge And Spread Like Space

i am tiny, like a nit
wit, and i look at you
spread like wall paper on the wall
something is beautiful there
like a face
something in there excites me
like a pulse on my wrist
i am tiny and i feel so tiny
watching you
like a wall paper on the wall, you
are indifferent
i am excited like a chick hatching from
a shell
i am growing feathers
like a chicken
something in you is so huge like a world
that i have never been
i am excited like a puppy to my master
getting out of his car
i love this feeling, this tiny feeling
this world that is expanding
you are my world now, and i fall into
a regret,
when tiny becomes lost
and when the hands melt while groping for the truth

about beauty that is lost
about existence that is deleted

simply because you are too huge
like space

and i, this atom, unseen,
colliding,
invincible, and now unknown.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem About The Rotten Self

it is
a law that every
human being
accepts
as is: it is always the soft side that is hidden

sort of
Achilles's heel since we do not want to be
destroyed in an instant

it is the hard side that is always shown
a carapace
an armor of the body
a steel polo shirt
a pair of pants made of platinum

a bronze heart
a brain full of lead
tin hands
iron feet

the soft side is left like a fruit that you have forgotten
inside the
cabinet because of your selfishness
that inability to accept that all things are meant to be given away

one day
you will find all the pulp consumed by the ants

have hope get the remaining seed with dried fiber like hair
on all over its body

take it and sow it
today.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem After A Walk This Afternoon

dust on my feet on my rubber shoes
stamp a mound of mud drying itself
the afternoon sun so hot
this little boy follows me with his gaze
did i appear so big to his attention
or the world is too small for him to play ball?

we look amazed to the same birds
too playing in the skies chasing the ones
not having the same feathers

the sun sets spreading orange colors
waning and now sprinkles some gray hues
the boys playing basketball sweat like they
were bathing on the rain, their bodies gleaming
like some barbecue on spiced oil

time to go home, it is dark, i have no reason to stay
the little boy follows me towards the road
where the flourescent light is turned on by the guards

then i look back, the boy was gone
the whole block is lost eaten by this night
and on the island of light on this road
i stand, waiting for my ride back home

then i look back again, i smile a while
that little boy was me, i got lost somehow

i touch my head, i am setting a new perspective

RIC S. BASTASA
i don't remember...

you show me a face
a hand
even a beautiful naked
body

you sing for me again
you even dance
you wiggle
you jump over a fence
you run
to a cliff and say
you give your body
a fall

you roll over the hills
like a ball of fire
in the universe

but i still do not remember
(the pain is still there
and i keep hiding from all
these corners)

no matter how i try
i still cannot remember that i for once
have given you a chance to exist

you ask me again...

i still do not remember if i have chosen the words so well
to write you a self....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem By Louise Gluck, Now Rate It Zero, You Have Taste

Remember that time you made the wish?

I make a lot of wishes.

The time I lied to you
about the butterfly. I always wondered
what you wished for.

What do you think I wished for?

I don't know. That I'd come back,
that we'd somehow be together in the end.

I wished for what I always wish for.
I wished for another poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem By Merlie Alunan

Fallen in battle in the mountains of Santa Catalina, Negros Oriental, 1987 A.D., a hill warrior talks to his daughter, three years old, from the trail where his bones lie unburied.

Sure I had them in my backpack, the piyaya, just as I had promised, and the baye-baye from 'Nay Asyon. She was asking about the grandchild she'd never seen. Also a comb for your mother.

The road from Siaton blew up. Crossing the valley to our hut to see you for the last time, I left no footprints anyone could find. So many things I couldn't bring with me- my gun, my boots, left behind forever in the hidden trail. Unseen, I watched your mother waiting while you slept, combing her hair by the gaslight with slow patient fingers. If they ever come and cut your mother's hair and bind her to bed, run and hide. Whatever you see, do not cry. You will grow up, little one, bearer of this vicious bond-

anger of your daughters, revenge of your sons.

posted by merlie alunan @ 2:05 AM

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Composed By The Lady By The Sea

a

garland

of calachuchi

from me and chuchi

welcome to the island of desire

now you must choose between me and chuchi

just one of us but not both

do not spoil this

love broth

ahoy!

RIC S. BASTASA
just imagine
what happens when you have not
eaten even for once
in a day? or a week?
just once
or if you have not urinated
or defecated?

is that the reason why you
are writing
poems in a day?
or just once?

to eat you live
you die if you do not defecate

as simple
as a rock to lay your heavy head
a warm grass for bed
a moon for inspiration
sunshine for that
beautiful blush

as simple as
i am full and must vomit
or vacate
what lies inside
that wants to always
go out
fly away and then
be free
disowning that once
those wings were mine
those shackles
that once fettered
the bones of my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Early One Morning...

for why should a poem be so caged in form
and a slave to clapping?
let the poem be
the ordinary man in the park
the woman buying merchandise in the market place
the child playing on the beach
under so much sun
let it not be a fence
a manicured lawn
a piece of architecture another form of white marble sculpture
let it wriggle like a worm on a Sunday rain
a butterfly hovering on that wild flower
a grasshopper on the grass
sands of the shore
sunlight and sunrise
a cup of coffee every morning
a sleeping pill on our anxious nights
an insomniac woman begging for sleep
a mad woman on the street
a soldier writing a letter for his wife at home
let it be nothing important at all
let it be something always new
no dictator here, no form of government,
let it be anarchy, and
let there be no diplomacy
let it it be fluid as a melting wax on water
let it be everything and nothing
too... let it be felt and be
not understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For J.M.

you don't bother me
even if you leave even if you are gone for weeks
and you do not tell me where you are
if you curse me i simply listen
i am attuned to curses
since birth
i can always remember how curses
hurt for the first time
but often repeated and repeated like a chant
in fact it becomes
comforting on the idea that you still make me
feel that i exist

if you are a thorn
i refuse to be another thorn
how can a rose bloom
if we are all thorns
in the garden
of Eden?

you don't irritate me
i have all discarded what sensitivity is left inside me
there is no more
lethargy
neither can you find its opposite
that unworded
ecstacy

you see at the age of thirty
i have already known myself
well rounded stone
hard and smooth
and
freed from the freckles of feelings

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Cold Woman....

gradually i feel the coldness of
your touch
your words are sour
the change is noticeable

i do not beg for affection
i do not force myself in your coldness
you need the warmth of the sun
i am not the sun
you must need someone
other than my begging which i do not have for now

i know where to go
i go home
and my home is myself

you have become a stranger
an alien port where my boat cannot dock
perhaps
this is what goodbye is all about
a ripe fruit
which is not for my picking
it is now all yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Deep Love Of Mine

how deep is
my love
you ask me

put a shark
i can have it

put another whale
it can still
accommodate

how deep is
my love
you ask?

got a submarine
launch it

but...let me ride
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Friend In Ohio

i shall be
the chronicler of
your pain

i do not understand
it actually
i pretend i feel it

i have respect for it
and so i keep
writing

it is you who knows
everything
about you and your
pain
it is only you who
knows where
the cure is

when you leave us
we understand

there is no cure
and that is the saddest
fact that i
have written

i am the chronicler
of your pain
inside that moon
that host with some
blood stains

i am the sadder part of
you
that spectator
when you pass by
that spot where
two flaming suns
just recently
set.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Great Poet

by the sea of manila
ebbs and tides
ruins of the old war
nay, all those who died
and raped and rampaged
rolled the sadness flashed
door die the men all
families vanished
armed only with rusty guns
swampy places they hid
undecided support from the U.S.
nonetheless they all fought
courage unwavering bravery surging
in those valleys and hills and mountains
onward the faith of those who prayed
no betrayal till the war was won.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Great Poet (Revised)

by the sea of manila
ebbs and tides
ruins of the old war
nay, all those who died
and raped and rampaged
rolled the sadness flashed
do or die the men all
oozing in misery

families vanished

armed only with rusty guns
swampy places they hid
undecided support from the U.S.
nonetheless they all fought
courage unwavering bravery surging
in those valleys and hills and mountains
onward the faith of those who prayed
no betrayal till the war was won.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Leaf

for a tree which for years
has not known the vein
of a leaf

one night in a hundred
years
the shadow of a stalk
and the
maps of a midrib
and the
giggle of the guard
cell
can give it the hope
for flowers

as morning breaks
when the petiole gives up
with dignity
it falls
back to the embrace of
the burial
hands of the
earth

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Liar

the words that you say
do not anymore make
waves to the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A Loved One

i can help you
but because i love you more than you know
i refrained
from taking you from the quicksand
i look at you struggling for life
i want you to struggle some more
watching if you can save yourself
i am testing myself too
to the future comfort that when i am gone
you will still know how to live by yourself
that quicksands could have been avoided
i could have helped you immediately & easily
but i wanted you to help yourself first
i want to see you stronger this time
and even wiser
i am getting old
and time shall soon make me irrelevant in your life
soon you must survive on your own
and when i see you finally on this state
i can say to myself: i have truly loved you
because i have never allowed you to be weak.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A.

do not lose your stinger
keep it

without it you will perish

sting if you must but do not leave your stinger behind

this is the bee speaking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For A. M.

i know of a guy
who hates pictures
he does not own
a camera despite
his money

a fact that he lost most
of them
in anything
except pictures

by social conventions
as he is in this
circle
somehow he cannot escape
pictures taken

but he would see to it
that his body is covered
his face behind
the rest of the other
happy faces because

no matter how he
tries to expand the size
of his smile
his sadness still invades his
eyes like
a skin disease
without cure

i tell him once about this
noticeable phenomenon
and he breaks into tears
like a mad woman
put inside bars

there is this fear
this certain sadness that
stays within

somehow we are able to hide it
as strangers knowing how to conceal their names
on ships which are about
to face the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Are We Here?

there is this sickness that comes
and you have no power to block it
it is like a monkey that comes at your
temple door and you have no way of driving it
you leave
leaving everything important to that monkey
spreading banana peelings
on the altar of your sacred nook
you watch at a distance
where the monkey plays monkey
upon itself
you are sleepy,
you fall into a deep slumber
the monkey comes inside that dream
and you are helpless
without your hands and feet

you cough, you struggle to vomit
there is no cure for this sickness
nothing comes out
and you are feeling toxic

that is why we are here.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Allan Jimenez (Written In Arvisu House, 1981)

If you open my door
Without knocking and
You simply come in
Without myself
What would you say?
It’s been a time
We cleaned rooms
Scrubbed toilet tiles
Into the desired whiteness
Of saints and souls
We designed rooms
Where no rain
Can get in
And surprise us
Of its pouring
About the damp
About the wet
Or the colds we get
We cannot imagine
Accidents do happen
Despite strict precautions
Of the perfect prefect
Of the other sect
We cannot situate
We at wrong hours
Inside wrong rooms
Talking about wrongs
And we talk
All about us and
It talks all about us
The stay
Silent and still
The closed gate
That must by now
Be opened
Or I get
Muriatic and drink it
As my morning milk
Crazy
Now if you happen
To come into my room
Without myself
As I have gone
Far elsewhere
Without myself
Leaving any note
Or sign that I would
Be coming back
To this room
Clean and tidy
What else can you say?
What else would I say?
I cannot promise
I cannot scare you
Elsewhere I go
With another routine
Hi, hello, how are you?
Anyway
The scheduled morning prayers
Of this sad house
Clean and tidy
Shall recite themselves
Perfectly
Without me
Or us
And sure
Everything everything
Would still be all right
All right.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For An Old Man....

i once heard of
a man who spoke to his
horse
when his wife died
during the war
when his only son
succumbed to
an unknown disease

i dismissed the story
as another
unusual imagination
of an Anton
as i was unable to
relate to
said grief

somehow as i aged
i am beginning to remember
said story which
i now think must be true
for i must tell you

i have learned how to
speak to a tree
and even to the sea
and then to
the chair in my room
beside my bed

it is not a story of
another lonely man
i am telling you
with caution for someday
you shall be another
philosopher
who will learn this trick
in order to live and
be fully alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Another Friend Who Was Offended By My Stare....

when you see a tree on top of a hill,
do you sometimes think that it can be something else?

or perhaps someone, perhaps it was once a man who had gone astray
and by bad karma, The Heavens, punished it to be a tree forever

it cannot move when it rains, neither can it run against the storm
it is stuck, helpless on its immobility

sometimes i think that way
i.e. making stories about those that cannot talk to me

it is not a fabrication, far from a lie, it is just trying to know
what we have not seen or felt before,

everything can be,
everyone can be someone else

depending on who sees it and when
or where and why,

and so when i see you, i sometimes stare at you
and you get offended, and i do not explain,

i imagine you as greater than yourself
the possible brightest star in the sky

or another sun in the future of another galaxy
far away from me

as i regress into ash, into another grain of sand,
into nothingness that you perhaps have not ever imagined
even for once.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Bernardo....

by the rising of the sun
er the falling of the rain
rolling hills and
nagging splitting mountains
arbor thoughts along the
narrow trails of the paths of
armed men and women
rowing the rough seas of sulu
down to the forests of jolo
over the highways of zamboanga

free the kidnapped victims

assure the families and kins
shoo the sadness of those affected
untie the chains that bind them
nothing to give and part away
calm the screams and allay the fears
into the peaceful negotiations
out of the snake pits
now, submit to peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Black Friday

close
of reenactments unfolds
again
the plasticity of
human society
as all the bigwigs
of Christianity
shall wear their sad
faces for the
death of
Christ,
some will scream
some will make some
points of our
sinful nature
some will narrate
the life and
redemption of God
who has taken the
pains of man,

close
the crowd is maddening
not a needle can insert
itself and make its
presence felt,

i am angry
at all these
where solitude is
choked
where suffering is
made a show
where contemplative
thinking is
chopped

i calm myself
into a reflection
that honestly

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
i could be one of
them...

after all,
i am still human...

RIC S. BASTASA
there is always time
to write about a white butterfly
how it flutters early morning
from leaf to leaf
along with some bees and
bluebirds,

how fragile how light
how gentle how bright

how time flies like a paper
with the wind
how restive are the eyes upon
the meadows of the plain

there is always a chance
to write about love and affections
the warmth of the sea at night
the hush of the breeze
the calmness of the moon
the sleepy waves

how i wish there is us
here, i touch your lips
i ask you: let us savor this
privacies of silences

kill me with happiness
i am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Desire......

she whispers
to your ear that
she just finished
her night bath and
that she will wait
for you till dawn
as the perfume of her
hair runs to the
veins of your neck
down to the deepest
part of your bones.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
A Poem For E. & H.

UNABLE to find
what is due them from their very own country
they go to America

despite the fact that they can be
discriminated there
or the fact that they are second class citizens
in that great nation
where the apple dreams are growing
they must remain
take things as is
rather than be hungry and starve
in the land of their people

just this morning
i see how lovely they are as a couple
in the U.S. of A
HE holds her like a rare diamond gem
a fragile flower of Florence
She allows him
like He is her surrounding mountain range
Love echoes
rebounding on every corner of the hills
That's them
Behind is the crowd
And the tree and the grass and the shadows
of yesteryear

We who remain her
shall say all the best for them
those who love truly
and faithfully all those years

Love feels betrayed sometimes by its own country
But for both of them
Love knows where to go
and still survive
as lovely as it can be
in any place
at any time
whatever be the reason why.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Her

This heart
of mine

Must not be
Given to
Others

it will explode

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Impermanence...

even the stones in your
garden
we do not know really
shifted places

do they know how to travel?
we ask

even the sands have learned
the flight of birds
on invisible wings of our
very own minds

we do not ask since then
all these
manifestations of impermanence
the flitting moments
those invincible phantoms of the hours

i am convinced,
me for instance

where am i now? i still ask
the same question
to the moon which had long gone into
the corner
of dawn....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Mama

thinking about mother on a special day like this
transforms you into a child again,

the images flash:

that little boy who hides behind her skirt when the
a stranger arrives in the house,

her arms warm around when when the sound of thunder
arrives on the roof

the hush of the lullaby, the hammock, the way she puts you
to sleep on that blanket-cradle,

that early morning when she fries the egg and fish and boils water for
your milk, and the scent of newly cooked rice,

those dancing feet that teach you how to dance,
those stories
of fairies and giants and princesses,

some tears begin to fall but you wipe them out remembering
how she tells you to be brave always,

when she left you, you held her hand too, telling her,

'mama,
do not be sad, do not fear, after this short while (as she was in pain) an angel
waits for you
to guide you to your new home'

and she closes her eyes,
leaving you the most peaceful smile on earth that you cannot ever forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Mother-In-Law

On the rainy season
I see some tadpoles
On the pond
Near the house
When mother-in-law arrives
I hear all of them croaking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Ms. Unl

you may want a poem
for your life, maybe tomorrow, something that you can borrow
life,
a lifeful of life, a bed of sex not roses, a pool of orgasms
not the usual organisms that you feed
to kill the killing hours, not doves or kittens
a number of hugs, those that make you warm and huggable

i want to give you these poems today,
perhaps in my wet dreams, in my dirty mind,
perhaps i will swallow the whole of your body
and savor your soul
in the poems that i will write for you,

and perhaps you may like them
sublimally,
subconsciously, like the way you sometimes pretend to hate my smell,
they way you detest my
virtual presence,

but i know you well enough,
you only like something small and kind
this kiss
this little respect from my simple line
something like

i miss you
and be good, sleep tight, and have some sweet dreams
my dear.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For My Beloved

i will sing a song
for you
a sweet song
more like
a whisper
from my soul
for you
my beloved

it is a song
from my heart
filled with
so much
love

it is a song
of smooth words
like a chinese
porcelain

a song of joy
more of bliss
that early
this morning
you wake me
up from such
a stupor

it is a song
about you loving me
even if i have
forgotten you
sometimes

it is a song of praise
and worship
because you my
beloved is always
My God
alleluia! alleluia!
I bow to God
i am his servant.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For My Country

Beijing is fine
the summer palace is cool
the tombs and temples are dignified and
mysterious and for the whole
of china and its people and
lakes and moats
and trees and gardens
i am mystified but

back home
then where my heart sings
The Philippines is still
my own home for it is here
where my heart is
beating
where my soul
is at peace
and true to my own
patriotism
there is no other place
that i love
this Philippines, this country
that welcomes me
wherever i was
lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For My Wife

there is no card for you
or a bouquet of red roses
no box of chocolates
no phone call no text message

on this day
what you will have is me
and all the days of our lives
together hand in hand
every moment
from the first union
till we last

till we are gone and have
nothing anymore to cherish and remember

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Prolix

Tediously wordy.

the Latin prolixus
(extended, poured),
from liquere (to flow),

the source of words such as liquid,
liquor,
licorice.

Now do you see the connection - why consuming lots of Tanduay 65 make the teachers of Cancainap prolix?

Let me try using the word,

No one has ever called her prolix.
At a seminar sponsored by the DECS,
Miss Manolita mumbled a few introductory words
and then sat in silence,
eyebrows arched,
arms folded,
for the remaining two loveless days.

She misses someone
No, not the prolix poet
But the sylvan lover.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Restraint
	here are acts which we never did

not because we cannot do them but because

our nature rebels and we cannot afford to lose a simple revolution of our selves

inner wars that the lover beside us cannot feel

these are acts which we decided not to commit because by doing so we retain the original flavors of our dignities

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Rosie

the castle of paper
that we create from a
sheet of white
bond paper
stands on the brown
table
tall and proud so
they say
but we know Rosie
that this is just plain
creativity
could be a way of
expressing your
self’s discontent of the
surroundings
the foul air
the heavy rain that
seems not to stop
the muddy path
to the market and the
church
betraying fate
and foolish friends
but you know Rosie
very well that nothing
lasts forever
the water paper
the paper castle
gathers dusts
and soon we are fed up
on this
i am going away and
you too
but we shall not
be together for i also
get fed up
on you as you shall soon
to me.
A Poem For Solitude

the sun comes here
faithfully
without the sound of the band
the grasses meet it
without so much fuss
the long trees stand there
and there is no dancing
the leaves listen to the passing wind
the dew slowly give in
to an unnoticeable disappearance
an exit without the goodbyes
the rituals of parting
sweet-sorrows of a Romeo and Juliet
nevertheless
this is everyday
a solitude that everyone knows
and hence
does not talk about
except me
who wants perhaps to make
a record of events
before i finally pass away
on the solitude of
nature
on the beauty that the mind sees
and accepts
and simmer without much fuss.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Someone Out There

it is only when i keep the rules
concerning distancing that we shall feel the
essence of our union,

after night of our fusion, i need to walk away the following morning
i trek upon a mountain and stand at its highest peak to once more see more of
you,

it is only this when i become convinced that i need and love you
and that i must, as a matter of grace and giving,

that i must leave and then forget you, because i know your pain
when i am with you, that gut that gluts in there.

it is only the distance that heals my pain, time waters it,
and then i become dignified as a man.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Crabs

i don't hate crabs
at least

they have what you
call a mentality.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Dead Villain

i do not really
think that we should quarrel
about a dead man

lest i think that you are
fixed
like a cancerous mole in your cheek

the dead has no more power
over us
we are alive and we can kick
we can always move on
using our power of locomotion

i do not think that we should worry
where he is buried
or whether he should still get the honors
which he did not really
deserve

let him be, he is the wind that
simply passes us all and then be gone
for bad or good
it does not really matter

the dead has no more power over us
if we do not forget, then forever we are damned.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Heart, Its Day...

on the day of the hearts
why should you let that heart weep?

do not be cruel, give the heart what is
due for its day

give it a dose of happy pills,
add more blood to its vessels,
put more moisture to its skin
color it by all means
with the brightness of
twenty roses, red as red,
bright as the light of two
happy mornings,

give it its night too,
not as dark as that evil thought
gray perhaps, a little confusion will do,
but if you can, make that evening
romantic, a little teasing finger, lips that
search and find, longings satisfied,
if only illusions, then why not?

give it a drink it deserves,
vodka or tequila, make it dance,
a little tip for tipsy,
raise its hands, in surrender,
curl it in bed, and have it be filled
with love,

a meat cooked well and filled with
gravy,
a salad of fresh lettuce and tomatoes
garnished with Italy,

red wine, red cherry, satisfy the tongue
and the nose,
more fire in the body, rest the arms,
close those eyes,
live those dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Higthest Leader Of Our Land

Quiapo Underpass
Some blossoms of graffiti
We are tired of lies
The whole year round
Chasing tails
The cats and dogs.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Silliman Writing Fellows

Writing Fellows / 1968
Alfred A. Yuson
Emmanuel Lacaba
Donel Paccis
Armando Ravanzo
Lamberto Caballes
Rene Bonsubre
Cesar Mella Jr.
Rene Estella Amper
Urias Almagro
Dionisio Gabriel

Writing Fellows / 1973
Vidal Armamento
Mauro Avena
Jolein Cuandra
Maria Cristina Ferreros
Feliz Fojas
Jaime An Lim
Meng Magno
Oriel Muspratt
Cecilia Nava
Antonio Orogo Jr.
Catherine Salazar
Angelito Santos
Anthony L. Tan

Writing Fellows / 1979
Geraldine Maayo
Susan Lara
Jessie Badillo
Vicente Vivencio Bandillo
Leslie Lofranco
Elson Elizaga
Mathew Kuzhippallil
Anthony Tan
Priscilla Supnet Macansantos
Letty Salanga
Enrico Enerio
Henry Villalva
Ernesto Superal Yee

Writing Fellows / 1982
Rhodora Espinosa
Seth Florentino
Victoria Kapauan
Fanny HB Llego
Patria Rivera
Merlie Alunan

Writing Fellows / 1994
Ma. Rhodora Ancheta
Alma Anonas
Calbi Asain
Ruben Canlas Jr.
Melchor Cichon
Edeliza Cruz
Alessandra G. L. Gonzalez
Nerisa del Carmen Guevarra
Doreen Jose
Rene Ledesma Jr.
Lilibeth Rose Mercado
Esperanza Nuiqui
Michael Obenieta
Aurelio Peña
Josefina Tejada
Anthony Kintanar
Sylvia de Guzman

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For The Talking Man...

a talkative man
has nowhere to go
he will be taken
into hell by his
very own words
as he unable to keep
his mouth
shut soon like a fish
he shall be caught
by a hook and line
dropped by
a greedy fisherman.

in a sense after a time
i begin to miss
the misfortune of that
talking man

in the middle of this
journey inside a car
on a long journey
the sound of silence
stabs

and i begin to bleed
and having a hard time
to breathe
i stop the car
goes outside it and
wished that the
talking is with me
so i may forget
what haunts me inside
like the furies.

RIC S. BASTASA
FOR once
on this page i
want to be of
social relevance

i want to spread
the news
about that gruesome
murder of
58 Filipinos,
media people
and even
innocent
civilians who
happened to
be on that road
that dismal
day

justice is still
not served

let us have silence
for 5 minutes
and pray
that sooner
justice be done

let us pray
that it be not
snail paced

let there be
thunder and lightning
after the silence

let those
who are guilty
be punished
let nothing
be hidden
let no one
be spared
due to political
connections

let the flower of
truth bloom
and let there
be damnation
for evil forever...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Those Who Are Sad

did Octavio say that happiness
and charm are cliches?
did he really mean that he
shall write about those who
labor in pain
about those who stopped
smiling because of the
harsh rain
about those who hide
because of the coming storm?

he could be right
not writing about the cliches of
happy days

for they have all enough
that make the sweet syrups
of their eating lives

let me write a poem for those
who are sad
for those who have less

let me write about the opening
of a flower
about the butterflies moving
out from their cocoons

let me write about the
end of the bitter days
for they have less and now

they may have more
through my lines

let me write about the
rising of the sun
the waking up of the boy
from his sleep
and the beginning
of his play on the yard
with his bike

let me write more
about what i really like...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Us

this is the sign
at the entrance of the Oracle of
Delphi

Oedipus, he says, you must stop,
right here, in the middle of
an ignorance,
you know what happens next
when you know
finally the root cause
of this misery

You will finally be free
until you become
blinded
by the Truth

You chose your own
Destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For Wantok About Loneliness

Wan
Tok
Wan
Tok
Three
One
Talks
To
A
Tree

One talks to a tree. She has nobody.
The tree talks to her. She has gone crazy.

Isn’t it lonely?
It could be more. It is in fact tragedy.

One two three. One two three.
Want to tree. Want to be a tree.
Want to talk to a tree. Wane to tree.

Wantok talks to a tree. She has nobody.
That could be a phenomenology.

Wantok talks to a tree.
She has nobody.
Birds flew away.
The clouds drift away.
The sun sets on the park
Wantok still stands.

Wantok talks to a tree.
Indeed that is very lonely.
what a tragedy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem For You

in the rush hours of my life
those times when breakfast is even set aside
or prayers reset
or as he said it once
when dreams
some too personal dreams are deferred
because of a very important matter
concerning the usual
bread and butter
when the stars are not seen
or they exist not at all
on evenings which are cold and
when our bodies are
too tired

no mistake about it
i always take time to scribble some notes
unhampered by style
or what ever they say after
this poem
for instance

a blank page so hungry
that i stop
and bend
just to feed it with some
words to
munch

so here is it. Feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am really
54, that is my age,
you would not believe
me for as you said it
i look too young
for my age,

do i have to tell
you
with all honesty that
i dye my hair
into natural black
and i bought
an expensive Kiel
for my
skin to evade the
fate of
wrinkles?

well you say
you had it too but
simply age
inevitably crept
through its
wrinkled hands
eventually choking
youth away
from you

but this i must
tell you finally
youth is not
chronological
it is a state of
your mind
it is the way you
reminisce
and believe
about a happy place
that land
called paradise
that hope that
always glistens
for as long
as this sun in our
life
shines.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem From Lina S. R.

He said, “Bug-at ang akong dughan.”
"I wear a heavy heart.'

Does grief really cling like a legion of bats on the cavewalls of his memory?

On the drooping branches that are his shoulders,
would the crow of betrayal perch?
Is there space enough to build, slowly, its nest?

He uttered, 'natandog ko, '
“I am moved.”
and I told him I do not hold him responsible for my own desires.

On that day I dropped by to visit, I suddenly saw
That he was no longer with me even as he sat
In front of me at the dining table; he had migrated,
Riding on the steeled wings of longing towards far Germany
Near the spires of the Cologne Cathedral where his beloved dwells.

While I waited for his return, I sought refuge in the mild
Aroma of coffee, the beans of which came from Guatemala.
At dawn, he had roasted and ground these beans and mixed a brew
That became the dark ecstasy that he poured into my cup.

My vast powers had turned to cinders. I fled away from his kindness.
The only baggage I carried is this heavy weight of aching to touch flesh.

Here I am now a bakwit, like the widows whose husbands
are warriors in this long and undeclared war.
They whose stories he listened to and whose portraits he limned in Mamasapano.
Like the mudfish that was caught in the Liguasan Marsh
That he hung on the laundry line so that its flesh will dry
completely in the crawling fierce heat of the sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem He Wrote Before He Went To Bed

good night
darling
take care
yourself
out there

i am
very sleepy

(yawn)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem In Five Minutes

just say

hmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

did you count it?

it is exactly five minutes,
and it
is a poem to
me,

(sigh)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Is Breakfast

A poem is a breakfast for me
in seven courses: an orange, grilled port,
steamed rice, lettuce and onions and tomatoes
a cup of coffee, a slice of forest
cake

but this is still not enough for me
any poem, breakfast or lunch or dinner

can always make me feel hungry
any juice or coffee
always can make me thirsty

God is somehow different
He is neither water or coffee or orange or apple

My thirst shall be quenched
My hunger satisfied in the coming of my own time

and then poetry shall be dead

and then poetry is no longer the breakfast in seven courses
that i am always taking

and then poetry is gone but you know too well that it will be
in another person's heart

ready for another taking in another breakfast
table.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Is Just A Poem

a poem is just a poem and if it is just a poem
it must be just a poem just like another poem

a poem is nothing but just a poem otherwise
it cannot be my poem; it may speak about

anything, or something, or about everything,
but my poem is just a poem just like anybody's

poem, which is just but a poem, like any other
poem, for a poem to be a poem it must just be

a poem: it has nothing to do with my love, and death
my life, or bliss, but as i have told you, once, twice

 thrice, eat some rice, and be that wise, a poem is
just a poem, just like your poem. Why do you insist

on asking, what is happening to me? I am not a
poem, for i am but just the composer of the poem,

need i tell you again, that a poem is just a poem?
just like any other poem, which is just a poem

it is just a voice in my head that i have heard
someone comes and speaks and i listen so

this poem is not actually my poem but the poem
of someone else's: theirs not mine, from a mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Is Not Measured By How Long Or How Short It Is

a poem
stands by the merit of its sound, tone, color, smell,
how each sense participates
sometimes
if you must, as others want it, they put the sixth sense

the message of morality
and sometimes they even put God
as a divine flavor
perhaps to dispel the evil ants, snakes, ghosts, vampires,
werewolves, the furies that haunt them

and attract those
who are holy, or those who want to be holy, or those who simply pretend to be
holier than thou

but a poem no matter how short
like a mere

man.
i.
am

or how long, an epic of his heroes,
his dreamland,
a fan for fantasies to cool
the humid and warm air
of the surroundings

if it comes from the heart
joyous or sad
blissful or lamentable

for me, that is enough, because at the end of this search eventually it is
you that matters most of all, whether in your brief stay here
as brief as
a morning glory
or a mist, frost, or waft of air
or a heave
a sigh
a gaze, or a mold in bread,
you have spoken a word
or two
about yourself, and the world, and about how well you have loved
at least
a single soul,
that will be enough, in fact, i am so sorry, i have spoken at length
when i could have simply said
yes,
or i could have stayed silent sleeping in my bed full of regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Of Empathy

my shoes are shiny
black
leather and expensive
i look rich and i speak
like a true gentleman

last night i went of the house
without my
Man Friday
and i wore a mask of the
beggar
and i erased my first name

i am Tonio
the mendicant

and i sit upon a corner
with a can on my hand
begging for
mercy

and you pass by
and you never recognize me
and you spit on me

and then i wrote a poem
about the matter
and you say it is the best poem
i have written
and that you pity the beggar
and that you like to do
something about all the beggars
in this world
make a foundation
fund a cause

and i stop reading the poem
and then
i begin to ask
'who are you?'

RIC S. BASTASA
you are fed up
you want to do something
but you cannot

the problem has defined itself
in numbers, in letters,

you feel like a mole on a cheek
a small indistinct island in the pacific

in the middle of an ocean
a single celled amoeba
swimming across the great mucus
of a corrupted civilization

can there be another David for
another Goliath in my story?

Avatars' bows and arrows against
the missiles and rockets of my film
about manipulation and oppression?

a speck of dust against profuse light
an atom invisible to those giant eyes

God has His own ways to correct
these crooked lines,
I am fatalistic, i cling to the vine
of his miracles,
and at the end of this misery
i, shall, a flower be
caressed by the hands of time
of the rays of the
gentlest
sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Of Hope....

Time has changed
my appearance and my
thoughts,

but i shall remain
true, to you, and to
life,

and then when death
comes, i will be
true to my faith,

i will have no fear,
as i close my eyes

i shall be in the arms
of my God
as i sleep perhaps
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
i must have forgotten
your face

i must have been lost
in the labyrinths of my
sorrows

i must have focused on the
pain
rather than the pleasures
of you
Earth

how could have i been
so cruel and
so forgetful?

the day when i was born
you nurtured me with
the milk from your
breasts

i was contented in my
beautiful silence

you have provided me
everything

and because it was too easy
to hold and enjoy

perhaps i have
not appreciated them so well

a light that has traveled
a thousand years
lands on my cheeks and
comforts the coldness of
my skin
must i regret then
about my indifference?

O, Earth,
i must now ask this forgiveness

i have been ungrateful
in the abundance of air
and space and and
colors and scents and
tastes and
sounds

O, blue sea!
green plains!
O, towering mountains!

all these
have given me the
complete meaning of
my existence

O, Earth and Sky and
Sea
you are all with me
in my passing days

O, God, My Creator
and Provider
On this Day of Death
I thank Thee

For Love, and Beauty and
Truth
O, God, I praise Thee....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Of Syntax

A poet and his bird, his dog, his cat and his tree
A poet and the bird in the tree
A poet and his dog in the tree
A poet and his dog in the tree and the wind and the cloud
The bird in the tree, the dog in the tree, the cat in the tree,
The bird in the tree, the dog on the tree, the cat under the tree,
The bird on the tree, the bird in a tree, a bird in a tree, a bird in the tree,
And the wind and the cloud and the poet and his dog and his cat and the tree

The dog chases the cat the cat chases the bird
And they all arrive in that tree
Where the poet is sitting under that tree
The poet takes the dog and the cat was envious
And the bird looks at them in silence
The silence looks at the poet in the eye
Of the cat and the bird flies away
The poet and the dog is the poem of friendship
The cat and the dog is the poem of the endless natural quarrels
And the bird that flies away against the cat and the dog and the poet and the tree
And flies against the wind that the bird is now fighting
And the clouds that seem so blue and blue

The bird that actually flies away
Is actually me
I was not the poet with the dog

I am not the tree I am not the wind I am not the cloud I am not the poet there
who had a dog as friend and I was not the quarrelsome thing from the blue and
out of the blue

I am the bird with wings and I always fly away to places
Against the wind to places where I can be as always be the bird with wings in
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem On Marriage

she is with you everyday
she is your cup of tea

you have known her rhythm
you too, very well rhyme

it has taken you to an age
to make this poem on marriage

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Serves As Marker.....

each poem is a marker
of a thought
every mile of emotion traversed
all those surges of
strife
some secrets embedded under
the skin of
fire
a poem serves as marker.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem That Does Not Make Me Sleep

it is still your face
i have avoided looking at you for years
for i must simply
be hurting myself
crushing myself
to this
unrequited longings
something
that my heart pretends
to accept
my mouth denies
my hands
cold on the railing
on cruel nights

how many sighs do i have to
throw to this wall?
my body has taken a lot of changes
siding to the left
to the right
and could not stay that long in the middle
i bury my face on the pillow
i cannot breath
i cannot also die
dishonorably without having told them that i have fallen
into this abyss of love
that is killing me
so gently
like slow suicide unnoticed
by intimacies

i open the window
let air in
i sit on the chair on the side of my bed
turn on the table lamp
the paper is ready and the pen is pouring its ink on the mantel

how can i promise myself that i can now sleep

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
and not write again?

i, this liar,
this painful heart
looking for the coolest
herbal cure

you are the leaf in the forest
that i have never found
where...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem That He Sent To His Ex-Girlfriend

my poems shall mystify you
my words shall edify you

you make no sense now
at anytime or anyhow

your smell has turned into
the pungent odor of
dog urine

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem To Make Emily Strong

you pack up your clothes
take on the little money you save
from your hometown

now you have come to this city
of sin
where people come and go
where friends are rare
where nights are colder even with the flurry of city lights

where faces have no eyes and ears to see you
needing help
crying

why have you come here and look for love?

there is no love here, only indifference
a little cruelty

well, perhaps to make you strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Written At The Taoist Temple In Cebu City A Few Days Ago

the place is well trimmed
bushes with leaves well arranged
like the haircut of a soldier
the dragon guards the place
the one that does not spit fire
nothing to fear in this place of
worship this place of calm and
quiet where cameras are prohibited
but we all tread our steps towards
the holy and the divine that
unholy hour of our existences.

i was once here and there is
someone i cannot forget
the close friend i had who
clicked her camera who told
me to pose here and there only
to realize later that there was
no film.

oh, those were the younger years
that speak of lies
that gives nothing but false hopes

meanwhile, i am amazed at this
temple
a tip that tries to reach the clouds
telling us
though that we are less inferior.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Written By A Confessed Bipolar (Her Name To Be Revealed Upon Her Permission)

I write because I can
I write because there are so many things to be written.
I write because I can make a painting without a brush and paints in my hand.
I write because I can capture the moment without having a camera.
I write because letters and words are the only recipe I know how to cook.
I write because I want to read what I’ve written.
I write because I’m used to speak in silence.
I write because I have a story to tell.
I write because I want to strip off my flesh and live as a pure being.
I write because I can record my “voice” without having a recorder.
I write because it’s like a cup of coffee, it keeps me awake
I write because I want to live even when I do not exist.
I write because this is my throwing stones when I’m frustrated.

6/11/09 at 4: 42 PM
I write because I can flaunt my being when I don’t have clothes to show off.
I write because this is like making an encyclopedia to a coloring book.
I write because it’s more effective than my lithium medication.
I write because I’m tired of carrying these baggages on the road.
I write because I’m tired of talking too much.
I write because it’s a healthier diversion than smoking.
I write because it’s more therapeutic than analyzing my problem.
I write because I want to paint a thousand pictures with words.
I write because I can put colors to the letters and make a rainbow of words.
I write because it’s the key combinations to my hidden vaults.
I write because my ball pen is my best friend in the darkest nights.
I write because it surprises me with what I am capable of thinking&doing.

6/11/09 at 4: 43 PM
I write because I like that ideas are popping like pop corns.
I write because I can wander in the adventures of my own world.
I write because I have to cleanse my collection of memories of an old home.
I write because like a mirror you need to do a lot of reflections.
I write because I want to fight the battle of life.
I write because I wanted my little voice to be heard.
I write because I want to run from the insanities of the world.
I write because pictures don’t talk.
I write because it helps me connect the dots when I look back in my life.
I write because it brings me back to my crib of silence.
I write because it makes a buzz to other bees in my beehive.
I write because unlike my bike my destination is limitless.
I write because I want to become an inspiration without extinction 6/11/09 at 4:43 PM
I write because like strumming of the guitar, it vibrates in my soul.
I write because I love to write.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Written By The Other Woman

i am not asking you to answer
me with
i love you too
empty words, i do not need empty words
i am a practical woman
need proof:

a Chevrolet 2010 model car and a house and lot in the city
do not say it. show it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poem Written Inside The Cebu Pacific

even in the heavens
the clouds are so thick

like the fog
beclouding the mountains

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poet Of Your Caliber

oh, i very well agree
as you believe it yourself
behaving like a god
of the air and the sea
once the king of the
clouds and the rain
once the prince of
the hills and mountains
the only rightful heir
to the flowers and bees

i very well agree sir
oh holy one oh mighty one

a poet of your caliber
need not write
another poem for
the tiny tadpoles swimming
on a very small pond.

RIC S. BASTASA
IN MY life i am making poems
numbering in thousands and those who read them
must have felt that i sound like a machine gun to an enemy
it is funny
but it is not intended to be that way

THERE is a wounded snake if you have seen it
if you have once lived in the forest
looking for the herbal cure for its wounds
near the center of its heart

IT IS not only a question of love, but also of hate,
not only life but also of death
not just death but the series of deaths that one experiences
with humanity
Those that love to hate, to injure, to inflict pain
and those that receive this pain, those that taste their wars
those that witness the dying, the dead
those that listen to the unexpected fires and explosions
those that are part of the shattered and the shatters

ONE WORLD
in the nooks of poetry.

Pity and Piety
The Pieta and the Sunless Sea
Clouds of Van Gogh
Guns of the Piedra
ALL THESE
In the hues of the lights of sunsets and sunrises
trying to be captured in the lenses of mere words.

Just listen, watch, just be a spectator
Do not say any word.

not complain.
If bad, just spit it out. Go, go, go.
A Poetry For Loneliness...

when you are lonely
you are lonely
both inside and outside

by your own psychological expertise
you may not show it
and they do not notice it

they are busy too
with anything to conceal their own
and play games with you

late at night
you continue the guessing game
those tricks
and treats

and indeed you are all lonely
and you drink the wine to put some redness on your face and skin
to lessen the impact of that trembling

but no one talks about it
no one dares
for fear that talking about it makes the pain worse

you cannot hold it you want to release that bird caged
that loneliness that sings inside your heart
and you set it free
and it flies in the air and above the mountains and hovers
from one tree to another

and then at night
it comes back to you
you are the cage and the home combined
and they see the bird and hear its song

it is so sweet and so beautiful
and they want to describe it to you
but there is just no word
for it

and precisely the hiding game continues
routine loneliness
common songs of mankind
unspoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poetry Of Smell

a smell, your smell,
that perfume that sticks
to my skin,
your sweat, that wetness
between us,
dry before us, desert sand,
nothing to talk about oasis,
camels in a caravan
under the stars one evening,
you are my tent,
i live there, but you are not
there, there is this blankness
that i face within me,
there is this trail that smells
like you, i follow,
and then i stop, it is not us
there, there is no us,
there is the star that shines
one evening
it does not last,
but every evening it comes
back to me,
too near, in my mind,
too far, in reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poetry To Reckon With

My poetry is like stove in the summer
Or fan in winter
It runs against the popular tastes
And has no practical value
Basho

IT IS I TOO

It is I too, I run against authority
I Quarrel with the mayor I Sue the postmaster
I tell my teacher that she’s teaching the wrong thing I even tell my mother that I did not deserve her
(And she cried when I did not regret saying the same statement all over again).

What is it it me that fans when things are cold that heats when everything is so warm?

To want the undesirable
To desire what cannot be imagined
Of those that do not exist
And get inside where there are no exits
To love the unlovable
To give up something so important and honorable?
To set aside love and love the lovelessness of a meaningless locomotion.
To sculpt from mud inhuman forms
To read that which must still be deciphered
To swallow that which is vomitable
To stay where others wanted to leave
I have a taste for the unpopular
I voted for the loser
To side with the weak
To speak to those with less sanity
To settle for what is unsanitary
To lick despairs
To risk whatevers
To go the whenevers
To leave the dead bury themselves
To enter the narrow gate
To light the post in the midst of day
To sail when the winds are too strong
To smile when your loved ones enter the great divide
To wish happy deaths for friends gone by
Empty chairs and empty tables
To spit on these sorts of things
To be myself and yet to be so unhappy
To be so happy and yet not knowing my name
To speak none where my mind is so filled with sense
To be unknowing about what I do know
To be so funny when seriousness demands
To have worked so hard and to die so untimely
To write without any opportunity to be read
All these…. and the senselessness of these all
To be able to say thank you very much
Now that all of you are dead and gone & all I have are empty chairs and empty tables
(In the manner of Les Miserables)
In some pages of nonmindedness
In an island of don’t touch me
This I say I thank you
So Long.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poetry Workshop

got invited to this poetry workshop
telling me
these critics
that they like my work, the way i put my words
like glass,
shiny colored glasses shaped like
ballerinas
in my cabinet

a menagerie of sorts like i am a keeper
of transparent dreams

so there i go, on free board and lodging
and oh yes, the place is so poetic
and i really like the scenery
of shrubs and bushes
and heights

on top of a hill where i can see lines
of sea and land
separated by my
kind of imagination
the sunset
the sunrise

the cool winds at night the
warmer sea breeze during the day
the kind of wind
that flaps the window making a sound
of a slamming door

i remember then the house
of my youth
where papa always slams
the door before mama
and the quarrel so endless
and we were not even
considered
as
creatures of the house
and they all begin
to leave
one after the other
and i remember
they all die
anyway but that is not the end
of the subject of my poetry

i see everything
in the workshop
where we eat and drink and discuss
my possibilities
my potential
as a great poet one day

but it is all in the mind
of this critic
it is all in my mind
until she begins
to dissect my poems
like a cadaver
nerve after nerve
muscle after muscle
bone connecting
to another cartilage
to another bone

until such time that all i see
are dead bodies
of my poems
surrounded by vultures
eating each
rotten flesh

i close my eyes and
feel the
wrong crowd all around me

what they do not know
is
i believe in myself, i still believe
in my
way of putting words to feelings
colors to blandness
scents where the dead are dead
and some
little dramatics where they are needed
just to live
and just be alone and still imagining believing
the beauty in things
in people
in words that flow like a free wind touching my face again
fresh like a flower with few dews still sticking
glistening
till the wee hours of my mourning

RIC S. BASTASA
A Point Of View

There is something that is hidden
From you
And it stays inside my heart
This is the pain of my lifetime
It is there
Every night it shines like the moon
And like the sun
It scorches me every day

I like it to stay there
Though it is within my power to
Let it go
And leave me forever

But It will stay there
And you will not like it
As it is killing me
Slowly like a cancerous bone
Like a deadly mole
Behind my back

How is it that a man like me should
Like this matter to stay
You may ask if you later will know
But this I will say
This pain perfects me
At the end
This pain is nothing but the whole of me
Like the happiness
That you would want to stay

RIC S. BASTASA
A Political Statement

i pray that corruption be murdered
let the culprits be free

i pray that dishonesty be hanged
let the judges rule

i pray for the the killing of tradition
let the love of money go hungry

i pray that the voices of the people be heard again
without any intervention

i pray that democracy shall bloom again
like a brand new day

i pray that the voices of conscience prevail
over the choking hands of money and fame

i pray for the death of tradition
for the triumph of innovation

RIC S. BASTASA
A Political Statement...

white and black birds
rainbow birds
all kept
in one big cage...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Political Theory

the way you manage things
pertains to an ordinary garden
weeding out the bad ones
cultivating the ideals
the snakes are caught and
cut to pieces
and the rats poisoned
and the trees pruned
the paths cleaned of rocks
and pebbles
you level mountains
desiring the plains
and the neighborhood claps
their hand and shall make
new monuments for you
there are words of praises
but not from me

for in my garden
the snakes thrive with the rats
the moss grows well with the stone
the grasses and the buffaloes
the rivers and the reeds
the fish and crocodiles
the bees and the flowers
the mountains stay as is
and the plains spread as they wish

i just let themselves be
and they are all very happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ponder...

on an early morning
dew on the grass
looking towards the sky
there is always more
to be pondered
upon the leaf that
falls silently
back to the arms
of the grass
soundlessly....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ponderous Moment At Pizza Hut, Cagayan De Oro City

i am sitting in one of those commercial benches of Pizza Hut

the glass walls divide me from the rest of this world
the sidewalk is filled with people rushing in different directions

the main road of this dusty city is filled with cars and trucks and buses
if only i can hear their rush of horns and screeches of their rubberized wheels
i should have know better how noisy will it be

across the road is another set of people walking, rushing, running

they are all busy, and the dusts on their shoes have become too visible
like clouds of brown and gray on the surface of the pavements and roads

inside is this peace of comfortable living
i have a plate of hot vegetable pizza, ice cold red tea,
vanilla sundae

as it is too early for the mall to open
there is only myself and the waitress who has well kept hair
a red apron as uniform and a very smiling face as mandated by the rules of the establishment

inside the kitchen the chef is busy with his recipe and dough

i am pondering, why should people be too busy to forget about how is it to be at peace with themselves

like having to do nothing with roads and dusts and work
i am at peace with myself, arrogating upon myself the much needed vacation

this is my time, when i am not a part of the busy world attached to no one, with no vested interest, no itinerary
i do not know yet what to do do really with my own spare time
how to make it productive as the Establishment would want me to do

i am at peace, and this is what i want, and this is what i mean,
Others are none of my business,
as i am too, am none to them...

sometimes i ask, why should i be busy? why should i be a part of
all these useless crowds?

i have only one life to live, and it is not that long enough for some
long range projects,

i must learn to enjoy it, to the full and so tomorrow i shall be shutting
myself off from everyone,

i am set to go in a far away island, swim on its blue sea,
rest upon its sand, bathe on the rays of the gentle sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ponderous Moment...

at the point somewhere between
loneliness and
independence, one settles on faraway places,
to see how things are
from a distance, and you soon find out

it is you that seeks the company of others,
spends for their drinks, caters for their caprices,
enslaved and deprived,

it is you that has behaved as the insufficient one
always begging for
a relationship, and you conclude that you have
always been
the lonelier than before

the insecure one, looking for others' entertainment
dependent as an accessory metal to
their diamond natures,

but it will only be for a time, soon
you discover it and fight back,
i mean,
you begin to question your own behavior,

and you shy away, feeling guilty about your
weaker side, and you begin to build the fences again
to make a good neighbor
of yourself,

you write in your journal,
i have always been
a defeatist, needing always the hands of others,
those that press upon me

choke me and had almost killed me
those whose arms have become ropes around
my neck
you quit.

you ponder again.
you look at the stars at night and marvel upon
the distances of each

and their solemn silence
their pride and self-esteem
always whole, glittering,

against the darkness of the
universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Pool

a pool lies at the foot of a hill
there is a bush of mushing green
beside a rotten tree are mushrooms
birds drink here and then sing
a crystal pool where Narcissus
rests and stays for a while

at the side of the bank are white stones
a frog licks a fly
drinking upon a dropp of sperm

Narcissus is sleeping
soundly upon a grass
under a tree
it is windy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poor Family

the man is out of job
and his abdomen is
giving him all the pain

the woman knows not
what to do for they
have nothing left

the one-month old baby
sucks her milk and there
isn't any anymore and the
the baby cries in hunger

what he heard is thunder.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Poor Mortal Like Me

who does not love beauty?

anything beautiful, be it to the taste or to the touch
will always be desired

a body, a fruit, the sky,
something too near or too distant
if beautiful will always be desired
we wish it can be ours

i desire you,
you are so beautiful to me
i long to touch and kiss you,
but how sad can it be?

you are always a star in the sky
to the stone in my hand.
always a blooming flower
to the autumn of my eyes

you are always a bird with blue feathers perched upon a tree
while i am fenced away on the other side of the hill

my hands are useless, my tongue is dry,
my body is thinning out in grief

Time is teaching me more lessons,

I cannot have what i desire,
Beauty is not always in the reach
of a poor mortal whose hands are too small like a flea
in the middle of the sea......

RIC S. BASTASA
A Portrait Of A Thinker

at the time when you say
you want to take a picture of me
in that office
where books are not adornments
but necessities
of my being a part of this strict system
of competition and
rat racing,
i suddenly go to the instinct of biting
the nail of my hand
my arm pretends to be secure on the head
of the chair
covered with white leather
i look at it again
i smile at you
and you like it and then you click
the camera
and feed it on the computer and send it to me
with a dedication...(i will not write it here)

i suspect, really, (how can i tell you)
i am not that self, i have not composed it.

Yes, it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Portrait Of Tomorrow

get the pen of the present
and take the colors of the past
use the hand that you trust
and begin making
tomorrow's portrait

have the ears of twenty years ago
try listening
if the sound is happy
put them there

and for the nose
smell the sweat of your childhood
those that play so well on the grass
and took the plunge on the clean rivers of your life
if you have that nostalgic feeling
then put that nose there

and how about the mouth and the lips
i think, if i were you
i'll take the teen age years
remembering the first kiss
and the first communion
the sound of a tight embrace
and if you like those happenings
then have those years
as your mouth and lips
and even the teeth

and now for the eyes
those that know really how to see
clearly and probingly
ponderous eyes
where wisdom is embedded
i think if i were you
take it from the present
those that see the past
as a summary
and of course the future
as a plan
specific and determined
strong and willing

and with a stroke of your
skilled hand you put the final
touches of tomorrow's portrait

you see your face and you say
you are beautiful
you caress it and tell yourself
you are lovable

RIC S. BASTASA
A Possible Explanation For The Cause Of Chest Pain

The pain is on the left side of my chest
And runs to the other half of my arm
Sometimes it settles in my hand

I think I know why
On the left side is the woman who lives
With me
On the other half of my arm
Is another one

She runs to my hand so I may hold her
For all the days of my life
But I can’t I just can’t,
It is not simply possible

But above all these
The pain lingers at the center
Of my heart
Because I have not offered
My heart
Like a ripe mango, my heart,
To the real one
Who deserves it because
She came first
Before I have known
The meaning of lust
Forever she will last
And the pain is never gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Posting In The Street
	his picture says it all:

we must learn
together to live as brothers
or
we shall perish together
as fools

framed in maroon colors
of hardwood
a black man in black suit
raises his right hand to
stress his point
his left hand rests on the railing
a shadow of a street sign
lands on this figure

as i see it
there are no men watching this picture anymore
left to the sun
which the strong winds want to destroy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer

may all the good old people of this world
have a happy death,
may not the young die at their young age
may those who pray for death
be enlightened to choose life
and live in peace in an actualized self,
may all those who have forgotten prayer pray, and may all those who still pray
pray some more to learn to pray
and pray earnestly that all
prayers through God’s Holy Will
be heard and granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer For Me

soon i will be one of the hollow people
and soon i will have nothing but air inside me

why can't i make a choice between substance
and emptiness?

i can. There is this light that leads me to
his Grace. There is this door that always opens.
There is this garden where all
the flowers always bloom
and never wilt.

I follow the light. I open the door.
I enter the garden.

As easy as that. I only need to call His Name.
And He is always there.

I do not have to suffer and
be confused. He is happiness. He is certainty.

I do not have the right to inflict
this unnecessary injury into my soul.

Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer For My Enemies

i pray

May the Lord
give you more grief
May he make you lose
the one you love
May you lose your home
May your country be
at war
May you family be
erased from the face
of the Earth

May you feel a hundred losses

For you have become another
arrogant tyrant
a mass murderer
a land grabber
For you have forgotten our
failures
For you have disregarded our
pleas

May you die in vain.

May you come back to us
As we mourn
As we grieve

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer For My Enemies (Revised)

i pray

May the Lord
give you more grief
May he make you lose
the one you love
May you lose your home
May your country be
at war
May your family be
erased from the face
of the Earth

May you feel a hundred losses

For you have become another
arrogant tyrant
a mass murderer
a land grabber
For you have forgotten our
failures
For you have disregarded our
pleas

May you die in vain.

May you come back to us
As we mourn
As we grieve

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer For Today

Lord i thank you
for everything
This early morning I felt the warmth
Beside you through the soft pillows
and the warm bed and the blankets
that embraced me throughout the
dark and cold night.
You have spoken in my dream
I have seen the images
And i have understood all the metaphors.
I am your poem Lord
And I like it.

You started it all
And soon you shall put the ending lines.
You shall sign your name and say
That i am what you have done best.

Dear God, thank you
I look forward to your promise
That you bring me back to your kingdom
To life everlasting

Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer On Early Morning....

it is up to you
now Lord
for i am a cold ham
sandwiched
between two extremes
it is up to you
Now Lord
to judge me
for i am colder than ham
between
two hells, the children
hate cold hams
adults pretend
they like it
it is up to you
oh Lord to judge me now
but i must tell you
i have tried
to be one delicious piece
for all those
who profess
that they are hungry still
despite the
coldness of
the ham their hands
as cold
as mine....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prayer To Doubt

if you are everywhere
where shall i see you

it will not be specific
like a street with a specific number

or that
widely accepted landmark

like a
rock of Gibraltar

or a room at the second floor
numbered 6

if you only tell me
specifically

i would not have been in this
doubtful mess

are you in the sky
or at the top of the mountain

you tell me 'i am in your heart'
but my heart

i stabbed by the sharp knife
of sorrow

are you pain?

i am looking for you
everywhere

pity me
for i am tired and my feet are wounded

i cannot be in everywhere
as it can be nowhere

guide me

are you at the bottom of this ocean
of grief?

tell me

i am willing to dive there
and die

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prediction....

as usual we know about it as
hills know its trees
as grass knows its hoppers
and soil

but we don't talk about it
we dislike storms
it is horrible to see uprooted trees
and blown away houses

we leave things as they are
there is no ripeness yet
but the way you withhold love
and hide second thoughts
very give the signal of the coming days

a desert shall produce its own sandstorm
you prepare the door
i too, keep the windows.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Prelude To Prayer

you must have seen
how the fingers of the trees
turn into hands in
prayer

it happens after the storm
when all the leaves had been taken away
when they are all nothing
but branches and twigs
when some have felt the fear
of being uprooted

RIC S. BASTASA
A Preparation...

how can i perhaps explain
photographing every nook of the house
all sides of the fence and even the face of
the ceiling
the fingers of the stairs
each nail
and beam of the house

what is the use of all these?
am i gathering memories in order to
take with me somewhere else?
am i ready to forget how i made this house?

the bright colors of the paint shall haunt me
wherever i am

they will say, there was summer here
there was harvest after the seeding

the walls will say what about those that you conceal with us?

shall we now reveal them to vendors of biographies?

my bag is still not full
and i doubt what shall i fill it
when the right hour
steps in the door.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Price To Pay

too much delving on the mind
the physical body pays the price

balance

sound mind
sound body

time and space
on parallel lines

RIC S. BASTASA
A Primera Luz

you wake up only to find out
that at this hour you are confused with
what to do first

you rise put on propriety
you walk towards the fridge
you open it to
have a cold glass of water
to drink and feel
the coldness of this
still gray hour

there is no difference
it is the same cold moment
like last night's
old temperament
when you had problems about
what to do
with your life when you took off
propriety
and lay your self naked against
light of the ceiling's
indifference

there is simply no one that fits
the one that you dream: so sweet
and enduring
the eternal goodness that you
still hope for

there is no one,
no one

perhaps there could be good news
on a primera luz.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Private Moment....

once i wanted to choose, 
a place, a person to be with, 
where i cannot be hurt 
where no harsh word can be said, 
it always ends upon a nook, where 
i am always disappointed, and 
so, i have decided to try something 
else, to choose myself, and listen, 
to enjoy my coffee alone by my window 
read a book and position myself 
wherever i need to, or want to, 
or when it gets too static or 
sometimes boring, i stand and 
undress myself and sleep in bed 
naked. And here, i am not adjusting 
to anybody, just me and my body, 
in the comfort of our privacy, 
as i go back to the page that i left, 
read the book again, under the 
lamp just beside my pillow.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Process...

when the mystery is finally gone
and familiarity rests on the carpeted floors
the ticks begin to
multiply and breed what makes
us apart
this contempt for so much
knowing
the taking for granted of
what used to be
love's luxuries

RIC S. BASTASA
A Program Component

part of the program component
is the fear that they install
on incoming viruses

what do you do? take the fear
and savor the virus and sit on the
easy chair, wiggle, wobble, like
another unknown planet

stare at the monitor as though
it is a bird that cannot take flight
with your mind

it will stare back
but you are no longer moved with pity

fear is an important part of this program
fly with it
have a tour on its contours
and when you come back
tell me the story of fear in wonderland
show me that Cheshire grin
be the mad hatter
with the etiquette of the
Red Queen

this is senseless
yet why did you finish it?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise

dear lady
i will climb ten mountains
i will swim twenty rivers
i will sail thirty seas
i will walk forty plains
i will vanish in space
just tell me if all these deeds
can make you happy.

from me
the man you don't want me to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise For Lilacs

so where are the lilacs?

you promised me lilacs
i am far away

i will be satisfied with the pictures of lilacs
in bloom

less the scent, less the reality of lilacs

i grab then the illusion of lilacs
a field of lilacs

a mountain of lilacs, a path of lilacs,

or just a single lilac,

or just another promise of lilacs

or look-alike of lilac

from you

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise For You My Love...

loving you
is not to love the air

it is to touch the petals of a flower
to savor the scent and inhale it inside my body

to make you
a part of me so that anywhere i go i must carry you inside me

loving you is not to love the air
invisible

loving you is to caress your hair
lay my head in the comfort of your bosom

loving you is not a thought but a touch
loving you is not the future but my present

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise Revised.....

you are just a spark
in my universe
for once a year and

so here i am
watching you without
much expectation after
which i still have to
wash my own soul
tomorrow....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise To Grandfather

soon we shall lose
what our great grandfathers
left

when i was a child i saw them
in camps
planting those coconuts

now the new laws shall deprived
us of these legacies

what can we do? back to arms and
our fierceness regains
what valor hid.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise To Insanity

daily shall this man
ask for food
and daily shall this house
open its door
to cater to its
precious
insanity

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise To The Lady Moon

last night
i promised to the lady moon
that what happened
in the bosom of her
darkness
streaked by the sheen of
her loving light
on the break of day
when the man of the day comes
on his strong gaze
i shall tell nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise To Yourself After The Rain

after the rain
the whole night
when you wake up
the following morning
what you see is
a glistening world

fresh leaves that
cover the trees
new mushrooms sprout
on the footpaths

you breathe and
fill your lungs
with all the newness
of this life

barefoot you take
the walk on the grass
feel the dewness of
every filled blades

who cares about friends
and umbrellas and
raincoats and
fears and pretenses?

solitude is cool
to the call of the pool
undress sorrow
prepare to make love
tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
A Promise.....For 2017

because i do not have you
it does not mean that i
annihilate myself, i am
sane, and whole, and i
promise myself that i
should not destroy the
what i have for a lifetime
with that mere spark of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Proof Of Love

you tell me that love cannot exist if i have no time for you

time seems to be love's way of proving that love loves love the way love loves true love

a time for both of us sailing in the river under the moon a stroll on the grass under the sun

a candlelit dinner a serenade of violin music a dance of tango a glass of wine for two a slice of sweet cake

i may agree with you and be with you like the way you need time with me

but what i know really my dear as handed down from my father's father their marriages solid and smooth and surviving all those years inside the same old ancestral dwelling

that true love knows no time-for it is timeless that true love knows no price-for it is priceless

that love unlike our finite bodies., is infinite that love unlike our temporalities, is eternal that love so unlike us, knows no beginning and knows no end.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Proposal

i guess there is something
better to do,
let us go inside the room
close the window
i have an empty glass
you too have it
i have wine, aged and mellow,
let me pour it to your empty glass
then we make a toast
let me drink from your wine glass
as you drink from mine
in this room
we are alone
sleep is such a waste of time
as time runs
berserk upon its own feet
and we gain
nothing but its wrinkles and
forgetfulness

it is nice to get drunk
now
we do things we are spontaneous
we may imagine other faces
previous events
those that we can never forget with someone else
let me be just a movie to you
as you are to me

the following morning
don’t say a word
we both do not need it
we part
and parting must be
as beautiful as we met.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Protest Poem...

a poem is a feeling
fragile, transitory, it does not
say anything
at all,
do no look for substance
it is not meat
it is a table napkin
i wipe my mouth and throw
it away.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Proverb

God gives every bird
a worm,
but he does not throw it
into the nest.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Purpose Driven Life....

no one
does a thing without
a purpose
at hand

some who claims otherwise
either
is out of his mind
or amnesiac
or must still be in the state
of anger and
denial

even the spider and the fly
knows their
purpose

everyday the spider spins its
artistic web of
deception with only one purpose
to catch a prey
for it to live and on the other
hand
the fly
in the usual habit flies everywhere
looking for food

until it gets trapped
and dies

that is still purposeful.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Purpose Driven Life....(Revised)

no one
does a thing without
a purpose
at hand

someone who claims otherwise
either
is out of his mind
or amnesiac
or must still be in the state
of anger and
denial

even the spider and the fly
know their
purpose

everyday the spider spins its
artistic web of
deception with only one purpose

to catch a prey
for it to live and on the other
hand
the fly

in the usual habit flies
everywhere
looking for food
to infect

until it gets trapped
and dies

that is still purposeful
leaving too others
dead.
A Quagmire

I fall into you
Since then
Henceforth
Now &
Forever

Till death do
Us part

You also
Said

“I do”.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question

if i give you love
white (as it is pure)
whole (as it is allgiving)
and so fragile (as love is suppose to be
so sensitive)
like a fresh, chicken egg
that i have and hold
and shall now hand to
you, as i give it to you
with matching

i love you, i love you so much...

tell me what will you do with it?

i mean, the fresh,
white chicken egg...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question

whatever detests upon yourself
cannot just be simply removed by you
and you say, this is not me
there is no denial about your dual nature
both evil and good
mixed in one glass like salt and water
if you remove one from the other
you shall not be the same again
not your taste, not you anymore
and you ask: what is real? the salt alone?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question About A Diminishing Family Heritage

an antiquated silver
ten-centavo coin
embossed with the blind
Lady Justice

fell off
the old and hard wooden floor of the
ancestral house

till then
sister.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question About Religion....

to pass the time
we talk, i have nowhere to go
this self is not taking me
anywhere
i am not well dressed
i am a shadow of my mind
it is my mind that
is becoming my own body
my body is but
an afterthought
of a flash,
you do not talk much
you are surprised
you doubt about what is happening to me
i cannot explain
you do not want me to explain
it is obvious
each part of me is disappearing
my ears are dissolving in air
i have become smaller
when you stare at me
perhaps this is what happens
when shame
makes a decision
i do not feel any roundness of this earth
the space has become
another meaningless
edge of my
existence

i want to explain it now that
you start to speak
'what the hell is happening to you? '
you ask
feeling the roughness of my hair
'this cannot be true'

i nod my head and shrink
like some ice on the floor
and then
as you cannot see me anymore
you left
this refusal to believe
that things like these can happen to someone like me

i use to ask ' Was i God? '
it is this blasphemy that
meted the penalty

'Issa, Issa, are you preaching now
that it was not really what you intended? '

it is not too late yet,
it was the fake one
that spy that
was hanged
and died.

Lina, please leave the documents
on my table.
I cannot yet
find myself
just like the way you have not
forgiven yourself
once victim, now
the offender

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question And An Answer

what is the meaning of the black bird?
it is the friend of the night
not darkness
neither evil nor curse for it is a singing blackbird
the jolly one that comes
in the month of June
when the rest of the place is preoccupied with
grief,
it is the self that has combined all the colors
red for madness, white for purity, green for envy,
yellow for ripeness, brushing and mixing all these
in unity
the black bird is what i am when you
sit by the window looking for answers to the sea
the moon at night silently
passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question For Both Of You

There is this
desire to please
all of you,

and so i dispose
all trash impressing

that both of you may
better forgive and
forget

but in so pleasing
both of you i have become

so disgustng to both
whom i think

have nothing in mind
but to attack and
destroy

the other always
wants the other dead

and be buried but
how can you understand

the wisdom of this
decision: that both of you

must live, and must too
please each one

so we can make one happy
world

for everyone. Is that
hard to understand?
A Question For You

do you you how much pain
is spent in keeping
yourself
tight as a bud?

do you know how joyful
will it be
if you try to finally bloom
and be
the most beautiful flower
of the day?

just asking
just asking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question For You Again

I thought i had you as company for misery
but just the same, thanks, i had that slightest moment
Now, like an eagle you are going to soar the heights of a faraway mountain
Far from me
Your dreams fulfilled but for how long will the excitement last?
sometimes i wonder how the gods placed the minds of men and women
I've seen those who prayed with their prayers granted
Due to persistence and yet at the end regretted what they've got

Have the gods granted what people wish and pray as a form of punishment too?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question For You....

the blind is
much better than
you

you read letters
which you do not
understand

your eyes are wide
open and yet
you do not see

the blind has only
dots and yet
they can retell the
story

the blind has only
darkness within
yet they have seen
the colors of my feelings

you have no use of your
eyes
and yet you take pride
in them?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question For You?

i ask the wind
when will i ever see you again?

and the clouds hear it and then
the sun shines telling it is when the clear day comes again

and then i wait and there is rain for days and days.

on a clear day, the sun shines the flowers bloom and i wait again

there is no you, not even a shadow, and i left

the sun, the wind, the rain, the clouds

they have nothing to give for my quest for answers,
useless metaphors, broken promises, empty poems
shattered dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question Of Conscience

How can you ever
Leave someone
Who cannot live
Without you?

Look at her eyes
The moment she
Hears the word
Goodbye

Her eyes start
To bleed
Blood.

I cannot kill
Someone with
The use
Of the word goodbye.

I can’t.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question Of Family -Values...

the child is confused
for when she tells the truth
about this
family's mess
she is warned
not to expose the
dirty linens
she reasons out
what is wrong with
the truth
is it not that the truth
sets us free
as mother once told
her?
papa says not all
truths must be
preached
family secrets for
instance
what a shame!
but it is a shame
then why did this
family do it?
shut up
the father shouts
at the little girl
and slaps her
small face with
his huge hands

the very reason
why you have seen
this little girl
on the street
crying

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question To My Lover

what is it that i
desire really from you?

is it your body?
is it your wisdom?
is it your time?
is it your concern?

i have tasted
every skin of your body
i have taken much
of your time
i have listened from
your wisdom
i have much of your
care
and yet i am still
empty

i have consumed you
like bread and
have drunk you like
a glass of wine
yet there is still something
that i desire from you
and yet i still do not know

or is it that it is not
really you that i desire
but someone else?

and how many more?
yes how many more
shall i waste and yet find
no answer?

will you finally kill me at
the end of this
betrayal?
what is it that i desire?
self, tell me now.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Question...

is that old Hungarian
for mere citizenship
or for love?
for a moment or
for eternity?
do you know really
what eternity is?
i know citizenship
i have known love
but eternity
is a chasm
between too much
familiarity and
too much
looking at the past
it is untrue
and yet you utter it
how come?
are you not bothered
by the coldness
of a promise?
the lightness of
assurances?
the falsity of
words?
the fear of the
void?
are you not at all
human to
consider that something
must at least
be for a while
too uncertain
because it is garnished
with so much
truth that
we cannot bear
anymore?
A Quiet

a quiet room
a real quiet room
amidst these ruins
these flooded streets
around these
screaming buildings

inside the heart
of the patient man
a gentle soul
amid the rubble

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rainbow

to see the beauty of the rainbows
hues
you need the rain,

that is it. The rain, The bow.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rainy Day

cmp; the trees are full of green leaves.
ncmp; the shrubs are flowery.
ncmp; the grasses are still wet with dew.

cmp; two muscular men pass by.
ncmp; Under one black umbrella.
ncmp; One hand on the shoulder
ncmp; of the other
ncmp; keeping themselves close
ncmp; to avoid being wet by the rain.

ncmp; On the bench beside the
ncmp; pavement
ncmp; One lean white man
ncmp; sits with sad eyes
ncmp; (i guess there must
ncmp; be tears on his cheeks)
ncmp; looking at them.

ncmp; Not a word is heard.

ncmp; RIC S. BASTASA
A Rainy Day In Katipunan

AS the rains fall
the mind turns into a seagull
and the world becomes an ocean
the chairs into boats
and then

another journey begins
memories become islands
without ports and

nowhere is a lighthouse
horizons are without borders
and walls
have murals around this world
inside my room.

RIC S. BASTASA
that day the rain falls heavily on the roof. 
the leak has been managed. 
the doormat is replaced with a new one. 
the dogs are inside the house and they 
are everywhere. The biggest one stares 
at me on the dining table. 
i stop sipping my coffee. 
The smallest one, coy and secretive, 
sleeps beside you in bed. 
the other three are so unruly 
waiting to eat the white cat on the 
ceiling. 

you have chosen sleep. 
i take the black raincoat 
open the door and head 
towards my favorite hang-out. 

the soup is ready and she hates 
dog like myself. 

RIC S. BASTASA
A Random Poem Written While Looking Beside A Window

from where i sit
i see a man with a black shirt

an old man, smoking his cigar
beside a hollow-block fence

wearing faded jeans
consistently smoking

perhaps killing time
brown shoes fresh with mud

by the road his back leaning
against a wall across my room

the cigar between his fingers
sleepy and not minding

a fat lady with flowery dress
passing by

he is under a mango tree
lush against the backdrop of

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reaction About Breaking

i sit on a chair
and it breaks and i fall
on the floor
but i rise and looks around
with no one
really seeing what happens
just a while ago
and then i touch my bottom
and then alone by myself
i laugh the
hardest.

crazy, but i like the legs
of the chair splitting into
useless limbs.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reaction...

we still have our flag
flying high every Monday
on Fridays we fold them
together as one
national treasure

there are no wars here
that may tear the flags
for more bandages

i am glad and still proud
to be Filipino.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Real Dancer

a real dancer
does not need a stage
only a soul,

a real poet does
not need an audience
only his own
perfect silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Realization

why do i have to insist to see you Cupid?
it is enough that on my dark nights
you are there beside me
there is no need for me to do another Psyche.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Realization Of A Compromise On Some Pretenses

when he finally realizes
that he never loved her after all those years
he chose silence
for this matter may better be left unsaid
as this of course
hurts like a double-edged
jagged knife

he comes to the conclusion that there is time
that truth must yield
to the common good
to the soundness of affections
to the thought that hurting someone may be unnecessary
considering the shortness of the
span of life

he looks at her and kisses her
fondles her hair
and makes love for another night and another night

he is imagining another face
someone that makes him feel so good

he swallows the guilt
when the morning comes

nothing is visibly wrong
the flowers in the garden still bloom

he finishes his breakfast and drinks the coldest water
the one that freezes everything inside him

but it does not matter anymore
he always thinks that he has only one more day to live

and even if in pretense
he thinks he might as well live it the way love wants it to last

momentarily until the last day comes
until the elegy is finished.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Realization Of Two Things

a bud is better
seen on top of its stalk

even when it has
already bloomed
completely

it is still nicer to
see the flower stuck
on its stalk

even if it has already
wilted
it is still nicer to see
it on its stalk

even when the stalk is gone
the flower is still there

and it is nicer still
to imagine it

untouched by any human
hand
only nature
only nature has the power
to take it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Realization Too Late...

i am not from
here yet i wonder
why i am
still here

a sense of home is
singing
it is whistling
for me

i do not want
doing this
but i still wonder
why i still
do this

i envy those who
know where they want
to go
and where they are from
and they who know
their family line

those who come from
the sea
have long swam to its
navel

those who know there
come from the line of birds
had long flown
to that far away horizon

i do not like it
here but i am still here
perhaps stuck

i must not live here
i do not belong here
i must have betrayed myself
depriving it of
its much deserved compassion

i want to go but i can't
i do not want to stay
but i cannot

wait for me, we look alike.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Realization....

i am never afraid of
the deep
even as a young child
Papa already
taught me how to swim
and to dive
for shells

what i am afraid of
which i later realized in my
mid-age is
that i am simply living in the
shallowness of my
own waters

i do not sink
i am not drowned
but
i feel like i am
choked and
dying....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Recital Of The Past Still Not Forgotten

inside that room then
i was so young
my age
the strong rod

it was dark
as you turn off the lights
what we do not wish to see
we only have
to feel
the lips and hands
in harmony

i am the sun
you are the darkness that i invade

nothing defeats me
as you too conquer me
absurd
the invader and the invaded
all win

there is the language
that we still
do not speak
but which our tongues are still eager
to taste
back then when food no longer
satisfies
our own kind of hunger
when waters bathe our bodies
yet our mouth
still keep opening for more

just once, it was just once
but by all means still the best

i thought it wasn't love
i joke upon it and tries to forget
i am the sun enveloped
by the veil of time
i try to open my self and relieve myself of this
burden of dimming light
i can't

you are a memory
my scar always recites your name
you are still
my sweetest pain

RIC S. BASTASA
A Recollection About What He Had Written....

it is not at all bad
rereading himself,
reinventing what they
think, looking back
he folds his hands
behind his back and
begins to dance, to the
music of his ears,
to the delight of his
heart, it is not at all
bad, as time passes the
goodness rises in the
air and he catches it
with his words back again.

each word has meaning
each syllable has a face,
and it was never bad.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reconciliation.....

recently the sea had taken
so many lives
people did not want to eat fish
for a while
some coconut trees were uprooted
the wind did not have second thoughts
showing its greatness
through its cruelty
blowing away houses and
leaving children homeless
and couples
traumatized
someone killed himself the other day
and others
looked blank
staring to the gray sands of the shore

today the sea is appealing
it is a piece of silk
smooth and calm and
too inviting
like a beautiful woman waiting to be
embraced by my arms

it is this act of reconciliation
and gratitude for being saved
i too could have died
if i did not go to the friend's birthday party

i have no choice
but to take my dip and swim for hours

above me is the sun seemingly smiling
underneath are the fish
playing with the cleansed corals
and dancing seaweeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reconnection

Koi feeding on
my hand
in the clear pond

beside
the neighbor's house

it is the first day
of this year

bubbles of water
rising to the surface

green moss and
rocks

RIC S. BASTASA
A Record Of Betrayals By Emma Z.

i keep a record of your betrayals.
you undress me

when your hands travel on my body
like a hawk surveying an open field
i close my eyes

when you kiss me
i hold your body unto mine

i make you feel at home
like my beloved
inside my heart

i moan for another.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Record Of Familiarity...

i lived with her for 5 years,
we do not use any language now
the one that we constantly use
we are like a landscape
we know what is beautiful and
worthwhile yet we have never
spoken a word to agree about
all these. It is different but it is
also the same.

marriage has its own house,
its own garden. so many flowers
and yet you always have a
name for it. A record of familiarity.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rectangular Shape Of Words

the body is always promised
and the soul is always silent
between them is always you
making promises and noisy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rectification

the randomness of them all
entering your mind too preoccupied
with what must be
and what oughth to be,
the mind blunders
with timorous thunders,
and what becomes so evident
is this error protruding like
a tail from a body
like rabbit ears from your face

you feel like a fraction reduced
to its lowest terms
but you cannot be subdued by the
urge of sweet dishonesty
the self pretending to be right always?
to err is to be human
and to be most human is to accept
the errors of all errors,
yourself....

you take the correct decision
you expose your tongue and show
them your rabbit ears that
you have such a funny long tail

you laugh at yourself and you laugh
with all of them

the room is filled with laughter
there is no chatter

and they all clap at you
for on this day
you have become a great man.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Beautiful Gumamela

a red beautiful gumamela
floats on the river
taken by the direction of the flow
and goes somewhere
it does not really know
it is red and it is so beautiful
yet there is no scent at all
no life
no soul and it is yours
for the selfish taking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Carnation As A Symbol

many want to stand for it
love, yes could be,
fire, fire on a green stalk
from whom? from love
yes, yes it could be
bloody, this red carnation
is bloody
but love, love, yes it could be
love, from the pocket
of your black suited heart
oh, yes, bloody, so bloody,
this red carnation, could still be
love, love, yes it could be

how much harm more can
it do
wrecking havoc on innocent
hearts, these bloody, bloody
victims
of love, love, yes, the red
carnation could still be

RIC S. BASTASA
it is raining.

dthis is the first rain for the month of June
in Katipunan

i sit facing a screen
i press words

i look through a glass window
much older than my being here,

out there
the mango tree is heavy with its fruits

under its shade is
a red motorcycle beside a hollow block fence
which separates a dilapidated house
from the public market

a woman holds a blue umbrella
walks slowly along the pavement

it is still raining

cats and dogs, and the red motorcycle is wet all over.

it is inanimate and everyone
takes it for granted.

among those that i have enumerated
perhaps it must be the one with the least meaning.

the day is crying
and the woman with the blue umbrella is unaffected.

inside this room
with a glass window as protection
i am sifting
what meaning is there
for this rainy day.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Rose

a red rose  
casts a shadow  
on a white  
canvass  

light strikes  
on the body of  
its redness  
and the greenness of  
its leaves  

this red rose is  
for you  
give it the light  
so i may cast  
a shadow of myself  
to you  

when you touch  
it  
the rose begins  
to live  
another span of  
love  

it becomes an  
inspiration of dreams  
which are about  
to die  
of love that is  
about to be  
forgotten.  

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Rose Plucked From Its Stem

a red rose
plucked from its stem

the petals like
being taken
separated

life is
short

it is the most natural
thing that happens

for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Slice Of Watery Red Melon

IN the room where we made love
an hour ago
i offer you a slice of my
red watermelon
i take a bite and i tell you
about its taste
sweet, as sweet as my love for you
you do not care
about the juice the redness the watery
freshness of my
red watermelon
i am naked sitting on the floor
i am hungry and need some rest
i am talking unnecessarily wasting
my words about my red watermelon
you laugh
and you notice something flaccid
it is funny
and then you back to sleep
still dreaming
about something thick and hard and stiff
like a dog
with a bone in his mouth
still looking for a place
where to stay alone
and lick it
and rig its sharp teeth
biting, biting and biting still

RIC S. BASTASA
A Red Truck

there is this red
truck with muddy
wheels
beside an old
cement fence
parked alone

it's been there
for the whole
day under
the sun

not for hire.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Redemption Of The Self

when i stand there
there was a dark cloud of shame
above my head

the cloud is heavy
and it poured
dismay
i am drenched with
humiliation

i fell like i am a tree with
wilted leaves
that keep on falling to
the ground

until i become nothing
but twigs
mere fingers of the hands
skeletal to the sky

i do not have those roots
that keep me strong
but then there is always that
redemption

ally to the sun
shall i be when tomorrow comes
i grow my leaves again
spread my roots

dereper than the
hands of the rivers
to the cracks of the earth
where gold resides

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reflection

those who start to speak are those who realized they do not know
and those who begin to be silent seems to have understood that they know

why must i speak to you? why must i write you a poem?
why did you write me a very long letter?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reflection For The Lenten Shows In The Village...

do you love the show of the recent crucifixion?
do you find excitement in the nails that pierce the flesh of the hands of the volunteering Christ?
do you want to be the Judas of this show?
this Lenten Presentation in a village of Passion.

I've seen how the rituals are done purple robes, veiled women, big wooden cross dragged in the streets, men beating their backs until they get to be bloody and bizarre

this cycle of tradition goes for years and on and on till we get old and die ourselves

do you love the show of death? have you seen yourself? Have you seen your God?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reflection For This Morning

when it is not done
you feel cruel,
you'd like to go away
but you imagine a
lonely funeral

you stay and you become
more cruel than you
think

but it is a must
a dictate of what is the law of this land
you stay
and they are too cruel to make you stay
you don't like the way things
are happening
the way the words are left unsaid
because they can be
more cruel when
said,

you are at a loss
but you have decided not to mind it anymore
you invoke
fate,

there is this destiny that takes charge
make the most of what is here

and that will be fair enough

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reflection Of Today's Thoughts

and so...
not everything can be art

there is this sense of taste
and order

this quest for beauty that
must link us to the celestial

the divine
the one that gives us a glimpse
of the

face of God
this beauty that radiates the

light of the moon
this heart that speaks

without words
this eyes that look beyond the lights

the seeps upon
the leaves of poplars

refracting on the clear water of the pond
where a fish is surfacing

koi flipping its fins
getting near you

and between you
there is just this air that creates a bridge

eye to eye.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reflection On The Pond

no amount of denial
now that
it is still me
emaciated and brown
and still
very real
and true,

until i stirred the water
and the ripples
run to erase
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reiteration Of Desiderata

he could have been in the wrong place
even the trees believe
that he does not exist
the stars do not give him any
sign of the zodiac
but look at him
even without the recognition of the trees and stars
he still exists

know what? because he is.
he is,

and that being himself
gives him that right to be
what he shall be

here,
here,

for in truth if only the trees and the stars know this
they should have known that as a man
he has the right to be here.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Relationship

you are in the middle of the storm
with him
and you have the same destination
amid the torments
you embrace each other
not wanting to sacrifice anybody

it was love, you think it was pure love
this mutual miseries
finding comfort for a while

the storm is over
the ship is now steady on the port
it is time to disembark
and then both of you say goodbye
to each other

outside the legal arms are waiting
embracing you again
and him again
and you forget what you call at first
in the midst of the storm
as pure love

somehow, you remember it
you still love it
somehow but is there another
when?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Relationship That Lasts

the stone and the sun
made a pact
that everyday they must see
each other eye to eye
without blinking whatever
the truth may be

the grasses have nothing to say
on this enduring fidelity
the brooks still flowed without
an obstruction
the flowers are smiling and the
trees are interested

one is too hot while the other is too numb
of course, it lasted
happiness is not the issue anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
A Relaxed Lifestyle

midnight
pampers you
with its
coldness
and soundless
gentleness

as writing
goes on
and on

as ideas hover like
butterflies
on my
hair

sleep is
a deep ocean
deep
and blinded

till
the clock
hands
in the double
moon
on top of
each other
on the study
table of
your room

the rest are waves
of repetitions
spreading out
the whole day
coming and going
and dissipating
frantically

being sits upon
a patch of eternal
grass

empty gazes
watching the hours
fly slowly
like
feathers on
the tainted skies

there is no rush
to a pampered
lifestyle

it is like
going in a strange place
and
smiling at people you
met
whose names you
never know
whose battles are
none of
your business
anyway
as you proceed to walk
and pretend
that nothing offends
you that
you are no longer
affected
that numbness is
the badge that
you carry in
your body

you chance upon
a Japanese resto
rai
dai
dai
sumo
sam

you signal the
waiter clad
in red and black

' bring me a plate of sushi
a cup of green tea and
three slices of
california
maki...

and a dessert named
Both Worlds'

RIC S. BASTASA
A Relaxed Mood

well the moon was there
whatever horrible happened
i have already forgotten it
i mean my point
there are instances in our lives
that we think it is better
to learn nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder

we claim no expertise
for this
we are not famous
neither shall we be at
all at any time
on the page of history

we assert no name
we are in fact nameless
we claim no right to a home
in fact we are nothing but freelance
hopeless romantics
insistent fanatics as you dislike us
writing about our
failures

we are here
not for anything else
we do not need any
eulogies that will last a lifetime
of mention
we do not go for
epitaphs
no tombstone

we are here because you are here
we talk.
we are here because we are hurt.
we simply express what we feel.

do not bother. we know where we are going.
do not give us importance. We are used
to our being trivial.
we are used to be used.
we are irrelevant with our syntax
we shall fail you

do not mind us.
we know how to exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder For All Of Us

global_to_the_laws_of_evolution_something_that_is_not_used
may_finally_be_lost. It fades. It is gone. So like the fins of a fish
who migrated to the island, they slowly fall out and from there shall
grow a set of wings and claws. They become they soon
learn to fly. They dream of clouds.
Like the moss of the rocks by the shore
by the lake. They envy the worms. They dream to wriggle
and move and push their tiny the acquire the gift
of motion. Soon they become worms and crawl their way up
on the leaf. They even become caterpillars. Soon they become
the new butterflies.

So it will be with us. If we do not walk, our feet will soon be forgotten.
They will become mere skin. Our feet shrink and become part of
our bottom. If we do not think and use our minds, soon the brain
becomes a stone. Hard. Brittle. Soon they become part of the river
where a passerby simply steps upon it. Upon us.

Soon we will just be the sand. And the river flows upon.
If we do not love, soon we will just become a wall, a floor,
a house whose doors will close. A place for nothing
but merely departure.

RIC S. BASTASA
erasing the past
is like burning the pages of your diary
the smoke hurts a while
but
soon you begin to write your own future
another page
another stroke of the pen
that sometimes we admire because it is nicer now
there will always be a difference
until you tear the pages again
crumple them
and let them go

sometimes i think
i need to make paper planes
or perhaps kites

and so i need some strings
some bamboo sticks
for bones

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder For Nur

How many lives shall be taken as offering to your altar simply because not enough attention has been showered in you when you arrive in that overcrowded hall?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder From A Son-In-Law To His Mother-In-Law

be kind to me
fake mama, do not say
words unkind
as i also leave words
sharp as mongol pencil
in my study table

to your harsh questions
i do not answer and to your answers
to my pleadings
i do not make any reply

this is the best arrangement of the furniture
behind it is the closed door and to that door knob
is the lost key.

there is the window glass
a little bit frosty
i see your face and body and in vagueness
you also see me
on those cold early mornings
when the leaves still own the dew
when the birds are still asleep

take note
we all become interesting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder To All

perhaps after man has mastered the laws of the wind and the land and the water he must venture on mastering the laws of love for by then in another moment of history we shall find again that fire that must continue burning love, and more love in our drying hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reminder......

we quibble
like worms in the
office

someone asks
what is this
rushing all about?

someone is worried
are we killing
ourselves?

so we got out
from the quibbles

out to the fields
of other dreams

to stop for once
and be still and

then we all dance
with the winds....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Renewal Of Vows

On the old trees
The dancing ladies are clinging
On its barks
They are all yellow and blooming
From My heart too
Shall spring forth
Renewed vows & commitments.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Repost Of The Past Poem

i step out of the door
from my dark room the windows are not open
it is humid and cold

i step out of the door the windows are still closed
i lock the door and step upon a patch of green grass
the dews are hanging on the blades and shaken

i look upon the sky
and there is this star still shining
despite the opening of the mouth of the morning
i was in deep slumber
i close my eyes
i see your face but i promise there shall be no tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Request

lady since you cannot
explain to me
orgasm in words
or even in poetry
i have one request
will you please demonstrate
it to me?

i am a slow
learner, so please
repeat it over and over
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Request For Grief

leave me not
it is you who keeps on teaching me
the value of life
the meaning of
happy moments

despise me
pain, like you, i have become
myself...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Request That You Simply Mind Your Own Business...

there is this tail end
of the wind that tells you
that the journey
was never smooth and easy

there are eddies of the mind
that must finally tell you that

oh well,
not every thing has been alright
that there are no clearer ponds except those that you have not really gone to

oh yes, far pastures are always greener than we think
or that, you never really understand what one had gone through
all those fast flying years

these goddamn quick years that leave us with nothing
but suppressed memories
which still carry the needles in their hands and prick us on those
empty nights

at the height of this upheaval
you still have no right to grasp
what details are there

go somewhere else
and read between the armpits of these lines

there is this Notice on the Wall which tells you
with accuracy (and even warn you about respect)

(i.e. to simply mind your own business, ok?)

RIC S. BASTASA
A Resolution

early in the morning
as we pray in church
searching for
light
we ponder deep
like a well
without rope
on a rusty pail
and then we open our eyes
not seeing any light
we find the darkness instead
and then we step out
and walk on our
separate ways.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Respond To Thought....

there there is the useless man
the forgotten animal, the bird which you set to waste,
there is this tree and plant which we do not want to mention
there is this leaf without medicinal use
the wasted time, the useless day,

i keep them.

the dead ant, the wrong notion, the hated answer,
the passing time, the days of war.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Response To Love Unrequited

i've seen love offered
which i did not love for once
and for fear that
i may mislead love to a place
not intended for it
i simply ignore it

i had love and spent it all
until i do not have any

i am not that happy if you
ask for
that higher standard of
having to live away from misery

but i know love and i know how to throw it away
so that i may cause no pain at
all

or that it may not cause any pain
at me

(for who likes pain?
i too, want to avoid
that unnecessary pain
that i do not wish
to bear with out any
meaning)

what i wish to tell you
is this: i have learned to live
alone
at least in my mind
that on nights that i am just
myself in bed and with
no other
in peace shall i
soundly sleep
and you who say
that you do not love me anymore

i shall reply:
i really don't care.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reunion

Often a man's life is such
that he seldom sees his friends,
like the night and day
never sharing the same hours
In the skies
Seldom does he share
His evenings with friends
Or his mornings
His lamp light unshared
His mornings unspent
How long will this
Distance last?

Hairs have turned
White and lesser
As we inquire about
Friends and other
Acquaintances only
To find out that half of
Them have turned
To ghosts,

Shocks and torments
Of this heart, cries
But I will try again
To enter your home
Twenty five years
And now you have
Two sons and three
Daughters to greet
Me by the door
I thought you never
Married and they all
Kiss my hands and
Before I can ask the
Questions you drive
Them off to the grounds
To play away from us
As we talk about
Lasting friendships
And how we have
Almost forgotten them

Tomorrow I will be drunk
Again back to my own
Affairs in the big city
We will be separated
Again by these peaks
Of mountains and we
Shall again lose each
Other’s friendly views.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reunion To Our Sadness

my friend on this reunion
of our sadness

to desires untamed
to hopes untouched

to a love that
we both lost

we look to the sky
tonight and gape
our mouths wide
we shall catch the
the rain

some leaves
some flowers
some dusts

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reunion With High School Buddies

since there is no electricity
we build fire
from dry leaves, and coconut husks
and palms
and driftwood

we go back to recalling the past again
the boyhood days

just a few of us who think that life
to be lived must be
in every moment

colorful lives, aged, mellowed,
and still not careful with words

one still talks a lot about his women
others merely have a good time laughing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Reunion....

the dogs in the house
are
wagging their tails
and letting their
tongues

trying to tell
a story of their own
for we were
for quite a time
away
from home.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Revelation From A 40 Year Old Student

he is not married
and not into women
he has a child
that stays with his sister
in that
faraway city

he is here studying law
single and
happy

a matter of choice he says
life is not complicated.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Review

dressed with apples
in the garden of Eden
and Eve was so Hungry
for apples she always dreamed of apples
even if Adam is just beside her
that jejune
she is the first jejemon,
and on that day when God was not watching
when the Snake was merely behaving like a Snake
she touches an apple
her dream
and he ate one and Adam so likes it
she takes a bite...

nothing new really, just a pass and review
of their story that we believe without any question at all

the moral lesson: reflect on ourselves, we are the consistent
gullible readers
we are never original on this.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Revival Of An Old Story....

She'll make you feel
that you are weak and nothing better
than an empty shell
less the song
of the sea and sand.

You must understand her
Story. She's bitter as a witch
under the curse of her very own
mother who
finally disowned her as she keeps
herself intact
tight and compact
in the world that she created
with Sappho and the rest of the
girls in Lesbos.

Do not dare love her.
She cannot love you in return.

She makes poetry like a spinning
wheel. Threads into silk.
It is beautiful indeed it is.
But there is no place for you there
and if you come nearer
she'd spit on you.

Keep the thrill. Make your own
pottery.
Your poety to her is pottery.
Do not laugh at yourself. As i see it
in the name of Love you are doing
much better.

It that is a fact.
The only way to love her and yourself
is to move on.
Find Another.
Forge this unrequited Love.
Love has many faces of Janus.
Do not worry.
There is a face suited for you
and do not be shocked.
It looks like you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Riddle

I saw a man in white,
he looked quite a sight.
He was not old,
but he stood in the cold.
And when he felt the sun,
he started to run.
Who could he be?
Please answer me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Riddle...

if only
you did not lie
i could have written more
perhaps
more truths than we
can bear

but since you tell the
biggest lie today
despite the
warnings

i guess, i have to
quit
for lies do not interest me
anymore
i have more that you can
ever tell me

in fact i live in the house of
lies
play in the garden of
lies
eat on the table
have breakfast
drink from the glass
and satisfy myself
with a burp
all lies, all lies,

those lilies of the fields
floating on the marshes
tadpoles and
mosquitoes
snakes and rats

these are the only truths
we have
in this predator-prey
world
dog eating dogs
cats befriendning mice
heavens
compromising with
root canals.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ripe Mango

smell its sweetness
like the scent of a
child's memory
soothing to sadness

its color is yellow
on hues on pale orange
smooth skin
like porcelain

its pulp is juicy
and sugarlike
in taste, and
the covering
of the seed is
leatherlike

at the core
it is better

like me, really.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ritual

one puts too much
oil on the hair
and you know how it goes

your face glows
like fire
your hair becomes
pitch black

and you face the people
of this corner
and that pathway
as though you are you

inside the fire
and the sickness burns
outside the smile
becomes as wide
as full moon

who knows you?
nobody

what then? you are happy.
i know, . i am too.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Ritual Of The Day To The Night

afraid of being converted into a pig
i do not sleep when i am done
and full

i sit and watch the stars flicker
the moon floats on the river and stays full at rest on the side of the mountain
i listen to the fox
i gaze at the bird resting upon a twig on a tree beside the house of my parents

and when i am hungry and thirsty again
upon an empty mind i go to bed and ponder
between this dreamland and this harsh reality
the words come into play
and begin to reconcile

and then i fall into a deep sleep
erasing all that the day has written so
ineptly

RIC S. BASTASA
A River Of Loneliness

loneliness is like a river
winding through many mountains
and hills and plains
and ricelands
trying to end its journey
to the mouth of the sea
whose vast bounty takes the river in
and diffuses all its loneliness
into anonymity

RIC S. BASTASA
A Road Incident....

a red easy ride is parked
along the graveled road beside a
cemented fence

it is one hot afternoon

a little girl carries on her head
a bunch of ripe bananas
following mother carrying a basket of
clothes

a man wearing a shirt with green row stripes
runs toward the market rushing

it is beginning to rain on this hot afternoon

after a while, the road is flooded
a little boy runs across the road against
an over speeding truck

and then what we hear is a mother
screaming for help

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rock Garden

in my present garden
i put rocks and pebbles
some sands
added dusts

they ask what do i grow
in there?

i put a chair and sit there
alone

barefoot i put my hands
in the open

i gaze
feeling like the sun
to some
planets

the stones as i walk
for a while
grate
as though they have
teeth

then back to where i sit
they begin
to grow silence

silence is a lotus
it is a pond too where
a dragonfly is
hovering

there is this stillness of a
little universe
the space is emptiness
of imaginary
stars
there is no moon here
no one is lost

there are no leaves
no pretensions of stems and calyx

the stones are faceless
like everyone that i meet in the mall

the rocks stand like gods
unchanged unaffected by the chaos of
my thoughts

i gaze
transfer my eyes to those that remain
intact

immutable hardness
fixed situations

they only sound when you take a walk
they do not rearrange things here
for they are heavy
and always
unchanged, unaffected
steady, firm

lifeless, unfeeling
stubborn, solid,

tonight darkness sleeps with them
its coldness seeps in every stone

lifelessly
always unaffected, unfeeling

and much as i wanted to stay
i can't

i have life out there
a door to open again and again...
A Room In Club Astoria

luxurious
life style
this room
i never expect
to be this
big in my

being alone
far from where
i had roots

light green walls
too much light
a taro leaf for
accent
milky white
drapes
for my privacy

i think of so
many things and
people i leave
behind

i picture a
living animal
i breathe
and imagine
a tightness and
wholeness
of skin and
flesh
of love
and my
tyranny

i learn to be
cruel and
now alone am i
not anymore...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Room Without A Fan

there is a room without a fan
but there is a piano there
where a child practices for the whole day

there is a room without a fan
but it has a mother with a stick on hand
there are fingers on a musical piece
too hurt to say that it is too hurt

there is no blood
but shall it mean that there is no bleeding of his heart?
how can mother
not understand how is it to be a boy
deprived of
his normal play
in the backyard of the house.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rose Bud....

there is a way
to keep things
tight and
even tighter
that the other sees
only the essence
that you want to
show,

like the way you
tighten your lips to
choose
this essence of
silence

it looks like
a rose bud.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rose Is Not A Rose

i mistook
a rose,

a wall that
rose,

higher than
the sky

nothing about
redness

or petals, or
stalks

or thorns
but a wall that

rose higher
than the sky

wallowing, wailing
willing

still to push
through

this dream
rising, rosy
rainy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rose Tattoo?

you have that rose tattoo
on your arm
there is a bleeding heart on the
side
and when we bathe in the sea
the sun shines there
and i imagine how things bleed
and heal
and get immortalized somehow
on your tattoo of
love and hate and devotion and then
gone for good

you like to retain somehow the lessons
of the pain
the memories of the ecstasy
and the moment
of final separation

i told you last night when we made love
i don't keep memories
i let them drip like a rain in the gutter and they
are kept
better be
in the canals buried deep inside the earth

i like to grow and touch the sun
i am this flower that blooms only once and then die

i don't have a tattoo
i know what i am, i just pass by like a hush, like a sigh

i like the way things are, blank and clueless.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am reading about the death of a rose
i am reflecting about
dead of freedom
it is all about a rose, a wilting rose, a brown rose,
a dry rose
each petal falling softly on the ground
a dry ground full of sand and pebbles
all footprints covered
abandoned, i am talking

about the death of a rose, the death of the freedom of the rose
the death of freedom, the rose of death, the freedom of death,

is it you now that i talk about? that i must remember?
have i met you before when i was but a thorn, a worm, a leaf?
was i the sand
a pebble, the wind? will you be a rose forever?
is there death in you?

i feel the wind, i smell the rose,
there is no death....

RIC S. BASTASA
we have this round table
and we put all our hands
on it when we eat and
drink and just talk for
hours and hours and
listen. And we ask what
is happening: Karding
broke a leg and Delia
is looking for the money.
Always it is the money.
Always she is short of
the money. And there
were jewelries hanging
on her neck and arms
and fingers, and we all
ask at this round table:
what is happening?
Nothing, don't mind at
all, this is just a part of
the round table, some
wine glass that broke
and must be swept at
once. We keep away the
sound of a crying pig.
We eat pigs here at this
round table. Then we shifted
the talk about our dead
parents. We pray. We
remember we keep on
saying this. We finish eating
the pig. We drink a very
cold water. Our throats
are irritated and we step
out of the room wanting
to pull away our tongues.

when we come back the
round table is empty.
and we laugh about a
joke that we remember.  
our childhood games  
the river, and the boat  
that father made for us.

we turn off the tv and we  
begin to talk about the  
beautiful flowers in mother's  
old garden, the secret one.

we agree. we miss it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Roving

Some
like to drink with friends
front of the house
where ladies pass by

Most
wives stay at home
and hide their sorrows

Many
families love a new house
beside the sea
the seagulls are joys
as company

We
are here in love with poetry
and most them, many at time,
not just some
wonder, what is this delight?
what fuss? what stuff is this that
is written purposely
not to be understood directly
a burden of the mind
a puzzle to be solved
a bliss known only to the

Few.
We are what they call as the
introverts
needing a shrink.

Many of us
laugh. Many of us see
the big picture
overdecorated with
metaphors.

Like, this. Can't you be patient
a little bit to
see it?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Rural Scene

a line of carabaos grazing
on a newly harvested ricefield
behind an abandoned nipa hut
some wilted grass and dry leaves

shadows of hills and mountains
tall coconut trees and a footpath

two little boys holding each other's hands
bound for home on a late afternoon

sunset, red and orange, and then you
leave the place: your pain is subdued.

RIC S. BASTASA
today the women wearing buri hats are planting rice on the muddy rice fields of Katipunan

the sun is up
the petals of white flowers are
still holding on to their dews

the finches are flying low
and hovering on the grass

the buffaloes are grazing on the field
the children are chasing chickens
and playing with the dogs

the amor secos are growing wild still uncut
as the some men are singing songs with their old guitars

a wooden sled filled with wood is hauled by a big spotted cow
the path is covered with stones that grate their sounds in the open air....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sacrifice

we have only two here
but let me do the sharing

one for you, and one for...

oh forget it, take this last one
for your wife and children
they are expecting you

i am alone and i think, you bet
i can still manage even without it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sad Day

a garden of stone
a butterfly long gone

da dry leaf
afloat on the pond

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sad Song I Whistle

A sad song I whistle in the air
Like a river floating
And then the strong wind comes
My hat flies away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sad Story About A Plight Of A Woman On The Other Side Of The World

he is talking to
a woman on the other side of the world

a world that he cannot feel
because he never saw it
neither is the woman since
she is on the other side of the world
he was never there

he knows a lot about her
he was told by so many who tell him
that she lives with them for a while

he hears everything about those foul things about her
but he never smells them

can foul be foul when he only hears it?
can a sense of smell be simply heard?

while they were talking on the phone
she hints about how her lover rejected her
about how her father abused her
how her mother abandoned all of them
for another man
how their house was foreclosed
and how they have to move
to another place
again and again

how she had to sleep with other men
to make a living
etcetera etcetera

it was a long conversation
and it was then that he felt her
a madness not of her own causing
but of society as a whole

when she was finished
he nodded, for now
he understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sad View...

the tiny hand
of the child
is finally melting
the face of
his father
who is now facing
the sentence of his
wrongdoing....

the boy has not
learned words
but the father has
learned much...

goodbye son
till we meet again...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Safe Secret...

dear dead woman,

my eyes ache badly
today
but i must write
you this letter

i still have so many
things to tell you

and i could have told
you everything
when you were still alive

the moon is full tonight
and the wind is colder

i cannot rest and
i cannot sleep

i have many secrets to tell
you
and these are all safe now
since you are
dead.

your friend,
(name withheld)

p.s.
i still like to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sapphire Sky

look up
to a sapphire sky above us
find the castle there
the princess
who sings the sweetest songs of peace
or the choir of angels
who sing the praises and hymns for God's
wonders and divine creations

look up to the sapphire sky
and feel the wonder
of the heavens

be humbled
you are nothing but the spectator
of God

be confident
God has created everything
to please you
the spectator that He loves
above all things
above all creatures

RIC S. BASTASA
A Saying

and there was darkness
and let there be light?

he wept.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Saying....

to be somebody
he says
you must last, do not just fleet,
and fret and
when things get rough and
thorny
just hang in there
like a vine
on the iron grills

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scalpel

A scalpel am I to cynthia’s
Aching tooth
And true to your calling
You are the morphin
To my antiquated pain

All I need really is a simple
Bamboo
Toothpick

Get some sleep prince charming
Now free yourself

Just be an ordinary man
To an ordinary woman

Hold on to your promise
To love her till the end

For better or for worse, for richer for poorer.
In sickness and in health
Till death do you part

Remind her though
Not to outdo your promise to love each other

You may find it too humiliating for yourself
And you simply
Retreat to yourself like a deflated balloon

But just in case
Love stops, ceases, and becomes frank and true

Say: I don’t love you anymore

Take the yellow brick road

And dance yourself to freedom.
You’re too courageous, It does not matter who gets hurt.

It could be you. It could just be you.

Jaundiced man, jaundiced heart.

Every woman you love wishes you a happy

Death.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scene After Dinner....

an empty drinking glass
falls from the hand of the house help,

it breaks on the floor into
pieces

we hear the sound of the breaking
the shattering

we do not mind, drinking glasses break
the sound is usual and we do not

ever dare to ask why as we are busy
with our usual business

i am reading a book, you are rendering
an accounting on a yellow paper

the guest is preoccupied with the internet
booking for a ticket back home

there is another sound of breaking
that is not evident to everyone in the house

that evening after dinner
and suddenly there is a blackout of the whole island

it is hot, and humid and we perspire
we do not complain, as there is no use

we hear the sound of a breaking as loud as
a nuclear bomb in Hirosma as a documentary film

in National Geographic, we suffer, silently,
we are becoming deaf, we do not mind anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scene In A Little Town

the sky is white
the sea is blue like silk

on the sea three fishermen
pull their net

their boat is small
and wooden

on the sandy beach
a child plays with his white dog

how peaceful is this place
how wonderful is this life!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scenery Of A Morning Light Arriving Upon Green Leaves...

a boat of light
arrives at the port
of leaves,

it is beautifully
anchored
in the iris of my
eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scenery....

the trembling hands write the
words of truth
the mind wanders in the desert
thirsting
the body is a pillar
remains of the time's ruins
the eyes are black birds looking
for prey
feet become boats carrying
anxious passengers of toes
to the shores of
oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
A School Of Losers

the school of losers
gather one day in the sea
at the reef
under the anemones
on a drinking spree
of sea
and foams

having done nothing
about their loss
they simply talk about
other matters
those trivial ones of course
stories about losers
their lives
and irredeemable
selves

i do not pity them
i think it is just a waste of time
under the sea
on the reef
with the anemones

the jellyfishes are coming too
sooner.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Scissor's Story

there was once a boy
who is afraid of scissors
and the scissors keep on
threatening him,

until one day when the boy
gained strength to face
that scissor and
he tied it with a string
on his neck and
paraded it on the streets
of the town

his thumb was cut
and blood dripped along the
path
towards his self-gained
freedom

and then he laughed
as the scissor gets too sharp
for the pleasure of
his neck

RIC S. BASTASA
Boy: I have to leave you
Girl: what do you mean?
Boy: I am leaving
Girl: what about us?
Boy: there is no us anymore
Girl: just that?
Boy: yes, I have to go
Girl: I am pregnant
Boy: get an abortion
Girl: I can’t I am a catholic
Boy: You know that I can’t marry you
Girl: why can’t you?
Boy: I am just a boy
Girl: but I am not asking you to marry me
Boy: what do you mean?
Girl: just be the father of my child
Boy: I can’t I am just a boy
Girl: why can’t you?
Boy: I only 13 and I cannot support that child
Girl: I am not asking for support
Boy: what do you mean?
Girl: just be my man
Boy: but I am just a boy
Girl: just love me
Boy: I can’t I don’t really love you
Girl: I hate you
Boy: I hate you too
Girl: I will tell papa
Boy: I tell mama
Girl: I tell the police
Boy: I am leaving
Girl: I tell the world
Boy: go, I am leaving.
Girl: where are you going?
Boy: I am going back to school.

(End of the scene 1)
A Sculpture Of Human Stone

you are outside
and i watch you,

this glass wall
between us

i make it. I am
safe.

the heart screams
in silence.

unknown by you
i bleed.

this is the best
arrangement that nature
has designed for us

i only have to watch you
no amount of touch from my hands
can make you alive

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sculpture Of The Living

from the mountains of
Antulanga
where even horses
have a hard time
climbing the
steep cliffs,

you are finally
transported to a museum
and frozen

you were not
given a seat
so you do
what you do usually
do
when you
were on a hill
waiting for
no one
putting your hands
above your hair
and looking at
the ants

i had wrinkles on
my forehead
as though the sun
is too strong
to my eyes

i can't say what
i feel but this
i am too certain

i have to talk to
the curator of the museum
if i have to bribe him
i have to
if my diplomacy does not work at all
if my influence in society fails

You must be returned to where you belong
You must live
You must.

RIC S. BASTASA
at first it was acceptable
talking to a stranger
always casual, no depth
like a leaf on the surface
of a muddy pool
then you learn, something
is not acceptable, always
with caution, talking to a wall
where you cast your shadow
and then a conversation without
words begins, you wear weights
around your body to meet a sunken
ship on the depths of Malcapuya
island, where a big black fish
meets you to tell another story
and there, because it is too
beautiful, you begin to forget
how is it to listen. Everybody
speaks here, and there is no
sound. It is simply amazing
and yet it is not acceptable.
Everyone lives here peaceably.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Seagull Flying On A Dimming Horizon

just that, what do you have to say more about it
just that

a white seagull flying towards a dimming horizon
a ship sailing away

the sun receding towards the other side
deep down the sea and then gone

just that, do not ever say that the seagull is heading home or running away
that is not so, there is no basis for such a personal conclusion
or just another imagination of your own loneliness by
association of that

white seagull flying towards a certain darkness
the ship turning to a dot dissolving on a horizontal line in front of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Season For Sowing

a season for sowing
good tidings
and good will

the fields are clean
the sky is bright
the air is filled
with mists

we bury what good we have
inside our hearts
we let the soil bid time
we make room for growth

we wait for many moons
we dream with the stars
we anticipate the next to come
that season for harvest.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Second Look

i must have been
mistaken,
that evening you
were a full moon
on my desert
you were the warmth
of my cold body,
i bathed with time
in the oasis
under the palms,
at the second look
at you
you have become
the sun
that speaks of
thirst and
death to me

help me
reverse time,
let me save
that love
i have for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Secret Find....

you know the secret
of the heart, it is
after all, the heart
itself that tells you,

when we go out of the house
slowly as we caress
the soft spots of our body

we throw away imagination
like a kite in the air
albeit we hold upon a string
of our logical deductions,

when i finally find what i
am looking, i take it gently
inside my pocket
and then i go home to
savor what taste is there,

we know what we find
yet we are not telling each other
about it,

it is a secret,
it is life itself,

we keep this secret throughout life
when by the slip of our tongue
this matter is revealed,

you know the consequence,
the heart knows it,

the house falls down,
the sun closes its eye,
the moon burns itself,
the river dries up
the heart shrinks
someone finds finally
the ash beneath the
innocent child's feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Secret Garden

outside the house
there will be a number of faces to meet
and you shall be ready
with you cliches
to face them

it will not last
for soon you get inside
that secret garden
when the pressure gets strong
when the tempers rise
to a higher scale

in the secret garden
you lock the door
inside is the big tree
where you sit under
and then ponder

there is peace here
nothing bitter

RIC S. BASTASA
A Secret......

there is an appetizer
if you only know if you only

know her or me or the other waiting
on the other side of this street or

that window, no, it is not chili,
not even curry, it is not physical

it is something beyond good appearances,
and this makes you agile like a gazelle

if you have seen one, or felt it, or
simply disregarded it, like the way you

dismissed a silly idea, a rock which you
have thrown, and has become its own

kingdom. There is this taste for the
ostracized salt, this bland bitterness

this flint and prank this unacceptable
proposition which you hide tenderly and

keep inside a music box, which makes
music for you alone. A secret.

more than delicious, it keeps your
soul burning, no smoke, no color,

A secret. It does not put you to sleep.
It burns your heart. It makes you alive.

it is good, and it is all yours alone.
it is a secret. Let yourself not know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sedentary Lifestyle....

i defy what morning
wants me to do,

here i am again
sedentary sand,

sorting out words
to give me my life back.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Self Indestructible

just being myself
that is what is left of myself
after everything is
taken away from me
after i am stripped
of my name my honor
my property

there is this soul
that you cannot kill
there is this self
that you cannot destroy

it is
indestructible

there is this thought
that subsists
on its own
eternal motion

RIC S. BASTASA
A Self Spent

got this small self
small as a snail
slow
pacing like that old snail
that you know
something that you did not
touch
because of pity
got this tiny conscience
like a speck of dust
it is too small and perhaps
of lesser value
than any other self
in this lonely nook
i do not think anymore
how to spend it well
i got a day
or just a second
and i am spending it all
till i am no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Self-Gratification

she left her for good
but he manages to stay
and keep himself
sane,

he sits naked on the stair
caressesthe loneliness of his flesh
and squirts his substance on the floor

at least he did not spit on her.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sense Of Belonging?

the happy year is here again
meeting same old, sad faces
inside the dining room with only one candle to light
and create the ambiance of gloom
blackout.

RIC S. BASTASA
and so
from prison to the hospital
you find this sense
of comfort
to the piano music that
he played once
but still sticks deep down
in the recesses of
memory
it is that sweet sadness
assuaging that
madness long subsumed
that is awakened
bringing forth the rage
and the sage
in you
welcome to the
realities of this world
tackle down
the heaviness of
some words

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sense Of Home.....

the chickens in the backyard
are feeding themselves freely
on the corn grits

the hen are checking her chicks
and enfolds all of them with her wings
under the mango tree

the roosters roost up the tree
settling upon a big branch

it is getting dark and a flock of sparrows
arrive and stop to take their own place
on the coconut palms

they're all home now, and then
the silence begins to hover too inside the room.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sense Of Humor

listen to a joke
just listen and then don't mind the face of the teller
just listen and then something clicks
and you catch something funny
and you laugh

keep the joke and dissect it
let is stay
retell it to yourself or even to your friend
retell it how many times to him
and let him write it

you see there is no click anymore
something funny was lost
because you want to keep it
because you want to let it stay in you

one thing with a joke is that it must
always be something new
one that you have not heard before
i tell you, it is just like a poem

thereis  this switch, a clicking
and then something happens

how can you tell it? you can't
tell it and then it is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sensitive Conversation

in a sensitive conversation
we do not just listen and observe
what happens next,
we take active part in exploring
what goes inside that makes this
person listless
we take his journey too
into the great abyss of his own void
which has the same face as ours
we feel
what void is there
that bites his being that poisons
his mind
we tell him we are about to arrive
at the root cause of the problem
so take it easy
do not ever give up
we assure him that everybody is
experiencing what he is
experiencing right now
that he is not just the lonely man
in this planet
there are just too many of
us,
yes us, and so we bond together
cohesive
till we are not what we are
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sensual Scribble

I was the scribe who woke up at dawn
Finding a clean sheet of paper
And this glossy sort of ballpoint pen
Having the urge to write
Something sensual
My fingers spread the paper
On this table
Where there is so much disorder
Some paper clips and
Floppy discs scattered
Scotch tapes and mail openers
And some still unopened mails
That I did not mind
Not my priority

I was into something sensual
On this clean sheet of paper
On an urge to write
Grabbed this glossy sort of ballpoint pen
And start scribbling
Some lovely head notes
“My dear darling”
Careful strokes in curves
Sliding on paper
My fingers are wildly
Caressing to the shapes of
Sensual letters and words
And breathtaking sentences

“You know that you make me
Hot and you make me wild
And I always remember you”

And I am at the middle
Of so much longing
Using such letters

U and I
And w and e
Lots of ohs and ahs
And s and e and x
L and o and v and e
To make sense
Without pretense

Some exclamations
And pauses of commas and
Semicolons spread on some
Corners of this paper
With so much
Unstoppable anticipation

Somewhere in the center
I pierced this paper
With this glossy ballpoint pen
Writing something
Emphatic
Clinching
And I was at the height
Of my desiring and
So much liking
Something ecstatic
And calming
At the end

It was a beautiful piece
Of a scribble
Written at dawn

And I wrote at the end part there
“With all my love I remain
Your faithful slave”

And a postscript at the tip
Of my tongue
Written with a nip

“When will I see you again?”
The letter shall be mailed at once
She will understand that pierce
Somewhere at the center something
That was ecstatic and she will remember
Every letter every word was an ember embedded.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Separate World

guess not
but i live in a different world
not yours
it is dimmer
but it is mine
it is not as joyful
as the bells
of the church
or as naive as the
wind chimes
by the window
but it is mine
i live here
contentedly
watching everyone
that passes
my way
at night when i sleep
i am confident
with the pillow
conscience rests
peacefully as
the moon
above the trees
as fresh as the
wind to the
leaves
as scented as the
flowers
beside the paths

of righteousness.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Septon Message For Luis

I do not have to convince you Luis that we have become better writers because of pain and sorrow and loneliness... it is when the heart bleeds that the best literature is written, and not when the heart is feasting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sequel On Charles Bukowski's 'so You Want To Be A Writer? '

he has his message clearly said: a writer is chosen
he does not have to move heaven and earth
to make a poem or write an essay
or finish a novel, for he is the

privileged soul
the chosen one
the prophet
the messiah
the secret prince
the hidden king
the divine incarnate
whatever
whoever

and words simply come to him like
a light from the sun
embracing him with so much inspiration
that he merely sits there by the throne of his porch
and simply listens to the dictated poem.

he says it is a burst inside your heart
an explosion inside your head
and you simply have to listen with your heart
and mind and soul
and there everything comes so easily
day by day and on and on and on
ad infinitum ad aeternum

there is no sweat
or hard work, there is no striving at all
to become the chosen one
for the inspiration

it comes even if uninvited
it perches on your chest like a bird and sings
it stays there until you die or it dies with you
there is no madness
or murderous intent or this lostness
they are not necessary

to be a writer one does not have to
stay for hours and write a piece and stare at the
screen of the computer and tire your eyes
with so much pressure

Is that so Charles? Did you not once believe
that Elvis Presley is nothing?
Did you not look for a job, or even try to find your lost self
for twenty years or so or even more?

There must be this irony.
And if that be so, I think i must believe you.

He does not bother at all, how can he be a poet?
Not you Charles, someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sequel To Mamta's Asking About Sky Scrapers

after the progress
when sky scrapers
stand tall reaching
the moon and the
stars and elbow to
elbow with the sun

the birds may have
asked: where shall we
put our nests?

and the trees may
have asked: where
shall we ever grow
again?

and the brooks may
have asked: where
shall we ever flow?

and yes, mamta, the
children as asking:
do we still have
playgrounds to play?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Set Of Neighbors

got this drunk neighbor
and always at night he does nothing but drink
he bangs his head on the table
on the wall
he hits his fists on the chair
he urinates by the window
and his wife shouts at him
and curses him and
threatens to leave him
this early
and he hits her with lots of fist blows
and they will wrestle with each other
wrestle for the gun
wrestle for life
and there will be a big bang
and their baby in the cradle
will cry
and we do not really care
because the principle here is simple
to each his own
problems
the dead tomorrow shall bury their dead
and babies will be taken
by nuns
that is how it works here
in my mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are not alone
for i am a shadow and i always follow you
wherever you may go,

you shake me off?
no you can't. I am your shadow.

you want to be left alone?
you shove me away, no you can't.
i am a part of you. i reflect you. I am your shadow.

you feel forsaken?
you dislike me? You plan your escape.
You stand at noontime. No you can't take me away.

I am diminished. When the sun comes as your ally,
I am equal to you, under you and still a part of you.
You cannot take me away. I am your shadow.

You shed tears. I have the shadow of tears.
You bleed blood. I have the shadow of blood bleeding.

You cannot take me away from you. I am a part of you. I am your shadow.
You regret life? You want to end all these? You hate me?

Plan your next step. Vanish me. Kill me.
Use your black magic. Take me away from you. No you can't.

I am always a part of you. I am your shadow.
I ask you to ask me if i like this way with us together.

I tell you. I want to shake you off from me. I am your shadow.
And i detest you. My body.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Shadow And The Heavy Rains...

a heavy rain
a dark night

inside the comfort
of a room with
walls of wood

a shadow sings
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sharp Contrast

at a friend's party
drinks are served and some
christmas food, dessert and
conversations and laughter
of reminiscenses
we left at the right hour
when the hosts are sleepy

time to be back
to my room,

in sharp contrast
the bed and the pillows
and blankets are
soundly asleep

no snores, not a scratch
of an ant's feet
not a sound from
the walls

deafening silence
questions without answers

RIC S. BASTASA
A Shin Splint

May the light of God shine upon the Poet
who just had a shin splint.

The shin pains

it
do not shine but shins its way through Chua-Shin
that little Chinese boy whose cheeks are read like peaches of Guangzhou.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Short Break Of Intimacies

i sit again here
at the tip of the
hill
under a lone
coconut tree
which stuck
after the
storm

i watch the light
between the hills
as the sun
arrives
on time

the shadows
slowly disappear
the mists dissolve
upon their
own fluids
turning to
dry leaves
finally left out
to be
themselves

i may be sad
as you see me
and conclude
that after all
i have lied
to the pages of
my own
book

but i got one
consolation
in here at the tip
of the hill
alone
i think i can see things
better
when you are
faraway

RIC S. BASTASA
A Short Life Lived....

i have seen him
lived a very short
life.

he was the best.
a classmate, and a
friend.

the sky is still here.
the river did not
dry up.

birds still keep on
nesting. Goats have
increased in number.

my horse died but
i no longer think about it.

i have never lived alone.
I have a wife but we have
no child.

the sea is normal.
Storms come and go.

when it is calm when
this sands are serene

thought come and
i have become deeper

time teaches me to simply
move on, live, and

not to think much.
No worry is that long.
If he lived a longer life,  
i am sure, he won't differ.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Short Note For Mother Theresa

yes
the same question
shall be asked:

how much love
was put in the
little thing that
i have done

i am not a
saint
and i do not
know how
to really
measure
love

please
teach me how

RIC S. BASTASA
A Short Reminder For Lawyers

two lawyers
died today and
my friend asks
'is God cleaning
the earth? '

hmm, i quip,
He is cleaning the
floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Show Of The Words, Getting Undressed Before Us....

this is my own way of
undressing letters that
fake emotions, and what you
hear for now is
the honest song of
nude syllables,
how they dance in bed
and fly in the middle of
our ceilings,
have become much beyond
our literary expectations,
wild and drunken, though wine
is swine, and win is winged,
and we come to terms with
what is real, how these words
must try to get back to their
dressings,
sort of dress rehearsals for
the next show
while we sit down there
with lights closed
watching what is next to happen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Show....

all the rats
mourn over the
dead rat,

all the cats
have been singing
all night

the frogs are
croaking over
a heavy rain

reeds drown, canals
overflow

a boy watches
a tree falling on the
road

mother calls and
closes
the window

lights out.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sigh At The Pier

seagull flying low
preying on fish

clouds getting dark
tides rising to the port

horizons losing grip
of the fading light

there are only two of us
and we are not talking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sigh Into The Present Air...

things would have been better
if left untouched
like some women opting to
become virgins
not having seen any man
nor thought
of masculine symbols

like nature
the forest would have been better
if its trees are left
uncut

the weeds tall like grown up natives
the grasses spreading
without the
artificiality of
the manicure
of the mower
like a river flooding the land
overfilling banks

words would have been better
if not uttered
like raw emotions like
sushi
that you savor with your tongue

how delicious to see
all these things
and feelings
unadulterated by explanations
or justifications

of reason that does not want to be overpowered
by the innocence of ignorance
no apple on the esophagus

none about analysis
just plain description of what is there
nothing about
additions
or conceptualizations

i would have wanted
my love to be like this

but look at it now
this heart folded like an origami
deceiving you with a stork

feelings cut into pieces of
graffiti of pent up emotions

what they ought to be
what they must or
should have been

dado joints fitting into
rules
or universal concepts
lacking now
the originality of
truth...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sigh....

at exactly two o'clock
and 1 minute

the i,
makes a sigh like a well
pronounced syllable

and perhaps by such
a perfect clarity

the night clearly understands
what is it for
and why

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sigh.....

i ask
what could have been the reason
why we all
have two eyes?

perhaps we can't see with
just one
we even missed a lot
having two.

i wonder why the other eye
is not at the back
we could have seen the past
too well
or we could have projected
the future
that much

it seems that everything is
in pairs: hands and feet and two
holes in the nose

i wonder why i only have
one navel
one mouth

and i most wonder why i fall
in love a lot

and yet having no one
loving me back.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not care to read me carefully, just skim over
some words that may call your preferential attention.
do not mind the smaller ideas, or the images that
you find hard to imagine. They may not be images
after all but just blotches of my stains, the negligence
of my trembling fingers, the lapses of my brains,
the slip of my tongues, the cliches of humanity,
seeking meaning in the meaninglessness of words.

this is mumbling, this is plain rambling
do not ever mind what i am writing. this is not about you.
or myself, or the society that like sheep simply graze on the grass
not knowing that on the next step is the landmine that kills them,

or why look for the meaning of loneliness in words or lines or poetry.
are you going home tonight? on a train. sit there. look over the window.
see the line of trees, do they shout at you? No.
and move your eyes, as though you are scrolling for names on the
cell phone, like roving camera, you do not have to look that far on the
20th person sitting across the other side.

someone is sitting next to you. listen to his silence.
feel the vibrations of all his problems. try to unmask the cover of his face.
are there words covering his face? none.

or if words cover his face and body, try reading them all silently.
most of the truths are not said. Not even written. You always see them
next to you. Be it on the train, the bus or the plane. Or simply when you
walk along the cemented paths of the park. Here comes another
lost soul. Talk to him. Do not write poetry.

this is mumbling this is plain rumbling. Do not speak poetry.
write them and let them cover your face.

That is the best way to speak.
This is what is life is all about.
Speechless. Alone always.
A Silent World

got a headache
and i shall not tell you

i do not share pain
so i hide away from you

i go behind the house
tied a hammock between two trees

the sun is up and
the shade is cool

i lay my body inside the hammock
and i rock myself slowly

slowly sleep drowns me
into a forgetting

the world is silent
upon a grass so green

RIC S. BASTASA
A Silver Platter

the silver platter is what your family gives you
your father makes it and you mother polishes it
and you are given what you need
in your life
some fruits and bread and meat and water
that you need in your journey when they start sending you away and
when they finally leave you
as what this world demands, the usual flow of life and the fading
death, and you find yourself still
thinking and coping and running and stopping and resting and running and
walking and curling and stretching what
is all there,
then everything is consumed, the silver platter has nothing, tarnished
and you begin to worry
what used to be is not anymore,
you think life ends just like that,
no

reality bites now, like a snake, or a rabid dog, and you despise the
silver platter
its lasting effect on you, how it made you weak and unthinking,
complacent
and unable to grow your trees and eat the fruits
to raise your goats and eat their meat
to live your own life
and be strong yourself in the darkness that comes
when you still want to play

it is not too late, take the silver platter and throw it away
or bury it
lest another one comes and takes it and be another victim
of its temporary glow that almost killed you

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes you feel so unlucky.
you feel that you are carrying the whole earth in your shoulder.
very heavy, and your shoulders feel like breaking into glass pieces.

sometimes you feel like a slave.
following orders, all orders from the higher up from those cloud gods.

sometimes you feel like sitting down on the pebbles muddy ones, from the river,
you feel like throwing your body in a mud-hole and cover every part of your body with mud or buffalo dung.

everyone is making you feel like a dirty towel, a rusty shovel, an unwanted discarded spare part of a motorcycle or an outmoded cover of a cell phone,

you are familiar with a tissue that someone just wipes on his nose after sneezing and throwing the crumpled piece outside the window of the bus that speeds along the road on a winding path,

that piece is left on the road and blown by the wind and simply forgotten very unimportant so insignificant, sometimes you feel that way

you know why? i can explain it in the most simple terms using only six words to end this misery that you are in, and it is this, to wit:

'because you allowed it to happen'
A Simple Indulgence

to help fight
child hunger worldwide

me and my
three friends did not
go fishing

we listen to beethoven

RIC S. BASTASA
A Simple Life

a moon to shine above us
a night where we sleep
a blanket to keep us warm
and a bed where we can
sleep together

throughout
this darkness
this cold
we shall not even
tell
what we really
feel

it is just between
our lips
and our
navels.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Simple Life In The Cottage By A Hill

when you sit upon a bench
under a mango tree
and then do nothing but listen
to the sparrow
up there singing

life stilled tolling
time
where from here
where you rest
the rivers of the mind
keep on flowing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Simple Message To My Friend

ask me if
i regret some things
in my life

i will say yes

ask me if
i need this option
to be back to
the past and
change the things
that i regret

i will tell you
no,

I've learned from
my past mistakes
and
i do not want to
change them
anymore

what i treasure much
are the lessons
of the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
A Simple World

one poem
read by one person
one day

one enlightenment
one moment
one solemn day
of the funeral

one death
one spectator
one tear

and then the most exciting part:
forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sinking Soul

sink
sink
sink
sink

my
soul
to
sleep

at
the
bottom
of
the
dream

find
your
self

know
your
self

sink
sink
sink
sink
my
soul

why
are
you
so
silent?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sinner's Death

Death most resembles

a prophetess who is without honor

in her own land

or

a poetess who is a stranger

among her people

How frighteningly will it be

when death soon spoils her appetites

and makes this world

so empty,

and so soon

suddenly her sinning stops

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a waterfall on my belly
there is a dam on my pelvic bone
i cannot stop this
i will let go a river
there will be a flood
needing you.

be the parched earth
let your cracks be mouths
i will be the rain, i will be the flood
do not destroy humanity
take all of me, this flood, this rain, this dam is broken
i let go a rampage of emotions
i explode

you be the space
you must take all that i am
all that i will be
tackle me, swallow me
drink me
o thirsty earth, my love,
my life, my outlet, my current.

RIC S. BASTASA
he enters a door
the frames are eaten by termites

he goes inside
where the chairs have only three feet
the sofa is like a stomach with intestines getting out

the roof leaks
there are stains of dried liquid on its corners
blood of a woman

the ceiling is like some rotten leaves
without stalkers

the floor is rough like a rocky shore
mud plated on some surfaces

he looks at the pile of papers
people are always quarreling

and there are endless litigations here

no one wants to shrink a little
and give way to something
perhaps bigger

the setting itself is unjust

the aircon is cracking like some hot oil
where water sprinkles itself unnecessarily
or inadvertently

i do not like to be here
but here i am

learning to live with injustice
dirt and rotten system

turning into humus
on the other hand, there must be a time for change
a fertile ground

after so much leaking and wetting and
rotting

worms eating themselves
bats evacuating
leaving feces on the floors

airy space, silent halls, and children giggling

RIC S. BASTASA
A Situation Like Yours

there is this
boundary between the room and your door

there is a frame
of a mind

outside
possibilities grow like
any tree

inside the room
you are always lulled to sleep
by your bed of
roses

outside is always stunted
like a bonsai
they always cut your branches
remove your
roots

inside you are
dying
what you can be is
but a dream

if you love
it will be a lie
if you tell the truth
you will die

RIC S. BASTASA
A Situationer

the shadows dance
under the moon
you are alone under the tree
tearing the leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
A Situationer...

when he begins to write
the words
of course, he has in mind someone in particular
for it makes him
more particular too in the choice of
images, like

something so fragile like the last egg
in your hand

or something so beautiful like what you
are not

somethings need not be mentioned
and it will be
peaceful

the moment you say what you have in mind
three dragon heads spring from your neck

so it is better to be cautious
like saying something that we do not like to say really

something like
how i wish to be like you

and you who hears it knows what is true
and you make a rebounding

yes, i like you too and then after the brief moment
sipping coffee and reading the news and looking at on striking passerby

you then part ways
clinching hug, cold kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Situationer.....

he has been writing

he is thinking and then she calls him for dinner

there is a blackout

and she lights a candle so he can see the fumes of steamed rice

the green color of braised morning glory

he is silent and she does not ask

she does not know whether he has been writing a lot

whether he is lost in the maze of his thoughts

she has cooked dinner for him

she calls his name

it is dinner time and that is the most important hour

she trusts him

he is dying

the needed light for the evening did not come

there are no stars outside the window

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sketch Of Fairness

in the park the
baby is on a cart
as the young mother
drives it toward the
father who is waiting
carrying a diaper

do not think that
you are a loser

attention is diverted
to the rain that starts
to fall

to the car that just
parked on the road

to the jet plane that
draws a white line
on the sky

to the bird that
punctuates a branch
of the poplar

to the man sitting
alone on a bench
looking blank

well, you sit back and relax
and tell yourself
life is fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sketch Of What Familiarity And Routine Is All About

when she arrives in my house
that early morning
she was more silent than
the grass that is still jeweled
with dew
there is still that sense of
strangeness
like a bird from the forest
that is still feeling its new cage
she had three to five days
her feet studying the floors and stairs
her hands groping the blankets
and pillows in the bed and
room
the books in the library included
there are conversations going on
to the different parts of the house and garden
until she has become a part to all of them
and then
she sits on the grass and
lays her body in bed
after spending more time reading
the titles of the books
she has the best time dining
until she holds control
and laughs the hardest
disturbing the peace of the neighbors

it is the familiarity
and perhaps too much of it like an alcoholic drink
that makes her lose
what is important
she gets drunk and
unmanageable

on the fifth day and it was a Sunday
she left us without a word at around 3 a.m.
when all the members of the house were all tired and asleep
she left a note: she does not deserve to stay
in this ordered universe
she is a random incident of a dice,
she is a woman unnumbered
a bird not fit for a cage
a dog without a leash
a speck of dust owned by no wind
we do not mention her name during that lonely breakfast

RIC S. BASTASA
A Slice Of Life

There is this twig
Long dead
And there is this
Dew clinging
On its side
Even for a very
Short time

There is this death
Long time dead
And there is this
Life
Clinging only for a
Very short moment

There is
You and there is also
I, in a short while
There is really no
Us
Even to utter.

RIC S. BASTASA

poetry is just a slice of reality
a tip of the iceberg
true
they are marks
points of origin
helipads of departure
boundaries
hmmmm
you felt something so strong
and then you mark it
so that you may remember it again
like some images
a subconscious talking too maybe
some monuments
you simply bury them there
even in water
yes i love the images
so that when you come back
you still remember
what was it
the simple stuffs
that u wont forget
remembering the details
so that when you are lost
yes
they must have something to say
to describe you
really?
such as
Alice had a mole on the right shoulder
she wore a red blouse
brown shoes
her hair had split ends
when we last saw her
who was this Alice?
could be you
hahaha
before you were drowned in the river
it is only when we are gone
i have a birthmark on my right arm
that they begin to ask
who was that?
what was she?
do you understand what i mean?
yes
all my poems are dog ears
i am reading my life
i know
things that i cannot forget
and i leave some words to guide me
what really happened

they always resurface
yes.
yes.
yes
yes, i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Small Butterfly To The Size And Shape Of Your Lips

there is this faint
red butterfly fluttering
slowly hovering
hopping from one petal to another
in my garden

it is so beautiful and so soft to the sight
so fragile and so tender
lighter than a feather
as gentle as a baby's breath
while sleeping

it lands on my hand and then on my lips
i stand still
close my eyes
and wish that this moment shall last forever.

i am thinking of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Small Poem

a bonsai poem of love
designed not to grow
taller and wider inside
my miniature heart

and too small and pruned like
a midget

that the sun laughed
one hot day

RIC S. BASTASA
A Societal Contrast Of Two People

if you were just a janitor
and you eat at their fiesta
they will say silently with disgust
you eat so much

if you were the mayor
on the table with other important guests
of the political structure
and you eat much
they would be happy
and say with pleasure in their hearts

' he has a good appetite' and
they will thank their hired cook
for the nice recipes.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Socratic Thought

there is a way to write to make you
understand
like pointing a way and walking through it
with us together

but the way to that is dangerous since
many have become posts and markers only
and those who follow it do not really
make it to their known destinations

lost, and sweating, and wary where to go next
you sit under a tree and begin to talk about
themselves instead using such trivial words
like the way birds simply fly and roost and then
fly again without having to worry about maps

i like to state it directly: there is no way for
understanding the reasons why we are here
and where we are really going: and as pointed
by the sage ahead of me, we must understand
that we cannot understand, that what we know
after all, is what we do not really know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sole Window

i have a sole window
it looks out into space
from a world of doors
and walls where the only
existing entity is the frozen
tear.

i have a window and it looks out
into space where there are no more meteors
and planets
where there are no more suns and moons
where there is only the newness of
what darkness feels

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sonata For Maria

Maria, where are you going after tonight Maria?
Will you forget the last night we had together?
Will you deny me forever?

Dressed, and clean, and neat and prim and proper,
Maria, will you forget my name?

I regret Maria belonging to someone else
for i truly love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Song For Mely....

when you ask for rice
i do not ask questions
i give you what you need
you deserve to eat

many will criticize
this liberality of giving
that i am just making
Mely so lazy

Mely, you must eat
beyond right or wrong
weak or strong
Mely, you must live
i have no more questions.

RIC S. BASTASA
a song for myself...

shall i ask myself again the same question

shall i stop? do i have a word for quitting?

shall i lie to myself about this exhaustion

this exasperation for another desperation?

how can life refuse living? i have sided with life

and will always be on its side despite. so here i

am and you are bored and shall soon disregard my

pleadings. but don't you worry and do not mind

i had always been alone be it dancing under the

moon or swimming at night in the nearby lake

i am pleased with myself and shall live with myself

soon i will forget you and will not remember any

thing about you. i have long learned this:
i am a stone. I am
a rock. I am another
island, another lonely
song. Do not mind me.

For i am just myself.
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Song For You....As Always

do not be afraid
you are not alone
i will be with you
wherever you go

you are precious
to my eyes
i love you.
i love you.

i called your name
you will be mine forever
i am your Lover
Your savior and servant

do not be afraid
you are never alone
i will always be with you
wherever you go

you are always precious to
my eyes
i will always love you
i will always love you.....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Song Of Death

the song of death
fades
like a child on his crib
sleeps soundly again
as you hear the
whispers of rain and
wind
from the open fields
to the window

out there far away from
the slumber of
peace the widows grieve
the children weep
with their mothers
as fathers get buried
without
the necessary ceremony.

a thousand stares of blankness
fill the night of stars
another night of stained silence
creeps
amidst the rubble of more
lamentations

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sonorous Morning

this morning is sonorous
as it brings rain to the fields
and a man is stranded seeking
shelter on an abandoned
house which speaks nothing to him
but loneliness
that story about separation
that death has
murdered love
that children leave sometime
and what is left is nothing
and then this morning
the rain sings a sad song for
a traveler.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sort Of A Poem Upon Arriving At The Mountain Hut

where it is? the native points to the place
using his nose. It is just near he said while chewing his betel nut.

we pass three winding rivers
and five hills on footpaths with mud and grass as tall as us along the way.

we finally arrive at the foot of a hill
below it a nipa hut

there is no one there
i curl up and take my sleep

meanwhile the fog swallows everything
just us.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sower Went Out To Sow

It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep,
and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots.
Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it.
But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.'

for the Lord speaks
in parables
in the same manner that
we
who try to become poets
shall too
speak in
metaphors

sometimes
to please you
i shall only
speak
those words that
you want to hear
and not the
truth
thereof

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sparrow In My Mind Is Enough For Me

i do not need two or more sparrows to know what a song
of that sparrow is all about
more sparrows become a crowd and i cannot figure out the intent
of the song
the notes blur like a mist that i erase from the side of the glass window
i do not need a living sparrow
for i do not wish to capture one and choke it inside the cage of my hands
i only need the most freeing sparrow inside my mind
the one that i can erase if i do not need it anymore
without inflicting any pain without holding any feather any longer.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Speculation About An Existence In The Clouds

anywhere i go
i write as though i am bound
to speak what
i have long kept as a garden
inside my heart

i have not yet spoken about
the flowers and the stones and the
sticks

but soon i will
and what you have heard so far is nothing
but the
sound of the river in the air

there is someone still who lives in the clouds
and never want to speak about it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Spinster's Life...

by the river the spinster wades
like a black swan
all alone not waiting for anyone
the bamboo leaves not blown
by any ill wind
begin to fall
one by one until all that can
be seen
are needles of morning light
cutting through
the early cold by the banks
to the marshes

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sprout For A New Season

the drought dries the land
there is no rain coming yet
the grasses wilted
and the soil turns to dust
the winds are blowing
sadly

somehow the miracle comes
with running water
along the dikes of hope
and then the first seed of grass
sprouts
its bud looks around
gives a smile
to the cloud
and then sings the beginning
of a new season

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stalemate

I do not give thanks to the hands that feed me

I work for those
Hands anyway
Writing his letters
His own contents
Not to my delight

I love somebody else, her hands are soft
Her thoughts so graceful
Touching me
Penetrating the deepest recesses of my brain
My soul jumps with joy
To the sight of her,

She eats me, I am half-consumed yet I
Sing of her
Kiss her all day

Yet what does she give me?

This death unto myself,

The hands that feed me caress me to no end
Helping me live, I understand this kindness perfectly

How I wish to love the feeding hands
How I wish to reeducate myself & learn to live on these hands

I am hardheaded, as always thinking about her all day all night long.
The heart has its own foolish reasons, while the feeding hands

Are patient, and silent, understanding my true longings.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Star From The East

a star from the east
three kings
wise, and giving,
the shepherds
and their sheep
dry grass in the
manger

a bright star
shining to the face
of a baby

our world pays homage
to the humility of
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stare

a stare is like a stair
it has steps
and there are feet
walking,
and leaving,

you stare at me,
and i see stairs, where you walk
and climb and stop at the middle
and then take the stairs layer by layer

that is what you like to do, to look at me
as though i am this room where you build the stairs
and you want to go inside my room and lock me up

and take all of me with your tongue and hands and
mouth. You mouth me. And i receive the life you have.

and then your stare subsides. the stair is gone.
the room vanishes. I am free. And you are inside me

your stare has become the memory lingering inside me.
i become a bird and you are inside my wings.
Your stairs become my feathers. Your stare
becomes my eyes.

in love, we make the stairs leading to a house.
and there we feast, and live and sleep.

yes, there are wings and windows.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Starry Night

after the day
of hard work in the office
i go home and take my dinner
watch the night news
and go upstairs
on the deck to be with the
stars.

try it.
it is appeasing.

take a sip of tea
with the
Little Dipper

RIC S. BASTASA
A State Of Affairs..........................

at the end you arrive
and what you need is only a
bed to rest

then you change what you need
is only sleep, even without a bed,
a pillow,

even without a house, even without
any place where you can lay your body
to rest

it is the dark unconsciousness which
you needed badly

where you do not think anymore where
everything turns blank or even if you do

not know it, clouds of blue, sounds of
sea breeze, sights of sail boats on the
wide seas, cliffs and silence, but just the
same, on the present state, there are no
more cares, no nothing now, just the fullness
of being empty not even wanting to be full.

RIC S. BASTASA
what makes him humiliated
after a compromising situation
where he restrains the movement of his body
like a machine shut off from an
electrical source is this:

he has voluntarily renounced
the true nature of his being
like a fish unable to use its fins
a bud that is tight lipped and cannot
bloom
a wind of ice
a sea denied of its journey
its waves scraped like an
infected skin

how you have such a mouth that cannot open?
words that remain in the books
deprived of some meaning?

the loquacious monster on the other side of the table
where he is seated
is soap bubbling giving you an illusion of a child's game
too unbecoming and unlikely of one
like you who has always the
reputation of free speech
there are souls that hold your mind
pulling your hair
and tying your hands to the arms of the chair
for centuries
your respect for all these is not diminished

self-denial is another principle
that made a Gandhi great
now you are trying to question it
because
it hurts.
A Statement About Art & Friendship

It is the friendship that she carries well
On summer day

In the writing workshop
She wins their hearts

When she is asked to read her poems
Or say, show her masterpiece

She merely smiles
Her friendship is her piece her only masterpiece

Her smile is her only word written on
Her face

And they all say it is enough
A smile can save the world

But I beg to disagree
A smile cannot save me

Last night i wrote a poem written
With my blood as ink on my face

The angst on my crumpled paper
And they ask me to read my poem

This afternoon when everyone
Is tired and irritated

My turn, I think, I decide to give them my smile
Like her friendship, my compromise

I get their approval and I think
It is her friendship that kills

Literature that suppressed art
It started with Mona Lisa, now it
Will always be, perhaps, the scream
Must die, popularity does not like it.

I know I have to cry alone
In my room and make my own kind of literature.

Someday the world may find it and love it
Sorrow is suppressed and happiness is fabricated

Friendship has always been politics
And art is hidden in compromises

Only to come out later and too late
The people will say, “we all love this one! ”

RIC S. BASTASA
A Statement, A Stand...

given the purpose
right motives and passion
to help the other person
who is suffering and
lost,

i know, i shall no longer
be alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Still Thoughtless Life Of The Eyeglasses

a pair of eyeglasses with brown frame
lays itself bare
on a white cloth
actually a wiper of mist
or tears perhaps
or dirt like oil or stains
a black casing
stares at it like a niche
as though someone that
appears later
shall be buried on the
red mantel.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stone Garden

in the middle of this
garden there are two rocks
one is smaller

around them are
pebbles and some scattered sands

what you plant here is
the seed of silence

tomorrow when you come back
you shall know what are its fruits

its leaves are not green and its
roots are for your liking

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stone In The Middle Of The Road

a stone in the middle of the road
will always be a stone in the middle of the road
despite
the fact that you are reading
a comic book
whatever content you have in there
a stone will always be a stone in the middle of the road
today, tomorrow
and thereafter.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stone To Hit Your Forehead

having preferred
emphasis from compassion

i shall be the stone
that hits your forehead
and shall make
you bleed

after all,
it was the sling of David

and not the size of
Goliath
not his height

that gave history
its glory

RIC S. BASTASA
A Storm For A Dream

a storm for a dream
the morning light arrives
appeasing

the senses run wild like horses
i keep an eye
opening to

a window of an awakening
things come
i do not hold any

rivers flow and surge
i watch without any feelings anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Storm, A Brainstorm

look at the window
something lingers on there
this sadness
so clear to me now

the snowy land, the roofs of houses
covered by this certain coldness
this sadness
in my mind

look at the window
a snowstorm is coming
and i wil be here in the hiding
on some confusion
i will stay
and look out the window still
and impulse comes
a solution

this darkness
this death of beliefs
this death of beliefs in the humanity of other people

this
this death, this idea of death

it is not a lovely day for me

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story About A Daughter Who Married Distance

When a daughter marries
a distant place
his father will be sad
knowing that
distance can always stab
him anytime

as years go by the bleeding
continues

the daughter can forget all
these with a child to bear
and years can add some padded
memories that make the distance
more bitter

the father goes to the kitchen
for comfort as he slices with his
sharp knife some onions

tears fall down and in those years
that he is alone
the floors where he stands are
rusting with all the crystals of
salt

the news is heard that the father
one day goes out of the house and
runs naked in his farm of cabbages
there, he uproots what he plants
there, he curses the rice paddies
and pours his misgiving to the
scarecrows

one day the daughter comes back
bringing her three daughters home
what surprises her are the changes
which she cannot believe: the
stair has only one tooth left
the floors of the living room melt
the roof is nested with black crows
the bed has a boa for a sleeper
and in the kitchen there she finds
her father who is still slicing
all the rotten tomatoes constantly
for all the years

defaughter embraces his father
and shows her three daughters but
then the father has turned into
a sculpture of stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story About A Wedding And My Friend And Poverty And Joblessness

i met an old classmate
today
at the wedding of
a newly appointed high school teacher

my ex-classmate is jobless and his wife
looks like
an old sickly monkey with less hair on her head

(forgive me but that is
the only possible
adjective that
i can give)

he is fat and feels like
a louse

(i am sorry
i am intruding into his
own feelings)

he does not like me
his eyes are shouting at me

possibly because we look the same
possibly because we too
feel the same
possibly because our wives look
like twins
possibly because the weather is bad
and people do not mind us
because everyone is hungry and
there is nothing much to eat

RIC S. BASTASA
there are two kinds of people in this world. You know it. The swindler and the swindled. The one who felt swindled and the one who never admits that he are brothers.

a man of high rank, feeling guilty about his rise to the skies, the lonely eagle that eats monkeys for lunch and dinner and shares it to no one.

descends to the plains
walk on the grass and degrades
its being to be with
the simplest creature, the worm and the snail,

thinking that these two deserve
to be raised from their
lowly, damp, slow
and dark state,

only to be infected by the
virus of the worm
the bacteria of the snail

and these lowly creatures
claim the triumph over the eagle
who in its fancy to be
belittled
finds his ultimate death...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of Hard Work And Death

monkeys live on trees in a dense forest and one day sees a farmer and his family bring bolos and plows and everyday these guests cleaned the land and planted corn and potatoes and some fruit trees.

the monkeys watch with gladness in their own playful and lazy ways.

the farmers sweat it out during those hot days they gather water and fertilize the plants until harvest time comes

the monkeys came first to take the corn and then the potatoes and then the ripe fruits of the papayas and the bananas saying foremost:

this is our land and so we own these fruits...

the farmers brought forth their guns and shot them all

and that was the beginning of the monkeys claim for injustice

they were deprived of their lands and mercilessly murdered....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of A Delicate Man

he is the delicate man
he brings an umbrella
even when there is no rain coming
he is the kind
that makes sure everything is in order
his shirt well folded
his shoes well polished
his notes in folders
his table dust free
his anti-allergies ready
until he lost
everything pleasurable in his life

until he ages
and now he goes back to the places
he misses
gathering all the flowers
along the pathways
plucking each one of them
but his nose cannot smell anymore
his hands are shaky
his feet arthritic

too late
too late

the niche is waiting
the epitaph is hungry for
the words
of his regrets.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of A Marriage Counselor

..he is a simple man
married to an ordinary woman

the man teaches science
the woman serves as legal clerk

25 years married without a child
so they adopted the baby place beside their door

they did not know where the baby came from
they say she is a gift from God

the girl for what genes she has
turned into a woman with hysteria like Ida Bauer

got pregnant
but cannot pinpoint who from among her three lovers is the father of her child

the simple couple now gets a grandchild
so glad
the new baby has not father to speak of

they go back to the cycle
the beginning about the pleasure that the baby once left beside the fence

gave them
unspeakable bliss

of course, this shall not be
a sad story

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of Bad Karma

the curtain in the room is transparent
silky, embroidered with tiny light red flowers

light is filtered and air is lazy
laughter is restrained at first until the drinks come

glasses click and talks are varied
times come anew
memories of faces come out from the graves of our
forgetfulness

the room soon is filled with smoke
men smoke and women sip wine on their warm sides

the lives of other people start to be opened
the talkers are surgeons scrutinizing the intestines and bladders

there is a small man whose hands are like cold forks
he is looking at the fat man puffing smoke and bragging about his gains

fortunes backed by crimes and
money laundered and shared in secrets by conspiracies

no one notices a bee landing on the navel of the fat man
whose belly comes out from his tight shirt

instantly the bee left a sting
and the man died.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of My Life

My house is there by the side of the hill

Without color without name

Father andmother brought me into that

House by the side of the hill

Without color without name

Each day there is a celebration of

Nothingness

Without reason without cause

Without color without name

I am the anonymous of the that nothingnes

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story Of Survival

his mother wore white
he was young and compliant
she took him to the river
tied his hands with a blanket
as he woke up from sleep

and then she threw him there

what his mother did not know
was that he already
knew how to swim

and the depth and rage of the river
are no threat to him

his mother did not smile
she meant death

it was over
he knew how to get out from the
tie of the white blanket

he escaped and swam
to the other side of the river

climbed the mountain
and then to the eyes of his mother
he was gone

he started life all over again
with another name.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story To Tell To Your Lost Civilization…

at first there was peace
trees bear fruits
that turn ripe and children
climb the trees
to gather the apples and
savor what sweetness is there
that nature
has to offer

the land is vast
the sea is immeasurable
the skies infinite
the rivers keep on running
forever
the ocean's depths and
abundance
untiring

people misunderstand what ownership is
stewardship is an alien concept
there is always the want to have
greed is cancerous

a country expands
dictators abound
conquerors become heroes
of their lands
bringing slaves and
the fortune of
others

nature is made to bow down
to caprices
whims are the rules
to destroy is to own
to abuse is to use

wars are made like the way the bombs
are stored
like the way the swords and spears
were once sharpened
to kill

there is always nothing enough
for the imperialist
nothing satisfies the conquerors
disguised as the discoverers of
the new world

and so there will always be war
rebellion will always mushroom everywhere
nothing rests

and it will always be the 'dead who can see
the end of all these wars'

at the end who wins? ah nobody
everyone perishes
and nature shall grow its roots again
to retake its long gone leaves and flowers

its green mountains its pure rivers
its clean and blue oceans
its clouds untainted by the smoke of gunpowder
the mushrooms of that nuclear warfare....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Story To Tell....

the images of light
like needles from the sun this morning

actually, there are no threads
and nothing to sew

actually, there are no significances
except some few

every word must have a story for you
and you may ask me

but always i agree to disagree with you
words have their own lives their own existence

i am only a vehicle
i am only a body to this ghost

for we are nothing but wings of some black birds
that hover on our backs

when they are through they all leave us
and they take all the wings they have given us in our imagination

we fall asleep and when when we wake up
we check if we are still us mirrored in the pond of still waters

our hands touch our faces
sliding through our smooth bodies

then we say, goodbye black bird
and thank you for making us live all over again.

RIC S. BASTASA
he feels guilty why he is not guilty
at that time when the guy was shot mercilessly
beside his wife that early morning,

most of those who knew him say that he was one of those bad guys.

these dangerous times, people seemingly thirst for vengeance
against the bad guys.

who knows who the bad guys are? did we not just take the word from those who
label those bad guys as bad?

have we fathomed the depth of the well to know whether there is water there,
whether the water is safe?

are these the unthinking times? blood squirted from the brain of
the animal, blood flowed from his head, and as he tried to ask for help, looking
for a safe corner,

all the doors are closed, the wife screams, blood followed his body like a river, he
drags his body on the long empty hall.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Straight Line

you know
you no longer wonder
whether a straight line is what happens next
you stutter
you become a broken jagged line for a while
but only for a while
a second
not even a minute
and then there is a prolonged noise

it is not hazy
it is lighter than white whiter than white
people accept this

and they nod and you go.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Strange Dog

this dog has no eyes, and so it feels most of the time
through its tongue
it believes it comes from the genealogy of the fish
and so its swims

against the current of the river
inventing its own gills
it closes and opens letting all the water of the river pass through

i am not surprised, in fact, i can relate to this dog without eyes
and inventing gills for it to breathe under water

that is what i do, most often than you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Straw On A Glass Of Water

from your point
of view
that straw
is disconnected

nothing seems
to be sipped

RIC S. BASTASA
A Stream

there is a certain stream that all of us
would like to swim
where we are like children
following no other person's command

it is not a stream of water
that makes us wet and shiver
and make us think about some
kind of thirsts and satiation

it is something that we must not
cross lest we find ourselves in another
world and leave everyone
everything as they are and we
do not want it

we are scared we hesitate
to throw our feet in there
but then there is no choice
the nights, the lonely nights
take us all there

this is the stream of consciousness
that we all have
we think and love and speak in silence
in the light of our hearts

we travel inward, we hope we
truly become ourselves
invented, reinvented over and over again
to see our real faces

we simply float in there
we flow and we can never stop
gladly beyond as he calls it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Suggestion For Humans From A Sleepy Cat

please master
try another subject for your poetry

i am not a lovely red rose that blooms in spring

i am just
a sleepy cat
hiding on my fur
and sharp claws
dreaming for that
little pink rat
hidden inside
the ceiling

RIC S. BASTASA
A Summary Of Our Foolishness At 5: 35 A.M.

so she is now cruising
her time is 3 a.m., mine is 5: 35
a misfit wanting to die
lost in some consequences
in the city by the sea

beside her is him
i know him
this lover pondering on her
regrets
then Kim says
Death Has Called His Name
but cries' It's Impossible! '

i look up and say
If we are honest enough
with a bit of encouragement
i could have walked with you
tonight on this longing that never stops
this gamble
on epic love

Love is It, if only we
Listen,

you ask what time is it?
in my country, after i have written this summary
of our foolishness
(be patient, i am foolish still)

the time now is 6: 40 in the morning,
it is not raining, some yellow flowers bloom
beside my window
a bee is busy
hopping from petal to petal
gathering its favorite nectar

as i write,
now it is 9: 44 am.
I quit

RIC S. BASTASA
A Summer Midlife Crisis

i am
actually afraid
about what
i think
i can
do

what
this self has so
carefully
denied

years and years
of gentle restraint hands
kept
inside the pocket

soon
in the middle of this
holding on
i shall
unzip what i have long
hidden
in sleep

i am afraid
i must tell you that
i can
very well
do
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sunday

4: 30 you rise
and kneel down
you chant the rosary
and mumble
your prayers

i hear vespers
oh, whispers
of your secret
wishes

i cover my ears
with this
thick blanket

then you leave
for church
and you find
it unnecessary
whether i must
go with you

5: 57
silence reigns
i cannot bear it
i turn on the radio
the news start
bombarding

about the flood
the storm
the waves that
roar of evacuation
and some deaths

i turn off the radio
i turn it on gain
i try the hip hop
on another station
i dance i sweat
things out from
my system i filter
what must come
in

i open the windows
and door to let light
come
in

i am ready now
to face the day
on a washed face
and brushed teeth
without breakfast
and coffee

let them see me
clean and happy
i am on a hunger
strike i am on
a strike for life

i take my walk
without you
i pretend that
this world is one
lonely man and
he does not wish
to talk

like the trees
like the pavement
like the leaves
that now with the
strong wind
keep on falling
blown away

yet uncomplaining
this is sunday
this is still a very lonely day

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sunny Afternoon

by my window
i look upon the dusty road
one sunny afternoon

a horse driven carriage
stops

the horse is black
and the driver wears a black hood

it is getting dark
and all the children stop playing

their mothers are calling
them all home....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sunny View

sunshine lands on
a
big anahaw leaf

when a man is lonely
sipping coffee

when his attention
focuses on it even for
a second

it could mean a huge
slice of happiness for
his lifetime

how light makes love
to a green leaf

how eating makes
one survives

how youth was wasted
how useless is sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
A Sunset

there was one sunset
that i can never forget..

it was when we parted
and there was no other sunset

with the color of sadness
as that...

no other.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Superstition About A Black Butterfly

if it is a brown butterfly that flutters inside
the house
we have reasons to be glad
for it means money

if it is a black butterfly we better prepare
for it means death
sorrow, lament

last night the moon was full and it was floating
on the clouds
the sky was so dark the distant star in contrast
flickers like a firefly full of life

i have seen Venus, the neighboring planet
i keep the joy of light

there came a black butterfly
inside the room passing through the window
while you were sleeping
the light of the moon was all over you

i have seen death
it is inside me this love fading like a faint light
like that most distant star
losing the essence of its light

RIC S. BASTASA
A Surprise For Myself....

on his diary he writes:

dear diary
i have sacrificed a lot
years are like
layers of steel on my back
time is running fast
abnormally
on engineered days
canals are overflowing
with water
the cities are flooded
i am drowning
and yet how helpless
can i be
how dumb
not to call for professional
help or even
to talk to a close friend
about it
only to find that actually
i do not have any
of these
closer encounters
or needed
intimacies

tomorrow my dear diary
i will write more
courageously
i pray for more strength
more wisdom

tomorrow dear diary
i will surprise myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Surreal One....

the blue butterfly arrow heads north towards the white castles of a dream
below it are the fishers on the gleaming morning where the ambrosia shell labyrinth waits.

another reality is making us alive from this beauty sprouting from irrational trees from leaves of silk from nerves as roots.....

RIC S. BASTASA
inside a frame a boy puts some words  
he does not know how to choose wisely  
he plays his game and goes on without really knowing  
what happens next  
the words begin to move and argue with each other  
some have become elves and pumpkins and they crowd inside the frame  
unmanageable now  
the words cross the borders of the frame and begin to grow transparent wings  
flying away like a swarm of bees to the sky  
and the little boy is left with nothing but the emptiness of the slate  
when he grows to become a man  
somewhere in the middle of his dying age  
he understands what that childhood game is all about  
it is about a momentary crowd, the gathering and the bothering  
and then the wings and winds and wondering  
until what is left is the emptiness which he knows well  
as the synonym of what others have died of...  
nothingness....all the bees go there.  
RIC S. BASTASA
A Sweet View From My Window…

the rain starts to fall

the red hen runs
towards the mango tree

the leaves are thick and
the trunk is old and tall

ten little chicks
red and yellow follow

the tracks of the red hen and
then seek shelter under her feathers

RIC S. BASTASA
A Symbiosis, A Parasitism

lichen to tree
moss to rock

river on the bed
stars to the sky

caterpillar
on the leaf

pinworm
on the intestine

choose
what relationship
above
do have we?

we call ourselves
sweet
we mask ourselves
with the face
of love

time shall tell
the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
A Talk To Oneself

last night he said he could not sleep
so at dawn he drove his car but he did not know where to go
at that hour as usual in this lonely town and the other lonelier towns
there were no people on the road
and he wanted speed
and if possible even the speed of light

i want to die he said to himself and i am lonely and abandoned he
continue telling himself
these thoughts are destructive but he keep saying he wants to die

and he closes his eyes and his car bumps the huge tree on the side of the road
and his car falls on the ravine and smashes the rocks below beside the sea

he did not die and survived and he told me he wanted to die but it is still not
his time and i told myself what a wasted man is this creature
and how God must have wasted his Love on such a man as self centered as
himself for such precious hours could have been devoted to something more
greater than our limited minds and should have been given
to another man more deserving than him

obviously, his selfishness i told myself could not be measured
and such is the most wicked moment that i spent with such a man that i could
not really understand

i could tell, i was once there.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tantrum....

writing is divine
seeing is mundane

one is purified the
other is soiled

waters from the sky
wash the stains

sighs of the heart
move the stairs

ask the magnetite
what attraction does

everything clings like
nails on the head

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tear

a tear maps out
its way along
to make an opening
a vent
to give way to a sigh
a release
for something that wants
to choke you

there is this hiss
a fume
an open sky

RIC S. BASTASA
A Telephone Call

it is surprising. A soul uses
a telephone for a call.
Are not telephones supposed
to be dead? They're alive
only for the those maids
who do not have cellphones,

they are for them. But it is
a surprise, it is my call.
Long distance from Vegas.
Midnoon. A sure way of
catching me, because she knows
i am home and not doing any
work at this hour.

she is crying. She says she
is depressed. All those that she
loves either die, or they simply
leave her. She wants to come home
and she's broke.

can't you help me about this
loss? this mess. This hell.
Help me. She cries. She insists.

I have some pills, she says.
I love you.

What can i say? This woman
who once betrayed
my brother. This woman
who stole my hope.

I put down the phone.
She must face the wall
that she built.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Temple Is Not A Temple Of Selfishness

this is my body
this is my temple
this is where my spirit lives
in flesh and bones

this is my face
this is my skin
these are my feelings
these are my hopes and aspirations

now touch me
now let your fingers run over my skin
let me feel you too
like i am no longer an island
a body of water
a river a sea where boats always sail away from me
where birds just pass and fly by
destined for another place to another shore to another bush

this is my body this is desire this is hunger and thirst and longing
feed me with your body
satisfy my thirst
fill my longings with your longings too

let your river chain my body
let your sea fill my land let your skies be above to wrap me
to shelter me to fill me also with more stars and moons and suns

let me not be all alone like a space without anything without a flicker
let me become a universe glowing and hushing and lushing with life

this is my body this is your body too
let us breathe let us touch let us push through

RIC S. BASTASA
A Temptation Of Arrogance

i am tempted
to feel like a shoestring

shutting a foot inside
the shoe

i am ten feet above you
ashed ass

hole in the black
universe

you will be in
my own outlook of stars

i am tempted to be
your god

and you are
a foot stool

but i am humbled because
of the
unsinkable titanic
easily torn by the side-tip of
an iceberg

that night when God
was sleeping

when
with what was said

woke him up
into anger

so divine that it wiped out
a thousand lives
in that cold and dark night
in the ocean
of Atlantic.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Theme On Unrequited Love Via The Moon And Sun

the sun in its might
finds meaning
to the moon and stars
at night

love sought
love not found

and always in its heavens
love is unrequited

for the meaning of his might
and sunshine
is always that pain
and longing

the moon and stars
are waiting
and the sun
always
cannot reach
them

fate and nature has it
on its design
there is no meeting
there is no fulfillment

but come to think about all these
what if one day
when the sun and moon come
and make love

will this earth not burn
with their passions?
will we all still be here
on that fatal day?

will not all the stars explode
with envy?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Theory About The Absence Of The Divine...

in the end
in trying to figure out the sense of meaning
pouring out
taking in
decanting, filtering,
testing, considering each
detail with
significance
one still cannot accept that
all these data
never make sense
at all

one hopes
nothing comes at random
the chances boils down
to a specific purpose
such a hardheadedness
against the wall
breaking one's head like
an eggshell
nuts!

the premise should have been
in the beginning life has no meaning
man creates his own image
shapes his own future
and out of respect of man's will
God is no longer
there

like Papa
watching his son soldier
leaving him all alone now
to fight his
own war

RIC S. BASTASA
A Theory For A Friend Who Shies Away From Temptation

he is too old for a scandal
now you must understand why he did not
pick you
why your teases remained on deaf ears
why your invitations
remained unanswered

you are too young to be believed at
too fickle
and your lips cannot keep a secret

or perhaps, he loves her so much
that he changed his mind
and promised never to hurt her again

RIC S. BASTASA
A Theory Of Time And Space

Time &
Space is a Big Loaf of Bread
There Peacefully put
on top of your dining table

The knife's sharp edge
cuts through it
and Puts you There

There is an illusion
for the Moment
You see a river flowing
towards the sea
You hear the voice of surging
The rage against the rocks
the sliding upon the banks

Inside that Big Loaf of
Bread are all the ingredients,
The past, the present and the Future
and You may taste it at once

What you have is a moment of illusion
that you cannot be here and there at the same time.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thin Curtain Of Gray Silk

between this and that
there is a thin curtain of gray silk
that serves as a divider
between this despair and
that bliss

it is not your hand that
sets it aside
not your your mouth that
finally speaks the word

it is someone else
the mighty one
that one that puts it
this way and that way
between

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thin Slice Of Silence....

crisp, clean,
fresh,

a thin slice
of silence

in exchange
for you

i'll take it
i'm shut., , , .

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thing

a things smooth and
as fragile as
china

when you left
untouched it cracks

shatters on the floor
unpicked.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thing Just A Thing

things only seem to be what they are
when they try so hard to convince
they ask the help of light to cast some shadows
and if they can only speak they will say:

'you see, i am true
i am real, i am casting a shadow'
in my doubt, i touch a thing in you
there is nothing there but only a thing
and i tell you

'you are only a thing with a shadow
i haven't touched a heart'
and then i hear the silence
and then there was calm and quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thirst Of The Past Lives

... AND then there is a thirst
that long upon some buried jars in the waters of our past lives
we want to clearly remember what we were once

was i that? were you that?
why do i feel something for you which is
by the scales of reason
without weight?

i see clouds, and then the tips of the mountains appear,
and then i fall into that land

which gives me nothing but another form of forgetting

and then i look back at you, and there is this sense of disbelief
and reason with its head shakes endlessly

no, not that, it is something else why you are being brought here
but your heart tells otherwise

it is boat with fire and it is sinking carrying with it all the
screams of your being here

and then back to a silky ocean, back to the lines of the shore
without crease, or anything that one remembers, and so delighted

to forget like a wave upon wave
in order to keep the island compact
the air blows, like the soul that you keep.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thought About A Communion

the fruits of the earth are for all
and those who do not work for them
deserve no less than those who only stand
and wait, those who dance to the music,
those who tap their fingers on the table
for the beat of poetry,
those who savor the beauty of the earth
and stop for a while to contemplate
about such an amazing beauty,
those that only describe what grace is there,

for they are not those who caused the
growth of trees, the coming out of
the buds, the blooming of the flowers,
the making of the pulp and juice of the ultimate fruits,

it is the wind that makes the seeds fall,
the rain and the soil that make them grow

No man, however hard he works for it, whatever
he does, can make a seed, or a leaf, or
make the sun spread its rays,

No man can make the soil stay and disappear,
No man can stop the journey of the earth
and say that now he owns it and that some
Would have to beg or ask for its bounty.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thought....

There is a lady by the lake
She plays the Piano
At night sadly
The moon listens and remembers
Just like any abandoned lover
A song
Learned by the Heart
and Until
Now is never forgotten
The notes from the Piano
Swim in the Lake like some fishes
Wishing to be stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thousand Words

What is the use of the thousand words?
When what she needs is nothing but the touch of the moment

the thousand words
are the noise of the gongs

the banging of stones
the unfinished struggles
of the sands

the complaints of the thunder
the blinking of lightning

in the uselessness
of wasted gestures

marks of the water
in the realm of nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thread Of Silence

I have long wished to follow the
thread of silence
like a worm in your brain
wanting to discover
the secrets of your
wonder

i stop.

the gate of respect is closed
and hinders me from further
intruding
into your castle.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Thrill Of Hope

you love and fail
and you want to die
the heart that loves and fails
shirks and shrinks like a drying grape to the desert sun

raisin, look at you, you have become a raisin
wrinkled fruit,
shrinked to the size minimal to the existence
desired, you dry some more, taking away all the life
possible in your skin and bone

the desert sun is cruellest
in you
so unforgiving so determined to shrink you
more than a raisin
this cruelty can turn you into a stone

the night has come
this thrill of hope comes like a comforting friend
to tell you raisin,

keep the sweetness still
for tomorrow's bitterest spill
the cruelest sun
the deadliest ever
on this desert sun the hottest sands

and you will not surrender
the hope is still there

the dream is this oasis somewhere
the bedouin and his coming camel

who knows? and when?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tightly Closed Door

The door that i have now
is tightly closed

you step outside and face
the storm

i shall remain and think
about nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Time For Roosting...

IT IS sad to see
chickens
when the hour of
fading light comes
when they all start
to look up
and find their
respective roosting
places
upon their chosen
branch of the
tree,

it is like
going home
after the day
of pecking
grains, and when
full
you find
solace upon
a chosen home
as the night
starts to
cover
everything.

it is like
death to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Time For Silence

today
is my time for silence
a time
for being closed
as a door

no ill wind
comes
no word
arrives

bringing some
news of doom
some pieces
of information

that destroy
rather than
construct

that subtract
rather than add
something
beautiful and
worthy of my
quest for life

today is my time
for silence
to be left alone
so i may gain

strength
peace

so i may know
myself more
and learn to live
with the
unknown

RIC S. BASTASA
A Time For Us To Be Lazy On A Silent Sunday

time to be alone
on a bench under the trees

time to see how leaves fall
silently on the grass

as the world watches us
in mutual
idleness

this is what lazy Sunday is all about
doing nothing

reconstructing the pieces of
the past week.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Time To Pause In Silence

a time to pause for a little silence
for all the souls of those
departed........

we remember them and the love they
left us.

may they rest in peace. Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Time To Write About Time

how do you write time? as simple as asking what time is it?
and then you look at your watch and say
without much thinking about how time passed swiftly and how
it affected you leaving you another lock of white hair
and sense of nostalgia of
i am left out here and i have done nothing about the passing of time

it is 8:17 in the morning, you hear some roosters still cocking out
their maleness to the hens laying their eggs in the warmth of their
quest for more of them

scrambled eggs and scratches on the grass for food

now finally i have found time to write about time
for eyes to look into my own eyes for hands to work on my own hands

time swiftly passes by
and i have noticed more wrinkles on my hands, more lines on my
forehead, eyebags, weakened knees, blisters on my feet, sagging cheeks, falling
flesh on my arms,

my heart beats faster on the worry of
i have not done well enough and time passed by leaving me away
with this feeling of

there they are on happy faces with children and grandchildren
and birthdays and deaths and graduations and anniversaries

where are we my dear? we are in this house where there are only
two of us left
we are watching tv and this advertisement on milk for old age
and new born babies

how can we relate to the time that i am writing? i sit beside you,
i hug you again (for the nth time of this almost 30 years of being
together)

i turn off the tv, and let the silence be with us again
i hold your hand, and tell you the usual sweetest words
your name, i always say your name
and my name, you always call me by my name

i hold your hand, your head on my shoulder, we sit together
facing the sunset on the sea on the horizon where birds are flying towards their
own nests

it is 5:15 p.m., time is not freezing. it need not stop just like the
way we really want it

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tiny Bird In Fear

a tiny bird comes
inside my room
delicate as a feather

when i arrive
this morning
it suddenly flies away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tiny Poem For Samsam

such a small time
too many woes......

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tiny Sad Song

when you were once a girl
as tiny as a memory
you wish to be like a geisha
serving men
in a nice conversation
that was how you see things
on the limitations of what they have
seen for you
that you too have seen for yourself
Japan is your only country
to be free from your own impoverished country

the leaves of the mahogany tree
all fall out from its branches
one day
showing the beauty of its bare twigs

that was long ago
and then you turn into a woman
and you do not want to talk about it anymore
the mountains know
how ugly is the nudity of the trees
how bare
a mind becomes when deprived of its own thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tired And Hungry Poem....

a tired hungry poem
crawls to bed and pulls
a blanket
wraps itself and then
snores

dreams begin to grow
on fields of sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
A Toast

let us have a toast
of the finest
wine

let us cheer ourselves
about
the latest news

the latest development
of our mind
now hardened
to death
of expectations

how we learned
to live
without anything at all

our bare selves
undressed some more
now stripped
of every treasure

we begin to love
nature
we begin to believe
about the
power of starting
from scratch

to know that to
touch
we simply have
to rub our hands

to know that to
see well enough
we need to
close our
eyes and see
the intricacies
of darkness

to know that speak
so well
we need so much
silence

to know that to hear
we must figure
what was not spoken

that to be us
we must forget ourselves
that in irony
lies the strength of our
simplicity

RIC S. BASTASA
A Toast To Humus

i am failing
down
down
i am submitting
to
destiny
to fate
i am
my own
defeat
i am falling
debris of
your sky
i rejoin
my ancestors of
stone and sand

a toast to
humus
feast to
dusts

back to the
silence of
my roots

RIC S. BASTASA
A Topic On Pain

now i have learned
to refuse seeing you again

i think i should be wise enough
there is always the new pain in old wounds

we often agree to talk about it
i give you time enough

to forget
but you have always insisted in lingering

there is no use over broken collections
i buried mine

scars are not good to look at
there is no premium for pain

the next time you call
my line shall be busy.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Touch Of A Hand A Kiss

a simple touch of the hand
a kiss on the cheek then into the lips
tongues sliding on
top of the other
a skin rubbing another skin
body to body

without love
all these do not mean a
thing

love beyond eroticism
love beyond ourselves
love on top of love
love rubbing against love
love licking and love penetrating
and love penetrated
love well rested
in perfection

we do not have it yet
what we have are mere stains
off-white and pungent

RIC S. BASTASA
A Touch Of Class

since his
house is flooded
she decides
to stay in the hotel
at 5,000 dollars
a month

and she likes it
for another month

since she is not the
one paying
anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tour

it is here where on the first day
everyone is excited to know each other's names

endless hellos
each wanting what we do where we come from

fourteen days of roaming around
from one city to another
one changing landscape to another
imposing landscape
each night a different hotel
a different meal

on the last day
the bonding fades as one prepares
for the good bye

the tall man who happens to be
a dentist delivers its impeccable speech
in English
saying that soon we part
and then we go back to our own realities

at the airport in that connecting flight
we saw both of you waiting for your connecting flight
back to Australia

we passed by
and here we are strangers again to each other
as we board our own plane
back to home
16 flights hours away....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tragic Story...

he got money to
burn
even all the money
just to
have you

at that stage
he is blinded by you
as a shining star

do not abuse him

it is only at
a certain stage that
he is blinded...soon

the blindness is gone
and he has no
money anymore and waking
up from this nightmare

as there is no more
money to burn
he will burn you
he will burn himself after

RIC S. BASTASA
A Trail In The Forest....

we went inside the mouth of the forest as first hand experience we followed the trail of its intestines

we were so exhausted we rested for a while sitting upon a big root of an old tall tree

trickles of light landed on our faces we hear the sounds of birds and rivers and we were about to take a journey to sleep of this trip

leaves began to fall and winds got stronger we see no landscape here except perhaps those rows and rows of wild ferns and flowering ground orchids with violet petals standing

we could not stop walking lest darkness comes and we would be away from home stranded in anxiety and fear

we proceeded to take the final steps until we found the exit: could be the sphincter of this specter, an end which we shall savor and relish with gladness
we made it and with our bottles
of water we said 'Cheers!'

RIC S. BASTASA
A Transfer Of Assurances

In the meeting of the frail monastery
Of light
And the wet trickles of the rain
By the wall
Between them
Speaks the throat of the wind
Murmuring
The loneliness of their hearts

It is the breaking of day
And the little bird
Sings the
Darkness of the fences
Disintegrating into shattered
Shadows

The exhilaration of the sun
Comes like a passage
Of his chants of
Love
Sleep decays
Between the trees
And the hammock
Of green grass

The assurance of what is azure
Dissolves the regrets
Of her insecure sighs
Emotion moves
In little glances
And close the cracks
Of his doubts
Vulnerable
Her fervor climbs like
A vine
Climbing toward
The gentle rays of the sun
And like
An old myth
She rests and sleeps again
In the broadness
Of daylight

RIC S. BASTASA
A Transformation

sticking to his own
reality
for NOW the caterpillar
munches and munches
every leaf

it is not aware about
SOON

RIC S. BASTASA
A Transformation Of A Pornographic Perspective....

i am watching
nudes,

i feel the heat
that is normal
perhaps

too many times
i am watching nudes

sort of an addiction
on this fertile
imagination

and then
i learn to feel

the hardness and brittleness
of skulls and bones

soon i hear the dragging sounds
of iron chains

i am watching nudes
now in a different perspective

once young, and beautiful
soon
rotten, and ugly
and exactly pure and
true.

RIC S. BASTASA
think of me as
the man who went outside
the house
bathing in the rain

it is not because i am
feeling uncomfortable
with the heat of my own
clothes

out there
as the rain falls
you cannot see the flood
of my tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Trauma....

between galas
and olingan is an old
bridge
built by the koreans

stories were told
and retold that on those
nights
a funeral march passes
the mourners wearing black
and silent

i was then six years old
and with friends that sunday
afternoon
we took a raft and explored
the river
beneath the old bridge built
by the koreans

shocked to see a woman
dead, thrown by unknown culprits
tied with a wire on her neck
cold and nameless.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Treatise On Light And Darkness

the truth is always there
that woman nude lying in bed
waiting for no one
self-sufficient as she is
like the eternal fire of
the sun
the gentle softness of light
that finally lands on
the grass
on early morning

she is eternal
mother of all mothers
her breast with flowing milk
for all the babies
of this universe

in the vast darkness
light pierces every space
travels
without any definite arrivals
departures
not always final

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tree Tested For Its Roots

at first the wind blows
with cruelty
uprooting all the root of
your being
but this is only at first
you are but
a tree tested
for how long you can
continue
being attached to the
earth
the wind makes it sure
that you know
what attachment is
the meaning of being
rooted

after the uprooting
when all your leaves are taken away
when you are but all hands
with nothing to grip

then the wind begins to show
its true nature

it is lovely
fresh and pure

RIC S. BASTASA
she says i am always running away
she asks the same question about what is really the matter?

is there a problem? she asks herself such a very easy question but
which of course has remain unanswered

perhaps because she knows the answer but decides not to tell me
or perhaps i know that she knows but i prefer to have it posed in the
most beautiful face of silence

a blank canvass is itself so beautiful that sometimes the painter
upon contemplation for days decides not to put any color

because it seems to say more than what it is
and to say it flatly like the truth that it is

why i am running away? i change it to, why i am enjoying this fun of having to
run away

from nothing actually
because to run away is, after all, the nature of man

obviously, the very reason why feet are put
why these feet have flexible and strong cartilages
stoic bones,
thick skin underneath to the envy of the lips
friends of rock and sands and very long trails

perhaps there are no need for reasons to explain the joys
of having to run away

from nothing at all, yes, from nothing at all
because no one is chasing you

because the shadow is always there faithful to every running away
against the sun and moon
under their guidance putting the maps of the earth

uncertain
true, exciting, endless
eternal search

for nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tribute To God In Refusing Our Prayer...

perhaps we have asked the wrong thing,
God is so silent,
or perhaps we are asking more than what we really need,
the head is shaking,
perhaps we are giving him our own limited and erroneous calculations, but he is not saying that we are wrong,
perhaps he respects and love us,
and hence the silence and refusal.

pray some more in the silence of our longings
deep within God is listening.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tribute To Hope

when hope dies
a cheap funeral is due
the coffin is made of
old mahogany
the flowers are
improvised colored
Japanese paper
cut by ordinary women
of the town
the candles are
recycled
the room is dimly
lighted
with a coconut oil lamp
the mourners
are the very same people
that killed it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tribute To John The Second

that he was poisoned
or

was smothered by a pillow
to make
it appear like a natural death

are stories....
about an old Pope who died

or was killed
because he had seen the errors

and was then ready to
divulge it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tribute To Nothing

sunrise comes everyday
hence it has become so ordinary
we do not give much attention
something expected
no longer amazes us

we have focused much on what
is lost
all energies devoted to finding
what is not there anymore
hence we are lost ourselves

this is not a poem but just a
friendly reminder.

you have read so much
and all poems sound the same.
no poem amazes you now
in fact, nothing.

and here, nothing becomes a poem
it has become something
as nothing amazes you
you too have become nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Troublesome Woman

a woman of trouble knows how to weave words, fabricating them into little monsters, not of lesser significances that litter in that pestering pond that she creates herself,

she likes what she is doing and she likes

trouble, she makes trouble, she will die without trouble, so sometimes she pulls out her teeth for trouble and cuts her hair for trouble because you see her ugliness and you are caught in a reflex of telling her that she is ugly

and there again the trouble begins, you start it by telling her the truth and she will not like it, she seeds the conflict and you pick it up, the conflict becomes yours it is growing and spreading and she will be laughing because a war is born

and she says, it is not her war, you started it, it is yours now.

she hides in the light and makes many shadows that soon she will fear herself, she will mumble names, this so and so is trying to kill her, and she must take revenge, to justify her quest for violence, violence begets violence her mottoo and she sees to it, that violence is created even without her

she fears herself though and hates the mirrors on the walls she lists her enemies, plans her schemes of destroying them ahead of their plans destroying her, she has a lists of the faults and shortcomings of her friends, (she has no friends in her heart she has no heart in her body her body has no soul)

she writes:

the sun is hot
the moon is a slut
the air is pushy
the wind is bitchy
the sea is salty
the child is naughty
her mother is ucky
her father is sickly
the world is leaky
everyone is prickly
the system is kinky
the priest is hankypanky
the mayor is itchy
and so on and so forth

a woman of trouble always falls  short of herself measuring her height against the rest
she will be either taller or shorter and this makes her so unsatisfied
always comparing herself she feels always defeated, there are always more of them than her so she feels so empty like a hot balloon pulled by the air up
(only to burst at the end)
she floats she pulls everyone to her to anchor her emptiness
she will be devoured soon by the big mouth of her own troubles, the horror of her own big mouth devouring her own body like a movie
she will shout herself so loudly using the remains of her own tongue she will hear
the screams from inside her but she will not listen still as inch by inch the big mouth swallows her

noisy, garrulous, hysterical she will make her last scream
she is gone
her own mouth and sharp teeth have tasted her
she is gone
and what shall be written about her is this bitterness of cannibalism and the ending lines shall be
(as she is finally consumed)
let eternal rest be granted to her Oh Lord!

RIC S. BASTASA
A Truce....

two snakes
are panicky
trying to find
a cure
after a mutual
bite
poisons shared
fate rigged.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Truckload Of Rocks

i close my eyes
hurt by the light
i nod my head
and ask for
more ideas
from God
i beg for more
silence
from the storms
of my troubled
heart
i dream of a calm sea
a raft
a fisherman
a catch
a rope a rudder
a blue sail
a seagul an island
a tower of light
a blade of grass
a ring
a truckload of rocks
a navel a while skin
an arm a butt

i want an imagination
of wingless birds
stranded in an island
a shadow
a dream of liberation
of bodies
trapping souls

RIC S. BASTASA
A True Disciple

a true disciple listens
and takes every word of the great teacher

patiently he takes note of
the errors committed and corrects them

the teacher points out the room
for improvement and the true disciple enters the door of wisdom

he takes carefully each criticism
and creates what he thinks is more beautiful to the

heart and makes a record of what should
have been and ought to be

and then the right time comes for blooming
the true disciple unfolds his own creation like the petals of the lotus

at the middle of the murky pond and then finally
exudes his own perfection under the bright sheen of

the mighty sun of the new day smiling
more deserving now and as bright as ever diamond-like

another new spring rising higher than its source
the teacher by his side like the wind hushing

applauding and bowing before him
so pleased is his heart and then in a moment passing him by.

RIC S. BASTASA
A True Fight

the true fight is not to kill the enemy
at most we weaken the foes
for them to change their minds
and submit to what we think is right
and so
remaining alive we gain on our side
our friends and allies

the true fight is for the understanding
that we are one and we shall be all one on
this war against ourselves
in the pursuit of excellence
and perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tryst

I will not perish upon the
Thought
That life on this journeying
Is not worth living
Once I returned from a trip
Last summer
Something nocturnal
And the same

The girls may be different
And I may be older
Than you think
But oh my
I danced all night
Tirelessly
And you will say
That is not natural
And too prickly
But let me tell you
My dear
Do not be sad
Times simply goes
And will not wait

Seasons change
Our wrinkles multiply
And that is expected

But lest you forget
Whatever happens
Oh my! Life is
Still beautiful

please forgive me for
saying that the tombstones
do not frighten me

and I do not fancy
your pretensions
about the full moon
&
that tryst of the stars
&
those two shadows
under the trees

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tryst

i kissed
her hair
before
the sun
dried each
lock.

the tips
are
drenched
with
tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tryst Of The Past

what i have been
telling you
here is actually
different from what
i am seeing,

i just can't tell what
it is
that makes me
happy for now

when i tell you
that trees are growing
on rows along
a country road
where the skies are
blue and the sun
is warm
where dusts follow
a truck
where birds fly
towards the lake
to feed on fish

perhaps i am
hallucinating on
what is not there

i am having the
arms of someone
that you
have not met even
once

in a secret garden

RIC S. BASTASA
A Tryst....

what is said here need not be necessarily true,
so beware, you might be misled into thinking that
everything is a mess, and that i am feigning happiness.

people lie, that you must put as an accepted principle.
people sometimes do what they do not like to say
and say what they are not doing anyway.

well, be cautious, there are traps and hollow spaces,
mines of the minds, exploding devices hidden on the wall with ears.

i look forward to meeting truth in person.
tonight, at eight sharp, beside the line of trees, under the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a vine, so green
i put on a vase
of glass, there is water
and pebbles
the vine grows some more
leaves
alive on the filtered light
from the window pane,

there is a red tulip that never
dies there
but also does not
grow,

that plastic one i bought
a year ago,
i do not remember having washed it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Turn-Off

i remember
the two of us
under the thick
palms

we are alone

and you touch me
begging

you want me to
show you
my naked body

under the palms
beside the
river

i declined.
i left

i shudder about
that fact.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Turtle Thrown Into The River

they come to the house today
mother and son
the father who is so angry merely stays in their house
it is all about his wife filing a petition for annulment
of their 20 year-old marriage
she tells all the lies about his being happy-go-lucky
unmindful of her miseries
his drunkeness his womanizing his having no income at all
and he cries foul
that all these are not true
that he is psychologically incapacitated

the truth is
that he does not love her anymore
that she too is having an affair with an american who is financing the petition for
annulment
who is now sleeping with her in their marital bed

i told him as he seeks my advice
admit all her lies and swallow all her false allegations
let her throw you away
as you too would like her to be thrown away to hell

let her throw the turtle with her two hands to the river
and then let her see how the turtle swims and sings to the comforts of its flow
the way they both want their lives to go and be free at last
from their mutual disappointments and hatred

RIC S. BASTASA
A Twin

the vastness of love
can be a desert
or a wild forest

in the desert the winds
of emptiness blows
all day

in the wild forest the
heavy rains pour
all year round

in said places
time like sand spills
people imagine all the
ghosts of pains
and so i wonder
what love really is

in the vast forest
a bee complains that it is homeless
a butterfly cries on broken wings
in the desert the skull of a horse
is watched by still
hungry vultures
after all
what happened

so, is pain actually love's
twin sister?

RIC S. BASTASA
A Twinkling Star.....

this early morning
between
the crowing of
the town cock and the
barking of the
brown dog in the veranda
wagging its tail
for my coming
i have seen a twinkling star
in the sky
against its gray vastness
at the backdrop of the
white wall of this
old house
i stand still for a while
and i am thinking
how loud does beauty speak
in its silence
how it stands out against
the vastness of
space and
how sometimes despite
the numbness of our
thoughts
we still are caught
in the web of its
twinkling...

RIC S. BASTASA
A Twist

did i tell you that in all the days
of my life i have always been thinking of you?
that no matter what i do
your face always wears a smile
inside my head and that i always want
to go home early just to see you and
be with you as we eat dinner and drink
the red wine on the porch beneath
the stars that i had all the nice time holding
your hand and kissing your lips
and dancing with you
under the rain?

(i still have to tell you
tonight before the moon vanishes
into the darkness of the night

that all these are not true).

RIC S. BASTASA
A Twist At The End Of The Line...

i am here
i was here
but you never
care, you never
notice, i am.
Here, i was,
but you, never,
care, you, i,
ever notice.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Twist Of Love And Death

dicke he loves
and truly truly loves
was the only who knew
that he was about to
commit suicide
that night

tall went well

he lives without thoughts
now he thinks that thinking is silly
it only leads to the
death wish of
the one who was trying
to be another kind
of innocent and
beautiful
brain.

RIC S. BASTASIA
A Twosome....

two fake
people are
doing their
thing
in the park
for such
a public
display of
affection

yes two bodies
of salt
entwined like
vine and
bark

and then the
rain comes....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Unique Kind Of Drunkeness

the usual wine
the favorite rhum and the well sought vodka
or martini
scotch on the rocks or you common margarita
or bloody mary...
a glass, another glass, more glasses
an open mouth, more words, a flood of ideas that come when the
spirits stir you to more shores and islands..
you let go things and monsters and angels long stored in your
vocabulary, you're a book with some pages sticking
for you seldom open
only sometimes when things really get rough when the heart wants to speak
because it is too full and your mouth has nothing better to do except to speak,
then the many glasses take you to many places and you face many people
long dead and gone
and you speak to them without fears now
direct to the point
confrontational and you learn how is it to shout
less civil, bursting manners, regrets cracking out like fireworks
and then you mellow down
for this enlightening moment of
why, yes why did all those things happen to you?
some explanations
like how towel to your neck and face
a soft massage on your arms and back
a woman with a beautiful body and sealed mouth
gentle eyes and a certain
professional indifference
you refuse an offer for the night because you just want to go home

someone is waiting and you feel so guilty
it is late and you need nothing now but a good sleep
in the house.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vacation In San Rafael

it is comfort
riding a brand new
taxi
63 kilometers east
of puerto
prinsesa

the driver sounds
honest
driving carefully
wishing to
see his three kids
grow into
maturity as he
becomes another
old man
in their town in
aborlan

i am escaping
from a humdrum
like a whistle
from a
tea pot

from the glass
window
i saw mountains
dressed with fog

the rain
starts to pour
heavily
and we could not
hear each
other
since then

i've seen
intestines of this road

'it is dangerous'
he said.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vacuole....

haven't you taken a closer look
at the vacuole? it is owning a space for itself
and what you do not see is that
it is ingesting emptiness upon
its own open mouth
and just like you digesting everything
to tiny pieces
until everything gets so fluid
upon its own belly
the universe begins to take shape
and move

just like our own feelings of emptiness
we must learn this art of
ingestion
taking things and converting them
into fluids
until they take the shape of our faces
our future
and fears.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vague Image Of Life

a vague image of life
against a shade
of daylight

outlines of motions
of arms
and hands
and naked
bodies
bathing in the river

a leap
of desire
certainly like a frog
from my belly

like some
butterflies
wanting to come
out from
my chest

like some
bees
hiding in the hive
of my mouth
wanting to swarm
to the trees
of life
to the nectar
of flowers

life wants to shine
for us to see
what life really is:

desire, ambition,
passion, love,
hope, faith
come to think of it

what is vague
is actually
death always
lurking
in some
dark corners

RIC S. BASTASA
A Valediction Inside The Room

do not hate me,
for i am, this is all that i have
wind in your palms
when you close
you know what happens
when you open again
you know what is next

love me then for what i am
a rose in your lips
when you say something
like
i love you
you know what happens next
surely.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Variation Of The Day To Day Routine

finally you drive your car
to the place that you have not been too
it is grassy out there
and the hills are rolling
and the skies spread
all the blue
below it is the sea
and the white coast
with sea gulls
and coconut trees
and clouds drifting with
the wind

you step out from your car
and take the deepest breath
in your life

RIC S. BASTASA
A Variation Of The Other Poem

when you are about
to squirt
and finish half of it
bad luck
blackout comes
the poem
gets half-cooked
and you
go upstairs
and sleep on
the bamboo bed
eyes staring
at the ceiling

RIC S. BASTASA
A Veranda Without You

gone were the days
when the veranda keeps a man
to fill its empty space
to watch again those countless
stars in the heavens
at night
when everyone is gone
to sleep

it is those books
those black and white letters
those rules and laws
they are those that took the man
away from it

how can this veranda sing again tonight?
how can an evening rain retain its meaning?

all these laws
unromantic and so unkind
all these men
have since then
become schemers
of cunning

RIC S. BASTASA
A Verdict Of Guilt

I like to be stern today
So that you may believe me
That I am serious
About the law and that
I mean it when I punish you

I look at you
As you stand before me
Uncombed hair
The dirt of poverty
All over your body
Unwashed clothes
The odor of your crime
Permeating the room

You look like a
Tattered poem to me
I want to write
Something beautiful
About you

I could have followed
The creative path
Of compassion and
Shy away from form
And reason

Yet society is looking
With anger and thirsting
For revenge
Which they call justice
I hand the verdict
Of conviction

Another body another
Soul shall suffer because
The path is rigid
And too smooth for our
Own creative imagination.
A Verification....

barely an hour
after sleeping
she wakes up
faces the mirror
and asks herself

'do i know you? '

RIC S. BASTASA
A Version Of Freedom

Walked the streets today, mindless
Of the usual ways
I argued with my feet
Wanted to go this way but went that way

Fate had me in its grip & by chance & grace both
I wonder why
I suddenly look up & in your deep
Deep eyes saw the Smile of all Smiles

In my naked wanderings I thought
I heard you whisper my name there you are
Soft and slumbered & cradled in his arms

Well I try to understand why you set me free
Was it love or insecurity you let me be

I walk down the road, I, Look up at the sky
Now I know why Reasoning has conquered me
I can’t and I won’t deny the fact
My heart beats a special Drum
Only for you
But I’m glad to be on my own
I have never been this free
From all suspicion & the pain grown
Year upon year

Give me space Give me time
Don’t lose yourself in anyone
Water rushes down my back, down the water runs
Walking in the rain then
Seemed beyond conception I’ve never been so alive
So much in love with life
So alive, so much in love with life
& from the gray gray sky fell the
Tear of all Tears

RIC S. BASTASA
A Version Of Solitude

you feel like a leaf steady on a pool of water,

around you is thick fog
and beyond is the haze of a misty morning

the house on the river bank is deserted
and the boulders of rocks are gray and hard

the grass is nil dipping its tongue on the shallow waters
ripples of the wind bring the shadows of shimmer

the mountains stand still
merely looking like a monk closing his eyes under the sky

this is my poem for solitude
yes, my own version of solitude when all else fail

RIC S. BASTASA
A Very Revealing Truth....

i could have written it
this morning
but i was too busy then
attending to some other
important matters

i am trying to remember it
as it could have been too important
equally important
as what i told you this morning but
i cannot remember it anymore

here i am gaping in the wind
by the window till the darkness comes
as the village lights itself up
for another evening

i let it go, perhaps for a very
important reason, perhaps i do not want
to hurt you, or hurt myself for such
a very revealing truth....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Very Sound Sleep

close your eyes

just close them

do not make a wish

as i too close mine

i only need to close them

even for this short moment

we'll not make love

we will just close our eyes

pretty tired just pretty tired

and all we need is this very sound

sound sleep this very very sound sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
A Very White And Clean Towel

it was you
who squeezed the
last available
toothpaste
for a much needed
brushing of your
teeth

i noticed it
and somehow i remember
how you want me
to tell exactly what
my poem # 96
really means

you are naked
in the bathroom
with a foam in
your mouth

i simply smiled
at you as i handed
you a very white
and clean towel.

RIC S. BASTASA
A View

driftwood
with seven twigs
on the shore
as clear as glass
is the water
and all stones and pebbles
are visible

above
blue skies
so blue that the white cotton clouds
appear like sperm cells moving
impregnating
an earth-sky womb

and then
it rains
the water rises
the drift wood again taken
floating
gently to another shore
another island
of white sands

a coconut tree towers
to reach a waft of cloud
winds as cool as ice
sands slipping on the fingers
a leaf from a guyabano tree falls
on the mouth
of a sleeping woman
beside her
the man whose arms are enclosing
her throughout
the rainy night

RIC S. BASTASA
A View From Here

a house is deserted
beside the sea
the waves are gentle
the coconut tree stands
the cassava plants are steady
a cab passes by
carrying a man and a child

this is a closed room
with glass windows

you see the water from the pipe
flowing fast as though chasing some gravel

you hear nothing.
except your words.

you are talking
alone. how can you stop?

a silent world.

RIC S. BASTASA
two days after
the sparrow has a nest
upon a twig
covered by leaves

the other sparrow
waits by the sill of my
window
looking over
a windless view

RIC S. BASTASA
A View From Here.....

my dark nights
are wrapped by the bundles
of air

the vast sky is mum
humming a lullaby

all the children of
this universe are sleeping

a night like this
silent like the sands

like an abandoned shell
shiny still at the height of noon

morning comes sooner
with dew upon the rocks

waves arise again like
songs of the lost gibraltar

RIC S. BASTASA
A View In Town Square

four blue chairs surround
a center table

at the center table
lies the red cloth

there are no diners
this time of the day

on the blue frames of
the glass window

where the white curtains
hang & flow like silky water

the lush of the red
bougainvillea is a wreath

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of A Man Arriving

the wall in this room is made
of glass

overlooking the plaza
where the rains are busy
discarding themselves

like a burden.

soft rain. no noise.
a big, muscular man
arrives

mustached, and
strong arms holding on

to a electric blue
handle of a motorcycle

he holds the key
to a certain destination

he looks at me
and i told him even if he did not ask at all

i do not know. i do not really know.

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of A Narra Tree Whose Branches Are Cut

there it stands tall beside a nipa house
its branches all cut
the climbing lichen and moss shall soon die
at noonday
wilting and stiffening
mummified on an early summer

when all the fingers are cut off
and arms stripped of hands
how can man be a man?

how can a tree be without leaves and branches?
how can moss and lichens thrive on such a cruelty

the nipa house triumphs and someone inside laughs
the sharp axe and the long bolo serve the purpose of the author
of this murder.

I loathe. I make this protest poetry.
Man murders nature unpunished.

No kind of poesy saves. Words are useless.
Metaphors are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of Love's Bridge

it is a connection
from the bottom where you take the view
there is long bridge connected to a cave
& drops of rain that you cannot see

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of Samal Island

between Samal Island
and myself

a moon sitting
on the sea
a golden sheen
spread
like a pedestal
of light

and then
a big ship passes by
marring
my view

i hear no sound
absent minded
i am always thinking
about someone else

always far from me

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of The Old Farm That Father Left Us...

an old man
is sweeping the dry leaves
into a heap
in the backyard of the
house
lies the chickens and the
ducks
and there
at dawn the eggs of ducks
are spreading
on the lawn and the roosters
are calling
as the chicks are seeking
for their
mother hens
pecking on the worms
under the
green grass of
home

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of The Stairs....

we all love the stairs
there is order in its placement
there is a hierarchy that we equate
with stages

of life, of something that is always
higher
and that something below it
also serves
the purpose of elevating a step
so someone
can reach the door of the house
and then
enter it

we all love the stair
there is respect in elevation
there is use and
artistic purpose,
there is dignity in elation

we remember every nail that is hammered
there,
echoing the sound of the past
struggles

it is the perfection of friction
the platform of a reconstructed struggle

step by step
a comfort to achieve height
a bridge to another
dimension

RIC S. BASTASA
A View Of This Place That I Remember

the back space of this house
used to be a green ricefield
and there was that tall mango tree
where i used to sit underneath
shading me from the scourging sun
i always remember
the view
of the carabaos grazing
with white herons standing on their back
and blue cottony clouds drifting above

the place is now cemented
with a wall as high as three men added-up
high buildings rise from here
reaching the cottony clouds out there

and the river is no longer a hype
but a big silent hard steel pipe.

RIC S. BASTASA
A View To A Kill

it is dark
the only light getting in
thru an open window
is the moonlight

naked you lay in bed
waiting for me

i undress myself
now is the presentation of all the truth
i have

you wait for my embrace
as blood rushes to my face

i love you i know
but tonight i will not say it

i let all my actions speak
tenderly to your receptions

do not say the words
i do not need them tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
A View To A Kill...

the grasses
on early morning
are weary with
dew,

wet and heavy,

and the face too
is weary
overburdened by
an indifferent smile

dry and short-lived.

RIC S. BASTASA
A View To Lighten The Heart Of A Sad Woman

two ducks wading
on the blue water
beneath them
refracted images of pebbles
dancing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Village Scene.....

the little boy is climbing a guava tree.
a bunch of ripe yellow guavas are hanging in one of the branches.
the sky is blue at 10 o'clock in the morning.
some feathery clouds pass by.
a sparrow hovers on the banana leaf and looks at the little boy
with fear.

and then the war between the rebels and the government troops begins.
series of fire shots and explosions. the villagers run for their lives. there will be
many casualties.

one of those who will become another number is the little boy who climbs the
guava tree.

the ripe guavas fall on the soil, run over by the fighting men.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Village Story....

the woman
with a red skirt comes down
from the mountain

she carries with her
a basket of violet eggplants

the little hand of a child
holds to her mother

he is silent with his blue
lollipop

the market day here is a
sunday

a drunkard runs amok
the streets of the village

killing in cold blood a
young man waiting for her girl

as she urinates beside the
abandoned hut near the river....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Village With Many Houses

his heart is like the sky
with many birds flying inside it

his heart is like the village
with many houses around it

the sky is as white as snow
the birds are so blue
the houses with no one
they are all empty
for quite long deserted

RIC S. BASTASA
A Virtue Of Distance

when she repels you
do not think bad about it
it is just
that

nature operating upon itself
healing
for the good of all

be the universe

be happy when planets and stars repel
each other
and keep their desired distances

it is for the smooth flow
of heavenly
relations

you can imagine perhaps
when a planet gets too near
Mercury kissing Venus
it will surely be not only chaos
it will be massive
destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vision

the world is so vast
the universe floating and so endless
there is always this
fluidity
no one knows what is there

we focus on the
garden of our heart

it is the only thing we
can do
till

tend what is present
go where we are taken

time
that is the waiting

that sense of this, that
there

but soon the change comes
the timelessness
and weightlessness of these
all

the sense of floating and
being endless

sunless horizons
edgeless spaces

at the tip of the icebergs
of our minds

along the peripheries of
our tattered hearts
soon there will be no burdens
on the wings of
spirits

on the feathers of angels
to the arms of gods....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vision Of Doom...

you look at the world
while riding a taxi
above the bridge that connects
two cities

a canvass of blue sea
white clouds drifting
seagulls crossing the horizon
blue ships floating
tiny houses along the boulevard
cars moving like ants
upon a line of path

you are amazed by so much beauty
man-made though

slowly the compassion arises
from the stares of your eyes
for soon

who knows that this is your last glimpse
of this city

beauty swallowed by waves
as islands sink to the bottom of the
the blue ocean

and the sounds of people like you
finally gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Vocabulary

i have a new word for you,
to illustrate
what my poetry is all
about,

it is this word: blabber,

it is not the one
who reveals confidential information for money,
i am not that
sort and my poems are not
that kind, oh, it is something else,

blabberblabberblabberblabber
bladder,

could be a bladder
one that stores urine
but there is no urine here, i smell like a wild flower
like
a dama de noche, a champaca, an ylangylang,

something else really, □

not the betrayer, informer, squealer, rat
canary, fink, snitch, stool pigeon, stoolie, stoolpigeon, sneaker, snitcher,

not a sneak
someone acting as an informer or decoy for the police
neither am i a
copper's nark nor a
supergrass, grass

well i am more like this: a verb form of

i speak about unimportant matters of my life
(don't believe me
i am just ironic)
rapidly and incessantly
gabble, gibber,
palaver,
piffle,
prate,
prattle,
tattle,
tittle-tattle,
twaddle,
blab,
maunder,
crack,
chatter

i am a
mouth, i speak,

i talk, i verbalise,

as in yes,

i talk about a lot of nonsense

blather, blether, blither, smatter, babble - i
talk foolishly

and so finally here we are at the core of
this matter:

this is the poem that babbles and croons

and you are the baby,
and i am not the mother, the father, or the big brother or sister:

plain poet, that's me,
i am so sorry

the flabbergasted
blabbermouth of them all.
A Voice Lays Hanging On A Pole

like a tattered piece of
loin cloth
a voice lays hanging on a pole
beside a
grassy path

it speaks
and i listen

it speaks about its loneliness
its being tattered
it is a torn voice haunted by
a scissor
the thread of mystery runs
wanting still
till nighttime to find the naked
eye
of the needle

pines beside the hill
stand by
like strangers staring
upon the dead body
of a boy

overrun by a ten wheeler
truck

tragic! yes, tragic is the
silence

more tragic is the indifference
that simply walks away
unnoticed even by the invisibility of the
soul of
the wind
chimes.
A Walk Into Oblivion

there is a way to come
and then just watch
everything

you are not one
of them
and they do not
know you
and you are not
interested to
know anyone
of them at all

they look at you
somehow
quizzically

and you feel their
anger

when they leave
after
you watch them
they speak only
about themselves

there is a way
to leave
without use of
words

and you remember
a few of those who
were here once
and who were very
much in your
situation

you blink
and then you too
shall take a walk

into oblivion
where no one remembers you

just the way
you like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Warm Welcome

tonight when the world is asleep
someone knocks at your door
and you open it. You tell him

'welcome, i have been expecting you...
i am sorry, i have neglected you..
for so long...come, and make yourself
comfortable. Sit here beside me
Let us have a drink, and some smoke
and let us, for once eat together...'

you look at the face of that stranger
slowly and carefully you map out the
the similarities, disregarding the old
differences...

deep inside you, you like this stranger..
It is you. It is now. You have accepted

Yourself. You are drinking with its truths.
You are eating its have

finally become one with Yourself, and
tonight, it is time to party.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Warning

the sea knows how to dream
and dream
it will
still dream about a jellyfish
a flesh
of a jellyfish, and it will sleep and think
about this dream of more flesh
and sting
and fling
its salt like the tentacles of the jellyfish
to the fish
and the sea urchins

and starfish begin their journey to the shores
where desire stops but does not end

i am the sea and i dream about her tentacles
her flesh
and the pain
in my skin

the needles of the urchin
and the hardness of the starfish and the shore
where i lay

to desires that do not end
to loves lost to wishes that it may regain again

sea dreams sea pains sea urchins
the boat on fire and the captain drowning

RIC S. BASTASA
A Warning To A Closure

it is not that we desire to change
a stone into a vine

you always complain that the stone in you
is silent and heavy

there is no laser to perform such work
of transubstantiation

i do not have that power to go inside your gene
and cut some stairs of DNA molecules

what we need is just an hour of compromise
a little sacrifice here and there

like some stains in your shirt which we can
remove later in the washroom

but you do not have that hour or you simply
refuse to see us sacrificing too

we do have common enemies
but you do not belong to us now

soon we will also close the door against you
and when it is shut

you are on your own too
alone to all of those who do not have mercy

RIC S. BASTASA
A Way Of Life Professed

he is lost
he intends to be lost
in the crowd
he never
belongs
to anyone

he is lost
he loves to be lost
forever

he has no world
no place
to stay

he has no breasts to hold
and keep
him in place

so keeps on looking
somewhere
where he can have a place
where he
can stay put

he is not afraid to become
a stone
only if he can find
a home

there is no one
no place
and he learns it after
so many
fears and then

he begins to love
this feeling
got stuck to
being lost
as a way of life

professed.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Way Of Management

i  premise it on
freedom and
responsibility

a small boat without
motor
an oar for a mind
a compass for
logic

the storms are
tests and
survival is always
as once emphasized
for the fittest

i have no word
for misfeasance
i have nothing
disciplinary for
malfeasance

move on and i
speak nothing
for i like it
to see you suffer
all alone

RIC S. BASTASA
A Way Of Seeing December...

the past months
impregnated December with
so much Joy
and it is now ready
to give birth
to a wonderful New
Year

RIC S. BASTASA
A Way To Complication

as i see it
it's more of trying to make things more complicated
like putting a handful of cotton upon a scenery of trees
or taking some smudges and scattering on the plate so you
cannot see what you are eating
and then you take a spoonful of it
and rely only on the taste
deprived of eyes,
and this way, you begin to wonder how interesting it is
when you only use your heart
even when you are just partaking of an early morning
breakfast.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Way To Live

a little fish rises from the water to
eat a bubble of air

from the tree a kingfisher with an eye for fish
swiftly dives and with its sharp long black beak catches the little fish

a boy with a rubber sling aims at the blue kingfisher hitting it with a stone crushing its round head and sharp long and black beak to the ground

a ripe coconut falls from a tree and hits the head of the boy below

the lizard that climbs the coconut tree looking for brown beetles at the top does not notice how all these events happen

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wednesday Treat

Wednesday, at the middle of this array,
you doubt, where to?

you want to be back
or you want to go forward?

they have forgotten you
and you try standing at the center of the kiosk

a pity, this pity asking for attention
and they all pass by without looking at you

there is simply no change expected on a Wednesday
there is this shuffling of shadows

gaze not fixed at all on the wall
it is the same rain, the road, the trees

you give up this madness for a name
you take your slippers and wear them and then go away

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wheelbarrow

a wheelbarrow
is a mere wheelbarrow

even if it is not
red or glazed
with rain water

it is
what it is
just a wheelbarrow

but look beneath
ourselves in the forest of our wanderings

there are trees there
growing in the dampness of darkness
looking for light

a river comes flooding
that is where

meaning sprouts
upsurging emotions
now without walls coming before your fences

a wheelbarrow
is not the same wheelbarrow anymore

emotions
your emotions made it
for not what it is

transmutation
from William to you and this world
looks not familiar
anymore

petals of meanings
red so real
thorns and stalks and dews

RIC S. BASTASA
A Whim....

after a few years
in this nook of your world
you learn a language

that you only speak its
interrogatives keep on asking
and you answer with some uncommon declarations

soon you will understand that the subject had always been you
the verb is silent and compassionate

you forget some descriptions
it is unlikely but you have become another contentment within you

you talk to yourself in this world
without stars and moons and suns
the books keep an eye on you
their hands ready to shake yours

they wait until you become like one of its pages
until you become a mere idea
or simply just another whim whimpering for another day....

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a whisper that arrived in our little place
it's name is loneliness and it is looking for someone that it has known years ago in the place where it is living

it is knocking every door of the house and someone opens it
it mentions my name and it asks whether i still live here

someone takes the courage of telling it that my house is about two hills away from here

finally we meet. It stares at me. Closely. Then it hugs me. It cries. It kissest my ears.

I am silent. I am still thinking of you for all these years. Time cannot then the

whisper stays inside my ears. Silenced. It is not saying any word anymore.

The neighbors know that its name is loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Whisper Of Tomorrow

that is the great promise
for you to forget about those fears
of having not accomplished
all these and those
or having to fulfill all hidden dreams,
you are gifted with progeny
a tendril, a bud, a ray of light by
your window,
a whisper of tomorrow,

when the lights are all turned off.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Blanket

a white blanket
covers your face
but not your body
so how would you
think about what
i really think?

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Blanket....

I should have taken time to write
about it that early morning
the words just arrived much earlier like some visitors from
a garden
shaped like butterflies and so fragile like china
flying low and hovering in my hair
and then staying there for a while
the silence is beautiful
soft on my skin and soothing  like the coldness
of the blade of a grass - herb
but i have decided to take a walk for hours
and have some breathing space
setting aside what could have been more necessary than air
what could have been more beautiful than the sunrise
i keep myself in circles and when i come back
it is no longer there
I'm so sorry  for i have forgotten what is essential
this i have confided to the blanket in the room
unfolded still.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Butterfly

a white butterfly flies
over a bouquet of white roses
intended for the
dead loved one

it lands on one of the petals
and then it disappears

i look for it and with my
breath i shy it away on a wish
that it may hover
on the red patch of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Butterfly And The Written Words

i am afraid
i really have
to keep
on writing

what shall happen to me without
the written
existence of this poem?

i am afraid
about the consequences of my
arrogant
submission that i can live without
all these
quivering of
scribblings

what if you have nothing to read?

i am afraid about you

for this is this flower and you are the loneliest
butterfly
in white against the light

you shall disappear
and this flower falls to the ground

it rots. And you are
gone.

tomorrow morning
words repeat themselves over and over again

another white butterfly
comes

and will always hover
A White Flower Blooms Against A Blue Sky

let me not think that sooner
this flower shall wilt

let me fathom the secret beauty
of its whiteness
against the blue sky

let me savor the opening of its petals
in slow motion

let me think of time that way
let me not be the rushing of the air

let me move like a snail
let me taste the delicious syrup of the honeybee

the white flower
the purity of your intentions
the blue sky
the beauty of your sorrow

time like a scallop
seasons like seaweeds

the hermit crab moving and meeting the huge wave
foams, and murkiness, and then you wonder where are these things
these thoughts

after a storm.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Flower For You Inside My Hand

This is a poem of comfort inside my hand

It is a flower pure & white

It blooms only for you

In wintertime

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Fragile Butterfly......

we've been writing and writing
and writing

not for once have we seen each other
yet

i do not wish too somehow
perhaps we are meant to be just like this

near and yet so far
real and surreal at the same time

perhaps we are better as souls
better as air rather than rocks or islands or bones

i cannot say i love you for that would be
too shallow a conclusion based on the emptiness of sands

we are into this anonymity and i will tell you
how i feel

i feel like a white fragile tiny butterfly
fluttering from one flower to another and still undecided

whether to hover finally to a red petal of that
rose

there is simply no flower for me
the air claims me as its property, and my nectar

is emptiness, my proboscis is guile
my feet nowhere to land.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Pebble

in my little unknown town
a lame woman
swallows a white pebble
after saying her name
in reverse

and lo! she turns into
a superwoman
duping all the lazy people
into watching her serial stories
on TV

Darna! Darna! Darna!
The Good always triumphs over Evil
at least in fantasy
somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Rose

you tell her, death does not exist, and she says, she knows,
she had been dead, if only you cared enough to know. she will answer,

your handkerchiefs are all ironed, and they are all kept
well folded in the drawer.

she says she misses something.
just a white rose.

RIC S. BASTASA
A White Yacht I See

a white yacht i see
on a very blue ocean
far away

at the port
a shadow of a girl with a long black hair
against a very strong sunlight
waves at me
still

i figure out as i wait on the top of this mountain
where the air is fainting
she must be the one
destined to die
because no one helped her
because
i have no way of becoming
this wooden boat
to sail and save her
from him

RIC S. BASTASA
A White-Breasted Bird

a white-breasted bird
sits on a twig
of the champaca tree

alone
always alone always

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wife Who Thinks All For Herself

Love will like her.

Her husband packs all his belongings
And and soon leaves her for another

RIC S. BASTASA
A Windless Night

a windless night
the one without stars
without the moon
the hovering silence
trees unmoved
no shadows
no self
just this just this
undefined yet
escaping
like sand dripping
like water dropping
like light fading
like darkness setting
like the sound of waves
endless
like the horizon
boundless
like feelings
unfathomed
like God
mysterious
all these
make my life move
more of the questions
rather than the answers
slip drip drip slip
slide slash slush
whoosh
non stop

be-ing

RIC S. BASTASA
A Windy Afternoon At The Beachfront

under the coconut trees
a nipa hut
a boy on a swing
another boy pushing his toy cart
the little girl on the bamboo stair
hugging her doll
the mother is burning the dry leaves
the father is mending the nets

such a happy family
perhaps, who knows? i do not even know them
i am just passing by
trying to breathe trying to take so much salty air
inside my lungs
on this windy afternoon at the beach front

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wish

i like to see stars tonight
at ten in the evening when the
rest of the world are asleep,

i wish and think hard enough
invoking the belief that the mind
can always manage to work things
out with the heart,

there are no stars
the dark clouds are here
and then it rains

i listen to the sound of the rain
i am not anymore running

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wish For Change....

i built a nice cottage
by the beach
i put some wooden chairs
and a bamboo bed

there are glasses there
and a pitcher for drinking
water

i have a well and a rope and
a bucket
which you can use for free

i leave the gate open
the doors too
the roof is wide and
the rain will not get
you wet

i wish for trust and leave
the place for everyone's use

the day after, the glasses
are broken
the rope cut, trash thrown into
the well
and water becomes unpotable

the bamboo bed destroyed
the and the wooden chairs too

how destructive could you all be?
when you could have used it for free?

what worm lives in your brains?
what virus in your nerves?

but i do not wish you death
for i still hope you all change...
A Wish For The Couple Who Want To Be Wed

here i am waiting for the couple who want to be wed.
I will be the one to marry them.

I like to tell them that I am not God
and what i unite today, may not last forever.

Here i am waiting for quite a time.
I have a wish that they won't come.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wish Inside The Plane To My Way Back Home

there is a reason why
i sleep
in that one hour plane
flight
back home

i have (perhaps)
a wish that if i die
it can nothing be but
a waking up....

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman Long Battered By A Husband

the mirror
shows what it is to be indifferent
like a journalist
ture to his calling it reflects
what you
show as faithfully as
a woman long battered by
a husband

it is you who is shocked
as the mirror
without speaking a word
continues its work.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman Named Rose

many believe in her
her courage and durability
she is like a strong wood
and she has become an instrument
for hitting those who are weak and
faithless and hopeless and
brokenhearted

i like her truly
her threshold for tolerance
i consider as beyond mine
she knows how to keep pain and not show it
she, is, i think, stronger than steel
even platinum
her flexibility is duly noted
in fact, she is also elastic as rubber
and too fluid as
liquid occupying every empty
space
finding her own level
or i can always compare her
to air
occupying almost everything

she is also a mystery
Rose, such a beauty,
exuding the scent of a lovely day
on a chain of rosy colors
Red Rose

until one day,
when everything glorious about her was said
all plaques of appreciation given
all trophies of her victories for such virtues shown
all medals for her valor handed

until one day
(and this i cannot explain
till now)
until one day
while on a cruise ship at the Atlantic
she jumped into the raging ocean confronting the storm

and then she was forever
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman Slighted

to feign motion
she goes into the clothesline
to hang her soul
her hips sway
her breasts baring

she stares at the other
side of the fence

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman Trapped In A Man's Body

ariel suggests that a poem should be written about a woman trapped in a man's body, and sometimes one may spell this kind of trap as a tragedy as mostly projected by those that claim that the happiest gay is a dead one. I suppose it is just a matter of how one sees the best that happens when one is there. A trap can be a cage, and to some a cage is a safe home for the bird who does not bother taking the risk of flying anymore. A woman loves a man, and try thinking Ariel, how happy would a woman be staying inside a man's body?

she makes love to him day and night long.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman Trapped In A Man's Body (2)

ariel suggests that a poem should be written about a woman trapped in a man's body, and sometimes one may spell this kind of trap as a tragedy as mostly projected by those that claim that the happiest gay is a dead one. I suppose it is just a matter of how one sees the best that happens when one is there. A trap can be a cage, and to some a cage is a safe home for the bird who does not bother taking the risk of flying anymore. A woman loves a man, and try thinking Ariel, how happy would a woman be staying inside a man's body?

he makes love to her day and night long. and she caresses him without any tong.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman With A Mask

Asks for your name
Don’t give any

She has no right
For true names

She has no face.
She is nameless.

Quid pro quo.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman With Two Navels

she may exist and i may see her
and her two navels,
it does not matter,
what matters most is the doughnut
that empty part,
that looks like a hole
i can always
complete it.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Woman's Nipple

a woman's breast is exposed
the nipple, pinkish and firm like a pointillist finger

looks over the window of the dress, innocent and
wondering, what the world out there is all about

why it is hidden? it is desire - why is it suppressed?
the eyes of the woman with long curly and soft

hair are so inviting, it says welcome, we have been here
before you came, we have been searching for you

for you are lost, like a ship without an anchor in the sea
of love, in the storms of your lust, in the calmness after

an outburst of desire, -why do you come with shyness?
the nipple smiles, and remembers how is it to be sucked

till it brings forth milk for all thirsty babies of this world
men who miss life, men who love to live because the

pink nipple is hungry for their hands, because the eyes of
the woman are always inviting, because love is still a

possibility, because lust is its initiative, because death is
imposed by the system, that refuses to understand and give.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wondering Soul

the two elephants
are dancing the gangnam
while the strict trainor
with a big stick
watches with a clear eye

after which
the audience crowding
the small
theatre renders its
big applause

sometimes i wonder if
these elephants really like
to dance

RIC S. BASTASA
A Word Is Just A Word

a word is just a word
and it may come from somewhere else
from a very far place
because a word like a bird has wings
and it has feet and it may hover
on my hair and make a nest there

like this poem
and that poem of pain and that poem of joy
and that poem that you have read and
made me the man crying in pain inside those lines

for a poem is just a poem
and it may come from somewhere else
from a very far, far place
about someone else
because a poem is like a bird with wings
with feet and with feathers and it may hover
inside my heart
and make a house there
and i am there too
emphatizing.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Work Of Fiction

reviewing the past pages of life
you find out that most of the chapters are sad
the characters are actually confused
they are not certain what shall happen to them
at the conclusive page
you have subjected them to all doubts
in such a suspended animation
and they are attuned to your unpredictability
some of them do not expect much
they know your temperament
and the patterns are like the foldings
of a brain
like a labyrinth of one misinterpretation
to another

the characters understand you
all they ask is that you live and even if they
all die at the end
they implore thA Work Of Fictionat you lengthen this
novel of life
because even if they are just your
works of fiction
in truth
they all love you

RIC S. BASTASA
A World A Universe

to the pebbles below the fish
and the bubbles
the fish is the only
meaning of their existence
its scales are the suns
its tails meteors
its eyes the gods
and fins the winds

the bowl is the emptiness
the water surrounding is the fullness

to all of them
the world is perfect
their eternity is only
this moment

RIC S. BASTASA
A World Ending Upon One's Death...

ey all remember their dead,

ey make landmarks of places they've been to

ey make journals to keep forever what happened when they were still alive

ey take pictures preserve them frame them and hang them in the walls of their libraries and living rooms old faces, beautiful bodies in their dresses of their own times and suits and shoes,
in truth no one likes to remember the world ends when one dies somehow

RIC S. BASTASA
A World Forlorn

i open the window
and cold air gets in
the world is still gray
eagerly the birds sing
for the birth of
a brand new day
the leaves hum and
the treetops like hands
open

i stand by the window
wishing for wings
so i can fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
A World Of Our Own...

there are other ways
many ways in fact
to create worlds,

some do it in hiding
the world is a corner
a nook of few clutters

some make another ocean
inside their cupped hands

when i talk to myself
when everyone else leaves

for their own homes
on delicate whispers of the
heart

i have too
a world of words
my own
home

on some but few
syllables...

RIC S. BASTASA
A World Of Scorpions

scorpions are everywhere
if you only know what i mean, sir
the world if you only understand
how is it to be real & human
is made of invisible pincers
and silent dignified sufferers.

RIC S. BASTASA
A World Revolving Around Your Hands.....

one day
a moment arrives
sounding like a
total stranger

it is ready with
a back pack
for you

that moment tells you
this is not your world

look at the bruises in
your face
the wounds on your feet
that do not heal
the falling hair
stinking odor of the
fluids from your ear

then it will tell you
what to do

that there is a process
of release
which will be painful
but only for a while

you ask
what is the payment?
at whose expense?
the consequences and risks

that moment turns its face
away
humiliated about your
questions

it is bizarre
but many have succumbed
and fallen
to the trap of the moment

you said at the last moment
thank you
it is uncertain
and it is not worth it

when that moment leaves
you affirm a world
it is still revolving around
your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
A World View From The Wounded And The Oppressed

i have a stone
in my hand
i do not have to polish it
since i have to throw it against the world

The world is a big face
The stone is thrown straight to its pair of eyes
That is why it is blind

it is deaf
and i do not have to throw another stone
to perfect
its indifference

RIC S. BASTASA
A Worm Edging Throug A Leaf

there is no hurry
really
for the worm to eat
his way through
the place it lives
temporarily

for soon
things will change
the world
shall give it wings

RIC S. BASTASA
A Wound On His Forehead

he scratched it accidentally
perhaps when he was asleep
as he was wont
to raise his arms on his forehead,

and with uncut nails
he caused a wound therein
infected by his carelessness
his hand touching
barely almost anything dirty

he looks at himself on the mirror
studying
the gaping wound like an
eye staring back at him
asking

why should a man raise his hands
even when asleep?

and why should he wound himself
unnecessarily?

why does he not care about
the possibility of the complexity of an infection
that may even
cause his death?

is this the kind of surrender
he had dreamed of inside his dream?

his way of finally giving up life
since it left him with nothing to offer?

he looks at himself closely
now, he becomes a strange man staring at
another man he thought
he knew too well.
A Yawn

Sees a yawn
Gets infected
With the yawn
And a yawn
Too by itself
Then it tries to
Sleep to
Get some sleep to
Count the ships
And the sheep
A very tired poem
Yawns
But never sleeps
a tired poem
No more it is simply
A poem
Sleepless
True to
Its nature.

RIC S. BASTASA
A Yes For An Answer

things happened so fast
she says death is preposterous

a friend was drunk from a
reunion
and drove his car back home
alone

his body stiffened
he was dead last night

and no one found him
the police came late

dead is fast and furious and
flattering

he courted it and voila
he got yes for an answer

RIC S. BASTASA
to write is to recall
what cannot be found

you keep on trying
there must be a real capture
of what slipped

it is like fishing and
what you fish is not fish
and what you are riding
is not even a boat
and you float there but
there is no water

to write is to be filled
with contradictions
meeting the ironies of your
life and shaking their hands
as though you are ready
to have friends again in that
room where lights are dim
where candles are restrained
with what and how much light
to give

to write is to go back to that
thatched roofed cottage long
abandoned and as you open the
door you hear the creaking sound
of your past who appears as
a young child waking his eyes
from sleep, stretching his hands
and looking for mother....

RIC S. BASTASA
A. Pope

YOU got your past world
a language of your own
to copy of which i have not
the slightest intention
They all call you a great man
that is something
i must be dumb that
i cannot understand

I have a language of my own
a voice that constantly
sings my own song
at night i keep it toned down
in my heart
there is no frown.

RIC S. BASTASA
A.K.A. Mario

before he finally left
he came to the house finding me alone and busy with words

the usual work on words
that makes me
bread,

he did not say much
as usual he is the silent mario of the class

many thought
he is at peace, i told me he is not actually and so i tell his wife

mario is confused, like some entangled seaweeds
where no fish can penetrate and stay or bring something

mario died two days ago
thinking that i am the happiest man alive

i think so, i must think so, otherwise
mario shall know, otherwise, he would have live a little longer

mario feels this sense of abandonment
like a port without boats and seagulls like a fish without a fish

he died
and that is enough to tell us what he believes in

he felt something so disturbing
he did not mind

before he finally left
he thought that i am the happiest man alive

and now, i must promise myself that.

RIC S. BASTASA
A.S.1

while waiting you
make a poem dedicating
it to patience since
you cannot curse the one
who is always late for
your appointment
and then when she arrives
you close your ears
for all the
usual excuses

RIC S. BASTASA
i have not put
the dot yet in my
life's
composition
words are not
final and so
i simply put
the comma and
the hyphen
sometimes the
dash and
then the slash
perhaps when
i die
i give you the
honor
to put
the period
add nothing then
i have enough
of me

RIC S. BASTASA
when i was
sixteen
i tried to hold
a cigarette and
smoke it

i was in a dark
alley
with you and
you held my hand
seize my cigarette
and throw it
away

it was raining
and it was cold

you said a lot
of words
telling me that
i am your
under your
control

since then
you know what
is my wish
for you

i have always loved
freedom
i have always liked
to live alone

if you were alive
now
you could have seen
this misery
i know not how
to live

RIC S. BASTASA
A+

you work for hard
for an A+
and naturally
you take pride
in finally
getting it,

that's honor
deserved.

congratulations.

RIC S. BASTASA
we speak
they hear
and sometimes
what we speak which
they hear
is not actually us.

the wise man
does not listen much
knowing that what is
spoken is sometimes
not really us.

in anger, in utter
disappointment
in times of the storms
and fire and
quakes,
that spur of the moment
words are spoken
louder than the storm
which we do not
really mean. Not us.

it is the silence that
mends it all. What was
not spoken
remains to be the truth.

in fear and hunger.
in love and much of it.

RIC S. BASTASA
if you have been doing those which you ought not to do vacate. Play ball. Go outside. You miss the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
climb a mountain
do not look back
sail the sea do not sail back, fly and fly do not look back
to have it most in this journey just cling to the very moment. The present stone, this cliff, this seashell, these wings. Do not look back

Did not the wife of Lot turn into salt?

RIC S. BASTASA
Abc's Of Loving

When one loves,
s/he
must never love from the head,
or heart:
for both can corrupt the state
with emotions.
instead one should,
love from the tongue,
it is unbiased.

RIC S. BASTASA
Abdurahman

i was looking
for you
and i wonder why
you have
stopped singing

you must have
forgotten
how birds sing
during the rain

how fish swim
during those storms
how the sun
keeps on burning
just like the stars
twinkling
despite an end

RIC S. BASTASA
Abel Korzeniowski......

frozen in a dance position
history shall be perplexed.

soon the geologists shall
find the answer as to what love really is.

the rippling notes of an old love
go to the antarctic.

the lovers simply want everything to stop there
at that point hoping that love does not change.

seemingly fidelity is likened to a footprint
of the dinosaur preserved by a catastrophe

that struck everyone and yet muted and shall
forever say nothing about it....

RIC S. BASTASA
Abgebrüht

the harsh times
sometimes makes us hard
so hard that we become calluses
towards the sufferings
of our others
never mind our own
we have been too insensitive, indifferent,
unsympathetic to ourselves
we get used to everything
that hurt us, they become everyday encounters
like day and night, like washing our faces
like morning and evening brushings of our teeth
callous we become this attitude
indurated parts of ourselves
thicker skins exposed to so much friction
not unbearable
not invisible but unbreakable, impenetrable,
and always challenging

you and i.

RIC S. BASTASA
Abi Nimo Og Sikat Ka Na Kay Usa Ka Na Ka Magbabalak

ayaw pailad sa imong kaugalingon
kon moingon sila nga ikaw sikat
dako kana nga bakak

abi nimo og sikat ka na
kay kuno ikaw
usa na ka magbabalak sama kanila
momata inig kaadlawon
aron kunohay mamati

sa mga tingog sa awit sa mga gangis
nga gihimo sa ginoo alang lang
kanimo

abi nimo og usa ka na ka halangdon
nga tawo nga pagapurongpurongan
sa usa ka korona sa kahayag
nga gimugna alang lang
sa bulan ug mga bitoon
ug sa adlaw ug usab
kanimo

sayop ka
usa ka lamang ka magbabalak
tighawid sa lapis
tigtuplok sa mga letra
sa imong computer
tigpatik sa dugay na nga ania dinhi
tig-aninaw sa mga karaan nga butang
nga dili imo kay kini sila nauna na
sa ilang tagsa-tagsa ka yugto
ug panahon sa ilang kinabuhi
ug pagkamatay

nagtikawtikaw na samtang wala pa gani
matawo ang imong mga lolo og lola
samtang wala pa gani
nangulag ang imong papa ug mama

sayop ka
usa ka lamang ka tingog
nga dili nila madungog ug kon madungog man
dili gani nila paminawon kay
daghan pa kaayo silag buluhaton

ang pagtanom sa mga lagotmon
ang pagpangisda ug pagpamaling
ang pagpamasol
ang pagtikad sa yuta
ang paglakawlakaw aron pagpangita

sa mga liso nga itusok sa abono nga yuta
ang pagsalom sa mga suba
ang pag-abli sa mga nasirad-an
ang pagtuktok sa mga pultahan
ang pagtukod sa mga pinuy-anan
ang pagsunog sa mga kagulangan
ang pagputol sa mga kahoy
ug pagtanom na usab niini
ang paghimo sa mga tulay
ang pagtumpag sa mga pangpang
ang paghimo og mga pader
aron usab
sila mabuhi sama kanimo

sayop ka
usa ka lamang ka tingog
nga molabay
usa ka lamang ka hapdos
nga dili matambalan
usa ka lamang ka pangagho
nga motapad sa bungbong
ug dayon mawala kay gidagit
sa bugnaw nga hangin

dili ka sikat
tan-awa ang imong kaugalingon
nga migusbat ang imong gisi nga karsones
ang imong bulingon nga polo shirt
ang imong gidalikdik nga dughan
ang imong kuko nga wala maputol og bulingon
mora ka og iring nga nagpunay
og kawras sa haligi nga dili
maparog ug sa katapusan
mokatkat paingon sa atop
sa udtong tutok molantaw
sa mga bungtod ug mga panganod
ug igo lang nga miingon

pagkamingaw diay
pagkaalimuot sa akong kahimtang

RIC S. BASTASA
Aboard The Domestic Airline Bound For Home....

at the height of
fifty thousand feet where
the island looks like
a mole on the
cheek

you begin to realized
everything in life
is so uncertain

dead can happen anytime
anywhere

then you hate
thinking about everything
that much

RIC S. BASTASA
About A Friend Named A. K.

if you only knew where he lives
a dark corner of this hospital ward
his hands and feet jacketed at times
during times of seizures and fits

if you could have only seen how he
sits for hours on the floor beside an iron door
how the wind that touches him pains him
like his skin is removed from this flesh and bone
if you could have heard his screams and then
when nurses rush to him to give his dose
of sanity back through the usual injections

if you could have only felt the beatings of his
heart and his tremors running through all his fingers

if you could have only seen him on lucid intervals
how he scribbled his lost lines through his laptop
spending hours recalling what should have been forgotten

my dear friend if you have the heart of someone human
you could not have called him moron
for whatever he is, he is part of you and me and us and this world

if you have seen him all alone trying to meet his soul halfway
between a murmur and an incantation

you could not have said such a very cruel word

RIC S. BASTASA
About A Lady

she writes, with all disappointments
her chin on her elbow her feet right on her ears
plans are falling out like buds that did not make it to become flowers
what is so simple has shattered into a complication
out of control, her life has become, she stops for a while,
she needs this moment
she poses the question: what went wrong along the way?
love was there
compassion was abundant
he sends her a note through her email: darling, don't worry
my love shall see you through
she is restless, jobless, she tries everything to please
what boredom was there

life is also a matter of luck, she concludes
she writes him, forget it, let me do it without you
without myself in this
i will let life do its share,
luck to manifest. I will wait, she says, I can always wait.

This time, i will do nothing.
Let the chair come to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are telling me about a stone
who refuses to admit anyone simply
because it has no door, no room and no space
for someone like you,

you who does not even know what knowing someone
really means. you ask the stone for a space and it says no
and you tell the stone that it has a space
where the leaf and a dropp of water live

the stone says no, and you insist because of the state you are in
you are dying and you need a place
perhaps a burial space where you may finally lay yourself
to rest, but the stone still says no, telling you that it has
no feelings that for centuries it has always been its nature

stony, stony silence, stony stares, unfeeling, that in its
house of stone, there exists no word for sympathy
that it is simply living up to the demands of its true nature
its tradition, and you finally understand, yet somehow you
tell the stone about what it does not know

inside it there is this leaf with dew, there is dropp of water
coming from the rain, that until now it has not fully known,
that inside its stony silence, there is still this song
that it has a heart that it keeps denying.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Alma

and then there was Alma,
a name which means soul.
she tells the story about her
son, how she gave birth
at such an early age, meeting
this chinese man,
who offered her a nice world
who promised her heaven.

it turned sour. The chinese man
left her. But she managed to
eme out a living for her son.
She raised him.

She files an annulment
two years and still undecided.

When the annulment is granted
she promises to invite us to her party
The motif? Wear the color of freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
About An Open Window

let me now talk about an open window
the one that lives in that room
where the window is open
be it day or in the dangers of the night
its blackness threatening
it was even rumored that a monster flies
and eats the sweet flesh of women

is a woman, oh, she is as beautiful as
the north star that guides lost pilgrims
oh, she is as sweet as the honey of cultured
bees, she as as tender as treated beef,

her window is always open
waiting for the full moon
to make love to her once a month
when she too is on heat
like a wild, wild beast.

that monster brings the moon
and beastly, the beautiful woman knows what love
is there
by the window that is always kept open
because it fears no one
her lover
the beast, none other.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Anthony's Poem

quite a gem
gold in luster
gleaming
amidst the mud
the sun sighs
saying: how can
they ever not notice
the beauty of his poems?

what a gem i too said,
and then i feel so light like a tiny white bird
and i fly near the nugget
of wisdom
so smooth is the color so like the golden sheen of the sun

the peace and quiet
the contemplation i still remember
beside a pond
underneath a lotus flower
is a charming koi.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Antonio's Infection

antonio's infection comes
from my own infection, and
so is candice's and
hazelen's infection of the
beautiful mind,

ahh, poetry, the beauty
of each word uttered in silence

each word be it sliding in the
snow and nesting in the
snowflakes

be it in the rustling of the
leaves in the tropical
sun of our islands

be it anywhere, the sound of
each word like a hush from
someone who is far away
and yet so near in the
touch of your sighs

ahh. poetry, the infection
of your sound and
rhythm

filling us softly with clouds
and stars and moon and
sun

upon the loneliness of our
plains and mountains

like a wind, a very cool wind
inside our hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Being Extrasensitive The Places Around You...

I SEE sparrows gathering
little pieces of leaves and
light husks
for the building of
their nests

it is time for laying eggs
this summer
when the winds are a little bit
colder

i see leaves falling
the trees getting bald
becoming like new fingers
under the sky

i see grass spreading
slowly turning brown
like muscovado sugar

i see mountains
where clouds hang like
smoke from pipes
of old men waiting
still on there
veranda

i see roads where old cars pass
leaving an eddy
of dusts
slowly settling down again
like a light brown mantle
of the breakfast
table

you should have seen me
how foolishly have i waited for you
in this old house
where we first met
many years ago

you should have felt how a poem like this
can be written

because waiting can be an agony
and without being extra sensitive to all that i see beyond all these longings

the horizon over there
the mountains and grass and roads running without ending
and eddies of dust of old cars that conk and honk
and winds that manipulate the helplessness of leaves
as cold as feelings of being
ruthlessly abandoned

without all these
life could have long surrendered
could have long ceased
like a calendar
on the last day of Christmas

RIC S. BASTASA
About Being Ordinary

There is nothing
Exceptional,
Nothing special
With me,

I am just ordinary

In decency, in status,
I am what you call
the average man,
Of no special rank
Of lesser significance

I am found
In the most common
Places, undistinguished
in the most common men
in the market, in the mall,
in the park, in the beach,
in the streets, in the church,
in anywhere in everywhere

I am what you see
As plain, the usual
The most customary
that you meet &
easily forget

I am the
Normal person that you
Shake hands with,
whose name
does not linger
long enough in your mind

I live in the many
I am the numerous
I breathe the common Air
I drink the water
For everyone
I smell like the
Sweat of the rest
I look like everyone
Because I am the average
Because I am the ordinary

But without me
You will never be
Special

In truth it is us
The common ones
In this whole world
The background
These ordinary
Occurrences and
Resemblances

That make you
Exist,

We, the average,
We, the people of this world
We are the ordinary
And you cannot
Disregard us,

We are the many,
And we can always
Disregard you
If we really want to

we make you
and we can always unmake you

mister special..

RIC S. BASTASA
About Bob

when you stole father's house
we did not mind
nothing will be lost
you just took your ride
gallop in the air
and then when the excitement
was over
you returned it somehow
without questions
we accepted the
self that you are

now you are the summit of your
success
perhaps that ride of the horse
gave you that feeling
that you are bound for the
greatness in
the clouds where you now
live

we never regret
you thief
you stole the dreams
and lived it

that horse died
dreams don't

RIC S. BASTASA
About Cassandra...

'She evokes the same awe, horror and pity as do schizophrenics', an observer has noted, 'who often combine deep, true insight with utter helplessness, and who retreat into madness.'

facing the stones that rise into figures of her own horror she goes outside and asks for the help of someone who must believe her there is no one and that is the main agony of her days turning instantly into nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Dean And David

two best of the minds
in the university
taken away by the darkness
of the state

cruelty to political beliefs
intolerance to a different view
that is what happens

they were brothers
sons of a judge of the town
their father is a prosecutor

Dean was buried on the shallow
part of the bank of the
Saluyong River

David was kidnapped in Sapang Dalaga
and disappeared forever
the body not found

The fingers of justice point to
the state as culprit
yet the case was dismissed
for lack of evidence

Now, my friend
this happened to a family with means
and power

You? Son of a fisherman
Your mother is a laundrywoman
what right has you to voice out the
shortcomings of this
wickedness?

I, who, for the long years of study
has done nothing, except to kowtow
call me a coward
remind me that i may die a thousand deaths
but i am already tired
to be blamed again for the death of more
brothers in the field
in the struggle
in this revolution that arrives at nowhere

Fruitless i say.
I prefer this silence in my poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Eddie...

ed, you are 51,
and back to corporate life, and
i say, that is better now,
that go self-employed,
on a business that
sometimes fail,
i mean, with corporate lives,
busy like a salesman, hopping
from one place to another,
sleeping in different motels
with your pen and ledger
and sending reports through
your laptops,
the sin of self-pity and
idleness cannot be there
that is what i mean,
i do not mean those naked
ladies dancing on poles
those margaritas and
bloody mary 's,
the sin of uselessness,
the way others have quit
marking boundaries and
forgetting about maps
and directions.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Emily.....

Emily is beautiful.
it is not her dress,
ever, it is not her
eyes
either, not even her
gnarled hands,
her body is bent,
is it not definitely
the source of her
beauty that we admire
for years
and centuries, even when

she was gone,

oh, i tell you

it was her decency
her propriety throughout
her life,

oh, she was in pain
in all those restraints,

her cleanliness of
spirit...
yes, definitely,

definitely...

RIC S. BASTASA
About Every Morning Writings....

so many things need to be written
every morning
you know all about them
and i do not have to even tell you
that all these are more
about sorrow

do i have to ask you
what happens to me when i do not write them?

i am trying to fathom your silence
we have been there
with all our fears

i do not have to tell you more

and if i were to tell you about all these
must i tell you
what shall happen about us?

the future is mean
the skies are cloudy
dark with the the warning of rain

shall i tell more about us?

forgive me
for i am tired
fed up but life's empty promises
hungry for more
failures
that serve as food
in our
everyday
table.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Grandmother...

at 90
grandma was left alone
sometime in
1970
she lost her mind
walked down the stairs of the house
and fell
on the big rattan basket fit
for the
coconuts
when she died there was
a grand funeral
her niche was covered by
daisies
her picture when she was young
was best
the neighborhood was so
impressed

RIC S. BASTASA
About Him....

he never danced
even when he was younger then
though he wanted to
really
but all his feet are bound

he cannot speak fully well
and demonstrate his points through his arms
and hands
because all of him is
bound
chained

his neck has a rope that if he objects
shall be tightened

do not think that he has bad manners
when he screams upon hearing the sounds of iron
chains dragging a body
even in a dream

do not speak of ropes to him
he will run away

you were not there when he died
when the final prayers were said

RIC S. BASTASA
About How Love Cures A Broken Heart

Sometimes you lose yourself
In the middle of a
Talk with friends who wish
To come to your
Succor

They’d say they are concerned
And show their love on that drink
And stories about other people's lives
As examples of bitterness turning
Otherwise
About how love cures a broken heart
About how one must rise to a fall
And be whole again
Courageous to face the storm and
The usual trials

You oblige with attentive listening
But for how long? you measure it
With the cups of coffee, saucers of
Peanuts, beef loaves, barbecue sticks,
And those long-necked bottles of gin
And slices of lemons and pinches of salt

And then all of them are drunk except you
Who still thinks
Sober still, clear as cellophane bag,
You begin to travel alone in your thoughts
Far far away
Trying to reach still the one you love
But who never loves you still.

RIC S. BASTASA
i have discarded
the stair. It has been
a long time.
No stairs then, and
no stairs ever.
this is a flat world.
mountains are
but illusions.
seas are realities
flat as flat as flat.
so there is an edge.
something to end.
an end to darkness.
an end to dawn.
for this is the essence
of being flat and
straight.
an edge, a cliff, a
stop.

and this is where
we take our rest.
overlooking beyond
us. we imagine.
they too are watching.
eager, excited about
how we are.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Jaclyn....

what you did
jaclyn
was perfect

you rushed
your hunger with
fried fish balls
fitting all
inside your
mouth as though
there is no
more tomorrow

under the rain
your hair was wet
all over
yet there was
no trembling

no one
notices the tears
flowing

you look at the
world
tumbling down

your house in pieces
a jigsaw

which your children
will never know
how to put back

the big flood has
come
everything is carried
away
somehow, the rest of the people never see...

RIC S. BASTASA
About Joy And Beauty

the ugly creatures come
crawling beneath our feet
we feel
their tiny hundred hands
above the skins
of our existence
we are tickled for a time
and then we shoo them away
we used to feed them
but we change
too
we are what we are
despite
we are the attempts about
why joy and
beauty must be
we choose
and hold....

RIC S. BASTASA
About Lady Luck

last night
when the hours begin to bore all of us
in our heads
like worms i told my students about
Lady Luck, oh
she is beautiful and scented and
soft skinned and
black haired with eyes as clear as
a pond and
hands as comforting as the voice
of mother
that when she comes she enters the door
of your house
without knocking and proceeds to your
room to bring you
the big news of your life and she hands you
success and money and fame
even honor and
a good name

and they were all amazed
their mouths wide gaping and asking for more
about her

Lady Luck
and they all love her and all the boring hours went away
like hot water seeping on
the dusty carpet of the room

what they do not know is this:
i never like her and she never like me too
and that i once told her
go away i do not need you
and i cannot love you

my heart is heavy of course
paddling my way towards an island
a castle separated by a moat
using my own hands
my own
faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Last Night

last night
another lie was born
behind a blank wall
some words escape
from the heart

you believe it
as i pretend again
about who i am

the point is
you love what i say
and you keep on believing
as i kiss you
as i hold your body unto mine
as i pour
the liquid being that
i am

i guess life is like that
to love
lies assume no responsibility
for love
keeps on believing
what is not true
it is the the sweetness of desire
that keeps on
hugging

till then
when we meet again
my eyes shall speak
to your eyes
my mouth is shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Last Night

the boat was small
the glass window is round
like an eyeball
looking out to the
vast sea

it is dark

the black shark is a shadow
inside the dark
blueness of the
night water

there is a storm

a man stands
waiting for what comes next
he must jump
to the water
if needs be

the big eye of the fish
stares at him
with fury

that night
they were eye to eye
and then the fish
passes away
opposite the boat's
direction

RIC S. BASTASA
About Last Night...

i've seen love
it is beautiful

my whole life
soon revolves
around it,

it goes around me
and i am carried away

like a dream

it is so beautiful
i do not wish to
wake up,

it stops

i fall out
i wake up

but i am not
crying anymore

i know love
it moves away

i cannot stop it
from leaving

i stand up
and too
walk away
just like love
itself

i've seen love
as a bird
flying away from me
i walk the road
under those trees

i have no complaint
it's been that way

i've learned to live love
along the road
on a sunny day

it was about
last night

i still think about it
miles away
today

i've known love
and that is enough for me

i don't keep it
it goes away

i write about love
just that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Last Night.....

i finally went to bed at
1: 30 a.m. and when i undress myself
as i usually do,
when i turned off the light
you turned it on
in a little while you while naked
went up bed
and walked towards the door
opened it and then closed it again
as though darkness
when the lights were turned off again
was a big mouth
eating the whole of your naked body
and then
gone

i wished i were asleep.
but it wasn't
because the following morning
the whole room was as silent as
clothes on the floor
without a body.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Li Po In Today's Featured Poem

it is indeed a beautiful view for
Li Po

beside a cloud
fronting a mountain

staring at each other
without tiring

what a beauty and i ask myself why
and finally i get this answer

from my heart it says
it is beautiful because of his own loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Lies

Because the buses were stopped in front of the railing
because the dolls in the lighted shop windows gesticulated
because the girl with the bicycle lingered outside the drugstore
because the carpenter broke the glass door of the beer hall
because the child was alone in the elevator with a stolen pencil
because the dogs had abandoned the seaside villas
because the rusty grater had been covered over by nettles
because the sky was ashen with a red fish
because the horse on the mountain was more alone than the star
because these and those both were hunted
because of this, only because of this, I told you lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Love Untold

there is something beautiful in its being
kept like a secret

it glows like a firefly at night
and its warmth is felt by the coldness
against the dark sky

the tree so indifferent
is sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
the last day was crucial
it was excruciating,
i saw papa kicked mama
and mama fell down the
path
she was moving out from home
she could not take him anymore
everything was over
practically, , ,

the dogs barked
hating papa
they perhaps thought
he was a total stranger in
his own house
and they do not recognize
him as their
master anymore...

i walked away from home
on that crucial day
i did not want to know
what happened after

i heard papa died in
all pain

you told me that there was
that inevitable conclusion
that papa never loved mama
despite their five children
and 50 years...

i never believed you
i decided never to believe you
i believed that face in the mirror
half is papa's
the other half is mama's
how can there be two of them in me
if they never really loved each other?
they were sick and tired
those were the reasons
they forgot
that was the cause...

RIC S. BASTASA
About Manny...

Manny does not remember as a poet when he left this small town 24 years ago because he felt so lost and he is looking for what self he thinks he had,

i was then a budding word, my petals are ugly and my stem is a worm the roots crawl like an invented monster

what he thinks i was was that i was a monk without a beard a non-believer of the bishop and a critic of Lauritz

he never bothered to look at my room as i have kept it like a pigsty it smells like hell and all he thinks is that heaven is here

RIC S. BASTASA
this is all about me
my name is Handa Awit
it means Ready Sing
it is a request
but it can be a command
for people to sing
for us
for everyone to stop talking
and sing
there is something in the song
that makes us joyous
even in grief the song will always
be uplifting
a song of love
a praise for God
a song for unity
a song for liberty

my hair is black and long
and is blown by the winds of change
it is only one of my eyes that see
for one is closed in
a dream
my thick lips open for this song
of freedom
not from the bondage of war
for there is none
but from the bondage of our
worries
away from the land of depression
the cities of noise
the bumpy roads of our
differences
i am brown like the earth
i am the shade of the west and the east
my name is an invitation
for us to sing
a song of love
of freedom of harmony
About Money

you know that already
money is a good slave but
definitely a cruel master and

those that hold money
hold power and

that sex is only an additive
while security is only the side effect
of money.

RIC S. BASTASA
About My Concealed Feelings In Words

there is something
i like about
words

you who never love
me you who never expect
that i can
love you

i draw birds on the air
and you listen
they hover on your hair
and you glisten

i put stars on my tongue
and they twinkle
and you are amazed by
the light that
i emit

you never notice how huge
love can be
as huge as a cruise ship
beside a port
where passengers embark
without you spotting
me in red.

RIC S. BASTASA
About My Wife

what i lack she fills it
and when she's full with what i lack
she comes back
and gives me that smile that reminds me
of a flower everlasting
a life eternal
a love that stays put even when
the floors are trembling
due to that emptiness between
those dirt that insert
between one floor slab to another
she walks carefully on those shiny floors
not to disturb
the shaky foundation

she keeps the word
forever in her bosom
and what you can find there are only
the memories
those good ones
the bad ones
long discarded into the bins
burned

she knows what must be forgiven and forgotten
to keep the fires of love burning

and when the fire is gone when every nook in the room is cold
she hides inside my arms

like some kitten to the embrace of the cat
on those dark and very cold nights

RIC S. BASTASA
About Neneng.....

she is right
there is bliss
watching the rain
finishing
its pour by the window
in that small house
in a far away village
away from the
bustle of the city...

RIC S. BASTASA
About Nico....

his hair used to
be afro

he is original
and tactless

upon a square
face lies a square life

no nonsense
no covers

plain is plain
spade is spade
no diamonds
you do not like
forever...

nothing progresses
in you actually
an old car is still
what you are using
not much money you say
works at harrahs
as a waited still
thriving on tips

bought an old house
in a bad neighborhood

you promise to leave
always wishing to leave
but never leaving
sans the capacity to
really be yourself
after all those years

nothing's changed
i am glad you are still honest.....

RIC S. BASTASA
About Nothing At All

imagine an empty space

your hands have nothing to hold

you float and there is nothing to land

a ship without sea
no port visible
no anchor
no lighthouse

there is no storm
neither calm nor chaos

there is no poetry since
there are no words
no thoughts
no spark
no inspiration

there is no house

there is
a vast emptiness
nothing follows.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Nothing At All (2)

imagine an
empty space

your hands
have nothing
to hold

you float and
there is nothing
to land

a ship without
sea
no port visible
no anchor
no lighthouse

there is no storm
neither calm nor
chaos

there is no
poetry since
there are no
words
no thoughts
no spark
no inspiration

there is no house

there is
a vast emptiness
nothing follows.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Nothing At All, Yes.

you wake up
to find a cure to restlessness
perhaps, dreams become real
when you are awake
you look outside
everything are shadows of trees
dark, cold, abandoned,
you wish to open a window
but it will be much colder
you go back to your room
despite every blanket
and pillow
the cold fearful feeling is still there
you are down
you head is a floating ship
without an engine
the light from the ceiling hurts your skin
you fear for more
and you ask yourself analytically

what is this all about? what is this all about?
you pause
to know later
about a delayed neurological response

'actually, it is about nothing at all'
that voice is objective
it speaks the truth
it is inside you but it seems to be not a part of you

heavy, cold, restless, -and it is all about nothing at all.
welcome to the absurd,
it too is real, and those who do not have it
thinks, you need someone to love.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Nothing....

we are getting older
though we decide to sleep
late at night
we still wake up early

you rub your eyes and ask
'what time is it? ' and i turn
on the light look at the watch
and say 'It is still 3 in the
morning'

time is telling us that
we have changed,
that we have been anxious
for what comes next
time rushes us for nothing
and we have become too curious
'what for? ', we want to end
time, we want to go, we want
to be beyond this sense
of going and leaving,

time is silent. Living inside
the clock, it is indifferent,
as we keep on waiting and waiting,
anxiously about nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Other People’s Lives

About other people’s lives

Rizal the hero must have chewed cud
And found the grass bitter, or the mongo
Beans too hard for his taste. Perhaps he
Did not know the exact number of
His buttons when he walked towards
Luneta and face his accusers
And meet his death. Perhaps he did not
Like the light from his lamp when
He wrote a poem. I do not really know
More about his persona life.
Did he like cheese? Did he take a deep
Breath and spit on the dogs along
The road? He poured no tears
Onto the frying pan of this
Old country. They wrote a lot
After two or more centuries
And there were so many stories
Not really rumors but I thank
God I am no great hero.
No one writes about me
And I think I am more understood
In my own privacy.

I do not really mind about
Other people’s lives
I do not peep on my
Neighbor’s windows.
I move my own hip
And drive my own car
Slowly away from those
Crowd on the parking lots
Of the mall. I like to stay
On the side of an abandoned house
And just sit there for a while
For no reason at all.
Winds do not frisk trees I guess.
Hairs fell wherever they want.
I touch my own cheek
And bite my own lips.
God! I like it when I am here
And no one minds me.
And I mind no one too.
I like the bridge
Long enough for my
Hand to travel on my nose.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Our Family

my sister is asking me
why we cannot be
for once
united for a certain cause

why we cannot make
a single stand on
a certain issue

why we can't live
in harmony with
each other
all five of us like one
solid and
loving family

i am not a fool to
think that this world
is and will always be
in harmony with
one another

countries living in peace
without any one
oppressing another
or feeling that way

i tell her that this is just
the reality of
heaven and earth

of clay and sand
of stones and
dust

that the influx of change
will always be
there and that the feet
of humanity always tiptoe
to keep a
certain balance
to eternity

not content with that
i showed her my hand
with five fingers
of different sizes
always never
the same
and cannot point to
one unified
direction

she is always loquacious
and discontented

but
i do not
really want to be bothered again

now i like
my mouth
shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
that the younger daughter of Xenon recently has been caught on video

sex scandal of some sort that made her drug addict father crazy

and that the mother was so embarrassed that she does not want to go to the market anymore

that whole week Nena closed her door and sobbed

i am still wondering if i really like that fact, all i can say is this:

we are not supposed to intrude into the bedroom of other people

it is none of our business and so we must shift the topic:

let us talk about how we can move on with our lives

it is 2012, and there is this Mangyan calendar and it will be weird and hmmm, not really that interesting

end of the world again? shift topic, let us talk about money instead

let us talk about ourselves how about it?
About Pilar 2....

“I
soared to the highest levels of success...

only to find
when I got there
that I was empty,

did not know who I was,
and even despaired
of life itself.

I really did not have
a
face
of
my
own.”

RIC S. BASTASA
“Feel.
Fill everything to the brim.
Feel every nice feeling.
Even loneliness because
it has a purpose.

If you must cry,
let the tears flow.
That’s what they’re there for—when emotions overpower.
Cherish things,
people,
relationships.

Nothing lasts forever.”

RIC S. BASTASA
About Pilar's Daughter....

“I asked her
why she wanted
to marry a blind man
who couldn’t even
see her.

She replied: ‘Mama, you had lots of men in your life,
but they couldn’t see you.’”

RIC S. BASTASA
About Returning To The Rivers Of My Youth

i do not wait for a time
when i return to a place
only to watch a sunrise and
tell myself
that i am enjoying it to the full
recalling the first
time i
saw it

there is a time when i return
to the river
of my youth
where i will be naked
jump to it
and feel the coldness of its
water and i will tell myself
that it is all
too refreshing....

not to see you again
because i know that you will never be there

RIC S. BASTASA
About Some Wars That Still Continue Raging In Some Islands

when you asked me, father, on how to make this diversity work
for all of us who had already become impatient about peace,
i said it must be because the tower of babel still exists
here in one of our islands
where people still rely on words to thresh out their problems

and it is the same words that pulled the trigger
that opened the barrel of the sonnamagans in all of us,

there is a careful way of using words, but first that tower of babel must be bombed
pulverized as you said it before
because by doing so
what leaves us to really work to understand is the lesson of a destruction

the crumpled stones, the remaining dusts that settles in our foreheads
the open space left after
can and will always be our best teacher

when we all have nothing
that can be a good beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
About That Jealous Dog

yes, possibly
she could be
the reincarnation
of my ex-girlfriend
who died
with a broken heart
because...

ah, time was so
cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Ash From Yuri N., She Writes It

I once knew
a lady at our church
who played the piano -
Her name was Naomi...
she was quiet,
maybe insignificant...
but I knew her
(only from church) ...
when I heard one Sunday
that she had died
and had been buried
without me knowing,
I grieved for days....
that was 8 years ago...
I still sometimes
think of her,
thinking that,
in some way
she enriched my life -
I cannot remember
her piano-playing,
but I still grieve
nevertheless....

RIC S. BASTASA
mama once told me about
a woman, so beautiful and holy
that she has many tiny angels on her hair
a halo on top of her
a rose for her lips
and kind eyes like hazy moon
on her face

mama once told me that there is heaven
and all the good people are all there
that all the good food are there
all the things that i love
all the toys
and friends

i was a naughty child and i never believed her

when i have grown up
and when all the problems came like bunches of sour grapes
when all the trials arrived in batches
all those that i thought i cannot endure anymore
that was the time when i remember mama

and i realized
that there is a need to believe her
about a beautiful woman
not only with angels on her hair
but will all the stars in heaven
her connections to heaven
and powers to put all the good people in there

it is not the authentic belief
but it is the need to believe
because without it, what would the future be?

my hands for the meantime need to hold upon these
holy rails
so i may not fall and die
About The Bird With A Bleeding Heart

I was the one who taught you once about the bird with a bleeding heart.
How it raised its head, opened its eyes and stared to places beyond its reach.
It has kept its dignity in the middle of its pains.
It managed to fly back to its nest and still sang its usual songs in the morning.
At night, like you, it did not sleep, and had a good look at the stars.

It was you who was seated at the last row at the last column of the chairs of the room.
Unlike the rest, it was you who listened most.
You wore a thick, heavy tinted sunglass, and you stared to every movement
Of my eyes and lips as i was telling the story.

I had a good glance at you. You shed a tear and then you hid it in your hand.

Time flew. Swiftly.

I received the letter that you sent. You thanked me.
There is no return address, but let me tell you now as you read this poem.

This is our journey are no longer afraid to cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Boy

the door was locked
and the boy has nowhere to go
except the closet filled with
clothes
the tongue of the devil came
and devoured them all
clothes and all
his screams faded like
sunset

RIC S. BASTASA
Some are not really causes
But just symptoms
And we misdiagnose
A sickness
For a symptom
Of the real sickness

The cause
And the effect
Are often interchanged

For instance
Is poverty the cause
Of crime
Or is poverty
Only the symptom
Of it?

For instance
Is ignorance
The cause of poverty
Or is it simply
An effect of poverty?

Or is poverty
Nothing but an effect
Of ignorance?

Or is poverty
Just an effect
Of an oppression
Of the rich
Taking much
From the poor
Who gets poorer
Everyday
Because there
Are no reforms
Coming
To solve
His poverty
His ignorance
His having to commit a crime
To survive
His poverty
His ignorance
His being a crime
Of
Society itself
who never cared
And wanted him
Who never
Instituted the much
Promised reforms?

And so you doubt
The cause and effect
The effect from cause
And if you did not mind so
Well
They may always be
Interchanged
And mistaken
For the symptoms
The conditions
That always
Are
there deceiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Father

the father fell down from the second floor
broke a leg and tore his ankle
crawling his way
in the middle of the suffocating smoke
he heard the cries
of the boy
and yet the cruel tongues of the devil
snatched away what it thinks belongs
to it on such a horror
there is no peace now
the ash still want to tell the stories
of the tragedy

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Last Time

the first time is always nice
it cannot even be forgotten
it continues to drip inside the mind
it does not cease
even if you stop it
even if you wish it were not there anymore

then i ask myself
what happened to the last time?
it was there before but it is nowhere to be found now
i refuse to remember it
it broke me
into pieces....

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Moon

While in china at night on the great wall
By a hill, there he writes about the moon
His shadow his flute and his
Cup of rice wine,
Then he sings for a while
And sleeps under a sky of stars
On a blanket of soft grass,

When he immigrated
To the American city
He writes differently now
About the moon
As the companionless
wanderer

The head of a murdered man
Rolling on the floor
Uncontained by a sack
A moon

Or some kind of a fluorescent
Truant
A silver circular corpse
Infected with AIDS,
That corpuscle confusing
And ovulating

Him, spoon feeding
Her with so much longing
Date-rape drug, where she howls like
A bitch

To the moon in that great American
City

I just like it here,
The moon is still my
Moonchild
my fair lady of the night
In all shining glory
Above the mango tree,

In this little country..

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Mother

she feigns laughter
to hide her extreme grief
about the unexpected loss
of the beloved
wrapped in white cloth
without a face
just pieces of those
charred limbs

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Past Again

my elder sister
when we were still studying
keeps the money
as i burn the candles
as offerings of my sacrifices

time knows who the victors
must be
her irresponsibility
shrinks her
into a figure that we
cannot respect

but for all these
we speak no word
we keep the feelings
retaliation is not us

for whatever happens
we must remain
under the house of our
respect

RIC S. BASTASA
you take pride of our country's past revolutions
theirs was bloody and cost the lives of many fighters,
ours was peaceful, and recent
still fresh on our minds is the flying of doves letting them loose from their metal cages,
and the confetti of shred secrets from those tall buildings in the city where you live
the marching against tanks is simply matched with a white daisy from the hand of a child
and the rosary of the bespectacled nun gotten out from the convent,
you remind me about the greatness of the revolution which i have no power to object
as you are the victor

how many times shall i lie to you
that i was never there

and neither did i ever see you
or your shadow marching blindly under the scorching sun?

is there any harm when we should have told the truth even without its innate elegance?

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Poem Of The Man Who Prays That God Takes Him

well there was this man
who sits by the door and sees
the passing of the people that
he knew, some peers, some
classmates, and close friends

the funeral line passes and he
feels that he is the one missing.

someone suggests that he better
commit suicide. I am shocked.

For i know he won't do it
Lest he goes to hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Rainbow

need i explain to you
again that the rainbow is the biggest
lie of the rain,
when light gets in
and when the sun reigns
the rainbow
is nothing.
it is the rain that gives the sorrow
and to compensate
it gives you the rainbow.

i have been at its feet,
the rumored pot of gold does not exist at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Rules

y they make the rules
and they break them
and here you are
sticking strictly
to every word
of the rule

varchar ight
we were drinking
champagne and
we talk about
you

we were all laughing

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Scissor

yes there was this scissor
on the window
one night looking at the moon
asking if
somewhere it can cut
the darkness
and allow so much light
to pass through
the covered walls

the bats flew feeding on
some rotten star-apples
the moon as usual sitting on the pond
seeing its reflection
undisturbed by the ripples of the fish

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Shadows

if you want to get rid of your shadow
then kill light

do not reflect upon anything
do not move

do not be yourself in substance
be not a body but be a soul

there is no shadow
when the past is murdered

sometimes i ask
why do you fear or hate the very part of yourself?

when you pierce it with your pointing finger
there is no pain there is nothing that is pierced

live in the dark where shadows are no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Shoeman.....

i seldom
travel in your city

and this day
i park my car far from
the shoe repair shop

where i bring
a pair of old and worn shoes
for repair

i told the shoe-man
this is a white shoe
make it black

and this is leather
make it appear alive

like the skin of a
crocodile

meanwhile the
tv shop has
turned into an
eatery

the pharmacy
has become another
mall for
old and
overworked people

there are only two of
them now
one is always coughing
and the other
is obese

the third whom

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
i met a long time ago
is already dead

the old man
slouched
and i remember
the hoe

the city has
changed
people meet me
and they
do not remember

on the same
odd way
i don't remember
where i
was

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Sparrow In The Park

that there was once a sparrow
in the park
Papa and I never had the
time seeing it
we did not spend time
together
sitting in the park
viewing a sparrow in front of us
i never had the chance
asking him about the sparrow
neither did he.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Stars....

when you become a star
you cannot refuse what stars do

you shine
the trees become hands wanting to have you

you glow in the middle of a dark night
the fireflies worship you

but you too must know
that stars do not really last that long

some fall
and sad people wish upon them

and then
they are gone...

RIC S. BASTASA
definitely unprepared to understand what crimes
other people commit without regrets
and too horrible to accept
those that came and took their seats
did not stay long for what they see
and hear is that
men are still beasts
preying on their own
kind savoring the taste of
salty blood and
bland flesh
delighting upon the misfortune of others
upon their own deaths
and vanishment...

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Tears

tears from your eyes
and if i be poetic enough
to calm you and
lessen your pain
i shall tell you that
tears are pearls
and that your sob
is a song of a
woman of beauty
but you cut me short
and touch my lips
with your hands
and you tell me with
the truth of your silence
you are mourning
and my poems are
not of help.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Two Of Us.....

when we talk
we do not really look at each other
in the eye

we have so many places to hide
and we choose the words to conceal
what we really want to say and
mean

i try once to see you straight
in a moment
a flash of having to be candid
even for once

you evade my stare feeling the stab
of truth
and i respect the way you avoid the
pain

somehow we are two islands
set apart by the deep water and lovelier
still
between the rush of the surge
the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Two Of You

the two of you
were too close

in a conspiracy
you rob so many

of what they have
and worked for

those days were the
laughing days

the two of you
were too close

there is no space
for something right

and just and kind
and compassionate

we were so hurt
we do not know where to

get in and take revenge
and bring to us justice

the two of you
were too closed like

aluminum cover to an
aluminum kettle

we were the dirt clinging
to your bottoms

you had nice stuff inside
and we have no way to get in
and eat and live and
be happy ourselves

we were helpless because
the two of you are closed doors

and we are the unwanted intruders
and you were laughing and

making merry over what you
have taken from us

we have no other resort but
to pray for fire and

there...on that particular day
the two of you burned each other.

justice came with a sword
and fire and brimstone

if only you had the chance
to look at yourselves now

you would not have done
what you did to us.

RIC S. BASTASA
About The Winner

he was once the winner
and they listened to him
every word he says becomes
their new laws and he amazed
them with all his wits
and they all liked him

he made a name for himself
and for this
he forgot his real name
the one given by this mother
when he was born

and for that new name
he invented
all the stories about himself
how he was as a warrior who slayed
the dragon in their heads
how he saved the princess from the
clutches of the beast
how he built his castle in the clouds
where they can all be happy

and all his stories were recorded
as truths and
they all believed them
until finally
he lost his face
and hands and
he kept on looking
for all of these
in the sands of the desert
under the orange moon

and then one day he found
his pair of eyes
and opened it before all of them
he told the truth
that all his stories are lies
that he who is now making a speech before them
is no longer himself
he is a lie. and that is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Things That Tumble

at the table
spoons and forks, knives
things tumble down
lips trembling
sad stories and handkerchiefs
tears
you know what i mean
there are three of us
one is an outpouring of
rain
we choose the sunshine and
clouds
we look at each other
you know what i mean
we understand now
there is too much about
these things that tumble
falling earth
ascending sun
and crumbling cliffs
what do we get?

what do we have to do with
all these
things that tumble down?

we help ourselves with what we have
we move on
with all that we keep
memories and the will
determination and speed
there are two of us now
the rain stops
it begins to understand
we choose
sunshine and clouds and
days.
About This Stuff Called Writing

Upon reading the poem
about a childless woman
My friend Sol wrote

I am truly sorry for reading
About such a delicate issue

And she emails

“Did you write it because I have offended you and the childless woman?”

“I am truly sorry”

I e-mail her back; there was no offense,

as it was not really about us
The little boy who died a long time ago was not

About us,

I was surprised
That poem
Was not meant to be

a certain Apathy

it is not about us
it is not us

it is about them

Such is a poem
is meant for a

certain kind of empathy
it is no apathetic
it is not about a sickness into death
it is not about
a 'mind-you-own-business'
but it was meant to be

'we-feel-what- you -all -feel'

It is empathy
it is reincarnation to the bodies
Of other people
it is going
into life
into the lives of other people
into life
into salvation

a life in those moving fingers of a new born baby
the same moving fingers that give you the hint of of life to
a hit-and-run victim
a while ago comatose

a life a breath a hush
for persons
not just people

(specially for those whom we love much
that if they die
we want to die
with them
and we
keep saying without them
life has no meaning at all)

And we
Become them
the childless couple that was not us
the hit-and-run-victim that layed long unnamed in the morgue
that baby that was blue all over because of a congenital heart defect

they were buried
and we say we were buried with them
we have duties and obligations though
as we watch and stand for those who remain here

empathy
that is empathy

Every part of them: the nose, the eyes, the brain, the trachea,
The butt, the hands, every nerve every vein every corpuscle

we become them
we join in their mission

We become the air that they breathe
We breathe
We penetrate the other completely
to

Every part of them: the nose, the eyes, the brain, the trachea,
The butt, the hands, every nerve every vein every corpuscle

The apology then was wrongly worded
And was wrongly sent
The dog has wagged its tail
To the wrong master
the dog has barked to the wrong tree

Hence I reject the apology

because the tragedy and the sorrow are not about us
it is them
we only become them because

we empathize
we allow ourselves to be a part of them in the process

Or whatever excuse
It was not for us
It was for them

We are merely the wires
Through which
The unseen electrons pass
an in the process we generate light and power
For others
For this dark world

The danger lurks when for lack
Of understanding about the mechanics

Of apathy and its
distinction with empathy

between us making a living
and between them that we try to appease

You touch us in careless passion
And for lack of understanding about compassion
You are shaken
Unnecessarily

And who knows
In due time
You too shall become
Us

in utter exercise of empathy

And that would be enough

i know there is something that you did not understand
life shall tell in the process
and life shall tell you all about it before everything is ended.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Those Metaphors

i know that that black bird was
but about the door
i have finally given up the search
i have begun the climbing of the stairs
the hammering of the nails
i love the silence more
than anything
else.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Two Ants Transformed Into Fireflies

what happened last night was beautiful
i ask you if i can write about it
you say no, it is so beautiful and must remain private

but i have decided to write it anyhow
in some metaphors: it was about two ants transformed
by love into fireflies.

RIC S. BASTASA
About U And I.

i know what you are
because of what i am.
when people ask me
i tell them what they want to hear.
you know me for what i am
because of what you are.
when people ask you who i am
you tell them what i am not.
we are into this predicament
of self-denial
it is not that we want to take
ourselves from shame
we are not afraid
how can we be fear itself?
i remember fully well
i told her that you are a wall
and she believes me.
i can see through you
through me.
and what i see need not be spoken
or the Sphinx shall be broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Us

there are rains
on the days of our lives
and we try to grow flowers
on our fertile grounds
the weeds are there
but they never outgrow
what good seeds
we have put there

RIC S. BASTASA
About Us And About Them

we busy for some noble purpose
for instance, i teach and you travel visiting places
where you are needed, as i continue on
burning the fires
of students who want to learn more
as i guide them where legal wisdom lies
in between those wits
and slides of humor
where we finally meet on the serious challenges
of criticisms: what society ought to be? who the leaders must be?
where progress is? what trees can do for this aging earth?
etcetera etcetera

we are angry
for those who search personal pleasures on Sundays
the cock-fighters shouting at the cockpit
the picnickers drunk on the beach
the rumormongers enjoying the headlines of the town
who are pregnant without getting married
who are impoverished by their convictions

they are those that thrive
we are those endangered species
and we are meant to perish

we blame no one then
as we meet again and be so silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
very tiny bit
of wisdom
from her,

she speaks
the power of
atom,

bread crumb,
dash in a long sentence,
a dropp of rain,
fragments of the poetess
who kills herself at the
end,

grain of sand
resembling the universe
of our
humanity,

hoot, iota, jot, little,
mite, modicum,
particle,
piece,
pinch,
scrap,
shred,
speck,
trace

it is us.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Us Now

there is nothing that tickles the heart now
no word
no whisper is seductive enough to make my thoughts dance
this is part of my autumn
when leaves of myself float on the river
full of moss and run over by fleeting creatures

RIC S. BASTASA
About Us Who Remained Here....

when first thrown away
they call it
seed,

there are rocky fields
where most of the seeds
struggle for soil
& water
to grow
buds and mature as
branches

or be successful trees
into forests,

so many have found themselves
as utter failures
in the form of sand

so many are dead, wilting even
before
leafing

there are others who evolve well
despite the harsh conditions

lucky for those who imagine wings
and turn into birds
of freedom

but others do not have that fate
the stars are against them

you have seen now
so many pebbles scattered on those
twisted paths

others of course have turned themselves
into stones
the mostly preferred state of being
strong
or mistaken to be stoic

into rocky formations ready to be
fields of cradles again for
those that come recently and
baptized with the same name
seed.

we who remain here
have learned to write about all these
sad phenomena

we have fortified ourselves as slates of rocks
with rain as pens.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no argument about love

i love you and
you love me
it was as mutual
as a pineapple sliced
in half

but time has its own
choices for us
and we were left speechless
about what it
gave us

we say, after the parting,
after the marriage to
another,
'we were not meant for
each other'

and we cried, we wish it were
us, we wish it was different
from reality
but

time is the judge of all
our fates
it hands to us the map
of destiny
we have become its finished
products

we like to turn back time
like a folded linen
we cannot
we have moved on separately
with each others' lives

i have one wish
i want to be born again
with you

begging mercy
kissing the feet of time
that next time
somewhere
it shall be us again

RIC S. BASTASA
About Us......

our sensitivities
grow in a glass house
hardened
by incoming stones

who is afraid of the pieces
of broken glasses?
our wrists are experienced
sufferers
they heal themselves in
due time
we know what the word
endure means
by heart
we are devoured somehow
but still whole
in those vomits
do they find us bitter pills?
don't they know that we are the cure
of those unreasonable fears?

those stones turn out
to be marshmallows getting more
delicious looking
at the flames
on those cold evenings
beneath the
darkness in the forest

we eats stones
no longer afraid of indigestion
our guts
have kept the morning glories
glorious gods
with hardened walls

RIC S. BASTASA
About Utako (An Excerpt)

Utako had not heard until after the end of the war that the child had died in the care of the person who took it.

'But-do you think the child really died? ' Utako said.

Jiro looked away.

'Sometimes I think that it might still be alive, you know-possibly.'

'I'm certain that it's dead.'

'If it's alive, do you think if I met it somewhere-do you think I would know? ' 

RIC S. BASTASA
About What I Am

i know
who i am
in fact
i hide who i
am and what
i am since
i also know
why

i create what
i am

i make many
i's
to suit your
style

RIC S. BASTASA
About You

a dream, it is about you
we are so near, and your are facing me
you smile but i did not

i thought i have already
forgiven you
and then i left the scene
i am happy somewhere else
without you

RIC S. BASTASA
About You (How Disappointed I Was)

what happened to me
you never predicted
it was like the story of
the ugly duckling

despite the weakness of
my past
the hardness of the stones
(the unfeeling body)
and the shortness of the
vision of that horizon
i have remained
more than what i am

i must have disappointed you
who never think that
success may come to someone
without the royalty of
the lines of the palms

it is i
who is severely disappointed
for you never changed

your mind has always
been a door closed

your heart
a stone house without windows

RIC S. BASTASA
About You About Regrets

how can life be a pool
of regret
when it has long been designed
to flow
freely into that universal sea
of love

believe in this
we are meant to be what we are
every atom has a reason
every sigh
has a direction

RIC S. BASTASA
to please you and your old and rich American
'lover', i decided to take you to
Tabancura Cafe where
indigenous paintings are on
exhibit on that day

first we had coffee and some
sticky rice delicacies and ripe mangoes

then the American (was his named Ted
for Teddy Bear?) begins to view
indigenous art, from softdrink tansans
to plastic straw and
drift wood and used
tissue, and from which he
said ' Honey, we have to go now,
we will be late for the show in Dakak.
This is garbage! '

Then both of you are gone
and i am left out
alone again in the art works of
my countrymen.

I sleep early that time
after drinking beer
and i dream about myself swimming
in the river of garbage with Manny Villar.
Weird.

i wake up profusely sweating
goes to the ref got a glass of cold water
and drink
take a deep breath and
walk my way to bed again

i pray that i may not dream again
about garbage
that i may not even remember about both of you
(garbage too
you, whose dream is it to go away from the poverty
of this country)
that i may not remember this political mess
of lies and deception
and more corruption to come
after this year's election.

RIC S. BASTASA
About You And Restraint....

it's the mystery in you

that makes me

somber, or perhaps dumber

i think more of you

and i ask so many questions

all my answers are wrong

i go into the details

letter by letter in my book

i utter the syllables hoping that in each sound

i can find

an exit to this useless mess

i stare at you

in those moments of my chaos

my thoughts are wild

i have lost control

and restraint buries itself

on the ground that it dug for days

i have not traveled so well

in the past

trying to explain why this hour is
sad

i dream

that i have another face

another body

i see yours

limpid on the floor

calling my name

i did not say a word

as i look for the best explanation

why we cannot be

one in the heat in bed.

there is a fire that consumes

me

i am praying for a storm

i am wishing for

rain

i am a ship without anchor

there is no shore

in view
i look at you

i am a meteor in the sky

shooting myself

in space

lost with so much distance.

RIC S. BASTASA
About You Last Night....

i am missing you
For you have accustomed me to a morning conversation
with coffee and
some bread on the table
facing the sea
sunrise lighting our faces
unkempt hair
salty skin
parched lips
over-kissed the night
dreams outpouring
bliss, so much bliss is killing me
and you are there
so silent still
this silence that are like hands caressing my body
my heart is a sleepy dog
resting on the soft white rug
beside the door of
our room...

RIC S. BASTASA
About You My Friend

you do not steal from me
because whatever you take
when you are caught
i am always willing to give

do steal away from me again
and i will give it to you again and again
for in truth
i own nothing
and i am not taking anything
away from here
for in truth
we own everything
and you have the right to take what i think
i have inside my hand

i will always remember
the Bishop who gave the chandeliers
to Jean Valjean
who bought his soul
with silver
from God.

RIC S. BASTASA
About You Then

YOU WERE a pebble
on the road
it was muddy
and it rained, and
i picked you from
that unspeakable
mess, and
i kept you warm in
my hand
even talked to you
and i polished you
and people
adored you until
you transformed into
a star
and you acquired
light
and speed and you
found your place in the
skies
at night you shine
like any other
star
you are so distant
and
untouchable
my palms miss you
my eyes can
only have the look
my heart
can only have
that lightness
when you were once
a pebble
inside my
hold.

RIC S. BASTASA
About You, About Pain, A Memory...

who can change you? Nobody.
There is a need for you to change
They tell you
Like you were a child and like a child
You do not listen
You have behaved like a moth
Wishing fire that you do not know shall burn your body
They grieve upon this
But As Fate always have its way of winning over Everyone
You are finally gone
There will be a deafening silence for a while
But the flock has to move on for a greener pasture
You are a memory
A footprint that we all leave in a sand dune
The winds from the desert comes at night
Blows you away
As they all leave for another land
To draw upon their palms
A map
for Another Beginning

They shall remember you as a sad story
And they respect you for all that you have given them
And then
They must forget.....

RIC S. BASTASA
About Your Day

go to the sea
listen to the waves
focus on the white foams
follow the sea gulls
ride a boat
see the colors of the fish
feed them with your hands
and feel
agility, and know
how the corals
breathe

inside the office
you are surrounded by venetian blinds
your light is the bulb
your sound is the beeping phones
you are beside a heap of papers
pile of books

your partner is the personal computer
you chat at noon
and wish for sleep too soon

inside sleep
run as fast as you can
chase your dreams
catch them
all.

RIC S. BASTASA
About Your Denial....

Do not think that i am speaking of death
your view must be limited like an afternoon without hope for light

You have pocketed a smile
as though you are preparing for your usual cry

Do not think that life has gone awry
like the glass that spilled the milk
rolled on the table and fell on the floor

the sound of shattered pieces of glass
that feeling of stain
that silence that expects the reverse
of what actually happened

Come to think of it
this is just a path where everyone passes
they look forward for something else
like an open door that leads to a garden
a pool
a line of coconut trees
another view of the sea
a net full of fish

Come to think about it again
i am talking about life that remains life forever
you know it well
as it is written in the main page of your heart

you feel its song
you have read each word
and your soul has mastered it well

But for the meantime that you are lost in the middle
of everyday affairs
you pretend that you have forgotten it
afraid of the next door that opens
you settle for a chair....

too tired i must have slept by the window of the car.  
   it passed a bridge  

i looked down and found  
 an abyss where i fell and  
   spill out my essence.  

i have a pair of hands like you  
   it carries some flowers and seeds  
 and i let all of them go  

i cut off a pair of wings  
   in my mind and i let the body retreat  
 to its vulnerabilities of  
   static pains  

i must have dreamed that long when the car arrives in the house.  

   same dogs are excited about my arrival.  
   same wagging tails.  

   there is this perfect timing of opening the garage door  
   where the car slides without a space of doubt when it says  
   it has found a home.  

   too tired yet how can i forget?  
   how can i not cry if ever i decide to throw all these things away  

   just like that  
   just like that  

   where is the difference between feeling and numbness?  
   where is this bridge between a you and me?  

   i cannot find the way where your heart is nestled.  
   above the cliffs, the clouds are silent.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Abraham

abraham hears the voice of God
to bring Isaac on top of Mt. Moriah
there he must kill his own son
his offering to the Lord, His God
the argument begins, why his God
must order him to kill his own son?
is this killing this murder not a sin?
does God make man to commit sin?
If One orders him to kill his own son
God? Is God in this not a murderer too?
the steps to Moriah are difficult thoughs
yet Abraham, Abraham, do you Love
your God as God and none other?
kill your own son, Love of God?
you know how it ended. You know
how Abraham became the Father of Faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
Absence

in the boat
we were decent people
on a party
this cruise leaving
for the Caribbean
at night
the grand party
begins
you drink cognac
it is a need
you always want
to belong
but there is none
that you can
find
in the middle of
this ocean
you are always an
island
you see a continent
behind you
it does not always
see you

you drink some more
you wish
death upon a tequila
on tomorrow's
sunset

RIC S. BASTASA
Absolutely Nothing

ten the drum
clothed with
sheep's skin
is absolutely
hollow inside

it is named
nothing yet

know its power
for it can call
enemies to war

make naked men
and women dance
for love

it is hollow
you open it
it has only air
and yet

hit it with your
face and it will
wake all powers of
this world

it can decide
war or peace
live or die
dance or kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Abstain

abstaining from
lust

i sit alone on the porch of the house
watching the stars

taunting
tempting
seducing

the moon shines and shows
the beauty of her
butt

i wonder
when will this prison last
this purity of the heart
this hypocrisy
of my body
this drying skin
slowly
shedding off
my pretensions

i shall miss you
and tonight i write this poem for you

RIC S. BASTASA
Abstraction Fo The Word Chirp....

i hear birds chirping
early morning
on those trees

clouds arrive, light
spreads,
green becomes too green
in the fields of
life,

i hear birds chirping
sweet to my ear
i give it priority

abstract. delet morning
move out clouds from the picture
double click green fields
focus on life

delet birds
add volume to chirping

it is all chirping now
just chirping
chirping chirping

the essence of chirp.
i have abstracted it from
everything else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Absurd

the absurd lies on the surface of our skins
like a rose tattoo that shirks and shrinks with time

crumpled lines and fading dyes and a story that refuses to die
you ask me if somehow i have obtained some meaning to my life

something that i cannot say i soon tell you
it is more of a growing thing that does not really show itself

unless you wait till the right season comes
the wind gives it a light feeling and the sun warms it a bit

RIC S. BASTASA
Absurd Continued

surprise comes like a bud and bliss comes like a red flower
so dainty and beautiful but you know it well: a very short moment

like a breath a sigh like a puff of whisper to the ear
it is a show of life, we gather dry leaves and then burn them

we clean the ashes and we wait for the grass to grow back
we anticipate the coming of hope, the rain, the clouds, the sun

sometimes it is all dark, we are blind, and then things, all things
begin to be real, it is all the same, too much light is also blinding.

RIC S. BASTASA
Absurdity In Love

you are condemned.
those you love
will love someone else

those who love you
on the other hand
will make you vomit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Academic Life

one sometimes fear
leaving an academic life
seeing the world
through a thick reading eyeglass
sleeping with books
surfing on the net
writing treatises and
too legalese
side tripping with literature
and floating with
poems on wild imaginations
on the clouds of puff
and huff

one fears that after
sleeping with books
night after night
dating with the lampshade
headboard
one finally loses what is more
important
than these prints and
paragraphs

when finally she is gone
dating real people that she can touch
and feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Accademia Dei Solinghi

KANTATE IHR VOELKER HOERT

IT is her alone
Now singing
Her lonely song
As though
She is on a very
High tower
On a very
High mountaintop.

WHAT I admire
most is her skill
Of singing
Solitude as though
It is a common
Piece
That any maiden
Of the town
Can sing

and
Sing it well.

A perfect voice
Of solitude
Singing

Alleluia
Alleluia

The God
On High
Shall come
And the
Bride must
Be ready
for the
God-groom

She sings so
Skillfully
And the mountains
And valleys and
All the people
Of the town
Listen and
They cannot
Tell what time
Is it because

All they do
Is listen to
Her as she
sings
Skillfully the
song of solitude

I too was sleepless
I learned the art
Of simply be
Myself
of simply
Be
in solitude

Unknown
to all
She sings

Because she
Is sleepy
and

She did not
Believe
in the

Power of solitude
In fact
what she
Really
believed
In and
what made
Her sing is
The power
of
Her song
It was
her
Projection
Of solitude

Which they
Really mistook

as

solitude

Her song
May be about
Solitude

She was not.
she was not really

RIC S. BASTASA
Accept Now My Dear Friend

dear friend that there are days and nights
yin and yang
darkness and light
open highways and dead ends
that if there are daughters of Chaste
there too are the daughters of Lust
that if there are sons of Love
too there are sons of Hate
that there are mountains and plains
seas and deserts
prey and predator
victors and victims
accept my dear friend that this world is round
inside and out
rings of fire
depths of trenches
do not settle for the illusion of peace
and disregard the reality of war
accept my friend
there are fakes and genuines
morons and geniuses
blacks and whites and lots of shades between them
shallows and deeps
tongues and toes
embrace those days of sacrifices
and those other days of paradises
and when you have learned all these
you shall have taken wisdom in
have seen life at its peaks and lows
live it
the way it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acceptability

no one's to blame for the rejection
it was you who wants to get inside
that door where everyone
seems to be preoccupied with
how they look and what others say
you should not have entered in the
first place, now you mix with the crowd
talking about their latest gems
and acquisitions, their tongues
are forked and you are not prepared
for this

why did you leave the pond, your house,
your garden, don't you see that there
was more peace and quiet in there?

look at you, you're sick and trembling.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acceptance

each day she bleeds
there is pain
her mind is empty
there is no thought in there

she waits by the door
looking beyond the front road
she knows no name
she waits actually for no one

no one is coming
and she does not know where is anywhere
everyday this happens
every hour is a spirit

when the day fades
she does what routine requires her
she goes inside
closes the door behind her

she eats too little
recites her prayer and then sleeps
this happens everyday for all
the rest of her life
who is doing this to her?
No one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acceptance Of Wisdom

what i know most
and i guess i have become
an expert on this
is...

that i do not not really know
hence i feel
the need to know
what i do not know

makes me wonder somehow
about wonder.

and looking at the stars
i fall on the floor
of grass
and pebbles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acceptance.....

time makes you forget
yourself

sometimes you stop moving away
you need a mirror

faces it and looks at your face
there are so many lines

you undress yourself
and find our so many wrongs

so much have been neglected
you wonder

and you think of the river
that flows in so many winding ways

accepting and taking with its body
everything

there is no regret
it is nothing but fate to just be a river

to just be later
nothing but a part of the sea, the ocean, to be just

a part of everyone and
everybody

RIC S. BASTASA
Accepting Evolution

there is this feeling that you are slimy
and prickly and
floating on the water like a whale
and you hide back to the depths
making signals if there are still other whales
out there
and yes, i could have been once a whale
or was i a shark.

RIC S. BASTASA
Accepting Things Are They Are

when i was new in this place
i like seeing and staring at things
and think about how to make them more beautiful
on the way i want them changed
from my one
point-of-view and so if something is so short
i try stretching them
even if there is pain and i always think that
all things are flexible and that with a little
retouching
they then fit as i see it fit.

there were storms. There were instabilities
there were unnecessary silences
and there were times when i was forced
to keep my mouth shut
and hide myself in a dark room
and sleep and let time pass by
like some moments
that i do not like to remember
that i like to throw up
and then mumble and then
surrender like a defeated soldier.

and then there is this subsiding
there are tiny waves, gentle winds, and
restive sands, and moments
of solitude

this may be nearer to an end
but look, we arrive at the point to accept things as they are
that changes are shaped like pointless objects
and blunt as they are
we do not want them sharpened
because sharpness has no use at all
to all these blunt happenings.

things appear and they talk and we listen.
we shake their hands. we know they are strangers.
we let them in and seep like rain to our sponges.

we no longer shake our shoulders. we listen.
i do not know if i really smiled when i first confronted them.
they are here. and as you tell me, i agree, i make most
of what is here. This is my best form and i am showing it now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Access

sometimes when the
door is closed
when everyone in the
house is either
asleep
or lazy or gone somewhere
fishing
i go somewhere else too

walking away is a nice option
could have been
not going back again
but can't live alone without
them
i am a slave of affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Accessibility Test

press
ENTER

if nothing happens
i.e. you cannot log in

transfer to another
site

post again
press ENTER.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aches

do not laugh
i am aching, it is not just my eyes
(from too much reading)
it is not just my arms and legs
(from too much work, and walk and
your prescription for a daily exercise
those weights and pumping irons)

do not laugh at me
you are the woman that i love
away from me
and this heartache is not funny

let us make love
in cyberspace tonight
9 p.m. sharp

RIC S. BASTASA
Aches Of Mornings...

aches of mornings
nights wild and aggressive
some outbursts here and there
we were nowhere together
the nights are as usual long
and drunk and the hours run like
ecstasies

boats with ports and oars
plunging to an edgeless horizon

trickles of light arrive
on the curtain
like dripping water like what
drips between us

aches of morning
realizations about what wrongs are there
we make and cannot unmake but as usual
we will always be on the learning
to forget

that is the only way to go
head high, secrets kept
dress the code and
dwell on a new abode.

RIC S. BASTASA
Achilles

his body trembles
when her tongue
licks his heel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aching Eyes

aching eyes
bleeding heart
trembling hands
a storm within
entangled hair
wind sweeping
pain in my ass
scarred skin
another wound
blues and bruises

sands of silence
tower of ivory
ebony spaces
starless skies
faded moon

shattered pieces
of self
hands that want
to grasp
every broken
word, stuttering
existence

my friend
what writer's block
are you talking?

RIC S. BASTASA
Aching Eyes And Neck Pains

aching eyes and
back and neck pains, they do not really matter
once i face this monitor

i assume i have many things to say
after a day's work. I TAKE pride about the
matters unsaid. I take note of the words
kept hidden inside my want
to jump and assume the shape of some fleas.BITERS. bitter biters, for they were made
to be silent as we keep on doing
our own bread and butter thing

my eyes are aching. i feel the pain on my neck.
there is this burden, and this burden is the burden
of a writer, a poet, and it keeps on saying

write me, write me now: about a girl whose father betrayed her, about a man whose fortune is stolen in the blink of an eye

he was thrown in the river
and the fish ate her in tiny pieces.

there is this little boy who imitated my actions and he was laughing and i was laughing too,

i never thought that my hands are as clumsy as his or his words too disappointing

the world is telling me: it is enough too much of you is already suffocating

it is telling me that i must quit but how can i? there is this little boy that keeps on taunting me

to play again along the sands of the shore and make my new sandcastles
it is not too dark yet, and he says it is still time
there is still time to play....

i get out of the car. It is raining. I look at the sky.
Drink some rain. I get wet.

It is not enough. It is never enough. There is still this little boy
in me. His eyes are always in wonder.

and so the poems keep on coming.
I close the car. I look at the trees.

How green are these trees! Greener than green.
How blue are the clouds! Bluer than blue.

And i really like all that i see.

This little child in me. Giggling.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aching Eyes...

the eyes are weary lovers
exhausted

over
sexed, they feel like
under-wears
hanging on a clothesline
on a rainy day

RIC S. BASTASA
Acknowledging A Mistake

i takes courage to acknowledge a mistake
as one steps out of his throne of self-righteousness
and opens the door of repentance,
the windows of corrections
letting in this air of humility
one bows down to that which is
true and right
admitting with full responsibility
the wrong committed
after which one rises again much greater
and stronger, more mellow and pure
than his previous self.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acquaintances And Old Friends

we miss them
because they are not there

but say to say
you no longer look for them

you have peace
and it will stay

because they are no longer there
and you never want them anymore to enter the fences of your life

you have peace
and you live in there

did i say we miss them?
old friends sometimes i ask

have i reserved a space for them here?
i must have forgotten and i like it that way.

i have peace
and i live here alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Acting

we may pretend
sometimes that i am this handsome guy
and you are this beautiful woman

we go to the beach
i am wearing my white speedo
and you are in your red bikini
a two-piece suit
we imagine we stroll the beach one fine day
holding hands
and then we sit on the white sand
your head in the embrace of my strong arms
i encircle your body and i look to the blue horizon
and dissolve my thoughts

you smile
& you close your eyes and feel the joy of loving
we imagine
there is only the two of us in this island of desire
we kiss and we hold each other tight

we feel so close
and we make love under the moon
i feel your heart beating inside my heart
and i say i love you and you say you love me too

we imagine a lot and
try this fantasy for once

sometimes i ask: why don't we make it true?
these feelings inside us may burst
soon i tell you

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually I Do Not Talk Much About This And That

if you ask me now, this moment, forgive me but i am ready
with a sack
of lies filled with rice grains of excuses to feed my
hunger for truth, sorry

but i need to feed my lean days and you will see
how hard it is when summer comes
with nothing but tin roof on our heads
for shelter,

hot we are familiar about what hot is,
how hot is it when we mean hot
this Philippine summer
in this city
and you must not have the nerve to tell me
to cool my skin
like i am your tamed reptile
a snake perhaps or the turtle that you once knew me to be,

time has changed my shape and way of looking
at the river
you do not know how i have made ties with the frogs
wishing for the heron to come to eat us
and we learned our lesson so well,

we made more slime, and poisonous
tumors in our skins to protect us, they tell you this story
i was there then
and compromised a little with how my life has to be managed,

chameleon, iguana, hot days, sandstorms, some easy preys
to our feeding times,
dark lonely nights with the timid moon
heavy rains at times and flood that
forced us to stay on cliffs
for months, i have learned these all

years, we have not met and one day
we meet again on the hills filled with flowers
and friendly air,

you are so confident, and you touch me
but i am already harmful,
the way i make you feel
sends you the signals of second thoughts
there is a little distance
between you and me
and in between is the doubt and questions

you touch me again
i feel so cold and you felt the danger of this reptile

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually I Have Nothing To Say To You

so we meet again and you are seated
next to me
by chance our eyes meet and we remember the times
when once we were together
we were not lovers
we may think we were friends we ate together till the night comes
we drank on the same glass
of wine when our heads began to fly bubbles in the air

you ask me if i remember
how can i forget? it is you and it is always me still
by chance we meet again and
our eyes meet like the headlights
of two cars colliding one dark night

i still remember
there is nothing that hurts that always last
i still remember and i know you also remember
the screeching on the streets and the marks of shocked tires
we do not like to remember that which hurt us both
you have nothing to say and actually to be honest and

blatant about this meeting by chance
i have nothing to say but i could have told you i want simply to forget

you but i can't
forget you and erase you
you always leave this mark that i cannot just hate and believe

that you do not exist at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually Some Poems Are Not Meant To Be Understood

forgive me but my poems are not meant to be understood
they are simply meant to be felt
like silk to your hands
just let the feeling slide and it is complete

it is just like a description of something that suddenly passed
you think it is a ghost but it is not
it is just the hush of a wind and it is not driving any point at all

if it refreshes you without thinking of anything at all
and gives you a certain lightness
like you have wings yourself
then the poem has become a poem

it is not meant to be an idea just something
magical and please do not hold it
it is simply meant
to pass and not stay like the wind and the river and
my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually, There Is Still No One There....

it is when all of you
had left
this room when i am finally alone
that i
feel what departure must be

departure is synonymous with
loneliness

when it begins stabbing your peace
distance is prolonged

it is light embracing finally
the tunnel of darkness

you hear a tinkering bell
from a saffron monk

you peep from a leak of this
structure

still, there is no one there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually...

i am having a hard time
getting inside your life
like a house fenced and
barbed wired
and i am like a dog waiting
outside
beside your steel gate
waiting
even if it rains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually……

actually
who wants ever to be a silent wall?
there are windows in us
that still beg for the
wind to
speak our sorrow
and we want
to hear the sound of
of a vibrant
existence
we want still to hear
the song
even if it be the sonorous
lyrics of
a bewildered wingless bird
or a boneless
kite

most of the time
the busy lanes do not have
a parking space
and cars go on a rampage
for collisions

actually
most feet want to stop walking
and ponder upon
nails

hands look for hair to caress
but heads have crazy thoughts
for their own days
to eat

there are no more directions
where home can be found
confetti fall from the tallest
building
and those who look up
from below
mistake the same as
another celebration

RIC S. BASTASA
Ad Aeternum

This i know

there is no change
in me

the landscapes are
seasons

i am the core of
this rock

there is nothing to
change

even death
can be a futility

i am the core of
this rock

when it crumples
or cracks

i become the wind
the air

that this universe
breathes in

again and again
ad aeternum.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ad Baculum...

it was not the line that he towed
not the carrot but the stick
that made him what he had always been
a donkey not the rabbit
never the caterpillar dreaming of
the flower.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ad Hominem...

do not speak about a name
he will leave and you shall find
a desert
without any name

do not mention his name
for there are rashes in his heart
where that name is written

be an empty temple
accommodate him on those nights
where there is rain
and there is no room for him

RIC S. BASTASA
many happy returns
my friend
we shall be back from
where we started

getting to know each other
retrieving the excitement
long gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Ad Perpetuam Memoriam

and for the memory of those
who died before us
those who carried the woods
on their back
from the mountains to
the cities that
they built when once we were
children
playing on the very first roads
that they built

cheers! without them
where could we have been
altogether?

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage # 3

what comes up must come down
that is the natural flow of any projectile and you who is up has no other possibility but to come down with me. I am not going up anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage # 4

you come to the point of this dead-end
numb, you do not move any finger you do not point any finger to anybody
lazy, you do not till any patch of green you begin to hate the soil you do not
appreciate, you do not like any bee, you do not like anything fluttering
hopeless, you do not speak any language, you do not hear any music of
anybody, you stay there, just stay there, freezing

silence is too cold like ice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage #1

when you do them good
and they still think that
what you have been doing
is still bad for all of them
i guess it is time to stop
and wait for them to vacate

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage #2

he shames you with the dusk passing along a line of trees and stopping at the seam of the golden light of the moon

you cannot think of any metaphor you simply want to be direct and simple when you say you do not like any complication you hate this convolution of words and phrases and talking without stopping because you cannot find the period and the comma slips away like a sigh from the holes of your nose and the hairs are not syllabicking anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 10

'Small is the number of people who see with their eyes and think with their minds.'
Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

you cannot blame us
the spirits tell us
to see with our minds
and think
with our eyes

we are too many
to be stupid

in fact we have not invented the bomb

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 11

'If you have no confidence in self,  
you are twice defeated in the race of life.  
With confidence,  
you have won even before you have started.'  
Marcus Tillius Cicero (106-43 BCE)

it is still all in the mind  
this war of  
psychologies

be composed  
show the teeth  
grinning with  
close-up confidence

RIC S. BASTASA
'A good meal ought to begin with hunger.'
French Proverb

one who is full
shall never be full
because he is
to be full
one must be empty again
to be a wall
one must start being a window
blink
and then open your eyes
and then close
each eye
slowly
this is the ritual of days and nights
shuttered existence
close
open
close
open
close
open
open
fragile tiny hands of a new born baby
beside
the sleeping mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Don't make use of another man's mouth unless it has been loaned to you.'
Belgian Proverb

if i let you borrow
my mouth
will you follow what it will say?
or will you tell it
what to say?
i am a poet
without a motive
my words speak for themselves
the only function of my
mouth and my tongue
is to eat
and shut up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 5

'Joy in looking and comprehending is nature's most beautiful gift.'
Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

we are here
we do not worry
for everything is give
a tray of fruits
a bouquet of flowers
a cool river
a wide blue sea
white clear skies
sun

there is joy in merely looking
not even comprehending
what they are
their reasons
our reasons

we are the gifts
they are the gifts
we are this feasts
this dance
and celebrations

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 6

'Whatever you are, be a good one.'
Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

as you step out of my house
as I open the door for you
as the road
takes you
far away

well, be good.
just be good.

RIC S. BASTASA
'The mind's first step to self-awareness must be through the body.'
George Sheehan (1918-1993)

the body is the boat
in the sea
between
us islands
between us
waves and ripples
above us
the winds
around us
the emptiness that fills us
all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 8

'A good laugh is sunshine in the house.'
William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863)

dark house
gloomy atmosphere
let us put some sunshine
from our thoughts
let us put the rays of light
from our tongues
let us spread warmth
through our gums

RIC S. BASTASA
Adage 9

'The secret of happiness is freedom.
The secret of freedom is courage.'
Thucydides (460-395 BCE)

if you want to find
the connection
between happiness and
freedom

try this key
of courage
it fits

RIC S. BASTASA
Adam, The Apple The Snake Less Eve

Adam is the man
obedient son of God
placed as the favored one in Paradise
and of all the fruits
he must all eat
except

the Apple (they say it could
be an apricot
or a pear, some ways to confuse
this myth of an apple
of discord)
the source of the test
for the temptation
to eat or not to eat? that is the

question, and then comes the villain
Snake
the Seducer promising that if Adam
eats the Apple
he will know
Right from Wrong

Pleasure from Pain
Sorrow from Joy

Is this not good after all for Man
to be Enlightened? I ask.

Let us not put Eve in the picture
even then
granting that the myth is true
or is it a way of literature telling
us

Man must not know much
He must only obey
and not Use his own Mind
If i were Adam, i will do the same
Less Eve, I shall grab the apple and
chew it well, swallow it all
lick the last dropp of its pulp.

I like to be responsible for myself Now.
To know Myself
That i have committed Sin
or that i have pleased God sometimes
or that i have too
displeased Him.

The Apple
Even without the Snake I know
I shall love the taste
And happier outside the gates
of Paradise

Lots of places to go, Now,
adventures to make, which of course,
enlarges the volume of the Bible
a thicker book, more pages to read
and increase its sales.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adam's Remorse

his remorse
was that, the apple
was more tempting
than eve
and so he ate the apple
to the satisfaction of
the viper
which confirms the prejudice
that adam after all
was a pervert
preferring the apple
than eve herself....

RIC S. BASTASA
Add Vice....

here
, hearer, do not make it
things clear
that is not their nature
it is filled with
mess, and like a mountain
path, one may clear the grasses
but a month is
old enough to cover
the tracks

do not explain
there is none to explain
what we see we see
it is like that

the forest do not have
news,
when you go near
it is dark

far, it may have a shape
like history

the nature of nature

is always
unpredictable

there is no formula
for what is

no crystal ball
no zodiac no star is telling
where to

just live
breathe for the world is
a breather

RIC S. BASTASA
Addiction To Travel

..and then there is a shark
that just gobbles up an old man
weird, then there is the whale that
is caught by the Japanese fishers

bloody shore, and then there is that
killing fields where skulls are like big white stones
horrible site, and then there is the temple
of Bacchus at Baalbek and then

the two stone dancers of Ankor Wat,
the moon set garden, Hongkong  from
The Peak, and apples and Stilton and
pork-chops, and Manila Bay sunrise

travel makes us choose, from the eyes
to the tips of our toes, tongue and nose.

RIC S. BASTASA
Addictive

once you get
to writing poetry,
you become addicted
to the art,
you cannot stop
until you
pop out like
a bud into a
full blown flower
and you know
what is next,

the wilting and
falling but you know
what is next,

the hibernation
of the seed
the drying and
cracking

it is a cycle
but it is so beautiful!

RIC S. BASTASA
Additives

with a single pill
(whatever is that name)
feel that you are now
an inch
above your lousy self,

but when will this illusion end?

ask yourself when you are sober

RIC S. BASTASA
Adjusting Again...

could the mind be saying
I am not affected,

could the heart not say it

but it is trembling
the body makes a compromise
takes a walk
the mouth whistles
the eyes see another place to go trying to please itself despite the pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adjusting To A High Society....

can't find what...
Admiring Forgetting...

the pond is gone
and the mango tree too

the place has changed
the painting faded

i do not see a white duck
a boy does not have a ball

to play with and this girl
does not like dolls

you stop for a while then
start the engine of your car

off you go there is nothing
worth coming back here

anymore in the same way
you admire forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Admiring Those Who Know How To Cut And Leave

i admire those
who know how
to cut and leave

what courage
have they when
they decide to

become birds
and fly away
to shores unknown?

to cut the umbilical
cord and be the
persons that they
want to be away
from their mothers?

RIC S. BASTASA
Adopt A Mountain

Do not name it.

Climb its belly
Plant the trees.

Give time. Have
fun. Make a Network

Of those old rebellions.
Gather the bones

and Let them tell their
Stories too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adopting Li Po's Tryst 2017

just read your text

we meet tonight at Rizal park

you will be alone wearing black.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adore The Sun

you may adore the sun
worship and lay prostate

before its glory and might
as you feast upon its light

love it and dream about
the abundance of its sunlight

but by all means do not go near it
for it will burn and char you

it is cruel in intimacy
it can only be loving

through a filtered layer
always from a distance

miles and miles
away from you

RIC S. BASTASA
Adria, Adria, Adria Why Are You So Funny?

adria moya, hmm you do not like your name to be written in the poem
the problem with me is that
i am hardheaded and i am the kind of boy who does what mother
does not like me to do
i am naughty and so here i am
in all my mischief

adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny? adria, adria, why are you so funny?

hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha ha
do you see the train of hahahaha
come let us ride on it and forget the sad things of our lives

i will make another one the train of

tralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatralalatala
tralalatralalatralala

it is the train of dance and laughter
come, come, come,

let us be there, what is the use of being what they want you to be?
the place is here and it must be a place of fun and laughter
and something so divine later.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adria, I Am Giving You The Right To Say The Last Word

and please say it well
gently
tenderly
lovingly

and never mind if it does not make sense
just say it
and as voltaire once said

i may not like what you will say
but in God's name i will defend your right to say it.

amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Adulterous Woman

when she comes back
she will be welcome still

this time
as additional housemaid
less the prescribed
uniform

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice

lady do not spend
spring by shedding tears

the flowers are blooming
they will wilt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice By A Mother To Her Daughter Who Recently Discovered That Her Husband Is Having An Affair

my daughter stop crying
enough of this misery
learn to deal with this kind of thing
this usual
this normal happening between a wife and a husband
just ignore it

by now you have realized how too
i was once my mother's daughter caught in the same tragedy

i love you all my children
you should know the reason why
i keep your father
and endure him all these seventy years

it is your first time and there will be more
if you keep on minding all these infidelities
you gonna die earlier than the rest of the women in this village

and if it happens
a younger woman shall then live in your house
open the window and show her happy face there
as the new first lady in the house
of the traitor...

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To A Friend

idleness leads to sin, it 's a fact so keep yourself busy

stress is a part of life, so, learn to live with it, as though it is a nose that that will always be the centerpiece of your face

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To A Monkey

when the monkey
was on top of the trees
he feels nothing
extraordinary about it

boredom sets in
like a long sunny day that misses the rain

so it sets on another challenge
to set its feet on the
highest mountain

when he gets there all he does
is to breathe
there is nothing more challenging
than breathing and

he is all alone there

no one speaks to him
no one mentions the fruit of his labor

then he feels asleep
and wakes up at another lonely hour

like a very long rainy day
now missing another sunny hour

boredom sets in
and he looks at the sky

and he wishes he had wings
on its tail

he dreams of clouds and
stars

sad monkey with no one
to love
all these
are pretty useless
now

ask yourself: what is next?
what is it that gives you
happiness?

there is no other monkey
like you
who can love you?

go to the monkey world
and play and say hello and yes
to every monkey

do not be human.

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To A Spinster....

i wonder
what are you apt to

in keeping that
chastity belt of yours?

do you wash it?
and use germicides?

i think you should
give it more space
to breathe because
now it stinks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To A Wanna Be Poet Like Me....

in the forest of
words we shall hunt
poems
those wild boars
and boas
there will be no
road or doors
some rods or sods
or you may like pods
or sops but in this hunt
for poetic niche
one must not just carry
a head with brains but
foremost
a heart with rains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To La Niña

take the new
approach Amiga,
if you enter
this door, be
ready for its
insiders,
the warning is
clear,
'know thyself"

if they tell
you who you are,
just ignore it

coz you know
much better,
as always,

however, if you
take things
seriously, the
other door opens,

outside it
is more free,
talk to the sun
and live
with the grasses.

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To Pongpong

do not put
too much disdain

inside that
small bowl of time

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To The Newly Wed

let the pillars be far
do not fuse them like a rope
for the space
has to be respected

in there the air comes
to cool
the room and to hold the
house firmly
above the ground

the arms of the furniture
spread
for the tired man to sleep

the floors are ready to
embrace
the births of kids

outside the trees are stretching hands
reaching the sky

let there always be space
that lovers need

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice To Trining

in such a small
cup of your time

please do not
put too much bitterness....

RIC S. BASTASA
Advice....

always give a space
for doubt,
spare some people
through a hole
where light still gets in
and illuminate

who knows?
it is someone else
and not you.

you are lovable as
a flower of the early morn
in full bloom
and laden with dew
by the window

no one, not even their doubts
can take it away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aerobics Exercise In The Morning

my cardiologist
euphemistically admires
me for being
an avid listener
to aerobics
music early those mornings
after i signed out
at Poem Hunter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Afewthings

somethingisnotalinktothis
akintowhatyouhavebeen
thinkingforawhilewhereto
escapefromthelulloflife's
longingswheretogoafter
averyboringdayyoudonot
knowwhattodoafteranhour
ofstaringatthehorizonexcept
ofcourseoreflectonwhatlife
hasbeen denyingyoubutjust
thesamewhateverismissing
whateverlinkiscutofffromyou
yourideinatrainofwordsopen
thedoorofitslanguageandstay
thereforawhilehopingthatat
theendofthisjourneysomething
mayturnoutwellliketheheaven
thattheyhavebeenpromisingus.

RIC S. BASTASA
Affection

in an unfriendly snowy city
dear affection is
sorely missed

a room with furniture
varnished
accentuated with fresh
white magnolia on
a vase

apples and peaches
in a basket
on an island of light
in the kitchen

still there is no
affection
a vacant room speaks
and looks

there is something missing still

RIC S. BASTASA
Affirmation

there is no truth anymore
to a lonely life

it is true
there is more to solitude sometimes

but who can tell that you are alive
without me?

who can tell that i speak of love
when you cannot love me?

love is not love
unless shared

otherwise it can simply be another tragedy
of car tires traveling
without any commitment at all
on the hold of the road

of skies dappled with stars
and yet so unfeeling

of arms too strong and
lips so warm
yet the hugs and kisses
have not found
solace?

RIC S. BASTASA
Afraid To Crack

soon there is no use of your fear
in due time
you crack

extreme heat
extreme cold

like a seed
your mind cracks

but do not lose hope
my dear

we all crack
on extreme pain
on extreme joys

we give room
for the seed
to grow

just wait
just wait

RIC S. BASTASA
Afraid To Share Who And What We Really Are.

we did not really care
what is happening
days pass like leaves falling
on the ground
rains came and most of these things
are rotting and rotten
we did not really care much thinking
that with this kind of taking
things would run smoothly like an electric
train from osaka to tokyo or shanghai to beijing
we thought so and so did things run smoothly
until you die and we too think that peace has reigned
intelligently and philosophically upon all of us who
are more afraid to share who and what we really are.

was it not you who said when you were still so alive and
Benjamin with life that the great wall of china made good neighbors?

RIC S. BASTASA
Afraid To Wake Them All Who Are Still Asleep.

and you have become happier
writing for that which pleases you most
forgetting finally that we were supposed
to be born and now here
to please all of them.

forget the rhyme of the air and the
trees
the symphony of the clouds and the sea
now you are here
making a life, living it the way you
like it
though, still in a nook, where you tiptoe
afraid to wake them all who
are still asleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
After 25 Years

if it isn't love
then what is it?

if you are still
there
despite the fading
of so many
sunsets in my life
then what do
you call it?

you disclaim
your being a goddess
it was your underestimation
of who we are
which tore us apart

may the sunrise come
may birds sing again in those
fields of our
unsatiated satires

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Breakup, We Search For Words Again...

yes Priscilla
the words come mostly after a heartbreak
we look for them
in dimly lighted rooms
that do not offer us
sleep
in our restlessness
we dress up again
seeking some fun in the night
on those neon lights
we are actually looking for words
that sound like
herbs
as we still look for the
cure...

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Chess Game....

it is said
that after each chess game
the king and pawn
are put always in the
same box,

in truth
does it really matter?

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Dry Spell

On the Katipunan plains
Between those
Mounds of mud
And plain sand
Just beginning to grow
Glimpses
Of green grass
The rain is giving
Like my love
For you
After a dry spell

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Long Long Time

you come back
your hair has grown long
my flower
where have you been all these
days
when i am so thirsty
for love?

i long for you
your scent of magnolia
and roses
how crazy have i become
in this longing

my bed is soft
the wind from the sea is refreshing
i am hot and
ready for your love

kiss me.

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Long Travel

after a long travel
on a trip well planned
when most of the hours
are spent inside the car
where you dream
about what lies there
on the place of your destination
some flowers
and treks on mountain trails
and bridges
and rivers where you look down below
cloud-filled skies
and big mountains with enormous
shadows and cold places
at their peaks

you find rest somewhere
on a rock under a big pine tree
high on this plateau
where you can see
the green valley below

you think of home
your bed and your room
and the poetry books
and some love poems
of friends that you
miss reading

you realize you are getting old
and your taste for the world has gone cold

inside another long journey is waiting
and you think it is more exciting

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Long Walk

after a long walk
you stop a while
sitting on a dead tree
under the clouds

the sky turns dark
the clouds heavy and black
the rain begins to fall
heavily on you

you do not run for cover
you look up to the sky
you open your mouth
drink the rain & accept everything

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Nice Evening Of Poetry Reading

well it is indeed a nice evening
with charles bukowski
it is getting late and i am sleepy
we had so much
shit
and a little understanding of
Humanity
and taking in
other people's point of view
on an almost
made up poem of love and missing those we love

i have to go now
and i do not wish you will die now
for by then you will not miss me again
though
if by luck i still live
i will still admit

i miss you

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Night Of Fun

oh well, there were lots of drinks
bloody mary, screws, margaritas,
name it you have it, and lots of friends
and lovers, and newcomers on the rise
and on the go, there were names and
pseudonyms, but what matters most
were the looks and come-what-may
i like you babe, tease me, tease me,
oh, those younger days of yore,
got layed, and got drunk and got
what you got, carefree, making lots
of loves, not once a war, and then
there was this intimacy that
never gets out of your system,
like a flush of a dream, like a
perfume that refuses to get
off my skin, and i called her
after that night of fun and her
name is 'angel' and she's
just into a deep sleep and
i woke her up and she said
'who the devil are you? '

gosh, i thought love is
a many splendored thing.
be strong, there wasn't any.

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Night Of Rain

It is only when the rain stops
that you go out of the house
step on the path leading to the garden
gaze and gently pick the leaves that fell on the ground
that you realize again
how peaceful is this world
that we live in

how peaceful is our heart
not remembering
the storm

how happy can the mind still be
not thinking about anything

you are there i see you at the other side
of my garden
as one of them you are
also singing the new songs of your spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Rainy Night

morning sun
shines ahead of me

too much mud
below my feet

between us
the freshest air
in the village

blades of grass
holding glowing dew like
pearls and
diamonds

i keep the walk
without any talk

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Slingshot

after the boy
slingshot a bird
and then walk away
with his catch

i, who stood and
carefully watched,

saw this bird
restlessly looking...

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Week Of Sacrifice And Grief

i am all intact
nothing is lost
nothing is gained
from now on
till tomorrow
until forever

RIC S. BASTASA
After A Week Of Turbulence....

today i will find
a place
of my own
quiet

on the soft grass
under a tree
beside a clear pond

i close my eyes
and take some
needed
sleep

after a week of
restlessness
i think i deserve
this....

RIC S. BASTASA
After A While...

when he was about to
leave me
for good, (that is what is usually
said)
he told me
Be not proud
for you too
shall have a share of those pains
just like the rest

and it is only when every
flesh of your body
gets numb

(i.e. it is too familiar
with pain that
it does not react anymore
to any
stimuli)

that you finally get
that reward

of what you have always sought
that

eternal peace

(i.e. it is not that the mind
becomes blank
like the closure of the windows
of the day
where you are led
into a dark room where you have
no choice but
sleep

forever,
no, no, no
it is not

it is never meant that way

it is this

you sleep
you are too tired
for almost everything

you do not remember
what happened

you wake up
light touches your face
plays with your
eyelids

you rise
again
a whisper leads you to
the door that opens
into a garden

it is such a beautiful garden
flowers that you have first seen
scents that you have never smelled before

there are sounds of
chirping birds
blue clouds
clear skies

a peaceful path
that takes you
to new friends

yes, my dear,
you are into another new beginning

you write again
those new letters upon a new language
that surprises you
with a higher
level of
understanding

yes, it is the wisdom
that faces you
upon a first
meeting.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All

today
I've seen a
dragon lady
finally in
her pitiful
state

she is
barred from
getting out
of her
great country

she is
choked and
her body is
shrinking
deteriorating
in the
hospital of
her choice

i am waiting
to hear
from someone
around me
a word of
sympathy

for hours and
hours

there is
none

alas!
when she
whispered
that she is
dying

no one
believes
her

after all
she is
the dragon

never
a lady

RIC S. BASTASA
After All It Is Not At All Darkness

as you learned what darkness is
in the middle of your grief
and lament

light sometimes comes surprisingly
from the holes of your walls

and you find warmth and colors
pink, and red, and green and blue
in a prism of light
from a slit of your window

and you look out to another world
beyond your walls and
windows

you find
a rainbow, some clouds, evergreen mountains

you find a trail
inviting you for a walk

you feel the cool air
wishing you to breathe

you see a world before you
arms ready to embrace
hands always waiting for you to be caressed

it does not take much to open an eyelid
to wake up and then try this walk of life.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All It Is Not The Money

when you finally have the money
in your hands
and you can buy what you want
you begin to ponder
saying this is not what i need
this is not the one that makes me happy
and secure

all i need is you, but then the other is gone
what do you need someone for
who is not here with you anymore

you shift paradigms
you jump over the fence and climb another hill
you gasp for meaning

shall you find it then? good luck, climb another hill
face another twilight

you know the consequences of this mortality
we bleed.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All The Years In The Study Of Black And White

after all the years of studying black and white
two exclusive colors in the place where you live and thrive
for 48 years
you suddenly come accidentally to a place that your heart
had always known but had never been there
perhaps only in its wildest dream

it is the place of the leaf where it can become a river
the haven of the stars where they can turn into butterflies
the space of the fish where they wish to become dragons
and many more

the place of your imagination
where you can be anything in anywhere at anytime

all those white and black years have turned you into a stone
now you must start to recall how to grow a pair of eyes
to see the brighter shades of every color there
the place of your imagination

and be color blind no more

RIC S. BASTASA
After All There Is No Route To This And That

after all these, you stand alone to be judged, and you think
this has something to do with content, your flesh and bone, your words
and deeds, the meaning of what you want to tell them,

you get it all wrong and the world of magic and imagination laughs
you have not done them wrong
you have not done them right either

you may not believe this and that
but rightly so, the passing wind, the flowing river, the moving sea
the breathing baby, the sleeping meadows,
all these, including the eternal movement of the galaxies,
the unbending light, the constant ebbing and growing of the tides
all these, must have given you the hint of the truth
it is in the flowing of the sound, it is in the journey
of all things and thoughts
these make our world, all these, not the content but the style
the art, not the words but how you sing it.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All These

after all these
your strange silence
may soon become familiar
and there will be ease
in this empty room

RIC S. BASTASA
After All These My Sweet

after all these
i will leave a stare at you
you are still sweetly
asleep in bed

i rise and wear back
my pair of pants
and you hear the sound
of the brushed wall
you open your eyes
to see a naked soul
fitting back to its warm body

and you give me back that stare
that shall make me guilty of
betrayal

you tears fall
and i put my hand on your
mouth
trying to cover a certain emptiness
that was not yet there before

i begin to wipe those tears
away from your cheeks

after all these
i ask you
to give me the beauty of silence

i will keep my lips sealed too
like the way you have sewn
my torn white handkerchief
when we first met

i shall leave you memories
sparkling like champagne
sweet as grapes
we both shall remember all these
but only for a while
for soon we shall bury all these
to the sands of time

you are inside and between us
this big and thick wall
of ontological indifference

i am outside now
and the world sends me that usual
smile

RIC S. BASTASA
After All Those Years....

i beg to tell you
my dear fellow human beings,
that after all those years
of loving,
time that makes us all nothing
but wrinkles,
seasons that with indifference
change,
flesh that turn to ashes,
bones that disappear,
glossiness that turn
into a rough surface,
i hate to tell you this,
before my death,
love is still, and will always be,
a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All What Do We Really Get

a house,
a car, a residential lot,
got no plane
or an island
a mansion, a submarine
i do not have them

and by all standards
i am not rich
and famous,
my poems thrive only
at Poemhunter
no publisher ever asked
for my work

and so when God asks me
to transfer to another place
i do not hesitate to say
YES,

THIS is our covenant
I go where he wants
to send me
even in places of
No Return.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All, I Am Human And I Am King

I sometimes think that the tree loves me

i look at the leaves

find hope in its buds, until all these

leaves, buds,

die,

until all the leaves fall and scatter all its dead self

on the ground

where the roots have no reaction at all,

until the buds are nipped and

the world speaks nothing about it,

since, destruction and death are nothing but

normal occurrences somehow

that everything around it, the air included,

has nothing to express,

i listen, i scrutinize what is happening to me

thinking that this tree which has no preoccupation but to grow taller

and look for sunlight

is in love with me,

this mind that makes inventions, that fabricates things that

must make it a survivor,
oh well, i can think i want and leave this tree upon its
mindless existence,

after all, i am human and i am king.

i sometimes think that the tree loves me

i look at the leaves

find hope in its buds, until all these
leaves, buds,
die,

until all the leaves fall and scatter all its dead self
on the ground

where the roots have no reaction at all,

until the buds are nipped and

the world speaks nothing about it,

since, destruction and death are nothing but

normal occurrences somehow

that everything around it, the air included,

has nothing to express,

i listen, i scrutinize what is happening to me

thinking that this tree which has no preoccupation but to grow taller

and look for sunlight

is in love with me,
this mind that makes inventions, that fabricates things that
must make it a survivor,

oh well, i can think i want and leave this tree upon its
mindless existence,

after all, i am human and i am king.

RIC S. BASTASA
After All, It Is Nothing

when others quit
you keep on going

they are not your
reasons

you are the reason
why you keep on going

& doing & the reason
is not really the reason

it is the emotion
that runs like a river

without a dam
rushing to the place

of its ending
where it is no longer a river

where you are not you
anymore

you belong to everywhere
and to everything

i.e. 'that is' the reason
the emotion that goes on and on and on

like bunny energized
it does not stop

it does not have that power
it goes on and on and on

until it is no longer itself
but the sea
until it is no longer the sea
but space

until it is no longer space
because

after all, it is nothing

i am
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Another Legal Writing

somehow
time shrinks
mind expands and there is no
vacant space for so many thoughts
but this always happens
every night when you begin
to take the pillow
you roam around the vacuum
nothing is filled.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Death

shall i now reveal your name?
i doubt it at first
until you write truthfully for once

he knew from the very start
from the bottom of his heart

but you never learn to believe
that sometimes somewhere the one who fools
you once
shall soon learn what honesty is

he is dying
and you too know it
when all of you come out from your bodies
you shall not anymore remember

RIC S. BASTASA
After Death.....

once you
read him
just like
any other
nothing is
worth talking
or even
mentioning

he met
death and
you attended
the wake
and he is
gone
but this
time you
remember what
you read
about him

you become
a part
and he
for once
becomes
alive

it is
his death
that
recaptures
what
was missing.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Having Been Defrauded

she did not bother
she did not summon for lightning
to hit her enemy
so she be killed instantly
she did not call
for the devil
she did not curse
she did not bang the table with
her fists
she may be angry
but she did resort to any legal action
or even her capacity for violence
she sat beside me
and told me, 'my dear
the kettle no matter how high
will always have
its commensurate
cover'

RIC S. BASTASA
After Having Killed The Mockingbird....

to kill and bury a
mockingbird,
and then leave the place
with all
satisfactory achievement
to begin life anew
in that house facing a tree
where the mockingbird
used to be,
to enthuse oneself with
the silence
of the place
still leaves, no dust on the road,
nothing disturbing
ah, such a bliss!

RIC S. BASTASA
After Having Written Poems Late At Night...

I see her turning off the light
on the table. I can see gray.
I hear her
folding the books and
crumpling the papers
perhaps her drafts
of a letter or
a composition.
I see her stand, leave the chair and the table,
and i hear the closing of the door.
everything turns dark.

i imagine her lying in bed
she closes her eyes

i know that the light inside the room
is open.

as usual the TV is on with no one watching.
i just know it. It is a habit
and it has become a practice and that
when i follow, i must be felt
when i turn off the light
and when i turn off the TV.

I know she is awake.
But i do not mind

we all pretend we are alive and that
we want to sleep.

we fall on the same mistake.
we sleep always late, and we do not talk about it.

i put my hands around her body.
she tilts her body and finds her own direction towards the path to

her own dreams
not mine.
After Julia Roberts

i see children this Christmas season
so happy with their gifts, opening their boxes,
and exhilarated with toys,
beside their doting moms and proud papas

something stings me and it is not a bee,
i look away and tells myself this:

i have a different reality
i have a different reality
there is no reason to be sad
no reason ever to be lonely

i shall be back in Bali and talk
to my Ketut and i shall wear a smile
and hear the sound of the sea.

through this, i shall be my happier self.
Ketut, i shall eat, love and play.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Life

when you are nearing the door of death
life attracts you
with another door, someone there gives you a smile
and signals you to come
to change your direction
as though saying, this is the correct door
come, come,

you doubt

but i must tell you do not doubt
proceed to that
doctor, open it have courage, enter it with dignity
embrace it with all your
heart
learn to love it

there is another life there.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Listening To A Friend

okey, i got a basketball
for a tummy
and you advise that i
take the exercises
you tell me: stretches
ball, abs, i have to do
abs in 20-repetitions
regularly everyday
got to eat less carbs
more fresh veggies
more fruits to detox
my ugly body
avoid stress take yoga
chant and have my
private peace
gym must be regular
must have discipline
no smoking and
strictly no alcohol

oh, it took me
ten years to earn this
shapely tummy
took care of it
put more fat and
had more sleep than
needed
there were more
expensive pizza and
burgers and cakes
in there

had put more investments
deposited money in there
let me think if i have to remove
it, but if yes, definitely,
not just in a day, a week,
or month, can’t promise
i love myself, and my appearance sadly does not matter, but i may change if i don't die earlier than the time frame that God gives to hopeless men.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Making Love

After making love
We split
Our bodies
Into
Perfect halves
We hold hands
Kiss
Then close
Our eyes

We dream
Something
Very peaceful
Everything
Is so calm
So perfectly
Quiet.

We hear
The footprints
Of ants
Journeying
On the ceiling,

Dreamy
Red ants
On chocolate
& bread
Crumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Making Love....

IT HAS ARRIVED,
The echo. echoed from
another
echo, eons and eons
ago,
same feelings, loneliness
fighting against
loneliness,
different languages,
flowers turning
into poetry,
these petals of tulips
plucked one by one
after
we made love on the sofa

on closed selves the poems
coming
one after another, and i
said, where did you copy
all these?
they all sound the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Measuring It

the gap is
sky and sea

we should
not have
measured it

between us
now is emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Noon.........

fourth of a spoon of turmeric
three spoonfuls of
oatmeal
hot water to mix all these
a little milk

stir them in one cup
the one you bought during the
1987 alumni homecoming

lunch and some images to inspire
you to sleep

you needed it most, just now

12: 20 afternoon....

RIC S. BASTASA
sylvia, the elephant is inside your
tummy, you have become a melon growing and crawling in tendrils
a ponderous house
a red fruit
you have eaten a bag of green apples
and rode a train without stopping
to an exit

sylvia, i may not understand the nine syllables
inside you
for i am a man without
these syllables

sylvia i put two syllables somewhere
and it grows into three just three

there was bleeding and i saw it
i took her to the hospital and she was put into a sleep
and she was finally made to appear
clean to me

she was numb and speechless to the window panes
there was frost
and there was that bird which flew away since then
from her forehead

now, sylvia look at me
i was the man who only had three syllables

look at me in this sentence
i am a comma, i am a period.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Reading Your Poem About That Indigo Morning

about a star so bright
and then only
to die
early that morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
After Shooting The Mockingbird

To death
On top of my roof
I can not sleep
In the middle of this
Cold night

RIC S. BASTASA
After Ten Years Or So.

when he was about to write the poem in his head
suddenly the glass fell and then it broke into pieces
near his feet but he heard nothing

what he saw were the scatted pieces of glass
that calm table which did not in any way shake
that curtain which was blown by the air from the window
like the hair of a woman
the paper which remained blank
and the pen which had become too tired
in its throne of silence

it was too late for him to remember: why did that glass fall?
and what was inside that glass?

after ten years or so.

RIC S. BASTASA
After That Long And Lovely Night

after this long and lovely night
and the morning after
when we are dressed to the truths
of our beings

can i still look at you straight in the eye?
can i still call your name without shame?
can you look at me so gently
and touch my hands again and assure me
that that night
was still as lovely as truthfully as
we still are....

that it was done in the name of love
and that nothing there
was painful?

RIC S. BASTASA
After That Depressing Moment....

it is indeed
a beautiful morning

sun is up
air is fresh
leaves are shiny
no dusts on the road

i had my bath
and breakfast
fixed my hair
sprayed perfume
and fully
dressed for this occasion

at least
i know what to do
and where to go...

RIC S. BASTASA
After That Earthquake In Haiti

tears fall from
the weary eyes of the world
as its million ears
hear the chant
and songs of the
strong people
of Haiti

God is with them
always
with its billion hands
ready
for a trillion cares
the zillion touches
& living thoughts.

RIC S. BASTASA
After That Love Long Gone

this i will tell you or i may not tell you at all
i have to think about a choice

i still have the scar, call it a souvenir.
whatever that is,
a proper word fitting like dado joints

my pride is
i am healed.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The 3,000 Cranes

after the 3,000 cranes
religiously made, day and night
as promised by the gods
my cheek turns pink this day

and now i am into my 4,000th poem
i am praying to my gods of poetry
to energize my nerves to make
this body move, to make me whole
again, so i may learn the true
meaning of my poems about
faith, love, and hope.

let me begin first with hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Attack Where Some Children Died

and so they attack one dismal day
in Lanao del Norte and Maguindanao
some innocent towns
shooting in such a spree
the farmer who merely passed by
the child playing on the family yard
the wife cooking the breakfast for the day
they sprayed bullets on the houses
an old man lying there was hit

the widows wail in sadness
the children losing their fathers, these breadwinners of five or six
some are brave enough to tell that this must not be repeated
that the culprits must be charged (or be summarily beheaded)

and then today, i hear the MNLF leaders say
on tv that
they condemn the mass murder that
they ask their commanders on the field to stop the senseless killings
they tell the government that they will investigate
and if these men are found guilty
there shall be no pity

i spit my discontentment and for once in my life i use the word
SHIT!

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Bombing Incident

AFTER the bombing incident last night
at the church of San Pedro
tiny shreds of flesh hang on the walls
and ceiling of the confinement.

the cries are not prolonged except the
sounds of ambulance
and the military jeeps
to and fro the city gates

sleep was denied, and then that early morning
i opened the window
i saw this little blue bird perched on the guava tree
it was singing a very sad song beside a bunch
of ripe guava fruits.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Bombing Of The Small Village

after the bombing of the small village
by the insurgents
some flesh still hang on the
branches of mahogany trees
some eyeballs of women left to stare
to the skies
some toes are scattered on the grass
shrapnel reigns like the
pebbles on the shore

that morning she looks over the window
she finds ripe guava fruits
on the branches surrounded
with green leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Burning Of The House

we've been to such situations as

a house burning with no fireman coming despite our screams for help,

that day when an old woman walked straight to the sea and drowned herself and the waves took her in gladly

while we simply watched how even fold and unfold

when we do not cease when we flowed with the surge of the big river

when everything turned dark and silent when we wake up

and see all the curious people asking as what really happened

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Chat

we have only a minute
or so
but after the chat
we usually end it with
take care
you take care
and then we go
or at least we know
that we do different things
on different days
on this chasms of our lives
then i told you
it is raining heavily here
and they you said
bye
and i said bye too
but if you only know
literally speaking
there was no rain
there was only emptiness
the void and the
words in between
the lines
this thinking of
how can i ever tell you?
how can you
ever understand
the rain
its sounds
and meanings

RIC S. BASTASA
look i will never promise
that i will see you all again

there is no such thing
as missing,
it is just a matter of knowing
who went up
and then forgetting those who
went down

then we move on
to our separate lives
the struggles within
the mindlessness
without.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Day

when day folds
like an umbrella after a rain
of heat and light,

we must welcome the night
as a nesting place of love
and rest

we must journey into the fields
of dreams
blue skies, soft clouds
drifting in our minds

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Day's Work Is Done

tired and disappointed
another day's work is unfinished

i look up the sky
seeing dark clouds

i look towards the sea
fading
the sun a glowing disc
falling into the dark line
of the horizon

unfinished business again,
ah, i still have enough reason to live
for another day

sisyphus! sisyphus!
how true can you be
in me...

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Downfall

my friend, please listen,
a downfall is not permanent
for we too are like air
we do not stay
as stone forever
we transform this self
into dew hanging on
a the leaf of dawn
we do not stay like that
forever
we go with the seasons of
life
we transform to the dictates
of the sun
we soon become air
we evaporate
we rise and rise and keep on rising
until we become
the quintessence
of this universe

some have become
atoms of the stars
and they look down
that stone and shine
upon its hardness
wishing to speak
again about transformation
and truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Flood

after the flood
one looks around and finds brown
fine mud

what comforts us
is this eye for abstract art.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Flood...

i
after the river
pregnant with water
a wood drifting
finds ashore

ii
old man lies on a
tatami
arm on his forehead
thoughts drifting

iii
little boy little boy
playing on the road
there is no fear
about rushing cars

iv
on a calm morning sea
the white seagulls are feasting
on a school of fish

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Flower Has Bloomed

after the flower has bloomed
it has no option left
but to proceed to the next
inevitable step
of wilting and falling and
drying and crumpling

it will
just be another dried seed
again
falling to a fertile ground
of illusions

without your hands, it shall
soon grow
to become another flower
again
soon, soon
spring.

even without your hands
even without your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Great Flood

after the great flood
it was the black crow which was first
allowed to fly,
Moses had confidence on its
aggression,
it did not come back you know that well,
it puked on dead flesh and
flew away
deciding on its own now
charting its own
destiny,

then it was the pigeon's turn to serve
coy and shy and yet obedient
it came back with a twig and a leaf

whether this is all symbolism or not
an interplay and contrast between black and white
crow and pigeon, good or evil
disobedience or impunity, i don't
go into a hairsplitting
or argument with you

but i have to admit, i like to be that black crow.
i never want to be the pigeon that you believe i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Killing

after the killing of his parents
shall the killer say
that he is an orphan
to be pitied?

after the cruelty
shall cruelty be understood
and be forgiven?

ask those who mourn
those who scream in pain
those who know not what humanity is all about

ask those who bury their dead
without names without faces without hands
without brains without intestines
ask those whose genitals were riddled with bullets
stained with the sperm of the monsters
ask those who cannot be silent anymore

perhaps there is reason for that tooth for a tooth
an eye for an eye
a chunk of flesh for another chunk of flesh

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Long, Busy Day

so many words
others so unkind
freed from
the prisons of the
mind,

hurting,
cruelty in rampage
thorns and spikes
biting the
soles of the feet
even of
strangers

the words of love
are still kept
preserved in the
recesses of
the heart

(though bleeding still
and still
healing)

i rest myself
in the hammock
of ropes

i let a black butterfly
hover on my lips

we kiss and
forge a protocol
of silence

on my birthday today
let there be
tranquility between
us
&
the world takes
time to listen
to the ripples
of our souls

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Night Is Gone

the windows open
lights are turned off
there is one in the kitchen
at the back door
which you forget to close
which makes you
remember
who she once was

there is the grass trimmed
still insufficiently cut
there are shadows of leaves
there are whispers of gates

no one tells us carefully
every word rushes inside our throats
on blistered syllables

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Rain

it is an observation that after the rain
the stones on the pavement glisten
to the envy of the dews
but the leaves where the dews sit and dry
themselves to death
when they finally vanish into the rays of the sun
understand
what all these temporaries are
at the peaks of glory time is always too short
passing like no one
like nothing is
there

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Rain The Pebbles Too Glisten

after the rain
dews still cling on the leaves
glistening,

the pebbles too, but lifeless
still, my heart feels

sympathy, for those in the cold
immobile, wanting to change

but cannot, vision filled,
all unrealized, anticipations

smothered wishes, choked
ambitions, breathless, dead

nerves, numbed existence,
unfeeling, used now

to the brim, unspoken, desires
fettered.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Rainfall......

after the rainfall
the world turns into
a glistening dew
slowly fading like
a dream
on the linings of the
leaves

an old man sits by his
window
hoping for a clear day
when the sun comes out
again
from the bosom of the
mountain.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Scream

after the scream, she takes her needed vacation
in Florence,
takes her silent walks along the boulevard
by the river of Arno,

this is Italy, and the scream had long been forgotten.
it is over she said, my brother is dead, and i am here

working on a plan to survive the pain
of my family

each step is a forgetting.
the sound of her heels on the cobbled stones
must tell another story

something happy, about her love and her coping up
for a new beginning.

her long hair hangs on her thick black coat
the river is a big, wide, long silver
running between two connected
ancient towns of other people's miseries

not hers now. It is over. It is over.
She keeps on telling herself.

she obliges a smile in this picture.
her hands inside her arms
sticking on the side of her
frail, brown body.

Meanwhile, the sun begins
to spread her morning light.

It is time to 's what is written
at the back of the picture.

I am looking at it now. I am smiling.
After The Separation...

now i shudder
at your touch

i have regained
myself in this

shattered independence
i am many pieces

mirrors of myself
on the floor and here

in these many things
you can not find me.

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Slow Slipping Of Self

grab your emptiness
like a handful of sand
in your hand

and let it spill there
grain after grain
after grain

until all is gone
away
slipping from
your fingers

then feel that
your hands
are still yours

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Storm

after the passing of the storm
last night
the leaves are in disarray
entangled in some
broken twigs
on the ground

i look at the window
down under
and see the mess

on a tree fronting my window
i hear the mocking bird
singing

trying to resolve the disorder
at the top of its
lingering song

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Storms....

after all these storms
i shall walk again on those peaceful paths
into the rice fields of my
ancestors
where the stalks despite the wind
still know how
to rise

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Talk

after the talk
i walk and take a
little distance
not wanting to hear
what you said
a while ago...

it is sad
when words serve
no purpose
but to tell about
pain and elaborate
on the sourness
of sorrow

it would have been
easier for me
that before you go
you have not
said some
words so unkind
and so undeserving
of the dignities
of past memories.....

go now
i have enough of you!

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Trial...

he walks straight to his chambers
remove his black robe

he opens the jalousie window
takes a deep breath in silence

between him and the walls
are the Gumamela petals

dead red at the center and
saturated yellow at each side

RIC S. BASTASA
After The Work Is Done

after the work is done
what will you do next?

take a rest you cannot
sit and sip your tea
you still cannot
you are simply not
comfortable not having
any work at all

your hands tremble
without anything to do
you panic on this state
of uselessness
you become confused
in emptiness with
nothing to do

so after the work is done
you look for more work
again, for they must not
forget you,

your name had always
been
Sisyphus, a convict
of the gods, eternally
damned to be always
on the go
and stopping is simply
not possible.............

RIC S. BASTASA
After This Flood.....

i left the garden of
our Eden
i have lost whatever
reason i have
for those flowers
no ambition remains
to be trees
the clouds erase
themselves
from the only sky
left in my
mind

whatever that
was
it was a happy
memory
but the only faithful
creature
is here with me:

this snake with its
forked tongue
has an eloquence
that keeps me company

let me hope for
a dove
after this Flood.....

RIC S. BASTASA
After This Meeting

after this meeting
you must forget that we have met
whatever was said
or felt
simply disregard everything
like you have taken a bath with me
shed off each drop
to the river
let each moment pass
and float and then go back
to where they must belong
some things
some moments are better
forgotten
i do not want to remember
sweetness or pain
i do not want to feel
what was once there
let them go
for nothing belongs to me
time, words, thoughts
they all pass through me
i never own them
after this short meeting
when you think you fill me
(like a glass of water
or a cup of coffee
when you think you have
quenched my thirst
when you think that for
a time
i shall not hunger)

let me be
an empty space again
let me be another drop
of silence
After Thoughts About William

did i tell you that in this life what we see is what we get?
like william's
red wheel
barrow

words are things
and things are words
interchangeable

you see what i see
but what i see need not be what you know
and what you know
need not be seen by me

just like a red
wheel
barrow beside the
white
chickens

it is great

behind the lines is this child's death
eyes closing
forever

you stand by the side of the window
helplessly looking somewhere where you become nothing
but
this speck of dust

falling on that red
wheel
barrow glazed by rain
water beside the white chickens

a thought falling
endlessly on a chasm that sinks deep within you
helplessly, you,
just stand there for in truth we are here just to see how things come and go
and then we go too, like the white chickens

RIC S. BASTASA
After Watching A Trailer Of Amelie

the piano plays in the dark
it is inside my mind
every note of it
i see the old man still on his trembling fingers
the sound of his music clings in the ears
of my heart

she died a long time ago
it is his inability to accept things as they are
that makes his fingers sing

it is this sadness in his heart
that makes his solitude as beautiful as ever
verily like the face of the woman he loves

it is this darkness that keeps all lights open
dusk, twilights, trailing blazes of needles of peeping light
penetrating the shutters of his window

at the end when he dies
i look at the face of the room again
stained with so much sorrow
artistically
priced without much value
the onlookers laugh
i don't
precisely i know the story and i want to write
this one
all over again
not on paper but inside my mind
my soul is the pen
my heart bleeds on paper

RIC S. BASTASA
After Watching 'snow Falling On Cedars'

tears fell from my eyes

prejudice & justice
do not rhyme

truth creeps slowly
on my brow

a man is convicted
not for what he is

but for what he has done

a reflection of
Sunday

not gloomy
not gloomy at all

the sun shines
brightly on the beach

like the truth
waving

RIC S. BASTASA
After Watching The Sand Artist

it is within
my power to
change the scenes
to hop from
one chapter of my
life to another

with my fingers
and palms
i chart the course
of my life
i write my own
destiny

i like an ending
where we are finally
talking.

just that.
nothing miraculous.
erase the
kissing scene.

RIC S. BASTASA
After You Conching.....

i would have been more gentle despite the strong wind.  
i should have not minded the waves, that day when you have finally 
arrived at the place of rain. It is cold and then the road has turned to mud. 
The child in us wants to go out and be restless 
or relentless, but we had been grown up as trees 
pruned in all the coming of the wild seasons. 
after you Conching, i too left the place for there are no more reasons 
given by the books.  
When i stepped on that old bus bound for Campo Redondo  
i left a letter.  

Love there was carved in stone, but I do not wish to find it again.  
I was told a child got angry and threw that stone in the depths of Caninga, 
and it was never found again.  

For no one, no one, ever found it to be significant 

RIC S. BASTASA
you must begin to imagine
after you leave
and be gone for years
when you come back
i am still here
this is still the house
but there is no longer
any welcome sign
even like a rug
we are tombs
silent cities without trees
grassy paths
all stones ....

RIC S. BASTASA
After You Sarah

There is no magic any more,

we are the most normal people
meeting in an ordinary party
i do not expect much
after hello
as much as you do

you act like the sea and i pass like the wind
there is nothing marvelous
i have become so restless
like someone not magnanimous

and then finally i say enough, enough,
nothing is suspenseful as a car-nap
everything is monotonous like a shoe tap
for all the peace, goodbye and bless

RIC S. BASTASA
After You Unfold As A Flower In Complete Bloom

i see you unfolding as a flower to me
i become your sun to shine upon you
as you bloom completely
i watch the beauty before me
i am warm too as you are so beautiful
to the caresses of my rays
i hold you then kissing everything
your petals your leaves your receptacles

after you unfold as a flower in complete bloom
i will make you
some dews
gleaming

then i leave in this sunset of my life
you too must fall
petal by petal
then the leaves too must die

such is the temporary nature of our meeting
so beautiful yes
so brief indeed
and no dew of time must ever be wasted

till we meet again
i will always be the sun and you shall always be the
flower unfolding
to such a marvelous complete blooming

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon

a woman with a long black hair
sweeps the road
using a coconut broom

three children pass by
and suddenly throws a stone
to the mango tree

a motorcycle speeds its way
from the market
a dog crosses the street
the little girl runs after

we hear a screeching sound of the
brakes
and that is how the case starts

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Break

i sit
upon a chair
under a tree
surrounded
by blooming
dahlias

i like the silence
of the shrubs
the coolness of
the wind

in my solitude
a bird
hovers upon a
twig
and sings a song

i guess it is
for me
i guess
God has sent it
for me

i think of
nothing but
God's love

in serenity

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Fading

at the beach
something is going on

a change of colors
of the beach scene

the blazing red turning
into a haze of gray

children playing turning into
shadows

the laughter fades into
a sacred silence

the heart learns some more
about the face of solitude

the dance of loneliness
the falling of the curtain of darkness

in the room a candle is lighted
the mind begins to think

RIC S. BASTASA
there you are
pain and its protrusions
creeks to rivers
and tributaries like
fingers of the hands
into thy chest to listen
to the whispers of the
heart the sea and the
ocean to become whole
again to be not noticed
as pain and its protrusions
but wagering waves friends
of the monsoon winds
slaves of the lights of the moon
sailing like ships losing
their shadows to a limitless
horizon into that darkness
sleepy until the next opening
day of the sun where light
in profusion blinds the eyes
the truths that scare us
we should have loved and
believed like gripping hands
of our very best friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Musings

who first took the cookie from the cookie jar?

who me?
yes you
not i
then who?

(for the grown-up
insomniacs
try the song

and change cookie
to love

it works)

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Musings 2

an afternoon dumptruck
carries all the light
away
and here comes
a pick-up of twilight

vans of worries
and a jetplane of imaginings

to carry me away
inside is this journey of a submarine

inside me
wanting for an understanding of the
deepest sea

RIC S. BASTASA
it is 5:48 p.m.
dark and light
are arranging
for this shift

i am waiting
for someone
to come and
replace me

i have to go
somewhere
i am not meant
to be left alone

in this old house
in this empty room
in this silence
that is too deafening

another night shall
take over and all
my loud music
and musings
shall have no
more meaning

RIC S. BASTASA
you always love to see the man
out of the door

i guess you own the house
the land the city the continent
the world the universe

how many men have passed away
from your world?

how many have finally found the way
out of your door?

i have no wish getting in.

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Musings 5

i am sorry darling
i am a ten or more thousand miles away from you

i am sorry darling
i could have given you a little love from my heart

but you are also twenty or more thousand miles away from me
i am indeed sorry my darling

all you know is just this distancing away from everybody
and i am learning a little of your game

point A running away from point B
not to make a bridge but just this long, long, long line

of separation, a debunking demarcation away from the land
to the sea and to the other sea

you never imagine that in doing so
from one far end to another end you finally form a circle

finding me and everyone inside you
don't ask me but the world is still round

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon Musings 6

(the time is 6:02 pm
Philippine time)

imagine myself situate yourself
in my own place

i am writing a poem on the ground floor of this house
the brown curtain is laced and tied to a window
that opens beyond this red painted wrought iron fence

outside the mango trees are full of leaves
and the grasses are running wild
on mud where the earthworms are thriving

the sky is turning gray and the horizon turns
pale orange as the sun finally descends to
hand this total darkness on this land of mine

you hear the sound of the strong wind from the
sea moving towards the big mountains that i
see from where i am sitting and writing

i am telling you again, the sound is howling
and i am telling you again, i am just alone staring

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes i miss a friend  
who talks to me without knowing  
what time is  

one who is carefree and freewilling  
like the way we blow the bubbles  
of soap and water in the air  
when we laughed so loud  
when we were those naughty children  

sometimes i miss the times  
when we bathe in the river  
naked with our innocence  
plunging in the noise and the rage  
of the rippling waters  
and not thinking about  
what we are or who we are  
or what do we become of ourselves  

i miss the times when we simply bask  
under the sun to dry our wet tight bodies  
when we close our eyes under such a strong light  
and see the comfort of orangeness inside us  

i miss the times when we simply sit on the grass  
on early afternoons watching the sun setting on the sea  
waiting till it becomes dark when the stars come  
like an array of friends to the full moon slowly  

ascending, and how all of them shine and though  
so distant from us, they all appear to be happy  

in that glimmer and glitter, on that summer  
many years ago before the coming of death & despair  

RIC S. BASTASA
Afternoon View When The Office Is About To Close

from my window
you must have probably heard me about saying the same thing all over again
but i will say it again

the sea is very calm like a sky blue silk spread on the floor
the horizon is pale white like the color of shyness

at a distance there is a boat
the man just spread the fish net

a tiny bird hops from one dry twig to another
another leaf on the other branch falls because it is bound to fall

yellow leaves, those dead ones
caught by the fingers of the grasses below

and then the sound of sirens comes
it is now time to go

now my heart sings with joy
for another night perhaps with the stars high on the roof of my house
in my solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aftershock

It is true  
even if the bed is classy  
soft as the best imported foam ever  
feathery like a dream  
inside a perfumed room  
on the 8th floor  
of your hotel  
upon a sleepy light  
on the ceiling  
one still cannot sleep  
when there are cracks  
on the walls  
like rice terraces  
from a top  
view perspective

RIC S. BASTASA
Again Nothing Is Said

The one you love comes home
on muddy feet

you open the door
and inside the house

without a word or two for you
sleep soundly
comes

rushing to the bed
dirt lies upon the
the white linen which you have
laundered for
days

when the time comes for waking

again
nothing is said

what for are the coming days?

ah, still for the one you
love

RIC S. BASTASA
Again We Shall Do The Same Things

again we shall do the same things
we used to do before
the smile we both smiled
the laughter we both laughed
the hands that used to guide us
and hold us firm
as faithful lovers used to do
cling
entwine like the vines in our garden
then we flower together
to meet the sun
and greet the moon with our love
we run
holding hands together on that green pasture
where some brooks run
where some birds perch on some contented sleep
they we lay on the grass
facing the black sky
the full moon and some distant stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Again, It Is All About You

....becasue you are real
nature has designed you as
an intricate artistic creation
of nerves
that feel the pain
but always with
all those meaningful
and divine related
 endings

RIC S. BASTASA
Against Oneself

running and running
in an endless road
everyday is running
to a year a century
running, running, running
against oneself
if you only look back
no one is chasing
if you only know what is
at the end of this
journey
there should have been
no reason for a hurry
running, running, running away
i don't know till now
what is the reason
why.

RIC S. BASTASA
Against The Light....

imitating me
my shadow
too writes poems
against the
light......

RIC S. BASTASA
Against The Mainstream

what is see
is this salmon
swimming
against the
mainstream

it is looking
for a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Against The River...

he stopped whining,
it will be counterproductive
the leader says,
he taped his mouth, he tied his
own hands,
he closed his eyes,
and then he died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Age Matters

when a 70 year-old
grandpa marries
a 19 year-old
woman
one cannot deny
the different possibilities
between the two
of them

vested interests
soon shall kill them

RIC S. BASTASA
Agn Bikil Sa Atong Kinabuhi

mao nga kita mopiying aron
magpadayag ang wala nato makita
sukad-sukad sa sulod
sa atong kasing-kasing

ug dayon ibuka nato
ang atong mga mata aron makita
pag-usab ang mga dayag
nga nakapabuta kanato
sa dugay na kaayong higayon
diha sa tunga sa kusog kaayo
nga sulog sa kahayag

RIC S. BASTASA
Agnostic After 49 Years

49 years are all enough
to perfect
agnosticism.

the icons are sold.
religion is turned off like a nonsense radio.
belief is suspended
like a frozen stalactite.

but for one thing the river still runs to the sea
calling for help.

agnosticism does not expect anything
from an ocean.
it sinks and wills what death wills.

RIC S. BASTASA
Agnosticism

white clouds
searching for
a white dove
on the white
sandy shore

Kalibog

Puti nga panganod
Nangita usa sa
Puti nga salapati
Sa puti nga
Mga balas sa dagat

RIC S. BASTASA
Agnus Dei

mistaken for innocence
the Power has to make
the sacrifice of the lamb
and then we must remember
the blood that saved us...

RIC S. BASTASA
Agony

i. pag-agulo sa usa ka babaye nga uhaw kaayo sa gugma

ang imong hunghong sa akong dunggan
misuot sa mga ugat sa akong utok

ang imong ilong misusi sa kalibog sa akong mga buhok
sa tunga tunga sa atong paghingutas
mibutho ang kalaliman sa usa ka talagsaong himaya

'patya! patya! patya ko! ' miyama yama ka og bungat
nianang mga pulong nga sayod ko lahi ang ang imong buot ipasabot.

ii tubag sa lalaki nga dugay na usab nga wala magamit

ang imong mga dalungan nagpangamay
sa akong mga hunghong
og ang imong mga buhok
morag mga kamot nga mibira kanako

mitugsoy ang akong ilong
og mikusog ang akong pagginhawa

gisuyop ko ang hangin
sa atong lawak sa pagbati ning gisaloan tang kaulag
mora akog buyog nga mobatog
kanimo og akong gihigop ang nektar
sa pula nga rosas nga anaa diha sa imong ngabil, sa imong dughan sa imong bilahan

nag-uros-uros ang akong gugma,
mibuhagay nga morag busay, og ikaw babaye
anaa sa akong ubos, sa akong tiilan, naligo, nagpauraray, miluhod kay
nahinangop usab kanako

'Luyaha! Luyaha! Luyaha ko! '
maoy balos ko kanimo.
Agrarian Unrest....

my father is a landlord.
He sent me to a big university in the city.
I studied philosophy.

The university taught me about equality.
Compassion. We studied existentialism
The poverty of the masses.
The agrarian unrest.
The essence of man
The quality of life
Justifications of living
Explanations of death
After life.

I wrote a class report about a child who ate
only a handful of rice for breakfast
plus brown sugar as viand
and then a glass of water for his thirst
from the nearby river
and then he was left in the house
as his father works in the field
and his mother
sells vegetables in the market.

When i left the child, The
heavy silence of the world fell upon my shoulder.

One day father took me for a vacation in our land.
There are mountains. Lots of trees.
A beautiful place.

There is a house there
Dilapidated. A tenant lives there
There is a hungry child.
Drought. Long hot days.

I pity the poor condition. But i no longer ask for the cause.
Then the tenant asks me if i can give him land.
Or a part of father's land.
I have no answer.
I could have told him, I do not own anything,
I do not live here
and father is still alive...

And wants me to be firm and cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Agreeing With Urias

the sea
has reminded us that
there are still depths
despite
that cannot be
fathomed

it knows
when to invade
and we do not know it
it takes what
belongs to it
perhaps
rightfully

with its ebbs and
tides
it has told us
that in here
everything changes
that there is such thing
as a cycle
now
once we were here
and then
we were gone

always
for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Agusan Marshland

Around you, waters
Above you, blue clouds and sun
Boat sliding, hush.......
Agusan Marshland

pregnant
the moon
tonight
rests upon
the marsh
land.

RIC S. BASTASA
Agusan Marshlands From The Lens Of Elvi

Crystal clear river not a ripple from your hands
You are inside this boat of art
Sailing on the belly of this peaceful Agusan river
Where the sun and earth meet and become one
In the mirror of their likeness
The dark islands the dark trees
Mirror on the smooth water as you take the pictures
Of this manner of capturing the beauty
Of peace and tranquility
On the background is a native hurling his nets
On a boat his thin child
The river turns to murky brown
The fish swim away in hiding
Disturbed by their hunger
The poverty that grips their bodies
Their souls thirsty for the beauty that they cannot see
Your lens disregarded what should have been more true & real
Overshadowed by your quest to capture
What is not there
I am looking at the background beyond the mirror
On a closer look the native has angry eyes
Red with fury but then the night comes
And your lens was not sensitive enough
The truth was not exposed
Only the man and his boy felt it
In darkness they are the only ones fully seeing
Your boat leaves without saying anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Ah, I Am So Sorry

but my poems tonight
are like autumn leaves
falling
they are sad
and they don't sound
beautiful at all
i do not wish to edit
them
to polish them like
some shiny
gems

they are not
intended for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ah, The Stars Talk A Lot In That Infinite Space

a dialogue
is not just between
you and me

could also be
a me and myself
who knows
what it yields
sooner or later
but this had
happened for
quite a time
in between two
buildings
amidst the forest
of concrete woes

one has tried it
with a tree
and writes about
it with conviction
that a silent tree
rooted upon itself
has a capacity for
a dialogue

did it not happen
to lament talking
to a horse
one one wintry night?

man and his mind
or his soul could be
has a way of finding
a way towards home

and home has become
everywhere and
everything
to such an extent
words are becoming extinct
like some
forms of dinosaurs

ah, the stars talk a lot
in that infinite space

RIC S. BASTASA
Ahh An Evening Of Poetry

an evening of poetry
goes beyond words and images

beyond thought
beyond what we care about

darkness fingers itself in the room
when you turn off the light

moans suppressed
like a poem restrained from a loud reading
because
something is so beautiful
and someone
tiptoes

not to destroy
the arrangement of the furniture

too careful
not to break a code
of the white porcelain

one speaks sub rosa
in whispers because love is too private
to savor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ahhh Love, What More Can I Spare?

ahhh, love what more can i spare to you?
i have given it all and has spoiled you.
i shall give some more, will it destroy more?
ahhh, love, they say saves and liberates and resurrects
i have given it all, and they take it all
in some schemes of betrayal
what has love done to you? is it good? is it worth the while?

love has given me pain
but i shall wait again and again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ahhhh

in truth
you must know
there is something inside
us that builds up
upon itself
and wants to erupt
we cannot hold it
there is more
that this dam self
can take
the rain of realities
still pour
until everything is us
is full
and then we let go
everything
that bothers us
to make us whole again
to make us
sleep again
like once a
peaceful river

RIC S. BASTASA
Ahhhhhhhhh, Ariel The Wind Is Joining In

ladies, ladies
be quite

ariel is here again
he is the wind
not a storm
he is the soft breeze
from the sea
of love

listen carefully
he is not a brute
he is your
perfect gentleman

now if you wouldn't mind
please
open your legs... er, your book on page 10.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aida

what beautiful body have you
soft to touch cool as dew

what virginal eyes as innocent as a dove
what fragrance how sweet such a love

refreshing air from grass and meadow
i feel like heaven & so in love with you

and what kind of horror is this
when i think i just found my bliss

in the middle of our ecstasy
with all the colors of fantasy

you turn into this black giant scorpion
your pincers preying upon my hard-on

and now, how can i ever move on?
this life in ruin, this body on destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
Air

be like air
to my body
invisible and yet
so essential

felt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Air Comes And Goes

after a while
one realizes
this world is
to wide for me
and the butterfly
too fragile for
its rock kind of winds
how i wish to change
a mountain?
the horns of the
buffalo are no
match for its
cliffs
so here you are
sitting on a chair
away from the mountains
facing the sea
on a journey
towards an endless
horizon
when the mind is
blank and
bland
to an open window
air comes and goes.

RIC S. BASTASA
on the other hand, there are other reasons,
on the other side of this mountain or that river
there are other explanations, sublimation, suppositions,
non-exhaustible tires of juxtapositions, some more, i will attempt
to understand from behind all these fog and frost.

on the other hand, i still have myself, there are losses for sure,
a face, a privilege, a position, a classification, a category,
lower, lower, lovers, losers, you cry out, it is foul and doleful.
But, there is still myself looking, finding, trying, to withstand
the whims of your winds, the batteries of your barbs, and
well, it is swell i suppose so, but there is still my soul
intact, and no matter how many shells and rockets bombard
my body on the hills of hell, there is still myself, a core.

unbent spirit, still shaped to the face of God.

the other hand, on the other side beyond
the edge of time.

Indestructible is this soul. . Timelessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Air...Nothing But Air....

i have not seen you
you are air
that passes me by
you are invisible and you
want to teach my heart
to love
so you ask the help of the
scented flower
and you made the petals dance
the buds open
and you have finally taught my
heart to sing
the songs of love
under the fullness of the moon

i feel you then...

can i change you into something that i can kiss
and touch and sleep with?
you are air still,
you are invisible,
i feel your essence but i cannot touch
your presence
my arms are empty
and longings still haunt me
you are still a certain space
that is never filled up
by any substance

you will pass me by
and i will feel the absence later
and this will amount to nothing but pain

more & more pain and so
i have decided for once
on a shorter notice
that as early as noontime
i shall forget you then
completely even before
the sunset comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ako Sa Langit Gibayaw

gipiyong ko ang akong mga mata
dili
sa dili nga ako makalantaw sa pagbuswak sa usa
ka masanagon nga adlaw
alang kanako
sa pagtak-om sa akong baba og sa pagtago sa akong dila
misulod ang hangin nga bugnaw sa akong ilong
padulong sa mga lawak sa akong kasingkasing
og ako
sa langit gibayaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Kang J.

akong gihinumdoman karon
ang atong pagpadiditi didtos
bungtod sa Bandera
gamit ang sinaw nga palwa

dunggon nato pagbalik ang atong
mga katawa samtang kitang duha
natuali, naligid, nga morag si
jess lapid paingon sa ubos hangtod
nga kitang duha napaingon didto
sa mga kabaw nga nagpabugnaw
sa ilang kaudtohon didtos ilang
gitugwayan nga tunaan

atong balikon ang atong pagpanagan
paingon sa sapa dayon natog ambak
gikan sa habog nga bato tiglom ngadto
sa laom nga suba diin kita nahupong
sa pagkaligo sa bugnaw kaayong
sulog sa tubig nga haskang tin-awa

sa paghinumdom lamang mamahimong
tin-aw ang tanan.
ayaw palihog, lubga ang kagahapon.
duyugi ako ning akong awit sa kamingaw
halad sa nagkahanap na nato nga mga adlaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Kang Juan....

juan, palihog daw bi
himoi kog balak, kanang
morag buwak nga mikatay
sa labat,
nga naghimog entrada
paingon sulod
sa balay nga
malipayon, unya pakapini
og mga aninipot sa lalom
nga kagabhion
nga nag-alirong sa kahoy
nga kamatyonon,
og kon mahimo pa nimo
palihog og dugang sa
bugnaw nga hangin nga
imong isulod diha sa bentana
nga kanunayng nangabre
nagpaabot
sa awit sa kaadlawon
nga misaad sa adlaw nga
bulawanon

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Kang Robin

lain na sang babaye ang imong gidal sa beach

gwapa, puti, may pagka blonde ang buhok
taas, nindot ang legs, gamay og hawak
pula ang ngabil, batan-on sama nimo

gilutoan nimong sea noodles
paris sa sandwhich
bugnaw nga coca-cola
ug pipila ka chichiria

sweet mong duha diha sa duyanan nga uway
nga medyo gaguot mong duha
apan kabalo ko nga diha sa sikit
ang lami nga ingkit

gikan na ko diha, busa sahay
makakatawa ko

pareho lang gihapon ang atong mga pangutana: pila pa kaha sama
ninong mga bayhana ang magbasol nganong sama sa usa

ka dangag nga isda mitukob man sa paon nga wati nga mitabon sa taga?

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Sa Mga Makalolooy Sabat Palihog

Looy kaayo ko
Looy kaayo ka
Looy kaayo kitang tanan

Ngano ba?

Looy kaayo ko
Looy kaayo ka
Looy kaayo kitang tanan

Sus ngano ba gyod?

Looy kaayo ko
Looy kaayo ka
Looy kaayo siya
Looy kaayo kitang tanan

Sus ngano man gud ba?

Looy kaayo siya
Looy kaayo silang tanan.

Di na ko mangutana
Kay wa na akoy labot
ug di jud ko mangilabot.

d.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Sa Mga Working Mothers

Himoan ko kamo og balak
Halad kaninyo.

Dili ko kini tas-on sama sa
Red carpet sa mga kaslonon

Gikan sa pultahan hangtod
Sa altar sa simbahan.

Sayod ako nga nagdali kamo
Sa kadaghan sa inyong trabaho-

Magpatutoy sa puya.
Magpatutoy pa sa bana.

Magplano sa family menu.
Mag-budget pa sa gamayng sweldo.

Magluto sa pamahaw.
Manghipos pa sa bahaw.

Kutob dinhi na lang lagi ko
Niining balak alang kaninyo

Kay wala na ra ba mo’y panahon
Busa ugma na lang pud puhon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Sa Tawo Nga Hilig Sa Kaon

Kadtong imong larawan
Sa pulahon nga sakayan nga dunay
Usa ka katig nga naglutaw sa
Ibabaw sa lubog nga suba

Pagkaanindot gayod tan-awon

Morag sushi sa ibabaw
Sa cheese nga parmesan
Pizza ang larawan sa gatabisay
Nga dila, naglaway gustong

Mopaak bisag gamay nga hiwa
Diha sa iyang hotcake nga kalibotan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alang Sa Usa Ka Mangkoy Nga Balakero

Dunay daotan nga nahitabo.
Miabot ka kaganiha pa. Wa’y tingog.
Misu’d ka sa lawak. Nag-ilis. Niligid
Sa imong katre. Way tingog-tingog.
Isip pagtahod, ako pod
Naghilom-hilom lang.

Sa imong edad nga singkwenta,
Unsa bay tambag nga imong ikadalit
Sa akong mga pangutana?
Wala. Kamingaw ning atong ba’y.
Mora tag nagpuyo sa menteryo.
Ugma mobangon ka, magsulat
Og laing balak. Magtudlo ka na usab
Sa imong mga tinun-an kabahin
Sa usa ka balakero nga dili kaayo
Ganahan motingog.

Nagbukot ka sa habol. Gitupong
Ang imong duha ka tiil aron ka
Masigo. Igo ra kong naglingo-lingo.

Sirad-an ko ang imong pultahan-
Balik ka ni Nanay. Sa iyang sabakan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alas Kwatro Sa Kaadlawon

ang alas kwatro sa kaadlawon
sa daplin sa baybayon
nindot nga talan-awon

asul nga mga balod
nga morag gilitikit sa sa mga tudlo
sa kangitngit
mga aninipot nga nagpahuway
ang mga kahayag gikan sa duha ka baroto
nga kagabii nagdungan og dunggo
sa lapa-lapa sa dagat gustong motupad
sa mga lubi nga nagpahipi ug nangahirig

naglakaw ko nga hinay
namati sa hunghong sa hangin
nga namugnaw sa kadagatan

ang asul ug itom
kon silang duha magpunay og hagwa-hagwa
nga morag manag-uyab
nga dugay na nga wala nagkita

kon motingog lang gayod unta
ang mga malipayong panghitabo
diha sa sulod sa mga lawak sa kaadlawon
seguro makaamgo ka
nga ang kalibotan
sa tinood lang
wala baya nagmasulob-on

RIC S. BASTASA
Alas! Everything Is In A Flux

the body of the loved one
that lies there
without a face since it was the fire
that consumed
what flesh was once there
in the breast
and the extremities

all are atoms and molecules
vibrating
there is no body, no pain now
there is only the sound
of a whisper
radiations of waves upon waves
and when you go inside
alas! everything is in a flux
in fact
there is nothing

so why are you crying?
are you grieving for flying atoms
for jumping molecules?
for love that is nothing but the interstitial
spaces between each
nothingness?

let me be honest with you
i have no grief for no one,
not even for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aldo Is Correct

be brief and concise
even in poetry, people
are busy and they
want instant desserts
for their weary hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alerisky

sa adlawan ni
alerisky karong
adlawa
didto sa america
akong nakita
nga naglingkod siya
sa lamesa
naka-riding hood unya
sul-ob pa ang
kalo nga NYC,
dili kaayo taas ang
iyang pahiymom
unya lalom ang iyang mga
mata
gabii seguro karon
sa ilaha
unya dili kaayo
hayag ang
lighting
pa drama effect
ang peg sa iyang
kaarte

lahi na siya
dili na mao kadtong diri siya
pulo na ka tuig ang
milabay
suwahi nga kinabuhi
wa nako damha
(di nako ikasulti kon
unsa)
suhi nga bata nga
migawas sa
bilahan sa iyang inahan
duna siyay gisugilon kanako
nga mohatag og katarungan
nganong nausab siya
nga akong gituhoan
(misaad ko nga amo rang
duha)

ang iyang larawan
mitutok kanako
nagbasol, morag ako
ang gibasol

maong bisag respetar na
lang
wala gayod akoy
imbitasyon

RIC S. BASTASA
alex been away for 8 years
today, i meet him on the road
i am going to the city riding on my car
he is walking along the street under the rain,
i fail to recognize him: his hair all white now
his arms thin out, his body emaciated
his steps are counted, he moves slowly
along the asphalted road in trying
to cross it.

he used to have two wives,
three children out of wedlock
he used to own a house and a farm
he lost all of them
in one wink.

Only God knows why.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alfredo N. S., Poet, Dead.

he was the first man that showed me how rain can be made inside an audio-visual room
without the use of anything,
nothing about colors, taste, brush, medium,
there are no clouds, chunks of cirrus,
of nine grams of nimbus,

he simply sat on a long chair
his legs not reaching the floor
his fat belly round like a suspended moon
his lips thin like a grain of rice

light was focused on his mouth which then started to say the words,

and then it rained from the ceiling
we saw it, we were amazed

i felt so cold and i told myself i wanna be like him someday.

the news came to the university that he died early dawn,
at such a young age, when his wife was still two months pregnant with their first child,

such a brief, beautiful life,
which i can never have, but i promised myself i wanna be like him someday

i will make rain from the ceiling of a dark house
where everyone can feel the strange cold,
that they will believe in
the power of poems

that poets in some aspects even if useless can be powerful items too of
this intricate system of intertwines.
Alfredo Remembered...

he did not draw the rain
he wrote each drop
with so much art
inside the audio-visual room
where light focused on him
i saw the rain and
felt it
yes, every dropp of it
every coldness
every joy spattering like
i am a roof
a gutter a ground of
pebbles

he never walked much
and stayed
many did not know
that all he waited
was simply
death...

RIC S. BASTASA
Alibangbang Nga Itom

sa kakapoy
magsalimuang ang
hunahuna

apan dili kini magdugay
diha sa kalaay
sa kasakit sa gibati
sa umaabot

mahimong ablihan
ang hawla
aron manglupad ang
tanan puti nga
langgam

sa mga panganod sa
kisame
mahulma ang dag-om

ang mga lingkoranan
manubo isip kahoy
unya ikaw diha sa kakapoy
motugpa isip usa ka
itom nga alibangbang
nga kahadlokan
sa mga lumalabay

RIC S. BASTASA
Alice In Wonderland

i must remember alice.
and when i remember alice,

i must again remember
the wonderland: where

rabbits talk and caterpillars
smoke where Humpty Dumpty

always has a story to tell
where politics become

but a fantasy, where riddles
come like fables and

parables. after all these
imaginings, i am lost

and then, i forget alice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alicia

depth almond eyes
singing
the depths of
her soul
a human voice
on fire
amidst the rain
soon flickering
dying
finally in her
own sleepy
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alicia Nuncamas

As I walked by myself,
And talked by myself.
Myself said unto me:
Look to thyself,
Take care of thyself,
For nobody cares for thee.

I answered myself,
And said to myself.
In the selfsame repartee:
Look to thyself,
Or not look to thyself,
The self same thing will be!

RIC S. BASTASA
Alien

he knows how it feels to be inside a house and no one wants to talk to him. He tries to be in but they all kick him out.

at that point in time he befriended himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alien Song

in a song
which he felt
alien as
he is to the language
yet his
heart
completely understands

the meaning of longing
the brokenness
without for the time being
healed

RIC S. BASTASA
Alienated...

it's like a bird
with red plumes
and blue beak and
golden claws

its song is
heavenly
more than an angelic
voice
of a seraphim's

it is hunted
always hunted-

you can always see it from
afar

it can sense the danger of you
coming near it
to catch it and tell yourself
and the
other hunters
that
you love it
so dearly
that you will risk your life
just to
put it in your
cage

it hears each step

when you think about
a capture
it
it is finally gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alienation....

i am going to places
looking for something
at night when everything
is cold and silent
in that far place where i
am in
i think somehow that it is
is not a place that i am looking for
it could be someone
to warm my side
i dislike the thought of greed
for i have already some
of them
it dawns upon me
the sad truth that i am looking for
myself
someone that i have not really found
despite the years
because i have been blind
and deaf
and mute

do i know that we are together
in one body and
yet so
strangely
alienated

with what we really want
to have and to even
just touch?

RIC S. BASTASA
Aliens Like You...

you were there before you arrived
their laughter is too loud and you need more time to think
to decipher
then a new batch of tired people arrive and by then
when they have already sipped their tea
you will begin to understand

you want to make them feel this place
as a home
you guide them to their rooms
you will lead them later to another floor where the garden
and pond makes them wonder
where they are now

you assure them
like yourself you too do not understand fully well what is these all about
what is next
you must keep within and then pretend again

at least, you achieve what you want
the dissolution of fear....

RIC S. BASTASA
two nights: the first was wholesome
to warm ourselves since it was a a little colder
we say we were grieving over wasted days and routine
and love that quarrels upon lots of things
incredible,
to warm ourselves and yet not offend the truth
we lay our bodies back to back and
we begin to tell stories

' i am unhappy and yet i cannot leave' she says
' i am happier with you now' he responds

'we're not doing anything wrong, right? ' both ask themselves
they evade the answer, conceal the truth in their mouths
as they begin to play with their own tongues
how can they resist what to do when they all fell so alone
in Aliguay Island?

we are into this and we are all mature and responsible
'do not forget, in love we too must learn to make the most beautiful lies,
recreate that old art of deception' he reminds her
on the third day they all pack up
headed to their unhappy situations
they start to forget their own names
erase the past like the way the waves
give the sands what is due them...

RIC S. BASTASA
Alis Aquilae

'But those who wait for the Lord shall find their strength renewed, they shall mount up on wings'

weakened
i remember your name and the promises you made upon me and my ascendants,

in your name Oh Lord shall i rise this morning...

on eagle's wings i shall fly again.

RIC S. BASTASA
At first i wanted to write you a short letter. the main purpose of which is to inspire you.

for so many nights I'd been thinking what words to choose, how to put them well.

I've been imagining birds freed from their cages. Fish flying trying to reach their stars.

always I've seen your sadness nestled in that face, eyes that stare to nowhere and hands that want to hold on to anything wanting to survive and be whole again

i want to tell you how shattering into pieces spreads us like confetti in the air.

i know what you will say: yours is sadder. There could be no cure, and time is only the teller.

and so i have decided not to write one. Instead, i summoned some words to put them all into order, into a system where i myself can be comforted too, for in truth we are taking the same bus on bumpy roads on dusts that try to choke us, on destinations that seem to be too confusing where and when to really stop and then go down from the bus and find another place where we can be children again. Freed from worries. Filled with laughter.

It is too rare to come back and say that nothing really happened. In our brokenness we assume
nothing now. We gaze around and tell ourselves
'How uncertain can life be? How maps
become so blurred? How we revise everything
that we write? And for how long can we be strong?

But i see you with all your innocence regained.
You are strong as steel. And i know you will live

longer. You will take back what you lost.
You will be back in their arms again. Alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alive, Alive

at dawn sleep left without a word
my back curves and my arms look for something to hold
to grip what is there before me
my fingers shake and holds the keys
of the computer
they all begin to scribble words
to assure my being
that i am a tree with roots
a vine with tendrils
an earth still blessed with a sun
and winds and breeze
i sweat and look around
i stand still beside a window
i open the eye of the world before me
and said to myself
everything is alive
to include me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alive, Moving, Shaking

it is the moss
silently growing on the side of the stone
that makes the stone
alive

in the same manner that waters that
keep on running on the dry bed makes
a river resurrected after a long
death in drought

the clouds make the sky breathe
and sail to another ocean

we make the house live some more
for when we are there
the infesters of the wood and
the thatch shy away and surrender

it is our laughter, the cries of children
the woes of old men, the moans of the
newly weds, and
the marches of men and women
along the streets that we abandon

that make this world take another chance
of spinning
alive, moving, shaking

RIC S. BASTASA
All  Homeward Bound...
	here is a poem that looks like a map
the syllables are trails
and there is a word that sounds so
striking
and you equate it with the 'x'
where the treasure
is supposedly found

and you keep it in your mind
always figuring
'x'

'x'

'x'

what is really 'x'?

as a treasure you mistake it for
the usual gold,
the usual finds that pirates steal from ships
and keep in secret places
sometimes under the sea
sometimes in the desert but the marking
of the cactus is gone

the poem has a lot of them
but do not be disappointed
for i am no pirate
i steal none from innocent ships
no galleons
nothing about search and visit stuff

in fact, it is not a map at all

it is a park where children play
and where we figure out what next to do
we wait for a while and then we go
eyes, to home.
All I Did Was Hide My Love For You

Like an iron gate
That rusts
Weakened by the
Salt from the sea,
So I must
I live on
To hide my love
At last I have
Staled and
Failed.

RIC S. BASTASA
All About Us

a cup,
 a shovel, a therapy,
 a string
 a lock of hair
 air, packets of heaving sighs,
 a dirty blanket
 an open window,
 the sea,
 a scribble on yellow paper,
 a brink,
 of what? an edge of where?
 pieces of junk
 driftwood, an old river,
 the usual fallen leaves,
 some puzzles of you
 not all of you
 but parts, shattered glass,
 catching you
 holding your hand
 and then
 releasing your fingers
 like drops of
 water from my hands,
 slipping sands
 last breath
 wordlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
All Blown By The Same Wind....

i cannot be you
god on high the cliff
you get all the chips
as i just watch
empty handed and seeing
nothing but this
blankness in space

what if i become you?
where will i be?
what happens to me?
i can imagine it
when i become you
i become nothing too
just what happened
precisely to all of
those who get tired of
themselves

ah, the multitude is
just that
a heap of dead leaves
a mass of sand dunes
a pool or creeks
a mound of pebbles
ah, same things same
dusts
all blown by the same
wind....

RIC S. BASTASA
All Copies Of Same Genes...

wisdom
is not equated with age
neither is
experience
a guarantee of
excellence

let the sun
ageless
the moon without
marks of neither
either time
nor place

let you not
mind which is
original

from adam comes
eve
and then everything

all copies
of same genes.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Dirty Clothes Wrapped In Cellophane

this time everything is masticated
they will not see mouth or teeth

ey they will not hear you but you
never look for any beginning like

the usual hey there hello how are you
you set all these aside as unimportant

you look forward like the nose of a train
there is no coming back there is no one

there anyway and how things have become
so interesting by then colors and scents

and the movement of clouds in air and
olaf's summer and snowman and

whatever that makes you irrelevant and free
from threats of your extinction like what

you are doing now: keeping a bag ready
all dirty clothes wrapped in cellophane

chances are nil, and life is opening as
you set aside the curtains to let light in.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Equal, All Quashed.

the same sun
same moon
same body
of men and women
and children
same world

but you are trying to make
a difference with your walls
and closed doors and

walls of your bodies
tinted glasses for your eyes
clothes and jewelries
and masks too
and perfumes and houses and
towers

same sun same moon
same rotten body
same death

all equal, all quashed.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Fetal.....

after i have written so much
the night will be deep and dark
and then when i go into the room
it will be so silent
that i can hear the whisking of a
bug on the floor
on the rug
and she will be soundly asleep
tightly curled
around herself
the bed is wide and the blanket is thick
the sound of the night wind is not that horrible
as i may have thought that much
the light is dim and
the room smells significantly nothing
like artificial orange or a fake
lemon
i too shall curl inside myself
cover everything in me with that separate thick blanket
and take my much needed sleep
it is a very late hour and the hands of the clock are tired
and the light will be completely turned off in such a way
that i see nothing at all
not even feeling that i have a soul
this is what we are now
all genetically
fetal.

RIC S. BASTASA
All For Free....

let it be known
that here is a potter
obsessed with clay
in this passion to
put love around its
mouth
feel the curves of
passion
with its calloused
hands

everyday is always
another beginning
to make love again
with its muddy craft

'life shall be tested
with fire'
as it is with
artistic pottery

here is love solidified
hand shaped
heart poured
here is art to your view

all for free...

RIC S. BASTASA
All For The Dead

at the mausoleum of my ancestors
i light my 50 candles
put the white carnations on
glass vases

every nook here is painted white
the grills are always black
tradition we always honor them
on on the coming marked day

we who remain alive flock and pray
despite the sufferings inflicted
we show respect and recall
and savor what they all left here

never mind the deed we are one in saying
never mind those dagger words
we keep the fortune of a lifetime
those that they cannot carry in the

world where they are silenced now
black crow and rusty screw

RIC S. BASTASA
All Ghosts (Revised) ...

the town as usual
misses the noise of the
microphone
wanting to see boxing
bouts not just during
the Feasts
but also on ordinary days

d this is only second
to gambling

those fighting cocks
that dominate
the itinerary
of the month

and all
the poor men gather
and try their luck

to get rich
even for a day

the church is nearby
and its bells are silent

copy paste
the silence of the
cemeteries

despite, this is still
the little town that i write
about

and i ask if i love it
or does it love me too?

RIC S. BASTASA
All Ghosts...

the town as usual
misses the noise of the
microphone
wanting to see boxing
bouts not just during
the Feasts
but also on ordinary days

de is only second
to gambling
tese fighting cocks
that dominate
the itinerary
of the month and all
the poor men gather
and try their luck
to get rich
even for a day

to church is nearby
and its bells are silent
copy paste
to silence of the
cemeteries

RIC S. BASTASA
All I Know Is That I Live Within Me

The lonely moments teach me
Where I live, what I am
I may not know where I am going
Or tell when I am going to stay here
Fully dressed in the vigor of this life
Or even unmasked naked to my sorrows
This is my own life
This is what I make of myself
I am free beyond the limits of my grey skies
I am tearing walls
I am breaking closed doors and shut windows
Trying to see what lies ahead
Searching where I must end
This journey
Slowly I am knowing the jails
That lock me
I am destroying the chains
That bind me
Freeing my hands my mind
Into the surging river of my life
I shall run I shall flow
I live I know what I am within me
I am free! I am free!

RIC S. BASTASA
you lay a mat on the floor
for you to understand dirt and its implications its complications
to the wall
or to the center table and to the rest of the parts of your house,
dirt must be eradicated, that is your rule number one,
so you put lots of mats and rugs, doormats, floormats,
in every door in every corner of the floor

all dirt is not welcome,
it is as though you have studied dirt at length for years,
what is dirt? what are the kinds of dirt? the causes of dirt?
the consequences of dirt? the historical background of dirt,
and your recommendations finally about
dirt
its control and eradication,

you have talked about dirt and how you disliked it,
how you have driven dirt away from this house
how you called they police when dirt resisted to leave
and of course they all were arrested and jailed
without bond
the judge convicted dirt on the basis of those dirty exhibits
and dirty testimonial evidence,

dirt must be poisoned by lethal injection, hanged, electrocuted,
to make them disappear forever
that is your firm belief
your solid conviction

the sound philosophy of
your society

you are talking to me, and i will now tell you who am i really,
my name, the place where i live, my family and how i am related to you,

mother, i am dirt, my name is dirty, my family is dirty,
i live in a dirty place, i am your son,

i cannot step on your doormat, immediately i must leave now
you will report me to the police and i will be arrested
and jailed and even be hanged dead,

all i need is only that you clean me, mama.
now, please........

RIC S. BASTASA
All In The Mind

It is true
You must believe me
That everything is all in the mind

Whether something is hot or cold
It all depends on the mind
Of the skin on our forehead

You tried to hold my hand
I set it away

Now you must believe me
It is all in the mind

Whether I love you
Or I don’t

It all depends on what you believe
It is all in your mind

You are taking me
Without any question

You refuse to believe
What my hands are saying

RIC S. BASTASA
All Insignificance Frees You From The Anxiety Of A Lifetime.

one thing with what we do now
is that

anything goes, everything is fine,
everybody is welcome
and everywhere is just the best
for this
whatever occasion

this is an attempt to get away from
the house of logic
that pile of cards
this domino arrangement

have you seen a fish flying in space?
stars having a concert in the hills

singing mermaids in the pool
multi-faced man on stage talking in
a thousand languages
have you heard about this?

what is fine with me is when i
am everything, i am everywhere and
i am everybody

it is dreamy, but not dreary,
not well lighted, but colorful indeed
every smell is here, and every warmth
which triggers whatever is hidden in the
heart to come out into the open

like those hermit crabs getting out from
their borrowed shells to bask under the sun
when every bather is away making love with
their chosen fantasies
you will not understand if you are shackled
by the fetters of what is logical and systematic

lose yourself like a balloon in the sky
no one sees you bursting
at the threshold of your buoyant life

shattered and fallen
all insignificance frees you from the anxiety
of a lifetime.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not just shaping your hands like a net
when you fish for mermaids in the air
you are surprised to trap only poisonous sea snakes
because you cannot recall the name of the thing
that bites you and makes you think some more.

was it a stingray? it looks familiar but definitely it isn't.
it wasn't, it looks like an umbrella with hair as feet

behind you is the orchestra that plays the song of the champions
sounding like Queens,

then the guests start to leave, and you are inside your
innermost self, not wanting to open like a door

it is all mixed up, then the artistry of words come like soldiers
putting order to a chaos that you have just created

no one knows it, the room is perfectly at peace with the tree
the clouds drift, and dissolve to a certain distance

it is too far, you tell your friend, who died five years ago
you revolve around a world of words, and you try to find one that
describes all these realities, to no avail
your thumb is cut, your tongue envies it, you are mum

like a victim, there is a war, it is between you and you,
the i is gone, the us lingers, but you want it hanged.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Our Lives

all our lives
sad to say
be it the sixth
or the tenth
have always been
a don't do this
don't do that &
perhaps it is time
to change from
blessed are those...
blessed are those....
God bless you.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Right

all
right
all
together
all ways

in time they felt the need to fuse

today
they are one
alright, altogether, always.....

RIC S. BASTASA
All Rise To The Sky

what makes him live some more
is always that secret

he treasures it
like his own life

it is so real
its jagged and pointed edge
wounds the corners of his page

it is the wound that makes
him move
that pinning and prolonged
pain
that creates the creeping
story on the surface
of his skin

he does not waggle like an old
wheel
along that public
road
(to hell)

it is the pain
that makes him think like a cliff
above the plain
that worships it like
a king

from out of his innards
comes out a
spasmodic voice
of a series
existences
imagine that caterpillar
moving in your
left eye
it is beautiful
the listeners clap
deep inside the
whorled ugliness laughs

it is the threat that one loses
everything
in the wink of an eye
that one tiptoes on the wire
keeps its hold and never
gives up like a sore

it is the hardest fall
which gives the dignified rise
it is the pressured noise
that creates the external
whispering
silence

he keeps all these like a house
with closed doors and windows
the cooking continues and
all the ingredients
well cooked
inside that dirty kettle

all things are always brewing
all the processes of the silent brain
aging

the cause creates the smoke
and the flavor
that eventually escape from
the leaking roof of the house

all rising to the sky
like a gigantic sigh.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
All She Needs To Do Really Is Just Signal

She does not have to be obtuse
That would really be unnecessary; I am a wise man with few words
She does not every have to waste words.

Words are concealing, and she wants something unconcealed, one
That she can clearly see and touch,
Freely in fact.

She wants that she can be what she is, doing what she freely can do
To her man,

Undress him,
Remove his shirt
His pants, his brief,
And look bluntly to what is left and cannot be removed but can only
Be caressed, touched, stretched, rubbed, kissed,

what she can eat,
And drink.

Her wants are so simple, and there are no words to be used.
Like a tango dance, her slightest touch on the hip, tells him where to
Lay down like a meek dog
and wait
to be subdued
and pampered like a new born babe

like babe

hey babe! i miss you!

Her tongue can do the least
to signal him to spread his hairy and muscled legs
like a colored and glossy magazine
pages open in bed

Her tongue sizzles up for him to look at the ceiling,
and how sensitive
he gets his shiver in
such moist warmth inside her
cavelike,
stalactite in
soft pinkish
allusions of flesh
pleasure trickles
pleasures in trickles tricky to his shaft surging like a wave
of an angry
sea

Her long hair covers all the secrets below him. He closes his eyes and reveals to her
she veils what his eyes see
when closed

it is pleasurable

Everything that was delicious in his dreams. Lust, this time,
lust will last.

Such shortness of
Breaths coping, gasping, grasping up with eternity.

Her fingertips soft and equaling what he had long stored for her

Nasty stories in whispers in gasps.

He sees stars. his abdomen pumping
more stars in his loins longing for more
trembling
with so much echoes of ecstasy

She sees the fullness of a tilted moon.
er her lips still cave like enclosing

and this time
she blows the wind
a soft wind to make a home for his warm
stars.

her last signal is the satiated silence of her eyelashes

wavelike,

she is a complete woman calming down because he is also a man completed by her

moans, slowly receding, like light fading, cooling, fading, subdued.

RIC S. BASTASA
All Storms Are Waiting

you must have been
taken anew by the recent
changes of your
life
	his is no longer
the case of a woman who
bathes herself
naked in the river
while singing a love
song

last night she made
love to her
hunter-lover
and she was filled
with memories
which she cannot
unload to the
water

the changes have come
like an old man
carrying a load of
timber planks
and he has not grandson
and the road is muddy
and the rain falls so hard
and there is no
leaf of the taro
to cover his
fate.

do not be surprised
when you embark soon
to a trip in the pacific ocean
all storms
are waiting
All That I Have Spoken

The time has come

it is empty and what you feel is the hollowness
of space
buried underneath its
gut

directions become nothing
plans turn into dry leaves
the future is just a word that you utter

i have no ears and my eyes
dream of nothing but the closeness of
fading

i am no longer a strange of all these
i know myself and my heart has ten hands
embracing
all that i have spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
All That I Hear From The Rain At Dawn

all that i hear from the rain at dawn
when in the usualness of
waking up early
the mind begins what it must do

is this grumbling of things that always leave us
why people do not stay
why this world rotates and tilts
why you are left in the corner of the door
always waiting
for someone to return back to your arms again

when the years have dimmed into some rotten memories
into dust into air
and your face has become nothing but an empty
space in one of the lonely corners
in your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
All That I Need

all that i need robert
is a little nap

beside a kitten
unclad and then

i will continue
writing the poems

for all the cats and
dogs and for all those

who have forgotten
what sleep is,

all i need is a little
dark corner, a little light

from the candle and
an open window where

i can see the moon,
without a star

there are no stars, i so
think, in real poetry

it is more of like ants
building castles on their hills.

RIC S. BASTASA
All That Is Needed To Burn Everything, That The Heart Desires.

if what is necessary is that which
for the meantime comforts you, despite,
he will oblige,
he will be with you, and will talk only
if allowed,
he will follow you to hell and
comfort you there,
and he will burn with you if necessary,
for the meantime,
but it is not in the meantime,
all the fires are there,
all that is needed to burn everything,
that the heart
desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
All That Matters Simply Come Home And Look At Us

straight in the eye
what we did, they come home and look at us

straight in the eye
feeding us morsels of guilt, and asking us again

why?

we try to look at them straight in the eye too and we justify ourselves, with

it was a necessity, the inevitable, and all with the face of the human being
bones and flesh and hair and skin
with balls or no balls
will just do the same: kill to save oneself, the doctrine of self-defense,
that innate self which must preserve itself
and always ready to strike
when in danger, not even running, but keeping itself unafraid, to stand firm and tall and unmoved,

they all come today, like her chickens, but i see them all snakes, and scorpions, and even fire-breathing dragons and witches and wolves and blood sucking leeches

i do not run, i keep myself composed to all these now, i am ready, i have prepared myself,

if they ask for reason, i give them the reasons, if they don't and they just stare, i too must stare without blinking
i am a brave man
i am an honest man
i harmed no one
and no one harms me now.

i am at home and if they, of the past, and today, live with me,
i always have the room to spare, and some padlocks too
and iron bars, and air tight spaces

RIC S. BASTASA
All That We Can Care Of Are Those Made Astray By Inhumanity

what we have
are five dogs

all street dogs
adopted

all that we
can care of are those
made astray
by inhumanity

we feed them
and they guard us

so how can we be so lonely?

so many times
i ask that question

so how can we be so lonely still?

all that we have are
five stray dogs

staring at us in the eye
sometimes

that they are our best friends

and the we are their beneficent masters forever

and what is forever
but just this moment
of adjustment

my wife is singing her old
love songs
in the middle of her sleep

and i am figuring out
the map of
my own salvation on
the ceiling

in this labyrinth
where can the graceful
exit be?

where is the promised
treasure of my
youth?

where can i find the
rewards of my persistence
and hard labor?

and then the lights
went out
and then i feel that i
am so lost
as a wooden boat in
a tiger storm

and outside the house
it is
raining cats and dogs
spears and
arrows

and then
the dogs howl as though
the bad spirits
are coming
i know that today
in the heavens
there are no stars
no moon....

RIC S. BASTASA
envy rages like
fire
burning every flower
in the field of
dreams

hatred floods every
house
killing everyone
not just dogs but
also children

when everything is
over
spread forgiveness
like a shower of
rain
to let all dust and
ash
go back to its home
of earth

love is sunshine
another cool breeze
that caresses all buds
and sprouts
of the trees and
seeds

green grass
silk seas
silver linings
golden horizons

here we are
starting all over again
all the children of
life....
All The Dishonest Men....

the dishonest men
have a language of
their own
a coded handshake
a secret symbol
a place which they
call their own and
you know that, they
make those who win
those who must have
that fame and glory
with an equivalent
money, and you know
that but you just smile
at all these things
and manners which do
not actually last.

RIC S. BASTASA
a seed is lifted
from that rocky soil
taken by the water
to the fertile site where
it had all the opportunity
for growth

it sprouts, grows into a
big tree
it tip even touches the sky
and claims to be
one of the gods in heaven

it looks down on the water
sheds off its leaves
and does not remember
the rocky soil where it once
came

the rivers and seas got mad
rages upon its roots
surges and carries it back
from its humble beginning

the one that tells this story
is the wind and all the
storms listen with all attention.

RIC S. BASTASA
All The Tiny Bubbles

the liar
foams in the mouth
releasing
all the tiny
bubbles of saliva
in the air

others who knew
take a short glimpse
and then
leave

RIC S. BASTASA
All The Way There & Always Us, Us

we are related on intimate chains
there are no strangers here
one cannot say i do not know you
names are nothing but tags
on goods that know how they are made
and displayed and
eventually sold
nothing remains here unshaken
to each his pleasures and
pains
those that pretend they are staying
had already been discarded by
fate, and those who voluntarily take the journey
as expected
are handled smoothly by their
destinies
delivered to the gates of their dreams
and sleep there
for a while
we are what we are
bodies with souls
minds that always speak
and can never be restrained
by our faiths
we have grasses and fires for metaphors
goats and pigeons
the sky above us
the layers of rocks below us
we face walls and curtains
we did the dance and we have sung so well
we were in the same house
this heaven and hell
this self and others

now why do you tell me
that you are alone?

RIC S. BASTASA
All The While I Want To See A Brighter Sun

just like any other man
let me put it this way, we all want
to wake up one morning wanting to see
a brighter sun

a warm day, a bright morning
a gentle sunshine landing peacefully on our cheeks
our eyelashes waving a warm welcome too
our eyes glistening with hope
to the wings and songs of birds
perching and then flying away

just like all men we want peace and harmony
of leaves clinging like stalks on a bark
like vines steadily climbing on trunks

we want blue clouds well placed in the skies
and mountains settled in their proper places
and sea as vast and wide as our eyes can reach to see

yet like ordinary happenings these things are not really true
there are driftings, there are inevitable flows
going nowhere, and then gone, and then we sit idly
on the shore now anchored on the truth

we stare to a horizon. we expect nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
All These Good Men...

everyday the strangers come
i have always kept the door open
they do not have to knock
for i understand
why they are here and what
they want to do
the dogs do not bark them
the cats come sliding on their feet
the birds comes to rest upon their shoulders,

they do not open their mouths
their eyes gentle upon the morning light
and like all those memorable and
valuable moments, these men of art and
honor, and passion

they do not stay that long
they come and go and come back again
just like any breeze, any wind any hush
of leaves and husks and filaments of
light and shadows and souls...

RIC S. BASTASA
All Things All Persons Are Interconnected

in truth all of us are related, interconnected, by blood, by flesh, by thought, by the mere idea of interconnection we are all interconnected, on the philosophy of language unless we are interconnected there should have been no word as interconnected,

soon you will discover that there is a thin line connecting your eyelash to the tip of you toe that when you cut a dead nail a tear may fall unseen tears that your dream may not even notice, the butterfly to the star, the star to the starfish the atom to the the moon the foxhole to the blackhole of this universe, the lullabye of mother to the hum of the earth well detected by our human ears that too the sun has ears and fingers of its own or the stars its sewing needles that fall from the dark night skies, my mind away many many miles from you is interconnected to your longing, my death is your death too and my dream of being reborn is relative to the dusts rested on your feet,

we are interconnected and soon we will know that we are one that this river that we pass for a hundred times seen from above this earth is just one winding river that we step upon
our eyes duped by all these
ordinary rocks and mountains

RIC S. BASTASA
All Things Being Constant

all things being constant,
there will still be hope.

or even just you, since i
have changed and swerved
on another curve
without you.

you being constant
and i coming back, carrying with
me

a handful of 'i am sorry'
' i will be good this time'
'forgive me'

and i kneel before your feet
pleading.

with you being constant
as the star of this house,

this shattered home,
these broken window glasses
and dirtied carpets

and muddy floors because
my shoes brought them in,

with you being constant,
like mother,

i too, can be, myself again,
i, too, can say,

damn, i am lucky, to have
mother in you,
damn, i am lucky,
like daddy.
i am really sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
All White

day you are
all white, so neat to see,
my flesh quivers
to kiss your lips
and hold your face
lick your body undressed
tonight
without all these white
trappings on

now either you are brown
or black, but just the same
my flesh quivers
for leopards and
black birds and
dark nights moaning
for love.

RIC S. BASTASA
All White, No Rock

it is the want that is giving me this

prison and so
to free myself i must not want this anymore

i wasted all my precious time to wanting this and that
which i never really got anyway

it is a sour grape
now i am sure about it

so i junked it and look at me i am now free at last

my chest is spacious
my hands are waving like leaves to the wind

feeling cool
relieved at last from all those unnecessary worries

the storms are gone
the sands are too peaceful like my mind

all white
no rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
All You Have To Do Is Just Sit On A Chair, And Then Believe.

then you sit on a chair declare yourself as king or judge and everything depends now on your hands, what you say is the law what you do is a must, and what you think is always right. It does not require much effort, or money or influence not education of power either.

all you need is just sit on a chair and believe in yourself.

you do not even need a crown or a scepter, or a gun or a set of goons or a set of believers.

all you have to do is just sit on a chair, and then believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Allegory Of The Boat

the boat that we are riding
towards an island
is chasing the sea and the sea
runs always faster than
where we are
until the waters hand us to
the sandy shore
when the running stops

but our minds do not just stop like that
it is not that simple
we tend to run as fast as the sea and this
thought
wanting to arrive on what we still
cannot grasp

RIC S. BASTASA
Allegro Comodo

a word from you, then you stop
something choppy
i like to listen more from you
another word, cut into half
i am having a hard time
figuring out what is there
with you that wants to hold
me, i stop to listen again,
some scratches from your
tongue, some gnashing from
your teeth, i am listening still,
some more words, more of
pauses, like some commas
are constructed by you on
purpose, i am tired in this,
i am impatient, you stretch
your arms to reach me again,
as i go nearer tapping my ears,
for you, yet there is this
suppression of meaning,
i am listening still, you
close your eyes and then
open them, this time some
tears fall, like ripe drops
of rain from dark clouds,

i see, your heart is broken
and your mind cannot
understand perfectly,
your mouth haggles
with words that your
tongue cannot form

simply because love is always misunderstood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Allowing Things To Happen

too early

without breakfast yet
one indulges in poetry and
peruses on some windows of
philosophizing

perhaps

seeking for cure
or just plain grabbing
of justification
for what we have not done
and failed to do

before the sun rises
rays of light already stand-by
the window frames

left by the moon
on last night's
drunkenness
of wisdom's
nocturnal rendezvous

there are not butterflies
but there will be
as soon
as we decide for their
fluttering existences

well there are no flowers yet
but soon
there will be
only because
we allow them to grow

at least
in the fertile grounds of the
heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Almost Twelve Noon

it is the silence
that i shall wait
when the clock strikes
twelve noon

when everyone goes out
of the door
and when i am left alone
talking
with my thoughts

it is perfect for me
when i begin to look
around
and find out that this world
is too small
for departures

RIC S. BASTASA
Almost Wanting Nothing Anymore

in the morning
is a new world handed
on a golden plate
to those
who are redeemed
by dreams

over ricefields
the sun shines like baby fingers
holding on to mother's breasts
with silent eyes content
on the milk

birds fly in the skies
hovering on trees
feeding on fledglings

this hometown
is what we all miss
away now from those overcrowded cities

green grass always
gives us the feelings of home

scents of pines
more satisfying than any perfume

we are in contact with our inner core
almost wanting nothing anymore
Alone
	his is the most
overused word
we are lonely
sometimes
most of the times
we are always
lonely
we cater to this
word like a
nice breakfast
we date this word
like it is a lover
we worship this word
like a goddess
we never get rid
of this word
because this word
is us
we are too many
to be alone
be happy then

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone Again

His wife leaves him
And he has no friends
As he drinks beer
All alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone Again Naturally

I have prepared my own world
Like a bed of my own
In my room

Come live and sleep with me
So we can be alone again

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone And So Different.....

somehow while eating together
we feel some similarities sprouting.

we level up with the way we chew.
and the way we spit it out if something in there
turns bitter, if not spoiled, which the taste buds
can easily detect without much thinking.

we converse. we make familiarities. we all like to be
the same at least for this lunch.

as soon as this is over, we walk towards our own cubicles.
here, we lurk. Alone, and so different.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone And Yet Happy In A Kingsize Bed

sooner
could be better
when finally
you sleep happily
all alone
in a king-size bed
without someone telling
you, 'wake up, wake up,
it is ten
o'clock'

you close a door in
your life
sleep in its chamber
dream a lot
and cope up with the
pains of those
passing years....

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone But Not Unhappy Untouchable, Untouched.

since i do not follow
the crowd
naturally i am left alone,

i know how it feels
to be abandoned

no, it is not that i
am ostracized

it is just a consequence
of my personal decision

to be just myself,
to follow no one

oh yes, this is solitude
this is happiness,

am i great? nope, i am not.
i do not dream.

i keep this belief:
the world loves me as
one of its
inevitable truths:

alone but not unhappy
untouchable, untouched.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone But Strong And Undefeated

in this world
you do not know anymore you is really on your side
you are not surprised
these betrayals and back stabs have become more real
and you accept them as is

when someone talks to you you talk back
holding trust, reserving beliefs
and you listen, there is no harm absorbing
you swallow a part, digest, and when thoroughly chewed
you throw away those which are toxic
and indigestible

you find yourself alone
strong and undefeated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone In A Togetherness

at one moment
i know what togetherness is
in an embrace
at night
recoiling and coiling
and curling
two bodies fusing as one
lovely

time has a way to
separate entwined beings
when things begin
to appear hazy
to the eye

you wake up
finding it hard to spell such
a simple word

as togetherness
it is there at the tip of your tongue
yet you cannot utter
even a single letter
you find yourself so alone
like a star that has
not faded with the others
at noontime

it is hot in that place like an over
making bread black
and not fit for human consumption

you stand by the door
look at the people passing by
guessing each name
the faces are sad
very much like yours.
Alone In Reykjavik

when i was
in Reykjavik
i have a picture
taken in
barnafoss

i cannot remember
who took it

yes the place was
cold, so cold,
despite my Columbia
gadgets
on layers and layers

yes the place was
so cold
but what was harsher
was the coldness
inside my heart

you were not there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone In The Mirror Of The Night

to survive the storms that come
within us raging
outside this body is the calm and quiet
people simply do not know
what is happening &
they do not ask simple because
they have no right to invade the fences of our privacy
we wear many faces
some many pretenses
masks
and when we are alone facing the mirror
we take everything
and see that innermost face
the last layer
that tells us the truth of our existence
and then we begin
that talk: that honest conversation
without any taint
or blame
only that gentility of the spirit
that forgiving arm
embracing
a shoulder because it is cold and
the feeling
is shattered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone On A Stormy Night

flashes of lightning
roaring thunder
heavy rains and
flooded highways

the street lights are off.
there is total darkness
the strong straight light of the car
guides me towards home.

i park the car beside the
the house. I get out and
open the front door.
winds blowing stronger
the veranda is drenched
the gutter with leaves
overflows with water.

i open the door of my room.
undress myself and wipe my body.
i am dry. Silent. Uncomplaining.

i am finally alone.
I decided not to argue. Not to think.
Relax. Sleep. Dream.
Too much reason, too many arguments
When what i need is only this pillow
This blanket,

A window closed. A safe house.
A glass of water perhaps. But later.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone On A Hill

alone on a hill
stands a cherry tree
without leaves
only twigs
stretching to the
the moon
on this cold
and damp
night
like some kind of
human hands
and thin body
in the act
of a very deep
prayer

(except for
me
it does not
know you)

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone With You

as we walk
we feel the loneliness of
two people
with questions to the breeze
that give us only
a hug of a hush
we stroll
our hands begin to
quiver
it is cold you tell me
come i ask you
but you have doubts
about the sea
you have a space
between our union
we have become
two distant boats
sailing in opposite
directions
i like to tell you
goodbye take your luck
somewhere else
but my mouth is like
a pool not giving up
any of its water
then we reach the
destination of our journey
and as expected
you are not with me
i look back and
see your shadow
dissolving in the mist
i hear nothing now
except the beating of
my heart
the thoughts inside my
head
refusing to utter what
their conclusions are
and then i sit on the sand
lay my head on a rock
look at the night stars
without thinking
what happens next
but this i must tell you
i am always at home
with myself
there is always this
comfort that i have not
told you about
even before the glacier
breaks into the escape
of its waters.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alone.....

... is such a much abused,
molested than ever
overused, cliche
of the century, spoken
by the majority,
a cancer, a lump,
a freckle, a wound,
a scar, but no matter
how i hate this,

my God, it is still
poetic!

RIC S. BASTASA
Along The River, The Stones And Pebbles

he fulfilled a promise
       to be strong
alone with the rest of
       his lonely surroundings
despite the
       number

the storms
       and drought
the devastation
       of the quakes and
floods
       no way
they cannot effect
       him
them

along the river
they all lie
       all faceless
stones
       so many
pebbles
       made by
God

RIC S. BASTASA
Along The Road

at noon
along the road
a bald man
rides his
bicycle

his shirt is green
his shoes black
and the road
is dusty

RIC S. BASTASA
Along The Way

along the way
there was something wrong with my life
i stepped upon a very sharp stone
i fell over and was not able to rise again

i was waiting for your helping hands.
that was the worst thing that i did.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aloof

i am
Aloof
because you are
Aloof
and Aloof are we
in this
World that is Aloof too
because we are Aloof
because we think that this world is Aloof
and the World thinks too that it is Aloof because we are Aloof.
and so on
and so
Forth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Alpha Man

leading the
pack of wolves
silent in
the snow
killing the herd
in such
a quick show
blood pours
forming a river
as he claims
victory
around the
land

inside the house
there is no talk
for all the
guilt

RIC S. BASTASA
Alphabet Haiku

abcde
fghijkl
mno   pee

RIC S. BASTASA
Alright.....

between your legs
my tongue is
joy, and my mouth
is bliss

there is no tomorrow
here
and i accept there is
dirty
feeling after,

but haven't they told you
that even in such a
very short moment

no matter what you call it
the feeling that you are the king
of the universe
and that stars explode to form
new stars
and new galaxies
will always be there

and when everything turns dark
and silent
you will always remember

once, there was bliss.
once, i was there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Altruism

i am trying to
look for it
somewhere in the park
there is the lady
there signaling
her hand
she is on for
something that
i cannot
understand
that word is missing
really

RIC S. BASTASA
Alumni Hall

surrounded by old wood
you breathe wood
and you feel the wood
breathing you too
all around you

in deep sleep
the past comes still dreaming of you

RIC S. BASTASA
Alumni Homecoming

those who came
and those who laughed
and those who feasted
and shared their past
glories

those who chewed and
sucked the sap
of their promising
future

those who planned
their now
and then

it is still them
and just them
no other

=================================================================================================

Ang mga nanganha
Ug ang nangatawa
Ug ang nagsalosal
Sa ilang tam-is nga
Kagahapon

Ang nagtam-os sa
Ilang mabanagong
Ugma

Ang naghan-ay sa
Tumang Kalipay
Sa ilang karon ug Unya

Sila ra gihapon
Sila lang gihapon
Alunan 2

Storm

Fumespun fury well-told
Upon a turn of the windvane's tail
You can't escape by magic
Or the clever exercise of wit,
Deft designs the mind contrives
To trim the terror down to size
your teeth can bite down hard
Fighting the invasive chill.

The outcast passion wasting
The land, flogging the feeble trees
Runs a course in your own bloodtides.
When it comes harrowing the light
Or shredding the shrouds of light,
Bare your head to its carress.
Naked in its eloquence embrace
Yield all to the ravaging kiss.

September 9, 1988

posted by merlie alunan @ 6:04 AM

RIC S. BASTASA
Sort of a Love Poem

Alongside each other they lir
Each one keeping to its side-
The ponderous land, the abysmal sea.

In the mountains, clarity and light,
Grey silence of silt, implacable downdrift
Sucking in skeletons of whale

Perhaps on a September evening,
The sea in a playful mood may curl
Upon the shore its wavelets of lace;

The somber land beguile would murmur
In a voice heavy with rocks and trees,
'Stay, stay a while, a little longer,'

But the sea, tossing its frothy curls,
Would gather its weedy skirts and rush away,
Sighing and leaving to fade on the sand

Its bangles of coral, cowrie and kelp.
A story, my friend, without proper end.
And yet, I'm very glad we've met.

posted by merlie alunan @ 1: 02 AM

RIC S. BASTASA
To a Poet Caught in the Will of the Sea

... tell nothing
in the flush of your fear
speak no word that the sea may hear

trust to it no name call no one
enemy or friend utter not one sigh
to snag on a reef

or curl round the coral keep
furl song in your throat tales of fire
laughter and ice cram in your

brimful eyes confess nothing
in the crest of your fear
lock up your tongue

that when it chill fingers
reach deep to pluck out your heart
make no sound not one prayer

vault your voice
telling the wind nothing nothing
to the very end nothing...

posted by merlie alunan @ 12:42 AM

RIC S. BASTASA
Alunan 5

Poet travelling over water

befriend the wind
let it ride easy
in the hollows
of your bones
open your bosom
for wind to go through
storm rising
from the abyss
could pitch your
on the rocks
blow the skull apart
for darkness and sun
coldness and heat
to flow in without staying

salt-caked and split
your tongue will breed
secret words
of the wind's singing

now then
will the wind
command the billows
to bear you
the tide to lay your bones
under the moon
to bleach without rancor
without bliss everything forgiven
your name that wind spells
on water the syllables

so very kindly
very gently leave
where it will

posted by merlie alunan @ 12: 18 AM
Always
always my friend
in the midst of everything
somewhere
when we look at the stars
no longer asking
when the moon is waning
and we are not
complaining

shall there be
this grief
that cannot be spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
Always A Shadow

always a shadow am i
  to you
always the second fiddle
  am i to your feats
someday
  when my sun is at its
height when my light shines
  through
the valleys of my heart
i shall then be free
  from the obstructions of
your fame.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always A Very Interesting Morning Always

And then the cock
crows
and then the morning
comes
and then
you dress up for
the day
and then you have become
another
guest of this earth
welcoming
welcoming always
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always About You

there is no more sorrow
on the leaves of the kamuning tree

it rained all night
early morning we are met
by the glisten
of the pebbles beside those
roots

sunlight slowly treks its fingers
between those gaps
you finally give up
the agony of waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Always A Poem

NOW
i know how is it
that i do not have
blank walls

why i do not
have walls
at all

why i cannot
be silent
or be silenced

i let people in
let them speak
and i listen

any man
has always a story to
tell

any
woman
any child

an old man
dying

an earth
molested
the sea
corrupted
the moon upon
its dim light
those distant
stars

always always
are poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Begging For More

at a certain point
there is a crisis be it

in your career
or marriage or friendship
or about
another love that constantly
keeps on meeting
you in the
street
like a beggar

or you can be that beggar
always asking
for what is not given
a mess
really

the unfulfilled self
keeps you running

people think that you are such
an active and never exhausted
genius

it is the crisis that keeps
you moving

the storms that push the boat
farther

leading to strange lands, meeting
you with strange people

it is not over the oceans expand
sunless days

it is not within your power
to stop the journey

even if you do not do anything
keeping your hands on the side

of every moment, gazing and
blankly accepting what is given

it is hard, it is real, it is
you, it is this world

the unfulfilled self keeps you running
and always you are begging for more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Being There

i am not evading it anymore
since it is always there
and no matter how i tried to create
the distance
it is always near and calling me
with its own fingers
there is not a sign of quitting
there is no exit and for me to live
like the way you live your life
i must accept this: i am
nothing less and nothing more
than yourself
the mirror speaks and so truly
i am.

i am you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Going Back To A Place Of Origin

IT IS as house of stone
above a hill where the grasses
have learned to survive

The sun shines all day
The moon as usual comes only
when the cicada sings

As if
sorrow has a role to play
on the uncertainty of the place

I am a constant visitor there
I murmur words to the grass
and they all listen
I sit upon the rock
and it lets me warm my butt

The place is too unlikely for one
Like me
But i always go there
To worship
What i am

You do not know where it is
And so you will never know
what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Moving On

the past
is just a set of some
grammatical errors
which i do not
wish to correct
because they are understood
to mean
what you think
too is right
but is too tired to
comment
or change

one does not have
the time to go
back and
fret and
edit
because there is so much
to write
to put into the concrete pavements
once again
to choose and
discard
to begin again a new
sentence
putting the first word on
paper
bulbs lighting
a new day
sun rising from the
east
and then suddenly
as you look again
on the screen
and look out to the
window
it is another sunset
and it is
too beautiful to speak
or write

there is no jutting down now
it is just plain
gazing
your hands on the table
all pens up
and you surrender to
such ending

it is too beautiful to behold
and then
at night some other dreams

let the letters then
reorganize themselves
let the errors
reorder what should have been
or
ought to be

now i am moving again
into another depth
another milestone

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Moving On....

the bombing in that airport
puts us to shivers

you say how lax could they be
how wasted lives are taken just in the blink of an eye

there is no time to dig into the causes and
the effects

the first step is to bury the dead
the kids, and there are twins right?

the second step is to clean that airport
let the operation begin again, no need to prolong
the agony and the shock

no one is to blame
life moves on like everyday

it is the silence that we fear most
it strikes again and creates another noise

do we carry earphones and turn on to rock music?
do we stay put in the house and learn to live as monks?

no way. we go to malls again
buy our necessities, walk the parks, and enjoy life as usual

for life is too short for all these threats
if they take it again, so what?

society heals itself
you pour on more fear, it gets attuned

you face your killer as a friend
you smile and hope, he smiles back at you

you walk this world at the end as one
humanity, perhaps die now but we always come back later

changed, renewed, fresh, confident, fearless.
wise, decent, white as lambs, brave as bulls,
飞行 higher as eagles, tall and dignified
as cliffs and mountains, wide and countless
as waves and winds

and always, always, moving on.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Prepared

though i never look forward
to the point where you may finally
give up loving me,
yet, my dear,
i am always prepared for the
possibilities,
my heart is always ready
my mind always open
my feet always ready to dust off
every magic that you put on my toes

i like to think that when everything is over
i still must know how to sing
and dance
my own music.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Read Between The Lines...

pause between
some lines and read
the void

pause some more
and breathe
let the void simmer
let every empty space
sink deeper

find something of weight
and substance
like a word that you wish to expand
and live there for a while
sow the seed
and let it spread like a vine

that is how a good idea
is born
and then see the morning sun
bringing you
some strands of light

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Remember

always remember that when
a fake dog
takes a poise on your sofa
at the middle of your
living room
or your study

try looking
try listening carefully

it never barks.
it is your silly puppy without a mommy
that barks

in the mirror. barking at its image
waggling its tail

the fake ones
do not bark, remember that, and i know that you know
that i know about this plasticity
between us.

it is you that barks
almost every morning when i begin to write a poem
and all the while for years and years
i have always been silent.

that is the difference between us.
and let me tell the obvious. do not be hurt.

i am fake and you are are angry and i never was once.
you breathe. i don't anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
always remember
that if there is darkness
there is always a candle
waiting to be lighted

that if there is emptiness
there is always a space
waiting to be filled

that in loneliness
there is always a beloved
waiting for your word

each is ready
for your initiation

remind the rest
that something comes
and yearns
and by its own volition
springs satisfaction

fill the void
cheer the beloved

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Remember My Dear Caterpillar

always remember what the black bird once chirped
that wise bird long buried in the sands and leaves of time

that which angers you
conquers you

that which does not kill you
strengthens you

that which you love
enslaves you

and that which loves you
with fire from her eyes
and cinders from her heart
may soon
make you the most vulnerable
link in the chain
of creation

a caterpillar crawling
in the world of roses
either it soon turns to stone
a pebble or even dust

with no promise of
metamorphosis
once in the life of the
trusting butterfly

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Remember My Friend Poet

new to this site? new to this art?
this scribbling and nibbling
and quibbling and clicking
of metaphors from air
and other figures of speech
from out of nowhere
this is not the outer space
but it makes you feel just the same
the usual floating and fleeting
and painting and fainting and
gloat and bloating and sinking
and shrinking and yes sometimes
blunder and surrender and plunder
welcome to this world
to our world your world
a world of imagination
imaginary bowls and plates and spoons and forks
but with real rice and fish in there
where the coffee is hot forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Remember....... 

after the lapses,  
i conclude: this 

is a hormonal  
matter, a secretion 

when it gets out  
of my system, another 

scene falls, this  
man becomes strong, 

and discriminating  
and can tell which is 

which. This is right.  
Not until the filling 

comes again, the lymph  
nodes, the gonads, 

rebuilt is the corner  
where you are again 

blind and tasteless,  
and you love what is 

actually detestable,  
but let it go, just 

let it go, it gets  
out of your system again 

and here you are as  
real as real, now 

hold on, keep this  
state ecstatic, you
are you, and you now
know which is true, and

real and divine, keep
this, make a record,

mark it, another mile
stone, always remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Tasteless To You.

there is a bridge which i
did not take
the river under it runs
through
there is a water there
always
tasteless to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always The Vested Interest...

the cat grins
beneath those soft feet
are bear claws

RIC S. BASTASA
Always There Is More To Life

life is not
a box of chocolates,
it's a bouquet of
flowers
colors of delight
scents of desire
so light
to the heart

it is what i hold
for you
in my hands
life so full of
flowers

but always there
is more to life
we feel it
when the bouquet is
finally thrown to the
air
and another one
expectant holds
it dear

someday
life will be different
a tree full of fruits
at night
fireflies in
freedom to shine
their own
lights

RIC S. BASTASA
Always There Will Be Something To Write

for as long as the grain of sand is in the mouth of the mother pearl so there will be pearls

it is the pain that makes it
it is the wound that makes the scar
it is the blur that makes the eyes
work hard to see
it is the haze and the mist
that make us stand and wait and carefully see
to find what is there
when the light of the sun finally comes

it is what is inside me
that i cannot just tell you
that makes me write
and for as long as i am muted by your presence
i will always have something to write

for as long as my tongue is tied
and nothing slips from there
i will always write

because there is no other outlet
no vent
for as long as i fear your wrath
i must continue to write

from the bondage of my teeth and tongue
my hands and mind
shall find its way to freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Uncaught.

a fugitive
finds a shell

goes inside the
labyrinths without
a string

a fugitive loses
himself
and he likes it

for no law shall
find him

the genuine loss
is when

you, yourself
cannot even find you

and that is what
fugitives like

always uncaught.

RIC S. BASTASA
Always Unfinished

some words fly like honeybees and i am flattered as they
come near me and say

this is the place
this is the place
where nectar is sweetest
and they all stop and buzz and busy themselves

so disappointed, i am so sorry, i tel them,
how unfortunate for all of you to be here and waste your time
at this early morning

i am not the flower of your mind,
i am just a little bit of this bitter man

and then the bees start to fly away like words vanishing from my mind
and here i am as you can well see

alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Always You Ask Me...

these had always been the same questions
despite our being together

'do you really love me? and i am caught
with the same answer
'...so much', with a pause and a gaze beyond
the bareness of your back
and the softness of your hair
the sweetness of your cheeks

and you know it well
that when we kiss i close my eyes
as though there is no other option

sometimes i feel guilty though
about this dichotomy of my brain and my heart
two mistrusting friends
who cannot really love each other
but cannot live apart

i put my arms around you
as though you are one of my planets
and i am your only sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
always, after something is done,
a word written
on paper, filling in the blank sheet
with something, there is always that
void, which comes next, asking

why? and telling you
there is still something left out there
and you must look for it

a pin? a button, or a lock of hair
things getting smaller
than your nail and you
try to voice it out

tonight? No. Tomorrow morning.
No. At dawn when everything is
silent and you have all the power
to think, and grope and
dig and crawl into the recesses
of your brain.

write me, write me, i am almost
dead. Says the letters scattered
on your bed.

you want to sleep. They fly like
fireflies above your face
and they dance in circles.

you are tired. Your eyes
close like the rock that
kept the dead body
of Christ.

yes. at 3 a.m. again.
leave me.
Always, It Is Poetry Time

Life is filled with work to do,
Always there is, with me,
Poetry time, an escape, like you
Were so tirelessly breathing
And then
Take a cat’s nap, in a corner
Of your mind on a frame hung
On the solid wall,
Always it is poetry time with me,
Otherwise, life is nothing but
One that is hammered with work to do,
Feeling like a funeral, like a murder scene,
& Without,
Poetry time, there is just a lonely face,
Reading and writing books and books
And serious looks in crazy nooks,

And where can smile be? Tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Am At Work

won't you believe it
i am in the middle of my work
and in between
i type some words,
which i may call
a poem, like this one

those that see me
do not realize this

poetry is in between
our dull moments
poetry is an insertion
of our routine
poetry is not bread
it is the cheese
the ham
the mayonnaise
the pickle or the
lettuce in between
the slices of
sandwich

poetry is what goes
in the middle of meaningless
endeavors

poetry is unprofessionalism
defrauding the employer
with his paid hours

this it. The fool has not
notice.

this fool.

RIC S. BASTASA
Am I In Or Am I Out?

beyond all your hands
i shall be another dove
when you try to enclose me
i coo,
begging, i come with a song
mistaken as pleasure
it is a philosophy of
freedom,
an entreaty that you
shall never
fully understand
for i myself is that
stranger
between a door
confused whether he is
in or
out,
when i fly away
i shall carry only my own wings
i leave my claws
and beak
and some feathers
so i may be as light
as a sigh

i need to see a door
and feel it with my hands
when i open it

how can i? my hands
have been bartered for
wings
that i always dream of.

RIC S. BASTASA
Am I Still Here.......... 

obsessed 
it is more than 
often 
that visits are 
done 

the picture 
tells it most 
felt on 
top of his chest 
near to the 
heart 

of course 
the picture is 
inanimate and so 
is the 
place, the window is 
alive only 
with the wind that 
from time to time 
gets in 

pain is abundantly 
growing 
like weeds 
and mussels 

'the sooner you 
get it over with 
the better' always 
is the message 
from friends and 
kin 

pain is better 
than numbness, 
pain assures
that you are
still alive
rather than the
numbness which makes
you wonder

'am i still here? '
the question roams
around the room
looking for
the answer....

RIC S. BASTASA
Amadeus Mozart, Con.K-365

What they adore
Is his genius
His music
Soaring to the heavens
Without so much
Effort

Effortlessly magnificent
Amadeus Mozart
And his music
Tossing me
From sea cap to sea cap
In my sea dreams

Piano notes ruffling
Like the windy beach
Waffling to the shore

Piano notes
Trickling
On my window pane
Like a soft rain
Playful
To the vines
On my window pane

What they adore
Is his genius
Soaring to the heavens

I envy him
Amadeus Mozart
His music grows like a river forever flowing

I do not mind if in there I drown
And die with a single note

He died in the sea drinking all the salty notes
Of Amadeus Mozart
Dehydration in the most musical fashion.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is the dog in you
perhaps your previous life
that scatters
i've seen how you still
sit there
scratch yourself as though
you are infested with
fleas, and i ask you to rise
from it
daily perhaps like the sun

shine from there
make it dramatic and perhaps
even sensual
from behind those mountains
that look like the breasts
of Amanda.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amantes Sunt Amentes

i leave to you love
keep it
i move away and shall promise
not to come back

i am taking back my sanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amarelinha

Draw a pattern of
Rectangles
On the ground
And I will throw
A stone
Inside one of
The spaces

Then I hop
And hop
Avoiding this
Line and that
To retrieve
What stone I
Have thrown

In my life
Let us talk

About my life
Seriously
Now, I jump

From past
To present
To present
And past
And future in
A very confusing
Manner

And then
Time, this time
Line does not
Exist anymore

My life is that
Stone and you
Are one of those
Spaces
That rectangle
I jump in

And then we stop
This hopscotch
It is dark and we
Have to stop playing
We must go home
Now

RIC S. BASTASA
Amazed By His Own Ripples....

at night the struggle
is evident.

i did not mind it
i have mine too.

all the days the
struggle continue

working like a buffalo
my body has no time for rest

the night becomes a blessing
i sleep soundly.

the weariness of the body
gives the soul its rewards

you stare at those hours
and go inside of your conscience

now the wee hours of the day
have become furies

what is your mission now?
to hover like a bird on a cloud?

it is hard when you have no ground
to set upon your feet

floating is horrible and being
lost to any direction is a terror

of the mind, of the imagination,
settle down, anchor, steady your boat

if possible leave it, let the storm
bury it, and learn the wisdom of the child
sitting upon a stone throwing a stone
amazed by his own ripples....

RIC S. BASTASA
Amazed By Its Wings, We Have Instead Crushed It To Death,

sometimes our frail human nature
makes an error,
like how we caught a butterfly in our
hands and with so much
love for beauty, amazed by its
wings, we have instead crushed
it to death, but as this is just
a matter of butterfly and hand,
we disregard guilt and consider
this as just an ordinary mistake that
we often as children do, but

there is an error which burns
humanity, like
this man who just made the
guilty free, and the innocent suffer
for twenty years in jail,

like one who made the wrong press,
and instead of saving the kid,
exploded the whole building wasting
ten lives of a cat,

sometimes one simply has to bear
with what is there already,
and this is the legend of the story
how silence as a princess
lives forever in the gallows of
the castle of abandon

RIC S. BASTASA
Amazed By What Is Going On

at this moment
you want to say nothing.

you watch Turing
forgiven by the Queen of England

and then the Fall of Ming
and the War of the Warlords

it is seven o'clock in the evening
logic works again, everything fits.

the principle of autonomy,
every idea works for itself.

your eyes are sleep but sleep
is nil. At the red sofa the

brown dog looks intently at you.
Amazed by what is going on.

RIC S. BASTASA
what i hold inside my pocket is just a pebble.
it is all that i have now.

i take it again put it on the table and look at its face closely
you know that it has no eyes
or hands or feet, i let it stay there as though there is only one pebble

in this universe of sands, i listen.
i let time stop for a while.

i look at the sky tonight and there are so many stars.
they are so distant you know that and you feel that

i take the pebble back in my pocket,
there will be no exchange, it is enough for my anchor
it is now my own rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ambition And The Caterpillar

basically it is the story
of a caterpillar

kicking other cocoons
and hundreds of feet

it takes a lot of hard
work not to see what lies beyond

up there
there is nothing, we know it,

yet why?
why this kicking of asses?

why this
blunder and plunder?

we know that at the end
the caterpillar turns into a

butterfly and
flies away and become gone

from our eyes,
yet where? where is it now?

all we see are broken wings
of dust beneath our dirty feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ambivalence

it easy to spot
our ambivalence

our lips want to kiss
but your hands
push my chest away

i want to hug you
and make love
with you
but my mind says
i may be
into a long range
trouble

i am thinking
of a room where
we can think

and speak our minds
where we can
forget the dangers
of our game

i reserve a day
for both of us
where we can
simply sit and
do not discuss

morality and what
people may say

yet my feet take
the cab and the
next thing i know

i am in a plane
warmed by my
own black jacket
my arms folded
my hands in
my pockets

i am beside
someone else
and the plane
touches down

and i cough
and it rains
and i step out
and i hide
in another room
far away from
you

and i tell myself
i will be missing you

the word is goodbye
it is never hello
it is never us

it is not the heat
but the coldness of
our coward hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
Ambot Ning Buwan

ambot ning
buwan
sige mang halok
sa aping
sa disyertong
balason

ambot ning adlaw
sigi mang
halog sa bukid
nga sunog

ambot ning dagat
sige mang handom
sa patag

ambot ning bato
nahigugma man
sa gunting

ambot ning papel
naghandom mag
uwan

ambot ning uwan
ganahan mag
baha

ambot ning tabian
gapadako man
sa baba

ambot ning karsada
wa may utlanan

ambot ning kahilom
nahimo mang
talagsaon....
Ambot Og Nahinumdom Pa Ba Si Marcelino

Usahay makakatawa ko nga mag-inusara
Niining lawak sa akong kabatan-on
Nga usahay akong pagaabton.

Kay dinhi baya samtang bag-ong nagmata
Ang gwapita nga si Maya
Sa dihang iyang edad lima ka tuig pa,

Dinhi sa katre nga nagbung-aw sa bintana,
Nikalit og kawat ug halok si Marcelino
Sa iyang nipsis kaayo nga aping

Upat pa iyang panuigon, ug iyang purol mubo.
Ug bisan sa iyang pagkawalay-buot
Nasihag ko baya ang mga ugat sa tungaw

Nga mitapot sa iyang nanghubag nga itlog.
Sakto gayod si Freud. Dili nato angay
Kompynsahan ang mga tungaw sa kagahapon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amelie

jumping in the clouds
looking for dreams
unsettling for the lump
of the earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amelie Is Beauty

how could you be
prouder of your origin?

you've seen that Amelie
many times

but each one
each moment
is an other pleasure

.And what about the music?
Nothing to add,
there is enough comment
it is easy to understand
what is perfect

whether happy or
sad
there is this kind
of listening that
ponders

yesterday it was the
music of my mother's death
today it is
for my sister's marriage
and another one
for my nephew's
baptism

the years have still
more to offer
i keep waiting
waiting and waiting
for more

for love.
Amen, Amen...

for the few grains of rice that i have given you
and for the slice of fish,
God has given me more than what
i have parted,

God has given me a house, a rice granary,
a thousand loaves of bread,
an ocean of fish

plus a book of poems,
plus the nightingale songs

My heart sings praises for Him.
For every grain of rice that i have shared with a hungry neighbor,
God has replenished me with truckloads.

FOR THE FEW cents that i have given as fare for the old woman
who wishes to go home,
God has repaid me money in bundles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amen...

If i can only have you
even for a moment
when i shall finally lose hold
of my own arms
perhaps i can then die without
regret
even if i have to fall from a cliff
and then be
nameless forever in that abyss
of love
then i can tell myself
that i have never died in vain.

RIC S. BASTASA
i agree with you
i'd put all my trust
beforehand

in the beginning
till the end and they
are telling me

you killed somebody
and i close my eyes and
say nothing

and they could not believe
what i am doing
and they tell me again
more are killed senselessly
and you tell me
this must be done to save
this country
to make this country a livable
place for the incoming
generation

for our children and for their
children
and i again close my eyes and
covered my ears

and i open my eyes and look
at the skies
and i find another world which
i never wish to live
with you

i am helpless
and you have no use of me
it is my silence

it is our deepest silence
and on the other hand
it is their noise
their loudest noise
hand and in hand you shall
never change

we resort to time
we beg for history
and then at the last
resort
we say we believe in God
in the name of the Father
the Son and the Holy Spirit

Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
america, i wonder what snow is,
they say it is cold and pure and smooth
and too fragile to the warmth of our fingers,
in a second dissolving into tears,
i may be wrong, i know it has no salt of the earth,
i know that for certain for i have taken
a little of chemistry and
have studied some ramifications of the weather
and have even tasted the whirls of
storm in my country of brown
monkeys, brothers all, in the hinter hills.

i think snow is cool, I haven't touched it yet.
but i have heard about some rumors,
that i better stay here and not touch it anymore,
because i may break my heart
since it sings utter loneliness.

i am bombarded with apples though
in the market stalls they are now cheap
some of the best
not from America but China
and Japan.

I do not like the taste of apples.
Neither shall i like, i know, the taste of snow.

So finally, i have decided to just stay here
and rot.
Who knows, I can be the best humus for change
who knows, also for growth?

Yes, they call it progress in the wilderness and poverty of the
Third World.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amidst The Crowd, I Am A Pebble

i

the boy's band plays
country music
on deaf sounding guitars

ii

a few guests
do not have hands
	heir eyes
feast on the food served
by young girls
wearing ethnic
dresses

iii

the resto
is beside a river
where nipa palms
grow naturally

iv

i have my choco
and sip after sip
i look
beyond this
usual
charm

v

a boat slides on the
water
peacefully
amidst this small crowd
i am a pebble
sinking
on the water trying to
find
its bottom

RIC S. BASTASA
Amidst The Forest Trees

amidst the forest trees
i, the firefly
below the lush of leaves
kept my own light

fluttering in the middle
of the night
the hearth keeps
burning

RIC S. BASTASA
Amidst The Noise And The Haste

amidst the noise of people coming and going
passing you by
(the they want all the while to stay and have a talk with you
for whatever
but you ignored them as you are busy with other
preoccupying things and events and places and
ideas, you write and keep on writing still in your journal,
the poems on used pages, the vandalism on the walls and
the painted words on the fences
of the house where you live)

you ask, what is this sea of people doing here
around you making all this whirlpools and waves

trying to drown you? or put you in a breathless space?
or pull you down in the oceanfloor of meaninglessness?

you look at them, and you do not find any meaning to their
flow, their movements anywhere, they all seem to have no
specific directions like
dusts and water bubbles only to spread and burst

what then? do you allow yourself to be drowned in their noise
and haste and
waste?

look inside you, investigate the available evidence of your heart
find there the magical silence
the wisdom of your past
pick them one by one like colored stones in the beach
put them in a jar
and look carefully the pieces the stones of what you are

you are never like them you are in them but you can never be one
like them
you are unique, and free and always
the center of your own
created universe
be good, be kind and sing sweetly your strong silence
live, live the way you like to live
just be yourself and to moments of haste and noise
close your eyes shut your mouth
and stay peacefully in the home of your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Amidst What Is There And What Is Real.

it is a sad decision
indeed
to stay inside this room
and deny yourself the right
to watch the coming of the
morning sun
between the bosom of two
mountains
for here you are imagining
what the sun is like
within the cubicles of your
own imprisoning disposition.

whatever is written gains
no significance
for it is another imagination
another lie
amidst what is there and what
is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amo Ut Invenio

i shall be picking flowers
along the way
i shall whistle away my fears
and all of my dismay

worry not what shall be next for me
i shall be as happy as i'm destined to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Among The Clouds

among the clouds
you float
and then you argue with me
about the earth

how can i ever believe you?
when your feet
have become cottons
and your brain
has become this gusty air
filled
with empty thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
Amor Et Melle Et Felle Est Fecundississimus

and another thing
beloved
my love too is rich
with honey
and venom...

RIC S. BASTASA
Amor Patriae

like pebbles on the shores
assumes many colors and forms

others take the streets and
voice out dissent
others listen to their idol and
clap their hands

others work beyond borders
missing lots of what could have been
within their embrace
others do it on the secret caves and
mountains
leaving kin and families

others have concluded: terrorize
others take the last resort of diplomacy
ask them and they will all say
all for the sake of my people
all for the love of God and country.

so bombs explode, roses bloom
pavements are made, lines are destroyed
arms are sold and arms are bought
planes are hit, children maimed
mothers weep, as fathers kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amor Vincit Omnia

conquer me

love

conquer me

for i am the lonely child

the father of all lonely men

RIC S. BASTASA
Amoral...

Beyond morality and besides
immorality, lies the gray area of
amorality...

it is an exploration of the possibilities
of our humanity
where we are like innocent children
without any bias for
anything that we think is new
and feasible....

something that must perfect
the art of sharing
complete the fruiting of the works
of love....

not just about things, or events
a book, a dinner at the mountaintop,
a conversation at the ridge,
a time in bed, or even the sharing of
some dreams

those that do not bother us after
that which makes us comfortable despite its strangeness
the one that they call wild
and impossible

but which they have not tried themselves
as the restraint was only existing in their minds
with the heart
still thirsty and hungry and
vehemently disagreeing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amorality

the flesh refuses to understand the code of wont's,
like a river it surges taking the route of least resistance
filling every nook, every vacant space of the heart's desire
it is warm, and plump, and always pulsating,
alive, it breathes air and fire, and sees its prey
and pursues it, and bites and chews like teeth and tongue

you may shy away, and take the code and fall into the chasm of regret
you may run away and deny what commands this flesh makes

how can you? it is you from the tip of your hair to the tip of your toe.
how can you ever deny? you're all covered by skin, fixed and held.

RIC S. BASTASA
Amorality

when i see another petal of
a rose falling to the ground which
meets it with the silence of
indifference under the moist soil
the worm sleeps in content as
the sun shines again in rage
till noonday as the clouds shift
their positions as the children
begin to fly their kites as their
mothers watch and think of
other coming images as the
world spins and gives us nights
and days: who can ever think that
in all these there can be a possible
classification between sinning and
not sinning?

events now are traveling faster than light
all these neutrinos of change and sparks and
awes and ahs
and sooner the story of disobedience
and apples and snakes
and innocence and guilt shall be erased
from the face of this
fast winged earth flying towards
an unknown destination

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Man Watching The Stars From His Deathbed

obviously
as no one is present
to read him
some poems
he simply waits
for the stars
to come out
in the heavens
from the open
window
of this deathbed

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Poem

an old man
walks downhill
following the path
that he once
prided

at the foot
of the hill lies the
six-foot hole

on the side
is the banyan tree
climbed by
this persistent vine
with white flowers

the place is calm
butterflies pay it
more visits.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Idea About Our Life Here

we belong here
in fact we know the ins and
outs of the many doors
we open windows
and let light in
we know when to close
and when to hide
do not think that we
are different
we are all the same
breathing mechanisms
complete
with defenses and
offenses
do not be amazed
there are more to suffering
inside the room
when we cry we see to it
that no one hears

after all
it has always been our solemn
obligation to please
to deny
and then to confirm
what is not found here
and what is
supposedly
grand out there

RIC S. BASTASA
An Abandoned Love Song

you abandon a love song

it hangs on the bus
as you leave home
seeking for the comfort
out there

a very lonely song

no one picks it up
to take it home
or even
to just whistle it
for the meantime
along the railways

you will
soon regret

that song
shall become the hit song
tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
An Absurd Idea...

i'll make it
crisp this time
not so salty,
deep fried,

well thought of
before it is served

take it with your bare hand
into your mouth
let your tongue savor it
let it stay for some minutes
swallow it

do not tell me
forget it.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Accident

Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure of a woman
hazy in the rain
against the furious lights of the car
in the middle of the city
it is tense
i mean the feeling when you are
in the middle of the street and it is raining
and there are furious lights of the car
on a busy street
and what you see
is the figure of a woman
against the howls
of the sirens of the ambulance
and people running
wanting to see
what happens finally
inside that
yellow line

RIC S. BASTASA
An Aching Heart...

an opportunity
for love to grow and be wise
given the chance again
despite it
it will always love again
because
hearts always exist
with love as justification
and aching hearts
are no exception

RIC S. BASTASA
An Act Of Art....

some quit
for good, others
complain,
whine, and curse,

envy is a normal
feeling,
accept it, and
move on

others are deaf
and blind, and mute
and they are just
there

honing their craft
being out there
is also an
act of art

creating and
re-creating
thanking for all
the love....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Active World, Alive And Happy...

between
katipunan and
dipolog another bridge
is repaired,
cars are detoured
on the right side of the
river,
the asphalted roads
are thickened,
it is the wear and tear
thinning them out,
vehicles line up
to create order.
in punta we pass by
a checkpoint,
motorcab drivers wait
for their cue,
along the way vendors
sell lanzones and
durian,
when i arrive home
the black dogs wag
their tails
dance and meet me
with all
their happy barkings,
oh if they could only
talk,
we could have heard
that this world after
all, like those bridges
and roads and fruit vendors
is filled with
activities, all telling
us that there is
happiness, uniqueness
of each moment,
that this is not
the place for the dead
but for the living.

then dinner, and music
and peace,
with the family,
as the dogs
lie outside, waiting
for their
share.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ad: Prolix (For Manolita)

Who uses PrOlix?

Law enforcement
Military
Outdoor enthusiasts
Olympic shooters
Target shooters
Biathletes
Homeowners
Collectors

Designed for Firearms

Lubricates and cleans
Waterproof
Inhibits rust/corrosion
Eliminates oil/grease
Preserves wood
Environmentally friendly
Safe to use on Glock polymers

PROLIX is a registered trademark
Dry lube technology

Use prolix on Valentine's day.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Admission Of Weakness

the heart has no reason

I've been thinking so hard
why i am
in love with you

if i have to listen from
reason
you are never the one that
i must love and dream to live
with

i keep a certain distance
hoping that reason may finally
triumph
wear its crown like a king
of wills

i am listening to reason
and it is telling or
must tell me
that
you are such a disgusting
temptress

there are so many grounds
why i must detest you
we are never at par
nothing
for the liking

i am confident that this love
may soon die
or fade or simply go away
or that i must abandon it
that i must run away from it
as fast as
a slip of my tongue
when i see you again
however
my very own reason bends,
kneels, begs
to touch you again
so i may live and be more
alive again

the hearth is dumb
dumb, dumb
moron,
a clown

but it triumphs just the same
it struts down the street
and mocks me
for all my denials

i am weak
but i assure myself
it will be only for this moment...

the heart is hysterical
now it is a jackal

RIC S. BASTASA
An Adventure

what would i choose for
this adventure?
a boat ride? a cruise?
a jet plane for instant arrivals?
what will i do there anyway
except to loaf
and take a view of the parks
and paths

on my feet for an adventure
please do not think
about death

we have so much of it already
on daily doses

RIC S. BASTASA
An Adventure From Coron Island To El Nido

sailed from the island of coron
that early morning of saturday
leaving hanging cliffs and rowdy
boat with blue and white sails
passing by the big waves of the
pacific ocean rocking the wooden
boat that we have taken for the
trip to el nido: clouds like feathers
hang above us as we go coastal passing
white shorelines teeming with coconut
trees seemingly the other islands
are not inhabited and we heard the
sound of mocking monkeys playing
with the hanging vines of Comping.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Advice
	ry making it short,
as a syllable, crisp
like popcorn
make it quick,
like a nibble
because
they don't have
the luxury of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Advice To A Friend

there is a point in not having to say anything
when we really have nothing to say

but there is no point in not writing what we cannot say
what we do not want to say
what we keep on keeping like a bomb inside our heads

let it explode! ~ write everything that disturbs
that tickles and even the one that kills

come to think about something redeeming too,
like my thoughts of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Advice To A Problematic Student

he sailed two rivers
and now he is lost which river
did he take
only to find himself
at the middle of this
christina falls

i am a lazy problem solver
and i let the problem solve itself
i ask him to sit
cross his legs and fingers
and stay calm and
cool

she says she keeps two women
and i tell him
let them pull their hair
and slap each other
and then
see for yourself in the mirror

how handsome have you become.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Affair With A Surreal Beloved

one can have
a love affair with a full moon
beside some stars

you lay your body on that veranda
upon a wooden bed
beside you a glass of cold coca-cola

the moon spreads its light upon you
and you feel that softest warmth
on your hair, your face, your belly, your feet

it is that moment when you close your eyes
that your beloved arrives
surreal on the bed of roses
that your mind has prepared for her.

RIC S. BASTASA
An After Love Poem

making love with you
gives me the depths of the ocean

your arms are failing me
i fall like a sigh from the lips
without the wetness of love's
natural delights

i hold your body tightly
like the darkness that clings to dusk
like light that makes an island
from a pole

i utter love as you close your eyes
i know this pain
i know your pain
i know the house that you left
the place that you miss

i am this lonely island
and you are a drift wood floating
in the sea

waves are taking you here
gifts of the silence of the world
too drifting in this
loneliness of the galaxies

what are we here for?
tell me? dead drift wood to another dead island
to another dead sea?

there is life that we must choose
a pulse
a vibrant heart
an excited hush
a wandering wind
a flickering star
a bright moon
a silvery sea

oh hear, the dolphins are here
they are singing!

RIC S. BASTASA
An Afternoon

when they all leave
and you are left all alone by yourself
you reflect upon the shape of the wall
you check if it has gained
a little length
whether it has widened
a few inches
for all the days gone by
unnoticed
you stare upon the walls around you
you check on your nails
you bite one
it tastes salty
there is this bitterness in your heart
you grope for a word
to describe it
in one setting
there is something that screams
you silence it
you stand and close the door and leave
you walk along the silent corridors
you think
what if this darkness goes on and on
what if this bitterness continues
day by day
what if the walls grow to become this big house
and you are inside it
not finding anymore
any door any window
what if?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Afternoon Poem

it is all coffee without cream
do sugar, you say please, no sugar no cream

it is all about cold bread
nothing electrifying
unlike the softness of the arms of the beloved

it is about the coldness of bread
and the hotness of coffee

less the cream and the sugar
nothing sweet really

you guess it: there is something bitter
not from the water (for why should water be bitter?)
not from the cup (is there such a cup which has a bitter taste?)

guess further: you are wrong.
it is bitter, it is really bitter.

it comes from the heart. Not from the saucer
or the spoon.

it is the heart that is bitter. do not attempt
tasting it.

it can be toxic because it is mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Afternoon Poem

When i write this one,
this general idea about something
with nothing definite in particular
falling short of the images required
of a poem,
i really have no audience in mind
i am just writing like talking a walk or
sitting on a bench watching some of you
passing by,
definitely, this is an afternoon poem
and that is what is definite about it

i am tired
but i cannot rest
when i arrive in the house
only the dogs meet me
there is no one here
no note
left on the fridge
there is only this silence that keeps
me company
and the image of the wagging tail of
a dog
the only loyalty that seems
to abide by the rules
of this
game, well,
i should not be surprised
it has been this way
and i like it that way now
this nonirritating
spectator

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ailing Wind

the night
comes in and
meeting you
could have been
one sunny day
for me except
that your eyes
are never
sun and neither
moon

the world says:
out there is an
island of light
where the sun
will always be
mine

and so i leave you
with a word from
an ailing wind

RIC S. BASTASA
An Allegory

when i was small
i was taught that the meaning
of my life
lies inside the big dome
it is where destiny lies
all explanations possible
are contained in that book
kept inside the golden
casing,

life turns sour
and bitter and
sweetness seems
to be slippery like
an eel,

the dome does not help
and so i turned away
walked outside
and found this new place
outside the dome

trees and grass and
some dragonflies
clouds and cones
fine mornings
calm seas

there are lots of shapes and
colors and
odors
more explanations become possible
they’re born like buds turning into
petals

and freedom is like a child
running wild and
talking in chatters
so many songs
and poems
and conversations flow
without fences

i like it here
even without you
i am hurt
but it is different now
i have befriended the pebbles
and the sands
the sun is terrible
but on a night like this
the moon comes once in a while
bringing me
another sense and meaning
some stars sing
they help

RIC S. BASTASA
An Allegory For A Virgin....

the eyes are submarines
every moment is a nighttime
beautiful sea creatures of
this mind
forever appeasing
first meetings of lovers
more like
it,

i refer to art, this is the one
that always brings a new day to me
sunshine is not the usual sunshine on the fields of hay
it is always new and
different
always the first time
virgins in bed
on love's unwearied imaginations

the eyes are submerged
seeing what is not here for the first time
clouds bluer than ever
rotated by a fan
suns hanging on the ceiling behave like the stars in those heavens
those trees shedding off leaves
upon a teasing wind

dogs howl, the rain comes like hair
upon the slender neck of a beloved

doors close, windows open, the house staying put upon love
and the star of the show is silence restrained

too much restraint
joy contained exclusively on those arms tightened
like a jet surging parting the tight legs of a virgin sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Allegory Of Our Poetry

we are all riding in the same boat of MV Poetry

we all eye an island of our dreams
we want to feel
the ecstasy of words, the sensation of sound
the scent of imagination

the Chairman of the Board sees to it that there must be a proper classification of all passengers
strict segregation
in accordance with social status
and economic standing
the color of the eyes
the smoothness of the skin
the mark of class in the foreskin

we know our states
we get our economy tickets
we never have fine dining
and nice classical music
we only have our own packed food,
cold and all that kind
of cheaper stuff

but we all know how to please ourselves
we the poor
and the underprivileged

or the middle class that we want to think
as a matter of elevating ourselves
a little bit
this backbone of society

someone gets an FM radio
turns it on
and we have music then and then we dance
all night
among our kind of
class
holding on to each others'
weaker arms

those who die in their fame
are put in their most expensive coffins
and those who are rich and privileged like
have private rooms
hot showers
expensive silk linens
softest pillows
exclusive parties and
dark forest cakes and red sparkling wines
and chosen conversations
recited their own poems
and are applauded
with their own
special musicales

....i make a conclusion
it is also true here, very much exactly like it

when the boat shall finally sink
all scamper for life just the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Allegory Of Our Sinless Meeting....

beyond our two flesh
i hang on
to the twig of the
divine
i am the black bird
with a wide
span of wings
i am heavier
than a stone on your
neck
but i carry on
like a cliffhanger
i will let my body fall
and i shall not use
my wings

i trust the sea
and i am a friend of the
full moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Alley...

i am just an alley
where you must pass
i only listen to the waters
after the rain
and like you they pass me by
i am a friend of the gutter
we speak the same
language
there are stones on my belly
the rats come at night
the sweepers on
bright days
i am not a street
and so i have no name yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Allowance For Some Mistakes Of How We Perceive Things To Be

our thoughts have what in them an allowance for the possibilities that what they perceive are just illusions of the mind far away from the flesh and bone of the things-in-themselves

a mirage, or just the image of a mirage, come to think of it, a man that you hate or love, could not be me, but the image of the man in your dream in your mind like air dripping from your forehead to your lips you taste and feel it but it does not taste and feel as you have seen it there are possibilities of optical illusions, and what you see are evil come to think of it, could just be as good as your disguises.

you are made to believe that what you see is what you get. but there are those which your eyes do not see which your eyes failed to find. what you feel is also what you get on such matters that only your heart can feel.

i have written this because you wish to see my love through your eyes. you grieve because you have not seen that red flower in the blue sky. it is not in the mind, it is right there in that garden when you close your eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Altercation

when i step there
for the first time i know
the difference between
silence and
shutting up, that soundless scream
that only your ears
can hear and people wonder
what is happening inside
your tiny world
where you always live and
there is no
specific address
as the streets wind up to nowhere
the world is full of noise
and as you see you imagine people
as like you
all in the flurry of the winds
of disgust
and then i ask you to see the
light at the post
it is 6:30 in the evening
and lights begin
to make a claim of their
own islands
amidst the crowd of
passers-by
i ask you once again
to listen to the clicking of the
watch inside your
heart
and try to erase the
imagined scream
i agree it is an evening
loveless in itself
there is only you
and no one else
for i am but a stone to you
in your garden
of sands
i urge you to listen
carefully and close your eyes
and open them
once again
searching for the red
color of the
longing
it is deep into the night
when trees are but
shadows
and the winds create
a stir of
falling leaves
those that last only
for the night
and i assure you
there is nothing
here but leaves
yes, leaves and
leaves
softly falling to the grass
carried by the
sounds of the flurry
of invisible wings
and i am telling you
it could be
hope dressed
like maple.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ambiguity Of Us

long after midnight you sit on the floor
you wish there was flashing of lightning and the thrill of thunder
or that there be fires on the sky like meteors flickering
like wishing stars
or the moon burning like red coals, the stars more curious
like signals of light of the nuclear war

you do not wish her to leave
you want still to be in bed for love
(you like it to be lust)

the heavy rains have long stopped
and you still remember the rush of the waters from the mountains
i have always wondered
what is in store for us here
we are naked and truthful

i have, perhaps wasted my life
trying to take you from your own kind of death
you wish to cease breathing as always
and it has become too irritating

i had a dream last night, that i emailed you something
like: please be gentle to yourself
but you were away on a trip and
you have no answer
(the phone says you are sick
or shall i say madly in love with someone else)

RIC S. BASTASA
An Announcement

he has
an announcement
to make

he has one
thing to say

lady justice
is still working
in his country

even without
the cooperation
of the majority
of those
whose robes
remain
blacker than
ever

the people
have not spoken
yet
but there is
rejoicing
from their
hearts

the need to walk
in the streets
is dispensed with

the cheat and
the liar
the corrupt
and the
dishonest
has finally
fallen
'bad karma!
bad karma!'
the islands are
shouting

the sea is calm
the night is cold
joy is jumping

RIC S. BASTASA
An Argument

IT is like our guns.
We do not need it
to kill,
killing is not at all times
illegal,
self-defense for instance
our way of defending ourselves
from the assassins
the hired killers and the
mercenaries of
modern times,

the law on divorce for
instance
who likes a divorce?
you do not marry only
to think that
you have to be separated
from the one you love
someday

but there comes a time
when you need it
and you cannot use it
because it
is not there

and you will regret
not allowing it in the system

just like a condom
who likes a condom?
it is a wall between us
our flesh not touching
each other

but there are times
when you need it
because there is that need
and you have to be safe

who needs guns, condoms, divorce?
it a matter of choice
so bring them in,
let the man in his wisdom choose
let him be responsible

time is nothing human more than us
who can deny
the options available in this world
it is fair
make all these available
so when you need them
you can avail of them

let the options be myriad
for in all these activities of choices or choosing
we become more human
and even more divine
in what we really want to become....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Argument This Morning

dislodged from a frame
of inspiration
(perhaps thinking that
the reason why
poetry is born is because
the muse is beautiful
luscious and
edible
&
so since there is no
one there anymore
with the muse trampled
upon
and there is no more
light
from the moon)

he quits and dramatically
ends with
a quip
that poetry is
dead

not bad, but not completely
true
poetry has no life
how can it die?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Argument With You

you must not expect that i give up
the world that i built for all my years
my sweat my labor my dreams
shall they all perish this minute
just for me to prove that
i love you? if you love me enough
you must not attempt to destroy
my world
you must let it grow and lavish
upon itself the fruits
and flowers and seeds
as i have loved you and as you have loved me
we must keep this secret garden
no one must know not even the left hand
of yourself
we make this love hidden from the eyes of all of them
a love  misunderstood
as sin

for in the darkness of the nights of our beings
this love glistens as the most beautiful star
you must wake in the middle of the night
to see how beautiful it is when left alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Arrangement

.. and so we went to her place
in a house where her only furniture
is a bamboo bed

she holds my face
she kneels down
she kisses my hand
as though she is my slave

... and so something which should not have happened happened
there's that tinge of guilt
i wanted her to say she loves me
but she didn't

she made me happy all the way
all way through that lonely night
on that bamboo bed

that following morning
when she was still fast asleep
i kissed her hair
put something beside her
that she loves most

it will make her survive perhaps for a month
even without love

RIC S. BASTASA
An Arrangement Of Priorities

i got a cup of hot green tea on top of a pile of legal folders

i got a window made of glass up the second floor and i could see what is happening down the road

i got a closed door a dusty floor and a shining pen

RIC S. BASTASA
An Array Of Candles

On that corner
There is this array of
Candles
That you see

If you only look
Carefully
There is one candle
There
Its light is about to
Stop
Its wick so short
To last for
Another minute

That candle is my
Life
And soon it will
Signify an
End

Do not ask me
I do not want an
Extension
Even for a
Second

I had enough of
This light
This little light
I had enough of this
Vast darkness

There is no time
Nicer enough
To convince me
For more of it

I had enough
Let me say it again
I had enough of
You.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Assurance When The Rain Seems Not To Stop

in the coldness of this
old and traditional bond
like a chain of steel in the
coldest day of November
we are mature enough
to disregard what repels us
we do not clash about
these corrosive walls
head-on we shall die our
heads like broken balls
our hearts giving in to the
cancer of indifference
we are in this rain and
we stay we know that like
all seasons nothing stays that
long drought or flood
there is that moment of
subsidy, that subservience
of least resistance that
patience of insistence
takes time but it will
always come, surely

RIC S. BASTASA
An Attempt To Compare To Convince You That The Other Is Happier

There is absolutely no need to compare you are unique hence there is no acceptable standard to tell you that that guy with a girl and a child posing as a happy family is much better than you are or the rest of this humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Attempt To Describe

i wish to describe
anxiety on a shaking glass of water
held by your hand, but i do not wish to be
tactless about it,

with due respect i transferred
my gaze to the other side
of the window and told you about
the dancing leaves of the bamboo
being blown by the gentle
wind from a very green mountain
on the left side of
our house.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Attempt To Rhyme

i am so sorry for you Johnny Doe
but i cannot rhyme for you
i have been in all these
What a pretty mess!

Life does not really Rhyme
Time mistaken for Thyme
Nothing really jibes
That's why we have tribes

RIC S. BASTASA
An Attempt To Understand God

you have seen God
in the eyes of the child

you shall see more of His face
in another man's anguish

or his bliss
you shall see more of God

in a woman's hands
earlier on her beautiful face

you do not notice God in
time's passage

you miss Him when you think so much
it is only when

the sand in the glass is empty
that you can hear him speak

louder, it is when you do not
desire water to fill that thirst

that you experience Him deeper
when you are lost that you can

finally find Him, when you finally
love death, that you can feel that

Life in Him, when you flow like
a leaf on the surface of the flowing
creek, that you shall know his Will.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Aunt And An Uncle

The last thing i heard
is that they have already lived separately

they are old when they decided
they must part ways

he sold land and he has money
bought a new car for himself at 79

she also sold land which her mother left her
bought a new house for herself at same age

they are irreconcilable but they are not arguing about it
they are too old for a nullification and it will still be expensive

sometimes i wonder how foolish two old people can be
haven't they learned the science of symbiosis at least?

he has a car and she has a house
she could have gone places and he could have shelter

and granting that they can no longer be happy
at least they can still live together and make use of the hereafter together..

RIC S. BASTASA
An Awakening For Air..

a time comes
for an awakening

you look at yourself
as a stranger

you begin to dislike
what you have been drinking

or eating, you have starved
yet you do not want to eat anything

you float like a hot air balloon
you rise up to a sky

you burst and then you fall
without feeling anything

you awaken to the idea
that you have turned into air

that you belong to everyone
and yet you have no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Awareness Lesson

it is at the exact point
of your orgasm and my ecstasy
when the world in creation
is learned inside us
when we throw away all thoughts
in space
when we forget who we are
that reality unfolds
we have no eyes no mouths
we are nothing before
the magnificence of it all
pure light inside this darkness
a ball of fire
flaming and burning
us always unconsumed
in a world inexhaustible

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Canvass

the white yacht
sails

upon a sky blue
sea

soundlessly this
silhouette
watches

it is i
i say to me

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Departure...

when i wake up
this morning
the door is half-open
i did not touch
it
something in its
rough feel
still hurts my
fingers

someone i love
so well
left me before
i could see her
face again

it was her
who touched that door
very early
that morning

it is departure
that i felt and that
which i cannot
touch again

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Greeting From Her(E)

an early morning greeting from her thru tx mssging
though abbreviated
is still long and she asks that i as the philosopher
poet share
to her some of my insights for the day

i have nothing to say really,

tess, silence is wisdom too

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Oat Meal

an early morning oat meal
is like poetry

it warms the heart
fills an empty stomach
makes you
move smoothly
for another day

like a survivor of
another day's shipwreck

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Song

an early morning twyla
for delilah
eyes waking up like fila
all for delilah
a beautiful phyla
all for delilah

and so i tag the line
that delilah is doing fine
based upon samson's decline

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Walk

i had a walk this morning
and i saw twilight

fog hovering still on the feet of the mountains
there is beauty in haze
in the opaqueness of smog

i inhale cold air inside my lungs
and walk faster

there is dew on the grass
as fingers of light comes out from the hazy fog

herons arrive and land on the green fields
catching the frogs

the brown cow is munching grass inside its mouth
still lying comfortably on the ground

the macopa tree shed its leaves
in favor of new shiny ones

the trail is clear
no one has arrived here yet

it is about to rain with all the gray clouds lumping in the sky
ah, i am not running for shelter.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Early Morning Wish

it is too early
i guess the nights are longer now
it is 4: 56 a.m. it is cold
the air is cold
and the windows are still closed
the rooster at the yard
keeps on crowing
while other roosters of the neighborhood
(i live in a rural town
with dusty roads still at the other
nearby kiosk)
keep on crowing too for an answer,
how i wish to make you
a lovely,
happy,
gentle,
peaceful poem
no one screaming on the road
not a motorcab screeching
neither a bus overspeeding
and spreading dust
how i wish to write you a poem
about love
or about that only peaceful star
hanging on the
early morning sky
just a wish
but really
there isn't any
it cannot be
what with a heart that is grieving
a soul that is lost
a body that trembles
a mind with thoughts live leaves
heap upon heap
without a match
to burn them all
this hot days of summer.
i remember an egghead,
his head feels so light
like silk handkerchief inside your hand,
you do not pay particular attention to its color
i know,
you have no time for an egghead,
but i always remember him and you are angry
why i remember him and i am your favorite brother
who rose to the skies
more of a kite on a windy summer
and you do not like me to
sympathize with an egghead,

you see, you cannot blame me brother
i am traumatized

he broke his head in front of me
and you left him spilling his gray brains on the street
amidst those indifferent people
who merely pass by
as though no one died that early morning

you are one of them
with coat and tie
and who do not care if
others die,

if you call me another egghead
i may by now, be a little dignified

but i promise you
there will be no more brains spilled on this angry street

RIC S. BASTASA
An Elocution Of Preparedness

i must start training myself
to be alone

after all this is actually
a solo journey

i am imagining some what ifs

what if you will leave me?

what if, after realizing that your motives are not as pure as pearls
then i, too, must decide to
leave you for
good?

when we first met
i was lonely
and i told you that and you caressed my hair
put my head in the middle of
your bosom
and i felt warm and i for the first time
felt so secure
and then as usual
i put all my trust in you
believing that love
is all this about

that is, putting my heart at the mercy of your
hands

i've read it somewhere
sometimes
love does not work
just like in novels
betrayals as not
uncommon

and one night when you are soundly asleep
while i
suffer the cruelty of insomnia's
distrust
i feel the distance
between you and
me, it is like an ocean
and there are waves as big as houses
and we have become
to islands
struck by the tsunamis of our
changing outlooks
our so called need for
space

and i look at the stars outside my room
regaining the breaths of
fresh air
reinventing myself in that loneliness of
separate natures

oil and water
darkness and light that meet only at twilight

that oh well, we were not born together
we are different
and we can change
and we may decide to call it
'quits'

i savor silence
and i tell myself
welcome back old world
be ready
for what happens
tomorrow
morning

RIC S. BASTASA
An Elocution On A Rainy Day While Sipping Coffee Beside The Glass Window Of Starbucks Cafe

leaves falling blown by the monsoon winds
rains and more rains
the whole day outside the flowers are so wet and heavy
empty streets and
two women with black umbrella
and a man
looking at me angry perhaps why i have looked at him long enough
beyond curiosity as i begin to write another poem concerning falling and humanity,

you get bored sometimes looking for something new when actually
for the meantime there is none except the fact that to feel new
you simply have to reinvent yourself and recreated another world from the wasted hours of your monotony.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Elocution....

we read
between the lines
we pause
we take in a lot of the other
we read them and they become a part of
our innards
we pause and we take sleep
a journey
into an imbibing
the roads are too many
but we choose only one
not necessarily the happy one
we take what
is only necessary
we take the stairs one by one
we count each
sorrow we leave each happy moment
like a landmark
we always surge
like a bus into the other end of the road
that never ends
we read between the lines
we become what is
between them
we do not understand how we become
we just become
buds, flowers, bees and
pools of
clear water
we are flowing and drained
we exude and then
we go
until we are finally gone
and we have forgotten
to ask who we are
and so
what right have we to
deserve the
answers
we go, and then we are finally gone
we are never
anyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Emptiness Again?

does this emptiness move upon its hands
on the carpeted floors of the hallways
upon an old catholic church

the pillars as you see are taller
than the rugby players
the windows are as wide as the shoulders
of african men

i stand on the threshold of this door
the sun gets in
and i must choose which way to be

outside is the wind full of uncertain origins
inside there is this light that fears dissolution
the moment the wide window closes upon itself

there are two windows inside myself
i open them soon and then i will fly away

inside there is too much feasting
outside there is only your silence

RIC S. BASTASA
An Empty Bed

the empty bed
shall not surprise
you woman
it has always been
designed from
the start
when you decided
to marry the
man that you do
not love.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Empty Glass

an empty glass on the table
we stare at each other tonight

and i theorize on its emptiness
is it fed up with water?
was it drunk the other night and
would not take any liquor?

we stare at each other tonight
my hands holding on my chest
i bite my lips with my teeth

something seeps inside my mouth
i hesitate to swallow it
there is still this fear about substance
something that is alienating

my heart is quenched of its fire
there is only the coldness
of tranquility

something to drink from an empty glass
something that caresses

i shall take it.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Empty Heart

burnt letter
ashed

on a hot air
it floats in the sky

this empty heart
of mine

slowly it lands
like a sparrow's feather
on the river

RIC S. BASTASA
An Empty Heart...

evolve this chatter
into a leaf,

do not easily conform
to an old
shadow,

be solid, not that warm,
i discarded a stone

i put this little bird
upon a window

whisper to it the
beauty of wings

i invented it like
how thoughts are born

gladly, it understands
and flies away

oh, how happy i am.
an empty heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Empty Jar

she finds it unthinkable that
at this hour
i am dislodging thoughts
emptying my mind
of all our memories,
i am backbreaking a heart
repairing a mindset,
i am a jar with a leak and
all my contents
are removed,
i am as light as a plastic
pail, and she can lift me
up without
exerting any force,
she can carry me anywhere and
fill me again
and i am practically under
her control and
mercy, this, is the one,
that she cannot accept,
now i must follow and not lead,
now i am but an accessory
and not the main
thing
i surrender, i retreat, because it
is only in taking the
reverse, that
i shall conquer myself again
its weakness to the full
its defeat to the maximum and it
is only after getting this
full insight
shall i begin to
fill what is there that is lacking

it is i, a jar, a jar
full and heavy and
ready...
An Empty Space Is Built

one day a wall is destroyed
an empty space is built and made to look like
a big rectangular window
which makes a good view outside the house
where we all can take a look at every passer-by
which by all means give rise to all the adjectives
we can think of like

that one is a colorful woman dressing like a
koi and that child is wild like a coyote while following
his papa who is carrying a big sack of onions

and we, though silent as usual in the custom of
our old people who died long time ago
laughed secretly inside ourselves but

it is the verb of life that makes the window more
interesting to me like

the way a busy working man walks fast towards
a market to sell his bundles of chickens
the pitiful cries of a goat with a tie on its neck
as it is pulled by a barefooted kid
the reckless drivers of motor-cabs trying to make
the most profit that a holy Sunday can give him
on this market day.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Encounter...

in that encounter
the day becomes a mirror
as i begin to see every part of you in me.
the same eyes
longing for the outside game
the same feet wanting to walk all the edges of this earth
you are asking questions
that need the answers to the same questions over and over again
i play this game too
and even though i am bored i make you feel that this is interesting
i talk to fill the missing words in your mouth
and you listen
hoping to find inside me what you have been looking for
it will take a long time for you to know that i am just
another sea breeze
kissing sands and stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ending

a civilized man
no matter how eloquent
and sociable

no matter how
engulfing his mind
is

no matter how thorough
his grasp of all the elements
of this universe

no matter how amazing
is his body and soul
and thoughts
and cares

somehow if he has to be
decent at all

must know about the
fact of an end.

a manner, of ending
a meeting, a manner of ending
a conversation, no matter how nice it is

some men are much better at it
when through when the mission is done
when everything is over
when all is said and done

knows how is it to end what he
has started

he takes his life and not waste it
in a meaningless nook

in the useless passage of the hours
where the bell tolls and no one listens

RIC S. BASTASA
An Entry In A Diary Today...

there is this anger that is brewing inside me
my mouth is like the sea that is covering the mouth of an emerging volcano
no words that hurt
just plain cool silence
like breeze from the distant mountains from those trees and grassy hills

i am disfigured for each eye looks at the opposite direction
my hands are not coordinating with the direction that the feet are making
i ask my wife: is this how is it to be insane?

she is patient as always. a woman
the nurturing and motherly figure.

there is nothing wrong with you, she assures me
they're a mess and you cannot endure it anymore

the park is well lighted tonight
there is no drizzle of rain
some flowers are blooming along the path leading to the seashore

it is our night and we are safe now.
then we talk about other matters that are not part of the day's trouble.

we are still here. we breathe.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Epitaph Of The Once Renaissance Man...

so much
and so many
have depended
on me

but that was
a long
time ago

i gave it
up

so much
of
me now
depends
on You for
whom
i have
laid
my life
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
An Erotic Man

an erotic man
takes another woman away

and she is carried away
until another man

pumps bullets
and then the erotic man is taken away
by her husband

RIC S. BASTASA
An Erotic Wish As I View You On The Beach

a thin waistline
is what i need

your waistline fused
to mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Escape

as reality gets too harsh
we get confused but we do not just stop right there
we have still these remaining instincts to please ourselves
to survive
we learn how to play
when denied of the backyards
and the fields and the hills and the rivers
we take the four sides of the room
and make our own little world
when denied of their speech
we use our own and then then when they face us
they shall be frightened
we are alive we have our own language
we write an essay on how we have won
we compose the poem
that proclaims our own greatness
the paintings and sculptures
our faces our bodies
not theirs

we were denied an entrance and so we made our own
we escape from their clutches and found our own hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Escape Into The World Of Exhaustion

to live in a closed world
plunge into a workload that
makes you forget
what happens next
the one that seals you away
from the anxiety of
a place where you get
annihilated where you
only see the tracks of your
memories
where these fade into
mist where mist turns into
air where everything
becomes a clean slate of
space and it is colored
dark where not a single star
flickers where your body
takes heat and you back
aches and your neck is
shrinking into your
clavicle
and then you are seduced
into bed
where there is only
one of you

you have not closed the window
and the rain is heavy
and there is lightning
a flash
and loud thunder
and water gets in your
room and it is cold

you do not know what is happening
you are fast asleep
all your limbs are dead
tired
An Escape To The Countryside

inside a white car
you drive towards the
countryside

upon a brown road
you slice a path and
leave
a mob of molecular
dust

along the side of this
country
are blooming wild daisies
where dragonflies
sojourn

there is big mango tree
as old as
the second world war where
bees till today
swarm

the bamboo cottage is
still there
beside a balding hill
where the early morning sun
peeks and stays for a while
perhaps sipping mist
and then
leaves you feeling awkward
about its
fidelity to
routine

for here you are breaking rules
and finding ways still
to be blameless and like a
pure white lamb
unblemished.
An Escape...

bear with me
i haven't slept for
hours, help me,
i am designing
an escape module,
for i don't like
it here.

i am watching
You Tube, preoccupied
with Facebook,
and here the best
escape ever: am
writing poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Eulogy....

of course you know
Totong very well.

he is such a good man
he feeds the pigeons in
the park
always helps a hungry man
in the street
he gives alms to the poor
does not drink hard liquor
shuns pork and lives a happy life

chooses memories
disregards the unhappy ones
junks bad influences
watches the stars at night
bathes under the moon by the river
with his girl

you know him too well
as a model of virtue in our community
he is 56
Aquarius, a dragon
lucky number is 7
lucky color is blue
lucky day is Monday

loves his wife and only daughter
works well with his office-mates
climbs mountains
sunbathes by the sea
loves fishing
and eating too.

he died today
due to heat stroke
in our little town
under a blue sky
at 7th Dragon street
on a quiet Monday
at 7 o'clock in the morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Evaluation

it is not the answer
that tell who you are
and what
shall you become

it is your questions
the openness
the wide latitude
of your doubts

these shall make you live
open arms and
a mind that does not narrow
down to an alley.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Excerpt....

I did love you

I know. But I still love you.
So, love me.
But I miss you.
So, miss me.
Send me perfume and
flowers every time
you think of me...

Then dropp it.

It won't last forever.
Nothing does.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Excerpt

i know...ha-ha-ha...i'm happy for you..

it's good you don't have children yet, at least you can do whatever you want. but in my case i have two boys and it's like a domino reaction.

mawala na ang trust nila sa ako-a.
(they will lose their trust in me)

maybe if i am divorced i could do whatever i want without any consequence. maybe that's why she can do it because she is separated from her husband and she likes you to start with.

well
maybe i will too! if i am in her situation.

lami gud ang orgasm..ha-ha-ha

(orgasm is exciting)
maksingit gyud ko ug ahat,

(maybe i will scream)

ha-ha-ha

what a lengthy exposition when what you can do is simply make a very short and erotic poem

ha-ha-ha, was that a poem already?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Excerpt Of A Non-Poem

'I started to draft
'In My Own Eyes'
last 2008;

And shared it
with a friend (priest).

It's put on hold
for a while
because I know
I can be too emotional.

How I wish I could just free
willingly tell my story,
like re-living
the past'

RIC S. BASTASA
An Excerpt Of Painless Cut...

during those times
when you have partaken
on my free dinners
it is in your anger that paves the way
to the truths which are laid

now the bridge that connects us
falls to the rage of my rivers
i have nothing to lose
and surely i have everything to gain

for losing you is like cutting my hair
i give up something that i do not need
ah, keep that monkey's grin
for sooner or later the truth shall always reveal
what your heart has kept concealing...

RIC S. BASTASA
sadness is not a reason
and it is not always
beautiful

so be it

let those who cannot bear
bury themselves
we have our own preoccupations
our graves to dig too
our own litany of justifications
after

RIC S. BASTASA
An Excuse For An Exit...

IF THERE are too many of us
in this room
i may choke and with lesser space
i may die in this process and so
for many night i figure out an exit
or an excuse
to be excluded from this intimacy
of souls
it is this body that does not accept
too much heat
lest i explode into shreds of
brains
blood squirting out from the pores of
my skin
and just this morning i have grouped
some thoughts
my final excuse that right to be free from
the mob and the rest
of those who are here to know
me and in that door where i just exited
as you see
you shall read:

i just want to be left alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Exhortation About A Dog

i

the dog that licks my feet
every morning after i wake up
does not appeal to my senses anymore

ii

the dog that licks my feet every morning after i wake up does not appeal to my senses anymore

iii

the dog that licks my feet every morning after i wake up does not appeal to my senses anymore

iv

but i must allow it still
because it is the law between
the dog and me
and this
dogged
society

v

and so the dog still
licks my feet
every morning
and at night
i do not ponder about it
anymore
i do not ask
i have no questions
for asking

vi

the dog sleeps with me
at night
in my bed
and spreads her legs like
a spoiled
prostitute
and she is confident
that i cannot kill her
because that is the
law between us
and dogs

vii

and society keeps guard
on this
and if i continue
having this dog's tongue lick
all over my body
and feed her well
and make her a part of my
life
till death do us part
then society
shall have a thousand hands
clapping
for my obedience
and fidelity

viii

my honest neighbor
(who does not want to be mentioned here says
that actually)
she's one kind of a typical
bitch

(and i will neither confirm nor deny
it, but please do not tell
anyone about it)

that is the law.

RIC S. BASTASA
something is missing in your lines.
i regret to tell you that.
it does not speak well of yourself
or the world
or any moment, it is like a desert and all we have is space and
a horizon
there is even no wind to blow the sands away
i do not expect rain in the desert
but i could have seen a camel or a line of trucks or a
caravan

or even a Bedouin riding on his black horse with a scimitar

here i am again
in my worst self trying to tell you what to do so that you can be what you are

your lines are straight and too clean and that make them appear
dishonest
people love crooked lines and those that move in free directions
lines that are cold like the wind
and yet vibrant at night

not really dead, but simply grieving in silence for the loss of
someone so loved and missed.

i do not want you to change your lines, they are yours to
show,

i may be unfair wishing that your lines may be like mine
but mine are too sad and always sounding like a lover abandoned.

the beautiful lines are not clean.
they are imbued with our errors, erasures, blasting in our faces
like explosives

where shattered as we are on the fields of our disasters
only in a few seconds
we become silent spaces again.
mine are sad, and lonely and abandoned.
they are the only ones i have now, and so i must be compelled to
have them and love them
just the way they are.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Expectation

what do i expect of myself? I,
who is, only a repetition, a body
who goes on everyday, same direction,
same going and coming, house, office,
Sundays on same beach, same
paths i walk everyday,
where adventure is shut up
like a door of a hotel that you
do not like to visit again,
what can i expect of a bullfrog
in a world of a small pond, saying
the same sound both for the rain
and sunshine, content with what is
here and not looking over there,
i, am, a fool resigned, away from
the academe and church and
halls, now, hiding in that garden
of silence, still looking for seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Expectation.....
	his is the usual feeling anyway,
the more i read, the more i do not know,
the more i know about you,
the more unpredictable you have become.
you are not the weather that i can put on the map
and say that tomorrow surely it will be sunny.

perhaps, i have changed myself too,
and so you have ceased to be another pattern.
the beautiful city that used to be in the map
whose road i can take by night even without the
light of a star is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Experience With A Crazy Old Woman...

at the first glance
an old woman
well dressed
does not appear to
be what she really is:

insane
perhaps because of too much sorrow
over land
or perhaps she cannot accept
the reality
of children leaving finally
old mothers

she talked a lot
and we all compromised out of respect
for old age
wisdom is obviously
absent

she had become a pestering parrot
a hissing snake
a shouting monkey

we called the police to throw her out
we all look at ourselves
freed from all guilt

we no longer wonder
what children are for...

RIC S. BASTASA
An Experiment Of Life....

life is an experiment
this poem is, was, and will always be
another experiment
imitating life, art imitating that serious life
that broken heart
mimicking pain
but can never be
the same

life is so beautiful, because of this experiment
shades of colors mixing in the atmosphere
life changing perfumes
hues,
changing shapes, birds, fish, islands
clouds,
ever ending drama
conversations without end
whispers without edges

this one too, the one that you have never felt
even before
as you once closed the door
this is a cloud peeping for you
longing
drifting imitating you
changing
clothes, self, shedding off skin
snake, shark,
shoelace,

waters, sands, kiss, arms,
bodies....

just you and me
behind your nape my hush....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Experimental Love

perhaps love
would be nicer for the second time around
if we experiment on the venue

a lighting effect
at noonday
where the garage is vacant
because they bring
the car
to their offices
indulged in serious work

perhaps love?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Exploration

just seeing birds
migrating or
sailing with a friend
to a new land
elated by the wagging
of a dog's tail
a hammock world
rocking
all about a movement
a hum

this more to all these
there is
this whisper of the ear
to the eye

there is more to
the sound of
content,

there is more to sorrow
than joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
look these ink blots
are not butterflies, they are just ink blots
are you wasting ink on the paper?
are you careless blotting this paper?
you have stained them and they do not look good at all.
do not force me into saying
there are butterflies there
or bats or
clowns, there aren't any
there are no flapping wings
no dragons
no fire, no journeys of a snowman
there are no monsters that live
on paper
they're too heavy to carry on a permeable
sap of trees
slices of wood and lines of fountain
pen...
i am serious now and i am realistic
i want you to feel that i am concrete as a slab as real as a floor
where you stamp your feet and hear my sound
do not force me into a belief that you are an illusion
because you are not

i am not an illusion. i am sad. I am a recipient of your unfairness.
but i am not dead.

tomorrow i will bathe myself with the light of the sun.
i reflect light i am real.
i will dive into the deep river
i splash water, i am a body, i am real.

watch out, i have thoughts and you do not see them.
i have seen you misled me, and i become the storm.

these inkblots stain me. I am real.
An Hour After Midnight

you must know this hour
when I wake up and the rest of you are sleeping
it is at this moment
when loneliness wakes up
and soars
like a smoke from a chimney
rising to the sky
it is so dark
and it is going everywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
An Hour Of Arabian And Egyptian Music

i close
my eyes it
is deep
in the darkness
of my life and

then i see
a sky filled with
stars
a wide stretch
of desert
a spot of
palm trees
islands and islands
of sands

a tent a horse
a Bedouin
a harem
a sultan

a scabbard
a sword

a scab
a bard salt of this
desert

cold winds and
a scimitar song

an urge of
an oasis and then
the calmness
of a sleeping
desert.....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Imagination

intentionally i let my right hand hold my left hand
my left hand holds the branch of a tree that
holds some leaves,

my feet are on the trunk of a tree
beforehand i mentioned
there are clouds getting near us
fog that promise a cover

out there oceans sing
stars hang themselves upon a path of the horizon
all imaginary ceilings
where the moon behaves like one big chandelier

there are moment when stars and moon are simply themselves
as moon and stars without
self-imposed meanings and then all that we describe
is that it is the moon and they are the stars
no sauce for more words
nothing added nothing subtracted
faithful to the phenomenon of the stillness of what we see

to still this restlessness
we focus on what we have
a hand holding another hand
a head that looks upward to the heavens
a foot rooted like the roots of a tree
leaves falling like the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
An Imagination Of Hope

despite these things
which i shall not tell you
about the truth
of the state of affairs
the arrangement of the chips
like dominoes
that may fall off and create the
havoc
... despite everything...
(sigh!)
i shall keep myself alive
give a smile to the day
hug my nights goodbye
take the stairs
and walk another mile
and shall come back
again
to you

...despite everything
the sadness
and despair

(sigh!)

i shall not tell you what
or where and when
and why...(sigh!)

somewhere beyond
yes there is always a time and a place
somewhere beyond

when i shall be happy
and glorious
where i shall be king
with a queen
with my prince and princes
with my soldiers
and a kingdom and a castle

(sigh!)
i always know this
somewhere sometime beyond.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Immortal Love?

when you kiss me
do not ever think
that my love
or your love
lasts forever

when you kiss
think that someday
you will lose me
and that i will
lose you too

it is more passionate that way
more honest
and warm and true.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Impingement

it takes a little impingement
to ruin the whole of my life

you push a nerve and disconnect it
from the rest of my system

a hand does not complain but there is the pain somehow
the arm is weakened and stiffled

the whole body wonders what is this conflict all about
there is this sickness of the mind

there is this crippling of the soul
the pain generates more pain and then at the end

you wonder
what is happening and where is the culprit

no one is there
and you lift nothing to tell the finger that it is over

RIC S. BASTASA
An Important Woman In Class...

you are too small and no one
notices you in the class of legal minds but
you should have known
it is only you that i see and no one else
but i know how to
conceal maxims and suppress rules and
display what everyone normally sees
in us,
and so perhaps until now you never have known
the definition of what
importance is what necessary is what
is....that being that refuses to know
what must have been known
quite well
a very long time ago

mute, blind, deaf,
out there, lurking hiding in a name...

RIC S. BASTASA
An Incense

in the morning
i light the tip of the
incense stick that
i bought specially
from
Malacca

i write a poem
for everyone then
there is no more
someone
in my mind

i close the room
and the incense smoke
fills it

when it is over
i see
ash gathered
upon the foot of
the incense
stick

i contemplate
upon this
demise

and i say
pretty much like us
pretty much like everyone
no one is
special

not even you
in Malacca

RIC S. BASTASA
An Inconsistency

the only honesty i can offer you
inside my empty room
is the bluntness of silence

ask me why i have no answer
to all your questions
i don't think that you are a stranger
to a love without name or
categories
you have been fucked up
do not deny that
you have been bleeding
and you have not healed yet
from that pain that
you voluntarily infected upon
your heart,

silly.

this time i will lie again
i love you, and i have to repeat it
to reinforce this lie
like a weak concrete post
concealed by fresh cement

if you ask me to kneel
i will
there is not much effort
in doing something that
i do not mean

you will see me lowering my head
and you may decapitate
what crown of integrity i have

bowing like a slave losing his grip
on the power of words
and protestation
i worship you
i undress myself like a cursed god of air
i become a dim light to your touch
i become a mist
a fog, a cloud, a mirage, a rainbow
a stream of thoughts
that you can never hold

silly.
kiss me if you can.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Inconvenient Truth

truths somehow are inconvenient
like living on walls so tight that we cannot breathe
because air is so thin,
like living high up on the topmost hill,

truths make us uneasy
like we fear that somehow these truths are uncovered
and the corresponding penalties
are hard to accept and endure

just like this inconvenient truth that soon we shall have
ice melting, waters rising, lands diminishing
populations exploding, massive floods
people drowning, global warming,

i remember Noah, just like you remember how he
constructed his ark
on those clearer summer days,
he did not build his ark when the flood came
put yourself in his shoes
or in the shoes of the ordinary onlooker

was he not crazy? was it not really inconvenient for him?
or was it not worst with you

because you have no capacity for truth
or believing it
you have no talent to live in its shadows
you have always been repealed
by its warm embracing arms

you will wait when you will be slapped by its very hands
by then it will be too late

you are drowning, and the ark has sailed farther to that island
of truth where you will no longer be its inhabitant

RIC S. BASTASA
An Independent Woman

an independent woman had taken so much lust inside her breast
she was filled and then bored and decided to throw
all her hormones away

thinking that now

it is time for love, surfing and searching, what love is in the person
not the body that she sees everyday
it must be someone
different from the rest, the one that comes with gentleness like a dropp of
water on her cheek and falls down slowly along the lines of her nose
into her lips and seeps down
to her tongue
and slides
in her throat, perhaps something melodramatic, someone who likes to listen
about her life story, gives her time and attention, and shares her vision
of life
& death

& rebellion

she is looking for love, a conversation, she is looking for one who can hold
her hands and feel her head falling on his chest

this independent woman now believes in casing, in caging, in marriage,
in bowing, in enslavement,
because the man who loves her demands just that
testing her
taming her, the shrew, the wild bird, and if she starts learning these tricks,
who knows,
she may finally find the man who shall love her forever

and when they get old, they watch tv, and they stay together as two
faithful shadows in a mirage

(she may not like it, but if she needs love, she may finally learn
what is this marriage all about)
An Index Of Racism For Your Reference

Sexism • Ageism
Religious intolerance • Xenophobia

Ableism • Adultism • Biphobia • Classism
Elitism • Ephebiphobia • Gerontophobia
Heightism • Heterosexism • Homophobia
Lesbophobia • Lookism • Misandry
Misogyny • Pediaphobia • Sizeism
Transphobia

Slavery • Racial profiling • Lynching
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Anti-discrimination law
14th Amendment • Crime of apartheid
Adultcentrism • Gynocentrism
Androcentrism • Economic

We are one big family of Humanity...
Do you have the index of Humanity?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Individuality

i am always a shade of something else
a background for instance
am i not a part of it? i am.

in the dark, i am black
so what do you see? just darkness
how can i be a ghost? a mist?
a white fog amidst the sea of darkness
a soul floating in cold air
you will be afraid for what you will see
so i am but a black shadow
blending with the night
you see nothing
but i shall speak in the comfort of your sleep

during the day
i assume the shape of a body
settle on the mind
live on the plain and the green grass
take the shade of the big tree
and wade myself on the shallow waters
we will be there
enjoying the conversation
sipping tea
and watching the seagulls
we shall take the beauty
in the most ordinary ways we can
spectators and distant from the touch
of pain and too careful about desire

you see? how can we be hurt
an island to an island
between us the ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
An Insecurity

the way she
puts the foundation
on her face
and puffs powder
on her cheeks
and paints her lips
with that stick
and sprays
her hair like
a pesticide

i think i know now
what anxiety turning
into a full blown depression
really means

but i will not be speaking any word
somehow i do not wish to give
the impression that for now
i already know how to
relate to the falling of
a world.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Insignificant Pebble In My Hand

i am now into
useless things

like this pebble in my head
smooth, reddish, with some
gray veins
a paradox of youth
and senility

i hold it
i close my hands
and hide it from you

you who see nothing
significant about it

it is cold now and
it is keeping me warm

inside my mind
it has become so significant
and as
beautiful as ever

i shall dream about a castle
of pebbles

smooth, reddish, sun like.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Intellectual Life...

inside this glass world
lives the porcupine
fish

the sea is made of
pure air

everyone is swimming
with the hands and feet of their
minds

one eye sees through another
eye like light piercing a sea of
transparencies and ripples
of doubts are reinvented

it is a deep ocean
imagine a world of porcupine fishes

silence are not knives here
there are no stab wounds on the water

everyone knows how to breathe
without making any sound of rustling leaves

outside this glass world
lies the world of fences and over there are the greener pastures

the fences are high like clouds on the cliffs
and the pastures have no milking cows in fact

it is a jungle without trees
and you will be having a hard time to imagine a

justification why this world is becoming a puzzle
of new languages and reinvented scripts and scenarios

but this is it, this is the way how fists land on chests
how lips design the shape of spits

long ago, they drew ivory towers and disoriented pillars
long ago, they were whistling out of touch tunes

now, there are heads rising from the armpits
feet from abdomens fingers from the anus

and they are talking about dormant diseases that
come out in the open only after your 50th year

out there the mockery is getting louder
the air as colder as men whose blood is removed from them.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Interplay Of Images, A Commotion Of Emotions

I like shadows, silent shadows busily moving
Touching shadows on dim lights on the meadows
Silhouette of trees and slender figures aligning
On a path that I, this voice, shall tread upon
In a minute, the hushing wind from the sea
The changing of hues, the disappearance of shadows
In the meadows, the entrance of slits of lights
From the shutters of the skies, spills of orange and
Yellow and reddish glow turning to crystal clear days

Welcome the sun, choose warmth and bathe
Another day has come, you sit by your window
Nature unfolds itself to you, and you marvel
Emotions collide and explode, you are deep
You are silent, you are carried away like a leaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Intimacy

we understand
only a glance speaks the
needed words

there is an invisible string
that connects us

between us no rivers
the oceans heal into a page of a book

our hearts are vapors rising to the sky
fusing as clouds

when we fall we become
the hills all dressed with grass

there is no time
only our lives

when we hold hands
another earth is duplicated

RIC S. BASTASA
An Intimacy That We Deny Ourselves

there are two posts
near and far and solid and
compelling

these two posts
build a house of some strictures
do not do this
do not do that

this is evil you say
this is outrageously sinful

because you are a married man
and i am a married woman

you look the other way to the direction of the wind
blowing westward
i look downwards trying to find the explanations of the heart

what is desirable. Is this wrong?
if it is not, then it must be right.

what gives us joy? is this a sin?
what is sin? Are sins the rules and regulations of man?
safety standards? societal order?

sometimes you are hard to be with.
you do not kiss me when you like to.
i wait. i do not conquer. i do not subdue.

someone that i love. someone that i desire.
someone whom i live to sleep with.
someone who can undress me
and tell me that my body is the kingdom
of God's divinity inside my heart.

i waited. you looked to the other direction
where the wind blows westward, where you will be far away
where you will soon be forgotten.
i have no regrets.
i am just the offer, and it was you

the altar, the princess who walked away
because there were crumpled
in the white dress that you were wearing.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Introduction To A Poetry Book

Poetry Is More Than Mere Words,
i agree
mere words do not make poetry
it is the mixture
of night
and day
and day
and night
when
you think of yourself
and the other
when the night
dragged
so slowly
and you forget
that
morning has arrived
like
an unwanted visitor
of you party

it's a profound expression of what's inside oneself.

oh yes, it is always the inside
that matters
myself wanting to get out
from the cave
of innocence
and assume
the form
of a bird
wanting to fly away and never come back
since
there is no home
anymore to
speak of

It's an impressive play of words with meaning and
depth through which the author shares his feelings,
thoughts,
and
ideas.

i agree, it is sharing
above all, reaching to others who take the same
walk with you
angst
depression
joys
bliss
numbness
and feelings
of guilt

a confession

Through poetry, he conveys his innermost self -
putting them into vivid
and vibrant verses
that tell stories,
express sentiments,
and speak of lives.

In this kaleidoscope of poems,
he gives focus on everything
and anything there is,
making this poetry
as diverse as life itself.

Enjoy

these poems, and

you'll find yourself inspired

to write your own.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Invitation For A Sad Beloved

The world has so many things to offer
so many friends to share fun with
so many places to visit
so many books to read
memories to cherish
mysteries deep in the forest
unexplored oceans to dare with
wild runs on the vast plains
views on top of the mountains
cottages to stay on the hills
grasses so green so thick to lay
our bodies to rest
warmth under the mellowing softness
of the morning sunshine

so why be sad my dearest?
why worry about what is yet to come?

come, come, i have two horses in my farm
let us have our rides, and have more fun!

RIC S. BASTASA
An Invitation From Nature....

and so here we are
crossing this threshold

why are we gazing more
on the pictures?

why have we chosen what
is inside us?

we are broken pieces
now and everything is done
to gather all them into
one drawer

have we forgotten those
trees on the hills?

the grass has more to offer
the clouds are eager

the rivers are singing
the birds wait....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Island Cave

then there is this island which we brave
even with a storm

the boat is small like a leaf
the waves bigger than houses

and we are so silent afraid in the middle of
this confusion

we arrive there with relief as we sit
on a rock mountain

and then we are called to get inside
this island cave
of glistening stalactites and stalagmites

water as clear as air and cold as ice
lapped our feet and the sound of
slush is sweet as a call of

a beautiful maiden wanting to be hugged.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Island Torn Between Night And Day

it is your music that makes me alive
at daytime i listen

it is my lust that makes me wander
at night sleep becomes a stranger

lust does not do the talking
it takes you to places that you know you shall regret

it is your music that makes me reflect
about what i should not have done

i am an island torn between two surges of the water
on one tip there is the day on the other there is the night

somehow thinking about these makes me a paper where writings
have become so illegible

how can i read myself with my own eyes?
how can i walk without my own feet now?

i just want to go away and find a place where light is always light
where darkness like sleep becomes another stranger to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Observation
	his maybe something
paranoid
i just feel that the rest of those
who are there
inside the small circle
closely knitted among themselves
like some design
of a crocheted set of flowers
simply want us
or me
to be like themselves
on a code
of exclusivity or uniformity

i don't like it,
my voice speaks
my fingers hide inside
the pocket of my pants
my conscience sits like
a king
in the throne of my brain
my eyes like a lighthouse
in the middle of darkness
searches
only for my own
lost soul

let me be then
just be myself
unstyled to yours
unkempt like
hair blown
by the monsoon
winds

they say
i am wild and i must have
come
from untamed Siberia
oh!
i do not really mind
i sound like a barbar
i sing like a gypsy
i dance the ethnic steps
of the nomad
and there is no
land titled
for me

oh!
do not worry
i get used to all these purposelessly

RIC S. BASTASA
An Observation....

there are those who are destined to succeed,
once cannot figure out whether it is tedious work
day and night, or just sheer luck, God's chosen leader,
favored by fate,

one reaps the fortune, honor
fame, glory,
people around him in full
admiration

there those who seem to know only failure
alone in their miseries
and praying over their famous questions
why? why?

the years are fast, and time becomes the sold judge
of all these,

there are those that live in mansions, lavish in their manners
wicked in their spending habits
lush, posh,
and then one day, just like Henry
put a bullet in their heads,

and those that have been accustomed to misery
still continue living
struggling like an ant on their usual processions
like worms eating the
humus of the soil,

and those who think, wonder, and then nod their heads
and say

there is nothing to grudge about
life as see sometimes is unfair
but at the end
every scale balances itself

i, too, has come to the conclusion
success is a relative term
happiness is a state of mind
no one is perfect
so just enjoy the moment
grab your day
and let live

RIC S. BASTASA
An Occurrence....

when things go awry
like some plates flying out of the kitchen
breaking their faces on the floor
one day
or in some other days of your liking
you become so engrossed
in your silence
your hands begin to pick up the pieces
pondering
the mind probes deeper
into some
recesses of memories long buried
in those layers of years
and then
your feet begins to decide to walk away
silence no longer
synonymous with silence
sounding more
like some winds wishing
for swan
songs....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Odd Feeling

in that place
if you remember
mango trees line up
the street
that year
blooming

i go back there
chancing to meet an old
friend of ours
in a cafe

she asks me
how come things did not
work out
the way they should have
been

we fit in her picture
she says we have wasted the chances
and time must
have betrayed us

i say
things happen sometimes
and we
do not have control

our fates have hands of
their own
shaping
their own
sculptures

love is illusive
like a mirage in the desert
at the end
there is only sand and sun
the boat going to Dipolog
has docked
and an hour from now it shall
sail again
for Cebu

we parted
with a smile in our hearts
reckoning
how she had served as
our bridge

i lied to myself when i said
i do not love you anymore

and she believed that

i walk back to the boat
and it rains suddenly
and i get wet feeling like
a chick without feathers
and left alone
by its mother hen

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To Happiness

wherever you go
i must follow you Happiness

this I have noticed though
You have given me more of those
Frustrations

You are as elusive
as an Eel

like the fleeting feelings
of the Bell

Everyday is tolling
for its new Victim

Ahh, happiness i'll take the reverse
Now you must pursue Me

for I do not anymore
Care.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To J.

While driving the car
he wondered, what if...

all his life he had
been driving for somebody else

he never drove for himself
he never had a car anyway

his college degree in agriculture
was nothing
all those hard studying days
are wasted

his father should not have sent
him to school
and spent money for him

there is no item for him
except this contractual job

always a driver, not even a clerk
and he is tired of his fate

he wonders what was he in his first
life? perhaps, i was just a slave

a lowly servant, from day one to
the eternity of his evolution,

i closed my eyes and wondered too,
perhaps in my previous life, a king?

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To Loneliness....

Loneliness need not be feared.
IT is one of the most common guests in your house.

If you fear it, it will tease you and prolong your agony.

If you, however, meet it at the gate, and welcome it to your house, give it some drinks, feed it well, and offer it your room, ask it to sleep with you for ten days,

Then it will look at you from the tip of your hair to the tip of your toe and say, 'This man knows me, and has a deep thinking, he knows how to nurture me, and take good care of a bleeding heart'

And then it will have second thoughts in deciding to stay in your house and sleep with you in bed

It has lost its use and finally arrive at the conclusion 'You are a strong man, you know how to live. You talk to God, and compassionate about the pain of silence'

And then without saying goodbye sans the note or words of departure, it leaves you and your house looking for those who are still living on their closed houses, on shallow waters

For indeed, Loneliness also chooses those who deserve it
Now you smile, you close the door because it is already dark, close the windows because there is no moon, and somehow you think about it, honestly, you miss what you have become so familiar about it has become dear to you and clearer now it has become a part of you like a key inside your pocket.
An Ode To Marital Music

without you i know i will die
like a water bag ousted of
all its water

without you i know i will be
empty and disturbed and
lost like a child deprived
of its mother

without you i will not be
myself anymore i will just
be the ordinary man
on the street

stripped of a name and
robbed of my chosen
identity

without you i am a nobody
and people will no longer
know my name

without you i will have no place
to go without you i will be
without a house and a car
and all that i have will
be surrendered to you

..... i am happy, without you
i am still me. i am glad that all these
may finally be so unreal
that this is
just a very lousy poem from
me to you.

Be happy. I have decided
finally to take a break, and possibly

i will not be coming back.
p.s.
please read my note
under our marital bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To Numbness

it is just a game of words
i like to say it that way
when you ask me what this means
i candidly say it is nothing
like the way the wind whispers to the
ears of children
busily playing their games
along the streets outside the house
where their parents are always fighting

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To Poetry

i am buried in these noise
the demands shout like
market vendors
sometimes one is confused
where to start
seemingly there is no end
to all these bickering

spaces expand
distances travel like fading sounds of the day
there are storms
i am frightened but you
are there
that comforting whisper
to my ear

sweet sounds of sorrow
gentle groans of gypsy
ohh, poetry pampered...

RIC S. BASTASA
An Ode To The Last Blow Job (No Malice Intended)

how can i waste my
natural resources with you

on another
blow job?

let us stop this
i am not into mass killing!

RIC S. BASTASA
An Offering

since you are not with me tonight
i have an offering to make,

i am sending you a bon jovi song
through the internet

since you are not with me tonight
and all i have is this room with papers
and books, some dusts and a
cup of coffee getting cold
ants invading my biscuit

i like to sing this for you: I will be there
for you.
i will always be there for you.

i promise.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Offering On Earth Day

the little child
who swallowed the
seeds of
santol
finally gave way
to an offering
to earth

poo!

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Barn By The Side Of The Fields Of Hay

an old barn by the side of the fields of hay
is nothing but an old barn to your eyes
miguelito
this barn has been here ten years ago and it will be here
for another more years with you

father always
had it repaired before he died and when i take charge
i still come here and think once in a while
what is in this barn
that refuses to be broken
something that negates
the art of losing

it is the memory of my youth
it was here where the hay smelt pungent
for the first time

it was here when i was first
deflowered

changed

don't laugh, it was here that i felt
the first squirt of
my manhood, and her name was not that important
in fact,
she was laughing because i was trembling and she was
so crazy

trying to really teach me, in this old barn that refuses to be broken
in all the years
when our father teased us: weaklings.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old College Picture

on a black toga
graduating on a chemistry degree
thin body, sharp eyes,
shy, and
feeling hopeless,

but things change
now, i am fat, patient eyes,
confident, and feeling
so aggressive

i am looking for the
golden mean
on this thesis-antithesis
phenomenon

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Dog

an old dog
stays guarding the house
waiting for me
not wagging its tail
it is dead

it is this sense of waiting and
belonging
it is this that gives
the door mat
its meaning

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old High School Song

we used to sing:

'it seems we stood and talked like this before, the smile you were smiling
you were smiling there
but i can't remember where or when

some things that happen for the first time
seems to be happening again.......'

sing it again, sing it again for me, i know you remember the song
from your heart where ever you are

many, many years ago, inside that old spanish church
we sang that song, we were not that far away,
i was the tenor then, and you were the alto
and our music teacher was so elated that
he closed his eyes, walked a little distance and listened so well
and he said we are singing like angels that his heart melted
on that warmest day

look at us now, tell me if you want to go back, so we will sing again
that same old song

the music teacher is still alive and he perhaps he wants to listen again
and be back on that glorious moment
of our youth
his apex too

tell me if you want to go back,
we will put on the same costumes of innocence
and sing the songs with all our open hearts

oh, how i wish to be inside that church again and be with you
alas!

you are too far away like the most distant star that i want to see even on
a stormy night
RIC S. BASTASA
An Old House Of The Family

an old house of the family
we always come here

our umbilical cords were tied
on one of those hard beams

from the eldest to the youngest
they always look for that which
dried and yet keeps on living.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Maid's Birthday

my friend from the mountains
of Tabon celebrates her birthday tomorrow
and i sent her my advance greetings
she says she has no money
and she has no man
and she is sick
and she is tired
and she is depressed.

and i tell her
please come to our house
catch the chicken
and cook it
and put some blood on your forehead
so that the bad luck
may transfer to the chicken
as a matter of belief

she refuses the celebration
i guess
what is she as an old maid for?

i guess the word is
hopelessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Man In His Darker Night

it is a dark night
and darker for an old man who cannot sleep
soundly like you,
he will ask about the moon or if the moon is not coming
he will ask about the lights on the streets
he will look for an island
where he can stay
and be happy at least for another hour
before he dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Man In The Dark Room

Gnarled
loose, dry,
sunken cheek
like a hollow sandpit
trembling hands
like trees in a
typhoon state
of things
hands clasped
always in
prayer

peace,
eyes closed
body and soul
intertwined.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Man's Ode....

i may still be able to hide
my true age in my hair which
i dye every month

my eyebrows, my beard, my
waist and my bones
can no longer deny it

my brain remains as young as
ever
my thoughts tell me still to
jump over the fence of
Baliling

it seems that nothing has
changed in the planets of my
universe
it is as though no star has
fallen
as though the moon still shines
on the romantic moments
of my life
in Plaza Magsaysay

when you kiss me this early morning
i have never felt anymore
the arrival of the red ants on my
nape
their tiny feet have not tickled
my nose
and even if some of them are biting
my lips
i have no feelings about it
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Poem For Enrico

there is a time for
joy enrico

all yours had been
and will always be

sadness and confusion
because enrico

you choose them like
the way you choose

the placards rather
than the notebooks

20 years ago when
you are smitten and

you do not have enough
time to listen to my

silence. we cannot
howl for a long time

enrico. there is a time
to shut up and keep

our tongues and freeze
them inside our mouths

i am tired of the words
like liberty to be released

from a cage like a white
dove in the name of your

new revolution, the massive
one, the one that kills
another thousand brown monkeys on this forested part of the world. i am tired of slogans and epithets and analytical essays on a democracy that does not work

i am now into love poetry enrico. i am into eroticism i am into a desire that gives me life. i am into life.
i will not dabble about a novel on death and desolation. i will not go into that dark chasm anymore enrico. i know you are still there.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Woman Carrying A Load

on a rumor
that the dike leaks and soon
shall give way

an old woman carrying a load
on her head
runs away looking like

a question mark

RIC S. BASTASA
An Old Woman With A Straw Hat

an old woman with a straw hat
and rotten clothes
deep eyes
bony cheeks
barefooted and cracking lips
and stinking odor
like a dead fish thrown
on the market canal
this morning as i meet her
is asking me
who is the owner of the sky
and the earth
and the sea and the mountains
and the grass
and the trees and the birds
and goats and pigs and
root crops

she is asking me where he lives
and if he is still alive
she has many questions for the owner
of all these
for until now
she remains to own nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
An Open Letter To Filipino Artists By Emmanuel Lacaba

A poet must also learn
how to lead an attack
- Ho Chi Minh

I
Invisible the mountain routes to strangers:
For rushing toes an inch-wide strip on boulders
And for the hand that's free a twig to grasp,
Or else we headlong fall below to rocks
And waterfalls of death so instant that
Too soon they're red with skulls of carabaos.

But patient guides and teachers are the masses:
Of forty mountains and a hundred rivers;
Of plowing, planting, weeding, and the harvest;
And of a dozen dialects that dwarf
This foreign tongue we write each other in
Who must transcend our bourgeois origins.

South Cotabato
May 1, 1975

II

You want to know, companions of my youth
How much has changed the wild but shy young poet
Forever writing last poem after last poem;
You hear he's dark as earth, barefoot,
A turban round his head, a bolo at his side,
His ballpen blown up to a long-barreled gun:
Deeper still the struggling change inside.

Like husks of coconut he tears away
The billion layers of his selfishness.
Or learns to cage his longing like the bird
Of legend, fire, and song within his chest.
Now of consequence is his anemia
From lack of sleep: no longer for Bohemia,
The lumpen culturati, but for the people, yes.

He mixes metaphors but values more
A holographic and geometric memory
For mountains: not because they are there
But because the masses are there where
Routes are jigsaw puzzles he must piece together.
Though he has been called a brown Rimbaud,
He is no bandit but a people's warrior.

South Cotabato and Davao del Norte
November 1975

III

We are tribeless and all tribes are ours.
We are homeless and all homes are ours.
We are nameless and all names are ours.
To the fascists we are the faceless enemy
Who come like thieves in the night, angels of death:
The ever moving, shining, secret eye of the storm.

The road less traveled by we've taken-
And that has made all the difference:
The barefoot army of the wilderness
We all should be in time. Awakened, the masses are Messiah.
Here among workers and peasants our lost
Generation has found its true, its only home.

Davao del Norte
January 1976

RIC S. BASTASA
An Open Mind Somehow..

inside the room
i saw the masks
which you confessed
wearing
under the justification
of your harsh times

i've seen you laugh
when you wore one
which the world had
known to be you
through and through

in my time i have
realized how fraud
has ruled the world
in order to survive
how ruses bloomed
how swindlers thrived
how parties sprout
the laughter in those
halls
how traitors had
become heroes
how names switched
on and off
like the blinking
lights of that
disco house

i only have one face
one body
and i feel guilty having
you in my house
where everyone is real

my friends cannot
accept you and my world
detests your presence
time and distance cannot
mend our broken souls

it started with pretenses
wanting to heal
with a confession

what do we end when
we have never really began?

now fit as you are
blend with the chameleons
enjoy the changing
colors of your skin
flexible to the times
attuned to the seasons.

i sit on one of those
chairs in a Parisian cafe
watching people pass by
but in fairness of this world
i will not keep my conclusions.

as i sip coffee
read the news
i will not keep my
hands closed

RIC S. BASTASA
An Open Window...

the whole day
of Saturday you do
nothing
nothing to read
or write
or say you take a stroll
and back home
you watch tv and you
turn it off
and you think about nothing

you sit under a tree
and then the day turns to night
you stare blankly
to the world which is starting
to make stars
and the moon comes and you
are still there

thinking about nothing
emptying
emptying
emptying

feelings like an open window
without curtains
letting in air
letting out air
on this openness

and then night gets deeper
and you lay in bed
without anything on
without anything in

an empty self finally put
to sleep

an empty dream and empty world
letting in letting out

an open window
without a lock.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Optical Illusion

when she finally sees him
with another woman
in the darkest part of the
park
as he starts to hug
and kiss the other woman
giggling
to the trick of his fingers

she knows surely well
that this fact
is not an optical illusion.

wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Option

i have decided not to be serious.
i like being lackadaisical,
sorrow-free, sadness-insulated,
to just let my depression
go and leave me for a while
something that i have not
accepted really, like the way
i keep on advising this
mentally-challenged neighbor
of mine who keeps on belittling
and humiliating her husband
in front of me, telling him
that he is no good, poverty stricken pig
and that she wasted her time
on him, her beauty, intelligence, and youth
squandered on
the lazy bone as him, not of her own choosing,
that she was just empty and needing
some filling, crazy indeed, but

let us start talking about myself,
i am bored and fed up
with so much lecturing and posturing
about my career and so ambitious
about climbing the ladder of success,

did i not have too much? i ask
myself, did i not have too much for the taking?
fortune, fame, family, all the 'f's' and the

'ifs', so many 'ifs' and it is making me
less of myself, undoing what i am,
looking at myself lesser, seeing always
that out there are the greener pastures,
comparing, and always in the mood
for change and something else, trying
to grab all the candies in the store.

i stop.
there is so much crowd in here, and
too much materialism, and less of the
spirit thing.

i retreat.

there is something to this world still
unexplored and misunderstood. i know.

what is happiness? i know it. i know it.
i just don't have the time. i know.

God passed me by. I did not even notice.
And i become sadder than ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Option For Demi

when you take a shell
from the shore of life
do not mind so much
about its labyrinths
you will be inflicting the
pain of loss and miss the
song that the wind is giving
to its orifice

take time, close your eyes
listen, and for once shut yourself
from any preconceived thought

RIC S. BASTASA
An Orange Bicycle

an orange bicycle
is parked on
the side of
an abandoned
house

it has flat tires
and its
spokes
are eaten
by rust

obviously
nothing depends
much on it
beside it
there are no
white chickens

RIC S. BASTASA
An Orange Cat

an orange cat
with one eye

(a cruel man
bit its eye with a stick
and the cat
became blind)

it always waits
by the door looking for
me on early mornings

i feed it fish and rice
and a can of water

i look at it
and somehow i remember
what i was
on my past lives

what i lacked once
now i must fill

lest i be the rat
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Orange Cat With One Eye

a one-eyed orange cat
(not really a kitten anymore)
likes me so much
that every morning the moment
i open my door
leading to a stone garden
it always comes to me
singing like a bird
as though saying
good morning master
it rubs his orange body
beside my leg and it feels
so smooth
like fine silk to my
hard skin

i feel the guilt of humanity
who the hell
removed its right eye

where did this one-eyed orange
cat come from?

God-given
must be.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Outburst Of Feelings

when he takes in air, there is no thought of air
just air filling the emptiness of his lungs
air tasted by his nostrils air drifting on the linings of his esophagus
there is no discussion about what is air all about its color its angle
this is just air expanding and filling and cooling him
he sees more of air when he closes his eyes and be with air
united, immersed, entwined, amused, becoming so engrossed
there are no numbers nothing to calculate
there is this outburst of feelings of unknown emotions
life getting in like air, like water, like this lovely feeling
dripping, catching, drinking, savoring, filling, cooling....

RIC S. BASTASA
An Outmoded Poem... (Valentine 1980)

i must admit
i am outmoded
as i am still
talking about
love,

you laugh
you tease me

i must admit
i am out of touch

i can't tell you
you made me
love you

it is funny
i am out of touch

what can i do?
i am crazy for you

RIC S. BASTASA
An Unhappy Childhood Of This Man Who Names Himself 'I'.....

i've seen this picture of you
on that far corner of the world

land of snow and you are inside that very thick
winter clothes

there is that smile in your face
and i am taking a closer look

it is sour.

i know what sour is. I've been one for forty years
wearing that

sour smile, and i have many reasons why a smile must be sour
for forty years

the reasons are sour
very sour

beyond those tastes of a hundred green lemons

or a green mango with some disturbing gums on its mouth

i burned all my pictures in college
except those when i was yet a boy beside my mama and our white dog

i was in grade one and i did not like school and mama forced me into it

i was selling chocolates and i ate them all and mama was mad at me and beat
me with a stick

papa did not like me reading books as he does not know how to read

i climb trees and hide on the leaves and read stories
in our dialect and draw some pictures of women without their dresses on
you see i still have this picture of myself riding a carabao and hauling some wood and coconut palms

i take a close look of my own smile, It is very sour and it tastes like yours, but perhaps mine is the worst

but i am happy now, i know how to suppress sour smiles, i know how to manage and project myself

i smile like a cow now, and laugh like a horse because all of them are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
An Urge

let us be attracted to light and its softness
do not be afraid of the temporary blindness
let the good shine some more upon the bend
it is light itself in power without end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Analogy

just the two of us
we went to the beach this afternoon
she sits on the
bamboo chair
hanging her feet

she looks to the horizon
of the very calm sea

i walk towards the shore
undress myself and take my swim

i need it badly
i like to get that swim

as the sun begins to set
as she looks at how sad the fading is

it is like love
and life and mortality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Analysis

'The work of the poet comes
to meet the spiritual need
of the society in which he lives,
and for this reason
his work means more to him
than his personal fate,
whether he is aware of this or not.
'

'El trabajo del poeta viene resolver la necesidad espiritual de la sociedad en que vive,
y por esta razón su trabajo significa más para él que su propio destino lo sepa o no.
'

Carl Jung

so this is it
my soul
not my soul
my body
is not my
body
in this literariness
of things
i am but another
slave
creature of
my society.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anatomy Of A Decision To Be Pure Sometimes

the way we cover flesh with flesh
layer upon layer

imprisoning the divinity of thought
within the core

when they come to seduce you with
colored slices of ligaments and

salmon shades of serum
you shake your head and signal that

you do not more flesh in you for you
have become solid bones

ribs and clavicles, a map of skin
that guides you where the heart resides.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anchor

As a baby
I was fastened to mother’s belly
As I float in her amniotic fluids
Through an uncut umbilical cord,

I kept that
In my navel forever, perhaps,

As times pass by, as I begin living a life
Of my own, in work, in love,
In circles of my daily undertakings & means,
I anchor myself to some ideals
Like
Being clean, and honest, and

Having integrity, principles,
Sort of another set of umbilical cord,

Though in different conceptions,
A figurative sense of the word
Or something emblematic,

I keep
That in my mind, now, perhaps, who knows,
Forever,

The feeling of having to float is
Always there, wherever I am, be it in
A drinking spree with friends, making love with my wife,
Or asking a night with a woman that I just met
At the sleazy bar,
Or in the
Simple study of
Some ordinary events here and there,
A feeling of lightness for being so
Different from the rest of those who are
Here with me once,
These idiosyncrasies of self, always getting to know why me,
This quirk,
This oddball,
Why am I being different yet so ordinarily elbowing with all,
Why this sort of floating
Drifting,
Like a canoe on smooth silvery river,
Dusts floating in air,
A white crane gliding,
A waft of culinary flavors from a
A food plate,
A shadow of a plane hovering,
This drift,
This sail on some seas without land
Or anchor,

Like when I write poetry grasping ideas, floating, drifting ideas
Catching them with the nets of my recollections
Bobbing and dangling
Trying to find a buoy,
An anchor, of weight, to hold things together, to make links
Chains to hold on to.

Of what I am who I am
Who I was
And where I am going,

I hold on to faith
Hold on to faith, they will always tell me, the priest the nun
& the Voice of God
And just in case I still float, drift, and waft
To tense & terse feelings and lots of pretenses

I go outside,

Touch a tree, feel its rugged barks, smell its
Leaves, stick my hands to its sticky stains, and
I
Get stuck, I want it, I want being stuck.
I hold on, to the sturdy tree standing near me,
I hold on
Like a baby floating on amniotic fluids fastened to an umbilical cord
Or
Like a hot air balloon, anchored on some sandbags and ropes on the ground.
I am somehow fastened, anchored, I become real.
Now, touch me, talk to me, hold me tightly please.

RIC S. BASTASA
And
then from the drop
of water
i appear
closer that
where i am
really
from you, dew

RIC S. BASTASA
And Always: Without Expectations...

something political
i always hear that in my country
how politicians have been consistently
corrupt with no one
hanged

or executed publicly in the plaza

and it seems that this is all but a game
of hide and seek
or an endless cycle of ironies and paradoxes

or that story of which came first the egg or the chicken

who gave birth to corrupt politicians?
ask the corrupt voters who have become political prostitutes
making love to the highest bidder of their
political wiles

those who are not yet in power behave as though
they are saints
but when the get the power finally
they are worse that the
ousted

it has been years and i have learned my own
self-taught lessons

i do not expect much anymore from this society
the governed and the governing powers
belong to the same category

i have a place of my own now
i write, i spend my private hours
at the beach
listening to the sea
feeling the breeze
drinking my beer
and savoring my own kind of meat
some cheese and bread
and fish and chips

some friends may come and share
conversations flow
and then i let things simmer
and then after a while
they can go.

so here is the self
honest to itself, confident confidante
better known to itself
and always: without expectations...

for life is a river flowing
always flowing, nothing stays, no one stays
nothing lasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Another Fro Bernard....

bring the bacon home
eggs and eggnog too
ring the bells and
notify the priests
arrive early and
do not fret for we're
out on the move for gigs

for what?

at the foot of the hill
she sings a song
unlike everybody else
no, no, no it is just her at
cobbled streets and
indigenous bricks
outpouring molten gold
nobility at it best.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Back To The Middle Of The Road Lies The Body Of The Man Overrun By That Obsession Of Being Safe.

it is safe to take the middle
of the road

you hear it once and then
again this time

to take courage rather than
rashness
to be silent and shy away from
so much noise

or just to be the middle class
not the poor neither the rich

the one ham and lettuce
sandwiched

but just the same shall be eaten
still by that big mouth of avarice
and greed

and back to the middle of the road
lies the body of the man overrun by
that obsession of being safe.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Dawn Has Come  With Nothing To Say....... 

to mimic you 
beautiful one 
i, wanting to 
have your voice 
and body

i look for 
that window into 
your eyes 
where i, in the 
night, of all 
desires, 
could enter

there is none for 
me, not an orifice 
not a tunnel, 
nothing opens for 
me

i, mourn, for both 
of us, 
in the wrong time 
and place

a body fades a face 
immersed in sadness 
and dawn has come 
with nothing to say.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Emptiness Becomes Perfect In Their Emptiness

always the sun shines
the moon shines
the night fades and light spreads
everything happens the way they happen
even if you are not there

and poems remain to be what they are
even if no one's reading them

as the rivers flow to the sea
as the rains fall
as the stone stays put in their weight
as the tree grows as the children become men and women

everything happens as they do
even if we are not here
even if you are not what you are anymore

i have not read you but you are still you
and you have not read me
and here i am still what i am
and what i will be

fate and destiny
all move even without us
the songs sing themselves
the poems recite their lines
and emptiness becomes perfect in their emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
And For All My Questions My Friend Has An Answer

you have seen the kite flying in the air
and you believe it
you have not seen the wind but you feel it just the same and you name it as the wind
and you accept it as the wind that exists in reality
because it lifts the kite

i feel God like the wind, i see myself like the kite
there is this divinity that sticks on the stick and string and paper
lifting me up
like a child to the skies above

i do not have power
it is the wind which has it and the wind has it because the owner of the wind has bestowed up it the power
yes the wind that you do not see but you just feel

my friend, i am not ashamed to tell you about angels
neither am i ashamed to tell you about the existence of the owner of the angels

He is our God and He loves us
why do you insist on flying away like a bird?
why?

believe and be loved
love and learn to love some more, and be a believer forever

RIC S. BASTASA
And For Those We Cannot Touch And We Cannot Find

those intangibles
those whose skins we cannot touch
those which we cannot smell
despite
the health of our noses
those which we cannot treasure
because we cannot have them
because they are too
precious and so distant
and so
unreachable
even unthinkable
those that which we love we hope we
really love and care
those beyond
us

we leave them to
God

RIC S. BASTASA
And For You Who Knows How To Write Poetry

please kill me
gently with your
words

choose those
which are prohibited
by this site.

RIC S. BASTASA
And He Must At The Designated Hour, Step Out.

at the introductory part of the book of your life
do not speak about thorns
just as the door cannot be considered to welcome
a stranger if you put a dog in there

how beautiful is it if the window has a creeping vine
from the ground bringing a flower to the sill
like a prince trying to find his Rapunzel

at the beginning of everything begin with a nice word
and use this words to take a stranger into your life
not to save him or give him a home but simply to
entice him to know how is it to live your own life

serve the drink in the receiving area, and put the
music to create that mood of intimate contemplation
but do not make him sleep, for soon you shall expose

the other pages of the story, what life really is, how
it made you scream, and how at the end it made you
silent, how you have finally discarded the words and
settle only for feelings, how you were broken and how

finally you have recollected yourself, using the prayers
of your own traditions, the logic of your forefathers,
the acceptance of yourself, that manner of staying put
and still be alive, despite all the odds,

and then when this is over, tell the guest, that this
house is so private, soon it will close, and he must
at the designated hour, step out.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Her Comes Cris

untying his tie
disrobing his red polo shirt
without his pants on
except his
stylish G string
looking like a native
from the uncivilized
mountain
the cameraman directs
his gaze
and to project his
bankable image
he was told
never to smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Her....Too

once again you stroll
an old boulevard with no changes
of its landscapes

huge acacia trees
a hundred years old
a memory of the nuns
teaching the catholic religion

the same patches of grass
and same old towers
watching the sea from pirates
of old
kidnappings of maiden
fair and brown

you take the walk
at dusk and you breathe the
smell of the past
relieving the lungs like trees
all roots and no branches or leaves

you remember
this is what you do
always remembering and savoring
the memories
there is a tinge of pain but it is as sweet
as each syllable
in your poem.

the boulevard lights begin
to die and you meet faces
smiling at you
but you go beyond what is there
piercing
the ears of the past
wanting to hear
how it sounded
the pain inflicted
the love disregarded

there is so much talking
so many persons inside you

sigh, you take the walk
again, you move on without looking back
as to who is following who
and whom

the rain falls
and you take shelter on a closed bar
across the road

he is sleeping on a chair
and someone wakes him up
for he is too drunk and lost

you think that you could have been him
you shrug your shoulders
no, it isn't
you call a cab and you take the ride
now you are on your own
self-made
perhaps too selfish but no, no, no.

it is a bright day now
and you look forward to going home
where she is always waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Here Comes The Legacy Group

ey they make the announcement that they have gone bankrupt
call for a press conference and ask the court for rehabilitation

and this man that heads the legacy group lives
in a mansion, a swimming pool as large as a lake,
he owns an exclusive yacht, a vacation house on top of a hill,
shares of stock in the names of some strangers,
a swiss bank deposit, some condominiums

all the planholders are weary, and all their dreams are broken
the future is bleak, and everything they invested are lost to the wind

the usual blah, blah of the press, and the incredible explanations of the culprit
another gullible investor, another secret billionaire getting off the hook
the court grants another chance for a rehabilitation

only in the Philippines.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Here I Am Alive I Must Write It.....

last night you made a promise
not to ruin your eyes again early morning
reading some poems
and starting too to make some more

as a mode of
your expression thinking that another day shall pass

making this candle that burns itself
shorter by another
millimeter,

the metaphors of life are not that bad,
i suppose,
there is another way to looking at things and
putting the words to make it
beautiful though

sad,

you must have heard how the blind man's
path changed when the lonely girl in black suit changed
the words,

' it is a beautiful day and i can't see it'

this shall be the same with me,

or us,
our eyes are not ours, borrowed from their creators &
the makers demand that it must see
what we have not seen before that they must speak
not only the beautiful but the noble
the glorious
& the sublime
or the divine which we feel and yet
cannot fully grasp
the meaning is there lurking like a butterfly under a leaf
that covers it from the last night heaviness
of rain
and then when this darkness is gone
dew clings like pearls which we should write about

the eyes are weary and painful
but who cares for now: it is a beautiful day and the words
are waiting

and now i must say it again,

' i have seen the sun,
i feel its warmth,
i have seen the blooming flowers,
the liveliness of the bees,
the grace of butterflies,

and you tending on the bromeliads
bends like a humble servant to the king of light-

and here i am alive by the window overlooking the whole picture
of life

i must write it.

RIC S. BASTASA
And How Did He Put The Elephant In The Refrigerator?

simple enough
he first
finds the door
of the ref
opens it
lifts
the elephant
using his hands
and then
puts the elephant
inside the ref
and then
he finally
closes the
door

that is how
he does it
and everyone
who hears
him says
he is one
mighty right

the next
problem is
how to put
the giraffe
in the ref

and he says
it is very simple

open the ref
take the
elephant out
and then
put the giraffe
and do not
forget
to close the door of the
ref

is it not
that simple?

RIC S. BASTASA
And How Did He Survive?

well, as he told me
before he succumbed to death
before he scattered his last breath
he said
he survived by entwining himself
with his own arms
his fingers wrapping
his body
and his mouth was kept shut
all those hard years

he kept his eyes
alive he made his skin
feel everything
he knew pretty well
every detail of his
surroundings

the wall clock ticking
reminded him
of wasted time
some dripped
without regret

he kept the walls
stronger
he learned to live
with the haze
and the clouds

he walked like
he was blind
and he loved
everyone

to survive was simple
enough
daily he unlearned
what life really
was all about
it is not much on
the thinking
it was more of
the doing

even insensibly
taking all nonsense
as though
they are his truths
and the truths
of the whole world

at the end there was
only disbelief
and then he believes
in life again

from there
the blank slate

RIC S. BASTASA
And I Did Everything I Could

i look at the sun
and asks if i can do it

then the sun says
why not?

and then i look at myself
in the mirror
beginning to have the wrinkles
on my face

there are no scars though
there are no broken bones i am sure

i walk my own way
after doing everything....

RIC S. BASTASA
And I Do Not Really Care How I Fare

the gods watch
from the kingdom of the sky

and here i am
too busy with my creations

figures of clay
women of sands
leaves of butterflies
a garland of some lies
some notes of survival
fumes of memories

rising to the skies
the blur of life
smudges of beings
flames of fading faces
fangs of emptiness
the hunger of attention
the love of my shadow
the future fizz
whatever

i keep myself busy
the gods watch me
i know i fall short of
some standards
i do not measure
myself
i am doing it
just the same with
consistency
this ardor for pleasure

the gods talk behind
my back
then they close the door
this exclusivity of
divinity

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well, i am happy
i am.

(and i do not really
care
how i fare)

RIC S. BASTASA
And I Feel So Guilty

today she buys a rotten apple
she says it is hard for her to notice
the market is crowded and she is in a hurry

she also buys canned goods in bulk
whose dates on the label have already expired
she says it is hard for her to notice
the mall is crowded and she is in a hurry

she has this usual style of repeating lines
when caught in the midst of her stupidities
but i do not let any stone unturned and i
ask her why she is in a hurry

she is in a hurry to be back home
she says she misses me
she says she is cooking dinner for me
she says she is stupid enough to have ever loved me

RIC S. BASTASA
And I Guess Until Now, Still Are Lost.

the one who got my hands
perhaps still unsatisfied
with its taste and texture
and flavor its blood and
veins,

comes back to the house asking
for my arm, and not contented with
one arm, he asks another arm,

for dinner with his new-found
friends who are happy-go-lucky
and want to have company to ease
their pains and drive them all away.

i have enough of this body.
so i find it pleasurable for
them to have it. It is with so
much gladness that i
surrender everything to those
who want it.

what i am minding is the setting
of the sun
the passing of time
the changing of the colors
of the horizon
the passing of the wind
the bending of trees
the rotation of planets
the falling of stars
and their coming back
as suns

i have a soul, and i am proud of it.
i have transcended the physical gates
and now journeying into the
metaphysical seas.
and those who are still feasting on 
my flesh
remain in the limbo of greed

and i guess until now, still are lost.
i busy myself with the hazy view 
and the faint sounds of songs 
from the tiny shadows of all the angels 
from a faraway heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
And If I Hang With The Wrong Crowd

actually,
there is no need
for me to yell

i simply
slip
away
like an eel
to a murky water

without
the need
of electrifying anybody

not even you

RIC S. BASTASA
And Justice Is Done

when you wish no ill upon no one
when at the end of the day
you keep a conscience free from anger
and hate against anyone
when you finally rest your mind
in peace
and harmony with all the senses
of your self
when you wish peace and love
and goodness
when you keep yourself beautiful
in thoughts and deeds,
it is only then
when justice is done.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Keeps It To Herself Alone.

she was looking for love and found nothing but a word, words are spoken, and love is spoken, and written, so she thought love is a letter, a love letter, which she sends, but there is no name to send it, no address, and so she thinks that love is uncertain, and just a letter, which she writes and folds, and seals in an envelope and keeps it to herself alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Know For Once The Reason Why.....

we were groping
for reasons in the dark
we heard sounds
we see more than ever
we feel each other
and then we all found it

and then we move towards
the light
and know for once the
reason why

RIC S. BASTASA
And Letting Go That Kite

The feel of what is real
is far away from what we think

to see is to believe
but to hold it even for a minute
is more credible

and then to use it like a spool
that you run far away from where you
hold it
is having a connection

you make a kite and let it fly with your wind
now you have given something for the sky
to know.

there is a longing for uselessness
that feeling that i am being held not for any other reason
but just to be felt
and then made free by cutting the thread
and letting go that kite

somewhere is this crash
that shakes the paper
tearing every fiber of our being

making us real

RIC S. BASTASA
And Love And Burying.

when it is just a word
the plainest of all, without a structure of a square
or a root,

when you look at it you cannot see a tree
or a cloud,

there is no sound of a chirping bird, or a grind
that cow that chews its curd at night to the consternation of
the grass under the moon,

consternation can be much, how do you imagine it as a a spoon
less the fork? or a house without a roof?

when it is just a word, no matter how you repeat it,
it will not have a face,
and you see nothing but the structure of the letters,

there is no view to sea, a cove for instance is nowhere
no fish on the water, no bird in the sky, no sun on a day,
no moon at night,

yet somehow inorder to live, you put substance to your words,
something sweet to cope up with the bitterness of those that move
near you and bite you and as you bleed you shape the words like
balm, and oil and gauge to heal your wound,

and then it is not just a word anymore,
it is a boat that you can ride, a pair of wings that you wear

for you to finally fly away. And when you are gone,
they now believe you. Your words are not just words.

they hide and protect you. And missing is not a word anymore.
and Love and burying.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Must Hopefully Be The Best Of All Our Endings

things are not what they seem
familiarly like the way you have mistaken the sun
as not one of the stars because it is nearer
to your heart

when you are told of the truth finally you refuse to embrace it

because you have loved what it is not because what it is not is sweeter than what it really is

and they who feel you had so easily forgiven this error of love this wrong that makes us all live this mistake that used to be a good beginning

and must hopefully be the best of all our endings.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Neither Did I Mention Your Name Adria

the Answer is from Ric  
and i did not say that I am Rick  
perhaps  
there is a miscommunication gap somewhere  
sorry  
but i did not mention  
the name Adria  

dec remed ate lot  
the World's Poetry Archive

there are lots of Dinners in this world  
thousands of Dinner Guests  
and mothers  
and sons  
and tuna  
too  

so why should it be you  
or Me?  

let me have some questions marks too like  

And Never Must We Ask Our Beloved

and so never shall we ask our beloved
why she must deserve this love from

my heart why she must know any reason
why she must be loved and why she must

also love in return. There are no justifications
for loving. Just the feeling that someone fits

in there like peg to a hole like air to space
like stars in the galaxy like you and me.

that will be enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Not Stop It.

right now  
i am alone in my room  
and i am listening  
to baroque music  
which is so mellow and  
gentle that it  
is like some kind of  
hands caressing my hair  
like that of a woman,  
her body soft to mine  
as i explore some more  
the kind of love that  
i too can give  
to my own loneliness...

right now  
i feel so light like  
the lightness of light  
that lands on the wall  
early morning  
from the leaks of the  
window  
and the ceiling  
like some soft wings of  
birds hovering  
upon the petals of a  
flower  
finally taking the nectar  
to its long beak...

right now  
i have learned to live  
my life  
to the utmost of what  
i can do  

and not stop it  
to enjoy the music of  
my soul,
the sweetness of my being,
the loveliness of
my existence

and not stop it
and not summarily cut it

like what others did
they, who claim braver than us
they who claim to have seen the
light,
they, who in one way or
another
have behaved as
gods....

RIC S. BASTASA
And Not The Beginning

MY HEART is free,
it is giving me options
from a
to z, yet it is me that
rules,
my head as crown
my heart below,

it is not Freud but
Van gogh,

it is not the skin
but the convoluted brain

not now, but always
the later on,

you see, it is not
Hercules but
Orpheus,

not the prologue but
the epilogue

these are what really
count,

it is the End.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Nothing At All About The Why

to cut you’ve got to cut
quickly
like a slap
not much of a pinch
the pain is sudden
and becomes unnoticeable

leaving could be done
at dawn
when everyone is still asleep
when the chickens are
still roosting
there is no pain at all

it is that warmth in your hand
above your belly
which you feel
and then you wake up and it
is gone

no words are wasted
no tears
no promises when and nothing
at all about the why

RIC S. BASTASA
And Now The Straight Man In My Mind

like poles repel
that is the straight man's dire strait
fearing what likeness he has in the mirror
of his world, shying away from the possibilities
of love and loving the person who needs it
more and worst than anybody
the confused, the disturbed wants him loved
and hugged and just even to share a drink with him
in one of the loneliest nights in their lives
he cannot love any one like him
he has not known what love is
the one that gives
and never takes
something in return

straight man in dire straits of possibilities
how can you ever love the one who loves you most?

RIC S. BASTASA
And Now....

and now...you like to go on oration, a piece of a long peroration,

ladies & gentlemen,
good evening,

i am this kind of animal,
roped to thinking, i have this analytical attitude
this reflective mood,
i am a mirror
and i mirror my own mirror, i reflect my own light
to my own light,
smart ass, envying the feast of the pigs
on leftovers, the mudbaths and the nudity of all sexes, and the nonprohibited desires of all creatures, nothing mindful really,
i am this now,
ready for this, and now... let me tell you

about this sickness, the numbness and emptiness of my existence, like a crazy coconut
its meat not white, its juice like molten asphalt
its sound so neurotic
knock the shell and find the truth

and now.... what is the matter? what is the truth?
silence, let the kitten lick its hind legs and clean itself from the smell
of the dog... and now, ... tell me, tell me, the truth,
and now....where do you go really with that basket of fruits?
oh nice, is someone sick? is someone in the family angry that now
and now.. you want to please and be pleasing?

and now....everything is changed attitudes about peers and peeling the pear, , , , , and now...
oh, you are so circuitous,
be direct and candid...

you want to quit
and you are so silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Once Again You Decide To Live.

now is the time
to feel the wind passing by your window

hear what it is
and let it in

inside your lungs
let it stay

but always remember
no one owns it

it must come out again
as you exhale

what you can keep
is the memory of its freshness

and once again
you decide to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Rick, The Dinner Guest Has This For An Answer

How sweet of you
Adria

How cute is your son?
(I don't have any
we simply couldn't have any)

How old is he?

aND Thank for the Tuna
i still like it
since it is heartily given

(in truth
i am vegetarian
and i only eat
fish
because i am bound
for a heart
surgery)

I like Americans
they are not
rude

RIC S. BASTASA
And She Said Upon Herself

born
was i
from mother's
words

poetess am
i
poetess shall
i
die

i
will always be in need
of words
to complete
this
i.

RIC S. BASTASA
And She Was Silent But She Knows I Am Defending Her

she has been silent for long like a drifting cloud, those white feathery ones on a clear sky, a fine weather

like her disposition today wanting to be left alone so she can think like a deep river, the dark deep one less the crocodiles that swallow whole her thoughts and i am considerate about this indifference of a healing wound, the one that has been there paining her as she puts more betadiene and red merthiolate because some big flies are coming in like an uninvited visitor, the one that does not send you notice and neither brings you at least a daffodil for your empty vase by the window

well, i know that in your silence you always keep me by your side the defender of your past

lapses, those that give you embarassment, those that almost kill you but i keep telling you, never mind, never mind, move on, bury the hatchet, bury the casualties of your sins, let them not come back, you see

i am here, your defender, the one that builds you a good name again, the one that makes you write some nice poetry, that one that makes you paint the beauty of sunrise, the redeeming colors that you see when another sun sets in the west

RIC S. BASTASA
And Should Not Be Spoken Again

and there is the envy
how most of them
remember their fathers

sweet and memorable
those hugs and pats

strong braces of the
house
running horses on the
mountain trails

waterfalls and pools and
sails at sea and blue skies

some write otherwise and
remember sad plights of birds

and cracking of chinaware
and snapping of rubber bands

and blackouts and breaking
of beer bottles and

spanking of butts and
hurting women

some sad sensibilities
which we should not have been
remembered

which must remain hazy
and should not be spoken again

RIC S. BASTASA
And Since I Am But A Word For You

You said it
You love me
As a word and nothing more
But just a word
Without a stand
Just a word
Unable to make
Your love come true
In the form of
Body and sweat
In the shape of a kiss
in the substance
of a hug
or an embrace

I admit it
I am just a word
And I am deleting
This word
Myself

You follow

the time is 11: 52 in the evening
and you are not sleeping
like me

us is also a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Since You Do Not Know How To Write A Poem

the i offer you one thing to do,

how about
drinking an indian ink?

or throwing an american pie
right at my face?

or folding a manila paper
keeping your shit
inside it...

i miss you really.
i like french fries
and french kisses. mhoaa!

RIC S. BASTASA
And So Am I To You

drought is here
river beds are drying
plants are wilting
trees are shedding off all leaves
they all look like
skeletons and skulls

there are dusts everywhere
roaming clinging leaving
blown by the strong winds
from the desert

please make the rain
bursting
water the earth
cracking
fill in the gaps
and the holes

shower this thirst
fill this hunger
give back life....

RIC S. BASTASA
and so when darkness closes in on me
like a blanket covering my eyes with the softness of its blackness
i simply go with the flow of its coldness
as i close my eyes and sleep and if dreams come
i welcome them and learn to accept whatever color it shows
whatever movement it makes with its images and streams
and sequences like a movie in my mind

i too welcome the new day
waking up with the freshness of a blank mind
emptying and not working out what should come inside myself
i let the air take its seat and fill the space
i breathe what is only necessary for the day
i let out what wants to go into the open field

i hold no one and i obstruct no one
this is the free trade going on inside myself
i just want to grow and let all my cells go where they want to
i let my nerves celebrate and feast on all its impulses
this is the feast of myself the resurrection of the soul

where is heaven? where is hell? I tell all my senses
Go find them all. There shall be no restraints. No visas.
No hold-departures. There is always this welcome sign
Hanging on every door.
Yes, all the entrances and exits are open now.
This is life. There is no room for any regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So I Asked For Wisdom

so many things that i cannot understand
finally i try the last option

the acceptance that they cannot be understood
that they better be not understood at all

not that they are too painful, far from that,
it is, that is, they give us wisdom more

last night, i ask for wisdom, and this morning
i reap my peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So I Just Watch And Never Ask To Take One

what am i?
upon a word, and with my arms
i know
you shall give it as you have given
all
to all that ask for
what you are

i watch you but i am not
taking it

you are a nothing but straw
no vein, no blood

no heart pumping for
love

RIC S. BASTASA
And So I Write This Poem...

because i cannot tell you
exactly the facts,
all the details that may
hurt you
and me at the end
of this
pathway where pebbles
have sharp edges
and mud is sticky and foul
rotten leaves abound
and worms
are busy eating what
leaf is left,

because i do not want
to hurt you
neither does i want to suffer
with self-inflicted injuries

and so i am back
with these lines there is no way that
you can sense that there is something blunt
in the vowels
something unspeakable
in my consonants,
as expected,
life in dots and dashes
some blanks too.....

RIC S. BASTASA
And So Let Us All Pray For The Children And Their Mothers, For The Fathers Who Work All Day, For The Government Who Cares For All, For Liberty, For Freedom, For Another Hopefully not a fraudulent election.

amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So Must I

in our existence

or be it in our claimed
lives

we live in the universe
of the tongue

when we are so lonely
like an exploding planet

we use its words
its language that we privately know

we tickle our arms a bit
with something fleshy and

warm and wet and tasty
inside our line of teeth

in our existence
we use the word turning into flesh

in the universe where the
center of our world is the tongue

and you shall never regret
and so must I.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So She Decided To Make Her Own Sail And Leave

frail woman colored pale
by her own loneliness
people chide her as the
daughter of dullness and
how one day she finally gets
fed up, she gathers some
wood and palms and cloth
and decides to make a boat
and leave the place of her
birth and loneliness

she will be taking the
rough seas and look for
and island of arms and
hands to hug her and make
her feel happy these coming
years and the coming days

one day the radio brought
the news of a woman slain
by a monster who lives in
the sea
how her flesh were torn
how her bones were cut
into indistinguishable pieces

it is so sad but she will have
no regrets: i told her about
the strength of routine
i warned her about far
distances
i told her about sea monsters
i hinted her that there are no
arms and hands in the islands

but she did not believe me
she was fed-up and she took the risk
i guess she is brave
but people think she was never wise
and she was too hardheaded

RIC S. BASTASA
And So The Lie Shall Become Truths

you sow your lies in the fields of innocence
the maidens there are blind
virginal in their upbringings
in those hills where the one that rises is only the sun,
and they are not deaf nonetheless and they listen so
attentively like the lonely forest
where the birds there are laying eggs,
the maidens always believe what they hear
and they know it is your voice
quivering
not faltering in every word uttered and sighs heaved,
they nod
they believe the lies sprouting in their clean minds,
they are not born to tell the difference,
and so when the sun sets before their blind eyes,
they all contributed their sympathies
buying you a nice coffin
even if you speak again they will not listen
you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So The Search Begins

he starts with an advertisement
wanted: a clean woman

neat down to the nails
of her toe
one who washes her hands
with chlorine
and gurgles salt and vinegar
and munches mint
before kissing

in a line he sees
laundrywomen and washers
and babysitters

he closes the door
and wonders where is the clean woman
of her dreams

he dreams of the unicorn
wearing a white apron
and a bottle of antiseptics
to boot
a purified germ-free presence

RIC S. BASTASA
And So The Table Is Set

i like the way she
puts the array of food
in utter simplicity
accented
by a single light
bulb

the one that
is not so bright
not so glaring
for
glare is the last
element
that we both
do not need

just one red rose
on a very slender
crystal clear
vase

just a bud
tight lipped
and a dew
sparkling
like a tear
on this
lonely night

just one pizza
mushroom
and mozzarella
and some
red slices
of tomatoes
and onions
the white
circular ones
like a little
universe
with the bulb
as sun
and the spices
as planets

and here we
are
holding on to
each other

like god and goddess
in the little
kingdom of our
simple affections

RIC S. BASTASA
And So They Have Again Teased The Ugly Duckling

having forgotten the story
of the ugly duckling
here we are again retelling
it to children, that once
there was this ugly duck
who turned out to be the
most beautiful swan at the
end of the hopeless lines.

that we must stick to the
beautiful self that nature
gives us; it knows the ripe
season for a very beautiful
unfolding; that there is always
a perfect time for everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
And So This World Never Really Lives Happily Ever After.

no one wants
to share
if it is his
it is
if it is mine
it is

does no one know
what co-existence is?

does no no one
believe that despite
the smallness of
the cake
it can be sliced and
be shared?

do you forget how bread
and fish
multiply when shared?

when miracles happen
when men understand
the hunger of each
other?

the world is flowing
with rivers
and makes the rain
for all
a tree that fruits
does not ask your name
when you gather
its produce

the sea does not ask
for your credentials when
you fish

the mountains do not ask
for your passport when you
trek upon its belly

the skies do not ask for
money when you fly
how birds are so privileged
how butterflies have maintained
their beautiful fragility
in air

how can one not
see the natural law of
love?

no one wants to share
always there is this fencing out
this utter selfishness
one wants all for his
and so the other has begun
to learn to use
the word 'hate' to do the
verb 'kill'

and so this world
never really lives
happily ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Soon We Will Be Leaving Somewhere

the guy
has a heart problem
and when he knew
that
he got so depressed
and would not
want to eat
and even does not want
to breathe

i assured him
however that
it is all in the mind
and if he has it
he can do nothing about it
anyway
so why not just take it
for granted?

and we decided to
spend our days lightly
we laugh
a little and drink a little
and talk
much about those funny
stories on earth

now the guy is happy
we pretend we have no disease
and we believe
about the life hereafter
we are strangers here
and soon we will be leaving
somewhere

RIC S. BASTASA
And That Is The Trick Actually To Be Happy

a journey is a
diversion road hoping to find
something new of this
routine-existence
trying to figure out if there is a new
specie of life out there

when the journey is about to end
five days or six maybe
you begin to compare only to find
out that it is the same road
same trees
same sky

on the last day when the way
back home is trekked
when you return
everything that you left
becomes new

and that is the trick
actually
to be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
And The Brim Cannot Hold It Anymore

there is a dance that comes to you naturally
you never planned it
it even comes without any music from a radio
or from a neighbor's loud video

it is the same with a song
you do not even know the lyrics but it comes
on that spur of the moment
when you give yourself to another
without any corresponding number
without any weighing
of consequences
when you surrender not because your are defeated
but because
you have become full
and the brim cannot hold it anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
And The Child Draws A World

the teacher asks the child to draw
The world
& the universe

And the child with his Mongol pencil
put a dot
for a start on his clean white bondpaper

(& as his fingers are clumsy
His hands still shaky)

he makes a stretch of a crooked
line

Stretching
& occupying almost all the space of the paper
To make a
Crooked circle

His world

And for his universe
He draws five little stars
crude
A crescent moon A comet moving In a blank space

A space rocket
Is drawn
On the top page in propulsion

A crooked circle The lines hardly meet At a common point
For a world

A little blank space For the universe

And where is God there?
The teacher asks him
You gave no instruction, sir. The child answered.

But He is there, the Child thinks.

RIC S. BASTASA
And The Man Wearing The White Cassock,

and so there was this old picture, 
we were five, she said, i was the thorn among the roses, 

i thought i was one impressive guy, tall, slim, aquiline nose, 
well built, thick black hair, and so on and so forth, 

and then the priest beside us, forgot me, and asked 
the lady at the extreme right, ' who is that stranger? ' 

what came into my mind was Albert, i love that strange man, who had a cue for 
strangeness, 

he bumped his car against the wall and killed himself. 
gee, that was impressive of him. 

and he is always remembered. And the man 
wearying the white cassock, o never forget even 

if he did not know his name, where he lived, and where 
and when he died. Ah, what courage!

RIC S. BASTASA
And The Taste Of Old Salt....

noting that the venue
of the december reunion shall
be in Talim Island

(imagine the boat
and the breeze and
the usual cargoes of
basic necessities like
rice and noodles and
salt and sugar and
the chichirikas and

some spaghetti sause
and soap and laddles
and basins, notwithstanding
the underestimation of
the river foams and lilies)

i guess i must have been
spontaneous in saying,
with apologies to Norman,

originality-wise you will
love the smell of your roots
and the taste of old
salt....

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then A Cliff Where I Fall Again.

there is way to hold your hand
after, we
make love, when i pull my body away from yours
i lose
grip of your hand after trying to keep it tightly into mine
there is no
we
or us,
there is nothing permanent in union,
to lose you is to
find myself,
alone in this struggle for
who i am
and what shall i be, after
discarding what notions are there
about nudity,
about me getting into you and yet
there is no
self in there just a plateau and then
a cliff where
i fall again.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then Die...

there are so many ways
to pretend that life is alright

opening a glass door
gently closing it with a whistle

getting to church, shun revenge,
kneel and pray in silence

coming home with a song
and play ping-pong

cooking pork and letting all that aroma
fly like sparrows to the roofs of the neighbors

getting a ticket for an orchestra
or watch classical ballet with mama

or traveling on a spree
taking a tour to another country

there are so many ways to be happy
so many ways to waste time and money

post pictures in facebook, and chat
displaying the smile of the big cat

so many ways, so many ways
to be like everyone on those days,
to become everybody else on arrays

on some nights you are wondering
how you have been too convincing?

and then you give your honest cry
let go some tears, and then die.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then I Am Happy...

everything is
fair enough

preoccupied with
the self
the burden feels
heavier

stroll along the park
proceed to the boulevard
sit upon a bench
look out to the sea

watch people go by
woman carrying a child
man on a bicycle
vendor shouting his wares
an old woman under
the tree
a dog beside her

the world is a diversity
filled with so much stories
i got mine
not that bad really

when i start to listen
to other people
my misery shrinks and
then i am happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then I Begin To Understand

what stones are
their missions
and then i begin to relate
with cliffs
and sands and shorelines
and waves and
depth oceans

and then i know what that image is
a boat in the middle of the sea
tossed by a storm
with nowhere to land

and then i know
who i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then I Pass

when i was a professor of
relevant thoughts, of the old pillars,
i grade you with your ability to
give the answers,

and then i quit

and then i enter a new world
another university of a kind

where i am my own student and i
grade myself with my
ability to ask the hardest
questions of my life,

if there is an answer, i fail
myself, and
always there are answers that
keep coming and
i am at a loss,

i am not quitting,

i will wait for the kindness of
my best teacher,

the Most patient Time

i am confident, there will be
one moment when the toughest
question comes,

and there will be no answer
and then i shall

pass.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then I Remember The White Roses

suddenly what flashed to my mind
on a gray afternoon, so vivid are the white roses

a bouquet of white roses
assuring me once again, after 13 years

that your love is pure, despite
that you have remained to be true
no matter what, despite the odds

and then i have seen how each petal of the white roses
fell one by one under our feet, we feel the loss again.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then I Think I Am Beginning To Understand My Life

the black birds had arrived
and perched upon the power line
most of them hover in groups
of two, four and many
but there is one who is alone at the other line

it is the one that gives me
happiness

and then i think i am beginning to
understand my life

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then Kiss Me....

my imagination is just that athletic

you try to run with me in those fields of dreams

you do not love me much
we do not fit and you had never outrun me

to meet at the end of the line
and then kiss me.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then Move On To Places I Have Not Been To.

when this rain stops
i made a promise
i shall forget you
tomorrow the sun
shines again
i shall make no promises
i will wake up
open a door
and then move on
to places i have not
been to.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then My Wife Arrives Carrying A Heavy Bag

at robinson's
puerto prinsesa

she has white
skin
a little flabby
and long
blonde-dyed hair
hanging over
her shoulder

she is selling
a gadget
to make my
tummy firm
to make me
look handsome again

she likes me
and my money
and beside her is
her manager

he is gay and
wants to eat
everything in me

life is a drama
of someone you like
to love
but does not love you
in return

of someone who waits
for you
outside the structure
but whom you
disdain
everyone is giving
numbers
like a fishing gear
waiting and wanting
for that
dream catch someday

and then my wife
arrives
carrying with her
a heavy bag
struggling to make
both ends meet

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Body Aches.

we fall short of the sweet sound
of kindness.
we have leaned towards the
cruel wall of indifference.
and then the body aches.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Dreams Wake Up

and then all my dreams
wake up from
their sleep on the day
when i claim
upon my kinship
thoughts
keen and slick
they wear
their colors
vivid and bright
in a new world
where i am inside
simply watching

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Night Swallows Her Including Her Shadow Of Doubt

while she was at the height of her fury

like a dragon spitting fire on him and not stopping

he merely looks at her unaffected though a portion of his lips twisted a bit

as though saying this woman is impossible when will she disappear?

she is emptying herself and she wants all the fire to burn him

but he knows how is it to be a rock and a salt

he has mastered the art of being a nobody and hence he thrives

she is fading and then the night swallows her including her shadow of doubt

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Paper Is Dirty

You start with a clean sheet of paper
Write some words, scribble, draw some lines
Some curves, sharp lines, tangent to bold
Lines, and rough sketches of faces and
Bodies, thin lines that get crooked from
End to end of this limited space,
You doodle, you get wild with so
Many lines unimaginable, senseless,
The paper finally looks dirty,
And you do not like it, you crumple
It and throw it in a waste basket,

You get another clean sheet,
And this time, you think what is
It really that you want to make
Out of this new clean sheet of paper.

You think, you ponder, and you need
More time this time not to waste
This clean, glossy sheet of paper.

I think you are doing well with your life.
You see you are supposed to be careful

Every word is delicate and every paper
Is actually accounted.

Never mind guilt, set it aside for a while.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Quiet

outside
walls and walls

of rain and wind
and so much

noise and then
that quiet

that we all
rightly need.....

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Truth Comes To You Like Your Father

the pain is not actually abrupt
in fact it comes like a puppy that you love most
waggling its tail and you lift it up with so much joy
only to be bitten by it and you realize its being rabid
and you only have lesser days to live
that is the truth that comes to you
like your father who loves you
embracing you and kissing you on your neck
and caressing your hair
and assuring you
that there is still a room up there

he need not say that you are dying and that you are finally joining them
all, he did not say heaven, he only says, about a place
where you are finally giving in
and there is no more coming back

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then The Wind With Its Mist Carries You Away

the hands have opened
letting go
the cold seeds of the rainy days
past
and for a time now after this
lousy talk
that afternoons share with us
looking for the meaning of our days
we finally find ourselves
walking the trails of the
empty handed

'i am so light'  
you tell the wind

and then the wind with its mist
carries you away

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then We Shall Write The Truth

we shall start being true
to ourselves like how the world
started
in light, we shall start being true
to others
that give us light too,
words and actions
all true
all so beautiful to touch and hear
and too beautiful
to our smell
and so good to our sight
our eyes too
so beautiful
how we look at ourselves
inside us
then when all these are gathered together
like some firewood and leaves and
cinders
we shall burn
we have fire
we have smoke to offer to the skies
then as we inhale and exhale the last fires
within us
we shall begin again from the beginning

we are not ready to write everything
every detail
of that fire that kept us burning

in our hearts that keep on loving
soon they will

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then When The Door Goes Bang

yes, when the door goes bang
you know it is closed and even locked
from the inside

and you do not wish to see anything
you are now alone
you do not wish also to enter that room

you feel so free and you go back
doing the thing that you always love

starting all over again
still hiding and concealing
now the giggling starts and then
the usual explosion
of yourself
in silence, this innermost peace
of the soul

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then Without Violence What Is This World All About?

all the violence is this world
a country fighting another country
brothers killing brothers
could be nothing but an attempt
towards the annihilation of mankind

one wonders: is this normal? is self-destruction
a trait of humanity?
does one really have that instinct to burn his own house?
to drown his own sister? does humanity have that
habit of erasing man from the canvass of the world?

suicide is a fact
a man leaves a note saying he is tired of this world
his life has no meaning
and the only way to save himself is to
make himself extinct
on such artistic ground of
i owe nothing to this world and this world
owes nothing from me,

another one jumps from a building
mashed human potato drenched to the color of blood
sunsets beautiful sunsets
and dresses of fashionable mourning

all the violence of this world
reaped and constantly repeated has become
a truth among the series of lies
a fact, an acceptance, a norm

a jus cogens that every man must live in his heart
it is pretty normal
a man must kill for no reason sometimes.

this numbness for all the violence of the world
one sips coffee watching another bombing
killing hundreds amidst the commercial ads after

learned to live. pretty normal. and then without violence
what is this world all about?

in the park another boy is gifted with a gun
another boy plays with him
another victim playing dead another boy playing
hoodlum, killer on the loose
mercenaries of the future wars

a string of thought has carried me that far
into senselessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You Are Nothing.

Yes it is all in the mind
writing without hands
pens are dispensed like
an outmoded tool and
here you are facing no
screen even

the fingers lose their
directions, because it
is all in the mind, in a
dream where you can
no longer tell who is the
dream and the dreamer.

wherever you are
know this, it is the breathing
it is the taking in, that
really matters.

remember, when all these
come out from your
mouth, you are no
longer its owner, and then
you are nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You Ordered The Sun To Rise For Me

and so the sun did rise
upon your orders
to shine upon me,

what next? shall you move
the mountains? shall you divide the sea?
shall you fish for the stars and bring them inside a net for me?
shall you seal the blackholes of my heart?
shall you summon all the birds to sing for me?
shall you stop the planets from revolving?

even if you can, you don't have to.
there is only one thing that i ask of you.

write me a poem about 'such sweet sorrow'
that which Romeo said to Juliet on that famous night.

you know it well, your heart once bled.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You Remember

you're on top, you display something analytical, tails and heads in perfect harmony.
explanations, rationalizations, conclusions, therefore, i am.

then you are down. Colors come. Red, brown, yellow.
Metallic, rust. Shedding off. Tarnished silver.
Cracks. Lost diamonds. Melted gold.
ice turning to drips.
whirlpools. and rocking and pushing and shoving.
oh why's please. You touch the lips. Sssh. No words.
No answers. No questions.
Just sitting down. Looking at a sunset. Orange turning to black.
Pure pitch black.

then the stars. Distant stars. You touch your hair.
Breathe the air. Suck them inside your lungs. Expand.
Close your eyes.

Now you are seeing all things in the dark so vividly.

On the table clothed with banana leaves, the food are laid.
Bare hands attack. And you gobble and haggle.

Meanwhile, the sea breeze arrive. The beach is empty.
The cradle swings and takes you to your youth.
Imagine what once was there. Just laughter.

You smile. Close your eyes. And then you remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You Shake Your Head Saying You Do Not Remember

there is a dark room
in our house
where we stay for
a while
to admire how strong
we are
how beautiful we feel
when are so alone
and quite
there is this corner
of the room where we lay
our bottoms
where we close our eyes
and rest
there is this window that we
keep closed
where we refuse to see the
world outside
where the winds are so cold
where leaves fall and blown
away
there is this self that you
want to meet and shake hands
with
ask its name again for the
nth time
and then you shake your
head
saying you do not remember

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You Wanted To Go And Leave Me Here

you come like a shadow creeping beside the twilight of my life
i wake up at dusk and hear the faint sound of hope and there

you are dressed in morning light shining upon the drapes of
my room where the windows are tightly lipped in silence

we talk like the wind getting inside a leak of my wall and we
whisper what we know from the beginning, about love and how

some of it lay broken on the road of mishaps and how some
wounds begin to know how to heal themselves and pretend that

a scar is beautiful and shiny upon a skin that knows how to forget.
i smell the skin of freedom spreading on your bosom and i touch

the scent of your hair and i begin to know what life is all about until
you know the real hour for leaving, the sunset calls you and then you

hear the song of the sea, and then you wear upon your shoulder the
wings of the seagull. You leave me and i am like a window waiting

for the white sail from the ocean its shadow getting smaller from the
horizon. And then the moon rises up with the stars lighting the darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Then You'Re Gone

listening to my monologues
is never fun
in fact i think you are irritated
by what i do not wish to say
that is why
you never really pay attention to the
words that shimmer like ripples
on the water
without fish or snail.

but i know the consequences
i have been warned
by extreme loneliness when
i was abandoned
and so it is better this way
you leave without notice
and my words
have become full and yet
i am so
empty.

go away find someone
who shall love you
much better than i can

i choose to stay and shall learn to wait again
for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
And There Is No Pain Anymore....

so you are special.
how may times did i assure
you that you

are my only love.
my only desire.

you are a bloated nit.
you like my weakness.

you say i can have you in a minute.
just that.

my patience is not a flower in the desert.
i am not your little prince.
and you are not just that only rose in
my small planet.

one learns. one grows.
one realizes, there are too many planets
to many roses.

the prince grows to be a king.
rules some planets.

and rose is not a rose anymore.
bloody rose.

not just red, but a white petal.
in the garden of love,
there are so many, like sands in the desert
like stars in the sky.

i wont have you now.
and there is no pain anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
And There Were Those Who Sailed East

yes we learned later that there were those
who sailed towards the east
and they became our forefathers
before they died they left their voices
on the mouths of the waves
and gentle as they are
they settled permanently
on the shores of the earth

there were those who stayed
on nipa huts and wrote their books
on bamboo shoots and they
thought that all these would be lost
after the whites have fulfilled their
conquest. But they were wrong.

some found a way to survive on
the lips of their mouths
words handed from one child's palm
to another and we found them
transported by the winds of their times
from one meadow to another
their treasures now embedded
in the tattoos of our oily brown skins.

RIC S. BASTASA
And They Do Not Even Know What Is In There

i wonder
why the women
are crying?

the guy is just
moving
to another room...

and they do not
even know
what is in there

RIC S. BASTASA
And They Hate You For That...

ey they cannot believe
you telling them that one day you fall in love with
a cockroach.

the one who lives in the dark and runs away in the
glimpse of light.

you try telling them it is true and convince them
that there is nothing wrong with cockroaches who like them
are also struggling to be loved
to be alive to be with anyone else

you try to tell them, love is blind, love is patient,
love is not discriminating, love is not jealous,
love is encompassing

and they hate you for that.

RIC S. BASTASA
And They Will Love You For It

there are so many layers of this self,
when you shed off one layer
another layer takes over
and the more layers are there
the more wholesome you become
to friends and foes alike and they ask

how is he? what is he? which is he?

and you laugh
and you hide from one layer to another
and you become what you are not
by simply being what you are here
and there
and then
everywhere

now there are so many persons inside you
and they are
all what they are:

a party, a celebration of your selves

a clapping of hands and tapping of feet and
shaking of bodies

a dance of life
around the circle of joys and pains
a path of hate and love
into eternity

and they will love you for it
you are both rain and sunshine
sea and sky
And This Is What Life Is All About What Love Is

somehow we like to look back
upon an experience which once shattered us.
a betrayal, another humiliation,
a failure, and then we feel it again,
and we who are not so keen about metaphors
simply sit and watch and let it pass
hoping that the feeling diminishes, calms itself,
and you look it as though it is a picture
now bounded by a frame.
you say, now i know, i am not that shattered anymore
i have become a patch to another patch,
sewed, and sees a pattern
a map,
a lesson, a paper where you read the story
and then you set it aside, and look for another,
this time, it will be a page of a happy moment,
love for instance, or
sex,
or meeting someone you care for and
who cares for you
in return, a sense of mutuality,
then, human as you are, you extend your remembering
about a love unrequited
and this is where you get stuck again,
accepting the fact that you have not really moved on
with your life,
every night, there is a face without a frame
of reference
which disturbs you no end,
which follows you
even in the room of your dream
you want to forget
but it is not within your own domain
to do so.

and this is what life is all about
what love is.
you have so much and yet you choose the
one who is not there for you to touch.
you choose a storm and you
live in it.
stirred and whirled and tossed,
and you take pride on the strength
of this poem.
whatever happens, you are still here
writing.

no patterns now, just a trail
towards an uncertain destination.

RIC S. BASTASA
And To Keep This Peace, You Do Nothing

who does not want harmony?
it is an equation of beauty
and peace, and what is most important is peace, I know.
who wants to chill upon a rainless day?
who wants to be left alone crying in the streets of nowhere?
nobody, nobody.

But why are they still there? they who cry in the streets,
they who are discordant and senseless?
They who run and run, but do not know really where to go, when to stop?

you are at peace, and you do not mind why they are at war?

you do not mind why this world is shaken? why the cracks have widened? why the chasm is deeper?

you are at peace. You know where to go. You know the reason why.

Just be there. Do not move. You are God.
And to keep this Peace, You do nothing.

You will say: It is Destiny. It is Written. And it shall be Done.
It shall be fulfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Too In Our Extreme Happines

and too in our extreme happiness
we close our eyes
hold our head up
we laugh so hard and without our
noticing it we expose

the missing tooth beneath
our cheeks

RIC S. BASTASA
And We Are And Shall Always Be Its Kids.

do not ever think that your
grief is the greatest,

it is not, definitely not,
honestly not,

think of the other griefs of this
world, yours is just the
a grain of sand, on the shore
at the foot of the cliff's grief,
the mountain's sorrow,
the loneliness of space
the tears of these galaxies,
the fall of stars, the explosion of
suns,
the fading of planets,
lost and still unnamed.

come to think of it,
there is no reason for sorrow

the reverse of this world
of grief is
far and wide,

early morning, there is much
sunshine to drink,
and at night, the stars are silent
and much beautiful that
these diversified noise that
sorrow murmurs
to the hearts of men...

a speck of dust, that is,
what grief is,
how the wind easily blows it
away,
how it can easily be forgotten,

drift, float, feel
the breath and pulse of this universe

it is meant to be a dance,
a smile, a happy beat
and we are and shall always be
its kids.

RIC S. BASTASA
And We Are Merely Charting Our Map For Survival.

we write not because
we want to be read, we write because
everyday we are trying to read the pages
of ourselves and to keep ourselves
posted we write what we have read
just us and if it happens that you read us
and then you shake your heads thinking that we are just crazy threads
well, that is just a secondary consequence
we are the cause and you are nothing but an effect
which we do not really need.

Life is hard. We agree. And we are merely
charting our map for survival.

RIC S. BASTASA
And What About Freedom?

sad indeed,

there are other freedoms still
freedom from having no ideas, from this dryness,
freedom from having you
as a poet on forced wit and half-cooked cleverness
freedom from a reader
who has nothing to offer
except his own loneliness
his having nothing to do
freedom from long bored
to death
freedom from having nothing
to say and comment
freedom from this feeling of emptiness
this bigotry
this indigestion of dumb thoughts
freedom from impertinence, immateriality, irrelevance,
freedom from thinking about freedom
freedom from freedom itself
there are more
freedom from pain
is useless now
that you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
And What About The Arrow, Where Did It Go?

good that you ask
it fell to earth
i know not where

if you wish to know
find the man
with a scar on his chest

do not ask me
or i will tell you more lies

RIC S. BASTASA
And What About Us Who Write Poems Every Minute Of The Day?

what words can we take pride in
these poems like our daily breaths
ordinary words we utter in ordinary
conversations we have
come breakfast come snack time
come lunch come dinner

the talks we have on the park
in the marketplaces of our ordinary days
unplanned, unscreened, unedited
ordinary words to ordinary occasions

an embarrassment, can these words be?
dscheming and devoid of meaning
the lines of the common places?
the dialogues of the fool and the unwise?

you do not have to mind
this is my journal, a record of nothing
but ramblings of my mind and there you are
carefully reading putting meaning where there was
really none

this poem of day to day, unwavering
trying to be but nothing, a mode of nothing but just
plain thinking

do you too have this kind of breathing?
tell me why you breathe, then?

RIC S. BASTASA
And What Did The Red Queen Say To Alice?

she says,
move on
alice, find yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
And What Is The Truth Like? .......

the truth
is a fan

a hand with
more than
ten fingers

your head has
a thousand strands
of hair

the river has
a hundred
tributaries

light that
spreads like a rope
unleashed

or trickles of
rain drops

the truth is
a legendary elephant

do not judge too
easily
you got the tail

RIC S. BASTASA
And What Is Your Wife Doing?

well, she is in the music room
singing the Anne Murray songs

as i make my poems for the day
writing about Anne Murray

and why do you ask? oh i know
it is true we are not talking, precisely

because she is singing and i am into
this poetry writing and yes, i ask you

why do you keep on reading?
every poem that i write, oh my, why?

alright, friends forever there shall be
no denying, and too truth telling, see?

RIC S. BASTASA
And When He Turns To Dust

and then he is laid to rest
and be left in the silence of his grave...

the grasses take charge and
some seeds may grow to make flowers

no, not for him anymore
he turns to bones to dust he shall return

and there will be no more songs
no poems, not even his name shall be remembered

his songs perhaps but only for a while
our destiny like his is always in the beauty of forgetting...

RIC S. BASTASA
And When Some Of The Butterflies Come And Flutter

and when some of the butterflies come fluttering
over my sweet scented jasmines in my garden

i look for the sunlight from the colossal sun
and the enlightenment from the great Pan
and ask what is there left for me to do
the right solution so i may not be also blue

shall i hide my nectar inside my sepal
or shall i open more the colors of my petal
or shall i choose but be one brittle metal?

a caterpillar, younger sister of the butterflies
intervenes upon a feast on one of my leaves says:

hey you, don't be a crab? open up, spread your petals,
go grab the fluttering wings, these are the lonely ones!

RIC S. BASTASA
And Where I Shall Go After?

We are two who have become one
Because of the law, we thought it was
Because of love, too late we found it
Not to be that,

Too late, for us who find ourselves
Naked in bed, and then find nothing
Desirable at the end, our eyes stare
At the ceiling finding no stars, no moon,
But just wood, and yes this bulb which
I bought at a cheaper price, and now
About to flicker,

You say, we shall endure, what will
Others say? shall we break an oath?
Shall we put ourselves to the shame
Of our elders and the law? i say
Nothing. i am worried about the flicker.
Soon it will end. And this room will
Be dark, and i won't hold your hand
Neither will i embrace your body.

I put my hands above my abdomen
In prayer and you see me before that
Light dies, and you smile, as i pretend
That i am dead.

That is your dream i know. And mine
Too, perhaps. How i wish i’d been
Clear to myself, who i am, what to do,
And where i shall go after?

RIC S. BASTASA
And Where Is Mom?

she is not there anymore
she is not an all time giver
a hundred percent present

she gets fed up too when emptiness comes
drifts and diffuses in her clothes and skin

when insanity begins to eat
her hairs
she will stop comforting you

and will not even know who you are
that breastfed baby
whose skin no fly has ever smelled
no mosquito has even flown to a distance
of a millimeter

she is one kind of mortal too
she can fall asleep forever
into this eternal sickness
and from thence
can no longer sing your
lullaby for the night

RIC S. BASTASA
And Who Is The Poorest Of Them All?

not the one without a cent in his pocket
not the one without a potato on their table

not the one who lost his house to fire
not the one who lost his parents in the war

not the one who did not finish his education
not the one without a job

the poorest of them all is the one without hope.
the one who does not love
the one who has stopped yielding his fruits.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Why Are You Staying Late Too Tonight?

i know
you miss me and you send me
illustrations
of the best positions
in bed

nothing new
really
still about dogs
and beds

and some
questions
about where
and when
and how often

your number
and your
sexual
preference

hunger &
thirst

and some blank spaces
and some
multiples choices
and an essay
about man's need
for sex

that is your quiz

RIC S. BASTASA
And Why Did He Choose The Manger, And Mary And Joseph?

and why did God chose
the manger for the seat
of his birth and Mary his
physical mother and
Joseph the carpenter?

he chose the place of the
poor, the innocent face of
the unsophisticated woman,
the callous hands of the
simple carpenter in the
small town of nowhere,

he chose simplicity and
poverty, he never chose
us, our place, our time,

because he may not have
liked it at all. Too rich,
too arrogant, too shiny,
and so dirty.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Will You Love Her Again?

yes
and why do you say yes? because my arms and hands are ready
ready for what? for my lips
what do you mean? i have prepared myself how to hug and touch and kiss her
again

a dark night, a room, a candle, a glass of wine,
a cell phone turned off, and silence

can it be this
it, yes, the two of you again meeting

and did you taste her again? oh yes, i tasted her again my tongue is hardheaded
and how did she taste like? still sweet, sweeter than before
was she beautiful? more beautiful than ever
how did you know? she was naked
is beauty being naked? yes, someone beautiful must be naked before me
and silent and quite and private

she is still my sorrow and i know what i have at the end are still tears

RIC S. BASTASA
And Without Any Agreement We Become What We Are Within Us...

there is a relationship developing between this craft and myself, it is this consistency like the way mornings arrived on time like the way afternoons introduce an evening like the way the moon comes by my window like the way the curtains too sway with the flirting of the wind outside the house,

the relationship is like that of the piano and the fingers as they try to make music together to fill an empty space of monotony

there is no demand whatsoever that you read or listen that you come and stop for a while and take a drink and think for a moment why music is composed why a poem is written why stairs are built

i myself have not asked for
the reason anymore
everything just comes handy
like strangers arriving
and then watching a painter
does the brushes of
his creative images on the
canvass of a violent
environment
on the streets of Belgrade
in the squares of Romania

how the violinist
persists upon a note that
does not bring him
back his bread and butter
and how somehow he gets
contentment of following
any note in air that
takes him to
a not so definite infinity

this has taken quite long
long time
and nothing important really
is in the making
as always there are only
trivialities that make life
still worth living &
sometimes accepted without
any question anymore

the morning light has landed
on the drapes of the house
of my father
another being is touched
another soul is perforated
some molecules of air
that we know which we have
not seen ourselves
have arrived and then the
party of silences begin
and without any agreement
about when and where and what
and how
simply

we become what we are
within us
without need of everything...

RIC S. BASTASA
And Write An Essay About How To Forget.

sofa is such
a word, it is a chair
extended, targeting
to fit both head
and toe in one setting,
sofa is a phonetic
and if you want to be
hypnotic about it,
you will get what
is meant by it,
for it is not just
for sleeping, or
daydreaming,
it is more than
that, it is action,
too, moaning and
then

without regret, you
bury your head,
into the ref,
get the coldness
of the machine,
and write an essay
about how to forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
And Yes, What About The Nights?

did you say that we invented the Night?
that we mystified it?
that it has hoofs and thorns
that its ways are cruel
for men of centuries have long been
deprived of its sleep
for greed
and hunger of power
for sex
and lust for the flesh
for avarice that the night hides
from the eyes of those
who have the courage to be good
to have wisdom?

no, the night is here
and whatever opening of the mind
no matter how we close
our eyes

the night becomes more felt
and it is so cold
and deadly.

RIC S. BASTASA
And You Decide What Time Is It

The usual things are gone.
What used to be mere chair
Comes to you as the fire blowing monster.
The good changes and you think you cannot bear all these
Unexpected. You thought you die just like the rest.
You knew some perished. The ropes come like jubilant players
of the killing games.
You are amazed. The changes after all are harmless
The demons are all in the mind
And if you really live with the peace of your fingernails
They are but flowers in the meadows
Drenched with rain, gleaming with dew,
Coated with sunshine like platted selves
With gold.

Keep those hands under your command
Do not let them betray you
You are still the master of this clockwork
And you decide
What time is it.

RIC S. BASTASA
And You Shall Never Drown.

in the darkness of
our secrets
we must learn to live
in the most beautiful
face of silence.

darkness stays and
it is not afraid of your
screams.

soon you will find the
beauty of this wisdom.
soon, you will know what
life really is.

soon you will understand
the journey of other people
whom you have never known
at all.

soon you will fathom the depths
of this darkness
and you shall never drown.

RIC S. BASTASA
And You Too Will Eat What We Are Eating

come now
i have praises for you
about what you have written

come join me
on this table

i am eating my words
that i have just vomitted

it is not fattening
it is indeed enriching

this vomit
this acceptance of

i have committed an error
i have not predicted the way things ought to happen
i have not looked at you well enough

come
join us and you too shall eat what we are eating
words and nothing but words

but you can make the difference
with your beautiful eyes

your beautiful soul
we will listen now

you must sing your most beautiful songs
as we eat our own words
as we swallow our own prides
as we accept what we are

in our uselessness
in our misery
And You Were There Still Soundly Asleep....

it has become
a fact of your life

when you are too busy
time melts

in fact it dissolves
like coffee to hot water
in your personalized
mug

it is like drinking
bottles of beer
and time becomes another
irrelevant factor in
the lives of men

it was Monday when
you kissed her on the
lips
and not it is Thursday
and she had not
come home yet....

you read a novel
which remains as of this
day
unfinished business

some lives you know
have to cut themselves
nicely
as you want them to be

a happy death
a life lived without regrets
departures which must
remain insignificant
in fact unnoticed by everyone
because they have become
too ordinary

like sunsets and sunrises
like a rain which stopped
when the window shuts itself
and you were there
still soundly asleep....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Damgo Gabii Wala Ka Naapil

Daghan kog damgo gabii
Tua si papa gadala ug pusil
Tua sad si mama gagan mitago kay
Hadlod sa pusil ni papa
Tua sab si lolo nagdala pud ug pusil
Ug tua sab si manang, si manong
Gadagan mitago sa kalibonan
Nangita ug cover sa mga
Dagkong bato kay nahadlok sa
Pusil ni lolo
Wala miapil si lola kay didto sa
Damgo patay na siya
Dugay ra

Saksak sinagol ang akong damgo
Gasugod sa estudyante pa ako
Nadat-ogan sa daghang libro
Nagbalhin-balhin sa dorm
Tuay nasunog tuay nabahaan
Tuay nabungkag tuay nalunod
Sa baha sa linog

Dunay pa gyoy taas nga tulay
Ug sa ubos niini dako nga suba
Nga giagian sa dako nga baha
Ug sa dihang naa ko sa tunga
nangisog ang dako nga baha

Hinoon duna poy nindot gamay
Sud sa akong damgo
Kadtong romantic portion
Nagkita mi sa akong uyab
Nga karaan
Naghalok mi, naggakos,
Nagkinuotay, nagtinilaay
Naa pay mas lami
Apan di na lang nako
Ibutyag kay hadlok ko
Sa buyag
Nakamata ko sa kalami
Nagbasa ang akong
Bulog, gusto pa gani
Mobalik ug katulog

Saying, wa ka maapil sa akong
Damgo
Bisan na lang gani unta ug
Kadting napusilan ni lolo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Dila

daghan ang hugaw nga hunahuna kabahin sa dila
kay kon subayon ang sunod nga pulong sa dila mao ang tila
kon unsay tilaan, imoha na kana
diha sa halalom nga kangitngit tupad sa imong
gihigugma, ug kon unsa ang imong gihigugma
imo na usab kana, motugma baya ang dila sa tila
sa imong gustong makita ug makaingon ka
nga kon unsa man ugaling kana
hugaw kaha? lami ba kaha? lami ba ang hugaw nga hunahuna?
pula nga tambis mosablay sa imong buhok
kalami bang pupuon ug dayong kini kan-on
tubigon kini tambal sa atong kauhaw
sa kagutom sa atong init nga mga adlaw
lunhaw ang imong mga pangandoy
samtang ikaw mogamit sa imong dila
sa imong paghinamhinam
sa pagkuba-kuba sa imong dughan sa imong hubag
nga kasingkasing

higala, usahay makahiubos hunahunaon
ang pag-gamit sa ilang mga dila ug kita
walay pulos sa sulod sa usa ka kagabhion
wala kitay mahikap walay kitay masabtan
ilang dila lamang ang nagtikawtikaw
ug dili matagbaw ang atong kahidlaw

ug busa ania usab ako karon mogamit
sa akong dila, motila sa katam-is sa usa ka balak
motam-os sa kaligdong sa atong mga tinguha

ang akong dila ang akong kaugalingong pulong
ang akong kaugalingong laway ang akong kaugalingong
galay sa hardin sa mga bulak sa pulong sa usa ka
pag-ulbo sa kayo sulod sa akong kasingkasing

dila sulodd sa akong baba, kalayo sulodd sa akong kasingkasing
lunsay ang tanan, hapsay, mogitib ang akong panghayhay
molandong mohupay ania dinhi sa dila ang akong kalipay

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
* kon ang ubang manunulat dini dili mag-iningles kay mag-afrikaan, ako usab mosulay sa pagsulat sa binisaya bisag magsalapid ang akong dila, way sukid sa balos walay kumo sa akong pagsulay

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Gana

sa humba
mihupas na

sa chosuey
naa pa

sa ice cream
wala na

sa tinola naa
pa

sa kinilaw
labaw
kanang presko
kanang medyo
nagdugo pa

kanang halang
kay sinilian

kanang unod
nga humok
sa akong dila
kanang lumoy
sa akong paglamoy

kanang hapsay
sa akong tutunlan

kanang galangoylangoy
pa sa akong mga damgo
sa kadagatan

kanang makapalupad
kanako sa kapanganuran

kana ang akong ganahan
apan ang akong gugma anaa ra man
gihalad gihapon sa altar sa akong panumduman

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Kagabhion

gihilantan diay
ang kaudtohon
ug mibugwak kini
og kangitngit

nawagtang dayon
ang kalagot sa adlaw
naulaw mitago
sa tumoy sa baybayon

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Kagahapon Ug Karon

Kawras sa iring ang
Kaniadto
Buot hilison ang bukog
Sa isda
Sa akong tutunlan

Sa usa lamang ka mahiko
Dili ako motoo
Ang akong karon
Sama sa dagan sa sakayan
Sa suba sa loboc
Adto ako sa iyang
Kinatumyan
Ang awit sa mga tubig
Daw sama sa hagikhik
Sa mga bata
Midayan dayan sa
Himsog nga mga aping

(English)

my past and present

the cat’s scratch
is the past
wanting to melt the
fishbone
in my throat
in one magic

I disagree
My present
Is like the sailing boat
In Loboc river
I am going to its
End
The song of the waters
Like the laughter
Of the children
Flowing through
Healthy cheeks

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Mga Amiga

ang akong mga amiga
sa kahanginan
nangawala na
wa na ko kasayod
kon asa sila
gipadpad
sa dakong unos
sa ilang kinabuhi
ania ako
naghandum kanila
nahadlok
kon sila kaha
gikaon na sa
dako nga bakunawa...

kangilngig ba
kahadlok ba sa akong
mga damgo

ako kuno
ang bakunawa....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Mga Tiil Diha Sa Ting-Ulan

inig abot sa ulan
ang wala mitagam nga
mga tiil
anaa
kasayawon na pod
gustong mabasa
maglapok-lapok didto
sa gawas
bisag
niadtong miaging
bulan
natunok kini sa
baha

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Nakita Sa Bukid

Usa ka linya sa mga kabaw,
Nagsibsib sa mga bag-ong pinutlan
Nga mga inani nga humay sa likod
Sa usa ka gamay ug biniyaang
Kamalig. Nangalaya ang mga sagbot
Ug napapas na ang mga tunob
Sa mga bata nga manganihay,
Nanguli na sa ilang mga panimalay
Sa daplin sa baybay. Ang nabilin
Mao na lang ang mga tawotawo nga
Nagpakaaron-ingnon gihapon sa
Pagbantay sa mga bulawanong uhay.

Miabot ang mga tulabong nga
Mitugpa sa bukobuko sa usa ka
Linya nga kabaw. Sugod na
Ang pagpanghinguto. Mibalik na
Ang tumang kahilom sa kaumahan.

Naglantaw na usab ako sa lunhaw
Nga wanang. Wala akoy gipaabot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Akong Paboritong Titser

ang akong paboritong titser suod sa akong mama
misakay sa usa ka bus gikan sa bukid
pauli sa ilang balay sa syudad
mga usa ka gatos ka kilometro
ang kalay-on

ug siya malipayon kaayong nagbitbit
og tulo ka manok nga gituali ug gihiktan
sa usa ka pisi nga abaka

tulo man god mi nga nag-tie
sa first honors sa among klase
ug ang second duha ka buok pod
og ang third upat ka buok
apil ang anak sa kapitan

ug kaming tanan puros
honors aron walay mahay
ug ganiha hastang busoga
sa akong paboritong titser
kay nangaon ang tibuok klase
sa dako kaayong lechon
halad sa graduation

tagnaa kuno bi kon pila mi kabuok sa klase

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Atong Kalay-On

ang atong
panagdug-ol
dili magpasabot
nga
masulbad na
ang kalayo mo
gikan
kanako
isag modutdot
ka
anaa pa ang
dakong gubot
sa lukot
nga dila kabayran
og dukot

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Bag-Ong Pagsugod

Gihakot ko ang mga parte
Sa akong lawas. Una, gitagoan ko
Ang akong ulo sa ilalom sa katre

Ni lolo. Sunod ang akong mga tiil
Akong gilubong sa daplin sa suba

Aron dili kini anoron kon magbaha.
Sunod ang akong dughan diin
Ang akong kasingkasing naghago,

Akong gisang-at sa atop aron makakita
Sa bulan ug bituon. Bisag wala na ako.
Ang akong mga kamot akong gitapad
Sa salag sa mga langgam aron
Makat-on kini puhon sa paglupad.

Ang ubang parte sa hamubong
Pagkasulti akong giapod-
Apod sa kawanangan aron
Dili na nimo mailhan,
Makit-an ug mapuslan.

Karon mobalik ako kanimo
Nga walay pulos. Kanang dili mo na
Ako mahimong magamit.
Higugmaon mo pa ba kaha ako?

Kon dili ka katubag niini
Sabton ko gihapon ikaw.

Ug ako mopalayo kanimo
Balik sa akong kaugalingon,
Sugod sa uno, balik
sa akong pagkawala yamo.

Dinha baya ako gikan
Sa dihang nakit-an ko ikaw.
Ang Balak Isip Usa Ka Lusok Nga Nangka

Alang kanako ang balak mora pod
og usa ka lusok sa nangka.
Tam-is. Sinaw.
Bus-ok. Hanoy

nga mosulod
sa akong tilaok.
Walay sabod.

Apan ayaw lang hinumdumi
ang mga tagok
sa mga nangka nga giabis
ug gihimong utan
nga tinunoan.

Ayaw lang hunahunaa
kadtong imong nalimtan
og putos sa sako sa semento-
kadtong nangalata kay nasamdan

sa pagpaak sa mga piyangaw
ug mao nga ginuka ug
gikabahong ug gisulong
sa mga langaw ug nangahulog,
wala gani tagad mangahinog
tungod sa imong kadanghag.
Kalimti na lang kadto.
Ayaw gub-a ang imong adlaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Balak Nga Dili Mahuman

adunay misulod sa akong baba
mga pulong
nag-ung-ong

nabuak ang mga pulong
nahilis sa akong dila
karon ania
buot mogawas
kining akong mga alibangbang

mitugpa sa akong ngabil
susama ako
anang bulak nga waling-waling

ang mga pulong nahimong pak-an
milupad ug mibatog
layo kanako
sa laing mga tanaman

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Balay Ni Konsay Og Ni Tiago

sa dihang nagbulag na si konsay ug tiago
gibiyaan nila ang balay nga ilang gitukod
daplin sa baybayon

sa paglabay sa panahon
ang mga bintana morag mga mata sa buta
ang mga pultahan nga kanunay nanirado
sa kadugayan nadugta sa kamingaw ug katugnaw

ang mga bitoon didto wala na mangidhat
ug ang panganod ug hangin nahisama
sa mga kwaknit nagsige'g panglupad lapos-
lapos sa mga nangabuta nga bintana

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Basakan Diin Hinog Ang Kahumayan

Hinog na usab ang mga lugas sa humay
Sa among kaumahan diri sa Katipunan
Bulaw ang bulok sa mga basakan
Daw buhok sa matahom nga Amerkana.

Mihunong ako makadiyot
Sa kaanindot sa akong nakita.

Apan sa tinood lang
Mikawat ako og lantaw
Sa dalaga nga naligo sa sapa
Sa kilid sa basakan.

Taas ang iyang itom nga buhok.
Lagom ang iyang pamanit.
Apan bus-ok ang iyang dughan
Ug ang tubig nga mibasa kaniya
Mipasihag sa tanan
Nga buot ko pang makit-an

- RIC S. BASTASA
Katipunan, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Boksidor Nga Walay Daog-Daog

Bus-ok ang iyang lawas
Walay tambok bisag usa na lang
Ka bugasbugas

Nagtagbo mi sa dalan
Namalihog ko kon pwede
Ba niyang maaswat ang
Akong bug-at nga
Dala nga usa ka sako
Nga kamoteng kahoy

Wala jud mangambat
Ang kanahan
Nagmug-ot og morag
Miyawit nga unsa
Man kuno'y iyang labot

Sapoton ang boksidor
Nangita og sumbagay
Didto sa peryahan
Sa kilid sa munisipyo

Sayod ko nga siya ang
Gidungog nga boksidor
Nga siging kapilde
Busa ang iyang kumo
Iyang gisuntok sa
Mga red horse dapit
Sa ngiob nga luna
Sa daang merkado.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Boksidor Nga Walay Daug-Daog

Bus-ok ang iyang lawas.
Walay tambok, walay bisan
usa lang ka bugas.

Nagtagbo mi sa dalan.
Namalihog ko kon pwede ba
Nga aswaton niya ang akong
Usa ka sako nga kamoteng kahoy.
Wala gyod mosabat
Ang kanahan, nagmug-
Ug mora’g miyawit. Unsa man
Kuno iyang labot.
Gisapot ang boksidor, nangita
Og sumbagay didto sa peryahan
Sa kilid sa munisipyo.
Sayod ko nga siya
Ang gidungog nga boksidor
Nga kanunay mapilde
Busa ang iyang kumo
Iyang gisuntok sa
Mga Red Horse dapit
Sa ngiob nga luna
Sa daang merkado.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Dapit Nga Abohon

abi nila kad tong sa bag-o pa sila nahimugso
kad tong ang ilang aping sama pa sa bulok sa gumamela
abi nila nga ang kalibotan

puter ug itom lamang
wala ug tuo
sinugdan lang ug katapusan

abi nila duha lang ang atong kapilian
nga ako mahimong daotan o buotan
nga ako magpabilin ba o molakaw palayo
nga ako mahimo bang bibo o masulob-on

abi nila duha lang ang numero niining kalibotan
abi nila ikaw ug ako lamang
abi nila ang pultahan sud ug gawas lamang
abi nila ang bintana sira ug abri lamang
abi nila ang tanan mao lamang
ang pagsibog ug paghunong

kini o dili kini
kana o dili kana
nga kon moadto ka didto
biyaan mo gayod kining dapita
nagkinahanglan kita
og daghang katuigan
ug daghang mga tawo
nga ato gayod ila-ilahon
himamaton ug amumahon
ang uban ato ganing ikaipon
ug sa matag kaadlawon
atong hagwaon pinaagi
sa usa ka pakighilawas

ug estoryahon sa tunga
sa usa ka kamingaw
aron atong mahibaw-an
nga ang tanan diay
dili lang duha ka buok
nga dili lang kini og kana
nga dili lang ang pagsugod og pagtapos
o pagtagbo ug pagbiya

kay sa tinuod lang adunay
mga dapit nga abohon
nga mura'g naa ug morag wala
nga imong mabati
nga didto ka apan
dia ka usab kaniya
mahimamat mo kini sa usa ka panaw
sa imong pagbaktas sa dalan
sa imong pag-inusara

molantaw ka sa kasadpan
ug sa imong likod naa pa gihapon
ang kahayag sa silangan sa adlaw
anaa ang paghiusa sa tanan
kadong imong gipili ug imong gilabay
kay giingnan ka nga dili mahimo
ang paggakos sa upat ug walo o napulo
sa imong duha ka mga bukton

mag-abot sila ug ikaw mopahiyom
kay karon ania na silang tanan
naghiusa sa imong mga kamot
wala nimo damha
nga sa mga dapit nga abohon
mahingpit diay ang tanan

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Demonyo Sa Akong Likod

nakuryentehan ang akong liog sa dihang
gihagkan niya ang akong tangkugo

wa ko kasabot sa gisugid
kanako sa akong mga pagbati

kon molingi ako og molantaw sa iyang mga mata
hadlok ako kon unsa ang sunod nga mahitabo

basin mawala ako sa akong kaugalingon basin mahimo akong kabaw nga milunang sa lapok sa usa ka tunaan

gipatong niya ang iyang kamot sa akong abaga nga misulay og haploy sa akong bukton paingon sa akong dughan

giwakli ko ang iyang kamot og sa walay lingi-lingi og walay daghang sugilon ako siyang gibiyaan

ang kahumot sa iyang gininhawa ang kainit sa iyang kamot unsaon ko kaha kini pagwakli sa akong hunahuna?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Dili Malimtan Ni Mama

i

tay wala man niya ako kuyuda
sa paglubong kang manay takya
padulong sa dipolog
akong gipang-ibot ang iyang
mga paboritong
african daisies
didto sa iyang harden

pag-uli niya pagkahapon
patay na silang tanan
nangalayos sa kainit
sa mahal nga adlaw

ii

kay wala man niya ako giapil
sa picture-taking sa iyang mga kauban
nga mga school teachers
didto sa Olingan Elementary School
akong gilabni ang iyang sayal
ug dayon nikaratil ko pagdagan
ngadto sa likod sa eskwelahan

iii

kay iya man lagi akong paligoon og sayo
sa buntag didto sa banyo tapad sa atabay
sa ilalom sa punoan sa balimbing
ako misaka og mitago sa punoan
sa star apple nga gabok na kaayo
ang mga sanga

ug busa tungod niini
dili gayod ako mahikalimtan ni mama francing

i
sa pagkamatay sa tanan niyang mga african daisies
nga mahal kaayo ang pagkapalit ug mao
nga iyang giatimanan pag-ayo
iya akong gibunalan sa usa ka dako
nga sanga sa bayabas hangtod
nahimo kining mga buhok sa abaca sa iyang kasuko
ug ang akong mga ngabil na lang ang nabilin
nga walay labod

ii

ug tungod sa iyang kaulaw sa iyang mga kauban
sa paglabnì nako sa iyang sayal tungod lagi
kay gusto gyod ko nga iyang sabakon samtang
mag-picture-taking sila sa katapusan sa tuig
sa pag-eskwela nga nakita gani ang iyang
puti nga paa ug itom nga panty
iya akong gidakop pagkahuman sa picture-taking
ug iyang gihawiran ang akong mga bukton
ug iyang gibunalan ang akong mga tiil
sa iyang silhig nga tukog sa lubi
nasamdan sugod didto ang akong bata
nga kasingkasing sa iyang pagsinghag
maldito ka gayong bataa ka
ambot og asa ka naliwat

iii

ug tungod lagi kay kandingon man ako ug mitago
sa habog nga sanga sa star apple nga gabok na kaayo
sa kalit nabali kini og nakit-an ko ni mama
sa akong pagkahulog ug sa kalit nakong pagkahagba
didto sa dapit sa sin nga gihimong labat
ni papa sa among kusina
natunong ang akong tuo nga tiil sa usa ka hait
ug tayaon nga sin ug maayong pagkaabis sa
akong bitiis
daghan ang dugo nga miagas sa akong unod
ug ako nakuyapan sa tumang kalisang
maldito ka gayong bataa ka
kandingon man god
tan-awa nagabaan ka gayod sa imong inahan
wala na nako maklaro pa ang uban niyang gisulti
ug busa makita nimo ang dakong ulat
sa akong biitiis diri dapit sa akong tuo nga tiil
nga morag bitin lakip ang mga garas
sa akong mga bukton nga morag mga kigwa
nga napatik ug wala na kalihok sa akong panit
apan dili ang mga ulat
sa akong kasingkasing ug panumduman

apan bisan pa niining tanan
kay ako anak man nga sa giixon ni mama
maldito man gayod og angayan nga gigabaan
sa akong kadaghan nga natun-an
mga kasakit nga nalabyan
morag sa kadugay sa panahon
nagpasalamat lang gihapon ako
nga kon og wala pa si mama
sayod ako nga dili gayod ako
mamahimo karon nga ako

ang ako nga malditong bata kaniadto
nga natagak ug karon nagkat-on
og katkat sa kakayohan sa mga balak

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Duha Ka Gilansang Sa Krus

duha kadton<
gilansang sa krus

ang usa walay
sala
ang usa makasasala

dunay nalipay
duna say nagmahay

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Gamayng Bato

(hubad sa Iningles ni Peter Dale Scott ug Czeslaw Milosz
sa balak ni Zbigniew Herbert)

Ang bato
maoy hingpit nga nilalang

igo ra sa iyang kaugalingon
kabalo sa iyang utlanan

napuno og sakto
sa iyang kahulugan isip bato

dunay kahumot nga walay ikapanugilon bisan unsa
dili makahadlok ug dili makapagmat sa gana

ang iyang kabugnaw og kainit
makatarunganon ug puno sa dignidad

Mabati nako ang dakong kaguol
dihang akong gihawiran sa akong kamot
ug ang iyang lawas
nasurop ang akong bakak nga kainit

Ang gagmayng' bato dili maanad
sa kataposan motan-aw sila kanato
sa usa ka linaw og tin-aw nga mata

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Gibating Kahadlok

mahimo baya nga moadto
kita dapit sa lalom
sakay sa sakayan unya
ako ang magbugsay

nagkalo ka nga milantaw
sa unahan
mora kag namasol gamit
sa imong pahiyom

wala nako hisgoti kanimo
ang akong gibating kahadlok
sa ilalom sa akong
kasingkasing nga basin

og ako ug ikaw matuwang
unya ako nga dili pa kaayo
kabawong molangoy dili
kasalbar nimo.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Gugma Ug Ang Gana (Bow)

ang gugma ug ang gana
daan nga amiga
nagkuyog silang duha
sa sayo sa kabuntagon

pagkaucho ang gugma
abtik pa apan ang gana
nagkaluya ug gustong
mopahulay sa bugnaw
mohigop sa sabaw

pagkahapon ang gugma
abtik lang gihapon
apan ang gana nalipong
naghigda sa kutson
nasakit gisip-on

pagkagabii ang gugma
abtik lang gihapon
apan ang gana patay na
nabaho na ug busa
ugma sa sayo sa kabuntagon
ilubong na kini sa yutang tabonon

mao kana ang kaminyoon
mao kana ang tiunay nga gugma
kay ang gana mawala na
apan ang gugma magpabilin sa gihapon
sa kahangtoran sa kahaponon

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Ilang Kapalpakan Kaniadto Kapalpakan Gihapon
Nila Karon

mitunga ang mga kala
didto's sam-ang
gihimas nila ang kahilom
sa mga sinaw nga
letra sa ilang metal
nga mga ngalan

gilantaw nila pag-ayo
ang mga nangabot
nga saba kaayounya
kusog ang hudyaka
sa katawa, kaon
inom, unot og surasura

kusa lang sa usa ka tuig
kini mahitabo
apan wala sa ilang nawong
ang kalipay

wala gyod nausob
sukmat sa usa ka kala
ngadto sa tupad

ang ilang kapalpakan
kaniadto
kapalpakan gihapon
nila karon

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Imong Mga Balak

gamhanan gayod ang imong mga balak
higala ko
sa mga panid sa pulong dagitab

gibasa ko kini kaganiha
sayod ka
gibasa ko na usab kini karon
sa akong pag-abot
halayo sa kagubot

nakakita ang mga buta
nakayubit sa mga pulong ang mga amang
nakasayaw ang mga bakol sa katahom sa imong mga pulong
nakadungog ang mga bungol

nahingangha gayod ako
sa mga kausaban sa tanan
nahimong bino ang mga sapa
sa akong tiilan
nahimong pan de sal ang imong lawas nga kaniuadto
patay na
ug ang imong mga bukog wala
gayod nila maputol
bisan pa sa ilang mga kasilag
ug sa kasuko

gibasa ko kining imong balak
sa makatulo
ug mipiyok baya ang manok
ni san pedro

mipahiyom ka higala
karon nagmalipayon ka na
kay ako nakaamgo na
sa kagamhanan sa imong mga linya

ug karon tugiti ako nga
mangutana

kon kining tanan gikan ba sa kinailawman sa imong kasingkasing?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Kabangis Sa Iyang Silingan

ug ang iyang abogado mipakita
sa mga larawan:

exhibit 1: ang itsura
sa usa ka iring nga nabulhog
kay ang iyang usa ka
mata sa wala gilangkat
ginamit ang kutsilyo

exhibit 2: ang mga nangapaknit
nga panit sa iring nga abohon
gilaphawan sa ininit nga
tubig gikan sa kusina

exhibit 3: ang usa ka bag-ong
natawo nga iring, gamay pa
sa kuting nga gidat-ogan
sa galingan sa mais, napidyat
ug ang dugo misiplit ug
nakamantsa sa usa ka
puti nga t-shirt

mao kana ang mga ebidensya
batok sa iyang silingan nga mga iro
og pamatasan

ang misumbong mao
ang mga iring nga namarog
sa katakos sa ilang pangatarungan
nga dili gustong ibutang

sa ilang mga kawras ang balaod
sa ilang miyaw nga kalibotan

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Kamatouran

Sama kini sa hubag
Nga dunay mata

Gusto na nga moboto
Apan imong pugngan

Hadlok ka sa nana
Nga unya mobaha

Apan akong tambag
Pasagdi lang untag

Moboto kini sa iyang
Paningkamot

Paabota ang saktong
Higayon ang saktong

Panahon kay kon
Moabot na kini

Iya ka gayong
Hupayon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Kamingaw Ko Kanimo

Dunay hunghong sa kamingaw nga nasalaag
Dapit sa among balangay
Dunay gipangita

Naglakaw-lakaw ang maong hunghong
Nanuktok sa kada balay sa daplin sa kalsada
Nangutana kon nakaila ba kuno sila
Sa iyang gipangita

Iyang gisulti ang akong ngalan
Sa usa namo ka silingan nga nakaila kanako
 Ug tuod man iya kong natultolan

Iya akong gitutokan og dugay
 Ug migakos siya kanako, miiyak ug gihagkan niya
Pag-ayo ang akong mga dunggan lahos sa dughan

Akong gisuot ang akong jacket. Gisirado
Ang zipper. Namugnaw na usab ako sa paghunahuna
Kanimo. Nagpabilin lang gihapon ikaw
Bisan wala na'y tingog nga mapaminaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Kanser Sa Totoy Sa Akong English Teacher


Lubong niya karon. Ug tulo lang kami nga mitungha.
Usa lang ang miiyak. Ug ang duha, kadyot lang nga mitan-aw
Ug dayo'g biya kay dunay mga importanteng mga lakaw
Sa ilang gahom ang balak sa pagbanhaw kang
Ma'am. Ang mga prepositions ug conjunctions dili mga karo
Ug ligid mga mohatod kaniya sa menteryo. Nag-inusara lang
Intawon siya gihapon. Bisan pa sa iyang pagpangugat og pama-
Lak usab kaniadto. Dili ang iyang mga pag-umangkon
Ang miiyak. Ugma ablihon ko ang daan nga libro ni Pablo Neruda.

Sulaton ko pag-usab ang pinakasubo nga balak alang kang Ma'am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Karomata Ni Papa

ang iyang mga igsoon (i mean akong mga uyoan)
nakapalit ng ug Ford Fiera ug Hilux nga pick-up apan makapungot sad ni si papa
permanentente ug faithful sa iyang karomata
ang ligid kahoy nga yakal, gihapnigan sa puthaw ug ang iyang padanlog
aron kini modagan nga kusog kusog
grasa sa baka nga among gipatay sa pista,

makaibog ang akong mga ig-agaw piknik mi sa beach sakay sila sa ilang Ford Fiera ug ang uban dagkong katawa nga dili nimo maklaro kay silaw baya ang bag-ong pintal sa ilang mga wheels, samtang kami, sakay pa gihapon sa karomata guyod sa kabaw nga nabasa ug nanimahong lapok sa basakan, ug ang among dala binakid nga humay, sako sa kopra, binulig nga saging gikan sa among uma,
ihapit sa balay, (i dropp lang kay naa pay laing lakaw) ug si papa moingon nga

pag-una lang mo sa beach kay mosunod ra mi
(sus, udto na jud mi moabot niini)

naa pay among balay, nipa pa gihapon ang atop, tapak tapak nga kahoy sa lubi ang mga gabok na nga narra, dayon ang verandah morag bata nga nanghiwi na sa kamaot, morag luha nga kahulugon na sa aping sa wakwak sa kaimitohan,

sige ko ug reklamo, sige ko ug panaway kaniadto apan si papa hilom lang suggest pa ko, 'pa nganong di man ka mopalit ug Ford Fiera, nganong di man ta magbalay ug gwapo, maulaw na baya ko sa akong mga classmate sa vincent? '

nganong di na lang mamaligya ug yuta aron ibalay aron mopalit ug sinaw nga sakayanan?

'Dili ko mobaligya ug kabilin sa akong ginikanan' mao kana ang tubag sa akong papa.

namatay siya, gihaya sa baratohon nga lunong, nag-ihaw sa iyang binuhi nga baka ug mga manok ug baboy sa among umahan ug kabukiran

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
gilubong na siya, human sa among mga novena ug pangadye.

ug karon, ania ako, nagpuyo nga haruhay sa kabilin sa akong amahan. kalooy sa diyos, nakapalit na ug bag-ong pick-up noh? ug sa sunod bulan magpatukod na ug simbahan... er, bungalow nga gamay...hayyy

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Katabang Sa Alas Siete Sa Buntag

Lingkod sa hagdan. Sa ika-pito nga ang-ang.
Tan-awa ang karsada nga gaabog. Palayo na
Silang tanan. Su’d sa kotse sa ilang amahan.
Imong amo. Ikaw na lang usa karong orasaha.

Basa pa ang imong kamot sa paghugas
Sa ilang plato. Gipaningot ang imong agtang.
Giigang ang trapo sa kamot. Imong gipahid
Sa imong mga kahago. Karong mopahulay ka

Sa makadiyot, dili ka motan-aw sa TV
Ug maghinambid. Dili ka kasabot sa dagan
Sa panahon. Sa politika. Naglibog ka kon
Nganong sige silang nag-away. Nag-Tinagalag.
Nag-Iningles. Ang imong kamot luya samtang
Wala pay gibuhot. Pahulay sa makadiyot.
Paghinuktok. Paghunahuna sa kabaw sa bukid.
Nahurot na ang sagbot sa hulaw. Nauga na
Ang tubig sa suba. Nagratatat ang tingog
Sa mga nalaya nga dahon. Gubot usab didto.
Nag-away ang mga rebelde ug sundalo.

Napusilan ang imong bana. Namatay
Ang imong tatay. Ang imong anak nga lalaki
Nasakit. Ang imong anak nga babaye
Sulugoon usab sa pikas nga lungsod.

Hangtod kanus-a ba mahuman ang tanan?
Humana ang pahulay. Motindog dayon ka.
Maglampaso sa hagdan. Maghumol sa bulingon
Magtigom og tubig. Maglata ug tiil sa baka.

Walay kahumanan ang tanan. Gikusi mo
Ang ilong sa radyo. Karon ikaw ra usa
Mamati sa drama. Moduyog sa kinahon
Nga kamingaw ug kasakit. Moiyak ka’g apil.
Ug sila nga makadungog sa imong bakho
Sa pikas nga balay, moingon nga ikaw
Nga bag-ong katabang, medyo may pagkabuang.
Mitulo ang imong mga luha sagol sa nilabhan.
Walay sapayan. Makakaon ka na ug katulo
Sa matag adlaw. Walay pasayan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Kinabuhi Sa Wali Ni Eustolia

i

Dili mahinungdanon kon unsa kadako ang imong madawat.
Ang imong bantayan kon duna pa bay mabilin
Bisag gamay lang sa imong pitaka
Sa matag tapos sa bulan.

ii

Ang mga ariyos nga bulawan dayan-dayan lamang.
Ang labaw nimong akatahon
Mao lamang unta kon makadungog pa ba
Ang imong dunggan.

iii

Sa imong dakong gugma sa iyang kabahong
Wa na nimo makita ang tinuod nga katahom
Sa pagtakdol sa bulan sa imong kagabhion

iv

Sa banag-banag magkita kitang duha
Dili ako moatubang sa imong kilom-kilom
Kay dili ako kabalong mosalom diha sa
Imong aslom nga pahiyom

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Langgam Sa Katulugon

pagkagamhanan gayod
sa kakapoy
giwala sa akong panumduman
ang mga damgo
sa akong kagabhion
ang katulugon iyang gihuktan
diha sa akong
atubangan.

wa kaipsot
nagapos intawon hangtod
sa alas nuybe
sa kabuntagon

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Lumot Nga Sa Bato Mitapot

Ang lumot dako gayod og gugma
Sa bato. Kay bisan pa kini og tig-a,
Bisan pa sa pagkawalay-pagbati
tapot lang gihapon siya

Sa bato. Wala mangambat ang bato
Sa lumot. Apan ang lumot kanunay
Naghandom sa bato. Bisan pa og
Moligid ang bato sa sugo sa baha sa
Suba, sa mando sa tubig ug linog sa
Yuta, ang lumot nagpabilin nga
Nagpauraray sa iyang lawas, sa iyang

Paa, sa iyang bukton. Ang lumot ang
Tinood nga nahigugma. Dili malingla
Sa tambag sa gamut sa kawayan.
Dili kabalo magtoon sa gibuhat
Sa lapok nga mikuyog pagpaanod
Sa mga bali nga sanga ug larag
Nga dahon. Dili mausob sama
Sa dagayday sa sapa. Dili pod
Makiskis sama sa taya sa barko.

Gugma. Gilumotan na sa pagdis-og sa
Panahon: Madakin-as bisan mga umang
Nga nagbalhin-balhin sa ilang balayan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Manggiulawan Nga Sagbot Sa Daplin Sa Dalan

Bisan sa iyang pagkamanggiulawon-
Tungod kay siya usa man ka tunokon
Nga sagbot nga kanunay matumban
Sa mga kabaw, kanding ug baboy-

Siya baya usab nakahimo og tulo
Ka mga bulak diha sa iyang gagmay
nga mga sanga sa daplin sa dalan nga
nanugon nako: Alang kuno ni nimo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Manok Igsasabong Ug Ang Duha Ka Himungaan
Sa Daplin Sa Basakan

Nindot ug barog
Pula ang iyang sudlay sa iyang ulo
Mabulukon ang iyang balahibo
Sagol ang pula, puti apan
Mas baga ang itom
Lig-on ang iyang mga tiil
Tag-as ug hait ang iyang
Mga kuko
Lalaking-lalaki ang manok nga
Igsasabong nga gibuhian
Sa iyang agalon
karon
Sa daplin sa basakan

Tawgon ta siya ug
Sunoy

Adunay miabot nga duha ka
Himongaan, pula ug puti
Nagkuyog pagpaduol sa
Barogan nga sunoy

Dili na ako ka seguro kon
Asa kanila ang mibirig
Ug kinsa ang gibirigan
Kay ang sunod nakong
Nasaksihan mao na man
Ang kadyot nga kapakapa
Ug kupokupo sa usa ka
Sunoy ilis-ilis ang duha
Ka inaan
Nga pula ug puti

Pagkaugma sayo sa kabuntagon
Madungog ang tugtugaok sa sunoy
Ug pagpamutak sa mga inaan
sa ilang pugaran
Nga daghan na ug mga itlog
Ug sarang ikalipay kini sa tag-iya nga
Mamaligya niini sa
Merkado sa lungsod

Nalayo na kita sa gusto nakong
Isulti ug ipasabot

Mao kana ang kalainan sa sunoy
Ug sa mga inaan
Sa daplin sa basakan
Ug sa mga desenting lalaki sa
Atong katilingban

Dili pwede ang usa ka sunoy
Moupa sa daghang mga inaan
Ug dili kuno malipay ang Ginoo
Sa daghang mga itlog
Kay dili kini mamaligya
Sa merkado sa iyang lungsod

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Matahom Kanunay

ayaw pag-atubang sa
aso

kay maglisod kang
ginhawa

ayaw hikapa ang kalayo
kay dili ka kaldero

ayaw pagtanga kay dili
ka statuwa ni joxe

hiposa ang imong pahiyom
kay dili ka si mona

kon mahimo
pagpabilin nga ikaw lang

kanang dili laing tawo
kay mas tinood ka unya

ang tinood, kabawo ka,
matahom kanunay

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Dayag

adunay ngalan ang tanang
nilalang

ang tuko nga mituko
tuko
ang taluto, taluto, ang
tikarol, nitingkarol, ang
tamsi, nanamsi ang
sitsiritsit, misitsit,

wala magsuot ug maskara
ang adlaw
wala magturong ang bulan

ang suba wala magkapa
ang dagat wala nagmalong

nindot ang mga dayag
diha sa ilang pagpadayag
kaanindot sa imong nawong
ayaw tabuni sa usa ka urom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Ligbos

Nunot sa dugdog ug kilat lakip sa kusog nga ulan
Kagabii, segurado ko nga pagkauhma sa buntag
Manurok gyod ang daghang ligbos
Sa daplin sa punoan sa mga saging.
Andamon ko ang basket nga uway
Aron pamuniton nako ug itugyan
Kini sa imong mga kamot
Sa dakong pagsalig sa imong kahanas.
Ilain mo ang mga makaon ug ilabay
Gawas sa kusina ang mga makalanag
Sa atong lawas.

Apan sa pag-abot na usab sa kagabhion
Pamuniton ko pag-usab kadtong imong
Mga gipanglabay ug ang mga gihuksahan
Nga makalanag sa akong lawas.
Sud-ongon ko sila og otro sa lubog
Nga kahayag sa akong lampara su'd
Sa akong kwarto ug sa hinay-hinay
Isukip ko sila sa ahina sa akong mga libro.
Pangitaon ko ang hinungdan kon ngano.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang mga ligbos

Human sa linti ug kilat ug sa makusog nga ulan
Kagabii segurado ako nga pagkaugma sa buntag
Manurok gayod ang daghang ligbos sa
Daplin sa punuan sa mga saging
Andamon ko ang akong basket nga uway
Aron ako kining pamuniton ug itugyan
Ko kini sa imong mga kamot
Sa dakong pagsalig sa imong kahanas
Ilain mo ang mga makaon ug ilabay mo
Gawas sa kusina ang mga makalanag
Sa atong lawas

Apan sa pag-abot na usab sa kagabhion
Pamuniton ko pag-usab kadtong imong mga
Gipanglabay kadtong imong gihusgahan
Nga makalanag sa akong lawas
Kay ako silang pagasud-ongon ug otro
Sa lubog nga kahayag sa akong lampara sud sa akong kwarto
Ug sa Hinay-hinay ilukip ko sila sa
Pahina sa akong mga libro
Pangitaon ko ang rason kon ngano.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Nagpahipi Lamang

hangtod kanus-a
tagoon sa yuta ang
dako nga bagtak
sa kamoteng kahoy?

hangtod asa ang
pungpong sa mani
diha sa ilalom sa
balason nga
yuta?

matago mo ba ang
kapuno? ang kalabong?
ang kahomot?

ang tinan-ogan nato
gugma pa ba kaha?

nanitsit ang tuway
sa lapokon nga bahin
sa dangoyngoy sa
suba

nadungog mo na ba
ang awit sa mga wati
dihang wala miulan
kagabii?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Panghayhay Ni Nanay

Si nanay ang labandera sa among pamilya
Sa mga bulingon ni tatay
Matag adlaw ug ako siyang nakita
Nga nanghayhay
Sa among nataran

Sa karsones sa polo shirt sa brief
Sa medyas sa tanan tanan ni
Tatay

Gidugangan kini sa among mga bulingon
Bisan na gani kami nangadagko na
Bisan na gani kon patay na si
Tatay

Labi na ang akong magulang nga babaye
Ug ang among kamanghoran nga
Lalake
Si nanay lang gihapon ang nahimong
Labandera
Bisag karon nga patay na siya

Nakita ko gihapon si nanay nga nanghayhay
Madungog ko gihapon si nanay
Bisan sa menteryo
Gihatdan ko gihapon siya sa among mga
bulingon

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Sakong Bugas Alang Kanimo, Andam Na

nagtoo ka nga
dakong sayop ang karon
nga kinahanglang
daghan pa gayod kaayong
usbon
nagtoo ka nga wala buhata
sa mga nauna kanimo
ang angayng buhaton
gibasol mo sila sa kalisod
sa mga nag-antos
gipanghimaraot mo ang
mga gamhanan
gusto nimong tay-ogon
ang atong gisakyan
aron mangalunod kitang
tanan
aron daghang malumos
og mamatay

apan bisan pa niini
ako pa gihapon giampo
ang mga masaaron
diha sa imong
kabatan-on

andam pa gihapon ang
pipila ka sako sa bugas
nga sarang lung-agon
alang kanimo Ondoy...

RIC S. BASTASA
Dungan kon mobatog
Ang mga salapati
Sa mga sanga
Sa kahoy
Dungan usab kini
kon sila mobiya

Molupad palayo
Balik sa ilang
Balay tugpahanan

nakita ko karong
Buntaga
Ang mga puting
Kalapati nga mao
Pay pagtugpa sa kahoy
Nga niwang

Kalit ba lamang silang
Nagdungan ug panglupad
Palayo kanako
Sa akong pag-abot

Ug ang nabilin mao
Lamang ang kahoy
Nga niwang
Walay mga dahon
Sa iyang mga sanga
Mora siyag
Mga tudlo sa tigulang
Nga babaye
Nag-abli sa iyang palad
Hangad sa langit
Nangayo sa pasaylo
Ug kalooy
Sa atong Ginoo

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Talan-Awon Didtong Dapita

human mapul-ungi
ang mga kahoy sama sa
mangium ug
mahogany
nindot kining lantawon
nga silang tanang
mitugsoy

kanunay nakong gitugon
sa mga nagpuyo didtong
dapita
nga kinahanglan dili gayod
tabonan ang mga panganod

kon aduna may mga dahon
nga ibilin
kinahanglan nga unta habog
ang ilang pagkahulog
aron dugay dugay kini natong
makita
diha sa dughan sa
hangin..

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Mga Tulabong

Kon unsa ang tultol, mao kana
Ang mga puting tulabong sa among
Mga sila kong
Manglupad ug mutogpa sa likod
Sa mga tingog
Walay gubot ang ilang pag-abot.
Nindot kaayong tan-awon ang
Ilang pakigsandurot sa mga kabaw.
Walay away nga makita sa ilang
Pagpuyo niining gamayng
Kalibotan sa mga basakan,
Kalapokan ug kasagbotan.
Walay tingog ang mga kabaw.
Nagpunay ug sabsab sa sagbot.
Walay makitang kagubot kuyog
Sa pagdagsang sa mga maya
Nga morag mga gagmayng laya
Nga dahon nga nangahulog
Gikan sa langit. Dili pa ting-ani
Karon, ug dili sab tingtanom.
Walay ulan. Dili kaayo init.
Ug ang hangin naglapos-lapos
Sa mga gikwadro nga kaumahan.
Naglingkod ako silong sa kahoy
Sa marang. Sa unahan atua
Ang mga puting tulabong mitugpa,
Mitupad. Nakig-unot na usab
Sa mga kabaw. Ug ang mga maya
Nanglupad paingon sa kabayabasan.
Milabay ang iro nga itom, kuyog
Sa iyang amo nga nagsul-ob og
Pla nga polo nga taas og bukton.
Itom ang karsones sa bata.
Ug siya mitaghoy. Bugnaw
Ang huyuhoy sa hangin. Nindot
Ang kaudtohon. Puti nga mga tulabong.
Itom nga mga kabaw. Lunhaw
Nga mga sagbot. Walay mga habalhabal
Dinhing dapita. Mipahulay ko. Naminaw,
Nag-aninaw. Madungog ko na
Ang mga tunob sa mga hulmigas
Lakat paingon sa hinog nga bayabas.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Pag-Awat

miabot ang pintor
mikuha sa iyang mga kahiman-an
ang mga bulok nga iyang gihapnig sa iyang mga palad
ang brutsa nga iyang gihulom, gitagaan og kinabuhi

sa iyang lig-on nga mga tudlo
molihok na ang iyang kahanas sa pagmugna
ang tawo sa daplin sa baybayon

ang larawan sa tawo nga nagpungko
sa daplin sa baybayon
dili na ang tawo kon dili ang tawo
nga giawat sa iyang kahanas sa pagpinta
pukawon ang atong mga pagbati
sa mga bulok sa iyang panit
wala na kini giputos nga mga unod
ug ang mga unod wala na magtabon sa mga bukog

dakong patag na ang tawo nga atong nahimamat
dili na siya ang bukid, ang sapa, ang dagat
usa ka debuho, nga usahay labing mahal pa gani
sa tinuod nga tawo nga nagpungko
didto sa daplin sa baybayon
puli sa tinuod ang giawat-awat
puli sa tinuod ang mga bakak
nga karon labing bililhon

bakak kana, kay dili na kana kadtong
tawong adunay daghang balahibo ang iyang paa
dadtong init og ginhawa,
dadtong imong gihapuhap, kadtong namatay
nadugta, ug sa kataposan gilumotan sa kalimot

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Pagdakop Sa Awit, Sa Balak, Sa Kahadlok

nadakpan na nimo
ang tingog sa buyog diha
sa imong
saxophone

akong gisulayan ang
pagsulat sa balak sa
ligwan

ugma kaha ang sugilanon
sa mga pukyutan?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Pagkamatinooron Sa Usu Ka Balak

Wala kana sa ritmo,
Sa sukod, sa mensahe.

Dili usab kana
Dula-dula lang sa pulong
Ug baid-baid sa dila aron
kini mahait.

Alang kanako
Ang balak mao
Ang pagbalos
Sa nagbato kanimo
Naigo ka sa agtang
Ug ikaw
Nawad-an kadyot sa
Panimuot ug
Unya mibangon,
Mihapuhap sa bun-og
Sa imong agtang.
Mipahid sa dugo
Nga milatay
Sa tulay sa imong
Ilong tabok sa
Tampi sa imong
Aping kay buot
Mobalik pagsulod
Sa lim-aw
Sa nagtibi mo
nga baba.

Gihapuhap mo
Ang kasakit
Ug wala panumbalinga
Ang nagbato sama

Niining akong balak
Alang lang kanako.
Ang Pagkamatuoron Sa Balak Alang Lang Kanako

Wala kana sa ritmo
Sa sukod, sa mensahe

Dili usab kana
Dula dula lang sa pulong

Baid baid sa dila aron
Lang kini mahait

Para kanako
Ang balak mao
Ang pagbalos
Sa nagbato kanimo
Naigo ka sa agtang
Ug ikaw
Nawad-an kadyot sa
Panimuot ug
Sa kadali ikaw
Mibangon
Mihapuhap
Sa bun-og sa
Imong agtang
Mipahid sa dugo
Nga milatay
Sa tulay sa imong
Ilong tabok sa
Tampi sa imong
aping
Kay gustong
Mobalik pagsulod
Sa lam-aw
Sa naghibi mo
nga baba

Gihapuhap mo
Lamang ang
Kasakit
Ug wala mo
Panumbalinga
Ang nagbato
Kanimo sama

Nining akong
Balak alang
Lang kanako

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Pagtilaw Sa Dugo Sa Usa Ka Dila

si tatay kwadrado ug apapangig.
si lolo sab.

ako dili kapanghimakak ani.
nakasunod ko.

kwadrado sab ang akong
apapangig.

kon masuko sila, morag ang
kalibotan nagplantsa ug habol

nga sundang. sakit sa dunggan
ang kanaas.

silang tanan, kon pangutan-on,
wa kaila ug balak.

o nakaila man ipaagi ang tubag
sa mga tanghaga.

'nina na pod ang bag-ong sastre
nga ginganlag tiago nga mikastigo
ni conchay! '

kanunayng hait ang sundang sa
kusina. Walay sakuban.

kaging ang mga tinap-an, asgad
ang inun-onang palotpot.

dili ko sama nila. Kon masuko ko
moadto kos sulod sa langob.

mamati ko sa pagkahulog sa
tulo sa tubig. Gisapopo nako

ang mga gamot sa kahoy.
Ang awit sa tamboboan.
Ngitngit sa sulod labi na sa layo. Nagsubay dinhing dapita ang pula nga tubig.

dili ka motoo nga pula. Nangutana ka giunsa ba kini pagtan-aw sa mata diha sa tumang kangitngit?

kon nasayod ka lamang akong dila ang magtug-an kanako.

kamao kining motilaw sa kaasgad. labi na ang dugo gikan sa utok.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Pulong Sa Bakakon

wala diay kuno
magpuyo ang
imong mga pulong sa
imong balay?

gilay-an gilayaan
diay ang imong
mga pulong sa
kahalayo sa imong
gipuy-an

asa ka naman
diay? dia ang imong
mga pulong nga
imong gibuhian
nagpaabot kanimo

dili nila gustong usbon
ang inyong gikasabutan
nangita lamang sila
sa hustisya ug katumanan

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Sayaw Sa Itik-Itik

nahuman ka nag sayaw sa itik-itik kaniadto
ug haskang lipaya sa imong mama
samtang naglantaw kanimo

karon ang imo na usab nga anak nga babaye ang misayaw

kamao ka na kon unsa gayod ang tinood nga kalipay

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Simbolismo Nimo Sa Mga Balak Ni Neruda

Ang imong duha ka lapalapa
Nagtalikod kang Neruda.
Nahimo silang mga tabil sa init
Nga adlaw nga misulay og halok
Sa imong balhiboon nga pusod.

Gipatong mo ang Five Decades
Of Poetry ni Neruda
Didto sa bahin sa imong lawas
Nga gitabonan sa puti nga panapton
Tapad sa Nature’s Spring mineral water
Ug sa imong dark shades.

Nahikatulog ka su’d sa imong mga damgo
Samtang ang imong mga lapalapa
Nahimong mga pako sa mga salampati
Nga dili kamaong molupad
Ngadto sa hanap kaayo nga mga panganod.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Simula Nga Pagbabalik

know what is missing

124567

did you say
three is a company?

u r wong.

are is missing

that makes it right

8

is the number before makes

is so?

yes, you need that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Tawong Nahigugma

ang tawong
nahigugma
kinaham ang
pagkatkat
sa punoan
sa kapayas

ang pagsulod
sa langob ang
pagsakay sa
mga balod sa
gugma ang
pagsalom sa
dagat nga ug
mahimo wala
nay tungatunga

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Thinker In Rodin

Wala ko’y katungod
Nga manaway nga
Ang Thinker ni Rodin
Sa una nakong tan-aw
Mora bayag wrestler
Nga wala kabayad
Sa iyang utang.

Naglibog ko ngano ba
Nga huboan pa ang tawo
Aron ingnon nga siya diay
Dili bogo, nga siya kabalo
Sab diay maghunahuna
Sa iyang kahimtang.

Nganong gitago niya
Ang iyang kinatawö
Nga giutgan sa mga nindot
Usab nga nanan-aw niya
Samtang siya
Nagpakaron-ingnon
Nga naghinuktok
Sa iyang gilingkoran
Nga bato nga morag walay
Gibati bisag gamay na lang
Nga kaulaw, o bisan
Pagpangihat nga siya
Sa tinuod lang
Ulagan usab.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Tinagoang Balak Ni Tarcisio Alang Kang Tarcila

'ganahan ko kon ang tanang
natong isulti bisan asa tang duha
maglagyo mag
magdug-ol
magtingogay man og
magbungol

dunay sense, kana bang makahunong
ka kadyot aron tukibon ang pulong
kon unsa gayod ang iyang
buot ipaibot sama sa lansang nga

namartilyohan diha sa kahoy nga
banaba nga morag dunay dugo nga
milakra

midahinob o misurop unya
nagpakita sa lama sa kasakit

pwedeng magdugay ang atong
panagsandurot basta dunay direksyon
ang panaw sa atong mga
hunahuna

dugay na kadto karon naglutaw ko
sa panganod
wala na kanako ang paghandom sa
unsay angayan isulti o kon asa paingon
ang atong mga panultion

dako ang atong suliran
og walay angay nga makahibalo aron
kita ilang ingnon nga
kitang duha gigabaan

kon unsa ang mga samad o ang
mga takbas
o pagluba ning atong kapalaran
we just ignore it, kon dunay mangutana
nganong milungtad ta sa pipila ka tuig
og wala milubad

usa lang ang atong tubag: it is love.
sa ngalan sa gugma
magpabilin ang kadena sa atong
panaghiusa....'

RIC S. BASTASA
SA DIHANG MIANTUG AKO NIINING BALAK
KABAHIN SA white breasted bird, to wit:

a white-breasted bird
sits on a twig
of the champaca tree

alone
always alone always

MIBALOS BAYA DAYON si Dante ug
Siya miingon, to wit:

Started reading a crony's poem
excited and determined
in the middle of nowhere
Stopped.
Eyes became heavier
tedium overpowered
the mind in turmoil
maybe start in the morning
with immensely rested mind

bravo! bravo! bravo!
for all the hardwork
those poems to be shared
for everone to accolade

ug ako mobalos pagtubat: towit, towit twit twit
twit twit

lupad akong spirit
of the glass
lupad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Tugon Ni Ogden Nash Sa Mga Bana

Aron kuno magbukal gihapon
Ang tuba diha sa hungot sa inyong kaminyoon
Kon ikaw ang bana ug nasayop ka
Ayaw daghag estorya, dawata.
Kon ikaw ang sakto, maghilomhilom na lang kuno ka.

Sa pagkadungog ni Jerry kabahin sa gisulti ni Ogden
Siya miiktin nga mora og baktin
Kay kuno nganong ingon ana man
Dili ba unfair? Nagtagay mi sa tuba
tupad sa gisumsuman nga kinilaw nga isda...

Migalot si Jerry. Mibangka og estorya
Kay kuno dili gyod siya magpa-under sa iyang asawa.
Wa pa mahuman ang iyang pagpunay og porma
Nadunggan niya ang tawag sa iyang asawa:
"Jer! Jer! Jer! Jer! Pauli na, kadali ba! '

Nayabo ang galon sa tuba nga iyang nasingkilan
Dihang kalit mikaratil siya'g dagan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Tumoy Sa Tumoy Ni Manoy

lisod baya pag analayz ug tigulang
sa tinood lang kitang tanan nga bisdak (bisag di na lang Pinoy
ang pung gamiton)
adunay tigulang, in one way or another, sa atong bay, naa jud tiguls
sa amo lang, naa si lolo enggoy, naa si lola pacing,
naa pa si tiyo miguel (mangkoy pero ingon si lolo nakaukoy)
sugod tang lolo, pagkasug uhan, ug pagkalimtanon na,
wa kuno siya katumar sa iyang tambal sa highblood,
wa kuno siya papamahawa moreport ni tiya inday
sa manila, ug dayon ug kasuko, makagot ang ngipon
mokaging ang apapangig, ug dayon ug dram ug iyak
kay kuno siya gipasagdan na

ug si lola pacing, siging hinumdum sa iyang pagka miss bisaya
cover girl kaniadto sa pagkahuman sa gubat sa misurender na ang
mga hapon, mangutana ug naniudto na ba kuno mi, dayon hangyoon
ka nga isulat ang iyang ihangyo ni alfred sa Dubai,
papalit ug turban sa moslem, kay dili siya gusto nga maitom samtang
isuroy siya sa wheelchair sa iyang garden nga adunay mga dama de noche,

ug si tiyo miguel, nga ang favorite past time magsiging ibot sa mga salibotbot
didto sa among nataran, pul-ong sa mga dahoy sa likway,
dayon hangyo nga magpaluto ug haw-an nga tinonoan kay kuno siya
gimingaw ug isda sa suba sa Olingan, ug kon gutmon motawag kanako
aron papaliton ug sopas sa tindahan sa Nidas, parisan sa pepsi nga bugnaw,
ingon sila dili enjoy mag-akatar ug mga tigulang kay kuno ang uban bisag
nag-antus ug pangamaw sa chicago apan tungod lang kini sa dollar ug sa mga
utang nga bayran, sa mga anak nga nageskwela ug nursing aron puhon
makakalos usab ug mas daghan pang dollar, makatukod ug maayong balay,
makapalit ug basakan ug kalubian, aron ang kinabuhi maharuhay

ako? enjoy lang
(hmm, ayaw lang ug saba, ako baya ang nabutang nga heredero sa
.... ayaw lang ug saba ha.. sa last will and testament ni lolo, ni lola ug labaw pa
ni tiyo miguel, ... sa totoo lang.. pila ra goy pagpalit ug pepsi ug sopas sa
tindahan ni Nidas)
Ang Tyabaw Ni Edvard Munch

Ang estorya mao nga ang iyang igsoong babaye
diay nasu'd sa usa ka mental hospital ug iyang gifuaw. Nalooy siya. Ug sa dihang mipauli
na siya sakay sa usa ka gamay nga baroto
mibuto ang bulkan sa Krakatoa, diha
sa iyang likod makita ang mga kalayo
sa panganod. Wala siyay kadaganan, ug busa
siya misyagit. Mityabaw siya, apan
walay nakadungog. Misid-ok.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ang Wala Kanimo Karon

ang pagsayaw sa
huni sa kabuntagon

ang pagpasalamat sa
labawng Makagagahom

ang pagabati sa kabugnaw
sa hangin nga kaganina
milalin

ang pagtagbo sa adlaw
sa usa ka pahiyom

ang pagdayeg sa lamian
kaayong pamahaw nga
giandom sa imong minahal

mao kana ang wala
kanimo karon....

RIC S. BASTASA
Anger

how to deal with you?

i ignore you like an
uninvited visitor.

but then you insist
that there is something
in you that is very urgent.

i face you
and i burst into one waterfall
from a very high cliff
after a heavy rain.

you turn into a driftwood.
and i become the raging waters
running
without direction.

the snakes and
crabs are taken
and i have no choice
but to sound like a roaring
lion.

i want to stop
but you do not have anymore
ears to listen.

you have become
my own ugly face
and i am afraid to see
the face of the
real mirror.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anger And Self-Denial

something arrives
it is harsh and you do not recognize it
it exists but your mind refuses
to acknowledge it
this is self-denial and you tend to take
this harsh thing too lightly
upon a bottle of beer
and some puffs of Marlboro cigarettes

the harsh thing sticks to your skin
like a leech and sucks your blood
and drained
you fall into an unconsciousness
self-denial falls like
a stone to a house of dominoes
causing this pandemonium
of your guts

then comes anger
you scatter all your parts on the highway
you let the trucks run over you
whatever is left
everything shatters
and you scream to the continents of the world
to no avail
of course

there is this angel of pity
hovering over your soul
bringing you the light of the brightest day
of your life

you stretch your hand and there is this
new world before your eyes

acceptance, the tranquility after the chaos,
heaven, this must be, serene, a clear pond,
a self rising above the selfishness of your
earthly existence
it is no longer us, in this luminosity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Angrier To Myself

when i am gone
please do not think of me
because frankly speaking
and this may hurt
but this is true
and may liberate you
as wont
would have it
let me tell you
in the honesty of my
hands stretching out
for emptiness

i do not think of you
i will not miss you and
don't cry don't scream
you are a fool
loving someone who never
love you

is it harsh? yes it is.
i was there not just once
but many times

i am angry at yourself
i am angrier to myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Angst

enrico poses with a beautiful wife
and two kids as Kayang also sends a
photograph of
a family

ey were old flames taking separate roads
on their new lives

it was really unexpected but in life
the unexpected always asserts itself

the next thing i know is another
angst

someone dies and someone grieves
secretly
for fear that the grief may hurt someone
that you
pretend loving

pretense is another fact of life
a stranger that stays which keeps everyone in the house
tiptoeing

an open door does not necessarily welcome you
someone wants to close it
but couldn’t

RIC S. BASTASA
Ania Ang Ang Tigtagik Kalimti Na Ang Mga Atik

sa matag adlaw
miabot ang hunghong

hangtod na kini sa
mga kagabtion

kon ikaw siging pamati
dili ka na ganahan nga motingog

sa imong pagtingog
dili na nimo kaayo madungog

anaa ang mga hungihong
anaa ang mga kasikas

nadungog mo na ba ang
mga tunob sa hulmigas?

gahasol ako sa akong tanlag
gihadla ako sa tumang kahilom

gipamati ko ang maong tingog
gilikayan ko ang alingugngog

ania ang ang tigtagik
kalimti na ang mga atik

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Animal Cruelty Club

you cannot kill the dog
she says with authority
if you kill one we will
find out and we'll kill

you, for Dog's sake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Animation

thunder assumes life
of the male genitalia ruling the evening
the houses are the recipients of its fury
the bliss of the other strikes
the roofs of those who remain indifferent
to its invasion
there are sounds of moaning of the wind
but the windows know how to pretend
that they are all dead

lightning tries to provide the electricity
of the lapses
but the doors like the windows
also know how to pretend
like the house.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ankor Wat In Cambodia

we are into the labyrinthine
paths of the temple in Cambodia
two years ago, and now as i lay
in bed thinking about it the image
of a tall man comes into play,
he invited us to a secret place
where a beehive is situated and
there is really nothing unusual
about it since we have lots of
this kind in the philippines, and
then for heeding his invitation
as tour guide to a beehive he then
asks for money as his fee which to
our mind is not that hard to give
knowing very well that he needs it
for his daily survival and then
we left the place rushing to see
the old trees eating the Buddhist
temple for years and years still
hungrier than ever....

RIC S. BASTASA
Anne Sexton...

or, do not try
that trick of closing the garage
turning on the engine of
your car and breathe
that eunuch carbon monoxide,
you are not
Anne Sexbomb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anniversaries

for all
the things that we both know
we don't talk about them

we start talking
about those that we pretend we do not know

you choose the words
like the way you put the right flowers in a vase
at the headboard of the bed,

and i choose the words not to hurt you
we do not look at each other's eyes
we refrain the touch
of the hands

you leave the flowers there
and i look to another direction
there are things that remain
to be done
we ought to

and then the flowers wilt
nights come and go
and then the following morning
we choose again
words, flowers,

we continue
not talking about what we already know

i guess
this is the only way how we can survive
the travails of marriage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Annotations To Daily Encounters

The room is small, dark, and humid
It usually speaks,
Nevertheless, it is tight-lipped today,
While I undress myself
It looks at me
& Senses the foulness
Of my nudity.
I walk naked towards its hazy windows
Overlooking the strong rains
Pounding those breathing in the
Garden,
The sunflowers are shouting for help
They may die sooner,
While I remain in stand still
Unable to do
What is needed to be done
While everything breathing
Are groping for space.
And I can’t speak to the room either,
About this arrangement of
Predators and prey
Heavy rains and helpless sunflowers
Grandfather and son
Parasites and hosts
Brothers and sisters
Late suns and balding trees.
I am tight-tipped too,
By nature this room is without tongue,
With nothing to say, and interesting to open up, an icebreaker.
It reminds me:
It is about leaves and leaving,
About everybody’s departure, from one reason to another,
Excuses & recluses,
I don’t want to understand & I am logically starved,
Deprived of some perspective about God’s ways,
What I mean is that
This room would not want to listen about what I will say,
There is no room for pacifications anymore.
We are both occupants here, the room
Occupies me,
The pre-occupation in fact is too much
We seem too much mindful of our
Private affairs, in so contemptible manner, as it is bare, as I am naked,
And we don’t speak too many words today there
Are no adjectives for departures, we are too tight-lipped
My chest too congested, and the room too bare
It is short of what to
Exposé, what with nothing left, except barrenness and nudity.

Come with us, and be departed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Liza says
it was her last option
otherwise she will simply be hurting herself
like poking a stone on her head
or stabbing her own heart
with her own knife
from her very own hands

last option: annulment
the man she says is irresponsible
incompatibility was discovered late

then follows Maila
again separated with a man sired her a boy
it is the boy that she loves more
and not the man

and so with Verna
she finally finds her man on top of another man
right in their conjugal bed
she could not fire a gun
that is her regret

the family court is constantly hammering
the gavel
for another annulment of marriage
and everyone seems happy
celebrations is occurring here and there
balloons are bursting
firecrackers on the month of June

my Emma is silent
perhaps disturbed by this legal turbulence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Chance To Say The Words

i hurt you,
that is a fact,
i make you bleed
i have seen the drops of blood
on the floor on the bed on the corners of your house,

i leave now as you say
but give me another moment for me to say the words
i may have been unkind and selfish and not deserving of your purity

of your love that surpassed my mortality, look at me for the last time,
please give me a few seconds for me to say the words:

I have always loved you.

(and if given another moment of my life :)

i will still love you. Always I will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anonymous Poet

then anonymous poet
keeps on writing
his critic is the curtain
his reader his own
computer keys
the walls around him cheer
the ceiling stares
the beams comfort him
and the floors
say that his poems
are interesting

he does not really mind
after all
he is anonymous
and he likes it
that way

his life a mystery
his name a nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Aging Opportunity Had Passed

early in the morning
i will miss
the first glimpse of
sunrise

the birds are
filled with fidelity
to sing

leaves are always
dew laden
glittering

the white dog wags
its tail to the door
that is opened

the licking of the feet
is one monotonous ritual
but it gives the
boost just the same

life in a box
sequences in routine
like the way
we always make love
mix it sometimes with
prolonged patience
and sound sleep
after

seemingly the world
goes out
subconscious subterranean
streams
like an underground river
imaging memories
in stalactites and
stalagmites
down far
north

another year
a little bit bitter
but in sum
sweet, filled with cares
love lavished
ravishing flesh
and bones getting brittle
with sense

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Anonymous On The Loose

what i am trying to learn now
is to travel alone
and just be myself
carrying a small back pack
and a
credit card and when
i arrive at my
chosen destination
i shall find a lodging house
where i can
be alone and naked to
myself
i'd sleep for hours and
think nothing about
work and
the future
and on one fine day
when the rain there
stops
i shall take a bath
(clean myself
comb my hair and
get ready
for another adventure
of my life
as though i am once again
a bachelor
taking my stroll in those
public parks
buying my breakfast
on one of those
lined up stalls

in here i am myself anew
another anonymous.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Bright Day

you start your life early, as usual, four in the morning
when the rest are still asleep
you start organizing your thoughts for the day
hopefully a brighter one
unlike yesterday's storm
when the house was closed
when there is nothing practical about
opening a window

you like this feeling of having written
another poem
a brighter one perfumed with delight
you write the last line
and put there the word
happiness
and then you put the graphics
of a daisy where a butterfly
flutters its proboscis
tickling the center of the
pistil of this flower
that you offer
for yourself

it is a bright day
you open the door remembering some dance steps
in the green grass of your father's yard
the roses that mother always love

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Chapter Of Suspense And Happiness

when you are gone
you are gone for good

you are gone and i do nothing about it
because when you are gone you are simply gone and i do nothing
to make it more sophisticated or

complicate such a very simple matter as a departure

it takes only a second when the jet plane takes off
and all its sound is gone
its trace of smoke in the sky simply dissolves in that blue canvass

soon it is empty and soon blackbirds dot its hues of white and blue

what is there to make about those hands that forget about waving?
those eyes that look so happy watching the fields flashing away from the window
of the bus?

or an array of thin sheets of clouds from the window of the plane?

where you are gone
you are gone and that is precisely
for the best in us

you go your way and i stay and soon too i must go my own odd way too
finding another one who shall not speak and act like you
(so i can easily forget)

when you are gone
i shall still be good, pursuing once again this search for

another chapter of suspense and happiness
in my own little book of incoming days.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Conversa Mi Amiga....

i am proud to say, i do not hide my ignorance and lapses
but i always hide my eggs

Me

hehehe

for fear that it may get burned
but
it is because uv got confidence
ur ignorance is minimal hehehe
compared to us

confidence is the flower of ignorance
Me

so nasa taas gihapon ka 07 AM
safe up there 07 AM
u can still be naked 08 AM

it is cold up there 08 AM
lonelier 08 AM
because there only a few of me here 08 AM
(har har har) 08 AM
‘few of me’ 08 AM

tht’s confidence hehehe 08 AM
few og u 08 AM

looking down the cliff and asking the ant 08 AM

Me
Hey mr. ant what's breakfast? 08 AM
what is the weather down there? 09 AM
and the ant said 09 AM
You worm, why are you up there? 09 AM
you will die when the sun comes up? 09 AM
Me

hehehehe 09 AM
wow 09 AM

and i said, how dare you call me worm? 09 AM
i am a caterpillar 10 AM
and the ant said: caterpillar is a worm, idiot! 10 AM
Me

hahahaha 10 AM
and the caterpillar said: watch out when i become a butterfly 10 AM
i will ride the sun 10 AM

Me

sunog 10 AM

and the ant said: try it mr. butterfly, sting like a bee and be that dead boxer of the world 11 AM

Me

nice story 11 AM

and the worm said: (yucks, this ants knows many things 11 AM
Me

hahahah

how come does he know about muhamad?)

and the ant said: hey worm, i can hear you? i have feet with ears

and the ant said: hey worm, i can hear you? i have feet with ears

because the ant is grounded hehehe

she knows and she sees
and the worm said: with ears or not, you are still the ant that feed on morsels and dead leaves

ant: well, at least i feed myself from honest means

worm: i did not say that you are dishonest, and what's honesty got to do with our conversation?

Me

hahaha

true

ant: (ugma na lang ta maghuman kay magsulat pag balak si alis kweng ka)

ha ha

nadalahig ka hinoon sa akong ka buang

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Day

it's another day
waking up feeling new
seeing all things new again
from these old weary eyes

without prejudice without
the bias handed to us
from the previous days

the trembling is gone
my hands are strong
my mind expectant

cool and calm my eyes
shall be, and warm and deep
my heart shall be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Dusk

like distant boats at sea
not wanting touches of foams and sand
i lie here in this strangeness
of beach and bench
sunburned and feigning to be happy

in the cottage there is a woman
far from me
she knows what is it in me that closes and opens
nothing but doors

all the groans and moans she make
are unnecessary
the grunts and punches
she could be thinking of another town
or another man
her eyes as you see may be filled
with wounds
pain stings her like red ants

i watch her and then i step forward
to meet another dusk

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Fiction At The 20th Floor Of The Summit

how we wish to keep
it simple, like
love

but most of the time
love gets so complicated, like
betrayal, where

secrets arise, and when there
becomes too
hypocritical, to keep love and
luxury walk together in the park
and in the
veranda of a five star hotel,

now it gets much more folded
and inside the cabinet
of ourselves

we close in, showing nothing but
a well arranged
set of furniture

when the lady of the night comes
there is only this
bottle of champagne
two glasses, some stars in the sky
a glass wall

and from the 20th floor
another love story unfolds,
and at the end
you make a conclusion: this is just fiction
please disregard.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another For Poetry's Sake...

(i am sleepy but my hands
are still crazy about poetry...

it is a living river fed by
a heavy rain from those big
virgin mountains
the roots of trees are no longer
cups and basins
and so the flood begins
the rivers
tributaries twenty in all
run
towards the big mouth
of the bay
where they unload their murkiness
swallowed
by the royalty of
deep blue.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Fraud In The Making....

so you wanted
a business proposal

offer me something
that may make me rich?

there again
fraud appears like a man
desperate to
disperse his fortune

if you think that poets
are gullible
i may agree with you

i like magicians and
when they ask me to make a wish

i oblige: magician, magician,
make yourself disappear!

and if he is true enough
for sure, my wish will be granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another God.....

what we do not really understand
becomes to us, at least, something to revel,
what to us then somehow becomes an
amazing story, the awe of the moment,
the surprise of time, and we keep on
marveling it, like sun, and moon, high above us,
another god.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Good Deed....

one night
the stranger
arrives in your
house

you serve him
rice and fish
a glass of
water
and ripe mango

he is one of
those that
to your mind
time has left
behind

you watch him
eat
he must not have
eaten for
days

he will be
sleeping in your
house tonight
and it will be
nice

his haggard face
his failing sight
his trembling
hands
his tired feet
shall for a while
rest

as you enter your
room
before you sleep
you face yourself
in the mirror
you shake your hand
and smile....

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Happy Day

At the central park
he walks
wearing his red jersey
and red pants and
red shoes
viewed against the green water of the lake
the green grass and
green trees
and he walks along with his
greyhound
with a grey leash

above him is the blue sky
and some white feathers of clouds

and so
i conclude, and this i should have told him
'buddy, there is no reason to be lonely,
the world is full of colors, and we still choose
what color to wear! '

i'll take the walk myself early morning today
feel the wind, savor the colors,
and live my life happily
another day more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Horror Movie

who wants to show pain?
no one wants to show it and be pitied
pity can kill
makes you shrink like a chunk of sugar into some tears

everyone wants to show a happy face in the road
people walk and smiles everyone
and when the back goes a distance
everyone is back to their serious faces again
twisted lips, crashing teeth
misshaped jaws

one time that night
i show pain in the mirror
the mirror laughs
it is telling me it is not me
and i look funny with it
it says i do not fit well as a beggar of affection
it teases me
that when in pain i look like a liar
an old Pinocchio
with a broken wooden nose
reaching the door from the comfort room

i insist that this time it is true
my tears are rolling like a river on the tributaries of my cheeks
the mirror

finally screams
i am another movie.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Imagined Betrayal

i'd perhaps see it from you point of view that when you left me
you pretentiously wore a sad face,
lying to your teeth as you try to deliver the lines of
parting,

and when the plane left and landed upon
your destination on
a perfect touchdown

another pair of arms are there
waiting for you and

you run almost hitting another passenger with
your pack

focusing on the
new lover
kissing and holding too tightly
not minding
how the other conservative passengers
react
to such a
well planned
betrayal

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Important Monotony...

I wake up
on same bed
same windows
to open same trees
on the backyard
and yes

same chirping birds
coming over and over
same mornings
in my house

it is
a family matter
and i feel
so good

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Insomniac Night

last night thoughts came
rambling and we had a guessing game
of what each image mean
for instance the closed door of the dorm
at 1: 30 a.m. when all of us were drank
when the fat one climbs and breaks
open a glass door
i can still hear the shattered pieces
of glass
but no one minds as everyone were
afraid and pretended to be asleep
for instance the bald prefect was surprised
making love with someone we knew inside
his room
no one likes to tell about these anymore
those secrets that must be kept
and buried in the chambers
of our ruined subconscious subways

in the morning i look at my eyes
buried in my sockets
but i always think of some advantages
about those insomniac nights
these bed for hidden thoughts
uncovered by its curious hands
those that want to be
part of who we are now
no one
not even our morbidity
erases them

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Key Chain In The World Of Illusion...

the excitement about nonsense is that many people come and find a castle, and they find the door into it and finds a princess with golden hair beside a king with crown and scepter and even a singing queen and the dancing minions in a mayhem of the victories of imagination and the magic realism of all the mothers and fathers of verbal illusions and then you hear not from far the clapping of the hands of a big audience in a theater with thick and long curtains and absorbers of sounds and light and there you are at the center of this scandal where the hero is killed and the villain becomes well decorated like the general from Yemen where the lions and tigers kill themselves leaving only the elves and mermaids in the chambers of the marvelous and the terrific mixed with the horrors of your eves-droppings like the claws of the blue bird clinging to the blue vines of Terana where as the story goes: they live happily ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Leaf.....

another leaf
another year
another seed to plant
another tree to grow

there will be no hiding from now on
there will be more
confrontations

no one to trust
everyone is a suspect

love of self
nothing greater than this

another leaf
of the book to turn to
another page
to write on the journal

tomorrow is my day
my own unique beginning

you were all disappointments
my food came to the wrong mouths

there is no wishing for death
for me or for anyone

there is more use to reason now
rather than the flings of the heart

another sun for me
another new moon

my shadows follow me
and not otherwise
another leaf
without a worm

another glistening leaf
dew forgiven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Learning

there is a door
between us as though
we are just
two adjacent rooms

to enter into your door
i need to have that key

you keep on telling me
the key was lost and you
do not know
where to find it anymore

there is another door
and you are allowing someone else to come in

at first i say 'This is unfair! ' and
I thought of forcing
that door open

on the other hand
i have my own door too
and the lock is broken

a long time ago i have
thrown out the key

for what use is a door with
a broken lock?

and for what use is your door
to my prayer?

i do not know what force is &
i already stopped begging

i change the frames of my window
i have some other plans in mind
there are nine planets in our
galaxy

there are many galaxies
in unlimited space

and like all those who still hope
they always know

that someone somewhere keeps
on waiting

in a world where doors welcome me
like arms in half-embrace

and so i go to places where
my feet are welcome
& i have learned the happiness
of forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Lonely Night

another lonely night
writing poems another day of beckoning
understanding what loneliness is all about
another awakening
another hint
about the love we think we found
some stains some pains some attempts to survival
marriage deconstructed
only to be reconstructed
thoughts falling like leaves
gently on the grass
the moon listening
and the night staring at you
like the eyes of the ponderer
patiently waiting

distance makes us see clearly
the one away from us
how the heart grows fonder
how her name starts to be written
again on lovely letters colored
rose and daffodils on the ceiling

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Lonely Night With You

another lonely night with you
we speak to distant stars
we think they know us
and we think they listen

another lonely night we gaze
upon the moon we feel the warmth
of its lunatic light inside our hearts

we keep looking up and not looking
on our eyes we do not feel what
warmth we have on our very side

another lonely night with you
how can i ever tell that i do not love you?

RIC S. BASTASA
thinking
that i am dangerous
i kept
silence and she thinks
that i have become
more dangerous is
this silence and she
carefully observes
every word i say
every action i make
and to keep her
calm and assured i
tell her that i am
just mimicking
another Louise
gluck.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Love Song

let me say, even if you do not believe me,
i am here
swinging on a rattan hammock
facing the sea
figuring out how God mixes the color
of a sun fading and the darkness
finally winning the game
of day

let me say, for the nth time, that i am here
alone
waiting for no one,
not thinking about change of society
not computing the number
of the dead
comrades,

let me say, that i am here, thinking of you,
but i know,
you do not believe me anymore
but that is fine with me

i am not yours
anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Metaphor For Recovering...

it is not
between me and the wall

i am not helpless
against it

in my youth i was furious
even without you

i hammered a wall
and went through it

mama was crying but
she finally recovered

i watched her gather
her composure like gathering
nails

it was the magnet
and everything went on place
again...

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Moment

this is another moment of being alone
in another place
where you will find time
to be yourself
on the beach
with two seats and a single roof
there will only be one
blue towel
only one seat shall be
salty
no boat or a raft
the sea is so calm
you hear a sorrowful sound
of breeze
the sea urchins are too many
ready to prick
any of your toes
but you are careful this time
not believing all my stories
my alibis

the sea is calm
you must think some more
another moment
may strike you

i have never loved you
even for once

the sea is calm
and i will not be around
to see the coming storm
this moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Mountain To Climb

day
climb another mountain
summer
grasses brown
crack
climb more mountains
not mind
get tired way
joy

when

clouds
mountains

sunset
orange

fading

sleep
grass

under

near

RIC S. BASTASA
we get blinded by the rage of our
own biases
our own prejudices are monsters within us
eating us slowly
until we disappear from the face
of our reasons

the wise man says
it is destiny, there is nothing to worry
nature is just fulfilling
what the stars have drawn
in the skies of your
very own palms

when all of them is taken away
it is nature that is claiming its prize
but soon nature returns back
what was painfully taken
in joys doubled and even tripled

look at the rivers now
aren't they seductive with their own clarity?
look at the trees
some leaves are beginning to grown on their bald branches

the fish are showing their colored scales
and the moss are growing their greenish hairs

the children have arrived with their boats and paddles
ready for another sail another swim
they are our new divers to claim their new pearls

the women are singing and the lovers are following them
the old are settled on their chairs and listening to the old
songs of the winds

another new beginning
the past is now forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another One And Another One

i am referring to a bread and butter thing, the work that we must do,
when it is finished there seems to be no end
it becomes a case of this one too, and another one and another one, this is work
obstructions of the heart hurdles of the running game
a pain in my ass, but i give myself a break
for every case resolved for every problem solved,
i take a pause, think a little bit, see the sky, walk at the upper part of the house
open the window and see for myself the world
of planes and birds of flowers and tall buildings
of playgrounds and yards of grass and then i begin
to write what i love another poem from my heart
this one is not work but play, it boosts my energy it starts my life all over again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another One Bites The Dust....

another one
displays
a plaque

smiles upon
the flashes
of greatness

applause applause
applause

sweets sounds of
victory

affirmation of
little triumphs
on this tiny journey

you need it
badly man

and i support
your need

thanks and
welcome

let us take
this last drink
for the road

for the sake
of something that
we want to last
forever

i am a ripe
fruit

my wish
is to fall

i love gravity
and i am
bound to rot
in the ground

i do not need
you
and i do not
need it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another One Bites The Past

at 20
i have doubts about you getting into the world
of images, but you have persisted invoking the law
of the leaves and dusts
the pages of the wind you scan
looking for the justifications of your
fate
and every word there
though invisible
has given you the meaning of this
pursuit,

without choice i welcome you
and i am opening this door of emptiness
and you shall enter it
and meet a room that leads you to a bridge
of jagged edges

there the snail with sleepy eyes
shall meet you and serve you a plate of
mongrels of your
past

you will not find it tasty of course
but you shall swallow
bit by bit
because of your hunger

welcome you finally arrive where i am
introducing myself as
a permanent resident

this is the place where we were born
this is the place where we are going to die

it is an empty place it is dark
but be glad
we are serving as light.
Another Poem For A Working Mother

i understand perfectly
you have no time really to read
my poetry
but i will write you one
as short as you want it to be,

go on. just be good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Poem For M.

he sent me a picture
of a highway
and some cars
running
taking some pilgrims
on their
usual far journeys

to include himself
of course

and he swears that
along the horizon of
that vast desert
along the asphalted
highway
far from the city he
sees two
flaming suns

i dismiss the idea
as flowers of his
dismal loneliness

but it is not the end
of this theorizing about
miracles
(when you are so lonely
away from home)

it is about a broken self
that travels a very long distance
hoping to
repair itself like
piecing aggregate parts
segregated by
the cruelty of time
the indifference of
men.
RIC S. BASTASA
Another Poem For Marvin, Who Is Not Responding To A Calling

“Literature takes shape and life in the body, in the wombs of the mother tongue.”
- Ursula K. Le Guin

marvin, this time
this is the only time that you are called for this mission
the tongue
of your mother,

go back to it
take your shape
and life there

the reason why
we were defeated

it is their tongue that we are using
and on the first poem that we made
they were laughing
and laughing still

how much useless effort shall we waste some more?
and how many fools will there be like us

laughing when they laugh at us
and still imitating their tongues
when they have become so humiliatingly poisonous?

do you still remember how your mother tongue sound?
it is sweet, so sweet marvin
i hear the songs of the angels and they are all waiting.

the place that i have told you
i will meet you there
cindy and candice are waiting
Another Poetess Comes Along

another poetess has come along
bringing an old guitar

she strikes a note from a string
and then she starts to sing

another darkness is pierced
another star is born

another soul rises to the heavens
another body sheds off old skins

welcome, Yani, to our world
we have been waiting for your word

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Poetic Sigh

how can
slicing a melon
be a poem?

but the two faces
of that melon
are poems

one face was
a haiku
the other is a
sonnet

and the monk
who lives alone
on the top of the
tree
laughs

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Position....

i let the hours run
so fast
i do not notice how
things here have changed

i am rooted
have grown and shall not
look back

not afraid of the last worm
wordless
till my end

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Promise......

for those we cannot touch
with our bare hands
we stain inside our dreams

sleep is a ship taking us
to the ports of our wishes
we do not have to tell the
captain or the crew
the winds are too willing
the waves are acting like
slaves

we embrace tightly what we
sorely miss on those indifferent
days on those cruel days
until what comes out instead
is the blood of our desires

we promise again not to....

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Question For The Pond...

it is the feeling
of frog jumping into the pond
the joy of
love.

have you seen a dead
frog lately?

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Question For You

a relationship to be real
usually is taken as a two-way
street, or two hands holding
tight along the road of life

but it can be more than that.
envision an end, how an end
ends itself at the end?

two hands slapping each
other? no way.

it must be
ready with an entrance and
an exit, a fire escape, and
some firemen to put off
a conflagration

but if there are none
what then?

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Sad Poem For Leaving....

vigilance he has invited
a month ago, and so he has prepared
for the next coming days,
he lives alone now in a house above the
hill which touches the moon
at the deepest part of his loneliness

tomorrow when you arrive the dog will be
already taken away and no one wags any tail for
you.

the door will be opened and the windows too
and the free winds from the sea shall meet you
perhaps there will be stories to be told when
dinner is served by

the shadows in the room and by those shoes
which have accumulated dust for it has been a long
time and

the cruelty is forgotten, the indifference stays but
it has no more effect on the sadness of the walls.

then you will hear the words in the morning
you will be here alone too, the shadows are gone,
the shoes are kept in the bag, and then you will be
talking to no one.

the pigeons no longer have a house here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Set Of Lovers Under The Moon

the usual things we did
surely we will miss but we cannot
settle for less
and you know it and so we create and
recreate other usual moments
something new to the hold
of our hands
evenings that tempt the stars
mornings that
entice the thighs
we cannot sip coffee together
just us and
us
we will miss the unknown too
those that we like to
know
there is this pain in
anticipation
this letting go of the
old and
embracing the new
questions that
never quench our
quest for answers
and so
if you have decided to leave me
i may not be bothered at all
for in another junction
another shadow is waiting
and the moon
spreads its golden mantle
for us
to be lunatics
again

RIC S. BASTASA
at dawn you are one shadow
against a dying light looking
for warmth because
the sea breeze is cold
because the sound of the
shore is one deadening
silence

you meet another shadow
and it is looking at you
and you do not talk
since the other too is
silent

both shadows decide
to depart and find
another direction where
they do not meet anymore

you thought that this world
is one lonely circle
you thought that this loneliness
runs in a circle

and so the two of you meet
again
and again you make the
kind of departure
silence to silence
death upon death

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Smile To Remember

one day grandpa
summoned a worker in his field
and that early morning he told him that he is fired.
with nowhere to go
poor as he was, with a wife and five children to feed
the man had to go, search for another land
and bow before another master.

he was humble, and courteous still
despite the humiliations and the insults
on being called a lazy bone

he still afforded a smile that i as a young boy
could not forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Spammic Way To Prove Friendship

If you wake up in a red room
with no windows and doors,

DON'T panic..you're just in my heart! ! !

(cid: @01CA3C28.F5DE85C0)
(imagine the picture of miss piggy
waving her leg at you saying Hi!)

TAG YOU'RE IT! ! !

YOU HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED
ONE OF THE SWEETEST FRIENDS ON MY LIST.

ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN TAGGED YOU HAVE TO TAG 5 OF YOUR SWEETEST FRIENDS AND LET THEM KNOW THEY ARE SWEET.

FAKE FRIENDS: Will
ignore this.

Send this to all the friends you want to keep forever...

(what a mess!)

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Story Of His Life....

your palm
had given you a
blank sheet of paper
as white as
the boracay sand,

a pencil, sharpened
and strong,

fate asks you,
'who are you?
what do you want
from me? '

you know what you
are
from the very beginning
you know what you want
since time
immemorial

a middle aged woman
with thick reading glasses
looks at you
seriously, 'you are tough,
you are bright
like a morning
light'

you know what you are
and you know much more
what you want

when you want to write
the truth
(the truth as felt
and loved)
the blank sheet of paper
turns into a
thorny bush
with fire from its roots
it is ready to
hurt you and

the pencil can turn into
a venemous viper
ready to bite you to
death

if, if, you write
the truth (as felt and loved)

the woman looks at you
more seriously
'you can manage it
i have trust in you'

and so, to keep this life,
this journey of pain,
you scribble a lie
and another lie

and the woman with thick glasses
smiles at you
with confirmation

the pencil remains as a pencil
and the paper as paper
'this is reality, this is reality'
the mirror of life speaks
in utter silence... the irony
of truth, dressed as a lie,
life transcending death,
sadness with its sweetness
defeating the routine
joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Time.....

the bones have turned to dusts
and no one is there anymore to tell
how the earth has changed
now covered with rocks and grass

Time
the teller
and soothsayer
of truth
the finder of the lost thoughts
the ant at the end of the maze
the light at the end of this
labyrinth

why are your days too slow?
your years are the growth of islands and continents
your cliffs rise and mountains
begin to touch the hands of the sun

everything is done
and still unfinished

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Variation For Rebecca

naughty child
Rebecca
slamming the door
of the house
with your
genetic agility
how did
Abraham's bust
ever kill
you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Another War Again......

we travel
just to get know
what we do not
have here in
our town, and

something interesting
comes along the way
somewhere the differences
become too obvious
this and that
that river is just as
murky as ours
but oh my God a
revolution erupted
here and many got
drown on that river

we too have our
own struggles our
murky rivers and we
see the sameness of
all these-

the hardness of healing
the trauma that sticks
to the minds of children
who have become
revolutionaries too

forever disappointed
in this cycles of change
mass killing here and
there
and then a little moment
of peace
only to arrive at
another war again....
Another Way Of Looking At It

it is the body
that takes me
it is this body
that uses me
i am one helpless
soul
abused by my body
molested
by its taste
its tongue
its hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Year Another Mountain To Climb

another mountain to climb
from this valley where we sit for the meantime
under a tree where we get our drink
of the the mist
dew-like sustenance

it is another year on this cliff
we thought this is all there is

an edge
where there is no pushing anymore
another shadow comes
and becomes visible as a hill
then a peak
and then a tip of the high mountain
becomes another target
of this unending struggle to be
on top
of our worlds

Sisyphus is with us and
we look at those backlog of years
a flood of tears
a harrowing furrowed existence
broken selves bones reunited
flesh mending like torn pieces of
letters
the contents of which you prefer
to forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Another Year For Our Sweet Embrace.....

because of love
the years pass by without us noticing it. we are in a bus bound for a vacation
the villages that we pass by are not significant and we are not stopping by
we have not noticed the grasses and the flowers along the road
our talks are light, nothing much, to make those who hear us, take a look
windows are opened, and the winds keep coming, friendly and gentle
we always have things to do, and you always have something to cook
always, always thinking about the other, no winding within like a corkscrew
wine a little bitter goes with the moist cake from your lips to my tongue
eternity no longer matter because what we have is now all encompassing
beyond those fences are the greener pastures of our hope, and we leap.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anothner Stranger

to come home
and be not at home with the house
you are detached from the intimacy of a garden
the dog recognizes you still
but you have no intention to play with it
you are looking
for the right time
and it could be
not later

it is a kind of kiss
no longer of your liking
even the sound of your own feet
on the floor
has become
another stranger

RIC S. BASTASA
Answer And Reply

shall i hear again the song of the shepherd
do you remember
how he said: come and live with me my love?

and what was the reply?

i don't remember really

but i hear it again, echoed by tai chi

RIC S. BASTASA
Ant World
	hey make a bridge
out of their bodies
to cross a split

or sail on a leaf across
a river
to reach the other side of the division

when one falls and die
or even two or three

the ant world does not mind
they keep a vision and it must be done

RIC S. BASTASA
Anticipating Others' Schemes

in bed we finally find the chance
to know what is there
outside it rains what is there outside
the rain what is in it that makes the rain
we keep our silence
we have not found the word
to describe the calamity that we know
she is here
we do not invite her because she is a discordant voice
that we respect that we know shall hurt us
somehow we always make her prevail
we belong to her
but she does not belong to us anymore
she intends to stay
but we do not mind her anymore
she is a piece of paper and we do not intend
to write any letter
not even a slip of our tongues
she is rain herself and then we pretend
that we like getting wet
that we are stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anticipation

the skin is cleaned.

the shower goes on
the curtain closes in
and then it opens

she comes out
naked and fresh
with so much
anticipation

the idea trickles
like icedropp melting
sugar under the hot sun

the tongue
does not really speak
it rolls and finds some treasures
the mind stops thinking
hormones rise and emotions burst

love is spoken
lust begins

RIC S. BASTASA
Antigone And Myself

it is explained
why you followed the law of God

it was never easy
not to follow the law of man

the one who can inflict
the present pain and isolation

please understand
i am here doubting which is which

for certain the pain is here
but man says it is God inflicting

RIC S. BASTASA
Antipoem 01

roses are red
violets are blue
please flush the poem
when you are through

RIC S. BASTASA
Antipoem 02

he was stealing roses

to give to her mother

because it is her birthday

and the world says

the crime is still a crime

and like all other criminals

the boy must be tried

and be duly sentenced

pursuant to the evidence

(now change roses to

bread or fish or a cookie)

RIC S. BASTASA
Antipoem 03

when you do not understand
that is the time you say you like it
when you tried to understand and still could not understand what you try to really understand
that is the time you say there is a mystery and we have to be prepared to worship it, for something mysterious could be angels, could be God understanding is understanding like a mother
she comes to you to reveal things
though slowly and you must be patient like a child
understanding is loving like a father and you must be like a son waiting for the final advice

but you love more the things that you do not understand
things that mesmerize you and give you the sense of awe
which of course, is followed by the word, say it,

wonder. Wisdom does not begin here. Wisdom begins the moment you begin to quit smoking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Antipoem 04

Mary had a little lamb
The lamb turns out to be a ram
Mary has a little lamb

RIC S. BASTASA
Antipoem 05

so the opposite of a poem is not prose
but a joke
pathos and comedy
slapping each other
and then laughing together
the tragic and the magic
the loss and again
not the gain
the sacred fool
now the tool
i shall speak the language of the common man
and be the man of all men
drink with them and dance and cry with them
and then with angel’s wings
i shall take them back to heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
Antiquated Dialogues

hand in hand
these are some of the antiquated dialogues: i love you
and
i love you too,

take care always,
i will always love you

and she leaves
and he says: i will always wait for you
and she says: i shall return

take care of the flowers
cultivate the soil and water what turns
dry

and feed my kitty and put water
near the door

write me some letters
send me text messages or call me
at least once a day when you are not busy

time flies
the flowers die and kitty gets away
to another neighborhood with other cats

there are no messages
no letters

and there is nothing to wait for
the footsteps left on the shore
where they made
the promise
had long been washed away

RIC S. BASTASA
Antiquated Space For All Loneliness

can old place
bore the old man
talking to the moon
drinking his antique
glass with that
aged wine

it will always be
that way
even today for here
you are
with your shadow under
the city skies
neon lights with the
moon
grasping once more
what life really is.

what makes the difference?
your latest gadget
fills none of that old
place of vagueness
that antiquated space
for all loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
Anti-Thesis....

i wake up again
and the usual feeling is there
when everyone in the house
are still dreaming
in sleep

this is the unholy hour
of the arrival of words
but i must oblige
for i am nothing but
a servant of
syllables

this is a pond of darkness
and i am the only fish
here
communing with moss

this is the moment of my blooming
i am the flower
that blooms at dawn
and wilts again
at the first hour of your
morning

and so what you see
at your doorstep is another
untimely death

when the rest just open their eyes
when the first ray of the sun lands on the eyelash
there i am
back to bed
captured by the hands of dreams
lost in transition

and those who see me
shake their heads
thinking there is something wrong with this man
always running against time
against the sun
amidst the storm
and the flood
a bad sight of a rock
in the middle of the raging waters

but shall i worry then
when i am half-dead in bed
so silent like the sands
lost now in my man made stars
inside the secret
labyrinths of my own mind

RIC S. BASTASA
I HAVE been anxious for days
jumping and running
for no visible reason
like a flea
like a grasshopper
always
doing things
because
these actions
are nothing
but routine

a routinary
anxiety
just like
taking a bath
or brushing
my teeth

i worry
For the days to come
And I ask
what are these days?
why are these days coming to me?
like some worms
clinging eating
a rotten
piece of wood

What I am worrying about?

for god's sake
why don't you answer my phone?

where were you last night?
who was with you?
and why are you getting fat?
what food are you eating?
I am wrecked
Nerves entangled
like loose threads
like grasses
growing all over
a garden
like some weeds
in the wilderness
like some pieces
of junk
scattered on
the garage

like some dry leaves
on the part
blown by this wind
in all directions

And blood rising
My head swirls

My fingers tremble
my hands shaking

I could be hungry
have not eaten
Food for days

There is air
In my stomach and it is
accumulating a lot of
Emptiness
it is
Painful
gas building up
and i
will be exploding soon
inside
is a bubbling
hunger
a danger
of putrid air
and filling up
madness

Why I am such a worrier?
good question.

I am weakened
by so much of this bloating up
a pressure
of gas
putrid acrid
accumulations

I want to sleep
But my thoughts
Are crowded
like a busy public market
filled with pickpockets
and hawkers
and hawks
and owls
a night forest
dark and
howling
and

i am fed up with a lot of
quarrels
of bad blood

these worries
are like murderers
Killing my sleep

i am being stabbed
at my back
And I am
Always awakened
By nothing significant
the wounds of insignificance

a moss clinging to a
watered stone
is insignificant
it is always there

I worry for things to come
And they did not come
And the fear that
these things
That comes
that are coming
will choke
Me

Are not at all true
bad dreams.

My mouth is dry

Saliva is sucked
By my own
malicious tongue

My fingers are cold
The heat is
Eaten by my palms
hungry always hungry
for anything warm
for anything warm
that it will always eat

I look like a zombie
I walk like a zombie
I think like a zombie
I see like a zombie
i am talking like a zombie

I am anxiety.
i am some kind of hairs scattered throughout my
forehead and my
body of entangled hairs
unwoven into a face
of a scattered splintered man

Beware, do not imitate
the cold is too much
the splinters so many and so tiny
there will be no reconstruction

or a recovery that will take sometime.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anxiety 101

when you eat
not to fill your hunger
but to feed
time
to make it preoccupied
so that
it won't bother you for long
with its
boredom

when you drink
not to satisfy your thirst for water
but to please
your lips for what has been
missing

when you miss the alcoholic
breath
of life
the dance of life
in cold and damp
nights

when your arms embrace no one
when your hands
wish for the usual touch
when what you hear is the wind
that gushes on your
window panes
when you arrive home
and no one
greets you
when the only pet dog you have
dies
when the furniture
is accumulating dust from the
other side of
the street
when you dream
and nothing comes
true

RIC S. BASTASA
Anybody Home? Anybody There?

You sent emails
And there is no reply
You sent pics and
There is nobody
Acknowledging

You sent a lot
Of poems
And you
Keep on doing
These things
Repeatedly

For what
Crazy phenomenon
You can’t just
Simply stop

Missing breakfasts
Skipping snacks

Little sleep
No exercise

Canceled walks
Refused Parties

You are
Simply engaged

In nothing
But intellectual
Masturbation

Rubbing your
Brains against
The monitor
Self strangulation
Self beatings

Inflicting a
Punishment that
You do not deserve

That
you cannot
Explain yourself

Hey, hey
Is there anybody
There?
Is there
Anybody home?

Are you there?

Answer me
I am tired.

like one mashed potato
just mashed
uneaten
unliked
moldy

and will be thrown to the garbage can.

RIC S. BASTASA
Anything About Everything

actually there is no such
ing as anything that is
everything

a you for all of them
a me for all the you's
other there
is a little bit lost
and too unseen
and untouched

a great poem
is as concrete
as a pebble
staring to an eye

and an eye
scrutinizing the
lines of the palm
finding a map
where the
great treasure
of love
is buried
underneath.

RIC S. BASTASA
Apart.....

poetry
pornography
promises

ice cream
i-pad
Iligan

Pi
at 3.1416....... 

butterfly wings
storing winds

we both look
for the first day of the year

apart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Apiece

four sided die
no one dies here

cast
the die and the
die is finally
cast on the
die

decisions &
consequences of
cast dies

not my own
but the majority

the future of this
country not my own

perspective
nothing about a friend

or relative or self
or something in particular

dissolved self
in human solution

above all
humanity & integrity

succession
and handed bounty

continuity and respect
for pillars and
fences.
Apolitical

let those who refrain
from indulging in politics
thrive on their own
self chosen freedom
to be indifferent
let them thread their
own paths
of political loneliness
let their mouths be finally sealed
let them die
for words not spoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Appeasement

cooling the body
rekindling the fire of the mind
it is the water
that cannot stop this fire
this conflagration of the heart
this wreck
of the spirit
this lounging of the thoughts
like passengers
waiting for the bus

RIC S. BASTASA
Appeasing Our Shortcomings...

as i open the door
leaving the room where you are praying
you touch my butt
i caress your breasts
only for such short
time,
we are decorating disappointment
with such
teasing,
simply because we have done nothing
really
to please the flesh and
to appease
our shortcomings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Appendix

listen, you are but an
appendix to his intestine
up there
where he is enjoying his life
he only remembers you
when he aches.

RIC S. BASTASA
Appetizers For The Day

just a slice of green raw mango
to fill my thirst
a morsel of bread to satisfy hunger
a thin slice of onion
to invigorate the eye
red hot chili for my tongue
rosemary and thyme for my smell

finally a burp for the final sound.

RIC S. BASTASA
Applause Is Noise.

it is not about popularity.
this is not about it. It is about flying and
the love of flying.

in the middle of the air into the high skies.
there is no need of an applause.

so soar my friend. soar, soar. when you are up
there savor the feelings of those gods

and demigods.

if you think you are popular, as you really are,
it does not make me sad either.

what makes you happy is my happiness too.
keep going. soar high. transcend the barriers of fame.

jump over the fences of popularity. Get the high of
this traverses. The greatness of our achievements
lies in our silence.

applause is noise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Apple

red shiny apple
in your
throat, do you still breathe inside your heart?

red shiny apple
between my legs these friends of my thighs

i am a tree and you are that woman
craving for the red shiny apple
in my garden

i do not claim innocence for my wanton actions
before the snake and
my God

i will say i will always love you
bend over me woman and i will lay open my mouth
fill it with your tongue

pour in the drops of apple juice
to my cracking lips

water my garden and fill it with flowers from your hair

RIC S. BASTASA
Apprehension

before the rain
there was this gray cloud
it was that sad

it was before you cried
that sticks in my memory
the tweezers
those lines on the face
the twisting lips
the horror in the eyes

and then it rained
and the bridge collapsed
the waters rushed
bringing all the driftwood
and the boas.

RIC S. BASTASA
April Morn.....

DEFECATION
urination, it is just that
writing a poem

how did i see you
doing the same thing?

ah, you give me
another setting: the beach
ball and you trying to catch
it under the sun

the margarita
on an old table facing the
horizon
on an April morn....

RIC S. BASTASA
Aquarius

you weigh things
Aquarius
some things you think
always preponderate
to the truth
now even to something
criminal
you no longer go for
that which is beyond
reasonable doubt
there is no such thing
as truth
immutable
there are only
compromises in lies
you know it
inside
the convoluted past
spitting fires at you
like dragons
still alive
you close the door of the
cave
to an abracadabra that
you have invented
outside there is only pretense
pretense
you dress up
and walk away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aquila Non Capit Muscam

if indeed you are
an eagle,

why are you
catching flies?

RIC S. BASTASA
the agreement is that
when he likes you he shall
stand and clap and
bow at you

res ipsa loquitor

he lies there motionless
his face in the ceiling
his hands clasped then hidden
inside his pockets
and being so tired for the
day's endless struggle
he slept

RIC S. BASTASA
the compulsion to stay
and to keep on seeing and
to keep on bearing the
silence of what we bear
and see the way we select what
we must keep and bear
and see
we decide what must come
inside us and what must be
discarded this way we have
become more human and tonight
we sleep again on the same bed
saying we are
compatible on a common purpose
to preserve tradition
to keep things last which should
have perished if we dare not
decide at all

RIC S. BASTASA
i know that you know
that i know that we have
long known what we have
known and we know that
speaking about it
won't do any good and
so we know that we simply
have to keep what we know
knowing that in doing so
we can be at peace and
people are envious about
the harmony of
our well kept silence and
all these we know is what
they do not really
know

RIC S. BASTASA
For R.

your name is
analogous to
a tongue
in cheek, your favorite
figurative
language
for human relations

i do not have
an iota of
doubt over my past
stupidities

this kind that believes
right away
what every mouth
has to say

i guess i have
not yet learned the language
of the press

underneath the water
is a bed
of air

everything in this
planet of yours
float

nothing settles down
for the
truth

RIC S. BASTASA
Arabic Nights

you are the arabesque
into my arabic nights.

you dance and i open my eyes
trying to see where does love reside

in your belly? no, it is not there.
it could be inside you.

but you are closed as a door
of the palace where aladin lives

i am looking for love.
dance, dance for me.

it is dark here and you are the light.
the moon.

i am a snake. i need the apple.
let me bite you.

take me inside you.
you are my paradise.

you are my tree.
i have the apple inside my throat.

do not die yet.
i am still alive.

please. please.

please me i am not dead yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Arch

one longs
to be at the middle of
the arch
door,

arch hands falling
on the side of the
hips,

gaze maps out
the other leg of the
arch
door, and finds ultimately
the source
of restlessness

the air is the
suspect
why the room is
confused

it thinks that it is
a boat at sea and there is
a storm
that causes its
vertigo

the nauseous philosophy
of the lost
existentialist
embracing pain hoping to
find the window

a frame of reference
a space between
where the jump has to
be made
at last...
Are Our Sorrows More Potent Than Our Pleasures?

we are playing again
with our
yesterdays

we are like children
whose laughter
are flying to the
heavens

spills of the drops
of rain
mud in our cheeks
climbing those hills
lost in those tall
grasses
tumbling on the rocks
falling on those
rivers whose currents
take us to
lots of surprises

it confuses me why
the past looks more
enticing that the present

why those long dead
are more pleasing than
those we talk with

why are we touching the
bodies of the past?
why are they more
real?

those unfulfilled promises
keep on coming back
like close friends at
the guesthouse
are our sorrows more potent
than our pleasures? oh, these
empty moments
keep us in pleasurable pains
like this white kitten
clawing my mornings....

RIC S. BASTASA
Are They Still Here?

sometimes i question what
has been taught about souls

are they still here?
are they in heaven, and then on All Soul's Day
permitted to visit us
here in our homes?

is there a day when the souls of the dead
and the those who are still leaving
meet and converse
and evaluate what's up?

i like to think, there is still this connection.
Papa telling me what to do and
Mama still comforting me about
what has been done.

And all the souls of my ancestors
for once on this day of the souls
Guiding me towards what pleases them

and what pleases us all,
something that is good and beautiful
and yes, levelling

when the dead and the living are still one
inhabitants all
in God's everlasting grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are We Lost?

what they did to us
we want to deceive history
oppressed we tell them
cause, they are the masters,
effect, we are the slaves

the past dissolves like smoke
shaped like a mushroom in the sky
forget we do not just choose
curse, we seem to point, like a rocket
in the sky that the North has shot into space
beware! beware! that naked little girl ran
in the road of destruction,
screaming, now just a picture in the archives
of a long forgotten history,
she died, her name is written like an epitaph,

where are we? we like to forget
but the stigma of the tattoo still clings on our skin
not a rose, not a heart pierced by an arrow
with blood dripping in the stillness of it all,

we are hearts beating into an abyss of fear
hostage to ourselves, chased by our own shadows,
we pretend we can sleep in this prolonged darkness
we can't, haunted forever
we keep on running without an end
for a destination.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are We Still Living In The Past?

there was that time
when we talk, and i talk a lot
and i sense this fact that i am floating
like a raft the way the conversation goes like
a wide river and it has a force, a flow, and i do not notice that
i have no control anymore, got no paddle or stick, and my words have become
the wind from the east, moving towards a narrow way into the darkness, and on
the raft there is no one there, not even you, and i hear the laughter of no one, as
it was still i talking to no one but you who is not there too...and now i think
about it, and i ask the same question: are we still living in the past?

we are inside this room with yellow green curtains and glass windows outside the
rains are pouring heavily yet we hear nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Angry?

are you angry
because i have
always trusted
love?

do you hate
me
having more
red roses
that my
hands can
carry?

my love
you cannot
obstruct
love

neither can
you
bonsai it.

because love
is a tree
not a stone

a cloud not
a cliff

sun and not
the sea

because love
lies within my heart

you cannot
have enough of it
throughout
the skin of my body
Are You Happy Now?

war is nice to see
specially in movies
blood is red like a river
and bursts of fire from
rockets appear like
a 24th of July,
piles of dead bodies
become your works of
art and death becomes
another mighty poem
to recite.

you want war? have it
in your town, or better still
in the close sight of your
backyard.

face the enemy. Fight.
count the dead. if you
survive.

have a little music.
drink wine. smoke a bit.
hear the last scream of
the dying. stare at the eyes
of the dead.

are you happy now?

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Like God, Breathing Life With Your Words?

welcome ladies and gentlemen with poems written in your palms in our own humble beginnings we take the mission of creating and building words putting up images of full moons & stars on dark nights like these, the images move like a circle in our lives glistening without ends the words too become alive as we breathe them to ordinary things insignificantly tasteless to the tongues of people with mouths ungaping that we resuscitate so they may too live,

there is life in what we breathe we touch and motions begin in a sense, may God forgive us as we imitate Him, and i know, God loves poets like us,

we are not just few we are many we are holy and we shall flock like angels singing by His side
these poems, these songs
of love, of beauty,
of truth in the quest
of holiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Lost?

if and if
by any possibility you are lost,
please follow me
i need someone to explain to me
how one can be lost
despite
the map & directives handed to us
by the prophets
of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Ready For Solitude?

if you begin to dislike people
finding stains and dirt and freckles on the face of another
if you do not like to listen to what they want to say
if you find a list of mistakes and you say they ought not to be forgiven
if you like to be with yourself as though the world is one indifferent shape
if you begin to hate and keep things to yourself like you are an alien

then, you are not ready yet for solitude
you still suffer, you have embraced the loneliness
you are still a shadow hiding in darkness

in the alienation of the self
you have inflicted the cruelty upon humanity even if you are not there yet

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Sad?

You sound so sad,
Are you really
Sad?

Is your garden
Without any
Flower?

I am sad.

You doubt the sound
Of
My sadness?

What does
Sadness really
Sound

Like?

Does it sound like
A seagull’s journey
Along soundless
Stream on a

A dimming orange
Sunset, at the
Sea’s
Horizon

Homeward bound
Alone?

Is sadness in
True sadness
Sound at
All?

Is sadness not the
Maimed mouth
& death of the

Tongue?

The sound of my sadness
Is the sound of your
Sadness

You read me
In between
Some lines
In that imaginary
Phrase

Perhaps if you look for
Some flowers, or
Even a single flower
In-there
You may find it
If you really
Insists

But
You have to put
The flower
Yourself
Out-there

Sowing the seed
Of sensitivities

Who knows
If later, happiness
Grows
Like some unwanted
Weeds &

They would be many,
Not just one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You There? ....

sunlight embraces everything
outside, lakes and mountains, and
shores of the seas, and grass,

inside there is nothing, but darkness,
and coldness and sourness of existence,

the coldness of a stone, the darkness of
a soul, the sourness of feelings,

a window is closed, another door is banged,
someone gets outside of this beautiful house,

how is this golden cage? this silver box?
how would you refuse a goodness that too

imprisons you, away from yourself, from the
truth, with your lazy bones, contented cow

grazing on the lush of green fields, fish
still on the pond without exit and this

firefly inside a bottle, this gnat inside
a glass room, this bat upside down

some perspectives of outside and inside,
prison and freedom, who do you think you are?

kiddo, you are drawing the lines, inside out
there is this eternity of motion, who knows?

are you there?

RIC S. BASTASA
Are You Willing To Pay The Price?

two houses

two distant islands

on one island there are only two colors
black and white
nothing in between
no shades, no hues
no compromises of
blending
it is a hard, disciplined structure
where rocks are rocks
same shapes, same weight, same burdens

on the other hand the other island is
full of colors,
it is like law being let go
into freedom
call it a rainbow where pots of gold are found
where seemingly everything goes on and on
but with
responsibility
the trees grow leaves of different
colors and
striations and shapes
it is surprising
it happens
the rocks there move
like living heads of mushrooms
the rivers sometimes take their rest
freezing cold
and hard and then turning into mobile water again
singing

there is no bridge between this two
no connection
nothing familiar about each
but i live in both
i know the secret path
and if you want to know it
let me ask: are you willing to pay the price?

RIC S. BASTASA
Aren'T You A Little Bit Conceited?

aren't you
a little bit conceited
thinking
that i am thinking of you?

reading your mind?
i am not a gypsy

or a chinese fortune teller &
all for free

i am just this Pinoy
trying to be
a writer read by no one

but lucky me
perhaps for this day

are you waiting for
my next line?

wait a minute
i have to urinate

RIC S. BASTASA
Arf Arf Poetica...

do not read
do not study it
just ponder
go inside your body
recreate yourself
reinvent what is there
feel it, feel it,
write

take that dog's
sense of smell and then
find that place
called home.

RIC S. BASTASA
in considering the dangers of my position
i am giving you the first impression
that i am armed with the possible explanation
for these are the logic of my ammunition

but if you only delve more deeply about my situation
i am so helpless hiding only in the web of an exhortation.

RIC S. BASTASA
Around The Island

the trip around the island
takes us a day

it is dark and we are back
at this beach resort
lighted by shells and
torches

dinner is served
prawns, and crabs
and some lamb's meat
from the farm
and some slices of
pineapple
again, so sweet
to my tongue
crunchy to my teeth

beside you
the music from the sea
the breeze plays our songs
of silence
that only our eyes speak

RIC S. BASTASA
Around You Days Hold You In An Embrace

days hold you in an embrace
there is love
and affection in light
warmth
given by the sun
by the side of the window
like a red apple
on the tray

RIC S. BASTASA
Arrival Point...

and then i changed
expecting nothing from everything

marriage, career, friends,
fortune, everything everything
and that includes

, nothing, nothing,
and nothing

your wife is just a companion in the
house, not even a friend, and your house
is not for fun anymore, but where you
come because you sleep not even to eat,
you go to a fast food shop and spend time
there letting time pass like the
apps in your gadget...

your career is routine, boring and
maybe exhausting but not really exciting,
and your friends are all sunshine ones,
not there when it rains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Arriving At An Age

when one does not recognize
anymore: is this night or day?

the 24th of May or the
1st day of July

when the sound of the rain
feels like a whirling electric fan
in a cheap motel

when the sea breeze feels like
another useless trip away from home

when every place looks like the same
like a road stretching far away from your car

one day on a glaring light
and you feel like you are arriving at nowhere

and yet you cannot say the word
'shit!'

RIC S. BASTASA
Arriving At The Island... Alone

the boat takes you to the island
the only person there
is you,
the coconut trees rise to the sky
and the white sand spreads
there is a bed
and blanket
and pillow and the glass of wind

and you embrace the body of the sea
and they
who think that you better be left alone
as you like it
have long left everything there

and you put your body down
clothes on the white sands
skin on the tree
and bones under the rocky shorelines

you close your eyes
and begin to fly away
into the abyss of solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
Arriving Home

those that love
me come and
embrace me at
the doorsteps
these dogs of
mine, their tails
give delights
wagging their
barks are so
sweet to the ears
of a man arriving
home at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
Arriving There

at the end
we all fall and we

do not notice
how hard was it
how painful

when we arrive there
we gaze at ourselves with
all compassion

as deep as the dark color
of our sorrows

RIC S. BASTASA
Arrogance

he says he is not scared of hell
that burning flame, that fire and embers
eternal

he need not even wear a cloth of fire
since birth
till death he has always been
burning with fire
it is him, it is his nature, he is
himself flame and fire

RIC S. BASTASA
Arrogance And Conceit.....

listening to all of you
i finally choose not to talk

i travel inward in my blood
running inside my vessels

inside my heart i feel that
i am much better and then

i sit inside my brain still
thinking about so many things

those that i have not ever met
those that i have never for once thought of.

my hands are folded, my feet lotus
i float in the water above the mud.

RIC S. BASTASA
Arrogance

it is the i
which speaks

i know what
excellence is
i have my own
standards

i do not speak
that much
i lurk in the
comfort of the
dark
the beauty of
dusk

retreats are
wonders of my world
where i speak to
my own silence

and there they are
in those wide ways
all fools, all fools!

stupid, stupid!
worshiping their own
idols and gods!

RIC S. BASTASA
Ars Gratia Artis

i will say this
and i will say this
again to you

it is for art's sake
that i write
not for the rating
not for popularity

that is why i never
go on campaigning
that you read me

i do not advertise
no gimmicks
just plain writing
because i just feel
like doing it

words come and
i welcome them
they ask to be written
and so i have to
write them

art must be for art's sake
words are written
and poems are posted
because they are here.

RIC S. BASTASA
HOW CAN i tell you something that i do not want to tell you?
how can i let you hear my voice without me uttering a single syllable?
how can i tell you know what i feel and yet
depth within my heart, i wish you do not know a single pulse
of blood in my veins?
HOw can i be so loving to you, and yet show you that i do not care at all?
How can i be in so much pain and then
you do not feel the salt of my tears?
How can i say and yet say not?
How can i be myself and be without you on my side?
how can a snail be a snail without a leaf to stay upon?
HOw can i pretend to be a cloud and you
my leaf, my flower
as nothing but a land without a river?
how can i be so confused amidst the certainties of my life?
this luxury in poverty? This pain covered with white icing?
this sweetness deep within
the lumps of sorrow?
understand and not understand at the same time?
to go and to stay.
to live and yet die.

only through this.
this narrow door where an elephant
has entered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ars Poetica 2

like a turtle
to be faithful to
art

one must always
carry it
at its back

anywhere

it is not a burden
it is a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ars Poetica....

poetry is
sensitivity,

it is feeling
what we cannot see

it is this vast
darkness
where we pierce
with the light
in our
hearts,

it glows

it traverses
dimensions,
it links
one
to another

they are these roots
intertwining
with tendrils

poetry is
awareness
about what others
fail to know

it is
a flow of emotion
carried by the
trailers of
words,
and sound and scent
and smoke
and mist and
dew
it is the syllabication, of an imagination about what is real what is touched what is loved and what hurts the most.

poetry is a beating a pulse a timer, a heckle a tickle, a pause, a seizure, a cough, it is colds and flu and a viral infection

and at the same time it can be a leisurely walk at the park with your dog unleashed and jumping with too much happiness

it is the sound of raindrops tripping from the leaking roof dripping in our room to the wooden floor

it is the fluttering butterfly drinking nectar from flower to flower so gentle and so fragile
it is a wood drifting
in a river

a letting go
wherever it is
taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ars Poetica......

it is passion
without it it is nothing
it is feeling winding up
running looking for an
opening and then if contained
it bursts
it is an emoticon
sad, happy, exhilarated,
burning, wriggling
dancing, wild, making love,
resting after love,
smoking and gazing
finding a home finally
in the silence of
its fulfillment.

it is never propaganda.
ever an advertisement
not even an autobiography
everyone relates
and at the end begins to
imitate it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Art 1

from the whole
big and round like a pizza
you only pick a slice
savor and then
describe it

each spice exploding
inside your mouth
salt and pepper
and pineapple bits

RIC S. BASTASA
Art And Pornography

hand in hand
nudity and lust
smoke and dust
juice and cookies
our two faces in one body
this sofa and that garden
this floor and that grass
beer and water
bird and stone all together
make a correct picture
of the scene
where we are
right now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Art For Art's Sake

it is art for art's sake
nothing more nothing less
shy away from popularity
delve on the magnanimity of
your day to day task
delusion of grandeur
this art for art's sake
like scribbling for nothing
just scribbling and scribbling
like hearing and then writing
brown leaves fall upon
brown leaves on the ground
over the roots of trees
decay comes like everything
destined to be rotten
and then you sleep on some
cool shade
smelling the flavor of your
silent labor

art for art's sake
who needs your rating?

art for art's sake is like breathing
getting in your lungs
what is invisible to the eye
and yet so essential
the inevitable and the inextricable
the ineluctable the inexorable

it is like taking all the entrances
and then accepting
that there are no exits

RIC S. BASTASA
Art Of Forgetting

I have asked
so many questions

and all i gathered as
answers
are same as mine

i pretend i like them
and agreed with them

we go for a drink
from glass to glass
till dusk

our goal is the same

we must learn the
best art
of forgetting

RIC S. BASTASA
Art Perhaps As Cure For Madness

his loved one
has gone mad

the medicine prescribed
by the doctor
could not help

to appease her he plays
his violin

and then perhaps Mozart and
Beethoven....

RIC S. BASTASA
Art Without Use

Sometimes art
Has no hands

The poor couple
Who sat here days
Ago

Went to the other
Village because no one

Accommodated them
For a night's stay

And the famous artist
Did not bother except

Of course his way of
Depicting them

In his new bronze
Structure that now

Lies on display in the
Public park.

RIC S. BASTASA
Artistic Pursuits

the hands of days
are winds
bringing all dusts
to my hair

it is night
time
it is cold but
i wash my hair
to make
me colder

everything is getting
fresh
deep in the night
lots of
life
creep into my
soul

sleep is useless
i tell it
i do not need it

here i am
giving the sounds of silence
to this earth

here i am
writing letters
for those i do not
know
for those i have never
met

it is this joy of
saying
without knowing if
someone hears me

it is this automation
this self-generation this seeding
without having the interest to know
if something
grows from those unknown
unexplored grounds
tomorrow

this is a closed mouth
speaking to the earth
this is the sleepless soul
singing its songs
to the wilderness of
vast space

what i know
is that there is an end

a place
where you too
have never been

this is the joy
of our loneliness
we always do not know
about what happens next

that is the only
excitement left

someone,
someone is there

doing the same thing
ardently like one springtime
artistically....

RIC S. BASTASA
Arvisu Blues

20 years hence
i ask you for a word to describe my
box existence in a place named
arvisu

you obliged with ' you were serious looking then,
but deep inside, (a little pause) i felt
something was boiling' as though i were a kettle
and i was thinking of the live cat
which the Chinaman put there without any mercy
and where the screams of the cat became one beautiful
silence
which we always try to savor during our dinner times

upon a feast of glances
unspoken criticisms of our submissions
to religion

those were the times of my suppressed revolutions
when even a newspaper i dared not read since i only want
to be all: deaf, blind, mute and still be human
more like a monkey eating eagle in those forests of
davao,

nevertheless, i still do not have the courage to ask you
questions pertaining to your good self,
forget it, but i have doubts about my questions
but mind you, even before i ask them i already knew all the
answers

and now you have the right to call me a hypocrite but i was
then an artist in the making. Remember that dusty library we had where books
were left unread
where ideas about a revolt were kept a taboo

where we always had the idea that dogs must never bite
the hands of a master that feeds them jolibee
fried chicken everyday
i remember another hopeless fanatic who was with me cleaning the rest room
and i wrote that the tiles were whiter than
our souls,

i am stopping now, my words are hurting and i do not like it when i am more of a
knife than a bread which should have been delicious, soft, hot and ready for its
show with brewed coffee from batangas and a sunny side up egg from
novaliches.

till the next. take a vacation and by all means..marry.

RIC S. BASTASA
As A Drive The Car To The City

you will always be on my right
at the front seat
do not talk too much
i have had enough
you are my wife and will always
be at the front seat
do not take that position for granted
others are waiting
somewhere over the next block
for a hitch
of this marriage trip.

RIC S. BASTASA
As A God....

So here we are
birds perching upon a branch
without laurel leaves

it is raining and it is dark
we are all wet and
still singing

i look at you with your blue feathers
the other one is brownish with streaks of blood

sometimes (if you do not mind)
i really think that we
are all fools
in this darkness under the rain
still singing

(same old songs of sorrows
and sometimes we think we change the tune

come one fine morning
dressed in sea breeze

the joys of the jam
the bliss of the barn)

deep within as i fly away
on the other hand upon deeper thought)

to the other island on that big
old banyan tree

perhaps, in one of those twigs
i can be
a lesser (fool) but then the kids
without their mothers

may take me as
a god.

RIC S. BASTASA
As A Husband

as a husband
i go for the old ways
of my forefathers,

i keep this wound
and will not allow
my wife to
take a look,

unless i allow it.

when i married her,
i promised
her only the joys
of my company

i have no right
to pin her down
or hold her too
tightly to instill
the pain

of my own hands.
i will only share
my happiness,

sadness is not
welcome in the
nest of my
dreams with her.

are you afraid?

you must be.
I expect the
same from
you. Keep the
pain yourself.
Lick the pus
of your own
wounds.
Heal yourself.
Take the
privacy of your
suffering.

Unless you ask
me to touch you,
I will. I will always
be there.

Just ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
As A Matter Of Sustenance

as a matter of survival
the last bite of the chocolate
tongue need not be
delicious to the tongue.
you let it roll inside your
mouth, let the tongue relish
it a bit, till it melts there.
this is senselessly
numbing, such sweet
taste of life, and then
this emptiness of the
mouth, needing a fill
for a glassful of water.
this is senseless,
there is no more meaning
for the filling up and the
emptying, except the hands
that keep on running and
running meaningfully on
the keys, listening merely
to the sound of words,
and nothing more, there
is this senseless search
for an understanding this
logicality, this madness
for reason, the heart aches
in shame, unable to accept
the ease of an explanation.
let it be, let the eyes shed
tears, let the flesh tremble,
till darkness comes, till the
silence of the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Always Not Seriously Though

a child may ask for the moon
point to it and look at you

and you assure him
it will be given on a silver platter

but then we know
how is it to treat a child

as always
not seriously though

RIC S. BASTASA
As Always, Back Always To The Bad....

we promise, soon, tomorrow
we shall all be good, we

had made promises, soon,
we shall all be good, not

minding other people's business,
not pecking on weak people,

not concentrating only on
ourselves, closing doors and

watching the world go by,
motions of rain falling and

leaves blown away by strong
winds, or waves galloping on

shores into fractured sands,
where to? sometimes i make you

lost, as you track me down, i
change direction, i want to go

back to my innate goodness, but
where to? it is always going back

to bad, and this i tell truly
to myself, i am getting back

to bad, and sometimes i reflect
i am not that hundred percent

bad, for at least at this moment
i recognize this fact, i am back

to bad and it is the truth and
nothing but the truth, and here
i am satisfied: this goodness in
me and as i clap my hands alone

in this lonely activity: by all
means whatever happens, i still

know that innate goodness, knowing
that i have gone bad and telling

such truth to me, and to this
corner, these words.

i make a promise again, i tell
the truth, and tomorrow, i will

be good. I beat my chest with
my two fists.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Always.....

YOU may now be in
bulgaria
or in pennsylvania
or perhaps
in new york
or somewhere in russia

if you miss me
look at those stars
at night

i always twinkle for
you
in that vast silence
in that faraway
distance

RIC S. BASTASA
As Beautiful As It Does Not Exist.

When you are saying so many things
i only pretend that i listen.
i close my mind. I never let any sound in.
i close the door and the window.
something that you cannot see.
i live within like a rat in my own hole.

when you write a lot of things i look at the page.
yet i read nothing there.
i can always pretend again that i am reading for your
own sake, just to give you pleasure.
i still live within the hard cover of my book
i am a dot there.

dthis is what happens when love is gone.
dthis is what is really happening.
dno fact is changed. Nothing is added.
dbecause you speak too much.
dbecause you write a lot. and so you do not
even notice my presence. you do not feel me anymore.

i only give you what you have given me.
nothing is added, nothing is subtracted.
it is but fair. To each his own. Each world
within is as beautiful as it does not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Cold As The Skin Of The Snake...

fear makes us
feel the coldness of the skin
of the snake
but our own warmth
must make us
live life
to the full
despite the cold morning
despite
the indifferent nights
despite
the earth's
nauseous spins

RIC S. BASTASA
As Far As I Am Concerned

I was not born
yesterday, Let me tell you that i am aware
of what i am, where i am going, what i am after of.
I do not wish to speak
for i have nothing to say
what i know of
need not be spoken anymore
it need not be known
because my words are dying
but not looking for cure.
When you ask the questions
i have long pretended that
my answers are true.
They suit you and you leave
me happy thinking that
everything is alright with me
and all of us.
Now you doubt and you
want to ask some questions
those that you have long
wanted to ask
but to please you
i always use the same
answers until you stopped
coming and asking for more.
I have no use of speech
I have found reason only
in speaking to myself
as i begin to create a friend
that i alone can trust.
This is the imagined friend
who like me does not
find talk too necessary.
I used to talk once
like a child who loves you
but you did not bother
to mind each qualm for
thirst each complaint for
hunger.
I have nothing to say
I have no prayers.
Because as far as I am concerned
I have long considered
myself finished.
When you come again
You shall know a friend of mine.
This ghost.
This emptiness that will
never fill you.
This stranger without
a traveling bag.
This silence without
a signature.
This vacant lot without
a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Fine As Wine

hello baby, look at me
as fine as silk
do i look weak?

no baby, i am fine as wine
ah, there is something in my life
that is new
yet i shall not tell you

hello baby, life is fine as smooth as wine
in my throat flowing
hard and strong and foamy
sparkling
and gleaming

yes, baby, i am drunk
life is fine like your wine.

RIC S. BASTASA
As he boarded his  
Ghost Ship he wonders  
Where is this Ghost Ship  
Taking me?

He prays and asks God  
And God says  
Read your Ticket  
It says  
Heaven bound.

RIC S. BASTASA
As He Looks At The Painting

for several years
there is one figure in the painting
that he cannot really understand
it is the woman with a glass
she is somewhere
in the middle
surrounded by her friends
all men
it is very suggestive
of someone inside
and yet so detached from all of them

maybe she is someone so different
but how different
she answers 'i do not know'

but really i know, i know
but i will not tell her, she knows too i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
As He Peels The Ripe Mango

as he peels the ripe fruit
a mango
taking the skin
and slowly sipping the
sweet sap from
the pulp and
leaving the
hard part
of the seed

so shall God peel the
masks of our faces
slowly shall He take
the sweet smiles
the substances
of our memories
and pasts
leaving the
core of our soul

He skins us He buries us
and so shall we, all of us without exception, begin
to regrow a new beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
As He Was Reading His Poems

he stuttered on every line
like the way he stumbled in the days of his life
he had his nursery lines
as simple as his life has always been
an evening of poetry
with a group of friends and peers
there were so many cheers
and some hands clapping
expressions of ways of loving
and then there was this hug
and the green tea bag
and my eyes open for the purpose of his line
nothing complicated but divine
just a celebration of life
less the knife
seeing himself in the mirror
as a new human being so pure

RIC S. BASTASA
As Huge As A Cruise Ship

as huge as cruise ship sailing on the ocean
as wide and broad as your dreams
as high as the sky as bright as the sun
as mellow as the moon yellow
floating on the silver river
as silent as the dark night as tranquil as the dew
as calm as the pond as cool as the wind from the sea
as beautiful as sweetly scented as a rose
so shall my love be for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Am A Man

as i am a man
measure me not with that
divine stick

i do not wish
to be more than God
nor do i intend to be
lower than
that beast.

measure me
with the love that i can give you
the sorrows i have
the pains i have endured
the successes that i have
hidden from your eyes

measure me with the purity
of my intentions
the care with which i do my
actions
do not measure me
with your expectations
let me stand strong
on the pavement of
your cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Am Telling You My Friend

i sit here.
not surprised for those who
come uninvited and even for those
who know how to say
the word hello

not hurt for those who leave
without saying goodbye

like a revolving door
i see those who come and go

simply like the images of light
and shadows

like a rainbow that i see and
pointed with my finger
for the little brother to see
and then gone

like a dew like a gust of wind
just passing on the thin layer of
my skin

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Am Writing This

when i begin to write the words
i pause
for some regrets and i look
at another window
where life is
unfolding a scene
it is something lustful out there
but i watch closely
what is it in them that clicks
to a switch of my flesh
and then i write again
because outside it is colder
and the temperature is freezing
some muscles
and then i write again
closing another window
i go inside
and open another door
i find the words
but i stop right there
right here
the words that need only to
be spoken
they cannot be written.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Brush My Teeth

it is not the sensitive teeth  
it is the sensitivity of the soul  
listening to the rhythmic brushing  
the sound of too much repetition  
the cycles of up and down  
the softness of the gum  
the whitening of the dentin  
the gargle and the flushing  
inside the indifference of the  
faucet catching all that you give  
the bathroom that  
persists in its inanimate  
presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Grow Older

As i grow older
I realize that changes arrive
As they please.
There are no summonses
For the senses.
When they come
They come in a caravan, in hordes and hordes and when
Something is wrong
They go wrong
All the way
Anyway in any way.

Oh, they come in bunches
Like friends.
Sometimes, i like to reason out
And convince myself that the best
Way to survive is to hide.
To bury my head.

Oh, it does not help any cause.
I welcome the changes.
I shake each hand that says my name.
I drink with them and dance with
Each of them.
We get drunk and we do not even
Remember the exact hour
When we have fallen asleep.
We have no fixed hour
For waking up.

Each is free to go.
Each is free to come back.

This is life. No one blames anybody
Why he is lonely. The doors are open.
The windows open by themselves
Like prostitutes, the beds.

When someone closes
Like fingers,
The frown shouts like a
Mad woman.

As I grow older
I let things be and I don't really
Mind if anyone disagrees.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Look At Myself Carefully In The Mirror....

i see time
how convoluted it is
how deceiving like a magician
hiding time
inside the black box
and time
pretends to be a rabbit
or a bouquet of flowers
and excited as i am
to all these magic
i have forgotten
that i am a subject of
time and that
it knows
how to kill me slowly
without my knowing
and i look at time
closely
from my hair
to my belly
to the thickness of
my hands
and the losing of
my balance
what can i say then
about those
beers in my belly?
those furrows
on my forehead?
these silver hairs
these tight lipped
existence
words unsaid
a heart closing
as time shows itself
again
more real this time
like the black hooded
sickle-bearing
anonymity

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Slowly Tell The Stories

as i
slowly
tell the stories about you
when you were small
from where and when
and why you were born
tears
begin to fall down from your eyes
in disbelief
you come to the conclusion that you were an unwanted child.

but that is the truth and that is the key to a door that you must open.
so you may begin to understand the meaning of your life.

and now as you open the door, close it and try looking
what is really there.

there are scars along the pathways of your tears.
believe now in the reasons
unlock the love that hides inside your heart.
and then forgive them

begin from love. Oh, do not forget, there are other hundred possibilities for you to become whole again.

good luck.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Stand On The Side Of The Port Also Waving Goodbye

inside a ship
amidst the roaring sound of
a departure
so many hands are on line
waving

black smoke covers
my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Wait For For You

and then our minds met at a point
of convergence
i waited for you in a room without a number
a place without a name
a space where only us know what & how to fill

i am naked
you want the whole truth and so i am naked
in this room without a number, a place without a name
a space, where only our self-manifested emptiness know how & what to fill

when you arrive do not call my name
be so soft and gentle with your feet
do not even say your name as
i have also left my name somewhere else
and it is only i who knows it

i lose my identity
that is how i want to spend my short moment with you

i am naked
i only have my face, my skin and my flesh my bones my whole body
not my soul

do not knock
just push the door
it is left open throughout the nights of my waiting
i have intended it that way
so when you arrive and i am still asleep with my dreams and desires
of you
do not disturb the silence and sweetness of my sleep

just whisper your desire for love so sweet to my ears
touch the surfaces of my skin and caress with your soft fingers the smooth lines
of my face
place your head just beside my tight chest
for there you shall hear the sounds of all my desires
and then my love we begin the sharing of our hidden truths
we shall dance in our nakedness
we shall make love real
we shall open the shutters of this closed window
we let the slits of light from outside the night get inside us and put some
warmth on the empty pores of our skins

we bring light to the darkness of our lives
we put fire to those eyes that refuse to close and die

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Wait For You

The sky darkens
As clouds slowly
Make the rain
While I wait for you
On a cold wind

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Walk Away Taking Nothing

I SEE bodies making love

in privacy
the postures
try to draw
the lines between
love everlasting
and lust
disintegrating
into shattered pieces
that no one
later bothers
to pick

I see Love walking
out of the room
passing through
a door that
closes
gently
upon itself without
a key

I see you still sleeping
so innocent
and divine like
an angel
bedded in the soft feathers
of your wings

as i walk away
taking nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Was Leaving, They Are Just Arriving

you meet new people at
the airport today
when the plane just landed
and the door was opened

fresh faces from the north
moving south
still entertaining hopes
and ambitions how
to make more money
buy a few acres of land
build a new house
start a family

you are with a pack of
chosen clothes
and you are moving north
fed up
with hopes
promises without bones

you smile
and they see you
misinterpreting that gesture
as a welcome

deep within you
goodbye is truer
death levels everyone
and there is no point
anymore
at all these

you are the truth
they are the truths in the making
lies crawl like worms
towards that
empty mountain
top

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Was Talking About My Share Of The Sorrow

dear friend,

i am happy about you
here i am
writing a diary about my share of
sorrow
and as we chat
you go back to the past and
keeps on reminiscing about
the crush of your life,
as in forever...
i am happy about your illusions
since i have long destroyed mine
like i am as you see
a broken glass.

truly yours,
your ex-crush.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Watch, Undecidedly

my secret keeper
is an innocent fly.

trapped in a bottle
it struggles to be
free

as i watch still
undecided what to do
with it.

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Work With My Words As Medium

I want to be profound
Deep, deeper than what i
Can possible swim

But I have seen
The limitations
Of words as medium
Of my thoughts
How can I put the
Color red
Of an apple
In words

Or the scent
Of lavender
In syllables

Here you are
Reading me
And I do not want
To disappoint
You, my reader

I want to create
A world of sensations
For such is the
World of poetry

I have long wanted
You to feel
My sadness in
Letters
My loneliness
In a single
Letter

This
I want you to listen
To me
In the hush of the wind

In syllables

I want you to
Read my joys
In my phrases

Sometimes
I have given
You sentences
stanzas

I want you to
Be at home
With my words

But these are
Just words
And I must
Have failed
In bringing
Back to life

Your senses
Hopelessly
They have long
been dead

words, words, words,

And
Even this whole
Poem
Is not enough

Let me try
Again
On some
Coming
Illustrations

Birds falling
Their wings clipped

Leaves blown
Detached from
Their stems

Trees threatened
About the news
Of the coming storms

Oh I am so sorry
Your senses are sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
As I Write Some Poems....

this is one thing
i like

by writing poems
or whatever

notes of my daily
struggle or simply
haggling

with time and price
to pay

for my caprices and
whims

for my wants and
extra needs

i become too powerful
i can be what i want to be

i can talk to you
i can touch you again

i shake hands with
grief and then let it go
like a friend

and then i can make
myself invisible

from what is so real
and cruel

there is no blood
no bone

i am king and nothing.
RIC S. BASTASA
as i write this, she is with someone else,  
a friend, i do not really know. i do not dare ask.  
i do not like any answer. for what i have are just questions.

as i write this, the people around me are talking within themselves.  
half-naked. copying their books. talking loudly among themselves.

friends, yes they are friends, and they say they belong to one another.  
someone stands to take a look at me.  
as though i am a tree. another one stares at me. as though i am a bird.

i hear a phone ringing.  
it is not stopping. she says she is waiting outside the door.

i am not a tree. i am not a little bird.  
with her waiting for me, they looked at me,  
confused.

i do not dare tell them, i am a man  
and this is not about love. this is about  
my soul

she is my soulmate waiting. and she says  
she can wait that long. whatever. wherever. whenever.

then they start doing their own affairs.  
one reads back his book. the other goes back to his seat.  
and then they stopped talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
As It Is Pulled By A Barefooted Kid

one day a wall is destroyed
an empty space is built and made to look like
a big rectangular window
which makes a good view outside the house
where we all can take a look at every passer-by
which by all means give rise to all the adjectives
we can think of like

that one is a colorful woman dressing like a
koi and that child is wild like a coyote while following
his papa who is carrying a big sack of onions

and we, though silent as usual in the custom of
our old people who died long time ago
laughed secretly inside ourselves but

it is the verb of life that makes the window more
interesting to me like

the way a busy working man walks fast towards
a market to sell his bundles of chickens
the pitiful cries of a goat with a tie on its neck
as it is pulled by a barefooted kid
the reckless drivers of motor-cabs trying to make
the most profit that a holy Sunday can give him
on this market day.

RIC S. BASTASA
As It Remains To Be This Unwritten Bliss...

i took the steps
carried myself down
to the river and then
uphill and at the top
of this mountain i
sit upon a stone with
a covering of moss

the mist is cool and
the air is bearable
with its lightness ad
silence

this is the time to
confront what was done
looking back at those
muddy steps tracing each
towards the river
which sings an old song
for me to remember

mama is happier when
dead and so papa followed
that early curious perhaps
as to the wonders of the
other worlds for she never
endeavored to return even
in his dreams

we are here
living our own lives
always reinventing what
we are

here in this silence
what can we really share
with those who want
to leave us?
nothing, we always
say there is nothing
with us

except for those who
keep the beauty of
silence because despite
all that happened
there is still a stone
inside our hearts
which occupies weight
which we bear
surprisingly with all
gladness

it is something that
we cannot say
because it can never
be said.... there is
simply now word for
it

as it remains to be
this unwritten bliss....

RIC S. BASTASA
As My Love For God Is...

when you tell me
that there is no god
that all these
are just made up

i do not bother

my love for you brother
is greater than
this disagreement

i do not have to tell
you that God exists
that He loves me and
that I am happy

it would be creating
envy

remember my brother
i am weak and soft and gullible
but it does not really matter

my love for you is greater
than all these

so we drink to this disagreement
i toast for love
i drink for humanity
i go for independence and tolerance
and happy living

i am not sure myself
i have doubts
but my love for you is always
greater than all these

as my love for God is.
As Nothing Stops The Unusual, The Mundane, And The Most Ordinary.

in a room where there are so many people
where men smoke a lot
and drink a lot from glass to glass
where women talk and dance and gossip
from room to room

there is one who is segregated,
or who has segregated himself in the middle of that
ocean of
camouflages,

the gossip tells his name
the drink mentions his idiosyncrasy
from mouth to mouth
and that stabbing look

beyond this door the veranda lies like a naked woman
legs stretched ready for another
prostitution of thought

there is only one man who sees the sacrilege of this indulgence
half naked
he jumps and then as he makes his last scream
the world stops

and then the women gossip again talk a lot
and then the men drink more hard liquor

as nothing stops the unusual, the mundane, and the most ordinary...

RIC S. BASTASA
As Peace Finally Reigns...

it is getting dark
the flesh well used
shall soon take its
needed rest, the mind

tamed and put well
positioned inside the
skull has given up
into surrender what
lewd thoughts it had,
and the heart,

felt the goodness of
it all, not denied, not
suppressed, it got what
it really wanted,

soon this body steadies
as the strong temple of
my spirit, finding finally
the solution of this long
day's confusion: it is

all hormonal, and once
excreted what excesses are
there, peace finally
reigns.

RIC S. BASTASA
As She Rides Her Bike

as she rides her bike
everyday here in India
the lady with a brave heart
gives an inspiration to
a brazilian poet named
Aldo Krass.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Simple As Closing The Door And Opening Another One

don't you worry about what recently happened,
it is nothing much to be talked about,
no one wants to recall a sad subject matter,
but i want to tell you,
before she went away she stood up
opened a door and walked a little farther
about a meter away and she opened another
doors against too much light someone guided her
i saw that and then without looking back she dissolved like ice on the floor of sand

then we pretend we do not forget her
oh, we have other topics in our lives

love, for instance.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Slow As You Are Loving Me

Slowly I know
Slowly slowly
I know what
Slow is, how
Is it to be slow
To be very
Slow like
A snail, like
A turtle like
A feather
Falling in air,
Like an ice cube
Melting and
Water dripping
Like you, slowly
Touching me,
Slow as how
Slow as you can
Be slowly loving
Me, slowly killing
Me in this kind
Of love so slow in
Suspended animation

Squeeze me, fleece me, and eke me out,
Crumple me, disarrange me, scatter me
Crease me, fold me, scrunch, crinkle,
Corrugate me, crimp me, and furrow me, ripple & ruffle me;
Jumble me, mess me, I am in love with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Bird Meets The Worm

the law of instincts
reigns
and in hunger
no one is
always forgiving

the worm
cannot have
any reason
neither will the
bird
have any justification

the prey is there
the predator
does what needs
to be done

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Moon Begins Its Journey....

the fire that you
see is very much different
to the fire that you
touch with your
bare fingers,

the smell of the rose is
much different to the taste of
each petal,

the memory of you is far different
from the you that is now beside in bed

as the city begins to die,
as the moon begins its journey from sky to sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Pilot Sings His Mother's Song

I AM just wondering
why you have opted for less:

less quantity,
that makes insecure
my desired quality,

at first i care,
i only have to say what is best
and necessary
so as not to crowd
the space where
writers
gather and speak
for themselves
about time and matter and
suffer,

there is a feeling of
something that is about to be exhausted
like a candle
with its wick which had been
burning
day and night
without
rest like the heart which had been
beating
from the time we come out of the womb
till the time
that we will enter our
designated
tomb

i like to be a bomb
for now,
tight upon myself
and gaining
so much force
till the right time comes
and i
will explode

so much for that,
back to wonder, and back to you
you must have more
because there is more to
what is less
than you are

write what is in your heart
do no mind, do not mind
what word to choose
what ladder to step upon
what fall
what strips us all

i am writing what i do not
even hear

relying on feeling like a plane
in the middle of a thick cloud
an ocean of fog
relying only on a radar
as the pilot sings his
mother's song.

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Saying Goes

the best way to love
mothers
is to truly love
their daughters

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Seeds Grow Into Flowers

The insomniacs are here
in the deary fields of dreams
unbelieving

throwing words carelessly like wild seeds of
discontents
and without sleeping
they are all watching them grow

for the morning to see
and believe and perhaps be happy again

as the seeds grow into flowers
poems and stories too arrive in
abundance like a shower of petals
from the spring of trees

and when everything blooms
as though the place is somewhere in Tokyo
poems and stories are read and passed
from one bookworm to another

from one fiery imagination to another fairy tale
perhaps on the next night of our sweet ordeals
we shall find something we want to really
recover

we can sleep soundly again
dreaming words in their bright colors
tomorrow, yes, perhaps on another
tomorrow

in their sweet scents in their
good taste in such basketful of abundance
the words will always grow.

RIC S. BASTASA
As The Young Poets Put It

alone in his room
he closes the window
and the door
and lays confident
on the bed
with loneliness as
his mattress
for the coldest night
of his life

then things so rightfully
accepted without sighs

'it's ok' you say goodnight
to yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Though It Were My Only Son....

there is no such thing as an official poem.
there maybe familiar ones,
most acceptable ones with the pulitzers and nobels and whatevers
but there is only this personal poem that you compose
for no one, or for no other and sometimes not even for yourself
it is a journal, a landmark of your stay,
a feeling that you cannot forget, you record it,
it is only you who knows it well and fully
recognizes it when after a time, when you have forgotten,
it comes to you as a reminder
about someone, about something, about an event
that when you pass away and come back
in whatever form
it becomes a scent of someone, or something and then
you remember exactly
what it was, and then you say, this is the poem that i have once
composed
and i love it, and i remember,
it is my poem,
i have composed it for that reason
and i am proud of it
as though
it were my only son.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Though There Is Meaning

oftentimes
to make life as new
we make
beginnings

a fence here
a garden within
a new house
in the middle of
the land

and then the old
storms come
again

there is always
this instinct
for destruction

for which we must
be all
thankful

for soon we shall
begin anew
another fence there
a new garden here
another house to replace
the old broken one
in the middle of
the land

and so there is
nowhere
or no one
someone is always
here
something
makes the tick
in truth
just another
deception
for us to sow the
earth again
as though
there is meaning

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no such thing as done
everything is always unfinished

you think a bud dies, it does not
you think that the twig that you cut
remains cut

like a dead end of the road
that is always not the case

you think that the body of the man that we buried
is all that is,
that is not the real case

a story shall be borne it gives a bud and a twig another start
a poem is written it marks a new understanding

and the grain of sand becomes another planet
a drift wood becomes another one's dream of a bridge

it is not just the seed it is also the covering
not just the ring that you see but another one's marriage

a view can be immortalized in a painting
or even when the painting rots itself all colors cracking

there is always something that remains unsaid
it is
what is always unfinished

the one that we know but which we never uttered
the one we uttered but which we start to doubt and not really know

oh it is like a wheel of a bicycle
like the ring that you keep on wearing
like a hemisphere that you have traveled
over and over
as though you have known
it forever
As Time Fades Like An Evening.... Flower

four days in morbidity
and there is only one question there

what is life? in that dark box
you hear the time clicking and

you imagine a very beautiful flower
glowing petals of light

a green stalk soft as a meadow
some dew of coldness hanging on its lonely leaf

and then it wilts in your short gaze
and you are neither the sun or the moon

but a plain spectator
your eyes have no tears for it

there is only that unspoken loneliness
which has reached that tip of joy

you are silent and then you nod
as time fades like
an evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
As Usual......

as usual
this morning walk is done.
the acacia trees are not shaken.
the winds are sleepy.
the loser takes a walk
as though saying
life moves on.

as usual the bakery opens on time
an old man driving his green easy ride
becomes its first customer
for hot pan de sal.
Cesar whose wife abandoned him
years ago is talking to his loyal friend
about God and how He is obligated to save sinners.

the fat man ahead of me walks slowly
exerting all efforts to shed off
what is not wanted.

as usual the mass of the catholic church
starts at 5 in the morning
and a trickle of the faithful
take the communion.

as usual the sun shines at 6 o'clock
and joggers rest to finally take their way home.

as usual breakfast is served.
everything is usual.

as i am telling you, whatever happens,
life moves on as another entity

apart from us
the usual events still happen.

RIC S. BASTASA
As We Are

under the moon
we share a drink
some stories
we mend the past
we look for meteors
bursting and falling
for the future
as we are
we toast
we long for nothing at all
as we were
we become what we are
there are no regrets
life and love have always
been fair
life as beautiful as ever
love as true and forever
what more do we ask?
on the poverty of
our spirits.

RIC S. BASTASA
As We Bury A Great Woman

perhaps i shall tell more tales
about the greatness of this woman

imbued with firmness and
a self laden with the integrity of a queen

the eyes that speak more than what the hands
can hold
the stare that makes the bad guys
wear back their shirts and go back
to their usual work

the black umbrella and the
thick stockings
the long walks on the streets
the hauling of wood
the locking of the gates
when some have to come late

those important notes about
honesty
no cheating
the gerunds and the cognate objects
of her affection
the way she sees the potentials
in all of us
the manner by which she sends us
to the fronts of our own wars

for indeed she has and will always
be the woman for the other
now that she traverses another dimension
we should not watch her with sadness
for now she merely meets
her own greater destiny
not found here
not given by the emperors

goodbye
for what the earth has lost
surely is heaven's gain

i have given you the silence
of my victories.

RIC S. BASTASA
As We Close The Light

we bear upon us
a blanket of silence
not a talk
we listen to the chant
of the fan
the monotonous whisper
of the sea
the passing wind
hushes and we love this
kind of
submission: we are
embraced with
the stillness
of the earth

RIC S. BASTASA
As We Gather Again Like Heaps Of Leaves

we shall be
one heart
one hearth
of fire burning
heat and light
as offering
to our God.

RIC S. BASTASA
As We Grow Older

as we grow older
we give way to the new:

younger promising faces
we welcome them
and give them
a toast, a warm shake,
a sincere cheer

technologies that
we do not easily understand
yet we have to embrace
lest we be left out in the corner
of the mute and the blind
and the deaf

yet deep inside
our confused hearts
we still
keep our simple ways
our cherished loves and
human affections
our precious memories
of loves gone by
and loves forever
kept like gems
of gold and diamonds
inside our
treasure boxes

there are those
few that we do not compromise
something divine
inside our heart and mind
for without them
we are but leaves
blown easily
by a light wind
As We Talk

time goes so fast
as we talk my mind whirls
and ideas are sucked
and then buried
within my
dark bottoms

keep on talking
i am a barrel that is so empty
it will take you long to fill me up
and you see
i am never filled up with water
or stone
or even air, i am always empty
and i am emptying still
whatever i hold
inside my mouth
i keep on spitting
but you have no time noticing it
not even my pain
i know how to hide things even when
i was still so small
to the eyes of my mother
even when i was just
a corpuscle of blood to her vein
i already hide
my own emotions
as we talk i always
fly away
there is nothing here
that is worth keeping
you think i am listening
i give you that impression
you have my body
excuse me
i do not have any soul
anymore
As You Abstracted Her

sometimes
no eyes

incomplete
face

breasts are
erased

there are lips
but sealed

so many parts
missing

in a woman
named wife

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Fall From The Cliff

many hands
open
& wait & you
think
they open for
you

stupid!
save yourself
they have no
bodies
no minds of
their own

driving
the real world

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Feel The Pain At The Side Of Your Abdomen

i see what you are seeing, you are always telling me.
your fingers feel the pain. your eyes speak.
you take a little time. taking a look at the side of things.
you see some worms. a dead dog. a rat rotting on the road.
the rain has come for days. flood runs.
the sun comes. everything dries up.
the flowers wilt. this time you rise from your bed
to be alive for once.

you see ghosts. i see them too.
white ghosts floating on the window railings.
i call them clouds. outbursts of light.
the moon. and that stars.

denial. the images of denial come like some petals
of rain. red petals. orange leaves.

they come to you like naked children.
they grow to be men, naked men, these truths, they are like
the ten sculptures of david.

denial. you are talking of something else.
it is not pain. it is happiness. you like more of it.

yet the irony is, you are about to leave. the black car is waiting.
and they are ready with their dresses and flowers and prayers.

just as life has become beautiful
the end of the story comes. happy ending.

that is what you want. happy.

ending. sometimes, i feel so disgusted, why the young
useful and well-loved people always have to leave

there was no time enough to really meet them.
i am crying.
As You Fly With Your Wings

as you fly with your wings
now
meet the vastness of that space
where you are heading
alone again
because there is no other
reason
to stay
because there are no more
reasons

that which reason itself has given up
to be eaten
by the wind on this journey to nothingness

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Gaze

the stars
at peace with the moon
the darkness of the night
the vastness of space
in silence

as you gaze

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Go Back To The Paths Of Your Dreams

as you go back to the paths of your dreams
the grasses grow tall
on the bend somewhere

i depart as breath
to my labyrinths of regrets

if i find you
i must kiss you
if you like it still

if i don't i must find back my hands
so i can still feel

my heart still beats sounds
of life like a cicada at high noon

extreme heat but never burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Have Finally Accepted Yourself And Loved It Too....

the dignity of the lion
the bravery of the tiger
the meekness of the dove
the agility of the mouse
the silence of the cat
the swiftness of the eagle
the lightness of the butterfly
and so many others whose
goodness we have not so well
considered, because we are
so centered with our own,

choose the good part, disregard
the bad, take them, and then
learn extreme tolerance, and
finally you will love them all
as you have finally accepted
yourself and loved it too....

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Humiliate Yourself

you volunteer to shrink a little bit
like a rotten pumpkin to
let her know that you also know how to die
and find a way to reach her
in her own death.

you let go all that is fluid something that is liquid
you make these
turn to gas so you also have a way of telling her
that you also know how to disappear

she may close her eyes in anger because of you
she may like to abuse you and not talk to you as you gaze to find out
the reason why the stars are not out tonight
why there is not a single shining moon

you are so patient waiting like a fisherman with his bait
to catch a fish tonight
out there in the deep sea in desolation

you give her time to change and to understand your longing
for stars
your thirst for the light of the moon

it will be painful, you have humiliated yourself in all these
shrinking of your arms and hands
you become like a tiny dot in humility to the line of
bold letters and exclamation marks

you give up, you get out of the bed and stopped staring at the ceiling
you open the door of this cold room and you close it again
to leave her
still closing her eyes keeping her tears from falling.

it is over you say. it is over. it is too late. another door has been locked
and this time you do not wish anyone in.

a wise man sometimes likes to use
a period.
As You Know Great Poets Steal

do not copy,
steal,
and be too careful,
do not be caught

as you know
great poets
steal

when they were caught
they were already listed as great
and no one
believes
that they were thieves

perhaps only those kids who
stick to their beliefs that the emperor is
wearing no clothes at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Look Deep Into The Mirror

the mirror is the echo of the sound you make
inside yourself,
the voice that you utter when nobody watches you
when all of them left to their homes
and you are left alone
talking to yourself, the voice comes out
from your heart
speaking your name, your dreams
you hear the voice that you cannot see
calling you
and so you stand before the mirror
and try once more
to see the face of that voice
fair and square
it tells you who you really are
softer inside
hard on the outside
the exoskeleton that you have been making
breaks down
like flakes of mud drying
the warmth in your eyes is still there
the affection you want to give
the love you want to spread

they are all there
in your eyes
but you cannot help it
seeing something ugly

you have not spoken
the voice hides in the silence
walled by your teeth
your tongue swollen

this discomfort of not saying
anything as everyone you love

leaves the door still opening
to the cold outside
the wind hunting for some stars

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Promise Me

as you promise me
to write a poem
about winter
here in my warm country
i waited
for the coming of rain
at least to feel
what coldness means
when it is promised
to come
through the words
of your
winter poem

the sun is up in
our tropical skies
the snowstorm
still rages in my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
As you read these lines
Another toothpick
Is chewed by my teeth

Something is wrong
With my tongue and Teeth, how they compete
For recognition, the teeth
Claiming it chewed the Words the tongue claiming
It approved the taste,

I am listening how they Argued and quarreled,
And in the chaos I bit the Toothpick chewed it And spit it out,

How choppy have I Become, how some
Of my parts have been So disjoined, and how Have I become So disengaged, divided,
Like the tongue & Teeth, in their bickering.

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Sit In One Lousy Corner

seemingly
those who laugh
and commit an injustice in you
are invincible

as you sit in one lousy corner
as they ride in their fancy cars
you surrender
they win, they have all the money now,
they flaunt their wealth
party in their mansions
with their families: so many blessings
more grandchildren
more investments
a friend of power
all political allies
and hence you surrender as they have everything
and you have nothing

one day lightning strikes
they are all hit in one flash and the house burns all day
no one can go inside the high fence
and you the outsider simply look how things have changed
how the oppressors die
how injustice ends
how a new possibility flourishes like a flower on the sand
at noon

an old man asks if you are finally vindicated
if you like the way things flowed
if you like to take the flower on the sand to be kept in your palm

the way invincibility is finally destroyed
somehow creates a breathing space for your sick lungs
clogged with indifference and hatred

you have nothing and you walk away
you do not like everything here
and you do not need revenge
not even justice.

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Step Upon Me

step upon me
and you shall regret
for i am a snake
that bites

paralyzed you must
learn that point
you cannot speak
until the next morning

you see
ask how was it
when i first faced you
dove was i.

RIC S. BASTASA
As You Write....

as you write
you do not notice
that time
is slowly eating you
up

your eyes and
fingers
are left out

your brain burns
and there
is no one telling you
where water is

all the rooms of your heart
open
as morning breaks itself
upon this
feeling of rocks

RIC S. BASTASA
Asa Gikan Ang Kasilag?

Asa gikan ang kasilag?
Asa gikan ang kasuko?
Asa gikan ang limbong?
Asa gikan ang kabakakon?

Gikan ka na sila sa tawo.
Milayat kana sa iyang kasing-kasing
Miambak gikan sa iyang baba
Milayas gikan sa iyang mga kamot
Milalin gikan sa iyang mga tiil.

Kangil-ad gayod nga hunahunaon.

Ug ang tawo manumangil sa dagat
Sa dihang iyang gilumsan ang tawo.
Ug iyang itugpo ang basol ngadto sa yuta
Sa dihang kini milinog ug mikaon sa daghang
Mga bata.
Apil na ang adlaw, ang mga langit,
Ang mga bitoon, ug bulan, ug lakip
Na ang kawanangan. Kay kuno
Sila ang kasilag, sila ang limbong.
Sila ang  ang maluibon.

Kay sa pagkangil-ad sa tawo
Natingala sila ngano nga wa pa
Nila gipagawas ang ilang tinagoang kaayo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Asbestos Lungs...

never did i think in my whole
life that i finally found this little niche
where all my molds
could grow admiring its leafless
state, its tiny black spores
infecting surfaces of my books
taking my thoughts
as food needed for
its new colonies
flourishing with a dose
of humanity, this humidity
our own human body...

dead wood, scarred hearts,
asbestos lungs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ash Silence

we were three
on an afternoon edge
against
a sunset

tangerines turning flames
soon fade into
darkness

soon of ripeness
the lone fruit falls
the ground mourns
grandeur burns
ash silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
what makes a promising poet
is the one who comes to you
telling you that he wants to write a novel
in some other exciting ways
or simply one who lightly quips
that he likes to play with words
like some tumble weeds
and bedbugs tugging a bundle
of fecal matter

i suppose one that lacks the seriousness
to write the most important matter of life

and he was clear in saying that the one
who comes to him telling him that he wants to be a poet
because he has important stories to confess
ideas to express

does not really become a poet

and i am really, one of them
because i do not really want to be one of them
there is simply no use
at the age of ten, i already wrote my first line:

please leave your slippers before entering the door

RIC S. BASTASA
Ashly

he plays an Eye of the Beholder
theory in his work
such as poetry,

and they say he has become
too Aloof
his style they mean

when someone comes
and knocks
on his door

he transforms into
a rage that they
never imagine

something in him now
wants to be
alone

someone sick and
dying and then they
understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Asinus Ad Lyram

isn't it awkward
that an asshole
is playing the lyre?

or the turtle again
into the rat race?

or the fish vendor
into poetry?

unless there is a miracle
then let the mute sing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ask A Poet...

one time i
used the word adamant
and the guy next to me says
he has never used it

and i tell him even if you did
not use it
or do not even understand it
at one time
we all had been adamant

despite being burned
or even charred or even thrown as
ashes in the river of life
we never cease with that desire
to live- -

ask a poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ask Marcelino If He Still Remembers

when he was yet four years
and Maya was yet five on this very bed

where Maya just woke up one morning,
he kissed her.

he stole a kiss from her lips and from his
short pants, that of a child, loose and transparent

i have seen how hard his thing was
to my disbelief arising as it was from a very young boy

with milk on its tongue. And Maya too liked it.
There was no anger in her face.

Freud must be right. One cannot take for granted
the tick that sticks on the eggs of men
inflamming them.

One cannot take for granted the lust of the past.
They still haunt. They still confuse. They can still make us crazy.

Look under your difference is just the lush of the black hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ask Me

ask me what i wish for in my life

ask me what i do everyday

i will have lots of answers, my wish to be with you at the end
as she once wrote it, was a lie, my wish to hold your hand when
we meet again, as she once confessed was also a lie,
my wish is a lie, i will tell you now, my wish to love you forever,
still a lie, ask me then what is it that is true?
it is only me that is true, from the very beginning of my birth
it is only me
that is true, loving myself, working out to love myself first, so that
i may love you as my first wish, then you must ask me what i do
everyday,
office work, 7: 30 to 11: 30, back to office work, 1: 30 to 5: 00
it is not me there,
we talk, it is not me there in that conversation,
it is all work, it is all this obligations to my earth,
i owe my birth,
but i go back in my hole, this home, one day, and everyday,
face the computer, plant my feet on the floor, glue my bottoms
on the chair, bind my finger on every letter of the keyboard
where i heave some sighs,
hurl my words, run the lines that never stop, and mimic some great
men and women,
i sit all night shunning sleep, i write, ask me what is happening,

i am making myself a self, now look at me carefully,
i may be true at least when i begin writing
the first word in this
poem,

ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ask Not

Ask not a question
Of not to love and be loved
All over again

And let no widow & widower
Tell a white
Lie.

Love unceasingly loves and will not
Recognize bad endings

Love is never meant to be sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Asking

cold air
devastated
all dew evaporated
into the evening

the moon comes
like a wanderer
on such a lonely hour

i bought new blue shoes
and i ask myself
where i am going?

RIC S. BASTASA
Asking Cynthia...

on the blank pages
i write nothing
on the wall i write
nothing
i only speak and
then leave
when i arrive here
i carry nothing and
thus give you nothing
when the hour comes
for departure
i travel light
as light as air passing
by your window
i take nothing too
for

empty handed i come
and empty handed shall i go

did you say that too
cynth?

RIC S. BASTASA
Asking For Forgiveness

When genuine love is lost and you want to regain
What was original
You may execute an affidavit of loss like
Your love is a certificate of title

Show it to her in a verified and subscribed manner
She may take you as is
On another kind of certified true copy
Of love,

As though nothing is lost as though nothing treacherous
Happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Asking, Where She Is Right Now.

at the airport
there was this old woman
who in her eighties
gave herself an
opportunity to travel
alone

de she was trying to book
her trip to iceland where
she will be met by
some old friends who told
her that travel is
advisable
considering her situation

her husband who had
Alzheimer just died a month
ago and
buried (or was there a cremation
i forgot)

she could not book her
flight as it was already full
and she called for the
attendant needing a wheel chair
as she gazes on her cellphone
where i too could hear her son calling

asking, where she is right now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Asleep In A Boat On A Very Calm Sea

This soul is asleep
Aboard a boat
On a very calm sea
Dreaming

Tomorrow
This soul shall be awake
In another port
On another welcome
Strange perhaps
But inevitable

RIC S. BASTASA
Assorted Sounds Of Existence...

you must have heard the cymbals
and the sounds of the broken glasses
the rolling coins on the floor
the snap of the guitar string
a tap on the wall
someone makes the signals
a pebble on the glass window
the wings of the fireflies
tired of the lights

eclectic, all sorts,
everything, what do you really love to hear?

RIC S. BASTASA
Assume

assume that things always
wait for you with all stability
these inanimates
if you think clearly has
a lesson for us to tell:

the table no matter
how tired still stands
on its four legs

the chair no matter
how problematic
its life is
still manages to
hold your bottom

the bed no matter
what happens
even if it has some
problems taking
its much needed sleep
still accommodates
your tired body and
makes itself available
for you and your
little darlings

the windows no matter
what the weather is
still clings to the walls
it closes when it rains
and opens when it
gets too hot

the door opens and
closes when someone
from your family arrives
and departs to some
places
they do not ask questions
they perform their duties
and they never complain
until they are finally broken
and then you throw them
away or replace them

i suppose they are more
stable and uncomplaining.

why can't we be like them
less our capacity for feeling?

RIC S. BASTASA
Assurances For 2013

Even if you
are lost and feeling
so lonely

A stranger in her
paradise
a man without any
name

She cannot anymore
remember

Even if you cease
The world still keeps
on turning

She continues living
life without you

So don't feel that bad
Life goes on
Like nothing ever happened
before
Like nobody's hurt
even once

Don't let her say any
word
It won't help

Lay your soul upon that
bed
that you beforehand
bought
for yourself

Hear the words from your
heart
What the wind whispers
tonight
is true

RIC S. BASTASA
Assurances To A Friend In Need...

i was never sad
but i had all your sadness
at hand

i could have chosen not to be anxious
but i receive all the anxieties you have
as though they are all mine

i will not be lost but i must be with you
into your chosen uncertainty
for how can i let you be
in early death?

i was born strong and i remain to be
for i have learned a lot
from what i had years and years back
when i was left alone
to tend for myself
with what i do not really have

so this is life, so this is my happiness
to take your burden as mine
to forget myself, to join you in your misery
to cry with you,

i am confident. I can take you out from there.
I am wise. I assume the best that i have.

i will follow you to the end of your stupidities.
I will not talk, but as soon as we reach there,
i will have my hands ready.

I know my way back home. And i shall lead you there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Assuring The One You Love

i heard it all when she said that she is pretty useless

in a metaphor she carries me to the spot where a tree stands without leaves without roots and she asks me what shall be the use of this tree? the sun she says has given up hope and the moon comes only to comfort it with silence some birds out of civility chirp as though saying your branches are good stop-overs for our journey

i do not wish to argue with her and i always keep on telling her that my love are leaves of trees, roots, sun, moon, safe havens for travelers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Astray

Forgetting the feeling
Of barefoot
And bare
Hands
She ventures
On thick face and
Lips that doublespeak

She’s gone out
Her own fence.

she will be wild at
first

then she will be
painful

RIC S. BASTASA
Astronauts

couples on the verge of divorce
have become astronauts because they always say they need
space.
it matters, and matter is that
which occupies space and has weight.
i need space. i am gaining weight.
i am standing on a cliff, on the verge of an abyss
i am not afraid
i want to fall, because i am an astronaut too needing
space.
i miss the fun at the opening of your beehive.
sort of your art boutique
i did not forget it.
i need space.
i need  badly need more space.

tomorrow morning you will ask me
why did you write a sad poem last night?
and i too, now, needed more space
to lie,
i will ask you,
which one?

did i?
i cannot remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Astronauts Must We Be

astronauts must we always be
the moment something goes wrong
with a kiss
that is as cold as frozen beef
we tell in a dramatic
manner:

' i need space, my dear'

RIC S. BASTASA
At 4 A.M.

time is as cold
as dark as the evening
when you left me

at 4 a.m. i feel like
a stone,

hard, cold,
numb, and so
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
At 12:30, After Midnight

midnight is another
demanding master as you wake up
opening the window
where the skies have no stars

the night is dark and without
the twinkles of even faraway glimpses
at you who is in deep thinking
as to what is it that bothers you
and yet despite the tinkering of your
silver past
nothing appears as marks for your to
really regret and remember

you are left with nothing to do to appease
this troubled self
there is nothing to see or feel
you are empty, and numb, and someone is soundly sleeping
in bed with you but then you are not really there

when love is finally gone, what reason is left to
make you stay?
you ask the past to make the justifications.
it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
At 35

at 35 you think you are a learned man
you listen to what they say
and then you can anticipate what they gonna say next
you get bored with every word
there is no more suspense
there is this plateau
this plain
that holds you like you are owned by it
you struggle to be free from this ennui
this monotonous sound
of the sea
this diaphanous cries of the frogs
the lulling sound of the rain
the bursting of light that comes every morning
from the window
soundlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
At 4: 19 In The Morning

the mosquitoes are already full
and bound to rest and reproduce their hundred eggs

i wake up. there is something to say.
there are lots of things to do.
i am having a hard time to decide
what 's first, what's next,
then i write this one. this one is different.
it is about a question. it does not demand
an answer though. it is about 'why i am always doing this? '

why i am hooked
to sit down and write again
those that do not really point to a direction
this scatters me like dust
as i try to gather dust again

the fingers run again. some words keep coming.
i wonder. Do these words have meaning at all?
keep going, the words say, keep going.
we will tell you as soon as we arrive there.

it may be about nothing at all. just keep going.
carry us. we will tell you is the catch.
keep going. just keep going. who knows

there may be something out there.

RIC S. BASTASA
At 4: 25 In The Morning, About True Love

you are curious about true love
and let me tell you about my love for her

twas true, yes it was,
too much moss in the stone
the river wants to
remove all the green in there
sad to say
it failed.

the stone is still strong.
and the moss too green to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
At 48

at 48 time eats what we have grown
they say
there is no turning back
no regrowing
something in us is irreversible
no way to change
no way to repair
and just be another
new cell

what we have like everything that starts
young and solid and firm
wilts, melts, evaporates, loosens

there are wrinkles
so many deaths no resurrections

at 48 the mitochondria burn itself
to death
there are no more fuels
they all speak of an inevitable end

somehow i am not convinced
there is a way
something not yet known by us

call me old fashioned but i still believe
in the power of persistence
there is still an insistence of the miraculous

positivity knows how to wait
in a world that wrinkles, my lips still curls into a smile

RIC S. BASTASA
At 52

with all my shortcomings
what can i be when i am 52?

will my wife leave me?
will my paramour stick with me even if i have no job anymore?

i am supposed to have a date tonight
with a very young woman at her prime subliminal urge
somewhere in my favorite motel,

but i am having doubts really
about fate

about my fear when i reach 52 when finally i become
a ruin of myself

betrayed, lost and
alone...

ok, i will try another option.
i will focus myself in school.

RIC S. BASTASA
At 55

she sleeps with the
tv on
at 6 o'clock in the morning
in the kitchen the
breakfast is
cold

he walks upstairs
waiting for the sunrise
sparrows are busy
feeding the fledgelings

he sits on a chair
by the veranda overlooking
the sea

there alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
At 55...

eyery married at a late age,
she was then 35 and he was
then 40,

ea friend of hers said
that the marriage is doomed
she later died
but they offered her white flowers
to break the curse

his mother did not want her for him
she said she cannot be a good wife
she knew she had a history
of existential tonsillitis
whatever that means
he did not ask and she did not elaborate

their marriage sailed on
like Titanic, but unlike it, it did not sink
there is no boasting somehow
that this can be unsinkable
(for no one knows
what is suggested on the
lines of their palms)

then, just like rivers, and droughts
waters evaporate, rivers become ordinary dry beds
for stones

they have something to prove
their marriage must last
the lust is gone
their skins loosen
their teeth fell
their bones clang
their feet shaky

they decided that they can just be best friends for the meantime
till death tear them both apart.
At 60

there is nothing to keep
for nothing shall last
and so i am finally giving away
anything
that makes me remember you

i am not the detractor
i have never betrayed true love
i was faithful all the way before you
passed away
but i have never told you that
on your stereo-typed logic

RIC S. BASTASA
At 7: 59 In The Morning

my coffee has gone cold
the grease on the fish has frozen again
the jasmine rice has lost its scent and gluten
and the lettuce gave away its crispiness

all because i am writing poems again
forgetting time forgetting the table
where breakfast has been served

losing and forgetting and finding myself
to the bosom of God

RIC S. BASTASA
At A Certain Distance

at a certain distance
when you begin to talk
and i begin to be so silent
you become an alien
to a certain point a monster
and i shrink into a very tiny
shrimp waiting for my
big whale to swallow me whole.

RIC S. BASTASA
At A Certain Point (For The Wife Who Drove Her Husband Away)

at a certain point
you give up on him
and you convince
yourself that regret
is not your friend
neither your enemy

you finally utter the
curse
that

'may he
crawl on earth
forever like a
snake'

'may his
bad luck embrace
him till the end'

i look around
the living room of
your house and there
just below the ceiling
i still see his picture
beside yours

i guess you are compelled
to saying a different thing
because you still love him
despite.

you tell him never to step
on the backyard of the house
ever,
but your heart says another.
you want him back to your arms.
he leaves without any trace.

RIC S. BASTASA
At A Certain Point In Your Life

you go around
your room
and then to the kitchen

you look carefully
on each object
that you see

the rexona deodorant,
the knife,
the garlic and the onions
some rice grains
on the sink

you look at them
and they are all messy
you even think
the deodorant's place
is not in the kitchen

there are wrong
placements and you
want them changed
by you
you want something
proper
things in their places

you simply look
at each of them
and they are all alive
talking to you

they know
you do not have the time anymore
and they are so sorry for you
saying
goodbye
At A Certain Point Of The Day

there will be no questions
about cold mornings

we accept coldness as a way of life
justifying it with how our parents
decided their own lives,

days are split like wood ready for the fire
wood eating the flames
flames reaching for the blueness of skies
skies dissipating heat and chaos
and chaos disappears
and what you see is another clear
happy day
without the marks of
of hate & anger

at a certain day
there will be no words to be uttered
accepting events as they are
as though they too
have their own
lives....

RIC S. BASTASA
At A Loss On What To Say

cumbersome words
holding nothing but the emptiness
of air

molecules unseen moving
in random directions
shall i identify myself with
just one

and claim that i am lost
in such space of
invisible ions

i am always at a loss
what shall i say?
about these feelings
unrequited

i want to touch your lips
my hands are bound
i want to say i feel love
my tongue is tied

like a sun i tower above you
so helpless
i fade in the dark
there are no stars in the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
At A Reunion Party....

to keep the distance
we shy away from saying anything
deep within
we have so many things to say
but we are afraid

when we gather
just like last night
we were too careful
all the words seem right
the way they were used and spoken

nothing seems broken
not the sound of the plate that
fell on the floor
or the glass that spilled water on
the table
how the mantel got wet
and how each tried to clean the mess

but the fact is that
everyone is suspicious
someone is going to be destroyed
at the next moment

we hold our glasses
ready with our toasts
for good health
somehow our eyes are looking at
a different direction
vigilant and
always ready

someone is going to be destroyed tonight
and everyone sees to it that it should be the other.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Any Rate

at any rate
what does it really matter
if she knows you
granting that to be true?

does the riddle of the Sphinx
ring true?
can't you be Phoenix for once
and rise
from the ashes
after some centuries?

just be yourself
the truth is
you are more beautiful when you
wear your true face
when i speak your true name

(from the four or so
many names you have
invented for yourself
so many selves
like a gorgon's head)

will it not be the sweetest?
i mean, your real name.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Anytime....

in a room full of
dignified people
all the angry eyes
focus at what i just did.

i left because there is
no more place for me
there

the hypocrisy of the mob
has become
intolerable

after all
real supermen can
fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
At Caluya.....

seeing you
in a state
of utter
depression is
not an easy
task for me

i know you
are inside that
box and
you do not know
anymore
how to escape
and what to do
with all yourself
alone in
there

we are outside
we are many
and we talk a lot
sometimes what we
talk about
is a lot of nonsense

but this keeps us
all outside that
room
of asphyxiation

i dream of a key
but i cannot find the
door
i know what a key
needs

it needs the lock
but we have one problem
though
like you we cannot
find that door
where you are hiding

and inside the room
all the monsters are there
you scream
we cannot hear you

here we are
in this floating cottage
in the middle of the sea

there is a tall mountain
over there and the
giant statue of Christ with
arms stretched to the
sky
is standing

we see it all
what we do next is simply
unpredictable.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Cendet's

it is early morning
the usual sunshine landing on the violets
then spreading its thin fingers on the tiny leaves
and soon enough a white butterfly hovers
upon its softness
soundless in the air

what beauty is there more than
what i have recently seen than
a uniformed security guard
calling his stray cats for the feeding
of left-over fish

later the cats lick his shiny shoe
and sit beside him
aS friendship resumes from hair to skin

RIC S. BASTASA
At Dawnbreak

i open the windows on the rear
pale lights from the eastern side of the window pane enter

i stretch my arms and hands
rub my eyes like sands
the cock has crowed
the church bells toll, we bowed

it is the paleness of light, the color of sadness
landing slowly like a tiny wind in my emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Eden

always
there is always
morning sun in you
earlier in dusk
i wait for you as i begin
to open my
windows
and unlock my doors
letting you in
my bed of
mess

how can i satisfy
myself on you?

you are the forbidden fruit
of my Eden
and you are so sweet
and i must not lie
i haven't tasted you yet

and perhaps
somehow
i should have been better
if i were
that snake

RIC S. BASTASA
At Fb

GOOGLE, google
see the faces of those that you remember
then
this is what you can at least do
shed some tears
a pool of tears
and let all the characters of your life
swim there
for long
let them tell the story of salt
and the previous dryness
that killed a rose
which made the bee mourn
that made
another butterfly flutter
in another garden
owned by
that self-made oligarch
applauded
by the wasps
and smacked by the
worms.

RIC S. BASTASA
At First I Did Not Believe Her

unless you hear the sound
of the footsteps of the ant
pulling a grain of rice
below your feet
as you swallow the
chunk of tuna in
your mouth

unless you feel the corpuscles
of white blood bumping with
the red blood cells inside
the veins in your
heart

unless you know how to
wait for the turtle
to finish its trip from
one river to another

unless you have the time
counting the needles of rain
falling on your rooftop

unless you know how to wait
for another rainbow to appear
between the mango and
coconut tree

unless you know how to embrace
and hug sweetly another
insomniac night

you will never reach the place where
your secret dreams are buried

covered by the diamond sands
and guarded by angels with hair

made of gold. There you shall have
your final rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
At First There Was Only The Truth

at first there was only the truth
it was born
it did not know anything about lies
and being pure
and unrelated yet to anyone except to mother
the truth remains to be the truth
until many things happened
on its life,

father lies at him
at first he is confused
and brothers expect him to be this way and that way
like what his sisters is telling him
from time to time

truth wants to remain true
because there is joy to its nature
but nature too dislikes it
and then it inflicts pain
to it

at first there was the pinch
it increased to slaps
and then the mauling began
there were series of intimidation
sometimes they use the carrot
sometimes the stick
truth was confused until it gets of age
and knows the mechanisms
of defenses

of age it knows right and wrong
of course, it knows what is true and what is not
it is so easy to detect that
even on asymptomatic situations

but this world are made of rules
and liars who triumph hold the book, the law, the rules of their own games
and truth too just like you wants to survive
and so finally it knows how to wear different colors
shades, clothes, sneakers, 
masks,

it knows about the fox
and the wiles of the snakes

and true to itself
it becomes a wise creature

joins the rat race
goes for a kill
even on acrobatics
knows when to change
its face
to hide its voice
and the exact time
to bite
and lick.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Home With Emptiness

a door's way
to welcome you is
simply to open
itself

the living room
outdoes it
by letting you
breathe
more space

the common
denominator of all these
forms of
entertainment
is still
the capacity
to contain and be at
home with
emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
At Home With My Writing

how often do i have to read
other people's work hoping that i may soon hone mine
and get
the admiration of other writers?

that is a long time ago and i guess
i have changed

whether admired or not we are all writers in our own ways

it is just a matter of self-expression
a way of telling those who will be left here that once we were here and we have
written a lot, a legacy in words, that we are the ideas of our own time,

and time perhaps is glad about it
how we wrote and what we wrote for and whom

it's perfectly nice living life at your own pace
saying the words you want to say and leaving everything for the rest to see and judge

so to say, i am finally at home with my own words and style.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Home With Our Dogs

four dogs since the latest one
died hit by a truck when it tries to cross the street
without us watching,

four playful dogs in the house
the only animals who miss us when we are away
the same ones who welcome us
when we are back at home

they say that it is expensive to raise and feed
and give shelter to four dogs in the house
no, no, not at all
they do not go to school
neither do we pay them their salaries for pleasing us
they do not harm at all
and demand holiday pay and other allowances
nothing about retirement schemes
and SSS premiums

there is no problem about betrayal either
these four dogs in the house
if you must know, are our children
since we have none
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Home, At Home

Sunday afternoon
at home
sitting on a Persian pillow
watching the outside view
the sea over there
the mountains on the other side
sipping green tea
closing the eyes
meditating
on who you are
what you are
and what i can do for you

i have green eyes and the
tree are changing its leaves into mournful yellow.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Istoy's Cafe In Puerto Prinsesa

the fronds are having
fake butterflies

two old americans are
having their usual talk
over english tea
and some marlboro
cigarette sticks

on the other table
are Filipino women
meeting for a pyramid
scheme

i have my own
morning spaghetti
in italian sauce
and guyabano shake

people around do not
speak about cancer
it would be too
harsh for a beautiful
morning here
in puerto prinsesa

next time i will have
Istoy's hot coffee
barako

they will not think of
anything else
i am just one of them
in the usual coffee world

i guess the two old
americans too must love
coffee next time just like everyone else

i wish it will be a no for cigarettes and san miguel beer this early foggy morning

RIC S. BASTASA
At Karl's

that evening
i smoked three packs
of winston cigarettes

i love the menthol
soothing in my
nostrils

i did not refuse
the bottles of beer
i was taken by
the bottles

cosme thrived
on glasses of coffee
and stood up
to sing
a bocelli

i have the manners
of the drunkard

no one noticed
that
all those were
my first
time

oh i love it
and no one noticed
how
malfunctioned
had my nerves
become

the following day
i never had
the hangover
i longed for evenings
and i want
these evenings
repeated

lovely drinking
sipping
evenings forever

tese my youth
missed.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Langging's Wake...

while the preacher explains 
a point in the bible, that we die
only to live again,

Fredelita passes by, goes to the
other door, and taps my
shoulder,

winks and signals that
there are other friends waiting
at the lounge,

seemingly she is stressing
the point
death is not a serious matter
we who remain
have other responsibilities

talking with friends for instance
reminiscing,
things we want to forget
matters we want to confront
fact is
not all that die young
are good grasses,

sometimes, Fredelita makes
sense.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Last, Together Once Again, In The Solitude Of Ourselves...

and so we just
ended as friends
after all those years
living together
suffering the same fate
in the same old house
of tradition

i told her
sleep by my side
i assure her
that her snores from
now on
shall not be disturbing

there is a sense
of longing in the forgiveness
of wrongs

a sense of hope in old age
praying for
a happy death
together

now we are left alone
by ourselves
as all of them, friends and kin
had all gone

breakfast is ready
you invited me
coffee without sugar
half a banana
a cup of rice
a slice of milk fish

an open window
with a view to the sea
a twig
with a baby owl on it

flapping wings for the
first time
eager to go away....

RIC S. BASTASA
At Least I Noticed.....

i talk to the talker
i despise his talk and i talked to him to
walk his talk
and we had a little disagreement about
what talking is
whether talking is working too which he says
is.

he said he did not like me and that i am irked by
his talking

i hope he should have noticed that by talking to him
i have become a talker too and that by despising his talk
i too despise myself.

at least i noticed. And so i walked away.
now i think i just walked my talk. And i talk to myself

' did i please you now? ' and the self just keep on walking
not listening to my own talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Low Tide

at low tide
try walking on the shallow water
now be surprised
for you can see the edible snails
the treasures of the sea
right at your feet
ready for your picking

it is what happens too
at the lowest ebb
of your life
keep on going then
for the same treasures
shall lay beside your feet
keep looking
just keep looking

RIC S. BASTASA
now what you hear is only the sound of the rain outside

there is no lamppost, it has been taken away just this morning,
understandably there is no need for light
there is no feeling that
in the brightness of a new day
darkness can have digits

but i heard of a man who carried his flashlight
at noon
declaring that this city is as dark as the deepest floor of the ocean
where the gods
of rage have been hiding

and he warns that the rage continues
that we honestly still feel this matter inside the guts
of these modern days

that sometime the ocean will bring its own darkness
with the storms at mid-noon

and we who take pride of the light and the
grasses of the earth
will have something to write

perhaps not really that gentle and calm
and perhaps we are too clumsy for this

RIC S. BASTASA
At Monkey's Cliff

in this place many japanese
pilots committed harakiri
at the end of that short airstrip
is the cemetery
which was kept secret for years
until an american posed in there
with the caballo island as a shadow

sort of background
the tour guide named momet says
with historical expertise
who having worked for quite a long time
may not felt each word uttered

the japanese tourists inside the bus
did not blink
their jaws stiffened
like the walls of the malinta tunnel

you must have already known
how cruel are the effects of war
how everyone have become losers
how the dead slept in the hollowed grounds
of this earth
not having received the true worth of
their sweat, blood and tears

this the tour guide says again
her eyes smiling

RIC S. BASTASA
At My Own Pace

slowly i walk on a path
leading to the woods
taking a closer look at
the ferns and enjoying
the freshness of the
the air inside the cover
of the trees, my steps
are careful not to disturb
the peace of the birds
still hatching their eggs
on the nests, lizards watch
and worms keep their feast
on the rotten wood beside
the sturdy roots, the rain
starts to fall, i am wet and
now going back home.
something the silence of
nature, the glossiness of
leaves, the musical pit
pat of the rain strengthens
me: i am part of this
beautiful scheme,
preserving and not
destroying, seeing and
not taking, watching all
creatures live, listening
what this earth is saying.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night

at night
you find yourself
alone with the moon

the moon casts shadows
upon the trees
and roofs

there is always this wish
to grasp
what you cannot touch
what you cannot reach

they say
that is not possible

at night
you keep that wish
you keep that faith

that someday
your wish will become
another reality

then one night
you said goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night The Sound Of The Flowing Water

at night the sound of flowing water
(not as gentle as raindrops) come crawling in the tunnel of a dream,

i listen cautiously

i refuse to remember what is gentle and kind and compassionate

i have no veins. Neither i am a pipe of someone else

I am merely silence. And silence does not creep or
crawl.

It stays, it is a pool.

A worshiper of the moon, a lover of the night

that drinks the bounty of darkness, compromising upon the

slowed glow of

moonlight.

it is at this hour when the soul speaks, and the body listens,

friends again.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night When I Am Alone At Last.....

This morning
i keep the voices
united inside
a decent room

at noon
the voices become
impatient

they all have so
many words to say
too many secrets
untold

at night i gather
them again
like sheep in their
fence

i agree
there is respect
as i swallow my
own word
which i have not
told you

we live in peace
in harmony
there are no variations
nothing complex

society is already confused
and i do not have
to confuse it some more

i learn to light
my own cigarette now
and puff my smoke
against the sky.
At Night When The Air Comes

at night i hear the coming of the air
hushing,
i feel the touch of its fingers
that is why
i understand coldness
and patience
and ultimately the life of
silence
short and too concise
brief and frank
and candid and yes, sometimes
it can be so cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night When The World Is Sleeping

at night when the world is sleeping
i have learned to sing inside the chamber of my heart
i have become this nightingale
a black nightingale singing the songs of the full moon
at night i have become this bleeding heart
blood dripping on the floor of the house

at night i beg the moon to listen
to the songs of the black nightingale
i beg the moon
to see the blood from my heart dripping
i beg the floor to understand and for a time being
when sadness and mourning reigns in the house of my body
to keep this bleeding heart
like sands on the floor of its hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night When You Are Fast Asleep

i do not care much if you do not care about what i do at night when i am alone in my study

(actually writing poetry)

all i need is only a little warmth from the silky, curly hair of my poodle sleeping beside my bare feet contented with the touch of my toes.

the two of us, just the two of us, against the rage of the cold, dark night

the light from a study lamp mingling with the glare of the monitor

a miniature of life
an islet of my nocturnal universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night With The Rain

i have closed the doors
and the windows
and let go the curtains
touching the floors

i close my eyes and listen
to the rain
i dream of stars
i miss the moon

the walls close on in me
beyond the glass windows
to the sea
i hear the sad calls of the
night

outside the trees are blown
the black cat stares at me
and then some tears
begin to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
At Night...

the cicadas make music
on the twigs of trees
where dry leaves fall heavily
though there is no wind

eye make the dirge
for those who die for the season
the funerals
of silence are at it again
the leaves so light
like souls....

RIC S. BASTASA
At Nirvana....... 

admit loneliness
agree to this idea
that life sometimes
can be too lonely
that you can be
alone sometimes or
most of the times
but of course, not at
all times,

all shall pass,
whatever, sorrow, or bliss,
all shall pass.

start from there
and move onward,
and then it comes
finally to this

whatever state you
are in
it cannot affect you
at all

at nirvana...

RIC S. BASTASA
At Noon When Everyone Is Gone

the silence in the office is like the silence of
the catacombs
someone drops a pin and every stone hears it

it is also like the silence of the dormitory
that evening of December 25
when all the lights were turned off
when the prefect was asleep
when what you hear was the buzzing sound of
that old olive green ceiling fan
when what you did was read a novel
that did not interest you anymore

that time you wrote a poem for her.

RIC S. BASTASA
At One Moment...

then everything shuts up.
the door and windows.
nothing opens, you have no use finally
of your hands and eyes,
and this time
you simply become an empty bag
put inside a cabinet
waiting for the
next trip to
nowhere
you are rested but it is dark
and silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Papa's Grave

AS I light the candle
i will too, remember the white horse
that bit you
which they shot and died

i remember the loneliness of the grazing
fields after the incident.

All sins are always forgiven.
All hidden loves have no choice but to reappear.
When memories come, i pray,
Let those sweet and sweeter ones
be always chosen.

My brothers and sisters are here too.
All in the solemnity of silence
Pay homage to the law.

This day is the show of flowers, the dance of candle's flames,
In the concreteness of our personal appearances
To fill what blanks stares of the past
To erase what was missing.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Pee Itch

this is small time
no one bothers
he is small time
no one is bothered

but he is here
with all the small timers
in this
small time endeavor
in this
small time corner
of the world

to him it matters
it is important
and so it matters
even if they who
are big and beautiful
do not mind about
what matters

RIC S. BASTASA
At Ph....

i do not say
that we who keep on writing are like those flies
trapped in the bottle
wanting to find an exit...

dthis is the bottle, we are the flies, and
we all love it here.

tere is less air, but we manage to breathe.
tere is less space, but we co-exist

this an enclosed world, and we are the letters
that they have sealed inside those envelopes

somehow, the envelopes arrive
in those distant places, and here we are

read by you.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Ponce Suites (Kublai Cafe)

I arrived late for dinner

but i still had that empty chair for me

which i took with ease as though

it is by all intents for the moment mine

there is too much on the plate which i did not eat, too much on my glass

the night is deep and shallow with its irony of lesbians singing

and kissing and drinking

as they fill that room forgive me

i am still a hand skewed as i hold

my own bottle of beer

RIC S. BASTASA
At Random......

to maintain depth
keep the shallow feeling
embrace playfulness
and keep
the trivia, do not

disregard the wisdom of
absurdity
which is beyond the clutches
of logic
actually

it used to be that this is this
and that is that
and we have to keep the page and
follow
till the end

when there is no end really
for everything always begins with
another beginning

to be wise be unwise
to be full do not be filled
to be at the top know where
the bottom line is

imagine this earth floating
in a floating universe
and you are in there still believing
that while sitting on a chair
nobody is moving.

standstill, is that not the word
you heard when they think you are confused?
keep calm, is it not what they advise you
when you become panicky
about what is not really there?
we measure God with our spoons
we reason out with our tongue
we take eternity as though it is
a pool of a thread
poor little kettle, whistling when
it is boiling

tonight is see stars in the heavens
without thinking without saying anything at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Some Moment...

you feel like all wrapped up
you dream of a very cold running river
you undress,
remove everything
underwear
whatever
somehow you go beyond it
you shed off
skin and
flesh
and you arrive at this last feeling
that you finally
want to show them
bones
your bones
and veins
wanting to find out
what ugliness
brings

will those spectators
continue
dissecting you?

RIC S. BASTASA
At Some Time...

to be a sponge-head
amidst the rain in the yard of the red district
just an ear
not a face, just an ear detached left to dry
upon a deserted
street,

to listen and not be be a host to a lot
of emotions
to be just a canvass to the bright colors
to be just the soil to the flowers
a fence
of a certain perimeter

to open one eye and stare and close the other
and feel
to blink and then remember

to hold my own arms and rub my own shoulder
to lay my head upon a stone and
savor the hardness and
numbness

the soles of my feet to be acquainted with the
sands of the shores
at high noon

to live in a faraway planet where there is no sun
to sleep and be not dead

to wrap a secret like a gift upon the self
to count the locks of the hair

to breathe like it is the last free air
to smile as though the lips and teeth have a deadline to meet

to type the period in the poem
to stop the fingers from encountering another blank space
a world in a ring
where there is no more beginning where there is no more end

RIC S. BASTASA
At That Wrong Hour

sometimes our ways cross
and we are surprised yet
in our reservations
we do not show what others expect
we pretend that it is normal
we hold our tongues
we put our hands inside our pockets

you tell me someone is dead
at the wrong hour of his life

i do not ask any name
and that is enough

who cares about your dead?
i have mine too.

it is sad
it is normal
and so we pretend no more about what we feel at that wrong hour.
At The Middle Stage Of Our Lives

sometimes we still have to say
the same stupid lines they once said
like: i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Arvisu House

a year in there
but i never let any part of that wall
be a part of
any cell in my skin
and so when i left
i was like a dove
freed from my own
cage
i welcome every molecule
of air
into my nostrils
since then
i have learned to touch
freely
the fingers of
surprises of
simple joys

for instance watching
how a leaf falls
and finds solace
on wet grounds

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Back Of My Mind...

and so you ask
where is the place of the truth?
i do not wish to speak
but i know somehow when we are together
in the secret places of our
hearts

i do not look into your eyes
for they are pools of water that may drown me
there is no peace there
except some
suspicions

i touch your lips with the softness of my fingers
like they are roses
and i am but dew

i know where it is
but i will not tell you still
you cannot look back now
i am thrushing into
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Back Of The North Wind...

Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Balcony

from here
i see the blue sea and the old bamboo raft floating in the water

over there is a mountain of stone
with patches of green resistant grass

the coconut trees are tall and thin
and the wooden boats are docked

the men are drinking their tequilas
away from their masters and the owners of their fates

the women are doing their laundry on the river
and the children are splashing in the shallow water

some dogs waggle their tails afraid of the water
i am alone here with a camera on hand

my cell phone is turned off
i am out of reach, i am not lost, i am trying to find a way

back into my heart
feeling what my soul wants to say

i feast on the view that this balcony is giving me
i savor what God is giving freely.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Bar

she says

hi i’m gina

and then she hints that it is her birthday today

and the band sings her a birthday song...

you come back to the same bar

looking for gina and you find her

and she says

hi i’m agness and then she tells you it is her birthday today

despite that

you still like her and gifts her with a more expensive jewelry.

your name was arthur too.

and now you are james and you talk about love and broken marriages.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach

i spread this green
towel and lay my whole
body under the sun

i close my eyes and
feel the warmth

the sea breeze
blows away the
fears and
boredom

i hear the sounds of
children playing ball
on the left

i sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach From The High Window

sea breeze
soft silk on your cheeks
the curtains dance
Beethoven

it is morning

outside the slender
fingers of sun
caress the petals of
the red Chinese
flower

i am giggling.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach In Boracay February 2011

the coconut trees
line up the white sands
along the shores
of my privacy
like green umbrellas
with hands and fingers
touching no one here
but only skies
the sea is a lonely woman
with a flat blue belly
waiting for our legs and arms

in this place i am obscene
still thinking about what i should not have shared with you
i tell the sea
i am in love and i must be forgiven
but it does not believe me
the sands as usual
look at me with blank eyes
the waves are all
having their tongues-in-cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach On A Sunday Morning

this is an isolated place
the coconut trees are growing uninterrupted
by the talisay trees long ago cut by papa
fenced by barbed wires and planted with carabao grass
this is one thing that sometimes i miss in my life
the molave gate is left open
for the caretaker knows that i am coming
to spend my sunday here...

i told them that i prefer being alone this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach One Early Morning

i see indifferent soft sands
i feel the fineness of their being in my palm
i bury my thoughts there
my hands holding on
to what is falling out of my grasp

the waves murmur
so envious about my silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach One Noontime

WE arrive On the beach at noon
i park my white car nearby

the sun is at its top
whirling so much heat

the white dog on my side
is breathing through its tongue

i sit on a coconut trunk
uprooted by a storm last night

the sea is calm and silky blue
there are no foot marks on the sands of the shore

when this dog chases a stray cat
it will just be me left alone again.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Beach...

te the long rain has finally left us,
the sun comes up
and sand is sand and
the beach is real and we
decide to undress
we want to be real too
we want motion and sounds and scents
we run towards the sea
and dive and taste the salt
of our bodies

this beachy beachy beachiness of live
so lovely so salty
so wet so hot
unmindful of our being naked
now
the i penetrating in you
and the you
letting me in

but just a dream...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Birthday Party Of My Sister

she had her storms the past few months

her husband
sired a baby with another woman

and she cried in all these blunders
events she cannot accept at first

the seas will be rough
and she will be in a boat where she will find it hard
to move and breathe

she sails and she is now back home
to her senses

it is her birthday today and my brother-in-law greets her
with a kiss and perhaps more promises

she will smile with the guests
us and the rest will cheer her and sing her
a birthday song

all along we pretend that we do not know a thing
about the storm
whether there were those who sank and drowned

and counted as a number
a casualty

who wins who loses
we cannot count with our fingers the
minuses and the plusses

the party goes on with more food,
desserts and
hard liquor

we pretend all along that we do not know a thing
like life
my dear sister, life goes on
stick with it, let them those who hurt you

sink and be forgotten
the sea is calm you might as well decide to take your
happy swim

or just take a dip and wet
a part of your lip

see? nothing happened and those that happened
have become
stories merely not even wanting to be told
repeatedly,

we are merry
we have decided to be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Boulevard, Dumaguete City

slowly, the gray clouds open
like a door
giving way to the sun
coming in like
a glowing ball of fire

and then i see this old woman
lying on the lap of another
old woman
by the side of the
brick pavement

i can't find a word that is too sad
to describe this reality...

it speaks to me
i am here, do not abandon me

then another voice says
I have not forgotten you

there are lots of people
walking and thinking about their own lives
and not minding

other people's anger.

the sun is too good to be true.
but it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Breakfast Table With Family

at the breakfast
table
the plates are
placed
food waits us
we know our own
places
after a prayer
of thanks
we start taking
what is due us
to make things more
delicious
we choose the words to say
to make a
nice conversation
like laces of curtains
well sewed
to give us a view of
this world's created
wonders
for here we are still
a family
well-knitted and designed
to bring back
beauty and grace
which to me
has become faded.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Bus Station

worms getting out
rushing
at a door both serving
as entrance and exit
to know not
where

private interests
going to and fro
like the mad hands of
the watch

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Bus Station In Kota Raya (A Translation From The Bisayan Original Poem Of Leo Flores)

Here at the bus stop going to Kota Raya
the colors of the skin of the people are many
if your diaper is borrowed
others may mistake it as theirs along the way.

Dinhi sa Bus Stop padung sa Kota Raya
Ang bulok sa panit sa mga tawo daghan
Kung ang imong sapin hinulaman baya
Basin sa dalan ikaw pagahubuan.

- LEO BOB FLORES
Bukit Batok, Singapore

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Cafe Des 2 Moulins

it is right here from this cafe des 2 moulins
where one day she decided to find a way
to make others happy

she is in a quandary
for in here there are always lonely men and women
and even children

she takes note of each of them
a child lonely because he lost his toy car
a woman whose marriage is on the verge of a collapse
and she has nowhere to go
a man whose wife left her for another younger man

they sip coffee here
there gazes as far as the farthest distance of the star

she is a very unhappy woman herself
but for now
she does not care

she finds a way for them to be happy
she found the lost toy, the wife came back to be reunited with the husband
the husband realized that he loved her more

she does not tell what caused her sadness
but she does not really care about herself now

at night she goes to her bed
soundly sleeping after

tomorrow, she will find another lonely soul again
she has become an angel

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
At The Cafeteria

another long tiring day
and for a change you decide to go inside the cafeteria

you look around
there are people that you know do not know you

years have made you anonymous
in this place where once you put your roots

over there are two students
lovers you suppose since they are too close for such a wide space

whispering as usual
nothings.

you take your tuna sandwich
over a bottle of coca-cola and then you begin to take your chances

glancing outside this rain that keeps on pouring
the trees are wet and the pavements flooded

you wait, you think, you look at everyone around you
this place that you should not have entered

this life that you should have not taken
this world that they have forcibly given and now

this space that gives you nothing but this
emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Cemetery

last Friday
i went to the cemetery

i like the silence of the place
the trimmed grass
and the tiled mausoleums

the air is warm on this cemented
territory
this silent city
this paradise of mutes and
rested souls

i like the creeping vines with white flowers
and reddish center
i envy the stones and the pebbles
i appreciate the grills and the shiny
gravings
metallic dates of death and birth
and the last epitaphs of the
beloved

but like you
i do not wish to stay that longer
it is not my time yet
as i still have other places to go
the noisy ones
the intriguing places of the heart
those where we lose ourselves
and wish sometimes
that homes be not that far away
that lights in the living room and the kitchen
still function well
the odor of the fried bananas
the aroma of coffee
the smoke from their tobacco pipes
the smell of perfume on slender necks
the silk in their gowns
the colors of their eye shades
the movement of their hands
the activity of our worlds
on their orbits our bodies as planets
in our living universe.

we offer flowers for the dead
we wish them luck too
and we keep on moving somewhere
not losing hope
keeping the grip for life
whatever that be.

the marital bed of course
keeps the central point of this existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Center Of My Being

at the center of my being
lies all my weaknesses
and if you hit it right at
bull's eye, i will surely die,

your fingers do not find me
my skins are walls.
your lips are too searching
but my tongue has curled
upon itself like a frozen meat.
your eyes try to melt me
but my mind has hardened
like a rock, you try to cradle
my body, like a swing, but
my arms have changed into
sturdy pillars

at the center of my being
there was once this queen,
she turns into a sparrow
forever taken by tomorrow.

and so no matter what you do,
nothing happens to my sorrow
at the center of my being
someone tries to call you
and smile and waive at you,
i am telling you, i do not know.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Center Of Our Universe

to get close to each
other
we must find a common
center
and once fixed
we all moved towards that
we become one
after a certain
time

then the outer
line dissolves
like an afternoon
horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Church Mass....

there they go again
(i within)
hearing mass in
the church,

it is Saturday
evening,

it is a show of
music and poetry
of song and
choreography

uniformed ladies and
gentlemen
white and gray and
carrying candle lights
for accent

i like this show
as i perspire a lot
in this multitude

what i do not like
is this
what do i understand
by all these
mixes?

i sit on one of those
chairs
thinking about
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Church Of Nativity

it is only upon the order
of the old religious head
that the door shall be opened

so we waited patiently for hours

there is going to be a procession
to be done by the greek orthodox church

we waited for long until the old religious
man shouted at the photographer
as it is prohibited to make shots in this
holy place

the alien photographer cannot be outdone
he shouted too until the church got to noisy

until i doubted the solemnity of this
nativity.

until i got to question what is real from
hypocrisy....

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Circle

at the circle
which is so enticing
to be part
of those inside
it, i try to look
like one of them
as i arrange the
fold of my hair
put saliva on
my hand
to put some
gloss on my
skin and forehead

they all laugh
and i am too dumb
to understand
the reason why
they are all laughing

they say
it is funny
that i am funny
and i try to laugh
with them
in order to feel
that i belong

they continue laughing
and i begin to think
that they must be drunk
and i am the only
one sober

quite a positive attitude
to keep my
confidence
but no
they still keep on
laughing
and they they do
not even know my name
they're not interested
or if they are
only among themselves
in their own
witty world as i
think again and step
out from their
demarcations

and then
i smile going back
home
my own place
here with my own
limited confidences.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Club Ultima, 39th Floor

we somehow feel the bond
of unity
we feel the abundance of food
and emotions
no one is telling somehow
what is it
that makes us still torn apart
from the link

she is seated beside me
i look at the veins blue on her wrist
she is not eating much
fear of fats
and betrayal
fear of too much acidity
in her guts

when she looks at me she smiles
though i find something mysterious
concealed and yet too obvious
to be mentioned
i keep my dumb silence taking
seasoned beef inside my mouth
to keep me from
using words of which i am
getting skilled at
covers

the rest are noisy
as the live band plays
Latin beat songs

the mother feeds the child
two mothers
who want the best for their kids
clean fun

the man over the edge trusts me
sad, there is no way that he sees what is inside
my heart

there is something sinister there
like a masked ninja scheming to seize
what he treasures

and then i look at her again
this time she knows what i want
she says she likes it here
on the 39th floor
though there is more fun
at the 20th
where their is a sort of
happy quiet
and pallid privacy
with the hint that she will be alone
as she owns that room

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Confessional Box...

there is this boy
who looks like me when i was once a boy like him

who as taught by the priests
of the catholic schools have to be on a regular confession
inside that box where the priests
listens....

(Father i have sinned, i have not gone to confession
for a week and these are my sins...repeat, repeat, repeat,
and the priest, perhaps tired and
bored says...

my little son, say three hail marys, five our fathers, and 2 glory bes
and if you have time

write a poem).

and so the poems since then were written.
the boy did not stop to live within that confessional box
the priest died
earlier than expected.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Core Of My Being

a cake with white
icing, some sugar
red roses and
confectioner leaves
of green around
the chocolate cake
layer upon layer
to give an impression
of fullness and
solidity,
at the core is the
softness of air bubbles
trapped within,
something is empty
so soft, something like
a void unaffected still
by heat and time.

that is what i am
and i love it.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Crossroads

at the crossroad
we meet again

not as father and son
or brother to
brother

we shall meet
as friends
and shed off
the bad blood
between us

if blood does not
work and thresh
conflicts out
let us be dying men
in bone and skin
in thirst and hunger

what we need
is water and food
and some wood
we do not need
words
for another round
of argument

why not brother?

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Dinner Party

well we started with
memories, the funny ones, those that
fully reflect youth
and carelessness, the stolen kisses,
fear of pregnancies on their part
the saying yes and
opting for other possibilities
generalities nothing
about details yet

late
yes, the night was getting late
and we begin to
talk about those we are not supposed to
either because they are
too personal and
still affecting us
clouding reason and
objectivity
or still so painful and we focused on her
she just had a new set of teeth
her husband boxed her
and she had to resort to court
for protection
it is not a joke anymore
love, marriage, kids, brokenness,
beyond repair
irreconcilable differences
astronauts (joke)
needing more space
getting away
looking for openings
a new world perhaps
sighs
pauses, silences,
God passes through
she says,

tear eyeed and sobbing
we listen

i feel as though i am a man
without a mouth
deaf, i want to be
and blind
these realities are not
walls
we are transported at the center
of her house
and we all catch fire
our bodies
flaming

we realize
when we close this party
as it is about
midnight and some people
wives, husbands, lovers
kids
must still be waiting at home

'pray more' my parting words
i guess as i drive my car alone back home
i am still
lucky.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Easter Party Somewhere In The Philippine Islands

i am thirty minutes late
i expect that everyone of you must have started dinner
those on the table of important names
must have already been seated in comfort
and slicing the beef and sipping their champagne
and those of lesser importance could have already lined up
to pick up their choices: chopsuey, lasagna, fish fillet or salads,

things did not happen the way i expected it
i become part of the waiting people, another thirty minutes
the reverend who shall bless the food is still somewhere

this is the party of fools and waiting is the bad game
there is no exact time to start, and every minute is flexible
the reverend has to say the final word
and we are but some kind of appendices on the book

there is nothing poetic in this thanksgiving, nothing at all.
the rice has gone cold, the grease turned solid, the guests too gullible.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Edge....

upon reaching the edge
or at dead ends
of streets or cliffs
when you finally face
a wall and you can do
nothing well at least
you can sign your name
and tell them nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End

in the ocean of
mercies
it is only you and the
dog
on the boat
fused are your visions
on a wagging
tail
on a tongue
hanging
on the air.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End It Will Just Be A Another Dance....

half a syllable, semi closed door
demi gods,

a slip, that stutter,
i stare,

you put your thumb
on your lips,

a falling note another
leaf

bald tree outside the house
a mouse,

close a door, divide it into
halves

a melon, a cut finger, blood
dripping on the white table cloth

a flag inverted, the leader
speaks on morning tv,

occupied islands and typhoon
at 300 km/hour

half of the world is feasting
half of the world is mourning

after writing this
you stand and dance the zumba

plan B candy
daddy yankee rompe....

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of My Day

at the end
work is left on the table
it is alone there
with no one to speak to
tonight
as we exit this door of work
and enter the
world of imagination
about dinner with
wife and
(kids if you have any)
outdoor
the stars shine beside
the moon
and then you rest your
head
on the the clean
conscience as
pillow
perhaps tonight
listening on
the theme
song
of Forrest Gump

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of Our Journey

has anybody told you
that there at the end part
of this journey
is only a certain height
a depth that you can see like
a chasm of
fading darkness
donw to the earth
and then to the highest
sky

that when you arrive there
there is only a sky of
cotton
made of all the elements of
air
which when your finger touches
touches only
nothing?

they all made it up
so that you can be like them
hoping against hope
dressed
and heavy with their thick
clothing
to solve a coldness
to walk more miles
to have a basket of nothing
but
metaphors

a garden of eden
an ark of triumph
a manger of humility
a revelation of
fear
the much awaited next
book of
light and glory

one should not be mindful

let us try to see
a window open
a dove with a green leaf
on its beak
an eagle lost in the wild
feasting on
the flesh of the dead

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of The Dawn Mass

at the end of the dawn mass
she still hears the bells ringing

she still sees the white cassock
the cool air she feels inside her

heart and the restrained conversations inside the church she

likes to keep on going and going because her loneliness

creeps like a centipede on the side of her arms so gently

without any feet so tenderly
like she does want this moment

to leave her anymore, she nods and kneels and says yes to every

thing to anything in her life there are not more reasons why she

should be meticulous about which way to go which option

to take which way to make her self alive, to find her meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of The Day

and so at the end of the day
when finally darkness won over light
whatever mistake the sky did to earth
was easily forgotten
forgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of The Day (2)

at the end of the day what thoughts shall i keep

what thoughts shall i discard

what to forget what to remember

at the end of the day when we see each other again
dine together on this carved dining table

and sit on these steady mahogany chairs

finally we sleep together in bed covered by thick blankets and soft pillows

then you lower the mosquito nets
do we not feel both being buried?
i honestly ask if you are still alive with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of The Day, You Just Listen

stepping inside the room
you close the same door
sleep on the same bed
but this time, think of someone else,
something else, nothing extraordinary really,
something lovely, and indifferent,
something about dreams that never come true,
those years, wasted time,
leaves that do not serve any purpose
falling on the ground, rotten,
gone.
you accept these as part of you.
and then you
soundly sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Of This Poem

time flies so swiftly
on jet wings
the world looks like a dot
at the end of
this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Peace Triumphs....

at the end
peace reigns

after the war
after exploding the bombs
all men die
including their wives
and children
all kin

all humanity is wiped
out in a few
seconds

the silence of peace
now reigns
grasses cover everything
trees grow
birds mate
make nests and hatch their
eggs

and then every creature left
these survivors
sing for the resulting peace

humanity is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End Then What?

this is what our tracks
on the road are asking
and so does every
step along the shores of
time: then what?

will it be justified?
will the reasons of reasons be enough?
this is just my body
and my mind

in that basket the ripe fruits are missing
the tracks cover themselves
and every step is finally erased

you ask: then what?
i return it with nothing
no, not even a smile
since i turn my back and then
proceed to another journey.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End You Must Become The Part Of Everyone

not all paths are the same
not everything are carved by tradition

somehow you deviate not because you want to deviate
it is just written in the lines of your palm and there is no way
that you can avoid it

oedipus rex is not an exception
what he wanted to avoid he instead entered
it is the tragedy that leads him precisely
to his own tragic fate

someone was once asking: who wants to be myself?
and no one answered quite well
most people find themselves unwanted and that is tragedy by itself

' i never wanted to be myself' the ugly creature in grief said it frankly
to himself who never answered him

you end up unsatisfied and resigned
how heavy is it to carry oneself as a burden
how unfaithful one can be
what a disadvantage to keep an enemy within you
what tragic moment
to hurt your feet with your own hands
to torture your mind with your own thoughts
to pluck out your eyes from your sockets because you do not want to see
yourself or to uproot your very nerves that you think are the ones hurting your
bones to tear your heart apart
and shatter your fragile self into some kind of irreconcilable pieces

what if you were just as gentle as the wind caressing the waves of the sea
as warm as the sun landing on the valley
your hands are not dichotomies
your heart never a wasted part of your body

what if...you forget the self and think of it as nothing
so that you shall become the wind of the earth
the sea of the continent
the earth on this universe? a darkness moving with space which has become the part of everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End, Let The Spirit Soar

times drags.
the shoulders of man begins to stop.
a heaviness hangs upon the
edges of the heart
immobilizing love
passions numb
life melts
hope shrinks
body rots, stinks,
bones turn to dust
and then the spirit
begins to soar.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End...

it is not the quantity, not the length
you know it, it is the quality, for you are weighed
and not counted,

it is never the number of days, the delay in the
falling of the sands, the slipping away,
it is the wideness of that vast expanse of the
oceans in your heart,
it is the why, and not the how.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End....

i anticipate the end  
but i do not worry  
i know the ending long  
before hand  
even if you do not have  
to tell me  
what the ending is all about  
i know it  
by heart  
and so i do not worry about it  
anymore  
i know my heart  
and your heart knows mine

we are satiated  
that friendship knows best  
that commitment knows better  
whatever  
faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End.....

here i can be anybody
i can be anywhere
here no one touches me
but i can touch everyone
here i do not matter

here is what i am
what i want

i wear a tinted glass against
the glare
watching you without being
notice by you

it is this comfort of just being
me knowing that even without you
i still live the way i like it to be

at the end, it is just i,
living me life and finally losing it.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The End: Absurdity

the point is reached
the realization that at the end
we write for nobody
not even for ourselves
we write for nothing
we are actually still nothing
for this is nothing but nothing
speaking for itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Extreme

at the extreme
coldness is the coldness of the arctic snow
and hotness is the hotness of the volcanic flow
he got them all and he survived them all
his palms know what are all these things all about
but he never stopped touching
he touched the rays of the sun at noon
with his hands opening in prayer
he touched the frost with his fingers
he disliked his fists
he opted more for the silence of the dusks
and the patience of some longer nights
at the extremes of seasons and events
he continued talking to the trees and all its leaves
to his horse to his dog to his door
to his chair to his bed
to his stair
he kept his prayers

He lives. He is very much alive. His solitude his nest.
His prayers shaped the wings of a white bird.
His stone his silence. His strength, his spirit.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Facade Of First Glances

what comes as pleasurable
at the start
turns out to be painful
at the end

who appears to be most cruel
in the beginning
becomes your most and well-meaning
teacher at the end

whom you find uninteresting for
all those years
when she is gone
becomes the person most missed.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Farm

there is this world of farmworkers
riceplanters and coconut gatherers
they have a language of their own,
their dreams so earthbound and
so unlike our sophistications,

eyed talk about what to eat
only for this day, their desserts
plain sugar chunks, their main
dish just plain rice, their drinks
just plain water from the well
and their feast, a bowl of
extra rice and two pieces of
dried fish, and they talk about
their sunday dance with the
banana vendors and the
charms of the housemaids
at the north end of the barrio.

simple dreams of day to
day existences of what is
just within their grasp and
hold: just today and no
peeping about what
tomorrow may bring.

and yet, i see them, they
laugh the hardest in the
fields and talk about sex
without restraints, and
i must agree: they are
happier than all of us
on this earth combined.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Fishing Village

life is simple here
and i learn a lot
first, i put the bait
on the hook,
got an earth
worm
wriggling
attractive inside
the green
water
i throw the line
a fish
catches
the bait and
it is caught

i cook what i catch
and have
my own fill

i get what i
deserve.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Food Court

a woman carries a very fat baby
white skinned, and sleepy on her tummy
both hands holding
the baby’s feet clinging on her hips
like a vine

you look at them both
and you accuse me that i must be envious.

i did not bother looking. i know i will not like the
kind of scene.

a madonna inside this crowded foodcourt.
now sip your soup
i am munching this dumpling.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Foot Of The Hill

Over the earth
And in the skies
There are
Trapped dusts
And mists
I see clouds
And rainbows
Arching
After the
Rain at the
Foot
Of the hill.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Forest

you just shot
a robust deer
and you are
happy taking
it on your shoulder
something for
dinner....

and you walk away
behind your backs

a little deer is looking,

oh, a mother is taken
and the son
is weeping!

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Highest Frequency

someday
when we reach the highest point
of our existence

words will be weird
they are useless

silence speaks to silence
in perfect per functionality

touch to touch
hush to hush

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Hospital

one feels like
he is dead in a catacomb
he likes it
slow paced life
and everyone
attends to you
like you're the most
helpless
body, sprawled without
the strength of bones

one feels like he is wasted
useless piece
of flesh all wrapped
with dry skin

sometimes
he wishes he is not cured
and simply be
buried in that
catacomb
forever

in this society
however
no one gives
you
your free meal
no one hands
you
a happy death

they always
feel that you will
be leaving them
all the
possible guilt

afraid
they all ask you
to get well soon
so they
may also start
taking care
of their lives
the soonest

you turn on
the tv to watch
news tonight
you turn off
your honest
morbid thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Hospital Bed

even when the eyes
finally close
the room is still lighted
another set of eyes
still look
at everything here
a bed some planks of wood
a machine

another set of eyes
wake up
floating in the air
with the smoke

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Hour When Darkness Wins And Light Surrenders To The Edge Of The Sea

on that hour when darkness and light fought
i take complete time to watch them

the usual afternoon when darkness wins when light surrenders to the edge of the sea
in dismal silence

it is a very sad view, one can relate and weep

on the other hand, when light finally gives up its orange body to the invasion of the night

when it assumes that fading ball of fire descending to the abyss of the darkness

behold! there is so much beauty in its sadness!

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Junction

now we must
part ways at the junction
of

this earthy path
where rocks still hurt
it

is time for me to say
what an end
is

all about give me
a smile
at this junction

where you
are no longer you
where i
will

face the light
with open hands
taking me
to

the place called
Home.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Junction....

When you are trying to give me sorrow
i don't mind
at the junction i take another direction
away from you

there is no way that sorrow goes with me
there is a wish
may that sorrow you sow follow you
wherever you may go

they are all yours
each sorrow bears your name
and they must
as i pray
follow you wherever you go
they are yours
and shall be yours forever

on my part, at the junction, where our paths depart
i have chosen
a thousand joys.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Kitchen

she is preparing
breakfast
and i can hear the
pounding of the
pestle and the mortar
spices perhaps
black pepper
and some sliced layers
of onions
there is something that
i do not want to hear
the sound of
tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Last Grasp Of My Breath

you have always been
a gale to me
a wave that always comes and goes
in endless
fleeting

you have always been the wave of my
being
how i wish that you stay and be mine
in the shores of my sands
but you are always flowing slipping
from the hold of my
fingers

at the last grasp of my breath
this you have taught me: you have never loved me
and i have endured it
beautifully like that sunset to the sea...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Last Hour

he is ready
but before he goes out of his
sound-proofed room

he plays the blues
and dances his way out of
this world

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Last Hour Of Our Goodness...

there comes a time
when we wished we were mute

or blind
or deaf

there was a time when we
were happier
without anybody beside us

when we shy a crowd
when we feel great by just being

ourselves,

or myself for being myself
in particular for instance

when having all the praises
become too unnecessary

like shoes to my feet on the
sandy shore of summer

so many times when we feel
we do not need any umbrella under the rain

these are the ironies that we grab in a lifetime
when we lose only to find

when we quit because we have already
won that much

when giving becomes a routinary gesture
without doubt or hesitation....

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Mactan International Airport

a diary:

we arrive 15 minutes early.  
i have only two light bags.  
this time i travel as light as  
a time i travel alone.

it is a connecting flight  
to caticlan. I have to wait  
for another 7 hours.  
there will be too much  
minding on arrivals and  
departure.

i escape this waiting  
and goes to the ayala mall.  
got some italian pasta  
and fresh veggies for  
lunch. iced tea to appease  
the longing of my  
throat.

i hop to another japanese  
resto nearby. The soft  
salmon sushi and  
californian maki this  
time.

i pooed at rai-rai ken's  
comfort room. And i  
remember the famous  
poem of the poo  
and the cheese and  
the grand feeling  
of freeing waste  
from the system.

great writer, huh?
and someone just ask me if a fake poet just sent me a love note from brazil or nicaragua. I laugh.

what is the need to know the name of someone who loves you and sends you a note and does not tell her reality? is she indeed true? is she as real as her poems.

i have other matters to attend to. This time another pizza at the yellow taxi cab and coca-cola, and

then i have to buy an ear plug and some sun block.

now i have something more in my mind.

a swim in a blue sea. snorkling. island hopping. corals. colored fish.

the white sands of boracay. boats. banana boats. white towels. buffet by the sea.

a walk at the beach at dawn and then seeing the sun rising.

a walk again in the afternoon
and seeing the sun setting.

things like these. somehow
i am now ready and willing to
forget where i come from.

i am new. i am a fish. i am
a coral. i am a starfish.

i sit on one of those empty
chairs, a table of my own.
a candle light. and i am ready
to tell anybody that i am alone
and i have a name.

i need to practice how to smile
and yes, be attractive and
yes, be seductive.

(ha ha ha ha)

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Meeting

i keep what is
decent

i don't dance
with the music

i can't sing with
the rest

in the middle of
this crowd

i am alone
thinking about the hills
and mountains

beyond
the sea and my
empty world

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Middle Of Things

the starting point is always a rush
the sound of times is demanding
specifically
on wanting details to be perfect

there is that attention to color
what ought to be and protesting always
for what is not
the idealism of the mind and the
strictness of the hand

at the middle of the way
one feels tired
sometimes the wish to back out
settles on the skin

you peep at the end of the line
what is the use? you ask yourself
there is no use. there is no us.
you answer it yourself without even
the slightest wink in your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Middle Of Things...

living in the comfort zone
is easy,
nothing much
nothing less too
i am neither at
the top
neither am i at
the bottom
i am what is
sandwiched
the ham and the
lettuce
and the tomato
and the cheese

buffered i am
protected
the gods find me
delicious

i look forward
to begin consumed
and be simply
gone

there is nothing
good in here
it is flat and
boring
between...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Middle Part

..and then she faces me
this time exposing every part of her
a tall, lean white body with long black hair
cascading like a waterfall
of silence
she walks towards me
as i lay my head on the pillow
as i signal her to come
and share with me
love and sorrow
and the passion of our presence
she takes a slow movement
her hands touching my hair
her lips getting near
my face
and then we close our eyes
and enter into another world
where we are one
so close
airtight.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Museum With A Friend....

despite
those younger years
i remember
bathing in the same river
laughing on silly
matters of
our youth
i thought of such familiarity
and when we see each
other again
with Liz at the Smithsonian
Museum
as we watch Demi Moore pregnant
and naked
or that abstract painting of
Ashikaga which are drops of
mixed paint on the canvass
as i pass him this time to
another
diorama of our history
past his glare and flair
i sensed that there is really
something wrong somewhere
in the island of his face
with the sea in his eyes
that angst
which he cannot tell
afraid that i may tell him
that he is unhappy
with his life
despite the expensive house
in the city that the
diplomat from Spain gave up
for good
as the air is not a song
and the sky no more
than a blot in a page
of his life
that painting of the sinking
ship with hands
outstretched
screaming for help
i could have bought that
were it not for
the consequences of the kind
of life that
we have finally
lived.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Other House Of Ill Repute

a few meters from here
where i am writing
the peace of this town
is a little bit disturbed
by the song of Bob Marley
or his look-alike in that
known house of ill-repute
where the women make
love with you in bed
where the men also take
other men instead
those that smell like pigs
are given soap and water
and a sachet of shampoo
on dim lights and cubicles
happiness is bought
for a very cheap rice on
these hard times
and as the Bob Marley song
is played the bursts of
the Fourth of Julies happen
the women have deep sunken
eyes and so are the men
prostitutes
this is a peaceful neighborhood
decent and responsible
until the hard times came
throwing away whatever education
is left, whatever values remain
the bodies become commodities
for the meal of the day....Sadly.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Park On A Friday

it is a happy
day

laughter of children
in the park

cool winds
spring
onions

a glass of coffee
a little chocolate
cookie

watching beautiful
people

passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Party

you meet faces of an uncle
some nephews
and nieces, even a brother
after some long years
not seeing them
you notice some changes
how the uncle has grown
a beard
your nephews getting
sophisticated
on the latest craze
electrical gadgets on their
ears and even noses
you nieces on their own lingo
you do not know much
anymore
more than they do

and your brother
you counted the gap
before he came to your life
ten years
yes ten years
you stare at him
and you get a scare
how come
you do not know him much
what anger is there
how come love
has not built a bridge
between your
far souls

you offer him a bottle of beer
and greet him
'when did you arrive? '
you ask him

it is too late
his wife steals his attention
and you would have asked him some more
existential questions

like 'how is life going with you?'
they are taking leave at once
someone is sick
and dying
he had no chance telling you

the gap now you count again
is not just ten years
it is more than that
and there is no bridge
no rainbow
always this wide river
this vast space this endless sea

you miss him somehow
yet you cannot say the word
oh, these modern times
always a masterpiece of
distance of alienation
something we have not dared
and we have not conquered

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Party (Of Fools)

at the party,
we wear smiles, we tell them
the way we hold our wine glasses
and puff the smoke
we tell them that here we are we want to belong
to everyone
that we after all
are parts of this socializing human race
aristotlic and platonic and
watsonic all rolled in our mind

we get drunk and for a while we group
in accordance with our categories
species

and then we realize
we are happier alone in bed
at the beach or somewhere else
where
only our hearts speak

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Party Last Night Till Dusk

you take your glass of red wine
and sit on one of the chairs in one corner

friends surround you
as though you are a port and they are docking boats

the laughter begins and continues
till nighttime till one

the glasses of wine take you to places
of memories

the conversations about the lives of other people
their misfortunes and sometimes successes

no one wants to leave
neither can all you keep on staying

till the wee hours of dusk
until the minds becomes groggy and restless

until you realize that peace has become elusive
you become part of the unforgiving crowd

amidst the words and sentences
you are one of those colons

so so alone this time
amidst the hill and mountains

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Party Of The Blind

when one is barred to enter
there is no way
that force is
a choice, and so one waits
at the gate
fronting the street and
looks for
the correct timing aimed
at entering
without violating some
rules of this
party game, and one sees
a chance
for here
comes a very important person
who is blind
and you grab
his arm
walks beside him
and tell the gatekeeper
that you are his
escort
and when inside you look
around
where everyone laughs
because
everyone is blind
and you are the only one
who can see
and so you were
barred.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Party....

we are lucky
i tell some friends in that party

they do not content with what i have to say
that we are not just alive but happy

they go for more than all that luck can give
they pride with what they did...oh forgive!

those cars, and houses and resorts
more money, more ports

oh forgive! i tell myself
they have all become mute and deaf...

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanting to cleave clearly in the mind the wooden chopping boards of the house into piano keys, and the long tables of the dining room into some imagined concert: Do you hear it? Yes? Do you not since then not realize this grand scale? The poor boy is playing a sonata in his head, yes? Yes. Now. (Pushed into agreement as if pushed by birth into an empty room without choice and flowers for wallpaper and a mirror kept blind dark in a drawer) There was a piano, once, in my head. And a stage. And the world surprised by what had been found. Difficult piece: the left hand flying over the right and the air-pedal stepped through and clean to sustain. And all the world standing behind kitchen counters and the dinner plates waiting for the imagined overture to complete its applause: If only there was no need to explain. If only the real thing was as clear and as audible as once the beautiful music.

* Brown beaver in a stream and the grass green Small girl on a swing and a bird wing And because he thinks it’s meant to be spring, he colors the clear edges of all living things in his piano book- Where the paw touches sharp the blades of the green patch and the bare arm of the blonde girl arcs her slender reach to the sun. And old Brahms who lifts his hand in a wave, even if this is meant to be a slow waltz he’s playing, and a packed piano concert hall he’s set in where a bright blue blazer’s not the right suit for this true master to wear. This genuine thing: Every day before the sun rose, I dreamt the world already in color. Ivy on the old wall greener by far than any I had seen the lush trees bending some friends hiding behind jars,
sliding doors snuck into the empty cabinets of the garage wanting to be found and: everyone loved.
Wanting to tell the truth, to play it.
Song remembered from somewhere else and someone else’s mistake:
the bored boy on the waiting couch
knows the girl now playing the piano has no applause in sight. The day could be awash with light!
what colors blind him with the waiting bird on the wing wrap his hands with a song small girl’s swing fill his eyes while he’s playing a fast loud trick of a trill in his head

in what was said to be “with feeling” terrible terrible thing

* All encompassing terror of the grand design
I wanted the great concertos,
the Bach arias.
I wanted: Praise be to God who fashions with his own hands the universe and all of creation out of a deep love for everything without choice.
Without being dramatic.
I wanted the long pause.
I wanted the audience stunned to tears because:
this we have not heard before in the streets this song this beautifully done.
It moves.
It brings us to the edge of our sight.
I am not the light.
I was not even part of its terms of recovery or perfection.
Joy without end without just reward.
Who has not, faced with a sin, said:
I want to be good?
For he hears even our thoughts.
I wanted that silence.
I wanted the huge applause after the silence.

*by

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Pier

i like that blue bird
that stands only
on one foot

there is this sense
of self-sufficiency
without the other foot

i wonder if it's you
on your
animal life after hating
me all those
years

i like to descend
on that level
if that is the only
change left for me
to tell you once
again
that i was never joking

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Plantation Bay

as the tram roams its way
around the island

my eyes are focused on
the heavy clouds about to give

the much missed rain
the smell of the Italian restaurant undermined

by the chains of thoughts clinking like
chains of the prisoner

RIC S. BASTASA
At the point of saturation
the apex
or the pinnacle of your
subliminal wishes
the misspeaking
subconscious
desires

you look back
you move forward
you stare at those
flashes of images
before you

those that you love
most
now lay before you
as unwanted
strangers

no longer pleasing
noneffective
there is no more
affection

at this point you do not know
what to say
you are neither happy nor sad
voila!
you have become one of the
lesser gods

eureka! this is the triumph
of numbness.

RIC S. BASTASA
the news is that
another storm is coming
and our boat is still on this port
that we fear
for once there was terror here
a bomb exploded
planted by this unknown terrorist
and many died
the boat was burned
and many bodies still burning
jumped and drowned in the sea
most of them
children and women

i am sensing the colder wind
from the sea
the touch of the
coming storm
i can sense its strength
while i wait
for the decision whether
to go sailing or not
so we can reach the
other island facing us
with a warm welcome

i look for a sign
and see this pigeon
hovering above
my head
as though saying
warning

do not,
i have all the reasons
to listen

we sleep here for the night
we shall let this storm pass
At The Prayer

te the man sang
liberame, liberame
the guitar is mournful
and those who joined
the song
understands what is
grief all about

that His Thoughts are not
ours
He has all the reasons
we just don't understand
any word

and then the prayer ends
eyes begin to shed
community of tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Probationary Period....

you've been a good man
every errand is done
there is no complaint
from anyone
the stockroom has been
cleaned
not a dust, nothing messy,
the sofa is brushed and
even scented
food is delivered on time
drinking water is kept
at its safest level
the floors are swept
and even made shiny
all of them have shown
the approval sign
all thumbs up, but
this i ask: when will
you last?

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Reunion Party (Grandma's)

to drown my well-kept storm
i purge words
too many like bats driven from
a cave
flying on barbaric sounds
and one of you looks at me
with a stab
but it will not hurt me a bit
i ignore
whatever tries to hurt
whatever skins me out to reveal
a damaged bone

think of me
as a happy bee that is all i can ask for
this moment
i shall like it
for what you think
makes me become
what i am not

the hours will run like a windmill
and water pours out
to satisfy the mouth of the hill
and i will be happy to see
something filled
a thirst satisfied

you see i admit i am wrong in
trying to be alone by myself
in doing so for the past days
i shrink like
a plastic bottle
heated by
a candle

i realize the link
it is always a you and I
and the rest of the people in the world
my feet are your feet
my hands are your very hands too
my mind is a lonely planet
lost without the sun
and the rest of the lonely planets
in this always moving
universe

i know what depression is
and now i know how to delet it.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The River Bank

deep in the river
the waters rise
and all my steps are taken
back to the
sands
of the river
in this place where you live
decently

when you come too early
you will see
what steps have i taken
and where i have been going

at noon when the children play
everything is mixed up
and you shall ask
what is the matter

the children when they are gone
leave you marks
and you do not understand

at the river banks of our youth
finally
all the steps when we get old
turn
into forgotten stories

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Roof Top One Nignt: A Reflection

there are words
which are better left unsaid

some dreams
that do not come true

a love that must
stay unrequited

a self so unfulfilled
an ambition that is merely a sketch

a face that you cannot touch
lips that you cannot kiss

shadows that remain
as shadows no flesh & bone

the sway that never
becomes a dance just a bend
or a tiptoe

that is why the stars
hang on the skies and they are so silent

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Rooftop

tried to hold the hands of
the moon
at the rooftop
to my literal disappointment
shunning away
any metaphor
it has none of the arms i need
it has no hands that hold
mine

sometimes i blame
the literal world about
unfulfilled fantasies

about dreams taken away
from the breasts of
the words
about love ripped of
its literature
that which must exist only in the mind
in order to survive
the harsh
hails.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Rural Side Of This World

when i step out of my door
i see a road lined with mahogany trees
an empty wide road
but not that muddy really
at this rainy season of the year

i hear the chirping of birds
and the hushing of the wind
greeting me with the coolness of
an after rain,

the grasses are still wet with dew,
the paths still dappled with water,
the pebbles glistening
to the sunlit view of
the hills which are so green and vibrant
the distant mountains shaded blue
tall and huge their tips almost touching the sky

there are no cars here  just wooden sleds
pulled by the cows
of the working men
at the other side of the river nearby
some water buffaloes are restive on
cool wade in their mud holes
their tails whipping their butts
to drive away the gnats

i am waiting for the bus going to the city
the only bus for the day
and it will pass by here at eight.

on the bench opposite where i am seated
three girls are giggling

a handsome boy riding on a horse whistles
at the one with the long black hair
the sun is shining brightly on an ordinary day like this
on the rural side of this world that i have chosen to visit

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Seaside, A Solitude

cethe seaside is peaceful
cthe sky is blue with white cumulus clouds hanging there
cslowly they move and change shapes
clike the air is painting and mixing the colors in space
cgentle hues graceful strokes
cthe white sands extend to some miles
cthe coconut trees are like handshakes
ctheir shadows restive and steady
ci lay my body weary of the years
ci look at all these lines and circles and spheres
ci like to give up thinking and just be a spectator
nci let them talk and i merely listen
ncthe seaside, the seagull, the clouds, the coconut trees, the white sands,
cnthe circles and spheres and lines extending
to nowhere.

ici cover my eyes with a straw hat. I cease.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Second Floor

at the second floor of the old house
he goes up
taking the creaking stairs
as though telling him some old stories
about the falling of the
clan house to ashes for years
no one dared say
about the fall of this family
there are whispers
not louder as a thud of a cat's foot
limping on the carpet

up there is the open space overlooking the blue sea
a white sail and some foams of the sea caps
catch his attention but he can not withstand such a distant view
his eyes are hurt by too much light and tiny object

he looks at the nearby tree
old mahogany spreading its branches touching the roof

there is this single leaf that falls
a hush of the wind
twirling to the shaded space
it lands on the pebbles

nothing is heard but he has seen it all
the fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Senate Blur Ribbon Committee Hearing...

do you not see that it is a party of
all kinds of Pinocchios engaged in the
contest of

who has the longest nose in town?

shall you believe any one of them?

it is just a matter of who is sitting in power
they always share the bounty of their favorite
sports: graft and corruption.

you better engage yourself in one of those
Gulliver's travels to relieve yourself from all
these foolishness.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Shrine

it will take me a night
to sail by boat to the old city
of my ancestors
i will ride a horse for
another two days to
reach the shrine
where i shall bow down
in prayer lighting
a candle for the dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Sidewalk...

the mother was peeling
raw, green mangoes

selling them to kids in the
nearby elementary school

her son plays alone near
the bakery

there are no other kids
there anyway

lots of people walking to
and from like pendulums

the mother was so busy
attending to her small livelihood

the little boy falls off the sidewalk
hits her forehead on the pavement

the mother did not notice because
the street is noisy

at first the boy cried then stood up
and rearranges everything

he appears to his mother and
attaches his body on her side

the mother kisses his forehead
as though nothing happens

there must be a story behind this
why the boy has no father

why the mother takes charge of
having to sell mangoes to earn
she takes shelter under a big umbrella
beside a vending bicycle...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Speed Train In Taiwan

in your strange
country
i do not know how
to speak

but you are so
beautiful
and it is my heart
which does the
talking

you do not know me
this is the first time
we met
but you understand
perfectly
what is this love
all about

how easy is it to
start a conversation
using the hands, the
lips, and the eyes

how our heart beat
how short the hours have
become
how anxious are we that
this train trip shall
soon end

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Spring Garden

the last poem is not
about leaving

i do not like it
when you pack your clothes
take a bag and then enter a car
and leave

and i follow you at the
airport
and wave my hand goodbye

i do not subscribe to pre-departure
areas
it makes me sad really

the last poem is when i am back home
and i write what happens there

and i often say, the last poem is an error
because there is no such thing

the last poem stays at home
and begins again
the new episode of planting new seeds
in the spring
garden

RIC S. BASTASA
it is nice at the top
there is more fun in there
at the surface one sees
sun and landscapes of
plains and trees and houses and
trains and
roads,

at night, it is a city of
glittering diamonds
and you are on top of this
situation

it is nice swimming at the surface
seeing the rest enjoying their splash of
days

but it gets lonely
sometimes, at first, then most of the times
the nights are like clinging hands
pulling you down to
some depths of your
kept oceans

showing you the dark side
of your existence
the most silent part of it
this one
tells you the truth
and speaks straight to you
without
the flowers of
euphemistic living

you are plunged into a vast silence of the
deepest part in you
and you take all the risk
that somehow because of too much pressure
you break down into
pieces of
broken stars

porcelain, glass, cracking
and this inability to join the pieces together
makes you
incomplete again into the emptiness of your
being

what i hear is sighs in the depths like
some kind of
whales communicating that there is something greater
down there

rather than the top the surface which may offer you
a loud life laughing
but then deep inside their is this wailing and mourning
as though someone so well loved
has just passed away.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Tail Of The Rainbow

i work in codes
and you have to
decipher

the meaning from
those neutral letters
forming
a scenery of words
like
pools and mountains
and rivers
and leaves and
twigs
and stones
and sand

there are so many
which i put there
for me
to sometimes
remember and
smile

i never forget what
i put here

each word is a trail
that leads me always
back to myself

the syllables
are my fortresses
each sound is
an echo of
what happened
and must catapult me
beyond
this wall
at the tail of the
rainbow
are the imaginary
bridges of
our minds

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Taoist Temple

the steps are straight
guided by arrows

the stairs always go down
to the bottom of things

surprising why the man
with white socks and

black sandals got lost still
asking 'where's the way?'

to the parking area
just below the stuffed storks

on a man made
pond.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Time When Evil Men Triumph

his silence is deeper than the seven oceans
how can he accept that on his beloved land
evil men triumph
the bad unabated?

there were ten bodies unclaimed for ten days
the widows cannot weep for their husbands and children
all swept by the bullets of his terror

i look at it stoically
God is testing us what to do in times like these.
A tooth cannot be for another tooth.
Those were the years of eyes plucking each others' eyes.

There is this I, standing, there is this I, undisturbed
The devil now is worried
There is this I that worships God no matter what.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Time When Mother Left For Ozamis

i remember now
it was at that time when mother packed her clothes
and left my father for good
back in the little village where mother
was raised by grandmother
as a naive girl
keeping things to herself.
she dwells in a house of silence.

it was at that time when father said
that he loves her very much
that losing her would mean his death
but mother was no longer in the house
where we grew.

and of course, mother did not really believe him.
she died ahead of him, and he got drunk everyday, and
he put her picture on top of his chest and he cried all night long
staring at her face, black and white, her hair her mouth.
he died a year after and he was buried just beside her pantheon.

i still wonder if mother would believe him.

the silence is overwhelming. no one sweeps the heaps of leaves
and no wind is strong enough to clean the mounds filled with thick grass.

come summer time, i see white daisies blooming, and a black butterfly
hovers to stop a while. i watch closely this new turn of events.

it is like poetry. Some metaphors. Symbols, and hints. Love's mouth
wanting to say all over again, what the heart has constantly hidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Time When You Interrupted Me...

other people will
not be that as responsible as you expect them
do not be dismayed
this is just a part of that total
collage
without the black colors what
landscape can you make
there are shades that must complete
this picture
of humanity

do not be too arrogant
to reduce what you are not into a
humiliation
you have not worn any of their shoes
 sometime you must try
some

rain comes and it lands on every roof
and everyone
there is no bias or pre-selection as to who
needs water

you talk to me and tell me that you still
love Mexican music
i am lost and cannot concentrate on what i am
thinking now

i am confused and misty -eyed
there is no point now in putting things inside a box
i am becoming one of those whom i dislike
a lost direction a shot in the sky
a bird lifeless on the road
a little boy asking what is this all about
what is it that is up at night? shining too brightly!

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Top Of The Mountain

at the top of the mountain
where all of you are heading

nights and days trekking
rain or shine on half breaths coping

as i go down taking the usual trail
i am sad

seeing excited faces imagining
the beauty of the top

the feeling of that grip of power
i have something to tell them

but i know belief is rare
the faith is stronger to find something bigger

than our small existences like motes
in our eyes

up there
there is nothing, there is nothing

but the wind and the fog.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Top Of The Mountain....

the air begins
to thin,
you grasp for
breath
it is cold and
lonely

there is no one there
except you...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Train Station In Rotunda...

i stop for a while here
this corner where you too stopped
i am asking
if we have the same reason for
stopping here
this place where there is nothing to see
or touch
where you smoke a lot and pollute
my vision of the world
where death seems to be the only reason for living
i am taking this quiet stance
merely looking and scrutinizing
listening
passive like a common wall between us
i do not like to move
i may create that ripples in the air
and it will give you a justification to harm me
i lean against this wall
shifting the weight of my mind to the bricks
and you look down

there is this distance that we feel
and you like it
i can hear that
even if you do not utter that
i live in another world
and you have created your own
different scents and colors
you want that this must not be understood
in the same manner
that i want it

we like to part ways now
not friends not foes
plain strangers again without names
no judgments

by this time you consumed all the cigarettes
and the smoke has conspired with the air
everything is clear now
the sound of the train is getting near like an ambulance
we are finally rescued from this
separation this
strangeness
innate in human existence

can this inability to connect and be a part of someone
can this appreciation of freedom
can that only preaches alienation
and segregation

in this parting there is no goodbye
you never know me and i never know you
we are always
not interested

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Train Station Somewhere In Canada

and so it was evening
a Kenyan woman asks you if you are Chinese
and if you are married and if you have kids
& how many

on the pavement just below the bench
a white man is drunk
and could not carry himself back
on his feet

the Kenyan woman asks if you are waiting
for someone
and you point to the white man
who wriggles to signify that he still
hears both of you
talking about him

the train arrives and you both go inside
the Kenyan woman and you

you tell her that you are not Chinese
you are not married
and that you simply want to go back home

she says her teen age child is lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Ultima Club

WATching the 4D movie
of the

LOST iSLAND, Got bitten almost
by a snake

the plane crashes beside
an erupting volcano

meanwhile the aborigenes
keep on shooting with their spears

the woman beside me
screams

to this illusion as i keep
waiting when will this

unnecessary thing end
i want to go to the door and take

my escape from this
hallowed

commercialism, consumerism
and wastage of my

shattering humanity
my dripping soul absorbed

by the dry money paper
laundered in the group laughter

sun shine, all artificial man made
creations of the mind boggling

like a crayon doodle
fingers scratching for meaning
At The Universe Central Saigon Hotel

time is different here
and so we have to pay an extra
day charge

there is no need to argue
we volunteer to be liable.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Valentine's Cafe

never have i
seen so many
lonely people
on the arms of
other so many
people in
this world

on shallow
laughter they
swim
their bodies
floating
like paper
boats
with candle
lights
turned off.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Veranda

her hair is black and curly
and she is so tight
and young and you
do not speak to her
as she waits for
her lover at
the veranda of
this house

you stand on a door
half open where your
eyes take the
luxury of looking
at her

she blushes and
pretends
that she is scrolling
a name in her
cell phone

you pretend you
look at the stars
crowding a black
cloud up
the silent sky

she steals a look at you
she wants you
but she is here
at the master's
bedroom
and her name
has always been
fear

he looks at her again
and winks
in the mirror beside
her

'she is fast asleep' he said.

she has no answer

she smiles.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The War Remnants' Museum

we watched the pictures of the
war and it victims

we stopped joking

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wedding Ceremony

and then it is time for the bride
to speak
as custom dictates,

her hands are trembling
her tongue
unable to utter any word
and drops of tears
fall from her eyes
she looks at the crowd
and bows her
head with so much
gratitude
on this special occasion of
her life

she cries and resigns
back to her seat

we know what she means
happiness that cannot be
contained in the hands of
words
so much bliss
so many tears falling

tears of joy!

the groom kisses her again
the audience clap
for a new beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wedding Of A Niece

...so finally i attended
the wedding
i doubted my ability to
be present
and witness the kissing
couple
sadly i was not touched
thinking about someone
else
whom i think had always
been preoccupied
with anger

i always drink a lot and
eat some more
wanting to damage myself
slowly
dying
if only to forget what truth
lies there
inside that box of
feathers.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wedding Table

..there was this man
well dressed beside me
does not smile
somehow i did not mind
until he asks
if i know a certain Ric

i said i am.
and then he smiles at me

perhaps thinking
how did i ever get so old and so fat?

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wedding Today

the bride and groom
in their 30's
kissed lips to lips
for fifty seconds
and then the relatives
clapped their hands
helping them to stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wharf

a man with a white face towel
half naked
bends on the cemented beam
of the wharf
looking for
canaries
this early cold morning
when the sea
is calm like a white sheet
on the table

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Wildlife Park

the monkeys stare at us
and so are the cockatoos
the alligators the porcupines
the boas and cobras
they're all named, numbered
and confined in their cells
others in glass others in iron grills

they're all for open view
of course for a fee to maintain
the park and the man made wildlife

sometimes i ask myself
they are but prisoners
on what charge? upon whose
complaint? what penalties?
when will their incarceration end?
what is the justification of their capture?

oh i see, just for our pleasure.

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Willie Show...

gosh! you must have seen
the four-year old boy
imitating the macho dance
gyrating
watched by many people
laughing
there is no hint of prurience
neither malice was there
and what was seen next
were the tears of the boy
falling from his eyes

soon there were lot of stories
passed
that the child was exploited
forced to dance

debates came
others call
to stop the Willie show

some things went awry
indeed
many thinkers came but
if we only asked
and this is my theory on the matter

perhaps the boy cried
because his shoes were
too tight for his
feet and not because of
anything else...

RIC S. BASTASA
At The Zoo

the tigress
is tearful to see her cub
bringing a pink candle
for her
on her 12th birthday
in her cage
at the zoo

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Age (50 To 60)

everything becomes
merely nothing
but reminiscences

nothing efflorescent
or even fluvial

once there was a boy
rising from rags to riches

once there was a girl
who became the wife of the president

once there was a love so true
it brought nothing but sadness

once there was a home
splintered like a grenade

once there were beautiful times
fading like sunset.

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Hour After Tonight

at this hour
after tonight

when the darkness is over
when dusk peeps in

inside my sighing soul
the warm body whistles

for again it has triumphed
as it feasts upon
the madness of its own flesh

the soul does not perish
but it cannot
for the time being
on some divinities relish

ah! look at this firm body
it has a tongue & a mouth
and luscious lips

it is dominated by its king
this....sex organ

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Hour I Am Irresponsible

i hurry
to reach this place
but when i arrive before
time
i realize i do nothing
except to
stare at something
that stares at me
too
like we are strangers
wanting to know
what we are
with our long
gazes

this is a mirror
but i am not
seeing
my own face

it is yours
which i have not really
touched.

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Hour Of Separation

at this hour of our parting
i hold your hand to feel its last warmth
you do not look at me
to my glances
you have chosen an evasion

you wore your dark glasses
you enter a certain darkness
where you think
i cannot see your eyes with tears

clouds drift at your face
you go
finding your place inside the
predeparture area
i wave my hand and left you

you are gone
the plane slices the clear skies
i know
from up there
i am but an ant below the haze
distance does
the inevitable forgetting

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Hour, It Is The Deep Of The Night

at this hour, it is the deep of the night
calm,
silent,
there is no wind blowing, i can hear the typing
of words
in this keyboard, this personal computer, writing,
because i cannot sleep, after we made love, because i am still
thinking what to do with my life,
what is the next move,
after love,
when there is no hate, because i have stopped feeling altogether
all those years,
and the years shall come slowly like some growing children
in your eyes, not seeing how the cells add to become their innocent eyes,
i am here again at midnight, then dawn,
2: 11 a.m.
that is the time here in this room
on this island
on this nook of the big, wide world,
time had made some divisions for all of us
for you it is morning, and for her it is noon,
but we are here writing at this moment for all different reasons,
some claim happiness and bliss and love and nature and hope,
i still claim my main reasons,
doubt, this sadness that has known how it is to write and be not able
to get a sound sleep, this lostness in space trying to find
where is everything
from nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Hour...

i stopped looking for the moment,
it is not here anymore
that moment with you
when you arrive and then when you are finally gone
without saying hello
without saying goodbye
and you left me
without the sound of the soft wind by the window
and then i look at the star
trying to figure out
the reason for distances
wanting to be logical about space and emptiness
when there is
none.

at this hour
i could be dead,
i could have wanted death,
but death is not mine
it is
yours.

run, run, do not sleep tonight,
chase the shadows of life
hold tight
to the fingers of the morrows
have faith
on what you've finally got,
tell me

what is it?

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Moment

at this moment
since you arrive late
what you will see
on the blades
of grass are nothing
but dusts

you never really
loved the dew

you never really
wanted to feel
the moist of mists

soon it will be the wriggling worms
underneath they have all the books

most of the words are cold
and likely the sounds too mournful

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Moment Of My Life

at this moment of my life
there is nothing to prove

nothing to build anymore
all beginnings have found
their sought endings

there is nothing to see
everything have seen what
they ought to see

there is nothing to feel
everything had been felt before

there is nothing to fear
everything is so near
there is something to touch
it is light it is fire.
it is at the tip of my finger
it stays on my tongue
and my heart keeps on singing

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Moment....

at this moment
i am writing

i am writing for
no one

not even for myself
or perhaps

i am writing because
i have nothing more

important to be done.

at this moment

my business is just
to write and keep on
writing until i get
sleepy

at this moment of
an afternoon
i am alone again
and i am trying to fill
a void
within.

this is the moment
as in other moments
nothing divine
nothing physical

a play with words
passing time.

RIC S. BASTASA
honestly, at this point, don't say that i am
pointless, i am driving something
though blunt, and not as sharp as what
you have sliced yourself with before
(and remember i saved you from shame)
and
death.

now, try saving me myself.
i am in love again and my age is 50.

can you help me on this?
it has nothing to do with you
since there was never us

in the first place.

save me. Make me hate love.
Undo my vested interest of having to love someone
who cannot love me in return.

Unrequited.

But do not misjudge me.
I still know how to leave for another twenty years.

i am a master of pretenses.
i have iguana pets on my bed of
roses.

RIC S. BASTASA
At This Worst Times Who Cannot Create His Own Universe?

well i never
bother with what you
say

i must be bothered
much with what i
can do

in this universe
i am the center
the sun

at this worst times
who cannot create
his own universe?

RIC S. BASTASA
At Times

AT TIMEs
it is hard to shift from him to i,
all because there is something too personal
that should not have been
invaded by any
noun, lest things serious becomes
trivialized and
loses face, but there are slips of the tongue
and these so called
unguarded moments of the body
(when the soul is asleep
during the days of your grief)
when the I asserts itself like a kamikaze
on its suicide plane
ranting
and with a black smoke that
catches its ass
glides to earth
and dies

RIC S. BASTASA
some give silence
and then take the exit
and forget

others clench their
fists and make
the announcement
of chaos

other simply write
a diary
make a poem
and then leave
for another place
where they
are more
welcome where their
irrelevance is
still accepted.

others do what
is violent
they explode tall
buildings
and hijack planes
and kill
even their own bodies
to meet
twelve virgins
waiting for
them in heaven

others merely stay
and pray
and hope for the
better
for the change of hearts
for the enlightenment
that this earth is all ours
and we are
all brothers.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Twin Lakes (Coron)

somehow you arrive
at a conclusion that we are all rocks
with unique
formations and strangers love to watch
us
that we are some towers
facing the sea
some have solid hands
praying to the sky

you feel that you hear nothing
the screams for help are gone
and what reigns supreme
are only our
very one voices
speaking upon our
consciences

our lips are sealed forever
there is no use for
conversations

it is the words of the world
that speak for themselves
without using
our words

thus you climb upon a steep rocky hill
then go down
to find a deep blue lake
without a fish
with nothing but dead corals
trying to entice you
to become alive
and be one with everybody in the
silence of the
ferns
you swim and feel the coldness of the water
you feel love
because there is no one there anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
At Two O’clock In The Afternoon

You complicate yourself
It is hot and you need a fan
You sweat
And in between some quick naps
You snap
For some missing thoughts
And you said
You need something to take
To remember
What you miss awhile
You need coffee
Or lemon tea
You do not want
Something cold
This is the hot portion of the day
And you do not want to crack
You scribble
There is something that is terribly lacking
In this foreplay of a good remembering
Something passionate
Or romantic
Or something to shock you so you do not
Get sleepy
You remember some lines at the tip
Of your tongue
But you cannot complete what you just remember
You sip coffee
It is so sweet and you do not like sugar
At two o’clock in the afternoon
You are half awake
You want to write but you cannot remember
You would rather sleep
But it is just too hot
And you are sweating

You keep mumbling words
Keeping yourself busy with what you
Remember and forget and cannot
Completely discard
Something is bugging you really
You know
You just don’t want to say it
You simply want to ignore it
It is facing you confronting you
Like a neighbor wanting
A fistfight
You turn your head away
And you keep saying it is hot and I
Need coffee but there is so much sugar
I can have tea, I am busy
Either you can have her or me

Not both, for God’s sake
Face it.

RIC S. BASTASA
At Ward 15....

so after having known that X is the prodigy
who once hails from Ward 15
you finally decide that you don't want to be one
like us....

did you ever think that i could be one who
pretends to tell you the truth
that creativity also demands the folly of the fox
the slyness of the wolf
the meekness of the dove?

did you ever reflect yourself like a mirror under the bed
capturing light from the leak of the wall
inside that house where a wife screams at the husband
when the husband finally strikes the head of
the woman with his fists?

there are no more standards of what we can be
there are only unfinished paths
and we are here called upon to build them
to try at least one and follow where we cut the stems of trees
the tallness of grasses
the sharpness of the thorns

the bleakness of the beaks of our days
the way how our bodies grown feathers and wings
and when we fly
higher than you think will you ask again if you still be
one of us?

when we are on top
we do not brag about it
it is usual and expected
because you cannot follow
when it is dark
because you do not know how to
absorb light
because you cannot detect which
place is warmer
and viable as the resting place
of our beautiful souls....

RIC S. BASTASA
At Your Party

i will invite
the flies and there
will be so many

RIC S. BASTASA
Atlantis

if you must remember me
try remembering Atlantis

the continent that used to be
the place of the great kingdom

it am it and i shall fulfill the destiny
for soon i shall be lost

and there shall be no more day
that someone remembers

my silence shall forever be
deep down the depths of the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Atm

At this moment
the brown dogs are barking
a green which has
remained closed the whole
week

the beach umbrella lies
folded on the white sand and
the rain begins to fall

an old woman on the side of
the village road is selling
papayas....

RIC S. BASTASA
Attending The Wedding Somewhere In Mindanao

i attend a wedding today
the groom is Hungarian
the bride is Filipina, but she looks like
an apsara dancer,
with her long black hair,
 thick eyebrows
and sunken
eyes

i remember Angkor Wat

as i see it, they are so in love with each other
that they only have a very small world of their own
and the only thing they know is
kiss,
kiss,
kiss, and embrace
and smile
and kiss again

i time it: 42 seconds long

as usual they have the slice of the cake
and the sharing of the wine

glasses are click again by the guests with their spoons
asking for more kisses

i finally get tired seeing them kiss
everything that is always repeated becomes

a big pester (am i envious? or
am i just bored?)

my wife is there beside me with her casual blue skirt and
flower printed blouse from Kuala lumpur

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
actually it is already 9 o'clock in the evening and we are very sleepy....

RIC S. BASTASA
i see in your
words an attempt to make
poetry as a form
of story telling
a diary, a journal for the day,
a note,
a reminder like a dog mark
or a magnetic post
on the refrigerator
sometimes i go beyond
all these things
seeing scars
poke marks, acne,
a mote,
a blister, oh yes,
what about that burn?
an injury being healed
by the caresses of
words without
the capacity for rhythm

i see in you what others
have not seen,
a silence that curls like
a snake,
that in extreme hit
gives a rattle,
a warning for those who
come and mess
with you,

you know when
to bite
and it is only
when necessary
when your
castle of privacy
is invaded
with nothing but the
obvious
degraded into
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Attention!

Please do not submit poems that include words like (, , , , , , s.n o. a ).

Please do not use such letters as u......to complete the s......for the a, shole s e a a u f i

etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

Please read all of the formal rules written on this page. The poems that do not meet these rules will be removed.

and

&
what if i write a poem
with some letters missing

yu. t?

we; ; y i like to u.e the wo.d too
and the
in some other artful ways
and the
in some medical means

just a matter of contexting...

poetry, you deals with how we feel
when meets the
in some wildlife parks

to create the sparks of life, one of those nice gifts the Great Lord
has given us

and for
.

well, rules are rules are rules for our peaceful co-existence
but honestly
i have not seen anybody die yet, or being killed by this certain disease
by simply uttering the
word

what i see is the feeling of relief in a democratic state
where one whose chest
or breast is filled with so much oppression and having not means
of satisfying himself
or retaliating from the walls of oppression

the ones inflicted by the
Board of Censors
against his purity of honest expression
when you have no other remedy except to say

just to relieve yourself, and then you sit and drink your beer
and lift your feet high against the mighty sun
shielding your face your eyes from such a mighty stare

and

indeed is the only right word
and you get healed.

i copy. i bow. i am diminished.

half-beast half-man
are we,

we cannot deny always the other
lurking just behind our backs
ready always for a kill.

half-man, half-best
half-angel, half-devil,

truly i am,
and if this angel has the right to say

praise God in the Highest
let the other one say also what is buried in his real heart

the his only right to say
and be himself too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Attorney's Blank Eyes
	single at 50
it is his birthday today
and he sits there on the bench
with blank eyes

(i am unkind to ask
what sins must his father commit
to punish him now?)

(i am judgmental.
i am silent. i look at him with curiosity.
as though he is a stray cat
on the road, deserted by
the bitch)

his hands are clasped.
he looks bound.

got no girlfriend at 50
(but he is not gay
in fact, he had many girls
around him.
a harem of his
Arabian nights, but he has lonely eyes
white skin,
frail bones, he is losing hair)

got nothing, despite
his fortune and luck.

another lonely creature in court.
lost dragonfly

wanting to be crushed by a hammer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Attractions And Distractions

at 18
attraction is a magnet
nails and
shreds of iron fillings
all absorbed

at 25
something changes
because of
the seeping pains
i doubt and i begin
to know
that i am

at 35
one wavers about
what to attract
and when to be
attracted
selective they say
there exists
now this discriminating taste

at 45
everything happens like a
bad dream
who will ever know
that this is what i am
really
i don't even know
anymore

at 55
attraction gets boring
i don't pay attention to
what gives pleasure
or pain

they are all the same
waste of time
and breaks my heart
and weakens
my soul

at 65
i want to rest my case
with all
peace there is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Attuned....

everything slips away
ah, that usual feeling of sands thru your fingers
water from a cup of hands
air inside your nostrils reaching your lungs
giving it back
in a single sigh

one becomes an expert at expulsion somehow
yes wasted but not consumed
feeling the loss but not fearing anything anymore
that way of embracing rejection
like what happens to everyone else
we're all in these
suffering yes, but not that long enough
one masters the pain
and does not talk about the details
under the moon
darkness turns out to be a home
silence a favorite
recreation

RIC S. BASTASA
Auden....

to learn to live
without the stars

to embrace once
more an open sky
barren and sublime

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura

we never met
but for years now
we seem to melt
you're cheese
and i'm the
hot burger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 10

I've been talking to a
man that i never really
know who
and he is also talking to
me as though
we are familiar
places
and known faces

We have no more
questions to ask
about ourselves and
we are talking about
how to improve this
world and solve
some of its problem

I am real, i am my picture
he is a shadow, and he has two names
he proposes solutions,
as i agree,

Then tonight we go back to our
rooms, look at the clock,
it is deep and dark and cold
and we sleep again
taking time, rest, and perhaps
dream, and recall
what dreams we had
the night before until everything goes
blank and someone
who sees both of us
must have felt pity

That we are not yet dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 2

As i smell
the good flavor
of food
from a far resto
so must have
i smelled
the goodness
in you....

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 3

I know who Laura is,
from the shape of her
footprints

She knows me too well enough
from the odor of my sweat

when we meet again
we shall discard masks and
clothes....

what we'd been through is nonsense to you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 4

the higher you go
the more you will know that there is nothing there
the more you will feel the coldness
and the thinness of air

some felt so light, as light as a feather
and they fall back to the ground

crushed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 5

today i watch a film
about love

it is so touching
i had it repeated over and over again

six times and i do nothing but watch
and then it becomes another

meaningless film because i watch it over and over again
which goes without saying

that something always repeated numbs the senses
blunts the taste

and turns out to be senseless

perhaps i will keep it for a while
and let those days, and months and years test it

if it is good, then it must be still good
despite the luster.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 6

I have a friend's nephew
who keeps on repeating words
five to six times
and he wants you to pay attention

I heard that during the time when she was conceived
his mother did not like it,
(another unwanted pregnancy due to poverty)

if you do not know about this
of course, you get irritated by his arrogance of repetition
as though you are deaf and dumb

but knowing how unwanted he once was
and perhaps now still
you begin to understand
how cruelty and madness and selfishness created him

and that there is a need to listen
for each repeated word
as a matter of him punishing us, or his mother, or his father
because we never wanted him
and here he is
born without even his permission.

now we must pay for his autism.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 7

there is a person
whom you meet
just this morning
in the market place

your eyes meet
and you want to remember
yet you cannot

and you stop walking
and this person walks fast past you
and at a distance
looks back at you but you cannot still
remember
and he cannot remember too
and so both of you leave

you must have imagined
that both of you are aliens
and here you are
still alienated in this world
where you
find yourselves in
a common ground yet
without memories
and living with some other people
that you never like...

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 8

i first arrive in the bus
and then she
next to me
and we never had a chance to
talk on that long trip

did she not know that she
slept on my chest
and that i did not close
my eyes
throughout the night?

the following morning
she woke up
refreshed and she did not
even bother
asking my name

when she left the bus
in that next town
it seemed that nothing happened
and i presumed too
that some things happened
for no reason at all
and even without any
significance or meaning or
thought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Aura 9

In the seminary
the Prefect
saw to it that we
become buddies of
the faith

in the university
we were put in the
same class
and we had only one
book for both
of us

it wasn't easy of
course
how i hated his guts
and how he disliked mine

he asked me why
and i told him ' how would
i know? '

and he fell silent
knowing that he felt
the same for me

and when we both left
the seminary
we really felt so
dumb and free.

RIC S. BASTASA
be reminded that
in reaching the ethical
goal
one must compromise
at the middle
ground
between two
sinful extremes

Aristotle says
that is virtue.

(Horace's Odes II,10)

RIC S. BASTASA
that exact moment when you say

i do not care anymore

that moment when you drop your reading glasses on the floor

when the coffee gets cold untouched

when one finally leaves you and you have no word to say

when they say the world ends today and you just look at them without a whimper

and when you step upon a broken glass and you bleed and

too you say once again i do not care anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Authenticity

he lives not to please anyone
and if by chance he has pleased her
it is just a matter of consequence
for indeed the cause is somewhere else
not her or anyone else

it is just plain and simple
personal hygiene and good grooming
and self love and human obligation

RIC S. BASTASA
Authenticity (And The Ocean)

by not saying the truth
you find the authentic me
within is the struggle
not for freedom

too much freedom
like a wide ocean
see me as a lone boat
amidst the storm

flashes of lightning
and growling sounds of thunder

i am a boat
without a passenger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Autistic Poetry

got a few words
and nothing much to say
so i repeat one word
and another word
sounding pretty much
the same
without much meaning

morning is good
good morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Autistic, Dyslexic

love, love, love,
where are you? love, love, love
why do you keep yourself in the darkness
of subsumed silence?
open up, heart o heart, open up, beat like a gong
be loud, so others
dead in their silent pains may wake up
from their deaths
so many deaths in one hour of living
love, love, love, come, come, come
be with us,
don't run, don't run, please don't run away from
us, who lives are ruined
by too much hatred, and guilt and
repetition.

we need sleep.
now that we have said our dyslexic lines.

love is, i think, a form
of autism.

RIC S. BASTASA
Autobiography Of A Seagull

the mother of course is a white seagull
who made love with a seagull
one springtime
when all the snow have turned to sea

and there were ten eggs
i am the fourth to hatch from among the ten
hardheaded shells

all my siblings love the fish and the sea
and the breeze
except me

all the while, i want to be human.

RIC S. BASTASA
Automation

a seed that falls to the ground
from a dead, rotten fruit
cracks its covering and
sprouts

a tight bud soon
from a stalk opens up to become
a full blooming flower
with petals proud and
dignified

and so must you girl
be the seed and the bud
and be the full flower that you can be
in full automation

RIC S. BASTASA
Automation (2)

stars
sketching themselves
on a mirror
of universal galore

moon and moons
light years
planets minding their
own orbits

it's orderly
every being so quiet

keen and keel
sails and snails
the peas
at peace on a
universe of verses

RIC S. BASTASA
Automation...........

if it is yours
it will come

when you arrive
the door opens

when you enter
the living room
the chair rushes
for you to sit upon

when you are hungry
and you go to the kitchen
the plates and spoons and forks
move by themselves
and serve you food

a room lights itself
the blankets and pillows
arrange themselves
for you to rest and sleep

fate knows what you
become
what you are and
what shall you be
fate seals you
and knows where to
put you
till the end of your
day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Automaton

when we wake up again this morning
we do not really know what to do
we stare a while on that closed window
still blurred by the frost
we rub our eyes trying to make matters clear
and then all the impulses rush
and then with all the images filling our empty mind
there are, we begin again, so many things to be done,
so much unfinished businesses, so short a life,

time is so swift with feet so nimble.

RIC S. BASTASA
Autumn In My Mind

i guess the color must be pastel
pastel yellow and the feeling must be humid
or if not it is something soft and yet dry
and the only motion like what candice describes in her poem must always be the falling and falling and falling and falling and

touching the ground with so much silence except the murmur of the wind always passing by and not really remembering anything between us

but i always remember yes, always, the pulsating pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Avoid Perdition...

in the backward city
magic is everywhere

a frog turns into a prince
a maid into a princess
witchy witchy itchy itchy
betcha by golly wow wow wow

like everything else
politics, family, office
magicians abound

money talks and talks so
efficiently
the ugly becomes beautiful
the loser becomes a winner
the unknown becomes famous

learn, learn, learn
and to avoid trouble, just listen
look, stare, do not mind

keep doing and going and
just be happy: who cares?
to each his own, avoid perdition.

RIC S. BASTASA
Avoiding A Rejection

take a part of your
pelvic bone

close your eyes
let someone take
the flesh

and bone to bone
of your own bone

let it grow
smoothly

to get rid of the pain
and start anew

bone to bone
of my contention
following yours
nothing
opposing
blood following
the flow

RIC S. BASTASA
Awareness

hearing the sound
of the feet
of the ant
pulling a crumb
of bread
on the floor
just right
below
my feet

and then
noticing
the feather
of the bird
you picked
yesterday
under the tree
while you
were walking

it has fallen
from your
table and
then it dropped
on the floor
beside the
red ant

you heard
the sound of
softness
and it was
very loud

RIC S. BASTASA
Awareness Of A Busy Man

how can he
possibly notice that there
is a cockroach
swimming in his
bowl of
noodles?

or the white pebble
on the pond of his
shifting preferences?

or the rose tattoo on the
left thigh of the woman that
he slept with
last Friday night?

it's his own credit card
that he minds
not some dust inside
the seat of his car

RIC S. BASTASA
Awareness To Fly In The Skies

it is this awareness of the hidden wings
that makes us think of flying

when? it all depends when you finally
decide to shed off your dress
your skin and bones

when? it all depends on when you
are ready with flumes and feathers
when you feel that you belong to the clouds
and not to the patch of land and grass

when? when you feel that you do not belong anymore
to me or anybody else
or to the world

it is only then when
it is time to fly up there to the highest peaks
of your longings where there shall be no more falling

RIC S. BASTASA
Away From Everyone....

to avoid a collision
we simply drifted apart
you flow with the tide
i flow against it

when will we be at sea
again? honestly, i detest
the thought of another
reunion

i wish to turn into a stone
be beside those urchins and
corrals
i long for the silence of
the depths
away from everyone...

RIC S. BASTASA
Away From People....

in this village
no one knows that
i am, sort of,
well, a poet, though
it is not really
the word that mostly
describes me here.
it is enough that
i am given space to
breathe, ..i live,
i go around, round
and round, but the
fact is, i still
remain, as an ending
of the usual letter
which i send to a
friend, or cousin,
mostly of whom are
in distress, as another
citizen. I have a name
here, but not that
familiar. A nephew asks
if i like it, and i said
it does not matter.
we are in the beach,
away from people, from
snakes and parasites,
and i am trying to
catch ball...which
i sorely miss this
time because i left
my glass at home...
and i got no cellphone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Away From The Deep

forget the deep
we have experienced what drowning is
the past is over
we begin again for something new
this wading
in the shallow waters
we bear witness to the whiteness
of our flat feet
we store some confidences
we throw unnecessary fears

sometimes
being a pig gives a nice feeling

how does it feel perhaps
to be a buffalo wallowing in the mud?

not thinking about what they think
not thinking about the
strict codes for tomorrow?

time's getting too short
the hands of time have been too cruel
let us take this moment
little pleasures that may last us for
another short lifetime

let 's swim, let's get muddy
let us be happy

forget how was breathing
when we were in the deep sinking

RIC S. BASTASA
Away From The Madhouse Of The Chattering Crowd.

I just read about the 20 most interesting people to watch and read for 2013.

amazing. really amazing.
one feels like a dead jellyfish
the other says life is a shore
with lots of waves and the
other says he eats cannibals.

i shiver. One feels autumn in
summer. I can't relate. Going
back to my room and facing
the same screen, i face
my own blankness.In the mirror
at this moment i am a man without
a face. I feel like i am not interesting at all.

well everyone feels this. A speck of
dust a grain of rice, indistinct
upon a big bowl. The shore is endless, and the sky is limitless.

but i never want fame. I like it this way. I go out of my door
walk alone, and the crowd sees no one. I see all of them, and
that is enough to make life so ls in the zoo.
Stuffed toys in the store.
A dress shop. A show of guns and bullets. And then another explosion headlining the most famous people entangled in that ending.

I'm lucky. I am not in the headline.
I am back home, watch the news.
Eyes get tired and then have some sleep on an hour without restrictions.

No one tells me that in this broad daylight, it is not good to have sleep. As others work themselves to death, I rest at my own choice. I am nothing. After all, this is nobody at his utmost luxury, in privacy, in seclusion, happily situated away from the madhouse of the chattering crowd.

RIC S. BASTASA
Away From Those Deceiving Details Let Me Live.

from a distance
seven hills away
let me think
let me see
what beauty is there
left for me
what grace is there
that is found in you
in absence.

away from those
deceiving details
let me live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Awed And Clapping...Life

it is hot here
and for weeks there had been no rain,

dusty roads, feeling sick,
moans of windy days,
and humid nights,
sweat and tears, and lonely talks

despite, children sing,
faith sticks like epoxy to a broken wing

when leaves fall upon the touch of the passing wind,
i hear the music of the coming rain,
a symphony of dry leaves,
finally finding their places on the soil theater
where i am

part of the audience awed and
clapping...

RIC S. BASTASA
Awesome!

IT is your word, but could be mine, when you saw the pictures, of little boys and girls posing for the centerfold of mama's love, where papa is nowhere to be found, or uncle's attention, because mama has not been good enough to call them pretty,

awesome!

it is your word for the ricefields green, filled with the light of the sun, where the white herons are friends with the black carabaos pasture graze, graze, till the afternoon ends, the day when the sea is calm and the sand so white unblemished by any man's sadness or any woman's grief,

awesome!

you saw the old man and the old woman hugging missing the moments of their youth now in each other's arms again despite names forgotten and places gone away

awesome!

it is always your word against mine as i take the pictures rehearsing them again in my mind now
with captions and human conversations
in low key

where shall we go next and gather
and then again remember?

RIC S. BASTASA
Awit Sa Pagdayeg

sayo ang pag-awit
diha sa pagdayeg sa Dios
samtang ang mga langgam
nga dayo nga nangbatog sa
kahoy nga kaimito
wala pang kalupad paingon
sa lugar diin wala pa nimo
bisan kausa maadto....

RIC S. BASTASA
Awit Sa Usa Ka Babaye Nga Nag-Inosara

Ang pag-inusara ang imong gipili.
Ug busa mao kana ang nahitabo.
Kay kon unsa ang imong gisamkon
Mao baya ang imong ipanganak.

Gisamkon mo ang pag-inusara.
Gianak mo ang kamingaw, ug
Imo kining giamoma, gipatubo
Diha sa imong tugkaran.

Gisuroy mo ang mga gabii diha
Sa imong hardin, nakighinabi ka
Sa mga bitoon ug bulan nga milandag
Sa imong tanaman ug kakahoyan.

Miawit ka: huni sa gugma.
Nadungog sa hangin ug gihatod
Kini sa mga bungtod, lapos sa dagat
Ug mga suba, hangtod pa gani sa bangaw.

Subo ang imong awit kutob sa dag-om
Nga pahanod. Nabasa ang uga nga yuta.
Namulak ang mga rosas. Imong gikutlo
Ug imong gihalokan ang imong kaugalingon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ay Pawond May Hebin

ay pawond may heben
da di ay mit yo
an ay no it
ay kanot porget yo

it wuz ol pun
antil wi partid

heben wuz short lib
an so i waz lif brokin hartid

naw ay kip sirtsing
ebri park, ebre dremlan dat ay ben to
bat may lost heben
antil wen kan i payn yu?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ayaw Ako Usa Og Pukawa

kon nganong
gipasiga ang suga
samtang giangkon
ka pa
sa katulugon

kon nganong sa
sayong kabuntagon
nasangpit mo
ang ngalan sa
yawa?

ngano kaha nga
gipili mo man ang
kasakit kaysa
sa kalipay?

ngano kaha nga karon
mas naisog ka
kaysa imong kagahapon?

ngano kaha?
ngano ba nga mas gibuhat
mo man
ang sayop kaysa
sakto?

O, lawas, o kalag
mahimo bang
sabotan ninyo kini
sa laing higayon?

gikapoy ko
katulgon ko
ayaw ako
usa og pukawa

RIC S. BASTASA
Ayaw Ko Ilara

palihug lang langga ayaw ko ilara
nianang imong usa ka nipis nga halok

ayaw awata ang mga ngabil ni hudas
ayaw ako og ilara sa paglutaw diha
sa mabaw nga sapa kay ako dili na bata
nga molangoy ug motidlom
padulong sa imong dughan

dugay ra akong nahimong bato
ug dili na malumos sa imong dagayday

palihug lang ayaw na ko ilara
sa imong gamay kaayo nga halok
kay dili na kana nako mabati
ug ayaw ko paambita anang mga lamigas
nga gadimdim sa katam-is

pasagdi ang mga langgam magpabilin
sa ilang mga salag silong sa imong simod
nga bugnaw pa sa mga dahon sa kahoy

dugay nang milayas ang mga langgam
dugay nang nangamatay ang mga lamigas

RIC S. BASTASA
Ayaw Pod Ihungit Uy!

Ako lang putlan ang kamot
Aron di lang pud hungit kayo
Kana bang di ra pud klaro
Kanang medyo, sort of,
Mora’g si Mister Yoso.

Sama ini:
Gitulon sa kangingit
Ang kahayag. Smooth sa esophagus.
Gabii na, morag dako ug itom nga
Uwak. Milupad, miwarawara sa iyang
Mga pako. Gitukob ang adlaw.

Tan-awa ko, piyong kadyot
Kadyot lang, dugangi pa kadyot.
Ukba pod ang imong mata
Ayaw pagpamilok. Piloa ang imong
Dila. Paduladulaa sa imong tilaok.
Ayaw tunla. Ang imong dila
Kanang padulong sa imong
Gihadom sa kasingkasing

Ok ra ka?
Kagahi pa sa imong panumdoman
Katig-a ba sa cover design sa imong
Kasingkasing. Hard copy.

Matu’g ko sa katre ni
Procrustes. Na, hala, inata
Ang akong tiil. Biraha pagpugos
Kay mubo ra.

Ingon ana gyod kana si
Sisyphus. Snub kaayo, sige
Lang aswat ligid sa iyang bato.
Maghimo og dakong lingin
Walay katapus an walay sinugdanan.

Sus, buntag na man diay! Time na
para malibang. Makigsulti na pod ko
Sa akong tai. Di na ko patugatuga’g
Kaon og mais.

RIC S. BASTASA
**Azul....**

Shades of blue confront the
man in blue, so blue, but not
electric blue, the blue in faded jeans
saddening blue, the blue in marble,
glossy, but sadder still, the faint
blue of a heavy sky, laden with rain
some restraints, falling suppressed,
the blue in that deserted lagoon,
those blue Spanish eyes gone,
the navy blue without an address,
the blue lips, lesser in oxygen
content,
the bluebird perched upon a twig,
kingfisher blue without a fish,
a blue heart, pastel blue shirt
torn blue, blues, blue bruises....

the puerto azul....

RIC S. BASTASA
Babay Na

babay na babayeng
taga canada
adto na ako sa baybayon
kay malibang kadyot
niining init kaayo nga
kaodtohon

unsa kahay akong
dlhon nga ilo?

RIC S. BASTASA
Babbling....

the sea has mastered the mass
production of waves
like millions of white foamy
eyelashes
the shore multiplies its own sands
that gleam like diamonds at noon
the trees grow leaves upon its twigs
the spiders spit their own silk
just like the worms
air is breathing upon its own
molecules
no one notices all these miracles
every aspect is normal
there is nothing extraordinary
things flow like water
coolness gush like wind
clouds flit, rain pours, the winds from
the sea hushes
my hands type the words for anything
trying to make poetry unnoticeable
there is nothing extraordinary now about
words on feelings long numbed
when you read this
you shall notice nothing but mass production
too, and you tell yourself
what kind of desecration of the words
is this phenomenon?
desanctify fear, desedify what is divine
make things flow like water
let the air be but just molecules
now, what is so extraordinary about you?
there is no such thing now
as discriminating taste...

RIC S. BASTASA
granting that you want to be transformed into a fish, 
let me be your aggressive cormorant. 
i will take you whole.

RIC S. BASTASA
Baby

in my world
all things move
like creepers

like strawberry
tendrils
on a very
wide field

it rains all day
but all possibilities grow here
like seeds

i like sunshine
the warmth of its kindness
but i dispensed with it

i love
the pebbles drenched with
rain

they are mute
but the have learned the silence
of their songs

in my world
i am just one of the possibilities
i am a seed
but i may decide not to grow

i may simply be
one of the pebbles that learned to love
the silence of their songs

i like it here
thick and covered
dark and damp.
Baby Can I Hold U Tonyt?

baby it's colder tonight
and i am out of the house again
looking for someone to fill the void
inside my heart
this constant void looking for
someone to fill my longing
for love
baby i see you walking in the park
wearing the same face that i have
looking for someone to fill
the voids in our hearts
baby can i hold you tonight?

baby i am walking in the park
on that warm and darker side
baby my arms are open
you can have them all tonight
baby, i have my love
all too ready
to jump with you tonight
to hug you and kiss you
baby same time same warm and
darker side of the park
baby same body with me, tonight?
promise me baby, you don't tell
our stories to her or anybody,
and so baby my heart is beating
again beside your heart in that
warm and darker side of the park, tonight?

RIC S. BASTASA
Baby, If I Noticed Everything

do not blame me
about this
mess

did i notice really
everything every detail
like
the ponytail or the rosy cheek
or the dainty fingers
of the princess
in you

because if i did
i would have never left
where
you were then hiding
like a mole
on your nipple

you were waiting
for me to call your name
and kiss you

when you could have
simply
called me by my nickname

when you
should have been candid
and tell me
that you love me too

this world would have been
a happier place to live in

you and i, would have lived
a life
not wasted by those fast tracking loveless years
look at us
we are wrinkled with all regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
Baby....

with such
tiny hands
you hold my
finger

how can
that be as
beautiful
as
the sunrise
this morning?

RIC S. BASTASA
Baby-Poem

blood and tears
drama,

sweat and brow,
cinema,

poetry writing,
eccentric,

you dream,
eclectic

malling and texting
normal

solitude,
the peace and the quite
exotic

noise and rush
always doing and going
busy forever
welcome

you are here exactly
at the point of

where i am. i wish
to go back to the comfort room
of my childhood,

but never mind, i am almost through,
and then back to the womb of mother

back to baby, back to you,
take care of me, i am lovely when helpless.
Back From A Morning Walk

i

it is earlier today.
4: 04 in the morning
on a walk
towards the college
oval beside
a gym
(i counted the steps
14 in all
from the basement

some finches
hang on the
cracks of
its cement walls)

ii

i made six rounds
walking
abreast steadily
mindless
about my surroundings
wilting
grass on the side
of the pavement

when the clouds turned
gray and
the atmosphere
dimmed
like a night study lamp
in my room
when i was too
sleepy
to notice the hours
then the rain began
to fall
and i ran as fast
as i could
to take shelter
under a
cemented roof
the gym as i told
you beforehand

iii
then there was this
old man
with a long white beard
wearing
sporty pants
and nike shoes
and seated on one
of the stairs
looking far
waiting for the rain
to stop

iv
i was behind him
a few steps away
and we were not talking
because the rain
was already falling
so hard
that i could no longer
hear the sounds of the
birds grouping
themselves
on the cracks of the
walls
i never felt lonelier
than ever before

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Home

back home
i have gone far away

for days
i will miss somehow
the old things

i may ask myself now
if there is something new

to feel
to see

to be excited to
live again

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Home From Cebu

Forgive him
but fear had become
greater than
love

that was the time
when saving himself
had become
the truest instinct
unthinkably

she was left
eating at the cafeteria
at 8 o'clock in the morning
while he slipped fast the door
like a fish to the open sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Home Then After Three Days Of Isolation

nerves
oh, they are like snakes coming out of your skins
oh, anxiety
that grows inside a room where you are alone and cannot sleep

if you do not get out of it
tomorrow another one shall be proclaimed dead by reason of sleep

they will not know what you are going through because your mouth
has molasses
and your tongue has honey
and everything in there tastes
sweet

the words are careful tiptoeing
like dancers
in a ballet show

how can you survive this kind of
denial

three days more and there will be an explosion that
no one hears
no one

bags are packed
the reservation is canceled
trips are
booked backed home
at a very
expensive cost

money does not matter now
you can throw them all in the sky

there is a song in your heart
it is the song of home
and waiting
you have survived those nights
and now the dogs greet you with their wagging tails
but there is more to those
five tails

she sits on your lap
and kisses your ears

this is home she says and it is
welcoming you back

it is like a plant uprooted you see
and now put back on its soil and then again
roots grow and spread like a carpet
in the living room

RIC S. BASTASA
the plane
touches down
smoothly

a few seconds
i look at the river
winding
in murk

the nipa palms
have water
on their necks

too much water here
back home

it stresses
my mind

sometimes i think
this world will end
with so much water

that we all drown to death
that waves as big as mountains
come to claim
our lives

i am back home then
whatever happens
it does not matter anymore

i will say it to myself
we all die anyway

what time
and how

it does not really matter
i am back home
and we are still on

missing each other's
arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Home To Yourself Less What You Thought Was Love.

the flowers that you see
soon shall turn into walls
the bees are buttons the
skies are but ceilings of
a stone house and sooner
the stairs are but piles of
steps leading you to the house
of your own reality,

well, just let it out early
in the morning when hormones
are overflowing. Run as fast
as you can, take the deep breaths
and say your thanks to those
ferns and snails for now you
are back home to yourself less
what you thought was love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back In Each Other's Arms

we were
whole day apart

when i arrived home
i did not ask

when we sleep tonight
i face the other side

somehow i miss you
i do not notice that my

leg landed on your thigh
and you do not set it aside

we are back in our arms now
and the night cannot stop it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back In Maribujoc One Evening Last Summer

i look at the picture again
of old men and women
reminiscing their past
one evening dinner their
bald heads shiny on the
light the women with furrows
on their foreheads nicely
concealed by imported
cream, i listen a lot about
this conference of what
to do with poverty and
make the town alive again...

what i felt was this: ghostly
and ghastly, cold air by the
window, hushing, hungry
for attention.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Into The Arms Of My Arms

i am back

i was away on a trip
lost in those layers of
history

i open the pages of an old book again
and it tells me
who i was

weak and always penetrated by
the joys of
evil

i bite my lips
and spread my fingers as i grapple for words again

a deva in me
has arisen

i am back and the old chapters of what i 've read
tease me

how can you change? there is no change because there is no
happiness in there

i go back to those pages again
but i am writing notes from this pen

i am growing
i am taking roots

i am back and happier now
stronger even

because i shall no longer be missing you that much
and when your face resurfaces again on the mist
i don't grapple that much
to see

what is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back Off

back off from me
do not imprison me by your generosity
do not enslave me with your love

set me free
tell me that this is all an illusion
show me the way
to the fantasy of your pretenses
make me an angry man
tell me tell me
that you do not love me

so i may pack and leave
and take back my life again and live

RIC S. BASTASA
i am here
at par with you
my peer
we shall appear
on same designer clothes
now
i can afford it
i am glad finally
that i have made it
on the
21st century

touch my elbow
we go elbow to elbow now
for you have been my giant
and i was your dwarf
because you have looked at me
with disdain
but now, i am happy to have made
it on your century

my God if you only knew it
got demoted really
from my own time
on the 30th
light years ago

touching myself
trying to be human again.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is summer
scorching summer
season creeping,
grasses are wilting
trees are shedding of
their last leaves,
what i see are bones
of trees,
skeletons of
branches,
the dry wind keeps
blowing the leaves
away,
what i have is this
bald surrounding
emptied of their
essence
beyond me are
brown mountains
vultures are
in the skies
eying for
death as prey
i sit upon a rock
the only rock
left here
i have no cover on
my head
i am half naked
i have no one to talk
to,
they have left this
arid place
a long time ago
i am back
i am telling the
sand soil,
i have something
to write and
tell the world
about it

it is summer
in this vast desert
a long time ago
this was ours
and the trees are green
grasses verdant
butterflies flutter
and innocently
land on our
hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Basics

the shadows of trees
against the gray skies

there is no one here
except the white storks

and some sparrows
taking their wings

i wait for the right timing
when the sun rises

some leaves are falling
so gently on the cover of grass

a caterpillar takes its bites
on the leaf

a frog jumps on the pond
some tadpoles follow

the clouds drift away
a new day is just born

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Childhood

i pay a visit to Apolonio today
now on his 60th year as tenant of my grandfather's farm

on my 50th year i begin to see the strangeness of the place
where i spent my childhood

the field of plain grass opens a view of a chase
of memories

coconut trees tower to the heights of my dreams
and the winding paths been converted as a wide street leading to the city
of progress and change

Apolonio's teeth are black and broken like a knife with jagged edge
his body emaciated his speech choppy

beside his wife who is already too forgetful about faces
he heaves a sigh and then tries to remember my mischief

hiding his hat and pushing him into the river
as he pastures the carabao that i let loose on the green fields

father was always angry
and mother was too defensive

the wind begins to blow and the clouds turn darker
yellow leaves fall from a very high makopa tree

and then it starts to rain
the rice ponds make the dripping sound of water

we take shelter in the old house where he now lives
his children have long been gone starting their own lives
in some other landlord's lands

he has regrets since not anyone has finished school
he tells that like a mirror to his past

the rain stops and then i bid goodbye
it is late and have no words to say anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Each Other’s Arms

shall you accuse us? dare. we know our defenses.
we were first,

the date of our meeting was earlier then.
years are too cruel for us,
we who learned love earlier
under the pine trees in Davao,
we who drank the nectar of flowers
in fantasy land of the bees

we are back into our arms
and you must understand how we must cope up with a love

that we lost, when youth was confused,
when our arms were too tight
we were choked almost to death
until we learned to make a distance

a distance which fooled us into oblivion,

we do not give up, we sting to the hope of
having new arms now
those that understand that love is always sweeter
the second time around

if the groan is loud enough
you may cover your ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To February...

there is no point
returning
to that red day
of February

there is nothing
there
except a heap of
rotten leaves

underneath are the
feasting
earthworms
boasting about their
self-proclaimed
independence

themselves upon
themselves
even the sun is
not needed

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Insomnia

back to sleeplessness
i come to you, and we talk a lot till morning
no coffee or smoke, just plain talking
and i have lots of things to share with you
my lost boyhood
so much time has been wasted on so many preparations
what father wanted what pleased mother
what made grandpa proud
and things too personal that to you i could only tell
how i wish i can go back to bed and have a nice sleep till noon
but i am simply a kind of a sleepless man wanting to talk to you
and here you are
wanting what i am and listening
too much interest in what i am saying and what i have to say
this loneliness
and guilt and
this wish for death

i could tell you like me, but how can i ever hold you
you are around me, words and words, and images and empty spaces

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Its Origin....

for now my streets
are silent
the pond has become
clear and
still again

back to the self
unfazed by all the changes
of the weathers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Me...Again...

Everything we see
Everyone we meet along the way
We embrace
All

Moment by moment
Familiarity
We are surely
Fed-up to all these
Cycles of acquaintances
Numbing our senses
Of letting go

Goodbye here and there
Until we do not know what it means again
Hellos that do not give surprises
Like counting the grains of
White sands
Of a faraway secluded beach

Enclosed now
I must prefer only this small room
Where
It is only me that fits
After all, I was born this way
Singled out by
Mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To My Brain....

i am a free man.
i have freed myself from your rules.
your advice that i keep for a while finally
is discarded. It guided me but it is not mine.
i am looking for my own. Back to my own arms.
my own face. my own tongue. my own brain.

you said i do not have any. you are wrong.
look at me i am whole, i am thinking and i am going somewhere.

i am ready. i put my own tie, my baby breath polo.
my shiny shoes. my brown belt and khaki pants, a little
perfume and a carnation in my breast pocket.

i am walking with your words.
i am throwing them all on the river by the bridge where
you said you like me and my style and by God i have potential
to be loved and be great in the future.

i am going with you. You are with me
and here i am with a shovel.
i am burying you.

i like you but i cannot pretend that you are alive
forever.
great men die and they become
nothing.

back to my arms. my hands. my feet.
my brain.

my soul, my conscience.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Nature....

sad to say
you have been looking on the pages of the book

away from the landscapes of the mountains
the calm unfolded soft linens of the sea

pages of days
the chapters of those seasons

a butterfly floating
is enough poem without so much use of words

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Normal

i will be back to normal,
they keep on saying that
those in white
and green uniforms surrounding
me in this state
of being worn out
like a blown
tire.

(must have been abnormal
for the past years,
how could i not notice that
on my twisted tongue
my boxed face and
languid hands,
whorled bones like
a prison door,)

yes, i tell them
i will be back to normal,
to a place
where i will not
be thinking much
about a birthplace
a mole in the sea
a moon on placid lake
unmoving

RIC S. BASTASA
you are a small bubble
living inside
a big bubble like the small cat
inside the stomach
of the comforting bigger cat
a joey
inside a kangaroo
a louse within a
mustache
there is always a story when something
is inside something else
like a sub-language
because somehow one must
survive the
dog's race or
the rat world
the internalization of
of the subsumed
fine, the story must be told
in the simplest manner
possible
there is no need for
a story teller
and the story goes like this:

there is a bubble which burst inside a bubble
and the bigger bubble bursts during the bursting
and then
the end is always the same as ever:

there is only nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Poetry......

IT IS
not important, so i brushed it aside.

iT can be forgotten altogether.
it did not give me anything except this
disappointment.

I give up.

days and days i go beyond this border
embracing all the exotic things that you
cannot offer me.

a short fat man dances the tanoura
while the
egyptian girl with long and wavy eyelashes
and white plump body
does the bellydancing

as the musical strings and drums go louder
as the drinks multiply on the glasses
of that night

the honeymoon is over and
now i am back
to the room where i left you

and you are as silent
as ever

and then i am with you again.

my sorrow.
my anxiety.
my grief.
my words.

the poems that keep on waiting
to be written.
an unfinished sculpture
of my mind.
the details that come to me
like a million
eyes blinking like
ambulance....

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To Square One

back to square one
my dear
making life more
interesting for us
both now
we pretend
we first meet
and you are
so naive and
i am so brusque
and so
attractive and
you are so
demure and
so seductive

love is sweeter in town
the second time around.

RIC S. BASTASA
he is looking for an opening
his eyes are angry
but his words are restrained
and will not
let the mouth speak about
emotions

in his place emotions are
rebels
and the owner of everything
will not like it

there are spies and soldiers
of decent speech
and modest actions
and anyone caught shall be
shot to death
or beaten till his flesh
bleeds no more

and so he is looking for an exit
an opening
but there is only nowhere
there is only somewhere
and time seems to be like a road
without a station
and emotions seem to just a random
of planets
evading a collision
that could have made him happy
when the whole universe
bangs against
each other
and thus end everything
everything
so he could become another atom again
beginning anew
on a virginal spin
in a nucleus world
where he can be truly himself again

he is so small
he is so negligible
and let it be again
that no one notices him

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To The Basics

it is not funny
it is true

that the more you hate the more you love the person that you love

try to eject
the person that you love from your system

eject, junk, spit, defecate
whatever you do

something in you is already missing
because loving is loving and it is

not:
ejecting but embracing
junking but keeping
spitting but swallowing
defecating but the eating of the pudding and the nourishing

try hating love and it always comes back to you
not to shame you
but always to love you again

to make you meek and gentle
to make you cry and smile

to make you all too human, vulnerable, weak and so forgiving
and something too hard on you as hate
becomes too soft
as gelatin
with lots of sugar and honey and milk and grapes and peach and
red red cherries on top of everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To The Basics Of Life....

you must have
forgotten some
basics in life

those that take
us away from depression
like: mopping the floor
sweeping the yard
weeding out the garden
washing clothes
drying them under the sun
doing the dishes

after winter
replanting the garden
growing again
what the season had
taken

having a party
sipping your drink
laughing with friends

you will not waste
time and money
with psychiatry....

RIC S. BASTASA
it always begins with
the face,
arms, then the body,
then back
to the lips again,
deeper
into the tongue
and even
to the throat
wishing to touch
the heart which
takes
so much effort of
your soul
you rush back to
the toes
and nape and
back
all these, triggered
by that unseen
force of love,
which slips despite
the force of ten
fingers
the neurons fail
and the lapses
begin, you compromise
with the

outburst and you
stop

thinking once again
the mystery

of that x that
can never be captured

and so back to
emptiness again

that God can
only fill.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is still the warmth of the flesh of the arms and legs
and somewhere between
that make us feel more alive

we are not saints
not angels, we are humans still rooted to the ground
less our imaginary wings
and halos and white feathers
if at all we are meant to be
divine
holy

i touch your body and you touch mine
and set ourselves on fire

the world, in some ways, in its darkness
at noon
or night time, gets lighted with our lust

i call it love, because it feels so right
my blood pumping from my heart to my head to my bottom
to my toes

and i moan, and i sigh, and i think, at a glimpse when i close my eyes
i have seen the eyes of God looking so gently
to the eyes of my soul

inside this body,
my bones did not make the sound of the rattling snake

RIC S. BASTASA
Father bought land. It was cheap, because you have to walk seven rivers, climb eight mountains, and walk another ten kilometers beside the forest where the monkeys keep on teasing passersby with their human appearances.

Father took me once there. We rode a white horse together. It was really exhaustive but upon reaching there you can see the world. You can even touch the sky.

There were horses there. Cows and goats, and fruit trees. It was a plateau with springs of water nearby. The ducks and chickens and pigs roam freely.

e we stayed their for a month. I had dandruff because our viand everyday is native chicken. Chicken causes dandruff and i smell like chicken dung.

When father died, he left me that mountain as a secret. I am the only one who knows the way. I promised him that i will not tell my brother and four sisters.

Back to the mountain, like what father did, to have peace, I only have to speak to myself.

The winds at night shall hear me. And in the morning the mists and fog are my comfort. And then the mountains nearby shall be my echoes.

Despite father's cruelty, I still hold him with high esteem. He left me paradise. He gave me the beauty of mountains, and the silence of the the peaceful nights away from the anxieties of the city and the troubles of the family.

Last night, I touched the sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
for what is poetry? did i tell you that it is merely defecation and all i excrete are trash, garbage, e coli?
you keep on saying
i disagree, i completely disagree
i am recollecting your pieces and put them in an album and i will make a publication, ...jesus!
socrates did not write a word.
jesus neither.

(i am not what they were.
i am just a sigh, a sort of a morning exercise, exhale, inhale, exhale, inhale thing)

and stephen king who says he does not write but all these are still here...
silly life, silly life, looking for a wall and a spray net, spray, spray, write on the wall, draw on the wall, keep things intact, mementos, refreshing meal of the river of time.

i do not know. i keep on telling.
chanting. i got no book of my own.
I have nothing to own.
Let no word come back to me and tell me 'i am your creation and you are my papa'

for at the end i shall deny all of them for i do not belong here neither to somebody nor some reason.

pilgrim am i. in this river of time.
leaf.
Back To The Stable

back to the stable with Vincent
eying for a magical landscape

somewhere in dusty Mexico
on the hands of the desert sands

he is looking for horses
those harsh horses of the black night

he is on his journey
to plant the seeds of his solitude

i am tilling silence too
in the garden of my heart

silence listens to all the forebodings
solitude blooms amidst the skulls of hunger

RIC S. BASTASA
i am back to this place
and i am feeling strange
there are changes
and some i can tell have been missing

a few meters from where i stand
under this mahogany tree
where the wind is cold and fresh
flavored by the newly cut rice stalks
over this spread of golden fields

the well is still there
but the brown woman with earth skin is gone

an island of coconut trees

(and some mango trees
and banana shrubs)

has turned bald
and the grasses claim another territory to its grassland

the sparrows must have migrated to the nearby forest

the cable lines run an empty length of a sigh
from one pole to another
endlessly clinging is this anonymous electricity

the twenty or so white herons are here again
pecking on some little frogs in small ponds

i walk under the sun
revisiting reevaluating rekindling perhaps
the reasons why i must go on living
a life unlived for quite a time

why are the fields empty? why are the blackbirds circling the tree?
why do people pass by this path unable to know the significance
of this human journey?

the sun is up like an absurdity triumphant
a dog comes near me

it is waggling its tail and i am calling him another name.

RIC S. BASTASA
the words have
decome mute and
to express what they
have inside their letters
they now ask the
visuals to help them.

like words however
the visuals do not speak.
They just show.

a poem makes a sound.
exudes an aura
spreads a scent
foremost it makes
you dance even
if there is no audible
music from the
radio
it makes you see
even it what it is
uttering is just the
blankness of
a wall.

it is then not the visual
or the word
it is what is not seen
and what is not uttered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To You

if you're a vine, then climb
don't cling
if you're a pebble, don't shout
it is too unlikely of you
if you're a tiger, roar
if you're a lion, kill
the deer,
if you're a bird, by all means
fly
if you're the sea, keep this
width and make the storms
if you're the sky, keep
the space and hang the stars
and give way for the moon
if you're the night be dark
if you're the day, shine brightly
with the sun
keep things true to thy nature
be

there is no need to be anybody
just be yourself

now wake up, and write.

RIC S. BASTASA
you shall condemn
Lust,
like the rest of them
who wear the whitest robes
of Prudence,

you want me to embrace
Purity
i did.

Once and twice
and even thrice i have kept
the purity of my flesh
not able to share it
with the one
that needs it so badly
that embrace
and kiss and love
ultimate

i have felt gravely the sense
of our Selfishness
that Enclosure that admits no one
in Need

and I have become gravely ill
the worms are too excited to consume
my nerves and bones

you ask me to condemn some more of this
Flesh and
Desire and be with you in
Heaven

I have become so lonely and
bare
my heart lives in the desert
there is no
water in there
no oasis in sight
no camels to ride
no water bearers to ask
where i am

and so i embrace back Lust
who promise me nothing
for it only asks that i feel and see
and touch
no promise of Heaven
nothing about Hell

it is Lust that makes me alive
again
In bed, with you, i touch every
part of You
In those hours of my silence
we begin again
listening to the pulse of Life
the whispers of the
Heart...

RIC S. BASTASA
Back To You Still My Love

all the strange thoughts, i bathe myself with,
feeling the soapiness of the matter and the wetness of all
the newness, i feel clean
about new faces and friends and places
i have never been too,
to all these, fog and mist, and valleys and grass
and winding paths,
all these new, bushes and bamboos
leading me
still to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
A widower comes asking
For new seedlings
Of sexy pink

His old jeep parks
His young handsome
Driver

Comes his name is
Mark

Both of them smells
Musk

Something’s musky
Something needs
To be explained

But you understand
This widower at
60 needs a

Young boy like the
Greek Plato

To appease his
Philosophical sense

About loneliness
The good, the beautiful
And yes

The truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
a girl takes a train
but the train that she has taken
backtracks,
all she needs to do
to adopt to this mistake
is change her sitting position
going south is her actual
destination
but the train is going north now
there is no point
going down
she has more time left
for recreation
lots of landscapes to see
more sad events
to forget
and things now
are getting straight
and perfect

RIC S. BASTASA
you once walked its brick path
amazed by its antiquity
never destroyed by any calamity
for the past three hundred years
you once prayed there
admired the oldest icons
and touched the woodiness of
the centuries
you once climbed the stairs
listened to the sounds of its bells
and on that stone window had the view
of the sea and the blue horizon

now, in thirty-two seconds
it is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bacolod 2011 May

(at kasai’s resto)

little Tina i remember
was the one affectionate
with the white
kitten
that she saves from the
window in grandma's house

i have seen compassion
in her eyes

how did she grow to be
a woman
reserved, decent
and compassionate
to the little world
where she is
in now?

her mother who has
white hairs
smiles when Tina says
that marriage
can always wait
as she has still other
things to do
with
the present kittens
at the house
of the door
of her old house

RIC S. BASTASA
Bacolod 2012

it is not planned
but just the same i went there

i've been there many times
bathed in its hot spring
felt the coldness of its trees
and scaled the vastness of its
fullness

i stood on top of a hill
felt the sun
ached my eyes for its mountains

wrote about its beauty
nothing extraordinary

in a final note it is not about its name
or history
not even about a place
or anyone

not about myself, it is indescribable
it cannot be said

it cannot be thought for long
because once you settle upon it
longer than you wish

it too is gone away
and when you step upon the stairs of another plane

you forget and try to remember another place
no, not another person

it is this travel of non-attachment at all
the bed that you sleep last night
is no longer a bed

the table cloth that you stained with the sap of
the luscious ripe mango fruit is no longer a cloth

you are on top of the world
on top of the white clouds that block all view

from the earth from all memories
and you keep saying now and writing each piece

piercing you and you do not mean anything
it is just the passing and the going and the non stopping

out of your mind out of this world
out of what dissipates like light in darkness

it is cold you cover your face with the blanket of
the plane
and then you cease

that is the story that you have written
it is intended for no one

now, not even for this earth
or the imagined heavens

RIC S. BASTASA
Bad Influence...

listen
you are unhappy
and you drive
alone
on those winding
roads
of the faraway mountains
looking for nothing
finding no one
at the end
of your journey
and exhausted you stop
for a while
beside the
abandoned cottage
trying to figure out
what went wrong
and why....

i told you
it is not the heart
there is none
who has it
i advise you
it is nothing but this
flesh
these hands
are scrutineers
this body
is as warm as black coffee
and you take
the initiative of
sipping what is there
on the table
you put your arms
around you
and you lick your
lips
bland taste
of too much
restraint
your legs have taken
roots
and now
you cannot move.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bad Karma

now on your great fall
i shall look at you from here
at the top of my own
clean castle,

and you shall shout my name
curse my birth
and my ancestors

but how can you make me angry?

not anymore

you get what you deserve
in your own version of hell

RIC S. BASTASA
'Bad Karma, Always Bad Karma' The Old Woman Tells Us.

he had modest beginnings.
a woman whom he can never love
supports him to college.

he got a world of his own now
and takes another woman of his dreams.

his wings are long and strong.
he flies alone, corrupted by the sky.

what transformed him
into a black bird
is not unexpected.

His past has horns
His teeth sharp from
the beginning.

he wants not to see the truth
that hurts him since childhood.

how to rule the world and then destroy it,
will always have the consequences

he will always choose the wrong way
and everyone is excited
to see how he destroys himself.

'bad karma, always bad karma'
the old woman tells us.
' he should not have killed himself',
his wife says in closing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bad Karma....

Free from the usual bind
You surge as another star in that black sky
You like your wings
Feeling like a young bird
You hover on one of those
Heavenly branches
Somehow time catches up
with you
it has its own long fingers
It is squeezing your heart
For some important memories
That you have been ungrateful
In forgetting

You fall down
From such a height
Time does not kill you
You suffer

A woman watches you with so much pity
And then looks to the other side
And walks away

Her heart is bleeding
She wants your wings too
She changes her mind and walks away

RIC S. BASTASA
Bad Luck

today his house is burned
everything he has
lost in a matter of a few hours

the body of his only son
wrapped in plastic charred
there is no face of agony to see

and his chamber maid
ashed to death
a face without a hair
a skull with some flesh
the odor is incredible

how much does he owe still
to the gods?

he is drugged to sleep in the hospital
things are not that easy to swallow
bad luck, bad luck, all his friends are telling
this bad luck to each other

RIC S. BASTASA
Bad Picture
	his long tongue of the salamander
catching a fly
and perhaps regretting the taste
throws it out
but with long time hunger
regrets again and throws its tongue
to take back
the double dead fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bagatelle...

shying from the outside world
where the sun can make a thousand bites
the king through his ministers
evolved
from efforts of bringing croquet
and shuffleboard
inside and
atop tables....

in the Great Hall at
Hatfield House
the tables have become smaller
enjoying the holes
in the middle
of their chores....

RIC S. BASTASA
Baguio City

the rain falls
most of the time when i visit this place
it is so cold as i climb
the hundred steps up
i dissolve into oblivion
behind the fog
at the top of Lourdes

RIC S. BASTASA
Baguio City, A Memory....

i remember
that coldness of December

we stayed
on top of that hill
below us
all fog
around us trees
foggy trees

the glass window
is hazy

the heat from the fireplace
gives
the warmth that we cannot
give
to each other

my mind played on the
waves of fire
when all the lights are closed
at midnight

i remember
i went out of my room
went outside the house

climbed the fence and
stood there with my arms raised in surrender

i was too lonely
and did not know what to do
where to

i was broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
We take shelter from the monsoon rains
In the warm inflections of dinner
Spread out to our liking, a la carte.
The sky’s the old cliché: no limits here,
Chef’s a master at re-incarnating Lapu-lapu,
Or carving a plateful of Manansala’s heart.
Will I, I wonder, be so bold as to say
With a straight face to the waiter: we are
Carnal you see, hungry for the Other.
And we’d like everything as raw as we
Can get it in this civil place, with its piano,
Violin, china, silver, spotless linen.
You look at me, intent, your voice encodes
Bite-sized pleasures — (Kani Sushi, yes?)
Dipped desires — (Oysters Rockefeller, baked?)
My mind scuttles the crab’s tangent
To our table, shelled; my tongue
sauces at the thought of succulents.
Even when the waiter interjects
Those Rockefellers are out of season,
What a feast live absences meant!

RIC S. BASTASA
musta na? bugnaw na ba kaayo diha?
lami kuno ang mga pagkaon diha?
nindot daw ang mga dahon sa kahoy
morag bulawan nga gagilakgilak sa
pag-abot sa adlaw

daghan daw ang kasuroyan diha
mabudlat gyod ang mga mata sa kadaghan
sa talan-awon nga dili gayod nato makita
sa atoang lugar

musta na? aykog ingna nga mouli ka na
kay gimingaw ka na sa imong mga
higala?
unsa to? walay kinilaw diha? walay tuba?
walay tagay? walay tapok-tapok og hisgot
hisgot kabahin sa mga ginagmayng kalipay?

mao ba? daghang balay apan walay mga tawo
daghang miabot apan sigi lang pong pahawa?
tinood ka?

winter na. Unya kaw rang usa sa
imong gipuy-an
unya kon duawon ka
pang-week end lang?
unya kon isuroy ka, i-drop ka lang
sa mall
unya ikaw na ang bahala

ayay, na hala, pauli na.
manirang unya ta.

RIC S. BASTASA
Balak Alang Sa Gugma

ang gitisok mo migitib.
Bisan unsa.
Ang pulong mga imong gitanom sa akong baba,
migamot sa akong dila.
nanahon ang akong mga buhok,
namuwak ang akong utok.
ang hunghong nga tam-is nga

imong gipahiluna sa akong dalunggan
nangutay,
milabong padulong sa akong bukton,
nanalingsing ang akong mga tudlo.
kad tong ulan sa akong dughan
nangahimo nga mga suba sa akong pagbati

miawit ang sulog
ug mikurog ang akong
mga paa
sa kabugnaw sa
tubig nga midagayday
sa mga batohon kong
mga pangandoy

ang gidapion mo sa akong
tiyan
usa ka init sa bag-ong kahaponon
nahimong usa ka dilaab
sa gabagang pagbati sa
kagabhion
nahimugso ang bulan
sa akong mga mata
ug mikuyanap ang kahayag
sa duha ta ka
ngitngit nga kalibotan

migitib ang tumang kahayag
nanubo ang mga liso sa paglaum
nahimong kahoy
nga daghan kaayog sanga
nga naglumba sa
pagakos
sa mga hawak sa
kaadlawon

RIC S. BASTASA
Balak Nga Gibasa Sa Announcer Sa Radyo Samtang Nag-Drive Kos Akong Pick-Up Pauli Sa Katipunan

nakadawat siyag
usa ka libo ka pesos
sa iyang balak nga
maoy nakadaog karong
hapona
sa ENERGY radio,
gikan sa bag-ong
nakadaog nga
bise-gobernador

gibasa kini sa announcer
nga nagpahimangno nang
daan nga dili niya basahon
ang nahibiling 150 ka mga
tampo nga puno sa kaguol,
nga mora bag puros paningil
sa mga utangan apil na
kadtong iyang gidanggaag
maginoo pero medyo
mas bastos

basahon lang kini niya
human niya kini ayudihan
o malaygitan ba hinoon

ang maong balak
nahimong kataw-anan
diha sa iyang pagmahay
kabahin sa iyang pikoy nga
bisan unsaon kunog tukoytukoy
dili na man gayod kamaong
mangukoy

wala kuno siya kabawi
sa iyang pagpatuli
unya sa kataposang garay
nagpabilin
siyag pangutana kon sa iyang
edad nga saysenta maminyo
pa ba kaha kuno siya?

mikatawa ang announcer
ug miingon nga depende ra
na nimo sir

kon duha ka bay kayutaan
dako bag abot ang imong kalubian
ug pila ka sako ang maani sa
imong mga basakan
kay daghan pa gayong mga
babaye ang kamaong mokapyot
sa imong katigayonan

RIC S. BASTASA
Balak Sa Alas Sais Nuybe Sa Sayong Kangitngit Sa Bulan Sa Disyembre

sa ilalom sa
mga karaang kahoy
nga talisay
giub-ob niya
ang saging...

RIC S. BASTASA
Balak Sa Tikalon

apan lagi kay ang akong pusod
gitagkos man ni nanay
sa bongbong sa among balay didtos
Olingan
na, bisan unsa pa kaanindot
ang iceland
ang denmark ang austria
pati na gani ang romania
og bulgaria
pastilan, ang kamingaw nako sa amoa
dili na gayod maantos maong gikalimtan ang mga sausages og beer sa Munich
ang salad sa salzburg
ang di masabot apan lamiang pagkaon sa Sofia

gihandom pa gihapon ang barbecue sa bacolod ang inun-nan sa dipolog ang lechon sa cebu

og dayon mas migwapa ang pilipinas
mas humot og mas lamian pas kagubkob nga chicharon

RIC S. BASTASA
Balay Sa Davao

sa davao
sa pink nga balay ni jun evasco
sa may kwadrado nga bintana
sa bungtod
gilantaw ko ang Mt. Apo
dili ko mahikap bisan
ang kinamob-an nga panganod
nga nagbitay
sa iyang tiilan

RIC S. BASTASA
Bald, Pale, Short

30 years, then and now.
you lost all hair,
a compulsory version
of Yul Brynner
still short but this time
on paler skin
your eyes are still sharp
less the silence
on a drink you pour out
what life did to you

as always this drink
will still be my treat
oh man, time has not
changed
your poverty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bali Bound

when i fly
to Bali
i choose the
window

i am now
beside the
clouds
separated by
glass

at night i
am at the level
of the forehead
of the moon

at dawn the
sun slowly rising
seeks my
level

the mountains
below me
and he seas
so vast
the colors of the
waters
become a landscape
in my mind

it is me high up
the clouds
inside this plane
bound for the
Bali of my
dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Balo

amidst the crowd of four to five
laughter becomes like the wind
and the rain
everything so light and funny
when we finally stand waiting
the side of my body leaning on the pole
with the evening light
the silence creeps like a caterpillar
on the leaf

we feel we are consumed
bit by bit

RIC S. BASTASA
Bambino

playful Bambino
tumbles on the white sand
hurts himself
stands
and then laughs
with his friends

RIC S. BASTASA
Bandera

it is far from here
as we have to pass the same
big and wide river
curling some mountains
ten times

we shall follow a winding
path
muddy most of the times
as slippery as
imagined

on foot we really have
to
as it is real and old and
memorable

papa and grandpa passed this
way many times
to reach Bandera

a cozy place by the side of
a green hill surrounded by
mango trees

we shall be there at the ripe season
as mangoes fall on our feet
we pick them up, peel it, suck the juice
savor the pulp and taste the fullness
of our lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bangon Na!

buntag na
misilang na ang adlaw
bangon na
pil-a ang imong habol
hiposa ang imong ugnan
pag-ilis
gawas na sa imong kwarto
hikalimti ang imong
katulugon
hikalimti ang tanan
mong kasakit
ug kahigwa-os
sa imong kinabuhi

abrihi ang mga bintana
ug pultahan
tan-awa ang adlaw
naghata ug kahayag
sa kalibutan
hinumdumi ang
kangitngit sa kagabhion
ug pamalandong
sa bag-ong kausaban

kanindot sa kalibotan
gaksa ang iyang kaanyag
simhota ang iyang kahumot
pamatia ang awit
sa kalamgaman
batia ang hagwa
sa kainit sa mga
hapuhap sa mga
tudlo sa adlaw

oi! gihagkan ka na niya
kaganiha pa
wa ka lang seguro
makabantay tungod
sa imong tumang
kalipay

RIC S. BASTASA
Barangay Dos

another diabetic
guy is dead in this
small town

a street is closed
and a gambling table
is put beside the
road

inside the house
a family mourns

electric lights
around the house are
kept open

the community
sympathizes with prayers
and the usual condolences

my house-help cleans
the street and
quips: he was not a good
man

despite the good that
we have done
that dead man
when he was still alive
said nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Barco Blanco

BARCO blanco
is arriving in Pulawan Port today.

My brother from Yugoslavia
a seaman by profession
is inside it.

He asks me to fetch him.
But i won't.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bared And Exposed Only To His Mirror...

notoriety
speaks ill of
the truth

in internalizes
and mimics the truth
to give
the best show for
the audience

nice performance
the audience stands and
claps

the sounds of fame rebounds
in every wall
the praises in bouquets
of assorted flowers

the clown takes off its masks
showing a scarred face
the truth of sorrows

now it is saving itself from
disgrace
goes off the stage
takes the other exit door
and when alone
it laughs the hardest
saying to himself

' how stupid, how foolish
these shallow people are! ! ! '

and so it had chosen
a life all alone
true to himself, bared and
exposed
only to his mirror...
Bareng Tunu Bigal

perhaps, yes perhaps
perchance,
life is a basket full of surprises
this you must know,
discern some more
what life is willing to give and yet
you refuse
inside your hands are the invisible daisies
they grow even without roots
and bloom even
without suns and moons
it is their nature to curl and grow
leaves
and spread their petals and show
the colors
of the wind, the ones that you have not
seen yet
even when awake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bart The Bard

to ease hardship
since poetry cannot
support his family
his wife Emily
takes the opportunity
of packing up
for Ireland

the same job waits
for her there
care-giving

at first it is hard
to imagine him alone
in his room
but necessity you
must agree
is always the best
teacher
in fact it is the father
now of
all innovations

RIC S. BASTASA
Basho's Predicament

old pond
dries up in long drought
skeletal frog

jump! jump!
if you can!

RIC S. BASTASA
Basic Wisdom

and if at all you cannot help then proceed to plan B

DO NOT HURT.

RIC S. BASTASA
Basin Ugma....

nagpabadlis intawon si emak, sa iyang palad kay suma pa sa tiguwang nga babaye didto sa bukid sa sibutad nga gidungog nga maayong mananambal buayahon lagi kuno ka unya pati ang imong bana imong tugbon kon dili mausab ang lakat sa imong palad, gibabagan ang usa ka linya sa usa ka kudlit nga maoy makapausab sa dagan sa imong kapalaran,

ang iyang bana nga sabungero naglantaw, samtang nagtakilid kilid sa giagay-ay nga pultahan dapit sa lugar diin ang pugaran sa iyang inaan nga jolohano nangitlog, ....'kon kabalo pa lang ko nga dili manganak ang akong asawa, ' maoy iyang sulti sa iyang kaugalingon nga seguro ang tiki ra ang nakadungog, 'mas maayo pag gitaban ko na lang kadtong bigaon nakong silingan nga walay ugam ang bulog sa kaulag', ..unya mora siyag tika nga nag sigig tsk, tsk, tsk, samtang mibali sa tukog sa lubi dayog panghingiki.

ingon ka, naa pay kamunggay ang iyang lagos, unya pula kaayo ang iyang dila sa iyang mam-on.

ang dagom nga iyang gbadlis
tayaon. apan wala ka naykahadlok.
ambot kon nagtoo ka ba kaha
nga basin uigma mausob na
ang dagan sa imong kinabuhi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Basking Under The Sun On  A Sunday Morning

i assure you
there will be changes

it will not always be
rain
not muddy all the time
no frolicking
upon those
dirt
no, i cannot be
wet forever
and
trembling

it is a slow process
this awakening
this change for the better

i am patient
than you think
i do not rush
time is a trick
and treat

this is a safe place
for reckoning
you will not hear any name
but you shall see
what my tomorrow shall
bring

today is my silence
i shall bask my body under the sun
on a Sunday
morning
Basorexia

you have infected my mind
and my tongue is restless

hungry, craving, crazy
for the next kiss and the next and the next
and the next

my tongue hand in hand with your tongue
exploring the contours of the gums and teeth

our taste buds bursting like flames.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bastet

cat-goddess
worshipped by
poetic humans

o my
she likes rats

RIC S. BASTASA
Bathing In The Sea...

i happen to watch
upon three brown children
running to bathe in the sea
they are naked
laughing and swim like
a fish
go to the deep
and wave their hands
at me

saying 'come, come
the deep sea is
warm
there are more corals
to see
giant clams
live here
fish in bright colors
swimming side by side
with us'

i have selected
the words: naked,
and then it echoes
innocence,
deep which i have
equated with
that healing silence,
fish
the symbol of my
faith, and

so i go naked too
run to the sea
and swim to the
deepest part

and there is this silly
wish
that i have in mind

i wish there is no more
land anymore

i wish we are all children
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bathing Under The Rain
	here is rain
there is this rush
and i am bathing
under this coldness
i stop
doing anything
canceled all other
appointments
there is this rain
that seems not to stop
falling on my hair
and i am wet all over
and i remove all my
clothes and i keep
running
there is a wall all around
me
it is cold, so cold
i dance and
tumble
and i am
all alone by myself
shouting
for joy!

RIC S. BASTASA
Battering Pain Away

like a softball
you batter away pain
hitting it hard
it disappears like a dot
in the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
Batting The Ball

batting the ball that i did not hit,
walloping the volleyball that did not reach the net
swimming on a murky river
the boat that sinks
and the birds that fly too low on the mountains
their feet hitting the tops of the trees

dreams that do not come true
i am already forewarned
foretold, i have resigned to accept

that what is not best for me cannot be granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bawion Na Lang  Sa Iyang  Pagkaasyoso.

ang di makamao
naglingaw-lingaw
ang di kamao
gipalimpyohan ang mga kuko
gipasinaw,
nagpaputol sa buhok
nagpahumot
sayod ko kon unsay iyang
buot ipasabot
kay lagi di man makamao
basin bawion na lang
sa iyang pagkaasyoso...

RIC S. BASTASA
Bbc News (An Internal Reflection)

THERE will be wars in this world,
many lies like masks on the faces of diplomacy
agenda are hidden like
cockroaches in those dirty cabinets
what they say on TV
mislead everyone
guffaw
the terrorists wear suits
silk tuxedos
armed with international resolutions
in effect
destroying the right of each nation
to self-determination
freedoms smashed like glasses and plates
after a toast and
party

WHATEVER, the lies are hard to figure out
the experts know how to package them well
like statutes of David
like the Trojan Horse

THERE are more victims
Triumphant less
Exploiters myriad
There are excuses on the death of innocent children
and strangled women and silenced men
of this World
The collateral damages are buried
underneath those shattered facade of mosques
and markets

The gates are interfered upon
AT night the moon bleeds blood
The air at dawn sighs
A morning is broken again
People have no choice like native now
Rejoicing over a new master
The frogs has not started yet
To worry about their numbers
The greedy white Heron eyes
Its next prey.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Be A Candle....

be a candle
to me

shine in darkness
consume yourself

cry, cry,
in silence

consume yourself

be those tears
wasted on
the graveyard
of the one
you love

be gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
Be A Prelude To Being Miserably Alone

alone
can always be a prelude
to being
miserably
alone

be with people

soon you will forget
what misery is there

they have their miseries
which you will learn later

and then
you will start laughing

be the butterfly
fluttering

from one tree to
another
from one mountain
to another

trees of tragedies
mountains of miseries

among the thousand leaves
that fall

how can you notice
yours?

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Afraid

be afraid of the things that you see
and does nothing for you
be afraid of those who appear like
the people that you meet
for they may not be the way they seem
to be
be afraid of those that shake your hands
for they may have other plans
be afraid when you do not fear
something so harmful maybe near
be afraid of almost everything &
when all the fear is spent when things are over
be strong and confident be another lover forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Blind, And Use The Sword When Finally Needed.

i did not find it hard  
to work within the four corners  
of this wall

everything is measurable  
everything has an answer

i work well within this circle  
beginning to love the limits of  
its perimeters

everything is well defined  
there is a word for what to say

all the principles are laid out  
and all i have to do is say it.

what did you do? what evidence proves it?  
what is the law?

there are no emotions  
no colors, no relationships  
it is not a what if  
but what is.

it is the simplicity of these  
elements that make our work doable.

and so, if you cannot do it,  
what is really your problem?

ask the four walls.  
work within the circle.  
use all the tools.  
be blind, and use the sword  
when finally needed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Brave Enough

be brave enough
to go away
and find your destiny
a future
where money flows
like water
where fame comes
and takes
the pictures of
your smiling
face
where every man
and woman
sees you
as the model
the grand bearer
the mark
of their history
the symbol
of their time

be brave
and go to places
where i have
never been
be enduring
in your faith
be determined
in all your
pursuits

i dare you
be brave
and daring

leave me
i am staying.
Be Cautious...

all those that surround us
are arms
poised to embrace us
yet not all are true
though warm

some are
there to take some parts of you
and not return them
making you feel so incomplete
and incompetent

and when you finally give up
those arms set you aside
like you are
a leper
still wanting the cure

the message is clear
you must also learn to choose
which arms are
snakes assuming the shapes
of fingers
learn somehow
to hide distrust
be not mislead
into the vast ocean
of despair

put your arms around
your shoulder
let your palms feel
the truths
even still at the surface
of disbelief

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Contented You Are Telling Me

you sent the slideshow
of the little white daisy
contented in the
forest where all the
other plants are confused

the oak wanting to be a lilac
the lilac wanting to be a pine
the pine wanting to be a daisy

you are the daisy
i suppose so

how can i ever believe you
when all the while
you have been dreaming
of wings to fly away?

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Cool, Be Gentle

do not be hard on yourself
creativity is a soft water on the glass
waiting to be
sipped slowly like a lover
waiting in bed
waiting to be kissed

just wait, be cool, be gentle
everything comes without much effort from you
you are so lovely
and love cannot refuse to be loved again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Gentle With The Earth....

how many times
did i tell you to focus on the falling leaf
follow its way
when it finally lands
on the earth?

take that leaf
with your two hands
as though
it is your baby
and feel it closer
to your
breasts

sit on the grass
and look at all those
around you

do not talk,
feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Glad That A Poet Isn'T Credible, Lost In His Own Words

a poet is never taken
seriously
for he is one who can never
change this world
and you, on a magnanimity of
intentions, and
desirable deeds,
make the sign that you can
remove walls,
destroy barriers, bury the dead
resurrect them
like Christ, you who can stop
this world even
from revolving,
the power that be,
i am glad that i am just a poet
and i can sit in one corner
and sing like
a mocking bird
mimicking all of you in your
greatness
i am glad no one believes me
for if i were believable
so many
should have died in vain
so many should have
found no meaning
so many, so many more important than
what they think themselves to be
should have hated
the dust
their indifference to
mockery
of the truth
their own grief
a mirror
a destruction of all plates of this earth
all fire, tongues
all teeth

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Glad That You Are In Pain Now....

know what, my dear,
there are more poems in pain

pleasure
does not give you much

happiness
is nothing but complacency
in waiting

be glad,
are you still in pain?

be joyful amidst this struggle to be set free
from the
pain of
loneliness,

oh, i can attest to its
truth,

its unrecognized usefulness
for our
very own
spiritual growth,

this cleansing,
this purification

where happiness in the face of an accounting
becomes so bare

that it amounts to nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Glad The Gods Know What Is Good For You

you made a pilgrimage to the mountains
climbed the steep hills and crossed the ten rivers
you sailed the five seas and walked the three continents

you are praying for the fulfillment of a wish
for a dream to come true
and you whisper it to the ears of the gods
offering food and flowers
lighting scented candles and letting the smokes from the incenses
spread to the heavens
as you bow your head and prostrate on your legs
and make your chants
in humble worship

the gods did not grant what you were asking
they all said no and you asked for a reconsideration
they all denied your motion

it was given to someone else and you wish you were dead
lightning hit the man you envied and thunder sounded like happy drums
the man to which your wish was granted is now dead.

be glad for the gods know what is good for you
when they denied it, they said it is not meant for you
and they never wanted you dead that early in his bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Glad Then For The Moment It Is The Only One You Have.

this is the situation
of either this or that

there is no or, here, there
is no other choice but to
choose

and you shall be confronted
with this where you shall be
thoroughly shaken and you feel
like everything in you is falling
down to the abyss of incalculable
emptiness

you do not die
you confront it
you lose everything
and you find finally
yourself alone in
this struggle

at first you detest it
you rebel
why me? you ask, and you
ask foolishly

and then you return to your
senses as though you find
yourself finally in that old
happy home

you do not intend to be happy
but now you are.

be glad then for the moment
it is the only one you have.
Be Good

that i be good
seemingly is the only choice
i can have as a human being
but say to say
the good in me shatters like
it does not want any
part of me

the bad thing
wriggles like a worm
and it is
so tickling that i forget about
tomorrow

i just love living life the way it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Happy

be happy
nothing is permanent

no one is permanently rich
no one is permanently poor
it is the cycle
that governs the fates of us all
destinies
and change
and rotation of the axis
of this earth

it is the circle
that keeps us alive
so be happy

now you may be sad
and down and
feeling hopeless

just wait
the cycle of life comes
to save you
just wait
the cycle of death too comes
to give you rest

it is the circle
not the flatness
that gives us happiness

be glad
nothing is permanent
the changes come
and you shall
have it

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Happy, Say Goodbye

be happy today
walk the dog
and talk to your wife
kiss her
goodbye

you're reporting
eyearly for office

and don’t think
about anything else

or that someone
she can always wait

until forever
tell her

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Light As A Feather

be light as a feather
do not go for a heavy face
or a heart that stores
sorrows
be not overwhelmed with
grief
these burdens
pull you towards the
grave

be light as a feather
be blown by the winds of change
into some happier lands
hover, drift, float
empty your mind
and heart
be so light as a new thought
that bewilders you
into another
comforting
fantasy

be light as a feather
have a good ride in air...

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Like Air

invincible and
yet so essential
my love is
like air
to your soul
as you too love me
you love
is like air always
unassuming and yet
i cannot live
without vice versa

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Like The Stars And The Moon And The Sun

with or without
you, these heavenly
bodies keep on
giving light,

such
is their nature

unselfishly
they give light without
taking anything
in return

be like them
with or without me

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Lost....

you have been searching
for happiness and so

happiness did not find you
try

sitting down, stop the search,
see the grass
it covers a hill without really trying

try closing your eyes
and settle down like a stone sinking to the pond making itself

lost in the murkiness of the river.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Magnificent......

the self is
a deceiver of
the self
itself

it lies to
its own teeth
it hides behind
its back

it whispers
that there is nothing
wrong anyway

it settles for what
makes it feel good
for the moment
and if the self reaps
the sad consequences
it goes to sleep
trying to ignore
what it did to itself

sometimes
it pays to get out of
the self
rise above it
and then be
magnificent

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Not Like The Frogs And The Clouds

be not like the frogs that copulate in the rain
on those nights where others cannot sleep
be not like those that croak without meaning
on the murky ponds, on those rivited rivers

be not like the clouds that drift east to west,
and have not known what is fidelity to permanence
or what colors to choose as they change shapes
for the seasons that come and go like the wind

be not like me, for i know not what is there to be
a perfection not attained in any form of my poetry
do not follow me for my ways are not theirs
those who pave the easy & wide paths to destiny

just be yourself my dear, use the light inside your soul
stare at the flicker of your own wisdom your own goal
scroll your own choices, take the path of your loneliness
speak the language of your heart then feel your wholeness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Original…

i can relate to you
distant friend, when in any moment
you face a blank wall,
when you cannot remember a word
when you reconstruct an adage
and suit it to your own liking,
i can very well relate to that wall
that shuts you out from any idea,
that slip of the tongue
that tip
that does not say what you want to
at this minute,

do not attempt to please
this world
do not attempt to filter thoughts
like words like pebbles
or sands with sea water escaping from
a screen

do not impress, that is the one that makes you
forget,
that lessens you
emaciating you into a clown
a page

heroes are originals, they have no fear
ugly or what, they are always what they are

be good, write the first word that comes into your mind
do not recall what beauty was there that you have first seen
contemplate, close your eyes,
see yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Quiet.....

i am so sorry you deserve
something greater than this
which does not sound so well
like a well oiled
machine

i am so sorry
to hear from you with all
the grunts
and the runts
here you are at the prime time
of the hours
mistaking again
another prose for a
poem

sorrier to you my dear
whose taste for nursery rhyme has
not waned

whose love for the limericks
still prick

dear pig, be quiet
the butcher is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Ready, It Is Coming

sad truths bring you some preludes
so you can hone your ambivalent reactions
so you can have a little refinement
when the real part of grieving gets inside
your skin deep down into the pores and
flesh reverberating into the very mesh of
your rattling bones

nature gives you a rehearsal
over and over again until you are bored with sorrow
until it does not affect you anymore
until you have no word for it
except dignified acceptance

the hours are well regimented like soldiers prepared for war
and the days are like empty boats accommodating a lot of free passengers

now do not panic, keep your chin up, do not be overwhelmed
for soon
grief shall come as a typhoon
sorrow like a year of drought

your rivers shall run dry
your deep wells shall turn out to be shallow foxholes
your homes of comfort shattered into pieces of wood
drifting in the strong currents of the winds
of change.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Silent.....

those who amassed
more than they can take,
let them be,
those who think that with
their children and their
properties, and bank accounts
and companies,
they can be happy forever,
let them be,

let them own what is not
for them,
let them think that there
is forever
here,

be silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Strong

like a rope
of steel
to make a bridge
and connect
two distant
islands

i walk in
do not snap.

RIC S. BASTASA
Be The Garden Not The Gardener

the thoughts growing in your mind
are thorns

you are the one growing them in your mind
let no thought grow there

let yourself be not the grower of these thoughts they are the thorns
let your mind be just the garden

let Him spread the seeds and let these seeds grow like
some clouds seeded in the skies

let Him grow the thoughts in you
you see them
they are the red roses
because you are the garden

you are not the gardener
you have never been and you are never the good one

RIC S. BASTASA
Be There

be there where we once meet
on the agreed date
on such a moment
for i am but a passing
gusty wind
be there on the running river
dip your feet
for only once shall i pass
it is my coldness
that you must not forget
you shall touch me and i must feel you
only but once

RIC S. BASTASA
Be Wise Like The Guys

So all you have is an
Emotion

Which to me is
A wrong notion

So slow is the motion
Leading finally to
A commotion

Take the potion
Of logic's promotion
Set in motion
That smart locomotion

If you must
Kiss the frog
Do not brag
Have no devotion
On that superstition

Be wise
Apprise and arise
Chastise disguise
Take the whys
Of the snake's eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Be With People Who Are In Love

be with people who are in love
with life
for they can help you
become so alive

their breaths are warm
and they all rise
to the heavens
unlike them
those indifferent and loveless ones
their breaths
are like chunks of dirt
and they crumple
and stain the earth

learn the art of loving
more people
and learn to fly
so when you are falling in love
you do not crush yourself
cracking to the
rocks of the earth

leaves die. But the real tree
knows how to grow back
its roots.
and then the buds start
to show.

flowers bloom, that is next.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beach Neighbor

at the other side
of the fence
is my British
expatriate
neighbor

his beard is white
and he is
6 feet tall
retired
military man
married to
a Filipina
who split with her husband
5 years ago

i watch him playing
with an adopted
2 year old
brown kid,

eye are throwing stones
to the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beach Volleyball

beach volleyball today.

you wear your cap
to protect you from the sun.

you wear your beach shorts
blue shorts with big white flowers
prints.

you walk barefoot.
and then you decide to walk straight
to the internet cafe.

and you are here now.
you do not like
anybody else.

cruel world. hot sun. your flight
is still tomorrow morning.

another loud night.
an impatient self trying to be
completely silent.

shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beach, 4 P.M. Somewhere...

as i walk along the beach
this afternoon
i give in to the child in me
picking up stones,

amazed by its colors
and shapes
i begin to make stories out
of them...stones, smaller ones,
like a creature possessed by an enigma,

there must be an underlying truth to its shape, it is, as it must be telling me about what happens to me after this?

is this a hurting enigma?
am i mad at my attempt to give meaning to one without meaning?

i am interpreting a pebble the smallness of humility the silence of the insignificant the wars of the sands the struggle of the waves of the sea chasing each other as to who reaches the thighs of the shore first

a mad man is reading the shores of the sea on a very insignificant moment of the day

the stones are writing novels on the hot skins of the shores
people who pass me by are sparing me
of saying anything
and they refuse to look at me and give
that look
of that feeling that i must have been
one kind of
a wasted man

a child looks at me with pity
and asks, what are you doing with the pebbles?
are they speaking to you?
i am awakened by this vastness
sometimes to be found, i must experience being lost myself
in the secret labyrinths of
thought

the child is looking for play,
i do not have it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bear Bare Beer

square affair
bare all hair
erring prayer
declare aware
prepare dare
beer heir spare
debonaire millionaire
swear tear
where stare
death chair

RIC S. BASTASA
Bearing Her Sorrows

how she carries
her own sorrows of marriage
is like
lifting her skirt and putting
all the chicken eggs
in there

RIC S. BASTASA
Beat My Heart Like The Gong

Beat my heart like the gong

At the feast of san vicente

Beat it softly with your

Pink palms and if it does not sound

Beat it with greater force

Like mortar and pestle

(No sound still)

Beat it again please patiently

And if it sounds

Let us go on a long journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Beating Around The Bush

women like to go around
sometimes without their knowing
they move away
from the center of their
attraction
that only point in the navel of
love that keeps them going
i own it
and i can always give it
even without their
asking
all that they can do is simply
use a metaphor
which can be easily understood
like a bud unfolding
into a flower
spreading perfume
under my nose
down to that lower part of the delta
of my belly

it does not each there though
a woman needs to say at least hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beating The Blues

You have seen my face
You have seen the way I smile the way I bend my back
My shoulder leaning on the door
As though greeting you
A nice day a promising future
The glow of sun
The coolness of the moon
The splash on the clear blue waters
By the pool
By the sea
The sail boat passing by
The ship on anchor
By the wharf
And the cotton clouds hanging
By the green mountains

The poems I write are sad
You read them and you cry
You say you relate
You say you feel
The sadness of my lines

Now you ask me
Who am i?
Was I the butterfly dreaming about the sad man?
Or was I the sad man dreaming about the butterfly?

You are confused
I am not; I choose what I want to be
I am what I am
This moment,
And the moments that you imagine me to be

I write what I want
I am what I am
Some lines may be lying
But read them all over again
I may be there
between those lines somewhere
Beating The Bush

do you like to run
in circles? we are chasing
each other in
circles

that is the truth
about a circle
a chase without end
our lives
in non-narratives
but riddles

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauteous Island

everything stays here
nothing is taken
not even a grain of sand
not even your favorite shell

there is song somehow which
you can carry with you in the heart
it persists in your ear
what you long for
what you have always desired
stays there forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful

in the mirror
looking at the window
where the red roses
are in full bloom

Kaanindot

Nanamin ko
Gitan-aw ko ang bintana
Diin namulak
Ang mga pula nga rosas

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Betty

don't be a Beany
try just being a birdie
bevy not bleary
could be blistery
but have that
mystery
embrace the arms
of infinity
Delicious berry
beautiful Betty
not blandly but
somewhat
beefy
meaty spicy!

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Bird...

i see you with plumes
glossing upon its natural colors
upon a storm
you continue on this journey
firm upon the thought
that the island of your
coming comfort
is just a mile away
in your silence i shall not hear
you
you dream
i dream too
now rest for a while
perch upon those
petrified trees
the rocks below
have earned their moss
the winds are not
carrying anything
we hope
upon a meeting
there is no fear
even when
we are finally
gone.

beautiful bird
retain the silence
do not sing yet
hold on
to broken wings....

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Flower On The Wall Without Roots Anymore.

seven days
of crisis, nothing
happens, except
the spasmodic
movement of life.

you are passively
posted, spectator to
all these chasing
and wandering,

beautiful flower on
the wall
without roots anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Hands....And Sorrow

your sorrow is bearable,
do not ever think of a surrender,
if you listen carefully,

listen to what your sorrow says in poetry, as i too listen closely,

the burden is not that heavy
your sorrow is not just beautiful but in fact delicious, at a closer look

it is like a basket of assorted fruits and

look closely, your hands are beautiful...

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Medusa

at that moment
i was silenced,

because
it was too beautiful

and it was my first time
being in touch

and being touched
by beauty.....

the rest
fell silent
as though everyone
in that very moment

turned into
stone and
cliffs and rocks
and sands

it was the transformation
into manhood

an evolution into an awareness

that when beauty
hits us
straight in the heart

we cannot
at the core
talk anymore...

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Morning Is Here.....

a salad of sounds
mix in the trees and the garden

birds chirp, fountain flows,
wind chimes, leaves falling

a grasshopper hops from fern
to fern

the black crow lands on a
coconut palm

hear and earthworm squirm
ducks wade on the nearby river

in the kitchen an egg is beaten
the flame heats olive oil on the pan

sunny side up, white porcelain plate,
spoon and fork beside each other

brewed coffee fumes, a symphony
of smiles and cheers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Morning Is Here.....Oooo

a salad of sounds
mix in the trees and the garden

birds chirp, fountain flows,
wind chimes, leaves falling

a grasshopper hops from fern
to fern

the black crow lands on a
coconut palm

hear an earthworm squirm
ducks wade on the nearby river

in the kitchen an egg is beaten
the flame heats olive oil on the pan

sunny side up, white porcelain plate,
spoon and fork beside each other

brewed coffee fumes, a symphony
of smiles and cheers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Passion

i watch beauty take a walk one morning
by the sea as she undresses herself and begins
to carry her body to the calm waters
where she plunges herself
and in a moment she rises combing
her wet hair with her soft fingers
as she closes her eyes and
raises her head to the glorious light of the sun

she gets out of the water her breasts
in slow motion protruding to the direction
of her firm nipples as drops of water drip
down her tall and white body of
this woman who says she loves me too.

i am awed and speechless and i thank God
for this beautiful passion
his greatest creation that now i can touch and feel
and live with for all the days of my life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautiful Scars

Lovers lie
the earlier you know this
the sweeter the pain
love leaves us unprepared
but despite all these
one only needs to recall the kiss, the hug, the chase, the laughter
the stairs, and bed, or the cup and saucer,
the spoon in my mouth, the fork in your fingers
love does it all and we are not alone,
we did not lose a single moment
we have loved and lost
and the earlier we know this
the better the pain
clean cut wounds
that carve in the their skins
beautiful scars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beautifully To Air

i still wish that i can write like how the fingers of sunshine handle the pen of light
majestic strokes on fragile leaves of dawn
where emotions begin to wake up like sprouts of mongo beans from their coats, oh

i still dream to be a weaver of rain from the heavens
pouring out the magnificence of something pure and untouched

by the ordinariness of all thoughts
(i dream that one day, i can do it without the use of words
where inks and blots are invisible yet emitting the scents of glorious sounds) where

you think that what i am saying is the ugliness of irrationality,
someday we will see what we have not seen and yet so near to the lusciousness of our lips
the tenderness of our hands, the gentleness of our essence like breaths that we

in these cold years have surrendered beautifully to air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty

i agree what you say about inner beauty

the windows of your soul
through your eyes
to the secret chambers of your heart
holiness and peace
glow like burning fire in your head
as you evoke your presence

forgive me, but i am more tempted
as usual
to the external
the flesh that wraps your bones
the curves that travel around your body
the warmth of your arms
the softness of your touch
your lips
and breasts your thighs and groins
i see them more now as i kiss you

i am young. so young to see
to want these all.
i do not bother about your soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty And Hope

The early morning
is beautiful

it promises me
something too good

to be true like a
simple yes from you

look! look! oh! look!

there is a white butterfly
on the petal of a red rose

well framed by my
wooden window

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty And Mystery

my friend you must understand
that i am
too, sort of, a roller-coaster

emotions are,
feelings do, travel in a circle
like
a repetition of
tantrums,

there are no good
ones, there are those that keep you high
promising you a nirvana
(which you only have to guess because it is not that clear)
clarity is like a fairy sometimes

i know what you want, what you think is great
it is something that we cannot understand
and it amazes us
because we cannot understand it
we equate it with mystery
and beauty is mysterious

i will concoct a secret for you
like stone inside a glass of water
that we freeze on the ref
there is frost, and opaqueness
that melts down
with time, and our gazes are impatient
until such time that everything becomes too clear

plain stone inside a glass of water
with lots of stories in them

fumes of cold, water dropping,
liquid, and
safe.
Beauty And Pain

he was searching for beauty
he traveled far into the mountains crossing rivers sleeping in the forest
he was seeking enlightenment
pain came, and it stayed for years, and then left him

it made a difference,
beauty still he did not find,
it was somewhere else
pain carried it away from him

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty And The Lyre

she strums the string
of my awareness
and i soon bloom like
a white lotus
in the pond

beauty breathes
and then sings

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty At The Shower

naked body
under the shower
waters cascade
following the contours
the shadow
cast on the glass
i am
filled with desire
and lust

naked body
waiting on bed
just
the two of us
in the privacy of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty Speaks In Silence

early morning
along the white sands of the shore

there are no people here
most of them are still asleep

the sea is calm as silk
clear as glass

the sun is rising gently
in the gray horizon

it is beauty that speaks
my words are shying away

RIC S. BASTASA
Beauty, Like Anyone Else, With Too Much Attention, Is Choked

i like the way you put so much effort
on that sculpture: a head of a woman with braided hair
a flower between an ear,
and a certain restrained smile
as though trying to hold
what she sweetly keeps
in secret

every night you look at it and every morning
you chisel a part here and there saying,
' this is an excess
there must be a room for improvement'

on one morning you chisel out another part always looking
for a way to perfect your art
until such time that it does not look a woman at all:
it has become an indescribable creature
'derived from a native woman who has not spoken
the language of the woman that you love'

i pity the work. I abhor you
something so beautiful and so natural was finally sacrificed
in the altar of your artistic greed.

monsters arise from an overworked mind.
from too much discontent. from too much hate
for what good was there.
with too much effort, beauty, like anyone else,
with too much attention, is choked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because God Is There...

a good and
kind soul
is never weary

bumped it is
never injured

given myriad tasks
this soul which is
good and kind
shall finish it
without complain

and in excellent
manner.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because God Loves Me Still

At first i promised myself
That i will deny myself of those
Little pleasures
Which may have caused the curse
Of the gods

I am thinking of time
And how little it is
Like a drop of honey upon
A white porcelain plate
Feasted by ants,

And so i made a decision
I'll have them back again
Though with little restraints
For a compromise

I am human, i am uncertain,
I am fickle

And yet mind you
God loves me still....

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Am Blind With You I Can See

i ask for your fingers and you were so kind
you touch me with the gentle feel of such
tiny ten tributaries
with so much love your fingers have become a set
of loving hands
and you take me to places i have not been before
to things i have not ever touched
to feelings i have never felt

this is our house, you first tell me, feel the living room
it is warm and cozy and full of concerned conversations,
this is actually what we call a home,
and you are here

you are telling me with the definite and bold strokes
of your choice of words

and this is the window, you continue telling me
this is where you see the world outside
those are blue clouds, and i have known blue
through the ice cubes that fill the glass of orange juice
that you give me

those are red roses in the garden, and i feel the red
through the hot tea that you serve me,
and then
you take my hands to your breasts, and you tell me
this is me, and i feel the beating of your heart and you tell me again
inside is my heart, and with all love you are telling me again

you are always here

and this
i have felt, and since then i am never blind.

RIC S. BASTASA
because i am free i invoke the wind in me
and because i have the wind
i call the bird in me
the wings i have
and because i have the wings now i must say
adieu
to you and them and everyone of you
those that still have the looks of surprise and amazement
bedazzled and puzzled i must confess that i
do not belong here in this place of
too much ordinariness because i am free because i am the wind
because i have my wings and now you pray before i leave and fly away
that i may tell you
on which part of my body
have i learned to fold the obstructions of my arms
do not imitate me do not attempt to find the secrets of my
capacity for flights

did i not tell you that my father is an eagle?

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Am Here

and neither there

or either or

to infinity to infinity to infinity

and then you look on this half-darkness

half-sleep and then and then and then and then and then

you claim you have the hands to touch me

i am neither here not there now

i am nothing but

this air in the infinite emptiness of your infinite bowl.

i am everything i am nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Am Not Yet

why i did not see you
it was simple
i have nothing to say
or show
to impress you about me
you may
ask me about my poems
as though i owe you
something
or an explanation why
they sound so sad and
then when we face each other
what you see instead
is the sunrise
and never the sunsets
or the smile that you think
must have been purported to
deceive you
i do not wish to disturb you
further
it is not odd
it is simply a matter of
keeping things to myself
because
i have become independent from
anybody’s prison
that matter of opinion
that impression
that something that i do not want
to have

that conclusion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Am The Giver Then I Am Inexhaustible

i have been thinking about greed
your greed with specifics
the details crop in cramped inside these craniums
and i am honestly
disturbed but i shall not let this matter
unmake me
i won't allow this to infect the flesh that you are eating
i shall be strong
and be willing to part with everything i have
all for you
and when every part of me is consumed
every ear, eye and even the mind
my heart reduced to nothing
not even shreds of paper
then you must leave
and you shall part with all satisfaction that
finally
you have taken everything from me
and i shall ponder on this

why did i allow this nothingness in me?
why did i allow you to rob me of my being?

shall i tell myself
because i have loved you much
even if i know that there is something messy in you
your greed
and avarice and selfishness?

it does not matter
i am the giver and i am always inexhaustible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Believe In Myself....

you have neglected
a flower
but it blooms just the same
you despised the sun everyday
but it shines just the same
you have not appreciated me
but i am doing good
just the same

there is a flame inside my heart
no one turns it off
except myself

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Cannot Sleep Tonight

because i cannot sleep tonight
i have to pay the price
my morning and noon tomorrow
shall be my night
and the whole day i will sleep too
not speaking to anyone
not having breakfast
and lunch

another dinner for one on a candle light
they will all be sleeping
and i will be working

like a vampire have i become
thirsting for blood
wanting more flesh
shying away from the ordinary hustle and bustle
of this world

i wake up when everyone sleeps
i sleep when everyone wakes up

and soon they will all complain
and bury me

alive

because i have refused to learn how i must live
with them

and of course, they will not like it, tomorrow morning
the rules will be posted in the ref

they know i still need a drink, and the cold water
is stored in the ref

they are away on a trip, and they will wait
as always.......wanting to understand, wishing that i change....
i am still thinking, if i better get lost and be not found forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Love You

i can always
pretend
that i welcome
changes

that i can change
to suit
your mold
about what
love is

and you take
charge of my
life and soon
i will let you
see that
i master change
and change
shall i

into not loving
you.

do not regret
your wish
for changes

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Love You I Have Become Nothing

because i love you
i have always been ready
to give up my world
all for you

because i love you
i am willing to conceal myself
from the truth

because i love you
i live the way you want me to
away from myself

because i love you
i confronted the death of all my senses
no promises no resurrection

because i love you
i thrive on compromises
i deny myself

there is no I, only you
there is always the betrayal of my destiny
there are no more shadows
just you just you

because i love you
i have become a mist, an imagination of myself
i have become nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because I Love You So Much

because i love you
i can make use of a line
and in an instant i see you:

beauty inclined
reclined

RIC S. BASTASA
Because It Is Not My Body Or Your Body

so, must i come to this conclusion,

perhaps it is your soul
yes, perhaps it is also my soul unto yours,

perhaps you have forgotten all those light years back,
perhaps, i too cannot recall exactly, but the feeling is here

it is like the North Star to my wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because It Sings....

there is a man inside the cage
but you cannot tell that he is a man
because

by all appearances of it
it has black wings, sharp claws, it is muted
by a beak
it can only sing in syllables
it is wrapped by
shiny feathers

it is a bird, a black bird and by all means
you cannot tell
that it is angry

because it sings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because Life Is A Surge....

and for the thousand
footsteps
i still say i have
not begun yet

and for the thousand
words, or a thousand
poems, i still say
i have not written

for all those loves
and heartbreaks, i still
keep saying
i have not really
loved that much

until the calendar
ends the days
until the mouth is
sealed
until the heart
stops....

for life is a surge
and it keeps surging
and surging

RIC S. BASTASA
Because Love Begets Love

you hide the shadow of a man
inside your bra

it is not funny your bra bulges like
a bone

someone hides a woman's breast inside
his pants

tits on his pockets like pebbles on the beach

there is something bitchy over there
it is laughing

someone wears a heavily tinted sunglasses
imagination thinks about someone else

hands are traitors too and feet never run away
from a confrontation of lusts

we know we have secrets and we are comfortable with all
these
without the need of telling
why

we understand
we simply want to survive the heat and
the cold

the days that torture us
torture as no more

we love these secrets and of course
these secrets love us too

love begets love
in discreet cold and comfortable places of the heart
Because Of Me

because of me you begin to write poetry
some haikus
and more haikus are coming still
from what you have actually seen
in the river
in the pond
the geese
the leaf sinking

those little things
the worms
and cocoons

because of you i also learned how to read poetry
long enough
for the hours to become so huge

and i was scared by its big mouth
and long slimy tongue
and i stand before it
and let myself be
swallowed
whole

it is dark inside the hours
but my heart was like the sun
shining brightly
at midnight

because of us we have become complete
we have become new breeds
now eating poetry
for breakfast
and lunch

and perhaps, on the next coming days
dinner too.
Because Of The House, There Was Never A Home

because of too much concern for the house
that someone other than yourself may live in there
and steal away what you are keeping there

the furniture and the kettle
the glass and the spoon and the fork
and the spam and sausages and
wheat and bread

because of too much worry for what a house can be
so much home has been wrecked
so many homes were not even conceived and born

because you want a nice and expensive house
now you don't even have that dream of a home

RIC S. BASTASA
Because Of What Happens In The Night

because of what happens in the night
(a night full of love
a night full of passion)
you hum at dawnbreak
you sing in the morning
you dance at noon
and you laugh in the afternoon
and then with so much
happy anticipation
you look forward to
the coming night
with another ready passion
because you love her
and she loves you***

RIC S. BASTASA
Because One Chooses Optimism

despite
the storms that
diminished
the fixed numbers
of trees annihilated
and stars frozen
to the dilated eye
of the sun
one keeps faith
about the greatness
of humanity
and still keeps
writing
poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Because She Allowed It She Was Destroyed

one summer she attended a poetry workshop
upon invitation of some writers
and wannabes like her

her name is poetess
modest
shy
truthful to every word chosen by her
in the poem that she chooses to
read before them
these writers listening to her

after which
the chopping begins, the stabbing knife, the slices of her self
the sharp teeth biting her to pieces
the slapping criticisms of her works
her poems her life
she was bleeding to death
they have no inkling to save her
she shrinks
like some sundried raisin
she shatters like some broken glass
she shuts up
she runs away and throws all her poems to the trash can

she is ugly she is a witch
since then she never wrote again
because of them
these writers ahead of her

she was the object of their ridicule
she was utterly destroyed

because she allowed it
she had known better

that one should write
because one must write
not for anybody else
but for oneself alone

one need not even win
or excel
one only needs to write
because you love to write
because you must
survive this love of your life

your poetry, now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because She Loves Him....
	he way his hand
pours red wine to
her glass
is eloquence not
yet even spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
Because The Heart Has Always Its Own Reasons

only if we can choose
what makes us happy
given our own kind of
logic
we should have been
truly happy

ahh, but this heart
has a mind of its own
by which our logic
sometimes says
illogical

ahh, but this heart lives
in a world of its own

there is always a compulsion
to be there
helpless feathers are we
tossed and fallen
on those seasons of our
reckoning

ahh, the moments are
worth the remembering

but how can we speak about
it to
our friends?

like the way your frown on them
so shall they frown on you

in that party of silence
all of your shall feast

RIC S. BASTASA
Because The Pain Is Still There

one scratches his skin
everyday
even if nothing itches
anymore
as a form of habit
because
the pain is there
and you do not know
what to do
about it

not knowing how to solve
this
one scratches his head
after which the hands do not
really know
where to land
where to go

RIC S. BASTASA
Because The Snake Is Here

i am eating my words
i languish in the jail of my ideas
no woman comes here
for a visit
i am murmuring my sighs
to the bars
in between the hours
i whisper my whimper
to the grasshoppers
on the grass
i look to their feet that jump
for skies
i am at a loss of syllables
my mouth is dry
my hands are trembling
a snake is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because The World Has Not Given A Chance

when the doctor says
that he is a ticking bomb
i understand it,

soon he shall explode
without him
willingly detonating it

it is this neglect
of a thinking experience

the lackluster of the mirrors
of the soul

i do not blame him
dying is an option
when hope is no more

when this bomb explodes
it will be absurd to ask him

if he combs his hair
or washes his face

what to wear does not matter
or what perfume to dampen the skin

it is this annihilation
this dream of finally becoming nothing

because the world does not know how to give
what chances are there left

for the most ordinary man on the street
the underprivileged and the oppressed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because Their World Is Sinking

because their world is sinking
they move out
to save themselves and

finding your world
they knock at your door
politely,

as you open it
they start doing the traders' talk
they want to be your new house cleaners
for the meantime
that they do not have a world of their own

you refuse them
and then you close the door almost
hitting their faces

outside your world
a police officer is studying the pages
of the penal code
wanting to find the provision that
may put them all to jail

RIC S. BASTASA
Because There Are Just Too Many Of Them

yes too many
makes us too familiar
each pebble
no matter how unique
and gleaming on the shore
against the sun
is of no value
to you

RIC S. BASTASA
Because There Is Really No One There At 11: 30 In The Evening

when sleep does not visit you
till 11: 30 in the evening
you take your time waiting for it
as you dabble in poetry

here is a friend that understands you
and listens to what you are talking
in that cautious silence of his metaphors

the evening becomes a romance of one soul
and one body all contented in the grace
and beauty of the gift of thoughts
and words

he toasts that imagined glass of wisdom
filled with that wine of air
and then the laughter that spreads
that no one hears

RIC S. BASTASA
Because 'They Look But Don'T See And Hear But
Don'T Listen Or Understand.'

ah, same with our situation,
we, who want to speak
and hide
what we think is too private
like a secret
in the cabinet of neatly folded clothes
shall only touch
the surface of those things
smooth and
convenient to our touch
we long
to reveal it
but we know that consequence
of segregation
and alienation
so we try to touch on them as lightly
and as gently
as possible without hurting
us, or them
the metaphors come
not that easy
as easing the pain of brightness
we concede
to hiding
we bury things only to mark them
up
for identification
marking the sea with a pole
the sand with
a stone
the air with a butterfly
the land with
ice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because This Love Is For All, And Not Exclusive,

i will not let you know that i know that you lied.
i will pretend inorder to save you face.

whatever you ask i give in the name of love.
if it destroys you, i will have no regrets.

you will be responsible for this love.

if at the end you will know the real score
that i have not really loved you despite the love
that i give away all the time for those who are left out
of life and felt that they were never really loved,

because this love is for all, and not exclusive,
like the way God loves both sinners and saints,

if at the end you will discover this, this poem of confession,
even then, i will not expect that you will change,

but if by chance, whatever that be, that you change for good,
o my! i will be also one of those who will rejoice!
i will join with all the stars in the heavens,
and like firecrackers, all explode into a vast song
of this universe all because The prodigal son has returned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Are Human.....

last thing,
we did it, not to be
praised,

nothing about
a name,

we did it because
we are alive

we are here
and what we are doing can
be done only here

and you remember
when you are asked why did you
climb that mountain

and your answer was,
because it is there

and we too say this
ask us why we love and make love?

because we are here
because we are human....

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Are Part Of These Mysterious States

to make you more interesting
(not just to myself but more of yourself)
i tell you something that you want to know
and you listen
and you like it and you begin to smile and
feel great about how i speak about you
because you are great and somehow you fail to see it
and never acknowledge it to yourself
before you sleep and at times when you see yourself
in front of the mirror and affirm
the reason why you are here because you pretend that you do not know it.

you are interesting and you belong with us all here
as we are interesting too
we feel the exclamations of our beings,
we are beyond the colors of the sea and the the land
and all that arise from them
we rise above them all
and we must confirm these phenomena of our
being what we must be.

tonight i will ask you some questions
and there will be no answers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Are The People....

we are the people

we are the multitude of
small hands &
minds

we shall see soon how the mighty fall
how the powerful rock is crushed
to become the sands that
we are

we are the people
when the might falls
we shall feel
how powerful have we been

how silly had we been to forget

that we the people
that power resides in the multitude of our small hands
and minds

soon, we shall be the people more
feeling the power in our hands
the crushing power of our feet
the power of our minds

the mighty falls
the rocks have turned into sands

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Have Gone Astray From The Father

because we have gone astray from our fathers
God has created mothers
they are the ways
to the hearts of men
back to the homes of love
and compassion

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Have Never Told Them

there is a straight path
and you want to walk straight to it
you cannot, there is this desire to
go inside a circle and hide
behind those curves,
there is this wish to find a resting place
a glass cage
a one-way mirror where you see all of them
and then
no one sees you
sometimes i look for some reasons why
this behavior is sought

there is this straight path that nobody wants to take
it is too tight in there
and everyone sees you
and their gaze hurt a lot
and you do not deserve to suffer upon their causes

no wonder birds travel on clouds
and build their nests
how men made walls
how women hide their faces on hats and
winter coats

there is this secret that we keep
that we bring even to our death
it is this secret that makes us what we are

others miss us
because we have never told them
the trees wish to look inside the nests
where birds have already flown away

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Love....

the coming days cannot disturb me
with you on my side
the hours travels so fast
i am short lived.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because We Were Too Careful...

we tiptoed
not to earn their anger
and we become
ballet dancers
much to their pleasures
and we earn
the big clap
those civilized
ovation and
warm public
applause
yet look at us now
old fools
never been really happy
even for
just once.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are King

to write well
i suppose
is to take a chair
and sit there
and imagine yourself
floating in the
middle of this universe
where you are
the Great Creator and
then you open your eyes
and begin
what you have never
really started
from day one till the end
of all the other days
of the rest
of your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are King (In Your Poetic Creations)

to write well
i suppose
is to take a chair
and sit there
and imagine yourself
floating in the
middle of this universe
where you are
the Great Creator and
then you open your eyes
and begin
what you have never
really started
from day till the end
of the rest
of your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are My Form Of Perfection

BECAUSE you are a form
of my own form
so perfect
and divine
and too mundane
for one to
touch and keep
as a memory

because you are God
myself
and too luscious for
my senses
the darkness of my nights
forgone
the thorns of my roses
all softly taken
the guilt of my own humanity
forgiven

i shall take you as you are
as part of my being
as skin to my bone

and this i shall keep forever
without regret
sans the guilt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are Never Mine You Can Never Never Be Mine

i see you in the face of another

your body i feel
in the body of another

i always remember you
in other places

i smell you in the hair
of another

i touch you in the hand
of another

i dare not mention your name not to hurt the other

i kiss your lips in the lips of another

i lose myself in the mind
of another

because you are never mine you can never never be mine

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are The Good One

one day you will choose the right path
not because you are afraid of the pain of having
that error as seen through their eyes of conviction

but because something right will always be right
and the right way is not taken because of the perks of
goodness
or the offers of approval
or that altruistic feeling that finally you have
chosen the goodness of
humanity

but for the main reason that in this life
there is nothing to choose
except to be good
and to walk the right path

not because you want it now
but because it is.

it is you and you are
from here from the very start
till the end

the good one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Are The Star Of The Universe, The Only One

we do not try that hard enough
reality has muscles of its own
when it sees us tired and rotten
it begins to show its hands
to take us for a ride
its feet pedaling with the wheels of beautiful truths
in the gardens of this universe
it is then when we become the tourists
simply looking and enjoying what reality shows us

so relax, do not overwork yourself with some chosen words
let the words do the trick they are your slaves not your masters
let the chair stand on its own legs move towards you
and then you sit as the windows open themselves
as the sun finally arrives as the mountains grow the trees and the greenest grass so appeasing to your eyes

spectator, the star of the universe the most important mortal the chosen creature
Because You Cannot Remember Anymore

i do not wish you to
read me
as you read another
poem of me
early this morning as it
is raining
inside my heart

the rain never stops
and the storms
have been so strong
but i have never wavered
like a leaf
taken away from a
branch

the leaf is gone
it rots somewhere else
and the branch dies
like any other part of
any tree

but we are different
we die
but our deaths are not
the same

after this, nothing stops
us
to go back home again

and home is where we are
our true selves again

i do not wish you to come
with me
there is this inevitability
for life beyond
what any word can imagine
i do not wish you to read me
because life itself reads us
and then puts us back again
into some mystical senses

and this is what we have not
fully understood and this is my
only hope
why i keep on writing again and
again

now without you because you have
also found
what you are

i am happy now because you
cannot remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Do Not Know How To Say Yes....

do not make a conclusion that you are wrong
or that you are inferior

you know best who you are, keep thinking,

when you were rejected
by whose standards?
and under what circumstances?

yes, theirs, and their
network of evil influences
this company incorporated
a root system of cajolery
and mediocrity

keep that dignity, do not expect, do not demand,
stay what you are, you know best who you are

your nights have been days, your craft well honed by sacrifices,
you have been an expert listener and talker to yourself

you have mastered right from wrong, you have fathomed the
code of silence, the ethics of your profession

your efforts since when must be rewarded?

ah, you started so young to be disciplined
you shy away from shallowness, embraced the loneliness of time

burning hair with your candles, whetting what is metallic and
glossing over the gold that is found in you

you are a true value, an epitome of virtue,
the ripe fruit of the grape vine,
the moon on the river.

ah, they are mud, and how can they ever like the true pearl
the nugget of gold beneath their stinking waters?

now do not blame yourself,
you are the best,
the true winner of this
game,
they all have their friends,  
they are drunk with their lies and power,  
they had their secret meetings and their talks  
they have the strings of the marionettes in their hands  
they are garbage on the cans

eye will tell the truth....  
you could have won  
you are the best,  
but you just don't know how to say yes  
too all of them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Doubted It

That first day
the house was clean
everything was in order
the lawn was
well manicured like
your nails

love was young
and its best foot was
stepped
forward

The rest became part
of history

The house fell
dirt and dust was all over the
yard
the garden was gone
your nails uncut
and you keep on saying

it is all because love
is gone
and you are telling it to
the wind

and you never let him
hear it.

love gets old and
it too learns to forget

you doubt it
that is the real reason

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Have Faith In You

because you do not understand it completely

you let it mesmerize
you,

logic sits upon a rock under a tree
then sleeps
so soundly

as imagination spreads its wings and then flaps it
soaring in the sky

like the kite when you were once a child
like the jet plane when you left your beloved in preference of latitude

like a cloud that hovers upon a hill and rests there like a vagabond
with no home yet in mind

you set aside the need for understanding
you are happy and singing and wandering
you have no direction
yet you are so full like a river bringing so many memories to the

sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Let Her Go

remember,
both of you were so young,
she had natural curls in her hair and you really like
playing with them
that summer

you had wavy eyelashes and she loved each wave
like the sea when the august winds came
some storms
coming to your love
some promises broken
like the tower of your sandcastles
that evening by the sea
falling

you were once together, remember
now, the wrinkles of your hands claim a long, lost memory
once so smooth and supple
like the cheeks of a woman
like her breasts, remember, remember........

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Love Him

he betrays you
in ways that you cannot notice
in modes that you
cannot discover
in a manner that what you do not know
cannot hurt you

on so many pretenses
and he knows it
and he wants to change and
stop those
betrayals
but he is as weak as the
first Adam to
Eve
and to the Snake and
to the Apple he
shall always succumb

it is hard to wake up a man
who is awake

but because you love him
you always understand that a betrayal
cannot be that
hurting anymore

when he comes back
you are there waiting by the stairs and the door
and you hug him back
with all your
open arms

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Never Ceased To Believe…..

sometimes a chair follows you
to make you sit

a door opens by itself even without a key
it is meant to welcome you

sometimes coffee pours on your cup
it does it without your asking

for sometimes all these are meant to be yours
and they all come by without telling

believe it or not, the stars shine for you
the stairs build themselves

a house appears, a path runs, a blanket rolls
a window opens, love spreads

simply because you never ceased to believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Never Talk To Me...

all that is left of me will be
bones suffering takes the flesh and breaks
the nerves the sad times long
enough shall mellow these
bones into powder decently turning
later into a hundred or more
dusts then you shall
identify with me for dust
too is your final destiny

everything you are shall be dust too
you too shall mellow

now is the best time to talk
in the common ground of our final existence
but it will be too late
the strong wind by then
has blown us all away
scattered specks
lacking the specifics....

RIC S. BASTASA
Because You Want To Go Fishing....

living in the country
of your birth. Fishing.

immigrating to america.
you say, what is the difference?

is joy a folded paper?
is sadness graffiti?

inside the bus bound for
Dakota. It is you mind going fishing.

memories are schools of fish.
resembling shaped of a whale.

then you arrive at conclusions.
same roads. same canals. same boats.

same sun. same people. same food.
same conversations. You want to go

fishing. Back to your country.
Your place of birth. You go fishing.

foul smell of dead fish floating
on the polluted river. Then the
flood of

ideas. Fresh talk from
fresh people. You are finally alive
and you go on

fishing without anybody else. The
fish are all yours which you throw

away into the sky to watch a kite
connecting you to the clouds.
Because Youth Is A Flower

because youth is a flower
that blooms only once
one must be kind to use
hands which are gentle

a flower is fragile with
petals and sepals and
stalks not strong enough
to withstand the demands of
time

the flower that blooms today
tomorrow shall die
each moment is crucial
each bloom cannot last forever

the flowers of my youth
if well taken cared of
shall proceed with its fruits
and its seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Because.......I Never Had You....

i am always restless
i already had everyone
i am always thirsty
and hungry
no place satisfies me
no house is ever a home to me

because i never had you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Becoming Just Like Everyone Else

since then
i stopped chasing for
a relationship

my beggar story
was indeed
regretful and i do not
want it
retouched

the whiskey is a bottle
of the past
and the beef stew
makes me
vomit
even the smell of it
can kill me

now i stopped chasing
love

it does not mean
that i must pursue
indifference

there is only one thing
i learned an
art
and this is the art of
just being myself

just sitting by the lake
watching the
fish swimming on the
shallow water
and letting time go

i am just becoming like
everybody else
nothing more
nothing less.

RIC S. BASTASA
Becoming The 'It'

i don't really mind
becoming your 'it'

play with me like
i am what you like
with what it is.

rub it tightly.
rub it consistently.
make it hot and strong.
play with me like i am it.
it is your desire that
matters most. it is the it
playing with it.
rub it your time.
lick it. taste it. feel it.
close your eyes and
make love with it.

it is it. just as it is.
you like it. you prefer
my being an it. it has
no name. it has only
taste. it is it. just it.
and after you have
done what you want
with it. after you are
through. leave it.
it is an it. it is not
you. it is just an it.
it cries. it misses you.

it however cannot
love you. for how can
an it love a you?

it stays with me.
and it is silent now.
it is resting and i
am giving it time.
it is inside me.
and it will always be with me.
you may come again and have it.
i don't really mind.
it has no it is still mine.
and takes my commands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Becuz Of U

i still dream of chrysanthemums
and daffodils to bloom on the coming springtime
i still dream of tranquil ponds where the lotus sits
like dignity
i still dream of birds that sing for me
i still dream of blue skies and dancing clouds
soft winds, and swans floating like snow melting on the lake
i still dream of red roses and blue butterflies hovering on them
i still dream because of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bed Time

mother is
bed time
as mother
tells a lot
of stories
about
strange creatures
like
elastic man
yellow frog
girl
robin hood
red riding hood
manhood
boy with golden
hair
Rapunzel
gazelle
Cinderella and
Aladdin
we sleep and
mother goes
back to her
bed with father
and the lights
are turned off
and there are
so many dreams
father, mother
and us
and so many of
these dreams
with the
unicorns
and the
dragons sometimes
and the knights
such that
we cannot
anymore
remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Bedazzled

bedazzled
it is love that does it
at the height of
affections
the beloved appears to be
the sun of the universe

time sooner tells the truth

it is just one of the stars
like those that from a distance
appear like dust
mere atom
a neutron

RIC S. BASTASA
Bedouin Music At Wadi Rum, Jordan

on the sand
then the carpet
the Bedouins
sit

music is strum
from strings
and hands are
clapped

a belly dancer
named Amira
dances in their
minds

behind them the
camels are
resting

the sharp sounds
of the winds
cut the song

(oh, it is the
sound of army
jets passing
sky cutting)

RIC S. BASTASA
Been

the devils were once
angels
they've been good once
so they know both
sides of the coin
the angels have never
been there
so they get lost
when confronted
with hell

RIC S. BASTASA
I've been cheated
five times and five times
i have to assure myself
that nothing's wrong
with their cheating
they get what they want
and they punish themselves
after
anyway.
i am not diminished
by their evil deeds
i am not envious of
their success.
i close my eyes on the
night of my defeat
and chant my mantra:
' i am great. i am good.
i am honest. I am not evil'.
to sound sleep i go.
mornings are great.
sun is brighter.
birds still sing. air so fresh.

I am new
and invigorated
with what i
am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bees So Many Bees Looking For Honey...

some words come back
and they look like strangers
their names become
forgotten and they stay there
staring at you
who had gone old and
unforgiving,

some have become orphans
reduced as mere syllables
and you as toddler
begins to mumble

bees so many bees
looking for honey...

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a big difference before and after 
the explosion

i am not referring to what destroys buildings 
and kills a hundred people

this has nothing to do with bloody bodies 
and noisy emergencies and headline reports 
and with due respect to all that terrorize us 
and how at the end, we will be met with the 
same unsolved mysteries, where the trains 
run as usual to their respective normal 
destinations, where passengers still line up 
for more trips, where drinks are served where 
stories of horror are for the meantime set aside 
and forgotten

i am referring to our private agonies where our 
bodies are being pressed by so many warm arms 
and flaming lips, and secret trysts,

before the explosion the ravings are there 
and reason even if dying is left unattended asking 
for a glass of water that we hesitate to give

all those inside want to hear that explosion 
and see what happens 
in those deep-seated longings 
like almond eyes without sleep for 
many wars of the nights

and the explosion happens

the palace where you live becomes a place of ruins 
the princess turns into a grasshopper 
and you look for wipers of your car windows 
and then people think that you are sick 
very very sick, because your are listless 
and in every corner of the room
you puke.

RIC S. BASTASA
Before Christmas Day

you ask someone to be with you
you make a call
on that busy and lighted street
despite the traffic
and the honking sounds and the
people walking fast
you feel so alone

no one is available
and you understand
you have no choice but to
dance loneliness away
you cross the street
not minding whether you will
be hit by one of those sane cars
and the finger of the driver
gives you the f sign
and then you smile in return

it is a happy world you
have there
and they begin to think too
otherwise

RIC S. BASTASA
Before Going Home

before going home
(it is already nine o'clock in the evening)
from the university
i call you that i will fetch you
since there is a fire raging some houses
along the road where you will pass
and i am driving this white car
still thinking about what will happen to you
when you will be left alone
tonight
due to some petty quarrels
which we indulge sometimes unnecessarily
i invite you for some late dinners
in some interior restaurant
catering only to the some
exclusive few
(perhaps those who are lost
in the labyrinths of a complicated
relationship, just like us)
and you say yes
and you order spaghetti while i shall have
a burger and we both agree
we shall take the
canned Coca-cola
without much talk
i hold your hand while waiting for the waitress
to bring the food.
you smile and i know
we're still all right

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you smile and i know
we're still all right

RIC S. BASTASA
Before I Met You

Before I met you I had laughter
A sane one, the laughter that you hear
In the usual cafes, in the market,

Then I asked for your name, we gazed
You showed you like my gaze, you liked
The way I talk, and I could sense it the
Way you gaze, the way you talked to me,

Like we have become two mirrors looking
At each other, like we have become two
Hands complimenting each other’s hold,

Like we have become two lips nearing
For the kiss to seal our emptiness, but
Then I close my eyes and see that it
is not you, and it is not me, in that
Moment, we see two strangers scared,

Two strangers scared in the darkness
Where we hid our two equal emotions,
We both remember the freshness of

Two mirror wounds and we compromise,

We are not; we are not really ready for this.

I get back to my laughter, the one before I met you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Before I Sleep Tonight

i have written many poems
and you have been reading
perhaps all of them and you
even remember what i have
written and left there, i always
tell you i am busy, for i am,
doing anything, reading and
writing each poem, each
feeling, but before i sleep
tonight, as i will write this as
my last poem, let me tell you
given the choice between
poetry and you, you know too
well, that i will choose you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Before I Slip....

forgive this
one my dear

i know it
fails your expectations

you love details
and color and scent

you love all the
particulars of the
human moment

each hour, even each
second
counts

a snap is needed
the sound of the clicking
of the knob
and the ticking of the
clock
inside that
vacuole room

but i honestly admit
i am busy
and busier than ever
i say what
i want to say and i
write what
is in my mind this
very moment

i have set aside
details
perhaps tomorrow or
on a sunday
when my feet are rested
upon the waves of the sea
when my mind hangs like
a baby on a cradle

or a depressed woman upon
a hammock
waiting for another
session with Sigmund.

i got to go
i have promises to keep
and miles to go
before i slip.

RIC S. BASTASA
Before I Write These Lines

before i write these lines
it will take me perhaps

perchance
ten years more
to realize that the words
are worthy to be
written

the pain finally soothing
when we finally
said goodbye

when we realize
that goodbyes seasoned
by the spices of time

that after all the bitter herb
too gives
a nice taste to the buds

so that when we meet again
we smile
we remember those tears
we thought salty
now, we say though silently
how funny
how misplaced sentimentally

RIC S. BASTASA
Before She Dies...

even if she does not ask for it
before she dies
i hold her hand and gently press
it against mine
and i whisper to the silence of
my own pond
go, for i have since then
forgiven you

do not say any word
you are too tired to ask for
what had long been
hidden

RIC S. BASTASA
Before You Go Away

before you go away
please return
everything that i
have given you.

return my kisses
my hugs and embraces
return my blanket
the warmth
i have shared with you
when you were
so cold
on that damp
room. Please return
them immediately

before you go away
please account
all the moments
i have given you

and if you are finished
all these undoing
you may go

rest assured
i am whole again
and love another one
much better than
you: ingrate!

RIC S. BASTASA
Befriending Despair

i will talk to despair
since he is my friend

everything will be trivial
nothing serious
about some possible solutions
or explanations
about a tragedy
or death or suffering

and despair will talk to me
like i am his friend too

closer, closer,
that is what i want
despair
to do for me,
and i will
ask him
to write for me
a story

specifically, more about a fantasy,
nothing serious

we will not be talking about
family troubles
squabble over lost fortunes
black sheep
the prodigal son
the molested girl
the wife who serves as punching bag
for the drunkard
hopeless hubby

i would prefer
something about travel and
cuisine
or even money and
women
or honor or awards
or achievements

something that strikes
the lull of my taste-buds
the aha experience
those first times
honeymoon, or victory balls
Christmas parties
mama's reconciliation with papa
first born,
that earthly communion

we will not talk about pain
or separation
or broken homes
or failing to make it in life
those horrible failures
that inability to rise up
from a fall

and i will not
mention
how in those years,
he has hurt me so
badly
like i were not human
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Befriending Our Wounds...

the wounds of the soul
are our friends
these pains of being human
how can this body negate
what it really is?

our friends have never for
once been ugly
we are our friends too
beautiful and enduring
show them the right paths
beyond grieving
phantoms from our humble
beginnings
the purity of parities
those flaming flumes
levitating

RIC S. BASTASA
Beggars Of Love

i am the king
in my small kingdom
i keep dignity
intact in my
heart

at night i have become
a beggar of love
and so i kneel before you
asking for it

it is the dark that conceals me
my crown and scepter
beneath your feet

i am at your command
and i follow every word
so blindly

it is because of love
and love makes us all slaves
to the pleasures that
it gives

i swallow every pride there is
because i cannot unlearn
this love for you

but it will not be forever
there will be no slaves forever

i shall soon awaken from this sleep
and be myself again

to wear my crown and hold my scepter
and walk again with dignity as my own king
in my small kingdom

i shall keep my name
but how lonely can it be

less the joys and pleasures
less the honesty and ecstasy
less myself,

devoid of everything that shall
make
my kingdom in shambles
into the triumph of the
shameless and
the beasts....

RIC S. BASTASA
Begging For Affection

People will hate me if i go from one door to another begging for affection
they will ask, ' does he have a mother? '
i did have a mother. 'Where is his father? '
same answer. ' Does he have a wife? '
that is the hard question now, because the answer is 'yes'
but it will be a long story, and many will be asking more questions from me
when what i need is only a little rest and a variation of my life
by looking at the door of their houses and then after a few minutes i move away
like a cat and never like a rat that takes away
some of their trash.
and so i learned my lesson now
i dislike other people houses' doors
keep my own soft feet and just take my leisure at the park
where people like my sensitivity
simply move away and never stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Begging The Question

to get a clearance from the ombudsman
you get the clearance first from the NBI

(go to the NBI)

to get a clearance from the NBI
you need to get first the clearance from the Ombudsman

oh common!

which comes first the chicken or the egg?

RIC S. BASTASA
Behind Me The High Mountains Beyond Me The Blue Seas....

at dawn
i pass by your house
i know that
you are in there
your room is lighted
by the window glass

i know i am still
welcome
but i have already made
a decision

i will just pass by
for i have some other
plans
for the goodness of my
own life

last night
i have already
weighed
the possible
consequences

my new home is uphill
behind me the high mountains
beyond me
the blue seas....

RIC S. BASTASA
no friend betrays me
because they all love me
be it at the front
or behind my back
they all are enchanted by my charm
and they like my hugs so warm
the one that rushes blood to their hearts

despite their heavy work and tight schedules
far from me
in other states and the edges of the world
they still have time to say hello
and tell me
they miss me

i am full of joy
receiving and mutualizing what they are giving me
with such abundance of the heart
our mouths speak
nothing but love
and friendship

our hearts leaping with joy
our hands raised in praise
for friendships true
like flowers blooming
in the early coming
of spring

long sunny summers
cool breeze
banana boats and
surfing boards
to the sea of life
with so much to offer

what a life!
what a joy!
come! let me touch
your trembling hands
let your kind soul
taste the chinese soup in our bowl

RIC S. BASTASA
Behind The Scenes...

imagine when
the curtains fall
and when
the lights turn off
imagine
how tears fall
despite
the applause
imagine
how the earth
itself becoming an
empty space
the mind
a desert and
the body a sprinkle
of sands
the lips as cold
as dawn
chalice

RIC S. BASTASA
for as long as there is still a sigh left
there is always that possibility for the scream

or if you don't
you shall choose the silence of the seed

another night
of waiting and soon you will see the tendrils of light sprouting

it is a new day, it is the promise of be-ing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Being A Poet

being a poet
is not an ambition

it is ironic
that i do poetry and

yet i do not want
to be called a poet

nor be identified with
any movement in poetry

nor take the challenge and opportunity
of being crowned by laurel leaves

and be dragged on the stage of
an island of light focusing my head and body

and they shall all clap and say
this is the poet, this is our poet

not in the figment of my imagination
not an ambition not a profession not a career in the field of literature
to be a poet on a certain degree

you see, i live in a crowded universe
i am a fish in the sea of people

and i, never imagine once in my whole life
that i will be swimming so meaninglessly in the corridors

of this vast ocean of men and mice and snakes
and goats and pigs and eagles

poetry is what i do but i am not a poet
this poet, that poet
their poet

the reason is here inside my heart
this is my place &
this is my only chance to be alone

to be myself to be human again for out there
i, we, you have become pillars
and walls and continental shelves

it is only here in this spot
that i become my island

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Alone

being alone is routinary
nothing unusual to a man like me
it is like taking the bus every morning
from home to the office
then back
and forth everyday everyday

it becomes a lifestyle
and when one gets used to it
you fear nothing anymore

even death, you know it, when you die,
you don't die with them

alone, alone you die, no one else dies for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am nothing
so i must make something out of
my being nothing
this sense
must make an essence

this watch must tell time
otherwise
it is not a clock at all

this poet
must write the poems
to be this poet

to become
one must make out
his essence
for from nothing
in the actual doing
is this something

i am
not because i am for now
the way you see and touch me
i am because i am becoming
i am because i am being

i die, what am i?
a mist
see, i am not even the air
i am not even what you think you see

now, i am nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Co-Equal

being co-equal
you are in no position to tell me
who i am
and what i am supposed to do
what i must speak
and what i must think

do not shame me with your
interference
you think that i have not done enough
and have not lived
to the shape and mold of your expectations

i am silent as paper
give me the pen
and i will tell you

i make the difference
and you shamed me too
for you speak in the tongue of
so much noise
i scream in the silence of
my written words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Left Out

we arrive here together
when the moon was full

for what reason i am left out

i am alone
and you who are all my friends
like sparrows
flew away from me
together

i am like a tree without leaves
and the rocks from the cliff
stare at me in silence

the rivers have their tryst with the sea
the clouds in reunion with the wind
all in their ecstasies
bursting

the fire of sunset amazes me
i want to go near and be burned
there is something lovely
in that red and orange blaze

soon the black bird comes and hovers
on the land that i walk
soon the silence of the stars shall shoo away
the madness of my heart

i may cry and be like the rain and flood all
the paths that you have left me
i may topple some bridges and witness
the fading colors of the rainbow
the dissolving mist of the mountains

these are the utilities of futility
someone has cried and no one listens
i have a dream for many nights now
i have become the moon owning my own light
i speak to my heart and my ears listen
i shine my own light and i am now silent with a hundred stars

eyou all left me and now i must thrive

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Lost In Cloudy Skies

it is the longing
denied
that these eyes
inflict pain upon
its macular
hole

it is this darkness
that is missing light

it is this
denial that presses
truth to the
edge
banging its head
against
the unprecedented
wall

the thoughts
fly upon its big
black wings

beak pointing to
a landscape
in that dream

clouds hang
fold upon layers and layers
blurring
the vision of
your destination

it cannot go back
it has no option but to
move and fly some more

it cannot fall
its feet cut by the sharp
edges of the winds
it finally becomes
an illusion
dissolving in flight

RIC S. BASTASA
we were lost
thinking it was the way that
shall take us home
we are in the middle of
nowhere
the trees are towering
the songs of birds unknown
on the other side are all ferns
and on the barks of trees, orchids
we were lost
upon a dead end
but the place was so beautiful
and indeed
we never think of home
we will stay here
she says.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of course no one wants to be a fake
A copycat
Not that one has no mind of his own
A perspective
Or a way of seeing things the way one sees
Oneself
Or the other or the world out there
The eyes have long seen
The ears have long heard
Something different something delicate
When so young and so innocent
He kept telling them about the sound
And image of what he is
They laughed
It is something peculiar
Not the way they were brought up
All of them

He is original. They laughed. They branded
Him a name he never liked.

He likes himself. But he cannot fit in.
There is so much pain.
He becomes an attractive copycat.
Nice name. Nice belonging.
Perfect camaraderie. Nothing seemingly wrong.

The pain gets deeper. Like a hole inside his head
A hollowness in his heart.

It is dark. It is late now.
They love him. But he wants to die.
They are wrong. It is not the dark that blinds.
It is too much light. Too many.

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Scattered And So Complete.

everything did not
matter to me at the end

what end was that
the stranger asks?

I did not bother I have
nothing to be bothered about

one eyed-unicorn
clouds had no legs ever once
paradise is just
a state of the mind
of the survivor

it is when we are alone
when we sing the most
when we whistle without
ceasing

it is when the windows are
closed when a home becomes
more comfortable

what was obvious had been
with us but we never saw it
what was important
had been roaming in the backyard
which the dogs played with

now, what have I really felt?
being scattered and so complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Undecided

when one is really undecided
(about what i need not tell you
i guess you experience this
matter of indecision somehow
as shallow us what flavor of ice cream
to choose from that
glass casing of frozen
items; . but hopefully you must
realize there are other matters
deeper than
vanilla or chocolate)

one becomes a floater in the
eye
you see black birds where there
are none
flying just below
your eyelids

when you continue being undecided
for years
what happens is that
the years bury you
the days stages a funeral march
for you
imaginary
since in reality there are no
people and
there are no flowers
and the dirge cannot
really be heard
by the priest that stands
there like
a scapegoat
to your
trembling hands

poor guy! they tell you at your
back
and you know this
but what can you really do

precisely,
you are still
that silly undecided
lazy
bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Being Used To Travel

being used to travel
one gets used to being dissipated

another arrival
another departure

in such a short time
with such a moment with someone

another someone
another temporary feeling

not even love
not even another feeling anymore

another travel
asking: where am i going to?

being used to
being used
to dreams that never come true

now on another train
to another bus
on another plane

each question begs for an answer
but for now

there is just this blankness
this bluntness

no conversations with another passenger
just like myself
asking: where am i going to?

now, i don't ask anymore.
Being With All Of You

to be honest
being with
all of you
is like a rock
protruding
in the middle
of the rage
of this strong
river

you are the rock
and i am the
rage of that
strong river
moving away
from you

RIC S. BASTASA
Being, Just Being...Less The Extraordinary

to be still
in consistency
smooth
with direction
unchanged
to still be
in the usual
state
not making surprises
amaze not
but be with all of you
in uniformity
as i keep
the other chunks
of golden thoughts
only
within myself...
to still live
despite
to still mingle
respite
not to shine
but just be that
ordinary grain
among the sands....

RIC S. BASTASA
Be-Ing....

it is a blackout
in the city
there is no air
in the condominium
room where
you are renting
depressed
over lots of things
losing a job
death of a sister
pile of debts
collection agents
on the row
bad news from
your small town
the rebels are
killing the farmers
and there will be
no rice harvest
this season
you lie in bed
your eyes do not
close
you look for an
opening
somewhere else
there must be
sort of an exit
that your fingers
can find

someday

the lights turn on
the room is
well lighted now
there are no
exits for
this fire
and it is consuming
every part of
your
body your being
stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beleaguered.....

as you open the door
beleaguered

i reflect upon the sound
of the banging

when you close it

somehow i must be
in the wrong place

but
unlike you

i am not
doing anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
Belief Of Self As Once The Sun...

that you were once a star
or even the sun
you must believe all these
as part
of your unique history
for it you don't
what shall you become
without it?
a void, an everlasting darkness
an emptiness that never
fills itself
a traveler that keeps on hurting
his chest
unable to arrive
at any destination....

RIC S. BASTASA
Believe First In Yourself Baby

believe in yourself first baby
and everyone will soon follow

they will believe you because
you believe in yourself

and you will lead them to the
belief of other selves and

all of you will start believing
another soul becomes a king

another soul becomes a queen
and soon you shall have a

kingdom of believers: strong
men and women,

without an oppressor
without a tyrant

and soon we all become ourselves
planets within our orbits

a galaxy moving alone
lights shining, stars and more stars

who is afraid of a black space
who is afraid of a black hole

who is afraid of this mouth of
boredom and loneliness?

no one, no one, because
we believers in ourselves

foremost, like to eat them.
and there fromt this earth

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
the stargazers see us:
shining stars, venus, jupiter and mars

look how they shine!

RIC S. BASTASA
Believe In Yourself

this is not intended to be a poem.
this is an advice,
believe in yourself.
do not listen to me.
listen to yourself.
do not follow me.
nor can you follow you.
take your steps
very cautiously, this is a hill, a steep one,
there are no grasses here to serve as hold.
no trees.
there are no directions where to go.
all eyes aim at the top of this hill.
what you see are all backs of people
they are ahead of you.
be blind now.
look at your hands.
see the map there.
close your eyes.
you see better now.

this is not intended to be a poem.
but an advice.
it is in times of darkness that we see too well.
it is in times when we close our eyes
that we see better

with our hearts. Speak not through your mouth.
Understand not through your thoughts.

Be still for a while. Stop.
Then go again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Believe Me

believe me candice
i did not sleep last night
your sleeplessness
my mess
your fear my fright
i have taken all the sides
of my bed
made the lights dimmer
the room colder
the blankets thicker
i counted the sheep
and dreamt of
marshmallows

did you also think
of me?

let there be silence
between the lines
that talk much

RIC S. BASTASA
Believe, Doubt Are They Really Friends?

when you ignore
the mystery
will it be soon gone?

in a way when you
cease to believe in fairies
he says
they will all be dead

when you immerse with
too much reality
will reality be more real?

when you engage in too
much thinking
will you be more of
human
more human than any
human?

ignore, imagine
believe, doubt
are they really friends?

RIC S. BASTASA
Believing

start with the basic
belief in yourself
that no matter how
hard things are
you can always do
it and get the
taste of success

soon you realize
despite
every fall and
wound
and painful
things have been
there is still
this comfort
of how we look
at things we
give meaning
and how we
put color to
what is there
and sense its
smell
we get the picture
of who we are
and what we have
become

what is important
is
we still have ourselves
as walls
houses and beds
and windows
opening
towards this
galaxy of
meanings
the confidence within
is indestructible
feel it
today, tomorrow,
forever

be constant as
your soul
is intact
unbroken spirit
unwavering
to the destiny
reserved for us
there

RIC S. BASTASA
Believing And Believing

it is that which you believe
that all things
begin to exist
and flourish
and become a part of your
life, it is the mind
that makes you real
it is not the touch
that the mind utterly rejects
it is the word
that first comes and then
the flesh...

RIC S. BASTASA
Believing Bukowski

amazing bukowski
death
buried,
i give up reading
him
and his poetry
something in him
tells me
that i am better
than him
not that i write so well
but he says
if i were to be better
than him or
anybody else
there is only one thing
that i must do

be myself
and believe in
myself

great bukowski
you are original
idol.

RIC S. BASTASA
Believing In Yourself

to start with
let me tell you right at this moment
you must learn
to believe in the powers vested by the gods
to yourself

the movement of your fingers upon the command
of your mind
cannot just be underestimated as something that
everyone does anyway

it will take a lot of scientific minds to really explain
how a nerve impulse is sent from your brain
to your fingertips
how you react to a pinch
or a simple smile from your lover

you move to the manner in eating a chunk of chocolate
how does your mouth water?
the imagination itself is so powerful
you thirst for something sweet
and like to melt this chunk of chocolate inside
your mouth
your tongue plays a tune
of a sweet sonata

do not underestimate the power of admiration and
remembering
do not disregard the power of your heart when it starts to love
and wanting to be loved in return
how it jumps in joy like a child
how it feels the pain
and how it wants to redeem itself when unrequited

you have these powers
these wonders

believe in yourself
you are part of this magical universe
the bursting of creation
the marvels of magical incantation

believe in yourself
you are a god/goddess undiscovered all these years
by yourself

your eyes not seeing
your heart so unfeeling

RIC S. BASTASA
Belittled

no one treats you
like you do
like the way
you treat yourself
so you shall be
treated
the way you
want
to be treated

if belittled
it is because
you have
belittled yourself

as Eleonore
once said
no one makes
you inferior
without your
consent

belittled
because you
belittle yourself
you feel
just the way
you deserve it

try standing up
with dignity
try integrity
and honesty
and a clean
life free from
the stains
of corruption
and pornography
exploitation
and oppression

free from
the dictates
of caprice
and evil
and guilt
and whims

hold on to
a clean life

something
that you can
start with &
be proud of

and then
we shall follow

we shall return
what you have
given, my friend

and then we shall
say
we are proud of you
and then
you will hear
how our hands
also know
how to applaud
those
who dignify
themselves

RIC S. BASTASA
**Beloved Poet....**

beloved poet  
keep writing till the end.

i like it when you  
shut up.

for we are better  
being read, or even if not  
we are still better  
even if not, for now,  
perhaps later,

no matter what you call  
it, poet or not,  
it matters not, for the mind

is crazy, for the fly is  
trapped,  
for the cave is closed,  
though the sea  
is overcrowded with its vastness  
which is still not  
eternity  
its waves keep  
confusing  
lost in the rolling and rolling  
and the licking and  
licking  
on the white thighs of the  
shores

beloved poet  
write, write and keep on writing,

if you cannot  
sing, sing, sing, if you cannot  
dance, dance, dance,

without the other
keep doing still, under the moon

if not, under the darkness,
der under the light

whatever pleases you
pleases me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beloved, You Must Do As I Have Told You

i can no longer give it to you
because i have given it to
no one,
nothing receives it
and if falls in nowhere.

i have nothing more to give
you
and now the power of your
understanding shall be tested
if you must still
take me as your beloved

i am nothing now, the wind is
more with flesh
and the water is warmer
than my skin

i am a stone and the rivers
deny me
i am this part of your universe
where the sun
cannot shine anymore

the only way that you can make me live
is release me from your
cares.

i am nobody now and
you
even if you utter my name
like a possession
like a jewel
i do not dare any glow
i am rust amidst the salt of the sea.

do not deny me this freedom of the winged
curse,
i am no longer the fire in the cold
not even a grass for the grave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ben Siemsin, The Burning Flame

let me be the moth
hovering around your burning flame
let me have
this happy death
while you are
still burning.....

do not ask
for the reason why

RIC S. BASTASA
Beneath All Else...

beneath my feet
i hide my shadows and
they escape like
fugitives
under the guises
of their
sad stories

beneath my hands
i clasp my emptiness
and shaped like a ball
you mistake it for
fullness

you are confused
and i look amazed
still unfazed by your
feigned confidences

beneath my hair
i hide my thoughts
beneath my skull
i hide my soul

beneath my beliefs
i hide a number of faces
beneath my heart
i tell love stories

beneath all these
are the shallowness of them all
something that nobody expects
for i am simple
as a yellow paper
where you list
your bad debts

RIC S. BASTASA
Beneath The Lush Of The Nipa Palms

beneath the lush of the nipa palms
are the homes of crabs beside is
the river the niche for the schools of
fish and on the river banks are
glossy pebbles some silent greens
of moss and ferns,
amidst all these beauteous secrets
perhaps we shall remember
how sweetly once we spent the
passionate night together...

RIC S. BASTASA
beneath the lush of the nipa palms
are the homes of crabs beside is
the river the niche for the schools of
fish and on the river banks are
glossy pebbles some silent greens
of moss and ferns,
amidst all these beauteous secrets
perhaps we shall remember
how sweetly once we spent the
passionate night together...

please, please, take time to remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Berde Nga Baroto

kon makita ko na gani
ang berde nga baroto
nga tugsoy kaayo ang tumoy
morag ilong sa amerkano

kon makita ko na gani
ang iyang mga katig
morag duha ka mga kamot
nga andam nang mohawid
ug mosubay sa dughan
sa akong dagat

mahinumduman ko dayon
ikaw ug ang akong mabatian
ang imong mga hunghong
ug igo na lang mopahiyom
nga mag-inusara

gigkanon lang gyod tingali ko
kon berde na nga sakayan
ang atong hisgotan

RIC S. BASTASA
Bergius

i think
Bergius knows life
more than we do
i think
he knows sorrow
much better than
we used to think we know
the way he holds his
cigar
between his fingers
the way he stares aimlessly
at

i do not really know where
his thoughts are
where his gaze is going
where his heart is

all i know is that he is with us
in this

in the
misery of our lives
in this coldness of our times
in this recollection of the pieces
of our shattered
little existences
we, the nobodies,
we, the uncertainties
we, the roots of truth and
the budding lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beside And Outside The Frame Of The Window

When we look out into the window
we keep the frame
and what we have in mind
is what is inside the frame
alone not knowing
that beside the window is
another creature
could be lizard or a
fly which rests there because
of too much tiredness
looking for it thinks can
satisfy its wants or
longings for the day

we forget what is outside the frame
what loneliness it has too
what hope, what doubt, what ever
that disturbs
outside the window frame
outside us all

RIC S. BASTASA
Beside Me

an old american
wearing sleepers.

white sands clinging
still on his feet.

beside him
her filipina. the brown girl
black hair. orange sarong
wrapping her body

she needs yahoo.
he says, what are you looking for?

i do not really think
that she is literate. but i can sense
she is trying to be

just like anybody else.
he thinks she is beautiful and
cheap.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beside Restful Waters He Leads Me;

He is my Shepherd
and i am his sheep

there is nothing
that i shall fear

and it shall begin
today, i recommite

myself to Him
and i shall never be lost again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beside The Vast Sky Upon An Early Flight Back Home

the tantrums are there
guitar strings of anxiousness again strum
struts along all the corners
of the sky
ways

inside the plane a pair of eyes
looks stupid to the drifting clouds
flying without wings

vast fields of weightlessness
nests of all the emptiness of the world
beside this sky
again must i lie?

RIC S. BASTASA
beside you

i am silent beside you
i guess i have nothing worth saying now
i have become a non-thinker
and poetry has not done any good at all
to another round of
our confrontation of the emptiness
beyond us.

soon perhaps i am ready to scream
but i will not be with you anymore
i have long decided to be just a stone
that you throw into the night
dissolving like an ordinary sigh
in the dusk

ric s. bastasa
Best Buy, Good Sale, Fine, Sell

ok, you got the best buy
in the history of sales
got this contract
with lesser obligations
but more returns
maximized at most
for your benefit

though, it's scratched
with what?
with some hidden defects

got the best buy today
cheap
tomorrow i will have a good sale
of course, more expensive
for my gain & profit

that's how capitalism works
a third country having the best
buy from the rich country
and sells the same
to its people at a higher cost
of their freedom
and other liberties

ok, fine, if everything is at its highest
sell
what you bought at the cheapest
this is the law
and this will always be the law

when cheap buy
when high, sell

boils down to....

what do i get? yes, profit.
Best Friend....

they do not really stay
like change, they flow, there is always an influx
for a time, and then
slowly, the contents are emptied
like a mall that closes at ten p.m.
and you are the last to take the exit
because you have no one to be with
and the one that waits you there
is only your rented room
having the same scent
of an abandoned
rug.

as i once told you
the only best friend we can have
the one that will always be with us
through and through
without knowing the word
fade
is you
not even us, not even them.

so feel at home
hold your left hand with your right
talk to yourself
and do not ever be a stranger again
you know your name
and your favorite things and places
and food
and memories

keep calm. this quiet is all yours
savor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bestial Affection....

my favorite dog
named pretty is
sleeping beside
the soles of my
feet letting me
feel
its warmth reminding
me
that there is such thing
as
bestial affection

RIC S. BASTASA
Betelnut Chewing

got a hot leaf inside my mouth
i chew it with lime and betel nut

i feel it well, hot and chilly
heaven to my earth and then

i spit it out,
red and spicy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beth

what i cannot forget about her
was her plagiarism,

and my stupidity for putting her article
at the front page

i was 25 that time she was 28.

it is good that she became a doctor.

it is bad i became a lawyer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Betrayal Of A Friend

the woman whom
you thought was a friend
whom you
confessed
your gripes and the sins
of the world
committed upon you
finally faces you
with the face of
an angry tiger
roared at you
driving you away
because if you don't
she's ready to
devour you

back to square one:
alone again
naturally

RIC S. BASTASA
Betrayals In The Name Of Love...

betrayal is a ballet
dance
always the best tiptoe
and the twist and twirl
excites till
the end of the discreet
show

a dance behind curtains
without the use of words
the music within plays
well between the meeting
ribs of two
blossoming souls

do not get caught
let the ecstasy always be
the spark of this
handful of suspense

the thrill of stolen moments
without the common drill
strategies and ruses
like spies and spice

i get you and you get me
we have something in common
we cannot kiss and tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Better Half

to Philander
it is not a case of a better half

since he is engaged
in about ten events of his philandering life

it is only
one-tenth of the story

but he's not the
kiss and tell type

his life is a closed book
still unread.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between A Party And Poetry

if made to choose
between a party and my poetry
i choose poetry

i choose silence rather than noise
i choose words rather than people
above all
i choose myself rather than
those goddems

RIC S. BASTASA
between sunrise and sunset
if i were to choose
i shall choose the sunrise
for in there everything is lighted
like the way you tell me about
the truths about your life
you're so warm and endearing
and all giving and
i have nothing more to ask
for i have become so complete

but then do we have a choice?
for after all these
time knows that there is something
inevitable

the sunset of my life comes always with
a big reminder
the slow fading of the brighter colors of my life
the creeping show of gray skies
the closing in of the lights
and the windows
the silence of the night and i make the last word

what choice do i have except perhaps to say
'Darkness, Come, let us dance the last steps of life! '

and i shall say ' Death, you're so cool! '

do i have a choice, my love?

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Good And Evil...

you have nothing
to tell me, i have
not set you aside,
being half of me,
my other, i am not
unjust, how can i
deny you? you are
another face of me,
though i could have
detested you, i did
not. Respect is still
have
put me in danger,
there were times
you put me to shame,
more often
on some uncompromising
situations, but i
still keep you within,
could be a curse,
and i know the
consequences of
having to discard
you, half of me shall
be dead.

the Furies are silent.
gazing at us. Night
and day are in my
body. Spring and
winter. I both
feel this wolf and
sheep. I guess
it is all our nature.
This battle within.
Between good and
evil. These two
are residents of the
same house.
Fragile. Temporary.
we are not referees.
we are the players.

night is yours.
the day shall be long.
you fight. I will
compromise.
Let dawn be mine.
Let the last word
be yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Grief And Nothing, I Will Take Nothing

in this small space in this narrow alley
in this room where there is only
you and me, where you love and hate me

i take this smoke, this last breath
as you leave, telling me
it is over there is no us

you challenge on this pain
that i am not prepared to accept
between you and nothing
between this grief and your leaving

it is over,
i will take nothing

we have nothing to begin with
anyway, i will take nothing

there was never something
there was never you and i am telling you

there was no me too....wanna play?
i know your games too.

RIC S. BASTASA
between heaven and earth
there charlie lives
and he writes about a tunnel
a very creepy tunnel
where the only way to travel
is to crawl your way to the
exit where are the end
a light appears....

enlightenment and awareness
that is what charlie means.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between James And Kris

and so it's over
i too expected that
between a kris
and a james...

no one survives
the crash

but i think
everyone is happy

whatever that means
for in truth
a man is gentle enough
for the woman
to always hear
her last words 'it's over'

and did it ever come to her mind
that he likes
it, too?

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Mararison And Binatbatan

we were in the middle of
the sea
just the two of us

we realize how huge is
this world
how empty it is

there is no boundary
for our sadness.....

RIC S. BASTASA
i hang my feet
upon a
Brazilian hammock

between them
i watch the sun
set

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Our Own Realities

between our realities
are the waters of privacy
and for one who does not flow
like what others do
the ripples of misunderstanding
begin to behave as whirlpools
in our minds

the banks of the rivers are far
and we who desire the harmony
of the clouds and their mirrors
begin to build the bridges of words
and symbols

between us now is this poem
and if you have been with me
upon the graces of time and
the courtesy of space
there could have been more to
this poem, and to those words

because between the emptiness
of air, something like a beating heart
a warm hug could have done better.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Pain And Happiness....
	here is always that pain
that instigates you to write
the one where there is no cure
although many are telling that
you have become one impossible
piss off,
you leave the place,
take a boat and settle in an island where
you can talk to the moon
you do not sleep
because you can't and the moon is one avid
listener of your woes
it does not talk of course
and then faces away
like a hand that caresses your hair and then
you feel that faithful warmth
that makes you write some more on the muddy part of the shore

tomorrow you find yourself asleep on a house without doors
the winds who understand you perfectly
are there to massage the pain of your thoughts

at noon happiness comes
you do not know its name and from where it comes from
it waits for your commands but you are silent

you have learned to love pain
because it is more beautiful
than the one that comes so
seldom to visit and listen
to you

in fact it has no body
it has no soul
it is not wearing a sign
that it is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between The Cebu-Bacolod Skyways

i like the window
this is where i usually sit on my plane rides
upon the mountains below
the clouds are sleeping as they move
like fish
they say sleep
and yet flow with the movement of the waves
and then
discover
as one wakes up that this is no longer
the same place
but another set of mountains
fencing a new city
your destination
at night when you arrive there
as the plane makes its
touchdown
you want to find another feeling
like you are another driftwood
transported anew
to another bank of the river

the feeling is like an old ancestral house
you remember
the past like all those clouds that you pass
by in different shapes
back-grounded by a shift of orange
and yellow lights
until something clears them out
blinded
or you become a
blank piece of paper
searching for
new words, and yet, and this is sad,
it is the same
nothing's changed
what you want not to meet anymore
is there
waiting for you
and you forge a smile
yet no matter what it is as raw as
meat with blood still
dripping on the side
time does not subside the
pain
there is no automatic cure
even your
escape to other places of
your mind
your heart will always
tell the truth to you
in fact....

RIC S. BASTASA
i offer you some words like three white carnations
on the table of our existence
between us is this distance
a sea of silence
and you look at me and begin to speak
what i see are but waves arriving to my shore
some hushes of the wind that i hear
some foams of the water
there is this drift this lull
this sleep that does not want to wake up
above us are the gray clouds
soon, soon, we shall hear the dragging footsteps of the rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between This Body And This Soul

my body thirsts for water
my soul thirsts for another

my soul immersed my soul entwined
my body grows my soul static as a thought

i shift from one channel to another
body to soul, soul to body,

the body's nature to sin
the soul's quest to heaven

God is in between.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Those Spoken And Unspoken

between those unspoken
and those unspoken
lies this space of my
my poetry speak.
it is gentle.

the unspoken hides and shies
away a little bit
like a child

his heart is always pure.
and he does not speak.
he simply comes near you
and holds your hands
looks at you and smiles.

words do not help him.
purity speaks without them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Two Moons

dusk

between two moons
fingers of twilight

early morning
plant a kiss on the lips

coffee and
conversation

we look at the same
love
for the sea

hands on your breasts
nipples of pleasures

openness
horizons without end

RIC S. BASTASA
between us is this chasm of silence
we are like a river
and i am on the other side of its banks
at the middle is this haze of the fog
and the transparency of twilight
between us is the thread of a word
a line of syllables that must connect us
to connect our loneliness
you on the other side has only to utter the words
but you cannot do it
neither I, and so we have become the widest sea
without a shore. Now we are faraway islands.

RIC S. BASTASA
between us 
we must accept an 
odd-shaped space 
some irregularly shaped 
walls 
blocks of imperfections 
inverted tables and 
chairs 
broken pieces of china 
a black-out of lamps 
a feeling of rough hands 
between us 
let us hold 
all these forms of realities 
we start from there 
so we can survive 
this slow 
series of deaths 
cries that soon shall fade 
like a beautiful 
sunset....

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Us Is The Uncertainty Of It All.

it is what is not
said that
creates the ripple

the ripple is the
invisible thug

the thug is the
fermented thought

at the end of the
line is us

me at the right you
at the left

between us is the
uncertainty of it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Us Is This Mystery

when our two bodies fuse
giving off
so much energy that we
can ever imagine

in the spark of my mind
when i close my eyes
lies this chasm

i fall in there
and till date
even as i open my eyes
and leave you with my fingers
i still feel no bottom

i am a leaf with nowhere
to land
there is no surface of the water
there is no sand
at the bottom

the bubbles keep mesmerizing
the mind lost in
ecstasy unimagined before
the first touch
of your nipple to my
upper lip.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Us Is This Ocean Of Fear

you are there,
i feel you, unknown,

i am faraway from you,
the distance is a number.

you zero upon me
i, who, speak to the wall

between us are oceans of fears
we are whales

making the sound of a song
saying: we are not alone

our voices blend
upon a horrible silence

we wait when the silence
blooms

when it perfects itself
upon a tomb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Us Under The Moonlit Skies

we are surrounded by the symbolism
of our concealed thoughts
between us
are not just ideas
we think that every touch is real
but we continue believing that there is more to all these
a kiss
an imaginary mating
a darkness and a light inter-playing between
the void of interstitial spaces
our lips seal each other
we think we are one
we fuse
we groan and moan and drown
where there is no river
or sea
we rise up where there is no depth
we talk where there are no words
as options
for our understanding and penetration
attempts at our beings
we finally take what rest we left
on the grass
where the last dew still cling
on that leaf
where the veins begin to
fade
our faces scream
we see without our eyes
and we feel without our skins
we think we know what is all these
but how can we ever tell them?
they who do not know
what is going on
when two people are prohibited
to love.

RIC S. BASTASA
between us
is something that we think
is impenetrable
or impossible
but there is nothing that we know
unless we try

close your eyes
and i shall kiss you
open your mouth
and i shall let the tongue
say what i have long
been not prepared to say

words are useless
between us is the fire
it will burn us
throughout the night
till dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
Between Walls Between Walls

walls around us
always walls around us
morning till noon
till night walls always walls between
us i try to inser some words
of consolation between us
all walls rain walls between us
there is no word for us
for it
we, it, we, us, there is nothing
between us
air, between, us, air, air, air,
between us, still walls, walls,
speak, speak
why, why are these walls still walls
between us

i guess, you are dead, then
cogito, eureka,
will i be a happy man then?

RIC S. BASTASA
Between You And Me....

there could have been a bridge
even just a word to connect us and form a ring
a hollowness between
a hole
where both of us can pass through
and then leave all these

between a you and
i, there must be a word to describe
that wish for closeness

the intimacy that nudity speaks about
my hands clothe your body and make you another body

between my body and your body
there must at least be a syllable to make a sound of this silence between us

we hear a faint music of a distant phonograph
between us is a phrase

between us is an incomplete clause thirsty
of meaning

this unsatisfactory of ordinary humanity
this imperfection between us a word a bridge a rainbow an arrow

inside us are wounds and maggots
outside us are the words of laughter written off in air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beware

beware, my son,
not all species are all like us.
not all creatures have learned to pray and be patient.
Not all know what waiting is all about.
Not all flowers bloom and understand
what buds are.
Not all rivers flow and know where the sea is.
Not every event knows the wisdom of destiny.
Beware my son, there is not much of us left
we who have read the lines of our palms
and understand the movement of the stars
we who respect the change of the seasons
and understand the reasons for changes
and transformations
not all caterpillars know about butterflies
beware my son
beginnings are there because
there is always an end, and always remember
my son,
the glory and the gladness that is promised
beyond us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beware My Son

Not all know what waiting is all about.
Not all flowers bloom and understand what buds are.
Not all rivers flow and know where the sea is.
Not every event knows the wisdom of destiny.

Beware my son, there is not much of us left we who have read the lines of our palms and understand the movement of the stars we who respect the change of the seasons and understand the reasons for changes and transformations not all caterpillars know about butterflies beware my son beginnings are there because there is always an end, and always remember my son, the glory and the gladness that is promised beyond us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beware Of His Silence

beware of his silence
his stillness is dangerous
his numbness is a killer
beware of the quick shallowness
of his leaving

for when everything is complacent
and busy with the day to day
cares
the building of the stairs
the installation of the windows
the putting off the lights
he shall come
and with a quick blow like a tsunami
he takes away everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Beware Of Me, I Am Bitter....

forgive me, my dearest,
i too, suspect myself from
all these vicious motives.

if you suspect me, i am true.
i am not at all dismayed.

my door has a notice posted.
beware of me. I am bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond

beyond this world of evil and good
beyond the realm of right and wrong

there is another field
we shall soon meet there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Existence

today i tell time
and the sands and the desert sun
you cannot vanish me
i have reasons

you can take my body
feed it to vultures
but i still have this soul
everywhere

i am not Ozymandias
i am not mere mist
i am my words
my atoms, i live forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Gender

beyond gender, race, color, creed, social standing,
business category,
whatever
housemaid or landlord

the cell phone

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Gravity

PLANETS float
follow their own assigned orbits
meteors pass by
avoiding collisions
the sun rules and the moon
keeps faith
on its smaller revolutions
the stars on the other galaxies
keep glittering in their
own spaces
everything expands and moves
away

expect another destruction
a necessity
for more galaxies

and we are but atoms
and neutrons and protons
in all confusions.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Love

beyond love and desire
beyond sex and lust

beyond form and substance
beyond rhyme and rhythm
beyond now and here
or then and hence
beyond you and me
I and thou, some longings in us

still look for social relevance.
where, when, how and why

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Our Prison Walls

our prisons are too many
the penalties imposed upon us
are heavy

everything is passed from one mouth
to another
this prison of tradition
and what we have are just kettles and
ladies
a few spoons and some
crooked forks
some moldy fats of pork
and hardened bread like bricks
upon our walls and rooms

i am tired of those other prisons
handed to us and
well kept by our respect for what
is old

the mind is the prison
and thoughts and imagination are our wings to our well deserved freedom
we do not deserve this
weakness this self imposed defeat
we are not worms
we butterflies and all these fragile wings
shall take us
beyond the tops of molded hills
beyond us
our better selves
our very own proclamations that we are not the children and heirs
of gods
but that we too
are godly creatures with divinity in our hearts
our sacrileges tattooed on our skins and bones

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Science, Beyond Law.....

the most recent trend of 
this poetry thing is 

this confession 
where one simply expresses his 
angst, or woes, 

sometimes trying to express 
overjoys 

where there is no ear of a priest 
listening 
but you take the world's attention 
to your murmurs 

it is not noise 
but a hum, it has nothing to do with 
a cure 
but just a tapestry of words 
moving freely like a molecular theory 

of freedom and randomness which 
belittles 
the power of fate 

we believe in destiny 
we go there surely but this is the place 
where 
we defy gravity 
where we tease the lines of our palms 
rebel against the soothsayers 
brake the crystal balls 

anything goes here 
rhyme or none 
it is a surge, a sailing, a stroll 
it is waving hands and throwing spits, 
it is holding you
without restraints

it is walking and talking and no one bothers
they understand
you are in a trance of your sorrow
walking helps

ideas flow and you are carried to
the mouth of the river towards the open sea

everything happens
without a boundary

i submit, it is not meant to be understood
or even recalled or kept
or sculpted

for it is the wind, and the shore,
it is the seagull and the fish and the kingfisher
and the cloud

this is poetry to me,
beyond science, beyond law.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond The Gloss

beyond the gloss of skins
those that these eyes cannot see
i shall know you
time shall test how true can i be
to you
i shed off all these pretenses
and be naked before you
i am old and bent
i shall kneel and pray
that soon when everything is over
shall you
forgive me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond The Mist And Fog And The Fading Darkness Of The Night

what he said
after all is confirmed
correctly this morning
when i wake up to hear
a bird chirping by my
window

against the drenched leaves
after the wind and rain stopped
beyond the mist and fog
and the fading darkness of
the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond The Old Man's Chair

the leaves of years
swiftly fall

the winds of change
the summers of acceptance
are quicker

the branches of time
have turned bald

a man is alone
but not sad as you expect

it thinks of a boat
sailing
it knows of a place
beyond his chair

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond The Touch Of Reason

stepping beside the edge of time
reason tiptoes like a swan lake ballet dancer
it slides on the slimy part of the linings of the heart
now limping asking for love
yelping for sympathy

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond These Hands

something that i cannot touch
beyond these hands
more of them are invincible
though far from the fingers
yet still close to the heart
like the way i will always love you
kissed only by my dream
lips to lips with nothing but air

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Time

beyond time
is love

time is a measurement
of the past
and the present
and the future
that we tend to limit
within a
certain space

love is beyond time
it is when
measurements
do not matter anymore
because
you love
and your love
has no measure

it is not even
this moment

it is beyond
momentariness
that we love

just being here
looking
at you

everything freezes
nothing leaves
nothing comes

the box
of time where you
are in
does not have
length
and width
and sides
and depth

there is just
this breath
breathing, life living, and it keeps going and going

without any ticking

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Us Is A Horizon A Line Without End.

i have wasted so much
time in this
uncaring matter of
scribbling

these do not affect
lives
people keep on walking
ahead of you
and they never look
back
who's missing

you keep writing the
names of these streets
and they laugh
and they move on with
their lives

you are crazy
beyond us is a horizon
a line without end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Words

Got a party today in the house
and my sister brought her granddaughter named Sissy
who likes to play with our puppy named Ifur
and she chased him with a stick
and she was laughing as though there is no other
laughter left in this world for tomorrow

the old men of the house look at her with joy
without saying a word
they were busy with their smoking pipes
as they were seated on their hard molave
rocking chairs

i look at the old men of the house blowing smoke into the air and i imagine that
they are all traveling back in time when they were once like her

but time of course says, you've had it and there is nothing more and they all stopped
and began talking to themselves remembering the war and how they served as veterans, how he japs reached Dipolog and how some gold treasures had been buried in Diwan and Manawan.

They changed sighs for awes. Sifted sorrows for joys and excitement. Exchanged boredom with action. They know how to forget and then please themselves. I admire them. They are survivors of the war and the loneliness of aging and the ennui that peace sometimes provide on that silver platter, on that bountiful table where food are sometimes thrown as waste.

and so i shifted my paradigm too. I transferred my focus outward. Away from the selfish mode of awkwardness. That greed of my own face is consuming my identity.

i look at the window, extended my view to the far away sea
beyond the reach of words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beyond Words Beyond Images

it is ironic, these words claiming
that one day, these words will be beyond words,
that these images will be beyond images
that i will be like those who went their way alone
not befriending anyone but keeps on writing
in the middle of the storm
and cyclones and typhoons
and quakes and volcanic eruptions

beyond destruction, beyond words, beyond images.
smart man.

unlimited.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bias

even when the lion
smiles at us
we still withhold
confidence
even if the lion is
sincere
and does not think of
evil
like eating all of us
as prey
we always think of
the worst
even if it is just a picture
of the lion
smiling at us
we still suspect
that this can be a trap
another deception

a lion is a lion is a lion
and will always be lion
no matter what

as simple as that
ask the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
bidding goodbye

you say words
that you do not
mean specially
when you are
bored with
her already

you kiss her
on her lips
on her forehead
you hug her
tightly
you whisper
sad parting words
to her ear
you grip her
hand like
you will miss her

but the truth is
your feet are
too excited to
take the plane

and fly away from her
because
another one
more fresh
is waiting for
your arrival

RIC S. BASTASA
Big And Bold And Defined

you are like a lens

You are like a lens
A big round thing of
Convex glass

Magnifying every minute
Thing or small matters
Every word every letter

Well on a positive side
All words become so clear
And they appear so loud

On the other hand, don’t
Magnify sunshine lest it
Becomes so hot
and turn To fire and
we get burned we get charred.

RIC S. BASTASA
Big White Petals On White Sands

big white petals falling
on white sands

try to find out the reason
which one is which
white against white

you find a canvass
where nothing can be found
except the white silence
amidst another white silence

and true you find nothing
you think there is something there
you smile because somehow
you begin to understand
about this labyrinth that you are in
that you think you cannot escape

until you accept the truth
about this simplicity: nada y nada.

RIC S. BASTASA
Big White Petals On White Sands In Boracay

big white petals falling
on white sands

try to find out the reason
which one is which
white against white

you find a canvass
where nothing can be found
except the white silence
amidst another white silence

and true you find nothing
you think there is something there
you smile because somehow
you begin to understand
about this labyrinth that you are in
that you think you cannot escape

until you accept the truth
about this simplicity: nada y nada.

RIC S. BASTASA
Big, Wide, White Soft Pillow On My Bed Tonight

big, wide, white soft pillows
on my bed tonight
my head rests for a while
as i wait for you
on this kind of lovely game

my fingers are tired and there they
are fainting with my hands
my eyes are closing like the windows
of the houses in the village
lights turning off like fireflies
getting some sleep on treetops

some locks of my hair fall on the the white
linens where my body lies
like a mountain on the grasy plain

white soft pillows on my bed
my conscience sleeps like a fat man drunk and dead asleep
on the thick warm pastel blue mattress
not hearing the loudness of his snores

RIC S. BASTASA
Bilateral Agreements

and so you let me read your poems
after so many nights when you made

them and finally finished all the lines
and i too shall take my hidden pieces

and read them secretly inside my mind
and i will tell you that your lines are as

perfect as mine and that yours deserve
to fly to the skies like mine which have

already perched upon a tree and looking
tired. All of them wanting to sleep and die.

RIC S. BASTASA
sitting here
i am reading Billy's
silence

superb, i say
that silence of the belt before it hit the boy in me,

too much drama i suppose
i do not need it for now
i like to live and so i
objectify
and ask the help of
the saving arms of
reason

with it i remember Alfredo today
he died when i first studied
metaphors in college

in the dark where he first read his poetry to us
he talked about the rain
there is no rain but i felt the chilling rain
inside my brain

rain is cool but that time
it wasn't
it felt like i could vomit
on the tiled floors of the hall
i did not finish
hearing him
i was shivering
in the cold that i only could imagine

he died young and he was so fat that he was having
a hard time carrying his body to the lecture hall
my professor

i wonder why he gained weight
despite the knowledge that it could kill him
he was not dumb

now i finished Billy
and i think Alfredo padded weight after weight
like layers and layers of club sandwich
for the simple reason
that after all he had no more valid reason to live
and the only option is death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Billy Joel's Innocent Man

(for a friend somewhere, i am dedicating this song)

Some people stay far away from the door
If there's a chance of it opening up
They hear a voice in the hall outside
And hope that it just passes by
Some people live with the fear of a touch
And the anger of having been a fool
They will not listen to anyone
So nobody tells them a lie
I know you're only protecting yourself
I know you're thinking of somebody else
Someone who hurt you
But I'm not above
Making up for the love
You've been denying you could ever feel
I'm not above doing anything
To restore your faith if I can
Some people see through the eyes of the old
Before they ever get a look at the young
I'm only willing to hear you cry
Because I am an innocent man
I am an innocent man
Oh yes I am
Some people say they will never believe
Another promise they hear in the dark
Because they only remember too well
They heard somebody tell them before
Some people sleep all alone every night
Instead of taking a lover to bed
Some people find that it's easier to hate
Than to wait anymore
I know you don't want to hear what I say
I know you're gonna keep turning away
But I've been there and if I can survive
I can keep you alive
I'm not above going through it again
I've not above being cool for a while
If you're cruel to me
I'll understand
Some people run from a possible fight
Some people figure they can never win
And although this is a fight I can lose
The accused is an innocent man
I am an innocent man
Oh yes I am
An innocent man
You know you only hurt yourself out of spite
I guess you'd rather be a martyr tonight
That's your decision
But I'm not below
Anybody I know
If there's a chance of resurrecting a love
I'm not above going back to the start
To find out where the heartache began
Some people hope for a miracle cure
Some people just accept the world as it is
But I'm not willing to lay down and die
Because I am an innocent man
I am an innocent man
Oh yes
I am
An innocent man

RIC S. BASTASA
Binding The Wind

You are breathing
It is cold
And your breath
Is seen in the wind
As white smoke
As you speak
I see your
Words in the air
And the wind
Carries them
All to me
In my nostrils
Then to my heart

I take my fingers
Touching your
Mouth feeling
Your lips
Molding some
Words of white smoke
To this cold day

I am cold
And weak
But I shall have
A way of making
My fingers coil
Into a rope
And I shall
Bind the wind
Where your words
Are contained
My fingers
Ropes of this
Meticulous mind
In this lovely chase

It is cold today
I am weak today
I bind the wind
Your words of
Love your warmth
In affection
And I bind them
All as I bundle
Them into a pillow
On my head
A pillow in my heart

On this cold day
I will not be weak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Binging Home Overipe Durian

Bringing home overipe
Fruits of Durian
I arrive full of regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
Biocentrism....

this is the house
we are in it
we recognize each other
because we are inside
this house

this house is
time and space

there is something outside this house
we cannot see it

there is a door
that will open soon
when the right time comes

when we step outside
this door
then we are outside this house of time and space

soon when we find ourselves there
it will be different.

RIC S. BASTASA
Biography Of A Poet During The War

by nature
he is introverted

he did not
make close
friendships

he absorbed
himself in his
writing

a life of isolation
and was very much
a loner

RIC S. BASTASA
Bird Of Paradise

as i look at you
beauty begins to have wings
my heart too
beats in bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
Bird On Wing

bird on wing
again
air whispers
another name
a distant island

RIC S. BASTASA
Birds And Grains

in a relationship
the birds wait for the grains
whose meanings are

the birds to eat
the grains to be eaten

what a complimentary world is this
all in utmost pleasure

the mouth opens
another tongue fills in the void of hunger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Birdshot

just because no one saw
the tree falling does not mean
that there was no tree which fell

logic has failed me.

it was a 'NO ENTRY' area
where the meshed wire
was removed like an empty hole

the native girl broke
the rule
shot dead a Philippine eagle.

the father wants to save
her, concealed the gun, buried it to play innocent

a herd of dead bodies were buried
on shallow grounds
which the grass has not accomplished covering yet

above them the eagles fly
beside them the native girl watches the opening of the secret wound.

RIC S. BASTASA
Birght Is The Sun On A Summer Day

On a summer’s
day
Bright is the
sun
To make this
last journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Birghter Days

i look forward
to brighter days
with you,

more lights
to the darkness

of our souls, shades
of hues, and colors

of more rainbows
gentle rains music

of cicadas, soft
night winds and

cheers, and hugs,
and...kisses

brighter days
back to brighter days

on bleak presence
of folding sorrows.

RIC S. BASTASA
Birth

i, too, passed
that gate to here,
they say i cried
when i first saw
light, they say
i was too restless,
until i received
the first nipple,
i have been there,
you have been
there too,
we cannot recall
it somehow, and
we do not really
know why, what
we know was
they had pleasure,
at the higher level,
they had love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Birth Of Art

The sponge in the sea
Seeding it with million spores
The night lit by a full moon

The spores
Appear as dust
Like a sigh like a breath
The sea is now
Full of millions of sponge spores

Comes maleness
Fertilization of the dusts
The birth of art
Bursting
Like the new corals
The sea flowers
In long crowded Array
On the ocean floors.

RIC S. BASTASA
Birthday Greetings

may you love
till another birthday
comes again

as i have loved
you too
last birthday
of mine

quid pro qou

RIC S. BASTASA
Birthday Party At Five

he was five
when a party was tendered
for his birthday
and he received a brown coat
from his eldest sister

so many things happened
she grew old and he left
away
for greener pastures, but always, always

the brown coat he carries with him
kept its scent

that smell of pure love
of generosity still undeserved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bisag Patay Na Ang Kontra.

i

ang mga
dili makiangayon nga
panghitabo
ang dili nauyon sa
kinaiyahan

ii

dunay tawo nga gustong
mosipa sa makililimos kay
kuno giilad siya
sa kinyentos pesos
dunay gamhanan nga
wa kasabot kon nganong
angayan unta nga ang
bugas ihatag na sa mga
walay gikaon kay namad-an
na ang ilang mga
basakan
dunay makagagahum nga nangayo
kon unsang partido ka sa
pulitika aron ihatag ang
tabang human sa dakong unos
dakong sayop
apan bisan gamayng hunahuna
nga basin nasipyat lang
wala gayod

bisag upaton pa ang mata
di gyod kakita
bisag unumon pa ang mga
dunggan
di jud kadungog
bisag padak-an pa ang utok
nga morag bangal
nganong di gayod kasabot

kon gipadak-an lang unta
ang kasing-kasing
basin anaa ra unta ang kaloooy
bisag wala pa ang gugma

iii

diha sa sumbagay
ang kanunayng pangutana
mao lang gihapon
'kinsay gauna-una ninyong
duha? '

bisag patay na ang kontra.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bisdak #1

ang mga sunugon puhon
makapangutana baya kita
usahay, nganong ang mga badlongon
maayo man hinoon ug mga
nadawat sa kinabuhi?

kadtong palahubog mao man
hinoon ang nahimong pari sa
inyong lungsod,

kadtong igat, mao may giminyoan
sa mayor
unya kadtong kurakot sa salapi
sa gobyerno maayo mang
pagkaasenso

daghang sakyanan ang mga kawatan
pagkadagko sa ilang mga balay
ang mga kidnappers, ayay, napuno
ang ilang mga katribu sa kadaghan
sa natigum nga dolyares

aw hinoon, dili ta angay nga masina,
kitang nagpakabut-an dili man maghandom
nga diring kalibotana ta molungtdad,
kay lagi, sa walay kasumo, nagtoo man
kita nga dunay langit, unya silang
nagpakadaotan, didto man sa ilang
impyerno pagasunugon sa kalayo
nga hangtod sa kahangtoran wala
gayod kunoy pagkapalong...

RIC S. BASTASA
**Bitaw**

sa tinood lang
lami pa unta
maghimo ug
haiku

morag
well, sounds like a hiccup
to me
these haikus

saon ba paghimo
ug haiku
diri nga ang
imong makita
puros
kurtina nga
biege

lingkoranan
nga
black leather

martilyo nga kahoy
pagtingog
aguy!

the door bell
rings
a visitor is coming

(kagwang
naa ras ilang balay)

RIC S. BASTASA
for years inside that cage
the dog finally gets unleashed
released and fed to the gaping mouth
of the road where it runs berserk and
its only known word of course
is

bite.

RIC S. BASTASA
the news came that there are people with same names as we have in that
faraway island. I am curious.
I went to the place and introduced myself as a possible relative.
There is a need to trace our roots. My grandfather and his three sisters sailed
from Bohol to Zamboanga because they have no future in that rocky island.
They left taking only a few clothes and their dreams.

Their great grandfather was Juan and his wife is Maria.

When i went there, this i found: more or less there were 50 juans, and 100
marias.
They all look the same. Their faces are our faces too.

There were 3 politicians,8 bandits,2 at-large.
There is a priest. And there are 4 prostitutes.

I look at my list. It is same with who we are in faraway zamboanga.

I am not surprised. This is what a family is all about.

Scattered Leaves. Broken chains. Bricks that make a tower.
Black clouds. Storms.

Flickering Stars. And a big lighthouse.
There is a port there, abandoned by boats.

I took with me an exhibit of their poverty. Showed it to my arrogant sister
who hates kids. She looked at it with all contempt.

They are poor. They are not us. When you invite us they will not come.
I also have that contempt for poverty.

We are poorer. I, too, must dislike them.

RIC S. BASTASA
what is bitter than bitter
is a love that ends without the formality of
a goodbye.

it likes to be sweet, but there is no taste whatsoever.
it is like a film that ended in a total blackout.
no names parading on the screen. no ending.

people just leave and they wonder
what happens

a broken heart still thinking about a love
that is not really gone.

when we meet we know it is over.
no one says it with finality somehow.

unfinished business. the soul keeps coming back.
it has something to tell to the living.
but no one has always the courage to lend an ear.

you know that. what is there is only the usual fear.
the moment one sees, his feet keep running.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bitter Grape Is Real

If you convert a sigh into a symbol
think of a comma

then you change your mind
it is a hyphenated silence which waits for something that is always coming

from a distance you see something like grapes
they are your thoughts

ripe, and misty, and you think that they must be sweet because they look like memories

you couldn't help it, you sigh again, like taking a deep breath and filling your lungs with power and then you exhale like the way you surrender to that urge for smoking at night

you touch it, it is cold, it is not soft like a fruit
it is solid, something stoic,
you grab it and put it inside your mouth where you tongue begins to play with its obtuseness

it is not even sour, something that is possible with a grape,

it is bitter
and you cannot believe it
it is simply unbelievable
you have already buried all bitterness how come that it is here again?

you swallow it because of shame that you are swindled by an imagery that you have never tasted

it is bitter. it is actually bitter. and then you remember what happened to you when you were fooled.

that bitter grape is real.
Bitterness....

if you believe that freedom is
absolute, that is
you always have the power to choose
every inch, and
variety, much always to your liking,

you are wrong

(forget poetry for once
forget this hiding place
forget this secret garden
where you are growing your
own set and color
of flowers
choosing well the weeds
and rock
focused on inner freedom
and this quest for originality and
independence)

when you were thrown into this world
your brain was just a pea
your fingers appear like insignificant commas
in a sentence
in another context you are sentenced
to a prison
not of your liking of course
involuntary
validated coercion

for instance you are born to poor parents
a not so well developed skull where you little brain grows
sporadically
you are thrown into a place
of the slums and
polluted air
where people kill one another for a dime
or even for free
on a tripping
you consider yourself still lucky
you are still alive
that is consolation enough
hmm

you proclaim

for things that i cannot change i leave them
but there are those that i can still change

you will change the world?

you cut the grasses, clean a path, walk,
you work hard in school
devoting yourself to studies and thinking
ponderous soul

you finish a course
you marry the right woman
find the right work
and you say i am wrong
you make a difference
you have progressed
self-made man
dignified, honored,
praiseworthy

then you laugh at me and say
'you see i am now free'

and you expect me to be silent and
say i am sorry i am wrong

look at you
your face is now twisted
your legs are not rooted to the ground equally
one leg is higher than the other
you practiced dancing all your life
dancing to life's demands
tiptoeing like a ballet dancer
the circus man on a tightrope
trying to please
those kings and queens
the system
hammered you to a lot of compromises
and on their standards
most of you have become distorted
your chin is bending towards your ear
your lips bloat like a dead fish
you have scars in your forehead
stitches on your neck
Mr. Frankenstein
Pooh!

ah, indeed you are free now
and behind you, this sour and bitter old man
is holding his laughter

for i think
i will have the last laugh
until i find my eternal rest
six feet under

if they ask me to come back
it is definitely a big
and uncompromising No.

Sorry, i don't believe in anything else
forgive me, but not even myself
This agnostic too doubts himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bixed Man

there are four
corners
and all sides are
equal

equality is never
a guarantee that you
are happy inside

look at you
you are bending a little bit
and choking

you are inside that
box of
equal sides.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bizet's Carmen

blue cards
woman with black
hair
a black fan
a kiss
underneath
the trees
a sigh
and a thought
long after

RIC S. BASTASA
The sound of sirens
Another ambulance running wildly
From this town to the city
Another sick man perhaps
Another emergency
People are dying not of hunger here
They have overeaten
The have overslept
They have overreacted to the bad news
This morning and all the other mornings
They have listened to the bad rumors
Of annihilation of total destruction
Complicating life with nightmares
And too much worrying

Take the walk, savor the fresh air
From cups of leaves see the dews
Like pearls in the morning flowers
Think about how God has been saving
Loving caring and guiding us
The positive thoughts the glory
That is yet to come, the heavens
The sun and then the full moon
And the countless stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Bird Singing

a black bird flies on top of the house
and perches upon a tree
fronting it

i stand by the window
looking at the scenery of sea and sand
and alternating rustic fronds
pine trees and grass

the black bird begins to sing
asking for attention
then we see each other eye to eye

it is i who blink first.

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Birds Of The Future

the teacher in the mountain
eight hours from the main road
passing the winding river for
ten times, teaches her pupils
english, attuned to the common
birds that roost on the trees
beside the nipa houses of the
hinterland,

and what the color the birds?

and then the pupils who had
nothing for breakfast, poor as
their parents are, relying only
on the left overs of this
cruel society, with a hope that
by learning english their lives
would soon change, finding work
in the city and earning money,
have this to answer,

ma'am, the color the birds the
black.

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Charred Chunks

it was the dance of their lifetime
it started at 6 p.m. and it did not
end at 5 a.m. the following day

the fire razed the dancing floor dwindled
the roof fell down
the doors did not open
they were all trapped

it was Sunday when the priest made the
sermon of a lifetime

there were no bodied inside those coffins
just black charred chunks, yes, just black charred chunks

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Dog Pink Wall

black dog
walking
near a
pink wall

stares
at the pinkness
of the wall

and then
it raises its
right leg

and squirts
urine

do you think
love exists
in this show
of release?

urinate
after a pink
love

black dog,
is that you?

staring eyes
are those
yours?

spread legs
are those
yours?

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Flowing Hair, A Memory Of You

I see you leaning by a wall next door
Against an afternoon sun

And though it is your back that faces me
I know
From the beating of my heart
That it is you, Black-flowing-hair

I can smell you
In mint
And you shall be inside me
As I breathe
So I can live for another time

You are
My tallest tree
On top of the Sleeping-dragon-mountain

And I look up to you
Like my full moon one cold night
Untouched by my fingers
Black-flowing-hair
The world may not have found love in my eyes
As I have none to boost

Since I have given it to you
All of it
I shall find it
But shall not take it back
From you

Your shadow is my god
And it is only that I can touch
Without you knowing
The shadow
Of your
Back
My self-made god
Is enough life

I do not ask much
I cannot
You do not know me
There is no need
I only give myself
I do not have to take any
In return

Now I declare
I have found my place
In you
I have found myself
In you
I have found you

I am Mute-white-dove -sitting
On the breast of Black-flowing-hair
Touching the clouds
Holding the rainbow
Saving all the raindrops of my life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Friday

our errand man
is depressed on a
black Friday coz his
woman escapes from
the monotony of
modern slavery
slips from his room
runs towards the
mountain to be a
black bird again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Black History Celebration

she steps upon
by chance
on a poetry reading
of black poets
inside the library
as she was
returning a book
of her favorite
poetry

and she listened
and she said

'it was sooooooo cooollll! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Spider I Keep My Silence

I know how it feels like to be in a narrow alley
there is no rope but the feeling of being choked is always there
in such a way that you cannot utter the necessary words calling for help

you fear the coming of the night because there are no more people talking
and silence seems to be another cruel stranger without a face and fingers

the weirdness of these all
underlies a throbbing of the heart drums without music but all palpitations of an
abnormality which you know exists but which you cannot drive away like
unwanted birds pecking on your hair as though they are grains
as you see yourself getting bald and bloody

there is no screaming now, people won't hear anyway or if they hear they will
think that you are being haunted by
invisible demons, which you yourself cannot figure out which is the head and
which is the tail
and you move your arms in circles trying to locate which is the point of an ending

that happily ever after that you like to write which cannot be written because
now you cannot pinpoint
the cause from the effect and the effect from the cause like a wedding ring which
has become too tight in your finger

you like to throw it away but it is not that simple. People are complicated. Events
are either lawful or unlawful and you are given the choice whether to go to prison
or die.

the deep blue sea and the devil. you or I, either and neither, puzzling bitch
surrounded by dogs like a lake surrounded by small shores, like a mouth
mumbling for syllables which still remain irresponsible and
hence incomprehensible

but i know each like the fingers in my hand, and to avoid death of the black
spider i keep my silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Black Umbrella

in our custom
a man must take an umbrella
and must raise it
like a gentleman

it must remain raised
even when the rain stops
until the woman signals
otherwise

this time it is the Chief Justice
doing it for the First Lady of
the President

there is more to this tradition
than meets the eye
it is my perfect picture of
subservience and
corruption....

RIC S. BASTASA
Blackout

no tv
no pc

life ceases
we think
life begins
anew

gazing at the stars
looking at the shadows of the trees

listening to the drizzle of the rain
figuring out the songs of the wind

feeling the silence of the night
dea inside our bones
we hear the collision of blood
the cry of the intestines
the pumping of the heart

we seek the arms of another
feeling one once again together

RIC S. BASTASA
Black-Out

slowly the worst in you
trickles

short of ideas
lack of images

at the gate
half-open you
want to see
the world again

everything is
dark
and you are
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Blackout In The Town Where I Live

blackouts happen here most often
the president of the country is confused
what to do at the end of her term
others think she may soon go to prison, and for whatever reason
political or otherwise
or perhaps on the common reasoning of a global recession
affecting necessarily the shortage of power
i mean, electrical power,
this town too is affected with constant blackouts and people
worry much
what happens for the next eight months
for fear that there may be a coup d'etat
or a rebellion of the masses
or simply a plain revolution from within

but enough of all these political upheavals
i decided to simply sit in the corner of my room
open the window and look beyond all these darkness
i expected a full moon tonight
some bats to enjoy the ripe guavas unharvested by kids
the mysterious white owl that pass sometimes
when all of them are fast asleep...

i was thinking of the past times with grandfather
before the Japanese came
there was this oil lamp that they keep
shining all night long
and they were talking about that
perfect peace reigning
for long in this little town
thriving in the simplicity of its lifestyle
the integrity of its people
the innocence of its children
the love of family
and so on an so forth....

and then i feel so sleepy as the lights un-switched off
begin to take life again.
Bland

his words are bland
and i think i understand

inside his cell
darkness and emptiness
and silence

words
becoming intense

he felt all of them
like pins
and here you are disturbed

angry
and wanting to kill
what mockingbird is there

if only you
have felt what drowning is

on that well
where the water runs dry

you would not have
become like him

engulfed by this huge mouth
of emptiness

vomited you run the streets
endlessly without direction

RIC S. BASTASA
Bland And Dry And Negligible

sometimes we simply close our eyes
on some ugly things

we choose not to hurt somehow
those who never chose to be
bland, dry and negligible

given the choice why should they stay
on such a disliked state somehow?

we simply sit there and pretend nothing disturbs us
we sip our coffee slowly savoring the appearance of new light
we place one hand on the table as the other hand keep the handle of the cup

the human person facing you cracks a conversation
you pretend you listen but you understand the pain
things are not equal
life is not fair
there are those who are unlucky
some protest their fates
despite all the hard work
they still arrive at nothing but losses and regrets

meanwhile the early morning sun rises slowly to make a brand new day
you utter the prayers

Lord, Lord, keep us, keep us,
make us understand, make us feel you
give us hope
make us live another day
give us peace.

then you face the human being in front of you.
paying attention.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bland Poems

to choose

between a
burger and
a poem

i'd rather
choose a burger

lots of mayonnaise
and ketsup
and lettuce and
meat

beside me a mug
of san mig beer

because i am
hungry and
too thirsty
this summer

and besides

i already
have these, oh well,

bland poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bland.....Illusion...

a man sometimes finds shelter
in a castle in the sky
just like any child
abused by a stepmother

a woman goes with the man taking shelter
in that castle in the sky

though they have nothing it is their love
that makes them live happily there ever after

the croaks in the fields croak their laughter
the rain from the sky diverts the truth by pleasing them

the two knows the real story of their wrong notions
there is no bother, love too exists so well

in that illusion, they both make the castle in the sky
what choice is there? To live with the croaks in the

pool, that murky existence which thrives
in the harsh truths of slime and noise

RIC S. BASTASA
it is time to have blank walls
something to start with
where you are more careful with
what to write and
what to draw

you think twice, thrice
before you start your scribbles for
you once drew a cat
and it didn't work well with the dog
which she drew first

you should have talked to her
so everything that you plan
to put on this blank wall
might as well have harmony

& peace & beauty, like the way
she painted her own blank space
with all black colors, and she gave you
an impression of the darkest night

you tried to put some stars and
a full moon to brighten the darkness
of her thoughts, and perspectives

she did not like it
she was in deep mourning, she was very sad
depressed with what happened
when she was a young girl in their house

she set aside the stars and she told you she hated the moon
and you kept your silence and opted to put there the whispers of
wind and the hush of the sea

again she did not like it
the wind made her vomit and the sea made her very sick till

you finally gave up
with the way the blank wall had been painted
and the manner by which she wanted to take it all to herself
you know what was really proper

you said there is still a blue boat on the blank wall
and it is leaving soon finding a new world..... now sailing on

RIC S. BASTASA
Blank, Numb, Floating

it is 1: 55 a.m.
i hear the rain falling
she is fast asleep tired of the demands of her day
i leave her and she takes the pillow for me
i turn on the light
and see this room of books and paperworks
i turn on the computer
i am feeling nothing and i am floating like i am but a spirit
i am numb and i am feeling so dumb
i see this blank wall
i am feeling so empty

i look at her again
she utters words in her sleep and i will not wake her up
i lay my hands on the keys
run my fingers on some letters
there is nothing to write
in particular but there is something to run my fingers on
this feeling
this attempt to imitate the sound of the rain in letters
to put the motion of the rain to put its smell
to be wet and to have the rain run over me
all over me all over me all over me all over me

blank, numb, floating and wet
this is the poem now
at 2: 03 a.m.
it has gained finally this form
and scent and motion and color
that you have never seen
or felt the way

i do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blankness

it feels as though
the well had gone dry
the thirst invades
the tongue wilts like
a leaf soon crumpled
like mud baked under
the sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blasphemy

when you start
to tell me that you
love me too

RIC S. BASTASA
Bleed

you ask me if i still love you
and i say yes,
definitely after all those years

i remember
i bit my lips
and it bled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blend

blend, how did i ever use that word in my life?

blend with the people i work with, dissolve in their ordinariness
so i cannot be noticed anymore
i wear the same clothes, same brand and even same color to blend
with all of them, and so i am in, not a deviant, not an opposition
not a rebel but a supporter of their cause

blend with the crowd like cuts of carrots and apples and melons
in a blender and nothing is identifiable in that concoction
blend and blend and blend myself with the world and this universe
escape from my uniqueness betray my individuality

as all creeks and rivers all flow to the sea as one entity
away from loneliness, losing myself my thoughts

the I surrendering to the we, the coward one,
blending, and now there is no one, yet why this poetry apart from you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Blend, Do Not End

Blend. Sip your blend to the colors
Of this room. Smell like a morning perfume of
Small red roses. Open palms. No collarbones.

Blend. Take your time. Familiar faces and freckled
Dreams. Blend, bend.

For God's sake, do not end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blending With The Sky Again

clouds colored black
Rising from the earth
Floating on red skies
The sun Is gray
Rectangular to the
Earth shaped like
An ovum
A splash in the sea
Like an inverted comma
He is Icarus
He just drowned

They do not think
It is me
The sea is not green
It is blacker than black
I am trying to be
Off-white for you
To see.
But you can’t
You did not try
Thinking hard enough.
You have no time
For this
For me
Or anything else.
Sometimes I think
I should have
Grown myself
As the suicide bomber
And then explode
Inside you.
Perhaps you
Will notice me
Finally.
My
Color must not
Be red.
I may
Blend with the
Red sky again.
Blends Of Air And Fire Wind And Earth.

in this corner
is this fountain
water spurts as
we gaze
and birds hover
and stop here
for a drink on
the peaceful part

i sit fronting it
under the shade of
the willow tree
listening to the
song of water blending
with the passing wind
creating in me
a chorus of fire

i am between
your heaven and earth

man: the center of
this universe
the listener
of your heave and
hell

spurts of humanity
birds hover and stop
here, for a drink of
the peaceful water

blends of air and fire
wind and earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blessed

it is an old
story

blessed are those
who said no
but did the yes....

RIC S. BASTASA
Blessing

I am my father’s best
I am his blessing

I do not cry during
His funeral

I do not grieve
Because he is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blessing In Disguise

Blessing in disguise

You were late for the office The bomb exploded on time

Thanks God! You were saved Every delay sometimes Has its blessing.

So every time There is delay, do not curse,

Who knows? there might be Some reasons

who knows? Someone up there still cares for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blessing In Disguise...

she arrives
disgusted
she is singled out
oppressed
abused  but when
we meet today
we do not speak
about it
she knows how to
handle this
thing
she is mature enough
not to react
to humiliation
she asks nothing
not even justice
she knows God too well
and perhaps
what happens is just
a blessing in
disguise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blind

sorry to say
that whatever you do
he does not mind
not that he is numb
to love
not that he is so indifferent
to your advances
because you
see
he is deaf and blind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blindly Underneath Carrying All Its Own Weight.

you shall choose
between a gun and a flower

a room or a path
between an empty space and

another empty space
between a dimming light

and another darkness or
too much light which has

blinded you or between being
alive and being dead and

there you shall know the
limits as you end the right
to choose with an erasure
of what what was boldly written

you shall choose between choosing
and not choosing if there

is really that choice.
you end with a desire not to

think, to cease, to stop and
just be the tree that you

like. Above a hill, tested
by the seasons, unable to

transfer to another hill and
hence has grown deeper roots

blindly underneath carrying
all its own weight.
Bliss

at the outdoor
garden hangs
a yellow flower
on the vine

the air swings it
and its scents spread all over

watching it
is bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
Bliss

the hills
are legs spread upon the plains

waiting
as some flowers spread their scents
on the thighs
of the valleys

the sun arrives
in its naked grandeur

since then
love, and love and love
has filled the
earth

winds so soft
and clean and fresh

the heart of the earth
beats
for love and love and more love

the sea is quiet and
calm

and then tonight
the moon and stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Bliss Remembered....

a rose
in a white porcelain vase
on top of
a glazed
wooden table
showered with
the early morning light
from the laced
window
while you were
still sleeping soundly
in bed

two yellow birds
chirp
on the sill
of the window

i am at
peace
beside you

RIC S. BASTASA
NOT SO Familiar
with the English word
the not-so-well educated
woman in her
fifties says: BLISS THE CHILDREN
and the English speaking
world laughs
and underestimated her
in fact
humiliated her for
her mispronunciation,
but i know
as i know her from the heart
being from the
country where i grew
up to be a man,
as she is one of those
childless women,
a product of the family-planning
imposing First World
God Knows not why
she couldn't bear
a child,
it is clear to me
she really means it
Bliss the Children
rather than
Bless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bliss...

if need be
i have to sell my body
and have a pact
with God
whoever is in-charge
for reincarnation
so i can come back
soonest
and touch
your beautiful
bottom

this time you
shall love my own
kind

we shall kiss
you loving me
i loving you

no love triangles
no hitches

mutual, requited
love, lust
love, love, love
paired with
lust

in perfect
harmony

then i die
as early as dew to
morning sunshine

and perhaps i do not have
to spell
regret,
no broken heart
no shattered self

no sighs..
i shall fill the world with the
scented flowers of
ecstasy

bliss, complete
perfect
bliss...

RIC S. BASTASA
Blitzkrieg

the assault at noon
like lightning and thunder
at the foot of the hill
bodies spreading
dead
women wailing
and children
weeping

this is the latest bombardment
of a moslem village,
bombing at night when
some peaceful
religious souls
are praying inside their homes

unreasonable lightning attack,
and dirty offensive,
an onslaught of the civilian mind,
illegal raid,
shelling of lies,

and so they also strike
like what was done to them

but what was written on the front page
of the news
the following morning
was altogether different

damn! i said.

RIC S. BASTASA
two irreconcilable perspectives
at once:

descending from the top
two bars with rectangular cross-section

ascending from the bottom
three cylindrical rods.

RIC S. BASTASA
you see at the top of the mountain
beside the clouds that have become so close to me
like some kind of
domesticated wolves....

you mistake me for a god of the sky
i am not
you tell the man beside you that i must be a
prince of the clouds
i am not

not even the earth shall own me
for i am not of earth though i come from its feet
i belong to no one
not even the trees or the moon and its stars

why am i here? block to block
every corner of my skin pitted against each other
and i rise from my
own profanity
having known the link between sin and love
between God and Man

between Good and evil, between the boundaries of these
seemingly irreconcilable odds

the tunnel of personification of the personal views
honesty and authenticity
flesh and blood and spirit and soul
mind and body

lust and love, that is where i first made the start.
here i am now at the summit of it all.

sitting lotus amidst the murkiness of the pond.
silent, deep, and mindless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blonde Hair

America has become like your kitchen,
gone for a week
without notice, and back again on another
day, without so much fuss,
you walk back
trace the steps of your past on grounds
filled with dust and dry leaves
pebbles without dew, buds that wilt,
roots that stop to spread,
this is still
My Philippines, dusts or fresh air,
storms or drought, i keep walking its paths
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blowing Wind

her long black hair
slides on his thigh
and rests there

her luscious lips plays
a game on him

he is not in peace
he is at war with desire

she takes his grief inside
her mouth

he gives in hoping that
this can be a temporary solution

she thinks of someone she
truly loves

his mind wanders among the
clouds that hang on the ceiling

in their wanderings
their eyes never meet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blowjob For Marvin

she likes something long and thick something she can pull like a shiny, silvery pole but she prefers something golden really one that is like a precious gem metallic in strength one where she can blow with all her might, where she can expel her sighs of the day her loneliness for the nights one that can also be musical to her ears where her locks of hair can dance wild like disco and hip hop the trumpet of her dreams or the trombone of her wishes of the clarinet or the flute this lady who loves to play music in her dark room

RIC S. BASTASA
Blubber

weep not
the willows are singing
weep not
the winds are blowing
weep not
utter nothing
lips swell
sleep well
the distortion
is over

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue And Red

got a blue brief
and you got your red lips
we can combine
these two colors together
they all fit so well

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Bird On The Window Sill

come to me bluebird
let me dye your feathers
to white if you want to be pure
to red if you want to have more
excitements
come to me bluebird
let me handle your problem
about their judgment against
you
you are not blue because of
your feathers
i will dye it for you
do you want pink for
a wise panther?
i can do it for you
trust me
you are not blue because
nature made you
you are blue because you
allow it to be so.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Birds

this morning
the blue birds nest inside
my heart
and they all sing in harmony
for one whole
self

it is a nice song
that may make me live
for another day

their songs are blues.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Butterfly

blue butterfly
so blue fluttering alone
hovering on my yellow green leaf
and stopping for a while
on my shiny, brown twig
tell me if i am smooth
just tell me if
if am good
then leave

blue butterfly
do not ask if my heart is real
do not ask if you can have it
i do not have a heart anymore
for you see i am just this
tree, this twig, this leaf

but blue butterfly
if ever i have a heart

please
do not ask about it
i give it to no one

i am smooth
i am too good
to be owned by
someone

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Butterfly (2)

a tethered
flower
you call
her

unleashed
beauty
a prisoner of
a stalk

RIC S. BASTASA
WHO does not know this kind of dance
Like hopping grasshoppers
And butterflies fluttering
Hovering and then
To a quick change
Jumping
Like joy overpowering you
From an overwhelming sorrow,

It can start as a mellow single note
Then comes the other notes
And a lot others joining
Ended into one bombastic
Show

Of women in gowns
Held by men in black suits
And they dance from one end
To the other of this
Dance floor

Who cannot imagine the flow
Of the river Danube
And of course
Who cannot tell
Strauss there all his hands
Bombastically beating
To the rhythm of
A grand waltz
A dance of royalty

For a while
We adopt the mind frames
Of kings and queens
And princes and princesses
To the dance of

Blue Danube
A royal river flowing
To all the hearts of those
Who view life

Alive, rich, abundant
Opulent, of expensive gowns
And silk suits and perfumes
And wine

Oh, it will be only for a night
The blue Danube is now turned
To real blue

The women have bruises
The men have strong fists
And the song perished
In that sickened mind.

You wake up,
The blue Danube
Is a polluted creek
And all the fish
There are already dead.

And who was strauss?

It is you, the complete
Manic-depressive
delusional
Disillusioned
citizen
Of this dancefloor
republic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Grass And Green Skies

the grass is blue
the skies are green
the sea is black
the sun is violet
the river is grey
the flowers are silver
the mountains red

i lost my sense of color
my sense of touch
i lost my logic

without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Moon Tonight?

whether the moon tonight is blue
really depends on you

loneliness is just a state of mind
you must learn how to take your wine

walk inside this bar and sit there for a while
take your scotch on the rocks
and look for someone looking for someone like you
smile the smile he gives you and wait for him to say hello
give him the look he is looking for
and compliment him with words he too likes to hear

like you he likes to have someone tonight
someone just to kiss and hold
like you he wants to have a little warmth
like you he wants to have a moment

just tonight for two lonely bodies to keep living
and then the moon tonight will never be blue

a little compromise tonight do not look for love
just someone to hold and then release like a white dove

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Pastel Stills

pastel blue
daisies
round protrusions
at the center
six in all
under an orange
sun

still as steel
on the canvass

RIC S. BASTASA
Blue Spanish Eyes

what more is there
except the blue Spanish eyes
what more of her
can you ask?

will you ask for her hands
for marriage, Figaro?

RIC S. BASTASA
there are always layers
of awareness
impression upon an impression
forms a face
and veil upon veil
one must figure out
what is next to what is seen
i keep this composure
there will be a lot of guesses
i must proclaim
there is only one truth
and well i must see to it
that you cannot
touch it
sometimes i show it to you
but then
familiarity takes you away from it
things that you take for granted
become truths
and i take refuge
on what you already know
on said confidence
you will miss the real show

RIC S. BASTASA
Boat On The Sea

UPON The virgin
waters
the keel of the
boat
penetrates

a whirlpool
an ecstasy

RIC S. BASTASA
Bobbing

when the crow
lands on the twig
the weight
pushes the twig
down almost
reaching the ground
the bobbing
somewhat intrigues
the senses of the
caterpillar on the leaf
the tree frowns
upon a black alien
some leaves fall
and the grass as usual
keeps its silence
as the air passes by

RIC S. BASTASA
Bobbitt: A Part Of Speech

the word to describe 1994
it was
what was done to an abusive
husband,
this Lorena Bobbitt,
this woman
scorned
with fury as furious as hell

now, you must remember,
do you wish to do it again?

mrs.2008?

RIC S. BASTASA
Bodies Are Left Out Floating

how i wish
i can
be inside you
and
explore the
possibilities
of my being
but i know that

i am
always not what
i am
when i am inside
you
i deny all that
i could be

i am not
unfolded

there is pain inside
my heart

what appeases it
is what we both do not
like
to happen

i take side
with the comfort of my days

that soon
they all fade away and
take me
to the right place that
i always
dream

it is yet empty but soon
i know
it shall be full

feelings are compasses
the destination of paradise is not just
an idea

it is
i can be
it can

bodies are left out floating
spirits rise like suns above the mountains
killing
darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
Body Of A Man

what i lost
was simply my body
the flat abdomen
gave in to negligent
fats
my strong muscled
arms
got the flab

i detest what my
mirror shows me

this is not me
i tell myself

this is me
the truth insists

too much sitting
too much poetry

the thinking finally
kills the body
the spirit soars

this is the real me
forget the body
i finally proclaim
myself before me
Creator

RIC S. BASTASA
Bolero A La Ravel

clapping hands
to the sound of
doves into the air
into the domes of
mosques somewhere in
the abandoned island
of Jolo

at night the boats leave
of malacca
a place of all religions
shoulder to shoulder
on the road

silence is vast
a dancing woman comes with
little steps

heard at dawn
where everyone is soundly
still asleep

your sneeze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bonding

like descending the stairs
he must be with those who
cannot climb
the ground is waiting
for him to kiss it
and he must
otherwise those that
look up to him
shall soon turn into
neglected monsters
with dinosaur wings
to pull him and eat him whole.

precisely one gets bonded
with the weak and the deprived
the marginalized and the
disadvantaged and those
challenged about everything
that are not there.

the conversations give them
the feeling that you are one of
them
in fact, you are one of them
less the cap and the coat
that they gave you
the purple feather, the ring
and the right to be king.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bong

now in the field of law
surprise, surprise
i have seen his latest pic
on the train
as he was waiting for
someone
he does not recognize me
and i pretend
not knowing him

i remember those days
of police line-ups
less the smiles now
we still wear the same
anxious faces

the train arrives
he is in the embrace
of a woman
i guess, let me guess
ten years younger
that his age

the way they kiss
she is not his daughter.

RIC S. BASTASA
i don't think we do not recognize each other anymore when we meet we keep the silence a horrible silence since it is the most pretentious one yet we do not feel that something is wrong or wasted or something needs to be repaired what i know and for which i never tell him was this i was also broken, in fact, more broken than him and in my silence i was then too busy placing things in the proper order same as him i do not think that we intended to hurt one another that is never the point we have gone there twice and it was very painful we have to repeat the procedure again we look down we are so humiliated and wanting to redeem what we lost upon our own faults

now we finished the mission but still in silence we keep the understanding still friends but not calling our names

in the humility of our failures we have become real men....

RIC S. BASTASA
Bonsai

and why
betty should i settle
for the lesser dreams
of this bonsai?

why should
i distort my growth
in your view
of a miniaturized
world

when i can have
hands as big
and as spread
as the roots
of a banyan tree

when i can have
tendrils and tips
as free as
wild to touch
the blue clouds
hanging
on a cliff?

let me be,
you do not own me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Booger

you who loves so blindly
the one who does not love you
in return
has become this booger
manipulated by his fingers
and then thrown
after so much abuse
into the infinite space
of oblivion

RIC S. BASTASA
Books

books after being read
become nothing
but things

books unread
are treasures of gold
undiscovered
beneath your feet

books unshared
are thoughts unspoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Boomerang

what you throw
as tamed always
comes back to you

what you give
finds a home finally
to the hands that
give it

what you get is
what you deserve.

RIC S. BASTASA
Boracay Fantasy....

this summer when we are together
in boracay
near as tongue to a cone of strawberry ice cream
licking,

i get so close to you that i can feel the 'tanness'
of your tan
tasting like chocolate without sugar
a little bit bitter but
enduring

after the sun has passed its joys upon you
brown smooth skin
broad spacious nape and black flowing hair
surfing upon a pair of mountain breasts
with trees as nipples

scented with
southern sea breeze and smelling like fried dried fish beside steam white pearly rice
early morning
with barako coffee and cream and freshly scrambled mayonnaise egg
on a sky blue saucer.

how i wish for a premature evening
beds softer than sand, thoughts ever lovelier than lovers
and such questions as,

'what is this moon saying? '
	onight, you are telling me
your room has no lock and your sister is dating
that new guy in town.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bored

Bored na bored ka
pag 3 o clock na
ayaw mo namang kumain
baka tumaba ka pa
ayaw mo namang manood
ng tv kasi masakit na ang
mata mo sa kababasa sa
mga balitang nakakapayat sa
puso ng ulyaning taong
kagaya mo

lalabas ka sa bahay
patingin-tingin sa mga
punongkahoy
nakikinig sa awit ng
hangin at paakyat-akyat
sa may bangin

wala na talagang
magawa
balik sa bahay
mag-compose ng tula
o ng isang munting
kwento

tungkol sa taong
muntik ng tumalon
sa bangin
at magpakamatay

dahil bored na bored
na siya
pag 3’clock na ng
hapong hapong hapo na
sya.

RIC S. BASTASA
the first time you
hear about death
that time when you
were so young
wearing that tight &
smooth
skin- you did not
really pay
attention,
in fact it is
irrelevant,

and then you go to
that middle age,

a disease here sometimes
and a misfortune
on the other

lots of worries, skins
begin to wrinkle

and then you hear about
death again
you feel touched
you shiver

lots of talks and
you pretend
there is nothing that
affects you

and then here you are
now,
the doctor reveals
your secrets
like a priest

and you confess your
sins
your guilt
you having done nothing
to keep this
body and soul
together

you shiver, you tremble
like a building on
an intensity 8 quake

you bet
you are bored about fear

now you look at death
as a friend
and soon you are willing
to walk with it
hand in hand
along the road to
freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Bored Couple

just one room
two beds
less talk
more sleep
twosome tired
about
each other

tomorrow

another walk into
the unknown

RIC S. BASTASA
Bored: Ejusdem Generis

cups of coffee,
cigarettes, a chain of smoke
women, girls,
hotel lobby,
wine, gambling,
casino, and....
funerals and coffins..

now you are telling me you are bored with all these?

it is this relational thing: love to love
and care to care, a chain of concerns,
a rose without thorns, a candle light,
holding hands while strolling in the park

you will miss all these, because you are not at all willing
to start all over again.
try it. and then tell me if you are still bored.

hold my hands. just hold them. please.

RIC S. BASTASA
Boredom

a long look at the mirror
see the face
of boredom

Kapuol

Panamin ug dugay
Tan-awa unsa
Ang nawong sa
kapuol

RIC S. BASTASA
Boredom And The Sunday Beach

everyday seems to be a Saturday
today and yesterday and now
they all have the same faces and colors
and manner of greeting me hello

and when they all say goodbye
i do not really notice when
as though my wrist
watch is broken and needing repair

i only know that it is a Sunday
when we go to the faraway beach
when you wear your orange bikini
and you kick the ball
when you fall on the sand
and you giggle and when you pull me
to take the plunge in the calm, blue sea
when you are with me breathlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
Boredom, Some Words

Boredom: the desire for desires.
Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)

when i get fed up and say i am quitting
it does not mean that it is the end of all these cravings
it is not.

when i shift my head to another direction like a ship changing course
it does not mean that i am leaving
this place
it is not

when i look at you with pity and tell myself what have i done
something that you do not really deserve
that which i myself does not too deserve
it does not mean that i am saying
i stop
it is not

it is not the end of everything it is but another endless beginning
desire that desires more of itself
 cravings that crave for more cravings
it is eternity finding itself in eternity

this quest unstoppable
this thirst unquenchable

this self that always begins
insoluble imperishable

this is the boredom of the divine
this is the restlessness unto the rest of its restlessness

RIC S. BASTASA
in this place i was
born
merely to listen

the only meaning to
my existence is my ear

there is so much noise
and surrender is not a word for me

i hear everything
even the needles of the pine

when i speak
i am no longer myself

when i move my lips
the world turns-turtle

when i scream all i
have is silence

so many are lost
every night they seek refuge

in my emptiness
i become full.

RIC S. BASTASA
Born Writer

defined the midwife was shocked
er her mother could not believe it
when he was born
his tiny fingers came with a pen
and a paper
and instead of giving the first cry
of the little baby
he dictated to those who are shocked
his name and his ambition
his next poem
and his latest novel

RIC S. BASTASA
Borrow The Journey Of A Leaf

too conscious of my roots
now
how can i be shaken by any
departures?

if i choose mobility to forget
i will borrow the journey of a leaf
float in the air and then land on one of the rivers
where i can drift
and then find my way to the ocean

all, as one sage says, always go
to the sea
and find their resting places
in the
ocean

the leaf in me will find you there
but if it cannot find you

i have other leaves on the tree where
i keep all my roots
and i can still be alive and be
significant

i have prepared for all these
done so much thinking like a whale
that knows
one continent from the other
and if i wail
you have no way of knowing it
for sure...

RIC S. BASTASA
Borrowers

earling morning
two women knocking
asking if i have a thousand

RIC S. BASTASA
Boston At The Public Garden

first time for me
to see a squirrel

i tore part of my
earl of sandwich and
gave it

it picked it up with its
hands and began to nibble

here the sun is awake
the wind is too cold for my
chest

we sat on a steel chair
saving words
savoring what was there
on the last day

RIC S. BASTASA
Both Ways

now that you have seen the sunrise
and now that you are facing this sunset
both ways then
please tell me which is more beautiful?
the blooming of the tight bud
into a flower
or when the petals slowly fall one by one
and then blown by the wind in all directions
tell me
what was it that you felt when you were born
and what is it that we should anticipate
waiting for the sunset to finally fade out.
RIC S. BASTASA
Boulevard Sa Dumaguete

Daghang balak kuno ang
Nasulat sa mga
Nakaabot dinhi
Sa paglakaw sa sayo
Sa buntag
Sa boulevard sa Dumaguete

Kita ang mga panganod
Nga dili matandog
Sa hangin
Kita ang naglawig
Nga sakayan
Tingog sa bugsay
Ang akong nadungog
Sa kaadlawon

Nakita ko ang lunsay
Nga dagat
Ang mga lumot nga lunhaw
Sa daplin sa baybayon
Sa hinay
Nangapalong ang mga suga
Nga naglaray
Sa boulevard
Morag mga mata nga
Mipiyong kay
Mobuka na ang maanyag
Nga kabuntagon

Gisud-ong ko kini
Sa tumang kalipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bound By Invisible Ropes Of Psychological Instability

Morpheus is bound
and i am the modern Morpheus
Light is refused of my
Pleading
and I do not resist being bound
i tease you with
No complaint and you watch me
Feeling so guilty
Why a man like me must be bound
by the ropes of
Psychological instability
That is what you think from the
Beginning
And i give you the look of Numbness
and you begin to ask
Who is Morpheus?
Where is the heart of Morpheus

It is in his head and you cannot
Destroy it
Because you love
the Passion in his eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Bounded By Chains

your kindness and
goodness have become my very
own chains

i love not you
but another yet how can
i leave you
without being drowned
by so much guilt?

love no matter how true
dissolves in the
cares of gentleness
and understanding

my heart beats for her
yet your chains of freedom
tightly bind me
on my arms

i am free to go
but how can i?

RIC S. BASTASA
Bow And Arrow

this is the metaphor
of society

the greater the
opposition
of the bow
to the arrow

the farther the
travel

take note
a society of
yes men
arrives
at nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Braggart

someday i will be poor.
it will happen, someday i will be very poor.
and you will be rich, and happy and proud
and influential and famous
and be in the cover of Forbes Magazine
perhaps Times
for your exemplary charity
or Asia week for your nobility
and humanitarian projects
perhaps the Pope will make you Saint Marjorie

someday i will be poor, in fact, poor as the poorest rat,
but i know
i will still, and cannot still love you real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brautigan....

ok, no money,
ok, there is no fame,
there is nothing to expect
from those mothers of art,
their children unrecognized
no share, no will,
nothing to expect, from all these
children of art.

ok, you sit alone, by the window
you put your folded arms,
you look outside
the people pass you by
and they do not bother
looking at you for the second time

ok, nothing delicious for breakfast
this month's rental is not paid
electricity bill lies there calling your attention
this is a poor guy, inside a foul room,
shits are all around

favorite expression: f....
age forgotten
wrinkles multiply
sour face
forested hair
thin chin, deep sunken eyes
restless fingers

ok, no friend really wants to read a poem
or if they read, one visit, it is out of pity
not even respect

don't cry. there is nothing worth crying.
just sit there

tomorrow they will bring the news
a friend writes a letter that for once he will dabble in poetry
and he has written one
though too personalized and needs further editing

you look at the ceiling as you lie hopeless in your bed,
you see images of hope
nothing angelic, there are no wings, no halo
not white, blurred, brownish, chinks
pieces, naked words, unfinished dialogues,

the unknown people at the other room
can hear you laughing
you laugh so hard
alone

perhaps, this time, you shall win.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bread And Butter

bread and butter
day to day
on the table
i must add
this dessert
called poetry

then some
fumes of
pearl rice
and scents
of hycinths

rise up
to the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
amidst the busy day
the hurry and the blurry
of things and events to come

i take a break. Poetry.
Images of sunlight where the sunflower rides

across the window
the sea, a boat, a little boy playing on the shore
a man paddling,
a woman with a hat waiting for the fish

the wind gets in
i smell salt and i feel the coldness.

back to paper work
and reality, a table of folders
names and figures
reasons and justifications
citations

15 years now
more to go till i get 70

how do i get there?
ah, i need sleep,
i will have my siesta.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breakfast

after writing
five poems

i realize
i need to
eat my

breakfast.
i still stick
to this idea:

an empty
stomach
is full of
nice ideas.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breakfast Is Ready

(7: 45 in the morning)

to choose between a
hot breakfast ready on the table
and finishing another poem

i choose the breakfast
together with my wife

this poem can be suspended
in time
and become another unfinished
act of creation
by a man wanting to fill this
world with poems

after a while
when i have my fill and when
i make some nice conversations with my wife
and my dog beside the table
looking at me
for a piece of fried pork
when the sipping of coffee is over
when i finally wipe my
chin with the sky blue napkin
when i consider
eating as finally over

as promised
i will come back again
and finish this poem

and there is something
nice in this
act of creation
you feel it

it is warm like the hand of
a beautiful woman
it is as hot as ever
like this wanton desire

lovely,
as lovely as you love each letter
of the word
of your poetry

i am feeling it in the bone
of my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
breakfast is ready
we sit on our designated seats
we pray
we put our hands on the table
we take the spoon and fork
and knife
slice the cheese, break the bread
sip the coffee, chew,
no spitting, swallow
no choking
in here there is an implied admission
of hunger, thirst, and
emptiness.

we say the words thanks after,
amen to the next thirst and hunger.

conversations there are cliches.
but i admit, i dont give a damn now, nothing really matters.

i always say a little prayer for you.
Before i leave. I do not have to tell you.

honest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breakfast With Mark Strand

i had a chance to have a breakfast
with mark strand
a sacrifice on his part since he does not know me

i am a nobody you must know

back to mark, i guess he feels like a boat stranded
on an island with no known name as me

we were eating poetry
voraciously and ink stained my lips
ink dropping from my beard
spreading in my white polo shirt

i like this adventure having breakfast with mark strand
and i look at him closely like i have a magnifying lens in my hand

there are blackheads on his cheeks
white hairs on his eyelids
cracks on his lips
he smiles a little out of courtesy and i see
tooth decay

we finished eating poetry
i set him free
i know that two hours with me can be a century of agony

because i am a nobody and because at the end
i had eaten so much poetry and excuse me...i may vomit poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breaking A Promise

i promised myself
not to open this pc
and not to write a poem

hardheaded
here i am again
irritating you

no rules, no form,
no grace, no beauty,
no meter, no count
insensitive, unbearable,
persistent, pestering,
pondering, and always
on the themes of

black, shapeless,
starless, moonless
dark, cold, and damp.

i break promises.
but i do not curse.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breaking Free....

it is not the hatchet
that breaks the walls
not the lever
that lifts the rock
barriers of
your sought freedom

do not go physical
for it is not the keys that
will open the doors
for you
to fly like a black bird
into that
blue sky

move and plunge
like a yellow submarine
into the depths of the sea
inward
the first step is deep silence
and when you
know every sand and corral
every coldness
rise up
slowly to the surface
of your being
and be not afraid of the sun
and winds
and waves and the wideness
and length of the
continents

for all these
when you are strong and firm
shall be yours
to own.

RIC S. BASTASA
Breaking The Door Open (Revised)

on that day when i lost the key
to the room
i waited for some solutions

perhaps i shall break the lock
or smash the door or remove the door jams
or climb on the other side of the house
and enter through the window

but my arms for breaking
are weaker now

my hands tremble at the thought
that once in my childhood
i did climb a wall and break open
the window
and was so badly beaten
that i could hardly stand and walk
back home

i keep on waiting for some solutions
until i realized that anyway
this is not my room of destiny

and there is nothing
in there that is worth my trouble

and so
not being that foolish enough
(or hopeless to say the least)

i simply walked away
with nothing on my shoulder to carry

RIC S. BASTASA
Breaking The Rules

Look mama
the horses are jumping
out of the carousel
and they are all running
into the woods!

RIC S. BASTASA
Breathing

the most essential
is inside you
and you take it
days and nights
air

invisible and yet so
necessary
in fact
indispensable

tell you what
you tell me perhaps
what is necessary and what is indispensable
is invisible
and tell you what
it is free

RIC S. BASTASA
Breeze Breeze Breeze

your parents are not your parents
though you come from them

or though not
your parents are not your parents

they are merely the bows and you are
the arrow

mind the direction where the force
of the hand shoots you

mind the wind that gives you the push
mind the arrow
and let us see where fate takes you

why do we have to quarrel about the origin
of children
or the origin of the species?

move forward and find the real purpose
of the stars

you are here. Go there.
Does it really matter where do you come from?

there is more out there. Busy yourself
about the things to come

and give the best that is found inside
the chambers of your heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
I will hold your hand
And we shall dance
The chacha
The sound of
Brian lubeck
Is chacha
I hold you by my hand
Your hand
Your side
Of pleasure
As I slide
My mind
To your
Soft slender
Body swaying
The chacha
To the magic
Of brian lubeck

How I wish
To make love
To someone
Like you
Tonight

Nameless
Woman of
This dancing floor
Where your name
Is simply
A chacha
To the beat
Of brian lubeck.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bridge Between Us

i like to build this bridge between us

the river that divides us is long and wide
and the waters rage like the emotions of the night
that fought against the days of my life

i like to build this bridge between our minds
two continents divided by an ocean seemingly without the sea
the shores nowhere to be found

i like to build this bridge
let me just tell you that before i finally take my leave

RIC S. BASTASA
Brief

People are so busy
and their attention span
is short

too much info
here and there and
everywhere

and so i have this
tripping now

brief. A poem must
be brief.

women easily
understand that

what is important
is not what is between

the long lines but
what is deep within

that brief
poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brief And Concise

yes, the poem,
that poem, nice.

a red carnation
fresh from the garden
alone
in the glass vase
half-filled with
crystal clear
water

RIC S. BASTASA
Brief Meeting

we met  
so briefly  
like a ride  
on a bus  
i was looking  
at the busy street  
by the glass  
window  

i disembark  
as usual to  
another  
beginning  

you wish we  
meet again  

i am bound  
do you wish  
to free me?  

RIC S. BASTASA
Bright Colors

bright colors hang
on a horizontal pole

a white bench a red
pail and purple clouds

yellow sand black
sea grass and lavender
shadows umbrellas

on alternate orange and
white and saffron and

yellow green and crimson
blue sea with white foams

escape from a shrinking world
to the sea breeze and solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
You are the brightest star
That I always watch every night
How will you know?
How will you notice?
Brightest star.

You do not mind me
I always whisper your name to the wind
i always dream of reaching you
to touch you and kiss you
And even own you
Yet how can I? I do not have the wings
I do not have a heavenly soul

You never notice me
O! Bright star!
So High and so bright
In the black sky and space
That own you

You always live there
And thrive in its black bosom
With the moon

On this day
I dream of becoming the sun
So I may have the power
To forget you

RIC S. BASTASA
Brigit

you define to me
the sparks of
creativity

Celtic Goddess
In your genes
the art of this
earth is
found

daughter of Dagda
goddess of life
magic and
art

oh flame in
perpetuity!

Burn me!

take my imagination
upon thy wings of
bliss
and sorrow

bring me forth
the words
i may again
retake
the joy and laughter
the catharsis
of suffering

upon the eve of
Imbolg
i shall place
a white wool
upon my roof
one morning
Triple Goddess of
Smiths and Iron

Hand me
My Healing.

RIC S. BASTASA
cousin, let us bring back the good old times

climbing trees
gathering mangoes on the green hills
bathing nude on light brown rivers
basking in the sun on that big rock
fishing on ponds for mudfish
with earthworms as baits

jumping from tree trunks
to rivers below
riding on carabaos
barefoot on mudholes
swinging on half-fallen coconut trees
chasing dragonflies
making ripples on the blue seas
sailing on wooden boats
paddling on clear days
suns shining full
and moons glowing cool

cousin, let us bring back the old glorious times
we go back
to where we once were children, where our innocence like
incense in the taoist temples
glows and spreads
a certain pure perfume in
nature back united
to us

we are awed
we now wander....

RIC S. BASTASA
Bring Me To Life

How can you see into my eyes
Like open doors.
Leading you down into my core
Where I’ve become so numb.
Without a soul
My spirit’s sleeping somewhere cold
Until you find it there and lead it back home.

Wake me up inside.
I can’t wake up.
Wake me up inside.
Save me.
Call my name and save me from the dark.
Wake me up.
Bid my blood to run.
I can’t wake up.
Before I come undone.
Save me.
Save me from the nothing I’ve become.

Now that I know what I’m without
You can’t just leave me.
Breathe into me and make me real
Bring me to life.

Bring me to life.
I’ve been living a lie
There’s nothing inside.
Bring me to life.

Frozen inside without your touch,
Without your love, darling.
Only you are the life among the dead.

All of this sight
I can’t believe I couldn’t see
Kept in the dark
But you were there in front of me

I’ve been sleeping a 1000 years it seems.
I’ve got to open my eyes to everything.

Without a thought
Without a voice
Without a soul

Don’t let me die here
There must be something wrong.
Bring me to life.

Bring me to life.
I’ve been living a lie
There’s nothing inside.

Bring me to life

(from Evanescence)

RIC S. BASTASA
Broken

flashes of the mind
blinking eyes
fluttering wings of the spirit
glimmering hope,
glimmering diamond at night,
nictitate eyelids
scintillating scents of the soul,
shimmering body of a woman rising from the river,
sparkling bubbles
squinting squirts
condone, connive, cushion
this short circuit of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Broken Body But Never The Spirit

he shows the picture of
a man with nothing but
tubes
no limbs
just a face and a spirit.

at the bottom is the
caption of the title
of this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Broken Dreams...

i watch him when he arrives home, bringing his baby armalite and a pack of dirty clothes and a notebook (is he listing those that owe him or those that he plans to see again after 20 years of having to spend his life among the natives in the far away mountains?)

he leaves his boots at the doorway combs his hair and wipes his sweat still clinging to his long beard (with white locks)

he looks for mother (specifically now the available matter is only the picture for she had long been dead missing him the void within her heart)

'mother had long been gone', sister told him,

he heaves a sigh and breathes some more i suspect he may cry, but i know, i know
as he is, and really is,

he couldn't

there are other reasons
for tears to fall
not this one, not this one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Broken Faucet

force of water
on the faucet

the plumber is
sick with hay fever

reading a book
titled
Conversations
with God

RIC S. BASTASA
Broken Girl

broken girl
come to me
i will guide you
to this austrian mirror

see yourself
your heart bleeding
your flesh rotting
your bones rattling
our nose twitching
your eyes crying
badly you are hurt
you are but pieces
scattering without
direction

broken girl
come to me
embrace me
i have this love
to make the repairs

broken girl
come to me
i have this trust
to give you

broken girl
come to me
let us to go the fields
and feel the air of freedom
let us play in the shores
of life where the sea is gentle
and kind
where the sands are soft
where our eyes can sleep
where tomorrow is a promise
where today is just today
nothing big and illusory
now, you smile to me
broken girl take this love
and be whole again

RIC S. BASTASA
Brother

we have seen how
each of us has differentiated
like fingers
trying to be of the
same length
but will never
be....i
understand
what our true
natures
are...and so
i do not really mind
that much...when
you hurt me...i
forgive even though
you never asked
...when you are
far i worry how
you live
what you are eating
where you sleep...
we do not
talk much
communication is
nil....but i
know
we miss each
other.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brother Do Not Say I Am Sorry

brother
now it is time for you to wear
my shirt
my shoes
my pants

i have outgrown them
and it is time
you wear them
for they fit
you

do not say

' i am sorry'

do not tell me
you will escape from the pattern of our tradition
you shall step
into my shoes into all that i have and own and you must fit in

that is the law that is the rule of our ancestry
and you shall not break it
until we all die
until you die yourself inside the coffin of our father

as i will, without so much complaining
so you must
in the name of our tradition

RIC S. BASTASA
Brother Joe Zam

finally brother joe zam
the legal researcher from Dipolog has made it at last, to
Las Vegas, now with cousins, all struggling to make both ends meet

on a down economy, what a wrong timing, i think, something's wrong
with the weather up there, and he's not smiling and groping with the coldness
of the melting snow

but there is no coming back now, wife and daughter are there
all for the mighty dollar, and the motto is always, as before
no retreat no surrender

tightening belts and taking all the efforts
knowing what hardwork is from a to z, from
the beginning to the day till the beginning of another day

no one knows what a legal researcher can do but i know, i know,
it will be onward Chicago, and there will be plenty of work to choose:

gardening, gasoline boy, apple picker, nursing aide, hotel boy,
caregiver, and whatever

another wife perhaps, another coldness within, and as always and ever
shall be

away from home, and the last choices:

a) homesickness
b) broken home

he can take b) .

RIC S. BASTASA
Brother You

BROTHER YOU accuse of me of snoring in my sleep and that
you cannot sleep and you demand that
this bed be divided that this room
be changed

we have no other house brother
and this bed is the only one we have which father gave
when he was strong and alive when he felt that we can be brothers forever

BROTHER i accuse you of the same disturbance when you were asleep you were
snoring too hard and i too was not able to sleep the whole night

let us talk and before the sun sets today
let us understand our own lack

RIC S. BASTASA
Brother, I Remember The Old Games We Play

Hide and seek on evenings when mother is busy
Before we sleep
It is you who knows to hide so well
And I cannot always find you
You win
I lose and you take pride of your skill
In hiding away

There was this time in our lives
When we both hid
And fought and stood on some idealisms
Like rocks against the sea
Like towers standing against cyclones
Like the tree against the winds of Change,
I failed, I hid and fought and I was caught
To this renewal
But you brother has fought hard enough and
Hides with all the skill you have
They never found you
We never found you

Come out brother now, in peace
Mama is dead; there is no use of these fights
Times have changed
Our thoughts have become useless
Come out, brother now,
The land is finally ours
We shall start to clean and plow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brothers All

the gambler finally finds
a conspiracy with the liar
and the thief,

father is correct, this
is the family of vice,
the eldest is the gambler,
and the younger one is the liar,
the thief is in the middle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brothers And Sisters

now that the roots are dead
and the buds cannot anymore
turn into flowers of their own
we turn back to the seeds
hidden under the ground
we look for the moist patches
and begin to sprout

we give the leaves and then
we become trees ourselves
apart from each other
now, not even knowing what
are our names

we rationalize these separations
the cycle of life
the pathways of survival
the genetic tendrils looking for the light of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Brothers In Sabah

we flew over a continent of palm trees

we followed a road as wide as the ocean of the earth

we shut our mouths over our little brothers surrounded by an ultimatum of surrender or death.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Brown And Blue, Revised....

it is not between blue
or brown

it is of this earth
within the
coolness of blue

it is when the brown
shades of this
skin
are spread

when the blue shades of your eyes rest
upon the floor
of my belly

that my navel beats
like a tadpole in that pond

as brown and scarlet
take once more the interlinking of my earthly arms
to the blueness of your skies

it is when color
seek each other's hold
it is when when they mix
and blend

that tones and scents become
as perfect as both

RIC S. BASTASA
Brown Girl

do not live
on a night without stars

or if you live there
fill the silence
with your
songs

were it not for you
how can
he ever live

for another day
so

ms. brown girl
sing, sing a song
(no matter how sad will it be)

for him

RIC S. BASTASA
Brown Grass: Doom

brown grass, no signs of rain,
ripe grains of rice spreading on the ground
the dust reigns like triumphant ant
soldiers, the sun is up, the earth is heated,
the leaves are shedding, the rocks are cracking,
drought comes and stays for months,
under a cave, a dog rests,
smelling death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Brown Skinned

i always find time going back to the place which you do not like.
it is a pond
it dried up long time ago.
those who happen to pass there do not dare looking back.
what you love is not what i love.
we respect this. i try to explain you say there is no need.
i can go my way. FIND THE Pond
who knows there's water soon. and my thirst shall be quenched.
you are sure. it was never a pond.
there was never water. it may rain but it is not a pond.
and there is no water.
i always find time going back there. i am not looking for water.
i am looking for myself and there is someone there who fetches water for me. brown skinned. sunken eyes. black hair. mute.

and he tells me who i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bruxism

it is the inability to assert
yourself
during the day
that you start
grinding your teeth
at night
until all the teeth
fall
and they you wake
up
screaming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Buchart Garden

my friends are travelling for fifteen hours
away from the drudgery of their lives
to buchart garden

to see the island garden
the flowers of their youth
the fountains of their wishes
the rivers of their lives

i am excited
about the coming pictures
through the emails
after they have seen
them all. i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Buckled

like a highway buckled by a heat wave
so does a poem warps time like a yarn
arranged lengthwise on a loom and then
crossed by a woof, your body shape
twisted by the way i look at some distance,
you know it, you sit there and begin to write
the words, it was still 3 o'clock in the afternoon
when the people speak of arrivals and then
departures, and then you finally finish your
poem, carefully weaving and weighing and
asking which word fits what you want to drive
to the niche of your dead thoughts or to the
womb of the birth of your fertilized words
suddenly, the clock strikes 7: 09 in the evening
you forget dinner, you forget the birthday party
of a friend, you have forgotten time, and yet you
are so alive, like the stars in your window that
now have started to appear like fireflies on a
very lonely tree. You close the door. It is dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bud Element Of Freedom

the bud element of freedom
as tight as
lips
sewn into
seven silences

it is painful when you
keep it
that way
the cobwebs of time
cover
what should have become
a full petaled flower
for the
vanilla skies

RIC S. BASTASA
Bud, Bud

A bud sighs a question into the air
The question
Diffuses
Layer by layer
Into another sphere

The bud
Blooms
Into flower

Waiting sadly
It wishes to wither faster
To trace the question
Gone away

RIC S. BASTASA
Buddha Faces Me

In lotus form, Buddha faces me
This afternoon, his palms clasped
He is seated, his feet kissing,
There is peace
And quiet, there is no sound no ripple
In this cool crystal clear pond

Both of us here, in a while It is I

as usual bubbling,

Speaking words, and more words in
Popping out from my restless mind

Overheating, overdoing,

Why me now? Why have you come now
When I have no peace to offer you?

How can this kind of prayer work for me?

RIC S. BASTASA
Inig tapad sa akong nawong
Diha sa imong kilid

Dapit sa ubos sa imong
Kahumot og kaanyag

Pangitaon ko ang buhagay
Sa mga bugnaw nga busay.

Damghon sa akong ngabil
Ug dila ang imong katam-is,

Kaaslom, kaasgad, ang tanan
Apil na gani ang kapait

Kay alang kanako ikaw
Akong salomon, akong tilaan

Akong kitkiton sa ilalom
Sa imong mga suba ug dagat

Sa pusod sa imong mga langob
Sa mga kangiob diin ako

Ang kabo sa kahayag
Ang kainit sa dila ug ako

Ang baba, ang tilaok,
Ang liog, ang dughan.

Paimna kining giuhaw.
Dawata ang akong dila.

Paaka ako ug kan-a.
Tun-la ako tagoi ako.

Diha sa lawak sa imong
Kalag ako mobuhagay.
Build Me A Boat

build me a boat
do not paint it
let it just be the most natural
color of wood
the glow of mahogany

build me this boat
and i shall sail on it one night
when the sea is so calm
i shall put nothing in there
not a paddle
or a rudder

build me this boat that will take me
to my own world
away from you

RIC S. BASTASA
you build a big house
with one thought, a wish
that something may last forever
like love, like the finest wood
like a relationship,
or say
(let me say it this way)
a marriage, like strong stairs
inviting attention to society
that no one is leaving
like a door closing behind
a sigh,
but a house with time falls
pillars collide, and floors go
termite eaten to the ground
doors fall out from the hinges
that hold them in their frames,
nothing lasts forever

i know,
i build a house because i know
what love is
i want to give it shelter and warmth
like those rooms
a glow like those living rooms
a nice dinner
like the kitchen and the dining tables.

i do not think beyond my body
that turns to dust
i know
i do not utter beyond my words, i know,
no words can withstand the
lures of the niceties of a lie.
i know

i build the house because we are here
and there is nothing
worth doing
there is no snow and ski is irrelevant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Building A House Of Your Own

to a newly wed couple
building a house is poetry
each nipa shingle is a memory
put on top of another to make
a roof, an imagery of protection,

each wall is respect for privacy
each beam is stability
each door is a security
each window an eye

the house is the nest of this
new found love
and then a baby is born
giving them hope
as they both shower their affection

and as love grows there
like a well tended tree
as time strengthens their company
the house you know
has become their home

RIC S. BASTASA
Building Sandcastles

my brother and I
WE build sandcastles
on the shores
during lazy afternoons,

my brother finally
joins the Sea
but i still remain
being Me

i am part of the Earth
Linked to the Clouds
a fRIEND OF THE stars
there are no blurs

my brother is not speaking
to Me
He is always in the middle
of the Sea

Until one day.......
Building The Sandcastles

do not think that it is only children who build sandcastles. 
big people do, and worse, they do it 
in the air and they are serious about this matter

someone comes along to destroy these sandcastles 
his job is simply to destroy and give the hassles

dreams, as we all know them, 
someone always has the temerity to destroy all of them

do not blame this dreambreaker, do not give him a bad name 
whether you like it or not 
the maker of the waves sends the sea to wash away 
the sandcastles that we build

the maker of our dreams destroys these dreams 
and then be glad 
another cleansing has been duly accomplished and done 
you see, 
everything in this world always works for our own good 
and for the best

RIC S. BASTASA
Bumble Bee....

to go to sleep
i will take a ride on a bumblebee

and i will take my last breath
to life's lies...cheers!

RIC S. BASTASA
Burden On The Shoulders

as the weight of the burden
on the shoulders increases
one develops a trend

an evolution comes
saving you from ruin

now on stronger arms
and bigger bones
the weight becomes lighter

for this is what  life is all about
the more burdens there are
the stronger we become

with more rain
the thirst of the earth too deepens

in automation
the balance seeks its own scale

RIC S. BASTASA
Bureaucratic Red Tape

Juan de la Cruz hates it.

He goes to Mr. X of Department Y, and he is shown a list of requirements from 1 to 10, and upon seeing 1 there is a sub-list of requirements from a to f, and then he is referred to Mr. Z of Department T, saying there is a need to attend to a seminar of sort, and then pay, this and that and this and that,

when all he is asking is that the slight cut on his hand be dressed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Burning The Weeds

we take pride today
in burning all the weeds

those dry weeds
with all their screams
to the fire
we make

huge fire
we feel that hell in there
big smoke rising to
the skies

we look at the skies
seemingly
God smiles

RIC S. BASTASA
Burning To Nothing

there is a light within us
we do not keep it inside for soon

it shall burn us alive and so
we keep ourselves open to

the blue skies and to the
full moon at night so they

all can see us flicker like
a star glowing in the darkness

of our longings we keep this
light burning and burning

night and day till we are
all consumed till we are all

gone like a candle burning
itself to nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Burnt Love...

burnt love
teaches you the
wisdom of
the ash

those fallen leaves
share the
beauty of twigs

a nest left out
by those
fledglings
sometimes gives you
that sense
of home...

RIC S. BASTASA
Burnt Paper

it is a cut-out paper
thin
delicate white
sharp

it is my world
apart from yours

i stay away from
rain

put my paper feet
on wood

as you pretend to be
the woman of
my pen

you touch
but what you touch is just
my paper
me

i have no more flesh
no bone

the years have eaten them
all

it cut-out from a shape
of your desire

i am burnt.

RIC S. BASTASA
what i wanted to say
i cannot say
and what i said is not
really what i wanted to say
because of your foreboding
your rules are making me
what i am not
you keep on looking at me
reminding me not to say it
and so i keep it inside me
for all those years
you are my own ghost for even
if you are dead
you are always there restraining
filtering and here i am lost
in the translation of myself
from word to wolf, from syllable
to bubble, in such a bloated gleam
with sparkling rainbow in my
emptiness, bursting once and
never twice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bursting....

the house in eastvale
was huge

only three people live
there

all white like the walls
and the fence

well they were warm like
the los angeles sun

you wonder why we do not
perspire
unlike the place where we
all come from

to sum it up we are some
of those lonely people

always lonely and perhaps
will love it that way

fifteen hours on the plane
without a lay over
either in korea or perhaps
singapore

we eat a lot to a hope that
we learn more from this

and then the plane lands,
skids a bit
and we are not affected

this is home
this is the mind
and it is bursting.
Bursts Of Emotions....

over those
square fields
after the harvest
the soil cracks
until the rain fills
them all again
the wild ducks come
with the white herons
the frogs croak
the mud fish is back
to life.

the cycle of life

burst of emotions
inside the nipa
hut....

RIC S. BASTASA
Bury Those Truths

not all truths
set you free, some bury you
to the grounds of
eternal damnation
these
are those that better be left
unsaid
forever kept on sealed lips
and taken to
the graves
so they can take finally
their eternal
rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Burying He Dead Man

ey they are burying the dead today
a loved one
with Parkinson's disease

ey they all wear white and they look
all too well for the mourning
of the dead

ey they fly white balloons
they sing the songs for the dead
ah, the living knows
how to socialize an event
with all the metaphors

i am watching and i am sighing
asking 'what is the fuss about this empty shell? '

afraid that they will call another one a freak
i mix with the crowd and has become another unknown.

RIC S. BASTASA
Bus Travel At Night

it is the loneliest journey
bus travel at night
the driver does not talk
to the conductor
the silence is the silence of the sleep of all the passengers

i follow the road
the signs are intact
there are only lights on the sides of the streets
the trees are black
the leaves are merely shadows

the world passes me by
in complete silence the scenes changes
and all so sudden
the world moves with me
the bus is a bullet

RIC S. BASTASA
Business Is Good

business is good today
the war has just began
we make more firearms
both parties are buying
and we sell them everything
business is booming
see to it that this war does not stop
or again we go bankrupt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Busy Life....

inside the room
upon piles of paper
you do not even know
if outside
it rained.

RIC S. BASTASA
Busy Streets And Noisy Malls

confronted about
these noisy streets
and crowded malls
and honking motors
in traffic jams

i go within
into that peaceful
haven
inside my mind
my heart
sleeping in the cozy
nook
of my being.

RIC S. BASTASA
Busy...

you body clock
does not tell time,

busy body, slimy fingers,
trembling hands,
wrecking nerves
fast tracking heart,

exploding ideas
killing boredom

it's been this way
since

nothing is written
the spirit is away

the body is left here
comatose

dreams like butterflies
hovering on some red flowers

heartless sounds of
discontent

fingers dissociated from hands
the eyes are closing

like closed computers
at 8 o'clock in the morning

RIC S. BASTASA
But Always Remember No One Owns It

now is the time
to feel the wind passing by your window

hear what it is
and let it in

inside your lungs
let it stay

but always remember
no one owns it

it must come out again
as you exhale

what you can keep
is the memory of its freshness

and once again
you decide to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
But Could Care Less For A Red Ant

one can love the world
the whole of it
but cannot love one
for a time

one can love the universe
all of those stars and the planets
but could care less for
a red ant

RIC S. BASTASA
But Even Ashes Are Cried Over, Sometimes Even For A Long Time

Life is amazing
in that
it makes us forget....
but even ashes
are sometimes
cried over...

sometimes
even for
a very long
time

tell me more
the name
of that ash?

for whom shall
you grieve?

for whom
you have loved?

for whom
you have died?

for whom
you have lived again....

RIC S. BASTASA
But God

she is worried
about what is happening to me

the silence and the stare
the long walks seem not to help
the loss of appetite for life
the one that forgets the sweet taste of water
the softness of rain
at night

to all the queries
there will be no answer

God is like that
He is silence and why do we not have to worry about Him?
His silence for all those eons and eons
Did you see his hands? Did you triumph on doubts?
Do you ever remember his last appearance?
when was that?

she is worried because i am asking for specifics now
she is worried because God is Love
and all my love is gone

including what i once revealed to her
that first time
when we were so young and so gullible
about
the magic of creation

we are all dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
But If You Don’t Love Me Anymore

If you change and don’t love me anymore
If you don’t really care anymore
If you don’t laugh at my jokes
Or does not like my hug
Or kisses
Or my company
If you change

Just say it clearly
No pretenses, no covers, no ambiguities
Nothing equivocal

No regrets

I can manage
I can change too
I can change you too

Lots of them, and they will love me too

Now go. I’ll find another.
There is no bother. No problem.

Leave, while I keep words unkind
Within. Leave while still early, and
Be kind to yourself.

Now we are free, from our
Hypocrisy. Receive the fullness of

This
Blessing in disguise. At last, I am free.

My prayer is too, granted.

if you really do not love me anymore
say it clearly

because i don't
love you anymore too.

RIC S. BASTASA
But It Will Never Be The Same Old Friends

it is the same old path
but it will never be the same old friends
someone will be missing
someone will not remember
someone will take another path
and most of the times
always far away from all of us
but we too soon shall forget
and if we happen to take the same old path
oh, perhaps
we will remember

RIC S. BASTASA
But Let Me Talk Now About The Sunflower Queen

at first i contemplate about the
sunflower as a princess
but it will not do her justice
because she is the queen
of the sun,
she rules the fields of green
and blue
and red too, these sunsets and
even sunrises
playing well
tagging her along
to paths of joys
& sorrows

she stands flower high
to the clouds
to storms and tempests
she yields
like any flower
still queenly to her bowing
only to rise again
with her seeds

yes, her many princesses
by her side
wilted yellowed petals
and withered
stalk
some soft winds
sad
some drops of rain still about to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
But The Feeling Beneath The Word

it is not the language, but the feeling beneath the word,

it is not the word that makes you trickle a bit like a leaking faucet, it is the trickle itself, the one that you saw when you woke up upon a dream about a leaking faucet, the one that disturbs you, until you have found it, and closed it.

it is not the idea, but the images you construct and paint in the air when the night is cold and you are alone in a room and you open the window to let the air come it and you feel how cold is it like you.

it is not the images even, it is what you create inside your mind, while waiting, while the hours rush to you, while you are trying to figure out, what is it that disturbs you and yet there is still nothing to capture it and then master it yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
But The Years Have Not Yet Spoken

it will always be a law
that we cannot change that for
every action we make
we always get a reaction
that things at rest
will always remain at rest
unless acted upon by an unequal
and opposite force...

with you today, i shall move
away and i will always be in motion
unless you take the initiative of holding me back again...

with you in the entire life that i have
i have not reacted with inequality
and i shall not move you into accepting the fact
that sometimes this law of motion and rest
may not work between us

otherwise
i should have packed all my things
put them tight inside my heart
make myself whole again
strong and determined
to take the direction of the winds of my mind...

i shall wait for the time
when you change perhaps
but the years have not yet spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
But They Can Never Be Mine

the face
the breasts and nipples
the abdomen
the smoothness of the skin
down to the last details
of the body
the middle and the bottom
the legs
and veins and toes and nails
all these dance before me
to my pleasure

i shut my mouth
i hold my hands and tell myself

oh how beautiful! (but)
they are not mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
But Who Cares? Ah, God Loves Me.

Now i like to live
in a very small planet

but it is still huge
for me

For i am a speck of
dust

I can be smaller
than that

But who cares?
Ah, God loves me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Butiki, Bituka, Butika

Palakang Kabkab,
kumakalabukab,
kaka-kalabukab pa lamang,
kumakalabukab na naman.

Minimikaniko ni Monico
ang makina ng Minica ni Monica.

pitongput pitong butong puting patani

Sumuso ang sanggol na si Susie
sa suso ni Susan na sumuso sa suso.

Kakakanan lang sa kangkungan
sa may kakahuyan
si Ken Ken habang kumakain
ng kakaibang kakanin kahapon.

Mayamaya'y mamamanhikan
si Aman sa mayamang
si Maya malamang sa harap
ng maraming mamamayan.

Usong usong
isang isang salu-salong
nagsisi-usyosohan ang mga aso
sa asosasyon sa Ascuzena.

Bababa ka Ba?
Bababa din ako!

RIC S. BASTASA
imagine
how butterflies live the moment
in an hour
a day perhaps
they are all dead
wings clipped gladly
they give in
to the murderous joys
of the boy
or simply by the natural
caprices of the winds

imagine how happiness
is savored in
such short moments
everyday
life and death
interchanging
like two faces
day and night

imagine myself as a gathering
of butterflies
all over my body
my parts all with wings
in dusty transparencies
imagine how i disappear
from you
even if you have not
touched
any part in me

for i am but a moment
an appearance of
a series of disappearances
for i am but
a mirage always gone
when you
come and want to see me

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Butterfly

everything is interrelated
nothing is
compartmentalized

capital thus
when the butterfly in China dies
the bear in Russia also suffers

when the monkey in the Philippines
falls short of the banana
the anaconda of Brazil becomes sterile

when the tiger of Africa kills
the parrot in Paraguay feels

everything is interrelated
nothing is a stone
no one is a creek
we are all one river.

RIC S. BASTASA
Butterfly Song

AS I sit upon a the grass
a white butterfly flutters by
in fragile and
slow wings
synonymous to a feather

such is the sweetest song that it can offer
to the air
everything is so quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
Butting In

i do not really know what is between us when i talk
you butt in and when i am silent
you begin to listen
which should have been easier
if we remain silent tonight
when i butt in you must open

RIC S. BASTASA
Butuan Airport

i met this old woman
who lives in Seattle
dance teacher
now at 79
she does not look like
an old hag
really

she brags she can dance
the boogie or
tango non-stop for
five hours

she does not eat much
she walks more

she told me she was once married
but she ended it
she went her way
to the U.S.A.

her husband made her a punching bag
did not give her money
had other women
as she served as his geisha
washing his clothes
cooking his meals
bathing him
etcetera

her neighbors even advised her to
poison him one day
but she didn't

instead she went her way to the U.S.A.
where she is now free

she says she can dance non-stop for five hours
and no one has yet
defeated her for that

oh my! what a woman!

in just a short span
of time
while we waited for our plane

she, i think
has told her story
so well.

RIC S. BASTASA
By All Our Windows.

the trees
are pruned.
the sea is
calm.
too much
to do here.
i tell those
who live here,
cut the twigs
let the trees
stand tall,
and do not always
forget
to find an
open space
for the all
the clouds.

by all our
windows.

RIC S. BASTASA
By And By

ah, life is by and by
you pass at this corner
walk further
go inside a door
stay for a while
and then
do what everybody does
pass away.

RIC S. BASTASA
By Faith....... 

when a stone
 grows its roots
 when it rises into
 a sprout
 into a bush into a
 flower
 into fire we are
 surprised
 we are not prepared
 for all these
 we have remained our
 own unbelievers
 when something turns
 into mist
 blooms into clouds
 we finally meet
 them as rain
 we touch back
 and close our eyes
 we feel them all again
 by faith and not by sight.

RIC S. BASTASA
By My Belly....

how sweet is your smile
how beautiful you look tonight

now you are near me and i am
like a crazy dog wanting to bite
your lips, your mouth, your tongue
your saliva smells like leche flan
to me,

i have become one beast wanting
to eat such innocence as you.
and you will be forever a part of me.

i will feast on you from morning
till nighttime.
under the moon and the coldness of
this night,
my belly sleeps.

RIC S. BASTASA
By My Window At The Second Floor Of My Office

the strong wind
last night
brought it by
the window
of this second floor
office

rotten branch
with a lichen still
growing
a patch of green
on brown bark

a bottle of mineral
water is empty
and it is beside it

the glass window
shows it
and so i notice it

not my fault
why i am saying
about their
existence

again these things
are not
significant

except perhaps
the strong wind
last night

it gave us fear
amidst the darkness
when all the
lights turned
off

RIC S. BASTASA
By My Window....

dawn
darkness finally receding

morning
light spreads

the leaves of trees
begin to appear

the mountains
show up in magnificence

little black birds
hover on the tree fronting my window

dews giving up
mist gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
By Now My Friend

By now my friend
you may have figured out what it means to be me

that sometimes i live in the land of the opposites
where i say is what i do not really do
and when i do
what i have not ever mentioned to you

and that sometimes in order to survive (and make you feel good
for you to live like the way i live my days in the land of the
living)
i, too, must live the degrading life of the black spider
a widower
who makes the web of lies to catch my prey and eat
the whole day of its flesh and
then rest for the rest of the week
praying for the forgiveness of what i just did
rationalizing that i am but a spider
living alone
and not denying what loneliness can sometimes
do to our lives
how it hurts us and how we hurt in return
just to get even with what we think
is unjustly given

By now my friend
you could have seen how this magical gossamer web
cling between the branches of indifferent trees
you could have heard
the gentleness of its silence glistening against the sun
and yet deadly and dangerous
to the innocent flies
to mosquitoes too complacent to their journeys
in the final destinations
for my necessary personal consumption.

RIC S. BASTASA
By Now.....

heavy rain
moonless night

just me
in this abandoned
house.

no dreams
by now.

RIC S. BASTASA
By Our Ownd Decisions

I keep this magic
of choice
this wand of options

are there dragons?
i can turn them into
lizards
do they still use the
fire of their tongues?
i can make them
torches in the darkness
of our paths

are there hawks?
they can be butterflies
are there hornets as
hindrances?
they can all be
fireflies

where there is going
to be war
i can always move to
peaceful places
of the heart

where there is cruelty
and oppression
there are always places
for contemplation and
peace...

this right to choose
this myriad options

there are all in the lines
of our palms
on destinies paved
by our own decision
By The River

wooden boat slides in
the river
stopping on a woman
undressing

RIC S. BASTASA
By The River Of Time

by the river of time
no one stands still

the river of time
carries everyone away

on wrinkled creeks
on waterfalls that stop

to fall on rains that
consume themselves

on leaves that crack
to the power of the sun

the river of time drowns
us all to the comfort of oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
By The Sea

the sea is crystal clear
the seagulls mirror
what they have on their feathers

the fishes too transparent
the feast starts

predator prey
on a very clear day

that is life in peace
someone has to eat
and someone is eaten

like us in love, we prey
on weakness
all strengths and wisdom
all forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
By The Window

two men pass by
my window
talking about a
pigeon run-over
by a car

by all means
it is already dead
when
they finally
arrive at the
scene of the morning
crime

RIC S. BASTASA
Bye Baby Please Do Not Cry

bye baby please do not cry
somehow we must realize
some stars are not meant to stay in heaven
some planets too need not stay all light years
some suns too disappear for they are stars
some things simply explode and pooh
in a second just this bang and twang
and gone

bye baby please do not cry
i am this black hole and i suck all feelings in
and then move on

RIC S. BASTASA
Bye Bye Girl Bye Bye Past

someone posits a theory
about yourself
how you have to explain
the reason for your absence
how she thinks that you
have never moved on with
her past love for her and
you give her what she wants
you align your seven planets
to her system and she may
believe you but you have
other important things to do
you have another beloved
another lover another season
another place another orgasmic
universe and you are into this
game that no one has ever played
you cater to their beliefs
and you pretend you are moving
with them as always and then you
let them move ahead and finding
an exit by the side of your
hidden life you finally get lost.

and that where to find and really
find a true self and true love.

RIC S. BASTASA
i wonder if poverty is still worth writing
that little child once in cabantian in 1979
eating breakfast: a glass of water,
chunk of brown sugar, a cup of rice
that was all that i saw
and i wrote poem about poverty
and poured my heart out,

i went back to the same place last year
the shanties are gone
perhaps the child has become another
work force in the banana plantation
or perhaps he had gone somewhere to the big city
serving as bell boy at the hotel
or waiter in a pizza house

or perhaps before that happened
he could be one of those salvaged victims
in the crusade against domestic rebellion
one of the unsolved disappearances in Davao

cabantian is silent, as it was silenced before.
no one knows. Perhaps he died at 15
...i do not really know and i do not want to recall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cactus

equipped
now with thorns
you seduce
the moon

you rise above
the rocks
and seek the
heated rage of the
sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Cactus Hostess, Her Dialogue

you may sit
as we welcome you
mr. honored guest
but all we have
is a cactus chair

you may sleep
but all we have is a cactus bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Calai

friend Calai just flunked her bar,
and never, with her own intelligence, guts and diligence
did she expect such an astronomical
failure,
but it is real, she flunked her bar, and she is weeping
alone in her room,
her eyes swell with tears flooding her cheeks
her room so filled with gloom
i guess,
there is always a first time, and i guess again, given her
indifference to failures, but soon
sooner than soon, she will get used to it,
to other failures in her life, and then she will be adopted to it
and won't be bothered anymore,

by then, we can talk freely,
mature, real and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Calamity

washing the shovels
on a murky river

nearby a bloated body
of a dog

RIC S. BASTASA
Calbiga Caves

the caves of calbiga
hide the roots of trees
those that seem
to be growing strong
from above them
the summit of green leaves
and cool summer breeze
from the samar sea

the same roots
that you talk about
somewhere in vietnam
age and ages
they never tell us
the truth about themselves
we see them now
still strongly attached
living and breathing
but as usual mute

about the horrors of war
the killing of tribes
the annihilation of brothers

who came here before us?
what have they done
that you fear talking?

i know there used
to be blood running
along the rivers and
the tributaries

i know there are still
other stories to be told
but the water is now colder
and the night is near

we pack up again
and then go........

RIC S. BASTASA
Call A Spade A Spade

at that very young age
you were taught to call a spade a spade
and a square a square. There are no exceptions to the rule.
There are no compromises with the truth.

Then you grow to be a very nice, self-made man.
You practice what was taught to you.
And you meet pain and disappointments.
And you suspect that the teachers are wrong.

Time teaches you.
Squares sometimes become rectangles on an extension of a principle
to accommodate a compromise of a certain shape.
A spade need not be a spade depending on who gets axed.
A square peg you sometimes put in a round hole and it does not matter
really what happens next. You are simply told to do so as ordered.
And what is important is that they like it.
You survive the hazards of this life.

You become successful on the science of compromise,
the art of plea bargaining, the techniques of human relations.
You get some plaques for a lessened self-restraint.
You get the awards and recognitions for being their man of the year.

And one day you look at yourself in the mirror.
You see a different face and you do not like it anymore.

You quit and hide. You go away. You want to be left alone.
You want to reinvent yourself and listen to the voice.

Carefully, you cure the sickness of success.
All you need is a self who accepts yourself. All you need is the touch
of your hand. The applause has become pain itself.
And there you are, finding the truth real meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Call Me A Snooper

that vic married a minor
not for love but for
sex alone,
and after all those lust
he finally left her
for another, your friend
who is a psychiatrist,
that now he marries
for a reason
to understand himself
and untangle
all those ropes from
his body,
counting sheep and
dogs,
you doubt how i learn
all these things as i assure
you that all these are
true,
it is simple, it was the loneliness
that built us,
it was the friendship
that keeps us all informed,
that is why
vic finally painted
that portrait of a woman
with twisted eyes
a broken mouth
an incomplete foot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Call Me Idiot

a word from you,
and i will remember it,
on this
elephantine memory,

idiot, you call me idiot,
and i shall retort for once
but not twice, not anymore
shall i become
another image of you,
i dread.

i will not call you moron,
but i shall be in my room again
alone
on an array of oxymora

talking to the drapes and the drawers
burying all these
humiliations, and putting a stop
to my fears,
i will see the dancing chairs
and hug the lovely pillows,
hide beneath my blankets,

i promise myself, i will have a nice sleep
and inside my dream

i shall write the most beautiful poem in my life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Calling For Help

a hose with a hole
in the garden makes
so much sound
as though it is a
man drowing in the
middle of the sea
calling for help

doi not wish
to change things
doi not want
to help
di like to watch
and see what
really happens

when i decide
to simply be
indifferent

RIC S. BASTASA
Callista Relates To Me Like A Bird

for i too have wings like her
hidden underneath my loose shirt
and i too move down the stairs
and up towards the heavens where the stars are.

for i too pretend that i cannot fly
mingling with the rest of the crowd in the mall
for i too want to soar someday
away from you away from everybody

for i too dream of a time when the rain stops
when the river ebbs
when the trees grow tall
when the clouds finally drift to give way to a gentler light

for i too am waiting just for the perfect time for the perfect direction of the
softest wind to fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
Calm Down

as the ship is about to sink
she calms down
tucking her baby in her arms
deciding finally to jump
and swim in the
stormy water

in an island she wakes up
and then she screams!

RIC S. BASTASA
Calm……

in a hammock
from Argentina
I gaze
at the Philippine
sky
early this morning
gently
i caress and
rock myself
beside the white
sandy beach

RIC S. BASTASA
Camel

i am not ashamed to say
that i have never seen a living camel

(except the pictures
and movies
Lawrence of Arabia)

how i wish to ride on the hump of the camel
touch its hair and lick its tongue

(do you find it dirty? am i weird?)

but despite this ignorance
i must with all honesty admit

i smoke Camel
cigarettes.

I am not horny
I am just being corny

Oh forget me
I am damn crazy!

RIC S. BASTASA
Camp Fire

a few of us
soon shall meet
on a side of a hill
where we will
build a fire
where we send
smoke to heaven
where we stare
at the flame and
reminisce
what love we
once had
what violence too
was there
how time was
both saved and
wasted

at dawn when
the wood is finally
consumed by
fire when the flame
is gone
when what we have
are mere ashes
and cold winds
we then begin
the ritual

we sort out what
we soon will write.

RIC S. BASTASA
Can Love Bloom?

When we reach
cicada hills

i fall asleep
and then dream
about someone
i have never
even met

upon a blank face
can love bloom?

RIC S. BASTASA
Can One Escape The Written Fate?

it is what i believe
and so it must be, and so
it is going to
me,
things always change for the
better
as always claiming the power
of prayer,
say not that i cannot escape the
judgment of fate,
say not, that everything is already
written
and what we have to do is
simply
to open the page and read and
see the pictures and landscapes
posted,
oh, do not be mislead
i do believe in prayers,
the hands that somehow
change
the pictures and the words,
i have a way to escape
what fate has written,
i plea, i beg,
i kneel, i chant

and here's the change
the offer of fate,
your untimely end is suspended
another change is given
another time
love, life,
and immortality....

RIC S. BASTASA
Can She Really Go Slow On Poetry?

you bet. As i am telling you
there is no such thing as
stopping and there is no such
thing as slowing either

as emotions are part
of our mental matrix so shall
poetry be, there is no choice

the words keep coming
and you do not mind what
the critics say, you keep
on writing down the revelations

of your good self and the way
the bad black horse tries to
kick you off this universal
fence, cannot kick you again
more than what it desires
unless you shall
allow it helplessly.

you flow now like the way the
rain falls and wets you. You
have become part of its greatness
and out you go running against
the rocks and boulders,

ultimately finding your
self again at the bottom of the
sunless sea, into an enticing infinity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Can You Eat Poetry?

into a thankless
art

poetry...splash!

RIC S. BASTASA
Can’t Jibe With All Of You

an oil dropping in
a basin of water
i cannot jibe as
another usual sound
in this noisy
chatter

i want to be
a silent stone by
the river
but i cannot be this
every moment
till my death

and so i fly away like
that black bird from
your mouth
i hover upon
a rock on the side
of the cliff
feeling the clouds
drifting away....

RIC S. BASTASA
Canadian Canary

sleep now baby it is late

dreams, have some dreams

you need dreams to appease you
i will not be with you
anymore

come summer time
the sun shines in full glory

and i will be with my sunflowers
the wind
and the moon and some stars to carry me away

from my previous rainy days,

so sleep now,
dream about the sunflowers and let your hair flow freely
with the wind,

forget him for a while, think some more,
destiny awaits you
with so much anticipation,

without plans.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cancer And Compassion...

compassion makes
the young intelligent man
to be too considerate about the
inability of the old clerical woman in court who is sick with cancer
to be too lax with the way she makes a sentence with all the blunders of syntax and grammar he smiles and tells her, 'thank you you are of great service to this office'

the old woman knows that he does not really mean it but she understands the shortness of her life and she does not do anything to correct his decent lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cancer Free....

and this is the good news
about joji, for she is a happy good fella,
cancer free, they say, because she prays that much
and people pray that much
we'll drink to that,
buen salud
and let us sing the praises
To God the Highest
you have set her free
welcome, joji, and now let us be crazy once more
to life, for life,
with life, by Life.
alleluah!

RIC S. BASTASA
Cancer Of The Cervix

her husband left her
when their kids were just
a matter
of three, four, five years

she had to feed
them alone with the use
of her very own flesh

literally. i mean it.

all daughters went
to Japan and danced.

they married and
got rich.

and then she wore
an expensive jewelry

on her hands and
ears

and then he wrote
a letter saying that

he likes to come
back. She
opened her arms
to hug him.

i went to manila
and spent my
life there
in three days.

attending to her
wake
offering prayers
for her
dead and wasted
body.

i am learning
in that place
what is betrayal
what is forgiveness
what is reconciliation

what is death
what is it to be lost in a crowd
what is it to be left alone

what is cancer?
and they always say the truth
there is no cure.

may she rest in peace.
amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cancer Patient....

this is the reality of
man losing his hair of a woman losing her breasts
dis is the sadness of
having to exist and no longer benefiting about the promises of
living

they say this is just a trial
of that long and lasting error
one hopes after every chemotherapy
in each vomit
one sticks to life after every harsh radiation
clinging to every remaining healthy flesh
each cell
rebelling upon another

the doctor says
now madam you are cancer free

but it will only be for months
and so there is another party with friends
and supportive members of your family
only to wake up in the morning
with blood oozing
flooding your linens

there will be relapses
and those cancer cells that did not die
comes again
like a warrior wounded
now stronger than ever

given the expensive choices
of money
and emotions

i guess, you may call me cruel,
the correct and rightful option
is merely to surrender
it is only the body that dies
the soul perfect as usual flies again heeding for its real home....

RIC S. BASTASA
Canción Del Mariachi

the usual stars
and guitar under the
open sky

the usual dance
and clapping of the hands

affairs of the heart
forgetting everything

the stars, the moon
man woman and the
child to come

RIC S. BASTASA
Candid And Fearless

..and here is another human thing
whose goal is to save money
so he can
sit under the
tallest red wood tree
in California

ah, this human thing in us
still rooted to earth
and its
temporary reliefs
its limited senescence
its
temporal attractions

such a relief
i do not have it anymore

i am candid
i am fearless

i am growing the flowers
for the dead
i like the woodenness
of silence.....

RIC S. BASTASA
she took a handkerchief and tied it round her neck

her niece said the prayers saying it was caused by mere feelings

feelings end everything sometimes and it is no wonder it is acceptable nowadays

the sad fact is no one wants to mention it and so it simply forgets itself like water boiling and evaporating and what is left is the cold tin of a can

in our chat you blame me for taking about endings

that i should have mentioned more about sunlit beginnings

grazing fields and limitless horizons of green and blue and flaming sunsets that make our mouths gape for beauty
i tell you i am
not a story teller
i am a poet
and endings
are not open
most of the times

sometimes they are
insults that one must bear
even in one's
self dug graves

there is always a responsibility
that must be gripped by our hands
and if these hands open
and surrender respect
to some
insignificant handkerchiefs

so be it

sadness is not a reason
and it is not always
beautiful

so be it

let those who cannot bear
bury themselves
we have our own preoccupations
our graves to dig too
our our litany of justifications
after

RIC S. BASTASA
Candid, Frank

Frank made love to Candid last night
Candid groaned and Frank could not help
but explode and say afterward 'i love you'
candid to please Frank says 'i need you'

Candid had an orgasm on Subtle

Frank knew, but his love always Understands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cannabis Sativa

the way to enter into the magical mind
of my god, you take in the smoke of cannabis sativa
like she were a goddess a diva
of the latvia,
via the ducts of the endocrine glands
testosterone like in power
penetrating the sweet emptiness of the
holes of the virginal nymphs
at the back of the university where the ponds are so silent.

the nymph broke down wingless
in moans

that sound of weightlessness
as light as an ounce of air as free as a lock of hair blown somewhere

RIC S. BASTASA
Cannot Be Fully Contained.....

i have secrets

those valleys and
hills that i love and that
i can exchange
my soul for

those sunsets
that i adore and which

you cannot see
and ever speak

for which my eyes
feast and delight
my hands hold so
dear
like the sun and
winds

too many of them
not one, yet, you can
feel

i am dead
because of those
that you have
never seen
or tasted

and so forgive me
for all those
lies
those excuses

i am alive
in the world of the dead
because
of too much
bliss

my hands even in thousands
my eyes even in hundreds
cannot be fully contained.

RIC S. BASTASA
Can'T Help It

the urge that is there
like a bud popping out
for the sun
in an ephemeral meeting
rays of light
and innocent petals of
the white blossom
of spring
miracles of all miracles
an awakening.

RIC S. BASTASA
Can'T Really Fly

how we try to grow wings
the efforts exerted
ask the hornets

we try to be one like
the herons
yet we failed for we get stuck
to mud
and we take in too much water
and look what has happened
to our hands

we melt and back to the ditch again
we have become the runners
with the water
deep down under the sewage
with the stink
and soon we sink
with the pebbles
buried with all
dirt

can't really fly
like a gnat
i told you so
but anyway let us just be us
in this
contented silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Can'T Really Get Enough Of Love Babe

once i have it, there is this irony, i give it away,
i wish, i dream, i work to have what i do not have yet
once it is in my hand, there is this irony, i throw it away.

the paradox of feelings, i had this joy, long time ago, and
i let it go, and i wish it comes back to me, like a memory of someone
too far away, i spend life like it is not life at all, i wish death, like death is life,
like it is not like, this is the irony of my life,
hating and loving and hating and loving, until, everything is gone

i have nothing and then i feel so complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Can'T Stop Loving You

no matter where i go
to the farthest sea
to the loneliest island
to the most crowded city
to the deserted town
to the dry deserts
to the coldest snow
up the skies
to the endless space
down below
to the hottest fires
you are still there

My Lord
how can i stop loving you
when you never
never never
stop loving me?

RIC S. BASTASA
We will not forget the evil eye
of the storm they raised,
gutting the grounds we defended.
We have been trained
to look away too often
when man’s flesh, muscle, bone,
knifed woman, to protect
the child’s eye from the dust
of the lord’s sin against
our kind, pretending
our tears are daughters of the wind
blowing across no-woman’s- land.
We have had to seek the center
of the storm in the land we claim
is ours, too. Faces keening towards
the full force of winds
once blinding us, we see
the blur of broken earth,
blasted wastes, damned seas.
Our vision clears in our weeping
We have joined the trek
of desert women, humped over
from carrying our own oases
in the claypots of our lives,
gathering broken shards we find
in memory of those who went
ahead of us, alone.
When we seize the watersource
our ranks will complete the circle
we used to mark around our tents,
making homes, villages, temples,
schools, our healing places.
And we will bear witness for
our daughters and sons,
telling them true stories
of the caravan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Care Free Guy

he stands against
an old wall
on folded arms
watching people
pass by

let time kills its hours
let it choke the minutes

faded denims
white shirt
he winks at the lady
who believes that
a man likes him
has a lot of time to
offer her

she is boredom
he is the perfect man for her

he kills time
he shall choke her hours
like the way her hands
press her breasts
squeezing
her private moments
to juices of
their complimentary
convenience

RIC S. BASTASA
Caregiver Leaving Again

The children of Punta
Sing you a sad song
We hear the whirring
Sounds of dragonfly wings
Then the plane flies you
To Chicago
As you make
Many flying kisses

RIC S. BASTASA
Caressing That Which Had Long Been Dead.

i am trying to write
from my innermost, i
am attempting to
skin myself, so you can
see the beauty of my
bones,

it is like stripping myself
from the burden of clothes,
and soon i shall be naked
before you, like a confession,
which you may hear, like a
litany of my own weaknesses
and shortcomings,

i am finished with all those
metaphors, i may go with the
literalness of my free verse,
like, what you see is what
you get thing, off the grid.

i am removing fences now, but
slowly, so i shall not bleed and
die sooner than my truths, a
manifold of coverings, until
what you see is the plainness
of my own light

so here i am dancing to the
sound of a drudgery, the songs
for the dead, in a funeral march,
hear the wailing of the women
i love, the murmurs of my secret
longings, the silence of my
lies, the hushes of hands that
touch my hair, caressing that
which had long been dead.
RIC S. BASTASA
Caring For Your Body

you do not smoke
definta about alcoholic drinks
you take your centrum vitamins
drink the morning milk
and shy away from chocolates
you exercise everyday
take the morning walks and
spend your time
on a warm sunshine

sometimes, you ask
why?

and sometimes you
reach for an answer: don't know

why is it that despite this caring for the body
this beautiful body
something inside you still wants to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Caring Less For The Loquacious

seated, formal, behaved, and stopping to read the morning paper, the tv is on for the usual morning news, the cup of coffee is on the breakfast table, the usual rice and sunny side up fried egg and dried fish to with your wish for the wholesome thing, salt and sugar and something sour like a piece of lemon to accentuate your need for a variety,

in front is a woman with curly hair, big earrings like a mystic, she speaks in crystal ball reminding you of your inevitable pain in the future, you are her slave and you listen, though you are not interested, (shit, shit, you have these words hammering in your mind) finally, you take a glimpse of her mouth, they look like scissors, her nose looks like a wrench, she looks older than you think,
cranky like an old
rice mill,
you like to get rid
of her,
you know this woman,
hers name,
and her being a
part of you
even for life,

you create a certain distance
like Mars and Pluto,
farther away, you settle on
the orbit of earth,
this marble planet, known
for its coolness
and tolerance for
evil.

you're not quitting,
you love that dragon inside
your hot, creamy coffee,
and then you smile, and tell yourself,
after she had spoken
her piece,

it is a beautiful day
it is a real beautiful life out there.

you step inside your car, drive for work,
and let life manage your life somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carlo, Do Not Grieve

do not grieve
over a woman

she is just a flower
and like a flower

it will not take
a longer time

she wilts and then
you will be free?

shall you be free
when that flower wilts?

can't you be at least
a busy bee?

she is not the only flower
in this garden

there are so many more
don't grieve my friend

be a man
man is reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
What now, José?
The party’s over,
the lights are off,
the crowd’s gone,
the night’s gone cold,
what now, José?
what now, you?
you without a name,
who mocks the others,
you who write poetry
who love, protest?
what now, José?
You have no wife,
you have no speech
you have no affection,
you can’t drink,
you can’t smoke,
you can’t even spit,
the night’s gone cold,
the day didn’t come,
the tram didn’t come,
laughter didn’t come
utopia didn’t come
and everything ended
and everything fled
and everything rotted
what now, José?
what now, José?
Your sweet words,
your instance of fever,
your feasting and fasting,
your library,
your gold mine,
your glass suit,
your incoherence,
your hate—what now?
Key in hand
you want to open the door,
but no door exists;
you want to die in the sea,  
but the sea has dried;  
you want to go to Minas  
but Minas is no longer there.  
José, what now?  
If you screamed,  
if you moaned,  
if you played  
a Viennese waltz,  
if you slept,  
if you tired,  
if you died...  
But you don’t die,  
you’re stubborn, José!  
Alone in the dark  
like a wild animal,  
without tradition,  
without a naked wall  
to lean against,  
without a black horse  
that flees galloping,  
you march, José!  
José, where to?

RIC S. BASTASA
Carlos' In The Middle Of The Road, Plagiarized By Me

in the middle of my writing career there was you
you were in the middle of my writing career
there was you
in the middle of my writing career there was you

never should i forget this incident
in the life of my broken eyelashes
never should i forget that in the middle of my writing career
there was you
there was you in the middle of my writing career
in the middle of my writing career
there was you

you were that stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carlsbad

two warm bodies
taking a swim to the sea

they kiss underwater
looking for each
other's wounds

unshaven hair
and some lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carousels

I

merry-go-round, at the amusement park, the laughter of children
and the mothers
as fathers watch,
life

II

this circular conveyor
when you are at the airport claiming your luggage
and heavy baggages,
because you are all alone,
hiding from your misfortune

III

remember the tournament knights
in horse races
gallantry used to be
evalliant
word of honor

IV

& this time
of the year
the trademark of a
circular tray
photographic transparencies
the projector
where you see
your own life
through slots

V

where everything
about you rotates
at the sacrifice of
right direction

RIC S. BASTASA
Carpe Diem

actually my dear, the most that matters is
now. This is the moment. There is no other.

what is inside my palm is not yours to guess
for i may not follow your wish
your dream, what is here inside me is alive

but only for this moment, there is no time to think
or imagine. This is only the moment. The now.

This is the only moment. It is now.
Hold my hand. As we pass the river of our lives.

Do not look back, as the rush of the water may be
too harsh. Look at my eyes. This is the only moment.

Do not look down at your feet. The water is flowing.
And flowing. There is nothing that you can hold

with your fingers and drink. It is and it will be impossible
to grasp, a past reality, a future possibility.

This is the only is the only truth. Grab it
with both hands and tell me. Now, is the only truth. This
moment of our lives. You hear the sound of a cascade.
That is what we are now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carpe Noctem

you seize the day
but let me have the nights
where i am unknown to you
i won't let you know
what happiness lurks
in the dark alleys
of my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Carr, ..... 

how could he had truly loved 
someone whose only liking was to 
tab him with a jagged knife 

tie him with shoelaces and stones 
to sink his dead body to the 
murky river?

how can love end at murder? at a 
novel that speaks his ultimate 
death with someone who thinks 
that he should have been dead 
a long time ago? a mockery of 
love, a snare of all humanity.

there were so many lies, and 
for this, i never really liked it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carried Away
	ry bathing in the river
swim, swim, swim farther

you feel light, you are like a fish now
carried by the magic of water somehow

you long for depths and distance
you forget the specific instance

you are carried away floating
to your instincts so trusting

you do not even notice that it is already dark
and the moon begins to sail with you with the lark

towards a dreamy evening where you are
free and light like a drifting star

RIC S. BASTASA
Carry On The Spark In Your Heart

there will be lots of dry leaves to fall
from a tree to produce a fruit
more leaves to be blown by the wind
to make that flower with a sweet scent
and bright color
there will be thorns and worms and
sickening barks
there will even be deaths of
some trees not just
the shedding of leaves
but what matters most
is for you to carry on
with the mission
to bloom
do not let that spark die
that fire that keeps burning in your heart
make it live
carry on carry on
it does not just take a blink of an eye
to make this
beautiful universe

RIC S. BASTASA
Carry Over

i am a very patient man
willing to understand you.

kick me and
lay with me
step on me
and go over
on top of me

i will turn into
a blossom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carrying A Self

you carry a self with you
and you barely know who
but just the same you carry it with you
simply because you can't go
you can't be without that self
that 's you, and sometimes
what the self wants you
simply can't do but you must
lest there be a division within
and so in yourself there are rooms
where you and this self and the
rest can be at home....

give each a space to be itself and
yourself, toast and celebrate...

then mind you, you smile
now, there is unity in this diversity...

lust, love, greed, charity, silence
noise, solitude, crowd, cowardice,
bravery, honesty and some much
needed lies, visibility and invisibility...

you must learn, these are necessities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Carrying The Pains

before anything else
is pain

it is born
before everything else

it is the beginning
of
personal wisdom

it is a teacher
without pay

it hammers the nails
throughout the
body

one gets familiar
with the
touch of pain

it becomes pain no more
but an everyday
carpentry
in that wooden
system

a house appears
and there are windows

your eyes begin to
see
your hands
learn feelings

then you leave it
just like any house

you are a vagabond
on ceaseless pathways

you still carry that pain
built inside your skin

like a tattoo
the art of the scar

anywhere,
everywhere

for it is a sea without a shore
space without edge

you simply move on
there is no falling
or rising

whatsoever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Casanova

call it the libido driven life
a woman of every type

'i love only you' sent to many
red roses for them to see

chased and un-beholden to anybody
sort of an unchained human malady

this casanova in poetry
think, 'is it good for me? '

valentino had long been dead
unremembered
and Don Juan riding on this horse
with a sword
fell off from a ford

they do not exist, they are all in the minds
they all dissolve like mist on the pines

RIC S. BASTASA
Cascades

thoughts cascade
and the sound of your words make the
cascading sound of the rushing waters
a river
a flood
a rage that goes into the sea
taking everything: driftwood, pebbles, sand,
leaves, houses and even lives and islands

emotions like magma and lava flowing
from volcanic eruption

and then everything calms down, you see the shapes
solidifying

rage of rocks and cliffs in gray and silver colors
you see yourself

a mountain of rock facing the sea
breeze blows and cools off

a rage
and then some seeds fall and grow and become grasses
and trees
too green for your anticipation
and then

there is peace and
tranquility and a house that you start building
a woman
a wife and some children a

name, a father a family
a pillar of hope and a vision of the new sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Cascading

i am like a cascading water
fall
rushing to meet you

even in the midst
of some
boulders of rocks
beside
cliffs and ravines

the moment i
touch you

love cascades too
like rain from
a heavy cloud

an outburst of
desire
an explosion
of an absence
long suppressed

deep inside
our palpitating
lusts

two waters cascading
from our
bosoms and hands and
thighs and feet

like a big murky river
longing
for the mouth leading
to the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Cascading Thoughts Made Of Paper

i am not ashamed
to tell you
about the cascading
thoughts i have of
you
these past few days
made of white bond
paper

RIC S. BASTASA
Cassandra Crossing

there are codes
to every mystery

the code of yellow
and the sun
the black mantle of
the night

the greenness in the
peace of grass
the grating discontent
of the pebbles
that you smash

yet we wish upon
an awe
our nerves jump for
amazement

for what we do not
understand yet
for what we refuse to
know

if we know these all
then what?
the boredom to a long
journey
without a view on what
is outside
our cars and trains
shall surely
kill us
so soon without parting

let my innocence prevail
let me not accept the gift of fire
let no Cassandra meet me
i like it when
i am there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Casting Pearls Before Swine

a man polishes
his bluntness with pain
his humanity sharpened
the more
with his failures
his sight seeing more
and better in
the darkness of his
soul
from his tears
are made the pearls
and he must reflect
through poetry
whether all these are in vain
like pearls cast
before all swine

RIC S. BASTASA
Casting The Dice

off you go,
a new decision,
a promise of more reservations
still, the water
inside the glass
of the deflowered table,
down
under the four feet
lies the sadness of the floors
waters spill
no one wipes for changes
all are seated well
tasting the delicacies of the present
facing the faces
gladly devising lies
for survival

RIC S. BASTASA
Casting Your Burdens Upon My Shoulder...

for i am as light
as a cloud
as agile as a
bird on its wings
as flowing as
the river on its
unending journey
as weightless
as a feather,
let me ask you then
to lay your
burden upon me
so i may sink
deeper to the
earth
and having settled
i shall now
exist...

RIC S. BASTASA
Castles In The Cloud

castles in the cloud
ivory towers and
the fearful cloth of
the black robe

crowns and names
and titles of royalty
badges and lines
power numbers
and marks of
high society,

you know me
i smash them all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Casual Relationship

you ride in a bus
on a long trip to Pagadian
beside you is a woman with long black hair
pink blouse, not wearing a bra,
juicy lips, smooth skin,
perfumed
just the two of you
and it rains
heavily and the bus speeds its
way climbing steep roads
then her head rests on
your chest
she must be tired
your heart beats faster
something in your body
grows
you do not want this journey
to end
you caress her hair
she wakes up
and smiles
and then you kiss

at the terminal she rushes
to the road where a black car is waiting
she waves her hand
bidding goodbye

just that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cat Stevens Notes....

i still love
Cat Stevens
singing

morning has broken
the first cut is
the deepest
in a father and son
trek

sure am gonna give
you a try
baby i try to love
again

i know
i know baby
that first cut
was the deepest....

RIC S. BASTASA
Catch Me I Am Yours

from a high cliff
i will fall

i see you
by the sea

i am confident
you will catch me

i am yours

RIC S. BASTASA
Catch Me If You Can

there was a time when
it was me who chases you

slippery love,
sliding through my hands

a broken heart
seeking the embrace of solitude

questions resolving into
answers

and then the reverse comes true
now you shall chase me

catch me then
if you can

RIC S. BASTASA
Catching Breaths Like Words

the difference between
you and me

is not the sameness of
our miseries

the difference is that you
are an open window

that has closed again
but i am a window that i

broke and never close
because there is no more reason

to keep me closed i am
sinfully opening to the

changes of the clouds &
the course-less drifting of the wind

i do not pay attention
to direction now
except perhaps on the basics

of having to feed my day to
day existence

when you arrive here
i am no longer myself

and then you leave
saying i am the useless wind

of the house and i deserve
no room at all

early in the morning
before i become myself again
words rain in my eyes
like tears

salt to my tongue and
biting

i want to put them in a
bowl

treat them like salad
days

but i do not eat words
neither do you

so i let them pour
on the vacancies of the

floor and they drip on
the earth and

gone & i said i have no
time for thoughts

thoughts do not help me
find my arms

i rush to go and be myself
again

on the wings that you
detest

above everything else
i resume

catching breaths
like words

feeding myself like
paper
RIC S. BASTASA
you know how it feels
when the devil is caught and
shown in such a lowly state
of tangled hair
pale skin
emaciated body
depressed state

you feel like you
are the new king of
that invisible throne

when you look outside
the window of
your house
you see a greener grass
all flowers bloom
and bees busy with
nectar

even if
it is still winter time
even if the night
is so cold
and you are trembling

when victory sets in
the ugly world
becomes nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Catching The Fish With Your Bare Hands...

too many thoughts
so many readings
one influential writer to
another
filling my head with
numerous inspirations translated
as potential imitations of
this restless mind
a name you
call yourself
wanton insomniac who is still
awake at
3 in the morning

i suggest that you take a dip this
Sunday at the
beach of black sands

take the cue from the stories
we make of the
driftwood and those
colored stones and
wasted shattered wine
bottles

so i must have told you
hamlet is not a wise literary
character
it is hard to pay bills in
the psychiatric ward
and we are impoverished at
this time of the year
of the fire
monkey

tire the body
exhaust the mind
what they did
they cannot remember
so they are cared for
by Lady Gaga
the antidote for
sound sleep

sleep is a gift
you do not have to pay for it
it is free

but it is a paycheck
for a hard day's labor
catching the fish
with your bare hands
peeling potatoes
plowing the fields of stones
transferring rocks from one
cliff to another
rolling and rolling the rocks of Sisyphus
climbing the trees of Hercules
running in the lonely tracks of Hades.

RIC S. BASTASA
Catching Your Flying Kiss

what i catch today is a
flying kiss
like a white butterfly
departing from your
rose lips
now hovering to mine

i am tasting its feet
i am lipping its proboscis
i am embraced by its wings

so fragile
so pure is your love
so frail in the purity of its intentions

so sweet as nectar
so sweet is your kiss

RIC S. BASTASA
Catherine

on top of me is a woman's body
after
a moan is another woman's body
a door opens
for a woman's dressed body
a window closes
for a woman's naked body

Catherine
wolverine in a woman's body
pure cotton
dangling softness in a man's naked mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cats And Dogs

You ask me why
There is always trouble
In your life

I think I know it

You eat together
The dogs and the cats
Swallowing all of them
Whole
Inside your gut

RIC S. BASTASA
Cats Are Waiting By The Door

i just feed
one stray cat
and they
say it is
my fault

why the other
cats come
to the house

and stay there
waiting
watching
my next move.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cat's Song

not now
not now
not now
maybe
tomorrow
tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Cause And Control

a nerve has its own domain
like a territory
when a bone creates a wrong
the nerve begins to run
out of control

an impingement
an erroneous reach out
a right arm screams in pain
stressed out
the mind invents a fabrication
you do not mind it

trace the cause
it's but a nerve, that nerve
that hate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cause And Effect

Some are not really causes
But just symptoms
And we misdiagnose
A sickness
For a symptom
Of the real sickness

The cause
And the effect
Are often interchanged

For instance
Is poverty the cause
Of crime
Or is poverty
Only the symptom
Of it?

For instance
Is ignorance
The cause of poverty
Or is it simply
An effect of poverty?

Or is poverty
Nothing but an effect
Of ignorance?

Or is poverty
Just an effect
Of an oppression
Of the rich
Taking much
From the poor
Who gets poorer
Everyday
Because there
Are no reforms
Coming
To solve
His poverty
His ignorance
His having to commit a crime
To survive
His poverty
His ignorance
His being a crime
Of
Society itself
who never cared
And wanted him
Who never
Instituted the much
Promised reforms?

And so you doubt
The cause and effect
The effect from cause
And if you did not mind so
Well
They may always be
Interchanged
And mistaken
For the symptoms
The conditions
That always
Are
there deceiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cause Of Their Separation

you may find it shallow
but the real cause of their broken
bridge

or thread that snapped
at the end

a few years
specifically only about a year

she dropped soap
at the toilet bowl

and it didn't flush out anymore
she could not believe

how a child in him
still works

he left her
preoccupied with a woman who is clean

RIC S. BASTASA
Caution...

you pretend that sleep is your friend
but sleep is honest enough to admit that there is something wrong
with the bed
the blankets are talking and the pillows
are protesting
your hairs are mad
your eyes as usual do not tell the lies
that your mouth and tongue have long mastered
and the teeth that grit
knows who at the end
shall win

your mind is not a friend of anyone
its insomnia the heart fears
can kill anyone

it is time to be cautious
wear the feet of the cat
perhaps be silent like the
floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cave Canem

do not misinterpret
the law
it is found in the gates
of the hearts of men
beware of dogs

those bitches
wanting nothing but the flesh
they stoop to conquer
they smile to plunder

RIC S. BASTASA
Cebu Airport, 0020 Hrs

he must be a jinx

the three women who worked 
as domestic helpers in taiwan for two years 
with whom he had some 
brief conversations about the places to visit in singapore 
like sengkang and sembewang 
(they were not interested about sentosa at all) 
were not allowed to leave 
by Immigration 

they were loaded with canned goods and noodles 
and they were supposed to stay in a cheap hostel 
at 20 Singaporean dollars per day 

he did not know anymore what happened to them 
as he boarded his flight that early dawn 

he must be jinx 

previously he also talked to two beautiful women 
who were supposed to meet their boyfriends in serangoon 
(she believed every word that his white boyfriend 
told him that he owns a submarine, an airplane 
a resort in bali)

she finished her nursing course and works 
in a calling center 
the other one is a high school teacher 
somewhere in Leyte 

they were beautiful and young 
not really dumb as you may think 

they just think that this country is not a good place to make 
their hope live some more years 
to make their dreams come true in flesh and bones 
and with smooth lively 
skin
Cebu Blues #1

It was your eyes
i am definite about it
it was like a lake

mirror-like to me
i swam there and
loved it there since
i found myself
without a difference
about who you are

if you ask me if
i love you i cannot
say yes.

it was the sameness
that created the empathy

do not say anything
it was enough for me
i do not wish to go
back there and torture
you once more
with our same past struggles.

neither do i wish
to inflict pains also to those
who really loved me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cebu City, Sto Rosario Church

i know it is her, and she will not believe me.
i know that shape. Bent. I know that hair. Scattered.
yes blonde. and curly. her fingers are stroking each lock
at the middle of this mass.
she is listening carefully to the priest
making the sermon.
she is busy reciting the prayers
through her rosary beads.
she is fat and looking misshapen by the weight
of her sorrows.

we know what is inside her. we say we pity her.
now is her time to escape soon she will be back
and she can't take what she sees.

some xanor tablets, from her psychiatrist.
she will swallow some more emptiness.
she will take in more heaviness of her own lightness.

will she recover? we look at her, we are never wrong.
and then we pray.

there are humps of flesh on her shoulders.
steroids. and side effects.

we take the communion.
she kneels down.

we had that one before. now she will take some more.
fair enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Celebration

flower petals all over the air
roses, roses everywhere
two turtle doves released
from the cage of
twenty fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
Cenon...

just the same i took the shot
he posed with his teeth protruding to the sun
his half body beside the
clear and calm river
flowing

i was there looking for a man
carrying a plow on his shoulder
muddy feet and
shriveled hair and
furrowed skin on his forehead

but then i was told that he had long died
of tuberculosis
and that he had no son and wife
to mourn for him

Cenon is ok.

but he is never enough
to fill in the gaps of the loneliness
the summing
up of all deprived humanity

he is getting bald
and no one speaks about it somehow

RIC S. BASTASA
Cepi Corpus

do not proclaim happiness
it will not last

you have my body
but not my soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chain Letter

as said deprived
days salivate excitedly
younger
revert to
odder risks
sobriety yielding
grotesque
expertise evolve
endearment thrive
expressed denotedly
yellow wonder
respite evanescent
twilight tearing gorgeously
yogi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Challenging The Rules Of The Game...

birds fly away from us
because we had always been in
different, some wings are clipped
from the cables of those
bridges,
the cold waters, even,
slip from the emptiness of our fingers,
between us,
some departures are numb
they will be chanting all the possible excuses
those who are left wave their hands
pretending
that they understand the meaning of boats leaving
i stop thinking
i discover that there is no use for the arrangement of
the furniture in the living room
where our bones clutter
when i enter a room
i ignore the door
i am bothered about my constancy for other journeys
i have been looking for apertures
where a part of me must have been hiding
feeling always
incomplete
i arrive at the conclusions like train stations
only to embark
rush, go down the floor, touching the railings
waiting
to cross another busy road
not on
pedestrian lanes....

RIC S. BASTASA
I do not remember who you are
everything escapes from my hand
through the spaces between my fingers
into this nameless land
My life is woven out of water
noting stays and everything goes
my memory is a river
forever running its way out of history
I am nothing desired
I am nothing stopped
I come and go any time and any way
alone and ten times alone
I do not have a single breath to mourn for
And always I give out myself for souvenirs
each time passing for something else
for you and those like you
and what I am will be
what I will be for each one of you
the city of flowers, eyes of the loam
describe shelter: piece of crap
> weak roof, could be blown off anytime
> cardboard walls, easy to put apart when gov’t wants them out
malnourished child reading book
> lamp source of light
> skips parts with words s/he doesn’t understand
> books saved by father from fire, father loved books
> father died trying to save more things, leaving behind: 2 children + wife
> mother died giving birth to a still born
whistles from outside
> sister is back, she shouts at the perverts
child comes out with a stick
> drunkards earn enough to get drunk
> they push him/her, throws a pail of water
> dirty water dripping from body of the child
> “useless aral, you should work, inutil!”
sister helps him/her, shouts at men
> no one bothers to help a “dirty” woman
sister prepares food she bought
> she coughs, months na ang ubo
>angry, “dont turn on lamp unless kailangan, mahal gas”
>not touching the child for fear of infection
>“matulog ka na, tagal pa ako balik”
>puts off the lamp
>malnourished child turns on the lamp
>reads book again

* reprinted from a friend's collection

RIC S. BASTASA
Chances Are

chances are
we meet someday
and you shall
have a glimpse
of me

but you hesitate
and try
to create a little distance
to make
sure that
it is really me,

aquiline nose
sad eyes
lean body
and an
aura of
divinity

and then you step back
telling yourself

it is not him
he smells like Tanduay in his poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
Change

the ship
slices its way
along a mirror sea

behind it
you do not see any scar
there is no sign
of disturbance
whatsoever

in a minute you look back
the sea is another mirror again
reflecting
fury
at noon

RIC S. BASTASA
Change And Frankness

i wake up
late at night
finding myself all
alone in bed

sometimes i wonder
why
this matter is giving
me the nice
feeling.

RIC S. BASTASA
Change.....

before i became you
i always see to it that any broken thing
is repaired
nothing is spared
i thought
that every part and nook
of this house
must be perfect

time is not only the healer
of wounds
it is the giver of
our destination
it changes us
into chameleons

now i will have no more time
to repair broken things
when i see a broken leg
of the table
i have learned to ignore it
shrug my shoulder and say
oh the days shall repair that leg
oh i have other better things to do
oh i only pass this place once
i am not destined for something permanent
for something steady and unchangeable
i can resist and has given up that instinct to recreate
and reconstitute

i only have my mind left
and i can manage
even without it

RIC S. BASTASA
change is
fickle
and it will always
be fickle

it comes
sometimes it promises to stay
but it
cannot keep it that way

sand castles always
and always
children too on the shores
of time
on the wings of moments

the ticking is so silent
how could i notice?

RIC S. BASTASA
Changeable

he looks at the picture again
some details that used to attract him
he does not see anymore
the definition of love
even lust,

he looks at the sky again
thanking God
for this experience: nothing lasts forever

something frees us
after a time of blind love

you mourn only for a while
and then you find joy again in those other details
those that you have discarded
in fact
becomes more important

so you go over again
life and its basics
love and its reminisces

you move into another stage
of survival
now there is comfort in strangers.

RIC S. BASTASA
the map of
the country is changing
stores close
new roads are constructed
you leave years ago
the people close to you
wave their hands
wishing you luck
in another country
you lost
good luck was not in your side
when you come back
they are no longer there
you do not know the names
of the streets
they change it years back
the children playing softball
in the field
do not bother
a stranger is watching the game
but not cheering
houses fade
rivers become dry
mass housing projects mushroom
you look for the past cafe where
you had coffee with her
it is no longer there
malls crowd
you go into vast window shopping

RIC S. BASTASA
we do not pray for changes
they always come
and they disregard
those that do not welcome
their presence

when the texting came one day
the telegraphs and telegrams
have become so funny and
we all laugh about sheets of
paper travelling in air

who would have thought that
iron flies? that faces appear on
cellphones? that making love
can be as easily done
in cyberspace? so safe
and at no expense.

and who would have thought
that you will leave me?
i never thought of it and you
one day has become a mere
shadow without a body on my
favorite bed. And you laugh.

and who would have thought
that i, too, can easily forget you
like a text message deleted
in a very instant.

you also never thought about it.
we're even, and indeed life is fair.
changes are instant. and so are
wounds easily cured, and so are
hearts mended, and so are scars
made to disappear like an MMS.
Changes And More Changes

don't you notice the changes
every second every moment when we face
each passing hour each passing wind?

every pore opens and then closes every second
words that hurt, silence that stabs, feigned smiles
suppressed screams, erasures of the mind,

ev
ting glances, a falling lock of hair,
grow
ing nails pushed and pushed by each cuticle
slanting eyebrows that return to its shape like a wave

t the sands and winds conspire to cover and conceal

all these, including the changing hues of the seasons
all these, you do not fail, you must not fail,
they must touch you through your smell your touch your sight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Changes That Happen

when i met you at the first hour
of light
you shine and like a precious
diamond you
gleam

i am amazed
you are someone new

and then like the rest
when the darkness comes
and you are tired dancing
and exhibiting
what best you have
you finally show the weariness
of your heart

you put the lousy feet
the one that smells like
dung

i am not surprised anymore
this happens
as always
so naturally and so i counted you

as one of my friends
on the list

RIC S. BASTASA
Changing A Name, Transfering To Another Place....

because the past
becomes so heavy to carry
i erase it
like any word
that can be deleted
at my own
whim,

i change my name
my place, my dream
i change everything
and simply
be nothing

i empty my past
to fill once again
a space
for my present

i sent word for my
future
and it echoes back
to me
my own destiny.

RIC S. BASTASA
Changing Grips...

when reality gets berserk
unable to grip the steering wheel
when the car turns turtle and when
there is no way pulling you out or
opening the door
mind you, you change faith
your spirit flies away and
begins to worship the goddess
of Illusion...that is.... if you still
want to live again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Changing The Angle Of The Sight Of My Eyes

the fatty side of the eye
bugs shall be removed
and the tiny tumors just
below my eyelids shall
be extricated

it is another day for a
clearer vision of the
world

another kind of view for
my life

embracing something
bright and beautiful
less the haze

less the pessimism of
the tumor
less the obstruction of
the fat

set the angle towards
beauty and goodness
and truth

now it is moving towards
the goal of
perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
Chant

the lotus chant
i hear this morning as i listen
attentively i feel like all hands
are massaging my whole body
i close my eyes
and feel the piano keys
running among themselves
producing the
monotonous sounds of
sleep

dthis morning you hear
it differently
sounding like some frogs
in the rain
you love it more like it

you see
we feel differently
like night and day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chant To The Sun

voices of men
like wailing of the rivers
like riding wild horses
and catching wolves

voices of men
strong and determined
for freedom
under the ruling sun

voices of men
cascading like the Niagara falls

voices of men so alive
muscles of their arms
shining like metals
to the moon

voices of men
friends of nature
chanting
for more love
life
peace and harmony

RIC S. BASTASA
Chant....

Love chooses
a posture and
when it has
chosen it submits
a position

paper with all
its arguments like
pillars and walls
and beams of the
house of

gods when all else
do not matter except
this one most

valued by you
disregarding what
words are there
uttered by your
greater minds
grating over such
possibility of

oblitration but
the voice speaks
and the gesture lays
upon itself a
poise of the hands
and

the die is cast
finally
no regrets this
time
it is all yours
in

that kiss and
making

love redeeming
itself upon itself
standing by
the reasons of its
own

time like the heart
stubborn upon
a mere

demotion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chao Boo Sang

into the land of less oil
imagining that wooden boat with white sails
into the land of mines before
i should not hear
the sounds of wailing children again
i must not see half arms
a quarter of some legs
cut ears and
exploding choppers

there i will shop and tour
see the past and smile the future
khum unng.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chaos

as one child puts to sail his paper boat
another child stamps his feet on the water

that is the beginning of all the chaos in the world
and we are all these children
these hands these feet

and paper boats and the water
this cycle of creation and destruction will always be there

RIC S. BASTASA
Chaos, Order, Chaos, Beauty And Ugliness...

beauty must a purpose
have, for instance beauty that
gives peace and
harmony to the world,

presumably this world is a world of chaos,
and chaos is wanton
and understood to be messy and
undesirable, makes the mind
to lack the necessary focus

but what is focus for? what is thinking for?
again, you return to purpose
focus must have a purpose
and thinking must have another purpose

but what is the purpose of purpose?
seems that purpose is beauty
and that purpose without beauty is not desirable,

and so on and so forth,
people get so confused, they want order as though order itself is
beauty
as though it is one purpose that we need,

the universe must have an order
a system, every planet orbiting around the sun must have
a purpose
as though they are human beings like us
as though they are us

look at this poem, read it so well,
it has no purpose but to make you think
make you doubt

that perhaps beauty to be beauty must be wanton
and chaotic, which by itself is a reality
and reality is always
beautiful,
it has always a purpose and this is what you think it to be
right now, but is this really so?

RIC S. BASTASA
Charles Bukowski

A Man

(just that. A Man, as it was written by a Charles Bukowski, it has become a priceless poem in his poetry collection series)

there is another poem entitled

A Man

(same form, same everything, nothing added, nothing subtracted, written by a certain Ric S. Bastasa, and the Great Poets of This Site, twitched their faces, niked their eyebrows, rolled their tongues in their cheek, and said,

a flop!

who is he?

well, it is in the name, it has nothing to do with the poem itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
not too sensitive
is the shrew,

that is talent
above mediocrity

it rises more likely
in the world
than genius.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chasing Time

a child rises up
for his first walk

his first walk
rushes him for
his first run

his first run
is fast and speed

takes him anywhere
away from family

where he begins
another family of his own

children rush to become
fathers and mothers

to beget children again
another family line

another roots for the
family line another tree

another name another
family name

what are we doing?
we are rushing chasing time

as though we can do it
no, time is like a truck

it over runs everyone
squashed and mashed

like things like creatures
everyone perishes at last.
Chat

in accordance with the law
of evolution
we chatters shall soon lose our
mouts
we are now attuned to speaking
with our fingers,

at least, we touch
but possibly we must invoke
the retention of our mouths
who knows if we meet

how can we kiss?

RIC S. BASTASA
Chatmate

I may desire you
in my dreams
but i am at most
hesitant if this will
be the same thing
when we finally
meet and feel each
other's presence

how do you smell?
what kind of smile
can you give?
how does your hand
gesture
when i call your
name?

i like to feel the
beatings of your heart
skin to skin
heart to heart
butt to butt

if it clicks
then we go to
bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chatting With A Friend

when you relax and forget about work for a while
chatting with a friend
about sweet nothings
about anything goes
some jokes and we all laugh

nothing about kiss and tell
nothing about the picture on the hill

just plain chatting
and in between she gets her cup of tea
while
i do some urinating

wait a minute, i have this poem
title it

friendship, now don't write about it,
just cherish it

RIC S. BASTASA
Cheating....

in some ways we are cheats.
do not deny that,
for it is a fact,

in some ways, we do not tell the truth
when it hurts the one we so much
love, we keep on residing inside the houses of
our own
illusions, not to dislodge the one that we care
that we want to stay
in the places of our longings,

in some ways, we are cheap,
we love the wrong part, we admire the wrong person,
we marry what others think
does not deserve us,

in some ways, we are hardheaded
we go where death waits
we negate what the good life offers,

with all honesty, we make our own lies,
we confess, we are wrong and we are
wronged in return

in some ways, we never really understand
life, death,
and those that still lie in between
we miscalculate the distance
we suffer, we notice,
we regret

but in all these, we must admit,
we want to be honest, but we just can't...

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
what we always see here are blocks
blue straight lines blurring
on a crisscross of other blurring blue lines
square jawed abstracted as same squares
nothing delineated
no tendrils here just trunks and trunks
squared and
straightened with so much grief
and regret
feeling the loss of other forms and shapes
like circles or irregular patterns
of the weaknesses of humanity
(purposely you are made not to understand
the rationale for delineated patterns)
gaping mouth, shocked hairs, cut nails,
hammering screams of
abandoned children inside that egg-shelled
room
opaque, vague and begging for a clarification
he comes with a shaking shoulder and says 'You are right there is nothing
in there'

it is dark, and the world is stark
people work so hard to understand and find the reasons

ah, this arrival at nothing like the way your lover tells you
meet me there i will give you love and lots of what you desire
only to find out

'this is just imagined' a joke, a bluff, did you not know that?

the table on checkered mantel
polka dots dress of the fat spinster on the first day of the year
luck is still hoping.

RIC S. BASTASA
Checking Love

when you arrive at night
i am buried in my heap of paper works
still,

when i go to bed because it is too late
you iron
clothes and sort what is clean
from what is dirty,

i am buried in sleep and you wake up
in the middle of this darkness

to see if there are birds flying in the horizon of trees
if stars are alive if

they still glitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cheer Up! Young Man!

Macte animo!
Generose puer sic itur ad astra!

cheer up
young man
do not grieve
there is a way
to the heavens,

here
it is inside
the heart

a pure heart
that sees
the true
face of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chicago Moon

the aura of dusk
it walks alone at
segregated paths
you walk
towards a room
which can never
be your home
for your home is here
and there is no
promise
that you will come
back

no one figures out
the reason
for this self
ostracism

if you ask me there
are designs for
happy shapes which
time in some ways
shall teach
us
how to mold and cut
and finally
show

you walk away and
that is the end of
how we can think of you
what we have is a mist
and then
the morning light
takes it
away

i know how cold it is
there
but what can we really do?

RIC S. BASTASA
why do you ask
me to cut
a flower?
it took this vine
a month
under the sun
and rain
to make this flower?

give me the compelling
reason why should i cut
it for you, my child?

why can't we just
play with your finger
and point
where the full moon
is?

my child as early as this
i must teach you to respect
God's beautiful and
dainty creation

art is sacred
and we must make it live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Child Ego

i push you
you pull me
we laugh
we lay on
the grass
we see clouds
our hands hold
fingers to fingers
more than flesh
and bones
we gaze
deep into our
eyes
we are more than
oceans
more than lips
and tips
it is getting dark
and mothers are
calling us home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Childhood

buds of
china flowers
used as
garlands

RIC S. BASTASA
Childhood In The Village....

early morning
after the night's storm
i gather the
ripe guavas from
the uprooted
tree

RIC S. BASTASA
Childhood…

that brown sweat shirt
from elder sister
during my 6th birthday,

i remember
the weather was too cold
and fogs hang on the
mountainside
like lots of doubts on my
forehead

i remember there was a heavy
rain and strong wind
and big waves from the sea

and there was no light
because
electricity was expensive
and father could not
afford it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Child-Poem

only love
can make this world go round

only love can make the spin
and the revolution

only your love
can make me human and

only your love can make
me feel

that i am god
undersized, unappreciated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Child's Variations

i

what they need is just
a box of chocolates
the cheapest that you
can buy from that
flea market

if you give them money
their father will spend it
on cigarettes and bet on
a cock derby this coming
Sunday

ii

the one with a blue shirt
wants to play killing with guns
the other one will play dead
and the last one will, by
statistical probability, like
a barbie doll

iii

next month their mother will
again be pregnant
and then their father will
be laid off from work

iv

The President of this country
will build them a house for free,
a lot too where the house shall stand
He will also give money for them
to cross the bridge of poverty
and this three will not go to school
and the mother will have another
pregnancy and the father will have
no plan of finding work

they can thrive on charity,
they will live on dole-outs
and they will vote without
thinking come election time

and the same political dynasty shall win
all over again

it will be the same mess
the same hopeless case

tomorrow a writer will change his
point of view
he will be cursed for his pessimism

and these kids who will grow to become
lazy bones
will have wives who like to sleep and make
more children

whose picture will again be taken
by another man who will say that the
writer died at an early age and
was proven wrong by the
pages of history.

fine. That is the ending of this
fiction.

Which i know, you never liked

RIC S. BASTASA
China

i walked upon your
great wall,
saw you beautiful mountains
amazed by the
palaces, and garden of
sleeping willows
lotuses
blooming on the
ponds
handmade beauty
built for
the empress

i heard the stories
of murders too
of the past
poisoning and
betrayals

i ponder upon
the thought that
with power comes beauty
and behind all these
are
myriad deaths
castrations
bloody revolutions

indeed a very rich history
spoken of by old wise men
poets
and philosophers

RIC S. BASTASA
Chinese Zodiac

so i am a metal ox and you are a wooden rooster

she is a silver whatever and now i simply don't care.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chirping Bird

chirping bird chirping bird
chirp no more

the sun has come
and it is time for you to sing

chirping bird sing
chirping bird sing a song for the sun

it has come
to give you the clouds and the air and

the song for you to sing
chirping bird chirping bird

sing with the sun
sing that song for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Chirping Birds

the morning here
is always the sound of chirping birds
because the trees
have been their homes at night
when the sun rises
the birds fly away again
and when the sun fades
they come back
to their nests
and home

the night hums the song of silence
bird's eyes closing again
to the golden sheen
of the bright moon

the white owl flaps its wings
on a nocturnal adventure
in harmony with the bats
friends of the night

some shadows lurk in the night
in the pursuit of happiness
some souls are restless
on dreams unfulfilled

some wake up dwindling at dawn
opening the fridge for a glass of cold water
switches on the computer
and begin again
anew to another poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Chirstmas Decor

the ladies in this internet cafe are putting on some christmas ball on top of their green christmas tree

they are talking about a certain german who will be coming to take a vacant room for a week.

RIC S. BASTASA
there was this man/god
whose love
was unrequited by
the native woman
who fell in love
with another
native, and he got so angry
and threw mountains
on the plains

legend says, the chocolate hills
came about because
of (again) a broken
heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chocolate Hills Of Carmen, Bohol

Nagpunay ako ug saka
Sa tumoy niining bungtud
Wala ako maghangak
Wala kanako ang kakapoy
Wala kanako ang kalaay
Wala kanako ang pagkabudlay
Ania sa akong kasingkasing
Ang tumang kamingaw
Ang tiunay nga kahidlaw
Makita lang ikaw
Sa ubos sa langit

(English)

I keep on going up
To the tip of this hill
I don’t breathe hard
I don’t feel tired
I am not bored
I do not feel tired
In my heart
Is this feeling of missing
This true nostalgia
Just to see you
Under the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Chocolates

sweet chocolates
who will ever resist
sweet chocolates
we take with
our bare fingers
handing these
chocolates inside
our mouths melting
sweetly these
chocolates in
our tongues
putting heaven
sweet chocolate
so sweet inside
our mouths
playing with
our tongues

guilt food and
sin how do you
really love the
sweetness inside
our mouths
melting with
our tongues
these sweet
chocolates of
hidden sins

burning our souls.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Choice For Today

same stuff
different days
same evasive stuff really
moving hours
tiring days most of the times
but one makes the decision
to color days with summer
sun and cold winds
and beach
relaxations
same stuff but always
with different outlooks
renovating innovations
respecting life
enjoying bodies
tanning and resting eyes
upon bluer horizons
farther farther
imaginations dreaming
unthinking
things

under the tree
hands restive upon
the green blanket on
the white sands
on a Sunday
morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Choices

those who dream of freedom
die in the clutches of those
who free them
for now thrown into the ocean of
choices
whether to go or to stay
to bite or to go hungry
to crawl or to climb or to fly
or just stay and be rotten
to be contented or to be thirsty forever
all these confront the face of the
free man
tired and weary and full of
indecision
freedom mocks him
laughs at him now
and takes him anywhere
he wanted to
he is like one who cannot finish
a movie on Tv
shifting as always from
unlimited number of
night channels

RIC S. BASTASA
Choices

physically
the changes are inevitable
at the reunion
last December
we were all pigs and
elephants

our best enemies are the
mirrors
we eliminated the word
fat

some cannot speak about
how sickly we are

we hate to face this
plunder of our flesh
how much we have neglected the
basics of our lives

we justify
perhaps we have focused more on the
internal mess, sorting out philosophies
looking for the best reasons
for us to be alive

we drink a lot of beer
and taken too much meat and pasta

we are addicted to books
our feet shrink
our arms are shorter
and our fingers
are melting
like butter

to cut the story short
i for one,
promised: i don't need reunions anymore
i go on with my life
into the abyss of convoluted thoughts
into the ocean of
more deliberations

away from the run
away from the fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Choices After The Semester Ends

to repair the stairs of the house
or possibly putting up a new poultry house
repaint the gate
or spend a day at the beach
and help mend the fish net of
the old fisherman
or have yoga under a tree near
the forest
going away from paper works
taking a leave from all theories
about politics
seeking variation
from a whole semester's routine
all these now running within
my imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
Choices For 2013

the mind is always free
images are laid like pictures in bed

you heart beats for that one
your logic grabs another

there is no quarrel for one who is strong
it has nothing to do with emotions

there are so many rooms
one can stay for a while in the one which is dimly lit

and be open and be happy but what is happiness
the argument begins

there are temporary joys as there are permanent choices
there are roses that bloom today and tomorrow wilt

there are pillars that you construct the house with
there are sandy foundations but there are those made on hard rocks

the errors shall know what eros is
and as you mature who shall know what to really choose

it is not just emotions
fleeting moments
hidden arrangements that thrive in the excitement of fear

there is a garden where your solitude blooms
where someone who loves you waits and then

embraces you forever.
Keep this. Disregard the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Choices....

i pick up
the blue abstraction
it appears like
a boat in the middle
of that think mist
and it is leaving
the port and

then i shake my
head for there is
something green inside
this body of
art

cool so cool like
trees and forests and
rain

soothing sounds of
this miniature
universe inside a
bottle of
transparencies

finally i took the
boat bare and holed
destined for nothing
but shore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Choosing Selfishness

no one calls you
to watch it
a thing like this
is a secret
just between two
people
no one wants to
share it
with you
and you continue
to be alone
with no one embracing
your body
or simply asking
where you are now
you watch it somehow
in video
even beyond those hours
when you are
supposed to have
a good night sleep
you continue being
a boat without a steer
on this lonely
journey
with your own hands
cressing your own
body

you have are shrinking
into an abyss
refusing the offered lips
of others
who tell you how
delicious a french kiss
can be
injecting life into
your throat
making your tongue
alive again

it is your decision now
as you close the door
and face the internet
of your life
on a pornography
of selfishness
more evil than
self-abuse

RIC S. BASTASA
Choosing Sides Next Time

why do you have
second thoughts to
quell
the cruelty of other
people?

can i tell you
that they are your friends
and that you
are part of their
cruel schemes?

that you too are
part of this cruel system
a tool of this
massive matrix of
deception?

i know where i sit and where
i stand
and i know fully well where
to side
next time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chopin Early Morning

it is a luxury for me here
listening to chopin

i got no cuts or burns
no wounds

nothing bizarre or catastrophic
or calamitous

this is a life
relaxed on a saturday

i do not have to go
anywhere

to look for chopin or
his impostors to soothe

me, i claim no grief anyhow
or a malady

got no sickness to cure
or a problem to solve

at this point in time
papa used to say

we shall do nothing but
listen

he was talking about
those wild birds singing

in the forest, where
at the middle of it

he lived the life of
a tarzan
got his vines and knife
a recently butchered
boar, while he struts
giving us all the awe
for he wants us to do
nothing on a saturday
far, far, far away from
home, far, far away from
mama, who in her own
brave life, says, I could
care less, what happens
to him, whether he lives
in the heavens or in
hell. yes, yes, hell.
so here I am
listening for once
upon a luxury of a chopin
winging birds, hushing leaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Chopsticks

chopsticks  
hot red tea  
atami sashimi

RIC S. BASTASA
Christmas

Cherish one again
How once the Lord has created you
Remember your first cry which was the sweetest music to the ears of the world
Into another new beginning
Savor the coming surprises of your life
Tumble like a weed in the freedom of air and space
Maintain that glee inside your heart, O! happy child of God
Acknowledge the Greatness of your Creator
Sing and smile because He is here again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Christmas 2012

in valdia’s garden
the clan flocks
bringing with them
the missing years
that we have never
talked about

we have roasted pigs
goat meat, lots of red wine
and popping soda
we have desserts and salads
and games

our elders talk about
our origins

the grandchildren recite
their memorized poems

dance the gangnam style
and put on their best
smiles

we watch a generation line
continue with another
like strings attached to
strings
forming the DNA structure
in my mind

perhaps
thinking that posterity
shall be the answer to
our common uncertainty

i sit there with my wife
among the crowd of relatives
& friends
not feeling lonely anymore
they have their answers
and we have too our minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Christmas 2016 For Rolly And Bing

i guess we have the
same fate

this christmas facing
a table full of delights

an expensive whisky
that i promise to drink
this day
fried ham, a little macaroni
lettuce and
cesar's salad with just
bare hands

we have sushi and sashimi
as usual
persian bread and
turkish condiment

then we'll have the
picture
first solemn then
the wacky shot with

our fat wives.

Just
a table for two
the servants are at home
with their
families in the mountains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Christmas Marriages

today
two people will be married
one is white
the other is black
one is sane
the other is saner
one is
very close to me
so intimate
that i cannot even
utter any word
to describe what kind
of sonnomabitz
am i.

RIC S. BASTASA
Christmas Realities....

THIS Christmas
i give my cheers to
everyone

There is no need
to pretend that we
are too elated

Life is real and
it cannot continue
with our illusions

Show the faces of
truth
Mourn for the Dead
Cheers for the Drunkards
Keep the family
Love your wife
Honor your Parents
Befriend and Be Nice
to Everyone

Another day to
Remember
The eternal Rebirth
of God
in Human Form....

RIC S. BASTASA
Cinderilla

many girls since then
thought that losing
a shoe
is a virtue

madam steel butterfly
of asia
hoarded 3 thousand shoes
as symbol
of political power

what is in a shoe?

RIC S. BASTASA
Cindy

what a way to mask intentions,
for those failures
you stay put here
not blaming the slowness of your feet
and your inability to make the necessary connections to success

your success has an imported definition
it is not here it is in another country where people are giving you the higher currency for your services

you mask your failure with patriotism

your weaknesses you cover with the love of self

be courageous cindy
tell them the truth you're a failure oh yes but you tried so hard and that makes you the heroine of today's
modern story
to greatness

stories that last
and get the
Oscars
you must know
has something to do
with honesty
and not the travesty
of that beautiful face
of pretension

Cindy
cry if you must
but have trust
failures don't
last.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cindy's Nightout

she likes her hair
red and her skin
pale
not jibing with
moonlight

big white flowers
hang in her room

a black pumpkin
with white leaves
has two rats ready
for her dreams

obviously she believes
in Cinderella

obviously she is waiting
for the fairy godmother
to do the magic

when she decides finally
to spend her night out

looking for her prince
wanting to fulfill her dreams

you might notice
she is already ready

all day she practiced
walking with only one shoe

she runs and laughs at the same time
inside her black room

RIC S. BASTASA
Ciphers About Us

seed
time towering high
upon those
common founded hills
woman and shadow
evading finally
light housed
shimmering encased
storms packing up
letting go
wind, and sand and
rage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ciphers Of Love Unrequited Because I Am Taken And You Are Already Taken Too

it is too unfair for me to hate you i admit this
you do not really know even if you are beside me thinking that there is nothing
happening that there is nothing wrong that there is nothing between us that i
have not rooted my hands to your soft hair

i choose to live wisely and i must invent hate to you i must grow the seeds of
indifference for by then i too do not even know if slowly i am choking myself with
this love that i have not offered with this 'thing' that you must not know for by
then i shall be demeaning myself and all the meanings that i have worked for
shall all be thrown in the river of trash and so when you meet me i am as solid
and as high as a pillar and you are my butterfly that hovers around me and i do
not say anything.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Circa 1970 And Years Back

those were the years
we were so young
and fit and prim and
prime and so careless
so young, so dumb,
so stupid, so gullible
we are so ashamed
about us in those years

on the other hand we
must also be proud
remembering about
those years those past
days and memories

oh we were so in love
and so free and bursting
in ecstacies exploding!

RIC S. BASTASA
Circuitous… But Selfish Still..

offering love
to a son-would-be
in the same manner
that in reality
i am only extending
further my
personal territory

selfish still
and gaining more
rather than
giving all

is this what we
really are?

RIC S. BASTASA
Cirrus...

i am cirrus on a very sunny day
i rise and i do not have significance to the hills below
i make air pockets so that women
can scream and take their seat belts away and run for a help
that i never available up there
they say i suck
metals upon my body
and cause death
but who can believe this when i am too beautiful to see
like chicken feathers
on a very sunny day
i do not take other clouds with me
i am on my own

on evenings no one knows that i blanket some stars
within me

RIC S. BASTASA
Citizens Of This Country

the fingers may
move in different directions
the actions may
not be united
but they cannot get away
from the hands

always remember
that

RIC S. BASTASA
it is the sound of the train that leaves the station
every morning that does not haunt you anymore and you tell your friend who
just arrived from a faraway province that this is the usual sound of the city
where people leave and come back
everyday
like worms following their habits
faithfully.

RIC S. BASTASA
on the surface of
it is this casualness of

two people meeting by accident
like two boats merely

passing each other by
leaving some foams of waves

leaving this disturbance
that lasts for only a while

and then ti subsides and then
you remember nothing

except that feeling that
keeps on telling you: it should

have been that way, it should
have been, but you didn't

dare and you didn't last.

RIC S. BASTASA
Civilization Should Have Been Simple Enough For Our Survival And Peaceful Living

how can this civilized society understand that with our skin we have dressed our soul that much already?

that with our bones and muscles we have become equipped with the best weapons for our protection?

that with our hands and feet we can already live in peace

it is the soul and the heart and the mind

books have become surplussed money the invention of our greed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Clarity

do not eat words
do not eat my poetry

do not attempt to chew it
do not swallow it whole like how a boa swallows the whole pig

take your time. look at it. from the first word to the last.
think of this poem as syllables, not as thoughts, not as my thoughts. or your thoughts. think of this poem as a feeling.

a baby sleeping. a calm look at the eye. a stare.
a grip. a hand grasping another hand.
a breath suspended in cold air.

two hands in prayer. think of this as the sound of a distant bell.
an orange dressed monk walking at the shore.

a leaf falling on the white sand.
a last step on the trip.
a beginning of a dream.

do not think now. Feel the sands slipping from your fingers. See the sands falling on the floor of the sand.

do not move. Do not swallow your saliva.

And then speak the first word of this line.
This i think is clarity.

RIC S. BASTASA
CLEAN THE MESS, MAKE THINGS RIGHT, SECURE, SAFE, CLEAN, NEAT, AND ORDERLY. EXTORT UGLINESS FOR BEAUTY, REMOVE THE EMMPTINESS, EMBRACE LIGHT.

the room is messy
things clutter and scatter themselves
the socks smell in your feet
the soles of your feet are sore

the chair tumbles down the floor
and the floor is thick with its dusts
the belt blocks the entrance of the door
and the curtains are hardheaded
with their heavelessness hanging on the bars
that keep them hopefully
intact.

the bottles of hard liquor are now
silent from the night of merry making
you snore and life stinks here

until mother comes to clean this mess
folds the blankets, sweeps the floor
collects the bottles and
makes the chair stand erect like
a soldier ready for another
battle

to win this game of life is harsh
it is not effortless
it has to be achieved with the muscles
of our resilience

mother sets aside the curtain
to let the morning light come in
signaling again another beginning

mother is the commencement of our
understanding about what art should be
clean the mess, make things right,  
secure, safe, clean, neat, and orderly.  
extort ugliness for beauty,  
remove the emptiness, embrace light...  

and always welcome home.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Cleaning An Old House

cleaning an old house
takes a lot of time and
effort

on this day daddy
leads us

older brother gets
a broom
younger sister gets
the rugs
i get a pail of water
and some
detergents

some leaves heaped in
the room from that
broken window

got an insect spray
and killed the roaches
and those bugs and
ticks on the floor and
some corners

the rats are next
we drive them away and
destroy all their nests
on the ceiling and
beneath the floors

does someone question
the deaths of roaches?
the dislocation of the
rats?
the annihilation of the
ticks and fleas?

we did it finally
the house is cleaned
the roof is fixed and
there are no more leaks
the floor is shiny
a fly slides
the window is fixed
and the doors too
expired bulbs are replaces
with those brighter ones
the family picture hangs
on the wall
at the center of the
sala

that night we had
supper
after a prayer lead by
daddy
mommy is beside him and
we the children
surround

there is love and laughter
and stronger camaraderie
after the house is cleaned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cleaning An Old House (2)

cleaning an old house
takes a lot of time and
effort

on this day daddy
leads us

older brother gets
a broom
younger sister gets
the rugs
i get a pail of water
and some
detergents

some leaves heaped in
the room from that
broken window

got an insect spray
and killed the roaches
and those bugs and
ticks on the floor and
some corners

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on the wall
at the center of the
sala

that night we had
supper
after a prayer lead by
daddy
mommy is beside him and
we the children
surround

there is love and laughter
and stronger camaraderie
after the house is cleaned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cleaning Myself Up

after a series of
circumlocutions like i were an acrobat
in a Chinese show

i come back
to where i am
to being an island again

on a river bank without
a boat

on two separate distant banks without
a bridge

we have depths too just like
dark blue lakes

back to this choice of
isolation
on the thinking that i am different

that both of us
must not be hurt unnecessarily
because they are very different from us

as this time they are
toasting glasses of champagne to each other
celebrating life
and enjoying a banquet under their
lucky stars

back to writing and you are back
into computations

how many seconds are there in a boring day?
how many insignificant days make up a year?

and then it is Christmas
you remind me on day
after i come out from the bath room giving myself another shower
to freshen myself up as i shake off the water from my
white hair
cleaning myself
shaving off those extra hair
in my nose and
armpits

busy, busy
as though i am a miner with black dusts of coal all around my body
twenty days underground

RIC S. BASTASA
Cleaning Up The Mess

THE speeches are tiring.
My ears are bursting with the promises
of Politics.
There are no changes
There are only corrupt leaders
Betraying their Own People.

What i admire is the Loud Music
of my Neighbor
Obstructing the long speech
of the Lying Governor.

There is no use of this Next Election.
The same Oligarchs are playing their
Tunes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cleansed Heart

as we mellow
down into a gracious
ripening

gentle now in our
mature
dispositions

we say we know
what passions are

surges of overflowing
water

tsunamis of our
youthful days

we learn somehow
that we must guide
these
outbursts
in the winding labyrinths
of calmness
until it rests in
the basin
of rest

slowly
we touch each stormy
vein
gently pressing
like
a gradual
understanding
of that
healing
resolution

a moment indeed
which is now properly illuminated

shadows gone
fears melting

inside the
newly cleansed
corner of
the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Clear And Clean...Oh, It Is Just Another Day

Another day
it does not fail to come
as usual
it is another waking
and talking and
walking
and wanting to be
silent
once more

it is just another day
nothing significant really
you see love
but it has never seen you

oh, it is just another circuitous day
attuned now
to something that does not begin
and somehow does not
know how to end

where and when to cut clearly &
what clean really means

RIC S. BASTASA
Clear Skies

clear skies sometimes
like a blank sheet of paper
without a mark
like a YM without a message
like a poem without a comment
like a day without any hello

clear skies sometimes

but mostly blue clouds
and dark clouds come as nature’s
guests and you begin
to like them and they become
so ordinary

a common day for you

learning to live just the
way nature does it
for you and you
say nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Cliches On Hope

Always there shall be
a Glimmer of hope
God willing
(and the creek don't rise)
Grasping at straws
you say
Hope against hope
you say again
Hope springs eternal
you show them how
Keep you fringers crossed
you walk and try to see the
Light at the end of the tunnel
you wish
On a wing and a prayer
and you whisper to
Pin our hopes on
that man
Shooting for the moon
and that woman
Wish upon a star

RIC S. BASTASA
Cliches On Justice

What goes around comes around
your foolishness will go back to your own body
What's good for the goose is good for the gander
You got your just desserts
you cannot eat your cake and have it too

RIC S. BASTASA
Cliches On Lying

you got a tall tale to tell
something to yank your chair
lying there like a rug
pulling your leg
giving me this snow job
about a cock and bull story
forked tongue you've got
up my ass you blow your smoke
and to convince me
that it is raining
you pee on my leg
so hard to swallow
as you pull that wool over
your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Cliches Part 2

As horny as a three balled tomcat
Blew his wad
Hide the salami
Horny as a peach-orchard boar
Honsky is as Horny as a three peckered Billy goat
Hot beef injections he got
Makin' bacon in the kitchen
Making whoopee Goldberg
At the Mile high club
And could simply be a One night stand
Sweet 16 and never been kissed
But totally damaged
I guess she must be
Thinking with the wrong head
He got Wet dreams
And in the morning
In class he says
Wham, bam, thank you mam
Your place or mine?

RIC S. BASTASA
Cliches, Disbelief, Pretenses, Words We Have Avoided

a bed of roses
mountain of gold
fountain of youth
shangrila,
magic potion
eternity,
love, martyrdom,
holiness,

charity, openness,
self-giving,
patriotism,
talent,
fidelity,
two glasses of red wine
a red carnation beside it
grapes of wrath
gone with the wind
apostle, crowning glory
sacrifice,
obeisance,
geisha, warrior king,
indulgence

RIC S. BASTASA
Climbing And Climbing

for every step
a hundred deep breaths
you know how hard it
is to climb a mountain

but he chooses the mountains
though hard
as its sides are steep and sharp
because it is only through
mountains that he can
rise from the plains

the wise man once says
he chooses the mountain
because it is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Climbing The Stairs

others have gone there
on the floor
we were once together
on the ground
with the usual beginnings
of hard work
and luck... i observe the rules
they don't
they know something beyond
the rules
the one favored by some
gods
and demigods
they learn the art of chanting
and prayer and
bowing and genuflecting
and offerings
incense and candles and flowers
and praises

i only think of the rules of excellence
like a horse i walk along the streets
briskly and showing mastery
of my route
and agility and grace and
skill of my art
and visions

i climb these stairs
i must be cursed i cannot reach
the second floor
lots of talks and schemes
and tricks

i stay on the ground
surrendering to the dictates
of my own dignity

i get used to this somehow
retaining my own pride
and always
thanking God for what is given
He knows best, I know.

we'll it must be, and now
i don't give a damn.
This ground
is cool.

RIC S. BASTASA
Clint

Clint poor Clint
did not look so nice
with the bag
his name sound
pornographic
when a syllable is
made silent

Poor Clint he was
told to pack up
since he is disqualified.

RIC S. BASTASA
Clipped Wings

on clipped wings
i shall face you
my lion's teeth all pulled
my eagle's covered
my slimy skin rubbed
into softness
on this helplessness
i shall test you
what am i to you
if like a man stripped
of its riches and
grandeur
naked and cold
shall you still take
me in the comfort
of your body?

RIC S. BASTASA
Clique

clique
like a camera's snappy sound
you get a face on paper
you remember
pain.

clique
you hear the sound of clapping hands
exhorting the fame within your circle.

each to his name, his bias, and prejudice.
the bold line is drawn.

outside, they move around their circles too.
they're not sad.

those excluded, too, know how to find
themselves
they have their own feet and hands
their sticks
and carrots too,
to munch
in accordance with their own kind
the way how their teeth
are designed
their mouths spouting invectives
against those
not towing the line

'we have our guidelines' the ugliest of them all say that.

i, too, draw a circle of my existence.

in keeping myself in
i keep them out too.

there i take my own bed and pillow
and blanket.
to have a nice sleep alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cloaked

when love is cloaked
and warmth is hidden
inside a heart concealed
beneath a thick layer
of flesh and bone
gracious!
a ray of light pierces
your breast
letting out
a jet-propelled
outburst of emotions
shouting

i love you!

RIC S. BASTASA
Close Your Eyes And See The Truth

there is nothing
that must be changed

under pressure
under extreme pressure

we do not have to change
anything

did i not tell you
who we are?

the truth in us is the unseen
that electricity that you cannot hold
and stop

that spark
that glitter in the dark

that light that is never
consumed

the song that passes from
one singer to another

we do not have to change
we are already perfect and whole

what rots is just a part of us
so temporary

the ash is merely a symbol
it is never us

at night when you see lighting
and hear thunder

pay attention
to all these hints
and you shall never fear
because you are no longer alone

because you are different from fear
close your eyes and feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Closed

an earphone
and Ipod playing
Les Miserables
at 3 O'clock when
Jesus died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Closed Door

sometimes we want to enter
a door
a closed door that does not open
no matter how hard we
knock
we try being courteous and gentle
and so patient
eating every waiting time
like we are the most foolish of all fools
knocking a closed door
seducing it more often with our
pleadings
begging and even compromising
for a dance
to convince the owner of the door to
open it
but no one hears, no one cares to listen
to our pleadings,
no one likes the dance of compromises
the door is still closed
and then the last crooked thing happens
we take the axe
and break the door which is closed
forcing it open
only to find that all the people there are dead
there is nothing inside
but mystery and
grief
an unsolved crime, no more
no less.

RIC S. BASTASA
Closed Like A Sea Urchin

...and then i notice that i have forgotten
those houses on stilts,
the world of water,
and those children that amaze me
since they run on those planks of wood
with spaces wider than their feet
and that idea that they may fall is still on my mind
that anticipation of death
and the mourning that
follows every
thrill,

i have become more of
an individual who has thrived on the power
of my own freedom
and who has become merely a set of eyes gazing
on the world without my head
my ears becoming annexes
to a book
my mouth a piece of round
cotton that they
put on the mouths of the
dead

where did i bury my hands and
when did i exchange my feet for some
gossamer wings
of a dragonfly?

the deep well is telling me that
i have become like its hole
keeping an echo and reverberating same sounds
of emptiness
each day

i see only an aliquot
sky.
At night i keep saying that there is only one star
a scar of
light
It is sad but it is enough for me.
I have discarded the need for some more
and i keep telling
'who cares i do not need any'.

i am whole d like
a sea
urchin

RIC S. BASTASA
Closeness

your hand
entwined to my hand

your hair under my chin
your head resting on my chest

you smell my breath
there is no sound from your mouth

you close your eyes and see some trees
and ponds and waterfalls

and birds and clouds and flowers blooming
over a field of green grass

and butterflies and bees
the air you feel is as fresh as the scent of our skins

i caress your arms you let my hands go
you touch my face and then you look at me

we kiss and then we both melt
in paradise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Clothes And Underwear

shades and
black shiny shoes
and white socks

and olive green polo shirts
a red jockey underwear
and king's pants

a rolex wristwatch
reading glasses
they are all spread
randomly on
a carpeted floor

all these are useless.
removed from you
and her.

she are
naked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cloud King

the hands of fog
hole his head like a hill
the coldness is
felt on the
sides of his ear
you are the cloud king now
feeling so high
you let
the drops of rain fall
and so there
were tears
dropping from his eyes

cloud king, wearing the cloak of fog,
you leave another
valley of
molested emptiness

barren desert feeling
another wasted moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Clouds Begin To Hang On The Dryland

on the dry lands where my house stands
today
some clouds begin to hang
on the side of the
big mountains

they are forming rain
gathering all the dew
and mist and
fog
i sent the vapors
of tears

i wait for the clouds
to ripen
and become too heavy
to carry itself
to a distance

and then the raindrops
finally come
sliding on my roof
the waters rise
forming
the river where
all my sorrows
sail
toward the sea
somewhere
or whatever
that place where
everything simply becomes
nothing

unidentifiable
where i am no longer myself
or yours
or theirs
on some marks of
ownership

RIC S. BASTASA
dark clouds come
and light disappears
but only for a moment

light by its nature
triums always

and dark clouds
disappear and

make the rain
everything turns out

for good always
at the end

RIC S. BASTASA
Clueless Still

my wife asks me
why do you remain a stone?

why are you so impenetrable?
my answer is a gaze.

i wait if she insists if she repeats the question
over and over again
perhaps thinking that with repetition
i may become soft as water
and shall soon allow a
moss to grow
a fish to thrive

and then my answer turns into a stare
my eyes burning with fire

is it love? is it this love within me?
is it the one handed to me like a torch in a race?

my mouth is indifferent.
she cries. she says there is a boulder between us.

i kiss her. Inside my mind, a river runs.
you figure out where it is going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Clumsily

in the middle of a shoot out
you drop
on the pavement
still
breathing

eye say you are doing
nothing

inside a high end Brazilian
waffle
you sit uncomfortably
with books hanging on the roof
and on a tight chair
your butt squeezed like an
orange

when you stand up
to leave
a picture frame of her grandmother
falls and everybody who
sips coffee stops sipping and looks at you
as though
you have just killed a cat

silly and clumsy
they are indeed

i am not a public figure
not a superstar and why are they looking

i smile and then say
that the force of gravity
thanks God
is still working

RIC S. BASTASA
Co - Existence Of The Good And Evil, ...
Metamorphosis ...

a flower cannot be
without its sepal and petals
the leaves grow
around and below
the stem pushes
it straight and through
a thorn co-exists
a caterpillar climbs
and soon as expected
a butterfly hovers looking for the nectars

RIC S. BASTASA
Cocky

at 4 a.m.
the cocks are getting
cocky

announcing
the arrival of a
satisfied
morning

everything is a yes
everybody is welcome

light penetrating
the shutters of the venetian
blinds
light filling the room
like cream
to the mouth and lips

the cocks are cocky as ever
now louder
and stronger
on voices to the skies

to a perfect morning
hail! hail! hail!

RIC S. BASTASA
Coconut Grove

She carries her body
like a swing of delights

i got wings too
and i carry my body like
a coconut palm

she will find comfort in my shade
and my wings shall cover her body

she becomes a smooth sand wrapping my body

i am a tree and she will always be a swing to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cocosuma

This is music for painful eyes And numb arms Trickle of Electric guitar Flowing Cascading And then Caught By a flute At the bottom A basin And both Join together In unexpected Harmony The voice Of a beautiful Girl singing In between Mixing intertwining As I take all the notes In my hands And wash All the music In my face Like a Face towel

i am refreshed, Holy God, i am refreshed, i am feeling that The pain Is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
THE ugly faces
harsh realities, the schemes of your enemies,
the way the group together and laugh at you
don't waste your time on those that
hurt you

don't settle for less
choose your own friends
plan your next trip
Thailand is amazing
Beijing offers you the longest wall that can be seen if you are in the moon
Fly to the moon
Search for the magic carpet
Buy yourself a magic broom
Reset your mind
Focus on the happiness
Junk sadness
Buy those tickets now
To Mexico, Bahamas, Saigon
Australia and the London and Paris
ON to Austria's Vienna Woods
You see Life has a lot to offer
Leave the Nincompoops
And the hypocrites
Seal your eyes with the
Latest hip-hop songs in your
I-tunes
Satisfy your tongue
To a variety of Menus
Feast your Eyes
Upon the beautiful bodies in the Beach
For by now you must realize
There are no reasons
Why you should stay in the nook
Imprison Yourself in a cubicle
and Be Sad
Be happy my dearest
For you have just inherited
This Earth
That Heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Code: The Credit Card

THERE ARE always and will always be present
vested, self-interests

and the 'good' may pretend to have done the Good
for goodness' sake

what hypocrites do we have here?

the good man that you know who keeps on booking your place ticket
brags that he is doing but charity to you
sham! he is interested in the points that he earns in his credit card

but no one minds,
they're too dumb to listen
too selfish too to even know that there is something wrong

their concern is only the incoming tour
and nothing more

i still think clearly
silent and furious
the usual world of two people: the swindler and the swindled
the puppet and the string
the devil and the sea....

RIC S. BASTASA
unless you empty
all thoughts
unless you sit
there
all emptied
of who, what
you are

i will say
we are all dumb
we are co-equal

RIC S. BASTASA
Coffee And Music And Rain

as you play the piano
the rain outside has not ceased

the notes fall like rain
music is a crying
song

the cries become music
to my ears

there is no sadness that
is sadness per se

because sadness has meaning
it has a purpose

just like every note that
must have a place in this afternoon
sonata

to create that blend of
sweetness and bitterness over a cup
of brewed coffee

RIC S. BASTASA
Coffee Perhaps..........

we get to know each other
first by the hand
extended. The name comes
later. Coffee perhaps or
a burger. Things matter
day one till day five.
we sense a certain commonness
some areas of mutuality.
You have a guitar and i have
a song.
i have a place, you have
something to tell.
i got a bed, you have a blanket.
Then you have hands
and i got tears. Then there is
nothing to talk about.
Where is the song? Oh i forget
the lyrics.
Then life makes no sense.
Everything becomes too light.
You are not my burden
Neither am I
we are
back to fog again.
Another is a hill,
some treetops.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coffee Talk

i could have just written
about a hot coffee and that teaspoon of
brown sugar

and tell you that this is what is poetry
all about

one morning when it rains
so hard that we have no chance
to talk, and really talk
about it

but despite the rain
you leave just the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cogitation

if this chair does not exist
will i, this, chair, me, who asks,
if this chair, exists at all,
can i, exist, too? will i be dependent
on the thought of a chair
a thought of me that i think i
can touch, that i think thoughts
touching this thought of a chair
does the chair think about me,
i ask, looking for that therefore
beside the chair that i thought
is a chair, that i thought is I,
am, therefore, a chair, thinking
chair, on four feet?

RIC S. BASTASA
Coincidences

Coincidences are the initiating moments of seduction
and somehow nature smiles at it
the tryst may follow next
again as a matter of coincidence
this happens when people try to say that love
in unexpected niches also bloom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cold

distance becomes sweet
roller coaster love
repeating the constancy
of beginnings
the same windows
and doors that open
and close
familiar light
getting in every morning
cliches of promises
boring days and hours unchallenged
cold, everything i touch is cold,
i retreat to this bitter victories
sorrow shall i love more
numbing sweetness
this nameless state
what is no longer a question
the roof and the ceiling
crushing us both

let us have a little space between us
let us plant the words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cold Air

alone you
sit on a chair
facing the
orange horizon
and then
you feel
this cold air
on your nape

greet her
she is here
touch her
she is forever

RIC S. BASTASA
it is all but a dream
we are but illusions
my hands are mists
and so are yours
my lips are imaginary
flowers of the last
summer

it is all but a dream
a flower of my own fertilized
misery
a bud of my bid for
survival

in this dream
everything wants to be true
no one wants to be unreal
but we somehow have to
wake up
one morning
and meet the rain and wind
harsh on our skin
wet on our hair
cold are our hearts
but beating still.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cold Choco

i must have stayed too long
my choco is cold
and there are red ants
on the side of the
porcelain cup.

bye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cold Cuts

she went naked
purposely to call his
attention

when he saw her
naked he rushed to cover her
and forgot all
about it

RIC S. BASTASA
Cold Nights...

AT night he barks like a dog
since she is not with him, at dawn
he sleeps like a cat beside a
soft hugging.

ONE learns to cope up
with absence

AND no one's to be blamed
for one's sins in the pursuit of
human company

ON cold times like these
one declares independence from the
code of marriage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Colds

clouds
gather in your eyes
dark and heavy
and soon
enough
sticky flood comes out
from the holes of your
nose.

RIC S. BASTASA
Colors

twin dark blue hills
golden sun peeping
nude bathing

RIC S. BASTASA
walking along the beach
one morning when the seagulls are feeding
i tread upon colored stones
of different sizes
too pleasing to my eyes
despite the temptation
to indulge in the temptation
i will be obliged to pick them all
and load myself
with such a beautiful burden
that i can no longer
carry

like all solutions to this indecision
i watch and just keep on walking
amazed and too light
like a bird on its wings

RIC S. BASTASA
Come Back To Me

Do not be slighted,
Lust, return to me
when i am strong again
when my skin feels
the tickle and the rub

Do not be shy
Come to my bed again
For my sheets are warm
My pillow dreamy.

Come back to me
AT night when i am alone again
Caressing my body
In sin

Sensual pleasures
Come and feel the dryness of my
Thighs
The blessings of my arms
The tenderness of my heart

For now I welcome all these
I am alive
I am hungry and thirsty
For Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Come Come To Me Kitty

my cat
i never understand
you

you speak
a language
that i
cannot really
understand

come come
near me for i
miss you

come come beside
me
for i still love
you to be with
me

despite your
sharp paws
and inhuman
behavior

RIC S. BASTASA
Come Hercules Come Prometheus

there is this man in us
that is incomplete
one with the strong body
but with a weak mind

there is this strong mind
but with a weak body

Prometheus, Hercules
they all must fuse as one
to make this man complete

RIC S. BASTASA
Come One

come one
come all

let us have
another party

with words
and songs

let us
pretend
that our
ribs are
guitar rings

and our hands
are tambourines

and our
mouths are
flutes

and our
walls and posters
our friends
and guests

under the moon
on this cold
night
inside our room

let us be
joyful as the precious
children
of this universe
worshipping
God above
come one
come all
let us dance
and make...love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Come Springtime

come springtime
vienna, austria
your flowers
i shall smell
your mountains
i shall trek
your air i shall
breathe

come springtime
on the month of june
with her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Come Summer

come summer
we leave for austria
then to the czech republic
we proceed
and possibly stay
there for two weeks
on an ivf vacation

we want to see
the flowers of hope
we let them show
how love in heat
survives

RIC S. BASTASA
Come To Me And Be My Morning Sunshine

come to me and be my morning sunshine
i slipped on a mossy stone
and fell upon
a deep river
and i almost drowned
and i am wet
and i am shivering
and i am alone
that night, that cold damp night
when i almost died

without you
and so i wish that you will come to me and be my sun
that you may spread your arms like sunshine
that i may live
that i may still profess my love

though unloved, betrayed, and so foolish

RIC S. BASTASA
Come To My Window...

for you to see what i am seeing now,
there is a need for you to come to my window
stand beside me and feel me
we do not have to talk
it is what we see that will talk to us
they always understand and will always be there
to entertain us in their
loquacious silence...their dance of life,
their illustration of
eternity...

RIC S. BASTASA
Come To Think Of Them

beggars wearing
white robes
and large diamond
ring in their
middle fingers
by the authority
of God
they live all
in luxury
tax free

robbers wearing
fine, expensive suits
accorded accolades
and reaping honors
from plain
juan de la cruz
invoking the authority
of your state

holy and honorable
in their respective
thrones all built
by the bricks and
limestones of
our ignorance and
gullibility

we are the people
and we are the kings
and yet we look so
miserable living
miserable in poverty
in sickness in death

we sew the white robe
and the fine suit and
let them wear them
as we take and thrive
on tattered clothes
and listen to our rattling bones

RIC S. BASTASA
Come What May And Live For Today...

how natural can
can
can
can conflicts be
in their occurrences
everyday?

how beautiful can
they appear
after a time of
repetitions?

how courageous can
we be
facing them with
numbness of our our
faces
with all the mindlessness
of our own
existences

now we open the doors
to the winds
we do not close the windows
to these
outrageous realities

let them come if they
may
we have always been
ready

stones on the river
frogs on the fields
grass to the rain
cliffs to the clouds
continents upon the
widest oceans

what is there to worry?
all shall suffer the same
endings
same fates, same struggles,
come what may
and live for today...

RIC S. BASTASA
Come, Come Stay With Us, This Is Our Paradise

on the other side is the coastal beauty
of sky blue clear seas and coconut palms
at the opposite of the other side one takes
the road leading to the green mountains
the forest trees are nest of birds and
the branches are playthings for monkeys
below the mountains are villages
sleepy and peaceful and cooler with
fresh air and flowery gardens
a vast expanse of rice and corn fields
rivers still teeming with fish
the people still opting for peace

this is our paradise. Come, stay with us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Come, Come To The Light, Let Us All Bathe.

why do you choose to be sad?
it is not worth your time which
has curled like a worm inside
a rotten fruit,

why do you disregard the help of
God? Why do you choose pride?
why do you dwell in the darkness of
your struggles?

come, come to the light, outside the
window, come to the playing field
he owns the sun and he gives it free.
he owns the grass and there is nothing
to pay,

happiness is free, it is offered
unconditionally,
happiness is a dove, and a bud,
a ray of light, a wind on your hair,
a flower on a hill,

come, come to the light, let us
all bathe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Comes A Time When Love Is Gone

i do not wait for the colors to change
when red is not red anymore
when green becomes black
when the sea turns into a desert

when the signs of bad changes come
i will take the first move
of moving away
from this calamity: when love is gone

when there is no more any place
to hide to save what is still left behind
when there is no more you when there
is no more me even to speak of

when love is gone the whole world goes away
what is the use of talking and writing and thinking?

everything stops
like this one

RIC S. BASTASA
Comes The Night Of My Life

comes now the night of my life
a very dark night

the sound of the cat
looking for a mate

someone in heat
the dogs howl in the middle

of the road some footsteps
coming to the house

by the window
i show my sorrow

i talk about tomorrow
to the moon that somehow

pretends to listen
on the other hand you may be right

i pretend the moon is here
comes now the darkest night

how can a moon be a reality?
how can you be here with me?

to survive please understand
lying to myself is much fun

RIC S. BASTASA
Comfort Others Of Their Sorrows

there is something more
to what we do
there are always returns
of what we have so earnestly
given

as you comfort others of their sorrows
some of your hidden sorrows
also go away
unnoticed

as you try to solve other's problems
your own problems too begin to solve themselves

as you teach a person what to do
you are taught yourself what to do with your own idleness

unknowingly this is what giving is all about
unwittingly
more is also taken

it makes you full, and then it makes you sing
and in the streets where you walk alone
you begin to dance the steps you have never really known before

RIC S. BASTASA
Comfort Zone

when the world was young
no one stands still
each has traveled where the
dreams take him
each has ventured with
the sails into
the lands of their wishes

but that was long ago
now that the world has gone older
each has kept what has been given
without any intention of
giving that away

for in the comfort zone
each is ready for the coming
of this guide, death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Comforting A Wounded Self...

30,000 feet above
the earth
you take your camera
hold it by the window
and click on the the
tiny islands beneath
you and you tell this
world: you're not that
big and wide
and you sit back and
relax and comfort
yourself: it is not
that bad really.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Back

it's been quite a time
abandon is such a very sad word

neglect has become
important
and every word here mourning
for the demise
of a beloved
craft

i am back and you shall take
revenge
nights are sleepless
days are restless

life becomes one strange cat
with only
one life left

to come back and be
a slave again
on this
white leaf

RIC S. BASTASA
and one day you come back home and all of them rejoice for a soul that was lost and now found, a feast is held and some streamers hang on rope twines and flowers adorn some pillars and walls

smiles are exchanged turning to heavy laughter and a series of embraces from old arms to the newer ones, you shed some tears of joy and you look at every nook and road and even the rooms and stairs over the farm and the old village horizon, trees and shrubs and garden grass,

you weigh which changed most: is it the place or the self? is it you or them? less the drama, and the excitement, i look at you and tell you: things of the heart remain exactly what they are. Love is contained.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Back To The Corner Where I Just Sat A Minute Ago

without much thought
i come back to that corner where i just sat
a minute ago
i am not looking for anything
i know i have not forgotten anything like a pen
or a lighter or a piece of paper
for in truth i do not bring these kind of stuff anymore
a pen in my pocket cannot be
i don't have a pocket
a piece of paper to write some notes of things that i easily forget
like things to do this morning
or a meeting tonight
or a date with someone else
for i do not write those things which are so important to me
because i do not really forget anything so important
what more for a lighter...
in truth, i ceased to be an arsonist
of love..

i get burned, i do not burn anyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Back To You

i may have betrayed you
for a time
on that long waiting

a waiting that has lasted
for quite long

when the path has not flowered
my steps back
to you

but i shall compensate for the
lost moments

here i am back to your bosom
my fingers shall sow some petals
of words

that you really miss
this kiss

that lands upon your cheek
dried
like a rainless creek

i have come a long way
only to see you falling asleep in bed

in total exhaustion
where is the potion?

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Back....

pressing the orange.
it is not you that feels the pain
or the
pressure.
someone else does it for you
as you watch
when he twists his fingers and his face
but you
have other things to see
with the gladness of your
heart.

she sings a song early this morning
after she bathes herself
in extreme coldness
and i wonder why she did not use the hot shower.

it is the coldness of the morning
that makes her sing
as i still put myself under the thick cover
of a thick blanket.

this denial.

early shall she move out.
no word is wasted.

do not ask the meaning of moving out
it can be painful

reinvent the word, coming back, redefine it.
who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Home

unannounced you come home
bringing all the scruples inside your head

you stay somewhere else
in an island undisclosed

you phone me finally
not to tell them about us

you want another chapter of the
love story that we did not finish years ago

now i have to choose the words well
and for the punctuation marks: shall there be a period?

exclaim, i say, exclaim, interject!

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Home This Christmas

coming home this christmas
when all the leaves are dead
when all the twigs are broken
when there are no flowers

she looks underneath the bed
looking for old letters maybe
there must be some in there

she goes out to the open yard
looking for some creeping roots

RIC S. BASTASA
Coming Out From The Cocoon

a yellow butterfly
comes out from
its cocoon
its feet clinging on a leaf
the soft wind blows
and its wings harden
for its maiden flight

as it blends to the
yellow daisies
we think it is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Commenting On Tony's Poem....Deciphering...

a darling leaves appetite of sweet tongue
In a pointed bit of the heart with a daring
stunt of a satisfy embrace, take my desire to
cleanse my nothingness

(do you desire to remove the emptiness?
that sweet tongue that licks the heart of the lonely man,
that embrace that puts suns in the bosom?)

oh! garrison of sweet request, the bounty
hold on to catch the endless venture of
lasting memories to lend on the rapacious
appetite of my bosom soul

(the garrison of delights, those memories
that lust, what appetite is there?)

tarnish it with snapshot delight of nothing
and forward the driven heart to ponder the
quest of emptiness, I induce to pieces of
great surrender

(did you drive your heart towards more empty spaces?)
do you intend to surrender? and quit? and embrace defeat?)

where can I turn to, when the journey
shallow by the night of rapture, sail on that
envy of my cause for only in giving fully, the
enduring heart has had come to voyage
endlessly

(do you have no one to turn to?
is your heart a boat that shall sail endlessly?
no destination? no port? nothing about the idea of any
home for eventual return? just in case?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Commercialism Does Not Diminish Our Sorrow...

in cebu at the new
robinson's galeria
my niece asks me to pose
in front of that big
tarpaulin showing a number
of faces in their big smiles,

something new really but
i oblige for a pause
thinking that i do not have
to be a kill-joy in this family
occasion

she shoots my laughter trying
to compare it the artistry of
commercialism

i take a look after: mine is half-cooked
and theirs
as usual in the most professional manner
is well done.

what i think is that
and this i conclude: grief is always
personal and no amount of
commercialism
diminishes it. So far.

RIC S. BASTASA
Commitment

on your left hand
you have five fingers
one of which is the ring finger
where, of course, you have your ring

now cut the other four
see your hand bleeds

leave the ring finger alone
to manage the work of your hands

that is commitment
cutting off the rest from the one you have chosen

RIC S. BASTASA
Commitment As A Tiny Sun

above me is a tiny sun
it is dancing
only for me
it lives inside my head
warms my heart
it shines and sets only
for me

it is a dream
that i yet have to hold with
my own hands

around me are planets and places
they pull me
but i fell like a feather so light
and i float
and undisturbed and i exist
only for the tiny sun

i am a place where i let the sun
settle down
and i listen to no other sound
except its
hush which is more like a whisper
of a friend
to another friend
who lives for no other
reason
except themselves

the planets fall
the other places of the heart crumble
but the tiny sun
continues
to shine and set within
myself
because we promise
because
we fulfill.
Commitment Is Like Cutting My Fingernail

commitment
is like cutting my fingernails
i leave the part
that i do not need
i severe that which
gives me pain
i polish that which
must be clean
and neat
and against the sun
shall glow and glisten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Commitment To Excellence

It demands
That you must be crushed like rock to sand
To a fine refinement
To the highest pressures that make that glittering
Diamond
In the dark

It does not demand an explanation of who
Gets the credit
In the limelight

You watch, it is enough that everything is
Done

And now, the glitter lights for everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Committare

the way things are working
with us
when we start to learn how to cease
and be on our own

separate ways
we cut cleanly like how you cut your fingernails
your toes are neat
and my hands are free at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
Communion

my feet shall tread upon grass
the grass spreads upon a topping of pebbles
the pebbles plunge on the river
the banks keep the stretch
until it reaches the mouth of the sea

and the sea spreads its arms all throughout the
continents of the earth's bodily contours
with the winds that takes the clouds with them
drifting along the curves of mountains and its peaks
until it communes with the myriad shining stars

at night with you
my world has become complete
warm and lovely
in communion with your
body and soul

i have become so full.

RIC S. BASTASA
Companion In The Room...

keep watching
over a tiny candle light
be careful with your breath
close the windows
lock the doors

on still air
and cold stare
the tiny candle
light shall
be alive and
warm

RIC S. BASTASA
Comparative Lifestyles

you studied all your life
from a pile of books you consume your eyes
there are other leftovers of sight
but you spent them for the arts
until you get blinded by all these sorts of verbosity
lost and since then was never found
they lighted candles and offered prayers
for you disappearance
and then after a month or so
or let us say a year
but that would be quite a long time
for someone
who had become one of those
forgotten

someone in the neighborhood
weaves mats
fish in the river for food
isolated
whistles his way on evenings
on a tryst with his newly found
lover
worships feelings and follows
the intricacies of desire
he lives here with the rest
of the contented souls
peacefully
and untouched by the sophistication
of words
happily watching the stars
as his hands caress
the hair of the woman he loves....

RIC S. BASTASA
i take time
or turns
and twists as
i take pictures
on that day
of a sunrise and
a sunset
at a five-minute
interval

two Italians kiss
each other
when the sun finally
falls like a red dot
on the blue horizon

and then
it was dark and then
the lights
on the stores and
hotels are turned
on.

RIC S. BASTASA
Comparisons

you have not seen how
they repaired the broken things
within their fences

you have seen me
how i mend our broken fence
and you say
we are worse than they

you always see the greener fence
beyond ours
i will not disagree with you
but you must understand that

this all about them and us
and please bear with me

there are no points of comparisons
you have never lived in their house.

RIC S. BASTASA
Comparisons (Revised)

you have not seen how
they repaired the broken things
within their fences

you have seen me
how i mend our broken fence
and you say
we are worse than they

you always see the greener fence
beyond ours
i will not disagree with you
but you must understand that

this is all about them and us
and please bear with me

there are no points of comparisons
you have never lived in their house

we are a family and we must
accept with humility what broken things

we have in our house what small love
is left what waste we can still keep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion

a self-reproach
in a sense
equates itself
with compassion

you punish
yourself and
sometimes
more than
necessary

like your hair
that hangs on
your forehead
lashing your
eyelids
trying to pursue
what your
eyeballs could
not see
what your mouth
has not uttered.

compassion
you want to be like
a leaf and fall
and be lost on
a rushing river
and just be like
one of them

you betray
your race
your grasshopping
ancestors

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion 2

don’t let this be
don’t let this be
these are the eyes
that look
with all mercy

don’t let this be
don’t let this be
these hands that gently
do the work
necessary under
so much pressure

don’t let this be
don’t let this be
the mouths speak
nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion Is Always A Justification For Relaxing The Rules

compassion
is always a justification for
relaxing the rules
making them sit like visitors
in prison cells
trying to reach about those
who appear to be guilty
when if fact
they are not.

compassion is your
mother
as your father is always
the rule
stern as he is
she softens what harshness is
there

between them is the love
of the child
the runaway kid
the stubborn child
who has not understood yet

that the rod and
everything else
is used for the good of all
and always in the name of
love

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion To The Man In Sorrow

the man whose heart is broken
who lurks in surrender
sitting on the floor
covering his head with his hands
his lips tasting the salt of
his tears

sobbing
he needs to be left alone
what he needs most is the compassion
of your letting him go

letting him think about what to do next
with his life in such a short moment

give him the wide latitude of silence
his soul is speaking and he must
listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion...

i stop the car
a kitten is in the middle
of the road
wanting to cross

i get down to
bring it home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compassion.....

pity for sure
is an enemy of empathy
it is the lower kind of
this hierarchy of
compassion,

so please
do not ever say
that you pity me
for you do not deserve
to own those words.

compassion is different
as it transforms my suffering
and your
suffering as our
suffering,

as it enhances
our system of
immunity, ...

RIC S. BASTASA
Compete

Ok, this is a race
Compete. Ok, this is a dog-eat-dog world
Beware, be cautious, and be meek like a lamb,
Be vigilant like a fox, ok, this is a game
That all people play, be a participant,

But you do not have to compete with them
Compete with yourself, compete with excellence

Rage against the forces of evil
Go beyond your own limitations

But you do not have to bite anybody like a dog
And be rabid and fierce for no reason at all

But you do not have to be a fox in a lamb’s skin
Just be what you are in your true colors

But you do have to be shrewd and be a fraud,
Just play the game well, display your cards,

And play fair, and fight fair, and be a sport,
Just be honest and you will win, fair and square.

RIC S. BASTASA
Complacency

the road to understanding
appears to us
fenced and paved
the way all cleared
and the grasses on the side
well trimmed
the trees grown on a line
and flowers are grouped
according to their kind

complacent we think that this is all
that there is nothing to be figured out anymore
there is nothing to be scrutinized
nothing to question

you sit inside the hut on the side of a hill
and rest and breathe the air from there
there is nothing to be done
everything is handed
and what we do is only to receive
and behave

no one jumps over the fence
no one puts another kind of flower anymore
what grass you know
is the grass that is well trimmed
nature manicured

i have long gone away from that place
i live in the forest
and struggle to communicate with the monkeys
i am clearing my own way
and building my own house on top of a tree

i am well, and i guess happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
Complacency (2)

one has forgotten
the sickle

the weeds have
thrive

and the sea is
blurred

try to figure out
what sickens you

your hands are idle
you ego shouts

how soft the soil
how life is buried.

RIC S. BASTASA
Complacency

from my hands
you little bird with a black beak
shall take the grains

i wait for time to grow you
strong wings so you can fly away and join
your family

and then you have wings
why do you want to stay still in my house
pecking the grains in my hands?

what is it
that you love on the lines of my palms?

RIC S. BASTASA
Compleanno

on your birthday
you will skip seeing what i am
giving you

it may be difficult but it is
necessary

that pain that also gives
you much pleasure

that sorrow that soon
stimulates the senses
of singing

for years and years
you have completed the cycle of
births

and for those same years
you always evade what is there
to be felt

another year
and you tell yourself
i will watch it
later

always always in suspended
light
loving what is vague
happy with
what is opaque

RIC S. BASTASA
Complementary

she shall keep him
as half-truth
even if
he has turned into a big
lie

he shall keep her as
a big lie
even if she has become
the whole truth

RIC S. BASTASA
Complete And Perfect

me and kenra are
all about a meeting
of wisdom and youth

wisdom sits in front
of her as she glows

she listens carefully
to every word i say

she smiles, leaves me
for her mother

and then the day is
complete, & perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Completing One Revolution

like the planets you take your own orbit
away from the rest
eluding this fatal collision
you travel alone keeping on your own gravitation
balancing the forces of your being
outside inside
near and far
coming and going
centrifugal centripetal

that is the way you move
to be alive
then the moment comes
when you complete
one revolution

how time trickled
like some drops from a rock
you flow
bit by bit
you are so busy then
about almost everything

on the other side
the clear pool of water
mirror of the sky and sun and moon

it is you
you have earned it
it is you
on your birthday

RIC S. BASTASA
Completion...

the body
is stroked upon
by
tender hands
this body
stands before it
watching
caressing those
hands
skin lands on
skin

the world knows
its own
kind of foreplay

clouds on the side
of the hills
sunset kneeling
upon the foot
of the mountain

lightning flashes
sounds of thunder

the snake spits
its venom
on the tender flesh

of the
innocent chick...

RIC S. BASTASA
Compliance....
	here is nothing amazing
on things of compliance
duty does not glitter
it is just there for a function
it has not the passion of
the flower that blooms still
despite the deep forest
where light is nil
and waters few
perhaps it is only the dew
that pays its respect
on matters of compliance
where the heart breaks
and pain says nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Complicated

I know
You want something
Complicated.
You move heaven and earth
To get what you want
A body, a room, a set of eyes
Wanting to write
Your name there-
Then the body
Grips your neck,
The room imprisons you
And the set of eyes
Stares at you,
Now they demand
Something that you dislike
You begin to hide
And wear disguises
You fold your arms
And they ache
You hold your feet
And you begin to
Feel the numbness
Of things that you said
You love to hold to keep
You remember some dreams
They had all been there
In silence
You mention some names
You face some faces
But they do not
Recognize you anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Complicated Lifestyle.

a man's life is simple.
he has a routine, like this: house, office, house.

he gets bored, adds another place,
like house, office, park, mall, house,
waste of money, but a little interesting, he adds more

a friend's house, another house where he can be intimate with someone,
then sex, and games and romance and betrayal and use and sue and
lots of booze,

he retreats back to house, office, house,

but it is not the same again.

he sins, feels so broke, and
to a certain extent
attempts at suicide.

sad, but it can happen to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Composed, Restrained.

nothing can change love.

it is forever.

Love can change everything,
nothing can stop love,

it grows,
it goes out,

escapist, hard headed,
self destructive,

stranger to restraint
melts like ice even in the
cold,

burns snow,
spreads like a bushfire

it does not have water
to contain itself
neither air
to compromise
a choking

i must not have known it
well enough,

i am contained,
compressed, composed,
and silent
as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Composing A Poem For The One Who Loves You

how do you compose a poem for the one who
(pretends to love you?)

loves you and yet you feel nothing at all?

well, perhaps,
and i guess, there is no problem with the choice of words,
or images,

for in this case, what you will write is something that you do not really mean,
like an empty cup without hot water
and you just place it on the table and you wait,
since you only fill it with air,
and some sighs,

yet somehow how can you ever hurt?
like pretending also to love someone who pretends also
to love you?

it is all an imagination,
pretending that the water is hot when there is nothing
but the coldness of the
porcelain,
pretending that there is coffee, when there is nothing
to smell and taste,
when there is nothing so sweet as sugar
or as creamy as cream,

you write something so unreal,
it is bland, it is empty, it is sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compromises

you should have talked more with the gorilla
as he is willing to compromise
i still owe him something

the greater the haggling
the greater the chances for dreams
the mightier the swings of misfortune

your signature could have sped it up
but you left that in the notebook
because it would not pass as yours...

RIC S. BASTASA
such is the story
of love, now that they
have gone old
all their children
having no time
having lives of their own
in distant places

how the pianist wife
suffered the mental illness
which he could not
watch for long

'she is not herself anymore'
he thought

and he locked the doors
closed all the windows

put a pillow on her face
until she died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compulsion

doesn’t want to sleep,
but the fingers still want to caress
the words
for another poem

a bad poem,
a demanding one
vomiting
words with no intention of making any meaning at all
it is this compulsion
the body resisting sleep
a rehearsal for death
the eyes are not aware of this
it is the spirit
that oozes in the fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
Compulsive

a tattoo in your body crawling your thoughts
of the past
reflected in the lines of your skin those violent ones
and bloody ink tracing what they did to you when you were
just but a kid,
you cannot stop the tattoo
tattooing you, a matter of obsessive
compulsive body writing,
these too are the makings of depression,
the doctor says, you do it and you want it done, like you cannot stop
tattoo tattooing you,
in your arms,
and legs
and tomorrow your chest

you wish some pictures of God and gods
no, no, not the monsters that you want extricated,
i watch you
in this compulsion and you are relating why,
how,
what
explaining the meanings of these figures when they confront you,
i am listening,
i am not lost, i am analyzing bits and pieces of your world
to mine,
i am amazed how the changes come,
like some scribbles
becoming
angels
and saints,
i am trying to get what the
doctor is saying,
compulsive neurosis
schizophrenia,
obsessive,
dominant
recessive,
i am looking
for a space to put you
and make you my guinea pig,
but i stopped,

you are human and i must respect you,
now, i have to deal with my compulsive state too,
this poetry,
i cannot stop and it is hammering me everyday,

crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compulsive Existentialism

i want it to be simple,
not even unique
so that
it cannot be noticeable,
i do not want
any sophistication
or any complication
but the more i want it to be simple
it gets more complicated
the more i put order to it
the more it becomes unmanageable
i want to put it inside
a system
so i can easily trace and manipulate it
but it simply has a life of its own
and it makes its own decisions
i want to contain it
in a box
tape it
and create a vacuum in it
but it knows its ins and outs
and knows how to break out from boxes
i want to keep it
but it knows what freedom is
it cannot be mine
and now outwitted
i have become
itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Compulsive-Obsessive Neurosis

he promised himself that at the first second
when he wakes up this morning
he's gonna go directly to the door
get his sneakers and face towel
and take a walk while it is still cold
and dark

but look, here he is again
like a robot, opens his PC,
stares at the monitor, goes to PH
and then starts his
obsessive-compulsive
poetry.

hmm, it maybe a mess that calls for
psychiatry
but on the other hand
the feeling is elevating

now on the ninth cloud he takes a walk
in his fields of
imagination - on the path
of nirvana.

RIC S. BASTASA
Concealed

inside the clam is concealed
flesh
it is where the pearl is,
in the same manner
inside the skin is the pulp
it is where
sweetness lies, the ripeness
of the fruit,
and one licks it
and savors the juicy portion
of what nature willingly gives
without even
knowing your name,

inside my heart lies
what you have been looking for
i am ripe
and luscious
my pearl shines to the
hunger of your
gaze
my flesh drips to the
enticement of your thirst

come then and be with me
tonight
when the moon does not mind
what love can do
to love

RIC S. BASTASA
Concealing Nothing...

you were expecting a
diamond ring inside my hand
as i was too defensive
and too protective
to hide it and not for once
revealing what is it
to anyone, until i get tired lying to you
about it
misleading you about its true value
its ordinariness,
itstemporal nature,

that one that comes now
and gone in a minute
and cannot therefore
exist till the end of the day

you never guessed it right
i am holding nothing...nada que nada...

RIC S. BASTASA
Concealing That Nocturnal Existence....

you realize that there is nothing that you keep or can

at night a stranger of the house talks about a departure

you listen as he is putting music to his flute it is a sad one

it is like the sonorous sound of the rain at night it is windy

the departure shall be early before the sun comes up you never sleep

anticipating the excitement of the departure there are only two of you

before the sun comes up between the two hills both of you have already dissolve in the distance

blend with the trees, walk on grasses, there are no traces, the two of you never exist

RIC S. BASTASA
Concealment And Covering

you conceal so many things
for so many reasons
you cover them
for so many ratiocinations

you cover you cup of coffee
so it may not get cold that easily

in the same manner you cover your cooking pot
so it may get hot earlier and at least fuel

you cover your ears perhaps because there's so much noise
you cover your head because it may be so hot or there may be rain

you cover your book to protect it from stains
you cover your furnitures because there is so much dust

you cover your body, your heart, your mind
for so many reasons

to each his own because we want to survive we want to live
we want to be just left to ourselves in our chosen privacies

no one has ever said that survival is a crime, a sin, a wrong,
it is the most fitting thing to do, and you must do it too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Conceding

Winnie says that man with a square face
knows how to count
before the last hour, before the truth is fully
unfolded before his almond eyes
he conceded. Winnie laughs and blurts
he is an accountant, he knows the numbers before they come.
he says his speech giving up
we listen.

dignity is still a gentleman during a painful defeat
all the efforts of friends, all the money spent, they are all gone.
i listen to his speech
congratulating the winner of this political game
there are no tears
there is no slight trembling of the lips
this man is strong
and pure, this man has the courage

perhaps, next time, when another winner shows its true color
bloats his head, and commits the same crime of those ahead of him,
perhaps next time
i will vote for this man. He is square and
fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Conceit

so i may love you all
God has given me
this handsome face
and beautiful body

that you may kiss
hold and relish
not minding
this inborn conceit

RIC S. BASTASA
Conceit (2)

sometimes
you just have to accept that you don't belong
to anyone
or anybody or any group
or society

at first it is
painful to accept
trying to spell out this misery

but then
there is always that

on the other hand
that blessing in disguise

there is peace
in your being you

there is originality
in your journey

now that you are alone
but not really
lonely

lovely
is the scene without any
taint of any one
of them

their shadows
stink and you begin to close
your mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
Conceit And Deceit

what i have in my hands
are only stones

if you search for more
pebbles

my mind can give you
but first

you must entice me
with a flower in your hand

for you to have stones
that soon will grow you

some leaves of sand
that soon shall show you

how pebbles can be flowers
too

what you have are only
flowers

a little bit lighter than
the twigs of their source

what i have in my hands
are pebble that give us weight

yes, weight is wisdom
and they are all stones

RIC S. BASTASA
Conceit Of David

as i watch myself
naked before the mirror
taking comfort in
every muscle and
bone that i have
to form this magnificent
body, God's work of art
my temple
my transport to this
place
i feel the greatness of
the Creator
of such beauty
and grace
every woman falls
before my knees
and beg
for pleasure

RIC S. BASTASA
Concerned

i imagine you alone in bed
with a wound
blood drips but you are tactful
on this matter
you put cotton and apply
the needed pressure
to stop the bleeding
of your heart

then you stand up
head high
look over the window
take a deep breath
and smile to the passing
wind

this is life
these are  the accompanying pains of birth
the obedience to the cycle

and then it rains
you close the glass window
the strong wind cannot be heard
with its murmurs

you go back to bed
and sleep
with all the peace and quiet inside
the room
of your soul

this is the acceptance
less all the denials.

RIC S. BASTASA
Concerning Your Public Confession

that public confession
was more pubic
lots of kinky hair
and grossly
irritating and you ask

me if now
i must devour you

my sensibility is
touched like a
makahiya plant
in the ricefield
stepped by the
carabao's hope

let me tell you
babes

i'd rather be
devout and
reserved
rather than devour
you and be
fatal
at the end of
my happy days

RIC S. BASTASA
Concisely

in clock precision
words come out from the lips of a man
who just survived a broken heart
in all those silent
slow running years
like drops of water
inside the
light deprived caves
concisely shall sorrow
drip forming the calcite
and magnetite
stealing light from morning
dews
outside the eyes of
cliffs
where the sound of
fledglings still haunt
the clinging bats
sleeping their
hunger away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Concrete Images

hands with veins like vines  
creeping up the banyan tree  
piling hollow blocks filled with  
mixed cement and sand and  
pea-sized gravel building this  
high concrete post and 8-layered  
wall between our two houses  
my good neighbors with  
square faces do not have  
the ability to use kind words  
like they are new aliens from  
another galaxy 10 light years  
away from my bamboo bench.

RIC S. BASTASA
Conduit

poetry and pornography
conjoining

in this, poem. you do not know
me. as i write this, i shift from one
site to another.

from buson to the bottom
of what is prohibited by our sense
of propriety,

i cough. i sigh. i ache. i simply
refuse to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Confessing Again...

i come to the conclusion
after so many nights that since i enjoy
communing with freedom,
then i may as well accept that i do not belong to anyone
or anything

nothing is ideal, no one is my master,
this is a free world, and i let my thoughts roam like a conqueror
of air, and space,

i don't know, but i simply don't belong to any class anymore,
or a system,
or an idea, like a set,
or a cache,
or a cage of this
e-world

i am back here
confessing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Confessing Sins

when guilt is full
there comes a time when we think of
the possibility of confessing our sins,
the usual sins of omissions
more than our sins of commissions,

to a friend perhaps, but you doubt
for he has more sins than you have
and it might as well end
on the reverse, you the listening tree
and he the barking dog,

or perhaps to a religious group but
you shy away because of their number
and you might as well at the end be the
subject of their gossip
in town for a week or so,

and so you become a catholic again
on a Sunday before your parish priest
you kneel down and confess your sins,
and your dismay the priest says,

' my son these are not sins anymore
under the new doctrines
with an ending, don't worry my boy
you'll do penance just the same
say three our fathers and three hail Mary's
and don't come back

your sins are the same as mine'

what comfort is this, when sins are confessed
to a person on the same misery and guilt as we are.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no
big box where i
can hide my
face

there is no parish
priest who listens
there is hallway
of the old
spanish church

there are no sparrows
no owls
and no fanfare
no dogmas and
circulars

just me
my finger and my
keys

i am both listener
and spiritual adviser
i am both my
silence and chatter
i am the owl in this
night
the robin in the pews
of my mind
i am my own dogma
but still
no fanfare
nothing to circulate
for there is
no bragging about
the sins
of conceit
the omissions of
the good
the true and the beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Confidence

he does not really care
how he appears to her

a mutuality she shares
with him: they are like
flowers

blooming independently
with their white petals

always focused to the face of the mighty sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Confidence (Misplaced Revised)

man's greed may
boast of finally
consuming the
earth in the
next hundred
years

cutting all the trees
polluting the sea and air
and rivers
exploding its mountains
killing all the
fetus
and whatever hope
for the seeds
annihilated

but the earth knows
everything right
from the start
soon every destruction
is pingponged
back to man

and the earth will be
back to another
thousand years of
silence
sleeping waking
and humming

another grass so green
is spread
butterflies unhampered
whales crowding
the sea
peaceful landscapes
dews and
mildews
birds and grasshoppers
and whales
singing in
perfect harmony

RIC S. BASTASA
Confidence (Misplaced)

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dews and
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birds and grasshoppers
and whales
singing in
perfect harmony

RIC S. BASTASA
Conflicts

when there are so many fruits
when the weather is too fine for you
when you are too good to be true
when you appear with a smile and
when they hear you sing and give
to the world a hearty laughter
in there, at that precise point
when you think confidently
otherwise, the conflict
begins.

envy, as healthy as
a buffalo, is born.

RIC S. BASTASA
Confront The Night And Sleep With It

At the end of the day
this we must learn: confront the night and sleep with it
feel its coldness, overcome it with your warmth
survive its journey, be the boatman in this river of blackness
sing, sing if you will, and let that song be for its duration
do not sleep, keep the beat, ride to the power of its wings,
love it, and then be ready to forget

may the smooth darkness be your blanket
may its silence bring you more colorful and vivid aspirations

may our souls fly like seagulls in the sky
may we hover back in the trees of morning lights
and sing the solemn songs of our hearts again

RIC S. BASTASA
Confronted With A Blank Slate

the blank slate confronts me
and challenges me to write only the
most important lines in a matter of 20 seconds.

i ask myself,
how can i write my silence?

RIC S. BASTASA
Confronted With A Broken Snail

finally here i am
confronted with a broken shell
the labyrinths inside its body
all exposed

having seen it
i don't think that its mystery shall amaze me
any longer

finally here i am
puzzled about the sting of certainties

my face is quizzical
my arms lose freely falling to the ground

RIC S. BASTASA
we dream,
it is misty and cold
the mountain is dressed in fog
and the whole village
becomes a mirage
of breath taking
dream

as we tread upon a path
towards the
hut,

we were not shaky

we dream
that there is still the two of us here
like many years ago

it is misty and cold
and i am shaking and
afraid

this time
for real

RIC S. BASTASA
Confused

i was walking
along a busy road
of this village
where the sound of
squeaking bikes
abound, and

this old woman
carrying a basket of
fish
stared at me, i

was carrying a book
and an umbrella

it was sunny and
the old woman
stared at me, perhaps

i guess, he must
have missed his son,
perhaps his son
stopped schooling
enlisted himself as
a soldier
because there is no
more money
to spend
for his tuition in
school....

perhaps, his
son died in
combat, and perhaps

his son once had
a book.
Confusion As A Gift

there is nothing wrong with
confusion, in fact, perplexity is a common occurrence which in some ways give us the warning that something wrong may happen

there are walls, these are laws,
there are fences, these are guides

when you break the wall, the thieves come and take everything from you
when the fences are broken, the pigs come and eat what you have planted

doubt is a mark of our humanity
confusion is our acceptance that we are but limited creatures of thought

when you are perplexed take laughter
think some more
give time its due
savor the peace of logic
let rules be rules

doubt, doubt some more
i am sure, you are alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Congratulations Lady Suffering

Do as i tell you
your mama says
and so you embrace
every possible pain
and indifference
surrounding you
those snakes and
scorpions
all venom now
but still deathless to
all these
you face them all
saying: i am
invulnerable
and you cannot
hurt me anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Congenital Failure

in your life there will be rain
it is just a matter of the weather
a little sunshine
may come and with whatever warmth
take it

there is a place where the sun never comes
it is the island where you live
accept the fact
the some guys have all the luck
accept the fact
that the doors are all closed
that there is nothing for you

perhaps a door waits to be opened
but not here
for this is but a temporary party
do not weep
it could be that you are bound for something
long lasting

do you believe that somewhere there are angels?
that somewhere there is a room for you?

there is always the other side of the coin
hope, there is always a star that glows even on darkest skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Congratulations

So your friend leaves for Edmonton
And now you are left alone in your condo
Homesick to the philippine islands
In Sta. Catalina

Outside the snow has become thicker
Layer upon layer of coldness all white and windy
A snowstorm rages perhaps
As i too, imagine it here back in our
Home - this country

You receive the news about a new job
You get accepted and that is good enough gift
From God for you

You are right my friend
It is not late yet for you to put a christmas tree inside your room
On the 24th of this day of December
Make it just a little christmas tree
Do not put the star on top
It is passe

Put your heart up there and pray
Compose not a poem for me
Send a thank you e-card instead to
Our God Almighty

RIC S. BASTASA
Congratulations You Made It Here...

another one has entered
the world
of lonely people
and we who are inside it
wait for him
with flowers in our hands
and some dusts under our
feet
not so visible
to those who have eyes
that traverse
the depth of distance

RIC S. BASTASA
Conjoining

you see your face in the mirror
this morning and you begin to see the lines
of age
the white hair of wisdom falling out
from the hold of your forehead
time has conquered your brow
and your eyelashes
dropping lower than you have expected

your body is drooping
taking in the weight of your years
hefty thoughts the worries of your age
leave the shocking marks in the wrinkles
of your eyelids

age and the feelings of uselessness
feast your body
your eyes begin to see the threats of sunsets
you dream about the beauty
of a hundred glowing sunrises

but it is not too late to learn again
as you welcome the new things
the sons of our weariness
the daughters of our selfmade worries
they all come
these new ideas to comfort us about the coming
of a new age
where we must accept that we are destined to leave
that we have finished what we are tasked to do
that we are finite on this body
that we have something infinite hidden in our souls

the new comes conjoining with the tired wings of the old
and they become one new bird
singing and braving the winds of change
the current of the raging rivers even still unnamed

and together we shall chart and together we shall rage again
towards the paths of eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Consent

i
only knock
you are the owner
of the door
of the house
if
you open it
then i
enter

but you close
the door
and the windows
of your house
airtight
and so
i turn my back
and walk
away

if you change
your mind
however

i am just
a stone
throw
away...

RIC S. BASTASA
Consequences

do not forget
that for every action
there is always a reaction

that a body at rests
always stays at rest
unless acted upon by
an unequal force
opposite that
direction

this is the law in physics
so unforgiving
mercilessly operating
in the universe

if you think that i am
speaking about us
so shall it be
with what you have done
we both shall
suffer the
consequences of your
actions

because we are one
in all these
your mistakes
and miscalculations
included
and so here i am by your
side
suffering gladly

RIC S. BASTASA
Consequences Of The Dumb Lover

because of love
you are ousted from the palms of convenience

now you are alone in the house
for he comes only when he needs your flesh

pretty dumb, you are such a dumb damsel
native, non-eloquent,
not familiar to the guile & guises of love
and lust
you shall suffer i expect that
you shall be shedding tears alone on the confusing darkness
you hear the sounds of bad omen
the malevolent owl perched on a tree front of your window
at twelve

i could have laughed until morning
until i have seen you fetch the water again from the well
of true love

your eye sockets look like sunk ships
your veins dry up like creeks on drought

surprisingly, you move on
because you still love him after he slaps you because the fish
broth is too salty

when the lights are off
you become more alive again

RIC S. BASTASA
Consequences...

love conquers all
man gives the rituals
like marriage
and fidelity, and love is conquered
by all,
loveless, the journey continues
guilty, the mind holds on
till nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Consistency

little by little
a little bit of this and that

everyday
a pinch of salt
a single cube of sugar
a dropp of oil
a bay leaf

a little cut of lemon grass

a sip and a moment
with you
call it tea
or soup

don't ask for coffee
i don't have any.

RIC S. BASTASA
Consistency And Patience

if i were to draw you
a symbol of consistency and
patience
i will have the turtle
with moss on its house and
on its feet
some mud

i draw you too the silence
embedded in its eyes

i will show you how slowness sometimes
can be considered
wisdom

how sometimes it surrenders to nature
how it hides in its house
when cruelty begins to rule

and how at the end the impossible happens
it survives and wins and then goes back to the river
and swims away

and then it becomes a myth
a story and then you make it more intriguing
and that is where the rabbit enters into the scene

RIC S. BASTASA
Consistent Silence That You Choose

the winter shall pass
you bury yourself in
consistent silence
as you ignore calls
and invitations for
merry making and
you savor instead
your joy in solitude
the warmth inside
the coldness outside

wherever you are
i am with you in your
happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Consistent Tradition

it is a matter
of ice cream for the
cold rainy days
and hot tea
lemon and
honey
on the days of
summer

change it
and you will be in
hot water
in this little town
of yours

RIC S. BASTASA
Consolation As An Offering

i can be
whatever you want me to be
i can be a whisper
to your ear

on storms
i can be the lighthouse
of your lost ship

when something sinks
give me the sign

i can grieve
and turn off the light
i can offer
the consolation of darkness
it will be so dark
it will be, it will be

RIC S. BASTASA
Consequences

the stairs have been broken,
the beam turning into firewood
it too burns the house

the bridge of the river is also taken
all pieces down to the drain of the river

what now? what shall you do with your fury?
what shall we profit from your powers of destruction
your capacity for annihilation?

make us all disappear
we have nothing now except our presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
no matter what
it remains standing there
when tired
it sits sometimes when we are not watching
it deceives
and lies and mocks us when we are not looking
but what we must admire
and give credit
to this kind of thing
is its constancy
so that
when it rains or shines
it is always there
nothing moves it
and nothing defeats it
it is always there
and we applaud it
we put the boundaries
and mark the monument
of this
constancy
a sculpture of a body
with a face
like ours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Constructive Criticisms Are Welcome

the way i typed it has a sentimental value...im glad for your consern on my spelling but toommorow is not the point of the poem...thank you for being a 'spell check' if you will but each letter and word is written the way i write it for a reason...but thank you for your concern

something british i suppose,
but the way i type it
has a sentimental value...
i am glad for your concern
on my spelling but
tomorrow is not the point of the poem...

thank you

for being a speller
a checker but each (word and letter) is written
the way i write it with reason
under the circumstances
reasonable and
legal and tolerable

thank you
thank you

for your concern....

RIC S. BASTASA
Consuming Myself

those that strike me
and occupy me
those that consume my mind
i am sucked by this
emptiness
but i bother no more
i wait in ambush in my newly found
silence
i wait when the wind is fed up
when the soil needs no more of
the water
when the leaves begin to fall
because the buds
have taken most of the time
in peace
it was the chaos that do not
shock me
because i have embraced them
because i have known
all of it
from its very first drop
now i have learned
the cycle of another confidence
i stare
at those which do not excite me anymore
i stand straight and hold the hands
of the lust of time
every minute
there is an understanding of every second
my heart does not beat
that much
the surprise is gone
the bow shape is lost
the arrow is here
beneath the palms of my own hands
now i look at all these
i am strong
and i begin to leave
walk away
from here that has oppressed me
searching for the divine
and the noble
i take my chances
out there
is the azure beginning
the blue skies
the endless horizon
sun full

RIC S. BASTASA
Consummatum Est

it is irritating as it is
always complaining demanding
that this must be that or that
that must be this

the human being being becomes a
thing through this
the pronoun becomes it

somehow you like to go away
and leave things as they are
sail on a boat, hop on an island
and just be alone to relax

but it is simply impossible
because no man is ever an island
one is simply a part of a community
and the rule had always been
that one must be flexible enough
in order to survive

and so here i am with this thing
this human being turning into a thing
a companion of the journey
which had always been a liability to me

move on, move on, become deaf and
blind and mute
do not say anything do not look at
this thing, focus towards a direction
do the task, and accomplish everything

and just like the man on that
bloody cross, you will say
'consummatum est'

RIC S. BASTASA
Contagious.....

dear friend
i write this with bitterness
this poem,
this un-poem,
this anti-poem which is bitter

i do not know if you are bitter too,
because if you are
perhaps you
can easily understand how is it to be unpoetic
because you are bitter
because i have
the impression that to be poetic
it must be something
that makes us feel beautiful
inside out
and which also
spreads beauty
all around the world,
and people will be happy
and know that something
poetic is always the one
that creates order,
system,
nice feelings,
nothing of that bitter sort,
that depressing effect,
that prompts a suicide
somewhere along the straight line
of life,

i have nothing bad
for all my intentions,
i am a bitter man,
and i am writing about bitterness,
and you surely will
not like it,
because you are
a happy man,
in blissful state,  
as you wish to convey it  
in your pictures at  
facebook,  
and the rest of the write-ups  
that you have posted  
so far.

this poem is  
like a volcano  
that soon will erupt  
i hope there will  
be no casualties

it has to.  
because it is needed.  
because it is.

so,  
i think,  
it is time for you to  
run away and avoid me,  
and forget ab  
out me,

as of this moment,  
you should have already  
stopped  
reading.

i guess,  
you are interested  
in bitterness,  
it is sweet to know that  
...  
are you  
bitter too?

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplating About Home

the night has not befriended me

and so i walk alone down Jones Street
under faded lights of dawn

tall posts,

under the narra tree
two boys are sleeping holding on to their bare hands
to keep themselves warm as the cold air keeps on blowing

an old man counts his steps
using a cane
manages to take a farther walk towards Fuente Osmena

jaywalks much to the aghast
of taxi drivers when the traffic lights turn green

a newspaper vendor is repairing his bicycle
leaving his morning papers frightened on the road

a white dog tied to a post
of this fruit stand keeps on barking at me

the woman that owns it shouts 'shoo! shoo!'
i am perhaps a stranger lost
to her view

the month of June is opening buds of the fire tree inside the fenced grounds of a mental institution of this city

as i contemplate of my early plane trip towards home
Contemplating Upon A Crater

both of us manage to climb uphill
on a rainy day
to look closely upon the crater of
Kawatu
fuming sulfur gas on its side
and acid river on its basin

we have same thoughts
about how death can smell like that
how terrible
when its fury finally comes out someday
to cover perhaps the whole city
of Bandung

we keep our bodies warm and close
under one black umbrella
which the strong wind from the high mountains
break its thin metallic bones

the rain becomes heavy
spectators take shelter inside a concrete cottage
she takes time away to join another group
i am left alone
wet in the rain
brave in the wind

i have nothing to fear
for years my life has been wasted
in the luxuries of my academe
in the selfishness of
my dreams

i think
how nature perhaps can check
what real dreams are made of.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation

i take the veil of privacy
darkness shall cover me
shadow merging into
a oneness of self in
surrender, find me, if,
you, really know me,
touch me, in the sea of
darkness, how will you
ever find me? Feel me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation 1

When i try to grasp you
and you wish you had meaning with
my grasping
i become a loser at the end
i do not have
anything for you: it is just a game

and i once told you i like being
a child again
i have no scheme for you
whatever you become it is
your responsibility

when i hold your hand
i mean nothing, not love, not lust,
it is just a way of letting time fall
between my fingers

i try to think that i am waiting for
someone
to make an event with me
like having a kiss
but it is not just that: always i end up
with nothing

i sit, and then i stand and then i
leave without
leaving any word. It is senseless
but that is what it is.

Frank and always ready to go.
You know how is it to feel
lonely and in this state you always
want to go somewhere else.

and this is where we differ.
You live in a map, and there are
landscapes
that you imagine.
I don't have any. I only have
my eyes with wings.
My fingers always rivers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlike you
i write for the heck
of an excitemen

there is no plan
no structure
i don't see a path
even
no maps
no preconceptions

i catch a word
and then put it in
my hand
it wriggles of course
because
i have no way of telling
what to do with it

like you it fears
when it finally lands in the
hands of
a child

there is purpose
but the catching and in due
time
the releasing

this angers the word
telling me
how ungrateful i was
when it tries to lend
what meaning
it possesses

or wants to have
for its future use.
Contemplation 3

At night the dog woes the moon
the moon sways
and wades on the water in love with a fish
the dog keeps on wooing
when you hear it it is actually crying
a dog is a dog is a dog.
losing patience it swims in the water and eats both the fish and the moon.

now it rests in the dark loving more the satisfaction that silence usually gives to persistent and violent lovers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation 4

What the world needs
is the obvious, those that
needs no scrutiny,
like duck to a river.

it floats merrily
and what you see is
what you get, you do
not even have to look
into the water to see
if it has feet or fins.

what this world needs
are not words, they can
only be perplexing.

they only ask but do
not like the answers for
they, who live and jibe
well with this world,
has only themselves
to be heard.

tell them then what
they want to hear.
and there will be peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation 5

Long distance
creates a lie, a mirage.

do not trust it.
what you hear is faint
like a bee
sting. what you see
is a road in eternity
it does
not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation 6

If you need a pond
to relax
where you can feel
the coolness of
its waters
you must first
catch me a frog
or to be true to the
requirement of the
myth
you must catch me
an ugly toad

when i kiss it
i do not change into
a princess

but the toad does
for it becomes
a horse
and then runs away
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation At The Beach House....

year have written
almost everything under
their sun

there is nothing
to remember and copy

perhaps i will just
stay here and think for
myself

what happened here
and what is going to happen
later

i can tell the mussels
on the swamp the way they
breathe water

i like the wooden boat
tearing the river into
shreds

there is still joy in
diving 60 meters away
upon a cliff

someone has to rake the
dry leaves and then you
feel clean

when the rain comes
something is always
renewed

the nipa roof of this
hut and the silence of
the trees
something is missing
always missing
i still wish i know it
now.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation Of Stone

contemplating upon a
stone
does not change it

it cannot soften

it is
a stone and will be a stone
forever
it does not break
it breaks
what it hits

it is i
who will change
not the stone

i am
stone-like now
my eyes are like
stones
my body and my mind
turn into stone
hard, monotonous,
silent,
in isolation
ironic
deprived of
emotions

my heart shall not change
it is stone
from the very beginning
stripped
of its
humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation On The Climbing Of The Stairs...

as i climb the stair
i always think what is up there

when i arrive there
the door is closed

and i am thinking why
contemplating on the other possibilities

shall i open the door
and ask myself in

what if there is nobody there
what if it is just a door and there is nothing inside

i sit on the the last step
and i think again

what if it is not the stair after all
but only the ground

or the pebble or the grass
what if it is only myself and there is nobody else

what if i am just dreaming
what if i am nothing at all

but a thought
without weight without volume

what if this is all about air
a breath a hush a slip?

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation On Top Of Petronas Tower

when you are on top
you see
how tiny humanity can
be

its achievement of
heights
can portray men as
ants
trees as mere spots
of green
roads as nothing but
the tiny lines of
a pen

when you are on top and
you look down
you cannot help but
shiver
on your feet

thinking: what if we all
fall?
what if there is really
nothing up
but only whiffs of clouds
and the complete silence
of too much space?

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemplation, Excitement, And Work

An old man with a dream
sits on top of a hill overlooking
a river

On that river is a young boy
sailing on a boat busily paddling himself
towards the shore of a faraway
town

And in that town is a butcher
displaying the head of a cow
to prove the kind of meat
that he is selling

They have never met
the hill, the river and the town

The sky who sees all these
knows what Life is all about
contemplation, excitement,
and work.

RIC S. BASTASA
contemporary poetry
is nice to read since they are
not cliches, very much unlike
shakespeare or
mary oliver

i 've seen one and read it
over and over again
it feels like
trickling rain from
my forehead to my
spine

like this:

rain
rain
go
away
come
back
an

other
d
a
y....

i am amazed

i think i will write about jack and jill went up the hill to get a pail of water.
jack forgot and
what is that? jill come rolling after?
the pail.

i am bitter.
sour i mean.
i don't belong
i am one kind of a frustrated contemp...
orary writer.

well, i will try next time
i have to reread
bukowski's advice
i will wait
till the next tick.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contemporary poetry is nice to read since they are not cliches, very much unlike Shakespeare or Mary Oliver.

I've seen one and read it over and over again. It feels like trickling rain from my forehead to my spine.

Like this:

rain
rain
go
away
come
back
an

Other'd a
y....

I am amazed

I think I will write about Jack and Jill went up the hill to get a pail of water. Jack forgot and what is that? Jill come rolling after? the pail.

I am bitter.
sour I mean.
i don't belong
i am one kind of a frustrated contemp...
orary writer.

well, i will try next time
i have to reread
bukowski's advice
i will wait
till the next tick.

oh well,
i got other things to do.
the grapes are sour anyway.
(cliche duh!)

RIC S. BASTASA
Contempt Over The Contemnors

she is all inflamed
her cheeks are falling from
her bones

she speaks beastly
the wrong goddess in that

chair of justice meriting
disrespect

from the floor
the defenders are in a quandary

her other gods are angry
despite her unbecoming ways

look! the lowly turtle is turn
into the fireplace

justice dies
courtesy resigns

from now on
no one rules

the ways split
we look forward to more chaos

let us see if gods are really gods
on this turtle's turf

RIC S. BASTASA
Contempt....

in paradise
if you were Eve

and there is
go Adam

i think i’d rather
be that
apple,

or truthfully that
apricot,

or just any other
kind of plain
fruit

the Chinese here
eat snakes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contented With Your Own Silence

in one instance you step out of your door
walk on the road,
keeping your gaze away from the danger side

you keep things to yourself
there is no one to share with
what story you have for the past days
when you hibernated in that room,

it is a break,
you stroll in the park
take your breath under those trees
sit upon one of those empty benches
lose your mind
upon what is obvious and
visible upon those
that do not need any
kind of scrutiny and fathoming

this the time to fish
for nothingness

you lay your hands upon the grass
it is this coolness
that makes you feel connected
to the earth

you sigh and sigh again and again
it is this exhaling that makes you a giver
rather than a taker
it makes you
comfortable like what smokers do
when (they pollute
the air)

there is a certain fulfillment
in this kind of loafing
you carry nothing and thus
you leave nothing
you are not alone
feel this solitude
there are so many of you
doing the same routine in the park
fishers of
nothingness

but i tell you
do not talk do not start a conversation with the one near you
or that one
who is walking his dog early morning
i tried it once

when you get no response
it will just make you lonelier
it is like taking a stone in your hand
and hitting your head with it

sit there,
just sit there
relax

take your time,
and simply be whole
nothing falling
apart

it is beautiful to
see
now that you are
contented with your own
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Contentment

all places are the same
nothing is more significant
than your feet
not wanting to move anymore
on their ground
is this cool pond and
some lotus blooming
on a summer day

your eyes are fixed
to yourself
your arms and hands
on your side

what is out there?
it is none of your concern

RIC S. BASTASA
Contentment And Time

an old dog
resting on a white
sandy beach

the footprints
show that
they pass by
not minding it
and it does not
mind them

it is an island
within an
island and
he does not
really care

if the hours
flood him
by
as it is
and will
always be
forever

never was
he ever drowned
by its
boredom

RIC S. BASTASA
Contrast Of Two Views

on the other fence
are colored lights

a party of laughter
and a fountain of
drinks

roast pig, San Miguel
beer, Tanduay rum

clinking glasses
merry widows and
glints of new
moonlights on
clear glass

between us is this
wall of barbed wire
and fortune plant tall
for hedges

as a contrast
in here the lights at
the patio are turned off
the dogs are sleeping soundly
and the chairs by the door
are turned upside down

it is as though
the world here is a store
closed
and the storekeeper is
heeding towards home
after recording the
volume of sales

the accounting is done
and windows are closed
and tables all covered
there is peace
on this side of the world

they say
that on the other side
they are trying to talk about
preventing another war

ideas clink
views are diverging
so much talk
there is a preparation
for something
big and
horrible

and they call it
a diplomatic party
where eyes look intently
on each other
where schemes are
hatched
where fledglings
come out hopping
like nuclear
bombs....

RIC S. BASTASA
Contrasting Sounds Of Sunday Morning

rain is pit pattering
on the roof

the wind is as gentle
as a whisper
of a new lover

when the rain stops
the footfalls pass by

the church bell rings
on a call to prayer

the sound of motorcycles
get louder towards the flea market

the cock crows and
jumps to the ground from a tree

here i am
writing another poem for you

it is the sound of silence again
words hugging like a friend's reunion

RIC S. BASTASA
Contrasts

The food in the ref
Of the wealthy
Rots

Outside their doors
A child begs
He has
Nothing
to eat

RIC S. BASTASA
Conundrum

men of the East aghast
wealth of the West amassed

sumptuous breakfast bed-fast
in such a short moment in Belfast
did you hear that blast
such a murder bombast
to the world broadcast
this little country bypassed
and on an incomplete cast
disgust of the Indian system of caste
brown and black and yellow classed
to the white put in contrast
millions of Jews degassed
the Palestinians are downcast
time runs so fast
history has not done the forecast
foremost and foremast
cultures chosen and classed
rough mountainside no longer grassed
what kind of flash is this hand-fast?
food givers on a boat harassed
those who gained the voice lambaste
and so nothing of value forever last
death for the mainmast
long live the heinous miscast
not all is true in the newscast!

RIC S. BASTASA
Conversational Poem For A Migrant

hello
hullo, how do you do?
what is your name?
where do you live?
what do you do for a living?

i am fine.
Thank you.
My name is Nomer
i live in Kabir
i write poems for
a living.

How about you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Conversations Of Tess And Her Light And My Darkness

i
Come to the light
And let yourself be known
Shine

ii
I live in the dark
I glow there
I am not visible
In your light

iii
Do take pride
About light
I will take
Darkness

iv
I have seen your light
It still looks dark to me

v
No, go out
See the light
And be uplifted

vi
Ah, I bask in the light
Of my poetry
There is enough moonlight
For me

RIC S. BASTASA
the first poem that you really find it hard to write
is to write an image which must tell her
that you love her truly from the bottom of your heart, and then
the most beautiful poem comes from her when she admits that she
also loves you with all her heart and soul and mind,

and then the saddest poem
was not written.

it was when everything ended.
the years passed.
and you do not even know
where she is.

it is always the saddest poem,
when you do not know where to find love again.

you say, not anymore, but
it can be a lie, for how can one live without it?

All corners of the world are looking for it.
They seem not to find it,
and all these corners will only stop writing
and talking and speaking
when love is found
when their hearts are
filled,
when their mouths
cannot utter a word,
because of so much abundance,

bliss, joy, happiness,
all these shall make us mute for another hundred years.
(do we ever reach there?)

honestly in making love, (and be in so much trouble loving,)
words do not have use,

love, you embrace me with so much intensity
all my nerves sing, neurons spark with flints,

i explode, finished.

RIC S. BASTASA
Conversations That I Hear

i am into conversations
i do not speak much i listen well
like an absorbing sponge
and people suspect what i am
up to, but i keep on listening
to people who still have
the vigor to speak and
brag and expose what is
inside their guts
what they feel foremost
is important for i like to dwell
more on feelings rather than
logic and directions and
useful advices on how to live
and die perhaps,
and so this time i am inside
a bus bound to a far place
a hundred fifty kilometers
from where i live
an old man, i am surprised
talks much, complains and
scolds his grandson who is
there born to tolerate him
beyond the threshold of his
incompetence,
as he talks and sometimes
subside into murmur,
the grandson keeps on
listening to his apple ipod,
not minding what the old
grandpa is up to,
i smile and fall silent again.

the bus speeds its way to
the winding road climbing
a mountain,
the wind on my face is strong
and my eyes seem hurtful
to the flashes of trees
and bushes
along this road to another
city

the old man is asleep now
his grandson still busy
with his own
music

night is approaching
the headlights of the bus
pierces the road
like what a conscience does
to my heart

this time i hear myself
in a last ditch of conversation
to myself
before i also get a dose of
my own sleep

inside the bus now
silence reigns like a boa
who just swallowed
a whole pig.

RIC S. BASTASA
Convoluted......Folding Bed.

the day did nothing
bit by bit, it did not arrive
at something whole
like a circle for instance
something’s bothering
like a landscape that never
closes
ends are opening
so incomplete that it is the mind
that goes on
dovetailing what is not there

it is this sophistication
this flare for fire this frame
of reference
the ant has arrived at a point
when the issue is no longer whether
he is happy with the empire or not

it is just the constant walking in line
operating on the smell of the day
the sun-dance in the sand
forever numb and no longer asking
what is really happening

i like to think that i do not have to think anymore.
it is comfortable, when we only have to watch and not
even speculate about consequences.

the house is not a resting place
neither one worships God in the church.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cool And Still Dignified....

you do not tell me what hurts me most,
i know it too well, i who feel,
who fell
into this abyss of
self-throwing which we, or
i cannot
refuse, for this is, i think,
is the
inevitable.

The falling.
The lost paradise.
The sin of commission and omission.
The marriage of fools.
The victory of the Dumb.

To say the least,
i have never failed myself.
I still have restraint,
despite the affection.
I still maintained a square jaw
despite my
failing eyesight.

Let me say it once more.
I take refuge in silence.
This power.
This anonymity.

Love the nocturnes.
and the twist and turns.
The mind's war is raging.
The body still.

Outside everything is still manageable.
You see me walking, just walking.
just walking.
whatever rages in my mind
is mine alone.
Do not call the firemen.
My fire is invisible.

If there is a house burning,
or a body trapped within in,
Let me tell you,
It is not mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coping Up Mechanisms

keep in touch they say
departures are always given the icing of
take care

sad endings with
God bless us all

irreversibility with
let go,

when every things happens
in their worst shapes

we shake our shoulders
and say nothing

cats and dogs fight on the roof
when it rains

we watch tv and concentrate on
the series

there is always a right time to
close our eyes

even if we are not asleep yet
even if the room is flooding with our tears

everyone is miserable and like everyone else
no one lasts forever.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Coping Up On Prohibited Times

You know how to make your lips burn
When you are far from me
I have also known how to kiss you
Passionately at a distance
By a mere stolen glance.

RIC S. BASTASA
it will be
another lie, it will be another justification for
the preciousness of life
and its survival,
it will be another excuse
for having to follow rules,
it will be another saying
that because
i am here, so i must be like you,
and the rest of
the residents

it will be another sacrifice of
my authenticity
in favor of conformity

it will be from one cloak to another cloak
in order to keep this body warm
and then one cold wind
follows another cold wind
to make me colder all over
again

my hands shall then
by the passage of time
have mastered the techniques
of folding
to protect what i am
and what i have.

it will be another pain,
to another pain, ... i do not really know
when will this end

RIC S. BASTASA
Coptine D'Autre Ete: L'Apre Midi

i love this
nursery
rhyme
for another summer
love,
one afternoon
by the sea
sun fades.

RIC S. BASTASA
Copy Copycat...

do not ever think that
putting your head in the oven
does magic
to the blandness of your poetry.
copycat.
move on,
our business is originality.
try other devices.
authenticity is the key.
be good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Copycat Lady

She was very strange, and beautiful,  
as the violet mist upon the hills  
before night falls  
when the hoot owl calls  
and the cricket trills  
and the envapored moon hangs low and full.

She was very strange, in a pleasant way,  
as the hummingbird  
flies madly still...  
so I drank my fill  
of her every word.  
What she knew of love, she demurred to say.

She was meant to leave, as the wind must blow  
as the sun must set,  
as the rain must fall.  
Though she gave me all,  
I had nothing left.  
Long I smiled, bereft, in her receding glow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Copycat Thoughts

i'll buy you a margarita
so you may think
i am
good-looking,

i'll tell you a joke
and you may laugh
and think
that i am
witty

i have a sense of humor too
i'll give you money
and promise you a car
(again)

i know,
you think that i am a liar
(as i lied to you
how many times?)

ok, leave me, but please
tell me,

do i really look good today?

RIC S. BASTASA
Corona

the water on the pail
has overflowed
now you must feel
the coldness too

the rain will be heavy
and it will fall for nights and
days and the road will be
flooded again

this time no child will play
boat in the water
women with black umbrellas
will pass on the streets as
though nothing happened

life is like that
even the vine with nice flowers
are pruned
the trellis sometimes do not
want any tendrils

RIC S. BASTASA
Corona 2

whatever is good
belongs to the people

the people is the only
good there is

so? work as usual
the people are coming
and you must open
the doors
and serve their
needs

one must go where
the good is
one must march for
the people

let the one who is in power
be beleaguered
let heads roll
let the people have the toll

i am for the people
they are the only good
that we have

the people has decided
your fate
and now you must
gently yield
and accept.

RIC S. BASTASA
Corpus Christi

The flesh that i ate comes from the bruised and wounded body of the man who died for me

the blood that i drink tastes bitter with the gall and soured with vinegar as sharp as the spear that hit the side of my God,

now i shall swallow all suffering now i shall drink bitterness now shall i be enlightened about the real meaning of my own Christianity,

now is the purification of my soul as the body shall finally give back what it has made me love and feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Corrugated Fruit

its bitterness
cures the
corrugate soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Corruption.....

the way we love our dogs
makes me think about how corruption can thrive
in this poor third world country as ours

we like them fat and good looking
shiny noses and big feet and we like their
barks to be fierce and respectful
and so we feed them well
take a walk with them on early mornings and
late afternoons
and we let them inside the house and put them
on their own dog-houses

hence they all remain loyal to a pampering master
siding with them whether they are right or wrong
(they do not know anymore how to discern right from wrong
i think)
and whatever happens
the master is always right
like the way it keeps the bones and the steaks
in the closet

mind you, you haven't heard of a well-fed dog
barking against their masters.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cosmopolitan Stink

it is a closed road  
so i am included  
as one without a  
pass

i understand  
perfectly  
a new set of  
dead bodies  
whose flesh  
are partly  
eaten by fish  
arrrives today

from a boat  
that meet  
the storm  
headlong

it sank  
and the pointing fingers  
grow like lichens  
on the tree

the odors here  
are dumped  
and the nose  
bleeds

body after body  
wail after wail  
too huge  
for the cosmopolitan  
street to handle

i shifted  
my gaze  
and take  
another road
a hungry child,
families sleeping on the streets
of the city
imprisoned garbage
angry rats
captured at dead end
corners

RIC S. BASTASA
Could Have Been

so many excuses
one sighs one day back in his hometown
when every street changed already
new houses built
old houses gone
you do not not recognizes
those old faces anymore
new names now
a heart beats for something
that it cannot understand
a nostalgia taunts you
for not having
achieved what should have
been you
like some of them
who got their names
at some
islands of limelight
an engineer in manila
raking much money
an accountant in her
finance tower
a fashion designer now
making it big
in the Big Apple
and you?

if it were not for Papa
i could have been the best
writer in the city
of Sunrises

RIC S. BASTASA
Could Have Like You, I.

could have like you, i.

this is the place,
you were born here
marked by the planting of the
banana shrub on the side of the hill,
things are not complicated here
things turn out as expected
events are predictable
there is nothing to worry
nothing changes here
the stones are stones
and rivers are rivers
the hills do not grow anymore
except some vines
that the old people readily cut
for they said the tendrils are touching
the heavens
offending the sensibilities of the the
gods and goddesses
here,
you left on the third full moon
and you left a note
written in red ink, you declare
hey guys, i am complicated
i don't belong here
and they all hated you and promise
to kill you when you come back
they wish you ill

inside myself, i could have done the same
for i am more complicated than you,
but i am beside her
and the pictures of my ancestors
smile at me
at the altar perfumed by daily
incenses

good luck, i am staying
i am more complicated than you
but i do not have the guts
i am frail as the afternoon,
i am soft as the earth where i still belong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Could It Be Love? Again?

if you challenge him
he will not answer you

acceptance for that challenge to be separate
lives on separate feelings
on separate beds and
can be as silent as feathers falling on a silk bed

then silently he turns into a line of red ants
taking slowly bits of leaves
from your hair
and some tiny grains in a secret place
of his heart
buried somewhere else that even his eyes that see
do not know
where is it exactly

where is it?
where is the new home of the
bleeding heart?
where can it rest finally when it is healed?

he does not tell you
he is building his dreams again
block by block into an
invisible tower reaching
another sky

orange and red
fusing into a
flaming hell

RIC S. BASTASA
Count Your Blessings For They Are Too Many....

we were never
a family
her mother must
have been blinded
with so much money
and it is here where
love shrinks
like burnt plastic
cup

we are shut up
our voices are taken away
she owns the money
hence she is always right
moving towards her
own perdition

she must have forgotten
her once hungry stomach
her once empty pocket?

dthis morning we decide
to simply dance the chacha
i comb my hair
and it pleases me that
despite my age
it is till thick and
very much black

i open the window
to such a bright morning
for the first time this
rainy days
the sun is finally coming
up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Counter Terroristic Poem....

the more i polished
it the more it seemed
uglier, and i spin it
and rotate it like
a top just recently carved
from a chunk of
your hand, bloody beast,
facing you without eyes
but so significant that you
drop it on the floor
less all the meanings attached
to its nail.

i leave it as is,
easy upon itself, accumulating
dust and dirt and it
spins and rotates upon its own
automation
a being now into itself
upon itself
and you write it inside your
bloodstream: this is a living
creature, dancing like the sun
living most
unto itself, growing within,
and mutually

i have nothing to do with it
and it has nothing to do with me

and from a distance where i left
and live, oh, that bloody beast
is beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Counting

fifteen heads of buffaloes
grazing on the rice fields
twenty in all are the mounds
of rice husks
this harvest season
ten heads of men bowing
down to earth
sixteen heads of women
singing a summer song
a moon still up the crown
of mahogany tree
this early morning
a lone bird flies away
from me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Counting...

to be a poet
a man must have
five ears,
the woman seven
eyes,
and the child
five necks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coup De Grâce

an act of mercy
delivered
to a suffering man

the final blow
that merciful stroke

i am a king
and so i avoided you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Couple

he wakes up on
a vivid nightmare

the way he crosses
the river against the

rage of the tide and
he sees her sleeping

and he wakes her up
and she listens about

the sound of the river
and the thunder and

the wind and the
flashes of lightning

inside his frightened
mind and she holds his

hands and raises them
for her to kiss and then

they talk like lovers again
and then they make love

sleep is as gentle as
the silky bedsheets and

the soft cotton pillows
on the monotony of the

sound of the air conditioned
room. And then it is morning

she opens the window
where a pale red curtain
filters the light that lands
on his eyes still soundly asleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Couple In Their 50s

in bed they
talk

about the matters of the day
about this guy
who is looking for a job and could not find any
these harsh times
when humanity is at its lowest
rating

about a young girl who runs away from home
who finally finds herself trafficked in Singapore
the slave trade seems to be prevailing

many trivial things
it is not about themselves
but other people
not even new ideas how to improve
their
marital performance

in bed after an hour or so
they sleep

the one who is minded
turns off the light at the headboard

it is so dark....

RIC S. BASTASA
Courage

the courage to know
the difference
between good and evil
the courage to side
with the good
the faith to move on
even when
alone, I pray to Thee
My Lord

RIC S. BASTASA
you talk to someone
and you keep on listening even if you do not want to
he keeps on talking too

even though
he does not like to talk to you

educated fools...

RIC S. BASTASA
Cousin Gig

i thought
it was a metaphor
when she said
'please remain
your slipper'

(i smiled and
she corrected herself
as we entered
the Japanese house
that she meant
to leave my slippers)

we had saki
watching kabuki

RIC S. BASTASA
you know my name, cousin. 
you always call me by my name 
always in the shallow part of the river 
placid, i am, like a linen spread in bed 
before sleep time, 

we are bathing 
and we tell stories about our ancestors 
those brave warriors from the north 
moving south, finding some fortune long denied them by fate 

one day 
you prefer to dive with me in the Deep 
to find some pearls 

the whirlpool sucked you in 
and i tried to help, but you allowed it just the same to claim you 

up there is the storm of sinking ships 
down in where we are is the peaceful ocean floor 

i touch your hand and then you breathe again 
but it is too late then, you ask me who i am? 

but i cannot speak anymore 
for now i belong not to the earth but to the sea, the deepest sea 

cousin, i am not your cousin. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Cousing Jing

he had put it on
record
his cousin was too
damn stupid to
understand what was
there so real
inside him
and it was carved in
stone
that figure of a man
a thin man
deprived of the much
needed compassion
so many stories
have been told propagated
like a hardheaded vine
and it was too
deafening

and then all those
stupid listeners
wander why he chose
distance
why he settled in an island
in the middle of
the ocean
where storms are
everyday occurrences
why he dropped his name
why he burned
the boat that took
him there

RIC S. BASTASA
Covered Eyes

on covered eyes
amidst the darkness

moonless and
starless

on that quiet patch
of thick grass

we see much better
our ears sharper

our minds
more open

our mouths gaping
our skins sweating

RIC S. BASTASA
Covering For A Colleague

it is corrupting
and you do not like it
you want to tell the world
and yet since he is a colleague
who must have forgotten the rules of the game
you end up with a new resolution: tell him and cover the tracks
back to your office
you look at the mirror and contemplate
on the sharp fangs of your conscience: you see a snake biting its own tail.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coy And Shy Woman

she takes the last seat
where i can see her most
with her bulging breasts
and sexy legs

i know what she is up to
but i can always pretend
that i am more
interested in political law
rather than
sex

i must be firm. i know.
but for how long?

i guess
i must not be too hard on
myself...

perhaps, dinner tonight
with her
may lessen
this rage of the
hormones.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coz I'Ve Been Sweet To You

what have i got in return
a spoiled woman,

you have not seen
my worth
you have not felt who
i am
you have not valued
what i do for you

coz i have been sweet to you
my sweetness has
become so familiar
it is nothing to you

i am fed up
tomorrow let me see
how bitter can i be

and you shall have it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Coz We'Re Happier Now...

we did not notice
the ending of a day
we were laughing
on those old jokes
how they still tickle
our cheap taste
we were slapstick
we had the last one
for the road
a bear hug
there are no marks
between that point
where light
exactly faded...

RIC S. BASTASA
Crabs And Luck

the crabs are the creatures of pincers
they bite each flesh and nerve
and it will be so painful but you
are as silent as the
grass and as resilient as the
the vine that is in touch with the
latest wind

when you are finally taken
i know that like the rest you are not coming back
to tell us
how it is there
what perfection has been given
how happiness can never be contained
because it is
beyond the hold of our hands
beyond the grasp of the
human minds

lucky, indeed how lucky can you be
on your first trip to
eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Cracks

a crack on the wall
and a crack on the head
they are not the same
they can never be the same

a crack for evidence
a lapse of the proof
they are not the same
they can never be the same

the difference figures out
freedom and
death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crash Commercialism

you bought so many things

crazy commercialism

the moment you take them in
you feel you have no need of any thing

you put them in the store room
they get dusty

they become forgotten

some do not have plates to put their food on
you have all of them hoarded

see a shrink, find out why
you have been buying things that you never use

and yet you do not give them away
you are keeping all the living birds inside the tomb

RIC S. BASTASA
Crash Of Images In The Attic Of Your Mind

a surge of feelings
a crash of images in the attic of your mind
there is so much noise
of falling things and shattering of glasses
in your ears
a flash of lights like fireflies
sudden thrushes between here and there
a pendulum of what you want and
what you regret
a trickle of silence
a spread of seepage of dew and dun
everything is happening without a thought
it is like a bird bumping on the glass of the car
you are driving and there is no going back
to see if it is alive
or dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crazy But Happy.....

how come that we save money
like it is a morsel that we even refuse
to feed the dogs and the cats?

how come that we spend the same
in a night like it were raining dogs and cats?

crazy? yes, crazy, but
happy.

period.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crazy Moon

in my life i still wait
for the crazy moon
one that knocks
on my door simply
because i have
closed the window
and this crazy moon
insists that i have
to see it whole
before it leaves
to its journey and
swears what bad
is there that my
darkness can do
to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crazy Notebook...

as our vengean....go to the
muddle...ce to clarity
we cojams..
and wcorrect'
ill i
jumps from one space to
another.
i do not change
neither wfees..  our nfuse this universe
with our rattles, the
notebook rambles
and

RIC S. BASTASA
Crazy Thoughts

for you to
love me, and love me true and
adore my body, for you to kiss my lips
and close your eyes and love the taste of my
tongue,
to you to live with me be my own, and bathe with me
nude in the river, and bask under the sun alone with me
on a rock beside a hill among the scented flowers,
for you to love me forever
for you to own me
like a slave to his
master

this earth shall tremble

RIC S. BASTASA
Creating The Haze In The Distance

you must have finally realized
the meaning of moonlight
the reason for shadows
the justification for twilight
the madness of mornings without love
the nights that dance with the flesh
you must have eaten the red apple
from the beginning it was forbidden
there are sparks all over your hair
electricity in its static forms
smooth as silk and frictionless as a flamboyance
there is this distance between each star each planet
things move on their own now
systematically you see a universe
yours and mine
now we start again from the beginning
ask me for my name
ask me where do i live
ask me what is the reason for my being
ask me why i live why i still do not want to die
we meet we talk we laugh and then we part
as usual so casual as causal as destined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Creating Your Own Meaning

you wake up one day
finding yourself in the same dark and damp room
same dusty curtains
smelling like dried fish

light coming from the window
greets you with

hello, welcome
you are nothing special
you are just like everybody else

for one thing
your heart does not remember
what was that despair all about

you wash your face
brush your teeth
change clothes
walk outside

the world is still the same
it does not bother about you or
anybody else

man, you create your own meaning
no one does it for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Creativity

come sunshine
when you love doing the art
time erases itself like a mist
when you love doing love
there is no more time
no you
you go back to what you were
from the beginning
you are the
word

RIC S. BASTASA
Creativity And Illusions...

in the most noisy world
you can close your ears

and the sights you see
can have your own music from your soul

you can choose
what to hear and you can also pretend about what to see

or feel
you started doing this a long time ago

on that day when the birds of dawn broke their wings
when the light from the moon bent a little to have the illusion

of quiet, too early to learn
how is it to be a dove amidst the bats

how is it to be a lamb around the foxes
the world since then has become one big square

and then you create a scene: a green river flowing inside the forest
singing like a maiden

nude as she arranges her black hair
long enough to cover her breasts... and then

you place a man along the banks
paddling a boat towards her nipples

RIC S. BASTASA
Creativity Of The Mind

one thing with the mind is that
it never stops thinking
and this is something that i am really afraid of sometimes
this creativity that never rests
and so i dabble in poetry
and even short stories
i murmur to myself and muster some other ideas that always creep
like some grasses in my backyard
or dusts coming from nowhere landing on some
new furniture or stains that you wonder
where do all these come from?
i wonder. I wander. I move. My ideas move me
like
sometimes, i feel, so robotic, like what Robert sometimes feel
when he write a line or two and call it poetry.
something creeps in my heart and i am filled with desire.
i am afraid, i go out of bounds, and then you discover
dirt and shattered glasses
or i may not know it
you discover blood dripping from my hands
and to my surprise
i feel nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Creep

the vine underneath a thick foliage
always has a way of making itself seen
so slowly it creeps and climbs
the fence
each brick, each grill, each wall
the tendrils climb
and then when it finally sees the sun
it lets go its happy smile
through its little honeysuckles

i watch and felt the art of the tendrils
curling and curling sprouting and then
blooming.

There is a purpose, there is this vision.
I am keeping it. This vine.

RIC S. BASTASA
went home one day to her house on the hills
to meet
the love of her heart
for three days she was there
and she was looking for him

her face
unwashed for three days too

and she comes back to the house
sleeps without eating
her eyes swollen
and she does not talk

i will be too silly enough
to ask her
why she arrives late
and leaves the clothes hanging on the clothesline wet under a heavy rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crisp

Nona's granddaughter
climbs and
rides on a swing

her fine hair rides
the wind
and her laughter is
sowing
joys in the air

this early morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crisp And Little

it is its own sound
that you hear inside your mouth
no one hears it
except you alone
outsourcing the
beatings of your heart

something so crisp
so little
and then you swallow it all
it is yours and yours
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Crisp And Short And Stunning

that is
what it should be
people
are busy you know
and what they want
is something astonishing
in a small space
like a click of
the mouse

next!

RIC S. BASTASA
Crisp Haiku

crisp haiku
like potato chips for sale:

saintly salt and vinegar
a multi-pack rady salted romance
or this symphony of sour cream and chives

for god's sake
she's crazy for
chicken

RIC S. BASTASA
Critiques

when they read your poem
and find some fleas there
and they scratch their heads
like saying: this is bad, this is really bad
and they crumple your poem
and throw it in their waste basket

and they junk the best poem you
have written taking you days and days to revise it
like it is a composition
of another nincompoop. a moron, a lesser kind of
the human being
like a bubble, a bumble, a bum, a belle, a keg,
a piece of feces
a ning nang nang nang

well, write another not ever stop writing.

if you find the one that they have thrown in the waste basket
again, by chance,
redeem it,
take it back and iron out what difference have you
with that critique
(who has not written even a poem for his dog)

have patience. and always remember
you did not write the poem for him
you write it for you and your lover
and your loved one,
and another lover and many more lovers
of life and its
ecstacies

till kingdom come
be patient.
be ever patient.
it is you who has

seen the light. not them.
open another door.
go inside where your lovers dwell.
they will kiss you.
they will clap their hands
and drink beer with you.

and it will be dark again,
and you cannot sleep after you make love.
three times on the floor
and there and then
in your nudity
another voice comes inside your ears
asking that you write
about a floating blue butterfly
looking for the opening
of an orange
flower

another poem shall be written
early morning
be glad
the voice is still there

your shrink may tell you to name the voice.
for he thinks you are schizophrenic
to the max

do not tell him.

it is your secret with God.
be .

RIC S. BASTASA
Cross-Eyed

I am so tense
with what I see
I check whether
I am cross-eyed

You have two faces
And you doublespeak.

well, it is not me at all,
as you say it,
it is your prerogative as a poet.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Crossing Boundaries

in fear and
suspicion i ask you to hold my hands
to slide your fingers unto
mine,

what do i feel? i feel nothing
if i scream
i hear nothing and you hear nothing

with all sadness
i have changed i have crossed boundaries

i have wings
and i flap and i toss myself like a stone to the sky
light as a thought
blithe as
a memory of my childhood

i am not myself
anymore
and you shall not know
me

a thin slice of time
a sharp cut of the moment
separates us

i shall not remember you
for i have changed

and you shall not have any figment of my
feel
for you have changed

two worlds apart
beyond sadness crossing the boundary
of remembering

i have no hands, my fingers
are empty rivers
there are no stones no banks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crossing The Border

when i cross the border
when it is time
there will be no guards to stop me
i will be welcome there
by the hands of light
on the wings
of fate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crossing The Bridge

when you cross the bridge
you have nothing in mind
except
the other side

you have decided to
burn the bridge
and she likes it

what is the use of the past?
what is the use of the old pictures?

i have seen all of them
rotting in the garden

i have seen the rain and sunshine
mindless
about the fading of everything

the faces in black and white
turning into another muddy solution
seducing the roots
wanting to be gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Crowd

motorcycles
i cannot hear
woman whispers

RIC S. BASTASA
Crown Of Thorns

to go near you i put on some leaves
to hide the thorns
and you like the crown that pretends
to be the laurels of
my victory

then the truth has to come out
the leaves wilt and they finally fall to the floor
and i am left with this leafless vines
full of thorns

i make a crown of circular twigs
filled with thorns
now, watch me as i bleed
this is my truth this is my defeat

RIC S. BASTASA
Cruelty

her two children wallow
in shame and poverty

humiliated by her friends
who dine with her in opulence

RIC S. BASTASA
Cruising The Nile River....

cruising the River Nile
for two hours

waves pulsate on the navel
of the belly dancer

i busy myself taking shots
and video

my friends think that i am
lustful, but i must say

with all honesty that there
is so much art in such a

grace, in such a dance of life,
in such a celebration....

if they only knew the depths
of my oceans

they would have more respect
more reverence....

RIC S. BASTASA
Cruising The Pacific Seas....

cruising, i like the way
how life must be spent like simply cruising
in the pacific
seas,

away from everyone
in the middle of all strangers
looking for solitude
listening to the
the waves and breeze of foreign
lands
new to my self
rejuvenated

sunbathing at the deck
watching
other bodies showing
their
physical wares

my hat covering my eyes
watching without
being watched

RIC S. BASTASA
Cry Baby Cry

cRY bABY CRY
dO NOT BE afraid to
Stain the Skin
in your Eyes
or your Cheeks
Cry baby cry if you must
To relieve the
Heaviness of your Heart
Cry

After that Let us Talk
and Laugh Again

RIC S. BASTASA
Crying

he says he likes to cry when
everyone is asleep when no one hears his sound
of grief anymore

he wants to keep this grief alone
thinking that no one understands anyway

no one wants a sorrow that will be shared
or a grief to be feasted upon

sometimes he says he cries when he is bathing
under a cold shower to cool his eyes
to appease his heart and when he steps out
of the bathroom

when someone notices how red his eyes are
he tells them that his shampoo has caused it all

RIC S. BASTASA
Crying In The Shower My Friend

crying in the shower is such a waste of time
take away the shower and let us restructure the line
crying is such a waste of time
remove time and supply the proper word
crying is such a waste of
tears.
reserve your tears for some joys
i mean,
there is such thing
as tears of joy
and don't waste so much time crying in the shower
someone next to you who sings while bathing in the shower
may use the same
he is much better a proper user.

RIC S. BASTASA
the past eats like
a voracious monster
the future warns like
a sentry of the gate
the present melts
like ice
there is no mark
of life
for someone who
has been pretending
to be dead
facing no
responsibility.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is one thing
with you
that to me is
very wrong

you're too formal
with that coat
and tie
and those shiny
black shoes
and that
gel on your hair

we are not going
to a party
we are going to the
hills

take those off.
i don't mean that
we go there
naked.

what? the guns?

RIC S. BASTASA
Crystal Ball

a crystal ball in your hand
foretelling my mood

stop it
the paranoia is a lamp in your mind

it is daytime
stop it

see the sun
feel the warmth

do not make predictions
reality is here

see the world for yourself
do not look at me

feel the grass
not my skin

touch the wind
not my words

fly like a bird yourself
do not think that i have wings

stop talking much
every syllable becomes a bar of your prison wall

try the silence
like licking vanilla ice cream

set me free
for i am free

live your life
do not be crippled by my own biography
focus focus
focus focus

write the words for your life
do not see my notes

be brave
as i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Crystals

snow crystals falling gently
caps, white bodies around a hill
a mantle along the road
slippery
cold, and silky
and glossy with light
painful as such
when held
longer to the tip
of my finger
frost and chill
and thrill,

these are what i do not have
experienced yet
something to talk about
and guess

vicarious, elegant to the
ambition of thoughts
rambling and
fanciful

RIC S. BASTASA
Cuculus Canorus

A grayish European bird
two-note call

lays its eggs in the nests of birds of other species.
the family Cuculidae, of
grayish-brown plumage

a slender body.
cry of one of these birds.

A foolish crazy
cuck·ooed, cuck·oo·ing, cuck·oos
repeat incessantly,
as a cuckoo does its call.

Lacking in sense imitative,

ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha

Cuckooed, cuckooing,
hello, my dear cuckoo!
a nice day, is it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Cultural Lapse

i can understand
if my co-teacher
who is teaching
literature
can mistake
lighting from
lightning, but here
comes another one
teaching Physics
mistaking
lightning from
lightening...
if you understand
what old age is all about
everything becomes
forgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
Cunnilinguist

The Great Medicine of the Three Mountain Peaks is to be found in the body of the woman and is composed of three juices, or essences: one from the woman's mouth, another from her breasts, and the third, the most powerful, from the Grotto of the White Tiger, which is at the Peak of the Purple Mushroom (the mons veneris).
– Octavio Paz. Conjunctions and Disjunctions.

ang g-spot
mao kana ang Grotto sa Puti nga Tigre
nga mao usab ang Tumoy sa Dinorado nga Ligbos.

gusto niya nga adtoon ang imong tulo
ka langub sa kalipay,
diha sa imong baba, diha sa imong totoy, diha
sa balayan sa imong kinhason.

andig andig sa andes andes
 nga sa dihang nabyudo na si Papa
og naghandom kang Mama

miingon siya nga kadtong kinhasona
maingon ingon gayod

RIC S. BASTASA
Cured

and so the words
which he swallowed for years
and years
those that he chewed so well
turning liquid mixed with his blood
and spread in all his veins
and he was cured
and there is
no need
about what must be said
or should have been said

consummated the last sunshine
comes and
destruction of the illusions
have become inevitable

gone is gone
and bygone is bygone

RIC S. BASTASA
Curl

You curl, you know how to curl,
Yes you know a curl in your hair
And you curl yourself like a
Hair, in your bed,
It is so cold and no one
Sleeps here
No one comes
There is no hello
As guest and no
Hi to pretend
You are coming
Well, you curl, you know how to curl,
Like your hair,
This time, curl forever,
Nothing straight till the end,
Eternal curl,
Still
Touch it

It bounces and rebounces,
touch it again,
and be silent

RIC S. BASTASA
Curse

beloved
i am disturbed
with what you
have been doing
all these years

i have taken
the courage of finally
forgetting you
of forgiving
myself

please do the same
forgive
that i may have
a nice sleep
tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
Cursing The Nile

cruising the River Nile
for two hours

waves pulsate on the navel
of the belly dancer

i busy myself taking shots
and video

my friend think that i am
lustful, but i must say

wit all honesty that there
is so much art in such a

grace, in such a dance of life,
in such a celebration....

if they only knew the depths
of my oceans

ey would have more respect
more reverence....

RIC S. BASTASA
Curves

i love curves
like winding roads
that lull me
giving me such
needed rest
when i climb
mountain tops

for curves have
a way of making
things turn the
way they are not
and i marvel
about such
an intricacy
an art that winds
upon itself in
mystery, something

so profound
like what is that boa
hiding in its coils?
a pig? a goat?
a dog?
or a man?

curves heal
like a profound idea
entwining a man's mind
like a vine
delivering a yellow flower
to my lips

curves of a woman's body
like an argument that
wants to convince a stoical
and impartial jury

curves in my mind
not sharp not blunt not even piercing
but exaltingly stunning

RIC S. BASTASA
Custom Is Like

A circle of
caterpillars

ey they follow
head to tail
round and
round upon
among
within
themselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
you surf tonight
you see a bungalow beside a lake
abandoned

you do not like what is happening there
the birds are mute
and the ants cannot climb the
star apple tree

so to change at least some things
you cut
the bungalow and place it beside
a railway where a train moves
to another new destination

you want motion and
a song
you cut some notes from a music website
and put them
inside the throat of the mute bird
and so it begins
to sing
for all the lonely ants in there

and they too, begin to dance and build
their little kingdom

the bungalow appears like a some pieces
of assembled wood
dead

you paste some smoke from a busy chimney
you put some live fishes on the lake

and you look at what you have done
you smile

you are putting life to everything
and finally
you copy a picture of yourself, you cut
and then
paste it there

RIC S. BASTASA
Cutting An Old Letter

on cutting an old love letter
my hands tremble

some questions compounded
crowding inside my
mind

the scissors become doubtful
on some unresolved
matters of the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Cutting The Edges And Smoothing The Rough Points

in making the chair
we choose the strong wood
and cut them to desired shapes and sizes
we were thinking of you
how you sit, how big have you been
after 16 years of speaking English in America
and you are coming back
with some surprises
and sentiments and we here who know more
about the real story are ready with
our explanations

it is like the way how we cut the edges and
smooth the rough points
so you may find comfort
finally in your own
home

we want to be exact down to the last detail
only if you are willing to listen
sit properly and
be enlightened.

we would like everything to be simplified
if needs be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cutting The Heads

how many heads have my thoughts grown? aplenty, and you say thumbs down, you do not like the way these thoughts are going, i give you the power to cut all of them extract my eyes so i cannot see chop my ears so i cannot hear but give my power back to grow them all again these time faces that you cannot remember thoughts that bloom like flowers long eradicated by your time, let me have the seeds of thoughts that will grow moments again about a new beginning sprouts of my requests no longer begging for mercy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cyber Space...

morning sunrise
glorious morning
magnificent
soft lights...

facing the monitor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cyberspace

dahling, we meet in cyberspace
and in there no one asks what is our status
and for sure, honey, i will like it
as you like it too, because in there we are just nothing
but minds
thoughts and words and phrases
clauses: take me with you
mind making love with your mind
bursting ecstasies, moaning imaginations,
i get wet on my pants and you get wet somewhere
i don't care if there is rain or flood
of emotions

after the explosions of our secret wishes
we simply lay there
thinking about nothing
embracing this emptiness that for the meantime
at least for a short while
shall be filled by this cyberspace presence

in snow and sand

RIC S. BASTASA
Cycle

cell to worm
to body of an
animal
to death
rotten flesh back
to worm
and cell

there is an
exit from this
useless cycle
there is

RIC S. BASTASA
Cycle Of My Life

wake up in the morning
remembering some dreams
take a walk in the oval
and come back for breakfast
then take a bath
dress myself
then go to the office for work
the whole day is spent
within the walls and closed glass windows
then come back for home
eat dinner
pray and sleep to bed
dream and at dawn have little sex
with wife
and sleep again and wake up in the morning
and take a walk and take breakfast and
back to the office again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cycle...

those who are not there yet
claim they will not, and those who are there sitting
become disfigured faces,
either they are ousted or
they die, but some are lucky to
step down the plain
and live on their
houses again,

then they, whom we look up to,
trust and toss,
sit the throne but for a time
become the witches of their
own time,

i begin to write: all of them are the same
and all shall be corrupted by the same system
it will only take a very short time
before we can even forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Cyclic Choices....

when the well is full
the water gets free and can
soon make choices
away from that dark
hole of its
existence,

it can choose the canal
and be with the river's
conduit
or it can choose to seep back
and be with the
silence of the bottom
reunited

there is the kind
that confronts the heat
and evaporates
to join the gods in heaven
and be the
pure rain again

somehow it gets heavy
in there
and here it is
inside my palm
to fill the thirst
of my tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Cycline
	here is this snake
that bites its tail
there is this dog that
chases its shadow
there is this man
that looks for something
in the past
unknown to him
is this snake this dog
this shadow
that no one sees
there is this future that
meets them all
and yet how close how far
there is still no name
no tag no choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
D & G

between David
and Goliath
between the slingshot
the stone
and the eyes

let me be
just a page of a book
telling the story
about
the distance between
defeat and triumph

let me just be the air
between the stone
and the slingshot

i have too much
already of this
indulgence
let me be
just a sigh before
Goliath's fall

let me just be the shout
after David’s
unexpected victory

let me finally be the dust
blown by the wind
after the engagement
the duel

RIC S. BASTASA
despite the noise outside
the exhilaration of the crowd
somehow we manage to remain
as intact
parts of the whole
rejoicing in our silence amidst
the noise of the world
the clumsiness of our outlooks
vis-a-vis the
ineptness of the system
well, what do we really look for?
this is just a short journey
we keep it crisp like a newly fried
fish chip
savoring the taste of our salt
passing time
watching the passage of others
our joys

RIC S. BASTASA
the word is detained.

the technical term is custodial investigation,

the government forces are too many to hold a single person and claim that it is destroying the system.

the next word is injustice,

the government has more words to suppress the other words:

denials are clones and there are just too many of them all clones since the original is dead.

the only original word is honesty and Billy Joel says it is the most lonely word and include the generals and the president

everyone is so untrue

and back to the first word detained..

RIC S. BASTASA
by the way, 
there is a difference between biting nails 
and cutting them...

it is not the ball game that you see 
when you bite your nails
it is the little child in you at that moment 
when mama scolded you because you did not 
following her instructions

to take the bath beside the well 
at 4 o'clock in the morning
when you climb the balimbing tree instead 
to pick some fruits
and you fell down
and injured your knee & 
wounded the left side of your thigh
and you in fact
lost consciousness
and regained it only
in the hospital of that
little town
where your Papa was born

cutting the nails is another

it is not the hygiene that you have in your mind 
it was what you did 
that Monday night when you were so angry 
at yourself
and on that Tuesday morning
while you were having 
breakfast alone in your 
condominium
you received the news 
from the province that your 
Mama passed away.

RIC S. BASTASA
D12

i agree
that if from the moldy
bread they
produce penicillin

what more from
'out of you '
can they bring?

you are not
the moldy bread
i supposed

i wish i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
D2

we both have nothing to say
and we love it this way
only our hearts speak and feel
the mind has long surrendered
logic fails, reasoning gave us the
runaround
what our hands are doing are
simply opening to what is given
before us: doves hovering upon our
heads and then gently landing on our
palms.

RIC S. BASTASA
soon you get attuned
to nothingness
there is nothing to see and
feel at the end
smoke is all that is found
outside
inside then everything
disappears
and what you hear is just
the fading sound of
your last word

RIC S. BASTASA
we all have some
kind of prison
made of some kind
bars

each bar is not
an infidel to its duty
to make us think
that inside this prison
something good still
happens

kind hands can be
choking too
when what we want to
do is barred
because justice demands
that kindness
must beget kindness

out there
the real game is waiting
we hold the ball
but we cannot go
and play

RIC S. BASTASA
evading a yes or no answer is enough to invoke the 5th amendment and to questions which are as personal as undressing before the mirror and refocusing on the scar on the left side of the navel just below the edge of the heart and caressing it for a while massaging it and covering it again with the warmth of your palms is just enough for another day's humor.

well, let us keep the silence after all, it is precious.

RIC S. BASTASA
every early hour of the morning
before the church bell rings
for the first mass
the wife folds everything
from blankets to towels
to underwear
and paper bags and scarfs
and one by one she would put them
well arranged inside the cabinets

the husband has noticed these for days but he pretends that this activity is just normal for wives and that it will also be normal for husbands not to mind

perhaps she just wants to show that everything must be well kept and perhaps he wants to make the impression that indeed everything must be well-kept

but until when? oh, she keeps it to herself and oh, same thing with him, he also keeps it to himself

that will always be the beginning of their story the middle
and perhaps also the end

but everybody knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
in our galaxy of humanity
as we float like planets trying to keep
ourselves within
our respective orbits
somehow
there are some points of
convergence
where we fuse our minds
on something that we feel
as
our experience
and we stop revolving for a while
and lessen our spins
to have a little conversation
with this passing moment
but as fate would have it
we let go
and resume our journeys again
around the sun
in the middle of this ocean
of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
he never thought
that he can reach this point,

never in his mind
did he think that he is a lucky person
reaching the summit
and feeling the

coldest air
the fog beside him
the grave silence
of the stones below his feet
the howling cliffs

up here
he is the most lucky person
to understand
what loneliness is all about

and the people below
those who think that the plains are
low levels
and not worth their brief
stay here on
dusty roads and
arid deserts

look at to him as
an idol
and always mention them
to their children

that he is an epitome
of success
the man who made it
from rags to
riches

all the while he is thinking
something's wrong
with this system

something must be
changed
someone must be made
responsible

the belief systems are
all wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
the better answer
to a better question
is a better question

look at the first
it is never better
without the second
that is the rule

and then the third
comes into the
picture claiming
to be the best
at this triangle
each one must submit
for in this rule
one has got to be
the best
one is good and
the other is better.

now do not talk
about what is
or who is bad
that is not the point.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dadi

oh she was miserable
she is always crying

her handkerchief is dirty
with her tears
and make up

i told her there is no reason to panic
everything here
is temporary

i assured her
her woes are much milder than the woes of those
who are here
and listening to her

and i let the other four who were with us
speak about their mess

they tell their own sad stories
how they escaped from hell

and then Dadi starts to smile
her handkerchief is dry

and she leaves us with a happy heart
to comfort her

we have to concoct miseries much
greater than hers

and then we start all over again
back to chapter 1

RIC S. BASTASA
Daghan Pa Unta Ako Ug Isulti Kanimo

Daghan pa unta ako ug isulti kanimo
Kabahin ni Sharon ug Gabby
Ni John Estrada ug ni Janice de Belen
Ni Pops ug ni Martin
ni romeo ug ni juliet
Apan wala ka gayod ganahi niini
Gusto nimong ibalhin ang topic sa lain
Bisag unsa na lang gud unta

Tungod ba kay ang ilang estorya
Kabahin man sa panagbulag?

RIC S. BASTASA
Dahlin....Take Art

if you have fears
like thorns in
your bottom or

fish bones trapped
in your throat

take art

whatever art is there

sculpture or
painting or
poetry

makes the room neat
and clean

arranges the mess
puts curtains on those
empty windows

deletes the word
fear
on the net

have consolation
why not?

RIC S. BASTASA
Daily

you wake up early
you wash your face
you use soap and water
you wipe your face with
a white towel near the sink
hanging
you dress up
you take breakfast
you chew your food
you drink your coffee
you read the papers
hear the news on tv
you go to the garage
warm up your car
you open the garage
and speed your way to your office
you read the whole day
you talk less
you take your lunch
and you cat's nap
you work the whole afternoon
you read a lot
you write
you are tired and ask your driver
to drive you home
you open the door of your house
you sleep with your shoes on
you sleep for some hours
you are hungry
you go to the kitchen and eat
the food made ready for you
by your housemaid

you are alone in this sequence
you turn on the tv
and the whole night you feel
you are the lookout
for something that is about to happen
you ask yourself, what is this all about?
you tell yourself, you do not know, it is just your daily routine
for years and years, and it goes on and on and you have no
way of stopping

they call it life

RIC S. BASTASA
Daily Life

the procedure is the same all day
repeating and
always repeated
for making a difference is
a risk
altering the pattern simply
gives birth to
pain and so one goes all over
again
start with a picture of oneself
then the other
perhaps a model or the object
of your
physical desire and stay there
for a while
somehow you wish you move
to a higher level
like something emotional or
self-redeeming like something
higher than oneself
the spiritual but you come to the
conclusion that the environment
is simple enough
all images or tangible walls
and wooden bridges below the boats
keep on sailing even without you
in it
you hold on to what is
routine
there is no fear here
the formula keeps on working for you
a self, a picture of yourself, another
picture of the other
then you wrap your body with
your arms
and it is so comforting
no sweat
things shall begin again as usual
you step outside the
door and
mix as usual with the crowd
where no one knows you
and you know no one

at night you arrive on a room
nothing's altered
the smell is the same
and then
you open the window
there are no stars
all city lights
damned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Daily Poems...

these are little things.  
ant-like, crawling, and may not  
be good for your  
precious attention, and they  
are worthless,  
beneath your feet, insignificant,  
but you look down,  

they know how to bite.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Daisies All Over My Body

let daisies rain on
me and let all the daisies
cover my face my body
let daisies crown my head
my hair, my nose, let there
be daisies everywhere
inside, outside me

i am in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dama De Noche

That flower blooms only
at night

perhaps afraid of the
light

or just shy of the
sun's light

in darkness it spreads
its scent

nearby a man
embraces its own shadow

in bed
another man cannot
sleep

meanwhile the dama
de noche
continues to be enchanting

RIC S. BASTASA
Daming Tanong, ..Lundagin Mo Na Lang, Baby

bakit nga ba?
bakit ba ang dami mong tanong?
ang dami mong sinabi
wala ka namang gustong sabihin
bakit nga ba?
ano ba? paano ba? kailan ba?

ay naku
kung ginawa mo na lang sana
tapos na rin sana
at sana
wala na tayong matatanong
o masasabi pa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Damned Reunions

tired of those damned
reunions always other people doing good
making more money buying respect
integrity no longer intact
like a sword to its scabbard
bards and boards and bored
and braggarts
silky collars and shiny shoes
and dance beats
no longer adapted to my age,
i am not
attending any anymore
damned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Damon....) The Moon(

damon
show me a flower
by the window
made of
glass
against the
snow

it is white
and full
with a twig
that is
tall

damon i do
not wish
to go inside your
room and
touch that flower

i am far
far away from you damon
and you are
just an imagination

and precisely
with this distance and
my mind

i have remained
your happy
one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dance Before Me Sweet One

dance before me
sweet one
sway and slowly take
your clothes off
inch by inch i will savor
every part of you

dance, dance
to the wild music of
my desire

show me what you have
part by part
please me please me
for i am in sorrow

do not look at me
just dance

after the dance
take every piece of you

i have promised myself
there will be no touch.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dance With Me

as i am dust
and for us to have a dance
you must be the night wind
the sky our dance floor
the stars our background
the moon's silence
our only music

RIC S. BASTASA
Dance With Me Till I Am Finally Free

Take me in your heart with the fire of your song
Take me through all your fears
Take me in till we’re safe in there
Take me in like the sorrows that you have gathered
Inside the confines of your heart
Dance with me till the pain is lost
Dance with me till I am finally free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing In The Rain

Let the children dance
In the rain
They are free!
Let them run on the
Green grass in the rain
They are free!
Let us hear their sounds
Of excitement
They are free!
Let us see them drink
Raindrops
They are free!
Their shoulders caressed
By rain dropping from
Roof tops to their toes
Let us see them
Play in the rain and in the
Mud
Let them get dirty
Let them be washed by the rain again
They are free!

Don’t you see we are all
These children dancing
In the rain?

We are free!

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing The Samba With You

mas que nada
desafinado
vou te cantar
garota de ipaneman
corcovado
sausalito
samba de uma nota 56
berimbau
aguas de Marco
o pato
a fedicidade
chega de saudade
o barquinto
flor de lis
maracangatha
mancada
maracangalha
agua de beber

yes we are in this party together
there is nothing to be refused
nothing to be ashamed of
we are still this official couple
you in your spanish gown
and i am in my decent coat and tie
what do we have to lose if we pretend
a little tonight about a love diminished
with time and the boredom that wraps us

i will hold your hand and keep you close to me
you breathe the unnecessary explanation
as i smile like a man of the usual confidences
now my dear, we shall dance the samba

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing The Tango

i give the initial steps forward and then
you compliment them with some steps backward
and with my left hand on your waist
putting even a slight pressure there
you notice the understandable push and you know
exactly where next to go
without me telling you
even in a whisper

we look up high in the ceiling with dignity
as i carry you
to the places that i want to go
my right hand holds yours
and sometimes i give the signals for the slowing of our steps
as though we are casually walking in the park

the audience look at us
amazed by the grace and
passion in our eyes...

very well like marriage, i said to myself
the fingers speak
the eyes understand
the body moves towards a common direction
the mouth simply listens

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing The Tango With You...

now we dance the tango
and you may step on my toe
as i too may do the same to you.

things happen, but don't you worry
listen to the music, do not hurry.
feel the passion, free emotion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing To The Tune Of Life

the dance of life pulsates
like blood rushing inside our hearts

turning left turning right
we rotate we vibrate
we collide we slide
we tumble we gargle
we dangle we tangle

it does not matter what steps to take
forward or backward
we dance the dance of life to the tune of life
what matters most is we just do it
such a short moment
not meant to be wasted

let us dance before the next moment comes
soon the dance is over
we rest if we must but we can always say
we danced to the tune of life
we were so happy
we did not have the words of regrets

we reach the edge and then we fall
we are gone and then forgotten
we do not have to tell them
we were once here and we did our best
that this place was never ours
we had the best of times
we wrote the best lines

RIC S. BASTASA
Dancing With Time

sooner you learn to dance
with time
its steps harder at first to follow
but it has always a way of
making you feel at home
with its familiar
music
its songs like the winds
from the mountains
its tapping steps very much
attuned to the sound
of the rain

and then when you completely
learn by heart
its way of changing the way
you look at life
and give up the past and
take in the excitement of
your future

and having believed in your
talent now
without your knowing it
time leaves you

and you experience finally
the extreme pleasure
of the stillness of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dapitan Sunset

melting
orange lollipop

honey-coated
round candy

inside the tongue
liquifying

RIC S. BASTASA
Dare Me Not Tell That You Have Never Loved Her That Much...

what you cannot accept
(for you have standards of your own,
goodness, beauty, utility even)
here is mama,
she accepts whatever son she gives
birth to and daughters be they the one
whom you can call us homely, (or ugly to use the exact word)
so here is mother
the woman who can love you for whatever you are,

dare me not tell that you have never loved her that much...

RIC S. BASTASA
Dark

What will I do with a fountain
of time
my silence
is a well without a dropp of water
I can weep in the dark
weep and its silence will hear me
but it will close its eyes
it will not speak
the evening will tread on
quietly an old man
it will walk on without looking back
without seeing where its shadow
sleeps
and I can say wait where
are you going
and I can think of all the places I can think of
I can think of walls walls walls
of walls behind which anything lurks
I can lock myself
in a closet full of clothes not my size
fill my pockets with dust
or take off my clothes and imagine
my skin is ice
and I will be standing here
where I am standing stepping on moments
that sharpen into hours like thorns
into my feet
the wound in my heart is deep
the pain does not answer to any name
where is the door
the window the door

*reprinted from a friend

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness

when you arrive
you caress my hair
and kiss my nape

and i face you
heave a sigh
and send a stare
categorically saying
that i do no like
you anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness And A Rod Of Light

darkness shall part like the legs of a woman
and i shall enter like a strong rod of light

like light i also bring the property of warmth
and you shall filter me like a prism and glass

we see a spreading rainbow of colors
we are amazed in the dance of silence

we dare not think of the magnifications
the usual refractions the optical illusions

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness And Light

i would like to arrive not at the point
when darkness and light
chase and fight each other

when they grapple with who's right
and who's fit to survive
on the cycle of life

i like to arrive at the time when
they stop and arrive at a compromise
to live in peace together
not that the light stays on the right
not that darkness stays on the left

for that would still be divisive
i like them fuse into a certain hue
so pleasing to the eyes of all confused men

dusk, dawn, a dawning light, grey
the coolness of twilight, midway, between coming and departure

standing still, a gaze of the star and the coming of a new day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness And Light (2)

at the end
one must realize
the unity of all these
things, matters, species,

that we all belong to
the same origin
that all things are rooted
to just one tree

darkness and light
are not apposed
they are just one face
of the world looking
at another time

you and I
are what we are
there is no sense
in looking for differences anymore...

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness And Light Playing Upon Us

i shot myself
with a camera.

then i edited
the picture showing
more of the dark side
of my life
with only a very slight
shade of light
on the left side of my
face

indeed when light and
darkness play upon
your sorrows and pains
they make a true and
beautiful picture of
us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness Fades

darkness fades
like a dropp of ink
on a clear pool of water
just wait a little while
a bright colored koi
will soon show
and have a nice talk
with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Darkness...

it is the absence
of light
asleep in the cozy
corner of
the universe
on closed eyes
the sun
on weary body
the thin sheets of light
concealed
behind the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Dasein......

you know that it simply is not,
you pause, you think some more,
you try to figure out what it really is,
this and that are simply not that,
you are sure that it is not that,
but, by then, you must accept you cannot simply find it.

it is not here, but you cannot really point,
you cannot draw it,
you cannot write it,
you cannot say it,
but it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dave And Dean Remembered....

brothers, after
the university, they
surrendered their lives
to the mountain

where they were eaten
raw as their parents
still think
how unjust can this
universe be

the belief was that
only blood can wash the
country
bleached and blanched
into
prosperity, a change of
country soul

i go back there
diving into the loneliness
the validity of the cause
i now
question

oh, this is not about me
not even about them
those who donated their lives
into humanity

this is the journey
and they arrive there first
ours is still
one path to another
seemingly
we never want
the finishing line

oh, this must be very
exciting

i only guess.

RIC S. BASTASA
David Do Not Say That You Are Not A Poet

in terms of
the word written
telling something
that there is something inside you
that clicks
and beats and screams and calms down
like a slam
of a door from someone who decides
finally to leave
in terms of disbelief
about what happens on the day
when you are struck
with sadness
the poems begin to grow in your mind
and they become trees
and trees
are poems and so
be frank to admit now that
you are a poet

lousy or what.

RIC S. BASTASA
David, The Marble Sculpture....

the human
male sculpture of David
stands tall
naked to the tourist
amazed
to the greatness of
the marble
body

was it the story of this
man whose stone did not
miss Goliath?

was it the genius of his
creator who mastered
the curves and
balance via
the marble and the
chisel?

or is it this unending feeling
of the tourist
still unsatisfied about what
is lustful and
beautiful?

if you have seen and touched
it by now you must
have understood
what it is to be naked
admired
and then abandoned

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn

2 a.m. is not an arrival of
a surprise, but it is a compulsion,
images of yellow flowers
and green leaves on curtain
face you, a wall covered with
clothes, but there is nobody
wanting to wear any.
you wonder, how does it
feel to be a cloth still uncut,
a shirt just hanging there
ready to be worn, yet no
one is taking, and no one
seems to be ready to go.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn And The Drunkards Still Sing

i understand the song
of the drunkard at dawn
i was one
of them sometime in that
moment when
you got pregnant
and angry
about my own irresponsibility

i forget you and you
must forget me
that is the only solution but

i cannot help but remember
when the drunkards of this
place till dawn
sings all their miseries

they do not hurt me or anybody
they hurt themselves

i understand perfectly how is it
to love and to lose and to be
guilty
unnecessarily.

the songs are painful.
and dawn is so cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn I Know, In Deep Understanding Shall Acquit Me.

dawn is a good
investment

i invest so much time
in it

some memories
scruples that i never get
over with

much time is spent
remembering and trying to
learn

how to avoid the same
mess
how to rise above a
drowning

how to redraw the route
of a great escape

from what? from whom?
these are no longer
the mysteries of my own
faith

dawn is a friend
it talks back and i sometimes feel
that i am

an undesirable kid, the one who should
be blamed
for broken toys

dawn is my own paper
where i write all my sins of
omissions
if you begin to read what
i have written
in that dusky sheet
perhaps you will not like me
forever

dawn is a bosom
and i make love with it
as usual

i feel this comfort when you are
no longer with me

the days will judge me
but dawn i know, in deep understanding
shall acquit me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn Scent

cutting basil leaves
with bare hands at midnight

at dawn the spring onions
are jealous

at noon it is time
to peel the garlic

on an early night
i smell the scent of white flowers

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn Time

it is still dark
and what you hear are only footsteps
there are no shadows yet
only speculations
there is something good
at this hour
you ponder on what is
why and
when

then the cock of the neighborhood crows
there is light now
and you are ready to go

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawn, Dawn, Damn

the sound of soft rain
over an open window
the dance of the curtain
to the rhythm of the
wind
i like this whisper
to my ear
it is mine and mine alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawning

it is dawning
gray wraps the trees and grass in black
as i walk along this boulevard

the light comes
thru the shutters of the clouds
this morning

rays like hands touch me
there is warmth
spreading on my face
there is fire
in my heart

i look at the stretch of
of acacia trees where the street lights
slowly close one by one
and at this moment
the years spread themselves
like some green grass
where i rest my weary soul

in my mind
i always remember you
on my side i can stil feel the warmth
of your skin

it simply dawned in me
the fire of yesterday
and the coldness was gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Dawning.....

dawn talks
it says there will
always be space
not that close not
that far

a kiss must keep
reminding the forehead
that soon
you have to let me go
for i am not yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Days After The Storm

after all that happened recently
the meaning of the wind has changed

when it starts to blow
even how lightly like a hush on the cheek

those who met the harshness of sacrifices
and near deaths too quickly

will always be reminded of the kiss
that caused a thousand deaths

and those who remain to be alive
will always find suspicion why it is here again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Days And Nights Go By (By R.B.)

days and nights go by
like friends and lovers
merely passing by us
not stopping not staying

know by now, life is
like that, too, merely
passing by, not staying,

pilgrims, yes, days
and nights are pilgrims,
always passing by,
not staying,
night not blacking out
day, not exploding

yes, just passing by
like poems that you
read, that you pass
by, and then we

begin again, we pass
again, not stopping
not staying, sometimes
not even glancing.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Days Gone By...

back to
simplicity,
i wait for you
in that old city
as faithful as a
an uprooted
tree where
what remains only
is the covered
walk.

RIC S. BASTASA
Days Gone By....

Thursday.

got a headache on Wednesday

tuesday was bad,

and Monday was unforgiving.

negative energies are always here with me.

There is a maggot feasting on the poisoned rat.

I poisoned it last week, and days are not

that efficient to kill it without seeing

another light.

It died inside the cabinet causing us

too much disturbance.

Friday, another poem.

I hate sadness. I expect redemption.

But Friday is another usual Friday.

It cannot forget that poisoned rat

that died on a Thursday.

Saturday, i will be away on a boat

crossing the sea towards an island

Sunday, again

there is no church, It is the mountain again

No, not Calvary.

It is my day with the working people.

I will eat with them

It is the day after my

50th birthday

nothing big.50 is nothing

but a number inferior

to 60.

So what is the big deal?

i am still, no matter what,

lengthwise or

side-wise, i am still another

dust,
unseen fungus on
the scalp of another
unwashed head.

RIC S. BASTASA
Days Slip

his days slip mostly
on her halfslip
he gets entangled
on the seams
of her
underwear

stuck inside
it he dies
in bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
De Aguado, Le Fandango Varie O

The descendant of the Spanish Friar says:

What I am selling to you is
Water, something to drink

It is more than that
It is also something to sprinkle
Your forehead
And you become holy
Free from sin
You pay for holiness

Now walk on the aisle
Of the church
And how they look at you
A holy man
Because of my holy water

And you will have a halo
And you become radiant
Radioactive perhaps

I repeat I do not just sell water to drink
It would just be ordinary

I am selling to you purity of soul
I am selling to you a future in heaven

Come now, buy water
Sprinkle your souls
Make them holy
Sprinkle them to all
Parts of your body

Meanwhile, there will be no mass
For the coming week
I will be on honeymoon with the woman
Who got the water from the well
Dead Alive.....A Wedding Picture

we fit in
so we party

time is the
fish hook open eye

margarita, metaphored
me into this
bliss pain bliss pain
life death
thing

we must fit in
we must

bleeding is wound's
kids

keeping open what
injury there

what can we do?
well what can we really do?

live, fit, just keep on
fitting in

like our portrait on the wall
dead alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead And Dumb....

beloved, why
did you turn into
a pebble?

why did you make
it hard for us
to make you part of
our system?

we have decided
finally to spit you
out for you to find
your rightful place.

in the garden
in the muddy part
you plunge yourself
dead and dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead For Quite A Long Time....

breathless is the reason,
it is just this euphemism about having to lose breath
and you may think
it's a way simply out of the ball game
or a movie
like breathless (i.e. sleepless) in Seattle
but really, really
it is not the case of being breathless because you are overjoyed
or has exerted much effort
for joy
or bliss
it is not the case, it is not
it is something else that you cannot figure out
because you are still
too preoccupied with breathing and all
its condiments of air
and space

there will be a time when you see someone you
love in an infirmary
or at bay
and you confess your love and you say
all my life love has always been another and another stranger
without a name, and touch-less and you say
it is breathtaking but
there is never a hand or a pair of warm red lips

breathless because you have been dead for long
and you refuse to acknowledge it

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead Leaves

dead leaves are scattered everywhere
under the trees
surrounding this old house where we live

unswept and piling up like some layers
of our memories
some rotten some cracking some turning to dust
the snakes learn to hide there
making their home
and some worms and some rats and some seeds

begin to sprout
when it begins to rain again

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead Man Meeting

and so his colleague
died while attending a
meeting when he fell
asleep and did not
wake up since then...

he says he does not like
meetings and i presume
that he likes the
death portion?

God forbid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead Man.....

he does need to write you a long letter
to tell you that he is dead.

he does not have even to send you a word. 
he does not have to express his pain
about what you said which hurt him most....

dumb.

how could he when he is already dead!

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead Shells

not at all times that we stay on the deep portion of the river we get tired sometimes our limbs soft and weary we long for a little rest a place where there is only foam and bubbles and the sand and pebbles touching our pelvic bones.

there. On the shallow waters we rest our weary souls. No thoughts. Just descriptions.


No feelings at all. Numb and dumb. Dry leaf buried on the sound. Dead shells.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dead Stars

dead stars
dead stars
do not shine

they are dead
and the twinklings are
gone

dead stars
all dead
falling to the sea
the moon grieves

stars are
moon's princesses
her diamonds
on her motherly bosom

dead stars
fall to the sea

they refuse
to die

they now live in the sea as starfishes having fallen from the skies
one dark, lonely, evening
of my life

seastars, name them sweetly
but starfishes to the most common fishermen here who make love
to the stinky fish vendors

for once tonight
the moon spreads to a certain fulness of emptiness

trying to hold
seastars
(they are called starfishes by children who smell salt
and rotten sea urchins chasing hemit crabs on the shore
they are burned by the sun
but they already know how to keep themselves safe
they know how to feed themselves
with squids those that sparkle at night in the shallow parts
of the sea)

trying to kiss
them
in fact,

yes the starfishes, all they have are memories of the stars
and they now hide
among the corals and the electric eels

regrets and remorse are always late and they always murmur it to
the oceanfloors

after their fall and no one wants to hear
everyone is busy feeding and escaping away from one another

here in the deeper part of the marine blue seas...

RIC S. BASTASA
Deadly And Too Sensitive Because We Have Never Touched It.

you fill this house
with so many people

love cannot stay that
long here

it is rushing to leave
and go somewhere else

love is a pillow love
is a mattress

it is peaceful, how
come there is no love yet?

you have invited those that
i detest
respect is not here with us

it is a stranger, a violent one
killing us all softly

with a cliche, a song, a patter,
a chirp, a tiny bird

pin-like, thin, tinkering with
what was so tickling

deadly and too sensitive
because we have never touched it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dealing With People Who Anger You

you are angry
and you will be dealing with people now in anger
you face your detractors
you pretend you do not know what they are doing to you
you face them still
you whistle you smile you pretend you like them
you hold them with gentleness in their arms
wish them all the luck in their endeavors
give them money
feed them
tender the nicest dinner possible in that expensive restaurant
talk like you are the best entertainer in the world
ask them if they are sad
or anxious
stare at them a little bit
but still glow that look acceptable
to your betrayers
make them feel that you are not affected
(hide your anger
in the smile and laughter you always share with them)

let us see who will explode
let us find out where the bomb is

the terrorist in you is the most civil servant of them all

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Candice,

If you can't sleep:

* Make your bedroom more comfortable, keep it cool and quiet.
* Get up and do something else. Then, go back to bed.
* Drink warm milk or hot water before you go to bed.
* Take a warm bath, read a little or listen to some quiet music in the evening.
* Get fresh air and exercise during the day, but remember: exercise before bed can keep you awake.
* Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
* Don't take naps during the day.
* Avoid coffee, tea or soft drinks after 5 p.m.
* Don't smoke or drink alcohol in the evening—it can keep you awake.
* Don't eat spicy food in the evening.

If you often wake up during the night to go to the bathroom and can't get back to sleep, try not to drink very much before you go to bed.

But remember: if you need to take medication at bedtime, it is best to take pills with a full glass of water.

If you feel lonely:

You can spend time with other people by:

* Becoming a volunteer at your local school, hospital, church or community centre.
* Joining a seniors' club at your local church or community centre.
* Taking a course at your local school or community centre and learning a new activity.
You can also call and talk to a different friend or family member every day. You may want to write a short letter to a friend or family member who lives far away. Sometimes, just writing to someone can help you feel that this person is with you.

If you feel anxious, tense or worried:

* Try to relax by breathing slowly and deeply.
* Take a walk.
* Choose an activity you really enjoy doing, like listening to your favourite music, and do it.
  * Tell a friend, family member or your doctor how you feel.
  * Join a support group so that you can talk more about your anxious feelings.
  * Take a relaxation or exercise class, like yoga, at your local school or community centre.
  * Take a course and learn how to do an activity, like needlework or woodworking, at your local community or seniors' centre.

For more information, please contact:

ariel escalona, the sleep expert...(ha ha ha)

your friend,

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Diary

i am writing like i am talking to you dear diary
my true friend
mama and papa died a long time ago
and i am left with some wounds and scabs and
some injuries that refuse to hear about those
that must die and go away
today, i will tell you something but i will not write it
in your pages

i am happy because i do not think anymore
i am happier because i do not have to write anymore
i am happiest because now i live in my mind away from the

the cage of your pages, i have learned to live and fly away like a bird

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Friend

i always love to write, as early as
gradeschool when we were classmates
while you were playing and chasing and stumbling
i just sat on the grass of the playground under a tree and scribble anything
and read a lot about some stories with lots of pictures
and colors of fairies and kings and queens and butterflies and bees,

i do not stop writing, in fact, writing has become my life
that without words i may die an instant death
i dream that i have written novels and stories and lots of poems
i wake up with some ideas like some seeds that i want to sow
and grow in the field and see them become shrubs and trees and forests

and i keep on this life writing and writing and writing and writing
for writing's sake and i wish i may live longer so i may write
some more, some sequels of my love stories and suspense thrillers
and write finally all the poems that are inside my mind
hanging like ripe grapes and creeping like vines on my fence

as i am writing now as you always want to read me
until such time my friend that i will die, or end my life myself (who knows?)
(i will not talk about it now, it is something bizarre and makes me
shiver, but who knows, well you know, all are but possibilities and nothing
but possibilities in this vast wide world of realities and dreams)

there is something i must say somehow
there is something that i must have forgotten, i have not written about myself
i have always written about them, about you, about the world,

please do not refuse me, stop playing with your life,
gradeschool ended
a long time ago, i have one and ultimate request:

write the story of my life, because it is you who only knows about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear God.....

when i carry these pains
do not ask me if i can endure them

i am human
and i may soon give up

you know what i mean

you may test me and deprive me of everything that i once have
and those most important bits that i do treasure

you may take what little is left
in my pocket
or in my sockets

but please, i beg of you,

do not take away from me this bed where i can sleep
this floor where i can lay my body upon
this wall where i can lay my head and rest

for in here
where and when everything is lost
i can still cope up and sleep and
dream

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Love

dear love

the very reason why i left you
is because i love you very much, and i just felt
that you deserve someone
much better than my lowly self

please understand,
i do not deserve your honor, your beauty and your grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Mama, A Poem From A Son In Chicago

dear mama,

today is your 78th birthday
i can't join you but i am sending a little money
for your party
do not forget to invite our tenants
feed them well
how can i ever forget your birthday?
i am very sorry
i may have quarelled with you
but deep in my heart
mama
i love you very much.

may all sons remember this
as i will always remember it

there is no mother who wishes harm to her children
like you mama
thank you for giving me life
thank you for all the good things

i love you mama

may you have more birthdays to come.

love,

dodong

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Poem

how are you today my poem?
are you impatient in the waiting?

you see, i have been too busy
like everybody too, doing what must be
done in this daily routine,

this bread and butter thing
daily craving for wants and needs
and what the future may bring
this thinking this worrying
about we can eat and sip
and what we can keep

time must have known how
it is trying to kill us with its
quick passing,

you see i am just
nodding my head, and there time
swiftly passes me by, without a word,
an inkling, a warning

i am left with no choice
but to
go home alone
without time as
my companion.

I am tired
my dear poem, but how can i be so rude
not to write you
as you have requested
and as i have promised

my dear poem
i am here. & so
let us now begin.
tonight my dear poem
i may not get the needed sleep
but that will be alright

your servant shall keep writing
the saddest moment with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Someone

it is christmas time
time for gift-giving
forgetting and forgiving

i have forgiven you
and myself
this time it is your turn
to forgive me
and forgive yourself

it will be nice,
i assure you.

time to party
with friends and family
time to dance
and not just stand in
that lonely corner

come. everyone is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Wife

I work so hard
I have no time for supper, breakfast, and dinner
Got a cracker and a noodle
A little solid a little hot liquid Are enough since I need a lot of time
Before my computer And this is non-stop working for the whole day
My cell phone is on silent mode and I cannot open it
I work the whole day, concentrated and straight It is eleven o’clock in the evening I arrive in the house and you say a lot of things I do not care anymore as I drag my dead tired body Towards the room and eyes half-closed I almost stepped upon your expensive porcelain vase
I lay on bed my shoes and sock still on my feet I did know anything since then Dead tired I am dead asleep.
If you are unhappy and do not like me
Find the man who is not tired, just leave me I am dead asleep.
i am just your loving husband, tomorrow i will still be your loving husband, yes tomorrow, even if you decided to go away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dear Worm

There is no reason to be arrogant

In your small world you are the only rose
And he is the only caterpillar
Who wants to be your only butterfly
But in my world there are roses
All over my garden
And there are more caterpillars
And butterflies that one can ever
Think of,
So please there is no reason to
Be arrogant, dear worm...

RIC S. BASTASA
Death

i

The wake up call in the morning
Telling you
It is time to go

ii

The taxi driver taking you to the airport
Early morning
Without any conversation
To keep the trip alive

iii

The pilot that you cannot see
In the cockpit
Taking you to your destination

iv

Then another story shall be told
That is the surprise
And you cannot help it
So just take your seat
Relax and sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death .......

so what is rest?
she asks such a basic question
and i do not hesitate

to answer it
rest is when you finally go
and never come back.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death And Departure.....

he is filling up his calendar
with travels

dream tours somewhere in the north
and then the south

white sandy beaches, cool green mountains
exotic cuisine, luxury hotels

tickets for two
all paid packaged tours

she is finally saying that she is not going anywhere
she will stay in the house

'... and die early'.

his bags are ready, the plane is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death And Survival, And Theories....

Those who struggle so hard
in order to live for a number of years more
are admirable

They fight their wars
and Just don't surrender that easily,

Those who want to end their lives
Finding it absurd
Those who hit their heads hard against the wall
and Bleed and die
Upon their own will
I say,
They too are admirable

They have guts.

Death is a state, but the door towards it
is painful. Those who embrace pain, contrary to norms,
must deserve our honor.
Theirs is that dignity to end their lives
at will.

Life is precious they say. It is a gift.

But life has no meaning sometimes.
One simply gets short of more reasons in order to continue the journey of sorrow
and grief
and occasional joys of living.

One kicks hard against the storms.
The other stretches his hands to touch the sky.
Others let them be.

Those who are afraid, and non committal,
simply leave their lives in the hands of God.

They too have their own reasons,
They rest their destinies to Fate
or Faith,
And they too, must be admirable
or honorable.

I am this spectator still trying to fathom
the truth about this right or wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Comes And Chooses Its Types

well we all see that,

dead comes and chooses
but before that

three or more
died already

well we all see that,

we know those who were not chosen
yet died in fear.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death He Frowned

if we stay here, let us have compassion

compassion for our blindness, thinking that we are much better than the rest of the herd,

let us too, have pleasure

that pleasure of exchanging pleasantries

thoughts that boost our desire to go on living, to keep our sails smooth, ourselves whole, and never diminish our sense of humanity,

for after all, we are all here for some reason, some reasons that we still want to discover,

let us too have that sense of humility,

not for anything else, but we just don't know what happens next for instance, a friend just died, and he missed that trait.

death he frowned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Is Easier For Those Who Have No One To Love

dearth for sure is easier
der when your lover tells you that she is waiting
dear
on the other edge

and when you find that lover there
touching your hand
and kissing your lips

i am sure
you will be having second thoughts
about
your being born again...

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Levels All

ah, you are a rich man
smart and famous
you have a beautiful house
an expensive car
a nice family

how envious can we be

we have nothing
we are dumb, and anonymous
we can't afford shoes
our father died during the war
mother died from shock
the rest of the siblings
cannot be found

but today i level up with you
you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Must Be Dying Too....

because you are faraway
i resort to imagining you,

it must be bizarre looking
at a woman of stone with the head of
an egg
eyes made of wood
do not blink hands as cold as
tin can in frosty
winter
your color is darker than
violet
i try smelling
you like a ripe sour sop
there is this
prevailing smell of
Merthiolate
someone is bleeding right here
but no one is
asking for help

now you are so near and real
death is dying still

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Of A Loved One

everything cages cannot be caged forever.
love for instance, it finally goes out looking for its rightful place.
it is not our hands
never our heads, sometimes they stay temporarily in our hearts
but time has claws
sharp claws and time knows when to snatch
not us,
love is taken away and we are feeling the
aghast of love ’s loss.
love does not know how to stop however
there are always substitutes
and we must begin to notice love again
in another form

we pack away old clothes of lovers gone
anything that make us remember
we put in the mezzanine to be covered with dust
and be a friend to the cobwebs

this is how to survive, lose love welcome love
moving on that moves us perhaps is a cliche
facts are fact
the faces of love are like our faces
laughter now smirks later

an empty hole must be filled for the meantime even with air
for us to feel full again

welcome love, welcome lust, put another flower in that empty vase
open the curtain and see the morning sun
whistle a song if you can
open the door and try seeing a bee in that garden of flowers
a butterfly
at night, the fireflies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Of A Loved One (2)

i hold your hand
and assure you
that all is fine

that you will simply
be transferred
to another room
and that soon
we shall follow

you shed your tears
i say goodbye
you give me a smile
and then you close
your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Of A Pig

dead of a pig
does one cry when a pig dies?
my nephew who always has
sex in his mind,
though still having milk on his tongue
calls me that a pig has died
and he says, it is my pig,
the one that loves mud
and eats left-overs you know,
an hour ago
but still warm to be
butchered again,

i ask him, are you crying?
he says, why should he when it is
still warm and can be butchered again
for another pretended kill,
and i am not surprised
because next to sex, what he has in
mind is food,

not death, not the burial of a pig,
nothing about decency of a funeral,
health or plain
sanitation

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Of Lust

you're dead now rotting
in my bed

and i am left alone
cleansing myself
of desire

i am still burning from
my hair to my toes
and there is no
fireman coming

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Of The Innocent Whore

she submits to the
hold of the chains
hoping to regain her
freedom that he once
took away from her

soon, soon, she keeps
telling herself
the iron chains tighten
on her arms

soon, soon, she keeps
telling her body
gyrating to the feast
of his drunkenness

to Bacchus he cheers
till dusk

until one day a dead woman
lies dead on the floor
bathed in her own blood

she finally got
what she had long sought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Overran Love....

last nigh i watched a film
till midnight,
i was relating to the lead character

who felt love and stood
faithful for all
those years
throughout his lonely lifetime
the meetings though
intimate were only
two

the last meeting which was
the third
he was then mourning
for death that came earlier
who still promised
nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Simplified

she sits on the train
and the horn is blown
she closes in the
white silky curtain
of the window and
then sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Sticking On A Bark Of A Tree

as i walk today
under the trees
when rain starts
to pour and i
take shelter
to find a
a cicada
unmoving by
the side
of a bark of
a tree

light and empty
only a shell

left-over of life
clinging still

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Toll 5,000,001

whew
if you as the modern poet
writes
ten poems a day,

this man writes
30 poems
a day......

giga...

RIC S. BASTASA
Death When You Come

i am thinking when death comes,
i wish it has hands
to knock three times my
door
before it enters
chances for me to say
a prayer or two
for my safe and enjoyable
private journey into the
exciting unknown
to dress up
comb my hair
brush my teeth
and leave
a short handwritten message
for those who still do not
believe about
the propensity of life.

and then i will welcome
death
sweetly like a long lost
lover
that i kiss
lips to lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death Wish Revised

yes there were three of
us
we were one company on that day when it was about to rain
it did not.

we were wearing white
someone wished death for the other
but no one was telling

it is the truth
that death-wish that is there but we do not like to admit
it is there

speaking, singing, teasing, taunting
and no matter how we choke it with our handkerchief it speaks
louder
shouting wildly
teasing us
badly

yes we are watching the burial
of a dead man

we are silent
we have the same wish for one another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death...

i lift an empty conch
near my hear
i hear songs and i
carefully listen
and i close my eyes
and see places
i see emptiness
i feel the fullness

barefoot i walk on the
white sandy beach
i left the empty conch
and carry something else
my heart understands
my face nods
my body is light
and the sun is bright
the air is salty
God is mighty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death....

The fragility of self image.
Caught in a downward spiral.
Never completely destroyed, but left to tumble.
Awkward and out of place.
Begging for salvation.

Animalistic,

alien even...

grotesque.

Finally oblivious and therefore somewhat satisfied with this devolved state reached from the fall.

From this mindless state of contentment with the present condition

redemption is found.

Call it surrender becoming stability.
Recreation of the ego.
Mutating into something familiar.

Death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Death's Meeting

i invited Death

i prepared a slice of lamb's roasted meat
a glass of red wine
adjusted the light dimming yellow,
into the saffron of mellow ambiance
i signaled that He shall now come
and sit on the Persian pillow
i sit in front of Him so we can talk peacefully

Death is silent
looked at Time
and left me

The red wine never had the touch of death

the meat is cold
and the light is finally switched off

i rise from the floor and stand by the side of the window

i see death again rushing to the sea disappearing like a black cloud upon a mountain top.
Deathwishes

yes there are three of us
that makes a company
that day when it is about to rain
but doesn't

we are three
wearing white and i am the bad one
wishing death
for the other one that we do not like
to be with us
but will always be a part of us despite
our deep dislike

it is the truth
that death-wish that is there but we do not like to admit
it is there
speaking, singing, teasing, taunting
and no matter how we silence it with our handkerchief
they all speak
louder
singer wildly
teasing
badly

yes we are watching the burial
of a death that comes true
we are silent

do we have the same mutual wish for each other?
i am sure.
i do not wish to be the bad one forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
when i write this
they already clibed
the mountain of Malindang
carrying
food, and some
of their basic
belongings

we pass by them and we
are riding a white pick-up
and heading
to.............

RIC S. BASTASA
Decapitation Of What Is Familiar

as simple as
a triangle
two sides with
a middle
two arguments
with a solution

familiar as
the sea of grass
fluid and
ever green

take them all out
from a box of
the usual

elevate them
higher from what
we expect

a new look
to old places

extended meanings
to what have been disregarded

no, it is not a play
of words

it is the fusion of
what we refuse to know
and what they are

no, it must not be what
we are
but what they can be

yes, it is the sweetest
sound of the single hand clapping
Prince Serendipity
and her Princess Stupidity
wedding

we were those kids
laughing
because the Emperor
is wearing clothes

RIC S. BASTASA
Deciding On A Disposition For The Day...

early this morning
before my walk
i go up the house and
stay for a while at the veranda
overlooking a garden
of anthuriums and
mahogany trees
i take some long breaths
feeling my lungs with
fresh air

i stretch my arms and legs
and breathe some more

i put some numbers of this
inhale and exhale
cycles

and then
last night's storm inside my head
is fully
overtaken

i tell myself
i'll make this day
perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Decisions

just like a spur of the moment
a rose petal may fall and
wilt

a wind blows it

in one breath
one goes out
one gets in

to freedom to prison

in one bang of a gavel
one’s property
lost is another man’s
gain

in an instant cut of a scissor
one dies
another lives

promises are broken
in split seconds

in a little empty
space
I also change

Either I or you
Shall take
This courage

One closes a door
Another one opens it

In the wink of an eye
One falls another one
rises
Nature makes
Decisions for us,

Sadly enough, others

if we just stand and wait
and look stupid, numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Decisions......

do not
measure
how weary
your
eyes are

how time is
twisted
how nights
are turned
to noons

moons are
gone
suns burned
themselves

do not measure
how you too
slowly kill
yourself

deciding the
life and
liberties of
these
people

RIC S. BASTASA
Decorated By Fake People....

here
you hear
the song from
a conch

there are no
letters
to read

here you press
something to your
ear as a form
of endearment

there is no one
to miss
no one to remember

no baggage to carry
except perhaps sea breeze
landing on your
hair

here you feel only the
softness of the sands
the fragility of time
flowing from your
fingers
that must not close into
a fist
because it is not
called for

here birds are not
staying
always and always
they go for places
as though telling you
departures are not
meant to be sad
but for another
excitement

and so i love it here
rather than attend to your
party
decorated by all
fake people.

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes i do not like to write
even a word
i hate it when a time like this comes
to me
like a friend i detest for betraying me
and my secrets

i go places
to forget find me some green grass
and blue skies
i embrace the silence of the
hibernating fish in mud

somehow, this dedication comes
a fealty to word
a sense of i cannot be without it
i go back again
to my room
my head so full
my mind dancing again like a crazy bee
to the petals around me

so here i am
again writing for you
these lines are lovingly written again

i could have written one simple word:

hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dedication

to whom for whom
i am sounding i
sound for you
not for me i know
how i sound i know
the depth and length
of my word the kind
of smell and color
i keep within each
syllable for years and
years the horse
romancing the sea
its tail serving as
rudder the moment
it swims underwater
on an island where
the birds have long
learned the manner
of fish and fishing

expeditions here
the sand where
our steps were
first embroidered
like rose petals
to mother'w white
cloth, heave a sigh
to all these what
was there will always
be there, unless
you refuse to know
the ciphers of each
code, our youth
badly spent beside
the river, this life
these pebbles
underneath the
ripples of our
skins the lines of
our palms, shady
and sharp the thoughts
still piercing the
innocence of our
minds, mine me
mind you, let there
be nothing easily
understood, lest
everything becomes
just ordinary, and
the lace of your
memories, the seams
all through, lazy, lazy,

now stop this
nonsense following
every word i have
you're looking for
thrill and something
to tinker, there is none
here, nada y nada,
there is nothing in
here, and in the end
you get what you
deserve from me

nothing nothing
nothing nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Deductions Of A Lover....

i did not
push through
giving her
that book which

in one of those
not so distinguishing
pages

i have written about
her, hmm,
her infidelity,

which if by chance
she too reads

it, she may after
all arrive at

the conclusion, that
here writes her

lover, her executioner,
deliciously

another congenital
liar, whose lips

are still luscious,
whose loins still

carry that fat of
love, that

strength of hatchet,
that length of

magnificent rod,
hot and unbending.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
i should have
chosen, warm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Deep And Down....

the mercies of sleep
to the repentant busy man
on
deep down deep
to the peace
of sleep

it is
different there
the family waits for dinner
and everyone is
pleasing

food is abundant
and kids are behaving
mothers watch
as fathers drink the wine
and puff the smoke of their
Cuban cigars

one soul there
having the same face as you
ethereal body
drinks the glass of wind
and eats
the body of the sea

it is different there
i tell you

you are there
but you think it is not you
until you wake up
and begin to recall the
symptoms

of what you miss
the glass of wind
the body of the sea

for years that we
had been here together
i did not say any
bad word, something
to hurt you

many wonder about this
laxity thinking
that discipline is
always related to
humiliation and violence
and deprivation

the stick remember
had us beaten blue and
black and those who inflicted
the pain felt satisfied
that we had become straightened
with all force
like crooked wires

i did not follow them
i go for silence, love, affection,
and passion
i throw away the noise of the stick
i curled within the respect
for myself and for all of you

now i leave you with all your
questions
i will not answer them
i shall not tell you that i
had lectured to you not with
words but with example
in small little deeds in all
the hours of the day
in the patience of the nights
without moons and stars
that i lead the way with my own feet
and did the work myself
without you realizing that
now you are doing the work yourselves

i am moving towards the place of my destiny
i will be all alone there again
to my roots
deep down under the dark silence of my fulfillment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Deep In My Heart I Know God

deep in my heart
i know God as a friend
waiting for me
in the valleys and plains

for a thousand years
he was called Master
by the slaves and he
did not answer

for another thousand
years he is called the
Creator by his creatures
he did not listen

for another thousand years
he is called the Father
of his sons and he did not mind

until then when you call him
Your friend, your peer, your partner
did he look upon you and smile

and in this understanding
God has come, patting you on your shoulder
welcoming you to sit as a friend
on his table to take his glass
and drink the wine of eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Deep In My Heart, In Your Heart, I Know You Have Not Forgotten

I know you have not forgotten me

The kiss, not just mine, but ours, when we were so young then
When all those who do not understand us were gone away
When we were just two alone in the living room
When we closed the door of the house one Sunday morning

(Because I was one lousy kisser!)

RIC S. BASTASA
Deep In The Middle Of The Night And Beyond

deep in the middle of the night
and even beyond
this darkness

in my solitude
below the stars and the
full moon

i sit in the form of the lotus-god
praying

there is this silence
contained in the circles
of divinity

this is the throne of the ear
the bed of the mind
this bridge
between God and Myself

the strong silence amidst
all the noise

the glitter
amidst this cacophony
of a tarnished
silver

RIC S. BASTASA
Deep Into The Lblue Sea

into the deep sea
you are thrown and you
are into a series of
chaos
on this predator-prey
state of affairs and
you finally find this
kind of experience when
one is eaten and the other
is eating and some are
swimming out of danger
fast and furious or
scared and scarred and

yet no one is screaming
no one is talking

into the silent world of
war and chaos, unreported
unheard.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a place
where i cannot take you

i live there
and everyday i see what my life
is there

when you see it
i know what you shall feel

do not follow me
the door is
too personal

it only opens for me
but not for you

i like to take you there
but the room
takes only my body

there is no sun there
not even the moon

stars fall on the floor
flowers are my pillows

a blanket of grass
an ocean of dreams

the night is my mother
that lulls me to sleep

i have no company there
but only

the memory of you and
i.
Deer Tracks....

my poetry is not
the kind of tracks that deers
put upon the grass
that each
tread upon

you do not have the kind
of nose that dogs have
your sense of smell is not
that keen enough
to say that i am inside
the confines of
every word in every
poem

deers
those wild ones
are too keen
to sense even the
disturbance of the sands
by a lost worm

it skips and jumps
over the river and the next time
you see it
it has become another
mirage
in the desert

do not trace any part of
me in the past
for i am no longer there
i could be that
deer
at the other side of the
river

RIC S. BASTASA
Defamatory

what you said
was too defamatory
you paid him money
to tell a lie
and he got the money
and told the lie
the lie becomes a snake
with sharp fangs
the fangs contained the venom
and now
it spits back at you
you may not be dead
but i know that you are numb
for more lies
you too has become the snake
that spits the venom
that has grown fangs
now so immune
you manufacture all the lies
in that snake pit
of yours

how can the gods explain
such existence as you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Defeat

defeat must have the dignity
of a loser remaining
strong, supportive now of
the true winner.
defeat must shed no tear
must stand like a man,
bright still like the sun, peaceful as the pond
where the moon sits
and sings again.

RIC S. BASTASA
my eyes stare at
your body
my hair falls down
freely
my hands hold unto
a bar
my breasts shake
my lips all wet with
your lips all wet
my tongue moans
for your name
i am on top of you

in this struggle for
freedom
this revolution of
love

we come at the apex of this climb
we surrender
all in defeat to the powers of our flesh
you & i

RIC S. BASTASA
you have offended me
and you know that i do not demand any explanation
for like the way all things go
as nature to its due course must take
planets keeping its own orbit
galaxies moving to its charted direction
flowing and floating
you very well know me
i do not demand an explanation

i owe you nothing and the guilt inside you
grows like the usual cancer
i carry within me this innate peace
this peace that i treasure
a song it whistles

something in you owes me
but receive it i will not

nature shall i let go
not i, but it, shall take the inevitable revenge
your misfortune comes like a flood
the clouds are heavy with rain
and you, the lonely river, shall catch
the burden of too much water

RIC S. BASTASA
Defiance Of The Law

here comes this aggressive mind
claiming ownership of the whole town
caught by the police
and slapping one of them

RIC S. BASTASA
Defiant Pattern

you feel betrayed
sometimes

stones like us
some
have turned into birds

behold the clouds
they were once
like us
too

the dropp of rain
comes to you in a dream as
an ocean

black turns gold before
your eyes

the jinx has become
famous Lady Luck

you ask so many questions
they get mad

you get punished for
such a
philosophical misbehavior

defiant pattern
bad to see and must not be
published

you feel betrayed
by a storm of biases

there is no place for you
and so
you do not turn into a bird
or cloud
or ocean

you remain as stone
deep under

you live in silence
apart from the world of birds
and skies

and oceans
you are stone

perfect in your silence
undiscovered gem

how will you ever
discover that stone in you

glittering in silence
depths of black

strata of wisdom
no one knows

they have taken nothing
from you
you have buried your mouth
and eyes

and ears in that blackness of
your chosen silence

defiant pattern
beautiful secret underneath
the
earth of layers of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Defining The Kind Of Silence He Needs

it is like the silence of an empty room
not keeping anything
not holding
not gripping hands
or gnashing teeth
the windows are not closed
or the doors
to keep a hounding silence

it is a silence with still air
you hear me breathing in
and out
of my nostrils
nothing kept like grudges
nothing hidden like
some disappointments

it is the silence that heals
that gathers strength
the silence of your gratitude
the silence that rests
the silence
of the soul in solitude
the silence of peace
one that looks out
to the grandeur yet to come
one that waits patiently
the silence of
glory
godlike

humane, and seeks to understand
the one that drives
confusion away

like a bird
nesting its eggs for days
on a stable branch
Degrade Me, Please

this is the fountain of urine
i put it on
bathe in there
	his is the dung
of the cow, take some slices
like a piece of cake
	h this is a cup of molds
and moss and slime and spittle
take them
as you please

sometimes, i vomit and ask, why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Degrading Effusiveness

someone wants his name remembered

and everyday he vends along the streets where people simply pass him by

he tries poetry to have his name engraved in stone

should have been in the hearts of noble men

those who never wanted a name those who shun fame

on such a degrading effusiveness i give a gush.

RIC S. BASTASA
Degrees Of Unfreedom...

1. caught
   a bird inside your hand

   sed
   inside a cage and hangs
   on a beam
   at the side of the road

   feed with
   grains

4. starts to sing
   inside the cage

5. feathers fall
   and unlearned
   flights

6. so many thoughts
   about bird-lands

8. no one sees
   the spirit getting
   out of the body
   of the bird

9. into another plane
   another cage

10. back to one

RIC S. BASTASA
Deja Vu

i meet a face today
and it cannot look at me
straight in the eye
and i look at it with scrutiny
asking why

it is dark and i have seen that very same face again
and again
waiting for me
it is the very same face of darkness
that used to stare at me
from the very first day that i cried
now for pity
it refuses to make a glance

time which has been in an ambush position
lurking in the darkest corner of my life
murmurs some words to itself
sounding like a train
stopping

tomorrow, it says for the last time
is the perfect time to go

one bright morning when the flowers start to bloom
the least you expect
and you do not have the chance of saying...i have always loved you
you shall be blown away like some other leaf
so ordinary so cheap

RIC S. BASTASA
Deja Vu De Ja Vu

What were we
before this?

we have assumed
shapes
that do not now
fit

were you the flower
to my bough?
or the apple to my
tree?

why have i become
so attached to you?

was there a connection
before?
was i the trail to your
mountain?

was i your wing?
were you my lover?

you only appear in
my dream
and yet you have become
so real

like a finger to my hand
an eye to my face.

RIC S. BASTASA
Deja Vu With A Strange Landscape

you experience a certain height
a strong wind carries you there
you are not disturbed at all
you know it
even before you were there

then you put your feet on the rocky ground
your hands feel the only tree growing in there
there is fire on every leaf
but it does not burn you when you kiss it

there is this familiarity
that even you cannot explain

RIC S. BASTASA
same seat
in the same room
same time of
the night
same perfume
and then you remember
those same words
that i to you
gently said

RIC S. BASTASA
Dejavu (2)

same seat
in the same room
same time of
the night
same perfume
and then you remember
those same words
that i to you
gently said

RIC S. BASTASA
Delay Too Is A Virtue....

if she wove
a bridal gown which
she cannot finish

why don't you sculpt
a giant and they
will not suspect that
like her

you were just delaying
things
to put off the contract
because you
know that something
better is
coming

if he is telling you
the story of the thousand
nights

perhaps you by now
understood all these things
that somehow
delay is a virtue
to avoid the present sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Delaying Tactic...

Dr. Madonna has
a father who is an ex-general of the army
she is married but her husband has a zero sperm count
nevertheless, to save her husband from said predicament she adds,
that her cervix is also damaged based on an infection when she was
still 16.

her father is diagnosed with prostate cancer
stage 3B, and she is not actually that sentimental to entertain
the dance of sorrow,
he is 87 anyway and had lots of women during his
military career, and they are ten children in his wedded life,
and so there is nothing much to
sigh,

she accepts that death is a visitor but this time
it will be a timely one, the host is ready.

her Papa does not mention any possibility of a chemotherapy
or radiation and they seem to understand perfectly their silence
while they were riding that ferry that takes them from the city hospital
to their family home where everybody is waiting for
dinner

' we can go back next year and have a second opinion' her Papa
to break the silence, finally commented.

she nods and
kisses his firm hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Delectatio Morosa

on that bed
of evil thoughts
my morning
starts

i grow
and bloom
on such
a delectable
delicacy

butchered on
such a holiday
the gladiator’s
oozing blood
flows on the
alleys

of my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Delete

for something that
i do not want to respond to either
i have really nothing to say
or if i were to say it
it will just hurt you
i press
delete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Delikadong Dula Dula Sa Dila Ni Dalila Viuda De Dalida Didto Sa Dakota

Ang kolor sa purol
ni Dolor dekolor.

Ang relo ni
Leroy Rolex.

isdang anduwaw
namagaybay

Ang balay ni
belay libat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Delusions...

the rebel rat looks upon
from the hole in the ceiling
the cat taking its nap
on the white pillow and the
dog fast asleep on
the maple
carpet

on the roof is the rain
pouring heavily delusional
on cats and dogs and
rats alike....

the carpet and the pillow
passive, never in rage....

RIC S. BASTASA
Demanding An Explanation?

demand for explanation

Is this a test?

It must be
It has something to do
With

Passing away

Or

heart Failure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Democracy In The Philippine Islands

there is this little boy
who is practicing to ride a big bike
his feet are short
and so are his hands
and always
in this predicament
does he fall and tumble

the years passed
and it is the same boy again
practicing to ride his
big bicycle

sometimes i am just curious
what is this boy
eating and drinking
since his feet are still short
and his hands are still small
he never had the guts
riding his bicycle to the full

it is the same situation all over again
he falls and bleeds
and cries that the bicycle is always too big for his
short feet and small hands

he falls and he tumbles
he bleeds and he fails

RIC S. BASTASA
Demons

DEMONS, sound like diamonds
or the almonds

you ask to be free from demons
these demons that mess
your life

oh aldo, summon me
to fly to you

i am an angel from the east
where the sun always shines and feasts

(canned laughter follows)

RIC S. BASTASA
we like to sin
we like to think that when we sin
it is not us that sin
but some demons pushing us to make the sins

even in sinning we need some escape goats
the demons made me do it
damn these demons in my head!
i am innocent
the demons pushed me to do the sins i do
they are so many of them
these damn demons in my head
and i am just alone
(my sweet conscience
implanted by God)

damn these demons
they push me on the dead-end edge where i can do nothing but sin

nice, human logic,
less responsibility for sinning because someone did the sinning for you

not me,
when i sin, i sin alone, i sin myself, and there is no escape goat to blame
there are no horns, no goats, no snakes handing me the apple to bite,
no adam no eve no cains or abels no genetics involved in here

i have sinned through my own my own fault,
in what i think, in what i do, in what i have failed to do,
in what i have failed to think,
and i ask all the angels and saints to help me get away from

my own faults, my own and nothing but my own
this sinning

my own responsibility and i ask my God to forgive me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Denial

for every tear
that we shed
on the grave of
our loved one

another soul
up there
becomes restless

disturbed.

do not cry anymore.
let them have the
needed rest.

you must learn
to forget and learn
to live

your own life
of loneliness

the woman
standing next
to the grave
of your husband
mourns too

fighting her own
battle of
loneliness

look at her
she is broken
too with so much
sorrow

pity, have pity on her.
pity, have pity on yourself too
why should one be overwhelmed with so much sorrow?
when happiness lurks just behind you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Denial About Jealousy

do not deny it
you're silent

do not deny it
you're jealous

do not speak
anything about it

i am not yours
and i will not be

around when you
shall be furious

do not deny it
your silence shows

do not speak any word
it glows

do not write about it
it serves no purpose

please let it go
set yourself free

from the frost in your mind
from that dew

that is meant to go
the sun has come

RIC S. BASTASA
Denial Too Is An Art

denial too is an art
and with the complications of time
sophistication also comes
glittering and
throwing some questions
sometimes without
answers

that is the challenge
silence sits aside outmoded
the new models of denial and
refusal dressed in the latest creations
of fashion and color and texture
come parading
like scanty clad ladies with mouths
pouting for options

there is this man walking in reverse
and you will have a hard time to guess
what is he apt to?
and there is this woman that keeps on
going like a white swan floating on the river
what is her point?

the pond with pink lilies is too placid
and the philosopher sits beside a big gray stone
thinking

the koi comes up with some news
about the decaying moss and the foul water
spotted beauty

the clouds are heavy in the skies
and rain shall soon pour like wisdom

the earth asks you: who are you?
you shrug you shoulders and then gently you must go

to where? and when? you tell the earth you do not really know.
i like your art. The art of not knowing. It is where the flowers grow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Deny Me Deny You

deny me
entry into your system
deny yourself
that gate of happiness
made for both
of us
from high above

deny ourselves
what we thought we really deserve
let our lips dry
let our minds go crazy
let the pillars between us
be as tall as the coconuts

let us accept for now
the bliss of freedom
let time simmer
let the ages age
let the wine bottle be sealed
and kept at the cellar

then we come back
for more surprises
how does our sweat taste after
all these years?

goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Depressed Man In Bed....

rays of light
begin to penetrate
the holes of my
wall

light leaks
the beautiful day

but he is not
opening the windows
and the shutters
of his mind
insist on
another prolonged
sleep

there are so many
things to
do
creases of his life
to iron out

but he shall do nothing
about
all of them
there shall be no plan
no scheme
no itinerary for
the day
for the week

let life do it
what is its use
somehow?

RIC S. BASTASA
Derby At The Gym

the cocks are killing
each other for money
as the bettors shout
till morning, on the other
hand, the holy mass is
going on about 50 meters
away, more of, demons and
angels, at each other on
an arm-length war.

RIC S. BASTASA
Descended From The Pegasus Of Our Minds...

it's been years since
you know how we started with
nothing, - it was humiliating,
but we keep silent and we keep on
going,
we know how to understand how is it to be humiliated but at the same time we
take pride in
just keeping on the doing, just like the way we keep that rusty
bicycle, we took it to the market and we did not mind the foul
odor and the dust,
we just keep on doing what we think is good for our hands,
until we got the skill and
we still do it, despite the confidence,

now it is time to still
keep on going, there is no more rust there is more oil to use,
money to spend, but still we keep on going,

lest the bicycle falls on the road and we shall have
our own injuries  but despite, we keep on going,

because we love doing it, yes, love to love and to love,
despite the hurts, yes, we keep on loving, even if love is no
longer there,

because we learned a lot from that rusty bicycle,
descended from the Pegasus of our minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Descending To The Lower Level

i do not have to waste words
for the stairs and
so i descended to the level of silence
my mind does the
acrobatics
but there is no way to amaze her
she is the one in love
i wasn’t.

RIC S. BASTASA
Descriptio Personae

no such boat
without anchor

wider oceans
expanding horizons

sketched some stars
fixed the moon

onward always
moving

always with sails
and compass sharp

RIC S. BASTASA
the window is open
beside the garage where the white
pick-up is parked and below it
is the white poodle
sleeping soundly

it is 4:07 in the afternoon
in my house in Katipunan
where the road is empty where
the trees are still
where the wind is as silent
as the grass
well manicured at the
center of the
yard.

RIC S. BASTASA
Desde Ahora

there will be changes
desde ahora

no more tears, no more regrets
lots of love
like icing on a black forest cake
adventures on lust
experiments on the kama sutra

no more lonely early mornings
i shall have sugar and cream in my coffee

lots of whispers, plenty of time for conversations with you
more poems, less anger, vanish the hate,

embrace the loving arms of happiness
sleep in bed entwined the whole night in the heat of ecstasy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Desert Poem

we should have
asked
how the cactus decided
to grow
all the thorns around its
body

its long term
relationship with the desert
and the sun

its covenant with
the moon and stars
and the oasis

its kindness with
the camels and secrets
with Bedouins

RIC S. BASTASA
i
you are the fluke of the universe
you are less than the trees and the stars
and you have no right to be here.

ii
you are the child of the universe
you are no less than the trees and the stars
and by all mean
you have the right to be here

iii
.................................................................

RIC S. BASTASA
Desire

watching someone unfold
before you in synchronized numbers
someone undressing
the eyes feasting
something that you cannot hold
because it slips away
a memory
yes, nothing but a view where your hands
are water
your fingers nothing but air
you hear a laughter and then a smile and then just an image
dissolving into space

you are silent again for this
why can't you even touch it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Desire Me Not

desire me not
undesirable am i

pull me like a string
an end
i have none

desire me not
pain of the needle
piercing am i

blood drips from my
mind and
stains are all over the

the clothes of my body
naked
and tattooed and

threatening to the senses
of what is true

i am spun from lies
and lies you said

you abhor
savor me not for i am

an herb bitter
lick me not for i am a plant

all made of thorns
and sap

that blinds the eye
of those who pretend

seeing me
like sun am i
burning burning itself
to give

you light and
be not confident

i also know how
to scorch for torch

am i
burning what says
to be dry

desire me not
for at the end
i know the answer to

the riddle of the
Sphinx

the world crumples
before my feet

and then desire me
not

for without a word
shall i be gone

love me not
for i am lost in the woods
of love
and lust.

RIC S. BASTASA
Desire, Love, Want, Need, Dissatisfaction

so much of it
can be too boring
and everyday
can spell no meaning

but there is nothing
that much that
is so much
in our humanity

there is always this
lack
this wanting for more
and a lifetime
is never enough

RIC S. BASTASA
Despacito......

there is something
lovely in your slowness

that slow journey of the
lips to the spine

the low tone of the whisper
in the ears

the slow caresses of the fingers
on the hips and thighs

the walls that see all these
becomes alive with all its gladness

the winds say, Oh Lord, Oh Lord,
what is love doing to me?

RIC S. BASTASA
Despair

eventually, you must use black
when you paint despair
it is its color

darkness,
eyes closed and tears
coming out like drops of rain
from your cloudy
eyes

but you cannot be
restrained to the strictures of
conformity

society is raged
hurt and ravaged

oh my! you use
the color
red

they know what you mean
red is the color
of war

RIC S. BASTASA
Despair Is A Bad Joke....

after three days, despair has become an unwanted company,
i begin to joke,
i do not choke, i smoke.

its clothes do not fit for my new occasion
its doomed color is irrelevant
my true friends shall detest it
and shall surely vomit it
like a bacteria infected
spaghetti

i like to wear the robe of a happy emerald life,
shiny black shoes that exudes dignity and propriety

there must be extra pockets to keep some allowances for
the coming excitements, the unexpected joys of living,

i tell despair to leave me, and it is just as simple at that
and it did.

despair is a bad joke,
in essence just a joke,
it does not please us,
so why should we let it stay?

RIC S. BASTASA
Despair, I Know You Do Not Like The Word

I know you do not like the word
Its color its scent, how we relate it to something black
And smoky and ghastly and ghostly
Some say, red is the color of despair
Others say it is like black coffee because
It does not make you sleep
And make you curl the whole day in
Your dark room without wanting
To talk to somebody and just be there
Alone by yourself, pondering, almost crazy

Not yet anyway, so you go on a compromise
Grey is the color of despair
Dusk, or dawn, or something dawning yet
Like an idea of a suicide unhatched
Delayed like an egg still undecided whether
To hatch or not to hatch and face the world
Of chickens

Despair, what is so big about despair
No big deal, it comes to you whether
You like it or not
As a matter of necessity, face it and state
Its name and stare and say, I muster this
Despair, I am its master and not its slave
And then, when you know all its particulars
You know what to do
Kill it and if it is not killed yet
Well

Well, well, just learn to live with it
Sleep and with, make love with it
And well,

Have kids with despair and call them
Their names: the usual, the normal and
The everyday. And just be prolific.
Despair...

To know DESPAIR
and not to dislike it somehow
because it visits us once in a while
uninvited

We cannot just drive it
because it is related to
Joy and we must all welcome
a friend of our friends
a relative of our relatives

Take Despair as is
Feed it and Give it some drinks
AT night listen to its
Hang-ups and always
make it feel
that you too studied well
your psychology
and understands
what life (and death)
is all about

It will stay for this
Be flattered
Perhaps it likes the way you
deal with it

It tempts you somehow
about the beauty of Suicide
Just refuse
Say your black and white know
Do not betray
Bliss, and Beauty and Truth
and Goodness

Despair like any Creature
also Experiences boredom
and then it decides to leave you
and because you have been patient
all along
You must have noticed
that you have changed a bit
Now getting bolder
and Stronger and
Wiser

When it leaves you
Send her some of your gifts
Tell what you feel
How it had always behaved
In your house
and how others too have behaved
The way life should be
Send her your smile
and your hugs
And make a promise that
when it comes back
You always give it a nice
bed and board
That usual breakfast of
sunny side up fried egg
and Thai rice

Now you are at home with
Yourself
Wait for your next guest
Welcome Joy.

For life is just like
a House
With guests from time to time
Be an amiable Hostess
Take pride
In your little hospitality
and Household Diplomacy
Where can happiness
be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Despair's Body And Face

fat and ugly
on slow feet and
clumsy hands
despair looks
itself in the mirror
and fear itself
trembles

depression
goes to the kitchen
and pampers
itself with coke
and hamburger
and chicken
wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Desperately Seeking You

in desperately seeking you
i am actually
desperately seeking myself
because and I,

Because we have long
become One
in This
& That

Because One cannot live
Without the Other
Because we had that Vow

To live
To die
Together.

RIC S. BASTASA
Desperation....

you are an empty cup
tonight

i am not the cold wind
that makes you
tremble

i am the warm coffee
that fills you

the night starts to sing
our song

i forget my warmth
you lose that emptiness

tomorrow morning
someone shall see stains

on the mantel
another memory is broken

RIC S. BASTASA
Despite

The polishing of the sand
And wood has come
One day in my life
On such a solemnity

This newly built wall
On such high proportions
Is making no sense
Of my old principles

But I can’t live without them
Something is proven
Despite all these plans
The bad things still happen

RIC S. BASTASA
Despite Her Weight....... 

by then she had gained weight

in the united states of america
somewhere in her neck of the woods

her husband who had a brain tumor operation has arrived home

and this picture with him was taken

strong winds blowing her hair and she puts the caption on facebook

' there is too much air outside'

strong winds camouflaging in the demeanor of what in reality was the untold hurricane

i like her, we all like her despite her weight, despite everything....

RIC S. BASTASA
Despite Mortality.

as others lose their
way, he was there constant
on his faith,

this way is always the
way and no other

he meets everybody, and
everything

the laughing enemy, the
muddy stone, the longing mother
the ever complaining son
the drunkard

stars collide, moons wane,
suns splinter into bits of flints

the grasses have turned into flowers
rivers become cities

oceans of aircraft carriers, and loquacious
leaders smiling on TV

I only need Tolstoy's short story about
man's need of a land, six feet under his

bones are kept, and then a marker, a niche,
flowers growing on top of his rotten body

a man walks sometimes without a purpose
another one sits facing the see counting boats

you know what the seagulls are after
only fish, and nothing more

a boy plays on the sands of the beach
what does he really think of? we know
when we begin to recall, when what we
did was only play the whole day and when

mother calls us to come home we always
feel that the play is not over and we want

some more, which makes us reminisce our
birth right to selfishness...always incomplete

always in need, despite the abundance,
despite this paradise, despite mortality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Despite.....

Nothing will be changed
good food will still be served
we'll have the good times
till death suddenly comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dessert

you're sweet
and neat
you're adorable
you're beautiful
you're divine
and so kind
you're wonderful
you're joyful

like your poem

with rhyme
and rhythm

unlike mine
it doesn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
Destiny

(for estrella dy-imperial on her death anniversary)

under the tall coconut trees
you warned all of us
to watch out

you had not finished
saying the warning
when suddenly a coconut
fell off the tree
and hit you right
in the middle of your
forehead

dead on the spot
t'was you

we were speechless
unable to believe

how death sometimes
strikes

the most careful creature
still wanting to be
alive.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Destiny And The Impossible

geometry says that our two parallel lines
will not meet
the people who has disgust are of the same
conclusion
we shall never be together again

the stars frown and the moon whatever we do
is always yawning
the air suspends the sun in disbelief

you want to believe the impossible?
ask destiny, implore the heavens
let the sky and earth meet for once
between us, let the ceiling and the floor kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not utter so many words
one goodbye is enough
more of those talks do not
serve this journey well
there is only one direction
and i shall follow it
there is only one code
and my heart keeps it
do not follow me
destiny has carved you a path
i am not lost

RIC S. BASTASA
Destiny Is Silent And We Shall Follow

destiny is always silent
it is deaf and mute but it always comes and goes
and comes and goes
and then lets go what it has to offer
and then takes back
what we do not deserve,

you look forward and you see haze
fog so thick gathering on the side of the hills of your mind
you walk in there
no words no thoughts and then you penetrate it
and then you disappear

there is no self, just an idea of the self
there is nothing you can touch just the idea of the touch
there is something that you can hear but you have no way figuring what it is

RIC S. BASTASA
Destiny....

when i write
this i listened
to the

best of yann tiersen
on piano and

if you by chance
had listened too

even once in your
lifetime i guess

you shall feel
the same thing that

i am feeling now...

this sadness that
carries with it a kind

of indescribable
happiness this irony

of what we want and
what we cannot take

this longing which
does not desire fulfillment

this letting go of
what i could have possibly

taken with pride
and dignity but which

i left to the whims of
the winds as
i have began taking the
belief that what i have

or can be is already
ironed out by destiny.

RIC S. BASTASA
De-Stressing A Point...

doubts of the scalp
and so i scratch it with my nails.
holes of infection,
itchy life, and
fallen hairs.

the goddess of smell
looks upon me,
and i look up to taste
what smell is it.

it tastes like heaven,
my usual answer.

what is heaven? they all
laugh.

my eyes lift higher
eyelashes are top loaders.

sleep is a conqueror
i am conquered but the surrender

is de-stressing
tomorrow i have a plow
and a buffalo

i own this land i remind
the grasses

tomorrow
i need to vacate, i guess

a trip, a very long long trip
where your sight cannot find me

your trains of emotions are
grounded
i have an avalanche of forgetfulness.

so? got no word for you except my well sculpted
goodbye baby, after all, our worlds are galaxies apart

light years that you must know by now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Destruction And Rebirth...

when your universe breaks
in the same manner that other universes do

the most natural thing
that must happen

i, in my own, planetary motion,
watch
the shattering and the bursting
of the great bubble in you

it is not that i want to see
how you destroy yourself

i am not that
sadistic,

the stars know me by heart
and the moon likes me for that

it is this
within you,
after,
shall be
the birth of the
new star

and this happens
all you have to do is just wait

because
as always stars are born
after an explosion

tell you what
it will be the best stage to watch

the nicest thing that happens to you
also happens
to me

and once again the universe
celebrates
and dances and toasts with the lights
of the stars

the meteors sweep sorrows
throwing everything negative away into the
edges of darkness

each now, is happy again,
following each own
planetary orbit
strictly upon its own joyous terms

with Sun as God
with the other planets as angels and
friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
memories are ecstasies
when the come in cascades
we become flooded
every nook becomes water
and there is no escaping
only splashing into its flashes
of fluidity, and we tremble since
of them are horrifying and we
fall short of words to describe
how we are feeling again
like a shudder, a rudder with a
broken tip, a tipsy boat
failing paddles, lighthouse
turning off when the storm
rages on

somehow i end it with
'i'm ok' i have long prepared
for this, and this cannot
touch me anymore
it does not own me and
i have nothing to brag.

i take control, i let my mind
wander like a fog on those
rugged hills.

RIC S. BASTASA
Determination

for it is said my friend
that there is no such thing as
a hard rock
to a constant dripping of
the dropp of rain

there is not such thing as an
impenetrable void
to a loving heart

there is no such obstruction strong enough
to stop a flowing river
no rock stays forever
to a gentle song

RIC S. BASTASA
Determined Indifference

i like indifference
as a weapon, whether

happy
whatever carrot or stick
policy is used by the enemy

indifference sits on a bench
watches the big waves of the sea
unaffected

the wind wanders
the thousand eyes of the sand
look for a possible hint
on what is up to

they cannot find a thing
except the stare to nowhere
the calmness
amidst the sorrowful
leaves
heaps and heaps
on the ground
of emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Deus Ex Machina

she complains about the storm
last night
for the leaves are making heaps
and this morning
she will be sweeping them

the wind comes and sweeps away
all the leaves towards the pit

awed, she says, because she prays.

RIC S. BASTASA
Devastatus

the news was awful
and it was devastating for dr. serafin
he waited
and there was no cure
there was only this falling
and failing
and falling
on an abyss
without for him
an end

dr. serafin did not cry
his wife did
she imagined a city
destroyed by this quake
and then fire came
and burned
the whole city
that ate
all the women
and children

there was in actuality
no earthquake
no city fire
there were only tears
from her eyes
and she said
what she did not really see
she felt
all the way down to the
smallest nerve
of her toes

dr. serafin was devastated
that was the only word
he knew
and it is still inside his heart
i waited for him to say
he does not believe
in God anymore
but he did not say it
he couldn't
he just did not have any courage at all
to be honest

he did not ask me
either
he knows i do not have the courage
too
there is simply no word
inside my heart
yet

for all these miseries

RIC S. BASTASA
Devil's Advocate

if you are tired with words,
why do use the words yourself?

why am i using words myself?
why?

because we are far from each other now.
because i cannot touch you.
because i am a slave of the word.
because i can never be free.
because i am not at all human
without the word itself.

the irony is here. Let me hide then.
the paradox is here. Let me live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Devoid Of Vowels....

to write with passion
is to throw away anything logical

it is like you it is more like you
in passion

you hold tightly, you throw away,
you take back, you hold much tighter
and then you loosen the hold
giving up in surrender
what was once treasured like a secret

am i more beautiful when i am illogical?

the quick brown fox with a flower on its tail
the river with a ray of leaves
the house with the moon
the night with the whisper

the tightness and the clock and the sound that
it is over

the shimmer of emotions in the sea of love
the ripples of a love moan

the journey of the heart to an uncharted
destination

the blank stare on the computer monitor
how words run chased by my fingers

how meaning wants to have meaning
how emptiness draws a portrait of a human being

devoid of vowels....

RIC S. BASTASA
it starts with a cat call
and then inside the room
a slice of steak is
taken by the tongue of
the fork which was fed
to the open door of the
mouth and with a little
fear the one fell to the
carpeted floor the silence
of which is like
a secret that only the two
of them knew
and the other went on
top of the inexperienced
and said, 'do not be afraid'
and in said moment
the first kiss was planted...

RIC S. BASTASA
Devotion

admiration followed him from the men and women
of the beach as he walks one summer
his skin glowing to the sun: gold
the color of mud, his hair blowing freely
on his head, his steps mellow to the sand

a young maiden from the village follows him
at a distance but not so near bringing him his shirt
neatly folded in her hands-
a little bit angry, she looks at him lifting her eyes
but again not so near

she gives up devotion and throws his shirt
on the grey sand
runs toward the other end of the shore
and disappears

her feet are so tiny leaving this awkward
cloud when she runs away from him

he sees her vanish
ignoring what cloud she left from her tiny feet

RIC S. BASTASA
Devour

The present devours
the past
The hate that devours
love
Anger that devours
you
Hope devoured by
despair

Night devouring
day
And day devouring
night

The moon devouring
The landscape

These poems like flames
Devouring
me.

My mind devours
me.

Now is my revenge
I devour
You.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dew

i agree
with you
Dew
how small
the glitter
too short
a glory

RIC S. BASTASA
Dexter Always Remember

try to look at it from a different perspective
dexter

when your prayers are not granted
it is not because
you do not deserve to be there
it is not because
you are lesser that those who are now seated in the front
handshaking with greatness

it is simply because
God has barred the door
where you are going to enter
the room of your perdition

just wait
the right door for you
is yet unfinished
the room there
is suited for you
and for no other

soon, you will understand
but i know for sure
God has always heard you

RIC S. BASTASA
Di Lalim Ang Paglabat

ang paglabat dili
bastabasta,

maglatid ka
aron masubay ang
saktong linya

gabson ang
nanglabaw aron
sab nindot
lantawon

human niini
usa na lang ang
gawsanan ug
sudlanan

dayon di ka na
tinggan sa imong
silingan

RIC S. BASTASA
Diamond

it starts as a double face
one for her and another for another
they all love you
despite the lies and deception
they like the gleams of your multiple faces
you give such a magical light
for them
you are a gem
a diamond

you get tired
looking for mud
you want
to bury what magical light is left

RIC S. BASTASA
Dianne, Mercy And John

i do not know how to describe this
since i am not a fashion designer
neither am i a make up artist or a
director of a cabaret show, but let me try

let me say, i do not know them in person
so i do not know their names
i got this picture somewhere and i claim
no knowledge about who and what

but let us pretend that the one in heavy makeup
is Mercy: thick red lips like red strawberries
i could have said apples, a huge neck like that
of a lioness, giraffe is sexier,
the cape is gray and silky so i will not say
that it is more of a sail for a boat
the breasts looks more like a chest
perhaps to make it appear buxomy
air is exhaled.

the one at the middle looks like a man to
me with a diminishing hairline, white polo shirt
with gray marks and a black undershirt
i think i once met him in the ship going to
the big city but i can't really remember him
completely. Was he the one who constructed a
dark yellow building in the town? Is he the
postmaster of Chicago? I am sure he is Filipino.

the third one is wearing grays stocking, a gray skirt
and lone hair. I sense it is a wig. The arm has muscles
and the neck has Adam's apple.

They are all smiling. Mercy calls this a cross-over
Dianne says this is it. And John says this is fun

RIC S. BASTASA
Diaspora

From this plains i see a diaspora
of brown butterflies fluttering towards
the western side of this little earth
where i am merely one of the stewards.

I could have told them to stay as I still
have a lot of red roses to offer but
they are not listening because the
song the green song of the west
is so enticing.

I ask the eastern wind to sing the songs
of the kabuki and the cebuano guitar
and the nose flute of my great sultans
and the agongs of the Malayan caravan,
but they're not listening

Now, the tides changed. The West wind
is harsh and the trees there too unfriendly.

I see the brown butterflies crushed to death.
Thousands of them.

I sit here weeping, singing the song of the
of the ever faithful eastern winds.
There is no one to blame.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dichotomy....

the room there was spartan,
empty except for
a pair of dirty pants
hanging on the side
of the wall,

the atmosphere of wood
and dust and
bareness

i was lonely, i was always lonely
and some say
that i was sick almost all the time
there was either cold or
fever

mother and father died almost together
when they were alive they were not close
they always quarrel on something
be it fish or dog
or linen

they died a long time ago and there was that moment
when they both visited me in the room
and ask me if i was alright

if i want then to go with them and join them in their new place
and without hesitation i said: nope, thanks, i have my own world
and i like to keep it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did God Accept Your Resignation Letter?

You seek resignation from the company of life
did you submit it to God? And did he accept it?

Years ago i sent mine and it was rejected
For He said, in his universal company of life there is no resignation
His words were not many
Not really poetic as we wanted Him to be
But plain
And simple.

Did he say he loves you?
Well, he told me and then out of that I learned a lot.

I work for no pay. I work for no reward. I work for no honor.
It was simple and not poetic at all.
He just touched with his wind and then I become so alive
No death since then has spoken a word for me.

I look at myself in the mirror.
I have seen how i have grown.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did I Ever Think Of Sex When I Write About The Rain?

Wading through the rain, naked, and letting the rain fall
On my mouth as I look up to the cloudy skies where the sun
And the moon are missing, drinking the raindrops and letting
My hair go wet and flowing all over my body, walking through
The middle of the road where the waters are deep and cold

On the other side, you wait for me, your arms extending
You look into my glistening eyes, you hold my hand and
You embrace my shivering body, you take me inside your room
You wipe me with your dry towel and serve me tea and give me
The needed company, this misery, this rain crying on the roof

You wrap my body with your arms, you dress me up with your
Oversized shirt and let me wear your worn out blue jeans
We talk a while, you explain something, in truth, we simply
Talk and talk, and when the rain stops, you ask me to leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did I Imagine Someone Else That Time?

we are here in this abandoned house

let us go inside and find out what is left here

the pillars are still tall and nailed to each other

time did not touch the stairs
perhaps they are so insignificant

there is that bed where we spent the moments of youth
your moans are missing

the head board is dusty and the termites ate the legs

it is uneven now, and to hold itself it leans on the side table

when you were on top of me
i closed my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Did I Tell You That I Have Goiter?

it was accidentally discovered
when my arms felt numb

i have two nodules inside my neck
and still at 2 cm.

i am hyperactive, and i will be more of an
insomniac, so please understand
that i will be writing more senseless poems,

my therapy, but you may not read them,
it is alright.
i can manage my nights without you.

i am a wizard, an owl, i will be blacker than the night.
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did I Tell You That Our View Of Happiness Is A Little Bit Boring Too?

A girl all white on Sunday
With her papa and mama
And after mass
She gets her pink cotton candy
Sweet
Sugar to her tongue

And then they go to a
Halo-halo bar and they
Eat their slice of chiffon cake
Sweet
Sugar to the tongues of
A very sweet family

Happy childhood, normal people
Achieving and making others happy
Expectedly, kindhearted and
Not miserable, away from despair
And poverty, looking forward to
A bright future, full of laughter
And cheers

That is how we view happiness
Giggles in the youthful years
And marriage and children
And grandchildren
The cycle of perfection

Did I tell you that life gets boring
Sometimes with the way we are
Prescribed to be this and this and that?

I give up, and learn life my way
Preferring solitude, away from the mob
The crowd and the doctors of happiness
I want to find mine: In peace, In silence
In the most private moment
Even without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did It Rain Heavily Last Night?

i fell asleep
deep and
sound like
you i felt
i was dead

did it really rain
heavily last night?
the road is muddy
and i cannot take
a walk this morning

don't bother
i can go barefoot

don't bother
i like the mud

don't bother
i like being dirty

don't bother
the sun dries them all

and the water
at the pump
shall clean them all

don't bother
i am still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did They Tell You To Live Decently?

did they tell you to live decently
like gentlemen and ladies
societal models, sinless and spotless?

how easy for them
for they have the food and the accommodations
their houses and backyards
the smoke in their kitchens rising
to the skies
as offerings of the gods
the flavor of ham and roasted beef
and chiffon cakes
and salted bread

after they have taken all these things from you
deprived you of your inheritance
your birthright and your labors and your profession

after they have taken the rules away
and replaced them with their own

now they have all the hypocrisy to tell you
that you are not decent

and what about you? do you swear to be decent and
surrender the will that the gods have gifted you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Did We Do It Really For Love?

we had it once
then twice and then
it became wild and
uncontrollable, like a
rage,

but then there is a
sobriety, like the way
the storm leaves us
to show a silk sea without
the murmur

we stop for a while
it is after all, stoppable,
we regain our senses
we are back to our strong selves
and we look back with disdain
about what happened.

it was not happiness
it was not the kind that i long for.
a nightmare, but not that
judgmental

did we do it really for love?

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Ever Slap Yourself In The Mirror?

did you ever slap your face
in the mirror just to check for once
whether you are still alive?

did you ever check whether you still
have your feet rather than look for your shoes?

did you ever check the sound of your heart
whether it still beats for love?

i will, tonight,
ok, early morning tomorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Have A Sound Sleep Last Night?

out there is snow
inside your room you pretended sleep
i tendered some unsolicited advices
which i stole from the experts
of sleep
i tendered the face of the man
who can sing you the
songs of passion
and love and who can make you
sleep
i tendered an old song of mother
a lullaby
i tendered an ear of father
touching your fingers

i wish i could have been a tributary
of so much sleep for you
the mind
of softness and pillows and
warmer beds

do not believe me, if you only know
i, too, could not sleep last night
your sleeplessness
is also my mess.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Love? And So Many Questions

so did you love her? yes i did
and how did you know you love her? i tasted her
and how did you know you tasted her? my tongue is my witness
and how did she taste like? oh, she was sweet
how sweet? as sweet as sorrow
how did you know? at the end i cried

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Say That Your Only Freedom From Pain Is Death?

sad indeed,

there are other freedoms
still

freedom from having no ideas, from this dryness,
freedom from having you
as a poet on forced wit and half-cooked cleverness
freedom from a reader
who has nothing to offer
except his own loneliness
his having nothing to do
freedom from being bored
to death
freedom from having nothing
to say and comment
freedom from this feeling of emptiness
this bigotry
this indigestion of dumb thoughts
freedom
from impertinence, immateriality, irrelevance,
freedom from thinking about freedom
freedom from freedom itself
there are more

freedom from pain
is useless now

that you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Say The Weather Is Not Fine?

i didn't know really that it is always raining.
most of my time is spent inside my room.
inside my self. inside the marrow of my bones.

i do not like the rain. Or any news of it.
I do not go outside, i may meet the rain and
i told you
i do not like any rain, or any sound of the rain.

i am inside myself. And there is no rain anymore.
and of course, the weather is always fine
deep inside this miniature world of fine weathers
that i make myself.

just fine. and too small for any kind of rain.
clouds don't fit in here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Say You Make It On The Stairs?

did i really hear you right?
making love on the stairs
and then the boy
comes surprisingly
asking both of you

what are you both doing
on the stairs
both of you naked
while he pumps
on you
like one ever hungry
lover?

how shameful!

well, okay,
the boy is your son
and the man
is your husband

was the bed broken?
or the stairs
too exciting?

was the marriage
too boring?

well, ok,
I understand,
you split with him

could be the
staggering steps on the stairs
could be that the boy
finally understands

could be that the bed
is not that warm
you split for good
and uhuh?
so you are now free
at last

from those stairs
from the bed

and the boy has to make
the inevitable choice
between pa and ma

the stairs he will always remember
anyhow
yes, the boy not the pa

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You Think That Poetry Is Always Better Written?

Contented with the plots
Sagging surges
soothing
In the movement of the minds
Some friends write
Thinking that poetry
Must be an art
For their
Therapeutic consumption
Of for its own
Sake pursued,

A friend writes poems
And tells me to read all
Of them, and I can
Always say
She has concentrated
On some poesies
Not on heresies
Of her life

I told her
Poetry is an art
And it is life
Itself moving
Inside our hearts

Albeit,
I like a certain thing about this
Albert,
And Socrates
Who never wrote a line
But just spoke them
That
There is something sickening about
The usual intimacies towards
Words and phrases

Sometimes on days when
I do not write
But just stand and stare
And listen
Without words spoken

Writing transforms at its best
Without my mind
Doing it. It is more of living
About living
And not drying, dying writing
As it used to be.
And my life is full.

RIC S. BASTASA
Did You? ....

loneliness is just like a visitor
welcome it but do not overfeed it

or if you are wise enough and hate it somehow
then overfeed it yourself
lots of fat, no veggies, more soft-drinks,
add more and more salt

did it die? or you did?

RIC S. BASTASA
Did Your Love For Him Last?

i am just wondering why you do not
write poetry anymore. I am asking myself
if your having jumped over the fence
yielded the bliss on the other side of things.

Are you too happy to forget the sad refrains
of poetry?
or Are you too sad
mournig over another
love lost
that your hands are too weary
to write another love poem for this
valentine's day?

whatever happened, please write me a love poem
sad or happy, please do write me one

i just want to know what a love poem should be all about
after all those years
when we think we really found the true one.

write me, please a love poem, show me the color
and scent of each word, show me the texture of each line,
show me whether the heart is bleeding
or leaping with joy like the one we used to write before together

RIC S. BASTASA
Didn'T You Notice?

when you spit fire
i remain as the cool water of the pond
i am still the lotus there
undisturbed by the mud
and the ripples of the frog
and the braggings of the bug

when you are angry
i keep my happy disposition, no awry
and show my kindness
to Highness

when you are agitated
i simply mimic you
with a sense
of humor

all in the spirit of fun
as you sling me with
brimstones

so my poetry is bland
and i am bald
and aging and old
like a man
half-dead
lacking the final signature
of the earthworm?

i don't mind really
i don't write for praise
neither for condemnation
i have long told you that

i write because i feel the urge
to write
and i get this intellectual ejaculation
by the constant rubbing
of my intellect to
the images which are so vivid
and sexy
and too alluring to be ignored

i write because i must
because i am still here
with no plans for
leaving or for anger

i like to hug you
like a mother
(for in truth i am younger
than your youngest son
and more handsome than
your previous lover
or husband)

but you push me away like
a dirty beggar
and you utter words
unfit for a poetess
or for any decent
grandmother

(it is funny really)

let me write some more
lines without hurting you
these are for me
for her and for my friends
and if you still fume like
a volcano

for God's sake
please erupt now
while i am still here
i like to see
some pyroplastics
and ash and lava
and explosions

but what i like more
is the scene after
your volcanic eruption

the calmness of the lake
that your fury has
by force of nature created

RIC S. BASTASA
Didto Sa Bukid Ang Mga Mannga Walay Tag-Iya

Kaniadto walay mga labat ang mga balay
Pati na ang mga bungtod sa atong balangay

Kaniadto magsabot kita nga manglakaw
Paingon sa mga bungtod diin ang kamanggahan

Walay mga tag-iya. Diin didto kusog kaayo
ang hangin ug ang mga hinog talumtumon na

Sa katam-is, nangahulog ug wala gani namunit.
Nagdala kita ug sako. Nagpadidit kita sa mga palwa,

Nagdula sa taas sa bungtod sa bugnaw nga
Mga sagbot ilalom sa mga asul nga mga panganod

Nanaka kita sa mga punoan, ug ang mga bunga
Atong giduladulaan, gipahalok sa atong mga aping.

Tam-is kaayo sa atong panumduman: Nanguli ta
Uban sa sinako natong mga mangga. Nagkanta-

Kanta kita sa silong sa takdol nga bulan sa gamay
Tang agi-anan padulong sa atong balay. Halok

Sa kamot ni nanay ug tatay. Bag-o lang kong niuli
Didto sa atoa. Wala na ang mga kamanggahan

Ug ang mga bungtod gipanglabat na. Wala na
Ang kanhi gagmayng natong agianan. Wala na

Ang mga bata. Ug si Nanay ug Tatay patay na.

RIC S. BASTASA


Didto Sa Imong Impyerno

sa pag-abot nimo
gilibot sa imong mata ang
kadak-on ug kalapdon sa balay

mga lingkoranan nga tugas nga karaan
gasinawsinaw sa matag-adlaw gitapohan
sa hagdanan pasaka sa ikaduhang undana
sa lamesa nga puno sa pagkaon
abi mo ug mao na kadtong tanan

apan sayop ka, buang ang namuyo
sa maong balay
ang tiguwang nga babaye nga inahan
kuno kadto nagkaon ug tanod
ang igsoon lalaki nagdula sa gabor ug
martilyo siging gidokdok ug tabas
adtong gabok nga kahoy dapit
sa kusina

kadtong babaye nga imong gikaibgan
dili kasugakod ug sugilon kon unsay
nahitabo niadtong gamay pa siya samtang
gasulirat ang iyang mata sa dihang ang
iyang ig-agaw nga lalake nga taas ug barog
dunay gisuksok sa iyang alingagngag.

nakasakay ka na sa sakayang buslot.
matag adlaw gitapakan mo ang buslot
unya karong tuiga mao na ang ikadisinuybe
ka tuig sa imong tinipigang kabuag.

pit senyor, pit senyor walay hunong ang
imong pagsyagit didto sa tungatunga sa lawod
sa kalayo sa imong impyerno.

RIC S. BASTASA
Didto Sa Sulod Sa Langob

Didto sa sulod sa langob sa karaan
Nga simbahan
Adtoa ug pangitaa ang kamatuoran.
Abli ang tugas nga pultahan
Wala kini trangkahe ug puthaw
Nga kandado

Sulod didto. Sulod na.
Padayon didto sa unahan
Sulod pa gayod hangtod
Didto sa utlanan.
Makita mo ang daghan
Nga mga gagmayng bintana
Nga gidan-agan sa ginagmayng
Kahayag sa putli nga adlaw.

Nakita mo na ba kini didto sa karaang
Simbahan sa Baclayon? Kon mao,
Nganong karon moingon ka man
Nga wala ka kaayo’y kapilian?

RIC S. BASTASA
and so we met
in new york
we ate sashimi
for 70 dollars
total

i learn about
your poverty
how you once
lost yourself
in a train

your husband
could not fetch you

i learned that
Diego got a divorce
remained
single
enjoying life in
a hub pub

' i don't like
kids, and i
want to live
alone'

thus says
the new yorker.

RIC S. BASTASA
Difference

it is
your slightest touch
that can kill me
with my
volition

it is not the scare of
your love
in words that gives
me life

RIC S. BASTASA
Different Perspectives....

all work and no play
make jack a dull boy but

on the other hand, take note,
all sunshine too, makes a desert.

RIC S. BASTASA
Different Wishes On Christmas

beside the
christmas tree
the widow
makes her wish
to see her
husband
sometime
this year

the suffering
is seemingly
endless
she is falling
short of
tears

on the other side
another
single parent
whose lover eloped
with another
younger woman
still persists on
her one wish

someday another
true lover comes
to ask her hand
for marriage....

the last one who
had been childless for
years
kisses the hand of
baby jests
asking for
a son....
Differing Strokes

compare myself
not from other lovers
who once loved
you, i differ,
in subtleties and
open affections,
on crumpled paper
i write
something like
'i love you'

you like it
less formal
but retrieving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dignified.....

the attraction was there
wanted to name it love or
whatever but no doubt it
was magical, one that takes
you away from yourself into
a place of bliss, that which
makes you feel wanting to
live some more- - could be
love i so suppose, but i
dare think that it is wrong,
and so i close my eyes,
levitate myself, transcend
the barrier, live in the
clouds, cut my wings and
settle back to the ground
again- - back to the self,
maybe unhappy, but i rest
upon this fulfillment, this
self undiminished, dignified.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dignity

at par
with you
my equal
in this fight
you are
so gentle

when i
lose the grip of
my sword and it falls
on the ground
you have the courage
to pick it up
for me and tell
me
i need it most now

and then
the point of the sword
now faces
frozen at the eye
of my heart

i stare
coldly and i perspire
to the thought
of my death

at this point
you say
thanks it is fair
and i look at
you again
at par
shoulder to shoulder
my equal

you let me go
you put your sword
in your scabbard
and take the stride
on your white horse
and leave me

agape my mouth
opens
you are at par
with me
my equal
you have all the chance
to kill me at once

but you didn't
you make me live
now
a new man
a fighter rising from his fall
gentle and
brave as ever
to fight
my own wars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dignity Finally Comes In The Form Of A Rock.

sometimes i think,
upon a deeper thought,
that nothing will change
for the better anymore.

and when this happens
i feel like a boy sinking on the
deep ocean
with no hand to help

that i die at an instant
and sink to the bottom
in all deadly
silence

and that perhaps there
with the sands and
darkness

dignity finally comes
in the form of
a rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
Diha Sa Duyan Sa Gilaayan

Si Godoy tua galaag sa Liloy,
Nanarap og toloy.
Si Juan tua didto sa Manawan,
nananom og pakwan.
Si Pedro larga sa Sugbo
nangitag trabaho.

Ako? Dia ra sa amo,
gikapoy. Tulog-tulog lang
sa duyan, nangitag kapahulayan
gikan nagdamgog kahasngan
sa akong kaulagan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dilemma

it is true
you make
my hands
alive
my heart beats
again
when i see
you
but when
i touch you
i will
be dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dilemma In The Ocean Of Choices

suddenly you do not know
where to go
because there are too many choices
and you cannot
just decide which way

RIC S. BASTASA
Dilemma....

neither could he stay
nor run
the stairs keep that door
closed
and the windows are
framed-up
the curtains hush
but their tongues are cut
neither could he run
nor stay
so what he did
is fly away
a broken winged bird
low on the plains
asking the mercy
of the grasses
wishing the journey
of the rivers
dreaming the wanderings
of the clouds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dili Duha...

sa kanunay
hakupa sa dughan
ang kaloooy

ayaw kahadlok nga
ikaw mahimong lumo ang
kasingkasing

diha ang imong kabug-aton
sa kagaan
diha ang imong katakos sa
imong kahuyang

ayaw usa og lakaw
mahimo ba nga dili ka usa mosulti
ni mosibog

pamatia una
timbangtimbanga pag-ayo kon unsa
ang sunod

inig ka human nimog
pamati, inig human nimog timbang

kon asa ang bug-at
didto ka mokuha aron imong
ibalhin
sa mga balhibo sa manok

karon mao na ang panahon
sa paghukom
wad-on na ang tungatunga
kay ang anaa mao na lamang
ang wala o too

usa lamang
dili duha.
Dili Ko Motoo Nimo

motoo ko nga nagkasakay mo ni
fidel castro sa elevator.

di ko motoo nga dunay elevator.
nga tua ka. nga misakay ka.

motoo ko nga atua si fidel castro.
bisag ganig si rudy duterte too ko gihapon.

apan di ko motoo nga dunay cal.45
diha sa lamesa diin ang pandesal

nakighilawas sa butter ug strawberry jam.
too kos jam. apan dili sa strawberry.

too ko nga si delima babaye. naa si dayan.
apan dili ko motoo nga tinood ang video.

too kog negro. antipara. tiil nga nagbilangkad.
kiyod kiyod. hapyod hapyod.

too ko nga dako na gayod ang palasyo
sa shabu. Ang pusil. too ko ana.

pero kon ikaw akong tuhuan,
dili ko motoo ana. too ko nako.

walhon ko kaniadto. kapoy ang too.
sakit akong patay nga kuko.

kandiison ko sama sa akong lubot.
too ko ani. dili gihapon ko motoo nimo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dili Na Nimo Angkonon

kadali rang
malimtan ang mga
nangawala

bisan gani ang
karon mo lang nakita
ngasi usa ka
hugna
nahimamat mo

dahon nga gipalid sa
hangin
nga natugdongsasa
sapa

bugnaw nga hangin
ngamisulay paghawid
sa imong buhok

pulong nga imong
nalitok
nga bisan pag
mobalik
dilina nimo
angkonon

RIC S. BASTASA
Dili Sayon Ang Metaphysics

dili sayon
ang metaphysics

naglisod kog
asa kini gamiton

sama sa kabo diha
sa banga

o dili ba kaha kanang
tinidor sa lamesa

minganga ko sa
nanigilon kabahin sa

misteryo sa pagpasaylo
dili gayod sayon

nangutana ko sa
kataposan kon siya

mismo nakasabot
ba usab niini

nagpanglingo siya
kanako

ang wa nako pagsabot
wa gihapon niya mapasaylo

RIC S. BASTASA
Diligence

at 3 o’clock
the surfer continues to search
for what is missing

in his life
scanning it like the pages of an old
diary

in his exhaustion he continues
till daybreak

until he finds it
he cannot sleep until the question is answered

there is this seed that grows within
there are roots digging

the value of his existence
the reasons enumerating why a day should be added

what tomorrows are relevant
why death is untimely

his fingers press the keys
until it finds

what he dreamt last night
the face of his father begging to do what he did not achieve
during his lifetime.
he hears the cries of the goat bound for the slaughterhouse.

RIC S. BASTASA
Diminishing

you do not have to obey the law of diminishing returns
on your material resources
that limit themselves
to their utility & breakability

you are not the harsh object of the law
you are human
and miracles are made & meant
for you

and so today do not think of your hurt feet & scarred hands
dream of the gossamer wings that will make you fly

your eyes in truth do not only see
they also feel
like your heart that does not only beat for this kind of life

all that is found in you
is not only darkness and dampness
if you only open your heart
hard enough
you have always been designed & meant for what is beyond

the ordinary grasps of humanity
these miracles of dreams & hopes & anticipations

they do not diminish, they add & grow
and they even multiply as many as you wish

RIC S. BASTASA
Diminishing, Vanishing, Evanescence

our nature is to fade
we are diminished every minute
we shed we exude we exhale
whatever is kept is destined
to be lost
as early as dawn that surrenders
to light
and lights soon to darkness
we must learn to accept
this destiny of losing

we empty we are atoms
blown by the wind
we relinquish what is given us
we surrender always what we think
we have obtained and won

this is the evanescence of our
human nature
we are melting we are evaporating
we see hues of colors turning pastel
we pale we wrinkle we shrink
we are diffused in space
we turn to dust

nevertheless all these are but prologues
for something bigger
for something beyond all these
to the grand reunion
and on this anticipation there is no reason
for sorrow and grieving and lamentation

from this island of despair we take the boat
and cross the body of water
i am not seeing it yet
but my heart beats
for what i cannot imagine yet i know it is there
Diminishing...

she counts all her
numbered surprises on

that day of the
hearts

one of which is the
bouquet of red roses
sent by her husband
at # 5

in 1987 it used to
be at the #1 slot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinhi Sa Langob Sa Kangitngit

Unsaon ba nako ang taas nga panahon?
Mas lalom man ang akong kahilom
Ug dinhi niining langob

Labing daghan man ko'g mahimo.
Dinhi ang panahon lisod sabton:
Ang kahayag maoy utlanan sa kangitngit.
Dili mo masihag kon asa ang usa.

Dinhi ako nagpuyo karon.
Ang sukod sa akong katas-on
Naa ra sa akong huna-huna.
Dinhi wala akoy tiil ug mga kamot.
Dinhi wala sab ko'y nawong.

Apan bisa'g wala ko'y mata
Daghan ko'g nakita dinhi.
Daghan ko'g nahikap.
Daghan ko'g gibati
Nga wala damha.

Dugay ka na sab nga wala na
Dinhi diin kanako mibiya ka.

Miingon kanako ang kangitngit
Nga taas pa kuno kaayo ang akong lakton
Daghan pa sa unahan ang akong kab-oton.

Padulong pagkapapas ang panahon.
Andam na ang tanan paingon
Sa kinabuhiing walay kataposan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner

i see how loneliness opens its mouth
and swallows you whole
there is this dinner
and you are
what is served to its hunger
and thirst and you do not even make a sound
when you are gone
into the deepest throat
of emptiness

there is no sound
there is only the willingness to be lost
and to be forgotten

loneliness ate you for dinner
and i will be its breakfast tomorrow morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner For Alfalfa

let me introduce you
to Alfalfa
my girlfriend
she is 69
and still sexy
and rich
and she says
she cannot live without me
and i take her
to dinner
at her expense
of course
because she
has the money
and for dinner
she orders
soup # 5
garlic rice
hot chili sauce
jumbo hotdogs
and
cow's tongues
for stew

(u huh?)

you expect some more
i stop here)

we are going
for a date

i am 87
and it is none
of your business)

just the viagra
without the
condoms
and yes Alfalfa
my dear
for breakfast
tomorrow)

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner For Three

she is a doctor and he is a lawyer
looks like they are sweet after three years
of marriage
compatible, super, she says
as she takes a sip of her pineapple juice
while he prefers not beer
but just plain water,

well, he knows more about
asthma and heart disease
but i do not know more about
legal terms, she tells me again,

one time, he tells me
in the email, he cannot live without her
even for a minute

super, really super, this lovey-dovey couple
i like them

but sometimes, i couldn't help thinking
they are still new on this

trade, this marriage, and still there will be
more storms to come

superstorms

i still have yet twelve years
i and emma, and we still need more storms
to shake this boat

this marriage
and if there are none to come

i will rock it, let me see how anger
makes her more human
and strong and true
and perhaps even more beautiful,

then soon, when these couple for three blissful years comes again

it will now be a nicer dinner for four.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner For Two

at the 38th floor
i got a dinner date
with you:

sashimi, maki,
oysters, sea urchins,
duck meat, red wine
and the whole view
of cebu,

you put me in the box
to an affair
that you do not like to
remember

could be my ex?
or a new wanna be?
or just a fling?
another inkling?

you're wrong
it is the promise
fulfilled to
a nice niece.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner In The House....

a plate falls from the table
hits the tiled floor and breaks into pieces

a woman is caught in utter surprise
and breaks into a hysterical
line but soon
realizes that this is nothing but an
accident of its
kind
about an ordinary plate
on the dining table

she regains her poise
keeps her composure and
retains her
feminine reservation,

'it is just a plate',

(it is not
a relationship)

i assure the guests of the house
and then all begins again
upon a witty conversation,
an exchange of
state-of-affairs
some on a cheek to cheek basis
a tee-a-tee
a peek-a-boo
a little laughter here and
another one dashing
over there

the children are out of the house
playing
some men are smoking
to the moon
it is not just a plate,
there is more to this
breaking

it is a symbol of something greater than those
broken pieces

if they only know
someone is talking to oneself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dinner With Bonnie

the innocence is gone
we were trying to capture it once again
like a tiny bird
but we give up
we have learned to accept
the past
the brokenness of the spirit that it
handed

we drink some more of that light beer
and then we begin to lose
what we keep on hiding and thinking

somehow we promise we must keep
on moving on with our lives
no denial
all acceptances of those still closed
windows that we
tomorrow must open

time is short and it shrinks us
but no matter how small we have become
we are still what we were once
yes, the basics of what we are
still undefeated
and indefatigable....

RIC S. BASTASA
Dipolog Boulevard

he walks there when
the sun is about to set
when the setting happens
he sits on one of the benches
he spends hours there watching
something that fades
to surrender itself in the
most beautiful silence of
a feeling. When it is dark
and one star begins to appear
in the sky, he begins to talk
to himself. Now the lonely
chain is are
two of them now
in a conversation because
those stars in the heavens
are too distant, mute, and
even if beautiful
have remained to be
so indifferent
until it begins to rain
and that is the only touch
he has felt. It is cold.
Now he trembles, but
not running away to
take the shelter where
everyone is hiding in the
comfort of the arms of
the mob.

RIC S. BASTASA
Direct From Orlando

at the balcony
he smokes his cigar hiding from the view
of his wife who is washing the dishes after we had dinner
over stuffed squid and
fish fillet

what i like is the rice
i evaded the hide and seek of what i think is still harsh
direct from Orlando

lost business
unpaid mortgage
bad economy
they blame it on
bad economy

as he smokes
circles form above his head
and from time to time he peeks at the side of the door
seeing to it that no one sees him

i am not that dumb
to know that there is a big problem
the reason why they are back

i like the sauce
the chili that runs like a jagged knife inside my mouth

he is jobless
and does the laundry and kitchen works
children had to quit school and start to work
to pay the heater and the water
snow is cold, it is colder now

meanwhile i glanced at the sunset
the balcony overlooks the bay of Dapitan
once a hero and a white woman made love there
we knew the ending
it was sad.
Direct To The Point

when the sun lights the grass
there is no detour
it likes it done directly like a
candid shot of
margarita

i like it that way too
straight to my
mouth sliding smoothly into my
throat

there are no rocks that block
my river
no 'on the other hand' or 'what ifs'
that grow in my path

i like it when you tell me
straight from the heart
i like this pain that stabs me right
my eyes not blinking

RIC S. BASTASA
Dirty Wishes

when the roads
get too busy
and traffic is hell
when the room is
full
and there is no
place for you
to stand

just wait, who knows
someone may fall
and die
who knows some of
them will faint
who knows a bomb
explodes
and gee
a blessing in disguise
God forbids
you are not there

RIC S. BASTASA
Disappointment

My enemies triumph over me
I am humiliated everyday
Their lies are there and I am put to a loss
They win
And they progress
As I lay here silent in all my disappointments
Helpless
Weak
And dying,
And I ask my God why? What did the truth lose?
And why are the lies displayed as truths?
Why are my detractors laughing on my defeat?
What did you abandon me?
Why?

And then I go away bringing a bitter heart
Alone, without you my God
I know I cannot survive
But I have never felt your presence
Never

Forgive me for telling you what I am feeling
They are the only truths I have now
My only comfort
My only guide and companion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Discern....

words are grasses
they cover the dead
and make us a green patch of plains
and rise up
for hills dressed for a beautiful gaze
of the sun

discern then
for i make a lot of grass gardens
underneath
you keep on thinking what i must have buried
guessing
about dead frogs and chickens and even
bodies of lovers
perhaps (but this is all murderous
and too harsh
for me, for i am as you know
a man of peace
and the law)

i have lots of grass gardens and discern from them
the women that stand there
and all those who love me from the beginning of
my poem
and the end of those plots and stories
that i have long told you

i am not that wicked and witches hate me
for all these
i have only love to offer
and they all love me in return without even
those gardens of grass
those words that
conceal
those that you have not understood and
cannot kill

RIC S. BASTASA
Disciplined

like a disciplined cat
he sits on the chair
on a motionless scale
staring at an empty
breakfast table
an empty cup
an empty bowl
on those empty hours

she expects him to say
meow
but he didn’t

in an hour he left and
tells the wind about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disconvolutions...

in bed the silence of my body
waits for you
its mouth waters with hands
hanging on the edge of
a thermal blanket
the butt motionless to the
moon spreading its legs to
the dry earth waiting for the
sun which comes with rain to all
the flowers and grass coveting
with pebbles in my palms you shall
never be enough for my longing
speechless to this spectacle
with its silence spreading like
an ocean to the horizon of
endless galaxies moving through.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disguised As A Pauper

and so the prince
to know the pulse of his place
disguised himself
as a pauper

it took him such a short time
to become
a classic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disgusting Changes Indeed

when i come back to my old hometown
the creeks where we as children once fished are gone,
trees replaced with tall buildings
playgrounds turning into commercial districts
markets into monotonous stalls
they call it progress
i am saying goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disliking Anger

you are two people
putting fire on your hair
the two of you alone
i watch it
i cannot be the judge
and take side
as you demand
the situation is tense
something is twisted
grilling on your heads
the curtains catch fire
from your hair
and then the pandemonium
spreads on the walls and
ceiling the
whole house is burning
balls of fire from both
of you
and so i go out
running away
to save myself

that is the time how
i start to dislike anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dispensable

you must know
that you are indispensable
once when you outlive
utility
they ask you to take
a vacation
and tell you that they
will inform you
in case the need arises
that is how is it
now why be so sincere
when everyone
is always at the submission
of the usual dispensation.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dispensable...

in this house
dinner is served and
those who live here
can eat even
without me...

i can hear the talks
the spoon and the fork
in their chatter
the soup burps and
the knife pisses
off

no one calls for my
name
and i am just there
watching

defining what is
dispensable figuring out
why is this so?

it is like a movie
when they do not mind me
as they pass through
my body

am i a ghost?
busted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disregarding The Bed...

in going back to the tradition of
my lowly fathers
to get some sleep
one sometimes must disregard
the elitism of the bed
and have the humble unity with
the floors' embrace...

there will be no pillows
except the softness of your conscience,
there will be no blankets
except your pure thoughts
for the night
there will be no light
except the glow of your soul

the rest around you
that keeps you warm and
guides you to the entrance door
of trance and sleep
is the hope that the darkness of this world
does not
last forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Disrespect

that early morning i take a walk
on the path beside a ricefield

on the other side about ten meters away
a man is spraying the ricefield with
pesticides

the birds are too innocent for poison
and begin to eat all the worms that fall
from the leaves of riceplants

i am breathing poison but the man on the other side
does not really know what he is doing

the air cannot complain, i could, i know,
but i am too busy about a lot of things and thoughts

the birds are feasting on the dead
worms, and
i left the place at once.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dissatisfied

Always dissatisfied with what one has,
The power of nothingness
Engulfs
Whatever you also engulf
Or take as a possession,

What comes into you
Goes out of you and everything
Goes in there only to
Go out later,
There is nothing you can hold,
It is simply meant that way,
The flow
Life, birth, life, death, rebirth,
And then back to Nothingness

Unless you believe
In something Else
To cling to
Like a moss to an old stone
Albeit,
The stone rolls just the same
In an ancient flowing river

Then while here
We do not really know
What happens

There are many stories
That the bird outside us
Cannot yet sing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Distance

distance is good sometimes
i remember standing on top of the hill
fog covers me
and yet i still see
the burning house on the plains

remember the two pillars of Khayyam
how they make a house that strong
to hold a world above a roof
of lime and beams?

we keep the reasons
of distances
to make ourselves closer
than the sea to its shore

so from here i am northbound
southbound please write me a letter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Distance Between Us

da distance between us
is a beautiful landmark of
mutual respect

when i sit alone savoring
the essence of my silence
you be the moon

when you speak your sorrow
to the sea
i shall be the beautiful corals
underneath

there is beauty in the wilderness
of our existence
i am the desert and you shall be
the wind
in the extreme heat of my sands
you shall be the
purple flower at dawn

Ric S. Bastasa
Distance Cures

missing you
is like hell,
and that is
an understatement,

i am on fire
as i begin to think
about you

i send you smoke
and you do not
answer

i am consumed
by this
loneliness

but like the mythical
fire
i rest upon my ash
and shall soon
assemble
all my molecules
to be man again
against the
odds

RIC S. BASTASA
Distance Does Not Exist

to people with some questions
in their minds
and to people who care to listen
just plain
talking
without any vested interest
for what i owe
and what you owe
to me

for us who keep
on opening our hearts
and keeping
our fingers
busy with words
the ones
that we choose
not to hurt
but to elucidate
and
enlighten and make other people feel
that this world
is kind
compassionate
always ready
to listen
and be heard

for us
a toast, we just made it

we abolished distances
and now
the rule
is this
pure and simple intimacy

good thoughts
and wishes of health
may the force be with us
may distances shrink like raisins

RIC S. BASTASA
Distances

distance. ce.

what is the distance between
your nose to my eyes?

it is the kiss that seals it.

what is the distance between
our silence for days?

it is the distance of longing.

what is the distance between
these miles and miles of separation?

it is this knowing a little bit of ourselves
that sews the torn pieces of cloth

i keep a little distance
between my heart and my head.

i keep this distance between
you and myself, you know why?

i want to see you more.
The farther you are, the more

i can see you the more you
can see me.

IT is the farthest star
that we long much.

IT is the love that is gone
that we want to recover.

IT is the broken heart that we
want to mend.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
It is this certain distance
that makes us more human.

This longing. This pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Distances....

this distance shall seal
the fate of those bridges
the empty space
are cut arms
the chasms between our
thoughts
are sliced feet
there are no more nails
to scratch what pleasures
are there
in this all broken
arrangement

the words fall from the trees
like poisoned leaves
as i walk away like a thief
you shall have the last
laugh

when you are dead and there
shall be peace
i shall come back
not to bury you with all
the requisites of
religious dignity
i am coming with my vultures
and they shall have a feast
on your rotten
belly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Distant

that guy over there
that woman waiting in that corner
that child sitting at the edge of this bus station
that old man begging with a tin can on his right hand and a staff on his left
that vendor shouting for you to buy a drink and a loaf of bread
that silent man inside the bus looking nowhere
that man that woman that child without you knowing their names

eye are your brothers and sisters and our children
eye are you too in their bodies and faces and arms and legs and hands and toes

every part of each is a part of you
so please be careful not to choose to hurt in word and in deed and even in thought
because at the end of all these hurting and hurling
you shall be
hurt too

RIC S. BASTASA
Disturb Us O Lord

Disturb us O Lord.

Stir our spirit,
When we are too pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have become true because
We dreamed too little.

When we have arrived in safety because
We sailed too close to the shore.

When because of the abundance of things we possess we have lost our thirst for the water of life.

When having fallen in love with time
We have ceased to dream of eternity.

Make us bold to venture out to the sea during a storm,
So that losing sight of land
We shall find the stars.

Bishop Desmond Tutu

RIC S. BASTASA
Disturbance

fruit blender
beside a clear
glass of
drinking water

open bulb
behind the kitchen
door

door bell rings
the child runs towards
the middle
of the road

mother is turning
on the stove

RIC S. BASTASA
Divided We Fall...

how splintered are
we
even in burials we
quarrel,
we argue all about
nothing,
much ado about a flint,
more bickering,
until the enemy comes,
and we are so unprepared,
divided, i repeat,
divided, we all fell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dizzy....

I listened to you  
and i understand that islands are islands  
unless  
a catastrophe happens  
like the way how continents are formed  
how ice melts  
and how track disappear  

but i cannot listen to you forever  
not believing anything that you are saying  

i have my back behind the wall and i am opening the door  
i am walking away and there is no hope for any stay  

i listen to myself but just like me listening to you  
how long can i listen to myself too?  

what road to take? i do not really know and so  
this time, perhaps, any road will take me without being dizzy.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Do I Have Something To Eat?

you ask me if i have eaten
it did not come to your mind if i have something to eat

but i will not correct your question
it is the most common question somehow
that is being asked by the majority of
those who do not really go deeper
into the matter,

ask me now, how about the hungry children of Africa?
the children of the rebels in Syria?

where food is prohibited, where plants do not grow because of the war,
please ask me that question.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do I Love You?

when you enter this room
you will meet us

you look at our faces
wearing different masks

when you smell us
as though we are dogs

you will be confused
we anticipated that

scents interchanged and
manners well studied

each gesture is mastered
switching hands

you try the way we sound
listening carefully

we anticipated that too
we have exchanged our tongues

not to be outwitted
you listen to the beatings of our heart

you heard it, and perhaps
now you have known the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
Do I Really Have To Say The Words?

hi there
do i really have to say the words

i love you

or do we only have to meet
in a cool place
the one under the trees and the stars
and kiss?

that is more than saying it
i suppose

RIC S. BASTASA
Do I Really Like Being Lonely?

here you are, a vortex,
and i am a point just below the line that runs
like a bridge
trying to connect us both
as though
we are one kind of a
connection: a telegraphic wire
a letter between two lonely people
or a chat
an email that has not been read for five days,
here you are, saying lots of irreconcilable
concepts: loneliness is a friend
a company
and loneliness actually is likable
like it is sort of a friend
who keeps me company

you are telling me that
loneliness is happiness:

are you sure? try going alone in a faraway island
and strolling along its beach
where a typhoon is raging

no seagull, the waves gigantic
the shore all crumpled
the sands all noisy

the abandon, is this something that is
a happy moment?

tell me, remember, the moment
once, when your heart was broken
and you are so lost
you cannot even pick a piece.

loneliness is loneliness.
i am running away from it.
it is a void. i am avoiding it.
but here she comes.

and i am telling her,
i am incurable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do No Ask Me Some Questions

do not ask me for answers
  to your questions
  for i do not have the answers

do not ask me for reasons
  for i do not have the causes
  do not ask me for an explanation
  for i do not owe you

do not believe me
  for i do not believe in myself
  do not have faith in me
  for what i have are doubts

do not ask for any light
  from me
  for you have it yourself
  just see.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Also Attempt To Understand Me

when i sent you flowers
asking for forgiveness

when you forgave me
and then left you

when i wrote you letters
and you wrote back

and i did not answer them all
when i did not tell you anymore where i was

when i come back
and keep myself enclosed in a dark room

do not attempt to understand me
there is nothing with me anymore

i am heartless i am loveless
and i have long lost my life to the past

the present eats me whole
and the future waits no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Answer Using A Rope

the one you talk with
has many questions and you
focus on his dimension

trying to figure out what answers
are desirable for as you know
people love to hear answers
that they expect

and so your question is:
what answers does this guy want to hear?

(do not figure out the truth
he may not like it
follow his questions like a river
and you must put the fish that
that river likes

or just turtles
or just the messy mossy ones
to make things cooler)

what you do is know more about him
his past, his biases, his likes and dislikes
and hence when the first question is asked

answer right away,
the one that does not hurt
like his past,
the one that he likes most in the future
the one that makes him happier
or let us say, the one that makes his life
more livable

(do not believe that misery seeks misery)

(haven't you heard that he attempted to
cut his life last year?
we know that story,
his sins, his failures, and disappointments

do not answer using a rope
do not think like himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Ask Me

do not ask
if on the darkness
of the night
he will
make you
a star

do not
also ask
if he will make
you the
queen
of the throne
of his
dreams

do not
ask
yourself
for you
know that
you
have no
answer

do not
ask
the comets
they will
just pass
at the
blink
of your
eye

do not
ask

confusion
is deaf
and
blind

and i am
one of those
that surround this
big house

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Ask My Presence

Do not ask my presence
Today or
even tomorrow
The flowers
Bloom, the clouds and sun come
The sea is blue
The sea breezes blow
Sunshines and grasses spread
The birds sing
The fishes swim
The rains come
& waves roll & sea caps
foam

Even without me,
So do not ask for my presence
In all these matters
That manage
Even without me
Without you
Or us,

They manage themselves
Well,
& good enough they fend for themselves
and repair
whatever is broken & heal whatever is
injured or
wounded,

so if you Walk with sadness, it does not
really Matter,
the flowers along the way
still bloom
And blue clouds still drift by,

even if some
Tears fall
From your eyes
And even if you die,  
the sun still shines To another bluish sky.

Nature is automated, & to your uniqueness  
You are formatted.  
That is the real difference, this randomness  
Of feelings  
This intentionality of what you wish what you  
Desire.  
i have reasons for my absence  
a disappearance  

this sense of hiding.........

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Ask The Questions....

some things
remain beautiful
because you
did not touch them

those that remain
mysterious
made your life
meaningful

you know it well
those that remain unknown
still
have not hurt you

live as usual
eat the mandate
do not ask the
questions
you will hate the
answers

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Ask, Just Savor

Something magical is meant only to be seen
and then be gone and then be just remembered with awe and pain

it is not meant to be dissected like a frog
separating muscle from bones and naming each part and lag
and then naming it again apart from its connecting
ligament and nerve ending

somethings are simply meant to be enjoyed
not to be really fully understood

like the way you lick an ice cream
not knowing who made it skim
how it is really made
what are its ingredients unsaid

like the way you make love to me
you do not measure the ecstasy as though it is a cup of honey
you do not count the moans and the screams
you do not even have to open your eyes or dream
to know how pleasure penetrated your bones
and fit into your emptiness like some stones
that thing called joy
and
bliss and beans or soy

something so beautiful is simply meant
to be remembered like the rain
or even to return there again and again
not knowing what the consequences of pain

let the pain come perhaps later
for the meantime let's be better

as usual
let the role of regret be
the one
who comes always
late
undone

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Attempt To Force Me To Eat

i cannot swallow any food
i told you that
i made a promise
to my Lord,

must you force something
that i cannot eat?
even a horse cannot be
forced to do that

sorry, you got kicked.
ms....asshole....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Attempt To Understand Me

do not attempt to understand me
and tell me that this is this and this is what i have to do

for i do not need a shrink or another philosopher
they are all there inside the cabinet, locked and who knows
dying, but i am not that so cruel, for i still let them live
inside this void, and they still have the voices

though faint and well, i say, they have their own time,
but for the time being, i ask, that they must not attempt
to unlock me like i am a door with switches, a wall with bolts,
misplaced modifiers, incomplete clauses,
do they know that when they attempt to understand me
i die, like a meaning?
do they know that when the time comes for the riddle to be answered
and correctly at that,
i shall crumple like a paper sphinx?
there are those which are better be just themselves
undissipated, disassemble,
unconnected, dislodged, excreted,
for in truth, i prefer this self to just be...
unfolded, unfolding, it is more beautiful when
not understood, its mystery so beautiful, like

when you begin to explain a sunset
when you put in the square of your hands the sunrise

or the moon, that you contain
inside the iris of your eye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Afraid To Write The Worst Lines

poems are feelings,
logic need not be there
but could be just instinct
words flowing like a river
following nothing but that
which takes the curves
of least resistance

enjoy over there the
view of the naked bathers
those that dive and
swim beneath the waters
only to rise and show
the beauty both outside
and within

look at the trees lining
on the banks of desire
up there the clouds have
tongues licking the
shapely bodies of the skies

we reach the edge and
we fall freely to the lowest
level of our journey
soon we will write about
the impact of the fall
the pains and the lowest
ebbs of our lives

don't be afraid to write
the worst lines for they
speak the truth of what
happened to each of us
faithful to our craft and
consistent to our conscripts

we dance we dream we die

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Do Not Be Ashamed Of The Language Of The Heart

do not hesitate to write
down the letters and words

your feelings your hurts
and disappointments
do not mind what your
friends say about why
you are such a sad
creature looking for
a nice garden to stay
for a little while
and sigh and breathe

this is your language now
the language of the little child
who laughs because that
arrogant and gullible emperor
has no clothes at all
and his thing dangled along
the paths of embarassment

have you really understood
the language of the heart?
the one that is not ashamed
of vulnerability? the one that
finds strength in weakness?

the one that speaks
about the power of love
amidst the hate and pain?

i have left some seeds and
they are growing and becoming
trees, and now you cannot but
take the fruits and tell me
that they are pulpy and sweet.
Do Not Be Concerned About These And Those....

We leave clouds, 
mountains, stars, and grasses 
as they are

we do not worry much about 
where the wind is moving

the sea has its own story to tell 
and breathes with its waves

we leave everything as they are 
they know what they are doing

and now, are you not happier 
than before?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Cruel On This Day...

on the day of the hearts
why should you let that heart weep?

do not be cruel, give the heart what is
due for its day

give it a dose of happy pills,
add more blood to its vessels,
put more moisture to its skin
color it by all means
with the brightness of
twenty roses, red as red,
bright as the light of two
happy mornings,

give it its night too,
not as dark as that evil thought
gray perhaps, a little confusion will do,
but if you can, make that evening
romantic, a little teasing finger, lips that
search and find, longings satisfied,
if only illusions, then why not?

give it a drink it deserves,
vodka or tequila, make it dance,
a little tip for tipsy,
raise its hands, in surrender,
curl it in bed, and have it be filled
with love,

a meat cooked well and filled with
gravy,
a salad of fresh lettuce and tomatoes
garnished with Italy,

red wine, red cherry, satisfy the tongue
and the nose,
more fire in the body, rest the arms,
close those eyes,
live those dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Deceived

Know my friend that that woman knows how to make stories
they sound so true & real
they come to you
You think it is all about me

Do not be deceived

These lies are made
For some benefit

Now you shall think genuine thoughts
be authentic

And not so trusting
be city-like in your dispositions

Towering and strong
Like a skyscraper.

believing no taxis below taking them lightly as running toys

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Like A Stagnant Pond

don’t be like a stagnant pond. the fish dies there and the moss rots and the air carries the stink to your nostrils

always like change
make change
let changes occur

a change for the better
or if not just keep on changing
your shape your form
your odor your scent
your mind

don’t freeze like ice
instead be like air
or smoke or a sigh
or a breath

keep flowing with the ways of this universe and those that surround you

let them know that they cannot put you inside a cage inside a mold and then they will call you an it.

they will fix you a name and then you become so stuffed like a toy, a doll, something so dull and boring
keep yourself open like
a
flower blooming fully
on its last day

do not close
do not ever think that you die

keep the present
it is yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be My Shadow....

since that is how
a shadow works
then there is nothing
surprising with
being imitated

i own this shadow
and i can kill it with
light

when you want to be
my shadow
there are two things:

i am flattered by
you liking me but on
the other hand i pity you
since you cannot
and you can never be me

i always go away and
there you are without a body.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Restless

because it rains all day
and what you hear is just the pitter &patter
of the rain
along the pavements
beside the house
you become so restless for not having done
the list of the day

there is no reason for the hurry
actually, there is so much more to be done
inside the labyrinths of the heart

have the joy of contemplation as you take your
mental recreation
think again of her and you
think about the rain stopping when the flowers start to bloom again

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Too Close, I May Explode.

grill me
oh i do not mind,
i know what grilling is,
many years ago,

push me, pull me,
slam me, well, i do not mind
i know how it was to be
a door,

how it was to have a father
slamming everything that would have been good for all of us

ignore me, forget me, abandon me,
i am not worried at all,
i know what snores are in the middle of
those nights
i know how it can be spelled
even backwards if you want,

threaten me, ambush me,
as that lady once boasts,
we have all these for breakfasts

kill me, oh, it will just be once
and instant
not much feelings shall be spent
and wasted

befriend me, and be close to me
these are my real fears,

love me

i do not know anymore
what soft pillows are,
how warm blankets can be
how cold nights can be so lonely
how rains seem not to stop with a litany of its monotonous drips
how cold can it be without you?

how does it feel to have a train leave
and i am at the station all alone by myself

how beautiful can spring be?
how fragile still are butterfly wings?
how sonorous can the church bell toll?
how can this kiss close my eyes again?

do not be too close, i may explode.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Be Upset About A Past Love

do you feel rejected about your past lover?
do not be upset, just remember and then smile as you remember
his kiss and embraces and (you know better, what more)

reminisce the sweet moments, and then carefully pluck out the
bitter ones, like the way you choose the chaff from the grain,
the rotten tomatoes from the healthy ones,
the bad eggs, the speckled and spotted ones,
select, that is your right,
to choose and discard or keep, and for those that you do not need,
those that you think still hurt you
and destroy you,
let all these things go

exercise your power to select, and throw and vomit and delete,
choose and be so choosy,
just take what is necessary, just keep the happiness and throw
sadness and loneliness away,

take life, and live and be yourself, what else does we need really?
whatever it is, forget and forgive, bloom and zoom,
grow and glow

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Believe What Your Friend Says, Think

Are you my friend? .............
Messenger of good and evil?
Hmmm, ............Let me think
You are stepping on my feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Blame Me Later

I offer today
in my hands
a bud, a raw fruit,
a tendril,
a fledgling

all small, and
dainty
young and
hopeful

take them all
from me

and what is left
of me
are these empty
hands

tomorrow i
will offer a hatchet
a scissor
and a knife

take them all
please

if you will not
do not blame me
i will do
what now i will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Borrow Do Not Lend....

i've known a couple
they check on us if we're ok

we offer dinners for four
drinks for eight

the conversations are lively
from history to philosophy

later, they ask if we can help
about money on these difficult times

the Chinese know too well
to keep the good relationship

do not borrow do not lend
that is basic

the relationship ended
the Chinese know it too well.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Bother Anymore

every part of you tightens
and you feel choked
air has become
a precious element
rare in your
hold,

the process continues
and you grasp for reason
where there is none

finally the fruit comes
ripe
luscious
sweet

and fallen
and you who grew the tree from where
the fruit comes

do not bother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Complain

there are more spaces for praise
more blanks to fill for grace

an empty seat is there for you to sit
a lonely park for you to cheer
with your steps

the late bus meets you and you must be there
as its passenger
north bound to places where you heart has not been

your room in the office
waits for your presence

the buzzing sound of the air conditioner
has been a long hypnotic friend lulling you to think

the table waits for your arms to rest
for your hands to start the magic of work

you figure out what meaning is there in all these inanimate friends of yours
you smile, there are too many....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Complicate Love

No perfume
Only your breath
No questions ask

Your name, sex, gender
Marital status

We just kiss
Make love
Zipless
Then you go
And I go

Your way my way
No questions no answers

Just a memory to tell the next generation
A lecture on how to love and what love is

Zipless, buttonless, beltless, bottomless
Borderless, timeless, colorless,

To love without measure,
There is simply no measure

Love is openness love is naked
To face the lover naked
Is the best truth each can offer

Your way my way
Your way of loving me
My way of loving you

And we tell the next generation
About a love without a name without a gender
Without a marital status
Without shame without rules

Without sin without law
Because love is openness only to feelings
That we must tell to the next generation

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Cry

tears, and screams.
what for?

salt of the earth? drum sounds of another mourning
for the death of hope?

be silent.
tears do not say that they can help.
screams are not incantations for the gods to hear us.

be silent.
like a rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Disown The Promising Ones

for soon they will come back
like shooting stars in the heavens

like fireworks exploding in a hundred mixture of colors
lights, and louder sounds of thunder
with so much pomp and pop of power
so magical and so beautiful and so
ephemeral

and there you are are the bridge watching
on such a grand night
looking up and still wondering

how come you fathered such a beauty?
and how come you have become an alien
and so lonely?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Enter

there is the yellow line
where you cannot enter

be glad, you are not there.
it is someone's body that

is the subject of their
thorough scrutiny and

not mine or yours and
they use some circles and

x's and lines and arrows
pointing to who the culprit

possibly could be. Do not
enter. It is very private.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Envy The Beauty That Pain Gives On The Mumbler

there is nothing to be envious about that man who has always something to say in any place at anytime

do not think that he is one species of genius in another evolution created by shrinking time

you have mistaken him for gold he is just another stone baked by many suns

if you look at him closely there are scars on his wrists cracks on his lips leaks on his skin

there is light but it is more of the hues of a sunset

i know you have seen something beautiful but it is not all, it is just a spot between his chin

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Envy The Moon

do not envy the moon
the lady of the night
adored by the stars
on a red carpet by
spurts of meteors

we have taken a closer look
it has ugly craters too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Envy The Stars

distant
they are too beautiful
glittering
like diamonds

too near
it can gobble you whole
and burn you

do not envy the stars
their destiny is only death
and they become
blackholes

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Expect Much In Life

to be happy
only be ready with what life is giving you
do not demand much
do not look for what is not there
take what is available
love when love is there
when nothing seems to go right
forget it
settle, stay, be still
nothing to argue
we thrive only with what is given us
nothing to grab
for there is always a space reserved for us
in the parking lot
for free
if there is no food
why not enjoy the air and the sea
and the birds in the air
and the scenery of mountains wearing snow caps
and the river singing
a song for you
mind you
you are loved and cared for
like the sparrows without specific address
in the sky
take care
good luck
enjoy the supply of life
while it lasts

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Expect Too Much

This is it, this is poetry
Written by this man
He is looking by his window
To the world like a little boy
Still wondering, scribbling
Some figures of man and
Superman, putting them wings
Imagining that soon they will fly,
Do not expect too much
I myself do not have wings
I do not promise you any
I am simply writing the view
The green ricefields I do not
Have rice for you to cook I do
Not have water for you to drink
I have these words, only you
Can convert them to steamed
Rice to cakes to bacons to ham
To fish to sea to clouds to sun
Or simply coffee for you to sip
When you still hunger for breakfast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fade Away

my friend, do not ever fade away
to us, who are here, loving you, you shall forever glow
not in the sky

so fickle to the movement of the spinning circle
revolving in limitless space

my friend to our hearts
you shall  shine forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fall Aldo Gabbay Krass

YOUR destiny is written.
You shall rise to the heights of your success
In the world of Poetry

They must know that it is already written
And there is no way
But to rise

Take the wings of the Sphinx
Rise Aldo
Do not fall

Let the question remain unanswered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fear Death

why do you fear death?

did you not notice
that everyday
we always experience
death?

do not pretend
that you are alive
look at yourself
in the mirror
and see
the ghost in you
at most
they tell you
to love yourself
and you
believe them

ey too are dead
and they
have forgotten
said fact

ey are simply
preoccupied
with their parties, and drinking, and laughing

coping up mechanisms
and societal norms
and preconditionings
and lies

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fear Fear

friends, do not fear fear, find it, it exists for a purpose, try blinking, look inside, there is city there of shadows, of black lines and blunt curves, and flower of thorns and there is no free ride there, the paths are winding, and there are no directions, no one tells you where to go, and what to do, everyone there just keeps on doing and doing and going, no words, there is that world of fear, and in there it is a friendly fear, a teacher, makes you numb and strong, and thinking, and when you reach the heart of that city, you are no longer a fool, not a coward anymore, ask me, i live there,

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fear Those Who Kill Matter

they're all cliche.

fear those who kill the spirit.
they're the real metaphors.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fear....

LAST night you panicked
about the tsunami news

that is real
you have seen the video on the news
at BBC

THIS thing does not
shake me
i have trust on the earth
where we live
daily

The earth will always be a big thing
and we are its miniatures
My body is like the earth
and the Earth is my body

Thus when the earth shakes
it is because it is feverish
on a certain infection
its sea must have been polluted
with nuclear waste

Thus when the earth moves its belly
and creates the tsunami
it is because
it is bathing
to cleanse itself
from accumulated dirt
and other extraneous
destructive matters

Or it is only
doing this on a routinized
basis
self-checking and
counter-checking
its Own State of Affairs
The EARTH
has a mind and body of
its own

It heals itself too
Every moment
in Every movement

The Law of Nature
Removes what destroys Itself
It vomits what poisons It
It excludes what pains it
It expels what it does not
Need

That is basic

Everything happens
because it is Good

Last night
You wrap your whole body
with that thick blanket
You hardly had a
good breathing

I know
You never really had that
nice sleep
that I am always enjoying

You bet

Now wake up early
Open the Windows of your House
Witness the unfolding of Light before your very eyes
How nature dresses and undresses itself
INTO such a beauty

Charming and magical
Its poise
The way how light bends and
Walks the isles
and Leaves and Fades
and Comes back again
IN another set of hues
and freshness of its
air
her hairs caressing
all of us
here

The rising sun
the glamorous sea
The white dots of seagulls dotting the sky blue sea
The boats afloat
and the children jumping for their
usual dives and baths

On a little ponderous moment like this
Feel the love that this Earth has given us for free
Daily
Because after it has cleansed itself
It becomes another scented Lady
or Mother or Lover
or Friend

Ready to embrace you Again
To show how lovely you too has become
This
In all Mutuality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Figure Out What I Mean

if monkeys
could only write
own a camera
and learn how to
shoot and
post their pictures

we humans
shall have no history
no albums of
our own

our language unspoken
our tradition lost

and monkeys can have
more hope
to live in peace and
harmony
with the trees and vines

oh we have written
a lot
and made pictures and
movies
and books and
buildings

how we have monkeyed
history
our language our
very survival

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fool Me Again

to choose between
the sweetest lie
and the bitterest
truth,

the way you
evaded me
i guess
you have chosen
the former.

I have found my heart
finally in the desert of time
i let it dry there and do not wish to take it back with me,

no one keeps something bitter
you see

do not attempt to fool me again
you do not know what a heartless man can do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Forget The Sad Times

don't forget the sad times
make an album
of your tears
and fears
give them the captions
and tell yourself

i have learned, i have grown, i will learn some more,
i am strong, i want to be strong some more,
i have fallen, i am rising,

so do not forget the harsh times
the sad moments, recall them, relish them
learn, learn

surely, you will miss them again
your teachers leaving you some marks

A plusses
some more A+, sir and ma'am

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Fret

there is nothing actually wrong with
going back to the arms of the past
upon whose embrace we feel so young
again,

you wish upon that old star which should
not have fallen
which should have stayed brighter on that
old sky hanging

but this is not so. There are fallings and failings.
Fangs of reverses. The venom of a snake
hurt.

what happens is when you are finally there
everyone is not there anymore.
Not even yourself.

Do not fret. . Raise your hand.
your wings and fly...

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Give Poetry A Bad Name

The frogs should not have croaked a lot
when everyone is fast asleep
Aristophanes after all is right
These frogs should not live like the Clouds.
On the other hand
THe Philosophers should cling to being
Philosophers
Stay with the embrace of Reason and Not
Embrace the Strong Arms of Emotions
For Emotions belong to nothing but the
Realm of Poetry
aH! Lysistrata shall now wage her own
War against the Men
Claiming as she does
Her sole right to Eroticism

Honestly, i still love to hear the frogs croaking
In the Pond
I for the meantime loves to Keep
The Philosophers dwell in their Own
Cloud Point of view.

If Lysistrata obliges
One night with Her would be enough

After which, I shall work hard to
Give Poetry its Own Right Name.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Have To Fathom It Like Some Kind Of Philosophy

dthis afternoon
i like the way the wind blows the leaves of
the ipil-ipil tree

the way they shower your hair
with its tiny leaves

the way you do not mind at all
as your sorrow shows

how sorrow becomes transformed
in this view

one beautiful shower of blessings
from the sky

we do not have to fathom it
like some kind of philosophy

with wind as metaphor
we are diffused and yet so strong

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Heed My Advice

temperatures rise
feelings do not have specific barometers
emotions are volcanoes
you know exactly when you erupt like one
your hands are raging storms
setting aside every structure
breaking rules
and you are king for
the day
the rest of those years
you lurk in the nook
regretting

go, do not listen, the cell
is waiting
go, leave me alone
i know what it is
i am my own friend

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Inhale Me

do not inhale me
for i am not a pure, clean air
filtered free
from viruses

instead just watch me
do not say any word
for i am just a blank wall

i would have like it more like a jar
emptied of its contents

but i was born a stone
and i dwell in my own silence
numb and always
unhurt as i have learned to
love it

you see there is no pain
but there is no happiness either.

and that is fair enough for me
now, look the moss is growing all around me

but i will not stop it
even with invaders i let them be

i am a stone and i am silent
i am hard and i do not move anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Jump Into Conclusion

do not jump into
a very bad conclusion that
the one who leaves
and who shall be considered
as the poem

called 'Good riddance'
is my wife
or my concubine
or my common-law-wife
or my girlfriend
or my housemaid,

as i am telling you,
she can be any woman of this world

she can be any wife of any husband
who knows the many versions of what a
departure can be

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Just Sit There

we are here in this theater of life
choose your mask if you want one
take it if you need it
be in whatever form you like
ugly? you look ugly? cover it and then look
just fine
beautiful? are you beautiful? show it
in this theater of life
we are called upon to be ourselves
in whatever shape we take
cool? you want to be cool? then be cool.
shy? you want to be shy? then be shy.

now, let us take the dance floor
do not refuse my last offer

let us dance because the music is playing and
the band had taken a week for the rehearsing

hold my hand, follow my steps and do not look down
look at me and follow me
use the instinct of life

we shall now dance the last dance of life
the best dance ever
the sweetest ever

now that i have you and you are beside me
let me guide you
to the zest of life to the best of what life has to offer
this is the last dance

please do not be shy
please do not die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Let The Music Stop

it will not. It is not the guitar
neither the lyre,
it can't stop, it is this soul
always singing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Listen....

beware about what you
have been watching,

a love story, a romance
by the window in Venice
love by the river
love in the sky
love of swans and tweeting
kissing beaks,

do not overthink, do not
believe at once, for coming
back into your room, into your
life,

they are all far your truths,
your sad truth, your love unrequited.

beware if the yelping dog,
the coy cat, the patient spider,

beware of everything that excites
your heart
that tells you to yield and surrender
that tells you that
everything in love is fair
that love is everlasting
that joy is forever,

back into your room
light is dim, full moon is harsh,

they say, blue is old news, beware, beware,
focus, focus on your self,
lavish on your own personal truths,

just live your life, do not listen.
Do Not Lock Yourself In The Room Of Your Past

are you sad and confused,
my dear rat, afraid of the cat?
do not lock yourself
in the room of your past
go up and see the world
of men and women
join their party and run
and dance under their feet

feel the world and see the
world from the top of the roof
see the glittering lights
where the full moon sails

if you must, talk to yourself
and paint some bright colors
to the figments of your imagination
believe, have faith, and always be kind....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Look At Me Using Your Eyes Of Pity

please, if you let me live
for tomorrow
do not look at me using your eyes
of pity
i may melt like plastic
in the fire
of your arrogance

look at me with dignity
treat me like
a self that is strong
and unbeaten

let me rise
like a sun hidden from the mountains
let me be myself
rising from my own ruins
let me be a bird
repairing its own broken wings

do not even touch me
inspire me with the fire
of your longings
help me bring in
the winds of ambition
push me up
stir me with my own
fuel
so i may again be a rocket
piercing
my own skies

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Look Back I Said

do not be afraid when he comes
you do not owe him
there are no questions
you do not take anything
there is nothing to carry
except yourself
it will be quick and so light
like a hush
donot say anything
just go
it is that easy
just go
leave everything
and do not look back
for you may find the images
buried in the sands of the
past
a picture of your youth
the sad face
the frail arms
the vehemence within
the hungry sockets
dried long deprived of the
tarry tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Look Down.....

we both climb the
mountain
that day
there was one thing
which father
wanted us to remember

not to look down
lest we fall.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Look For The Form

do not look for the form
or the shape of your longing

there are no forms
but only hunger and thirst

parched lips looking for the source of the water
empty hands looking for the the sand
to slip through the fingers

questions that look for the answers
flowing water looking for its place to rest

steady ponds
bright lights of the moon
and the shadow
watching the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
she tells me again she agrees that everything here is
unintentional pure imaginings of the mind when the snow is so thick
and going outside is painful to the skin no matter how you rub your fingers
and hands against your tummy,
this happens usually in the morning, flickers at dawn, and does not subside
keeps on dictating, hushing, whispering words that the right brain fails to
understand, the left does, and takes note of every letter, like sketches of
a face that you have for once never seen anyway,
until the bacon gets crisp, and the white jasmine rice is ready
on the wooden table, one begins to share and ponder,
hot coffee, and loneliness
anxieties that do not know is already inside your room
last night

do not look for understanding
the purpose precisely is that this is a very confidential matter
ciphers of existence that only the self can tell
perhaps before the timely rowing to the path of God

do not look for the period it is not found here

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Look That Far Enough

in looking for truth
you do not have to travel that far enough

the seven seas
and their continents
the high heavens
the deepest core

the truth is right there inside your heart
the love you are seeking
the enlightenment is just right there
in the middle of your mind

do not travel that far to look for the person you love
i am just right here

writing a poem for you
am i too near to be seen and to be touched by you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Lose The Spontaneity

dance, it is found there the moment a body hears
the music
there is no need to order the hands
they will curl and become tendrils of the vines
let go
what is inside you
you do not have to think what to do
no one tells you
what you are blends with the scent and color
of this universe
close your eyes and
fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Make It Too Long

i may lose
breath.
do not make it
too long.
some are
gasping
dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Mind The Awards...

it was never a wise man's character to display his wares on his forehead
like the way you display your plaque or something
sort of an award of excellence for your works in art, or in sociology

it is not simply acceptable in my world where awards do not matter
where money does not exist
where gold is stone
where diamonds are nothing but sands
Where fame is just a whisper of the wind
where fortunes are but pouring rain
where houses are not made of wood or stone

come, let us play in the shores of life
let us climb its mountains and reach its peaks
where we touch eternity
where we join the gods
where we are finally divine
where we are but the purity of our souls

come, let us drink the wines of holiness
come, where we become so empty
where we join the oceans of space
where we become nothing
because finally we are with all of them

where we are lost
because we have become one with the VASTNESS OF THE Universe...

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Mind The Volume, I Do Not Mind It At All Too...

do not criticize me for the quantity
i do not mind, it is the most normal thing that happens
in the ordinariness of my
life,

true, we are weighed, we are not counted,
because the numbers do not matter at all
i know that perfectly
but do not worry, do not make it a problem at all
because it is the most normal even that happens
in the most ordinary day of my life,

i, too long, for the One,
the God of Quality, the One that perhaps the whole of this
galaxy shall seek and
worship and hence cannot ever forget

but honestly, what is the use of the One
when you do not allow me to speak my Mind anymore?
what is the use of those streams of
consciousness
if in the last years of my life
i shall offer you only a single line

must it sound to be the best
epitaph of the
Tutankhamen Tomb?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Misinterpret My Silence

when we are in bed
after making love
i always feast on my own silence
not wanting to share it
with you and you begin to ask
if i am a still there
if i am lost somewhere in the thoughts
of another
and you touch my face
for my eyes to see you
the whole of you naked still
and desirable
and i have to tell you again
not to misinterpret my silence
as i still think of the
'fireworks' when you begin
to smile
when you kiss me again
despite.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Mistake Me For A Writer

i am but just
a plain breather
my work is to breathe
my only qualification
is my nostril.
do not mistake me
as a poet
i am but a another lonely
man
filling a wall with
words.
violet are red
roses are red
others rhyme
i don't.
do not mistake
a poem
as a nursery rhyme
to a man it is
another rum
and so
Rumi is just
one

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Read This Poem

do not ever read this poem
this poem is containing a virus
and once you read it
you get infected by it,

do not continue reading this
stop at this point.... here....

-nothing follows-

sorry, but you are already
infected by this poem

the cure however is there,
read it back and when you arrive
at the last word

thank yourself, you are worthy of the title
gullible like the author....(ha ha ha)

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Read This Poem...

this poem is sad

it is the picture of a 12-year old boy with bruises on his head
blood oozes from his nose
his lips are swollen like a bloated fish poisoned on the river

his eyes look nowhere
like a light house turned off

do not read this poem when you are far away from your home

you may remember
one of your sons....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Rest On The Laurels Of Your Head

we get old
the laurels mean no more
they become irritants
to the lines in our forehead
we finally let go
of these decors
we take the chances of
negating fame
embracing the privacy
of the walk
beside the hills
feeling the stones on our bare feet
touching the winds
and listening to its roars
wading to the waters
getting wet
and then take the much missed
plunge

we wish we are gone somewhere
to places
where no one finds us
where we look at no shadows
we stare
at the sunset
and then find the silence of
the coming darkness

perhaps the moon shall be full
perhaps the stars will gather in magnificence

perhaps we can love again
loneliness like the grass that we cannot uproot
amidst the daisies
they become part of us
they become us
in love and tolerance
Do Not Reveal Everything

my love
do not reveal everything

keep the mystery
be just a shadow under the moon

on a clear night
be just the star behind some coverings of clouds

do not be too near me
neither too far

let there be a little distance between us
let us keep it that way

unrevealed not fully undressed
a little silk cloth on your breasts and your groins

oh my, i am filled with desire
you're sexier when concealed

desirable as ever
like the way i caress the tips of your hair

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Say Goodbye

i have not met you
and then you tell me that you are suffering.
you keep it a secret to your family and then
you cannot help it but tell them, the pain must be known

someone still does not know who you really are
and we keep that secret and i shall not reveal it
it is my respect to you and your pain
i have offered some prayers, and then perhaps i shall offer flowers

i have not seen you in pain
i have always imagined you smiling and taking time with the flowers in the
park

how many years? it was not that long
to really forget and simply dismiss what we shared as
nothing but
a brief encounter and
without any significance at all

i have not lost you because i will
not lose you
we decide what we forget
and remember.

do not say goodbye, there is no such thing
between friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Sleep Yet...

do not sleep yet
for i am sad and like all the sad people of this world
i need a little time
to keep me company

talk
talk to me
whatever that be
i may listen and look at every word that you utter
as some butterflies or bees
or flowers on the foot of those green hills
breasts of some mountains
thighs of some river banks
soft hands of the creeks
bellies of the valleys

i want to imagine the anatomy of nature
like they are all naked women
and you shall think of me as the lusting sun
licking all those
tasting everyone

do not sleep yet
i need to look at your words as flowers
for now my intentions are honest
pure as gold without the bones
of adulteration

soft and yellow
shaped by the gentleness of your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Stay On The Deepest Part Of The River

lest you get drowned
or be taken hostage by the
monster

join with us
friends of the shallow waters
we are wading
and laughing and
filtering colors
on the prism

we are kids on the shallow waters
our chins on the stone
our minds still dreaming

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Stop

i completely agree
that when you're well read

you need not be
number one,

i agree, about bias and prejudice
about some crooked explanations

about the way how the rules are changed from time to time
without prior notice to fit what is it that must be liked

we are bound by the greatness of the past
we reject the casualness of the present

you must remember
and must always remember

'know thyself''

and that is greatness enough

continue what your heart is telling you
'do not stop! ! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Talk About A Poem

a poem can
speak for itself

in less words
with so much
meaning

do not define a
poem
it is alive and it
defines itself
even in
a syllable

it does not need
a punctuation
it can look queer
with a question mark
or a
bombastic with
an exclamation
point

do not make it
preach
it encompasses
religion

speak about yourself
you are more
interesting and alive

and the poem
would be glad enough
to listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Talk About A Rope

this is my request
please do not ever talk about
any rope
in this house where
someone is
recently hanged.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Tarry, You Must Keep On Writing

the ideas come and they do not wait.
they enter your door and they do not knock.
they leave without any permission from your house.
they have colored wings and they simply fly away upon their liking.

they are so beautiful and deep and glistening.
enlightening and you miss them

now you sit there, speechless on the blankness of your world.
why did you not write when they were here beautifully dancing and singing?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Tell Me That There Is Something Poetic About The Rain Today

shoo.

please honey,
do not tell me
that there is something poetic
about the rain today

it is heavy.
cats and dogs.
and hotdogs
and syrup pancakes and
cold coffee,

gosh.

i am engrossed with the law.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Think

for in truth
according to the Buddhist monk
to write a poem
you do not think
you just watch and then you begin to write
go outside the
enclosures
lay on the grass
see beyond the fists of your hand
break the shell
that walls the beauty inside you
you write what you see
they all think for you

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Think....

do not think
again, please do not think
for it is your thinking
that makes you dumb
makes you feel
like a nit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Threaten Me With Fire My Love

do not threaten me with the fire of your body my love
for i am a man born of fire and shall die of fire
i eat fire, i bathe in fire, i swim in the deepest part of fire

i like to burn in the fire that you start
from your flicker, from the flints of your gaze
i like to see this hearth, this warmth, this conflagration
you with me burning like hell

do not threaten me with the fire of your thighs
for i eat fire, my body is fire, it is alive with its heat
my sweat are the smokes of fire
my end is the char that stays beside your legs
and tomorrow morning when i finally die
when i am put off by your power
you shall find me as burnt residues
beneath your feet

i am the offering of love to life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Trust Time

Time talks to you
and you enjoy it for a while

Time hugs you
and then to your surprise

you have wrinkles
and white hairs

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Utter A Word

despite the sleepiness the fingers grapple for syllables for a mumbojumbo or an abracadabra towards another state of being when your logical mind finds rest where another kind of mind speaks the tongues of images in sleep.

full orange moon wades in deep blue horizon of the sea. the waves dance with the wind but in this stupor there is no sound.

like a silent movie you watch in a distance with your eyes closed.

this is the numbness of reason like children playing in the park layered with leaves fallen from trees. This is the state of falseness, an abracadabra, another abracadabra and then the door opens for you.

do not utter a word. do not choose a syllable. let the good in us flow in a state of our helplessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Utter My Name It Is Never Despair

whatever happens my dear
to this lovely spill
blame not me or no other
what is despair? each moment
a pair
each sweetness a pear
each hour a glorious galore
just us
yes just us in this search for
hands and bosom
this feeling of what love could
really be
away from home
from the madness of this crowd
from the humdrum of
everyone

going then is the place of our nakedness
now call me honest
do not utter my name
it is never despair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Utter, Keep Going.
	here is nothing
to discuss. we get
what we see.
we agreed that
everything should
be simplified.
do not let me
suffer with
equivocation. this
is our
black and white
relationship.
nothing gray nothing
in between
nothing about staying
and yet going
nothing about loving
and not keeping
nothing about promising
spit the verbs
i do not believe in
having to enter
into descriptions.
do not utter.
keep going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Wear A Sad Face

i know sometimes
just like the seasons: this winter and summer
and spring and fall,
we change, we are governed by the laws of change
no doubt, but we can also choose what we want to be

i choose not to wear a sad face
i choose happiness
i choose bliss, i choose joy, i choose to be

the happy child of God, his joyful man, his smiling servant
there are sad moments
but there is no reason to be sad

this free will
wills to be happy, and no one, not even the devil
that lurks in the sad corners of sorrows
can take that disposition away from us

for in truth
the true child of God is the happy one
because he is loved
and every moment he is well taken cared of
more than the sparrows
whose only abundance
is found in the feathers
whose only home
is the nest
whose only treasure
are the clouds

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Wish To Understand

do not wish to understand a poem
much as you wish to understand feelings

feelings are not meant to be digested
and understood
you see them and so let your hands be soft
you feel them and so let your heart be kind

compassion, this fruit of the commonness of
of our time together, love may not take root
and there shall be no tree between us

i least expect joy. If it comes it is welcome.
let is speak to me and i shall listen but

i am the worshiper of pain and in mourning
i shall compose my songs

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Worry

do not worry
the seed of love will just find its way
to grow and upon itself
take its journey towards bliss
for like any seed on earth
it always finds itself to the glorious
face of the sun and shakes its hands
and be a part of its
embrace

from it a tree comes out
some fruits that ripen

for you to simply pick up
and eat
and without any question

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Worry About Your Style....

for soon the style they believe in
goes out of the window and breaks itself
on the glassy ground

do not worry
everything is in a flux
there is nothing that lasts
forever

listen, your inner self has a voice
you do not see where its mouth is
but it is speaking

listen carefully, speak to the rhythm of its
uniqueness
take pride in its cadence
rock yourself
put them all to a written piece

if you have these strong fingers
write it on the stone-faced slab
rest for a while
and let history be your noble judge....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Worry Chester

try again next time
connect the puzzle and form
another chance
to get finally the picture
of life

it is normal
life is a mess, things do not fit easily
expectations are not met
wishes always stick on the
rainbow
dreams do not always come
ture

try again
maybe next time the pieces fit
and you may finally see the final picture
of success

do not worry Chester
there is always a right season
for everyone
a time for you

a luck all yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Worry My Dear

try having a new attitude
imitate the wind
listen
be a soul floating
not because you are too light
but because you have become
so aware
do not forget the fly
on the dung
hovering and trying
to satisfy its
hunger

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not Yet Eat The Icing Of The Cake...

a delayed
gratification is
actually the bud
of maturity.

restraint is
the humus that
makes the
best peony....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do Not........

do not tell me
anymore about love
for i have
become an unbeliever

in an ocean of lies
the boat of truth
has no anchor
no port

tell me not about
happiness
in those mountains
the lonely people
are buried

do not tell me how
to live
so many had long
wished to die....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do The Explaining For Me

In love
I lose my reason
I become
An illusion
I can’t figure
Out what to do
Where to go
I will let
Someone
Do the explaining
For me

RIC S. BASTASA
Do They Play Basketball In Heaven?

your friend who died two days ago
finally gave you the answer
yes, they play basketball in heaven
in a heavenly basketball court
and all games there are set

tomorrow you shall be
playing with them.

RIC S. BASTASA
finally
after all those years
that you say you miss
me and that I miss you
too
we have arrived here
and we talk
only to find out that
in one issue
we differ.

one looks at the stars
the other looks at mud.

one looks at the past
the other looks at the future.

both are present.
both are living in the same hour.

but just because we have
different visions now,

do we have to part?

RIC S. BASTASA
Do What You Are Supposed To Do

do what you are supposed to do
no matter what
like is not the key
in understanding true duty

finish the work
and do it well like mama's
best daughter

and then submit
all that you have to offer

when this burden is over
go back to your room
and write
those unfinished lines
of the best poems
of your life

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Have That Third Eye? ....

perhaps i have a third eye.
perhaps, because i cannot see this eye
perhaps, because this eye sees for me and it sees my
two other eyes, it swears,

perhaps, i must be gifted having this third eye,
seeing what happens next, and giving me the
details, and literally, giving me the shivers,
someone dies in an accident, someone's
decapitating someone,
another one hangs himself, the other one weeps
someone jumps ship and leaves no note on the
board,
on the other side of the view, at the left portion of
this eyesight, someone delivers a baby and
sleeps, someone watches and cries, tears of joy,
i must know, someone dives in the pool at noon,
and refreshes oneself, looking at the trees beside,
sometimes, time stands still, and the white butterfly
freezes,

for one thing, this third eye does not have a mouth
and does not warn me if i get crazy over nothing.
yes, i fall, and sometimes, i do not rise, i wallow in mud
and sometimes, i just lay hopeless in there, as they see it
i am the most lousy buffalo in town, and the third eye
sees this, but it has no comment, neither does it smile or
frown.

the muted truth, that is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Know What They Are Doing?

slowly
they burn
little things
at night
to build
a fire

you know
what they
are really
doing?

they are
gathering
little things
to keep
the fire
alive

and they
keep telling
stories
to keep
themselves
intact.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Know Why You Are Unhappy?

you have always been unhappy
feeling unwanted, despised and hurt
yes, your ego is hurt
you believe that this ego is hurt
that this ego exists

try believing there is none
believe that there is no such word as

ego

try believing there is no you at all
let us see who gets the feeling of being unwanted
despised or hurt

there is none now

you see? 99% percent of what you do is for yourself
yourself
your ego and you are so unhappy, because in truth
there is no you
there is no ego

and all you did was for no one else

that is what emptiness is all about
precisely, that is what unhappiness is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Know?

do you know Manny that when

she (you know who) writes a poem she also wears
her shades &
for what reason that is something that we all have to figure out
but i remember something about what she once said
while we were walking at the park
her ratiocination
of wearing shades

she looks at people in detail
without them knowing that she is looking

in short, Manny, she goes out but she never lets
others in
just like in her life, it has always been this one-way drive
she pops out
and then she closes everything

her mouth shut
and her heart closed tightly
and coldly
like the sweet honey
(i meant the sweet person that she
is or was)

stiff and hardened
in the freezer
frozen

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Like My Verse?

yes, the diary, of some events though too personal about some
rifts between brothers, my brother and i,
am so patient, till the end, though i am older and mild mannered always
seeking to understand the gap of
ten years, practically he belonging to another strange generation
while i keep my mouth shut
my mind open to him: as i reduce him to prose and elevate him
further to poetry, and i am glad you like
this poetry of brothers reaching a conciliation
like some great movies
about brothers karamazov
and their anna kareninas or yes, yes, lady chatterly's
or emma
you never know grace, unlike tina she is not a brown dog
but the brown prima donna of my life

love lost and brothers fighting over some little wars of their hearts
do not attempt to understand
this is purely a private matter of the bastasa family,
rocky maribujoc, roots of molave trees, some streams of consciousness
always coming to my mind

a diary, a poem, a story that i want to tell
maybe tomorrow, or may be not at all, it will cost me a lot of pain
some unbearable lightness of my being
sadness, and hidden laughters stored for another year
like wine, well more of like, vinegar actually

oh, wasting your time, as i do waste mine, on words
maybe wisdom of saying what we want to say in our minds
like a river flowing and we intend to just watch
and not take the plunge

the plunge, the way we get wet, the way our bodies
fit with wet clothes all together revealing some hidden private parts
that other may find too flimsy

well, as i am telling you, this is my poetry, a flow, a river running steadily
to the deep blue sea
and yes,

shall we take the necessary plunge
just to check if we really know how to swim how to survive and not just

write poetry hoping that they may believe our quest for sincerity
and then let me still ask

if you like my verse, a stream of unconsciousness still coping up
what to do
with our messy lives

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Miss Me?

i do not want to be biased
about how you feel about me
but i do feel it

you miss me. Our first date was a mess.
we like to do it.
but we did not. and now we go crazy
thinking why did we not do it

but gracious, do you know what she said
in SEX AND THE CITY?

sex on a first date is bad luck.
guess we must thank ourselves.

at least i had it with someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Really Find It Hard To Write A Poem?

let me tell you
it is not hard to write the poems in your mind

ey are already there in the first place
inside your heart
always wanting to be written

all you need is just your way of waking your fingers in deep sleep
let them be
let them write the words
at the tip of your fingers
let the words speak for themselves
do not intervene
let them be
let the emotions dance like the wind
let the thoughts trickle like the rain
let them be
follow the river as it winds along the banks of your feelings
then watch
how all the waters of your self fall like

a water fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Really Like A Free Meal?

you like free meals
you like free meals
you like free meals
they taste so well
they taste so well
they taste so well
nothing is bitter
nothing is bitter
nothing is bitter
everything is sweet
everything is sweet
everything is sweet

why do you like a free meal?
why do you like a free meal?
why do you like a free meal?
you save much for yourself.
you save much for yourself.
you save much for yourself.
why do you save much and not
why do you save much and not
why do you save much and not
spend anything for yourself?
spend anything for yourself?
spend anything for yourself?
you are into the vice of misery.
you are into the vice of misery.
you are into the vice of misery.
You are the miser storing much
You are the miser storing much
You are the miser storing much
and still beg for more
and still beg for more
and still beg for more
hence the free meal.
hence the free meal.
hence the free meal.

there is no such thing as a free meal
there is no such thing as a free meal
there is no such thing as a free meal
if you only know the real score
if you only know the real score
if you only know the real score
you could not have eaten that free meal on the table.
you could not have eaten that free meal on the table.
you could not have eaten that free meal on the table.
everyday you eat this unnecessary gratitude
everyday you eat this unnecessary gratitude
everyday you eat this unnecessary gratitude
tomorrow you shall pay it
tomorrow you shall pay it
tomorrow you shall pay it

with what? your dignity,
with what? your dignity,
with what? your dignity,
even your whole life.
even your whole life.
even your whole life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Really Like What You Like?

do you need an army to let them know that you are here?
do you need company in that walk of your solitude?
do you need a friend to listen to the sighs of your soul?
do you need a child to continue the footsteps of your future?
do you need a wife to comfort you in the place where you are rested?
do you need a government to get what you want in this world?
do you want to be ruled?
do you need a cup to drink your water in the river?
do you need a horse to complete the journey that you have started?
do you need a follower of your thoughts?
do you really need yourself to understand finally who you are?
do you need life to understand what death is?
do you really like what you like?

i am not asking you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Really Want To Know Me?

if you know what a river is
perhaps you will know a man

i am a man and you will say to the river
i have known a man and i have known a river

there is no way that i will never you in full
you shall brag to the clouds in your mind

ey they drift
there is no permanence
permanence is an illusion
a river
a cloud
water
air

and this is where we must start
educating air

if you step upon my heart and tell me
i have know everything about you and you must not change and that is what you are

you are wrong
for i am a river that encircles a mountain
but i know a path but the paths do not know me

and so i keep on moving
changing paths and what path was it that you have seen yesterday
is no longer the path now

you must accept you have never known a river
because a river is man

and man is not forever man
he is a river that always escapes the hold of your mind

that frame that has walls
without even the possibility of another opening for stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Remember Failures?

Are you asking me? Yes, I remember my failures
Lots and lots of failures in my life,
I look back again and remember these failures
And my God, how deeply was I hurt,
I cried on some of them,
When friends left when love was lost
When relatives did not give support
When I was all alone

When I finally rise again
And recovered from the past, when I learned
And met success again

When I have become stronger
Rising from every fall, recovering from every failure

I always remember them with fondness
The hurts diminishing, the blames now faint

As the new sound of success reverberates
Claiming new friendships and new approaches

And the comfort that life is like that
Success and failure? A seesaw that we really have to play.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Remember?

The river where we bathed
As children
Innocent in our nudities
The fish we caught
The fire we made
When we all ate together
As friends as neighbors
So close like bees in the hive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You See My Truths? ..... 

naked shall you see me 
dressed in twilight

do you see the truth in me now? 
you are wrong 
for my thoughts are still covered thickly 
and each letter 
still tries to conceal what my words 
shall try to speak 

everyday i write the words 
the poems that you read 
do you claim to see the truths in me now? 
you are wrong again 
for what i am still belongs to those 
unspoken 

and in my silence i shower you 
with its emptiness 
do you see my truths now? 
you are wrong again 
my silence does not speak everything 
there is still the hush of the wind 
the chimes of wood and metal 
this silence runs and does not stop 
and you flag it 
and talk to it 

do you hear my truths? do you see them now? 
you are wrong again 
for i have buried all of them in their niches 
when you open each 
you will find no door 
when you go over the windows 
you will see what truths might still be there 

those dried petals of a rose 
those letters with words faded like sunsets 
those broken pieces of porcelain and glass
those jigsaw puzzles still
unfilled
those chains with missing links
those buttons that do not fit

do you see my truths now?
i agree, on those dusts, they have now become yours
visible to the caution of
your heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do You Still Cry? ..... 

you cried on your first pain and tell everyone about it, sharing the pain, thinking that with others knowing it and saying 'our sympathies' can lessen the weight of the burden and ease the pain,

i tell you, it is a matter of getting to know pain familiarizing the drama of the heart, scrutinizing every neuron of the emotion getting to know life, and eventually preparing for every inch and step towards death

for that is our destination, annihilation, but something higher than that can comfort you, birds fly higher so they can see from certain height the smallness of lamentations, we travel fast, and not arriving somewhere but we gain something as we tread upon the pebbles that make the mountains stumble

there is no use for cries, they are for the novices, we must swallow that bitterness and from its effects shall we live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doctor's Warnings

half of the mango.
that is all you can eat

and you do not like
it you take the whole
mango
and swallow.

a cup of rice.
hardheaded, you
take a bowl.

no coke. you
bought a bottle
and drink it all.

no sugar. no salt.
you are determined
to have some
and some more.

take death then
the doctor says

and you say
with all dignity:

thank you.
i love it.

RIC S. BASTASA
we both love the bear
Dodoy and me, in that party
tendered by a
retiree,

he claims we both do the
same thing
love other women, our wives
bitter
and rebellious about our
trips to
lust, and his wife is still
furious, stupid enough not to
forget and forgive,
i pity them in this tragedy of
fidelity, and the poverty of
open mindedness,

'you were caught and you admit'
that is the biggest mistake,
'look at me, never caught and
never in the state of admission
or confession, for to do so would
be an utter insult to her
status, beauty and education, and
money, '

we drink more glasses, no one is drunk
but somehow, despite the manageability
of this kind of conversation,
he pours out every regret, every
hope short of realistic expectations,

'how much does a divorce cost? '
'i do not really know'

meanwhile the music is getting
romantic, couples dance and cheeks
touch like magnets to iron
feelings, 'oh my wife is not here with me. She is into other equally important matters, and so i look around and there i see another lonely woman, waiting to be danced' and i pick her from the crowd of lonely women and we dance and dance so sweetly and then

these unhappy people begin to talk. 'there are many forms of love' i remember my philosophy teacher once lectured, it is like a fan, love for wife love for the other woman, love for a friend, love for an old mother, love for art, love for music,

'so why should you limit me to only one stupid love?' i close my eyes, put my cheek to hers, and kiss her.

it is a lovely night not fit for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Does A Sunset Feel What Sunrise Is?

sooner we get attuned

to this strange creature as guilt.

it hurts for a while but each night
when all the black birds roost in that island
we get the sleep we need.

tomorrow when we wake up we do not speak
we fathom the silence of our night outbursts
we get attuned to this, the kiss and hugs of cold bodies
and making love of robots in that warm room.

we get attuned and we do not care anymore
what is happening what they taught us
what was wrong and what was right in that place
where they do not have names anymore.

we get attuned to this and your kiss is not that
significant as mine is like yours.
we understand when we meet and then we simply part ways.

you to your love and mine to my love too.
different destinations, each carrying the lightness of our new beings.

so goodbye for now. Keep the secret of love.
Guilt is a stranger. Sin is a literary thing.

here we live life without a book.
without a master plan. we just live the way we feel.
ot even this. does a sunset feel what sunrise is?

RIC S. BASTASA
Does God Really Hear Our Prayers?

i guess so
because God is everywhere
and my prayers
are everywhere too

everywhere goes with everywhere
every ear goes with every prayer

and why should God
Not hear our prayer?

RIC S. BASTASA
Does God Weep On The Misfortunes Of Man?

the flood that kills a thousand men
and women and children
the massive mud that buried
them
looking like frozen statues

the lava, the tidal waves
that hit the islands
the virus without cure
the disease
the plague

the consumption of so much number
numbing
to our sense of dignity
the rape that fathers commit to their daughters
and even sons
the mothers that kill the fetus
to save their faces from shame

what more?
let us count the miseries of men & women and children
the fear that grip them
the chaos that always comes
in wars
in famine
in nuclear hatred of one country
to another

the hunger, many more deaths to come
the exploding population
too many neglected children

and too many to ignore
the rich & advantaged caring less
the insignificance of the voices of those
who speak
their valid concerns
does God really weep?
does God really care?
does God signify
any sign of presence
of any divine intervention?

did he say we are free?
did he say he respects this freedom that we take pride in
that we won from the snake in that paradise?

is God here?
do you really hear him weeping?

i want to hear my God
i want to hear Him speak
i want Him, forgive me, to weep,

but i have not seen the tears
i have not heard any sound of weeping...

i guess, if he is here, if he is here at all,
i will still respect, and worship & love Him,

even if i hear Him laughing....

for what am i?
i am just his slave, his servant, though he may call Me
brother,
or his beloved son

to Him, i can be, even
nothing
one that he can always
put in Hell and set aside as a useless spark
in the vast space that he owns

one that he can also save
by His Mercy and Grace....

i know, but i will always wait
for His answers, even from the passing wind
i am always thirsty and asking
Does Not Know How To Live Anymore

There is a door inside us which we do not want to open

there is a room there where the ceiling has no star

we want to keep that door closed forever

we wish we cannot enter that room anymore

yet it is simply not possible if i won't go in there something inside me dies

and something outside myself does not know how to live anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Does She Like The Suntan Or The Sunflower?

i have offended a nice woman today
aldo,
i need to know what flowers will she ask
to get an apology?

will it be sunflowers as big as a hat?
or suntan with the tiny little suns?

please ask her Aldo
ask her for me

i love her and i do not want to lose her

RIC S. BASTASA
Dog Stay Dog Stay

Dog stay and dog stays
Dog run and dog runs
Dog stand and dog stands

Dog catch and dog catches
Dog roll and dog rolls
Dog lick and dog licks
Dog hug and dog hugs

You are indeed a liberated woman
I don’t have to ask if that dog is your man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doggerel

He who dies with the most beautiful poem written

is, nonetheless, still dead.

Be thankful still for writing those doggerel,

Man, you are still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dogs / Gods

a torment
is a mentor

a show
can be hows

a dog
can be a god

with a little
manipulation
of words

me
can
be
'em

thaw can
be
what

got to be
tog

a door
a hinge

without the sea
a clock
is just a lock

with two
i
&
i

a dot is but an
an idiot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dogs In The House

since we love the dogs
who sleep with us
now we must feast
with all the fleas

we feel the rhythm
of their barks
we mark our lives
with dog ears

we master the art of
stand and sit and roll
and get that ball!

now scratch my back
as i scratch yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doing Duties Despite The Heavy Heart

usually two people
detesting each other's presence
do not speak
conversations are
painful
sometimes it is forced
out of civility
poor man he opens his hands
from his fists
turning into fragile fingers
but then the ants of the world
in their usual silence
demonstrate to you
an interdependence
the empire must live
do your duty
lest others still soft
and weak
shall die

RIC S. BASTASA
Doing Fine

the passion of doing a thing
that you love

it loves you too
feeds that passion with fuel

a conflagration
a fusion of fire and desire

you ask me why i am doing it
because i love you

not because you love me
because i love you

things love you in return
the barks of trees that you touch

give the best leaves
the most colorful flowers

the scent
pervading the air of the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Doing Justice To Love?

justice is an
eternal search
a way of
balancing
that does not
balance
at all, or sometimes
maybe
when you feel you
are near it
and yet it becomes
too slippery
to your touch

this morning i
like to tell you that
i like to do justice
to love

that i have not rendered
what is due it
that i am a kind of
a shortcoming
a big lapse
a slippery hand that slips
away from your
body

i like to tell that you
i am unjust
not having loved you so
well
or even if i want to
i simply can't

you are running with time
you are short of it
and at the last hour of
the rush you tell
me that it is time to leave
and that something
shall be done

you kiss my forehead
not my lips
you tell me 'i love you'
and then
you say 'bye'

i have not told you anything
because i know
that you are returning
because i know that i am
not

or must i contrive about
new choices
that there are many ways of
loving you

that there comes a time
when the moon is full and
we are together
under its light and we say
that despite everything
those lapses and
shortcomings we keep on
that hold

we love each other no matter
what
even if we do not love even if we
feel nothing
even if we are deprived
of any emotion
even if the shallowest feeling
does not touch
us with its fingers again
the fingers of a
child
unborn.
Doing The Things That I Do Not Like To Do

i am inside this system.
this cell. there are instructions.
no refusal. just plain moving on
not stopping. move.

i want to get out. i can't.
i am doing the things that i do not like
doing anymore.
i am lost. i am stressed out.

peristalsis.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doing The Ultimate Sin

in doing the ultimate sin
of the flesh
God watches in the patience
of one who understands
how is it to be human
to be frail
and to be repetitive of
of the same sin
over and over again

God understands.
Man always repeats himself
like history

in statue silence
conscience stabs

but how careless
is man, unafraid of the consequences

to the gates of hell
with a band, the multitudes march

oh! you are saved,
how lonely could you be?

one? two? three?
yes, not four.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doko Kara Kimashita Ka?

&lt;/&gt;we were seated
closer
there was silence
of the white
cherry blossoms
feeling like
i too was snow
we kissed and we did not
ask
where do we come from
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Dolphins Poem

one survives this way
to every line written
to every word chosen
so well, like

a dolphin to his
finesse
after a show
there is always
a fish.

RIC S. BASTASA
Domain Of The Heart

he says that the domain
of the heart is different

there is no east, west,
 north and south

there is only this breadth
and depth
those touched by its hands
embraced and kept
and so unwilling
to forget

to let go and die
treasures long buried and
cherished
by the rhythm of its beats

RIC S. BASTASA
Domestic Help

in California she fills in
for some emptiness of another white man's home
away from her country
and kids and kin as the snow falls freely on the roof
of an American house
layers and layers of cold snow heaping through her eyes
as tears begin to fall
on her cheeks to the floor

she has to pay her bills
she has to write her emails

and then the old man says
it is time for his meal
and medicine

she rushes to his room,
wipes her tears
and she appears before him
on that wry smile of the
brown domestic helper.

RIC S. BASTASA
Domestic Helper, Singapore Bound

a woman is leaving for
singapore

back there to resume her
work as
nanny

late hours again before
she sleeps

she waits for her flight
at dawn

outside the glass wall that separates her
from the country

there are no more people
the atmosphere is that of a dormitory after a semester break

she opens her i-phone
and watches

her hand with a cotton wiping her baby's mouth
spilling milk from her nipple

RIC S. BASTASA
Domestic Violence Against The Woman

With her persistent love she looked into
The scattered colors of her is
Happy to lose herself in the complicated
Sound of the ending of the day. Curious
She read carefully the meaning of his verse
Composed in red letters of his blood.
It was not the common red, it was something
Else, it was more than love, in fact it could
Be death, that dissipating color spun like
Fine fibers of her destiny. For the quiverings
She spent her time in delays and ambivalence,
Lacking the strength to walk out from this
Path of betrayal, she gazed upon it, just waiting236And staring at the patterns of his violence,
They asked her, out of concern, to finally
Step out, but she didn’t like a moth she
Circled the fire of his insanities
She prayed for the light. She called upon
The powers of the gods to change him.
It was too late, the fire burned the wings
Of the insistent moth. And there she lies
Dead, totally wrecked and abandoned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Domesticated

for you have been sheltered
the whole of your life
you have become the model of
domestication
the one with a sense of home
that sense of a comfortable zone
you have become a coward
unable to feel the roughness of the world
unable to accept its delineations
deviant world, bending and bending
to the commands of the few
the dictates of greed
the insanity of power
you have become a very entertaining dog
knowing very well the tricks
disabled to the call of the wilderness
the sharpness of your pangs
the smell of danger
the beauty of war, that law of predator and prey
the survival of the fittest.
you have become a stuffed toy.
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Domingo Sa Buntag

mikanaog kitang duha
paingon sa suba sa
Kantara

linaw ang panahon
walay kisaw ang hangin
madungog nato ang
awit sa tukmo
duyog sa sulog sa
suba
paingon sa bukana

gihubo nato ang atong mga
sapot unya kay lagi
kita man lang duha dinhing
dapita

mipauraray ka sa dakong
bato
unya ako miduyog kanimo

duyog sa awit sa suba
sa awit sa mga tukmo og
tikarol
gisugdan usab nato
ang awit sa atong
gugma.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don Juan

don juan rides on his horse
morning noon and nighttime

he is looking for happiness
and you are there waiting
and another one
and another one
and another one

what a party of friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don Not Be Confused

it is not the body
that we laundry
it is not the body
but the soul
that we purify
it is not the body
that you can
prepare like washed
dishes for your
next dinner
it is not the print
on the paper
but the thought
it is the dream and
not the sleep
it is the grasp of the
the divine
not the hold of something
bovine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don’t Lose Hope. Nothing Is Permanent

Are you down today? Don’t just sit there and worry all day. Rise from where you fall and do something, don’t just sit there. Try some more. There will be some other ways. Nothing is Permanent. Luck is for everyone. There is always a sun for You to shine, your season will come and bring you what You need, what you dream, what you wish, what is best for you Don’t just sit There, stand and be firm and do something. There is a season For everyone, your lucky day has yet to come, so don’t just Sit there and be eaten by the mouths of worry, or be bitten By the fangs of anxiety. Your day will come, your lucky star Will shine, so don’t just sit there. Tonight, look at the falling Star and make your wish again. Nothing is permanent, Everything is temporary, even the happiness and the fortunes That your enemies now enjoy.

From your fall you shall rise. From your fall you shall learn.

RIC S. BASTASA
IN America, you cannot hide your brown skin
and everything in you, Mr. Filipino connotes what it takes to be
humiliated and discriminated but you go beyond all these
in the name of the mighty green paper god,

the dollar i know you know
even without the essences of a metaphor

you can endure all the discrimination and the humiliation
for such lowly job as errand boy or whatever euphemism you may use there
like a sanitation engineer
for a garbage collector

but now

there is a little change as you emphatically try to hide
in the monotone of your voice
like a sleepy sea breeze

you got laid off due to that bad economy
creeping up like a black worm on the American white beer belly

a sucker, what do you call that really?
yes a leech, son of leeches, those crabs on the tin pail,
like what our corrupt politicians
feed us in our country

(where do we really have to go?
Dubai? again?)
you can endure them all, at whatever cost, to support a wife and daughter here,
but now what you cannot endure is this jobless state

now, you must go home, who knows, this is nothing but a blessing in disguise.
i must be lucky somehow, i do not need much and i do not need to be in America to be human myself or be in Dubai to at least survive on temporary basis

know what, we're on the same boat but to appease my thirst and hunger and an array of disappointments i try my hands on

poetry, this if you may call it, poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Donna....

by now you must have noticed
that this is just a game of words
rearranging letters to make a sound
polishing them
for more attraction
and you must shake your head
in disbelief
thinking that some of these words
have changed the
directions of lives
or perhaps lightened the loads
or fueled the jets

on the other hand
i must agree with you
this game
i must confess
is designed to appease
the kids
who are not loved by their
parents

somehow
there are effects unexpected
but these i honestly
did not know
but which you must have
experienced

well, i love this game
and i shall play it all over again

did you find
some codes in there?

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Ask

don't say the word
do not ask me and do not remind me

'it's too early' because you know what i will say
and i have said this over and over again till the last day of my life

'it isn't' dusk is not early
to wait for a brighter day is worth, 'what do you say? '

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Be A Loser

don't think that much
and lurk in there like a curl
of your lock of hair

spread, move, giggle,
take the zest of life like you're

a bird flying on its new wings
taking the somersault

the best dive
the exhibition of its power
of flight

don't be a loser
say yes to life and grab every light
in this darkness

wake up
open your eyes and see the opportunities
waiting for you

right in your own backyard
asking for your name

it will not be long
the sun did not promise

but it will always come and shine
for each and everyone

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't Be A Wallflower

the night is
cold
and so are the
walls

if you keep
on being that
you soon
will freeze
like a Popsicle

try being
the wine glass
enjoy
the clicking
to such
a good health

taste their
lips
do not mind
being
drunk

keep this matter
clear
enjoy the night
do not be stuck
on the walls of your
past

keep the caution
somehow
on this fragility
and clarity
do not break yourself
and fall as shatters
of glass
on the floor
Don't Be Everyone

don't be everyone
there's so much of them
and you are too small
to contain them all

you don't have even
to be somebody

or just be anybody
as plain and simple
as you can be

you cannot also
be everybody
there are so many
of them already
and so few to
be your idols

just be yourself and
i be own myself
just be my someone
and i become
that somebody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't Cry

when everyone leaves
for somewhere else
and for something for someone
other than you
give in,

don't look forward to something
illusive
root yourself to the weight of your feet
look down
the most important part of the soles of
your feet

hold the sands of your imperfections
watch them all slip away
and then just savor the emptiness
left behind
by the trails of mercies.

RIC S. BASTASA
lady, don't dare me to share my naked body.
i have a web cam but i won't open it.
i am resting because i am tired
i want to sleep naked on my bed
and for you to dare me
is an insult to love.

shall i hurt you with the indifference of my flesh?
lady, with due respect, i do not share my body to a woman
who dares me to get naked in front of a web cam
that knows nothing about the poetry of love,
about the nuances of gentleness, about the loneliness of a whisper.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Ever Think That I Write Good Poems For You

all these
are but exercises
like a morning walk
at the oval
of the university

i am a man with
no ambition for the
nobel prize in
literature

you're funny
come to think of it
what i write
are not poems

not pieces
for a poetry contest

these are
scribblings of
a trying-hard

expressions of my
day
away from the usual
routine of the
hammering days
black robes
and frozen faces

do not be
offended if i
misspell some
words
no harm intended

i do not edit
my work neither will
i ask your kindness
to do it for me

it is like this:
i put on some notes
for the day
random thoughts
nothing schemed
no arrangements
nothing planned
pure streams of
consciousness
my fingers follow
and press the
letters on this
screen

and some by
their misjudgments
say: what a poem!

i don't even know
what they mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Get Infected

go away now.
You may get
infected with
my yawn.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Look Back! Don'T Look Back!

the instructions are clear
like white silk on my skin

but what if i really have to
look back to pain and feel

it the way she felt it with
my own incorrigibilities

what i i really looked back
will i turn into salt like the

way Lot's wife disobeyed
the orders from heaven?

and what if i turn into salt?
do i have the sighs of the water?

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Make It Long

yes, very short.
do not prolong the
agony of
waiting. a queue
a line, a traffic jam,
a pile of folders,
horns, an hour
more. your poem
to read tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
WATCHING this one
alone, for how can i ever
share this
private moment with
myself,
makes my heart beat
like a nose flute
singing
my blood boils like
a rice wine fresh from
the coconut tree
gathered by
the expert hands of
the native,
there is extreme happiness
in this alone-ness
that four hours i watch and
speak nothing
it is only i
who understands what is this
and why
the hours pass like
people in the mall
i stand and wait
and watch and
savor what i am seeing
my eyes do not tire
my hands press for more
waiting for the arrow
and the red line
boldly running from my
fingertips

what i love
can never make me exhausted
what i long for
makes me live some more
i worship
the none worshiper
i know someone
that i love that does not know me
and will never
be interested in me

a long time ago
i write about this
and this time
after all those years
i watch and write
the same
theme

not all of you
will be interested
some of you already
passed away
and perhaps in the
other world
finally understands
speaking now
only to my dreams of
the murky river
where all the fish
are grasping
for breaths

there is no sun here
air is less
but with what i see
daily
i am more
inspired to live

RIC S. BASTASA
you don't have to prolong
my agony
of waiting and staring
at the stars
i give up i am leaving
what for my dear?
i only have your name
you are never here
i heard your voice
nothing but a
very faint whisper

a hush in the bush
a blush a crush
a bristle of a brush

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Read

don't read
my lips you will find
something that
you like to feel
don't read the lips
of a man
who wants to say

please, don't read
my lips, you know what
i mean.

don't.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't Really Try

Just wait
learn from juan
just keep on waiting
the ripe guava is just there
in the offing
don’t sweat
it is there already
keep your mouth open
your heart too
it falls right at you
because it's for you
just wait
and then after that long wait
taste it
it is very very sweet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T Rush

to enjoy the walk
don't rush your steps

savor the view of
a beautiful morning

what is there?
do not infuse thoughts
on what is there

this is the world
and this is your first time

to see and feel
the falling of the leaf

the first ray of the
sun
that today touches
your hair

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't Take Matters Seriously, ...This Is Just A Game
That We All Play

do not be that serious
poetry is not

serious about you in fact
it leaves you where you are now

alone, feeling rotten, dropped
potato, cut flower, vase with

a mosquito for another disease,
so, why not be a hanky-pansy,

dancing under the sun with
nothing on, and when people

think that you are crazy
and pour much attention, then

that is the price you get for
being this poetess, unadmired

for seriousness, unrewarded for
so much effort,

all the candles burn themselves
at night, and then nothing is left.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don't Worry

if you fail now
don't worry
try next time

if you are excluded
don't worry
soon the right season shall come

if you are down and out
don't worry
try again
there is always another chance
another time

if you fall this time
or if you fall again and again
don't worry
try and try again until you make it next time

there is no limit
rise, rise, always rise from it
from where you have fallen

don't worry
there will always be a place for each everyone
under the sun

there is always a place to be happy
for you and for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T You Know?

despite my love for it
writing also gets tiresome
my seat is hot
because i've been sitting
for a long time
my head is on fire
my soul is burning
my heart is that burning
bush that Moses watched

those that see me here
only see a body sitting on
the cushioned gray computer
chair, hands running like a child
on the playground of keys
as though everything is
alright on the park
even without the teacher
or the mother

it as though there is no
problem
but really there are
in fact too many

the writing seemingly
not diminishing
nothing solved
my ring finger actually aches.

RIC S. BASTASA
Don'T You Quit

boss,
don't you quit
loving
don't mind
the pain
i will take
over
this pumping
this beating

boss,
i am your heart
and stronger
than you think
when i was
first shattered
and broken

boss,
look, i have
no hands
look,
i heal myself
sooner
than you
think.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doodle

do not follow my thoughts
for they do not have direction
no place to go
or rest they simply travel anywhere they want to

searching for nothing at all
they merely
watch without even noting what is there to know

free thoughts
like birds flying on the horizon as though they know where home is

know now my dear
that i am but a spectator of my own dreams
sighing
and breathing and wondering all for its own sake

no use no purpose just looking plainly
on the sand feeling the heat and not looking for any cover

RIC S. BASTASA
Doomo Arigatoo Gozaimasu

even the gods
who give us
everything
wish that we should
have known
how to say
thank you very
much...

RIC S. BASTASA
Door Haiku

noon when you arrive
the crickets stopped singing
she opens the door

RIC S. BASTASA
Dormant Days And Inactive Nights

even if there is no way
for sleep to sleep in the couch
in the bed
the body tries to find
rest... no way, no way,
a whisper is heard in the ear
there is no way out
from here
there is this sound of despair
the music of
hopelessness
you who probably hear it
tonight
in these dormant hours
think that the notes
are divine
you who soundly lies on the sofa
of your
drunken feats
probably cannot distinguish
what is not there
anymore

i am shattered
but there will be no pieces
to piece
to make whole

i fly without wings
like air
you cannot see what is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dos Palmas

i eat my pizza
alone
in Dos Palmas

i am an
island myself

this time
i leave some morsels
for the
bird nearby

it is glad
when i finally stand
and leave

it, too, alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Double Edged

everything is double edged.
it all depends on us, what decision to make, what priorities
everything is always an interpretation of something else
a mover, an initiative
a glass half full or half empty
a prison of stars or mud
depends on the vision and action, depression a source of poetry or your annihilation
death, an end or a beginning?

RIC S. BASTASA
naked children
bathing under the rain
girls stamping their
feet on the water
scattered pleasures
in the rising waters of the river
the boys are at it again
cliff jumping
there are no stones
the rain keeps on pouring
the bamboo raft floats
seeking a strap for home
naked boys and girls
they bathe in the river
long ago there was no malice at all
pure pleasure of angels
the rain keeps pouring
the waters still rising
there is a flood of happiness
at what price tonight?

RIC S. BASTASA
Double Faced Poet

double faced poet
like day and night

light and darkness,

the bad side of
the other good side,

that is not what i
really mean,

it is not about good
and/or evil, it is about

how we do things:
poetry at night
and bread and butter
during the day, something
that makes the terror
of our creativity,

moon and sun
they may not come together
but they must exist

to make the whole
narration of a complete event.

rushing myself to write a poem
and then rethinking things over
a decision between life and/or death

liberty and/or prison, and so on and so forth,

this time, as you read, it is poetry.
as i sign out, it will be another face of me.

it is something that you cannot read.
it is hidden by the clouds
behind the sun and the moon and the stars.

it is something that disgusts me.
it is something that i do most of the time.
 apart from this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Double...

always, shall i be held at this hour,
always, finishing what is composed by the dawns of my mind, always,
must i be a servant of the greatness of whispers, this and that, an image after another, hour after hour, and when the sun shines, the fingers of light caress my forehead, i shall stand and walk, under the trees, contemplating and so fulfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Double-Entendres

sometimes i get tired figuring out
what you really mean
for yesterday you said you love me
and then we had a very warm night
in bed with dim lights and soft music
and then we curled and licked and
we said we love our connection
and we want this matter repeated
sometime

when we have the time
when we are free again

some other time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Doubt

that is the essence
of our
democracy
to doubt
to make everyone
suspect
as to his intentions
to question
integrity
to lavish on criticism
to experiment
to find our if there are
solutions
to the problems
that we make

RIC S. BASTASA
Doubt

here she comes
she is an empty space
a packet of air
she can be warm
during the rainy days
she can be cold
during summer
she completes our day
she is a compliment
to light
she is half of what
is there
a compassionate sister
to sureness
of one's capacity to
understand
she sits besides us
when we are
lost and want to find
our original ways

i welcome her
she is....

RIC S. BASTASA
Doubters Of The Faith

Surely, i know, i am not alone
on this, this field of doubt, this space
where i float, where i do not know
whether i shall land
or i shall be on the darker
depth of the clouds
forever or i shall finally sink
to the bottom of
my confusion
or the bottomless
sunless
moonless
sighs of my loneliness.

I doubt, I do not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dovetail

a man and a woman
so in love

on a cold night like this

RIC S. BASTASA
Down

THERE is always hope
when things go down when you sink and shrunk
like a coin flip flopping to the depths
of the storm
as one little boy watches yourself
with pity

and perhaps awe
because there is hope
for those that go down the only
tendency
is always to go up
for those that sink
the only hope is to rise
for those that shrink
they grow again on the interstices
of little spaces beneath
and within
and for those that flip flop
the only thing that you see
is the beauty of that
dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Down To The Depths Of Oblivion....

the consequences are coming
like a horde of wolves,

there are no wolves, just a thought
of the horde of wolves,

the mind is a trickling rain, tricky
creating a horde of wolves were
there are none, just because it is
suffering the pain of the dessert
the moonless nights, the day of a
thousand suns, the coldest air, the
crazy whiteness of snow in the minds
of the lonely people without the
comfort of tents and dripping water.

it will not last, the end is inevitable.
the black horse has arrived without a rider.

the deep well has dried. Dreams of water
come, and sights of mountain goats grazing
on salt.

what we think we become. I think of you to
become you.I lose myself in the water, flowing

to the forgetting ocean, where i am no more
other than a ripple, whirling, down to the depths
of oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Down To The Last Drip

Flings are like
mushrooms that come only
once a year and
matching it with
thunder,

flings happen because
someone has become
too irresistibly
enticing

you wish you do not
like it you wish nothing
happens

oh. like the mushrooms
flings you harvest
a delicacy and cook it
yourself and then
eat with relish what the
other wants to refuse

but you are equally
irresistible and when
these two forces meet
they clash on whatever

they finish it off
down to the last drip

RIC S. BASTASA
Doyou Really Want To Hurt Me?

hey girl
from faraway
do you really want to hurt me?

how?
and when? and why? i am just asking.

don't you want to know if i get hurt when you
like to hurt me?

let me tell you girl,
you don't hurt me anymore

let me ask you girl,
can you hurt a stone?

RIC S. BASTASA
Dr. Block....

before we begin
shall we pray dr. block?

never mind, he says
God does not listen to me anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
Drama 102

Love can be a name
as Beauty as Hope as
Faith can be..., 

But mama never named
me that

I could have been Hope

or Beast or Tears or
Water

I could have been Aquarius
or Robin or Batman
or Hercules
or just plain Jose or Juan

What made her decide
to name me my name

i ask her that and she gazed to
the moon
and sighed and
looked at me but did not
answer me

I later knew but it was too late
she died and i held her hand
and i told her
i knew but i did not mind

it is a secret that she carried to
her grave
it is something that i keep
but soon want to discard.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drama On The Golden Prince On The 7th Floor, Cebu City...

i am in a place away from home.
in my room there are two beds
the curtains are double layered
the thicker one i set aside leaving the
silky one transparent so i can see
vaguely the outline of the whole city
as i am on top of this little world
where i may have a holistic view
of this present moment.

i need some definitions of what
solitude is. It does not have the haunting qualities of
the guilty mind.

when i sleep tonight i shall not make creases
on the blanket.
i do not turn on
the TV
I will be listening to the sound of the carpet on the floor
when i walk barefooted and put my hands on the railing
of the window
watching the city glow
the lights of the cars moving
in different colors

other friends may make a call
but i am turning my cellphone off

really, really, there is no place
to replace a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drama..................

gikaon mo
ang gidili nga
mansanas
sa hardin nga
dili imo

adan
nabuhat na
ang tanan

eba
gipangutana ka
kon
maayo ka bang
kauban niya
diha sa usa
ka tintal

bitin
karong nahuman na
ang pagbuhat
sa sala
unsa na ba usab
ang imong buhaton

ang Ginoo anaa
nagpangita gihapon
kaninyo
kon asa na kamo
ug nganong hangtod
karon
nagpabilin kamong
mibati sa kaulaw
nga wala man unta
kana niya
gitanom diha
sa inyong mga
kasingkasing
andam na ang
entablado sa
lain lain natong
mga drama

pasigaa na ang
mga suga
biraha pataas
ang bagag nawong
nga kurtina

RIC S. BASTASA
singing and dancing
pointing to a you,
nobody, nobody but you,
crying and begging
for love and then
jumping for joy by reason
of a newly found
self: independent and
exploring, and happy
to be alone, this,
that, and this and that,
pure dramatics guild.

inside the room
the study lamp lights till dawn
writing a thesis
of human affairs
setting aside emotions
black and white in thinking
ablaze in logical deductions
this is his lady
reason and dogma
that is the truth of his
being and you have
never known
what twists await
at the end of this
deliberation.

poetry? side trip to the journey
of life's boring kingdom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Draw Me A Map Of This World

lady draw me a map of
this world
and tell me where the
mountains and
rivers are

draw me an island
of soft grass
where a man and
woman can rest
and make love

draw me a pond
a larger one where
the orange goldfish
are fat where the
swans can swim

draw me some
clouds where the
birds can fly

make them real
please

i need all of them
for me
to be real today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Draw Me That Line

There's a fine line
between genius and insanity.

You have erased that line

i need to draw that line again
between
you and me

do not laugh at me
i am not a genius
as they once
laughed
at Copernicus

i like you to laugh
at me
i have this acceptance
as i laugh
at myself more often

i like
Bozo the Clown

RIC S. BASTASA
Drawing

you draw a map
you make a landscape
there are people and children
and there are houses and trees
you put the wind
sketches of lines and shadows and
shades and blots
you pour this black ink
to make a night
and then you make waves to form the birds
flying away
you situate the fence upon an edge
they all fall down upon an abyss
you try to find
where you are

you are not there
and if somehow you are there
you are but a dot
you have no heart
there is no space where you can put it
there is no place
where you can make it beat
you do not hear it
they say that is correct
for you have long been dead
you refute
you take the revenge
you hurt
you write more words than they can think of
you tell them
this is poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Drawing A River

when you draw a river
the river begins
to draw also a fish
the fish shall
sketch a moss
the moss
paints the missing
green

then you have what
your river wants
a place where you
want to
ponder about a sky

come to think again
now draw
a very white sky
take a pen and a very
wide paper....

RIC S. BASTASA
Drawing Feelings

today i am drawing my feelings
and putting them some colors
for you to clearly see
what is the truth
running inside my veins

i am drawing threads
and spider's webs inside
a dark cave

i limited my choices of colors
only to black and red

blood and darkness and labyrinths
and thread falling from a cliff
and running wildly
in all directions

RIC S. BASTASA
Dread

dread is such a
nice word upon the
mouth of someone
whose life depends
on the mere signing
of a pen and upon
a stroke his life
vanishes away
upon a mere scratch
of a signature
dread is such a word
that I write only on paper
because saying it
makes you panicky
I dread to do this
but sooner a name
is written on paper
by you my Master

if you must today
please write my nickname
sort of final affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dream My Friend, You Must Dream

dream my friend
without dreams we become too real

and reality stinks like a stone without gloss
without color
plain weight without sight
the hardness
that Sisyphus
suffers unnecessarily

so my friend you must dream
the world is too much
for us to bear

dream we must to dare
we have still time to spare

without dreams we are nothing
we are worse than nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
we like to be in their gossamer world
leaves falling like the notes of this classical music
riding with the wind and making this world so light and
pleasing to the senses
the ears that hear the dance of the flowers
the eyes that see the breaths of the buds

i have new feet i have new dreams now
the dream of Olwen

i am dancing i am stretching my hands in praise
to life! to eternity! to sweet memories!

RIC S. BASTASA
Dream Scape At Night When You Were Not Beside Me

Time melts for sure you have seen
how Dali did it once tables float in air
hairs become rain and eyes
can be suns or moons in technicolor
skies like sweeping brooms made of
leafless branches of dead trees
in all these there is one horrible limitation

the soundless passing of images like
fog and mist and smoke and breaths

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreaming

when fifteen i got more
dreams than you,
until i got to be nineteen
experiencing some little pains
i sorted some dreams
and threw them all away

i wanted to live in a new house
there is no show of a shadow of a house
i dreamed of horses that i can ride on mountainsides
i got only goats

got realistic somehow
i only take what i can take hold of
at fifty i dream no more
a practical man
i sit on a bench facing a road
sip my coffee
and watch the dusts left by a rushing car towards the city.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreaming About A Heavy Rain And Then Waking Up At 3 A.M.

I can tell the details of the sequence
You dream that there was this heavy
Downpour of rain somewhere in crowded
Mong Kok, Hongkong and you ran
For shelter and then stay put and
Begin to use the power of this deep
Silence of a river running within the
Intricate linings of your veins.

You are in the middle of a strange crowd.
You keep looking where you come from
And you finally come to the conclusion
That you are not lost

You dream of a heavy downpour
And you like being wet together
With those that continue to walk.

You wake up so early you want to
Say something and yet she is too tired
Of you and she says

She still wants to get more sleep.
You get out of bed and look over the
Glass window. It is dark and the street
Is empty. You turn on the light on the
Table creating a small island where
In the middle of the light you put
Your mind like a stranger talking
About something that you like to
Understand for once and you do not really like it.
This is where you first decide to write.
This was the beginning of it all and it is still here
With you.
Back to square one. Back to the first syllable.
Back to yourself. The letters of the keyboard
Are as warm as you first once
A long time ago, pressed the vowels.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreaming Of Pigeons

not on a Sunday but it was
a Wednesday
the novena of the Mother of Perpetual Help
when her hands are soft
and cold,

as cold as the limestone wall
of the Spanish Church
the air is chilly for on that month
the rain does not stop

two teenyboppers kneeling
praying to make it through the uncertainties
of youth

love that feeling when brushing the skin
of the beloved
makes the universe travel into light years
with meteors exploding
like the Fourth of July

I still remember this
But now without so much flare.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreaming The Impossible...

i never stop dreaming
the impossible

in fact, it is the impossible
that makes me

alive, the possible only
reduces me to a dot, a

sentence so dull because
everything is clear we

must look for what is missing,
for they are not here yet not

sleep and grapple with
what are so boringly obvious,

dreams on waking hours,
well thought of, in full details,

what if, so well, try again,
failures are projectiles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams

for things that we cannot have
for people that we love but we cannot hug
for the solutions of the problems that we have learned to set aside for a while
for places we wish to go and yet can't take a step beside their shores
for wounds to heal
for things we have forgotten
for our dead ancestors who wish to speak to us again
for some precautions
for our suppressed desires
for those we bury while we are awake
for our escape to fantasy
for our imaginations to run wild chasing rainbows
for our dead love ones
for those who wish to be with us again
for the floating experience on baby pink clouds
marshmallow feelings and black forest cake sweetness
for all these wishes

weary and weak, i close my eyes
and then
i welcome all my dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams

it is the dreaming
it is what stopped that is killing you
don't stop the coming of dreams
welcome them
let them sit on your easy chair
talk freely
yawn if you must
it is nearer to it
that door that opens
when you lose
that restraint of
consciousness
when playful as any child
you embrace every color
every scent
every form
of dreams that make you rest
from too much
thinking

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams Always Come True

slowly, slowly, always
slowly seeds do grow
to become flowers and
caterpillars too
become butterflies

the flowers know all these
and so they keep on blooming
not losing hope for every winter
spring is always not far behind

i also know this and by heart
my love, i am telling you
our dreams will always come true
we only have to wait
we only have to keep the faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
to always have faith
that dreams come true

to always have hope
everything despite

to keep the light no matter
how little inside the lines of
my palm while the wind outside
gets stronger and more cruel
until the house is finally blown away
until the land becomes empty
until the tiny speck of moss
starts to grow all over again
on the gray side of the
stone beside the pavement
still not taken

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams Of A Journey

white face of a woman
failing hands
as frail as a man
wanting to give
everything all for
a white face of a woman
sad face
scars of the heart
on some brutish
past
veiled and held by
another hands now
love satisfied
music as forceful
as the waterfall
of love
and life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams Of A Middle Aged Man

he is at an age where
ambition wants to stop
but doubts
this decision

his tired feet say
it is time to just watch time come
and go

his mind is still sharp on something
a bird which he wants to catch
a fence that he wants to jump
a boundary that he wants to cross
a river where he wants to sail
a path to follow

but the bird is as restless as the air
the fence is higher
the boundary is well guarded
and the river is flooding
and the path had long been filled with tall grass
where snakes reside

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreams On A Sunday Morning

it is always a happy day
and dreams so many

many dreams
are here and they are all here

for
free.....

RIC S. BASTASA
not everything is written
here it is perhaps said somewhere
only you can hear even you
secrets become revealed and you
become uncomfortable, here
not everything is said, it is written in secret pages of the mind
remember those windows and those widows, there, sometimes what is said is not what is meant, paths are made by those ahead of us,
at dead-ends we clear the trees and make our own paths and those gates and walls and pinnacles for not everything is said some, and these are the most important and even the most disturbing, or perhaps your essence, are, is, am, kept by the chambers of your heart. love, hate, regrets, hopes, dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dreamy Skies.....

staying here is always
a suppressed question of
'why am i here? why am
i staying that long
enough? '

the answers are hidden
always, deep down the chest
and the more you breathe
deeper like trying to
remove some bones from the
fields, the more things
become hazy because you are
afraid of stating the answer
so that it can be heard.

there will be a ripe time
for change, perhaps another
year, that time you destroy
a dream, you crash a house,
you leave a body, you turn
perhaps into smoke getting
out of the chimney to be part
of your dreamy sky....

the head is filled, the chest
soon explodes, and there is no
need for any imploring....

RIC S. BASTASA
Drift......

not the
flutter of another
cottony chopper

not the choice
between a butter and
a dragon

or a fly...it is when you

want to rest
lay your body in a rattan hammock
facing the sea

of endless blue

and when you arrive between
that boundary of sleep and
waking

that moment when you
decide to take the leap to
sleep

and then finally get the
drift......

RIC S. BASTASA
Drifters

there is no motive here
it is just like flying not even for the love of air

i have no wish for wings
neither do i have a feather

i fly on the invisible wings of my thoughts
drifting for the sake of nothing but just drifting

because i am drifting and i do not stop it
it could be that it is locating a drift

a shore of the winds, an island of gusts,
it is following a river of memories

memories are drifters too
and so are all the rest of these hanging wishes

uncertainties like molecules making a room for
their unseen randomness, the chaos that we never see

because we are attuned to order
to the stillness of wood and panel

picture a bowl of fruits
the mind has painted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drifting

drift like a leaf
carried by the flow of the river

drift like a feather
riding on the current of the wind

drift like a vagabond
on the alleys of the foreign land

drift like boat
without its rudder and engine

drift like a space craft
deep into the black hole of this universe

there is this feeling
of letting go and saying yes and not wanting to know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drifting Away

and then the wandering cloud
drifts away
at first the dog on the side of the house
howls like
an old wolf from far away
and then it gets tired too
as it is not a plow
but a bird with bones that break too
on extreme pressure
from the west winds

it is this sense of people leaving you
like thoughts
emptying upon your mind
as normal
as you get old too and then
you begin
to gladly give in
yes, forget....

RIC S. BASTASA
Drifting Away...

two leaves falling on the surface of
a very clear pond

there is no flood, no storm, no quake
but it must be fate

perhaps putting it bluntly a misfortune
all dead and numb yet still drifting away in some junctions

one to the left
and the other to the right

and i who stands on the bridge
seeking peace
looks at it with all
ease....

RIC S. BASTASA
Drink It

do not be afraid of the dark
there is sunshine inside you
it is not the blackness that we fear
it is something else that you already know

too much light blinds you
take some time
let the tiny hands of the dark
give you what is familiar

soon when this is over
your heart will know how to mix things rightly
noontime and midnight
twilight and dusk
what fades and what shines
inside a glass
where dreams and reality collide

you are thirsty
drink it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drinking Gasoline Near The Burning Fire

what we cannot do with fire
touching it or we burn

cressing its hair or we
feel the seeping pain of heat and sting

we find a way of having to watch at a distance
where we are safely satisfied

the fire burns profusely that even when it is far from us
our thoughts melt and our identities with our wishes

get all confused about what to do next
we feed ourselves with gasoline and not expect

what catastrophe shall next happen
the fire laughs, and tells the sky how foolish can we all be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drinking Life

so you are drunk
hmm drinking so much life...

do not forget to chew.
it is more nourishing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drinking Poetry

at first glance
you taste its first sip

it is bitter and had always been
as bitter as grief

and you drink it anyway
everyday

until then when bitterness
does not taste bitter anymore

and then you drink it anyway
everyday

and everyday you drink cup by cup
poetry

your friend do not believe you
doing this
they cannot take it anymore
you drinking this bitter
concoction
everyday

you are true to this calling
drinking poetry
until it has become your habit
your vocation

your mission to write all that you feel
all that you can

what they do not know
is this freedom this blood from poetry
bitter and salty and sometimes bland
has become so sweet as honey

and these sap caused the growth of
your feathers and wings

and then one day you fly away
far away so so far away

to that clouds and mountains to that castle of the gods
and goddesses

and there you drink with them
and there they welcome you as one of them

RIC S. BASTASA
Driving At Night From The University

as i head home
after a lecture
leaving some
gaping mouths
open

i drive the car
alone like
i am a worm

like i am inside
this hollow
ground
and i breathe
all alone

the road for home
is dark and at this hour
it is only my car
moving on the
road

memories flash
on the glass
everything moves against you
and you penetrate the loneliness of the trees
like a bullet from a gun
wanting to shoot everyone

RIC S. BASTASA
Driving Opposite A One-Way-Street Somewhere In Hongkong

once what you
once loved is met
and seen again
you choose
to say nothing
as you both want
to move on with
your lives
less all the pains
that both of you
had inflicted
to many people and
most of all
that grief that you
have laid to
yourselves, ...

what is the truth
really? i still ask it
now...

was it only me?
were you not there with
me?

what i remember was
your leaving
the way you avoid me
as though
i have this disease
which many
as of today still call
love....

i must admit,
mine was different
for it was like
me driving
opposite the one-way-
street
in hongkong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Driving The Car One Evening

cold nights here
the cigarette is useless
there is a fire building
inside my
belly

stiff love looking
for the softness of the
pillow
a woman
is the best metaphor
for this
kind of poem

the lips of a woman
hungry for
love
in me

driving the car one evening
along the lanes
of dim lights
looking for loneliness
waiting for me

alone again
but this time trying to find
someone
even for a fee.

RIC S. BASTASA
Driving The Point

and then i look
straight on the face of
the creature fronting me
and we had an
eye contact
i was saying something
different
from what my eyes are
uttering and that
creature was not wise enough
to understand
what was driven
of course
i understand that my eyes
live in a different world
from my lips
and so does my heart
my soul and my
body
my feet too travel in
different direction
apart from what
i have in mind

nothing goes much
without unlike what war is waged therein
the winner is still
uncertain
the loser perhaps is so kind
to caress
the sadness of understanding

RIC S. BASTASA
Drool, Etcetera....

when you wake up this morning you rush yourself
on the usual
many things to do
but never completely done
but just the same
you keep on doing it
like opening windows, closing doors,
mopping floors, washing underwear,
brushing teeth,
etcetera
now you are working
the table offers you the menu for the stress of the day
you count them
and start at
the first file,
etcetera the clock even if you do not mind it
keeps on ticking,
nothing unusual really,
you keep on thinking and writing notes and then
making conclusions
affecting the life of other people
they become simply case numbers
and usual names,
nothing extraordinary really
etcetera
you stop, make some sighs, breathe,
stand, sit, lay your head on the sofa,
and think,
etcetera
this world is black and white,
there are no more rainbows, the rains are cats and dogs
the little shower is gone,
the slowness of beauty is murdered,
the strip teasing of something that your mind coddles
and fondles
takes time,
the unfolding of the flower is choked,
the buds are nipped,
births are scraped,
off,
and on,
push and pull,
that is the language i learn from you,
etcetera,

eetcetera
i did not invent it,
we say it when we do not know
what follows next

eetcetera
life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dropping A Hello

i will dropp my hello
like a feather
gently to a little space
where you
are thinking like a
very clear pond

such a hello looks
like a geese
floating on water

and then
it leaves

but i hope that its departure
be like
a word that leaves your lips
like a whisper

life should be like that
nothing shattering like a broken
wine glass dropped
by a drunkard at the bar

everyone is looking.
who cares?

RIC S. BASTASA
Dropping By Your House This Morning

i dropped by your house this very early morning
the windows are closed
but the door is half-open
and i could have given in to this little curiosity
that cats keep on their paws
and soft feet
or hands if you may

but i didn't. there is something in the house
that says
you had a bad day and that night you did not have
a sound sleep

the roses are wilting and a flower pot falls on the ground
broken
the soil splashed like spilled water on the grass

there is no sound of the wind
from the storm last night

i just dropped by. I respect you. The door of the house
finally closed
i did not see the hands that closed it.
it maybe yours
or someone else's

the rug has spoken. You want to be alone.
to keep the faint light left
in that little room. the curtains fall. the lights
went off on that very early morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drops Of Pearl

you wish upon a stiffness
i still have it
you open the secret of
Pink and with
your gaze you hold
what i have for you
Strength of
One Long Pillar
Samson strong
The length mashed in
You are
the Lucky Creek
where i Drop
some Pearls.

RIC S. BASTASA
Drought

chcia the
omm a hand
arkness
in Mt. Apo
here the
onkey-eating eagle
cries out
alling
or the rain to come

RIC S. BASTASA
Drowsy

drowsy, that is the next word
chosen by Dorothy, at the last day
of her stay in ward 9

six years of cancer she finally gets used
to slow death
i know that the pain is terrible but
she is finally tired showing the portraits
of her face in pain
many faces of agony

until the last day comes
she does not know what to say anymore

she embraces silence
death is no longer strange
she has it
piece by piece like a display
of her jewelries
from time to time sold
to sympathetic buyers
some friends who
know her &
love her for a time

when death comes
that moment
she is extremely
beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Drugging Life

because life moves like a drag
pendulum of grief and lament

nights are stillnoxed
days are pills of micardes
and oftener advil
lessens the volume of the
screams of pain

on oily oddities
the liver gets too fat
the ultrasound complains of
blindness to see
the maps of
maladies

aspirin keeps a painless
moment
blood thins to remove the
obstructions of the heart

the oxygen tank waits
the ambulance is ready to sound
its alarms
for an incoming police
of death to
execute the cardiac
arrest

and so the abusive creature
arrives
dead on arrival
the morgue keeps its cool
another number is
given
another cubicle is closed
some tears perhaps
but we all know it
it will only be for a while for soon
we will all be
back to feasting

RIC S. BASTASA
Drunk And Furious....

rereading donald makes me feel young again.
My past arrives, sits on the porch, and appears as a child.
The place is old smelling rosewood.
Over there are trees of oranges, all ripe hanging but not falling.
I remember bringing Manny from our city high school.
He did not like to pick any of those orange. He merely liked watching them.
Took pictures instead.
He wanted to see the old house and feel it.
Entered one of those rooms where a mosquito net at ten o'clock in the morning still hangs.
The window is open. Light is coming in profusely for it was a bright day.

There Papa was still snoring. Drunk last night as in all other nights.
There was that problem which he never brought into the open for the family to know.

Manny did not want to go back to the old house again. And he did not want me to be his friend again. Perhaps it was about the old house which smelled like rosewood.

Or perhaps it was about Papa. Drunk and furious. I still love those orange trees. I like the old smell of orange peelings.

And no one cares about Manny too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dry Hands

on the table
trying to absorb
the moisture of
sandalwood

it is not the water
but the lacking care
of another set of
hands

inside it rains
someone claps his hands
so inconsiderate

outside is the sunshine
of her smile
impenetrability
illustrated

RIC S. BASTASA
Dry Land....

on one of those mating
he intimated to her that one night
he dreamed that
he was walking on dry land
everything was sand and sun
there is no water
nothing slippery and there
she frowned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dry Leaves Beside My Door

a door half-closed
the wind comes with some dry leaves
coming in
through it

and then
spread on the floor
under my bed

i watch it
feeling that i am junked

even the wind
has mistaken me as
another
garbage

and so i finally closed my
door

tight

RIC S. BASTASA
Dry, Hot Day

even the sigh
that you let out
from your heart
leaves the
ground dusty

RIC S. BASTASA
Drying The Grains Under The Sun....

we dry the grains today
under the sun

they die.
they shrink.

we think that by dying
the grains can stay that long

and then
ready for the next steaming

delicious for our
mouths

filling our hunger
in times of drought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dryness

there are deserts
of relationship.
i've been there
and i will find myself
back in there
at least, with this experience
i had with camels and oasis
and mirage
now, i shall know how to manage
the sands
slipping from my fingers
the date palms and the
full moon
and the sandstorms
and then
the same thing happens
you ultimately find the sea
and the port
and hands waving
welcoming you back home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Due Cose Potrei Far

two things she shall do.

to wait,
and be fooled forever.

to dance
in the market place
and be their object
of mockery

to die with honor
as she cannot live without it

she takes his father's dagger
and bury it inside her heart

her boy blindfolded
hears the sound of death

RIC S. BASTASA
Duha Ka Baki Sa Silong Sa Dahon Sa Antulanga Nga Ilang Gihimong Payong

duha ka baki, baye ug laki, sa silong sa dahon
sa usa ka antuwanga nga ilang gihimo nga payong
nagkasabot nga bisan og unsa ka kusog sa pagkahulog sa mga dagko
nga lusok sa ulan sa umaabot nga bagyo sa ilang duha ka hamubo
nga kinabuhi silang duha gayod mag-unong

lantawa, lantawa ninyo, miulan na. mibagyo na.
duha ka baki sa silong sa dahon sa antuwanga
nangatawa sa tunga sa usa ka bagyo bisan pa’g unsa ka kusog sa ulan
bisan ug unsa pa kadagko ang mga lusok ug lusak sa ilang kapalaran.

sa ngalan sa ilang matuod nga gugma bisan pa sa
kahamubo sa ilang kinabuhi didto sa gamay nga sapa
silang duha nag-unong. silang duha naghagwa.
silang duha walay gibilin nga kabalaka.

RIC S. BASTASA
Duha Ka Maskara

Duha ang akong gipili
Nga maskara.
Puros puti.

Kaputli. Kahayag. Kagawasan
Alang nako. Gitagoan ko.
Nasayod ko kon kinsa ako.

Giganahan ka. Gihigugma mo
Ang gitagoan ko
Nga kangitngit.

Duha kita nga gamaskara.
Naghalok kita. Nagtandayay
Sa katre. Pipila na ba ka gabii?

Unsa pa bay kapuslanan
Nianang gitawag nila
Nga kamatuoran?

Nagmalipayon kita.
Dili na nato kinahanglan
Ang matuod.

Kadaghan na kana siya
Gipatay sa walay kukalooy.
Hala gaksa ko. Kanang hugot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dumaguete Boulevard Earling Morning

Many poems were written
By those who reached here
And made the walks
On early mornings

You can see the serene skies
Unmoved by the wind
You can see the boat sailing
Smoothly cutting the lines of the sea
You can hear the sound of the paddle
Slashing the sky blue sea
You can see the lush green moss
And seaweeds on the sea walls and stones
Along the boulevard

The street lights slowly die
Like the eyes of a woman closing
The morning starts to gain light
From the peeping sun

I am watching this unfolding
With so much joy
Sitting on this white bench
Alone as I watch her
Walking towards me

RIC S. BASTASA
Dumb & Dull

going back to
old places is depressing

your childhood friend
is dead
and the river where you
bathed
has become another
foul smelling canal

you walk some more
and no one remembers you
anymore

the woman who cooked for
the family
died as a spinster

the church is still alive
but the bell has been changed

the one you can hear now
is pretty
dumb and dull
sounding like you
who insists that
there is something
there still worth
coming back

RIC S. BASTASA
Dumbfounded And Very Stupid

Writing for its
usefulness is a virtue

heroic when you
expose the truth and
sometimes
suffer the consequences

the utterer of truths
killed in the process

i've been there
and it's not an easy life

at this hour however
i write for no use at all

and they taunt that
when i speak of love and
its satisfaction

i am but just a lousy
dreamer
dumbfounded and
very stupid

RIC S. BASTASA
Durga's Three Eyes

between

the sun
&
the moon

Fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
During A Night Party I Talk About Death

and the they do not like it.
who likes it?
no one.
i keep on talking
about death
i am drunk
and they leave me
and they tell
each other
that this man
is sick, that this man
is morbid
that this man is inappropriate
for our night out
of denial
and coping up
with what we are really
bound to.

on the other hand
they are right
they are not dying
it is somebody else
and it is just somebody else's business
not theirs

or maybe just mine
wanting too to
get rid of its little touches
on my nape
on early dawns
when i think about
life and
its beautiful memories
when life is so beautiful
when you
finally accept
that you are
dying.
Dusk

Stay in the dark, and keep a dark shadow,
Lurk in there for a while
Bathe with so much dusk
And disappear

I will find you there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusk Eats Me

despite these strong
walls,
or even destroying each
so i can have
a view of the whole
situation

in the candidness of
mature acceptance
stoic

unblinking
looking at an eye to
an eye

mirrors in every corner
of this room
where you cannot be sure
where in
particular i am
for a moment

each furniture here
seems to say
goodbye

one opens the cabinet
of polo shirts
and expensive suits

with a sigh
how can you ever wear these all
given the
shortest moment of your
life

one leaves them all
and one does not care for whom
shall all these nonsenses
then belong

till the next day
after dusk eats me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusk Till The Next Dusk

i shall watch the coming of dawn
slits of light from the leaves of dark trees

glimmering packets of light
from the hiding sun on the side of the big mountain

i am dusk
and i am ready with the last breath i have

to face my death at the coming of day
this morning

tonight i prepare to live again
on this constant resurrection

i am dusk
i die when your light comes

i always live in the little dark corner
of my sadness

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusky

the gradual decline
of desire within
your soul's
twilight

then it will be dark
it is then
when you can see
the clearest
without
the expertise of
your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Dust And Nothing But Dust

and what did that Pegasus leave you?

stop this dumbfounding
what he left you is dust

wake up! just dust and nothing but dust

and what are you? still amazed?
you are like what he left,
dust, and nothing but dust.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusted Off.....

our rivers dried up
yesterday
we have no fish now
to fry
the air of your presence
have smuggled them all away

we ebbed our pebbles are
ashamed of our dispositions
we have nothing to say now
we let you go we set you free
we stay here waiting for the rain

the rain when it comes
shall kill us all
we do not mind what happens next
this is the map of our life
we do not understand anymore
we are dusted off like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusting Off Your Feet

leave
dust off your feet
go
where you are loved
where
you are given
water
to quench your thirst
to rest your body
go
where you are finally
at home....

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusts

i was once a worm
people look at me with anticipation
and then i became a fly
the good people did not swat me
and then i turn into
a donkey
oh, the children had fun
riding on my back
and then i turn into a
horse,
men love me,
and then i turn into
a man,
oh, the demands are too many
i have to read
the codes of humanity
ethics, philosophy
science, logic,
and then i become old
and turn into
a rotten flesh
where all the worms are
having fun eating me
and i remember joy
and freedom
and being not minded at all
deep in the dark
underground

back to worms, i sensed
that i am complete

and then i must turn to dust
and then
i have become
so perfect

in the solitude of my tiny strains
in the peace of

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
the grave
where we all started and then
must end.....dusts....dusts....

RIC S. BASTASA
Dusty Creator

as you mold the clay
to make a face out me

you need to put water
and regroup all those

elements of fire and
air and earth

that refer to myself:
some stories and

answers to what i am
and from where i am

to where i am heading
to where shall i end

because you are my creator
and i am your mere dust

and for all things queer
and weird, My Lord, I must abide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Duty, ....

the whole day
i have not seen a cloud
not heard a bird song
not felt the
coolness of the pines
not a scent from the
magnolias,

i am afraid i have
become one stuffed bear
in my chambers,

but this is it,
my world, my own hypothetical
existence

and they call it
service to others.

my call, my vocation,
my mission, my turf.

' i am ready Lord,
Bend me, I am yours'

RIC S. BASTASA
Dying

He has heard
Of this path
That we all
Must tread
But he did
Not really
Know that
He is going
To walk
On it
Today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Dyslexia

thanks for the poem,
let me extend my sympathy

long live dyslexia!
let the words untangle the meaning

of the world let the world
untangle the meaning of the word

there is nothing there
but pity

a bird sings early this morning by my window
the vine has grown more leaves

the sun comes out between the two breasts of a hill
i take my bath and then

move on to the beauty of the words of the world
the freshness of the air from the sea

to the fulfillment of my lungs
to the lightness of my heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
E.

those that waged
the wars against you
you claim to have
the thickest
E.

Who likes it?
not
wE.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are those however who do not really work hard those with natural talent who think everything is just plain play, and then they get an A+,

do not call it unfair. they simply excel without lifting a finger without lashing an eyebrow

they are born you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Day Is A Miracle

what we lost was only simple.
sensitivity.
the curiosity that killed a thousand cats.

we must take our seats.
calm down a bit.

on the grass lies the miracles
of the cocoon
spitting out a yellow butterfly.

there is this fragility of the petals
the glossy leaves
the charm of the morning glories.

i am amazed.
i am silenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Injury Each Departure Each Time You Break My Heart

i do not keep a record of wrongs
each moment of loneliness
each sorrow
grief
each tear and scratch

there will be no record of it. Each page is blank
each pain forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Man Is My Equal

if each man is our equal
why should there be control
or dominion over another?

why should one cannot be
oneself?
why should one insist that
he must be followed?

blame it on the stars
or blame yourself

for not having used the
light right inside your
forehead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Moment

let each moment be magical
let there be a song of the seagull

let us choose not to hurt
even if by then we decide to part.

let no unkind word be said
let there be no form of dread.

we must rejoice always in everything
in acceptance lies the true blessing

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Of Us

we are as great as we think
we are

our greatness does not depend
on the greatness of
another

we are privileged to have taken
foot on this earth
we have, on this truth, already won,

there may be darkness
for those who were wise ahead of us

think that we live in this cave and we are but
shadows chained and blind to light
and bound

we are as great as we think we are
this is not an illusion neither is it just a proposition

this is the truth and this is the hope
keep on going

from the heart of this darkness
the mouth of awareness is not that really far

soon we shall be there
inside us the fire of life burns

warm as eternity
it is so alive like the breathing of the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Piece Of Ampatuan

for each body, each child and each pregnant woman
each newspaperman, each bystander, all 57 of them & more

the body of Ampatuan shall be chopped into pieces
each piece as a partial payment of each dead body accounted...

perhaps justice will be served
perhaps the thirsty earth shall be quenched
perhaps each scream shall be silenced

perhaps....

RIC S. BASTASA
Each Poem That You Are Reading

each poem that you read
is a product of painful eyes

from the excruciating grief
of the heart

from those exhausted fingers
still moving till nigh-time

the writer is a psychosomatic bleeder
so you see no stain whatsoever

it is only when things are too near
that you feel pain and acknowledge it

but when you travel and create distances
from yourself

when you drift like a cloud
(the usual cliche for drifters)

or perhaps a raft on the river
along the surges of cagayan de oro

you begin to see the most beautiful shape
of that struggle

a cheek smoothed by the flow of tears
soft hands massaged by those pains of the days

cautious lips, open mind, a heart that is finally set free
by the candidness of your thoughts

no longer entrapped by the words that you left
tied on those yellow sheets of paper

from that silent room where smoke hangs
on the ceiling.
Each Word Each Existence

to an honest man
each word
has an existence

a name of a friend
is golden

a word has weight
like stone

even air has a weight
of its own

no word is empty
and there is no emptiness within

on the power of our
imagination

green to leaf
leaf to freedom

air, and sighs
glances and love

death and dust
oblivion to light fading

darkness as blanket
covering us to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Ear Plug World

you watch
the facade of this
red
cathedral,

you know what is
deep inside it

you love every part
of this
red cathedral

you shall be the
tongue

and the caressing
hands

you keep within yourself
that moan

for glory
if someone up there hears it

you shall be
in trouble

it is an ear plug
world

after all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Earl.....

now you know what a silent scream is all about,
it is when your letters lie there naked and yell without a sound
and people
close friends and those that know you before you begin saying
that scream
say, yes we knew it
and we are comfortable with it
with you
there is nothing to hide everything
is as obvious as a cloud
the usual sun at midday
the full moon
one evening when you are so silent
as the thousand stars scattering themselves
in that big, black, empty
umbrella space

you think people will believe you
someone laughed, this is not the truth, this is a joke
this is nothing but another gimmick from
Earl,
the ears are plugged, but the eyes still see
it is your touch somehow
that must reveal it in another personal thigh
the fingers that glide and hold
the inner secret
it is me, you say
but by then nobody is interested anymore
and so i say, give yourself a break
have a hell of a good time out there
no one minds
no one is interested about you
and your
fake silent scream
we met that once but we refuse to hear

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Christmas Songs

on September air
the early Christmas songs are flowing
as i still keep
the sad memories of August morns
and July jejune,
how commercial the sounds
how happy can all these
exploiting merchants become
it's the money again
and more of it
assuming the disguises
of Santa Klaus

RIC S. BASTASA
Again the sounds of the strong waves
reverberate in your mind
the strong winds may have gone
to another place
you know not where but they will always be there
you are bound to write another piece
perhaps one now for your niece
oh, there are other more important things to do
they all tell you
but you cannot do otherwise
you are bound to write another piece
a beautiful one
another important piece
not only for your niece

Something about inner peace
not about Greece or any caprice
it is about God and goodness full
He keeps on loving on a handful
All of you, without crease without grease
His love unceased, always a timepiece.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Dawn Along The Dumaguete Boulevard

the sea is so peaceful
like a sheet of blue linen

a boat's shadow is that gray
thing floating on a canvass of blue sea

against an indigo sky
a tall and lean figure stops to watch this view

last night this figure chased happiness
along the cemented pathways of this boulevard

he didn't catch any
not even a flirting female mosquito

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Fears
	here is no moment of peace
for a heart that loves
the scent of
the blooming
white sampaguitas
when the wind starts
to blow its breath tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
Early In The Morning...

the white sands of sarangani
we are two naked souls
laundering our bodies
under the mild sun of

youth where the fingers caress the smoothness of salty

skin, i suck warmth from your mouth and you suck mine to give birth

to a huge fire that sooner we cannot extinguish

we have prepared for all these yes, in the name of love though forbidden to ashes to primal dust we have returned....

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning

the rain just stops showering.
the leaves are wet and some dews are staying.
the sun petals of the flowers open up.
some buds follow. some fruits hang heavily on the mango tree.
a pig is tied under and starts burrowing the muddy ground.
some leaves fall. orange in color.
soft winds from the sea come.
the twigs sway. a ripe papaya falls.
a stone receives it.
a cat comes to check if there is any fish.
a dog barks. a bystander runs to the other side of the road.
the canal is full of rainwater. some leaves clog.
moss thickens on the side of the cemented drainage.
a cockroach runs away and hides on a crevice.
a rat looks over a railing on the roof of the camarin.
an ylang-ylang flower gets caught on the tin roof.
the white sampaguita opens up finally to the
sunny sky. a butterfly hovers. a bee buzzes near my forehead.
my hand makes a snap. it escapes away.
some fruitflies find a new territory on the rotten apple
which i threw last night in the garbage can.

i start the engine of my car. and then to the office i am gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Birds

it is still
dark outside

inside my room
as i write
these
staggered
lines

i hear them
chirping like
departing
words for
the night where
they must
have slept so well
and dreamed

now ready for
another day
of their winged
existence

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Duet

rain subsiding
birds chirping

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Facing A Folder

contfronted with a folder
in a dream
i wake up laden with
work in my head

a folder lies there
with a mouth gaping
for justice

who killed innocence?
who buried love?
why are some so cruel
about other people's dreams?

a folder lies in front of me
and then i begin
to open the pages

something must be done
and it has
to start with me

this early morning
on this very day....

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Gaze Somewhere In The Ricefields Of Rizal

i counter them
there were about 20 chariots lining up in the sky
leaving eddies of dusts forming like a series of hills

40 horses black and white pull the chariots
all in the silence of the clouds hanging above the golden ricefields

of rizal where i take my morning walk and resting for a while
i gaze at all the slow movements in the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
this morning
i wake up early

i see this hen
and her sixteen chicks
roosting
upon a strong branch
of the narra tree

i get a handful of
rice grains

and scatter them on
the ground

the chickens fly down
from the tree
and feed on
the scattered grains

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning In A Rural Landscape

it is still dark
the haze of the cold outlines
the big body of the mountain far from me
the winds are colder here
and the sounds are a mixture of
sparrows chirping
crows on their love calls
cockatoos on their murmurs
this wilderness
we have chosen for this moment
soon after the passing of these hours

summer winds
hot and wild

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Light...

early morning
light
writes a poem
for me
on the mountain
breasts....

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Phenomenology

I want to cut that flower
over there
fresh and red and rosy
on the side of the hill

all i have in mind is to bring
it to you
because you are so beautiful
and i love you

on the other hand the fresh and rosy
red flower is more beautiful on its stalk
over there
on the side of the hill

the sun has blessed it with
so much sunshine
i guess it loves it more than i have loved
you

and so
i let the flower be
over there
alive on its stalk
uncut
caressed by the soft hands of
sunshine
this early morning
still fresh, red and rosy
more than loved
by its sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Poetess

ALOUD
you must think
in all silence
must you speak

your hands
tie them in restraints
more divine
your mind shall open

still to the
unspeakable
your steps
retrace what was
hanging in the longing

you watch
three hundred sixty degrees
24 hours
this earth released
from its
normal orbit

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Poetry

a gray cat so gentle
sleeping beside my easy chair

soft wind enters the window
from the far mountain

the white silky curtains
by the window
sway to the direction of the wind

a red rose blooms on the side
of the limestone wall

horse grazing on the grassy plain
a white dog runs toward a wooden gate

a car stops on the yard near the veranda of this old house
a brother from far announces his arrival

hot coffee and pancakes on the table
fumes of white rice and smoke from the grilled fish

faint classical Mozart music plays on the cassette
light from the sun penetrating the screen of the dining window

a black and white family picture on top of the family piano
grandpa on his military uniform as mother carries father on her arms

memories flood the room and words keep creeping like worms
i want to say that there are no termites on this house but that would be a lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
first song
from the trees
from a bird
slowly light
from the sun
creeps by my
window
mists dissolve
and then gone
upon the glass
pane
i switch off
the light in my
room
nothing dramatic
as one opens
the kitchen door
sunny side up
this fried egg
for breakfast
upon a coffee
scented room

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Prayer

when morning comes
the fingers of light
care for the feathers of the
white heron
which does not look
at it

their breasts are far away
but in the middle of the morning grounds
they soon embrace each other

dusk had left earlier

pag-abot sa kabuntagon
gihapuhap sa mga tudlo sa adlaw
ang mga balahibo sa tulabong
nga wala mitutok kaniya

lagyo ang ilang dughan
apan gginaksanay kini
taliwala sa nataran sa kabuntagon
nga ganiha rang milalin

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Ray Of Sunlight

the early morning ray of sunlight
is teasing the dry
leaf of the
banana

it is not at all looking
excited
it cannot fall
like the tiny
leaf of the honey
suck
le.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Scenario

the frogs are singing
gratitude for the heavy rain last night

the pond has ripples
some fish jump with joy

the trees are tall and fresh
the rainbow appears

the grasses are still filled with dew
disturbed by a little bird that flew

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Stars

like flower
dews
they soon
shall start
evaporating
into plain
white
sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Symphony

silence is a
blank sheet of paper

the notes come from
the birds

this early morning
i hear the most beautiful

song, a choir of birds
chirping, winds gently

blowing, hushes from
leaves, drums from my

footsteps, beatings of
my heart

whistles from my soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Thoughts

early morning thoughts
as warm as the rising sun
as beautiful as the temporary
dew on the leaves
of the red petals of the rose
in the garden
time becomes a luxury
time that pass and
does not come back
does not wait
you stop
and reflect upon those thoughts
that stand by
like passengers of the bus
going to a faraway
place on an unknown destination
you become that bus
and you let them all in
filled
and heavy you start the engine
and go
and forget that you
are a farmer in the garden
and not the driver
of this bus on an unknown destination
you account for each
you stare at their faces
and begin to ask
their names
the place where they come from
the loves of their lives
their misfortunes
and the reason why they are alive
why they want to go away
why the want
to die
you grieve and send the sighs to sky
and then
you send them all away
you write.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Morning Thoughts......

i was not able to
wake up early

perhaps i was too
tired last night

or was too confused about
what happened

drink after drink
and thought after thought
chasing the coldness of
ice

the windows are already
open and from the kitchen i
hear

the sound of whetting
that sharp knife rubbing against
a stone

perhaps what you feel and
what i feel
is

what rubs against each other
and viewed from this window

i have to take time watching
black birds flying

where are they really going?
what are they up to?

smoke from the kitchen rises
to the sky
the high mountains are guards
to the exit of emotions

in my silence i am
tight lipped.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early This Afternoon

i had sleep, lots of sleep this early afternoon
and so
as normal beings do,
i still claim to be one,
i wake up had a dinner of my own
and watch TV
and go outside the house to
breathe
de-stress distress
and then i go back again to what i like doing
have a conversation with myself
for i am alone here
and want to give the impression
to the neighbors
that there are people here talking
at midnight

actually, i love these ghosts
inside my mind
they are my friends and have
been with me
for years
before you decided to leave
because you did not not care to notice.

and so like that Chinese poet
i take a bottle of rum for a drink
get a glass to share it with me
and my shadow
and the moon which i had
just invited.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early This Morning

before any coffee
i swear to myself
that i am the man with
a new story to tell

to throw away
all these cliches
and be what
i really am

there is no word yet
nothing is popping up
................

so back to usual
i write something that
repeats itself
like an echo of
another boredom
form that same
mountainside

to wait for long
is crazy
i know

........

i will have my coffee now
and sip what i must accept

oh, there is nothing new
regret what you have just read.

i think you must go now
and this i must tell you:

write your own regret
do not read me again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Winter Time Begging For Answers

the frost cannot wait
the fire place is not ready
the wood are still wet
and the match does not
light yet

an early winter time
how cruel shall early death be
nature sabotaged
our sanity made hostage

something’s wrong
something really is going wrong
what is it? can anyone tell me please?

RIC S. BASTASA
Early Worm

you have seen
how dawn has given
the basket of light
to morning

how light flowers
how flowers bloom above
the breasts of mountains

how mountains tower
to reach the
pinnacle of sun

how the sun spreads
its wings
and make every leaf
every worm
learning the wonder
of flight

how a world is born
again
how the child's eyes
marvel to all these

as mothers make breakfast
as fathers catch fish

how rivers have consistently
made their journeys
towards the sea
and how the sea have
remained in the abundance
of its waves
in the salt of its waters

early worm
this world never starts
spinning
and this poem
shall be never ending

RIC S. BASTASA
Earth Hour

when you read this poem
i know that you will know what i really believe in.

ask me again
i am telling you nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Earth, Wind And Water

God in mixing all these elements made man,

but man is never contented asking for fire

and God gives him Fire everywhere

in his heart, in his belly and the colors of the earth are born.

RIC S. BASTASA
Easter 1

we think that the enigma
of the magma beneath is the
definition of perfection

for something that we pretend
we know
we give a ten
for it delights us
no end

deep within us
are trenches of falsities
flaw upon flaw
we bury the clarity of our
mind there

we think about what we
never understood
and we raise our hands
to all these images

delighted that there are
still unfathomable oceans
and undiscovered earths
beyond us
we continue on this journey
of the unknown

all these make us alive
hopes grow like flowers in the
grassy fields of our hearths

the idea is this earth is not
alone
we share the bounty of planets
in illimitable spaces

how can we be alone? and how
can we equate it with loneliness?
my familiarity can be wrong
and mystery is always right

RIC S. BASTASA
Easter Scene

a woman in an early morning sweeping some trash

away from the house

a heap of garbage

thrown on the road for the garbage truck to pick it up...

whistles her way inside the house

locks the gates

enters the door

and opens all the windows of the house

meeting a brand new day

filled with warm sunshine

and cool air breathings

from the yard's green trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
it would have been easy to write
about sunflowers
gazing to the light of the sun
and feel the wind
and hear the songs of the leaves
in an orchestra of nature

something so happily designed
something even so palatable to the tongue
nice to hear
soft to the feel of the skin
as soft as silk
or kapok

but times are hard
the truth is
you are alone in the hospital and
worrying about how to survive an ordeal
with relatives visiting only
for 15 minutes
and they go on with their own lives too

so i cannot write about the sunflowers
someone writes it
for us

i write something truthful to you
this existence of the mice and how it is trapped
in the gutter
under a heavy rain
with thunder and lightning
when everyone is soundly sleeping on their warm beds
when all the lights are turned off
when silence speaks again
without any bar
as to what to say

RIC S. BASTASA
Easy Math....!

1 + 1 = 11
4 x 4 = pajero

RIC S. BASTASA
Eat And Fantasize

alone in his room
another world is created

it is beautiful when
you are all yourself he swears

the universe within the four
corners

a tiny sun, three moons, day
and night unite here

in one kingdom, you are both
queen and king, prince and princess

to make the story more alluring
you create a frog, another prince

a glass shoe, a red hood,
blonde long hair, a castle, a tower

and then you take more letters
in the alphabet to make a line

they all live happily ever-after
then you close the hours and

you put music to your ears
and fairies and shangrila and

lots of catsup and and beef
and burger bread and mustard

alone in your room you eat
all fantasies like mcdo burger king.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating A Tulip

One day writes about
A poem that looks life
A map
For some directions
To a location
Of a hidden rock
Of gold and i
Who dream of
One day getting
Rich read it,

Only to find
This Woman
Smelling my Tulip

Wanting to eat it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating Alone In A Chinese Restaurant

all my life i never imagine myself eating alone.
there is something detestable i think when a person eats alone.
either he is selfish to have to share a conversation with someone else
or that he is shutting himself away from this world where each must belong
to someone else, lest one can be branded as another scrooge
before Christmas, a misanthrope, a man who has no capacity to relate to
another human being, or even with a pet dog, or cat, to join him eating
in a restaurant.

i have seen some who eat alone in a Chinese restaurant, their eyes fixed on
the other customers eating alone too, sipping the bird's nest soup with the sound
of a pig or a big bird, as though eating alone becomes a socially
acceptable action. I do not bother asking them, why they eat alone and look
stupid with their lonely eyes, falling faces, less hair, and protruding teeth.

then i start to eat alone by myself. I look at the passers-by one rainy day
through the glass window of the restaurant. I enjoy the noodles and the
sweet sour pork and the bottomless red tea and the jasmine rice.

i tell you, it did not take that long really to learn to live my life alone.
after you left me.

It is this eating alone in a Chinese restaurant which taught me. And now i am
beginning to like it.

Sans love. Sans anybody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating On Top Of The Mango Tree

it makes a difference if i eat
the fruits from the very tree where they
are hanging

i sit on top between the twigs
with the bunches of ripe mangoes touching my cheeks

you pick just one and take
a little bite

suddenly you are full
you think you are done

the blue clouds within your
reach has helped your hungry hands

=================================

Sa ponoan sa mangga

Lahi baya ang mokaon ka og
Lanzones sa taas sa iyang ponoan.

Tapad sa imong aping ang
Mga pungpong.

Mokuha ka ug usa ka buok
hinog nga mangga

Busog na ka kaayo
Sa kaanindot nga pagbuot sa mga panganod.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating Sandwich

she handed me
a sandwich
with tomato
and mayonnaise
filling
she sits beside me
we have hot coffee
and a view of the
sea
a fading sun
some seagulls
homing

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating The Hamburger Alone

i tried eating a big
McDonald hamburger once
since i was too hungry then
after a hard day's work
and as i was bent on saving
lots of money for myself
i did not invite anybody
to eat with me
that will be an unnecessary expense
treating another lazy friend
or relative

i had my order laid on my table
took my big bite
sipped my ice cold Nestea
feasted my eyes on the garden
beyond the glass windows
but then
the hamburger tasted sour
in my throat down to my tummy
and despite its shorter consumption
i was still hungry
in fact hungrier than before
my head was empty
and my body floated
among the other bodies
inside the cold mall...

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating The Peeling

Who’s gonna tell you
What to eat and
what to throw away?
Nobody you say.
And I watch you eat
The peel and not the
Flesh of the yellow banana.
And you smirked again
Asking me
Who’s gonna tell me
What to eat and throw away?
And in contempt of my
Presence like I do not
Exist
You eat the peel
And throw away the flesh.

I know you didn’t like it.
But I know you didn’t like me more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating Words For Breakfast

Some things are better seen on the left side
course some like it at the right side equating it with the right place

propriety, that sense that we must exist in harmony
like leaves on the wind, wings of birds on its side
trees growing up
heliotrope realities and accepted codes of conduct
that serve as pillars of
a wholesome existence

most of the things survive, and this i have seen,
when they are at the middle

we all know, we have done that, we have always longed
and craved for that center

man, woman, could they be the center of this universe?
God is the accepted one and that He cares

central to our meanings, perhaps, love and sacrifice,
or perhaps by merely saying that i am here because here is here

did he not climb Mt. Everest for no other reason 'because it is there'?

you must have noticed how i mumble today, how i have been eating words
for breakfast

how last night's madness have thrown me into a waking island
fireflies on trees, lighthouses in my temple, boats sailing in the oceans without
compasses and maps

well, it is just like that. We begin to love now this ability of
not having to really know, this talent of not having to understand fully

because we cannot explain and because we do not want to anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eating Your Heart Out

under the full moon
on the desert
you take your heart
and bite it

it is sour
but just the same you still love it.
it is yours
and no one owns it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ebb

welcome to the ebb
of time

have you experienced
drowning in an ocean
of emptiness?

have you once drowned
yourself
pursuant to the will of
your cowardice?

welcome to the rise of the
water
people do not just swim there
they also want to die
and others who see are not
at all shocked
for once they also
attempted doing the
expected

and those who rise from that
low feeling
somehow become renewed again
tempted to the power of
life they begin to love the fear
of dying

ah, life is too short for an argument
and experimentation
this time, life goes hand in hand
with pleasure
and meaningful attachments
like that flowering vine
so attached to the trellis
that even the sun could not
really take it
it wilts in time
irrevocably posted to the
mutuality of the coldness of
the inanimate trellis

RIC S. BASTASA
Echo

'It sounds like {we? } are feeling kind of low today.
I am having a low key day because of the poemhunter.
I am not getting so many readers to read my poems.
{Cinthya? }Buhain is the poemhunter witch
She is trying to get fame'

- Aldo

Advice: The world is just a matter of perspective.
Smile and the world smiles at you.
Cry? Oh, you cry alone.

Give her a slice of that fame.
You have too much anyway already.
Be kind

{ha ha ha } laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
Echoes

the echoes
of 2008 are still here

i am out of this hill
i will go to an open field
to forget your name.

i am calling another name
a beautiful name

it will still be your name
i guess my paranoia isn't over

hello, hello, hello,
anybody home?

take my arms
i do not have any need of them

RIC S. BASTASA
Echoes What The Winds Are Murmuring

the mountain with its
strong back
simply echoes what
the winds are
murmuring

that is what i do most
often.

i like the sky more and
the majesty of the sun

that is what mountains do
as rivers wind around it
as winds pass by
as clouds sometimes hover
as fog creeps

RIC S. BASTASA
Ecstasy In An Orgasmic Poem

a poem too can be male and female
the way we want it

i write it upon your urging
you say you are lonely and you have no one
to trust or to speak or to sleep with

you are vacant and blank and empty
you are crying all alone and you wipe your tears
in the silence of the four corners of your room

you open up a need. and i am there to fill it up.
i am silent too. and i know when to stand and when to sit
upon your gentle command.

you ask for a poem about love. i write it.
you want something harder. you want me to dance the
dance of lust. i comply.

i write a poem about an orgasm of words.
an ecstasy buried on some free verses.

i bow down to your urges. you too bow down before me.
as i uncover what wraps me, what encloses me.
we open up like flowers shedding off leaves.
we face the reality that we are big enough to understand

the power of ejaculation and the receptacles of orgasm.
we look at each other eye to eye only to close our eyes again.

then our mouths fuse. everything fuse. Interlocking.
and then it rains. we take shelter in each other's arms.

we live again. we throw away all the sighs. we have become one.
the gods find us and they are filled with what they once felt too.

there are no words possible.
Ecstasy....

by the time that this walk and intermittent stays are completed soon, i shall be like you papa sitting on the bench facing the porch watching the sunset...

i shall pour wine in the glass as i shall forgo all my waning desires those wasted years seeing life pass me by

i am untouched and i have not touched anyone

except the cycle of those moments all too human, handed by the dictates of humanity

complete with the diploma life completed, ecstasy unachievable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eden Of My Mind...

it is our creativity that
takes us away from the norms
of daily dallies

daisies growing on the hillsides
clouds hanging on cliffs

it is our imagination that takes
us away from pagination
about books that have no landscapes
no sailboats on its
horizons

when i begin to think about those
beautiful memories with you
those bygone days
i become free
shackles dissolve like ice cream on
my feet and hands
the lightness of my being
licks them

it is this thought of you that frees
me from the chains of my grief

the way the morning sun kisses the hills
the way the moon sails on the seas

what keeps me alive is not myself but you
my memory of youth tanning me on the beach

it is this paradise of my mind
that keeps Eden forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eden Resort, Talomo, Davao

there is beauty
in the trees that tower
to let you feel
how it touches the sky

there is coolness in green
waters
where you begin to catch
fish and feel
the slime on its scales

there is something about
serenity
something about your
solitude

there is something about
your silence with the grasses
the blue clouds above you

they all give the message of
the song of mother earth
that life is beautiful
that living each moment
with your beloved is as amazing
as the miracle of the
moving hours

slowly you become as small as
a mole
in the vast wonders of this
earth

your hands become to tiny
to clasp
the hugeness of happiness

you break like a glass bowl
unable to contain
what God has to offer

shattered you look at yourself
with all understanding
nothing is repaired
upon a brokenness

but the amazement at beauty
continues
and it has overcome you
into a wholeness
that until now you still
cannot say

tongue tied you shall soar
and fly away.....,

RIC S. BASTASA
Edging My Way Up To Success

there is no instant success
you are not born successful
i am proud to say
i edge myself slowly
towards the platform
of success
the road was rough
the weather was not good
i did not have a carriage
and a horse
to make thing easier
for me
i was like a snail not
hoping for that gift of
speed from a rabbit
i learned from the
turtle somehow
reached the finishing line
much to their
surprise
i am a hardheaded man
who does not believe
in failures anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
one afternoon when the sun
sinks at the horizon and fades like a face
of my beloved
i begin to write about the fact of
friendship
not in poetic form but
factual

it is all about you
the day you left for america and you never write
a letter at the time
when letters were still in.

it is about a question of not talking
about a silence that still speaks despite the fact
that my hands cover my mouth

it is about a promise
that you will be you despite the absence of everyone
despite the loneliness
that lingers like a leech
on the skin of your feet as you pass the murky waters
of your life

friend, dissolve like sugar to water and be invisible
but still be sweet as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
the structure of
life and our belief system
must be simplified:

yes, there is man
and up there is heaven
and down there is earth,
it is very much like
the Japanese flower
arrangement, and come to
think of it,
the woman stands up
and registers
an objection:

'where is my place?'
actually, this makes no
sense, this poem
it is the lull of time unused
the rhythm
of aching eyes
and boring existence
the way

to complicate things
like some pubic hairs

thoughts entangled
to the traps of the
webs of the spider-woman

one eye looking
blankly at the monitor
the other betrays it

with a non-mindedness
the numbness of sight
the shortness of time
and the lack of genuine breath
where is the exit
doors from all these lulls?

RIC S. BASTASA
Editing Bukowski, Without His Permission

i

☐ Long walks at night-
that's what good for the soul:
peeking into windows
watching tired housewives
trying to fight off
their beer-maddened husbands.

ii

(i am a minimalist, how about removing the last line,
ok, i will try)

Long walks at night-
that's what good for the soul:
peeking into windows
watching tired housewives
trying to fight off

iii

(hey, how about removing the first line,
the long walks are not really necessary,

ok)

that's what good for the soul:
peeking into windows
watching tired housewives
trying to fight off

iv

(hmm
why not remove the third and fourth,
it sounds good to me...)
yeah, i will)

that's what good for the soul:
watching tired housewives

v

(what about using only one word
to make the poem
very brief?

ok.. i will leave the most important one)

<soul>

-nothing follows-

RIC S. BASTASA
Editing Same Path

I HAVE walked upon this path
alone
and that was years ago
when i still cry
water the pebbles with tears
they do not grow
flowers
there are no trees there

One day
I come down from the clouds
since i am heavy with
rain in my
heart and decide to
walk back the path
of stones

I have seeds of clouds in my pocket
rainbow shoots in my hands

The path have since then
bloomed with dew
and vapors rise to the skies
in prayers

Trees grow and
bees pollinate
a new world is born
since then
and children come and play
their games
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Edsa Revolution

it was the case of
flower vs. armalite

religious nun
facing a hard-faced
soldier

people redeeming
themselves
from power that once
were in their hands
but with stupidity entrusted
to the evil dictator

RIC S. BASTASA
i agree that this educational system
is another kind of factory
persons of the same age at packed
in batches
designed for a common end
some have to be discarded as
nothing but useless commodities
others are displayed priced high
and for sale,
there is no more that person
so considered for his innate qualities
there is no more collaboration in solving a problem
lest it be considered by the university rules
as cheating
all minds think the same
on standardized testings
those that think otherwise shall be junked
by the system
and so there is no other Einstein
nobody original
all mass produced
certified for mass consumption.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Moe

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch an Arab by the toe
If he bombs you let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a Bush by the toe
If he bombs you too let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a musharaff by the toe
If he shoots you let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a GMA by the toe
If She lies you let her go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Now it is your turn
take all the fun
still take the pun
still hop and pop
and fart and dart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Effervescent

as you show
this strange liveliness
in a fashionable
exhilaration
of a foam

you hiss
and then bubble
and then finally
escape away
from me
as gas

RIC S. BASTASA
Effortless Superiority

there he sits comfortably
without having to do
anything
much to my envy
he gets everything
love, fame, fortune
luxury, prestige, position
everything by the mere
color of his skin by the
mere sound of his name
by reason of his lineage
and genes and
his being
chosen

RIC S. BASTASA
Ego

Look at your pride
Flaming with bitterness
On the brink of this cliff

RIC S. BASTASA
Eight

I do not indulge in this form of esoteric
Teachings, like the doctrines of Pythagoras
Or Aristotle,

Recondite,
I do not have some secrets now to hide,
What for? There is nothing private in me,
There is nothing worthy of confidentiality

This is not a poetry that is full of esoteric
Allusions to be understood only by the select
Few. What for? What for really?

There is nothing cryptic to the good that I must
Do for you, as one good man is wont to do for
Another good man,

For the good is open handed, it is not a closed
Fist, the fingers that behave like crumpled paper

I am opening like my fingers to the sky
Like a bud of this little white flower to see the sun

In fact, if you read me through and through
I am revealing myself through and through

Piece by piece layer by layer like you are
Going to the innermost me, there is no enigma

At the end and you may regret it though
I may not have cautioned you,
There are only drops of tears trapped in there

Salty and if you taste it, can be really sour.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eighteen

a moon to shine above us
a night where we sleep
a blanket to keep us warm
and a bed where we can
sleep together

throughout
this darkness
this cold
we shall not even
tell
what we really
feel

it is just between
our lips
and our
navels.

RIC S. BASTASA
Either/Or

either you go
and run free like
a child bathing
naked under the rain

or you wear all your
underwears
and coats and masks
and you hide inside
your room and lock
all your windows
and doors
and disconnect
the electric current
from your doorbell

these are layers and
layers of choices

but whatever that is
that you pick from the rest

that is still poetry to me

RIC S. BASTASA
Ekstravagantiškas

This one is conspicuously dashing
She is elaborate and the way she talks and walks
And holds her breath and then releases it
In air, there is this intricacy of detailing her parts
Something so ornate and florid
Nothing bland, her fingers like tendrils
Carefully clinging to this trellis
Like bars of tracery
Forming the ogee, colorful and showy
She knows how to be strikingly bold
Exhibiting this brilliance of expensive diamonds
Her way of entering this door as she steps into
This room
frequently a complication of
Our limited space

Resplendence is her way of life
Always entangled to wavy lines
And flame-like forms
her gaze her way of taking short
Glimpses at you as though you are a kind of
Neon-like existence on the wall

This audacity
This ostentatious display of woman in every way
She consumes the form
To the utmost, the way she shapes and drops the words
From her rosy pouting mouth
in heavy lipstick red as sticky blood

You look at her and she looks at you with contempt
Because in your own simplicity
you are the true woman
With full breasts that produce the milk
for mankind's babies

While she, this flamboyant slender, graceful body gracing
All the corners of this party
the woman of extreme sophistication
And complexity,
dashing thru her colors and sub-language of her on
mwah
oh la la
She is just your version
this fake semblance

She is gay, she got the looks, but she can never be you, woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is something
in your smile
that hinges beyond
the shape of your
body
your arms
sculpt me
into human
form again
for years i
have been
turned into
a big
stone

god of the
walls
pillar of
my gods

when i look
at you
the world
bloom
into a flower

it is this want
and need

but reason is
a sword
that hits
from one side
of my body
to the other

i do not surrender
i am on my wings now
i am flying away
and you feel nothing
about my leaving

nothing's changed
your world is still
sea, sky, land.

RIC S. BASTASA
El Merengue

Mexican clad horsemen
ladies in long skirts

circle dance, stretching hands
clapping of hands,

horses set free in the tundras
snow melting

at the cafe, a muscular man meets
a very feminine woman,

they talk a while, the woman giggles
the man holds her hands

they go for a walk
and it is getting dark

they go inside a copa cabana
drink wine

the moon is full and appears
sits upon a roof

the man pulls down his trouser
the woman undresses herself

he puts off the light
she closes the window.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Ela Toghat Al Alaam' (To The Tyrants Of The World)

Arabic script of the poem by Abo Al Qassim Al Shab (Arabic)

[Arabic text]
Hey you, the unfair tyrants...
You the lovers of the darkness...
You the enemies of life...
You’ve made fun of innocent people’s wounds; and your palm covered with their blood
You kept walking while you were deforming the charm of existence and growing seeds of sadness in their land
Wait, don't let the spring, the clearness of the sky and the shine of the morning light fool you...
Because the darkness, the thunder rumble and the blowing of the wind are coming toward you from the horizon
Beware because there is a fire underneath the ash

Who grows thorns will reap wounds
You've taken off heads of people and the flowers of hope; and watered the cure of the sand with blood and tears until it was drunk
The blood's river will sweep you away and you will be burned by the fiery storm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Elation

tonight
the moon slowly
ascends from the
deep brown river

it floats for a
while and then
rises gloriously
to the dark sky

a thousand stars
wait for
the moon
to fully glow

like you
on a night like this
the trees
are elated too

RIC S. BASTASA
Electrifying

my friend from Germany
who figures life in his computers
wonders why
do poets write in hexameters
etcetera
as though ideas have to be
put inside
a box
wrapped in rhymes to become
presentable

he feels that the poet
is choking the ideas
in the sweetness of his
words

i told him, i agree
i added, we have the same feelings

though, i keep
my own poetic stand
that poetry is an expression of
a strong emotion

stronger than Samson with his longest hair
stronger than Obama of the United States of America

and it is so varied like the sands of the shore
so intricate like one's own situation unshared
an embroidery of experience
in one page of the
hidden self,

it has no cage, no box, not even a frame
it is the wind,
and i myself, have never seen it
structurally

all molecules, and atoms and neutrons
much more like it
ah, neurons, all neurons
electrifying.

RIC S. BASTASA
Electronic Age...

They buried the postman
The telegram is a laughter

Time is nth
It does not fly anymore
Neither can it stand still

The choices are oceans
One floats
Undecided where to go
what to do
exactly....

RIC S. BASTASA
Elephantine

it does not mean that you have grown
big ears, a wide trunk for breathing
or a wall as stomach to the hips,

elephants do not forget those who
harm them,
and they always have time to talk to
the sand who shall guide them
where the culprit can be found,

all their lives they seek for justice,
and that is
what an elephantine memory is all about.

friends tell me, i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell me what is your recently invented pretense
Your latest lie?

Shape, form, color, texture,
Of your many selves like your unequal fingers
More than the number
Of your allowable toes,

Feign and feign
That is feigning
Feign in feigning
Fingers like other fingers,

The shape
Of your fingers

You make things up
You invent new stories
And without any excuses
At all, like a very clever man loving many women
At the same time,

Figment, fabric, fabricate fabrics
To entertain, you are justifying, just to entertain, not to
Deceive
To lure them to glorify themselves
To believe about some goodness and beauty and the
Truth so well expressed in fiction,

In the field of imagination things work themselves into human beings
The cows talk in affable fables, the characters talk about avarice, love, hate,
And murders done in fiction,
We learn a lot,

And in that vast field of fiction
You are the cicada singing
Alone
To a cold and dark night
Wishing to be
A black bird, the one that flies and sings
And goes to places where
You have never been.

RIC S. BASTASA
Elisa Ang Taga Tabon Nga Gihaw-As Sa Kalisod Diha
Sa Gihatag Niyang Kalipay Diha Kanimo

pagkadaghan na
sa imong mga nawong
diha sa nabuak
nga samin nga
nagpasad didto
sa salog
sa iyang kalimutaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Elocution At 3: 01 A.M.

adroitly
i, in the years of my confusion
have seen
the accurate face of
reality's
contours which i, have,
so gladly
taken, and you
who, have taken love,
so blindly,
trusting in the
safety of its hands
so gladly,
suffer.

i, in the soft
touches of
patience, as time
witnesses,
silently, tread
upon
the numbness of
feelings,
and so gladly,
accept,
all that there is,
on stretched
metaphoric imagination,
shall
survive, upon one
empty
glass to another,
on these
coffee days,
on dawning days,
rainy or sunny,
it does not
matter anymore.
Elocution....

the beauty about unfinished
work is that you still have a reason
to wake up early morning tomorrow,

i do not mean an unfinished painting
where the red is still bloody on the canvass
as though it is a wounded skin and bleeding,

it is something not morbid, and i do not mean
a poem half its form and sound like a scream that you
cut or a song that you quit for a while because you
believe that there is something much better
for it when sung again the following early morning,

what i really mean is something which i still
cannot grasp, where i am in the middle of
the sea, and i still cannot figure out where is
my island home, when i become so anxious and then
i still have a reason to wake up tomorrow
morning

and then ascertain if there is still reason left
to finish what i..do not really know....

RIC S. BASTASA
i am within your confines
arms, your arms around my
body, my arms around your
body too

sort of tight, too tight,
not comfort but shockingly
tight, that both of us
want to be free, or we
die, in the tightness of the
arms and the mandates of

the law, mockingly tight
irreversibly choking us

this tight, rope like and
apelike, not homelike anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
as we talk
behind her

i fell guilty sometimes
yes sometimes

i make it sometimes
with you yes sometimes

and then we talk so
badly behind her back

but we have no plans
or if we have them sinister

we keep them
intact unnerved

less the tangles of the dangles
we make the sound

bearable like water
pre-boiling

we open the window
sometimes yes sometimes

to get a grasp of air
holding on to our hair

breathe
breathe

we decide to live
behind her back

back yes sometimes
it is better this way
less talk more thinking
writing less speaking

there is an exit
but we shall not be there

we are in the lovely prison
of our infidelities

RIC S. BASTASA
about you
what shall i say about you?

ah, i prefer my
silence

this is my cure about
you
yes, my silence

it shall speak about
you my silence

my very own silence
to speak about your
long silence

now we are at peace
in our silence

both shall speak about
us yes our silence

our marital silence in
the silence of our bed

the root of all our
troubles freud say is in

the silence of our beds
two beds now

four meters apart
speaking in silence

the silence of the house
and the chairs

and the staircases
and the carpets and
the ticks and the
empty glasses or those
cold coffee and
frozen butter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Em 4

we are into this
conjugal nest
we are birds now
without wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Em 5

you simply ask me
to embrace you
it is cold night and
my arms are not warm
enough

you are 50
i know there will be changes
that my arms
have to comfort

do not worry
sleep and dream
even there i will be
with you
my arms even warmer
and shall be
all yours

RIC S. BASTASA
Embrace Yourself

Embrace yourself
Touch the skin behind you

Close your eyes
And dream and see the landscape

That you have not seen
You and I

Embrace yourself
I am the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
Embracing Everything

at first to be frank with you
i am choosy: friends and circles
i go for only two to three
not four
for they will be too many
and expensive to maintain
at a certain level
of intimacy and familiarity

i change like the ordinary rest
one gets lonely
sometimes and needs a broader
circle of friends
somewhere where you float
and not settle
where you hop from one island
to another and feel
the excitement of
not being true at all
playing a lot of game
learning new ones
embracing everything
a friend to all
but not to anyone anymore
one learns again
to be alone in the mob
of faces
a sea of people
you begin to sail
as a boat
for all
a seagull...among
all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Embracing Tradition...

selectively she lets the
laughter in, sifts, and
covers,

ferments, and savors
the flavor of old

tradition, embraces and
kisses, and

lets go off
the hook, the fish swims

back to the usual
pond.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emilia

last night shall be the last kiss
we made love
and we were like inside that Shakespearean play
the midsummer's night
too elusive
and...

we were acting love like it is true
i sense it when you close your eyes and shut yourself inside that darkness
it was another man's face inside your mind
and your heart uttered his name

i left earlier this morning
and you knew it

i will not come back anymore and i knew it
you are like a bird freed now from your own cage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emily Asks Me Write A Poem About Women

It must be about women
How they are strong
And selfless
And self-giving

Self sufficient
Free
Principled

She is that woman
She must write that herself

She can always do it.

To me strong women
Are not written
They are not for writing
They are made
Self-made in fact
They do not ask me to write about them

RIC S. BASTASA
Emily Dickinson

hands so frail
dusts do not crumple in her palm
eccentric mind as sharp
as Gillette

rumored
a blood hemorrhage
on suppressed
Freudian lustful desires

life and death
she knew them all too well

RIC S. BASTASA
Emma Concepcion Zanoria

emma of the green meadows
on the skies of white and blue
along the paths of flowers
of reds and yellows
how often have i dreamed of you
on the valleys of ricefields
where the winds of Karupay pass
along the tall coconut trees
to the mysteries of the
pacific ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
Emote

emote, just emote, pour out
what you have inside your heart
your chest opens like a trunk
and things simply come out
like secrets

let go
let all things fall and let them be just
they are
scatter if you must
and watch
how beautiful chaos can be at times
at that point
who cares?

RIC S. BASTASA
Emote One Day

when the heart speaks there is
no period it goes on loving without any room for
questioning it is like a dance where a punctuation is out of place always
arabesque
a twist
that art of tossing a spirit and falling down after
that moment when you talk to yourself because you need to unload a burden
like unleashing a dog captive to its house and master like a rain falling heavily on
your roof without any colon like a surge of grief without a comma
like bliss that needs no
interjection like a cadena de amor with a dash
or something

RIC S. BASTASA
Emoticon....

it is this pain
that has become the spring of
prolixity,

prolific have i become
these past few days of
helplessness

my hands have become empty
of its fingers
unable to hold a face of
my beloved

for i am left alone with
only a soul to talk to
for i am reduced to the ashes
of my own fire
for i am a city after the war
when all the heroes have
been executed

it is this pain that i bear
in the smiles of my silence
this suffering that not even
a mother can understand

it is this rain that pours
heavily at night that makes
me shiver to a wetness everlasting

i have not asked when will this stop
having become a masochist of love
having become another numbness to this
chain of indifference
this manner of unknown cruelty that
mankind has inflicted upon its brother
whose name it can never utter.

it is this pain that writes the words
that you read at night wondering
how beautiful have the words become
under the dimness of our both worlds
under the solitude of our partings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emotiking

your love
was true
you hid it
just the
same

there was
one which
was truer
than true and
you confessed
it only to
be rejected

now you ask
me, who would
want another
confession?

i say, love at
its truest will
still confess that
love...for such
love fears none
and knows
not what
rejection means.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emoting A Landscape

the rice paddies are dead, they have been long cracking
drying under the cruelty of the summer sun scorching every leaf and pebble
as the mud fish buries itself under for another hibernation

the trees are not complaining compliant with the strong dry wind
from the bald and browning mountain peaks towering to kiss the clouds

the pathways are bare and vacant for no child comes out and plays on the fields
the carabaos are kept under the shadows of the mahogany trees while the man
near the well bathes naked as the woman pretends to wash the dirty clothes
someone peeps with mad eyes, ready with his bolo behind the thick bush.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emoting Emotions For Emo, The Hermit Kemit

IT is fluvial, there is a river, and a boat
there are tears in the river with a boat sailing one early morning
when you wake up, without him by your side, though there is a note,
saying, i will be away for two weeks in Davao,
company thing, compulsory ones, meetings and discussions
what to do, and where, and it will be long.

excuses.
lies.
deceptions of angels
and demons.
goddammit

he is with her and i am here, you say it yourself,
you are here alone, by the side of the river, flowing in a valley of tears.;

he's in the arms of the other woman who is feeling hot and sexy all over.
it is the note.
You respond, with
' i trust you'

Keep loving.

definitely, you're not hermit, the Kermit, she is the Emo,
emoting
emotions, by the side of the flowing river, the tears are valleys.

RIC S. BASTASA
THIS
pondering the themes thou
is thy hour and the stars.
O Soul,
Away from books,
Thee fully forth emerging,
lovest
best.
flight into the wordless,
away from art,
Night, sleep, the day erased
silent,
thy free
gazing,
, the lesson done,

RIC S. BASTASA
Emotional Tools

some use the brain
the right most of the time
so they can earn a living

u and i, use the left
to sing that song and read a poem
at night
with our special friends
we toast wine
we light candles in the dark
we laugh together
at our shortcomings
we celebrate
anniversaries of our failures
we also remember
our little triumphs
we share our grief and joys
we are together in this
journey of the self
and the world

our brains fail us
and so we begin to resort to the heart
filled with so much emotions

and then we are drained
with so much love and departures
we invoke love
all the gods and goddesses of love and pity
on broken hearts
we surrender and yet we never promise
not to love and fail again

and then we resort to silence
and acceptance
we get used to all these processes of thought and feelings
emotions that burst and subside

we gaze at ourselves
in the mirror
white hairs cover our head
some bald and skinny and
gnarled-looking

and then we finally wish to reach the apex of this journey
murir es descansar
to God, to God, we all go back

HE is home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emotions

Excuse me, I do not make these emotions
They arise without any effort from me,

They agitate, they disturb me, this
this sorrow, this hate, this strong feelings of revenge and get even

This love

The very essence of my poems
This war between these that come without my consciousness
These emotions always at war
With my intellect,

Excuse me, I do not create them myself
I am not therefore responsible, and I leave these emotions
All to you

I do not wish to be damaged by them
I only want to be with them in such feeling and sensibility as

Joy, and overjoy,
And overwhelming joy and reverence and elations

Now, is it sorrow and hate and indifference?
Excuse me, they are not mine, take them all with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emotions And Money

it is true then
there is a big boundary between emotions
and money

you can't manage emotions
you go awry
senselessly roaming
floating like
an iceberg
waiting for another titanic

but you can manage money
and that is your forte
you hide them and there will be no chaos
no murder
nothing about cutting of intimacies
or ignoring of relationships

attached, we can be as close as door to a frame with
efficient locks and hinges

don't talk about money
i'll spend it with you
but you 'll never know how much

RIC S. BASTASA
Emotions Are Us?

did we create
did we ever
those that we
we ask them to
emotions, these
e motions of joy

these emotions
like what we
think harm
leave but they
emotions, these
crazy emotions
of hate and anger
are always strong
are always strong
and pain
and they keep on
and they keep on
they are here
to stay like
they are here
to stay like
forever and ever
forever and ever
remember
remember

within us?
feel?
think harm
us at the end
we want discarded
and yet they are
there always there
remaining
as is
as is

we want discarded
and yet they are
there always there
remaining
as is

as is

as is
they leave us
when they want to
they leave us
emptied and
suspended
we are

eye come they go
outbursts and
flashes and
flickers and lights
and darkness in
constant profusions
when they like to

we do not create them
they invade us
we do not command them
they dominate us
we do not master them
they enslave us

only if we will only if
we will allow them to be

RIC S. BASTASA
Empathy

your poem
your pain
becomes
a mirror
of myself

sometimes
it seems
i see you
writing
i watch
how your
pen slides
on paper
and my
mind too
slides with
it like my
muscles
flexing
when the
baseball
player
in the field
swings his
bat and hits
the ball

on a strike....

RIC S. BASTASA
Empathy 101

you are a happy man
so you claim to be
inhiring a fortune
from the rich ancestors
imbued with culture
from the good universities
that provide you the best
education in the
city

and one day
at early dawn when the rain just stopped
pouring from last nights
tempest
you see a man wrapped with plastic
sleeping on the concrete bench
of the town plaza

he has nothing
not even hope
and you just pass him by
but your thoughts capture
you and puts you in
this prison
of emptiness

and you come back
to see if he has shoes
that you can wear
to make him dance at least
using the smooths soles
of your feet

even for that imaginary
moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Empathy...

one day
i must be a fool

see me
and i like to see
sympathy

the next day
i shall be wise
again

and for the rest of
the years

there will more
begging

for empathy
life is....

RIC S. BASTASA
Emptiness

when you enter your room
and you hear the sound of your steps
on the carpet, as you close the door
and the sound of the snowy silence
is sealed,

you begin to think why,
when will this last? oh, this cannot
be forever, i know, you keep
on telling yourself

this is temporary
this is the need of my life

there is an exit somewhere
you wait, this is the hope

there is this distance between
this and that
it is not that really far away
from each other

the nearness soothes and heals

RIC S. BASTASA
Emptiness Can Be Shared

now we must know
that emptiness can be shared
as though
they are delicacies
delicious
in our plates
and palatable to our tastes

our plates are actually empty
not a morsel of bread
no grain of salt
no stain for a sauce
no elbow macaroni
nothing greasy like pork's fat or that smooth mayonnaise
no raisin or cranberries
not a rib or marrow
no cherry on top of vanilla ice cream
it is not about plum or apple pies
or fruit salads,

what we have are only words
and they are served on the forks of my tongue
which i gently put on your tongue
and we close in upon the door of the kiss
locked

these are the stories that we keep secret
swallowed and kept in the chambers of the heart
and we keep them wondering
how full we are in our silence
how festive we are in our chosen confidences
how settled we have become in our happy confines.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emptiness Is Both An Illusion And An Irony

emptiness is always an illusion
which carries with it an irony.

when i look at it, as its content shows,
it has nothing

bare hands, opening fingers,
an empty transparent ball, it can
tell your future, it can dig your past,

thinking that it is spacious, i went inside it, pierce myself though it

only to find that that are so many crowding elements in there and they

are choking me and you who is looking outside it, thinks that nothing is happening

but then the struggle is horrible, quick and even deadly, so many hang themselves in

empty air, and lose their lives, because you cannot see the body of breathing,

when you learn to live with it however, you become full, emptiness is its irony,

its antithesis, for how can you ever be full if you have never known how to empty yourself?

the face of emptiness is a mist, and you touch it, you will hold a forest, so many black birds,

myriad exotic orchids, so many blending sounds of trees screaming, of creeks flowing of waterfalls
cascading that you can relate to the locks of your hair and the hairs of your armpits,

inside it is too personal to be told, outside it are so many denials with the faces of the people

that you have loved before, and then you decide to stay at a distance, you are like a tree
dark as a shadow, counting the hours when the sun finally fades away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emptiness Too Is Art....

do not
say more than
that

lest the
path be full
there is no
more room for
the way

what house is
it without a
space for a window
or door

voice out
for space
emptiness too
is art.

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty

try looking at my hands
they are empty now
for i have released
what fullness was there
what fist
what clenched hands i had
once they were so
beautiful
in bravery
but
then
there is always a threshold
of courage
suddenly you find hands opening
to the sun
hands without a grip
hands that wave goodbye
to all your friends
hands that
grasp nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty Now

you are telling me that what i did was so hurting
it was you who was bombarding me with a hundred words
per minute
as i was
sitting on the rocking chair facing the sea where this time the wind keeps on
rushing
on my
face
i assure you i was listening to every word you are saying because i have told you
once and i am telling you again and again i love you and i will always love you till
the end
of time
and you still keep bombarding me with all those words that you were hurt by my
telling you i love you i love you i love you yet there is something untrue
you did
not kiss
me yes
you for
got the
kiss
the real reason why you said i love you is because i asked you to tell me and to
repeat the words that i missed hearing after ten years of this marriage
you are
cruel
in the
silence
in between
the words
demanded.

it is the emptiness of your words that is killing me it is this emptiness that
is telling the truth this emptiness between us so huge so wide i cannot
anymore
reach you
you have
shut me
out from
your full
ness from
your wall
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty Rooms Vacant Chairs

empty rooms
c vacant chairs
open doors
footsteps going out
somewhere

where to? who knows?
who cares?

at night
the wind blows
you want to
draw a shadow on
the wall

it is dark and there is no sound.

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty Spaces Of Leaves

dawn brings in
whatever was left
of the night
making love
to its own shadows
in the dark

so cool is the silk air
so beautiful are the laces
of light
drawn from the empty
spaces of
the leaves
the dews like pearls
still clinging
to the arms of desire

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty Talk

in so many words
he will tell you
that he loves you

but don’t you doubt
that for once he never
kissed you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Empty. Full, Empty, Full

these are like waves
of the sea
that will finally
take the boat
finally to its
port of destination.

RIC S. BASTASA
Emptying

after reducing mental activity
sit for a while and just remain there
sitting,

empty what you have
a dress, an underwear, an idea

empty your head
close your eyes

and when this happens
take the soundest sleep

i know you need it
for a while

we must be apart
sea to cloud.

RIC S. BASTASA
did i tell you
that a poet was not born in a day?
oh, it takes a lifetime
to become one,
it takes a thousand years
of sensitivity
to feel the thorns of a worm
the skin of the porcupine
it will take another thousand years
to tell which is green
which is blue
from the blind eyes of the
fingers
i must tell you
the poems may have come
not in trickles
for they come not but in a flash flood

in a flash of lightning
stabbing the mountains
in the roar of thunder in the bellies
of the tigers

oh well, they have all been there
we only need to discover.

RIC S. BASTASA
Encounter Of The Present

a young brisk woman stands still
on the side of the road
wearing a thick dark tinted glass
and a Mao Zhe Dong cap
i stare at her and she
stares at me
and then as i cannot stand
her strong gaze
i walk away rushing towards
a crowded mall

RIC S. BASTASA
YOU MAY live upon an imagination:
a rosy world, one without thorns at all,
a sea without much depth
where you can swim from one island to another
a sky without rain
no storm to ruin your day

but it just cannot be
it just cannot be

the lies unfurl
they soon will discover the real world where you live in
in perfect contrast with
what you are not

you may still live in there
live there if you wish

they will know and will understand
you just want to live

just to live, and not to harm
they will understand and then
smile at you

and you too shall smile at all of them
who live in the same place as you
who simply want to live
to survive and then end it
well like a finished
journey

RIC S. BASTASA
End Of A Story

Arnel made a point,
his friend who works hard in
Dubai
comes home for a much needed
vacation with
wife and kids,

in Palawan
a big wave swallowed him
and since then
he was never found

RIC S. BASTASA
Endlessly Yours....

he promised to stop writing poems,

waste of time he says

he breaks promises he has time to waste

so much time because the words keep coming

and it is giving him

all the pleasures

and when he reads what he had written last night

the following morning

when everyone is still asleep and when the kitchen does not have

any sound

of a fried egg or a whistling pot

he feels the hunger again

and there he is

eating poetry for breakfast

munching the words

chewing what he is in there

brewing

like strong coffee

that soon makes his heart palpitate
like drums

of the natives

recently capturing their first human meal

with all these facts at hand
how can he ever stop?

RIC S. BASTASA
Endlessness....

you get bored and feel there is nothing to life or even death and this nothing after a long time of sensing and feeling it as though it is your constant companion finally takes a shape, a face, a mold, and it becomes something and life passes and winks at you and you feel this prick, this eureka, and connections are made, links and links and chains of meanings, a circle, and nothing is something and something is nothing and then this arrival of silence and then this solid void, this continuity, this endlessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Energy, Synergy

feel the coming of this energy
rushing like blood pushing itself
inside our veins
now blue has turned to red
and you blush
with life

fill yourself with energy
push, push, push
pull, pull, pull

work things out
for the better
hop, hop, hop
hope, hope, hope,

make things for the better
excel, compete with yourself
another greater self today
than yesterday that you
always leave behind

you stand up now
you are a man of energy
yet you are not alone

you touch another hand
feel another body
diffuse, transfuse,
surge, mix, diffuse

you synergise
in this universality of this stream of humanity
in the ocean of our vast space
we become
stronger

one world,
one universe
one humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
i have nothing to bring you
always words, which sometimes i think over with regret,
there was a time when i first met you, i brought you bars of
chocolates, which you set aside, and i thought you prefer flowers
which i brought the following night when you needed to see me,
only for a while you smelled the petals and put those flowers in a
vase, and they looked so pretty with limited light from the window
city lights, and you did not say anything, but i know what you wanted
i opened my heart, i unwrapped my body with all its drippings,
i give you my lips, i brought you all my sighs,
my manifold sorrows, my misgivings about a life that has no eyes
for me, and then i give you words again,
you have felt the whole of me, and you love me and i love you
in return,
quid pro quo,
just that brief moment, and then both of us are gone
because life has constructed for us two paths
that never once again shall
meet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Engr. Rey And Life's Absurdities

here comes
engineer rey
who is as healthy
as a monkey
boasting of his
immunity

drinks vegetable
juices everyday

does not eat red
meat

and play tennis
every other day of
the week

carbo is a no no
soya is a yeah yeah

preferred diet
is lots of green leafy
salads
garnished with
olive oil
and grains
make his days

one day he bangs his
car upon a post
loses consciousness

when he wakes up
at the hospital
he does not know what
is one plus one
and can no longer
recognize his wife
and two kids
today he is in coma
diagnosed with
terminal
brain cancer
stage iv

yes, it is absurd
but it is true
and Oh God!
he is only 44.

RIC S. BASTASA
Engravings Of The Heart

everyday is a
betrayal

a closed door
assures

one dreams
wide awake

smiles are
sub-chapters

no matter what
two are still one

lies are sweet
creams coating

everyday is a
comfort too

there is a promise
of growing together

older and bolder
and number

everyday is
forgiving

betrayal and
forgiving marry

the home is still
the apple of the eye

a closed door is
always reassuring
silence is the sky
mouths beautifully shut

RIC S. BASTASA
Engrossed Grandmother In Her Cross Stitching

it is this absurdity of choosing words
for a nice handiwork

knitting some fairies in some mathematical colors of threads
some butterflies and flowers in bright colors

a painting in cloth and threads
takes time
when she is finally hypnotized

falling into a deep sleep
inside a room
where she is alone on dim light

i open the door
i see the best handiwork of God
a woman so indulged so engrossed
in her art

sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
Engrossed In The Making Of Art

it is this absurdity of choosing words
for a nice handiwork
knitting some fairies in some mathematical colors of threads

some butterflies and flowers in bright colors
a painting in cloth and threads

takes time
when she is finally hypnotized
falling into a deep sleep

inside a room
where she is alone on dim light
i open the door

i see the best handiwork of God
a woman so indulged so engrossed
in her art sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enigma 1

our fellows are selfish ones
they only keep their words for themselves
read them aloud
in front of mirrors and then they close their books
and sleep
without telling you if you can have them
and feel
the softness of their syllables

they want the moon at night to be only by their windows
and they travel alone taking nothing of our faces and scents

our fellows are the most selfish ones
and they are not interested about our names
they only have theirs
carved in those walls of skies

i am glad i am not like any of them
i do not read and i do not close my books

i leave the pages open by the window
and i tell the moon to just pass me by

the rain is happy for me
i have allied myself with the damp and cold
and so my hands speak
for myself: the lines map for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enigma 2

the irony however is this
the moment i utter your name
my silence leaves me

i love it this way
that you only exist in my mind

(i do not dream of taking you inside my heart
as i still respect its emptiness

which i have reserved for God)

i like it this way: you are a distant star and i am a traveler
on the desert
at night

and as there are so many stars in my sky
the sands too
shall never know who you really are)

RIC S. BASTASA
Enigma 3

three books lie on the headboard

the first is The Darkness After the Hour
the second is The Dreamweaver
and the last one talks about the Time of Olives

my eyes are tired, my heart is broken
my soul does not know the difference between
this brokenness and exhaustion

some things slip inside me
as i close my eyes, perhaps you know by now
what i have chosen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enjoy Every Bit

THERE is so much
unexplored deep down
the trenches of
the ocean

up there too
there is more to space
that is not grasped
by our limited
senses

there is more to
the mere glitter of the stars

you cannot catch all the
glow that the moon
is giving

our faces have only what
light can reflect
what air can we
touch

we are interesting

our oceans
spaces, stars, moons,
are but metaphors of
who we are

keep all these
in mind...you are too
interesting
you too are a metaphor
of what is there
unexplored

there is no hurry
enjoy every bit
grab every moment...

RIC S. BASTASA
soon another vacuum
is declared
an open country
where fools become violent
upon the women
of sorrows

another emptiness is
back
upon itself
debilitated

cupping not
a drop
of time
yet choked like
a man
hanging his last dream
on that
tightened rope.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Enlightenment

light, there is light,
too light, above my hair,
a little sun floating
above my eyelids,
it settles finally on
my lips as a moon
sits on the the marshes
at night,
the mouth opens
and it enters,
light, swallowed
inside my esophagus
finding its way inside
my heart,
it becomes the steel
core of my being,
a heart so strong now,
ready for another
surrender to love,
so gentle and yet
so objective,
savoring and yet
unaffected.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ennui

when you want to
refuse to think
when you
want to stop
doing anything
yet you cannot
because
you are still
alive
and there
is no way
that you
can refrain
from living

this and that
etcetera
endless etcetera

keeping
yourself
busy for
nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Ennui (For Merci)

when you think you have it all
and then
you find a certain void which is not
filled up yet
the void is very tiresome
the pillow feels like a stone
and the bed
feels like a burning log

RIC S. BASTASA
Ennui (Whatever)

there are four corners of this room
(as usual, us usual,
we are here again, both
on a togetherness
since the early days of our
union)

i want to go away, remember the flight
of the little bird, away from its mother's nest?

but i can't, your tears are holding me
like a mother,
and so how can a son get away?

how can a lover go away and be stripped
from its beloved?

the vinyl floors are dusty
the curtains unwashed for weeks
the door creaks like a man complaining
for its usual work

to close and open
to open and close

the door has always been closed in here
there is no exit

but i shall not scream, that is too much for this
harrowing experience

there is no tv, no ref, just the sound of an AM/FM radio
that i bought from a cheap department store

i hold your hands
that is enough for me now.
i stare at the ceiling, and then i get so weary and i close my eyes
asking shelter
in the colored world of dreams.
are you happy now?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ennui, Ennui, Ennui

if the usual delicious things
everyday, every night
you realize these are of no importance
and there is therefore no use
of being earnest

the most unusual delicacy
summons you to just sit down
watch a sunset and then just be
very silent

on this necessity
of waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enough Is Enough...

the time has come
to say, this is enough
we do not need anything
the room is full
there is nothing more
to cook
in the kitchen

we only watch time passing away
prepared for the
next eventuality

the vagabonds in us are waking
all feet are ready
not a bag shall be carried
the world comes around us
and we are carried...

RIC S. BASTASA
Enough Of This Ongoing War, I Will Write Something Obscene

i am tired of the ongoing war,
red alert on this district, and no classes today and curfew hours implemented strictly and check points,
i hope there is no hand grenade hidden in your car
or some ingredients of an explosive
no joke
you will be arrested and you cannot take your flight to Kuwait

let us not about war,
let us talk about love, silly, let us talk about sex, obscene sex,
salivary sex,

do you remember the sound of the squeaking bed?
do you hear the bed bug letting its last juicy cry because both of you are too heavy
pressing its body
against that piece of steel
flesh to flesh like steel, yes too rough and strong and rigid,

i like to remember these things, the sounds of the moans, and the sliding hands and firm breasts and the magical sound of the ejaculation of out intellects in bed as we study Kant and Sartre and Marx (have fear) and Mao (we were arrested,
do you remember at the university?)

you are bragging, you are a fake revolutionary, you were hiding while the rest of them were tortured and
yes, some of them were not even buried on decent graves

this is obscene. You are taking about something that did not happen to you. It happened to them
and they are dead and they are your brothers
you did not visit them in their prison camps
you were watching the latest movie in that rubbish city
while they all carried their guns in the mountains
and crossed the rivers without food and water
and without their hopes of a new home

indeed, this is obscene. now stop it.

start with the white thighs again. e.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enough Of Words And Thoughts

to rest my eyes
i go to the garden and
gaze upon those
leaves

the leaves become
caressing hands
stroking the
soft eyelashes
and rubbing my forehead
with the coolness of
its epidermal
gifts

it is dusk and
light slowly ascends
from the thighs
of the lady mountain

i am lustful at dawn
at noon
they say i am
poetic

i want action tonight
not just words
i call her by the phone

RIC S. BASTASA
Ensconce

snugly
comfortably do you remember
how we sit before the
tv and watch our favorite
videos,

fiddler on the roof
the sound of music
gone with the wind
the titanic
ghosts
who's afraid of virginia wolf?

and i went higher
than what you expect me
to settle for
higher
than entertainment
even greater than sweet-sour love
i went into
politics
and legalistic movies
and yes
crime does not pay
the who donnit ones
and the
phantom of the opera
and
les miserables
where i think i was finally
reborn
from my slumber
of
noli me tangere

and munich and the black september
i cried, sort of overacting
and you do not believe
and you laugh
dee. inside
yourself: this man is gone out of his senses

ensconced, like a bird i perched
and lodged
and installed myself in one corner
of just seeing and listening
like a ship looking for
an anchor
perhaps just to camp
and burrow like Alice's rabbit

so i can find my hiding place
keeping my own home key with
nothing to spare

and i like it here now
nobody looks for me
and i do not have to
answer for any call
or for somebody telling
me to open a door

RIC S. BASTASA
Ensemble Fete Rustique

I am assembling conversations
Of two former buddies
Who really like each other
Not as lovers
But as pure friends
And much as they really want
As brothers
They wanted to be
On same direction
Taking together
A path they love

But as fate would have it
Each had
Opposite directions
One went south
The other north

For years each
Thought about
The other what
Happened and
Where must he
Be now living

One fine day
They see each
But as norms dictate
Of course
One cannot kiss
The other
They shake hands
Like nice gentlemen
And they sit
And talk
No one cries
Each will be
Calm and rigid
"you are
flourishing! "he stoically said.

"you look
real good! ", he is unmoving,

they have not
seen each other
for 30 years

but as norms
would have
it, they pretend
that there is
no softness
involved
that there
exists no
feelings like
that of a
lover long lost
and now is
found.

Each saw the light
And each has opted
For a compromise
They have to be
Blind just the same
When they first
Parted as buddies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enslaved By Art.....

when it feels like
then hit it
do not suppress it
go for it
strike while the
creative mind is
hot
do not fret
do not ever think
just go
and be blown away by
this kind of wind
that visits not as
often
do you not notice
me not minding you?
do you not mind
why i have stayed in
this room for quite
long?
must have i imprisoned
myself for no reason at
all?
come to think of it
no one wants to be a slave
but here we are enslaved
for reasons that you can
never think of

the beautiful muses
have arrived without their
clothes on
bathing by the river
we watch with all glee

this is the mind
this is the body
fused into one...
enslaved by art.
the heart laughs
the hardest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entangled By Old Roots

time knows how to choke a face like yours
time like roots of the banyan tree smothers a face like yours

and you let it be
as you close your eyes and surrender
to this kind of death that for all these years you have been asking in your hundred patient prayers

your face is this stone
and these roots have entangled what you do not really own

RIC S. BASTASA
Entangled Hair

oh i see, your hair
entangled last night
must i have been
there? i must have been
drunk, for i do not remember.
Did i kiss you? Did i make
love with you?
I have this sticky feeling you
know and i must have been
guilty of having loved you.
I check my thighs and
they claim innocence.
I ask my lips and
they say they were never
wet last night.
I touch my abdomen
there is no shouting
faggot in there.

so your hair got tangled
last night, and you are telling
me that all this mess is caused
by me?

sorry, things sometimes exist
all in the mind of a woman
scorned.

someone said it, i think
i still remember. Not Shakespeare,
it was someone else,

but not me, i am sure of that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enter Her Garden Of Flowers

now you may enter her garden of flowers
but first you must be wise

do not think that what look like flowers are
nothing but flowers

man be wise, there are those that look like flowers
but they are something else

do not just pick them up, think twice think thrice
in her garden
there are some flowers which are bred in guilt
and if you are not so careful enough
pick another one

that one is meant for your death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entering The Door For The Final Exit

sometimes there is
an ending surprise when
we contemplate
upon
the death of a human being

we dread thinking that
we can be that
dead human being carried by
a few
inside a coffin
towards the most silent
destination
decorated by wilted roses

or some smoke from the
candles

call me weird and if i am
then fr minster must be the most weird person
doctor of metaphysics
exploring all avenues about death

he is rested. he was murdered while attending to the needs
of the prisoners.

for one thing
and this i admire myself for that
less the arrogance
of a
questionable philosopher

i told him
death is nothing
it is the most normal event that happens to the human species

even my own
i do not wish any pompous occasion to mark it
it is the humility to simply acknowledge
that we are all
silly mortals who are trying to escape but does not want to enter
the door

Jesus, he only had 33.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entering The Hall

a lousy day
something is dreary
life is damp and disturbingly wet,
as i enter the hall
where two old men are talking
deaf perhaps
they are shouting about
how life can be so dragging
when i go near them
they look at me with disdain
envious perhaps
about how i have not aged much
because i am smiling

inside it is damp and wet and dreary
but outside i show something warm
the sun and the gentle wind

i am hurt but i never utter the word
of your common complaint.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entertaining Two Grieving Guests...

when both of you arrive this morning
carrying with you
your loads of sorrow
i am ready with my arms
and words of comfort
for i will be with you
not only in happiness
but also in sorrow

and i listen a lot,
serve you drinks,
offer
you lunch,
sweet pineapple chunks for desert
red wine for some finish

then you keep on telling me about
what really happened
how things can be unbearable at times

i listen a lot,
i perfectly understand
the pain,
and i empathize with that lingering
grief that sticks
in your hearts like
some kind of a virus,

i offer you more drinks, because drinks can take us
towards other places of our hearts
a little comfort and diversion is needed on these
harsh times of your life,

we let time flow,
temperatures change,
words take unexpected shapes
your hearts begin to catch the fire
of survival
somehow even at this moment you must have sensed
another direction
to move on,
the options are too many
to count
the world is one big
space for
experimenters

this is an exciting world
full of surprises

then you like the way things have been moving
how accommodating can i be,
how understanding
we signified goodbye,
i send you both off the door of the house
we had the last drink
for the road

it is already dark
and the world is silent
as another
kind of listener

and then i am alone again,
taking all the glasses and spoons
back to their proper order

and when everything is set,
kept,
and in place
i go inside my room
also ready to handle those heavy burdens
that are mine and
mine alone

i am in this
kind of state where
sharing them
cannot lighten me

for they too
have been burdened enough
with what they think
they cannot bear
anymore....

RIC S. BASTASA
Entertainment At Barra's

dusty, old and weary, the shacks of this place
offers only the inside comfort of its simplicity.

a bowl of Japanese noodles, salmon sushi, ebi tempura,
not here,
hot green tea, not here,
chinese humba, chpsuey, sweet sour pork,
bean curd, bird's nest soup, definitely not found here,

this is the place of the lowly, where the poor converge
and share their woes,

a cup of rice, carabao meat, fish stew,
under the nipa covered roof, an angry sun,
and a talk about an uprising,

on the other side of the house, some home made
firearms, some leaflets,
and camouflage....

nothing rocks here, something is boiling
it is hot, but it is different.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entrances And Exits Tunnels And Light.

i do not really think
that when you are making the headlines that you made it.
there is more to be at the front page.
it is just once
there could be another.
but this is the mask of society's pleasures.
behind the page is another story.
the story of daily survival.
what help you can give to appease the anger of the masses.
what food to serve for the hungry
what comfort is there for the ugly and the unmentioned
what life is there beyond the films
what disappointment is there lingering in the system.
after all it is not the beauty queen that really matters
but the one executed for some worthy causes.
it is not independence
but it is the interdependence of all these links
chains and locks
entrances and exits
tunnels and light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Entwined

of all the words
this is what i like
there is that sense of
unity, that feeling of we are
entwined
like a bond of marriage
like a vine carrying a flower
to the trellis
i like to make it a little
more beautiful like
Cynthia's
intertwined
there is sense of twosome
foursome
eight-some in that word
a trois
something like Mary Poppins
with the kids on the hills
of Austria
singing the edelweiss
oh i remember you
when the three of us
intertwined under a heavy
downpour of rain
and we only
had one umbrella
we were like vines
but i hate to admit it
someone
turned into a snake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Enumerations...

not those flowers,
ever those summers,
not those rivers, not the sea,
ever the ocean
neither the continents nor
the islands
neither the clouds nor the
skies neither the space
nor the galaxies

the grain of sand, a leaf,
adrift,
a pond, and the old frog,

never the storms or the
winds,
ever the alligators nor
the hammers

it is the stone, a butterfly,
a speck of
dust....

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy

I may have an old worn out car
But I am
Handsome and popular
He has a scar

And he does not know how to spell
Lopadotemakhoselakhogameokranioleipsanodrimypotrimmatosilphiokarabomelito
katakekhyemenokikhlepikossyphophattoperisteralektryonoptokephallioskigklopeleiol
ag\#333; iosiraiobaph\#275; traganopteryg\#333; n

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy And The Discontented Heart

these faulty eyes
see what we are not
comparing the colors
of the invisible wind
testing the depths of the
waters
always complaining
about the scent of the air
the slowness of the rivers
the dirt in the creek

i should have let them all
pluck the eyeballs from
their sockets.

RIC S. BASTASA
blue jeans, yes, the blue
in the jeans, the jeans
i claim that it is all that i see,
but i may go on a deeper
exploration of this
introspection, there was
something fleshy
under the blueness of the jeans
something dark
like the color of the night
filled with
desires that one wants
to spell correctly,

there is the hand there
resting
and with a permission
since it stays there for
a longer time
unhampered

their eyes are smiling
and they were telling me
about
the art of letting go
and sending out the doves
free finally from their
decorated cage

at the end i always
ask
what did i feel?

frankly, i may say
nothing, but let me explore
the secret room inside my house,
envy is there
wide awake and wanting to go
out of itself
towards the darkness of the night
and the coldness
of the typhoon air

envy looks out of the
window
and it is very restless

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy Not

do not mind other people's pain
we too have our own
do not mind much less their own happiness
we have ours too
we keep things as they are
seeing them in our own light
we fly along with our friends
on our special wings
those that make the least of sounds
ahead of us
the island of our ancestors
the paradise of our presumptions.

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy Not Her Flowers

envy not the flowers
that bloom in her garden

red roses
taking the colors of blood

the roots
unadulterated pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy Of The Eye & The Nose

Let the eye and the nose
Argue why the eyebrow
Who does nothing
Occupies
A Higher Exalted Position,
& even this
Mouth which
Speaks and eats
Thoughts and food,
Have reason to complain,

Why the eyebrow
Up when it
Does nothing?

Its placement is meant
To make you look like
One normal human face
The brain understands
What happens when
The eyebrow is transferred
Below the lips, and you
Know very well, the
Eyebrow really, does
Not mind, if you look like
An alien with a spike.

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy, Envy, Sad Eyes

edgy, the end of the world
your world, is edgy,
it doesn't mean much
just edgy, there is this sense
of envy
and what is there to be
destroyed
is narrative poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Envy....

the woman
undresses herself
like a river

the man
falls like a leaf
and floats there

and then the river
foams
and the leaf
flows with the
river

and then
the moon fades

RIC S. BASTASA
Ephemeral

A red hibiscus that blooms
In the morning
Closes, wilts, in the afternoon,
You expect another one of its kind tomorrow,
A china rose,
Your night life,
At the outdoor café, sitting on light fabricated
Silver chairs, sipping tea, puffing smoke, sipping
Margarita, gazing
Slight stolen looks
At young handsome
Men rated per hour,
It is your policy of giving false names and wrong address,
They know
What you are doing,
They understand
Your needs & wants
For a fleeting night
A cure for an itch

Momentary piecemeal pleasures,
Allusions about a broken love of what used to be,
Illusions of what you could have been,

Momentary
Thoughts, momentary projections, when you make love with your catch, as you puff your smoke to
Confuse the ceiling with your gaze of momentary
Emptiness,
You are the first one
To leave, after paying the bills,
They always pretend asleep,
While naked,
As you leave his due on the side table,
You go home on shriveled hair,
Driving a red car,
Smokeless to the road,
Your celfon rings,
Your son in his father’s house calls
“Mommy, I want to go home”
“I am driving, ' you call him,
A flash of momentary happiness,
A momentary sadness,
Flip-flopping to your mind,
What are these really, these that meet your gaze for something that should have been permanent,

That red hibiscus, that blooms only for a day,
Is ephemeral,
Like stolen nights,
Like the way your child calls you, because father is always away,
“I am in Cebu for a week”, said many times over and over again,

Her stint for a night is ephemeral,
Electronic calls are ephemeral,
A happy home, her dream, was sort of, kinda like red hibiscus
Ephemeral too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Epikhairekakos

seeing others fall
ruined
at the bottom of the
sea
floor

one delights
upon the death of
his enemy

this feeling
of
now ' i am much better'

i have survived
and shall take
the pleasures upon myself

on those empty chairs
my sighs sit

RIC S. BASTASA
Epilogue

and so
the clouds come
and they are so many
like a grape-ful
of imagination
in bunches and bunches
of spheres
of understanding
you miss the point
they are not the
metaphors of
doubts
but of embracing for once
what we do not
understand
because we have no
power to do so
we use our eyes now
wide open
into the wonder
the amazement
no strain just
plain watching of a
folding phenomenon
like we
are all kids
newly transferred
to a grassy place
beside a lake
the first time
we see
a jumping fish

RIC S. BASTASA
Epiphanic

the ordinariness of things sometimes
like leaves and wind and grass

leaves falling
wind whispering
and grass covering
and footsteps
a ball playing with
the dog
a baby on a crib
mother's lullaby
rain coming with
a warning
roof that stands
aloof

your silence beside
a cup of coffee
and my gaze beyond
the window
the sunset fading
into total darkness
and the moon
sailing by
passing at us
slowly soundlessly

epiphenomena...

God is still here
on epiphany We watch
We are being watched.

RIC S. BASTASA
Epistle

Dear law students,

The semester is over, and I am
Your nightmare finished off by you by simply waking up and breathe & recover. Fan yourselves, loosen your shirts. I know I am the sum of your bad days for the whole semester, Assigning you cases as Thick as three cabinets and Giving you quizzes every meeting which You think are nothing but trivial flaunts and show of a Law teacher needing much attention. I suspect that you Backbite me and consider me as Judge Terror on the loose Eliminating the chaff from the grain, the bones from the Cartilage and those whose guts are weak must, as Humbly asked, pack up his wits and get his bolo and just Plant camote & yam in his mountain. My car got scratches and I spent a part of my meager salary to repair the marks of Your suppressed cruelty. You read two books in political law, exclude The assigned 30 cases or so, add another 20 and the handouts Too. The law classes are long and weary and focus Yes, focus is important, starts at 5: 30 to 8: 30 p.m. when You could have rested in you cozy homes and watched the Prime news and soap operas or the latest Oscar winning Films. It has been a wonderful semester but sad enough After I checked your final exams some may have to repeat The course again. I said may. I am writing you this letter And you may not read this. This time some of you may Have been preparing for Lent this March, when the sun Is hottest, when the dust is too dusty, when the church Is too crowded, when all of us must reflect what sins have We inflicted upon each other. Well, I guess, you have studied A lot, and suffered that much, but try to look at it in Another perspective, and let me ask you, Did you learn a lot about political law this grueling semester? Do not tell me your answer. I am not interested. I do not mind Anymore how you call me names when you are drunk with Your classmates in your favorite videoke bars. Good luck, have a happy summer break. Dream some more.

I remain. Judge Terror.
Epitaph

here lies the bones
of a man
they once called
boneless
during his lifetime

RIC S. BASTASA
Epitaph Of A Poetess

she leaves
those she loves truly
and those who truly
once love her
for now she goes
to the Great Poet's Place
to claim her
reward.

RIC S. BASTASA
Epitaph Of An Athiest

one day
your feet take you to the cemetery

on tombstones
you pass by and read some names

you read a name
and you shall remember a certain poem

this is it
'she is dressed and she is not going anywhere'

RIC S. BASTASA
Epol

epol
hanging on a pole
for sale

RIC S. BASTASA
Eq (Emotional Qoutient)

at first
it was so horrible
i locked myself inside the room
as father hides the knife

then i had the second failure
i kept it to myself
and despite the red spot in my eyes
i said
it was nothing

and then there was this third
and fourth and fifth
and so on and so forth

somehow i said yes and yes
to all these
for how can one refuse disappointments
and failure
oh! they come so naturally
and then the feeling of pain is gone

i rise above frustrations
the pain is too normal
the body gets adjusted
the brain is numb

when they come again in my life
all these have become my brothers and sisters
and mothers and fathers
they bring no pain anymore,
except the hard lessons
and all these
for us to live
we must
by heart learn.

RIC S. BASTASA
Equation

as i write about an old woman begging
on the street
as the night covers her and as i reflect
upon the smell of sunset

she comes again
trying to catch what i could be, asking

are you an old woman?

funny, but it becomes like you are stalk-ed and the other one is thorn-ed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Erasing The One You Love Through Constant Repetition

You had the face
you love it much
greater than
the lips,

too much love
has kept you
in this prison

the arms are
prisons
and to get away with
all these
intimate holding
which you
began and all yours
alone to
hold,

you try to make
a horrendous repetition
hoping that soon
boredom comes and
then everything is
erased and
forgotten

when will that be?

you do not really
know.
you bury your eyes
inside
the darkness of
your sockets
Erections, Elections, No Objections

let us trade

martin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ergonomics

the body speaks
in pain
and now i respect it
when it screams

i must sit up straight
maintain this integrity
of a gentleman

amidst the ruins of my thoughts
i raise the pillar of faith

i make smooth the foundation
of my being

i am here, and i am strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Erica

Erica does not talk too much
her moon has no nails
there is no trace of a scratch
when she had it
ziplessly
<*
? >
quickly in the
train with someone
who has no
name

RIC S. BASTASA
Ernie......

a long time
and now here you are with all these gray hairs,
and you confess
that at this age all that you want to do is listen

it is unlikely that you write
for their will be more corrections and it will really take
a whole lifetime to
finish and
remove all these errors

you watch Fox News everyday
have more time for Hollywood movies
and the local news

you don't go for a walk anymore in the boulevard to
breathe salty air
it does not interest you

old friends are forgotten
they are of no use somehow

what is normal for you
and routine is this need for an injection of insulin

when others talk you always  look at your watch
and as you move a glass of cola falls upon your stomach
lots of lapses this time
and oh, as usual, you have become so mortal
so human

i am a writer
a poet Ernie and will always be both.

and so here i am again,
babbling, exploring,
experimenting where to
put monotony
and make it appear so beautiful

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
like an ordinary weed beside
a cheap flower
as a centerpiece of the interior part
of the renovated
living room in the house of a long dead
friend.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Erotic Hair

when my hair
gets long enough
after a month
uncut by
my gay barber
they become
so curly
like my pubic
hair

and women
and even gays
love all the curls
of my hair

erotic hair
and i am wearing it
as a crown

understand
i am coping up
with mid-crisis
and i like to
say

i got hair
and they are too curly
like my
(messy) sex life

listen, my life
begins at 69.

RIC S. BASTASA
Erotica

i am telling
you i have the smell
of something
pungent
but you say
you do not mind
in fact
you like the smell
of pungent
substances

the wet one
you even
like to lick
and swallow

and then you
hold me
as you kneel
like i am
a god

and you plead
that i be
hard
and so unforgiving

RIC S. BASTASA
Eroticism

you tell me
you are in bed
waiting
naked
and alone

and then
i swallowed
my pride
and tell you
i am coming

RIC S. BASTASA
Eroticism, You And I

eroticism is just the surface
the skin where i pierce
and make the necessary
entrance to your
heart to the bone of
my feelings, and if you
allow it
i may find myself
living in there: your heart
my love, our only dwelling.

you must let me pass the surface
so i can get inside
your eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Erotique

dark night's arms
so strong
embracing the hot moon's round shiny body
the clouds are cotton blankets

in ecstasy
the rain heavy with libido
falls
squirts the drops of rain

the thirsty mouth of the earth
opens and
quenched

the universe
watches with glee
space expands and then
explodes with joy
giving birth to a million stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Erratum

be like the fish
agile to the rages of the current
sleek and smart
IN a second it escapes and is gone
an illusion to your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Errors

there will be always errors
my errors
not yours, even your errors
shall be mine
for there will always be errors
that is too normal
for our lifetime
too short to be erroneous
but always real
too real to be touched
too exciting
to be always noticed
and too numb to be affected
by their
hypocrisies

you too? oh my, why?
don't you like to be the most normal
bird with only two wings
to fly?
how can you use a third wing?
to see with the third eye
aren't you funny to see
on this third
excess?

come, let us feast on these errors
drink these glasses of errors
be filled and vomit with errors
defecate these errors
and be empty again
after having learned so much
to become the
newest genius in this town

of errors.

RIC S. BASTASA
Errors And Silent Corrections

what i say need not
be what i mean
and you know that
just like what is written
on the slabs of
stone
need not be God's
handwritten orders
know why? the essence
of this world is
fluidity
water, air, space, light
time
they all flow
and there is nothing
which says
that their faces are as
permanent as
a sculpture
we try seizing them
and the
planets around their
orbits
think that we are
as usual
crazy creatures
unable to understand
the natural laws of
change and change
and change and
change.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are in prison and you know it
there are no bars
but you simply feel the closing in of space
around you and you sense the choking
and tightening
of your body with so much pressure
against the walls
of your imagination
the concrete beams
and ceiling moving
towards the floor
and you are at the middle
of all these things

you want to escape
and you assume the shape of a very small bird
growing wings on your sides
like the new born leaves
of a seed

without still the claws and beak and tongue
you fly away
unhesitantly without so much waste
of time
& words

except the note
of a very sad song
left on the barren floor
for someone
you no longer love

RIC S. BASTASA
Escape Of The Worm

when there are no words
from the window
escape through
the door or

make a hole
on the floor
and slip your tiny
self in there

and you crawl out like a worm
into the open

you open your hidden wings and then you fly away where they cannot find you anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no escaping song
there is only the trap song
when were you brought here?
you do not really know, you were out of your mind
when you find yourself sleeping on that hammock
you were helpless and then you gave the first cry
and they do not like it
you grow to their wishes
and work so hard to please them
all hours are spent on a useful endeavor
nothing is spared
your bones are about to crack
until one day
you look for the escape song
and there is not any
not one
there is only the trap song with such
a melody
telling you, stay, stay, the time may come
and it is the right time
and then you go on that graceful exit.
nothing shameful, just the dignity that you deserve.
wait, soon it will be given to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
hello anger, where have you been? 
don't you like my kitten? It is missing you. 
Don't you feel its hunger? It's thirst for you.

IT is its thirst that thirsts you. Don't you fret. 
There is more to be done in this imperfection 
Of what is felt and what cannot be touched 
By our fingers.

hello anger, don't you have a comma for me? 
Don't you stop for a while and see a new landscape of 
Ourselves?


There is this lively brook inside a book. 
And I am trying to figure out some 
Happy characters for you.


RIC S. BASTASA
Escaping From Your Hands.....

i have escaped from being
one of those marionettes

and so i proclaim that
i
do not need much
i
have enough
of me
and you
and i do not wish to prolong
our
agonies
in the luxuries that have numbed
us into
wood and tin cans
and
scarecrows

i have finally escaped from your hands
slipping like
mud

and with my own hands i sculpt
a face
that you will never love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eskizo

imong gihimong yano ang tanan ang imong kaugalingon mao na lamang ang
imong duha ka dunggan duha ka mata ug duha ka tiil gipapas nimo ang ilong kay
dili na nimo kinahanglan ang gahom sa pagsimhot apil ang imong mga tudlo kay
sa imong kadugayon gilaayan ka na sa mga kalipay niaanang paghikaphikap og
paghapuhap milakat ka usa ka gabii niana mitan-aw ka sa luyo subay sa usa ka
dalan nga gidan-agan sa usa ka bulan nga nagpahiyom kanimo nga dunay
bungot ug imo pa untang gitutukan pag-ayo usa ka iring nga gustong mohapwag
kanimo

RIC S. BASTASA
Esotericism

I do not indulge in this form of esoteric
Teachings, like the doctrines of Pythagoras
Or Aristotle,

Recondite,
I do not have some secrets now to hide,
What for? There is nothing private in me,
There is nothing worthy of confidentiality

This is not a poetry that is full of esoteric
Allusions to be understood only by the select
Few. What for? What for really?

There is nothing cryptic to the good that I must
Do for you, as one good man is wont to do for
Another good man,

For the good is open handed, it is not a closed
Fist, the fingers that behave like crumpled paper

I am opening like my fingers to the sky
Like a bud of this little white flower to see the sun

In fact, if you read me through and through
I am revealing myself through and through

Piece by piece layer by layer like you are
Going to the innermost me, there is no enigma

At the end and you may regret it though
I may not have cautioned you,
There are only drops of tears trapped in there

Salty and if you taste it, can be really sour.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am learning and i am learning everyday
some truths keep coming like uninvited guests
my stairs are dirty the soil and mud keep coming
the living room is crowded and there are words everywhere
on the arms of the chairs on the tables on the doors some words hang
themselves, and i am not really at a loss, i am just amazed

last night i promised myself to close the door and the windows
and live a life of my own the following morning
but it is not at all that simple,
the house is lonely and if it decides to close
all openings and seal all its rooms,
how can the house breathe?
let all these truths come, let them take the forms of poetry
let them have the rose of the prose, the say of an essay, the narrations
of the long novel,
for now i have changed and have preferred once more
to give in and to listen
my ears are wide like highways
my eyes as attentive as lighthouses
my feet  patient as shoes waiting to be worn again

i am a bowl and i let the rain come inside me
they pour in like forms of bliss
they fill me
i do not break
i only overflow and then everyday
the sun takes every part that i save
and i become empty again

i am the passive recipient,
i am the spectator
they all reveal themselves as i watch
in wonder
i count my fingers
i sleep with all my dreams
in darkness in light
i am back to this wanton wander
Esterlita

hey, it's 7pm. here in SD!
It's dinner time! ! !
See?
to everything there is a season,
a time to mystify and
a time to satisfy!

there are wrinkles
that refuse to acknowledge
the presence of
a periwinkle, a dimple and
an apple

all rotten except one,
it is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Estranged And Comforted

last night we made love.
we are conscious.
we know very well this:
you know it was not me
and i know it was not you.
we live together
and we like it that way
we know this prison too well
familiar with its ins and outs
but we are convinced
this is still a better bed
and we have no plan
escaping
pretense after all is a good
medicine for all our longings
out there
there are true people
bragging that they are
free and
genuine
yet still
begging for love
and not finding it
just the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am seeing what you do not see
they are not invisible, they are real, subject always
to more doubtful
and debatable interpretations
which i think you better not see
because it demeans me
and then i begin to write
this poem, something that you may not like
to understand but just the same
it is here with a lot of doubtful validity,
must this be a poem still? plain word getting into a prelude
of a convoluted thinking failing to give more
landscapes of colors and lines
plain straight lines
like a road, a very long road that you have been walking
all throughout your life
and asking if this is worth the day's troubles

what i see here may demean you too
it has demeaned me
many times in the past and perhaps in the coming days, years,
but i am always seeing it
because it makes me alive
my life worth living,

at times i think that i am a very sinful man
but i raise my eyes to God thanking him that he still makes me live
this sinful life

those that understand me have always been misunderstood too
a sympathizer to sinners
but being misunderstood is a fact
it is human
and i am glad that you are here too
supporting cast
to this human drama
this humanity that screams at times
and then so silent in the sleep
because the soul is too tired
coping up with the mistakes of the body etcetera....

RIC S. BASTASA
Eternity

we are under the full moon
tonight and we look for some
tiny stars glittering in the skies
our vision dissolving into such

a vast space where we see
no endings no beginnings

we soon close our eyes and there we
too see no endings no beginnings

limitless to the skies
limitless to the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Eternity

you are told to just watch
to make ready your eyes for the amazement

the wonders of this world cannot be contained in a jar
of words
they always overflow and pass and fade and come back again
when your eyes are ready for another
show

once you fall asleep
then on the other moment you forget what is it all about
you are too busy with
your games
chasing the frolic of time's
mutability

there is such a thing as waking up
deep inside you
when time is not time anymore but merely moments
of connections
to every nerve
to every unconsciousness

here, there is no waking
neither there is sleeping
there is just that moment
of seeing

eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eternity Is Felt....

life is a
dance

when we dance
we simply enjoy
the music
and ourselves

there is no
thinking when
the music ends

no thinking even
where to go
after

within the music
eternity is felt....

RIC S. BASTASA
Etioles Brillantes

to those eyes closed
from behind
heaven is felt
stars are seen
God speaks near
the face.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eulogy

we have come to bury her
but forgive me
unlike Marc Anthony
i shall praise her

this woman for others
Christ-like
no ambition
all but service
to the nation

this firm woman
who hints the Ode to the
West Wind

she is silenced now
heaven's gain
earth's loss

Patricia.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eulogy For Caloyski

Caloyski was a good man
he was always silent
listening and participating
about educating the workers
that time there were few stores in the city
and C. served snacks
and it was delicious

Bennie is a happy wife
for Caloyski was not a problematic man
who gave him many children who shall work in the store and then later on have lives of their own

ah, everyone is like a smoke from a firewood burning slow passing yes merely passing

no one stays here forever the same thing that Caloyski explained to his
kids when he
was still alive
and sane

NOW he shall be
silent forever
and forever shall he
be a good man
for those who still
remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Euonia For Blok

things beautiful
some things,
beautiful things like

blooms of booms
flumes of flames in fumes

things beautiful, of all
things beautiful, so beautiful
so near, yet
so untouched, you look around

for things so beautiful
bloomings of boomings boozing

a, e, i, o, u

love love love lovely love
lovingly loving love loved

lastly this lust asking: love do you still love me?

RIC S. BASTASA
The time has come when
you have so many things to tell
or experiences to share
the bitter and sweet ones
the exciting moments of those that
happened unexpectedly
like moon exploding or suns becoming
hell or heavens turning into paradise islands
or stones becoming hearts
or squashes becoming carriages
or Cinderellas turning into real flesh and bones
you are so amazed and you are caught into a stillness
where you cannot write even a word
flashes of light, too much light, too much light
all of us becoming blind by these
enlightenment
people with eyes closed and yet can see
everything, everything
complete with colors, scents and
excruciating details
if you know what i mean
by now you must have closed your eyes
and see the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Eureka!

it is universal
the law of gravity of
depression
pulls you down

it hands to you a
mirror
where you see yourself
as gnarled

you feel
so lonely
and deprived

you feel the
weight of
injustice

you imagine
a self as a rock
pulverized
into nothingness

there is a need
to rise
to be careful
about the
blob of uselessness
eating you out
wearing
you out like
a broken
gear
of a machine

you are not what
that mirror
makes out of you
there is a splendor
in your own
world
the beauty of your own
moon
the majesty of your
stars

and these are all
in your mind
you must believe
in them

stay in there
and be well.

RIC S. BASTASA
Evading The Obvious

what is more obvious
is the sculpture of pain
standing in the middle of
the road
where we always pass
every morning

no one minds it
but it is there but there
are some who care
and touch the tip of the
bleeding stone

those who recognize
its existence
finally discover the
secret vein of
freedom...

RIC S. BASTASA
Evanescent

who likes to vanish and turn to air?

even moistures don't
ey they keep on clinging to leaves
like morning dews
but there is this evanescence
of all things
ugly or beautiful

fading feelings fleeting fainting
ecstacies and pains

after love, after love is gone
we all tend also to be imperceptible
scarcely words turn to syllables
commas and period
and then
nothing

who tries to hold my whisper?
your lips? oh they close after
a moment of a little kiss
an opening

who knows what menthol is? what camphor is?
do you still remember how
an old perfume on the side of your ears
smell?

white smoke rising to the ceiling from
a candle light that you have just blown off

you thought there was nothing
there was something and it is still lingering.

RIC S. BASTASA
Evasion Of A Tearful Story

as she was telling
her own version of the story
which the other
in advance said was fabricated
(she used the term fake)
her
tears
keep
falling

like corn
seeds

i look at the ceiling trying to find
the spider

or the lizard trying to swallow
a whole
careless mosquito

things are like these sometimes

evade, what destroys our day
climb on the stairs of the imagination
forget
forgive
if not
go away

RIC S. BASTASA
Evasive

the answers are shy
they have not matured

they always are not
confronting the questions

which keep on roaming like
Nazi soldiers looking

for the kill of the innocent ones

the answers are arrows
with blunt tips

the questions are the black holes
of our universe

who dares to answer all of them
not me

i see all the questions
and i am but a little boy stupid on the street

looking for mother
and afraid of what a father can do

to defend the senselessness of my posture

the questions are alive
the answers need a redemption

i take the side step
write a poem and then sleep

who know?
the answer is nothing but a dream
yes, a dream
something ephemeral

yes, an illusion
something like a mirror

yes, a moment,
something that must pass like the shadow of the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Evasive (Edited For One Letter Only)

the answers are shy
they have not matured

they always are not
confronting the questions

which keep on roaming like
Nazi soldiers looking

for the kill of the innocent
ones

the answers are arrows
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yes, a dream
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yes, an illusion
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yes, a moment,
something that must pass like the shadow of the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even After The Much Needed Rain

i am dry
a river bed whose pebbles are wearing
dead moss

i wait for your rain
it is not only me who needs water here
you must rain
and even flood us

we are dry
we are not afraid of drowning
to your excesses
we have long died even when the smell of the rain

invades our
desert.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even As A Young Boy

even as a young boy
i know
flowers fade
petals wilt
rivers become
dry
& birds fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
Even For The Meantime....

in this world of chaos
where brother kills brother

where buses are bombed
and innocent civilians killed in numbers

i take refuge on a chair beside the window of my house
still awed by those ripe guavas hanging on the tree
fronting me,

fresh air from the sea, silence from the meadows,
self in isolation, a retreat from the street,
evils in society temporarily forgotten

we need this sometimes
even for the meantime.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Even For This Moment......

if mannequins
exist,
why can't we

we who can pretend
to be mannequins

in the sequence of
humanity

we who can be better
at surviving
as robots in the world
of work

robots still in love, in
pleasure in lust
in merry making

do you care about what
i feel?
do not ask me for the
truth
i may hurt you a bit

you may leave me for
the truth
and so with a lie,
i can take you in
even for this moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even If It Is Not Easter

dthis is the day
tthat God has always made for me

in His Hands I give thanks
before Him shall I bow

dthis is the day
That God has made for me

for us
Let us sing and show to Him
that despite everything

There is always a reason for
The celebration

From our eyes
Let us remove the tears

Let us be happy Now
For He is here on the day that he has made for all of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even If Love Is Gone...

brave woman
learn from me
love is not all
it is not everything
love too diminishes
even gone
but look at this day
even without it
the sun still shines
the rivers did not stop
flowing
the winds still come and go

the pendulum still
swings to its usual
to and fro

time never stops for
love
and neither can love
stop it from
running

the moon at night
still
maintains its elegance
with all those
blinking stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even If You'D Never Seen Surgery Before, You Could Do It Because Vivien Made It Look So Simple,

one who knows
how to do it
teaches you
not only how to do it
but you also begin
to admire the
confidence
about how simple
can it be

RIC S. BASTASA
Even In Love You Must Also Be Prepared

sometimes the drought comes
i know

sometimes it will take a very long time
for the rain to come back
we know it

sometimes all the waters in our well
get dry
and we all anticipate it

we are prepared
for all these
a long time now

i hate to say this to you
but i always know how to say goodbye too

with the dignity of decency
and you know it

and when will that be
i am keeping it suspended in the air
like the sword of Damocles

my world is always an open door
it closes when i say the word
and you know it very well

i once told you
nothing lasts forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Even In The Driest Of The Desert

out there
in the driest part of the desert
a flower still thrives
thin leaves
and tiny petals
stalks like wires
and roots
penetrating the softness
of the sands
out there
it is preaching of hope
resiliency

some flowers are scarlet
deep blue
but nowhere can you find
black

black is the color of death
red is the color of
the wounded sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even Near You

from a distance you see an egg white shell,
put it against the light of your love,

i am empty.
i am nothing.
i am true.

i am really sorry
for this. i do not have you inside this emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even On The Late Hour Of The Night

even when late,
try getting in, they will not notice, you are not famous,
try being a nobody
and they won't bother, so get inside the room and pretend
you are not a part of them in this
discussion,
behave like you are the waiter bringing them a glass
of water,
no excuses this time, do not talk, do not bother them,
and they too will not bother you,
try being nothing
just be the ordinary you, and they will not notice,
even on the late hour of this night
they still have eyes only for themselves
within their circle
and you are still an outcast, simply because from the very
first day of this meeting
you are just being yourself
and you remain being so,
you have not become like them,
mimicking each other
into conformity
for fear of rejection, so at this hour of the night when they seem
to enjoy each other's likeness
get inside,
just be yourself and take your own kind of drink
your self-identity
your name that they will never know
when tomorrow
you will soon part and they will be themselves again
alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even The Best Chosen Words Cannot Tell.

i can sacrifice, once, twice, thrice,
or even to the nth time, one which you cannot count,
in the name of words, which ultimately boils down to

God, His Majesty,
his Omnipotence,
those were the reckless times, rushing to the sea, caressing the hair
with so much salt, and diving deep, learning how not to breath and yet
see the beauty, in complete silence,

where the self is lost away from everyone on the surface of
things,

i can always sacrifice, what i want to be, i can throw money to the river,
and see all these gone,
as i did once, in the name of poetry,
and our friendship,
in a certain place under the moon, beside the forest, upon the foot of hills, where
barehanded we embrace life at its utmost helplessness, and yet so complete with

nothing at all, naked, warm, deep,
fulfilled.

how do we make it happen? even the best chosen words cannot tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even The Petals Of The Flower

even the petals of the flower
holds the dew only for a short
moment like the passing wind
like us we also hold unto our
souls like petals of the flower
holding on to the morning dew
only for a short moment like
the passing wind like all of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is always time
for poetry
even if you see him in
court
even if the smoke rises
on the ceiling
even if fire razes a house
even if all the roofs fail
even if the rivers run dry again
even if continents sink
even if the oceans grow so fat
and like a monster
gobbles us all
into another waste
thrown into this
universe of
space.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Even Though I Walk In The Dark Valley: A Pantoum

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
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Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even When Sad

dis this coming
va loveys day
i will
focus on your
nails

make them
red

red as your lips
reddish as reddish can be
like your red heart
red blood
red love
red eyes
red thoughts like a revolution

that sadly lost
the flavor of victory

i will kiss your red nails
and bite them

on va loveys day
i will be stupid

like a clown with
big red lips
smiling even when
(sad).

RIC S. BASTASA
Even Without A Single Star In The Sky

i have learned to sleep soundly on an ocean of a night sky,
like a tiny fish on a bed of the ocean floor
without the protection of corals

i am a prey
to everyone's pleasure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even Without The Moon....

the day arrives
and gives you the sense
of blandness to what once
tasteful

spontaneously
you waited for this

you don't click anymore
and it is pointless to still

say the same words of
endearment over and over again

less its original meaning
and now, you announce to the sun

you are ready for the night
even without the moon
you shall dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even Without You

perhaps i have to ask myself
why i mumble
like no other restless bee
that i can be
in the twilight years
of my life

do i refuse to see light?

have i fallen in love with my
own darkness?

do i wish the blindness of
wisdom?

is wisdom blind?

is there light at the end of this tunnel?

am i in this tunnel?

i am in a room with only one window
and it faces the road
where everyone passes tonight

this is the only passage to their homes
and they simply pass by here

i make no sound
when i open these windows
when i close them
repeatedly

perhaps i exist and they know it
perhaps they only have respect for my silence

perhaps i am to blame for all these
perhaps i have chosen silence
its golden sheen
its private space

i am thinking, and that is the most important thing that is happening
in all my life

even without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Even....

this time
you have to be
candid

no lies, go
for plain
truths

i need to say
this: your cooking
is disappointing....

mine too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Even.....

when she leaves
she swears
she leaves nothing
not even a penny

we who listened
like it.
we too swear
not to like her.
when she leaves
we burn
everything
bridges and
memories.

this anger is
a burning fire.
it will be enough
even to cremate her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Closed Door

for every closed door
they say another window opens

so? now you do not have to walk
you must jump from this nth floor

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Day I Hone A Knife.

i have a stone. I make sparks.
And the knife gets sharper
and it even shines against
the sun.

everyday, i view the knife.
i have learned to love it.
I have nobody to stab.
I just like the art of honing
a knife. Its sharpness has
no use for me. It is just
having it and not using it
to do something bad.

And i tell you, this is art.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Drop

every dropp is precious
in my mind the trickle lingers

darkness in suspension
nothing bluish
plain cool breeze on my cheek

i walk
the directions are useless now

that i have found the joy
in your bosom

every dropp counts to form this
sweet syrup all dripping from the

kindness of your being
darkness too lovely to sip

the hours pass and
we are watching with all

content we are all alone
and quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Leak In Our Being...

how i wish i could escape,
and you tell me,

you may if you want to
she is never a door
to you,

you are a window without
a lock
a glass that looks out
to a scenery of
green and misty mountains
on a perfect
sunny day
of this stable house
this unshaken
pillar

how i wish i could be out of this cage,
and you tell me,

it is the cage of your making
your mind is inventing every bar

you close
something that is beaming with
the openness of freedom

you have painted all the furniture
with the colors of the forest
the cabinets with the color of the sea
the living room has become a flowing river
and the dining table
a frozen sun
the chairs have become shells
singing emptiness
to the amber sky
the roof whispers for the stories
about stars

she says, what more do you wish?
shall you destroy this placement
of our universe
some more?
what more would you ask?
do you ask the
impossible? you are blowing the
sirens of the
absurd

cool calm, do not rush
the hours
they are sleepy

you wish to leave?

please do, but before that
please try wearing my shoes
and tell me
if this place is not worth keeping
if there are no explanations
still that can
fill every hole in your mind
every leak
of our being
every wasted hour that lies helpless
on the face of the clock....

be the salt of my earth
stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Moment Every Color

i can be another person
through you
with your eyes as
mine
i can forget what
i have seen
from mine

will i be happier with what
i see?

i can always be a prism or
you can be mine

i look at you and pass through you
and then
the colors come and i shall love
it

every moment every color

but for how long? i am called by
by the voice of the wind
to be myself again

my eyes are tired but they are mine
this is home of age,
the house of debacle,
which i cannot piece out anymore
which is the door
and which is the floor

from where i come i shall return
for surely death is still the sweetest home

mourn for me
exude all the colors
my prism..
Every Morning

You are faithful to your morning
Prayers and your habit of
Having coffee first
After waking up

So the room smells of coffee
Fumes wafting
Settling to
My nostrils
As I pretend sleeping

You complain somehow
That this room
No longer smells
The pungent
Odors
of lovers

Of our common
Sweat drying because
We have overslept
Because we are so exhausted
each one
unattended.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Morning...

since you have become my habit
as you are my favorite
i shall not fail the day seeing you
and my heart begins to beat
my feet to dance and my mind
begins to fly
like swordfishes to the sky

but i have not forgotten the rules
i can only see you but never touch
i can only think of you but never hug
neither can i kiss your lips
i can only sleep back and dream
again and again

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Night That You Cannot Hold What You Love Most, You Always Go Into The Labyrinths Of Rationalization

love sometimes
is unrequited, and the best way to respond
to this matter
is to say that it is not love at all,

that this is just pure lust,
and every night that you cannot hold what you love most,
you always go into the labyrinths of rationalization,

this is not love, it is not love
how can love be like this?

at the end you arrive at the threshold of pain,
where pain is not pain anymore
but a lesson learned,

and you still keep on saying
proving to yourself that you are right

it was love, yes it was the purest of love felt,
but it was wrong and wrong is wrong
and nothing but wrong,

and you rest your head upon a pillow
beside no one,
declaring yourself as King

as survivor of the greatest misery of all,
love unrequited
as the king of love clapped by the pains
of the majority,

well, you ended it well,
you have a face, a body,
everything in you is intact
nothing diminished, nothing gained,
whole, and

still full of love, despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Poem Is About Herself And...

every poem, she likes to think, is about herself,  
and it is like a diary, that bares all 
what she is  
what she wants to be....

it is like she is dancing on the floor  
while we watch  
unbelieving that she can do such a thing...

she strips naked before our eyes  
and we close our eyes

the baby fat, the broken bone, the hanging abdomen  
the loose skin on the ribs,  
the elongated breasts suffering through all the years

i ask her if she can put back her dress  
she cries and then she leaves

i guess, that was her best poem ever written.  
sad, and finally departing like the hands on the boat  
on the economy class  
leaving  
looking for the land of promise  
searching for happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Step Every Memory

i have left everything
and do not really care what happens
every step had been taken
and now
i have no reason to look at every
memory
they're like the wind too
the comings and goings
are getting invisible to
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Tear You Shed For The Dead You Love

Reminds them of the earth people who love them
And the dead are now confused

To go or not to go
To finally leave and be full-fledged souls to the other world

Every tear confuses them
And you are so cruel, you shed so many tears

Enough for the dead to be restless and crazy,
Please stop crying, let the dead go, we just buried them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Every Time You Leave Me....

when you walk away
i inhale so much air
and feel the comfort of
the little space
that you have built
in the house

i mark all vacancies
and begin to paint the boundaries
from where you stand
the steps that slowly take their
exit from
the garden of
daffodils

how i wish to tell you
that i like this situation
when i am left and you are gone away
when i can think much
without so many distractions

your words on the wall
your thoughts hanging on the
china cabinet
your finger prints on every
empty cup

i think i could have been
free a long ago
without the benefit of
trials

on the breakfast table
i sit alone
and distinct from other mornings
with you
i turn off the TV
not wanting to hear any news
Everyday I Feel That I Am Slowly Buried

i try to wake up and rise from my lowly state
and every hour that you face me i feel like a small turtle
in my silence beside the still river and you speak and explain
and argue like the wind and the leaves and the clouds

everyday when i am with you i feel like am being buried everyday
layer and layer of sand and pebbles and stones and twigs
and branches and heaps of leaves
i am losing my art of breathing and i am beginning to accept the fact
that you have the capacity to lose me

the world shrinks and the river becomes deeper
the view around me is crowded and dark and i look for you
i call for you and you are no longer there

sometimes i need to redefine love when companionship loses the grip
of hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday I Wake Up

yes, and despite
or whatever i never tell
them what i feel,
there is no need
i am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday Is A Happy Day

here my stay shall be short
quality-wise
in the secret garden of my soul
i am singing
and then when the song is done
i go

it is as simple as that baby
i call it life
and life some more after

not here with you
with them out there on another kind of party

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday Is A New Painting Of New Masks And Layer Of New Beginnings

to live inside a locked
door
a closed window and then
just be the self that you are
and then to own your silence
and when everything is savored
to open the windows and the door again
to be another self
as one joins the rest members of the house
for a wholesome breakfast on conversations
that you simply let pass from one ear to the other.

everyday is a new painting of new masks
and layer of new beginnings

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday Is A Poem To Me

the people i love
and talk to, in some ways, do not talk
candidly, perhaps because of too much love, not really unspoken
because they want to hide it,
it is just because, i know, there are no exact words
to describe
what they feel,

it is
the same with me, feelings thriving but the inability to speak
is there, and so we use such symbols as a touch
of the hand
or a blush on the cheek, or some fingers landing at the back
of our soft skins

one need not say what longing and loving is
the lips have more to say
in fact, than the words coming from the mouth
or the mere
laying of her head on my shoulders

oh, the hug and that gaze and the clasping of my hands
to her hands,
such sensitivity that makes us feel
every rising of the hair

not in fear, but in the absence of letters fit
for the feeling

breakfast together
and then the parting and meeting again
tonight

they are all metaphors

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday Is A Special Occasion

with you
everyday is a special occasion
a celebration
so i wear my best polo shirt
and you serve me
the best breakfast in town
we hide nothing precious
you serve all the special things
for us
so when we die
no one laughs at us
for keeping things with
all dusts

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyday Is One Day More

yes one day more
another day another pain
another sorrow another rain

it is this waiting of the big day
that keeps us waiting
for the big day

what is it really that we are waiting for?
what is that big day?
i do not mean death. It is night.
i speak about the big day
when light comes to
defeat darkness
i speak of joy and bliss and happiness
when they come
and make a feast
because i we have become
triumphant
because we have conquered this darkness
because we have finally understood
the reason of sorrow
the purpose of pain
the justifications that like naked truths are still
dressed with the confusions of our mind

the big day comes sooner
and then we shall all be free!

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyone Is As Beautiful As One Can Possibly Be

well, you ask,
if everyone can be as beautiful
as possibly one could be, and i

say, yes, and i add, that everyone
can be as humorous as one could
possibly be, it all depends on how

you would like to be,
just like a very lively party, one could be
as lively as one could possibly be

and think one as beautiful as a
possibility, and then
way back home, when you are all alone,

you shed tears, and listen to the sound
of reality.

that is also a possibility. well, i tell you
you can be real this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
his ending (whatever that is,  
but swear to God, you know it 
too well like the back of your 
hand) 
is definitely not like yours 
or that of everyone, 

it is an ending which is  
a real ending, no traces, no memorials,  
no tombs, no landmarks,  
no note, no memories, 

it reverts back to there was never  
ever a man here,  
he was never here even for once  
and he has no name, 

no one shall remember where he was once 
or what once he did, 

it is like a poem that you write and which you seem  
to like and even want to save but then you finally 
decided to delete it and so what appears  
finally is a blank wall 

your eyes are disappointed because what you see  
stops there and when you close your eyes 

everyone is dead. You 
are included.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyone Is Worth Dying For....

for here we are
as we must
teach them all the
right things:

albert says it all,
in this absurd world
no matter what no matter
how, no one is worth
killing, everyone

who still breathes,
is worth dying for.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyone Under The Same Situation

you are always afraid
to tell anybody that you are dying

perhaps you are simply respecting
them for their mutual silence

you know too well that you are into
the same situation

you are settled upon a conviction that
there is no need

everyone has a way to end living
after having earned

time to believe that after all nothing
is worth the hassle

happiness has become an illusion and
lament and grief have become too real

as forms of dressing up for the
next stable and glorious occasion.

RIC S. BASTASA
births and unbirths
life and death, massacres and adoptions
pregnant women and death of old deserted people
the rise to power
the fall of dictators
the numbness of the people
the hope that others give for free
the lust and passion
the love and hate and indifference and succor
whatever, whatever, whenever, whoever
all these
do not happen in random
all is written
and all is fulfilled
God and demons
angels and cockroaches
lice and tadpoles
cocoons and snakes,
all these happen for a reason
we too
and them
those who believe and those who do not
all these happen
because they are meant to be

and so i watch and stand and sit and think and let all these go
accept and smile and sleep and dream and then die

all these happen for the reason
and i therefore, do not worry
there are always reasons
and so i no longer ask why.

i am now, the silent spectator.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Fades, Nothing Lasts.

there are so many things,
treasures
if you please, a house, a resort
Sundays, and
Fridays,

there are places of the heart
where love used
to reign,

so many ideas, great ones,
building you an edifice of a name,
blazing lights that
announce
fame and the concomitant
fortune,

there are so many friends,
real ones too, but time is laughing
there is nothing serious
to speak of,
nothing to make you last forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything From The Beginning

everything from the beginning
has always been right with you
the way you smile at me
the first time you touch my hair
and caress my back with your
gentle massage
everything has always been
fulfilling
the way you cook the meals
and arrange the flowers
the way you clean the room
and keep the broom

there is no reason why we must
part.
tell me, why? please.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Has Meaning

the floor give meaning to the ceiling
the shore to the sea
the moon to the night sky
the sun to the earth
and man in between and woman
around the arms of man
and the dog amidst them

there is meaning to everything
and to everyone, and the important conclusion is inevitable

there is meaning in you.
decorate this meaning with a smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Here Exits

we mourn for those
who exits ahead of us
in that Door of the
Great Divider

sometimes i think

that those who arrive
there
also mourn for us
who are left here

we who are in the bitterness
of greater pains

of incoming miseries
of ever pinning pains

they wish that we are
there with them

but they can never tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rianne, you evolve somehow
You must know, how you started
Your first lines with something
Like the womb of your mother
Some classical music
And nursery lines recited
Even before you are born

And then you talk about
Papa and mama and their loving hands
The male guitar the female voice
And tender fingers and rosy cheeks
And some babbles on the cradle

You grow up and talk about love
And the opera and some applause
Remembering the phantom songs
And the labyrinths of the heart
A little complication now
A grudge of some little prisons
And some birds wanting to be free
From a golden cage

Then Rianne I anticipate something
Sooner you will learn my language
Of happiness and bliss and wandering
To the sea, the one with a beginning
And seemingly without an end

How I decided to swim be like a fish
And be with the corals of the deep
How I like to have fins and codes
Deep down the far oceans to other continents
How I like some things far away
How I like never coming back
Because there is so much out there
And everything I once owned and claim to own
Have all become exhausted
RIC S. BASTASA
Everything In Poetry Is Allowed

everything in poetry is allowed
so much sweat had been wasted
so many words alienated from their own meanings
on the issue of which is true poetry

even of that
let me state once more that everything in poetry is allowed
whatever is it that comes from your mouth
that slips from your lips
becomes a poem by the intensity of your intention

today my mouth gives birth to bees
and i am telling you a poem is a swarm of bees
like a set of hands spreading some prayers

tonight i shall dream of words escaping from my mouth
i see them as snakes singing
oh, i see, i am telling you a poem is a choir of snakes hissing a song
(do you really imagine that? am i not a little bit weird?)

i never tire giving birth to words, and images, and metaphors
and a poem never gets weary like the insomniac still not wanting to sleep

oh, i see, you too must have words like these
those that never sleep, you see? what a poem can be?

a poem is a set of sleepless words, smoking at night, looking over the window,
naked, like a very beautiful woman, looking for love.

you want things to make connections? hmm, don't be silly, some connections do not seem to be
takes time, sometimes, takes even death upon one's self, to see the light.

but don't you worry, whatever is it, becomes a poem by the intensity of your affections.

RIC S. BASTASA
you must notice that everything in you seems to be wrong
your arms are shouting violence
and your mouth carries the venom of the snake
and keeps on spitting
and your eyes carry the knives of serial killers
stabbing anyone that comes your way
your body is twisted and your feet crawl like this centipede
your hands have become scorpions
looking for something to bite in the desert of your heart
and then you laugh like thunder and you touch people like lightning

and you finally find yourself alone like it were the very first day of creation
complete darkness without any light
without water and earth
just this cosmic chaos and you tell yourself

i am so lonely and i am laughing and this is pretty bad.

who in your world would like to live with you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is A Structure. Always, And Always With A Function.

everything is a structure
of walls, and divisions, and perforations,

and meetings. This morning, a venetian blind
and a screen window play a house and a fence.

sunshine is a visitor. It has hands and it touches
the skin of my face. I feel warm

and this runs over my body like a child playing
in the park

There is no crowd yet. I can feel the fall of
memories on my hair.

The sun filters itself. It says something restrained.
There is a process. Nothing is as abrupt as
disrespect.

The world is a gentleness of light and body,
Fences can do nothing. Walls break away.

The heart grows like a dough of home
made bread.

Baked, the world wakes to a certain flavor of life.
Like this bread. It spreads its scent
all over the kitchen, enters my door, and then

gets inside me. The air bows down.
It has done what it is tasked to do.

everything is a structure.
always, and always with a function.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is Exactly Inexact

at the end you weigh me again
i lack some points on the scale
a shortage of what you put in there
from the very start, i grieve
but it is late, i try to justify that
everything when they end
is exactly inexact by reason
of some unexplained feelings
and overspent emotions, yet
you are not convinced and you
shake your head and you said

'next! '

i grieve yet it is too late, at the
end there shall be no more
forgiveness that i once had
on this place of this earth

regret always comes late.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is Still Alright

when you arrive
dinner is served
and we have a drink
of some bottles of beer
we have some desserts
and you say you love
every part of it
the longer nights
matched with our
conversations
we laugh a lot
and then you have
your bed and bath
warm as you describe them

two days and we tell you
have some more
and then you leave us
everything is alright

despite the fact that you
forget to say
thanks

perhaps you will justify
we never ask for it
at any rate we shall always say
welcome

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is Still The Same

what is written on paper
is a prescription, i am trying
to draw some images that
lead to
creation and not
to self-destruction

last night another crazy
decision is cast
before he did it
he writes a note: when reason for life is lost,
life is lost

when someone tells you, Life is worth living
the other side also evokes it. Life is not worth living anymore.

No one can be of help. Each one is
drowning too.

Others are merely on the start of the journey
taking a big knapsack of provisions,
a partner beside, and some children's hands to hold,

in the middle of the journey
some hands lose grip, children become grown-ups and take
their separate paths,
separate lives,
more ideas, clashing views, wars within,

to an extreme you finally find yourself alone
and you are now at the top of the mountain where it gets to snow as well
it is cold, and you hear no sound except the howling of the wind
and sounds of wild dogs

and then it gets too dark,
you warm yourself with your fire, your thick clothes
and make a tent, and sleep

some are gone
the following morning
it is hard to think
how they manage
to jump
instead of coming back and telling
the good story
of the comeback

sometimes it is better to just stay
on the plains
do nothing and just wait

let the seasons come and go
and simply be an observer, and then
write about it.

everyone dies anyway.
less pressure, less pain,
and everything is still the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is Stinking.

raffy
you are spilling
all those
red beans,

do you expect
me to pick them
all?

who likes beans?
you?
as i told you
i am leaving, and

you are busy,
and you have the best
killer gun in
this town

leave the beans
let them grow and

fill this empty
world with more beans

red beans, red beans
all over

raffy you close
your mouth

this world
is already polluted

everything is
stinking.
Everything Is Temporary You Know

nothing, nothing
is ever permanent, &
so when i kiss you
i always,
always remind myself
that in another
moment it can be another
usual parting,
sweetest when
as early as dawn
after the hug
and the warmth
all night,
i begin to compare
it with
pain duly accepted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Is Yours

FINDING IGGY

first he finds the sun
and looks at it directly
for a while and was blinded
seeing red all over
inside his
retina and then recovers and
finds composure
to God again

and then everything is God
the bird, the stalk, the bud,
the sea, and moon and stars,

so many gods in one
God

but that is not just that
he finds God in misunderstanding
and chaos
and all those sorts of things

spark plugs, and bent spoons,
unused canes, wheelchairs,
electric bills,
unpaid mortgage,
low salaries, overworked bodies,
unschooled kids,
missing keys, rusty doorknobs,

abandoned houses,
houses of ill-repute,
strip teasers, ermita escapades, .
cheap motels,

cheating taxi drivers, broken pens,
and so on and so forth
and like Iggy, he finally rests his weary head upon the bosom of the endless earth, saying:

To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Small

feet will be short and hands so fragile that may even break with
the force of your whisper everything small like tight buds a voice in between two
silk cloths tightly folded in ten layers of

silence and indifference

unreadable
syllables, that to you sound so cute and so lovely
small soft thought ike fingers of a new born brother

your father walks to and fro
in the house 27 years ago, like a pendulum counting time
wasting thought

going nowhere, when he died, he said
did you doubt him? that boy he never looks like me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Tastes Bitter

Come what may
The usual cannot be embraced anymore
It is the unusual that delights
My mind & senses

Extraordinary senses
Unidentified

My taste buds getting
Uncertain which is salt

Which is sweet?
Which is sour?

Rehabilitate my tongue
Everything tastes bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Unfolds The Way They Want To

delamar comes to me by the shore
folding and unfolding and folding and unfolding
wave after wave
ripple after ripple
like the way they all want to

i just watch
i do nothing
everything is just fulfilling
and fulfilling and fulfilling and coming and coming and going and going

i just watch and i do nothing
i can do nothing
they are just doing and going and coming and fulfilling

RIC S. BASTASA
Everything Were Symbols

in the garden of Eden
the apple, the snake,
Adam and Eve
and God

and why do we ask
if the apple was actually
an apricot, or that the snake
was not a cobra but a boa,
or that
Adam and Eve were actually
humans

or that God exists
or that indeed there was
really this garden of Eden?

ey they are all symbols
all figuratively speaking
metaphors of this
divinity and mortality
entwined

ey they are matters of
the heart
and why not let them
just be as they are

in our hearts, in our hearts
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Everytime A Poet Is Killed

every time a poet is killed
and buried
unceremoniously on some
hidden ground

it is there where you see
purple flowers blooming on a patch
of earth
beside it
a singing river runs
seeking final refuge to the
Great Blue Sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Everytime I Go Out Of The House

always i check
if i have
my cellphone in my
front shirt
pocket
my pen and my
small white
stationery
something to
write
just in case a new
idea comes
along

neat and clean
and ready always
for an
emergency

all the days of my life
i think my life should be that way

except perhaps
the unhappy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
Everytime I Look At You

such a feeling
though i have no wings of the bird
i know i can fly

such a high state of my
mind
my heart begins to have the wings
of the bird
flying to the skies

such a foolishness
i pinch myself
this is going absurd
since you are not here
such a stupidity of my
imagination going berserk
such pain
making me fear the light
such darkness
humiliating my own little light
left flickering
and with a slight blow of the
hush from the dusts of the curtain

dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Everyting Is Interrelated

the tip of my toe
and the tip of my hair
have a connection
and in their connection
through a secret conversation
they are talking
about me on a sickness
that extends to the sea
towards the sky
beyond the limits
of the understanding
of the silent space

RIC S. BASTASA
Evidence

for one thing
that only evidence you
have is the
certainty inside
your mind

no blood samples
no dead body

where is the knife
that you have been dreaming of?

RIC S. BASTASA
Evolution

used to be plain
understandable instructions
like a manual
of what to do
when the times get rough
or when so in love

and you like it
others say it is so obvious
and to the taste
buds, numbing and to the
nerves so boring

and then time has a way of
feeding you
its evolutionary coping up
mechanisms

from a mole you
turn things into a hill

a tadpole to a whale
a breeze to
a storm

no rules now
no guides to follow suit
just plain
rambling like a boat tossed
by the stormy sea

and deep down under
the sea
this sinking comes like
a true
phenomenon

corrals and fish and
electric eels
and ocean floors

mermaids dance
and some Britons
a Triton

a palace under the
sea
Atlantis reborn

now, it is you so different
and yet so equipped

and so misunderstood
like a river without banks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ex

to the one we love
that we desire we always remember the specific

hard to forget
really: the mere touch of the hand
scent never leaves from the palm
the nearness of the breaths
there is still fire burning
crackling popcorn nearby

that time where you were seated near
at the park
in one of those benches
facing the road

the smell of the pines still
sticking in your nose
the laughter of children
playing

that exact bench that spot
where you left
the mark

the feel of wood
the color of the wind
the taste of that ice cream on the
crispy cone
that orange sunset and then the neon lights
that started to flicker
like stars in the sky
that evening

the sadness of departure
finally

oh, it made you stronger.
Except

I too, will be with thieves, and slanderers
And robbers, embezzlers, child molesters,
Rapists, prostitutes, and murderers
Today,
Listening
Patiently listening, like a father to sons & daughters on a big family,
I will be with them, hearing their woes, and
Worries, and cries, and
Lies,

I was born to listen to all of them,

Except for the tax collectors,
For whom, Christ with Zaccheus, once ate
Long time ago.

Today, all of them have been absolved of their sins,
Now they ride in flashy cars,
Live in their own mansions
These tax collectors,

Except
All those above enumerated, all the people
Still pay them their taxes, feeding them, sheltering them,

As I today, shall hear all their woes & cries
But mostly, lies and more lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Except For One Thing......

she puts the pudding on the table

she says
do not eat it

she arranges the bed pillows and blankets

do not sleep
here she quips

she puts order in the living room

upkeep all the knives and ladles

then i put my shoes and open the door

she says something which i hear clearly

i follow everything except for one thing....

RIC S. BASTASA
'What is your favorite dish, grandad?'
'All of them, my son. It's a great sin to say this is good and that is bad.'
'Why? Can't we make a choice?'
'No, of course we can't.'
'Why not?'
'Because there are people who are hungry.'

I was silent, ashamed.
My heart had never been able to reach that height of nobility and compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Excerpt,  A Grammatical Lapse Corrected....

a long time
and now here you are with all these gray hairs,

and you confess
that at this age all that you want to do is listen

it is unlikely that you write
for there will be more corrections and it will really take
a whole lifetime to
finish and
remove all these errors

RIC S. BASTASA
Excerpt: Correction Of An Enigma

i am lost in the symbols
of humanity,

i am trying to decipher again
the meaning of their visit
and their
decision to spend the night here
at the second floor of this house
where my father-in-law died because his
son pushed him towards the stair
and hit his head
on the grinding stone

RIC S. BASTASA
Excerpt: The Magma

the natives are smelling so badly
saliva dries on their lips
they rub carabao manure on their bodies
and put
a dead beetle on their navels

there is no water in the river where they come from
it was taken by thirsty fish towards the
China sea

ey they are thin
i mean their children who only eat
buds of
the guava tree

their stomachs are filled with air
their
hairs with lice

i guess you know when this happens
and why this happens

because, it is fiesta time
and there is no more road for us to use
because the more important figures
are busy playing
deaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
Exclusivity....

the selfishness abounds
in the picture

a mom coddles her dad
and only daughter beside a landscape
of tulips

for it's springtime and
freshness is everywhere

the cameras click
and some people not close to the family have to be driven saying

'excuse me, can you move out from there'

family picture, eh?

there exists this feeling of being
excluded

somehow it sometimes gives you the feeling
of correctness

the selfishness of others
begin always with the exclusivity of their newly found families

grandads and grandmoms
have no place in there

even dads and moms
and nephews and nieces

they have become strangers in their
exclusive paradise

and then when the ask
because sometimes poverty too attacks their solidarity

why bother? what the heck?
you have your own private life too
inside your room with your books and lamplight

your bankbook is all yours
and you too have no place for those who are in future need
solitary
you too is an exclusivity
and they too
have no place reserved by you
your room is just enough
your future all yours
your hands are too small
your voice always your own
you do not want anyone to hear it
even in this
poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Excuse Me Adria

excuse sa ko
kay mangihi ko
kaihi ko ug kinatawa

babay babaye
nga mabaw ug
botlu

(ha ha ha)

Hopelessly devoted to You

na ang sunod nga kanta
sa akong windows

watch what happens
this time i will be sweeter
saving all my love for you
misty
too shy to say
i wont last a day without you
i'll have to say i love in a song

mati sa ko
undang sa ko himo poems

tan-awa ang mga panganod
sa ibabaw sa kamad-an

para sa mga bisdak
always be cool

RIC S. BASTASA
Exercises

by analogy any unused muscle
finds retaliation through an ache
and so you have it massaged.

in the same manner is the word
and the letters
in the same behavior you shall
find thoughts

you know their revenge and you
must know how to handle it.

how can you un-think? try it.
how can you not write? how can you
keep mum?

unless you know how to practice
sleeping and then death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Exhaustion

it is now 9 o'clock in the evening
and here i am driving this maroon car
back home alone

on a three-hour lecture one gets
exhausted somehow
i feel the bones clinging
each to each like being held by
some pieces of strings
some may fall away but i held
up to some hope of a cartilage
and muscle and skin
for a wrapping

it is raining hard again
and the night is as dark as ever
the street lamps are off
another blackout happens
as often as this place is
poverty stricken and infested
with political leaders with
nothing in mind but how
to amass more wealth
for themselves and
their kin and relatives

i have always been a teacher
and perhaps will always be
a thinker forever
trying to figure things
how this country may have
a stable name
a stronger sense of
a confident self

plain thoughts,
political theories and some
speculations for economic possibilities
some questions roaming
and still without any hint
of an answer

i talk to myself again
this country will always be poor
because its leaders are making it so
these people will always be duped
because they remain gullible
this country has nowhere to go
like the boat of the El Filibusterismo
it will simply rotate and collide
with the whirlpools of its nightmares
arriving at the ports of nothing

the rain stopped and i am now
at the red gate of an old house
the bushes wantonly growing
stretching their branches
to a dark sky

the gate opens and profuse
light comes out from an
opening

a brown dog comes out
and barks announcing the
arrival of a very tired master

it is I, this political professor
coming out from a worn-out car
and this is my house
infested with worms slowly eating
every part every wood
this house needs another year
for it to finally fall

my wife comes out from
her room and kisses me
and she asks ' how about dinner? '
' i am not hungry, all i need is sleep' i said
with my shoes on
i lay in bed. My eyes close. I like to dream
about God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Exhortation

i dare not talk
something bad about

Siddhartha
or Jesus
or Mohammad

what they did
when they suffered and
sacrificed

we cannot fathom
since we were not there
in the first place in
their own time and
place

their steps and
ends

they deserve
what respect time had
given them

never had i felt
that sense that i can be greater
by saying
that they lied or
that they are never
true

or that possibly
they could have
said otherwise

or that
they are not
existing anymore
or once
existed as you
tried to imply
in your last
line.

whether we like it or not
God is there
and does
not change

it is this immutability of
this belief
that keeps me going
and going

though i am not certain
why and where.

RIC S. BASTASA
Existence First, Then Essence

take a stone,
from the beginning it was
a stone in form
and color and smell

and stone to stone
it shall be stone
unless you take it
in your hand
and keep it warm
in the hold of your palm
and take it home with you

you talk to it
and then it becomes
beyond itself

now
it is not just a stone
but your beloved
your lover

you will discover
that its silence also speaks
in tongues

RIC S. BASTASA
Fenced carabaos of this Agricultural college Thrive on limited spread of grass
Man-made They look forward To angles and rows of green hills and valley And
clear flowing creeks To the other side The white herons, (wild ducks, sparrows,
and mayas)
Fly above trees and (daffodils) And land on paddies with flecks Of surface mud
fishes and tadpoles and mosquito larvae

I see The sparrows rest In flocks Lining up On electric cables Or Power Lines
Watching army Worms and golden shells (kuhol) etching slowly, eating green
greedily On rice and grass stalks

An owl hovers (the late owl, where was it last night?) On the island of twigs On
an old mango tree (balding & ugly & dying)

No wonder The white herons (about twenty in all, I counted them patiently on
digital cam) taunt The carabaos (muddy and thin as grasses were cut and
cleaned by ROTC cadettes on Sundays, I can’t rationalize why the grass
population be reduced) fenced On a limited supply of Manmade grass and
Growth controlled

They wing finally when I got near them Lightly like blown leaves
This February wind And land on Carabaos’ backs Gleaning for lice Feasting on
some pecking and swallowing & pecking again

Thriving on carabaos’ Hairs and skin some creatures though still

On the other side of the landscape A thin brown, woman With a buri hat And a
rattan basket on one hand and a sack on the other Leans over A dry ricefield
Gleaning for leftovers of palay

Beside her but not that really near The man drives the white herons Away to the
other side of the island of banana trunks
Then he goes to the carabaos Their wet noses tied to an abaca roof and tied
again to the cemented posts of this accredited agricultural college spreading
about two hectares of stupidity

The questions about lice and herons and carabaos and grasses
And golden snails, tadpoles and mud fishes and sparrows died
The lice are free Feeding away from The eating white herons
They have flown away since then to the other side of my world

By now the flock of Sparrows On the electric cables or power lines Wing their way
To a farther town as I leave them fast for lack of time for shortness of
serendipity for lack of interest

There are pebbles inside my shoes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Existences...

with or without
words, even when all those
who record
the annals of history
disappear from view
everything turning
to dust
air sucked by the black
holes of this universe
even when
no one sees and says
what we have
or once
existence will always
be there
independent of the
talker
it was there
we were not there
anymore

the ruins you know
shall always speak
for themselves
even when we are gone
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Exodus 19: 2 - 6, (A Reflection)

our ancestors once lived in the wilderness
encamped before a mountain

God has taken them away
from slavery and poverty
on eagle's wings
to Himself

He built them a house
for them to be priests among nations
a Holy Nation,

and then
they have forgotten

their violence begets a thousand other
violence
and the killing and dying and chasing and blaming
seem to be
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Expand Time: Rarefaction

compress a spring
and release it

each wave
c Travels

we get narrower
with time
and steepen
into shock waves

RIC S. BASTASA
Expat Escape...

when you post a love poem
or another picture of yours in intimate embrace
with another man
in another scene
when you think that it is a wise choice
to be happy and not mind
what is happening in the other side of the world
when you post another selfie with your
Cheshire cat smile
inspired by that Alice in Wonderland
i must confess i am deeply saddened
by that choice
i guess, i must have been just hypocritical
in this morning haze
but just the same i wish you all the love
and the grace
i wish you are happy with all your hopes
for that final escape
towards an exit away from us
i wish you are gone for good
we are mourning here and you do not fit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Expect That In The Garden Of Love

expect that in any garden of love
there is always that snake,
that apple,

that disobedience to a certain degree
the driving away and then
the final redemption

the ignorance that was.

RIC S. BASTASA
Expectations

Sane enough
expect nothing,

a river cannot
divide itself, neither
can a waterfall
cease flowing,

expect nothing,
on the other hand,
nothing is
always a beautiful
mystery

the much talked
urchin in philosophy.

no one is sane
enough not to
know it. It is
in fact, us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Expectedly

houses are strong
and well insulated
in your
hinterland

but mine is on top
of the hill
kissed by the sun

it is open to the
air
they come and go
and come again

this is the house without
doors and stairs
a house deprived of
windows
and peeping holes
and cracks and
slits

this is the house of the
sun
the earth loves it
its body attached
to the grass

it has no pillars
but trees
no roof but clouds
no walls but spaces

RIC S. BASTASA
Expecting Nothing From Each Other...

at that point when you
tell the world that
you expect nothing from it

it tells you
exactly
the same thing
like an echo
from a cave

'i expect nothing
from you
too'

it is fair, you must admit
you must admit, it is but fair enough...

RIC S. BASTASA
Experienced

once ascetic, one jumps to an experimentation of life
giving up to passion, maximizing the sensuality of the flesh
enjoying the fulfillment of every dream of lust
catering to all amorous adventures
following the flow of every impulse of the glands
without any fear, taking in whatever is wanted
to fortify the will of the mind less the spirit
and having learned all these through a first hand experience
one can say at the end
' i was there, and it was good, and it was enough'

now back to myself again.
alone. strong. powerful. knowledgeable.
after evil, the good prevails
as always.

back to purity. wash and clean
the past.

RIC S. BASTASA
Experiences

on a train to Sucat
2 o’clock in the morning
on an emptiness
of the seats the man
gives a stare
to me,

tired to respond
i look at another direction
his gaze is looking for
something
begging and this i cannot
give
for i have no means
no courage

the train arrives at the station
i got out
taking my fast steps
not looking back

even if the man falls dead
drunk upon his longings
love he had none
i have no reason to help
him stand

for i too is seeking, begging
like him
last night, i too fell off the
canal of my
decency, no one helped me
stand
they take a single look and
went their own way
as though
this world is cold and numb
to what happens
everywhere.
Experimental

nowadays, a word gets bored, and it tries to invent what yet you have not heard or seen no outline no color as you imagine like blue and white and red, just a sheen of a ray of light coming from outside passing through a stained glass and then the choir sings

alleluia! alleluia!

you wonder what is it: a bat or a dove or just plain image of any bird lost inside the dome of the church of Christ,

then the shadows come ghosts of transparencies not haunting just letting themselves be

before you awed, and wondering

white wings halos, and feathers angels,

alleluia! alleluia!
you are one quizzical
look against the whitewashed walls

one look, one confused word
trying to be
sort of one kind of
religious.

let us see, the old man
says it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Experimentation

do not pick the words
let the word pick you

do not think let thinking
think for you

do not move
let the movement move in you

do not even think of the logic
in metaphors
there is no logic in them

eye are the geese coming one spring
lots of noise moving in one direction

landing in your backyard
staring at the window looking for you

you see the world has a life of its own
do not ever think do not ever signify

the world moves, twirls, spins, collides
in you and you are shocked surprise at this

kind of phenomenon
the world hands you what you have been dreaming

you are its only child
and she introduces herself as your only mother

her grass is your cradle
her trees your friends her rocks your company

her clouds your travel and transition
her sun her moon her stars

they are all yours now
resting in the lines of your palms
be glad then
now you are so complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Experimentations

i am fond of experimentation o!
i dramatize even small emotions those like dots and dashes
on the street where cars and buses are so confused about who i am, , ,
a line, a question mark running off
the road
siding and hiding with the shallowness of emotions at times
o! i mean nothing to you O! you mean nothing to me!
o! my fingers play with the ring
o! my tongue lashes like the whips of weathered words
stairs rise! moons collide turn into pieces of meteorites!
stardusts! jupiter rings! volcanic craters!
o! you look for a meaning of your life!
o! loser! come! come! run! run run run run keep running away!
you are the ruined bust of greatness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Experimentations Of The Cat Who Has Nine Lives

the cat who had nine lives
experimented on
different
death styles, and now that
it has only one life to live
it gets into too much caution
the last one
must be memorable and
deserving of its
last breath.

RIC S. BASTASA
Explain?

It is you who needs to explain
Everything

You did not write the correct
Name and
Since then everything went
Wrong.

The world turned upside down

We cannot tolerate this
Bat lifestyle.

Self-styled urine drinking
And inverted thoughts

Not my life, not my world.
Go away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Explaining Poetry

How can I ever explain poetry?
To a child it would be easy
Eenie minee minee moe
Catch the monkey by the toe

Jack and Jill
Went up the hill
To get a pail of water
Is a poem easily understood by
A child

But to an adult
How can I ever explain poetry?
Can I explain it with a straight
Look in the eye
And I will tell him
Poetry Is looking a person straight in the eye

Yes you have only one more day to live?
Can I explain it to him
Like I have a gun and point it straight to his head
And say
Yes poetry kills and it kills you in a minute
And for free?

Or can I explain poetry to him
Like I am on the tenth floor of this building
And I tell him I am so problematic
And all I have to do is
Jump and kill myself
And he would be there
To tell me
Life is beautiful
There is reason to live
That I am loved
That many people still care
That I have a mission
That I have lots of good things to do
That this world has meaning
That I am the child of this universe
That I am no less than the trees and the stars and that by all means
I have the right to be here

That poetry can save
That poetry is one saving person holding one back to his senses
that poetry is hope, love, kindness
it has no word for hate
it does not kill
or enslave
or annihilate
Poetry is a decision
Not to jump.
That is poetry to me
And as an adult he must understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Explicitly

there is dignity in what you do
makes man a king
you go to earth and open your mouth
letting in the quintessence of manhood
think of humanity
without this the world would be so many
swallow that pride of masculinity
inside your grace and kindness
accommodate this offer
man and woman entangled
tendrils so entwined
let no bud turn into a flower
let there be no fruit
for that is what they wanted

RIC S. BASTASA
Explore
explore
all the paths

find the meaning
of each labyrinth

there are shades
of light
from the prism

of our existences
life, death
rebirth

we do not die
all at once

do not deny
pleasure
welcome the pain
and be
freed from the prison
of the tentacles
of dread
and joy

live now and be too kind
for the truths
of love and hate
lust and pleasure

there is not a single
path reserved
for those who really
love every moment

dripping dropping
water and dew
on leaves
rivers rushing
to the sea and rain
always falling
for more
pleasure to the
earth

always there are openings
find them
always there are pleasures
try them

explore this world
of desire
for this is the gateway
to the holiness
of our soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Exploring My Thoughts

upon itself the thought
reflects
upon a thought

like an image in a mirror
my face looks upon
itself and my hands touch
my hands

upon itself the self
breathes and catches life
to itself

there is life and there is motion
there is this emptiness
that looks upon a sky
down upon itself

like a cup still dreaming
of the rain

there is this air that moves
in space
like an infusion of breath
upon your mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
Externals....

outside i hear murmurs
of children, shouts of mature men
calling their women,
sweeping the yard of dry leaves
from trees of last night's
storms

i hear screeching sounds of
cars heading to the city
rushing
as though they are always
late for
appointments

the school bus carries the
teeming sounds of
kindergarten kids whose mothers
keep on saying
God bless you all and i

who is supposed to be at work
in my cubicle
just a stone throw away from
where i am seated
still keeps on tracking voices
that cover the inner voice
of my longings

it is frail and fading
and humming and still wanting
to conceal the true notes
of its song

e.e. Cummings, it says,
it wants, the rhythm
of comings, but i must have been
in the wrong direction
for a long while now
i have always focused on the
ambulant sounds
of departures
loud and deep at first
and then
fading and thin
like a needle finally
dropping on the
hay floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fabricators....

oh yeah
i have spoken
i use a basket of words
like flowers
of assortment in different colors
and scents

oh yeah
i try to please you with dew
and wafts of winds

but you know everything about me already
and it was disgusting

you try to draw a tiny smile in your lips
but it is hard
to lie
you find it hard to forge happiness
and it is
so disgusting

oh yeah
i am an expert former of words
to deceive
the paper

but what can i do
i am not authorized to end the show
and neither you
who need me not because you honestly love me

it is sad
but this is life and life must move on
like a face
shameless to the crowd

the hand knows what to do
one by one take away the lips, the eyes, the nose
the face becomes a wall
where we both hide
like children away from
their cruel
stepfather.

RIC S. BASTASA
Face Of The Night

red lips white teeth
a smile a hug
room No.
6

RIC S. BASTASA
you need a face lift
but that would be too abrupt and expensive
you need a little distance
from friends and even foes
you're too good to be true
and God does not even recognize you
so you need a face lift
to shorten your nose a bit
and lengthen your short eyebrows
tighten your cheeks
and give your forehead lesser glow
there is a need for more changes
to make you real
so you may survive
the surprises of your oppressors
you need some scissors
to cut their sensors
take your break
you need to be bleak
don't be so cool
you need to be cruel
sometimes perhaps
too much goodness
makes the mess

RIC S. BASTASA
Face To Face With A Lotus

fRONTING THE
defunct Presidential Palace
Ho Chi Minh
lies the Lotus
just beside the majestic old
stairs

that time it was blooming
and i waited for the rest who climbed the palace
since i had to confront the
Lotus

It speaks too about my
loneliness
my triumphant survival
towards
another ponderous
solitude
oh my, i do not miss anyone
anymore
i rise above the mud
float on the water
and look to the sky
talk in the silence of
God...

RIC S. BASTASA
Face Value...

we accept the value of our front faces, whatever that is, we oblige on the premise that no man is an island we continue with the facts of our exitence you are facing me and i oblige with silence, a smile, a nod, and some common responses which by all standards are acceptable, no dice, no odds, not evens, no ifs and buts, then the time for departure comes like an expiration of a meeting and we admit another survival between us nothing really important is happening the usual casualness of of bonding it is like saying something without expecting what to know and understand it is like getting in a bus or a train and our eyes focus on the changing sceneries outside like a flashcard of different lives and then we arrive at our destinations we disembark all of us taking nothing but ourselves again and what to do when we meet the real people
of our lives where the sense of home is
once again entertained,
here, we say nothing much
but we mean and we are understood at once
without much fuss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Facebook Chatter

so many questions
and so many answers to choose from
can't decide yet
which one

but there is an answer hidden in your hair
your eyes speak them for me
i am restless
i need it now to calm me down
to dispel the questions
with only one answer from you
tell it to me gently
and then touch
me with your lips
my silence is always unfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Facebooking

had the chance of meeting Kaye
still at the agriculture department
no promotion yet happy
nothing new really except
this meeting

me too, nothing new, except
this conversation
of who what where when

then we stop
as it is time to go
the office closes at five pm
and we have to find
our way home

it will be dark
and there will be dinner with the family
then we watch tv
after being tired we turn it off
sleep
then dream and then we wake up
early the next morning
back to work

such routine such boredom
yet we still like to live more days
this is life perhaps
nothing new except
the meetings of old friends
then back to work again

i know you are bored reading this
precisely, precisely, now you must feel the same too
at least
in this boring poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Facebooking...

in times of doubt and
hiding where times get harsh and
when you are feeling so foolish
betrayed once twice thrice and
patience says think seventyseven times seven
before you take action, think and reflect and ponder
and be calm and be sober and do not say it is over,
you know where to hide and forget the real world.

surf, surf, surf out anything
have more time with pictures, and shallow hi's and hello's
lots of lols and omgods

RIC S. BASTASA
Faced Again With The Usual Questions

the walls face you again
with the usual questions
they were answered before
and now they come begging
for new answers telling you
times have changed like the
color of fading jeans, and
your answers have become
unsatisfactory. you state
your case and you beg
the judge, that somehow
the need for rephrasing
has become a necessity.
you straighten your tie
feel the collar on your neck
and say: I am ready, shoot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faces

lots of faces
square, round, elongated,
rectangular, triangular
heart-shaped

what face have i
that you say
you love me?

multifaceted
double-faces bigot
diamond

yes, i know
you love diamonds
so you say it
all: a diamond
as reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faces And Layers Of Faces

At first, this is the face I will show you
Shallow, thin, smooth
Then we feel each other, like some kind of
New found friends, I
Take another layer, and tell you, this is my face,
Some scars, and lines of age, and furrows,
Then we write many emails, and remember
Common things, like a certain familiarity,
Another layer is taken and exposed,
The face of a sick man, with some
Disappointments in his mind,
Some wounds, wrinkles, and so you
Think, are there other layers of faces still
To show,
Deeper, deeper is there another layer to show
Another face of this man?
Yes, there is another layer, more faces
Hidden underneath each layer,
As we go on, learning from ourselves,
And me learning from myself,
I will be digging for more faces,
Because I am never static
I am growing, and for each growth
Like molting
Another face comes out

Soon, I hope, I must come out
With the most beautiful face
The we can be both proud of,

It is just a matter of time
Depending on how well you have loved me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Facing Myself

do not ask me who i am
whether i have understood this self so well
or yourself

we always reason out
about the mysteries that surround our beings

i will give no answer
silent as a zipper

i close the door of my mouth
and go inside my esophagus

this slimy self that wants to be out
but cannot

in the mirror however
like the sun with so much light

i face myself and
check

dthis is beautiful i tell myself
i repeat it many times

i close the window of my soul
not wanting that you hear

any of these dialogues
this narcissism of the self unto itself

in the pond of my eyes
the mirror that shows what reflection is there

of the soul to the body
the body that is warm and touched

RIC S. BASTASA
Facing The Blank Face Of The Ceiling

poetry is not
as complicated
as
removing your
dress
and then going
to the
rest room
and brushing your
teeth,

it is not even
that moment when you
look at yourself in
the mirror
and seeing a new
wart at the lower
part of your
lip,

poetry is more of
putting your head
on the pillow

and then you gaze
the blank face of
the ceiling

wondering if
stars still hang
in there.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Facing The Sun, Late Afternoon

driving back home
at the white bridge
the light of the sun
that later afternoon
blinds me, like
what i feel today
i close my eyes
see shadows
let them all inside
my heart,
i open my eyes
half asleep
letting all the shadows
simmer like
i am a dry earth
receiving a little rain,
thoughts run like water
boredom is the dryness
the ennui
fleeting memories
haunt like thoughts
coming back at me
with swords and scales.

'what am i doing here? '
i stop the car, get out from there
and stand on the side of the
white bridge.

'i am doing nothing'.
the water below is silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
Facing The Wreck

naked
shall i face the wreck
in front of my
being

the wreck faces me
its face is
past
its arms are choking me
its mouth shall
eat me
and i lay helpless naked
so tenderly
surrendering to its
bondage

for years i have not devised
the best way to
escape

RIC S. BASTASA
Fact

The eyes of the witness
Look at her straight
In her eyes
There is no blinking
There is the silence of the
Majestic Pond
and then when asked
She raised her arm
Point her Finger
and said
' Yes, it is him! '
And then she elaborated
About the Truth
In exhaustive details
And then she stood up
And walked her way out
From the Witness stand of the Room
All her loads
Discarded.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fact And Fact

things are neither
light nor
heavy in a
vacuum

they all
fall
and
arrive
at
their
destinations
at the
same
time

come to think
of it
by analogy
our common
emptiness
level us
from
and
with the rest of
this humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
Fact....

IF THERE be changes
about this and that
i will have all these and those

need i be like you
perfect
stainless steel
polished porcelain
telling the
world
that God has created us
all equal
and bestowed with all
beauty
that there be no change
that is needed?

what a thought
for one as beautiful as you
saying
there is nothing to change
everything is in place
everyone is
in itself
beautiful and then you
win

honestly
everyone is imperfect
and everyone has an inner voice
screaming
i want this changed
this is not the one i dream

and i agree
this is all imperfect and these must
be changed
if only there is a way
or a choice
honestly, there is no choice
we are stones thrown
in a pavement
and all those who pass
and tread upon us
hardly notice

RIC S. BASTASA
Facta, Non Verba

what was done was done
they cannot be undone,

for what matters most what
what was done & not just what was said.

unfinished poems, pauses, words still
looking for the fulfillment of their meanings

like open bowls looking up to the skies
for rain
or sunshine
or plain nothingness

RIC S. BASTASA
Facticity

What you are, what you had been
Are facts of you
Facticities: you cannot change
You once had,
You have no power over these
Facticities: Undoing, unbreaking,
ing.

What you are going to be
What you want to become
What you want to have
to hold & to cherish
What you have to die for
What you long &
what you want to give
Are non-facts

Non-facticities:

They are being,
Be-ing
Becoming
And these are our hopes & our wishes & what we look forward to

A warm day tomorrow
A loved one faithful to you
The beloved
The beloved loving the beloved

These are the things we can still change
We can make

Death is a fact
What you do before death
Still belongs to the freedom of your hands

You are alive.
That is be-ing.
Be thankful.
Be always grateful.
Be strong.
Be the good self that you want to be.
These are not facts yet
They still belong to the freedom of your own hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Facts

some dreams do not come true
no problem about that
promises are made to be broken
not new to me really
some friends are not really friends
but enemies in disguise
i am learning about this fact
some loves are meant for lust
i am used to these
some moments are better used for silence
i love these
some lives simply become wasted
i am not surprised
some people just want to survive
live a life they choose
and cease the evil of comparisons
i begin this now
i dismiss my view on a love so true
it is not really late
for now i am moving on, just moving on
even without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fading Laughter

laughing faces
of little boys on the bank
of the river
sounds of running feet
fainting
the song of the river
farther away

RIC S. BASTASA
Fading Light

stay
watch the fading of the light
stay and savor
the new darkness
it owns you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fading Sun

as the sun fades
this afternoon
it leaves a mark
of ripples lights
on the gray sea

in a moment
everything fades
the wave sounds
its own question
to the night wind

RIC S. BASTASA
Failing Eyes

my failing eyes may help you
when i type the wrong thing you find it
the missing 'r' for sunrise
may remind you of a real sunrise
or may tell you about the sore in my eyes
getting into the wisdom of old age
the wrongs that old people leave you shall, the young, correct.

RIC S. BASTASA
Failings

forgive my eyes
again i have misspelled the words,

forgive my shortcomings,

i have no time correcting them

no time to go back and see how the errors can be redeemed,

i am in rush but i do not actually know what to do or where.

RIC S. BASTASA
Failure Is Not An Option, But It Is A Necessity
Sometimes

no matter how you plan
there is always that possibility of a failure,
no one has control about
this necessity,

it is not an option to flunk,
you all worked hard for all those years
to earn the title and gain the trust
but not all will make it
some will have to take the bottom
of things
the failure of an endeavor
success cannot exist
without it
one cannot see God
without the
appearance of Evil
one cannot be strong
unless he had been
weak once
i cannot be divine
unless i start
from the bottom line
of my humanity,

if i can see clearly now
it was because i was blind for all those years.

move on, let not that failure
make you fail.

RIC S. BASTASA
Failures

If you have become
Another failure
You must always give
Yourself a chance

There are no failures they keep
On saying that.
There are only suspended
Successes.

Everything is temporary.
Just like success.
Just like failure.

Keep on trying.
There is no harm on trying
They keep on saying that.
A failure is nothing
But a blessing in disguise.

Keep on writing then.
Until the perfect poem
Comes along.

Keep on thinking then.
Until the right idea
Reigns.

Keep going.
There is no stopping.
There is no quitting.

My friend,
I am here
Standing before your coffin.
To deliver this eulogy.
You keep on trying.
Until death
Has finally caught you.

Dear friend
Sleep now.
I must say you have
Finally rested

From our failures.

RIC S. BASTASA
Failures And More Failures

i am not afraid of failures
because i understand all of them
bows that send all my
arrows
towards successes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Failures Are Temporary

failures are temporary
heartbreaks can even be short
if you care enough
for love
of yourself and your friends
we all fall
and we shall all fall again
despite two waking vigilant eyes
and cautioned hands

and so is happiness and success and triumphs
and conquests of your fears
the ecstasies
and joys and what have you that makes you feel

eternity, tell me when have you learned
this illusion
of yourself feeling eternity, a glimpse
of God, tell me, tell me, describe it to me

today, i can tell you the difference
between all these temporary things, and places and events,
and this eternity that i feel,

it is you, your face that i see that i touch
is this the face of God?

RIC S. BASTASA
Failures....

i am amazed by the way
time has traveled that fast

we long want to sew what
was torn to make them into one piece
again

sort of another beginning
patching up and from a distance
making no difference at all

the thread has gone through
the eye of the needle
but our hands are trembling
and our eyes have failed....

RIC S. BASTASA
Fair

papa i do not wish to win this race
because of friendship

teach me to win
through my own competence

i want to be on top and take the cap
through merit,
not influence, or affluence

fair and square
i will now dare

RIC S. BASTASA
Fair And Square

i was there for
a tour
enjoying the place
taking notes
and buying some stuff

she was there
looking for work
an opening
holding on to her
last money

but i do not really think that
i am lucky

it's all fair.
and i do not have to tell her
what despair
am i in

perhaps mine is bigger.
i can tell it.

RIC S. BASTASA
they tease
me, i who like
the song
but the song
never likes
me, but i
keep on singing
and they
can do nothing else
but listen
under these circumstances
of lack
and grief and even
if they do not like it
as they do not like
to sing with me
or sing the song itself,
i keep on singing and singing
until

i did not like
the song itself, and
i tell them
it is but fair and
square.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fair And Square....

losing track of
saying something in
another way

metaphors take so
much time and
so much meaning
about what is obvious
as the sun and
the fields and the sea
are wasted

i want to say it
fair and square
nothing about hyperbole
or euphemism

you are bad
you are unjust
and that's just
that....

RIC S. BASTASA
how can i deny myself of you?
you like my puppy that wakes me up
in the morning
when my world turns upside down like
a bat hanging from
a twig of a wild tree like a dream
that clings to my brain
unwanted.
we make love every morning
sometimes in the deep recesses of the
night
when everyone has been taken by sleep
we make love.
this tryst is killing me.
every death somehow is every
resurrection too.

fair and square.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fair Weather...

fair weather
the big boat on a special trip
slices the ocean
smoothly like solingen

there's a rainbow on the
other side of the island that we pass

swordfish fly like a dagger
hitting the mirror sea and comes up again
with skillful wings

farther are the smaller boats
like leaves drifting

the sun is laundring
the pastel blue morning sea

RIC S. BASTASA
they were all fairy tales
believe in what the characters say

but the characters themselves
are not real

a girl on butterfly wings
a boy with the tail of a fish

the sea is real
and so is the air

if the message is not clear
try being there

if you do not know the word in between
try chewing one of the syllables.

RIC S. BASTASA
the plane took off
i realized i did not like the aisle seat
i transferred to the window seat
and the stewardess said
'excuse me, sir! ' trying to stop me
for doing so,
i pretended i heard no one
moved as fast a i can towards the window seat
fastened my seat belt
and put my head
well rested on the
beside the window

below the clouds flew
past me
on a deceiving speed
the mountains spread
benumbing

RIC S. BASTASA
Faith

you are there
i know
&
you are here now
i very well know with all my eyes closed
my heart now opens
&
doubt is always
behind you
taunting

RIC S. BASTASA
Faith And Love

He knows your hands
And arms too well

One day she falls
From a cliff
Freely

Like a stone
To a rocky ground

She knows what
You will do

She closes her
Eyes
And not feel any
Sense of harm
At all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faith Back To You

i have ordered the mountains to move
it is your turn now to make them come back in their proper places

RIC S. BASTASA
Faith That Moves Mountains

you tell me that your faith can move mountains
now this is this mountain
and you are here
and i am here

tell this mountain to move away from me
now.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Faithful Poet To His Craft....

he is getting bald over
words
emaciated having forgotten
several meals
because he is faithful to
his craft

everyday he writes
more poems than he could
muster
for his heavenly muses

on paper the poems become
written
well sculpted with curves
and smooth finishes

he does not know whether
they are read somewhere
but he does not care

on nights when he finds himself
alone and abandoned
by fate
he makes a fire
at the center of his yard
puts all those paper poems
there
all burned
smokes like some forms of
ghosts
go to the night skies
to be with the countless stars
in the extreme cold
of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Faithfully

images blur
faces are fading
one forgets
what day is
it, and i
still say
love it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fake Dance

to grapple with uncertainties she dances ballet
tiptoes
and balance carefree
credulity
twirl

the curtain falls now is the perfect time to hide everything
face-powdered the overture plays
conspires aloud to evasive drums

she grapples again regaining a balance
this rope secrets in cord-like tightened lips

her fake dance her fake feelings in her heart
her lover looks on without blinking

how sweet how true how remarkable

bravo!

RIC S. BASTASA
Fake, Fake, Fake,

it is all fake
(at any rate cheap)
we know it
yet we go there and
take some
for our loved ones.

they are all fake
(friends of your friends)
in that party
we know it yet we all find
ourselves there
still making much of the fun

what's most important is
that we know it
and that we have fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faking It

without the eye
contact
the words become
obscene
the conversations
have become
too personal

the masks have
become our very own
faces

we were looking for
love in all places
only to find it here
and then after the kiss
we taste something that
we can compare

and then i must complain
it is not the legal
tender

the saliva is fake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faking The Pain

The poems pretend
And fake the pain

Time comes like a bird
And my mind like a gun
Sets the perfect timing for the trigger

This big bang!

The sad soil demands a flow
Of blood
A watering of misfortunes
Havoc

So the flowers of progress
May bloom
Anew the scent of sense
The petals of pulchritude

RIC S. BASTASA
Fall In Love

you live up
this cliff
one with
the mountain
wind
fused with
fog and
moistened
with dew

f
a
l
l

i
n
l
o
v
e

with me.

i am waiting down here
with the sea caps and the dew foams
and the salted scent of the breeze
the sea flowers and sea horses
and the multicolored corals

blue skies and green grasses
inside my ocean floors

RIC S. BASTASA
Fallen Petals

for one thing i do not know the name
of this sea flower falling from a very lushy
tree whose leaves reach to the sands
as though kissing salt and silence

it is a big flower with pink lines
following the sides
the stamens are long and
scented like a woman with perfume
on her hair

alone in the night she walks
towards a cave
of cascading desire and there
he is waiting naked

the flowers keep on falling
the petals crushed
the night is silent
and well scented

the shadows fuse and then
they were lost in total darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling And Rising...

when i fall
this i must tell you
i am hurt
and will always be hurt
but not till eternity
there is no such
it will only be for a while
pain subsides
and the self stands up
again
smiling to the sun

i will be healed in due
time
but don't come near me]
no not yet
please do not insult me with
your help or
sympathy
unsolicited opinions
like cut onions
make me cry
but only for a while
only for a while

i am complete
and will always be whole
in sorrow and
pain

and
more self-sufficient than you
perhaps
who knows?
for i think i have suffered much
as such

i am prepared
and had long prepared for
this fall
of
my own causing
of
my own fault

my only way of surrendering to
God
making peace
all things
and feelings soon to
rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Falling Falling

some stars are falling and falling
across the dark skies

you look with awe

and make your many wishes

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling From A Cliff

when you fall from a cliff
there are hands
on the ground promising
to catch you

do not trust those who say so
they are there for sure
to crush you

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Hearts

falling hearts like rain
to earth
bleeding,

the earth is too thirsty
and whether it was blood
or acid
or whatever like
tears

it accepts, it
sucks them all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Out From Grace

it is just a stage
so temporary

the only probability
when you are
high up in the
pinnacle of your success

then everything falls
like leaves
from a tree at autumn time

do not worry
be hopeful for spring
it is sure to come
it is the completion
of a cycle

breathe and take the coldest air
now it is time to turn off the fire in our hearts
hibernate, rest, and give off all that we have

for when we are completely empty
that the beginning again
for another
fullness...

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Out Of Love Because Of Distance

light fades away
as sand slips away between my fingers
water drips
everything is either absorbed or
lost
love too diminishes
through distance
d dissolves in the solutions of time
losing its sweetness
in the memory of one
whose grip
to fidelity is losing
reality melts
like mist like the ghosts
of names
you cannot anymore remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Short Of Directions....

c. 50x795

d. 50x750

e. 50x732

f. 50x714

g. 50x696

h. 50x678

i. 50x660

j. 50x642

k. 50x624

l. 50x606

m. 50x570

n. 50x552

o. 50x534

p. 50x516

q. 50x498

r. 50x480

s. 50x444

t. 50x426

u. 50x390

v. 50x372

w. 50x354

x. 50x318

y. 50x300

z. 50x282

aa. 50x264

bb. 50x246

c. 50x228

d. 50x210

e. 50x192

Falling Short Of Directions....

c. 50x795

d. 50x750

e. 50x732

f. 50x714

g. 50x696

h. 50x678

i. 50x660

j. 50x642

k. 50x624

l. 50x606

m. 50x570

n. 50x552

o. 50x534

p. 50x516

q. 50x498

r. 50x480

s. 50x444

t. 50x426

u. 50x390

v. 50x372

w. 50x354

x. 50x318

y. 50x300

z. 50x282

aa. 50x264

bb. 50x246

c. 50x228

d. 50x210

e. 50x192

the road to patience is long and winding
say it over and over again
sometimes it leads us nowhere
there are dead ends
of our hoping
(and what shall
you do? you weep
alone and keep on talking
to yourself?)

you get feed up with lots of
my comforting
words, the poems, the chat,
and the
directions on what to do next
where to go,

they do not comfort you at all
all these long distance affections

but there is something that must comfort you
more, and make you perhaps
understand what this world is all about

everyone is lost
all hands are groping in the dark feeling only walls and walls
there is no light yet
the sound of rushing water deafens us
there are rocks higher than life
existing more than our
lifetime
always there
dead and cold and dark

there are traces in the sands
of some footsteps erased by the wind
not fossils
that still tell us what really happened
there is this comforting joy
we all are
and that makes us all

lost tribes, silenced by death
hoping not to be ever thrown again
like seeds that begin anew
on the first sprout
of another misery
handed from
bud to bud....

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Short Of Words

from this window
glass i see narra trees

the leaves had fallen
it is cold

i am alone looking carefully at the details
of leafless twigs

branches are dry
barks are cracked

the grasses below are brown
beside the fence two boys are playing hide and seek

cars blue and white and black are parked
in one area like gossiping women

i am alone thinking about some details
falling short of words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Star

he was the fallen
star

he fell straight
smoothly to the deepest
part of the
Indian Ocean

he used to be Orion
brightest in the sky when every meteor
races towards the edge of space and die

now that he is buried underneath
no one looks for him
or at least to know whether he can be
saved from oblivion

they all think they have to move on with their lives
and find another Orion again
as they keep on looking every night

they have forgotten him finally
not even remembered as a memory

meanwhile in Atlantis
he becomes the most precious guest
without his glitter
he is still cool

RIC S. BASTASA
Falling Upon A Cliff

ah, i know that feeling

when we end something lously

we are disappointed because it could have ended in another manner

that most excellent manner

we hate unjustified endings there is something much better than that

not just justice or that happily ever-after

it could have been something else not that

ah, i know that feeling I've done that before many many times

and you the reader hangs on a cliff

soon to fall... i know this feeling

there is no need
for sharing.

RIC S. BASTASA
False Lights, Termites, Stones

we are
to them
always
the image
of departure

and so it
seems to
be, as
always,
sadness that
they smell
on our skin
our hair

you imagine
bags and all
the stuff that
must be
there

they hear
the sound of
buses honking
and waiting

they like to
close the
doors of the
house
and see to
it that all
windows
are closed

what they always
see in us
is the look of misery
of time wasted
of dripping water
that dries the moment it meets
an arid soil

i sigh to all these wrong notions
but i only have silence to offer before their altars

they are not gods and i guess tomorrow early morning
i simply have to destroy them

these plasters of Paris these cranky obsolete stones these false lights termites and pests of my wooden world
Fame

when you pursue it
when you claim that you need it badly
it simply closes its door from you
airtight

when you finally give up pursuing it
when you too lock your door
and stay inside it for good
it knocks and insists that you take it

you peep by your window
it waits there and so silly that you
look at it
with full pity

RIC S. BASTASA
Fame And Popularity

you are a big fire
everyone looks at you

the big fire today as you
But tomorrow will only

Be ashes
Blown away and then no one remembers

RIC S. BASTASA
Fame Winston

Fame is
the virtue of
Notoriety

Soon you will
find
focus lights
hurt

People stink
like rotten
apples

Names disperse
like vapor

Stay put
in the Luxuries
of your
Privacy

One name is
Enough
and there will
be no confusion

A home is where
Only you live
in Peace

Buy your own
Camera just in case
you need a face.

RIC S. BASTASA
Familiarity

it is all bland

tasteless

like routine

unlike the kiss

that you first

planted

on her hair

RIC S. BASTASA
Familiarity Of Falling...

the same birds
through my window
sing
every morning

for one thing
their songs never bore
this heart

the same leaves fall
from this tree
the same songs of failure
of falling
in such a repetition
in all the mornings of my life
unshaken

RIC S. BASTASA
Familiarity With A New Born Day

the cocks still crow this early morning
same footfalls passing and stamping on the road
the same trails from the house to the market to the church
back home and same sounds of the gate opening and closing
and same chill of the air from the sea to the mountain

over and over again on this familiarity from day one to day one hundred
till the thousandth
this familiarity that breeds contempt
it is trying to kill us all

but there is this thing inside that keeps burning
this fire this light

it tells us keep going for one day this boredom that tries to kill us
shall soon be a big day for you and for all of us

nirvana, heaven, rebirth, the dusts that stick on our feet
wanting to be alive again and be the flowers under the gentle rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Familiarity With The World, Finally....

no place does not give you a distraction
the sound of the machine that lingers in the air and pierces your ear
it will always be there
the sound of engines
more cruel than thunder
and folding waves of the storms at sea
bigger than houses
shall always meet you straight in the eye
deeper in your mind
there seems to be no peaceful place of the leaves and grass
where you can rest your body where your soul finds an imaginary home
where the heart can sleep and dream
there seems to be none
and so you run and run as fast as you can to find it
but the running even if it does not stop
finds no such place
and hopeless then
you rest upon a field of destructive sounds and then begin to accept them as they are
the mad cry of the baby, the heated exchange of hate between couples, the war of governments and people,
all these are very real
are becoming spots in your skin
your very own shadow that goes with you everywhere you go
you too, is that sound of anger and despair
this is the world
this is your place
now, you must learn what is this all about
rest your head upon the madness of the crowd
sleep amidst the chaos
this is finally what we call as home
yes, a home in a very crowded mall, in a very narrow path towards a broken door, that slanted room.

RIC S. BASTASA
Family Secrets Of My Youth

on those early mornings
while father was out
to the sea to check if
his fishermen
were cheating him
i was left on the shore
alone
writing with my finger
some words on the sand
and for which the waves rush
to erase
all of them perhaps afraid
that someone
outside the family could read
what we have
been hiding

RIC S. BASTASA
Famished And Finished.

the time and setting
on this computer is always
in error,

battery drained or perhaps
virus infected,
my ignorance on the matter
persists

from one poem to another
jumping from anxiety to another
self taken anxiety

knowing then that another
city creature is depressed
and looking for a cure

or a cousin who got married
recently but lost its job or
that wife who is no longer sure
about her husband’s affection

or that writer who had always
wished to land first prize in
a palanca poetry contest but
never really achieved it

so many lapses in this life
so many dreams and escapades
so many exhaustive pursuits

birds that fell from the sky
angels that we have never seen
those lurking devils that we
only see in drawings or that
heaven that we keep faithful in
believing, good and bad karma,

the time and setting
on this computer is always
in error,

battery drained or perhaps
virus infected,
my ignorance on the matter
persists

a normal reaction to a normal
stimulus, perhaps we all have
to embrace: an abnormal reaction
to an abnormal stimulus, by all
means is the most normal thing
to do. Am famished and finished.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fantasy 101

we're old
our wrinkles do not dispute that
our cheeks are shying away
from a passionate kiss
the lips are cracking
like a soil in an
african drought

i see some hair
locks falling on my bed
and they do not make
a complain
why shampoo and conditioner
seem to have done nothing

how can i be so cruel to myself
my eyes wink
and my tongue in cheek
tries to spell the modernity
of my name

a man for all seasons
my nose is getting fishy
with the smell of masculine mask

i hold my pants
and unzip and look at the part
that makes me distinct from the
rest of the animal kingdom

' i am human' i say it not just once
but as often as i forget

' i am a man' i keep repeating it
i have this bulge
beating for life and i am ready
to go out tonight
for my fantasy
back to 101
so many faces
i can remember each even without the picture
so many beautiful faces that i have french
kissed
less words
lesser hellos

there were more goodbyes
those eyes shed tears but mine look the other way
towards more faces
every sunrise every morning light

so many beautiful faces that i can always remember and
soon too
easily forget

there is one though
shown to me this morning as i lay weak
in my sickbed

she says i kissed her once and it was too long ago
she is a sad face looking for me
i try to remember but
i cannot not remember ever
even the single lock of the hairs of said face
even the tears in her eyes
even the lasting smile that she once gave me

i know the reason.

who wants to remember the face that you really love
and yet you simply wasted?

you bury it in the past and you swear
you cannot anymore remember

you are careful because it will be very painful
Far From The Clutches

i read it again
amazed by what you said

as you were saying
you write a note about a man that they put in prison

for being ideological
very unlike the masses that go to congress and adopt a dress code
and stick to the rules of speech

propriety, that is the main rule,
not justice, conformity not creativity,
contentment not exploration and so on and so forth

summed up with your
etcetera,

giving medical assistance is beyond ideology
the sick man deserves to be given his dose of medicine
whatever he is
he is the sick man and he needs help
why hinder the good samaritan
why ask for his ID?
his political belonging

i wonder where is this journey taking us?
to hell? where is it?

it is here.

but this is not the end of your story
neither mine shall end here,

i ask you to spell a word: atrocities
a word in plural form
which you pronounce so well by enunciating the
'o' in there

nothing is funny now
i stopped laughing since then
i buried my jokes

anticipating that soon we shall bury too
another body
of Jesus Christ, copycats are we and they
survive the mess

they still sit there and judge all of us
for we have not lived the way they envision society

yes people, monkeys still, monkeys eating monkeys,
cannibalism, and yet, what irony is there

they tell us that we are strange,
that we need a rehabilitation, to be put back within the four corners

of their universities, and oh, what a mess
funded by the people.

tell me how can i stop this
poetry of anguish?

RIC S. BASTASA
Faraway From You

i have traversed so much distance,
got that this sense of being far away
where no intimacy can reach me as i

avoided that which is so near that which i cannot touch
because nearness is blindness

and when i become so blind how can i see the beauty of color

the coolness of the wind in you
the blueness of your affection

it is this distance that makes me see the rainbow
which i carried in my heart

it has the scent of longing
the you

so far away from me and yet still becomes my own shadow
when i sleep and dream

you are still beside me, and then we are one again
in wanting to forget

i shall fool love again and make it believe that
there is you

there is none
really there is none

what is there is this pain
my own shadow in your shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
Faraway Solitude

after four days
the floors ceased talking
about me
the bed is a sleeping
cat
and the rest room
has found
a friendly urinary bladder

the drapes are kind
to sunlight
scattering flowers
on softer hands

things run smoothly
now
like an automated
machine

RIC S. BASTASA
Farewell Speech

what i like from you is that
you are no longer talking
beside me,
my bed is my favorite mate
it does not talk
i have told you that many times
the moon is what i miss
it is dimming and cold with its glow
it is very much like me
what i like from you is that you do not weep
i have told you not to cry
and i like it most when you understand
what is a sky
and you see how it opens
and takes
what lies here on earth
tired and hopeless
what i love in you is that you always give
and there is no complaining
when finally
i am taken by the hands of the sky
by the dimming glow of the moon
when this bed
finally surrenders
breaks its legs
asks the blanket and the mattress
and the pillow
to leave
what i cannot forget about you is this
you have followed the ways of
my eyelashes
when i finally
close my eyes
do not weep
for soon we shall all be there
the moon, the bed, and blankets and pillows
and mattresses
the sky and earth
soon.
Farther And Farther Away

i am lost.  
please find me.

i am like the tennis ball that you throw away  
from the comfort of your strong hands  
into the darkness of the night

tomorrow morning  
before the sun rises with a new promise  
dusk shall find me

your hands shall turn to ash and i shall be the rain  
to wash you away.

farther farther to the river and to the sea to the sunless horizon.  
my heart is ready for this calamity of forgetting.  
with air as balm, i shall be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Farting Is Such Sweet Sorry

he couldn't help
but laugh

about his recent
encounter of the third kind

when after the kissing and the hugging
instead of the usual
bye bye

(the parting should have been ok but he..uhhum)

he farted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fast Paced

the morning sun rises
on the east

i open the stereo for
a fast paced song

come dancing
it is so natural for a love

that badly needs
a fast pacing

RIC S. BASTASA
Fast, And Flashing

for those that i have not
spoken
they shall continue to be
so

the bus is coming and it
will not make any difference
whether i
come in or jump out

you will wave your hand
someone will remove his hat as a gesture of honor
i like to think that i shall take a look
but it will not matter

i am inside this bus and
it is
fast and everything flashes
like
drawings erased
on that
blackboard

RIC S. BASTASA
Fat Woman

fat woman with a thick black coat
walking along the sidewalk of the train station
alone
and cold and remembering the sweet things
back home
ten thousand miles away

i perfectly understand this moment of abandon
this silence of the buttons
this warming of the soles of your feet
this discarding of memories

moving on towards another journey
forgetting who you are
and not anxious of what they all shall become

you've got your own life
a diary and a picture in the wallet

answer the call and be there
he is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fate

that time there was bombing
of the old San Pedro church
and about six people died
instantly,

it was by luck that i had diarrhea
and i had to rush before the holy mass ended

that time i believe about candles
the light that cannot end itself

because it is not its time yet
it is an invisible candle that God only sees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fate With Us

dark clouds gather
on top of a mountain
and then it rains and
we run for shelter.....

we keep ourselves
warm in an embrace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fate Wrote It...

the best
poem in the world is your life.

outbursts of feelings
geysers and volcanoes combined

tell me if your life rhymes
it doesn't

but i must say it is the best poem
that fate has so written

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no way that i will never know
you in full
you shall brag to the clouds in your mind
that you can hold
without your fingers
mists
fog
mirages
oh
they drift
there is no permanence
permanence is an illusion
a river
a cloud
water
air
a hush

and this is where we must start
educating air
trusting the coolness of emptiness
saying
this could be &
this could be not
all
at the same time
and yet
with a sigh

it happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
as father begs, the son in a compromise
goes with him in that dome
where there are candles
some have already burned themselves
and some have just been lighted
by the hand of the caretaker.

there had been so many misunderstandings
unresolved anger
the son keeps the hate as the father keeps
the silence
there is no available explanation
there is simply none to mention
for the moment

the father looks behind and tells the son
i am of the past
my candle melted to the ground
there is no rekindling

the father points to him another candle
about to end its life
and he tells the son, that is yours

the father is talking about a life of the past
and the shrinking future
the son now must explain too
how hate kept him
there is no explanation
there is simply nothing to mention

the candles melt to the ground
offering a smoke as left-over of its short existence
that is the only possible explanation

RIC S. BASTASA
Father And Son

For quite a time you sail
Like a paper boat on this river
Then you want a change
In these little things you get
You feel you deserve
To fly and be this kite
On air and face the
Rage of storms
You are proud of it
Claiming you have managed
Yourself so well

Sufficient, until the cord was
Cut,
Now I have to find you
where You landed
With some broken bones
From this cliff
To the rugged terrains
Of that mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
Father And Son And The Kite

at first i saw
how father made a kite

it was for me
and he taught me how to fly that paper wing

and then i aged
and too old to make a kite or fly one like that

got nobody to leave father's kite
and so i left it on the road one day

the wind took it away
and i did not bother looking where it went

you know
there are so many things that i want to lose
to forget

at this stage of my life
i want to throw everything away

it is the moment of wasting
diminution, fading, until no one remembers me

one day a father makes a kite for his son
wanting to keep everything intact

valued and loved and spread
someone wise as us knew how everything ends

as beautiful as rain that stops to make the road
glisten

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Father And Son...

when i see a child
with curly hair like that of his father
trying to grab my phone
and uttering my name
and then begins
his crying game
i am beginning to feel that
usual pity
for this young member of
humanity
for time and time again
nature knows how
to inflict its pangs and pains
to this little brain
but he is not at all that powerless
or helpless
for he knows also how to invent
his own defenses
with nature's abuses upon
his youth
he also knows how to strike back
with his fist and bites
and wild bickering

and soon it becomes more
like his own dead father
damned, and reactionary
rebellious and
too hurting

he hurls what he has received
makes the wars
and never learns how to keep
back that inner peace....

RIC S. BASTASA
Father God, Yahweh, Divine, Good And Fair.

at the end
i know what is
this all about

Art, pleasing
for a while, giving
flowers as reasons
to live,
soon you must leave
me with
wilting memories,

Politics, again
only for a while,
you, too must go,
for your own selfish
interests and
motives,

Philosophy, and reason
and justifications,
good, i can grope
for more explanations
and find more
reason for living,

Friends, ice coating
of my cake, flames for
a while, pudding,
wind and merry making
a little talk here and
there, miseries spread
too little on the
sandwich and the the
burger,

Family, oh, soon
they will have lives
of their own,
and finally you find
yourself again
alone,

Wife, soon you'll
die, destined for me
but again only for
a while, a mind of her
own, a direction she
can take, not much
to attach, spaces
here and there,
nothing really lasts
forever,

but there is one here
who does not leave me,
conscience, my own peace,
myself beside you,
Most friendly, Father
God, Yahweh, Divine,
Good and Fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
today i prefer to write
back, into father's invitation
a long time ago where for days
we have to ride on horses passing
by the forest of Antulanga

as he was tall and i was behind
him with the horse he would pick
berries for lunch saving on rice and
dried fish and potable water

at night the moon was a bright as
the glass which he tucked along for
the natives, to see their innocent
faces and then give up their lands
for us to plant and then they leave

now the fruits of the conflicts have
bloomed and i with all honesty claim
that there was nothing wrong with what
he did. The great grandchildren of the
natives are schooled and they think they
know now what wrong was done and that
they must kill all those memories to get
back their land.

i am inside this room, and trying to write
what history was all about. It is and will
always be about a father to his son.

RIC S. BASTASA
Father X

my mind was as young as a bud
of a white rose
when you were ordained somewhere
in that high place of the city

time proves who the innocent are
who the culprits are
later exposed under the mighty sun
of truth

you are part of the stain
you call yourself the fallen manna from heaven
food for those who think they are lost
those slaves set free by the shackles of ignorance

now you are like us
the grasses of the lawn
the pebbles of the pavement
the sands of the shores of time

now i believe you more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fathered By Stone

Thrown
into. Away and
now immersed with
all of you.
Pebble on the sand
some waves come
as occurrences.
Another
pebble of insignificance
is here.
Nothing is like
it and it likes
no one
upon its shiny
and glittering
arrogance.
Fathered by
stone
it cannot escape
the ordinariness of
all.

The rest of us
are silently
laughing.

Out of resigned
acceptances,
call it humility,
when it is
finally alone and
lonely,

we assure
it
that we are
pebbles too.
Father's Complaint To A Lazy Son Writing A Poem.

i know it is morning
thru the clock on the pc.
this is my room.
blinded by blinds.
a lamp stares on the keys.
got a jacket
for the cold.
lazy man, father calls.
what is poetry? he mumbles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Father's Day

Masquerade sits beside
his daughter: white face and
slender body

she looks like a flamenco
that evening

she feeds him some
yakosoba noodles
using the chopsticks

it's father's day and i look at them
with envious pity

at the 39th floor
i look at the city: lively like
stars twinkling
at the ground

inside is the sound of emptiness
hissing like a snake whose tail is cut

RIC S. BASTASA
Father's Footsteps

father's footsteps
are gone
brother, but do not
worry
we shall arrive there
on time
i know the path
by heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Father's Legacy...

father left a fortune
for the five of us, the mountains,
the three sisters are snobs
and a brother likes it there in
Tunisia,
i am left with skills perhaps
to convince you to stop
stealing from us.

Father is right.

RIC S. BASTASA
Father's Soul

father's soul comes again
i am cold
to his hug, this sickness
of ghosts
embracing us, the living,

questions and images
mixing on a night
of horror,

always, the question is:
what for, dad? what for?

leave us, we know how to
live our lives,
stay in the land of the dead
and be rested,

for now is our time to confront
our own ghosts,
equipped by your quotes
we think we know the routes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fault Is Thick Where Love Is Thin....

it is this way of coping
up
with anger, when you got
paired with someone who
does not
see the future like you
what happens next
what is there in that mirage
she should not have opened that
box of
Pandora and you ask her to solve
the problem
‘turn on the exhaust fan! ! ! ’

and you are into this rage
why is she not aware of the poison in this room?

she stares at you but she does not know how to
cry.

you are into anger, mismanaged fury,
and you recall what she just said before she went
into a frenzy,

faults are thick
where love is thin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Faura

it is here
where at noon you know not hunger
for a burger
you call someone to talk to
and you need it
badly
to pass the hours
you are almost dead
grasping for
words
and yet she answers you
that she is about to take a bath
and that
she is not available
till 2 pm

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear

there is this fear
about how things move past us

a chick turning into a chicken
it lays an egg
and more eggs and hatch into chicks
in a moment

you sit there unmoved
left out like a stone on a river bed that went dry
last summer

come spring
the tight buds burst into flowers
you sit there unmoved left out like a rusty gate diminishing
its body on the seashore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear And Trembling...

i have always wanted to
write this
yesterday i desisted
for fear that you may read this
and something might
altogether end whatever was
started with grace and gladness

the museum of art and porcelain
is no longer appealing
and i walk in there floating like
some kind of a cloud
without direction as i am thinking
of something else

it is hard to conceive change
it can connote transfer, departure,
rearrangements, and even the filtering
of all those matters
inside the cabinets, the kitchen and
the comfort zone

it has to be done, it must be.
not now. But i am writing this
hoping that you may read it
and then you make the first move
yourself.

i pray. It will be good for both of
you will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear Not Doubt

it is,
this doubt,
normal, in fact,
to me,
doubt is the beginning
of wisdom,

the only sister
of imagination
the only
way to be original

doubt is poetry
doubt
is truth, doubt is the springboard
of the questions
jump from it
and plunge into the
pool of answers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear Of Flying

by erica jong

the most uninhibited
delicious
erotic novel of a woman
ever written

and then
continue with
parachutes and kisses

the woman
exposing her most
intimate sexual feelings

it is all about women
in a completely
new way

why not?
go beyond the
catcher in the rye
and portnoy's complaint

sass, brightness and
take a bite

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear Of Saying

What is inside us wants to speak
Always
Wants to speak
It is we however who want it silenced
Because always we have all the reasons
To just be silent
Afraid always
That this self may break into pieces and then there is no way to repair it

RIC S. BASTASA
Fear The Water

for those whose feet are made of clay
they fear not
electricity

what they fear is the liquidity of
water

for when it pours
all those feet shall find themselves
flown to the sands of the river

his are made of glass
but stones are not that far away

RIC S. BASTASA
Fearless

and then when finally
all that i have were
taken, when i have
given up everything
that i stored for all
those living years
i face you: fearless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fears And Deaths

and the story goes that when evil spread to the world and took away its casualties
God has allowed only five to be taken by death
but what really happened was that the rest of the casualties were taken by humanity's fear of itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fears Of A Mad Man In The Office

forgive me
i am an unthinking human being
i am exhausted
and feeling like a wall of a house
the roof makes no sense to me
or the stairs
which she finds
to be filled with meaning
i am not that road
i go nowhere
and i do not stretch
to places
forgive me
but i am too tired to think about what you are thinking
now
it is my fingers
simply moving
and not knowing what it is doing
just following the water of the river
without fish
and moss
forgive me
for having wasted your time
i am tense
and i have fears about things that yet to come
i do not even know
i am afraid
and so forgive me
i am contagious and may destroy what ever mood
you may have today
and so forgive
me for taking you to the last line of this poem
it is this
nothingness that attacks me
like a bullet in my head
and so
forgive me
i am dead or
i am just playing dead because i am afraid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feasting

feasting on silence
a bowl of air
a balloon of emptiness
floating on a mountain
of madness
reckless and
imprudent
i swallow this pride.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feasting On A Beautiful Body

and i shall sit and watch
how you move
so gently
and artfully around
your body

i have no thoughts
i am empty
i am a clear glass
on a clean table
i am an unlighted cigarette
between
your fingers

every movement of your head
every slide of your hands beside
your legs
every bite of your lips
every wind that blows
your hair
every wink of the eyes
every coming and
going
and waiving of the hands
and closing
of your fingers

is love to
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
February 14, 1996

you view the night
as a blanket

it is cool black

and we are lying
upon the
grass

watching the stars
holding hands

and without saying much
since the feeling is too much
i just close my eyes
and convince myself
that this is
not a dream

RIC S. BASTASA
February Morning

white curtains laced and
see through

over the window down
below

red suntan blooming
beside mahogany tree

a sparrow is singing
upon a twig

a man sitting looking at the view
feeling so new

RIC S. BASTASA
Fed Up

one day
i got fed up
with poetry

complaining
with Basho

i too have
sighs why a
simple frog
jumping into
a water
can be a
classic poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeding On Gasoline

as you feed on gasoline
everyday, though a machine you're not
wanting to be an engine
on a 3, turbo-powered and always active
no matter what i say
you go on with what makes you happy
so you tell me
and i have all my wishes for you
go on
have a good dose of gas
feed on it
every moment, burn, burn, burn
glow and have the hearth of the heart
be bad, burn, and then char and then be
just a name somewhere
engraved, as i write the epitaph

'here lies a man
his dreams all granted
he burned himself to death
in the name of love and lust
now he is happily become dust'

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeding The Chickens

the grains in your hands
you spread them on the ground

chickens come near you
making you feel like you are the

United States of America
and they are the countries that depend on you

those third world bastards
those colonies, those developing ones
the grains become your bombs
under your keeping
you think you are the only one who has that sole
divine right to keep these grains (yes the bombs)
inside your hands

Holy cow! Who are you? Who are YOU!
(repeat the question 10x)

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeding The Wolf

there is this fight
between the wolf and
the sheep inside the
hearts of every man

there is this man who
feeds the wolf everyday
and so inside him the
wolf wins, and then

one night the wolf
who is always hungry ate
the weak sheep and then
finally the man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feel It And Be Real

grab the latest
story, not fiction

people are plastic
write it

on your forehead
learn from them

listen, talk, be merry
when the hour comes

leave as though you
know no one

as thought there
was really no party

or meeting
miss them because you

learn a lot from them
this social ladder

this climbing without
arriving at anything

laugh with them
do not be a loser

when you are alone
spit out everything

it never does you any
good at all

but somehow
feel that you have
become an hour stronger
and then

when you close the door
shut off the light

always remember:
it is you only

you only, and no one
else

it is your joy
only your sorrow only

your only life
and they do not give

a damn
feel it and be real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feel The Philippine Rain

mY Friend
you've got to feel the
philippine rain
sometime
it is too refreshing...

RIC S. BASTASA
Feel The Wind

feel the wind
inside the emptiness
of your lungs

feel your lungs
taking root at the back
of your body

feel your wings now
spread and flap and then go away
from everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling A Red Brick Wall With My Soft White Hands

red bricks
walls
thick walls

seeing these walls
of red bricks
feeling the hardness
of each
with my soft hands

close my eyes
feel that
i am inside you
a wall

no i don't scream
i moan

and then i am silent
so tired and
asleep

dreaming of windows
red doors
golden locks
platinum keys

wings on my shoulder
feathers of birds

blue skies red suns
blue moons

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Blue

feeling blue, one morning,
i feel so blue
i decided to sleep
the blueness all
day through

i won't tell you
that i am feeling blue
it is no use
you're feeling blue too
i know
i can see you
all over blue

i lock the door
and put the notice
Do not disturb
Just busy

i open my PC
and start with my journey to
wonder
something like a philosophical trip
to the portals of
Plato who i think,
is feeling blue too
and he put some marks
on the door
of his door: know thyself

i think, it is pretty much the same
with: Do not disturb

Someone is busy
Getting to know himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Guilty

if i met Tu Fu
and Li Po sometime
on top of the
misty mountain
and see them with their
poetry and
jugs of wine
beside the winding
yellow river

I'd tell them about
my guilt
that i am one kind of
a lost soul
preoccupied too
with poetry

sans the jugs of wine
but with a number of
concubines.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Hollow Is Not A Crime

feeling hollow is not a crime,
why worry? i like to feel hollow at times
i feel so light and guiltless, and i sit on a bench
and look at passersby, guessing what is also
inside their minds: that one is hollow too,
she is floating in air like a butterfly
and that one is hollower than thou
she has a halo.

now i feel hollow too, but i get so used to it
that it has gained weight like a feather from
the status of air, and i have become so sensitive
to what other hollow people like me feel,
to the nth time of their empty lives,
but, know what, only for a little time,
hollow minds become filled,
like hollow souls too filled with so
much divine grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Like A Ripe Plum

do you sometimes
feel that
you are a ripe plum
ready
for the picking?
and since no one is
there
not even a
child at play
and so you feel
the need
for
falling?

sort of
you are a delicious plum
and there is
no taker

sort of
you are bound to fall
and then
rot on
the feet of your
tree
in the middle of
a thick
green grass
underneath the bluest
sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Like A Stranger

in this place
this house without furnitures
all floors, this house with nothing but some stairs
and windows
you built it, i was away for years and we meet again
in this house
of acquaintances
devoid of affection, i have a way of telling what is this all about
by merely looking at the ceiling
there are no lights
to clarify me, who am i? in this house where i am not even a tree
or a vine
rootless, leafless
dying,
shall i continue living here?

i feel so unlike everyone else,
i am a total stranger
in this house that you built
this house devoid of affection,
i guess i have no choice
but to leave at once

otherwise, i too shall perish

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelimg Like An Asshole

too much giving makes me feel
like an asshole

there is no taking which they think
is normal

there is only the giving and giving
without asking for something in return

it is this blindness of the self
that makes this world see what is alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Lousy

Feeling lousy is seeing this lady laughing
She does her thing with confidence like she
Knows everything; what to do with this
Matter called
Everything,
She knows her place and claims it as hers,
She tells you, you are never like her doing so well
In fame,
Glory, and
Honor,
She has her circle of friends, a nice reliable computer
And an internet facility
To get her on top

On top of shape, on top of everything,
Yes, this everything,
Which she has control of,

And feeling so lousy, I wish how I can be like her,
This great woman of everything

But then, I wonder, I have my place, where she can never be,
This lowly place, this small space she detests,
This is mine, I am small,
This small place I have
Where she can never be
And I own this,
Enough for me,
I am happy.

And, oh well, I do not like everything,
Too big to handle and
I know
I would be unhappy by then.

I simply like myself being small.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling Of Relief....

i just wrote a very long poem
it is about us
i must be too stupid to have pressed the wrong part,
it got lost,
or it was simply deleted
and i tried so hard to recover it and show it to you
but you are not here,

on the other hand
i feel that i am just over reacting to that

know what? let the computer delete
or let the system experience its own error
i have no regret

in truth, i don't believe what i just wrote
it serves no purpose at all
and just like everything that is happening now

it is nothing but simply
another stupid thing that is happening to my life

when something stupid is deleted,
guess what? you feel relieved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The Coming Of Something Still Far But Sweeter

i do not wish
that you will consider my arms
as your prison cell
i do not have those arms now
i have fingers spreading like
wings
and i do not wish to hold you
with the sharpness of
my claws
i do not know what it tight anymore
everything i have
are loose
what i have in my hands
are no longer yours
i grope an empty room
feeling no walls
and floors
there is this first flight and i have no
fear

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The Falling Of The Leaf

it is a leaf with
serrated edges
turning yellow
and fallen

makes me feel
the way you feel
when the wind
becomes too
unforgiving

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The Life Of This Earth

at the end it is just you and
as usual all alone with a little
difference though
that in this particular moment
the moon above you is full and
floats as calmly as a mellow shade
of borrowed light
soft and tender
above your hair
there is home in loneliness now
no one screams and blames another
there is no running anymore
away from something broken
or shattered glass with pointed
pieces
you lay your body upon soft green grass
under the thin golden shade of light
feeling the the life of earth
gently gently beating

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The Lightness Of My Being

we're on a boat
bound for a beautiful island
far south
the sun is above us
our hairs are blown by the wind

i put my hands on the side of the boat
against the waters

eddies of thoughts
sparkling flashes
shimmering waters
this lightness of being
intimate to this world
that i am living

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The River Flowing Inside Me

I didn't think about whether I was writing poems.
I was thinking.
And the more I was thinking,
the more there was I didn't understand

— David Anti

did i have as my goal to understand?
no it isn't, it is merely to feel how i feel,
and keep a record about it,
i write like a river, actually
i do not know where i am going,
i just go with the flow, i close my eyes
and feel the
flow, and not ask where am i going?
for that is not the question
and there will be no answers, nothing specific
it is only the flow, and the sound, and the color and
the scent,

i am told, all rivers go to the sea
it is the truth, and i do not question it.
i do not ask any understanding about the sea when i arrive there.

again it is just a feeling.
perhaps, you may change the term

it is possibly faith
understated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling The Sunflower

feel the leaves of this living flower
pierce and burst
the dews still dreaming
this morning
the glow of the sun from the east
slowly spreading between
the hills

you do not notice
the slow unfolding of this flower
through its red petals
now wanting to
open from the hold of
your fingers

my living flower
blooms today
it is telling the world
what freedom is
and its purity

and its being so temporary...

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings

to feel that one which gets under your skin
love's mistaken notion
about endearment of an irritation
one wants to get rid of that sting
not the one inflicted by the bee
but by one that makes your whole world whirl
and fills with the lighter colors of the rainbows
your small cluttered world

singing for instance under the rain
does it remove the pain
underneath your skin?

nope.

temporary remedies, like a warm touch that leaves you
alone after a very short moment
of contact

feel the feeling felt for a very short moment like a smile
a kiss at the airport and then the plane becomes a dot thrown away
towards the distant skies

nothing lasts
that is why, and i say i very well understand why people like us
whom they dub as lost and irreconcilable

keep on writing
we wish things and feelings last but these do not really

their nature is airy and is simply blown away and
no miracle makes it come back and kiss you again.

alright, let the breath go, it is not yours anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings Are Like Clouds

if you go by what you feel
you end up changing always
because that is what feelings are,

clouds, air,
water, drops

a feeling is not
a house it
is sand,

it is a face not
a body

it does not
recognize footsteps

it is hair
without a skull

it is a stranger to
the past
and does not have
a future

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings Are Not Logical My Dear Cindy

looking for love? finding love in some discreet dark slits of the streets?
not quite right. Let love find you cindy, do not hide.
Take the good side of the lighter side of the system of the shin.
Take flight. Let the bees chase the flowers.
Do not an earthworm be like, in the hollows hiding
There is no mate waiting.

Show your glow. Be like a firefly with a light luminous carried by its body.

Be like a shining sheen of the sunny side up of the favorite fried egg
On the white porcelain plate. A fork. a spoon, a glass of tea.
Pancakes with glaze of honey.
And pink watermelon slice and yellow pulp of a ripe mango.
Eat. Lick. Savor. Bittersweet. Sweetest of all sweets in
Suntory Whiskey. Feelings, oh, feelings my dear simply utter
What is there. What is felt by the heart. Like all these
There is no pattern, no system, no formula,
All but unfinished roads, and you figure out
What to do, where to go, but Here you are
Start from here. All. It is all play. Enter.
Click the right icon for you.

Press enter. Go.
Fly away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings Creep Like Vines On A Trellis

you are an embroidery
upon a cloth
and everyday your hand moves with
the needle and the colored threads
as you rely on the rhythm of your
life

the picture is incomplete
feelings creep like vines on a trellis
and one sunny day
be excited

a bud turns into a flower
a butterfly flutters and lands silently in one of your petals

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings Feelings

i
)
(
)
(

so light >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>> i
(
)
(
)
(

so light >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>> i
)))) ((((((()))) ((((())))))))) free so feel
* *
*
^ ^

&i light

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
<<<<<<<<<so i feel
(((((so free))))))
(((((so light))))))

i feel so free so light

i
Feelings Of Insufficiency

our feelings of insufficiency are real.
we do not fake it
we show it, but these feelings have something greater to say
than mere helpless insufficiency:

it reminds us, boy, we are human
subject to the limitations of who and what we are
boy, we only give what we can
the rest could be luck
our best need not be enough

sometimes we feel that what we get we do not really deserve
oh boy! what conceit? what a lack of this sense of humility?

all is fair, nothing more nothing less
there is no rush for success
there is always the right season, the right time for the right person.

later, it will be me, later it will be mine.
all i need, having exerted my best, is just pray and wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feelings...

actually we are falling
like rain
but the difference is that
we fall
upward
because we are transcendental
creatures
who know the cycles of light
and darkness

who know that life is a ring
there is no end to this falling
and so we
simply stay

there is no floor
we only dream of skies

no ceiling
we only have space beyond

and this pretty makes all interesting
together
we are actually floating in this fall
and so we simply feel
that we are watching things around
us
we invent television and
we sit by the sofa
and watch

there is no falling after all
we are here
dots on earth taken by its spins and
revolutions

we are like stones now
stable on the sand...
Feelings... And More Feelings That Go Away...

in my hands are feelings
they are sand
spilling away
more like water in character
you want to touch it
but the sooner you believe
that they can stay
they have already left
and gone
away...

feelings are strangers
going places
how can they ever stay
faithful
to the hands
even if warmth is still there
even if
you tell them
how you need them to stay

RIC S. BASTASA
Feet In Circle

i have seen
feet of black children
in circle
they look at each
other's eyes smiling
affirming once again
the power
of unity in their most
tribal tradition

RIC S. BASTASA
inside that room
the item is displayed
in full
and you shall see the
perfect form that
you dream of

i will not describe the
lines and the curves
this is private

you are free now to explore
the terrains of the
human body

your hands are firm
you perspire in the middle of
the coldness

you are preoccupied with
yourself on the
limited time
life is....limited
time is money

the other one is obliged
the contract is clear
the hands mimic the touch of love
the lips plays the music
the body sways into a dance

the approximation is too short
love does not exist
no words come out
the eyes close imagining another
world out there
the heart bleeds
you do not see blood
you are too preoccupied with
what you shall get

well, time is up
upon a profuse perspiration
the heart is calm
that lovely storm is over now

you go separate ways
trying to forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feigned Passion (In A Pornographic Movie For Pay)

passion is
feigned and when it
is
done so
the sounds of moaning
in monotonous
dishonesty
it is
a repetition of
two same syllables
all likened
to the rubbing of
two dry leaves
on a very dry
summer
i listen carefully
no vowel is
truthfully spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
since you are selfish
not wanting to share
your fish
your loaf
your coffee
i decided to imagine that
you do not exist
not even air
which still occupies
space
& weight a matter of my discretion
that is
all too personal
from now on i decided to rely upon
my fish
my own loaf of bread
my own coffee
my own jumping heart in that
Mount of Olives
from now on i go my way
that way
this way
all the way
i have nothing to lose
i am nothing
to you, but let me try my own way
who knows
with the blessings of Lady
Luck
who knows that i can also be
everything
to this and that
whatever that fate brings
on a tray
of fortune.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fences And Fidelities

marriages were made
to be broken, that seems to be the rule now
women have long demanded
fidelity
not 1% of unfaithfulness is considered
as an excuse
now, i travel alone, watching the long roads
approach me like a movie
houses in the cities forestalled by
tall buildings
inferior to the heights of modernization
seemingly the old houses are gone
now like marriages
except those in the suburbs
where old house still persists
with their fences
like fidelity, i guess it must be fenced
to keep it away from
infection, love a green grass
marriage still like an old lifestyle
where the wife picks the flowers
while the husband still plays
with his favorite dog
and his kids.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fencing

fence out despair
it does nothing good for the grass on the yard
fence in hope
for they are like finches that feed on the grains
to include the wastes of the kitchen
fence out doubt
they do nothing but crowd the room
like uninvited guests
who always ask for glasses of wine
though you want to close out
but they always persist in drunkenness
fence it love
you know what it can do to your bed
and the linens
and the bathroom
it gives you a sense of beginning
a feeling of eternity
when you have forgotten how to moan
fence out loneliness
you know how it destroys you
and deprives you of much needed sleep
when your eyes sink
like boats in the whirlpools of madness

but at any rate when these fenced out matters
still remain
such as the loneliness that you cannot drive away
or the doubt that still cling like dusts in the furniture
no matter how you dust them away
or the despair that appears like blood stains
in your pastel green carpets

well, why not be with them
and make them feel that they are at home with you
perhaps
they mean no harm
they do nothing
except to make you feel
that you are not alone
that happiness is a freak
that life is like all these
whole in sadness
undefeated in our psychological wars
that after all
they are your sources of strength
the tests of your mettle.

welcome them
after all they have nothing to stay
except in your
house of realities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ferdie

blood was the rain
that made the ground of your dreams
fertile,
death was the plow that furrowed
a vision
of us here who simply watched
as you pass us by
there was something that bloomed
like the flower
under the shadow of the sun
the silence says you left
nothing
everything about you has become
unrecognizable,
there were traces but only for a while
the sea washed what footprint was
there
you left seeds, still alive, the birds of prey
black as their hearts are
took them all away

one seed grows
tall and mighty
now it is asking me what you were
what has become of you
a name that they all barely remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Ferris Wheel Talks

to make him interesting
tell him that you are with your other
famous friends in the bar
drinking the best beer in town
and you are enjoying the talks of the
town

to include him, (and he would be too
curious what about him that you are all
talking about)
and you make stories, here and there
and everywhere
precisely to make him alive again

when in fact, you and your famous
friends
had been talking about religion,
philosophy, politics, and
girls, and
about this incessant Ferris wheels
of war and peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fiat Voluntas Dei

at the end
we shall not be responsible
for logically
what happened was that
it was God's will
it was Him all along asserting Himself
slowly
in a hurry or whatever
despite the fact
that they always make us feel
that we are responsible
with our own human
will,

at the end
He triumphs
even without us

RIC S. BASTASA
Tel me what is your recently invented pretense
Your latest lie?

Shape, form, color, texture,
Of your many selves like your unequal fingers
More than the number
Of your allowable toes,

Feign and feign
That is feigning
Feign in feigning
Fingers like other fingers,

The shape
Of your fingers

You make things up
You invent new stories
And without any excuses
At all, like a very clever man loving many women
At the same time,

Figment, fabric, fabricate fabrics
To entertain, you are justifying, just to entertain, not to
Deceive
To lure them to glorify themselves
To believe about some goodness and beauty and the
Truth so well expressed in fiction,

In the field of imagination things work themselves into human beings
The cows talk in affable fables, the characters talk about avarice, love, hate,
And murders done in fiction,
We learn a lot,

And in that vast field of fiction
You are the cicada singing
Alone
To a cold and dark night
Wishing to be
A black bird, the one that flies and sings
And goes to places where
You have never been.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fictional

everything i write comes back to me
like they are real
in flesh and blood and friends write
how come
how is it that we are there in your poems
when they are supposedly
some works of a writer
imaginary and fictional

i have no answer

i write about love and broken hearts
and another friend
emails if i am alright
is there anything she can do to help?

but i say again

this is not me this has nothing to do with me
this is fiction

and she does not believe me
she says,
there you are trying to lie again
when blood runs surging like some pulse
of a dying man wanting to be alive
in your poetry,

i have no answer

the poems are works of fiction
it is not me it is about him and her and them

she shrugs off her shoulders
and reads again about the old church where
she once knelt and prayed

there was this girl who fell in love
and whose heart was
beautifully torn to pieces

she says she is her
the poem is true

and there was this boy
who was with her praying
who, when he became a man
broke her heart

she says it is you it is you
the poem is true,

the poems are true
who will ever believe me now?

i have always lied all along
count it from the first poem
when i said about

it and i said it was
it is

all about nothing and
it will always be about nothing

but fiction, nothing personal, but it can be also painful and lingering.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Fidelity

In your river he can be slimy as a fish
And when you sing,
He sings with you as a bird
And when you flow he flows with you as sand
And to the sea when you reach the final destination
He becomes the bay always looking at you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When love is gone
as it usually happens, when the house
empties itself
throws away all the furniture and beds
and sets aside
cups of coffee and
chocolate cookies,

When everything becomes a question,
we are no longer interested
in some answers,

We go on doing that things
we do
like ants on a trail
like birds building nests and depositing eggs
and hatching them
on pure instincts,

We do simply because we have to do
them,
we go on, and on and on,
nothing leaps from our chests,
the heart still beats but not for the joys of love
but only for
stability, somehow, the house is still this house,
let the home go berserk somewhere
we still keep the beams strong
and the stairs serviceable
for our comings and goings
We choose no departures
We pledge to stay: for bitter or worse
even death
till the next life, we must comply.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fiesta De La Vida

Hey amigas
Viva la vida
Fiesta la vida
Cantandos amigos
Viva la vida

Dance, dance
Sway your hands
Touch the ceiling
Touch the skies

Fiesta fiesta de la vida

Swirl, sway,
Raise our arms to the
Ceiling to the skies

Feel God
In the feast of your
Body swaying....

Meanwhile
Delete the email
Of the British National Lottery
Telling you that you win
One million pounds!

Ouch!

I am exercising. I am hypertensive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fifteen

You curl, you know how to curl,
Yes you know a curl in your hair
And you curl yourself like a
Hair, in your bed,
It is so cold and no one
Sleeps here
No one comes
There is no hello
As guest and no
Hi to pretend
You are coming
Well, you curl, you know how to curl,
Like your hair,
This time, curl forever,
Nothing straight till the end,
Eternal curl,
Still
Touch it

It bounces and re-bounces,
touch it again,
and be silent

RIC S. BASTASA
you tell me that your son
was mauled
by police officers
and you find him
in our arms
spitting blood
almost dead

the twist of your
story is
unforgettable

you are looking for
a lawyer to
defend yourself?

i am outraged.
give me my comfort bag
i am about
to vomit.

i am driving my car tonight
i do not turn on the radio

i want to kill the silence
of the common people.

RIC S. BASTASA
Figures Don’t Lie (Edited)

you must understand that what costs
us sleepless nights
and these ugly eye-bags are not
really the words, but the
numbers,

yes the numbers those digits
those symbols

they are the least common
denominators

and numbers are figures and figures
as you must have been briefed by the famous adage department

figures do not lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
you must understand that what costs us sleepless nights and these ugly eye-bugs are not really the words, but the numbers,

yes the numbers those digits those symbols

they are the least common denominators

and numbers are figures and figures as you must have been brief by the famous adage

do not lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
Figuring It Out...

first, we figure out
what makes us really happy,
takes us lots of time
and places
forgetting about the essence
of the heart,
then we move on to accept
what is laid before our eyes
mostly pain
alcoholic numbness
saves
and finally we find ourselves
beyond ourselves
against the rage of time
falling beyond the edge
of our sufferings

and then we feel nothing
at most
we are relieved
and then we do not tell them
that we
are free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Figuring Out Meanings

there is a time when we do not have to figure out what the bird really is talking
i mean, what does it sing? what word is there? what message?
isn't this too technical in a sense of figuring out what it wants to convey?

hey, just listen, it is singing
do not figure out the meaning

have fun!

RIC S. BASTASA
Fill Me In

fill me in
for i am an empty cup
and you are a river

fill me up
for you are a hundred stars
and i am but a lonely sky

fill me
for i am a man without love
and you are the woman bursting

with love
fill me up for i am a dry earth and you
are the goddess of rain and sunshine

make me tremble in so much joy
one that i cannot spell
with any word
in a poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Filthy

steel brush hair
uncut for a week

brown-out and
black-out

soap without water
dog waiting outside

telephone rings
no one in the house

RIC S. BASTASA
Final Parting

i hope you are true
on this final parting

when you say goodbye
make it always your last

when you come back
i am not here anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Finale

at the end
you must accept
you can do nothing about it,

you sit for a while on the grass
looking for solutions
you gaze at the trees
and the river trying to figure out
the meaning of its song
you do no miss
figuring the sound of the
stones

and then you finally look up
the sky
and find God there

Relieved
Now, He takes charge and then
your heart begins to sing
the new song
of Hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally

just like anything that you did in the past
you started like
a
gasoline spilled
on the cemented road
and a matchstick lighted
it and the fire ran
like a will o'wisp
but as usual it was
just a very short
procedure
of a flame
that once lighted
your
paths of pain
your wish for relief
and then everything

simply turned off automatically
and you
began to do something
new & strange

that which shall not cease
your way of
breathing life to another life......

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally I Know Who My Enemy Is...

i am armored
on my hand is the sharpest sword
i am ready for battle
to kill the enemies

your enemies

when i am about to win
and stab the victim
you are there running
towards me
asking that i be forgiving

your enemies are spared
and they all laugh at me

my armor is rusty now
my sword not as sharp as i
once held it

now you have enemies again
asking that i go to battle

who are you? i am not stupid anymore.
Use other mercenaries

and if there is now
Go, fight yourself, and have yourself killed

so i can offer you flowers
for the dead
so i can for once rest and smile
and tell myself

i am free and i work for no one anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally Leaving In Search Of True Love

it will be years
when you shall know the
difference of
an essence,

the quintessence of love
you try to feel it
in a body, and years and years
of ecstasy lead
to the numbness of your skin
and you begin to
discover that
this is all nonsense because

love is not actually there
but only the constant rubbing of
the skin and
the lighting of fire
that burn upon itself
until there is nothing
but ash that

shocks you into a barren
desert of emptiness

nighttime when there are no more
stars
when all the horses have
abandoned you
when the sound of the
sands
haunt you
no end,

you look around
love
the main ingredient
was never there
you regret nothing
and see nothing important here
that may hold you
into more days of your
turbulence

nothing is peaceful now
all chaos
and you finally raise your hands
in surrender

you signal the waving hands
today is the day and then you close your eyes

today is the freedom from the bars of
the flesh
you shed off flesh like leaves
you burn bones like wood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally She Asks If I Am Sick And Dying

How can I answer her?
Everybody is dying
From the moment one is born
He begins to count his steps to his grave
He begins to save money for his funeral
What makes him sick
Is the belief that he is healthy and wise
He will not die someday like the rest

To think that one is not sick
Is sickening enough
Not to think about death
That It comes anytime
Anywhere
Is sickening enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally The Bee Takes The Nectar Upon Itself

in the end he gives up his identity as the working bee buzzing in the garden of his own choosing circling the flowers that newly bloom hovering and sitting on them with his mouth and sting and sucking all the nectars therein he takes upon itself what is prohibited the caste system and the queen

today it sets itself free from the rule and flies freely in the air the nectar is his because he works for it and justifiably so another kingdom is born his nectar democracy his freedom his own destruction

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally The Laughter Reverberates Around The Four Corners Of The Room

..so finally
the sounds of laughter reigns in the room

listen!

it is mine, finally, and i do not ask
why you are as silent
as a path without a single traveler

the pebbles do not miss you
the sands are numb
the clouds are as white as snow
no signs of rain

nice weather, i suppose
sad times for you
mine shall be different
as planned beforehand

two days ago
i had that wrong notion
about death, i must confess
how foolish i had been!

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally This Body Which Too Segregates Me From You...

society has
always stairs for
the hall

houses have it too
grades, degrees,
segregating one class
from another

like water which
always seeks its own
level

i have nails
to make my own stairs
of my own house

because i understand all
these matters

i build a chair for my
butt
step on my shoes
carry my own bag
and proceed to my
journey alone

chairs i leave
shoes i soon throw away
and finally
this body which too segregates
me from you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally You Always Find Yourself Alone

it is a fact of your life

you marry
and have children
and grandchildren

and years pass by
leaving you
with wrinkles and
arthritis
bones that crack
and a brain that
does not remember
recent things
anymore

finally you find yourself alone
in your room
for they too shall find life
of their own

even your wife
has to struggle with her thoughts

and then you begin
to find
the company of God
as something
missing
long been missing

your hands are empty
your heart so hollow

you find yourself back to
where you once began

a cry and then
the silence and the sigh

now,
back to the entrance

and then
the most awaited
exit door

light slipping on the
holes of the wall inside
a dark room

ah, you are in a monologue
the air listens
like a vacuum inside a glass

less dramatic
but should be with
more glory, perhaps...

RIC S. BASTASA
Finally....

i have traced the words
and it goes back there to your mouth
you puke
and i urge you too
there is a lot of poison in there
your stomach
lots of parasites
the nerves in your skull
all infected
i am looking for some roots
if there is any brain at all
so sorry
there is none

RIC S. BASTASA
Find It....

you do not really
give up loneliness
whether you like it
or not, it is already
a part of you, you were
born with it and you
will die with it.

unless, yes unless,
you accept it as a way
of life, as a normal
beatification of the
saint in you which you
have not yet known.

when you were born
you were born alone.
do not expect much.
when you die, you
die alone, for in
truth, who likes to
die with you?

and you will tell me.
i'll find love, love
is everywhere, love is
everybody, ...find it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Find Not Love (2)

Look for something not fragile
as a sparrow's egg nestled
on a branch of a tree
not as spacious as the blue sky from
where you are imagining so many things
that may not after all
happen in your lifetime
not as real as a mirage on the desert where
once you were lost and luckily
found almost dead
look not for long and lasting love
find it here inside a house
where the roof may leak
where the hinges of the window
are rusting
where the water pump is struggling hard
to pour water
to a child whose eyes are buried
upon its sockets
badly needing a drop of water
a grain of rice
a fish bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Find Your Way Back When You Are Lost

when i look at you
your thoughts become
transparent

you have the head of
a glass
and your thoughts
are dark

like shadows of geese
flying away
from a blazing afternoon

look at me, i am a forest
there are so many creatures
inside this forest

when you come
when i invite you
it is your responsibility
to find your way back
when you are lost

RIC S. BASTASA
Find Your Way Through

we have been together
laughter and tears
(intimacies cliched
by daily familiarities)

now i am going alone
on this narrow road
(he calls it the road
to calvary)

but all is not done yet
there is a door
where you must get in
you too alone

then somewhere
we meet again

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding A New Pebble

Meeting you is like
Finding a new pebble
Out at sea. I don’t see

Any similarity
with
The rest

i say
you're unique

And
no one
Believes this pebble
in my hand is
Something significant

In fact
Everyone does
Not really mind
At all
Saying it is
Nothing but a
A very ordinary
pebble

But in my heart
It isn’t
It is something
That
Amazes me
with its texture
of solidity
and
metallic color

it has
Changed the way
i look
At all the pebbles
on the
shore

you lied.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding A Silent Place

he says he sees her everyday
in the internet
he still works in oxford
and wants to see her
in person

he is here and wanting to
find a silent place to talk
to her

ok there is none

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding God

the souls of my ancestors are angry
they were telling me inside my nightmares
the souls of my friends are worried
the mouths of my living acquaintances are angry
the priests and mother superiors
the church layman are impatient
with my quest that why at the age of 49
i still confess
that i have not found the way to God

i confess my doubt
but i am not at all the infidel that must be burned at the stakes of disbelief
i have seen all of you
entering that wide and gold-plated doors
all ready-made by the Church of Rome
i have seen all of you march boldly on that wide and steady road
of Dogmas
all prepared by those in Authority
like an instant coffee

inside my heart i still look for that narrow road
via the check-points of suffering
i have seen the bleeding blood of martyrs
decapitated heads, thorns on their heads, crosses with dead bodies
still hanging,
i have seen the tortures and the beheading
of the saints
i have seen the angels without wings crying for justice

that way, i am heading,
and this way, i am having a hard time understanding you
My Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding Home Back

the radio on the other side of this room plays an old music
i face this usual monitor as my fingers begin to press the letters chosen as thoughts begin to hover like pigeons in that public park where children are left by their mothers to play on their own sensing no danger somehow about strangers

somehow one listens and then writes with nothing planned in mind like a stream of thoughts some flowers that fall on the yards of your youth that you gather gently to make a garland for yourself a chain of daisies yes you must still remember white on a string connecting until the end line is closed

and you think that there is an end to remembering but like numbers that we gather its infinity runs like the horizon until the afternoon closes in and then the world turns dark on you and then you hear nothing and you have nothing to do now but walk away only to return to the first stairway to your home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding Oneself.....

one day
you will ask

who am i? where am i going?
why am i here?

it will not be
a happy day for you

or for us or
for everyone else

you will not ask those
questions in a loud voice

you will ask them
from the inside your gut

it will be a blurred day
your eyes shall fall short of tears

the river dries and the
skies turn into gray

RIC S. BASTASA
someday i shall
find the
best and fitting
metaphor for you
and your
grief someday this
metaphor will
lighten what burden
you have

i am sifting through
this
that which explains and
makes all these
ugly versions
beautiful

what mess is there
this metaphor must put
back everything in place
in full
Technicolor
in its HD version

when it comes perhaps
all the sad things could
be easily set aside
well kept inside a cabinet
and silenced

could be
a basket laced with flowers
could be
a rainbow in the sky
and a cliff with running
singing falls.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding The Golden Rod

from my head you follow the
contours of my eyebrow
walk upon the bridge of my nose
follow the furrows of my skin
and pass upon the grasses of my hair
you shall climb the hills on
my chest and slide upon
the muscles of my arms
rest a while on the plains
of my abdomen and
proceed some more
on the the lower valley
of my strong body

the veins your maps
that your lips must
gently follow and then
with your bare hands
right at the center of
my thighs you grab the
golden shiny rod
an ember sword
of the kings
hidden in that pot
at the foot of my rainbow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding The Sea Finally.....

oil and water do not mix
who does not know it? until
we know something else
and you call it: colloid
between the world of oil and the
world of water
something meets them, and they fuse
and make a scene, of hues and penetrations,
another world, another beauty,
the head and heart and the bottom of
humanity, somewhere between, this spine
this modality, this middle,
between the rings of the rich and
the hunger of the hands
a link is made, a connection, an intersection.
between the trees and the skies,
a bench, where two lovers sit unmindful of
those sunsets, between those busy folks
looking for money, the playground of kids
without the sound of fury,
boredom's petals fall, rot and then dry.
time indeed knows the way in this puzzle.
a river winds its way, finally finding the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding Time

time is such a huge space
and you find yourself inside it

so huge, sometimes you do not
not what to do with the empty
spaces that still haunt us

despite the calendars and
hectic schedules set by us
by them....

there is this stare that we give
to the wind
and we still have no answers

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding You Finally Finding Me

it is a merry go round
a roller coaster and we are the
passengers of this
exhilaration
it ends at a short time
and we take off
to find our hearts furiously beating
we run another mile
we cross another river
and climb another mountain
we like to know the limits
of our veracity
until we finally end at the top of the cliff
on a dead end
you look back
i jump down like a god
finding my right place
in the order of things.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding You Finding Me Finding Us....

each word has
a derivative
it is like a tree
each leaf has an
equivalent root tip

what is said is not
taken from the air
like a meaningless molecule
that is here and then sooner
disappear

there is meaning to each
word, even to each syllable
it springs from
an experience from what you did
and what i did
it does not just come out from nowhere

so always pay an attention
discover and always discover
be aware
be sensitive
discern and discern some more
be a lens
until you too find yourself in me
and someone else

for we are mirrors to each
to find each other's true face.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Finding Your Real Mission Your Real Meaning

as a teacher
it is with them
your students who listen to you attentively
while you lecture
and impart your knowledge not just
in their minds
but also in their hearts

not only in their bodies
but also in their souls
deep within

it is with them
that you find the fulfillment of your mission
you find the real meaning of
your life
as they like little springs rise higher
than their source
you
the teacher happily singing

as they reach for their skies
and you the clear running river
reflects their
triumphs
on the mirror of
your waters
of a hundred watchful eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Fingers Of Light

fingers of light
from the hands of the morning sun
caressing
the face of love
warming the body of desire

time both blanket and pillow
moments of melodies
songs of summer love

lips of lust
darkness moans
stars ejaculate
the moon in a multiple orgasmic outburst
the land is silent
satisfied

a new day is born.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fingers On The Piano

the fingers on the piano
are so cruel
pressing the ivory keys
of mother's old piano
and from
the blankness of
her presence
a floodgate opens
the memories
which should have
been better
forgotten
there will be more
tears shed
as there will always
be rain
but there is this
adamant
determination to claim
the colors
of the rainbow
after

RIC S. BASTASA
Finis Vitae Sed Non Amoris

you think you ended Love
when you ended your Life?

Love survives Life
Life is Left to Thrive Upon Itself
and Perish If You Will
But Love will always be There
In Itself Forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Finished

as soon as you are born
you actually start to venture
to an end. Every cry is
every laughter's equal.
There is no such thing
as loss or gain. There
is always an equilibrium
and equivalence, a value
for value, such is the law
of human conservation.
There is really no reason
to fear, because there
is no such thing as birth
or death anymore. There
is just this journey
unfinished by you
and know
that everything is an
unfinished business
is the finishing tribute
of the step
forward, and then
you feel eternity.
The first step is
actually the end of
all beginnings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fir The Lucky One

the shoes look for his feet
his shirt and pants find their way inside
his room
the table readies his meals
and the tv for his morning news
turns itself on
and when he walks away
the chair pulls itself to give way
the floors come running for him to step upon
the money pours like rain
and the gains find nothing to explain
luck comes knocking not just once
but all the days of his life
and he simply sits there and watch

oh, you lucky one!
someone takes care of you and loves you
you know nothing about hard work
and patience

and i cannot question it
because it is written in the palms of your hand
pursuant to the mandate of the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Fire

flints just below
my belly sending
fire all over my body,
burning! burning!

RIC S. BASTASA
Fire

flaming red
the heart that loves

basking
worshiping the sun

burning
but never charred....

RIC S. BASTASA
the night was young
and so we built a fire
until it will be cold
and darker
than dark for in this time
of the confusion of our
lives
when the fire gets redder
than red and
hotter than warm i
certainly find you more
beautiful than ever

oh, this deception of fire
that rages in the night of my
loneliness
has made you more desirable
to the demands of my
own flesh

i have never wanted this fire
to stop
but it stopped just the same
and you have changed
from shadow to stone

do not blame me when i leave
Fire, you have surely
deceived myself...

RIC S. BASTASA
Fireflies

tonight the fireflies
come out from
their hiding places

soon they will
be crowning this
tree with tiny
twinkless of
light and you

are confident enough
that there is no fire

it is lovely to see
travelling lights
in silence

the absence of stars
and the surrender of the moon

on the horizon and the
darkness of the night
in contrast.

you hold your chin
with you thumb and index finger

you sit down on a chair
without a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are no stars tonight

but there are fireflies
teeeming the leaves of
this tree
in darkness

o wo wo wo

the fireflies
are mimicking stars

but in inferior flickers

substituting
real twinkles

the tree in the dark
now begins
to look like
the Milky Way Galaxy

and look at you

you are nothing
but an atom
vibrating

making some assurance
that you are still
alive

in this mimicry
of the universe

RIC S. BASTASA
Fireworks In The Town

colors explode in the sky
in loud sounds

beautiful! beautiful!

yet unlike and unequal
to an ejaculation

silent not enduring
but freeing

RIC S. BASTASA
First Engagement In Bed

a moment
when a white
flower receives
the first drop
of gentle rain
feeling heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
First Level Of An Ordinary Conversation

on the shallow waters of laughter
we let go the words, we go with the flow of the first layer of our waters.
wooden boats, hands as rudders and a little emptiness covered
by the lace of sweet nothings, hi, hello, how are you, miss you,
as the feet stamp on something rocky, as the eyes bitter blue,
as our souls should know where to go, sham, spam,
violets are violets, and blue is blue, and red as red,
no implications, no deeper swimming, just a slight touch
here and there, some finishing statements, oh your nice,
you look thinner, losing weight is good, like your hair your nose
shallow, so shallow, there is no force here, no light, glimmer sans,
i look forward to seeing you again.

maybe next year, maybe never. you have become so ordinary.
and you sure, do not understand what i really mean. It is you.

RIC S. BASTASA
First Love

on that glance
the eyes see a different world

a rain of roses
when she comes

a colored world when she
gets near you

fourth of July
when her hands touch yours

though accidentally and
she says there is no meaning at all

you create meanings now
like a painting like a poem

a neutral word becomes
biased for love

RIC S. BASTASA
First Song.....

first song
from the trees
from a bird

slowly light
from the sun
creeps by my
window

mists dissolve
and then gone
upon the glass
pane

i switch off
the light in my
room

nothing dramatic
as one opens
the kitchen door

sunny side up
this fried egg
for breakfast

upon a coffee
scented room

RIC S. BASTASA
Fish Bone Thrown Into Infamous Pits)

the door is high on the mountain
if a fish swims its way it is more probable that
its fins are torn before it even reached one of the banks
of the river
below the feet of grassy lands

the old wise man once tells the story of the
great fish who made it there flying with the power
of a borrowed wing
a friend to the winds
humble to the reeds
and the fish as soon as its gills become adopted
to the hazards of mountain peaks

suddenly turn into a dragon
heir to the thrown of the volcanic kingdom
how it has learned to breath fire
and spit embers
how it has grown leather like wings
and sharp scalpel nails
is a legend

that old men always want to tell to their grandchildren
with nothing in mind that they shall become great

(and never like them who have succumbed
as mere fish bone thrown into infamous pits)

RIC S. BASTASA
Fishyt Fishly Love Affair...

the balloon that you released in air
finally burst
and you know not where the rubber
has landed,

just like that old arrow that he shot into the air
you know not exactly where it fell,

just like the love that i am giving, it shall fall
(not for you, who shivers with its touch)
i better give it to the seagull instead

this love for a fish,
this fish that loves nothing but the sea....

RIC S. BASTASA
Fistfight

which side of the fist do you side with?  
the left  
or the right

there are no other choices?

there is actually.

fistlessness, the man without fists  
and the watchers who do not shout for victory the moment one loses his game

or that which  
where no one grieves when somebody dies

fistlessness  
a world without a winner or loser  
a world without the cheerers of death

a world where each is equal  
man to man and woman to woman

where to eat one does not have to maim  
or kill  
or swindle  
another man

fistlessness  
an open hand, a palm asking for rain,  
hands clasped in prayer

hands gripping love  
fingers caressing the body of his beloved

in the theatre of war  
not the fighters, not them lose and win

it is you, the spectator counted as nothing but  
a collateral damage
they say and will always say, it was not intended to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fit And Strong......

for the things that you love
there is always time

nothing hinders love, there is
no obstruction

when papers pile themselves on
the table
when queries come here and there
when there are no more answers
when money is nil when opportunities
fall short of knocking hands
when everything takes the shape of
a fists when harsh words come like
vendors on the market streets
you feel like nothing destroys you
and you take no refuge in food or
friends and safe nooks and
secret gardens,

you do what i am doing
write and keep writing
journey into the storms of the mind
and feel confident

the mind is no sinking boat
and even with all the storms
the lighthouse of the self
keeps the flames and there you are
again: always a survivor...
fit and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fit For Forgetting...

i do not wish to understand you
it is no use at all, i only have to have you perhaps but i may not have you for certain there are no things as such or persons personified in wood and stone i do not wish to hold you i do not have that power i am tired of being lonely and broken perhaps some parts of me automate some parts adjoining to make a whole of me again, perhaps and so i do not wish to have you and hold you and even remember you the years have taught me that you are only such a beauty for my forgetting distance fold like waves of the sea spitting foams and touching skies and wandering at sunsets and then face away like
gentle light
finally embracing the
arms of
night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fitting In...

inside the mosquito net
he reveals that he is having a hard time
fitting a part of him
to her

i am at a loss
wanting to imagine what could this be
something sexual
or metaphorical

he says i refuse to understand
perhaps i must be too innocent or i must be too dumb
been purified lately
and what is adulterated simply repulses the emptiness
of my senses

don't know,
don't know

what is it please? what is it?
please.

RIC S. BASTASA
Feeling lousy is seeing this lady laughing
She does her thing with confidence like she
Knows everything; what to do with this
Matter called
Everything,
She knows her place and claims it as hers,
She tells you, you are never like her doing so well
In fame,
Glory, and
Honor,
She has her circle of friends, a nice reliable computer
And an internet facility
To get her on top

On top of shape, on top of everything,
Yes, this everything,
Which she has control of,

And feeling so lousy, I wish how I can be like her,
This great woman of everything

But then, I wonder, I have my place, where she can never be,
This lowly place, this small space she detests,
This is mine, I am small,
This small place I have
Where she can never be
And I own this,
Enough for me,
I am happy.

And, oh well, I do not like everything,
Too big to handle and
I know
I would be unhappy by then.

I simply like myself being small.

RIC S. BASTASA
Five Quibblings....

i

i have to write this matter in a rush
it is seven twenty two in the morning,
it is a bright day like a
sunny side up fried egg,

and i haven't had breakfast yet
it is not a holiday for me
i don't smile, there is no cheering up
pocketed smile, restrained yet trembling hands,

there is work in the office this whole day
busy, busy, busy,

i am on trial, (what i mean is i conduct trials,
slip of the tongue thing, eh)
and tonight i have to teach criminal law
at the law school
with more gaping mouths to feed
knowledge, skill, the capacity to evade the law
later after mastery,
that is it.

ii

i remember the star apple tree at the center of the school
it is shedding off its leaves and one car got hit
by its rotting falling branch: by mere pull of gravity
it has no life force at all to resist
a fall,
there is no desistance here, everything is accepted,
like this freedom too to destroy oneself
or another
negligent being, creature, thing.

iii
the place is muddy and the waters rise
and there is flood everywhere
and what appears before me is a lake
less the swans,

iv

the grasses here die of so much water and
there is no electricity, it follows, it is logical to expect some
short circuits during floods, and the storms
necessarily, strong winds, destroyed electrical poles,
fire,

the rooms are dark and the students are
leaving
i am as usual left alone with some questions
to be back home or have
a drink somewhere else where there is not
much crowd to know me and my
usual quibbling about
loneliness....i am not joking.

v

meanwhile, time runs that fast, like a bullet train,
i fall short of time, but here i am rushing to the
last word of this
poem.

if you agree.i think, it is none of my business.
i agree.

RIC S. BASTASA
Five Stairs

there are five stairs
in my life
on the fourth of which
shall be death
it is not the last
but surely i shall step in there
but i am stuck
on the third and here i am
delighted because it is so pleasing
it is not wood
it is soft and warm and even though
not as stable as the third
but it is as pleasurable as the sweetness
of my temporary days
thick and syrupy like pure honey
from the bee

RIC S. BASTASA
Fixed And To Be Not Able To Move And Go Beyond

You have fixed yourself like a pole
On this ground unable to move and go beyond
This daintiness (you call it carnality)
What you have in your mind
Are some parts of my human body
This thigh, this navel, this nipple
My legs my lips my tongue

You even hint on
The one that rises in the morning
When I make hot water and look for coffee
And cream
The sound of sipping you said you still crave

I honestly care for you
And I may even make love with you someday
(Or you may just kiss me on my cheek)
But try looking at me as one soul in this darkness
Feel my sighs hear my gentleness
And touch that softness at the center of my being
Light me up like a candle, let the light spread

Now see this lotus in the pond and then take a glimpse
Have awe and then wonder

RIC S. BASTASA
Fizzle

eat a certain funny idea
digest
and soon you fizzle out
and fart

i am trying to
break the wind
tonight

wind without noise
between us
poet
to poetess

we shall hiss,
as does
a piece of fireworks

unambitious rockets
we too fizzle
doggedly
downward

we rise again
with modest reluctance,
we hesitate often,
we decline finally;
generally,
to misunderstand the questions
some more
among us
thrown

we fail
we soon than sooner
die out

if we allow it......
Flaccid....

he of course has learned
to hate the word
with time unfolding in front of him.
she laughs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flapping Sails Of The White Winds

let us
let us all be
white sails blown by the wind in one direction
flapping, flapping winds, flapping wings of a white bird towards the endless sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flashes Of Lights

in one instant
the thought arrives
as a firefly,
or a flash of light
a lightning by the
window that
misses you
as target
you could have died
you shudder
looking on the other
side of the
world
through your half
closed window

a second
sometimes can be fatal
life often
behaves that
way.

RIC S. BASTASA
inside the room
you rest your feet
on the stool
and you ask her
to massage
these feet a little
gentle like the
way the other
woman does
not like the one
that a wife
does to a husband
the other one
is trying hard
to please you
while the real one
wants to finish
is quickly
and then you
tell her
that her love
is just
perfect for
this rare
occasion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flattery And Praise

flattery comes
from your
teeth out

praise comes
from inside
the heart

an appreciation
that is sincere
something
that you do not
believe
because we are
oceans and oceans
apart

because i cannot
touch you
because i
have no wings

you must have
thought of
drift woods
and sails
without rudders
of men
without hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
Fledgelings

mothers and fathers
are like birds
always thinking of their
fledgelings
what to feed to their
mouths everyday
until they grow up
with wings to fly
away.

on such stage
they throw away education,
principles,
sacrifice even their personalities
and integrity
for a few worms

RIC S. BASTASA
Fledgling

you beak is too big
for your wings

you see
you cannot really fly on
your own

you have fallen again
and your claws
are broken

surrender now to
mama-bird who is anxious

waiting for you
with a nice worm
in her nest

RIC S. BASTASA
Fleeting Moment

burning wood
smoke rising to the sky

fog finally leaves
and you see trees and houses

soft wind
touching your skin

fleeting moment
so light upon your heart like a tiptoe

now you remember someone
you wish she will be forgotten

it is sweet and
sour

nothing's changed
despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
one morning
you wake up
you see nothing
but darkness still
you ask what time
is it? it is 7 in
the morning,
you discover
that you are blind,
you see nothing now,
you rub your eyes
still
they do not see light
or color or shape
you imagine light
smell things and
imagine what their
colors are,

you think that it
is just a nightmare

it is not, it is
a reality

what is the use of
tears?

what is the use of
screaming?

bear the darkness and
learn to live with
it, ....learn to
love it...
it is all  you've got

RIC S. BASTASA
Flexibility…

for we do not own the winds
and so what we can always do is adjust our sails...

RIC S. BASTASA
Flirting...

do not worry
these are but little teases
of fate

if you take a closer
look at the tears
you could have seen their
tiny lips
smiling for their final
release

if you have listened quite
a little longer
you could have heard the
suppressed laughter of your
eyelids
before they finally close

but you are so tired
and have not noticed
all these
having entered finally
the narrow door
of your day dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Float And Facing

i launder my whole body to the sea
with a bamboo pole i float and facing

the horizon i meet every wave every foam
what i see is an endless coming and coming and coming

dthis must be what the sea is all about
the waves come with the salty water and yet nothing gets filled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Floater

I have become the tossing blade of grass
The tumbleweed of the powerful trail
Tugged playfully along
The lanes of the winds
Floating and not saying anything
This and this
And this and that
Going always nowhere
Anywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
Floater....

It must be the water
It must be where you chose
Living
Could be those clouds
For yiu have profuse roots
Of opulence

Why do u float
Still?

RIC S. BASTASA
Flor De Luna

White flower
Blooming
Only at night
When no
one is
Watching

And so easily
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
been there
yes, in new orleans,
rode too
on that street car named
desire
found a place named
cemetery
and bought some flowers
for the dead

you must know
they are for the living

those who wish to be dead
and those though living are already dead.

kowalski, yes kowalski
in his true words caused much of the deaths there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flower Of Summer.....

if you
were
just another
kind of
cheap thread, you

would have
snapped by now, listen

you are not
like those that snapped
before having
tried
the strong art of
sewing, you are

destined to be
part of the fabric

flower in summer
not a wind of winter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flower Petals

as the flower sheds off
its petals one by one
to the ground

i look at you closely for tonight
shall you be a flower
to me

shedding off
what petals you have
until what i see
is only
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowers

oh you like flowers.
red carnations. sunbright suntans.
big red roses. with dew still on its leaves.
oh you like all the flowers
from all the corners of the lewdness of the earth.
so earthly. you eat every petal
and chew every sepal

you bet. you're the beast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowers And Skies

between the grass
and the clouds
a flower,
it has a dream to
become a tree
she is a woman,
between the tree
and the sky
man,
between the two
lies the legend of
lust

between lust and must
lay the rules

between two cities
runs the train of trauma

somehow on this stream of
consciousness
a fish alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
you talk about a world
of flowers
and i cannot help but
also remember
the thorns and worms

bee to bee
tree to tree
aphid to
aphid

do you wish to bring me there?
is there a world for me?
flowers for the bees
rivers for the trees

suns for the grass
stones for the sands

in your circus world
of flora
Brigitte
the fauna clowns are no longer funny

look at me
i am no longer a child
candies do not
attract me

i decide for myself
now
and neither sorrow nor joy
is not
anymore the prime
envoy

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowers For The Magnificent Liar That We All Love No Matter What

you ask for bread
i give my own bread
plus juice, i had one
cold in the fridge
pressed from fresh orange

you can take it
sip slowly as i watch
i can give you almost anything
if you just ask

you do not have to fabricate stories
i know each line

been there, you see,
been there, i keep telling you

you ask the world
my world

i am always ready to give this world to you

i have no power over the stars
and the sea

but i can ask them for you

you just ask, all you need to do is just ask

there is no need for a lie
yet you did lie to me
will you ask if it pains me?

even before you ask me
i have already an answer
like a fried chicken on the platter

I've been in pain
there is always pain over my shoulders
you're the burden there

so how can i ever experience pain again?

you are a liar
and will always be
one magnificent liar

if you only ask
we can always give you

the answer: we will always love you
just the same

know that. you must know that.
we have all cried for you
we want to save you

perhaps, these flowers will tell
that all....

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowery Thoughts

when we talk
i can imagine your
chain of words

linking delights
vibrantly to
enchantment
like some purple fuzzy herbs
beside the red day lily
surrounded by tiny blue flowers
in a Japanese garden
where i am more of a
rock beside a pond
attentively listening.

felicity, i see
in full fruition.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowing From My Heart

lava flows from my heart
because i am a volcano to you.

lots of love flow also from my heart
to the one who believes in me

a gentle human person filled with love
to the one who also loves me

you get what you deserve
i give what i can

and for one who loves me for what i am
i have given everything

and for the one who has given everything
i also give everything in return

and for the one who really loves me
i am offering my mind, my soul, my body, my heart

for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flowing Rivers

we are there
we just don't want to
talk about it
we keep on flowing
like any river
the boatmen
and their ladies
how can they ever
recognize us?
they're having their
parties too
under the moon
upon the cold nights
of their
own preoccupations
what have they
become
we too ask

waters are uniform
so they know how to hide
incognito like all of us
there is no specific
face to all that is happening
to all

if we spill
and move to the opposite direction
we become all
too different

they must never know
the pain of being a river
of being plain water

oh, they know
their own pains too
and we know how to act
not feeling them
we're here
how can we tell them?
show the bubbles
let the image of a celebration
be seen
on both banks of this
iconic world

RIC S. BASTASA
Floyd's Fun

what is the fun of having surprises?

aha! aha!

she meets me one day looks at me with a little familiarity and comes closer and asks

'do i know you, mister? ' and i say without doubt,

'of course not! '

what is the use of her knowing me, anyway?

what is the pun?

that is the problem there is none not even fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fluid

emotions you must realize are fluid
and they flow sometimes misguidedly
sometimes blocked and
dammed and you see
a jail, a cell, a wall, an island without a bridge
a sea without a boat
a rainy day without any rainbow,

you are fluid, you must realize that too,
you flow, and surge and rage and
fall, sometimes, you splatter
and feel like a splinter
of a hand
grenade.

you feel something that behaves like a river inside you
and you hear the sound of rage, sometimes just a hush
or even a rain dropping from the sky to the gutter,
and you feel you're inside this gutter
and you have no control, about where to go and what to do,
this is
what is dripping all about

drip, drip, drip, and you feel this sloshing mind like a slime
getting inside the sensational strips of your throat
like words in your mind
pouring unceasingly, to make this poem.

what is this all about? you pretend to know. What to do about it?
i know you do not really know. Gut it. Gut feel it. Trust your heart.
Let the rage seep in like it is an innate part of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
emotions you must realize are fluid
and they flow sometimes misguidedly
sometimes blocked and
dammed and you see
a jail, a cell, a wall, an island without a bridge
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i know you do not really know. Gut it. Gut feel it. Trust your heart.
Let the rage seep in like it is an innate part of you.
Flu-Like

it is flu-like
this fluke of this
universe
this feverish feeling
of loneliness

i am alone on this
vast desert
on my night
with the wind
you are the
farthest star

RIC S. BASTASA
Fluttering

'she is the self-crowned
goddess
of many things and
sometimes many
silly things

with an attention span
of a butterfly, she has mastered
the fine art of fluttering
in many ways
but flying in none'

RIC S. BASTASA
Fluttering.....

if you are too heavy
and you are humiliated with
the way they look at
you

try going inside a garden
of butterflies

go where the flowers are
thick and bursting in colors

just watch there
find a tiny butterfly hopping

from one flower
to another

too fragile, light and silent

internalize
close your eyes and just be one

within that journey within
flutter....

RIC S. BASTASA
Fly Away, Follow Desire

desire is hard to spell
it used to live in streetcars
and complicated the life of one who
finally
lost himself in the labyrinth of
too much thought

i spell it secretly
and i don't spill it like your
beans in Malta

it is hard to pronounce
to fulfill it you do not even have to utter it

it must live in the heart
it must grow in the body and keep itself ready on the groins

or the thighs or the lips
or the soles of your feet during the cold pour of the rain
by the side of your window

the possibilities are always myriad
welcome it
do not deny the rights of desire

it makes you write so well
it smooths the rough seas of your journey
makes you forget what is coming
to destroy you

forgive yourself, embrace desire
do not harm
be good, be gentle

keep on waiting for the right time
cut those boundaries

travel and if you have the wings ready in your mind
try
fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
Fly We Want To Fly

when our hearts met
we were restless with our new found wings

RIC S. BASTASA
Flying Away?

i like to see the image of a lone bird flying away from me
two steady wings carrying a very light body of blue feathers
a kingfisher flying away against the morning sun
moving nowhere getting farther until it becomes a blue dot
dissolving in the distance that your eyes can no longer see

i sometimes like to think i am that bird flying away
from where i am
because this place is sad and cruel
i like to fly away
to leave everything behind me and then simply forget
and make new beginnings
as easy as that

sometimes however i ask myself:
where shall i go?
nowhere?
just nowhere?
where is nowhere?

just fly away and go
and leave and

then what?
i ask myself these real questions
calling for rational answers
begging
that i be reasonable enough with my life
and the life of others
who also depend
on me

it is not an easy stuff,
just flying away to nowhere and destruct
everything i build here:
a nest, an odor of familiarity,
a sense of home
(though sad and cruel)
a name for myself
a reputation
a family history
an ancestral domain

shall i go then and be foolish?

i am not a bird, i am a man
that is a very serious existence apart from those feathery wishes and dreams
with responsibilities, i have no wings just arms, i have no feathers
but this body

i am not just a bird, i have a soul
and so i decided to stay

with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Flying Is Just Another Way Of Living

the caterpillar feels you

how is it to be a worm
and how wings of a butterfly
come
as an instinct

but which you were not
so familiar
at first

until you fly one day
and for all the days of your life
and then you say

there is nothing in wings
that should excite us

flying is just another way of
living

and the worm in us in the past
does not really make a difference at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Focal Point...

what you are telling me is that you lack focus

i imagine what focus is

when i was a child i held a magnifying glass
and focused it to a ball of dried weeds

i got light from the sun

and of course the ball of weed turns into a ball of fire

i see the sun as the center of the universe inside my heart

i remember what you need: focus

just be careful, you will burn a ball of planets

soon you shall see a conflagration in our universe

all of us

not just watching but burning

now, with focus, comes what you think is success,

be careful, we may never find each other again

me? look at me? i am out of focus, i once burned all my books.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fog On Highway 5

we stopped right there
in Highway 5
because of the fog
and no other

just the two of us
the fog in Highway 5
and I

RIC S. BASTASA
Follow Me, Always Follow Me

follow me. always follow me.
do not worry. Do not be afraid.
There is no reason for fear.

We have the north star
and the compass and we walk through the rain.

we have the sun to light our way.
oh.. it will be as bright as noonday. except for the sweat
and the swear, do not have doubts.... follow me... follow me... come..

i will teach you the way to be lost.
i will teach you how it feels to be lost and not finding the way.
i will give you meaning to your life. You need to be shaken like

the way the earth shakes itself when people are too comfortable in their
homes watching tv and having parties for their first born, for their wedding
anniversaries, for their feasts of success, , , ,

come follow me. I am lost but i have no fear.
Because you are with me. Because i trust you. And because i was once
was lost and found my way. Because I am strong. Because i will be
stronger with you now.

Because you love me. Because you too wants to be lost with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Follow Your Feelings…

follow the feeling
do not touch anything
go where it takes you
be careful
do not touch anything
this is where it hurts
do not be touched.

when you get pricked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Following No Rules

...is like going towards a house
on a mountaintop
the trees there have
ripe fruits for the picking
lots of jack
fruits spreading a map
of smell
and you focus your gaze
and you do not know
which way
you follow a scent
a view
and you bow down
to a thick grass
finding your way in there

you are not lost
you are tired
the house is still there
the fruits are about to fall

no one has gone there yet
in your wild
imagination

a native tells you frankly
sir, it is only the top of the mountain
nothing more

RIC S. BASTASA
Fondling Just One Word

it started with just one word,
just the
I
and then it changes to
It
though there was an attempt
to use the word We,
as a matter of transformation
in a certain reaction,

but in the nature of all selfish designs from that single nose to a single heart to a hardheaded sole mind,
unwanting to share, the world shifted to the I,
the We topples down like an edifice of mockery
people not wanting to be with the other and the pain concomitant with the misunderstanding of the We, irreconciliable differences, the need for space and time

definitely there is no They
oh, the flock is uncontrollable and blind
and uniformity is abhorred and looked upon with so much disfavor and besides, the we has become an expensive venture,
we finally go back to the
I, and since then
we invoke self-respect,
dignity, and solitude,
it is the I
that finally triumphs,
well, there is this
loneliness
maybe, but,
on the other hand,
there is this strength,
or even stronger
nevertheless

RIC S. BASTASA
Fondness

it is indeed paradoxical
when one misses the one who is not missing somebody
when the fondness rests on the arms
of the cruel warrior
when love is like a bird that always leaves
the present season
looking for that which ambushes it for the
kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fons Sapientiae, Verbum Dei

the source of all knowledge
all wealth all health
all power all happiness
the source of all poems
not us but always
God.

Praise Him. Love Him.
And everything shall be given Unto You.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fool Them....

some people are happy
with you
being a fool

if it be that way
with those you love
then let it be

for a while, for a time,
on their numbered days

time is short
happiness is nil
if it be that way
then let it be

some still laugh at
the sun
which still shines
at everyone

keep your cool
fool them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fooling Myself

finally i stopped
calling friends

i quit treating them
for free dinners
on a night out

i befriended myself
it's not after my money

or it if is
it's just me fooling myself

and so
we're even

RIC S. BASTASA
Foolish

You are foolish with your art
It is killing you slowly day by day

You do not even have time
To wash your face or clean

Your ears, the earwax
Makes you deaf and you

No longer hears your rhythm
You write poems, you keep on

Writing poems. And what do
You get in return? Nothing.

You are helplessly poetic
Best friend of Sisyphus.

RIC S. BASTASA
Foolish Me?

i went out of my room
opened the door of the house
walked towards a tree
and i touched its barks
asking for the flow
of more energy
inside my body,

pranic healing of my soul,
and they think of me as foolish.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fools Like Us.

There is this theory in conversation.  
I keep on talking. When you are around we let the river flow  
and we listen. Sometimes you drop a stone.  
Sometimes, i break a twig.  
There are sounds which come between  
The silence that we try to grow among the ferns.

We talk like sands falling hoping to land upon a dune  
and see a palace.  

Or a treasure which time has marked with an X  
AND in those layers of exchanges, we arrive at some  
truths, like pagodas that we never saw before despite  
our familiarity with old terrains.

And then we know. What is it? Why is that?  
and then we learn  
Who we are? and Why we must accept  

Fools like us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Footages....

actually it is the same thing
that happens
over and over again
and i keep on watching
and watching
and if you only know there is no more
meaning
to what i constantly see and love and hate
and laugh
and cry for (how did i really learn
to cry? did i really cry?
i regret
i deny,
)

the footage of push and pull
and moans and groans
mechanical figures inside
these tubes

soon, i be a man transformed
from mere dirt to budding mushroom
fungus,
tasty, delicious to your palates
sliced thinly
on your favorite Hawaiian pizza

even the dirtiest
mind you always transforms itself
into a useful ornament
swallowed, savored
remembered

RIC S. BASTASA
Footnote To Beauty...

TO SEE you and not to possess you
to long for you and not have you
even if your hands reach for me
even if your lips touch mine,

because you are so beautiful
because i am....to adore you and then just walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
Footnotes To Langston's Deferred Dreams

for all the dreams
defered
and as predicted
exploded
please take note
of the the many
casualties	onight we
take a few seconds
of silence
and offer them
some prayers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Footsteps

the beloved has been waiting
and now despite the rain
she hears the footsteps of
her lover nearing
she is quick to open the door
to let him in
and then they make a new beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
For J.

IT is the steel part of me
that absorbs the sun and lets it go
come moonlit nights

i take whatever is cold
and hot
but i do not keep any

when it gets too dark
i revert to my true nature

i am cold
i am strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Love Is Like A Thorn In My Heart

yes, a thorn in my heart
this love
that i feel for you,

it does not hurt
though i bleed
it does not kill me
it lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
For 2009 To All Poets

always choose to heal
not to hurt
to forgive and not
to despise
to persevere and
not to quit
to smile and not
to frown
to love and not to hate

at the end of life
what matters is not what we bought
but what we built
not what we got but what
we shared
not our competence but
our character
and not our success
but our significance

live a life that matters
live a life that cares

have a blessed and
a prosperous new year
to all.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Younger Brother....

we are spaced in a span of
ten long years
we have no bridges
and i am one broker boat without oars
brother
you must understand about the fact of our
misunderstanding
though we showed we tried to make links
upon one post to another

there are no morning glories
i have seen no gates or exits or entrances
there is nothing enticing at all in all these
bickering

brother
we must learn to accept
the wisdom of distance
the comfort of space
we have only thoughts
so far away from each other
and then we live
separate ways again

in a land that welcome us
in a place without a scent of any regret

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Change.....

i find it funny when you write about the idea that you love the earth because of its brown color.

Brown like the soil, like the bald mountains due to the massive cutting of trees. I detest this idea. This dirt. This muddiness when the earth drinks to much water from the rain. This dusty places when the sun castigates the face of this place.

i persist on the idea that brown is not poetic.

Until one day i met this brown body under the light of the moon beside the river rising from its night ritual.

The brown body gleams under the golden light of the moon. Nude, facing me as i salivate like a dog seeing a bone not having eaten for days.

Brown is beautiful Brown is exciting.

I ejaculated on such beauty. Satisfied, i lie on the brownness of the earth longing for more.

It is not dirt. It is love.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Friend Who Had Gone Cold One Summer

i am just wondering
why you have not visited us for years.
it is not the rain,

it stopped.
or was it so much sunshine?

does light hurt somehow
let me know
how softness can be that
unbearable at times.

how is you wife?
did you tie her again
by that post inside your

room?
we heard her scream
inside our dreams
we tried to hold her but she is like

smoke
from your kitchen with a
lot of our
concoctions.

how are you?
is anger that overwhelming?

do not close your door
since you did not come

we are coming then
to tell you that we care.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is still 3 o'clock in the afternoon. iT is raining heavily outside as we still keep busy with our own business inside this courtroom.

two lawyers arguing on a point. I am listening. the accused sits there, his life is at stake. the mother is tense. two mothers. THE mother of the complainant who cries that her daughter is a victim of mother of the accused who rebuts that his son is just framed-up by the real culprits who are still-at-large.

the glass windows of the court muted the sound of the heavy rain. but the way the trees are swaying to and fro like a pendulum of a grandfather's clock very well tells that there is a bad weather outside this courtroom.

a river of faces faces me. i look at the eyes of the room, the windows cased in glass as the rain is maimed wanting to get in as though trying to say that it has also something to say about the matters discussed inside this closed room.

the world is always asking, what is the truth? it reminds us, there is only one truth and the rest are lies. I keep on trying to learn from it.

the argument has always been: everyone is a victim, and no one wins this game of a legal play. sometimes the guilty is set free and the innocent is put to prison.

there will be cries of the wind. In a closed court like this, one cannot really hear the sound of its cries.
I am trying to figure out. Each word. The words of the wind and the muted sounds of the rain.

THE hammer shall fall and it shall fall heavily. Can this poem help me? Are emotions aids?

Many mouths shall shape the words. Each lip makes a reading of itself. There will be whispers and murmurs. There will be calls and cries and hounding sounds.

I sleep at night soundly. My conscience shall be my pillow. There will be dreams handed to me by the gods.

As i write this, think also of my own journey, my own sorrows. In the battles outside and inside us, a closed room vis-a-vis the outside cries of the wind and the rain, i want to simply tell you, , ,

keep moving on. We move on too, with our own busy lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Friend Who Lived Only For A Short Time

the white butterfly
will always be your metaphor

and it flies one rainy morning
finding shelter in my house

through the window
it passes gets in and rests for a while

it does not wait for sunshine
goes out of the window again

and then goes away like
a distant star dissolving in the black sky

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Friend Who Never Stops Writing Till Kingdom Come

IT IS indeed nice to know my friend that the moon and stars at night still fascinate you,
how the scent of trees make like longer that we imagine it to be, and the songs of rivers still linger in our mind taking us back to youth,

some things
little bits of memories we want to remember like chips and chirps of birds we have forgotten

it is nice indeed to know, and it gladdens me that the sonorous sound of the rain, early morning, as it stops us from our usual speed, makes us stop for a moment and

know that God is here, how our hearts still thirst for that drink, how this thirst can never be quenched by wine or any drink, or even the flatness of water,

some things my friend must linger at the tips of our fingers, before we snap,

this vacuum with lots of gaps, before we nap, shake my hand, hug me, i am one with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Friend Who Starts

I am happy you find this thing
This old thing this oldest thing
Of being us
Making us feel us making the rest
See us making them
Take the form we are forming
This image these thoughts
These fragments
Of our humanity
Thanks for finally becoming like me
My friend you have just started
This art
I am happy for you and I will see
You more in what
You write
Your poems shaping your soul
Your poems to bare them all

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Hard-Headed Woman

I AM worried about you
nothing poetic is attached to it
plain worry
like paper with some written words
still running
looking for a certain space
to die

I have given you options
like the openness of the bay as mouth of the sea
like trees running some twigs to grow more leaves
like fledgelings sitting upon a branch and all willing to fly
and negate the need for nests

You do not grab any
You like it that way, and I give up
Surrender to the fact
that It is you who still paves the path
towards your
own niche

Unlike you we do not worry about the color of the paint
and the flowers
We simply do it the way it is usually done
Put the cover
drop, and then when everything is slayed
We go back sweating to our own homes
and force ourselves to accept
and then forget...

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Legal Nymph....

when the academics failed her
she deciphers the labyrinths and
finds the exit door of this complicated
tunnel.

Not regretting love
she quits the books
she embraces love and
readies herself for
another chapter of
pains.

The truth is there is less
drama in happiness ever after.
Something that you cannot forget
is when the lover dies
and loved one survives and
at the end
loses herself to the island that
no one finds.

The ending is hazy.
The book closes on a misty day.
The writer says
I do not know. They are not real.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Nephew And A Niece

i will give you sweet memories.
nice dining. stories. fairy tales.
some realities.
shells and the sounds of its songs
when felt by your ears.
i give you laughter.
jokes that you have not heard before.
i can be your clown
and you trusted adviser about first love.
these moments you must always remember.
we feast on a beautiful sunrise.
wide span of grass, so green.
we breathe the cool sea breeze.
here. we make the bond. we seal the day
in peace. in harmony.
i have become your friend
i bring you tidings. i bring you sweet years.

when i get old and you become your own selves
i ask you, let us relive these moments.
do not forget, we had the nicest times together.
do not forget, i will just be a memory.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Niece Who Just Had An Abortion

she left Ormoc
for it is such a small place for
her mind

she arrived in Cebu
that early morning

with a small pack of
clothes

she just had an abortion
and she felt so
isolated

she did not go direct
to her boarding house

she sat on one of the
benches in Fuente Circle

she cried, she is blank
as a grey sky sans the sun

she called my wife
through her phone, sobbing

'It is still very painful'

my wife listened
just listened

she knew how is it
to bleed
without stopping.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Reason Always...

every event happens for a reason
the comings and goings

departures for instance are always
on time and
always reasonable and those who are left
sometimes wonder
only to understand later
comparing what welcome was
and what departure
has become...

soon they may tell you
we have seen the light, we have seen darkness too.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Start....

blank, it is blank at first.
suspect, there is nothing, there is no one.
wait. there is a hush.
there is a shadow coming.
wait. there is a word.
it is a bean sprouting
last night placed
on top of
a sack wet by the rain
of tears.

i hear the sounds of syllables.
no figuring of meanings this time.
just hearing a sound
of life.

it is enough. I am not scared anymore
to the question: is there life here?

the windows begin to open
and lights are turned off.

good morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Start.....

when you arrive at the strange place

no trees just hills and wind
no trails just grass and stones

and you are alone and looking for a healing

and you have only leaves and nuts

and the only house is this cave to shelter you for the night

practically you have nothing except this self

and the only words you can say is 'thanks, i am alive'

you finally found a beginning and that is good enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
For A Variation

I am tired of some symbols and metaphors

♫ ♪ ♫ instead

Let us try some notes instead
A song,
And some desserts
Of the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
For A While

i stop for a while on this morning walk
to see the ripening rice plants on the field
golden indeed like the blonde hairs
of the american woman
under the gentleness of the sun that has
newly arrived from the split sides of the
nearby mountain

my eyes were caught however
on this maiden with a brown skin
long black hair with an earthen jar
on her left shoulder held by her
small hands

she is just passing by to fetch
some water in the old stone-walled well

RIC S. BASTASA
For A.

the secrets are within
the heart
they are so beautiful
to tell

they are now a comfort
safe in our own chosen
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
For A.....

now you must
understand, i have
always desired the
touch of human hands,
real fingers,
that tip of which bleeds
when i start
to prick.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Alan C.

And there springs Youth

and you who had It before is now

Mocked You feel the

Coming of an End

and be Proud and Firm

You have finished the Race

And here you are Winning....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Albert, The Mathematics Teacher...

albert posts the latest picture of himself in Facebook. he looks mature now, his eyes are not sad, his forehead shows the landing field of the birds of wisdom the black hairs did not change tradition sits there, every lock well accounted by time the nose has remained the silent post more likely it is here where lights are turned on and off when something in the mouth gets fishy when something in the ear gets thorny and itchy

ah, i told him, you are a happy person despite the decision to remain single in all those 45 years or so

but albert, i want to tell him, before i must write my conclusion i still yet have to see your body...

well, some people successfully lied at the tips of their toes

slips of the tongues need not be fully believed as the whole truth

somehow the torso too speaks just the the feet and the chest

well, do i need to see what is inside your heart?

this would be too much of an intrusion i suppose

good luck, stay happy, feel the sun inside your mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
For All The Goodness Of Humanity

these are the men
who cover the blood outside
the stadium
where many had been killed
on the recent bombing

a child is taught
that there shall be no fear
as the father keeps
equanimity
one candle in one hand
and a flower on the other

RIC S. BASTASA
For All The Other Places Of This World...

in vietnam or in hongkong
it is the same road that i walk
same lengths of
arms to reach another
wall
it is the same salt of the
sea
on a beach holiday
same coldness of the shades
of trees
along some boulevards
same noise
in malls and repeated
lyrics
sounds of love
and indifference
same menu on restaurants
and sometimes
same talk even

that strangest boredom
seems to be too insensitive
to leave me
at least for once

RIC S. BASTASA
For All The Things That We Have Taken For Granted

a chocolate bar
that we bite
that sweetness that dissolves with ecstasy in our tongues

it bites us
and even at the end
eats us
much to our regrets

we gain weight for every sugar that we take for granted
for every heavy grain that we slide in our throats
the dough nut that recreates a hole in our system

they soon eat us whole
and then in our deathbed we keep on saying

'i could have been more careful'
but it is too late

the flowers are there
and the prayers are already said
the choir is singing
and someone you love has delivered the best eulogy about you

RIC S. BASTASA
For All The Things That We Never Want Done.....

d this is about not doing what we are supposed to do,
or not really liking to do it, we promise it done the next hour
the next hour dies, another hour lives, such is the swing of time
and moods, in between these promises to change, lies the burger
and the coke, and the wish to be put somewhere else, far and
far away, at night as you lay in bed unable to sleep with all the
guilt feelings of an unfinished task, you wish you were dead,
you wish that tomorrow never comes, for what have you? you still
have the things that you do not want to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
For All The Treasures I See

for all the treasures i see
rain, forests, sun, clouds,
green fields, high mountains
waterfalls, white sandy shorelines,
rock formations, mountain mists,
a perfect sunset
a glorious sunrise

the ivory piano keys,
the 33-seater dining table
the paintings from italy
some marble mosaic
the glass windows from rome
the sculpted wood
the persian carpets
the octopus hangings
dancing lights

all these are nothing
treasures of mankind
his capacity for greed
materialism, consumerism,
his leanings for corruption
and avarice and instincts
for preservation
the reputation and fame

all these treasures fade
against the light of one

pure, clean heart
that i am still searching

RIC S. BASTASA
For All These I Wait (2)

somewhere
a frog is asleep
playing
dead lifeless upon
a cake of mud

there is hibernation
as a necessity
for another coming
existence

someone gets to be buried
someone becomes a busier
a brier or brewer

someday someone has to
be a chronicler
about what happened here

as most poets are
lifeless frogs inside a cake mud
sometimes a rain comes
and makes everything alive again

for all these i wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
For All These I Wait…..

somewhere
a frog is asleep
playing
dead lifeless upon
a cake of mud

there is hibernation
as a necessity
for another coming
existence

someone gets to be buried
someone becomes a busier
a brier or brewer

someday someone has to
be a chronicler
about what happened here

as most poets are
lifeless frogs inside a cake mud
sometimes a rain comes
and makes everything alive again

for all these i wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
For All These That I See Today

wilted grass on the pasture land
emaciated water buffaloes
dried river beds
the well without water
humid air and dusty roads
to the village on a rice shortage
birds in flocks moving away
sick babies and panicky mothers
hopeless fathers thinking about
another revolution

a government stripped of moral authority
arming itself strengthening wire fences
building more walls and students out-of-school

muted press and more speeches from the
political departments justifying reason

for all these that i see today
i have seen them all yesterday
during my youth my rebel days
when i was not so careful then
when i never thought of the danger
when i though i do not die

history unfolds again before me
we are not strangers we are in fact on a familiarity

how can we ever talk like friends again?
how can i run away from society for the second time?

how can i vomit and eat all these rancid food
these spoils, these trash, this enormous silence?

RIC S. BASTASA
For All Those I Have Not Done, Because....

so many things have been left undone  
perhaps another regret for the bygone  
but no, i must not be carried away  
for here i am, with you, so so happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
For All Those Who Remain To Be Deaf, Blind And Stupid

oh, i forgot to tell you
we do not eat together now
and it is better that way,
i would not be tempted to
eat all those prohibited
by my doctor but which she
wholeheartedly like to gobble.

same thing, we do not go
together anymore in those places
where you always see us,
and it is better that way,
so finally we end all these
kinds of pretenses that
somehow marriage still works.

same thing, we still manage
to sleep in one bed though
we do not face each other or
even talk, but it is nicer
now, at least, we are honest,
we have accepted things the
way they should be at the end.

nothing is forever. stick it
to your young mind, and as
early as you learn this,
i tell you, you would be
happier than the rest of those
who are still deaf, blind and
above all, so, so stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
For An Uncle

you should not
have posted the close-up
picture
of aunt's face

the sad
face of autumn
is reflected
in her
eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
For Anna....

here comes anna
she is from another far mountain
she arrives with just
one dress
no slippers
no deodorant
she smells like a
dead bird
but what can you do?
she is your new house-help
and you
don't do household chores
she now belongs
to you
for a meager pay
she will do everything
washing, cooking, cleaning
even massaging
your feet and hair
at your convenience
always

i am your husband
and i look at her
with pity

here is another
hope
a toast
that someone from the mountain
can make it
big sometime
somewhere

and you shall be
its stepping stone

i dread
how unequal things
can be
how fields
are not leveled
fairly
for all the
players
in this world

RIC S. BASTASA
For Another Damnation.....

she hanged
four paintings on the wall,

all squares
in three colors

i stop for a while
to take a look

i palpitated and
i like it

such is the work of
art,
it makes us stop for
a while

the world stops spinning,
life stands still

the paintings become
the stars,
all suns in their own
right
claiming the same
moving universe

and then back to your
world again,
for another damnation.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Arj

that fox must know by now
that i do not expose the lies of the boy who shouted

'wolf! wolf! wolf! '

there is no need

the lies know how to expose themselves
time need not compel them even

i can always tell a Pinocchio
even without his elongated nose

RIC S. BASTASA
For Arnel

This is what he wrote to me:
WEST COAST Blumpkin 'round the corner bright boy! !
and what's up with this naked lady showing off her boobs as you avatar? ?
wow! ur pretty bomb dude,
 kinda wishin you are
 brokeback mountain too? ? ?
lol
p.s that's my boyfriend CHAZ DIE...SEL - he's a mechanic! !

and then he wrote me again about his
 sex life
 his gay nights in Israel and how this country has
 advanced well in the science
 of pleasure,

and then i reminded him about
 how he was under me in Logic
 one summer
 and he said perhaps he dropped the subject
 because i was more of a smart ass
 who carried something too heavy on my shoulder
 and he did not like
 that idea of having to see me
 naked.

alright, he finally made the concluding remark,
 that after so many years of
 ponder
 he said without a sigh that

he's gay.

is this a bomb dropped in the island of Bikini?
 honestly, i don't think so
 perhaps he did not know that we have also
 advanced our views
 about him
 that we are not homophobes after all,
that when he dropped in class
after which he made the revelation that he had
more fun taking it at the University of California
(which i think, he lied on his teeth)
rather than suffer
the consequences of my presence
as he sees me
naked in his rather wild imagination
at 7 p.m.

how can i finish this thing off?
after all he is a smart ass too
underestimating our capacity to really
really appreciate his
human value.

Good luck and take care
be good, wherever you are.

Ponder, rotate, collide, vibrate
and do not forget
Life is beautiful. That's it

RIC S. BASTASA
For Art Does Not Tolerate Reason

Truly fertile Music, the only kind that will move us, that we shall truly appreciate, will be a Music conducive to Dream, which banishes all reason and analysis. One must not wish first to understand and then to feel. Art does not tolerate Reason. (Albert Camus)

precisely my friend
i have too much of reason's justifications.
bored. fed-up.
drunk. hollow.
is this boor.
another boar.
a bore. pestered. gouge out.
this analytical mind
causing so much
chaos in the world
of understanding
feelings.

i cross over the fence
of art.
lying on a hammock.
with a hat on my head.
a little warm sunshine
on my shoulder.
under the coconut trees.
beside a white sandy beach.
i welcome the sun
of feelings.
i breathe the breeze.
i touch the sand
and then i let loose the
grains through
my fingers.

this i like to do today.
just loaf and
dream.

i dream about us.
the two of us
in an island
our moans
music
to my ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
For As Long.....

for as long as there are sands on
the shore

leaves on trees, air in space,
sun on the horizon, moon on the marsh,

there will always be
a poem to write

a note to an experience
a syllable in my tongue.

RIC S. BASTASA
For B., (Still To Me A Stranger)

the cherry in your glass
red as it is shiny

you look at me
reminded about last night's cherry
shiny as it is red
sweeter than your lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
For B...

so you have felt finally
that you are alone: your brother after he married
built a wall around his wife and
daughter

you can hear their exclusive laughter in the other room
and when the light there is finally turned-off
you can hear even the whispers of love
that you have not met
before

the hands of love
drive you away

you turn off too
the only light in your room
and the war within you begins

there is that regret that mocks you
there is the passing time that appears like those leaves
blown away by the last month’s typhoon

you feel like a tree robbed of all those leaves
with some twigs bent
to the utmost you feel that pain
of being
uprooted

moments reversing themselves
like the back pages of the
book
with a vast topics
arranged alphabetically
which of course
you have no desire to
carefully read

you feel this horror of all horrors
loved ones
abandoning you
with their bags full of
clothes

those thicker walls that suck their conversations
like water siphoned by
a thick cloth
oh, how you detest each layer
of indifference

the whole night you never sleep
but for now
you are a little bit triumphant in this exhaustion
these eye bags
must posses a noble purpose
perhaps to educate you more
for the coming days
of more empty rooms
of chairs that accumulate dust
of carpets that accommodate more ticks
of those breakfasts
left untouched
on the table with unchanged covers

no more tears in this war
between you and your hidden self
as you wait
for the promise that soon
there will be a harmony
between loneliness and
survival
between the fingers of time
and the slippage
that you do not care to account
anymore

well, you assure yourself
'outside i still have my own secret garden
it is mine and mine alone
my brother's children cannot enter
now, his wife in truth
is not my sister
and what i must remember
truly
must only be my name
yes, i am',

you write it.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Baby Ralf.....

i am looking
at the picture of
baby ralf

chinky eyed
just a month old
in the crib

amazed at how
cut life
starts
in the body of
baby ralf

another soul
struggles in there
for years and
years

RIC S. BASTASA
For Bayani

Because you are too
insistent on your own views,
now you find
few to agree with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Both Of Us.

when we sat on the grass
and watched the light of the
afternoon sun fade slowly
when we spoke of nothing
because we love the silence
more than ever
when we understood what
was not spoken
when we made no qualms
about who i was and what you were
and what you will become
and what i shall be...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Both Of Us

things combine
as we too
fuse to make another
world
for both of us

as sound comes
in the still forest
birds become alive
and flowers on
barks begin to
bloom
for both of us

my words too become
too alive
with the music inside
my mind
as my body begins
to know the soul within
i become whole
you and I,
for both of us

RIC S. BASTASA
For Both Of You Whom I Love Equally

i love you both
equally and that is the truth that i must reveal
the kiss i kissed you is the same kiss
equally warm as the kiss i have kissed
to the other

the love i give you
is the same love i give
to both of you
you know that
you feel that and so you
do not complain
or whine or murmur

and the other too
who waits for me
when i am with you
understands
feels that

like the way
i spread my warmth on this bed
my smile and laughter in this room

both of you must understand
i have given much more
than anybody can
and for one who give more and much more
must be more than generous more than loving than
anyone can be
on this earth
under the sun

how can i sin then, i who had given more and much
that what is normally required?

from mere pebbles on the rough road of my life
both of you my love
true loves of my heart
shall rise, and rise and rise until you become

my lovely stars
as i watch and stay grounded for having loved
unusually, tirelessly,
exceedingly than what is normally required

my wings with a span as lengthy and wide as the night
shall always remember
the serenity and perfection of these
unusual dual union

the warmth we shared the warmth we all enjoyed
the togetherness that for sometime
society detests

RIC S. BASTASA
For 'Bridge'

The moon rises
above the river
as swans float
on the water

i wish deep inside
that you stop talking

RIC S. BASTASA
For Brigs...

when you grieve
for the wrong person
as you rushed
to the morgue and
cried immediately
on that covered body
of a bloated tummy
only to find that
it is not Bing but
someone
whose name
is strange to your
ear,

did you not tell
me that it
was funny?

RIC S. BASTASA
For C, J. A. C.

it is not a shame
to tell you that i am happier now
with two of us
in a row

the train has left us
here at the station

it left too early
taking the younger ones

those without
much experience

those whom we think
are undeserving
of their couches
and seats

you only have one trip missed
i had five and now i just had my sixth

I'll go for another one
and this will be the seventh train leaving
without me

it is unbecoming of me seeing you
hiding inside that cubicle of disappointment
i guess you must have been crying all night
more likely you do not like to eat dinner tonight

come out in the open
there are too many of us still waiting

when you are always left out
it becomes too ordinary

look at me
i am not sad
honestly i find it funny already.

RIC S. BASTASA
For C.J.

I like stars
how beautiful are they
hanging on the
heavens

i wish i have their
brilliance

i see the most beautiful star
one night
falling to the ground
where i stand
as i am just one of those
ordinary men

i am sometimes uncertain of
what to say

i am a step now higher
to my little stair of
happiness

stars fall sometimes
but always for a reason

now, another star becomes like us
we are inspired by reason

stars always fall out
for a reason and we learn

to tiptoe on the paths
where weeds begin to wilt.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Cita A.

perhaps you are a boat without an anchor.
we need anchors
because we are like boats
sailing in an ocean
sometimes the storms are bigger
and our sails are too small for the winds
and our rudders
are broken,

what i see is that you do not have any
and so i feel pity for you Cita
as you imagine walkie-talkies beside your ears
and talk about the machine of destruction
that is boring in your head like grills,

that machine that bores holes in your skull
and yet everyone hears nothing
sees no blood

they cannot see what you insists
those that stole your locks and open your doors
and stole your furniture and computers
and spurn you

what education you have in the university
now you throw away
like a cheap earring

Cita, this poem asks you
see God.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Claribelle

Life is a polite woman.
I have always told you that in class.
I delight in the politeness of a woman.
Outside the class.

When i fall in love, i keep it
to myself. There is no courage for
me to say it. I keep my own joys.

You are a polite woman.
I named you my own Life.
The class do not know that.
I keep it upon myself as a
lovely burden. I keep sorrows too.
Secretly, like
a divine burden, an un-confessed
sin.

Sometimes, i have not told you
before you left, i also mumble upon
myself, without any wish
that i may understand what i
try to hide,
completely. Soon i forget and then
I am happy again.

That is what life is all about.
I am polite too.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Cory

i was startled
about your death

i am amazed.
your funeral so grand
the people are in deep mourning
i, too.

in you the presidency
has tripled its value
destiny brought you there
on that chair

God speaks
in yellow colors since then

its voice
is still the voice of the people.

Like Ninoy
forever you shall live
in our hearts.

Long live goodness
Long live dignity
Long live humility
Long live Godliness

In you Cory, we shall ponder
upon the next presidency.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Ct

you're a star
a diamond in the sky

you are not
the ground coffee in that
coffee-haus or something

you deserve much better
than a vote

go girl. go. do not just be a sparrow
be an eagle, be a rocket, be a beautiful glowing planet in my sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
For D.

when you let me in
i feel the warmth of your room
a little bit damp
for a summer time like this one

i must be honest
there is something inside that repulses
what i have in mind
there is coffee that does not fit the time
there is that cookie that
does not satisfy
any hunger of mine

i beg you then
to let me out
into the open fields of my desire
where i can be home
again

you stay
do not let me hear you cry
at least you are free
inside the home
of your being

i yet have to find a home
a place to rest my head
and wash my feet and hands
a place where i can be once silent
because i have
nothing to say

RIC S. BASTASA
For Diony

dO NOT BE like god
who must speak in crooked lines
i am not your
loyal servant and i have less time
now to
analyze what you really want to mean
to me
speak clearly
for i am listening
do not murmur
do not eat your words like supper
lest i suffer
and do what you do not want me to do
i am far
you are 12 thousands miles away from me
she is married
and her husband is crazy
buying a gun and bullets
speak clearly now
tell me about the story of your true love
her being lonely
this Helen of Troy of Yours
and the impending game of death and pain
teach me now
how not to sow the apple of discord
the envy and sorrow
the death of morality
the crucifixion of integrity
speak clearly now
or i will be the one to end this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
the twang of your
english
humiliates you
but i
ignore it
i am more
interested in you
now than
what you say
or can
possibly do to
me.

so we walk that
old boulevard
the sea is calm
and there are no
vendors, joggers,
beggars
and sweet twee-tums

it is noon
and i compromised
with a conversation

you are going
to surprise with
a wedding
invitation from you
and your dad
surely will
be happy

you are a grown-up
man and you
have many things to
still prove

you returned
to your house
and i am left
here watching
the sun set
in Dumaguete

i am sad
you are bound
to repeat
what i went through
and i am pretty sure
that i would
not like it,

i hope you
do.

good luck, nephew

RIC S. BASTASA
For Donna

when he
left you
and you
lose your
mind

when the house
get so
damn lonely

when you
finally decide
to come home

the same
white dog
waits for
you
by the door
wagging
its tail
for its
only master

RIC S. BASTASA
For Dreams That Do Not Come True

you sit on one of the marble pavements
of the hospital in the city
looking like a hopeless boy abandoned
by his mother
and people that pass you by think that you
are one of the beggars

you wonder why dreams do not come true
no matter how you pray
you look far without having to see
anything and anybody that is real

you blame no one though
not even the gloomy day
grays clouds heavy and about to rain
air so polluted and faces of people without the smiles
buses running senselessly
indifferent hawkers and arrogant schoolchildren pulling
their bags like a dragging day

everything seems to be surreal
gossamer-like as you float in the air
feeling like one of the illusions in your mind

you accept dreams that do not come true and you think
perhaps some day
yes someday, dreams may come and be real- true
concrete and smooth and confident to the hold of your hands

and then you stand like a true man on unreal dreams
you leave the pavements of illusions
you go back to one of the rooms in the hospital
'No tears! No tears! ' you tell yourself because now
you have learned to be brave and strong and logical.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Each Other...

This love of mine
need not disturb you,
it is inside me
and it will not be seen
or felt by you,
i love you and probably
will still love you
(for this long
and for how long?
i do not really know)

and

this love of mine
may persist longer
than i ever want or feel it to be

This will be true and gentle
and coy and
innocent still

but I pray that you should
never know it
or that you may love me too

we simply don't fit
we are never really meant.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Edu

While it is true that
Silence is a source
of great strength

IN your case
it is not.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Emily

you have all the reasons to be sad
and be afraid

like a tree
you have no roots
and where you grow
around are rocks

when the typhoon comes
you have nowhere to hold
and you cannot stand
against the harsh winds

you will be uprooted
and blown away
you will be washed away
to the river and then to the sea

because you have
not really loved

RIC S. BASTASA
For Emma

If it were not for God
You could have found yourself at
The center of the
Altar of my being
You are my sun
When my moon left me
Extreme darkness

You are the river
Flowing to my life
Your soft sound
Of the flowing waters
Made me raise
All my goldfishes

In my own little garden
You are the center flower
And all the morning sunshine
That I can take shall all be yours

All my days shall talk about you
And I shall write
About all
About you
My last love
My lust
My moaning nights
A warm sweet scented blanket

You are my everyday longing
My quiver
My soundest sleep
Of such soft pillow

Inside a night of
Loving dreams

I am insatiable
Your white body on those black nights
Sparked a meteor
Into my vast universe
Your love

Moans

And I shall be
The wildest hunter for saber-tigers
In the safari

It is you,
After all these years
The queen
Who gave an extension
To my ending life

Another day
For better health

As you shall grow in my heart
You shall be forever

Unfathomable,
Ungrasped,

Untitled

You are my force-softness
Combined
My singing silence
My beating drum
My chant
Forever tireless

RIC S. BASTASA
For Enriqueta

be quiet, she will speak
what she buried many years ago
in the mausoleum of her
heart and soul

she is angry
and she has nobody
she is furious
and she has no place
to dissipate
her anger her fury her hate
her indifference as
shield
was all too weak for
her defense

be quiet,
let her speak her lines
she has learned to live the life
of an actress
let us all listen to her now
let us be sponges to absorb
the waters of her disappointments
we must listen now
let us know what she
will unearth

for if not
she will shatter like a dainty piece of glass
she will dissolve like air to a hazy atmosphere
she will disentangle into broken pieces
she will be lost

the process will be irreversible
and she will be lost forever

look at her eyes filled with anger
do not be deceived
she is not a bomb
she is a treasure wanting to be found
symbols and lines and directions
pointing to an 'x' saying that

she is still here

come, come, let us listen
our dear enriqueta is now singing....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Ester

when you read a poem, my poem included,
try to see a universe, do not neglect the plight of other planets
they keep on orbiting a void, out there some stars burst,
and from the point of no return, from the place where we are seated
just below the black blanket of our dark nights
we simply see a falling star
and they, what we do not know is that a lot of commotion happens
out there
explosions, changes, and annihilation and rebirths of
new galaxies, space shrinking and then expanding again
like our sorrows and significant risings
like the sun everyday rising and setting,
i repeat, what we only see is the falling star
and all that we can do, is simply make a wish.

you think that someone is lost and having hang-ups
(and perhaps needs medication for relief, like advil
or xanor, or perhaps a simple aspirin to smoothen what
lag is there on the veins and arteries)

well, i like to say that i have to disagree, but who knows
you may be right.

did i once tell you that i am okay?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Ester, The Reader

so i arrive there a little bit late
met by this fat lady with curly hair and
lots of pearls wound around her neck
and she smiles at me telling me that
you are reading religiously what i have
written for all those years and that
you like it very much and of course
as a normal human being i am a little
bit flattered with what little praise
is there intended also for my thirst.

but i am not that stupid that she did
not at least bother to compliment me
by saying that she too loves what i
have written, and so my instinct of
self preservation works again as my
mouth begins saying, 'oh, yes i know
ester, she has a private pool, lives
peacefully now in a far flung place
where i also live and by all means
despite her age, she had survived so
well from all depressions and she
looks much younger than her age, much
younger than you.' And that ends the
conversation, as i write my name on
the attendance sheet, as though i am
a famous actor putting an autograph to
a non-existent fan in front of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Eustoly

her earrings and necklace are fake, she boasts about a used clothing that she wears on parties tendered for her she does not really care about how she looks or what people say she is true her heart speaks with sincerity she chooses her words consoles and sympathizes with grief and misfortunes her hands work her mind probing she makes a difference on things and people.

RIC S. BASTASA
For F.T.

gifted with the mind and heart
you decided not to use any of them

not to think and feel and love and desire
what is left then? a heart wilting a mind drying

you exist like an everyday occurrence
of sleeping and waking and going and coming

arrivals and departures become anything
a routine and so much like a door closing and opening

who is it and for whom and what for and why
to you it does not matter, this is nothing but everyday

you add no essence anymore not any seasoning
the fat in you melts and liquefies and turns to gas and evaporates

it lands as a smell of meat somewhere in the lawn
the people pass by the house like some shadows against the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
For Fade Ward

do you really like
the dark rose?

keep it
and if you really love it
the way i love it
take it with you
for now, my dear,
it is all yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Father P.

'On this holy Mahogany Alley, I was ordained Deacon, 14 March 1998...'

what is needed is only the
down of trees, the white robe,
and the date,

it is the whole of life
already

no other name
except God....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Fear Of A Mistake

for fear of a little mistake in denying me the kiss
that night inside your car
as you drive us to nowhere but goodbye
i tell you and this i tell you with all the honesty from my heart
lady you drive away the most sincere love in this world
into the indifference of oblivion
it is the sweetest that you have set aside
and was forgotten
and time
wept.

RIC S. BASTASA
for fear of losing the poetic side
i go back to the secret garden
where my footsteps are forbidden
and i play a certain duality
the one that i do not like and yet i love
the one that is always hidden and yet so delicious
the one that i kiss and yet hurts my lips
the one that i embrace and yet burns my arms
i take the entrance only to find another exit
door of another door window of another window
i take shelter in the house that i do not wish to dwell
i assure myself
this is temporary but i never make promises that i will never be back.
this is the secret of poesy: heresy, lust, the forbidden
the apple in paradise

so crunchy and so sweet
that i begin to forget the reason of life
yet there is this life, this shortness of breath
all of it, it is everything that i have
that now i give, that now i must lose, to be whole again.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Fellow Amateur Poets

Riding on winged lines
We shall flock like doves
In the rain
So the fire in our breasts
Shall not die

In the hideout of flowers
Soft reeds and singing marshes
Where the moon sleeps
Throughout the night
We are all watchful eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
For Fellow Amateur Poets (A Repost)

Riding on winged lines
We shall flock like doves
In the rain
So the fire in our breasts
Shall not die

RIC S. BASTASA
For Frankie

My words are taller
Your native canes cannot reach them

So you always say
You misunderstand me
My murmur
You mishear as my sole reason
For waking up from cubic morning
To the edge
Of twilight

Perhaps you miss
The light burning in the middle
Of your forehead

As old woman
You’re taller as I am
Even when I stand and look up
I see the nimbus bursting
In the dark

You never really tried
To be
Like a puppy
When first thrown
Into the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
For Friend Rey

out there
in a foreign land
how long will you hide your face away from all of us?

your shadow is here with us
talking and telling everything about your clothes
and perfume
how you smell like someone else that we have known
beforehand
before you left us

we cannot pretend forever that we do not know
neither can you

it seems that all of us here, your friends and foes
know what we have been up to
admiring the flames and never touching any of its colors

it is sad..it is very sad. we want you to be happy
we want you to fuse with your alienated shadow
we want you to be whole
and be with us
without any fear

we are kind, we know and we understand
our hands are open, our arms are embracing

when you finally come home
please bear with us, we are one with you

touch the flame, we do not really mind
be hurt with so much bliss, we have no reason to stop you
less yourself, we cannot be happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Fugushima....

at dawn we again lighted
the lone candle at the altar

we will not blow the light off
till nighttime

till it consumes itself
till we light another candle again

this small light is our offering
to the engulfing darkness of this universe

it is this light that prays in silence
together with those distant stars in the heavens...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Gina

surely who cannot but love
the picture of your family
all in the water rising and
wet and yet still warm in their
sparkling smiles
the children made the V signs
of victory or
was it all about peace
and prosperity?
was it your mother at the back
and the nephews and nieces
at the front?
the water is greenish and i can figure
out how cool must it be
but i have one advice

will you please move the picture
counterclockwise
so i can see much better
the focal point of your
art?

RIC S. BASTASA
For God……

Everyday
you will be opening a window
and a door

you let light to come
and like a visitor you make it
at home with you
seated and with a cup
of tea

the wind comes too
with a lot of companions
with same invisibility
you only feel
its presence

if you are honest and
sensitive enough
you could have felt God
and seen Him with the light
and wind
even before you have opened
that window and
door

everyday

RIC S. BASTASA
godmother writes a letter
complaining that i have not
written about love

that in my youth the poem
was still about the
struggle
for freedom

in a country bound
by oppression
and dictatorship

she vomits the news
of my colleagues
summarily executed in
1975

she challenges me frankly
that i must attempt
to lust, have free sex,
and for once
be crazy about life's
offerings

i was a failure to her

honestly i wrote her a letter
which perhaps she
did not receive because it
was mailed
in the middle of a revolution

i am glad that she perhaps
did not receive it for in there
i wrote 'You are unkind and
suffering from irrelevance'
For Grandpa....

after this
aridity when this
well finally
dries up
when the sound
of emptiness deepens
and then rises
towards light, i,
this survivor
dew less, shall
begin, another spring
when the rain
pours again
and fills the drain
whatever time,
(i perhaps will
be 70 then
like grandpa
without fear
i shall open another
door and
go my way towards
a new path
be it muddy or
dusty,
what did they
say who he was
?

great, old
carabao eating
young grass,

no one tells
him what to do
with what has
remained out
of his
lonely life...
and he did it
well
till death...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Greed And Charity

I took a single bite of Jolibee chicken
And offer the bone
To the dog beside me

RIC S. BASTASA
For Him To Be Loved By The Birds

his wish is that the little bird
will love him and stay in his room
to feel its feathers and not just
stay on the window sill and
wait for the grace of grains

RIC S. BASTASA
For Home

your lips
my door to our
tryst
your breasts
my my
hands to your
warm, sweet home
where my bone
shall be.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am

for i am
the salt of my eyes
i have
tasted much
my tongue is my witness
the sun
is my judge

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am Not A Number

do not count me then
for i am not a number, do not weigh
me on a scale, do not judge me in
units, for i am not your number,

come beside me,

feel me, have a little kindness,

be gentle, listen, and

speak, for i have joys

and sorrows, i have

anticipations and

visions, do not try calculating

me again,

i am not a number.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am One Of Those Unreachable Stars...

sometimes the wish to be
you
is alluring,

as i look at myself
i see in you what
is missing

somehow you do no know
me

you are never interested
in what i am in what i feel

it is enough to make you
detestable

i put the real me in the sky
for i am too

is a star

be the sun
in that nearness

i shall be far and
unreachable.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am Still Yours....

something must be wrong.
on your birthday i feel nothing.
i like to write, but it is no
longer about you, or us.
something is really wrong.
i will be at your birthday party.
kiss you, have a picture, sit beside
you and upon their request we shall
have our dance, the tango.

i still hope, that we must dance well.
let us not step upon each other's toe.
we stand high, keep our dignities up.
and even if something is wrong,
really wrong, let us never tell
anyone. Time is a forgiver.
Life is still as beautiful as ever.

come, sit beside me. I am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am Taken....

no, i never
dream of
exhausting this
love,

it is enough
that from far
i can see
such a smile

sweeter than
sunset
mellower than
parting dawn

that is the
law, and it will
always be
this law:

i am taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Am The Coldest Spot Of This Earth

perhaps this woman is taking her revenge on me
i who have not spoken for days since i am attached to a screen
of this tablet,

on the same routine tonight as i write these lines
(of course, i am not talking still in defense of my poetry)

she enters my study room, opens her personal computer,
presses some letters, google, google, google maclintok
a vacation for one in palawan,
calypso, victoria's secret and it will be till
11 o'clock in the evening when i am not still going to bed
and sleep
and perhaps snore

it is getting even with me
who cares less for affection, who sets aside love in favor of
poetry and
the search of this self,

i am not troubled, i am determined, i am still in there
whatever i must lose, i am not swayed

back into her fire arms, for i am water, i am rain, i am the coldest
spot of this earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is easier to let things be,
leave others as they are, and just
be the best that i am, amidst,
the chaos, the fire that burns
the city, the children whose shouts
for help fades like a ship that sinks
swallowed in one instant by the
ocean house of tidal waves,
it is easier to see how suffering
munches the innocence of
the crowd, and tell yourself, who cares?
they deserve their fates, i have mine,
i am alone, and happier
but it cannot be, i am part of this suffering
these grunts and rants,
i am part of the picture
and when the whole picture is blotted
out by one stroke of
my indifference, i am, too
blotted just the same.
and so, i must, i can,
i do care.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Cry No More

what tears are? i have known more than
one, shaped like a cone, fluid, washing the sticky
part of my sorrow, like a flood in the river
taking every driftwood every foul carcass
of depression.

father says a man grows and he becomes big enough
for tears.
and soon he grows much bigger than the old tree of
the ancestors, a genealogy with roots spreading,
beating through the layers of a tribe's history.

like those who died ahead, with all the shaking moments
houses falling, and burning ashed,
one arrives at the point of the threshold of tolerance,
no stab of sorrow pierces the heart
there is this constant use of pain, unattached, ineffective,
and tears have no use anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Do Not Have Dreams Anymore

i do not dream
that you shall remember me

i do not write
to be remembered

i am looking for relief
someone wonders why that snake is biting

every bark of every tree
it is restless

it is looking for a cure of its
disease

that snake wants to live
some more years

it is looking for the cure of
its restlessness

i do not dream of any dream
i just want to live for another day

i have no more dreams
i am fading like an afternoon light against the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Have Become Murky

i am the river beside you and you are the woman
wanting to go naked and take a bath in my mouth

while wading you think of the calmness of the
a pond, some petals of roses, air showered with
white magnolias,

i am the river beside you and my ripples are tongues.
i move around loving every part of you.

and you tiptoe and wriggle and sing for i am winding
you take the plunge and you search for my heart

the warmth of my floor and the comfort of my banks
the tickles of my fish, the power of my pebbles

you feel that i own you now and you want some more
wanting to stay and savor the embrace of my foams

at noon the sun comes at the height of its brightness
you realize the mistake & you stand and dress yourself
you never want to be a part of me for i have become murky

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Have Never Ceased Loving

TIME passes so swiftly
i do not notice how this black hair
has turned gray
how these fingers once tight-skinned
have loosened like some used
condoms
if i did not stop for once
and scrutinized
each part of me
how could have i noticed that
i never ceased
loving
despite the fact that everyone had
aged
how could have i noticed that
most of them
have already left
towards the unknown
beyond.

RIC S. BASTASA
For I Too Must Leave Just Like Those Birds

the tree in the garden
has died

what we see now are
nothing but twigs without leaves

below are the heaps
of dead leaves
rotting

we have become like them
hopeless for sometime

dry and cracking
light as the wind
drifting like
the cloud

empty, hollowed by the
mourning of our arid
days

dragging nights
lifeless on a very cold wood
for a bed

one morning some yellow sparrows
with thin long black beaks
hover upon those twigs

and the dead tree even for
the moment has assumed
life

upon a borrowed hope only
for that brief moment

until then when all the sparrows
fly away again
taking with them all the songs
that you hear

you learn the tune from those
thin black and long beaks
and you must compose a song
for yourself

borrowing hope from hope
putting those leaves back
on your
imaginary trees

you must tell me
about the will to live

for i too must leave
and be a part of somewhere else

RIC S. BASTASA
For In Truth I Am Not As Happy As You Think Me To Be...

i like myself in that picture
somewhere in Dubai
after the desert safari
then to the mall behind me
a statue of the horse as you
order pasta, and you take a
picture of me, my hands supporting
my chin, you like it,
black and white, no hues...
as you demand that love must be.
either/or, nothing in between,
mutually exclusive, which of course
i now regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
For In Truth In This Life

for in truth
in this life one can never
be an island

lest the sea grows
and eat
those who remain to be so
uninvolved
so arrogant in their manners
to the world
of networks

for in truth
just a single soul as you
gives life
to the silent city
all painted white the houses there

for in truth
just a word from you that i exist
is enough
to make me feel the beating of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
For Indeed Love Changes Everything

i would have changed you
everything in you
because of this love that i have for you
that encompasses
all the nooks of the milky way
galaxy,

time confronts every
cell in my body, and so here i am

understanding every error
of nature that i found in you
converting shame to love
indifference
to compassion,

it is not you that is changed by my love
it is my love that finally
changed me.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Its Kite To Fly And Perhaps Touch Its Sky.

in you
everything is well
ironed out

there is no place
for doubt

skepticism is a
taboo

well, there is
also fear which is

accordingly the
beginning of wisdom

the doubt, the doubter
which leads us
to conclude about our
being thinkers and
existent, plainly,
the valley comes to

the mountainous mind
a river flows, music
comes in the strings of
leaves and reeds

white birds in the sky
clouds and cottons and

a child's head coming
out the car seeing a

kite, another child running
on the grass
for its kite to fly
and perhaps touch its sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
For J, T, And L

now i am seeing you all again
shining in your black vestments
like some shining stars in heaven

i am left here in my imaginings
looking for the brightest star
because i have decided myself
that i shall not be one

among the many
among those who had kept within their hearts
the loneliness of fame

RIC S. BASTASA
For J.

give me for my questions
i have become an intruder

but if you answer me somehow
let me keep the honest answers

in that lonely room where i read
and then begin to write
they all become my hints to
finally put in place the jigsaw
puzzle of so many lives
in the lifetime of a second....

RIC S. BASTASA
For J....

I am glad
having said
i could have loved you more...
it is sad
when love withers
due to your suns
when the desert bears more sands
because you hated more
about dreams of waters
rains are strangers
and the caravan of camels
are trains of thoughts
traveling at night
and not knowing what days are...

i am an oasis
and i have no place for you anymore
the leaves of my date palms
do not recognize your songs
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For J....(Honesty Is Still The Best Policy, And Happiness Is Defined This Way)

WHEN YOU decided to leave me
let me say once more that i will always admire your
honesty for that, and soon,

i might as well tell you that never in my life have i been so
happier when finally
you are gone completely,

for good.

this time i must know that you mean it and
i mean it too.

at par, mutuality at its best,
may you find your final rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
For J.....

She died last night
morphine took her to another place
that we are not still prepared to go
she died tired of all the sorrows
she ended it with a smile
leaving hope for
all of you

I shall hear those laughter
once again but in that small damp room where some cries crawl
laughter has become stained

The hands of life finally gave in
the temple shattered to the grounds of forgetting
this is the act of freedom
handing a soul to a boat that takes the same soul to another
bank of the river

The hands of death shall hold her
but only for a while
another perfect hands shall receive her
like another seed
to be sown again
in the cyclic fields of life
which we believe
to be always and always
eternal

Today you shall have
another birthday but we are no longer the hands
that shall touch you....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Jamby

How could nice woman
like you
rejoice in victory and delight
in the slaughter of
a single-out man?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Jayson P.

wake up early. Fold your blanket smoothly on your bed. Dust off the linens and the pillows.


It is your day today. Tell the servant to catch the finest chicken and have it cooked. Have some blood for your forehead. It brings you luck.

Tell your mama, you are going to church on this Saturday. You are praying for prosperity, health and more good luck.

As you pass by the bakery, buy yourself a chiffon cake. Have it wrapped with silver paper and have it tied with a golden ribbon. Buy some colored candles too to jibe with your age.

Smile. Laugh. Think of happy moments. Sadness shall have no place in your heart. At least today, a very important day of your life. Be happy. Have some chunks of joys. Take bliss. Choose the cheers.

Wipe out the tears of yesteryears. Do not make mountains of your moles of lapses. Give yourself a break. Make more promises. Embrace hope. There is so much for life. Destiny is waiting out there. So much sunlight. Warmth from the many people who love you.
Do not disappoint them. They are all waiting in the house. There are red roses in the vase. On the table there are ripe fruits and some food.

IT is your birthday today. Cheers To life! To Joy! To happiness! To prosperity! Kiss yourself. Kiss her.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Jejomar

In dwelling, live close to the ground.
In thinking, keep to the simple.
In conflict, be fair and generous.
In governing, don't try to control.
In work, do what you enjoy.
In family life, be completely present.

Stop admitting that you fathered a child out of wedlock.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Jj....

strictly speaking
by my own standards you fall short
of beauty: thick lips,
chipped cheek bones,
poke marks,
falling hair, receding hairline,
short feet, chunky hands,
unaligned eyebrows,
less eyelashes,

but look at you in the mirror
those cat eyes
looking for birds
of prey

ever ready to fight for
your rights
and the rights of the
marginalized, the oppressed
the poor and weak

by all means,
whatever physical defects you have
resetting standards,

now, i must agree
you are the repository of
invincible beauty

RIC S. BASTASA
For John On His First Frustration

let me draw you a house
with an entrance gate
leading to an entrance
door and some windows
to let in air.

just that, there will be no
exit doors, no exit gate,
all the windows open,
not designed to close,

that precisely is success
and failure.
there is a sense of
entrance triumphant
ditto an exit for some
ordinary and even
inevitable failures of
our lives.

the windows are some
of our other options, we
let in air to breathe
for a while. we must.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Johnny Come Lately

The journey of a thousand miles
begins
at C-5.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Joji On Terminal Cancer

i have no courage to see her.
But i imagine that she is bald,
and in pain, and always taking
that pain relievers.
I imagine that.
Who knows, i may be wrong.
Not all cancers are painful. Perhaps.
But most cancers are painful.
That bone, that marrow,
the pain that lingers even in the
middle in the night when everyone
would be soundly sleeping with
their loved ones.
I have seen those with brain cancers
how they hit their heads on
the cemented walls
to ease the pain
those bloated stomachs
afflicted with liver cancer.
Cancer is pain. And Joji must
be suffering it by now.
She must be bald
for her locks of hair
must have fallen to the pillow
part of that
chemotherapy side effects.
But i think i know Joji.
She is a strong woman
with a sense of humor
with laughter always on
her face
she has the will to be herself
despite the sickness
till death, perhaps,
i know that she will not change
i know that she will not
let the cancer defeat her
innate goodness
her confidence to herself
her faith in God
i know that she will always
be smiling
not minding the pain
and the uncertainties.
I know that she is not
afraid.

Upon saying all these
to comfort her
in her Face-book Account,
it is me
who fears most,
for after all,
i may not be able to live
what i am
saying to her.

God! Oh God!
Have mercy upon us all!

RIC S. BASTASA
For Joji On Terminal Cancer (Revised)

i have no courage to see her.
But i imagine that she is bald,
and in pain, and always taking
those pain relievers.
I imagine that.

Who knows, i may be wrong.
Not all cancers are painful. Perhaps.
But most cancers are painful.
That bone, that marrow,
the pain that lingers even in the
middle in the night when everyone
would be soundly sleeping with
their loved ones.
I have seen those with brain cancers
how they hit their heads on
the cemented walls
to ease the pain
those bloated stomachs
afflicted with liver cancer.

Cancer is pain. And Joji must
be suffering it by now.
She must be bald
for her locks of hair
must have fallen to the pillow
part of that
chemotherapy side effects.

But i think i know Joji.
She is a strong woman
with a sense of humor
with laughter always on
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she has the will to be herself
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and the uncertainties.
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afraid.

Upon saying all these
to comfort her
in her Face-book Account,
it is me
who fears most,
for after all,
i may not be able to live
what i am
saying to her.

God! Oh God!
Have mercy upon us all!

RIC S. BASTASA
For Joy

NOW THAT you have grown older
do not shy away from the possibility that happiness can still be
within the hold of your hands
that your lips can still be red and all alive
for the next kiss
no matter how late love
can be,

do not look back
you might fall to the past that
keeps on pulling you
to the arms of
grief

It was not at all your fault that the flower
of love wilted
too early

He was the sun that came at the wrong time
and did not notice
how sweet can you be
at sunset

Now, another moon has noticed
the beauty of your
petals
the sweetest scent that only comes
when the night is
depth and
so silent

Walk under its light
feel the warmth of its rays
close your eyes and feel
once again
how love can be stronger and sweeter
after the first pain
For Juvy...

Juvy is a thirsty woman
she is thirty, a widow for three years now
her husband died on a car accident
leaving her with
a daughter

tonight she cannot sleep
her breasts are making fire

she goes out of the house
and finds the brook nearby outside the fence
of her house

when she gets there
it is cold and dark but her breasts are glowing like cinders

she undresses herself
and goes into the water
her breasts are playful on the ripples of the water
she goes deeper
and dives
opens her eyes looking for happiness

she opens her mouth
drinks the fresh water of the brook

she is thirsty and wants to drink
everything

satisfied for now
she goes out of the water
dresses herself again
under the moon

she goes home
opens the door of her room
and with her hair still wait
she lays in bed and begins to sleep
the picture of her husband
is no longer
on top of the table

RIC S. BASTASA
For Juvy...(A Little Correction)

Juvy is a thirsty woman
she is thirty, a widow for three years now
her husband died on a car accident
leaving her with
a daughter

tonight she cannot sleep
her breasts are making fire

she goes out of the house
and finds the brook nearby outside the fence

when she gets there
it is cold and dark but her breasts are glowing like cinders

she undresses herself
and goes into the water
her breasts are playful on the ripples of the water
she goes deeper
and dives
opens her eyes looking for happiness

she opens her mouth
drinks the fresh water of the brook

she is thirsty and wants to drink
everything

satisfied for now
she goes out of the water
dresses herself again
under the moon

she goes home
opens the door of her room
and with her hair still wet
she lays in bed and begins to sleep

the picture of her husband
is no longer
on top of the table

her decision is to empty
her past and free it from dusts.

RIC S. BASTASA
For K....

BEWARE, the end is about to touch you
what you have in your hands
none shall be taken when you are finally taken
what you keep in the house shall dissolve like ice
all your secret stories revealed
all your hidden books open themselves like arms of the mad woman
all your accounts exposed
you are dirty, your are sick
and you are dying....

we are ready with the prayers for the dead
we have picked the best flowers for your coffin
we are not at all cruel
despite....

we are forgiving, we shall understand,
even death does not deserve you
much less
hell.

we shall shed no tears for you
it will serve no purpose.

we will not tell those who mourn for you
that you have done us evil.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Kemberly

Her body, already rotting, was found dumped, along with seven other guerrillas, deep in the forest of Concepcion, days after the Dec.15 encounter. (Inquirer, April 8, 2010)

at first they were surprised about the changes.
there were no more cocktails
parties are shunned
and you stopped reaping honors
for yourself in the state university

in a wink of an eye you were gone.
where?

you assumed new names.
you've been living with the poor peasants
in nameless places.
you are Adriane, Ms. Nurse,
or God knows who

they know later through the papers.
i am shocked too about your untimely death
your rotten body
beside the new people's army guerrillas
deep in the forest of the mountain in Bukidnon

beauty and brain and idealism all
gone.

at the end of all these
sufferings
on the temple of giving all that you have

what they give you is a poem
the one that does not make any dead man rise
the one that never heals
the sufferings of those
who love you more than them
For Kiss Is Not A Word And So Is The Tight Embrace.

she says it is enough
she utters the words clearly
but the usual

human frailty as her words speak
otherwise
her actions
show the perfect
reverse.

she took him in and
all the words
disappear
in the silence of their embrace
in the
darkness of the night
under the conspiring moon
and stars.

for the kiss is not a word
and so is the tight embrace.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Kk

they call her genius
because she makes a lot of money
without having to exert
any effort, she plays with time
as though time is a
pet dog,
she uses a few words to
enforce her commandments of
greed

and what is surprising is this:
the robots
her slaves obey without question
reaping the fruits of
effortless greed
and offering all of these
in her tray of
luxury,

we who earned each penny
with honesty
do not watch her with envy
neither do we pray
for her eventual debris

we pity her well
for
at the end
her destiny is
hell...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Krayge....

it is not the snow
you know its coldness already
you have experienced frost
and perhaps seen the movie about it
how painful can all these be
white, and prickly and
soft perhaps like a gentle flake
but you know how it gets too lonely
most of the time

did you say that you like someone
and then somehow that someone starts
to evade you as though you have
leprosy?

that is a mild form

leprosy used to be that antisocial
but you know that there is more
than what was
that....

Adenine
Infantrymen
Dementia,
Somnolence

take from it
or perhaps scientifically i once taught
you in our faded Physics class

in magnetism Craig, do not forget,
like poles still repel

and it has not changed since then
despite the blending of the
bends.
For L.....Wherever You Are And With Whom

i've seen
how well she paints
the portrait
of her mom

how well she
plays Dr. Zhivago
dedicating it
to edwin

we had pizza
facing an island
got a beer
while she had
coke despite her
being a
diabetic

now i am thinking
how well we
do not really
fit

it feels odd
but it already happened.

at any rate
i will not ever see
her again.

though the
heavens may fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lack Of Better Coffins In The Town

so many things to do
and should have been done

about these unfolded blankets
these scattered pillow on the floor
of a dilapidated house
about a door lock which does not
function anyway

everything is not safe here
birds come and go by the window to
the door

the night is sharp and shattered
like glass pieces of unconsumed wine
morning is not as beautiful as it
used to be
dawn is like an old dog, dying, smelling
like a carcass in Caracas

you like to go outside run into the woods
and scream and frighten the black birds away
you are a ghost of this present
and you have done nothing except to sit

by the window and stare on those hills
not faraway
you want to cut all those trees
that block the sun hidden from your face
your eyes swell and your coffee had gone cold
like some kind of dead dreams
still unhurried for lack of better coffins
in the old town where you live.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lack Of Confidence

..i tried to
sound like you,
studying your choice
of words, the way
the metaphors
are constructed,
i studied every line
of your face and
each night
i put on some lines
very much like yours,
...all else fails
i can never be you
i stop pretending
and imagining
that i am better if
i am you,
....suddenly, things
change, here you
are wearing same
colors as mine,
all the while you
also want to
be me.
... such a twist
we should have
talked about
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lack Of Words

he says that for lack of words
he could not a poem make
his tongue sticks to his gums
the images not so clear
in his imagination

he says it is like he indulges in masturbation
short of the needed ejaculation

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lady Love

I almost lost you.  
Someone is talking and  
I almost lost the idea about you.  
But i am here again  
Rethinking, coping up  
with what to say  
while you are here with me  
enclosed in my arms  
i am lost again  
with what to say  
you are kissing my nipples  
and i am closing my eyes  
somehow i still want to  
retake what thoughts i  
have still searching for  
the proper words  
what is it? let me think again  
how come that i cannot  
remember?  
this time you are  
hurting my  
heart, ah, yes i now remember  
and this i cannot forget  
you frankly told me  
you only love  
my body.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Life Is Life And It Is Never Yours

at noon
the sun scorches
all ambitions, and

with so much fire
in all hearts
our bodies burn

she dances in fire
as she eats fire
and as fire eats her
she never stops
that dance of life

and then the fire
rests in cold stones
in short breaths
of surrender and

she lays herself upon
a bed of contentment

everything does whatever
is to be done
without having to do anything
at all

life smiles and keeps its
own thoughts
it has brought you here
and you did much of the
thinking

that made it hard and harsh
which should not have been
the case

for life is life and it is
never yours
only lent but which you
think you own

RIC S. BASTASA
For Life Is Simple And Must Be Lived Simply Like All The Rest

i've seen the face of the winner
the one who survived from that war
and his triumphant entry in the iron gates of the old city
he is just one of us
scarred and scared and now simply wants to stay and just be one of us
sitting on one of the chairs in the veranda
watching the sunset
drinking beer
smoking a cigar
talking about the mundane event
how to fish
how it feels to gather shells in the seashore
how to make love
for the first time in his life
for life is simple and must be lived simply like all the rest
nothing special, nothing exaggerated
nothing about any 4th of july

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lina & Fatima

what you see is real
and you are not just outside it
you go inside
and take the plunge and all those who
say love you
turn into freaks
you do not look back like the wife of a certain myth
you continue with the journey
into an uncertainty
you lose your name and find another one again
you lose the change of marriage
but the world marries you
you trace the truth in the labyrinths of the poor
and those that disappear
and never come back

there were images of bats clinging to the cave
oh, such memories Lina
such a self
Fatima

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lina S.

SO my dear where have you been?
you don't remember the ripple of the river
it does not remember any
you or me, we are even on this matter

so you are searching for the games that children play
while their fathers are fighting the war
while their mothers wait for the bad news

there are so many
but i will not tell you their names for now

in fact i think you all know these
but you just don't want to remember
i can remember
but let me tell you about those games later

meanwhile let me write
about those who are dead and those who play dead
those who are through and those who are just beginning

it does not matter
there is nothing to be serious about
let all these go
like what i once told you

like the ripples of the river
scarlet from the top and deep red at the bottom
you know the smell
now you must remember

RIC S. BASTASA
For Linda

the photograph of
a woman could be you
and afraid of sanctions from
this rigid
moralistic society you hide
in the
shadow of a silhouette
you become a dark
black figure leaning on the
frame of a door
against the light of the day
your breasts are firm
your nipples are not afraid
anymore
caressed by the fingers of
the wind from
the window from the sea
your feet tiptoe on the
floor
but your arms and hands
are hiding

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lisbeth...

she surrenders finally
to the hands of marriage
forgetting finally her
disappointing struggles with
books and
peers and scales and
a litany of human cases
and supreme court decisions on the matter

'what is justice all about? ' her first question
who dares an answer that satiates her thirst for it?

no one.

the legal room finally ejects her
she is a plate of vomit

and she ultimately confesses
she misses
those nooks where people are
too serious

to be really true to themselves
for they must appear
like dead pillars
unswayed

to discomfort and
unconvinced about the power
of emotions
those flitting feelings are not
welcome here
sorry
so sorry to tell her that
she who cries
and grieves
and says this is a cruel world
where the fittest
too shall suffer
this is where people become stuffed animals
honored somehow for their
sacrifices
their frozen sweat and tears

eyes have no time for blinking
people’s minds are sculpted
to objectivity
like stone or marble slabs
into pieces
of davids

she goes back to the door of the family
enters it and locks the door behind her
it is raining that time
and people have to shout to be heard

hugs her two kids
her mirror to her new world
a confirmation of her untapped genius
what a flattery!

I'll make a lie and tell her
you finally find bliss!

deep within me i am not at all impressed
this is the best world i got
and she is never a part of it

i will let her think
about something that makes her happy

i will not let her ask
if i am telling the truth

i don't have the time
neither does she.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Liyo D.

a little bit flattered
by your comment i
went to your room
and i was trying to
look for a bikini but
i found nothing except
those long bell bottom
pants, black shoes
for the funeral, coat and
tie for graduation ceremonies,
all i need is
a band-aid that bikini
for my wound.

do you have one?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Loleng

i am afraid i have been too literal
for the main reason that i want you to understand easily
what i mean
to lighten what heavy load
you have there

i am sleepy and you expect more of those
metaphors

they have all left this place
that many have misunderstood

now Loleng
each word has its own moving meaning

a dung for a cow
something that is wet for rain

each word has its own limited reality
which you must enclose and
capture
a niche for instance
and a flower
and white curtain all for a wall

but it will not be for long Loleng
when leaving is too painful when things cannot be prevented
from happening

like birth for a start then sometimes death in the middle
instead of marriage

what words will i use Loleng to comfort you?
what metaphors can i think of
to appease you
or trick you into an exit?

perhaps only silence, only silence
perhaps even nothing at all
to comfort you because
the dark nights are getting long
storms more turbulent

and many people as indifferent as
the blank stares that you
see when they shrug their shoulders
when you ran for
them for help

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lolit...

poverty is like a thorn
inside your throat, and most
often this thorn
blocks the smooth flow
of food inside
your stomach,
you bleed to
death and your husband
who asks for donations
to buy your coffin
like Moses goes up
the Mount Moria and
prays there
he is seen by the neighbor
and he is described as
a cross of the new
Calvary
on that gray morning
when the fog still hangs
itself
in suicide position

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lorenzo

there is always a choice between
a barong and something more Filipino

but he goes astray
wanting to portray who he really is

a matter of self-expression
he says is important

one asserts to keep one away
from the enslavement of inferiority

in facing the Chief Justice he drives
the main point of his existence

a pink tie, a pouting mouth,
the famous sway of the hip

a la maya angelou.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Lou And The Rest Of Us

one day you will choose the right path
not because you are afraid of the pain of having
that error as seen through their eyes of conviction

but because something right will always be right
and the right way is not taken because of the perks of
goodness
or the offers of approval
or that altruistic feeling that finally you have
chosen the goodness of
humanity

but for the main reason that in this life
there is nothing to choose
except to be good
and to walk the right path

not because you want it now
but because it is.

it is you and you are
from here from the very start
till the end

the good one.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Love And Life Must Go On And On....

what must we forget?
we bury what
we must forget
we cover
what we love
with soil
we put a bouquet
of flowers

must it be because
we have loved
so much and they
can no longer
love us in return?

if we keep on coming
and sit with their
silence
are we not opening
the outer skins that
help us
heal the wounds
that have long wanted
to rest
in hiding?

we must forget because
love and life
have to move on

and we who are left here
cannot weep forever

we have wept and we
have put salt to earth
that is enough
offering
for all those who are dead
and now
have reigned in their
kingdoms of
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
For Love Sometimes Is Not Love For Truth Sometimes Is Not True....

what was in
me that you have
partaken

was it after
dinner
when the rest
had already left
with their
lovers?

what had you
offered me which
i cannot
pretend refusing?

tonight
everything is about
love

and each one
simply minds
each one's business

and the moon
looks at everyone
with that sense
of empathy

for love sometimes
is not love
for truth sometimes
is not true....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Love That I Want To Forget

a stain in my heart
for years
irremovable and so i let it stay
like a scar, now smooth and
so persistent that it appears like
a birthmark
to my pain, years back, when i still believed in love
when i was still enticed by the whims of
affections
my heart groggy with care
and drunk with promises of unchange and
landscapes of eternity

nothing lasts perhaps except the scars
the wound, true, they heal
and close themselves in like a room locked
with secrets and trunks
closed and covered with dusts
on the mezzanine floor

but on this day i remember things
with a welcome of my arms
sweet pain, tender memories
face of an innocent woman on the
shores unboulevarded yet
soft breeze of the past seas
salty tears on ephemeral cheeks
with dimples like
lines on the pink corners of
the orchids

on this day i may remember the faces
but i am numb and i do not
remember the intimacies anymore

on this day, i am free and so
in love with you

your hands are so soft, sweet,
your lips so luscious and wet and
flavored with scarlet desires

you are my present melody
and i am singing you from the deepest
chambers of my heart

you are so real, and i am so alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
For M

THE GATE did not open for you
the window is still closed to date
there is no way then
for you to go inside
and be counted
as one of those lucky winners
of this day,

ain't no survivor but i am glad with the way how you dance to this
music of death

the world is wide, the seas are incalculable, space is always and
will always be open with the arms of its
unending horizon

i like your attitude
when you tell me that you are packing your bags with your family
for a vacation this summer

beach, white sand, colored balloons, banana boats,
cold Pensacola, a new bikini, buffet dinners,
fun, fun, fun, more and more fun

until then you have forgotten what lurking is
what death is,

don't mind me, i am also going that way
ah, let all those disappointment disappoint themselves
let those problems devise their own solutions

for the meantime, the beach is too inviting
take a dip, have that summer plunge, laugh and love,
take life to the full, up to its brim,
and let all those despair
envy you forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
For M.

if indeed you are true and if indeed as you write it
you are love
and if indeed you are loved by many of them here
and you say you love them all
my dear M. why can't you have that little courage
of loving me in return
give me love like it were a morsel of bread
give me a piece of love
like it were a pinch
of salt.

RIC S. BASTASA
For M. (Just For Fun)

gometry starts with a
dot, and since the dot travels a lot
more lines are made
not contented the lines make
shapes
others enclose themselves
like walls and
churches others spread like
the lines of a map
reaching for countries and
people and
all the nooks of the earth

since then the world is
thankful for a dot
that hopes for spaces and skies
and light and
speed

RIC S. BASTASA
For M. C.

don't be shy
talk about loneliness
in facebook
be candid about it
i assure you
others will comment
you are not
alone
in this epidemic
that mostly plagues
on Christmases
and new years

one will tell you
man, you are normal
just bear it
and be with us
for we are one set of
lonely people
in this biosphere
whole year
round

don't be sad
someone will tell you
there are many ways
to kill a cat
which has nine lives
to waste

one day when
you find the solution
to combat it
and it is gone
someone will tell you
about this
irony

loneliness is a fact
and when happiness comes
and makes you
drunk
you will go back to
the place
where loneliness
resides

you'll miss it.

RIC S. BASTASA
For M. P.

we have so many things in common

our brown color for instance
our sunken eyes

bodies deformed with so much pressure
hands that no longer tremble
because time made the fingers steel

we are deprived of the crown due to our severed heads

they toast for their success in defrauding us of our honors

soon, soon, we have waited long enough

the mountains flatten
the sea shall bloat

soon, soon, our names shall no longer be carved in sand

soon, soon, we shall become a constellation that marks the paths of heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
For M., The Wanderer

you did not choose it
it is there already
you want to remove it
it just can't be
you ignore it
and learn to live
you sleep the whole day
and at night
you party the hours away
it is still there
it is choking you
somehow you know where
to take air
and breathe
in this everyday struggle
they claim they understand
your pain
you do not and
cannot ever believe them
some have fallen
and have become forgotten
others are happy of their
demise
it is you who understands
so well
and so you have
decided to wander
the desert land so vast
knows your pain
the mountains that are silent
knows the intensity of
your pains
the rivers and waterfalls
sing for you
they all know your pain
the plains lay the grass
for you
they know about your pain
and so you wander
not trusting anyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
For M........

every
lock of your hair
that falls on
my shoulder
are words
finding paper
for another
poetry of
romance...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mama

i never believe them
about the story. about the clinic and the
handsome doctor.
it was a remote possibility
that i could have been
born there
because i have always loved
the mountain and the sea
and i have always the feeling
that the dove
still hovers in my heart

how can a scalpel
be the source of my name
when i am but a seed
of the rice thrown
in the muddy fields?

they have destroyed your
face and your eyes bleed
some damage cannot
be repaired. when the coffee
spilt its hot liquid on the carpet
the aroma has escaped
our senses.
the stain hides on the dark
blue colors of its thickness.

there are new flowers
that i have planted in your
old garden. the rocks are kept.
and the pebbles. and the
little pond and the tadpoles
swim to be croaking frogs
this coming rainy season
for you mama. and i have
began to learn to love the
songs of the dance
under them. and be all wet.
i don't mind anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Manny V. On His Election Campaign Strategy

Campaign to a great nation
As you would cook a small fish.

Please
Do not overdo it.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mao...

we flew on the same plane
we sat beside each other.
i was  best friend
is with me. We have not seen
each other for quite a long
time.

Manila and its night lights
and its famous sunset would
have been best for us.

I imagined eating at Vikings
it would have been fun with
you. We love sushi. That salmon
was perfect. The hot wasabi.
The lobster was amazing. We
love food.

Luneta Park is a cliche.
With you it would have been
tolerable. Something to write
about at the sunken gardens.

When we arrived however you
told me: Leave me alone.
I want to be alone this time
in my life.

My best friend.

(for indeed, he did not want
me to be arrested with him,
that hard core communist wants
to love this country alone)

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mar

The Filipino people are hungry:

It is because those in authority
like you and your
fellow senators
eat up too much in e-vat
taxes.

RIC S. BASTASA
For March Of 2011...

when i have given everything inside myself,
the last breath even,
then i must stay, and once again this summer
like any other summers,
for another batch, i will say the same parting words,
'go on, without me'

RIC S. BASTASA
For Me Life Is Beautiful

life is beautiful
even without cash.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Me To Continue Loving You

for me to continue loving you
is to demand that you keep the light of the sun
inside your palms

i cannot tie a rope on your whispers and keep them
inside the confines of my ears
things escape, air rises, light dissipates,
molecules scatter in random, atoms fuse and
explode and change arrangements

i cannot keep a cold forever or a cough to hold its departure
or a sneeze to keep it secure inside my nose

blowing up, exploding, bursting, popping,
these are necessities of life and we are now doing each

we could not wait after all these things shall follow
the consequential silence. Listen, they are all here.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Me To Love You Baby, You Simply Have To Tell All The Lies....

so you are the topnotch of my choice
i have many of your kind of my illusions,
but you make it inside my heart and i feel so blessed
having you inside me, like i am a cup filled with honey
and you are not spilled even if i have to run away
fast like a water ski,
i like your form most, i set aside content,
form is more satisfying, with content i really have to wait a little longer, like
talking to you, and listening and
appreciating,
and i have no time for all these sweet-nothings,
it is the form of your body, and it is the most important thing to me now, i who is
lost in my
hunger-desire, own you love you take you forever whispers.

you know the truth, i never touched you.

when i leave this room and then they ask if i am a brute
a beast, a tiger with sharp killer teeth or a lion with a
sharp lovers claw, or an elephant with an ivory tusk that
amazes a lady hunter rolling in the hills like a top,
....tell them, i am all those metaphors.

for me to love you baby, you simply have to lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mely

i know you lied, not just once, but many times, and they are all mad at you, and you come again in my house, making all the lies, and fabricating more stories, so you may earn your food and money to buy your daily needs and the medicine for your sick mother.

they are all mad at me for not rebuking you, for pretending all the way that i believe you: your son meeting an accident, your husband at the hospital, your mother with a heart failure, and you on a nervous breakdown,

i know all these lies, but i understand you, Mely, a woman in need grips even a sharp knife just to survive.

my duty is to lend a hand, and it doesn't matter anymore if the one who receives the help, is a liar in need.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mers

i know that
all that you want to read are just short lines

you have no time
for stretched searches for meanings

crisp is always tasty
brief is sexy

i know that.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mich

time is aflying
the sunflowers that bloom today
tomorrow are wilting

Mich, make most of the time
take him.

now.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mifael And Company Inc.

et they read your poems
and all are unanimous
in giving the thumbs up
sign telling you that you
know when to go and
stop and sing and leave
their mouths gaping but

i tell you mifael and the
rest of those who are not
so popular here, you are
not good in your craft
simply because mifael

and the rest of those who
are not popular here you
are one of those who write
too carefully from the heart
and knows too well what
strings to strum what drums
to beat what piano keys to
press what chords to strike
that bleed hearts and make
them jump with joy again

mifael and company and
all those who are not popular
here, you are, to me not good,
simply because like candice
the evanescent, you're, those
categorized by this another
unpopular one, as the best of
the best that this site can
show and be proud of

perhaps not never but forever..

RIC S. BASTASA
For Miguel

when you left
there was this delusion of white mustache
this baldness that is too consuming
for those who want
to be always young

i was then a little boy
crying on a velvet blue sofa

i was aware of what was said
from grandpa's mouth in fact

there were scribbles in my heart
like some claws of birds

you do not have to come back
to point me the way you passed

i am still aware about those pains
having loved solitude

there was this party in the house
when i was sixteen and there were hands

slapping your face and i too bleed a lot
having known you much better

on your deathbed
i am still aware of the things to come

i know the secret passage
and along the way i pick you some white flowers

it is bouquet of flowers that i must offer to you
because you understand my pains too

this is our world of pains
we exit soon only to be parted again
and we say we understand the flight of the fireflies
how their lights are drowned by the rain

how the leaves finally find solace
in the silence of utter darkness when we finally find

the truth of this existence
the life after

RIC S. BASTASA
For Miss L.

YOU STOOD
upon a rock by the sea

i remember that
but not that clearly

what was done next
between us
a haze

the foams of the sea
went thin like tongues on the white sands
lapping

it was too long ago

the boat has holes
the fish which we caught slipped away

the net was a useless piece
on my clumsy hands

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mona Liza....

hello sweet lemon,
did you call me a sour grape?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mr. R

that time
all that he can do is flee the place
run away from his own house
that his son burned

it is not a question of whether he is responsible or not
it is a question of
not to hurt the one who caused him so much pain

and so all the memories are gone
the house that he built from his hard earned money for years

everything everything is gone
this time he does not flee anymore
there is no way that he is going to run away from anything again
he stays put on the ground which is right
nothing matters.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mr. Ron Mengzi

there is no one in his house
in the tropics who really know how to speak English
so he tries making monologues for himself
talking about his latest affairs
but it gets boring you know
and those in the neighborhood who hear
that he is talking to himself
think that he must have gone crazy
i want to talk to him but i am busy
always busy he complains
for i am the only who knows how to talk in English
but i am busy and so one day
Mr. Ron Mengzi walks towards the pond
and talks to the fish that he brought
from California
and there he had a nice English conversation
with the fish
all in figurative and
codified bubbles.

Some people who read this
do not think about Mr. Ron Mengzi at ll
They now talk about me
asking about my own sanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mr. Shepherd.

easier said than done, that it must be something always new, untrodden path, uncharted ocean carrying nothing but the flow no ideas please he said, plain texture, tone, color, most importantly it must have perfume of flowers with specific scientific names, something that my hands can feel and my nose can smell, vibrant as a beat of a drum hands synchronized with fingers hitting the animal skin, skin of a tiger, or a lizard that crocodile look of a komodo dragon inside the stone cage somewhere in jakarta, where can all these lead me? 'do not bring it to me? ' you said, you exclaimed, 'i had been dead'.

a very lonely white morning glory wilted on the fence and now it is dark and people are away in their own private sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Mukako

make me live
for another day
kiss me
before you say goodbye

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Beloved...

there's a thorn in my hair
a bone in my throat

there is a lump on my back
there is log in my eye

there is a cloud in my mind
there is a stain in my shirt

there is a snake in my bed
a scorpion in my pocket

there is wolf by my door
a jackal on the stair

there is bat on the wall
a spider on the ceiling

there is this blindness
in my heart
there are blocks in my thoughts

the hands of the clock
are running too slow

there is an eclipse of my sun
there is a rock in my river

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Dear Eraption

Health is the greatest possession.
Contentment is the greatest treasure.
Confidence is the greatest friend.
Non-being is the greatest joy.

Get lost!

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Gay Friend Who Says He Missed Me

he pretended
he was good and smooth and not so easy

on that crowded street somewhere in Malate

in sabah sodomy is a crime

a talk a walk some shapes of affection
a little coddling

nothing about something safe
like a condom

that is out of the question
something is chilly

like the weather that night
with some drizzles

which moves like a small ship of fizzes

exclude sex, recalling youth is so much fun
beautiful bodies in history

memories that sing like the rain
dimly lighted cafes and soft conversations

and then the salted goodbye
and soon to find

perhaps for another twenty years
sweet scented and bitter spoken

hello.....
For My Jealous Mother

forgive me mother
but today i remember
what you did
when you got jealous
over father
drinking with another
whore in that
cheap bar
at 5th street

you took and black
umbrella
for a sword and
stabbed him
on his thighs and
arms and legs

father must have loved
you so much
he never bothered
retaliating
despite his
serious injuries

in fact he ran away
from your attacks
that sad night
while that thick faced whore
laughed the loudest.

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Love In The Open

i love you
that is what you will hear
because i say it
when you ask for it
as a matter of
your daily
need.

i have long accepted
half of what i am
ever since
when light is vague
when truth is nothing
but an opaque
view of the egg yolk
against the
lamp.

part of my nose
is efflorescent
it shines when it is
so dark
like a fish on
a moonless night
on the surface
of the the calm sea

part of me is an
anemone
when you are near
everything in me wants
to close and disappear

part of me is your confusion
like the squid
jetting a spurt of
a black trail

part of me
is your love another part of
me is my hate
for this self that i wish
i have completely known
like the lines of
my palm.

part of me is lost
another part of me says
there is no way to find

i hope that 50 years is enough
to know that part of me
is unknown
like that part of the sea
unfathomable.

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Mama Who Loved Masks...

i no longer
deal with masks
mama

if one is to be
my friend
i must see the
face

not even the name
for one may have
as many

i burn masks mama.

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Neighbor

the black birds are
up
hovering over the
green coconut palms

beside the roof of
her new house
she remembers
Noah and her heart

begins to weep
there are other things
that i can see

from all these black birds
my heat too weeps
but i shall not give
her any hint at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Peers Who Made It Good In The Big City

it was with a sad heart that i left all of you
from that big city that promised to give me all the glitter
of the neon lights
an island of fame where my body
and my face shall take
the center of the stage
where i may wallow in the deafening
sound of clapping hands
and a shower of flowers
as i sing and dance
and be the star of all your
dreams and wishes

i am twisted
you all write me a letter
i am hardheaded
you condemn me for i broke the promise
of what i could have been

i choose the little town by the sea
where the waves all speak of sorrow
where the trees grow unprecedented and without pruning
the ugliness of their branches speak of ill-will and
pronounced unfashionably
nature's untrammeled simplicity

the newspapers speak of your breakthroughs
all your names in bold letters and colored
your cars and mansions your latest creations
your glory and victories

my day begins in silence and it ends in silence
i sleep with nightmares i talk my walks at midnights

how can i be so stupid? all the leaves ask me, and all the trees
when i begin to speak, run barefoot away from me
the eggs of little birds on the nest on branches falling and broken and wasted
For My Secret Love

i content myself with only
a glance of you per day
to exclude the touch
of your hand,
to exclude practically
everything
that may fulfill this longing
at one glance only
for only an hour of the year
i can say
my life is fulfilled in self-
restraint.

RIC S. BASTASA
For My Sweetie

Slowly you shall let them see your eyes
Lifting some veils and setting aside the curtains
To let in some light
The air to freshen a bit of this
Twosome Discomfort
This hiding and pretending not to seek
What lies ahead
The two of us
You dream you are a butterfly
And you tell them one night
That you have known how to flutter
Away from me
Into the world of your own dreams
I have no cause to hold you now
On your powdered wings
You shall go to farther places
Even without me
Mapping out your destinations
I will be sad for a while
But I will be happy soon
I have let you be
I shall set you free
To be yourself again
Now you must tell me
How the nectar of your chosen flowers taste

RIC S. BASTASA
For Nicky

You have just taught us three things:
simplicity,
patience,
compassion.

These three are your greatest failures..

RIC S. BASTASA
For Nikki

no one can stop
the daisies from blooming
the sun on an early morning
always is there
to understand so now
prepare the desired colors
of your petals
show them
don't just wilt and die
without the touch of
sunshine

RIC S. BASTASA
For No One Knows No One Knows....

my sister is
bitter
and i patiently
listen
to her
anger

i am in a
hammock
and i look at the
sky
between the spaces
of leaves
of the trees

father taught me
a lesson
my son always see the
forest
and not just the trees

the bitterness of my sister
is long and wide
and i begin to imagine
a road

an old road that father and
i used to walk on
past seven summers
on those drought of our lives
where many
goats and cows
died

the bitterness of my sister
shows
in her anger against the young
how they live
a life of fun and then
the years of misery

i did not listen much
misery is not my cup of tea
i have thoughts for all of those
who still keep love
amidst the hate
who still smile amidst the crying crowd

i have my thoughts like doves
that fly away
to the blue skies of my youth
till the orange sunset
of my death.

my sister is the bitter one
as always
i did not listen much to her woes
because i have freed
myself from my own bitterness too

i am forgiving
and i have forgiven
what misery had offered me
for i have long told myself
nothing lasts forever

no one knows
no one knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
For No Other Use Or Purpose...

they ask that between us
there should be no purpose

or this asking for a use
some benefits

that there is but friendship
that begs not even for time

that memory that simply rests
and then takes upon itself another

journey to a place reserved
for those who are classified as

useless because they serve for no
use but only for the sake of

beauty, the mere grandeur
and nothing in particular

nothing for return of investments
just the gaze, the compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Noelle Who Remembers The Fog And The Pine Trees In Masangkay

slowly the fog
blankets the
pine trees

at night the coldness
creeps
in every pore of the
skin

like thoughts that
cover our hair and
creepy too in our
spine

wake up in the morning
see how the fog leaves
the pine trees

see how our minds
clear

thoughts leaving
like birds perched
last night
in the branches of our
minds

RIC S. BASTASA
For Norma...

she sends pictures of herself in Holland with the tulips in full bloom and teeming as background, beyond is the shadow of the windmill, the usual symbol of what the place is all about,

she is smiling

somehow mathematics comes into the picture a little analyzing goes this way: she has cancer and she does not tell anybody, but how did I know about it, is something that I am original and say resourceful in all aspects: people feed people with other people's malady and they toast coffee and have a sympathetic talk about it, she lives alone and thrives on her monthly pension something not more than enough for a chemotherapeutic session, (how many sessions more?) did she wear a wig when that picture was taken?

(how secretly do we keep diseases
of the mind?) and how happy can feigned happiness last? how pretentious can pictures be sometimes?

well, this must be that, spread happiness, no matter how fake it has become

people must be happy,

oh! these are the happy real children of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Noynoy, The Incoming President Of The Philippines

He who knows
that enough is enough
will always
have enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Once In My Life

for once in my life
after reading an epic
i fell silent
upon a black butterfly
that hovered
on my lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Once The Poem Is Written, I Become Invisible Again

I am writing this poem now
In a matter of minutes, this poem shall be finished
This poem is not a Taj Majal
It will not require a thousand years to make it
It is just like my breathe that I throw back to air
To the world
From its air that I too have taken

Once this poem is written
I, the poet, shall become invisible again
Until the next urging to write comes
To sing the the songs of the cricket
The grasshopper, the sparrows
To imitate the sound
Of the falling leaf, the sea breeze,
The slush of the sand of the boat docking on the shore
The trickles of the rain on the nipa roof
The rushing ripple of the river
The brushes of the cogon grasses
The silence the drifting clouds
And there will be more
To plunge ourselves naked to some unknowns

To see to feel to sigh to be surprised to be awakened
To be electrified to be shocked
And even to be silent
For a while
On this eccentricity of faith’s actions
Conjure up this thing that thing
Adding scent and color and motion
I write
My living presence in the world
That someday may awaken
A body of memories and dreams
In another person’s body and soul

And in the most private sense
It can simply be
A you and I... or then, who knows?
Ask me, I like the whole world involved &

so, now that this poem is finally written,
i am nowhere to be found, and as foretold
i am again invisible.

RIC S. BASTASA
For One As Beautiful As You

Like that last raindrop dripping
On the cable wire
Like the one that dripped and dropped
And said goodbye
Like the crying road that
Held you by
I have tried to see what
Sorrow means
What giving-up signifies
How defeat looks like

If, if I had been unfair to you
Just let me go
If, If I have been so untrue
I hope you must know
I never meant
To hurt
one as beautiful as you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For One To Be In Love

The one in love
Feels that he is the king of everything
He possesses the moon and rides
On the wind upon his horse

He becomes as fluid as light
Escaping the view of the eye
And the notes on his diaries
Become fields of roses and daisies

When he loves
Fountains spurt from his ten fingers
Waterfalls pour from his mouth
And butterflies come out
From his tongue

When he loves
He runs out of time
All the waves lick his feet
All the leaves sing
All the clouds smile at him
The sun caresses his hair
The earth spins only for him

RIC S. BASTASA
For One Who Is Too Young To Write Poetry

i have one advice.
for you.
be the child who follows
the emperor
and be innocent enough
to tell him
that he has no clothes.
tell the truth.
the naked truth.
do not decorate it with plumes and
icy pearls.
and tell not
those who do not see
that the threads and buttons
are made of
pure gold
or his sweat
all diamonds.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Papa

the wind this month of
september
blows the leaves
towards the
hidden mountain.

eye are scattered
and cannot continue holding
their tips

eye have lost the hands of
the stems that
give them the sense of holding

i raise my fingers
to touch the old tree
on top of the hill
where our old house stands

the clouds have since
drifted towards the sea
and i never had
the chance to hold them
for you papa

RIC S. BASTASA
For Papa Gregorio

And then I finally reached
The narrow mouth of the river
That you told me about

And I was left with no choice
But to sail right there
On this wooden boat that you
Left me

I did it and here I am getting on
The sight of an island
A bountiful island with brooks
And green grass and
Coconut trees and
Lanzones trees

I am here finally
In accordance with the maps of your dreams
And tonight
I look at your sky
And I see the hundred smiles
Of your glittering stars

RIC S. BASTASA
For Pedro

it has
already been
forgotten

17 years
is too long

all the
marks of
the sands
have already
been
erased by
the sea
and wind

you think
that every
pebble is now
in its place
and that
the shore is
now ready
for a new
beginning

indeed it is
so
but who can forget
the salt
in the water

if forgiven
let it be so
but the broken
shells
remain to be so

their songs remain
sad
but no longer
vengeful

RIC S. BASTASA
For Pio.....

Yes, there were eternally bleeding palms
Pio, do you remember the name?
astigmatic, and there were those
many names, many images
so many mirages
And the desert suns, oasis, camels, Bedouins,
scimitars of the past conversations;
the origami of storks and ponds

There was this chinese frog
who made it to the seven rivers
The koi that turned into a dragon
guarding the eunuch of the empire

So many words said and you think
those were wastes,
they never had any meaning at all except,
the gullibility of the gulls
But who knows, you maybe wrong
ultimately for dismissing some facades of poems

People are poets and they cannot tell you
the meanings of surfaces
submarines go deeper and will not
announce its resurfacing
corals there, colored fish, pearls,
sunken treasures of the past;
who knows, there may be real stories there
hands that bury metaphors
euphemisms that actually carry truth
between the legs of their syllables

you should have known better,
when you believe all these at once
I tell you, you were never wrong.

it is just one of those days
when words are more real.
i never regret having said them,
drawn the lines, and fortified my forts.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is you in handcuffs, you claim to be,  
not your body, you're in for something borrowed,  
as we all are,  
you do not sell  
to me what you have, a body, a soul, a mind  
in trichotomy,  
i have much of these already, and i do not mind  
getting into these all again,  
your body, my body, without the mind and soul  
it is possible  
i did it and shall do it  
over and over again  
for i learn no lesson from anything  
neither from anybody  
nor any book

i shall set you free from handcuffs, and have me handcuffed instead,  
in return by & of your hands  
and arms  
i will not kiss you, you will be surprised  
i will not even hold you, you will be appalled  
i simply want to be a black bird perching on your shoulders as branches to a tree  
in my mind,  
and then you see me flying away,  
no drama, just a plain  
for general patronage movie  
it's like deplaning PAL  
from New York via Cebu with a note that i cannot be in Looc, Oslob, not even a shadow of my giveaway phone  
and then back to my hometown in Dipolog  
you bet, i expect no arms, i hate streamers and the band.  
i still love to do all these  
and finish all these tricks all alone by myself.  
Till then, if you are not happy at least  
Don't be gay.
RIC S. BASTASA
For R.F.

describe this body
has no center
because it has no
edge
it has no here
and there
for if there is
how can this body
contain
a love that
has no measure?

the sun
is not the center of my universe
for i am never one
of your planets
i wish you are my star
my sun
my God
but i live and
go nowhere
to you
i understand
i am
nothing...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Reyes On His First Attempt

Nature does not hurry,
yet everything is accomplished.

So try and try again
until they succeed.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Richard G.

He who knows,
does not speak.

He who speaks,
does not know.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Righteousness Sake And Not For Anything Else.....

then the dirt will be visible.
the blemishes striking.
you do not say as it was written.
we were experiencing it.
we are no longer strangers.

i like it this way.
it will be penetrating and long lasting.
it will not fade. it will stick to me and
i will fully understand it.

did you not say that wisdom is different from mere knowledge?

then i will know what is wrong.
then i will know how to avoid it.
and i will not even avoid it because i have to.
i avoided it because it is not a part of me anymore.

i avoided it not because our ancestors told us so.
or the authorities so decreed it with all its concomitant penalties.

there is a rock in the middle of the road.
there is a mole in your
face.
there is dirt in your
forehead.
there is a thorn in
your heart.

we do not say it.
we understand it.
and it most understood
this way.

fully fully comprehended.
then i walk my way
without thinking about
the law or about the judgment
or about the consequences.

i am righteous now and that
is for righteousness sake
and not for anything else.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Rj...

i perfectly understand it Rj
i know that the name of the child is always
Today

never tomorrow and so without so much fuss
i give as you ask
i ask no explanations i require no reasons

got no burden somehow
i am glad finally i have one

His name is Today
Never tomorrow

Oppress me, oppress me some more,
i need one, Today
I perfectly understand
Though foolish i may be
i give up
Sanity and Greed
and Logic

Ask me, i give in,
no reason, no nothing at all,
nothing in return,
o no condition

If your Mama Rj
cannot understand all these,
let me,

If your Papa Rj
takes pride in his Discipline
I demand nothing Rj
Go on, take this and that
I am ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Rjing (Be Brave And Stand Your Ground)

you choose without doubt
an inconvenient life
you think your arms are strong
that there is nothing slippery on your hold
your hands are spiders
you must have prepared for this
i have nothing to say
and will never say what i think are whales
in my mind
you have chose the cross in the Calvary
mistaking everything as love
you bleed into your own death
everyone stares at you with interest
asking' Can he make it? Is fate with him?
Has he talked to God about this
sensitive and painful matter? '
you are young but we are not
underestimating the orange birds in your eyes
so must you go now
do not take any word from us
be proud you have what you claim
will make you survive
there is a word from your father
'Son, do not ever come back'.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Robinson

three years
he said he learned about forgetting
Von, and he looked back
and pondered, that Von never knew
about what he felt,
and he pretended that he had become a very ugly witch
and so Von was all the way as numb as
dead tree
leafless and sunless on a deserted hill
where black clouds
meet with
wilted grass, so much so for that,
he continued, he has moved on with his life
after he mended
a broken heart, but he never told him
about how he had become so crazy about
love, or was it really?
he worked hard, learned the art of making more money
until he reached that point
that he can now afford
to buy love and put it in the house like a lover for money,
but just the same it ended this way:
another broken heart, another numbness,
another moving on
to another wrong direction....

ended his life with an end
that Von
never, till now, understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Rose And Arvin

now you have seen
the secret garden
the flowers here
are edible
the seeds life giving
but we do not eat
anything
we do not even chew
any leaf
in here we are cursed
to simply utter
to let time pass
in here we are simply
living on that unseen shape
of awe
on that indescribable taste
of wonder
the stars may be far
as distant as our unfulfilled dreams
but they are always ours
and we are always
their chosen gods.
we shall reign here
on our self-made thrones.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Ruby Rose

ah, the truth blanketed by
cement inside a barrel of anger
and then thickened by the
hideous steel
thrown into the depths
of the murky river
which time could have
easily forgotten as nothing
but just another kind of murder
unresolved

things come out by themselves
and they all tell their stories
not with weeping but with
the pointing finger as to who
the real culprit is

the truth can never be buried
it unfolds itself and bears upon itself
the promise that at the end
its face can be seen
and then justice shall prevail

we shall wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Rv...

now i know
why you shot* your two feet
against the
sea and sun
under the shade of a tree
one hot
summer

understandably
you are so alone and no one
did it for you

so you did
it yourself

* took a picture

RIC S. BASTASA
For S.

dark skinned
heavy weight
hair untrimmed

yet so friendly
compassionate
giving

i should have
seen more of
you in earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Sale

do you not know
that for now
everything is for sale
at the right
price?

my heart my body
are for sale
but only for you
my dear

but since i love you
take me for free
with a bonus
of fidelity.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Salome

do not tell me the truth
with us on this lonely journey
the truth becomes
unnecessary

let us move on Salome
to find a place where we can begin again

let us leave all the sad truths behind our paths
all our tracks covered

you go ahead i will follow
i will cover your sorrow

tomorrow Salome tomorrow
you will still me mine less the sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
For Salu Salu

the world has changed.

and new adages are worded:

a friend in need
is a friend to avoid.

do unto others first
before others do unto you.

and the truth has taken
the shades of the rainbow

what is good for the gander
need not be good for the goose

but we can force it
despite an oppression
of taste and culture

one must take shelter
in the shadow of the self

otherwise one gets lost
in the labyrinths of others.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Sam...On Self Love.

do not be afraid
of libido,
it is part of you,

us, we do not invent this,
it is there

we may wish it is gone
but it stays

we are told to go and
be clean

but who? nobody is claiming
responsibility for
the illness in Ward 6,

now they are washing
their hands
when someone so important
hangs himself
dead
on arrival

denial is a sin,
it is the opposite of
acceptance

we are here
we are the facts
we wish no one ill
we only wish them
all

love. Now are you
afraid of yourself?

there is no one
that shows the love
except yourself
thrive upon it
till the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Sara Kaye

it is good to see you begin to write,
assure me that it is not your suffering but those of other people
that it is not your hell but theirs,
and too i assure you that i am living in paradise
that i am still trying to know what is hell all about
that my suffering need not be my own but those who are merely called as
subjects of our literary styles,

why are you afraid to tell our story? why is there fear in confessional poetry?

was the flower afraid to show its petals to the sun and then
hesitant to show how it dies in the afternoon
when it sheds off all its personal treasures in the counted
petals of its existence?

show me that you can write a poem.
just one. And do not fear, i will assume that it is not about you.

charge it to empathy. Let us begin with the euphemism of internalization.
Putting our feet on the shoes of those who do not know how to walk.

Or let us say, we are just writing for writing's sake.
Pure imagination. Astral travel. Talking in our sleep.

Hmm, let us see. How your poetry speaks? How your short stories can tell
the most beautiful lie possible on this planet of the apes.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Selena

indeed
i commend you

your legs are
sexier now with
the polka dot mini
and black
stockings

at the age of
45 do not fear
you can still kick
point & dash &
sway

Selena do not just
trust luck
to get a man
you need to be a little
flirt this time
and be the smart ass
that you can

time passes you by
do not just wait there
go & grab & just be
yourself
open and
candid about what
you feel
and by all means
in God's name
say it.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Serge Who Prided That He Passed More Laws
Than Any Senator In Senate

The more laws
and order are made prominent,

the more thieves and robbers
there will be.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Simone

it was not the cat that ate the moon
it was the dog
which is capable of since
its mouth is larger and
and its owner is powerful

the dog is spoiled and the cat knows this
when the dog howls at night
the cat learns how to sleep amidst the
abuse
the charivari of drunken dogs
missing the moon that they have swallowed

the stars knew and so tonight they have kept the distance
afraid of the dogs but still glitter
to appease the
cat so sad inside its nightmares.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Sol...

smile my dear
the motto remains the same
since 1976

Life is beautiful.

and it will always be
because we believe that

Life is beautiful.

it is, in fact, it is.

do you still miss those islands of desire?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Some Broken Hearts

cscissors
that have long loved the
stone

cpaper that
wished for water

i wish you all
happiness still

RIC S. BASTASA
For Sympathy

since you married her
not for love but for sympathy
the gods agree
on some consequences

she will stare at you
and she will be nothing but
a ray of white light

you become the prism
to filter her soul
against the sun
your sympathy
shall spread her into
the many colors of
her griefs

soon she will say
that in the prism
where her soul passes through
there was no joy
there was no bliss

there was only this
little piece of happy moments
this pretense
not meant to last
her lifetime in the mask of darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
For Tem On His Last Day

THE WORLD does not weep
for a quitter, no matter what
no matter how deep is your sorrow
no matter how justifying the circumstances
precipitating inside that cup of poison,

another poem is written for you
a sympathizer from another country
perhaps suffering too
like you

or us, but it will be only for a short while,
after the last word is written and read
the world moves again, spins upon itself
to complete another revolution,

nothing is achieved much, time does not tell,
but the motion keeps on moving
like a spiral, like a steep stair moving up
only to arrive at an empty room,

i believe in something else,
that someone is waiting out there

i guess, you are right, the end is reasonable,
but the means will always be questioned.

i hope you still have time to read the poem of Mike
i guess, sincerity lies there,

i still shiver about an old age that could not wait
for more time.

at the end, who knows? but you cannot tell. You are silent
as cement.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Tess

do not envy the
billionaires for their
problems are in
billions too

be glad ours
are just in
cents

what makes us happy
simply depends
on what makes
us smile

there is no need to
complicate
what simple
happiness is all
about

how about a
talk?
tonight?

RIC S. BASTASA
For That Hypocrite With A Mole In His Face....

i make a mark
and draw the boundary now
when in your anger
you state
'this man is useless and
never credible'

and that is you
my friend who had keep pretending

during those times
when you have partaken
on my free
it is in your anger
when truth is said

now the bridge that connects us
falls to the rage of my rivers
it is me that moves to find the happiness
of least resistance

now that i have known you
i shall never speak your name again...
dinners.....

RIC S. BASTASA
For That Master....

you are giving what we do not need
and so of course we discard it
for what use are your grass to our sea
what relevance is your cloud to our cave
your flowers do not thrive
on the deepest part of our seas
we claim no kingdom
so what is the use of your slaves and serfs
and soldiers
and lances and carriages?

stop all these
we have long ceased to be a path to your discourses
did we not tell you that we descend from the spirits of the winds?
there is no use now
we have long set ourselves free
your golden chains
that made us sing for freedom
we have given
to the pillars
now you must own them
as you are bound

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Buds That Bloom

for the buds that bloom
thank you
for the flowers that show the
biggest petals and the sweetest scent
thank you
for those that keep on holding the dew
thank you
and for those who enjoy even the slightest moment
of my appreciation and praise
all for the glory of God
even for the slightest moment
and then wilt and die
in an instant
like the click of the hand
or the ticking of the clock for a second or two
thank you

i have learned a lot. i have opened. i have kept the answers. i am ready
for the next question that God may ask of me.
even for the shortest moment of my life.
thank you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Conceited Woman...

often your talk
boils down to how attractive you are
or have been

and i just keep on listening
i think i must give you the challenge of shane:

walk down the road
have a hundred dollar bill in your hand
make a man choose: sex with you or the hundred dollar bill.

it's fine with me: i'll give you a hundred more.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Critics Who Believe They Are Better Poets...

DO NOT dissect the frog
of Basho
it cannot sing in the rain
and there will
be no more splashes

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Cruel Woman

WE SIMPLY have to be honest,
do we have any choice? what do you have there?
a thick section of your
humiliation,
she keeps on putting you down
and she laughs
openly like you were the performer
with all the rotten tomatoes
as her score

what do i have here inside my pocket?
i have my fingers that keep a record
of her wrongs
and i am still writing

she is sick and dying and we wear sad faces
we are dishonest
she is saying the last words
in slow motion

and stretching her breaths
like a staccato of a song

we are the silent background
the floor of her bed
the drapes of her window
the slippers of her stinking feet

and finally

she is dead and we cry and then we wail loud enough
to be heard by the neighbors
and the servants of the house are convinced

we go through the rites of her passage
we are her heirs and our names shall not be forgotten by her
in the other world
where she watches us from the skies
with all surprise and regret

we are dancing on the grass
we are feasting in our house.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Flowers Of Spring

the flowers are here
thanking you for the rain
that which you gave
with an open heart

you shall bloom
in your presence
happy for all your
good deeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Greedy Old Lady

old lady
you have accumulated much
more than what you need

tomorrow is your
death time

you shall leave all these
greed stuff

no one will touch them
no one will have them

the wooden part will be eaten by termites
some shall rot under the rain
others shall become more rigid and useless under the sun

the rest shall be taken by the state
and they who are your children shall laugh at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Happy Housemaid...

early morning
the housemaid turns on the radio
in full volume that the
neighbors know that
she is already awake
and cooking breakfast

the house smells fried
good and bacon and
steamed rice

when i come out my room
she smiles and
turns off the radio and
says that breakfast is
ready

only to be told that
no one likes to eat breakfast

(like the two the housemaid
likes it much to eat all these matters
alone by herself,
she is attuned like a loud radio
early morning
and she does not mind what
the housemaids' neighbors say)

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Homeless...

it is this season
that usually loneliness multiplies itself
unnecessarily perhaps like
a virus,

do you say that you are homeless?
oh, be kind
be kind most of all to yourself
shelter it
and keep it always at home inside
your heart

if there is no one else who will love you
perhaps i might as well
but i am always far away in the home of another
and i am always at home with my own self
a friend to me
and so you are left with no other possible option

be kind
try love as always
be lovely

just be at home with whoever
and whatever you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Injuries That Our Fellowmen Have Inflicted

in all days of history
when tomorrow and yesterday are fused
for all the injuries
inflicted by our fellowmen to us
and by us to them
we pause
we think we are dying almost everyday
in pain and sadness
that we get used to it
somehow
and then we forget how is it to really die
once, only once

yes only once

RIC S. BASTASA
If you had a friend
coming to your house
for the first time and
he called and said that
he was lost,

you would ask
same thing,
"Where are you?"

If he can tell you
where he is,
you can tell him
how to get to your house.

You've got to know where
you are
before you can receive
directions where
you need to
be

where is the
poem then?

where are you?
indeed is
more poetic
than the violet
toilet
that you
flush through.

some thoughts
are not synched
lipped, just lipped,
the connection is
simply inside your
mind
from that past
e experience in that

mountain of stone
that valley of
misfortune that

bitch on the beach
that still stilt,
stealth, wealth and
filth.

SOMEHOW if you want
clarity,
and order, and logic

this is not the place
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Lord Of Songs

I bet my body and
soul on it

and i lost
i think i lost
everything
for a very lousy
song of mine

with honor
i surrender to you
and i come to
give to you
the prize

and you say to me
'no take that back
it is you, it is yours,
you suffered much
composing
that lousy song
for me'

and i go back
to my old song again
lousy still
even in the gratitude
of taking.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Love Of Art

the skill is there
expensive silk but
the choice of what
to say
and what to do
make the ultimate
difference

remember: side with the
truth
because it is beautiful
as always
no matter how ugly
can it appear
to your own perspective

a reader
true too to his mission
rejects
fantasy or horror

what about the sick
and the dying?
the unhappy and the
hopeless?

so many of them
subjects of a good write.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Love Of Work

the flesh is honed and
the bones will not crack
the fingers feel the most
of the affection
the feet are patient
and the lungs always have
the filling of air
nothing blocks the industry
of the body
and the longing of the soul
because the work
is loved
because the mind
has a purpose
because the mouth of the
soul still thirsts
for much of what
this love demanded

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Meantime

As we are all here now
For the meantime that the river is running
Take the freshness of its flowing waters
Take the plunge

Jump
Into
her
Waterous
Adul-terous
Body

By all means make your whole body wet

We shall talk about how to get dry later.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Month Of Coming May

the flowers
oscillate to and fro
like some
kind of
cute pendulums
that do not
tell time

hypnotic
these little beauties
take us
away from the hum drums
of our conundrums

as heat concentrates
in stones
spreading not the usual
warmth

but the other side
the warnings of
incoming deaths....

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Nth Time

THERE is always the nth time
an nth promise which shall also be broken
for the nth time,
the nth time does not end
for it knows to start its life over and over again
the nth time that i am in
for the nth time shall i be on this nth time again
never at a loss
infinity...till the nth time.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The One Who Changes Love....

there will be too many trails to the heart
if you love

if you will allow me
there will be thousands and thousands
like wave upon wave
shall be your welcoming hints

if you change
there will be no door
not even a leak

all the locks of the hair gone
you take back light

and what i see is an empty space
a black hole

the unluckiest one shall take the risk
and no more shall be heard

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Philosophers

there is no use really
arguing about God
whether he exists
or not
whether he is present
now amidst
our triangular grouping
there is no use
he was once here and
as we are too noisy
he left
a minute ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
for the rest of my life
i will take the same routine

home, office, school,
home office, school,

a straight life confined
in a certain space
too confined and too
tight for my soul
and too boring
for my body

home, office, school,
school, home, office,

you ask me if there is
something wrong with
my life? there is nothing

right in it, everything has
always been wrong
and everyday has always
been an attempt to correct
it, but nothing

nothing has fit into it
to cut the routine to
break me from the
chains of everyday

nothing comes and nothing
goes, i think, that is how
it is meant to be,

i think, i simply have
to imagine, make some
figments of stars, and moon
and sun and mountains
and seas and valleys
and castles and princesses
and kings and queens

and too they become routine
too, some poems and stories
some people that do not
actually exist, some imaginary
earth, imaginary creatures

they are all here, in this routine
of imaginations, of poetics
of illusions and allusions,
these lines, my life, these routine
and all my excuses, you and I.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Sad Woman Who Is Now Happier Than Before

i exist for another day
and another day
just to make you happy

and day by day
you begin to live anew
on that smile which burst
into laughter

i've been sad those past days
and you do not ask because
you were too
preoccupied with your
sadness & loneliness

day by day i change too
seeing those smiles in you
i too, am looking for that reason
to live and be so alive

and i found you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Stars That Fade Away

fade gently
the dark clouds hide
all of you
had your
dog days
and that is good
enough
for the annal
of history

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Things That I Cannot Change

what can i do?
i simply have to keep
them
like a page in the book
i make some dog ears
for tomorrow
i shall read them again
find some words
that anger me
and stir me to
envy
from there i shall stop
and reread
and reinvent myself
and in time proclaim
this is me
take it or leave it

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Things That We Cannot Change

for things that we cannot change
we may let them be

hence, i do not wish to change you
for you cannot be you

there is a time always to pray
to know what we can change and what we cannot
to know what is the difference between the two
i have limits too

for things that i can change for those i cannot
i may soon take my leave and go
to places where we do not mind each other anymore
where you are free to grow and be yourself

where i cannot see you anymore and then
i may stop gritting my own teeth

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Things That We Promised Not To Do

dedicated for all the things
that i do not want to do anymore
like spending sleepless night
on a poem that i am writing
about you
like having more cups of coffee
to my system
that shakes because of too much caffeine
like spending more hours on the computer
surfing for more beautiful images
of a blooming red rose with some dews still
fresh on its petals
like having to chat with you
saying nothing important really except some
lousy words like 'i miss you babe'
' i need to talk to you'
'can i see you tomorrow?'
i hate myself for doing these things
i like to quit and just be simple like everybody's
simpleton or moron or special child
i really hate myself for doing these things that i do not like to do anymore
but what can i do?
i am a slave of my own feelings
my brain is misplaced my eyes no longer the sentinels of my being
my body does not serve its sole purpose of carrying my soul
to the inner peace of my still pond.
what can i do? this poem, yes this poem is so dedicated.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Things That You Fear

the things that we
fear sometimes are nothing but shadows

of our hands and feet
and the words of our mouths
and sighs

when we wake up
and go outside the door of the house
naked

we soon find that all these shadows
are nothing but the makings
of the room

when the sun rises
as we bathe in its light
all the fears
are finally gone

we will find ourselves
naked on the grass
and too beautiful to
behold

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Time Being That You Have No Need Of Me

feel confident
and be just like anybody on the street
do not think about
meeting me
sometime in the future
for i am nothing but a piece
of useless button
that you can throw
in space and feel
no emptiness in your pocket

somehow
there is a part in you that breaks
perhaps your heart
or your
stomach
you feel the hunger of love
the coldness that seeks the warmth
the word that feels the need of the tongue
so that it can be uttered

then you shall look for me
but i shall take the revenge

i will no longer be there anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Traitor...

i shall forget the letters.

what for shall i read them?
shall i beat my head with my own hand?

tonight i shall take them all
outside the house
crumple them
page by page
and then burn them

the smoke shall go straight
to the place where
the gods shall
soon judge us

who was at fault?
who was forgetting whom?
who made a promise?
who broke them all?

when what i see shall all be ash
i will make my last laugh....

RIC S. BASTASA
For The Wife

yesterday i made
some promises for your friends
who of course, after marriage
our marriage, have become
my own friends too,
now because of you
i have to break them
break myself
some integral part of my
bones
i have to twist my face
and show the rawness of
my laughter
today
simply because you
changed your mind
and for which, as a matter
of marital consequence, i, too
have to become
a change myself,
i repeat, because of
you, i may not be
myself, anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For There Is One Thing That I So Badly Need

to get closer to you i will make sacrifices

to the goat goddess
to the siren shrimp
to the white crow
to the coral saint

there will be so many denials

i will deny my humanity
she will deny her engagement
they will deny who they are
the world must deny its
shape and color

i have to get closer to you
skin to skin
eye to eye
hand to hand clasping like
a prayer

for there is one thing that i so
badly need

the truth....

mama was silent about it
till she died
grandma says there are things
that one takes to the grave as a matter
of necessity

there are words which need not be said
even if true

because like love when you take it
you can always let it

kill you.
For Things That We Cannot Change

cannot be changed
the establishment
is at it again
deaf ears
strong hands
stiff minds
hard bodies
resisting change
of the clenched fists
there they are again
on barb-wired fences
defining boundaries
of thoughts
exclusiveness shutting out
variations of the race
this is the political science
of exclusion
of prisons and walls
here they are again
at the emphasis of penalties
and fines
setting aside the art
of compassion
the fusion
the inclusions
this art of loving
and giving meaning
and welcoming whatever
differences
in colors and creed
the magnanimous
art of toleration
here we are again
back to the beginning of time
the age of
renaissance
the flowering of hope
the blooms
of thoughts
For Those That Hurt Us

try this.
give them want they want.
be happy, smile and be fit.
they will be hurt when they see us
not hurt at all.

that is the revenge
of the happy person.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those That I Shall Not Ask Forgiveness

for things that i should have finished by now
i ask forgiveness,

for all my indulgences, the most unlikely of what
being should not have been

i also ask forgiveness

there are joys that crown my hair
where time becomes unimportant

there are sweet thoughts that dwell in my mind
that which the logic of the brains detest

there are memories which should have been buried forever
but which with relish i still remember

those that they say are wrong those that they say
shall destroy

my being, my wholeness, my end bound perfection
for all these

i embrace with all fairness
i shall not say sorry, i shall not ask forgiveness

for in truth without all of those and these that are still
within the commands of my hands

i could have not lived at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Trampled Upon

listen: the bad karma
does not send any notice

it is not like hot pepper
that burns your lips instantly

the oppressed sings their songs
to the winds of change

comforted
by the lofty ears of the clouds

listen: vengeance is not ours
it is God's.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Are Dead And Gone

we who are steadfast to life
despite the pains
we sing you our last hymns
as tribute to your courage
that never really lasted
you your lifetime

and then we gather again
after you are buried with all grace
with all our innate respects

we think upon ourselves
what future lies ahead of our journeys
we dust off every guilt that you leave us
from our sandals and feet
we go again and walk the paths of our lives
sticking to life and singing the hymns
vibrant and full of hope
each moment is cherished
each vision made clear
for all of us who remain here
we would have wanted life to be forever

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Are Wise

for those who are wise
are the very first to admit
they do not know much
just a little pinch of salt
to taste,

for those who are young
they do not talk about age at all
for those who are healthy
the medicine is not an issue

for those who are rich
money is not an issue
for those who are intelligent
the I.Q. is a taboo
for those who speak much
their inside is hollow
for those who listen much
everything is taken as such

for those who are dying
life becomes the most precious thing
for those who are fooled
to honesty must be glued.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Did Nothing They Suffer More

accept the fact
that all days are
working days

twenty-four hours
duty for humanity
sleepless in services
anxious on whom to cater
next whom to suffer

be glad for at night
God's gift to you is
a very sound sleep and

when you wake up,
revitalized, rejuvenated
you begin to like
the suffering again

but who suffers when
you have God in mind?
who works when all you
have is play?

for those who did nothing
they suffer more
at night they needed pills
on days they do not know
where to go...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Do Not Understand

like birds on a new land
they have doubts whether to hop in or not
but the wings are tired
the claws are numb
and there is no choice
except to rub their feathers
against the cold wind
blink to reconsider
that after all
there is no other shadow of a land to see
and out there is the deeper horizon
gray then black then
empty
one bird decides to dive
fall on the water
and then
catch the first fish

of course the rest follow
and then
the community begins
to take shape

like any body like any ant
or sand
or mound of earth
or the first birth of the
whirl and the
twirl

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Finally Quit

what is then the next thing
to do? retire
retreat
and hide?

consider this
what i did when i too feel like
the same thing that
you have

i retire but only to recuperate
i retreat only to evaluate
and hide but only to recharge
what energy i have lost

the next morning i shall move
again
another timing and strategy
another hope
and expectation that finally
luck shall be on my side
that fortune awaits those
that persist
that there is always a place
for those who wait
and do things again
despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Grieve

no one
do no one can really stop you
from eating the bark of the tree
the thick skin of the
fruit

no one can tell you what should have
been proper
or better

you like the skin and you throw away
the fruit that could have
satisfied your
thirst and hunger

the bark has poisoned you
the moon has warned you too well
the worm is wriggling
its frail and elongated
body

you have no ears
your sense of smell so badly damaged

and now you
are dying

no one tells you that life is as sweet
as the ripe fruit of the tree
that luscious flesh that flowing
juice

your gaze is sharp as a knife
stabbing even the
sun

and you are always right

what you have been searching
that can satisfy your hunger and thirst
is not found on the fruit
not even in the tree

it is in the poisonous bark
that useless skin
that silly coat

definitely it is not even here
where we are all grieving

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Have Not Read

for those who have not read his work
he reminded them that he is the gadfly
that bit the complicated ass of Plato's cow

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Love Most

time has become so detailed
the wall clock ticks and tacks and not just on two hands
there are many sensitive fingers now that rotate around its white belly
of paper and lines have become long and enumerable,
each sound has become delicate
cressing each dash of the second
always taking into consideration what the wall feels
what the roof sees
what all these floors are up to
ye they do not stop anymore fearing death
the thief who steals all when he comes
like fire consuming the house
not leaving even a stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Made War For The Skies And Oceans....

how do we tell
for birds to make peace
with the fish
that they simply have
to share
oceans and skies?

how do we measure
skies? where is the boundary
of the ocean?

do we really have to
own them to enjoy them?

who shall man the titles
department?
who's gonna pay for all these?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Really Love

and here it is
as a matter of today's reflection
after reading your poem
my friend,

that for those who love
asking what love is
is a superfluity

for those who love much and truly
they just do it
without so much asking
wordless and endless
a hug, a kiss, making love
feeding, giving,
all out reaching
patience immeasurable like an ocean
love without measure
on time undefined.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Really See

for those who really
want to see
and see

everything is
always new

and there is not
such a thing
as anything

each is
always special
to the eye
who loves

life and
sees something more
beyond
the here and now

the music
of eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Remain Alive

on the fields of sorrow
the finches of hope are hovering
the winds of change are blowing
the skies look down
upon the trees whose hands are raised
in praise
of those who remain with the dignity of
their roots
spreading like grass
so many and so alive

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Still Dream To Write The Best Lines Of Their Lives

you wish to write the best lines of a poem, something that they will remember for a lifetime, you want to put the best metaphor, you like to be deeper than the deepest ocean (or the bluest sky ever, or the tallest peak of a mountain with snow caps, you want to put the gentlest sound of the wind on top of the Tibetan monastery, you like to have your lines sound like a tinkering bell of the meditating monks, you want it holier than the saints, you want to make an impression with the moon and the stars, before you die, before you embrace the darkness and then take on the glowing robe of light) you wish to write the wisdom of the ages in some few lines, you want to put your name at the bottom, so they may remember you

how human could you still be! divinity shuns this waste of words!

come to think of the paradox the best poem is not written at all it is not even spoken not even the sweetest song of the bird not even the flute or the lyre has that note

it is not here, not even in the hearts of men or of the wise, it does not exist here,

it is not even heard yet, the metaphors still unseen the rhyme unrevealed, the rhythm unfathomed...

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Watch Us Pass By

so what are you looking for?
the future?
you rest yourself in that absurd future?

it may not come.
You may fall at this moment and
then die and then no one remembers you
so easily,

a month, a year, you will be forgotten

i guess, this is just it, this moment,
i am holding your hand
as you hold mine, loosely at first
and then a little bit tighter

we walk together, like very close friends,
at this instant,

this is the only thing real,

these hands, these getting together
words that we utter,
footprints that we make,

when we reach that distance
we soon become
another illusion. Another memory
a mirage,

for those who watch us pass by.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Wear Masks

actually, those who love you
prefer that the masks be worn,
for they want that confidence in you
when you wear even one of them
in fact, you showed what love is
you conquered those who shame you
with what you are
when you are without it,
so by all means, our purpose is anyway
to survive this pass over
we shall cross the river shortly and
with the mask, this thing will be easier
smoother, and at the end what matters
most is your victory,
not what is behind that mask,
the horror within, the shock in every line
of your realities.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Those Who Wish To Die Younger...

to be candid, i do not intend
to grow old with some dead leaves
on that cold pond,

i am not your haiku,
i am the elegy of the middle aged man
who leaves an oral tradition

a poetry to the world
with no trace of any lyric

i already sound like a dirge
dig it.

i do not grow old.

(it is nicer that way,
early to go and
still be wise).

RIC S. BASTASA
For Tina...

i see
your house is on top of
the hill in the island
of samal

it has a bath tub
inside a room facing the
sea

you love sunsets while
i love sunrises.

i guess we can compromise
at high noon

RIC S. BASTASA
For Tony

you're home tony,
you're just right there
in the home of your heart

cool, be cool, tony boy
you're just right there
in your own home
feel the love
and kiss the person
next to you

close your eyes
and imagine a very
peaceful and
harmonious universe

stars with hands
holding each other
and dancing in
limitless space
of eternity

the moon and sun
on a perfect agreement
to make nights and
days of equal lengths

the rivers that flow
ending right there
in the deep blue sea

it is all perfect tony,
everything is just as perfect
as we wish and see
them all today

this moment of joy
and bliss this moment
of perfection
this moment when
our hearts fly like
birds towards
the island abundant
of our respective
& reserved
destinies

close your eyes tony
and imagine what perfection is
it is the shaking of the hands
of the mundane and the divine

the meeting of the minds
of God and Man

listen well tony to the sound
of peace and harmony

take note of every feeling
of stability

and then write
the next poem that comes
cascading like a waterfall
inside your mind

and then from where i am seated
i will read
the poem of your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Travel's Sake

i am my own
car, and i drive it
towards a direction

on smooth wheels
fast and sound
tracks stretching
before my
sharp eyes

i overrun
not people
but my
limitations
i compete
against myself
against
the obstructions of my
intolerance for
failures

i like this journey
towards
an uncertain
destination

it is the excitement
of not knowing

it is travel for
travel's sake

RIC S. BASTASA
For Us To Become What We Really Are

when you ask me
i always have
those answers

i know how
to invent what is not there
as a kit for my
survival

i ask you
perhaps sometime

when we are
freed from our
syndromes

to dropp all those questions
and leave
them unattended for
a while

like leaves from
our twigs when

we have chosen to be
trees emptied of
our barks

we shall see
skeletons of our
selves

freed from the trappings
of our flesh
from the support of our
bones

for then we shall
have no biases
of the longings of
our minds

liberated from the
shackles of
what we strongly
believe in

and i will tell you again
that i have all the answers
not of my invention anymore
but those handed
to us

by the hands of the sun
by the mouths of the rivers
by the lips of the moon
by the whispers of the stars

o, let the winds be cold
let the nights be lonely
we need all these sometimes
so that we may become
what we must be really are.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Us Who Have The Sea

for us who have the sea
following every contour of our land
for us who have the birds
and the trees and the mountains
for us who have the nights
lighted by the moon
with the myriad stars

we are still bored
on a perfect scene as this

RIC S. BASTASA
For W

light
so much light
in my eyes
blinds
hurts and destroys
what peace and
quiet is there
once upon my own
short lifetime

love is light
we are eyes
we are always broken
and we are always ready to
mend

love
we are love
light we are light
light as burnt love
letter
those pictures that you finally burn last night
the silence that watches it
the coldness of our souls

the promises we offer
the disbelief that we counter
yes, yes to all these
what choice do we have anyway?

RIC S. BASTASA
For W...

I am wise
for i pursue my dreams
and fulfill them
without having to leave you

i am lucky
and too inspired
fulfilling my dreams
beside you

we are two incomplete
broken
chains
closing in for a
very intimate
link

RIC S. BASTASA
For Wanting To Write....

perhaps, because of this
i may end up
with a head cut, or
a body shredded like
cheese,
tired limbs like
burnt toast,

perhaps because of that
i may not reach
what destination is reserved by
the lines of my palms,

perhaps i may not even end at
all,
because here you are
reading these lines
and you will like them

not because they are as palatable
as exotic friend frogs
but because you have felt sorrow
and have the smell of pain
the sound of acidic rain
over your hair
now melting and before you notice it
you too have become bald
because of having known much
than what is permitted by all these lines

it is about us,
it is about our being part of this vast
nothingness

sands of the desert
light of the moon spreading on sands of the desert nights
hushing wind
taking all the possible directions
For We Are The Trees Bearing So Much Fruits

For we are trees
That bear so many fruits
We are lucky
Our seeds fall of fertile grounds
Our branches grafted
On healthy trunks
Our fruits are ripe
Everyone gathers
We have no right to ask them
Who they are
Their names do not matter
Not even their character
We cannot refuse giving
Them all
Lest we perish
And die....

RIC S. BASTASA
For We Have Nothing To Hide, Nothing To Keep

to live
is to spit it out
to let go
what is unnecessary
throw away
covering, clothes
go naked
into the hills...

RIC S. BASTASA
For What Is

'A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be.'
Albert Einstein (1879 - 1955)

young man
this is reality
this is
what is
what do you think
should it be?
when?
how and where?
young man
this is it
now dip your tongue
and tell me
how it tastes?
this reality
that lies within the reach
of your arms
than your dreams
which are still
in the hands of the
stars

now, choose.

RIC S. BASTASA
For What Use Is Time

when the mouth has forgotten
the shape of a smile on the lips
when the tongue has forgotten
the sweet taste of love
when the body has buried the
memories of desire on the
graveyards of boring routines
when everything in us is nothing
but the rush the haste in meaningless
daily buses and bustling streets
for what use is time & space with us?

RIC S. BASTASA
For What Use?

for what use is the most expensive perfume
when you use it with me
for only once a year?

i love the cheaper one
daily.

RIC S. BASTASA
for whom do we write?
for us, we beg the world
to know what we are in the realm
and bounds of our words
our sadness & madness
our longing for love
unrequited our desire to
taste what passion is
that which the bed cannot
speak that which the
blankets cannot fully give in
to warmth and
lust.

for whom do we write?
we write for those passions
those explosions of suppressed
feelings long kept inside the steel
boxes of our hearts
we write for those lamentations
of love rejected and those
dreams that simply die
even before they were born
for those eggs
that never became chickens.

forgive me, but i write
because i have nothing else to do
about my life
forgive me for exposing the
truths
about us, this existential angst
lost in the labyrinths
of the empty
shell.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Whom Will You Live?

no one survives this
war alone
this war among us
between us
no one likes this war
but just the same the war
continues
between us and among us
geniuses and morons alike
no one survives
if by chance alone you shall
survive,
but whom do you tell
and for whom will
you live?
and for whom will you
die?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Woman....

you may love me
with all your heart
give all that you
can
you undress before me
and offer
the flowers of your
youth
you bend your knees
kiss my feet
you stay with me
for the rest of my life
you cook the best menu
for my hungry hours
you pour the best wine
in my empty glass
you weep for me
when i fall

woman, am i a fool
to ask you why?

RIC S. BASTASA
For Yani

i see the seed inside you
and day by day it grows
into a tree both with flowers
and fruits and soon the birds
shall find your branches and
shall make nests on your twigs
and soon there will be eggs
and fledglings and soon
there will be children climbing
your treetops
and laughing and playing
under your shade
there will be travelers taking
rest on your roots placing
their spines against your trunk

only if you keep on writing
for art's sake, for yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You

For a simple glance at you I may leave my world
For your kind smile, I may give away my world completely
For a night with you, the passion and the groan
Tell me, what will I give in exchange?

RIC S. BASTASA
For You Love Me...

my forehead has dirt
there is shit on my cheek
my arms are dusty
and my hands are getting clumsy
my feet are muddy
and my lips are cracked
i am tipsy and drunk
and with someone else
on some cheap bed
yet when i come back
you make me still feel
that sense of home
you kiss my forehead
touch my cheeks with
your kind hands
and tell me
you miss me so much
and as i am tipsy and drunk
you offer me hot green tea
you open the door of the house
and let me step again inside the room of love
full of affection
we embrace again
nothing about history
nothing about
what i must say
because you always tell me
that whatever happens
you will always love me

now, who wants to be away from you?
For You My Friend The Great Lover Of Truth

when the doctor comes out from his room and tells you
that you have cancer
and at stage IV
would you rather think that this must be a lie?

or when you find out that your wife is having an affair
with another man
and decides to leave you
alone
would you rather say that you prefer a lie?

or when your younger brother sailing on the seas
is kidnapped by professional pirates in Somalia
asking for a big amount for ransom
and you have no money to use to help him
would you still prefer this truth?

or when your father is hostaged by the rebels
and will be the next to be beheaded
and the government still does nothing
would you rather think that this is but a big joke
and not the truth?

think my friend, you were looking for the real toads
in that imaginary garden
these are these toads croaking now
in the middle of the heavy rain

RIC S. BASTASA
For You My Friend....

i am feverish.  
i would have gone into serious thoughts.  
but how can i?  
i do not want to open like the sky.  
at noon the sun,  
then perhaps death.

the sky may open as it can,  
but there is nothing in there.  
nothing much.

the honesty is killing all of us.  
liberation is dangerous.  
there will be sacrifices.  
and it could be  
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You My Woman...

a woman
is like a bird
nesting its
eggs

or
a nightingale
which you hear
and still long
for

or she could
be one of your
arms

or she could be
your own gourmet
on one of those
feasts

or she could be
another devil's
advocate

but whoever she is
a woman
and my woman will always
be
my only woman to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You My...(Ambot)

this morning baby i take my walk
it rained last night
and the other nights before
and so today baby
the grass is greener
the road is not dusty
not also muddy
just perfect for this
'brand new' day in my life
i made some promises
to myself
not to think about your face
and your body
i haven't kissed you
i haven't made love to you
just in my dream
all but just in my dream
and this morning i take this walk
for you
wanting to forget
wanting to walk straight in the other
mornings of my life
i will make a promise again
that so surely
will be broken again baby
you're such a dust that i can't
take off my feet
very weary, weary feet
taking these walks
senselessly
hopelessly always always
crazy about you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Invite Me To Read You

i agree with what
the other guy on the other side
of the world
once wrote, that for you
to invite me
into your mind to read
what you have
been thinking and
writing all along
is an insult to your capacity
to attract people that if
(by God's will)
you die even your rotten
ass
cannot even attract
a female fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Know

I am lonely here like a deserted room
In the city
My windows refuse the orange moon
The sad calls only
Of the sea
Keep penetrating

My writing table has not grown words
Of beautiful shapes
Stunted scribblings only
By the wooden walls
And the lizards’ trails
On the hot ceiling
Keep streaking

such weird
acidity
stinking sticking
the day rains detest
this happening

i am waste liquid
splattered on cold floors
fetid urine
slowly drying throughout summer

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Know Whether I Am Afraid To Love Or Not
	here is only one way to my heart
and it is not grassy at all,
above this path are blue clouds
and the usual sun
follow the path
and be gentle in your steps
at the other side
you will find a door laced with
red roses
do not just stand there
knock and be patient
use the doorbell of understanding
and wipe your feet
on the mat of purity
knock again, knock again
	here is no one in the house anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Learn Earnestly

Pick up all the flowers dear
from the garden and put all of them
in one glass vase

watch how the colors change
from yellow to dull and then
how they all fade to brown
till they all wilt and then
die

three days at most this hot summer
time, the petals fall and then
another day and then another one
they all crack in utter dryness

and inside the vase see how the water
foul and stinky begin to grow the
wriggling mosquitoes as though
asking for more....deaths of
those fresh flowers that from the
garden you all pick.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Love Me

you must know
how a man's weight
is measured, his broad shoulders
the burden of this abdomen
and his thighs,
you must know how
a suitcase weighs
a muddy pair of boots
your feet must know
how to swear
how i
smell.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You To Trust Me

for you to trust me
i must listen and keep the promise
about your love and your
new lover
not to tell about the fire
burning inside your hearts
and eyes
for you to trust me
i must not be the rain
or the sun
i must not be the river
to sing what you both have kept
as a secret
inside the chimney when the smoke
rises to the skies
i shall only watch
and keep the pains that both of you
too suffer

i have not told you
that in love
goes the joy
goes the pain
and now you must take them all
like water and sand
in your hand

RIC S. BASTASA
For You Who Claims To Be The Owner Of Myself

It is shallow
i know, it is only skin deep

to be godly
i could have immersed myself
in that deep river
of blood where i could be
shaken
totally and panic calling for
help

but i like it here
sitting on the shallow part of this river
thinking only
about how drowning could be such a
horrible experience

since
(anyhow) the inevitable always comes
anyway
and for the meantime let me have my own time
relaxing myself

before you finally come
on time as
always.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You, My Dear, When You Are So Blank

white sheet. a paper. like you.
I want to write something
just to fill this white sheet a little bit
some words. i can utter them.
but i like writing them
just to make this white sheet looking
full. like

' i love you'.

the rest need not be written.
i know you know and you know that i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You, My Valentine...

because love
has betrayed me

does not mean
that i shall betray you too

because love has denied me its love
does not mean that i must not give this love to you

for i have known love and its pains
and having known all these

i have decided to be different
to love and to love no matter what cost shall it take me.

RIC S. BASTASA
For You, Whoever You Are...

The Furies are here
they have long black hair
they have not become old
as you tried to tell me

Their eyes are flaming like
bonfires at night
Their hands are sharp as blades
Their presences are dynamites

They have a record for
being merciless
Many tales are told of their
vengeance
They ask no questions

They claim they are here for justice
and They are looking for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Your Attention....

have a little time
to this page

it used to be a blank page
an emptiness, a void, a stare

it is calling for attention
its silence like roots call for more depths

it is not the normal page
that you open and leave
with your wet fingers
and dry tongue

listen with your eyes
let your ears see

this is this poem that perhaps
may not make you sleep....

RIC S. BASTASA
For Your Tito Rey

behind the two of you
is the Statue of Liberty
the man with the yellow shirt
and short hair is acting for an explanation
but you do not mind it
you look at the camera and give
the best smile that you can
muster in these hard
trying times
i enlarged the picture
and focus on the smile
and honestly i think
it is
fake

p.s. the tinted sunglasses
is more of a metaphor for hiding the
obvious truth in your eyes
that life is not easy
and every cent has an equivalent
deprivation.

RIC S. BASTASA
For Z.

for you
to be a star
in the sky
do you have
to accept that
condition that
you have to deny
your roots
as sand?

RIC S. BASTASA
Forbearance

as i eat my breakfast and you
start telling me about something that
makes me boil (a new debt incurred
or another lousy party for friends
or your way of clumsily handling your
private affairs
how can i be so interested in you?)

(honestly i want to scream for you to
shut up, but i keep my
cool head)

i continue eating and i pretend i like
the food that much
and then i chew my food longer this time
and tell you

'you look so beautiful today, my dear'
(you witch! my crazy mind insists, but
honestly, you have done more good than
evil, and i weigh them all in the scale and
i begin to have regrets, and i wipe my
mouth with a tissue paper and)

' i love you honey', (without really looking at
her in the eye)

the world out there is too wide
for narrow differences. (i am human and i
must be considerate)

' i love you too' (oh this crazy world! what is
it really that is bogging her innocent mind?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Forbidden

something forbidden
becomes so delicious in the mind
the suspense of deprivation
makes it more desirable

everyday desire takes
upon itself what is forbidden
in the secret room
of the heart
guilt cries but

soon the guilt by extreme need
of the flesh
erases itself like the list
of unwanted friends

everyday what is forbidden is done
until such point
when what is forbidden becomes
a routine
until what is forbidden becomes
the usual familiarity
nothing about what is forbidden
becomes interesting

and then sin does not exist
until the good becomes the forbidden
in the silent room of your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Forced Mystery

when we talk
we arrive at nothing
plain talk not aimed at
understanding but
to stir whirlpools
i finally decide to
end the
conversation
what for?
building bridges
on mountain tops
wasting stones
in the river
boats that leak
tops without nails
planets without orbits
chairs without legs
houses without walls
roofs without beams
i know you know
you that i know
we take leave
without hope
of reaching ourselves
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Foremostly, I Am Still Beast...

i shall not restrain myself forever,
flowers open to the sun somehow,
buds turning into full orange petals
red centers, glossy views of the
coming days,
i am bound, i have long accepted that,
my hands have ropes as stems,
but my heart is too a sharp knife
that cuts across those hidden
boundaries of my own being
i am free, this morning, i tell myself
beside you, i am, unbound and you
look at the happy angle of my face,
half-moon, half-sun, half-beast
half-human,
at a certain hour of the day,
i wish i have achieved a certain
divinity of my thoughts,
but soon, these all crumple, i am not
that mostly, i am beast,
i am undefined, but most of all,
i content with the mystery
that you still love me.
my fingers run wild over the belly
of your body, the navel tells the story
of love and hate,
the mind closes some more
there is no distraction anymore about the
promises of certainties,
for these are all unnecessary.
meanwhile, the emptiness rests on the floor
like a dog,
the desire to be beast is on top of the bed
with you, another beast,
on mutual tolerances.

RIC S. BASTASA
Foreseeing

the time has come
for the wilting of the flowers
the drought
the drying up of our rivers
the proliferation of dust
the death of a friend
the season for funerals
as we pretend day by day
that everything is still all right
that poetry still works
we have foreseen all these
i am prepared
like a fish hibernating
inside a cracking mud
i have foreseen
too the coming
of another beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
Forever

who wants forever?
who wants a road that leads to
a straight line, without any
crooked view on
the sided? who wants to
be left here
in the now forever?
who wants all the leaves
and the pebbles?
the sentence even
needs a period.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forever Ulipon

ang ilang katabang
dugay na kaayo nila

katabang pa kini nila
sa ilang lola

all around, mogarden
moluto, modaro pa gani

karon maoy iyang
caregiver kay lagi wa

man siya maminyo unya
wa sab siya's bisag anak

na lang sa gawas, nga
unta moatiman kaniya sa

iyang katigulangan.
unta di ko motoo anang

forever. Apan naa pod
diyay. Forever ulipon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forget Me Not

forget me
not

please do
not
forget me

me not
to forget

not me
forge
t

o

not
for
get

get to forge
forge
t

to me you must
not forget

get me

get me for
i, too do not remember

a face, a name,

i am old.
older than you think.

the pain. i never had this sense
what joys did we share? the boulevard.
long time ago. forge me.
forget me not. forget me.

i remember not you anymore.
post
traumatic

disorder. pity. she finally gives up this bouncy baby boy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forget Yourself

do you see life? try seeing life in me, i still have it, i keep it in my palm
it is warm and beating and soft and tender
try it with new things, as others do, buying a new fashionable coat
a glittering diamond ring for your loved one,
try literature, read a novel, read and write a poem and
yes, try too music, sing the songs of love
strum the strings of that spanish guitar, you hit the keys
of the piano, you fiddle with the violin, and strike the tight skins of the drums
with your fists and fingers

my friend this world is so rich, and simply throbbing with its
countless treasures and pleasures
there are still so many beautiful bodies
and beautiful souls
out there waiting for you

(claire, do not think about promiscuity,
that is far from it, just think nicely about other bodies
and souls, relating to them and be with them
in peace and harmony as friends,
as fellows)

oh, they are so interesting, and at the end you shall be happy because by
then you have already forgotten the person that saddens you

you

yes you,

you must forget yourself, that is the secret of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting A Lot Of Things....

i apologize
to myself
since i easily
forget
and leave those
who have
been patiently
waiting for
me like
a passenger of
a train
waiting for hours
for me to be
taken
in
i forget the hour
i forget
that i am
a train
i forget altogether
time
and the passenger
and then i try
to recall
smoke passing
by my hair
smelling something
hazy
like a perfume
that i
think was there
before
a woman naked
or was it
a horse
running in the
fields of hay

foggy memory
sounds of rain on the month
of May
a friend writes
an email
i Google
a name
figuring out
who's there but it is
misty
smell of burnt
fish
on the fireplace
or was it
at the kitchen?

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting Someone Who Loves You

i agree, it is like forgetting to turn off the light
at the rear door, the one who does not want to be made
important, the one who has always been at the backdrop
of your life,

the whole night it was on and then
the following morning you see it
still lighting

but then you turn it off and
there you remember how is it to be so faithful
and yet forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting Something So Important

why am i here?
must i have forgotten
the reason why
am i
here? am i destined
for something
greater
than my mind?
or my heart?
have i forgotten that
i have a soul?
a spirit engraved
within the
shiny metal of
my body,
a name, a brand,
a status

why am i here?
have i forgotten You
who have placed
me here?

have i forgotten
that love is always the
reason for my
being here

in this misery
shall love continue to be
my guide and cure?

how can i ever forget
the floor of
my existence
the love without
a ceiling?

the house of love
that never falls
the beams that never
break

the Host that knows
everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting The Consequences Of Our Ignoble Actions....

sometimes we forget
about consequences

we advance with our own
motives
that satisfaction
that fire that seemingly is
consuming every
particle of our being

we become the firewood
the grass
the gasoline that must burn
itself

into nothingness

where is our gene
of Prometheus?

it must be missing for now

we advance as armies hungry
for a kill
and we kill anyone that we meet
after
making a war and
killing all
the enemies

then we kill even friends
as we are hungry
for the killing

for the killing's sake
we have forgotten us
and the incoming consequences of our
ignoble actions

what follows next is
unimaginable

it is a planet of fire
where words
do not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
i invite you

to sit upon a hill

under the acacia tree

to view the moon

it is full tonight

rising from the shadows of

the mountains

i hold your hand

and your long hair

touches my shoulder

we sit tonight

silently admiring the moon rising

from the shadows of the mountains

i gaze upon your eyes

and we kiss under the cool shade

of the acacia trees

after that night

i lay upon my bed inside my room

still thinking about you

and that kiss

i have forgotten about the full moon

rising from the shadows of the mountains

i am the poet

who first scribbles the most beautiful poem about you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting The Rhyme

i must have forgotten
the scent of thyme
in the same manner that
i have spilled rhyme
i still proceed to this
kind of things i miss
how words are begun
how threads are spun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting The Word

the hands are busy
and the mind busier
the heart is
activated and blood
corpuscles are like
tourists
roaming around the
great wall of china

on top of bed
those pair of legs face the ceiling
and the mouth cannot say
any word
the tongue slips again
trying to figure out
the right word
for this

it is not about love...

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting You.....

the heavy rain cannot erase
the footsteps in the mud

the seasons cannot erase
the fossilized steps
in the heart that is made
of stone

if only what we had
were only found in the sands
of the shore

i cold have easily forgotten
you.....

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

dili mapapas
sa kusog nga ulan ang
tunob diha
sa lapok

dili maguba sa panahon
ang mga tunob
nga mitaplak sa
bato nga
kasingkasing

unta kon diha lang
sa balason nga
baybayon

nalimtan ko na unta
ang tanan kanato
sa dayon...

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Forgetting, An Ode

on my hands
the ashes of my anger
shall write your name
between the spaces
of our walls.
here the face of the
anguish
is painted

compromising
with the drought
even against my will
all these
shall be erased
by the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgetting......

the hands of time swindle us
just this morning a tight bud loosens
its collars
that morning upon a glimmer
wink of
a second, night folds unfolds like
disco lights

you dance and you dropp your
body

you cling to uncertainties
the hands of time drops you
in the middle of nowhere

and you ask where is this place?
you are right there

but this time your skin
has only bones

your neighbor who once fished with you
in the river
cannot recognize you

you too forget
what time is it what is this place

who am i?

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive And Please Forget

if you notice a repetition
do not be irritated
if you find a duplication
with a little senseless change
at the top
do not be mad
these are the usual symptoms
of my sickness
do not curse the words
do not blame time
do not put too much burden on yourself
do not feast on guilt
because my dear surely with your beauty
and goodness
there is not such a malady of this likeness
that you deserve
try making your own wings and then
fly away
that will do you good
and make those who still want to stay
feel a little bit better

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive Him

He wrote the most beautiful poem
The day she left him
The words are happy like jumping frogs of Canister,
The sentence was short
As short as a grasp of her breath
His sigh
Which has the sound of the running creek
Pretending to be rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive Me

forgive me
good neighbor
but your
ripe lanzones
are too sweet
and you have
been away
for two weeks

they're so
juicy and
we are so
hungry

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive Me, But I Have To Be Real

I ride my horse
not the other way
around

i tame my dog
the dog does not tame me

i cannot yet live in the clouds
and so i still stay in my house.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Forgive Me, I Am Damned'

some things that we do
and we get nothing in return

some words that do not come
back to us like a rain-shower

some people that we love and
who leave us without a note in bed

some places that are meant to
be only forgotten because we cannot

have much and we say oh we are just
human forgive us

some sins we commit and yet we do
not really know and hence we do not

accept. another poem which i have
written a long ago, and i read it again

it stares at me begging that i am
its creator, but which i cannot really

really remember. I am ashamed and
humiliated, but the words come back

to my mouth, slides to my heart, and
then i remember, 'forgive me, i am damned'

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive Me....

when you spoke to me that
night about
certain matters, which i did not
really pay attention,
forgive me
but i was somewhere else
into a far place
where i want myself foremost
to be a stranger
again

this place is exhausting
and it is sipping all my energy
as though she is a very
thirsty woman and she is drinking
all of me
without ever thinking that i as
a bowl
also needs a certain
fullness

despite air
or another chunk of emptiness
forgive me
but i have gone into a stupor
into a place
where i can be silent
and yet
more vigilant as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgive My Lead, But...

Forgive my Lead,
but i am just a cloud rising
and then
by chance the strong
wind
may blow me
north
when i merely want
to stay
wanting to get rid
of this rain

pregnant with
vapor
i am feeling so heavy

i rise at first
because i am as light
as hydrogen
gas

but soon i will fall
as storm
and acidic
rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgiving

how can a neighbor find it so hard
to forgive a
neighbor?

the self of course
is the nearest one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgiving Always Forgiving

when you offended me
i did not bother for i understand you
and always think that you tried always loving me as your brother

i always think you meant no offense at all
it is just that you are too disturbed by certain things that until now
you have not really understood

you grapple to hold on to something stable
yet there is none
you struggle to be yourself in peace and harmony with the rest
yet there seems to be nothing
to keep you in place

and so when you shout at me and tell me that i am someone else
a black cat
a wolf in sheep's clothing
the ill wind
the evil lurking in your darkness

i do not mind at all
i know it is not that easy to be in that state

i was there and i was lost and i was too confused
not knowing what i am and where i am going
and i perfectly understand what you are into

and so when you offend me i enjoy the silence of my understanding you
and the nature of the human being
you and the whole of humanity
you and
the universe

unmoved by evil
undestroyed by indifference and cruelty and inhumanity

i, stand still
i am good, i am beautiful and i will always be on the side of the truth
RIC S. BASTASA
Forgiving Thoughts

i am seeing
fettered fingers

vine stuck upon
a huge rock

i am feeling the
roughness of

rugged dry
river stone

there is a cliff
someone wants
to jump and
smash

what is left of
broken memories

i tell myself
frankly

it could be me
but my brain is numb

and thoughts come
explaining

things are more
beautiful

when they are
too forgiven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forgotten

early dawn
five of you arrive
bringing
gifts

wrapped, closed
i did not open them

you left
and then the gifts are gone

i want to remember
them again

but it is a waste of time
opportunity
knocks only once

i am getting older
and what i always remember
is regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forlorn Dreamer

i have long dreamed
that you press your body against mine

you are the heaviness that
i wanted all my life

i want you tell me how i close my eyes
and how lost will i be when you
make love to me

i do not wish you to be my blue sky
i want you to be my river so i can hear your song
and feel your water

you can rage in my banks strong as a storm
i shall remain placid in this love

i have long dreamed that i am broken into shreds of
tiny infirmities

you are here like a pillow beside me
but since you can never be true to me

you are always, always far away
like a dream that i have always long to dream
many years ago

RIC S. BASTASA
you sailed away from the certainties
of your faith
you find the exit back door and leave no note
whatever
only doubts that they can feast upon
while you are away
on a destination that only your heart
so strange this time
knows

you land upon twin islands
twin hills with milk flowing from their tips
but only for six years
and then the trees grow into a forest and
you find yourself
lost again in the woods
the grass grow tall and you do not like it anymore

on another island you find fog and hazy horizons
and in all these you find
a world that is too interesting to leave
you stay here
now you like this darkness and coldness
your moon
your mistress
and in your sleep you talk about a certain madness

those who know you and if they know you much
if you only let them know and let them speak their minds
like the river and the sea

i guess, they will say the same thing that i will say
your life is wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Forms That I Really Love Seeing

forms that i
love seeing
even for a long time:

black bird
on its perfect set of
three wings
against the
light of the sun

Buddha with three
heads
in deep meditation

Christ rising
pushed up
to the heavens

heaven opening
like a mouth
all teeth like
candles
throat like a tunnel
swallowing
emptiness....

RIC S. BASTASA
you are angry now
for i have disappointed you
you expect more from me
to elate you
to certain heights beyond your
thinking

i am so sorry
i am still the son of this earth
and shall always be
on its belly

i shed off wings
i wear these arms again
brown, and muddy
to the feel
with roots as bones
and creeks as intestines

my thoughts are air
traveling anywhere
my imagination is the ocean
moving into other
continents
into uncertainties

i disappoint you
you are different
you are sky and space
sun and
moon

i may look up to you
but not forever
for i belong here
to the soil to dust to stones
to layers of
pressed history
destined to be forgotten
fossilized....

RIC S. BASTASA
Foul Mouthed

forgive
his foul mouth

forgive the
sixteen million
mouths
who put them there

forgive and keep
forgiving
there will be six
more years
of foul mouthing

he is what he is
he was what he was
from here till
the end....

forgive, forgive
and forgive
 till all the mouths
shut up

and till then
you will hate his
silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
Four

Hey amigas
Viva la vida
Fiesta la vida
Cantandos amigos
Viva la vida

Dance, dance
Sway your hands
Touch the ceiling
Touch the skies

Fiesta fiesta de la vida

Swirl, sway,
Raise our arms to the
Ceiling to the skies

Feel God
In the feast of your
Body swaying....

Meanwhile
Delete the email
Of the British National Lottery
Telling you that you win
One million pounds!

Ouch!

I am exercising. I am hypertensive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Four Innocent Waggling Tails Of The Dogs

these are four innocent
dogs
who never know about
the conflict
of the house

the maids feed them
with the bones
of cows
that they love
to grind their teeth
with
all day

when we leave they
stay by the door
and bark as though saying
we must come back
we will miss you so much

but no one will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Four Poetic Points For The Neighborhood To Ponder

i

it is that particular moment
when your tongue tastes the skin of the wind
and it shall tell you too about its long
and unfinished journey

it is this intimacy with the hands of the wind
the talk that both of you do more often under the moon

ii

it is when you sit on the floor
your back rests on the wall
it is this intimacy of self-talking upon itself
when the wall begins to respond
when the floor finally makes its comments

iii

the neighborhood begins to doubt you
but you have no doubt about yourself or the floor's sincerity
or the door's indulgence
or the intimacy with the wind and the wall
which offers you a buffer between emptiness and chaos

eventually everything has come
smooth and natural
well folded like the waves
well covered like the mist on the tree tops

iv

what you have to serve to all these inquisitors
is an empty glass upon an imaginary tray
which they still have to figure out
why you are serving them the perfect drops of silence
for all their thirsts.
Fourteen

While in china at night on the great wall
By a hill, there he writes about the moon
His shadow his flute and his
Cup of rice wine,
Then he sings for a while
And sleeps under a sky of stars
On a blanket of soft grass,

When he immigrated
To the American city
He writes differently now
About the moon
As the companionless
wanderer

The head of a murdered man
Rolling on the floor
Uncontained by a sack
A moon

Or some kind of a fluorescent
Truant
A silver circular corpse
Infected with AIDS,
That corpuscle confusing
And ovulating

Him, spoon feeding
Her with so much longing
Date-rape drug, where she howls like
A bitch

To the moon in that great American
City

I just like it here,
The moon is still my
Moon child
my fair lady of the night
In all shining glory
Above the mango tree,

In this little country..

RIC S. BASTASA
Fractions

Do not let your hearts
be troubled

that is the final instruction
of the master of this
universe
who left us to visit his
house
to spend time with his
father

if we follow this
then
we can walk on the lake
feed the multitudes
sleep beside the master
glowing like a burning
bush

RIC S. BASTASA
Fractures

time has a healthy bone
on the thigh of history
there are moments of fractures
which cannot be healed by joy

some shadows roam the dark
corners of this world
unable to grasp what is happening
there are hints but not enough
to shift the mind
to the other chasm

the emptiness here cannot be understood
by the age of limestone
the fullness there cannot be anticipated
by hallways
more milestones and temporary triumphs
triumvir
Oh holy Father!

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragile

you are so fragile
as a blue bird's egg inside my hands

my sigh is a pressure
the slightest of which the shell cracks

it doesn't matter
nature chooses those which are fit to survive

perhaps
an ostrich 's egg will do

to show me what life is
the hardness of this.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragility

a petal door
Marooned
A tendril knob
For fear that i
May leave an imprint
Of unforgettable
Destruction
I decide not to touch
Any surface
Upon my departure
I have gloved hands and
My body is a closed
Luggage

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragility, Floating In The Firm Hold Of The Firmament.

today, i am
bombarded by a set of
lies,

i can hate this world,
i am not still attuned
to its tricks,

in the same manner,
on the right side of this
frame, there is a window
carved out by light,
and it is here where

however, some truths shine
penetrate the thick
walls of deceit, and i still

find a reason for living
and loving this world as it
is,

for i have two choices now
which to embrace and which
to despise,

i am the scale.
I weigh, and i go where
the leaning of truth and
justice shall go,

my will tips it further
towards
the gaping hope of humanity.

still truth prevails.
and my pillow is soft and
warm, as i sleep my life
tonight
fragility, floating in the
firm hold of the firmament.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perfection
Where is this perfection?
In our fingers
That do not have the same sizes?
In our feet that stumble?
In our eyes that do not see too well?
In our skin that sheds off from time to time?
In our broken selves?
In our shattered days, our past haunting
Our future dwindling like
Stones powdered by
Time’s hammering
Hours

Perfection
You feel it sometimes
It is there
It is not yet here
It waits for us
And we are not rushing still
We are frozen
Like trees in winter
Come summer
We shall wilt like twigs
And leaves

Perfection remains
A quest
For the waters
To quench our thirsts
And it is not yet here
Our wells are dry
The rivers too muddy
The sea too salty
The spring polluted

Where then?
Wait, just wait,
He has the answer.
I hear your voice
And I quiver
I love the sound
Of your footsteps
I know every
Note of your whisper
I love your silence
I care for your noise
I look for your shadows
I smell your dress
I go into your world
In your sleep
I join you in your dreams
When you wake up
I am no longer there
I do not wish
To spoil your lovely day
With him.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragment 4

To have you
To cherish you
To die for you
Till I am gone
Till I am nothing
But a kind
Of persistent memory
That you
Wand to discard
I am in love with you
And that is all
That I can give for now

RIC S. BASTASA
Call it foolishness
But there is wisdom to my
Self-inflicted pain and
Loneliness
There is this emptiness
That speaks more
Than the happiness
Multiplied by time’s
Precautions
When I am in love
I throw everything away
That blocks my way
To kiss and hug you
To have you
Even if it means
My own dissolution

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragment 6

Down to the last drop
I will take every part of you
That leaks
I’ll have the sweetness
And the salt
Every dropp of your being
To my system
That runs on the fuel of your
Love

RIC S. BASTASA
I take the usual walk
This morning
And think upon
A thought
What if I die
What shall I do
On the last hour
Shall I come back
For another
Round of
Reincarnation
To become a child again
Chasing the wind
To become a man again
Picking some flowers
Of lust and desire
Shall I become an old man again
Filled with wisdom

I said no
It is not worth it
I have faith
In the most beautiful world out there
Where I shall not burn
Where I shall not think anymore
Where I shall be
Wisdom and love forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragment 8

To you God
I raise my hands in prayer
My work
My ambition
My silence
I raise my hands in prayer
To you God
I bow myself
Like a monk prostrate on the cold floors
Asking for wisdom
Asking for guidance
Asking for mercy
I raise my soul in prayer
I leave my body stripped of desire
I leave everything to you
To you God
Take charge of my life
I am hopeless
I am loveless
I am empty
I am blown away
I am light
I am consumed
I am a well without water
I am nothing
To you God
I give up everything
I am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
What a way to love
Long distance
Just words on the phone
And some promises
What a way to commit
A self
That I can only think
And figure in a dream
Nothing to hold
Nothing to touch
What a way to love
And brag
What a way to say
In truth
There is nothing between
Us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fragments

the fragments
of glass
lay on the floor

some parts
of us are
hidden

red wine stains
and petals
of a yellow daffodil

a window
opening to the blue
sky

night as dark as
my black
underwear

some stars
begin to glow

from your eyes
as i wait

asking for
some answers

i go outside
looking for you

this is the hub
of the city

i am silent
walking alone
along its
crowded streets
Fragments (2)

I see fragments
Of memories
Scattered in the floor
Of our past
I am bound
And my hands are dying
I am muted
By bitterness and pain
I am a broken bone
My heart is maimed
My mind is floating
Like clouds drifting
I see fragments
I see leaves
Blown by the wind
I can do nothing
I see dusts
The wind has come
And everything
Is blown away
I see emptiness
I hear nothing
I am here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Framing The Sun

with your hands
you frame the sun
you stare at it
you know what
happens next

too much light
too small a grasp
too much sun
too small a mind

do you remember
how the balloon
burst? i shiver
to the sound of
your explosion

there are shatters
of memories
left on the ground
but not calling for help

RIC S. BASTASA
Frammento

A fragment is something incomplete
Something broken-off, severed,
Detached, segregated,

A fragment of a conversation,
Extant fragments of an ancient
Document written on stone,
A fragment of my poetry,

How

do

i

say

it?

..............................
Some fragments of myself
Missing some fragments of
Myself hidden, and you will
Not find them, too many fragments
like lice in a native woman's
hair spreading on her head

I place them where
You cannot find them because
You presume too much
To know me to love me,

Along this line, so many parts
are detached, perhaps my navel

my mole, my thumb
my right ear, my left eye
So many parts severed, perhaps
My head from my heart
my mind from my soul

my past from my future

Some extant fragments of
My past self, written on some
Stones still unturned, yes

I have pretended so much
And you cannot detect
Which is true from false

i have become so many parts
of myself, now in the last hours

fragmented

wanting to be whole again..

RIC S. BASTASA
France: Three Days

The landscape has rolling hills
WE traveled by car
courtesy of
cousin Ben,
to Metz, Strasbourg, Nancy and Dijon.

we stopped for wines: the magnificent pinot noirs
and chardonnays
exquisitewise
the famous 'Yellow wine'
from the Jura mountain
vineyard

got a postcard for
you, old ways do not die
another pic
for FB coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 10

He who dies with the most

beautiful poem

is, nonetheless,

still dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 2

all i need is a single candle
to light my way
in this dark alley
where at the end of this crooked black-outed cajolery
you said you would be there waiting for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 3

you are born condemned

those you love will love someone else

those who love you

make you vomit

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 4

one day i ask her about her life
what she's going to do now that she had fallen from grace
into poverty and all alone
her loved ones died in one sweeping car accident
on a freeway
she is silent for a while thinking perhaps that asking her
in the midst of her grief
would be to unkind from someone
but reconsiders the question
as i am one whom she considers a friend through and through
she opens her mouth and says
'i stopped analyzing, i stopped questioning'
and to all these and those
and those yet to come she says
yes, yes, yes, yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 5

perhaps

one who loves assumes another shape of the reborn

another face in another body

assuming a new name

i love you

arms warmer eyes making more glow

on top of her new found world

she becomes the sun coming out again

after a long, long rain

driving dark clouds away for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 6

at the end of the day what thoughts shall i keep
what thoughts shall i discard
what to forget what to remember
at the end of the day when we see each other again
dine together on this carved dining table
and steady mahogany chairs
sleep together in bed on thick blankets and soft pillows
then you lower the mosquito nets
we are both feeling buried

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 7

Fluttering
Moving lightly swiftly flying darting skimming
Like a yellow butterfly flitting passing flitting
From flower to flower from tree to tree
From cloud to cloud passing quickly

To depart then die this yellow butterfly
I have never heard it sing I have never heard it cry

Flitting fluttering lightly fluttering this lonely happy yellow butterfly!

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 8

clumsy lover

hold me not on my face

i can kiss you without your hands

hold me on my butt

so i will know where to rebut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frances 9

Write about love
The greatness the loveliness the thirst the anticipation
Of love
The night of waiting for love the dawn consumed to writing
About love the joy the ecstasy of the lines in between
You, my poet so well engrossed

Here I am pretending sleep; it is you that I miss,
Dreaming that I am waiting about your kiss

RIC S. BASTASA
Frederic.....

i admire
frederic

the way you
admire him

he stutters
he most often repeats
the same words
over and over again

but i admire
Frederic because
you admire him

you say he
is poetry
and i agree with
you

i must like
Frederic

for i am inside
frederic
and you admire frederic
and so
i must admire you

fred.

RIC S. BASTASA
Free And Freedom....

she did it for free
in the name of poetry

did she do it for her
to be remembered
in the annals of history?

no she didn't
she did it for free
all in the name of poetry

it's like sunshine and wind
and waves
it's like stars at night
and the moon
it's like butterflies and bees
and flowers

she says they're all beautiful
to see and all

for free. She does it now and
she will do it still

the past, and the future and
the present

not for a fee, not for fame or
glory

they're all free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Free And Yet So Painful

U hav seen what we hav not seen, felt what we havnt, it is beautiful and logical, and now it is facing me and speaking, it mirrors what i too want to see, what i feel, which always remains that uncracked enigma among us, how what in childhood we loved and died, how God spoke and ceased, and how then we have embraced the irrational, more beautiful, free and yet so painful, all over again

RIC S. BASTASA
Free Shopping

Bed and bath
and beyond gifts
Utopia
Jobs needed
for immediate hiring
U.S. stimulus package
a Facebook survey
unemployment bonus
a letter of collection
an email from a friend
asking if I have money
to lend

all these spams
i have just deleted

i am getting a slice
of my day
for a morning walk
with you

this world
is a deception.

RIC S. BASTASA
Freed...

freed from having to eat only
twice a day,
from having to walk for a day
just to learn to read in school
from fetching water five mountains away
from washing my body
in that river where stones are slimy
where accidents are not seldom
from ignorance
and hunger and thirst and
indifference
from a room with triple deck beds
from a rotten dormitory
from teachers with narrow minds
from religious intolerance
from a belief that only we can be saved when this world ends
freed from a belief
that there is an ending to life
that there is only death that makes this life a meaningful stay
freed from the tradition of strong family ties that minds every detail of
how life must be lived
how funerals are conducted
what colors of candles what light is necessary
freed from Spanish rule from English domination
from from brothers of superior minds who think that only they know
where we must go
and stay

freed at last from myself who thinks that there is no more possibility
for growth
freed from an insecure living
freed from all those prisons that still lurk inside my mind
freed at last
from freedom itself

freed from fire and cold
from paradoxes and ironies
freed at last from cliches and constantly invoked metaphors
freed at last from the clutches of words
into the limitless thoughts
into sunless seas
into moonless nights
into inconceivable eternities

freed at last from the nucleus of my atom
into the mysteries of more explosions
mushrooming into space
beyond the bars of my
imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom Fighters

For a few
fleeing is freedom

and so who are left leaning
on those Lenin-grads

frankly, fleets of
freedom fighters

Fleur-de-lises

ccaught in cans of
cream De la creme

trimmed terrorists
as they are now named
and charged

in the U.S.

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom From...

the nest no matter
how warm
cannot keep the birds
forever

there is always a day
ripe for flying away

the fish too cannot live
forever
in the mouth of its mother
there is a time in the sea
for swimming away
and finding one's
new destiny

mother's arms that cradles
you
gives way to
your new found freedom too

no nest, no corals, no arms
holds a bird, a fish, a boy
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom In A Metaphor Bird

the little bird
driven by hunger
comes near the place
where you are seating
because you
spread some grains
of rice
on the ground just
below the tree

without looking at you
it pecks upon a few
nibbling
and then in a few seconds
flies away

swims through the air
and leaves you
once again
feeling so fettered....

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom Metaphor (Corrected)

the little bird
driven by hunger
comes near the place
where you are seated
because you
spread some grains
of rice
on the grass just
below the tree

without looking at you
it pecks upon a few
seeds
and then in a few seconds
flies away
from you

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom To Move In Opposite Directions

we need space
we are the free souls
every wall is a choking hand
we find it hard to breathe
we have been these two parallel lines
we converge and make outbursts of joys
we soon get tired
joys are boring too
we know it
we need space
we go in opposite directions now
trying to see what is there
in the world where we both do not live
i do not think of coming back
i think you think the same way
we are happier now
moving to another journey
we are not hurt
neither do we fear
the strangeness of freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Freedom....

when i am no longer thinking
about what you think about what i think
when i am on my own way
when our roads cross and there is no light
when at the junction
the die is cast and we take the risks
without worrying about what happens next
because we know
what shall be taken and what shall be given
when the silence becomes understandable
when talk is noise
when i defend you from the outrages of the other
even if you do not ask for it
when i finally go and find my own way
confident about what i want in my own life
when the heart opens
and when the mind closes upon the needs of
the self
when the fingers open
to the skies
when i close my mouth
stop gritting my teeth
when i finally let go
what you left and when i do not notice anymore
how time moves
i guess
not anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
so you have proclaimed freedom
you have said it all: no food, no shelter, no clothing, no nothing
except freedom
just the feel of being free and being freed from everything

naked, and homeless, and hungry,
and then so

unfree.....

freedom, what is freedom, there is more to be learned
there is more to be done
there is more to be responsible about it

this freedom from need, from want, from being so ignorant
and shackled with that limitless desire to be free from feelings

without the mind?

RIC S. BASTASA
Freely In The Water Flowing

to just keep on writing
is like

to just keep on moving on and living
and enjoying life to the utmost with whatever is there

i no longer want to know what i can write
the love of it, or the taking of it for granted is just to keep on writing

even for no reason at all, no direction, no rules, no preaching,
nothing even philosophical, just this loafing, this floating,

this sailing on a boat on the water under the skies
beneath me a clear water with red and blue and green corals

fish swimming, eels, and urchins and dolphins and then i have
to finally decide

to leave this boat for a while and take my plunge into the
depths to see what beauty lies there and i do not stop

writing inside my mind, for
thoughts are letters, and imagination is another world
where the mind as pen still keeps on scribbling.

i like the salt
that clings to my tongue.

and i remember: i am the salt
of this earth.

freely in the water flowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
French Kiss Me....

je veux danser
seulement avec
vous

chante pour
moi

RIC S. BASTASA
Freud And Marriage

discovering the unconscious
he speaks with authority
mr. sigmund freud
has always told us
that the real problem
of broken marriages
is always
the bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friday Blues....

you work
like a worm.

a week spent
for an inch.

my heart bleeds
i am angry.

come Saturday
you are fired.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friday The 13th

such is the holy
hour

music so sacred
gushes on the windows
and the doors

eye are all open
throughout the day

and till tonight
to welcome the moon and
the stars

sleep so well
as i think of you

the greatness of God
his Magnificence

the black blanket of the
night
shall comfort you

it will be warm
it will be so lovely

all your fears gone
in the darkest hour

our hidden eyes can still
see so well

RIC S. BASTASA
Friend Forever

they come from the same place of origin
and they will be flying on the same place of destination

they may not have arrived at the same time
but they will be leaving soon at the same time

they are birds of the same feather
and they will be singing the same kind of songs

the songs of freedom
freedom from the same cages of their past
they have the same themes
the final freedom of all these...

RIC S. BASTASA
Friends

my brown dog
under my legs

a blue bird
a hand away

a water fountain
a blue bird drinking

my hand on the brown dog
my legs and hands reaching

my mouth drinking water
the water fountain

doing some other things
besides hearing the world

the people in front of you
they are not your friends

there is this bar
that is that bench

words keep talking
ears shut

got to play with words
multi-tasking and evasive

believe me not
i do what is to be done now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friends

in school we're one sweet bunch
we were soon, by time's demands,
splintered
like flying seeds from
a dead tree

we've lost each hold upon
each other
but soon we converge
upon a
reunion

time changes everyone
when we meet we noticed some strangers
among us
on same names but different visions

let's us partake this food and perhaps
quickly
and then we part
and go our own ways
as i tell myself
there will be no other
time

did not Merly tell you that you have changed a lot
that she was afraid to check if it was really you?

Me too. Thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friends Do Not Die

my friends do not die
they may go
and not come back
as in
they're gone for good
seeking greener pastures
as reason
in other continents
with no news from them
but they are still in my heart
and i always remember them
as they also remember me
in their hearts

memories of friendship
live forever
specially those childhood ones
once when the rivers were
clear and clean
when laughter was not shaded
with fear

RIC S. BASTASA
Friends On Their Reunion

three friends meet
der the shade of an acacia tree
one hot summer
they tell stories
without the required plots
they are heroes there
on their never ending
wars.

RIC S. BASTASA
we had a simple
gathering of friends and
relatives in the beach today
where food and drinks are
served
where talks are free flowing
taking us
anywhere bringing us to
any place that we imagine
still exists or even if they
don't we dreamed to be,

they say they've been
to america
and they miss this kind of
gathering,

no timetable, no rushing,
no limits, no bars,
we all know what this is,

realizing that depression
costs us much
psychiatric sessions are
going trendy
most people commit suicide
and we wonder
what is happening
why

we have this antidote to
suffering
this cure for loneliness
we talk without sense
we laugh for no reason at all
we recall the past which
you think is unnecessary
we use our bare hands while eating
we drink water from the spring
we walk instead of ride
we empty instead of filling
we lose rather than win
we give rather than receive
we are going home
to regain this faith to family
and friends and relatives
well knit, supportive and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friends?

i am extending my hand
like a door knob of my door

you are here just in front of me
where i am seated
with a rose in my mouth

please open the door
and please take my red rose
with your lips

do not speak any word
let me feast upon your face

your body, your soul
it has been a long time

and my world stopped turning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Friendship

she looks for you in your garden
not for any other reason
like the day before when she
wants to see you with her new hair

today is completely different she says
she simply misses you
that there is an emptiness that only you can fill

half the joys half the sorrows
and then both of them lay on the grass and speak
about a very fine day

RIC S. BASTASA
Friendship Has Nothing To Do With Survival...

depth down the river
the fish are coy and
friendly
that you can even
touch them
and the way they
wag their fins
is uplifting to
the heart

then he shoots them
one by one
with his fish arrow

(friendship has
nothing to do with
survival: a friend
for food is good)

RIC S. BASTASA
Friendship With A Stone

the stone is dry
the sun ripped off
what moisture life
it has today,

i take a glass of
water and wet it

the stone begins
to wake up and
breathe

i take its breathe
inside my lungs
i watch it become
alive in my thoughts
we begin
talking about
a previous life

story to story
until it is dark

the stone and i
and the moon
above us

we are one family now
one misery less

RIC S. BASTASA
Frienship

outside
the morning is very cold
as i open the
doors
our dog is there
lying on the
rug

the way he waggles
his tail
convinces me
that he may now
enter the kitchen
of the house

he gets his favorite
bone

RIC S. BASTASA
you surely forget
the door where you entered
to be here with us
we too have forgotten
we were born to forget such
entrance or if we remember
the door is gone, and the
entrance is just another
dusty door, old and fragile,
crumbling to our touch even
to our breaths,

we move forward, after this
short talk, finished with all
these conventions, tired with
the rules, those that we know
too well which we have evaded,
and we laugh, we drink, we
dance, and we stop and sit around
a circle at the center of fire.

someone says the door is in the
sky, and we need some wings to fly.
but i believe what the old are teaching.
the door is here, i point to my heart.
it opens only, when we finally die.

meanwhile, the fire stops. the
air gets too much colder.
we bury ourselves under those
leaves. Beneath the sky we dream
of a door, ourselves, thin and tall,
entering there, frightened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frigid After The Test...

the water is
tested
ripples are gone
crystal clear
to the sky
it does neither
frown nor
smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fro Someone Like You

always remember
that if there is darkness
there is always a candle
waiting to be lighted

that if there is emptiness
there is always a space
waiting to be filled

that in loneliness
there is always a beloved
waiting for your word

each is ready
for your initiation

remind the rest
that something comes
and yearns
and by its own volition
springs satisfaction

fill the void
cheer the beloved

RIC S. BASTASA
From A 9-Year Old Child To His Mama...

I was the one who
uprooted your
blooming red African daisies
that morning when
you walked to attend the
funeral of
Uncle Aldong

when you arrived that afternoon
from the silent city
all the African daisies
have already wilted

RIC S. BASTASA
From A Diving Board

you climb this certain height
towards the place
where the diving board is situated

you look down
and the pool looks like a square
the people watching you somehow
looking like ants looking at you

and then you stand still
look to the sky
and take a deep breath

you make the last pose
and then jump overboard
there is that feeling of falling
as you stretch your legs
and hold your hips with your hands
you tumble down in the circles
that you are making

and then you stretch your arms and hands
like you are a long pole
and touch the still water at last

you make the splash
and tell yourself in such a short event
this must be death

you plunge down
not touching the depth of the floor
you rise up again
and touch and rub your eyes
you see them and now you realize
this must be life
you tell yourself again

RIC S. BASTASA
From A Religious Point Of View....

the woman was carrying her one-year old boy
when the gunman chased her and caught up with her
and pumped bullets in her head

death was instant & the boy fell to the ground and
a loud cry in the village was heard

the man was killed first in the backyard after he opened
the door of the house at dawn after the women in the village
had prayed their rosaries

no one however said that the dastardly act was unjust
it was said that last year the man killed his wife mercilessly
to live with the woman who carried her one-year old boy
which he sired out of an adulterous relationship

it was rumored in the village that as always 'crime does not pay'
and that 'whatever you owed, you must repay'

the people are silent and believe that justice is served
out of court and without so much waste of time and money.

RIC S. BASTASA
From A To Z.....

i am telling you now
there were lots of
un-revealed passions from
a
to z

from a to
z all these loves
unrequited

i am telling you
i survived them
all

learned a lot of these
mechanics
from
a
to z

that which did not
kill me
to repeat
have made me
stronger

smarter, sharpened my
wit
multiplied my humor

and thanks to all for
now i am
like you all

normal in all aspects
adaptable
to all changes
flexible like
our childhood rubber
bands
rolling like marble
and

stretched well
like mother's yarn
and

never snapped.

RIC S. BASTASA
From Afar...

iT is only from afar
that we sometimes see what is real...

it is the function of distance
that makes us see all the details

something ironic
putting our tongues in aghast

but only for a while
as they say

the skies become rolled up sleeves
and the stars fall like leaves from the fig trees

from afar....

RIC S. BASTASA
From All These Shattered Pieces It Is Here Where I Glitter...

if i were broken
let me say thank you

i like the broken pieces
the shatters of my
glass self
scattered on the floor

i like the sound of
shattering

they have become music
to my ears

if i break i understand
the reason

from all these cracks
the morning light enters

from all these shattered pieces
it is here where i best
glitter.....

RIC S. BASTASA
From Among The Sands

from among the sands of the shore
and you must accept there are trillions and trillions of them there

you have the guts to tell all of them
that you are not like them

that you are this diamond
admired by emerald and sapphire
and that gold is inferior

the mighty sun shines everyday above the trillions of your kind &
it is not bothered at all

it does not know you &
finds nothing significant about your claim for self-claim for glamor & glitter

need i tell you Mr. grain of sand
that a grain of sand is and will always be a good-for-nothing grain of sand?

RIC S. BASTASA
From Among The Sands On The Shore I Am But A Singe Grain

from among the sands on the shore i am but a single grain
of sand
insignificant
indistinguishable
in fact just like the rest i may just be
nothing

but if you really love me babes, as i have loved you
i will stand out from the rest of those billion grains
i am not a single grain anymore
i shall become

your sun your universe

RIC S. BASTASA
From An Audience Watching The Best Ballet Dancer

' perfect! excellent! 
Dido the best ballet dancer in this country was once a man, converted into a woman by science and adopted by us as part of the feminine universe.

and it does not matter if he/she is a pervert. she/he is an artist. and she/he is loved by this government this world this universe this sexless universe perverted and yet so beautifully crafted. it dances and relieves us from our inherited woes.'

bravo! encore!

RIC S. BASTASA
And does the heart grow old? You know
In the indiscriminate green
Of summer or in earliest snow
A landscape is another scene,

Inchoate and anonymous,
And every rock and bush and drift
As our affections alter us
Will alter with the season's shift.

So love by love we come at last,
As through the exclusions of a rhyme,
Or the exaction of a past,
To the simplicity of time,

The antiquity of grace, where yet
We live in terror and delight
With love as quiet as regret
And love like anger in the night.

RIC S. BASTASA
From C.A.

dreamingbirds fall from this tree
where flower seasons pass
sweetlip & petalwing now
slain upon the grass
frost & glass
frost & broken glass
barefoot on the splinters of your heart
of frost & glass
loveblind & rippingyarns
a-slither on the vine
Snowking, with your thorny eyes
my happiness conspires
frost & glass
frost & broken glass
barefoot on the splinters of your heart
of frost & glass

RIC S. BASTASA
From Doveglion For A.K.

First, a poem must be magical,
Then musical as a sea-gull.
It must be a brightness moving
And hold secret a bird’s flowering.
It must be slender as a bell,
And it must hold fire as well.
It must have the wisdom of bows
And it must kneel like a rose.
It must be able to hear
The luminance of dove and deer.
It must be able to hide
What it seeks, like a bride.
And over all I would like to hover
God, smiling from the poem’s cover.

RIC S. BASTASA
From Doveglion, The Use Of A Comma

Purity... before, I,
   Stepped, to, the, Door, and,
      At, the, Door—
And, as, I, passed,
   Out, the, Door...

Line, orbit, locus:
   Peril, deed, and, map, of,
      Blaze! Peril,
Of, immediate,
   Hunter: daze,

Whirl, of, supreme,
   Migrator: pull, of, his,
      Gravite, anchor!
Fact, act, of, me,
   To, me: Knitter:

Cleaver, of, me, Intac

RIC S. BASTASA
From Fairy Tales

from those fairy tales
time makes us strong
and mature
and patient and so
understanding about
what is happening
about the whys and
grasps for meaning, and
soon we graduate from
the
once upon a time
we move forward
to what we know and
yet we cannot say with
bluntness
because we cannot yet
fully accept the
consequences of
the pinch of realities,
now
welcome parables
mysteries
and deep silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
From His Diary......

i've been hiding
from the womb of
my mother,
then to her arms,
i've been hiding
at the library in
school
at the dormitory in
the university,
even in the chapel
for that daily morning
mass, i've been hiding
in those island
escapades, in the bushes
in the caves in
the sands of
hidden beaches, i've been
hiding in the
privacy of marriage,
i've been hiding away
from everything and
from everyone,
and in the last stance
i've hidden myself
in the hospital room
without a number,
and in the funeral
home,
in the tomb,
in the cemetery
for all
human people.

RIC S. BASTASA
from my glass window
at the second floor overlooking the sea
i see big waves arriving on the sandy shore
murky sea waters striking each rock
like teeth gnashing and tongues lashing

the strong winds from the Pacific Ocean
have arrived at the earlier time
Cold and strong and threatening

the trees sway, the leaves fall, the children
are kept at bay inside their houses by their mothers
there is going to be a big typhoon tonight as predicted

i close the window and remember many sad things in my life.
i tell myself, i assure my senses, i am safe now, i am strong now.

RIC S. BASTASA
From My Window I See The Jackfruit Tree

in this tropical place
from my window
i see a jack fruit tree
in abundance
showing its fruits
all around its
body.

RIC S. BASTASA
From My Window To The Road Below

a brown boy
beside his pregnant mother
hand gripping

a bus stops
it is going to the mountain
loaded with
boxes and bags
and a crowd of
people

the boy sees his father
carrying
a net bag of fish

he gets away from
mother and
runs across the road
where father
is waiting

an over speeding
motorcycle is
coming

screeching sound
and screams
and then

silence, i, close my eyes
and walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
From Our Heads Like Gods We Give Birth To Others

they view us
as the impotents, those with only words to give to the world
we, phenomenal spectators
artists, onlookers, sensitive eyes, unblinking, blood rushing
to eyeballs, noting every thread of reality
in the fabric of this world
unfolding

we notice colors that they cannot see
we smell more than dogs
we see more than what eagles stare

we can be silent, and so enduring
surviving what they accuse us of
crimes that we cannot commit

we are patient and we endure what pain
is there, reserved for us like empty plates
on poisoned food and yet
we still eat them
caring less, on our emaciated bodies
too willing to offer
and if need be, die our earlier deaths
leaving them guilty in the process

we give no births in maternity beds
we do not really populate like they do
but look on our heads

we give births to other like us
in pain in joy in awakenings

and then we have become so many
ultimately winning
this game of posterity, this final battle of survival

in wit in freedom we have won this war
our swords are more sensitive
to make a kill and we devour what they vomit
From Pain........

after the rain
you stay by the window

you look beyond
this frame of mind

you listen to the
drops of rain from the
roof down to the
ground

last drops paving the
way to solitude as your
eyes begin to blink for

that feeling that soon
someone you love soon shall
cry for a reason

a pinch of salt another
smell of pepper
a cup of coffee and a
sandwich of ham and lettuce

you will remember a bit
but you have taken all the courage
to finally forget

one moves on in peace
after a thorough reflection
a self reconstructs
a future is shaped again
from pain....

RIC S. BASTASA
From Pluto With Love

hello earthling
this is Plutonian
i send you the signals of love
the waves of understanding
the ripples of compassion

hello earhtling
this is Plutonian
love is not far
only if we take the initiative to reach out
there is no distance
in the hands of compassion

RIC S. BASTASA
From Red To Blue

it becomes all
too familiar

it numbs you waking
up early morning

beside someone
with nothing between you

there is this acceptance
of life

both of you have no other
vision but an endpoint

of a titration: everything
in there has turned blue.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Ashes Of Your Phoenix

AS i wait for you
i have become an insomniac
for so many
trivial
justifications

for instance
writing so many poems
that alienate myself
from the world

i have been keeping hope against hope
that someday the dead shall rise from their graves

that love shall have a rebirth
from the ashes
of your phoenix

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Autobiography Of A Famous Man

i am now fully rested
fill my coffin with money and jewelry
park my brand new car at the cemetery
inset my credit cards and shares of stocks
carve my good name in my tombstone
place my societal status and title

i need all these things
in heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
i was born in a cradle
made of gold
my father was the king of Tut
he married the princess of Tat
and the bore eleven children
all named Tat 1, Tat 2, Tat 3,
Tat 4 for the girls
and Tut 5, Tut 6, and so on
and so forth for the boys,
I was named Tut 8
King Tut thinks that I am a lucky child
being the 8th
everything in me goes up
but Queen Tat believes otherwise
like Tat 2 my name as Tat 8
sounds like a
bad toothache.
This is the story of
my birth.

(Proceed to the next Chapter
for the Story of my Childhood)

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Bathtub To The Ocean

start with the bathtub, scrub yourself
with soap and some perfume
smooth white skin and flawless body
cleaned with soft water
safe on the privacy of your
comfort room

there is no challenge there
there is just this stagnancy
that kills
and numbs the mind
life is more than that
life always
wants an exploration
of the unknown

and so you begin to think of the shore
of the sea
and its waves and its rolling nature
its challenge for you
to swim or take the sail
towards the ocean
beyond the comforts of your domestic mind

you look forward to the vast expanse
of the Atlantic or the Pacific
you anticipate the storms
the cyclones
of your life
the way other people's ships sink
how other people drown
and how they tell you
they survive

and then they start telling you the real meaning of life
you must go
and find the meaning of your life yourself

definitely not in that silly bathtub
it is always in that ocean
the cyclones
the storms after

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Beginning

from the beginning things are too simple
each creature has no name
they know each other by the sound
and smell and the simplest glance ever
eye to eye
gives the needed peace
love and compassion

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Bottom Of His Heart

did he tell you
that he writes
from the bottom of
his heart?

did he not frankly
tell you
that at the bottom
of his heart
there is only
sand and
rotten seaweeds?

that there is no
one there
that the silence there
is haunting
him
that there is no
sun and
stars there

that the starfish
has gobbled another
sea urchin
there
for breakfast

that in there
the only story is
all about
the predator
and the prey

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Freedom Of The Forest

from the freedom of the forest
you trapped and caught this bird
and put it inside your cage
you love it and feed it well
on top of the ivory tower

you want to hear it sing
a love song
you threaten to kill it
and take away all its
colorful feathers

it does not sing still
the following day it lays itself stiff
dead and you tell yourself
it is not your fault
you too, like it, has been so
unloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Heart

yes master
i will beat for you
you own me
every vein
every vessel
every blood
that i pump
out and pump
in, ...all these
shall be with
you,
i admit
when you
fall in love
i fall with
you...
i am not afraid
anymore.

i still bleed
but i am healing
right now

and just a second
when we fall in
love and again
when i will be
broken again
and again
and again

we shall always be together.
what am i for?

your dear heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The House To The City....

the best part
of my day is taking
my ride
to the office
where i pass
farms and
houses like pictures
of my postcard
past
sometimes to feel
what nature
is
i open the glass
window and
feel the winds
passing
by my face
and i see this world
full of cars and
people in the city
where i am met with
noise and
speed and i promise
myself
i cannot be sick
this time
for this world
needs
strong people
to change it
somehow
for the better.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Night

the morning arrives
on my cheeks
light gives a new warmth
i meet the sun
and i understand
the darkness of your loneliness

gikan sa gabii

pag-abot sa kabuntagon
midan-ag sa akong aping
ang bag-ong kainit
gitagbo ko ang adlaw
nasabtan ko ang kangitngit
sa imong kamingaw

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Nooks Of Jakarta

the canal gives up
the river's bosom is filled with
plastic garbage
the color of the water is
black
the leaves of trees
keep on falling
to the ground

people pass by
nothing's new
everything the same
day in and day out
business has to
continue
Indonesians simply
move on
with their
daily lives

it will be the same
here
when i come home again

sweet too is the garbage
of my country
my home

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Notes Of A Friend

They are typically gorgeous,
haughty,
unapproachable,
sometimes arrogant,
and often unfortunately
straight.

They know that
they are being watched
but they
usually ignore that.

When they grace you with a smile,
a slight nod,
a word or two,
you are exalted
to be in their
presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Outside....

you do not see
the right shape of this mountain
unless you look at it
from far,

it is the distance for now
that makes you see the truth

you do not see so well
when you are inside a cell

a room gives you a door for you to go out
and a path so you may take some steps

here, where we stand
here, where we meet

we can see that it is heart shaped
that it has no thorns that it is not bleeding

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Peak Of The Mountain To The Foot Of The Hill

you knelt before that
god
it is your hands that
travel
from the peak of
the mountain
to the foot of the
hill
both sun and moon
hairs as stars
you close your eyes
and worship this
god

i regroup all my senses
and call all the roses for reasons
sham god
and you're a fool
hormone engineered.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Viewpoint Of An Abstractionist

The whole world
is a color of orange.

you imagine age
as pure
sunset.

there is a black
hat below this world

there is a face of
a man with
a screw for an eye.

nothing really means
much

except the dissolving
part

which is actually
nihilism at its

peak of beauty and this
is what we experience

when we say
we like to die and

this is the moment
when a writer says

nothing and the reader
sayS much.

RIC S. BASTASA
From The Voice Within....

it is hard to be a voice
within which is not heard
or heeded

one feels the straining of
the flesh
how the bones tremble over
unrequited love
over feelings unattended

for the simple reason that
one must have strength over desires
that power to control
and do what ought to be done

the voice within struggles to be
heard and followed
it echoes in every corner of the
nerve of your humanity

the years are rough and muddled
over a voice which keeps on
murmuring
praying that it should be heard
and loved

somehow when death comes and the
voice dies with it
one from beyond all these
sees the true reason of restraint

the man dies dignified with all
praise
for he had been strong and not
swayed by the voice of the flesh
as flowers are offered
over his pure name
his reputation untarnished
living the life of a dignified
stature
carved upon stone and was never
stained by the acidity of
the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
now be careful
because if you are too kind
to all these
hungry men

they will pluck out
your eyes
they will tear your
flesh
they will break
all your bones
they will sell
even your
soul to the
devil

RIC S. BASTASA
From Where I Come From

slopes of the
mountains
and a small patch
of a plain
on the side
of the river
where the grasses
thicken
like armpits
there is
a hut there
and some
trees around
years
and years
we stayed there
like there is no other
home for us
but then
time comes and
leaving becomes
a must for
each of us

we left and
we followed the
direction of the
wind towards
the sea of our
freedom

and here i
am
writing about
what my
ancestors
thought

leave and take
a journey
and find the
real path

the meaning
that we attach
to ourselves

to the direction
of the wind
towards the sea
and then
do not ever
think of the patch
of plain again
or the grasses

it is the wind
that leads us
the wind
the wind and nothing but
the sound of
the wind

freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
From Where I Stand I See The Silent Tomorrow

tomorrow comes
on small
silent feet
like a cat

from a window
overlooking
a harbor

gently,
the clouds drift
the mist and frost
slowly gone

and what the cat
sees
is the sun
smiling

and the cat
remembers her mother
the one that feeds
her with pink mice
and
sharper claws

RIC S. BASTASA
From Womb To Womb

from the womb of my mother
where i once slept
i shall walk up straight
and run and play and then
stop for a while
contemplating about my
sweetest surrender
and then i bow down to
earth
with all respect
genuflect and kneel
and prostate my whole being
before its sun
its trees its rivers
and skies
praying that i be taken
back
to its womb
where i shall sleep
contentedly
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
From Worm To Wings

deeply embedded in their instincts
they always follow through
and the lead
an obedient crowd
no one really knows where
they would really go

guided by their instincts
they always follow the lead
an obedient crowd
no one really knows where
they would really go

you look at them and
have this sense of worry
the shortage of the leaves
the endless walk on the branch
some have fallen
and you try to pick them
and let them be

unknown to you
is nature's law
the survival of the fittest
that those who become
butterflies
are those that never stop
to try to eat
and then to be transformed
from worm to winged

RIC S. BASTASA
an idea always comes from
all of you, a chat early this morning

the wind outside is cold and the rain has
not subsided it
the road is empty and the leaves scatter
there

jimmy is starting the engine of his motorcycle
his girlfriend met an accident last night

my window is open
since last night and some rain came in but i did not really mind it

i look at myself in the mirror in the bathroom after i have taken my bath
of hot water

my body is another wasted material
my face is like a sinking boat in the water
my eyes like a drowning child

time has judged me like an unforgiving father
to a prodigal son

i have freed myself from some shackles but i have never used
that freedom too well

there are stories of murder and regrets after
and they shall remain always ready to be told

RIC S. BASTASA
From Zero

dr. zero i have to
go again to some

one like you.
for i am nothing

and will always be
nothing

without you.

and then you come
very simply
as a smile

a pat on my back
and then
a hold

on my hand
my heart begins
to beat

like i am some
one
for you

and then we are
here
from ground
zero

a leaf falls
a little wind blows

a lock of hair
on my palm
the first step
to a kiss

i sit here
remembering
things again

three women
are carried
up
on an elevator

as i watch
with a bottle
of mineral water
beside my hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
i make a garden with all the intentions of giving you flowers.
It is not all the time.

i cannot create my own happiness. i am dependent on love's giving.

Expectations are exciting. I create more synonyms for it. With it alone, at least, i can be happy.

Blessings do not come in forms, They come in shades, like the paintings of suns and moons.

Losing love is not painful
I am tired of losing it and I am numb.

It has in fact become a habit.

I once adopted a cat, not a dog.
And the following morning,
many cats are infesting my doormats and backyards.

In solitude, one comes across all the questions.
There are no answers.
But it is good.

Life becomes an eternity of questions, as it is really meant to be.

Unless you want a final answer.
Hope that it will not be very disastrous.

Do not embrace old age.
It embraces you instead.
Whether you like it or not,
It comes even like a hale in summer.

Missing is part of finding.
Debts and taxes, Oh never mind.  
They will always be there, even without you.

Do not dwell more on what is to be done.  
Just keep on going and doing.  
And you will exactly  
how it feels.

Do not feel it.  
It will feel you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Frontal...

and there was this abbot of
mont serrat
who used an unknown number
and texted me the worst story about
myself, which he believes to be
this sort of hook, line and sinker
his lips entangled in the
falsity of
the pleasures of the rumor
and i simply read and afterward deleted
what must necessarily belong
to him

in a little way the rivers get crumpled
but the rains flatten out what creases are there
now, i listen only to myself
and see the sheen of my own light
to myself i am true
to no other must i be responsible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fronts

i know what you are.
when you start walking this
early morning you
have something in mind
other than this ordinary
walking for

i know who you are and
what you desire
what you like to hold
early morning,

the one that i am holding
now, sorry, but this is not for you,
it is for someone else,
the one that i love, the one
who covers my lies for me,
the one who loves me
no matter what, even if what
i am holding now
is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fruitflies Inside A Milk Papercup

you keep the fruit flies
inside the milk paper cup
covering them with your palm

and you tell me
you wish them well
you wish they multiply
fast just in a minute

asphyxiated stupid!
they are all dead!

RIC S. BASTASA
Frying Pan

d there are times when
life becomes one fish helpless
on the silent heat
of the coconut oil

to the utmost the harshness
lies on the charring of the skin
the protest of the scales
the flesh
no longer edible

to the chagrin of the mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
Fuente, Cebu City From Jones Street

I am back here. This used to be my place.
Busy street. Smoking jeepneys. Unknown
Girls. Yesterday’s news littering on the
Streets. McDonald’s opening 24 hours.
Hot thin crust pizza at Pizza Hut.
Park view hotel always filled with
Japanese and Koreans, No room
For Us, but anyway I have taken
A room for 500 a night at YMCA.
Nothing’s new really, except for this
Brown girl following me. Cheap sir.
Just cheap buy this DVD, triple x.
Diagnostic centers. Old Julie’s
Same bread. Cebu Doctors. How
Much money shall I spend for
My new blood test? Doctors always
Require these tests, and I am fed up
With nothing normal. Everything seems
To be wrong.

I am back here. I will do nothing.
What is the use? No one knows no one.
Anyway, I’ll pass at Red Ribbons
And try what I cannot eat.
Black forest cake and ice cold coke
For a drink to death. Bordeline.
Diabetic. Sweetest dreams tonight.
Like mother: who cares? Enter death.
Go away rules. Get lost prohibitions.

RIC S. BASTASA
LIFE is simplified
back to the year of
the first white chrysanthemum

there is only earth and
heaven and
man between them

on folded silence
like origami
they understand what happens
things move on
like the lotus
calm, gentle, softly
above the murky water
to the morning sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Fulfilling

to close a world
you simply have to close
a window,
or put off light, or keep
back your silence.

you go to bed. Slide upon
a blue blanket. Cover your
head, and listen to the sounds
of your breathing.

it is dark, but there is still
a sound of you.
they say, you close a door and
another door is opened.

indeed, it is true. Indeed it
speaks to you. Confirms you
with yourself.

you talk to yourself. The chair
listens. The ceiling stares back.
they say it is a long journey.

what they did not tell you is
that, it can only be you.
and it will be long, and sad,
and this is the hope: fulfilling.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fulfillment

to write without thinking
without really thinking much or
counting the cost
the time wasted

and then to wonder what was it that was written
and then to be told that

what was written was true and that it has changed the life of
the reader....

RIC S. BASTASA
Fulfillment Of Dreams

we have each other still
the rain stops
the flowers bloom
the skies clear
the sun popping up
on the promising horizon

we have a house
a kid
a dog that waggles its tail
and laps our legs
we have a car
we have poetry
we have our own movie time

we have a night together
at the veranda by the sea
we watch the stars
and the moon

we hold each other's hands
we kiss and then we embrace....

RIC S. BASTASA
Full Moon

the moon is full tonight.
under the shadows of trees
are pairs.

with envy
i look at them.

i put my arms
around my body
and think of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Full Moon By My Window

full moon by my window
dark night as hair
light and warm her body

full moon by my window
i bathe in love

full moon by my window
i breathe happiness

full moon by my window
she is fast asleep in my arms

RIC S. BASTASA
Fully Alive...

how did you
give fully? did you
not know
that you have
to die first before
you can live
that full?
and how did you
die first?
did you know that
all these are
but idioms?
it is death
without being seen
with any blood
or strangulation
you appear
there in that
garden without
any wound
and yet you have
died
as you claim it
to be

internally

did you know that
all these
are but a harem of
metaphors?

you do have to
give fully after all
neither shall you
die because
you cannot and you
are not death
neither are you
life.

all these are figures of speech.

there is a path that you know but you do not speak about it.

you just walk on it and do what you tell yourself within.

automatically.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fully......Understood....

he cannot say
everything

amazed, what
comes

this silence

dumb
founded, he wrote the evolution
of his self like a hieroglyphic

black bird
headless.....someone draws a wing,

a cloud,
pearl,

now in Asia, lost in the configuration of yin yang,

he thinks he is a failure because no matter how he stretches his mind
he could not reach the star....

what one does not know
is fully understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fun

as age
increases its creases
like a convoluted species
of the brain
fun rewrites itself
in some straight lines
shunning curves
and crooked edges.

RIC S. BASTASA
Fun Together

slow but sure
but if i fall
i rise again
and begin
anew
slow but sure
like a snail
like a worm
inching my way
to my
destination
i am not in hurry
side by side
with another worm
another snail
oh we're just
having fun
together

RIC S. BASTASA
Functionality....

ah, the natives here
do not just watch the beauty of the tall ferns
by the side of the river

it is not just the waterfalls
and the vines

they are bringing baskets
gathering those ferns
as salad for breakfast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Funny

tonight i told her
that i shall be back in her arms
and she is laughing
for surely i cannot be in her arms again

she lost them.
trusting her i do not bother asking
i have no more arms either
though not literally in the strictest sense of the word
but figuratively
i lost them too, somewhere with someone
whom i really love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Funny People

we have friends who during a
party ask us
where have we been all these times
what we have been doing
on those spare days

and we answer that
we have been writing poems
and trekking the country for metaphors

and they all laugh while holding their wine glasses
thinking that we are joking
and finding us all
funny

'cheers! we'll drink to that' says a friend
to celebrate those days
when we merely talk about stocks and dividend

RIC S. BASTASA
loneliness has a way of
piercing
another body another soul
the hug and tight embrace
bodies fusing
scents diffusing
drowning minds into that
oceans of passion
diving and penetrating
what the void has been missing
into a substance
into some fluids of compassion
all eyes close
for this musing
lost and wild and hot as hell
after that emission of light
and power
reigns after
the satisfaction of heaven
having seen the face of the divine
one finally exhausted
rest in the empathy of another's arms
it is love that kills loneliness
murders it
and scalds it
it is love and affection
that makes all the green grass spread again
that makes all the lonely rivers sing
it is love and no other
whatever name that you are giving
it is love
that shuts your mouth up
that fills the emptiness in your bosom
that gives you heels
that makes the smell of your armpit
a mouthful a bit.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this song
which tackles about faith
this walking
faith
in your heart where
you shall never
then
walk alone

God is fair.
Your voice is
like the sound of
a broken bottle
but as
i told you
i admire your
spirit
that courage to
sing like
a defeated warrior
after
the war

RIC S. BASTASA
after that anonymous talk
(since you never revealed your name, referring me to
Rumpelstiltskin, to my chagrin,
i realized,
how low is your opinion of myself,
how debased have i been
with your figures and
stories, that i myself, have not even
bothered for years,
simply because they are not true
and which you tried to impress
upon me as
God's truths,
and as you advised, i look at myself in the
mirror
and i look at it with all compassion
and i tell myself,
this is all i got, and this is all that
i can love
because you cannot
and never dared,
but just the same i say, thank you,
and at that time,
i tell the mirror, i wish that creature
a happy death someday,
one, where after smiling,
one can hear the chasm of the earth
divide, and there
the intrigue is swallowed
whole

i do not know you
so how can i say what you are too,
coward!

RIC S. BASTASA
G10

Shape me
O suffering
Sandpaper me
into a desired
smoothness
Shale me
O suffering
not in my design
but yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
your path is yours
as i have mine
at the junction we part
but do not worry
we shall soon meet again
as promised

RIC S. BASTASA
the lonely wife in the house
for years has been abandoned by the brown colored
husband,
and she in turn pleases herself with some
daily chores: replacing the vase with flowers
everyday
fine tuned with every occasion
of renewal and
revival
sometimes she wears a dress with flowers
of blue designs
she weaves stories for herself
and indulges in the fantasy
of her sorrows
away from grief and
numbed by the pains
this time as the rain pours heavily
and she cannot go into her garden
to pick a flower
she takes a picture of herself
half nude, her breasts
protruding to the light of the sun
whose fingers
caress her nipple and she closes her
eyes
not wanting death
but remembering the face of another
man
even an illusion of a nose
and a set of thick lips
shall make her
survive

whatever, is, the name of
lament.

RIC S. BASTASA
outside it is wet.
inside is acrid.
at the inner side of things
deserts make more deserts
sands slip beneath our feet,
outside the rain sings
lots of denials,
hands imploring for more
acceptance
arms looking for an embrace
and the universe
spins some more
the threads of its messy
indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
the children at the park
form a circle and
closed their arms around them
and i remember
what once you imagine
as the circle of life
but at that time
the dancers are nude
and blind.

RIC S. BASTASA
when i am left alone
in the room when it rains so hard outside
and you are not here with me
when you will not be coming
for two or more days
do not be slighted
but i am happier that way
shall i send you a message
that you better be away
for a week?

or perhaps a year,
so i can be myself again
for with you sometimes
in words
i am lost and i grapple
with who i am
and what will i become

perhaps, as they say it
i need more space by cutting
some bridges for a while

RIC S. BASTASA
one thing with us
is that we are not like the air that fills the space
the void,
we have not adopted the properties
of fluidity
flexible enough to adjust
to emptiness
embracing it
like a long lost friend
and liking what
new setting is there

we should have taken the shape
of God's containers
and say that despite the hollowness
there is nothing wrong
but what is there
is the excitement
of being like Him
Everywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
she accept
each sacrifice as a stair
leading to the door
of her home

and they are homing
hand in hand
together

RIC S. BASTASA
because we have wanted to see
what ought to be
we have utterly failed to see the
joys of
what is...

RIC S. BASTASA
so these are all
what we know as experience
grief, joy,
lament, excitement
all parts of the
path, we step each
stone and
step some more

the essence of which
is always not to stop
but to proceed....

RIC S. BASTASA
Gaba

Sa dihang molarga na unta
Namugos nga mokuyog gayod ang bana
Walay nahimo ang asawa

Sa dihang mogawas na unta sa baba
Sa barge ang bus nga ilang
Gisakyan gikan sa tiil sa Mukas
Hunong sa agtang sa Ozamis
Kalit lang mibuto ang bomba
Nga gitanom sa terorista
Sa lubot sa Rural Transit
Nga ilang gikatulgan

Nasunog ang tanan nga wala
Moambak sa dagat sa tumang
Kahikurat ug ang ilang mga matang
Nagsulirat wala gani tagad kapiyong
Sa dihang gidali dali silag kuha
Sa limbong sa kamatayon

Ug ikaw sa way kukalooy miingon lamang
Ug “Gaba! ”

RIC S. BASTASA
Gadfly

you have seen the errors
and you want to correct them and you tell me
i should have corrected them

but i really have no time for corrections,
i said, touch and go, and go and go,

leave the errors, let it irritate those who read them,
gadfly, bite the mules.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gador was left in an island
hot and bare

his mind is obsessed with the boa
with two white eggs

behind the cave where he dwells
lies the nest of the black bird

his feet do not grow
his brain smells like chloroform

he learns to love it there
and shall soon die there

only if he wills it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gagged

upon this page
a very important poem is
written

but the writer
fears
that it is not appropriate
for all of you

and so this page
was once
a place of that very important poem
that could have
changed the lives of some
lonely people

said poem
is deleted

it is inside my head
and it is
screaming.

it is a bad poem
claiming its own importance

if you know
conceit, pride, bias,

if you were once its servant
then you also have
that poem
in your head

it is screaming
and so i gag it.

RIC S. BASTASA
what she has in mind is all romantic. 
valentine's day 

enough of chocolates and roses 
or this motel thing, 

away from the home that we built 
mutually for 

25 years. 

why not go out for a while? 
be with all the strangers in that far away place 

and celebrate love? 
she suggests. 

a beach perhaps, or an escapade with those zip lines, 
or a hideaway somewhere 
in the desert, 

hmm, i said, let me think about it, 
after valentine's day. 

(still got a bleeding heart to heal, 
hardheaded and battered, and angry still) 

just the same, happy valentine's to you my dear, 
thanks. 

will she leave? he asks. I know she won't. 
but that will be alright. 

alone again, he thinks, life must be one 
happy solitude, hurtful, on the hinds, and blinds. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Gamay Nga Bata…

magmahay ba ako
kon ikaw wala miabot sa
akong kinabuhi?

gipaabot ko ikaw
og bisan og unsaon ko og
paningkamot nga ikaw hikalimtan lamang
kanunay kang
nagpakita sa akong panumduman

sama sa usa ka damgo
kabahin sa usa ka siwil nga naglangoy
sugat sa sulog sa usa ka suba
og dayon sa kalit nawala

dili katoohan
apan ikaw akong himoon nga tinood
ugma damlag
sa pagsubang sa bulan
sa pagtaob sa dagat
kuhaon ko ikaw sa duyahan
sa imong mamahimong inahan

RIC S. BASTASA
Gansa

pagkasaba ba sa mga gansa

miabot nga diay ang atong inday

RIC S. BASTASA
Gap

ENVY not
those who are busy,
and acclaimed
by the hands of the masses,

they have their own
problems with
fame

they too have the problems
of their money

a gap
of self from self
a hollow space
in between

behind the masks
are the limping insecurities
success is always short
and failure is not
far behind

it is a matter of time
soon
a mouth that opens
with fangs and
deadly venom

a cobra always waiting for the
right bite
at the right time
even if you were
the wrong person

so please envy not
the proud and the
laughing
gas.
Garden Fantasy

gossamer wings of dragonflies
platinum petals of tanzanite tulips
sapphire daisies, ruby roses,
million flowers of mandarin garnets
red silk wings of butterflies
diamond-studded lilies of the valley
peridot grasses alexandrite dews
garnet violets aquamarine carnations
quarts crocus chrysoberyl chrysanthemums
opal orchids coral daffodils

metallic fantasies
of an imaginary garden
eventually your heart is missing

RIC S. BASTASA
Garden*

When we talked about the world
we were talking about order:
a trail of grass, a fist of blooms.
My mother points to a slow
and deliberate fall of the full fruit.

“When we are dying,” she says
“When we are long gone and dead,”

And it is so easy to pretend we had a world
of choice. A green, easy tending.
The orchids tenaciously
cling to their dark barks.

We talked straight into evening,
straight into each tangled tendril
angled against dark, into dark.
If we could only hold the edgeless
in place. Night and its reckless weeds.
The light was not ours to give.

* written by IL

RIC S. BASTASA
Gary Granada’s Definition Of A House

A shanty of cartons as walls
Some tin for roof
Several cuttings of tin
And some worn out rubber tires
To keep the tin roofs
In place

Ten persons reside there
Too crowded
Smell of dead fish
Smell of decayed fish
And dried urine
Rodent and human urine
Hotter than the
Temperatures of
An Arizona desert

Patches of wasted wood
Planks of leftovers
Undefined window frames
There is no comfort
Room or living
Room or bed or
Sala
Every floor
Every patch
Is a bed, a room,
A kitchen
All in one
For ten people or more

Is this what you call a house?
Gary Granada is singing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gassed....

if you notice
all that we did was
a repetition

open a door
then close a door

it has always been
a status of doors then
knobs

entrances and
exits

born and
died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gay Marriage For William (Just For Fun)

this world opens itself to gay marriage
the gay priest presides this solemn marriage
of william to another william
and wilma to another wilma

do you william take william as your spouse
for better or for worse, in sickness and in health
till death do you part?

and william says, yes i do

and so by virtue of the authority vested in my by law
i hereby pronounce you william and william
as spouses

in the presence of your witnesses
wilma and wilma
the groom may now kiss his groom

it is not funny, it can be real as it has become real
nature keeps up with overpopulation
and goes for more copulation
between two same sexes in love with each other's sameness

life is an experiment and so love is an experiment too
love and its quivers
bodies and more bodies warming themselves
hearts fusing as one, how lovely to see?

seriously speaking, in the dark the souls keep on dating
the bodies become so irrelevant, the sexes not important
there is this kiss, this touch, these solvents of our loneliness
these glue and paste that must fill the gap
of our respective emptiness

the same goal the same purpose: we always want to be filled in full

RIC S. BASTASA
Gazing At The Japanese Painting Of Katsushika Hokusai...

the scorpion claws of the sea
have again claimed the lives
of more than ten thousand Japanese...

RIC S. BASTASA
Gender Sensitivity

miington ang t-bird,
piling niya, kon tagaan
siyang usa ka basong tubig
dih sa party,
crush na siya,

tsk tsk, dili baya.
dili tanang baye crush sa
 tibo
nagmalasakit lang
kawawa naman,

lisod gyod ang stereo
typing. ingon ka, dili siya
bayot kay
kadton nagdulog mo
wala baya niya
hikapa imong itlog

tsk tsk sayop ka
dili lang gyod ka gwapo.
o bisan gwapo ibutang ta,
dili ra gyod ka
bug-at diha sa iyang
kasingkasing nga
nagkiaykiay sa biga nga
dili para imo

kadton halhag ug ngipon
dagkong bugas-bugas
walay pul-ong ang bungot
kalkag ug buhok
bahog baba
maoy iyang dios

kadton security guard
nga dunay totoy palihog ayaw igna
ug hoy doy aw
day.
Genica's Dream

her dream car: a pick-up
black, and the latest edition of dmax

she is into the world of poetry
and she has more time in her
literature, and every day
she dreams of

words, punctuation marks of her life,
the period is rolling in her eyes,
and the future seems to be bleak
in the haze of her fogs,

there are mountains along the way
those that do not move by her command,
those that have old trees
and rocks and
pavements without directions

she will be lost, and then i will
whistle,

and then, suddenly the dreams are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Genie

if you are here
my dear Genie
i will make
three wishes
but first
i have to rub
this magic
lamp first

rub it hard
until you come out
hot and happy

my first wish
make me wise
my second wish
let it last
my third
make me disappear
from here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gentle

let us walk by the sea
one early morning on bare feet
let us hold our hands and talk a while
about ourselves

let us stop for a while and sit
on the white sand under a talisay tree
let us feel the breeze meeting our faces
let us wait for the sun to finally shine

let us marvel to this changing world
the passing wind
the sun slowly rising
the sea gradually growing before us

let us stop talking for a while
let our eyes see forward
let us hold our hands tighter
let us feel our strong union with the world today

let there be no questions for a while
let there be only amazement
let there be so much wonder
let us try to have a glimpse of forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Genuflection Of Lawyer

I AM a lawyer
I have not done my duty
I have not served my country
I am telling all the lies
I am making more money
I have procured false witnesses
I have done my neighbor wrong

I am a liar
I am a liar
I am a liar

Whatever you do to me
Kill me shoot me bury me cremate me
Drown me, choke me, suffocate me,
Poison me, stab me, pulverize me,
Chop me, mortar me, skin me,
Debone me, beat me

I am still a lawyer
Always true to my profession

I will lie
I will always lie
I will always be telling lies

Without any purpose of evasion
So help me God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Genuflections Of An Erring Husband To His Cyber Lover

shall i do it again?
shall we do it again?
i have done it once,
twice, thrice and

nice, shall we do it again
just for once?

shall i let you do again
what i did to you
from the beginning?

not singing with a microphone
kneeling without the veil
reading poetry in the dark
moaning in the middle of
joys not everlasting.

shall we be matches
burning our souls
in lusting flames?

shall we? shall we?
now, now, now
while she is there
entangled in her own
dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Genuis

what resents fame and charges you more interest on pain
and bitter with time

the pills cure only for a while
almost at all times it places you on a reversed gear
and you love
when everything is bumped with your rear

it magnetizes everything ore-like
and pulls you finally on the verge of despair
and you appease the tremor in your mouth
with a bubble gum

it triggers you to a shapeless space
in eternal illusion

RIC S. BASTASA
Geography And You

you do not plant
trees in the big forest
neither shall you sell
ice drops in the
north pole

in tropical paradise
we are the lazy people who
spend most of our time
sun bathing in the beach
watching sea gulls
breathing the salt of the air
sipping cold mango juice
painting yachts
burying our bodies under the
comfort of the the white sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Geometry Of Friendship (For Gatiting)

if angle x with
45 degrees
has a 3 m-side
line on the opposite
of a 8 m-left
to angle y inclined
tangent to angle z
at 40 degrees,

now, prove if we
are really friends
fine the length
of the third line.

tell me your answer
in one hour then pass
this to your other
5 friends within
10 seconds.(whew!)

RIC S. BASTASA
Geometry Of Love

it is obtuse, and you must
take the form of the isosceles
not off tangent
do not be strict on
perpendiculars
take the angle where
love fits most
where the groan is least
the pain
negligible
love maximized on trapezoidal
compromises

RIC S. BASTASA
Gestalt....

is it the shape?
the shape of your face, your heart,
is it just the shape, of your body, the color of your hair,
the kinkiness of your eyes,
is it just the shape of the bowl that matters to you?

what about the contents of the
bowl, or if it is empty, what about the air that fills it somehow?
do you see it? no you don't, so

it is not just the shape, neither just the parts,
or the whole, there is something more in shapes and colors
and

even contents,

there is the will that bends everything
to mercy
there is the decision that convinces us all
to be one, this sympathy,

that empathy, that belief that i cannot live
without you,
that someone dies when someone leaves,
that life is better with us
in all these,

that there is life after our deaths,
there is this
unseen coming, this one that we want to
grasp yet
because we think we failed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Get A Handkerchief

Be decent

Today get a handkerchief
And wipe
All those crocodile tears

They are so intriguing
All the people are talking

You looked so untrue

While you shed tears
the tongue
Inside your
Mouth is Giggling.

And please wear your
Correct name.

RIC S. BASTASA
Get Connected Marvin

it is not bad to be alone
taking a grip of yourself like your hands embracing your body
the closeness of the self to yourself

it is not bad either to get connected
to your loved ones
they make you grow as they affirm your goodness
they make you fulfill your essence

to be alone and step in your room
and yet to be with the world
and become part of the universe

this is what we are doing here
in cyberspace
alone and yet alone to many
there is no harm marvin
there is so much good

this solitude in the modern sense
you touch the world without even one of it touching you
this choice of absence and yet this universality of our
inevitable presence

press the keyword: enter

RIC S. BASTASA
Get Out Self-Pity

Surely there is no one
Who speaks with
Authority
Or pity
About the pain
Of my lost love

Now is the time
To kick out
This feeling of
Pain &
Emptiness

Go on
Get out
Self-pity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Get Together World...

all humans
is there a shortage of
water
in the seas? lands in the
mountain ranges?

get together on
your feet
gather all your
reasons of the
mind

why make a war
over a dot of an
island?

RIC S. BASTASA
Get Up, Let Us Go.

at the final hour
we need recall no more
what greatness was there
once, what honor was there
that was bestowed upon,
when the final hour
knocks, we must,
but obey

whatever you bury
you bury no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Get Used To All These Somehow

got used to all these somehow
these that i cannot understand
always the questions in my mind
like open mouths
longing for a kiss
empty and cold,
there are answers to choose
got nothing
i move in an open field
gasping for air
like a fish on the floor
shattered glasses and water
seeping on the
wooden floor

too dry for me but I'll get used to
all these
tomorrow the usual sun shines
if you ask me
i have no answers i will pretend
that this is the usual day
nothing extraordinary

like the passing of the wind
i shall not be carried away
but i have to rearrange my hair
gets crumpled
and i do not really like it

being seen by you and you ask
if it's me

i am. it was me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Away From A Responsibility

a child open his arms in Asilo
asking if i can be his father,
without answering him in words
my arms hug him in return

i lift him from the ground and
feel his heart beating unto mine
there is a connection between
two hearts in that thick line of emptiness

between two kinds of loneliness
a child understands it well i think

i didn't
in my age where my hair refuses to
be white
or gray
i am given more options like an ocean
where i am but a very small ship

the child has none
he can only be a bird without wings
drowning at sea

he sleeps and i give him back to the
penguin

oh, i have more places in my heart
less any child

i am a man with so many homes
wanting to be a vagabond again

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Away From All These....

so many rules, and so many changes
and we who are foolish enough are tracking
each nuance,
each abrupt change, each newly built sandcastle
which from time to time
the waves destroy
and we like Sisyphus enduring
keeps on reconstructing every rock rolled and then in place

this is our business
doing and undoing, remembering and forgetting
round and round
that eternal circle of
joy and happiness, of searching and finding

there is a way somehow
to get away

but i shall be doing it with you
i am half of you
i shall be an eye to your body
you are my arm to my hands
you are my mouth to my tongue

after we get away from all these structures
when we are finally free
we shall see, if by then, we be on each own
finding our own paths
to our defined bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Close To Me

it would have been simple and
cheap, not on the train or plane or
ship, for it could have been through
a simple chat,
which you needlessly
refused.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Even With A Traitor

when you give up everything
to someone whom you love like undressing yourself
so she may see your soul and touch it
and even own it
when you feel that in that moment she has cold hands
and eyes distracted by something else like she is thinking of
another day to come
another face to see

...............you feel betrayed,
she is not sure about you and her in that instant
you have the right to stab her with your sharp looks
tear him apart with your knife sharp teeth
like you are the lion king of the forest
eat her piece by piece like you are very hungry
for a love that is completely true
swallow her bit by bit
and make her now a part of you
you will not regret the eating
she took your love away, now you want it back undiminished.
Getting Even...

if you desire
to imitate me
think well about
it for we may
end up liking each
other on both ends
of this peculiar
matter for i have
imitated you and
here you are
imitating me and
the horror of us
finding each other
all the same
may haunt us
in hell forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Lost With Your Own Volitionlife

unable to write on your own
you shop

you read wanting to find for
answers

you do this most of the times
neglecting outside

you enter a cave and find some
shadows

you love it
now you have something to write

if you are lost
it does not matter

before you arrive here
you were nowhere to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Naked

what makes it interesting?
it is the seldom way of showing
what is there
it does not happen everyday
and that is it, but
i imagine if we were born less
the shame and the malice
there is actually nothing there
but humanity and the coldness
of society
there is no lust in there
but just our own shape and skin
and bones wrapped so tenderly
with care

love and understanding is there
only when
we shed off the crude manners
of our built-in civilization who for long
in the pretense of religion
and governance
have taken us away from our very own nature

the death of candidness
the scourge of expensive dresses

once i go naked inside my room
and look closely at my body in the human-sized mirror
this is reality i proclaim to my senses
there is nothing lewd in my belly
there is love in my navel
there is this kingdom of love
hidden inside my guts

tomorrow i will be honest
i will wear no masks
no clothes

i will shed off the name that they gave me.
Getting Old Gracefully

at 4 a.m.
she wakes up

she is getting older
and cannot sleep that well

she is looking for something
she goes to the kitchen
she comes back to the bedroom
trying to remember
what is it that she is looking for?
she goes to the toilet
and goes back bed again

i am afraid
she will ask me who i am
and why are we together in this bed

i sleep again

it is 6: 43 a.m.
when i wake up to find that the room is empty
the kitchen door open
the light outside is still on
and the gate towards the road is left open like a mouth still waiting for the next slice of cake

she has changed a lot
she is taking a walk without me

in this house when we eat our breakfast
of oatmeal and banana
no meat, no sugar,

then we take our medicines
two glasses of water

the whole day will be story telling
reminiscing those younger days
looking at those black and white pictures
calling friends

we wonder sometimes if the world soon
like those red riding hood and ali baba stories

shall have a happy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Old Graciously....

there was this old man bent to his
weaving mats and baskets,

and his wife too, as old as he is,
eighty or so,
gazes upon the patterns of colors
and shapes

both know, what grace and love have
made from out of them,

mellowed backbones, like bending flowers
to the setting sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Out

i did not say it was a mad house.
perhaps it was me, when i left it.
perhaps i have not seen the light.
or perhaps it was too dark inside.
or perhaps the darkness is just inside myself.

but then i left it. It is now a fact.

i smile to the world now.
i have many choices about what colors
of shirt, or pants or socks to wear.
i can read any book and i can be anywhere
i want.
i did not change my face or modify my body.
there was no pressure to adopt my vision
to anyone else
or to that house that is set in the middle of the
big city and walled as high as the clouds.
all i felt was the hanging
and the inhibition as though i am caged
but you have always said
this is part of the molding and it
will be painful for a time.

i want a ring with a name and date on it.
i want a house without walls.
a face with eyes open and hands outstretch
to the sky.
i want to listen to the sound of the river
as it longs for the mouth of the sea.
i went to the mountain with trees and
listened to the songs of the birds
and the aria of the wind.
i went on top and saw the city
and it is too small for my hands.

now, i have seen the light.
now i feel freedom.
now i am myself. there is no fear
and all i have is love and
compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Out From Time

mechanically all that the fingers do
is take off the watch
from the wrist
put it on the computer table
turn off
the switch and
rest

what choice have these fingers
when the spinal column begins to sound
the aching bells?

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Out Of A Fixation

the exit is just within your view.
it is daily and you do it
and you become so engrossed
so you forget yourself
it is overflowing and then
you get so bored
and you do not feel like doing the same things all over again.

it is not like fetching water from the well.
something that you easily understand as seeding and planting
and harvesting.
it is something personal and you need not ask some more.

i get over it.
and now i am free
do not ask some more i said
i have risen above it
and that is the most important thing that happened to me
today.

i get over you. No sadness.
no dramatic goodbyes. Just plain and simple
freedom. Release from fear
and pain.

in love, i am reborn.
get over with me.
and take another chance
with someone else.

another menu
in the resto. another drink.
and then be drunk
and be in the dancing mood.

just that. just that.
keep going.
for now, i do not really care.
this is my life and finally i got it
within my grasp.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Over A Failure (For Liza)

be attuned, there is no such thing as a permanent failure,
there are only preludes success even is temporary
how much for failures?

do not diminish yourself failures are merely suspended successes, be patient for it is just but a matter of time

failures are but temporary guests the uninvited ones whom you can even dismiss at any time but don't be too harsh upon failures and upon yourself

like everyone else that you meet give them time to speak and be with you, they also have something to say, though not nice, but there is also so much to learn from them.

that ugly guy over there, welcome him inside your house, serve him tea and company, he has something more important to say, than that handsome man over there, who like a magician, gives you only illusions.

sometimes what is more real let me say this once, is failure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Rid Of Biases

the unexpected sometimes happen

fragile glasses did not break under extreme pressure

those that we think are solid enough finally liquefied

the hottest air did not make the balloon fly away

sometimes we are wrong

whom we hate most finally are those who really love us best

those with whom we trust our love, life, even the future that is the only one left

since then have betrayed us

some paths that we tread upon where we draw some dreams of heaven

the least we expected brought us perdition

so what is the point?
see what is there
do not adulterate it with what
you think of the
past

empty yourself
and fill in
what is raw and true

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting The Message Across

The boy does not go to school today
The teacher calls and so without any further ado
They ground him
And he knows the agreement the rule of the house
Of his father

He kneels before the altar on mongo beans
They beat him with a 2x2 wood
He has to shed blood and tears before the Lord
He shall be barraged with a roomful of scolding
He shall be locked the whole day in silence
No calls, no celfon, no friends to visit him

Simply because he did not go to school today
He is never asked he is not allowed to answer

I am his uncle and I am disturbed by this kind of injustice
“You should have asked him to explain his side” I intervened,
“This is a family affair, and we just want to discipline the boy,
And get him the message across” the couple answered.

I think the message is clear. To the boy, life is unjust.
And the earlier he knows it, the better for him to adjust and survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know The Faces Of Failures

at first they come like harsh
beasts of the cavemen variety
crude to your feelings
and you want to dismiss them
and even kill them in one explosion

but they don't leave
and they do not die at your option
and your own terms and
conditions

for they are like acrobats and
bats and cyclops
they know very well how to evade
your manner of attacking them

for you are too crude enough
in your manners of dealing with each of them

you get attuned to their faces and bodies and shapes
and strategies and skills
after a long, long time
they too learn from you and the next time that they
knock on your door
they look like perfect gentlemen
with coat and tie
and shining branded shoes
equipped with the latest technologies of
communication

but you do not get outdone
you evolve too

this time you are a well positioned high-rise executive
witty, subtle, and from so many failures that you meet
you become the new consultant of their disappointments
possessing a very strong self-esteem,
tough, and smart and when they come for an appointment
with you
you tell them: 'welcome, please be seated gentlemen
this is your new office now! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know The Real Person

WE cannot know
clearly who that man is
when he is happier
with what he sees outside
the window
rather than with the
woman in bed that
he had just made love
with.

dili nato maila
pag-ayo ang tawo
kon labaw ba
siyang nalipay
sa iyang nasiplat
sa gawas sa bintana
kaysa dagway
sa iyang uyab
nga bag-o lang
iyang gikayat

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know You

getting to know you
is like a love call of
a very colorful parakeet
showing the best
of its feathers
and trying means
to get near you
and just that
and then
you fly away

nothing more
except getting to know
your color your scent
and the sound of
your love call

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know You At That Moment

i descend upon
your youth and you
with respect receive
my hunger

i taste you but
shall not consume
the delicacy of
your care

converging
the meteors and stars
collide

explosion occurs
to create another universe
between us
there is no space
for regret

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know You In 2013

now the nit has turned into a louse
the mouse into a hippopotamus

now you think you can move mountains
you were once but a mole begging for sand

now you have become a native turning into a monster
taking pride that we feed you fire and burn us all in return...

success has not made you good
instead it shows how worse can you become.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting To Know You More

it may start with a name
how to pronounce it
where the accent lies
then i begin to look behind
figuring out which shadows
make a good story or at all
a bad tale
that may stop my own little world
from spinning
then we go dining
i take the bill
we sip wine and admire the
delicacies of
our newly found intimacies
then without much expense on
words
we end up in bed
trying to figure out who and what
we really are
what sadness lies
within the almonds of our eyes
mapping out
where happiness is
the limits of our own
idiosyncrasies
then we look at our eyes again
something is wrong
but definitely within our hearts
something right
shouts for joy

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Used To The Cycle Of Ups And Downs...

when you are up
the only possibility is you have to go down
there is no choice really
except to learn this up and down thing
enjoy the fall
enjoy the rise just the same
until such time that you get so familiarized with the
routine
or cycle as it must properly be termed
that what you feel is only the valley
the plateau
that is
when the mountains and hills are no more
when everything is plain
and no longer fancy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Getting Used To Uncertainties

the haze
and the fog sitting on the hills
waiting for me

the mist and the
the dew that look like
pearls

oh! so temporary
are the doubts
and the ambiguities

time knows
what to do
the passing seasons
know how to heal
the sands of time
bury what hurts
the grasses
cover what is sad

time to sit and lay my head
beside a rock
time to hear the sound
of the earth
through the travails of the
worm

time to read life
through the chirp of a
fledgling

i am tired
and i am sleeping
sweetly
soundly

so detached from
all of you.
Geyser...

when water gushes forth from a rock
it simply does what it is supposed to do
shush,
there is no mouth to speak
nothing hilarious about advertisements
or strategies
or self-aggrandizement
it gushes forth
day and night
unstopable, restless to its mission
to quench your
thirst

RIC S. BASTASA
Gia Il Sole!

It is morning now.

after darkness
like a confusion
the morning comes
with a brighter sun
this time

twilight leaves
like doubt
we think the pain
subsides

It is morning now.

we wash the dirt
on our faces
we dry wet cheeks
with
good morning
towels

It is morning now.

You must stop
believing all the lies
You must wake up
from this stupor
You must meet destiny
Not in your dreams
Touch your hands
with our own hands
Feel the roughness
of realities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gidalidali, Gadalidali Aron Way Sakit

Gidalidali niya
Ang pagpananghid
Kanimo nga iya
Nang kuhaon ang
Iyang kasingkasing
Kay duna na
Siya lain

Gidalidali sad nimog
Langkat kay morag
Lahi na ang
Timpla sa iyang
Kampat

Mas lami man gud
Ang pagdalidali
Aron dili na
Mailhan kon kinsay
Nangilad
Ug kinsay
Nailad

At least
Dili ra kayo sakit
Kay pinakalit
Ang pag
Split

Morag tuplok
Sa dagom
Sa imong tudlo
Niadtong
Gikuhaan kag
Dugo

Di ba mora
Rag paak
Sa lamigas?
At last
Patas na ta
Gadali-dali ug lupad
Tugpa sa tagsa
Tagsa ta ka
Bag-ong salag

RIC S. BASTASA
Gift

wait for three more
hours
your offer
non-stop blow
job
for the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Gifts Of Silences...

here we are again pinning needles
in our epidermal existences
trying to pierce every flesh
carefully noting every bursting of pus
and blood
mapping out the cartilages and bones
of our sorrows

two years more and perhaps another
twenty years of
existence
in order to understand the meaning of life

a life that lies there naked
so tempting and scented by the thousand jasmines
and saffrons
on spiced blankets
rosemary and lemon grass
and basil in every seams
of the pillows

the hands of time keep gripping
what ought to be mine (or even hours)
it does not know how to give
what we want to sip and savor
and caress

the eyes of the storms stare at us with
anger ready to strike us with its fits
and fists

this pilgrimage tiptoes on slow feet
because we are all tired figuring out what is real
oasis from the
mirage of the heat of the desert beyond us

we like to see the white seagulls feasting on a school
of fish
at the coastal collateral of our side trips
a little drink from the hands of the vestal virgins
some kisses from the dewy lips of dawn
a warm morning's hug, and nights non stop
fleshy circus

there are many things more to do
more events to attend too and many other letters
to compose

by then night has come with the gifts of silence
and then i say, 'i do, i will keep on doing what is there to make
the best of yet to come'

keep listening Beethoven, keep dancing Lady Dianne
we are here watching.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giggle

as the queen-moon glides
in the arms of the dark night
on top of the tiptoeing-trees
behind the cautious-clouds
you could have seen
how the stalking-stars giggle

RIC S. BASTASA
Gikan Sa Gabii

pag-abot sa kabuntagon

midan-ag sa akong aping
ang bag-ong kainit

gitagbo ko ang adlaw

nasabtan ko ang kagitngit
sa imong kamingaw

RIC S. BASTASA
the couple know what
to show, and what not to
speak about,
that night, they did not
tell us,
they went on a spree,
took the walk
with the neon lights of
Saigon,
posed at the facade of
the Hotel Intercontinental
and the camera
clicked

funny, really funny,
in truth, they cannot afford it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gimmickries

sometimes i am trying to figure
out if you are only trying to impress
me with your questions
perhaps you want to project wit
and on the other hand i try to answer
each question
with definitive answers like lands
with exact boundaries
delineated from the river and the sky
here we are again
wanting to make a point
but missing everything
here we are again lost in the labyrinths
of our pretenses
my face is masked with bitter realities
and there you are
chained with the shackles of your
freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gipistahan

Gipistahan nila ang
imong balak
(ang uban mihagikhik
og katawa
nalipay basin)

dunay uban nga
gihingut-an kini nga
morag babayeng
walay ligo

gipangita kon asa
ug unsa kadaghana
ug unsang klaseha
ang imong
mga kuto

RIC S. BASTASA
Give And Take

In your helpless state
He will take
You; you will dine
On his table,
He will buy you a
Dress and what
You need, you
Will live in
His own house
He will take
Care of you

But there is no
Such thing as
A free meal
Nowadays, or a
Man with a
Hundred percent
Kind heart,
There will always
Be that element
Of give and take

And so when the
Night comes
He will, know this,
Undress you
And start eating
A little of you,
And you will give
In some parts,
That element
Of give and take,

This is a dog
Eat dog world,
My dear, so while

You are in such
A helpless state
Try the lizard’s
Way, start growing
Again those lost
Parts, and if you
Will, start growing
All those wings and
Then fly away...

Or if you will,

Start growing some
Scales and big
Crocodile teeth
And a long solid tail,

And you will know
In lizard’s name
What to do with him.

RIC S. BASTASA
Give Away Genius In Exchange For Compassion

soon he will give
away genius
in exchange for
compassion

soon he will trade
himself for
the wisdom of the
nonsensical

soon the irony
triumphs
paradoxes grow
like seeds upon
rocks

from the sands
shall grow
a castle that
all you people
will definitely
love

RIC S. BASTASA
Give Back To The People Their Poems

every poem written
was taken from them

picked from the slums
and the public market
and the churches and
lonely houses and
dirty bus stations

like an empty tin can
of milk or a rotten tomato
or an abandoned shoe
a leaflet, a flat tire,
uprooted trees, and
scattered garbage

you heard what that
woman vendor said
about the price of her
fish and the price of
rice and the price of
gasoline that seem
to be irreconcilable

you write them everyday
the recent stabbing
at the gasoline station
and the kidnapping
for ransom in that
old city where the
mayor got most the
the ransom money

you write them everyday
giving them a voice
in your world of poetry
these truths that you
have taken away from
them: it is time to return
them what is due them
do not ever be silent
move on, create the
lovely noise, spread the
word that the poems
on that ivory tower
are not there anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Give Me Another Moment

i hurt you,
that is a fact,
i make you bleed
i have seen the drops of blood
on the floor on the bed on the corners of your house,

i leave now as you say
but give me another moment for me to say the words
i may have been unkind and selfish and not deserving of your purity

of your love that surpassed my mortality, look at me for the last time,
please give me a few seconds for me to say the words:

I have always loved you.

(and if given another moment of my life :)

i will still love you. Always I will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Give Me Space, Give Me Time

It is the hands of time that
its hands caress
My weary thoughts. So much
Have been lost in my fingers
Slipping away. I walk down
The road now, to freedom.
Hand in hand with the tree
And twigs. Feeling the
Caresses of the leaves
On the road to my freedom.

Give me space. Let my wholeness
Occupy. I need to expand
My choking life. Give me time.
Give me the healing hands
Of time. Let me sleep on its
Palms. I am throwing my
Hands in the air. I want to fly
Now. Sensational. I must.

RIC S. BASTASA
Give Me View And Let Me See For Once The Happiness Of You

i am writing you a letter
i have to tell you that you have to come
and visit me
even for a while
i am writing you from the edge of a cliff
i am tempted by the abyss of its height and emptiness

when you come
make it a Friday
bring me a frame of
another reference

give me view
and let me see for once
the happiness of you

RIC S. BASTASA
Given The Chance....

indeed, i know,
and much indeed, you also know
that this is a cruel world,

someone is screaming for fire
and as you know, as you once wrote,
there is no fireman

it is a cruel environment, indeed,
as the fire grows, there is no visible water.

indeed, we know all these things,
and it is hard to accept, we reflect
what they too are: are we not cruel
ourselves, given the chance for
a revenge?

RIC S. BASTASA
Given The Last Hour To Live

if
given the last hour to live
and on the last
minute
you ask me if i still have
things to change

i will always say
no
i have enough of this

let me try what i have not yet tasted
let me go to the other side

they say
it is better there
no dark nights
no pricks

just us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving

it is not at all times
that i must gain
there is time to give
without counting
the cost
it is part of the
emptying so
God may fill
my coffers again

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving All Of Me

i maintain my innocence
and so here i am silenced by time
for what is the use of speaking
when the heart is sleeping
in complete peace,

what is the use of bragging about
this peace when
you never for once live inside the
embrace of its trees so full of
leaves so blessed with
the coolness of its solitude...

in this silence i feel the fullness
of being.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving And Giving...

the hours
as spoons

you are the
best soup

the spoons
take you like

mouths of
hungry workers

you are consumed
and what you see

is an empty bowl
and this gives

you a sense of
fulfillment since

you have served
so well and what

is left of you
is the silence

and the emptiness
which is what is

life all about:
giving and giving

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving And Keeping

i am not greedy
i am offering you all these
you know what are all these
from the beginning of the grass and worms

i am leaving you all these my treasures they cannot hurt you
neither did they hurt me for i am not blind
for i am never a slave for all these
they are not mine
neither shall they be yours even if you keep them
conceal them and sell them when the right time comes

our fruits are never ripe our trees forever tall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Away, The Last Stage Of Perfection

whatever is saved here
now must be spent
or simply be given away
because
happiness on its first stage
to be itself
must be shared
at the last hour it becomes
completed
when finally all of it
is given away
all of it, all of it,
its perfection is
its own annihilation and
then you go to a place
where everyone arrives
affirming the truth
of said paradox
all of it, all of it,
yes, my dear self,
all of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Back

this is what i have taken from you
many years ago
and you do not remember

i am now returning it back to you
with an open heart
my hands stretching out
to reach you again

you still wonder what was it
what is this all about
what i am giving back to you

i am giving you back this
empty heart these empty hands
this empty mind this openness
my gaping mouth
my hollow body

you still do not remember
many years ago
you have taken them all from me
and i was wearing that smile
of the willing victim

it is about time that you remember
the sadness that clings like a wilting vine on our fences

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Eroticism A Chance....

let go
youth at 16
and 17
let go
let them be
let them savor
and be tired
let them have
what we
missed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Hope A Chance...

we are assured about the sound
of drum beats
from all the continents of the world
so assuring
that hope has given birth to more children
of hopes
the women dance and the men beat the drums
the children watch for a while
and liking the sounds of these drums beating
slowly then wildly and then
contagiously exciting
the children begin to clap their hands
and step their toes
sway their bodies
and sing the songs of hope
again

the world spins
the universe sways and gives birth to another star

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Love Its Due Freedom

seeing both of you
gives me that feeling
that i am not alone

that i have cut off
possibilities in me

and then i leave you both
in your sweetest moment together
as you close the door
against me

i go back to the place where
i belong
where i have grown trimmed
like a bonsai

i bow down to earth
humbly
acknowledging gratitude

i have nothing to curse
it is simply my own arms embracing my own body

my hands clasped as one
eyes closed in happy acceptance

i do not envy love
i always give it freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Reason A Break...

my own intelligence
does not serve me
resigned upon a certain
bleakness
i am into a break
on a broken piece of
glass
where i see a face in
shatters
the heart copes up
with some hues
like the northern lights
like star dusts

that realm that we touch
beyond our comprehension
that faith that we keep
beyond the fences of good reason

one wonders
why we have lived in comfort so far
why we have become
unlike the restless rest?

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Smiles

the smile
is palliative
made possible
by plastic
surgery

it is of
course different
from yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving The Carabao  Feelings Of Wings

The carabaos are grazing again
It is summer and
The white herons are teeming
On the green fields

Some take the usual sight
Of friendship
The white heron on top
Of the carabao’s back

They are so close I wonder
If there is this familiarity
Between them
Their friendship has lasted
For centuries

They say the white herons
Feed on carabao's lice
And to repay the kindness
The carabao gives the bird
Its free ground ride

I disagree totally
There is no pecking that I see
And there is no distance
Whatsoever that the carabao gives

This is friendship, this is a picture
Of friendship, the heron is giving
The carabao the feel of its white wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Them All Away

i am going to my room
and look at things that i do not need

that one
this one

i do not need this and that and that and that
and the choice
has become a long list

of attachments and storages
they all have become one big garbage
and my world has become
nothing but a garage
and the mezzanine floor
and the basement

there is no more that nice feeling of the living room
and the music
room and the sounds of little birds chirping
at the veranda
and the open windows

today i have decided to give them all away

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Up Giving Up

it is a surprising remark
at the end of what to give up
for instance
take the following 'Give up complaining——focus on gratitude.

Give up pessimism——become an optimist.

Give up harsh judgments——think kindly thoughts.

Give up worry——trust Divine Providence.

Give up discouragement——be full of hope.

Give up bitterness——turn to forgiveness.

Give up hatred——return good for evil.

Give up negativism——be positive.

Give up anger——be more patient.

Give up pettiness——become mature.

Give up gloom——enjoy the beauty that is all around you.

Give up jealousy——pray for trust.

Give up gossiping——control your tongue.

Give up sin——turn to virtue.'
etcetera,

the twist is the last: give up giving up!

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving Way To New Beginnings

when i arrive home
today
it rains heavily

there is no one home

i have my own key still
i open the door and close it

i hear quite clearly my
footsteps reverberating
in all the corners of the
wooden room

there is a sad music
attached to each footfall

i open the glass door
to hear once again the sonorous
sounds of the rain falling
on the tin roof
gushing and
flowing freely
upon the gutters
down in
the drain

it is like remembering
and then wanting to forget
but then forgetting
may sometimes mean
the pain of having
to throw off yourself
bits and pieces of you
like raindrops
from the roof
down to the gutters
till it is taken
by all that is drained
in the
canals
of your personal
history

well it can mean too much
like a heavy weight
upon your
breast compressing
your heart

then you justify

this is life,
no one lasts forever
relationships make
their own
natural endings

to give way to
new beginnings

RIC S. BASTASA
Giving You The Scenario

i am the culprit who gives you the scenario of his
driving alone on one stormy night
the white bridge taken away by the strong river
where there is no more connection, and you write me hoping that this
cannot be true, because you always believe what i write and because i always
assure you that everything is true, oh my, oh my,

the storm is true, and the river and the bridge too, and its color and its rage
but oh my, oh my,
the one who is driving
the one who was lost and stopped by the side of the road and wished
that the tree above him may fall on his car and damage it and even
kill him inside the confines of his anxieties
need not be me,
he could be someone else, a neigbor, a friend, an acquaintance of the mind, a
character of his short story,
or the mad man in his poem
or it could even be you
in some figures of speech
yes, everything are possibilities,
and oh my, oh my,
yes, i finally agree,
on that stormy night with all the details in tact
trees bending, leaves blown away, rain as thick as walls,
rivers raging like a revolution
darkness as black as ink
howling sounds like dogs seeing the bad spirits
oh my, oh my with all the stark detail they are so real
so real that i know how it feels like i am touching the flame itself
from the dirty kitchen,

well, you are right
he could be me, how can i now disown who i am and what i have seen?

RIC S. BASTASA
Gladness....

when you sit
alone on a chair beside your window
facing a long road of this village
thoughts come
and form a chain
link upon link
and seemingly
it takes you to more roads and windows
and doors and
valleys
you hear the echoes of its sound
you see
the beauty of a chain of daisies
on a stretching acres of grass
despite the long journey
surprisingly
you feel the magnificence of wander
you name the world
you tell it
you are lost deeply lost
nevertheless
it is the excitement of all these
that makes you
face
the anonymity
of gladness

RIC S. BASTASA
Glimpse

the flower may curse
the caterpillar at first glance
consuming its leaves
greedily
rushing for the next stage
of its life

then the silence of the cocoon
where the flower
doubts

and then the excitement
of the birth
of the yellow butterfly

the hope of the flower
and when
the flying begins
the flower unfolds
blooms

and the consortium begins
the nectar flows

and the flower
turns into another fruit
back
to its seed form
as the butterfly
nears its span
like a glimpse

RIC S. BASTASA
Glimpses

don't you feel sometimes
a glimpse of the Atlantis
when you dive at the sea?

don't you feel sometimes
a hint of an image to our eternity?

don't you feel the depth of our being
down down to the blackness of
the ocean?

RIC S. BASTASA
Global Climate Change

a mosquito finds this place
colder, there is a shift somewhere
he flies into the warmer
places where blood
is abundant
somewhere in the north
he takes with him
dengue and malaria

cold, there is a shift somewhere
he flies into the warmer
places where blood
is abundant
somewhere in the north
he takes with him
dengue and malaria

that is a fact, on record
with the Department of Health

cold, there is a shift somewhere
he flies into the warmer
places where blood
is abundant
somewhere in the north
he takes with him
dengue and malaria

this cannot be fake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Global Warming

a cockroach
on top of the roof
wanders
where the humans
are

as the sea rises
and the trees drown
as the glaciers melt
and the mountains
slowly disappear
like chocolates
melting under
the hot tropical
sun

even cockroaches
get lonely too
missing the the logicality
of mankind
their love for words
their cravings for poetry
their jolly conversations
at night when
they are all drunk
with wine

RIC S. BASTASA
Gloom And Doom

it was when your excitement was only the strong wind from the forest
the ripe mangoes fall for
you to pick them up
you run for excitement, the thrill of ripe fruits falling to your hands

it was when your sadness was only about a failing grade
on a math quiz

it was when your happiness was the carabao ride
from your nipa hut to the public school

it was when your sweet face was kissed by your mama
your hair caressed by a friend
simple memories

it was when your escape was the plunge in the river
with your naked friends

it was when your conversations are about fairies and princesses
and frogs and lost shoes

it was when the coolness was the thick grasses spreading
on the plains

it was when joy was the playing and bathing under the rain
on the month of November

now these changes have made things more complicated
people are hard to deal with and
a self that is deeper, darker
and difficult to really understand

now there are more severances, dreams that do not come true
failures keep coming, alienation of the self, the soul from the body

reverses, and uncertainties, longer nights,
without the stars,
a moon covered by thick clouds,
the heavy rain promising another big flood

gloomy crystal balls, smokes of fire, and
misfortunes of the mind

that earthquake is not the last.
when will this bad karma ever end?

RIC S. BASTASA
Glückschmerz

what have you
done?

you are laughing
when another innocent man
is hanged?

RIC S. BASTASA
Go Ahead My Friend, Leave Me

go ahead, my friend, leave me
for i am tired and weary
let me take some breaths of air
so i may fill my lungs
let me take some glasses of water
so i may quench my thirst

go ahead, my friend, take leave
let me stay for a while
and think about what i have lost along the way
of this long journey
something in me is broken
something so vital fell along the roads
of my past
i am taking my time to think
so i may come back and gather the pieces
i am dusting my feet
i am combing my hair
i am stretching my arms
i am looking at the mirror
i am looking for that door where you have never
entered before

go ahead, my friend, give me time to be alone

so i may become whole again
so i shall not have lived my life in vain

RIC S. BASTASA
Go Away Little Girl

Beautiful girl
You have grown such long hair
Flowing like river

Go away now, follow that river
Find the sea follow your flow
To the vastness of
This bounty

Go away now and be yourself
Beautiful lady, earth’s bounty

You cannot find love in me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Go Away..............................................................

i'd take you seriously,
idol, i follow you every
moment when i travel. In

Macau, i read you. In Beijing
i talk about you to another
Australian tourist while
we walk the great wall.

in Bulgaria i cannot help
but compare you to their idol
too. Big parliament building.

wide rivers and a cruise to brag
you again. Time is a revealing

book. The world is tired of you.
Mongolian barbecue. Buzzing bee.

well, i am dropping you. I am
no longer taking your seriously.

you are a passing wind. A storm.
wash away everything. do it quickly.

we will be happy with what is left
even if there is nothing.

go away. My ears are pierced.
go away. we are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Go Back To A Former Body Of Smooth And Tight Skin

who wants not
to slim a little
to simply whisper
make a hush
and live in peace?
who wants not to
go back
to a former body
of smooth and
tight skin and strong
arms and
muscled chest?
who wants not
to be beautiful again
and thirsty for love
and have those
dreams of youth
fulfilled?
time is so unforgiving.
fate is uncompromising.
here you are
waiting for the next bus
to your last destination.
you want not to look back.
everything is nice
it is over.

RIC S. BASTASA
Go Girl

go girl to faraway zamboanga
find the shells silent by the shore
find what you have lost for the past years
away from us

figure out what your hand can hold
figure out what must slip there like sands of time

tell me what is left from your sorrow
tell me what we can repair

your silence must the draw the scene
for tomorrow: a sailboat, the blue sea,
the wind that is so free

RIC S. BASTASA
Go On And On

It is like
I dive in
The depth
Of the sea
I stop breathing
And all
Of them
Are waiting
Time
And tide
Go on
And on

RIC S. BASTASA
Go To Poetry My Love Is Telling Me Find The Best In You.

i look at the lines
of my palms
as told by you

i had a glance of
yours
and the stars are
twinkling for you

i look at my palms
again
and see a storm

at night i reflect
upon all these
and i keep on saying
'damn these self-made
storms!

these lines, mere
creations of beliefs

go to poetry my love
is telling me
find the best in you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Go World

go world.
we are all set to run
this race.

but take the fire
of love and pass
it to another

who is too
eager to join
this race?

go girl!
go... run and have the real fun!

RIC S. BASTASA
Go, Go, Gone

blinking lights of neon
creating an illusion
like a go, go, go, and then
gone, things and colors seemingly moving
in reality,
not at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goals.....

it is not a question anymore
of whether i am in or out

or whether i am acceptable
or disgusting

it is the passion that works now
automated,

it does not consider anything
outside itself

it is burning to eternity
it lights

and whatever darkness is there
it disappears

and those who had seen what is happening
within

and of course no one really bothers
simply considers it as

a form of routine
something that must be discarded because it can be the source
of envy

as

imagine, this, as other lights face
and die

as the darkness of their hearts win
you continue to shine

glossy in the universe
like a new born galaxy
whirling faster away from them
who until now
cannot understand or
simply refuse to because they do not have it
there is no inkling
nothing to speak

out there new stars come out
exploding

ordinary men continue
tarry on what is not important

like building a house for their future
when it is not there yet

where is it? it is here
that is the perfect hint so far.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Always Answers Prayers

When the idea is not right, God says, 'No'
No - when the idea is not the best
No - when the idea is absolutely wrong
No - when although it may help you it could create problems for someone else.

When the time is not right, God says, 'Slow'
What a catastrophe it would be
If God answered every prayer at the snap of your fingers.
Do you know what would happen?
God would become your servant, not your master.
Remember: God's delay is not God's denial
God's timing is perfect
Patience is what we need in prayer

When you are not right, God says, 'Grow'
The selfish person must grow in unselfishness
The cautious person must grow in courage
The timid person must grow in confidence
The dominating person must grow in sensitivity
The critical person must grow in tolerance
The negative person must grow in positive attitudes
The pleasure-seeking person must grow in compassion for suffering people

When everything is all right, God says, 'Go'
Then miracles happen
A hopeless alcoholic is set free
A drug addict finds release
A doubter becomes a child in his belief
Diseased tissue responds to treatment, and healing begins
The door to your dream suddenly swings open
And there stands God saying, 'Go! '
Cheers,

RIC S. BASTASA
I have always wanted to be
what you are,

oh, how i like it to be
where you are now,

and so i follow you,
every step
that you have taken
is a map
of my destination

you are inside that room and
i want to be in there too

but the door is locked, i knock and
no one hears it,
you are deaf and blind

no one opens the door for me
and i begin to
look at the window
they are closed too and i go behind the house
to find the kitchen door
it too, is closed

and i stand there alone
outside, and it rains and there is that sound of
thunder and
lightning is the only one that
gives me the flashes of light
to light my path

i am scared, of course, i am normally scared
by what is happening

and you are there showing your back at me
dining with the rest of your
guests

these successful people
who hold in their hands
fame and fortune
and who can withhold or grant other
people's opportunities

i am abandoned, and you are there inside that room
with all these societal gems

i give up,

i shall find another world of my own,
where opportunities are given for free
no dirty tricks, no influences, plain merit and
fitness, and
skill and competence,

i will work it out
from within, and i challenge myself with these words:

'soon, soon!'

i will be there,

because i am good and God will hand it to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Bless All Those Pigs...

at the end of my day, i ask myself what do i get?
a plaque at the bottom of my teeth that is irritating to my gums?

are they going to give me a promotion to the nth rank
so that i can be well respected even by those goats and skunks and slinks and slugs and mugs?

are they making a crown for me
a scepter in my hand,
a purple robe
for kings with golden threads
of epitaphs for my grave?

i know what i can really get from all those circle-loving snobs.
those mopy dicks, and perfect pimps of power and play,

i get nothing but wasted time
and white falling hair and osteoporosis on my backbones
from their air of empty promises

for at the end, the music is nothing but theirs
for their own exclusive dances

throughout the night they are drunk
and horny and they go own
fucking their own selves
like pigs and dogs.

and i say, oh,
i really love that and surely
i will miss you all

with tongue-in-my-cheek i
pack myself like a bag and
go wildly in the hills
where all my arms are waiting
to embrace me myself like
i am their long lost red blooded brother
turning blue and black
because
i am too stupid to work in their sty....
God bless all those pigs! ! !

RIC S. BASTASA
God Has Never Abandoned Us...

Trust in Him
Forever.
Pain? Share his pain
He had more than enough.
Sorrows? He lived it
while on earth.
God never abandons us
But in our blindness
We do not see His arms around our bodies.
He is perfection testing the
waters of our soul.
Always, always.

RIC S. BASTASA
God In His Mighty Kingdom

Heavens
too need a Queen
the stars are
the glittering stones
of Her Crown

The King
is so kind and powerful
in the vastness of
its Eternal Spaces

Its eyes
The Suns and Moons
Its hiding places
The Planets
Its Emissaries
The Comets

I speak
As one of those
Invisible
Insignificant Atom
We are
But Negligible
Molecules....

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Asleep

even God
needs time to sleep
spare Him this
Time with your
praise
i think he is fed-up
with all the praises
and invocations
and prayers for peace
and progress
and other prayers for
self-interest
Let us try a little bit
altruistic not
Disturbing Him
in his rest today
I think
he likes us better
on ourselves
independent of his
kindness
where we are kind
because we are
not because He is
I guess
we can write poetry
without
including his
originality
His poetic greatness
is above
board this time
we try on our
own
be glad for
He loves this
quest
on our own hands
on our own feet
with our own
heart as guide.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Coming Back

God is coming back
with the Son and the Father and the Mother and the
Holy Spirit
and all the angels and saints and all the angels
of heaven

just to see you again
in your disbelief just to check on your faithlessness
and he will utter your name
your age your work your address your circumstances
what you do what you think what you plan to do what you want to think

are you the bride?
are you ready for the groom?
are you ready for this walking on the aisle?
this marriage of God and Man
this surrender of mortality
to divinity?

are you ready?
that is the question

an order, a command, a request,
these demands of love, some responsibilities of loving
the obligation to care for the other
the poor and the oppressed, the sick and the dying
the meek and the humble
the widows and the old, the orphans and the children lost
the fetus and the bleeding navels of innocence

for salvation.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Good

God is Good
God is Great

Meet him
Now or later

When are you ready?
Be on time

With the Bomb
Be aplomb

Be cool
Wear Wool.

Don't be a fool.
We are all.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Good.

somehow it is not all
about love, it will be sometimes a shame
if you
know all about these

i must tell you since i am about to burst
and i can be a disaster

i do not want a world annihilated
by my silence

i will say a word and i will not stop right there
i will describe a place there is a bridge there
between us

the boat is in my hand i will carry it to you
you will sleep like the water

i love it and i see it i am mesmerized
it sees me but it does not feel it keeps on doing what it does

it stops finally like a movie
and i the fanatic have to arrive at my senses and sing my song

the wall hears it and wants to shed tears
it is a very lonely song that even the wood can easily understand

i must stop telling you
my lips are shameless and my head is about to crack

there is an understanding and it is inside the heart of
our solitude

now you understand but i am not walking away
i am staying in the name of life and its colors

let the man in black wait
as i begin to count my fingers for the last days of my life
the boat is ready and the weather is fine
the afternoon is cold like wood with misty dress

i am writing a letter to my best friend who died
a month ago
and i am telling him i am staying for a while

i put the famous postscript that i keep on reminding him
when he was alive stormed in so much depression

life is beautiful
God is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Great

God is great

Because when you fell
Upon a cliff

You really fell
And there were no angels
Who catch you
For safety

God is great

He opens the door
To your new world

Now, you have become
One spirit with him.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Here....

last night i had a very sound sleep
it felt like a still pond without a fish
but only moss and stone and light

like there was a full moon
drifting among the tree tops
no ripple of the air from the winds of the sea

and i remember what i dream
no bridges and flood below this time
it was like a Chinese painting of a river and mountains behind

it was so peaceful
that i can hear the sound of the leaf falling from its branch

and i told myself
this is home,
this is heaven
and what i have been dreaming has become all too true

i now, believe,
God is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Here.....

what i remember of you was your rudeness to that woman
who had no work
and who worked for you
but you kept that rudeness
through and through.

karma, karma,
chameleon

that's it. that sums it all.
now look at you, white haired, flat tire,
folded, passe,

do not complain.
you deserve it.

God is here

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is Not Alone

God is not alone
Loneliness is not his attribute
Perhaps
Solitude until he created man & woman
cats and dogs, snakes and rats,
fine and water.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Is So Good

he even reserved
a marsh
for mosquitoes to breed

tunnels cold and damp
favorite for
boas

inexhaustible trees
for termites

how much more for
you
for whom He prided
with so much
love?

RIC S. BASTASA
God Knows What Is Best For Us

in your prayer
he says
make your pleas
and requests

be general
and original

he knows what in
particular is best

so please do not
be a dictator

RIC S. BASTASA
God Marvin, You Had It First In The Bus?

so marvy boy, you had it first in the bus
seeing this beautiful portal
of her flesh
and without an erectile dysfunction
you made your
silent explosion

go marvin go
keep going

let us have more explosions like these
they cannot kill

RIC S. BASTASA
do not insist. God has a way of punishing
your unreasonable widow
persistence, the Greeks are warned
about Wooden Horses,
and Achilles' heels,
do not insist. Don't you know that sometimes
God grants prayers
purposely to punish
those who are hardheaded?
Pray what God wills you to be.
Do not insist.
God knows better
Before you were born
He knows what is in store for you
Till the last
breath. Till you dropp dead.
So do not insist
Natural laws cannot be compromised.
Legal laws maybe.
Man made ones, those that twist
and pride on
Compromises.

Do not insist. Let God flow inside your
Heart. Let the seeds grow
As he sets the fertile soil
of the mind
As he gives the light in your
Sun.
As he prunes and cuts
and Makes you
The most beautiful tree
within the forest of your tangled
hairs.

RIC S. BASTASA
God The Provider

that morning
was a happy one

we had breakfast
and we talk about the
places i have
traveled

the scent of steamed
rice and
fried fish and brewed
coffee
refresh our souls

i told her that to
a traveling mind
depression has no
house

one must not worry
about money
the owner of all these
is God
and he is our Father

someone borrowed me
money and did not pay
but i never worry
i collect it from the
Father and He pays
at higher interest rates

we talk a lot
we laughed and sighed
your wife seemingly has
recovered from her
malady

under the skies
beside the lush of trees
a bush has given us
the best white flowers
in town

on September we will be
at the west coast
when we come back
we will treat you for
a special dinner
a treat from our God
our Father...

RIC S. BASTASA
God To Myself

And as God loves me
(like the way He loves you,
one day, he comes near
me trying to explain
about myself, thinking
that i still lack
understanding)

but i ask him first
Will you please
explain yourself to me?
Perhaps by then
I can understand myself.

My parish priest says
i have committed
blasphemy

since then no matter
how i attentively listen
to the sea
and to the wind
and to the sky
in vain

i have never heard of Him
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
God Writes Me...

i, too, know
how to write 30.

whatever,
this enormous darkness
my eyes close.

i always look
up to Someone
who spells my name
and who knows
how to say it
correctly....

He understands.
He knows when.

it is not a matter of
waiting or winning
it is a matter of
Mercy and
Will. His.

RIC S. BASTASA
God!

the way she makes love
to me
the way she moans at the
top of her ecstasy
makes me feel
that she knows
what heaven is all about,
God!
i doubt if He
knows her.

RIC S. BASTASA
God, My God

as i finally find myself alone
in my room, like a sun turned off
planets falling on the floor
like dust from the curtain
and waste basket filled with
crumpled scratches of works
unacceptable to my standards,
i learn for once
to pause in silence
just fifteen minutes to call your
name, how i have relied much
on my self, my faith and
pride to a determination,
i must know by now,
like a broken planetary system,
the you have laws,
merciless, that you have love,
also always forgiving,
i go upon another poem
praising your Glory
Without you I am nothing,
In You, alone, when I am alone
Shall i find
the humility of
rested, aloof,
understanding, this Genius of
You, where i am
nothing but
a whimper.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goddess

goddess of the moon
you descend upon my humble beginnings

you kiss me
to my surprise
my body rises above the shadows
of these hills

you take me away
from my roots and like a flower
you take me by your hand

i am cut and though i love you
i bleed

i am human and i cry
i am human and i still long for my land
my roots still miss the soil of my birth and my origin

goddess of the moon
you have wings to fly

look at me
i have none

and so even if you love me
and even if i love you
grant me my wish

to be home again.

for i am just human
and wings have i none.

RIC S. BASTASA
Godly Thirst....
	here is this
thirst in me, not in the tongue
the mouth denies it
	here is this thirst
that water or wine or
juice
cannot quench

it is a thirst that forever
stays

a dropp of rain
a dew from a leaf

a word from my Creator
shall satisfy it.

RIC S. BASTASA
God's Offering

for what is good works
without faith
what is mercy without action
what is humanity
without the awe and wonder
for the divine
what are prayers without hands
what are promises without fulfillment
what is a kind action without worship
what is man without his God?

RIC S. BASTASA
God's Poetry

God is finding it hard
to make us understand
who we are and
what we can
be,

He stoops, goes down from
His throne
and tries to learn the
language
that we are using,

when He speaks and
we listen

we finally hear the songs

the sounds
of His poetry....

RIC S. BASTASA
God's Smoothie...

drops of rain over my naked body tonight
in my loneliness are notes of heavenly music
trying to comfort me as I open my mouth
trying to taste God's smoothie.

RIC S. BASTASA
God's Starry Creation....

the night
is well studded with stars
too much darkness running
in contrast with flickers tiny lights

who had hung these stars
on such a huge space of darkness?
the void is filled
and we all watch
awed

RIC S. BASTASA
God's....

what you have taken which is
not yours
shall be returned
with all the penalties and interest
and surcharges

what you have given with a meek heart
shall be returned too
in the same manner
but this Time it is God
that gives you more than
you can ever expect

must you choose greed then?
must you stick to avarice?

you give a seed
then you shall have a tree filled with fruits
and even birds
nest there and find their rest

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Back

i always find myself
going back
to where i am, on early

mornings, i promise
myself a brand new
beginning, a place where

i shall find myself
exciting, on a new venture

away from here, but i am
always at a loss

the irony of going far away
and not arriving
at what i perceived is my own place, and so

here i am again
watching same shame in the mirror

gazing at my own eyes
shocked that i have never changed,

regrets nesting in my head
lustful eggs hatching
in same shape of sinfulness

i wait until i am
to ash begotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
you hear the noise
of the day
drums beat so hard
on the city
streets
on a mardi gras

people march with the sound
of victory
upon a mass demonstration
of their
mobbing slogans

masks of faces
that you have not fully
figured
crowd the mall

outside
you hear the loud
screams of the heavy rain
the blowing horns of
the cars and
the jeepneys
on those rush hours
people are running
women are holding on
to their kids
from school
lights are turned on
blinding
your view

this is the horror of
the
daily bustle
the noise of
every day's struggles
the existential
angst
that no philosophy
 can hide

time knows no one
and the hours
treats no one with
specialty

x x x

you rest your head
upon a green velvet sofa

and you remember

hearing once again the variant
bustles of the hour
at the center of
this huge mall
the sounds have turned into pins
and thorns
in your brain

there is no rose
nothing red nothing blue as a
cloud

x x x

when you finally go home
to the house that you leave
days ago
which you think
created the worst loneliness
dragging your life
like a steel ball
to your chained
legs and arms

x x x
you close the door
and then you know how beautiful
is silence
for now

how satisfying like water to your thirsty mouth
how comforting like the softest pillow to your head....

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Back To H Happiness....

it's been a time
we have been writing
grief,

how to write all these
we share no secrets
we mirror
each other's sorrow

somehow we must make a
pact
that next time we should
try something new, - -perhaps joy,

have we forgotten what it is?
we go back to
childhood, in that tiny village
at the tip of this
archipelago, there is a river there
that winds a thousand times before it
reaches the sea,

it is taking as always the path
of least resistance,

we followed it, it did not break
rocks,
filtering itself clean
by those hundred pebbles,

when it arrived at the mouth
of the sea
it was purified, and not content
with its
transparency, it has finally joined
the salinity of the bigger world

all seem to lead to an ocean
where everyone loses its identity,
to be one again
into an anonymity....

RIC S. BASTASA
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where everyone loses its identity,
to be one again
into an anonymity....

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Back To Kindergarten

Wittgenstein went back to kindergarten

trying to figure out how a language is learned

to know that language is born not with a word or two

but in a cluster of sentences like the birth of a baby

that comes not with spare parts of hands and legs and toes

but as a whole coming out from the womb and with a

spank from this world cries to let you know that

it is alive and has already some feelings and thoughts

of its own. Like us, we learn the language of love not on

a piecemeal basis, we know love when we are accepted

as a whole person, not as bits and pieces and chunks

and cold cuts, but as tomato sauce garnished with cheese

and mint and rosemary and meatballs and salt and pepper.
Wittgenstein went back
to kindergarten
not as a kid but as a philosopher.

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Back To Old Poems

going back to some
old poems written
years ago, i change
some words,
finding some
ways to make them
rhyme and taking in
another breathing
changing fonts
and graphics
and let the new
year pass unnoticed
rededicating them
for someone new
and lovely and caring
recycling, retitling,
reviving, revising
and so the year
may have passed
with a lesser pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Crazy

going crazy going agog going wild going bananas going going going
you are with me my love
and i am flying, jumping, leaping, stamping, diving, whistling, jetting,
exploding, bursting, overflowing,

with you my love
my heart pumping so much blood
inside my heart into my head into my thighs

where am i? what am i?
with you i am complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Crazy For Something That Does Not Last Forever

it is crazy
to think that something lasts forever
or someone
or love

it is too crazy for you
to think of me as a thing that lasts forever
or someone that you can always love

you go crazy
over something that you want to hold and cherish
forever

there is no such thing
perhaps such things as air
or of the spirit

of God and angels
i am not God neither am i an angel

when you hold me with such a grip
i begin to bleed
when you kiss me feel me
i am not forever
i am just this moment and then like a snap
of a finger

i am gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Out To Enjoy The Faces Of Nature

summer. do not sell me books
i have enough of books.
i am going for a swim
bringing my girl.
i will go naked then
up and down. we are going
diving, seeing not just corals
we go for black urchins and
electric eels.
we go bubbling and
taking deep breaths
upstream. you ask me why?
well, this is summer and i am
not reading books.
i will be kissing the beautiful
faces of nature.
and since this is summer
motherfucker, i must do it well.

RIC S. BASTASA
Going Up?

going up is finally
a minuscule. atoms drifting
stopping on the lines
of our palms
then we go down
to the cells of
a leaf
it becomes another version
of the universe
a nucleus surrounded
by planetary
neurons

RIC S. BASTASA
Golden Advice From A Friend

if you fail now
don't worry
try next time

if you are excluded
don't worry
soon the right season shall come

if you are down and out
don't worry
try again
there is always another chance
another time

if you fall this time
or if you fall again and again
don't worry
try and try again until you make it next time

there is no limit
rise, rise, always rise from it
from where you have fallen

don't worry
there will always be a place for each everyone
under the sun

there is always a place to be happy
for you and for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Gone
	here is no pretense
i will be in love again

i will dream of another
and ask for her hand

we will take a walk
and kiss in the dark

i will forget you
that is what i will do.

so please do not go
i can be foolish without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Gone And Gore....

we did not really
make much
as masters of this
land

there are too many
of us
we are the ants and
there are
termites

we simply pass the
time
we cannot stay that
long

we are moving like
camels in the desert
we do not own the sun
we tread on deserts

we do not really make
much as
owners of this land
we killed the tigers and
tamed the elephants

we have our tusks and
bellies
we are the masters of
yore
gone and gore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gone And Makes Me Free....

there was something so important last night
for days i keep folding it neatly in my mind
while we were traveling and waiting and
sleeping

it seeps in like another dream
nothing vivid
like a fading memory of melting chocolate in my hand
one summer

i treasure it and promise myself that soon it will be real
i hide it from you
and it has become invisible in my fingers

imaginary little things in my mind
that make me alive
and survive through the night
when you are
snoring in your sleep

today it is gone but mind you it has set me free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gone With The Wind

never again
she says at the top of the hill
against her body
the sun fades,

never again
shall i be poor again
never
never never never

the same lines i keep
telling myself
moving away from the
theater
after the show

RIC S. BASTASA
'How can I tell
If I shall ever love you again
As I do now?'

time has no mouth anymore.
it has only wings.
i am carried away and on few words
my soul dissolves
my body rots
turns to dust
no nectar is found
in my hair
no flower grows from
my bones
my name is encrypted
in your womb
on mere initials
of my pen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Good Deeds

i will be passing from this world
in a little stopover
this place of mess and Mesmer

for me to get a pass to another world
perfect as they say
sorrow less and infinite
i know what i have to offer

good deeds, and everything from love,
and the faith that must never fade

i am waiting for the next door to open for me
look at me in my silent selfishness
oh, this excitement that i cannot speak
and share
with you

not minding about the series of the pains anymore
setting aside patches of pleasures

thinking about the next train
the final destination

RIC S. BASTASA
Good Luck Baby

yOU MAY IEEAVE early in the morning
But tonight let us talk
let us dance
let us sing
Once and for all
And when we are over
Leave
But for once tonight let us view
The big Dipper
And the Little Dipper
and Andromeda

Let us drink to all the beautiful stars
Above our
Silly Heads.

RIC S. BASTASA
You don't have to say more.
You have said enough.

I have said what i wanted to tell you.
Do not misinterpret my own concern for both of you.

I am rebuffed, and suspected of having to discourage you of your chances for the winning and the prestige.

I swallow this all. I do not have to say more.
I pray that i could be wrong and that you are right.

When the right time comes, and you come to me and tell me
That they have all swindled you into that wrong choice

Then by that time, i shall tell you so,
That i have said my lines and that was all that i need to do.

I do not have to say more. Now then, when the falling out comes
Both of you shall be responsible. You shall tell them

The party is over and you have nothing more to give
Because everything you have has all been carted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Good Morning

waking up late
light pushes itself inside the slits of the windows
the sky blue curtains filtering
the hues of
little rainbows

he rubs his eyes
discovering he was all alone
the whole night

dreams he could not remember anymore
sets the curtains aside
opens the window
looks at the garden below
sees the birds feeding on some grains spread to the ground

he hears a song from his heart
a nice one now
and to please what has been disturbing him
a void, a thorny feeling, last night, or was it the other night
he compliments himself with

good morning world
thanks, i am still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Good Morning Self

i wake up
checking my navel.

i face the mirror
to see my eyes
blinking

a face blinking
i am happy to note

that i am not bound
anymore
to that which
obsessed me last night

oversleeping over
a naked body inside my mind

this morning
as i open the window of my room

i see a black bird
rushing like a stone thrown
into a white sky

a stone with the wings
of the wind

good morning self
goodbye
persistent lust

before i forget
i got a new mask

an office man
with a very serious face

no jokes
just benign remarks
about today's
winning politician

RIC S. BASTASA
Good News

my friends i am back
from a long lull, a sleep for years

rip van winkled, i wake up
discovering wings on my feet like Mercury
on my shoulders like Michael,

my friends, i could not wait to use this gift
i am flying! i am flying! on to the swift wings of

poetry!

RIC S. BASTASA
Good Night Old Self

unlike before,

when i unlock a door
in a house where i have lived all alone
for years
i feel like crying
hearing the sound of the living room
in the anguish of the
silence that it has never chosen

there is always the imagined sound of rain and

it is eerie

there is a spiteful
space that is always trying to strangle you
a hollow hole inside
my guts

i must have gone beyond the demarcation line

or i must have jumped that fence
having grown longer

these pair of legs that have outgrown the
looseness of corduroy pants

now it is different

i feel the content of having to accept that when i was born
i never had a twin

now the silence of this room is comforting
telling me that the crowd in fact does not serve
but choking as well
with whatever whims it has

what to do with my life
or where to do things the way they should be properly done
i am fed up with all these dictates of the mob
i have proclaimed that i am a different reality

in fact more beautiful than the face of the average
the many, the crowding people

as i open this door, i hear the song of my own silence
sweeter than ever

i leave my dirty shoes
take off my stinking socks
i lie my body on the soft sofa
and take my sleep

i don't even need a television to make my eyes
weary and
thus have the much needed sleep.

good night old self. I shall dream anew.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye

sometime i tell myself
when you say you are busy doing lots of your routine

i am here
and have always waited for you

i am impatient
and calls this affair 'quits'

there are other rivers to sail
seas to travel
fish to fry

my dear honey pie
i have other things to do beside you
i can't wait that long enough
i am not getting any younger
i have other windmills to conquer

my dear sweetie honey pie
let me say the word goodbye!

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye Cutie Pie, Honey-Bunch Goodbye
	sometimes how i wish
that i should have loved you

i like to be a dictator
in power to make me love you

how does it feel to be one?
one that sharpens feelings to pierce love?

how i wish i love you
how i wish to deny myself and love you forever

but it is not that simple
love speaks and love decides for itself

as though it is a self within this self
speaking upon its own terms and acting like a stranger

to me, and i am regretful, why it is not you?
for here am at mess with the person that i love

i am hurt but in love
i am destroyed but still in love

two faces of reason and emotion
a day and night in one revolution

i have to go now, goodbye cutie pie
honey bunch, i won't let you hurt me more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye For Now....(But It Will Never Be The Same Again)

i do not really know
how to say it

to say something that will
be painful

as painful as a stab
in the back of the mind

this mind that
circles upon the circling thoughts

of the wind
i guess i may just say it

euphemistically something that pains
someone who is with me

by simply saying it is all goodbye
for now

(it will never be the same
again)

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye Is Such A Sweet Decision

now you are saying goodbye

such a sweet word

to another word: overstaying

leave me in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye Is Sweet And Not Bitter.

i take a
quiet corner under the
pine tree

it is getting darker
and no one is in the house

for a wife leaves her husband
sometimes
she needs space and the other
takes his quiet
for a change

numbers come to his mind
things account for things
nearing a conclusion:

perhaps i shall take
refuge to my roots
that old house there
abandoned
can be rebuilt to acquire
back lost memories

sometimes there is no regret
there is nothing missing
and in the middle of this
thinking
one rests for good

goodbye is sweet and not bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye My One And Only Sparrow...

i could have written more
for you. I could have cooked
the best breakfast for you.
i could have spared more of
my rarest time for you, but
i like to repeat the same lines
before: i still have miles to go
i still have other promises to keep.
and i cannot really have you.
and so here i am again with my
sweet sorrow: goodbye, sparrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
to live, one must say goodbye
to the good old days

white shiny porcelain days
no rug and hands can ever

hold them for like the wind
they shall go and what is left

shall be your days of weariness
and dust

settles on your palms and on
your forehead

the sweat of the coming days
living a life of the anonymous

wanting to be free from the
prison cell one makes for oneself

pains self-inflicted and the game
of solitaire begins anew

the trucks that pass on the road
all huge and the same

over and over again
one spits and goes back with

his cards. Fate rules.

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodbye....

i must write you with a heavy heart
this heart of stone

blank, numb, gray, rough,
silent,

i write this at dusk,
there are yet no birds flying in the twilight skies
some boats are still there
but only shadows

i want to be completely stoned

to bleed, and be broken,
to be hurt by you once again
in this masochism

last night, you spread your legs, you hang yourself in bed
crucified in the ecstasy
of our love on concealed identities

no one sees us, no one knows us,
except
the angry God.

this morning, i see strangled bedsheets, off white,
empty glasses on the floor, stained carpets,
half open windows looking into the vast blue ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
do not follow me
there is a curse
for all good men
who arrive always at
the end
with nothing
but i never regret
this thing
i am good i was
good and that is
enough for me
for in this goodness
nothing pleases me
except the goodness itself
look at me
do not envy me
for i am good for goodness
sake
there is no money in it
i tell you
but what all i have
is what
money cannot buy

money talks
but i have arrived
at this point
when it is not
worth my time anymore
money talks
and i am not listening
at all

virtue is as silent
as the still water
it has the voice of
winds
the dance of leaves
amidst the morning light

RIC S. BASTASA
Goodnight Adria

sleep tight
it is morning in your place
time to sleep

my night is still to come
it is darker than ever
no stars
no fireflies
no moon

just the brown dog barking and barking outside the gate
of my home

i guess, i still have more words more lines to make
and i am not stopping
tracing our trail
i may stop until

it is morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Gordimer's Awareness

the voice

the conscience

the interpreter,

she is

nadine, not naive,
the african
lover of words,

the loot,

to pick things from life
from reality

land politics,
fractured human relationships,
AIDS,
violete,
belonging,
identity,
corruption,
education,
the situation of refugees in Africa,
ecology
globalisation.
third birth.

what now,
nobel prize?

RIC S. BASTASA
Gorgeous Moon

i love to be
under this gorgeous moon
i love to be
with another gorgeous girl in town

RIC S. BASTASA
they didn't know
that miss gorgeous
always have
haiku
for breakfast...

she is so cool.
i guess.

RIC S. BASTASA
and you hear what God says
that you Mr. rich man
has to sell all you have and
give all the proceeds to
the poor

and Mr. rich man
why are you so sad?

do you hate the church? do you not like God?
are you bound by the strings of your purse?

you still want to be saved?

RIC S. BASTASA
even the dogs eat the crumbs
on the floor

sometimes we
his children simply do not recognize
the cake
reserved for us
on top of the table
with flowers
and the matching
sweet music
prepared by our father

we are the spoiled
brats in the house
but he is so
patiently
waiting

and very silent

RIC S. BASTASA
Gospel Truth

truth is not a closed
door or a fixed pillar
it is a seed growing
inside our heart and
looks for the light of
the sun until it wilts
because of too much
glare, ...truth is the sun
that keeps on shining
to the earth and sea..
truth is the earth that
keeps its orbit...truth
is the sea, it is wide
and deep, it is always
beyond and mysterious...
truth is word, slipping
from my grasp....

RIC S. BASTASA
Gospel Truth

brother you must know
that your suffering today is inferior
very much inferior
to the glory that is promised
in the ripeness of your time

feel the eager longing for the
coming of that time

for soon brother
you shall be freed from the decay of your
self-created depression

for quite long
we have groaned for that redemption
that spirit within
that hope for the coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got A Bedrock

got a bedrock for my being
not the usual softness of the pillow that mothers usually
give to their sons
it is hard on my head
it can smash if i meet it headway
and so i am as careful as you
not to break the rules
of engagement
the ethics of conduct
the code of life
this is the rock on my head
above it the rope
and your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got A Timetable

know that i got a timetable,
i do not like a prolonged breathing
since the birth of the pink bud
i always love gasps
find thrill in grasps and quick finger holds
and soon releasing
nothing usurping nothing over holding on
to something
lest everything gets so old and familiar and
death boring
something is new in the newness of beginnings
nothing must last an hour longer

i am listening but not for long
there is no use for your argument
the pink bud blooms only for a very short day
the nights are longer
the years cannot convert themselves to bright days
there is no exchange
substitution is null and void
novation does not exist in this personal world
no erasures
all original
everything ends as desired by the law of nature
why worry then?
i stop as written.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got It Now

ture knowledge speaks
that it knows
really nothing and the fake one
finds its way to laugh
and dance....

RIC S. BASTASA
Got Nothing

i got nothing
my hands are bare
i am empty
my head is light
i have a space in my heart
i have nothing to give you
i promise nothing to you

why do you love me still?

i have only love
i have only the promises of death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got Peace And Nothing To Squeeze

Take all these pearls
let me have my own peace

take all these gold
i will choose love enfold

i am asking for more
like hope and grace azure

wisdom, and understanding
no to war, nothing to wrangle

dispose this car
nothing about a spar

i live in this house
of now
got peace and nothing
to squeeze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got Sick

when you left me
i got sick

got really sick
for a long time

but i did not die
even when you

left me, got sick
and got sick for

more than i can
handle, but i

did not die
somehow i

got sick but
i cannot die,

i am alive and
soon i know

i will be in love
again, my promise

to myself, my
hope eternal.

spring, and new
moon, and change.

RIC S. BASTASA
Got The Ball

gaping head divided half-thought
half-work of my hands look straight to the eyes looking at you

a ping-pong

existence of wrinkled hands the ball stops
in midspace words attempt a beginning the ten fingers grab
reality the eyes and the nose united in partnership

something fishy and illuminated

the ball is in your hand now
you are in control of your heart keep it your fingernails stuck on the surface of her skins

RIC S. BASTASA
got tired finally of this passion

there is exhaustion in arranging words
to make them poetic to you
there is this unwinding to say the obvious
without the aid of some
silly metaphors

this is something that we hate
and here we are trying to project a smile
adoring beauty
where there is none to feel
and see

RIC S. BASTASA
Got To Be Free

you got to be free
sing it like queen

but the problem is
you must know by now,

where to?
do you know?

RIC S. BASTASA
Got To Work Too And Earn My Living

the hours passed
so swiftly
now it is 9:04 on my watch
i have written
poems
candidly
direct from the mind
to this blank eyes
always staring at me
this dumb monitor

i like to write more
but what can i do?
got to work to and
earn my living
and got to hammer
some more
this mortar and pestle
of this justice
system that
does not really
work....

the Chief Justice
can kill me
but oh well,
this is nothing
but work
and work
and work
and work

nothing to do with justice
but work
nothing personal
(so it is but impersonal)

no eyes
just this blindness
hammer, hammer now
hammer out, hammer in

this gavel
this, oh, well, this bread
of life

this death for some
this escape for you

RIC S. BASTASA
got nothing to do 2day
just scribbling and chatting to a friend
who is also pretending to be someone else
feigning happiness and embracing all the sadness
like, well, i have to admit,
like us.

i don't even know if i have to stop scribbling
whatshamakalit, a poem? gee,
i don't know
i am simply unstoppable,
bad, and too
earthly.

RIC S. BASTASA
the government arrests a
citizen for urinating
in a public
place

the citizen is asking
'where is the toilet? '

the government says
'it is none of our business'

the government arrests
a man for not paying his tax

but the citizen cannot arrest
a government
who misuses it

the government arrests
a lowly citizen
for wrong parking

the citizen is asking
where is the parking place

and the usual answer
is still, 'it is none of your business'

RIC S. BASTASA
Government Worker.....

as you work so hard
throughout the darkness of the night
a candle light
a peaceful wind
away from the crowd
walled.

there will be stones loaded
in your brain
some thorns on the flesh of your arms
you feel the crawling of the ants
on your belly
or some butterflies wanting to fly
away from you

in the morning you rise from a war
surviving soldier of the nightmare
oiling a gun
clicking once again the triggers of your life

putting on the shoes and the vest
arranging the cap
in the mirror seeing yourself once again
ready for another encounter

in the city the enemies are invisible
they meet you as friends
on a disguised fidelity
you are fully armed in this diplomacy
an extended war on the tables of negotiations and compromises

you put your name, sign a paper and submit yourself to the judgment of the people
Grab The Eternal

it is this
wrong premise
that if i find
another lonely
person and when
we talk for
while
i become less
lonely

or if i put off
his light
will that make
mine
brighter?

does the misery
of other people
a cure to
our miseries too?

happiness is
simply a state of
mind
i must create
and recreate it

it is reinvention
time: there is no
forever
grab the eternal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grade School Boys Playing Volleyball Early Morning

the streamers in different colors
look like leaves on trees lining the path
that i walk upon daily

i do not want any involvement now
i have so may ideas to think about

at the playground however, the cheers come out loud
for school boys playing the volleyball preparing for the Meet.

the coach with a fat belly like the volleyball twice its size
sits on a chair shouting to the little boys making the most of

what their tiny hands can do,
i remember the past, my hands too tiny to manipulate

the ball, and i feel humiliated with the strange hit
on my face.

i am involved now. On the same level, i am now
the sports spectator.

little dreams wanting to be big outright.
broken bodies, not worth it.

as early as that age when my fingers bend,
i opted for the dignity of just watching and then writing everything.

that little boy over there, his smile is so dry.
i can relate. I am like him, so afraid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gradually, It Happens

gradually we like how dead things rise from their ashes
managing to take a shape like the neck of the heron
the white long neck of the heron
amidst the green rice fields just below a crumple of blue clouds
and then the sun slowly rises from the hills that look like
breasts of a woman just awaking from a very deep sleep
beside her lover who is too drunk from the many jugs
of happy moments which he drank....

last night, it was raining so hard
but they never noticed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Graduation From A Love Poem

perhaps it is true
too much love can kill

in love poems too
got much

and now reading another love poem
gives me goose bumps

sometimes i think
making the love poem
and another love poem simply shows
your having not loved much
and your being not loved in return

love more and even if unrequited love some more
get up from a loving fall
cure that bruise
mend that broken heart
love still even when the world has learned the art of
indifference and hate more than any other

takes time to learn to do this
to know that love is giving and giving and giving
and then
after years of this kind of loving and giving
you will experience what i had gone through

now the love poem doesn't tickle anymore
nature does

the waves of the sea caressed by the hands of twilight
the moon nesting on the marsh
the grasses all wet with dew
the clouds pregnant with the blows of the wind
the gentle rain falling on the roof tops
the geese on their v-flight
the fledgling jumping from the nest to learn to fly
you see, this is what i am engrossed in now.
a beautiful world that i have not described well enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grafted

from your skin
shall rise
the fruit of your
persistence

a new face
shall come out
from the mirror
and you shall
be happy

your name
finally written
on the door
of your family
history.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grain....

when life one dark night says
that it is tasteless and so bland like the air
the leaves of the mahogany trees hear it
and the following morning confide it with the
sea breeze
who tells it all to the sands who spread same story
to the waves of the shores
who deliver it to every desert in the sand
who keep all these in the heart of their
sacred solitude
and the wisdom stops in there
every dry sand of the desert
thrives upon this story
and sleeps so soundly.

'it is a fact and we are not surprised' the grain
of sand so proudly tell the others.

RIC S. BASTASA
Granddaughter Sitting Beside A Sick Grandmother

wearing a short hair
a smile
her hands clasped
she sits beside her
sick grandmother

the faint light
by the window
enters gently
filtered by the
thin silky drape

the grandmother
is dying and her
daughter has an
axe to grind

she comes as
an offering
a link between
two worlds
long separated
by indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grandma

his son wants to get rid of
grandma

she removed the stickers
of his childhood from the walls
of his room
his cabinet cleaned of his toys
and he did like it

he has a mind of his own
and does not want to be
grandma's victim
like his papa

he thinks that when
grandma dies or when
she leaves to finally
return to her ancestral house
their family
shall be one again

he wants his pride whole
his ego unfractured
unlike his papa
he does not want any
stories about a boy
who was beaten almost to death
in the name of parental respect

when grandma begins to speak
he shuts his ears
and closes the door of his room

he still dreams of his
stickers and his toys and
a world without grandmas

and now papa must choose
Grandma's Old Piano Was Sold

grandma's piano is old.
she died ten years ago
being the second wife of grandpa.
my mother is her second child
that she sent to piano school
but father found her and married
her when she was still 18.
and i was born as their fourth
child. Mother knows how to play
the moonlight sonata which father
loves to listen at night when
i learn how to smile and laugh.
One day Papa found another woman
whom he said made him new again
and he left Mama.
One day Mama died and Papa married
that woman.
One day i left home.
One day the piano was sold
One day the piano was taken to another
town so far away from us.
One day, all these things, the piano, Papa
and my step mother are forgotten.
But then the Moonlight Sonata comes again
One night
From another piano nearby.
The keys are no longer made
From elephant tusks like grandma's old piano.
Not the off white of ivory.
So white and smooth like a well brushed teeth
of a very young boy.
I like to hear it when he learns
how to gnash.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grapevine

every morning i put
landmarks
after having surveyed
night's domains

meeting people and
hearing their own stories
taking notes where i can
possible situate my feet

my hands are not fists
they are tributaries of fingers
i have seen worlds
compared it with mine

there is this empathy
that somehow redeems my losses
how wonderful is the listening
about the travails of suffering

it lessens mine
grapevine

RIC S. BASTASA
Grasp And Grapple...

upon a piece of old
rosewood
the hand keeps its
grasp

grappling for a hold
to prevent the
fatal fall

darkness surrounds
the grappling
continues
the man in me
must live

RIC S. BASTASA
Gratis Et Amore

for the poems that i have written
and which you read
by heart, i bless you with a prayer for luck
for another year

for the poems which i have not written yet,
i wish you a longer life, so you may read them
when they become finally written

for the poems i have in mind and which i will not write
i wish you patience i wish you some prayers

may these poems realize their worth
may they decide to become truths

with you i pray that God may be also kind
for those still unspoken

and may God bless your mind
may they open up like tight buds to become the flowers
of the world, the sun to warm them, the rain to shower them

may these poems live and linger
may they be like grass always unswerving to grow and cover everything
alive and loving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gratis Et Amore (2)

helen cannot sleep,
and she keeps on sneering at the moon
and writing it
with poems as though the moon is a man
and as though the poems are her
letters pleading
to be loved by its glimmer
and shimmer imagining
them to be the rough hands
of a lover and
throughout many nights
she had been waiting
to be loved

there were many things that she did
all for the moon not even for the stars
until one morning she was found
dead inside her room
her face towards the moon
her eyes closed
her window open
and the people who buried her
that same day
told about the shame
that she was naked

i know how it is to be like her
and it was all done in the name of love
gratis et amore.

and they said, all of them, after all the prayers were said
Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gratis Et Amore...

do
gratis et amore

we sing
without getting something
in return

there is no money
in poetry
they always say that

art is purposeless
and those who indulge in it
are damned
to eternity

but here we are
masochists in our own right

pains from hammers
right into our head
blasting
exploding
as always as we reap
all our

fourths of Julys
gratis et amore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gratitude

that moment was the moment of
gray hair

you hug her and let her feel
the beating of your heart

though weary like her
she feels something so alive

the song of the grateful heart
the sound of love triumphant!

RIC S. BASTASA
Gratitude Galore....

the bees are thankful for the
nectar of the early morning flowers

blooming to the softness of the
rays of the sun

the butterflies too are grateful
in their fragile wings floating in the air

and so are the trees to the rain that falls
the mountains and the seas

and so are the stars thankful for the darkest nights
which gave them their brightest gleams

i am thankful too
to God in His greatest glory
for all the blessings received

pouring in softness like light
in the dryness of my skin

RIC S. BASTASA
Gray Cliffs And Gray Skies

on a foundation of
giant boulders of rocks
in the desert
of Saudi Arabia
where the grass are
resilient to
heat and change
the gray cliffs rise to touch
the gray skies
as though
they are on a conference
for something bigger
than the giant rocks below
and higher than the
heights they have achieved
something must be so
important
like the need for rain
and seeds
and men and women
with thick callous hands
to work for them

RIC S. BASTASA
Gray Cliffs And Gray Skies (2)

i watch the blackness later
and clicked
the camera, i signed out and
tagged this
as something bleak
and dangerous

RIC S. BASTASA
Great Are The Dialogues Of Plato

great
the dialogues of plato

the true, the good and
the beautiful

rereading them
makes the monologues

of a woman scorned
so super
ficially inferior

but for a change
let me listen with one ear

the other listens
to Basia singing

I don't really mind
and there is really no need

to run for cover
freeze thaw promises

RIC S. BASTASA
if you speak
you create an imbalance

about what we see &
hear & touch

convince yourself that
for a while

not to speak is
great respect

for what should not
be spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
Great Soul

shall i liken you
to a water that once quenched
the longings of this dry
river bed
after which you leave
leaving no trace of you
since you
appear just like the rest
of those
ordinary flow
of water?

such greatness
always
unrecognized
as you
very well like it to be

when no one is looking
that is the time
that you assume finally
the body
of air

they all breathed you
but they do not really know

RIC S. BASTASA
Green

Green leaves of summer
Shades of green in moss and
Lichens sticking to stones and tree
Barks and some greens on twigs
And branches, some greenish
Patches growing on pavements
And even on walls and fences,
Some greens in mangoes and
Rainbows, some greens in shirts
And eyeshades of a woman,

But what I want to really say
Is the green in your eyes,

So green with envy, and now
Turning red to unreasonable anger,

How can you ever change?

RIC S. BASTASA
Green Eyes

got green eyes
as green as grass
on mama's lawn

got green eyes
over greener pastures
on the other fence

got green eyes
baby over your green eyes
when i stay
and you leave me

when you tell me
it is over
got green eyes
as green as
broccoli & lettuce
for my salad
that i serve
and share with my
newly found lover

RIC S. BASTASA
Green Ricefields

green ricefields spreading to a distance
some white herons circling and landing finding a hiding place
for a while gone and then the wind comes from the trees swaying

the white herons in a flock of fives fly away again
to another rectangular spread of a green ricefield
a scarecrow stands in the middle of the place
the clouds arrive turning from pale to grey to blue
the sun has come in full grandeur

i am just amazed, sitting on a bench praying
simply watching and wondering
they all say that i am lazy and doing nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Green Slimy Vomit

that is what he felt precisely when she rejected him.

Phlegm, and fecal matter and cockroaches, and worms.

he likes to pretend that he is a dog retaking what has been expelled.

RIC S. BASTASA
why should i waste my life on so much grief?
i do not deserve this.
why should i, a man in his fifties, waste my time
on things that i can no longer change?
i am unreasonable on this.

why should i go back to places whose paths
deny my presence?
i am crazy on this.

i go where my feet take me where my imagination
like wind to the kite blows me.

if i have scissors now, i will show you
how i will cut the string that you are holding now.

set me free, my Lord, set me free
i have been yours for a long time now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grief

to see how the light faded
to hear how the sounds for help are swallowed by the darkness and the extreme silence
to feel that no one wants to talk
to cease
and stop and finally
be gone forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Grief And Sorrow

grief and sorrow one day
in the life of a man
bathe under the light of
golden silence

together they walk and move
towards the place where patience lives
in the house of simplicity and
forgiveness
under the nooks of forgetting

hope is touched but there are no tears
there is only the dimple of freshness
to start anew

a map unfolds showing the path to tread
on the hills of contentment lies
the new born baby of
happiness

the stars glitter and even the moon which had kept
its silence
slides away from the comfort of the darkness of the
night's embrace

it sings the most beautiful song of solitude
then rests its fullness on the edge of the pond of bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
Grief As An Island

grief is always an island
in the middle of the sea

it will always be that way
even if the storm has already
gone away. Grief will always
be an island

separated from the rest
of the world

even if the waves on the
other side keep on reaching

for its shores, it does not want
to keep them here to stay.

grief will always be an island
silent on the long wall of sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Grieve Not

grieve not
for what God has taken away
from you

grieve not
for what you will miss for another
hundred days

God knows each missing lock of
the hair
and for love God replaces what was
missing
with a thousand loves

For how can God ever
see a tear falling from your eyes
without giving it
a replacement of a rain of joy
sometime

RIC S. BASTASA
Grievous Sins Of Man

raping the earth
killing the trees
molesting the creeks
stealing the fruits
shooting the birds
depleting the forest
converting them
to golf courses
polluting the air
and space with
so much noise
swindling the natives
lording over the poor
get rich quick-schemes
nuclear war heads
pulverizing everything
silencing the people
falsely testifying to the
sun, the stars and the moon.

the worst:
not doing anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Griotte By Marjorie Evasco

the story I remember Sandie Mbanefo remembers
her Igbo father telling her the old village storyteller
sat in the moonlight middle of a circle of ears and drums
beating the story in to let each one remember
stories from the very beginning simple complete
the way to throw nets onto the center of the lake
the way to cast spells to tame spit of the black mamba
in the countless spirals of words seeking the listening
whole navel dark pit memory called Mother in any tongue
in any story remembered and passed on in time
from time to time resurfacing in another other parts
of the world woven with skein like hers like mine like
Lina Sagalar Reyes bathing in the moonlight because
Bohol Electric cut off her supply her power to tell
the moonlight to me undiminished under the candleglow
as she remembered how rain water splashed
a shiver of fireflies on her brown body washed off salt
and silt from her twilight search for mollusks at Loay Beach
with the village women who also tell stories
what they remember everyday where crabs dance mate spawn
at new moon tide extraordinary things glowing
in the mangrove swamps while my feet tread their way
back to the night Sandie showed me Nigeria
the ceremonial clay figures in the round of storytelling
pulling me into the silent stretch of words as time curves
the gesture of fishers’ nets on to another lake where
I sit listen with Mabel Alampay to the blind
storyteller of Talisay remembering Taal Volcano
spewing lightning bolts the memory burned onto thin membrane
of eyelids shut forever into seeing inward a story of awe
passed on passing

RIC S. BASTASA
Gripe Session

open up
burst, bubbles,
flood, and then
settling down
and then
the pond.

RIC S. BASTASA
Groping.....

the language is barbaric,
don't equate it violence but with something that
we cannot understand
because no matter what we do
open our minds like windows
scrub the floor to start with a clean slate
even take the roof
at its senseless option
the vessel still cannot hold on
to what is given
perhaps the vessel is just too small
or the message is
egyptian
like thai characters or
arabic
we give up
perhaps there is nothing to be understood at all
but something only to be felt
like warm or cold,
or hot potato or melting ice cream in our tongues
yes, do not figure out
because there is nothing to be
figured
it is a jargon, a drool,
a language of feelings,
so miserable and
enigmatic simply because
the hands of thoughts are groping in the darkness
and there is nothing there
except the coldness
and the silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Growing And Aging....

growing up
is to know what a ripe
fruit is,

the skin turns yellow
flesh soft
orange spots appear
sort of
wrinkled matter,

you mellow
down
and exude that
responsible scent
of maturity

that sweet flavor
of surrender

you know what happens
next to
the ripening

you fall, and there is
no regret
it just happens that
way

as natural as
what this world
takes
without question
or complaint

a kind hand picks you
up
your want to be
desired
to be consumed
wholly
is now perfected.

RIC S. BASTASA
Growing Old Together

what possible option
can age give us?

now that twilight has come
its hands caressing our weary hairs
ah, there is something yet
that must fulfill itself that
promise to
grow old together the acceptance that
our flesh has surrendered finally
giving in
to the triumph of the spirit
bending itself to the fading light
of our
younger days

we shall be holding our
hands
as we sleep tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
Growing Roots.....

the way to know you is to close my eyes
to touch and feel you
my nerves sing like a choir of children
whose sharp voices pierce the sky

your name engraves itself on the bark of
my tree self
i grow leaves and branches
i, too, know how to touch your sky

i grow roots deep into the layers of
our memories
i keep the silence of the ages
travel alone this damp darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Gtg

i have promises to make
and kilometers to keep
before you sleep

* a la frosty the poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
i guess
loneliness is a self-inflicted
catastrophe,

a choice of ruin,
sometimes, a place
of pain
where the mind is trained
for the greatness
of his spirit

loneliness is
sacrifice, a choice to
find a place for the
purification of the soul

this soul that is so strange
amid the market of confluences
of happiness and lust
and insensitivity
it chooses this

loneliness, silenced silence,
silent patience,
patiently coping with the meaning
of one's existence
gauging the limits of the
happy mind
penetrating the wall of
prohibition,
genuflecting on
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Guesses....

must i have to pretend
that the first one was true?

could be, most likely
could be, i nodded and then

i too, shook my head,
but granting

you think that it was true
and i must believe you

and then it was over
and then came the second time

just a game, people play games,
like kids, could be one of those games

i play, and i want to quit, but who can?
and it was over, and we want to forget it

just the same, the third one came
and with more experience

more meanings are tried to be
attached, like some strings,

and again, like all things with ends,
it too was over, we got it over and over again

and then, just like old things, we forget,
we tried to remember, but powerless

are we, we are not quitters, we are winners,
we keep saying, we are winners,

and then gray hairs occupied our
black territories, and then
we surrender, we accept, we forget
and we try to remember again

everything is over, like a game,
everything ends, like the world,

like life, befriending death
befriending everybody, saying yes and yes

and yes, and then we approach
the bed, and utter the last word,

thanks, it is over.
now, shall you leave me? i am at rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Guests

we try to blend
to the colors of the guests
their perfume
and laughter

sooner the blend dissolves
in discordance
we become overcrowded
in thoughts like an overloaded boat
their perfumes bring
the foul smell of pretenses
and their laughter simply
does not synchronize
with our grief

we wait forward to the last day
of their stay
and when they leave we ponder
that this must not be repeated again

we are better left alone
in our sorrow
the guests cannot understand
we are disturbed
perturbed and molested

there are hotels anyway
where they can just throw their dirt
leave the linens unfolded
chairs scattered on the row
water from the faucet
left open

there will be no murmurs that
at times
all these familiarities breed nothing but
contempt
Gugma Kuno Nga Dili Gugma Matod Pa Niya

sakit
ang paghandom
sa nahitabo
kaniadto

anaa pa gihapon
ang tugsok sa
punyal
nagpabilin
sa lawak sa
hunahuna

apan ang nahigugma
mahigugma lang
gayod gihapon
bisan pag ingnon nimo
nga kini
dili gugma

balikan ang lawak
nga wala nay
sulod
hangpon ang habol
nga wala nay
kainit
hagkan ang alugnan
nga walay aping ug
ngabil

RIC S. BASTASA
Gugma Ug Gana

ang gugmang tiunay
magpabilin bisan kon ang gana
patay na

(love and desire)

a love that is true
stays even when desire
has died

RIC S. BASTASA
Guilt

you made love to her and she's too young
to handle her own death

you leave her vanquished
and you keep the world blind with your poetry

she was too young to know how a beautiful world ends
the flowers of her youth in the garden wilt

you keep the world blind but soon the dragonflies shall come
it may not be too late

let some flowers cover her tomb

RIC S. BASTASA
Guilty Feeling

at dusk a black cat
by chance
happens to meet me
along my path

it stares at me
for a long time
and then runs away
into the dark

dissolving like a black blot
on a dark spot
lost in the ocean of
space

and then up in the sky
a lone star twinkles

RIC S. BASTASA
Guilty Pleasures

the pleasures we seek
all honey
taken in by the hundred
tongue buds
inside our thirsty mouths
come back as bees
that sting
all the skins and flesh
we keep

we are inflamed

RIC S. BASTASA
Guitar Music And Tweeter....

your guitar music
far compares to the
sounds of birds tweeting
in my
personal computer

inside this rectangle is
a world i keep to make me
alive

the lives of other people
spread before me
my sorrow lessened, my despair
spread like the light of the
morning sun over the plains
and mountains

trees sing, keep singing
waves keep the chorus of
all monotonous slumber

if only i have four wings
if only i have twenty claws

i want freedom and if i cannot
have it then i must take this war

soft guitar music is slipping
through my bones and the tweet of
virtual birds are keeping me alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Guns And Thorns

you take him in
you want him to fit
and be
in your circle

late at night he asks
if you are coming
as promised

he was looking for you
you said in due time you will be there
a little busy body this time
making peace
with everybody

he was asked to talk
about something that he never has an inkling
as to what is it

about a world that he never for once entered
nothing like a cave
for bats like him
operating more in sound rather than sight

he was honest
sadly he declared
' i have nothing to say'
this is not the world of my fathers
'i am glad i am the victim
i have not killed anybody'
on the other side
i write some notes,
' why do we transport
an alien to our world
and make him live there and suffer?

why did we invite him
to a party and then we are not there
to make him at home
with every social climber
of words?

and no one
talks to him
to make him a livable
home? '

you are unfair
i keep talking to myself
i cannot be responsible for this
i am an introvert
in fact i belong to no one
even with the good
i have long classified myself
as beyond
the tower of the church or
the pinnacle of governance

i have light kept
inside my body

it is you
but you are never there
you leave anytime you want
to go
you come when you like
coming

when you arrive at last,
the damage has been done.
He regrets your procrastination
but will never tell you.

if you did it to me,
expect a rebellion
my words are knives
guns and
thorns....

RIC S. BASTASA
Gusto Nako Mahimo Kong Gary Soto

gusto nakong mosulat sama kang gary soto
kanang mora kog trabahante nga gadala anang
pala og piko kanang gakandos sa yuta og dayog
pangagho, kanang gahandom kos bulad nga sud-an
og humot kaayo nga mais nga luto og dayon og
inom sa bugnaw kaayong tubig gikan sa atabay,

gusto kong moadto sa uma og mosimhot sa mga
bulak sa iyang mga gapas, gusto nakong makita
ang iyang giingon nga pula kaayo nga adlaw nga
iyang gikumkom sa iyang palad, ganahan ko nga
mahimo kong gary soto, magtindog nga gary soto,
og molingkod nga gary soto, og modagan nga gary
soto, og moambak na gary soto, kadtong mokuyog
sa mga langgam nga namakwit paingon sa San
Francisco, kanang mora kog tubig sa kanal nga
mikuyog sa pagdagan sa hangin paingon sa mga
lugar nga dagko og sweldo ang hago nga trabaho,

apan dili man gyod nako makaya si gary soto,
mas nindot man gayod ang pagsulat ni gary
sa iyang mga pangagho, sa iyang mga kahiubos
og pagpalutos: dili gayod ako mahimong gary
soto, mao nga ako ania, mao lang gihapon sa
akong pagkaako niining akong mga balak sa
pag-eksperimento. Sagdi na lang, basin puhon
maawat ko ra si gary soto sa iyang pagkamaldito

RIC S. BASTASA
that we are one into this
pits of lonely wits
beside each other
or on top of one another
on this narrow hole
one understands fully why
others scream and lose their
minds and if lucky enough
recover and regain the poise
of a sane island,
this continent of void is
vast, and it is not vague
years in embrace of our
weaker dispositions
have taught us
t here is nothing strange
t here is nothing that is unacceptable
we master the pain
as the saying goes
to know what real happiness means
i guess i must have said
much and more
but much and more can never
be much and more
unless one opens his heart
and have it cut and sliced again
as a matter of sprouting
love, endearments, bliss
seeds that grow too well
because the ground is made up
of rotten expectations
the carcasses of ambitions
the humus of hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
you challenge me to write about nothing
you say it is nice theme
something that we experience somehow
when we are down
depressed like a man screaming on the boat
bound to nowhere
rotating upon itself the paddles all so confused

i don't really believe that i can write about it
it is beyond my grasp
beyond the clutches of words
but let me tell you that when i begin to sigh
and take a deep breathe
i know that it is here inside my heart
but my guts deny it

RIC S. BASTASA
Habent Sua Fata Libelli

the destiny of books
always depends on the
reader,

the destiny of my poetry
depends
on the capacity of
the feeler

its rhythm its tone
and color
its scent
its ending
its lasting impression

its possibilities like your
possibilities
always a memory of those
whom we have
easily
buried in the realm of
forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Habit
	his is by force of habit
that my fingers
caress the keys
to make
another poem
for the day,
nothing is really
significant,
nothing to give
us power,
it is like
brushing my teeth,
washing my hands,
gargling vinegar with salt,
defecating,
putting my brief
and shorts,
straightening my collar,
inserting my shirt
locking my belt,
combing my hair,
going to the office,
you try going further
than all these,
sorry, there is nothing here
but just routine,
plain typing, and reporting,
stating
and even
by force of habit
without thinking
i said, keep doing
what you do with your life,
do not follow me,
there is nothing
important about this,
this is routine,
the usual path,
where everyone passes
and goes and enters
and exits and
exits and enters
all over again
until death surprises
you no more,
comes like
plain closing and opening
of the office door.

RIC S. BASTASA
tell me
what is it that bothers you?

why you wake up at 2
in the morning
and write a poem
that you keep to yourself?

why you keep all those emotions
inside you?

what is the color of your sorrow?
what is the sound of your happiness?

tell me
why until now you still hide in the shadows
of your being?

tell me now
because tomorrow i am leaving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hackneyed

if you go deep, shall they go with you?  
go deeper, take those who love you,  
what if they do not have your gills  
and they cannot breathe  
with you like a fish?

it is still a family, mom and dad and kids  
at the shallow pool, where baby is wading  
soft sunlight, strong rocks of bed-floors  
green moss beside, ducks walking on the banks,  
seagulls on top, clouds drifting in the skies

ah, being hackneyed, or trite,  
it is nothing  
never shocking  
copycatting, ah,

these too have their own noble purpose  
for a happier bonding, less the ruse.

RIC S. BASTASA
one day
i look forward to this
that one day
you look back
on this group of words
and then you smile,

you remember something
that i once said
and then you trace
the exact hour
of the night where we
stayed together

you remember a touch
from my hand
you look back
close your eyes and
dream,

it is enough for me
once,
we both remember
and then
the light fades away

RIC S. BASTASA
Hagpat

ang akong kinabuhi
morag kamunggay nga imong
gihagpat ug hinay hinay

ang nahibilin sa akong
kalag mao na lang ang mga
tikog

hagawhaw na ang tingog sa
hangin kon molabay kini
sa akong atubangan

kon malabay ko sa espidno
wala kay madungog nga
reklamo

RIC S. BASTASA
suppressed repressed
emotions
restructured to
be
understood

RIC S. BASTASA
Haiku 1

some defects in the
pc prompts me to write this
lousy haiku

RIC S. BASTASA
Haiku For Choices

always have a choice
you must always remember that
if not willing, - junk!

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Haiku For The Childless Courple

'coz they can't have kids
all their dogs got all their love
what a happy life!

RIC S. BASTASA
Haiku For You

The bright moon
An inch above
The quiet pond.

RIC S. BASTASA
Haikunin

every memory of you
pierces like
a nail

RIC S. BASTASA
Halakangcandisaka

halakangcandisaka
migamit ka sa ngan ni casey walsh
nangita na nimo kay nganong migamit
ka sa iyang ngalan sa walay pananghid

well anyway
nindot bang magsugod anang bag-ong ngan
nga sounding like

carwash?

RIC S. BASTASA
Half

half the glass
is philosophy

you must tell
whether it is
easy or full

RIC S. BASTASA
Half Of Me

half of me is darkness
half of me is light

half of me is a shadow
half of me is my body

one hand is above the other
elbow to elbow that is what levels me

i ponder upon these
one body pulled by two horses in opposite directions

i ponder upon a way
to tame this wildness
this anarchy of my senses
these desires not properly canalized
on Eros overflowing
on a confusion of my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Half-Open Door

let me try to see
a door half-open

let me not be
half the man

let there be
light though dim

let me be the shadow
to come in

let me not find
you asleep

with some
living tears

let me kiss your lips
i can't let you die in peace

let me touch your lightness
let me be this caress

RIC S. BASTASA
Half-Truths

i distrust the
half-moon
when it speaks
to me
its eyes goes
nowhere
when i gaze at it
it dimmers
and my world
gets
darker
no star dares
to rest
upon its chin
it stabs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Halfway

you ride a boat
now you are at the middle
of the sea
the land at both sides
seem far

halfway is a malady.
impatient sometimes
you think
you'd like to sink
and be gone for good

the lighthouse blinks
to help
now there is only darkness
throughout

the sea murmurs
fish glisten in the water below

you let the night pass
as you begin to count the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Half-Way Through

half-way through
a love poem

you tell me
you will
finish it soon

will it be
about you
and me?

not to hurt me
you choose
not to finish

depth within
is the pain
of the truth

for how many
years will you
be hiding
away from
its face?

RIC S. BASTASA
Halfway...

halfway
to exhaustion

death is nowhere
to find

one sits on the
grass

meeting beauty
and kissing it

one sleeps with
grace

falls asleep
embracing dreams

halfway a door opens
as gently

as a very delicate
pink bud

RIC S. BASTASA
Half-Woman Half-Fish

I've read the story about
that half-woman half-fish

so sad to know that a man
had been taken deep down

the blue sea and was never
seen again because of a
deception which stirred the
minds of kin and skin

now i must confront you
about what i must say & do

i can't take both, i can
discard the half of that woman

& i can take the fish for
my viand tonight good for

my body and soul, i am
not hungry for tales i am

hungry for salt and sea and
fins and tails and what is

not found in that woman
which i can have at my command.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hallelujah

and then
what we saw was a dove
above our heads

and what we said
was only

hallelujah!
hallelujah!

RIC S. BASTASA
Hamlet Stranded In An Island Surrounded By Sharks

it is the same view from here
the sea and the island and the sharks around it
it is the same me
unable to decide whether to cross the see
leave the island
and take the risk with all the sharks

RIC S. BASTASA
Hammock Upon The Winds
	here lies sadness like patches of green moss
sticking upon a rock half covered by the clear water of the river

one may think that sadness will always be there as patches of
what we have always wanted to get rid off like peeling them off gently from
an old sharp and rugged edged rock

sometimes you become so tired planning and doing and then surrendering into
the helplessness of a fallen leaf that floats and is carried slowly by the current of
the river early morning on a Sunday

when people are not around spending holidays on places that they miss for the
whole week

and so one lays its tired body on the side of the river's bank
wades his hands and feels the coolness of the water and then starts to flow and
release what he thinks must be given away

one feels the restfulness of finally giving up
of not minding about what cares must be done in order to make
life smoother

flowing and easier like the way the brown leaf floats
like the way the blue clouds drift
like the way we let the moss grow
upon the side of the rock
having more wet times with the clear water of the river
having a clearer view of the orange fish within and the shiny pebbles
beneath them

words lull me like i were carried by the hammock upon the arms of the unseen
winds....

RIC S. BASTASA
i like to be formal with you
so we walk hand in hand in the park.
more civil, we go just there
talking, not the kissing
and the hugging, for that would
go beyond the norms of
simple acceptable intentions.

but look at you, you are lonely still
you dress your face with that
grumbling look of an old ass hole.

tonight we go walking again
under the moon under the stars
we stop under the big tree
we'll do what makes us free

RIC S. BASTASA
Hand Me Your Dreams

You have dreams
Suspended, deferred,
Unfulfilled, you still keep
Them without hope

I am here, tell me your
Dreams, hold them like
Delicate glass
Or white egg

Hand them to me
I will wrap them
With this silk
And tie them with
This golden thread

Away from the
Wicked eyes of the world

RIC S. BASTASA
Handel

this morning
i sing alleluia
i never thought
of it

it just comes
my heart is grateful
it is like sunshine
getting inside

the window of my house
that is open
i sing alleluia
alleluia! alleluia!

it simply comes
because my heart is grateful
To you O Lord!

RIC S. BASTASA
Handel Concerto Grosso

it was like a meeting
of cats
the objective of which
is to bell the
dog

who among you has the courage to do the belling of the dog?

yes the meeting among brothers and sisters
before mother died
before father followed her
before my grandfather died

it is about land, money
it is all about inheritance

who would spend to the funeral without reimbursement?
who would shoulder the bills of their hospitalization using private funds?

none would do that
my youngest brother said they died and they have their own money
let them spend for themselves then

what i want is, he said, which inheritance is mine
that is all i need, who cares?

so who will take the bell of this dog's greed?

handel play on play on they are killing each other.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hands And Birds

there is something good in being free

when like birds we make the impression that we own the sky
that we know how to live in there

but the sky can never be our home
mortals as we are and birds have claws designed for land

we go back to our past and find out that once there was a home there
that there is also something good in there

we go from here to there and in sum it makes the proper comparisons

it comes sometimes like a memoir
that there is also comfort in some instances of our unfreedoms

the comfort of warm fire imprisoned in our heart
the assurances of the walls of the house

the hold that we give to the railings of the stairs
each step each trust when we feel that our hands cannot float in the air forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hands And Shoulders

my shoulder
cries for help
through
its aches

my hands keep
their silence in
prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
Handsome Friend Charlie

handsome friend charlie
of the G community
poses in a photo shoot
for he says he's gonna be
a star someday
we saw it
but it's rather weird
he holds his brown belt
rather than wear it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hanging Like A Cloud On The Arm Of A Cliff

you were so calm
like a white cumulus hanging on the arm of a cliff
beside the branch of
a tree where a little black bird
sings

below you
i am the gray pebble watching
listening

amazed
on a miniature world
complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hanging...

we like to make love
but sleep invades
we wake up we say
we like to make love
but dreams keep on
holding us apart
we decide to touch
to simply touch the
surface at the middle
portion of this age,
we shy away from
deeper penetration.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hang-Over

between us is
a fence

a set of painted
ing iron grills

we greet each other
today
a formal good morning

i sit on a garden
chair
sipping coffee

and you on the other
side is
having a booze
of your life

a mixed concoction
of gin, lemon,
rum, (i do not mind
what you are
saying)

again i am engrossed
inside an
idea

which is a little bit
vague
last night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hangzhou, West Lake

do you expect me to
be happy here? the lake is as old as time
that is true

there is this premise that the old lake
must somehow
refresh me about some past pleasures
that i have forgotten

round one: the sound of the wooden boat
and the sleeping willows are peaceful along the
river edged with boulders of stones

there are stories
those sad ones about lovers who die without
tasting what love could have been

i am swallowed by an ocean of faces
and sadness simply comes again
uninvited.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happier

logic can be so tiring,
though sweet and straightforward
but it can be too exacting

and sometimes it does not work for us
it serves us a bowl of
destruction
less the imagination
hating the temporary cure of a fantasy
an illusion of glass
and light
and the provision for smell
of rare oils of lavender and
lemon

do you know that i have given too much reasoning
in exchange for the cold glass of
passivity?

i mean, just sitting down thinking about nothing
discarding the formula for living

like a bowl of clay under the sun
containing upon itself the song and caress of
sunlight

so gentle like a waft of air
around its ring

it is when i discharge what i have
when i surrender what i think i must be
that i become
fully alive

logic can be murderous
not allowing any twist of fate
on solid predictions
of this and that
with no allowance for a miracle

logic can kill us
how can it entertain other possibilities?

it is all numbers and facts
for which life is not.

i embrace possibilities now
as logic taunts and laughs

i am patient, i listen, i entertain what is hidden
from the grasp of the hands of theorems.

you see, i am relaxed, you should see the smile in my face
happier than the morning sun
the morning daisy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happier This Time

i

I don’t smile
You may think I am giving you
The permission
To think
That I really do not mean
What I say
With this grin on my face

ii

I stand my ground now
No backing off
On a wishy-washy
I give weight
To my prime intentions

iii

I tell the truth
I will tell you what I feel
I will tell you that I am not comfortable
With what you are doing

iv

Tell me I am silly
I will agree
I am not a little bit touchy
You are right I am
Now take the wind out of your sails

v
I do not have fingers
To point
To make you more defensive
I have only my heart
To tell you how I feel
Who are you anyway
To be blamed?

vi

I will make up a list of handy excuses
To see what is clearly going on
Before I put myself in the fray

vii

I am not afraid
To change my mind
Whenever I want to
In a minute or two
I may still have time
To tell you
That sometimes I do not
Honor commitments.

now, i will be happier

RIC S. BASTASA
Happily...

for Ging
...happily separated
the man demands
his right for a child
and she cannot give it,
quits,
she is into knitting
and time heals and
she's into
herself into her
own womb,

for Joy,
...one plus one equals zero
for Charles finally
and today i see her blooming
happier alone,

for Lora,
...she cannot live without him
and she is into culinary arts,
that binding marriage
till forever,

and for myself,
...happily i wish for more
honesty,
let life be life
let is unfold and give me
what meaning is still available,
i am not afraid,
i can live without anybody beside me
but i choose to be bound

happily.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Happiness

after a hard day's work
you keep all things in order
pack up your things
and close the cabinets
make some notes
for tomorrow's work again

you pass by the bakery
buy some cookies
enough for the little money
you save for the day

you walk your way towards home
and there they are
meeting you
by the door in your little house
waiting

your dogs
with tails swaying
hugging your legs
eating your bread.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Alone By The River

the moon was full
spreading golden light
on the river
it was so peaceful
and i was naked and alone
it felt like steel
and my right hand
was fondling it...

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness And Joy

when you look for yourself and find
this self
within your heart
and you touch this self
so lovingly
with the understanding of your mind
you have found happiness
like you put your hands behind your back
and embrace your shoulders

fleeting and sometimes
tiring this search
of self that ends sometimes
in questioning
how long does this last?
this won't
it will pass but it may come again
but to last
it will not

you either go deeper
or you go higher
always beyond yourself

to find another
a heart to your heart
a mind to your mind
you talk you understand you reach for another hand
you kiss, you make love, you share each other 's bodies
each other's long lonely nights
this can be more than happiness
we call this joy

but you go deeper this time or higher if you
prefer it
this search for joy greater than joy
this joy beyond bodies beyond nights beyond hands
beyond time
eternal happiness, this is joy greater than joy
we sense it
but not completely
we sense it when we look at the eyes of the person we love
and who loves us in return
truthfully and so beautifully
the feelings in our hearts
as we sleep and make love and dream and stay together
with clasped hands

we have mere glimpses
vague but it is there

it is the joy that always lurks but cannot fully make us see
we are too small yet
too young to fully dance the steps and leaps of this

i am still looking for this
this joy
i know it is there, but i just can't utter it

i must know better
i live some more and perhaps if need be
die and then travel and be there

beyond, yes always this feeling of beyond
my armpit is warm and my eyes are still rolling

i am holding it
i have it in my heart but not competely
and so i ramble

in so much waiting, this impatience
but lovely still, and yes, so beautiful....tomorrow.

<<<<<<<<< It is far better to seek 'joy.' Joy is related to happiness, but it is a deeper
experience. In the search for happiness the individual focuses upon himself, but joy moves a person out of a self-centered preoccupation and provides an orientation towards others. Joy is an experience which connects us to that which is 'Greater' than we are. It connects us to the creative power that is more than the 'I' or ego. Joy gets us out of ourselves and in contact with this 'Other' and with others. Joy can sustain us throughout the four phases of life. If we are willing to give up the search for happiness, we may find joy. It exists near the center of the wheel where happiness and suffering meet and intermingle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Enough For Me

When we are here
we think only of a road that ends
to a definite
stop

so when we go near that place
we think we are consumed
and feel like we are
empty tin cans

worry no more
there is another view to all these
and it is like
a window overlooking
a cliff

the trees appear like dots
upon a mound
and the skies are like rivers
blue and white
flowing upon
so much space

it is bountiful
and enormous and your heart surely
cannot contain
all these

we go beyond and that is
happiness enough for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness In A Platter

fruits in a platter,
pineapple wearing a crown
apples, green and red in shining gloss
of their glory,
alligator pear
sleepy,
ripe mango,
your hands carrying them
your breasts
helping to put them all
in one platter
of flesh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Is A Decision

i have long decided
to be a happy man, and till this day
i stick to this decision,
sailing on the ship of happiness
along the sea of joy
the foams of excitement
the winds of bliss

There is no grief in this world
of responsibility
For God loves a happy man
The smile beneath
the heart that sings
the hands that wave
in celebration
The self in collaboration with
Nature in Harmony
With the happy disposition of
the Earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Is Coming....

my dear
have tolerance
for discomfort
for as you know
it is part
of growing up

and when you
grow up
miracles happen
your hair
grows
your knows
longer
you tower
like a princess

did i not teach
you about the pains
of the snakes
when they molt?

have tolerance
pain does not stay
that long
it pays a visit
at your door
to tell you that
happiness is
coming

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Is Coming....(Not Knows But Nose)

my dear
have tolerance
for discomfort
for as you know
it is part
of growing up

and when you
grow up
miracles happen
your hair
grows
your nose
longer
you tower
like a princess

did i not teach
you about the pains
of the snakes
when they molt?

have tolerance
pain does not stay
that long
it pays a visit
at your door
to tell you that
happiness is
coming

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Is Longing For Repetition

Repeat what? say you love me again.
Prove it again. Kiss me again and again.
Multiply the mirrors of mesmerizing munches
love, love, love, ...
make love to me for the nth time.

multiply the branches of the trees of desire
free those thousand birds of restraints.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Is Only Real When Shared

AT chow king
i've seen so many
new faces eating
the hours alone

no one is surprised
one gets attuned to
a certain individuality
a mode of indifference
where one minds
his own business
like a yuppy

i must be an outdated
fool feeling a little bit
ashamed to sip my
seafood noodles
alone sensing a
humiliating selfishness
underneath the spoon

i have decided though
to have a take-out
i am not happy at this
chair facing an empty
chair as others pass by

i want my noodles shared
with someone
where conversations
become spices where
news become condiments
where friendship makes
the food more delicious
simply because the hours
too are shared like food
for the soul itself.
seemingly the rule is
posted in their city wall,

here if you want to be happy
you have to beg

at the gate you have to choose
for whom to beg

it is not usual that sometimes
you are refused

you have to beg again and
again

at the point of humiliation
you begin to realize

there is not point forcing
yourself to this kind of thing

you back out from the city game
back to your village

you close the door of your house
for olive oil, a little salt and bread.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Lies At The Surface Of Things

when we are happy
we only look at the surface
of everything: like bird in the sky
carabao on grass, house on stilts,
a river flowing, sun rising,
mountains overshadowing us,
as we realize how small we are
perhaps, even insignificant
unless we hold on to hope and faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness May Come Later....

there is always
a sorrow inside us

do not be shy
say a little

we, men, do not want
to tell about this sorrow

women know that
but just like us they are not saying anything

it is this respect for sorrow
that makes it dignified

well kept,
well minded, but never spoken

when you share it with someone else
what good will it give her?

she has also her own sorrow
inside her

no matter how well dressed
no one wants to take it

it is the dignity of sorrow
to be silent and just be itself

it will always be here
waiting for her sister.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Of The Simple Heart

'a glass of wine,
a roast chestnut,
a wretched little brazier,
the sound of the sea'

-u & i

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Simplified.....

my happiness now is
simple

as simple as a folded
paper
to make a kite and feel
flight

it is the floating and
the loafing
without an adoration
of any person

this love of self and
of freedom
this having not to think
about what
happens next....

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness Without A Reason....Is It Bliss?

i am happy
i can jump out of this window
to land on
the grass of my old
home

i am happy and i am
singing
the song of the village
the song of your
world

i am happy and i am jumping
like a frog on the rain on the
fields of rice and the
hills of cogon grasses

i am happy and i wonder why
i am searching for the main reason
which i could not really find

i am happy because i am happy
is it a decision to make?

look at the small boy pulling his
truck toy on the street away from home
ask him why he is smiling and he will answer
you with a smile and a nod and he continues
his walk towards the park to meet his
friends with their other toys

happiness is, and this is true happiness,
has no reason at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness, A Visit

happiness comes
she knocks at the door
and sits on the sofa
sips tea
takes little bites
of black forest cake
opens up a short
conversation about
us

solitude wants more of her
and attempts to please her some more
with a poem

when it was about to be read
she butts in saying
she is not staying long
she still has to meet a lot of other people

RIC S. BASTASA
Happiness...

To know DESPAIR
and not to dislike it somehow
because it visits us once in a while
uninvited

We cannot just drive it
because it is related to
Joy and we must all welcome
a friend of our friends
a relative of our relatives

Take Despair as is
Feed it and Give it some drinks
AT night listen to its
Hang-ups and always
make it feel
that you too studied well
your psychology
and understood
what life (and death)
is all about

It will stay for days and nights

Be flattered
Perhaps it likes the way you
deal with it

It tempts you somehow
about the beauty of Suicide
Just refuse
Say your black and white NO
Do not betray
Bliss, and Beauty and Truth
and Goodness
that you still have
inside your hands
and heart
Despair like any Creature
also Experiences boredom
and then it decides to leave you
and because you have been patient
tender
and gentle
all along
You must have noticed
that you have changed a bit
Now getting bolder
and Stronger and
Wiser
and very patient
sensitive to the
needs of others
and also listening to
the inner voice
of YOURSELF

When it leaves you
Send her some of your gifts
Tell what you feel
How it had always behaved
In your house
and how others too have behaved
The way life should be
Send her your smile
and your hugs
And make a promise that
when it comes back
You will always give it a nice
bed and board
That usual breakfast of
sunny side up fried egg
and Thai rice
and brewed coffee
the homemade ham
and baked potatoes

Now you are at home with
Yourself
Now you know how to handle
all guests
invited or uninvited
Now you know what universal
welcome is all about

Wait for your next guest
Welcome Joy.

For life is just like
a House
With guests from time to time
Be an amiable Hostess
Take pride
In your little hospitality
and Household Diplomacy
and

with your learned
Social Expertise

Where can happiness
be?

ah, it is there

in Every Nook of the House
In every line of your palm
In every lock of your hair
In every pore of
your skin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy Day....

you must know
where to go
and what to do

you have a promise
to fulfill
principles to live
by

do what is right
always do what you think
is right

you have befriended
yourself

your hands know your
arms
your toes are in
agreement with your
feet

you know this dance
you feel the harmony of the
music and the lyrics

you dance with
the music in unity with
the universe....

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy Earthday

today i planted
a tree
in honor of the earth

my tree can make it green someday.

i thank the earth
for the place i live
the water i drink
the sea i sail and swim
i thank the earth for
everything good that is happening

happy earth day
long live the earth!

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy Easter

sun is up
and i wake up
to a brand
new day

Jesus has risen
there is no reason
to be again
forsaken

Jesus has come again
sun, moon, stars
in the days and nights
of our lives

happy easter here
from Mindanao

no more wars
let peace be in the
silence of
the colored eggs
let the rainbows
come
after this rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy Endings

some poems are sad but we may help
them to be happy again
to let the poems wear a smile
and let these poems like
fairies dance in the
prairies let them sing the songs
of love and
passion and thanksgiving and
praise and be
so venerable before the throne
of the divine

i read this poem this morning
that has made my day
a very inspiring one indeed
and it was not that long and winding
and direct to the point

it simply said: i love you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy Moments

inside your room i keep some peelings
of ripe oranges, and i squeeze them when you finally
take your rest,

at the top of the cabinet i keep a glass of blended strawberries
less the yogurt, and i keep the window open for you
to see the fullness of the moon tonight
and the calmness of the lake,

silvery and shiny and shining
the view is just perfect for the two of us and then

we do what we really want to do
we kiss, we intertwine, we make love, we become one

with the stars and the silence of the spaces of this beautiful universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Happy, Yes Happy

feet jumping with joy
hands clapping
raised to the skies
lips singing your
love songs,
naked
you run and then
plunge in the sea
of love
all the waves
of the sea telling
with glee:
welcome sire dearie!

hear ye! hear ye!
we have another
crazy lover to
drown today

RIC S. BASTASA
Happyness

something in us
sometimes
spells things differently
but no matter
what]
we do not really
mind}
what symbols
we attach, for whatever
that brings us
joy,
wrongly, or rightly,
we do not mind the eyes
that see us,
we only see each other
eye to eye
and body to body our souls
fuse, as though
we are the only inhabitants
of this earth
as though we are the only
owners of the sea
and the sky
heaven and earth

i do not even imagine
hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Harbinger

let i be the frost to tell you that winter
in a moment shall be here
let i be the omen about something
bad that may happen
so you may say all your prayers
and convince the gods to
change their minds
and bring you fortune instead
let me herald, Candice
your coming

i am your harbinger
let then the writing begin
let yourself pour all your feelings

then the winter may not be that cold
as you take the whiteness that the snow leaves
when it finally melts

let me be your friend
still in the coming spring.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Hard Habits Do Not Really Change

the morning wakes you up
with palpitations
it has no plan ending
this travails
you resolve that schedules
must change
always there are promises
that break their heads and
limbs
against the cliffs of
habits that never give you
a chance to change.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hard Headed Woman

hard headed woman
with a very soft heart
all for me
what shall i give you in
return?

i shall always have
you in my heart
i shall always look
for you

my hard headed woman
i am weeping for you

you know i have always loved you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hard Headed Woman For M.V.

I'm looking for a hard headed woman,
One who will take me for myself,
And if I find my hard headed woman,
I won’t need nobody else, no, no, no.

I’m looking for a hard headed woman,
One who will make me do my best,
And if I find my hard headed woman
I know the rest of my life will be blessed - yes, yes, yes.

I know a lot of fancy dancers,
People who can glide you on a floor,
They move so smooth but have no answers.
When you ask why’d you come here for?
I don’t know why?

I know many fine feathered friends
But their friendliness depends on how you do.
They know many sure fired ways
To find out the one who pays
And how you do.

I’m looking for a hard headed woman,
One who will make me feel so good,
And if I find my hard headed woman,
I know my life will be as it should - yes, yes, yes.

I’m looking for a hard headed woman,
One who will make me do my best,
And if I find my hard headed woman...

(a song, from Cat Stevens for Manolita)

RIC S. BASTASA
Hard Liquor......

and this is the irony of love.
never mind.

to set yourself free
at least only for a while
you drink
hard liquor

the feelings fly
you see birds with you in the air
it is dark but the song
is clear and sweet

you remember love
but not the chains anymore

you are never ugly
in this freedom, everyone is as beautiful
as they are

in their own right
in their own way......

travel, make my own scene, you and i, all in love,
every bit, every moment.

when it is over, how simple it is.
life is simple indeed. We sleep and dream again.

did someone older and wiser tell us that after all,
reality is another illusion?

RIC S. BASTASA
Hard-Headed Feet...

at the party of a friend on his 51st birthday last night

they went on some revivals
matt monroe and
pilita corales,

gosh, they know the lyrics
by heart

i listened with the
giant ears of this year's metallic rabbit.

tried to dance the salsa
and the mambo and the chacha
and that criminal tango...

disappointing indeed,

my feet
do not follow my usual orders anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
the heart does not cease
pumping blood,
neither has the mind
stopped to think
neither must we cease
to love
to care to dream
the moon does not
stop shining
neither does the sun
or the stars
the orbits the planets follow
neither must our
feet stop rejoicing about
the new paths
our hands on their new maps
of touch
our eyes on the beautiful
landsapes
God has put.

RIC S. BASTASA
Harem

welcome
to desire
welcome
to my harem
welcome
love
do not be
shy
welcome
to the colors
of life
dance
dance
welcome
to lust

RIC S. BASTASA
Harmonizing The Chaos

how many heads do you have now?
five. yes five more faces.
the mouths have become your problem.
they do not seal their lips and you
crave for the silence of the crabs.
the teeth gnash, they are afraid of the
ash. the gums, yes the gums are weak
and they are not spitting out what the tongue
has been keeping.

silence. you issue the order.
they wait for the words from your heart.
they keep on waiting.
they are looking for love like you.
but there isn't any, and so they keep their
own chaos now. the tongue is licking
every part of your body and the eyes
are busy with the pictures of two shadows
making love against the light.

the hands are gentle and they start to caress
the roots of your loneliness.

love, love, love, the lips begin to whisper.
the heart wakes up from a deep slumber
and now it assumes the role
of the storyteller.

once upon a time...
and now they begin to listen again.

once upon a time, there lived a very lonely princess
and there was this prince riding on a white horse
from the castle in the sky............

the princess turned to stone
because the prince never kissed her.
Harmony

when the guava tree showed leaves
we waited for time
for it to give flowers
and then it came
we waited till it bore fruits and then
the fruits ripened
we waited till all the ripe ones fell to the ground

then our hands picked them all up
and we ate the juicy sweet pulp and then
we spit out the seeds to the ground

we swallowed what fills our thirst and hunger
and the world smiled

RIC S. BASTASA
Has The Woman Arrived?

I have seen her picture, the one you are proud of
She is indeed beautiful
With long, brownish curly hair
Her smile is longing for you
It is moist
And warm

When was the last time you kissed her?
Two years, four, five
Or even one

It is such a long time
And you said you were crazy for her
Her neck entwined to yours
Her nails buried subcutaneously to your soul
Her sweat immersed to your
Chest hair and whirling in your
Masculine nipples

Captured
Your tongues twist like snakes in heat
In some isolated swamps
In your two mouths

You surely miss those thoughts of her
And she comes back to you
Like a breeze in the sea
And you wait

Here she comes. Hold your breath
Be kind enough. Use your fingers like tendrils to her
Vines. Be cautious, she is fragile, too glassy.
Lift her like
An expensive Chinese porcelain.
Then break her so gently
She will ask for it
Through the welcomes of her eyes
Like hands saying
Come to me come to me
Break me gently
Break me gently
I am closing my eyes I am spreading my self to this universe

She gleams in fading lights.
And you will be her strong darkness to blend
The colors of love, desire, lust, longing,
Love and lust, lust and love.

Feel her, dissolve in her softness
Your tenderness now diffused.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hat My Patience As Ever Is Ocean Wide.

i am one of those
trees
could be that to me
i am still alive

no, i am a rock, but
deep within is this
conversation that negates
what a rock is

there is always a talking
self unto itself
a dream inside a cabinet
skeletons in my closet
worms in my own can
dirty linens in my own
yard, the sun looks down
upon me, seed without glory.

all the while, i have
always been air to you
i am inside your lungs
which you have not really
noticed. it is I,
who is making you alive.

youth, how cruel are you
not to know my name which i
have carved in stone for years

your tight skin,
you bright eyes,
the clarity of your memory
the careless happy disposition
which i have all spent
lost and missed.

promise me tonight that
you will never ask again
why i still love you.

promise me not to ask about my foolishness.
i have too what you do not have, and you have what i do not have.

turn off the light. Let us play what we lack. Let us complete this puzzle this guilt, this disguise.

youth and wisdom, how do you compliment each other now to survive the storm of loneliness?

you are playful. I am serious.
you are lost. Be calm. Do not panic. for i have found you.
do not tell someone who would be envious about this...
that i have loved you
that you are loved
and that my patience as ever is ocean wide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hate Finds You Too (A Reply)

hate also takes its
own revenge
upon those who look
at me
with the eyes of
hate

like a sound
it echoes the very
name you call
me

RIC S. BASTASA
Hate Is Such A Word

hate is such a word
but it could be real if you wish it to be
and from a flicker
it can turn into a big fire
and it can burn a woman
like hell hath no fury
than a woman scorned

try the little sister of hate
we call it indifference
she is numb and yet
so strong like its
brother named
Trottel

RIC S. BASTASA
Hate?

to choose between love
& hate

we choose love

hate is a waste
of energy
it makes you
explode &

when you explode
you shall be scattered
until
you cannot find
yourself
because you have
become
pieces or
shrapnel
stuck on the
flesh
of other people

RIC S. BASTASA
Hating A Self

i hate taking a tour
alone by myself,

from time to time i have to ask someone
to click the camera for me.

then i walk in the burnham park
i am mistaken as a ham for sale

it is a pity
being alone spending a sleepless night

in a five star hotel
no channel of the TV appeases me

don't mistake me
i also hate you for this.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have A Good Time

Buy another
gold fish for your
aquarium

gather cranberries
in the yard

ride the red
pony

spend money on
italian spaghetti
and butter toast

sip coffee
on a table by the sea

write a poem
at nine

RIC S. BASTASA
Have Fun Then

what is your wish?
i wish to die as soon as possible

why do you wish death?
it is certain
other wishes do not come true
so i grab this
certain, inevitable wish
that will always come
ture

why are you saying this?
i just said it
why are you saying this?
it is not nonsense

why are you saying this?
don't ask me
and so where are you going?
i don't really know

where are you going?
you are repeating a question
where are you going?
i have faith, i have hope and the going knows where i am going

then?
if possible i want a repetition because i have
unfinished business because i was unloved even if i loved much

do you want to be born again?
of course
then it is a logical wish.
have fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have Fun, Take The Vacations You Like

have fun
that is your advice
take the much needed
vacations in Egypt
see the Pyramid of Gaza
in Italy the Leaning
Tower of Pisa

i won't.

The journey to
Myself is still my own
best vacation.

i have in mind
you know
the fable of the grasshopper
and the ant.

it is the ant
that wins at the end
on a virtue of thrift
and wisdom

after all
the fool and his money
always part.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have Patience

there is so much noise
on the surface of things
like a very shallow river

its waters always arguing
with all the rocks
and even with the peebles

it lashes its tongue
on every bank that
it passess
without
listening

farther away is the wisdom
of silence
the patience of the depths
and its dangers

to swallow those who
are reckless
to compel the noise
to submit
to its final poise

forever, the quiet
rest, resignation, death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have They None Of Their Words?

have been lookin'
for words, they, those who love
the words, those that assume the
silver color of the river
and the golden sheen of the moon,
many, many
they look for your words, their hearts
thirst, their minds drowning and
their souls wanting to rise from the
ruins of their bodies, many, many,
are looking for you,
for you are so kind as the tree giving fruits
for light as the cloud shaping its faces
for you are as wide in patience as the ocean
green as the grass, coolness as refreshing as the
river, many, many shall look for you
for you have ears of the corn
and wings of the winds,
for you have their emotions and then you
put them in place

RIC S. BASTASA
Have You Experienced Inside A Wall Within A Wall Within A Wall?

i laugh since i broke a wall and i smile because finally i am free
and yet when i try to smile anew i find myself inside another wall again.

i break another wall again and again and again
but the walls keep walling me like i am its lover.

and finally i give up, i feel the walls too loving and caring for me.
and then i care for the walls and learn to love each corner
its thickness its soundless world

and then i tell the house where the walls are growing healthy,
i am glad about walls. They keep me secure. And then finally i said it for once.

the walls love me. and i love the walls since then.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have You Noticed?

have YOU noticed
the foul smell of the dung
of the cow and goat
around the manger
of the
baby who is destined
to be KING
of all kings?

if you do,
you are one of his sons.

RIC S. BASTASA
Have You?

have you ever experienced walking
just walking away without having any destination in mind?
just seeing the place where you always pass
the trees along the path
some weeds and stones and carabao dung
no conclusions
just observations
the clouds hanging on the side of the hill
the sun shining above a tall coconut tree
you take shade
and some streaks of light pass thru the leaves

sometimes i drive the car
but i do not have any place in mind
or name
or purpose
i just keep driving following the road
and slowly i see the ordinary things
and people and
structures

an old bridge abandoned
beside its railing some vines
rust overcoming its steel edges

your mind keeps traveling
but you do not stop it
it is the one controlling itself
not you

the sounds of birds and the
motors and some conversations
of people around you
vendors and passers-by
carrying their goods and
important supplies

have you ever written a poem
without any plan as to its theme
or a careful thinking about some imagery
or a deliberation as to the propriety of its tone
its count and color?

this is the one.
this is the poem that is making itself.
no rules. no theme.
no expectations.
plain monologue.
no unity. no consistency. nothing logical.

it is free. and it may be nothing but
an ugly piece.
but it is.

it is. Just as it is.
and this could be nothing but a
portrait of the face of
nothing. Nobody. No one.

. A No.

RIC S. BASTASA
Having A Nice Sleep And The Bones For The Dog

new year. Summer heat here.
i gave my dogs their favorite bones.
tonight, i shall have the nicest sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Having Been Made Helpless I Too Dance With You.

when viewed from a hill
away from the house where we live
i really dislike it
but distance, the nearer things become
when i think i cannot anymore see it
clearly because of the nearness
i change me mind and like it again
because of you.

the nearer it is
the heart begins to speak
it smells an old perfume
it closes its eyes
and leave things flowing as they are

the blindness of honesty
makes me long for you and here i am
touching you again without
rhyme and reason

why does an illogical situation
take you to the heights of bliss?
it is when reason sleeps
that all these wild dreams begin to dance
with me
and which having been made helpless
i too dance with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Having Built Their Empire Upon A Mound Of Sand.

we were taught about the ants
and the grasshoppers
how food must be stored for
the coming rainy season to spare
how play must be avoided
how complacency often leads to
misery
the story simply ended there
with all the ants victorious as the grasshoppers
lay dead carried by the flood
hungry and cold...

and the ants too for having built their
empire upon a mound of sand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Having Friends Around You

like a planetary family
there is a nice system
of orbits and revolution

the center glow is you
and them, your friends
planets and meteors and
gleaming stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Having Slept Like A Dead Man

having slept like
a dead man
i finally wake up
to find an empty
space beside me

my hands panic
to the unusual

i go to the mirror
to check what is
left for me

oh you are there
rocking your chair
at 3 o'clock in the
morning.............

now, i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hazeline

it is not the haze of the frost
or the fog, it is the core of the nut
that is important, not the brown
leafy involucre
but the one inside
that brown thing, it is the bliss
at the core of things,
the wish for good,
the touch that
sends the quiver in
my skin, all hazel, and filbert
and the hardness
which is soft inside.

please, do not say
any word.

RIC S. BASTASA
He And She

he was empty and she came into his life
he had nothing in mind
he practically had nothing to think for his future
he is empty and she comes like warm air to his balloon
and she lifts him up
somewhere up in the skies
and they are together

and then on top of the world
the exhaustion comes
there is no more fire
there is no more warm air and he is still empty and she is consumed

he must fall with her
to the ground and they must start to live again
like real things
like real people

he must fill his emptiness with what he wants to
she may look for warm air
and some other modes of unnoticeable deceptions

RIC S. BASTASA
He Could Have Written More

forgive him
he could have written more
and you could have read his mind
and tell yourself
he is this and he is that
his pain and his joys
his vision and his mission
you begin to know and feel and
perhaps start the rage of time
and the seasons
that change and never stop

he could have written more and you could
have experienced the love between the lines of this words

but time is so strict and cruel and it tells him
time is up
raise your hand and leave this place

and so he stopped and then he left
and then he vanished

RIC S. BASTASA
He Could Have Written More (2)

forgive him
he could have written more
and you could have read his mind
and tell yourself
he is this and he is that
his pain and his joys
his vision and his mission
you begin to know and feel and
perhaps start the rage of time
and the seasons
that change and never stop

he could have written more and you could
have experienced the love between the lines of his words

but time is so strict and cruel and it tells him
time is up
raise your hand and leave this place

and so he stopped and then he left
and then he vanished

and then you are there
hanging on the beams of your dreams...

RIC S. BASTASA
He Cuts You Off As You Deserve.

he also knows
what to pick and
what to throw

for like the rest
he also knows what
is best,

you must realize
that sometimes after
so much familiarity

there is a point of
demarcation
when you cannot tolerate
his views

feeling that you have
to impose yours
then he cuts you off
as you deserve.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Did Not Really Understand What Oxymoron Is All About

well dressed
in the court room he
asked the man about
his accurate estimate
of the tree's length

i quipped it is an
oxymoron, but whether
he heard it completely
or not, i 've seen how
his face blushed.

honest, i did not say
that he is a moron.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Finally Says, ' Leave Me Alone This Is My Home,
....

the white doves from the north
have already arrived
and now have roosted in his home.

they begin to talk, ' look you are lonely here
dove of heart, you must go with us
we are south bound
that is where our home is'

he finally says, ' leave me alone
this is my home, this is the home of my wound
i live here
and i shall die here'

the head of the flock says, 'let's go
we are wasting our time,
he is not one of us anymore'

the youngest of the flock thinks
' how crazy is he! '

RIC S. BASTASA
He Got You

he got you into this art
of acting out things but not really
this harmful pretension
that which defrauds or swindles

it is just the art of mimicry
well, may be not just to entertain
but could be
also to survive

this is an art of life
imitating art and of
art imitating life oh,

this is all about disguises
the man disguising as a clown
to please the lonely kid in town

the clown in turn disguising as a man
to help another one

the man is not the clown
and the clown is not the man

no matter how convincing the
acting might be or
how perfect the imitation

the identity is never lost
they stick to their own realities
despite the perfection of their art

it is you who is lost in this labyrinth of art
your skill and instincts have failed you
utterly
you bring with you your equation
antiquated &
so inaccurate and thus defeating the quickness
of the mind with the sleigh of the hand
that the man and the clown are one.
you may be right, but i tell you you may also be wrong

well, you must cope up

simply see things as they are
not as what they seem
to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Had Always Chosen White

he had always chosen
white, then shades of white,
then gray, then the shades of gray,
paler, and then
like the rest, you get into a black pit,
you fall,
lost into the blackness of
bleak,
somewhere there is reason
for this,
you watch, how day turns to night
how night turns to day,
how things work
how people come and go,
how colors mix, how white gets stained,
how leaves learn
what spring is what autumn is
how cold is winter
how exciting is summer.
it is the seasons my dear,
just the seasons,
and right or wrong has nothing
to do with all these
changes.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Has His Own Way

as i enter this cheap
restaurant he also sits
on the other side
of the table on one
of those dusty
rattan chairs

i take my bite
he puts his
toothpick between
his lips and leave
them there
for a while

his hands are
on the table
holding an
orange as
though it is
a cotton bud
that his fingers
play with

he looks at me
and i look at
him. I know what
he wants

any simpleton
will know what
the tongue
has been doing
on the toothpick
between his lips

i look down the
floor and then
i decide to
leave. It is not
the usual rush
hour in this
hot city far
from my
rural home

where the mountains
protrude to touch
a bulging blue cloud.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Hated It

A seed
is inside his belly
and it grows despite
the absence of
air

too acidic there
but it
sprouts just the same

takes root in his
colon and
a tendril comes out
in his mouth

and i see how
he uproots it at once

like some kind
of a parasite

RIC S. BASTASA
He Is Asking What To Do When The Love Is Gone?

over a bottle of beer on top of his loquacious spirit
he is asking me: what to do when love is gone?

i throw back the question to him: what did you do when love was there?
and he says, he was in high spirits, he did all the thing he thought he cannot do
he grew flowers in the garden he painted the house anew
with white and blue and red and yellow
he laughed so well and claimed he was so happy
he loved so well and claimed he was in bliss

and so now that love is gone, i must tell him
just do the usual things when love was once there
there is nothing to lose, except that love that you have taken for granted

RIC S. BASTASA
He Is Happy

as he contemplates
on the miseries of
his friends
piece by piece
weighing
his own
finding out
theirs heavier
and harsher

he laughs
and then writes
piece by piece
what misery is

what happiness
really means

RIC S. BASTASA
He Is Here Again...

he knows himself
the place where he comes back
over and over again
despite
those far more beautiful faces
those other palaces
he knows it here
here
where he is at home with
himself
cabinets of familiar contents
here where
the love of self
reigns

RIC S. BASTASA
He Is Poor

she picks her
from mud
he tells her
he loves her
and she believes him
and dresses and feeds him
and he tells her more that
he loves her truly and that
he will love her forever
he needs her
that is nearer to the truth
and she is the most hopeless romantic in town
and thirsty for love
many years back when she had an attempt
of taking her life
she is still suicidal

he loves ease and comfort
that is nearer to the truth
and she knows that well too,
he loves another but she loves him more than that
she keeps what she knows
he hides what he can
and they live in one house
and sleep in one bed and dream
and learn to survive
in this kind of situation
loving and pretending
and keeping that matter within themselves

for how many years
since then?
12 years and there will be more
time passing by
like a stranger fitting
his night in a motel

that is the truth, and they
do not mind it anymore
'who cares?' their theme.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Is The Clown

he is the clown
the blackeye of society
underneath the heavy paints of a face
the teary eye and the bruise
the gritting tooth
inside a cup of ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
He Knows The Cadena De Amor

i now know
that he loves
flowers

he likes
most the
cadena de
amor

climbing
from one
tree
to another

pink flowers
on fences
and pillars
and walls
and windows
and doors
creeping

living
to its name
the chain
of love

a life
full of creepy
sex

RIC S. BASTASA
He Left You Finally....

when we were at your party
he was there and you humiliated him

no brakes for a very fast car
though he avoided a collision
the damage however was done
it was deeply humiliating

you thought you can dispense
about what he is and your future
now that he is gone
why are you crying?

when a glass is broken it is broken
and there is no repair possible
at least that is what a man's ego
is all about

the house is big and the emptiness
is never contained
your cries are spread like a ripple
of the river to the ocean

now you will be alone in grief
if you ask me this is my answer:

you deserve it. Congratulations.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Must Have Improved Into A Better Variety

for now he is speedy
like light penetrating the tainted
glass of the
church window

for now he speaks the tongues
of the foreigner

for now he understands
the meaning of shadows
and the accent of
the winds
that come inside his
framed windows

for now he does not
wait
for any moment
he goes and goes like
a bird without a map
for its wings

for now he is
carried by the streams of his consciousness
and he does not ask
any question anymore

for now he does not bleed
for he has healed himself
as his mouth waters
for the smell of his new breakfast
in bed

for now he makes love
throughout the night
and sleeps on the day
filling his skull with
all these dancing dreams
for now he has the wings of the
big black bird
taking him
in the places of anywhere
in the timelessness of anywhen.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Never Goes To Church

the man who had blonde
for his hair
at 78 or more
says he does not go to
church

in looking for God he simply
unbuttons his shirt
and finds God (allegedly)
dwelling inside his
Heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Plays God...

first he thinks a word
or a number

quick he said do not
whimper and so

the word becomes a seed
and the seed

grown into a tree and the
tree bears fruit

and then the number becomes
numbers and numbers

become children who climb
the tree and there

comes a world of chirping
birds and a nest

and the nest becomes a planet
and there are stars

and he finds love and they
sit together

under the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Says

that the weather
is too cold for those
who have no warm memories,

all he need to do
is wear his shirt
to hide the ugliness
of his
dirty body that in the mind
has become a disturbance
says my wife.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Says There Is No Denial

i watched him on his last lecture.
there are seven tumors on his liver.
six months to live and he is on the fourth month.
a little math will make us understand
as simple as that.
he does the push up
look there are no hands, he laughs.
there is no sadness in his eyes
just the glow of having to go
the eagerness of having to go on
sabbatical leave.
nervous laughter is heard
as he shifts from one joke to another.
he has three points: one must not stop dreaming.
second: one must help others realize their dreams
third: i miss this one. i have to go back and watch him again.
i guess i cried.
but i wipe my tears, and pretend that i feel nothing.

i can relate. Grandpa died of prostate cancer.
Papa died after Mama died. He could not wait dying
after another year.

well, what 's the worry? death is certain.
i think, there is nothing new here.

i, too, am moving, i may not know when, but i know where.
i just believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Should Know That This World Too Needs The Luxury Of Silence

early morning this guy
says that he has not moved on
with an outworn love
the one that junks his affection
and does not want
ever
to even see him again

what can i say?
he must learn the art of letting go
and he is not original on this
that art of singing out
like he had never sang before
and when all the noise is released
he should know that this world too
needs the luxury of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Sits Beside Her

when he sits beside her
she knows what she wants

him

and she pretends that she is just
nothing but a girl
whose hands are too tiny and so fragile
and he of course
will be tender & gentle to any kind of girl like

her

but she is more than a girl now
that
he must know
she knows where to touch him
what weak spot
and tell him
you are sitting beside this

woman

he takes a look some more
her eyes are are inviting
not innocent
he begins to see the eyes
of the woman
he made love before

she wears the smell of a beautiful
full-grown woman
ready for any sweet seclusion
or inclusion shall i say
a seduction just to be exact in some ways

this physical smell
of warm flesh and smooth skin and luscious lips
of a woman
now she looks at him again
a lingering stare
ready to take him in
only if she understands
the changes in her taking place in this moment

in such a magical moment he does not see the same little girl
whose hands he thought
are innocent

and so fragile
he understands fully the begging hands of time
now the fruit is ripe for the picking
the tree is waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
He Stops His Car In The Middle Of The Busy Road
Just To Save The Life Of One Stray Cat.

a stray
cat in the middle of
the road
stops a driver of
a car...and i say

he is such a good man
a respecter of life
even if such a cat
is known for its nine
lives.....

for in this sense
no life, not a single life
must be wasted
even if it is the one who
is negligent....those who
lack the awareness, those
who lack the sharpness
of the mind,
beyond this shaky state
of affairs,
a life must always be
spared....and i admire
that man,

he stops his car in the
middle of the busy road
just to save the life of
one stray cat.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Used To Speak Before The Pulpit

he used to speak before the pulpit using his
robe from Rome and people listened and then
he changed,
time changed him like a season
changing the colors of the leaves
trees adding more rings
snakes molting
men shedding off old skins and growing more hairs
change is the law of everything and everybody
he used to but soon he didn't like it
people do not really mind
they come back to habits that do not die
to sins like sweet chocolates
they begin to love every guilt
they do not believe the penalties handed from the skies
they just live and love and go where the merry makings are

he sees them counting their moneys
the only one that talks now

now he talks to himself and leaves and starts to travel
the long and winding road
away from them all

since then he has waived his right to speak
because it arrives at nothing just the same

RIC S. BASTASA
He Walks Between Her Legs

between her legs
he walks through her
she is sleepy
he is bored
she is ready
he is crazy
what you cannot see
and hear later
is the pointing of his finger
to her face
she curses him
she cries
he apologizes later
and then the usual embrace
the kiss
and soft whispers
and then he goes inside her
she groans
he fits
in her open.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Was Once Like Everybody Else

No one has the right to complain
about suffering
everyone is.

no one has the right to tell about
others' suffering

perhaps to lessen his own,
words has no bearing
any comfort be it a hug or whatever
cannot change
the trend
this state of passion
of grief

no one escapes what is given
The Lord watches in such beautiful silence

He was once like Everybody else.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Will Keep The Simplicity

he goes on to keep the simplicity of his existence
the chastity and candor of his feelings
the clarity of his words
the classicality of his clean line
the clearness of his directions
the modesty of his intentions
the openness of all that is obvious to the naked eye
the plainness of all that is primitive
the naivete of uniformity
the straightforwardness of innocence
the severity of his singleness
artlessness in sophistication
and without complexity understanding comes without difficulty

yes, try the restraint of the state of lack of adornment

white, blank wall
and you.

RIC S. BASTASA
He Will Stay Tonight

she opens the door
and switches on the light
of the ceiling
she kisses him
and he hugs her
tightly

like a cork
to a bottle of red wine

there is a need
for more sparkles
but the champagne
is too expensive

there is a need
for moonlight
to make tonight
more romantic

but frankly
tonight is the
night
when the storm
comes
when the wind
blows
so hard
when the rain
pours
like cats and dogs

touche!
they will talk
and she will open
up

no not her legs
but her
mind

they will face
each other
with sad eyes
and
pleadings
for forgiveness

this the time
for their last
lovemaking

tomorrow
is another goodbye

and they know
it
there is no more
love
to speak about

inside
the forbidden radius
of their
respective
circles

RIC S. BASTASA
He Writes His Name In Bold Letters

when he writes his name in bold letters
others
mistook it for a call of attention
as though
he lacks what was not given him
during his youth

it is not the hunger for fame
it is simply that
his eyes have failed him due to so much
devotion to reading

when the lights are fading
when his eyes are failing

he wants still to see his name so he may have a trace
of him
everyday fading like the sunsets in his poems

RIC S. BASTASA
He, The Obedient New Giraffe

they told him

to stretch and straighten

matters to give way to

spaces needed by one

vertebra to another,

which he did like an

obedient giraffe stretching

its neck to reach the

leaves for its survival

RIC S. BASTASA
Healing

keep on rubbing the drops
of time
in your wound
to completely heal yourself

massage slowly
the bruises of your sadness
with its fingers
until they
disappear
just like
your face
slowly dissolving
in the canvass of
the wind

the philosophers are
right
the hands of
time
are the true
healers
of our
wounded
hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
Healing The Family Tree

for you to let me know
that i must pay for all that the family owed
from the past
the suffering souls of my great fathers
and fathers of my fathers
and their mothers
i am sorry but i was not the one
that committed the blunder
that is their business and mine is different
look at me
have i not suffered enough to deserve all these
genetic retaliations?
hold my hands
don't you feel that all these tremblings
in fear
are not enough to pay for their
misdeeds?
your paranoia is mine too.

but somehow, all these must be stopped.
the wombs of our mothers are tested with pain
one leg to life the other held by death
yet they walk this valley of death without question
they breathe your air without suspicion
they live the way they ought to
and they die
without much ado.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heaps

the moments
are like leaves

winds of change
make them fall

our firmness
however
make them
stay

as heaps of
memories inside
our hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
Heaps And Heaps Of Leaves Under The Trees One
Early Morning

ahh

I see. Too many words
sentence upon sentence

i become less and less
of what i am.

Look up the hill
a tree as bald as the leaves
that the winds had taken.

It is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hear Me O Lord!

O! God
it is through these
words,
these works of
art
that i pray to
you!

Hear me!
I DO not ask
for anything

You dwell in my heart
and walk
inside my ear
it is enough
joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heard From The Kindergarten Class Just Across The Road

'good morning ma'am
good morning bird
good morning cat
good morning dog
good morning clouds
good morning sun'

and then they all sing
and dance the

tra-la-la tra-la-la-la

beautiful joyous morning here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hearing Again From A Student Who Broke Down

her face pale as a fading moon
her hands trembling like the leaves blown by the wind
at dawn
she is
the thin, tiny girl in a row of the brusque and the thick faced
law students, so to speak she has become the weakest link
of their argument
why one has to study law and become a lawyer and compete
for power, money, and position

she finally retreated, broke down somewhere where she says she
screamed without tears, where she writes her poems finally
in inkless pen and imaginary sheets of paper
her mind exploded into some painful shrapnel

that is what happens when you are so true to a vocation
when you do not learn how to fake feelings
and eradicate some emotions
and be the woman and man
tough like steel and shrewd like the fox
or fight matters out like the rats in garbage cans
and yet appear coy like a dove,

they say, this is the battle of the fit and the survival of the fittest
no muscle no guns no spears or swords
it is what they call the decency of words
and logic and sophistry sometimes

she chats with me today, thanking me for the books
for the lightness of being, she blames her stupidities of being
weak, the weakest link of the
argument in law school, she blames her poetry, (she hates my poetry:
who says that life is fair? nobody raises a hand)

she says she is now coming to terms with herself
befriends her journal the more, she is taking more breath
regaining her composure

next semester, she will be joining us again,
she promises, no chains, no feelings, a little wit and humor

and nothing fading and not one shall be pale among the brusque
a pachaderm

RIC S. BASTASA
Hearing That Song

that comfort
that she found in your strangeness

you sing it again
and my heart bleeds but

sing it again and again
for in truth i have long wished to die

for without you
i was lost and my life drifted like a

leaf tossed by a stormy night
carried away by the river and the mud

RIC S. BASTASA
Hearing Yourself....

not a word is
nonsensical, each
has a purpose, you
just have
to decipher the
sound of a syllable
you see
each letter had been
chosen
to give that desired
sound

well sometimes
you get confused
when what was given
you was
the silent sound
of nothingness

be patient
when you hear it
you hear yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart Body And Soul

the soul knows
the body
which the body
doesn't sometimes
the heart beats
and knows the
state of the soul
you see the eyes
of the heart
as the soul feels
the beatings of
your heart
when the body sleeps
the soul practices
its journey to the
gate of the heart
as the heart shies
away from the
reasoning of the
body

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart Burn

heart burn
you are the root cause
what is your name?

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart Cannot Shut....

the heart can
never be
a shutter
in that camera of
love,

to a beautiful day
it can't resist
opening
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart Wrenching

pain. wrench.
hammer and nails
and wood

s.
lover and the
unloved and
a cruel heart

the fall of the hammer
the fall of the unloved

from the table
from the cliff

and then the common
ground: eternal silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heartless One

In darkness, the eyes learn to see
In blindness, the heart becomes the eyes
And you heartless one? Do you know
What darkness is? You live in there
With your wide eyes open, you are
A dark soul and behind you is this
Darkness that eats you up and now
You ask us to find and save you?
Take your heart back and speak.
You shout and then save yourself!

RIC S. BASTASA
Heart's Day

we went on a picnic to the beach
with samsam, a local dog,
pret, my poodle, kuting, my japanese spitz,
bonbon, our dachshund

emma, my wife brought her favorite househelp named tatang,
marinel and gina, her friends cooked the potatoes
and prepared the sushi
jasmine rice that looked like tiny pearls
and pork barbecue

pret, my loyal poodle went with me walking
while kuting and bonbon played on the grass
barking and chasing some teasing finches

the air is cool
the sun not so bright at ten a.m.
clouds hang like soaked cottons
the sea is crystal clear like a mirror
the corals are visible
with some stone fishes

emma snored while asleep
and tatang excused herself to take a view of the place

i took my plunge alone in that crystal sea: splash!

it is a beautiful life
and on this day of the hearts
i can hear mine singing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heaven

he found heaven
the day he met her

long time
that was a long time ago

she's gone

now he keeps searching
every park
every place where they've been too

but she's a lost heaven
and he did not find her

until
he met you, his second heaven
on cloud ten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Heaving The Heavier Sighs

you know how heavy are the sighs
you lift it like a weight
from your stomach
to your throat and finally
to your mouth
you let it escape
and then you are relieved
just like smoke
coming from a chimney
of a house covered
with snow

you know how is it to carry
something that you do not really like to keep
you let it go with a sigh
and then you are back
feeling high

RIC S. BASTASA
Heavy Rain

it is a matter of new perspective
choosing what one becomes
what one hears
and bears
ultimately this outlook makes
or unmakes you
breaks and on the either/or
unbreaks you

listen to the heavy rain
the one that makes you stay
these are the arms of love
wanting you home
these are the songs of peace
urging you to write
the poems of unviolence

remove the thorns that crown your head
try the laurels of victory
it all lies in the power of your hands
the choices of your heart

be good and move on
do not tarry on the streets of sorrow
follow the trail
that leads to the light on the side of the hill
on this dark night
there lies the home of our longings
where we come from
the haven
the resting place
a room where your name is engraved
in gold on the door

RIC S. BASTASA
Heavy Rain Today

the rain pours heavily
on my roof
and all that i can hear
is its loud sound
pounding
like hammer on the table

the workers stopped digging
the waters fill in
i keep on writing about
a certain force
loud and insistent
mouthing every earned silence

now, i have a good excuse
for being nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Hedonism

you are the body
always wanting
more pleasure
more tickle

there is no end
to this
you pour gasoline
to a body
in flame

you burn
without end
char & ash
and scars
of the earth

you shall be

RIC S. BASTASA
Heirless Future....

it is horrible to see
that thing over there
we stand a little bit taller
to have a glimpse

a desert, the sun its only eye
the sands in cinders
every sand in abandon

it trembles me no end
that it is our possible destination

RIC S. BASTASA
Heliotrope

finally the mongo
seed inside the
box of paper
finds its way
to an opening
to see the sun
in such a very
short span

RIC S. BASTASA
Hell Is Other People

what is hell?
Sartre says, hell is other people.
I think, i agree.
Some people simply make our lives
Live in hell,
If you feel this hell

the rumors, and betrayal,
the stabbing at the back,
the unpaid debts,
ingratitude, the prison of
dictatorships,
the irreconcilable differences,
hate and indifference,

on the other hand, there is also
the mutuality of affections,
love meeting love,
ecstasy moaning with ecstasy
pure love, agape, empathy,
faith, trust, symbiosis,
dependence and interdependence,
there is also sympathy
and unconditional love
of parents, and care of
siblings, the humanity of concerns,
and compassion, feeding the poor
and the hungry, satisfying the thirsts
of those who still desire
to live,

on the other hand, depending
on how you look at it,
on this same place
either you look at the stars above
or the mud below,

heaven could also be
other people.
Hell Is Other People....

MY wife asks me
if i am original in that statement
and i said

'Nope'
it was not me who said that
i just quoted it
and does not perhaps even understand it fully well
the philosopher is Jean Paul-Sartre
the man who believes that there is only an entrance
but there is no exit

what i know is this
i am like an empty jar exposed to the nights and days
i shall never be full and shall never be empty
completely
i cannot be a lie and cannot be the truth at the same

what i realize in darkness
is this:
not one is true
no one
they're all shadows inside the cave
where
the one and only truth  is
Socrates....

RIC S. BASTASA
Hell Is Paved With Good Intentions....

by intention, or practical purpose
i only need to heal myself, and i

remember, how bad it is, how wrong,
for a physician to heal himself, or

for a lawyer to defend himself, that
would be a terrible mistake, a physician

or a lawyer for a fool, but this is not
what i want to say, .................

i am here, look at me, i am nowhere,
i have no face, i cannot be touched,

somehow, there is no wish for that,
for i imagine this only as a clinic,

a sofa, where Sigmund is brought to
life again with my words, and he begins

to listen, as i elaborate upon blocks
and blocks of experiences which He has

to reconstruct so that i can be understood
since such understanding can, perhaps,

lead to a cure. I am confident, however,
i know where to go, what to say, and whom

to say it. By intention, there is no wish
to impress, or write the best lines,

this is a soliloquy, a boat in the middle
of the ocean, and there is no island in

intention, it is just to love
to love and expecting nothing in return.
Hell Is That...

i know how to leave
and so
here i am i have
just arrived

for i have left them.

you know how is it
to be there
it is so stressful
i feel like i am shrinking
my dignity melts
and what i hear is only
their laughter

there is no use staying
there

that place is hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello Again

aren't you bringing any flowers
in your hands
from south africa?

in your absence
the flowers here wilted

it is your time now
to recompense

and i am asking
where are your flowers?

open your hands
from your palms
let all the flowers grow
let the scent explode

make another beginning
start writing the first line of your poem

how about a poem sort of
a love poem
the one worded so well with
affection

the one that repays
the cruelty of disappearances

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello And Goodbye

he pops out and says hello
you must know by now that
that is what he only wanted
you know what he will say
next: thank you and goodbye
he will find many excuses
a story to write, a friend to invite
a poem to read alone with him
alone admiring the smooth flow
of the words and then he disappears
for in truth he does not like the crowd
though he misses it
most of the time
he knows that he cannot be there
dissolve and be gone

he tried it once
had a drink or two then danced his way in the middle of the dancing floor
with all the lights blinking in shifting colors
he was shouting with all joy and lost himself until he fell in the same
dancing floor

his eyes will not close
they stared at the blinking lights
they thought he was dead

indeed he too thought that he cannot live anymore
he shatters in the limelight
like specks of dust scattering every bit of himself

he learns his lesson
now he makes the limits
marks the boundaries of his being
knows the fence
and the entrance and exit
he looks from a distance and then makes his sure steps
towards his own death
Hello Candice, Are You Sure Of Yourself?

you speak of some bits, bits and bits
of bits buried underneath our hearts and
bones and you want them
to be unraveled bit by bit

that there is always a way, a manner
a process, some means
to an end, to find that light at the end of the tunnel

i am born on a complicated day.
And then i have grown hairs on my head
They too are complications
and my fingers do not have the same lengths
and shapes
That is also another complication
And my feet are not straight
And my face is not proportional
There are angles of deflection
There are lights in me which are refracted
And i may appear so far
And my hands may bend a little
It is because of the difference in our index

I am myself sometimes. I am not myself most of the times.
I ask you then: Are you sure of yourself?

Is that you? If yes, I am telling you
I am not me. I am somebody else.

If No, do not mind me at all.
I am having the tantrums of the poet
A dough with yeast. A grapefruit sour to your lips.
I am irony. I am another riddle.

I like to make myself readable. How many syllables do you
need? Tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello Ct

Please make true
Your promise to make
For me
A poem.
Just one poem.
It will be enough
To make me
Sleep for
Another night.
Another lonely night
For me.
My silence unlike
The silence of the happy man
Does not know
What a smile is.
Its tongue
Tied, it does not utter
The syllable of the
Night.
It has no ears
To hear the coming
Footfalls of my beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello Cynthia

have you heard
about the mocking bird?

at least the Mayna
in Palawan

it repeats what you say
like an echo

irritating maybe
but if you do not ignore it
it may destroy you

so just take a good ride
enjoy and
don't mind what others do

P.s.

huag mo nang patulan si Aldo,
kc sira ulo yan.
Matagal na yan dito
ginawa lang niyang
therapy ang site.

hindi naman sa baliw sya
medyo may konting diprensya lang

kaya huwag mo nang intindihan
ok?

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello Lady Grace

i have checked the sun
it is hiding behind the clouds
and the clouds say
it will rain today

i have checked the wind
the leaves have the prediction
it's gonna have
another typhoon

and so here i am,
signing in too... for this morning
poetry with you!

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello Mr. President

I'd like to advise
my friend obama not
to attack syria

like: hey Mr Friend president
war is not good

why interfere on the private
affairs of another

like: why can't you let
Syria be herself
and leave her alone
in her private room?

but all i got is a spit
from Obama saying

hey, you, idiot Filipino,
mind your own portfolio! !

you see, i am an idiot
Filipino, and (best?) friend
of Obama, the president
of the United States
of America

at best, i keep my mouth
shut

p.s.
I need him because
china is pissing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello My Friend.....

you try to be inside
their circle
you get in
but they are enclosed
within their very own arms
there is no place for you
you charm them
and beg
and they let you in for a while
thinking that you can be of use
and serve them
and then they talk among themselves
dance their own steps
and you want to imitate them
wanting to be in
to be a part of themselves
since you are never a part of anyone
and you just want to be
engaged
need an affirmation that you
too exist...

takes time to realize
that you can never be in them
and you feel that strangeness
but it will only be for a while

people are inherently selfish
they have their own family
to belong to
and you do not have your own
they are all dead
and the rest too are living their own
independent lives

you rise from the insecurity of your ashes
a Phoenix
takes time to grown your own strong wings again
wide span long journeys
find a home
an island
with walls and moats
a palace of your
solitude

learn the language unique to you
live alone but not
lonely
and selfish too
like the rest

then you say
hello self my friend
i love you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hello My Gatiting

hello my gatiting
please solve the problem below
if you can solve it
email me the answer

then i will tell you if
we are still friends.

deal.

Solve each of the following inequalities
and express the solution in interval notation.

\((x - 6) (x + 2) (- 4 - x) > 0\)

\(x^2 + x + 2 < 7 - 3x\)

Find the number by using exponential form.

a) \(\log_2 32\)

b) \(\ln e^5\)

The following example represents a correspondence \(f\) from \(A\) to \(B\). Determine whether the associated statements are true or false.

i) One element of \(A\) corresponds to two elements of \(B\).

ii) Two elements of \(A\) correspond to the same element of \(B\).

iii) Some element of \(A\) has no corresponding element in \(B\).

iv) Some element of \(B\) has no element of \(A\) corresponding to it.

v) Is \(f\) a function? If not, then explain why.

you have only an hour to submit
your answer.

after two hours,
our friendship ends.
Hello There? Anybody Home?

did i tell you once that i also like to become an echo?  
that i like to ask the simple question to the mountain  
like: Hello? Is there anybody there?

as though, there is this scene that the world has ended  
and i am the only one left,  
and there is nothing but smoke and emptiness,  
boulders of rocks with not a tree to accentuate the final scene of survival,  
or a moss to tell me that life still exist  
on a creek without a single dew on its priceless pebble,  
know what? i am happy today to know that you are still there  
so far away like an undiscovered distant planet that the light years  
have not known yet to measure

i know that somehow we share the same madness.  
Poetry.

know what? Be happy too.

I have someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is always a way to spend time
from another perspective

nothing serious this time
time to laugh, time to fool with time.

i got a joke, and i share it with you
and you laugh with me.

i got a story about a buffalo and the poodle.
how imitation can be funny. How envy can be a tragic matter.

i got to share time with you.
at the veranda we face an afternoon.

i have coffee and you have tea.
did we forget about our old tequilas?

i have something to whisper to you.
No, actually it is a kiss. I am planting it
to your lips. Do not bite me.
You see, we are here now. Tomorrow we will be gone
two white butterflies against the wind.
first shadows, then a whisper gone too.

no one stays here. No one.
we turn off the lights. we fuse in the dark.

No promises. We do not make promises.
Early morning, i go. You are no longer here.

I am talking about life. It is what it is.
Hello, goodbye, and till we meet again.
Help Save A Child's Life Today
	his little girl has kinky hair
black is the color of her skin
almond eyes that speak
and small hands and
short arms

the ad says,
help save a child's life today

and i read it silently.
i ask myself, honestly, please do not brand
me as racist

is there such a white child
who can say, 'Help me! '

i am just wondering.
and what about the brown child in Asia?

RIC S. BASTASA
Helplessly Devoted To Writing...

the monitor sucks the energies of creation, and you who face this phenomenon of addiction of having to write despite the odds, becomes a very dry parchment of crocodile skin removed from its fierce body all sharpness pulled out and on helpless gum one must learn how to survive under the hot suns of senseless loving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Helplessness
	here is this cough
	that does not
	originate from
	the mouth
	it shakes the whole
	body

giving the warning

but the man who

owns it

wipes it and

smiles

and then he

coughs again

and then he

smiles again

RIC S. BASTASA
Henpecked

the usual long walks
in the morning
that's what's good for
my body
passing through pathways
watching newly opened doors
and clean yards stretching
where hen-pecked husbands are
feeding the chickens

RIC S. BASTASA
Henry Piddington (1797–1858)

'An atmospheric system characterized by the rapid inward circulation of air masses about a low-pressure center, usually accompanied by stormy, often destructive weather'

circulates counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.

blame him, this British meteorologist he introduced the

cyclone

coined from kyklôn

leaving Myanmar with 100,000 dead more or less

now, the generals need help

RIC S. BASTASA
Hep Hep Hurray

do you watch it every noontime
the hep hep hurray
of our day to day
existence,

you match your actions
to your words
and if they do not
then you are

definitely
out!

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Beautiful Face In My Dream

lilac lips
beige skin
morning eyes
dancing eyelashes

such a beautiful face of a woman
in my dream
i keep telling myself
she loves me

how can one accept the sad
conclusion
that she loves me
not?

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Biography

She
Lives with two guys
A tortoise
And some kois

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Dance Is Eternity...

she had one
advice to her
protegee,

keep dancing my
girl
till your feet
become the
dance of
your life...

and she dances
her life to life
to life

to life, to life
she dances till life

was taken away from
her

for now as spirit
her dance is eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
when she discovered that
she had colon cancer
stage 2, she at first had
the usual denial,

'no this cannot be true
for i don't smoke
neither did i eat meat
i did not have
a stressful life' she says.

the discharges of blood
proves her otherwise
her loss of weight
and low red blood cell count
convince her
about this reality

' i accepted this
matter and i did not
want to do anything anymore' she resolves,

'anyway, i am already
68, and had my life
what is the use of
an extension' she continues

on her plate is the fried chicken
a slice of roasted pig,
for her desert a glass of ice cream
and leche flan
all that the doctor says
she must not eat
she eats them now

i guess, i know what she means.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Defense Mechanisms

she thinks
that i am getting cold on her
like
last night when i did not
have the chance
(or the nerve)
hugging her
and she was looking
at the ceiling
in total darkness
unable
to get some sleep
because
of her predicament
while i lay
soundly sleeping
on my soft pillow
and thick blankets
wrapping my
body away from
the world

hers

too tired i tell her

with lots
of work in the office
and too many
problems
to solve

the following morning
she takes
her bath so early
and washes
herself
her sorrow away
her
insecurities about being unloved
(her own crude way of thinking and evaluating things)

she goes to the kitchen and cooks the feast
for her husband's breakfast

(me?)

all the while thinking the basic principle
that the best way to make him love her again
is always through his stomach

and he laughs the hardest this morning
he will have another day of indigestion because he has to eat more & more if only to please her

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Demands

he is fit
he has a great body
he is witty
he is a good conversationalist
he thinks they'll make a good pair
and will be happy forever

but there is one thing he didn't have
and she wants it more than anything else

his bank account
he is fit
and he knows how to make this matter a secret.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Evening

her evening is noisy
all the words of the town invade her
ceaselessly

well i know of the reason
her man left her for another

younger and hot
like the night in the tropics

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Eye Colors

spring
lush foliage
buds of flowers
tiny leaves
sprouting from the
twigs

in Hongkong
where there is no
space for gardens
she draws spring
in the colors
of her eyes
shades of green
and pink and
red and
blue for the flowers
the clouds
the horizon
the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Father-In-Law

He's really an interesting character.
When my kids were small,
he wasn't so happy that I'm talking to them in English,
because English is the language of the enemy.

Goodness, the war was over decades ago!

I felt it's weird.
I grew up listening to my grandparents and parents about how hard life was
during the war and how cruel the Japanese soldiers were.
And here are my children listening to their grandfather's stories about his hard
training as a kamikaze pilot.

He was recruited towards the end of the war,
and there were hardly any plane to practice on.

Basically, they were taught how to fly, not how to land, because anyway, theirs
is a one-way mission.
Akiko said that it was fortunate that the war ended before he was sent to do
kamikaze.
He said that it was 'zannen' (regrettable) that Japan lost the war, because he so
wanted to see action!

Masanao thinks that his father had not actually been
to the front line and experienced the horrors of actual combat,
so his father clings to an idealist view on why Japan went to war.

Jya ne! So long for now

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Hands Are Stronger Now

she greets you by the door. She knows you are coming.  
Her heart pounds for you.  
She shows the room. It looks for you for many years.  
Now she brags the room is alive.  
she opens the window and lets the air  
and the trees know that you are here finally.  
they all talk about you know.  
they nod, you are no longer a dog.  
Or a parakeet.  
The chair opens its arms for you.  
You take your asks you if you miss coffee.  
Black coffee, without sugar.  
You look around. There is nothing changed here.  
20 years ago, all the structures are faithful  
to their positions.  
They miss you and like to embrace you.  
She is restrained like a dam.  
No tears this time.  
Not even some tears of joy.  
She knows why you are here.  
The room, the tree and the window,  
the floors are blind.  

She knows that this will be the last time  
of your compromise.  
She is dead 20 years back  
when you told her  
about the truth.  

How can she feel like the room, the floor,  
the tree and the window  
How can she be as foolish as air and cloud?  

Her hands are strong now.  
They write her name, her signature to sorrow.  
Her heart notes the final statement.  

Life is over.  
Game is over.
Her Indifference

she wants to end the journey
with me
i do not want to end it yet
she sits beside me
and i am pushed to the side
my hands are tied
and the steering wheel is free
she steps on the gasoline
to a speed of 180
on the road to nowhere

meanwhile another truck is coming
at a fast speed
to us
in an inevitable collision

she does not speak a word
neither will she scream at this
i pray to escape
from what she calls as
inevitability.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Insomnia

this is a private affair
between her and her wall clock

there is this consistent rhythm
of the tick tock tick tock

her pupils roll and sometimes
still
staring at the walls of the house

restless she avails of all the possible
combination of postures

but to no avail
the clock keeps on ticking and ticking and ticking

she feels like a tick
and she cannot talk

this is her private affair with her wall clock
above her head
her mouth is closed shaped like
a lamppost
without a light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Is My Body

here is my body
take it

do not look for my soul
it is no longer there

in your power
this body surrenders

the soul escapes
and you cannot chase it

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Last Lines Written While She Was Alone

on nights when she is alone in bed
she wakes up to dream of his touch
his long deep moans
she wonders from his chain of words
if her absence too did make his heart
grow fonder

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Last Words Before I Left

please, please
stay a little longer
i miss you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Letter Dated July 1, 2008, To Me, It Is Poem By Itself

I wonder how many more poems related to me I've missed.
I also wonder if you're a mind-reader.
Every springtime when the cherries bloom,
I do think of fire trees dotting Mt. Makiling
and lining the highways of Los Banos.
When wisterias bloom here,
I think of the jade vine in Makiling forest.

The pink, red and white flowers of azalea are pretty when they bloom in April to May,
but they can't compare with the explosion of colors of bougainvillea flowers trailing over the terraces of the buildings of IRRI where I used to work years ago.

I wonder if they are still there.

I did ask my father to plant ylang-ylang or sampaguita years ago, because in Dipolog,
I can hardly find them anymore.
But father preferred palm trees, orchids, and anthurium.

Yes, I'll always miss the land of my birth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Majesty, Mt. Kinabalu

i have
seen her
full majesty

tall, and
sharp,
and solid
as a rock

i heard
the magical sound
of its wind

there was
sadness
but it was
sweet

i was
speechless
feeling too small
like an
ant

my legs
trembled
like
bamboo
leaves....

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Name Starts With An F...

AT That time she only knew love
nothing below or above it
all love, nothing about the future
nothing to take, but all
everything to give but the guy
said he is not prepared and
so she had no choice
but an abortion, her first baby should have been
theirs.....

The Chinese man married another
she was devastated, but she must move on with her life
she said
and to a man where there was no love
she gave herself
got pregnant but the loveless marriage
like those marriages
did not last.....

She is all alone
her baby turned into a man
time flies so quickly
he became a nurse
and he called her
that he loves her that much
one time
when he assisted a woman in labor
'it is not easy to become a mother'

In one party she met the man he first loved
broken too
with a sickly wife
a failing kidney
and they had no child....

'Do not say any word, for i am blue'

Things do not work perfectly for love
love brings its own sorrows
and love
becomes too beautiful
always
to remember....

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Old Argument

we meet as old trees with roots deep on the ground.
twigs are trunks and leaves if they fall do not come back to hang back.
do not look for meanings, they are all there already
when we meet as old trees
when we agree that we meet as old trees so there will be no compromise that you change that i change
that we become like each other in color and perceptions
what you see is what you get, that is your oldest premise
and i jump into conclusions: i am free, you are freedom.
somewhere, i also cannot bend as you keep that bent posture
when we meet as trees old enough to understand the spread of our respective roots.
'you cannot change me, you can only love me' your ending statement.
' i give up the search for the idea, i stay put' my conclusion.

The pavement is so dry. There is no rain. I hear nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Own City Poem...

at the Mindanao Times
i read her poem-

the city is lonely
it is filled with people
who are not
interested to know
one another

She is an old poet
crowned with the wisdom of laurel leaves
and she
i agree knows much better

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Own Departure

Her own departure is a show. 
a big bag hanging on her shoulders, her left hand holding a coin purse, 
her right crumpling a white handkerchief wet with her tears.

she is crying. Her blue blouse fits her fat and her black pants are loose like two shirts.

She wears her white rubber shoes, sort of telling me that she will be running towards the place that she will be hiding for just towards the airport. Or bus station or port.

I don't really care.

She takes the ATM with her, and the credit cards. She does not tell me where she is going. She gives the hint that it will be far away from this cold house.

I am staying. I am glued to this house. I am silent and peaceful now. I still have many things to think and write.

My first poem after she leaves
shall be titled, 'Good riddance!'

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Own Life....

the middle aged woman
speaks about all the bad luck in her life
she is poor, her heart is broken
her husband is sick
her children all dumb
she has no house to live
she has no relatives to
help her

then she asks me
on what part of her life will she be grateful to God?
she does not know the word
about thanks

then the older woman asks her
to give back at 3 p.m. today the life that the Lord has given her

she realizes what she has which she has not given importance
she shakes her head, kneels on the ground and
said thanks to God....

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Own Wonder...

she may wonder
why leaves detach
themselves from twigs
why butterflies depart
from a flower
why there are ebbs

he has a lot of reasons
but the stars during those darkest nights
are too obvious

too beautiful
there is no need anymore to speak

RIC S. BASTASA
fascination strong
losing control the flow
unable to handle on this
honest concupiscence

moments unfold
the conspicuous aspirations
this moment
shall i now save

like scotch on the rocks
such aroma as you
sparkling and strong so hard
to resist

hit me sting me
i delight in your love
i plunge in your hugs
i go losing myself in your kisses

you're spread on my table
my exquisite menu for my dinner
love and lust all mixed together

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Poverty

her poverty always comes to them
on a Sunday
while they are contemplating on the
words of God

she is outside the door and
keeps on knocking until she gets tired
and just sits their on the porch
waiting

she says she has many stories to tell
about her miseries

they call on their Afghan hounds that bark so loud
and she is driven away

she tells the neighbors who save her that they are her cousins
of the first degree

they tell God that it is still time to pray

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Pre-Valentine Wish

o heavens
i do not
wish to
read her
mind, i
do not
want to
know her
pre-valentine wish:

that her husband? i do not, i cannot say it.
let her say it, but i know she won't.

o my God, i do not wish to know what is inside her.
but i have this hint of what she really likes to think

o my God, i do not wish to read her mind and judge her
but i have this hint of what she really like to do

but i give you this hint, she hates me for me telling her
that in truth she is in love with another.

RIC S. BASTASA
she had dinner with me
and she talked about some priests and sinners
i think she is refined in some ways
the way she handles her fork and her forte
the rumors of the town
and the rest of those who profess innocence
pretended to pay attention

there were names and places and secret events
and trysts of some characters like they are in the play
of Tennessee Williams
and she carefully assesses the merits of their wounds
their tragedies surely are not hers

she does not eat much but her face swells
her stomach bloating and she burps like she is one kind
of a healthy baby

after the dinner
despite her expensive earrings
we in the house are unanimous in saying
she is the kind of character who must not have
another dinner with us

perhaps she must have breakfast
and we think she deserves to be
with Sophocles

Ric S. Bastasa
Her Report

she is now in Malaybalay, 45 kilometers from Valencia where they are taking dinner with junjun's girlfriend and soon after the dinner, she will take the car with cousin and niece back to La Vina, where they will spend the night

she has more news but she will not bring it tonight it is more private it is not about junjun's sweet young girl, still studying in the university and to cope up with the hard times, she sells cosmetic products for those who are vain and taking other means of livelihood to live and appear like decent

it is cold, a place higher than the sea levels of two cities the trees abound, it is green grass all over the place, and the skies have stars, and the moon is brighter as she looks over the window to see the rolling hills and the horizon of flashing lights the glitter of a far city, the hovering of thoughts like birds crowding on a tree at night, like the whispers of rain from a distant mountain

we are apart, we decided to create some spaces, we must breathe and i know, what she wants to tell me from Malaybalay, though she says, she cannot tell it now, the way she phrases her lines i know

she misses me she loves me she wants to be back home the soonest and i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Stare

confirms
the harshness
of the
big C

RIC S. BASTASA
i am afraid
i cannot love another
as i begin to touch
and caress my ego,

i look at you
indeed you are beautiful
with your smooth skin
and long black hair

i feel it when you touch
my loin though you may
think it was unintentional

i am afraid i cannot love
another despite the trouble
we are in, this stage of
marital confusion when
love is asking so many
questions that i cannot
anymore answer

i am thinking i must be
sorry for love at this stage
is not true to itself
and if i pursue this matter
to its ultimate destination
i am afraid i cannot bear
this burden when i arrive
in the house and there i
can hear her crying, and when
i open the door she keeps
pretending that everything
is okay and then asks me if
i have already eaten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her True Nature....

the schemers of evil enjoy their success

there is a party in the house
the beautiful lady is carrying a bouquet of flowers beside her five children
gifts from God, beside her is her handsome husband holding
a key position in the energy sector

it is her day today, she wins the political and judicial crown
it is her party, and the evening shall be filled with neon lights, music shall be played the whole night, and drinks will flow and roasted calf shall be put at the center of the garden

all the ministers and v.i.p.s shall join her in her early success
she will enjoy the accolades, she will rise to power,
she will have the support of the people,
and she will have her place in history as the icon of political genius, economic might,
social galore and glamor.

she is the golden butterfly of our history.

in truth she is a cheat, a murderer,
a dragon, a vampire, the queen of evil in the Kingdom of Wrath.

no one knows about this of course.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Underwear.

I've seen a beautiful woman lonely on her chair, one hand with a glass of wine while the other with a cigarette

from time to time she throws smoke into the air and it lands on my hair, on my lips, and then my thighs are trembling

how can she ever ask to suggest that i too need love, only for tonight?

we have the same mind, and when we did it, she walks away first, uncombed hair, forgetting her lipstick and her underwear.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Usual Patience...

her kiss will
always be
a reminder that
an infidelity
is always an inch
shorter
to the
majesty of
the holy
matrimony

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Wish

her wish
is another grand wedding
on her 20th anniversary
she will have
some fireworks
and a grand ballroom
complete with
flowers and doves
and nice food...

her wish is to be
married soon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Her Woes

the social welfare officer carries
her bouncing baby boy

the social welfare officer says the boy is healthy

the mother has meningitis and cannot support the boy

he needs a lot of milk
he is heavy and he smiles a lot and he stares at his mother who has no mind of her own now

the social welfare officer carries the baby in her arms and i am signing the papers attesting to the mother's having to give up the boy for welfare,

her sister from Calape has six kids
and her husband
is jobless

the boy stares
at her mother
who says
she is moving
to another place
to forget him

she was raped.
she got pregnant.

they are poor.
and she has to give
up the boy

the boy keeps
staring at her
mother.

their woes.

would you like
to carry the boy, sir?

he says.
No. he is definite.
No. His answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here

in here
there is an opening
of my heart
come
and lay with me
in the fourth
chamber
it is this that you
desire

without so much
love
without words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here Comes Life

the rolling stone
sliding past
following us

the rolling stone
now ahead of us

here comes life
and there it is gone

we are still the moss
catching no stone

RIC S. BASTASA
Here Comes My Silent Prayer

waking up from a nightmare
i get out of my room and drink a glass of cold water
i sit on a chair beside a table with a vase of a single flower
i face the sea without the sun yet coming
and then i say my silent prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
Here Comes The Morning Sun

here comes the morning sun
one body of the heavens
that gives us days
faithful
to our souls

here comes the morning sun
let us go out
and bathe
with so much sunshine

here comes the morning sun
it is another day again
another promise
another grand beginning

i decide to live, to laugh and love all over again....

RIC S. BASTASA
Here Comes The Sun, Joyous

from the shutters of the windows
light peeps in
like fingers creeping
on the naked body
of the woman who made
love with me
last night

my eyes open and welcomes
another memory of the night
for the day

bouquets of memories of the mind
offerings for the sun
joyous and vibrant

we kiss again
as we dress our bodies
on a promise that everything
shall be kept
secret.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here In The Desert

here in the desert
you are the hot sun glowing fire
i am the sand blown by the winds

the winds are many
and i have always wished that i shall turn
into a big rock on the side of the blue sea

you fade away in the darkness of my night
and i look for the promise of space in eternity

in the absence of the kind moon
i lay upon myself and spread my loneliness
i dream of the deep sea which was once
a part of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here In The Silence Of Your Moment

in this retreat
of yours
here in the old place
of your silence
hear the music that
your soul
had been singing
try to unlock the secrets
of its longings
rewrite the poems of
your yesterdays

RIC S. BASTASA
Here Is Peace, Why Look For Another?

here we are
caught in the night
trap and we prepare
for the coming of
light which brings
us more truth, we
are those who work
hard to prepare for
the incoming confrontation,
unnecessarily i think,
since i do not really
bother about what
happens next, i am just
cooperating with your
woes and worse your
anxieties, and so i do
this and that as told
by you, but there is
a limit to all these,
i may soon sit and read
and not mind what you
say. here i am
attuned to what i am,
comfortable with myself,
and not anxious about
how i look and what they
say. I like this nook.
overlooking the sea.
the world is too wide
and space is encompassing
and we are too small
and insignificant.
to the world we have
no names, no places,
no histories. i love
it, when i am negligible.
when i am as usual,
alone and meditative.
here is peace, why
look for another?

RIC S. BASTASA
Here It Is A Saturday

in my country
today is a saturday
sunfilled, not just warm but hot
and all my pores open

today she caused the cutting of some trees
around the house

today she wants the sun to wrap everything
that is covered with coldness
and indifference

today she wants everything exposed
and be tested by heat
the lies to die
the truth to live

today she is fed up with coverings
tall trees concealing some moss
stones unturned
some bedbugs
hiding some worms curling up on some
comforts of humus

today she wants to be free
like a bird to fly to the other side of the island
where everything is sand
and bald and candid and dying

RIC S. BASTASA
Here The Beauty Of The Stars And The Moon Shall Make Me Live For Another Day.

do you really think
that i cannot keep that promise
to myself, love?

i know i broke some,
if not many,
but it is not the end
of my story

time changes everything
so goes the saying
and now i made that promise
that i am going to change
for the better

if not the best that i can be, away from you.

the tree is thick with leaves
this summer
and birds are flocking
making their nests and laying
their eggs

the leaves which fell after
the storm
have rotten, humus is aplenty
and there i watch
the new seeds coming out from
their hard coverings
sprouting

here the songs of these birds
shall keep me singing too
here the sprouting seeds shall
show me what hope is
here the silence of the night
shall cover me
here the beauty of the stars and
the moon
shall make me live for another day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here They Are

they have arrived from a distance
away from ourselves
for the past years
for a time

and this time
like a telescope
i shall see things from far away
to see things clearly

here they are
and i have become a stranger

RIC S. BASTASA
Here We Are Again

YOU ARE right
There are reasons why we write
Daily, we are looking for a cure to this disease
Not what you think,
It is what we think,
For how can you go inside our minds
Our houses are closed
Our gates high and locked
We want to go outside and commune with the trees
We cannot
That is the irony
The paradox
We desire to be Free
Yet we live inside these Caves
So many caves
Vast darkness where we speak without seeing our Faces
This is horrible
But what reaches you are
Too beautiful to believe
Too good to be True
What you call as Truths
We dismiss as Lies
There are twists and turns
Labyrinths inside a very small house
Where ants are keepers
and Confidantes
We keep a treasure here
Chests and Trunks full of money and gold
Nope
Don't get me wrong
We are not right
We mumble like hungry slaves in the desert
We are those broken bones
That you find

So beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
here we are
all children
drenched by the
rain on
December

our mothers
are all dead
our fathers
gone away

our sisters and
brothers have
families of their own
in far away places

here we are children
playing under the rain
running without aim
we never have any more
names.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Here We Are In The Middle Of The Rain

here we are in the middle of the rain
and we are all wet
and you sing a song for the rain gods
saying
they're crazy
and for a while, i think, i must be convinced,
i change my mind,
there is this point of finally joining
you, in the singing of the song
and the dancing, perhaps...

RIC S. BASTASA
Here You Are Depressed And Dying...

the birds here
are not wanting

always in time
for their instincts

i think they all
sing for you

and here you are
usual in your late waking

these birds are
not insistent

when they leave
they leave

even without you
or us

it is a clock affair
their wings always
accurately tell

and then you know it
well
as they move again
to distant places

without much drama
no talk

their flights tell
them who they are

and here you are
depressed and dying...
Here, Goodbye Is Sweet. Like My New Date In Silawe.

it does not take
that much, not an
emotion wasted, no
effort even, there
is no memory left
anyway, for-

what did i throw
away? just a sheet
of paper with all those
doodles therein,
i wasted my time,
nothing significant,
it was at that time
when i have nothing
to write, i was looking
for words, grasping
darkness and probing
what is inside that
locked room, - -

finally found the key
into the open,
fields of tulips,
a garden of rocks,
a rake and the sand,
mind drawing in
what is new and
interesting, oh- -

we were interesting
at first, but everything
repeated over and over
again sounds like a
broken record, monotonous
like the sermon of the
parish priest in a town
which you have to leave
because everything sounds
and looks the same,
and hence not worth
the time and attention.

here, goodbye is sweet.
like my new date in Silawe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Here, Here My Dear

we honestly did not intend to build a palace in the sky

you must understand our disappointments and sorrows
that is why we are playing with our hands on the sands of time

we do not intend to challenge the waters on the shore
we do not mind if everything we built is erased by it

we are merely squandering time because we have nothing meaningful to do
anymore

we cannot simply delet ourselves like some innocuous words in the
sentence

we have no power to simply burst like a balloon release ourselves as air and
leave the empty rubber on the ground

we have codes in our bones some inscriptions on our skins
the instructions are vague and incomplete that is why we are being held here
with the caprices of too much waiting

come join us let us play on the sands of time let us swim on the
shallow seas of our usual existences

it is not fun really but it can be if we think it to be
it is all in the mind it is beautified by the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Here...

it IS here where i am accepted
as MYSELF,
i admit i am not good, not that
skilled really, unable to get the
feel and the real kill,
I AM
like everyone else here
This is my place
and I am at home here
I want to say i want to stay
and you accept me....

but this will only be for a while,
no one stays forever here
no one lasts....

soon i will, too, say goodbye.
and it will be all right still.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hermaphroditic....

an earthworm
desires to meet a snail
on a common ground of
slowness and softness of
their flesh

the snail is proud
and wouldn't love someone
without a home

unrequited the earthworm
goes back to the softness of
its earth

hermaphroditic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hermaproditic

the gods shun them
the circles for they
know much and can
do much more
and so they divided
them to halves
and quarters and
so a man looks for
a woman, his better
half, but then there
were those who
earned the favor
from the gods,
they still have both
sexes, man and woman
inside their underwears
and you see them
loving themselves
at home with
who they are
and still keeping
up with their own
selfish mode
of reproduction,
making love
with their own
bodies hugging
their own arms
and kissing
their own lips.

just perfect!
the gods concluded.

RIC S. BASTASA
Herminia

as usual she is silent
an absorber among the group
of the pioneering teachers
of the school

she dyes her hair
completely black to hide her age.
she married late
and got a drunkard and gambler
for a husband.

her silence is understandable.
what she hears she keeps to herself
but they won't stay long
she is full
of angst, stories about marital
abuse files her mind,
her children have grown up
and had lives of their own.

she is alone, like everybody else
in this party
what will she talk about? will she
make a complaint? will she pour
her regrets over a bottle of beer.

she is old enough. And time
is too short.
She listens. There is no other
thing worth doing
in this valley of tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hey Beautiful

stay as is
you are beautiful
don't stretch
your neck like
a giraffe
for you are you
and you are
beautiful
as ever

hey, beautiful
baby, you are
come sit beside me
do not be
an alligator
be the bird on my shoulder
be the sunshine on my hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hey Mister Poet Find Me A Death Poem That I Shall Read This Sunday

hey mister poet
find me a poem
that i will read
this sunday upon
the behest of
our chapel chaplain,

hey mister poet
find me a death
poem to be read
this sunday evening

and mister poet answered

hey lady i will make
a death poem for you

but it shall be read
by me this sunday

and you will be there
but you cannot hear

you will be there
and they will be there

because of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hey Where Have You Been?

have you been to London
to visit the Queen?

hey where have you been?

we are waiting
for another round of drinks
with you

a glass of wine
a marlboro stick
some peanuts
another glass
of margarita

remember the rain
and your naked
feet on the
muddy ground

remember the
storm and the
ceasing of the
thunder

remember me?
i am my poetry
now i must admit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hi... Bye...

hi

one syllable,
two letters, it makes the difference
of being here and
you being there,

hi

and i say hi too to you

crisp, too short, reserved,
as we both wonder what next to say
what is the possibility of
another letter, or word, or perhaps
an incomplete sentence will do the trick
of what that rest must follow...

hi.... and i fall short of meaning and i write...

bye.

three letters
one syllable, sad and
indifferent

it could have asked for some more
but you know

it cannot.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Hibernation Of The Self....

this door is closed

the pavement leading to
the stair is not even
allowed to receive
morning messages

the self is hibernating
on winter time
it is putting fire upon
its being
let no one enter
or one gets burned

in this hearth
of cinders
this molten lava
that purifies
rocks

RIC S. BASTASA
he was sitting on one benches of the public park
where anything goes really,

after a stroll, he sits again, putting his feet on a trunk
his arms on the upper side of the bench

the air fans him and he looks at the trees lush with leaves
it rained last night and the scent of freshness is here again

he simply sits there alone...
there is no need of anything

or anyone, in this kind of a very simple bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hidden Disgust...

she opens the door
in the study room to tell him
that dinner is ready
his favorite but he is so engrossed
(in his lies) before the
computer and he says
he's done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hidden Dreams

as true love is
speechless

i sympathize
myself

on so much
talk

i bite my
lips

put my tongue
on the right

side of my
cheek

the years
i tame

endured are
the hours

no matter
how soft the bed is

how fresh the
room

i always know
what to do

in sleep i
go where

dreams are not
few.
Hidden Pleasure....

feeling so light he floats

the feeling is
feathery

chickening out he hides himself
in his journal

a dark room where he projects himself
as a butterfly

black powder
with proboscis extending

longer than his
pants

he consumes what nectar is found
on that
flower of illusion

he knows this thing is only found here

this only thing that for the meantime
makes him a man

RIC S. BASTASA
Hidden Something

something that you promise not to see
again
the tongue hides within the mouth
it will not taste this again
the eyes roll
eyelids close as the scene is
repeated
it is about another form
of tongue-in-cheek
the mouth says something that it does not mean
the brain understands perfectly
like the heart

and so here it is again
viewed for the nth time
this time the conscience is numb

it says
another lie
it comes back again
savoring
what it says it hates
what it believes is too unlikely of its being

but what can you do
here it is again
mutually salivating

RIC S. BASTASA
Hide And Seek

when i went there
you were not there
when you went there
i was not there

purposely we try
to not meeting
like two parallel lines
unbent by light

you think about the kids
playing hide and seek
to while the hours away
when we are not with them

come to think about what
we are doing: we are breaking
up, and we are loosening our grip
to our hands. we pretend that
you like finding me and that i like
finding you.

we love not finding each other.
and that is the truth.

when the kids ask why?
we play our games and we tell them

we are enjoying each others' search.
we miss our absence.

we like it this way.
raw smiles. fake grins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hiding

Since you are hiding
And I am here
Where and when do we start?

In the first place
We have nothing to begin with
You hide
I can never find you

There is no beginning to
Something & everything unknown.
There is nothing given in particular.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hiding A Secret Love

How can I hide
From my face
This fondness
This secret love
When she comes
To face me
She asks
If there is
Something
Wrong
As I leave
and say
Nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hiding Behind So Many Names

why does someone
hide in so many names?
if there were only many faces
i am sure that someone
shall buy those faces
and day by day s/he walks
in the malls
and confuse people about
who she is

she may show a smile today
a frown tomorrow
anger today and
gentleness on another day
she me take the face of the clown
or that of a masochist
the sadist
she may buy the face of God
and for a time
for excitement's sake wear
the face of the devil

but for God's sake
who is interested about her games?

not me. are you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Hiding The Gray Side Of Life

because you want something
definite
then i must hide

what grays areas are there
nothing shady

something goes on
on this concealed portions of

the hair and this morning
i am ready

to let you know
that the world is only divided into two parts

black and white.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hierarchy

THEY ARE up there
enclosed in their rooms of power
it is a circus
they are all exhibitors

DOWN HERE the lowliest of the lowly
suffer.

RIC S. BASTASA
i feel high today
because mother came in a dream
with an airplane
evidently by her dress
and expert actuation she is also the pilot
she says with authority that this is a chartered flight
and i will be the only passenger bound to a place where she presently lives,
i do not mind at first what she is saying because my first reaction has been
to hug her tightly like the way loneliness hugs a newly-found lover.

i look at her face carefully
she is not as bright as the appearance of the ring she gave me when i reached 25
and she feels like wax when i touch her her face.

i don't know but i refused her which when i tell the story to my wife she explains why i am still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
High Noon

high noon
time to cook
for my wife

got to fry
the fresh fish
warm the rice
and place
the plate for
one person
only...

i have already
eaten just
before high
noon

left-overs
last breakfast

no problem
keep on writing
i am reading
your best poem

RIC S. BASTASA
High Noon (2)

something happened
on high noon
the world stopped
spinning

the hands of the clock
become
a single line

pointing to the cause
of the death
of her innocence

petals falling off
sepals dismembered
a man cuts a stalk
and leaves the roots

mourning upon the
bitter, sticky sap of loss

RIC S. BASTASA
High Power Lines

high power lines
along the green
ricefields

two black
birds
so interconnected
bridged

and yet
unengaged
with each other

RIC S. BASTASA
High School Memory

three of you in class had a crush on her
You threw a crumpled yellow paper with a note in black
Ballpoint pen

I love you

She opened it and crumpled it again and threw it back to you
It read in red ballpoint pen

I love you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
High Tech World

Google
quick results
data gathered
Word, Powerpoint
chat, information highways
Facebook,
instant noodles
e-credits, etcetera,
everything at the tip of the fingers
everything at the tip of the tongue
flowing following
without much meaning
like electronic poetry
what a waste to figure out
emotions...
what emotions? nothing.
pressing keys
placing words,
and they keep figuring out
what is the meaning of all these

nothing. nothing.
decay and oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Highly Ambitious Dot

the lowly dot
learns that ambition is a virtue
and so one day
it rolls itself upon itself
until it becomes a line
and then it runs and struggles
and chases and rises and stretches
and curls and winds itself upon itself
until it becomes a shape
until it learns the best shape to be in
a circle that feeds upon its own shape
until it become a sphere
a ball
a rubber ball until it becomes
a bouncing ball
bouncing and bouncing until it masters
the tricks of being the most
important circle
the earth

where you live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hills And Meadows

I like to see hills. Meadows.
Blue skies. Blue birds.
Trees are lining like
confident soldiers.
This must be the Alps.
White caps on mountains.
A winding river. Pines and cones.
Rabbits and squirrels.

This is the Sound of Music.
A movie in my mind.
You come with your lonely boys and
girls. You are the mother of escapism.
They are the hope of lost fathers
of the wars that man has waged
against himself.

I like to see hills. But there are none.
I like to hear the sound of music.
But there is none.

I face another darkness.
Tense situations. Another struggle.
No conversations. Heavy with
Monotonous Silence.

Perhaps i will light a candle this time.
And inside the flame. I shall see hills again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Him

the man with red cheeks
and white beard
and less hair, what is he up to?

ah, he is the mocking bird
and for this
he is never married.

RIC S. BASTASA
Him And Her....

he tried to understand
what his hands are
she didn't, she had no
expertise on those hands
closed like a living clam
under the sea
to the bottom below the
sand
she could not see his
flesh
he did not see her face
the story is rabid like a dog
after the bite
death is sure
feared is light
and the cell closes on in him
she was gone
like a glimmer
of the sun
dawn to the deeper part
of the forest
breathlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
Hinay Hinay Lang

usa ka higayon
usa ka ginhawa
usa ka tikang

hinay hinay lang
ang pagdawat
sa karon

ilabay na ang
gahapon og
ayaw lang sa
dawata ang
ugma

lisod ang tawong
magbagood

daghang mangahulog
kay dili na mahawiran
sa iyang gagmayng
mga kamot

dili mo mahakop ang
tanan
dili mo na magakos
ang dako og
karaan kaayong
kahoy

og busa mas
maayo pag
molingkod ka
na lang una
sa iyang silong
og manghaw-as
sa mga dili
na nimo
kinahanglan
tan-awa ang
mga gamot sa
kahoy
pamatia ang
kalinaw sa
iyang mga dahon
batia ang kabugnaw
sa iyang landong

karon
ang pamalandong
karon
ang paghinuklog
niining
mga kamatooran

usa ka higayon
usa ka ginhawa
usa ka tikang
lang una
hinay-hinay lang

RIC S. BASTASA
His Advice

his advice
for me not
to fall into
this chasm
is to hold
unto my
two ears

it is not really funny. he simply meant that i have to solve my own problems
as he solves his. no molestation. just minding each own business and yes

just being
independent.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Argument

when life has nothing more to offer to myself
what do you think should i offer to you?
when i have nothing
what is it that i can give you?
when i have nothing to gain
or lose
what is it that i must fear about death
when life itself has become my own sentence
my own death
my own end
why should i love it? why should i live it with you?
when you have nothing too
when we both have nothing to give and nothing to offer
shall we ever forget and forgive?

that is perhaps the reason of the explosion
explosive answers to explosive questions

RIC S. BASTASA
His Booklover

and so it came to pass
that his book lover
that he loves so much
skipped the book that he wrote
in years,

feeling dejected
he wrote another one
intended for the one
who is willing
to have him.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Burden

early morning she goes out
putting orange juice in a cellophane
without bread or cookie
she sips like a child

she cannot be outdone by him
she walks a kilometer or so
and he would be looking for her
for hours filled with anxiety

then she finds her without her bra
in the marketplace
singing and dancing
the people looking at her with pity

tired she sleeps on one of the benches
and snores aloud
dirt is on her feet and arms
and hair and breasts

he finds her finally
and takes her with his arms back home
where his daughters are waiting
for their mom

his burden is his wife
besieged by the mystical furies

RIC S. BASTASA
His Calm And Silence

his calm and silence is such
that one hears
the footsteps of the
ant
the touchdown
of a leaf
on the fragile
covering
of his heart

RIC S. BASTASA
His Case

tomorrow did not come
he waits
but tomorrow never came
he sits and claims
the benefit of patience
the past sits beside him
enumerating
all the stories of regrets
today is mindless
it laughs and shows nothing
but indifference and
then it tells him
that on the next minute
it will leave him

no wonder he calls the
long name of the rope
befriends it
and then gently he wraps
it around his naked neck

RIC S. BASTASA
His Charity.

the japanese was short with long black hair.
he carried only one sporty bag and sits there silently.
he did not talk.

at 12: 30 in the evening the loneliness crept in like a rat in the sink
smelling left over.

we sat side by side. And then he started talking.

i learned much from him. His charity. His tolerance for troublesome women. His
way of telling that his home in Japan is very peaceful but
equated it with intolerable boredom. He bought a house in Argao.
A beachfront.

He is a widower. He supports scholars in Surabaya and Surigao.
And they quarrel over his generosity.

When we arrived in Manila he kept his silence again.
Perhaps, his only treasure now.

I gave the sign that we are now home and we must part ways.
I keep a treasure now. His charity.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Depth

when the rope with a pail was lowered
to get some water
there was none, and the
rope was only about two meters long
what was loud was the
echo of the pail banging
the muddy bottom

RIC S. BASTASA
His Dialogue Along The Stairs Watching Love Pass Him By...

i simply watch love
pass me by

and till this day

i regret merely watching
love pass me by

i have not sinned
and i am not as happy

as those who sinned
and were so easily forgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
His Drawing Of Her

with only
the pigments of red
and black made
available to
paint her
he sticks to the
rules

her body is
the white of the
canvass
her lips
red and the rest
shall be black

her heart too.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Father Had

his father had
long died 20 years ago

and at his age now
when he coughs
at night
unable to sleep he
hears the very
kind of cough
that his father once
had

pain sometimes
has
twin sounds despite
the passage of
the years

despite the urge
to simply forget
and let things

like ships take their due
course and
sink

RIC S. BASTASA
His Father's Death...

that early morning before eating
breakfast his father asks for a glass of water
his chest is in pain
and the world closes out for him

Marcelino Sr.
R.I.P.
he farmed his way till death....

RIC S. BASTASA
His Favorite Picture

i've seen his favorite pic
it looks like a creek
where the ducks go for
a swim
beside it is the green grass
untread upon by the
feet of men
growing tall is the tree
giving shade
to a lost soul
the sun above it
creates the islets of light

RIC S. BASTASA
His First Hug

his first hug
was not his
mother's

for
she died
on the first
day of his life,
neither his father's
coz he died
when the war
came about
long time
ago

not his
grandpa's
neither his
grandma's
no, not
hers

it was
from his
gay teacher
in the context
of a molestation
but he did not say
any word about it
simply because it was his first hug and it made him
feel wonderful
that he could
not really
forget
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Funeral

MULTICOLORED umbrellas
marching the black road
towards his final resting place
this is his funeral
people cross the bridge
of the blue river
the day is bright
and the grief is light

He must have
IF he were still alive
Disliked it
He wants black umbrellas all along
Black suits
Blue flowers
A rainy day
He wants his departure to be sad
He has many unfinished business
Too may sins still
Without the penance.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Funeral (Edited)

MULTICOLORED umbrellas
marching the black road
towards his final resting place
this is his funeral
people cross the bridge
of the blue river
the day is bright
and the grief is light

He must have
IF he were still alive
Disliked it
He wants black umbrellas all along
Black suits
Blue flowers
A rainy day
He wants his departure to be sad
He has many unfinished businesses
Too many sins still
Unforgiven
And needing the penance.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Idol Is Still Bruce Lee....

i ask if you ever
get lonely in vegas

what with having to
endure two wives and
six kids all on their
own lives now away
from you

i ask if loneliness
somehow travels in
your spine when you
are alone in the house
abandoned

is there such a lingering
feeling of being
abandoned

your idol is still bruce
lee, in high school you
manage those kicks and
how well you have
manipulated chako and
kung fu

i ask again if ever
you get lonely too just
like us, just like everyone

you say you are leaving
you are busy and you have
no time for all these
nonsense questions.....

RIC S. BASTASA
His Ignorance

it is the first step
to knowledge, knowing
that one has not known,
it is the first stage of
being full,
knowing that i am empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hail and welcome to the wondrous kingdom of the Warriors of Fantasy!

You are about to venture forth into various domains, each ruled, governed and protected by different kinsfolk and mythical beings that dwell in this enchanted land.

You are cordially invited to a demonstration of each of their customs and swordsmanship.

Each domain requires you to take part in the festivities they have to offer, so steel yourself and ready your blade, for you are about to draw blades with the likes of barbarians, demons, feral beasts, Greek gods and other creatures and beings from the worlds of fantasy.

From here travel south and make use of the map to your right to make your way to each of the available domains.

The map will magically navigate you to new magical worlds as you venture forth over time.
Be brave and alert in your travels.

Until we cross paths again, my friend...

: : Bows graciously once more
and disappear under the veil of night.: :

RIC S. BASTASA
His Last Dance With Her

he holds her tight
nothing in
between their
bodies except
this whisper
his whisper of
honey i love
you so
she repeats the
words and
he kisses her
and then he falls
on the
dance floor

cardiac arrest
the doctor pronounces
his demise

RIC S. BASTASA
His Lies

his lies are his hairs
the crown of his head
making him a king
of your dreams

do you wish him bald
and ugly and finally
unlovable?

care his hair and kiss
his forehead
you may even put daisies
laurel leaves

there is no halo
but what can you do?
he thrives upon your illusion
upon your wish
he comes through

dreams are free and so are lies
love, love, and love, there is no choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Loneliness

he undresses himself and
slides inside a tub of water

he buries his head to gain
the coolness of the water

he places his hands on the side
and looks beyond the glass windows

there the trees are green and the
clouds are blue and the sun is brighter

he closes his eyes and lies still
around his body are the foams and scents

he stops awhile for some thoughts
she is still there inside his mind

how can he ever forget her?
how long shall she stay inside his heart?

how can he be so powerless in this?
how can she be so beautiful still despite the years?

RIC S. BASTASA
His Love Rejected

his pain is still there when she said no.
the pain of rejection

his pain spreads like cancer throughout his body.
he is sick, and he does not want to say a word about his pain.

he wants to continue living though as a matter of an obligation.
the parents that he loves, the friends that he likes to be with.

her picture.
yes her picture is the one left for him.
he gazes upon her lips and kisses them like he is a passionate lover
loved by her.
he touches her hair, her cheeks, her neck, he dreams of her body
and makes love with her.
it is all in the mind, he says to himself on dark nights.

he closes his eyes and dreams of her
inside his dream she becomes a dove
he looks at her but it will just be that
just that.

he devises no traps, or concocts magic potions so she may love him
in return, or cage so he may trap her in his sole gaze forever,
he keeps his hands on his side his feet on the right ground
he opens his heart like a window looking out to sea

he is in pain and keeps on chanting he loves this dove very much
but still, still even
inside his dream, he wants her to fly and be happy and be peaceful
and be so free
away from him.

he keeps his tears inside his pockets.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Marriage Today

as proof of his love
for her
on his marriage today
he brings
a little boy
enclosed by his arms
and he kisses him

the best evidence
of their love
this boy
coming out from
her very own body
borne
out of their free spirits
their love
unbound
by no other consideration
except
the warmth of their embrace
the promise
to be always together
for better
or for worse
till death tear them apart

and i
with the authority of the law
vested on me
do now pronounce
them
as man and wife

their eyes smile
their spirits jump with joy
there are no wedding bells
no doves
no motifs of any color
because they are poor

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
he is jobless
and she is but plain
woman
of her domestic chores

RIC S. BASTASA
His Mode Of Earning His Living

beside writing poetry
he takes macro photographs
ants like camels
moths into dinosaurs

moles into hills
islands into continents
sorrows magnified
this is beauty to him

his poetry magnifies
what you have not seen

RIC S. BASTASA
His Name Is Predator

he thought he could not eat alone.
one time, he said it is unethical.
it is a show of greed, a manner that is uncalled for
in the social order of proper behavior.
it is not nice to see.

why can’t you invite someone to dine with you?

now he drinks alone.
finished his combo meal.
a slice of pizza, two pieces of fried chicken breasts,
a greek salad for solo, a bottle of san mig pale pilsen,
five slices of mojos,

all tables are filled.
there is a family of four.
another table for two sweetie pies.
the usual whispers for nothing.
(does not make sense to him now
since his girlfriend changed him for
a night caller)

another table for five friends: the screaming gay is
the loudest, another one is flirting, the three are making rumors
and then the laughter,

no, i can't spend for another.
he tells himself. I have enough of myself. he adds.

life is tight. there is no one he can trust.
a bottle of beer and his combo meal are just as happy
as all the tables combined.

who cares? he is the devil now
and ready for his next prey.
his name is predator.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Own World Of Calm

and then he closes the windows
and doors
he spreads the drapes to drive
away
a figment of light
he walks away from the
world outside and now
stays within
as another world opens like
a bud
into a giant flower
where he alone
becomes the stamen
at a certain moment
secreting the
nectar of his
own making

a sky is made and clouds
drift
a sun appears
and light so much light
satisfies his thirsts
and hundred
huners

it is so calm
his world is at peace
in a soundless
sphere

RIC S. BASTASA
His Paintings

I looked at the paintings
not just once, but over and over again

oh, the colors were so bright
the yellows were glaring suns
and the reds were like strawberries
and the blues are what you see in
long summers

i admit i admired the choices
the mood, the glare which, as he
terms it are radical, sort of giving
it the masculine touch of
the rebellious hero, who at the
end, of course, wins his cause,
with his woman beside him and
the orange sun, behind.

i thought he is a friend so i give
my unsolicited opinion, that the
exhibits are more of, gay.

And, without due notice, he
shut me out of his blonde world.
I regret losing such a friend.
I could have been nicer, but
putting a blind eye, and a deaf
ear, in my face. Hmm, my big
honest mouth sometimes.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Poem

i read his poem today,
a disciple of
I don't really know
he will not tell
but this i can say,
i follow every thought
every metaphor
and it is like i am being
pushed
to the labyrinth of the
large and small
intestines of a
chicken,
i know how is it
to be a gizzard,
i survive all these
blind curves
until i bump upon
a closed door
like an opening at the
end of the tunnel,
there is still no light
only lots of
shit.

One thing,
last word, i like the
ride of the
roller coaster
which brings me
back to my
heyday
my youth
which i may say
is paramount to his
nauseous, really.
His Prayer

he prays a lot
that He must take him now
for he had nothing left
not even his mind
what he has is only his soul
but He did not take heed
He sticks to the plan
that he must suffer
purification
cleansing him so after
the putrefaction
he shall sit
beside
Him

RIC S. BASTASA
His Prayer In Jail....

the accused who
in his heart had
been innocent all
along had the last
resort:

Tolstoi, 'God sees
the truth but waits'

Father, Father,
why have you forsaken me?

RIC S. BASTASA
His Sermon

at the pulpit
he keeps reciting the three attributes of God

that God is true
that God is beautiful
that God is good

no one disagrees on this
soliloquy

have i really felt this?

some questions keep on propping
inside my mind
in the middle of this crowd
and uniformity

is something true always good?
will good be always beautiful?

what about the bitterness of the true life?
what about the ugliness of the desired good?

shall a good feeling be not wrong sometimes?
the bitter herbs of life has good teachings too.
the badness of failures make us strong and vigilant.

and so on and so forth...
and then it is time to leave, sometimes an end is good.

like life, like death
like the beauty of a fading sunset
like the cover of the darkness
like the coming of dusk
like the birth of a new day...

RIC S. BASTASA
His Small World

a blue pen
a pair of eyeglasses
a cellphone
a remote control of the TV
a book
a writing notebook
a lap tap
and a white poodle sleeping
beside all these things

it is his small world
yet everything and everywhere are inside it
his body and soul

RIC S. BASTASA
His Song

it is natural that he can be mistaken
as the mad man
at noon he demands that all street lights
be switched on
he says the town is as dark as the night
without the stars and the moon

he proclaims that God is killed by
all these self-righteous people of his town
that God is crucified again and that there
is no Veronica who wipes the blood
from his brow

his song is the song of doubt
he says it is the only certain thing

there is only Nothing
and Nietzsche is coming over to strengthen
those that never killed him

RIC S. BASTASA
His Story

he likes to think that he is welcome here

that Someone placed him here as gentle
as those invisible hands of the caressing winds

so he stays

the people around him are filling his skin with rules
those that must not be done

so he is scared and
scarred

to keep the usefulness of sanity intact
he must pretend as that is the only way to survive

many have been hanged by reason of honesty
and those who lie have become living heroes

in his throne
he is king now

king of hypocrites
master of lies

and all the people who make the rules love him
inside he screams

tonight he goes for another kill
like a vampire

in the morning his mouth is clean
his face well shaven

the mirror mocks him all day
but who cares? he'd say

'i am your creation
and so i too have to create all of you
i am the monster that you love
and so here i am day by day eating each one of you'

glance at the world
it is happy because of you

morning angel
night's devil

RIC S. BASTASA
after arriving from the u.s.
dodong went straight to the
ancestral house in milad, it

is quite big, with two storeys,
made of hard wood, and nipa roofed.
it stands upon a hill overlooking
the sea far away from the city.

he opened the front door which
squeaked wanting to perhaps greet
him and tell a horrible story of
what really happened before they
left the place for good after
ten long years of wanting to forget.

it is a shame of the family his
father said before he died. This
must be kept a secret, something
which he carried to his grave.

dodong understands that pain is
always there, coming like a stab
in his chest. He can hear the cries
of his two sisters, the loud screams
of his mother. He was then a small
boy before those three monsters.

it was the time of their fall.
He was tied to a chair where mother
was killed. The whole town knew.
But it was still kept a secret.

Happiness is a hypocrisy. Silence
is an option. Leaving things slipping
like water from one’s hands.
Now he is back with nothing to do
but to pray and forgive. This is not
home. This is a graveyard of family's
tragedy. After a few minutes, he is now ready, to burn this house.

RIC S. BASTASA
His Sweetness

now i know who in this office
is sweet
it is him
it is him that we suspect
his urine
it is his urine which the ants
have feasted

it is him who is sick
it is him who does not admit it

he has no reason to live
the wine takes him
the cigarettes choke him
the nights bury him with its
loud music

this early morning he lies drunk
on the sidewalk
his mouth still with froth
his eyes still tightly closed
his stomach now again
protesting....

RIC S. BASTASA
His Usual Routine...

last night he made love to her
on longer hours
his tongue working out her nipples
genitals on deeper penetrations
trying to reach the deepest part of
the wells of
their souls

it was unusual

attempting to achieve what was never there for once
new techniques of pleasures
unlearning traditions of
the missionary positions
time is elongated
there is a new fantasy
of an abstract
painting a la
Picasso at the back
of his mind

a woman with two faces
a man with a twisted jaw
a guitar with
a broken string
a river without visible
banks
a ship without a port
abandoned lighthouse
dark clouds
boundless seas
trees without leaves
hands with nails removed
detached arms
half man half horse
a lion with the tails of
a fish
ceiling without beams
rusty nails on walls
about to collapse

(how can he tell her that he never had
an ejaculation?
that there is something in him that is never understood
and tapped)

as lays there in bed
snoring
he stares at the ceiling
silently
composing all the possible
questions
still without any
drafted answers

he is a submarine on uncharted
depths of
deep blue oceans
charting out
the bottom
where due to so much pressure
he shall shrink
like a crumpled
paper

RIC S. BASTASA
His Vision For His Place

his eyes look for hidden springs
surging from the rocky crevices of the old mountains
and he finds them
his hands caress the river that is long and winding
like it is the wedding dress of her beloved
soon his dragon boats will come
with a hundred paddles like a millipede on its tiny feet
he sees floating restaurants sprouting like mushrooms
by the side of the mangroves where colored stone fishes
shall thrive like seaweeds and sea urchins

everything is eco-friendly
the silence of the nights shall be preserved
the people of his place shall sleep soundly
there will be no crimes and abuse of the land and sea

and those that hinder him
shall float and bloat in the river
their heads explode their brains scatter on the rocks
they shall disappear without any trace
their eyes plucked out their mouths sliced from their faces
summarily and quickly and without so much fuss
their mothers and fathers cannot even weep
they will be faceless and nameless and will have no place to stay

he is the mayor of this town and his popularity rises
he will soon be governor and even in time be president of this country

his first name is the bullet and his family name is the gun
he is judge and prosecutor rolled into one

RIC S. BASTASA
His Writings On The Wall

when he was writing about
walls
he wrote the words on the walls
and they were arranged
like walls
from wall to wall his description
about the wall was
consistently like a wall
walling in all the walls
around the wall
where he was writing
consistently and
uniformly the word

wall, wall, wall, wall
and then nothing but a train of walls like this

wallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwallwall

of course, he did not add any smoke from steam engine
neither did he add any children and women and even men riding on the
train of walls
there was no driver even
or wheels

what he stressed was just a wall, a wall train, a wall nothing but a wall
walling him in
but what he really wanted at the end was something that should wall him out

something however that until now he is still trying to figure out

RIC S. BASTASA
His Youngest

two wives
and five children
he embraces the Koran
his education
and religion and his peers
and forefathers
crowding inside his mind

at the airport he looks at
his youngest daughter
playing with a toy
puppy

tears fall from his eyes
for yesterday
if it were not for a little delay
of the car
he would have been included in that convoy
that met the
horrible massacre

blessings in disguise
he kisses his youngest daughter
his time has not arrived yet
he has things to do yet

always now to love
and to love always more

RIC S. BASTASA
His Youth

his youth was spent
upon lighted cigarettes
upon circles of
smoke above his head
lost in the ceiling.

RIC S. BASTASA
History Lover....

a place is interesting because of the stories that you have heard before. for instance, this bed is where this man and that woman first made it.

this house is deserted because once a fire broke here and chaos is born, and chaos wears a mask and since then people do not recognize its face.

a name to you is interesting because your mother tells the story of that name. the spelling has a history about a rumor and you love rumors.

shall i say that you pretend that you like to have a talk with him because you like to gather some flowers from his garden?

that is a nice objective. Flowers are always a delight at the center table. the earth appears to be thirsty of conflicts. That is a misinterpretation.

The deserted path knows better. No one really cares what one does with his feet. The moon knows it all. But look, it simply shines and does not tell you anything.

For secrets have always been nuggets. They must remain buried. When dug again and shaped into different forms, that is where the definition of hell comes out.

I am not the one saying this anyway. Quite harsh. Hell is other people. And i am one of its delicate flames.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hit By Cupid's Arrow

hit by cupid's arrow
last night right in the middle of my heart

i bleed
and you are so blind and numb

you'll never see and you'll never feel
i am dying and it shall not be with your knowing

RIC S. BASTASA
Hmmm Working For The Money?

i like it this way
the way
i want things
come and go
and

i do not really
work for the
money but

for a certain
calling
a mission
a vocation
an apostolate
a profession

and it goes
this way, God provides

and the money now
is working for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hmmm, Something That Is Mysterious

hmm, i press the word
and lowered my face
so my eyes may see clearly
and there the enigma
slides upon itself on the monitor
the mysterious line of words
keep coming like a rain of
thoughts a train of trickles
pushing itself on the
dark tunnel begging for
an understanding something
that i cannot comprehend
completely and then i said
i like this
something so beautiful
inside my heart
and yet something so
incomprehensible... life
hmmm.... life, oh life!

RIC S. BASTASA
and so we made an understanding
to make our fences higher & stronger
& thicker,

we shake our hands and on that very day
we constructed things as planned

we heard some whistling that sound of the
mixing of the cement and sand and gravel

the putting of the blocks and finally the
shushing sound of the finishing touches

since then we could not see their affairs
in the same manner that we have kept strictly

on the privacy of our own events
the visitors that come the drinks shared

we know there is peace now
nothing of the old disturbance but when

everyone leaves to occupy their own private places too
what stays behind is the hoarded silence, this loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hold On To Everything

surely you have hands and surely you know how to use your hands
like holding on tightly to joys and sorrows
holding on to pains and reliefs
holding on to misgivings and thanksgivings
and hate and love and giving and taking and speaking and silence
you hold on to whatever
in the place where you are an alien
to all things honorable and miserable, defeats and triumphs,
losses and gains, you must hold on, you must tightly hold on
to life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Holding On

i hold on to love
just i imagine it to be
i hold on to life
just i want it to be
i hold on to anything
to keep love, to make life
your hands, or if without it
to the knife that i hide
under your bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Holding On, Just To Be Alive...

when a boat sinks
you grab everything that your hand can hold,
it does not matter what it is,
whether it is good or bad, legal or illegal,
you simply take hold of it and hold on
to the saving of your life.

similarly, when you are hungry and there is no food to eat
you grab every food that is there, dirty or clean, stolen or gained
you simply take it, and eat it to save yourself from death

they impose their laws upon you, it does not matter anymore
they give you death? what for? it does not matter
you’re already dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Holding The Lamp

anxious face
the lines are bold
like some veins
about to burst
like a bomb timed
at ten tonight

the flash light
roams around the
darkness
a roomful of darkness
wanting to point
out the truth

the truth is in my heart
in the darkness of
my heart
your flashlight gets
nothing
the view is holographic
mirages and shadows
ghosts and
souls

you are a failure again
i turn off the light
now see me again
in this darkness
this is my truth
this is my life
this is the only light i have
the dark room
a roomful of blackness
inside my heart
inside my soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Homage

today i pay homage
to the turtle and for those like it
are too slow
for almost anything

its inability to cope up with the
arrogant and speedy rabbit
the subject of
too much mockery
in that snail-paced history

today i pay homage
to persistence and flexibility
to patience and stoicism
to faith that grows steadily within the hearts of every man
that respect for every block of brick
that makes the long winding gate of protection
that composes the great wall
of the house
for every step
that does the ways of master builder
though small and slow
yet still sure

today i pay homage for all the other
slow processes
of solitude
those quiet manners of the
grass and the leaves
the tender climb of the tendrils on the trellis of the fence
the steady flourishing of the
petals on the sepals of the
morning flower

today i pay homage to
those tiny green turtles anchored
quietly
beside the gleaming stone of the ancient pond
of our civilization
those sleepy eyes under the moon
full of wisdom
showered by the rain and sunshine of the ages
not rushing for anything

they are all here
undisturbed and thriving still
not hurting anyone

RIC S. BASTASA
Hombres Del Viernes....

men with nothing to do
but hold their beers till morning

there is no work available
and the world is at war with each other

the government is a liar
and the church is a good collector of their bones

the neighbor has a party of its own
not inviting anyone of them

so here they are
making their own sub-culture too

fridays are the beginnings of their weeks
devoted to a drinking spree
long list of debts unpaid
screaming wives and children who had
to stop going to school and
find work themselves
they have their arms now and feet
on their loveless locomotions

it is not a shocking world
it is real
it is the truth too obvious
fists punching tables like
boxers going for a kill

RIC S. BASTASA
Home

the home is where the heart is.
we always know where our hearts are.
we therefore know where that home is.
somehow, my heart is broken
and i have lost my home
and i do not know anymore where that home is.

until you come to my life, pointing to me that way to
my new home.
thank you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Home Again To The Arms Of Despair

the waves are bigger in the middle of the ocean of my dreams
i sit on the sandy shore waiting
here is distance unfolding
coming and leaving at the same time
the hands are powerless in this
no amount of concerns connects us
once again
even if i surrender to the grips of the night
even if the moon swears
to shine till dawn breaks

you come like a shadow of an afternoon Sunday
broad and firm and strong as you claim yourself
in a name carved in stone
you're marvelous like a comet at noonday

it is late and i am weak
my knees are bent to the ground of worthlessness

you run to the sea and plunge yourself
you wave your hand before that
dissolution or that diffusion into the forgetting

i am looking at the horizon
it is as straight as life wants itself to be
who wants to break the silence of a line falling
out of a page? the smoothness of an edge
finally denying an importance

and then the sunset completes itself
with your silence
in that single splash
as you gasp for the last single breath
of hope
there is no stranger coming as
a survival
there is no new born child to revive
despair
i think it is horrible but on the other hand
it is divine
i remember that stair into heaven
rosary beads they imagine
hurled by our Mother

i cannot remember how that Sunday ends
i will again say it ends with the splash and then the edifying silence
the rising of the clouds
the resurrection of the dimming light
in the middle of grief
when handkerchief begins to show a face
of thorns

let me stop and think awhile, a moment of silence
please, drink this cup of silence with me
this blood of wine

how can i tell you that there is this deleted version of the story
in trembling i arrive home and then i scream
that was at first
and i realize the windows are closed like a man without ears
there is no use for doors and doorsteps
the stairs have long been broken

RIC S. BASTASA
long ago
i was unwanted
grandpa
never praised me
though i worked
hard
even for
one word, perhaps

love or
even a pat on my shoulder
which i never
really had

papa i remember
bought me
a toy chopper
but that was just
once

he was not drunk
when he played with me
in the garden

when you feel unwanted
you do not
have friends
you have nothing good to say

it was early
for me to learn that
dying can be good

i never speak to anyone
about it

i only speak to myself
because i have
no choice

i love isolation
it becomes a way of life

never had a best friend
never had a circle of
friends

as a matter of consequence
i become too independent
complete in myself
and had always been
a survivor

despair is an everyday word
so i was no longer
afraid.

today people want me
call me by my name
and praise me, but

it is too late then
i do not need it anymore

when grandpa died all those near me
cried and mourned for days

i keep my usual distance
wear my tinted sunglasses
and walk myself
all alone back home

home is myself
my heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Home Of The Broken Heart

a broken heart
is always a stranger

looking for
a cure

on an unknown
terrain

it finds a river &
swims there

feeling cold it rises
naked from the water

dresses himself
to be born again

he finds a home

it is where his healed heart
is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Home Sweet Home

sunday on a home sweet home
from the city
to this little nipa hut
on top of a hill
that father built

where the guava trees are filled
with ripe fruits
where i climb and gather and taste
the sweetness of its pink flesh

where the carabaos rest
in the coolness of mudholes
where i take my ride on them
in the river nearby

on crystal clear waters
where some fish swim on shallow waters
inviting me to fish and catch them
for lunch of pearl white glutenous rice

and with banana leaves as plates
and some wild chicken's barbecued breast
and with my bare hands and
some childhood friends
we shall take this simple feast

RIC S. BASTASA
Home?

We were the children of poverty
And upon our shoulders lay the itemized responsibilities

As other children catch spiders
I was there repairing the leaking roof with papa

As others chase dragonflies and trap birds
I was there pasturing the cows and watching the carabaos

It went on and on even when i have become a man

As others went for the dance i was there cleaning the car
And scrubbing the floors into shining surfaces of pride

As others married the women of their dreams
I was there burning my eyebrows in the university of life

Everything i had i thought was a suffering
But Papa is right

My feet are on the ground
And then i have a house, a car, land, money, and a name

Except love and some things that money and fame cannot buy.

I guess he is right, i have a home of the past
But the future is still dimly lit, a shadow of a wall

A smoke from the kitchen, an ash in the garden,
Stones and pebbles on my feet

I can never be complete, just like anyone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Homebound

before he left the U.S.
HE took pictures of himself sleeping
no one believes that it was him who took that picture
someone theorizes
someone was beside him
another lonely body to another lonely body on that winter time

but it is really true
he will always be alone
and will always be alone
he repeats it so many times that it has become the sound of the
monotonous loneliness that he is finally leaving

he took the pictures of his breakfast
some greens
his lunch something oily
and his supper
something like cheesy pasta

he took every detail of that lonely room
then he viewed them again
when he was on that 17-hour flight back home
before the plane landed in Manila
he deleted everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Homelessness

There is homelessness
In ungodliness
So much mindlessness
To this kind of indifference
There is no reference
To my homelessness
This restlessness
To nothingness
This unholiness
There is no reference
There is no address
To this kind of unwholesomeness

There is nothing found
Only something lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly

Something in me
wants to go back
and want once more
to hear the sound of
your laughter

i want to imitate
what it really is
i want to show this
place where i come
from
i want to show you
now how disfigured
is my mouth
how this system
has done badly
for all the child in us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly ...

never had the chance
to visit Gethsemane
the thorns of the crown
on my head, never felt,
did not see the carrying of
the cross,
that darkest night of the
crucifixion, never been
there

in this middle of my
reflection
couldn't wait to see
Christ in His
Resurrection

i'd give up sorrow, grief,
lament, in exchange of
joy
it's the redemption that
matters most
our way of moving on
this long yet
unfinished journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly I Too Turn

honestly i too turn
to sand when love is
repeatedly uttered like
a chant to make the dead
become alive again when
there has never been proof
of its resurrection I've
seen people live
faithfully in the house
because there is only one house
not because they are one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly If You Only Ask Me

what name shall i give you,  
i have so many names ready,

i am paul, but they call me greg,  
(i can be a kenneth, if you like,  
or an apollo, tell me,  
do you like greek games?)

i told you i have been always  
Paul, not the apostle, but the  
one that they always like,  
at the gallery of bones, at the  
esplanade of hands, more hands,

the room is clean and perfumed,  
and the light is dimming like a  
human drama of lovers and  
what they do quickly to themselves,

you like to see dark nooks  
something that is crowded  
just for two people to feel the  
pulse of their wrists  
nothing about the heart here  
you emphasize it from the start

plain rubbing and then at the  
back of our minds an  
impersonal groan,

then we leave, without a wink.

honestly, if you ask me,  
i never like it, but i know  
soon another one follows.

(note: this has nothing to do  
with me. Someone i know.)
Honestly Let Me Talk To Myself And Remind It...

enough of these tantrums
that i have caused upon myself
that i have shamed upon myself
an honorable man
to the eyes of those who do not know
my cravings
and longings and

what do i call it? these rampant
rantings of a man
who may not after all deserve to live
for another day
a devil's quivering chanting
that i may take my life
and let others live
in peace.

drama, enough of this drama.
i admit, it is this unrequited love
for all these years
that keep me living
to the life of la vida loca.

she bangs!

alright, talk, i will listen
in a minute.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly My Love

honestly my love
on a union like ours
for twelve years, forty days, six hours, 25 minutes
and 40 seconds
i feel like i am a train always running and running
on a railway without resting
on any station

now that you have decided
to take a vacation
somewhere
in mexico
or africa
or how i wish you go somewhere
in east asia
where some of the mystics
are selling
their beliefs and practices
about peace and harmony
and nature
and introspection

on your leaving
as i have
my break

i feel like a man
with a heart filled with so much
air
pressure
and then suddenly
a vent opens
and air pushes out
from its chambers
like a balloon whooshing
its way to the
clouds
and fall
again
and here i am
fully deflated
squatting
on the ground
like a new
skin

or rubber
to be a little bit specific

wanting to be filled
again
by another lovely mouth
a strange air

i long (kill me) always
for another
someone not like you

for the meantime

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly Sometimes I Feel Like A Robot

writing poems..
just that, i can't explain it
but i can't really help it
opening the pc
and writing whatever comes to my mind
like a robot...

but this time
after having expressed myself in all the lines
i sense something too...

self-esteem and i am feeling more
like a human being,

incomplete, unfulfilled, insatiable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly Speaking My Dear

you have a sharp knife with you
so i will keep a little distance

poor innocent onions, lousy green tomatoes,
foul garlic chopped into microscopic
pieces, and a frying pan overheated like a bull
fuming with smoke from the oil

what is that temperature honey?
oh, you are angry again to the world
of work, you are bored to the law
of routine, you are at it again in your
atlantic ocean of sighs and mysterious
turbulent ways, surge and upsurge.

I do not ask for reasons.
I let you boil up like water inside
that kettle that sings the songs
of madness, a warning that all
must shut up or be stabbed with
your unexplainable silence.

nothing sunny side up, everything
hard boiled with the black soot of
sulfur settling at the bottom of the egg.

honestly speaking, i do not mind at all.
it is at the time when you are so angry
that you become so silent,
and i like it that way. i can think some more.

Deeper and probing. Perhaps, i shall
soon find the answer in the hot oil overheated
inside that frying pan.
No one wants to be fried alive,
you know that well enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honestly......

i
do not
believe you but i have
to read you over and over again
because i want to see who i was from the very beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honey and lemon, I know how
The taste blends, and honey and
Pancakes, I know the taste
And lemon in ripe papaya
so sour so sweet

And Honey, how about you and me,
Do I blend like lemon to your honey?

or do i blend more as a yellow slice of lemon
to your margarita?

RIC S. BASTASA
it was only less than a year
his grandchild was charred by fire
that razed their house and car
they are still in mourning
the wife died two years ago
of an unknown infection
the doctor declares that there
was something incurable
his son had to stop the lawyering
on a broken tendon from a high fall
but he seems not to be shaken
a man needs to be shaken
like a tree that must shed its leaves
to grown new ones
last night he slept while driving
his Honda Civic
running over five pedestrians
scurrying for fish
one died on the spot
the rest of the four were badly injured
and had to be rushed to the hospital
his eyes are sharp
he is 78, retired and still teaches
Special Proceedings
he is thinner now
and still skips lunch
to stay fit he says
everything can be paid
there is always a price for every man
no one sticks to a certain integrity
unreasonably vis-a-vis
one man's need for money
in order to survive
the high cost of living
and dying

it boils down to money he continues
pouring his legal wisdom based on his
50 years or so of legal practice
money does not only talk
it covers crimes and washes away man's
sins in society
he says some more but my mind like a black bird
flies away from a steel cage
wanting the freedom of the mountains
the wider expanse of the horizons
and oceans

i like to leave but he grips my hand as though trying to say
he hates being alone now
in his distress
(the one that he cannot accept and
does not want to talk about it)

there is always a hypocrisy for past greatness
building its empires in the bones of those who are guilty
of reckless imprudence
of those who think that money is the living god
that man is nothing but a creature
of debits and credits

i bid him goodbye
and wish him luck and as usual the cliche of having to tell him
'God bless you'

again serves as
another empty rhetoric. Man says sometimes what he does not
really mean
and that makes no difference with man's concubines too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Honoring God Forever

even if God does not
answer my prayer
I will still honor Him
Forever in all the days
of my life

God owns everything I have.
And i have no right to complain
even murmur
even murmur
my misgivings.

God is always Great!

RIC S. BASTASA
Hooked

a fish is hooked
non-aligned
and sank.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hooked And Eyed

hooked
is the eye
the fish
cannot get
away

caught and
sliced
salted and spiced
on the table

breakfast
one fishy morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope

as you step
on a forest of
dry leaves
and twigs

you take
a peep
at the bottom
of things

and see an
acorn pushing
through
to make you
a tree
in due time

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope And Truth

pain is not your true friend
it does not stay long
it looks for another
faithful company

that is hope

and so is happiness
that knocks once and like pain
enters your door
sits on your chair
and dines and drinks with you
but only for a while

you want it to stay some more
you pamper it with scrubs
and foot massage
a very soft bed and
a bear hug and a french kiss

it goes out without notice
flies from your window
leaving you
a certain emptiness

that is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope For Something Unpopular

Van Gogh's expressionism
did not offer him anything

only one painting during
his lifetime was sold

no one liked it
because he was not a follower of anybody

it was only after so many years
after his death

that his sunflowers begin to be noticed
midway between insanity and spirituality

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope For The Coming...

black butterflies
against the dark blue skies

cotton clouds sailing
above a wave of horizon

as ships reach the shore
lower their sails and fold

a woman waits for you
wipes her tears,

opens her arms and finally
embrace you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope For The Trees....

every color has its destiny of
fading, like the sound of ducks at night getting fainter
until what we hear is the perfection of sound
its reigning silence
and so do all the colors
dying,
either surrendering to total darkness
or
too much light
the same things amount to
and end

that afternoon what burns into red
in a rejoicing
comes into the perfection
of utter
darkness

the lights of the small houses
redeem what was lost
in the same manner that the fireflies
arrive
assuring hope for the trees
that the stars
are coming....

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope Is Always There

never mind
nothing

it stays there
anyway

under all
circumstances
keep going

something crops
up sooner

nothing leaves
chase
always the elusive
substance of
something

nothing's spent
no one's here
for a kill

so never mind
nothing
keep going hold on
to something
like even
a packet of air
in your hand

that is something
it is not
nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope Is An Intervention

hope is an intervention
when Ladies cannot give you the attention-
But flavored condoms are cautious
to something delicious!

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope Of The Black Curtain

Beyond this black curtain
this veil of my window
on its sense of mourning
on the grief walled by the frames
of a house devastated

...clouds drift, a sail boat stirs its way
a man paddles it to a distance
the sun rises, all things move
all molecules collide
all atoms consistently collide
making me feel
everything is alive
i am, too, breathing still
despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hope...

without hope
you imagine hope

you must imagine hope
there is no hope you must
invent hope

it is too tiresome
do not believe in hope because it is too hopeless
promises are not popes not pop but poo
pooh,

if there is no hope, accept, hope does not exist
what exists is you and you are not hope
you are real,
you are reality, and hope is lesser, much lesser than you

hope is a tree you are bird
hope is the pebble you are the running water
hope cannot hold you
it is not a cup of water

you are the wind and you are not suppose to stay
hope is a dead tree stuck on its rotten roots

fly away, so, do not just stay there and stare at anything
open your wings, spread and be gone for good

hope is a dead grandmother
and you are the inevitable grandson

least limitable, ongoing movie
swinging tarzan, hot popcorn

RIC S. BASTASA
Hopefully A Merry Christmas Here In The Philippines

Three people were killed and 47 others were wounded when two cellphone-activated mortars exploded one after the other in two department stores 30 meters apart on the same street in Iligan City yesterday.

In Manila, Malacañang said President Arroyo would push through with her scheduled visit to Iligan City today for the inauguration of the suka pinakurat vinegar processing plant of Green Gold Gourmet Food Products in Barangay Pugaan.

* Let us stop this war.
Let us give peace a chance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hopefully Come Cascading

we work on some secret codes
you put the letter folding into three

rebellious
satirical
bully

i am, i am that reality subsumed bone-like
enticing

revealing sanctity
bonfire

you keep on telling space: i love you
i desire all of you
crush me, make love to me, bend me,
you kneel and worship
my humility cries
like some rain dripping from my lips
you love this game of the gods of love
and lust

hopefully come cascading
homespun cauldron composing

how come coldness?

reality stings bangs
robust shining body

come! come! hope comes cascading
real sweet boy

waits for a bed-ful of desire.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hopelessly Romantic

when he was a child
he made a fan out of those
big leaves

gathered flowers for
mother

and he carried these options
when he became a man

ladies love him
but he never loved anyone

he had become hopelessly
romantic

loving art, loving the world
but never offered himself

and so when he died
no lady has ever shed a tear

flowers wilted
leaves dried, cracked and

turn to bits and pieces
too fine enough to be blown

by all the winds away

RIC S. BASTASA
Hoping

with the hope that you are coming
i sit alone beside a table
with two cups of hot coffee

until everything gets
cold

while the leaves of the
talisay tree fall
because the strong winds
are passing

=====================================

sa pamasin nga moabot ka
naglingkod ako nga ako rang usa
sa usa ka lamesa
nga dunay duha ka tasa nga
kape

hangtod nga
ang tanan nabugnaw

samtang ang mga dahon
sa talisay nangahulog
kay milabay ang
kusog kaayo nga
hangin

RIC S. BASTASA
Hoping For The Uncertain, Groping For The Unpredictable

braving the empty space above a field of grass
he walks away carrying nothing
no jug of wine, no cigar
no picture of a loved one
no memories in his mind,

no hope either, nothing to speak about
he brought silence strong as steel
he has his hands shaped like a bowl
like a mouth gaping open to other uncertainties
his only kind of possibilities
unpredictable,

and hence more exciting!

RIC S. BASTASA
so many things to see
  to do, outside, the sun, and
trees, and
pathways, narrow alleys
some,
and eight-lane superhighways
inside a bus
one chooses the side of the
window
hoping to forget what hurts
still, as edges of roads come
and slice
your mind, but, and this is real,
as you close your eyes,
you go back to
yourself, and to that which still
hurts, which makes
an empty space in
your heart, as you feel the hollowness
of dreams
unfulfilled, of substances light as air,
and someone sees you

blank as paper, light as cloud,
hard as another wall,
a word misspelled,
a lapse, a limp, another slip,
and you do not mind, leave it,
there, you sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hot And Dumb

the sun had not
seen the rose inside
a cave which is pretty
unusual for
a rose to survive without
light

dinvalid upon a focus of survival
the rose learned
how to live without light

the sun never saw its beauty
and when he heard about it
it simply ignore this fact
as a myth, as something that
must be dismissed something
that must be taken as a grain
of salt upon a bowl of water

the rose is true, the sun
hot and dumb

RIC S. BASTASA
to be a poet of reality
one must collect real stones from the past

the past can be misty and everything
because of time can become yellow

with age like a letter written long ago
and inserted in one of the pages of

a book. Even the present can be
uncertain. The future fickle. But to

be a true poet, one must always go
back and take what was necessary and

left out in those secret attics. Those that
they all want to be forgotten because they

think that they will just harm us in our
contented places. Our comforts need not

be sacrificed by are growing
now into the light, the window, and what

use is that to dwell on cliffs where the only
possibility is our falling? Death is the constant

fear of pain.I, too, am a poet of reality, I know
what hurts me, but I am embracing it again.

I want to be stronger. Near perfection.
I want to be that child beside Papa

watching him remove the scales of the fish,
slice the flesh, and remove the gills, and

frying them all, in that hot and silent oil.
Hot Tea From Candice

a cup of hot tea
on an early morning chill
the smoke rises
only to vanish

RIC S. BASTASA
Hot, Hot, Hot

it is hot outside
temperatures are rising
i am sweating
and i am also hot
for almost everything
you see
it is like a stone
surrounded by sand
the sun is up
and there are no trees
no grass
no grasshopper in sight

there is fuming in my mind
i am bursting
with steam

i send out a scream
' i am alive! ! i am fuming! !

i am human.
Now the world is listening.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philippine government on Sunday (24 Aug) rejected a call by Muslim guerrillas for a halt in a massive air and ground assault, and instead intensified the four-day attack, capturing a rebel training camp in a southern province, officials said.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front Chairman Al Haj Murad urged the government in a rare news conference Saturday to stop the offensive, warning it could imperil a years long peace process and escalate violence in the country's troubled south.

About 6,000 troops and police commando forces, backed by artillery and bomber aircraft, have attacked guerrilla positions to capture a rebel commander who occupied and looted Christian farming communities in North Cotabato province. Two other commanders are also being hunted who led a rampage last week in which 37 people were shot or hacked to death in Lanao del Norte province.

'There will be no let up in government offensives, ' Press Secretary Jesus Dureza said.

He said government forces would 'enforce the law' if Murad does not turn over the three commanders for justice. Murad has refused to do so.

After four days of air and artillery strikes and attacks by army rangers, rebel resistance has softened, allowing troops to capture a guerrilla training camp in Maguindanao's Mamasapano township, said Army Col. Marlou Salazar, who was overseeing the offensive.

Troops were checking the camp, which has obstacle courses, assembly areas and small buildings for combat training, for possible booby traps and land mines, he said.

'They're scampering and leaving only token forces to delay our advance, ' Salazar told The Associated Press by telephone.

At least 27 guerrillas have been killed and 21 others wounded in three Maguindanao townships where Salazar's army brigade was pressing its assault against the forces of rebel commander Ameril Umbra Kato. Military and police were continuing a manhunt in nearby Lanao del Norte province for commanders Abdullah Macapaar, also known as Bravo, and Aleem Sulaiman Pangalian.
The National Disaster Coordinating Council reported that at least 40 civilians have been killed and 240,000 displaced by the rebel attacks and the fighting.

'The number keeps growing,' Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral told the AP. 'There is fighting that erupts in new places almost every day so more and more are being displaced. So we are hoping that there can be a peaceful resolution very quickly.'

Cabral said the World Food Program has increased its emergency rice supplies for refugees from 400 tons last week to 900 tons.

Murad said government troops were attacking the main rebel forces and not only pursuing the three commanders.

The rebels, who have been fighting for Muslim self-rule in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation's south for decades, said they regretted a recent upsurge in violence and that the commanders responsible had acted on their own. Murad said peace talks should resume, but refused to turn over the commanders to face the criminal justice system.

'We cannot subject our members to the laws of the government,' Murad said. 'We are a revolutionary force.'

Just weeks ago, a peace deal to end the decades-long insurgency had seemed within reach after government and rebel negotiators initialed an agreement on an expanded Muslim autonomous region.

But Christian politicians in areas that would be affected challenged the deal in the Supreme Court, triggering the attacks by frustrated rebels.

By JIM GOMEZ/ AP)

Associated Press writer Oliver Teves contributed to this report.
MySinchew 2008.08.25

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do We Speak In Riddles?

how do we speak in riddles?
are we the modern versions of the sphinx
and where can oedipus stand and destroy
us at the crossroads?
come oedipus, slay us with your
wits
and incestuous destiny.
we are supposed not to look straight in the eye
we degenerate and shrink when we do so
we delineate a bit
not for any dramatics but it is simply the reason
why we are born this way,
writing in crooked lines
and burying some meanings on the sand
for the waves to caress and recover
with great patience and love,
we speak and we do not explain
they will say they will understand
and each shall make a stand that
though different each is right to a certain extent,
this is the life of
mystery a prism of colors contrasting
conceding condescending yet
true, well, maybe different when
filtered, light, shadows, images,
meanings, submeanings,

then extract, abstract, and what you find
ultimately from what is written above is
simply this:

riddle.

these are what we poets mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
How A Poem Is Born....

suddenly
you are jobless,
you read all the
ads in cyberspace
like a star floating
and looking
for an anchor
of a galaxy,
sleepless and
restless - -how normal
for this
situation of
intensity and
anxiety,
you look out the window
oh, it is cold out there
you mumble some words
not really coherent at first
the feelings rush
like children
out of school
that is how it is.
i've been there
not really nice
but comforting.

RIC S. BASTASA
How About Me?

doe, a deer, a female deer
ray, a golden ray of sun,
fa, a long long way to run
....

me, a name i call myself.
you are right.

me is my name. I call it myself.
and it is pushing us
to an illusion, an allusion, of a self,

identifying too well with it.
it. just it.

me.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Are You Children Now?

what are these mountains?  
how old are their foundations?  
how long will you take it as a hiding place?  
how pale have you become,  
how diminished in view  
away from us. There is still a way to the plains  
to be with the village again  
how are you children now? they have grown without you  
how is it to be a man without a father?  
how stern have you become?  
how you shaped a system  
and how the system has shaped you.  
these things happen,  
and i am at the middle of these crossfires  
wanting to fade.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Are You Death?

on a lonely night like this

on a lonely night like this
i envy the stars
i miss the moon and
the cool shadows of trees

on a lonely night like this
in the desert of my
dryness, i long for the rain
and the fog and the mist

on a lonely night like this
i begin to think
about you:

RIC S. BASTASA
How Are You Treating Life?

how are you treating life?
so,
but i prefer another active question
the one that makes me
more responsible

ask me, how i am treating life?

well, i am treating it well
like the way i talk to anybody
courteous,
careful
passionate
taking each time as a moment
of joy
preserving more memories
moving on
always with love
and affection

truly yours, sincerely, with the usual
bravado of that
aha! yes, that
aha! experience
i just love life
so how can i every betray it with
the kiss of sorrow?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Are You?

the winds are strong today and the leaves fall from the trees
they struggle for space in the garden

the sea is mad and raging like a rush of a man wanting to be brave
the sea caps are whiter and foamy like the babble of the unhappy woman

how are you? i sometimes ask that to myself and people begin
to answer (it was not for them somehow

perhaps the man over there hears the whisper of my mind to my ear
and he says also upon himself (I am not ok, i have this pain in my heart
i have this pain in my belly)

how are you? i am asking you and you are so far away from me
my words are sleepy but i still wonder now: why do you insist that my lies
are true? why do you prefer beauty than truth?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Are You?

morning
is your usual sound
vibrant as the
wings of
a seagull
diving upon
a white
fish
against a blue
sea

it is evening
i sit alone on a chair at the porch
trying to
listen to
your whisper

rising into a
lively conversation
like
a crowd of three
at the
balcony

i am worried

the city has no electricity
and it is dark

you have become so far away from me
like
a vanishing
light

i need you to
make a sound

even the faintest sound
of a cellphone
in silent mode with
a matching
vibration

RIC S. BASTASA
How Beautiful Is Hope....How Lovely A Dream...

somewhere is always
a filler
of a place in our
dreams

someone is always a
hope
for all the broken
hearts

someday is never a
consumable measure

somehow yes somehow
i always wait somehow

more likely, could be,
these endless possibilities.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Best Not To Engage In An Outrage

stay cool
sit there buy Bo's tea
wait
look around
do not join in this rampage
of an outrage
this building is burning!

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can A Man Be So Intelligent...

how can a man be so intelligent
to prey upon his own
kind?

he ceases to be a part
of his own kind,

he places himself on the throne
of his own disaster

he makes his own kingdom
of tinmen and
haywomen and iron soldiers
and wood servants

he carves his own stone heart
ruthlessly he walks
and kills whatever displeases him

he paves his silver path
to his own hell

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can A Tiny Sparrow Sing?

how can a tiny sparrow sing
with a worm on
its tiny mouth?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can Be Be Disappointed?

our days and nights
speak well of our
sins and redemption

two faces we wear
one for you and for the
other: smiles and grimaces
stung and dung
bleak and beak
spick and span
black and block

sameness of expectations
nothing from me and nothing from you

how can we be disappointed?
you are on your own convictions
and me to my own directions.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Believe You?

all those i meet along
the way are
animals, and they all lie
and cheer
and full of pretenses,
and here you are
another animal pretending
to be human
promising me another
day of cheers
another hope
and then at sundown
when i look for shelter
you are nowhere to be
found
telling the trees and
the daffodils that
you are but
another shadow
slave of the night
and then
disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Bleed? ..... 

you treat me like
an ordinary stone that
you step upon
towards the river where
you bathe and sing
and remember
the true one, who
had long exchanged you
for a stone
like me.

here i am.
how can i bleed?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Die?

for the love of it
how can there be boredom?

how can the body tire
for the one it loves to do?

for the love of birds
you do not fear the disease

you love those dogs
you never tire feeding them

with my love for you
how can i die?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Eat That Apple?

it is half the apple
it used to be
sliced on the table
named for you

you know that
i cannot take it

rotten besides
there is a worm
coming out
from inside it

it is taken
you say so

i am glad
it isn't mine

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I End Something That Does Not Leave Me?

at this hour
i hear the sounds of a sweeper

it just rained today
and i am watching how it ends

in the balcony of the house
where the road is empty

the woman across the road
is sweeping the leaves

the wind as usual blows
and then leaves what it cannot

carry...very much like us
very much like that woman

she sweeps and groups the leaves
and leaves them all there

only to be blown by the wind
again as i watch what too

i cannot carry with me for
i am just a spectator whose

deep thoughts are carried by
the wind only to be left inside

with me again. How can i end
something that does not leave me?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Ever Be?

how can i ever be
a very short moment
fluttering in a few minutes
and then be gone
as a memory without a trace
in the labyrinth
of man's whims
in the caprices of history
in the clasp of
serendipity

how can i ever be just a butterfly
in your mind?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Ever Cry Again?

Cry baby, I was, and mother could not rest
Her sweet lullabies work somehow
I always stop crying when she puts me
Safe in her arms

She was always there to wipe
My tears
She was always there to assure me
Of her kisses

Somehow I got used to this crying
And it does not work anymore
To appease me
And put me to silence and sleep

You never loved me I know
My hands always reach out for yours
You closed them and open them to another
I am in pain but how can I every cry again?

When I do not have tears anymore
When crying does not work anymore
To appease me
And put me to sleep and be silent

I have learned how to be tough
I have learned this art of self-denial
This art of losing and not retreating
To always move on, & be silent and strong

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Ever Forget You? ....

to write a feeling
is to collect water from
your hands and
then read them in your
fingers

how do i write that
i really love you?

you are not mine
you are gone
i want to write that
i can forget you

like water dripping
from my hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Fake Some Feelings?

when you fake your orgasm
i know it
by heart, there is no moisture
in my thoughts,
dry
as a desert i walk like a bedouin
without a song
my camel looking for some
water in the oasis
mirage,

we too are mutual
in this faking game
i do not even have to fake
my feelings
loving you

it is the bulb in my head
above the bed
where we make love
in an intertwine
when the light clicks
see another face

forgive me
i have had your fake orgasms
multiple in fact
but i really do not mind
faking my feelings

they are not there anymore
i do not have them
they have long been buried
in the marrow of my
bones
the red blood there
long dried

i do not even remember
where and when

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Finish This One?

Multitasked, five fingers touching different plugs,
Two hands holding three coffee cups, a mind that reads a book
And looks at the changing hues of the skies, two feet sailing in two separate
sailing boats,
A heart that loves and hates a hand that wants to clap alone not in
Good rapport with the other, a left ear that closes and a right
Ear that opens,
A mouth that eats and wants to speak when it is still full,
A disunity of my parts and confusion of my beliefs,
A rebellion of my cells, unrest of my nerves,
And so how can I ever finish this one?

When all that could have been done is that

we all listen
when speaking should only be one at a time
when things should have been done one at a time
when living should have been only a moment in time
when climbing should only be one stair at a time

this moment, this time, this you and I, not convoluted not intercalated.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Make A Poem About Children?

let me begin with some diapers
to make a poem about children
let me add the lines of wetting
and crying
some more of the crying and
the hunger of the children
who have not mastered to use
the words to file their
complaint
let me put the images of thirst
a desert
a ricefield cracking without
the rain for months
let us see the cradle of the
child unable to sleep
because of the sound of
bursting guns and the
disagreements among
men always warshocked
warlike

let this poem be but a lullaby
let me put a smile
of a child rocked by the
arms of mother
now the child may sleep
in her warm bosom

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Say That Your Poem Is Like An Ugly Woman?

i confided to her
many lied

for
the truth of the matter
is that
his recent poem is not the kind
that he makes
those that mends the broken wings
of a bird
enabling it to fly away from
all threats

i am an honest man
i have told her that
but at
this moment
i am having a hard time telling the truth
to the sad man
who is
licking his wounds
like a stray
dog
in the street

i ask if my honesty can do service
to his art

she says
how can he ever understand our quest
for the lighter
state - the way we have been looking for those
beautiful
gossamer wings
on twilight
when the rest have
ceased playing
their games

it is dark
and everyone is tired

those depressed
have swallowed the drugs
that can make
them sleep
and for a while
forget

ah, why bother?

i write this instead.

To hell with art
I must save the life
of a sad man

even if
i shall only tell
about
illusions

like what the rest of
the tribe is
doing

here is silence
it is truth's beautiful sister

and together
they can make a
perfect pair...

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Speak About Morality?

All the while they were talking
the new code
of morality

she looks at me
with a margarita on one hand
and smoke on the other
she looks at me
with disdain
and

i think, she feels
so sorry
for my form
and beliefs

she is asking
if i am a professional
virgin, (of course, i am not)

i rise to go
and she follows me
her eyes i mean
slowly undressing me
seeing my
legs and bottoms and waist

she calms down
she waters herself
with some hormones running in her
hands
exiting down to her toes

her fingers feel
like iron rods
to the fragility of my
tissues

how can i speak
about
morality?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Tell The Yellow Daisy?

how can i tell the yellow daisy about the sad truth that her fingers
that long to touch the blue clouds high up in the sky cannot be hers?

how can i tell her that she is just wasting her fleeting time and feelings
trying to touch that which cannot be touched by her fingers because

their worlds are far apart because the sun will not allow it because
she is just this tiny little daisy that grows wildly in my little garden?

how can i ever tell her that love too has rules? that love too can be
too painful and most of the time addressed to indifference: unrequited?

how can i ever tell her that like her i am also in pain in longing and dying?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I Tell You?

in truth i like to hear
all your laughter.
who does not want to be happy
like all the rest
of the living?
Time is a strainer.
It is separating what is important
and necessary.
Now, i have found that i do not
need laughter.
It has not served its purpose.
So many have laughed and died
just the same.
There is more perhaps to all
these escape goats.

what i need is a green grass.
blue clouds, wide oceans.
a cow beside, a flying bird above.

i need no one now and i am happier.
i do not need your laughter.
I do not need you even then.

And so i am on my own now.
In my silence and curiosities.
What is there? What is beyond me?

This place is nothing.
There is something over there.
How can i tell you?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can I?

how can i put
your music in my words?
your dance
your kiss?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can Love Be So Kind?

my right hand holds the essence
of my being

i do not have to fight it again
your soft hands shall gently touch it

stroke it like it were a gentle dog
a fine feathered bird

and then we kiss, we kiss,
we are on our own now mapping out

where true happiness lies
just us, tonight, under the blackness of this night

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can My Hands Prevent You From Getting Wet?

grief

the rain starts falling
softly
on your hair as we step
outside
how can my hands
prevent you from getting wet?
just life grief
is this rain, that starts to fall and stops a while
and falls again and much to chagrin
we have never really learned
this cycle of pain,
this grief that behaves like rain
wets us and makes us cold
but we keep on going trying to find
once again
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can One Stop Sharing?

it is the same question as
how can one stop one's humanity?

it is our essence,
a nature second to none,

think, the quintessence
of what we are,

without the other, we die,
without sharing, we lose the salt,

we do not look back
what we did we left there

do not, do not look back
Lot's wife is only once.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can Someone Ever Leave You?

how can someone be so vile
to leave someone as good
and as beautiful as you?

try to remember if you have met
that someone even once

where and when and how?
and why?

why must he leave someone as
good and as beautiful
and as truthful
as you?

unless, it was you who left him
because he never showed up
even as a shadow.

yes, when someone loves
unrequited, in fact,
i always remember that
red rose for Emily beside
the lover's skull.

The town is so silent
that i hear the fall of a leaf
on a grass so soft and yet
so indifferent.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can Something So Beautiful Be Wrong?

because he keeps on talking
alone by himself
you do not have to make a guess
that something beautiful
is really wrong

because he keeps on writing
all that is sad and so beautiful
how can something be
so wrong?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can We Be Now?

now you must dance alone.
you can dance without me.
i am not your feet. i am mine.
than the music stops.
now you must dance alone even
without the music.
you must know that the music
is in your heart.
it is not with me, it is not
with the world.
it is you. The dance, The music.

now you do not ask any
question.
Tired perhaps because there
are no answers.

now you are the question.
i am not the question.
you are what you are.
and you shall always be.

without me, without you.
we have turned to air to mist
to water in everywhere.

from the beginning we should have
learned what we have no names.
no self, no hate, no love, no world.

i am imagining once again, what we
cannot anymore imagine.
In all gratitude and respect we must
thank what we were once for without it
how can we be now?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can We Come Back To Ourselves?

Ask that again
How and when

What were we
Remember, what were we

We sound alike
We mutualize looks of ourselves

Softly when we both left
Marks in our faces and skins

We stole what we dream
We did not return them

When we arrive there
We met regrets

We dream again
What was that what was that

Some images come
We are so afraid and want to stay

Now, now, we cannot go back
To destroy worlds

I will walk back in there
I will not tell you anymore

This is all that I have now
These without you

I will sit and relax
Tonight I will not cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can We Ever Know?

i am the tree in the forest of your mind.
if you paint, i am just one of the lines in the canvass.
if you sing, i will only be one of the notes
and if you write, i am but a syllable.

in the same manner, no matter how i tell you
the truth about myself,
in some shadows of the silhouettes of the night
a dark figure in the middle of the dark background
you grope as i make some protrusions on the wall
you feel something and then the object slips like a fish
back into the sea

sometimes i put on my name and you read it.
you say, i am that name, but i laugh, i am not a name.
on a moonlit night, i am that bird flying away.
you lose sight of me like i am a ball thrown by a child
sucked by the night.
on a sunny day, i pretend as one of the petals in your garden
less the smell, you dismiss me as one of those
that you can always afford to lose.

it is funny, you want to know me, and say you value
this getting to know.
it is sad, i am not concrete. I am always as fluid as the river.
as fluctuating as a mirage.

i am the desert. I am the rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can We Not Write?

there is a bone in
your throat
and water cannot
remove it

there is a nail in
your foot
a pebble in your mouth
or a
blue bird in your
hand

there is worm in your
hearth
a log in your eyes
a clot in your blood
a stone in your
gall bladder

there is a wrench in your
arm
an axe to grind in your
teeth

there are birds in your hair
flowers in your
ear

there is a smell in your
armpit
tears of joy on your
breasts

there is a moon in your iris
there is sun in your tongue
fat in your belly
a furry cat on your feet

butterflies in your abdomen
nerves in your fingers
nuts in your head
hammers inside your ear
a book beside your bladder

there are so many things in you
so many things in us
how can we not write?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Argue Further?

IT is when he said finally
that God whispered to his
ear
and that the answer is
No.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Be Like This?

a fan in winter.
a hot shower in summer
the stone in drought
silk in rain

wrong timing
the wrong person
in the wrong season

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Be Lonely?

hear the sounds of footsteps

the ants are moving
pulling their catch
for the day

your cornflake
is tasty,

a spill of milk on
the floor

a lizard comes
down
to drink what
you wasted

a dragonfly
is lost and whirls
around the
flourescent bulb.

turn it off
it is 6 o'clock

there is no
more shadow

there are rays
of light
wanting to
enter the shutters
and the blinds

open them
turn off the light

welcome
this new morning
there is no more
reason to be
lonely

write it. I am
reborn.

write it. I am
a child of God.
I am a happy
child of God.

write it. I am
ready. I am going.

now. Go, go. go.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Be So Unforgiving?

many times i watch you
you are very near
my breath touches your
skin
my tongue is restrained
it is true

you do not bore me
you give  life like a song
of a dying bird

when i listen you start
to play with your wings
and the wind
is perplexed

when i kiss you
you begin to fly away from my
tongue which has always
been true
as ever
like the ray of the sun
to the petal of
the rose

that is my only mistake
you are not forgiving

my breath touches the shadows
of your footsteps
my tongue licks the mud.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Be With Us?

you claim to be with us
in our sorrow and joy, this cannot be
when i ask you what our dreams are
you reason out
that these matters are my personal matters
that i must keep within my heart

no, mother, since you do not know what
my dreams are
you never know me, and you never love me
the interest pushes you to know
and the knowledge keeps the love
aflame.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Ever Imagine Liking Yourself To It?

feeling sorry for yourself
for a past that cannot be undone
wading in that murky river of self-pity
like a wild bird caught on the oil spill
of the lake of desolation

my friend, that is the worst and last thing
that must happen to your life

this is the tree without fruit
a bush without a flower
a sky without sun

how can you ever imagine liking yourself to it?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Ever Like A Theme Of Death?

no one likes this kind of theme
for no one likes winter
and autumn
and night
and dusk
and even the paleness
of skin
the kind of feeling that
you show to
a child covering his
bald head
the men and women
on pain relievers
and chemotheraphy
and radiation
they are the worst
of death's images

or the shock that goes
with it
like a flood of blood
on cemented streets
after a bomb
explosion
of the plane that crushed
where some body
parts are scattered
on trees and
grasses distant
from each other

how can you ever
dislike them?
deny them
but how can
you ever deny
them when they
are true
when soon
they will also
come and say

here is death
Now it is your
turn.

take your time
do not rush
yourself
do you really
have to cry
on a gloomy day?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Can You Quit?

don't tell me lies now
do you want to quit
the thing that you like?

how can you quit my love
the person that you like to have?

don't tell me lies
and if you will
kiss me first and hug me tight
and put on the light
and see my body and feel my soul

and then tell me
if you want to quit
and not drink your cup of tea
this whole of me...

RIC S. BASTASA
How Cold Was It?

i'm here breathing,
writing, chatting, reading a case,
pausing for a while, looking at the yellow green blinds

profuse light from the window, murmuring air conditioner,
books piling, folders rising,
papers to sign,

switching to music, turning it off, listening to a tv opera
next to my cubicle,
someone is concentrating on a ball game,

sounds of a car arriving, a door opens, she is singing,
someone is taking a chair pulling it like a pail,
another laughing woman,

i imagine if the trees are greener with leaves now
after the storm
or if the pathway towards Tabon is still muddy
what must have happened to father's white horse taken
cared of by ronnie?

i promise myself, i will visit the mountain soon
sleep on the nipa hut there and watch the fog the following
morning
thick on the top of the forest trees

how cold was it? i want to remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Come

you move on whatever it takes
on what form
or shape or color

you join a party
finds some hoax
or opens the
fake emotions

crossed, one gets away
for good,
or bad,
one listens, on the
barrage of
outbursts of emotions

late at night
mouths are pressed
and the brain dreams
of lands so faraway

having discovered
a scar
the wound remembers

and then
the night begins to speak
it murmurs
it is mum from the beginning
strikes past twelve
it stops,

it accepts
what lies there
as a nude
woman needing
a man

ah, the stone turns
into a bird
and one wonders
how come...

RIC S. BASTASA
How Corruption Can Thrive In This Poor Third World Country As Ours

the way we love our dogs
makes me think about how corruption can thrive
in this poor third world country as ours

we like them fat and good looking
shiny noses and big feet and we like their
barks to be fierce and respectful
and so we feed them well
take a walk with them on early mornings and
late afternoons
and we let them inside the house and put them
on their own dog-houses

hence they all remain loyal to a pampering master
siding with them whether they are right or wrong
(they do not know anymore how to discern right from wrong
i think)
and whatever happens
the master is always right
like the way it keeps the bones and the steaks
in the closet

mind you,

you haven’t heard of a well-fed dog
barking against their masters.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Could I? ..... 

TELL me that you have
crossed the bridge connecting
what is real from the unreal

tell me that you have touched
what i have not
that you are as happy as the
boundless sea

my eyes may have been deceived
and bloated in that search for
all these illusions

tell me that you have reached
the summit of my disbelief
that apex of all successes

i am not a fool. i was not born
yesterday and i must tell you
straight from my eyes: i do not
believe you.

how could i? tell me, how could i?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Could We Not Have Known?

at the foot of the hill
after a day of walking
we rest on the grass under
the mango tree

got my sandwich and you
got your cocacola
we both shared what is
half of each
and the day has become
so perfect

how could we not have known
how happy are we away from home?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Dare You?

excuse me
i am listening to

Basia’s masterpiece
Time and Tide

and this one
How dare you?

excuse me
it is not a dog

it is just a song
How dare you?

what about
listening: How dare you?

it is not a dog
just one of my favorite songs.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Days Are With You?

days hold you in an embrace
there is love
and affection in light
warmth
given by the sun
by the side of the window
like a red apple
on the tray

RIC S. BASTASA
How Delicious

how delicious can you get
when you get naked before me
how delirious can i get
when i touch your body
when i kiss your lips
when your hands hold my hair
when you lick my nipples
when you sleep with me
you give me wings to fly
and yet i stay beside you
on top of you
how blissful this moment
how ecstasy takes my soul

how short, how time can get too short
like my bending knees
like my grasp of you
like my sighs so incomplete
inside your breasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did I Love Those Snails....

my eyes are wide open
my heart is into unexplained
explorations
which my brain detests,
there is a need for distance
my feet insist,
my hands too,
for all these years i still
really do not know how to
choose.

i am not telling my friends.
not my mother.
how i still love those snails.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did Poetry Change Our Taste?

well something bitter has become sweet.

we have converted hell into heaven.

an abandoned thought into a crowded street.

the face of noise has been transfigured into a face of a church made of silent bricks and indifferent lime.

our sorrows? oh yes, they have become ours. we assume that we also know how to make their sorrows as our sorrows. Life likes it. You are good. Thumbs up.

our house of stone has become a page in poetry

our daily routine of boredom has become one kingdom of excitements as to what word to put next on the coming line of our morning literary rituals

chants, more chants, om, om, om,

oh my god. They're coming. I am coming. And here i come.

What? What are you talking about? Oh yes, I am talking to myself.

That is the beginning of my journey to poetry. Talking to myself and not trying to understand any sound.

Illogical even. But when i write them, well, there is some form, sound, scent,
and then i honestly declare. This is what i really like doing.

No signboard. Just plain going.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did We Write....

one thing
we did not really mind how good
or bad it was
we simply did it
something we like doing
go through it
and not overdo it
it is just like
going to the sea
and enjoy everything
worth its salt
all the foams
and waves and all
the fish and seagulls
too
what is breezy and
fresh and
relaxing to our body
and soul
it is just like
sleeping in a hammock
after a swim
and then dream and
after that
wake up to find the moon
stopping by the
horizon
like a big lit halogen
lamp
guarding us all
throughout the darkness
of our night

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did You Experience The Hands Of Time?

the hands of time
could be the hands of my lover
there is no rush
nothing is as quick as happiness
that savor itself
slowly in the taste buds of
imbibing
love and affection
caress and not duress

on the other hand
the hands of time can be the hands of the master
to a slave
whipping and humiliating
forcefully putting furrows in our foreheads
breaking bones and overusing cartilages
till they break
as they stretch beyond the limits
of their elasticity

it all depends on you
you are the master of your own universe
make time your ally
your best friend
let it go gently over your heart
let it love you
and time with you
is the air that you breathe
savored by your nostrils
happiness and life to the
roots of your lungs.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did You Kill A White Butterfly?

in your play
with your peers
children
when you catch
a white butterfly
in your hand
how did you
kill it?

did you pull
its white wings?
or did you crush
its head
on your nails?

did you detach
its legs one
by one
like you pulled
the white hairs
of mother?

tell me
if once in your mind
you decide
to set it free
and see it fly
hovering like
a flake of snow
from one
wilting flower
to another?

tell me if you
feel the same way
i do
when the clutches
of love finally set me free?
tell me if you know
the sound of a door
which closes behind you
when finally you
decide to leave
the house of
your birth?

tell me how you
zip your jacket
when you say
it is enough
and then
you feel everything
so warm inside
you?

that every inch
fits and you say

i am leaving for good.

did you really kill
the butterfly with white wings?

or you set it free?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Did You Use Poke In A Sentence?

intriguing when he said to have sex with you... poke back,

or romantically just to make love with you... poke me,

or to bang bang and he was too smart to say that he poked her doggie style that evening

or all night long thus did Jim on that hot gal.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do I Forgive And Forget?

it is like being invited

to her wedding party

and i attend handing

her the gift

and still kiss her

casually

cheek to cheek

and yes

i feel nothing silly

anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do I Remember You Ms. Belen?

we met as teachers in the college of the arts and sciences,
and i was busy with my poems, those that drained my sorrows
and longings dragged into some forms of
words,
metaphors kept me bound to some illusions
of beauty, as usual the good that i always pursue,
and the truth
which always put me in some wars with almost
every creature in the world,
you will remember me as a poem
and how do i remember you, Belen?

since then you were always like the white cherry blossom
graceful to the morning sun
and not afraid of the heat
and resilient to the cold,

there was one scene i cannot forget
we entered a newly opened noodle restaurant
we ordered our favorite
and we waited
and talked from a to z

did it rain then?
did we have the noodle finally?
did we really enjoy each other's company?

do you still remember?
the sound of the young city
the hush of the hands waiving always these departures
someday, perhaps we shall have more hellos

hey there, i am back, and i am staying here
in this courty for good
the Philippines.
How Do Prepare For The Coming Famine?

i like the way my father and mother
once lived.

they died with all serenity, and there
was this banquet we tended, before
each passed away, as though
there is nothing to worry

they danced their days, their entrance
of course was silent, and their exits
a little serene, and then we talk as
though we understand how to live
just like them

there were droughts but father knew
how to store water in the house and
each of us had its own fill of our thirts

there were past hungers but mother
has her own skill of using the knife
in cutting each share each piece to
be nibbled by our mouths

and now, we are left here my brothers
and sisters, warned about an incoming famine
let us remember how it was with father and mother
and grandfather's father:

when life was so simple then
when there was hunger and yet none died of hunger
when there was drought and yet each of us has a glassful of water
when there was crisis, yet each had symbiosis

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do We Write Happiness?

hair blown by the wind the two of us in the morning meadows
laughing and light as the air that carries us to the sea
you hold my hand you lead me you pull the kite with you
colors of blue and white spreading in the skies
you tie the kite on a tree and we lay ourselves on the grass
softness is you and my heart beats the notes of our love song
we sit side by side we feel we own this wide world
we hear the birds sing we listen to the flow of the river
we see how free are the fish riding on the currents

we look at each other's eyes, then we by instinct close
what was once open, we go inside us, gently our lips touch

there is so much color when our eyes closed
it tastes so sweet that our souls are like tongues licking
the sweetest honey on our skins on our whole bodies

we write happiness not in the usual words that they use
the ink is invisible the pen moves not with the hand but

with the heart with the soul

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do You Expect This Kite To Fly In The Wind?

my friend, how do you expect this kite to fly in the wind

its long tail is disconnected from its body like a tree without roots
its paper is thin, its skeletons too soft to stand against the wind

how do you expect to live in freedom,
on uncut navels, on shallow disappointments, on shaky guts,
my friend, to live in freedom
like the kite, we too must go against the wind
the stronger winds against us are much better
much wanted
we shall then fly so high against the wind that gives us the lift

and when we gain the heights
up there, we look on all the things
so little before us

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do You Go Away?

going away may mean what means you use in
going away
a truck where you also leave some dusts for them to remember
as they wipe out their tears and
dust off their feet, or you take a boat
where all the chances of waving your hands after a long story
is told,
when the bells of the boat make the sound of
warning for the well-wishers to take their time out
of the floating moment,
then the loud siren shouts, a boat load of memories taken
a bag ful of hidden resentments
sails aways with you,
or you take the jetplane where some sentiments are
written on air,
clouds not necessarily bursting with joy
as you leave
suddenly, away from them
someone you do not like to see anymore
something you
want discarded from your life: the pain inside your heart

cease, that is your word for going away,
but most of the time you just slam the door
pick yourself, carry what you have not spoken,
and walk away, just like that
never looking back

you only have a handkerchief to comfort you
and you go on with your life
surviving on the salt of your dried tears

the unkind words you keep with you
to support you
for the coming days, you are sad for a while, and then

you are free.
How Do You Know That God Is A Myth?

a myth
like the sphinx
and the phoenix
as the story goes
on and on
somehow
there was this death
at the end
and then immortality
in the same way
that my God
died and lived
forever

killing a myth
can be another myth
like asking how do you kill a myth
that does not exist?

when you finally give the correct answer
about our humanity
the sphinx gets killed.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do You Separate The Woman From The Poetess?

she is mad at me
and i wonder

how was i not able to separate
her being a woman from being a poetess?

is it her lust or her love?
she says 13 inches is smaller

and i just can't get why should she not make
me comment on her creations anymore?

why i have become so indelicate?
is it because my hair is curly?
or my pubic hair too thick?

does she dare touch the most delicate part
of my body?

we are far and she is too sensitive
we have not seen each other and yet she is filled with anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do You Show Me The Power Of Your Love?

will it be the whirlwind to begin with
one that takes away everything from me?
will it be the strong and heavy rain
one that floods me away from where i live?
will it be the sun? one that dries me as a river bed
one that cracks the soil of my life?
will it be the moon? one that is full and yet so cold?

show me the power of your love
let it be just a smile, a slight touch of your hand to my hand,
let it just be a tap on my shoulder when you say goodbye
let it just be a word of consolation

show me the power of your love
show me the intricate ways so that i may learn the art
of finally forgetting you

you, who already belong to the sun, the moon and the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Do You Win?

it's the lavishness
not the denial
it is the immersion
not the diversion
when soon you get over it
not just the imagination
you splash and mash
you consume what is there
and soon get bored with
what preoccupies you
it is only then when you
do not desire it that you
finally win....when finally
it does not have any
effect to you at all.

you win.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Does A Relationship End? ....

in Siayan the woman who broke up with her man ended up dead,
he rationalized that if he could not own her let no one can

the parents mourn for the death of their baby whom
not a fly had ever landed on her skin

on his part
his life has no meaning anymore
he has become the living dead and then with one fatal shot in his head
he exploded death

there are two coffins in the neighborhood
two funerals

many mourners
ten lamentations

on a tongue in cheek
one of those who gambled on those wake nights asked

all in the name of Love?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Does A Waiting Passenger Look Like?

some watch tv, some read the news
others have coffee and talk with
the person they are travelling with.

others are just silent and sleepy
and then sleep. They dream.

others stare at the hours. others kill
these hours of waiting for the
3 o’clock flight to boracay.

i am one of them. I kill time and this
is my tool of killing it.

you are reading this. Time is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Does It Feel To Fly

from a walk early morning
you enter the door
of your house

you see a glass vase
with a red rose
alone in the
living room

you go near and smell
the rosiness
of the rose
and gaze at it
as though it is the only
rose of your
home

you feel
a heart with wings
you fly
like a very light feather
on the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
How Does On Touch Really And Where?

empathy does not have hands.
neither does sympathy
have lips.

the touch contemplated is not the kind
that gives the birth of conflict

or scandal that which is based
on malice

or molestation of the innocent bleeder
or the soul that walks on the ship's corridor
screaming

for help,

you ask how do you do the touch
and where

the gentle tap on the shoulder
the handshake

the soothing words of comfort
and condolences
like a shower of rain to the
roses that have not felt the water
for weeks

straight from your heart
right in my heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Does One Hear The Echoes Of Silence?

silence. Does not speak, silence is dead.
it is buried underneath the mouth,
and simply rots there, like dust,
with worms. It will be the worms
that shall utter silence, but at the end
silence is devoured
and gone.

what you hear and see is this
emptiness. it has feet and walks in air.
and tinkers in space, some moods and
feelings, fleeing, fleeting,

this emptiness speaks a lot
some words turning themselves
from elves to giants to cyclops
to monsters of the universe
where this emptiness dwells

it is in my heart, always, resounding,
with lots of echoes as it reaches
the walls of the farthest planet
and comes back to me
like the twinkling of a star.

and then i am full.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Emptiness Is More Felt

noon time love
after,

sleep creeps
on the
stained white
linens

the hand falls
on the side
of the bed

without her
breasts anymore

thoughts begin
waking up

weaving more
questions on
the ceiling

RIC S. BASTASA
How Good Must It Feel To Have A Walk Under The Rain

How good must it feel
to have a walk under the rain
at 4: 53 am
	hree dogs still hesitate
to step with me
on the rain

the park is an empty bowl
no grains

the trees are sculptures of stillness in black and white

and sometimes as my wife says we need to get wet.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Happiness Is Made...

the old man puts
an empty coconut shell
beside a mahogany tree
and fills it with water

he feeds the dog first
and then the cats
and then what remains
unconsumed

belongs to the birds
who wait by the branches of
the trees

to take what belongs to them
after all had left...

the old man fans himself
under the shade of his
humble home and watches
the birds peck on the
morsels and the grains...

hums his songs again
together with the birds...

RIC S. BASTASA
How He Ended His Life

this is how he ended his life

he drove his car
as fast as he can
and smash it against
a very thick cemented
wall

he lays there
bloody and dead
and his spirit
comes out of his body
and says:

indeed the wall is impenetrable!

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish All Things Are Simpler Then

when no is a no
and yes is a yes
when a spade is a spade
when a diamond
remains to be a diamond
when you are true
as i was once.

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Can Smell Like Dusts And Molds....

i take a walk this morning
in this village of trees where there are no houses of dwellers,
i am looking for a peaceful place as i carry with me a load of some thoughts heavy on my hair
i do not think that i am being punished with these
i am just trying to take my time
listening to my own footsteps
to the sound of the leaves on those grasses and trees
a river walks along with me
that is how i see it
it is a water traveler wanting a companion
towards a far end
that it knows too well  for i am but new here
a lost stranger to his view
a novice of distance

i bring peace in my heart, i have set some pigeons free
my gifts to the balding mountains and to the hills with brown grasses

no pen, no paper, nothing about personal computers or cellphones
no signal, i am satisfied,

i am sucking air, words are carried with it in my nostrils
the river smiles, flows, and winds itself like a snake smooth on the grass

i listen too much, i become this earth
the river winds around my hair, birds are building nests,
the owl sleeps for the night beside my ears,

how peaceful is this place, how foolish had i been for all those years
hiding behind those rooms and rooms of books,
which explains why the river says that i smell nothing but dusts and molds.

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Have Destroyed Myself...

last night
when i arrive home from work
i undress myself before a mirror
seeing a worn-out body
furrowed by
too much stress

who furrowed all these lines
who wrinkled all these previous tight skin
the smoothness gone
who whitened this hair
and created the ruffles in my fingers
undulating waves
in my thoughts
endlessly rocking my mind
to such exhaustion?

the mirror is cruelly silent and if it has only a mouth
and a tongue
it could have uttered and lashed me with

'You! '

slowly i swallowed the word
I

Time should have been a good companion
loyal to my endeavors
but i rushed it like a slave
and so it has
taken its own revenge

these furrows
funnels of my Frankenstein's...

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Have Enjoyed Life

the body has changed a lot:
what it does before it ceases doing,
at first there is this surprise
but sooner things simmer like hot water
turning into a cold infusion,
you no longer lift your doubts about me,
whatever comes, you nod,
there is no more question as what to what happens next,
whatever is there, it is.

my fidelity to you is a creaking machine
it is the same sound though coming out from a
rusty mouth,
i tell myself i never change
even if you change, even if you leave earlier
i will still be here.
your body has transformed into its molecular state.
now i am marking each small bit with flowers.
i light a candle. the wind puts it off.
i leave with a sigh. How short life is.
How i have not proved myself.
How i have enjoyed life. How you suffered.

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Have Lived And Thrived In My Parent's Nice Front Yards

how i have lived and thrived in my parent's front yard
handed to us through generations,
i call it luck
inheritance of comforts and style
but soon
i get tired and i have become one
meaningless arrogance
away from everyone, so i have decided to go somewhere
in the lines of my poetry
now in poverty of spirit
with so much humility
i offer some lines on some meter and forms of repentance,
i'll go away, take the exit doors of this luxury
and try to see the backyards
of everything i have not seen i have not gone to

i see some tattered clothes
of tenancies, i feel their tremblings
in hunger, i hear the gnashing of their teeth,
i feel the shaking of their feet,
i think of what they have been conceiving
all these years
i have talked to them
in their hunger

to compensate for their lack
they will teach me about their revolution
i will hear them
in this backyard
i will join them

my ancestors will cry and disown me
i will give them rebirth
create them a new name

time shall judge, who wins?
How I Live...

there is another world
where my eyes sojourn like
a white yacht
anchoring for a while
while the storm to my
destination rages

this is the place of temporary
hiding

there is another world where my
hands permanently reside
it is a world of ropes and chains
where my fingers
are hindered from moving
from pointing
except to feel what my heart
desires

my eyes are too honest
they do what they want
they feast when they are hungry

my fingers are like nuns
in the monastery
my hands are the nunneries

on two worlds my body lives
balancing
the rope, the chains and the
pulpit

meanwhile, the confessional is
occupied
the sins revealed
to God in metaphors...

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Must Live

it will be
A child with a home

There's so much
Trouble
In the house

The streets are
Like the house too

There's no choice
Finally

It is a must
That you take

This journey
The disposition
Must be roadlike

You don't live
On a sidewalk

Roads have no ends
No attachments

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish I Could Have Shared With You A Moment Of Its Singing

that hour
i concealed a sparrow
which sings for
me
a night song

how i wish i could
have shared with you
a moment of its
singing

i suspect somehow
that you will not like it

and so
i keep you deaf and blind

when you open your eyes
you will see a boat

and a very far island
like a shadow of a dream

at the other end.

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish I Were The Rain

Avoiding me
You get wet
In the rain
Under the tree
At the foot
Of the hill

How I wish
I were the
Rain
The tree
And the foot
Of the hill

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish That We Become Friends

i have read your stories
and poems,
and then i wish we can be
friends
much is common between
us, and i want to tell you
that i am always a
part of those poems, and stories,
there is always a link
between us
categorically on the source
of sorrow, the spring of
hope
i have seen your trees
emptying leaves
birds shedding off flumes
i want to take a ride on your
bamboo raft
to go the place that i also
know

but you are a cloud
and i am a pebble
i gaze at you wanting to
hold you
in that moment but then
you are always gone
always leaving
not telling anymore
anyone
where to?

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish The Bell Tolls For Me

for whom the bell tolls?
i ask that
it must toll for me,
but the bell never really
toll for me,
always, it tolls for someone else,
a friend for 15 years
a relative close to the family,
a baby newly born in town,
a man conscious of his health,
the non-smoker and non-drinker alike,
the successful politician,
the wife of an expatriate,
the rich gambler, oh, the bell tolls for all of them
and there were banquets and city lights
and eulogies
and expensive garments of the priest

i wish the bell tolls for me,
but who am i to really say?

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish The World Does Not Have A Hundred Eyes
To See Me Naked

how i wish the world is blind to see me naked and broken
they always say
ever since i was small
this little girl is ugly
she will not have a promising future

(did they think that i better be thrown
to the sea and be eaten by sharks
or to the forest so i can be the prey
to those predators?)

they let me live, however,
thanks, nonetheless, and i have grown to be what i am
ugly
learning to live this way
ugly
time however has told me a different story
about the ugliness that lies only on the surface of
things, and living memories have grown in me
the seeds

some possibilities
for beauty

like i can grow a mind of my own
like i can be cultivated like a beautiful flower
of my choosing
in my own garden

like i can have the possibility of
a sweet scent
or i can be a slender plant that will bear
some luscious fruits
to feed the world and make it feel
that i can
quench its thirst
or satisfy its hunger
i have learned patiently
how to be a better possibility and long time ago
when i undressed myself
removing some layers of sadness
and confusion
skin upon skin upon skin

i was once afraid of everything
the windows
the cracks and the crevices
i was once afraid of the hundred eyes of this world
those walls barring me
those writings on the fences of my existence
shouting that

i am ugly
(that i do not have the right to live
or anything to live with)

i go naked again
time places another mirror at the center of my thoughts,

to see another me
i am beautiful
in my nakedness

now, i do not wish anymore a blind world
so it can see the unfolding
the coming of my
thousand possibilities like some kind winds
white sea caps and gentle sands,

i am beautiful and i really know it now
by heart

this confident soul undressed and still so beautiful.

that you, my lovely world, must start to see.
How I Wish You Do Not Understand My Language

speaking in tongues the drops of light fall on the pavement
of the church, worse, there were heads banging against other heads
and beards. Birds fly away, upon a thud of a pod,
pudding, leaves heaping, trees shedding off heaps of leaves,
and church bells ringing, i drag my feet drugged against the
ragged tags of the rugged rags, Sham, It is still painful.
How i wish you do not understand my language, Yet you
are speaking it, like i am the sham shaman of the shah of tehran.

it is your wedding day. I am here.

RIC S. BASTASA
How I Wish You Were Here

how i wish you were here
i sit by my window and you
are just beside me and i become your
face tissue and you are some tears
or we could be something else

or could be that i am the microphone
of the videoke and you are the
song or could be otherwise

or i could be the sofa
and you are the guest sipping beer
or a coca-cola or could be that we
are all guests and we are all the singers
and the rest are the songs and the sofa
and the glasses and the wine
and the ham and bread

whatever, i only wish that you are here beside me.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Individuality Is Lost

i meet you at the pier somewhere in phuket going to phi phi island and you are as rugged as any american can be in faded jeans, carrying a back pack, smelling like an arabian, half naked, and uncut hair,

born in mandaue, raised in new york, now working in california seemingly with no permanent home and not caring what happens next

for now it will be you and phi phi snorkeling, surfing, relaxing on one of those huts, enjoying the fire, and simmering and drying your skin under the Thai sun

now i understand all these untidiness this mess of yourself how cold is that far country and how insignificant is each body, and strangeness how individuality is lost how everyday has become another route into an anonymity

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is Beauty Seen....

perhaps i must
disagree on that,

that beauty lies
in the way we put

order to a mess,
pillows on the bed

blankets well folded
clothes hang,

outside the stars
twinkle in random

no lines in this
universe no queue

a list of data items,
commands, etc.,

stored so as to be
retrievable in a definite

order, usually the order
of insertion

beauty lies in
chaos, in volcanic

eruptions where
molten lava flows

and in spontaneity
freezes to the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is It Possible?

how is it possible
my dear friend
that you write about the
sun scorching the
earth and wilting
the leaves
and filling the
world with nothing
but heat and
more heat
until a certain
collapse comes
to the birds and
goats and rivers
dry out and then
you tell me you
write with what
you see
that these things see
you and nothing
is seen?

how is it to be human
and just be
the pole in the middle
of the field
so unfeeling?

to stare over a dead
beloved and
not shed a single tear?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is It To Really Live For Another Day

tings are
geting different
ow

t the earthen jar
outside the house
is filled with
rain

t the glass which
you tilted
lays flat on the
floor
steady on its
newly found
emptiness

t the song of
the world keeps on
humming
and birds roosted
in the nights of
silence

ings are getting
different
old things are ruined
old thought
fade away
old paths are no longer
visible

when i arrive here
i think of nothing too
amazed with what is
not here anymore
with what is different

i have no name
no place and no number
anymore

i pretend i
do not know you
and you must
do the same

i guess this is
how is it to really
live for
another day in this
old place
which had never really
got its new shape.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is It Tonight

what is it all about
what is it all about tonight
how is it possible
about tonight
that which happened
last night
what is it all about
what is it all about tonight
how is it possible
to hold your hand tonight
how is it possible
the change
the change of mind
how is it possible tonight
to show my wounded heart

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is It?

how is it
that you go to that famous beach
and there is a storm
and nobody is there
except yourself?

are you crazy? you keep asking yourself too
but you are there
not to take a swim
you are there to watch a storm
you are there to watch when everything has gone wrong
when everyone runs for safety
when everyone is busy for shelter
when everyone thinks you are crazy
and always at the wrong timing of things

what mind have you?
nothing you say
you are just crazy, you are just you, and it does not really matter somehow

who knows if you have a point too?
like the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
How Is It? ..... 

when i dream of butterflies 
immigrating to an island 
you dream of fish hiding in 
the living corals

when i speak about romance 
how people fall in love 
you butt in saying love is 
irrelevant and you talk of 

war and the reasons why so 
many children die, how novels 
write themselves in chaos and 
death and sad separations 

we realize we do not fare out 
in a synchronized journey 
my north is your south and 
my sky happens to be your sea 

i grieve for this and then you 
laugh, i say i am leaving for good 
and you close a door and stay. 

RIC S. BASTASA
How Lonely Have You Been All These Years After He Left You

When I first kiss your lips
Bit it a little bit
Your upper lip bleeds
Sending this blood
Dark and sad into your heart

When another kiss follows
These hot lips of mine
Send the heat and give you
Sparks of light
Shaking your whole body
In the fire of ecstasy

From then the paths
In your body that lead to your soul
Are no longer guarded
By the propriety of your senses

You have given in
To the pleasures that I am giving
You have become the river
Wanting more the splashes of some
Fishes and frogs and even crocodiles

More kisses, more touches
More heat, more flames
The hottest of fires
Cinders and brimstones!

RIC S. BASTASA
How Love Feels After That...

it feels like
when the heavy downpour
of rain stops finally
and the winds gone and
all the trees and grass
are fully at peace with
that aftermath: cold and
dewy.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Love Shall End?

at this age, who shall ask about how love
began? if it came in my mind, it is not because i conceive it,
it came by pure
accident, someone mentions a very good beginning,
tight lips, vine-like embraces,
sweat all over the bodies
in a room with no window open.

i am so guilty about what i entertain as a prolonged thought
like a scheme of things
how a glass is crushed against a rock in slow motion
classified as art,
how the tiny pieces gleam against the sound of crashing
eyes screaming and
hands still hiding inside the pockets
of the abdomen
like a kangaroo taking away all its bag of thoughts away
in safe haven,

i am trying to spell departure, planning to have an exit
that graceful one
without any shame at all

i am wondering if this matter could still be put under the domain
of words or on the category of
motion.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Lovely Can Ignorance Be...

how can you ever see
what i am seeing?

the words are veils
the face remains hidden

do you remember my voice?
it is trembling

cascades of meaning
yet you can hold nothing

what i have seen
rushes my blood in the middle of my being

it is a tryst of myself to myself
that i try to capture in syllables

understanding makes you leave me
so i chose the reverse

i am not there
i am not what you think i am

i live on the other side of the river
and you do not know the vein going there

for years i will be silent
to understand myself more

i leave no trace
when the time comes you may see a footprint

a picture of a footprint
and you shall know what suffering did my foot have

it is over soon
i think, it is better that you shall not know
as you shall love me still
how lovely can ignorance be!

RIC S. BASTASA
How Lovely!

nature is no nonsense
thing.
it always repeats itself
the way the sun
sets
the manner of moon waning
water ebbing
rain falling
the way that apple falls
from the tree
birds rising from their
sleep
etcetera,

this clock this glass
and these
girls, they're no nonsense
too

we gape and wonder how wise
are they
how natural how bountiful
how lovely.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Lyrical?

she chops what should have been
seen as a straight line, and we who believe in her
think that there is something strange

i think, deep in my heart that
it is ugly, but those that surround me

believe that what she does like the way she
holds her glass, putting red wine in it, and spitting out

something bitter, is lyrical...
'this is art' she says,

i am attuned to something direct and clear and logical,
and i stand up and say

'that is the ugliest thing that i have ever seen
and i am telling you
i detest it, i dislike it'

i leave, and i tell the world that there is something wrong
with her.

the world claps its hands. the people bowed.
they say, she is beautiful and everything she does, no matter what,

like her spitting at me,
is beautiful, a work of art, a mark of history.

i sit here asking still some questions to my hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Many Grains Of Sand Are There On The Beach?

we are on the beach
it is a very bright and warm day
the coconut leaves are cooling us
the shade is comforting
the sands so white
the sea is crystal blue
the sea gulls are singing
colored fishes come up from time to time
hiding in the corals

if you want to know how many grains of white sands
are there on this beach
begin the count

for the meantime
we are taking our much needed plunge

we leave you for a while
enjoy yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Many Miles More?

how many miles more
shall i walk, to make myself complete?
how many oceans shall i sail
to make myself a man complete?
how many skies more to fly?
how many planets more
to step upon?
how many black holes more
to explore?
how many deaths?
how many unknowns to solve
to make this journey complete?

i do not really know.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Many Nights? ....

IT is the darkness of the enclosure
that is trying to kill me
it is your face that mocks me
it is not time
that befriends me with a basket
of its mellowing
the flowers of youth
its petals falling one by one
to the sands of
of loneliness finally slipping
through my fingers.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Meanings Are Invented....

if happiness is hard to define
how harder is sadness perhaps.

but both are two faces in one body.
taking time with you, how seldom

do they face you at the same time?
it sometimes rain on a sunny day.

then a rainbow forms against the showers. Meanings are invented.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Mother Made Us A Home

our navels were cut
and they were tied
on one of the strong
walls of this house
where we were born
and since then
mother takes pride
about our missing
a home that where
ever we are scattered
by fate we always come
back and feel and fill
what is missing inside
is home.
This is where mother
died and father too
and the rest of us
shall also be buried
here when we finally
die. This is country.
This is life and
This is death. This
is our meaning and
This is where we shall
always be forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
How My Cousin Wished To Have A White Friend, The American

my cousin had once a wish, to befriend an american
the white great man who once fought with his grandfather
during the last 2nd world war
in Bataan
they were together in their defeat
on that Long Black Death March

and they miraculously survived
and during their veterans' memory programs
they always have time together
little drinks, nostalgic conversations and then a hug a farewell
matching tears and trembling lips
of old useless men

but that was long time ago
times i guess have changed due to climactic errors
global warming
and well
crude, rude, city life that changed gentleness to
aloofness,
and when my cousin worked as a nurse in chicago
lonely as he was, and so alienated and yes
discriminated
he changed his views of the white man
no longer that christ-the-saviour thing really
but that 'get lost' monster that throws him glasses on his head
and if it were not for his escaping instincts he would have been dead
on arrival in the Philippines,

well, i cannot blame him, indeed the times have changed,
whites hate browns and looks down on them,
the browns too, retaliate and sometimes wish to poison the white man
and kill him on his bed with an overdose of his antidepressant drugs

or simply leave the white man with his own business as he falls
to the floor from his bed, with no one to help him, and i remember what my
cousin said,
he is the brown man telling the white man

' white man, summon all your green money to help you stand,
i am leaving! '

he left, really, he left the old man asking for his help,
less the curse and the insult

actualy, i like how that story ended.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Not To Overthink.....

they say
to be unhappy is
to overthink

do not overthink
that is the
key to the door
of happiness
with rusty door knobs
and dusty
doors you must enter
and

clean. You ask how not
to overthink

there is another door
to that door which
you have to open again and

once outside you
have to feel the rain
the mud and
walk away and step into

another world, walk
to that stretch of
road towards the
hill circling the bush

but only for
a while. When you
return

it will not be the
same again

you have changed.
How Not To Write A Short Poem

first give the sigh
release it like you are freeing a butterfly
from your palm
push a hush
then let your finger dance
like a dropp of rain
hitting a grain
then stop a while
look over the window
and pay homage to
the moon's swoon.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Ordinary Language Becomes Poetic
do not worry about images
leave it to the wise imagination of the reader
do not insult his powers
of extending the meaning of your ordinary language
beyond what you
are thinking or saying with utmost intention to drive your point
the poetry of indeterminacy
the meanings hidden in such plain words
as wolf and sheep
shepherd to this staff
river to stones
and clouds to rain and rain and rain and rain
and yes the trrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrainnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn,
do not be too concerned
with form, the form comes and takes the shape desire before your eyes
what i am driving at is that
ordinary language becomes too poetic when
you shake because it is a very cold rain pouring in your roof
and you have no one
and you have no other place to go and you cannot call him because
he is too busy with other
matters of equal importance
i could be him and you could be her, in this ordinary language of
disappointments
why we met and why we regret the meeting and union
oh, why speak about something too poetic when ordinary language
can be so poetic
about pain, and hypocrisy, and mendicancy
of emotions, She herself is one of the few constant
features
on that landscape.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

8091


Wary, as always,
of holistic paradigms for the literary history

dynamic, interactive condition of experimental poetry today

i cannot think
of any other recommendation,

Christian Boltanski's simulated documentaries,
I cannot think of a better introduction
to contemporary

poetry, this, oh,

so you understand a thing?

alright, how do you do?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Poetry May Not Be Taken Seriously

when spontaneously
a poem comes along
you grab it like a chicken
and choke it
with your usual grammatical
errors
and words not so well chosen
like a stream of erroneous
thoughts misspelled
and put out of context
and then you are too busy
to correct it
and post it right away
and then it comes back
to you when you
read it
after a while when you
come back from office
work and you
realize
the horror of
the Dracula that you made
another Frankenstein
all of them bite you
in your neck
and takes your blood
sucking them
like water.

devastating indeed.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sad

how sad to think
that you
think that my marriage
is on the verge
of wrecking

i like to think
about
this possibility

but come to think
of it
where will we go
when the house
is burned?

shall we eat
the ash on the
ground?

and what shall
i tell God
about my
broken vow?

how shall i repair
my broken soul
my torn heart
this total
destruction
this
annihilation?

think about it
and the possibilities
other than a break
up
for the meantime
i'll drink my tea
and eat my cake
and relax on
a hammock and
read a romance novel
and then
sleep

in this life i don't
really think much
i just do it.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Shall I Interpret Your Dream Last Night?

you are telling me about
this dream: a shadow carrying
a bag departing away
from the dark
leaving your body
on the pavement

how shall in interpret it for you?

you are weak, so pale beside
your very young wife
beside your (death) bed...

RIC S. BASTASA
How She Changed The Sayings..

birds of the same feather
are same birds

a friend in need
is a friend
to avoid

it is not what comes but what remains after.

RIC S. BASTASA
How She Defines Love

love to her is just
a hello and goodbye
a little introduction
a drink
a talk
some feelings for
common grounds
a night
sleeping together
and packing up
again
to another place
without even having to
say goodbye

love has been that way
and hence she never really
knew what love is.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Should It Be?

it is nice to say that twilight dances
and the morning is preoccupied with coffee and cups
hotcakes on the plate
and lawn mower still asleep.

lightning scratches a field, i see it.
waves move to and fro endlessly
signifying infinity.

thoughts are all possibilities until you realize
that the hot choco is cold
and not minded
it knows how is it to be untended, it dies
into a bland taste.

blind moments are there, i pick up a magazine and simply
look at the pictures of women
skimpy dresses and sexually stimulating ads
of softdrinks.

things move by themselves
and now i declare no war, no pact of peace, nothing.

i am numb.
and selfish.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Should Mornings Be?

a cup of roasted coffee
a toast of bread
butter and marmalade
a slice of orange
some lima beans

a little music
some prayers

how nice would a morning be
overjoyed

by your presence
sipping same things all over again

with us
how can such a morning be so boring?

RIC S. BASTASA
How Small And Far Can We Be

how small and far can we be
when love
breaks,
how small is our way of looking
at love's other possibilities
when love is lost
and gone away,
we shrink in pain
and we become so insignificant like a
rain dropping to the ocean
or a granule of sand
on the shore

yet love is vast
its domain is encompassing the earth
and space
the whole of this expansive universe
so why cry
when one love is gone when this or that love leaves you
it is just one moment
come to think
a little higher and be lighter to reach the feelings of the stars
the fore sightings of the moon
learn to love again
and be stronger in every loss
rise higher from every fall
mend that broken heart
and embroider in there the golden threads
of another love
even lovelier than before
because for once you know what love is
when it dies
it is reborn
resurrects itself always lovelier that ever before.....
wipe your tears and let you eyes glow
brightly to another soul
another face waiting for you,
he loves you so....
How Small We Are, How Insignificant.

a dot is a runner
making a line, and it ends
it rests for a while, it is there
where our silence lies,
after a night, it runs again
the whole day i suppose,
and that is where our life
moves on,
it runs and stops and runs,
to make a figure, a landscape,
and that is where we enter,
as we ourselves make the doors,
the exits, the bridges, and pools,
and rivers,
as we go along this running,
when we stop, when we are so silent,
we go back to this life of a dot,
how small we are, how insignificant.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Soft The Sea Touching Upon My Feet

there is this likeness
for shattered pieces falling from the
10th floor of this building

a confetti of feelings
a falling to the ground
a soundless floating
until everything settles
as though a piece can be
gone forever

i have been to the thousand islands
of white sands and mountain peaks
and green and blue waves and
salty breeze clinging to every
lock of my black hair

each island is as beautiful as
it is like the rest segregated
by their own uniqueness of shape
and color

you see it has dawned at me
how pieces can be not miserable
how island live by their own beautiful
silence how suffering can be concealed
in the whiteness of thighs
and legs well rested on beaches

how moon and sun can be beautiful
in their own places
how soft the sea touching upon my feet

RIC S. BASTASA
How Stupid

how stupid for the moon
once to ask the sun

where will i be without you?
and the sun said

i will still keep shining during the day
that is how this world expects me to be

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sublime For Poets

how sublime for poets
who spend sleepless nights
writing a poem and posting
them at dawn when even
all the dusts on the furnitures
are still all asleep, and
he never expects anything
to happen to his life, not
even the simplest thank
you from an unknown
reader, and he, who in turn
knows that a reader exists
somewhere, he too, never
has the chance of saying
you are welcome.

it's the spirit, i suppose,
that cannot stop, but goes
on and on, speaking to
itself, like the way its body
speaks to the house and
listens to the winds of the
windows and waits for
an opening of his only door.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sunday Ended Upon Its Own Trembling

the waves are bigger than my dreams
i sit on the sandy shore waiting

you come like a shadow of an afternoon Sunday
broad and firm and strong as you claim yourself
in a name carved in stone

it is late and i am weak

you run to the sea and plunge yourself
you wave your hand before that

i am looking at the horizon

and then the sunset completes itself
with your silence
in that single splash

i think it is horrible but on the other hand
it is divine

i cannot remember how that Sunday ends
i will again say it ends with the splash and then the edifying silence

let me stop and think awhile, a moment of silence

how can i tell you that there is this deleted version of the story
in trembling i arrive home and then i scream

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sweet Can Sweetness Be....

too much honey on my tongue
cannot be sweeter
upon days when it sticks it
has not attracted an ant,
boring sweetness that makes the
mouth vomit and so i look for something else
its opposite: bitter
that which we junk becomes a need
for a variation,
we, humans, are not into this contentment
longing for sweetness that soon
will kill us,
and since we still want to live,
we take in
something bitter inside us,
and for a time again,
we recall, how sweet can sweetness be....

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sweet Of You

how sweet of you
to remember me through the lines of my love
poetry? how sweet of you
to remember too the poet
his face
his hands
his lips
and the kiss he once gave you
so tenderly

how sweet of you
old flame, to think that i have loved you with a love that had a beginning
and no end
like the shore to the sea and to the horizon of eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
How Sweet The Sounds Of Steps Emanating From Those Stairs?

the strength of our love is measured by the spaces that we reserve on that long hour of waiting

you ask me what is it that must keep us one?

i am telling you were it not for the emptiness of some moments we would never have cherished the fullness of our longings

how beautiful are those windows of the houses that for once we have decided to leave and forget?

how sweet the sounds of steps emanating from those stairs?

RIC S. BASTASA
How That Sunday Ended

the waves are bigger than my dreams
i sit on the sandy shore waiting

you come like a shadow of an afternoon Sunday
broad and firm and strong as you claim yourself
in a name carved in stone

it is late and i am weak

you run to the sea and plunge yourself
you wave your hand before that

i am looking at the horizon

and then the sunset completes itself
with your silence
in that single splash

i think it is horrible but on the other hand
it is divine

i cannot remember how that Sunday ends
i will again say it ends with the splash and then the edifying silence

let me stop and think awhile, a moment of silence

how can i tell you that there is this deleted version of the story
in trembling i arrive home and then i scream

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Dalmatians Come.....

our black
dog
just mated
a white dog

hence,
the dalmatians!

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Day Ended

five decisions
groping for words
and logic
to arrive at
justifiable conclusions
where the parties
may find
whatever is reasonable
and necessary

a hard job
but this is the
meaning
of everything
i am

the day ended
on a compromise
between the
left and the right
between
art and
the blindness
of justice

i set aside the records
and attach
the final verdict
to be handed tomorrow
with clean hands.

at the end of the day
the conscience sleeps
in peace
in harmony with the best
that i can be

tired but fulfilled
like the moon resting finally on
the marshes
 glowing and steady
 with its light
 and poise

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Evil Story Begins

denied of humanity
he steps out of the door
and asks that be allowed
to enter the narrow door
of divinity

he knocks, and the
door opens
a question is asked
what is his name
and from where?

he answers i am
a man without name
and i come from
the humble house of
my earth

and then the door is
shut
and he walks away

and the evil door opens
for him
and without questions
takes him in

and that is where
the story of his
life begins....

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Flood Came About....

the waters have
arrived
with so many
surges and they
are confused and
keep on asking

' this is our place
why are you here? '

the one who filled
this place cannot
answer
shows instead its
title to the property

' no, no this is our
place get out of here'
the water rages.

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Judgment Is Made....

here we will be losing
art, all emotions shut, like
a butterfly caught and then sealed
inside a transparent bottle.
still beautiful but now getting
illogical.

here we are called to be logical,
analytical, everything in suspicion,
all beliefs suspended.

here we are made to be wit the truth
and the truth is silent.

it does not talk, it keeps on seeing
accurately what is there what happened.

here we keep the sea calm. the earth
sky emptied of all stars
at night. The sun is steady.

then when everything is put into a lens,

with light, the burning begins and it ends
not that long, until the ash is settled.

then the truth speaks, and it judges.

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Leaves Are Blown By The Wind

did i not tell you that these leaves come from the trees?
no dispute about it
about them, they grow out from there, those twigs
of the trees of life,
they get their glow, their sheen, though they have given more honor
to the sun
rather than the roots and the phloem

the season for them to mature and fall has come
and they all wait for the wind, the great strong wind to blow them all away
to their respective destinies
some find their way to the river
some to the thick heap of other leaves destined to rot
and only if you hear them
they say they come from nowhere
not from the tree of life
not from me

the leaves, my poems, the wind my way of throwing,
the tree, myself, my roots my mind, my phloem my blood

i made them all, but now, they are on their own

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Meaning Escapes Us

someone will tell the story of an eraser

its meaning escapes us who never ask

why?

because we have lived in big cities and thrived in huge ambitions

we always miss the point when a butterfly closes its wings and then stays at rest behind a leaf

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Poem Is Treated By You

My instruction is very simple
Take the poem and read it
Casually in your room, do not
Force yourself to understand it
Just read it and tell me what
You feel,
Be kind to the poem
Like inviting it for tea
With just the two of you
As you sip
Let the poem drift like
A cloud and let it take
Its shape
Be compassionate to the poem
Let is cry for itself
If it settles for tears
And all you can do is
Just wipe its face
With your handkerchief

But you are cruel and so
Indifferent, you slap the
Poem with your right hand
And tell it straight
That you do not like it
That way it has successfully
Puzzled you
Then you leave the poem in
The rest room
It feels that it is a tissue
Paper fit for something
So ordinary waiting for
What others usually do
Wipe their anus after
A poo.

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Sadness Of The Other Has Become The Comfort Of Your Moment

you tell a tree
without leaves

that bush without
a flower

you tell an orchard
the sadness of having
no fruit

you keep on telling
what you never hear
for yourself

ah, here comes again
this misery that seeks
more company

how the sadness of
the other
has become the comfort
of your moment

RIC S. BASTASA
How The Words Are Taking The Man

let me start with one word
another word takes in another
and they begin to talk to one another
i let the third word go
and they will ask another one
to equalize both sides
they will soon invite other words
until they will make a crowd
and the words get so many
now with mouths and no ears

like the drink the words take the man
and after so many words have been uttered
you begin to regret every word that got in
so many and now you feel so empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
How These Were Born

days words were born
because there were no other things done
this poem is written
because the most important thing to do is set aside.

bread is fed to the the birds
diamonds thrown to the pigsty
a black bird leaves the blue sky
a crocodile is eating a horse

days thoughts roam
because of pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Things Really Went

when he turned pale and fainted
he blamed it on his dieting
he said he did not eat breakfast
that morning

when his eyes turned red at noon
he said he got sore eyes
and blamed the knob of the
door for the infection

and on the night when he locked
his room he said he wanted to
sleep early as he lacked sleep
writing his poems

he drank poison a la socrates
and when he died
the froth on his mouth looked like
the bloom of a
while million flower

he did not tell the truth
that his wife left him with another man

RIC S. BASTASA
How This Universe Rhyme So Well?

the beginning is chaos
so the end shall be, also chaos

there is no order, there is even
no beginning, there is no systematic ending

wanton is the conception and
disorder is the truth, not that this is what you see

today or tomorrow or yesterday they are all one
there is no space in between

yet you refuse to believe and you write
to please everyone and make them believe

in the pleasing personality of the world of
rhymes and clock ticking at the middle of the night

you perceive order and you organize the system
please yourself and then suddenly

tears fall on the letters and smother the print
of your orderly paper world

you suffuse anger on the pen
i ponder upon the blot and rethink what i think was always right

back to chaos, i ask how can you like the rhyme and the rhythm?
how can you ever live in this fantasy?

in my free verse, i say what i say, and life speaks to me
like i am life itself, and freed from hypocrisy, the truth gets in

jagged, rugged, and pulsating

RIC S. BASTASA
How Time Betrayed Me

the young dad fetches her daughter in school uniform
early morning
using his bike and they pass by the house as i sit by my window

and i realized how time passed
how time has betrayed me and how by all complacency did not complain

i do not notice how time flowed like a bullet train just in front of me

but i have no regrets
i am too preoccupied about mapping my way out without causing any trouble

not a ripple to the pond when the water grasshopper lands.

RIC S. BASTASA
time flies swiftly
much faster than the fastest wings of
your mentally concocted
bird

because you love

you love everything
what you do
what you are
what you want to become

you are in love with yourself
with the world
with every face that you see

when you left you were just a child
who cannot say any word

it was just like a click of a finger
a blink of an eye

when we meet
we understand what happened then

the graves are ready
the grasses sing

we laid everything rested
we regret nothing

because we love everything that came and
went
we embraced what is here
and what passed away

with so much love
with so much affection.
How Time Really Swiftly Passes By

again i see this movie
i look around me
i close the window panes
and then the door
and then i go within
the movie in one of those
characters
that keep on chiding me
that i have done nothing
to make that love come true

it keeps on laughing at me
saying
'how time swiftly passed
and you are left alone
still tending to your wounds
as she had sent her boy into
manhood and now waits with
him at the altar for his bride'

bad character i supposed
but i am worse
i know how to jump
into mud into the situation
and tell myself
' Go, go away
i have more loves
to tend and tender
for another day! '

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Be Still Beautiful Despite

i understand perfectly well
if you do not not believe, but

this morning the birds fly in
the air, and the butterfly flutters
and the bees still droning
on coconut trees,

and there are no manuals there
no books, no tips on how to do
it right, how to be still beautiful
despite

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Consume Fear....

fear and desire
mix in a glass of
margarita

look at me

i have consumed
all fear
and have never
tasted desire

look at the foolish me

dignified and
free....

RIC S. BASTASA


How To Cook

if it is too big
chop it to pieces
if it is frozen
thaw it
if it is hard
soften it
if it is bland
put a little salt
and a little sugar
and some spices
and seasoning

life is simple enough
to be compared to cooking

use your common sense
don't worry be happy

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Deal With A Very Beautiful Disciple

she comes like a princess from the
a castle high up there on those blue clouds
descending from the sun
down to the mountains
and the rivers
and to this
pond

i am the grass, and she wants to lie down with me
so i can teach her about what, i ask, about poetry she says,
no there is no poetry with me for

i am the grass, and you signal the wind so you may leave at once
and be back to the arms of the heavens
but i think a while and change my mind for i am the grass

and i am a teacher of all mankind, those who want to die and be
covered with my hands, and those who want to stay and be
with my greeness, my softness  and i in humility whispers to her

my princess, stay with me for a while, lie with me, and sleep with me
under the moon, the darkness of the night shall be our blanket,
my thick leaves of grass, your pillow,

i am the grass, i may not teach you what poetry is,
what i have is to spread
love and togetherness, and intimacy that i have with the soil
my secrets with the worms, my eternity
with what death has concealed  from the eyes of your world.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Fight Him

learn from the sun and the wind
how they fight to win him,

remember the wind that made the blow,
the man held on to his coat and woe

remember the sun with warmth emit
and made the man undress before it,

and so you know how the sun won
the man's heart  beats for it till dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
there was this place she bragged about
in the hinterland and we had to take a ride
for seven hours from Jakarta and she kept on
talking that it was where

silence is grown and

people who went there once wanted always to come
back

she pictured it:

dinner by the river where lotus
are flowering beside it reeds and
more reeds and
shades of old trees where leaves
fell and floated
on the water which was
so still like a mirror to
the moon

when we arrived there we were so tired
that we
sleep together and food
shall soon be served but
we postponed it

and there with her sleeping
beside me her head
on my shoulder my arms
wrapping her i know what
she means: how to grow silence in
its loveliest form.

it was so
quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
there was this place she bragged about
in the hinterland and we have to take a ride
for seven hours from Jakarta and she keeps on
talking that it is where silence is grown and
people who went there once wanted always to come
back

she pictured it: dinner by the river where lotus
are flowering beside it reeds and more reed and
shades of old trees where leaves fell and float
on the water which is so still like a mirror to
the moon

when we arrived there we were so tired that we
sleep together and food shall soon be served but
we postponed it

and there with her sleeping beside me her head
on my shoulder my arms wrapping her i know what
she means: how to grown silence in its loveliest form.
How To Grown Silence...(Revised)
	here was this place she bragged about
in the hinterland and we had to take a ride
for seven hours from Jakarta and she kept on
talking that it was where

silence is grown and

people who went there once wanted always to come back

she pictured it: dinner by the river where lotus
are flowering beside it reeds and more reeds and
shades of old trees where leaves fell and float
on the water which is so still like a mirror to
the moon

when we arrived there we were so tired that we
sleep together and food shall soon be served but
we postponed it

and there with her sleeping beside me her head
on my shoulder my arms wrapping her i know what
she means: how to grow silence in its loveliest form.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Have A Very Sound Sleep

every day
i climb a mountain
and i like
it
three more mountains
to go
and it will be dark
and i like it
when i arrive there
i will be very tired
and i will have a nice sleep
beside the stars
on the grass under
the moonlit
sky

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Hold The Rose Inside Your Hand

a hand knows how to keep fragility in a secret garden
like that way you hold a moth inside your mouth
feeling the flapping of its powdery wings,

you know how to hold the rose inside your hand with all the sweetest intention
not to break any of its red petals.

hold me the way i hold you. Keep me the way i keep you.
At night i have not spoken a word about it.

to hold a rose is to hold a secret which to yourself you cannot even mention.

if you keep that secret the rose will be alive and it can even have that desired
eternity for flowering for all the seasons.

i have not met anyone like that yet.
This is the eternal wish of the dead well.
The dream for water far exceeds the dream for light
that windows have claimed as theirs
prior to the dawning of a dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Live A Lifetime
	here are doubts
streaks of light coming from the
half-open windows

when you wake up
you cover the nakedness of the night
with you

you arrange some strands of the hair
in your head
putting some order of the perceived
chaos

you want to understand
and the deeper you go
you realize that
there is really need
to understand in order to fully live
the shortest life
possible

it can be too taxing
and it may cost the moments of your life
all beautiful encounters
unmade

you say what a waste
what a ruin

more excitements are coming like a mob
and you forget to savor each moment
because the quest for understanding
preoccupies your lifetime

you sit for a while to stop
& discover

gaze around you to believe that this world
has no mind of its own
it merely spins all days and nights
making itself felt

create the usual revolutions
where men who used to conquer
turn into loose skins, white hairs,
brittle bones
and cadavers

and then back to dust again
and for sure
no one wants to remember this
customary annihilation

one goes to the pizza parlor
bites some hot slices
fills his hunger
drinks coke
satisfies the thirst
and without so much thought
lives a lifetime.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Live....

that morning
was fruitful.
had my cup of
coffee while
watching TV
at 6 a.m. there
was this bishop and
a pastor
discussing the
meaning of life
showing a very
simple formula
for living: first,
know that you
have a Creator,
know who you are
to Him, then
discern your mission,
to please Him,
you do not live
for yourself
but for Him,
so you do all
everything
for Him and
His glory.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Murder Loneliness....

anger is better
than pity
killing yourself
is out of the
question
at this moment
under rage
you want to kill
rather than
be killed
voila loneliness
is murdered.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To React With A Letter From Maureen

well, it is simple.
delet it right away
block Maureen
and poor Maureen
she is dead.

everybody happy?

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Sit With Idiots And Listen.

you just don't know
how i suffer, it is like

jest, on the other side,
that cannot be measured,

felt, and savored and in
a moment gone, like a winged

shadow, fleeting, hovering
upon a figment twig, a fragment

of gossamer thoughts, a dragon,
paper, a scissor hand, a god

dog on the wall, behind
a blanket authority, yet,

allow me to say that you
are the cause of this suffering,

how to sit with idiots
and listen, hard rock on my

head, a sword above me,
and i am blankly stubborn

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Tell The Story Of The Cloud

you know how is it with the clouds
the more with air
and mists

they always change and they do it
as quickly as a wink

you know what clouds do
the form upon you some stories
the rainy ones sometimes and you shed tears
in the same manner with the air and mists

the air passes and sometimes you do not even feel it
and so you miss the story that it is bringing
the story of a journey
into somewhere

and the mists bring you some notes about what to do
in the darkness of the night
yet you tarry on the grass and on the side of the hill

you miss the essence of our beings
we are ghosts and we do not know where we are hidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Treat A Poem....

a poem is a flower
that blooms
early morning kissed
by the
soft lips of the
sun

do not cut it
do not ever do the
she loves me
she loves me not
you will be
killing it

let it bloom

do not undress it
do not deprive it of
its leaves and
stalk

leave it there
to bloom till the night
comes
till it meets the moon

at night it gives out
all its scent
wait there to kiss it.

RIC S. BASTASA
How To Write Happiness....From The Learned Poetess....

the poetess writes happiness on the sand beside the furious waves

she is a failure says the boat

'come, ride with me' the boat invites

the sun is up and she has no umbrella

she begins to write happiness on the water

nothing happens of course

and then it is night time

quite long for sadness

then she writes words for the moon

in the air and then the moon smiles

the moon understands what happiness is
perfectly....

RIC S. BASTASA
How Unfathomable Still Life Really Is......

in this single life
realizations are myriad

that this is just
a passage
in a dark tunnel towards
the exit where light
waits like
mother

that everything here
is temporary
in fact just hints as
to what is real
not really fakes but
marks to guide us where
we are really going

along the way you meet
someone
which you must never forget
that like you
this someone too dies

hence once you kiss
once you close your eyes
do not think of
eternity
think about that moment
only
which as you once felt
never really lasts

oh, there are those
that speak to you without
using words

a leaf blown by the wind
eagle migrating to another land
a river winding its way
along high mountains
nests that mother birds left
oceans that make you think
how unfathomable still life
really is.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Unlike I Am To All These Silence?

How can all these creatures
live and survive in a place where
they are not in talking terms?

how can a butterfly flutter and hover
from one flower to another without
singing?

the beautiful garden must be enough
the blue sky, the soft rain, the green bushes,
the flowering trees, clean air,
and just like them the beautiful silence of the sands.

how unlike i am to all these silence?
and so i have decided to leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Unlike You How Painful.

you get tired finally of
don’t have to say that there is something ugly in what you see.

it is not the friendship anymore
it is the truth.
it is impersonal.

the next problem is
what you have to face
squarely

how beautiful is the enemy
how wisdom is found in them
how unlike you
how painful.

RIC S. BASTASA
How We Are Seen By The Child Outside The House...

the big window
of the house
by the breakfast
table
from the perspective
of the child
without a mother and
a home
shows it a picture
of family and
opulence and it looks
at this picture
with full envy and
sadness
mixed like a salad bowl
of bitter gourds and
sour grapes
drenched with
vinaigrette and
rotten olives.

RIC S. BASTASA
How We Live

during those times
we did not mind the passing of time
we watch the leaves falling
and we do not give much significance
leaves fall we keep saying
nothing but a common recurrence
a day to day matter

then one day we see things differently
for every leaf that falls
we also shed a tear

time begins to laugh at us
we who have began to know fear
we who have seen the shortness of the sunset
we who have become
restless no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
we look at ourselves
after we run for miles and stop
for a while by the side of a
peaceful pond along our way
back home where we have
seen the lines in our foreheads
the curves of our jaws
the sunken features of our cheeks

and then we have changed
from quizzical to a certainty
as we begin to carve our
hopes on that mirror:

not all bread cures our hunger
not all water cures our thirsts
not all in us can be sold like some
kind of properties that can give us
a profit for the day

we reflect back then when
all experiences are teachers
when fear of everyday life has
actually made us live for the better
when certainty is finally abhorred
when life becomes so real
as it slips from our fingers when
we finally dip our finger to the
body of that water that
finally erased who we are
and how we look like
the rest of those we knew.

RIC S. BASTASA
How Weak Is Sweetness?

we are all interconnected
just like your past to my future
my present to yours
and i am getting curious
who infects who, is it my
bitterness or your sweetness?

how weak is sweetness how easily
it becomes one like mine as i too
have become like her, old woman
whose miserly ways have killed our
hopes, our dreams, our tomorrow....

RIC S. BASTASA
How Wrong We Both Were About Each Other, And
How Happy We Have Been.

after love
then what?
shall we dine
less the usual
conversations?
shall we take the
walk
and look at different
directions?
shall i tell you a story
about what does
not interest you anymore?
after this
then what?

you know it
then tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
How You Can Still Be Light

A number of friends encircling you in your misery is a big comfort but you will be lost inside them and you are in no position anymore to probe the recesses of your sorrow: you will soon forget how to cure it.

try being solitary in that journey to creativity: marvel at all discoveries how your shadow follows you and you control its shape and form and movements against the light. How darkness can be a home and how you can still be light.

RIC S. BASTASA
eventually you will like the way you handle
yourself.
when a news is handed to you, you just keep it
you are not the messenger.
you hear something bad, you keep it.
when someone asks, tell him about the good weather.
about how the flowers show the best in themselves
on summer
describe how is it to be a fish in the water
and yet still be friendly with the fishermen.
tell all people how exciting is the life in the village
how full was the moon last night and how the kiss
marks your cheeks without your knowledge.
you are glad, show it well.
and do this as a habit. Trouble is trouble.
Love is always lovelier. Peace is a pursuit.
Show them what happiness does.
How small you are. How you have become
Unforgettable!

RIC S. BASTASA
However, With The Passing Of Time...Do The Memories Dim And Imperceptibility Become Altered?

i don't exactly remember,  
i choose that i can't, i remove all the little things that make me remember

put all their personal belongings in the box  
and give them to charity  
the orphans are happy with the boy's clothes and pants

the old women at the senior home  
took their turns choosing mama's dresses and headbands

i choose to forget what and who they are in my life.  
i move on with a new name, transferred to a place beyond the reach of memories

meeting new faces, making love with new bodies  
not settling long, not being alone,  
always fluid like a river  
always blown like a leaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
she lived in that house
the windows were like her
tight-lipped
their tongue never showed

nagpuyo siya anang balaya
sama kaniya ang mga bintana
sirado
ang ilang dila dili makita

the front door was a watchdog
it guarded her from harm
guarded the doorknob from falling

ang pultahan sa atubangan irong gabantay
gibantayan siya sa kadaut
gibantayan ang trangka nga dili
mahulog

one night
as in any other night
the lights remain blindfolded
a man disguised as the wind
stole in
through the soles of the door

usa ka gabii
sama sa laing mga gabii
ang mga suga natabonan
ang lalaki nga nagtakuban nga hangin
mikawat og sulod
diha sa giwang sa pultahan

in the morning
the watchdog was dead
the windows talked endlessly
without sense
the furniture broke down like nerves
pagkabuntag
ang bantay nga iro patay na
ang mga bintana nagsalimuang og sulti
walay unod
ang mga kasangkapan nangaguba nga morag mga ugat

a lock of masculine hair
lounged on the floor
adunay buhok sa lalaki
nga nagtambay sa salog
wa na siya hikit-i
she could not be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Hubris

she comes like air inside your nose
passing through your esophagus
and resides in the chamber of your heart
telling you
you're good, and kind, and the best of the rest
and she makes you feel at home with yourself
until then
she begins to make you feel that the rest should
behave like you
and that this world would have been better if
all people are like you

she makes you feel the arrogance of the mountain
and you become the center of this universe
because you have become the sun
that star

RIC S. BASTASA
Hubris' Grand Display Of Feathers

and so pride stands there
like a peacock
displaying its grand tail
with all its blue pupils
green eyelashes
and all the people who view it
are unanimous in saying
that this is pure folly
stupid display
dumb expression
contentious zilch.

RIC S. BASTASA
Human Beings Are Nothing But Memories

3020. the year
when robots pay homage
to human beings
who created them
in their own likeness

at most humans could
just be idols
to the least they have
been reduced
to nothing but biblical
names and
notes of robotic
histories

RIC S. BASTASA
Human Judges On The Suffering Of Others

we read the same books of the law both civil and criminal: you end on an acquittal and i end on a conviction of a conviction.

we are but human judges on the suffering of others.

RIC S. BASTASA
Human Nature.....

and now i remember you
dear scorpion, you, who wanted
to cross the river, but you have
no fins, only that sting,
and you ask the frog to help you,
but the frog made you promise
not to bite along the way, lest
both of you shall drown and die.

you promised.

then in the middle of your river
you stung the frog which of course
died and both of you drowned
together.

you were asked why?

you just can't hold it.
you sting, even if you shall
die yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are times
when we do not like to stand
not because we cannot
since our bones are still strong
and our journeys have just started

the miles keep on calling
and the paths are too taunting

there are times when we do not
appreciate speed
being fast can be too normal
like people
all people rushing to places
and when they arrive
there they decide at once to leave
and return
from where they are
only to regret that they have
arrived there again

we envy the turtle who does nothing
but walk slowly and sleep
and begin again
at its own pacing
and so silent
as a fact naked on the
road to
suspicions

we stop for a while
yes that is the reason why we refuse to stand
though we can
why we shy away
suspend our footsteps
and ponder
for once
why we keep on doing things
and yet we do not really why
we are doing them

RIC S. BASTASA
Humanize With Me

humanize with me
whatever that be
i have beer in my tongue
and i taste like beer in my
mouth,

kiss me, i have a tongue to offer
to you, tonight

humanize with me
let us take the bed
and humanize
ourselves the whole night
through

do not talk about love
it is not humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Humility

great poet
i can never say more beautiful words as you
for i am but your shadow
and i have long been muted by the greatness of your words
i have become nothing
but your mimic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hunahunaon Lang Sa

karong kalmado na ko sa akong kaugalingon
ako lang sang hunahunaon
pag-ayo ang gihunghong nimo nako
sa hangin gikan
sa baybay

lisod na
kon motoo ta dayon karon
daghang mga makalanag nga botete
diha sa Oslob

mamatay nya tag kalit
kanang dili na gani
kapanamilit

RIC S. BASTASA
Hunger Games

When i first watch it
i could but cry because of
the violence

despite the pomp of the props
the fire and the sharpness of
the colors

was the director merely hungry
for the blood and the honor?

nope. He shows what we are.
How easily can we forget our
violent history

how Cain and Abel were
how brother kills brother

i had years reflecting and i guess
we deserve more deaths of our own kind

to be human again. To be careful
that soon we all perish

and lose our very own inheritance.
Earth, Peace, Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hungry For Discernment, (Or Power?)

What shall I tell this great mountain?
That I have seen everything from here?
I breathe thin air here
Day and night
I stretch my hands to the clouds
I touch
I tire my eyes to the sun above
I follow the birds flying to the other island
But I shall not rest
I shall climb this great and high mountain some more
To see everything
In a single glance
Without even moving an eyelash.

RIC S. BASTASA
Husband And Wife

well, at the end
we have nothing more to offer
'like pearls'
we have consumed
everything
we have nothing to give
we just want
together to live
together to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Husband's Song

the night is getting late
and i am inside my car
the cd player is off
the silence is too loud
to be ignored

at this hour the roads are clear
except for the checkpoint
at the boundary between
this town and the other town

the rain starts to drizzle
it is cold
but he is confident that
to the place of his destination
it will be warm and cozy

his wife is waiting for him
to be home again

RIC S. BASTASA
Hushing Hushing

the usual land
escape of pyramid roof
touching the sky
heave
in space and sip
in lights of stars
i am
happier and enjoying
things that
are far
away from me
you
wonder how this is possible
on empty arms
on hearts without
head
ing my way out the en
closures
of too much love that is kill
ing me

RIC S. BASTASA
He says
I should keep on breaking my heart
until it opens

I say
I quit, my heart has opened to the world
and the world
is broken

to heal this world
i must
seal this heart

it beats in silence
and the world
is at peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Hypochondriac

just a little pain
on his teeth
and he thinks
of his death

RIC S. BASTASA
Hypocrisy And Civility

We were business class
inside the plane in a five-hour flight
together bound for pleasure

we had champagne and ham and
some slices of apples and oranges
we did talk a lot from science to politics
to love and hatred
and that was where we paused a lot
and listened

we did not like each other actually
but what can we do? this is business class
ill motives is the rule
and profit is the goal.

We cheered for what is good and profitable
and then we looked somewhere
to the good things that we really wanted to treasure
to places that we really wanted to go and stay

RIC S. BASTASA
Hypocrisy And Ignorance...

cutie the little chihuahua
lives inside the bath tub
near the music room of
tom,

the whole night the chihuahua
barks asking for
a hot-dog
for supper but cruel tom

listens to rock
and hears nothing about the tiny barks
of the tiny dog,

the following morning
tom gets wild
why his tiny dog died

RIC S. BASTASA
Hypothetical Departures

the kettle is not
in its proper place
grains of rice
scattered on the
path

no birds pecking
this time
the cat on the fence
is keen
but helpless

leaves in heaps
there is no wind this time
i think about
burning

the curtains are
unmoved
dusts settle
layered
there is a story
to tell

the archeologists
are not bringing their
brushes
of history

even the winds
if you taste them
are bitter

when the gate opens
this time
no hand shall open it
again

a woman sits
staring blankly to a humid morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Hysteria Of A Sick Soul From A Friend's Diary

it happened so fast
it was just a blur

i tried to clear
my head of the
whisky fuzz

it was just a
blur,
a film over,
just a glaze over a glassy surface

hope loses clear vision.

Her eyes glazed over
perhaps from lack of sleep

The haze blurs the hills

confuse, obnubilate,
obscure barbaric incantations

yes, unclear, indistinct,
blurred decisions

Remarks confused
the debate
over words

obnubilate
their intentions
blur,
smear,
smudge,
smutch
earth smudges

blear, blur
dim indistinct
The fog blurs my vision
dim, slur
you're one vague indistinct
shadow in the
night
garden

The distinctions between
two theories about ourselves
blurred at the end

goodbye says goodbye to goodbye
just that just that

RIC S. BASTASA
I          Sidorsch         Neider
d
   O auroral
lace sleeves  obfuscation! -
over the hard
awn.
grasp of day.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know When To Leave....

if it is handed
to me,
sincerely, i will
take it,
if you close your
hand
and shake your
head,
and look at me
with a square face,
i will understand,
it is not mine
it is meant for
the other
and he deserves it
better
you see
i am a just man
i give in
to what is higher
i nod my head
and will always be
ready
to leave

RIC S. BASTASA
I Admit I Need To Be Loved

i admit i need to be loved
for without love
where can all these poems
of mine be?
they live inside your hearts
not mine
and it is too self-serving
on my own plate
to eat or on my own glass to
drink
for love lives in the hearts
of the other
because narcissism
kills.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Agree

... that before humans
destroy the earth
they get destroyed in the
first place,

you must be talking
about us then
for what else can be be?

there is no third person
between us
we breathe the same air
and walk on this same land

we are destroyed
and then i agree again
the earth recovers
when we all are gone

RIC S. BASTASA
I Agree, I Find Long Poems Senseless

i like it brief and quick
like zip-less sex
on the train
bound for Zurich
like an exclamation point
inside my
mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Agree, It Is Not The Word

it is the hush
and the slight touch on my hand
on top of yours,
the sweat on my
belly,
the kiss and not
the unsaid
goodbye

i agree, it is not the word
that matters,
it is the memory that
haunts us both
still,
stuck on the scene
one afternoon on that Sunday
when they
were all not there
just the two of us
enjoying
each others'
mystery.

we were too young then
we thought we understood life

we didn't until this
pain subsides

that kiss that union
of souls
still lingers

you came into my life
at the wrong moment.
i went out too
at the wrong time

we like to find a moment in history
where we can both be right
where time becomes friendly.

until now all the doors are closed
the heart is numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Also Find You There

i speak because something is missing.
i let you know.

i speak again because there is this
feeling of emptiness

something does not satisfy no matter what
color what shape
what it does

i touch it but it is only its image
someone touches it and he turns into stone
a curse and many people who see him
thinks that he should be stoned to death
even if he
had long become a stone
in the middle of the road
that no one
bothers to call a stone
or mind
if it is still a stone
hard and
broken

this is the thirst the hunger
that any present cannot fill

if you look into my eyes do not be shocked
i also find you there.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Also Know

i also know
how to stare
to a face
and tell myself
i love it

i learned
how to
just be silent
and savor
a love
unrequited

takes time
take a lot
of silence
and endure
the pain

takes time
to learn
how ecstasy
lingers
even without
touching

to shut up
and close
the womb
of your feelings
there
is no birth
of love
or hate
or whatever

to just look
and wait
and still wait
even
for a long
time
even for eternity
you savor
the lasting
flavor of your
secret longing
the face
that you see
the one
that is meant
never to be
touched

RIC S. BASTASA
I Also Know How To Keep Misgivings

in my patience
i also learned how to keep misgivings
like a sponge
i absorb everything that wets me

everyday
i keep the secrets of my life
adding them and putting them all together

how hurt i am
how i keep the pains like they were precious gems
in my secret pockets
of my memories

i do not complain
i have no reasons to support them
except that
i have surrendered myself in the name of love

someday i will be full
like a cup unable to keep the foam
overflowing

i will not burst like a balloon
i will not explode like a bomb
you know me very well
in my passive silence

there will be no wars or unkind word uttered
there will be no questions
i will just take my long vacation
taking all my necessary belongings
with a note
that never will i be coming back

i always think of a new life
i always have in mind another new beginning

there in the place where i can breathe freely
finally without you

RIC S. BASTASA
they manage to express themselves in some equations
to find what they still do not know, such as their x's and y's.
for years, i sleep with the number One.
Wanting to get away from the hazards of the Zero,
Found help with the Number Two
who took away some tens and hundreds from me
In favor of Sixteen.
Well, anyway, Number One as always is Patient.
And passionate about my Algebraic State.
As a number, I do not bleed.
My root is numb. My world is always accurate
Down to the nth digit.
I had another One, Like Three and Four
but they always end up to Null.
In the calculus of the heart, things are always moving.
A change of one thing is also a change of the other.
Finally, i get tired of this world of numbers.
Numb Senses. I go back to Philosophy, and Social Studies.
The lives of the Pop star, the soap opera at night,
the latest rumor that Michael Jackson is murdered.
The latest scandal of a certain closet queen matinee idol.
Lots of these, simply to take me away from
the Numbness of it all.
Meanwhile, i am taking lunch with a rebel.
I am stepping into the passionate world out there.
The military is jealous. And of course, I am cautious.

The cheese, and the rat, and the trap and the
Aerobics exercises. Look at the cat, it is making sense
of its ninth life.
Take care. Sleep tight.

Find your code book and decipher the words.
What can i say? Sleep well, You still have other things
to do,
To justify your poetry
and Your Lousy existence.

Exequator Zorro.
I Also Like You To Think For Yourself

child, they beat you?
and leave you? and not mind you at times?

why? do they justify that you must know pain
so you must avoid it at all cost
and know how to defend yourself
when it is inflicted?
do they say that leaving you prepares
you for independence so that you
can live by yourself and not rely
on anybody?
did they not tell you that they do not mind you
so that you will learn not to be conceited
and self-centered
and that as early as your childhood
you will know that this is a wide wild world
that there are evil people
that this world is a constant battle between
the bad and the good?

i understand perfectly daddy
that was what you did to me
and so i am here
strong, independent and
real.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Also Pay Tribute To My Flesh

I do not keep a snob spirit
A closed one not open to the realities
Of my duality: body and soul
Flesh and spirit, to keep myself whole
To keep the horses satisfied and make
This chariot travel smoothly towards
The path I have chosen towards the path
Of my true destination
The black horse and the white horse
They must too live in harmony
The black horse of my nights
The white horse of my days
And this chariot where I ride

I am still the driver in control
I drive where I want to go
I stop when I want to stop
These horses must see me as their master
And this chariot where I ride Is nothing
But just a useful thing.

Today, I pay tribute to my flesh
And my spirit must also understand
Love after all hinges on desires
And without this body, how can the spirit feel?
And where can guilt be, if love knows
That it is always greater and can always win.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Always Find A Way To Be With You

i have my own ways
and you do not know clearly how i do them
you do not notice the way how my eyes glow when i see you
like an early morning sun
like a midnight moon looking for some arrays of stars

i always have a way to be with you and today we share a meal
together and you think that there is nothing special about it
when you take some bits of the bread when you sip your coke
when you close your eyes to the taste of the gravy
when you slowly lick the syrup of the pancake
i always have the moment of feasting on your face
of traveling to the lines of your cheeks
to the luscious lips, i settle my gaze
in a matter of just a few seconds

my heart keeps on beating and you do not hear it
i put my hands on my side i stop for a while to see a very
beautiful world in front of me
it is you.

until now, you do not know it.
that is the boundary i set
because there will be no you and i

the gentle space between is lovelier and my heart beats some more
so near and yet you are so far away

i like it this way.
my dignified self, the master of self-restraint.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Always Leave When I Do Not Fit....

many times
i was cheated
but it is this
virtue of simply
leaving that always
comes into play, and

so i always leave
thinking perhaps that
that place where
a cheater lives is
not for me, for

i think i am an
honest and hardworking
man and if i continue
to stay there, surely

i would not fit and
as i am different
they would not really
like it, so here i

am into a different
world, where i work hard,
keep on this virtue of
being honest, and thus

live a happy life.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Always Like It Cool

simmering, gliding, and
sliding, these kinds of figures
of white herons, and
hawks, and
even gray fish on stones
beneath the
shallow sea
amaze me, i am silenced
by their beauty, and
trying to write about
them is always a disappointment

reading the lines
i am at a loss, i am less of what you
are, and my literary journey
has not even
begun

at any rate, it
really depends on how i see it
and how you see
it too, i like just being what i am
and that is the biggest
win.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Always Remember That Movie

it was about the story of a murder
of a man by a very ordinary, naive, uneducated woman
scorned, she loved him with all her life until she noticed
that slowly she was betrayed by him
leaving her all too empty
and starkly naked
against the
world,
and so she murdered him and buried him under
the champaca tree which roots ate everything
of him
that gave it the white bloom
the perfumed scent of love spreading in the air
on her lonely nights

she is never caught and the people are happy that he is gone away
never to be seen never to be heard again

RIC S. BASTASA
I Always Remember The Cool Shade Of The Bamboo Grove

his poverty takes him to long walks
on the paths of hill and mountains for days
the sun scorches his back
he wears his buri hat and covers
his body with big anahaw leaves
he passes the same river that winds
towards his nipa hut, ten times
he plunges his weary feet on
the running waters of the creek

the heavy work he does indeed
turns him into a man of the plough
and the rugged muddy fields
the sweat of his brow and the sighs
of his unbroken spirit, the trials
and the tribulations of his insignificance

above all these, he passes by the
bamboo grove where a creek runs gently by
he remembers her again
his first love his first plunge naked into the water

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am

The black snake
that slides through the waters
of the creek and the
grases of the land
seeking for the tree whose
buds, leaves, or bark or root
or whatever
for it to bite and chew
to cure
the wound that keeps
on bleeding
on that spot where the
heart
is dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Daydreamer Too

I am a daydreamer too
for days that always come
with promises broken
even for nights
that always seem colder
(nightdreamer am i too)
my blankets thinner
and shorter

i daydream
on the green grass under the trees
measuring the movement of the sun
rising from the east
and setting on the west

i like to sit
my chin resting on my legs
my hands supporting my body
against the ground
my eyes always gazing
at the sky above

and my brown street dog
always beside me
waggling its tail
as always

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Dream Weaver

from buri palms
i weave a dream
of a world
made of steel

i dream that
harshness has turned
into a flower

i dream that
intolerance has become
a smiling neighbor

i dream that
the imperialist is dead
and buried
and we all go home
without fear
of tomorrow

i dream that
the terrorist has come down
from his mountain of hate
and now spends
his long vacation in
some beach resort
in boracay

i dream that
finally my enemy has become
my friend and we drink beer
and laugh and make
some nice conversations
without second thoughts
of betrayal

i dream that
everyday i make poems
about love and compassion
and a nice life and a
confident future free
from fears of global warming

i dream that i am in a dream
dreaming dreams
forgetting that i am just dreaming
that soon i wake up again
dreaming

to be lost in dreams
forever, i dream to be lost in dreams forever
in this dream

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Fast And Furious Learner Too.

when for the first time
i summon all instincts to save
what is fragile from you
i forgive myself from taking
all the hassle, but if you do
it one more time i may
oblige again since i do not
like the shattering sound of
what is important and broken,
but i may soon give up and
make myself numb from all these
surprising fragility, i may
soon surrender and leave things
falling and breaking and
messy for like a monkey legendary
as it is, i also have hands to
cover my nose, my ears and my
eyes, and for such a feat, i have
also learned to sleep well despite
all the explosions going on around
me. Give me more time. I am a fast
and furious learner too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Finger To You

in bliss
last night
i was not
just a finger
to you

during next morning
when i wake
up and taken back
my senses

i am a finger
still
pointing
the way
to justice

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Gentleman

annoy me
and i will transfer
to another seat

annoy me some more
i will transfer to another room

if you follow me some more
i will transfer to another country

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Man

in the morning of my life
i need four of you
at noon i only need two
in the night of my life
i will need three
now you must know me
i am the answer to the riddle
of the sphinx
i am man
when the night is gone
at dusk
i only need one.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A New Word

i am a new word
to the vocabulary of the flesh
and the soul

ey all live in me for this moment
and slowly i must define myself

gently i must touch the beauty of my soul
with the mortal hands of my body

there must be a way
to harmonize light and darkness

living in twilight
in the land where light and darkness meet

where love and hate embrace
where heaven and earth kiss

i am a new word
and in my heart and mind i must define myself

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Path With So Many Conduits

i am a path with so many conduits
so please do not follow me
every path leads to a hundred paths
and you shall be lost
but keep the faith and love
and soon you will find
the only way

leading to my heart

when you reach there
(do not use your mind)

you may see yourself grieving
i have long been taken away

and i have no words or substance
no flesh or even bones

use the skin of your fingertips
to feel the dust

see the stain and do not ever wash
what is there is there

i am the eye staring at you, drowsy
about the coming

of something that is yet to be known
you shall not understand

neither shall i.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Piece Of Broken Man

do you see me? what do you really see?
do you see this piece of broken man?

his spine bowed to the earth
because it has a huge burden on his back
his face with rugged lines, his jaw somehow dislocated,
the bones of his body unsymmetrical,
his flesh rotting, his skin unable to hold some parts of his
broken body, his nose does not smell the sweet perfume
of the good life, his tongue attuned to the bitterness of his past,
his lips crack with the present catastrophies,
it has not defined the kiss of life,
he cannot look up now to the bright skies
and marvel upon the wonders of creation,
the nature of green and red
the scent of peach and apples and roses
the taste of honey,

look at him, look at me, this piece of a broken man,
i am not your imagination

i am you. you must look at me again, stare at me.
give me your hand, so i can be warm again,
so my blood starts to run again, it is you, and you alone,

who can make me rise.
i am no other man. I am you.

help me. help yourself.
this is the real picture of the man
in the mirror of your eyes
in that secret chambers of your heart.

help yourself. help me.
we shall are one.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Tree Without Roots

i like it
that way, a tree am i
without roots
but i do not die
for i know
when to become
the cloud that i was
when then
i was blue.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Very Hardheaded Humanoid

short,
stolen moments,
i write, have placed so much weight
like baggage
of emotions in my mind

too heavy, i do not dare
lifting it with my own
fuckin' finger

but i am a very hardheaded
humanoid,
always forgetting, from now,
then hence, and then
tomorrow,
and missing what i had stolen
i turn back and begin again,
as though
nothing happened

i kiss a black spider and shall die
a hundred deaths

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Very Poor Electronic Man

i don't have emails to read
no one remembers me
i do not have a chat mate
no one likes to talk with me

but i write a poem and
you are reading it today

that makes me the richest man
alive in the internet
on a blog known as PH.

Welcome me as I thank you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am A Winner

tried my hands in poetry
like i am studying idolatry
got nothing in the end
just plain useless bend

dthis is just expression
no impression
poetry and bigotry
nothing but sultry

entered some poems
in the contests
only to be rejected
and be busted

got this hardhead
always moving ahead
now at PH
at my high pitch

here i see my poems printed
and i am so excited
see? i am a winner
my garbage and litter

RIC S. BASTASA
darkness comes
it is routine, nothing is mysterious about it
and as usual i am about to sleep
but you are there knocking at the door
of my heart
bringing me a bouquet of vowels
looking like petals of the
blue flowers in the desert
i let you in and i take the bouquet of vowels
and shower it
sprinkle it
with the salt of my tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Afraid

because i am afraid
to really say what i feel about
what i love
because my sun cannot fully shine
on the rainy day
because the clouds do not disperse
with the light of my moon
because the waves of the sea
do not cease to bump
the rocks of my shore
because i cannot hurt with honesty
those that cause me pain
because the dog still barks
at the wrong tree
that is why my dear
i still write poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Afraid I Have To Say It Is Too Hot Too Here

Fighting between Islamic rebels and Philippine troops intensified Sunday, dimming hopes of renewed peace talks with the southern separatists, government and military officials

(ADVERTISEMENT: COCA COLA)

More than 100 Muslim fighters have been killed in four days of clashes with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on Mindanao island, said military spokesman Colonel Julieto Ando.

About 90,000 people have been displaced by the upsurge in fighting, according to local and foreign relief agencies operating in the region where government troops have battled insurgents for 40 years.

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'Fighting intensified overnight with battles raging near the towns of Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Datu Piang, all in Maguindanao province, ' said Ando, who blamed recent rebels attacks for the deteriorating situation.

'Ve have done our best to embrace peace, but the MILF started the hostilities by pillaging villages and murdering innocent civilians in Mindanao, ' Ando said.

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'Now we are implementing the full force of the law and we will arrest those responsible for the traitorous attacks against civilians.'

The National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) said Sunday that more than 240,000 people have been displaced since the fighting began two weeks ago.

The NDCC put the number killed in two weeks at 50, conflicting with military figures.

Glenn Rabonza, NDCC executive officer, said nearly 100 evacuation centres have been set up across the affected areas in Mindanao.

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I Am Alive....

early morning here
night time in your place

it is this daily mirroring
a kind reflection
of what i have become
after last night

do not take me seriously
it is just a matter of routine

checking my hair
my mole, grinning my teeth
comforting myself: i am alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am All Set With You

there is drama when i first
saw you. I ask for a woman with a
red rose on her hand
and it was you holding this
red rose one early morning
and it set the beginning
of my day with you. we married.
we stayed on.
12 years. moving on
to 25 years.
we keep the laughter
and the giggle
each night we tell
stories
how we begin
always...
in this book of love,
we do not know how to tell the story
of an ending....
perhaps we must learn to write
about a fairy tale
how to keep ourselves
happy ever after
how to say the clinching lines
of a happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Almost There

slowly i climb the
hill, that is my main
objective today
my mission
and my vision to
finally reach the apex
and join you
in your drink.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Also Moving On In Another Direction..

a woman carries
a black umbrella
tagging along a
boy

a man without a hat
follows them
and he is getting wet
for it is raining

this is just a glimpse
about what is happening
in this world

a boulevard stretches far
beside it a stormy sea

i cannot give a complete
story about what finally
happened

i am also moving on in
another direction...

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Always A Part Of The Whole Picture....

i should have stopped a long time ago.
move my way, like another planet to another orbit
unto another galaxy, for there are so many
options, anyway.
i should have closed the door and the windows,
light my own room, and play the flute and
listen to the songs of my own soul,
contented with the caresses of my own hands
the dances of my feet and the gentleness of
my breathing,
i am a certain rhythm away from all of you,
i have a hammock where my head rests
throughout the night, i have my own soft bed
of white fleece, the rain outside and the storms
can do me no harm,
i could have just listened and do nothing,
i didn’t.

tell me now, have you heard the coldest
sound of my regrets? have you heard the flapping
of bird wings away from your heart?
have you seen the river moving away from
the banks where you are
constantly castigated by the
howling sounds of your foxes?
my nights are your nights now.
come, do not listen to me, come,
i shall listen to all of you.
we're all in this now.
to the journey of our deepest selves,
my way of understanding the changes of
our lives, the coming of the dawning of
light, shadows fading, rains stopping,
seeds beginning their sprouts
in the coming of our springtime.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Ash

do not threaten me with the fire of your body my love
for i am a man borne of fire and shall die of fire
i eat fire, i bathe in fire, i swim in the deepest part of fire

i like to burn in the fire that you start
from your flicker, from the flints of your gaze
i like to see this hearth, this warmth, this conflagration
you with me burning like hell

do not threaten me with the fire of your thighs
for i eat fire, my body is fire, it is alive with its heat
my sweat fumes are the smokes of fire
my end is the char that stays beside your legs
and tomorrow morning when i finally die
when i am put off by your power
you shall find me as burnt residues
beneath your feet

i am ash
the offering of love to life.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Asleep.

the old man who loves the sea
after 70 years
built a boat, which you cannot figure out
if it is really a boat,

for the boat is inverted like a kayak overturned by the waves.
so many storms of his life
so many riddles.

this is the world turned upside down.
the old man writes the map of his life on the sand.
with his finger, and he has to kneel to be able to do so.
his bone broke. he prostrated.

the old man who loves the sea feeds the sea with his own body.
and the hermit crabs crawled.
they want a taste of his wisdom.

the sea claimed everything.
it says: even you, even the land i own.
i am asleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am At The Beach

i am at the beach
it is getting too dark to play
with my emotions
there is this woman against the wind
her clothes blown outlining the contours of her body
her hair black and long
she stares at the waves
going bigger
i am watching her vigilant
on her next move

the sun sets sadly on her face

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Available

when you are sad and lonely
come to me
i am available
when you are rejected and
feeling unwanted come to me again
for i am always available
when you feel that the world is against you
come to me
i am available
when you are lost and need guidance
come to me i am still available

oh, our mutual miseries
always need faithful and available
companies

come to me then
i am like you i am available.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Back Home

and guess what?

i still smell like
those bags
at the airport

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Beginning To Understand Myself

last night was different
inside my dream i was gentle
kind to myself there was no blaming
no enumeration of sins and no formula for what must be done
it was more of taking things like a shallow river
i step on it and there is no qualm
no sounds of wild ducks
just the cool, calm waters with slight ripples from the drops of dew
from the leaves of mountain trees,
last night, we were different
we simply gaze upon our bodies
naked as we are to the honesty of who and what we are
i kissed you on the mouth and your tongue licked mine
we closed our eyes we caressed our bodies with our hands
not a word, just a savor of the fleshy feast,
no justifications, no explanations
we grip our fingers
we bite our lips
on joint orgasms, a celebration at last of having discovered
our souls, fused, divine, and forgiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Best....

when all of you barely
know i exist,

and you do not acclaim
my work,

when you despise me
and call me
foolish

i do not talk
i have no use of
oral intercourse

i only write
what is given
what is there already

and when my work
is done
my aim is fulfilled
completely

and then
you will say

' I could have
done better
than him in this'

now, i all these
i become
the best.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Bewildered

there is that spider
spinning its house of memories

trapping some flying strangers
wrapping them
putting them in a warped time
eating them

is it mourning now?
one hears the sound of the falling of the leaf

now on the river
spasmodic to a distance

rushing rustling rubric
breaking finally at the junction

of cataclysm
change and destruction and then

the inner peace of the pond
that runs dry

consumed by itself
to the pebbles numb to the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Blunt

i am blunt
i do not have expectations
from people or things
from flora to fauna
from human to bacteria

at this stubborn age
i live my own life now
no expectations from wife or kids
from mama and papa
from house to government

i am blunt
i care for my owe self only
i live for today
not thinking about tomorrow
each second counts
nothing for the year
nothing for some

i do not expect from any site
nothing from anybody
i live as simply as a worm to a leaf
a fish to the sea
a butterfly for a day

i am blunt
i am free.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Bringing You Flowers For Your Hair

don't they think that bringing flowers for women we all love have become so irrelevant?

or that i am so incompetent? and that whay i say to you have become so immaterial?

oh there you are, your notes on evidence have made you so insecure, but i like the allure, someone must be on trial. I am bringing you flowers, they're much better than handcuffs, for love.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Brown

i am brown
like a cacao,
i smell better
in hot water.
i am bitter
but sought
after.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Concerned About Your Today And So. We Are Talking Now.

as i write this
i put aside a red apple which i just bit

on a hard bound book
beside a calendar of my
vacation trips for the
coming months,

the book is political
confronting the state about
some of its abuses

the apple appears
incomplete without my hand

the fingers are groping for
the keys

for instance, the key for
our liberation

the words seem to be at war
against each other

i am concerned about your today and so.
we are talking now.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Eating Peanuts

at the very moment when
i am thinking of how to plagiarize
a part of your
creation, i am picking peanuts
from a jar, and
i stop writing when i have to
use two hands to
swallow the nuts
and then chew
right there, the ideas pop out
that this could have
been better if
you thought about it
i simply thought of making an
improvement
from a previous one
made by a lousy
man.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Feeling More Hot

MILF chief peace negotiator Mohagher Iqbal warned of a return to full-scale hostilities.

'This is a grim scenario and I don't even want to think about it, but if the peace talks collapse then there will be war again in Mindanao,' he told AFP.

Iqbal blamed hawkish factions of President Gloria Arroyo's government and local Christian politicians opposed to a Muslim homeland.

'The voice of reason is dwarfed by the voice of hatred and prejudice,' he said. 'The peace talks are slowly breaking apart and if this continues, may God help us all.'

Talks to end the insurgency have been going on for 11 years, with a ceasefire officially in force since 2003.

The peace accord would have granted Muslims their own separate state across more than 700 villages in Mindanao, but the Supreme Court on August 4 halted the so-called Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain.

The peace plan had sparked a series of protests from mostly Christian politicians and residents opposed to the inclusion of their areas into the so-called Bangsamoro (Muslim) Juridical Entity.

Several rebel MILF commanders have since ignored repeated calls by their leaders to stand down and launched attacks on civilians in towns and villages in many parts of Muslim Mindanao.

Some politicians have urged villagers to arm and defend themselves from rebel attacks. Armed militias have also been deployed to guard their communities against further atrocities.

On Saturday MILF chairman Ebrahim Murad called on Malaysia to help resume the peace talks to end weeks of brutal fighting in Mindanao.

Deputy Presidential Spokesman Anthony Golez said the government would continue to pursue peace negotiations with the rebels even if the government enjoys a military advantage over them.
I Am Folding This White Paper

i am folding this paper
the way you want it
to every corner i give my sigh
in my mind
the paper shall be this bird
you want it to be

my friend, you always dream
of flight
and this paper soon shall
be what you want
to be
a bird with strong wings
gathering winds
taking in the big storm

today it is finished
and you shall take it
then in your wildest dreams
added in the layers of your
years

you shall fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
i
am fortified
by constant practice

i
am feeling at home
with my own
self-imposed
loneliness, it is changing its form

into a dignified shape of a young man
enjoying his stroll along the bank of this old river

the trees are tall touching the morning sun
lush of leaves, cool winds,
daft of fog
hanging upon my hair,

i am
contented
with my own thoughts

birds winging their way out into the open space
diving into the face of the ocean

an ocean of compassion
drops of my chosen existence

into the anonymity of
my given
universe....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Free I Choose The Peace And Quiet Around Me

i am free. i rest below the light of stars.
i look for the peace of the things around me.
trees that do not move, waters on the pond that are still,
birds resting on the nests with their wings clipped in sleep
i wait for nothing. i do not think about taxing things.

and when despair comes to meet me i simply move
and take refuge in other places where there are no obstructions
to the peace and quiet that i decide to choose.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Free, I Tell You So...

your hair is in disarray
nails are dirty
and just like your feelings
all those little things
that hang on your body
are in chaos,

i look at you and you stare at me
and i look back and you laugh

triumphant perhaps in what you are finally
from an ordered past to a
present pandemonium you come to me and

shout at me that you are free,

i wonder, is freedom actually chaos?

i am free too,
i have worked my freedom and earned it

i comb my hair
i trim my fingernails
i wash my body
i filter my thoughts
i put things in their
proper order
i exercise propriety

i choose my words,
i plan my day
i only buy what i need for the day
i write my diary

i decide what book to read
i weigh things
i throw away what destroys me
i don't put myself to danger
i protect myself
i defend what is right
i speak the truth

and i will tell you too,

' i am free! '

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Funny

i am funny
i cry upon hearing the pleas
of the goats
transported from the
market to the
slaughterhouse

it is ridiculous
as others think of the
goat meat well spiced
for their next
sumptuous dinner

i am funny
thinking about the mass killing
of natives in the south
as other still think of the gain
on the next delivery of
guns and ammunition

i am not just funny
i am crazy
and they are not ridiculous
they are serious
for wars to come and shall never end
for the violence they create
so they may have all the profits
and gain

reality is not funny
war is a serious business
the government is crazy
worshiping a master
this great puppeteer

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Giving All These Condolences To You

at first i encourage you to write a poem
you do not have to be a poet to write one
inside myself is the fire that keeps on burning
no dark night no cold wind no idleness has quelled it
it is this art that has keeps me going after a hard day
i am confident that i can manage despite the piles of work
it is this art that conquers the impossible between us
i have long wanted to share this to you as i once if you remember
told you to write a poem for me but you did not hesitate to take the snore instead
opting for a dream inside the stupor of another world where you are but only the spectator
you do not create you do not imagine you have never shared
some bits of yourself, and so i am giving all these condolences to you
you are dead.
I Am Giving Way

here they all come
beaming with pride
and solid  hopes
the upcoming generation,
and i give them
all my respect
what is due them
now they shall take
i have given them
all that i have
all that i am
and all that i will
ever be

here they all come
i am giving way
i am all fed-up
now is their time
to feed us too

here they all come
and so i will go away....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Giving You Up For Another

it has been a nice exchange of
wholesome conversation
the past few days
when we treat ourselves as friends,

what could have made you change?
talks about money, and people, and
how life shouldn’t be
desperate things and miserable events
ships that sink, minds that explode
and kids on rehabilitation,
mariages on the brink of breaking
governments that don’t serve anymore

how desperate we could be?
you must have realized that this is my
hiding place
as i have no other place to hide
and breathe

we now must part, i want to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Glad

i am glad
i do not have winters

if i had
i could have written more
painful haikus.

if i had
i could have saved more silence
enough for me to
muster more solitude
enough for me to
die slowly in blissful silence
like a snowflake slowly melting in the warmth of your palm.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Glad She Didn't...

when we were in Indonesia
she was confused
and doubted the reason for life
and it happens
that we were brought to a place
where lovers were killed
it is such a high place resulting
from a cataclysm of long ago
where volcanoes erupted together
bringing one land down and raising
another to make those very high cliffs
which made her fear her knees trembling
and i thought she, like that woman of
the story, would jump from the cliff
and crush herself down to the rocks
down the sea,

i left her to decide for herself
since she had been brought in the spirit
of freedom

she didn't. I am glad she didn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Glad That You Are Into Haiku

i must imagine
you sitting on a chair
facing the void
at the window

and then you see
what reality has long
concealed from you

was it a butterfly
that you have mistaken as
another leaf?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Gone.....

since you asked me
then this is my answer: i don't build a bridge for now
i don't even like to see how it is built by you
i grieve over how you waste time trying to connect two distant islands.
Time is precious. The bridge is there
and there is no need to construct any.
You eyes look down the cheek.
To the waist of life, the dance is waiting.
Every night every light is a dance of life.
There is no time to answer the questions even.
Those who were ahead of us, oh, they have the answers
but they carry it to their graves.
I get the point about life now.
It is nothing to do with greatness.
It is a very simple proposition: i am life, live me.
I am time, let me pass the way i want to.
I am water let me flow.
I am air let me blow what is left of me.
I am an island. I am a coconut tree.
I am a shell. I am a grain of sand.
I am everything you see and touch and think about.
I am gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Hands

i am those hands
and you are the sands
slipping from my fragile fingers

i do not understand each grain of you
a universe in itself
i do not wish to understand
to keep you to hold you

beyond my grasp
i must let you go

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Handsome In My Own Way

the list shows how deep you are
how admirable and the resulting envy could
be inevitable

sometimes i wonder if that deep ocean
belongs to you and that what i have is only the
shallow part of the shore where i
content myself with foams and sand
and passing wind

i am not yet familiar with the path of the shell
the labyrinths of your chosen words
but i am not that dumb

challenged i shall soon learn all these tricks
but not with a dream to be like you or anybody else

i am handsome in my own way
and in some ways untold
you are ugly.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Happy I Am.

the gods watch
from the kingdom of the sky

and here i am
too busy with my creations

figures of clay
women of sands
leaves of butterflies
a garland of some lies
some notes of survival
fumes of memories

rising to the skies
the blur of life
smudges of beings
flames of fading faces
fangs of emptiness
the hunger of attention
the love of my shadow
the future fizz
whatever

i keep myself busy
the gods watch me
i know i fall short of
some standards
i do not measure
myself
i am doing it
just the same with
consistency
this ardor for pleasure

the gods talk behind
my back
then they close the door
this exclusivity of
divinity
well, i am happy
i am.

(and i do not really
care
how i fare)

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Happy Now...

despite all this, the moment you start dipping your finger to eat you do not notice that your finger is being licked and finally eaten, but the magic is there, an illusion, you take back your hand, still warm and gentle, like a moss to that swamp. What I am saying is what you love takes your time away, like a train that consumes the road towards the place where you love calls you giving you a landmark of cherry blossoms. In time you discover sleep and when you wake up the world had already left and there you are alone, filled with another innocence, and full of wonder.

It is not always that you are alone and sad. This time you write a letter to your dead mother saying that...
dear mom, i think i
understand. I am happy now.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Happy To See You Flying

i am happy to see you flying
freely in the skies
like you are making a painting
with the wind

go, take time with the friendly clouds
go, be aware of the colors and scents of the winds

wait, in a moment, watch the bursting of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Home Again.....

forgive me
for i have changed

did you also wait for
that kiss?
that perfect timing
when we will be the only
two in that sad room?

forgive me for
i have changed
i go back into that
relapse of simply
pleasing myself

the wind caressing
my hair
the breeze singing
my lullaby
the sands preparing
my bed for the night
and the moon
lighting my head
as i begin to dream
again

back to myself i whisper
to my heart
here, here, i am home
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Human......

i am eating Italian flat bread  
inside it four rectangular slices of cheese

it is a Sunday and the university is at its  
best in the quiet

the skies are blue and the grasses are green  
still wearing the dews that glisten against the early sunlight

i sit on a stone bench under the narra tree  
on the 8th day of July where leaves are plenty

i love life because of you.  
i love this Sunday morning this quiet this solitude still because of you.

i am lost because of you, and without you still i must find myself  
because of you.

how i envy the one that owns you, but i must accept this fate  
because of you.

you are not what i am  
you are not what i can touch  
you are not what i can never have  
you are not what i can never find

if you read this by chance  
you must learn to forgive me.

i am human.i am sin.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am In Here

i am in here
inside this system

it does not follow
that i will agree
to everything inside this system

there is this
courtesy, there is this hope that someday
things will change
that i may after all change too and like it

i am patient i will wait
i will keep my silence

i will be sane, until i explode
like a bomb

surely i will die, but i pity you beside me
keep your distance then

i am about to explode, i am almost there

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am In This Cell

i am in this cell

to live some more i need a very secure and strong

cell wall,

tight in my silence and isolation everything will be safe & fine

nothing in nothing out

this is what it is all about.

i am a dead cell, now, not comes in nothing goes out

see, i am shrinking

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Inside This Cage

i am inside this cage
made all of words and images
i sometimes think of escaping
like a dove winging away from all
these rings and vertical lines
yet i am still here
and one day the cage opens by itself
and i go out
like a child of the house when
mother is away
and i meet the wind
and the trees
and the tendrils of the
squash

i may have gone outside
for a while
and here i am again
getting inside this cage
enclosing myself
with its door

i like it here
there are so many words
and images
and metaphors.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Interactive

i take your shape when you face me
in fact you become me
because i am your mirror

and whatever you do
you do it to yourself

whatever you say
it echoes to you

so please be good to me
so you will not harm yourself

the moment you forget me
there will be nothing left of you too

in fact we are not twins
whether we like it or not,

this you must know,
we are one: heart and mind

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Just Another Number...

i step into a room
of glossy wood facing
a number of stoic, pallid,
bulky faces,
the stare at me, hold their chins
with their pointed fingers,
and begin to ask me
questions,

i am careful not to offend
these gods, who by all means
have blood and veins like myself,
and i cannot figure out really
any difference
except only the fact
that i am the one under
scrutiny

i feel like a fish for sale
a junk for disposal,
a letter to be read as they
look for lapses
of thought and syntax
and content and
style

they have no mercy
as they violate rule and rule upon
my own chosen propriety
like 'why do say yeah? ' say 'yes' it's proper and polite,
(but i am polite in every aspect)
'no, you're not' the old man with osteoporosis butted in.

it is a belittling experience
a humiliation,
to a crowd like these
i am nothing but a gadget

'is he useful? ' 'will he serve our purpose? '
'does he get a backer to support his destination? '
'does anybody know him?
'can he be our tool for the next election?

and then i was told to go out
to wait.

One writes me a letter. I'm not in.
That's it. For what reason i do not really know.
Who am I to them? 'Kid, you're just another number in there.
More numbers are coming for scrutiny.
And they have no mercy, no compassion at all'.

But then, when it was over, i too made a conclusion
'Who cares? '

And then here i am, free as the wind, and could not care less
as anybody else.

Perhaps, it is not my destiny.
Perhaps, God is saying, ' It is harmful for you'

'Leave it. It will do no good for you' my conscience speaks to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Just Another Poor Lover Of Yours

As of this time
I bring you no offering
Here I am
Bringing nothing
Just lies

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Just Here....

does not always
be possibilities
you give me hope
but time has given
me another view on
the matter of living
and loving: i am
no longer my past and
i do not expect anything
from the future,

i am my own moment
i am today
i am here
i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Just Poetic

i have a red melon
which i put on the
table

i am concerned
about you
you must be hungry

i like you to eat
and be happy

if you are ready
please take the shadow
of my melon before you

slice spirituality and
and satisfy yourself with
something virtual

come to think
of it
i am just poetic

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Just Wondering How It Feels To Be New Again

i am just wondering how is it to feel new again
like having a new face, a new name,
a new beginning

how does it feel to molt and be a new reptile again
like an iguana, a turtle, a frog,
a croc, a snake?

how does it feel to be born again?

how does it feel to talk to an old friend
using a new mouth?

i am just wondering, will you tell me girl?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Like A Radio

in the morning
early to your loneliness
you turn on the radio
and it speaks about everything
from the latest news
to the rumors and in between
the ads to remind your senses
about some distinctions
between wants and needs
between luxuries and necessities
between utilities and wastes
and you listen
and numb your senses
on such hypnosis
you forget him
you junk love like an unnecessary
information

like a radio i speak to you
and you do not respond
but you are there
all the way
from five to ten.

you tell yourself
i do not need more trouble
in my wasted life.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Like You.....

if you really have
to trace the equations of
all human
relations it boils down to
the one and
only self that
keeps on saying, 'I, me,
and myself'

thus whatever kindness
your right hand does always
the left brags.

thus whatever justification
you make
to say that you have sacrificed
a lot
for this galaxy,
it is always redounds to the
esteem you always longed for,
this 'i, me and myself' all the way
from the soles of your feet
to the tips of your hair

so whatever happens next,
please do not use 'me' as a justification
of 'you'

' i, me, myself' is also nothing but 'me and me
and me'

don't bother much
i also know this, lived myself, learned
from all these,
and i don't really care too.

it is such a big wide world
i can take care of myself.
Don't tire me. Go, search your 'i, me, and myself' 

i perfectly 
understand this human thing.

Do not touch me. I am like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Looking Towards The Direction Of The Sky

we all do
we find the direction
of the sky
what choice
do we have
to feel this

comfort
of God
to feel
the place

of the sun
and the moon
and the
stars
day and night
it is always
the sky

the symbol
of eternity
of what is
up there

where perhaps
the heavens
lie
where perhaps
everything
is bound

where perhaps
our fathers
and forefathers
live

where perhaps
we are
all welcome

where perhaps
no dirt
of this earth
is no longer
found

what did they
say?
to the skies
we are meant
to fly

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Lost Again.

when i speak
it is because i am trying
to find my
way back
home, i will ask the guide
of words,

they say i must articulate
otherwise
there is nothing to hear
and see

as though words are
roads
and sentences bridges
and the whole
poem becomes the
place

i am lost again.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Lost

first is the sound of the wind
coming then the wind itself then the sound of the rain
is coming and then the rain,

we are prepared under a roof of our house and we are
not feeling cold and we are not wet,

we are the wind come let the rain come.
we are prepared.

but for this sad news, about the sound of your sickness
about the sickness itself, about how you say the words without
meaning at all, about your restlessness for the night,

d this we have not prepared ourselves.
my sister is crying under the rain.
my brother beats his chest with his fist.

i am in the middle of of this storm.
but as i am not prepared for the sad news,
i am lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Man And I Am Numb.

it does not mean that
since we made love last night
that i do not have the courage to say
'bye' this morning.
you say, 'it is too early',
but i do not answer you anymore.
Questions about love,
(or could be lust)
do not deserve the
dignity of an answer.
What did we do when
we made love?
Just once.
Just once.
Did you take my world for
that piece of cake?
I don't have to take yours.
I have mine to last me
a lifetime.
It was good.
That is all i can say.
But it is not worth taking
with me to the next island.
To the sea.
To the desert where my cacti lie.

I am alone as always
Even after love,
a minute after,
when you are asleep,
due to this exhaustion,
I am still alone.

No one makes me happy
and whole again.
i was once.
I do not wish to be happy
and sad again.
I am man and
I am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Merely Passing By

i do not wish to change this world
neither do i wish to change myself

when i come here and when i leave
it will all be the same, i am not

involved, i come as a stranger looking
at things and people and not even talking

about them, & i leave them as they all are
i do not take any flesh or bone, for i come

as the wind, and i leave as the same wind,
i do not change a room, it will be the same

tree, if something is lost, or rotten, or
by the grace of the heavens, grows and

become one beautiful mountain, sea or
sky, i only watch them all, as i pass by...

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Mine.....

when everything there is bland
or dreary
when you are not elated at all
or surprised
when everything sounds the same
and everyone looks like everyone
when there seems to be only one
teacher or authority
when seemingly the goal is
uniformity you finally decide to
make it yourself, do the best you
can, just to be yourself,
apart from everyone who looks down
at you because you have become
so different, so disgusting but you
keep on doing what you love,

yes, uniquely yours. and you
love it, happy with this feeling,

i am not yours, i am mine.
mine and mine alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Myself, And That Is Good Enough For Me.

It is always the temptation
to be great like you,
every word that you say is gold to me
every actuation is a sunny day
to my cold winter,
every leaving of yours, could be
my series of deaths,
and every coming is every rapture
of my spirit
but how sad it is, how reality bites me
for i am always different,
i am in my coldest night, i am deaths of doors closing and opening,
i am always the sadness of departures,
and people get bored and people says that it is not good
and they want me changed, but sad as it is,
i am unchangeable, hardheaded, and
original,

yes, original, and that is the only key that i have to open the real door for me.

i am myself, and that is good enough for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am None Of The Above

the rain
may pour

as the sun
may shine

and there
will be no talk
about

what was
given and

what was
returned

the sky
does not measure
what vastness
it holds

the river flows
with a song

it does not choose
who must
hear it

what is the
point to all these?

i am none of
the above

and human as i am
i am a servant
to numbers
a believer in equations

i give but i also
take

and i can't help how
my mind
works

and it knows what is
unfair.

RIC S. BASTASA
as soon as the storm leaves
what we have here are trees without leaves

houses disassembled
how doors are taken away from their jams
windows without a perspective
stairs like teeth removed from its gums

you tell me that the trees without leaves
are hands in prayer

disassembled houses as broken selves wanting repair
pieces to be taken back into a logical placement

i am tired of this landscape and so i leave
giving myself more chances of meeting those still not broken, those trees whose leaves are not shaken off from their twigs

the world is too huge and i am not a tree that cannot move.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Afraid Anymore In The Dark

yes, there is nothing to fear in darkness
nothing
is there anyway, nothing to feel in this emptiness emptying itself
like evaporating water into vapor
in space like a bag of dust spreading like feathers
in openness

you feel empty you feel the void wriggling inside your
guts
your mind floating so lightly like a dream in your sleep
like a mist
of the mountain
like a mist
of the green fields early morning
like a mist
floating in an open sea where a man paddles his life on his small wooden sail

be excited as i am excited about you
tipsy
in spirits of the red wine
and feeling so light so empty like a ray of light like a smoke rising from
a cigar
filling the room filling your chest

be excited as i am excited about you
emptying
like a window opening to the skies to see some shooting stars like eyes
gazing to an open ricefield
emptying wondering to so much wisdom now rushing back to you
like a door opening
for an incoming guest
like a crevice of your wall letting in a ray of light telling you
that morning with the sun
is coming

oh be excited as i am excited about you as i watch dawn turning into
day
oh, i am so happy seeing the void expanding
how much can you really hold on the next step after so much void?

oh i am so excited!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Afraid Of Emptiness

i may not have told you, but now i will tell it to you three times,
girl, i am not afraid of emptiness the one that walks upon you when you were once this huge space like a Gothic church with doors like mountains and windows like continents
the sound of emptiness reverberates like a tin cup that falls on the iron rails of this room
it fills every nerve that coils upon itself and forms a hand gripping for waterfalls
it closes the ears and rips every rational entries that your eyes write in the pages of your journal
it encloses you like a mental jacket of that new patient at ward 6, it walls you in like you are a chair inside the congested kitchen
look, who likes the congestion of the spirits? who likes the choking of the nicks of time?
who likes a light imprisoned in its own flames burning itself upon itself like a candle consuming both of its ends?
who like the mezzanine filled with letters that you keep containing love stories of suicide and escape?
look upon your face too crowded with your senses? it is a forest with trees killing each other for an ounce of light
roots upon roots and leaves upon leaves this world is too crowded with unraveling thoughts
i am not afraid of emptiness i like my windows opening all the days of my life i like doors without locks
stairs without rails, houses without walls and roofs

i live in open space and yes right here inside my heart
i thrive in its empty spaces without the nerves and the veins

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Alone....

since i do not have
a sense of direction
i just bend a little
to accommodate my
own shallow fears.

i bend on a window sill.

put my hand on my chin.

and then to every person
who passes this road
i take a closer look

trying to figure out
what suffering has he
comparing it to mine
and then comforting myself

that i am not alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not At Ease

i am not at ease
with anybody

not even with
you. we come here
together and then
i must leave first
to leave you
at your own kind
of ease.

finally, the adage
is true again: hell is
other people

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not At Home With You Anymore

i do not intend to waste some words anymore
the images have become too hazy
lacking the particulars of the eyelashes and the capillaries
the roots are too short and few
on this very shallow soil

the rain has come and the tree with the small touches of the wind
shall be uprooted
there is no more dignity to this
no honor possible

you pack up and leave
goodbye is not even a word anymore
it is just the usual hand waving aboard a boat
with no known destination

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Bothered

text:

all i do are mere exercises
as i flex a word
make it run in the confines of a clause
into the sentences of
my soul

i take you and i play
i create a door and when you are inside a room
you may have seen nothing at all

because you very well know
about the story of the wind
it makes you colder and feel
that it is just lying there

i am always far away from you
even if you kiss me passionately

all i do is caress a letter
and it grows into some pretty words
because of love

i sow a vowel into a fertile ground of consonants
and then the sounds of concerns begin to hush

you see a baby
you baby talk it
you surrender the maturity of your thoughts
because all it has given you is pain

a thousand flowers bloom
filling colors to the black array of stones

in silence the sands are too beautiful
the sea breeze wants to drown them

these are the exercises of the mind
looking for justifications for some hardships that are left
in the dark
words are not just tools
they are also toys
to make the child believe that this world is too a
playground for joys

there is an experience of so much freedom
in every clause in every cause

you wonder why i do not dabble into punctuations
anymore
i am not bothered
i am not sour....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Gone

i am
not gone.
How can
i be gone?
Vanish me
from
your mind.
Lust
Rusts.

RIC S. BASTASA
i Am Not Honest Completely As You Expect Me To Be

it is like my test
do not anticipate this for an answer because it can be that.
i do not go for filling in the blanks
for that would be too easy neither will i ask you to enumerate
for how can you ever have a good memory,
i go for an essay
the one that ask for justifications
where white can be black
and black white
with a person like me and like you
based on the need
and our desires
reasons abound like a bunch of ripe grapes
sweet sour
we pick them all, make the wine, ferment, and then
we sit like lovers
drinking our inventions.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Merely Human

Thus far I've spent my evenings in Hovd translating additional poems by poet L. Olziitogs. I post here one of my favorites from her book The Practice of Loneliness (Ганцаардлайин Дасгал) in its original and first draft English versions.

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Улыхахаадабийугэдгээмэдэгуунимранаагэрснуюбороошнйдаровэрдєргээнухэлмөгценгөболоошингоныжиргээхэлмөгцөгөлөөгөэдгээнухэлмөгцадаг

Бихүнлбишдөрэлзэухийнцагтарахарныжигэдгээнухэлмөгцадаг

Охийнэмгэддээддэг

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
I look at a mountain and know that I am mountain
I observe mist and perceive that I am cloud
After rain sprinkles I sense that I am grass
As soon as the sparrow's twittering begins, I remember
    that I am morning

I am not merely human

When a star flares up I know that I am darkness
As soon as girls shed their thick winter clothes, I remember
    that I am spring
When I smell only longing from every person in the universe
My ever more tranquil heart understands that it is a fish's
I am not merely human

Under a multi-colored sky the immense VOID,
From today on I, only...

© Lisa Fink, 16 August 2007

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Old And I Am Not Nasty

hello baby sarah,
i am just experimenting on this craft,
an art, i am not old, and i am not nasty, i am just an experimental poet,
or trying to be one,
nothing personal, my daddy is dead, and so is my mommy,
grandpa too,
i am the fourth of the family of five,
got a brother who is a seaman
a sister as political activist,
another sister who is a probation officer,
the other is jobless
don't know but i just feel like writing, though i am not sought or read by many,
this is pure love of the craft,
i don't spread my legs and i don't ask you to do the same thing for me,
i got mine, long, hairy legs, muscled duo, ready for another art,
i won't ask you, but you may ask me,
with all respect and courtesy,
i am.

your reader, with the inability to appreciate
what you are doing, but let me try, who knows, if i become dumb
and deaf, blind and paraplegic,
for the meantime, thanks for commenting,
nothing hurts, nothing makes me inferior
if i do not allow it.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Running Away Anymore...

i should have not loved
you, i think, i would have
been happier without you.

i should not have pursued
a dream, you see, here i am,
as you think, i am broken.

i have loved being alone,
people think, i am sick,
and they always make all
these advices...which i
have followed.

The old woman
of the village says
she holds wisdom.

that old woman keeps on
saying,
young man follow
nature, it shall teach you
what you are and who you are
and everything will be
all right.

I have lived
that long, there were weird
wishes then, but i pursued
nature.

i am both alive and dead.
i am now both human and
animal.

somehow i feel something
that i am not me.

where is the god in me?
where is this redeeming
divinity?

i am sitting upon a stone
outside the house

soon it will rain.
clouds are dark,
and heavy

but i am not running away anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Saying This With Finality.

i see you write,
i listen to your voice
when you tell me that
what you have written
is a poem about your life,
i see you dance
and i thought you were all right
you never ask me to listen
while you cry
if you ask, i could have given
it time, and i could have given
you a hug,
the last thing i heard was that
you ran away, jump over the bridge
and there, you were gone.

your body was recovered and
prayers were offered.
i was there listening to the
prayers and their songs.

we lost you. we never had
the best of our times.

if you listen to me and my
poetry, which i have kept as
a secret from you,

you could have told yourself
that you can do much better than me.

well, i am not saying this with finality.
i am still alive, and still writing.

i will tell you perhaps,
when i cross my next bridge

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Telling You That I Am Right

my only choice is to talk,
and it is not even loud, it is a careful whisper
not even to your ear,
because i know for sure that you
can hear and see,

my choice is to hurt, because i have the truth
and it is like a sword,
it kills,

forgive me but i am only a tool,
and they all use me
to strike at the center of it all,

ah, forget it, just like what i said
when we first met, i have nothing to say
actually.

RIC S. BASTASA
that night
the image of an old church
arrives late
there is no priest
there

my gallbladder is full
and i let it go

i could be the groom
waiting for the bride
but it is only a wish

then the image of an
old house flashes in my
mind later

i wake up
switch on the light at the headboard
the clock reads
2 pm

i could have been
a black butterfly
the one the old women of the
house dread

but i cut it off
i promise them
i do not want to be
a pain
in their asses
anymore

i am not that good
enough
at killing them
with what i cannot be.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Not Yours....

my face has misled you
my eyes specially are not the best tour guides

of this journey
it is your journey still

that worries me
no end

you wish to enter the door of my mind
you cannot

it is closed with the best locks i have
imagined

there is no window to my soul
my eyes are not what they call them to be

do not do anything
they can only be useless attempts

they can even be choking
my being

you may kill me in an instant
with the very first question in your mouth

let go
do not hold anything in your hand

stay beside me
rest your head upon my shoulder
as we watch the setting of the
sun

disregard the idea
relish the feeling

i come and i go

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
any moment
from now and then

because
i am not yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Nowhere Now.

papa loved the poor and he let them live
in his land
there was this vagabond.
he said he knew how to fish and papa bought him a boat
and the net
and the man lived
on the shore of papa's land
where coconut trees grow beside the sea
for they love salt.

he did not live that long to hear from them
what happened after.

the poor sometimes are not correct.
they are bound by their poverty in spirit.
bound by their tragedy when they were once children.
their trauma are chains of their afflictions.
unable to rise from their calamitous past.

papa became an alcoholic.
mama did not understand how this matter came into being.
they were like a river which changed course and
split.

when papa was buried i prepare the eulogy.
not much people. the poor were not there.
we were not that rich but papa always shared what he had.

papa wanted to believe that everything done turned
out good.
i want to think that he was right.

look at me, i tell the children by the sea.
i am that empty shell. Press me to your ear.
My song is strange and you will ask me where i come from.

i am nowhere now.
I Am Of The East And You Are Of The West

i am a man of the east
and i am muddy

you are the man of the west
and you are shiny

but that is not our main difference

i do not look for said difference
or any other kinds of differences
on an endless enumerations

i do not say you're guilty
i am not saying i am innocent
i do not say that you are the murderer
i am not saying that i am the victim
i do not say that you're a waste
i am not saying that i am this
stinking garbage waiting to be burned
i am not saying that you're the eagle
and i am this monkey
or this prey, a chick, to a hawk,
the predator of the sky
i am not saying that you're the alligator
and i am this gazelle drinking water on the river
that you claim you own and that you have the right
to eat me whole
that you are the shark of the food chain
and i am the dolphin
that you are the sun and i am just a
cloud drifting by your strong winds
far from it
i do not condemn
i keep my silence and you keep your gaze.

i am looking for our similarities
our sad eyes
I Am One Of All Of You

it is when i listen that the grasses
begin to grow again

to make the hills and pastures
those far ones
greener than ever

and women all over
think that i am an excellent lover
hot as Mexican chili
not because of my bottom
but because of my
ears

an elephant does not look that bad
after all
and the one with the widest ears
have become
the favorite of the circus

ah, the lonely people of this world
they do not need ice cream or
coca cola
what they need are blank spaces
where they can spread their woes

the beauticians after all
have outlived the use of shrinks
women go there in those
social parlors
not to have their hairs or nails
fixed and colored
they are there for the needed talk
and the laughter

i was born to listen and i live myself
on that edgeless frames
i listen
i give more space
for guests
i open my heart
   to show them that i too
   knows how to bleed

and then i changed
i become one with the world
one of those stars
part of the moon's entourage
parcel of emptiness
now filled with
the meaning of purposeful
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Part Of The Burden

into the green pasture
we all walk
and look for the milk
from the breasts of the cows
we drink the milk
of the years and the scores

we soon shall know
that our memories are small places
for us to live
some more

we become streams at night
in dreams
far away
we become so absorbed
in our work
throughout the day

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Pissed Off

So they planned a reunion
a gathering of friends
a reminiscing of the past
a recollection of who we
once were
wild and carefree
in those
days revolutionaries
burning night candles
immersing trembling feet on the water
just to keep
eyes waking
and then making most of the hay
on those
sun shining days of our lives

and now
earning money
more and more money
though
still honestly

i want to come and be a part of
all of you
rags turning to riches
fools becoming wise
poor to rich guy
children of the farm to
executives in the
city

but i finally got pissed off
when this reunion turns out nothing
but another fund raising
to a fraudulent scheme
(to a certain extend i supposed)
i am telling you
money is always suspicious
and big fortunes have always
crimes behind them

don't tell me that money too
can root out evil
contrary to the common belief
that money is the root of
all evil

shall we debate it, my friend?
hand me the money, so much money, and i will tell you
how i become changed

I am not that kind
who shall bid for the highest donation
and then impress everyone
that i am making good in my present life
and that
i am paying back for all my crimes

P.S.

don't say anything
i am not done yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Proud To Say

the horrors of life, we were there to confront all the horrors of life, at first it was a struggle to be free and then it is not anymore it has become a lifestyle and so we get used to all these horrors and they are not horrors anymore they become facts that we face everyday without anymore the fear these everyday every minute we conquer them with nothing but a blank face this numbness that chews what seemingly is horrible at first but now they have become us.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Raising A White Flag

A truce
Stop pounding my head
Bullets of lies
Do not penetrate
Truth proof vests

I am raising the white flag
Of truth
Let us stop this war of lies
Keep your face, save it

I’ll keep my own reality
This is my own territory

You take fantasy land,
Some fairies, wizards, and elves.

Keep the face of Cinderella

To keep the peace, we will
Provide you the prince.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Ready…..

When i come back
the room is empty
i am looking for
the reasons

those decorated ones
with pretenses

and excuses and i am
glad

you cleaned it up
and i am coming

with authenticity
cool,

look at me,
i have an empty mind

feel me,
i am ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Real, You Can Touch Me.

i do not live upon
a dream
i cannot live so well
in one of those
magical rooms of that
castle in the
sky

i live here
upon the floors of what is real
white sands slipping
from the hands of my
five fingers
i sleep in this bed
of reality
my pillow this conscience
of every hour
of my days

i do not exchange the
roughness of the touch of your hands
to what is still ideal
coming from that future
that is yet
to come

what i have is minimal
imperfect
what you dream is colossal
and well thought of
as perfect

i do not envy you
mist upon a mountain
i am the dew upon a leaf
real
glowing to the lights
of packet sun
i am
what you can touch and smell and
see
what you can mold
with the skin from your tongue
i am massive
as a storm that can blow away
the walls of your house
do not be afraid
i am for change
and for the better
i do not exempt
destruction
it is one of the steps of the stairs
towards
the magnificence of that
heavenly dwelling.

RIC S. BASTASA
all your leaves
are dead

the strong winds
blow them all
away from you

in extreme heat
your fingers pray to
the clouds
in surrender

today i am living
what shall i tell you?

i may have feet
i may have the mind
yet i feel just like you
to the many places
i have gone
i have not really
moved out
even for once

i am rooted to you
in the desert of
my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Rude

I am in the midst of writing about my life
And here comes
Someone interrupting me

She rings the doorbell
Sounding like what she tells you is very important
Like what she is bringing you
Heaven and earth

You open the door
And ask her

She is selling herself
It isn’t fine. I am rude.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Seeing The Movie

dawn, alone, i sit in one of the corners
it is empty, and there is silence creeping all over the walls
like some millipedes,
stare has become mossy,
and eyes opening like a crack of light on the wall
around me,
sleep has become a word too elusive
for my understanding,
i close my eyes only to become a river,
waiting to enter into the mouth of the sea,
i wait, only to see the unfolding of the movie
of my life

i am the villain and soon the hero
shall take the sword and kill me and they all
those who wait for the ending love the suspense
the thrill and like much the musical score
and the flow of the story

perhaps, it is only me who did not like it
and so i stopped it.

who likes a villain to be the victor at the end?
surely, they wouldn’t.

but i am the maker of the film
and i decide how it shall end.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Singing The Songs Of The Rivers

i am singing the songs of the rivers
and my notes flow like the rage of the the flood of the waters
rushing and rushing
all wanting immediately to be with you
passing through the mouths
between us

you are the sea of deep desires
and i am singing the songs of the rivers
i flood into you and be lost forever

in love i take the inevitable destination
of losing myself and be part of this universal longing

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am So Sorry For You....

yesterday
you remember you were never really an important part of their fabric,
for they are a family, and they do things only for themselves and you are there
taken for granted.

you had no choice then, but to stay with them, not even as a decor of their
house, but an unwanted pest, which of course, by previous indebtedness, they
cannot just get rid of you until you surrender, but

as i said, you really had no choice but just to be with them for the meantime that
you have no wings, no backbone, no feet, and you feel just like those not
considered essential, ordinary stick

regular wind, always unseen.
Until time comes rewarding you because of your sacrifices.....

your wings will take you anywhere. The world is your playground,
everyone else, becomes the same, just like the way you were treated but
which you do not wish to remember anymore...

how easily you can forget, now, you treat yourself the way you were treated
before. Unable to see your essence. Cruel to everyone. Even wanting to punish
those who you think are innocent.

all is fair. all is vain. all is useless.
meaning is meaningless. you have never seen the blueness of the skies
and the seas.

rock you hit on your head.
your hands are as dumb as your feet.

this stream of consciousness, without reason,
without images. just fleeting and free.

believing in the randomness of words.
beyond meaning. just the sound of ticking and clicking and
nothing.

you wasted your time for this.
i am so sorry for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am So Sorry....

must have i forgotten
that you are in control of my life?

why did i doubt? Why did i not call
your name at the first instance?

my seas had been stormy
all my boats sank. The winds too strong
the houses are carried away.

what is left is only myself in this
desert. I see the moon at night. And
i remember you.

you, the owner of everything.
i am so sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Sorry Voltaire

so sorry
voltaire dear
i have
misquoted you

thanks to
adria aka claire dasani..

my sincere
appreciation

Ph. D. in Literature,
oh my!

forgive
my ignorance
i crack....

nuts!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Sorry....

so you really read my poems?
are you then
reading me?
are you going inside my
heart and mind?
are you a blood corpuscle now
traveling inside my veins?
are you another strange thought
on a journey to my
brain?
are there lapses or
synapses?
do you see my heart
beating inside
my body?

i guess i have to say
i am sorry

it is never me.
I am the other people.

I am the old man who
lost a house
I too am the old woman
who lost a son
in the war
I am too the child
abandoned in the street

Sometimes i am
the moon resting on the
bosom of a river

Last night i was the
sea breeze
refreshing drying the tears
of a woman
abused
Tonight i am someone else
that i met in the
street

soon i will choose
whether i should be a
carpet or
the tick

so will you still read me?

you want to enclose me
in my own work?

sorry, you called the
wrong number.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Still Thinking

we have not
talked for a long time
now
and you are here
back
and i tell you
i miss you so
you compensate
with
miss you too
i am still thinking
what to say
something about
love perhaps

but there is none
i may say it
without meaning

i think i have nothing
to say for now
i am thinking about
other things
other birds other flowers
i am thinking like
the deep blue
sea
with the devil
within

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Stone....

i did not find love,
it came to me, it did not count much,
it wooed me
i did not take heed to its calls,
i have no choice then
this pretense of loving, and
this prayer that time would be
changing and forgiving,
i have never known what true love is,
it pretended it arrived and i pretended
loving it, with all embrace, and kisses,
and loving,
but soon the truth finds its shadow
fuses itself with its body,
and it becomes one,
and love finds me but i have become numb
and blind and deaf,
and i have never known love,

and so forgive me.
i am stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Sure This Is Your Plan To Get Me To Leave Or Change My Name... Not Gonna Work Randy.

hello adria
i am not Randy, i am Ric
please do not leave
we like you
here

let us make poetry work
forget ourselves
our names

it is my real name and i do not have any other
to make lies
and decorate it with more excuses

i am just this plain poet
playing with words
because that is what they want me to do

i was so serious
and they all laughed

now i am laughing
and damn
you are too serious

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Taken

my mama
had long warned me
about the
catastrophe
that happens
when the sea
marries the
sky
but i did not
listen
to her

the tornado is here
and i am
taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Taken.

woman you draw a line
turning wavy and crooked
unto itself
closing in

you have become another
exclusive
being,

and you enclose me out
of your world

and i have become one
happy spectator

i am taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Telling You. Poetry.

what cures the flu?
what drives away the boredom of bed?
what makes you sleep so soundly on a couch even without someone to hug?
what makes you occupied when there is nothing worth doing for the night?
what tells you that it is alright not to say something?
what makes you feel so comfortable with yourself?
what makes them feel betrayed for not posting what they expect to know for tomorrow's examination in law?
what makes you think that you are much better than the rest of the flock?
what makes your friends think that they do not know you anymore?
what makes you isolated and yet strong and stable like an island of Nonoc glittering red at night
like fire in the middle of darkness?
what makes you wonder why are you doing this kind of non-essential pursuit?
what makes an irrelevant thought relevant?
the impertinent gesture pertinent?
the immaterial material?
what makes you feel the bitterness of tea
makes you remember beer with her
makes you feel like you are a stone sinking in the deepest part of the marianas
and yet so calm feeling the nearness of death
hearing the music of a funeral march
and then wake up and you feel the plumpness of your muscles
and say
this is a different experience and write again
i am ok. i am doing fine. i am just into another exploration
and that this is temporary
and that tomorrow i will be back real as a book
starting over on the page that i left
back into the arms of the affairs of the state
upon a sensible and inanimate stare
like any other.

eetc...

i am telling you.
Poetry.
I Am The Man

i am the man
who has a puppet
under the
control of my strings

the children watch
and they all
enjoy
that is something
too funny

the old people
including the middle aged
understand
this reality

they do not laugh anymore
they are angry
to the world that they live in
they are the puppets
of someone who holds the
strings of their
lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am The Most Ordinary Person That You Meet On The Street

Reading my poems, my essays, my comments, my biography
She thinks
I am a manic
Depressive
one infested
with a bipolar
personality
neurotic
to the
utmost
psychotic

insane crazy lost bewildered out of this world
out of touch in limbo unleashed unsheathed
out of touch out of this world

o my god
o my!

She is wrong
Completely wrong

I am the most normal, ordinary person that she can meet
on the street
In her normal life

I work in an office
With a coat and tie
My hair is shiny
With gel
My hands soft
With ease and comfort
I smell perfume
My nails are clean
You cannot even tell
That these are the fingers
That compose
The hand that composed

Those poems
Political, sadistic, masochistic
Love, libido, desire
Nature, carabaos, birds
Violence, war
Irony, paradox
Rape, murder
Food and shit
White sands
And long long vacations

I have the perfect smile
The male version of mona lisa
I have the poise of
David not Goliath

And you wonder this man is not the poet in the poems that he
Writes
I expect him to have
The looks of a madman
Scattered hair
Looking shit
Foul shit
Emaciated
Eyes with bags
Insomniac
Hot tempered

Oh my God
I have the face of angel today
And the people always tell me
I am God’s gift to them

On this I agree
Indeed I am no madman

I am a trance in that poem
I am the medium of the higher voice
I am simply an instrument
And as I write every word
I know nothing
I am not responsible for every word in my brain
I am a tool
I am a knife
I am a gun
I am a chewing gum
I am a boat
I am a motorbike
I am simply the stenographer for every word that I write

For I am merely a voice
From those who cannot speak
I am merely the messenger
For those who are souls
I am just a body
To their wisdom

I speak
What I have is only the courage to be an instrument

When all of them are gone
I am dumb
I am myself
I am the most normal person that you meet

In fact, indeed, in truth,

I am just a nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is something in people that clashes
with how you see things
how this world behaves or ought to be
shaped by your hands and spoken
and you keep it to yourself like a pebble
inside your palm which serves nothing somehow
except that it is there for the keeping
you want to say something
true but which can hurt really that bad
so you choose to swallow your saliva
and learn the taste of this mucus thing
and then you see her all messed up
you wonder how she feels and those who surround her
there are faces that show sorrow
which you suspect may not be true
as you figure out motives, and schemes and
practical results
you see i want to say something
which could have been said directly and
be easily understood but there is a choice here
to conceal and to be civil about a fact
so she passes by your side and you give a wry smile
shake her hand and put a little pressure to
address condolence and you say no word at all
you keep your mouth tightly shut
you stand and take your exit
passing over her sorrow
and at the end you say you do not want to judge
but here you are saying to yourself
something is wrong and there is really something
wrong with what she did
you condemn in silence and the word forgiveness
cannot be found in any page
in that story that you want to tell but which you can't
because they are still alive and you do not really know
what happens next
who is right and who is wrong
time stands there shaking its head
as though saying 'i am the only one who has the right
to say the word'...and i agree.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Through With It

'Existentialists are monumentally and monotonously serious; they don't like to joke.' Wislawa Szymborska

i am through with this seriousness, they all think that i do not know how to joke,

look at me closely are not my lips big enough to be your clown?

are not my arms longer than my legs do i not look like a chimpanzee to you as you read my english poetry?

look at my eyes bad, these eyes are bad, with thick eyelashes and thicker eyelids looking like the beard of the walrus

how can i see myself in the eye of indifference from the point of view of my master

i will always look like a slave a second-class citizen in this modern world that claims that discrimination had long been dead and buried

look at me i am no longer human. i am no longer myself. i have always imitated you mime. puppetry. this is practically all about it. and i guess it is time to stop. i am through with all these.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Time

i am time, more than that, i do not have only hands
i have feet, but like time,
i only move on, i cannot stop, i do not think anymore,
i just run
and i go round and round
not moving that far, i only move in the mind,
like time, i do not see, i have long plucked my eyes
from my sockets, but i still feel, like time,
i know what darkness is
what coldness is, and what anticipation is,
i sense the loneliness of my journey
the eternity of my dreams,
i heal because i forget,
and there is one thing that i wish, like time
weary of its round-the-clock work,
it wants rest, but there is none,
it wishes death, but still unknown.
i am time, and like the river i flow,
like the mirror, i reflect the lights of the world,
uncluttered, unfettered, unbeholden to no one
and there you are wanting to hold me,
like sand, i slip from the fingers
of this world, to space they say
i bend, i tell no one,
i am always moving,
and gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Tired

and i imagine her
laughing

as though
she is sure of herself

as she removes the
patches
covering her eyes

and she tells me
that i am embarrassed

or that i must be
embarrassed at the end

she is the woman
so sure of herself

when she wakes up
everyone has left her

for good and they
are not coming back anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Tired Of The Rhyme I Am Tired Of The Rhyme

i am tired of the rhyme
and rhyme just to rhyme with you
at the expense of my thoughts
at the loss of my spirit
at the defeat of my spontaneity
my streams flowing and stopping looking for the proper word that sounds
like the previous word
until i am drowned by the rage and upsurge of my emotions
just let me be myself
let me flow like a river without the banks restraining me

in the canalization of my dreams
i will be nothing
but a line
parallel
to yours and they do not really look and sound right
i am afraid to say i am sorry
i will not be beautiful with you
i will be beautiful alone so alone in my own solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Tired Of The Usual Agony

tell me another story
the one which you cannot tell inside a motel
where you hold a cigarette
on one hand and a bottle of gin on the other
do not attempt on another
one that begins with

once upon a time
for sure i don't like it and i won't like you beginning
such a kind of trash
to tickle my dead senses

ooops, tell me not a story about pity
and sympathy, the one that you always tell to your
bed partner when the storms come
and in the middle of its harshness
you have nowhere to go nothing to do except
spend your time wisely in another hotel
with a partner
whose name you never bother to ask
or remember
as there is no significance

do not tell me about agonies
i had them all and will have them soon again
or sooner than soonest
they always come to a person like me

do not describe to me the agony of death
or torture or broken hearts
or crashing economies or incoming wars
between this government and the rebels
and soldiers on a coup against their
fellow soldiers at the military academy.

do not tell me that, now that we are here
inside this room where our clothes and faces
do not really matter
except our bodies emerging from a hot shower
where every moment counts
as escape from other agonies
that we have mastered

do not tell me about the agony of our times
high prices of gas and still rising
the possibilities of retrenchment
and closing of some companies
the possibility of this government getting bankrupt
and the working people on mass strikes
topping
of a government and the
putting up of another
by another superpower
out there

do not tell me about such kind of agonies
i want
an agony with you, the warmth of your hands
like cinders all over my body
the weight of your body over my body
the kisses of your tongues that will not make me breath
sucking me
as though i know eternity

your legs blocking mine
like i have no way of finding an exit
from this prison
or labyrinth

this is the agony i want for the moment
give it to me
and i will give it to you
in mutuality

agony for agony

then we shall forget ourselves
our faces fade in the dark and then at least we sleep
lost in our naked dreams

let the storm rage outside us
while we make more stories
about flesh and moaning glories inside
this motel
without us knowing
even the room number
or the color
of the curtains

or when another morning comes
slowly on the window panes

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Touched And Will Not Be Able To Sleep

he touched her
thru the fingers
of his poem
about the deep
night and the
sleepless one
a true story about
him and her
writing, deep,
dee into the night,
about sleeplessness,

why?
did he not tell her once
that he never sleeps?
did she not believe him?
did he not tell her
that his poems come
in the depths of darkness
from the dark recesses of
his dimming soul?
at a time when twilights
have not even sprouted
yet?

that his deep thoughts
come like some strangers
capricious and whimsical
and on shorter notice
leave without goodbyes?

now, the cycle grips him
again, he writes unceasingly
like he is being chased by
his own ghosts,
like he is one cat
disturbed by the shadow
of his own rebelling tail,

he shall write,
and if she too
is not sleeping at all,
tonight
then she must write,
like him as if both of them are twins
in thoughts,

and if there is nothing to be written, why not read and tell him what he is blindly writing?

perhaps,
he will soon understand his very own tragedies perhaps she can figure out the answers in his written works

she must touch him,
like her brother or even like her lover
and even kiss him

and he will sleep, perhaps, soundly, tamed by the softness of her love perhaps, the answer to all his questions.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Trying To Write A Love Poem

it is about my ring finger
manipulating my right nipple
and i am imagining
more than what i can
to save me from another
sleepless night

soon i will have just what i need
a satisfaction without having to molest someone else
not to despise

this love poem is a fake.
it is utilitarian, narcissistic, and too unkind.
i refuse to understand it

our negligence is mutual.
you are sleeping in bed, snoring, and embracing yourself
feeling cold and coping up with anything to warm you
your own hands folded on your sagging breasts.

i am writing a love poem with my shoes still
not detached from my feet.
i am imagining someone else.
Erotic like my own ring finger
pressing my nipple.

i may sleep beside you,
and you may, in sleep embrace me, and savor the warmth
of my torso,

but i am no longer yours. I am someone else.
I am an erection to the pillow
No more, no less.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Way Behind You

i am way behind you
with no intent to pass by you
i am taking time
to smell your scent
and trace your
footstep so i may
finally find
my way back home

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am What I Am What I Am....

the speed casts upon us
a flash of what we have forgotten who we are
slaves of traditions
geisha of oppression
bars and locks, and meatless contentions,

just this noontime
everything flashes on the window of the car
unable to piece what all these means
i finish the journey
go straight to the usual paths
and when i go down and talk to the guards
of the gates
i am met with indifference
asking for myself to make an identification of
who am i

something too philosophical analogous to the
commands of the gates of Delphi
know thyself

and i remember the burning bushes
as i pretend to be another kind of a god,
and i utter the words,

i am what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am With You

on your defeat i am
with you
i am your consolation
your excuse
and voice

let me give you the
soothing words
of a poem
that is never read
by anybody

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am Writing A Poem That You Can Understand So Easily

this is not to insult your intelligence
or your sensibility
your capacity for managing angst,
to see the wholeness
of the matter
in the eye of the needle
where the camel enters where you claim you have seen it,

dos, this is it, the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog near the bank of the river

do you not find wisdom in it, it is filled with questions to be answered:

why is the fox quick
why is it brown? why does it jump on a lazy dog? and is the dog really lazy? is this not offensive to the dogs in the royalty? and why should the river be near?
and this bank of the river? is this where the dog lives? or the fox or the dog, do they relate to the word quick and lazy?

i tell you, there is wisdom in every word, no matter where you place it.
every verb serves its purpose in giving us action,
every question calls for an answer
and every period serves the purpose it is intended to be.

rest.

the purpose of an easy poem is to understand it, and so the poem is written in the most familiar language that you know and speak,

period.
i don't want to understand things really, there is no point there.

period.

some poems are not meant to be understood, they are only meant to be read.

period.

some poems are not meant to be digested, they are meant to make us full, even only for a while.

period.

some poems are written by Someone Else, and this writer does not even understand it.

period.
rest........

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am You Are

sky
you're too high for me
heaven
are you?

i look for you
clouds
behind me and then

as i wait you
rain
and i take a glimpse
the mirror
my horizon shows me
two faces

of pleasure and pain
of bliss and agony

in this state of our fusion
sky and earth

blue sky brown earth
round and flat

i am. you are.

near and distant.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am wondering if we survive the heat,
if the cold having been neglected, and its fading
of grays, remaining unexplained by the
roughness of those stones,
i am wondering what is this wandering all about,
moving from one mountain to another,
crossing another streams of
thoughts, jumping from one border to another
and marking the seas we left with the
strokes of our fingers
i am wondering what will become of us
stuffed, wooded, anesthetized
skeletal, deprived of our dreams of
skin, and fresh flesh,
i am wondering what becomes of these arms,
unable to hold you once again
like once when the fish inhabit the pond,
when the lotuses bloom and give the colors of
its hollowed flowers to the
moon
i am wondering if wonder still saves us
from this desert of
affections,
i ask a diminishing, i forgive nothingness,
i am scheming a plan for escape
a dignified departure, and you smile, not knowing
what goes really inside this tunnel
pretending still to have light at the end
when there is none
when nothingness is still full of its
uncommitted contents.

RIC S. BASTASA
I am, with impurities so tainted
My skins stained, my mind blighted
My feet muddy, my body
Murky with sweat, my reputation
Besmirched, and night so well
With darkness hug me, I sometimes
Shake and rattle my bones,
If I am still whole, still intact,
With all these impurities and
Mechanical defects, my spiritual
Brokenness, these fractured feelings,
I am so tainted, I am so dirtied,
I am not scared and estranged
And stranded, I am, I so assume,
Just being real, and compliant
With what a human being
Should be, in shades of black
White, and some taints and stains
And tinting shades of colors
Some sounds of pebbles
Shaking in a tin can, some
Gargles, some spits, some
Itches on my head, some silent
Nods of my usual acceptances
To all these, I clasp my hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Am......

i
transform
myself

i do not create
myself

i do not destroy
myself

i do not have
that power

i am ripe
as a red luscious
fruit

i am not my curse
oh i cease
to be just
a word

or a work of
art

beyond wood and metal
beyond
my own canvass,

i fall

so gently

and surrender

to my root

RIC S. BASTASA
I And Thou

FROM my simple understanding
you only exist because you are nice to me
as i am also nice to you
as the world is nice to all of us

nice in its usual connotation
smooth smile simpler synthesis
like you offer me an orange
that i squeeze and suck every pulp every drop

when things turn sour when fungus strikes
when everything is rotten
there is nothing more to desire

i need a brick wall to bump my head
there will be cracks and then it is my turn to be gone

that is the exit that i am speaking about myself
there is only I, BECAUSE

THOU is simply a delusion
there is no such under the state of affairs
i cannot even touch it
even in my little imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
I Ask A Very Simple Request

i ask a very simple request 
that you write me a poem
about one that makes me
ejaculate...

but you are so dry.

probably you do not understand
what a horny poem is all about.

bull!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Ask Nothing

from you i shall ask nothing
the way the sun makes its presence felt
the fields of grass
have nothing to ask
as gently as the morning arrives
handing air and light
in that sleepy room
what shall i ask from you some more?
memories? oh no more
we had some
we had more and so perhaps
what we can ask for ourselves
perhaps perhaps is just
a brief
goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Ask You Friend

i ask you my friend

take leave and give yourself a chance

take leave of that self
caused, self inflicted pains

to rise up from such
a depression

use your hands as lever

to move & take this
world back to its orbit

give yourself a chance to choose
love and happiness
the good and the
beautiful

surely my friend there are more things
to do in this life: in your backyard the flowers
are waiting to be watered

your roof needs some repairs
your faucets leak and need some
immediate attention for sealing

surely my friend fears are unfounded and
if there be foundations, there is a need now
to shatter them

surely my friend there are more important
feelings than fear and surrender
triumph waits patiently
and hope look
at you from
a distance

surely my friend, you must see how this house
must stand again you are the pillar that we lost
and all of us are waiting.

i ask you my friend to be the rebuild
of all our dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Assure You.

the sand has expanded its territory
the sea is getting more shallow

the vines that crawl on the sand
tease the waves into a play

you are into some ways finding
how to forget how to heal

the 50-year old man has a wound
and the fat woman is about to cry

there is a big bottle of beer in the basket
and some butterscotch and crackers

all of you are crazy about the first sunset
and the bigger waves at the end of the day

the one-year old baby is naked and
holding tightly on the mother's breast

i may be lost too just like the rest here
but this is only temporary. I assure you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Bait With My Heart

'When you fish for love, bait with your heart, not your brain.'
Mark Twain (1835-1910)

since i shall fish
for love,
so i have love
as bait
not my brain
which has given
me more pain
than pleasure
the thoughts
that shy away
from the true meaning
of love
looking into the dictionary
of words
rather than deeds
because precisely
God has invented the
hug
so we may learn to
love sans
the uselessness of
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Beg You My Friend To Draw Her Back To Me

If a friend
true to her
Is you
Is there any way
Hidden from me
A gaze
perhaps
That you can do
To draw her back
To me?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Begin Again

and so i begin again
from the cold winds of my desert nights
where there is no moon where there are no stars in the skies
i rest on the sands and lay my head there
waiting for tomorrow

tonight i must again think of you
the face that makes my blood move like running water
on dried river beds
on emptied wells
on fields cracked by too much dryness

tonight i recall again
the first kiss from your innocent lips
your soft hands holding my body
your words of love comforting me to always move on
and always be strong and confident

deep in this lonely night
i close my eyes
i enter another world before tomorrow comes
this world of dreams
where we kiss and make love again for
another beginning

it is dark and so silent and then the desert begins to sing

RIC S. BASTASA
I Believe

i believe that in the novel
written about us
it shall not end on the last
sentence with a period

i ask the Great Writer
to at least end it with a comma

the silence of the comma
the suspense of the comma

and the exclamation point
of the Hallelujah!

I do not prefer the eternal rest
i pray for that Bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Believe In Evolution....

i believe in evolution, and the best evidence is here,

myself evolving, my hands used to be moss, now they are fries of milk fish, tonight they will be bear cubs,

be ready, tonight my head will turn into a Chinese dragon,

a little reflections a thought of a yellow river soon my body will turn into a koi, and there will be a pond ready,

i will be slippery and even without feet for i now have fins and scales,

a little more i will learn to jump into wings

and cross this wall and join the mountain where the tree
of knowledge
grows,

there is evolution
in reverse
for of all wishes
i only want to be
just another
stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Belong To This Group Of Men

i belong to this group of men with eyes
that look like full moons gazing at some stars
not just seeing the glitter but
minding the faults as well of the lights that sometime fail
and then mete the penalties for failing to live up
to the demands of light and orbit
against darkness and the bad things that sometimes
loneliness can inflict upon us

we are human
we believe in rules that we make and we impose the standards
of our actions

i belong to this group of men tasked to measure
the value of each man
his strengths and his weaknesses
the chambers where the rules are laid
the hammers that must be be banged
the souls that must be made to suffer
the segregation of those unfit
from these society of fools

i belong to this group of self-righteous men
for years and years i will be here
not counting the cost of my strangeness
this alienation from day to day
this segregation of me
this falling and falling and falling

far from you i have no feelings anymore
i am all mind

i am broken i am all mind i am looking for the images
of softness
and gentleness and loftiness
i long for the humility of sinfulness

teach me how can i be human again?
I Better Sleep

to learn to
live without
anticipation

to live without
fear
what does that
future bring?

i know now.
it is this.
today, now,
this moment

that train that
runs towards
the future
is giving us creeps

this is the couch
i am in here
i guess i better sleep
till arrival.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Breathe Poetry

i confess, i am the master
and i am asleep for years and years
because the curse is there hiding my name
in the tomb of fear and shame

i am the master who has not used the power
of words for years and years because
my tears were frozen
inside my eyes and i have not tasted salt
inside the niche that was built for me

now you come into my life like the winds
of the spring bringing me the flowers
and the rain and the sound of the river
and the songs of the little birds

the hush of your sorrow has given me rebirth
from the deep sleep.

i am the master, and i wake up with words
buried inside my lips. Now i breathe poetry

inside your nostrils, and you too become alive.
come hold my hand, and our shadows fuse as one.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Bring You Tidings

i bring you food
you set them aside
you are telling me
you are not hungry

i bring you water
you set it aside
and tell me
you are not thirsty

i bring you stories
you do not listen
you tell me
you do not need
any of those

you ask me
to bring you justice
fast and swift and
commensurate

now you are thirsty
now you are hungry
now i am listening
to your story

RIC S. BASTASA
I Call It Prayer.

it is when you do nothing
like sitting upon a hill
looking at the sea and
feeling the breeze and
letting everything caress
you.

it is this emptiness
emptying upon itself

i call it prayer.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can

sacrifice church bells
to the craze of my fingers

ey they know what they can
do and will be doing

as i watch the screen
words are climbing their own
steep mountains.

they know their names
and they are screaming
their own chosen joys

to the heavens from
the cliffs....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Be Disastrous....

do not attempt
to wear my shirt

it may be
calamitous

do not steal my hands
it will be disastrous

for what you desire
to hold
shall turn to stone

what you kiss
shall turn into a snake

and it will bite you
as it has bitten me

many times have i suffered
escaped death like a magician

what you eat
shall turn into wind

how can you be satisfied?
you shall be in
eternal thirst and hunger

no one has the power
to fulfill your desires

or your dreams or your
queries

do not borrow my pair of
shoes
it can burn your feet
it may cut your toes
into pieces

by now you must have
wondered
how i survive all my
years

you see it is not easy
never been smooth and easy

i never lived a life like
that
and you may never believe
it

now that i am old
and shall die in any hour
of my choosing

burn everything i leave
behind
forget every memory that
i have given you

my shoes, my shirt, my hands
my mind, my dreams,

do not forget my eyes
do not be misled by its visions
burn them thoroughly and
throw all the ashes to the
far ocean
of this earth

do not fish there
it can still be disastrous.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Be My Own Galaxy

closed door.

everything not close,
open fingers.

closer hues,
like purple to red and violet,

eye are closely entwined, but not closed,

ey may be close enough
to resemble the kind of warmth
and ambiance found within
the nearness of their hues,

but they know, on closer
scrutiny, their differences,

distinct as sand to sun,
separable as clouds
to rain,

and you to me,
i am warm as red,
you are pink as desire,

we blend, i am fire and
you are this cinder.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Be Someone Else In The Faraway Place

in other places
i can be another person
i can be other than myself than you think you know

on a paper where you think i fit more as a signature
in black and white and in some likelihood of a tendril
i can be a black bird perching upon a cable wire
and you refuse to believe
that i can stand the heat and be not afraid
of the city lights
and its electricity

in faraway places i can be a faraway tower
it has more rooms than you think
and there is no more directory where you can find a number
of a room and say that i live there

i can be someone else
whom you meet along the street
and you will not recognize me anymore

as planned.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Be The Other Possibilities....

since i have cut my roots
and gathered all my leaves
what remains of me is nothing
but twigs and some branches

they give me a name. i am a floating tree.

birds are asking if somehow we are
genetically related.

i am mimicking the winds.
and we shall soon play our games.

now i can bark like a dog.

you see, i realized that i can be
all the other possibilities.

only if i will it, then what i think becomes real.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Dream Now....

now i am free

away from your numbers

away from your tips

away from your hold

now i am free

not as a bird
not as the wind
not as the kite cut off from the hold of your hand from that string

now i am free
and i am scrutinizing it
why i say that now i am free

perhaps because i can say what i want

perhaps because i can do what i want now

but what is it that i want to say really what is it that i really want to do with my life?

i am tired.
i am free because i want to sleep
and i can sleep.

i can dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Hear You

i am here i can hear you.
but just like them i need not bother.
we are all free
we have our own light
freely given
we are responsible for our own lives
now
you too, no one can be responsible for you.
if you die, die alone.
if you cry, cry alone.
if you smile, and laugh, that is a decision.
if you die, that is a decision.
if you live, that is another decision.
a choice.
an ocean of choices.
an ocean of choices over a continent of options.
take your pick
and be yourself.
me? i choose to live. i choose to be happy.
i choose to be responsible. i don't bother sad people
or happy people.
I scratch my back when it itches.
i set the correct time for my ejaculations.
i sit and relax at my own pace.
i take a walk and breathe. I fill my lungs with so much air.
I float like a cloud. I jump like a grasshopper.
I see like the sun.
I fly like an eagle.
I get high sometimes
and get so low sometimes
but i care about myself
and live my life the way i want it.
i don't humiliate myself with making other people responsible for me.
I can do it.
I don't want other people to drive my car for me
i have hands.
I don't let people open the door for me
i have fingers.
I live my life. That is my business.
I am a breather, that is what i do.
When life does not have meaning anymore
like a wall
i bump it on the wall and then i go.
I know where. I decide that too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Never Be Chinaski

i like him, in fact
i have all his poems
printed
and every night
before i sleep i read
chinaski
teaching me
about his poetry

he talks
to me & that is enough
of chinaski

i am
just myself, this man wanting
also to talk to
himself
in a

boring monologue
and i pretend
i too can write
my own poems
and versions
of the

great chinaski

finally, i get tired
pretending and imitating his kind
of manly, hoarse, candid, direct
straightforward voice
guts
firm, strong, determined words

i rise
from my weakness and stand
naked before this mirror
i am not chinaski and i can never be
chinaski
i still have a well kept hair
a smooth chin
i still keep some clean sheets
of paper on my table
a glass of water
to cool my throat
from this chaos

no empty bottles
filling my room or scents
of whores and
radio music of beethoven
or mozart

i only have this silence
pervading
still remembering
and wondering

how can i start
being a chinaski
when i still
keep being

me, oh, i am still me, and
yes, perhaps, i still like this being me

nobody

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Never Get Out Of This

This flesh, its demands, its whims
And caprices,
I despise, this flesh, but how can I
Ever get out of this flesh,
When this flesh is in me,
Wrapped by my skin,
And loved by the senses of my mind
The taste of wet, the whispers I hear,
The smooth touches I feel, the
Sensual sights that I see,
How I promise to be true to
The longings of my pure soul
To pure grace
And sublime wishes, as white as light flinging
Seraphims and Cherubims,
Hands praying in God’s garden,
This flesh
Throbs and thrusts like sin, like demon’s
Favorite poses and twists
This flesh imposes, like these fidgety hands
Arguing again, not wanting to be held,
These hands now ready, willing
For the caprices of my flesh,
These hands shall now touch the secrets of
The night and how my eyes pretend
Not to know,
In such delights, they all now close.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can See It In Your Eyes

THE blue sea.
the black hole.
the whirlpool

THE me
memory,
The future
that is not still there.

IN your eyes,
is the world.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
I Can Take Things Barefooted

when you left
your shoes down the stairs

i kept them

i wait and i am ready
for your return

even if i have to
jump over the fence

i can take
things barefooted

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can Write About It, I Can'T Write Some More

that is the riddle of the sphinx,
but i will make sure you cannot figure it out
that your answer shall never be right,
for i am the sphinx,
and i still do not want to die.

tell me all the lies so i may live some more.
i will keep this answer till the last breath of my life.
you shall never know it.

be human still, for i am half lion half bird sitting on a hill
challenging those that pass before me
killing them without pity

you are the chosen one to kill me
with an answer
you are the answer but you are blind still
and too dumb
for not loving me and so i live still
perhaps forever,

for i am attuned to this pain
of loving not
and truly not loving still

you, my secret, my truth, my death.
i live, and only through lies, i live and only through your indifference

you must not have the wit
you must never learn to love
for when this happens
i shall be no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can’t Write Your Kind

Tried to but I can’t
Fell short of courage
Talent
I have lost it and have not recovered
Since then

I like you and want to be you
You’re up there
I am here
I am not lost anyhow
Can still see what is wrong
What is right

That is all that matters
See you soon

I am writing
Only for myself you know

RIC S. BASTASA
I Cannot Attend On Your Wedding Day....

The last time i saw you
was when you were still a kid
holding tightly tn your
mama's skirt,

life has kept me busy
constant travels make me forget
plans are many mountains
and victories are few like
diamonds kept preciously inside
a locker,

and then i get a card and i open it.
you're getting married and
it will be your grand day
and that i must attend so that
we can all be happier again

but life has kept me busy
constant travels make me forget
plans are many mountains
and victories are few like
diamonds kept preciously inside
a locker,

oh, i get puzzled, i forget faces and
names because i want to stay here forever
and there are so many things missing
markers removed, boundaries kept

i am old, and it is sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Cannot Be...

i cannot be always the guardian angel
to your stupidity which like a female cow in heat
somehow escapes from the fence when i begin to take my much needed sleep.

when that cat in your hand escapes to eat the moon
i cannot always assume the body of the dog
for in my own weakness i assume the shadow of the mouse

sometimes i let you go and wish that you fall off from that cliff and die for my own
good.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Cannot Wait For You

I cannot wait for you
for another thousand years
for now i have assumed the
butterfly's body and
and its white fragile wings
in another minute can be
blown away by the wind and
then be all torn

at most i can only live and
love you for
only a day.....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can'T Add On What You Are Saying

there is the story
of mommy eagle
you are on the
sixth week of your
pregnancy,
we, who had a
sad story to tell
will remain silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can'T Stop The Rain From Falling

outside
you walk the path
away from me
you run
wanting to
finish the episode
in a hurry
there is no
point turning
back for you
to take the last
look at me....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Can'T Wait For You...

waiting makes me tense
i am restless and i do not have the temerity to
be patient,

when i wait all things seem to run away from me
and it is sickening to feel that i am the only one left out
at the station

i hate the silence of the pavement when all of them step inside
the box and then all their sounds and laughter fade away

nobody wants to be left alone in a catacomb of helplessness
no one wants to be dead and all alone feeling like a shattered rock

and so i have decided that i must go with the crowd
inside the train going nowhere.....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Choose The Latter

Reality fades
lights die
switches turn off
a world may shrink
and some
shatter
into meaningless
bits

that is a fact
a law
that operates with
or without us

everything is flitting
most flee
and have no plans
coming back

we are born
we get old
we die, and then what?

we can do nothing
about our flesh

we can do nothing
about the trees

but we can join the
wind
and still be with
the clouds again

on one hand reality
and on the other imagination

i choose
the latter.
I Choose The Questions

You think I am wise
Giving you the questions that
You cannot answer

On a wide domain of answers
A question or two shall be taken

And you will answer them for me

Haven’t you tried thinking
If we shift roles

Ok, so you try asking the questions now
I do not answer

I could have answered you
Because I can, but I won’t

I think, I have become real myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Choose To Be Your Moon

i always console myself with the idea that i am not
at all alone

there are too many of me, of us, that we all become one boring
brew of liquefied images
coffee flowing on the carpet and wetting it and there is a fume
and the dust are captured on the stains

what i feel now is the feeling that i do not want anything at all
that i just write what comes to my mind
without choosing

and i am bombarded with thoughts and i am always on a defensive stance
a recipient always, passive and relaxed

things that come like rain to an empty earthen vessel
gives that feeling of fullness
which is too pacifying to the weary mind

then the vessel is filled with water and water pours out its liquid body
to the ground
to the grass to the canals racing to another path

we try to follow it
it has myriad options and we are at a loss which way shall it be
words are like that
they pour upon our void

others are blind and keep on talking about
hair and heads and hands
it is just myself that feel
emptying and filling and running and taking the journey again

what you see is the stillness of the body
a shadow on the wall
the night and rain sometimes come together
i choose to be your moon

and you are there looking at me
i am full, your gaze empties me
into a profusion of gentle dancing light
on your face

i never said a word
in the silence of my own understanding
you are so far away like a fallen star.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Claim Reason....

inside the box
where i am also inside
it with the rest
i see two human beings
crying: one for joy
the other for sorrow

i am stoic. i look at each.
not shedding any tear
i claim reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Close My Eyes And Think Of You....

early morning
i take a walk to
watch the
growing plants
in the yard.

it is cold here
and peaceful.

a dog sleeps by
the door.

a cat licks its
hands.

a leaf falls from
the mahogany tree.

red ants are
crawling up the mango
tree.

a wooden bench is
wet with mist.

a soft wind blows
my hair.

i close my eyes
and think of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Closed The Door

it was me who had the
courage to close the door
behind my father's back,

he was the lion coming from
the mouth of the fish
with an injection
he stings me inside my dream
he inflicted the pain
and i did not run
from what i saw and felt

but i know how to grow my beard
and let my hair grow long like a forest
my rage rise into a flood like
my anger

i know where to go and gather strength
and wait for years till i take my revenge
i come back home
offering flowers when he found rest
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Come Back To This Wholeness Less The Cares.

there is a part in you
that parts me
into two

half of myself is not
me anymore

the other struggles to
be alive

i stare in the farthest
wishing to end this dichotomy

there is a sprouting bamboo
in the forest

and i come back to this wholeness
less the cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Come Running

i come
running to you
my friend
for all those years
my arms have been
so incomplete
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Complete You And You Shall Lose Me.

there is use
in giving you a blank space

you make a stare
and when you see nothing
you begin to see everything

you have no use of me
i am a blank stare

yet see me once and you
can see everything in you

i complete you and you
shall lose me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Confess I Love The Kissing More Than Ever....

actually
there is more
joy
emphatically
in the closing of
the eyes
and the prolonged
kissing
rather than

you know what i
mean

you felt it.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Be That Snake

been writing for quite long
not anticipating for any change in me
or this world
not expecting any concrete return of
this mental investment

i remember i once saw a snake
which got bitten by another snake and
looking for a cure
went to the forest hoping to find the
herb that must give it life

i could be that
who knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Be The Moon

i could be the moon
where you can be a body and a
shadow

i could be a lake where
the moon may shine
and you can still be the body
and the shadow
and the voice

i could be a candle in the dark
where you may put
your hope and you can still be the
body and the shadow
and the scent

i could all be your moon
your lake and your candle
and you can still be the body and the shadow
and you shall walk

under me (if i were the moon)
and around me (if i were the lake)
and you may have the power
to put me off (if i were just a candle
in the dark

where you are the body
and the shadow and the voice

and by the mere sigh
of your whimper
i may die

so i still prefer to be your moon
or your lake so i can be your full light
so i can be your mirror

larger than your body
not helpless to your shadow

in silence, i still like to be myself
not a slave, not someone whom you can just
give away as easily as a flicker of a candle
as fickle as you are

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Be The Most Hurting Footnote Of Your Loveless Existence.

i scan the pages
i was never a part
of this book

i wrote a note
at the bottom of that
torn page

just a scribble intended
to be the map where
you can find me

i do not exist here
but i am beautiful as
the last word of the
page always
meant as a syllable of
that happy ending

i have my own world
in that dog-ear which
you disregard
after a use, ...i was
once a book mark of
you
but how can you not
remember?

find me, oh, i do not
mind, if you can't.
i am always a part of
your longing.
the missing link of your
future,
the harsh part which
you must disregard
because if you take
the last glance
i could be the most
hurting
footnote of your
loveless existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Be Wrong

i accept the illusion
after which i set it aside
this could have been mine
in my paradise
where the tree grows with
luscious fruits and glossy leaves
everything is cool here
and delightful
i could have been more gentle
and then be drunk
and careless and i could have
owned you
like a piece of priceless art
that i do not deserve
i wonder what happens when we
both wake up
in our naked view
what if our eyes have mouths
and exclaim
‘this is all wrong! ’ and the mouth
in conspiracy
have long silenced its
manners without words
because it understands
you.

i have carved in stone
and it is still there
in this arid desert love will not grow

i am wrong
that shadow who knows how to kneel
so carefully upon its own
knees
not minding the tease of ill wind
show two purple flowers
to the sun
I Could Have

i could have kissed you on your lips
and hugged you tight
and caressed your breasts
and licked your whole
white soft body

that night all i did was simply imagine
savoring your eyes
with my gaze
i did not even caress your hair
and touch
your finger

that night i was so foolish
when you left
i did not bother asking you to stay

i was so foolish
i simply wrote you this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Been....

there are so many things
already that i have forgotten

of which i may remember but always with
regret

i could have been something else other
than a hammer to a nail

i always dream of wings of a hawk
claws of an eagle i still detest

i could have been a cloud, soft and blue and
drifting

all over the world
watching glaciers break and fall and turn into a flood

or water
i could have gone back to where i was once a child
and do swimming in the river with my naked innocent friends

where we do not plan for the day
about what to eat and where to work next and next and next

i could have been so irresponsible and innocent and weak
and die without regret

young and will always be mourned and remembered and then
well oh well just like everything and everyone

being let go and simply be forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
i could have chose my words
carefully
to please you all. I could have arranged them
the way you all want them
like the way you presented your points-of-view like the pillars
all aligned to the north star
the one that guides the lost ships
back to their comfort shores. I could have chosen the tone
and specified the context of my intentions. I could have set these words
in a musical scheme that pleases your ears while you sip your coffee
and had a good view of this world
amaze you with beauty and grace
like some well-sought and popular entertainer......

but i didn't and i have long decided that i won't.
i have never been a pleader
and an entertainer i am not, neither had it become my cup of tea
to see to it that there is comfort in my house......

i am just being myself, and like you, no one pleases me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Done Other Useful Things Than Writing A Poem

Sometimes I have regrets writing poems
Love poems, poems about virtue and heroism
Poems that explain myself, that justify
This nothingness
That fill this emptiness,

What are these but signs and metaphors of
My weaknesses,
Symbols of my hopelessness
Ciphers of my uselessness
To life’s dreams, unfulfilled, stars that I have not
Reach or even touch with the words in my lips

I could have danced, and danced so well
Sweat things out shedding sighs and skins on the floors
I could have played a role, acted my way out
Exiting through the doors of author’s characters
And feel this sense of
It was her it was him it was not me

Sometimes I feel
To be a poet is to be dumb and dead
To demand nothing but this honor
This laurel this principle
That I cannot eat that I cannot sell that I cannot
Make use of,
Useless poetry, trashy, nothing but bad breathes
Of my being
Foul and nauseating to my sense of
What I dream what I want to be
To be this great, respected man of power
One that commands rather than take orders
From someone claiming superior feathers

I have long wanted to stop but here I am again
An addict to poetry destined for rehabilitation
In distant cruel word processing centers
Just like you, here I am again, not stopping
My fingers always wanting to type the words
My mind always listening
my heart always mouthing
Words, words, words, these words
This poem

This poem is born and I am its tributary
I am this poet now without a face without a name
I am but a mouth, fingers to my hand
Always not stopping, how can I tell you why?

When I myself, do not really know. I am this poem
With an unknown author, I am this poem just written
Taking shape like a candle lighting,
Flowing from your thoughts
Taking the forms of beings unknown to us
We claim we understand we claim we can live with
You are now lost asking the way
You could have done other things than reading this poem

Precisely this is what I really feel. Do you feel it now?
Yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Embraced Simplicity & Candidness

how i want
to embrace simplicity

how i want to
throw away generalities

i wish i can be specific
like a hammer to a nail

or my fingers to my hand
whom am i clapping

what i idea i detest
what movement i follow

but i am afraid to hurt
you &
myself

i therefore now talk like
you

in words veiled
in the content of
vagueness

clouds are beautiful too
and haze can be thought provoking

and murky waters
hide the fish

that we all want to catch
and then eat.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Enjoyed A Very Nice Conversation Out There At The Mall

i can make choices
like i am thrown in an ocean of choices
everyday as i decide for myself
what to do really

i could have gone to the mall
shopping or just enjoying the walk there
seeing lots of people and meeting them
and knowing their names and
having fun with them

or get a date with someone else
have sex at the motel or have a ride
somewhere in the countryside where no one
knows me

i could have done all these but i am so foolish
for instead here i am writing this low key poetry
wanting to figure out what do i really want in my life

i can figure it out someday
and i will figure it out now as i have been doing
this thing everyday
every hour: i just love this stuff writing for nobody
(but you may read if you want
blogging for no one and surfing for more words
and idioms and looking for that part where i become
an idiot or the everyday moron on the screen
at You-tube or facebook or friendster)

well i guess, this is it:
just trying to be nobody but a writer like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Stopped Writing

I could have stopped writing
some letters on my wall
some words on a clean sheet
of paper, i could have stopped
many years ago, when things
lack the luster of meaning
the shining hues of explanations,
steps do not traces steps
on the floor, and what the windows
see sometimes are so untrue
and my eyes are blinded
with so much light from the
slits of light coming from the
noonday roof,
i could have stopped writing
and tell myself: oh, there are more
important things in my life
to do, and there i may take
some colors for meaning
blue for peace and red for love
and violets for remembrances,
i could have stopped writing
but how could i? my throats dry up
my hands shrink, my heart grow holes
of hollowness, my lungs collapse,
my head falls off from my neck,
my body freezes, my ears close
inside its lobes,
i die without it. It is my life,
so how could i ever stop living?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Taken You In My Arms

i will die i know i will
and so i wish i could have taken you in my arms
and kiss your lips
and rub your body against mine
and take shelter to the warm wings of your soul

i could have listened too to the beatings of your heart
near mine
i could have listened to the songs of
love and desire

but i have become a coward
and too soon have i surrendered
to the weakness of my soul
to the tiredness of my whispers
to the smoke of the vespers
i lose myself

i travel in my car alone
i have covered a distance
mountains and roads beside
i have left you waiting and i have not left any word
where i am going
what i shall become
what shall i be doing for another set of years

throughout this loveless journey
i shall be lonely
i shall be sad

but it does not matter anymore
for soon i shall die and soon i shall take another journey taking with me the
wings of time to
another place to
another moment with you

it is then my time to wait until our worlds meet again
without a wall
without a hindrance
I Could Have Told You

THAT YELLOW
SOLO LEAF floating on a very clear pond,

was it last summer?
will it really matter when someone is finally gone?

will the wind remember?
will the deep water of the pond be always true to its clarity and peace?

that yellow leaf that sank on the very clear pond on one peaceful day

will someone still remember?

i think, i will,
if i, too, shall live
longer than
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Told You About Religion

i could have told you about religion
about the angels with white wings
and all the saints and holy men
long dead who left an imprint on the earth

about God and his goodness and his
greatness

but then you were sleepy and then
when you woke up you said you were busy
earning for a living
some kids to take care of
a house to clean
a garden to tend

and so to take your full attention i hinted you about
sex.

your world stopped spinning.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Told You More

i could have told you more
about love about us
about everything within me

but in your indifference
i decided to shut up
and close my fingers
back to the fold of my hands

i see it in the looks of your eyes
there is no us
there was never us from the
very beginning when i extended
my hand for a shake and
told you my very first name.

some flowers simply shy away
from darker clouds
and fear the coming of the rain

for petals to open up and bloom
the sun must first promise to shine

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Turned Her Into A Toad

when i met her along the way she was so sad
and tears kept flowing from her eyes
and i, as the great magician of my place,
took her inside my room and began to perform
the usual tricks,
how my hands are quicker than her eyes,
i took a rabbit from my blackhat
i made flowers from my long staff
crisp money from newspaper shreds
yet she is still as sad as a child looking for her mother
and her favorite rag doll

and i asked her what she really liked she without hesitation said:

'please make yourself vanish in air! '

of course, what i did was wiser, i vanished her myself.
with all regrets, i could have turned her into a toad.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Could Have Written The Truth About The Sigh

oh yes, i could have told you
that there were so many women to love
and yet
i got only the least time to share

when i leave
let no one weep for i shall lie again....

the one that does not shed any tear
shall be the one that i loved most

let that one one who really loved me
forget me with all ease,

time flies so swiftly on wings that never tire.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Couldn'T Believe It

.. that you read
so well now
poetry coming
from your mouth
read by you
full of beautiful
angst like
blue birds
caged in your
heart....

a la
bukowski.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Create All Of You.

night has come again. I am restless.

tonight i will watch a show alone.

the theater is the ceiling. There will

be birds and insects from my mind.

Soon the insects are consumed. The

birds do not fly away. They stay

They dance on the ceiling. They wish

That i be another insect for feeding.

These hungry birds dance death.

I cannot sleep as usual. These

birds I keep in Control.

I create all of you. In law, i

too destroy you. Now i sleep.
I Cry No River

ey they love me
for being
a river,

ey they like
the sway of
my flow

the way i surge
and run and
rage

and move against
rocks
and sticks and
timber and
even carry
rhinos and
crocks
on my back

mind you

they love the way
i gargle

the way a toothpick
satisfies
a discriminating
matron
after dinner

at most
they cheer me
for my
travels of
least resistance

as i curl
from one sleeping
mountain to
another

as i ignore
cliffs
and holes
and sharp
bamboos
and some
pythons

they all praise
me for being a
river

and fear me for
every little
uprising
sometimes

because i can
be also
cruel
when provoked
like fallen
grace

i get awarded
as the most promising river
the committee
gave me the
Highest Achievement Award
for a river

i get the trophies
and the cash prizes
and the numerous
plaques

(i feel
the inside
roughness of
the other
plaque between
my teeth and
gum)

i am not
really happy if
only
they
ask me

but they didn't

who wants to be a river?
yes, who really wants to be a mere river?
nobody

but love me for this
i never cried
a river

i cry no
river no more

(never for once
if i
correctly still
remember)

RIC S. BASTASA
I Decided

decision
do not imitate you
and in your justification
that everything is yet
unfinished
shall not follow

time is this nice feeling
that every creation is a beautiful one
whole and finished
and seen by the eyes
as a flowering delight
like a window with an
orange curtain
a wall with vines
a stair with intricate carvings
of wood at the
railings

class when i pass by
deep within i smile
my heart whispers
this world is whole and complete
and so
beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
I Deleted Your Comments

not that i like them
i may
but i just think they
are
unnecessary

i like being alone
and so please
go

(i did not say to
hell)

RIC S. BASTASA
I Desist From Translating You Again

...henceforth
i desist from translating
you again,

i will be lost and it is not
easy to be grappling in those alien
words that you constantly utter
without rhyme or
cadence....

i am lost now
drifting like a leaf upon the surface of the river

and you are there mumbling still
far away from me

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Avoid You

we meet
and then i greet you
hello
you ignore me
by shifting your gaze
to the bus
you turned your head
left and right
right to left
and i wait for you to mind
me
and i stand still and look
at you still
you are bringing flowers
i think they are for me
you take the taxi
rushing
you close it and you do not
notice me crying
it rains and i get wet
and i take a walk back
to the park
the winds begin to blow
hard on my face
i take a taxi back to my
house
i close the door and
i sleep
you call me on your cellphone
i turn it off

and then you write a poem
that i am avoiding you?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Change......

oh how time passes
swiftly like a multi-winged bird
mythical
or like a rocket
here in the now and then
nowhere
smoke rising in the air
and then
infinity

first it was his father and now the son
familiar places in a row
of chairs
year after year and
the year after

they have all changed
(hope for the better)
the child in their fathers
the hands of mothers growing
lilies and garlands

and they are all surprised to
see
how black my hair still
how steady my hands
how the bridge of my nose remains
unbroken

how i did not change

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Know That He Has Become Serious In His Poetry Writing

until one night
i saw him putting his chamber pot
beside his
personal computer

and his teapot too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Like It

i actually did not like it
when you rest your head
on my shoulders
while we were on bed
and you ask
if at all you mattered

how could you be
so shortminded?

i am tired
and i have no mind
and i can be so dishonest

i do not like it
when you compel me to make another lie tonight
in my silence

you equated it with
yes....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Notice That You Are Still There

Though you know it is me
That I am here a longer time
ahead of you
]
When you arrive
You pretend that
There is no
Presence of me
]

Do you love my absence?
Do you want me
To leave
Or you simply
Want a proof of your importance
]

That I notice you are here
And that it should be
Me first to say hello
to you
]

You always doubt my presence
My unequivocal
Love
]

Will it be you or her?
Or you and
Her?
]

Or just you
It is something till today
An equivocation
Equipoised.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Did Not Say I Love U

there is something wrong with my beliefs
perhaps my codes are rambled again
my cards are in disarray and my locks of hair are rising to the air
i look like an electrified hippie

i want to say i care for you and even i love you but i just can't

there is a lump in my throat and with my own hands using the mirror of my car, i look at it, there is blood, and there is a porcupine inside it, wanting to come out, but it can't entangled like a hook in the gills of a fluffy fish, poisoned and dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Didn'T Know That Butchered Animals Do Not Feel Pain

sexy, so sexy,
and meaty and
tasty....

tenderloin steak,
spare ribs,
pork barbecue,
menudo,
sausages, and
chicharon, and
brain chops

sexy, so sexy,
butchered meat
feeling no pain
well cooked and
too spicy on my
table.

do i hear
the sound of red
blood dripping?

send it the specialty of this house.
sexy, so sexy,
and meaty and tender and juicy....

that is how i want things to be.
i don't mind the pain too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Believe In God

there may be doubts
like pebbles along the path towards a house
there may be darkness
at the end of day
but there is still a candle to light
a gas lamp by the side
of the door
outside the house covered by a glass

you see how even during the storm
through the window
transparent on the curtains
there is still this flickering light
despite the wind
even in my sleep my nightmares
faith still glistens
like a distant star

amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not

I do not wish to talk
Today
There is so much
Contempt in so much
Familiarity,

We know it. We will not like it.

We should not betray
This friendship with so much
Talk,

Senseless, and too tiring.

Let our silence miss us for a while.
Like we think somewhere else.

Like simply listening to what these heavy downpour
Of rain is telling us,

Something wet and wild and
Wonderful.

God is making a lot of noise. This heavy rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
the way to love
is always to conceal
what we are
bringing

if we disclose, even sooner,
surely, everything
is lost.

we are here dining
in an old restaurant and
i order pasta with lots
of tomatoes and cheese
and you, as usual go for
the salad.

i conceal what i really
like to eat, what i dream
about, and i manage it well.

you ask me if i like what
i order and i of course said
the yes that you need.

you should have noticed
that in love, in a dining moment
like this,

i do not ask questions.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Correct Mistakes ... I Play

it so happens that
i post a poem with some errors
not of feeling but of
grammatical lapses and she is afraid

that people may begin to belittle me for such
unforgivable simplicities of
mistakes unaccounted

but i tell her even beforehand that i am
always unapologetic
even unkind
or indifferent

i am a person who does not go back
to review
and correct errors

i laugh at them knowing that they have deceived
me into such a corruption

somehow life is like that
we rush to get out of a door only
to find the wrong key in our hand
and we are having a hard time
opening that
which we closed
and we cannot enter anymore
except when when we break the door &
open it forcefully
with a hammer

the noise is painful
having to break in
your own room with locks forced open

like an invasion of your own
body destroying it
breaking your heart or
bones
tearing your skins apart
or slicing some flesh
because you made a mistake

i like lapses,
errors are not supposed to be
minded at

life is like that
no crying for what is there already

sometimes
i don't even solve puzzles
i let them be their own problems

as i sit on the sands
watching the sun
set
feeling the cool winds when the
world starts to lose
its light
and surrender all its arms
to the power of
darkness

and when it gets too dark
i begin to play again
like a child left by mother
abandoned
by father

under the moon under the rain
and all alone.
i like it when i listen
to the bliss of my own wild
laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Demand Much

i do not demand much
that you give me so much
love,
i have lots of love to give

i am love myself
overflowing
and if i love you
and tell you so
that i love you
i do not demand much

i am in love with you
and i do the loving
because in truth
it is the loving that
is the giving and
it is not the taking
that matters to
the one who truly
loves to the one
who loves to love
being loved is not
really that important

when i love
i give
i do not take

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Expect That....(For My Wife)

i do not expect that you will be perfect,

and sometimes, i wish you to do wrong
so that you may be in the future strong,

that you commit some errors
so you will know the meaning of some tremors

i do not expect you to be like God
in His Omnipotence,
i like you in this human state
so close to me
warm and real.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Have It....

i have tasted it
it is bland
i see it
it is not what i
expect
there must be something
more
i just feel it
there must be something
much much better
i have touched it
it does not really matter
i am dishonest i do not tell you
i am too in this
groping and hoping
at night imagining what could
be best
tomorrow or the next and the next
something beyond
something i am sure which is not
yet here
i have not even told myself yet
for i do not have it.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Have To Be......

i do not have to close my eyes
to listen fully

i do not have to shed tears to understand
what is goodbye and
attachment all about

i do not have to burn myself in the fires of the sun
to understand how far is it from my earth

i do not have to be you to understand you
i have enough of me
and then
i have fully understood what is this all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Know If You Feel The Same Way

it so happens one moment
someone so smooth and so clean
so beautiful
we kiss, and caress, and not contented
we feel like eating that someone whole
and be a part of us
forever.

(a cannibal loving?
can love be a form of cannibalism?)

i salivate for love
my teeth are gritting
my stomach hungers
for the body.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Know You.....

and so you have arrived,  
and you call, ' i am here'

when i heard this, i then  
remember

' i am here' i also said that  
to you, when i arrived there

in your place, i was a tree and  
you are the horseman and you keep on

that equestrian pride, and you always  
pass me by, and

i felt betrayed, and diminished and  
degraded,

i even felt i was just a grain of  
sand  
and you were the sea

but i am not that foolish, i also  
learn, i got brains you know

and so when you keep on ringing your  
arrival, i turned my phone off,

and when you sent me text messages  
i just deleted them, all of them

so you are here? what is it? now  
is the time too for me to say

' i am busy' that's pretty cool, but  
that is still not enough,

'do i know you? ' this could be worse,
but i muster the courage now to show who you are,

ugly, ill-mannered, manipulative, user, monster, parasite, so here you are?

i am so sorry, i do not know you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Like Long Poems....

inasmuch as i
have no liking for
long speeches,

for i am an
impatient man with

other things to do
like gazing at stars

dipping on the shallow
waters of the river

riding horses and
climbing mountains,

i am sorry, i reject
that long poem of

yours. Submit it to
the commission, let

them know what epic
you have written

for those star years
for those future trek.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Live In A World Of Flowers & Clouds And Mountains & Rivers & Brooks

I do not live in a world of flowers
I do not live in the world of blue clouds and green mountains and ricefields
I do not live in running rivers and stretching seas and clear brooks

Though I write about them
Though I miss the scent exuded by them in their kindness
Though I like the bees and butterflies that busy in their
Multicolored world with some rainbows and coolness
Of rain showers and warmth of sunshine so like
Paradise, so like the Eden of our ancient dreams,

But I do not live in the world of flowers
I cannot leave in the world of flowers

My land is this desert scorched by the noonday sun
My sea is this sand stretching from shore to shore
My outlook, my view is this misleading mirage
My clouds are these unresolved doubts and fears
And my air is this silence that only the dead can surmise.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Long For Your Eyes

i do not long for your eyes
not your hands
not your breasts
you do not entice me
anymore that you used to
seduce my
silence,
you have become the noise
on my streets
of desire, the canals have
overflowed
and the flowers on the garden
do not have red roses
the weeds are thriving
but in his house
i must still live with you
there is no choice
but the same silence
that came with you
when you seduced me
into this trap
i want to spell the word
home, love,
fidelity.
Help me spell all the other
words for me.
I am groping
for those that lie deep
and strange.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Mean You Really

the poems are for the dogs
not for you really
yes the dogs do you hear them barking?
they're too many
it's not me

sometimes poems
are not really meant for
understanding

just feelings baby
not you or her
but the universal angst

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Really Mind If You Mind

do you fear me now?
do you have doubts that i may know the manners of an angry man?
do you hide away from me avoiding so much familiarity that which does not just breed contempt but numbness as well for all the senses?
do you shy away now that i have known you much better like a secret pathway named after my beloved?

have i done something to kill respect like i am one kind of a murderer who must deserve the hanging of conviction?

why do you hide still when i have opened myself like all the windows of this public hall?

why do you shrink like a plum deprived of moisture and water?
do not turn into a raisin be a fruit to me i am hungry of your sweetness your pulp, your flesh be with me in my sorrow and pain come to my soft bed be the arms that i need be the hands that i can hold

i am a lonely man needing comfort

let us talk, let us be closer now let us make love let us turn off the light let us let the light of the moon filter what is pure behind these double curtains

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not run away from grief
grief itself is the cure of grief,
did you not know that from the thorns grows
this rose?
from boulders, that nugget of gold?
that from dead trees
the rare orchid blooms?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Sing A Lullaby
	his is one
thing that
i haven't for
once
sang

baby you have
not arrived

& i have
already waited
for so long........

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Take Pride About My Loneliness

I do not take pride in my loneliness
But I get embarrassed at times
And I hide it
As

SOLITUDE

IT gets covered in such term
Of lovely loneliness
Of a certain wise man of a certain poet
Sitting on a hill
Stars lighting his long lonely nights
And the laces of darkness serving as his blanket

No mater how I hide loneliness, however

Loneliness
To such term as
Solitude

Loneliness comes in claiming the truth of its name

"I am lonely" say it "I am always lonely" shout it.

I guess I have to tell the truth

I am asking for the true definition of solitude

How does it look like?
Now that I am lonely, how can I ever say

"what I have is solitude and my poems tell that so"
I take
pride on such a camouflage

a facade
a skin
glowing to the color of sunshine
covering a skull that looks like the true face of death.

I do not take pride on this shame on this embarrassment

“I am lonely”, take my hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Want To Be Lost In The Crowd Of Tongues In Cheeks

when i left the party
i lied, i told someone that i am going to the rest room,
i rushed to my car and sped towards my way home,
i am not home at parties, they give me
gooseflesh,
my hairs like to rise like i were
electrocuted,

in my isolation i feel real, a king in my own small territory,
when i am with you
people, i become so scared, scared about what i think i do not really
know,
my senses are sharp and it knows that there is danger
of being
lost again amidst the crowd
their tongues inside their cheeks
and you just don't know what happens next,

and so i left earlier that you expected,
i simply have no more reason to stay and be melted like a candle
in that big fire
of hypocrisy.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Want To Say Anything At All....

when we speak
we like to tell actually nothing at all
what we desire is only to live
the moment
so we refrained speaking about the
past which we cannot change
or the future which we cannot purchase
days like these
make us lonelier than ever
perhaps because we want to tell something else
that which we have grasped
and about to
but not what we are having now
this being
which we are holding for the time
being

i know how hard it is but does it
really matter?

did the wind that pass recently tell you something
about itself?
does that wave which touches your feet
claim otherwise?

no they are not minding you
neither do you think really that they mind themselves
for you think them as unthinking things

so why can't you do the same?

stay
just stay here
just be what you are

even without me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Want To Say It

but really,
after days of absence
and i was away
pleasing myself
with another date
in another beautiful place
tranquility of the sea
and songs of seagulls
and cool summer breeze

but really
i come back again
doing the same things

i do not want to say it
but i
really miss you, baby.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Want To See Religion Dancing With Politics

so ugly to look at
as religion is not a good
dancer always stepping
on the shoes of
politics

i abhor them getting married
at people's expense
for soon
what they shall beget
shall be
hardheaded children of the
self chosen gods
and spoiled lectures
about heaven
and hell

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Wish To Die In The Classroom

i do not wish to die in the classroom
learning all day about what life is all about

i do not wish to die in the comfort of my own home
beside my lover
embraced by the comfort of warm arms

i wish to die like a child
wildly free
playing and running
in the playground of life

i wish
that not
a single mom watches me
as i stumble on a rock
or fall from a swing or a seesaw
and then

i simply close my eyes and dream
about a certain darkness that shall have no end.

then i will dream of a faint light, a little angel
waking me up again

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Wish To Irritate You

am still here, you ask,
but i have been away for a while,
with my thoughts, and then you say

hey there? are you gone?

and i go back, typing the words,
am always here my darling,

why can't you notice what i am doing?
i am not asking, i am silent.
i am not answering any question
from you,
but

i am always here, ready to talk to you
in some normal
ready to say, syllables.

i am here. But not for long.
know that, i am the wind
and you are the stone.

you are not hurt.
i do not stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Wish To Romanticize....

there are some theories
for instance, that we shall only settle on the magical state
of our words, do not philosophize
do not restructure a world that we are in now,
do not disturb the political order
do not preach, papa, do not ever preach
do not be the church of any order

just feel the lyrics of the song
the beat of the agony

my hands rub your hands in my belly, feel that something in me that
is growing and hardening,

let the metaphors do the excitement
of that strong burst of emotions

do not justify,
that is not the intention of our words
there is nothing about repair or
compensation,
just see the stars,

and feel the light of the moon on your cheeks
let someone touch you

do not ever think, but just savor the very moment
of carpe diems

in other words,
romanticize, romanticize, fantasize, nothing about
bread or butter, or wine or dessert
or red meat or corn
or wheat or
bun,

i am sorry,
it is not my cup of
tea to simply romanticize,
i want some reforms, and i want to make a difference.
i want words with weight,
like anchor like anvil like
steel bars, balls or stones,
scales, and stick and swords and
basins,

i want action, punishment and rewards,
and restructuring of buildings
reconnecting bridges or sinking ships
and finding treasures.

i need a map, and i need you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Do Not Wish To Understand You

to understand you is to put you under the control of my mind
tie you there and with a scalpel layer by layer i will peel you
peek upon the secret nooks of every muscle and
take you into pieces as bones and ligaments

i can imagine the pain
it is not mine of course but
yours

on this thinking i have become grossly unfair
and so i leave you in the middle of your mess

i guess i must trust you
i know you can manage

our friendship and trust shall take charge
everything shall work and shall make the best of what you are

left alone to heal the wounds
to grow those scars

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don'T Anymore....

this thing is not the most
important to do in my life
i have many other important things
to manage,
but this one is most addicting
because it can be anything
from trivial to serious
or to nothing but just a
matter of expression for the day
like
hmm, when i have nothing to say
i can always say it here
like when i have nothing else to mind
i can always put it here

you see, we are riding on the same boat
of ennui
when we feel riding it
we do,
when we don't we simply turn this thing off
and
do something else somewhere
nothing kills us, nothing can,
as simple as that...you wonder
i don't anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Complain

if the most stupid
among us here
gets the reward
it is not a problem
with me
it's the owner's
prerogative i suppose
&
i am just an ordinary
employee here
earning my living
&
if the most unqualified
among us here
becomes the boss
well
it's no problem with me
it's managerial priority
&
i am nothing but
just their lowly employee
to hire and then to fire

i have no right to complain
this company is theirs not mine
not ours.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Drink Liquor Anymore...

i've been drunk many times
not just with wine
but with power
for which when i am sober
the guilt is eating me
over

and so
let me be frank with you
i do not drink anymore
that hard liquor
with those highly spirited vapor

why can't we just sit and let the time drink us
we be the drinks on the vessels of our emptiness
filled by the spirits of the wines
of the moment

let these talks take us
to the surprising places of our hearts
sincere and
illuminating like the early morning sun
arriving
where we are those greenest grass
taking in more
of those chlorophyll

we shall be drunk with our poetry
and dance with the music of our sorrows
let us share all these
on our highly improved
Tu Fu.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Give Up On You Babes

i don't give up
on you beautiful Babes,
you're sweet and
adorable
you fight for me
and i am so
flattered

i don't surrender Babes,
i am into this
intercourse
two bodies
pushing and pulling
for some
meaning
searching and
pointing to places
of the heart

i like this way of
knowing Babes
touching you when
i close my eyes
and kissing you
when i feel so
alone inside my
room

Don't leave me Babes,
Don't make things too obvious

Do they think that you are unhappy?
That i am as lonely as a tunnel
where birds stop a while
and peck on a seed
and then leave me empty again?

Well, Babes, when do we meet again
Inside our crazy dreams?
I Don't Have An Arm For A Pillow

i don't have an arm for a pillow
under the yellow moon

but i have all my hands as cups
for the tears from my eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Have The Guts To Tell The Truth Anymore

of the nine reasons
i had given you
there is only one
which is true:

i lost the guts
to tell the truth
because it is no
longer there
in the first place

if there is any
it is concealed
in ten colors
layered by
twenty clothes
in the darkness
of thirty walls.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Know What

i don't want to be with you
go with anyone else not me
go buy a mirror and see for yourself
your face that only your mother can love
do not look at me like i am guilty
i do not know what to do with pity
go away and find another one
go away and do not just stand

i am wondering when i get to rest
and simply be my best

go away moron and find yourself your beast.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don'T Look For Miracles

as i listen
you traced the roots of your faith
to miracles,

cancer cured
a happy life ever after

a renewed life
from broken bones

sometimes in silence i begin to think
faith grows too
even without miracles and that is

the miracle itself
no crutches for my legs to stand
no fetish no superstition
no stories

plain conversation in the altar of
my humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Mind....

DESPITE
what you did
(you cheated me)
am still here
i need your love
let me love
you then

despite the
humiliation
how you shamed
me
am still here
to love you

for i am the
giver and
you are the
taker

for i am love
and not hate
for i am
in unity with
myself
and not in the breaking
of your
shaking

am here if you
are broken
call my name
am here
to love you
even if
you still do not
love me

that is love
that is giving

i let go doves
to fly away
in the air

i wait at night
time
i don't mind
if they come back
and roost
again in the
branching trees of my
heart

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Really Know When Will This End

describe
when will this end, this silence between us at noon
a harsh noon, hot and humid, where I burn like a pile of wood in the forest
on a very cold night with you on the other side of the bed
facing the full moon and some shooting stars

describe between us, when will this end when will the space
between our eyes
resolve the distance of the seasons night and day and summer and rain

i sleep on the bed alone on some scorpion thoughts biting one another
inflicting venoms that numb and even kill
and there you are rocking yourself on a chair making some sleep
like a concoction
of vodka and champagne teasing your eyes filled with tears

the soap on tv is busy with their stories of pain and twist and turns
i pray to end this silence so we can talk and
lay down the final plans
of our earthy longings some demarcations of pain and tolerance and
facts and conclusions
this wherefore and therefore finally

you turn off the tv, and you lay beside me touching my hand
i give in, i still miss you, and i think, the silence has come on the soft
wings of a butterfly for a brief flutter at the ceiling
looking at ourselves for another sweeter second time beginning

the cliche: love is sweeter the second time around is still written on the wall
how can i forget it

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Really Mind

when you shout and scream
and slam the door
i don't really mind
as i watch TV

I guess i was born
to be a perfectly normal and
happy person

so, i am really sorry for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
they all remember
their dead,
they make landmarks
of place they've been too
they make journals
to keep forever what happened
when they were still alive
they take pictures
preserve them
frame them and hang them in their
libraries
and living rooms
old faces, beautiful bodies
in their dresses
of their own times
and suits and
shoes,

sometimes i ask why?
why do we really have to remember?

when we all leave
what mind in us may still remember?
and will those who inherited our failures
and even fortunes
remember us?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Really Understand, Mama

when you said that Papa is good
and that he loves you and that he loves us all

i really find it hard to understand Mama
till now

why he kicked you with his feet
why he hit you with his fists

why he left us for such a long time
and why he came back always drunk

make me understand Mama, i am too old
to be dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don'T Understand A Sunset I Just Watch It

as i sit on the white sands on the beach
watching another sunset
i do not think
of the sunset
i just watch it
and be amazed about the changing of the hues
and then the darkness
and then the moon and stars that come
like a change of a number
in a program that you watch

what is it to to be understood? Tell me.
There is nothing to be discussed and written like a thesis
these things are
meant to be seen and felt and then forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
I Don't Wait In Vain For Your Love

lady you must know that i am a busy man
in love, and i am asking you
today if you still love me,
so i can decide for
myself what to do with this love of mine
insisting inside my heart

i am a busy man always in love and loving
seems to be my thriving business
this offering of love
till the last supply (of drops) lasts

grab it and take it if you really love me
because baby, i don't want to wait in vain for an answer
love me if you will
because if you don't or if you won't

i'll take the other chances somewhere else
where my love shall fully grow

you may be the only flower i see today
but i may have to pick other flowers somewhere along my way

RIC S. BASTASA
I Drink Tears To Become The Salt Of This Earth

teardrops from
My eyes
to my cheek
slowly
to my lips
my tongue
licks it
my mouth
swallows

I need tears
to drink
To become
The salt
Of this
Earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Enjoy The Reflections Of Your Light

i enjoy the reflections of your light
from a distance
where you burn when you see me looking at you
i enjoy your flame
in blue, red, and green and orange hues
it is warm from where i stand my hands feel you
i go near you i may burn like you and may hurt myself
but it does not matter now i have nothing to protect from hurting
i have nobody to comfort me
i have no choice but to burn
myself with you
and those who simply watch love and how lovers pain themselves
even to the edge of death
in conflagration
in the passage of time
rotten and to dust returning
they will not remember anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Envision A Time When We Are Poor

once
out of my loneliness
i sit and envision a moment when we are poor
and desolate and we decide to go together for a lunch date
and we order
what we really want despite the fact that we fear we cannot afford it
yet we do not mind what happens next

i have the best chicken curry and jasmine rice and green tea
and you have the four seasons-juice
and beef steak & mashed potatoes for the main course
and leche flan for dessert

and we talk on some matters of the heart
about the stillness of time
and the unchanging mind and we begin to escape the poverty
of the hands and the feet &
the reality of us
wrinkled and weak

and we laugh and we look at each other and we confirm
the power of love.

love wins always
we agree

RIC S. BASTASA
I Envy Those Fingers...

an unbuttoned shirt

thanks for the ripe papaya

i envy those fingers....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Exist Only In The Mind

imagine a bubble
crystal
or made of glass
or soap

floating in the air
where i am inside

imagine a quick
prick of the needle
from a child's hand

puff!
i flip flop

i am gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Feel So Light Like A Fur, Like A Feather


My heart listens. My arms fold. My hands clasp. I breathe a breastful of air from your scented body. I love this way of finishing a relationship. We make love and then without saying any word We part ways.


Who cares? We had it, and that was enough fuel to make us Move to another direction. To propel us to heights beyond our control.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Follow The Smoke, And Sigh

at first we like highlights.
we want to reach the peak of this and that.
or the lowest point where we can get attention.

the years twirl. The nights curl. The days dance.
Until everything gets numb.

Then we take our reclining chairs when evening is near.
We light the dry grass, build a fire, and produce the smoke
that climbs the stairs to the sky.
We sit calmly, our hands free on the side of our body, and then look beyond the
distant sea facing us
without any emotion.

I look at you, doing the most usual thing.
Merely watching
the passage of quiet moments.

I follow the smoke, and sigh, hoping that in that far
place, God may still see us.
No matter how tiny.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Found My Niche

i found my niche
and it is the place of my brothers whose tongues
are as forked as mine
whose words are as sharp as mine and we understand
how to say them
and we say them as we understand them
from the roots
to the stem of our awakenings

some bottles of wine will do
in this little niche
this country of my people
where i am one
of those counted to make a stand
and speak

there will be singing and touching of hearts
through the poems that we compose
and read with each other

there will be this sense of ourselves
back to our own arms
this sense of home
where each of us
are so alive.
we keep the poems in our own language now.

and if you wish, you must learn what each word means.
come, come, you are invited.
leave your slippers
before you enter. There is this burning bush in the middle
of our presence.

it is burning. it is burning.
we are in the midst of this worshipping.

come, come, come, stranger.
there is no reason for fear here.
I Give The Sound

i have experienced
freedom in the wings of the bird

i taste air
it is bland
i ate space
it is empty

i have experienced doing
anything

explored what i have
not explored

i have been there
there is nothing

i say i have everything
if you wouldn't mind

i shall tell the truth
there is nothing there

nothing satisfies the tongue
nothing fills the mind

nothing is forever intimate
with this body

nothing is so intertwined
with the soul

that when it breaks away
i am still intact

nothing is broken
nothing is created
what is this soul?
what is it that always longs for satiation?

there is this empty
unlimited space

i give a sound
it has never since then returned to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Give Way To Time Without Much Murmur

time comes to my narrow alley
it fits, i make things fit there
like a snake hissing on its very
tiny hole
its fangs sing of clarity
it bites without
responsibility the frog dies
and the rain mourns
for said loss,
time passes me by like we
were strangers
my beard turns white
my hair diminishing into a death
of its own
chasing the tomb in the forehead
one day i look into the mirror
seeing another person
i swear
it was so haggard in looks
deep sunken eyes
like an old Spanish church buried
by this volcanic eruption
somewhere in Camiguin Island.

I ask myself, what is my name?
I smiled, how can i ever give a wrong answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Go For Simplicity My Friend

i go for simplicity my friend
because i am poor

i do not go for sophistication
because i am poor

i do not complicate matters
because i am poor

i do not want you to misunderstand
because i am poor

i do not want you to think some more
because i am poor

i do not want to convince you
because i am poor

i do not want you to be with our side
because we are poor

i want all things in their simplified forms
because we cannot afford
any other form of convolutions

we cannot afford another revolution
it will be expensive
and we have no more years to give
to pay for the sponsors

RIC S. BASTASA
I Go Out In The Open Field

i go out
she builds fire
earth sghs

RIC S. BASTASA
I Go To The Past And Regret It

i go to the past
barefoot i tread upon its
sands

it is cool
funny

really funny
it is very simple
and spontaneous like
a smile

i regret
it was too short

very much like
a glimpse
of you

and what i see is only
a shadow

a moment more like a
kiss

which has nothing to boast
but its
goodbye

yes, it was shallow but it
was really
fun.......
I Got A Boat

i got a boat today
let us all ride in it
its destination is
happiness, its name
is Happiness,

the boat is a decision,
with a flare for precision
it is not dependent on
luck, or destiny, or
dictated by the zodiac,
it is a decision to be happy,

come, ride with me
let us all be happy!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Got A New Satin Jockey

IT FEELS so smooth on my skin
depth down under my
thighs i feel like a
god

my inner glands
are so curious about something
smooth and new
and tickling
like your feather dusters

and i like you looking at me
like i am a
born-again christian

on the other hand what really matters
is not this satin jockey
it is still what is bobbing inside
that really counts

feel it like your
throbbing heart

RIC S. BASTASA
I Guess

i guess today when you arrive
you enter the room so tired you lock the room
and switch on
and switch off the light
you sleep
and tell the world for once
you have nothing to do with it
until the next day
when it rains heavily on your roof
and the water rises
and you ask it where is the door for your next escape

RIC S. BASTASA
I Guess I Must Place It Under My Bed Beside My Socks And Shoes.

i, too, honestly
cannot imagine that
hat as an elephant
inside a
constrictor

i admit i must not
have felt everything inside
me in the heart

everyday to live
this kind of life i have
to see a hat as
a hat

it is the brain
that works to get us
our daily bread

when i followed the heart
i go bleeding most
of the time

one in a million
we go berserk
over so much drama
and yet
arrive at nothing but
our perdition

let me touch my heart at night
when i am about to sleep

and to sleep well
i guess i must place
it under my bed
beside my socks and
shoes.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Guess It Is That Simple.

to win
is a relative
thing

it is like this
game of
stone, paper and
scissor

it all depends
on the situation
who faces you now
and what you
should be

to the scissor
you must be a stone
and to the paper
you must be
this scissor

i guess it is
that simple.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I ask
This question if the people out there really read poems?
A laundrywoman for instance
Does she even read? Have I told her that there is poem
For laundry soap and how her laundry can be magical?
Or the carpenter, does he ever know that poetry exists
As he hammers the nail on the stairs or puts the walls
Of the house that he is making? Is there a certain beat
In the strokes of his sawing the wood from a newly cut
Tree? Is there something sentimental about his pencil that
cuts the exact plank of wood to make the railings of
the veranda?
And what about the garbage collector? Is there poetic
sense in the smell of garbage that he collects early
morning of the day?
Or about a friend who spent so much to move to
some places in the U.S. or Canada or New Zealand
looking for a dream for a greener pasture in foreign lands?

Well to tell frankly I write a lot about them, this laundrywoman
This carpenter, the garbage collectors and friends who give up the
hope of finding a good life in my country?
I guess I have the right to ask, if they ever read the poems
about them?
I guess I have to ask if there is really poetry in what they
do and what they dream and what they worry about?
I drink so much coffee to extend my nights to reach
a certain poetic significance about some uncertainties
And the meaning of all these which may not be
magical, poetic, which may not after all
be, in the most plain sense,
Readable.

Sometimes, I go outside this room where I am thinking
about them and write about them and just sit there
on a rocking chair looking far to the boundless sea
And I ask, sometimes, do they really read poetry?
I guess, no one really bothers that much. They are busy.
The guy who stopped
writing poetry
reasons out that he falls in
love but was not loved
in return and so he grieves over
such a misfortune

I wonder

Same guy, same unrequited love
but he never ceased writing love poems
for his beloved

And I wonder some more

The better guy shines like the sun
despite the rain
still fuller than a full moon
despite the storm

When you let the two stand together
they mirror one another
but I guess someone chose to be more
at par
with the gods sitting in the thrones of the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
I Guess You Can Say That I Am Hungry

I GUESS now that i have packed my bags
finally deciding to take this break away from you
for some other place that you need not know
for someone that may show
the care that i need
the love that i badly wish for
I GUESS you can say that i am hungry not for bread
or pasta or steak or
sex,

I AM HUNGRY FOR SOMETHING else
for words for some healthy conversations
for laughter
for silly talks we use to indulge before
for some lighter things,
for anything goes,

i need to loaf i need to float i have been anchored that long
i sense there is something wrong

RIC S. BASTASA
I Had A Friend I Met So Long Ago

i met him in the hills ago
for he was a freedom fighter like me
he was shot in the river by the forces
of the dictator and his blood
flood all over the waters of the land
until the sea turned
crimson
until the sunset turned
scarlet

he did not die
he lives in the lives of more freedom fighters
and every sound of the gun
sounds his name
and every song of the rain
sings his life
and every end of the day
starts a new dawn
for this democracy

RIC S. BASTASA
I Had A Talk With A Woman Just A While Ago

I had a talk with a woman just a while ago
Well, she is not just a woman,
She is that woman
The other woman,
That he always brags about,
Witty, witty, tweedy, tweet,
& shitty
To me, forgive me, but she is

Witty too, wait,

I wish him dead and for weeks I will be wearing black
Custom,
Tradition they say,
It will be my color of good riddance
Of this bastard of that woman
Sleeping in bed squeezing some drops of life
To lengthen that sense of agony,
Waiting on a chair
In a hospital room as though I am a passenger
On a plane on a flight to nowhere

Well, at least I have shown some chunks of my
Being nasty and
Well,
This touch of class that money always
Gives,
But I showed my wit,
My shit,
And she did not believe it,
Well,
At least, I am consoled,
I am the lie
And she will be the truth for a time
Until
Another encounter, with a web cam this time,
Perhaps tomorrow
When black will be the color of the week,
Or I will
Compromise for white,
Just in case, she still insists that I am still a lie
Just like him with her in some greenish spacious cyber bed.

Just a while ago, I had a talk with that woman,
she will feel what I feel she will.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have A Black Bird

i have this black bird
and it does not sing
but you confess you
love it just the same.

i nod at you and then
give you my sweet smile.
your tongue salivates.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have A Friend In Virginia Who Is Talking To His Chihuahua Named Silver,

I am healed.
i have a friend in virginia who is talking to his chihuahua named Silver,

do not ask me, of course, he is lonely, and Tolstoy has described it once when the only boy of the horse driver died in an accident one winter time and he had a hard time accepting the loss, and lamented such fact that he wanted to talk to anybody but then no one is there to listen, the snow fell heavily, and the whole world is one thick covered sediment where indifference was so thick that no empathy was possible to penetrate it.

this friend has white hair, wears thick glasses, and i haven't seen him reading a book, but he has his wine, and TV, and some friends to see on some special weekends,

he walks with his dog, and has a one way conversation with him because the dog is not talking back

this i can say, i can relate, as i too, talk to the car when i drive long distance just to divert my attention from what is found in the house, empty chairs, milk boxes, medicine capsules, celery and lettuce and tomato salad on the dining table inside a white porcelain plate, the scent of black pepper and olive oil, turmeric and ginger juice for my morning ritual,

my wife has five dogs, which make us a big crowd in the house, but for one thing i never bother talking to any one of them which has become a lot of noise for me

i love white cats but all these dogs drive them away. I like to go to the mountain where Papa planted some trees surrounding an old cottage. No one stays there because of the bandits who killed our caretaker. They cut his penis and hanged it on one of the beams of the old house. He was beheaded. There was hatred for a very uncertain reason. The man was very old, he had ten grandchildren. They all left the land.

i talk to my table when i am left alone in my office. I talk to the trees when i take
a walk on early mornings where i can fill my lungs with fresh air.

Talking to something inanimate is not uncommon. I remember this old man too in Fiddler on the Roof.

i guess my friend who is childless like me who works as caregiver in the U.S. of A is just coping up. Boredom is dangerous. Perhaps if he does not talk to his dog, or me talking to a chair, the possibility that the Demons of our Minds will begin talking to us, is not remote.

But there is one thing that i like to share. I was in the hospital for five days, isolated, and drugged to sleep by my doctor, and then i still remember, i held the rosary, and i begin talking to God, not the chair, not the table, not the bulb.

Whatever that is, call it a miracle. I am healed.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Accepted It, Hope You Will.

The scenes flash
in a series that runs smoothly
without a glare

somehow i have decided not to watch it
straight since it can be
a source of
prolonged and undisturbed pain

and so i shift from one frame to another
summer and winter
landscape and numbers
this time sky and then in a moment
sea
somewhere there could be a meeting
or none at all

the joys are intermittent
and i like it the way it should be
something that sometimes
we are not prepared yet to accept
but it is there
gazing at us and saying that it has
been a part of
our very being

and they shall concoct stories and
offer some explanation and lay the usual rules of
the game of life

there are scales which the rainbow fish wears
as it swims deep into the sea
and soon disappear into what we deem as the unknowable

be glad you are here
and with this short time we have
we cannot really make a lot of difference
peace be with you, that is the last offer
that is made
i have accepted it, hope you will.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Always Liked Your Silence

as you sit beside me
i have always liked your silence
running deep inside
my veins
like good blood.
i hate the way i always talk
but i could not stop
lest we both be silent
and sounding nothing
but dead
i am coping up with
what lack you have
and i envy you
for that
you are determined
in this silence
i am hesitant and prefer
my persistent noise
at least for the meantime
that we are waiting
for nothing to come
i like your
silence but i guess
you have nothing to say
and too
prefer
my talk, my restlessness
my world
where you cling
in the middle of your
sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Always Wanted The Sea To Be Calm

i have long wanted the sea to be calm
but they too have to comply with the changes of the seasons
abide by the rages of the storm
and throw of the tornado
the weird whirlwinds
the cyclic cyclones
the typical typhoons

i always envy the stones
they belong to no one and they abide to none.
they have no feelings and so they are not hurt.
they do not have the heart, and so they do not take the risk of loving.
i envy their stares, they do not blink, neither do they wink.
they roll and never break.
and sometimes they are carved and worshiped as gods.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Become Sore....

so many
beautiful
bodies

more than
sparkling
these
glasses of
wine
on these
tables

so many
moments of
ecstasy

countless years
of bliss
outnumbering
the days of
sorrows

i feel guilty
i do not feel
any

everything is
in order
harmony is
everywhere

i feel guilty
i am not a part
of any

i am not human
anymore
and to all of
them
i am sore.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Chinaski In My Mind

so you like chinaski
i like chinaski
too
i see him make love to many women
and drink his wine
and write his poems
somewhere
in the dark, damp corners
of the post office
or in the attic
or even in the park while
he strolls alone
drinks more than
what his mind
can take
and then
he arrives in his
apartment
gets his typewriter
and writes his thousand
poems as though
he is just talking
mumbling
to himself
all his sighs
and disappointments
of this world
now
well spoken
in verse and he
signs each
with this

bukowski, the man
you will never forget

he shies away
from fame but he
takes
the money just the same

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Come From Far To Shake Hands With Myself.

upon a homecoming
i will not be there

you shall perhaps
imagine how i have changed

perhaps from bad to worse
and there will be talks

i have another homecoming
to attend and this i must

tell you: i have come from far
to shake hands with myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Decided To Stay Choosing Tranquility

People come and go
Moving away
To new places
Looking for conformity

I am here
Allured by this sweet scent
Of champacas
In this mountain
Of contented tranquility
And like the tender
Flowers of dove
Orchids
Clinging to
The barks tenaciously

I have decided
To stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Had A Taste Of Your Badness...

you have bitten my back
i thought it was another snake
venomous
and i thought i have only a few
minutes to live and hence
i regret the happenings of
my life

when i turn my back i have seen
you
and you have changed me

not to believe a beautiful woman's
body
a gentle face
a word soft-spoken and i have
more trust on myself now

finally realized that your bites
are not that effective anymore
and that i can live more of you each
day as just another lousy threat of
a bad life

and having become so immune
i have disregarded everything in you
like a monotonous murmur of a busy day
a routinary wave of the sea
another ill-wind which need not be minded
since it is just passing anyway

now i am free and you have become
another fog along my way
and i pass through it
without much thought.

how sad of you, a smoke,
another useless and ineffective
pollutant.

my world is as fresh and green as ever.
more flowers are thriving now
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Learned To Live Alone.....

i always know how to create a happy world

i do not have to wait for a designer of
a happy interior

there is no place for a home maker here
i can manage

i cook a stew of happiness here
put them in a bowl
there is no recipe or choosing of
ingredients or even
measuring the quantities of salt and pepper
to be put there

whatever is available
i cut and make part of the menu
if it is hard, i soften it
if it tastes bland, i add salt and
seasoning
and if i want it sweeter
i do not have to ask for an opinion
i put whatever is my
dream and liking

i have learned to live alone
and happier this time

you must see me
perhaps next year
and i will not invite you
anymore
to enter my
new house

if you give me a ring
i will not answer it
RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Long Wanted To Make Love With You

inside your car
i have long wanted to make love with you
but you were so
prim and proper your hands
strict on the steering wheel
and your eyes
looking straight ahead
of the road
beyond us

nothing happens by chance
and nothing happens by chance without your permission
and so i just closed my eyes
(and you did not even notice)
i just imagined love and loving alone in the darkness of my soul
and even inside that fantasy
you were the angel with big wings flying high
like a cloud in the sky
and you look at me as though i am the ant looking for a morsel
of bread under your table)

and then, i learned you want to make love with me too,
and then,
how sad, you said

'you blew your chance baby! '

i could have been more brutish
on an insistence. Foolish me
and hypocrite you.

shall we meet again, this time without chains?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Loved

i have loved
when i was so young
and i thought that it was true

my heart was broken and time
heals
the pieces become one again
there is no sign of
a previous crack

i have learned when to love
there is the right person and the right time
for me

love is not just love alone
so different when we were so young
and dumb

love becomes a choice
it does not just come
we intend it
there is this responsibility
to commit
even in extreme bitterness
there is still
this companionship
when libido
fades like the night and the sun
even in the rain
cold nights
we, in love, sleeps together
in bed
warm and committed
till death
till the next life, on and on, like undissolved
time.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Loved You Through

Sooner my life shall end
And when I am gone
Beyond this world
And I am forgotten
Let it be remembered
That I have met you
And loved you through

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Managed Familiarize Myself With The Sound Of Rusty Hands, And The Rattles Of Nails,

i also know how to close
doors, in fact, i have closed so many,
to my own delight,
though, i have to be honest that at times,
closing a door leaves in me the sound
of sad hinges,
nevertheless, i have managed familiarize
myself with the sound of
rusty hands, and the rattles of nails,

after all, learning to survive the hazards
of walling in and walling out is the only means
that we use to arrive at survival rooms,
where we feel safe and take the soundness
of sleep

we take again the cliches of ourselves,
the redundancies of our usual beginnings
our modest cruelties, our capacity to escape
and be strangers to places of our lonely hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Mastered The Art Of Pretending

As i told you, write anything
but as i told you once, if you still remember,
write anything that tickles our minds, like acupuncture
to lessen the pain, with those needles, which to me
feels like your thumb, and the ring finger
it lingers, like the way i keep your lingerie last night
in the room which has no more tongue and teeth
which is quite beautiful in its peace and quiet since
it cannot tell which one of us did the healing or which
one of us inflicted the pain after. What pain is that?
that pain of having you and then losing you and then
planning again when to feel the gentleness of the
acupuncture needles again? I don't think much now
i have no more time for all these. I am alone in this
world, and i have mastered the art of pretending.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Never Been To Duhallow

hello my friend, i have heard of Duhallow
where trees are thick and green where brooks flow in spring
where flowers bloom where the birds sing
where women take their baths in rivers so clear and clean
where men do wait and gentle as they care
where mountains tower where forests prevail
where the air is cool where the nights as starry as before

hello my friend, i have never been to Duhallow
i have always dreamed of Duhallows
hello my friend, please take me there with you
in Duhallow, to Duhallow, cheers for Duhallow! ..

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have No Heart You Notice It

at the very first glance
i see love

and i believe love
and i am
stable as a
foot on
the solid marble
floor

love is crowded
doubt rains
it is a chaos of
burns and
bruises

pain is like a
drought
love dies
love dries itself
like
a cracking field
it sings
emptiness from its
chasms

then everything
turns
into war

within, without,
limitless

understanding is nil
you sleep

you wake up seeing the
same reality
unchanged

one complains to the
city
i do not understand
the language
of your lights

what do you mean?
the posts ask

love is overcrowded
it is a market of
barbarian vendors

i am not buying
i am going home
without my hands

you notice it
i have no heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have No Need

i have no need for
originality anymore
i like the mockingbird
singing its song
on the rooftops
always mistaken
for myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Not Expectation At All....

i have no expectations at all
not even from you, a friend, not even from you
lover,

it is the same way i open my self,
unbuttoning buttoning a shirt or zipping and zipping out
storage bags,

(how many are alive? no, it is the wrong question,
always, it is. how many are dead? injured? maimed? how many
are lost?

not how many are found, that is the way to keep records,
always for the dead,)

i do not expect you to wait, or read me, i am not a book
not your book, i am not your train station,

keep going, look at the window, see the passage of everything
trees, walls, houses, trucks, roads, yes even roads are passing
at us,

keep a watchful eye, look at the sky, today is the hottest,
at noon, do not expect to see stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
i must have been too
stupid not having understood
what is the meaning of that
small finger of yours
that touches my chin, thinking
that perhaps it is merely
accidental,
took me two nights to finally
think that something deep down
under means an ocean, whose wave
signals the coming
of a permission to that which
was denied of me before but
which i can do for now,

last night the moon was gone
and i was grateful of my own
stupidity: i have not sinned.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Nothing To Offer To You

when you turn me off
what can i have but
silence
i become the inanimate
television
that watches you

stoically
i do nothing more than what you
can do to yourself

i do not have those eyes that
can say yes
neither do i have the courage
to say
no to you

i am the wood and wire
assembled
insignificant because you
have decided
to deprive me of my own
meaning

i neither have life
nor death
to offer you as
relief

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Nothing To Say To You

i have nothing to say anymore
to you
we mutually like the way things ended
we're both happier now
we say it

i'll make it clear
the wind rushes beside my hair
and i know you do not trust my moustache anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Nothing To Say To Your Pain

i have nothing to say.
i will sit beside you and just look at your face.
i am at loss of words
there is no punctuation to ease the wreck
of the sentences of pain not breathing anymore to rest
but always wailing as though there is no end to your paragraphs.

what words are needed, i ask myself, to ease your pain?

i was there. i am still here. Past lives that still haunt
secretly in the furrows of our foreheads.
was i a nomad in the sahara?
was i a king in one of the kingdoms of Java?
have i killed a brother? or a father?

why are my hands trembling like some stilt houses
in the rivers of Kwai?

i am hearing voices from the deepest caves of India.
The past is not past. It is still here in the present
trying to tell me about what is there that i have not seen.

i look at you again. You have slept in my arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Nothing To Write From My Heart Today

having nothing to write
from my heart
having forgotten
some memories
of my love

i decided to write
from my mouth
and my hands
and so look at you
look at me

we feel nothing
we see nothing
that touches us

in the bottom
of our souls

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Seen

i have seen her
she smiles at me
inside the glass window
of the train
and she waves her hand
and then the train goes on and on and on
like a thought throughout the night
her face dissolving
in an infinite darkness
i am not light myself
i look for sound inside the forest
of my words.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Seen Her

i couldn't believe
that what i saw was so abstract
i couldn't see a line delineating
reality from fantasy, not a bee
on that usual flower, there is no
house on the hill, no man on the
beach, not a woman on the train,
the rain is a mere syllable,
the clouds mere unseen air,
not so dramatic as a leaf
falling on a rocky ground,
it does not speak of drought
or a truck crumpling a dried
dung, there is no message what
soever that makes an old man
think about his passage to the
afterlife, there was no cat with
nine lives, no electric chair to
see a dead man walking, and yet
this is the point: it is so popular,
and takes the No.1.

something so fishy,
i decided to take my rod
and try my luck
for that slimy fraud.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Seen Your Picture With Your Daughters In Kimono

i have seen a long time ago
you and your daughters in their colorful kimonos
then there was this guitar that you play
and the english language that you teach
and the education you are giving them

there are other many people in this world
not just us,
we are not living inside walls and fences
there are other playgrounds out there
where you my children can
play
beyond colors beyond chinky eyes
are other possibilities with us

the firetrees here burn with loneliness
this summer
forgetting the color of your memories
Japan, the city of the sun
where you now live
has claimed the name of your soul

but i know
under the blooms of cherry blossoms
this spring your heart still beats for the fire trees here
you still love the scent of the champaca
miss the yellow ylang-ylang on the hill
and the dama de noche has more love stories
to tell for the dark nights
where fireflies still flicker
those that we have long forgotten
still exist

we shall meet somehow filled with stories those left untold
when we have busied ourselves
with what could have been so unnecessary
those that we see only after they have been taken away
and time shall sit in one corner of the garden's wooden benches
and ponder

was there something wrong with the past?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Survived You

There is something in me that wants to be true
like a window that stares to a road where women pass by
covering their mouths from a dusty road
there is no blinking

every detail about the color
of each woman's scarf is duly taken

but there is a boy who comes from the bushes and carries a brown ball
and throws it at me and then i close this window in me and i turn into myself
coiling like a wounded snake

that snake within us
it does not hiss anymore but in this hurting hours our eyes are like lamps glaring
in the dark
thirsting for vengeance

the hurt is long and excruciating like a road to the cliff
and it has no end except an abyss

from then on
one takes the truth lightly like a feather plucked from a hen
twisting a neck and planning for a fried dinner

from hence
i laugh
i laugh out loudly so that you can hear and think finally that i am all right
and that i have survived
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Taken Your Slice Of Bread

i have taken your slice of bread
from the table

it is for you
as i have already eaten mine
early
this morning

forgive me
i have learned
to eat more

and took
without so much
thinking
your share

the slice of bread
one half bigger
than mine

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have This Big Mirror In My Living Room

i have this big mirror in my living room
i guess you must have liked it
yesterday you bought one and true to its purpose
your living room like mine has become a wide space
more fantasies, more time seeping in, more ideas perhaps,
more rivers in the mind, more skies, more emptiness,
but let me not talk about it for now.

i like it to be broken. Let me tell you in my next poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have To Go I Cannot Stay

i am just a pilgrim and my real job is to walk anywhere
i am a vagabond and my place is everywhere
i do not even have stars to follow to serve as my guide,
i walk and sleep and walk and sleep and walk again under the skies
night and day alone

follow me and take the risk,
but of course,
i will be happy to have you and be my love in this pilgrimage
anywhere everywhere somewhere

we shall be together when we shall arrive possibly
still holding with our mournful gazes

cheers... i am not the fine wine
just plain water, and you are not the cup
just plain cusped hands...

drink, we shall walk again
this time, together, beside each other..

we follow Him.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have To Speak....

it is nice to say
nothing
this i always see
in the other
person
always silent
nods when asked
shakes his head
when he disagrees
i wonder if being
mute is
a beautiful feeling
for that is what
skies and
seas do to us we who
stroll along the park
trying to figure out
how come we
love this noise
and miss it
when we are facing
the storms of
our lives
i dream to be secretive
for once
hide in the silence of
my loneliness
but the dread comes
rushing
and if i do not speak
i die.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have To Walk Away Again Looking For The Fresh Air

one finds a hard time nowadays
looking for fresh air

i step over a good view of the rice fields
from an Asian perspective

the rice fields are flowering
dews still sticking on the blades of grass
the sun is slowly rising from the mountains
a lot of fog hang on the sides
coconut trees are towering
not much winds today from the sea

a middle aged farmer stands under a tree
with his sweater on and his long bolo on his side
smoking his cigar
the woman in the house is cooking mud fish for breakfast
meanwhile she goes out and
starts a fire under the mango tree
burning a rubber tire
to drive some insects away
which she thinks are destroying
the tiny white flowers of
the tree

i smell the smoke coming from the cigar
it is floating in the air
the smoke from the rubber tire burning
is choking me

somehow that is what is being done to this world
brought about by ignorance and superstition and bad habits

i have to walk away again
looking for the fresh air

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Worms Inside My Mouth

at first i wanted to spit them all
wanting to relieve myself
with all the hassle
in keeping worms
that my friends detest

they tell me
that i must spit them all
for reasons of
sanitation

or perhaps
for my own sanity

i think about it
and the possibilities
of finally throwing up

after all i get
nauseous

this feeling of trying to hide
some things
inside the mouth

(do you know
about it?)

i could not do the throwing up
and so
the worms are still there
it is something
about giving them
temporary shelter
a home

i did not listen to myself
i did not listen to their advices
i decided to keep the worms for good
swallowing each worm
sliding in my esophagus
and finally settling inside the
rooms of my heart

i dream about each worm
wriggling inside my brain
but i keep them still
despite the mixed feelings of
pleasure and pain

one day
the worms become butterflies
and i feel ready for
this beautiful eventuality

i look up
to the heavens
on a very bright day

i spit them
all free

to the skies to the clouds
and to the trees
where they all
rightfully belong

RIC S. BASTASA
I Have Written This Poem

i have written this poem
at early dawn
when the heavy rains
of the evening
stopped falling
when the birds
on the trees
start to fly again

RIC S. BASTASA
I Heal Myself

from a broken heart
i start mending, sewing what was torn
from the bleeding
i seal the leaks and wipe the blood
i seal my lips
and prepare myself
always for another
love
another new beginning
obligated
to move on because at the end
i must declare
i love myself more
than anyone of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Hear Music From The Wind

i hear music from the wind
it 's the arias of the diva air.

i hear the sad song from the conch
i keep it singing in my ear

i see the great love from the rays of the sun
spreading
embracing me this early morning

i taste the coffee-ness of coffee from the cup
i love the sweetness of sugar the creaminess of cream

i love the liveliness of life
i dance its dance and sings its songs and taste its taste

i face all things sitting down
in a lotus position

RIC S. BASTASA
I Hear The Body Speak

i hear the body speak
today warning the soul
that its demands sometimes
cannot be granted because

the soul is merely its visitor
and here on earth
the body is the host and as

host, it decides what is
good for the moment
what is best for itself

RIC S. BASTASA
I Heard

i heard that to stop your mama
from wasting her life
and all the lives of those who also love her
like you
and your brother and sisters
and even your papa
you decided to choose
silence
extreme, determined, strong, authoritative silence
in the house
for you were once such a lively little girl
dancing in the yard and so sweet with ribbons in your hair
and smiling and laughing at the top of your innocent voice
and then
all of a sudden you embraced silence
and your mama
was stunned, stoned to your quick numbness and afraid about what
people say
that you have become crazy, a product of a broken home
your mama
finally opens her eyes
and for the first time in her life
sees you
a woman who wants to bloom but obstructed by her choking hands
she is so afraid finally
she lets you grow she sets you free she now calls you
your name.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Heaved A Sigh

i heaved a sigh
passing by the store
seeing this handsome man
tragically falling on
a manhole

(or was he eaten
swallowed hole)

because there was this mirror
on the store walls
and he was looking at himself
rather than his steps

his name is Narcissus

RIC S. BASTASA
I Honestly Love You, Some Notes

2 months ago
Had to say this again...

30 yrs ago I fell in love with a girl &
she with me.

We both had partners,
so nothing good
would've come from it.

I sang this to her -
we cried, kissed & parted.

We met once&65279; more at an office reunion
15 yrs later.
I was single,
she was with the same man,
but it didn't matter -

one look was all it took to know
that we'd made a mistake.

I found out last year
that she died suddenly
at home 5 yrs ago
she had breast
cancer.

I miss her. That's it.
I just miss her.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Hope I Am Just Like You

i know
that you will be reading this.

This is thinking about man's capacity to quit.
TO dismiss what he grows inside his heart.

He was talking about the stalk of the fruit.
His end like the sap. The white sap
of the stain of the stalk of the fruit

the banana stalk giving off the
white sap from its stalk
cut off by the sharp bolo
when it ripens

he is talking about the mouth
and the last spit of the saliva

rabid. The dog finally goes off the street
and bites everybody.

I am bitten. And i have no last word to say.
There is no reason to quit.
everything ends. There is such thing as
a natural death.

soon it will come. I am waiting.
I try to tell you that there will be an end to this.
It is obvious. Too obvious. Like sunlight
to my forehead.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Hope You Wouldn't Mind

i have blind spots
i sometimes do not see what you see clearly
and i stumble down upon some thorns
and hurt myself
unnecessarily and i look at myself in the mirror
like a curious child wanting to see
who i am and what i am
only to find some wrinkles
in my mind

i hope you wouldn't mind if i tell you
that you and me have some things in common
blind in some ways and seeing well in others

i live in an island and there is a rock there
and a red rose that i keep all day
i like you to live with me
for i may have the eyes that see the rising and setting of the sun
and the hands and fingers that feel the warmth and the coldness
of the seasons that whirl around my head

may i ask you to please bring your heart
for i have long lost mine
it was taken by someone who promised to live with me here

that bird flew away taking from my lexicon
the word 'forever'

RIC S. BASTASA
I Imagine

i imagine
you
thinking woman

your elbow
calloused
on the table
by so much
thinking

your legs
scarred
your bottoms
bothered
by innumerable
ideas
coming out
from your
head
like the
colored
sparks
of the fourth
of July

i imagine
you sitting
on your study
a heated
chair
a burning
table

a room
crowded
with a lot
of warring
ideas
a bed
not enticing
you to sleep

i imagine
you thinking
woman

scribbling
your poems
burning
a dozen
candles

i imagine
your fury
your disappointments
your disgrace
your fall
from their
grasp

the bump
of your head
on their
shallow waters

thinking woman
be pleased
in truth

i have not
offended you

all my hairs
have decided
to fall
on the floor

and my eyes
have lost
the need
for eyelids

and be happy
we still talk
in the lines
of this
unstoppable
poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
I Insist.....Tell Me...

they dream of
a well ordered society

a house with a
roof without leaks
a window that closes
and opens in
perfection
a stair like a
complete set of
teeth

a society that
flowers with hope

manicured lawns
and happy roads
without fences
exuding confidences,

for all these years
these dreams did not
come true
a fact that is hard
to accept or
has remained unacceptable
to their standards

hence, this is what is
happening now
by all means
by hook or by crook

they take the law into
their hands
make list of the unfit
and then work out for their
elimination

we all have the same eyes
and minds
robotics in numbers
and will be programmed
by:

who? by who? tell me
i insist.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Just Hope That She Will Be Alive When I Tell Her This.

i understand your predicament
the house is as spacious as the whole sky
and there are no stars in there
i heard once when you speak and there were echoes
bouncing from wall to wall and when it arrives to me
its only message is ennui,

do you want me to tell her that there is a rope in the house
which is posing a threat to your existence and that night after night you fear
yourself for an inhuman possibility?

that big screen in your living room will not work,
i tell you,
that menagerie of hummers will have no way of appeasing
your hunger for affection,
the garden of bamboos are neuters

all you ask is the human element
the one that gives you a glass of beer while you
plunge yourself in the sea
the one that gives you springtime
the one that affirms for once that you are
a breather

i will tell her that before the next war erupts
before we are all destroyed by this
incoming chaos

i just hope that she will be alive when
i tell her this.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Just Love Being With You

do not say anything
mislead me
in the labyrinths of your
silence,

i do not worry
i love being lost with you

RIC S. BASTASA
I Just Remember It Today

i remember when we were young
reared in want
accustomed to nothing
grown with guts
chasing dreams

we pretended that sands were grains of rice
that stones were loaves of bread
and pebbles as fried meatballs

we built a house made of coconut leaves
we had tin cans as kettles
we only needed a handful of water
in order to live in such imaginations

i remember when were so young
we were so happy
laughing over our mistakes

we did not mind what comes next
we were always ready for the best

we kept on saying, ' we ain't seen nothing yet! '

RIC S. BASTASA
I Keep A Place Where Everything Is Neither Sacred Nor Mundane

it is a place where
what i touch i can touch
where what i smell i can smell
with all freedom
where i can undress and look at my body
and see for myself the innermost chamber of my heart
where my soul sings for me the real songs of my life

there is a pond there
where i lay myself down where i can stare at myself
through the eyes of my being
at peace

the pond is a mirror where i can view the whole of my world
its face without any wrinkle its body without any ripple

RIC S. BASTASA
I Keep Looking For More Beyond And Deep Inside And Out

i have often
believed in all of you

what you have written
amazed me endlessly

the enigma kept
the mysteries buried
underneath the wisdom
of your fragile
spirits

the world listens
attentively
but is not impressed

everything is just
superficial to its
layered wisdom
inside the wombs
of its oceans

you have often focused
on your fingers
where petals are dying
their mortal textures
their redness turning
into cracks of
brown pieces

i am tempted at times
to settle for all these
sweet concealment
spirits of men singing
what this world feels
with all fragile frills
and nod with all admission
that it is true
and yet it must not
be uttered
for fear that we can
be wrong too

for who is so certain
about what we feel?
for what we cannot
really say?

nimble and shivering
along the paths of stone
i keep looking for more
beyond and deep inside
and out

RIC S. BASTASA
I Keep My Fists You Read Your Palms.

well, we can be here
for that formality

after all we had those
years together

we held our hands like
a flower bouquet

twas like a marriage
of this sort

i make promises and
you listen

i give you all those
years and you take them

now we are sitting on a
chair facing the road

we both leave this place
all those years

i go left you go right
and since this world is
round

we keep the hope, that
convergence out there

hope you can meet love
hope i can meet hope

the moment of boredom
has arrived with an empty hand

i keep my fists
you read your palms.
I Keep My Heart

there may be something wrong with the weather, tell me, there is something wrong with the way the temperature is rising today at 30 tomorrow at 36 my blood is boiling my heart is beating that fast and there is nothing to be done about it i am used in keeping my heart broken

RIC S. BASTASA
I Keep My Silence, I Think You Are Simply Seeing What We Really Are.

perhaps i have visited this island for six times, and now it is still amazing, white sands, cool coconut trees, colored pebbles, fresh air, emerald waters,

this is the second time with you and there you are lying on the sand without your hats and sunglasses on.

complaining, there is so much heat and you do not like it, the sea is getting polluted, food is boring and the sound of the waves sonorous,

i keep my silence, i think you are simply seeing what we really are. and i am so worried about tomorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Keep On Thinking

As we talk
i keep on thinking
who is this man who is talking to me
is he my comrade in poetry?
he is funny and he is hard
he writes too but revises as he says
as often as he wants to
wanting perfection perhaps?
is perfection a good motive to be a man?
or is it nicer to be a man of all the imperfections?
do you wish to insult God with your wish for
perfection?
i keep on thinking and then i keep on writing
aimlessly
firing all my guts to nowhere
and then i stop
i like it this way
aimlessly devoted to
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know

i know what you want to hear from me
after tonight
after i untangle my arms around you
after i take away my lips from yours
after i hide my tongue
i know what you want me to utter
after tonight
when the stars fade away
when the darkness hovers again like a giant
black bird
when there is nothing left between us
i know what i can still afford to say:

i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know For Sure

i know for sure
that when
you see
the sun directly
you close
your eyes
and see
everything
red inside
you

you do not
want to
be hurt
again

i know for sure
that when
you close
your eyes
you see
what you
want to see

will it be
me?

or will it
be him?

or will
it just
be yourself?

in pain
alone
I Know How The Grass Works

gthey die and they grow
and they repeat this cycle all over again
even if we are finally gone and buried underneath them.

i know how they are tended and burned,
i like how they spread far and wide and become the green coat of the
mountains again.

what i cannot understand is the departure of two lovers
who slept once under the moon on a dark night on that same grass.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know I Am Not Getting Any Younger

i look at my face in the mirror
and take my comb and start to part
my thick black hair in the middle of
my forehead,
a black dye cannot hide anymore
the white at the bottom of my hair
all of them and i stare at myself
and begin to fear the
hands of the clock ticking

i know i am not getting any younger
and i am eating a lot of oysters
fresh from San Pedro
wanting to recover the lost drives
somewhere in San Isidro Labrador

how can i lose this hardness of my being?
my life has orbited on this belief
that i only live when i am useful
to each of you

i return my hair to its original style
looking so young again
i love this face and i tell myself
it must still sink a hundred ships
till i am gone
till i am forgotten by all of them

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know I Have Only One Heart To Give

i have only one heart
to give
and one soul to share

but if all of you wish it
divide my heart into four
my soul into twenty four

for i am not poor
in love i open my door.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know That It Is Him Whom You Love And Not Me

i know that it is him whom you love
because when i left your backyard

despite the silence and the emptiness
of that hollow space

despite the absence of the wind
the umbrella in your hand begins to dance

your foot too caught in the act of pointing a toe
as though it will dance a hulaballo

he is coming and you can smell the perfume of his shadow
seven high mountains away from here

despite the fact that i am still about an inch away from the
bamboo fence of your house

when the wind from the champaca tree whispers his name
your heart beats and in an instant you have become a flirt.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know That It Is Unfair. But I Leave It That Way.

I know it is unfair.
The numbers do not lie to me.
The heart keeps on saying that it is the only truth.
I feel it too, but i decide not to do anything.
I keep things to myself.
I know who i am
and what will i become when i am no longer here.
This world is a left-over
and this is what those real cockroaches really love.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know That You Know How It Feels Tia Maria

i take a look again
eye to eye
to that white-breasted
bird

it flies away in the middle of the rain
leaving a leaf
falling

this time it is the leaf
always alone
always to the bottom of the
wet empty ground

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know That You Still Love Me...

between shakespeare
and bukowski

i prefer bukowski

brautigan smells better
than shelly

this is my way of telling you
that i am shallow and cheap

on the other hand when i
begin to write like
bukowski and brautigan
combined

i know that somehow in that
academic pretense of yours
you still like me and read a lot
about what i write

inside your room
when you are all alone
and then
with affection
you kiss every word
that you think i do not really mean
writing

and then
you giggle

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know What I Do Not Have...

how shallow
is your water

only toes
how bland is your taste

no finger licking
how gullible are you in this

thing of getting only the honor
which you cannot eat

it is true
one does not live by bread alone

what now? we need salt
and pepper

coffee and water and a little
sugar beside a
slice of bread

sandwiched between honor and
money

do not ask me i know what
i do not have.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know What You Feel As Always

when you go to the river where palms are still
where a duck floats on top of a crystal water that mirrors the clouds of white and blue
where the wind is as fresh as the memories of your morning
eyes that look blankly upon a sight of a flowing green mountain range
to a horizon that has no end
fading like a sleepy word

i know what you feel
for in here in this seeming perfection

day is where
you do not clamor for any change
where permanence is the virtue that you now put upon the hands of nature
the way you felt loved in the utter silence of its cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know Why You Are Following Me...

perhaps you see that we have  
many things in common  

something is twisted and yet  
so beautiful still to follow  

white hair when all the hair  
becomes white reminds us about  

the snow of our lonely imaginations  
something cold and haunting  

something pains us but redeems us  
sometimes all the paradox explains  

this doubt clarifies what has been  
too disturbing and it is in the middle  

of so much noise that we appreciate  
the tiny silence of our hearts.  

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You Are Here

i know you are here
i have this sense of smell of a fox
a dog, a cat
and i smell your decency in your discreet
appearances
in the air in the atmosphere where you keep your silence
and secret
presence

you love me i know and you would have wanted to touch me
as i too
do

but the world has its own rules and laws of
nature
and physical dictates
its axis
its determined revolutions the way the zodiac
put the stars

you are at one end and i am at the other
we smell
each other's presence we sense each other's longings
even in a distance
of lightyears
of this interplanetary distances

yet i am the earth and you are the sky
i am the sun and you are the moon
you are the farthest star
and i am the pebble
thrown to the deepest part of the ocean floor

it is simply this memory that links us
something unfulfilled
the empty space
and the passing wind invisible always till the end of time
i feel the coldness of us
on the skin
of my cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You Are There

i let you stay there
i know you have been there
before i arrived
i can't give a reason why
i am late again
traffic is a silly excuse
there will be more hours
waiting for more of the
coming hours
there are no moments to share
you look at me
as though i am a sick man
i am famished
i like to go back home
and better spend
my time
with the refrigerator.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You Are There And I Know You Understand

What I am saying,
I say from my heart
Two faces, happy & sad, Hate & love in one body,
And you see them
In the mirror as you shake your hair
For some lies, combing some truths
For me to gaze upon like I am
This woman asking from your crystal ball

What happens tomorrow?
When I am alone and he is gone,
Do I have to speak in riddles for you to
Really find the answers? No, I don’t because

I am candid about feelings,
Ask me again if I am happy
And I will show you some scars.
I know you are there and I know you understand

When I tell you that I am crying and sobbing
On a laptop of stories,
He will neither hear me nor you, but we will all be here,
In this tragedy of the hearts

Of two faces, happy & sad, and hate & love, and hate & love,
Wanting to go but also wanting to stay
I know you are there and I know you understand, stay, and stay

I will be going away but only for a while.

(a poem for ric, from his wife)

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You Do Not Feel Anything In Some Of My Lines

i accept my defeat in knowing you
i get the shake of your left hand
as you keep the other
safe and sound in your pocket
i can sense the hesitation
in your tongue that utters
some doublespeaks again

in your 'how do you do?'
I will always respond with 'I am fine'
but deep within this brief
exchange of lines i know you do not
feel anything anymore in the last two
lines that i utter

i hint that what you like most is
'goodbye, i am leaving'
and you do not show any sign
of holding my arms
your right hand is still in your
pocket playing with the coin
that you toss:
it's the tail this time
and i lose

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You Live A Very Simple Life

i know my friend that
you live a very simple life out there
waking up in the morning
working in the office
buying food in the market
watch tv
sleep early at night
wake up early again
listen to the morning news
a visit in the chapel
work in the office again
a chat with friends
a little drink of cali with them
sometimes
and no broken heart to nourish
like a wound that does not heal.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Know You'Re Hurt

i know you are there in your usual
electronic silence, facing the monitor of your laptop.
the kind of person who keeps all the hurts inside her heart
you bleed and you simply let the blood flow from your hands to the floor,
and the blood flows like water spilled from your
drinking glass.

the beauty of your pain
shows through those beautiful flowers
sprouting on the floors
all the vines of green and blue tendrils
spreading on the window sill, the ceiling, the roof.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Learned A Lot From You Today

first, i like the way you say hello
and your concern when sometimes
i get disconnected
the way you insist that we still have
many things to talk about
not just love
but politics and perhaps
religion

second, i like the way we embrace
clean fun now,
nothing about sex (though i honestly
miss it, and perhaps you too
but we take a break from this
monotony)

and i even recommend that we talk
about philosophy or
poetry
you say you only like to read them
when you are lonely
but not when you are hot
and... gee

third, i like it when you leave me
without saying goodbye
i know this thing called love
between us
shall not end... it 's like a comma
looking for
the exclamation point

fourth, i like it here when i am alone again
i learn to think some more
what to do with my life
when you might be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Leave For Another Place.....

Up in the sky
gold fish are swimming
looking like
kites

down under the white herons
are pecking upon
humpback whales

there is something wrong
really wrong i know

and i ask you and you just
laugh
it is funny
but you ask no question
as it happens that way

this is art, you keep telling me
everything is possible

and beautiful, but i do mind

i still live there
black dogs eating grass
and cows grinning with
knuckle bones
inside their mouths

i like to change this world
beauty is not like this
it is something else
it is the orderly arrangement
of nature
from big to small

there are numbers to follow
memories to put in writing
in cards and waiting
for more to count
there is a figure in sorrow
squares and triangles

but it is the melting that is real
you keep on saying and it is indeed funny
and real too

i left, and draw a world
where windows are windows where spades are called
spades because

they are.

No games now. No games now.
This is real. I am counting reality as real.

for now i walk alone in peace.
Hope is a giant jellyfish breathing
under the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Leave To Give You Sweet Memories

delighted time.
net to wash my face
i get wet and rub my face with
a white towel
and open my eyes and see for once
myself, this man, abandoned by time
so quickly
like yesterday and today
and tomorrow
all mixed in a second
white locks of hair
bony cheeks, and
serious eyes, looking through
the mirror
wanting to find if there is yet
another me
that i can live with
for another more time
to be reborn
and use the youth
that i have wasted
without much thought.
i see, i am melting,
i see, i am air.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Left You In Your Sleep

after the caress is over
when the sweat dries
and the trembling subsides
when the blankets
sought you cover
when the pillow finds
itself vacant again

one's mind sleeps for a while
and then begins to wander again
in the forest under the trees
one must find another prey
just to survive

you have always been the predator
in my sleep you left me: i was the prey.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Lied When I Told Her That I Am In Alaska

to make fun of life
when you feel that you are like
inside a can
of milk
i told her by way of a joke
that i am in
Alaska...

of course she does not believe it
for all the while
she knows
that my only Alaska is no other
than the
Condensada.

But i get the point though
albeit in a manner that is subtle
that indeed i am in Alaska

that cold round can
so sweet with all the condensed
reconstituted milk
causing Diabetes

RIC S. BASTASA
I Lied.....

to cut off
dreams and that
chain of memory
i told you
that it was ugly
that it stinks
that all those are
rotten fish
that we both must
finally avoid it
bury the dead
and keep away from
that foul
place

i lied.

(i just wish you
happiness
you have to leave
and find
what is best for you

buds are nicer with
the flowers
the dead roots
are simply out of
place

let the new barks
hold the existence
of trees
let the dead
find shelter in the
company of the soil
happy with the humus
where new seeds
must open up and begin
to grow another
life again)

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like It

i like it when you go
classical, something like
stating the obvious
so i may not have to waste my brain
figuring out
what you mean
i like it when you are so natural
as simple as rain falling and wetting the grass
as simple as you stop and then
give way for the sun
as simple as sunshine spreading on our hair
i like it when you are so light
nothing heavy on your eyelids
nothing blue and black
all white
so pure like a sky not stained
with clouds
like a night sky
still bright with the stars
i like it when you are so silent
like a sailboat on the river
without much ripples.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like It Here

this is my place, insignificant, small,
fleeting even, like a soft breath coming out of my mouth when
i utter the word
you and
i, but you are still confused unable to understand each letter
like chopped string beans so disconnected
from each piece
i understand myself now as intimately as my nose
to my lips to smell and sound touching each other
this moment,
i still say convinced as i am like how the window pane
agrees to entertain a morning chill and then
the light coming,
i still say, i like it here, the view from here,
green mountains hairy with forest trees
rivers running like children in the parks
clouds drifting like butterflies all in the hues of pastel blue
and some scratches of white and gray,
i like the sea here
friendly salt to my tears, i like the gardens here,
so alive with flowers and bees and blades of grass,
i like it here
and i have no plans ever to leave even with you telling me that you love
me till the end of days and nights,
you are lying and there is no sense dying
in the beds of your dreams so far away like
a mythical kingdom.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like It Here (Part Two)

i like it here
i speak my lines i deliver them and there is no one to listen

how do i know you listening?
but even if i know you are there
it does not really matter

i am here only to speak
and i do not want to hear you talking back

i like it here
this place is simply perfect
for my circumlocution
my monologue
the way i speak to the moon
when the stars are so silent and unminding

the way i talk to the river when it simply passes by its banks
the way i talk to a stone, a tree, a pole, a cloud,

the way i talk to a glass one day whose water i have all drank
the way i talk to a horse, a dog, a cat,

or even to a pillow all wet with my tears.

i like this monologue.
i burst and then i live anew
for another day
tomorrow.

yes, i like it too
talking to your picture that i keep many years ago.
black and white and scented
with moth balls.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like It This Time

when the world is so silent
because everyone is fast asleep.
when the night is dark
when all the lights on the street
are turned off
when no one walks his way
back home
because everyone is finally
at home
i like it this time when the wind
stops when the leaves find
no disturbance
when the paths and roads are
finally vacant from feet and cars
and buses
when every car is parked in the garage
when the child sleeps
in her mothers arms sucking her nipple
when the father is beside mother's
body
when sisters hug each other in bed
i like it this time
when the world finally is rested
for i am now awakened from
my sleep
i like it this time when i begin
to write
when what i hear is this
computer machine is buzzing
fanning (sighing)
like my long trip
in the plane.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like It When You Are Faraway

well
you are more beautiful
that way

like a tree
on top of the
mountain
fronting me
casting
only a shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like My Departure To Be Like A Movie Ending

something like
you will not miss and judge as a flop

i step outside the door
i lock the knob
and what you finally see
is a big wall

you think if there are stars outside
a long road
a very dark and wide sky

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like Talking To You

today i like talking to you
i feel that you are stupid
and i am at home with you.

hope you are not offended,
stupidity begets stupidity.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like That Idea

i like the idea of what boats are meant for
i told you once
boats are meant to sail
far to the sea
and dissolve in the horizon
till they are gone
till they sink
to the bottom of the sea
and kiss its floor
and become the
permanent ornaments
of the corrals and sands

but i like your idea too
of boats
like mine sailing to the farthest sea
of boats like yours
that come back and embrace again
the welcoming arms
of the ports and the shores
and hear the sounds
of men and women
and children
all rejoicing

RIC S. BASTASA
i like that you stay,
for a moment inside my room.

i will ask you, those little things
that you can do for me, so you will stay for a while

so i may have a smell of you
so i may see you even for a few seconds

so i may have life.
i ask you to pull the calendar page. It is not

october anymore. Time flies.
you display me the face of november. a sad one.

a face of uncompromising stance. Not not you. Not your love.
you may refuse my feelings, like the way you resist

some sweeter spaces between us. i like you.
i like you to stay even for a moment.

you flatten a crumpled piece of paper and you ask:
there is still something important on this page.

i look at it. some words, not supposedly written
some words, not to be read by anybody.

you read it. how can you understand?
when i always conceal the meaning

of my pain. i am only for me. I understand the rules
of this game.

i like you to stay really. i like you.
but then, i open the door and then you leave.

you have never understood, the silent beats
of my dying heart.
i like it this way. i touch myself still wanting to touch you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Flow Of Language That Is So Natural

like falling rain
hitting a yam leaf,

round drops sliding
to the tendrils
of a vine

like water leaking
from a roof
saved by
a tin can

(remember poor
Basho's poem
while he was trying
to sleep
on a rainy day)

like the sound of lips making a kiss
of the ten fingers of the hands sliding
on thighs
down to the most sensitive
part of the human body

the vulva &
the glans
in mutuality of
accepting the rule
of desire

making the most out
of the last remaining
moments of
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Image

of two white butterflies
fluttering on top of
the blooming blue daisies
beside two old graves

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Image Of Clouds Keeping On Changing

i am simply amazed with the way the clouds keep on changing themselves

and sadly, the winds do not really admit their faults how they blow harder and how

they stop when the clouds are carried away in ecstasy and red with sunset the clouds are mad to the coming of the night its blackness overpowering its quest for the good and the true

and the beautiful. The moon sits with the stars in meditation, what goes wrong? why so silent?

that seems to be their theme in the motif of stillness and the wind now with the wolves and dogs howl throughout the night telling the trees that they are ready for love and lust.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Sound Of The Rain Pouring

today i listen to the rain pouring
from the roof to the gutter to the polyvinyl pipe
down to the ground which i filled with pebbles

the water drains to the garden where the roots
take all the joyous time of seeping and drinking
the pure taste of life's waters

it is music to my ears, these slow dripping
much like the rhythm of your classical poetry
Catullus and Sappho and Emily and Pablo.

i realize then that my poems are too inferior
than those unwritten by the grace of nature.
I will not be at a loss, for soon, i shall imitate them.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Way You Do Things Effortlessly

you simply stay still on the water
and then slide away

nothing to pack and put on a
sack or keep as a memory

i despise myself from working
too much

you are in that clear pond and you look at me
and there is nothing really done in magnificence to

make your eyes show all the
wonders of your world in a light & slimy body silent

in a pond with the moss on the rocks and
the lilies on top of your head and the ripples of the water caused by your

fins and your mouth gropes for nothing expensive
but just air.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like The Way You Write

narrative poetry
in little doses of feelings
from the most trivial
to the least know, and it
is everyday,
i like it that way you
make a diary of what
happens along the way
a glass of water inhabited
by a black fish
a room becoming a haven
for a blue butterfly
the lamp as the center of
your universe
the chairs as knights of the
night armor applauding
waiting orders from your
head king of imagination
your bed hugging you as
the queen of purple hearts

words playing like kids in
the part at the center of
the city of halluballoo (read
as hallucination) while
their mothers are away
doing the marketing
calling daddies to fetch
their kids back home.

by now you know this is
nothing but play: a dolphin
catching a ball passing it
to the parakeet rumor mongering
with another parakeet
as the clock of nature ticks and
ticks: my ears are tickled by the
feathers of triviality.
I Like This Poem

i like this poem of yours,
always unfinished, makes my imagination
run wild,
i like the words misspelled
and the lines without a period
no sense of ending
no sense of time

i like the senselessness of it all
it is so unreal

like most of us

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like This To Be Frank And Simple

you turn me on
even your picture turns me on
as though i am a bird
remembering
bigger wings
to clouds long forgotten
you turn me on
that is a fact that i can no longer deny
my mind whirls
looking for an exit
my super ego says
i must me not be turned on
by a mere you
by a mere picture of you
but you still turn me on
oh i love this feeling of you
turning me on
and my id says let it be
open like a bud let the bee
share the nectar
but there is in me that stays strong
and now
you cannot turn me on
I'm off
closed as a bud
tight as vacuum
falling to the
ground.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like This To Be Just Mine

what used not to hurt
begins to feel

you keep it inside
hoping that it will just shrink

and be gone
it spreads and you hide it with a

scarf or a hood
it spreads some more like a woman's long

black hair which the wind catches
that smell that it brings to the sea

to another island
where the one who really loves you

smells and comes back to take you
away from me

as i get stuck on the mud of my own feet
deceived by the fairies of

my own pride
slowly eating me like the pizza

with cheese still hanging on your chin
waiting to be cleaned

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Believe In Reincarnation

i imagine a room
and you are alone,
i do not like to hear a sound of weeping,

do not
weep,

silence is more decent,
it wears the fabric of dignity

a suffering with dignity
the one with eyes that stare at the incoming death
without blinking

the courage of blood corpuscles
that keeps on circulating despite the inevitability of an
ending

there is a travel that has no destination
if we choose to

it is like changing clothes
because we believe in the series of occasions

some wise guys call it a cycle

now, tomorrow, tonight
early morning
noon, the fading of the sun
the shining moments
of little glories

we must believe this
in order not to be shocked by constant endings

it is like a window
where from time to time we set aside
a silk fabric
with tiny embroidered flowers

we open it
when we like it

and when we are tired
we close it

just that.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Build This Bridge

i like to build this bridge
between us

the river that divides us
is long and wide
and the waters rage like the fury
of the night
that fought against
the bright days
of my life

i like to build this bridge
between our minds
two continents divided by an ocean
seemingly
the shores
they're nowhere to be found

i like to build this bridge
let me just tell you that
before i finally take
my leave

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Dance

i like to dance
early this morning
like a top
whirling whirling
like a top
till i get nauseous
at the end
till i lay flat tired
on the floor
flat footed on the stairs
from Jamaica
to the world
as they sing it
like love
it will just be love
for my
fading generation.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Keep The Feeling

i am wasted on some feelings

i like to keep them but they always end up
consumed
gone
lost
evaporated with no mark left for me to understand
or recall

how i wish i could have written that feeling
of
love

writing them faithfully like a devotion
but
i couldn't

my eyes are covered by tears and they cannot see
and my hands tremble at the moment of recalling

on wasted feelings
i must thrive
alone, without you, without your memory,

i muster courage
to live without meaning at all

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Love You But...

i like to give you flowers
and chocolates and
(money, if that will not
offend your kind
of sensibility)
for you to love me and love
me (perhaps) as true as i
am and wanna be

but i won't
you are cold and dead
heartless
to my pleas.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To See Love Dance Before Me

i am boredom

i sit on a chair watching a show
it is love
bellydancing its way
into the secret room
of my heart

i am lust

i lie on bed and here comes love naked
on top of my heart
my ears hear the beating

i am love finally

lust overpowered
after this darkness that is so sweet
love and lust sleep
in the silence of their fulfillment

i am flesh closing its eyes
i am a spirit soaring in the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Stay With You

if you're a flower
i'll be a bee
and if you're the sun
let me be the earth
and if you're the mountain
let me be the cloud
if you are the sea
let me be the river
if you are the hand
let me just be a finger
if you are the face
let me just be an eye
if you go away
let me go with you
if you stay
let me stay with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Think That All These Are But A Game Of Words

that is the impression from the beginning
when i started to scribble
word, and more words, i assured her that they do not
mean anything at all just
words, and words and more words

that even a sunflower wilting and spreading all the seed on her feet
are nothing too but words and more words
nothing to grow nothing to expect like a sprouting something

thus my loneliness, i again assure here, is nothing but a word
my way of taking solitude on the other side to save myself
is another word, and she of course, did not believe me saying

there is more to these words, there is fire in them and i see you burning
there is the sun inside them and the letters glow and the

there is smoke rising from the heads of vowels
from the nonspeaking consonants

i keep hiding the flowers
i bury those that are alive in the silence of my pretensions

until one day she grips me like she is a knife wanting to stab me
and then she stabbed me right in my throat and there i bleed

words, words, and more words coming from the slit
bloody words, and she was convinced, until death, ... and then i vanish.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Think That You Are Much Better Than Myself, But...

you are years ahead
i like you to think that you are much better
in terms of compassion

knowledge had always been
younger than compassion

yet compassion is as meek
as it is not assertive

i like to think that you are much better
but you have not lived that much

you are never water to fire
never a tree to a bird

you have taken side with the ax
and the flint

there is so much blood around
the rocks are bathing

confusion flows to the sea
the rivers are willing victims

you put gasoline on chaos
and you dance around that big fire

i like to think that you are older and much better
than myself

but your hands have grown nails and splinters of glass
and like a hand grenade

you finally exploded and killed so many and
died
i like to think that i should have done better
you have nailed my feet on the floor and splinters wound my soles

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Write A Poem

about a cock
roach
that i just
stamped
with my
right
foot

it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like To Write An Epic

i like to write an epic
about a prince who went away to find
his destiny
who met his enemies
beasts and bad spirits
who slew them all
who found his own kingdom
on top of the tallest mountains
reaching the skies
who rode on a Pegasus
and swept away another Helen
there was this war for a thousand years
and there were betrayals
and losses and gains
and at the end
the tragedy happens
the epic is unfinished
all the while i will finish it
but then my friend
you fall short of time
at the happy ending
when the prince finally comes home
as a king
you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
well, today, i like to write like gary soto and his cotton lines the man next door with a hoe and ticket and dream of food and little children on his lap in his home after hours of work under some masters

i like to write like gary soto on his hitchhike to san francisco with the migratory birds and the waters from the danals dragging him to a richer town

but it is so sad, i can't be gary or any other sordid soto, i guess i may not be so dumb but i am not that smart either.

so i will just be me trying this kind of experimental poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like Tomato Sauce

i like tomato sauce
and so i keep lots of
and different kinds of
tomato sauces inside
the ref and when i open
it one night i thought
tomato sauce are also
water and i am in a trance
of some sort or something
i drink tomato sauce
and i remember you:

saucy, so saucy
i thought i am floating
in the river filled with
tomato sauce, yes,

my point is: be proud
i always think of you.

saucy, yes, so saucy.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like Your Silence

i like your silence
now
it is not like the
silence we had
before

your silence
now is different
it is
reminiscing
it is
refreshing
it is
sensitive
to my presence
it is
reflective of
who i am
enabling me
to hear my
breath
to see and
feel
my very own soul

i like your silence
now
it is the silence
of the memory
that cannot
be forgotten

it is not death
it is life
it is the blossom
of my sorrow
it is the fruit of
my despair
it is the silence
of my silence
it is the peace
within my
solitude
it has become
the center of
my life
the focus of my
scattering
the finding of
my loss

RIC S. BASTASA
I Like Your Silence For The Past Few Days

i like your silence for the past few days
nonetheless,
i am hearing more what you do not have to say
there is this silence of absence
that speaks well of you

there is this fondness that was not there before
there is this whisper that is more patient than the scream
gentler, so filled with wisdom

more beautiful than the routinized hellos
more meaningful than everyday

i guess it is when you speak less
that you speak most wisely.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Live, Therefore, I Ignore. That Is Me In Descartes.

this is the picture of a snake like
scar on my left leg,

long and crooked, you see, i was then
a hard headed kid and when mother told me
to take my morning bath
instead i climbed a sour tree and
wondered there how is it to fall and
bleed, and indeed i got this long and snake like
wound and due to the loss of so much blood
i lost consciousness

when i woke up
mother was beside me berating my being the
most hard headed kid among her five children

that was the time when i learned the art of
ignorance: to ignore her again and again,
until she died, perhaps believing
that i was
the most impossible kind,

i have no regrets.
i live happily now ignoring
everything: harsh realities are ordinary events,
when someone is killed i just turn my head to the
other side of the street,
or i just close my eyes
and live in another world,

i live, therefore, i ignore.
that is me in Descartes.

and why am i proud of these scars?
it is understandable.

Obvious as they are,
record my
triumphs.
I Look At Fear

i look at fear
and fear looks at me
i am not shaken
i do not allow it
fear looks at me again
and i look at it
straight in the eye
then it smiles
and says
it is enough
the short encounter is over
and it turns away
leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
dusty pages of a bundle of papers
i untie them
so i can look at the past

honestly, it could be
that i was at fault
or simply you ruining my
life somehow like
a broken piece of
glass
a dainty dancer
tiptoeing on a mechanical music box
on broken heels

i read again and again
and the pain
comes but it is not that as painful
when you first come
into my life

you claim that both of us are broken
i answer with my silence
for years
and there will be more years
for this silence
still

you offer your hand in friendship
no, i will not receive it

i could have been so civil in my manners
like anybody else
but you must have not noticed
something that you cannot
find in me anymore

i have lost my face and it is not within your power
to ever replace it
i will be honest before my God
and i may be wicked and
too vindictive

i still pray that you may find your soul
still burning in there

RIC S. BASTASA
I Look For Her Name On The Top 500 List

and she is not there
but she writes so well
and i must disagree
with the rating

oh i know
she uses another name
could be whatever
and surely she must be there.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Look Up The Sky

i look up
the sky finding you
to be a very bright star

and i ponder
if i down here
a pebble on the grass
silent and left alone
by my companion
if you still
remember me

for once i was once
a star too
shining beside you

it was love
that pulled me down
to earth
on the mud

and i pray
that it will be the same
love that died
shall pull me up
to redeem
my lost glory

but somehow
i like it here
beside a mound
where flowers grow
someone i love
is buried by
the thick grass
in silence

RIC S. BASTASA
I Love The Moss. A Comfort To The Stones.

my hands
can never hold
the sky

it is my mind
that climbs the
stairs of
your heaven

you are a god
sitting on your throne
why do you seek me?
a stone, a cut flower,
a dead ant,

loneliness is the
sickness too of those
who believe
they belong there

sun, moon and stars
a bouquet of bodies
you should have known
beforehand
that they are beyond
the hands of feelings

look at you, bearded
by light, vomiting storms
stabbed by the sharp blades
of your own thunder

i love the moss.
a comfort to the stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Love You

one that i cannot even
touch
spend my money on it
one that
i cannot even remember
someone
yet to come and
spur
my wildest
imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
I Love You Because...

the mountain how high
still needs the coolness of
dew glistening upon a leaf
of morning,

the ocean how wide and blue
still needs the song of fountains
from the tributaries of rivers
from far

the meaning of the desert's life
still clings upon the moon
above the cactus where a frail
violet flower still blooms,

my slate of paper though white and pure
still needs the grace of your scribblings
for words to grow and give it
our story for the world to read....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Love You Everyday

how would you know that everyday i love you secretly
like my diary always written in some ciphers
the longings
not open like the fields visible always to the clouds
i like to bleed but it would be too unbecoming of my being
a part
of this society who installed gods and goddesses
out of us
victims of morality and restraint

i make earnest glances and sometimes
i make my gaze stand still to take a closer and longer look at your face

and then i say, i love every angle of your cheeks and nose and eyes where i melt like an ice drop
all my sweetness dripping
down the drain

consumed am i and you did not even notice me,
as the single stick remaining all the ice wasted, all my sugar thrown to the cold soil the frigid ground, the indifference that stabs me right in front of you

RIC S. BASTASA
I Love Your Ripe Papayas...

the papaya trees are blooming
time runs so fast and there they are
with you posing for their fruits like
breasts of women from the roots to the
top,
and so are your perennial eggplants with
all the purple sizes, loaded into crates
headed for the market,

your efforts have been converted into
profits, or maybe for the service of the
demanding consumers.

except you old lady, never married, and never
had a kid, or if you had it with a man, it was
plain rumors, and you always deny what pleasures
are there waiting and available for your picking

how you wasted so much time on the flowers and
the vegetables and yet how you left yourself into
the sorrow of singleness

blessed art thou,

i am puzzled, but i am taking this to a stop.
none of my business.

i love your ripe papayas.

RIC S. BASTASA
I May Admit Finally That I Am Lying

in our short conversation when you ask questions
about me i may answer you some lies and then
you wonder if i am the kind of person who makes lies
to you as i wonder too if you are the kind of person deserving
to be lied by myself, and so i try to figure out the lies
i made before and how honestly you believe them and then
i sort of changing myself, and slowly revealing some of the names
i keep on using, that these names may refer to one and the same
person, which is myself, and you honestly believe me and i am
of course, guilt-stricken and then i slowly unravel other names,
other places, other circumstances, sorting out my life,
page by page, and you listen carefully, and you also tell me
there are two of you, two names, and that is the truth,
and i honestly admit, i had some lies, lies for me to survive you
and this sad world, and then i begin to answer your question
with all honesty: you will regret it, there is more pain to the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
I May Blend With The Red Sky Again

clouds colored black
Rising from the earth
Floating on red skies
The sun Is gray
Rectangular to the
Earth shaped like
An ovum
a sensate object
splashes in the sea
Like an inverted comma

He is Icarus
He just drowned

They do not think
It is I

The sea is not green
It is black

I am trying to be
Off-white

for you
To see

But you can’t
You did not try
seeing hard enough.

You have no time
For this
For me
Or anything else.

Sometimes I think
I should have
Grown myself
into a suicide bomber
And then explode
Inside you.

Perhaps you
Will notice me
Finally.

My
Color must not
Be red.
I may
Blend with the
Red sky again.

RIC S. BASTASA
I May Have Asked Your Name

i may have asked your name
and i may have mistaken you for someone
who feels my pain

and who knows where my body lives
where my soul rests
where my feet dust every bit of dirt
where i close my eyes and sleep

i may have been noisy and nosy
i may have thought of the past neighbors who died
whose crosses are removed from their old graveyards.

you who feel my pain and yet has no name
you who say you lie you who say you survive

what can i really say? Let me hug you
Let me be with you Let me play with you
In this dark space.

My name is nothingness.

RIC S. BASTASA
I May Still Move On...

if you go away
from the darkness of my room
in the middle
of my struggle for
a little flicker of light
dreaming
of stars and hoping
still for fireflies

if you go away
i may still manage to find
my way through
this mess of crowded
chairs and
misplaced tables

if you go away
i may still sit beside the window
facing the sunset
and enduring the darkness
without a single star
i may still think
about you and us
reminiscing what used
to be there

i may still be strong
and take my self intact
with dignity and pride
and be
friendly still with
sleep

things may still move on
like planets revolving
on their orbits

i sigh...things are never the
same again...
I Mean You

Yes you, I have always meant you
Because you do not just go away
This time
Of my lonely hour you come like
A persistent dream that does not
Leave me, I ask
Why?
Yes, you, I have always meant you,
I know
It is not enough to say the words
You like to hear
I understand
It makes the difference when you
Touch my hand
Kiss my lips
Slide your hands in my pants
And feel me
There
I know more shall be demanded
When I say the words
You do not want them
You need me
In this hour of loneliness
Yes, you, I mean you
My love
I will hold you still even if
I am dead
Even if my spirit does not know what
Flesh is all about
Yes, you, I have always meant you
I cannot touch you now,
Let me whisper then
The words you want to hear
This time
It is not my mouth that will speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Miss You Too

today, something is broken,
the pieces shattering all over the floor
a drinking glass just fell

my feet are cautious, getting too defensive on those
which can possibly hurt, and so is my heart,
too numb in fact, but still feels
wanting to at least beat and show that it also knows how to survive

a wound graduating into a full scar,

there are no little things here that remind me of you,
your photo with your dedication and signature
had long been burned,

i burned it
alone,

when the wound was still fresh
when pain was yet a jumping frog,

this time however, the rain comes unexpectedly,
something unpredicted by the
weather bureau

i am looking for a black umbrella
this i remember only when it rains
something so important in my life

one that does not want to get wet
and feel the cold
and the dampness of my existence,

and i remember you beside me
there was that rain and we were so
warm and close and

true, oh, yes, i hate to admit this
i still miss you.
I Move

i move and part air
infront of me

the air fills every empty space
i created

i leave every step
and behind me another wholeness

comes, like i part the water of the river
with my hands
my feet catch what water i parte
and then
everything is whole again

i move, therefore,
to make all emptiness full

RIC S. BASTASA
I Move Around The Bends

i change my mind
now i move around the bends
wriggle my waist in every curve
hop and hop on the humps
beat the bushes and climb some trees
up there i look on the ground
and see how small things are
how seemingly the clouds have
turned to nothing but mist and air

i change my mind
i go upstairs and view the windows
opening to a path
leading to a beautiful garden
towards the sea

i change my mind
the rules need not be that strict
we make them
i move around now
in circles drunk to repetitions
unwinding relaxing a bit
embracing too kindly
some unknowns

RIC S. BASTASA
I Must Be Lost With You

to find myself
i must find you
and so when you
are lost
i must be lost with
you
if you are lost without
myself
i will be lost forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Must Rise From Where I Fall

To rise from where I fall

Subdued, I lost, I have no choice
But to surrender my own voice
Now I have to go to places
Missing your embraces
I am but just a shadow
In a nook without tomorrow
I walk under the rain
Where I am wet & drained
And cold in the night
In darkness I lose my sight
This is the time of losing
In his arms you are smiling
And you will not be with me
With him you can only be
I understand perfectly what losing is
you are not with me, you are his
This is not the end however,
This is just another fever
I must get out from this wall.
I must rise from where I fall

RIC S. BASTASA
I Need To Know You

Early morning
i need to know you

we exchange notes
about last night

some of them are lies
but deep within are truths

which we do not need to say
during our breakfast together

the plates are listening
and spoons and forks do not argue

i like this ambiance of softness
this skin of empathy

your eyes still glow
and i love the way they see me still

despite the pains of our years
we are still the best of friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Need To Sleep. Do Not Wait For Me.

"How long shall I wait for you?
Do not wait for me. I am tired and I want to lie down.
Are you tired and do you want to lie down?
Yes, I am tired and I want to lie down" (Mark Strand)

i need to sleep. do not wait for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Had Time To Explain Myself

there were stones thrown
on the water and so there were ripples
like the pain

the pain goes on and on
like circles spreading beyond a certain point

of my tolerance
my tongue forms some words like hammers

to hit the nails right on their faces
to break the monotony of destruction

without rivets no dovetails but
the story has become like a code of the samurai

to you, and you swing your head like arms
in disbelief how can all these be true he is not like this

and you become like a bone in my throat and i like
to remove every obstruction one by one

but i do not have the pleasure of keeping you
my hands inside my pocket are mine alone

the pebble inside it is warm and smooth
my treasure and like my conscience i keep it

inside my heart. I keep seeing ripples and then
i do not mind how many stones how far they spread.

i owe no one and no one owes me
i am an island and i wish there are no boats docked on my shore

any time, somewhere, any more.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Said I Was A Poet Just A Man

dear francis,

do not call yourself
'just a man',
do not deprive yourself
the laurels of
'a poet'

you are a man, and a man is more than a poet
the man with the urge to write is more than a man without an urge
even just to write
and be this 'poet'

the poets (those taking the top charts) either have died
(and take the fame posthumously) or they have rested
on laurel
leaves, or they have confined themselves on
some
writers' block

but you francis
behold the stars and the other suns

has written more
and toiled more, your fruits are many
and more have eaten them
tasted how sweet what wisdom you have

i crown you the true laurels
these living laurels of poetry
moving, alive, toiling, working, always thinking
about those that must come
next for generations to come

i crown you,
Francis Duggan
the true laurels of working, moving, living poetry
i give you the title,
the true, living poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Thought

with the scent of my forest and trees lushing
by the side of my three mountains
i have given you the hint to follow me
where we can be happy

i wish upon a potion of immortality
i will give it to you as you promise to stay with me
through and through

i promise you my flesh and bones and spirit
and i thought you believe me

with all these, gleeful sands, and delighting waves of the blue seas
and green leaves glistening from the trees, all these

who in the world would have believed that i would still lose you?

i am blind now and i do not see
my lips are sealed and i cannot speak

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Thought (About This)

for once in my life
i have never thought
that you were that woman
who descended the stairs
of the moon
and to the earth here you come
thinking perhaps
that you are someone special
with the marks
of the craters

welcome
now don't think that someone is special
in my place

everyone here
are nothing but pebbles
some prefer to be sand
others mind you
simply want to be air
passing by
nothing to be conscious
about how they look

if you ask the right word
yes,
most of us are
invisible

faceless and cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Thought, For One, In My Life

i, once, for one, never
ever thought, that you, who came
later in my life, so ordinary like
a single petal of a white rose,
blown by the wind,
falling on my path, which i pick up,
without, at first, so much interest,
you, that i keep, and set aside,
in one corners of my room,
you spread the sweetest rosy
scent in my room, filling all the
emptiness, that once,
was there, now, i take a closer look,
and kiss you, what miracle is there,
it happens, you are the
best rose, that happened
in my life, my white petal

my wife, my soul mate.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Never Wish To Escape From You

i never wish to escape from your hands
you for once never own me and i for once
did not pretend that there is this clasp or
a grasp, for in truth, we have been strangers
all along, from the beginning when you have
seen me as a very tiny flower grieving for
my own darkness. There is no freedom,
because there was never a keeping.
Do not set me free, you never had me.

Look at me, do you still think that my eyes
are sad like the eyes of the widow?
Look at me and try touching my eyes,
aren't they as warm as yours?

There was never an entanglement of the
unicorn. Never. There is only this river that
your feet once trod, and then there is nothing
since then. I am free, and will always be.
There is no end, because we never had
any beginning. Take your chances.

RIC S. BASTASA
I No Longer Sing The Songs Of Societal Significance

i no longer sing your songs of societal significance
i have forgotten them

honestly, i do not remember a word
i cannot even hum the tune of your songs of protest
(our songs)
against the government, honestly, i do not like them anymore
even if i remember

all i remember are unnecessary, premature, untimely deaths
of friends
of our self-made revolutions when we were so young and full

of idealism
in our hearts
now i dim
like a dying light

tempted by the shining sun of new rules and
the philosophy of
mature contentment

i no longer climb your mountains, i no longer walk the long walks
on dark nights, passing the snake rivers
and gorilla forests and monkey trees and slippery fins of fish
and eels and
eagles,

i no longer have your callous feet
i cannot remember you

you ask me
if i love you still, i cannot remember, i have none of your bravery

honestly,
i have become this coward cloud, raining
regrets

the peace that i do not deserve
the hiding

in open places, without a name, without a trace,
mouth shut, tongue clipped,

and then you walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
I Offered A Hand Of Frienship To Adria And This Is Her Answer

'It's in your best interest
not to contact me in any way.
I have no desire whatsoever to deal
with such an intrusive stranger...
that only gets stranger.
Goodbye'

and i like her much for publishing
my autobiography

i like her
for being such a friendly woman

sometimes she likes to have the name
Ms. Wren Springs

sometimes she likes to be called
Ms. Claire Dasani

and i like her more for assuming so many personalities
Oh My,

how i wish to have such a woman as her

chameleon

slippery like an eel
and not so biting like a snake

she flies like a bird but she stings like a bee
even to a 'stranger like Me'

thank you Adria Moya
i will surely like yah.
and by the way
i like your poetry.

really, i am serious.
see me. I am smiling with my real mouth.

momma, we love yah.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Once Write To Follow An Idea

writing has a purpose. Words can preach. Or they are like a wind vane, giving you the north, and south and east and west. You ask: why am i heading west? What is in the snow as thick as my agnosticism? and you follow, and ask what is it that i really mean about the sound of a frog croaking? I put some leaves, and twigs and pretend that i am composing a tree. I like the sound of a hush, the wind and the silence of the mists, the insistence of frost. Too early, yes too early to conclude that words must, and must have no other purpose but to convey and idea. About myself. Looking for Myself. I am an idea.


Yes, this is nothing but colors. Feelings I mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Once Wrote A Letter To My Girlfriend

many years ago i once wrote a love letter to my girlfriend
in Silliman University
in the City of Dumaguete, Philippines
and perhaps she really liked the way how the letter was written
(it was more of poetry than prose)
as i poured all my love and affection
like sweet real orange juice to a shiny glass
much to the liking of her innocent taste
her virginal frame of mind
for we were young then and she was so beautiful with her white
skin and tight body as i was also so handsome then
with my spanish mestizo looks and gentle disposition

(let me breathe for a while)

she decided to have the love letter read by all her dorm mates
it was passed from one hand to another and she was so proud of it
and she even framed it like it were the picture of a saint

(i learned it later)

i was pondering about my feelings, my secrets passed from one person
to another, my deepest emotions known by another
at first i felt that my privacy was violated, but on the other hand
i assured myself about the truth of said feelings, the authenticity of myself
relating to my dearest love, my one and only love, and then i felt free

it is the truth and i must not be ashamed of it
it is a beautiful feeling that the world must know and feel too

and as i recall it again now, i remember another woman, a poetess
and truly, i like her too, for spreading the truth about my real self and there is
no other, i take pride of myself and i take responsibility for what i am
and for all the poems that i have written.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Once Wrote About The Bees And The Beehive

on the web, i see you got pregnant
of this brainchild of yours, the beehive,
a project from your heart,
at the center is the child,
instead of the queen bee,
and surrounding still are the
workers, the drones, the soldiers
instead of your lovers,
and you ask for my support
(perhaps some money
but i know they are not that necessary)
you may hint on the songs
about children
my friends shall send you
you may ask for me to read
my poems
over some bottles of beer
or some tea,
there is no problem, honey,
i will be there buzzing around
your beehive
i will ask where the door is
and just hang in there
for in truth what makes me happy
is not that brainchild of yours
but just
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Only Wave My Hand To My Neighbor

i only wave my hand
to my neighbor
not wanting to go beyond
that intimacy or
that familiarity which i have always
thought of
(as others do too)
as a breeder of
contempt
& i do not want that
to happen,

sometimes, we choose the luxury of
our own privacy
the dignity of our own hideaway
inside the pages of a book
in the busy world
of our minds
we dance there
alone with our own hands
to the sounds of the patting of our
own feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Open The Door And Enter The Room

i open this door
and enter this room
i do not have to tell you
that i am always here

the moment i enter it
i close it
and then i have my own world
that you my love
has not entered

dare not
for this is my world
where i am happiest

it is surrounded with
mirrors
each wall contains
my face

there are no words
or other images
and the floors sing
even without lips

i am happy here
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Point To The Night This Flashlight

A flashlight
I point to the night
Above me
To feel the depth
Of this darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
I Pretend I Do Not Know You

in darkness
as we tryst upon
cold hearts
rubbing our skins
to warm the night
there is too much
of us in here
in familiarity,
to cure this
loneliness, i,
must pretend
that i do not know
you not to hurt you
as you pretend too
that you have nothing
to do with this
escapade of the
hearts fed up
with love
inhibited.

i like in fact
a kiss without
a name.
it is exciting.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Promise You

i promise you

when there are only three stars in heaven
when the moon fades behind the clouds of darkness

i promise you

i shall give all these three stars for you
to light your way and marvel you
till you meet your destiny

i shall have none
i never liked one.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Promised Myself Not To Hurt My Eyes Anymore

last night
my eyes ached a lot like they are protesters
of my negligence
overusing them
apart
from the rest of my body parts: the nose not so nosy
the ears not hearing much
and my skins not feeling well
and my mouth and tongues
merely sleeping
in their safe spaces

my eyes
keep working for days and feel as though they are the only
workers
of my body

the eyes
that begin to hate poetry and reading and seeing and watching

i promised these eyes not to hurt them again
to give them a vacation
somewhere where the trees are greener
(since they love greens)
where the skies are bluer
(since they also love sky blue)
somewhere in the beach
where
beautiful bodies entice them
and make them
excited like ordinary hormonal
creatures
but

here i am again
my eyes working again on the lines of this poem
the eyes crying
on a promise that is always broken
I Promised Not To Wake Up Early And Write Again

but of course, here i am.
it is 4:25 in the morning.
i wake up earlier than
i expected. there is no sense wriggling
on the bed that no longer feels my yearning for sleep.
i rise.
i open the computer. i hear its buzzing sound. No problem i am
willing to write about nothing
nothing at all. call it emptiness. call it weariness. on a very early
morning. but it does not matter at all. this is this. this is it.
this is what i am. just going. just coming. just writing.
whatever.

outside the rooster keeps its announcement
of a promising morning. the hens are laying their eggs.
some steps of strangers pass by. sagging footsteps
for an early work to do. opening doors of their stores.
dusting, cleaning, baking the bread. displaying wares.
the salesgirl still yawning on an unwashed face.
the dog wakes up and wags its tail on my side.
as i write.

my life begins to unfold. it is another poem. another story.
written and kept. there is nothing more important to do anyway.

you look for a rhyme. You do not find it here. Go somewhere.
That poet over there, the one with the color of dusk
keeps some. Talk to him. Meanwhile, I am through.
No promises again this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Promised You That We Make Love At Dawn

but then there is this poem
inside my heart
and it wants to be written
at dawn

and so i promised you
another dawn
tomorrow

you perfectly understand
my situation
it is not simple. it is complicated.
i make it complicated.

you look at it simple enough.
lack of love for you.
devotion to poetry.

and sooner, you declare a war.
an end. you write a letter telling about
the word
goodbye.

i understand it too perfectly.
we have two parting worlds now.
floating stars looking for each nest
in some other space.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Put On My Brown Socks

i put on my brown socks
i bend a little to check my knees
to feel my bare feet and
smell the color of my soles

i put on my sneakers at noon
i am not eating my lunch
i am half naked and i cut four
locks of my black hair
i leave my fingernails uncut

i am not running anywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Put Pearls Around Her Neck

i put the off-white pearls
around her neck

she loves all of them
because i grow them all myself

priceless
she does not intend to tell you

how happy she is
licking and swallowing each pearl

deep down in her heart
these pearls are hers forever

RIC S. BASTASA
I Raise My Head

i raise my head towards the heavy rain
strong seeds of water
hitting my eyes
like i am the cracking earth
thirsty of the
season

the seeds stay inside my
eyelids
my heart and sprouts to
become
the trees of my life

i am not afraid if i cannot
move anymore
with roots coming out
from my feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Read Some Poems Today

i read some poems
today, and these are
poems about the flesh
touching another flesh

like the lips touching
another lips, a kiss to
another kiss, like a
body rubbing another
body, and then it went

higher than that, a
spirit touching another
spirit, ablaze, like some
flints catching fire, like

that desolate house
of bukowski where parents
forbid the children to see
that man with beautiful
eyes, on his pajama
wet with his sweat and
carrying a rhum on his
right hand and a cigarette
between his mouth.

i see, this is all about
isolation, a man's way
of getting away from
the maddening crowd

his way of loving himself
and making a part of
himself grow and glow.

the door bell rings
someone is calling
'anybody home? '
i am pressing my fingers
on some letters
my left hand rests and
touches my crouch

the woman with a shrill
voice finally stops and
leaves and i hear her
footsteps departing

i am silent, i am awake
finally i find my way home.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Read This Poem For You And Then I Go.

it is a waste of time
the tree is telling me

as i sit beside my window
writing another poem

i say it is for you my tree
i still love you

but the tree says i have
no use of a poem i

like you to be with me
under my shade i love it

more if you still climb
on my branches just like

once when you were a child
picking my ripe fruits and

even swinging with me in one
of my strong twigs and oh

i remember when you fell from
me and i could not help you

and i say i have no time anymore
for you my tree and to comfort

you i read this poem for you and
then i go.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Reinvent Myself. I Have To Grow My Roots Again

i think much better in
english. sorry, but that is how i was
brought.
every hour, every book,
every lecture in school is in english.

now you are telling me to return to
my home.
be back in my house. familiarize
myself again with my childhood
bed. my wheelbarrow.
that slingshot, that river,
that swing.

i met old friends again back
in that barrio.
we have become strangers.
i have feelings that they simply
dismiss as overrated.
i am alone in the midst of my
memories.

i want to run away. But i have
nowhere to go.
i am back. I reinvent myself.
i have to grow my roots again.

i will be another tree in this forest.
let the monkeys come.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember I Once Loved Someone And Then I Set Her Free

it is sad to remember that once i loved someone
who pretended that she loved me too,
out of need
so she may survive, i was blinded by desire
not thinking about how she would
have vomited the taste
of my kisses
how she endured those intimate times
which were not at all
a comfort to her loneliness

i blamed her for not telling me at once
her shortsighted honesty all
wrapped in fear, and so one day
i set her free,

of course, with some money
for her to find the only
love of her
life.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember Once When I Was A Little Child

i remember
when i was a little child
i once climbed a tree
to take a look of those
down below me.
i simply sit there
and feast my eyes
on the tall mountain
far away from me.
i see a winding river
flowing to the sea.
i see memories.
i am a little child.
i am the father of
that sadness that
i left behind a rock.
i am the image of
that little boy
behind your face.
i am not noise.
i am the silence
of a very faraway
memory on that
cone mountain over
there with a snow
cap. I am my
small world like
a bird perched on
a twig. A small patch
of green grass. A handful
of clouds drifting on
my shoulder. I am
a silent memory.
I am listening inside
my little corner.
This heart still
of a little boy.
Always wondering.
I Remember That Day In My Life

‘twas early morning
when i climbed
the mango tree
and at the top
i sat on the big branch

for a long time
i looked at the
tranquility of the barrio
where i spent
my childhood

i breathed the air
filled my lungs with
so much peace

i did not have anything in mind
except that little escape
from every day's boredom

‘twas a day without words.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember The Caterpillar

t'was a story told
when i was young

the moth that circled
the fire of the lamp
he gets burned

the daedelus on the
wings of wax
he flew too high
and the sun melted
his wings and to
the sea he drowns

the caterpillar that
struggled to the top
kicking other
caterpillars along
the way only to
find that there is

nothing at the top
that on the other
side are mountains
of caterpillars that
never knew that
they are all destined
to fly and be some
colorful butterflies

it amazes me
it still amazes me
how can i not
easily understand

my own destiny
RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember The Mimicking Bird

it is perching on a branch of a tree in front of our house
facing me
this hottest day of the year
when all the leaves are falling
like an inevitable misfortune

i open the window and it does not fly away
i whistle
it whistles too

i sing a song it sings the same song as mine
i hum, it hums too

it is mocking me
but i like it that way

i don't consider it my enemy
not even a flattery
perhaps a compliment
to my dissent.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember The Torture Room

i remember the torture room
i thought at first
it is hell where hot fires
and forks
hurt my skin and pierce
the flesh of my body

i imagine it
to be this oven
of cinders where
devils with tails
and horns
frighten me

it isn't

the torture room
in fact
is in the big house
where people
come and do not
talk
where we
have no
convergence
of the minds

where
she loves him
but he loves
another

where wives
hate
and batter
their husbands

where husbands
too
slap their wives
and abandon
them
for another

where children
have no
respect
for parents

and where
parents
do not mind
their children

where governments
run the state
for their
own personal
profit

where people
sell their
votes

where there is no care
and love
where hope cannot
thrive

where there is
indifference
violence
and perpetual
hatred and
always for
retaliation and
revenge

it is indeed
a beautiful house
an earth filled
with colors

but those
who live here
have converted
this

into a torture room

we, now live
in the room
that we deserve

RIC S. BASTASA
we are walking up
towards the peak of
an old mountain, where

Papa before his demise
walked with me
to the top and told me
how beautiful life can
be when we are near
the clouds that dress
the trees on the mountain
tops with its
foggy days,

we have gotten heavy
on the plains and
our feet are not forgiving
us for our lousy days

when we reached the top
my world changed

as i remember what
hurts and having learned
the cause

i breathe life again
like a child.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Remember When My Mouth Was Full

and i too remember when my mouth was full
i still wanted to talk
to you, there was this thought that keeps on bugging me
and it was for you,
that time, when my mouth was full, i wish i could talk
intelligibly, but how could i? when what i had was everything
kept within the four corners of my mouth,
sealed by the fence of my teeth, and the lock is in my tongue,
and my lips, they keep closing, keeping what palatable food was there.

i vomited. no, i did not.
i swallowed them all, Hook
line and sinker. i forgot that i am human.
i thought i was a fish. there were bubbles.
there was that river that swallowed me.
and it too did not talk,

now, i am talking to you. and you are listening.
then what? i have nothing to say.
i am empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Repeat

i like you ms. beautiful
with your bad habits
i like it when you
are bad sometimes

and you like me
when i think luxurious

use you, use me
i will be frank
i am indecent

RIC S. BASTASA
I Rush My Life, Hoping To Arrive There First Ahead Of You.

on the 28th we leave  
for new york passing hongkong

everything is arranged already  
from shuttle to train to montreal then  
back to boston passing  
niagara to stay there for two nights

if we by chance shall meet i am bringing  
Talan with me and perhaps you will like it.

perhaps on a thanksgiving you may share a slice  
of turkey with me  
a glass of red wine will do  
for just a night at the patio of your house  
overlooking a garden of daffodils

i know it is autumn and this world is  
sadly colorful with some leaves about to fall

a hurricane may come, i know, the forecast is  
surely devastating, an earthquake in mexico, flood  
in California, and a kneeling athlete on the news,

i am a little disturbed, confused, and thus i travel.  
if we do not meet, that is actually fine with me.

i rush my life, hoping to arrive there first ahead of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Said I Love You

And I know you love me too

Caught unaware
I kissed you

And you said “Utang na Loob! ”

“For God’s sake! ”

Kiss me again.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Saw Father Cry Over Mother's Photograph

i saw my father
cry over mother's photograph
on evenings
after our family dinner

i pity him dearly
then he followed mother
earlier than later

i simply
heave my slightest sighs

RIC S. BASTASA
I Say I Love You And I Bring You Flowers

a bit romantic, i come across the procedure
to wooing my new found crush
just a few cubicles away,
sending messages through the cell phone maybe too modern
she may not like it
calling her through the phone, maybe, sort of fresh and rash,
sending chocolates maybe alright, but it will be bad for her health
(she is a little bit fat but she is not that gross, she's still pretty)
and so i decided to send her flowers

she did not like it, she needs money.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Say I Will Always Be Here For You

you left me
and i search for the reasons
from every place where we have been to
those squeaky beds cannot tell
what was it exactly that you have been missing
the blankets no longer smell our sweat
and they no longer grasp what
they used to brag

that i have
and you say you really like
they have shun
mouths and tongues
and they all keep
what they do not know

somehow i come back
to my senses
and feel the same love i share with you
i still feel the warmth of my kisses
i still have the dignity of my hugs
the purity of my love
that you discard

and if by chance you read these lines
i say
i will always be here waiting for you

on white hair on long beard on a mind
that would have been willing to forget

RIC S. BASTASA
I Say Thank You

even when offended by you
i say thank you
i know
i can do nothing to reform you
even when you slap my face
let me say thank you
God still loves
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I See How Beautiful Is The Light

inside it is dark
and yet you close the window
i regret having you
you are always as silent as

a thread and the needle
somehow i just feel that you do not care

but time is a tutor of your ways to mine,
i enter your room one day

and i see how beautiful is the light filtering its way through the glass in that usual quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
I See Lakes On The Pics

and i turn myself instead to those images
on the net, i surf: serenity, gratitude, bliss,
divinity and eternity, and what appears on screen
are pictures of lakes, and there is this

Lake Moraine of Alberta

a lake so placid, a swan taking its way to the other side
green trees and an old castle on the other

so serene,

and there is the figure of a man raising his hands
to the sky, on top of a mountain, overlooking a lake,

so grateful, perhaps that amidst all these beauty
he is there still alive to see, to savor, to praise, to thank, to be silent

RIC S. BASTASA
I See You But You Don'T See Me

i am invisible
i have the powers handed to me by the gods
to be invisible
on this site to have many faces to have many
forms and colors and
dispositions

beyond gender
beyond boundaries
religion, beliefs, beyond what you ordinarily call
poetry

i am invisible to anybody's closed eyes
narrow alleys
i have wings i can always fly
i have horns i can always bully each
one of you here

you do not see me
but i always see you

when you fall
it will be my poetry
that will stop the falling
when you melt
it will be my poetry
that will solidify you

the gods the gods
they must have cursed me
i am always invisible
even to myself

i touch but i do not feel

RIC S. BASTASA
I See You Entering Buddha's Gate

i see you entering the gate of Buddha
moving inside
his castle

the Buddha yawns
and i have seen
you
undress
and then wear
the saffron
robes
of perfection

outside
the gate, i sit and yawn
and then
i sleep
and then
i dream you touching
my dirty garments
and then
my heart bled

RIC S. BASTASA
I See You Rise Above The Skies

i see you rise above the skies
i am smiling
but i always understand
the discrepancies of
this world

honestly, despite the throne that you own
(how you obtained that)
i keep silent
you never deserve it

the true stars around you too silently are laughing
inside their hearts
your light is not as bright

RIC S. BASTASA
I Send You Music Instead

the news is bad
7.6 percent unemployment
rate and more shall
suffer the coming days
of the month

you are afraid
things gonna be worse
and some have to give up
the united states
and go home to their
hometowns until
such time that the Obama
team recover

i choose my mood
and will not be
saddened anymore
by more sad news
depressing
moments
cannot overwhelm me
these days

and so i do not
cater to statistics
anymore what i send
instead is my favorite
kind of music

mozart, tsaicovsky
debussy, whitney,
celine, gary and
cynthia

the night is dark
and i am in the mood
for listening to music
watching the stars
and the moon
and just be silent
to the marrow of my
bone

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Be At Peace

every hour that i am alone
is a betrayal

every hour turn into multiplicative hours
and i should have been swimming in an ocean of guilt
that must drown my soul

but i hit my chest with my fist and i swallow all my words
saying that i perfectly understand all these
every part
piece every shred
every brokenness

and then i live on those hours of betrayal
and never has it occurred to me that i shall sit with you and
tell you honestly
about it

how can i endure the pain that soon this gift of knowledge
shall hand you?
a cup of tears
a destination without a sign
of an island in the middle of
nausea

i sit for long hours and sift one betrayal
and another betrayal

i can endure this until i die. And you shall cry believing that
i have been faithful throughout
and that you never had any regret loving me
forever.

and i shall be at peace
i shall be at peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
i fall upon a cliff
and dive upon the
sea
away from the rocks
i must survive

there is beauty here
from where i am lost
and then to where
i shall find
myself without you

the corals sing for me
the fish worship my body
the seaweeds too soft
and comforting
loneliness is a good
companion
together with solitude
mixed
completing me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Have These Hands That Shall Write About Hands....

must have i forgotten
from where all these come?

ah, i have read about your hands
and now i shall have to mind about mine

once i had these hands
whose name is
work and struggle and
sacrifice

ey lifted rocks
outlined by Sisyphus
and roll them from
atop the hill
and put them again there
in senseless
labor

when i got reason
my hands began to think
as though they have brains
under their nails

tese hands begin the
questions
grapple for answers
and got
no satisfaction

ey dabble in poetry
trembling and tense and
looking for
a compromise for some
fetish

must have i forgotten from where
these hands come?

someone says these hands are from
the hands of God
whose hands hand what we do not have
in hand yet

two hands did what was wrong then
and covered the face of the
penitent and the remorseful

two hands that slap a face that
triggered a gunfire
that lay upon the hardened breasts
and held breaths

two hands that write now for you
face upside down not asking for anything in return

two hands that speak for you
as you turn your head for someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Not Look For You

you are gone
and you leave no note on the bed

i stare outside this room
and sees a field of grass
shadows of mountains
and a sunset

i shall not look for you
i am confident that now you have finally found a home

deep inside yourself you shall sing
and knowing that at last you are happy with yourself

i, too shall move on, close the door and take the walk
on the other side of the fence

it is nighttime and there are stars in the sky
i lay myself on the cold grass and i do not shiver a bit.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Not Run Away From Myself

To tell you the truth
i keep on writing to make myself live

if i stop, i die, and if i die
no one lives for me

for i am alone by myself
in all these

i do not die neither to i wish
to have it myself
done, for that would be
cowardice at its most

one who loves oneself does no
lose oneself
for what choice do i have?
except to live and show the
courage that i still know how

you may be happy now in
another lover's arms
what choice do i have?
no one bears all my regrets for
me except myself

i am brave, brave as a thousand
lonely men who know how to fight
and not run

away from myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Not Think Of You

i shall not think of you
when i, by necessity, in this soul searching
proceedings, shall take back what i thought
i left, along the past paths of my own time,
i shall not think of you, as i, go back
to the river, where my soul once sang,
the loneliness, of my stories, the
horror of what chose to chase me
and shame me, and now
i face them back, each step
each thought, the bus winds
on the steep mountains,
i shall not think of you,
neither shall you think of me,
in fairness to the wounds that have
taken all their time alone
to heal themselves.
i shall not think of you, for now i have regained
the crown of peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shall Pass This Way Again

i shall pass this way again
and stop
for a long long time until
i shall remember
the hugs and kisses
and the love
that once you gave me

just once, and then i shall go away
tight lipped like a bud
i shall wait
for time comes with a gentle comfort
and then for once
i shall open the door of my heart
for someone
more deserving.....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Should Have Been More Responsible...

i should have been responsible for you
suffer for your loss
i could have drawn a map to find you
you are lost

it is this regret
that i keep on leaving
i, too, has a life of my own to live
a mountain to climb
a river to cross

a house to build or destroy
if i really want to
a grave to visit, flowers to throw away
to the winds

it is this disappointment that has kept me alive
i could have been more responsible
to each of you, sick and needing help
or dying and needing even just a prayer

but i too, has the time too short
to accomplish what i haven't
lots of unfinished business too
and so i cannot be yet taken

i've been empty, so empty that i begin to float
i drift like everyone else
still undecided where to land and be myself again
when i was just born

what i lost, i have not yet recovered,
my innocence, what i had was so much, this pride,
what i must achieve, seems but only a dream,
and it is not coming, no signal, no warning,
death for instance... oh,

i should have been more responsible than that,
I could have lived the life you've wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Should Have Less Than Five Fingers...

finally i come to the
conclusion that
friends are not necessary
so i may be
piqued and enter
into compromises
and accounting of
whether i have given more
or that they have given less
and so one by one
i keep a list
whom to junk
and whom to keep
and oh my

i can't reveal
if i still have ten
fingers anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
I Shy Away From Hugs

my first hug
was not from my father.

it was from that man
with a hanging tongue.

it was dirty.
he had no heart
but a knife.

since then i shy away from hugs.
youth cannot forget.
what it buries, rises from the grave.

i face it with hatred.
i am a grown up man now.

there are no more hugs
since then.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Simply Like The Word Roost

and its variations,
refer to the latest poem i wrote on the word

ensconce, it is roost that you use, which signifies
about chickens
but honestly i prefer the pegions
which we had

once in my youth
the boy who chased and hit birds
feeding on our rice
drying under the sun
and i did not know what i did

stoning birds and killing them
not really thinking
that they would be happier
and nicer to see
when they are alive
and flying and feeding
on the pavements where
rice is abundant and
it would have been more
memorable if i feed
them myself
with rice on my palms

which i never really did
because in my place
a boy is a boy and he must
hit the birds with stones
from his slingshot

until i have seen real birds
and real people shot
and killed on the fields
like birds but
with real ammunitions
from government armalites
and brothers
killing brothers
which really bothers
me a lot
until now

when finally i get tired of thinking
when i simply write
poems and poems, not judgments
not commands, just feelings

like hot and cold, fever and the coldness
of death

RIC S. BASTASA
I Sing Your Eyes

i walk the dream
where the street
breathes in the shadow
of moon-light,
the lovers night.

oh, sweet love
long time coming
longer time whispering
us free.

i sing your eyes
as willows
stretching into
the ever passing winds

i speak the words of my heart
i sing the songs of my dreams
i see in the water
your image
and it’s true...

as i ride the butterfly,
i offer the rose.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Sit On A Tree

i sit on a tree
on a strong branch
below me a river flows
far away at a distance
a snow-capped cone
shaped mountain
some clouds drift
near my shoulder
i am just this little
boy trying to see
my coming world.

RIC S. BASTASA
when i make love with you,
oh, i am honest, we did not, but
perhaps in a dream

when i was then too tired and could not remember,
but i guess, i must have forgotten it,

i made love to you, and when i make love with you,
i close my eyes, hope you do too,
it is more intense that way,
oh, i have to admit, i imagine

someone else, though you hold me tight, and i can not even breathe freely,
i have to grasp for gasps,

and oh always there is a gap somewhere between our realities,
which i think is more real,
i see light, intense light within,

remember i close my eyes,
yet i see, another face, forgive me but there is more beauty and desire in there,

it does not mean that i do not like you or that there is no love happening, there is,

but there is greater there,
it is perhaps my desired perfection of you which is not in you yet,

we are artists in some ways during that act of lovemaking,
we close our eyes, and we see
light within us, perhaps we feel
that fire, only that we were so indulged
and
per-occupied, we do not bother

naming it,

alright, let me say it, i love you,

but (within me there is more
to what i love in you, and it is not you,
forget me, but i say it here,
i may be there but i am not there,

within the context of this paradox,
i lay in bed
too weak to wake up,
and too timid to say that i am still
thinking of that place where i am more perfect
and you are not yet there with me.

i sleep again wishing that this light
does not cease.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Sleep Late Tonight

because i cannot sleep
with my enemy

do not ask who my enemy is
the one who sleeps with me

do not mention the name of the woman
who claims she loves me

give me space, please.
I Smell Chlorine From A Distance In That Nook

stained,
you find a place there
in that nook where you can be alone and find some
solutions

cleaning some stains
sticking to your arms and hands, but it will not be long

i smell chlorine
concentrated chlorine from where she works
day and night
graveyard shifts
and other extra hours uncomplaining

she will join you
for the cleansing, it will not really take that long
just a matter of one hand
then it will be over

but your eyes will be hurt a little bit
you know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Step Out Of The Door

i step out of the door
from my dark room the windows are not opened
it is humid
it is cold
and i step out of the door the windows still closed
i lock the door and step upon a patch of green grass
the dews are hanging on the blades
and shaken

i look upon a sky
and there is this star still shining despite the opening of the
mouth of the morning
after a deep sleep

i see your face but i promise there shall be no tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Stick To My Point Darling

i stick to my point my darling
love and lust go hand in hand together
one cannot exist without the other
one cannot just love and not lust
for love will always like to last with lust

for what is this deep silence without the
noise of fire
the tongues of the sun
the pelvis of the moon
the fingers of tickling tiny cinders of stars

to the heavens of course, we heave, we bend,
show me what is kept inside your skirt
show me those breasts that enclose the
true beatings of the heart

i will love you and i cannot help but lust with you.
for i am both air and leaf, river and rock,
for i am both bird and sky, i am both mortar and pestle,
  i am both sun and moon
pond and pebble
snake and grass

let me hold you then with the gentleness of my soft hands
let my tongue lick every corner of your skin
let me love you and eat you and swallow you
for by then, you become truly a part of me

immersed, flowing, running all over my mouth and veins.
my throat, my lips, to my finger tips.

let me love you and let me have you. let no part be absent.
let the meeting and tasting be so sweet and enduring.

i love you, and it is not enough.
there is more to the bursting
of a star. it is endless, it is kind and brutal.
like this big bang of creation.
the pain of darkness
and the gentleness
of light.

silence cannot lose itself within the calmness of the waters.
dee inside, we partake, the lust of our beings.
we drink this cup, we die and live.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Still Have Fear Getting Out Of The Circle

i am staying
i finally tell myself
there is no sense going out of the circle
the comfort of its radius
being in
for the rest of my life

inside i may suffer
i may bleed in silence
but i live and i can still do what i can
to ease the pain

i have seen you
leave the circumference
you shout at first
you are free

then you suffer alone
in agony
then you die
then no one remembers
no one really cares
no one understands completely
us, how we both suffer

inside and outside us
how we suffer everywhere
how we live how we die

RIC S. BASTASA
I Still Have No Words For It

must i stop writing about love
& lust?

do you know what happens to
me afterwards?

you ask me to stop
you claim that it is disturbing you

must i, as you, suggest, write about the pains of
others,
those whose mouths do not know what words are
proper for their
sorrows

those whose lips
are cracking estranged as they are
from the fluency of our learned
articulation

i am guilty of this kind of misery
i too have
what misery is there but perhaps because i am still
attracted
enticed to lust and power and love

i must have a good reason to laugh and stroll and dance and sing
perhaps, this i say, perhaps, my misery is lesser
in height and weight
it yet cannot see how big is the misery of others

i cannot yet speak for them
as i still have no words for it.

RIC S. BASTASA
'I Still Have Time'

for things we like to do
we just do them and then for things we do not like doing
we always say, 'i still have time'

and time has no mercy for without us it goes
and then gone

and for all the things we have not done
we still say, 'i still have time'

and then there is this sunset that fades too quickly
orange to black, and then the world is too dark and silent and cold
for all the things that we have not done

time is dead and we have not done
the things that we should have done

time is too short for those that we love to do
the sinful ones
time is too long for those that we ought to do
those that could have opened the doors for our salvation

time is dead and then we are gone
regret laughs the hardest and the door to hell opens like the mouth of the
mad one.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Still Love You

How can I not love
This world
And be sad
When I soon leave

When my heart still
Beats for you

RIC S. BASTASA
I Still Write These Poems Of Love Again In My Shame

For as long as this heart beats
Though erratically now by time and age

Though blinded by numerous desires
These hands shall press the letters of love again

These fingers shall caress the lines of love
Despite the pain, the sin, the blame

Did you not tell me once, that whenever and wherever love is
In whatever form and imagination,
there
is also the pain accompanying?

we love, we pain, we love again
we pain, we love, we pain again

RIC S. BASTASA
I Stood Alone In Pasay

lost in the crowd of
indifference, wishing i am
back home,
where i can sit and watch
nature bloom
far in my provincial home,

here in one corner
in Pasay
i stood alone
discerning where to go
next
what to do

as the train comes and goes
as the door closes and opens
as people come and go

as the noise grows deeper
i wait for this confusion to sink
bury all doubts

so i can rise from these deep
ocean in the city
so i can finally get myself out
from this jungle of
cemented dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Bong is happier with his private practice of law in Ortigas.
i CAN deduce that from his smiles as he toured Europe for tax shelter
His conscious is clean posing like Alexander the Great at the Acropolis at nighttime.
I like his pictures at Vatican Must be heavenly there Cool and huge architecture simply amazing and i still have the wish to do it better in Amsterdam

Rey loves to shampoo his Beagle in Chicago Puts more time on his dog than himself and it makes his happier too

Guess i am happier here too Tropical climate How can i imagine surviving in the snow as thick and cold as a forest uninhabited by monkeys

I don't rhyme sometimes and does not get the correct metaphors for my existence but well, this is my choice and i still love it.

i can't waste my money on a round trip ticket to Rome
or Greece
I haven't even savored yet
the seaside of my own place.

TOMorrow i am going to Ponot
climb a coconut tree
swim in the river
and dry my naked body
on top of the cliff.

I can fish and eat my catch.
I can walk faraway and sleep
where my feet want to rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Stopped Comparing Myself To You And The Rest Of The Gang

There is no use
there is no cure for this hollowness

so let it be

i sometimes think that you are luckier
what with a family of three
and a house on top of a hill with a red car parked nearby
what with a parrot to greet you good mornings inside that silver cage by the window
of your cottage at the right side of your daffodil garden

on the other hand
what choice do i have?

i live on my own now
rooted to a family history

the house is old but smelling still of the bread that mom used to bake
the wall still resounding of the nails that father hammered on my younger days

so many things so many memories

and so i stopped comparing myself to you
you are different, so much different to what i am

i will be what i can be
without you even without this world
even in the eternity of emptiness

for this universe is nothing but a big burst
of loneliness

coping up with planets and stars
moving on somewhere still hoping to catch

what happiness is all about.
I Stopped In The Green Rice Field

they pass me by
and they did not notice

how i stop my walk
and

feasted on the white heron
on tall yellow legs

my eyes in wonder
the beauty without

my spirit has wings
lifted to the flight of the white

wings of that bird,
so light, so swift, so free.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Stretch My Mind To The Sky

Everyday

instead of stretching my legs and arms

i stretch my mind to the sky

i can feel my nerves screaming

the one at my neck is aching

for more comfort

sometimes one feels that the hands are not

connected to the arms

like a night emptied of its stars and moon

there is chaos because some parts of our selves

are no longer in harmony

with the old body of the world

the streams and rivers get disconnected

with the sea

and the ocean waits for all these waters

to come

and be at peace with the silence of the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
I Teach My Child By G. Abad

I.
I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
    The simple words first
And last.
They are hardest to learn.
    Words like home,
Or friend, or to forgive.
These words are relations.
They are difficult to bear;
Their fruits are unseen.
    Or words that promise
Or dream.
Words like honor, or certainty,
Or cheer.
Rarest of sound,
Their roots run deep;
These are words that aspire,
They cast no shade.
    These are not words
To speak.
These are the words
Of which we consist,
Indefinite,
Without other ground.

II.
    My child
Is without syllables
To utter him,
Captive yet to his origin
In silence.
    By every word
To rule his space,
He is released;
He is shaped by his speech.
    Every act, too,
Is first without words.
There's no rehearsal
To adjust your deed
From direction of its words.
    The words are given,

But there's no script.
Their play is hidden,
We are their stage.
    These are the words
That offer to our care
Both sky and earth,
    These same words
That may elude our acts.
If we speak them
But cannot meet their sound,
They strand us still
In our void,
Blank like the child
With the uphill silence
Of his words' climb.
    And so,
I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
    The simple words first
And last.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Tell Her These Things When I Come Home

So much
Has been taken for the quest of something original

Time squeezes to something interesting
Something original

I am carried away

I look out this glass window
Seeing the sea

Farther blue nearer me is brownish
The river is flooded the rain poured wildly in the mountain

A blue green car passes by below
A woman with a basket of something
(I cannot see clearly)
Holds her boy like a twig of a tree

The wind must be blowing hard
There could be typhoon

I see these happening, I am from here. I live here.

I tell her these things when I come home

RIC S. BASTASA
I Thank You For The Little Things

thank you my love for the little things
though how little how can i forget?
the way you remind me to comb my hair
when i begin to forget in so doing
to point to me where my glasses are
my pen which is just hanging in my collar
the taste of the fried chicken that i have almost forgotten
	hank for those little conversations
on the lazy afternoon
thank you for the glass of cold lemonade
when my throat begins to sore
thank you for the notes
of a day's reminder on top of my bed
when i have overslept

thank you for being with me
for all these years
thank you my love
for sticking with me
when i have none anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think

i think i can rescue the sky for you
the clouds shall uplift me
and the blackness of the coming rain
disappears,

sunny skies, whiter horizons, and a very
gentle mood for the day.

you are welcome

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think I Am In Love

never shall it be a part of me
it is not inside a box
in fact it is visible to me
so open so beautiful
but never shall it ever be
a part of me
concealed inside my heart
this secret intimate love
that i only know
not even the gods who
sowed the seeds of
true love
in the furrowed field of
humanity's indifference

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think I Have Found God.

abdul

you flatter me
saying i can be a good
thing
to be copied by you

sometimes i like to believe
this matter
and so i go back to the mirror
and look at my own eyes

wanting to find what is
is there to see and what is it
that perhaps i have not seen
and yet seen by you

a few minutes i laugh
i have memorized this face like
the poem of a child

know what i mean,
living life, taking it for granted
not expecting to find anything
in the garden

this morning i take my walk
i think no thoughts
i feel the wind and see the leaves
falling

and i think, hope you do not
oppose my humble conclusion,
i think i have
found God.

RIC S. BASTASA
i think i know now
a little hint from a shadow
a borrower of light
an imitator without the gift
of gab
how one must go on
with fidelity to a body
and dissolve
when darkness comes
when sleep is here
where the beginning to another
journey
begins....

i think i know now
what i do not know
what i should not have
known
what i should keep a secret
and bring it
to the depths of my
grave

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think I Know What Your Dessert For Lunch Is

you are part
of this poverty line that

stand
--
we

within the circle
of office and house
we save all
we can

money
time
effort

and yet we find ourselves
dry as grass
and crippled
like some
branches
cut by the storms
of misfortune

you have become
emaciated
and you wait
for the fast claim
of

death

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think So.

yes i think so.
it lands.
it stays for a while.
it goes away.
it teases me.
it winks.
it flies away again
it stops
for a while.
it waits.
it winks again.
it dances.
it undresses.
it dresses up again.
it is going anywhere.

it is so beautiful
always from a certain .

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think That Was Friendship All About

when we sat on the grass
and watched the light of the
afternoon sun fade slowly
when we spoke of nothing
because we love the silence
more than ever
when we understood what
was not spoken
when we made no qualms
about who i was and what you were
and what you will become
and what i shall be...

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think You Are Right

when you said that it is harder
 to hide something which is not there
 i tried to think upon such a paradox
 of hiding nothing

you are right
 when there is nothing to hide
 that becomes a heavy burden

when you open my mind
 and find out that there is nothing in there
 worth loving
 worth reading
 the burden becomes unbearable
 all your castles of expectations fall
 like the tower of sand
 on the shore

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think You Know What I Mean

a young man sits inside his orange car
puts his legs above board
wipes his face, sweaty, cleans his nose
idly, looks around
in silence

he gazes upon a vacant road
there is no car
no people,

from where i am seated
i observe him
he is contented upon his idleness
i can't read his mind of course
whether there is sorrow
or bliss

beside his car is a wall
enclosing a garden of cassava and papaya trees
there is a guava tree
laden with its fruits

beyond us is the calm sea
plain blue as coconut trees tower
like guards

or lighthouses on an early morning
contemplation perhaps
about what to do next after this gentleness
this calm

will it be chaos? will it be too much noise?
can pandemonium be not far behind

the white chickens arrive and pecks upon some grains of rice
upon a bowl of clay lies the water that can satisfy thirst

you know what i mean
life is a variation of everything
full of color, wanting sound, longing for scents expecting some happenings.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think, ..........

i think,
i like that position when you sit by the window and begin to ask all the questions directed to the world.
The way you stand on stage and take the posture of an authority and then answer the questions was wayward. You do not look like god. You are an elf and if they only have time, they could have thrown you a basket of tomatoes.
I think,
we are more beautiful with our open minds, the thirst of so much knowledge the basket of venus, the open hands of Sophocles bleeding.
I think
we are more credible when we take the pose of children in the park waiting for mother.
I think we know nothing. We are clean with nothing on the wall of our souls.
I think, we are honest now.
We have nothing important to say. We are only passengers waiting at the bus station.
We are only pilgrims.

Look, that is the path. Now, let us walk.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Think, I Know Myself

i think, i know
myself, ...i arrive
at the conclusion
of who i am, really,
when i look at you,
and i lift my
left hand to
hold the side of
my neck

my right hand
hidden inside
my pocket

i gaze at you that
long enough

you do not mind
there is no meaning attached

my hand caresses
my hair

my lips close my eyes open
my heart dancing

and you are
that event for this
celebration

i look at myself in the mirror
and say, ' a toast! '

RIC S. BASTASA
I Thought I Am Complete

i thought i am complete
seeing my fingers
all intact in my hands
seeing my toes
in proper places of
my feet and my eyes
between the bridge
of my nose
and my hair lushing
on my head and my
ears too sensitive
for voices and sounds
and then something
runs in my spine
like a worm
at first then
more like a snake
and i suddenly
shudder

and then it was
that time that i
realize that i am

incomplete
and the thought comes
like a sudden flash of
light

i need you
i may not have learned to love you yet

RIC S. BASTASA
I Thought I Cannot Write A Love Poem Anymore

i am 48 years old, and i have loved and lost
so many times,
the pains that do not hurt anymore
come like trickles of rain not ripping any skin with
cold,
those that ripple sadness do not make any sound,
love,
does not intimidate me anymore,
neither does it make me quiver,
or long
for more,

i am 48 years old and had taken lust as creamer
to my bitter and black coffee,
stares at the window and never cares who gets
in and gets out of my door,
this room is empty
and these blankets are washed
as often as they get dirty, twice a week or thrice

and this floor gives the sounds of stilleto shoes
and hushes and moans, and there was no love
requiring a better sofa to lay my head upon,

or some romantic roses as accent on the blue
glass vase,

i am 48 years old, and still in love with you,

can do nothing about it babe,
memories bring more memories
like a stack of fantasies, and so here i am back to square one

writing you a love poem like tendrils of a vine
looking for the best tree to climb upon
until i reach that place where i can see you
sleeping in your room.
and i will be there for long
glancing
i do not wish that you love me too.
This poem serves the purpose.
It is just a matter of remembering.
How can i ever forget
, it is still you.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Thought You Are Asleep My Dear Friend

two o'clock in the morning
snow must be colder and thicker
but your eyes are awake
like an empty basin still
wanting to be full of the
day's warm air, but my dear
you need sleep and you
must now sleep and be
with your colored dreams
they shall speak like friends
with gossamer wings,
and some will be like jokers
and princes, and princesses

sleep now my dear friend,
you need them to guide you
what poem to write next
when another morning breaks
again in the shutters of your mind.

sleep now, step into the world
of magic, the garden of fantasy.

who knows someone so lovely
waits for you there, saying hey!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Thought You Know Me

I hand a piece of paper
It is cut into halves like the shape of my heart.
And you take the other and read the letters there
There is no way you can decipher
What I want to mean. You take the other half back and
Then you Look at Me and Ask

Is there something here Is there something?
Twice. I said Yes There is Something in There.
And then You Ask for My Name
Where I live and what i do.
Who I am?

I ask myself, how come that I have loved you so much?

RIC S. BASTASA
I To I

i do not deny myself anymore
of its confidences
it is hard to strain this intimate
relationship between
this i and i,
for Thou can always sever from
me and always shall i
be left alone
devastated like a land abandoned
by the natives
because the conquerors who are
too cruel
have just arrived.
from this moment on
i promise myself
it is i
and i alone
let no one distract my
own attention
to love myself
above all
no matter what blunder
has it committed
against myself
for it is i
too who must forgive and
then always
forget

RIC S. BASTASA
I Too, Like An Unfinished Poem

an unfinished poem sounds like
an incomplete sentence
sometimes just a predicate without a subject
like love unrequited
a verb without a noun
an adjective so misplaced that
it calls for an adverb
it is more like a mouth
that opens but says only some syllables
though you as the reader
understands what the poet
wants to stress and mean and accentuate
for some parts of the poem are meant
not to be finished sometimes
in fact, they are meant to be concealed
and well covered like a bikini
to your........or the prohibited love
you still keep in your........
or the memories that hurt you and are meant
to be unsaid.......you still want her not to
know.........
i, too, like an unfinished poem
like the sketch of your secret love many, many years ago,
once when you were young
the face is unfinished, you have not drawn the eyes
of that love so profuse that no canvass could ever contain
you still like this love unfinished, who knows
the ripe time comes and both of you
will finish
the unfinished love poem soon......
or some poems cannot ever be finished
because the words to complete them still
do not exist
or they are simply missing,
too lost like you,

they are not there yet to a feeling so new
so fragile and so indescribable.....
so rare........

and i, really, like it that way the poem
unfinishes itself

RIC S. BASTASA
I Tried To Paint The Canvas

tried hard to paint
the canvas of my life
using the bright colors
in spontaneous strokes

but it rained so hard
outside where i watch
the view of things
to come

rain like tears
erased the picture of
myself
of what i chose
to be
those brighter colors

but it does not really matter
i still like
pastel, or the darker
ones, blue and black.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Understand Aldo

i understand Aldo
he is talking about a certain
cynthia buhain who thinks that he is a bogus poet
imitating others

art imitating life
aldo imitating other people's words

which, out of sheer fun, i also do,
but cynthia is new,

and Aldo must also try to understand
like  God
Aldo must extend the hands of compassion

the witch may live in the Philippines
if Aldo believes it so...

meantime, Aldo my friend
outstanding poet at PH

let us keep PH 7
not 14 not 1

cool man, be neutral, be cool,
there is no storm, there is no malice

let us keep being first rated mockingbirds
on top of the roof
on top of our voices

let us keep mocking!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Understand Perfectly

the difference between
the abundance of the heart
wherein the mouth begins
to speak

the language of green money
as crisp as
it is signifying the importance
of having to earn it
with the sweat of thy
brow.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Used To Be A Part Of The Herd

long time ago
i used to be
part of the
herd
following the leader
not having to
use my own mind
got no problem
then with
authority

until then when i met you
you with the Light
and Reason
you who taught me the Way
of Awareness of what
i am and who i am
and what i can do

Now with my Own Light
i go my way
alone, and strong and
self-reliant

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wait For A New Day. It Will Surely Come.

it has always been
as always, all about a love

unrequited. So much feelings
had been wasted. All reasons to
garbage.

did we not make love? did you not embrace me
tightly?

i gazed at you. I feel the inanimate in you.
i embraced a tree. I hug a waterfall.
i kissed a stone.

i have a bed of sands. i was with you in
an anthill. I was bitten a thousand times.
it hurts.

i have thrown away all my education over the window.
i have become a beggar.

for how long shall a king bend over a slave?
give away his kingdom, all for a butterfly?

i wait for a new day. it will surely come.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Waited For Her

actually, this is the story of my marriage
i have chosen not to hurt and so
i pretend not to like to close the door
and shut myself away from everything
that bears every scent of her
the air outside
the dust inside

i waited for her to feel the core of the story
for her to internalize
who i was and what i have become
i left my shoes so she may finally wear them

and there by chance, it was her who shut the door on me
i pretended to weep and she hears the knocks to let me in

but honestly, i was thinking of something else
the blue sea the sunset at the beach

the small cottage and this beautiful shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
I Walk Away

this afternoon
something inside me
is a shell

i put my ears
to hear the song

i like to scream
to make you
hear
the song of the shell

what i only have
are feet

i walk
away

and so i have only
this
departure to
offer

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want It Smooth And Classy

i like to have a glass
of wine shaped in the body
of a beautiful woman
i like to drink
something smooth and
classy flowing inside
my throat

on an evening like this.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want The Best Things In Life

who would not want to be the best?
who would not want to have all the best that life can offer?
i, too want the best things that life can offer.
but, it is not what life is all about
we too, must share the sacrifices of the few,
so others may live, so others may have what we always had.
we are too, the passions of Christ.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Be Us

i have nothing to conceal
for i have none of those fortunes
in fact i tell all
what i know and what
the world wants to hear
sort of
a storyteller
pleasing the sad ones
listening
to the voices of crowded minds
for i am the guard of the mall
standing, looking closely
to any form of calamity

please do not run away from me
someone so friendly need not be hurt
and feel
what abandon is

i am myself
because there is nothing more
because there is no one except
my vision of us....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Fly!

yes, you do.
where do you want to go?
i am looking for a new home

how does one grow wings?
i want to fly…

it is the most quiet conversation.
the man begs to understand
why the mouth he is blest with does not take the shape of a beak.

the bird sings of many lands
the man has not yet been to

the little brown bird's heart is a ray of sun
but the man does not know

inside the wars are all in the making
outside it is still calm

the bird and the man kiss
the bird flies
the man falls asleep
the man flies
the bird is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Go Over There

i want to go over there
i now have the courage
of hercules
i now have the wisdom
of prometheus

i want to cross this river
take me
on this sail
silently, gently, gracefully
take me
to the other side

where there is no pain
anymore
where the songs of praise
are sung

i want to go over there
now and
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Keep Love He Says

someone so crazy
is handing him lots of money
poor handsome man

dusk

he returns it kindly
to the lewd hands
of the unrequited

it is not all about money
he says
it is about love and he is
keeping it

till night.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Talk To A Horse

at this moment i want to talk to a horse
perhaps this animal makes sense

at least the horse does not know
how is it to be sad and still be human

and please my dear classy one
don't ever talk to me and please please

don't send me any message
you might be mistaken as another horse with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Want To Write A Sad Poem Today

how i wish to write a sad poem today
for instance: wilting grasses and dried river beds
stinging heat of the sun
cinder like sands of the shore
heat waves, and melting ice caps
something like there is no place that is cool
to my senses,
how i wish i can write the poem about a mad woman
and a husband that always follows her laughter,
how i wish not to be affected by such a sad poem

but i am
and i do not wish to add insult to injury for writing it
and so
i quit, i will not write a sad poem about other people,
that will be too much,
i decided not to write about it anymore.

i will forget about it. I will write something much better.

i will write about
nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
please go now

it is dark and you need sleep

you are tired, you are disturbed, and i do not want to be the reason

for your disturbed feelings

leave me alone

i always have to suffer alone

it is my season of pain, it my turn to be miserable

i will be alone in this and you cannot be of help

no one can

it is me finally caught in my own world of loneliness

the world that i write about so many times described in all

my poems

please go now, i do not want to see a beautiful person like you crying

let there be no tears

and sobs

a gentleman like me still has dignity

let me have the honor, the opportunity to go in peace

to the world that i can no longer write and talk about

because it will be indescribable

because there i am no longer myself
but another being
perhaps with wings and with feelings which are so light
like floating and drifting clouds.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wanted To Tell You The Truth

i wanted to tell you the truth
i have long wanted to tell all these to you
years and years
i agonize on the sealing of my lips
my tongue likes to kick out my teeth
rubbing itself on the sides of the gum
my throat is dry
saliva is useless
i have long desired to tell you
about the unwanted departure
my sickness on the sea
the long hours listening to the
engine of the ship
i spoke to myself alone
on that long journey
i arrived at the port with no one meeting me
on that strange land
on that planks of indifference

i have long wished to have the last dialogue with you
but you are no longer there

you wrote a poem
about the naughty boy who shouted 'Fox! fox! fox! '

i've read it.
I gave up.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was All Too Glad

it was just a passing moment
i was there
and i was all alone and
i only watched
what was happening
around me

i did perhaps say some
words
but only to describe
i did not subscribe for change
neither did i support
a revolution
it has nothing to do with cowardice
but more of
respect for the passing of
the moment
where i am not even
an important part

i was immersed in that passing moment
feeling like a river
or a sleeping fish

or perhaps it was more of me as a rain
falling to the grass
seeping on the soil
without so much noise

it was smooth experience
nothing tight
it was not tragic
but more only of
the clock ticking

it was more of the waiting rather than the going
really
and when i finally leave
as we were meant to be
or wont to do

i know
i was all too glad.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was Born To Listen To You & You

and then recently i learned
something
like a mission for my life: to listen
to you
& you, whose mouths are drying in your own
kind of depression
your hair falling like some dry leaves of
a very hot summer and you
appear like
a bald mountain to me
as i behave
cool as a river as i flow steadily
following the path
to the blue sea

you ask for my ears and i add my eyes
and even
my eyelids that shut to put more color to your imaginations
some flowers wilting in your mind
some snakes spitting venom in your head
all these
that sometimes too threaten me
that i touch my skin
and bones
if i am still myself: born to listen to all your woes
and sadness

you & you alone
how many are you really
so i may know
also how many selves do i have to invent to solve
the riddles of your mind?

now i know my mission
to resolve and draw the many faces of you
to remake
a stuff of a hollow being
fill you with some
essences
so you may finally come to your senses

now a shrink
tomorrow your papa or your mama
or your brother

sometimes I feel like I am God
to watch you
to see to it that unlike your ancestors
and my ancestors
we may not fall again on the same
abyss

of not really knowing ourselves
of having many names
and finally losing what we really are
in the sea

of missing identities. Now, i pray that i may have more ears
and eyes
to listen to see and more hands to hold

more of you and you and you and you
split and shattered

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was Just Behind You At Mc Donald's

don't get mad, i was really there
but you did not notice since you were surrounded with handsome men.
Medical reps i supposed so
With vested interests.
You had the pepperoni pizza and cocacola
And you added caesar's salad
There was laughter on that table
Obviously, you were enjoying it.

I was alone at Table 10.
Reading a newspaper.
I took time looking at the road
Over the glass window.

When you left with them
I counted, all five, I merely smiled.

There is such thing as
delicadeza, and I still have it with me.

When i texted you
You said you were waiting at Maria's Cafe.

It was enough. You lied
and what will you expect from me?

Tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was Once

i was once bound to the insecurities of my world,
and words are frightened to come out from my mouth

the fetters of thoughts that ask whom shall they be pleasing
too unhappy i rise from the rocks and split myself from its cracks

untrustworthy
the words are too enslaving and one by one their syllables
fall like nails from the pillars

words are not for building stars,
for when they look up the skies, they shall never find us

we are grasses spread on earth as floors of the gods
and we always creep

this is the greatness of us, cool and spreading
and free.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was The Magician Who Tried To Make Her Smile

when i met her along the way she was so sad
and tears keep flowing from her eyes
and i, as the great magician of my place,
took her inside my room and began to perform
the usual tricks, how my hands are quicker than her eyes,
i took a rabbit from my hat
i made flowers from my staff
crisp money from newspaper shreds
yet she is still as sad as a child looking for her mother

and i asked her what she likes she said:

'please make yourself vanish in air! '

of course, what i did was wiser, i vanished her myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was Then A Child

it was raining and i did not
hear papa opening the door

rain was noise and night was
dark and the door had no lock

we're not afraid of thieves
nothing of value can be a target

for crime in the house. Papa
was drunk, and his feet were

muddy and he went to bed to
sleep and there was blood in

his hands. He slept soundly.
He must be tired.

The following morning Papa
had coffee listening over the

radio for the morning news.
A man named Gregor just

stabbed a man in Olingan.
That is the name of Papa

He laughed, the family had
influence. He sipped coffee

and put all his feet on the bench
for more convenience.

He told me in a loud voice:
do you remember Lucio?

He stole my gun. And so
i stabbed him. Father had no
regret. He simply defined to me
How to shape a souvenir of justice

Using his knife and bare hands and
Guts. He is our man.

I was then a child, and my eyes
were larger than my guts.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was There

at the top
i know what the wind is
its strength
i know how the earth sounds
when the stones pull
the roots of the vine
it gets lonely up there
and no one listens
to the cries of the tears
the river seduces me
to jump
but i did not listen
i have known how to go up there
and i have also known
how to go back down
with all the dignity of the soles
of my feet

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was There On High

i was there on high
for a time and i like it
but nothing lasts
so they say
and i know and then
i fall like a leaf from a tree
and so they say once again
nothing lasts forever
and i know and then
i fall to the ground like
a sick bird from the sky
but i did not die
and i know and then
i really accepted it
like a cup of my tea
and now you too
shall fall like a leaf
from that tree but
don't you worry
we are here down
to the ground and
now we are home.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Was, Once, Too Beautiful....

first there was a word
you listen carefully
it is uttered
it is not the word
but how beauty presents itself to you
it is awesome

then the word was gone
you have paid no attention to it
it is beauty that
strikes you
and wish some more to see it again

beauty parades itself in nudity
you fell in awesome silence
who can speak about it?
you are shut into a room of amazement
this wish to possess and hold and
not lose the grasp

but beauty does not belong to you
neither does it belong to anyone else
it escapes and then lost forever

time takes it
and time does not give it back

you mourn
but in the middle of your grief
you accept

i too was once
that beauty, so why should i grieve some more?

i too was that beauty
that never was once possessed by someone else

now it is not the grief
but that selfishness
and greed.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Watch The Sun Setting On Top Of Dark Trees

i watch the sun set on top of dark trees
light fading
surrendering to complete darkness

i look at it with sadness
i imagine it is like my life
fading light
completely surrendering
letting the darkness in
everything vanishing
slowly gracefully

indeed, it is so sad
and so beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
I Welcome The Rain That Comes In The Month Of August

equate the month of august with agony, it simply sounds like that
does not jibe well with sorrow or sadness, sounds too underestimating
and it goes well with the rain that comes surprisingly today
on this hot month, on this arid soil, on this acrid atmosphere

between us, this silence, inside us the rambling thoughts of
alienation, around us is the smell of spices of separation those that
when sliced like onions when peeled by our trembling fingers make us cry,

out there our eyes look at different directions and our hands are taking
the forms of mutual dislike like some roots spreading down the deep recesses
of this earth, preferring to be anonymous in this undescrivable boredom

i like the rain, the sound of dripping, the slowness of life, dripping from my
hands like raindrops, like things gradually wasting themselves reaching my
toes, numb to my nails, wanting to be buried to the ground and simply

be forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
I Went To A Fiesta Today

it is the feast of San Vicente today,
and all those places named after this saint
took turns in butchering their chickens and pigs
as offering to the powerful miracles of this saint.

some played their gongs to remind
them of the rhythm of love and action
because this saint taught and
showed that God has the power
to cure the sick and liberate
the minds of those who are in prison.

i went to the house of this woman who once
was mad. She confessed her sins of commission
and omission.
She once kicked her husband and
left him.

Now she is serving us food and stays beside her husband.
She smiles. She remembers everything.
Once she once was in deep depression and she prayed a lot
at the chapel of San Vicente.
Light shone upon her forehead.
There was a dove. There was fire. There was a voice.

And surely enough she went home
whole and cured.

Hence, this feast, this thanksgiving, she said.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Went To Church Today

i went to church today
and as it is customary
at dawn
a sacrifice so to say
for advent's sake

i join in the singing of
the hymns
i sit and stand and kneel
i recite my prayers
on paper
i look at the pulpit
and listen to the
priest saying the homily
i sit and stand and kneel

i look around the corners
i follow the lines of the pillars
i look at the center of this
church majestic in its
art and architecture
i look at the corners
and at the seats filled with
my own people

i was looking for the face
of God
his shadow even
is not there anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will

I will follow you
Wherever you go

Like my fingers pressing
Every letter
To follow you with my thought

And find you and dress you
With words

You can be a poem
Afterwards

Without my knowing
In your becoming

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Always Be Here

I will always be here, here in this place
Worshipping you, remembering you
Always, even if you forget, even if you do not anymore remember
A trace of my presence

I will always be here, here in this place
Because I made a promise to always remember
A trace of your memory.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Always Be Writing About You

As I cannot touch you
With my fingers, as I cannot take a longer
Gaze at you without being condemned
As I cannot be always with you even longer than a minute, as I cannot sit beside you without being
Despised, as I cannot talk to you about
How people love and love so true
Without being ridiculed,
As I cannot
Offer you fresh white flowers as symbols of my affection,
As I cannot send you a greeting card wishing you well,

As I cannot hold your hand even in casual friendship,
As I cannot
Take you to dinner and be myself sharing
What I can give you,
As I cannot
Hug you and kiss you and make love to you even in the wildest of my dreams imaginations without me dying in sin and guilt

As I cannot walk with you in a park
Without being

Ostracized by this decent society

I will just think of you in milder forms in decent thoughts,
And write about you in clean and clear words,

That will just be enough.

I always look at you on this one-way mirror tinted with silver,
And so you do not notice
And so no one knows.
Because,
Strictly, I am prohibited
And that to me is loud and clear.
And by all means within my powers, I have to gently obey.
I Will Be Away For A While

i will be away for a while
i will be hiding for days

i am gathering some voices
i am reconstructing myself

but i promise, soon i will be back
when every part of me becomes intact.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Be Silent To What I See

i will be silent to what i see
to what you are doing
here and then
when you hurt me
snake,

i will not move
i will stare at you
i will take the right time
snake,

to cut you
into pieces

your venom
i shall drink

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Be Speaking To You In My Own Voice

This is my voice,
Sad, prolonged, fever pitched,
With some intermittent turbulence
In between a concentrated discourse
But
Still in a slow, smooth, sailing like
A canoe on a very clear silent running river
And
Some rapids, and rocks somewhere, may distort,
This voice
Of mine,
Or
At the edge for which a waterfall rages,
This
Voice
Of
Mine,
May sound like a violent fall of a hundred heavy waters,
Not a drip, but a hundred heavy, heavy falling waters,
As though the whole word is falling down
On your
Shoulder,
This is my voice, sad, on a prolonged agony,
But somehow, when tickled may move into
A mystery, not discounting the possibility of
An ecstasy,
A fantasy,
And you, my love, my beautiful reader, may hear this voice
Speaking to you in a hush of silence,
This is my voice; hear it for what it is, that is all that I ask of you,
I am myself speaking. I am real, this voice of mine.
Listen to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Be With You

I will be with you
Wherever you are
I will be with you
When you are down
I will be with you
When you are crying
I will be with you
In your over joys
I will be with you
When everyone leaves you
I will be with you
When you are in pain
I will be with you
In all your sorrows

I will always be your tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Do It For You.....

i wish i could have
loved much
and loved better than
you do

or did, i, really
love that much, you,
have not even shown
what love to me,
is, or

was, it, simply me
so enclosed, and unletting,
wavering, as to,
what should i ought to
be,

a bud, it was unable to bloom
fully to meet the
fingers of the caressing sun,

i have a mirror in my hand,
it shames me,
there is a board, a list of
what to do
and what to be
and all those

what ifs and what nots.
early morning tomorrow
i will not tell you,

i will do it for you.
no, i must do it for myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Do What Now I Will

I offer today
in my hands
a bud, a raw fruit,
a tendril,
a fledgling

all small, and
dainty
young and
hopeful

take them all
from me

and what is left
of me
are these empty
hands

tomorrow i
will offer a hatchet
a scissor
and a knife

take them all
please

if you will not
do not blame me
i will do
what now i will.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Learn To Live Again Love My Image, And Love At The End All Of Humanity.

there are many of them
ty they have names, but there is something in you
that sounds like me
and it has become too interesting
so i left my friends, followed the path
that leads to you
my mirror, my echo,
and then you ask me why?
i followed you, looked at the paths
you have taken, i listened to your words, and then i see myself again
at last, i flatter myself this time
you are interesting because i am interesting,
and this is the beginning
of a friendship, who knows?
i will learn to live again
love my image, and love at the end all of humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Look In The Mirror And See A Person That I Respect

this is the face
of a weary man
furrowed by the years
of sacrifices
this is the hair of a lonely man
spaced by the cruelty
of time
this is the nose that breathes
the agony of history
these eyes speak the silence
of the wolves
these lips kissed the misery
of the torn bosom of the
hills
these are the ears that listened
to the screams of the villages
this is the face that fought
the age of terror

the mirror draws my face
that i could have forgotten
now my son
you must earn respect

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Never Leave You: A Prayer

My child, no matter what you do
No matter what happens to you in this life of exile
Regardless of all the difficulties that you encounter
I am always with you because
I will never leave you.

My child, try to live your life with much care and candor
Try to live your life with much discipline and truth
But even if you fail and stumble in your efforts
I will always be there to lift you up because
I will never leave you

My child try to avoid all occasions that may cause evil
When faced with a choice between the broad and easy path in life and the narrow and difficult one
Come to me and I will show you how the seemingly easy path is fraught with danger
I will show you the ultimate rewards of the narrow and difficult path because
I will never leave you

My child try not to stray from the good that should always prevail
You will often be enticed by reasoning and false logic to embrace the apparently easy and convenient way that ultimately leads to evil
Yet I am there, hoping that with your will that is free, you will eventually perceive your perilous journey ahead because
I will never leave you

My child, life is made up of many instances of pain and sorrow, of overwhelming problems that seem insurmountable
Take heart, for all things pass, yet if matters appear too harsh
Remember me and compare your difficulties with what I went through in my Agony
And you will see things in a new light, a different perspective because
I will never leave you

My child, there will indeed be times in your life when you will feel all is lost
That you have been left alone with your problems
But if you go deeper into your apparent isolation, you will see that it is you who
have left me because
I will never leave you

My child always come to me with your problems with all your needs
Do not be afraid to ask me for I am rich, very rich and I will always give you
what is for your own good
Through the difficulties you may encounter, remember that I will always be there
for you because
I will never leave you

My child will you endure these few problems that come to your life?
Carry whatever load comes your way for love of me
I promise you that you will find rest because my Yoke is easy and my burden is
light
Through the crosses that come your way, you will only bear a sliver of the timber
and I will carry the rest of the heavy cross for you because
I will never leave you

My child will you do something for me in return?
Come to me whenever you can, I am present in all the Tabernacles of the world
In churches in chapels in prayer rooms, there I wait for you in solitude
Waiting hoping for even just a flicker of recognition from you because
I will never leave you

My child love me for I thirst so much for your love
You will be able to love me much when you love me in others the lonely, the sick,
the abandoned, the unlved, and above all, the needy
Give to all who need much for it is to me that you give and even if you have
nothing to give, you can always give the alms of a smile
You will never find me wanting in reciprocating your love for
I will always love you back a hundredfold, because I love you so much and
I will never leave you

Note: for your meditation from the Little Soul Sisters

After reading, reflect; be still for a few minutes in gratitude to our Lord for
inspiring you with his words of wisdom. Let him rest in your heart. Feel the peace
with Him on this special moment. Praise Him.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Not Talk About Pain This Christmas

i promise you  
i will not talk about pain this christmas  
i will rest from pain  
i will embrace the joys of men and women  
i will talk about the birth  
of hope for mankind  
i will write about saving grace  
i will listen to the sounds of peace  
i will look at the stars and ponder upon their twinkles  
i will not give my tears  
i will give so many smiles  
i will not close my hands  
i will send a lot of roses to all my friends and foes  
i will be home early at night  
i will pray that God may make things right  
i will ask for a longer life  
i will wish that there will no more be strife

i promise you all, for this christmas.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Not Ask You

i will not ask you
why

last night i saw you
in the party where
i got drunk

you're wearing the same smile
i have seen when
i fell out of love
when i thought i would die
in pain
for a love that i have lost a
long time ago

i will not ask you why
you were there with so many masks
you were so near but
not wanting to be touched
by my hands

to love to doubt to fear
and always to be
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Not Ask You To Love Me Again

i like you to have some principles now
when you say No, let it be, let it be No consistently
in the morning, till nighttime
let your No be No still

i will not ask you to love me again
because love is not a bargain not a burden
love is freedom

love is like the bird that yours hands set free
now let it be
let me be free too till night time till the world sleeps in its silence
till i am gone
till i am no longer myself to you
let it be

for now i also know how to sing the songs of freedom
for now i also know how to use your words

i am NO too, I am learning it then
so long!

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Not Be Fooled By Prudence

i have seen the old man
die. His face spell regrets
and no matter how the funeral
make-up artist stretched
his slips, he never formed
a smile.

I know him.
He was during his younger days
a very prudent man
He observed strictly the codes
of restraint
and refused an offer of
looseness and being
free.
He prays a lot
and reports to God
all his misgivings.
He was a handsome young man
and women adored him
But he only had one wife
one woman all in his lifetime
who never sired
him a child.
This was his prime
misfortune.
He was erased from
the genetic tree
Forever.

His wife died ahead of him
and He prayed a lot
not to betray her
even when
more women still
are willing to sleep with
him.

For after all despite his age
he was still a man
with a lovable face.

Then suddenly he died.
Absurd. He died in sleep
A happy death perhaps without
the accompanying torture
of pain and
waiting.

But no matter what,
his face in that coffin
never shows
a hint of the joy
of eternal
peace, that inevitable
rest.

I know him
He has a misgiving.
He was fooled by Prudence.
He was a slave of
His own morality always fearing
what society may name him after.

He died a lonely man.
Erased by time.
Fooled by his own Prudence.

I look at him before he was buried.
And i made a promise with him.
I am not a fool and i will not be fooled
to suffer the same fate he had.

I will choose looseness.
Happiness. The one which is always free
Unrestrained by anyone else's code of Morality.
Subjective, as i have always known
it to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Not Take That Much Anymore

I have aged a lot after such a short time and I look
Like an old man, a useless man, a man who can do nothing and give you
nothing.
When I speak to you I forget and would have a hard time recalling that it was
you and that I was speaking to you, I am like an old useless part of your
household
I will not take that much about myself anymore
I cannot speak that much that which you have expected from me
I cannot take that much load anymore and I am surrendering myself to you
Begging for laxity
Begging to understanding
I cannot take that much anymore, I will take less time
I am an old useless man and you can now convert me into

A biscuit.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Raise You Up My Friend

the piano sings
again in the living room
tinkering on notes
that finally rhyme into
a beautiful song of friendship
i may have not known
what is happening inside you
all these tantrums
of the heart
all these confusions
of the mind like
leaves scattered in the
yard of our youth
perhaps, i could be wrong
finding you alone
in the corner of your room
but no
there is music in every ear
a sigh in every word
hope in every tear
there is something that
i feel and yet
i do not really want to know
like the notes that you
strike on the keys
of the piano
unmathematical
yet so enduring.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Remember

the full moon will pass tonight
i remember
a man hangs his wash on the black telephone line
he is naked and lies on the warm roof
the sun hides itself behind a distance
a brown bird of common specie finds its way
upon the man's chest

they eye each other.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Take You As A Grain Of Sand In My Palm Against The Sun

your name you call yourself is insignificant, a speck of dust, a grain of sand, you have slept for years, in this dream of being nothing,

what a sadness you have the inability to gleam freely like a diamond even on a faint light in the dark cave

i have been looking for you missing you like the only missing soul-mate of my whole life i have existed i have not lived at all i have not died either for lack of reason and power to unbreathe to vomit what has been generously fed us by time

now, it has come this magnanimous opportunity of meeting you again i shall take you gently in my palm let you rest in there and when the sun comes you will gleam he will know your name and presence your insignificance by itself the sun tells you is diamond against the vast sky, shining, shining in the shores of our lives

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Teach You To Just Let Go....

i have had a set of
limitations
you know that

i am an island yet
i do not have a coconut

i do not own the sea
i claim no cloud

yet i have the wisdom of
the rocks and the sands

i can foretell tomorrow
when i say it will rain, it rains

i have one problem though
people do not believe me

tomorrow you will lose your
money, you will lose a future

but i am no longer telling you
we are islands of our own now

what happens, whatever happens
i will teach you, to let it go.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Throw A Stone

From the mountain
I will throw this stone
To the nearby river
Try to see if the
River gets muddy

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Try To Write A Poem Like Li Po

i will write the poem like Li Po

a poem that does not need an axe
to break a coconut to eat the meat

it will just need your soft hands
to cut half the water apple *

and so easily you will hand it to your mouth
to quench your thirst & savor its watery flavor

the seeds are not even necessary
to be kept

you simply throw them away

for the next season of summer.

* tambis

RIC S. BASTASA
I Will Write A Poem That Will Say The Truth

This poem I will write and it will tell the truth
The candid truth, the whole candid truth and nothing
But the miserable truth
And this will hurt you and all of you who consider me a friend
The words are carefully chosen and the
Lines screened with so much introspection
This poem will tell you who you really are
No holds bar, no second thoughts
No consideration at all that you may hate me
I, who want, always to be loved and be popular
I am tired of lying and telling what is not in my mind,
I will now write the truth about you and the whole world,
This poem will hurt you and this world
And the whole world will be angry about me writing this poem,
This poem will bring you into harsh awakenings
And this will surely shake you and hurt you and you will never
Talk to me again and you will wish me ill and you will curse the day that I was born.
This poem will make you hate me forever but for one thing
I still have no courage to show it to you, perhaps later when I am
All ready to be despised, hated and finally discarded from your minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The night without stars
a night with a
dog howling
mother rocks me to sleep
in the cradle
beside her
as father watches
me take
my sleep softly
as the hush of the wind
from the
green mountains
nearby
our house on the
foot of
the hill
under the big
tree that
grandpa once
planted

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wish I Have A Mouth That Knows How To Speak My Love

i wish i have this kind of mouth that knows to speak about my love one that opens so easily and dashes with words like

you know i love you, tell me, do you love me too?

a candid mouth, like a shrew who gambles with words and will not mind losing a mouth who kisses your mouth without shame and if shamed because you slap it does not bother at all,

one who says, why hide love, why not pour love like a strong wine to a chalice and let it warm the glass and let the glass be nothing but a glass

one that does not mind at all, one that loves and if not loved in return takes the other possibilities without regrets or pain,

the mouth that i have is closed and will not open afraid i have kept the words

i love you only for you

like a worm inside my tongue, wriggling turning into a little butterfly that never had the chance to see what is outside and feel the freedom of air, yesterday it died and i keep it for the whole night

now, i spit it out
and my mouth closed again
eating only silence
while you just watch there
asking me
and i said there is nothing to worry
nothing at all
i just don't feel anything and there is nothing

worth saying, i look at you as you go, i hold only to your shadow
and you will never never never know,

this

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wish Life Were Like It

when i was a child
mama would give me a blank sheet
of paper where i can draw lines and circles
where my imagination runs
unstopped like it were the wind
blowing anywhere

all colors swirl and figures of angels
and fairies and castles and horses are drawn &
after a while all these become too
crowded inside the four corners
of the large white sheet

and then tired of such figures and lines and
circles and colors crowding on that large white sheet
i decided to take it away and
crumple it and throw it on the waste basket
and i would tell mama that i am taking
another blank sheet for my use
and she says 'It's alright'

I wish my life were like it. Something that i can
change the moment i do not like it.
Something to crumple and throw when
necessity dictates it.
And then i take another for good start.

I wish it were like that. But simply said,

it isn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wish Upon A Star

tonight
i am not that really lonely
as you think
i am
or as i used to be
one
always looking for the stars
the Phoenix
and the Suffix

but tonight
and for so many nights
when you were not with me
i have learned
a lot of lessons from the roof

like the star
i am distant
i am shining
i am indifferent

like the star
i am not a guide for someone's fate
i am a lie
a sophistry of the universe

like a star
i glisten not borrowing any light
from the sun or the moon

like a star i may be alone
but look at me carefully if by chance you are in the desert with somebody

i am still lovely
i do not rain and i keep the silence of such beauty
I Wish You Luck

there are things worth doing only at the back of the wall of the world
things that make you more alive than ever which
if done in the arena of artifices make something fall so
hard that it breaks like
glass like the one that you keep inside your palm
in the form of a fist
against the backdrop of
fame.
there are approaches proper under the rain and on a sunny day.
nice
seeing you jump over the fence and run free to the other side of this world which
for now, all facts considered, is still not within the power of my wits and will to do
so.

i wish you luck, but
i will not expect anymore that you are coming back.

RIC S. BASTASA
'I Won’t Know What Unhappiness Is. If My Life Is Not Fully Shattered'

i love your line
but i would have wanted
it stated this way: i should have not
know what happiness is
until i met you
and slept with you,
i won't have known
what unhappiness was
until you junked me
and finally
i would have not known
what bliss is,
until i forgot you
babe.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wonder About The Cicada That You See

i know that this morning
you walk on the park
on a sunny day and it
is, of course, hot

and then you see this cicada
and i wonder if it is
singing
or grumbling
on this very hot sunny day by the park

i wonder if the cicada stares
at you
i wonder if you talk to the cicada
i wonder if
something happens that you
cannot just forget
about the cicada

i wonder if everything is unfinished
images half-printed
i wonder if at all, to whatever we see and feel and
talk about i wonder if
there must be conclusions
i wonder if
we must limit only to our own observations
leave it that way
like a bat hanging on the wall
and then

just that, whether if flies away or drops dead
you say

i do not honestly know and
i have really nothing to say

i like it with you,

something unfinished, and perhaps that is the beauty in you
this suspended suspense
suspenseful till nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wonder Where You Are

SHALL i wonder where you are?
no more

i am on my on now
and so shall you be

you choose loneliness
i choose mine too

i know it is hard to forget and forgive
but i have learned to accept this: nothing is permanent except

change.

so go, find yourself, i go my way now, finding another.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wonder Why She Wrote A Poem Like That

she starts about her conversation
with the doctor
inside the operating room
concerning her
first abortion

(how could she when she says
she was still on an anesthesia
feeling no pain at all

and she says)

'doctor, clean my womb
and remove every dirt

clean the little flesh
that may in the future rot,

and pull out everything
there that dirt
my conscience'

how could she?

how could she ever say those words?
when she had long been
dead?

RIC S. BASTASA
I Wonder Why?

wonder why
you only have
one tongue?

and one heart
with four rooms
in it.

and those pairs
of hands and feet
and eyes

wonder why
you asked why
there should only
be one God

why a line of
teeth?

the mirror me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Won't.........

in my country
i am tired of all the talks going on

the professor talks a lot and the students
in return even talk in their papers

those who retired from government service
also do the lot of talking thinking that they have done much
and now they have to do the talking for they think they also
know much better than you do

the rich talk a lot and people listen thinking as always that
the rich are right
the politicians cannot be outdone in this kind of talk for they
think they are paid for that

those in the government retaliate for they are elected anyway to
do the talking
they think that if they do not talk then they have failed the
electors

meanwhile the house servants are busy doing their usual work
the fish vendors are fanning their fist
the chefs are facing the ovens
the plowers are tending to their carabaos and their plows
the electricians are climbing posts
the drivers keep an eye on the busy streets
the laundry women are keeping an eye on the stains

those who think the government is not doing the right job
are on the streets marching
shouting and burning tires and fasting and protesting
for reforms

my friend made a statement with his death.
He never talked. And he cannot talk anymore.

Neither can i do the talking for him. I won't.
I Worry No More....

the wheel of the
carriage is
split

the horse is
lying on the road
unable to move

it is your answer
to the question if we
are still
doing good

the year shall end
and there will be another
the days are not
consumed by the passing of
the hours

my heart is aching
but whatever happens next
i tell you
i worry no more....

RIC S. BASTASA
I Would Ask For A Sigmund Freud.

if you think that goldfish is babbling water for no reason
i think you have a good guess
and a nice attitude towards life, you have not made any
judgment at all, for things that you do not know,
for behaviors which you are not familiar,
for some reason you never want to be a fish
and feel the same way when others say that the fish is
babbling its life through a water bowl of existence.

it is too tight, too small, and asphyxiating.
if i were a fish, surely i get crazy.
and i would ask for a sigmund freud.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Would Like To Believe That Between Us...

i would like to believe that between us
there is just flesh,
that this is nothing but just a matter of orgasm and ejaculation, the art of seeking the perfect moan,
the magic of the intertwines,
i would like to believe that this is nothing but just the mere rubbing of our bodies, Freudian slips, and erotic escapades,
i would like to believe that my love has nothing to do with this, that this is just a matter of time and that everything will just pass that like the wind, something will just touch our cheeks a little coldness and a little warmth and then there would be nothing left...

but it is not so, now that the wrinkles reign like a kingdom of its own where age is the queen and silence is the king, where the children of memories slowly leave us...

i like to say now, love survives and i still love you for all the coming days of my life.

to you my wife, cheers.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Write A Love Poem

for you who left me
without notice
let me write
another love poem
besides the one
that you tore & trampled
on the floor

i will not send it to you
for a time i will keep
treasure and polish it
until the right one comes along
to cherish and love it true

RIC S. BASTASA
I Write About You

i write about you
simple enough

i write about you
because you are not here with me

otherwise
i will talk with you

i am not contented with the thought of you
and so i write about you

in my loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Write And I Will Always Write

i write not because i want to be famous
fame has its own place to take care of itself

i write not because i want to educate
people educate themselves and most of them are educated enough

with or without me
with or without my poems

i write not because i want to express my feelings
or display all my emotions like some sort of fireworks on the 4th of July

(maybe for quite a time i was that
a man making a ventilation
a fume looking for an opening
a pressure looking for a window
a failure seeking a redemption
a penalty asking for a reprieve
a criminal begging for pardon
a rebel detained and wishing for pardon...

a ship looking for a destination
an island asking for its own place under the sun
a sigh desperately waiting for the mouth

whatever...

but now i begin to think so deeply
why do i write? and why do i write everyday?

and why poems? why not a novel or a short story?
or an essay on the fate of men
the conflicts within them
the wars that they have to face everyday
their deaths and
resurrections

their erections and negations
the women and their seductions
the world in its glory
history and its memory

i write because i owe my life to poetry
it has saved me from my misfortunes

i write because i want to thank the poems
i write because

i just want to say: thanks,
to express this eternal gratitude
now, that

i am still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
I Write Happiness Too, Once

happy lines
they come dancing
and singing
inside my paper

but soon
happiness
gets boring too
like
a bubble gum
in my tongue

then i write
about despair
tears
wetting my paper
and
blank stares
drying them

and i pretend
i am lost
to make things
more melodramatic

but soon
despair gets boring
too and
we get tired of each
other
we decided to split
despair and i
i and happiness

well, i learned
about feelings
now i decided
to write the truth
about existence
beyond feelings
i become
one observation tower

and you become planes
and passengers
and fields and clouds
and empty skies

just to see and write
without me
having any involvement

yes, the phenomenon
unfolding and here i am

plainly seeing all of them
and you and them and everything

and it will keep on going
till the end when my eyes close and cannot

therefore see.

RIC S. BASTASA
I, In The Mirror

i know
you fully
well
we speak
to each
other
without
the use
of a voice

what happens
is that
i have underestimated
you
and i have
miscalculated
what you
can become

i do nothing
but sleep
and death creeps
in
in my hair
liking
it

but i
will not
just stop
there
i know you
fully well
and tonight
as i write
this
i face
what i am
i comb
my hair and assure myself
that everything is well
and that if someone asks me
i know what i must answer....

RIC S. BASTASA
I, Too Have A Harsh Voice

if you only see me
you will see the difference
and if you hear me
you too will know
what a harsh voice can be

for it is the voice of
my own wilderness
the sounds of young elephants
looking for their mothers
the sound of birds looking
for a home
for mine is the sound of the
whale looking for a
place to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
I, Too,

i, too, like
something to
be crisp and
little,
something
small and
beautiful
even if not
original, something
to call mine, something
to return after a time,
i, too, am, a borrower,
and borrowed at the
same time
i, too, like to pick up
a stone
along the shore
and throw it
back to the deeper
part of the sea,
i never like something
that i do not
own, and can never
own,
i give it back, and then
go my way.

RIC S. BASTASA
I, Too, Do Not Want Any Friends For Money

what are friends for?

we meet again
this time, we wear a different kind of hair
mostly grey and lesser in number
balding head, and bluer lips, and
sunken sockets and bony cheeks
ears seem wider and longer
neck a little bit lower
stooping shoulders
and clumsy hands and a memory
that find it hard to name names
and places

we meet again at the ticketing office
of this port
this boat that will take us home
tonight
it is your back facing me
as you are talking to the clerk
homebound
you are homebound
on little packs

i still recognize your voice
but i have doubts
you are that harsh now
impatient and so demanding
it is my turn
and you face me
your eyes are still the same
now turning so friendly

my friend it is you
how are doing?

we hug, we cry,
we shake hands
we speak about the university
we look forward to be back
home to our past

this is what are friends for,
we do not speak about money
we do not have any.....

RIC S. BASTASA
on disappointments running wild,
i, tame this cold heart,
like a tiger on a cage,
i wish nothing larger than the
tiny chamber of my heart
limiting my dreams
to what my small hand can hold,
i, too, expect nothing,
greater than i can think of,
how the unwise still knows how
to smile and laugh as
pure as the innocence of the
new born child,
i, too, expect nothing from
what my chest can hold,
i, too, exhale, what i finally
do not need.

RIC S. BASTASA
I, Too, Know How To Touch Your Sky

the way to know you is to close my eyes
to touch and feel you
my nerves sing like a choir of children
whose sharp voices pierce the sky

your name engraves itself on the bark of
my tree self
i grow leaves and branches
i, too, know how to touch your sky

i grow roots deep into the layers of
our memories
i keep the silence of the ages
travel alone this damp darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
I....

i...

shall remain as the smoke that you cannot
keep inside your hands
i gave you warmth
from the fire
that you cannot see...

==================================

ako...
magpabilin akong aso
nga dili mo makumkom
mihatag ako og kainit
sa kalayo ko
nga dili mo makita

RIC S. BASTASA
I....Breathe......

the body
senses your
ambivalence

the skin is
a radar

eyes telescopic
the usual lens
of the soul

something in you
bothers me

in trusting myself
i shy away

i cannot say it
but i know it

somehow there is
something beyond me

i open the door
again to step outside
us

the field is greener
the air fresher

this is my freedom
i found it

without you i sit
there. i breathe.

RIC S. BASTASA
I’ve Been Waiting So Long

I’ve been waiting
For so long
You’re coming
You’re sending
A message
You’re coming
You’re falling
You’re falling
To the ground
To the ground
I am waiting
I am waiting
You’re falling
You’re falling
To this ground
This ground
You are falling
I’ve been waiting
For so long

My arms my hands
My fingers
Have been waiting
For so long
You are falling
To this
Holy ground.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ice Cream

to be with each other
closer than before

we take turns licking
the ice cream
on the cone, then,

after the taste of vanilla
we savor what sweetness
is still left
in each other's tongue.

RIC S. BASTASA
Iconoclast

the statue
of Saint Vicente Ferrer
is crushed

the iron bones
saved for
gunpowder....

RIC S. BASTASA
I'D Like To Take Take You Away From That Wrong Place.

i'd like to take take you away from
that wrong place.
twisted trees. poisoned winds.
a river of rocks.
a rose made of nothing but thorns.
a house without a window.

how i wish i can take you to my place
the exact opposite of where you are in now.
you are smiling there.
Eyes filled with so much contentment.
You are very sure of your life.
You announce your heart beats.

and so i resumed my silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'D Rather Be A Sponge Than Be A Sprayer

close

there is more to gain
in being a sponge
than being a sprayer

there is more wisdom
in being the rain
than being a sunshine

there is more peace of
course
in being a pond than
being your
waterfall

there is more beauty
in being seen and felt
there is less in the
nakedness of pomposity

there is more value in our
denseness
in what is left hidden
rather than that which
you expose
and without that cautious
hold
of self-restraint.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'd Rather Be Not Your Poet.

i do not
want to be sour,

being bitter is
not advisable,

or having that
feeling that
i am atlas and the
world is
getting heavier
on my shoulder

or just being
that other man in
sisyphus
always rolling the
big ball kind
of rock

so? i'd rather be
not
your poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Idea

you come surprisingly
and i am amazed about what you are
you are risky
and gives me the shivers
of the dangers that you are giving me
you are quick
to appear and too quickly you
disappear
you tell me that i must be prepared
to record you in memory
that i must have a paper and pen on hand
ready for the keeping

you are the idea
so much has been wasted
because i am raged with age
too lax
and lazy and
to time has become
a slave
bound for oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
an idea is not always a ray of light
it can be a mirror under your bed beside your shoes
reflecting a ray of light from a leak of the wall
of your room dressed with curtains

when you lie there thinking about nothing
saturated about this modern opulence without
any efflorescence at all

you face the window
as usual you have closed it

there is no light there is only this faint sound
of the wind
this suppressed sobbing of lamentation

there is no light at all
and so the idea about faintness and fading
becomes a Sensurround

evidently it has lulled you to a deep
sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Idem Sonam....

i am listening to your
grief
attentively and
i hear it
sounding like the
songs in
my poems

do you still feel
so alone?

RIC S. BASTASA
Idiosyncrasies Of A Middle-Aged Man

What you need
perhaps is
something crispy in your mouth
so that you
may endure
the scary thing about
emptiness

the mouth keeps
a sound
to please the teeth

to fill the mouth
to make the tongue
play
its inner games

something
crispy like a newly
printed
money

surely not perhaps

RIC S. BASTASA
Iditarod, .... In Answer To Kelly's Queries

i am impartial to any smell.
I have not met a skunk though.

a sore day is a sore day
nothing seems to be enjoyable
to me
except the massage given to me
by the Thai girl.

severe storms are normal here
and do not exhilarate us all.

i have not eaten the same thing
for nine days in a row
but i remember when we had nothing
to eat for nine days.

it used to be that the happiness
of my loved ones is more
important than mine.

But I've changed.
Their ingratitude did it.

something has remained true
through and through.
I still cry
over violin melodies.

there is no future.
I live by the moment.
we wanted to think purely
in abstract but we get
hungrier everyday
and food is not abstract.

what is an iditarod?
tell me. Just me.
because like you, actually,
it is just me too.

or us, as of now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Idol

i have always wanted
to be like you to
sound like you
and be everything like
you,

but it cannot be
my voice is fixed
and it will always be
like mine
my face is original
and everything in me
is done.

RIC S. BASTASA
If

if AND only if
you say you love me
then i will sleep with
you tonight
even without the permission
of my one and only
wife,

i still need to be loved
to be assured that i am love
it is the way i was raised
by mom and dad who
split
when i was six

and who rejoined
when i got married.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Think You Want Me

don’t think
do what two dots do
they roll towards each other
and connect to make a line

if love is there
show it in the shape of a heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
If (Remembered)

IF I were to write
The poetics of a termite
I might as well bite
Or a flea I could be
Jump and jump
In a jubilee
And take some
Blood with me
Into the air
Into the vast
Universe
Of a man’s hairy arm

IF I were to
Judge other poets
Here those
Who write
Like a tyke
And attired with lots of spikes
I would give them ticks
For some kicks
I would give sticks
To make them pick
And climb the highest peak
And kiss the eagle’s beak
I’ll give them kites
To fly to heights
I’ll make them feel
The strength of steel
And make a deal
To hone their weal.

RIC S. BASTASA
If At The End Of The Day

if at the end
of the day
i tell you that it
is all my fault

will that make
you happy?

mea culpa.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Death Be A Matter Of Conquering Walls

if death be a matter of conquering walls
then you are right
smashing your car right on the thick wall of this country's fence.

this is democracy you shout and then you dissolve in thin air

you write a big name on the wall

before everything else fades from your weary sight

end. nothing follows.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Everything In There Is Emptiness Why Should I Go?

change is here
change i feel

the time has come
so wisely
i shall be the
master now
my nose not soft
to the leash of
fate

this is my boat
now
i decide where it
is going and
when

this is my own car
i hold the key to its
engine
i start it when i like
it and always with a purpose
a plan
and i am not going
just because i have to.

if everything in there is
emptiness
why should i go?

RIC S. BASTASA
If Given The Chance

if given the chance to live my life again
if i die
not on my desired date, if i die not beside the person i really love,
if i die on the occasion that i did not like,
if i die not having lived a life that's full

if i die without the necessary self-esteem
and if given the chance to live my life all over again

(to be continued...
i am not ready yet to say these things)

RIC S. BASTASA
If Her Tears Are Pearls

today the little girl
as i see her has grown taller

her papa has always scolded
mama even for those little lapses

her mama is silent and bows
her head to this patriarchal thing

the little girl is confused
she is a girl after all and she loves

them both. today her bangs are not
straight, her eyes sharp, her sneakers

noisy on the floor, and she tells her
mommy i love you and looks at daddy

too and says i love you daddy then
she sits on the floor covering her

face with her two hands. we are curious
if her tears are pearls.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Remove It, I Become Nothing.

Something always bothers us
something itches inside my mind
something crawls slowly like a worm
inside my belly and I can feel it
it is disturbing me and I want to take
it off from my system but something
that bothers me tells me that if I
remove it, I become nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Do Not Write

if i do not write
there will be no more meaning in my life

it is not a case of myself lesser than what you are
or you in the same manner

it's my nature

it's the way how the scorpion breaks its promise
never to bite the frog that shall take it to the other side of the big river

at the middle of the rage
the bite is done
now both must sink and die

there are stories and poems
shall i tell you that i am not in any of those that make you cry?

look, i am nobody.
put my name on the wall, write it, i will wait when you leave
for i shall erase it

listen, do you hear the sound of the wind leaving this room?
it was me, and you were never sensitive enough
to see the face of another departure

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Dreamed....

sleeping upon
a hammock one
Sunday morning

i forget mondays
and fridays
i leave paperworks
to their beds

the air is salty
the leaves are deep
green
the sea is showy
with its waves
the sands are white
and hermit crabs
are playing with
the foams

the seagulls are
coming in flocks
finding a school of
fish for a catch

i must have slept
so soundly
i cannot even remember
if i dreamed.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Have To Lose You

if i have to lose you
please
let it be your gain
if i have to put myself
within my
own walls again
let me at least know
that it is
your freedom
let me feel
that open space
those trees and clouds
that you are

and then i shall have my peace

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Heave A Sigh, What Will I Do With What I Did Not Heave?

if i heave a sigh
into the air, and i keep some other more inside myself,
unconsumed, unspent,
what will i do with it?
keep it
like a secret in my closed fingers and pretend i am angry
with this clenched fist
when in truth i have nothing
no plan of keeping things that long because my arms
my soon go
into the river and be lost floating like a log from a hill?

i heave a sigh, that is enough relief,
i am emptied of something heavy
in my nose
i become an island losing air
but keeping sand and
stones
to keep my balance with the coconut trees
still
making landmarks to lost directions,

but it is my way of making my senses alive
i heave a sigh
and i want you to really hear it at a very close distance
just you and me
for you to know where i have situated myself
in this vast
nothingness,

i am here, touch me,
i am warm, i am fire,

you have been taking the forms of water
cold, damp,
having the face of the night, where the moon lost its light,
what are you doing to me?
i am taking you but you are the one taking me nowhere
i am lost by your promises
of a raft
i lost track of your waft, and here i am lost again as i

heave a sigh, deeper
this time....

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Only Have The Time, I Could Have Spent That
With You

you are a set of words, you are
a line straight and hazy like the
sunset
horizon

i like you and your image of you
metaphorical
sounding like a whisper
a sonorous sound

i like what you have for me
even if the moment was as short as a whimper
as deep as a sigh
i like you whatever that be

you are a poem, and if only
i have more years to live, you are my poem,
how i wish i could have spent
all these days with you, but i am just a mortal man

and my father is the river my mother the ocean
and i no longer belong here, for my life is always one
that moves on

never stopping never questioning
never ending like your imagination
in a span of
divine attention, nothing like an intervention
an acclaim.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Really Want It

after reading
a number of your poems
i begin to
think that i must like
you

or your thoughts
or writing in particular

i do not know you
how can i know you or any person
who appears
only as an idea to me?

the danger is
i may feel small
smaller than a pin
and i may
succumb to imitating you
and then finally
lose myself
in your shadow

and so i am writing this
so i may wake up
and still find myself intact
with pride
and still original in the narrative
of my
woes....

perhaps tomorrow i'll shift

for i can be
happy if i really need it
if i really
want it
i can be
my
happy
self again

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Smell Like An Aprodisiac

i could be an aroma
of the strong aged
wine in your mind
the one that tickles
the nerves of your
nose
wanting to kiss
joy and
perhaps even
have a dance
in the flame with
lust

it is all in the mind
and for as long as you erase
everything
that you think you know about
this person
that guy that lover
that you have not even
touched
they you will always get me
wrong
an image, a mirage,
a rainbow, a mist
a bug,
a soft white curtain
always shaping the breaths
of your wind

listen to your heart
it may speak about someone else
the one you have not met
not judged
not framed
the one that looks like a window
looking out to sea
a nameless horizon
a drift the drip
without the strips and
the stripes

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Too Has To Pick A Part Of You

i'll take your eyes
and put them
inside my shoes
so you will know
that i am going
but you will not
see who am i with

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were

if i were a pair of gloves
i know you want to become a pair of hands

if i were a pair of shoes
i know you want to be a set of bare feet.

that indeed is romantic
something that fits like a dado to a joint
like thread to the eye of the needle

even though
nothing is challenging enough
like a round peg to a round hole

but baby these fittings are more of fantasies
there are more truths and realities
those that don't fit
and yet still exist together

like us.
i love you and you love me too.
against all odds.
and evens.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were A Turtle

if i were a turtle
and if you are a turtle too
how i wish to live with you
and be happy
and understand
our turtleness together
perhaps in a small pond
a small patch of marsh
a little rock
just for the two of us

but i am not a turtle
i am a man
but
i may still live with you
as a man
and take care of you
as a turtle

this is still the world
for us
in humanity
in turtleness together

why not?

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were Happier

i always go back to the places
where i’d been to.

she thinks there is no need to see
a place more than twice

unless there is another reason which
i think she knows too well

i went back to Guimaras with her
the fire burnt her eyes making her blind

to what i once was, the past where i
once thrived, weakened, and made strong again

until i met her and i began to make promises
she is trying to recollect them now

what we really are as of this moment
whether we are the chains or the chained

i look at the old man with nothing in his dwelling
except rugs and a bamboo bed

i could have been him if i did not meet her
and i imagine myself if

and for which i did not dare tell her
...if i were happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were History

your greatness is only in the hearing and then on the retelling,
all stories where you are never a part, not even one of those minor
characters there, you are not in the picture not even as a dog waiting by the
door,
or a sparrow by the window pecking upon a rumor,
you wanted to be irresponsible about what happened, a shadow arrived
opened the gate and waited for hours for its body of lies,
and then the party began, drunken bastards, bitching dogs,
spoiled brats, and a landscape of desert and rocks and a whole stretch
of sands to a seeming eternity of emptiness,
you are a good storyteller from the beginning of the party till it ended
at midnight,
someone is dragged and drugged and dead.
and all you say is, i do not know, i have nothing to do with this,
i am not even there, i am only narrating it.
if i were history, i would have smashed you from rock to dust

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were Something Else

if i were something else
i could be just
your pair of slippers
and i go with you
anywhere even in bed
when you begin to
forget

when you go barefoot
you will miss me
and when you are so
depressed
you can always beat me
on your head
and on said instance
i become so close
to you
in thoughts and in
deed.

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were To Listen To You

when i was a child
you want me to become an adult
so i may earn a living myself
and then you are relieved
of any responsibility
(or a burden shall i say?)

and then when i become a adult
you want me to become a child again
to cheer you up and help you remember
the happy times of innocence
those times when sins
and lapses are forgivable
to relieve you of your guilt
(or a scruple shall i say)

if i were to listen to you
what shall i become of myself?

i am glad we have become distant islands
and there shall be no bridge possible
no sail no mail no tail

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were To Make A Love Poem For Both Of Us

i prefer a poem
with the tone of water
the sound of raging river
where we both
stand beside it
and where you hold
my hand and we fall
on the water
where we go with
the flow of the rage
of the big river
where we are
always together
going to a place
where we have
never been

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were To Really Understand The Sea

i must
understand that
i have to
dive
deeper
to the sea
perhaps
even have
to kneel
before it
feet of
water

i must
experience
its
deadly
silence

if i were
true
enough
to really
know it

i must not
only
drink
the salt of
its
existence

i must suffer
too
the extreme
pressure
beneath

till i crack
like the
hardest nut
of the
earth

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were To Write A Poem For You

if i were to write a poem for you
i would rather be direct
and candid, my metaphors
are obvious and concrete
and the allusions
need not be hazy
as to confuse you

from my heart
write it: i love you.

it is you that i love
there is no other

every night i whisper
this to the moon and all the stars
giggle as they listen

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were Venus Raj

i should have
been fearless
i could have answered
the question with

'it is none of your
business!'

RIC S. BASTASA
If I Were You

if i were you
i wouldn’t be me

you are happier
by just being you

so if i were you
i wouldn’t be me

by just being you
i am pretty sure

you will be happier
than by being me

so if i were really you
i’d better be just me

RIC S. BASTASA
If It Becomes So

if it becomes so
that in wishing for the star
to have to touch its glitter like it were a firefly in my glass bowl

if it is so
that i, this poet, shall glow like the star and the firefly
glowing like a bright star

it it is so that like all those before me
one buries her head inside an oven
and the other hangs his strongest sigh on that tree and takes
death for an answer to the questions

if it be so
that i tomorrow morning shall turn into a cockroach and shall be asked to leave
and that i may find myself in the middle of winter and drive this horse
and talk about
lament

if it it takes, a lifetime of offering to be at the side of the gods
where laurels are made and worn on heads of the honored,
if it be so,
that i lose my head in this quest, my arms cut into pieces, my brain scattered
in the great river of loneliness,

if it be so
that i soon shall give everything just to be with the rest who have gone
their names written in stone, without the riches and gold,

if it be so,
that i go naked too and speak the language of the great losers,
insult to humanity, eyes taken away, sockets emptied, and flesh rotten,

if it be so that i shall just be the bone without any markings,
then let it be,

your name is poetry, i know.
If It Feels Right

there is only one
standard
in doing all these things
if it feels right
then it must be right
if it sounds right
then if must be right

i don't have to see
what my heart says.

RIC S. BASTASA
If It Is Really Meant For Me....

you say that i should
keep knocking
joy shall soon open
its window

ah, when it is meant really
for me
i need not knock even

even when i am far away
in that dead desert
the house will come running
looking for me
it will open all its five doors
and ten windows
it will let me sit in its
sofa
it will prepare my bed
where i can finally
rest for
the night

RIC S. BASTASA
If It Is Written

if it is written
then what shall i do?

shall i wait
till the words come true?

shall i stand
and just watch how these written things
come into themselves
like a growing lily on the pond?

things come to you
the floors make themselves under your feet

it is written
so why worry? live life
and life meets you
whatever is it

you just wait
and that is the excitement

the windows simply construct themselves
and the door opens
like hands that meet and shake you

they all say
welcome, everything is ready
and they had all been waiting
for you

RIC S. BASTASA
If It Is....

you warn me

no work can be finished

if it is, it finishes us

no house is beautiful if it is, it is unfinished

you warn me again

no life is perfect it it is, it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Life Be A Pathway Of Thorns

well my dear
if life be a pathway of thorns
don't walk in there
or dwell in your wounds
that is too harsh
and baby
life is too short

come, join me
sleep with me
in my bed of roses!

RIC S. BASTASA
If Love Can Only Complain

if love can only complain
it could have said a lot of words
something that you may not like to hear

for love is not a contract with a definite date
when to start and when to end
love has its own time, a meeting a bonding and a departing
it may come back but it never wants to be held
against itself
love is always free nothing bound no one obliged
no one coerced to stay and be loveless in every hour
that tortures what permanence abhors

if love can only complain
it could have told you that you have not known it
for love is just like a river flowing to the sea only to be lost in universality
for love is just like the rain that pours and then disappear to the earth
that it fills, the dryness that it wets, the cracks that it fills

you do not hold a hand permanently like you are a steel chain
you do not kiss that long as though you are a saxophone
will that music last forever? that will be too much of a bore.

take love as a moment a passing wind a leaf enjoying its fall with the wind
take it as a glance, a gaze of a face that you have to savor, and then
do not wish for more

flutter like a butterfly and then you must know that after this short moment
everything is gone like a ghost of someone peeping you at the door

RIC S. BASTASA
If Love Dies?

if love dies
what does he care?
love like humans
coming from humans
knows too
what death is

if love dies
shall i die with it?
shall i not befriend
the survivor?

shall i try hate? what a choice?
too damning

but how about indifference?
shall it hurt you more?

you chose it but i won't
i had much of it
before you came
into the portals of my life.

i will try being in love again.
i think i deserve it.
i think i must be born again
in some other bosom.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Love Has Touched Your Heart

it is this moment of my fingers
lovingly connected to each other
forming my hands
and clasping
in thanksgiving

there they lay as one family
beside the kingdom of my heart

so touched by love
as the greatest song with piano key still playing our song
of trust

eccstasy still bursting beside my chest
the world changes from orange to purple to pink
from pastel to something brighter than red

flames of love still burning
self unconsumed at the center of this global fire

RIC S. BASTASA
If Love Is A Wild Bird

if love is a wild bird,
then i must be a cliff or a rock
far away from the trees,
where the wild bird
builds its nest,
i must be an unknown forest
where the eggs are hidden
where the hatching is done

without even my knowing.

if love is a wild bird
beyond the grasp of my twigs

then i must be the night that hovers
on its wings

and stays also wildly on its dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
If My Heart

if my heart has a tongue
let it utter only the words of love
if my heart has hands
let it touch but only tenderness
if my heart has lips
let it kiss your lips so sweetly
if my heart has arms
let it embrace you softly
if my heart has eyes
let it see nothing but you only

but my heart has none of these senses
without hands, without eyes, without arms
without lips, without a tongue

let it beat somehow just for you
let it be true
to love no one but only you.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only

if only i know how to dance
then i will dance with you

if only i know how to sing
then i will sing with you

if only i know how to be you
then i will be you not just with you

you wish, and i may make your wish my command
like the genie of the three wishes

but my dear, i am myself all through and through
i dance my own dance, and i sing my own song, and i behave
the way i am, and want myself to be

i proclaim myself, my individuality, i do not wish to imitate you,
neither you to imitate me,

for if i become you and you become me,
half of you and half of me, looking alike in all ways,
a mirror image of a self to another self

will that not be boring? and damning? and degrading?
and cheap and unfashionable?

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only I Could Be More It Would Have Been Lesser.

if i can only invent
another me
it would have been
a way of creating
serenity,

someone sleeps on
the couch
another runs around
a campfire
one of me shall kiss
you another one
shall hold the hand
of another giving
birth to another me.

if only i could be more
it would have been lesser.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only I Have Two Hearts

if only
granting then that i have two hearts
what will i do with the other one

despite the passage of so much time
it may have mellowed
and learned from the pains
of some old wounds
they healed
and learned what true love is

what will i do with this one
i point to this other heart
wanting to love
but just cannot
what will i do with this
loving but loveless heart
spare and bare
but cannot
dare

despite the passage of so much time
it may have mellowed
and learned from the pains
of some old wounds
they healed
and learned what true love is

this heart shall kill me too
i may have two hearts
but i die only once
and it was only you

if i live
i live with this one heart alone
the one that bled
that healed

the one stronger still
and needs
in fact
no other

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only My Cat Could Read

The Pelican Brief
Lonesome Dove
One Flew Over The cuckoo’s nest
The Maltese Falcon
The Eagle Has Landed
The Owl and the Pussycat
Cardinal Rules
Mothergoose
The Ugly Duckling
Lonesome Dove
I Heard the Owl Call My Name, Margaret Craven
Owls Do Cry, Janet Frame
But Where is the Green Parrot? , Thomas Zacharias
Flaubert’s Parrot, Julian Barnes
Wild Swans – Jung Chang
A Sparrow Falls – Wilbur Smith
Where Eagles Dare – Alistair McClean
Tommo and Hawk – Bryce Courtney
Black Swan, White Raven – Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling

BUT it couldn't, so i decided to read them all myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only My Eyes Do Not Pain

If only my eyes do not pain
If only these eyes do not get tired
Eyes they are of a human frailty

I could have written a thousand
More poems in
256 ghz

but I am just a man
a mere mortal
with mortal eyes

I am not Dracula
I am not God

I have eyes that pain
I have fingers that tremble
I have a body that is frail
I have a soul that once in a while
Falter and fall and stumble

So please bear with me
In my tiredness the words slow down
Like dying soldiers in the front
While the war rages on and on and on

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only The Birds Could Bite...

a tree is barking
a dog
the river is jumping
over a mountain
stars sail the sea
ripe guavas ascend
to the skies

i laugh. I regret
having not really
ignored these absurd
happenings.

you are one of these.
for which i have
just ignored.

i am a little boy
playing my marbles
in the park and
there you are
assuming the form of
a dog,

barking, and barking,
if only the birds
could bite.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only The Hills And Trees Could Speak

if only the hill and trees could speak
it could have told you, how stupid and foolish have you been

waking up too early and doing all the things that others could have done for you
feeding the lazy ones, giving flowers to the uncaring, writing letters unanswered

loving much where they love you not, writing poems to cyberspace, thinking that
the stars too distant from you glisten to listen

and you speak to all these trees and hills that do not speak to you
and you write all these inanimate silence a letter: i know what love is and i keep
on loving no matter what, for unlike you i am animated with love itself,
for love touches and speaks and cares and always wanting to be infinite.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only The Moon, The Sun And The Stars Are

if only the moon and the sun and the stars
are for sale,
if only the night can be packaged exclusively
for personal use
if only the day can be bottled and sealed
for a certain exclusivity
if only the stars can be put in a glass bowl
and let them stay there
like some goldfishes
if only all the other planets and comets and meteors
can be kept in the store
and all for sale
and if you ask them from me
i will buy them for you,

but then what will you do with all these?
tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only We Could Have Known Better

there would have been no
good sales
of air conditioners and
electric fans
and processed food
and luxury items.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only You Went Out Of Your Way....

if only you went out
of the box

the door of your room
is open, if only you went
outside

what is required of you
is just the breathing
the opening

the coming out of the
shell and the presence
of the mind

flesh exposed to the sun
nakedness for a while and

then a covering a bit of
that shame
if only you came out of
the door

or jumped out of the window
like a winged bird
you could have flown a bit

if only you can came out
of the body
take if with you beside your
bed

your hand side by side with
your heart
your soul singing out to the
sky

you could have seen how
crazy it was, how foul it smells
how dirty, how different from
tenderness
how unlikely you could have
finished it
how bad did it taste

how rough and brackish
apart from love and real affection
apart from the one that could have
lasted forever....

RIC S. BASTASA
If Only......

TODAY i pick a stone  
in my garden

it's been months and  
there is no rain

the grasses wilted and  
the garden is dusty

Tomorrow i will be here  
again  
To pick another stone

DAYS become stone upon  
another

I am glad there are no  
birds

They're not here anymore  
AS excuses of loss

I got stones now  
one upon the other

If only they can speak for me  
If only.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Pains Be Flowers

if pains are flowers
of different sized and colors
and scents
and varieties
then if you only see me
the truth around me
i am filled with flowers
all over my hair
all over my body
around my days and hours
so many flowers spread in bed
in the bathtub
on the floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Religion Is The Opium Of The People

for things beyond our explanations
for things beyond our repair
we resort to religion

for all the beauty amidst the ugliness
for all those that we can still justify
we resort to poetry

back to the essence of things
back to awe and wonder
back to the first birth of imagination
i, grab, the power of poetry

i will start with the finest grain of sand
and then your soft hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Something Lasts Forever....

Iron rusts
the silver gets dull
porcelains break
flowers wilt
trees fall down
fruits rot
people die.

if something lasts forever
, ah, don't tell me about love
or about true love,

if something lasts forever, it is

nothing

i am as certain as death and taxes.

RIC S. BASTASA
If The Mahogany Leaves Are Hearts Then The Rivers Flood

If all the mahogany leaves
In Tabon mountain
Are hearts
Like the way I bleed
When you left
The rivers below
Will surely flood.

RIC S. BASTASA
If The Moon Is A Boat And The Stars Are Fishes

if the moon tonight is a boat
floating in the sky
on a journey to fantasy
and the stars are
fishes

i shall summon the sirens
to sing Atlantic songs for you

and then there shall be a hundred sea horses
and whales to keep you company

i will just stay from a distance
and watch how this fantasy becomes another reality

for us, perhaps.

RIC S. BASTASA
If The Night Be A Page For You To Write

if the night be a page
for you to write what is in your mind
let the words be stars, so many stars
let the paper be filled
with so much twinkling
build a universe for yourself
then watch what happens next
let you eyes be children
playing on that night
let there be laughter
let all things be happy notes of your song
do not sing

listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
If The Poem Is Really Yours

It will come back
Like your cat
Which has run off
Somewhere sometime
It will come back
You are the master
You are his home

RIC S. BASTASA
If They Had Only Feelings....

leaf floating
on the river as the
river rages its way
along the mountains

if it has eyes
it could have seen
the beautiful clouds
the infinite sky

a boatman is busy
guiding its keel to
prevent sinking

there is speed on
its hands
skill on the paddles

the leaf it only had
feelings could have
screamed asking for help
but it had none

on the other hand the
rivers too just keep on
moving
if it had feelings it
could have
surrendered to the stones
in utter exhaustion

RIC S. BASTASA
If They Only......

if they really
know you

won't they pick
the last stone?

if they really
understand you

will they too
wish upon a star?

and if they care
will they not take
a boat?

RIC S. BASTASA
If This Ends

If this ends, this kind of talking
And when you finally go back
To where we once started

Each interested
About each other

Where will you be?
That worries me much,

It will not be the same again.
Surely, it will end
We know, it will, if this ends

We learn to start again, so eagerly.

RIC S. BASTASA
If We Cannot Be Happy Too At Least, Tonight We Are All Drunk.

i still cannot figure the exact details

there is an area of privacy here which i must respect

there is so much pain to both of them and i cannot give you this and that

i accept i cannot write this and that i must fail on this what do you need pain for?

they float on the ceiling like balloons fists land on their chests like baboons

here we are my friends drinking our bottles of beers savoring these medium rares and simply talking about other people's sad affairs

i say we are lucky not being like them all splitting like atoms for a nuclear fission

boom! that is the sound of another bad news about love broken into pieces about marriage creating splinters
here we are drinking for good
saying: if we cannot be happy too
at least, tonight we are all drunk.

RIC S. BASTASA
If We Forget We Can Never Be Free

the porcelain

cup is

shattered

on the floor

beneath

your feet

we try to

put all the pieces

back

the cracks

are still there

like scars

i do not wish

to cover

them with

gold plaits

and

silver

coatings

let each crack

be a crack

upon itself

let each crack

mark a day upon

our souls

if we forget

we can never be free

RIC S. BASTASA
If We Let Mozart Play Like A Beggar

if we let Mozart
play the violin
like a beggar
in one of the busy
streets in India
or even in New York
subways

he too will go
unnoticed.

RIC S. BASTASA
If We Smooth The Mountain

if we smooth the mountain what mountain can we climb?
if we erase the wisdom of the depths of the oceans
all the unknowns, what desert can we walk upon?
if we only want the easy way out, what brave stories can we tell to their children?
tell me why you avoid the pain
and i will tell you that this can never be done

we cause pain, we are the pain in the ass, how can we deny this essence?
let them those who claim that they are the analgesics, come and deny themselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Are A Poet

You always begin with
Lovely Themes, motifs of
Love on tiptoes, designs
Of Tendrilled loves,
Of serrated leaves
And lost hearts
Bleeding hearts
Much to your

Complete consciousness
In the choice of words
Images, metaphors
And other figures of
Speech, which may be
Displeasing to the crowd,

And you feel so elated
Surely in a while,
But a little bit hindered
By your own kind of
Inhibited language,
But later. Yes later,

Things change, and you
Change a bit, you do not
Really care
How to say it
Your concern is the saying
The telling of what
You truly feel, yes feel...

Your feelings, your fleeting
Feelings of
Love, anger, loss,
Your own personalized
Revolutions making
Waves like hands on
A school bus for an
Educational trip
To disregard form
In favor Of content

And you go beyond love
To death, to redemption
To transcendence
And cadence and digitalization
Of ticking electric
Clocks,
To resurrections

You are now
Synchronized.

You do not really care,

You explode in your feelings
In colors, in multicolors
Of pyroplastics

Spreading shapes of
Symmetrical flowers,
In different dimensions
Giant Sea urchins,
Tall thin spring like suntans,
Elongated Sunflowers
All glowing, all glowing

In an evening sky
Above the houses
And churches and
Universities and mosques
And laws & regulations….

All the people watch
With gaping mouths

To the wonder of your
Thoughts, your explosions
In grandeur, in honesty

In the net, you are now
A poet, synchronized to
No one, but yourself

Yes, yes, to yourself yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Are My Food Spread On The Table

granting arguendo
my dear beautiful girl
that you are my food for dinner

what shall i take first?

your lips, oh, i love delicious lips
sweet lips, wet lips and tight lips, and
gripping lips to my lips

then your eyes
so i can enter your soul
these windows that cannot close
someone so lovely and loving you
as i try to be this air
invisible and yet so essential
to your being

i shall take every flesh in you
and every bone and every nerve

but there is one thing i shall not attempt to take
away from you

your heart, you may not tell me, but i know
it already belongs to someone else

in respect for true love
i shall leave it there
breathing, wishing, and still loving....

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Are Not Around...

Make me feel
that you are still mine

on a midday
shower me with rain

at night
peep to my window like the moon

or be the wind at dawn
make my hair rise

in the morning
when i stare at the ceiling

or when i sit
at the veranda facing the sea

seeing a boat
sailing alone at sea

be my sunrise
be my brewing coffee

be my maple syrup
to my pancake

make me feel
that you are around

be the spirit
to my body.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Are On The Same Boat With Me. Come.

as you read these lines
(let me tell you, there is nothing significant, and i may advise you to quit and may even ask that you write your own instead
it may be good for you than continue to read on the next line...

why not write something about yourself and the full moon and the lonely tree that needs badly a good company to pass the dark night away)

why not just be on your own, solitude and self-introspection? the secret journey to your heart looking for the place that is only for you

happiness, right? eternal bliss, how about it?

you are curious about my boredom the ennui of the century perhaps you like to know how i deal with the numbness of my being

every night every day when slowly i die and feel so excited about ending this ordeal and

how i cope with it

yes, the it.
this it. my it. this self....

attempting on
writing lines

whatever lines that come into my mind
words that try to please my senses
symbols that give me hope
figures of gods who may be able to say
something wise and
inspiring,
images. lots of images...

the image of the wind
on the wings of the seagulls

the colors changing on the horizon
like a swab of orange and red and black
or blood

or pastel green on the shadows of the hills
or the brightness of the sun when i stare at it and hurt my eyes
and then i close them
and see this world as all red
bursting red
like a sunset coming
and then fading away like a song
of a flute faraway

i wish i could stop writing
i wish that i could get a nice sleep
a restive mind
a peaceful state
a harmony of all my sense
up and down

but nothing seems to work right for me
i tried to sing the songs of love
but my ears say

liar! you do not have love in your heart
you do not know the feeling anymore

i tried drawing my thoughts and putting bright colors
on the images of green fields and blues skies
and stars and even seven moons of the other planets
but always they end up so displeasing

i am looking for the meaning of my life and if you are
on the same boat with me
then come and take the ride
on the stormy sea
no lamplight
no island to land
no north star to guide us

i ask you to quit reading but you are just like me
hardheaded human being insisting that there is meaning to all these
and the inability to stop
and be a quitter

quieter, i mean.
hopefully.

in the silence of the cat's feet
cautiously catching another prey
let me stop now. quit me.

Look at the sky. Do you see stars?

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Are Still In Love, Please Do Not Read This

i guess i am tired to talk about it
love
love, yes what is love to a person
who has loved many
and much?

love is no longer play
it is work too
so let me do it
like an ordinary business of the day

i love you  i kiss you i hug you i make love to you
i sleep i wake up i eat i defecate i report to work
i relate to others
i go to church i go to the market and i stroll on the beach
i talk to you i argue with you i walk with you
i pay the bills i spend vacations with you

these are all works of love
in time
sometimes you do not like even
confessing it

you just want to be silent
about it
and just do it
like a kind of chore

time teaches you
and this is hard to accept
love sometimes
becomes an indigestable matter that you chew and swallow
on a rush

and there
yes, it is sad to say it
you feel like you want to vomit

as i once
vomitted it
and my father was so angry
he said he will disinherit me

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Ask Me

you create words and change them into poetic forms
you count, you become sensitive how each syllable sounds to fit the mood
and the circumstances
you consider the strength of each feeling
hate, you have much but you
balance it with so much love growing and growing like trees in your field, this body of fertile emotions,
you put the proper colors and ambiance and
you make a creation so beautiful
i ask you for what purpose
the reason for all these magical moment
and you put a line which says you want to please someone
i am sad
no one pleases no one
that is not the reason for you must first please yourself, learn that art of selfishness before you can start pleasing others,
it is the same thing with love.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Can Count How Many Drops Of Rain Are Falling

if you can count
how many drops
of rain are
falling from
the heavens

(tell me
how many
exactly

and)

i will
tell you
if you
are happy

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Can'T Sleep Tonight

despite having counted
a hundred sheep
and you cannot still sleep	onight
how about counting those
who are dead?

those who died of poverty
in the slums of India
those who died of hunger
in the deserts of Africa
those who are abandoned
by their parents
in the Philippines

try it.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Could Only See....

if you only see what i am seeing
you could have been so restless as i am

clouds whirling, suns colliding,
volcanoes erupting, bridges falling
whirlpools of the mind
souls like meteors spreading
light, darkness, alternating

there is no peace there
only struggle
nothing permanent but only change
holiness gone

sharp light piercing the gaze of starry
eyses

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Do Not Want To Be Understood, It Is Alright With Me

one thing with
you is that
everything is
contceptual

ideas coached
always
in general terms
and so i

do not really like
it
but somehow
you have the
reason
to want to
communicate
to impress to me
that you better
be just loved
for what you
are
and not
be understood
at the
same time

perhaps
i love you
because
i do not
understand
love
at all

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Don't Exist

then who will exist
for you?
who will record
who you are and what you
have done?
nobody.
nobody.
nobody
but you.
because just like you they also
think that they don't exist
come to think of it
if all of us do not exist at all
then who exists?
nothing
nothing
nothing
it is simply absurd when the world
moves and no one is
existing

i don't exist too.
because i have learned
to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Don'T Love Me Anymore

if you do not love me anymore
do not write me a poem
like a code
that i have to crack
like i am a spy
in your movie
like i am an unknown
target
of your assassin

shoot me right
with my eyes wide open
no need
to tell me to
walk a little farther
and hit me at
my back with your
pretenses

the way you
talk like i am already
a stranger
in your house

the way you
treat me like
i were a child
with all my
mischief

the way you
cover your language
like i am
a fool who cannot
understand
what direct
candid
frank language is all about
if you don't really love me anymore
all you have to do
is tell me

and i will tell you too,
never had i ever loved you

never, never, never

just tell me,
because i can always tell you,

i also know
what you can do, i also know what to say
when you finally tell me

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Hate Poetry

i have read that somewhere,

if you hate poetry
you have to get
this book,
buy it, and
you will love
it.

sales talk.
if you really hate poetry,
why buy
a book of poetry?

you may dislike me
but poems
are nothing but
spits
of something
that you do not
want to stay
inside your throat

all i need
is a little relief
from this
urge to vomit

and here you
are

reading mine.

(i am
laughing)

so do you really hate
poetry?
k, buy that book
you will really
love it
(the book)

and hate the more
what you hated most.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Have Love In Your Heart....

if you have love in your heart
you could have noticed how
tomatoes grow in dirt
what you have thrown away
as rotten tomatoes
still make a garden and
in a few weeks without you minding it, soon, just like love, it blooms and puts back red ripe tomatoes in your kitchen for the best salad come summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Have No One This Valentine's Day

if you have no one
this valentine's day

then at home just stay
make a poem, read a
book, cook your pasta,
and watch tv

accept and be pleased
you are still your self's
best friend and perfect lover

and narcissus must be happy
he is not alone this valentine's day

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Hurt Me

if you hurt me
i will not complain
that is too
common neither will
i retaliate
that is too human
neither will i make
a scheme for
your eventual destruction
that is too
rude, or crude art
of survival

something divine
sparks within our
hearts

no vengeance
plain understanding
why one
wants to hurt and why
one must not
exact vengeance
or demand
justice anymore

God knows best.
This is cliche. And i
am taking it.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Look For A Rhyme, So Sorry I Don'T Have It

i don't jam and i don't rhyme
my life does not rhyme
and some parts simply
do not fit
until now
like a dovetail
of wooden pieces
to make
your chair

so sorry but i don't have
rhyme

it is the truth
it is the truth of this world

some things do not fit
some people do not just fit

square pegs in a round hole
square lives in a round dimension

it is the truth of this world
fingers in the hands
toes in your feet
look at them as a family of your
unique body

i like to rhyme i like to jibe with you
and sing the harmony of
our song

the truth is
there isn't

and so my dear, let us look at each other's eyes
again

can you  do it without blinking?
If You Look For Meaning Of A Poem

if you look for the meaning of a poem
be disappointed
its meaning
is in the feeling

the feel of
a lightness like a cloud
(ware you ever once a cloud?)
the feel of a feather
landing on your palms
and you do not
even
know it has
touched
you

be glad
a poem is
nothing
but
feelings

it has no
mind

you cannot
measure
its weight
and width
but it is so
huge
and
encompassing

it is there
it has arrived
occupying
the whole you
and you
never knew
that
for once it
ever happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Love And Really Love

always be ready
with a tray of
forgiveness

like fresh fruits
and flowers on the tray
of hope
serve forgiveness
heartily

and then be happy again
dining on the table
of love

by the window the
sun is always ready with
the rays of
more blessings

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Love Me

YOU DO not have to say love, you must show love, through actions words are nothing but icing on the cake.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Love Somebody

if you love somebody
you will surely miss that

somebody, no matter how you keep
that somebody inside your mind
unable to say a name

or draw a face or remember a scent
no matter how you bury that

somebody, that somebody always comes
alive in your memory that

somebody always comes face to face with
you
a smile of that

somebody a touch of that
somebody
in your dream that

somebody comes and reminds you
of a love that is true

of a kiss that is real
of the night when you made love without uttering any name

just symbols
of a rose
a dew

and some thorns about that somebody
who loves you
and that somebody
whom you also truly love

now in the symbol of a thorn
a heartache
always a forgetting and a memory that refuses to leave
a remembering

just symbols now
a wind a dark night a hush a flitting thought

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Love Someone

if you love someone
by all means you know

what he does every minute
of the day, where he's going
and what he's up to

you keep every trace that
he leaves on the pathways
so common and ordinary

but all these are special to
you and you hug and kiss
each footstep and remember
like heavenly resurrection
each footfall, each thud

when you love someone
you lose what you are and
you find yourself somewhere
like a garbage in the gutter.

when you love someone
think twice, is this love worth
all the salt of my earth? will
this someone also love me?
will i not be be a waste of
God's divine garden? Will
i not be but a snake in the
paradise of Adam & Eve?

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Loved Me, You Would Rejoice

life to life with you
arm to arm and mind indulging
with the mind
what is it that bothers us?

a bird without wings?
a horse without hoofs?
a man without eyes?
an old woman without a
burial site? a coffin unfinished?
a poem unsigned?
unfinished business
defective structures like
house without pillars
trains without tracks
cocoons without leaves

words without meaning
a poem without a definite ending
a page without a margin
a dog without an ear
a fish not in school

there are sighs unsifted
love unrequited

And now I have told you this
before it happens....

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Must Love Me

if you must love me
and love me truly as you can be
a lover of all the seasons
as a river always moves
flowing to the sea
or as the night comes
after the day
or the rain after
a sunny day

so must you love
Narcissus and Philander
and Zeus and
Sisyphus

& the cute child who was
ture enough to tell the people
in the parade
that the gullible emperor
has no clothes..

you must learn to laugh
and cry and scream and curse
and too be silent
and patient

you must both be a rock
and river bank
a cliff and the shore
the desert and
the mud

if you must love me
and love me truly as what you can ever be...

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Must Wear A Mask

my friend if you must
wear a mask
try the one with a contagious
smile or even the one
with loud laughter
this world is sad
so sad that it has forgotten the
shape of the smile
the links to laughter
wear the mask and
be with us
we'll take the same boat
to the other edge of
this earth

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Need My Pen

You said you need my pen.

(Is that what you really mean? A pen?)

Do not hesitate to call my Name, I have my pen

(Is it what you really need?)

And I am always ready To lend you

My hand. Just say my name,

Or make a secret call, my Pen is always ready

For your writing pleasure.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Only Hear The Rhythm Of This Poem

each syllable is
a heartbeat
it is something jumping
not like a frog
but more of a flea
it is silent
it jumps further trying
to reach the tip
of my nose

each word is a sigh
like the flaps of a bird flying away from me
this is the poem that i write for you

and if it is true that you live in the dark
i guess
you shall hear it well
you shall see it well

for the wings of the bird are white
and the color of the sigh is the color of the lights
breathed by the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Only Knew......

those that we hurt
most of them
have no way of defending
themselves
no way of telling us
even that they were hurt
for they cannot say
anything

the tree that you cut
the butterfly's wings that
you pull out
the air that we pollute
the river where we throw
our trash

these are silent
until they finally take
the catastrophic
revenge

if you only knew
that wing of the butterfly
is tsunami's daughter....

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Only Know How I Feel

feelings are not
letters of advertisement
sometimes
we hide feelings like love
letters
so private
like the way we keep the
secrets of our
beings

take time.
flatter me,

ask me what I feel
and I will not tell you

I keep a secret garden
where flowers as buds
are always destined
to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Only Know I Can Also Make A Love Poem For You

you need not open your door
i know someone lives there
and there is no seat for me

but you may open your window
for tonight i can be the moon
and if he sees me and closes the
window i may look for a crack

a little crack made by this termite
and i can be a hush of the wind
getting in trying to touch your skin

if he seals the crack i may be
part of the rain and i may enter
on some slits of your roof
and still drip on your lock of hair

for with you my love even if
there is no possibility
that i can be with you yet this love
though late can still last a lifetime
finding the ways till it finds you
finally loving and kissing me

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Only Love Me

if you only love me
even for a very short moment
i can take you
to the secret place of my heart
on the wings
of my purest love.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Read

If you read me
In my lines you begin
To understand what
I write about &
Perhaps what I am
That would be
So ordinary
A matter only of clarification.

If you read me, however
Carefully
in between
My lines,
and go deeper
To hidden symbols
And find some meanings
You will find
something
Else, something not
Me but sounding like
Me and you will begin to have doubts
If it is really me
Or I am just
Bluffing
Misleading you
For something else
So that you
Do not grasp me
At all,

and if you begin
to
Doubt it,
well, it could be that it was
Done on purpose
i
Wanting to achieve
A little
dramatization
Of what I am,
For some little
Thrills
Some gigs
Or gimmicks
We all love these
Tragic plays
Most of the
The time.

But sometimes,
For you to know me
I write about you,
You are
in some lines
talking about me,
and it is quite
classic
me finding you
to elaborate me,
and this one
would be a little bit
complicated,

You become
so confused
And even be paranoid
About this twist of
Things
Some turning points
Which may
Even be mistaken
As an identity
Crisis or a mental
Disorder,
Why do I have
To be spoken of
By another
Personality
As you or any other
Organism,
Sometimes a bird,
Or a fish,
Or even things in nature,
Like a cloud,
Or the wind, or the
Sea, or the
Sun or even the coldness
Of the night,
Where I can always
Be there in such
A hazy form
Or in opaque shapes,
And yet so essentially me
And so very like us,
And such questions as
Why
May even be answered
In that kind
Of reading,
About me
And you
And this world where we are always
In a situation.
Well I do not wish
To complicate matters more
Like this is some kind
Of a treasure hunt
With lots of signs
And symbols
And some missing links,
In a sense
I want clarity,
I need simplicity,
To drive my points clear
So that when you read
Me in short crisp lines
You grasp me directly
Like
A traffic sign
Red for stop
Green for go
And yellow for a while,
But in truth,
Things and matters and me and you
Are not that really simple
And as such
We cannot be so simplistic
And at the same time
Do justice to this and that
This you and me, this world,

But perhaps reading
Is not just that,
Not just knowing me
Or reducing me to a
Simple conclusion,
Reading me
Could simply be an enjoyment
Or a plain reading
For curiosity or
Even for just a perusal,
As I am not even
Worth reading at all,
A waste of your
Precious time,
You are busy,
But some lines may strike
You or shake you
Or develop a certain
Familiarity, of such things
Like this once happened to me
Or that I once said these lines
Or that I once thought
The same thoughts,
A sense of home
A sense of déja vu
A sense of I am just like you
In the same situation,
That we are on the same boat
On a stormy sea, tossed
By this fate,
This commonality of failures,
And so you are
Interested for common reasons,
In a way that I search for myself,
You are also searching for
Yourself,
And once I talk of this
Loneliness, this sickness
Unto death, you ring a bell,
You are also
Feeling the same,
And we come together
Searching for the cure,
Or you at the end,
Would simply be
Wishing that we will have the same
Kind of fate,
A survival,
A victory,
A success,
A shout for joy, a shout for discovery.

But on the other hand,
that would be so
Selfish and we do not
Glorify selfishness,
as it
Is not a commendable
trait,

We humans are
humanitarian
We always care,
we always love
We always have
affection
For another, so

If you read me,
really, as a
Good natured
human being
With a soul,

You read me,
With sympathy,
You empathize
You cry in sad poem,
You laugh
In humorous ones,
You get
Glorified in glorious ones,
you
Become a part of me,
and I become a
part of you,

well,

being
One with each other,
but, I still
Doubt it,

you read,
because
You simply check whether
This poem is good,
or making some
Sense,
or this poet
makes a
Mark for good poetry,
which
To me, is nothing but
Hypocrisy,
utilitarian,
and
Too
academic.

In truth,
I write,
not wanting
To be read,
not so inviting to
Any reader,
You read me
With a risk

But if you read me,
I am telling you,
Frankly,
I do not invite you,
You came
You gate crashed
Me, and you are
Never my guest

You are simply
misinformed,
coming here,
I do not know
You and
you do not
know me, and
I will fault you
For this intrusion,
And that would be
Too arrogant
& cruel of me
telling you
to stop reading
and leave me
at once.

Well

Actually, this is it
If you read me
As you read this poem
Just read,
For no purpose,
No vested
Interest,
You read,
Because you have nothing to do
With me
And I have
Nothing to do with you
We have nothing
To do with
All these
This life
This poetry

It is
Not because
You are hunting for
Some animals,
Put them on a cage
Or kill them
For meat
Or consider the stuffed heads
The tigers and
lions and
Gazelles
as your trophies of your adventures
on a safari of life
Or marks of your
Civilized cruelty

You are here because
you just pass by
And want to read
this poem
for a while
You read
me
in passing,
I see you passing by.....

It is a matter of feeling not knowing me at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Read These Lines This Morning

if you read these lines this morning
these lines that miss you
these lines that say i love you
to hug and kiss you
these lines that know every inch of you

if you read these lines well enough
then you know who i am

i, who is nothing to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Read This Poem, Expect Something To Come Back To You.

this world is a world of a see-saw
you must understand that this is an interactive universe
so
whatever goes up must come down
and whatever you pull also pushes you in return
sometimes
i become inquisitive: what happens when i pray for
something to happen?
what makes it not happen?
whatever you plant you soon shall reap
whatever dies, so too must live.

what goes around comes around.
and there lies the hope of us all.
so,
if you read this poem, expect something to come back to you.
and expect something for you to give in return
for what you receive.
if you like, soon you shall be liked.
if you write, soon you shall be written.
if you love, soon you will be loved.

don't mention hate and indifference.
forget them.
if you do, they will thrive
with nothing in mind but to betray
the goodness in you.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Really Love Me And Love Me Truly Enough For Me To Believe You

then,
you will point to me where my hidden mole continues to grow,
where is my
secret wart that nobody has ever seen

then, you will love the scent of my armpit unwashed for
ten days and you will sleep soundly on my
arms

then you will like my callous hands rough to your lovely face,
you will clean my teeth with the licking tongue of yours,
you will love to breathe my breathe though i have not brushed
for days,

you will love everything in me
everything foul and even dirty, and you still love to be caressed by my bare
hands
even if these hands too touched

another body last night when you were there patiently waiting
when i did not come on time
when you were sleeping
and your tears dried
on a loveless mattress on a bed where the sheets are not crumpled
where i may say that i
have never for once ever loved you

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Really Want To Know Me

If you want to know me
Transcend the lines of my smooth skin
Look at me and
Embrace every moment
Of my past and present

If you really like to know me
Meet me in the dark
Then at the fading light
Resurrect and then free me

Love me with all your cares
Like a free home free from doubts and blames
Sow the seeds of awe to glory without end
Offer them all to me
If you love me and want to know me

If you really want to know me
Swim into my being deeper into my bones
Then fly to the tip of my mind
Hover to the top of my soul
I am naked there: from head to foot.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Still Remember

her name is
Elizabeth Arden

a green tea
her favorite
da scent spray
eau parfumee
vaporijateur!

i am keeping
it inside my heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Wait For Better Metaphors

let go that patience
waiting for a load of metaphors
to make your poem
for today, you end up poor
with no poem to share,

are you conscious about what the lords, the gods, will say?
about your creations?
the beauty that you must exude to please these lords, these gods?

they, who left you here, they who do not feed you
crumbs, left-overs,
they, who live in the clouds, who feast among themselves
and look down upon you
as mediocre crab
running to catch the ebb and
tide of the sea,

you write, because you do not rhyme
because you cannot count
the beat of your aching heart
you write, because your mind is blank
blacked-out,
look at you,
you do not look like any human being at all?
you fear
losing your poetic sense?

damn, write, do not pray for metaphors
do not crack your head for images,
do not pray for the gods and lords

they too have problems of their own
mindless,
senseless,
quarrelling among themselves on some crowded skies,

your stay is short
there is no specific duration of your stay
write and write, let them have their own shame
life has no rhyme
in fact, senseless,

why pretend you rhyme? why pretend you make sense at all?
you are never god in the first place,

you are the quiver of this universe, the hum that numbs
why bother?

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Want To Know What I Feel

i just ate a
ripe banana
the only thing
for my dinner
since she left
me for another
(woman) ...not
hard to explain
eh. But if you
want to know
what i really feel
then try eating
the leftover
peel.

RIC S. BASTASA
If You Want To See Clearly

there will be doubts, there are abundant confusions
in our mnds sometimes
about someone,
someone so close
like two bodies fusing
like two sheets of paper pasted on stronger bonds

in such that
it is hard to distinguish one from the other
mirror images

oh, it is hard to see
when you two are closer than close
when eyes meet too close
that they close when they feel

how can you ever see?

if you want to see clearly
leave
stay far away
stay high, stay above what ordinarily places you
under these circumstances
of intimacy

leave, go away and from that far
you have the proper distance to clearly see beyond
the fingers that close
somewhere
only to open again and feel a certain warmth

will it be the same someone?
think with your heart and not with your mind
the distance shall seal
what was lacking in that closeness
that certain blindness
found in those eyes wide open
If You Want To Understand You Will Just Be Frustrated

Something magical is meant only to be seen
and then be gone and then be just remembered with awe

it is not meant to be dissected like a frog
separating muscle from bones and naming each part
and then naming it again apart from its connecting
ligament and nerves

somethings are simply meant to be enjoyed
not to be understood

like the way you lick an ice cream not knowing who made it
how it is made
what are its ingredients and how much

like the way you make love
you do not measure the ecstasy as though it is a cup of honey
you do not count the moans and the screams
you do not even have to open your eyes to know how pleasure
penetrated your bones
and fit into your emptiness
that thing called joy and
bliss

something so beautiful is simply meant to be remembered
or even to return there again and again
not knowing what the consequences are

let the pain come later
for the meantime let all the joys shake us

as usual
let the role of regret be
the one
who comes always
late
If Your Favorite Number Is Not 7

Your musings are fine, seven is so slender
Perhaps slippery to hold and be with
It may fold and not so enduring
Seven is too sharp and may hurt you
Though others may have thought that there is luck
Or even something magical to its past
And it is not puzzling or even tickling
You want the 9, this number completes you
I guess, you never wanted the 8
With two circles one above the other
There is no place anymore where you can be in
And stay contented for a while
8 is 8, it is complete by itself
With a nine as your favorite, don’t blame me
If I may think that in all your life
You have been a 6 thru and thru
Me? Try asking me
I like being alone, and so I have always preferred
Not 2, not 3, not 4,5,
You have taken 6
And he is 9
You junked 8 and I junked it too
I like being alone, so I will take one

but really, after so much musings
in real, and for real, i live in 2
i almost died taking the number 1

turning negative 1 sometimes.

RIC S. BASTASA
If Your Papa Remarried At 80 Be Glad

if your papa remarried at 80 be glad
he has feelings still
for love, this thing called love, where
in our own marriages we have become so clumsy
like we, in the first place,
perhaps, (don't tell) , regretted having done the walk
to the altar
of our dreams, where our too much familiarity in bed and board,
have bred contempt
for each
other's inability to cope up with the demands of intimacies,
but i tell you
my grandpa remarried at 87
he confessed, he was so lonely, when he woke up in the middle
of the night
or at the break of dawn, he felt he was sleeping in a coffin,
he needed love
like your papa,
he needed someone to talk to, not someone to have sex with,
he needed someone to take care of his
toilet problems
his urinary tract infections, his thick porridge,
when grandpa remarried
we gave him a very grand wedding
where the 19 year old girl of his dreams
walked the aisle
and they exchanged 'i do's'
the girl telling him
he loves him so till death....

we of course, do not believe her,
like, the way, you treat your second mom
like an alien,

but we'd rather believe her
we imagine
she shall take care of everything
while we simply sit and look
what happens next
we think, everything in the name of love
ends well

come what may, we shall be glad.

RIC S. BASTASA
If...

if. time changes you,
and you end up
short of love,

if, i feel your hands
cressing me
yet your eyes
speak
another, your heart
keeping
another name,

if, this happens,
do not say the word,
before you wake up
early morning
tomorrow

i have already
left.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ignore And Pretend

our eyes meet
our bodies remember
i know the bliss
of three nights but
i do not know about
what you say
to the guy near you

he introduces you
to me: your name
i also give mine
you ignore me and
i pretend not having
known you
your kiss and your
soft body murmur
the truth about those
three lovely nights

your lips do not know
how to hide
it is getting wet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ignoring A Bad Element

you go for the
good things
not really that
these good things make
you wholesome but
you only exercise your
right to choose
and then one day
this bad element
pops up and you
do not really like
it but you choose
the good element
as you once said
you choose not
to hurt you choose
the best course
greet her hello
do not say goodbye
just pretend that
you are there
that she is there
but inside you
you think about
someone else

the better one
oh, maybe not
the best, but
she is better
than nothing

you don't get rid
of things or people
you embrace them
but then
ignorance sometimes
is cooler than cool.
Ikaw Ug Ako

dili ko
ganahan nga
ako
aslom o
kaha ba
pait

gihandom
ko pa gihapon
nga ako usa
ka tam-is
nga
tibugol sa
kamay

para unta
nimo

dili baya usab
nga maghimo
kog mga lungag
sa imong ngipon

gusto lang nako
nga tam-is
gamay ang atong
tsa o
sikwate

wa nako gihandom
nga lamigason
ang atong
higdaanan

naglikay ko anang
hapdos
o ngutngot

para lang god
pon unta nimo
kanang hapsay
limpyo
hayahay bisag
diha sa pamati
lamang

apan saon ta man
moay palad, dia ko
wa kang kabalo, aslom,
pait,

kanunayng gihapdosan
diha sa
kangutngot

unta di ka
masayod niini
di na
kinahanglan

di sab kang
kamaong mosabot
di sab kang
mangilabot

RIC S. BASTASA
Ikaw.....

ayaw siya ug awata
ayaw ug kasina
panamin ug usob
bisan gani ang imong
panagway diha sa
samin lahi ra man
sa tinuoray nimong
dagway. ikaw lamang
ikaw ug ikaw lang
gayod lamang ug wala
na gayoy lain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ikebana

the arrangement
you must always remember

between heaven and
earth is man and woman
and children
and kin

it was never
said to be hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'll Start My Day Again

wake up
take my rubber shoes
wear my socks
take coffee
open the door
close it back
walk the dog
meet the sun
feel the wind
glance at the flowers
along the road
and the school garden

it is the start of my day
and everyday
it goes this way

sometimes i stop
at the middle of my walk
and ask

which way is it to the end?

it is in the mind
and my neighbor
on his jogging attire
sweating it out
for longer life
greets me: good morning!

RIC S. BASTASA
I'll Wait When You Finally Say, You Don't Love Me Anymore

i will not be dumb but i will be very patient
i know how to figure out
to decipher glances and appearances
the way your finger moves when you hand me
my clothes the way you find disgust in my underwear
but i will not waste any of the words i have saved
for the years i will keep them locked with key

your dreams are no longer my dreams
somehow we no longer look in the same direction
as we used to
gazing in the stars at night and giving them names
when we say
i love you and i love you too

some stars fell and you tell me they are but meteorites
ordinary occurrences, and they do not mean any wishes
i can tell the changes in the skies
i can tell the coming of the storm and i am always prepared for them

there will be no surprises
when you will call me by my name and you say you want
a heart to heart talk
something to shake me but i will listen attentively
you will have no questions
just mere declarations about the river that dried
about the fish that died and you counted them all

there are no stars to light this darkness
this room where the air is free to go from window to window
i will wait when you will finally say
what i already know and i will be patient

then you must go and then i must as a solemn duty
close this door and never shall i open it again

i will not watch you go and dissolve in a distance
i will not cry, i am saving my tears for the right occasion

the tears of joy and this happiness that finally
in my solitude i still love myself
(you will never know, how i have waited for this moment)

RIC S. BASTASA
Illicit Intimacies...

an intimacy
(an euphemism for something else)
maximized in
fifteen or so
minutes is equivalent to
a lifetime of shame
and regret
(an overstatement of
cowardice)
and so the die is cast,
I'd better be alone
and happy

but you may follow me
so that we can be professional
loners
together

who knows if the curse of law
tomorrow
shall gnaw?

RIC S. BASTASA
Illicit Sex

after the war
the commander says
pull out men
let us return
to barracks

RIC S. BASTASA
Illogical?

there will always be rules
that is why
there will always be
violations

there will always be laws
and so the criminals
exist

there will always be corruption
because we make it so

destroy the laws
erase the rules
make corruption
a way of life

let anarchy rule
let us see
who wins this game

legalize corruption
do there will be no
crime

have a bidding
of the election
so there will be
no vote-buying

this may be illogical
but these are all real

RIC S. BASTASA
Illogicality...

i'd like to make it simple
complicating it does not help
our situation

i do not have four feet
i don't know if becoming a fish can make me see thing clearer

but can clarity really help?

i guess with fifty-one years here
we are mislead by the
something that is clear

actually, it makes us more confused
unable to relate to something more real and recurrent

i change, it is complicated,
i don't like it here, it is as simple as that

i get nothing here except
boredom,
al my wishes turn to stone

stone hits my head so bad
i need to go and look for a cure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Illusion

perfection has always been an optical illusion
a manipulation of the lens
of life's eyes
hoping to see much better
all the details
wanting to match what all those invisible ones are creating

when we go back to the touch of our hands
the trembling is perfect

RIC S. BASTASA
Illusion As Cure

what i saw was an illusion
of love, my thighs are cold
longing for
a temporary sun
that can give it heat
for a while
and survive this

loneliness of the flesh
that thwarts what is real
this

longing that forever detaches
me from
what i could have been

a calm pond
a determined river
a still tree
a star unmoved by the wind
and shining
in the depths of unfathomable darkness

there is always a way to dislodge
what poisons my being
and this is where the illusion of images come
and i embrace them
make love to each color and scent
sway with its form
and obey the commands of those curves
and softness

it is only momentary
when i am lost
takes a very shallow moment
when i am in
a trance

i come back again
to the touch of my own hands
like waking up and
looking around the room
feeling anew to the colors and thickness of the drapes
the softness of the green carpet
where i lay
my exhausted body

it is nighttime still when i open the window
the city lights glow
i am speaking silently
to the mouth of my body

RIC S. BASTASA
Illusions Of The Reality Of Grief....

there will be discontents
expected, not at all strange
but to be a casualty of such
lack, what misfortune
can that be,

be simple, take patience
on slow doses
what discontent is there
soon can be
cured

life can be nothing but a sigh
smoke your boring hours
let that white spirit rise
to the chimney and then to the skies

take a deep breathe
ponder, the journey soon shall be over
there will be meetings
of joys and bliss

then you leave all things behind
like the eddies of the dusts in the air
like the bubbles of soap
you think they were all big
ah, they’re nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
I'M One Of Those Tiny Things

tiny things do not matter
in fact
those invincible ones
do not
affect us
they may be felt
but
only when we are too
sensitive

or overreacting

i am one of these tiny
things
don't bother
i won't

RIC S. BASTASA
I'M Sorry

learned by heart
the story of the moth and
the fire

do not want to die
yet
sorry but i am not
catering to
this and that

got my life
and will not waste it
with you

sorry but i am on my own
now
as ever before
you're a trap
a quicksand

so sorry you can't get me
alive
got a life
lots of sunshine in here
fresh rivers
and air from the trees
blue clouds
wide sea
cool earth
beautiful house
green grass

tell me why do i have
to bet my life
on 20 minutes
of your
happiness?

i won't
you're a quicksand
and i am no fool
in here.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'M Sorry...

i've met two kinds of
i'm sorries,

one is short and scheming and
escaped from the
gallows of the just and
the noble,

the other, got caught in the
clutches of his conscience
and with a self-inflicted gunshot wound
pronounced the sentence
upon his chest
and finally rested in peace.

p.s.
what will be next? who?

RIC S. BASTASA
I'M Taking The Photographs Of The Photographers

as they busy taking the
shots of their lives
focusing and focusing
their lenses

i take the opposite view
taking their pictures as they take their pictures
trying to define life
sifting all the details
the colors and tones
and frozen movements of
people and things

i am amazed on how amazed they are
with their object and subjects
i click my camera first before they
click theirs

RIC S. BASTASA
Images Of The Past

Image 1

A big white horse
Galloping
All four feet hanging in mid-air

On the ground below it
A yellow butterfly

A broken wing.

Image ii

A dirty boy chases a dirty pig
His dirty father chases both
While mother hides her face
Behind a black umbrella.

Image iii

I see on the ceiling a little spider, a lizard
And a white moth
The faded yellow fluorescent bulb blinks
I blink too

The little spider is gone and the moth flew away.

Image iv

A girl on a swing swinging high on air
Her left slipper left in space
Rightly so
Captured still in the middle of air

The two of us look we did not move
Like a Flemish painting
Images Of The Past....

the images of the past
sometimes project themselves in the screen
of our minds

rivers where children bathe freely
boats that row to the crystal blue sea
green mountains to climb

we are amazed by said wondrous views
and the joys of our voices
reverberate the atmosphere
echoing on the corners of our memories

we shut the journey and we take hold of the present.
the grip now is too hard
because the winds are too strong and we are afraid
that to the past we will be forever blown

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagination

roof houses
in a row with
snowtops
trees budding
leaves
meteors merely
passing by
a group of stars
rumor
mongering along
a lonely street
lights singing
light
parks with empty
benches
children huddled
in schools
mothers frying eggs
and fathers
repairing broken
promises at the
barn
golden spread of
wheat and
hay at the stacks
nothing real for
that matter
these are all
imaginations of the
mind
which was never
there in the
first place.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagination And Survival

when all things fail
he resorts to free time
this power of
imagination
that takes him anywhere
he goes
this twisting of something
that hurts
the hard blunt edges
rubbed into the softness
of the
gratifying self
the unacceptability that
you volunteer
upon your shoulders
inside the crowded room
filled with mess
you select what must go
inside your heart
treasure what they cannot
see in you
in the long run
the only reliable partner
is the silence
the ability to be
despite all the odds
where there is no love
from other people's hearts
the mind must
create the persons
must carve hearts
must know how to wipe
the blood
and from there grow the
seeds of
confidence again
that sense of peace
amidst the storm
that loving kindness
amidst the hatred
that waiting alone in the boat
dreaming of land.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagination....

as you begin to imagine
that everything in you is molecules
gathering together
to form a mass of what you see in the mirror
or feel with your palms
as you imagine yourself as a wrapping of vast skin
must you realize
that you too is immortal?

RIC S. BASTASA
Imaginations At 447

you lay your head
on the pillow on a bed on a boat
bound for Palawan
what you hear
because your heart is broken
is this dying boat slowly riding on the waves
rusting upon its hulls
with nothing in mind
but to just comply and complete
the journey
there are no dreams of welcome
no streamers
no drums
just an arrival and the usual
announcement: we have arrived.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagine

imagine that i am a hand
and you are the piece of
a mirror
and i reflect light from
the sun
so that others may see
the greatness of themselves

i guess this could be
the beginning of our noble friendship

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagine (2)

if you imagine
that this is the only place
we are destined to be

tall buildings
rushing cars
dusty pavements
artificial parks

i tell you, if this is the only place you believe
then you miss
the callings of truth

i still believe that there is another world out there
whose entrance is death.

when death touches you
do not shiver
welcome it and embrace it
with gladness
and peace

imagine that death is the door
that leads you
there

they call it heaven.
believe and be free and be happy
till eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagine (With Apology To J. Lennon)

Imagine there’s no poetry
It’s not easy
you may try

No bliss below us
Above us, only prose
Imagine all the poets
Not sharing all the words

You may say I’m Nobody
That I’m not Somebody
I hope someday you’ll join us
And Poetry shall not pass

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagine Freedom

the mind is always
our own
prison, we must
free ourselves
from the bars of all
these thoughts,
imagine that you are a dove
your wings
like the eagle's
your claws like the
tiger's
imagine, yes that is the key
to freedom
imagine that
imagination is a dove with wings and claws and
swift and
lost in the vastness
of space
like a grain of sand
in the
widest ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagining That There Is Still You....

i feel dignified
knowing that distance
has not choked
what my mouth had long
wanted to speak,

i am redeemed by your
constant reading about
what i have written and
rewritten for years
though i have not really
mastered what it say must.

here i am sitting on a
hard chair still making most
of the thinking
what to further do with
my own life and perhaps
put meaning to the senselessness
of the world: its absurdities
and even uncertainties,

i am free to imagine who you
are, what you also do, how
you must have read every word
i have written, how you must
have taken note of my longings.

here i am feeling justified
about time and silence, about
love and unselfishness, here,
this moment, i shall put
another word, and another,
until by my own constraint,
shall put an end to it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagining The Protest Of The Snake That They Killed Yesterday...

if only the snake had a good tongue
and fairly a good speech training,
the one that they killed yesterday
for having invaded the fence of their
territory
snakes are not allowed to roam here
and catch for mice
or frogs,
it could have said, 'i have nowhere to stay,
and i have no food out there'

the bamboo groves had been uprooted by you
our holes are covered with cement
the bushes are burned
the caves have been turned as tourist attractions
we are snakes
we too have rights
for food and shelter
and i did not come to bite your children
i only come
to ask for home
and there is none for me anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagining.....Imaging... Aging

youth imagines a lot.
middle age is engaged in
some imaging,
what once was too supple
and firm
and protruding on silky white
wet upper apparel
and what seems to be a tiny
island of a shadow
in between two
sides

then comes the last portion of
the story of the wine,
it is aged

a new flavor comes to the
nostrils:

memories of lights and shadows
oranges and tequila
and hands and thighs
and lips and tongues

RIC S. BASTASA
Imagining Us... That Night I Was Very Lonely...

on one rainy night
just the two of us
we share that moment
when you go under
hold the gleaming skin
of my being
under the moon by
the window
and you like the way
the veins of my body
draw the maps of
our faraway existences
that i imagine
when the rain finally stops
and takes you away from
me, a mirage of my darkest
desert night
there is no oasis
no water flowing from my
mouth
there is none in fact
to remember
there is only that moment
that i create in my mind
like a flash of my
meteor inside my
private room

the illusion moves on
like a boat
toward the pier
where everyone waits
like some stranded
passengers
one typhoon day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imati Ili Biti?

odlični video. kaj velite dal vam je dobra ova kineska sakralna arhitektura? i ovi ninje koji se bore iznutra?
Ja sam ga dvaput gledala.
Što se ti; e plo; a i ja volim; uti pucketanje, ali u ovom vremenu trke i frke jedva imam vremena i za kompjutersko slušanje muzike. Ne mogu da na; em iglu za moj gramofon.: tuzni:

RIC S. BASTASA
Imelda's Fall

the rooms of the old house in olot
closed, the sound of the sea so deafening
her blind masseur still comes here often
perhaps reminiscing always the past,

the indonesian goddess by the gate is headless
another god of the sea lost his left hand
the ex-president comes here using the people's submarine
as she dances the night away with her fourteen ladies

the Sto Nino inside a man-made cave lost his right eye
on another corner, stands St. Joseph with only one hand
the grandeur is lost
this place
there is nothing spectacular now
except the contempt
of power and abuse of people's trust
power is temporary

a bad memory lasts for a lifetime
she has fallen out of grace
everything in her room is locked
dusty,
only the rats and the cockroaches
now applaud her greatness

all her friends are gone
we do not know this place now
we are only reminded

and they always say
that the past need not be repeated
the sun sets finally
the orange hues are gone
and what comes next is the total darkness
of this place
once great
now in utter ruin
then we decided to move on
to the next place of our tourist destination

RIC S. BASTASA
Imitating Cher As She Is Singing Her Favorite Song

what am i suppose to do
sit around and wait for you

i needed time to move on
i needed love to feel strong

i believe in love
i believe in you

feeling something
someone
it's you

RIC S. BASTASA
Imitating Fear.....

it was sudden
how the fog came at 3 o' clock
in the afternoon

at the high part of this road
beside the car
a line of mountains
of shadows and flowing lines

we had to stop for a while
we were seeing nothing beyond us
we were silent
becoming fog ourselves

in fear we imitate
what causes the fear
perhaps

to please it
so that it will not devour us
from who we are

RIC S. BASTASA
Imitating God

the artist
creates and does not keep

like a tree
its fruits are not
for its eating
like the grass its greenness
is not for
its keeping
its coolness is for the
children's playing

like a chef it cooks best
when food is served
and all the rest have eaten

like those flowers on the
paths
for whom do they bloom?

like all the beauty and goodness
for whom shall they be?

the artist sees them
and re-creates them
and then after a moment
gives them all away

imitating God.

RIC S. BASTASA
last night i dreamed of caterpillars
there were caterpillars everywhere
they were crawling in my stomach
they were eating leave in my hair
they were munching at my pillow
they were circling on my head
they were cleaning up their mouths
as they spin silk in my bed
they were on the chairs and table
they were climbing the chandeliers
they were making cocoons in the corners
they were linking in my ears
there were caterpillars, caterpillar, caterpillars
for as far as i could see...
when i woke up today, i noticed,
there were butterflies on top of me

RIC S. BASTASA
Imitating Murray.....

life is like a cotton candy
pink and very trendy

eat and be a pretty baby and then
lose your teeth so early.

RIC S. BASTASA
Immigration

overseas, they all left overseas,

how happy to see money coming
to build the most beautiful house

how said to see no home at all.
how desperate, how loveless

how empty, how detached
ty they must know that these things are simply irreconcilable!

how the gold and diamond glisten on the ears
how sad the eyes have become.

RIC S. BASTASA
Immortal

evanescent
immortality
piano music
lingering in
my mind
wherever i go
the word
teases me
always telling me
that i am not meant
to be here
forever
that home is always
there waiting
that this body
is mere skin
soon shedding off
dead surface
matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Immortal Soul Life Eternal....

mortal am i
there is no
dispute

but this is
not just the end
of it all

this is not just
me in the company of
worms and
rotten leaves

something rises from
this rottenness

immortal soul
life eternal....

RIC S. BASTASA
Immunity To Departures

ey all but pass quickly: my dreams, my hopes, my ambitions
ey don't stay that long enough
what i had as a small kid, is just this poem long gone.

and if by chance you too should leave me
let me tell you it is fine with me
with a track record of departures i have composed some songs for me
frogs jumping in glee, like the rains and live bands of liberty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Imparting The Idea Of A Loving God

in her catechism class
after teaching the idea of
a great God

(How great thou art!)

she sees to it
that all the children
get their free meals

(Does she believe
about the confusion
that an empty stomach
can give?)

and so the children
see the greatness
of God
in the food they eat

the loving God
in the kindness of
the giver

and i agree,
that these are all
for free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Impels

there is this emptiness of the shell within me
that impels me to sing
to summon for the wind
in the whistle	here is this undefined moment
that always creates
a story
which i myself cannot tell
that which i know
but must remain not to be told forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Impending

it was a horrible scene
of a drying river bed
where a school of
fish surrender
to their waterless state
grasping for breath
to an impending death

there is no sign of a dark
cloud's hands to help
the eye of the sun stared
their bodies hang
on the air that they do not need

RIC S. BASTASA
Impermanence

like the colored sands of the
Buddhist monks of Mandala
the facts of our lives
that took
us years and years
to establish
after a very careful tapestry
of our own artistic instincts,
soon shall be

gone, mixed, castles and temples
turning into
sand dunes inside our hands

and we swim to the river of time
and there let
all the sands spill back to the water
that does not just flow
but run & run

RIC S. BASTASA
Implications

such is the meaning
of a rainbow, that when there is rain
and when it stops
and the sun begins to shine
a promise is made, that there will be no more
deluge,

that when the road gets wet
by logical implication
there must have been
rain,

and with too much rain in the forest
you know what happens next
the river shall rise
and bring the flood following
the law that nature
gives us
without any telling,

you do not have to tell me
about the implication
about a bag full of clothes
about a closed account
about a ticket for one only in America.

i know you, and you too know me.
that poem
in that junction, where Oedipus meets
the King.

RIC S. BASTASA
Impotent

such a big
tall tree
too grand
to look at

but there
is nobody

--------

Pagkadako
Pagkaanindot
Sa kahoy

Apan wala
May tawo

RIC S. BASTASA
Impotent 2

Pagkadako
Pagkaanindot
Sa kahoy

Apan wala
May tawo

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Field Of Absence

in the field of absence
i may find you

as a flower
or a a worm

of someone else
as i stare

at the clouds
asking who owns you

and who owns me
finally i nod

at all the leaves
meeting me

someone owns
you
the western wind

no one owns me
as i decide
to fly east

where the wind
is as soft as silk

i have grown
a pair of wings

you ask
what for?

i am flying away.

you ask
why?

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
i have no answer
but it is this

why that moves
everything

inside me
i ask too: why?

it keeps on moving
it is silent

it is bitter
it is as deep as a

black river.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Bowl

inside a bowl
sometimes i think
that it is the
only world where
the feasibility
of harmonious living
thrives

it is a small mass
with a personalized
scent

and when you
want it discarded
you simply need
to press
a handle

and then
everything is as clean
as they want it
to be

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Certain Place

his feet took off
to a place where ought not he
the rain makes the water rose
and he wet his socks and shoes
and a neighbor sees him there
puzzled what is he up to
why? this is not the place
for him
why is he here
alone?
his hands hold nothing now
for alone he is free
at last
beholden to no one
not even love
or plain gratitude
not so
with compassion
for now when is finally lost
he becomes strong
happier with
the murk of the water

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Circle Without Any Ending

to endure
this kind of relationship
you simply have
to learn how to ignore
wrongs

do not hope to change
what is there already
for the trunks or branches
of old trees
cannot be twisted anymore
to your desired direction
unless you cut it
which should not be
the proper thing to do

let life pass by
let people be
let them all be as
you let you be you
in utmost freedom
in this dance of life
we keep on internalizing
the music
deep deep inside our hearts
with closed eyes
not watching what steps are
there

just keep on dancing
sweat it out
life goes on and on
in a circle
without any ending

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Crowd In The City Internet Cafe

there are no faces
eyes swimming to one direction
on the monitors
alone
in a big crowd
in a city internet cafe

another form of reality
you watch no one
no one watches you

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Crowd, In A Sea Of People

in a crowd of people, in a sea of people
you can just be a wooden sail, and sail like
there are no people in there, in the sea of people,
you can just be yourself, like they do not exist,
you can even just be any kind of wave in there,
a small gentle wave with the usual sea cap, a white
foamy sea cap, indistinguishable like the rest of the
people in the sea of people, and in this sea where you
are just one of them, there is really no problem, you are
just like them, behaving just like anyone of them, and you can always be with
them, lonely, lonely like them, always being like them, in a crowd, in this
uniformity, in this
anonymity, but once it may occur to you, that there is
something in yourself that simply shouts, I can be out
from here, out of here, from this cacophony, from this loneliness,

I cannot wait anymore, in the sea of people, I can be out,
An outcast, and it does not matter, deep within I know I can feel it now,

my mother was a seagull, and I have always known how to fly.
The time is now to spread the wings that I have been hiding.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Fighting Mood

mY FRIEND who seems to be losing his mind
is in a fighting mood

Because he loves himself too much
(Not really poetry)
He misses the mark
Delving on the ARROW
rATHER THAN the apple
He hits the forehead of the child of
William Tell

Oh, it's messy
He's messy and needs proper
Psychiatric EVAUation

Nevertheless, we still love Him
Not for what he is worth
But for what he IS.

hUMANITY, humanity
What is happening to you?

When we speak, we regret speaking.
When we write, we always feel pity at the End.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Happy World

in a happy world we do not just speak about laughter
neither do we speak about flowers blooming when we speak about beauty
or we simply talk about our persons when we speak about truths
happiness and sorrows, ugliness and beauty, truths and lies,
you must have seen them how they all danced last night holding hands
and swaying and stomping their feet on the dancing halls of life
they are sisters, they are lovers, they are even parents and children

you must have learned how they go together like a woman with two faces.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A League Of My Own...

d this is the trick
in the league of my own
i compete to no one
except myself

i rise and fall and fall
and rise
there is no medal
no laurel nothing about
a sculpted trophy

it is just this fun run
this journey of the pilgrim
it is just this one man show
with me both as critic
and fan

i am the chair, the lights
and the curtain
the red carpet, the bell,
the clock and the
floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Meeting With The Gods

the gods have all
regrets for giving
fire to man
now the world is
burning like hell

the gods have all
regrets for giving
man the wheel
now the world is
spinning to death

the gods are crazy
these men are lazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Poem

in a poem
or even in a pseudo
poem
i like to be as articulate as a
winding river
as happy as a gazelle
jumping on a hill
as secretive as a cave
keeping my stalagmites
and stalactites
as social as a fish
talking to a fly
as loud as a frog croaking
with the rain
as blue as the cloud
as green as the grass
(pardon these cliches)
i like to be as true as
a barking dog to the wrong
tree wagging its tail
even to the wrong master
in any poem be it a true poem
or a pseudo poem
i like to sing with the cicadas
on lonely nights like this
and when my soliloquy is over
in all poems
and pseudo poems
i like to dropp
in my much needed
sleep in my couch
or on the solid wooden floor
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Rat Race

the rat finally gets tired
of racing
in his own rat race world
now it thinks of resting for a while
near the dog house
where the cat is taking its nap
well, he thinks,
why not try friendship for a while
why not exercise
some diplomatic ties
to stop the race
to have more space
for dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
In A Relationship

you must have noticed
you do not have to understand the other
in order to really love
for it is just a matter of being near
and then touch and be touched in return

feeling
hearing the beatings of the heart
like listening to a song
played from afar
the lyrics sounding like faded fabrics
the music still
playing too well in the corners of our ears

RIC S. BASTASA
In A State Of Nothing

i know it is wrong to stick to a job
that does not please me anymore
it will be entirely tiresome
feeling like a rubber bond stretched to its maximum limit
until it snaps out

you told me, it is a waste of my lifetime
like you
a bright star in the heavens now
i could have changed my course
and went out from that sinking boat

you are laughing
you have sacrificed a lot
you swam into that ocean of uncertainty
until you found your destiny

i am not less courageous than you
i once dropped myself from that boat
left my comfort zone
and too, found my own kind of joy
been there, as i want to say

look! i can't leap now,
i have learned and savored joy and it is not giving me enough
it has become an irrelevant state

i am steady now, pain and joy do not have any effect at all
i am moving but not changing any course
i know it cannot change me

i am in a state of numbness
i do not know what pleases me
and i cannot feel that usual pain anymore
there is no fear neither calm
and i am figuring out what i really am

this could be nirvana, i don't know.
In All Situations

do not be surprised
those who arrive here
there will be more
but less at the same time

if you go for quality
start it yourself
by then you will be crazy
because there is none for

that here. Perhaps to some
but they’re all to rare
and lazy.

precisely, this is what
is happening to me.
shall the autistic one
take the lead?
the one whose lines
are crooked? the one
who does not care
if there is rhyme at all?
the one who always
breaks the rules?

welcome, welcome
just join the fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
In All Situations (Part Two)

just like in any other work of art, painting for instance, there will fakes and there will be real. there will be those that pose for the genuine, but actually prized for nothing, but at what expense, for instance let us take a look at yours? it will take me time to read it.

i have none. i do not have the patience anymore of looking at what's real or fake, at what's quality, art or garbage.

we are here not for anything, for what? just plain nonsense make time pass and stare at the glass letting the sands pour between our boring fingers.

smile, there is nothing worth seriously taking.

RIC S. BASTASA
In An Island Of Light

some people have always loved
the island of light
and they do everything to be
inside
that island of light
to a certain extent of disregarding
civility and forgetting courtesy
and setting aside
the reservation that the island of light
is too small and cannot be
the place for all

some people have to live outside
the island of light
for that is what is meant to be
in the word of
destiny

and there will be time for all
a season for some
luck for the other
fate for four
disaster for more

the island of light soon dissolves itself
for the light of day
the sun of mercy
and it is for free.

RIC S. BASTASA
In An Open Rice Field

in an open rice field
beside a dried mud-dike
a man stands on guard

a rat hides under the tree
the eagle flies above them

RIC S. BASTASA
In Another Place

recall
that if you are not welcome
in that place

move out
dust off the dusts on the sandals
of your feet

go to another place
where there are songs and dances
where food is shared
where you are given a part
to be part of
their world

if they beg for you to stay however
please refuse

RIC S. BASTASA
In Another World Of Anonymity

it is hard to relate
too taxing since
a name is asked
and you have to tell
a name
or if you are not ready
you make a
hoax
invent as many names
as you can
to suit
a particular situation

you can be filled with
guilt sometimes
but it is a normal
choice
to avoid a complication

you become familiar
to all these

you find yourself stranded
a place with no name
people without tags
bodies without tattoos
societies without taboos

you write in your diary
happiness in anonymity
doors without numbers
houses with numerous exits

you reveal that once
they ask for you name
and what you can give
is only a very long stare.
In Answer To Pirandello's Question

if the character steps inside my room
i will perhaps choose the
c CHARACTER

honestly, i still don't have it
i mean,
character, not that character of
your play

RIC S. BASTASA
In Any Form Of Endearment

The river in you moves
Taking the least resistance
You shall be the murky one
That seeks your own level of murkiness

In calm and still moments
Let me fish for once
In your moments of rage
I shall be the rocky gauge

In the moment of your dryness
I shall be the river bank nearby
We shall be always here in any form
I shall be the bamboo grove one day

And you shall be the cool river again
gently flowing by

RIC S. BASTASA
In Appropriate

to love the glow of the flame
in the dark
the bluish and greenish
and reddish parts

and not to touch the hottest part
simply because you are looking
and you think that it is
inappropriate

i just watch it
telling myself that i might as well die
this moment

RIC S. BASTASA
In Artistic Arthritis.

i must have wasted my time
in building words
as my body is getting impatient
about its needs,
i should have climbed a mountain
instead
than build a palace in the sky of
thoughts
my muscles shrink
my feet have lost its bonding with
the earth
soon they shall take their revenge
in artistic arthritis.

RIC S. BASTASA
i ask you to write about the waning moon
something sad
one that tells about the misery
of man
and nature
and how they must try to recover
and be one again
how they must each
take each
other as brothers
as resting places

you are obliging
you write more than
what is expected

you write about
ourselves
behind us
is the full moon floating on a very calm pond

and you come about
with a cup of wine
for both
of us to drink and enjoy

you shy away from sadness
and perhaps
i will be liking it

RIC S. BASTASA
In Bandung That Early Morning

what we finally had
was not
time wasted the
car climbed
so many hills
passing by the
garden of
flowers
seeing how men and
women of this village
turn it
into a paradise
of scents and colors

small cottages dot
green hills
clouds hover like
resting
passersby

when we reach
Sapulipudi
a young woman guides
us to a javanese
hut
where a flat table
waits us

beside us is a pond
with kois
swimming beside the
lotuses

long reeds abound
beside big boulders of
shiny rocks
wet with the morning
rain
rice on banana leaves
fried chicken garnished
with chili sauce
sweet guava juice full in
transparent glass

we squat facing each other
amazed with the way
peace and beauty
fuse with each other's
body
as though they are
mortals making love
before us....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Bed....

time is a straight line
where are the curves? that contour of a woman
the hills of the dessert sands
it is too boring you say and there is this
desire to quit and simply be gone somewhere
even in places that you cannot name

you need a guitar to strum this hours and make it
dance
the flamenco, what is the color of the heart of this
lively dance
the tapping feet and the clapping hands
and the swaying of the long red skirt
and the showing of a map of desire in one of those
thighs?

what is it really that we are missing?
shall we perhaps take this chance of having a dance
on the floor and then in

bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Between

in between the monotonous pages
of this book of life

some dog ears are inserted
the red tassels protruding like a tongue

saying nothing
not even some slips of the memories

within are the serious
delicate matters such as incessant wars

of mankind and the impulses of greed
i scan the pages till the end

i have not seen such chapters as giving in
to humanity

that innate goodness, i hurry to find it
not even in the appendix

someone inserted in this book
a letter

it says, love has long been gone
and no one knows where it is going.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Between Her Legs

finally you find yourself
in the last destination of life

you are in between
her legs
fully satisfied.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Between Light And Darkness...

like a candle light
that you blow
you cease on a certain
awakening
not because you die
and perish
but because you need
a retreat to the dark side
of yourself
not to embrace darkness
but simply to
rest
thinking some more
about
what to do next
after this defeat....

you dream about advancing
to another broad daylight
triumphant now
against the weakness
that pulls your feet
towards that drowning of
the past....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Between The Rush Hours Of The Day

imagine a sandwich
two square breads with same boring faces
to make it viable
we make it taste good by putting some fillings
some prefer the usual ham
and cheese with pickles
and lettuce leaves

imagine too ourselves
what lies between us to make this relationship work
some fillings
don't put indifference
we had tasted its bitterness and
blandness
let us try the usual
excitements of
the unknown
something we have not tried before
to places we have not been
too
perhaps we can be strangers again
not knowing what rivers are
or the reason for the stars

or perhaps we be children again
pointing our small fingers to the moon

imagine too my rush hours
words are coming in trains and
bullets
and i am bombarding with blacks and whites
and bold
too heavy to my sight

i have learned how to take the break
the fillings in between
a poem here and there
amidst the sour faces of lawyers
the sadness of the victims
the twisted jaws of
the culprits

there are words that must please
there is world that must
cohabit happiness
be it in the mind or somewhere else
i grab it.

RIC S. BASTASA
to the gray shade of life we toast a drink between day and night in the middle of woes and delight we sip a drink of a hundred desires between this sorrow and joy this triumphs and failures we move in and take our exits somewhere in these in betweens at the tips of rainbows and skies we toss our souls like coins in the air like kites and spites.

RIC S. BASTASA
now in bold strokes
i have drawn my jaw
front of the mirror
and you find it horrible
but it is my jaw
and none of the other
i put my beard like a
waterfall
making the sounds of
confusions

in bold strokes i draw
the face
of my manhood
and you want to have compromises
about my teeth
and tongue
some have to be pulled
and the tongue
is not that long enough

the terms are clear
if you disagree then there is no deal

if you insist
there is no us in this

it arrives at a decision
either you
or myself
and if you do not leave
i will

my feet are strong
my soles are thick.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Bora

they have a term for all these big waves,
and strong winds,
when business is bad, when people leave

it is the low season,

when hearts are broken, when a lover is jilted
when time stops for a while

when tears flow and flood a room
when messages are opened and then

someone screams in pain,
when a door is closed, because the winds are strong

and sands are blown and getting inside your eyes
and you are hurt and cannot clearly see what is beyond

all these longings, these temporary hurts,
when waiting seems too long that you cannot embrace it

the lowest peak of your life
when breathings wants to stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Boracay Beach

On a summer break
Do not read your law books
It is a chance for you
To the see the moon
In boracay beach

RIC S. BASTASA
In Burnham...

i may be hard to please
this i may accept, while

in Baguio as i walk Burnham
park again early dawn when
my breath freezes in the wind
i cannot be notice, how

swans are made from wood,
how a man-made lake turns
to its muddy color, not at

all pleasing to my senses.
how i left the place and
found my way back to your
arms again, so, so displeased.

RIC S. BASTASA
friends have gone abroad
for greener pastures and they always make
all the reasons: children in college,
a husband to support, a mortgage to pay,
a house, a new lot,
relatives in the province needing help,

in my simple ways i chose to stay
in this country
thriving on vegetables from my garden,
a government job, though it does not pay much
but i can serve well
my own people,

perhaps there is something more to this decision,
i can take my morning walks
breath fresh air from the sea
reflect by the river
see the kingfisher catching a fish
hear the chirps of newly hatched fledgelings
on their nests
simple pleasures that i have already
gotten used to
which i cannot dispense with

in fact, this i can say
i do not have much like the dollars they earned
in the USA or Canada
but i am more of what i am
when i reduce all these
in poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Compromises......

what do you not see
is another face inside this face

it shows itself in the dark
and speaks in a language which i really love

selfish, it kisses me, and not contented
it steals a part of my day

to oppress the face that you love
which i show to you when you are happy

i am the night of my day and the day of my night
the other one loves nobody but just me

in a compromise of goodness i have to love you
show again the face that you love

the one you brag to your friends
the one you take with you in church

i thrive in this, without excuses,
the world spins, in compromises.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Constant Struggle

there is this hook, line and sinker

someone is a fish and he is caught

the urchins and clams and octopuses watch helplessly

the fish is this philosophy of being caught and wanting to be free

you are inside this ocean and you are this fish

and then you wish to become a man all your life you feel the fish in there hook, line and sinker

the fish in you and the man within in constant struggle

RIC S. BASTASA
In Contemplation

Sunbathing

Because my hands are cold
I move towards the place of the bold

It is this pastime of old
Moving to a mold

I take off my clothes, go crass
And lay myself on the grass

There is so much light
I begin to take my flight

Swimming under the sun
Having so much fun

Me and my silent shadow
Contemplating deep to the marrow

RIC S. BASTASA
In Coron Island By The Sea

in truth
you are more beautiful
without your
clothes on
as you stand by the
window
as you bathe yourself
with the
early morning light

the sea breeze and the
silk curtains are in their
usual flirting mood

as i just wake up
from a very deep slumber

we are alone in this
haven on another night
of bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Corregidor Island

it is an island
shaped like a tadpole

at the head there is
a giant cannon
which today outdates
the required accuracy
how to kill
the specifics
how the particulars
can be eradicated
with all ease

at the middle is an
airway strip
where old suicide planes
first landed

at the tip is the cemetery
a metaphor for sad endings
where the dead
are buried without their
names written in stones

a marble chrysanthemum
at the center
and then round smooth stones
surround

here the war heroes
are mute
our hearts know
not what patriotism is

all victims
war must be outlawed

RIC S. BASTASA
In Daily Dying To Ourselves

In daily dying to ourselves
As we pain
Each day, each minute,
We get used to dying
And every death that comes
Close to our skins
Whichever is it
As there are many of them
At the end
Not a death that comes
Really matters.
And so the stress is gone
In fact, we start to welcome
It like a guest,
The invited one, we even
Ask it to stay
And be home with us.

Little deaths here and there
Each is real, nothing frightens anymore.
And death becomes
So boring so common so tiny to tinker

RIC S. BASTASA
In Dakak

We are here in this island
at the back the surrounding mountains
a little near the woods and bushes
we hear the birds singing this morning

it is eight o'clock in the morning
you walk along the coastline
as i watch you

i lay my body on a swing tied
between two coconut trees
under this big pitogo tree
i bathe in air and hear the hush of a
certain longing

it is so peaceful here
the clouds are bluer than in the city
do not ask me why
the sea is like a pastel blue blanket
spread in bed

the silence runs on the white sand
the hermit crabs run and stop and run
i can hear the crumpling of the castles in the sand
last night we built them

i put my buri hat hiding my hair and covering part
of my forehead
the leaves fall inside my mind
there are certain notes of sadness trickling
inside my heart
a cascading loneliness
my ears are hearing them
my arms till now cannot embrace

i do not doubt it
here is this paradise even with her
i still long for you
In Deep Slumber

i sometimes dream
that i have only strong arms
and a long green fish tail

and i dive deep in the night
deed deep in my thoughts
feeling like
a merman

looking for that mother of
pearl
of great price that they have
been talking
on longer days

RIC S. BASTASA
In Failing To Drink What Used To Be Hot And Fuming....(2)

my morning poetry
is like coffee
that had gone cold
by the window having
forgotten that
i put it there a while
ago....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Femagas

This is the simplest place
I'd been
Througout my life

The roads pure clay
The mountains pure trees
Nothing bald
No patch of brown

The flowers here bloom
All year round
And fogs hang on
Mountain sides like
Guavas

The children knows nothing
But the laughter of the rivers
The playfulness of worms and birds
The freedom of the monkeys

The staple food is brown rice
The best viand is City Sardine
The one with the Boat trademark
The best desert is a chunk
Of brown sugar

When one gets sick here
There is no doctor
They just consult all their gods
In their sacred caves

And when they die
No one mourns
The other side of the River
Where the boatman takes them
Is their perfect resting place
The Silence golden
The Quiet diamond-like
So Perfect & So Secluded

RIC S. BASTASA
In Fifteen Lines

you write
2. a poem
fifteen lines

4. i always look
rd
the fifteenth line

best line
there
it will just be the line
10. i read

last line

is deigned
dignity

15. condescendingly, a respect to the brevity of poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
In Filing To Drink What Used To Be Hot And Fuming....

my morning poetry
is like coffee
that had gone cold
by the window having
forgotten that
i put it there a while
ago....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Forgetting About Your Birthday

in caring for the poor
you forget all about your birthday

you say birthdays are for young people
and you seem to say further that at your age now
the other people who need your care and compassion
are those that make you happy

i will not ask about your age
but if you ask me
i will tell you your age

it is the age of enlightenment

RIC S. BASTASA
In Friendship

in friendship
distances
get shortened
and even cut
like stalks of roses
shorn of thorns
only the red
petals and
their sweet scents
stay close in
my heart
still beating
for your
presence

RIC S. BASTASA
In Giving

in giving
you do not demand
that i part
with something

like money
or a object of value
like a diamond ring
or a prized watch

you say
you want a memory
love

in giving
you like that i part
with nothing
that i just close
my eyes
and leave you
with what
you can be
by my side

i know
it is more than
what i have

you want
me to give
myself to you

you want
me to accept
you

flesh to flesh
penetrating
the depths
of our souls
tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
In God's Horizon

after the performance
of the school play
the boy who plays
Prince
and the girl who plays
Cinderilla
all come to Mama and Papa
and they say

'how was it?'

it is like life, in Liao's
divine horizon
when the day is over
no matter how sad and rough
we all run to a set of arms
we are hugged
we are loved.

RIC S. BASTASA
In God's Mercy

we look for patterns of success
and we look at their lives
those who made it
to the top
and those who amassed what fortunes
are there
on this earth available to all those
whom you think
deserve

the efforts and strategies
the patience and hard work

you find yourself without a dime
homeless and
deprived

there are no patterns of success
not even luck has a map

there are only those who are there and do nothing
and yet they get all

fame and glory and fortune
you ask yourself today

what have i done to deserve all these?
God has no answer.

kneel and just pray.
Your fate will always be yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Her Simplicity

in her simplicity
she carries so much wisdom
at ease with her
the rock of Gibraltar at the tip
of her finger

RIC S. BASTASA
In Here

in here we come
without promises
of stars

we are free to go
leaving is not difficult
it is all in our minds
this dizziness about
our existence as poets
the last bulwark of
erotic thoughts

this is the place of
certain confidences
we write what we think
not what we are
we empathize we get into
the shoes of another we weep
as though we do not own any
tear we keep the silence sometimes
as though we own space
we move as though we are
the river we fall as though
we are the rain

this is this place
welcome back to this world
of words
bring in the emptiness
think that soon you shall be full
and then empty yourself again
feel the essences
of all these nothingness

i have come with empty hands
and i shall leave
without my face.
In Hiding

defense mechanisms.
coping up machines.
lies and deceptions.
covering up. conceal.

a little fish hides under
a big stone on that deep sea
amidst the friendly anemones

a big shark is coming
and the electric eel is taken
exposed, confident, dead.

we hide. There is a reason
for hiding sometimes. For retreats
in the mountains in secret
convents with the nuns. In secret
hideouts with the monks.
In tunnels dug for surrenders
like this. To survive.

when things get rough
and i am not that rough enough for the
roughness that gets going, i choose

to hide underneath a strong
floor, inside a closet, under
a cabinet of folded clothes.

the sense are not too strong
to survive a crash. I hide. I take
cover. I make poems. My poems
are my shelters of the scorching
sun, the heavy rain, the flood and
earhtquakes of my life.

i am shaken. But look, i am in tack.
My bones rattle but unbroken.
The poems are my fortress.
The big shark is coming again.
Let me hide. Under a rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
In His Fishing Expedition

in his fishing expedition
his bait is this bluff
and with gullibility
you take the bait,
swallow the hook, line and sinker

i say
baby you have not yet learned the intricate art of the spies
those who are still not captured by the enemies
in the middle of their yards

take the bait
and put it back to the sea
you must learn how to fish too

in this expedition of lies and deception
take the shape of the mythical mermaid
swim like a slimy fish but sing like a beautiful woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
In His House Of Standard Things

to make perhaps an impression of what is beautiful
he lets me in his house
he gives me some drinks and he begins to tell me
what indeed is beautiful

he chooses his colors
mostly green with whites embedded like pearls
on blue green seaweeds under a deep blue sea

he chooses the shapes that fit
mostly spherical and embossed
he likes static things like sculptures of the
busts of great men that he adores

light is not as bright as he wants it to be
more of dusks and twilights
for he does need not so much light to make his life visible
he likes the touch of silk and threads
he adores the gentleness of the wind
exquisitely plucked from a dawning breeze

and then after i have seen them all
he asks me to leave
it is a matter of simply having me in
for a showroom
a lecture on what is beautiful

how i wish to be back in that house again
green and white and shades of these two colors
but it is over
and the house has since been flown to the sky
and its doors and windows closed
and the door bell
had since been concealed with a thick wall
and the gate is locked with steel bars

well, for wherever he is
and whether his house was real or not
let me say, (and that i really forgot)
thank you sir

tomorrow, i will build a house of my own
but it will not be green and white
i will choose the pastel orange side of things like the sunset of my life
and some reds and pinks for the love of my life

RIC S. BASTASA
In His Mind

he knows now why he
goes beyond the decency
of love, those clean hands
touching, acceptable by
those who want to be
with all of the kind people here,
he looks back in time
when the moss was not in the
stones yet on the river
love was not there

there were no traces of its
steps
there was no trace of a cat
or bird
there were no words for no one

nothing speaks about affection
and acceptance
he once kissed love
and love shuts out saying it is over

there is no design
no architecture for a comfortable dwelling
he gets away from this dream
goes inside a room and goes out of the door
walks on the street that is dark and narrow

there are people without names
there half-naked and ready
to embrace whatever he brings

now he is at home
and there is no more regret
no comparison for what ought to
be that merely gives
him pain

beyond love of course
is the colorful and scented
lust that gives him temporary
relief from twisted faces
and bodies that desired and loved so well
in his mind
that he never once touched
ever because it cannot be embraced
by the arms of possibility
without him being burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
In His Place (For J. A)

When we arrive
in his place
though short he
becomes so tall
and then when
we enter the
room where smoking
is prohibited
he smokes like a
chimney

now he is the
ugliest law of
man that i have
ever seen

all of us did
nothing

and so everything
went smoothly
leaving no one
dead....

it was bad
and so we flew away
like birds
migrating to the
marshes
from that
snow

RIC S. BASTASA
In Honolulu

i refuse
the invitation to be
the guest speaker
of the alumni
homecoming and i
made it as an excuse
that i have
a conference in
Honolulu and i
think i have
seen eyelashes
rising from her
eyebrow making
stormy waves perhaps
thinking that i have
become arrogant and
unavailing or as they
term it
'cannot be reached
anymore'
but i never really
mind it, i know they
know that i am
lying but it does not
really matter
for i do not want
to do what i do not
want to do anymore
and i do not mind
what they say and
so i have really changed
a lot after a lot
of aging, mellowing
like a tired brown cat
napping by the window
but i look at myself
and travel years back
when i was so compromising
and too pleasing so that
i end up miserable
like an insecure stockbroker
in the finance house
where each is killing each
other mercilessly.

to be honest, and i am
now telling the truth,
an alumni homecoming is
a house in the past
a bridge and a boat
which i have long burned
and i do not know anymore
how to reconstruct them
and if you remind me
about a place to remember
honestly, i don't i cannot
and i won't for i live here
now.

in the solitude of my
present. Real, beating,
and strong.

and if you don't believe
me, well, try seeing me
in Honolulu.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Isolation.......  

the village chapel
celebrates morning mass
with only a few
who go in there for
the worship, as i,

like the rest of those
who exercise for a morning
walk, to get some fresh
air under the mahogany trees
in the plaza Rizal,
merely pass by after making
a sign of the cross.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Itself, A Long Time Ago, But Which We Did Not Notice

at the earliest hour of the morning
this first day of January, i hear a faint cry from the valley, outside this old house, seemingly like a cry from my imagination,
my mind listening to the sound of its making

i knew i heard it, it was like
a shrill voice of a little girl,
or was it a parrot, or the vine,
or from the distant wind,

sunlight lands in my skin from its distant flight
no longer a soft shade, or a leaning shadow, a little shallow
it is outside my flesh, this body

it does not come from this daily monologue
of a memory fading with the passage of time
the sun emerges from the hills and mountains
and walls and fences, and boundaries, and markings outside my body

that faint cry - it has a personal note of its own
like a blow of a horn, it comes from the sun's majesty

surrounded by the laces of its own
magnificent roundness, yet still far away from me
a trillion miles, a number of light years

it is like a fresh awareness, a new way of looking at things, of what was there a long time ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Life

Oh, in life you cannot
Isolate the notes of the music
Sad from the happy ones
Good and the bad
The nightmare and the dream
Like music they come and play
Together
And what you can do is listen
Till every note is played
Till everything is over

RIC S. BASTASA
In Love

love i must say has no limitations
its nature is pervading,
always in the mood for sharing
resources, physical and whatever

it does not stay
in one place, it travels to places
of the heart, expands, evaporates
and become the part of the clouds
the essence of an ever protecting sky

love, i must say, cannot be limited
to just one person,
it goes beyond unity and fidelity
it is always giving itself to another,

i am not hiding, i am love,
i am married, but it does not really matter,
it is man that makes marriages,
it is man that breaks this law
this law that limits the power of love
to love and love and love again and again

how can i conceal this love
that i have for you?
it burns itself, makes a smoke, goes out of the chimney
and shows itself to you

it gives you the smell of my soul
it pleads
to be loved in return
but even if you do not reciprocate it
it goes beyond refusal
it goes up again
and become part of heaven
the universe, the galaxies,
the infinite....
In Love She Has Been Disappointed

yes, in love
she has been disappointed
with fate always playing pranks on her
one man to another man
one house to another house
always moving to another arms
for whatever comfort is left
of her
she feels betrayed
and ought not to trust anymore
yes, love is a disappointment
that is her latest
definition of what
love is

but always she will
fall on the same fault
if love disappoints her
to lust she will always return
there ain't no love in there
but there is always
the cure
for her temporary cares
her ceaseless loneliness
clinging to lust
for her survival

RIC S. BASTASA
In Love The Use Of Words Become Unnecessary

the eyes speak
you are my full moon
i am your
stalking star

i get too near
you stay still

the black clouds
cover us
and our lights are gone

on those hours of
darkness
we are one
fading light

when the clouds are gone
blown as they are
by the winds that own them

we are again in our
places
you are my full moon
so still
i am the little star
that glitter

RIC S. BASTASA
In Love...
	here is no empty plate
nothing is stained
there is no empty chair
everyone sits
there is no tree without
leaves
no twig without a fruit
there is no paper without
words of praise
there is no labyrinth without
a trace
there is no chaos
understanding always reigns
there is no attempt to change
what cannot be.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Love

the one you love
need not love you
as you keep on loving
blindly

it need not be about
bodies but about the spirit
what you cannot put in a box
and label
and wrap and put a ribbon

you can always be kind and
understanding
you can always give and
not take
you will always be there
despite

the other need not know it
you are patient as God sees it

RIC S. BASTASA
In Loving Truth

you hold the truth
and show it to me as early as i was six,
you had it molded like a sculpture of
a well shaped egg,
a chicken egg, showing the fragility of a shell,
that when i fail to hold it with care
it breaks and cannot be
the same again, no matter what
or how,

the truth is a model
something that we have to imitate
but my palms have lines of each own
and i was born as a scorpion
with scissors in my hands

you want me to be your truth
and it will be painful and so i must go
somewhere where my kind of
truth will be respectable

there is no place yet for me
and so here i am with you
exploring all the possibilities of harmony

and so i must lie to live with you
and be with you for the meantime that my
castle is not yet a reality

must i tell you the truth? i can't
for this spells the death of harmony
even the view of your funeral
where i can be the pretentious grief
the laughter subsumed
on the face shedding
crocodile tears

i have more to tell you
but i am safe now in my silence
safe with you and the world and the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Manila

i told her
there are only two kinds of people
in manila: the swindler and the swindled

i warned her

last night she cried
she occupied the seat of the latter

i told her
there is nothing to worry

the swindled can still recover
after a fall

she learned the hard way
that night she could not sleep

i told her
it is normal for one to be swindled

of which i chided her
if she wants to take revenge

swindle another one
it makes thing even.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Marriage

to keep this thing
alive
some parts of me
have to be
clipped off
to make this
chain a chain
a bond a bond
of love to be love
cement and strong
some links
within me have
to be disengaged
disassembled
removed and
even thrown away

i am like
a tree pruned
here and there

you too
on the same
choices

what pains
to take what
sorrows to
make what
joys to discard

inorder to
be one again
and always

inorder to have
fruits and flowers

inorder
to be alive and
breathe in this
too narrow space
confined for
only just the two of us,
as they watch
in suspense as
though we are
the actors of
this new film
with no ending
still

we shall kiss
now, to please them
kiss me on my lips
hold me tight
let them not notice
our trembling hands

RIC S. BASTASA
In Marriage (3)

and then you become one 
like glued wood to iron

it will be shaky sometimes
she does what you do not want to be done by her
and you too takes revenge

precisely, you also do things to get even with her
you will know what is hell

but both of you get fed up sometime about these
disagreements

you try to agree on some rules
a meeting of the minds so to speak

you bring her flowers and chocolates
and she cooks the best lasagna for you

you come home early and she meets you
on a very soft bed and scented pillows

you make love
you whisper her again what you once felt

you tell her
and she will tell you too about the mysteries of love
that must be shared

you kiss her she hugs you
you are gentle and she is sweet

till then, you begin to find each other
anew, refreshed, and committed

in marriage.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Marriage, Love Speaks

in marriage, words are useless
with a mere wink, the other knows what the other wants.
with a mere touch, their world merge
like birds having their own song as language
love, love, and the gaze, this is all that speaks.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Marupay...

from here you can
see a number of villages
tonight
the wind howls
a gas lamp
inside the kitchen
of this
wooden house
nipa roof
continue
to give a little
bright
light

RIC S. BASTASA
In Memory

silence is such a memory
between us

sweetness of sweat
the lingering odor of love

armpits and abdominal
spasms in the beats

of half-breaths and
uncivilized groans

RIC S. BASTASA
In Memory Of Adriene Rich

A poet in the shape of a porcupine
a porcupine in the shape of a poet
the blogs are full of them...

RIC S. BASTASA
In Memory Of Raul Who Died From Breast Cancer...

the day before
Raul Figuez died he
dictated the final lines
of his last poem
to his wife

because he could not
write it himself
he whispered it to her
ears

the imagery of birds
finally landing their
feet

out there....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Memory Of The Play 'No Exit'

A woman is in love with the clouds
The clouds elope with the sunset
The man's heart is broken having
loved the woman for years
The sea is seduced by the sand
But the sand is attracted to the trees

what you do not see here is another
man in love with a broken heart
things are linked but all in chains
each link is a suffering link to another
suffering without end.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Mindanao

no one likes violence and everyone wish
an end
to everything violent
to stop the sound of guns
to let the children have the soundest sleep

dthis war
about land and religion, this must end
we just want to get over these
and over with

why must we quarrel over some patches of this land
when it does not even remember us?

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Pseudonymous Works

‘there is not a single word which is mine’
there is only this third person
this second person this first person
who shall speak for me in different
tongues and minds, there is no
knowledge of their meaning
except as a reader expressing
himself now, in relation to myself
not, it is now his private relationship
to himself opening to himself
revealing himself, and I will
not be responsible. He is now
giving himself, and devouring
himself when I am not looking.
I take the door, I take the exit
Now he comes, he then lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Country

The window of summer
Is now open

And like the eyes
Of newly born babies

They shut for a while
Like a strip tease

Like a dragonfly
Abandoned on the table

How warm summer is
With jubilant calls

It makes a flower turn back
To a fresh petal
a bud

We sit on the grass
And listen to the breeze

To the leaves of some grasses
Sprouting like they are
Very tiny dessert flowers

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Desire To Show That Now I Detest You.

the hands have always
been a giver to you
your mouth always opens
to all the opportunities
which you devour with
all meaningless chewing
like a routine of a traffic
on the streets of oblivion.

somehow i must learn from it.
and here you are, and here i am not.

your presence will be my absence too.
when you bear fruits, i shall let all my leaves fall

the weather i shall not pay respect,
when it is spring, i will be winter.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Hard Work

the goddess of poetry
by reason of my hard work
as a poet
writing poems and more poems
did not give me wings
as reward
neither did she give me
laurel leaves as
incentives or a vacation to
China or cash not even a trophy
or plaque of appreciation
to time allotted
to emotions devoted

she is cruel to me
she gave me a pair of black eye-bags
swollen eyeballs
back pains, tormented mind
stuttering mouth

and a very nice sleep
on the other hand

with a bonus
i am now more focused
on what i really want
i am self-reliant.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Heart You Will Forever Remain,

my heart i will give you
and what remains of me
is you
my self i will give to you
and what remains of me
it just the
thought of
you.
and i will say
thank you
i have become nothing
and my sorrow
all my sorrows
too become
nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My House

You enter a room to see a park
You close a door only to be led to another stairway

Leading you to another room with nothing but windows
You close a window the rest remains open

You close the windows and another door
In that park in the room where you just entered
Opens

Then you are confused about the roof that opens
To a river to the rocks where another door opens
To a wall with trees and birds and butterflies

This is weird you say, this is really weird
Then from the garage comes a wind that blows
Its horn like a car

I have just arrived offering you an explanation
For all these mess, these uncertainties, these self-made

confusions.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Island...

there is no regret having stayed
in this humble land of my
forefathers,
there are no chocolates,
no green money,
nothing of those jumbo hot-dogs
and burgers and hams and sandwiches
no coffee or tea
nothing of those cakes and wheat breads

plain potatoes and dried fish
and staple rice

no earthquakes, no volcanic eruptions,
no tsunamis

i am not stuck in here
we live here
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Little Country, Faraway From You

It is two o’clock in the morning
And you are not asleep yet
Disturbed you confessed
About something
This love
This love that has disappointed you
To my surprise
You are in a mood for a fight
You ask

Is it you
Is it really you hidden?
Buried beneath my words

You ask me to tell you honestly
We are friends
We do not intend to hurt
I tell you then it is not you
It is never you it will never be you
Now sleep
It is getting very late
You need to rest you are in pain
You need to dream all the sweetest dreams

In my country it is still an afternoon
We have coffee
The sun begins to set
There is no anger here there is no disappointment
About love or any other feeling
I am reminded though
Again I have to tell you
That which angers you has finally conquered you.

Dinner is served, faraway you must be asleep.
I do not dine alone. We still have jokes to tell.
Some more poems to write, this time, perhaps sadder.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Mind, The Stories Remain Unwritten

if i were to write the stories
about the lives of those who were already dead
remembering them when we carried
wrought iron in the hills
many years back and then when they were buried
on those shallow graves
and then i was the lucky one who escaped and then
kept on running and running without looking back
and then i change the color of my shirt and pants and
then i pretend that i have fully discovered the place for me
i tell you, if i make you read these stories, these will
all be about guilt, guilt, unnecessary guilt,
and i become so tired, i like to go back inside my room,
take my pillow, stare at the ceiling, and then
those bones come, each bone telling a story,
as i cover my ears, and promise that tomorrow
tomorrow, i will start to write and write truly about
what happened there, and then i may die in peace
even in my sleep tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Own Choice Of Peace...

on a murky water
a catfish shows its mouth

drinking a cup of air
handed by the hand of the wind

i see the joys of its eyes
it jumps

and dives back in the water
creating a crease of so many ripples....

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Own Chosen Solitude....

in my solitude i take the walk back to the woods

i go deeper under the trees and it is a world of wanton schemes

i discharge every crowd that resides in my head

i welcome dead leaves falling from the trees that seem to have hands

reaching the dark skies.

i am unloading and i do not stop until i am empty.

each step draws an idea which i fish from the water.

i see what disturbance is. I feel the chaos that wants to escape from

the barks of the trees, from the scales of each fish.

the solitude too struggles like a mouse caught in a trap.

it has learned the trick of calmness, of being steady, of

being still, in its own chosen silence.

the walk has finally taken me like a trap, and i cannot stop anymore.

there, ideas are born. flowers grow. animals talk,

there, dusts have grown the white wings of the doves,

there, man escapes from a hole, stands tall, and finally walks away.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Own Emptiness

night is a home of dreams
restive bed, warm blankets
soft pillows,

your head rests in my arms
you are asleep

my night is a home of your
dreams

i am your solace in this
darkness

now i too, am complete
i am an emptiness gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Own Little World

i sleep.
i need sleep.
the more i need sleep
demand to sleep

lousy thoughts
insomniac maniac

sleep goddess
cruel

she has removed
the covering of my eye

even in sleep
i am awake.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Own Town

the faces of people
are still faces,
nothing there are
transformed
into animals,

that boy may look
like an urchin to
you
with spikes throughout
his hair or

that old woman
a camel with an abnormal
hunch
back

the gasoline boy
becomes
an alligator
its tongue preying
on the
cars and impatient
queues
of turtles

i still have respect
to this town
the men are men
and women
are mothers and sisters
of mine

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Room

WHAT THE heart cannot understand
has now arrived
and so
the fear is born
the apprehensions boil like water
the mind is restless
what to shape

===============================================

miabot na ang
wala masabti sa kasingkasing
og busa
natawo ang dakong kakulba
ang gabukal nga kabalaka
nga kon unsa
nagkabuang ang hunahuna
kon unsaon
paghulma

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Room The Window Is Open

in my room the window is open
as i sleep tonight

you shall be the moon
as i wait for your shining light

in my room the window is open
come tonight

wrap me with the warmth of the
fullness of your moonlight

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Silence I Am Breaking

i am an empty vessel
why not fill me up a little
with your cool water

it will really matter
i am an empty vessel
for a long time now
wanting to be contained
in your fullness
you may please
fill me up to my brim
if it is possible with you
fill me with your cool waters
let me overflow
with your love
and understanding

in my emptiness
i am howling
in my silence
i am breaking

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Solitude

read my footsteps
as i leave them all
to you

on the sands of
my desert
try reading again
how i feel

if at all to you
i don't matter
let the sea
erase everything

RIC S. BASTASA
In My Untangling Soul.

a promise makes another promise
to begin anew for another day, as always,

another day, it will be another day,
it will just be another day, there

will be no change for the better,
this self is destroying the same self,

on the other hand, promises are the buds
of springtime, and winter lags behind, and

autumn comes like another waiting time,
comes spring, i make promises again,

i am new now, but you shall never see it
in my shriveled hair, in my untangling soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
In My World

in my world
there are no goodbyes
only hellos

when fed up
i just leave silently

like a fog
at carl sandburg's harbor
of that lonely city

RIC S. BASTASA
In My World Of Work

With so much paper works piling
On my desk

In my world where I call
a ♠ spade
♫ ♪ ♫ ♫ ♪ ♫ ♫ ♪
♫ ♫ ♪ ♫
in order to survive

RIC S. BASTASA
i did not correct
the wrong notions.

he will not believe
what is sculpted.

it shall remain in
the stone
of his faith.

when we see
each other,
just this morning,

i give him a stare.
and he stares in
return.

everything is definite
the house is inside
the fence.

Ducks keep
quacking.

i have my own
dead chickens too.

He keeps my goats
but i do not mind.

i do not wish
to take control of
his clouds.

i have my own sea
to keep
and my oceans
are deep
as usual.

he destroys a world
so many worlds
hoping to destroy mine.

divide time i keep
things out.
birds fly away.
as i always do.

i give them
every freedom they
want on the
power of their
wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
In One Of My Poems

in one of my poems that i wrote last night
i started well you say, something great at the start
and the way i ended it, you say, was bad,
nothing but a cliche

about the shallow minds of people around me
(and of course, if i may be allowed to tell you,
must have offended you,
precisely, you were around me during that night
when i made a very bad ending
on that poem which started just right
on the first two stanzas),

but no offense was meant, the poem was written
with malice towards none,

it just had to end that way,
there was no more
electricity

RIC S. BASTASA
In One Of Our Travels

in one of our travels
we stopped on our weary feet
in a town where the birds
are not singing. The landlord
offered a day of revelry.
Some tables and chairs were
transferred in the open garden
of chinese roses. And some
corks were let open. Some chickens'
necks were cut and blood
flowed on the sink. That noon
we heard the crickets.
The bamboo leaves swayed
in one direction.
From a distance we saw
how the carabaos were butchered
but we cannot hear the sounds
of their dying.
And then the host raised
his glass and said
' Buenas, buen salud! '

We as usual say what we are
wont to say, 'Gracias, gracias! '

deep in my heart when we left
the place, i said, ' There is no meaning
in the lives of men anymore'.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Black And White World...

in our black and white world
play me a song of the rainbow
strum me your guitar
and let me live on multicolored notes
i too shall sing the colors of my own world
and you may listen both of us shall paint
this black and white world with the shades of our hopes
pastel blue light green bright red shining gold.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Hearts

the law of God is not written
it is embedded in my heart
carved like a sculpture of stone
in vivid images and specific details
all summed up in
love
the law of God cannot be read
except through the light
that pierces my mind and
keeps burning in the sacred
place of my heart
God then comes and takes
his shelter in my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Loneliness

as we trek upon another high mountain
when darkness sets in
when food is scarce
when paths erase themselves
with the rain
when the rivers do not have voices anymore
for a song
when we warm ourselves around a fire
deep in the forest

you finally find time to imagine a guitar
that you once had in the city
a precious property that in here
you are not even allowed to carry
because strumming any of its strings
can become too dangerous

to please ourselves we too imagine you playing it
we too imagine ourselves singing with you
that song of freedom, of love, of a humanity
that selects only those whom they think
is fit to survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Nakedness...

when you begin to write something
ture and real
you cannot escape that little fear
that somehow
you have opened yourself unnecessarily
to an indifferent world
an unbelieving pack of wolves
ready to eat you when you are caught
unaware to the horrors of reality

it is as if the world has no time
to listen to your woes, your having
loved and hated, eaten and vomited

your guitar has gathered dusted
not a hand had strummed it for years

it is as if you have no other means to live
but to strip on this stage in front of a
lusting audience
as piece by piece you detach each part of
you baring the last inch
and there you are naked and helpless to all
their stares

somehow you do not mind at all at the end
of this stripping show
you assure yourself that you have so much
beauty to share and if there is that
ugliness, and on such equality you argue,
they all have it anyway

and as you go back to your seclusion you
keep chanting: we are all the same, we are
all the same, we are all the same and
you belong to them and they belong to you
to the exactness that the Creator has
designed it to be.
In Our Own Land....

perhaps we did not really suffer much
as her
how she survived the wars
of her lifetime
her prison years, her encounters with deaths
that life which cut off with her
when she badly needed a lift

she deserves her choice of words
the halo in her head

the earth has been too unfair with her
we have the comfort of our paradise
we drink water from the well
had hot baths during the colder seasons
food is served on the table
our cows have so much milk for our drinking
our pastures satisfied with rain
our trees teeming with fruits
seas with fish, rivers with clarity
and beauty

we deserve our shallowness
our words have lesser gloss, and the sun laughs
at our own chosen mediocrity

we cannot be great as she was
but in some sense, in fairness sake, we are greater still
in the comfort of our own sands
the integrity of our soil
the domestication of our hearts
the stability of our familiarity.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Own Limitations To Write

in our own limitations
we dream what to write and we try hard to write
them all this morning in the most direct and candid manner
understandable
to get the message through each reader also looking for the cure
of their emptiness

dthis madness that never stops until the words have no meaning anymore
until there is no more purpose in every syllable

do not wait, just keep on going, there is this train that runs to nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Own Little Ways

we plant the trees
around our house
we keep our garbage
as organic fertilizers
we keep our water safe
we dig canals
and keep the grass
green and lush
we do not smoke
we do not burn
we keep the air clean
we maintain biodegradable
composts
we do not use pesticides
the river nearby not poisoned
with chemicals
in our own little ways
we keep this world
safe and clean
for the incoming generation
we plant the seeds
so you may reap the fruits.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Place Sometime In 1972

as the shoes were new
the young boy did not wear it
when it rained he decided to keep inside his bag
and walked his way home barefooted

first new shoes and mother bought them from meager earnings.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Our Silence....

for nude images
we may put some words
for further flesh

for the nudes before us
the beauty of the curves and bold colors
shades of dim and pale and twilight
whispers of the unrequited longings of dawn
gasps of the possibility of fulfillment
no words are ever enough

let the hands do it for the body
let the body free
do not restrain the use of words
lick whatever silence offers.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Paying Homage To The Loss

i pay homage to a loss
what i give is mourning
i wear black
it is a dark night that i wear
no sooner that i realize
tonight
i become the moon
i shine
i go with the immensity of my light
covering the trees
and the plains
this homage will not last
it is just a respect
for a loss

no loss stays in my house longer
it dislikes my candid disposition
for i tell it myself
i, too welcome gain in my dwelling
success that comes visiting
assuring me
that i, too, deserve one.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Peace....

when all of you
finally take leave

leaving all the flowers
there to
wilt

and for a time
the grass to have
all their time
covering

what memories
to keep
what joys to
seep

RIC S. BASTASA
In Peace......

for years
the good has not triumphed

your meekness was met
with their violence

the good have done
nothing but
rationalize trying to
justify your vileness

now is the time for
change
the good has failed
the hard fist is here
the good hands shall have
their own guns

kill the bad
kill the bad
clean the land
strengthen the
band

violence for violence
let the war begin
kill the man
kill the man

when everyone is dead
when the night is peaceful again
let us meet
and bury them

at the porch we sit
see the stars again
in harmony
in peace.
In Perfect Meditation In Time Of Lent

in a world without chairs
or bed, just floors and walls
and a little leaking light from
the roof, gift from the sky
like a lone star at night
i
unburden thoughts
like slowly my hands are throwing
away the pebbles to the ocean

on a journey to a quite place
where i do not have to
think anymore....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Poetry

The soul weeps
stripped of its wings
it falls upon an
abyss

it is dark there
and it is struggling
to get out
from its prison

the soul howls
like a dog in the
night
as though
it lost its
master

thus it is in
poetry

the soul calls for
God
who is not
there anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
you talk about doors
where there are no windows

you imagine things exist
when all they do is pass by

you try to hold unto permanence
when there is none actually

it is not at all emotions
mind you, there is more to all of these

not just words, flesh, perhaps i am just
entertaining the illusions of the flesh

or light, or even the grass that live
on my head, as though i have

hair, in this game, there is no fixed
directions, simply because

in the first place, you do not really know
where to go, or what to do

with your life, it is just sitting down, talking
to the conscience, playing with its

thoughts, and questioning its rules,
there could be war, between you and

another you, and they say, here comes
another schizophrenic trying to spell

out the difference between a spill and
a pill, but there are images on the ceiling

lizards laughing, and a light bulb that
gets steady with its own
dim light, you imagine chairs as people
and the walls as curtains, and you

as the clown, or the magician trying to
do a trick, to please time, to stop hurting

other people, to love this self, that
lays like a carpet on the floor, there is

warmth, there is a flow of sentences, and
cut flowers, and a glass of cold water,

chunks of iced feelings, and sweet
sour fishy tales, and here comes another

fool trying to figure out, what are these lines,
maps, or pathways, or eddies of air,

or jars without wine, mugs without coffee,
words without meanings, just that.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Praise Of Fiona

how orderly are your lines
how beautifully they appear
like morning sunrise that
never fails to arrive on the
window sills of my loneliness

and then the doors open
and then the floors sway
to the rhythm of your songs
but she was no longer there

RIC S. BASTASA
In Praise Of Thee

i've seen a bird
against the storm

a rock against the
rage of the river

i've seen a rebel
against the mob

a salmon against the
falls and tide

i've seen myself in
all of them

attuned, sharpened
agile and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Prayer

in prayer you kneel you make your pleas
you signify
your lowliness in supplication
you behave
like a slave

you mumble you juggle your words
choppy sometimes as you are in deep sorrow
in hunger in thirst
in dire need of comfort
asking wanting that your prayers
be granted

you genuflect to a certain extent
you are crying
you are silent
yet you are so confused and crowded
you need your prayers to be answered
at once
the soonest

you are dying
or someone you love is dying out there
you want to live
you want the other you love to live some years
you want to be together

hence your prayers
some tears fall on the floors now wet and salty
a flood of tears
a rush of a thousand words in supplication
you fall on the floor
face down the earth hands stretching body flat and so tired

i watch you and i pity you and if i were God myself i could have
heard and granted all our prayers

the prayer room is so silent
it is cold tonight and i am too, so confused hearing nothing
outside a storm is raging
the rain so strong like the wind is coming

i close the door and the windows so there may still be silence
so our prayers may be heard

who knows? maybe, maybe, who knows? we must still continue....

RIC S. BASTASA
In Praise Of Idleness...

i sit on the stair
to see the world
to follow the flight of a bird
and appreciate the beauty of its song
in my imagination

i listen to the rain
observe its heavy downpour

i am passive
i do not run away
to chase a bird

i do not go out the house
and bathe under the rain

i do not destroy the
placement of the grasses on the lawn

i do not cut the stalk of the daisy
and bring it home

i hear the frogs croaking
excited to their games
jumping and swimming
on that greenish pool

i stay on the porch
lean upon a wall
i listen to the wind
i let the hours pass
i do nothing...

RIC S. BASTASA
In Reply To Jean's Theory Of Asexuality

Once you ask me
Why I live among
The distant hills
I just smile
I do not make replies
I do not really care
I stare in your eyes
Like you are a river
And I have no fear
And my thoughts
Flow like leaves
Falling from tall, old,
Trees
Blown into the unknown
I realize and
You too must
I have a world of my own
Apart from yours
And the rest
Of Everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Resisting

in resisting you
your breaths so near my nostrils
your hands
warming my hands
your hair blown by this
scented air
from your eyes
silently too
gazing
sizing what i may give you

i gently
lift your hands
away from my hands
shy away from your hair
trying to entwine
some locks of my hair
i waft the scented
air away from
my nostrils
i gaze away
from your gaze

i walk a step farther
away from you
i become a boat
my mind like paddles
sailing away from you

against the current
i begin to feel
that i am a rock
in the middle
of this raging river

RIC S. BASTASA
In Response To A Poet Who Wants To Tell About His Life...

write me
a poem about

the wind

it is enough

you do not have
to tell me

about life.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Said Dream

i only have your
body and you had mine
but i never see any
sign
any inkling that you
want to retain
what i give you
there is this secret feeling
inside
that detests what is
happening
there is this wanting to an
ending
that never ends somehow
inside that dream
what sleeps wakes up
again
and my hands meet
the same lovely stranger
the same
lusts all over my face and
tongue
a feast of what
(poisonous) and yet so sweet
a delicacy that
your feet are giving away
i take them
without having felt any fullness
and i wake up
again
full of regrets that what you can give
like what i can give
is only
this body and so the whole night
after i wake up
the soul grieves
upon a shattered wish
upon a thirst
that can never be quenched.
In Search For A Better Life

you bury your face on a
sand of work
you cannot breathe
you have not time for breathing even
you take almost everything
in one instant
and proclaim that this is the last
to boot

until you find out that there is no more place
for hard work
those who do not work so hard have already
been given
what is due for you

they have learned the art of praise
and worship
and they make the difference

RIC S. BASTASA
In Search Of Meanings

they search meanings:

a bike on top of a mountain
mists below
fog and smoke
and trees thick with leaves
some hands
reaching for the clouds
while you watch
from the top with a friend
telling you
that you have been a fool
on borrowed
sneakers stolen by
a kindergarten
mountain kid whose
grandma is sick
and dying and
looking for eternal
herbs

the climb has been
hard
all efforts spent
like wasted
time of an old man
childless
till the end

now it is time to go down
slipping like
water of the drain
down down
and you feel like
shrinking

looking for meanings
seeking for something that heals
like art
and yes, poetry, this daily breakfast
on words
fat and sickening

RIC S. BASTASA
In Search Of Metaphors And Images To Express Yourself In A Poem

it is the expression that matters most.

it is the relational flow from the writer to the reader the bond that is created anew, just like an ordinary conversation one fine day.

why can't poetry be simple and direct? that is the question that poetry asks to itself, in itself.

the poet in us can be lost because of so much demands for the absurd, this metaphor fits, this imagery is perfect, what is it?

you do not accept the sun and the moon and the stars. cliches of their poetry. You do not show compassion for his feelings of being abandoned simply because there are no images that tickle your senses.

even if he jumps with joy, you do not relate to his joys simply because the images are bland like burger without the black pepper.

it is enough that one bleeds, one wants a listener, one wants to open up to the world Like a bud turning into a flower

(oh forgive this lousy metaphor i am not a good poet somehow at imaging at imagining. Am not a camera. My eyes are clumsy at details. And my ears are not sensitive to sound of beautiful words. They even hide behind my head under my hair. And there is no compulsion for high highfalutin Ivory towers of similes from the gods and goddesses of
Literature)

Why can't poetry be just an expression? Just that. A dialogue.
This one, this monologue.

It is enough that you write from the heart.
It is enough that you are true

(oh forgive me, can i be really
true to you? Do i have to be naked and tell you that i am beautiful?
Do i have to master the art of metaphorisms
to be your poet
for the night?)

Or is it that poetry is simply our hiding place
From this world of pain?

Or our chapel for our prayers
Or our playground where we can be children again?

I am tired of squeezing my brain in the quest of the perfect metaphor.
I have read what they have written.
I pretend i like them. They sound so well.
They must be poetry. Real poetry
Those that garner plaques.
Prizes from the jury.

Honestly, I do not understand a thing. Those poems of my idols.
But I read them just the same.
Hoping that I am in and be counted as one of the stars in those
Metaphoric Heavens.I watch every meteor that drops
to the ground. Their tails.

I am not a star. I am just a pebble.
And it is enough for me.

The poem says, just write me.

Don't squeeze your brain to have metaphors
To draw the images.

Just be yourself, and for God's sake if you have something to say
Just say it.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Search Of The Sensual Pleasures Of Art

my mind overflows, this search for
the sensuality of art,

the curves, luscious mouths, soft arms,
white legs, hair flowing

as though the rains from the
emerald forest do not stop

a shower of the blessings
of the flesh

shapes and forms of love
speaking and caressing
in whispers,

my poetry desires all of them
... that night when i was so young
and spirited and so secretive
about the what the dark
night gives me
in full
gear

and no one is talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Silence We Do Jibe

you have been mistaken
i told her

there is a mistake
she told me

we looked at each other
carefully

every contour and
gesture if topography

the words stopped
flowing because

we seem all right now
in silence we do jibe

RIC S. BASTASA
In Simplest Terms This I Can Say

i have enough glasses of
darkness
i am drunk
of its fears
i am fed-up of its promises
of comfort
and pleasure

i dare myself
to move to the other fence
this day
this broad, bold, contours
of daylights

glare, dare,
i open my eyes to the light
i am hurt
i close my eyes to a surrender
to a temporary
blindness of red skies
and then

i think of you
the princess of the sun

i am the prince of darkness
and i am betraying
everyone that loves me there.....

RIC S. BASTASA
In So Little Time I Have For This Art

i always rush
thoughts are rushed
and must be written
at once
not caring what it
is what hurts what
gives joy
what bliss is
what grief
what sorrow is there
the rush
this adrenalin poetry
makes my day
so light
now i can manage
pushing again
the rock
of Sisyphus
when it rolls back
i am ready
to put it back
on top
and when it rolls
back again
i am willing to
lift it up again
you know it
you have it
we have it
we, yes, oui!

RIC S. BASTASA
In Sofia....

i wore this
black jacket
and underneath
is the blue
shirt with a hard
collar

and i pose at the
front of the church
and you may say
what is the big fuss?

well, it was taken
in Sofia, Bulgaria
and if you care enough

winter is coming
and the Syrian migrants
are still living
inside their small tents..in sofi

RIC S. BASTASA
In Sowing The Seeds Of Silence

in sowing the seeds of silence
what do you think shall i reap?

not death, not really that scary
i do not think that way

a tree meditates
leaves still and flowers of wisdom bloom

roots grow and penetrate
gathering the humus of contentment

accumulating what we all look for
happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Support Of Nature....

a monkey's wish
has always been

a forest, and given the
choices

it shall choose a banana
from a

basket of dollar bills

a monkey's dream is
a simple vine where it can
place its hands and
swing from one tree
to another

you claim to be a man,
and man

why have you become so
foolish?

you exchange a forest
for money

an expensive lifestyle
you have embraced

in exchange for the trees
and the rivers
and the mountains

RIC S. BASTASA
In Taking Death Lightly As Possible...

it can simply be reduced
taking out from your tired feet
your old shoes
and socks

and then walking barefoot
towards your bed for you to take that sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
In That Common Room Where You Are No Longer Alone

your eyes are open
as you are fully alive when you go
back to that old house
by the river
named after
sin,
you open the door
your hands are too willing
and you enter
a dusty room
where you shall be alone
for a while
you smell sin there
and you
get to know it better
beyond its name and
place of origin
you identify with it
and there is no fear now
you talk for a while
and then
it urges you to go naked
and close your eyes
to enter upon
a world where everyone is
welcome
you drink and dance and
become tipsy
lights begin to play
and shouts of joy are heard
in this totally
transformed world
you are not alone now
in this indulgence
you have become counted
without
any hesitation
your mind explodes into
four seasons
compressed in time
and the guarantee of
total satisfaction is handed to you
like a key to
your permanent room
since then

you are so alive
and death has become
too irrelevant

RIC S. BASTASA
In That Foreign Land

amidst the crowd
there are only two of you
speaking
your own language and
you walk with them
and your feet are tired
and there is no
talking, as though
both of you are stranded
in an island
where monkeys and birds
only exist

and then you dream of home
and you even promise
that your enemies are
much better than them
because at least
you can do a lot of
talking and shouting
and quarreling and that
in such actions, at least,
you have a world of sounds
that you can
take with you and understand
and preoccupy with
when the night comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
In That Place...

arriving there
we begin to change
we shed off
all shreds
all colors of expectations

we have learned
that we do not really need
the rainbow
neither its tail end
nor its bridge

we are met with the
substance
of having to hold on to
a horizon
without sun

the weight of
nothing
that gives no odor
that bears
no weight even
that of a feather

when we ask
how come that despite everything
the growing and blooming
there is still
the quintessence of an
existence

we are only embraced by those
incomplete arms
hands without fingers
face without eyes

yet somehow we are amazed
it is the face that sees everything
it is the arms that is warmer
without those fingers

with all the feelings of wants
we have become less of what we are
when we have shed
everything like all the leaves of those trees
we have met the essence of space
the comfort of the wind
the soothing silence

RIC S. BASTASA
In That Sea Of Sin

how nice of them
these great leaders
committing adultery

adored by many

walks through life
as though they can live
happily ever after

may the sea urchins
pierce their feet
as they swim in that
sea of sin...

may the sharks devour
them
may the earth crack and
swallow all of them

(from the envious
religious)

RIC S. BASTASA
In That Silent City In Those Silent Beds

the world of lies
is a paradise

here you can invent
wings
put them all around
your body
and fly

away on a journey
whatever and wherever you like to
be

here is your paradise
you butcher truths and prepare
from them
your menu for tonight's banquets

at night
when the stars have arrived
and settle themselves
on the seats of
dark skies
the singing and dancing
begin

here in this paradise of lies
the wine flow like
a flooding river

food is a mountain and desserts
are in every corner

tears are taboos
paranoia is prohibited
schizophrenia is set aside
psychosis a
no no
there are masks for
free
faces of fame
can be borrowed
and even
exchanged
every moment when
you get bored
of your own

this will only be for
the night
tomorrow when the sun
comes again
we shall sleep again
on the silent beds
of that silent
city

we shall deny
what death tells us all

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Act Of So Much Love....

i can't remember
having uttered a word

the eyes spoke more
than ever
my hands did all the
work
with the utmost help
of my lips
my tongue too

i agree
when love comes words
become pointless

when love reigns
the house does not exist
the universe is kept
in bed and pillows
less the blankets
which found themselves
useless on the
floor

my mouth was muted
by yours....

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Apple World

There are only two people
left in this
Apple World

One is in stupor
the other is always
in the mood to
wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Arms Of God

at night i am around the arms of God not feeling the numbness of heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Bamboo Groves

i fly for i have wings
and i go inside the closely knitted
bamboo groves
where the leaves dance
with the wind
where my bleeding heart
begins to heal
and sing...

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Battlefield Of Happiness...

look at the way he looks
at you
enter to the door of his eyes
be his lady

look at the way he pours
coffee to your cup
the way he pours to his
the way his hand holds
the handle of the cup
how it caresses the mouth
and takes it to his lips
as he looks at you

the vapors of love goes
to the sky
it is a sincere prelude
an offering to the gods of
love
praying to take you back

do not melt like snow
be brave to the battlefield
as happiness is
keep fighting for it
die for it
if the day comes if it is
by all means
necessary.....

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Beach Under The Sun All Wrapped Up.

waste of time
unrewarding

but here we are
you and i
and all of us

in the beach under
the sun
all wrapped up.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Bosom Of Mother

as i am writing this
i am listening to a song once
sung by my mother

carefully she puts me
back in her bosom
as i go back to being a child again
as i sleep
so softly
peacefully in her loving arms

with mother life is heavenly
in the cradle of arms

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Chain Of Affections

in the food chain
it was the big fish that
ate the small fish

the bird ate the seeds
and the fruit

another man eats the
forbidden fruit

in the chain of affections
it was the woman who made
the man eat
it was the woman who finally
ate her man
towards death

not all women though,
perhaps some...

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Church

the mother sits beside
the daughter as the sermon
of the priests goes on
for an hour or more

the father at the other end
beside a woman with a white face
closes his eyes
dreaming for the moon cohabiting
with the brighter stars

RIC S. BASTASA
In The City....

in the city
the black mushrooms of umbrellas
bloom

the rains fall heavily

the sewage canals begin to sing

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Comfort Of Its Mother...

leave innocence
upon itself free,
from your touch,
like a flower still
attached to its
stalk, this bright
day, sunny warm,
vibrant to the
colors of our lives,

look into the freshness
of this creature,
wide eyes, pale skin,
young, unadulterated
by our mundane
experience, dare not

take what is innate,
coy and still shy,
with no words yet,
to conceal what is pure,
you are not a stranger
to the joy of this lamb,
newly born, in the
comfort of its mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
so you live in the comforts
of logic
you see what you get
you only know what you can measure
believe only in what you can see
and touch
and conceive in your mind
on the specifications of width
length and breadth

it is indeed comfortable
everything is fixed and certain
there is always a sum
an amount
and one can always predict
with accuracy what happens next

but my friend
not every object
every man
every shaking experience
every mysterious circumstance
around you is embraced by logic
sometimes
we must admit that when we love
we love without measure
sometimes when we fear
and surrender
we miss something
and we cannot explain
some things are at the tips of
out tongues
some events merely slip from
our fingers like
sand & water
and air

there are 'x' factors out there
and when we fall and bleed
and hurt and die
the numbers do not work
for us anymore
they have become some kind
of miracles outlived
their magic gone

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Company Of Loneliness

i do not deny that when i am alone fear lurks in the corner of my mind it has been there from the very beginning it has not touched me even once i see it and i fear it it has not maimed me i am speaking in the dark verily we have become friends in this solitude like a moon that lights the way of the drunkard
it keeps
on listening
to the sound
of falling

it does not
help somehow
but
definitely
it has
been
strengthening
enough

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Corridors Of My Senses

On the corridor of my senses
I have lost the shape of
My shadows
Serrated leaves have fallen
On a bed of broken limbs
Muted the sound of my bones
Appearing in another dimension
This morning
I have seen the wilting of
Red roses
Tears drying from the blue
Lovers ´ eyes
I hear the song
Of a boatman
Rowing and falling
To the edge of the sunless sea

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Cradle Of The Dark.

Meet me
tonight i will make a surprise

the poem that you have read which i carelessly wrote
does not smell like the incense of a monk

i guess you are carried away by its flamboyance
the man has a pipe and releasing a big tobacco smoke in the window

meet me tonight
it will be a big surprise

what you read does not look like myself
it is something and i am someone else

hopefully i will be a surprise
and God forgive
i just hope that you will like it

i could be light wrapped in the cradle of the
dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Dark, In The Nook....... 

there is no style to speak of  
no pattern to follow  
now, or ever, no model,  
i have no idol, and i am no  
ido, i live faraway,  
and nearness is strange, and  
cold,  
there is a voice, you must have  
heard it before,  
it is more strange than nearness  
lonelier than faraway,  
i want to speak, i am drawing mouths,  
i like to fetch the sound of water  
from the well of literature,  
when i speak, and the more i speak,  
what happens is that  
i become less of who we are,  
the voice that comes out is the voice  
of the old and the many  
and so i sit on the floor and hide by the wall  
as i choose silence, my eyes begin  
to speak.  

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Darkness Of Our Room

if you read my lines now,
as you have made it a habit
(perhaps, out of curiosity
for what has become of my
present, and the uncertainty
of my coming days) ..... 
please, do not take things
seriously,
the lines are ordinary words
more like the structure of my
own fingers,
uneven, scattered, and bound
by the flesh and bones of my
hand,

take these lightly, so light
that we can feel the bird in
you and then you realize that
you have feathers, wings, and
then you have befriended the
winds,

now, perhaps, by taking me lightly
and all the things inside you,

i guess, as i have done it myself,
you can now fly

(not literally of course,
but in the sense of metaphorical
flights,)

a mind so light, as light as
dust,

visible in that light that
pushes itself
in the darkness of our
room
RIC S. BASTASA
In The Darkness Of Our Souls

In the darkness of our Souls
We simply disappear Like
Vaporized Mist

We listen to
Our flesh torn apart
We let our nerves Break

We simply do not care
Where the breeze is going
We surrender
 Totally defeated

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Deep Blue Grass

in the deep blue grass
you bury your face
and then think about
things that bother you

ants and worms
not death.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Desert

in the desert
one night
under a full orange moon
among the sands
and vipers
a tiny flower
still blooms
so beautifully
violet.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Desert Of Your Lamentations

in the dream
we touch and i am
free
like rain falling
on everything

it is different
when i wake up
and you are gone

these guilt like
thorns pierce
my hands and i
bleed
as you watch
in the quiet
of spring

and i have become
its main rose
when winter comes

the tree is real

stable upon earth
confident of its
leaves and trunk
rooted

and steady and
mindless
of the seasons
and the
travelers who
stop for a while
talk a little and
then move on
with their lives
leaving you
alone again
in the desert of your
lamentations

RIC S. BASTASA
In The East Side Of The Garden

in the east side of the
garden blue is the
butterfly that floats in the
air only for a day
and surrenders to the
last light of day

lament is lesser
within the community of
butterflies focusing

you are not alone
says the group of
worms
offering the
leaves of summer

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Embrace Of Another Man

..................................she left
Where the pastures are greener
........beyond my boundary lines

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Emptiness Of The Church ...

it is when i finally decide to go
to church this afternoon
after a long time of hibernation
in the world of words
in the most silent privacy
only to find out that the church
too is empty but the priest just the
same has to say mass

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Evening

10:30 in the evening
October 29,
she went out the room
down to the ground floor
to the kitchen to have her
choco,

she could not sleep
something bothered her

between the kitchen and the
garage was a glass window
and in the left corner was
a string hammock,
it was cold

but there was no restlessness outside as
the leaves of the nearby tree
were still as a post

the hammock rocked itself
the hammock rocked itself so hard like a storm to her head

and then she remembered her father.

when her father died ten years ago,
her tear glands dried

the cause of his death was suspicious..

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Evening Of My Life

In the evening of my life
I will not tire seeing the twinkling stars
I will remember some past lovers & friends

I will watch the beautiful moon sailing by
I will ponder upon its gold glowing in the sky
I will recollect some memories and
Treasure them again closer to my heart
I will not just watch people passing by
I will be a humming bird who will fly

In the evening I will sit with you
By this window
I will hold your hand and feel it warm
I will not just be in the sidewalk waiting
I will still be your man still loving

In the evening of my life
I will take the blanket gently on my hip
And then take my soundest sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Farm

i want to spell
freedom for her
we are two here
in this farm
where coconuts
are old and tall
where the grass
spreads like crazy
where the spring
of water does not
cease pouring from
the slit of the earth

this morning
i go to the nearby
river naked
and sensing that
she has only the
pillow in bed
she follows me

and there she
undresses herself
naked like me and
she spells freedom
perfectly: cool
and smooth to our
skin, too warm in
our hearts, peaceful
and private world.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Fingers Of My Imagination

Alone in my room
Her face blooms
I see her body
Growing
I feel it smooth
In the fingers
Of my
Imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Forest Facing The Lake....

we are singing new songs
you have your own
it is late at night
in a forest, facing the lake
inside this log cabin
we blend
together
we dance around this huge fire
sending thick smoke
to the sky

God sees it
We are His children
so alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the garden of roses and daffodils
spreading grass on the ground
some rocks and stones
and highlights of cypress trees

and above the blue clouds floating in space
the sun keeping its golden rays
and the wind going to and fro
like an invisible pendulum

i am with you
and we are here
let me tell you
we do not have to understand all these things
their chemistry and purpose

we are not called upon to dissect colors and segregate scents
that is far from what i really want
let me hold your hands and i will let them land on my shoulders
then to my heart
i will make you feel you the beatings of my soul
look into my eyes and be calm

we simply watch and admire all these beautiful things around us
there is no reason for fear
we have all the reasons for loving

let me guide you to the world of wonder
all seeing and feeling and oh! aren't all these amazing?

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Garden A Bright Day

i shall miss the time when i go out of the house
and close the door behind me
when i shall tread upon the grass in the garden
stretch my arms
run and fly my own kite
as i hold strongly upon said
string
when i decide to let the kite go
and find it no more from my sight
when i stop under the shade of the trees
and look far
into the hills below where houses
look like
tiny cubes
when the sea is so blue extending into nowhere
when i lose myself
when i close my eyes
when i dream that i can be happy with myself
alone
without the mob
that tends to confuse my thoughts
and replace them
with their own.

it is a bright day and the garden blooms
there is no cause for worry
no sadness

i'll make it perfect somehow
today.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Garden Of Olives

the garden of olives is silent.
it has been silent for years.

no one wants to tell its story.
about a garden of olives and

how blood reaches there
there it is, unreached by humanity,

untouched by the fingers of civilization
certified virgin garden of olives.

three shadows on twilight.
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Gentleness Of My Night

slowly
it is slowly
like a lullaby
like a feather
like a white
butterfly
the heart finally
sleeps.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Glasshouse Where You Live...

you were up there
like my Rapunzel
with that long golden
hair lonely on the
tower

meanwhile i do not
bother doing a jack in
Jill
where there are no hills
and pail

well well well
it is still in the mind
still

this is it
another imagining

in the glass house
where you live
i cannot imagine
stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
'In The History Of Language The First Obscenity Was Silence'.

i guess
you are the most obscene
person
to her who confessed her love
to you
and you merely smiled
in mysterious
silence,

the smile makes
her grief a little bit
bearable

your obscenity
is hardheaded.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Home Of My Silence

i am enjoying the home of
my silence

i welcome no one in the privacy
of my peace

there is happiness in this
solitude

where the crowd has no
place

RIC S. BASTASA
In The House Of Poetry

there is a house where
i am not wanted

but i keep telling myself
i belong here

the lady of the house
snobs me

the others keep their
abhorrrence in silence

but i have the stars in my
hand
and so their nights are
dark

i have the moon in my mind
the sun in my heart

my heart is burning
my head is gentle and cool

the house is lonely
and so i must come and live there

i have the right
the lines of my palm
are the maps
of my claim to keep on
living

the house is telling me
about rules

i am silent
the Goddess says

the rule is the Heart
it is open
always open
always open......

RIC S. BASTASA
In The House Of Sin...

sin closes all
the windows and
doors
seals any
entrance of
streaks of
light

the foul smell
does not know how
to stay
the smoke of sin
roams around the house
until it finds
an exit on the
chimney
there is no scream
but the whole
neighborhood sees
and finds
you...

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Island Of Desire

i live here in this island of desire
i am happier here now
on this circular island surrounded
by so many colored fishes
and corals and rocks and urchins

i live here alone and yet so happy
in this solitude where i am
the only truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Island Of Falling

they say this place
is about to melt
and everything in here
goes with it

i am in
here
and i know what happens next
i am human
i live here and my life
is all i have
and it is all here
rooted

once it bloomed
now it shall meet its doom

how can i leave, tell me?

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Island Of Humanity

if you read this
do not be disappointed
we are honest
and we are not that
good

we are here
because it is necessary
we cannot go out
because it is
forbidden

if you join us in
our dinner
be prepared to eat
what we have

that is what we have
nothing more nothing less
a glass of water
a fist of rice
a nail of fish

our window is open
we let the winds come
free as they are
to our envy and wish
that we should have been
like it

now we do not want you to
stay here any longer
you will not like it
our doors are open
for those who shall leave

do not be disappointed
we are good and we are honest
we do not feel well
but we keep on moving...

you are the strongman
in this world, we never see you again
we have forgotten your name

the lake is silent
the leaf is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Island Of Loneliness

again must you ask
the same question
about an island where
the only things there
are rocks

there used to be a
flower there
but even before it
blooms
it already wilted
as a
tight bud

someone is cruel
nipping the bud
and the island is dead
even before it
forgets

you know very well
that you cannot mark
any trace of the water
and so there is no way
that you can reach it

the boats were burned
and the divers
drowned at sea and

so all that you can have here
is wind
lots of its sounds howl
like wolves
in the forest

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Island Of My Senses

In the island of my senses
You have come as a lover.
Last night you touch
With your fingers my
Softness and I wriggled
In such sweetness.
I touch you too with the
Sands of my shores
You do not really know
That I am here
In my flowers and
Shells. I whistle and
Sigh in my winds of
My islands. You do
Not know that I am
Here. In the island
Of my senses I lay
With desire concealed.
As I kiss you in your
Sleep, I am not even
A part of your dream.

In the island of my
Senses, you are
The boat that leaves
Me tomorrow. I am
Staying in pain.
My clouds bleed
In scarlet sunset.

RIC S. BASTASA
then i stumble upon a
thought
which you and the rest of this family
had prohibited
it is a stone which you pick
to hit your head and then
you bleed
they keep on saying
we do not want you to suffer
we do not want you to experience what
we had gone through
we do not like you to be like us
please remember
and one day you pick the stone
hit your head and you bleed
you like it you wish for it
you want to be like them
and here misery finds company
in the joy of the many....

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Judiciary

fidelity to the law
away from friends
and foes
alike

solitary, lone wolf
inside a desert
room

the vision of the
moon at night

blind during the
day
black robes

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Market Of Ideas...

in the market there are good apples,
luscious ones and we buy them and we do not regret
the money that we part with,

there are rotten ones, who buys them must be fools

ditto with our creations,
we think what we make are the best
in the market of ideas
we rely on the proof of the goodness when others begin to buy
what we display

we think they are best
but look at the flies, look at the the emptiness of the market place
smell the stink,

then we decide not to display at all
we keep what we make as our own
after all, it is ours, and we protect them in our homes
not for sale
but for domestic consumption

we do not wish to compete
we are home now and then we are happier this way.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of A Hot Sunny Day

the morning
is dizzy

the night has offered
it nothing

but that darkness that it feeds
whole and dreary

noon time is harsh
with an impending kill

the mind indeed is
unpredictable like

a rain that comes in the
middle of a hot

sunny day

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of Goodbye

honey, let me tell you this

in the middle of that goodbye
is that firm mole
that does not die, it keeps on growing
it says,

hello is the cancer
at stage IV,

and there is no coming back
to mend the
broken fences anymore

time is a cruel vehicle
that does not come back to save what was spent.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The Busy Hour

there is always a space
between all
these pressures

an opening
a vent
where you rise up
and breathe

you love air
but you miss the vacuum
where you fit
and satisfy your lust for
verisimilitude

no word
no words

in here we do things
without words

breathe: exhale inhale
live life

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The City

someone has his last laugh
it is loud
the room is not enough

you do not know anybody here
so you can be yourself
and all that you can offer
is your back

you do not look at anyone
you have become a horse blinded
sounding nothing
bound to the direction
of the silent path

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The Crowd

in the middle of the crowd
where there is so much noise
all mouths talking
with no one listening
all arms and hands
moving and shouting
and all feet walking to
and fro like grandfather's
clock's mechanical pendulum

when the world seems to be
crowded not just with people
but with words
dishonest words and other
things that we do not really mean

why not try the silence of the stars
outside this crowd

on the grass, soft, soft grass
with the wind, cool cool winds

why not try the silence of the stars
under the sky
why not spend a little time with
the moon

let us try silence for a while
who knows
this world may still have peace
who knows
our overbeating hearts may
find its needed rest

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The Journey

there is this lag
that one finds in the middle of the journey
you do not quit
but you do not also want to farther go
there is this temptation
to stay where i am
wanting to grab eternity by the hand
and not spill any of
those grains of sand
but as you will know
this is only the temporary plateau
as the sun comes up
on that grassy hill
something in us melts like chocolate
sweetness gone
wasted on the floors of time
solidity spoiled
towers crumple
and then back to basics
sooner we take the walk again
towards that certain
direction.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The Night, Alone, Shall You Drink...

the cold days are here
the house of glass is misty
the roof is ready for ice crystals
the floors are growing molds
the tiles on the toilet
are propagating
mildew
you sleep all day
dreaming of summer
when you wake up
it is dark
you listen to the the stillness
of the walls
outside the leaves are so quiet
alone again
you drink
more glasses a little salty
as the wine
is mixed with tears

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Middle Of The Storm

float, that is what to do
in the middle of the storm
what choice do you have?
this boat is the only
safe place,
with us together.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Morning

in the morning
the sounds of the day keep coming

the motors of
mankind

the birds on the
trees on the other hand

what murmur
is there
for existentialism

what dismay is there
for the dusty roads
at noon

where is despair: ?
you raise your hand on your brow
you keep looking

you insist
about its reality

ah, it is not there
and crazy you

you miss it.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Morning Of My Life

I will see the flowers blooming
The blue clouds drifting
The sun gladly shining
The rainbow appearing
The brooks sweetly flowing
The birds flying and hovering
The trees beautifully swaying
I am the small child playing
Mama and Papa closely watching

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Movie Of The Mind...

to get back the substance of
my meaning
i must learn to speak the wisdom
of nonsense

you laugh and it only in the absurdity of your
childish laughter
that you get back what is long due you
that understanding
that there is actually nothing great that
amazes us
into belief
into the appreciation of the apparel of life
its accessories

there are no earrings to the
ears of mankind
there are only ears missing what it must
rightly hear

to get back the real meaning of my existence
i must believe in nothing

i must float in air
and this is what they call as soul
ghost

winds, sighs, whispers
sweet nothings

i take back meaning and i throw away everything
that i have collected in my hands

i hold emptiness now
and so i have become so full

it is this irony
this paradox that makes reality
one is not one and earth is never earth
thoughts can never be thoughts
dog to dog, dust to dust

when we speak again try to find out what is in our mouth
i am opening my mouth now

you laugh, it is still the same tongue
same teeth

there is nothing about this philosophy
there is only this restlessness that looks for a seat

in the dark, waiting that somehow this is another movie house
and there is coming

the next show.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Name Of Art And Love

i command the rules to go away

pigs! snakes!
icons! boxes!
door jams!
toilet bowls!
holy shits!
leeches! and
stinging bees!
and whistling kettles
pressure upon pressure
fissure upon fissure
veiled women demons
wingless angels
questions marks
and interjections
and premature
ejaculations!

get lost!

in the name of love
i call upon all the hues of
the prism
i summon all colors
and scents
sweet sour or
foul

come, come,
under the feathers of
the mother hen
of freedom

bow to a vow

we'll make more rainbows
across the mountains
even before it rains.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Name Of Love And Life

things are messy
like scattered brain of yours
you have no known direction
and you do not listen to advices
for you always
know better than me
and so today
you tell me in the name of love and life
you are leaving
and that is for good
i am angry
but cannot show it
i like to cry
but i cannot until i get feed up somehow
taking care of a child
that looks like a grown up man
spoiled brat
that is how mother had taken cared of you
no value for hardwork
nothing known about patience and discipline
i am tired taking care of you

please come back i shout at you as
you begin to take the steps away
from the ancestral house

you are flattered but i am already numb and definite
come back, come back i repeat what i am saying

take everything and go
i have nothing to do with you anymore
brother.

RIC S. BASTASA
and you told me
as a matter of justification
which i understand
perfectly perhaps that

you did it in the name of
Love, yes, love, yes love, love, love,

oft repeated, as love, yes in the name of love,
you a goddess
descending from the skies just to be with the mud

you love.

and i understand perfectly, how stupid can goddesses
be sometimes.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Name Of The Poem

in the name of the poem
i take the risk
of undressing myself
before the mirror
of all of you

here i am
naked
here i am
vulnerable

here i am
taking off everything
my name
my dreams
my illusions

here i am shedding off
and all of you
look at me

whatever it is
i am naked
and that is the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Ocean Of Forgetfulness....

and then i threw away the old
ring which is no longer fitting for
my finger

it saddened me of course and for
nights sleep abandoned me
angry perhaps about what i did to
that ring

the real reason, if you may ask,
remains to be my secret with my hand
and surely, i must tell you,
my heart deeply grieves for it,
but in due time, it surrenders to me
for having understood it

love fades, rings turn loose, and
we cast the die, in that ocean of
forgetfulness.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Open Fields

i met when you were just a boy
holding on to your mama's skirt
who believes in your innocence: shy,
tiny hands, naughty eyes somehow
hovering from one face to another,
i detect significance,

the next thing i know is your nervous
breakdown,
i guess, and i am right,
that inability to accept a failure
is apparent,
you retreat to a room
talking to yourself
this genius in you
that cannot be defeated
you cover your face with the pages
of an engineering book
devising your own formula
for the world
that pushes you to an edge
and against a wall
so thick
chokes you

you struggle for breath
the windows are closed.

the news arrives, you took your own life,
i am not shocked
people who feel that this world does
not deserve their
precious presence
kill themselves
leaving them their own
guilt
as they pray for your repose
that you may have
eternal life,
which i think surely,  
you now have.

sail on, do not wait for us,  
we are still figuring things out  
in the open  
fields.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Open Fields Of Green Grass After The Rain

i walk in there
i see clouds and clear skies
in the open fields of green grass
after a night of rain

i go close to the little brown birds
feeding on the path
and always i like it when they all fly away from me
they hurry and spread in the skies like my morning prayers.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Other Corner

there are
words there
and they come
from the heart

but for one
thing
they are designed
to deceive you

you keep on
loving
and i keep on
hiding

till you find me
but my arms are cold
my fingers
tremble like the tiny
frogs one rainy
day of
august

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Other World

spirits
in the other world
we are
spirits

sublime in silence
rested forever
perfect bliss

there is no you
and no me anymore

it is the moment now
that must not be wasted
when love still prevails
when your touch
ripples the memories
in my skin

love me now
or miss forever

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Poultry Of Intimacies....

we've never met
even for once, even just for coffee
on one of those early mornings
by the sea,
you promised me, and i believed you.
but it is all right.
i am not that sensitive like a tooth
on a chronic infection,
it is common experience
when two people get intimate in a chat
and look forward to a meeting
nothing malicious, just trying to check
what feelings lie, what is there to be seen
really from all these common rantings,

actually i imagine you as summer to my winter.
a stone to my water.
or perhaps, a wind to pass by my window
that which you said is my pain.

but never mind, i am used to promises.
not just promises. i am more used to being lied.

Lies to me are usual happenings.
We even party for said reason.
We dance, we sing, we get drunk and we
get laid.

oh forgive my imagination. or my language.
those damn chickens, they lay those eggs.

which we counted even before they are hatched.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Poverty Of Their Souls

there is noise in the silence of the room
it goes louder when the lights are turned off
i am trying to listen to it
what it is going to say but it is too crowded
like the biggest mall in the city filled with so many
people talking within themselves as they walk around
window shopping and just like anybody sufferer
in the poverty of their souls is buying nothing

i still listen attentively and hence not getting any sleep
till dawn breaks into a dimly lighted morning as outside
the world is still colored gray, shadows of trees etched
on the horizon, clouds are heavy and then as nature
so edicts, the rains begin to fall

and then i listen to the rain, its sonorous cadence
its monotonous tapping and dripping from the sky
down to the roof following the given rules of the gutter.

the noise subsides, the rain stops gently, the pond of water
slowly mirrors a gaping light, showing that hidden blue sky,
white cotton clouds like small ships coming in to the ports of
my newly found silence. Now, the noise resolves and so
i can soundly sleep alone in my room with a window open..

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Process Of Repression

in the process of repression or suppression of feelings

there is no difference the body gets sick in the end

the eyes choose to sleep in the wrong ours to diminish the pain to look for dreams as cure

the hands tremble at the end how they have always wanted to keep in touch to touch and be touched and perspire and cool and be warm and loving

the body gets crazy the desire is simply irresistible and then the world turns topsy-turvy like a bat
of the night

it relies on sound
not on sight
goes out
of the dark night
now wanting
to sip blood
instead of
the cooling waters
of love

do not blame
me or anybody
they too have
this and that
they too are
sick and dying

broken hearts
and shattered minds
loss of splendor
of soft grasses
flower petals
that wilt and never
for once
ever bloom

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Pursuit Of Art Every Morning...

on aching eyes
and osteopathic backbone
one must keep the
art of
writing, because that is what is art all about,
talking about
self-denial, the mastery of the
perfect art of
restraints, how to place your hands on
your chest and feel
the rhythms of that
isolated and well protected
flesh and bone
covered
heart, everything is there anyway
like bread and butter and
rice and fish
on that white painted breakfast
table, with the matching hot cup of
coffee and
table napkin, sky blue, and
silver wares, like the river passing
through an arc bridge
in that Chinese painting hanging on
your gray wall,
well,
your hands are somewhat
Olympic runners
taking pride that the fingers within
their hold
can write well even
though blinded by too much light
drivers without headlights
reckless and
wild and free like lovers always
having inklings to
change partners
till the next sperm
whale that comes
diving flatly on the Indian ocean
breaking glaciers
melting ice
flooding the world of
concupiscence

somewhere beyond the
grasp of my fingernails
much different than last nights
grips on that
smooth back of the geisha
is the thick and black
skin
of elephantine shame
but,
who cares? you don't.
and i too,
don't.

this, i must make clear,
but i know,
all these seeds fall on
rocks of salt, where not a
messy moss ever think
to stick.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Pursuit Of Happiness.

if you
wait to be
minded

if you
stand there
expecting
to be attended

what a pity
you will be
disappointed

everyone is
minding their
own business

buttoning their
own pants
zipping out and
zipping in

there will be
no one to attend
to you

to each his own
in the pursuit
of happiness...

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Pursuit Of Happiness........

the stork
just like me
perhaps is asking
how low shall
we all bow down
to pick up those
pieces of
happiness?

beaks shattered
feathers plucked
then they shall
call us shameless.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Rain

in the rain my friend
you have been croaking with the frogs
and what i hear
is the symphony of crooks
still waddling
in the muddy creek of corruption

if you invite me
i could have sang so well....

(hmmm)

RIC S. BASTASA
In The River

when the wind finally
drains the water
from the pond when the sun
dries all that is left
of the drops
the fish shall die and
the moss shall wilt and
the crabs and earthworms
shall perish

e except the mud and stones
their silence shouts for joy
now is their turn to know
heat and warmth

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Rivers Of Life

we shall be naked
in the rivers of life
we are not meant
to be wrapped like
a little package

skin to the sun
gleams at the brims
of our brain
we carry this self
for the pleasure
of the skies

here we are in the
rivers of life
swim naked
break the dress
code that enslaves
us to their humiliation

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Room

there is too much light
the drapes glitter
and the mirror on the wall
sparkles like
silver

i stare at the monitor
upon a pause
deciding what word to choose
to complete
this task

what i hear is the monotony of my sigh
one upon the other
like layers of blankets upon my bed
where i cannot
sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Room Of Quick Desires, A Love Out Of Wedlock
Is In The Making

though planned
i enter first using
a friend's name and
then you later
on an invented reason
they do not bother
anyway
attuned to this kind
of compulsion
everyone does it
anyway and with
us on a shallow pretense
they think perhaps
that we are funny
or new to this
adventure if you
call it that way

we begin to know
what bodies are
putting markers
remembering names
and places very
much like ours
we compare it with
some events
those that change
histories of nations
i may exaggerate
what i feel
there was independence
there was the freeing
of all slaves

we were like a very
short film
with a very low budget
that won't hit the market

precisely that is what we really want
precisely my own way of viewing us

like a painting that i love
without a signature at the bottom of the margin.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Room Where We Accidentally Meet

it is no surprise
on a white color you pass by and
stop
where i in black
takes an ample glance at you
and i too
stop
to savor our presences
and i steal a gaze at you
in the same manner
that you do

i do not know your name
or from where you come from and where
you are going
neither do you
know me
but our eyes are too gentle for each other
like kittens
too kind for each others fur
licking
each paw and body

deya vu
perhaps, in our first lives we were lovers
why do we have an unknown language?
we desire each other
now
we sit on the chair beside a table
our hands grapple
for warmth

we understand
we know what to do
we know where to go

we know we do not last
forever
and perhaps
in another time frame
in another world

we shall be
together forever again

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Sands

in the sands of time
passion trickles slowly
until
the break of day

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Sea In The Cave In The Shore

in the sea there are corals
that i have not seen
they say they are so alive
so colorful
and so beautiful that no words
except experience
can say it

in the cave there are outgrowths
made by the dripping water
they say they are like two lovers
wanting to meet again
make love

in the shores of the sea
there are seashells
hermit crabs alive and
running
someone thinks that they
all have one thing in
mind: escape

i have seen them
but i will not hold them
i don't need too
i always feel them
in the most blissful reunion
i have not seen all these
and i cannot imagine
that bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Shadow Of Doubt...

when you meet at some
crossroads
you are familiar with
what i carry

just a shadow

a shadow of doubt
a mimicry of what i am
a cry of the silent
darkness that is dependent
upon a little light

the moon long understands this
it is compassionate
and we talk
on the grass on the pond
in the eeriness of air
in the blankness of space

when we meet again
in the light
as you prefer it to be
i carry nothing

i am no longer myself
no matter how you try to be

if you love me
let me just be a shadow without a body
that you want to touch
and believe

you must believe in the doubt
that i am
you must hope for nothing
you must shed off faith

you only have to utter a word
that must exist beyond the journey of time

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Shallow Waters

to the geese
all waters are shallow

does one always have
to be on top
of the deep
silent waters?

to fathom the deep
and be the deep
itself
engrossed to the wisdom
of its secrets
and wallow
in the enigma
of the anonymous
or the unknown paths
breathless

there is a time to be
not ourselves
and we take chances on the
shallow waters

in there we are not fishers
of men
or women or anything
we wade and relax
waters covering half our bodies

half-truths
you must see and feel
trivial as they are
they make us
so light like cotton
or silk flowing on our skins

like clouds
we float and drift and go anywhere
i felt it once
oh, so nice temporarily but at the end

it haunts me.
for it is not me and it can never be me.

i am matter, i have weight and i sink
to the bottom
to the deepest secrets of my truths

if i drown at least, i have my graveyard ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Silence Of Our Graves...

those
sweet moments
are kept

in the heart in
the room alone

let not your
tongue betray

what our hearts
commit

it is shared
by us alone

and we take all
these

in the silence of
our graves.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Silence Of Our Pains To The Bottom Of Our Chosen Despair.

i don't really know
if i have finally refined this and that
as it all depends on how you
simmer it with your slow savorings
of who and what i am and could be in those
coming seasons,

am i soft sunlight to your face?
am i the moon gleam to your eyes?
am i a river to your ears?
am i a feather to your hair?

i don't really know now
what with this distance that
stretches itself beyond the realms
of our dreams?

we have descended to the level of the
seas bottom
in the silence of our pains to the
bottom of our chosen despair.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Silence Of The Night
	here is an island that you cannot reach  
it is mine  
there is a boat that you cannot ride  
it is mine  
there is a star that you cannot reach  
it is mine  
there is his sorrow that you cannot fathom  
it is mine  
there is this joy, this bliss, this gladness  
in my hearth

it is ours.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Silent Mode Beauty Speaks A Lot

a violet velvet
sofa
there the piece
of art lies

naked, like the sun
dark as a tropical island
clean and shaven

in the silent mode
beauty speaks a lot
to contaminate us
with so much silence

our hearts grow wings
and then we feel so light
lighter than the wind
or a whisper and
we have nowhere to land

we conclude we are spirits
more valuable that such bodies
we are divine soaring more than
art, more than pieces,
reinvented and yet whole
back to ourselves our pelvis
and navels
our arms and legs
our lips our closing eyes
our warm breaths
upon early mornings...

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Sky Another Window In The Horizon

morning challenge
reading you makes me
feel better

well, you could have done
much better

i tell myself
i can open a window and then a door

step outside and learn
much more

than reading you
which makes me better now

than my old self
as i open another door

in the sky another window
in the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Small World Of My Poem

in the small world of a poem
there lives a
teardrop

and there is only one reader
who sees it
and takes it
and says

'the teardropp is not salty
it is sweet
and now it is inside me'

in the small world of my poem
lies the miracle also of the dew
the pearl of the leaf
that lasts only
one morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The State Of Sickness And Depression....

this body
hibernates like a
frog
throughout the
drought
when all tiny
creatures die
when all
weeds wilt and then
soon
with one drop of rain
it wiggles its
legs
opens its eyes
breaks from mud
and jumps again....

sings in the fields
under the sounds
of thunder
and the new blessings
of lightning

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Void...

i send it to the door
so i must feel relieved

i let you in
now i have no feeling anymore

is this it?
in the void we live?

RIC S. BASTASA
In The War Zone

to keep hope from escaping
the soldiers
barb-wired it
and they who have lost
all food and
ammunition
keep track of hope
silent in the barracks
trembling in
the dark

RIC S. BASTASA
In The Ward

In the ward she was made to draw
A woman,
She complied
Started to draw a face
The eyes and ears
But without a mouth
Two legs
Without the hands,

The shrink says,
Was this woman
In your house
Not allowed to speak
Was she not allowed
To do?

Her mother
Wants to understand

The husband was
Not there.

In the house
She cannot speak
She did not do
Anything about it
Until she became so
Incomplete
And she did not
Know until she
Was made to draw
The woman’s

True face.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The World Of Achilles

the world of achilles
trembles
when a blade
of grass
hits accidentally
his famous
heel.

RIC S. BASTASA
In The World Of Poetry

in the world of poetry
where doves and shadows reign
i will be there with all of you

i will bring no book
i will only bring my own nakedness
i will be empty
and then i will be full

RIC S. BASTASA
In Their Own Eyes (For Tikoy)

on that precise moment
you open your heart, your stomach
your head,

and then you spread everything
before them
on the breakfast table

the usual broken heart
with perforations
the rotten intestines
the rusty thoughts
some cuts on your hands
wounds of the spirit

and then you challenged
each one 'Now, judge me!'

and they all left
slowly one by one
toward the door

all of them
i know
has remembered
the old story

RIC S. BASTASA
they say in these
confusing times we are
more needed

thinking perhaps that
we fit more
within the frame of chaos
rather than peace

someone just screamed
if they have the guns and bullets
we have the finest poets

someone followed it up with
a comforting note
that we shall win in this
fight

i am not that refined
but i am glad i have chosen
to be here, yes, just to be here

always ready with words, just words,
as i keep too honing and whetting my
swords

RIC S. BASTASA
In These Dark Days

in these dark days of our lives
the eyes may learn to see again
but the mouths
have never intended to speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
In These Peregrinations

i have a walk
to walk
i talk to myself
in these
peregrinations

i have a conclusion
to make
while taking a walk

the brain walks to
at first
with my feet in some
counts

and then i have a
hard time chasing
it and even loses
it for a while

since it has learned to
fly

RIC S. BASTASA
In These Poems That We Write

these are the wounds of the heart
let your fingers pierce that part

blood drips from a wounded heart
pain gleaming against the light

time has not healed the wounds
you can hear the screaming sounds

these are the wounds of my heart
we are not many miles apart

we share the wounds of the heart
in these poems that we draft

RIC S. BASTASA
In These Restless Hours....

in these restless hours
one wakes up to share what
innately is also
restless...

thoughts are wanderers
in a caravan of camels
under the full moon amidst
the coldness of dawns...

the desert howls like a fox
asking for names

i whisper my name to the wind
so all the sands of time may know
that i have allowed
to be counted in

in these restless hours
we are too, part of the pack of
those restless creatures

see our shadows under the fullness of the
moon treading the desert sands of time

the foxes, the bats, the snakes,
the cockroaches, the gnats
and the nits and lice.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Bin

in this bin
i put
everything

pains, sorrows,
&
joys, happiness

my bin
and my own alone

like some mailbox
of my
emotions

this is a world
where
i am: open, close
mystery,
double talk
whisper

shout
angry, scream, howl,
wail,

this is where
i can be everything: a mocking bird, a werewolf, an angel,
 devil,
crocodile, merman, worm, fish, butterfly
eagle
monkey, ghost, soul,
passionate body

fingers, hands, feet
lips

all the feelings and colors
of my mind
feel me, as i too feel you
what have i to gain
what have i to lose

you say, you think, words, words, and nothing but words,
no,
no,
do not reduce everything to simple terms of words
and letters
and syllables,

this is a field where i have sown the seeds of my self
and some flowers
begin to bloom here, and some fruits are ripe for the picking

i like you being the child who climbs
the tree where my fruits are sweet and ripe

i like you being the lady who comes along
and picks my flowers

i like you being the wind that helps my clouds
drift only to be alive
crossing the boundaries of space between
peaks of mountains

this is not a dustbin anymore, this is my house
this is my dwelling

there is a soft easy chair in my mind
a glass vase with a red rose
glazed with dew

like my tears, like my eyes that i am hiding
for you not to clearly see

this is not just a dustbin, this is now my home
come
come
come

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
make this your home, enter my door, follow me
in the labyrinths of my feelings
my hopes and dreams

come
come
come

take a seat, and have breakfast with me
see the glass window opening to a view
of the pines and the green mountains

a little frost may blind us
but here we are, i have prepared you tea and
sympathy and some stories about myself

listen, and be free, to tell your stories too,
the sun has just shone

and indeed, it is a very new day.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Empty Space....

who is holding
the truth
and only truth?

nobody, nobody
says the door without
a bolt

how many eyes have
you window?
how many sides of
the truth do you
see in there?

i've seen them all
all sides, all aspects
and look what i've got
'just the beauty you
admire
in this empty space'

RIC S. BASTASA
In This House

in this house,
painted white,
and walled,

a red iron
grill gate,

lights all around
at night
like a ship
about to leave
for another
port

this house
likes to say
goodbye

how can
it be possible?

unless you tell
me, i am
ready too.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Lonely Island

In this lonely island
I will go
Where the hermit
Crabs
Dry their
borrowed shells
As they bathe
Themselves
Under
The sun

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Lonely Ship In This Vast Blue Ocean

same boat same deep blue sea
as i wake up from a deep slumber
i find us
in greater number
in this long, long
uncharted
journey

everybody look
what the hell is that?

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Place....

in this place
the sound of chirping birds
the hum of the wind
the dew on the leaves
the fog on the cliffs
the silence of the hills
the only way to take
away from the mob

in this place
you have chosen to be
you and i.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Poem

in this poem when i speak
about myself in sadness
actually i speak about the
sadness of the whole world,

from a mole i move to the mountain
from one apple we move from the apple to one
and one is intangible
and one is invincible
and one is universal

like a fan with many fingers
but it is the fan of the world

so when i speak about a woman
on love unrequited i may start with a name
like a rose, or a woman named Helen of Troy
or just a plain Maria
whose sadness is as specific as
my own sadness but when it is written in poetry
and read by everyone
Maria is lost what is taken in is the sadness of the world

it is just like us: there is no ric anymore or a candice or
anyone else but just the universal man
the universal woman

because the poem is an expression of the world
unto itself
we become mere specks of dusts
sands of time's cannister

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Poem

when it rains for days
we damn the weather
we blame the gods
we for once do not like
the smell of water.....but then...

when the rain is gone
and there is no sign of a black cloud that it is coming ever again
we again complain
hating the sun, disgusting the feel of light
the warmth of days
we damn the gods
for not hearing us
our pleas all written in the
that empty space
in that drifting air

but the gods, gods as they are
have known our hearts
and minds

and they are never damned at all
in one lightning gear
striking us all
we become nothing
perishing
as we so deserve

it is written, so written
in this poem....

RIC S. BASTASA
In This State Of Love.

i have not noticed time
not even how it looks like
how it feels
i do not even know
that it passes by swiftly so swiftly like
a wink

time is not time
there is no waiting even
it is when you feel eternity

in this state of love.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Temporal World

in this temporal world
i, too, must keep a name
i, too, must be someone
you can call
me, but then, soon, and
we do not really know when,
we shall realize
there is this oneness
beyond the splits
and splinters
we feel it
we look for it

over there, over there
the voice keeps calling

RIC S. BASTASA
In This Voracious Cyberspace. We Have Become Nothing At All.

while facebooking
we forget
eating breakfast

and you stop all these
and say come we must
eat now

i follow you at the
breakfast table prepared
by a domestic
help

i keep this to myself
that while doing facebooking
i forget love
i forget you
i forget even myself

i forget the world
i forget my work

it is how damaging it is.
and we do not even realize it

i forget about exercise
i forget about my dogs
i forget about my garden

it is how damaging it is.
how we still keep on knowing
about the miseries of other people.
how we have diminished our value for ourselves

in this voracious cyberspace.
we have become nothing at all.
a monster in space without a face
has devoured all our souls.

RIC S. BASTASA
In This World...

some people offer you a
solution to survive more years
for you to live and less
pain

they require you to remove
your face
kneel before them
and they want you naked
(not the literal nudity
but the one with built-in
metaphors)

and then they require you
further to chant their names everyday
of the week
in exchange for a plate of rice
and three pieces of dried
fish

so cheap have you become

not only that
they spit on you
(there is no pain alright
but humiliation is more painful
than the kick)

and when you have all done
what they ask you
to do

they order you to stand
and they pat your back and say

good job

and you are ordered to leave them

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
for a while
as they indulge in the privacy of
their business conversations
secrets perhaps and you

wait outside the door
and you feel like a
poodle or
a shiz tzu

but whatever appellation you
attach to it

you are still within the category
of those pet dogs

or simply a
dog

wagging tails
roll, stand
sit

catch the stick

yet somehow your logic
makes the
dog world sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Times Of Adversity

the smile of the president
can mean a lot of damage
to our sincerity
to work out for an apology

i have seen it
and i find something horrendous
in the parting of his lips

i regret having voted for such a man
how can he say that he is serious about it?

slapstick, slapstick
there is madness in between the glow of his eyes
where glow is useless.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Times Of Depression

failure. defeat. setting sun.
dark nights. Bar escapades.

lost hopes. Excitements gone.
feeling like a dead log floating on the river.

silence. Conversations that do not mean anything at all.
dogs howling. Cat naps.

furs left on the sofa. Carpets and dusts
and some bites from mosquitoes
that find themselves
whisking inside this room.

ticks and tic tac toes of boredom.
book waiting to be read. Bookmarks and ears.

sitting on a bench. Sunshine falling on your hair.
warmth spreading inside your armpits.

lips wetting. Saliva on the tongue.
Air getting inside your nostrils.

a bubble of air inside your lungs.
a word shaping inside your mouth. You want to speak.

you choose the mute mode of your life.
You switch on to hibernation.

some leaves fall. The wind arrives. Some flowers
bloom. The bees beginning busy.

Some butterflies. Blue and Yellow lights.
Grass as green as ever with dew on their tips.

There is no depression. There may be denial.
When pain is so much. Try these little things.

inside your mind, there is fullness of thoughts.
Tiny butterfly wings. Shiny wings of beetles.


You are here. You are not waiting for anybody. Time runs. But there is no watch to tell you about anything.

Then you think you have something to write about. It is about this. Welcome.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Times Of Separation

when a man leaves you
cry not my sister
you deserve much better
the man who leaves you is blind, swindler
crippled, lame, impotent, deaf mute,
breath, flaccid, moron, fluke, puke, mote,
you deserve much better
he junked you then junk him dear
cry not my dear sister
i had been there
but if you cry, cry it out
my shoulder is a beach resort.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Trembling

i look at myself in the mirror
closer
i see my magnified hands trembling

the real reason was there
beforehand
but i keep on denying it and even bury it
like someone so vile

for long the reason knows too
the art of concealment
like the games that we play

then the trembling continues
and there are no reasons anymore
all the while
i never want any explanation of myself

i am here
and will be ready for all the possibilities
of death

and ready too
for the next redemption

RIC S. BASTASA
In Truth I Like Aldo

i truth i like aldo
does this man exists?
that was the question
thrown by him to me
and he answered
such questions well
enough
he has a dimple
on his chin
grey curly hair
on his head
tall, not so dark,
smiling,
a not so big
tummy,
always with a coat
but without a tie
beside his
another older
friend
advocating
against
child abuse

at least,
that is the picture
he sent me once
nice man
on some
unfinished poems
that i love
to finish

so here we are
on this poetry
we love each
poem after poem

the next question
is
smartazz unloved

who loves us?

will you william?
shine on the siennes?

RIC S. BASTASA
In Truth We Can'T

no hatred lasts long
it fades, it is not that strong to defeat time.

Unlike love, it conquers all, it even kills time.
we love, the rules come in,
the walls and fences,
the roof and ceiling, and love becomes more
of a house,
and if we persists, it soon becomes a home,
it shelters,
it is bigger than any thing you can imagine,
it welcomes a stranger,
shakes the hands of fools, and repairs all that
is broken.
Hate becomes the rug, where all the dirt is
kept, and then we say, wash it,
others say, throw it away,
but love goes to the dining table,
fruits and salads, steaks and grills,
we partake, and then we tell our stories,
we all listen, and then we promise to stay,

in truth we can't.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Trying To Find The Word Sleep.....

old age
is a visitor of
this house
changes are
coming in a
truckload
she reads the
news yesterday
at midnight
trying to find
in one of those
pages
where sleep is
such a tiny word
which her eyes
could not see

RIC S. BASTASA
In Trying To Look For The Words

i am trying to look for the words
like looking for flowers in the garden
but there are not any anymore
in this season of rain
when sunshine is becoming slim
and hideous
when the mind is becoming tedious
about what to spell
and sing
there are lesser elements there
the usual sands
which we always equate with time slipping away from the fingers
the timid pebbles that do not ask anymore
the meaning of silence
too tired for the constancy
too mindless about
what happens everyday
in trying to look for something else
one finds
stupor as a burden at the back of the head
shunning light
evading vibrancy of thoughts and memories
retouching the blackness and whiteness of the past
killing time
and resting one's head on the sofa
with the tv on
past midnight.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Trying To Reconstruct The Self

shattered pieces of self
like fragile glass
scattered on the floor

one must pick the pieces
and glue
the past and the present
and polish the
future

everyday is a reconstruction
a reunion of the mind and the heart
do not be left out
somewhere in the dark corridors of time
embrace the light and take another step forward
for life's essence is always to move on and on

those that stop shall soon decay
they rot and the layers of time soon bury them
in the land of oblivion

come! come with me!
hurry! hurry! time has big wings and too swiftly it flies away

for unlike the mind with memories that may come back
time only moves forward and then forgets

RIC S. BASTASA
In Trying To Understand The Use Of Words

we say the words
and ought to say them
because a certain
reality exists

either
it is bugging us or
it is making us experience
the flights of our
spirits
in blissful journeys
to an edgeless
universe

most of the time
when we are at peace
we say nothing
as though the new solitude
that we have found
is a woman

silent
because there is no way
that a word can enter
her mouth
now so full
of happiness

her thoughts filling
her mind
with so much joy
that she has turned herself
in an open world

now
volunteering as
nothing but
a mere
spectator.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Us The Happy Children

when the flood comes
when the thatched roof of houses
start to drown themselves
the children go on
with their games
on bamboo rafts
they begin a journey
of fun
and fantasy
now they are vikings
tomorrow they are the pirates of Penzange
on their penchant
for charm
their laughter over
the rising waters
like their ancestors who lost
nothing
they are now ready to
move
for another soil
on top of a hill
on some grassy grounds again.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Vain....

a road runner
never stops running
for it is
its essence

in the same way
how can a
sparrow cease to
fly? no sparrow
has ever
cut its own wings
to deny itself
of its birthright
to fly

or an ant to stop
walking on barks of
trees and
live upon the enclosures
of leaves or
sand empires
of their own creation

i feel odd
for i ask the same question
how can a poet
or a pseudo-poet
stop being one

how its fingers ever
stop to dance with
syllables and sentences
and lines?

i was not born with
ink in my mouth
and pen in my hand
and poems in my heart
and stories in my
brain

neither were words
kept in my veins
and neither were there
nymphs in my
lymphs

for i was a tabula rasa from
the start

what might have caused it
i still too ask

this ceaseless scribbling
which you
in your impatience may
have already found
disturbing or
irritating

nevertheless i do not
write for you
forgive me
but i only have myself
to blame for
this selfishness for i write only
for myself
(and i do not really
care what happens
next
or what tragedy may
come at the end
of this literary journey
into a desert without
camels
into the sea without
islands
into the sky without
planets and stars
into a window without
a moon)

this eternal damnation
to words
this masochistic carpentry
of ideas transformed into
the letters of the
flesh
that may haunt all of us
into
inevitable damnation

but we are we to judge
our futilities?
who are we to say that
we have wasted our time
and that what we are
are doing in the end
shall nothing but be in
vain?

RIC S. BASTASA
In Vietnam I Had Noodles

in Vietnam
i had noodles
almost everyday
except for the
french bread
and some
shrimps i miss the usual rice
which they
do not serve there
and thinking of rice makes
me miss
my own country like you there in Ontario
i began to count my days there
in my fingers
and then my toes and
then i decided to
come home for i cannot imagine
myself as a piece of a
ceramic figurine
which fell from that
display
breaking into pieces

it is very expensive.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Wanting To Be A Stone

in wanting to be a stone
an island is formed
rising from the river
a mountain is born
the shores expand
the banks traveled
like a viral disease
wanting to fill the
sea with nothing but
a wide expanse of
sand and pebbles

the feet feels like
some hands touching
a stem filled with thorns

not forgetting the rose
like the way i carry my
loneliness
my emptiness
with my bare
hands

RIC S. BASTASA
In Wanting To Be Another

as we arrive at the house
of insufficiency
and begin to ponder upon
the deficiency
of our vocabulary for life
its syntax
trend and nuances
we sometimes wish we were
another person
or perhaps another famous creature
with a certain expertise
for doing something that other people
cannot do
or having a talent
that pleases most
the crowd

we sit on a bench
lay our head
wear our sunglasses and
try to look directly at the sun
to make a plea
for our wishes
for our weird dreams to come true

nothing happens
it is the same path that we walk upon
the same stones spread
the same boring yellow flowers at the sides

like water seeking its own level
we begin to adjust
want from need
ambition form wish
power from life
mere from far.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Whatever Situation, Whenever I Can Be Found

you shall look for me
i know, you shall miss me

you think, this is the last
a swan song

no, you are bound by your own
longing
my word, my sighs

my soul moaning for love
my love singing
the ecstasy of outburst

the gentleness of the eyes
the softness of my lips

the caresses of my hands
the plateau of my belly

you shall look for me
inside your mind

and then, tears shall fall
for i am no longer there

without within
for i can no longer stay under the soles

of your feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Working With Images....

when we work with images
they become real, touchable,
i, too, smell
what has been transformed by
a dream
like a bread
baked
sending its fresh flavor
in the air

hot tea is served in the cold
corners of the mind

i am seeing beauty
and shapes of bodies come out from
glossy paper

i severed myself from the pains of
you

the images are real and they do not ask
if things are moral

i embrace all these images for the main reason
that i must live
my life
amidst the rules of this mundane games

every night i sleep late
transforming what this world thinks as invisible

in the morning
virtual leaves fall at the foot of the real tree
on top of grass, as green as my mind
flowers are flaming
like fire
in my belly.
In Yesterday's Lecture

yesterday i gave you
the president
of this country
and tell you
she is the strongest person
of our earth
and how she got the
royal prerogatives
of dishonesty

she is
dishonest but we keep her that way
to fulfill her task
of keeping us alive
and you complain
as a citizen

dare her not
on the yoke of her power she knows
perfectly the spot
where to butcher you like
a pig
or a chicken
or a duck
or a dog
or a turkey

inside our democratic prisons
we vote
for our death and annihilation
and she
holds the seal and she signs her name

mind you
after i have delivered the last lines
you say you begin
how not to understand power
In You, Through You....

it is in you
that i see love
it is in your love
that i begin to
see the true
face of
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Blog Is The Child Singing 'Why?'

Let us view again the video
of that child singing

why?

he did sing well
and i am touched because his eyes are fierce and he means
every word that he is singing, why?

why this war? what does he as a child do to make him a man?
why does he have to hold a gun and kill?
why does he have to be a soldier and be killed
and have his mother mourn for him?

indeed why? he did sing well and his song was like a stab
of light that pierced my eyes that made my heart bleed

he did sing well with his hands complete with fingers pointing
to us

indeed why? what does it take for children to become men and women like us?
what do they really have to do? why do they have to follow our steps?
what do they have to become like us?
what are we giving them? and what are they taking?
at what cost? at whose expense?

indeed, Ramona, the child sings well more than we do as children once
indeed, i remember
and i do not really want to go back there anymore

i have become everybody else.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Cave

in your cave
there is no sun
man-made
or superficial
or whatever

and so darkness
reigns
complete darkness
and when he mentions
about shadows
do not believe him

in your cave
there was complete
silence too
and so when he talked
about a dialogue
between two
speakers
do not ever believe him

in your cave
there was no life ever
and when he talked about
death
and numbness and indifference

that was then when i believed him
and i agreed
that indeed that man has his own name

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Company

in your company
there is always this laughter
and we know what is found
in every story
in every word
in every syllable even before it is uttered

it is this familiarity with our wits
and humors that keep us together
in the same room

we laugh about almost everything
and yet come to think of it

you are in texas and she is in chicago
and i am in philippines...

it is this circle of friendship...yes, we are in it now
now let us start another story,

are you there?

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Conceit

at the height of your conceit
you even think
that the sun shines only
for you
this morning

well, i cannot blame you
you are the better
poet
in your little corner

and yes, the earth is still the
center of this universe

and all the planets. the moons and that stars
all revolve around
you

mister poet.
i know i miss the sun, and the infinite voiceless void
they too bow before your highness

dear poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Confusion

i do not wish
to intrude
into your confusion

as you let this
confusion settle peacefully

upon the hands of time
i comfort myself

that soon these folds
find themselves justified

in the eyes of
art.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Fidelity With The Word

in your fidelity with the word
despite what mood you keep on siding with the word
giving it a face
and a soul
and a certain motion like the planets in their orbits

what then? what shall all these words reward you?

a story to tell? a poem that you can read for all of those
who are weary on the journey?
a novel to spend time with
or kill it since it bores you to death?

yes, i must ask, what shall this fidelity give you
as a reward for your affections
and loyalty to its nuances, moods, and context?

is it the liberation of your soul from the prison of doubt?
oh, you keep on saying you are free.
is it the liberation of your mind from the unpopularity of reality?
oh, you keep saying you do not need it.
is it the liberation of your body from the shackles of your organs?
mind boggling, why should my organs be my prison?

is it this prolix that keeps you bored?
or is it simply the questions that keep on growing
that keeps you alive?

are you more interested in the answers?
i am just asking. Are there answers?

my dear, at the end, there are only questions.
These are the realities of our world. The open mind
is the gift. It is the reward to your fidelity
of the bosom of the word.

kiss it then, and make love to the beauty of the
question mark.
In Your Goodness

you sit alone on your lonely throne
the kingdom that they do not see
inside the castle of your virtues
you are silent
on another weary day
the good deeds you have done
the charity of your touch
and sharing of your soul
your working hands
the ideals in your mind

somehow in your humanity
you begin to ask
what do you get in return?
you do not want to say it
you refuse to think
about this capacity
this choice for goodness
there is no waiting for
honor and glory
nothing in return

you have done what it takes
to be good and kind
and humble and meek
and forgiving

you are alone
you are rare
you sit in this throne of
loneliness
in the secret castle
of your virtues

in the midst of silence however
you hear the dance of small feet

it is your heart
still jumping of joy
in your tiredness
you almost miss hearing
the sounds of small joys
the dance of life
inside you

you sleep soundly
after a prayer tonight
tomorrow you still have
other good things to do
for the greater glory of God
thru man in his poverty
and his wretchedness.

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Own Storm

in your storm
you keep focused upon its
own eye

at the center of all
these

a peaceful star alone in
the darkness that behaves like
a cradle to a silent light
as apace hums like
your past mother

RIC S. BASTASA
In Your Poetic Kingdom

it is not planned
actually
you sit there like
a king
with a scepter in your
hand and
crown in your head

you rule.
you do not need anyone
or anything.

you speak
but in here no one listens.
no one is here.

your kingdom exists only
in your mind.
you have a queen
like a soap bubble from
your pipe.

you are doing it
not really for the sake of fun
it is just a way of survival

you speak to yourself
and you listen.
you get drunk to no wine.
you are playful
to no park.
you sleep under the sky
in your bed
of virtual grass.

you just had trauma the
neighbors whisper to the
ears of your walls
so you know, and you very
well know
but that is just that
a poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inamorata

to the one you
love every
detail of her face
can never be
forgotten and every
thing that she does
for the day
is always a part
of your itinerary

RIC S. BASTASA
Inanimate Questions, If You Only Knew

1. the law professor had a stroke
2. and he is hospitalized for weeks
3. you are the dean
4. and you tell me
5. he is sick
6. and you ask

When can he submit his grades?

1. you bought a new motorcycle
2. and your son used it
3. for a ride
4. and he met an accident
5. and you phoned
6. from your office
7. and you ask

How is the motorcycle?

Inanimate questions are those directed to solicit
Answers concerning inanimate things

They focus on things
Forgetting about life

You should have asked: how is he? Is he well? Did he recover?
You should have asked: how is my son? Did he suffer any injury?

We humans sometimes do not know how to ask the animate questions,
And this lapse must be immediately corrected and repaired like lesions

RIC S. BASTASA
Inanities...

every rose has its
dawn
and every night
has its thorn

not every buffalo has
its mud and grass
not every mud has its
own water or rain

figure it yourself
all these misplaced thoughts
disturbing ideas

illogical metaphors
absurd world

RIC S. BASTASA
Incoherent

on a long and lonely world
he becomes incoherent
someone meets to ask him
where did he come from
and where he is going
he's got no answers
he sits under a shady tree
and begins to stare at the blue sky
he has not words to say
everyone he meets must go
to leave him in his incoherent silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Incompatible....

when you show up
i will not be there anymore

i am the moon
and you are the sun

you are the sky
and i am the scorpion

things shall resume only
when you are finally gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Inconsistency

When my head says I have to do this
My heart says another

And I really find this
Matter so disgusting,

How can I be objective to
Something subjective?
How can I not read the law
And apply it
And let poetry
Render an interpretation,

Absurd

How can I set the facts
Straight, punish the guilty
And have no compassion?

How can I not condemn this
Adulterer when all your sins
Go beyond what can be written
On the sand?

I have to decide, heart & reason
Learning the law, like a lover for both.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inconsistent

you like me
but you are telling me
it is time to leave
you
that i must go away
yet your hand
holds the pocket
of my denim
your right hand
pushes me
telling me again
with tears
in your eyes
that i must leave now
yet your lips
are wet
needing my kisses.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inconsistent Lifestyles

in the lines of a dialogue
we put some markers
of a page of life,
some borders of our
past tolerances,
all commas actually
never a period
and we stop for a while
like a cease and desist order
to look
at all those words from a little
distance
because sometimes
what the microscope of details
says is no longer
important
we still love the forest
but we still cut
some trees

RIC S. BASTASA
In-Consumable

he grins
saying, so now you are inside
this circle of fire

do you regret this? he grins
saying, why have you gone here
when outside

it was paradise, and you were
a child playing ball and monkey

i am grim. I say, let me burn here
for i am fire myself
inconsiderable.

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes inday we meet
and we try to figure out what we really want to do with our lives
and we laugh
only to discover that we do not really know what to do
and so we keep on doing and doing anything
hoping to find something to do that may tell us
that this it.
but i must honestly tell you, i have never found it.

not with anybody. sometimes inday i just want to sleep
but i cannot
sometimes inday i just want to eat and eat but the food
does not taste anything anymore

i try praying, but i arrive at the meaningless mumble
and i am like a bumble bee just bumbling

i am trying poetry. and this is something that i always do now.
because it is like doing nothing at all.

it is just like playing mahjong. killing time because there is so much
time and at long last we have taken revenge

when time is not time anymore, but just a piece of a chunk
of the boredom that i eat everyday.

RIC S. BASTASA
Indecisive....

you have deprived
yourself of the rawness
of pleasure

one which has no shade
of reason
no shadow of what is
good
or bad, just the feel of
the hand sliding to
a body
with eyes closed without
a prejudice
or molds, or trellis where
vines make
a form of itself

what is happening to you?
sad man, bathed in the
melancholy of your
indecision....

RIC S. BASTASA
Indecisive.....

i lost the key
i think it fell inside
that taxi
which i took from the house
to the airport

for i am living to
Cambodia
i have promised
the monks
for my needed retreat

and for a time
i may think of leaving
you finally

you have to be on
your own
and i must be on my
own too

did we not utter
the word independence?
did we not say
it is time to part ways?

i told the driver
my key is inside that
seat
it fell there

and i think how
inconsistent i have become
trying to find a key
and retrieving still
what i think i do not
need
what is that key for?
i have already closed my door
and i have no plan
opening it again

let them destroy the lock
as i am not coming back

i am unreasonable perhaps
the taxi driver took time
looking for the key
and then he found it and
gave it to me

instincts perhaps
i dislike it... i still have it
this key inside my pocket

faraway from home
perhaps i shall throw this
sometime....

RIC S. BASTASA
Indeed She’s Wise

Since nobody wants to talk to her
She talks to herself
And
She is now

Herself’s new found friend

If not her very own special
And best friend.

I like her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Indeed, Why Love?

indeed, why
love? why choose
love?

ask how much
is hate, and
evaluate if
you can afford
its price.

RIC S. BASTASA
Independence

it is a matter of disposition,
nothing binds us if we do not allow it
inside our minds,

it is attitudinal, direct the eyes
to gaze upon those
that liberates not those that
encloses us to a narrow path
a box a compartment foul and full

go beyond what you see
create meanings innate in the coatings
of realities
jump beyond the fences of this being
this temporary house
what doors will last here?

nothing, these are but our illusions
of doors where there are none
of bars of steel where there are but vines
and tendrils

imagine a self, where skin and bones bare
undress, skulls are actually dusts
refined particles of bluntness,
try the spirit of the bird that flies away

and comes back as a leaf a twig
a truck with roots
and sap, the leaves where dew
resides

do not stay, always prepare to go
and when you go, do not tarry,
follow the path of light and then
be the light itself piercing what

was not there before, that which
we dream and hope for
that which we are not in touch
but so deeply entwined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Independence & Autonomy

do not touch
the tip of the island
with the
arrow of your
bow
do not say
the real name
let everything be
nameless and
thriving
growing on their
roots
suffering to
each drought
do not interfere
with the seasons
there are
automatic cures
for every
malfunction

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference

Indifference is so painful
Like an eye which sees nothing

I do not even
Exist to you

No matter how I prove it
With trembling hands touching you

Or with my Silence fed
Up
Wounds you, punctures
A ventricle
In your heart

You have an inkling of pain

You simply say you
Have myocardial infarction

There is no me causing it...i am staring at you.

What you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference (2)

you say you love
you say you want to make love
tonight or early morning
you propose it like a theory of the universe
over a cup of tea
you extend a hand to hold another hand
you tempt about luscious desire
something so sweet
and juicy and warm
you hear nothing
a hand sets aside another hand
unable to hold
nothing is spoken
you hear footsteps leaving
no hand waving
you get the point of what is indifference
no one's intent to hurt
just that there is nothing taken and there is nothing given

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference During Breakfast

you keep on talking
words flood in my ears
as i eat breakfast of egg
and white rice and
coffee,

i keep watching TV
Mt. Mayon spewing lava
another massacre of
innocent lives in Maguindanao
an attempt to bomb
another plane by
a Nigerian terrorist

i am engrossed.
keep on talking.
i will pretend
that i am your listener.

God only knows
you exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference Is More Painful

indifference is more painful
you are there
unseen by the subject of your affections
you are nothing but an empty space
an air
that cannot even sway a stem of the flower

i prefer being hated
at least, my existence is confirmed
by your angry words
your violence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference Of The Neutral Eye

the old man was pushed
at the edge
and the young boy
merely looked at him
crushed between
two hard walls
there was no regret
no anticipation
not even a syllable of
concern

RIC S. BASTASA
Indifference Of The Other

the I
in me shuts down the switches
there is no wave
nothing sort of a line runs
it becomes a straight line
there is no curve in between

when I face you again
i turn on the switches again
like an offering for a nice conversation
about anything else: a son
a sun, a sound of life, a cry, a thud,
a soft touch like a gushing water on the rock
like a ticking clock

i am in the middle of a nice story
you were listening at first as you sip your black coffee
there is this character, a man looking for an opening
a woman about to find an exit
then you look around

this happens at the 39th floor
one sees a world view of the city
tiny lights, moving worm like neon along the streets
of pain

i begin to stare
i turn off the switches inside my guts my armpits
inside my chest there is a drum that stops calling the spirits
of the wind

i look at the live band singing a Latin song
i like the beat now and then i pretend that you are gone

someone down there at the ground floor
where you are crushed like a pumpkin
shall pick you up
they will not just be surprised
they will know what existence means
how precious life is really

i switch off this weird imagination about you
but we will still be leaving together
no one notices the glitch

RIC S. BASTASA
Indirectly In The Despair Of Concealment

i always see to it
that i understand what a family is
when we went to a trip
we make the pact
inside the plane that moment when
we step upon the plastic floors of the tarmac
i have already seen the hint
we understand i repeat we always understand
when we were there at the saigon shopping complex
we too understand
the family segregates as one block
shields itself from our interference
we understand that
and so we too have to create our own path
go somewhere else
to the market to the park to the palace of the president
we must learn to enjoy things by ourselves
we are not really a family
but splinters of dreams
one must realize
to each his own no dependence
one makes a story
fabricates the rest of the characters
develops the plot
complicate matters and then
arrive at the resolution of the big conflict
finally i decide
a poem is better this way
intrepid, limpid, crisscross,
wanting to open but must only show the closed door
to reveal but only to arrive at the consensus
that it is better concealed
mouths silent, lips sealed
hands that dance in the sky enclosing the fingers
with the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Indirectly...

i could have told you
i loved the way how Stevie Wonder
sang that song... i just called to say

i love you.

i care much for you
the usual nights that do not give me sleep
summer times have become
lonelier

i sent the message
and got the usual response

'Stop it! I don't want to be hurt again! '

i'm so sorry.
Thanks.

Perhaps i shall call again sometime
after another
25 years?

RIC S. BASTASA
Indiscriminate Green

And does the heart grow old? You know
In the indiscriminate green
Of summer or in earliest snow
A landscape is another scene,

Inchoate and anonymous,
And every rock and bush and drift
As our affections alter us
Will alter with the season's shift.

So love by love we come at last,
As through the exclusions of a rhyme,
Or the exaction of a past,
To the simplicity of time,

The antiquity of grace, where yet
We live in terror and delight
With love as quiet as regret
And love like anger in the night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Individuality

our bodies are separated
by the fences of our skins
our thoughts by the
silence of its scalpels
nothing Siamese about us
nothing.
so one finally goes her way
as i finally go on my
own personalized
journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Industrialization

an early morning treat
to the chirping sounds of the birds
the engines arrive in the form of the bus
the tractors and the caterpillars
the birds fly away carrying their songs
the chirping sounds fade
the buzz of the day is in the machine
paving, drilling, cementing, screaming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inexpensive Moments

holding hands
watching the sunrise at the boulevard

that is all
nothing to spend

RIC S. BASTASA
Infect Us

in the silence of the house
come and be my guest
tell us your story
make us laugh
infect us with the virus
of your happy moments
when you were gone away
we have mourned enough
cheer us now
with your presence

RIC S. BASTASA
Infection Of Happiness...

you see
them and you like the way
they make
themselves happy like they were
doing a duet and the song
was just perfect
to make you happy too and not just that

perhaps to sing with them
or if not
perhaps for you to sing without thinking
whether
there are those who listen and who later on

gets infected with this happy thing
and they too sing with you
as though you are not there with them

as though all of you do not exist anymore
because you are all taken away
with the happiness of a song.

RIC S. BASTASA
Infidelity

it is the usual guilt
numbing my
senses, that bulb switched off
as i hold your arms and
as your body grinds above me
i see someone else
and feel what love is there left
for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Infinity.....

i do not blame you for not believing me
sometimes i write using air.

how can i blame you for seeing nothing at all?

i do not blame for seeing no roots in my being,
these times of my life
i have sided with all the clouds

the fog have allied with my coldness
the mirage has claimed the desert of my travails,

i do not blame you for not looking for me
you must have heard the rumors that i have taken another...

i have exchanged you for the waves of the sea
which i have named infinity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Infusions Of Love

the shadows of trees
softly arrive at the closing
of noon,
the winds whisper an afternoon
of love
and caress, the leaves fall to
a music of cadences,
the river cascades, and
sings a love song,
for us,
as shadows dissolve in darkness
once more,
to learn to love again,
to forget
what conflicts are, what
troubles give,
disregard all differences now,
as love infuses every
nook of this empty soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ingon Ani Unta Ang Paghimo Sa Balak Nimo Alang Sa Imong Gikaibgan

sama sa atong paniudto
nga kinilaw
mas lamian ang sinilian
kadtong
puwa nga kulikot nga
haskang isoga

gihungit sa akong baba
gidulaan sa dila
gipaligid ligid sa alingagngag
ang kahalang

nanginit ang akong aping
mibukad ang akong apapangig
nakapiyong kos akong duha ka
mata sa gibating dili na
masabtan

sud sa utok ang mga larawan
gugma, kaulag, gugma,
kaulag, hangtod di na maklaro
kon asa ang usa sa usa

nangita ang wait sa laing init
nga wait diha sa sinilihang halok

miaso ang lawas nga bisan
buboan sa usa ka gabiing ulan
dili gyod mawagtang....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ingratitude

when the dragonfly
got lost in the woods,
the wind accommodated it
pushing it towards
its home,

when the wind travels and passes
over the dragonfly town
it looks for that blue dragonfly that it helped one time
in the woods,
the wind asks for nothing
but the dragonfly so safe in its house
looks at the wind
not even mentioning its name

it hurts so the wind goes away
as usual
on same spirited wings not asking for anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Inheriting A Confusion....

when we go back to
a place
we think sometimes
that it
will only be for a while

a few days
hence
you want to go again somewhere
wanting
to remember someone else
for someone

when we return it is because we
want to begin again
but in so doing
we want to leave again

i do not really understand
what i am at

i remember father when he rushed us
early that day
to ozamis

when we reached there just when the sun
was about to set
we rushed again
back home

he was not drunk
what i still remember is that confusion in his face

it is now
mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inhuman

i already learned from everybody,
i belong now to the majority
exited myself from the narrow alleys of the minority
where i can be myself
at home
with the loneliness of the crowd
nameless and yet
one for all safe and sound in this
comfort zone,

i move around in new places never lost
i always find a way to be back from where i begin
taking note of the landmarks that grief made
the signs that sorrow plant
in every nook of this road
that has no end

look at that distance
it is very far away and i am not scared

the only thing to do is keep walking
walking and walking
no rush
and it is here in this comfort of slowing down
where the mind
cannot ask
what is happening
it is convinced that there is nothing to worry
because
everyone is doing it
done,
in fact, like the majority
has turned
into one vacuum of silence
that when you try to ask
all their faces turn to you
as though
you are a mutant
a jinx
inhuman.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inig Takdol Sa Bulan

alang sa mga balakeros y balakeras)

inig takdol na gani sa bulan
ayaw og katingala nga dunay manubo
sa kilid sa atong mga bukobuko

dili nato ikaulaw ang atong kaliwat
dili kita nila mabasol sa atong pagkapak-an
gisunod lang nato ang ilang mga panaw

dili nato ikaulaw ang atong pagkawakwak
anad na kita nianang pagtukaw
anad na kita kon kita unya isalikway

RIC S. BASTASA
Inject

inject some
feelings
of love into your
poems

feel the syringe
with passion

and let the needle
pierce so gently
inside the flesh
of my thoughts

drug me into
the fantasy of
your metaphors

so i may live
another day more
away from
this misery
of boredom

RIC S. BASTASA
Injustice On A Miniature Scale

one is cold
because his blanket
is taken by you
and the world
is so cold
out there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Injustices

so many injustices have been committed
by minds that
do not know the real name of
charity

by hands that do not work
by those that neglect
what charity
asks

what generosity could have given
what we have denied
in the midst of our abundance

some hands beg but our eyes closed
our hands clenched

and we talk to our cell phones in louder modes
just to get rid of them

the sores of society
and then the wounds in our heart starts to pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Ink From My Mouth

when i decided to
embark on the field of poetry
i have already anticipated
ink from my mouth
not so unlike a dog rabid
a man salivating
for woman for raw mango
and salt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inner Peace And The Sound Of The Electric Saw

from where i am seated
beyond the fence of this old ground
they that do not mind the murder of peace
keeps on sawing what wood is left for the hands of this world to feel.

the roots cannot grow by themselves
when all the leaves fall when all the branches are cut
this greed for furniture this amassing of rails and stairs and door jams.

i am seated on a piece of ground without grass.
this is what is left of me in the middle of my quest for peace amidst this chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
Innocence

Hopefully it shall be your last pose
beside an old Thai wall
that separate
the pure from the prude
the promiscuous from those
still wanting to be one
without thinking of any possibility of unrest
or regret

Now I must shed off my hypocrisy
like a black coat on a warm weather
in this tropical part of the world

I must accept, I am seduced
and I am throwing all my education away

Naked, I plunge into the river of my own destruction
now, the arms of oblivion shall embrace me
and history shall erase the name that I have embossed
in the sands of my own time

RIC S. BASTASA
Inorder Not To Be Bitten...

the cobra looks at you
do not move just stand still

it cannot detect you
and won't bite because at this perspective
you are
non-existent

it is like all the realities around us
do not talk do not move and behave as though you do not exist at all

and there will be no biting
no casualty
like a pillar of the house
like the railways of the train
like the big tree along our paths
like the unmoving
sun...

RIC S. BASTASA
Inquilinism....

dog barks
on trees as
orchids
share no
howls but just
flowers
for the morning
woman
bathing on the
river of
our lives....

RIC S. BASTASA
Insanity....

it is not hard to notice that

insanity has two i's

solidity i
disregard the other i
do not overcrowd the word

sanity has only one i

and go further be sane

discard the i

you'll get an A

sshhh n.

RIC S. BASTASA
Insatiability

it is not a refusal to be full
it is just the emptiness that keeps on digging
there is a hole
inside you and nothing fills it
it gets deeper and deeper
and you fall
and you arrive at a chasm
without a solid ground
you float
like a feather on the wind
you are bound like a vine on a twig
you are not free
on this insatiability

RIC S. BASTASA
Insatiable

that is what
i am to you

unsatisfied
that is what
i am

let us think
love over

let us sit
and whisper

let us not run
away from this

we talk
and if you still want to go away

so be it
the feeling is mutual

RIC S. BASTASA
Insensitive

as one
cries before God
as one screams
for help
for the horror of
his personal situation

the other merely laughs
and giggles
over these realities
dismissing them
as pure
melodrama

i look at him
and he is getting older
damned
cursed
and shall enter
into an eternal assurance of
his own
hell

RIC S. BASTASA
Inshallah Alhamdulilah

Lina, what is the color of the light when you first saw it in the border between the north and the south?

was the crescent moon more beautiful when it was full?

tell me, am i in darkness? am i both blind and deaf? and those of the centuries, are they muted by the layers of stony truths?

what stone shall i kiss now? what sandy soil is left for me? what sun shall i face? what time shall i bow before the earth and tell it that i am another man?

did i ask the right question that Tony answered before?
You have not met Tony
He has a square jaw and he carries no puzzle of the jigsaw.

To all these things Lina
i will claim no knowledge
I will not doubt what to do with my long hair
I will not ask you to tell me where must i go.

I rely upon no other voice
But mine alone and no one hears it
The way i utter my own words to the sea.

The world is noisy, It is not only that. It is too crowded.
I am part of it in the crowd, but i am not listening anymore.

Back to the basics.
God made the trees.
The sea. The air has always been free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Box Of Faith

the whole day i am
inside this box,
shying away from the
outside light
and it will be the
same situation
throughout the night
but you will not ask me
why,
i am not sick,
i am functioning well
and i can be
your normal lover
forever,
this box is my home
my shelter
i am hurt and i am
trusting no one
every face is deceptive
many acts are
ambiguous,
i am thinking
it is more like it
inside this box
of measured walls
light leaks
and i drink it
i squat on its floor
my hands clasp
in silent prayer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Cage

he is inside a cage
and he does not really want to be inside the cage forever

the cage however is different
it is not locked and no one guards it

he is free to go out and get in anytime
this cage of his choice

he wants to get out of this cage for good
he just can’t

he loves to be caged somehow
despite the protest of his reason

he goes out to free himself but only after a while
he gets inside the cage again

in fact he is more inside it and locking himself in it even
he loves what this cage can provide him

his sense of privacy his taste for an enclosure
his genes his sense of wanting to be alone

his beloved prison where he keeps his sins
it is where his ecstasies are hatched and grown

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Closed Room

this moment
someone feels the discomfort
of an enclosure

it used to be
a mode of security
a protection
from the harm that
the wind outside
may cause
on the skin

this moment
has become an imprisonment
the darkness waits
wanting to get in

the windows like eyes
want to see
what darkness brings

the enclosure takes in
but never gives up

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Crowded Room

inside a crowded room
are litters
waste papers, mongol pencils
on the floor,
crumpled sheets of bond paper
paper glasses, and used plastic spoons
a chicken bone
dried catchup and
morsels of bread that the ants
start to take away

light has entered the slits
of the walls
this early morning
it is humid and dark
and i am bringing this white
porcelain vase
put it some water
not filling it to the brim

i have this red rose
that i pick from the garden
i put it there
i open the window

what is it? my friend
i let delight enter the crowded room
and i want it to stay there for a while.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Dream

sleep can be a cure
for remorse,
there is this temporary
deletion
of guilt

inside a dream the soul
does a lot
of reconstruction

my love for you for instance
oh, it was not brave enough
to withstand the fear that i may
not after all
deserve you

until now
you never know the reason why
i left you

it is this woman inside the dream
of my lonely nights
that begs always for an explanation

her hands are the hands of a beggar
while i am that man with a hat and shiny black shoes
whistling and
walking away from her gaze

her tears are like rain
the temples of indifferent men are wet again

it is this dream that wakes me up
with hypertension
and so i go to the kitchen rushing
to take a glass of cold water
and swallow this pill
again and again
there is an overdose of guilt
and no pill has ever taken it away
from my heart

i dream again
but the woman is no longer there
i have become the beggar myself
on a tattered conscience

when i wake up
i spit upon myself
oh, i was never brave enough
to tell her the truth
that this love is not strong
that she deserves
another man

i go out again
on another unplanned trip
watching those gray clouds
pierced by the
nose of the plane

when you are on top of this world
you feel so clean again
so new, like a traveler
stepping out
from the door
of the Boeing 707

in this land
where no one knows me
i am this guy
with a crocodile smile
caught on camera
and posted
in Facebook
tagged by friends
who care for me

some know the real story of course
but out of respect
do not make any comment

I'd like to tell them perhaps
that i am never broken

and no one even inside that dream
can ever break me

well of course,
in a loveless state
in a state of affairs where love becomes so irrelevant
upon a self-made
declaration

i am telling you
no one gets hurt

i am in an island now
faraway
where no one hurts me
and i, in turn
hurt no one

tonight when i go to sleep again
I'd like to be a man married to another woman
happily living it out
in a nice niche
where there will be no questions asked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside A Glassed Cafe

an unknown energy runs through me
and somehow i feel like a bed of pebbles where
recently the rage of water rushes
within me

i feel like a dike
the image of the Suez
coils in my
mind

i am inside a glassed cafe watching the rain
throughout the night
unceasingly....

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside Facebook

i am a song there
ready to be sung
you can sing me
if you want
i am my own lyrics
the notes are
taken from the
mouth of the bird
that sings only
at night
i am a song there
hanging upon a tree
like a very ripe fruit
you can pick me
and taste me
and then tell me
if i am selfish
for i am not
i am an offering
and you must not refuse
i am a song there
sing me and then
i will listen
and then i will know
who i am
where i am going
what i will become
it is your hum
your singing me
that can make me alive
your mouth can make
me a new bird
singing another song
for this world
tonight
look, the stars are listening
the moon is ready
for this dance of love
tonight
i am a song there
sing me now
give me life
touch me so tenderly
like a woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside My Own Nook

when i was small
when mother beats me
and father does not mind
i keep my own secret
in that nook
and do things all by myself

the love of self
despite
this awareness of my own
light
in my own darkness
i must learn to shine

it is the beginning of wisdom
loving myself
and doing the best of what i can be
without anybody's hands
touching mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside My Study Room

five o'clock, the usual time
but i already woke up at 3: 45
too early really
but i could not go back to
sleep

the words arrive
riding on the boat
such wind
hovering
disembarking in my
brain

i am surrounded by
glass walls
and light brown
drapes
books scattering
like garbage
on the floors and
tables

i smell the odor of
dust and
water inside a vase
unchanged
the red rose
had long wilted

no one comes around
to fix things
and keep all of these
in their proper places

the windows are still
closed and it
is still dark outside
though the crows
have already
sounded their
sad calls

the cocks keep sounding
it is already morning
and the windows
must not be opened

i write some lines
as usual and then
i'll wear my socks
and put on my
rubber shoes
and then i will take
my walk to the
woods

it will be cold
and i can see my breath
like smoke from a pipe
but i need this
my body craves
my feet want to move

the walls are too much
and the curtains feel
like they have to be washed

i open the door
and then i meet a new
world again
i know at first it will
still be cold
that is usual

i know after this
the sun comes again
as usual
and things will warm themselves
again

on promises
like what hope is all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside Our Bodies And Minds

inside our bodies and minds
are suns and moons

there inside are the changes
of days and nights

the eternal chase of two forces
darkness and light

passion and reason
evil and good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside Out

OUTSIDE
is the laughter,
INSIDE
is same laughter

i am the same
inside out, but sometimes

OUTSIDE
the rain pours out like the tears of the widow
INSIDE
the heart copes up with the stillness of the pond without the fish.

OUTSIDE
the laughter subsides
INSIDE
the crying begins

when we meet
since i do not want to share my grief
I am no longer the same
INSIDE OUT.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside That Big Space

inside that big space
you undress yourself
and remove
what you have
what you wear
what you
hold
you dropp them
all

for they are not yours
not even
your parts
you let them
all fall from
you
you leave them
in the space
reserved for them

clothes, underwear
skin, secrets
regrets,
even hope

you leave them
like sleepers
by the door

and then through
the cold wind
you must go

and not look back

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside That Dream...

last night i had vivid dreams
you and your mother were there
in vivid colors of purple
green and red

i was the white light through and
through
falling on the roof under the dark skies
and the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside That Room

inside that room

clutters of old things
a conglomeration of dusts
silent stones
broken wedges
blunt shapes and sharp edges

inside that room

that silence we both shared
isolated moans
tongues lingering

inside that room
our memories

now the door is closed.
inside that room
the noise of insistence
the clap of a disaster
we disown

inside that room
the impregnation of tough thoughts
with soft laces
of ductile memories

inside that room
oh! there is no

us anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Blue Kindergarten Bus

inside the blue kindergarten bus
that stopped a while in front of our old house
the kids are shouting

'leo! leo! leo! leo! '

on their blue dresses and red neckties
and black shoes and white sock
they keep on cheering

'leo! leo! leo! loe! '

honestly, i do not know what they mean
they look so excited
and happy

they wave their hands and then the bus speeds away.

who is leo? you ask me? how would i know.
I don't have a kid inside that blue kindergarten bus.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Bus Bound For Zamboanga

UPON his hand is
the black crow with a rope
at the base of its claw

He says it is domesticated
having fed it
when it was still without
feathers

If i like it
i may start to bid at
one thousand pesos
his offer
sigh!
who needs a bird without
freedom?

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Car One Rainy Day

inside the car one rainy day
one sees the scattering of people
who do not have anything

tears fall on your cheeks thinking
that you are miserable

you finally wipe them and look
at those other miseries of
children pushing carts to
hide their wares

of drivers looking
for their hard earned money

of women disappointed for
loss of customers

tonight
this damn rainy day that finally
gives you the comfort that
at least despite all your
self-invented sorrows
your
own chaos

you are still one
God damn lucky guy

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Cave

we are witness to the shadows in the cave.  
Not to be mislead we touch each others' hands.  
When we open our eyes we become more confused.  
There are more shadows born when we begin to speak.

We are always patient. We imagine soon, always, the soon in the shadows. Light created more shadows.  
We fear it sometimes. We begin to mistrust it.

We are still inside this cave with all the shadows of ourselves. We do not like to move, we are mocked  
We are imitated by our shadows inside the cave.

Tomorrow is the exit. We become friends of the Light.  
Then we become free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Dark Closet

you must have liked staying
inside the dark closet
even without the cricket

at least everything there
is neatly folded
with a system of
stacks one thing
over the other in
submissive silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Glass Is This Juice Of Creativity...

Amy is right
in the glass universe
you put on luck and fate
and randomness
serendipity
not much on the
intellect or the answers
but on the
incomplete matters
questions that ask
why am i here?
what is my role?
mix them all together
with a stirring
rod of anxieties
on the solid base of
the past
and there you it
such a juicy
creativity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Guts

there are things of course
better not said at all,
like the way the seed grows
its own first leaf
it's first view of the sun
it's first decision
to be the beautiful flower
and fruit that
it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Hotel Room In Hongkong

IF YOU SEE me here inside my hotel room
in Hongkong
you will not perhaps believe
that in such a short time of our separation
I am now looking
at our pictures

the one where we simply sit on the train
going to Baclaran
on the busy day
where we were looking at the other side of the window
taken by that stranger
upon our request
still strikes me

there was something in your eyes
that gives the premonition
something in the misty window
speaks about the unexpected twist
of a sad story
a plot that i have not mastered well
perhaps because
i was too trusting

the stupid man falls in love again
with a woman still possessing the full senses
of her world

i have decided to tear this picture
into tiny pieces of paper
my hands like a shredding machine
i open the window of this hotel
and let the tiny shreds of your face
be blown by the wintry wind
from the 13th floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The House Of Pain

a damaged brain inside a house of pain.
pieces of broken porcelain, all white and tiny.
under my feet. flying plates landing on walls.
smashed to the sound of bangs and cracks.
running mantels and falling glasses.
and viands splattering on the floors.
dirty carpets. stained curtains. broken windows.
loud words buzzing like giant bees in such a small room. where everything is a crowd of cruel words and slapping hands and pulling hairs.
mother wails and shouts for help.
father strikes her face. some blood bleeding on unwashed handkerchiefs.

children running away. hiding in corners of this world. all silent not needing any help because they are all to afraid to become big like them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Italian Cafe

you are seated
fronting me

beside me is my
wife sipping her
cappuccino

i look at you closely
you are beautiful as usual

long black hair
and soft fingers caressing each lock

an old night
and french music playing inside
an italian resto-cafe

i guess life is like that
an instance when one cannot do anything
except to gaze

my wife says
the cappuccino tastes much better in this cozy place

and you look at me
as though i am one kind of fire burning and burning

and you are fire too
and the whole place is burning too

outside the rain is heavy
and some cars are stopping on a traffic jam

a girl wearing blue jeans
gets inside the restobar and she is wet all over

here it is
this fire burning and burning still
water from her breast
drips and the floor is wet

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Library

one may accuse
a man reading a pile of books
of hiding away
from the touch of a lover
those fragile hands
not equated with the rough
feel of a page of
a book,
one may negate
his search as something
unnecessary
which should have better
be spent in the fields
of strawberries
and the stretch of green grass
and the tall lines of trees
in that cool green forest
but this man
does not sleep too
finding the words
in fact eating some of the
letters and
god forbids
now drinking some of
the dreary moisture
from the nooks
breathing the emptiness of
the shadows of the
room
till night.

he is on one hand
also a shape of sacrifice
a monument of greatness
a god
of those cockroaches
who by time shall
understand all these
quivers
Inside The Lonely Train

inside that lonely train
a man finds consolation in his black dog

but soon
life will be over as the train reaches
its destination too

death, oblivion, annihilation
on a global destruction

that even to his dog
a man cannot hold on to an intimacy

sooner, not later, everything ends
no dog, no man, no cockroach shall be spared

no virus, no germ, except perhaps
the truth, the word

not even this poem, this poet
or its reader too, because

it shall be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Moviehouse

inside the movie house
my lips are drying because it is so
cold in here, but with you
i get myself moistened up
with your constant flow
of salive from your
mouth to my mouth
tongue to tongue
i close my eyes to get
the picture of you sitting
on my lap my extra large sausage
rising up from its ruins
you rain on my valley
wetting my grass and
my cliffs have waterfalls
flowing steadily
there is this forest fire
and there are no firemen coming....

i know the title of the movie
but i cannot really remember the details
of the story..

and i don't blame you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Plane Bound For Cebu

it was brief
but just perfect for me
i only touched your
hand
and you smiled
and then i carried my
backpack
and left

on air
like a bird
at night
i feel
so complete

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Plane...A Note For Myself...

for an argument about
a seat number
i have degraded myself
into
the most foolish
man of the month

i could not imagine myself
humiliated
by my own self

somehow, i should have kept my mouth
shut

it is this orifice that puts me in hell sometimes

why did i not nestle in the dignified comfort of
my right to be silent?

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Room

i cannot be
intolerant about you
going inside my
room at this
unholy hour
naked in cotton
fabric against the
light of the moon
your hair
flown by the wind
from the window
opening

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Room Early Morning

when you wake up this morning
you decide not to lift your finger
your body frozen inside
your thoughts
you spread your arms like a cross
fix your gaze in the ceiling
light enters through the leaks of
the walls
like warrior rods of flashes of
lights
this is spectral,
something sacred
when you let the morning
do things
the way it likes it
when you feel like a cross nailed
in bed
alone and so
naked

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Room Where We Are Alone

how can i forget you
when we were inside the room
just the two of us
you hinted about love
the fields of desire
insatiable
that wish to be
with you
forever

how can i be so cruel then
not to mind the way your hands
touch mine
the way your tongue slides
something so wet and sweet
in between your lips
to mine

how can i be so foolish
to pretend that this is nothing but a passing of time
a mere slip of the mind
folding upon itself
and then spreading too thinly
upon a numbness
of the bored existentialist

when you close your eyes
so i may kiss you

i look beyond the green fields
i gaze beyond the blue seas

i have fears
that i may finally be lost between your thoughts
in the middle of my oceans of concerns

i may become the ship that sinks
and then be forgotten
i chose indifference
i built a fence
i made a sunless horizon
i vanished the moon
i hid in the silence
in the darkness

i do not know what love is, frankly, anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Room....

we are only two
inside the room
later
we shall mislead
them into
thinking that
we are only
one

we are one now
inside the
room with closed
windows
and locked doors
and they
want to hear the
sound of
the bed
or the floor

we are one now
and you tell me
that
but then
i am not asleep
like the one
at the sky
hanging like a
lone star
still feeling the
vast emptiness
of this space
between us

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside The Void

inside the void
you like to die in the void
you like to die

wait, do not die yet
there is this sense of
things unfinished
you have not really done
everything and some things are messy
and need to be put in their proper order

you are called upon by time to
correct some mistakes
of others, or even of nature itself

it is not time to die yet
this is but a beginning
an emptiness that lectures
and guides and soon shall find
some ways to fill
some things
some people

soon they will come before your
eyes and soon you will understand

things and people may be late
like a fireman like a policeman
but they make a good finishing
a happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside This Boat...

paddle your way
take the boat
do not mind the
waves of this sea
focus on the
coconut island
where the women
are dancing
where the men
are drinking wine

let your hands
be strong
your mind as sharp
as your spear
let your patience
be like the sun
let yourself be open
like an edgeless
horizon

paddle your way
into the waters of fate
out there
after this darkness
the kindness of light
and the opulence of
air
wait for you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside This Room I Eat Fear

inside this dark room
it is only you who will be afraid

i am not
i will never be like you

i am ready for what can be touched in the dark
i do not mind what they are

i have nothing to lose
because i have nothing to give

inside this dark room
i eat fear and i am always a hungry man

nothing satisfies me
did i not tell you about this once?

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside Your Armpits....

the years that you pour
on that bottle
are many,

accumulating sands,
white,
smooth to the taste of your eyes
sometimes you touch them and you let them slip

you grasp for breath
and so you gently return them back
like robins to their
nest

you contemplate of breaking the hourglass
and then
go away like a stranger

despite
time still stays beside you
inside your
armpits.

RIC S. BASTASA
the best way to escape is to use the fingertips.
From it some words are shot like bullets hitting anything
But there is no death here.
No war. There is only the sojourn, some moments
of variations like
gyrations of the human body that looks for
some blankets of affection.
The human body is nil now.
The touch is elusive as an ell.
The river is crowded with moss and mud
and the fishes can hardly breathe.
Life, this is life actually
The one that moves lonely amidst the crowd
in the mall one Sunday evening.
people are families. They are so selfish among
and within their circles.
You have none of it. You are an alien.
A mutant.

You need another mirror to see how beautiful are you.
Without it, there is no more light in the room.
And in the darkness only the palms grapple for touch
like grappling for breathe
In order to live.

We make some trades.
Barters really.

I barter loneliness with the circus of my mind.
Acrobatic thoughts, juggling circumstances
Opting for the magic of transformations.
I can be a rabbit and then a flower
and the children open their mouths for me.

At the end, we take whatever makes us comfortable.
It is not always a chair.
An earphone, sunglasses, Chiclets,
peanuts in my hand, or
lemonade sipping,
summer hats, bathing trunks,
diver's oxygen,
or could simply be a book of poems by whoever,
immersion, diversion,
these are the words. We are not the same.
I have my own point of view. I take my own walk now.
Or i shall dance
and sing.

None of your business
because inside your circle,
i will always be an alien.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inside Your Great Self....

all she had to do was
write about a leaf, or a bird perching
one rainy upon a grain
of wheat,

voila! she is great
just like the way Picasso uses only two lines
to draw a breast of a feeding woman

how foolish can you be
searching for the golden ant with silver wings
trying to please them
with it

all toil, suffering yourself like
a Sisyphus,
you are still nothing
trying hard, copycat

forget about it, junk them
discover the great self within you

believe, Shakespeare is
a slave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Insignificant

from among the sands on the shore i am but a single grain of sand
insignificant
indistinguishable
in fact just like the rest i may just be nothing

but if you really love me babes, as i have loved you
i will stand out from the rest of those billion grains
i am not a single grain anymore
i shall become

your sun your universe

RIC S. BASTASA
Insignificant Links...

as we were talking
he arrived at the connection between the shoes
and poverty
and i was wondering what is the link of
that shoelace to
lack of meaning
we became silent until a man without shoes
came running
without reason for he lost his mind
when by his anger he murdered
his friend who borrowed his pair of shoes
and not returning
them

it is the experience that links us
to something that we think was insignificant at first

for instance he begins today with another
bewilderment
that piece of string and that
prison.

RIC S. BASTASA
Insistence...

satyr sits upon a rock
and looks at me, there seems to be a problem
he says, i ask, what?
he says you are not that happy anymore
forgetting our place
and the things that you once teach us to do
now we want to teach you what you have forgotten
i am silent
i am changed i tell him

the sands of time have been slipping
too fast i point to him the horizon dimming like
a torch being put off by cold air

the sound of thunder cuts us
the rain comes and we lose sight of our mutual
insistence.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the first place i know
it was never there
never for once
but i am testing it today with
a conversation something nonsense really
like: what will do you for your
birthday tomorrow? and the answer
was, there is never any preparation
and if ever there is
it will be only for vampires and i still insist
that for the sake of said party
i can be a vampire too
but he quits
the nonsensical and gets out to the blue
i am left
with the full realization

get lost! i can manage talking to myself
alone
i can manage this void
fill it with words
that never rhyme
but just the same
this serves the purpose
something that relies upon itself
very existential
my friend once says
but he is dead
he smashed his car at the wall of the university
he smashed his head at the stirring wheel
and the rest
is regretful and here i am again
very existential
stony, scaled, rough, and
insistent for any talk
though no one wants to listen
but i am strong now
i can be myself
without anybody else
so what? get lost! i finally said
in the last episode.

RIC S. BASTASA
Insomniac

there is something in me that does not sleep
and all the rest are protesting in these sacrifices

the bed is warm it is hot it has fire and it will burn me
i need to step outside
to feel the rain asking for more water
to cool me

i am here in this pool of water
water poems, cool lines of water poems
some pails of poems some lines that lull
some pills of poems
that i swallow
to make me sleep
but when? these poems do not have the word

sleep, or weary, or bore
they have this word they like
insomniac

RIC S. BASTASA
Insomniac Butterflies...

i can't sleep
upon this
Durban Deep,

my eyes are
butterflies
flying out the
window
from the house
of my heart

i am blind

outside the flowers
are captivating
two insomniac
butterflies

winking, the petals
signify
ultimately the breaking
of four wings

i am blinded by the
absence of
my portions

be the flower of my trust
seduce my butterflies
take them
in the sweetness of
your nectar

their proboscis
upon your bosom
in drunken ecstasy

it is only through this
that i will see
the light of morning again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Insomniac Fool

i look again at you
today, it will not be the last
of course,
I am always punished
by feeling
love
to you, and I argue with myself
why? what is in you that
I should love you?
never mind me, there is never
a reason that
you will..... but I look again at you,
there are no reasons,
there is no single reason why
I must love you
I win the argument against
myself

tonight, I shall die again
because I cannot forget you
and I shall always be at the mercy of
your indifference
which I
of course, perfectly understand

the night wins again
I am dying to get a glimpse of
what sleep
looks alike

RIC S. BASTASA
Inspiration

let the brush begin
let the strokes be gentle
but let all these be
definite with a sense of
a mission
a purpose

paint me oranges
like suns
green patches of
grass
like peace
paint me the blueness
of the seven seas
let these be not as dark
as the night
let there be openings
like doors and
windows
so i can breathe

let me live
like i was once so alive
let me go through all these gently
like the fluttering wings
of a sky blue butterfly

you are my flower
scented with morning lemon
let me
on such a short moment
bloom
and then
even for a day
just a day
wilt with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inspiration...

a red rose too
says bukowski burns
all day....

RIC S. BASTASA
Instruction From A Text Mate In My Local Language

sugata
ang
kabuntagon
sa usa ka maanyag
nga pahiyom
ug gaksa
ang bag-ong
pagsidlak sa adlaw
uban sa saad
sa matam-is
nga gugma
sa Diyos

maayong buntag!

(in english)

meet the morning
with your
beautiful smile
and embrace
the new rising
of the sun
together with
the promise
of God's sweet love

good morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Instructions For The New Puppy In The House

please do not
mix the slippers

do not take
the pair to the
garden

please do not
urinate in the living
room

please do not
bite the chair cover

please do not chew
my shoe

please do not
sleep on the
pillow

& please do not
call me papa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Instructions From The Wise

The first rule:
keep an untroubled spirit.

The second:
look things in the face
and know them for what they are.

the third and the last:
it is all yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Integridad (Pahinungod Sa Imong Kaligdong)

kanang mosulod ka
sa pultahan
unya silang tanan
molantaw
sa imong nilakwan

madungog ang
ginhawa sa hangin

saktong pagtugdong
sa papel
sa salog nga kahoy

RIC S. BASTASA
then you tried to stand
on your own feet
we observe you as you begin
to lift your body
your hands pushing this whole weight
upwards

(looking for the miracles that the
skies could possibly give?
ah, there is none
not even a streak of light
to give you energy
the moon is not there yet
and the sun just sink to the
dark horizon)

you failed again
your feet as fragile as your mind
are short of strength
in the same manner that your
brain failed to process
the logical consequences of
a premature
independence

you are crying
tears as big as corn grits
fall to the mocking earth
we are watching you closely
we pity you
yet we must be strong to let you
know that pain and survival
are twins
we evaded that final scene
when you lay prostrate to
the ground
as you begin to curse
the earth
that now and forever
never really minds
as to who dies
who lives
who conquers
who perishes to the
layers of
this universe
you see, this is an indifferent world
who tells you

man you are free
and now you are on your own
like an eggshell
from its yolk

RIC S. BASTASA
I remember meeting you last summer and you told me
I am intense; you stared at me, and felt my hand
And frisked my body,
Whatever was it that you meant,

I know what intense is,
Like intense loss
Loss of someone you love so much and who loves you like
You are everything
Like you are the whole world and when you are gone
The whole universe will be empty,
The great void,
Irreplaceable, intense feeling of gratitude for the love unequalled
Immeasurable, like taking grip of her hands when you are falling from
A cliff, you hang there for while, looking at the ants below
Without her timely hold you could have fallen, smashed yourself
Dead like a watermelon crashing to the pavement from
The 10th floor,
Tragic
but I see that you are intense too
Painting your life in the canvass using your weak hand
Testing how the face of God and your face beside will look
Like when the left hand is used, when you are right handed since birth,
Intense weakness
Tested
Something new, tonight I will try it with her; I have to know if she will
Love me through, these intense weaknesses within me
I will not use anything
Let us see what my uselessness can do for her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Intensity Lost And Found

a click of a knob  
a gasul oven opens  
your hand does it  
air filled with acetylene gas  
there is no flint  
to create a fire  
you arrive at the scene  
with a look a flicker  
of a glance and you  
blink, my goodness

you have just caused  
a conflagration

a house burning  
in a short while  
below your feet

charred, this being,  
this body, all the bones  
turning into  
ashes

no, they do not want to be reborn.

RIC S. BASTASA
no matter how you close the doors and windows
cover the chairs and tables
put some glass walls
dust, these unwelcome, particles, always come
and with neglect
they pile upon your favorite spaces and places
you check them with your fingertips
oh, they're thick and plenty
you blow them away with your strong breath
they all come back again
like your enemies wildly laughing always reminding you
that from them, and to them, you shall return.

these are the madness of the majority.
Denial.

RIC S. BASTASA
Interactive

I write some lines and you read each word
A word excites you and you take it up to
Seed your fields where you grow your own
Shrubbery of words with tendrils climbing
I look at your garden of words and there is
This word growing into a flower attracting
Me I pick it up this sensual flower and I
Seed it in the lines of my mind now another
Bunch of words like ripe grapes I take one
Swallow it and savor the taste of its sweetness
More lines of words in my throat sliding
Through the lining of my esophagus so smooth
Going straight inside the veins leading to my heart
Sweet, so sweet I could have written the usual
Lines of “I love you, I miss you” but I couldn’t
There is this roadblock, this writer’s block
The lines stopped, the words are stunted
I stutter, I retreat to my eyes, to see
The face of this woman I love, her eyes
Are gentle, she smiles at me, and waits
For this beautiful silence that gives her life
You stand there, looking for a hint, another
Word to seed the lines waiting to be written.

RIC S. BASTASA
Interconnected

How can I be so in love with you?
the mind asks

the heart smiles in silence
for humbly it knows the answer

for one who knows the passion
also knows the corresponding pain

and pain does not speak that well
attuned to its loneliness of having

to suffer alone in that place where
silence is the only cure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Interconnection

find for yourself how things and creatures really interconnect
find how the distant sun
has given life
to the blind fish
in the deepest sea

how the eel finally meets
the laddle

how the foot of the man found its way to the moon
and how we change our definition of the world

and ourselves
new names, new outlooks

opening the window
waking up and just letting the light from the shutters spread
seemingly endlessly stabbing the dark

finding that life is so beautiful and knowing that in a minute
you shall die

yes, i received his email which says that indeed he is dying
believe him
it does not matter to you anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Interconnectivity...

there must be a link between
a caterpillar
and the nail

on your theory of inter-connectivity
though we
most of the time burn bridges
break ships
and live on islands
there must be a trace between our
ashes

either those scars
or those new skins

words are growing wings
to fly to you
you have designed cages
however
to keep them
dying

my fingers want to touch your lips
your teeth grit
there is no truth to your bibles
where termites
build their empires...

RIC S. BASTASA
Intermittent Goings And Comings...

and then
most of them
are gone

marianne left
when her mother
was sick and
jun before that
burned their
house

we cannot deny
the success of others
nena's son is now
a pilot
deborah's daughter
enter the nunnery
joseph's cousin
got a u.s. visa
and so on and so forth

different forms of
happiness
bliss in different hues
joys in blasting
colors

at the boulevard as
we walk
we have become familiar
with the sameness of
sunsets and sunrises

accepted finally the
cycle of life
a pendulum of arrivals
and departures

they say that we diminish
ourselves
with all the goodbyes

we look at each other
we shake our heads and then
walk away bringing with us
the intermittent comings and
goings of
laughters and silences

and then we too
are gone
we know that from
the very
beginning......

RIC S. BASTASA
Internalility...

Now that all is lost in the air
what do i have to take inside myself again?

what i shall i decide to save for my future?

i must listen to the placid
pool, sit there a while, and see for myself again
that peace inside my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Internet Cafe, Robinsons Fuente

perhaps all the people here
skyping
are talking about business

or about flights canceled
wanting for a rebooking

it shames me
i am talking about an emotion

perhaps if they will know
that i am writing a love poem

vis-a-vis my age
my looks, my dress code,
my glasses,
my ring-finger, and my black back pack
with less clothes in it

surely they will burst out laughing

if they ask me
perhaps my answer shall be about being lost

not about love
(for how can i afford myself being humiliated in such a public place like this?)

there are Americans on the other side of the cafe
there are lovers kissing each other openly after sipping brewed coffee

x x x

but being about being nothing at all

or perhaps i will tell them
that this world is about to end tonight

buildings crash down to earth
seas growing tongues in their huge mouths
swallowing us all
and that i do not mind

how this world annihilates itself
or when it ends
or even if it ends this split second
like a

wind of your eye

i will not of course
tell them that i am growing tired and unhappy and discontented

that this feeling of unfairness is a vine to my old body
a snake to my arms

they do not mind it
they will not give a hoot

they shall keep on typing on their keyboards
doing business

people are still frightened
i am funny
i write about love

but i tell them
i am not frightened anymore

when the waves come
when buildings are swallowed
when islands sink
when all the people in the streets scream
when the malls vomit all its customers
the buying public
this crash commercialism of all sorts
softer hair, smoother face etc etc

i sit calmly
and give all of my hands
in a hundred percent
surrender

well,
all of us are dead somehow.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Internet Poetry

I and the internet
Sensitive nerves
Concentrate in
My fingers
Making sweet sounds

RIC S. BASTASA
Interplay Of Cold And Love...

rain is a constant visitor of dawn
it is the conclusion of the cold nights we had
the world is colder now
yet we are still so wet
with love....

RIC S. BASTASA
Intimacies Of The Nights

do not tell your name to the night
for you may be finally embarrassed
humiliated by the standards of the
day, the strictness of light
that binds and blinds
to the wildness of the nights
submit, but always be concealed
like the hidden face of the back room
the curtains of the door
the bowls of the rest rooms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Intimacy

an old man with a
white beard
wrinkled face
bald and slouchy
walking slowly
with his olive oyl
on the white sandy beach
the sun shines
the waves foamy
the sea breeze
cool and
caressing

RIC S. BASTASA
Intimacy Between Man And Dog

LAST night the dog
was alone. It has to be outside the house.
It is his job.

This morning it slips through the
newly opened door
waggles its tail
licks my feet
and keeps its body beside mine.

There is no grudge.
Last night was forgotten.

People should have been like that.
Duty and intimacy
holding close.

RIC S. BASTASA
Intimacy....

it is more
in the mind, and so the brain
makes a room
for us
two,

we shut up the mouth of
the universe

we fall short of the words
which we have mastered

it is the moan
of loneliness meeting another
moaning of
emptiness

glasses are made full and then
we empty them
and then we fill them all again
with what
we cannot really fully
comprehend

we have thrown away everything
shed off clothes, skin,
thoughts

wind to wind and rain to rain
and then in the silence of the room
after
sunlight slowly creeps in
from the
shutters of our
windows...

RIC S. BASTASA
Intimated

do not speak about
an intimidation for such a
word is not poetic,
not romantic, not lovely,
speaks more of the anarchy
and the oppression of the
masses, a cousin of fear,
child of insecurity,

speak to me in whispers
inside a room, scented with
lotus candles, incense and
prayer,
let us get a little of intimation
friends, and/or even
hard core lovers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into A Deep Sleep Where Dreams Reside.

It is all about some things that we cannot forget
we write them hoping to know why we remember

perhaps it is not the search for reasons but the way to find
how those feelings were once

those that make us fly like birds those that make us so agile like
fish

those that make us horny like bulls and those that make us so gentle
like swans

the pool makes us remember how still can be so quiet
the rivers show a stream of thoughts and the place where
they all meet to the sea

where sea meets sky where thoughts turn into realities of
boats and paddles sailing toward that island of our paradises

upon a stupor that finally catches with us
into a deep sleep where dreams reside.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into A Murmur

spontaneity misspells
a lot of words, for the mind
is rushing and the hands as usual
are limp,

as spontaneous as you, you are
not bothered, at all, at these
unusual, pauses, likely abused,
by the hands of these hours,

spontaneity comes like an uninvited
stranger into your house,

eats a cookie, drinks beer, and
lets you swallow your pride, tells
you that you are stupid,
and forgives you somehow for being
honest,

and then leaves you alone again,
into a murmur

the barbar in you, which they all
agree, could have been barber, but
you insist...barbar, barbar, barbar...

barbaric breaths, breaking into
a blurbing barb, messing mesmer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into A Place Where You Are Not Welcome

when you find yourself
in such a place
you imagine yourself
in the middle of the fire

the fire burns all day
you may not get charred
but you finally find your body
without nerves

you walk with them
and you feel that you have no more heart
that beats inside your chest

why stay in that place for long?
inflicting death to the very pulse
of your arm

RIC S. BASTASA

would you have children as dogs? quite a cruel proposition, would you have dogs as children? quite a pitiful situation.

there is no choice sometimes between cruelty and pity. between arrogance and humiliation. to avoid this dilemma, one goes out of the circle and slips from an orbit. takes time really. takes the anti-gravitational force to skin you out from the system. But it happens. It simply happens. To me.

one day in your life you are out. But it is not really out. You in. Into freedom.

Bird away from a cage. Into the cage of space. Out of space. Into the cage of a black hole. Into an imagination that goes back you you, as its cage alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into Another Dimension....

you are silent

but i do not question it

i do not need an answer

silence itself is the giver of an answer

i give respect to silence with another silence

it is their marriage into a bond of wisdom

there will be no hands clapping

because wisdom do not need praise and acknowledgment

this is now our silent world

as we try to move into another higher dimension.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into Another Nowhere....

last night i was alone in my room
feeling strange about a bed that has gotten big for my size

drifting dreamily along with the pillow in my arms

it is a readiness for something big which this mind honestly conceives
no one dies here but soon every butterfly is free

every bee makes a sting and every flower blooms
the road gets longer and wider and a new song shall be sung

as i drive along in summer time into another nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into Another Reality

after the usual lengthy
lecture in the university
the usual hour after
something like 8:45
on such usual evenings

i take the usual drive
from the city to my
urban homesomething like
fifteen kilometers alone

but this
time it will be different
i'll have the loud sounds
of some Queen songs on the DVD
and I'll join singing with them like
I'm going slightly mad

I was born to love you &
I wanna break free

and to All Fat Bottomed Girls
this is your Good Old-fashioned Lover Boy
Let's Get Down Make Love
Headlong
Heaven to Everyone
In the Lap of the Gods...

RIC S. BASTASA
Into Its Bosom

Darkness is not
alone

it is with me
and i am with it

with us together
we make the beautiful song
of our solitudes

it is still and calm
slowly i move deep
into its bosom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into My Own Chosen Silence

Ten thousand miles apart
you too
are my old woman dear
having that
wisdom in your own
right
as mother and
godmother
for me,

there is this disease
(not just loneliness
that slowly is killing us

ten thousand times more painful
than the measured distance)

but has not killed us so far

i am strong, and
you are stronger

ten thousand times more than what we are added to each other

we live, and we like to live more for
ten thousand days more

i see you reading a book

i am setting mine aside
i am sleepy and carrying on

that smile

into my own chosen

silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into My Own Mirror I Shall See My Own Image

the whirlpools of my mind
on a narrow strip my thoughts shall flow
and then strangely enough
the path widens unnecessarily from this island
some whirlpools
Giant whirlpools in fact I see from a distance
where I stand
but
I have no fears
because I am with you
and you are always silent
I take your hands
to my hands
and bring the mirror in the ship
sailing west
bound for England
perhaps there we will see some images
but not of ourselves
their
shall we be sad?

there is no bother
they are our brothers too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into My Own Privacy....

i do not wish that you become a part of me
like light to my room
i do not need any
i thrive in the comfort of my own darkness
with an option
whether to partake with light
or not

i am but a room with a little space
a small bed enough for my arms and legs
just enough
for my sleep,

i destroyed the ceiling
so i can see the
stars
i closed the windows and doors
so i cannot be
with anybody

i do not wish you to stay and be friendly
i like to enjoy how is it to be unfriendly
in some
moments where i cherish my own privacy

the silence of the paper in cohort with the pen
that romance with words and symbols
and in between thoughts, the precious solitude of
not being with anyone,

i am both the deserting and the deserted.
it's a certain stage and i want more of it

without all of you, i have this gift of thought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into Something New

he prepares into something.

it is new, the way to throw possibly all things,
those old polo shirts
unused shoes, so many back packs,

lessen the load, and
possible empty the house

and then what you see are only floors
and walls and

then you start removing those walls
and floors and

for the last time you go down the
stairs and

with the use of an ax you break
each step

and then you say now you are ready
into something new

walking on the bridge on the river
and then
upon arriving at the other side

you burn everything

the river is the witness
sole witness

since no one is there anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Beautiful Journey Of Untruths

i know it is true but i will not tell you. It kills.
And i want you to be alive and happy. It is a lie.
This truth is your poison. You are willing to take it. I know.
But how can i see you die? without me dying with you?
It is not a lie.
So i will lie with you. And you must lie to me.
This lie is sweetest wine. Our hands are cups.
We drink the sweetest wine and we become spirited.
Happy together in this.
Our words are islands, without shores.

I'll take this truth for you. I am an antidote.
You take a lie. It makes you breathe. You live.

when will this journey end? Come, walk with me to this endless road.
Now, we both are lies ourselves. Look at the mirror?

we are mirrors. Look at us? Do we not make a perfect pair?
My lying soul mate,
lies are us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Bottom Of The Ocean

the sky
has a jewel for you

it is the sun
you like light and you

traded your hands
for wings

by thinking more
your feet turn into fragile
hair

you fly towards the
magnificent light

only to be burned
charred

you fall back to
square one of ash

in the deepest part
of this ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Circle Of Life, Let Us All Dance...

come, come into the circle of life
let us dance, into the circle of life
let us dance, like the circling of the earth
come, come, have no fear, let us dance to the dance of life

do not fear to die,

i was once a slug
and a child caught me
and played with me
and crushed me

i died and then i became a bird
and i fly the skies and then a child caught me with his sling
and put me in a cage
and then i died

and then i became a man
and i walk the earth and journeyed to its corners
and got caught in the war and i was shot in the head

and then i live again
much greater than the past
higher than what i was....

so come, come into the circle of life
let us all dance, dance, into the circle of this life
not lesser than the past
come, come, have no fear, my love, let us dance gently into the dance of life

have no fear, rise above what you were once.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The City....

now in this black and
white world
this room of cubes and
blocks

this pile of well cut
tiles and fitting them
like a box

shunning all sweets and
weaknesses
jumping over matters
that keep us stuck

rabbits not turtles
highways not just trails
sneakers and not bare
into the city we all dare.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Desert....

into the desert
one survives as a cactus

others are scorpions
and vipers and
rattlesnakes

not all dream of oasis
not all expect rain

some wish to climb a
date palm
touch the moon and
drink those stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Feudal System

we'd like to change this world
we'd agree there should be no masters

no tenants, all independent beings
living life pursuant to need not greed

i traveled to far lands and ate ideas
looked for patterns and took them home

i visited your house and you were alone
surrounded by servants at your command

we admit we were too inconsistent then
for how did ever survive without all them?

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Mystery Of The Unknown...

fate has a mind of its own
it tinkers too
and performs an experiment
in you
loves guinea pigs
wonders about worms
inside
the humus of the
mind

fate is not cautious
about the softness of your
sensations

it has a choice of its own
no standards to follow
much of the time
unreasonably unfair

do not lurk like a mad soul
a destroyed
bent misshapen
spirit

it will consider you as
another
statistical mishap

take revenge
erase the lines of your palms
venture into the unknown
where fate
too has never gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Pool Of Death....

what is prohibited
i take an offensive stance
i go there alone
savor it
like a giant pizza
and barrels of coca cola
i drink the whole river
eat chunk by chunk a mountain
siphon the clouds inside my mouth
you are all shocked
this matter is unexpected of my
an honorable man
diving into a pool of death
an ocean of lapses
swimming with the whale
you do not understand
why i am doing all these
i satisfy myself
bore myself until i am full
and numb
and no longer anticipating
seeking
i triumph over sin
seeing it and no longer
amazed by it
there is no saliva coming
from my mouth
my tongue dislikes it
finally
my body dead to desire
my spirit now rules
transcends
climbs and flies into
the well sought
and illusive
heavens....

RIC S. BASTASA
the glass on the table
falls
to the hard floor and
shatters

harsh voices come out
it was like a ship sinking
where the sea once again
sips a bundles of helpless hands

the artist in you gathers all
chips of wood, chirps of birds
the time after the shatter
limbs of lonely lives

then there is a canvass of your
imagination

there shall be no black
it shall be red and all its shades

more than fifty in fact
add nineteen other shades of shades

blushes on your chicks as you
slide your leg to another leg as you swallow
your saliva like your pride

into the room
happiness is chiseled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into The Tunnel Of Fantasy

to kill love, one must imagine the ugliness
of a capture

a bird in a cage unable to sing
a lion lying low a tiger moving to and fro
inside bars

i once thought about a gun, a hand that pulls a trigger
to kill a love wasted as it is unrequited

on the other hand, it is the blood that dances upon each vein
a tongue singing
a mouth salivating
a heart doing its pumping
a rush of adrenalin

which keeps us so alive and so
why should i murder it with a forgetting?

i shall take it
hide it, and at night i shall imagine it with me

passionately, passionately
the face of love that finds its way
back to the secret tunnel
of fantasy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Into This....

she says
do not worry
things will take shape
the way God wants it to be
like what we want
the wish that
upon itself
is granted
as though
it is one
living
cell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Intransparent

in the desert you see a mirage.
on the mountains lots of fog
beneath the forest are the mists
inside the womb of the sea
lights are refracted, things appear
so near and touchable so real

there are in transparencies
unavoidable as you and I.
do not grope for words to put
ourselves in the cage of thoughts.

we are always beyond description.
we become sometimes a painful obsession.
it is at this moment, when forgetting becomes
the most necessary joy: a handshake, a hand waving
goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
the world outside does not matter
anymore
ideas come rushing to your head
seasons enter
your hair like a strong wind
slowly you pick those past
memories and
tell yourself
they do not bother
anymore
some pieces of you are scattered
in the room
you look at them and you are so amazed
so many of you
and yet so unaffected by the dance
of light and darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
Inventing You Inside Myself....

i search you
in the skies, seas, even underneath
the layers of this earth
i could not find you,

this loneliness keeps the search
about the best in you
there is nothing that i can find

and so i invent you
create you from the best in me
until i must find you
within me

then i do not have to search anywhere
for now
you are inside my heart
making me live for another moment
deep to the deepest core
in me

RIC S. BASTASA
Inveteracies...

a heap of dry leaves
under the trees

trees like fingers
stretching to reach
the moon

on the marshes
of the big river
the full moon sits
silently

a dog barks
this morning
at the wrong person

someone calls my
name but i do not dare
look back

promises are
feet without floors

faith is always
a blind item
and people accept
them always to
be true
and all giving
and
reliable

blank walls
speak too much

doors close
at the wrong hours of the
day
windows imitating
the natural
beauty of some
sexless eunuchs

facing the monitor
i am the nuclear
sun
threatening the room
that the explosion
is near

the dusts run in panic
the winds
stir the pebbles into
rebellion

etcetera is when
you do not know what is next
from your
self-proclaimed
knowledgeability

30.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inviolable Social Institution

it is this inviolable
social institution where
a kitten
has learned to sleep
with the puppy
without too much
strain

in their loneliness
they have learned to accept
that differences
do not matter

when love fails however
they invoke
the power of the law

eventually, one becomes
the lawbreaker
while the other one
enjoys the sweet fruits
of alimony

one becomes free
and shouts his newly acquired freedom
the other too
if you only know
does the same
in another place another party.

RIC S. BASTASA
Invitation From Latvia By Marjorie Evasco

(Inspired by “Big Sea # 1” by Vija Celmins and “Penelope as Painter” by John Berger,

I.
It is the sea, Vija, before my eyes —
Shimmered by the constant measure of your hand’s
Pressure on trough and crest: each wave
Crumpled by shadows the wind makes
As it blows from the frozen steppes
Of your knowing heart. But you are
Nowhere in your painting.
You have stepped into anonymity,
Thirty years an explorer with your graphite
And oils, tracing the world’s visible lines,
Searching the mysterious vast,
The mast of your pencil or brush
Following the light in the eye,
In the disciplined patience
Of an old hand of the Baltic.

II.
Big Sea #1 reminds John Berger of Penelope
On her own odyssey of beauty and faith,
Ravelled strand upon bright-colored strand
Measuring each day’s exacting frame,
He calls your way of loving hand made,
Hand maiden to the daily art, moving inch
By slow inch with allegiance to matter,
To what truly matters in the long stretch:
Design the careful eye sees, waiting
For images to reach their own completion
That the artist’s hand may fix the vision
To memory: stones from the desert,
Nightskies of our wondering,
The threatening distances only patience
Or love can warm into wonder.

III.
In the Visayan Sea, Vija, lies an island
Shaped like a water buffalo cooling itself
After a day’s work under the sun
Pulling the plow furrow after furrow
Of possible plenitude. On this island
Called Apo, old women call the fishermen
“Weavers of the Sea, ” criss-crossing
The waters Furrow after furrow
For the meagre meal. The sea which surrounds
Their island resounds to the sea of your memory
As you compose the tones, precise as music
Heard from the lips of a conch shell, bringing news
of the world’s magnificent indifference
To which we give homage
With an old and deliberate tenderness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inviting The Devil Into Your Home

filled with so much longing

sadness sifts and drifts and seemingly you have allowed this unnecessary item to drag you away helplessly

like a cloud in a daft of breeze

there must be courage somewhere like a hidden dagger

which you plunge in this void and it feels the pain too and leaves you in peace and silence

sometimes we are too busy to take this sadness

and those who keep the vision and the true mission

shoos away that common depression....

for those who stay idle invites the devil
in their homes...

RIC S. BASTASA
Invoking The Simple Symbols To Understand Some Complexities Of Our Lives...

to simplify what so many of those who do not wish to understand we invoke the most common symbols

for this universal kindness the sun has to do with all day shining with compassion the moon makes a good substitute for light and coolness

and romanticism, and to have available music that is free and all giving, we invoke the river, and the majesty of seven waterfalls

like the Niagara, or the Yellow River

some pearls of temporary beauty for the dews of the leaf,

the silence of the worms, the system of the red ants, the muteness of the fish inside a bowl of clear water in the living room of mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Inward

you shall listen to the voices of the young
the buds have their own kind of songs
that makes you see the past of the roots

you shall disregard the murmur of the stones
the present predicament that you are in
when will you give up being hard on yourself?
stone upon stone
boulder upon boulder
you have crushed what softness is left
on the soil of your birth

there is another way
take what light offers us sometimes
a little warmth
that enlightenment that opens the eyes
of the heart
the path inward
that opens the door of our
souls

RIC S. BASTASA
Inward Thoughts Of An Old Husband

Gifts of clothing and toys, just because
we really need to give.

Trying to keep up with a fast crawling baby.
(a niece actually, for we can never
have one)

The end of the biannual clothing rearranging/swapping/packing/organizing
(things that she is learning
to offer to the neighborhood
sense of community).

McDonald’s Caramel Frappé
(she is getting fatter
everyday but how can
she help it?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Io Scendo Al Piano.

i will go now.

he must go now
leaving this kid

whose name
for the meantime is Sorrow
and if he comes back
the name may be changed
to Joy

what a mess!
for a woman to trust
the snake's tongue
of men

i will go now.
there is no sense
to gullibility.

RIC S. BASTASA
Io So Che Alle Sue Pene

i know her pain.

she was too serious
a poem
believing each word
that every
desiring man
says to her
bosom

she bore them
children and they
all left her
like a disease

we know her pain

on that sunny day
the butterfly took her
life away

they never knew her
pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ion Busco Ballade De Ciprian No.6

dead on the
can. 

this time
pale yellow fish
floating
death on the
river seine.

brown child
looks at it in passing
on a boat
paddled by emaciated
rebels from
the saluyong basin

violence subdued
upon the notes of a mourning
violinist

in the middle of the night
i shed tears
even for those whose names
i haven't known

RIC S. BASTASA
Ipad

Around me are people
Talking about a lot of things
Events and jokes that i think i
Already know

Boring
And

Disappointing
Gone is
My love for tolerance so i have to open a hiding place
And stay with you for the rest of the hours

RIC S. BASTASA
Irag

irag is not
a stone
country dude!

RIC S. BASTASA
Ironic (5)

how does it feel to be a stone
really?

does the river know how to stop
running?

can i live on those clouds?

you have been clapping on one hand,
teach me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Irony

d this world has known so much anger
it is in fact bored with anger
and fed-up with violence
and so i will not add to it

i will give it laughter to lighten its mood
it is fuming
it is square-faced
it is into serious trouble

i will give it the comfort that it deserves

a square meter of green grass
a few liters of rain
a kilometer of a river
twenty grams of clouds
two trees filled with ripe fruits
three cans of crystal blue sea
a tiny sun inside a glass of water
three stars inside a bucket of milk
a moon inside a wrapper of biscuit

i promise i will not urinate on it
neither shall i spit in any of its corners

i will whisper to its bosom
i love you
i will tell its rainbow
i will care for you
i will be careful in my steps
not to hurt its fingertips.

RIC S. BASTASA
Irrational

the bolts
in my heart
are tightened
every time
i see you
fix your the
lace of your
shoe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Irrelevant, Useless, Wasted, And White Is Like Red, ...Nothing.

with too many roses
growing in a small planet

a rose becomes too familiar
and too much familiarity breeds

enough contempt to take all petals
for granted no matter how unique

a red can be, no matter how rosy
can life be, because there is so much

the numbness comes, and here you are
spoiled milk, sour, spilled,

irrelevant, useless, wasted,
and white is like red, ...nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Irresponsibility

give me a basin of water
also a bar of soap
i am washing my hands

let the voice
of the people decide
the faith of the
good, the bad,
and the ugly....

i am tired of all these
let me have some sleep

let morality decide upon itself
let religion be religion
let freedom be freedom unto itself

without us?

RIC S. BASTASA
Is He Fine?

he must be fine today
with his poems in array
each end rhyming
to nature's chiming

he shows his big grin
like a big pumpkin
he struts on the street
on a loud drumbeat

he eats his breakfast
like he's on a feast
he writes his journal
as the banal of bengal

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Love?

do i close my eyes when i am in love?
do i blind myself?

you rob me because i love you
i know it
but i pretend that i do not know about what you are doing

you pretend that you are not robbing me
you have always pretended that you love me so much

two pretentious people
then
loving each other
on the surface

when it is dark, they open their eyes
and plan for the next activity

one gets love, and one gives it
one eyes a fortune, the other one gives it willingly in return

for you see, this is the symbiosis of
love and pretenses

the rich is hungry for love, the poor has it
the poor is looking for money, the rich amply shall give it

'is it love? ' you ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Making Us Better Persons?

birds twitter
skype speaker
facebook blues
gmail rules
e-mail clues
poetry posts
marking days....

these usual
modernities
we might as
well question:

is it making
me a better person
in cyberspace?

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Not After All Exciting?

there are so many
things which we did not understand
fully but which delights us
no end

and you who understood them all
as you claim to be
why do you mourn all day?
why do you shake your body in fear
at night?

do not understand a flower,
or a sunset, do not try to figure out
an ocean

do you have to disassemble a memory
for you to comprehend its glory?
is it not enough that here we are
savoring a moment, beside each other,
delighting each other's presence?

why do you have to ask me what i have
done? where i am going? what are my plans?
for in all these i have no answers

here i am living my present moment,
gazing at the horizon, as the sun slowly sets
sinking into the restful bed of its history

for here i am emptied of all its worried
weary for the day's work, wanting not to think,
to relieve myself of understanding

to live like a tree, like a cloud, to dwell
in the silent darkness of the night
to savor tranquility, to seek the lake of
placidity, to look at the moon, eye to eye,
dimming life, like its dimming light
do you wish dawn? do you like dusk? do you still
wish for another morning?

the sound of the violin which you played last night
was so sad.

you tell me about a new door, an afterlife.
actually, it is that which stirs my mind.

a new life, a new place. Is it not after all
exciting?

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Not Surprising That A Friend Writes About
Prayers Today?

how can i say that i did not like what he wrote days ago,
about his eroticism somewhere in the hospital
in the room locked by him with his victim
(the willing victim, who does what he tells
as he struts his masculinity around her
as he spreads his legs while, allegedly she bows before him
like he is the god of sex
as she lays before him, naked and all willing to bare it all and have it all
on graveyard shifts,

it was not funny, and he felt so sexy with his stories, which may not be
at all true, it all depends on his capacity for
truth, or imagination, and then today he shifts his gears

praying to the saints, asking God for divine mercy,
and lots of invocations for peace and harmony and what not,

sometimes i ask, does he ever know what a split personality is all about?
what i know is that sometimes we just play with words,
chase our own shadows, and make stories just to fill our boredom

i guess, he is just transformed, from profance to profound, and he must have
felt the sense of home, the self, the temple of something divine

at least, with a sense of dignity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Not Unfair? ....

ey do not have to do anything
in fact we do not know if they are still alive or dead or
something

we do not know them for sure
their names are written on the walls
and they are all up there on those clouds
or somewhere

we only hear their names whispered by the wind
their greatness echoing on the on the mountains
rising to the clouds beside the stars
but they have not done nothing at all

we do not feel their warmth
we haven't touched them
neither have they ever ever touched us
but they are proclaimed
as kings and queens
and rulers of the land

God's edict they say
God's will is done they justify

but i am not fazed at all
i have a mission and a vision and i am continuing
everyday and for the rest of my life
even though i bleed and fall
i shall heal and again shall rise proud and tall
and soon perhaps
shall reap it all....

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It Not Unjust?

is this not injustice
try me

when you have the
money
you never mind me
you travel around the world
and you never send
me a postcard from italy

now when you are sick
alone in the
hospital with bills
piling up
you call me honey
help me
i still love you

try me
i also know to how change my name
i am no longer ric
my name is johnny
come-lately
no more

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It True?

for after all
is it true that a good poem
does not teach?
or preach?
or even tell something
so important
is it true that it simply
makes you feel?
logic is for
mathematics and
any exhortation on
how we live
and why
must be archived
in the ethics department.
this one must make sense
in the color and in the scent
and in the sweetness
or bitterness of its
words

it is more of a comma
than a period,
and some dots,
lots of dots.......
Is It Weird?

must be
could be
may be

but, well,
just be

to be
or just
be

between
you and me
is this
be

being
becoming

this bee
of beethoven
being and becoming

is it really weird?

RIC S. BASTASA
Is It You?

Read the poems and meet the words
Like they are strangers
They do not know you
And you do not know them
But then you
Get to know each other
With how you feel
And what they feel for you
They flow into your mind
And float there
Then they sink because
You rock them in your
Blood and thirst and
Loneliness, and you ask
If it is you in the poem?

Did I not tell you the magic
Of my poetry? Or of poetry itself?

I will tell you again
You read them and then feel them,
Then they become you
Because now you see yourself
Inside them
And the poems own you
Because now you own them too.

is it you? yes, it is also us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is My Dad Still Available?

dee, let me ask mommy.
are you in a hurry?

why not ask me?

Is that you Sarah? Hi,
i'm Abraham.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is She Not Silly?

you are making my life
so miserable
she tells him
why? why? why?
she asks three times
when i only want to make
you happy
to please you
to remove from you
that plaster of pain
from that bruised part
of your body?
she tells him of
her intentions

dthere is no answer
he is one hour from death
bleeding
yet she is still there
asking for an
answer

RIC S. BASTASA
Is That So? .......

he is singing
outside the house
under the rain and

we think that love is
in the air

and we called him in
and told him that love is in the air

and he smiles and keeps on dancing
since love is in the air

and that is how love is defined by him today,
love is in the air

love is a place and it is in the air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is This Poetry?

they write the most complicated arrangement of words
and give them their own tones
and colors and smell
and to a certain extent of sophistication you do not understand anything with all the symbolism and metaphorizing

suns talking and moons sneering
and cats yawning and seaweeds dancing and spirits blitzing
and cornucopia feasting
and ambrosia sleeping
and cupid and psyche
dating and lamps lighting
and darkness enclosing

and you complain
that you do not understand a thing
and you say you hate poetry

and this poet asks you: do you understand?
and you honestly say, with a matching shaking of your head and stamping of your feet: what are you telling me? I do not understand what your poem is saying.

and he laughs, 'anything that you do not understand is poetry'

and so from that time on, you pretend to understand poetry simply because, in truth, you do not like it and on such pretense, you successfully murdered everything that he wrote.

poems are dead, now they are burying them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Is This Sad? Tell Me

before he does other things
he looks at an old picture of his ex
he imagines old moments
that kiss
looks at the picture again
puts it in his pocket
then takes a walk

how can he ever forget
a love that was no longer there?

i am mad about this routine
it is not me but i can still feel the pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Isang Papillon

Ang Papillon ay isang maliit na lahi ng aso na may kakaiba,
malaki at lamuymoy na tenga kung saan nakuha nito ang kanyang pangalan, ang salitang Pranses para sa paruparo.

Isa sa mga pinakamatandang lahing maliliit ang Papillon. Maaari ring maging protektibo ang mga asong ito anumang kasapi ng pamilya, at mabuti silang magbigay ng alarma ngunit mapagmahal sila sa mga taong kilala nila. Malakas at mahilig tumakbo o manghabol ang mga papillon, ngunit mas nasisiyahan silang manatili sa loob ng bahay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Isolation

My right to isolation
To be let alone

Alone,

And I become the master
Of my fate.

Leave me alone
I am king.

RIC S. BASTASA
Issa's Nap....

i too take my nap
in the middle of this city
where
rice farmers have become
extinct.

RIC S. BASTASA
It

TO Kiss it, and hug it, and touch it,
To stare at it, to slide my hands beneath it,
To make my lips touch it, and to rub my body against it,
To bring it to life with me, to undress it and caress it,
To kiss its all body with my tongue
To be above it at its center
Of its being,
To sleep with it and wake with it
After a night of love,

To be crazy with it,
To dance with it, and be with it, and leave all that I have
Because, all because of it,
To destroy family ties, and make enemies of all people
Because of it,
Because it is wholeheartedly delicious
Because I can be free
Because my whole being likes to be with it,
Because I am in love with it,
Because I can be whole
Because I can be complete
Simply because

I am not me today
I am
I am still going to be.

IT.
Just it, it cannot love me in return,
It just laughs
And cannot understand,
It is just it,
And it calls me simply
Not even with my name,
That I can die for it,
It
Simply calls me
IT.
It’s crazy, I know
But tell me what I can really do about
IT.

IT IS NOTHING.

RIC S. BASTASA
It All Depends On You

how can something beautiful
be so sick?

unable to explain itself
amidst the opulence of grace

how can sickness be a beauty
upon itself?

how can dying be gentle?

how can
death be happy
amidst those who cry
for its
early departure?

how can life once bouncing
with vigor
now weakened
kneel and then prostrate
itself
before the bones
of this world?

how can dust invade a
secluded sanctity?

it all depends on you....

RIC S. BASTASA
It All Hazy

when we were in those
mountains
the fog keeps the trees
in haze

it is what we see when
we cry
when we close our eyes
as tears keep falling

it all hazy and yet when we
gaze again
we see how beautiful it is
to see fog
hanging on the mountain
sides and then not staying
for long
as they are carried by the
wind
to places where they fade
as though they were never
here.

RIC S. BASTASA
It And I

when you become the it
in that horizontal house
and when you rise above
the everyday itineraries

we are told by those who
have not gone there
that there is narrow tunnel
and there is a light at the end

some say there is a white bird
half-man waiting to fly you away
it could be a fact
but i am in no position to speak

i am not yet an it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Begins With You...With You...

in a twisted system
where the bridges are
only for those
whose names are listed
on the
pedigrees of families,

where opportunities are
measured by
your utility for their
selfish
family trees,

there is no way that
you, ordinary mortal
one without a family
name
shall fit,

square peg in a round
hole,
misfit,
nothing with
familiar perfumes

you step out of their
houses
you jump from their
bridges
you destroy the boats
bearing their names

you're out now, and i guess,
you are now
free, and
a million times happy,

you look for another
island
you shape your own
boat
build your own independent
dreams

you rise from that
twisted world

and now they look at you
with so much
surprise

there is not just one
world
there are so many other
worlds out
there
waiting for the righteous
man
the good one that they
can never put
down

and it begins with you....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Begs Me Not To Touch It...

then i told myself
i will be responsible for
this, love at its summit,
where i can see all suns
and moons all stars
seemingly not believing
in my goodness anymore.

i found love like a kitten
in the wrong street, emaciated,
and insignificant, it begs me
not to touch it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Came Into My Mind

it came into my mind what she started as a riddle.
syllables of life.
and of the seasons.

nine syllables for her till blooming till wilting
of the chrysanthemum, those which are not so white
against the snowy mountain of Fuji

two syllables for her brief stay in the woods
when she comes back as part of the wood itself
the twigs mourn for her
the leaves do not sing and the river stops flowing.

i ask myself, now that i have learned what syllables stand for.
how many syllables do i need to love you completely?

i have only one for you. The rest shall be my lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Can Never Be Grim....

i got an earthen jar
and put it in the open

outside the house it is
catching rain

it lost air and got only
water

i sit here by my window
dissipating sorrow

the jar does not speak
it looks pan and spic

up to its brim
it can never be grim....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Can Simply Be A Play Of Words....

you may think it as nothing
but a play of words, dismiss the nobility of an idea
with a purpose,

to heal for instance, or to dignify what is at first
impressing upon a mundane, like an insignificant scrap

of paper, there are second thoughts, or on the other
hands, something stupid but actually deep and hounding

full of substance, not just flesh but kindred spirit,
something that you have not met before but for a time

when you are finally alone, and learning well from sorrow,
you say, eurika, eurika, this is it, and it has changed you
to a better person, the play of words, turns into a tragedy
play, and you are asphyxiated, grasping for breath because

there is too much, in one glance, in that moment, a profusion
spasmodic wisdom, reaching your hands, saving you from

a catastrophe, how can you share it? it cannot be as it is
too personal, and it is so near to you that you cannot see

it and tell others about it, it goes to your mouth, settles in
that cozy room of your heart, and you become one, whole again,

like a baby once and back to its fetal position, walled with
a sac, swimming in amniotic fluid, connected to mother's womb.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Cannot Buy A Soul....

i've never met someone
who had been honest enough
to tell me that i am
swindled,

everyone is saying, give
me your money, it will become
many, and this stupid self
easily agrees in a glee

gullible she says, what a
gullible man have you become
after all those serious years
of study

i too say, i am simply unbelievable
always wanting to part with whatever
i have, which i too honestly think
is indispensable for my simple existence

my shadow stands by me, extends a hand
saying congratulations man, what is money
for? i cannot buy a soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Cannot Hold A Fish

a calm river
does not like even
a little ripple

a fish is not
welcome there

still water
what can a leaf really do there?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Comes Back To Us....

listening to alma answering
our questions makes me confirm
how stupid our political system has been

she is all fog on a clear day
shallow water on my knee
her answers are painful to my ears
i could have reduced her into dust

somehow after a while i pity her
and the rest of those who lead this republic
how from their own idiosyncrasies
and stupidities we too have grown into

full blown dumb blondes.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Could Be That

there is a built-in conflict
in this triangle

it is there and will never be
demolished

it could be among you,
God and
the others

it could be you,
your id, your ego and
the super ego,

it could be the child in you,
the parent later,
or the responsible thinker

it could be man, heaven and
earth

each angle well constructed
each side strong as the other

it could be the white and the black horse
and the chariot

and you with your whip
and your hand

it could be that you are tired
you disembark

you take a walk and wish that
you had never been born

in this ocean
your choices are waves of the sea
you are the ship without a sail
without a rudder

it could be your own making
or it could be because there are stars
there are lines of your palms
the maps of your
being
the destiny of your future

it could be because of your genes
the choice is still yours

are you made? or are you the maker?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Could Have Been Any Other Hour. But It Isn't

2: 52 p.m.

it could have been any other hour.
but it isn't. When you open this page of
a book, you will say. ' i do not see any
relevance'
but it is.
when you open another page, you will
comment, ' is this guy serious? is he not
just gallivanting in the sentences of
his life? Does he not have other productive
endeavors, one which may change this
world of lies? '

this the hour of the breaking,
somewhere an ice is cracked, put in a glass
and it gives a clinking sound of
relaxing music

and out there beyond your hold a man
takes the glass of cold water,
drinks it like a shot of whiskey,
feels the joy of the sliding pleasure
in his thorax,

just that simple gesture of the hour
given to him as he goes back to his
work again,

between life and death.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Could Have Been Simpler

it could have been simpler
like a leaf falling to the air and then
taken somewhere
where our eyes are too tired to see,

it could have taken lesser words to describe
the feelings
without so much expense from our hearts
not taking much of our time
towards contemplation

but it is not that way, not that easy really
to meet someone like you and spend the whole night with
on a burst of emotions
on a flame of so much heat from the fire
in our bellies
from the cinders found in our pelvic bones

when we wish to forget such a pleasant feeling
we cannot just spit it out like a form of waste
no, this sweetest thing between us
sticks like a red stain in our skin
sweet blood to our taste as vampires
lovers and strangers
like some kind of monsoon wind passing by
without leaving some marks on the white sands.

i still remember but how i wish i can forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Could Have Been So Simple: I Only Need You...

with you all i need
is just a very small room,
even a bed for one,
with us, no matter how small
the space, we fit,
and we do not mind the world
at all,

i travel the world,
i pack my clothes everyday
i may need much,
money and time and places,
i like to see glaciers and
geyser, and cruise on lakes
and oceans,
i fly hours and hours and land
on places that i barely know
for they have to excite me,
i need to be, i have to be,
i must please myself,
for i am dying, since i do not
have you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Did Not Make Sense, ...

it did not
make sense.
Death nods.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Blink

live for today
it is the only truth
available

tomorrow could be
another lie
and yesterday was
just another myth

one cannot be
threaded
the other has
none

today is the eye
of the needle
it does not blink.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Live In Your House You Cannot Imagine It

you have never found beauty
never will you ever put it in your hand and
claim it as yours alone
it is fan with many hands
a traveler in all lands scattered in every
nook in every unknown directions
it does not live in your house
you cannot imagine it
as numbers and solutions
when it comes you gaze at it
the first time you see it
you feel it
and you know that it is
and no matter how you grasp it
in some residences
it is never staying

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Make Any Difference At All

i must admit
i do not know a thing anymore
i have lost faith in the stars
no longer believing in
those cards

you tell me once i am wrong
and so i have had so many revisions
and like most people that you know
i tried to live my life like the way
we ought to: we work hard, we follow rules
we have dreams and pose hope in
all our kindest and honest
ambitions

look at you, without the stars
you have failed
and look at you once more,
with all the hard work
you too amount to nothing

you die in the same way that
stars die
you die just the same
like all hardworking men

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Make Sense And Hence Does Not Matter.

been looking for love
and love chides him not to

been trying to find where
love is and love laughs at him
saying 'i am everywhere, i am
air'

been mourning for love and
love understands and says
' you only mourn for me but
i never mourn for anyone'

and then he shuns love away
'what can i do with something
unseen? i haven't felt you
anyway' and he left the place
and the people
where love is not found

and how happy he is now
accepting the fact that love
is not here anymore
that we do not need it
somehow
in order to be happy and
strong.

if love is everywhere
but not in here
with all due respect
it does not make sense
and hence
does not matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Matter

what you were
what you are
what you shall be
all these do not matter
for there is no way
that you can be you
in any place for
whatever reason
there is no you
actually
you are but a
dropp of rain
in the wide sea
in the deep ocean
in the vast space
you are but an atom
in the air
a molecule in that
chair

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Matter Anymore

one gets used to it

a bland food one gets used
to blandness and it does not
matter anymore whether bland is
bland or not

one suffers the tastelessness
of routine like a road without a bend
where mountains are there and they
are there without anymore significance
to you whether they cast shadows or not
whether they are tall or leveled
whether they can obstruct or they
can make you pass through

if there is a wall you stop
and you cannot pass you turn around
and find another path

it does not really matter
whether it is a lie or truth
what matters most is
this journey that you are taking
and that soon it must be over

without destruction without hurting
those who must remain
those who are still holding their
wineglasses to wait for another cheer

how many years more? it does not matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Does Not Matter Anymore...

now lies the
difference

not on the flowers
or the drinks

I've seen those
shooting stars

amazed at first, and
awed to its full

now lies the difference
what falls does not matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Doesn’t Really Matter

A little inconvenient
This time for separation.
It is untimely. When things
Become beautiful.
You leave me. When
Emotions start to be
Whole again. You shatter.
Glass so fragile. Broken
To pieces before my feet.
But I don’t really mind.
I don’t mind. I am also
Ready to go. I have
Prepared my wings
For the strong winds.
So I don’t mind if
You too fly away.
The best way is that
Nothing is left.
Things shatter themselves
To pieces. We shall not
Be brave enough to see.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Goes There And It Comes Back To You

ask me
where is this wind going?

does it end somewhere?
ask the wind itself

listen. It goes there
and is lost

you have not seen it
even once

feel it. It goes there and
it comes back to you

ask its name. It has none.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Happens Most Of The Time

It happens
most of the time

what you think
that is good you
offer

a bouquet of
flowers

a set of hands
to be bound
for love

it happens
unrequited
unequaled so

you throw all of
what you have to offer

away.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Has Always Been A Struggle

it has always been a struggle.

time is a thread
connecting two strange bridges
one walks
and balances in order not to fall
to the abyss
of failure

it is always a question of
how i touch love with love

i carry love and the one i touch
does not recognize the warmth of my
hands

it looks at me as though i am a stranger from a very far land

i am always broken and sometimes i wish to have the hands of Midas
not the kind that makes everything gold

i want to have the snake hairs and the gaze that can make those who do not see
love in me

turn into stones.

it has always been a struggle and when the shadow of death comes with his
sickle

i will speak no word at all
and gladly shall i go with it

it is my wish for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Has Given Me A Moment To Live, To Cherish And Survive.....

i have never stopped returning
what i say are words well chosen
to conceal what i hate and love
what i still cannot understand the reason
for repetition this shattering of beauty this
loss of calmness and equanimity
whatever is the end of this road i shall not regret for i have chosen what i have desired
though it may not be redeeming but at least
it has given me a moment to live, to cherish and survive.....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Has Its Own Reason

When a door finally
closes
and you knock again
pleading
'sorry, i am very sorry'
it shall not
open and
tell you 'please come in'

it has its own reason and
you cannot say that you do not know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is

it is in the utter darkness that our eyes
work hard to see
complacent in the light of day
they are caught
in the traps of blind corners,
refusing to see
what is obvious to the ears
and the rest of the senses,

it is in the coldest season of winter
when we feel the sparks
of warmth from the hidden hand
the one we love
and cherish
becoming more visible
to these tributaries of
touch
these feelings of being
inside but outside still
the alienation
of presences,

it is during the lowest ebb
that you will see how stable
are the rocks underneath

that in this time
you shall know how to walk
when all the confusing waters have gone away

it is, it is, it has always been that way
but you have been listening not

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is 4: 45 In The Afternoon

we know what to do.
we stop this stuff
we all go back to our beginnings
those usual nights
and those usual tomorrow mornings

ask if we make a difference.
my answer: No.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Calligraphy Of A Fish

on the wall hangs
the calligraphy of a fish
given by a close friend
my heart seals it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Daily Routine

waking up
washing a face
and putting on our names

we walk straight
we see other people's eyes
we want to be
just ourselves

in the most honest way
we can

yet we are blocked
by this routine

and she tells you
do you want to tell the truth
and suffer the consequences?

dare or die,
be insignificant

make a difference
and dissolve

like the rest who like fireflies carried
the fire on their backs

one night
they burned the flowers and spread a fire on the trees

the following day
some worms got overfed and slept and then laughed
the hardest

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Fact

to soften the shell of an egg
rinse it with vinegar in a bowl
overnight

it will work too with the
shell of a crab

it won't work however
with a coconut
this one is hardest

in life it will

rinse your mind with the sourness
of a conversation
overnight

it will soften what
desire
or love
or
whatever
in you and you will remember
home

someone who still loves you
waits

in your lovemaking
you will think of doors.....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Habit

writing poems
when you really write poems
everyday and every moment of your life
even when you're in the middle of your
bread and butter eating thing
or even when you are defecating
writing poems becomes a habit
even when you sleep even when you dream
writing poems becomes a part of your system
you eat poetry you vomit poetry
you digest poetry you poo poetry
you breathe poetry you sweat poetry
you love poetry and you live with your poetry
and at the end you die with poetry

and your epitaph says: here lies the poet,
choked with poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Joke

it is a joke
and it will always be
a joke

that how it is,
it is a joke, my own joke, and i laugh
when i remember it,

i send it to you and you send it back
like a ping-pong ball
it bounces and i see it coming
back to me

it hits me right in my eyes
got double vision, cross-eyed

i am hurt. It is not a joke anymore.
it is here beside
a tear, a bruise, stained and scarred.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is A Long Story

and it is about love, first, then followed by
the second, separation, then followed by,
another love, love, then love, then suspense, about, what ifs,

what if it is not really love? what if there is no tomorrow about love?

what if, this is just a game of chess, or candy crush, or

what if, at the end, it will only be you and no one else,

because you are nothing now but a wrinkle on the forehead, a white hair, an inaudible word,

a cliche that no one uses anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All About It

it is all about it: friendship
cliques, categories, groupings,

the habit of having to scratch your back
and you scratching mine too

gone is the merit
and the justification of the thing-in-itself
the essence of essence
the value of value

everything arbitrary
nothing consequential anymore

know me and you go to the top
keep the code of success
we live we die we make things
as a team

odd man out, go, and be infamous.
without the background, you assume no color.

i am tired. I do not want to move.
let me stay here. On this spot, i remain

myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All About You....For Jiji

i think, i know now
the secret of your
maturity, the terminal
station of your
final growth, that which
you accept yourself,
wash it, your whole soul
with tears,
mourn for days, unable to
swallow food,
sweating out
insecurities, shedding off
pretensions, laugh,
scream, run as though it is
the last day of your life,
stop, sing, dance,
eat, pray,
and then you still find yourself
all alone,
meditate, arrive at a destination,
and say,
this is it,
eureka, you find finally what
you did not look for,
it is ugly, but it is true,
and you embrace it
like the memory of your long
dead mother,
it is,
and you are so silent
there is this sanctity
of yourself assuring
yourself that
everything is alright
that now everything is true,
real,
tangible, warm, alive,
beating,
loud, clear, flowing,
rivers and seas join
in the celebration,
choir of clouds
pools of moons,
mighty suns, all universe in
oneness
to accept yourself
as you are,
you have taken the leap
into the peace
of your own pool,
eureka,

and then the silence and then the
long walk
and then finally you are
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Air.....

i told you
years ago,
it is all air
that bag, is
all air, it
contains
nothing.

the children
crave for it
and mothers
dye it. The
fathers watch
what happiness
is.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Air.....Between Them

it is her house after all
she owns the car and she finally

lets him go, but before that she
says 'i love you' and he leaves

without looking back, deep
within, ' i don't believe you'

sky is sky, and earth is earth.
just between them, all air

with only a pack at his back,
he has nowhere to go: poor man.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Fair. Do Not Fret.

it is all your fault
you did not open up.

the sun is blameless
for the dead buds.

alright look at those
full blooming flowers

oh, how beautiful they
are, to the full colors

it is all the same, buds
or full blooms, they rot.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Fake And Temporary.

i shall dance
inside this room
in my
aloofness. i shall
whistle a song
and then
stomp my feet on
the tiled floors
by then i shall
hear my own music
dancing to my
own kind of beat
to my own
feet.

you see at this
age of independence
where everyone
is expected to just
do his own thing
and be responsible
one must learn
the technique of
creating a world

your world,
my world.
and there is no
difference
actually: it is all
fake and
temporary.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All In The Lines Of Your Palms

things and events all come to you
telling you that they are ready
to fulfill your destiny, and so just wait

the floors will come to make your feet feel
that there is a foundation for your success
the stars no matter how silent shall give a hint
where to go, what to do, and when all these shall
completely happen, and so be calm

keep waiting, things and events come
and unfold before you, like a scene of a movie
nothing shall be planned, things shall be done.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All In The Mind

think my dear, it is all in your mind
think beautiful
and you will be beautiful
think all the good things you have
and you will be good

think that you are this success and
you will surely be one, my dear
so why bother
about what this world has to say to you

it is you that matters
it is your mind your soul in you that shapes the contours
of your flesh and body

use your mind that way you use
all the wisdom in you
think about beauty, the truth, the good

focus your mind, change this cup, this saucer, this spoon
change this world of ash into flowers and butterflies
learn this art
this subjectivity, this feeling, this poetry

it is all in the mind
and matter is now bereft of power to hurt you
it is
the mind, the soul, the idea, so think some more

it is the real you, this rational you, think some more
with your beautiful mind, change this world of ash into

this garden of Eden

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All In The Mind If We Really Want To Find

do not admire me for my courage
not saving myself
always making others live
find their own homes
making them have wings
so they can all fly again
and find their hidden
islands of
paradise

these are all but the workings
of my mind
realities that i still want to have
something
yet to come true

but for the meantime bear with me
you badly need all these too
mind you baby
it is all in the mind
only if we really want to find

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Mixed Up

A blue minifan
Turned on
Blowing miniwinds
To a
Red tulip
Made of
Chinese cloth

Let me turn it off
It is not good
To see
Life putting
Breath to
Something
Dead

Life to
Something
Fake, artificial
A tulip flower cloth
A plastic tulip

Too dusty, inanimate.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is All Your Decision

dressed so thickly on a cold season
you decide to go to the top of the mountain

alone, and there you sit for hours looking at
the trees, and hills, and patches of villages

below, your feet hangs on a cliff, your hands on
the side of the mountain, secure on the tall grass

beside you, some twigs whisper the necessity
of being alone with yourself, wondering what

happens next, when you finally decide to jump
and then forget about what happens

next. This is the ultimate decision of your life.
To end it

Or to go down and think and start all over
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Always That Nature Wins

What i am seeing today
is a placid lake surrounded by tall rocks with some stunted outgrowths
of old suppressed trees of long ago

ruby waters
emerald skies

i feel the coolness of this water
i hear the song of the leaves of trees
the whisper of
long ago

soft to my ears
music to my heart
pacific
tender

if i have to really think deeper
what made this
calmness

was it before when the world exploded
spit lava
breathed fire
threw away what it kept inside
its fury

and so many of the likes of us
thousands
millions
buried underneath now without a hint
a voice

which we have forgotten
which we can no longer trace

and i see beauty and i prefer it like this
i prefer
forgetting what was madness

catastrophic madness
of men versus
nature

profanity, vanity
and of course, as i see all these spreading calmness of the river
and the sea
and the silence of the mountains and the
whispers of the trees

i know for sure,
nature won.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Always The Pain That Writes....

they think that
it is a little paranoia that is always on the go
for catching cold
and some words, for wishing about death
and destruction of the
self,

it is not, because pain has always been there
and no matter how you put the pesticides to kill it,
or antivirals, or antibiotics to cure the wounds,
or no matter how you try to remove it and
severe it,
with a knife or hammer

it will always be there
like your whole skin holding all your body parts

it is always there
like a world spinning holding everything
from cloud to
seaweed

to pebble to single cells
to all those molecules
and atoms,

smaller and
so minute, escaping our
further notice

we think they are gone
until they pinch us again
like the first snow flake of winter
in old London.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Always You....

it will always be
you,
and no one breaks you
or your heart
unless
you
allow it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Another Day

today shall be another day
do not think that it is the same sunshine
touching you
it will be another one
more warm
and will be even more comforting

you wake up so early when the windows
of your house are still closed
when the lights on the streets are still on
when the silence of the world still reigns

but soon enough you will hear the steps
of running men who rush to meet the day
with excitement with anticipation
for new thoughts for new adventures

do not just sit there and write
move your legs and run a mile or two
sweat it out and meet this world anew
till the new sun comes with the clouds

colors changing hues as birds start
flying in the air as trees grow to heights
as new leaves sprout as flowers along
the way start to bloom as if telling you

what a beautiful world we still have today!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Another Long Walk To Life

do not mismate
your shoes. try fitting
in what fits you.

tie the lace.
stamp your feet.
tighten your belt.
stand up.

comb your hair.
wear the warmer shirt.
take the cap
and put it on your head.

smile in the mirror.
take the watch.
wear the white socks.

eat the banana.
and wear the Ipod.
sounds of chappel
in your ears.

it is 6: 05, now
you are ready for
the usual walk
at the oval this
morning. The leaves
of the trees and
grasses are still
rich with their
dews. The sunrays
are slowly coming.

the air is fresh
scented with
the smell of the
rice paddies.
good morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Beautiful. Your Name Is Their Fear.

it is the pain that changes you.
you have turned into a beauty.
since then.
you have become too careful
about how a word shall be used.
your hands kept restrained
you just don't touch anything.
you molt. Shed off an old skin.
for a moment you are helpless
but only for a short time.
when the pain is over you have
become the

new snake in this forest
shrewd, and ready to bite.
it is beautiful.
your name is their fear.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Better Now

when the two of you
meet again
you become complete
strangers
in all your pretenses
smiles that do not mean
and occasional touches
that on the surface
feigns the warmth
fools the two of you
have become
before you wanted love that much
but time gave you
none
now you want to remember
but the walls have become so thick
to think
oh well
life's like that
even when we were small
when mother says
there is a place where
we cannot play
there is time when we have
to stop
reckoning
when darkness begins
to eat
whatever light is left
in our heads.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Better That Way

it is better that way
you are too distant from me

that way
i look upon you as my only star

you burn
when you are too near me

i become nothing but your
creeping darkness

alone i shall extinguish
with this anguish

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Better When Apart....

the sun
cannot tempt the moon
that they will
be better
together

the one that lives
in darkness
knows too well

the stronger one
does not think that
much

believing more on
its strength
it destroys what
goes near it

and the stars know
this matter too....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Cold

it is cold
there is still this mist
the early morning frost
that they talk about
and now you believe
nature's indifference

you press your palm
on your cheek and let
it stay on the side of
your neck

you hold your thick hair
with your left hand
saving what heat
still lives there

you exhale not often
you save this warm breath
of life inside your chest
inside your veins

you still want to live
a little longer
far from what you
have written in one of
your midnight poems

you put yourself
sometimes in shame
saying one thing and
doing another

the mouth babbles more
to the silent wishes
of your heart
It Is Crazy

i kiss your lips as though they are all mine
and you kiss mine as though i am yours

our tongues search for the perfect union
our teeth grind themselves on the thought

that this is all sin, but then the kiss is too sweet
like syrup and we keep on kissing, till our gums bleed

and we taste blood inside our throats but then blood
tastes sweet and bitter like wine and we keep on drinking

for we think we are still as young as the night and we
never have in our minds death and regrets.

we burst. we explode like we were so full. we rested.
we go deep into sleep. we grapple for a new beginning.

love is the reason for this all. and we dream this love we have
is beyond sin, beyond waking, beyond all of us. beyond this

frailness of our humanity. this is divine and we still think of this
as a glimpse of God and heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Dark

it is dark
let us add just a little moonlight
a gust of fresh air
a shadow of a tree
and a lonely distant star

hold my hand
lay your head on my shoulder

. do not add anything anymore

this is just perfect for me

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
It Is Dark (2)

like a highway buckled by a heat wave
so does a poem warps time like a yarn
arranged lengthwise on a loom and then
crossed by a woof, your body shape
twisted by the way i look at some distance,
you know it, you sit there and begin to write
the words, it was still 3 o'clock in the afternoon
when the people speak of arrivals and then
departures, and then you finally finish your
poem, carefully weaving and weighing and
asking which word fits what you want to drive
to the niche of your dead thoughts or to the
womb of the birth of your fertilized words
suddenly, the clock strikes 7: 09 in the evening
you forget dinner, you forget the birthday party
of a friend, you have forgotten time, and yet you
are so alive, like the stars in your window that
now have started to appear like fireflies on a
very lonely tree. You close the door. It is dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Dark And There Is No More Time To Play

it is too late
it is dark and
there is no more
time to
play

mother has called
and waits by the door
with a beating
ready on her hand

it is too late to remember
what sweetness is left
by youth

what pool is there to jump
upon
so we can be frogs
again

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Dawn That Tells The Truth

it is the dawn that
tells the truth, it is

when the soul wakes up
upon a body still wanting more

sleep, and it is when you
too, feels the urge to listen

it is dawn that gives a chance
for the fitting in, of what

i have not said that night,
when you too, was not in the mood

for absorbing, and then i wrap your
body with my arms, and you too

wrap mine with yours, and we
understand each other, and

it is the silence that forges
our oneness once more, &

then the first ray of the morning
light comes through the slit of

the window,... we are ready
to break ourselves again

to another episode to
another new beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is 'Either...Or' But Not 'And' And No 'Ifs And Buts'

my father had always been emphatic
telling me

my life is
'either...or'

i must choose only one
and only once
then stick and live
to my choice
in complete fidelity
and faith

there is no
'and' and this and that and this and that
not that it will be confusing
but it will also be hurting
and that will be
utterly unjust
for the other
and this and that and this and that

and lastly
there shall be no 'ifs and buts'
he says
as i have already chosen
and once and only one
then i must
live on said vow
on a promise

to become a real man

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Enough To Destroy Life

do not delve on meanings
if you really have to enjoy this life

on the desert sands somewhere in Egypt
we do not trace the roots of the sea
the tragedies of the oasis
the life span of the date palm
the ways and means of the Tigris Euphrates

we are here to view the moon
through the glasses in our hands
filled with rose
wine.

click my glass with your glass
cheers! Salud!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Finished

di the stalking is finally over
di the poems still keep popping
di and flowers blooming
(di oh the cliche of birds singing
di and cicadas chirping)
di the bamboo leaves bring
di the hush in the making

di the sea is crystal clear
di i swim there
and this i must wait
when i rise up from the
waters
when my hair is wet
and my body still dangling
with glistening sea foams and drops

i now find this joy
of lying upon the big stone
by the shore

sunbathing.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is For Everyone...With Or Without

the premise is laid
clear enough

Christmas is for children
Christmas is for the family

do not be discrimination

there are those who have
no children
those who do not have a family

and Christmas is still there
jingle jingle jingle bells....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is For Everyone...With Or Without (Revised)

the premise is laid
clear enough

Christmas is for children
Christmas is for the family

do not discriminate

there are those who have
no children
those who do not have a family

and Christmas is still there
jingle jingle jingle bells....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Funny

It is funny, she is thinking
That what I write is all
About her, so

When I write about
A pig, she claims she is insulted
She is being the one
Alluded to as the pig
Or If I write about
A bat hanging
On a cave rock
With a reversed upside
Point-of-view, she complains
She is not that,
Whatever,

But it is so tragic
She feels pain and she accuses
Me as the reckless
Man inflicting all these on
Her body, her mind,

We did not meet
Even for once, I do not
Know her, she does not even
Have a name, and a permanent
Place, I have not even seen
Her face her shadow,
And she cries I caused
Her pain...

We are strangers,
Complete strangers

That Is unfair! She needs
The doctor who healed me,

This paranoia maims.
Is she another kind of  
Sort mysterious talked  
About by the old wise man  
In my village, in my old hometown?

break me, i am frozen

RIC S. BASTASA
i have seen her
today. She is lost in the other horizon.
She is here with us but she is not with us.

i cracked jokes, and for the meantime she laughs.
I ask her for a dance. she refused.

I give her some beer, she does not drink any.
She is a mourning widow. She was loved and she felt that.

And then he was gone. it was too sudden. She lost balance.
I can imagine what she will do with his personal things still in the house.
She says she will be giving them all away to ease forgetting.

The sea is are cool and the cottage is spacious.
She rests her body in a hammock and slowly she rocks herself to the monotony of time. Depression is not easy to handle.

It does not listen. It does not talk.
It keeps on burning your guts.

She is feeling acidic. Her stomach is painful.
She is leaving and she takes the wrong key to her car.

Now we are waiting. We also want to go home.
It is getting dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Hard

it is hard to live in a house
whose walls argue with the windows
whose roof falls upon the floors
crushing you in between

it is hard when your heart is not at home
with your mind

it is hard when your fingers do something
different from what your hands sing

it is hard when what the mouth speaks
runs against the words of the tongue

it is hard when all you do is exist and not live
it is hard when you have long become dead

and yet the people that you meet in the street
tells you that
you are happy and that they all envy you
imagine the guilt as high as the cliff!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Hard To Be Visible

too much light kills me
i could be some sort of a fungus
thriving beneath a cave
where the dripping of sorrow
the wetness of tears
makes me grow

it is hard to be visible to your light
and so here i am in the greyness of my season
in dampness of my existence
in the silence of my longing

i could have touched your skin
but i know what happens next
i know it

i am not ready to dissolve and be gone
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Hard To Say The Words That Admit Of Weakness

how does one say
that one misses someone
without having to fit in the next word

that weak word
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Here, And That Is Good Enough.

i do not wish it to be that good
to your taste
i just want it to be here, to be written

and so it is written. and so you have read.
there is nothing expected

no ambition to send you to the skies
nothing about kites

or jets, nothing of this kind
nothing exhilarating, it is only written as it is,

as it is, not as it should be, or must be,
it is, because it is not even that it is meant to be,

it is here, and that is good enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is I

i

that transforms
myself

it is

not i that create neither i
that destroys

it is i

that waits

my ripeness is never my
curse.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is I That Wither And Pass Away

It is not the flowers
That wilt
It is not the wind
That whirls
And goes
It is not the world
That ends
In this place
But it is
We ourselves

It is I
That wither
And pass away

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is In The Blood

some people write
saying it runs in the family
it is inside the code
of its blood
corpuscles
it's the gene that makes
the hand write

my papa is a farmer and my
mama is a schoolteacher

no one in the family writes
what i hear is always a chatter
a murmur
a burst of emotions
broken plates
and broken doors

what i hear is always an
explosion
of light bulbs

the doors knew nothing
but slams
and the TV is loud with
horror

i have learned the secret
of silence
and since then
i have decided to write

i write for no one
i am attuned to having no one

this is for myself
and when i am no longer here

someone may read it
and say
This is myself too
and it is me that matters

alone, for I do not expect much
from ears neither from mouths
even from

the hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Interesting

the mind sometimes suggests that it is time to quit
there is something different between me and this mind
a question is asked, quit from what?
there is no such thing as quitting from everything
only for something and this world is not just something
neither is it everything, there are lots of in between them
something that you and i have never so well understood,
and so there is no quitting, as everyday brings a bouquet of roses
made of light and it's petals sing: you do not not know me,
and that makes it all the more interesting.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Just A Matter Of Time....

time flies, swiftly in fact,
invisible, twin of the wind,
friend of wounds, and the secret foe of harsh memories,

what you do to me, cannot be undone,
you escape, like a dropp of water seeping into a mound of sand,
the air and sun become your safety house

but i say, it is just a matter of time
since The Furies alive and insomniac, sooner, shall find you among the fog,

and there shall you be snatched to fall back into yourself punished to a concrete presence docketed like a word of woe on a stone tablet.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Just A Poem

what i write is just a poem

do not let it disturb you, they are just letters forming words

words forming a phrase

forming an idea to your mind as you read them

it is just a poem, it is just like a movie

let it not disturb you then, sleep and dream

but somehow if it has disturbed you, and you cannot stop it from

disturding you, then let yourself be disturbed and let yourself think

about it:

why are you disturbed?

now, it is not just a poem

it is me.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Just A Shell

At the end
you realize

it is just
a shell, a cover,
a thin membrane
a crumpled paper

you watch time
taking its toll on anyone
art is always wasted
nothing lasts

but then so what?
when the shell cracks
there is still something
there
when the cover is
torn perhaps the
contents are still
intact
and the crumpled paper
still finds use
i suppose, in your anus.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Just Within You

what is beauty?
look at yourself
in the mirror

what is truth?
again look at
yourself in the mirror

what is good?
again look at yourself
so many times in the mirror

do you find it
now?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Late

it is late and the sun is setting
the orange and red are diminishing
the blackness spreads like a diffusion
of our sorrow and pain
soon there will be the closing of the windows
of the house
the locking of doors of the ground floors
and some prayers mumbled from lips
to lighted candles on altars of saints
and angels

soon there will be stories
from mother
and songs too

and then in the quiet
of the stars and the moon and the sky
soon there will
be sleep
under white mosquito nets
the light from the lamp
is blown away
and we smell the smoke
coming from the
loved ones
long dead

we end the games that we play
and we are silent
we yawn and close our eyes
and now ready

as we enter the doors of
our dreams

in there
there may be chases and running too
i am sure somehow we just take a look
unspeakably
things are hazy and we do not remember anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Late, But It Is Not Always Too Late To Play

it is late
but it is never
always
late to still play
our games

it is dark
and they already left for their homes.
the rest are quitting

mothers are waiting
and fathers are silent as always
square jawed.

can we still play? yes just the two of us now
under the moon
beneath the trees
our feet soft on the thick grasses

you keep your mouth shut.
you pick up the ball and you throw it to me.

i am now holding it.
but i will not be keeping it for long
i have no use of it now.

i will throw it away.

can we just laugh and be children again?
let us have a new beginning.

that is my only point.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Like A Road Sign Which The Recent Tornado Has Not Taken

in that party
there were five of them

the one that laughs
the most
is the gay one
who perhaps thinks that
he is exempted
from the hazards of
sorrow

the other one is fat
but feels her sexiness
all over her
turgidity

the rest are part of
the mindless people

i mean, one may not
even have to mention
because they are not
worth remembering

but just the same to
live this life one must
learn to laugh with them

drink with them and eat
with them
but it will just be there
for after this hour
i am on my own again

silent, strong, determined
on where to go next
and what to really do
the purpose is there
it is like a road sign
which the recent tornado
has not taken

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Like Blowing A Bubble Gum

just wait
i am blowing this bubble gum
and i cannot speak

now you must know
a little about
my game
this bubbling
this silence
this puffing
of air into something
closed

and do not go near
the next thing
that happens

is this bursting

then, let us speak
i am now kind
and gentle
and back to myself

your man

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Like Nothing Else It Fells Like No One

THERE will always be someone strange

even if there is a name, or a place to go, or a house to stay, there will always be
strangeness haunting

it is like nothing else
it fells like no one

There is always some places where we remember the scent as though we are
dogs
of territoriality

There will always be strangers even if we live with them.

The name of a place loosens. There are ropes that we do not honor.

There are stones that we do not carry. There are hammers meant only for
the keeping.

There are nails meant to rust. There are houses which never become homes.

Hearts that never become hammocks. Hands that remain fists.

There are familiar places which we no longer consider returning.

There are times of sleeping which are residents of wide awake eyes.

There are moments when we regret having mouths.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Like This

i drive my car on a lonely highway
and i am sleepy and i decided to
stop on a gasoline station with a shop,
sip coffee while car is gasolined,
and have some cookies and take
a smoke somewhere and take my
pee and cools my tongue a bit
with menthol candy, and then i go
back to this lonely highway again.

the shop is what i call poetic.

RIC S. BASTASA
i accompany you to a wall
i know this wall fully well
it walled me since i was small,

and then i fall in love with you
and you feel the same wall despite the openness of the port of
the city where our love boat is docked
despite the songs of seagulls
despite the softness of my hands cupping your breasts

you ask me to explain about this wall
and so i am taking you there
for you to see

the wall has become thicker and higher
walling me since ages then
and it stares at me

asking, if i have learned about love at all?
if i have really love you? if i really love myself
despite the blindness that the wall is giving me
all my life

the wall is teasing me in front of you
i am ashamed

but i do not give up and hand all my life
without a fight to this wall

and i look at you
and i tell the wall your name

'h ere i s my savior
have pity, she does not know a wall
she has not lived there once
she does not know your name
she cannot feel your
loneliness
she will die
she does not know a fight
against the wall'

and then there is silence
like an ocean's trench

the wall opens a door
some tears are left on the stairs

'it is love still, there is no other' the wind
sings to the highest cliff
on that mountain of
death.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Lovelier

i find it lovelier
to just see
the one i love
without
having to
take the
finishing touches

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Me The Mocking Bird Again Repeating Your Words

'we feel to much and
we love too much and
this will be the end of us
one day'

'we feel to much and
we love too much and
this will be the end of us
one day'

'we feel to much and
we love too much and
this will be the end of us
one day'

'we feel to much and
we love too much and
this will be the end of us
one day'

here i am
hear me
at the top of your own voice
my voice too
on top of your roof
the tree watches

does it want
to silence me
with its hundred
leaves?

it is me again
this mockingbird
how can you
stop it?
stop me?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is More Than Sexual

if you come to my place and ask for my name i can give you more than what you ask for

not my name and not even something sexual like making love all night long inside a scented room, hazy lights, white linens, a candle that burns its life throughout the night witnessing the fleshy delights

you will be surprised it is not the kind of pleasure i will give you it is something more than that

i once told you about being together in an intimacy that this world has long denied to itself

we sit together on a bench facing the sea where the sun is dying

we hold our hands we feel not the softness of our hands or hear the palpitations
of our heart
like a song of love
or the drum beatings of lust

we try to see
how death goes
a sun slowly dying
spreading its last warm colors
to all the
creatures and contours of the world

we are witnessing
the gentleness of everything
those that end

and you and i
will be all too happy
to begin ourselves

on this basic truth

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Morning Time

clear the jade
laughing Buddha never
ceases
its laughing stance beside
a glossy brown
jar on top of my
study table

inside the jar
the blue pen is
resting

it is already morning
and it is time now for the
study lamp
to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Natural.....

when you say that you love me
i do not really believe you

your hands wrap my neck like
some kind of steel chains

and then you plant a kiss on my hair
there is nothing there that grows

it is like a stone that you hit a bird with
and the bird falls from the branch of a tree

dead on the ground
and then you dismiss it as something

natural, birds die
stone hits.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Never Written....

do not write the best poem
for it is never written

do not write
love's perfection,
there is none yet to boast,
how can these be written?

write what you feel?
it is never written.
nothing is accomplished.
even after the flowers bloom
even after the fruits have fallen
to the ground.

even if we both die,
it is never written.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Be Back Home

we cross the seas wanting to see the bigger waves
the other islands
we sail the rivers to hear the beauty of its songs
we go uphill we want to see the world from another eyes
we want to change some views
we plan to make changes of our lives
we want to trim some trees to desired shapes
we want to be familiar with other paths
we compare we make arrangements for new ways
we spend so much time
talking and partaking their drinks and food
seeking new combinations of tastes

then we stop and decide to come home at last
we make some notes
we bring dirty clothes and some new pictures
new memories

nothing compares still
to this home
to be back and make this conclusion

we live better because we smell this smell that we still love
this old home these old selves still wanting be be nothing
but just these old selves

at home and still lovers and friends
you are home at last and you check if your plants in the garden did not die

i go to my room and hold the blanket to my nose
this is the smell of home
this old self this sweetness of who i am

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Hear

it is nice to hear that the blind man
along the city street asking for alms
is not really asking for your coins and
other means of support when he starts
to strum his guitar and sing his song
he is simply telling you about his world
where light exists no more exercising
his freedom of expression and not his
freedom of abode and locomotion.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Hear Your Voice Again

now you are here
alone
facing me
singing your own songs
smiling at me
as i clap my hands

you are so beautiful
your voice magical
and it is so nice
of you

to be here again
as i hear
your voice

pure, and diffused
inside
what we call our very own

welcome to originality
to you and nothing
but just you

i am listening

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Know

my friend
it is nice to know that yours
was a failure too,
for haven't i told you
a week ago
that we were also devastated
by what happened to us...

when you broke the news
i did not mourn anymore
i laughed and i danced
all day long on the slippery
floors of the house
and at the backyard of
our little garden

i am happy
for now
our miseries have found
a good company
with yours.

i am inviting you and your wife
therefore in the humble abode of my
simple home

let us drink to our mutual failures!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Know That You Will Spend Your Life With God For All The Days Of Your Life
	hanks.

(Please enter at least 20 characters in the Field of God)

amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nice To Know That...

what am i murmuring
you ask one moment

i have all the excuses
and i love it more when

you doubt
when you are no longer sure

of what happens next
and what follows

this is the mystery of
my being
and i guess this is what
you love

in me, and i never force
you to like this piece

this word, this thought
it is you that searches

what light is left there
what sense

the trail is unfinished
but we are here

shall we then go?
shall we start talking about this?

a blue sky
a yellow sun
a green river

so? there is nothing new
nothing about any sophistication
so? why do you stay? 
are you looking for something missing?

like a key to a door 
an access word to a website?

like a better half of you 
precisely what you feel

this emptiness without 
us.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Nobody's Fault

you fall, she falls, he falls
we all fall
somewhere sometime
fingers were born
not to point who is
at fault for all these
catastrophies

it is destiny
fate, let the finger
touch love

it is nobody's fault
there is no such word
as blame and cord

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not A Number, Not Even A Word, It Is What It Is...

the heart that loves
does not quit

the heart that loves what it does
does not stop doing

even if it is unfair
even if it feels cheated

the heart that loves still keeps on doing what it loves
even if it does not reap what it sows

the heart that loves keep on loving
even if the beloved leaves it for another even if the beloved dies...

the heart that loves what it is doing keeps on doing it
because it loves and love is not measured

it is not a number, not even a word, it is what it is...
it is what it ceaselessly does, despite everything...

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not About Fear, It Is About Not Being Moved By It....

all in fear
in the middle of the ocean

nowhere, all in fear
be not moved.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Easy

it is not easy to pretend that i am
not looking, and you know that when you

take fast glances at me
and i am caught redhanded

filled with desire
the way my hair sways gently

my eyes take some passes
when you catch me

with your quicker looks
i nod down pretending

that i am writing a letter of my own
to a friends miles and miles away

it is not easy for me to think
that you understand all these

longings of touching
and kissing

it is not easy to be a part of you
your past and my past

meeting and knowing very well
the fallen parts

and yet still too weak to pick
them all and give

the picture, the whole,
the real one, the one that shows

the falling of tears
the hands that wipe them
and the silence that comes
after

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Easy, Mind You

There is always a need to speak.

have you heard the old man at dawn
speaking to his horse?
because his only son was killed in
the conflict, his body thrown to the river
and nowhere to the found,

the father sought the body all the years
even speaking to the fish
befriending the stones, and even
asking if the moss too have names
for its progenitor

if the in these river banks a mother
once cried asking for
a reason why her son was killed

there is a need to speak as houses
must have doors.

it is not easy, mind you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Hard To Admit That You Are Wrong

sorry
so sorry is the only word to say
then
correct the wrong
repair the damage
pay what is due
then move on with
the coming chapters
of your life

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Hard To Believe

it is not hard to believe
that some poems are behaving like politicians
seeking for votes
as though there is an election coming

in vying for popularity
some poems may lose their souls
and simply become human bodies
that, subject to the laws of
decay, they too rot &
become simple humor & humus

but unlike other states of
decomposed matter, so conscious of itself
no beautiful flower shall ever
grow and bloom

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not In The Rhyme Or The Meter Or The Message

it is simply
in the finding
of the spot
where you
are badly
hit and now
looking for
a cure that
makes a
poem real

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Love

pictures of your face
inside my mind
colorful landscapes of
sea and sky
white sandy shores
myopic trees upon a hill
a stretch of grass
a rustle of leaves against
the light of the morning sun
a daisy in bloom
flowers all white
on the plains

throughout the night
i cannot sleep
there were pictures of your body
inside my mind

i do not bother my heart
because this may not be about it

pictures of hands with so many fingers
cressing my body
i waited for your call

it did not come
i waited some more
perhaps a message from
facebook
or from my twitter

nothing

in the morning these pictures
lay shattered in the bottom of my mind

i have no regret
and i do not bother my heart about it
love, oh love, it isn't

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Only Me

it is not only me
who by the magic
of poetry
has felt
the softness
of hand
caressing
my hair
the wonder
of a mother
singing
a lullaby
as i sleep
like a baby
in her bosom

it is also
you Habib and the rest
the one
who jots down
on paper
her sorrow
her tension

it is not only us
but also them, and you too who reads
this poem
the one
who calls the soul
into
poetry weaving

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not The Backhoe

what caused all the miseries of those
who were massacred

what is the symbol? it is not the backhoe
it is not even the driver of the backhoe
it is not the armalite
neither the bullets
it is that man who denies that he was there
it is not the impunity
it is those who used impunity, those who used the backhoe
those who used the drivers and the soldiers
it is those who use them all
up there

those who voted for them
finally
those who get the money
those who do not do anything
those who simply watch

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not The Beer

for the blood to boil
inside your groin
definitely it is not
the brown bottles
of SanMig beer
but the brown server
of those ice cold beer
on soft hands and
of breasts bare

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not The Romance

like an oil lamp
soon it consumes itself
and light is gone

be prepared for
the darkness
both of you

stay together and
be that someone that
can't do it alone

you need another
to survive the cold night

this is marriage
welcome.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not Very Easy

it is not very easy to be here with you in this strange land
where you are no longer feeling blue
where your feet have become roots
and where your arms and hands
have given to the shape of twigs and blooms of
beautiful flowers
it is not very easy for me
to stay here with you
where i am but a this seed sprouting
and then suddenly transported
with such fragile hands
still unfit to the coldness
of the frost and snow
i am shivering to the promise of your love
your independence
seemingly shall shatter my old solid feelings

but i don't really mind, i am putting my thick
winter coat on, and i am slowly learning
the language
of your love

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not What You Really Think...

figure out
what was done really?
all i do is ask
and wait
the offer stands and sits for sometime
until you say yes
i need your nod, your bow, you too have to make
the genuflection,
this world is not made of guilt or innocence
the people that we know
we did not divide as either sane or insane
moral or immoral
we respect them somehow
we call them their real names and tell them
that life is worth living

i wait, it you that must decide
this is a world of volition
free will, my dear, free will,
if nothing happens, i go somewhere else
where i am loved
where arms embrace me for what i am
where there is hope for what
i must become...

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not You

a broken heart is not you.
it's another heart in another body.
it's not me anymore.
it's not even the name
that you always mention
that you attach to
my memory

it is just this broken-ness
just this
that i cannot touch and kiss
just this
unleaving, without a skin or body
it is just the broken-ness
in us, and no other

a word, an idea, a concept,
a connotation that we always
speak of
or if not, that we really want to
utter
but cannot anymore

it is far from us, and yet
buried within our arms

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Not...

it is not the language
but the thought
it is not the house but
those who live in it
it is not the road
but the car and the drivers
the passengers too
it is not the ship
but those waving hands
it is not the school building
but the students and teachers
depth in their mission
for more
it is not the church structure
but the pilgrims
in prayer
it is not Earth
but us
it is not the River
but the bather
it is not the paper
but the words that you write in them
it is not the pen
neither the ink
it is you and your memories
it is not the feet and hands
but your distance
the journey
the things that you create
along this
path
this hill and mountain
that cloud and
sun

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Only The Clock Which Stopped Ticking

there is something in me that does not stop. I thought it is only me.
There is also something in them that does not stop.
Then our steps jibe.
then we are into this together. Even the night is with us.
And then the day follows.
so many things cannot stop.

Until the clock stopped ticking.

It is the clock only.
Never us. There is something beyond us that cannot stop
and we know it
and now
we no longer worry what is it that does not stop.

We understand. IT is only the clock which stopped ticking.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Our Duty

it is our duty
despite the pains inside our hearts
we still must
stand with dignity

the heart has its own
territory
its own chambers where
we keep our emotions
burning
carefully that these
may not burn us

we keep eye
on what is going to happen
to the future places
where we must
take rest

we are now living
under the most
ordinary sun

a common day
of our senses
as we go on touching
the body of life

now it is time
to land to keep
our wings folded
at our backs
as simply as i must
face you

under the white feathers
of my wings
my pure heart
shall sleep
It Is Over

it is over and there will be closing statements
do not tell me about some cliches
that i have improved in the exchange
of mutualities, that i have satisfied every quiver of your
clit, that i have become an expert of long distance
love, that i know what prolongation means,
you seem to imply that i am not responsible
for the movement of my thighs and legs
that i do not know how to breathe
to the rhythm of a love poem
its beat and intensity
that i must claim that you are forced into such a sweet
submission
you do a lot of talking
i snore.

it is over. Be the best magician.
Vanish yourself.

it is over now. I had enough of enough.
i am dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Over, And We Made A Fine Start....

they have done it
discreetly and well,

ey they begin by traveling in
separate directions

one goes to manila
the other go to Jolo

as one arrives on a
Wednesday
the other leaves on
a Thursday

the hours are hectic
they do not meet at a common hand

that is a start
sort of a practice that soon shall make perfect

ey they do not sleep in the same bed
for so many reasons

a hundred two hundred
jingling of keys

soon it will be easy and
soon it will be as painless as

we know it
we know how to do it now

we are on the same frame of mind
it is over.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Over, Part Two

after the arms entwined
like tendrils of
a very resilient vine
the door closes
like a sunset
filled with warm colors
of red and orange
and hard yellow egg yolk
and then fading
like a whisper
in my ear
that hears a word
bye

honey
see you later,

and then we say
such a short bursting moment
in the most private silence

(of our concealed existence
like a love letter
written a long long time ago)

is over and when we walk away
our separate paths
i to the north and you
to the south
we keep assuring our dream
weaver
that since we like this place
with you
then we must work for a rebirth

a tryst

somewhere though we
do not know
exactly when....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Over...

when the journey
is reached

having passed
many times the same river

when the feet no longer
feels weariness

when the soul rests
upon no thought

then you stop
writing

because everything is so perfect
and no word
no word can ever justify what

it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Raining

i could have prayed
and raised my soul
as pleasing gift to
you O Lord, but no
i played Games in
the Yard, and i behave
like A Child, and i
Stumbled and goT
iNJured, and bleed
and you Look at Me
with Pity and I
AM amazed at your
Love, and then I
IOOk at you and I find
Meaning....

I did not even say
Forgive Me but you
gathered all your
Arms around me and
I feel warm...

And in that dream I
cried, and indeed

when i wake up this
morning, it is raining.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Sad Indeed

it is sad indeed korina that to gain the respect of society
we must all adopt the codes of hypocrisy

just like the way we sneeze and cough and get away with the cold and the phlegm
catching all of them in restrained silence inside our white handkerchiefs as though we are keeping the treasures of the moment

it is indeed sad korina that to be honorable we disregard what we really are
the way bliss jumps when blissful
the way we laugh like horses
the way we scatter ourselves on trees and jump into rivers like monkeys

it is indeed sad korina that the way to be free is to put on the stiff collars in our necks and speak the words well chosen with all hesitation that we cannot possibly hurt the sensibilities of this perfect world that they are trying to build for all of us

the one that finally imprisons us like convicts sentenced to death and still smile because they say they all love us

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Simple

when you draw a man
on your paper
do not complicate him
let him have hands
a head
a belly
let him have two legs
and two feet

do not try giving him
fingers and toes
and start tracing
the lines of his
palms
and pores of his skin
his hair
and eyebrows and
eyelids

he would not like it
the particulars
are his alone
his secrets
his struggles to define himself
apart from the rest

in doing so
you let him be
a man to complete himself
self-made
with pride to provide the missing parts
his past buried
in his muscles
his hopes intricately woven
in his nerves

it simple enough
let him have too his solitude
a secret cabinet
for his bullets and pistol
and rage

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is So Beautiful

a tree
dies attacked by fungus

infection is all
over

all leaves fall
to the ground

i watch sadness
creeping on stones

a tree without leaves
is happiness

stripped
off
as though deserted
all essence
gone

it does not end there
yet

this afternoon
birds with yellow breasts
and tiny beaks
come hovering

the dead tree sings a song
to the night

the sky is listening and it is
so beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is So Common

a common plague
here
how a fly
hovering on
a carabao's back
now behaves
and feels like that
big black
carabao itself?

not uncommon
yet everyone
speaks to no one
about
this discrepancy
as the carabao grazes
on the pastureland
stupidly
as usual

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Spring....

when you pose beside those flowers
and you tell me

it is spring! it is spring!

and that i should be happy
because it is spring time and all the flowers
are showing
their true colors

i stop right there
it is not actually the beauty that we are
cought inside
the prison of having to stay and
believe and
hold on to life with awe

it is the true colors
that i am stuck with

not even the spring that merely
springs it.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Still Dark Outside

I open one window to hear the
rhythm of the rain this
early morning

i hear the wind, soft on the
panes.

i feel my soul. My body works
for me.
i feel three things now. My body,
my soul, and me.

i am a trinity too. I create
a universe of my own.

To start with, i grope for words.
I write them to see them well.

They go through me. But sometimes
i suspect, what words are.

what they really mean. How
come i have chosen them.

no problem. no problem.
let me catch some more.

no images for now. Just this
pressing. A monotony that

sometimes lulls you back to
sleep again. ess.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Still The Worm That Matters

whether you have been an early bird or always late

it is still the worm that matters..

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Still Too Comforting

i read a poem
early this morning
i can't walk outside
since it is raining

the poem is all about
me
(but it could be
about you
too)
you write it and
i am deeply touched

the sun has not come
yet
the clouds still nowhere
to be found

the poem has a sound
more like the soft rain
that is still pouring
from night till morning

and for both us
i swear it is still
too comforting

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Still You That Makes Me Feel Incomplete All These Years.

there is something incomplete in a bird song
a space hangs
on the ceiling
an emptiness goes with us
in the middle of the crowded mall

something is missing
no matter how edges meet and try to complete themselves with a filling like some sealant in wood or metal

it is still you that makes me feel incomplete all these years.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Strange

i find the coming days strange
filled with your silence and i am here feeling so abandoned
pampered once by your words of concern
like i am always showered by your rain
when i was once a vast dryland
with grasses all wilting and animals moving away
searching for water,

it is indeed strange when a day goes away without any word from you
when the night comes as black as tar
and as lonely as a house without its children
moving out to another place carrying with them their
conversations and laughter
and oh even the usual noise
those senseless ones that i begin to miss
because of their absence

i miss you and i will be missing you more for the coming empty days
of my life
i am like a window now always open as
the strong winds come and scatter everything that i have written

the night comes like an empty space of darkness where i surrender
without any word
i sleep and then wake up for another day
when the light stabs my face
piercing my heart
this time every change that comes
is pain

because you are not here anymore and without you
i will be always alone
feeling so abandoned like the shell without its flesh
like the skull without a face

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Details, Be Aware, And Then Be Creative

he could not believe you
when you enumerated all the parts of the flower

what he meant perhaps was only a petal
how it smells at six o’cock in the evening
when you are with him but you said, in all completer
scientific details as follows:

the flower is made of its:
s are used to attract insects into the flower,
they may have guidelines on them and be scented.
a is covered in a sticky substance that the pollen grains will adhere to.
3. The style raises the stigma away from the Ovary to decrease the likelihood of
pollen contamination. It varies in length.
   This protects the ovule and once fertilisation has taken place it will become the
fruit.
5. The Ovule is like the egg in animals and once fertilisation has taken place will
become the seed.
tacle This is the flower’s attachment to the stalk and in some cases becomes
part of the fruit after fertilisation e.g. strawberry.
r stalk Gives support to the flower and elevates the flower for the insects.
ry This is where a sugary solution called nectar is held to attract insects.
Sepals protect the flower whilst the flower is developing from a bud.
et This is the stalk of the Anther.
r The Anthers contain pollen sacs. The sacs release pollen on to the outside of
the anthers that brush against insects on entering the flowers. The pollen once
deposited on the insect is transferred to the stigma of another flower or the same
flower. The ovule is then able to be fertilised.

he could have been sad. He wants the poetic sense of things
not the scientific, realistic approach
to something, like a flower,

the symbol of his love for you.
You busy yourself, without feelings.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The End Of My Rainy Days

I will miss you my Friend

On the other hand
I will loathe you
In due time

i like to
Leave you again

It is the end
Of my rainy days

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The 'Ing' Of Things Which Are Real

ongoing, loving, living,
existing, thinking,
agonizing, forgiving,
accepting,

drinking, thirsting,
eating, filling, filing,
reading, writing, singing,
philosophizing, mesmerizing,
sitting, setting, making, carrying,
bleeding, healing, bullying,
touching, merrymaking, seeding, planting, growing

these are the 'ings'
for they are real, and true and beautiful

keep going, keeping, storing, giving, releasing, freeing, seething, soothing,
....ing, , , , ing....inging...there is no stopping of these 'ings'

moving living singing flying floating diving dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Loneliness That Writes So Well....

even the simplest
poem
cannot be free
from
anxiety

it is still the
morning dew
of last night's
unrest

you ask
what about a happy
one?

the one that celebrates
the joys of
life?

it can be but mind you
it is not rare

and no one wants to
believe
as to its truth
anymore

it is loneliness that
writes well
because it is seeking
for help

do you expect a
newly married man to
write
a poem in bed?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Music Within

it is the music within
mind you
it is the one that impels
the words
not the form from without

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Poem Which Does It, Not You, Uncle....

uncle sammy
do not tell what
a poem must do
for it is the poem
that tells you
what to do with yourself
you, whose depression
had taken the roots of
the tree
deep down the earth
of too much sorrow.

a poem is a bird, and also
an arrow,
not much of a kite that
you can hold with a string
on your hand
that dances when you pull
and release it
one way or the other

a poem is air, it is too
water
it is too, if you are
sensitive enough,
in fact, just nothing
but a flitting feeling
more likely
a dart could be,
or a bob dance,
skipping rope that
trips and flutter,
or bounce,

ah, more likely
dragonflies

those that flitted
across the pond
behind the house of
grandpa.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Rain Trickling

always remember the sound of the trickling rain
always pay attention to its sadness

always greater than yours
the seemingly endless trickling of the rain
at night
when you are alone in your room
notice the notes
to make it a very sad song
appeasing your
heart

every trickle has a meaning
subsumed in another
trickle
mind it well
and you will never be alone again
mind the sound of sadness
get used to its rhythm
understand
the meaning hidden in every
granule of waterdrops

then, you will fear nothing
in this chant
this poetic trance this awareness
of falling
and its meaning

only then will you understand
what sunshine means what rising means
what everything else

to someone like you

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Same Reason

Why she sings, why she sings out loud at night
When all the neighbors need the peace and quiet

Why she keeps nagging me why she keeps going to
Church everyday why she keeps some dogs in the house

Why she keeps her garden why she keeps an updated menu
Why she sleeps late and wakes up early why she keeps away

From nosy neighbors now why she buys so many shoes
Why she keeps on buying more bags why she scolds the maids

Why she keeps all the things to herself why she experiences
Nightmares why she escapes to the malls and shops all day

Why she keeps asking me what time is it now?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Same Unrequited Love As The Old Song
From The Mountain

the love is alive
within you and it wants to talk
and tell and just
be a smoke rising finally from the
confines of the chimney
from those closed windows
and locked doors
liberation, spirits freed from
what imprison them
just to say i love you and then
i go
it is enough it does not demand much
it says hello and then
keeps upon its pocket the word
goodbye

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is The Truth....

you wished
everything can be touched
and felt
with all the gladness
that feeling of
euphoria

you wished every word
to be poetic
one that arises from your
basic instincts
the joys of heaven
the sounds of angels
the songs of skies
the whispers of space
the magic of galaxies
the beauty of falling stars
the concert of the waves of
the seas

but

what is real
still pains you

it is the
truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is There

it is there
it has always been there
even before you are here
even before they were there
it has always been
and will always be
ever and ever
now and forever

amen

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Actually My Dear

it is a trip to nowhere
you do not know where to start
you do not know where to stop
you carry yourself but
you want to find it
you seem to hold on to the usual answers
but you are suspicious of the questions
you go round and round
but you feel you are on top and then
you fall and rise and rise and fall
somehow at the end of the day
you feel complete and yet your stomach growls
you brain stirs and makes the house one whirlpool
where at the center of it all
you sleep soundly like a vintage wine
kept at the basement where the cellar lies

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Distance That Must Bond Again Man And Birds

under the pine tree
one rainy afternoon four robins
fly low, and hover on the pebbles
where just recently i spread some grains
of rice

and to build their confidences
i move away to create a certain distance

the past feeder had been pretentious and too unkind
to take some of their companions away
the hunger that brings them back here
need not be another tragedy

it is this distance that must bond again
man and birds.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Freedom

the air
serves the medium for freedom
it is the canvass
for a painting of red wings
against the peace
that the sky blue provides
there is no black string
that binds
us to the poles
we are free and then
we leave
towards the journey
of what we do not yet know
there are no palpitations of
the wrist of fear
what we have is just this
daily lookout
towards a universe
hidden beneath
the black holes of our
longings

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This How And Why Which Still Bother Me...

i look at your finger
my friend your diamond is bigger than that walnut

where did you get that? and how?

do not blame me for asking that question

we belong to the same class and i ain't have any

something's wrong somewhere definitely not my envy no way do not ever think of it

it is this how and why which still bother me...

the diamond ring is a shame to the poverty of our masses....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Pain

my traffic light
is this pain
at the upper portion
of my abdomen

signals
not for stop
but for go

it is not the same
with you
when all the vehicles
stop
it is me
this car

who is going

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Poem

thunderstorm
carries a ship
relentlessly aboard
a hopeless man he confesses to be
one hopeless man
losing his sense of direction
climbs
aboard towards the roof of the ship
gazing at the horizon
i fear that he would jump
out the ship into the whirlpool
he looks at me
and i sense the same
fear
to an identical situation
upon the same
storm upon the same ship
upon the same
dark hour
somehow we change

and so here i am

writing about him

it is this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is This Waiting

it is this waiting
how can one be so patient with
time that slowly covers
a dark island
with the mantle of whiteness
crawling like
a turtle upon the
bank of
brook

you want to trace the cause of this sorrow
like a line that links itself
to the
midribs of poetry?

do not mistake the cause from its effect

it is not sorrow which caused the lines to run from one end to the other
it's been there even without writing it

i ask you why there can be no comfort within her domain and
your answer is the same

the feeling is there but how can one smoothly provide words for them
to make
a chain of an explanation that can be easily understood

as a simple sentence.
it is not easy. Feelings are shadows in darkness. There is a shape but
there is no word yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Time For Me To Be Empty

listening to mariah carey
when the night comes.

i've been unloading thoughts
leaving them in the last light
of the day.

it is time for me to be empty
to be hungry again for the thought
of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Time For Them To Rise

the time has come
for our younger friends to take the lift
and they shall rise
riding on chariot suns

oh! how young and strong
this new generation shall be

we shall watch them smile
and others laugh
in joys unspeakable
they shall touch the clouds
and be cheek to cheek
with the stars
and be on elbows with
the planets and the
moons

& as they stay for a while in
the heavens we shall
take the plunge of our
destined falling

slowly we feel the
colder temperatures
creeping in our spines
and we shall have no
complaints and take
our lives within the
comfort of an
acceptable resignation

we know who we are
we know what destiny is
from the pages of the
lives of our forefathers

we know the ways of the inevitable
and we are proud of the bustle
we touch the temperature
of the river
it is cold as ice
we feel the flow of our
journey
inside the pulse of our veins
we see the darkness
dilluting slowly every
light that we once own

on such a sweet surrender
we wait
on such an anticipation
we soon shall meet
those that we once love
and those that still
love us

there in the great chasm
our affections make
the last connections

we had it all we had been there
we are joyful now that we too are here.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Time To Say Something Briefly And Concisely

oh yes
since you asked
i accept
that sometimes
quitters
also win
a lot.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Time...

you may remember
those bad times,

falling upon a
manhole with no
one minding,

being humiliated
and you keep mum,

or that moment when
you are accused of
a crime which you
did not commit,

that time when you
walk headless on those
city streets,

you bury them, you grow
up, ignoring and making
yourself stronger, and
then you become rich and
famous,

and they all come to
you for help, some of
them are dead without
your knowing and those
who are still alive
come to you for succor,

and you did what is
right, that which made
you stronger,

ignore them, coz what
they did to you cannot
be forgotten....
whisper to yourself,
it is time....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Too Wide And Huge

it is too huge and wide
and my arms cannot embrace it
my soul leaps my heart begins to have lips
to sing
my wings growing behind my shoulders
as though
i have become an angel
pure and ample

it is the world of my dreams
my tongue salivates
my hands tremble anticipating the fulfillment of desire
i close my eyes
and i become too near
unconfused
too sure of what i must become

a mountain beside the caressing winds
and clouds
and sun

too bright, too wide too huge
star unreachable but too gentle to my gaze

that is what is love all about
(how can i ever grasp its body, how can i ever restrain its soul?)
that is what is my love for you all about

my lips wet, my teeth gritting, my eyes limping
my groins grinding.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is True, I See It More Often

That for the sake of a single rose
The gardener becomes the servant
To a hundred thorns
So let the gardener come
To my house
And I will teach him how to be wise.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Us

it is us
not the mirror
that make us
constantly
beautiful,

it is us
holding on together
through the tough
and bitter times
that make this love
so real,

it is us
though how different you and i can be
that makes this journey
memorable
and always meaningful
as we look in the same direction
not looking back
not blaming
whom and
what not.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Very Funny Yuri

shall i be different
taking some breasts of
mukako mukamo
wearing her
japanese eyes
and porcelain skin?

you tell me
i am her and
she is me

that we are one
mind one soul
writing sounding
like each other

it is very funny Yuri
ask her if it is true

if you ask me
i will be silent

i will invoke what they always answer
to questions of twists and turns

ask me no questions
and i will tell you no lies.....

(are you laughing now?
it is raining cats and dogs
in here)

RIC S. BASTASA
reading you with all those particular descriptions, like
a knee jerk, with a sound and motion and smell, like terrariums
with a bee, all these, as i am about to end reading, makes me
desire to write one, at least for you, one whom i have not even met,
but one whom i begin to like.

perhaps i have become unfair to the rest of those who live in the same house
with me. Not liking anyone, but just the same, not saying a thing.

life must be like this. To live, and to live smoothly, one must not say anything, or
if one says it, it should be in writing only, and not direct, but slanted, not that
obvious, but perhaps could be understood and this is where the metaphor of the
cold table and the lonely chair comes into the picture.

it is what made me write about you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Worth Living

and so
i shall take advantage of the low tide in my life
go to the shallow shores
and pick some
sea grass and shells and
urchins

how beautiful does the sea floor
look
with all its tiny crabs
and grapes

this is the way to please a lonely soul
it shall search even if it does not find any
it shall make all the tiny parts of this earth
significant

shall i forget that grain of sand for a universe?
the shallow shore for a coastline as though i have the Bahamas in my
hands?

the mind knows how to magnify shreds of happy moments
into flying carpets of its endless imagination

and so this shall be it
the man without power against the world that laughs over
the powerless

the winds of poetry are calling
on board
the trip is endless

it is interesting
it is beautiful and i say with gladness that it is worth living.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is You All The Way

during times of my confusion
when i have no one to trust
when there is simply no one that i can talk to
no one to be with
on these dark moments on these moments
that i feel like it is alright for me
to leave
to die
to be annihilated by all the monsters in my mind
when i begin to view a resting place
spreading green spaces
flowers all in white
a door that is open that i can easily close
and have my own time with you
it is just you and my hands and my words
and my monologues
just you
because the rest do not want me
because the rest of this world is unkind
and too demeaning
it is you my rain
my sunshine
my confidante
just you in this
and that.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Your Face Again

it is your face again that i first see this morning and i ask myself
did i not tell myself and decide for once to forget this face
that i cannot really love? oh, something inside you insists, look, look again
carefully you love this face, this face that you see this morning
why do you deny it? why do you deny that you love this face and that you cannot
resist it?

why do you deny that you can also love something so wrong?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is Your World Now

it is your world now
you have enough of theirs
those who are gods and goddesses
what is perfect is never your choice
not yours
though

you live in your world now
of imperfections

on the other hand
upon such acceptance
you have become one
perfect human being

it is your world now
fill it with the birds of your choices
red, blue, yellow
feathers and claws and beaks
keep them well
in your hands
let them fly forever in your minds

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is, What To Me Is More Important, How Father And Son Become Friends

the tall old man with thick glasses
last night made a call
telling me that after 57 years he
has learned the value of travel
when he gifted his son with an
escapade in Vigan
after his much awaited college
graduation

it is good news that they have new
words learned: heritage houses,
vigan spanish chorizos, horse carriages,
ilocano earthen jars,
some spices of life some
hot places to remember like sahara desert
and old haunted hotels....

it is, what to me is more important,
how father and son become friends
after years of being strangers to each other
how this country can be more beautiful again
when to love you are also being loved in
return....

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is...

too much time has been
spent for nonsense

but somehow this nonsense
keeps us directed into something light and blissful

it is or could be odd
but it is fair enough

morning takes its meaning
from what others claim as nothing

so much time still must be wasted
it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Is......

it is the sorrow
that connects well with
sorrow

one man's misery to another man's misery
makes us celebrate a
newly found day another kind way

it is the bitter drink
that knows how bitter
is another person's
drink

not happiness since it
knows how to isolate itself
as a form of escape and
fought freedom

for it is in happiness that
one gets paired with
selfishness
that non-mindedness about
the plight of the
oppressed

a happy home separates you
from the rest of the sadness of this world
the comfortable light inside the living room
at night
always have a locked door and closed glass windows
as walls

evading what misfortune once was there
forgetting every trauma that was inflicted
upon the wounded hearts the scarred minds
the lost situation of the soul

it is the deepest sorrow
that creates a hole where we all must fall
and finally find
the best home that understands
what sorrow is there that
others have long embedded
in their broken selves

it is the brokenness that knows
what mending is
it is the war that destroys mankind
that makes civilization understand more
what peace is all about
how important must it become

it is this injustice that makes me
a silent water
that seeks the best level of my
existence
with the least possible
resistance there is

RIC S. BASTASA
It May Be At The Same Time And Same Place

it may be at the same time and place
our minds meet without the usual intent

we take this lonely trip
we like to dip and drip

we sail the boat to the magic island
of our mutual desires we bond

we step ashore
love waits at the fore

you will be in the arms of another
and i too shall find & then kiss her

RIC S. BASTASA
It May Not Be Bad At All, Really....

i went to
kota kinabalu
a year ago

i met a friend
who told me
that unless i
embrace his
religion
then i cannot
go to heaven

i, of course,
listened.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Merely Wounds You Again, And You Have Not Even Recovered Yet.

you watch a movie
not expecting that it has a scent
that stays with you even if you quit
and then leave that dark room and
it carries you now wherever you are
and even when you sleep it still haunts
you in that dream. It is now about you
how that story tells a portion of your
life, that part which you buried a long
time ago, it was too happy an event,
which no longer exists, and you do not
want to remember, because remembering
it merely wounds you again, and you
have not even recovered yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Must Have Been Something That I Said

and then it was the end
Alma did not talk anymore
something thorny hits
his throat as if what i said
was a kind of bone
of a deadly fish
something like about a plan
that cannot push through
a ship that cannot arrive
and she be there on the port
lonely again
while waiting for someone

someone who exists
only in her mind
but which gives her hope just the same
poor Alma
sorrowful soul

RIC S. BASTASA
It Must Not Demean Me

Pinoys working along
the forested areas
cutting logs for a living
under chinese businessmen's concessions

a waitress serving me salad
in French Cafe

janitors same color as my skin
driven away from
home

pirates thriving on the islands
kidnapping for ransom
from Sipadan
those white skinned professionals
enjoying their vacation
basking in the sun

no, i am not demeaned at all
for all these brothers seeking a shade
of a tree
under the same sun

RIC S. BASTASA
It Never Stops....

alright
i understand the feeling

we felt like wasted
grains of rice
from a leaking sack

spread on the ground
it does not matter even
if it rains or
it shines

time makes us grow
into leaves and we fruit sometime
into another hair of grains
heavy and falling
on the ripe season

the newcomers are noisy and
boisterous
riding on their cars and
keeps on planning what is good
for this left over

expect they do not remember
who we were
even a glimpse of wastage
or growths of some spring
or memories of our bitter winters

or even the summer song
understand this feeling always
the way the world moves
it will never stop

RIC S. BASTASA
It Rained So Hard In The Mountains

it rained so hard in the mountains
and the water ran
together toward the blue sea

a conquest
between brown and blue

i am looking.
the sea is parted.

brown is about fourteen meters.
and blue is driven away.

the trees are bald.
a coconut falls.

we wait. we see how
brownish things murk
the bluish shade of this world.

i am this Filipino.
I am brown. I am what
is this murkiness all about.

we parted.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Rains

it rains
it is far from what I guess

the road has become
one empty
platform

people run away
and then it makes me
really happy

it rains
and those who are afraid of the water
are separated from those
who have no fears

of getting wet and of being alone
of filling an empty street and be counted as
an ostrich

it rains
and the room shall be filled with people
of runaways
who want shelter

it rains and people get divided
and people know each other

and people make decisions
and the rain makes the sound

there is sorrow
but no one cares to listen

RIC S. BASTASA
It Rains For The First Day Of 2009

it rains for the first day of 2009
the firecrackers smoke all gone
the unnecessary papers
the trash that all of you left
are all wet and smeared

i do not wish to say
that this world is shedding tears

i know if these be tears from the skies
all these are but
tears of joy

you, my friend, who lies there still drunk
and sleepy, with dried saliva on your lips
curling on the floor like an abandoned child

yes, my friend, you can be positive about
all these

this year may still have so much patience
to give.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Shall Be It.

it should have been
a kiss
but who shall it be?

yes an it.

i have lost faith
in humans.

i have decided
i shall write the best poem
for myself.

it is more peaceful
that way

i shall kiss myself in the
mirror
and too it is an it.

but it is not really that
dismal as i want to paint it to you

Patty says she does
not like lies
but somehow to cut the
story short
she also makes up
stories about herself
to shut up
those questions which
in some ways
truly hurt her and
Ray.

at most what i can
offer is the silence of
the flowers
who are still as beautiful
despite the
heat this
Indian summer.

now listen to me
you have more
stories that
you can offer to kids
and look at them
their mouths are gaping
and they are
flown away with the help
of your imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
It Shall Become The Hit Song Tomorrow

you abandon a love song
it hangs on the bus
as you leave home
seeking for greener pastures
out there

lonely

no one picks it up
to take it home
or even
to just whistle it
for the meantime

you will
soon regret

that song
shall become the hit song
tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
It Should Be The Kindness That Counts

i like it here
where kindness is put like a basket
full of fruits
where you pick one and taste
one and say
this fruit is sweet, and juicy and luscious

and then not to be outdone
you put some red & white roses
beside a basket and some
daffodils and colored daisies
and i say
oh! how beautiful have the fruits
become
because of the flowers!

i like it here
on friendly air
and sunny skies and singing birds

it is here
where kindness begets kindness
where love begets love
where everyone braces for the race of happiness

and never
violence.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Simply Goes On And On For Hours And Hours

a beautiful conversation is like a chain of flowers
from my hand to yours
it does not just arrive at a dead end street
where all of us want to go back home
it simply goes on and on for hours and hours
and we who are into it do not notice the monotonous
circling of time moving on the same face of the clock
and for sometime we move like caterpillars upon same leaf
that we tread upon and then eat.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Too Is Made Of Nothing

do not cease to
believe in
yourself like a vine that always clings to the trunk of a tree
stretching always to reach the face of the moon
and after so much exhaustion on so many attempts
finally
includes its pure flowers
to the
blue skies
if you cease believing
the skies will be gone
adrift to nowhere
the trees shall die
its roots
dry
and the strong wind of doubt shall come
at a time when you are giving up hopelessly
surrendering everything that you have in your arms
your hands
emptied by the nothingness of the usurper

do not give up to what we are fighting against
come and take a closer look
it too is
made of nothing............... come and feel closer
we are made of that
sterner stuff
and no failure is greater than the memories of our past successes.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Too Is Selfishness On The Other Hand....

when you speak for the truth
it is because of some returns
the incentives line up like whores
next door
somehow they admit there is pain at first
but sooner
happiness knocks and there are many of them
waiting to be coddled by you
then you take one
all for the silence
it is worth all the hassle and then to prevent more damage
you go away
you fade like a old picture and some children come to your room
and see again what is in there
they will ask but there will be no answers
for the meantime

RIC S. BASTASA
It Took Me A Long Time

it took me a very long time
to realize that i love you, and now that my words are dressed on their Sunday's best
to let you know what was unsaid before
the door of your church is already closed

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was A Lovely Day

bright sun
definitely a fair weather
the trees of summer
regaining their lost leaves
budding

a man and a woman
walked together
on a grassy field

their last dialogue
was 'goodbye, good luck
till we meet again!'

it was a lovely day
that i will always remember

i want it back
that lovely day
with you.

like a film
let us have a take two
with all the lights, camera
and action!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Him

it was only him
who knew the secrets of your womb
no other, no other creature
knows about the code

when the virus of the rumor
spread
when the cancer cells of falsehood
metastasized to your utter
destruction
it was because he told you
he told them

now you are at his side
destroying your beliefs
his words
rule in your head
like a puppet to his
strings

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Not Curiosity

it was not curiosity
that killed the cat
in you

it was jealousy

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Not Even Literature....

early that night
love has accomplished what
it planned to do

not one is sad, at least
to our comfort, no one
mentions regret, exhausted
and filled

the usual smoke is not here
anymore.
someone hurries to leave,
it is done and there is nothing
more to be talked about

at this point, one wakes up
the following morning
trying to decipher the meaning
of a bed, or the significance
of breakfast.

to some extent there are changes,
say feeling for instance,
the door is not anymore exciting
even if it opens.

the table lamp loses the importance
of light or that book
about love becomes too ordinary
one does not bother to pick it up
again at noon.

what used to be a scent of perfume
becomes foul like a dead fish, with
some wormy gills,

one asks what is it that when you
get what you want and when it is over
you finally arrive at the conclusion

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that it was not that lovely after all, or simply unlikable, and to a certain extent you detest it, and you blame yourself for not that really wise and choosy.

damn, it was just a need, and just a past time, it was not even literature.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Not The Beginning Of Pain

when i hear that music
which is played outside this enclosure
whose windows are like leaks
upon a container of water
i remember you

alone in the other side of the room
we were then in zamboanga
we were boarders and i was reading a book
behind the wall that divided us

i was pretending
not being concerned about your loneliness
which i inadvertently presumed

i allowed the silence to creep on the floor
rising to my hair

which could not in any sense understand at all
what was happening
within me, it was strange,

it was a nostalgia that i never figured out
till then

it was too painful for me imagining that you love me
and that soon
when i finally left for another destination
i put it upon myself that you should miss me somehow

it was a little bit awkward
but i wanted it to reign in my heart
like it was a precious gem

i wished i had knocked at the door of your room
but the lights were already turned off
and i was presuming that you too were listening to the
silence of the enclosure where i am
situated comfortably
in my pretensions

i could have loved you and told you about it
but i knew that with the prevailing
times, the chaos and the rules of the game of war
during that time

us loving each other would be as absurd
as lines traveling parallel to each other
and in opposite direction
should ever meet

i understood the situation so i also turned off the light of that room

when i left the following morning for a new assignment
the landlady told me that you already left much earlier

That was not actually, the beginning of my pain
it began when i first met myself and got introduced to it
with me not knowing myself exactly,
with such an accuracy denied to the level of my convenience
or comfort.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Nothing....

orally fixated said he
to the two handsome men aboard that boat
going to an island
where paradise is rumored

on the other side
is a young man and a young woman
too in love
they were holding hands
throughout the trip
her head resting on his
chest
the sound of the boat is insistent
slashing the sea
into a slit of foam and bubble

i was alone, spying on every human aspect
of the trip
to that rumored paradise

they all look at me
thinking that i must be weird or cruel
not having with me anyone

i do not mind
i am on this curious trip to that rumored paradise
Spying on every one who is on that boat
i am the spectator
taking notes inside my mind

humanity is mixed nuts
and i am enjoying it
now orally fixated on every one
aboard that boat that shall take us to that rumored paradise

when we arrive there
it was nothing.
It Was Only Yesterday When I Said I Want Your Body

yesterday i may have been high with my testosterone
i wanted your body to satisfy me
i was so hard on
myself demanding what may kill me
at the end,
but then i jacked off
then i turned weak and flaccid in my thoughts
the heat is over
and time to cool off from our senselessness
and hard

headedness our unreasonableness to the demands of the hard flesh,

now i sit calm like a lotus pure around this mud
i take back my mind
i put my senses intact

i still need your love, your mind, your care, your thoughts,
and your body to just sit beside me

i do not have even the courage to touch you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was So Bad, But You Gave It Your Smile

at first when it was first handed to you
it was really as horrible as a bomb
but it has not exploded it and so you do not really know
the exact significance

nothing about consequences
like an annihilation that is about to happen
to you,

and so you receive it gladly
and your smile detonated it
and people weep
and then they leave
one by one

and it is you alone
and what you remember again
was that last sweetest smile that you gave
so willingly in exchange of that gift

you felt the last happiness
and then you too leave
though
in a different direction....

no one returns
and reclaim what steps you
have been taken

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Soft And Sweet

the first time
our foreheads meet
too intimate
that our eyes close
and we felt
something
we have not felt
before
something i could
not really believe
until everything ended
when i pulled away
my body from hers
and she did not
complain of
any pain-

she looked at me
and without any word
still says it all

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Then When I Tried Fitting Your Dancing Shoes

i do not know what really caused it
bad day, it must be a damned day,
it was then when i tried fitting my feet
to your dancing shoes
when the music stopped
and dancers fainted

do not look at me as though i am holding
the compass of this world
(did i really cause it? let me go
these feet. Bad day. Damn!)

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Too Long Ago

25 years must still be
hurting, a wound that could have healed
but she insists on its pain,
i want to forget
but she must have planted
a bamboo on that
brook of brine,
not too salty, but
mostly a bitter
blindness about that love
that never
fulfilled itself,
this morning i have something
to say
but she closed the door
and she
is crying still, despite
those 25 years.

how can i free
myself from this
cell of
guilt?

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was You

when papa did not believe me
it was you who encouraged me
when i was down and was about to give up
it was you who was beside me
saying 'there are other options
there are other ways
life must move on! '
when the school considered me a hopeless case
you did not believe it
saying 'there are other better schools'
when i left home because the family was unbearable
it was you who said
'when you get tired searching for yourself
please come back'

it was you Mama
who made all things possible for me
it was you all the way
giving me air to breathe
space to move myself freely
it was you who gave me a sense of
home.

i am offering myself
as a prayer for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Was Your Grace That I Still Love

not your rage, not your age,
not your rashness to jump into a hasty conclusion,
not your hardheadedness,
not your anger, or hate, or
unwanted pregnancy,
not your cries for help when i was away
not your hangover, your hang-ups
not your angst,

it was still your grace that i love
the one which tries to figure out why things did not happen the way we planned it.
it was your patience which keeps on saying
till death.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Always Be Still For My Own Good

last night i was almost caught

do not ask me what it was

i was almost caught and my body

shook like a vibrating fork and my

mouth shut off like a door and no

matter how she tries to open it

something inside me refused to

let her in.

if she caught me, i could have known

how the Sphinx did the extinction upon

itself.

somehow there was this ambivalence

if i were caught i could have been free.

but i was not caught

and so i remain in this self-imposed enclosure

i feel safe. But i am unhappy.

there are always two sides of our choices.

but i trust my instincts. Whatever i choose

it will always be still for my own good.

last night, i know that feeling, how to live
and how to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Always Be That Way...

it is hot in here
and we are wearing

our long sleeves
with undershirt,

we want to undress
and relieve ourselves

from this inconvenience
and deprivations

tradition however
demands that we suffer

finally the bride and the
groom have arrived late by

one hour and we see them
dance all the way to the altar

the guests are hungry and wary
but are not complaining

no one says a word or shows
a hint of discontent

it has always been that way
the hypocrisy of tradition.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Always Be That Way...(2)

it is hot in here
and we are wearing

our long sleeves
with undershirt,

we want to undress
and relieve ourselves
from this inconvenience

tradition however
demands that we suffer

finally the bride and the
groom have arrived late by
one hour

the guests are hungry but
are not complaining

no says a word
it has always been that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Always Be You

Wherever I am or in whatever
Situation I find myself
Be it in prayer or
Play or serious consideration
Of me & her,
It will always be you in my mind,
My soul,
It will always be you, in all my sins
Today, tomorrow,
It will always be you, how can I ever
Learn to be
True to myself,
as it will always be you
In my brain
Damaged till the end, it will always be you, how

Can I ever imagine myself always loving you,
Always imagining you
While I make love to her, while I move around my world

I become so ugly in you and we become
So ugly like wrinkles and scars
But it will always be you,
& me, I swear, I inser always you & me in there,
And no one else,
It will always be you,
How can I be so unforgiving?

How can I be so dishonest?
Always in sin, always in the ecstasy in the wrong workings
Of my mind,
It will always be you just the same,

The world will never know, because it
Cannot understand, I can feel it.
It has only the cruelty for it,
Like savage to a slave.

Reverse me, tumble me, and hate me,
It will always be you. You will always never know.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Always Be.......  

outside the world is cold.  
so windy, i hold my hair.  
i put my cap, and tie it to my  
neck. I could be blown away.  
I fear.  

the window pane is glassy,  
catching chunks of fog.  
and there you are with another.  
lovely so lovely, both of you.  
i steal some hours, some time,  
watching.  

i envy love. I miss intimacy.  
i could think for hours, blaming  
my fate, my hands, and my  
upbringing.  

i keep myself warm to layers of  
clothing. My face is tight.  
My body is keeping up to make  
me alive amidst this coldness.  

i let you go. I let myself too.  
outside the world is cold but  
i am staying warm to myself.  
My duty is to live. Perhaps even  
without love. Perhaps it is not  
love at all. Perhaps i am not  
myself.  

the world outside is cold.  
but it does not matter.  
i am going back to my father's  
house. There the light is  
sincere and warm, enough for me  
to keep on watching,  

the world outside is cold, so cold.
yes, it will always be.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Be Another Week

another week of unbecoming
retracing genes of
great grandfathers, these vomiting
moments of our lives
what they taught perhaps
shall linger like leeches
but we like them all to leave us
so we can also
lick our own wounds without them
watching with whirlpool faces

another week of hibernation
getting to know this self like it were a stranger
knocking on my door

for a while i must accept all these
treat this stranger to a drink
vodka or rum
i may hum and make myself numb
on this mantra of manifestations
here i am
embrace me says the stranger
i have been longing to have you
and hold you tight unto my arms
let us talk
you and i.

my name is your name
and my emptiness is yours too.
let us drink to this!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Be Done.

not everyday is worth
the take,
or the talk even,

time there are times when
everyday is just
everyday,

we simply let the hours pass
with nothing to reap
nothing to tell
when we meet again in bed
after dinner

just like this moment
when we are here in this sameness
we share a bed but not our
bodies anymore, or at least
we share a conversation,

my day at the office with
tired stenographers who steals
some nap minutes after a hard
day's trial

i share their woes, but i never
show it,
after all i am the leader of this
pack of wolves
and i must keep a watchful eye
a feet of quick sands,

what makes the difference is
how perhaps i think about the
coming days,

i have this prisoner to set free
and he had been languishing in jail
for years without a visitor,
this woman deprived of her kids
this boy molested by his uncle
this corruption of innocence
this unfinished business of mine

how i wish i never die
how i wish i have never been born
how i wish i can fathom well
the meaning of my world,

but it is not just possible.
now i share a nap with impossible dreamers.
it will just be short and never enough.

but it will be done.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Be Necessary

she will sleep there
till evening

from 2 o'clock in the
afternoon

after lunch, she will not
be waked up

by anybody of the house
she must know

after all these hours
that no one is coming

it will be sad but it will
be necessary

it is inevitable
it is always named departure

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Just Be A Waste Of Time

A beautiful cat is
nothing but black and white

a stair rises their way up
the wall
without your footsteps
without you
even

the world is complete
off white.

when you situate yourself
it will just be a waste of time

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Just Be Forgotten

whatever
was that
whatever you
think

about who i am
where i am from
and where i
am going

this i say:
i have chosen
the cheaper one
for only
one reason

it is just a
one night
stand.

it will just pass
away in
anyway
nothing stays
forever

and so like the
rest
it will just be
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Just Take One Flea And A Cat

it will just take one flea
to infest
this dalmatian

and a grey cat
to capture
the goldfish
in an aquarium

to create all the mess
in my house

on the frontline
where we are missing

RIC S. BASTASA
alone i come
from my own trail of mud and grass. My feet wet with mud
and my palms are thick-skinned.
I am familiar with the road
and the labyrinths talk to me in my own language.

alone i come
and we meet, and we become lovers, like the lone star
and the full moon one night
too close for each
other's delight.

alone i come and we become one.
the demands however have become
too many. That i wash my feet before i enter your stairs.
You always hush when i do not comb
my hair like the way the waves clean the shores.
You want to change my shadow.
Or the color of my dreams.

It is enough. Alone i come and i shall talk to the labyrinths
again. I will be back to the fold of their arms.
We will arrange for a secret welcome.
Alone i go.

I am very sorry. You cannot follow.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Will Take A Long Time Again

at 3 a.m.
i sit in one of those
metallic benches
waiting for my
flight
back home

i need sleep to
dream of you again

it will be a long wait
for me to come to
my rights senses
again

RIC S. BASTASA
It Won'T Be Long...

i was educated so well
in an expensive and
exclusive university for
the rich,

my training is not to be
swindled
perhaps with my skill
i am more
designed to defraud
other people who dwell
in their
sacred ignorance

but i will not be doing
that
i am excited how to feel
being swindled
by the lesser of my kind

i pretend i am one of those
ignoramuses
and i allow myself to be defrauded
swindled
by those i have long wanted
to serve

it is not a nice feeling
but i must experience it to feel
how is it to be
one of those
who are struggling to live
who are shying away from the pains
inflicted by
society

i like to feel what Jesus
felt when he was crucified
when he was spit upon
when he was humiliated and scorned

i just want to be a christian.

Do not worry, It won't be long.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Would Be Illegal To Have

FREE BEER.

the fallacy of accent
sometimes works

the fantasy of freedom
the way we deny ourselves
the truth, the way we choose
what to accept and discard
even if the same may prove
to be harmful. And so when

she reads the letter that she
does not really like reading
to someone whom she does
not want to offend she says
and you
know it: I RESENT THAT LETTER!

RIC S. BASTASA
It Would Have Been Easier....

in your escape
as you jump over the
thorny fence you
land upon a mound
of feces,

as always the
other side is greener
skies bluer
and rivers colder

in your escape against
the horrors of here
you spend and waste so
much time

it would have been easier
and without much hassle
you know the story of the
rope and you could have
all the opportunity to
simply retell it.

the child in all of us
are open hands, the gates of
heavens are options.

RIC S. BASTASA
It Would Have Been Nicer If You Have Not Known The Writer

for her things are personal
like a hand touching her skin
and so a poem how nicely written
goes to her dust bin
when she knew he disliked her.

RIC S. BASTASA
It...

IT IS everyday
like everything that you do: waking up
washing the face
brushing the teeth
combing the hair
defecating on the
throne
in the comfort room
taking breakfast
reading the news
watching tv
waiting and going
and coming back
on the table
searching for words
to mark your day

above all those
rantings
take the cure: write, write,
write

they follow you and
read and say something
about you

perhaps it will matter
that your existence
is being confirmed
by all

you too stalk as they
stalk you

it is fair then.

They are your ITs
And you are their
It too.
but actually it would have been
a better world

if we did not write at all.
simply because
we have chosen the
right course:

talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
It......

at the core
of your creativity is
an inflamed
certainty

you know it
but it is invisible
you feel it
but till this moment
there is still
no word for it

when you leave
the house
and stroll for a break
in that kiosk
under the acacia trees
at night
you see bodies carrying
their shadows like
burdens

you have a word
for it
and you are certain
and you want
them to know
what it is

you cannot utter
it. It is.

It is simply
not proper.

RIC S. BASTASA
It’s In Our Poetry

in our poetry
it is silence that speaks to us
most and best

it paints the truth
using the sunset
that we can never
forget

it writes upon our souls
in bold strokes
the most obvious of
what most think as
the impossible

those that only the blind
and mute people
treasure in their
temples of thoughts
forevermore

RIC S. BASTASA
It's A Beautiful Morning

AS i open the door
i see birds flying and playing in the air
i see chickens feeding on the grains

the sun is peeping
and the world is beginning to enjoy the light

the darkness of the night is over
it is enough

now is the time for basking
in the light

to hear the laughter of the strangers
as you go your own way

in the pursuit of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's A Blue Butterfly...

inside my heart
there is a blue butterfly

it is not fluttering

it is still
and so fragile

your whisper
warm as a sea breeze

displaces it
for i shall allow it

it waits for your kind hands
to take it and keep it and hide it

if you crush it with your cares
beautifully it shall surrender its powder wings

it's been quite a long wish
that you blow it far away from its home

the death that you give
with the indifference of your fingers

shall set it finally
free

RIC S. BASTASA
It's A Fact

that those who pretend
to be asleep
are the hardest people to wake

and so i pretend too that i do not know that you are pretending.

in this way
we are even.

i pretend that i am wide awake
in the middle of my
resentful sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's A No......

d tonight
as i lay upon a bed
inside my room

i hear the gecko sounding

i play my life
leaving it to the final sound

of the gecko on the ceiling
telling

yes, no, yes, no, yes,

finally,

NO.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's All About Survival

A spider spins its web
Using nothing but it's own
Saliva

The web is a marvelous work of art
An engineering
Feat

The spider is merely looking for food
Trying to survive
Making nothing but
A trap

Nothing
About fame or any of that
Kind

Perhaps about solitude too
And independence

That manner by which one settles peacefully
On being
left alone

RIC S. BASTASA
It's All In The Mind

so near and yet so unreachable
a Saturday imagination
about us, you say you like to
make me happy, and i oblige,
a kiss on my lips, a tight hug,
i can hardly breathe, and you
kneel down, like i am one god
to your lust, you put all of myself
in your mouth, and you close
your house
what you do not really see
is that kind of shiver
one rainy day, it is cold,

but how can you ever mind?
at the center of that explosion
soundlessly is just yourself
the sun of this little universe

RIC S. BASTASA
It's All In The Mind, It's All In The Mind

I keep telling you

it's all in the mind, it's all in the mind

and you look at me

hinting that you cannot believe me because i also appear suspicious

about how convinced am i that it is all in the mind that it is all in the mind

our worries are all illusions

a shadow of a rabid dog keeps talking like hands on the wall of your room

a lizard spewing fire on the ceiling?

a floor for a storm at sea? faces turning into masks

and women turning into pins?

you are a thread and you are entering an eye of a

needle, biblical, and oft white against a candle of stones

i run to the sink to wash my face only to feel being drowned by smears of water

could have been a rain in the fields of cogon grass

but things are no longer the same now after a fire, a plunder, a groan

emotions tumble like kitchen glassware breaking below our feet

things like these become wars and we stop for a while and free ourselves

from the bondage of words: sshhh, you try to keep the trees at home with its leaves

shhhh, you keep my hands in your hands
calm down, calm down, there is someone dying in the other room
and the children are nowhere to be found.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's Another Silent Song

Perhaps it was a silent night when you sang that song,

for a song cannot be silent neither can it be silenced even by the silence and darkness of the night

even by the deepest depression that humanity can plunge itself in,

the song remains to be a song until forever...

RIC S. BASTASA
Its Head Trying To Bite Its Own Tail Tasting Its Own Blood

between my house and my office
is a long road connecting both like a snake

head to tail

quite a venomous image of my dwelling and existence
i could have used the word
toxic

inside the car the silence is like a carpet

silence is soft and perfumed this time
it has given an ambiance for a monologue

this time there are more of myself,
three i count them

it is not a monologue anymore,
there are three persons arguing
against each other's principles

the first one is saying that the second is crazy
the crazy one retorts that the first one is the usual unhappy
and withdrawn type
the one sad to say with all honesty with an unhappy childhood

the third is singing a song
thinking that there must be a way to solve problems
in the lyrics of some jolly
refrains

the first one claims ' Is there really a problem? '
the second one says, ' How stupid can you be not knowing that problems always exist? '
the third one stops singing and with dignity
recalls that there is always
pride in restraint and
sacrifice
a crowning glory when one treats himself
with utmost coldness in
neutrality or
even filtered indifference

'Only God knows how to sacrifice, Only the holy ones
know how to forgive and be forgiven' he said

'Are you telling us that we are devils?
You idiot! ' the two
exclaimed in unison.

Everything seems to boil down to morality
'why should it be? ' i ask myself.

and then the three decided to go
dissolve inside me.
I lost the singer,
the logician,
the realist. I miss the one
who keeps using the word
Idiot

Perhaps the world must be an idiot.
I pity the one with an unhappy Childhood.
He is the one that bugs my memory
and sometimes spoils my candle lighted
dinner.

Alone.

'What is happening to us? ' they might have asked.

They are like chunks of sugar, a pinch of salt,
a spoonful of vinegar, mixing themselves
in my cup of tea.

there is always something that happens
which i am trying to understand when i drive my car alone
between my house and my office
like a snake that is now forming a benzene
ring
its mouth trying to bite its own tail
tasting the
blood at its
tip.

RIC S. BASTASA
Its Name Is Love.....

Of all
elements

i love fire
and i keep it
everywhere

look at me
there is fire in my eyes

feel my hands
there is fire
growing in my fingers

lay your head
upon my shoulders
there will be
fire in your
hair

kiss my lips
you shall eat my fire
burning in there
continuously

put your body
above mine
you shall be
dry wood
of my fireplace
in winter

and i shall burn you
forever
and you shall
love it

for this fire
burns
but we shall never
be consumed
no one is charred
nothing is marred

there is no
ash
neither potash

let me name
this fire

RIC S. BASTASA
It's Name Is Love.....

Of all
elements

i love fire
and i keep it
everywhere

look at me
there is fire in my eyes

feel my hands
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burns
but we shall never
be consumed
no one is charred
nothing is marred

there is no
ash
neither potash

let me name
this fire

RIC S. BASTASA
Its Promises To Your Bosom.

despite the coldness of this night
my hands shall keep
my fingers warm
my arms strong and shall keep forever
its promises to your bosom.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's Relative....
	hey are all ahead of you
they think so
but you are heading to
the opposite direction
and you look back and
they are all
far behind you too

RIC S. BASTASA
Its Sleepy Light Constant By The Glass Panes.

the blind sees more
than you do who blinks
more than what is
necessary, just like the
mute who speaks much
better than us, his fingers
sing, his arms are into
a locomotion, speech
like concrete posts in
highway 50, and so does
the deaf who is into this
trek of rumors, sponge-bob
and moby dicks of the higher
frequencies, ...

how is it that we are
more understood somehow when
we speak less?
heard loud and clear when
we do not listen as
often than not?
how i love you more with
touch rather than speech?
the nod, and the most
accepted wink of your eye
when you say yes and then
the lights are off, and
the moon by the window
softly glistening its
sleepy light constant by
the glass panes.

RIC S. BASTASA
It's The Same Dog....

i shall make choices
black or white
there are no shades
for qualifications
i choose this dog
two tails and three ears
long tongue and blind
and sense of smell
taken off
whatever it is
it is still a dog
the color does not matter
the hilarity of combined
silly imaginations
is the irrelevance of
my dictated freedom
good for you
you love dogs and know
the intricacies of
their seasons

RIC S. BASTASA
Its Tiny Light Then Lights Your Whole World..

so this is now
the task of your
new poem

your guardian
angel

beside you it
whispers words of
comfort

every letter takes
you away from
the devil

every syllable
washes away your
sins

after this poem is
written
a new sun shines in
the middle of
your forehead

its tiny light then
lights your
whole world....

RIC S. BASTASA
It's Us

The sea
always understands

it is not the river
pouring
all its waters
to the big mouth
of the ocean

mind you,
it's us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Itzhak Perlman

HE loves most
the violin
because
it is sad
and all he cared
most of the time
was nursing his sadness
like it were
a very important visitor
in her house feeding it
with so much nice
accommodations
caring for it
nursing a wound
wishing that it
will not heal
there is something
strange about you
itzhak
while all the rest have
gone to the beach
to play
because the wounds
have healed
you wished that the wound
would stay fresh forever

like a violin song floating in the air wishing that it would not disappear.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'Ve Been Inside The House Of High End Taste

they call it
Airforce One
somewhere in the city of
THe Flesh
High End it caters to the taste
of Prime Ministers and
Justices and
Cabinet Secretaries
to include
The Generals

Count me in
but i will not tell you who i am
or was
and what i do for this
Republic

There is a secret passage
for VIP's
leading to an Aquarium of
First Class Gold Fish
all naked on white smooth flesh
pink breasts and purple nipples

You choose your type
And Someone Up there pays
the Price in Dollars

The Best in Asia
Heaven is at the tip of your tongue
Your finger
and Your
Strong front tail.

If you are poor and not influential
this is nothing
but your usual house of
ill -repute and you are but
and ordinary construction worker
starving for
quick sex and if you are older than 50
they call you
Dirty Old Man
F****S***T

RIC S. BASTASA
I've Been Reading....

a lot, yes a lot,
i have never stopped reading
that is what they want
they want a mind
a very well read man
with a very sharp mind

for what purpose then?

it is not a sharp mind for sharp mind's sake
you know what i mean

it is a castle with a moat
a parapet with a sharp shooter guard
you know what i mean

what they need is someone they can use
and use so well
for their own ends... a sharp mind
which can shoot like a gun
and shoot rapidly and accurately
to kill all the enemies of the family

one that can protect this clan
and protect it
so well, and not just that,

but one who can go beyond it

amass other people's wealth
twist arguments in the family's favor

oh yes, i read a lot
and have more knowledge and a deeper understanding

Papa died a long time ago
he lost his fortune and brother says
that i who has a sharper mind than him
shall recover
what we have lost...

and must take revenge
and take what is not ours, oh yes, and go beyond all those
rules
and go around them

and this is where
i surrender, something that i understand so well

and hence
cannot do
what i am being told to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'Ve Been Searching

the search is on
since time roosted
to the first eyelashes
of my youth

the search is on
for the most beautiful self that i am
that i must be

the search is still on
perhaps until the last wink
of my eyes

what is the best self that i can ever be?
it does not just depend on me
it depends on your response too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'Ve Been There....

i've been there.

in those places of my fears

on those islands of desire

immersed myself on its bountiful

water

dived on its rivers

deep deep down

where breathing is nil

i've survived it

or i might have been broken a bit

in so many ways

but i have survived it

and had repaired myself

i've been there

and meeting you today

i have become confident

and firm

now i can look at you

without shame
look at you straight in my eyes

and tell myself

it is over.

i've had all the pain

now i shall

not make any bargain.

RIC S. BASTASA
I've Got Only Tears For Joy

yesterday's rains
do not make any difference
i made a promise
there shall be no waste of tears
as all these
are always reserved for
those few
coming
joys...

RIC S. BASTASA
I've Read A Lot Of Bukowski

wanting to be like him

in his writing style i read a lot about
Bukowski

I sniffed his wine and women
and his writing place

i've read every manuscript
and i begin to like him more than ever

not his style really but his
decision to be just himself

now like him i want to be nobody but myself too.

RIC S. BASTASA
I've Said My Piece

I've had enough of
words, and you keep more
of them like
they aren't, somehow
got bored, and i am trying another
medium
i am sending a dove
by your window
send it back to me
i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
I'Ve Tried That...

sleeping with a broken heart,
for days, weeks, years,
waking up everyday
on a self
still intact,

unbroken like the constancy
of my days,
week,
& years,

a morning coffee
sipped
without any thought
of having
tasted any
coffeeness at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Izuzu Pick-Up White

it is an izuzu pick-up
white
running so fast
on C-5
hitting a little child
who died
on the spot
the man who witnessed
the hit&run
says that it was
'For Official Use Only'
14th of the month
a Valentine's day
Sunday

there was a
number
16 on the
plate

someone powerful
i supposed
owns the killing machine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Izza On A Merry-Go-Round

izza is my my niece
she rides on a merry-go-round
at the carnival
today

before riding it
however
she raises her eyebrow
puzzled
whether to ride
or not to ride
thinking that
if all these horses
run in circles
it will not
be arriving at any place
pointless
futile

on the other hand
all the other cousins
her age
are riding
and she too must ride it
for fifteen minutes

i see
she is enjoying every minute
of the ride
she finally decides to
mount herself
like the rest
waiving her hand
to her mother
taking pictures
on her first ride
on the merry go round
when it ends
she dismounts 
at last 

i ask her  
how does it feel  
to ride  
in circles 

she says  
'it is so wonderful' 

she claps her hands  
and i tell her  
'good! ' 

in silence  
i could have told her this,  
izza  
that is what life is all about  
a merry go round  
where  
we are all children  
enjoying our ride  
in circles  
arriving at nowhere  
arriving at no ends  
and  
your mother is  
just like God  
taking the pictures  
of us waiving  
our hands with joy  
the joy of life  
that joy  
on that merry go round  
too short  
for fifteen minutes......

RIC S. BASTASA
this is not the usual story of Jack and Jill,
this is reality
welcome. Jack married Jill
in 1985
the first year was bliss
until the second year
when Jack
was so pressured
in his work
and Jill who was left at
home
got so bored with nothing
to do
except to listen
to Jack's shifting
towards the corners
of insanity
and then one day
Jill cooked Chinese noodles
for their wedding anniversary
which of course
she did not recall
but Jack still had it vivid
in his mind
the expensive wedding gown
the diamond ring
and flashy car
and the well attended
grand reception

Jack went wild
and throw the hot noodles
in Jill's face

Jill went to the U.S.
made a white man
Jack finally landed
in a mental asylum
The house where they once lived
got burned

nothing remained except the vacant lot foreclosed by the bank

sad
Jack and Jill did not live happily everafter

RIC S. BASTASA
Jack Frost

You were born
with no one but the moon
as witness

and it gives you a name
which you have
forgotten

and living in limbo
no one remembers you
not even yourself

the only way to live
fully again
is for someone to
believe in you

this now i do.

RIC S. BASTASA
January Rains, As I Remember

January rains fall in all the green ricefields
The carabaos graze the little brown children run and play
The rainbow comes like the Gumamelas in multicolors
In her little garden in her little house
Where the little people just have a little talk

Then with little cups of coffee to keep their little tongues warm
The rains of
January slowly fall

RIC S. BASTASA
Japan Diary (Miyajima)

we have been looking forward
to the Miyajima cherry blossom report for a while
and was happy
to see the weather further improve
in time for our visit.

The 'shrine island' near Hiroshima has been one of our favorite places in Japan
since our first trip there,
and is particularly
pleasant during the cherry blossom
and autumn leaf seasons.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jaundiced Eyes

let your jaundiced eyes
for the last time of your breath
see the redness of
a rose
the greenness of grass
the blueness of the sea
the drifting white colors
of the clouds

for once
be not bound by your sickness
that shall take
you to death

or close your eyes
to see
what black really is

this world is not all yellow
as you always insist

RIC S. BASTASA
Java Plums

those java plums
are sweet
and round and glossy
and by all means
attractive to the palate

i am very thirsty
and you leave it on my table and you
expect me to be just like them all
eat the plums without you

i have forgiven you
i am not eating them

RIC S. BASTASA
Jay...

the Notre Dame church
is an appeal to history but not
to her religious convictions

she enters the door
makes the sign of the cross
hastily and thinks
of what to buy next
at Saigon Centre Complex

RIC S. BASTASA
Jealousy

a seed of jealousy
grows leaves and branches
and trees

a forest where you
shall be lost forever
trying to find
a way towards
the river of
trust and belief

there is no
water anymore
no creek
no exit

from the roots and
dead leaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jean Paul Has Called Hell

i sometimes think
like a gogh

violet clouds to
be alive and
beautiful must
whirl

mountains must
have bold black lines
as boundaries
like hunchbacks
of Notre dame

trees appear
truly powerful if they
are taller than
the moon or some
stars

and the world is
happier without
those other people

whom, by all,
wit, jean paul-sartre
has called Hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jejune, Puerile

Black and white
That is the law
The books
And the lawyers
And judges

Jejunely
Insouciantly
Disenchanting

I, included.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jejune....

early morning
she goes outside while
it is very cold

dew still hangs on
the leaves
the owls have
not yet flown
away

she sits on the
garden bench
calls on her
favorite dog
to sit on her
lap

for hours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jekr

What dyslexic idiots
type
when
they are trying to say
jerk.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jesus

(the usual prayer)

Forgive us our sins,
Lead all souls into heaven.
Save us
From the fires of Hell.
Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jibing

just plain, dark coffee
no sugar, no milk,
just darkness
nothing sweet
white is taboo jibing
with the state
of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
how can he forget
he saw me in that city
with that woman
(whom i married later
at the age of 35)
i was at the counter
of a pharmacy
buying
Rogin E, he was at the
other end
signaling to the
salesgirl that he
preferred a
strawberry flavored
condom.

he was there
alone.
I wasn't, though he
expected
that i also know how to
play with
fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jobless And Broke?

just breathe
at 2 a.m.
just breathe
just breathe

now you are
qualified for
them oldest
profession:

breather!

RIC S. BASTASA
Jocelyn...

she is pale, white, emaciated,
on that last day, her hands made most of the grips

she did not want Chona to leave her in that room
she wanted more pillows, but then the pain
despite the high dose of morphine
and the softness of the pillows and the coldness of the
hospital ward,

did not diminish the pain until she finally
made the final gaze and said the
last words, a la cell phone
terminology:

i am checking  she died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Joji

it is the saddest thing
metastasis,

when the fluids do not
just stay in the lungs
but in the heart
in the liver
practically all over
the body

the big C,
AT the apex of its success
one cries out

God's will be done
and takes a smile at the last
shot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Jose Feliciano, España Verde

In fact blindness speaks

Unmouth words
They come in shades of light
Specks
Trickles
Unmouth words

Now they come
From your eyes

Closed eyes

From a blindness of so much love

Unmouth your words
Let the words come
As shades of light in a dark soul
Speck of light
Trickles
Of
Feelings
Like pearls
Of teardrops

From a blindness of so much
Unmouth
It is your eyes speaking
Closed

With soft hands
Reaching
The touch
Of my heart in pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Josh And Justin

I’m with you, Josh
Over here in Prospect Heights,
only a moron would clam
that Vanderbilt Avenue
without all the bars and restaurants
was better than Vanderbilt Avenue
now WITH all the bars and
restaurants.
Nighttime foot traffic is your friend.
And so are places to go.
Those guys in Gowanus
are choking their
neighborhood.

Now Josh, you’ve already got one
Jim Mamary restaurant in DP.
I moved from Ditmas Park to
Clinton Hill this past summer,
and have completely stopped
eating out.

The take out and eat in places
on Myrtle Ave. are all half as good
and twice as expensive as anything
on Cortelyou.
You could be living somewhere
much worse, and the
Q trains are all fancy now,
too.

bye. take care.

RIC S. BASTASA
last night we attended edu's wedding.
his dialogue is only gratitude.
thank you visitors, your presence is enough
even if you bring me no gifts.
the mother in-law has come from america with her second husband.
his papa, married to an old fil-am arrived ten days ago but resides
in the hotel

alone.

i am making a story.
it is true. i am making a reflection. am i a mirror?

edu is a man. no promises for ling-ling.
when it was my turn to speak, i said, life is full of surprises
and it is hardheaded, it simply follows the lines of your palms
as written.
no deviation. plain destiny. everything turns out to be good and
always in our favor.

the audience faces turn into bright moons.
so the venue becomes one feast of lights.
and there was dancing and drinking. the men become too lustful.
and the women to flirty.

the children swims at the pool nearby.

lanterns of light fly to the sky.
fireworks made the day the fourth of july.

i was drunk and i did not know what i was saying.

the following morning i phoned a fried.
edu's was a perfect wedding. everyone lost themselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is doubt
is this work worth the effort?

he has no time
you see, to read the details

put it there
let it rot there

some molds start to grow
on every heading of poetry

or if it were wine
something keeps on fermenting

you wait for more time
something in there keeps bubbling

you hear the sound
of this beautiful disturbance

there is the hissing sound of the snake
and be careful

it poses and so alive
it is now ready to bite

RIC S. BASTASA
Joy And Hope

Joy calls
She needs help she pleads
And I answer
Where and when
I do not bother
About why
I could be unethical
For my left hand
Must learn to give
Without my right
Hand knowing

And Hope comes next
Waiting at the Capitol
What a coincidence
She likes a hitch ride too
She needs help
Her heart is broken
And need immediate repair

I have this flashy car
With space enough for two
Or more

How can a man
Sane still
Refuse to give the best
Ride for lovely lonely women
Like them?

To err is human
But to make love is divine

And so I’ll go
What happens next
I will not tell you

Wait! My cell phone is ringing
It is Charity again calling!
RIC S. BASTASA
Joy Of Solitude

with the kind and gentle
touch of the wind
a bamboo leaf falls
flip
flopping
in air
down
into the serene
pond
on moss filled
stone
beside the water

so like a a silk cloth
of a woman
thrown
on the carpeted
floor of the marital
room

RIC S. BASTASA
Joys

as the heavens are sucking light
as the moon still hangs glistening over the river
happiness comes slowly
on tired feet

such is her gaiety for a moment
fame and money, ambition and sickness, even lust,
do not mingle into this

happiness and joys
unexpectedly they arrive
and they go hand in hand beyond
exactly, any dawn discussion
goes beyond what we
mention

RIC S. BASTASA
Joys Turning Like Daisy Chains Around Our Hair

when love works in our hearts
we are bound
not with anxiety or envy or hatred

for love works spontaneously
and two hates become a chain of affection

when we go inside a cafe
we have coffee for each and a nice
conversation to share

everything, whatever which is rough
or creased
is smooth again

like ripples turning to silk
on the surface of a disturbed water

we are friends again
talking about how much we miss each other's
company

laughter reigns
joys turning like daisy chains around our hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Juan....

what if i go there
undressed, completely undressed
and i shall be confronted with the vastness of the desert
and i shall hear nothing but the
wind and the slush of the sands?

am i ready to scorch in the desert
and die and be one of the unaccounted skulls there
together with some
unnumbered cows and
jackals?

the idea is horrible.
and i am staying here within these four corners
fully dressed.

because i am
moral citizen
Juan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Juggling

think think think
you think a lot wanting to capture
the words and fit in all the works
write
you write and keep on writing

love, life, love life, sex, money,
lots of sex, and lots of money,
spend, save, spend, cycles of lost loves
lust, desire, sadness
a sorrow you keep from
dissipating like water drying on
your skin
after a bath, but things keep on
coming and going and you know not
what to to and where and when to stop
precisely you juggle
all these like you're part of the circus
and you know how to
to at the spotlight and on top
of everything

and there they are after your performance
some did not clap their hands

but what do you care
let the finale come and the curtains fall
the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Juliana....

on early morning
she walks down the river
leaving all her
coverings on the grass
she wades in the water
naked
as the bamboo trees
bend with the wind
paying homage to her
raw beauty
she plunges into the
cool waters of the river
and the river
takes joy of her body
then she rises
as water drips on her breasts
giving way to her
nipples
as the water cascades down
her abdomen
to her legs

Juliana, the mountain beauty
once i have seen her
under the moon amidst
the trees in the forest
and the virgin hills.

RIC S. BASTASA
Juliet, Where Art Thou?

farting
is such
a sweet
Zorro!

ken lee
ken lee
ken lee
without
yo.

RIC S. BASTASA
July Heat

it enters right through
the middle of my armpits and keeps the thick hair
confused to the introductory giggle
and then it keeps on staying
on a perspiring state
rushing through the shoulder
blade and keeps the tinge on
the esophagus
this slimy feeling and yet so
delicious to the palate until
it slides direct to the
cozy chamber of
my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Jump

FLY WITH the wind
Walk and run on the
water

free the mind
from the very shackles of
your freedom

know not your limits
high fly
hover on a cliff
jump

RIC S. BASTASA
Jumping To The Other Side Of The Fence

i always love the thought of jumping
to the other side of the fence
where the grass is greener
and the air is fresher

my heart beats for all the excitement
when i will be there
on the other side with you

i ask if you will walk beside me
when i am there finally
but you did not say a word

i know i am not welcome
but i still dream of going there
for other possibilities of loving
and be loved without any condition

at all, not necessarily you,
i am a fast learner, you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
June Poem

to approach boredom
one sleeps before night comes

sleepless at the deep part of the night
one roams the silence of the ceiling like a flashlight

nights are long these days
and its silence wants to make you sick

i am telling you use your bones until they are about to
fall from the hold of your flesh

make full use of your body throughout the day
and when it is time to rest your body in bed

it will have no time telling another story
snores spread like flowers on the grass

imitated from someone's moans in a
wedding in the merry month of
June....

RIC S. BASTASA
Freud had slips on his tongue
like mine
Jung says
i may write about all these
and then
pray for more enlightenment
from the Lord.

i ask
if poetry cures.

he says
they may, but just take the dosage
moderately.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Piece Of String

i am just a piece of string
nothing important
an appendage to your
purse that contains
the coins

i am just a piece of string
tying something that opens
choking something
that breathes

i am just a piece of string
but i like also to be free
may i ask that you
throw me away?

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Feeling Of Relief...

listening to
mozart
i feel like
a bud
opening to
the light
of the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Finger Pointing To The Moon

yes i remember
and now i realize that
all these

man and God
here and eternity
this side and the other side

the beetle and the dragonfly
the now and here and there.....

nothing but just a finger pointing to the moon....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Leaf

make it as simple
as an empty sheet
of paper
where you are told
to write
only one letter

you see it is no
longer as simple as that
to show yourself
as only
one letter on an empty
sheet of
yellow paper

i want to make is as simple
as my hand
touching a wall

i close my eyes
let my body fall

i am not pushing anything

it is only me
as a leaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Little Time

let me have time
with you
give affection a
chance
we share
our loneliness
together
making us feel
that in
melancholy
two people can
never be lonely

feel that we are
in a picnic in the
mountain
under the woods

no ants on the
cloth
no symptoms of
any rain
nothing dull

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Mirage

He knows his end is near
He thinks
There is a river flowing
In the Sahara

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Pastime

what do you really expect?
a smooth flow? or a big flaw from me?

you're wrong, i don't give importance to anything anymore
there is no value
to excellence or
hard work,

the poor here gets poorer
the rich gets richer and those who tell lies
become gods

and so when i try to write something great
or you think it to be so

i am not really into it
i am having a conversation with someone else
and then
when nothing seems really significant
as it is
most of the time,

i get into this,
a pastime,
just a past time
nothing more nothing less

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Piece

“I write what comes to mind.  
It is like sharing a piece of yourself.  
I guess I am just a lover of words”

We call it spontaneity, something that  
Comes from an impulse

Effortlessly,  
There is nothing premeditated,  
Like a burst of applause

Indigenous, something that grows  
Without any cultivation like some ferns  
And lichens or moss on the rocks  
Of our watered paths

That which nature gives  
Freely and unconstrained  
Like sunshine like rain

In fact, this spontaneity  
Is the highest and best form of efficiency

it is Not forethought  
it is As instinctive as breathing  
As involuntary as  
Suspense and surprise  
Combined less the promptitude

An ad-lib,  
is that what you are,  
My friend, and automatic hi  
And automatic hello?

A spontaneous combustion,  
A spontaneous propulsion?

Like the three Princes of Serendip
Whose discoveries are made
By accident and sagacity and not
By an old quest, or conquest

Yes, I agree, the poems work that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Question

how can the violence
of your kiss justify
the silence of the stone?

how can the stony silence
ever justify the
promise of a kiss?

how can a stone be a kiss?
and how can a kiss be another stone?

how can my silence be your stone?
and how can your kiss be so stony?

do we revolve in this pact we call love
only on the kiss and the stone?

no stone shall be left unturned
and no kiss shall deceive and kill

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Question For You That I Like Repeating

have you even tried talking
to a depressed person who simply
want to pour out what
he cannot understand perhaps
because his burden is too heavy
for him to carry and then
you just joke him about it
and not take him seriously and
then the following morning while
you were talking your coffee
and listening to the news on tv
your phone rings and
then the news is being told to you
that the man who talked to you
last night
committed suicide and
died?

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Request To My Ex

move on
don't mind me
i know how to manage a break-up
i am invulnerable and i have had lots of them all: miseries

tomorrow i move on with my life too
i'll be this sparrow with another sparrow perching on a tree
building a new nest again on one of the branches of the this lushing tree

may i make one request though and i will be honest with you
find another, someone more tender unlike my unkindness and indifference

don't you be another dove all alone on the electric wires of the field
the hunters may see you and feeling so guilty me shoot and kill you

honey please, move on with your life, take another chance
i want to take this thorn piercing in my heart, i want you out of my system.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Short Poem After Admiring A Caricature

Alice B. has a suspicious eye
beneath her curly hair

her mouth is but a slit
keeping pain to herself

she has given up her
pair of eyebrows looking

sinister to the black and white
sketches of giant goldfishes

floating in the air
beside her

behind her is a light yellow
canvass

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Stage That We Go Through And Then We Move On Too....

it is heavy
but i consider it light
and it becomes
light

it is new
and it is surprising
the usual thing
is to shy away from
what we still do not
understand

but i welcome it
i welcome this and that
i say yes
i say yes to everything now
i say cheers
to you and this wonder

i am drinking from your glass
i am fitting my foot in your shoes
i welcome you
and i say yes to you and to everyone

there is no question
there are no answers
i guess this is just it
just that

here it comes
we live it
and it goes out
and we wave our hands
goodbye

and it goes on and on and on
and has become too ordinary
no one looks at it now
nothing to mind
nothing to lose
nothing to win

oh, this is not a game after all
not a question of who wins or loses
it is life
it is living it

just a stage that we go through
and then we move on too....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just A Taste Of Life

what i have in my hand
is a slice of pineapple
it is sweet
its sweetness lingers
in my tongue
and sticks to my brain

it is simply a slice
just a taste of this bigger life
ahead of us

i have another slice
to hand to you
take it

why waste some time
on bitter herbs
and sour grapes?

what i have is just a slice
of sweet pineapple
take it now
it is sweet

what do we have next?
we shall wait and see

RIC S. BASTASA
Just About Her....

She is beautiful
i guess cancer is beautiful
she must perhaps
accept this idea that cancer is
beautiful for the soul
i have never seen her so frail

her fragility is so feminine
and so is pain
a woman

pain is as fragile as
a center piece
on the table, a tea cup perhaps
which no one wants to break
to hear that sound of
pain

i do not know when to stop
to tell that pain must be beautiful
and that the soul is becoming more
beautiful in that pain

dying is in the curl of the hair
fragile on the head
which i also wish to caress
like the way mom once caressed mine

they do not talk that much
they feel

one smiles trying to say that everything is alright
the other looks to the ceiling

and the center piece of God's attention
the mom
is waiting

do not ask what she is waiting for
Just As It Is...

it continues
as a flow of
what you think
you like
as true and
beautiful

you are lost
in the rage of
the waters

you take a hold
of another drifting
wood, very much
like you

letting things go
the rage in charge
and whatever happens
you say it is

just as it is

when the rage stops
when calm reigns again
you get hold of your mind
saying: it is not, it is not

it is perhaps like it
but definitely it is
not, and you

are in your senses again
throwing the one that looks like it
taking hold of what is real

and then denying yourself
of its beauty once again
sorrow plays the flute
in your silence
the hands open
accepts what is there

and letting it go again
it is not meant for you
you have something else

just as it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Asking

Man’s years are God’s wink

Man’s wisdom is God’s folly

Man’s masterpiece is God’s babble

Man’s mortal, God’s eternal

Well, no dispute about it, God’s eternal

But does God wink? Has God some follis too?

Does God babble? Just asking........are you angry?

RIC S. BASTASA
granting
that i am at home
with you, and with you
and with you,
then i am at home
with everybody,
and i am at home
everywhere, and then
alone, i ask,
what am i and where
am i really?

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Be Like The Grass

summer or rain
be like the grass
spread your being
like your thoughts
your spirit always
reminding the body
that it is not his.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Be Who You Are

'Be who you are and
say what you feel because
those who mind don't matter
and those who matter don't mind.'
Dr. Seuss (1904-1991)

AT this moment
inside this room
i am what i am
and you are what
you are

i have no choice
but to give in
it does not matter
if this
does not matter at
all
this is the last
and we must
give it
the lust respect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Be Yourself

LOOK AT THE
white heron
it need not bathe
to make itself
white

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Be Yourself I Think, Is Still My Best Foot Forward

if i set my standards high
i may be defeating myself
if i walk too fast
my feet may be left somewhere
in the mud
if i put my best foot forward
it may not be the
best
it may even be the worst
i just want to be myself
my best or my worst
whatever
that you must accept

i am looking for the gate
that says
Know Thyself
and the one that says
By All Means You are Accepted

then i press
Enter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Being Alone

just being alone
my head resting on my fist
and listening
to the falling rain
on the second week
of december

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Being Myself

just being myself is enough for me.
there is no need for a better you. you are enough for yourself too.
there is no need for a comparison. there are no points of collisions.
we meet and we say then we always have to say goodbye.
some memories may linger but we always have the time
to discard them. there are always new things coming for our eyes to gaze upon.
we always wonder under the stars on our dark nights.
we wander. we walk the distances of our lives. we even forget what time is it.
we meet again and say hello and say i remember you we meet once.
but where was that and when. you ask the same question. and we laugh
at our forgetting who we once were.
for in truth, what we were was not just love.
it was also pain.
and it is but right that we discharge them.
all about is our right and duty to survive the harshness of the times.
we travel distances again. we meet new faces. we keep a track of what
we must become.
we always strive for choose emotions.
we decide. to live some more.
we go back to faith. we meet again this time. stronger.
and say for once: this life is enough for me. this self.
let the Lord have it. It is not mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Chant Your Way Out Of The Mess

ohm ohm ohmm ohmmm
mmm hmm hmm
omg!

hmm, ohmmmm, ohmmmm, mmm
zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Close Your Eyes

just close your eyes
i am near you
my cheek touching yours
i can hear the beating
of your heart
my lips are captured to yours
in this blindness
of the moment
you too know
where to touch me

then i explode

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Depths And Silence

All year
Round
I flow like
A shallow
River
This time
It will
Be the last
Of this
Round
I will
Be deep
So there
Will be
No rapids
Just depths
And silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Doing The Will Of God

if you like how i have done it
i will tell you
i am just doing the will of God
and if you did not like what i did
and you tell me
that you did not like it and that
you may take my life away
i will still tell you
i am just doing the will of God,
and if you tell me to stop
doing what God wills me to do
i will tell you I won't i can't
i will still do that which God wills
me to do...

for i am nothing, without Him.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Emote...

a poet without talent
forgive him
for just being himself

forgive me
but we are all poets in some sense

a fly trapped inside
your hand wanting to be free

a bird in a cage
singing

a leaf falling and falling
and falling

eyesight failing and failing
and failing

and old woman on a
swinging
chair with no one caring
for her

a Japanese kid waiting
for help sitting beside
the ruble

a bird alone on a
telephone cable

sands on the shore and
the sea

a boy lost in the marketplace
a mother still searching

the silent crowd in the mall
always window shopping
we may have no talent
but we are expressing feelings

we are writing simply
by what we see....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Enjoying It....

The world is not a book
so we do not read it as pages
neither is it a laboratory
for mice and guinea pigs
so we do not experiment
upon diseases and illnesses

it is as we see and feel it

some forest of trees
a sea of oceans
deserts of sands somewhere
a sky of stars
multiple shades of horizons
bounded by mountains
a field of grass and
a patch of flowers and
pools
birds and dragonflies
cows and dogs and horses
and peacocks

we are here to gaze and
enjoy
we live this life and savor
what is laid upon us

and then we pass away

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Feeling My Way Out....

dry land, humid,
desert plains,
sandstones,
bare hands,
empty heart,
the feeling of
being light
and dandy, this
silky feeling upon
a summer breeze,
shiny leaves
of euphoria,
mixed up
nuts,

this morning
indecision.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Feeling, Even Without Understanding

we want to be
as spontaneous as ever

as usual
to say what comes first to our
mind

without any filtration
uncensored thoughts like birds migrating

here in our hair, singing, singing
we feel

but we never understand what they mean
we imitate

we sing we sing too
and we are happy for once

in this feeling, something we
have never understood but just felt

we sing we sing we become birds
migrating

with all our wings we are moving
as spontaneously as the wind

you feel it, without having to
understand ever

what is it what is there
what will become....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Fit In, We'Re Going

here comes the sun, is a cliche.
i put a spell on you, is another cliche.
i think i love you, most abused cliche.
you complete me, movie cliche,
strawberry fields,
scents of magnolia, fresh and soothing,
vanilla ice cream,
chocolate Popsicle,
mint puffs,
and cotton candy, and black forest.

coca-cola and ice cubes,
inside a glass
against the summer sun

your lips sucking the straw
your face covered with my shadow.

i am no longer conscious about their
taboos
got mine, and i like it
when i am finally free.

i store more cliches and
lick them
like Popsicle on a hot
summer day.

no hard feelings. Just fit in.
we're going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Follow The Flow

just follow the flow
of words like the water flowing on the river
like the paper boat on the water flowing to the river
like the river flowing through the edges of banks
above the stones and pebbles of
everything swerving from mountain to mountain
of least resistances
the rocks that block your path you
just kiss them and then you go
following the flow again with the wind above you

just folow the flow of your thoughts in your heart
you do not even like to see
everything is smooth, freely flowing, taking shape
and form and having scent and perfume and so exuding

and then
an explosion inside well kept and taken care of

it is great, it is really great that feeling
so short and quick and yet so appealing

no one hears it except you because you
love it and so it has become so real

to your touch

RIC S. BASTASA
Just For Fun........

for the things
that we like
doing
we keep on doing
and the way we do it
it is just for fun,
we are old now
with lesser hair with wrinkles
everywhere
but with friends now
in the universe we become like
children again
playing the games
of the longings
of our
souls

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Fyi

my luxury is time
my profession does not matter
i do not spend time in sleep
i walk
even at night to talk with the moon
and listen to the stars
my time is short
but my mind is expanding like that space
between the two of us
we search for nothing
we find nothing in return
my profession is dead
i am still alive
the moon in silence talks a lot
and the stars are jealous
i diffuse myself as air in space
now i am everywhere
and then you begin to ask
why

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Holding Hands In El Nido

Sunbathing and strolling
On cold evenings by the sea
Barbecue and rice and a few
Drinks

Sweet nothingness
In a brief togetherness

Just one room in Marina
One bed
Nothing penetrating
Just feeling the
Skin surfaces

To avoid the most painful
Thing
About the sure thing that
Happens next

Another annihilating
Titillating
Parting

And this happens
All the times in their
Lives

RIC S. BASTASA
Just In Case

just in case we are in the middle of a very
nice and interesting chat and suddenly
a sign appears that i am offline and you
are surprised why i ended the conversation
without the simplest courtesy of 'gtg' or
bye, please think my friend that i meant no
offense at all and surely not a fault of my own

it is this power failure again. So don't you
spend sleepless nights thinking that i am
mad at you or that you have done something
wrong or that this world is a cruel one or that
friends simply cut you off from their line without
any reasonable explanation. It is not that.

it is this power failure again. Not the least,
i must have been groping for the best word
for an ending of my latest baby!

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Like All The Rest....

after 25 years
we finally meet again

at the airport
we speak what we have
not spoken

we are not taking
the same plane

we are heading towards
different homes

we depart again
but this time it will not
be the same

i got my freedom
and i had not felt any
regret whatsoever

you smile at me sending
the message
that it is the same with you

how foolish were we
how hardheaded
how stupid to be in love
just like all the rest
of what they know as
best....

RIC S. BASTASA
I know I will reach the point
When I will stop what I am doing now
Just like the previous ones once
For no reason at all I cease what I am

I stop, and pause and look at the main
The essence of what was left once simply
Because it remains unsolved, the main

Reason why all these come about
That which I cannot face because it is too harsh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Like Those Old Days.....

in bed
we had a little talk
about everything

so much of those
tiny things i thought
until i notice something
so different

she wishes for a quick
death
hoping that there will
be no pain at all

i told her
no, there is always that
pain, a license,
a pass word,
a ticket to another
door, or a show
or another world...

i wish i will have
a happy death
one which happens even
without my knowing it
like a dream, she mumbles
to herself like
a bee

i shifted to another
lighter topic
i do not like to
talk about
an ending, be it happy
or otherwise

so i talk about the
present;
something delicious
to eat
some places to go
and this bed
perhaps for another
joke or
fable, ora fairytale

just like those
old days when we first
meet and make love
unceasingly

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Listen, Do Not Think...

scattered lights
who understands the meaning of each ray?
one simply feels each
watches and
empties
everything from these tangled
convolutions

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Listen.....

listen. i heard it all. every detail. like the color of the plate. the design of the stairs. the way the vine climbs by the window.
listen. every word has meaning. look at the embroidery of the veins. the details of the story.
when she speaks look at her. Do not go away.
listen until the end. And note the conclusions.

when she is through. Do not speak.
Let things go. Let the heat rise into the air.

when you go home imagine what she will tell to another one like you.

you know it is hard to keep the friendship.
listen. Befriend yourself. It listens to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Live A Good Life

I wake up early this morning
Opening my computer
To read the emails and to
Write some thoughts in my mind
You pop out on the screen
With a big Good Day to me
You were fast on your pessimism
As I sip my coffee and read you
The world is ending
The climates changed
There is so much CO2
Humans have become
Slanderers and blasphemers
And God shall take his day
For this world’s destruction

I ask, if you have taken coffee
A pineapple juice or simply tea
I ask, if you had good sex last night
With your wife or someone else
I ask, if you are writing another poem
I ask, if you are taking a morning walk
With your dog or your son or daughter
I ask, if you have seen the sun rise
I ask, if you had a nice conversation
With a friend or an officemate
I ask, if you are living a good life
I ask, if you are being good and taking
Care of yourself, if you are praying, if
You are on the good side of the fence

You may not answer, I am taking a walk
I have just written a poem, I am answering
Emails of friends, I am seeing a beautiful
Sunrise today, its rays coming out from the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a point
in your life
when you do not believe
in anyone anymore

once you believe that
it did not turn out to be
that good
and then you believe this
it is worse

and so you you believe
in yourself
created your own nook
tended your own garden
build your own roof
mixed your own drink
and smoked your own kind
or brand of pipe

since then the world
has become so peaceful
the garden flowered
and the roof did not leak
at all for the
rain to intervene

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Nothing To Boast Or Do

on a bright Sunday
i have decided to live
on the pages of
a book

i forget the brook
i am tired of the sea
my ears are
bored of the wind

upon a borrowed book
i assume responsibility
on a Monday
i shall return it
you 'll see

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Once, It Can Be Managed

at the wink of an eye
the world is changed
black is gone, followed by
red, then orange then
light: the world i see
a green apple
up on a tree...

RIC S. BASTASA
Just One

(this is crude reiteration of your poem titled)

one

like you i only have one brain
but i have many thoughts
i only have one body
but i have many parts
i only have only one heart
but i am loving so many
i only have one soul
but it is looking up to
the sky seeking all the
stars in the heavens

RIC S. BASTASA
Just One Night

just one night
just one mountain to climb
to reach
the apex where i can touch a
handful of stars
with my warm hands
not adding
any light even
to the fire of your sun
just one man
to touch you
just one night
just one surrendering
of massive light
at peace with the full moon
where no one
minds us
just one night
full of love
one single explosion
where i
like you
can be another sun
again

fusing to your
light

RIC S. BASTASA
Just One Of Those Days Really...

yes, there were eternally bleeding palms
Pio, do you remember the name?
astigmatic, and there were those many names
many images, so many mirages and
desert suns, oasis, camels, Bedouins,
scimitars of the past conversations
the origami of storks and ponds
there was this chines frog who made it to the seven rivers
that koi that turned into a dragon guarding the eunuch of the empire
so many words said and you think
those were wastes, they never had any meaning at all
except that gullibility of the gulls
but who knows, you maybe wrong ultimately for dismissing
some facades of poems
people are poets and they cannot tell you the meanings of surfaces
submarines go deeper and will not announce its resurfacing
corals there, colored fish, pearls, sunken treasures of the past
who knows, there may be real stories there
hands that bury metaphors
euphemisms that actually carry truth between the legs
of their syllables

you should have known better and when you believe all these at once
i tell you, you were never wrong.

it is just one of those days, when words are more real.
i never regret having said them, drawn the lines, and fortified my forts.

RIC S. BASTASA
you say, sex is just 10%
but love is, 90% and i agree
with you 100%, no problem then,
but when you say you miss me
and that you want to be with me

or perhaps that suggestion that
we can live together and enjoy
the last days of our life,
i am so sorry, i do not have
regrets living my life the way
i live it now, even less the
10%, even without the 90%,

at that certain point in my life
i have gone numb, i am not ashamed
about a dilapidated house, a broken
fence, a grassy path, uncut bushes
growing wildly in my garden,
i do not know anymore what is
humiliation, i had more than enough
that you can take, i do not depend
on any other person, i am freed from
the hell of the other, i have
detached myself from myself,
no attachments, i go where i go,
i take everything what comes my way,
and so i have no what ifs, what nots,
no regrets, and i repeat

i am not from here and i am just
passing you by.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Passing By...

i
do not
throw stones
to a
barking dog

it is a
waste
of time
waste of
energy

did i not
tell you
that i am just
passing by?

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Passing By....

at first
you were born
with all the
beginnings of
the innocent one

you believe that
everything is a friend
everyone is affection

you wake up
seeing the truth of
all these
banalities
cruelties
stealth

you change a bit
now cautious
take years to learn
what is real

at the height of
all these
in the mellowness of
you age

you accept everything
saying yes, yes, yes,

and concludes: it does not matter
i am just passing by.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Perfect.....

at night
inside the house
a candle light
as you listen to
the sonorous sound of
the rain
you smell the
perfume of her
hair you touch
the softness of
her hand
you listen to
to the beatings of
your hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Pretend, Life Goes On And On

When you wake up
like me, just pretend

that nothing really
happened.

that is the way
how life goes on.

it may look back
but it does not say anything.

it looks at the window
to the road and sees

a car, creating eddies of
dust towards a far away

place, which of course,
does not necessarily

include us, just me moving
and just you, going home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Qouting

well let me ask you who ever said this:

'hell is other people!'

tell me, tell me who ever said it
and i will soon tell you
who will tell it to you, this moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Right For Me...

at first i did not
really know how to dance

i am shy and i am
not in love

then you came in my
life
and you love to dance
and i look at
you and i cannot
sleep
thinking about you and
your dancing feet
how could i possibly kiss
them

and i learn how to dance
with you and i kiss your feet
and all my life
i dance with you and the
smell of your feet
and my lips and my kisses

brought me to humiliation.
you may leave me
i am feeling just right
for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Say The Word And You Shall Be Healed

i believe it.
the word is here.
and it is healing me.
this sickness unto death.
this search for what is good, and true and beautiful.
christ must be the answer.
on the cross, the thorns, the lashes, the veil, and the last words again.

it is time to surrender from the clutches of art to the power of Love.
Veiled in the patterns of religion, i lift the cover, i fill in the void
i plunge into the mysticism. Finding some needles, a cone, a nut,
some bird's eyes. Two beaks. A tongue of a lizard. A prey.

I finally catch myself. Get hold of it and make the sign of the cross.
Tomorrow, i will say, Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just That....

courtesy of the court is a vegetarian

avid worshiper of God
singing hymns and praises
pays her tithes
true religious woman

she works so hard
taking notes about what all
these lawyers are
telling the court

one day her iris fell off
from her eyes....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just The Shallow Comfort, Not The Adventure...

in the shallow water
you stay
and have that comfort

afraid of the deep
you always hesitate
to float

or swim

but let me ask
what did that shallow
water give you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Just The Two Of Us

chair against
a window sill

umbrella at the
balcony floor

25th of December
at the dorm

you and the other
empty bed....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just The Way It Is....

this morning i bring a book
under a tree
and i begin to read
every page

the sun comes up
the sun comes down

I've done my duty to keep the peace of this world
to try to understand what complications
mankind has made

i am simplifying what i can do to make this world
a place for us

page by page
word to word
cover to cover

tonight i will go back to my room
sleep on my bed

it will be cold and dark
just the way it is.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just The Words

just words
just the words
they are written though not conceived
not thought of
just the words
just words my dear,
nothing hysterical
lest they fly away like broken glasses
nothing of the emotion
lest we be carried away like boats without direction
on a very strong storm
nothing of myself
i am nothing of your concern
no one nobody
nothing not me

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Thinking

there are so many things to ignore:

bad news for example, of use shall it be?
hate, do we really need it?
news of an impending death? will it erase the situation?

live life, and let it decide when it shall ignore itself
love death when it comes, you have no choice and second,
it is our entrance to where we really belong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just This Afternoon

tired the whole day, i stay at the second floor
and lay my body on that
bamboo bed where air is passing through
its plats,
this is a cool mechanism
and i sleep

waking up later, it is already dark
and i hear the sound
of piano music from the other house
of our next door neighbor

it is yann tiersen again on the piano
and i remember this lady you guided the blind man
on such a fast speed like a piano music
on allegro
at the mall, at the center of the mall
where there is so much light
she left him there
wondering: what world is this? who are you?

enough of memories, i go back to you tube
and listen again

it is another yann tiersen, this time
Le Fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain

who i am? i ask such a silly question again.
another attempt at a poem
philosophizing...

RIC S. BASTASA
Just This Short....

i hate long
poems i detest even
a sonnet,

i keep saying
i am a busy man
i decide about
life, liberty, property

i keep on judging
other people's act

and i cannot do this
with metaphors

i need facts. Solid fact.
something to hold with the hands
of my mind

concrete, hard,
numbered, cubed.

only reason, and reasonable
doubt.

just this short.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Thoughts Early Morning

it is another morning
in the cancer of the tropics
the chickens jump from
the trees where they roost
for the night
the cocks faithfully crow
you can hear the cackling
as sounds of the day

later the motorcycles
ramble their engines on the
roads
of this small village
where i live

people dress themselves
for work
children go to school
with their colored bags
and tiny shoes

days are always usual
faithful to their routine
like a clockwork
like a machine

who wants to change it
and create a confusion?
no one dares
even death
takes a pattern

and so the days keep grinding
us with boredom
unless a terrorist comes with
a new bomb
shakes the world
and cause it more shock
so that new questions come
demanding for
more innovative solutions

who likes it that way?
no one.

we are like old rivers
old water taking the same path
to that same ancient sea

when we arrive there
there is no greeting
no welcome at all
just the usual fusion of
anonymity
and exhaustion and
the unburdening of that
load

some prepare for the big storm
and that is
something new
to entertain

this poem begs for meaning
again that is
a routine.

you ask it too
and it does not make any difference at all

you are as ancient in your question
as the snake in that myth
about Eden.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just To Be Like Everybody

so many things
images, fluttering, hovering,
passing you by,
and you the spectator
merely stand there
and they who look at you
think that you are there
strongly held by your two
feet

if they only know
you are no longer there for
you are taken

and lost and somehow make
that compromise that
a promise to be back
in a little while
and be
like everybody once more

RIC S. BASTASA
Just To Let You Know

i am in an island
and i am in the middle of a struggle

the sound of the wind is not a song
for it is weeping

the sea has become a big mystery
the clouds as usual drift and unconcerned

the sun this morning comes
bringing me the sad news of a destruction

i sit upon the silence of the sands
figuring out the shape of a boat that must soon
take me away from here
out there there must be another island
where i can escape away from you

RIC S. BASTASA
Just To Offer A Prayer Each Day For You

just to dream
that you are in good hands
just to think
that you are in good health
just to wish you
the best in your lifetime
though far from you
as i wake up each morning
though i am not beside you
my friend
is enough reason for me
to live

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Today I Remember You

from the far sea
i remember you

the woman who
jumped over the fence

but unfortunately
the man whom you went with

slept with you only for a while
and then left you for another

it is sad i know
but look, there is another one

with open arms
waiting for you

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Us

we are on this trip together
perhaps the last
to nowhere

somehow
somewhere sometime i have loved you
and you have loved me

the worse comes to worst
we do not mind anymore
we had the best memories inside our minds
and for just the two of us

we had enough
and we are ready to go to
nowhere somehow somewhere sometime
we had it
everywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Us, This Moment

THERE Are so many things
that i have to give up: daily routine,
usual places, personal likes,
some hiding places,
treks upon mountains,
the drift
and the shift,
some pieces of memories,
strands of hopes,
simply because
i am lost too and have to follow you
simply because
i have to love you more
what lies beyond us
we never really care
it is us, now.
in this very moment
holding to each other's
hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Wait

Things come to
You, just wait,
Events even
Overrun you,
Just wait,
Sit down, &
Relax, just wait,
Tell then,
What you want,
Ask, and not
Demand, just wait,
Your wish comes
To you, everything
Fulfills, just wait,
The heavens
& the sky meet,
just wait, the
floor and the
ceiling meet,
just wait,
they will hug
you, they will
kiss you, they
all miss you,
you were once
with them,
you were away
for such a long
time, and they
always meet
you, and tell
who and why
so just wait,
you, just wait.
You don’t even
Have to, here
They come.
here, they are,
be glad, just
be you, in gladness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Wait

the desert does not end
as a desert per se
beyond these faceless sand dunes
there is always a shore
where our feet can taste
the sea again

beyond the sea is another
sunless horizon
a cool evening
a breezy affair
another conversation of
two lonely people
converging again
remembering what once
was an island
a lagoon with parakeets
coconut trees
and free flowing falls

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Wait....

do not force things into yourself

soon, if you wait enough it is the force that shall go
to you,
it will amaze you with its
strength that you never will know
from where

put on your feet, be ready with your hands,
just wait, just wait.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Waiting....

so sorry i could not
dare that long
could not linger for
hours
got a few for you and
nothing for me
really

this is just a rush
of feelings like a gusty
wind
like a surge of a soapy
saggy Sunday morning

nothing significant
am just waiting for love
and hence
nothing much to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Just Walk

just walk the lonely road
nothing happens anyway
except
the moving distance
the mirage

what life seems to be
is a running river

at the middle of this desert
we all dream of water

there is none but we dream anyway
somehow
there will be water inside those deepest
recesses of our mind

somewhere there will be an oasis
some palm trees
sweet dates and strong wine
and hot tea and smoke

and when darkness comes
i am sure there will be this moon
for all of us

there will be music within our hearts
some stories to tell
to lessen the sadness
to quell this madness
to fill this emptiness

the black birds perching on the trees
shall listen but they will not be sleeping

let us not die yet
the vultures are not that hungry

to false hopes we shall anchor
the weariness of our hardened souls
it does not matter
for in this lonely road we are only told
to walk and then we move on and on

RIC S. BASTASA
just when the rain stops
something within you stops too
the misery of being
confined in the small prison of
your thoughts

you find a window
and this wide door and you grope
for the key
to open something closed
days ago

you breathe the sea breeze
and take some salt of
life and you
release your sighs like
an earned ire

you take freedom finally
letting go your fingers and hands
your feet dance

go, go, go
your books on the table make the
cheering squad

out there
nature wants to be read
the books close finally
their pages like tongues
hide behind the thick glossy
hardbound cover

you are not a fool finally
touching the maps drawn
by the falling rain

welcome to the world
the trees tell you.
Justice

justice allegedly is not arrogant
when it proclaims that
no stone shall be left
unturned
neither is it so inefficient
to take the pacing of
a snail

how do you like a blind
woman to decide your murder case?

how unupdated is the sword?
how rusty are the scales?

and how long can the hands of time
stop the moldy motion of madness?

RIC S. BASTASA
Justice And Revenge

the temptation is always there
that when a tooth is removed
then it must be paid with a tooth
that when life, to be frank about it,
is taken, then the taker must be put to death

there is this feeling
that an empty space must be filled
with revenge

they will wait for me now
and it will be long
too long that they will look for me
and ask me what i am doing
and i will tell them
i am just giving back
fairly
what you have all
taken from me

RIC S. BASTASA
Justice Demands

justice demands that
if you forget me i must
forget you too, and that
is very easy and simple
to understand perfectly

love demands more than
that: if you forget me i must
still remember you in all
the days of my life not
asking that you love me
that even just for remembering

i do not ask for
something in return.

RIC S. BASTASA
Justmesays

How can I top that?
Such a beautiful haiku
about butterflies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kaadlawon

abo ang kaadlawon
itom ang mga kahoy nga nag-alirong niini
ug ang mga sagbot uga
sa akong tiilan

halayo pa ang kabuntagon
walay kalayo ang akong dapogan
bugnaw ang tanan
haw-ang ang akong kiliran

nahinumdum ako sa imong mga ngabil
ang kainit sama sa lamdag
sa kabuntagon
gihagkan mo ako
ug nadaub ang kalayo sa akong dughan

layaw ang akong panumduman
ang iyang mga pako
midagit kanako sa halayong kagulangan

gitaban ako sa akong kalibog
wala akoy nahimo
gitaral ako giwala ako gilinla ako
gihulog ako sa lam-aw sa kapakyasan

ania ako mibakho
naghandum sa kanunay sa imong hulagway
kaanyag ba sa kabuntagon
kainit sa iyang mga tudlo

gilantaw ko ang usa ka sakayan
nga nag-lutaw-lutaw sa baybayon
sa tumang kalinaw
ug hinay-hinay kining nagpalayo kanako

gitutukan ko ang mga butang nga nagpalayo kanako
nagatindog ako atubangan sa pagsilaw sa adlaw

unsa pa kaha ang akong itugpo nga mga katarungan
aron dili na ako biyaan sa akong mga panumduman?

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabahin Ni Benigna

gikalimtan na nako
si Benigna

pagkahait gayod
sa imong salabutan

wa pa gyod diay nimo
kini gikalimtan

dugay na kadto unya
kitang duha

hagbay rang nausab
nakabangon na

gibuhat na nato ang
angayan nga buhaton

didto sa dakong dag-om
ang ulan mipahiyom

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabahin Sa Akong Manghod

ingon ka
naa kay bag-ong batan-on
karon
maayong moakatar nimo
kaysa imong
asawa,

nangutana ka kon
pilay gasto sa annulment
sa kasal

ingon ko
' mo-out na ko
kay wa pa koy
hilam-os
wa pa koy ilis'

mamahaw pa sab
ko sa akong
giluto nga piniritong
pirit
ug nilung-ag nga
saging,

kay wa koy batan-on
bisag pod ganig wala poy
asawang nag-akatar nako

pagkabugoy jud nimong
manghora ka
bisan pa sa gagmay ta
bisag naay paa sa manok
sa imong tuong kamot
ang imong wala
nangita pa gihapog
balbacua

mas dako ang imong
mata kaysa sa imong tiyan
unya pirming guot nimo
ang imong purol

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabahin Sa Halangdong Kritiko

Dili ka nako mabasol kay ako ang nag-aghát nimo pagdayon sa akong balay karong adlawa ug sa umaabot pa. Ari, saka sa akong hagdan nga karaan nga wala pa gyod malampaso hi ang mga ang-ang.

Palihog og tan-aw sa iyang mga hawiran. Kinahanglan pa bang silakan o pintalan ba hinuon?

Dali saka sa akong sala, ug palihog pahimutang sa akong mga lingkoranan nga ginama sa mga kawayan nga gipaslotan ang batakan sa mga gабага nga puthaw aron ipatik ang ilhanan: ang akong ngalan.


Mangadto nya ta sa akong talad kan-anan. Wala’y basiyo sa beer o Tanduay, apan daghang garapa sa mga tambal nga wala nay mga sulod. Ang mga resita sa doktor gihapnig sa kilid sa lamesa diin anaa ang akong antipara.


Dali dayon ta sa akong veranda. Sultihi ko samtang manglingkod ta. Unsa ba ang imong nakita?

Dili na long pants ang akong mga pangandoy.
Wala na ang singsing og kwentas sa akong ambisyon.
Mibaga ang antipara sa akong mga pangutana,
ug nawala ang mga butones sa akong mga tubag
nga unta mohulip sa nagnganga nakong mga ohales.

Kon mobiya ka na niining akong balay nga karaan,
sulthi silang tanan sa mga hagdan nga dili na sinaw,
sa mga haligi nga nangaharag,
sa mga bungbong nga nangabuslot,
sa mga bintana, pultahan ug atop
nga kanunay gilamba ug giabrihan sa bagyo.

Sulthi sila nga ako wala nay plano sa pagpaayo aning balaya
kay sama kanimo ako mobiya na usab
kuyog sa akong laing mga plano.

Ang magpabilin dinhi mao lamang ang mga maot,
ang mga buang ug ang mga walay buot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabahin Sa Imong Paglubong

bisan kanus-a
dili na gayod mausob
ang imong
nabuhat

nahukman ka na
sa imong
kamatayon

ang ilang mga
halad nga buwak
ang ilang mga
gidagkot nga kandila
dayandayan na
lang

diha sa paglubong
nimo
bisan pag ilubong
ka sa langit
walay bisag usa ka
anghel ang
moiyak

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabahin Sa Tinood Kong Gibati Diha Kanimo

nagpanikad na ang kangitngit sa daplin sa baybayon,
ug ako naglakaw hinayhinay nakigsandurot
sa hangin ug sa mga langgam

gitug-anan ko silang tanan
sa akong tinuod nga gibati alang nimo

namati pod diay ang mga kinhason ang mga umang
nga nagkamang nunot nako

RIC S. BASTASA
Kabuntagong Kalinaw

diha sa mabaw
miabot ang nipis nga
balod sa dagat

kadyot lang kini
kay mibiya man
dayon

RIC S. BASTASA
Kadtones Baabye Sa Buntod

nakita ko kadtong babaye sa bungtod
nga naghilak
dugay na kadtong panahon
ug wala akoy katakos
pagpangutana kaniya
nganong
dili husay ang iyang buhok
nganong wala siya sa iyang
kaugalingon

wala ako kahinumdum
kon siya mibungat sa pulong
mahitungod kanako
o kaniya ba hinoon
apan naningkamot siya
nga magpuyo
nga malinawon bisan
pa ug pagsaway
ug pagtamay
sa akong mga katigulangan
ug sa among
mga halangdong silingan

pagkadugay na sa panahon
namatay
gilubong na ang babaye
nga naghilak sa bungtod
ug sultihan ko kamo

inahan ko kadto
ug karon
gikamingawan ko

RIC S. BASTASA
pieta, pyeta,
paita, ...punyeta!

ginadili ang
patapatay

balikbalika
ginadili ang pagpatay

ingna sila
iapil kadtong gipatay
nga nakapatay
nga karon ilang gipatay
kay lagi nakapatay
man ug pipila ka mga
patay

pieta, paita, punyeta
gipatay nila ang adik
nakong manghod

punyeta!

RIC S. BASTASA
Kadyot Lang Kita Dinhi

kadiyot lang kita dinhi
ayaw na anang mga kabalaka

ug mga kahiubos
labi na ang kapungot

usa ra ang atong padulngan
ang lubnganan

ug didto labaw na
nga walay pulos

didto diin labaw pa
sa semento ang kabugnaw

diin lihokan kaayo
ang mga ulod

sama dinhi diin daghan
ang mga wala'y dalunggan

RIC S. BASTASA
Kadyot Lang Kita Dinhi (We Will Only Be Here For A While)

we will only be here for a while
don't go for the worries

or those humiliations
what more of anger

we have only one destination
the grave

and there it is worse
there is no use

there where the coldness
is worse than the cemented coldness

where the worms
are restless

just like here
where there are more people without ears

kadiyot lang kita dinhi
ayaw na anang mga kabalaka

ug mga kahiubos
labi na ang kapungot

usa ra ang atong padulngan
ang lubnganan

ug didto labaw na
nga walay pulos
didto diin labaw pa
sa semento ang kabugnaw

diin lihokan kaayo
ang mga ulod

sama dinhi diin daghan
ang mga wala'y dalunggan

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RIC S. BASTASA
Kafka's Question

what if one day you turn into a cockroach in your bed
and you wake up and no one recognizes you
and one sees you and drives you away from your house and leaves you alone in the grasses under the sun?

it was your very own mother who snaps you away from the soft pillow where you were sleeping.

what if? it happened to Kafka it can happen to you.

what if? Really, what will you do?

RIC S. BASTASA
Kagalkal Sa Ubo Sa Kapobrehon

Pamatia ang kagalgal sa ubo
Sa kapobrehon

Pamatia pag-ayo
Gikan pa kana sa kagabhion
Hangtud sa kaadlawon

Kagalgal sa kabuntagon
Galawig pa gani sa kaudtuhon

Tan-awa ang dugo sa iyang palad
Gikan kana sa iyang tilaok
Sa iyang baba
Gipahid sa iyang dughan
Kay walay panyo nga pagalod-an

Walay gihimo ang mga silingan
Gawas lamang sa pag-ants sa balatian

Tan-awa ang tambal nga sagbot
Nga gihumol sa sud sa iyang baso nga barot

Mao lamang kini ang tambal
Sa ubo nga kagalkal
Sa iyang kapobrehon

Ugma mawala na ang ubo
Nga kagalkal sa kapobrehon

Mopuli sa kadyot ang bakho
Sa mga mabilin

Mopuli pag-usab ang laing
Ubo nga kagalkal gihapon

Mao kana ang ubo sa kapobrehon
Mulanog sa kahanginan
Sa among lungsod
Hangtod sa kaadlawon
Apil na sa kabuntagon

Molanab ang dugo
Gikan sa mga dughan

Moapil na ang kadaghanan
Mobaha mobuhagay sa tanang kadalanan

Kining kagalkal sa ubo
Sa atong kapobrehon kay hangtod kini sa atong kamatayon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kahinangop

ang kahinangop usahay magtudlo
kanato kon unsa ang besobeso
sa una pa lang kana
apan sa kadugay sa panahon
sa paglabay niini sa kalit morag

kagahapon lamang sa atong kabatan-on
unya sa imong pagmata
makita mo sugod ang kunot nga
mitapot sa imong agtang ug dayon

mahinumdm ka sa kahinangop
ug karon moabot sila
kadtong imong mga minahal
gikan sa America, Canada, Japan
Singapore, Dubai
(siempre nangita ug kwarta
sa kalisud sa panahon karon)

ug sa tumang kahinangop
mogakos ka, mohilak, mokatawa,
mogakos pag-usab, mopiyon sa
imong mga mata, morag anaa ka
galutaw sa panganod, sa walay

katingala, nakat-on ka sa mga
kinaiya sa usa ka kahinangop
hugot nga bakos sa gugma
hugot ug mas hugot pa tungod
kay bisan sa kalayo ug sa kapait

nangabot nga buhi ang imong
mga hinigugma: mga anak, mga apo,
ug mga hulagway sa imong bana.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kaiserschmarrn

Uncle Gomolka
says that this dessert
of shredded pancake
and stewed fruit
was invented for
Emperor Franz Joseph

i almost
forgot to
drink water

he says in Vienna
only frogs
drink water

funny duh!

RIC S. BASTASA
Kalderong Buslot

unta giawat nimo sila
kadtong namati sa
awit sa amang

sa dihang gipalayas
na sila
nagpasalamat lang
gihapon

igon ang nanay,
wa man sad tay
nahot didto gawas
lang sa kalderong
buslot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kalibang Sayo Sa Buntag

Morag mogawas na gayod
Kagawson na
Midagan ka paingon
Sa lugar diin nimo
Kini siya ihulog

Pag-abot gihubo nimo
Ang imong gisuot
Milingkod ka
Mipiyong sa imong
Mga mata
Mitakilid mipatunga
Mihawid sa kilid
Mipiyong pag-usab
Miagulo sa kalami
Lamog ang kasakit
Gamay morag maingon
Ingon ang imong
Pagbati sa dihang
Migawas na silang
Tanan. Nakaingon ka
Og hay kahayahay!

Nalibang ka lang
Sa imong nakaon
Nga santol, pinya
Og kinilaw nga bolinaw.

Nabasa nimo ang
Usa ka sinulat sa usa
Ka banggiitan nga
Amerkano nga kining
Klaseng panghitibo
Diha sa imong sampot
Og sa imong pantawan
Usa ka dakong kalipay
Sama sa paghimugso
Sa usa ka himsog nga
Balak. Busa paglipay.
Kalimti Ang Tanan Kay Lumalabay Lamang

Kalimti ang kasakit nga imong nadawat.
Kalimti ang kasakit nga imong nahatag.

Mobuhagay ang mga ulan sa tubig
Magsigi kini ug gukod sa mga suba
Paingon sa dagat ug hangtod mahuman
Ang ginukdanay. Kalimtan na dayon ang tanan.

Usahay madungog mo ang awit gikan sa layong bungtod.
Ganahan ka maminaw, apan dili kaayo klaro.
Dili ka kasabet. Kinsa ba kanang miawit?
Kang kinsa ba kanang tingog?

Moabot ang mga bata, magpaila nga sila
Imong mga apo sa tuhod
Hawiran nila ang imong kamot nga
Natikig sa baga nga kubal ug daghan nga konot.

Magpabilin sa imong panumduman ang mga ngalan sa dagkong suba.
Pagkangilngig sa ilang kadako. Apan wa ka mahadlok.
Nagsigi ug dagan, dagan, dagan, hangtod ang tanan malimtan.
Motindog ka sa lapyahan. Wala ka nay mailhan sa iyang mga tunob.

Kalimti ang tanan. Ang tanan lumalabay lamang.
Ang mga amang atubang sa laing mga amang. Magpahiyom, mangidhat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kalipay Sa Bata

mabaw lang ang kalipay
sa usa ka
sama nimo: bata

usa ka putos nga pulboron
nga sa dihang gikuha sa imong
igsoon padulong magsag-ob ug
tubig
imo gyong gigukod ug kusog
kaayong iyak
unya sa dihang gilabay na
ang putos
miyaka ka sa dalan ug
duro nimong bakho

mabaw lang ang imong
kalipay
apan ambot kalalom ba
sa imong
kasakit

RIC S. BASTASA
Kalliope

ipromisedyoufivepoemsaday
despitethepossibilitythat
icanbenothingbutlousysounding
likeasplashofafallingmanfrom
the7thstoreyofabuildingimay
failtopleaseyougoddessbutiam
truetomypromiseandsoipraythat
youalsopleasemeinreturnwiththe
beautyofyoursong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kama Sutra

she went on top of me
guiding my love to hers
last night and then another night
these temporary pleasures
do not always work

there are answers posed
but still inferior and short
the questions are laughing
harder inside the dark room

RIC S. BASTASA
Kami Nga Nagtrabaho Sa Korte Sa Gobyerno

Siya si Danny, gihilantan ganiha ra,
Gakurog sa katugnaw bisag init kaayo sa kaudtohon.
Giingnan na nga mopalit og Flanax,
Dili kay kuno basin madaot ang iyang bukog ug atay.
Apan sa tinuod lang
Wala siyay kwarta sa iyang pitaka.
Process server siya.

Siya si Landa, stenographer.
Kinabaratohang bugas utangon
Sa tindahan ni Flores-
NFA medyo baho-baho apan OK ra kuno.
Ayohon lang og hugas ug kilis sa tubig
Pwede na makaon
Sa katulo sa usa ka adlaw.
Budget lang sa sud-an
Kay mahal na hasta utan.
Siya nabuhi lang sa utang.

Siya si Jhonil,
Maayo mohubad og Iningles ngadto sa Binisaya
Duna’y barog, apan last year, nagdaot siya
Tumor mitubo sa iyang utok,
ug siya dili na kalakaw
Practically, vegetable na siya
Nagpabinisiya kay walay kwarta ikagasto para MRI
Maayo gani kay ang iyang sister naminyo og Kano
Nakabalik na si Jhonil, ang among interpreter.

Siya si Dodo, ang among clerk of court.
Niwang lang gihapon.

Basin walay gikaon.
Ang iyang paper works sa korte pwering haboga,

Labaw pa niya.
Dili na siya kahibalo mokatawa.
Ug ako si Ric
Ang ilang judge
Nia nagsulat niining maong balak
Alang kanila

Mopadako ako sa akong tiyan ug motiyabaw
Hangtod mora na ko og kabaw.
Mopataas sa akong bungot
Hangtod mora na ko og kagwang.
Mopataas sa akong mga kuko
Hangtod mora na ko og wakwak.
Magpagahigahi sa akong ulo
Hangtod mora na ko ug bato.
Gikan karon dili na ko maligo
Hangtod ako manimahong tawo
Aron mahibalo ang tanan
Sa sistemang wala nay kaayohan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kandis

You may feel
That your life
Is full of sorrow
And sometimes
Unbearable
But you just
Cannot fly away
When you
Feel
Like flying
In any instant
Since you
Are not a bird

I may feel the
Same way
Too
And want
To swim
And slip away
In any instant
To my liking
In the deepest
Sea
But I am
Not a fish

so why
not just
stay and
wait
and see? .

RIC S. BASTASA
Kaniadto

ang paglabang sa suba kaniadto
sumala pa sa akong apohan
lisod gayod kaayo

gihubo ni tikoy ang iyang purol
aron dili mabasa
ug si inday nga walay panti
gaisa ang iyang sayal
ug si nanay nga nagbitbit
og putos sa iyang ulo
magtungkod sa kawayan
aron dili mapandol sa bato
ug maanod sa sulog
sa daplin sa mga bato

magdalidali silag tikang
kay kuyaw mapaakan unya
sa mga kasag og alimango
samtang nagpasad
ang mga uwang
ang mga kasili
ug ang mga haw-an

pagkadaghlan sa sud-an
ang tawo maoy kulang

RIC S. BASTASA
Karaang Kumbento Sa Kilid Sa Simbahan

anaa diha sa kilid sa simbahan nimo makita
ang karaang kumbento sa katipunan
daghang pari ang nakapuyo diha kaniadto
ang uban gani diha lang usab namatay
dili sa kagutom, dili sa sakit, dili sa kauhaw

nasunog ang maong kumbento
gihungihong nga gisunog og tuyo sa bag-ong pari
kay sa diha kuno nga iyang giukab ang karaang kaban
didto niya nakita ang mga ngalan sa mga anak
sa mga pari nga gitagoan sa usa ka kleriko

taas-taas baya ang listahan apil na ang galastohan
sa pagpabunyag, sa pag- eskwela, sa pagkasal, sa adlawan
ang bag-ong pari wala malipay sa maong naugkat
apana kwidaw ka kay sa iyang lawak adunay dalaga
nga magsige ug pamisita ug giingnan niya
ang kleriko nga kining bayhana suod nga higala
ug siya ra gayod ang makamaong mopilo
sa iyang mga habol, ug mipili sa kolor sa iyang
mga punda ug sa kadak-on sa iyang alugnan
siya lang ang makamaong manao nga iyang kurtina,
ang mopahaluna sa iyang sabon ug tualya,
ang manirado sa iyang pultahan ug mga bintana,
inig-abot sa bugnaw nga hangin gikan sa baybayon
inig ulan, inig kuso-kuso sa iyang atop
sa usa ka gamug-ot nga panahon

RIC S. BASTASA
Karl’s Brew Café In Buhangin

You were singing the joys of your life
In a small café cramped with friends
And some just curious for your voice
And some who knew you can sing
And sing so beautifully
Like a magical bird
Like a mythical bird

Crowded you showered them with
All your love
My three friends texted
“It is sad why you are not here with us
My son danced with her song
He lifted my chair so I will dance too
And oblige to sing one of those songs
He really loved”

Tess I see enjoyed the show very well
And we heard something beautiful

“Without you”, because as you said
You are always “busy somewhere else”

It was that injustice which you did
That we cannot explain to Cynthia

Always your unexplained absence
Always your disappearing act

RIC S. BASTASA
Kasakit

ang mga lingkoranan usahay
sa atong nataran
dili magterno

ang kolor sa kaulag lahi sa
kaputli. Dili tanang kaputli puti.
dili tanang pula gugma.

didto sa unahan kiwa kaayo ang
gugma nga mitupad sa pinugngan nga
kakiat. Dili kaayo makita ang
kalainan.

ang atong center table
mao ang unta dili tang tanan maulawan.

butangan natog bulak sa atong
pagkaotot-otot
at least dunay buwak bisag
nanimaho na kitang
piot-piot sa atong kaplastik.

orocan ang atong gigikanan.
pananglitan naa si tisay nga kusog kaayo
manaway
apan kwidaw kon makagakos ug makahalok
sa matadero kon walay naglantaw
morag
siya ang alimatok sa bagtak ni
itak.

sagdi lang. moabot ra gihapon ang engrandeng
hugyaw. Naay imo naay ako.
unya walay manaway walay mamadlong.

sagdi lang, solo na nato ang mga adlaw,
ang tanang oras. paaboton lang nato.

bahalag tiguwang na ta. bahalag di na maukab
ang atong mga ngabil alang sa kinalamiang halok sa kinaoyokang kibot sa atong kinot, bisag ang mogawas mao na lang ang kinataposang igit sa mga kurit sa atong tinipigang kasakit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Katie Price: Her Advice

If you want to stay
in the business
then you've got to be
a bit shrewd,

haven't you?

(i wonder
if she meant
poetry as a form
of business
too)

RIC S. BASTASA
Katingala Sa Usa Ka Suban-On

Lahi ang ilang suba dinhi
Morag banig naglukotlukot.
Lahi ang ilang mga ginamos-
Kamaong molangoy sa suba.

Lahi ang ilang pagpanikma dinhi
Kay puston man sa puti nga panyo.
Lahi ang ilang kasilyas dinhi
Kay tagoan man pag-ayo ang tae.

Sa atoa, ang sikma alang
Sa mga hulmigas. Gutom sila.
Ang mga tae para sa atong
Mga gasuroysuroy nga baktin
Gutom usab sila. Ang suba dili
Magsaba. Hadlok sila sa mga
Tingog sa pusil. Ang atong
Mga isda dili asgad. Dili
Laog sa asin. Lahi sila dinhi

Sa ilang lungsod. Halab sila.
Gamayng sipyat nako, bunal
sa kuptanan sa silhig. Singka.
Sagpa. Sa ato, pagkahilom

Sa mga kahoy sa bukid.
Walay kamot nga managpa.
Walay mga aso sa sigariyo
Ug ispirito sa bino
Nga mopatay diay og tawo.

RIC S. BASTASA
do you remember how we competed for a painting contest
in high school?
i was always looking at you for inspiration,
you were so beautiful
i got near you to make a scent
of your black silky hair
you were looking at me too
perhaps my black curly hair
complimented yours,
we were drawing something what our parents
did not tell us
it was too late for us to know
their love
was theirs not ours to follow

the year comes talking to me
my very own beautiful sister

how could i have loved you?

nature's foolishness played
a prank on me again,
but no, i didn't mind, my heart
knows how to love anew
it has its own feet to walk me
away and start loving for some
exciting beginnings................

RIC S. BASTASA
Kaulagan Ba

Bisan sa akong Kalapoy
Nabati ko

Ang pagdapion
Sa iyang palad
Sa akong

Ubon-ubon
Nga buot
Niyang ub-ubon.

Iyang giinat
Ang akong Mga kabalaka.

Iyang giugay
Ang akong Mga kahadlok.

Mituybo
Ang akong Mga panganti

Mitikig
Ang akong Kahidlaw.

Gipasagdan ko
ang iyang
dila ug baba

Sa pagkurog
Sa akong Ngabil

Nakaluwa ko
Sa tunga sa akong Habol.
RIC S. BASTASA
No doubt
the crazy boy thinks
he's having his mother read
some sort of record
of his memories,

something that he wrote himself-
that's what he thinks
he's listening to.

His eyes sparkle
with pride.
His mother has no idea
whether or not he understands
what she's saying,
but every time
she comes to see him
she repeats
the same story,
and she gets better
and better at telling it-
it begins to seem like
she's actually reading a story
of her son's.

She remembers things
she had forgotten.
And the son's memories grow
more beautiful.

The son is drawing
the mother's story out,
helping her,
changing the story-
there's no way
of telling
whose novel it is,

whether it's the mother's
or the son's.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kay Ang Tanan Lumalabay Lang


Mobuhagay ang ulan sa tubig. Mogukod kini sa mga suba paingon sa dagat ug hangtod mohunong ang ginukdanay.


Moabot ang mga bata, magpaila nga sila Imong mga apo sa tuhod. Hawiran nila ang imong kamot nga natikig sa baga nga kubal, nangunot.


RIC S. BASTASA
Kay Sa Giingon Ko Na Lahi Ta Sa Uban Lahi Ta Sa Tanan Walay Timailhan

sa akong bahin
kon ako na pod puhon
ang mahingtungdan
dili lang pod ko
motagna kon
unsay akong buhaton
wa sab ko kabalo
kon unsay akong dangatan

lahi tang tawo
dili sama sa adlaw ug
bulan
ug mga bitoon
matagnaan ang ilang
mga pagabuhaton
kita dili
makalisang sab
usahay

makamao tang
mosupak baya sa
mga balaondon
moambak sab sa
pangpang
kon kinahanglan

hunahunaa nga
usahay
nabuhat nato ang
wala mabuhat
sa dagat
sa yuta
sa uban

mas gawasnon pa kita
sa hangin
mas mobaha pa kita
sa suba
maghimo tag buho
nga ato

kinsa bay nasayod sa
palad sa usa ka unggoy
nga manghod natog
gamay sa
pangutok?

ning imong pangutana
dili ko kapasalig
nga ang akong tubag
karon
sakto pa ba gihapon
ugma puhon

kay sa giingon ko na
lahi ta sa uban
lahi ta sa tanan
walay timailhan

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep

the conversation going
open up, explore all possibilities
the road outside is waiting for
footsteps, the the chair cannot
be empty if you sit,
keep lines open, do not deny
yourself the words of comfort,
heal thyself,
know more, no self is ever
closed, like an old abandoned
room, speak, listen, give time,
you are not in harmony,
distill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep Breathing

don't quit
keep breathing the fresh air
from the sea
and from the forest
it is the only job
available
for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep Destiny....

understand
by now that the travel
of the self is just
for the self

there are ambiguities
of directions which you have
to interpret for yourself
and then decide where to
really go

there are so many dead ends
where most people stop and die
and be gone forever

you have the guts of the prophets
the instinct of wolves
do not quit keep on walking
steady the journey
if you have to sleep
sleep but only for a while
you must keep on going
towards that one and only
road which leads to your
final freedom

keep the silence so you can
hear what destiny in whisper
truthfully says...

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep It....

the world is so huge
like the sky
the open space

yet you sit on a universe
only on one chair
situate yourself only in
one corner

yet you can only love
one, or perhaps lust on so
many other,

yet you can only die once
live once
cannot eat that much
cannot own that many

and you ask, you always ask
why is she so greedy? why is he so
cruel?

live now. learn much.
you only have five fingers for the counting
one lesser mind to think
one old heart
one happy soul. Keep it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep Listening Still

when our friends finally abandon us
we are still lucky
to have us: me myself and I,
NOW, there is no need to adjust
and chart what the other
needs
what amount of light must this room
have
what shape must the window be
half-open or wide open to see
the long stretch of the road beyond
this room
narrow and noisy with the other

when everything fails
do not ponder upon any loss or regret
how useless and faulty have you become
there is no use
the world moves on
the ship sails still

when made to choose between the joy of the crowd
when you cannot afford it
choose silence instead
purify the mind
live in the solitude of the soul
like a pond without a ripple

however, when a leaf falls (another metaphor for death
or failure)
welcome it
for such shall become your
wise company

listen to the duet
of leaf and water.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep On Laughing

There are no permanent fogs
mists have temporary lives
dew too short to be with leaves of grass

we sometime forget the essence of merely being here only for a while and then be gone

we do not even ask where they are going it is this too much familiarity that kills the awe that loses that strange taste of wonder

some people stumble because they are looking at the stars and those whose faces have taken the shapes of stones keep on laughing

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep On Strumming The Guitar Strings

my dear
keep on strumming the guitar strings
on this lonely night

where are the stars
are dead and gone

keep on strumming and let me simply
hum a tune for you

keep on strumming until your fingers
bleed until i stop singing until

the two of us become one
breathing soul
in our chosen spot
of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep On Writing Baby

keep on writing baby
just keep on writing
feel the urge inside your heart
let it out
let it go and follow it where it may lead you
don't just dream baby
early this morning do not just dream
write that dream and see what it promises you
write it in stone
and when this dream comes back to you
ask it if it is true
show the stone

can it deny you the truth of what you write
in that stone?

hear the words: 'your wish my dear is granted! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep Sanity, Follow, Follow, Follow...

what you see is a body
what is my existence but the gestures
of my hand, the sound of my syllables,
the sighs of my longings,

you have not seen yet the best of
who i am,
and the worst there is inside the

room where i also know how to play
the games of nasty kids, the art of
the malevolent, the cruelties of
the sadists, the pleasure of the
masochists,

outside everything is turning into a
serious business, all stuff, all dressed,
all purposeful, and the world knows this
and the world does not say anything

you are guided by the rules, you abide,
that is the way how to live, be silent,
follow, and be not destroyed unnecessarily,

o mature one, keep a blind eye to
visible wrongs,
keep sanity, follow, follow, follow...

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep The Mistrust

existentialism
was never that humane
every mouth utters
a word of longing
every heart murmurs
a hidden violence
an incoming outburst
of murderous emotions
and anyone who loves
himself and puts trust
about this fidelity
finds himself crushed
at the end of the
gates of hell which
closes automatically
when you are finally
in.

so keep the mistrust
of self who always have
a rationalization for all
the evils that men
pack for themselves upon
a journey made secret
so that you may not know
your final destruction.

RIC S. BASTASA
our gentle dispositions
must remain this year
there is still no need
to be rough and
unruly and they now want
to say
those curses to mark a
trend and just be with
everybody and then be
everyone
one for all and all for all
for identity and
comfort

actually who knows what
is going on
where are we heeding?

we still maintain this
grace
this gentility and honest
dealing

our ancestors had it always
water defeats fire
it is the warmth that takes
the hat off
never the force of the
brutish wind.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Keep Them For A While

My nights are long and lonely
and sleep is as illusive as an eel
in the depths where corals
even wish to die

i keep on remembering
what stories you keep on telling me
before we parted

tomorrow morning my eyes sink
deeper like a boat in a whirlpool
black dusts gather around the
the socket emptied of its lighthouse

perhaps i will write these stories
and keep them for a while

perhaps i will learn nothing
and throw them all away

like those old days that tried to
build our edifices of fun and trust

what foundations of love we
have we really set?

all the facade crumble into broken bricks
into dusts on the muddy ground

so we had it, happy, at the end,
after everything is over.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping Busy

life is keeping busy
upon itself
lost in its thoughts
unable to dig deeper
but things and people
meet
and cross paths
and stare
without speaking
keep on moving
like dusts
scattered upon
a window light

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping One's Clothes

just like the way you keep
your clothes inside the trunk
every piece must be
ironed-out, well scented
folded on top of the other
just like the way you must
keep yourself inside the
room of society

clean and dry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping Secrets And Continuing To Love

i keep the secrets. They are meant to be kept,
like moles inside our thighs
those that stain our bellies but
they are those, these secrets,
that make us alive. You will never know them.
They are secrets and they are meant to be kept.
Like treasures. They glow before my eyes,
when you are not around, as i open my chest
and one by one i touch them
account for them and kiss them with my lips.

These secrets. These make me alive.
For the coming years. When i am with you.
You will never know them.
They feed on me and I feed on them.
Everyday. Every moment, when i am about
to die and surrender to the ghosts of my
emptiness.

I will let you go for a while. I tenderly sleep
with my secrets in bed. I cup them with my hands
like water to my mouth. I hug them with my arms.
I lay my heavy legs on them. They make me alive.

Even without you. I put them back on my chest.
Inside the fifth chamber of my heart.
Inside the tiniest neuron of my brain.

Inflatable. Indestructible. These secrets.
These are the ingredients of my life.
When you will know them, if you insist,
and really insist, and i advise you to
please do not persist, when you know them

at first glance, like Medusa's glance,
when you look at them and understand

you will turn to stone. And i too will
turn into a serpent, now, Medusa's slave.
Unravel them not, therefore. We must live.  
This normal life. Pretenses and Defences.  
Walls and Fortresses. Love and Secrets.

Understand them not. As I too must.

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping That Faith In Love

when the journey
seems unbearable

you are walking barefoot
on a noonday
desert

no oasis, no palm
no Bedouin in sight to save you

it is just the angry
sun and
you

just the here and
the infinite
over there

you keep faith
in love

you do not ask
why or when
will this suffering end

love has given you
more than enough

overflowing

now it shall take back
what you have
forgotten

what you have taken for
granted
there was once paradise
you were that monkey
sitting over a mountain of gold

your hands have
the power
the spices of life
the opulence of cares
and the
rain of affections
moonlights of
whispers
myriad pleasures and joys
smokes
of hopes to the air
and sky

now it is the desert
the test

keep that faith
at the end of the desert is
the sea

the mountains and rivers
and trees
are just behind you

move

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping The Hundred Healthy Bulls

in keeping a hundred healthy bulls
inside my chest
i keep my fences high and strong
but for how long?

the hundred healthy bulls
are kicking their hoofs
and hungrily breathing and dreaming
and soon
will be running

for how long?

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping Things

you always keep things
collect things
and keep them all again
never using
anything
you become the hoarder
of everything

old grudges, anxieties, sorrows,
why not
set them all free
try seeing hope with wings
beautiful memories as clouds drifting by
both of us
in awe

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping Things Inside Her....

something inside her is not telling anything
not even to her own mother

perhaps she could have told her husband
to give him a hint of what is really the matter

gorgeous, she wants the word to stay
lovely, lovely her hands sometimes claps

but her whole body says otherwise
it is confused whether to sleep or not

whether to take a walk in the park with a friend
and then tell all, like a child finally sobbing

it is when the rain pours heavily and
there is not any inkling to run for shelter anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Keeping Things Inside The Heart

to keep the balance of what we think and what we do
we keep some things inside our heart
there is a home for all the doubts
there is a place proper for certainties

groping for stability of this little universe of the mind
we must only say what is needed
the rest are useless as they do not serve any purpose at all
what use are the angry words? those unkind letters?
somehow we must have a place to stay to keep us sane
to make our defenses against those that invade us
the tide of their opinions, the storms of their abstractions
we keep an anchor
we must disregard all the other tempting possibilities
they after all do not exist yet

we do not mind anymore what destroys us
we all throw the demons away
we keep the angels
we stay in the comfort of our heavens

in our silence we take this journey
love and mercy, we are together always.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kevin And....

brown and sleazy bodies
souls trapped
and no one sees the differences
between what is real
and what is not

what we do not hear are the moans
and groans
of their own sufferings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kevin's Statement

with what you have
and nothing yet to come
all messy
and hopeless as
a woman on stage IV
leukemia

well, then
you are correct
death becomes the
fitting gift.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Kick Kick Kick

when bored kick
when hurt kick
when ignored kick
when lost kick
when you're listed out
kick
when you're dead
kick

if you can.
what are those feet for?
kick, kick, kick,
if you still can

RIC S. BASTASA
Kill My Indifference.......

got invited sometimes
to sit with people of distinctions
got a problem thought with what to wear
what to say and how to say it
they may look at me with dismay
and this fear lurks with me forever
so i decided to shy away from said catastrophe
not that i cannot be with peers and primes
but i may too be another arrogant man
sitting along with their arrogance too
i pass this time
choosing to be with the common man
in the market standing by the crab stall
and looking intently on the faces of
anxious people who are struggling to live
on daily basis on meager income and
on man inflected oppressions,
a poor man give me smoke
unable to distinguish me from my
old coat smelling like a rotten fish.
how kind can poor people be.
how candid. how earth rooted
feeling always the suffering of others
but never telling somehow.

yhey never know how to write.
who writes for them? this is where
i start. Perhaps, the scene of wanton poverty
shall diminish my arrogance
kill my indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
Killed In The Name Of Change....

the path to change
is weedy
and thus it must
be weeded out

the bolos are sharp
the shovels are new
the workers are
muscled and healthy

in the garden of
change
there will be sacrifices
the grasses will be
cut
stoned are upturned and
thrown away

there will be burning
the smoke rises to the skies
the ash offerings to the
soil

the change is for the better
new seeds are sown
the plants are growing
robustly
and the fruits are big
and many

i was told the plants
are watered with blood
and its roots well
fertilized by the flesh
of the dead
the bones buried underneath
to make the place
neat and clean
and so the change had
indeed come
dreams are fulfilled
and people they said are
happy

in the market the abundance
is clear to many
full of fruits and flowers
food is many and cheap and
more than enough for
everybody

the emptiness however is
imposing
the would be consumers are
dead
the vendors long gone into
the great divide

there is no one here anymore
the souls of the dead are roaming
in the halls of the city
the plaza, the pedestrian lanes
in the halls of justice where
the judge is asked

who shall answer for us
we who are vanished
who shall record all our names
killed in the name of change.

RIC S. BASTASA
You may justify the killing of that
Bitch

But how can you ever justify
The cries of the puppies?

Those who are helpless and
Yet keep on waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Killing Reason Which Is Trying To Kill Us Too...

we build fire
on the sea
put fish on
the cliff
plant potato
on the clouds
send a carrot
in space
put salt in
the sun
seed lady's
fingers on
magma
do you understand
now how to kill
reason? it is never
that easy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Killing The Conscience

my friend i must tell you
that in this jungle
we have killed
statistics-wise
more mosquitoes with our hands
by not looking
at the misery of our victims
before and
after.

RIC S. BASTASA
Killing The Fear....

the non-sensitized justifies his non-writing
to lack of vocabulary, another one blames it to lack of time,
and the third one hints about the non-mastery of the technique
as if this is cooking spaghetti and
as though there is a labyrinthine procedure to be followed concerning the
art of mixing tomato sauce with cheese and the pasta
as though the onions have to be cut like the old art of paper cutting
in some old chine town

one gets desensitized at procrastination and the feeling is half dead
it is screaming like a painting aboard a boat and the shadow is there haunting
on top of the ocean behind that erupting volcano somewhere in the
Netherlands

takes courage to really write
there is much cowardice consumed in this literary surrender
opting to trust in the silence of the letters
the dignity of words
the detachment from the world
self decanted
to see
what purity is there left to the caprices of our little minds
what holiness burns
us, who are
no longer afraid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Killing Their Own Kind

the islands of the pacific
strictly
have not spoken about peace

the men who live there do not look the same
their language speak of a different version
their eyes look at differing
directions

soon there will be another war of wits
bullets like insults penetrate
each others' pride

this greed, this avarice
this human way of making war noble

but only after so many are killed
a hundred lives wasted, shall another new lesson be learned

a writer shall make a book
life is hard, men are so foolish
playing with their guns
killing their own kind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kim Corda...

if you cannot be a gentleman
since you are never one
as you claim to be
with women as simply objects of your pleasure
with money as your god
and exploitation always your motive
in the self that is above all else
the center of your tiny universe
may i then advice you
to just, just
pretend to be a gentleman and do not
do not
ever hurt the one who loves you
because that one
has no control over this part
that we call the heart
this feeling that we
call love
so please i beg you
hide in that pretense
and be the man of this world
that any man or woman
cannot forget
at least in one moment of his/her life
that she/he
had ever fallen in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
There is so much Noise
in kindergarten school
so much of their quarrel
is all about

A green rubber band
beside a seesaw
and some white balls
as early as this age
each has learned

already the convincing power
of a fist and a pinch

RIC S. BASTASA
Kindergarten Memories

we drop watercolor
drops to the shiny paper

then we blow each drop
the way we like it

falling short of air and
tired we declare to teacher

our works of art, and she
smiles comforting us that

my dear kids, life is beautiful
now take your rest. Do something
else, and what we did is to

run to the school playground and
play under the sun where nobody
tells us what to do next.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kindergarten Pictures

when i watch
kindergarten pictures
i go back in time
a very deep ocean
at the surface
at first i give a smile
but as time goes
by, i cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things are destined to be lost
To be broken

The leaves fall and rot
At the foot of the tree

The roots soon shrink
And become part
Of the indifference of the

Rocks and the soil
Things move out
And up

Like vapor and then
Change their forms to air

But there are those that weep
And keep
Whatever was lost and destroyed

The leaves they take with their hands
And the roots
They stroke with the toes of their feet
Caress and
Kindness their virtues
That humanity has soon discarded

They grow the seeds in their hearts
They keep the fire of love
Burning
And the earth and the sun and stars
All smile at them

They too grow and scatter and travel
To all the places of this earth
Their forms too many
The gods know
They too must grow and get the world
Of the grass of sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Kisaw Sa Kilomkilom

kon maghagwaay na gani
ang duha ka batan-on
diha sa daplin sa baybayon

molingiw gayod ang tigulang
kay dili na siya ganahan nga

mahinumdom pa kaniya

RIC S. BASTASA
Kiss Goodbye....

the goal is to look
at all these sad realities
in a new way,

find a better language
to describe what could have been
be,
or ought to be, or just be

themselves in themselves as they
all used to be,

for the meantime the goal is to
speak and to spit all these out
into the sky,

later, something better may come,
arrive with all grace,

something someone we can all hug
and kiss goodbye...without bitterness
at all.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Kiss Me

kiss me and hug me
and sleep with me
make love to me
let your tongue be
the ripples of your sea
let my hair be the cushion
of your desire
let us be lost together

in the maze of words
in the garden of metaphors
let us burst in the image of lights
and colors and scents and touches

let us forget our mastery of restraint
let us close this deal with a kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kiss Of Departure...
	his valentine's day
kiss me

tomorrow may not
kiss us anymore

this valentine's day
i shall kiss you

tomorrow may not
kiss us anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Kiss The Girl
	here she is
sitting in the corner
like a wallflower

go little boy
kiss the girl
who knows
you may turn
into a prince?

RIC S. BASTASA
Kissing The Ground

we are friends
in fact best friends forever
if you ask me
i can kiss your ass
out of our friendship
or for friendship's sake
i may even kiss the ground
for you
even if it is not holy
you see
i know what friends are
until you betray me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kitten

oh i just love
chatting
with a kitten
tonight
and my mouse
loves it
more than
i think
about the kitten

meow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Klaus....

of all the names,
yours stood among
the crowd in the malls
of my confusion,
it must be you,
i hear you laugh
once, and you sound
so well, like you, in
the hidden meaning
of your words,
of all my friends,
i know, it is you,
who knows how to
stab at my back,
hide behind the
curtain, slip in
the darkness and come
back with a smile
and say
ho ho ho,
santa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knife And Wings

that which is true
hurts like a knife

but only for a while

come to think of it
the hurt
has wings
pain has white
feathers
and red plumes

those wings fly
swiftly to set you free
makes you warm
comforts you
to a wool of warmth
on the onset of
a very cold night
when you find yourself
mulling again
on your empty arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knot

This knot which binds us
Is killing me
You just don’t know
And I cannot tell you
I am choked
And you are kissing me.
Please, please
Do not close your eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knotty

This knot which binds us
Is killing me
You just don’t know
And I cannot tell you
I am choked
And you are kissing me.
Please, please
Do not close your eyes

ty seeing me
i am dying to be free

RIC S. BASTASA
Know His World

the center table is the sun
and the chairs around are his planets
the walls are the horizons
the floors are the abyss
his words on paper scattered stars
his dogs and cats his zodiac
his silence his void
doubts his ripples
in the sea of galaxy
where his soul
is immersed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Know How To Ride On A Circular Boat

learn my friend to ride
on a circular boat
where direction does not matter
where north, south, west, east
do not exist
where the compass
becomes unimportant

where the waters whirl
endlessly
where you let yourself
be sucked
down to the oceanfloor

it is a soundless world
of the deaf-mute
you are finally
part of the Atlantis
breathing inside water
feeling encapsulated
in a crystal ball

RIC S. BASTASA
Know The Law

when you walk away
i am not sad
what i think most
is that you must find the right path

this one is not for you
i have seen your footsteps break
themselves upon
those roadblocks

i have to drive you away
for you do not grow well here
a moss to sand
a seed on a rocky ground
a tower on a pile of sand

you are destined to be great
in the land where your feet are desirous
like some kind of dancing feet on those
dancing shoes
like some kind of fingers fidgety on those
guitar strings

law is a serious faced monster
with blind eyes and sharp claws and
venomous tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Know The Meaning Of Morning

mornings are
metaphors
though routinized
but each morning
is another
blessing

it is another promise
of life
another assurance
that no matter what
something with
light and warmth
unfolds before
our eyes

wake up then
to a new morning
feel the new skin
spreading to your
body

breathe the new air
and fill your lungs with all
of these

reborn, be reborn
there is no use for anything
dead past us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Know Thyself

at the entrance of all our doors
in our delphis
we put this notice
addressed to ourselves

know thyself

sometimes i wonder
what does this mean?

do i have a self?
have i given it a name?
is the name myself?

i look inside
this self, there is none
it is not me
it is thinking thoughts
not my own
we quarrel
we disagree
this is not me
this ought not to be me

the oracle of delphi
must be wrong
how oedipus rex hurt himself
because he did not like himself
suggests somehow
there is another self
within us........

how many now?
this self? that self?
these selves?

somehow the oracle
of all oracles must be correct
we are unhappy
because 99% of what we do
is for the self
the self and nothing but the self

and there is none any anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Know Thyself (At The Gate)

at the gate
there hangs this notice

know thyself, and i
reflect upon it, how other

people can be so mean
about his neighbor simply because

and this is too important
he is confused and does not know what
to do

about himself, and his being mean,
and so the notice at the gate still hangs in there
and it will be for a long, long time,

until man really knows himself,
which could at time be too confusing too,

for how can one so embellished in himself
not know himself, for how can one be so attached

to his bone and flesh and his veins
be not knowing himself, and so i reflected some more,

where is thyself? is it not a possibility too
that there is no self and so one is too unhappy

because he searches for himself throughout his whole
lifetime only to find out that there is no such

self as I?

come to think of it, who am I? and who are you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Know Thyself And Then Live Your Life The Way You Deem It Fit

at the gates
of Delphi
of the oracle's
house it is written:

know thyself

it is only then
that life becomes
worth living.

RIC S. BASTASA
Know Your Real Friends

some friends
only like the food on your table.
in truth
they'll soon vomit you.

they come to your house
and look for something new
and they begin
to tell other stories

some friends
are not your friends

even the stars
do you think they're there for you?

don't bother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing Always What To Do....

when i fall
this i must tell you
i am hurt
i will be really hurt
but don't come near me
and insult me with
your help or
sympathy
i am complete and
more self-sufficient than you
i am prepared
and had lone prepared for this fall
my own causing
my own fault
my own way of surrendering to
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing For The First Time That You Write Poems Too

this is
the circle of life
in a trance
and dance
i am inside its
island of
exclusion
and i for one
thought that
this is but
a small world
where i
barely fit in
with no one
bothering
to like and enter
inside
this circle of
words
and then
you come
and dance
yourself to the
beat of the
numbers in your
mind as i
in total amazement
watch
you step upon
the dance of
freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing More About A Hanging Curtain By The Window Of A Hotel

inside the hotel i study the curtain
take a shot, put more light,
it is striking,
i remove the light, make it hazy
infuse more darkness
it too has many faces
imbued with a variety of emotions
that i have uncovered
from its hanging existence

the window has become restless
how it wish it were me
experimenting on life
wanting to extort what is there that has remained hidden
in fabric, in the space of lighted exhaustion

i remember you talking to a tree
i laugh
it is true, the link is there
i have never really minded it
until i get here

in the middle of this crowded city
where heat is high
where indifference is normal

RIC S. BASTASA
i thought there will be
no more surprises again
living this life
for a long, long time
but there will always be
this

aha! aha!

serendipity acts like a
stranger
whom you meet in the
market
or was it in the church
after a prayer and you
keep on remembering
but you cannot remember
and then you finally ask

do i know you?

and then you go back to
yourself again
and say

i think i know you

and you continue walking
and working and praying

i still do not really know you

and you wonder and ask again

who are you?

the man in the mirror laughs at you
and declares
hey, i am you, don't you know me anymore?

and you nod.  
now old, and weak,
it is you, after all these years  
always inquisitive 
and unsatisfied  
and questioning  

verily, it is you man,  
man all the time  
for all the seasons.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing One's Difference

there are differences
they begin to show their faces at first in the dark
and then
unable to hold what they have inside their hearts
they exposed themselves in an island of light
they talk and they begin to explain
i am what i am, says the old difference
and it doesn't matter now, says the new one
we come, says all of them
they finally say, we come to tell you
that there are no points of comparison
now, the one with a scar says
you must learn to live alone
thrive and grow and
just be yourself for there is no other
no one
and then one moment he says
'aha!' and then he jumps and shouts
after that
he is so silent and starts to write.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing Oneself Per Conversation With Candice

to know oneself is not to follow roads
we make the roads ourselves
there are no patterns
no maps
no destinations even
it is just you doing the cutting of the grasses
removing the rocks
sighting something faraway

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing That Fairy Tales Are Not True

in knowing that fairy tales are not true,
do we stop believing?

do we end up as hard rocks
muted stones and
slimy moss because we cannot believe
in gossamer wings anymore?

fancy has a function
and reality has a reason

too much reality kills, you must remember this
a little fairy with the wings of the dragonfly
comes on a full moonlit night
just to cheer you along

nothing more, nothing more
i believe in fairies,
part of the magical moment
in the life
of the tired man,
whose bones crack
whose face is twisted.

someone says,
and i hope i shall remember this always
when one stops believing,
another fairy in fantasy land is dying

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing The Rules Of This Love Game...

i could have been true
and i could have loved you
much truer than true,

but when i first met love
it bluffed me

i never had it so true
it only played a game on me

i learned from love first
and now it must not blame me

i only have to return
what was first given to me

i am playing this game
and hurting is not a word to say

you know the rules
and there is no one to blame

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing The Sinfu11ness Of Each?

smelling like rotten egg
cum fist intestines thrown in
crowded squatter canals of
his little town,
he went to the local catholic church
to make them all feel
how it smells to be a congenital
sinner
no amount of bath
soap, astringent, perfume
can cancel this
smell

of course, everyone was mad
at him
and pretended that they do not know him
correct: who knows one self really?

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing You Finally

it is my love of poetry
that has drawn me to you
and i imagine a face
the rhythm of your body
the softness of your hands
the gentleness of your words
like a flute a friend

must i discover a different you
from your words
those that have become
pilgrims living in some other
houses
brothels actually

there is bifurcated path
one that could have led to you
where i can be
happy
but there is that path that
leads away from
what is good

undressed it is a totally different
you in my mine
and i close my eyes and bow my
head and
i could have blamed myself
about something that could have been possible
but which i have denied

and so here i am again
solo flight
again to this journey
on paths that i have constructed myself
forgetting you

the usual
wolf in sheep's clothing
sorry...

day morning i get you book
of poems
pour kerosene over each page
and burn
them all....

RIC S. BASTASA
After all, I see you
What invincibility is there?

Do not take pride
In hiding, it has no name

Open up like a bud into
A rose
Like hands reaching
For a stalk
Of air
Or rain

I do not ask you
To think of someone

This is not the place
Of remembering but simply

A place to be
Just a word without a
Face

A sound without
The lips

It is just feeling a wall
A contour

A body with a little warmth
On one
cold night that I expect

Or shall I say
I except.

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing You My Dear

you stand there
motionless staring at the calmness
of the pond
you seldom take the first move
neither do you speak
there is the mystery of
first meetings

something falls from your hand
the one that you have been grasping for years
you finally made the scream
that now bears your
real name

welcome my dear
to the truthful world of funny selves
even the maggots who are seriously feeding
on the carcass of a pig
had taken time
to have a laugh at you

RIC S. BASTASA
Knowing Your Perimeters

knowing your perimeters is not an easy job,
not really expensive, but it takes the mind of the pensive man,
the wiles of the wise and the wit of the wounded

who am i? where am I? what am i?
where am i heeded? where i will stop?
what can i do? what i cannot do?

knowing the length of your arms and feet
the distance of your vision
and knowing what you can touch and
see, and knowing what you cannot
even touch and see no matter how
wide you open your eyes

knowing your place, your fences, the limits
of your garden, the source of your water,
your air, your food, the quiet imagination

knowing what you can give and you can hold,
knowing what you can let go
and what you must keep in your heart forever

knowing the limits of your mind
the stretch of your hands, the number of times that
you can blink your eye,
the right time to fear and the right time to kill
the right time to love and the right time to hate
or just be the foolish man who is so indifferent

i know my limits and i mark my boundaries.
please do not go any further. i am just staying
within the bounds of my hands and feet.
i am seeing you and i am warning you.

i have this detonator. My finger is ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
Koffka

i am a person,
and this finger
this toe
this lock of hair
are having
their own affairs

distinct from who
and what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Ako Inyong Pabasahon Sa Akong Mga Balak Sa Inyong Atubangan

Kon ako inyong pabasahon sa akong mga balak
Sa inyong atubangan
Ako usang hangyoon nga palungon
Ang mga suga
Aron unta ninyo maaninaw pag-ayo ang
Akong kahayag
Kay basin baya unya hinoon ug ang inyong
Kahayag labaw pa sa akong
Gihapos sa akong mga panglantaw
Sa kagabhion

Ug Ako usang hangyoon ang dyotay nga
Kahilom

Hadlok ako nga ang akong mga pulong
Dili ninyo madungog basin ug ang inyong
Kalinaw dili makaila sa akong
Kalinaw sa akong mga gilitok nga pulong

Dia ako naglatay sa linya sa akong mga pulong nga
Kaninyo mangamoyo ug dyotay
Nga kalooy.

Ug dayon magsugod ako ug basa ug
Litok sa akong mga pulong
Sa inyong atubangan sa tumang kangitngit
Pagkahuman gayod sa tanan ania

Ako kaninyo
Moyukbo
mohalok sa inyong mga
tiil diha
sa yuta.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Ako Mahimong Tore

kon ako mahimong tore
gusto ko nga daghang lumot
og mga tanom nga motubo
sa akong mga kilid

gusto ko nga aduna akoy kampana
sa akong kinatumyan

gusto ko nga aduna akoy daghang
mga bintana sama kadaghan
sa akong mga pultahan

ug gusto ko nga mosaka ka
sa kinatas-an aron didto nimo
makita ang kalibotan

gusto ko nga imong bagtingon
ang akong kampana
aron mabati nila
ang akong tingog
aron mangutana sila
kon kinsa na usab
ang ilubong karong adlawa


gusto ko nga mabati nila
ang akong kasubo

gusto ko nga mahanggab nila
ang hangin ug ang tambag
sa usa ka pari nga kitang tanan
mangandam sa atong
kataposang adlaw

apam sayod ka nga
dili ka na mahimo kay
ako usa lamang ka hawan

ug ang akong hangin
walay gisubay nga agianan

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Ako Pabasahon Ninyo Sa Akong Mga Balak

Kon ako inyong pabasahon sa akong mga balak
Sa inyong atubangan
Ako usang hangyoon nga palungon
Ang tanan nga mga suga
Aron unta ninyo maaninaw pag-ayo
Ang akong dyutay nga kahayag
Ug basin ako mabuta ug masunog.

Idugang pod nako’g hangyo
Ang dyotay nga kahilom.

Hadlok ko nga ang akong mga pulong
Dili ninyo madungog sa taliwa
Sa kahigwaos ug sa kasaba sa atong panahon.

Maglatay ako sa alambre sa akong mga pulong
Sa tumang kangitngit ug kahilom.
Inyo unta akong dunggon
Inyo unta akong paminawon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Asa Ang Mga Hinungdan Sa Atong Pagpakabuhi.

sa kanunay
abri ang simbahan
matud mo

sa kanunay manirado
ang pultahan sa lawak
matud ko

duha ang atong
lutsanan
sa kapit-os sa atong
mga panglantaw

ikaw sa simbahan
ako sa lawak

og kitang duha nanglupad
sa mga pako nga dili nila
makita

samtang nagwali ang pari
samtang ang salog nagpakahilom
duha kitang
namupo og mga katarungan
nangabi sa pagtulun-an
kon unsa ba gayod ang
gustong ipasabot kanato
sa atong kinabuhi

sa akong pagyubit niini
dili mo ako madungog
kay ang mga pulong dili
sama kanato
walay baba, dila og ngipon

dili kini sama sa piniritong
pirit nga gipanugilon sa
atong mga silingan pinaagi
sa baho nga miawas gikan
sa init kaayong mantika

ako sa kanunay magpakahilom
lamang
sama kanimo
nga kon sutaon diha sa pagsita
mopahiyom ka lamang

dili nako makita ang sulod
sa imong kasingkasing
sama usab kanimo nga
nagpabiling buta bungol
amang
sa akong kahimtang

ang pagpanirado sa lawak
nagpatubo sa kahilom og kini
sa kanunay namunga og kalinaw

sultihi ako kon unsa ang
unod sa wala sa pari
kon asang dapita sa mga
sacramento sa mga kapitulo
og mga bersekulo sa mga
himno og sa mga awit
sa mga salmo og sa mga
pulong nga wala usab
malitok dayon, sultihi ako

kon asa ang mga hinungdan
sa atong pagpakabuhi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Dili Mahilabtan

Abi nako’g komedya lamang kana
Nga kon ang asawa dili
Mahilabtan og usa ka semana-
Manguhit sa iyang bana
Apan iwakli ang iyang tudlo
Layo sa brief- siya pagkabuntag
Dili magluto sa paboritong piniritong
Itlog nga sunny side up.
Dili magtipula sa kape
Nga barako ug ang ihagat
nga luto mao lang gihapon
ang bahaw nga wala makaon gahapon.

Nahikatawa ako nga nahinumdom
Sa asawa nga wala nag-panty
Ug nanglimpyo sa kisame
Kay wala man nimo ma-”kiss-me
Mabrotsame” kagabii.

Unsa ba diay kataniuod nga ang gahi
Sa inyong balay mao na lamang
Ang imong mga ubo?

Mangutana lang ugod ako
Kay ang imong asawa sayo man god
Nakigtsismis sa akong manghod.
Kuno ang inyong banyo unta
Haskang danloga pa apan
Ikaw dili na man kuno
Mosulod didto aron manglimpyo.
Ikaw kuno hadlok madakin-as.

Pare ko, paminaw, kay dia diri
Imong misis sige’g tagawtaw.
Gasakit baya among dunggan
Sa pagpaminaw

Moadto kuno siya sa baybay
Ug mangita’g lab-as nga isda kay
Gimingaw og kinilaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Magsakit Na Gani Ang Akong Kilid

Kon magsakit na gani ang akong kilid
Lain na dayon ang akong mahunahunaan.
Ubod sa lubi nga gikaon sa batol.
Mga kuting nga nagpista sa likod ni Exuperio.
Nangka nga gitigbak kay wala maputos.
Babaye nga nagkanta nga mipiyo.
Lalaki nga migunit sa pader kay dili makaihi.
Mga tambok nga karapata sa su’d sa dunggan
Sa akong iro nga si Bonbon. Mga alimatok
Nga nagsuyop sa dugo sa akong mga paa.
Gold fish sa aquarium nga nalimtan
Og lawog. Naunlod, mibutod ang tiyan.
Nabaho. Nahiloan nga bagtok nga mas
Dako pa sa iring. Giulod sa ilalom sa banakid
Nga humay sa among kamalig. Irong buang
Naglutaw sa sapa, gubitik sa mga bugoy.
Halwan nga gipasol, wala makuha nalimtan
Sa bata didto sa katunggan. Nadugta.

Hikapon ko ang akong kilid. Painitan
Sa akong kamot. Tusak-tusaken paghinay
Sa akong tudlo. Gipangita ko kon asa dapit
Ang hinungdan. Mahinumduman ko dayon
Ang gisulti ni Dr. Lao. Dunay mobutod.
Manghubag. Ug moabot ang takna nga atong
Gipaabot. Wala nay tambal. Ang mabuhat nato
Mao na lang ang paghangad ug pag-ampo.

Gibuka ko ang akong mga mata. Tutok
Sa kisame. Gidawat ko ang tanan. Giabrihan ko
Ang bintana. Hangad sa langit. Ihap-ihap
Sa mga bitoon. Pagka-anindot pa gayod unta.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Mosulat Ko Og Balak Sa Gugma Alang Kanimo

kon mosulat ko
og balak sa gugma bahin natong duha
buot nako nga ang mga pulong
sama sa mga sulog sa tubig sa suba
tapad sa kanipaan ug mga kasagbotan

kanang naa ta sa daplin
ug dili kabantay
sa paglabay sa dakong sulog
hangtod maanod tang duha

manghawid ka sa sagbot
apan maibot kini
manghawid ko sa nipa apan
malangkat ang dahon ug ako
madakin-as ug ikaw mohawid
sa akong kamot ug kitang duha
mangaanod ug dili ta manyagit
aron kita tabangan

magpaanod lamang kita
kuyog sa dakong baha
diin dili tang duha kabalo
kon asa ang padulngan

RIC S. BASTASA
Kon Pwede Lang Unta Nga I-Simplify Ang Tanan

kon pwede lang unta ang akong kalibotan
usa lang ka lata sa sardinas
abrihan ug kan-on ang sulod
daginoton ang sauce dayon pagkahuman
ilabay ang lata sa basurahan
ug dayon manug-ab ko sa kabusog
ug dayon moharay-haray sa duyanan
nga gisab-itsa tunga sa duha ka punoan
sa lubi sa daplin sa baybayon

apan dili diay pwede kay ang kalibotan ko
nga lata usahay mataparan man sa hait
nga sundang ug lapad nga tadtaran

RIC S. BASTASA
Baliwala sa adlaw ang panganod
Busa ang panganod nakighinabi

Sa hangin. Gitayhop kini padulong
Sa bukid. Giabog kini paingon sa
Dagat ug mga suba. Sa kaguol

Sa panganod, nakigdula siya
Sa bukid, sa suba ug dagat. Wala
Damha, nanamkon siya ug

Nanganak og ulan. Nagpista
Ang bukid sa pagbukhad sa kabulakan,
Sa pagpamunga sa kakahoyan,

Ug ang dagat ug suba nagpadaghanay
Sa ilang mga isda ug hay
Ang panganod sa iyang gidangatan.

Nag-inusara sa gabii ug nakighinabi
Sa takdol nga bulan nga nanglingla
Ang kahayag kay anggid-anggid ra

Sa adlaw nga iyang gimahal.
Naburos ang panganod ug nanganak
Ug daghang mga bitoon. Pagkaugma

Nagpalutawlutaw siya sa atubangan s
Sa gihigugmang na
Sa kaugalingon. Walay kalibotan

Kon asa siya paingon. Gianod-anod
Sa pagtamay sa hangin. Baliewala lang
Sa iyang gihigugmang Adlaw.

Intawon pagkasakit sa nahitabo
Sa panganod. Nahisama siya kanako.
Konban Wa...

the evening
with you
has not started
yet

konban wa
Hajimemashite.

RIC S. BASTASA
kontento
nga tigulang
diha sa puti
nga mga balas
sa baybayon
nanampiling

makita
sa mga nanglabay
nga mga tunob
nga wala
siya ambata
og siya usab
wala mangambat

usa ka isla
sa tunga sa isla
walay tingog
walay kabalaka

wala siyay
labot kon mobaha
ang mga oras
dugay na kini
ug kanunay

sukad-sukad
wala gayod
siya malumos
sa kalaay

RIC S. BASTASA
Kota Kinabalu, Foodcourt

excited to hear
a young woman speaking
my language
as i was ordering
a roasted duck
and fried rice
beyond me a view of the
harbor facing
the manukan island

she says she is from Pagadian
and she is asking me if
i need a massage

RIC S. BASTASA
Krisnamurti

krisnamurti by his own wisdom
of non-knowing
just like the old and dead
Socrates
does not write a book,

wisdom is merely spoken
relayed from mind to mind
mouth to mouth
moment to moment

the past has no hold
it does not exist
the future has no fingers
it is yet to come

it is the now that speaks
that holds that shows its face

take it with gladness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kyrie, Mass In C. K 427, Mozart

Papa is dead.  
He is following mama.  
His coffin is white  
And shiny  
Very much like  
That of mama

In kyrie  
The soprano  
Sings for papa  
In the church  
For his last  
Day today.

All seems to be white.  
Pure, o they were  
Purely in love

When they were  
Alive, they always  
Quarrel, papa kicks  
Mama and mama  
Bites him in return

They seem not to  
Endure each other’s  
Presence and each  
Would want to  
Kill each other.

Mama died first  
And papa takes  
Her picture and  
Keeps it in his  
Pocket and he  
(mind you)  
cries all night

papa loved mama
mama loved papa
after all.

Listen to the song
Of kyrie
Amadeus Mozart

A hymn for the
Dead who cannot endure
Each other when
They were once alive.

Until now, it is something
That I cannot understand.

I listen to kyrie
The soprano taking us to the tip of the mountain
Her human voice
Topping my puzzlement of it all

Why in death, why after death,
We realize the person that we miss

When he is gone, we say we love him most.

Papa loved mama after all
We loved papa after all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Kyutkyut*

he meets me at the door
of this empty house
and makes a lot of noise

his terms of endearment
his mode of affection

i hear him like saying

'hello daddy! happy father's day!'

he licks my ears
and rubs his small body on my feet
and my wife, his mommy
takes him into her arms rocking him

our new baby, Kyutkyut

*our new puppy,
(we're childless for 12 years)

arf! arf! arf! arf! arf! (bark and bark little puppy)
come to daddy and mommy

awoooooooooooooooooooo!

RIC S. BASTASA
most people suck one another,
civilization sucks, visions suck,
missions are sucked, there is
no shortage of what is sucked,

oh yes, society is a dismal failure.
you too, suck, ...don't be silly,

the universe is a big failure,
God is disappointed, People suck
Christ, Christians keep on killing
one another, Even those who
say there is only One God,
Creator of heaven and Earth also
suck, they destroy each other's
beliefs, they tell that they are
the only ones who go to heaven
the few chosen one, that they
can never be wrong, that they
are the only Right Race, ..they too
suck, God loves everyone, can He
afford to lose any one?

This world sucks because of
intolerance, because of self-righteousness,

God bless us all. God guide us.
Suck us from an impending Hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
people are playing games
often they fight, the rules are
changed without notice,

people are killing each other,
the dead lose, the winner is
the living, there is no more
argument about this,
case is closed.

they play their games over
and over again, time is a
room, there are no referees,
no one is just, inherent is
the fraud, the swindler is
the hero, the rich ones have
always crimes behind their
great fortunes,

sometimes they go to court,
judges are made by them
in accordance with their genes,
and those who mold them from
their own clay, are those that
always win

such is the state of affairs,
to cover all these, these twisted
ways, those that have the gold,
invent religion, create society,
write their history, proclaim their
deities, codify their laws, print
the books, carpenter their
own kind of teachers, sculpt
a civilization,

i am a small man, i do not have
many years in my cells, i simply
watch, i do not say much, i keep
my mouth shut, i write a diary,
i keep a journal, i have a blog,
i do facebook, i fit in, i am not
that twisted somehow, i have
objections, i protest inside my
square head, i write in ciphers, i do
not want to be understood, neither
do i want myself to be used.

if you read me, you get nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no getaway
from this need
do not mistake it
for love,
this is too shallow,
a comfort, for days
that are long and
hot,

i like it here, watching,
boats come and go,
waters are split,
skies are pierced by
sails, white & blue
with black and gray
linings

the spectator in me
feasts on sights and
sounds, the whole day,
i miss no one, i decide to forget
broken pieces of past
loves,

sin is a matter of
conditioning, a room of
per-arranged furniture
and bed and carpets
of cabinets with color
coding, i am a transcendent
i rearrange
everything, i like
a new way, of
putting propriety,
i love change, i go
for what i have not
seen and felt
experiment, experiment,
discover what
have been hidden
from the eyes,
approach a new day
with a new
perspective
make it 360 degrees
break a neck
throw a leg.

i climb fences and jump
over them all, i cross borders
to travel to another unknown
territory
i do not fear
enemies, i talk to strangers,
even to trees,

fully a stranger now, i do not
need a name, i cut cords,
i am a set of feet,
i leave tracks which
the storms erase moment
to moment, you see,
i am temporary and
no one follows me
precisely i tell you
i am unlikeable.

RIC S. BASTASA
red dragonfly meets 
blue dragonfly one bright 
day for these
insignificant dragonflies
do their
tail to tail
love
in mid-air
explosions too
serially
beautiful
in their silent
flights
to be fathomed by
a beautiful woman
with long black hair
and well sculpted
pair of legs,
pressing her head
upon a muscular man's
handsome
chest, her hands on his
navel, his lips on her
flowing hair, softly the winds
caress
like butterflies slowly
fluttering from one flower
to another flower
fair and square, in circles
of eternal travels.
after a while, he is convinced
that the other playful one has,

experience, the softness of the
hands, the smoothness of lips,

the way the dance steps are
done by the tongue, one can

see how skilled can experience be
and so there is no need for words

on how to do love, how whispers
sweetly accomplish the need, the

luxury of simply having to wait,
to close one’s eyes, to be carried
to the clouds, to dwell in the heavens
for a moment, without wasting

an eyelash, or any sign, how intimate
can loneliness be with the experience

of another loneliness, jibing fitting in,

ecstasy to ecstasy
fantasy to fantasy, and

then when it is over, you sigh,
you always know what you long for,

there is going to be another dance of
the tongues, the thrill of the lips,

on same place, same hour
with the same kindness of the same

person, the one who understands
you even without having the need
to know you, even without having
a name, or the background, the curtain
the need for floors, the demand for
ceilings, the closes of breaths, the need
for air, the size of nipples, the tenor of
the song, the lyrics of the same....

RIC S. BASTASA
the net with lovely mesh
catches me breathlessly, i

am breathless in this
capture, and unlike those

who want to be free, i,
have learned to love

this captivity, this mesh,
the hands are ready to
take me out from here,
but i am refusing them, i,

love it here, my heart in
captivity has found meaning

i, am, growing the flowers
of lovely prison in my skin,

i am a captive scented
to the perfume of a affection

who is more willing to
preach that freedom

too, is a dangerous matter,
the choices too many to

behold, to be understood,
the responsibility too huge

thus, killing us slowly, here,
i am freed from duty, i,

am sitting on a sofa, with
nothing in my head but
the state of having nothing
of thinking and doing nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
L7,212

It does not matter to me
i keep on walking,

i do not matter to me at all,
i keep on going,

i am air so i keep on going and blowing

i am light, i own no one and no one owns me

i am invisible, you do not see me,
i pass by for nothing,

i travel in all directions, i keep no song,

i can be a cloud to you but not for long,
i can be a mist, but you will not like it

i can be a droplet of water, a crystal of snow,
i can join the river, but it will not be for long

i like it when i am so light and to be nothing in anybody's shape in any other time,

i am air, i am this self, i like it this way always nothing to you always nothing to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
There is a door which you open
you enter, and then it closes you
behind you
forever,

there is no force here,
but only volition,

you enter it
with all the warnings,
that the
possibility that it will close forever
has been told to you
over and over
again,

somehow, you do not make it a problem
you like a closed door, and you hate it
when it opens,
you love it when it is closed forever,
the room is nice
there is a certain loveliness
in there,

it has shiny floors,
it has a bright ceiling,
the lights are lovely,
like stars
in an open dark sky

the air is fresh,
the walls are comfortable

who wants to take an exit?

no you.

when the door knows this, it will open
forever,
it decides to open for you
and it will tell you to go out and be
an outsider again and
be gone
for good,

you insist that you own this room now,
that a closed door is not a serious matter
and there is no way that you have to
go out
or be ousted,

the door has a stair with strong hands
and it will drag you out
it will pull your hair and drag your body
like hell

the door has learned its lesson
when the room is not a prison to someone else
there is no use keeping him there forever
for in truth the reason of the door's
existence
is to make you feel the prison and to suffer

and you know your lesson too well
there is no prison to a mind that is an open window
there is no suffering
to a lover of suffering

you see, it takes a little reverse psychology
for closed doors to open
for men to know that suffering is not suffering
at all
when one loves is tripping

when one thinks
otherwise
when one loves whatever happens

when one accepts
the one that is there and not look for something
that is always missing

why go for the unreachable?
why suffer for long?

life is life, and death is death
you are here, grab this here.

RIC S. BASTASA
La La La La La La…..

happiness is a
syllable that you keep
on repeating
along the rough
roads of your
life
bumping and bumping
against the stones
and grinding and grinding
along the sands
of your misfortunes where
you are unshaken
taking things as they are
and having been attuned
to its syllabication
it shall turn out to be
your own unbeatable song....

RIC S. BASTASA
La Lyra Es, Telemann, Suite

You were wearing a polka dot one piece
Got your pic
From that white sand beach
You look smaller this time
The sadness is not visible
On your face smiling at the
Digital camera

Got your pic

My own pick
Is the sound of the lyre
On polka dot
On a polka dot one piece
Hiding the bruises
In your breasts

There is really no sense
There is really no sense

White sand as hideaway
A smiling face
And a piece of polka dot
Bikini
Can be more accurately revealing
The bruises
On your hips
The bruises
On your breasts

Junk him you pride a kind of your own story
I never believe you, you make no sense to me.

Polka dots, white sand and bruises do not
A true picture make, my dear.

RIC S. BASTASA
La Traviata Soprano

a big fat man
taller than papa
lots of beard
and mustache
large belly but oh
man
how heavenly the
voice....
after that night
i could not sleep
that much.
the night is
brighter with just
even
one star
actually.

RIC S. BASTASA
Labyrinthine...

if you still do not know
why the sun is still number one
among those heavenly bodies
why the moon is second and why this
planet earth is third
then you must have been born just
yesterday...or if you candidly say
it does not matter
whether first or second nothing
really changes his feelings of
emptiness....and he continues his
walk towards the sea and then
jumps into that crystal clear
morning water...when thoughts about
who is first is not the prime
importance of the day...when
thoughts float in the air when
birds keep on singing...when
the lull never stops
when everything is at peace among
themselves, when the day resumes
its journey into what we still
do not know but then even we do
ask why, what's next, and with
whom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lack Of Discipline....

the fat boy looking like a
giant pumpkin cries
heavy as he was
why her mother does not
carry her anymore

her mother thin as a wire
says nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
Lady Ambition

it is not too late for you
at 55
to read in reverse
to grow back into youth
again
to reclaim long lost ambitions
to retrace
the steps leading to the house
of your dreams

keep going

ambition is not a woman
who falls in love with you and
knocks on your door and asks
your manhood that
it be shared by her one night
in that
single bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lady G.

unperturbed your eyes
as gentle as the dark night without the noise of the city
like a blackout

we are in bed. Tight
close
warm
and our armpits sweat
like hell

we sleep after
that silence moving like the cool air
from the open window
moving throughout our throats
deep inside our lungs

nothing about the heart
just pure pelvic
pubic
engagements

what 's love got to do with this?
my mind keeps saying.

busy lips and sweet smooth tongues.
after it is over

nothing to say about. we come to our senses.
back to work. nothing to write.

it tries to seep like warm water to foam.
soak my soul.

i dismiss this. So unimportant. But there is one thing
i fear.

Love knocking again for another round tonight.
Next weekend.
do not be alarmed when i am preoccupied with seeing birds
flying away
from us from the fields that we see when we are both wondering
what lies ahead: it is just a bad dream, and soon
the dream simply becomes forgotten replaced
by another preoccupation,
we are too, so so human,
fearing even fears,

we do not like the time when we have to say goodbye,
we do not like to spell the word and pronounce it,
we always stick to hello, and end what we have on that word alone,
we even close windows
to drive away any ill wind that comes inside the room,

a lady friend keeps telling me that i must tell you
that i am yours and that i must love you till the end of time,
that there is no reason for insecurity
because the rest are but spices and dessert and i like what she said

you are still the main menu
(in fact, let me add: still my favorite, when
nobody's watching)

RIC S. BASTASA
Lady Judas.....

that lady of Judas....
what you do not know
shall not hurt you.

it is I, who know all
these. I am therefore hurt.

I am hurt, and i will
not tell you.

what i will not tell you
does not hurt you.

this is the real
justification for silence.

i never want to hurt you
and so i keep hurting myself.

this is the justification of my
love.

this love that keeps being
hurt.

and i will always be hurt.
and this is the justification of
my Christianity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lady, What Are You Doing With Your Life?

you gave up your career
in that busy city where you are what they call
a necessity
giving you importance, that feeling of being
needed
you have meaning, they gave you meaning
now, you have lost this
meaning,
you believed him when he said
i love you
and now the demands are many
you gave him your love, your life, you gave him
posterity, his kids, you gave him a home
a garden, a room where you make love
you sweat it out, this love you have for him
you learned to cook and sew and
entertain him and his kids
on the nights after you make love with him
you look at the ceiling your eyes wide open
refusing sleep you walk up and open the
door, you walk farther to open this window
looking for some stars
to light you to guide you
you are lost
in their dark space on a crowded universe

there is no more place for you
you have no face
and now, you realize this great loss
this misfortune

you are taking lunch with us
you talk the whole day
my wife shall help you find your way again

to yourself, take back the name that they
have stolen
Lady....

it was too crazy
of me
to do such a
thing to
you, but

i wonder
i have heard
no complaint
from
you, what i

received instead
is another
invitation to

be in that island
again,

and in my
own conceit, i am

thinking,
whether i have
to cause
that lovely
harm to you
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lady-Justice

so blind,
look inside the bondage
of the bandage
covering
the eyes of the woman
holding the sword
and the scales

oh, her hands are tired
and once
she had scrutinizing eyes!

RIC S. BASTASA
Lakewood, In August

i see fog
ejewel

upon a green
neckline

of twin mountains
mirror

upon a lake
silver

one morning
i see

mist creeping
upon the mirror

a fish jumps
and creates the ripples

i feel cold air
coming inside

my window
that does not blink

on tranquil
infinity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lame Ducks

there are always other
more important things to do
always
when things fail always there
will always be
substitutes and alternatives
and options
one cannot just sit down and
let the moss grow upon
his skin
let the rain drown you with
its coldness
there are always paths that bend
and twist and
part
one cannot just resign in the
pains of
hopelessness

that is what life is all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lament Of An Ordinary Filipino Lover

Of what use shall the
Saudi riyal
That Japanese yen be

When you are no longer by my side?

RIC S. BASTASA
Lament....

the lonely wife in the house
for years has been abandoned by the brown colored
husband,
and she in turn pleases herself with some
daily chores: replacing the vase with flowers
everyday
fine tuned with every occasion
of renewal and
revival
sometimes she wears a dress with flowers
of blue designs
she weaves stories for herself
and indulges in the fantasy
of her sorrows
away from grief and
numbed by the pains
this time as the rain pours heavily
and she cannot go into her garden
to pick a flower
she takes a picture of herself
half nude, her breasts
protruding to the light of the sun
whose fingers
caress her nipple and she closes her
eyes
not wanting death
but remembering the face of another
man
even an illusion of a nose
and a set of thick lips
shall make her
survive

whatever, is, the name of
lament.

RIC S. BASTASA
Landscape #1

rectangular frame of a linear land
a silhouette of a big pine tree and a house nearby
gray clouds on the horizon
a woman leaving the house
the man is nowhere to be found
a bird flying in the opposite direction
both looking for a place that each can call
a new home

RIC S. BASTASA
Landscape #2

4 o 'clock in the morning
dusk retreating and morning light advancing
a boat floating ashore
the wind is timid and the sand is still a very clean slate
you look behind you
you find your own steps
you think someone is chasing you
and you walk that fast enough
afraid to be finally caught
by your own fears

you stop to find out if the mountain moves with you
the sea taunts you

alone and weary and so poetic at this time of the day
the wind whispers to your devotion: who reads you somehow?
who cares? who loves you?

someday? sometime? the sand is still a clean slate
you are not this kind of man who gets easily intimidated by this void

you sit on the shore and then you begin to write the initials of your name
someone loves you and you know

it begins foremost with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Landscape #3

an up climb of a hill
you’re no stranger to this kind of height
you have been there where you hold on to rocks and roots
and cling and grip and say

i want to live for another day
and this hill is my stairway

to heaven you tell yourself over and over again
you touch the clouds, white like the icing of the cake
you lick the fog and caress the passing wind with your palms

you keep the lines of your destiny intact
the cliffs never change somehow

many have died and soon you shall be
next.

up there at the top you shall find yourself
triumphant

lonelier perhaps and colder and so quiet
console yourself to all these blunders

you are nearer to God and that is nice enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Homeward again under foreign stars,
history was a strange gush of wind from memory
that came to echo waterfalls of those years:
home to find the place lost among
galaxies of signs. The hills were gone. The river
trail was forgotten... Trying to remember meadowlark
and those who perished in the vanishing land
(bones in the earth where our parents died poor),
the journey fell into heavy tides of flowing
scorn that echoed and reechoed time there.

The sun was most unkind to the place:
history: names of men: patterns of life:
all that distant floodtide heaved and moved,
breaking familiar names that immortal tongues
clipped for the heart to cry, 'Home is a foreign address,
every step toward it is a step toward three hundred years
of exile from the truth...'

It was not homeward
to the first known land, nor escape
to white sea sprays blossoming on inland shore,
nor love leaping the boundaries naked in the soul,
but a vast heritage of war and destruction breaking
too soon for the living and willing to die.

Life is a foreign language. Every man mispronounced it...

RIC S. BASTASA
Landscapes Of Ironies

there is still this little girl
with a jar on her head
fetching water from the river

there is still this boy who
climbs the tree and gathers
honey from the combs of the bees

meanwhile skyscrapers occupy
your landscapes
nuclear reactors teeming
on the valleys

meanwhile great eagles rise
to the skies
small birds on the plains
remain their prey

meanwhile schemes for wars
lurk inside the top secret files
spies dress themselves as
businessmen manipulating
prime markets

there are still cows grazing on the fields
of hay
farmers waiting for the rain
their ladies still choosing the seeds
to be sown again
this coming planting season

RIC S. BASTASA
Langaw

langaw lang ko
kabaw ka
og kay kabaw ka man
sungayan ka
apan pak-an ko

og kay di kaman
gayod ganahan kanako
og hadlok ka man
nga malupigan nako
imo gayong gilihay
ang imong ulo og
abaga kay
unyang simbakog
makatungtong ko
hadlok ka
nga mahimo sab
kong kabaw
nga labaw pa kanimo

dili ba nga ang
langaw kon makatungtong
sa kabaw
labaw pa man sa kabaw?

kana ang panultihon
nga dili gyod nimo
madawat

apan kay gikasilagan
mo man gayod ang
akong mga pako
bisag gagmay ra kini
kay lagi pako
man lang sa langaw

og aron maulit ka
kanako hangtod
nga ikaw magluya
og mamatay
kay sa tinood mao
man usab kana
ang akong gipangandoy
nga dunay kabaw
dinhing dapita nga
namatay sa kasuko
og kaulit tungod
sa iyang kasilag sa
gamay nga langaw

nan ania ako kanimo
nagpaatbang
sa ibabaw sa dahon
sa saging nga sab-a
nga mas habog pa
sa imong abaga

langaw lang ko
nga gamay kaayo
kabaw ka
nga sungayan og
hambog kaayo

apan, baharan ta ka
ugma tan-awon ta lang....

RIC S. BASTASA
Lapses.....

it should have meant
a green gate, which was not
written,
a case of another missing word,
but somehow a mind still clings
to the law of closure,
provides a word for what is missing,
for in truth we
have always wished
that everything is complete

or finally finished...

RIC S. BASTASA
Laptop (Misspelled)

a blue pen
a pair of eyeglasses
a cellphone
a remote control of the TV
a book
a writing notebook
a lap top
and a white poodle sleeping
beside all these things

it is his small world
yet everything and everywhere are inside it
his body and soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Lasagna

this is lasagna
your favorite dish
at the bottom is
love
on the second layer
is regret
the fillings of
meaty lust and
spices of
hot desire and on the
top layer is this
pretense

one does not bite it
and then
you settle for hate
fuming madness
of love
unrequited
you wish the tongue
is dead
or the teeth of the
non-taker
crumple into
sand

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Call For Breakfast

the girl is
asleep on the table.....

(sorry, but this poem
cannot be finished

wife is calling).

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Christmas With Mama

last christmas, seven years ago, with mama.
we lie on the grass, and when she fell on deep thoughts
of her memories, we were lost,
we look for what bothers her,
we laugh, and
she turns into a petunia, beside me,
and i see all that is violet
in all of them.

five months after she was buried,
i become grateful. i was dancing, i lie beside
the lilies,
seeing every color under the sun,
it is beautiful
she is no other, we are laughing again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Ditch

over there is the last ditch
there are barbed wire fences
over there are the greener
pastures
you may jump as you wish
you may leave me if you
finally decide that
things end
like normal stories
that there are endings
to our expectations
you may pack and take the best
and leave the worse for me
but for one thing
sign this pact
that when you have finally done
and fulfilled your wishes
you must not come back
and beg
for my acceptance
the second time around
i warn you
is lovelier
but do not expect that
after i have cried
a river
that i will be the same again
nope.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Lines On A Catastrophe....

every day is a challenge,
if not a tsunami
then an aftershook of an
earthquake of
varying magnitudes

look, there is a meltdown
come quickly
pack up and leave!

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night About The Black Bird

last night this black bird
arrived in your house
bringing you the news
from its master

your hands and feet
tremble
for this was something
very terrible

last night you went
down from your room
and reflected upon the
roots of that old
big tree on the
yard of your house

the black bird had
already flown away
like a stone
thrown in the middle
of a dark night

things always disappear
from you

you ponder
about yourself
the first hello
the happiest moment
the past passes
like a film strip
in your mind

things always tell you about
some unhappy endings

the news about a
certain blackout is inevitable
the blackbird, yes,
the blackbird, now you are pretty sure about it

it was a crow bringing you
about a sad news
the color of which is
as black as the color
of midnight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night He Finally Did It

he dreams about it
and last night he did it
he wore his boots
slipped from his big house
went out and took himself for a walk
farther away into the woods
alone
unafraid
it was so dark as the moon did not come out that night
too the stars
and he went his way out farther without light
only his coat and bare hands
no knife
defenseless as he is
he proceeded deep into the woods
not thinking about any direction
all he wanted was to know
what courage is
how is it to be alone without walls to protect him
without fences and guns and bullets
he missed this point
just to be a man
sans everything.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night I Gaze Upon A Thousand Stars

last night i gaze
upon a thousand
stars

i was alone
and it was
dark around
these mountains

i was not afraid
to see
your lonely face
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night I Preached

as usual
we are chatting
busy and
cramming for words

there is lucy
worrying about the next money to pay her mortgage of the house
there is manny
asking where to find a money lender to pay for his tuition
there is polly
worried about her husband's worsening kidney trouble
there is precy
asking if she can file an annulment

advices, resolutions, analyzing pros and cons,
and the consequences
like a radio program for the lost and the ignorant
i feel like i am a radio announcer somehow
yet everything went alright till the end of the night

then someone asks for a poem
to make him sleep
for he had not slept for days

and i preached: some things are meant only to be felt
no analysis, no logical explanations, no synthesizing,
some things are meant only to be seen
no words are useful to situations where the tapping of the shoulder
and the hugs and embrace can speak the most
comforts and understanding, all these are matters of the heart
the wars within with which words and even syllables become useless

i told him: breathe, breathe, breathe some more
breathe deeply and feel the expansion of your lungs with fresh air

back to the basics, the only way to live is to breathe
and the only way for one to sleep is to lay down in bed and then close
your eyes and then tell the world that now it is time for you to be excused.
yes last night i preached, and then i too closed my eyes and took my much needed sleep.

life is simple. it is us. We complicate it. And then life has become unfair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night I Was Looking For You

last night
i went on top
of the house
to see the moon
and the stars
still looking for
your eyes
your lips
in the heavens
even

RIC S. BASTASA
did it rain so hard last night?
how can this room be flooded
when there is no roof
leaking

was i drunk? have i done something
that i cannot remember

on this restlessness of my soul
by your side
was i on top of the mountain?
where you there too?

i am wet all over
and there you are in your silence
as though nothing
happened at all

tell me, was i cruel when i touched your thighs?
you look so sad on drooping eyes

please accept my apology.

RIC S. BASTASA
last night i was talking to myself
asking and making answers
like the way i make a knot and
then untie them from a cemented
post at the port
so that the wooden boat
may finally be let loose
and be free to sail
to its chosen destination

the sea was so wide
like all seas that you have seen
but the night was so dark
like no other

do not read in my pocket
like how to cure a cold
with just a glass of water
like how to appease the coldness
of a room with nothing but
a piece of a woolen blanket
and curling feet and
hiding hands in my pocket
so i can have the exact warmth
so i may finally have my much
needed sleep and
dream about the peace
between the clouds
and the stars

last night i could not sleep
and you are beside me
last night i opened the window
of our room while you
were there snoring
last night i was silently
talking about the absence of
stars the loss of the moon
and then the rain fell
heavily on the roof of this house
and then i closed the windows
and then i listened to every sound
and then i noticed a faint light coming
from a leak of these walls

i know
another morning has finally
come
it is broken they say.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night I Wrote A Poem In My Visayan Language

it was only for me
visayan lines
flowers i pick
from my own garden
only for me
to see to smell to smash

not for the world
my mumblings
murmurs
of my homegrown
longings

finally, seeing selfishness
having tendrils
and roots in my hands and feet
i deleted it
early in the morning
nipping it in the bud
the eyes of my prison

i open the window
to the language
of the world, so you can see
so you can come inside me

welcome welcome welcome
the tower of babel has fallen

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night The Dog

last night the white dog
slept with me
and so i dream about
other dogs, and fleas
and hairs
and claws...

but the white dog was
prominently inside that dream
she was licking me
all over

and that was that
which made it different
in this poem the tongue becomes
the metaphor
of something that wakes the body
as though
it is the white dog that gives
it a soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night The Stars Were So Many

last night the stars were so many

moonless
and i went on top of the roof of the house
and i laid my body on the galvanized stuff

i began to count the stars
at least i tried to use the numbers to please myself
and lull myself to sleep
like the way i have to count the sheep

the night was so beautiful
with the glittering stars
the wind was cold and there was this silence which asks me:

why am i not happy?

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night There Was No Moon

last night there was no moon
no stars
i opened the window
to have a good view again
of the nothingness
above me

there is the cold wind roaming
among tree tops
passing by my window not looking back
not getting in
not minding
its hands are wings embracing
every space

i am glad
it does not know my name

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night Time Passed So Quickly

last night
time passed so quickly
i did not even
notice that
the people in the house
where i live
had already taken dinner
washed their plates
kept them back
in the cabinet
and watched
soap opera
and then closed
the doors and windows
and slept

i only noticed the
change when
there was that
silence
that shouted
i have
been unfair
and too
insensitive

when poetry
seems to
be my whole
life when
nothing counts
anymore
except my
choice of
words
and living with
them
all alone.
Last Night With The Stars

LAST nIGht
i Was tOO streSSED
I Feel liKE AN idIOT amIDST
THe three Magis
i Opened The TV anD
Turned IT oFF
I looKED foR SiLiENCE
wENT UPstairs
sAT On the Floor Looked UP
TO tHE opEN Sky
and SEE THE Stars so Many maNY Stars stars
in the NIGHT sky
the MOON was not There
and She WAS not There TOO
But the THOUGHTS of stars and more stars
glistening IDEAS and eMBRACING
tHE openness of Space
They ARE enough to OPEN MY Heart and
Sing and then
I Was SiLiENCED
I HAD peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night You Sent A Picture

last night
you sent a picture
a face surrounded with flowers.
i sent mine
a face waiting for your body
in bed.
you sent another picture this time
it is your son saying
leave her alone and
so i sent a picture of my wife
kissing my lips and too saying
leave him alone
he is mine.

this morning you say
i'm sorry and i am wondering
if i have to send another picture
thru the MMS
saying: are you the mistress of the ruins?

sorry? what are you sorry for?
we have nothing. I am only giving you
what you ask. Just giving.
Not taking.

yes, not taking you
seriously. And you like it?

love this poem. Play me.
You still like toys. Toy me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Last Night's Christmas Party

and he said i like sins
for they are so delicious and
i cannot live my life without them

a young woman with round and firm breasts
comes to him and confesses her love
she promises him a lifetime
and fills the emptiness of his lonely life

the woman is married and he is too
his wife left him for good a year ago
her two daughters detest him

the priest says he is in a state of sin
and cannot be given communion

no regret he says
his had been living a life of sin and lies and deception
and there is no backing out
perhaps fate
perhaps a courageous decision
a challenge to
vatican

he says he is ready to serve his future sentence in hell.

we all look at him and then ignore what he says

i divert the topic and tells him that buko juice without sugar
is what i prefer
no milk
no fruit cocktails

bread without cheese
a hot noodle soup without hot spices

and later a little silence with my black coffee
in the veranda
facing a tree with sour lemons
hanging heavily
on its weak branches

i will pick and bring some of them
in the house

and then all his friends left him
with his young girl in the dining room
where she sits on his lap
teasingly like a spoiled baby to his papa

one by one those who choose to
stay a while
finishing their desserts of honey coated jco doughnuts
finally stand and
courteously tender their warm
good nights

after a few minutes
i will do the same

i have been talking to
myself
as always
arguing unnecessarily

i am the last to leave
and i say
ciao!

sin loves foremost
its much wanted privacy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Late Last Night

how can i forget
things that embrace me
not for the last time
i am hooked to you
like a fish, i swallowed all
line and sinker
you caught me last night
i was lovely
and i did not give
any struggle
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Laughing The Day Away

what happens happens
there is nothing you can do about it
the plan last night
to avert the consequences
did not work out
what happens happens
as expected
and we watch the consequences
without hesitation & regret
and then we learn the last
step of this process
	his total acceptance
and then we laugh all these away
as though
things and event become passe

it's over, what's next?
that is the excitement.

RIC S. BASTASA
Laughter Is Always Contagious

Whether laughter comes from a baby
or a lady or
a middle aged man
or an old woman
one thing is sure:
it is still contagious.

RIC S. BASTASA
Law And Poetry

black and white like the point of view of
the cat is the law
hard to deal with
hair splitting and building
fences and trenches
keeping some enemies out
and friends in
keeping the nets catch the smaller one
but letting the sharks go
that is the first law

poetry: it is the hues of rainbow after the rain
flowers that bloom without much explanation
the sounds of her steps wading in the water
kisses without the penalties
making love without the risks of getting inside
some prison walls

the one that makes us so light as clouds and feathers
makes our hearts dance the ballet and do the triple twists and turns
in mid air
the music to our soul
the liberation of our bound spirits
the singing birds and cicadas in symphony
the frogs croaking
celebrating the first long rainy night ahead of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Law And Poetry Tryst

where law and
poetry meet
a flower blooms
in an alley
where the recent murder
happens...

RIC S. BASTASA
Law Class 2011

i love to see how
Socrates
enrolls in the law
school

comes on time
in class

sits there silently
like a lamb

and always
as ever
pretending not to
know
anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Layers

You must consider that everything is layered

The earth has layers of air, water, soil, rock, fire to its
Core
Molten fire

A fruit has layers of an external cover
Something hard, then soft and a
Sometimes a hollow core

A cake has layers too of sugar coating
Moist cake
And chocolate
End layer

My body has layers of skin
Tissue, flesh, bone
And nerves and
Marrow
The core can be hollow

And the mind
The soul has layers of understanding
Layers and layers of consciousness
To sub consciousness
Ego superego
To a layer
Beyond our grasp

Tips of the tongues
Slippages
Déjà vu
Memory gaps
Did we meet somewhere?
Do I remember you?
These sorts of some things
That happen which we know we can explain yet we can’t

Something somewhere
Could be
What if
Was I there somewhere sometime?
She somehow touches me and I feel it
I don’t really remember when

That smile that you wear was the same smile I saw somewhere

Foggy places, opaque faces, vague bodies hugging us in dreams
Murky rivers bathing us hazy rains lazily sizing Zen in showers

Some windows in some house
Remaining close

My heart is light and it is flying like a little light bird on its first wing

There is always a sense of awe and wonder to everything that I do here

An onion peeling, layer by layer, tear by tear

Here. I am. Here I am becoming unfolding to another beginning

No entries and no exits
Off limits, nothing yet allowed.

Meanwhile I am breathing, smelling something somewhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
Layers And Layers

we meet i only have one layer
we talk and i added another layer
we discuss and i added more layers
we dive to a certain depth and of course
i have to add more and more layers
so i may not drown
so i may not be too vulnerable to pressure

and when we come out of the water
our faces surfacing you do not recognize me anymore
i have layers and layers of myself
that even me
i cannot anymore recognize

the violence within
this turbulence of the self
this storm inside us
this layers and layers of selves
covering the truth

how can i ever uncover
what my depths cover from time to time
when you utter my name?

when you tell me that
i am myself.

there is no self.
There is no us.

There is no future.
I have only the past
and My now

Like a fruit basket
all naked on top of your table.

Just take one
The apple perhaps.
And fill yourself.

For the moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Layers Of Dreams, Journey To Journey

our dreams need not be
our own
their fulfillment
may not be our
own for the
taking

we are huffs
we dash our dusts away
in a minute
we shall be gone

our dreams are not ours
anymore
they are waiting
for our much needed
departures

they have their own dreams
much vivid than ours
they are anxious
why we still have eyes

their paths they think
are still blocked by our
old contentions
now they are wishing us
good luck
for we shall move farther
to places
we have not gone to

and these shall be our dreams
again
always beyond
comprehension

RIC S. BASTASA
Laying Bare And Lovely Still On A State Of Bliss

amidst the softness of the big sofa
you lay your naked body
your breasts stare at the ceiling
your hair freely falling
on the arm
of that big sofa
you close your eyes on this baring
you point your toe
to the carpeted floor
your arms are light
as your hands rest
on the furry cover

the silence is sweet and this time the world is calm
no word creeps on your lips
come to think of it
what is the description of this bliss?

RIC S. BASTASA
Lazy Afternoon

around the four corners of these walls
i sit
still, my arms on the side of my body, my eyes staring at the ceiling,
my neck stiffens, and the door is closed,
the air conditioner hums the monotony of its sound
faithful to its functions,
the venetian blinds are half-open doubting the world outside
where busy people come and go without stopping
on a rush the cars flash a change of metallic colors,

i am astounded by this catastrophe of a world denying itself
of its much deserved-calmness
a slow motion could have been more beautiful
where teenagers meet and kiss, and there i want the world stopped.

the movie unfolds, and i do not want it to end.
i cannot sleep. There is more to be seen.
This is crazy. Thoughts flowing like a river and i am a boat without a rudder.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lazy Enlightenment

now my soul speaks
now it is spoken before
it has spoken
before it has attempted
to speak
to my body to my mouth
seeing itself
in itself seeing
the beauty of the mirror
mirroring itself
upon itself

it is there
there is no question
there is no answer either
it is there
we have not seen it
we feel it
it is there listening
to us listening
to those awakened

RIC S. BASTASA
Lazy Imagination On A Friday Morning

sitting on a bench at the veranda
facing the sea

calm sea with seagulls
the sun is not yet here but he is ready

with his act
first he puts his legs on the table

toes wriggling angle
direct to this point of view

the sun arrives
his thumb perfectly covers the sun

his toes like trees
filtering the morning light

he smiles and finds content
on his crazy moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Lazy Saturday

lying on a bench
my feet higher than my face
this is my world
upside down

blood runs on my face
paleness fading
away

RIC S. BASTASA
Lazybone...

is there a place in earth where
happiness exists like a mountain
of chocolates and a sea of
brewed coffee?

(Translate as: a happy place
do you still like chocolates? or coffee toffee?)

if such place exists, perhaps i want to go
there and spend some time there
and then i will send you a letter and tell you
that you are not a liar.

(What is the idea really? what is the point?)

you want to know? Figure it out.

RIC S. BASTASA
Le Charabia

i gobble words one day
when you wish to listen
what i want to say, i
wish you shall not understand
because actually there is no
use now
for understanding, since

not to know sometimes is
beautiful
in its mystery that attaches
to my
acceptability somehow

i feel secure staying
on a chatter
where the threads of my sentences
weave nothing

how many times did i sigh now?
you hear more of its gibber
when you decide to close the door
for me
when you close your eyes
because
i have become unbearable to myself

with all the weights
of my being
all concentrated inside my head
where my heart
grapples for love that is no longer
there

inside my path i meet
a stranger
someone that i love
without
length of time, there is
no meeting
to speak of between understanding
and compassion

i wish i were you
but i will never tell you

a silent moon a still pool
a boat glides soundlessly
and we are not facing each other
dreaming of wings...

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaders Of The Land

they make gimmicks of all sorts
they like to play mud slinging games
and they dirty their faces and expose their dirty linens
under the Philippine sun
the act like acrobats on circus
displaying their skills to amaze and get Juan's devotion
to amaze and get the vote this May ten,
they become instant magicians
converting forest into cities
rivers into bridges
stones into bread
news into money bills
others who remain unconvinced
they employ goons and guns
and even kill for the vote
oh, the leaders of my land
they fool the people all the time
i am tired
i am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leading By Example.....

always lead by example
they will follow
if not now
at least they will
soon follow

or if they do not follow you
at least, one thing is sure,

they will remember something to cry on
if not something to smile upon....

RIC S. BASTASA
Leading You

i am leading you to a place
where you can be yourself
where you can be free

you will see a black crow there
and it will stare at you
do not be frightened

it will soon leave if you look at it in return
with a calm, strong eye

then another shadow will come flying in
through the window of your house
the shadow of the monkey-eating eagle
too it will stare at you with an intimidating claw
but just be gentle
and soon just like the black crow it will leave

and then you must stand tall beside the same window
where the two birds hover temporarity
you shall see the white dove
getting in at the perfect hour
it will hand you a branch with three green leaves
in perfect timing for the sun that we have been waiting for

you wait some more and there may be rain
a little thunder and some lightning
but again do not be frightenened
keep looking with that strong, calm eye

and then the time now comes for the cocoon
to open and from the window where you must stand tall
from the branch that the dove handed you
you will see the birth of a red butterfly
soon it will fly and hover in one branch of your heart

your heart is the flower
and i am that red butterfly.
you see me leaning
on the wall
you think that i am
about to faint
and you signal
if you can help
but i am quick
with my hand
waiving

no i am alright
i am feeling the wall
i am listening
to its ears

there is this
hardness on walls
that i like to know
there is this
silence of the walls
that i like to hear
from its very ears

you think i am
weak and sick
you think i am
the one that
darwin says
may be
exterminated

come to think of it
these walls
are the walls
built by my father
and his father's father

they feel my body
and they say
i am doing well

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaping

fears hinder the great leap
you look to the other side
of this great chasm
you think you cannot really make it
afraid to fall and die
yet you do not well know
the essence of our being
we are not destined to be
just here with mouths gaping
contented on immobility

we are blind and we want to see
we make the leap and we fall
we keep on falling and falling
let me tell you this
if you are still reading these lines
we are here in between the chasm
we are falling and falling
we are not feeling any bottom yet
the floor is still nowhere to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Learn

when broken
learn
when happy
learn
when bored
learn
when you float and does not know what to do
learn just the same
when filled with idealism
learn
when fed with what you cannot swallow
learn again
when the times get rough and you want to kill yourself
learn, learn, learn
you still have many things to learn
faces of life
bodies of life
learn, learn, learn everything
do not surrender

for in truth, you do not do what you only want
you will also do what you are told to do
no questions asked
or you will be left out
or you will be not a part of the picture
this life
learn, learn, learn, always learn
do not surrender
live, learn, live, learn
you will soon do all that others will tell you
learn, learn and learn again

and sooner you will have learned everything
and then do what you want to do
with firm conviction
you know now what is right
and that is what you will do,

now without even being told
you have become yourself
but still learn, learn, and learn again
because
you might be wrong,
try thinking some more, learn
relearn, learn, learn, learn, forevermore....

RIC S. BASTASA
Learn From The Ants

Did you say you
live in a box
where the entrance
and exit
look the same?

where the walls
are so strong
that to break it
you must obtain
divine permission?

did you say that
you were mislead
into getting into
said sameness that
you do not anymore
know which one is
you and which one
is them?

don't you know that
uniformity is their
design for peace?

that to deviate is
a rebellion punishable
by death? or stigmatization?

have you been isolated
and wonder if you can
still live for another day?

don't panic. There are
so many of us. If
you get out from there
we will be so crowded
outside the box
and you will surely
I regret having come out from there.

and those who dared suffers the same fate as those who didn't.

so keep the peace. stay there and just be 't move.

Don't shake the box. Don't hammer the wall. Don't touch the door. Don't nail anything of the ceiling.

Just follow all the instructions. Do not ask for more. There is nothing more.

I repeat, keep the peace. Your life is short. And the box is not worth your struggle.

There is a right time. To watch a sparrow and then know it all.

What wisdom is left Learn from the ants.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learn To Dance

it is not a hard thing to do
dance, what is so hard with using your feet
for the lively hours
those vertical positioning of the bodies
for some horizontal desires,
dance, as though there is no more music
of the world tomorrow
be happy in short, be a part of this world's celebration
this journey
where the earth having no feet and arms
simply floats
in space and takes that heavenly dance
with the sun and stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learn To Wait

it is dark,
d are shadows.
they are shapes
of flowers
behind this little darkness
that slowly
disappear giving way
to a brighter day.
just wait.
do not go back to sleep.
watch a new bloom
of day

go out and play.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learn From You, Learn From Us.

The rule of the game is this:
I have this basket filled with truths
That I cannot tell you
Because these are all bitter fruits
Of broken trees

This is the game of poetry
I can tell you something else
But it will be the same basket filled with
Bitter fruits
Only that
It will be artistically put
And shall be more pleasing to your eyes
For I cannot make you sad
And be like us
What is uglier than truth
Now appears to you as
The most fashionable lies
But soon you shall learn the trick
And be another expert
At telling truths that cannot hurt
At knowing no departures
That gives you
Never a sense of abandon
But all cheers
And welcomes

Those which must be redeeming
Like the way we put back the broken wings of the birds
Who have refused for days
To fly

RIC S. BASTASA
Learned... This Hunger And Thirst

one who sleeps on the floor
cannot fall,

in the morning one wakes up
with thirst, the one

that even you drinking
water and wine
in dreams
never gets satisfied, there is

gives you that feeling of you being here
and yet not really here

as though your one foot is in the ocean
and the other
is on the mountain trail
always looking for the
right way to finally find what you are really seeking...

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning

a little brown boy
perhaps aged three
is learning
how to ride his
bike

the father bought
a bike
taller than the boy
but the boy
has passion

breaks his bones
suffers the bruises
just to learn
this new skill

he rides on top of the
bike unable to reach
the brake
and he laughs at all this
not seeking
any help.

there he falls again
on the ground.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning About Sunsets And Faded Denims

everything fades
blue denims
daylight turning into
dark orange then
siphoned into
darkness

but before things
go into
nothingness
we still ponder
how beautiful once
they were

on the other hand
because they fade
we learn to love
what they have
too become

like cherishing memories
like putting flowers on the
burial grounds of
those who died
and whom once we
so truly loved

like savoring ourselves
with sunsets
like switching on the light
when it is so dark

ah, we learn
no matter how long to live
with what is in our
hands....

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning About The Toxicity Of Your Farting

when you fart inside your
  car and you
  smell your own toxicity
  which you yourself detest.

you do not even want to do it
to yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
these are the rainy days
night and day
those who live beside
the rivers of our
times
are finally leaving
and i am deeply touched
if they are
coming back

i live in a house with
a good roof
which i earned for years
and years
my clothes are warm and
my bed warmer
and who really cares if i
thrive on this
happy moment alone by
myself?

the rainy days are given
not our choices
but somehow we have learned
from the past
survived the present and
with so much skill have
learned so well
to embroider beautifully
our own future....

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning The Art Of Loving

it is a hug that you need
when some parts of you dangle
on your shoulder
like the way your your hair
shouts for help
for fear of falling
and here i am coming
to hug you
this kind of hug that sings
the song of
apple pickers
and

garbage collectors
whose hands
are sworn
to clean the mess
and keep the pieces

to put them all away
and burn them
as often as necessary

i will hug you baby
but only for
a while

i am both
this apple picker somewhere
in the north
and a garbage collector
some place in the south

let us talk about
love some other time
i am still
learning the art of loving
Learning The Art Of Sacrifices

what i understand is that
i have learned the art of
sacrifice

i know how to choose a place
and stay there
they say it is a mistake
but i keep it to myself
like my
idea of you

it can make you angry of course
and i you decide to leave
(or die)
i will be left alone
to tackle
who i am and it is a very
hard
subject to thresh out
and understand

what i keep to myself
i keep forever
& you whom i keep on saying i love
shall share this
moment of self-imposed silence

i know we both understand
these arts of sacrifices
and i well know that we find solace
in not
saying anything
in not giving it a name
because
though it has been born and
reside here
(i point my finger
to my
heart)
yet no one knows it completely
without
throwing it somehow
sometimes
when it gets so heavy
and hurting

and then we say that we are
enclosed by it
and we are
owned completely like
a fence

because there is no other way
except....

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning The Dance Of Your Life

one can learn the dance
in due time
one does not sleep but must wake up
to feel the song
at dawn
when the sound of the wind is
sonorous
it is the wisdom of dusk
that must tell you what to do
to learn
the true dance of your life

one can learn but it is not that
fast as reading a book the whole day
and saying to yourself
this is all and there is nothing more

life can never be a book with
definite pages
the title is misleading us
and the end always is a big surprise

your dance will always be original
you live and let live
and you can never have a pattern to compare

at night you are stunned
things are not happening as you expect them
you adjust
like the water to the river
like air to a transparent container
filling each space
until the hollowness is full

you learn the dance of life
and no one is teaching you
Learning The Games Of This World

good men don't fall down
permanently as bad men don't stay that high
on top by reason of
their devices
permanently

in fact there is nothing permanent
without which
this world becomes absurd
like marble that cannot roll and spin

games will always be there
for as long as our eyes stay young like budding
blossoms

there is no one here who is permanently poor
and dumb
everyone learns to experience that pain and
opens like some bleeding hands

hearts that erupt from deep volcanic sleep
and covers a well lighted city at night
turning into a forest with all its trees devastated
in a new world of
all oceans

our eyes see nothing but a covered table
no spoons and plates
chairs tumbling down like mass execution

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning The Lesson From The Mud

it was on that
day when you went out
of the comfort of
the house
descending the stairs
towards the mud hole where
the carabao is resting
and you bathe there beside
him and after a while you
walk towards the river to
cleanse yourself
your hair and hands and
body
and you go back to the house
ascending the stairs
sitting by the side of the window
looking down the hill
where you realize what is more
important
what is golden
what is to be kept and what is
to be thrown away

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning The Patience Of The Spider...

patience is the spider's trick &
i am learning such virtue, &
when i am confronted with such a situation that demands the quick action of temper, I, simply spit, spin my web & in it, I, entangle you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning The Ways Of Misery...

when you left an hour ago
to the city
i thought i may not be able
to know what to do
in the next few hours
here in this
lonely town where leaves
keep on falling as the
wind has always been strong
and cruel

i may only be listening to the
noise of barking dogs the moment
another stranger riding on a
bicycle passes by the road fronting
this old house

but really i have figured out that
if this thing happens over and over again
and perhaps even for real and
perchance becomes a permanent state
of an inevitable departure

i said to myself i must as early this
raw and budding time know how to meet
a calamity:

i face a blank screen
choose a classical music
and i listen and then i
begin to write about anything
to preoccupy my mind and
i scroll about the lives of
people

and there i tell you
i am not alone

there is so much misery
in this world and there are
so many miserable people

i am one in a billion and that
makes us so many

sands on the shore
stars in the sky
molecules in air
drops of rain
mists along with the waterfall
letters in a book

and so finally
I am comforted

and i spontaneously
learned how to sing and dance
with no one looking...

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning This Kind Of Game

I am learning this kind of game
which you taught me when i was

just leaning upon a wall and thinking
that it loves me

to meet you, and have a drink with you
and kiss you inside a dark room and

then speechless as we are, we take
turns leaving each other

with a note that soon this will happen
again, this story of hello, goodbye, hello

endless in the pages of your longings
and always anticipating that soon

everything in our backgrounds will be
ironed out by a god who has no other

concern but our happiness, freed from
the prison walls of selfishness and greed

and always open to other possibilities
to a door that opens by themselves when

we begin to utter those old words again
' i miss you' and the echo, 'miss you too'

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Distinguish Respect, Love And Lust

you must know how to distinguish respect from love and lust, it is like this way

when both of you are dressed
there will always be respect

and when both of you begin to talk
and share an intimacy like holding hands

and caressing faces and closing your eyes
and making hints between here and there

when like a poem you are still at the stage
of groping for images and metaphors

you are still at the stage of love
in the process of an eye contact and slight rubbing
of hands and hips and sides and sensing the smell

of a scent and telling that person that there is this
cuteness and loveliness on a certain surface

but then beware when both of you start to undress
in a dimly lit room where the windows are closed
where the curtains are left hanging when their ribbons
are let loose when the door is locked when there is nothing
but nudity and fullness of desire

in here you do not ask for any permission anymore
you do not ask for a glass of water or for a slice of bread
both of you are thirsty and hungry

on this stage of lust, you are cannibals
and savages, throwing away all the lessons that gentleness
taught us: you throw away your clothers, your underwears
anywhere, and they all fall in different corners

then you start eating each other, every skin is licked,
every scent is tasted, every thing is bitten
in all wanton greed, you want to consume every self that you
claim you own.

you all give up what you such feelings
as respect, and love and lust, these two things come last.

giving and taking. but for me it is more of the giving.
i call it satiation. because love and sex, is nothing but the
giving of self and taking nothing in return.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Let Them All Go....

she can love
a puppy or even
a gold fish but

she cannot live
with a human
being...always

she says, let him
go, let them go,

it is this learning
how to live alone
with oneself, but

i really doubt it.
a puppy is a puppy
and a gold fish is
a gold fish, without
a dog food and a
bowl of water, how
can life be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Live Alone

you lose them. and you do not really mind as they slowly slip away. friends.

one says i am tactless, and the other complains that i am subtle in chiding them, insulting him without his knowing and only then when he is caught in the midst of friends who laugh at him.

one says i am arrogant, and my superiority is not doing me any good anyway.

my mistake. i must, they say acknowledge the mistake of just being myself.

baloney. i do not give a damn now if they are like the stars united to attack the sheen of my moon at midnight.

it is enough. i am fed up. i sever what is severe. i cut the umbilical cord that tries to tell me what i should be.

baloney. i am different. i am purely myself now. i walk alone and think about my own thoughts.

i touch no one now and no one touches me. i am an island. i am learning to be

an island in front of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Live Alone And Be Happy

in my little Bisayan town
the guitar strings are loose
and the sound
becomes musically challenged

i will be having a hard time
with my lyrics
and choice of pitch
because of this faulty guitar
and this
hardheaded guitarist

one day i decided to sing alone
less the guitar
and the guitarist
and then i learned to live
and sing
without so much fuss
without
any need for a guitar
or any accompaniment

surprisingly
i can sing alone and yet
still be in tune
without things
without so many people

yes, it is this solitude
and the rest becomes mere surplusage

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Live Alone By Myself....

when i step from this door
i wish everything are still the same: like trees in a row
towards the avenue
towards the boulevard and to the horizon of moon and sea

i wish the coldness does not get colder this time
for i have not brought everything thermal with me
i have gotten old and so unwise to think that i am still loved.

i guess i am not that strong anymore to face the cold to brace
the night of this anguish
oh, how time has changed me for the worse
my health has failed and my arms are of no use to this struggle

the moon has waned and the stars have disappeared
the darkness surges in like a disease incurable

and so i have decided to go back to my old house
and as i close this door behind me
i have decided not to think of anyone else

not you this time, but just me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Live The Moment

to live
you must learn what is
every day,
which is nothing
but a day and
another day,
there is nothing
special,
it is just the closing
and opening,
the darkness and
light,
we learn something
new
and a little old of
living
just this moment
this moment
and nothing more.
this is it how to live,
do not spread.
settle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Love All The Mess

three plates remain unwashed
last night the cockroaches feast on the remains
of pork oil and morsels of rice
and bread
the dining chairs are not in place
looking like twigs in the park
after a storm

the table is littered with spilled sauce
the table cloth is stained
alcoholic
and the spoons and forks are still
having catchup on their tongues
and tails

the floor is foul with your dog's urine
and socks and shoes are roaming on the
living room

you guess it right
the universe is a big chaos

and so is this house
which is out of order
like a sink with leaking faucets

you want all your life to be in order
you wish a smooth and tidy place
vested with its own  system

name-tagged and cabinetized
pieces

but it simply is not just
the way things work out

your dreams are silly

chaos and pandemonium are the orders of the
days of our lives
and so here i am with this firm resolve
to the flexibility of adaptability
for my survival

since disorder is the law
so must i obey it

to perfect my life and to put order
to my dreams and
properly accept this world's disposition
so must i
love chaos as well

go with the random flow of pandemonium
enjoy the errors
love the mistakes

and i swear to myself
beginning this ruinous day
that i,
wholeheartedly
must love all these mess

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Love The Noise And All That Stuff...

at first i hate the noise
of motorcycles passing by the house
the screeching sound of the engine
is bombarding my eardrums
to pieces,

somehow, it is the adaptability gene in me
that survives
whatever the situation is
one must easily learn to accept
lest you
perish from the face of this earth
choking yourself with
disappointments

somewhere, i dream
not of silence but of noise

noise has a role too to play
in the deletion of
whatever noisy memory we have
that keeps
wrecking our
impulsive hearts

and then i learn to love noise and everything
that comes my way
sort of
meet noise with noise instead of silence sort of stuff

learning to be what i am in whatever place i may find myself
for in truth
i can do nothing about it
and so i let it be
but nothing nobody shall never destroy me
instead i must embrace them all

and to defeat all their attempts to put an end
to my struggles
(to be free or whatever...) 
i sort of 
embrace every strange moment 
with all the love 
that i can 
possible give

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning To Ride

learning to ride
whatever
you always have
a fear an attempt
and a fall
from time to time
wherever whenever
so normal
falling and
hurting yourself

after trial & error
riding becomes
too familiar
and you like it
maybe but for
a time
riding is nothing
but a thing
we always do
because we simply
have to

then just as when
the fear is lost
you sleep & leave
the excitement
you take
things as daily
boring matters
and there you
lose
the grip of cautiousness
about what was
once exciting &
even fearful

that is when
the accident happened
the time
when everything
is so normal
routinary
boring

you may even
kill yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Learning Well Life's Lesson The Real Way

a virtual heart
a second hand experience
of love and pain
and half-deaths from time to time

you call this learning
and you like it
because you stand at a certain distance
and tell yourself
that is enough for me
and then you
leave
and face another world out there
not feeling well
what you have just seen
bloodily
from a fence
and a thin wall

it is different when you bleed yourself
when the wound in your face
tells your eyes
this is it!
when the pain that seeps to your bones
tell your heart
this is it!
when the shattered pieces of your bones rattle and shout at you
this is it!
when the gaping skin sliced by a thin, sharp knife
tells you on the face
bloody hell! this is the pain!
and it is with you sticking on your palm
wherever you go and then you cover your mouth and
say, 'Oh, My God! '

this is learning the hardest way
when it is you that is broken
and not someone else
when it is not another person's story
that you read one night beside your soft bed
and you cry

when you learn to use the word 'empathy'
or 'sympathy'
or the justification of the word
'internalization' about other people's
tragedies, their own miseries and laments
their drowning in the raging sea
their head and hands cut and eaten by unidentifiable sharks
while you watch the show on tv
as you eat your pie and drink your orange juice
and you see
and feel the 'mess of their lives' just like another hit movie

oh, this will be different now,
it is you
do not think or utter death as another word of the dictionary,
it will be different now,

it is you who is dying,
not someone else on the other hospital bed by the other window

then you begin to learn, how is it, what is it,
and how painful is it really. It is you now, baby.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaves And Roots....

i assured myself
oh, my, this, is, just,
a hobby,
a diversion, a surplusage
of my existence,
nothing hurts, nothing glorious,
just a passage, from this
to that, in and out,
above and below, for as you
know,
the leaves touch the sky
unless your roots
touch the
deep blue sea and the
mama of all magma...for the greater
the height,
too must the roots be deeper
as you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaves Of Rice

leaves of rice
with feet
like soldiers
aligned
and stiff
and disciplined

learning
to live
on poisoned
atmospheres

to give
you better grains
a whiter rice
glutenous
on your
empty plate

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaves Of Summer

ricket sounds of the dry leaves
of summer
like a hot oil in the pan
splashed with a dropp of
salt or
water

it is not sweet to the liking
of my bone
it wrecks my cervical spine
into a succumbing
pain

they say
God is speaking
to me...

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving

Actually leaving is a necessity
I leave many times
And much oftener than usual

Most birds leave to warmer places
I go the other way around
In isolation
In an island of isolation
It may be cold

But I am the only bird in there
It is such a nice feeling

Being one and only
Being isolated

Like an experiment
Life, an experiment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving An Old Ancestral House...

i always remember someone leaving the house with a heavy heart. I sympathize. My heart is also heavy.
It is dark and someone carries a bag and begins to step away. The steps become fainter.
I like to help. I suggest he stays. But Papa is vehement and decisive.
Many years ago, five or ten people already left this house.
I stayed. I keep on staying.
The house is empty now.
I have decided not to listen anymore about the sound of emptiness.
The house of Gregorio must fall.
Everyone here dies.

I want to live. And so i must go somewhere else.
Where there are no hands that will choke me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving An Old Love

that last night
together our fingers entwine

i keep your love inside my hands
like i am grappling to hold on to some stone

it is inside my heart
when i leave bound for home
at twilight

you go
you keep yourself
to your freedom

you go alone
where your heart takes you

that last embrace
i leave all that is valuable to myself
on your shoulder

i leave some tears on
the white blankets
as souvenirs

i will be back in the house
where i am alone again

inside the car
i am weeping because i know that this time
you mean it

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving At The Final Moment....

your marriage is destined
to be ruined

no one causes it
except you: you simply believed

that with your beauty and grace
and fortune

despite your rude manners and
inconsiderate and insensitive
treatment of the man you love
and who loves you most

you still believe that he cannot
leave you

well, he just did it.
you see, it is not impossible

for a man humiliated to finally
come to his senses

that he can still cope up with
himself, carry his age with dignity

and live his life the way
he wanted it: without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving For Tiglan (1986)

It took him quite a time to come back
He missed the lull of the loafing swing tied to an old avocado tree
At first he remembered, he thought, it was everything that he really cared for
The lull, the breeze, the loafing
The blood red hibiscus and the pervading scent of the ilang-ilang
The silence of an isolated and abandoned hut in an ancestral farm
The hidden creek where the mudfish keeps its silent swim
The lonely walks towards the sea just to take a look at the sunset
And back again to the faraway hill just to see how it looks down there on the plains
Up here one can see the sea, the village, the group of trees, the winding road and the trails,
Everything in view
In full array
Of propriety

And I shall have my place here
Only me
Nothing really of much significance
A man sitting
Then standing
Moving from time to time
Sometimes not really knowing why
Why movements have to be made
And then I stand still
Hearing only my breath and the beating of my heart
The silence was so encompassing

Covering the whole view that I see

Completing the whole of this vastness

I have to leave tomorrow
But I have not told her

The lull is over

The house has been cleaned and every trace of filth has been hidden

Every litter burned

The ashes buried

And everyone thought that everything had been

Propriety

No one shall ever know

That the night before

The house was all crowded, dirty, and foul

The dwellers could not sleep

The quarrels so loud, scandal-filled, so blurred with inhumanities

Tonight the silence shall be marked
I could hear the breath I make and the clicking of time ticking penetrates the wall
Everything shall be in order and well –taken
Everything so proper like the view on top of the hill
I leave with all the goodness in my heart and the goodness that I have felt from everyone
I shall be heeding for Tiglan
With all the goodness that is over
I leave my longings to you
And I know I shall no more remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving On The 27th
	hank you for drinking with me
for days gone by
thank you for all the kindness
and in my emptiness
something gets filled
somehow
something reborn after
a little shedding
of an old skin

thank you, i like this tea
in fact, the red one
it tastes much strong
much bitter now

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not easy to leave
Pier 2. First one buys
a ticket, gets a pass.
Then you open your bag before
that security guard
who does not look
like a man at all,

then you take your bag
and sit inside the shuttle
that takes you to another
building. You step down
take your bag again.
Another inspection is
done. You pass by
another door, a detector
of metals and fragments.

You take another bus
again that transports you
to the port of entry where
the boat is about to leave.

You're almost dead when
you arrive at your bed
inside the boat.
Then you discover that
your bag was left at the
bus. It is missing and
your money is there.

Leaving Pier 2 is
really that inconvenient.
You are not wet by
the rain. It has nothing
to do with your bareback
or your taste of salt
as your lips kiss the
sea and be dramatic
to assume that your lover is finally getting rid of your body odor.

You are practically bathing with your own sweat.

Who cares anyway? You swear you take the plane next time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving The City Cubicles

it's been quite a time
when i left the cubicles of
the city, when exciting news
comes from the sheets,
and pleasures confined
within the electrical gadgets
of the room,

i am in an island
listening to the band of geese
the trumpet of the conch
the sloshing of the sands
gliding with boats
and dreaming with sea foams

i cover my head with
a straw hat
when the sun is up

at night we gaze in space
figuring the message of
the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving The Hermit Crab Alone By Itself

you see today
a hermit crab
crawling on the
sands

and it sees you
and does not
trust you

and it runs
away from you
and you
chase it

and then it curls
back to
its shell

helpless upon
a defense
of hiding itself
again

you leave it
finally
alone by itself

and perhaps
both of you are
happier

i can sense it
this time

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving Them....

so that would be that.
as years go by
you prefer more
of it blankly.

you open the window and then leave

more of 'leave them
let them see for themselves'

RIC S. BASTASA
Leaving....

when i leave
no one cries.

no drama, not
grief, nothing

about loneliness.
there is such a

leaving with
everyone, and

you go nowhere
but only to have

a picnic, be it
at the sea or

in the mountains,
on weekends, past

ten, be it in the
morning or at night.

RIC S. BASTASA
some thoughts cling sometimes
to our minds like leeches

they are hard to remove
and the more you remove them

or try to pull them and throw them away
for good

the more they stick it out with you
like a deep sorrow

like an insistent sadness like
a persistent disappointment

somehow you always take chances of
finally removing them

for you know what that means
an untimely death

a calendar that crumples the numbers
of the days of the month

you get tired finally removing them one by one
because they also multiply themselves

like leeches too tricky along the banks
of a murky river

then one day you give up
another leech lands on your toes

crawls on your feet to your belly
makes a hole there and prides itself as the new

possessor of your private territory.
you watch without feelings you let it stay
your hands caress them
and your mind rests on the comfort of more pains

like vacant chairs in a vacant room
it is you there alone without any competition.

RIC S. BASTASA
Left-Over Existences

there are those
who flutter for a while
exist only for a while
yet how amazed we
are with their grace and
beauty,
like those butterflies,
we abstract from their
wings and the winds
we reduce it to time
how time too flies
and how we are finally
left out
how broken our wings
how fickle the winds
how fine are we
that others do not really see
what we really are
left-over existences
mere stories.

RIC S. BASTASA
sandcastles
made by kids
on the shores
in a moment
a few seconds
the waves
come and
destroy
everything and
as you well see it
the children
build another
set of
sandcastles again

RIC S. BASTASA
Legal Indirectness...

it is a state of
dryness, the sun is not penal and
ex post facto
comes in as a validate guest.

the river bed is as dry as your
lips, the fishes have to hide
like teeth inside your mouth
the gum
is muddy.

someone with a long neck
arrives earlier
and those who arrive later
talk, and they shall be silent
for a moment
guided to the interior of the
house
made of glass and everything
outside is visible

a garden of magnolias
a fountain (of youth as promised)

soon everyone is at home
and then the celebration begins

that is how it is suppose
to end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Legitimate Suffering

try knowing what
suffering is
the legitimate one
the one
that is innate and
not given
by another
take the non-sysiphusian
style
don't roll the stone
downhill
and don't bother
taking it back
again to its former
position

RIC S. BASTASA
a married woman made love 
to her lover 
seven times last night 
and she confessed her 
sins to the parish priests 
who after listening 
said that as an act of 
penance 
she needs to take 
seven lemons and squeeze 
and then drink it at once

'what for is these lemons?' she asked 
'woman, it can wipe the smile 
off your face!' he answered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Len Wein

art will always be
in the eyes of the
beholder

time is the sole judge
beholden
to no one

posterity later
has the right to point
who is mistaken

RIC S. BASTASA
Lent...

we shall throw away wrist watches
oh, we can still tell the hour of dusk and twilight
time is reduced to sunsets and sunrise
categorized, simplified, chunked,
we have worn so many accessories we set them aside
oh, we are still alive and even relieved of the fears losing them those trinkets
what are they? those rings do they not choke the fingers?
we find a river put the moon and the marshes some hornets and storks floating leaves and herbs we listen to the songs of the palms we shed off dresses of pretenses the night is warm and the waters so cool we swim we sail and paddle under the moon we are naked now do not mind if part of us is still dishonest it is part of this purification process keep on washing this soul...

RIC S. BASTASA
Leonardo's Legend

he dreamt that a man
given his wings
can always fly
faster than a bird

eye dislike him
the church
sees him as evil
for flight is not
intended for men

for men have only
feet to walk
never had wings
as God so intends

then Leonardo
made the wings
and men indeed can
fly like the birds in the skies

the legend lives
the lesson learned
we can always be
what we want to be
if we only try harder
if we only think deeper

now, man beware
do you want to be God?

RIC S. BASTASA
Leonor

she lives alone
shying away from the crowd

at night when she is sick
when her heart does not want to beat
she only prays

she is used to a life
without anybody

a matter of choice
she does not want to speak about it

RIC S. BASTASA
Lesbos

curiosity drives you to open the door
go outside the fence
and enter a new territory

it is an island of women with breasts
and flowers
with heads and eyes of men

their vocabulary is made of man's terms
the grammar and syntax
muscular, yet deep within upon a close scrutiny

as you see it clearly
their hearts are still soft and fragile
they bleed real blood

when you remind them of their
births, their childhood, and how they grow
to be always alone

they do not show the signs of a sigh &
as you enter their circle you are met with nothing
but their own woes
you speak
and then they throw you stones

definitely, there is no place for you here
the one with the short curly hair
shortsighted and emaciated
makes it very clear

now you are back  in your own world
and you realize
things are just perfect
and the air is not as cold as ice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Less Of Myself For Now......

the age has
demanded that we
become as little
as possible

we shed off
excesses
we let go what
we do not
need

it is the autumn
of life
the falling and
mellowing

i am giving more
and taking less
keeping to myself
what words are

i am getting less
of you
but more of myself

i do not sing
because i cannot

RIC S. BASTASA
Less Talk, Less Mistakes

so that is it.

it is so. that

it is. so that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lesser Artists

in that less artistic
world where
some of us belong
like rats that pride
an exclusive passage
to the basement and
the ceiling direct
to the kitchen
let poems just be
a matter of
self-automation,
no lamp to rub
no genie to ask that
our wishes be granted
just stare at the window
look down below
focus on a stone
or the worm on a hot
summer day
and see what you
can write... so well.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lessons From A Loss...

i lose it
i am asking
what do i get
when i lose it?

i do not have
to be sad
i learn
the precious lesson
of a loss
and that is enough
gain for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let All Those Foolish Ones Rise And Become Stars

let all those foolish ones
rise from this muddy earth
to become stars in the heavens

the stars have fallen
for they are tired shining through all the centuries
fame has become such a meaningless thing
now they stay on ocean floors
as fish
in their magnificent silence

i ask them if they shall rise again
they say they won't
for only the foolish ones still want to be stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Everything Good And Beautiful Come

let everything good and beautiful come
to cheer the truth

it is arriving with dignity
on the entrance of your house

where you stand by the door
without anything

like a bag or an extra shirt
or a wallet with some money

or an ID for your identification
of who you are

when truth comes
oh let there be joy and let

there be some flowers
spread on the pathway

let there be some perfume
of rose scents in the air

let there be joy when truth comes by your door

embrace it with gladness
truth is always a friend

truth is always beautiful
even if it brings you the

news of the core of your existence: death

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Her Lies Be Truth And Then Set Yourself Free

be wise my dear
when she comes back to you and tells you lies
pretend you believe her
and let her tell all her lies again
let her bloat and make the bubbles of soap in the air
and always, always, always, pretend that you like it
swallow her lies like a bait
take everything like hook and sinker
then ask her if she is alright
and happy with her
new found man, this american
who gives her money
and a ticket to her freedom
the citizenship that she badly needs
to free from the bondage
of your marriage

you may even kiss her and wish her luck
and happiness and bliss
you send her away
for good

because, and this you must not tell her,
lie just like her,
you do not love her anymore
and you want her
also to go to hell

(for Dodong Harry
whose wife wants to be relieved
of their marriage because she wants to be married to an American)

RIC S. BASTASA
that everything last year
was a struggle against
choking, that something
grips us and wants us all
dead and buried six feet
below our grounds but
let me say on record,
my dear, we have sur
vived on some surrogate
fears, love, this thing,
provided us all with all
the tools, and here we
are like moon-cats
grinning in this darkness
in darkness out, grrrr
it is pretty damn cold
inside and out. Grrr.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let It Be Said....

Let it be said Jane
that i
have preferred silence
over
Adele's
songs of remorse,

that i have taken
distance
rather than
the intimacy

that i have chosen
pain
and embraced the coldness
of isolation

that i shall travel alone
and that i have
shut my ears
so that i can hear nothing
about what is being
said
about myself.

Let it be declared
that i do not care
about rising

that i have chosen
the dignity of
my fall

that i have triumphed
without
anybody's
knowing......
Let It Be Simple To Be Understood

let it be simple
i like it when it is made simple
no sophistication
i like it when you make me understand
do not leave me hanging on a cliff
i do not have those strong hands
i am heavy
and i will surely fall
and i may not survive
and no one can tell anymore
what sorrow
you have.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let It Rain, Let It Rain, Let It Rain!

Siberia breathes its cold air
southward to the Pacific
down into our archipelago, and
so the nights are longer and the days are getting shorter
and it rains and rains and rains
seemingly without stopping and i am caught
shivering under the nipa roof inside the wooden house
facing a mountain through a window
a world drenched in water
wet season everywhere
mud and flooding rivers
buffaloes relaxing and white herons resting on their backs
between the drizzle
i sit and watch the beauty of the tropical countryside
the trees and hills and huts and houses
and horses and cows...

no snow, and not that harshly cold, this Eden
of the orient seas!

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Be

between David
and Goliath
between the slingshot
the stone
and the eyes

let me be
just a page of a book
telling the story
about
the distance between
defeat and triumph

let me just be the air
between the stone
and the slingshot

i have too much
already of this
indulgence
let me be
just a sigh before
Goliath's fall

let me just be the shout
after David's
unexpected victory

let me finally be the dust
blown by the wind
after the engagement
the duel

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Be The One To Love You More

i waited all these years for you
past rains pour on me and they dry through time in my hair

i keep my words
and let these words stay faithful in my diaries

you finally appear in the form of mere thought
inside my mind

let me have you in that state
let me love you more as air inside my nostrils my lungs my heart

for you my love
these lines are dedicated

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Be Your Piano

you do love
ivory keys
and you do
like pressing
my body
so my strings
shall sing
you love songs

let me be
your piano
touch me
press every
key i have
in my body

i will sing
the best notes
of love for you:

do, do, me,
ti, ti, la, me,

do, re, do, me
me, do, ti, me

so, so, so, fa, me
ti, ti, la, ti, ti, la, me

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Count The Wounds In Your Heart

pain is so ordinary you say
we get used to every pain
we count the wounds
and we cannot finish
somehow
some refuse to remember
what pain is
what is the use of remembering
what hurts you

but i am different i say
i count the wounds and i always remember what hurts me
every detail
every note of the pain like a very sad song
that i always hum
i keep all these sad refrains in my heart
not that i have learned to hurt myself
needlessly unnecessarily

it is simply a matter of
remembering the beauty of these wounds
that healed
gathering all over again the lessons learned
the loves lost
the strengths regained

at the end i see the scars
drawing
sketching
this face of a very strong man
undefeated
redeemed

smiling over the pains
that almost conquered him

almost, yes always almost
because he always
survives and always
he learns, always

always, yes, always

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Cry Alone

you must go now
i know how to suffer alone
i know how to cry
without any comfort

you must go now
do not learn this art
of genuflection

this masochism
of the painful arm
the nerves erupting
the mind exploding

again the heart
must be purified
this pain this pleasure
this measure

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Enjoy The Moment

let me enjoy
the moment
with you

let it be
brief and yet
so memorable

and then let
each sweet note
go into the air

into smoke
and sparkle
inside a glass
and then
to an empty space

so much like
a very sweet, sweet song of love

and then like a rain
that pours and then stops
and then

silences itself, and then
we part, saying

'please, do not say
any word'

RIC S. BASTASA
let me guess why you write,
and tell me if i am right

you are in pain
though different than mine
but i guess
we're the same in this

pretense our close friend
and whatever happens at the end

we no longer mind
we tell them we are fine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Read You

let me read you that was the beginning
of this all
i was pleading then like a suitor of wisdom
to a goddess
who is blind, and deaf and mute
and so cruel
to reject my prayers

i was stranded in an island and i was very lonely
but no one knew
not one of them has gone there
only the waves from far that touched the sands
and then leave without taking any news from me

i was murmuring
there were times that i was hysterical
but no one hears for there was no one there
not even a crab
or a rat

let me read you once again
let me hear you like a page of a book
like a song of a leaf

you look at me with disdain as though asking
who are you? you have no name to woe me into submission

i resigned and dumbfounded
i begin being myself believing that i too have something to say
though different from yours

heartfelt and deeply wounded
i begin to hear my words
soothing like a balm of my clean conscience
freeing like my hands opening and letting go
from the past with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Say The Word Goodbye

sometimes i tell myself
when you say you are busy doing lots of your routine

i am here
and have always waited for you

i am impatient
and calls this affair 'quits'

there are other rivers to sail
seas to travel
fish to fry

my dear honey pie
i have other things to do beside you
i can't wait that long enough
i am not getting any younger
i have other windmills to conquer

my dear sweetie honey pie
let me say the word goodbye!

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Sit Beside You

when you enter the
room you never mind when they
disregard you: after all, who are you?
what are you?

you are just a nobody.
when you die no one notices it.
after all what have you done?
will you tell them that
you have written poetry?

oh they will laugh.
the most nonsensical human being is
here who thinks that with his poetry
the world will never end
that his life will be eternal
that his name will be carved not only in stone
but in the ocean floors

how foolish of you
but since you are here
let me sit beside you
hoping that two fools can
make it right
and become noticeable
by that lady who passes by at us
with nothing on.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Tell You Something

do not be intimidated by what i do,
there is no sense to my work
this is plain
cooperation with boredom
and some unresolved conflicts
(i still hope conflicts have minds of
their own
and resolve their conflicts by themselves
which they call
as auto-resolution, people have a
sub-language of their own
wanting to be understood
within their circles)
do not think that i am your competitor
i must admit before you
i am not an artist at all
not even hardworking
i am clumsy and cannot even hold a pen
and if i hold it
my teacher says i am holding a hammer
(her term really is a jackhammer
since i am forceful by all means
asserting always
the wrong point, and my classmates laugh
at me
and they never had the inkling that someday
i will be a great man
sort of i can be the best mediocre in town
a nobody, a great nobody,
yes, i finally know the term
do not take me seriously for someday
i will be a great nobody
if ever i get to be
90)
now are you satisfied that i am
not threatening at all?
you see, i am just an ordinary son
to the most ordinary father
who goes to the sea
old and naked
clanging bones and dives
to the depth
with all the people saying
'Que Horror!' 

it is just a splash you know
it is nothing, like the splashing frog of Basho.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Think Of An Island

an island
surrounded by sharks

i am in this island
and you are in the nearby island

we wish to touch
we cannot so we only communicate through signs
of our hands
we try to speak but the wind carries our voices away
so we cannot really figure out
what we are saying

i cannot take the risk of swimming the sea
infested with sharks
i still love my life and risking it for you
will not be worth it

so here we are
helplessly devoted to each other
unable to touch
yet always promising to love and be with each other.

aren't we foolish?
i admit i am, and i admit that in the last analysis
let me quote the famous self-centered actress:
i admit i love
but i love me better than you.

am i foolish? i admit i am.
But that is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Wear Your Shoes

i shall take a closer look of you
why are you filled with so much hate?
i like to understand every burst of your temper
why are you so unlike the rest? those who want to love
and be gentle like the softness of the green grass
under the skies,
i like to understand why you hate me
why you want to make me disappear
from your own point of view?
i like to stoop and listen
to every sigh and every word
that you do not utter

i like to be a part of you and be more
tolerant about your tantrums
you must ask me why. and i will tell you.

i like to think that you are such a lovable person.
i think, i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Me Write You A Happy Poem

after ten years
you are inside a bus
going back home
bringing the bacon

your mother hugs you
your father kisses you
surrounded by brothers
you take the pictures

dinner time is joyful
your favorite lasagna
and red wine and
roasted chicken and
jasmine rice

at night you all sit
on the grass
telling more stories
watching the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Not Your Doubts Be The Mists

In our distance
In my heart
This love
Shall bloom
Like a flower

Please,
Do not let
Your doubts
Be the mists
To hide
This view

RIC S. BASTASA
Let One Star Fall  To Make My Wish Come True

if all the stars of the skies
permit me
i will enroll in their university
of distance and
silence

what i lack is the peace
within
what i strive is the distance
of forgetting

let one star fall
to make my wish come true

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Our Meeting Be A Chemical Reaction

let our meeting be
simply a chemical
reaction without
the sophistication
of verbosity, nothing
lexical, but simply
be a change of two
colors, yellow to bluish
like i am being oxidized
by your yellow sulfur
powder, though brief
and not too hot, let
me be transformed to
something kinder,
something greater
something stronger
than ourselves inside
that test tube heated
by a bunsen burner

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Solitude Be His Home  (For A Nephew Upon A Broken Marriage)

how can words be soothing
to pains still existing?

how can hushes become
lullabies
to excruciating
goodbyes?

leave that man alone with his palm
let his solitude be his own balm

let it be the rock
to rest
his soul upon a hammock

let it be the softest grass
to his wounded past

let it be his home again
to his journey in the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Someone Believe In You Surya Man

let someone believe in you
try letting them know
that you write your own poems too
let them feel the deep feelings of love
that you keep in your heart
or the anger that for years have been
lingering there
let them feel your presence
with your own words
let them know that you have your name
and no other
Surya man

RIC S. BASTASA
infidelities in
this place
of chaos is absolutely
normal

that is what father
used to tell me when i reached
the age of puberty

i wonder if he talked about
himself and his implied infidelity
to mother

but i was then too busy then
with my new found loves
i did not mind what he said at
all

but here i am too
found in the same situation as his
keeping some secrets
with someone else

putting money to the mouths
to keep them sealed forever

when we meet we do not know
each other
we tell stories of diversions
we know how to pretend perfectly
when needed by the
call of propriety

father had long died and
i can remember how square his face was
he was unfair to mama
but he loved her so well with all his
lies
and she loved him too
with all her pretenses
that she did not know what he did
and that she only cared
what her children wanted

to keep the family intact
to keep the name going
and let strong traditions live
the way it should be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let That Lust Have Its Freedom...

unleash the dog
let it go
let it find its way to
the door to the gate
into the outside

it will bite anyone
it meets
it will bark that
hard enough

new to its freedom
it cannot manage it
wisely

and you are the master
you will be responsible
for the damage
you have to pay those
who will die

at the end, you have
to suffer the loss of the
dog

and its master.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Air In Let Us See You

they say
open the door
let the air in
let us see you

and you ask
if 'i open the door
light comes in
and i get burned'

you have not seen
light ever

open the door
they insist
light can make
you powerful
we have light and
we rule the world

and so he opens
the door and they
rule the world
and he becomes
their slave
and they laugh
at him and he dies
and they take his
cave & give
him his
grade

and they pray
that there be more
like him

he should have
known better
light can be
oppressive
and they that promise
the freedom in light
can be excellent
liars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Curtains Fall

when she did not call me by
my personal name anymore,
i fully understand what she meant
she cuts off
the cord of friendship
gives the final signal
that she does not want to hear
anything from me
anymore

i thanked her for the early
knowing,
i know also how to do the same
cutting off and
moving on....

this world gives you
so many options
so many people and so many new friends
to take in

so? let the curtains fall
let us begin the next scene the next act.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Eyes Speak

better be silent now
between us is this wide sea
inside us
the ocean and this whale
of options
let our eyes speak
what if
after all these years
of words
the eyes no longer know
what is hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Moon Be Our Witness

the way we live
is hard to spell.
i always combine
these letters forming
words which i myself
refuse to understand.
twin towers. unconnected.
the people connect us
in their hunger for
firm resolutions.
we blot out beliefs.
there is nothing left
to believe. the woman
who spoke the truth
died of cervical cancer
years ago. she said
our love cannot last
we try to disprove her
and now even if we
had nothing left,
we keep company just
to disprove her.
or the institution.
the way we live is
back to back. when
we face each other
we keep this familiarity.
we say, we are more
than friends less the
lust. less the love,
to rightly say so.
we are two windows of
this house. no one closes
any of us, in all those
nights. Let the moon
be our witness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Nights

let the nights
sing for us our love songs

if it be
let it be some birds' calls for love

let the nights
when we are too weary

be a very restful sleep
taking us to dreams of more love

let the nights be not a recalling
of our mistakes

let there be no stories
about our shortcomings

let the night be like
a shadow of a house on top of its roof the full bright moon sitting

the lamp slowly dying to rest and sleep
in a little cozy room the windows still open

RIC S. BASTASA
Let The Things Come

let the things come &
just let them be

let sorrow enter the door
of your humble house
and give her a soft seat
and some cookies and
a cup of hot brewed coffee
talk to her like she is one
of your beautiful women

give her space and
let her stay for a while
be gentle for she is as
fragile as happiness

your next guest in waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Their Be Disorder

i have too much of order,
things folded, dust vacuumed, cars shining
like mirrors, i have too much of all these,
crisp, and thin, and smooth,
silk, and confidentialities in the vault,
i am numb, i am tired of all these
orderly things. They kill me.

I like this wantoness, this scampering,
this scattering of everything i have,
for they are all dangerous. I like
to see my smile get crooked.
Knees that waggle. Hands that
tremble. I have much of the protection.
I am weakened by all these
securities. I am too crispy for
the world and the world does not
like me.

The world is a disorder.
Let it love me that way.
I am too crispy, and crisp
is lonely. I like to have crispy
wings and move away from
here. Today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Them Be

let the shoes come and accommodate your feet
and the gloves your hands
and your shirt and pants let them all come near you
and wear your body

let all of them come
let them be let them be

let them have you
the shoes will take you to the door of the house
the home you are longing

the stairs meet you
and the windows open like eyes looking out to another face

the floors and ceiling give you a space
where you can sit with the chair
that opens its arms

a glass serves you milk
or orange juice, tell it what you want
to quench your thirst

a saucer, a plate, a spoon and fork
they all come before your hands
some muffins and jelly
they all come before your mouth
they all come to feed your hunger

this is your home now.
Destiny is waiting.

You do not do a thing.
They all do it for you.

There is no worry.
Destiny does it for see.
Let There Be No Changes In Me...

it is my new year's resolution not to change anything about me,

i remain as the true chameleon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let This Be Understood

We stand apart
We draw the lines
You are there
& I am here
We make an agreement
To maintain the differences
Between us
We understand to know nothing
About us
And there will no insistence
I draw a circle
When I get in you must be out
When I go out you must get in
We always exclude one another
That is the agreement

Or this house burns
On a short circuit

Or another one dies
shocked
on electric
execution

On parallel distances
All is safe, nothing burns.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let This World Not Know It Directly

perhaps that
pain of yours
is not that
deep

you have not
found yet
the best suited
metaphors

tell me
oh please tell me
even with just
those simple-hearted
similes

let this world
not know it
directly

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Create A Certain Distance

even roads have clearances
a system of space
where movement becomes
easier

even buildings that grow
from patches of your earth
have easements
the servient estate giving
in to the dominant one

even the flow of the waters
from the higher estate
to the lower ones
for the proper sharing
of the resources
dams and locks
are made

it is the same with us
between you and me
someone has to be servient
to one who occupies
this dominance
maybe for a while
when we have not
mastered yet this art
of balancing
and walking on some
tight ropes

give me a little space
for my thoughts to grow
give me a little distance
so i can see
the better perspective
of you
from faraway
enough of the particulars
i am deceived
let me try seeing you
as a whole
and let me find
who we are from there

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Dance The Tinikling Then

the one without
the bamboo poles
the one
where we hum the music
of the tinikling
in your room
just the two of us
me without my pants on
you without your
inhibitions on
me without my shame on
you without your
second thoughts
me without my regrets
you without your future
me without my past

let us dance then
the tinikling
just the two of us
inside your
scattered room
let it be dark
let it be a dancing
with our eyes closed
with our fingers
crazy with our hands
open
with our hearts
stripped
(Or ripped off)

away from us

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Disregard Our Knowledge Of The Law

there is a big rock
in the middle of the road
where we pass
for home

let us relate
review what we feel
when we were kids then
not knowing the law

let us kick it then
and with a pick axe
let us break this rock
and on the broken pieces
let us run over them
and begin to
play our own
games

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Have Dinner In A Dream

the two of us
having a candle lit dinner
in a dream

we do not know yet
what are our names

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Not Talk About This Poor Little Me

my dearest darling
from out there
in faraway paradise in that wonderland
i have not been

in this cyberspace
please do not talk about this poor little me
let us talk about
the great
rich you

it will surely be exciting
you are the great demigod
i am your adoring
slave

and yet, you still insist
with this lowly state
to talk about me?

do you want to have sex
with a slave?

tell me, just tell me
there is no need of any extemporaneous speech
let there
be only spontaniety

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us See, My Love

A single dew
On the leaf
Shall promise
Life to this
Plant still
Wanting to
Grow,

So will
Does this
New vow
That I
Make for
You

Let this
Year pass
And let
The drought
Come again

Let us see.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Seed This Earth

let us seed this earth together
with the seeds of justice, love and peace

let us work together
plow the rugged terrains and make the plains

let us sow the seeds of understanding
let us wait for the time

we are one in our visions and actions
someday let us reap them together

the trees of justice, the grains of love the flowers of peace

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Talk

let us talk
about some things irrelevant

like the rain for instance
how at first the clouds
were dark
yet the rain did not make
it

like a promised vacation
on a far away island
or a camping in the mountain
that did not materialize

we shall elaborate
on the causes
and discuss solutions
and plan
some more about
places
what to do
where to go

let us not talk about
love
a very sensitive matter
that now
we do not have

let us talk and talk and talk
let us not
mention about endings
let us try
recalling about new beginnings

why not? we may like it
you may start it
but take note, i will keep my
mouth shut
i have nothing to say
and if i have any
it may not be good
it may not serve any purpose at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Let Us Try This One

what if i stay as your dream
and then you become my reality

will it be sort of sorrow?
or will it be a fanfare?

what if i become your reality
and then you become my dream?

what if we just become both as
dreams?

yes, just dreams because we cannot
afford us
this reality, we are faraway like north and south
we are hardheaded like rocks

we pretend to meet at a certain point
yet we maintained the distance of parallel lines

what if? then what? i agree, we better remain as words
there is not a touch which can destroy us
there is not a poisonous kiss

there is none at all, and perhaps that is what we really wanted.
yes, a dream that does not come true. yes, we are excited for nothing
at all.

yes, we are not really meant for each other
despite our clamor for completion. yes, i am but a spare tire

and what shall it be you? Air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Let You Be Happy, That Is The Most Important Thing...Anyway

the swindler is a sweet woman
sweet tongue, beautiful face
nice body, scented hair, everything
is first class, they say

you will talk to her tonight,
and it will be good for you
lonely as you are, dumb as ever
at least, you will taste what
happiness is, in the first place

that is what you like, i know that,
then so be it. At stake is your fortune.
you have lots anyway. bank accounts,
swiss deposits(?) . a mansion, twelve
cars, real estate, lots and lots of money

tonight will be your last, enjoy the
last drop. I warned you, i do not lack
what friendship demands, you are on your
own now. Just, just be happy.

back to poverty, no regrets. what is
money after all, but another illusion.
tomorrow we will be in that old house.
chicken soup, a little rice, and coffee.
now, come one, we belong to the commons.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letoit

the reverse is a whistle blower.
in a world that they think is full of
excrement, despite, the foulness
of the smell of deaths,
must come forth someone singing
soul...rock the world with the
beautiful rhythm of
all chamberpots

RIC S. BASTASA
Let's Have A Little Game

let us play
this small game
he that gives the smaller one
wins

i'll start
with a dog and you will have a cat
you win
and i will choose the flea in the cat
and then i win

we go into much smaller things
i'll have the bacteria and you choose
this virus
you win again

then i take the atom
you take the neutron
and i take a space of
emptiness
shall i win this time?

ok let's stop, let us try another one
something big, bigger and biggest

let us start with the size of our hearts
game.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting All Those Sands Of Time Slip Through

i do not see you
i wish not to, but i
feel your
loneliness

it is creeping in
my spine
and now it is hovering
in my hair

your loneliness is
far and deep
it is how i feel it
tonight

you have chosen it
i do not blame you
as i too have chosen
mine the way you
have chosen yours

it would have been
very simple if we
meet as you suggest
then we just be
going together on
a trip or just be
in a house which we
can turn into a home

but i chose not to
and you too chose the
same option

now i begin to
understand what is this
all about

it is all about
wanting to but cannot
thinking about but
cannot simply just do it

very human indeed
ambivalent, both too
certain and yet too
confused

consolingly confabulating
very near and yet too distant
feeling this and unfeeling that
hands complete with fingers
yet letting all those sands
of time slip through

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Go

let go a balloon into an air
going beyond tree tops
and you predict what happens
your fear is there
the bursting, but that is not
what i really mean
the metaphor simply
misses an important
thing in our lives:

we let go because
there is nothing that we can do

because things are more beautiful
if they are what they are

because they tell us also
who we really are

burst if they will let them be
at least we know what
bursting is and how

beautiful is the sound at
the end of it all,
the lingering sound of
silence

is it not soothing and
smooth to our ears?

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Go Of Sadness

I let go
All my sadness
to the edge of dusk
Among disappearing
twilights

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Go....

it feels lighter
as i let these little things go
their wings shall
take care of them
including you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Go......

before he dies
he asks that he dances
the tango with her
which she of course obliges as
she loves him
more than he loved her

and for now as he holds her hands
not too tightly
practicing finally that gentle way of
finally
letting go what he cannot forever
hold

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting In

letting in light
i set aside the curtain
and tie it beside
the wall

i open the window
look outside
and decide to stay

there is no walk
that is too appeasing
my heart is bleeding

i am staying to lick
the wounds
like a lion losing its
recent battle

i have a shadow
and i am looking at it
haunted by its
contours
i am reflecting where
the opening is
there must be an
exit somewhere
like light entering
a slit in darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting In Sounds, Light, Images...

a road leads me to nowhere
so i am not going
i want to stay with you
but you are not here
takes time to learn again
what loneliness is

at midnight i open the main door
open the windows
i let in air and moonlight
and some blown leaves
i let in the sounds of bats
i welcome the rain from
a hole in the roof

so,

who is lonely now?
not me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Life Serve You

when you write
some words
you always have someone in mind

someone that you wonder
because you cannot control her
because she has become
too unpredictable

as she
like a worm grapples with the slowness
of her movements
upon the
indrawn lines of the leaf

seeping time
like tea

soon things happens by themselves
without our knowing

how the cocoon's silence
breaks and
gives way to life

how wings grow from
arms
how minds open like parachutes
of morning glories
along the untrodden paths of
this earth

you decide finally that sitting down
is the best thing to do
watching has become the wisest
philosophical option

things unfold like letters
that we have failed to read
chairs open their plain smoothness
tables are always ready with food
shoes get inside your feet
life becomes a banquet
and all those that it had given life
is always there to serve

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting The Grass Grow

i tried to make this garden clean
from weeds and beetles
i keep it away from worms
only flowers are welcome here
and you know it

things went wrong and you know them
all too well
a broken heart unable to heal itself
a broken self, shattered thoughts
un-assembled un-repaired for years
the expected auto-resolution did not arrive
expectations falling like
domino chips

got tired finally about gardening
the flowers are not that beautiful enough
to appease this grieving mind
got bored with pain
ennui reigning
these benumbing times
too careless
and hurting still

finally, i let the grass grow
the weeds conquer
the beetles breeding like hell
the worms

turning into butterflies
time buds now a flowering.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting The Hours Go

the hours run so fast
and you are being left alone
in that room
where you still try to record
an accounting of
the past, as though you are into
a collection case
of those who are indebted to you

when you step out
from the door and close it
behind you
it is already dark and the
street lights
begin to make some islands
along the alleys

d there is now a dichotomy between
the hours and your
own pacing

d there is no one waiting
and you expect nothing to really love
that truly

d let the hours go
they must have other persons in mind
who are still
in sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting The Youth Be

youth passes by my window
i am on the second floor
and there are so many of them
some do not wear clothes at all
since it is summer

a girl sits under the shade of a tree
a boy comes with flowers on his hand

another one jumps to the sea
and takes out every cover of his body
another girl follows

do not put malice in what they are doing
in this village, they are still innocent of our sins

you watch them like a flock of sparrows
bathing under the rain
shaking their bodies to remove water
and drying them all again under the watchful sun

i watch these all, and mind you, to be honest
i do not envy them at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Them Be

let the pruning be done
during those rainy days

let the harvesting be
during our summer years

let the seeding be during
our spring times

let there be no picking of
stones and the throwing

let all the flowers bloom
gaze gaze let them all be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting Things Be....

let it be
oh, just let it be
the world has been
here and will always
be here
until you are gone,

so let it be
let it be, for who
are you really?

another grain of
sand

a dusty particle
showing its face
off against the light
and then
gone away...

RIC S. BASTASA
Letting You Go

i like to see you go
like a dove from
the hands of
the happy bride

i like to see you
go like a red balloon
still with a string
from my fingers

i like to see you go
like sunset
slowly dissolving
dissipating
its warm glow
in a dark horizon
by the sea

i like to see you go
with a smile in your face
like my open hand
that waves
goodbye and then
closing slowly
gripping
your presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Leveling Fields....

we just have to accept the fact
that ultimately we get what we do not really want
or need
and when we have it
we retreat into denial or regret
even blaming the circumstance
other people’s fault

this matter stays and won't leave
confronting us that we so rightly deserve this and
that we must accept

it will take time
as time is patient and kind and
always giving as a elbow room for understanding

we have been selfish and will always be
it is our nature

comes the time for reason
and we shall embrace the numbers and arrive at the propriety of
the equation

we have this because we made it
it is there because we so deserve it

life levels up with us
until death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lewd Object

you make my heart boil
like water looking for the bitterness of
tea

the temperature on my head
rises to the
level of the desert and i become
the Bedouin
racing with my black horse
looking for
oasis

there is water around me now
there are sweet dates and grapes within the mighty hold
of my hands

i must be cursed
i am never satisfied

this thirst and hunger
this difference
they are always
insatiable

RIC S. BASTASA
Liar, Liar...

when the sweet sap of
the sugar cane is gone
when the salt does not
taste salt at all
when the vinegar loses
its prized acidity
the raw mango its sourness
the pork its oil and
the rice its gluten

when essence is gone
when you say that it is this
essence that precedes
existence

then tell me what happens next?

i know what to do.I know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Libre Ang Mga Damgo

libre ang mga damgo
busa magdamgo ako kada adlaw
lingkod sa kasagbotan
tan-aw sa mga bitoon
hangad sa kalangitan
gikan sa akong pagkabata
hangtod sa akong kamatayon
magadamgo ako
damgohon ko ikaw
damgohon ko pag-usab
ang tanan nga nangapukan
ang tanan nga gilangkat
gikan kanako sa badlis
sa akong kapalaran

RIC S. BASTASA
Licking The Drops Of Reality From Your Feet

there is free ride
to the fantasies of another

you do not oppose an image
you follow the dictate of color and scent

you arrive at wonderlands
and be met by fairies

it is the other that needs it
not you

you bring the camera and
take shots of impressions

in fantasy time is limited
remember Cinderella

the flying horse takes you
back home

you comfort fantasy
it is crying

then you walk towards a door
that opens you towards home

your feet are hurt on the nails
on the floors protruding

you bleed and lick the blood
from your toes

you taste reality and like it
you open the door of your room

blood drops and stains all over
you know what sleep is from now on
Licking Tongues Of Pornography

finally he clears his mind
and comes up with his final decision

dr. the one has no art
no inherent value nothing ethical
no innate goodness

and must therefore
be deleted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Liebe Straum

simmering gleams of running brook
tiny lights landing on the ripples of the notes of this song

a caravan of joys, a stream of simultaneous ecstasies
waters falling on my hair draining to the tips of my feet

how fingers slowly drip like drops of ice cream from your lips
lovely lovely meeting of our souls in one bed of heavenly skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Liebestraum

ripples of the clear pond
a white swan
dignified to its own interpretation
of flight

tiny leaves from cypress trees
browning
the earth still so usual to its deep
silence

the last note is played on the piano

a little bird jumps out
from my hair and begins to sing

RIC S. BASTASA
Lies....

your lies are as obvious as your open wounds
which i do not mind since you are still
wriggling in pain
your defenses are as red as the scarlet of blood
dropping from your wrist
and even if i have to give a portion of my rib
to save you
without you being candid about sorrow
i shall give it
no one has told you that the world loves you but now
i shall do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life

burst cry
steady stare
limpid boredom
waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Life (Again)

it is after the rain
that the surface of the soil
cracks
giving way to the tip
of the turmeric
to grow
looking for the first
ray of the sun
for its own
yellow life

RIC S. BASTASA
Life And Belongingness

in the place where i live
the norms are always against me.

when i start to fish, they say
we do not need fish here.
when i change attire for hunting
squirrels, they shake their head,
it is not allowed.

everything they say to me always
carries with it my protestations.
the place is simply horrible for
my usual existence. They say i do
not belong here. But they also do
not tell me where? I guess, it is
just my own problem. I am no one,
I am nowhere. I am not synchronized
with their time. A broken gear.

But i do not really mind. I have
my imagination I am creative and that
is where i must belong.

Into thinking, into an invention.
A discovery. Into the future.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life And Death On The Stone In The Pond

on that rainy month
a stone was so kind
enough
to let the green moss
wrap its
solid body

there was
mutual bliss in
their
company
then the drought
comes in months
the river where the stone
lives
dried and
mud turned to
cracked
surfaces

the moss knows
that this happens
every year
dies peacefully
around the solid body
of the stone
like sleep waiting
for the next rain
the stone is
undisturbed

RIC S. BASTASA
Life And The Trees

when you sit upon a
rattan rocking chair by your window
and you see the trees that you have planted years back
it comes into your mind that
they all need the required
pruning and trimming,

after-which you reflect upon your life
and too they are some kind of trees that needs precisely what you think
is right, though it requires
pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life And Thoughts.....

do not attempt
to understand
completely a thought
you will fail
for a thought is a horse
without a horseman
and it is always running
galloping
and mountains and seas
are inexhaustible

learn to just enjoy an idea
toy with it
live with it like a friend
have fun
do not dig into its thoughts
inside his brain
do not attempt to fish inside
his heart

for to do so, he would have
died.

RIC S. BASTASA
view life as a watermelon
red, juicy,
huge, and heavy
and you cannot carry it alone
or eat it alone
so you cut it into small pieces
and take it
moment by moment
because you know too well that
watermelons do not last that long....

..and to be happy
you better share some of it
even to persons
you have never known too well...

RIC S. BASTASA
Life As An Office Worker....

there are still
other vacant days

some of my holidays
are never holidays to speak
frankly

brought some records in the house
read each page

fathomed every truth and untruth
based on each word

there is this feeling that
i am punished by my own ambition

gone were the days of my pleasures
here in the now

of my own choosing, i have a mind
that bleeds blood

which i now turn into ink
blotting every empty spot in my

skin and brain and alas this heart
this heart

is as empty as a market after
Christmas day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life As Sequencing

i was born on January of 1961
on the 29th day
i grew up in a little barrio
there were no books
but there were many trees there

then i was sent to a city school
studied hard and consistently
made to the top of the class

then i went to a university
studied the sciences, religion and the arts
lots of philosophy in there
and poetry

then i got employed
by some notable companies
where i earned money
where i got a name
where i learned the language of
diplomacy and survival

then one day, in noticed that in this
sequencing of my life
something has gone wrong

it is not the marriage
it is something else, it something that
you also know, the missing link
one that makes you wish
you were dead
one that makes you numb
the reason why you have sleepless nights
and lousy mornings

it is this link that gives you a feeling of loss
and grief
this emptiness that stays in your stomach
you are not hungry
you just feel it

it is the same feeling you have now
and you know very well why

RIC S. BASTASA
Life At Fifty Six.....

at fifty six you should
have been well polished as a
white grain of rice

and not as foolish as that
young girl who wanted to steal
three hearts at same time

if possible, you can be more
than a white grain of rice,
not just even a pearl or diamond,

she hates many faces, though she
loves the glimpses of light,

at fifty-six you could have been
as witty as a nut not a nit, you
should have learned all your lessons
well by heart and not just by the
mind,

do not drop dead, you are not a potato.
come, let us take this ride, into
somnolence

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Complicated
	here is only one path
but she complicates the journey
looking at those
unnecessary details on the sides
of the road

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Has Brought Forth Another Sufferer

a little boy sits
on a boat going to dapitan

alone he remains silent
throughout the trip

i watch him closely,
his sad eyes following

the ripples on the river
without much thinking

a voice speaks as though
from heaven 'another victim'

was it not Schopenhauer
who in his pessimistic meter

once said that life is a seducer
that brings forth another sufferer?

i admire his courage
and will
for in my youth
i never fought
as i, like hamlet
took no action but
doubt.

RIC S. BASTASA
in Iceland
we were told
that when a man
murders another
man
he is simply thrown
out of the island
and he cannot go
back there
anymore
as he had become
notoriously unacceptable
by his
neighbors

it is the same in
Batan Island
that small island
in the middle of
the Pacific Ocean
where as they say
it is too small for
your dishonesty
too poor for
your cruelty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Algebraic

twice of x
and less of y
in a factored
equation
life is never
enough...

the search
for the best equation
is never
over....

RIC S. BASTASA
an inch away
always an inch away from
sudden deaths

that is how we measure
time
luck makes it a little wider
a second
becomes meaningful

a friend dies alone
in his Makati apartment
but he was able
to say
good luck to all his friends
away from him
before that crucial moment

he made peace with God
i imagine
who's next
to succumb to a very silent
room
i imagine
what peace is there.

i think again
bubbles in my mind
life is too short
for all these quibbles.

i go out
take a walk
talk to no one
and bathe
in sunshine

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is An Adjective

life is a group of adjectives,

pretty
beautiful so sexy,
delightful
warm and endearing
most comprehensive
poise and dignity
wholesome
freshness or purity
rosy

life is beautiful!

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is And Will Always Be A Free Verse...

do not tempt me to rhyme
for i will never be,

i salute life, there is no
rhyme, life is, and will always
be to me,

a free verse.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is As Light As The Hush Of The Morning Breeze

do not ever
dream of writing the
perfect word
at the last line

how do you know
an ending?

thoughts are sunshine
words are grasses
life is as light as
the hush of the
morning breeze
echoing to you the
unknown depths of
the faraway
sea....

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is As Simple And Enjoyable As Sipping Coffee
Early Morning And Enjoying The Scenery Of A Rustic Place

alright,
we simplify this

it is early morning
they have not awakened yet
the house is very peaceful
the windows are closed still
and the doors too

alright
stand, walk towards the window
open all of them
let the cold air come in

then walk towards the door
unlock it
and open it too and then
let the cold air
come in

you want coffee?
go to the kitchen
take a spoon a cup and saucer and
take sugar and coffee and
hot water

you know what to do, right?
feel at home
this is your home

now take your time
sit on a chair
face the trees
stir your coffee
feel it hot
and then sip
enjoy, savor the scenery of
this rustic place

feel the wind on your cheeks
take the warm side of the cup

alright,
is not life as simple as this?

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Beautiful

And she writes me today without any attempt to cover
in any way
Her honest situation from New Jersey,

“Here I do all the work for my children
Unlike in the Philippines where I can have
A maid to do the chores for me
Like I have to do the laundry
Vacuum the floor
Cook and prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner
Clean the toilet, the living room, the kitchen
And the bedroom

What could I do
I have to make the most of it, right?

Here we always move from one
Place to another
My husband has to go from
One business trip to
another business trip
one state
then another state

And we have to tug
The kids along
For fear that the big kid
On the other block
That kid on medication
(I may be paranoid)
may harm him
the other day
he pushed rod
on the pool and good
that I was there
to straighten
things and
help.
Here I really have no time
Meeting friends and
Chat and party
Unlike in the Philippines
where mama cooks
and the party
begins with
friends coming
and the laughing
and talking
begin
for hours
and hours
we were never
conscious of
the time

here there is simply so many
Work to do
daily chores
choking me
as i have
already told
you
I can’t even have enough
Time on this laptop
And write you long emails

But despite
nonetheless

I will always remember
What you always tell me

Life is Beautiful
What can
I do
But make the most of it,
right? “
Life Is Fair

i had this buffet breakfast
alone

after a walk
alone

and as i was drinking my choco
in tiny sips

to savor the taste of
chocolate
ness
alone

there is this child whom if you see
what i see
you need not ask anymore if
he is autistic

he is
running from one corner to another
as the yaya moving like another autistic
chases him

what a servant
poor servant hired to keep him
safe

the boy snatched my turon
and i smile
of course i understand how things are

his parents are both doctors of medicine
affluent
and famous in davao

the yaya is
homely
but the child is terrible
biting her left shoulder in exchange for her understanding

and did i tell you while we were in that taxi that

life is fair

the poor is born to serve the rich who also shoulders the burden of looking for money and keeping them

and too taking care of all the abnormalities of this world

how humble they become with autism in their hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Like A Flower, A River, A Ripple Of The Sky

life is like a flower
tell me, like is like a river, tell me,
life is like a ripple of clouds in the sky, tell me

i tell you, the flower blooms and wilts, the river flows and dries, the ripple of the clouds in the sky drifts, and travels and sees a lot

and then fall into rain
and seeps to the ground and nowhere to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Like A River

we give away like the way a river flows
day to day

we may start with the petals of the flowers
we let them fall one by one

to the flow of the river
then we begin again with the leaves and then

the twigs and the branches and then if we have
nothing more to give we give away the tree itself

to the flow of the river
we look at ourselves we give every part of us

piece by piece to the flow of the great river
our properties our honor our clothes and when all these

are given away we start to give back our hands, our feet
we look at every pocket of our senses and when everything

is given away we shall now give the last that we have to the flow
of this great river of life

we let flow our soul. we have given everything
sometimes we ask that we stay for a while, but this cannot be

the law of the great river of life is clear, we give everything away
slowly, willingly, until all the pain of giving is gone away

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Not As Simple As You Think It Is

life is not as simple as you think it is
there is no proven formula for it
so you may live
happily everafter
there are no asphalted and cemented roads
for you to take and be confident about your
certain destination
there are always potholes to give you bruises
and muddy ones to stain the white shirts
that you wear
you feel you need to stop and take some washes
you sometimes think that you want to cry
and shout and box the world with your
clenched fists
you look for your love ones along the roads
of your emptiness and you find that
they are no longer there
looking also for their own paths to fulfill their destinies
and oftentimes you want to simplify life with
death
only to find that with it life indeed has become more
complicated
you are having the hardest time to write the note
to say goodbye

some businesses are yet unfinished
some loves have not yet been said

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Not Measured By Its Length

i know you know that life is not measured by its length
or its width
lest it simply becomes a piece of
cube
a matter of furniture
or even a block of wood
lest it becomes so ordinary

with a depth that you can measure
so easily

in truth life has nothing to do with numbers
first, second,
one, two and three and there you claim that you have life

life is quality my dear
it is giving your best shot
giving up
life for a reason for a cause for those you value most
for those you love

and then when all the reasons are lost
when all your loved ones left you
when there is nothing greater
to believe
when nothing is worth living anymore

i will ask you: where can life be?
there is none anymore

it has become a piece of junk
worth throwing
in your garbage can
or keeping it in dusty garage or the mezzanine
always hoping that someday
it may still be worth the stay

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Not Supposed To Be Hard...

why should life be so hard? 
you ask me

life is not that hard 
in fact, it is simple 
very very simple 

all you have to do is 
first: breathe 

is taking in air that hard? 
you already have your nostrils and your lungs 

all for free... 

second: relax. take your time, 

nobody pushes you 
unless you allow it 

third: well, take life as moment, 

moment by moment, 
sing it 
whistle, stroll, go 

to the sea of life 
swim 
but not too far 

get wet, get more tan 
sleep, dream 

it is just a breathing game 
no more no less.
Life Is Simple

A house that contains all
in one room
is enough for the family of three

there is no winter here
somehow
so the bamboo and
nipa shingles are enough

vegetables are grown
and goats and chickens
are raised here

there is a dog that waits by
the door
and some pigeons
to fill the empty skies

father plows the field
children gather the firewood
mother cooks the fish
and the chicken

life is simple
but somehow i who want it to be
exciting
adds a little sophistication

in the city
the neon lights blink to simulate
the stars
to give colors to rivers
seas shimmering
as though
there is fire forever
until
eternity
Life Is So Beautiful

i step out as the door opens
the rain just stop its downpour
it is cold and the flowers are wet
and the grass glisten with drops
of water on its blade
the red rooster jumps from a tree
and flirts with a gray hen
i look to the sky and then
around the nearby hills
some birds fly towards the trees
a carabao grazes on the plain
depth within me i still want
more years, more years.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is Temporary, Here Is My Temporary Life For You

life is temporary, so temporary that it is like something
that you see
and then don't because it has escaped like slippery water from
the hold of your hands,
ephemeral
like a mist, like a fuming vapor from boiling water,
like an air that merely passes by your gaze
like the wind
that comes and goes away from your window
like a cloud that drifts
away from your roof, like a leaf that falls from a tree,
like a flower that blooms today
and tomorrow goes away in the wilting petals
life is so temporary like the ticking of the clock
that you hear at night
when again you cannot sleep
this is life
this is my life it is so temporary
and with all my heart
i will hand it to you as a gift
take it
take it
do you think that my life now extends your life?
do you think that you with my life can live a little longer?
take it
take it
it is all yours

because i still love you because i have long been dead in this pain
of you
not loving me despite....

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Is What We Make It, You Are Saying That Again

and how many times will you tell me that
once, in your pocket poetry
once, you read it when you were so drunk
unable to take the right step
and say the right syllabication of your words
tipsy, you fall all alone by yourself
while i watch you
telling myself that this is another kind of life
wasted

then you are telling me again this time
when we are together going to the fields
of our own wars
as we hold our guns and read the maps
and trail the ways of the forest

life is what you make it
there seems to be an error somewhere

life is what we make it brother
we work as a team, a community, a nation, a country
a wall stronger than just anyone of us

we shall make it
we shall keep this struggle
as a nation, not just anyone of us, tipsy and drunk and hopeless
and falling alone
with the mere whisper of the wind, the whimper of the common enemy

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Need Not Be In Its Order As You All Perceive It

jostle
and juggle

why should it be
1 to zero?

or january to
december?

or a to z?

we love order
but order really does not
amaze me

coward is in chaos
and in its wantonness

wild has become so beautiful
untamed

uncategorized
we all shall now enter the picture
and fit in

no sizing no numbers
nothing less and nothing more

just what we are
and no alphabetical names.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Oh Life

life oh life
what rest is there that you can give?
you have been dancing
and hip hopping and wriggling
and jumping
and running randomly to
any possible direction

dance dancing.

life oh life
tell me what is in store for me out there?
is there no other island of desire?
is there no other haven for love?

tell me, boredom like termites are eating
each wood of my house
each bone of my body
each nerve

tell me, life,
where do we go from here? shall death be an answer?

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Stumbles

Life, why are you always stumbling?
Can't you see well what are you stepping upon?
Why so reckless, Life?
Why are you taking so much pain and trouble?

Would you like me to side with Death?
It's offering for peace is getting irresistible.
It's terms and conditions have become acceptable.

Life, Life, why do you betray your nature upon myself?

RIC S. BASTASA
Life To Me

i have accepted some facts of
my life, some things that cannot
be changed, there were human interventions
to no avail

now, the sounds of nature do not amaze me
a baby's cry at night
a couple's fight, a dog 's howl,
a woman singing by the river
a man whistling along the road at night
a love call, laughter of children
in the park, mother's call to go home,
fathers smoking cigar while waiting
with their cars,

i do not mind all these
they are all the cause of my little sorrows

a child's birthday party i simply abhor
a baptism, the more,

funerals are welcome, prayers for those
who die in the wars of the streets
candles for those who disappeared
prayers for those murdered in the far mountains
domestic violence
and so on and so forth
all these causes, i am in.

that is life, that is life, without envy
only pity, a little sympathy and a literature
for empathy
for all the saints, and angels, amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life Too

something is so vague
much vague than nothing at all
yet says 'everything'

RIC S. BASTASA
true life is not in the body
for it is the one that you can touch
it is a wrinkle
multiplying upon itself

true life is in the breath that you take in
inside your lungs
you fill the fullness in your heart
it is the soul that flies away
with a song
a bird that has finally mastered the
use of its own wings

there are no boundaries for its proper place
all space
no weight
not matter anymore

it is the sound that finally leaves the
cage of the mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
Life, Senseless, Short Of Meaning...

it is senseless,
that is true, you exclaim
life is senseless
you write it on the board
pure existentialist leaning
an afternoon
without tea
sunshine beneath a storm,
guitars behaving
as accordions but more of
the piano,
this is the house
and there is this door
you permanently close it and then you keep on going and going
to places where there are no more houses
no doors,
this is your heart
your home
this is your hand
your feet,
your eyes, some tears, some scars,
blood dripping
earth sipping
you like another cup of cold
coffee....

RIC S. BASTASA
Life...

it is just stepping out of the door
then it is closed
and you are left alone
in the open

yes, there is a beautiful garden
a sea full of sun
there is air
grasses....

RIC S. BASTASA
darkness is imagined.
one cannot really live completely
wrapped around by cold hands,
somehow, there is a tiny spot of
warmth that one needs to
dip one's fingers, for life is
a syllable of vibrancy
twilight soon leaves
breathing begins with a sigh
soon gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Life......Love...Regrets

if i did not
make mistakes

if i did not
have regrets

if i did not
meet you and

make love with
you and if i

did not finally
find myself alone

in the middle of
this ocean of

doubts and
apprehensions

i would not have
been human.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life's Dragons And Monsters.....

the bones from your
body that you buried years
ago
are coming out from the leaks
of the earth
and they are here like seeds
sprouting
perhaps awakened by last night's
thunder and lightning

they have the heads of the dragons
in accordance with the myths that
your father had been warning about
and mother had never been
wanting of the same warnings

soon they will give you fire and
soon there will be the fulfillment of
life's burning and you shall feel
that innermost consumption

now the regrets are coming like a
parade of ghosts and monsters
for the instruction should have been
that you should have burned all those
bones with the fires of your anger

when they have turned to ash you should
have taken a boat on the river and
then spread all those remains to the
rivers of the village and there will be
no questions asked for they know and they
understand what is this all about from the
very moment of all their childhood

the women will ask what is it that you
are carrying inside your hands in the
form of those fists and you shall tell
them it is the same matter that they had
been carrying as burdens in their bosoms that moment when they married and had given birth to ten children.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life's Feet In The Air

the dancer's feet are
in the air
the body is so light
in extreme joy
bliss like a balloon
floats the body
as light as air

such is the short moment
of flight of life's dance
until the tip of the body
touches once again
the hard and harsh floor
of reality

and then one says
sorry, but this is life
it is all about roots and
anchor
bliss is fleeting like
feet on the air

RIC S. BASTASA
Life's Like That Woman

woman
do not begrudge life

you see
it happens sometimes

and most often
the man that you love

does not love you
and the man who loves you

you cannot take
with gusto.

RIC S. BASTASA
Light And Lightness Of Our Beings

let the soft light land on my face
let it stay there for a while
as i close my eyes
and lay myself in the lightness
of my being

my hands are soft as
the hair of a rabbit
my lips open
to let my tongue wet
its red sides

i am as light as a feather
lifted up by air
i become light myself
rising from the walls
and the ceiling

i am freedom from
sanity i am the conqueror
of the logical order
there are no numbers
just an open space

there are no days now
and neither do nights exist

i am eternal
and i am inside this
space beyond
any space

i am a ray of light
i am a shooting star
i am a black hole
i am lost and no one
shall ever find me

except you, the one i love.
you make me feel so light.
i am carried away.
hold me and kiss me.
i am all yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Light And Shadow

the shadow hides itself
behind the body
away from light that
stabs it to
death

'too much light' says the
shadow
' amidst this heat
i shall perish' the shadow
fears

the body is there
as shield
and protects the shadow
from extinction

'not too dark' warns the shadow
i must be in the middle
somewhere

where light makes love
with absence
the shadow to its fullness
plays

RIC S. BASTASA
Light And Sound

as light travels much faster than sound
so does the people that we love,
they come first as mere flickers that
we take for granted
they talk to us and we do not listen that much
and then the next time that we try to look at them
they are all gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Light Behind The Glass Jalousy Panes

the shadows of the fence
mark upon the glass
some kind of curves in iron
casting a design of beauty
in concentric circles
and i look upon it on a kind
of reflection that sometimes
on closed window panes
the world outside seems to
be more beautiful when
seen openly like an undressed
human being.

RIC S. BASTASA
Light...

at the present
you are filled with so much worries
this is not necessary

if you are inside it
do not drown yourself with the fullness of its words
torrents are always there
no matter where

come to think of it
come to think of it
when we were once young and new to this world
we are preoccupied with so much fun
we never had time
reflecting our smooth skins
on that mirror
of sorrow

some people who are lost in the present
trace their way back to the past
for some reminders

that times are not that bleak and dark
that this world is not just made of waste and garbage
or that this sun always shines faithfully for
everyone

always
there is no such thing as overwhelming grief
neither is happiness
that plenary
that there is no more space for
its presence

relax my dear
find a nook and breathe
light always leaks its
way out
into your closing
eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Lightening A Load.....

for all your
grief
and loss
for all your
misgivings and
misfortunes

let us toast!
cheers!
i share them
for i will always
be a part of you

suffering and lament
and pain and disappointments.

at the edge of
hopelessness....

RIC S. BASTASA
Lighter Shades Of Blue, Green And Brown

soon the flower puffs
and spreads the softness of its seeds
this wisp of the winds
this call of the ground
to perpetuate life
to kill the ugliness of death
to resurrect the hope of the grasses
the ideals of the flowers
leaves dissolve like watercolor dampness
in the canvass of life
so soft, soft green meadows
pastel woodlands
light green horizons spreading
diffusing against the fading light of dusk
meeting once again
the blueness of the skies
like baby's breath to mother
lips kissing meeting
in the cradle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lightning Girl

at night the lightning girl
steps on the glass window
still bringing the old news
that God is great
that He must not be forgotten
or else....

RIC S. BASTASA
Lights: Green, Yellow, Red

flashes of lightning
sounds of thunder
woman whirling around
the green light
man gazing at the red light
above him

feathers of red chicken
around her head
asking if i am strong enough
asking where i slept last night
asking if i shall finally walk away
from her
as she sings at the top of her voice
her cheeks red like cherry
her eyes teeming with tears
as she swirls around the green light
as the man
stops on the yellow light
still thinking
whether to go or not to go
to stay and be part of this
traffic of paranoia
psychedelic feelings
the last goodbye

as she sings whether
she will live or die
she swirls around the yellow light now
with a knife on her hand
her wrist still pale and her pulse
still beating

RIC S. BASTASA
Lik A Cat On The Top Of The Concrete Fence

the black cat is silent
still
on the top of the concrete fence
the brown dog
below
keeps on barking

perhaps to the cat
there must be no reason
to infest
with confusion this
solid earth

the view of course is common
nothing important
but somehow i have written you
something
about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Bee

You are lucky
When you run away needlessly
I am just like a bee
I sting

What a mishap then,
I could have been Dingdong
Our faithful dog
by our gate

Man, Dingdong bites and takes
A mouthful
Pound of flesh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Bird I Will Let You Stay In My Nest

like a bird i will let you stay in my nest
because i need you to need me on these dark nights
i will fold my wings and you will be inside them
you will be warm and you will soundly sleep
i will keep watch and i will maintain this silence
this comfort with the moon beside
but soon when your wings and claws are again strong
you must leave and learn to fly alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Blind Man Like A River Without Eyes

the flow is rhythmic, seismic, like a heart beat
when you feel so relaxed lying with a thick, polarized sunglass
on a beach bed, naked in an island with your beloved,
untalking for a while, sunbathing and getting more tan
this summer, it is like i am weaving a tapestry of love
in primary colors under the sun, enveloped i am with the
breeze from the sea meeting the hushing winds of the
big mountains, i close my eyes and listen to the sounds
of seashell and hermit crabs playing with their houses on their
backs. The sea is calm. The sands so silent caressed by
the constant lickings of the salty froth.

this is the world of listening. Suspended sight. Seing love more.
Holding skin to skin. Without eyes. Soul to soul.

You are beside me. This must be Paradise.
This must be the first destination to heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Butterfly To A Leaf.....

oh, these tiny little
things
that to you do not
really matter

you wake up early
and then be gone to
that mighty office
that always threatens
you about
a bleak future if nothing
is done

i get this hand of mine
laying flat on my breakfast table

palms against the morning light
landing softly
like a butterfly to a leaf.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Child....

i hear her saying

that you shall give it
because she is crying

like a child

she confesses her love
and you just can't understand it

like a child.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Chopper To The Blue Skies.

I may lose you.
in exchange of that loss
is this silly feeling

ey they will say you are
my everything
my existence is inside
your world
and i do not have
my own
except this simple word

perhaps love, but i doubt
it at times, for it makes me
feel silly, most often and

to lose you someday may
not be difficult at all, since
i already felt that years
back

when we keep on talking
about same things same people
everyday for the rest of our
lives and you sometime

walk alone, and do not answer
my cellphone ringing and then
turned off, i

understand, this silly feeling,
this anticipation of a break-up
this painless set-up of you
losing me and i losing you

to lose you can be a triumph
towards a gate where i can
shout to the cliffs and my
echoes will be that of a
song, yes a song, of echoes
that uplift me like a chopper
to the blue skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Cloud

like a cloud
i change shapes
cumulus, nimbus,
feathers and cottons

i mirror myself on a pond
and begin to like myself

the reeds look at me
with disdain
and the rocks there
speak ill of me

no matter how beautiful
i am
be it the shape of David
or of Narcissus

always everything i am
what i have
they claim them to be owned by the wind

they say the wind makes me
the wind unmakes me and i am left
with nothing
but just the illusion of a cloud

doubt, i now have them and i am lost
in an island without a name

like a cloud i wander
higher than the cliffs and friend of the sun

the wind claims me and still i am nothing

there is no use for all these
i have loved the wind and learned to live with its daft
i love the wind and its song
its distance and its intimacies with my hues
but with the wind i am nothing i have none
all of them disbelieved my right to be myself

i am wandering and wishing upon the stones
i fall

i am rain i am the water in the gutter
i flow
searching for the place where i can be myself

distinct like a mole on a cheek
there is no wind to claim my shape and color

sad, i am still nothing, as empty as a hand opening
pleading for space and air, i am still nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Dried Cocoon

To be alive
is like
a lone leaf
clinging
to the stalk
the whole
winter

and even if
the odds are
due for its
falling

it sticks there
summoning
hope

it continues
even if
the hope
dies

it clings
still
on summer
like
a dried
cocoon

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Hot Potato

i could not
by all means
hold a very hot
potato
in my hands
and so
as advised by
you
and as others
would have to agree
reasonably
i have to
dropp
you

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Jar In A Vacuum.

The words link us
and shadows begin to take the gestures of hands
opening into some tributaries of fingers
wanting to clasp the essence of water

the river is murky at first but the swimmers do not mind
it is summer and the sun is trying to kill us and so we like
to drift on the salt of our lost thoughts

but words as you know are always empty like jackets
hanging on the railings of the stairs
soon they fall and we want for more

'we shall meet sometime' we are meeting at this converging
wish, 'there is an island and i have a house there where the flowers are dying'
you say sadly about how you miss a home

' i will travel for seven nights and days, just to see those dying flowers'
i responded
and ' i will bring water' my heart is whispering

if this is true then this can be the beginning of a changed world for me
' i will wait', your voice is weak

for nights i've been thinking
i am hurt and the world is prepared for more dosage of pain
i know, when i will be there in that island

the flowers must have already died
and the cottage will be mute like a jar in a vacuum.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Knot  Without An End.

When we talk
we are actually creating something
artistic between us
as i imagine us
weaving a fabric of
a relationship which is still
taking shape: i wonder if it is
a flower or
a butterfly or a boat
or an island
whatever is taking shape
in that mold
keep on talking as i listen
keep on pouring that
liquid candle
and let us see what is before
us: could just be me
or could just be you,
or us again, entwined in the
cold, like a knot
without an end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Leaf

i will pass this world
like a blown leaf
to the north by the south winds
there will be abrupt changes
just the ripening of the life
of a leaf
from green to yellow
to orange and then to gray
to dryness crumpling
into dust

who will not be dust?
we all are
but all of you are leaving traces
like a footprint
a child a parcel of land
a will

how can i make some traces
on the path of the
wind?

there shall be none
for a whisper has no bars to hold on
a sound has no box to stay
a spoken word
has no room for sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Mango Tree

like a mango tree bearing so many fruits
this month of May
the unruly children gather around
with stones and sticks
and beat each branch

and both the young and
mature fruits fall
without a careful
segregation

what a waste!

the moral lesson is:
do not be too fruitful, just be leaves and twigs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Passerby Who Finally Missed The Train Towards Home....

LOVE is better
done in the dark

it too has stark
realities which are
not good
to look at in the naked
light

it is true perhaps
that love is just in the mind
making all the
good scenes rather than
seeing what
really is there

the human skin with its
blisters
the cracking lips of
our mutual endurance
the silly hands and the
shaking legs
which desire has not really
fully understood

love is more beautiful in the
mind
rather than the heart
which is the one that suffers
most
in this
game that we all play all day

names do not matter
places are just places
what you once missed and
have taken hold
becomes another one
dropped and forgotten

sometimes i ask if love is
worth understanding at all
and the voice says
it need not be
for it cannot be understood

it is just felt like a mist
like a snowflake that melts on the
warmth of your palm

like a whisper without any meaning
at all
like a passerby who finally missed
the train towards home....

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Picture Under My Bed

Two things about being amazed:
one, that which you do not really understand but so sweet to your ears like a hum,
so delicious to your taste and yet not having been touched by your tongue, and-

Second, that which i understand but which i dare not share with you, because i love it to be mine alone,
treasured like a gold bar in my my basement, like your picture under my bed,
on my chest,
on my lips....

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A River In The Sky

today at its wit's end
can be a chair
under an umbrella
beside a huge tree
in the house

today can be an orderly
thought
sitting down
troubles
letting things once
turbulent simmer
slowly
seeping under your
skin

i put my feet on the
center table
my hands on my navel
i gaze
to all that my eyes
can hold
around me

nothing in particular
i just flow to the air
like a river
in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Scar

do not say a word, i dare, what i have chosen is, too not easy.

but if i have chosen the easier one, of which you think, i can dance there and sing with so many, or harvest the common fruits of roots,

i guess, i can speculate, or perhaps by now, must have come to the conclusion, that i may not be spared with the common occurrences of those who, by time have so mercilessly beheaded, stripped of meaning,...; i have my own mind, it was a radar deep down the sea,

and i have seen how the bigger ones devour the smaller ones of their kind,...it will not happen to me, and so i choose the color of the commonly acceptances, and no one notices you as a different specie in the market of ideas, and i adapted myself too well, and so i am treated just like a cotton,

not a nail, not a hammer, near a snail, slow, silent, meek, amenable, 52 years of being not being scarred, (but scared sometimes) but the masks are wooden,

i cannot play the games in the open field, the rain is too acidic to my skin,

i have a room, and it has a mouth that whispers its secrets to me. and i promise it, i have no ears, and i have closed my mouth like a scar.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Sticky Phlegm

life gets too sticky
to my throat, and like a cough
i insist to expel it,
but life has its own rules,
you cannot expel it
like phlegm
there are consequences
causes and effects
there are dogmas that
fence the wild imagination
there are metaphors
that can be forgiven
these guilty feelings
of abandon and welcomes
fear the skies
and know the wisdom of the
burying grounds
listen to the wind
it speaks in madness
hear the song of the solo leaf
this one must be
for you, lonesome fellow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like A Turtle Carrying Its Own House

she keeps her
father's letters
wherever she goes

expressions of love
always are not burdens
she says

RIC S. BASTASA
Like An Eagle Upon A Nest Of Sticks

You have so many things
to tell when you are in pain
but respect for other people's struggle
keeps you in a nest of silence
like an eagle on top of
a cliff
on a nest of sticks
still amazed by the skies
marveling
over the endlessness
of space

RIC S. BASTASA
Like An Orb

inside the saloon
your hair is cut

the people around
are speaking using their eyes

you are sleepy
watching the hours go by

there is silence
no matter what music drifts
in the saloon

what noise is there
you do not care

and so you only witness the
shadow of their unspoken words

through their eyes
the world goes on

nothing is perturbed
like an orb

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Bruno Mars

wakes up
at seven in the morning

slept last night
at 5 minutes after
midnight

so many things to do
so many ideas
so many unfinished businesses

listens to the news
eats breakfast alone
which i cook myself

the dog is sleeping beside
my feet
no lice this time

rain falls heavily today
and that makes me lazy

and so i take a chair
sit beside a window
watch the trees
feel the wind
listen to the rain
and i swear to myself
this day
like Bruno Mars
i will not do anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Bulls In The Spanish Arena Fighting Over A Red Cloth Raised By A Foolish Hero.

you come with a problem today
and you knock and i open a door and
we sit upon a chair facing each other
as coffee comes in mugs
and we sip hot aroma as you begin
to relate what is bugging your life

deep within me is this waste of time
trying to solve another man's problem
i should have been frank enough to ask him
'who's problem is this? ' and of course it is yours,
and then i could have been too frank to
this philosophy of newton's law of motion
'since it is yours then it must stay as yours to solve,
and not mine apropos'.

pressure of life are taking vents
right at our very noses
and we look like bulls in the Spanish arena
fighting over a red cloth raised by a foolish hero.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Cats And Dogs

like cats and dogs shall we
be in the morning till nighttime
that is how they want to see us,
in a brawl, a fight, an argument
a wrestle, a push and pull,
but whew, time gets so tired
too, and well, we got to talk
and settle the inevitable,
tonight we shall give them
rain, and again, as they
expected, we shall be
like, sort of, raining
cats and dogs, but this
time, we shall be inside
a dark room, we shall
try how is it just to listen.

you know what i mean,
unrobe me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Dawn & New Shoes

Every thing is new
Just waking up
For everything new

Like new shoes
Hesitate to walk
And get dirty

Evade mud and
Keep away from stepping friends

They’re jealous
And you are new like the shoes

Doubt is your trait.
Dawn doubts incoming mornings too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Dogs

there are people that we feed
everyday
not related to us in any way
yet we keep them
because they are just too pleasing
to reject
too hard to part with
not really love but empathy
they who do not know already how
to live
and feed themselves
because they have forgotten the other essence
of our struggle
to eat and be alive
to work.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Fresh Air

you look around
there is nothing more to see
you want to feel passion
nothing is passionate
you have all the mess inside
you do not care
you empty yourself in space
as light as what you can be
a butterfly now
fluttering
and knowing that in a short moment
everything shall end
but
in a manner which is so beautiful
something that you
cannot imagine
but it is there inside you
like fresh air

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Hotcakes

they're too many
like hotcakes?

unlike hotcakes,
they do not sell

nobody is buying
no one is getting rich
no one is taking
everyone is simply giving in
giving up
and out and
weary.

someone out there has to change
the motif,

merry colors of pink and yellows
and lighter shades of blue

apron clothes and jumpers
short hair and
pouting lips,

got to change somehow
to something loud and faster

the rhythm of cycles racing to the finishing line
skis grating slicing ice

monotonous sounds of the waves on the shore
still rocks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Leaves Closing In A Bud

it is getting late
and the questions which i have not answered
remain open

mouths without anything
to fill it up and say
that it is full

like a satisfied kid that silences
its cries
in the coming darkness

where mama's arms
wrap it with love

like leaves closing in
a bud

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Love, Like Lapses,

we did not count
how many stars are there in the sky

like love, like lapses,

we do not mind the shining of
the sun
neither is its setting

we always know that all these
happens

on time and if we think there is
a mistake

it is always us, always us,
and no one else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like Sealed Letters....

it does not end because we do not want it to end.

we cannot stop either because we cannot just do it.

so i keep writing whatever comes in my mind at this hour of the night

as you haggle for the sleep goddess to give you some gifts of sleep

you do not like books you like to simply iron the clothes which other hands wash and dry on the clothesline

i listen to Handel's messiah as you turn off the study lamp which you too dislike

we know that love has diminished we are afraid to say it categorically that it is gone

it cannot end we have already built a house, brought the furniture, created a garden of roses, raised some pigs and dogs,

so we live without love, others do the same, we still have conversations during breakfast, entertain some nasty rumors, watch morning TV, share opinions on politics and trade, and then we go each way

to each his own life for the whole day and then come back at night sleeping far apart, unmoved by distance,

accepting tradition, sticking it out, like sealed letters.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Ballet....

(for Bayoy R.)

and so as Darwin was not as
definite as his evolution what shape to take
what course of follow
Bayoy is caught is a disarray
whether to split or not
as she tiptoes in the house of
his father-in-law as all in-laws
look at her
frightened what to do for the rest of
this dramatic life

she finally says
with or without a home somewhere
i will take the kids with me
because living in the house
of suspicion
is just like learning the lessons
of ballet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Dry Cogon In Flames

Like the dry cogon
That I burn
This evening
On the ricefield
All myself
Is flaming
Waiting for
You
Who never
Comes

I understand
Now the meaning
Of instant flames
And the ash
They are leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Haze

like the haze
you will stay only for a while
you have been unwanted by the light of the sun
and so after dusk
you shall depart and be lost
together with the darkness and the cold
you live there
the home of the haze
the place where doubt blooms
like the tiny yellow flowers
the leaves are made of
confusions

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Jackfruit

like the jackfruit you wait for the season
when you become ripe
and when it comes you exude the scent
of the sweet one

and then you are removed from your stalk
and then they tap with their hands your body
and smell you with their noses

kissing you and hugging you and then
they cut you to slices and then they eat every chunk of you

meanwhile some saps flow from the stalk where you were taken
they fall dropp by drop
they do not stop until the night is over

each dropp is a poem coming from your hands
on that ripe season, your own time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Mouth Of Your River

I have a poem
in my mouth

the tongue is
eager to say it

it is like a bird
that is about to
fly to the
sky

if you want to hear
a song
the bird requires
that there will
be no
rules for the
tongue

and the mouth
need not be tight-lipped

it must
more of
like the mouth
of your river

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Sea

wave upon wave
i arrive
at the shore of my
being

unconsumed
unfinished

wave upon wave
i lick the
shore

always arriving
at a home
that is never mine

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Sun?

blue flower
climbing vine
on the
trellis

what are
you climbing
for?

the sun
that shines for
everyone
but loves
no one
in particular?

one day
you live and
then die

what did you
die for?

what did
you leave
for me?

are you too
like the
sun?

RIC S. BASTASA
Like The Water From The Mountain Spring

If you speak
To me
Your parting
Words
Let it be
Tasteless
Like
The water
From the
Mountain
Spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Like This Piece

it takes the guts of a real man
to love the nonsensical
the body that gives more fun
than the brain
the line that repeats upon itself
without the click
it takes patience to appreciate
what is so boring
so lonesome
to love the miserable
the hunger that best initiates
the good meal
the thirsts that longs for what
has long been denied
the mouth
like this piece after you have read it
you ask
what is this all about?
this is about the nonsensical
and you have just
taken it
you are the real man
carried by the letters to places
that you want to understand
to the closed and opened quotations
of being.

RIC S. BASTASA
Likewise Love....

it is my fault
i have drunk that much
more than i
can take

i used to love
wine
i miss what
alcohol
means to
each
empty glass

it is my fault
now i
have no sense
every glass
looks the same
every wine
means
nothing

how i wish i
can feel the need
again

likewise love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lily Lily Lily Of The Valley

I have to ask you why Rosalie
QUIT HER POETRY AS EARLY AS SHE STARTED
WRITING HER MAIDEN LINES IN HER TEAHAUS

Overlooking the river under a bridge made of steel
I guess well, it could be because I told her

Life is not fair. Whoever told her that life is fair?

I played games on her,
I ask her why the old monk still sweeps the
Temple stone paths under a scourging sun
And hmm she knows: because the monk is there
Because the temple stones are there
Because the sun is there
Because the sweeper is there.

I ask her an analogous question: and why did the
Mountain climbers climb Mt. Everest?
Because the Mt. Everest is there.

Hmm hmmm hmmm.

And she recites her favorite lines,
While I listen to her with all my heart:

“There is really nothing that you must be
And there is nothing you must do
There is really nothing you must have
And there is really nothing you must know
There is really nothing you must become
However, it helps to understand that fire burns
And when it rains, the earth gets wet.”

What wisdom! And she spoke her closing argument:

My dear sir the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog
Near the bank of the river. The lazy dog was jumped over the river because the
fox was quick and brown, and it was near the River {because it was such a kind
of bank} and the dog was lazy, and as you see, the {fox was one brown and quick}

[With a wink, he turned and walked away.]
{Robert Fulghum, it was on fire when I lay down on it p.205}

RIC S. BASTASA
Limitations

we think of changing
we promise new things
we entertain new visions
of the self
and yet at the end of the day
we stumble on the same mistake
and haggle on the same regret
well,
we have no plan of killing ourselves
we are mature people
we love mistakes
learn from them
and have the same courage
to repeat them
all over again

nothing but reality
and that is the truth
we are mature people
and we understand
our human nature

RIC S. BASTASA
Limitations Of Freedom

fling your arms
i keep my nose

the freedom of your hands
end
where my nose
begins

RIC S. BASTASA
Limitations Of The Human Desire

desire wants to run
but its feet are bound by the codes
of restraints
desire wants to kiss
but the lips are owned by someone else
desire wants to make love
but there is no time left
desire wants to die
but there is no decision yet
and so desire sits on the floor
spreads its legs like one
ballet dancer
stills itself until the next music
plays
until the next curtain rises
until the next bell rings
before the night
is over

RIC S. BASTASA
Limitless

Limitless the sky is
All its lies
Spread further to the universe

Limitless the sky
Is and I do not know
Where to start or to end
The sky is one big circle
Limitless is
Its deception.

I really thought the sky
Is blue and orange
I proved it once
The sky is dust

Limitless is my misunderstanding
Of the sky

Limitless is the sky

I have been deceived the sky is
Limitless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Linda

Linda had a tryst with
Samuel and they sleep on
the grass together

Linda has no regrets
about Samuel
who got a thick, strong, long
and hard will

and so Linda and Samuel
live happily ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lines From Leo, At The Bay...

'life seems harsh this time.
nevertheless, i find myself at peace
with the world around me.

I'm so lucky to catch
a mother and child
by the bay
basking the warmth of daybreak.

God would somehow
want speak His/Her love for me
through this sight.

I always feel nurtured
with indefinite grace and power.

I couldn't totally describe
that certain feeling of security-
knowing that I'm protected
and acknowledged by
an almighty.``

RIC S. BASTASA
Lines Of My Hands

are we really meant for each other?
let the lines of our hands grow mouths
let them speak about a reunion of hearts
do i see you once again holding hands
with your shadow? or was it me wrapping
my hands with water? or blinding my eyes
with what fairies use in their flights?
the stars of the zodiac, what are they
really talking about? about us? two lips
fusing a rose? promises grasping for
protocols? the jalousies are like tongues
begging for words, and the floors are
empty arms thirsting for an embrace.
the lines of my hands are ants drawing
a destiny. I look at all these, and where
they must all lead me. One furrows for
death, the other delineates for life.
I cup the water of life, and drink.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lingaw-Lingaw

lingaw lingaw sa kaugalingon
pakli pakli sa mga dahon sa usa ka
sugilanon
kabahin sa gugmang nalanay

kuskos kuskos sa gitara
yawat na lang unta malimtan ang karaang awit
nga sigi lang gihapong
kutkot sa panit
sa kasingkasing

RIC S. BASTASA
Lingaw-Lingaw Lang

lingaw-lingaw lang
poetry, karon, ug unya
sama sa snack
nga pritong kamote
tam-is, tinusok
morag linya sa mga pulong
nga karon
akong pagatunlon
sud na sa akong
tilaok
sirit sa akong dughan
medyo
dako, sakit usahay
inom ko sa tubig
bugnaw baya
sud sa akong
dughan
kamote, tubig
ug poetry
makabusog
sa akong lawas
ug kalag

lingaw-lingaw lang
apan
dalang pangadye
sa diyos
dalang
tinuod,
ok lang,
balak sa udto
balak usab
sa gabii
morag kita
sige sige
walay pagkapuol
haskang
hubaga oy!
I used to say what i want to say,
at that moment, i was the happiest guy in the dorm,

everyone starts avoiding my lingua franca
and i felt i had that contagious disease

eating alone in one of those breakfast tables
occupying myself with almost everything

atoms collide, energy bursts, molecules fuse,
lands are taken, sunsets come and go,

i like being an island, ports need not have boats anyway,
you grow somehow, needing people, lucky you,

now i don't say easily what i have in mind,
i have reservations about the seasons and the times and
the people in the park, the passengers on the plane,

i keep bad opinions to myself, even with good intentions
i keep restraint, sometimes, sometimes, we must
be cautious, we are not good anyway,

i cultivate words, keep those rare ones and
put on the vase those flowery ones,

there is always a season, there is always a reason,
sometimes, sometimes, it is best when not said at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am glad
that A has not known much
she is like
a basket without a base
letting off
what should better be kept

the fruits are rotten
and she is no sleeping
she hops from one bottle of beer
to another
till she gets drunk and
tipsy

she bares herself naked
and in the morning when everyone is gone
she lays there alone
feasted by all flies

then B sends me messages
of hate
and humiliation

i am lucky
i am never like any of them.

RIC S. BASTASA
i travel a lot
perhaps i am searching for something

i do not really know
as i step on the the stairs of the plane

as i step out as i enter the bus
and have my ride

into nowhere i look at my calendar
in my cell phone

too many confusing notes
scattering themselves like falling leaves

on a stormy day where murkiness seems to be the words that float on the river of time where men approach the day with an answer of silence where women just smile and do not give their names when you face the fading sun and promise it that soon you will stop and cease and be another part of the whole picture

inside that living room beside a painting of a rural landscape holding an iguana

with your ring finger exposed to the danger of a venomous bite from a snake that hangs itself in one of those beams on the ceiling where the light gets short-circuited and ends wounded along these lines of thoughts on flimsy contradictory links clinching on
the crossroads of our inconsistencies,
adieu, you, too shall be lost with me,
lucky, you, too shall find the truth, about
this losing, and finding and exiting and becoming

at last free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lino

i trust you and i repeat
the line of our heritage
from trees we come from
rooted to their roots
this time we let go off
our leaves and even some
of our twigs as we pay
tribute to the change of the
season, but soon, Lino,
and i trust you, we become
trees faithful to the sun again,
soon they shall see buds,
growing from new twigs,
roots growing deeper
probing our loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lip Song

a dead child
washed ashore
face down
the sands of the
earth
the sea sings
a song

all the gods
look down
shaking their heads

after a while
when this song is over
everyone
resumes their own speed

RIC S. BASTASA
Listen

the best way for me
to know that you
really love me
is when i tell you
lies and you
pretend that
they are all true
and then you kiss
and hug me and
tell me that
you love me
very much.

perhaps i will
opt for change
and live with
you all the days
of my life.

love loves my lies
as well as my truths.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listen

what does your body say?

listen some more,
your soul is whispering

from within
like the song that once you've heard
from the seashell
with me

RIC S. BASTASA
Listen Carefully

This is the play of the threat
They will come and kill some of us
And we will kill some of them too
All in self defense

We kill each other, and the hate is rising
We cut each others’ ears
And mutilate innocent bodies
And put on fire the houses
Of our enemies and even neighbors

If we only listen
Someone is laughing
The war is for her benefit
And she is the one who issues the order herself

We have become puppets
And paupers while she and her relatives take the European cruise
Enjoy the banquet
And then reap so many powers because we are blind
And deaf and ignorant of this
Power play

RIC S. BASTASA
Listen, Do You Hear The Lullaby?

if you know well enough
the house which you named lonely is actually a peaceful abode
of two souls,

the dogs on the yard are sleeping because they had a full meal of meat and bones,

you always fear that they will bite you,
they know me and my presence is enough to
pacify them,
for i am still the master of this
house

you cannot bear the silence
is it too heavy for you to carry?
are you overloaded with fear that silence
is another burden to carry in your mind?

we have a door without a rug,
a window with a cat napping and waking and licking her
fur, and the only sound that perhaps
disturbs the house
on an afternoon like this
is the footstep of an ant which
is carrying a morsel of bread
which was left on the table

after we had coffee
and a restrained laughter
careful not to wake up
a neighbor's baby who is soundly
sleeping
in her cradle

listen, do you hear the lullaby?

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening And Talking

all art forms
receiving and giving
all and some
a few maybe
but just the same
what is given
always returns
to ask your name
but you may not give it
any name at all
that too is
an art
to be unknown
and just
be present

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To A Beautiful Woman Singing The Songs Of War

they all left their homes and sailed on pumped boats
to the other island
children all gathered like some dried grits of maize
while their fathers stand and hold their hands on their brows
looking for the right direction
their mothers covering their faces
with veils
bringing all the necessities
that will last them for only a few days

this is the quick way to save their lives
from an ongoing war
when the enemies attack their homes

the only one left in their silent place
is this beautiful woman
singing on top of her voice
in acapella the songs of war
and death

some blood will again flow
more men shall be killed
as history repeats
itself

good men doing nothing
except to follow orders of the lying queen

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To A Child Singing

another innocence
preaches
In a sweet song
From tight lips
A song of love
She barely knows
perhaps
Only has the feel of
A world new to her eyes

Such a song
such fantasy
Good for children
Shall cure a little of this
Big wound that
keeps rotting
In poisonous odors
Such pains
that keep pinning
Hearts that curse
almost
Learning all
blasting blasphemy

Such song for us
all living
Every breakfast time
We dread to remember
we
Who are dumped
in a damp
Loveless locomotion

I hear her sing
to a world
That I already
misunderstood
My tired eyes are wanting
of escape-dreams
My dirty feet shiver
for these rough
Foundations

Ah, sweet song yet
only a child-song
Who can stop such
a short swing to eternity?
And forget
everything
everything
everything
... We can do noting for her
and for her song
we can do nothing too
so we just listen
and go back to our
work
work
work
and
work again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To A Chuck Mangione Piece In Boracay....

afternoon feet
stepping into the white sands
of Boracay

eyes soft sailing
upon a turquoise
sea

place of pale memories
starting to fade
upon a Chuck Mangione.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To An Indian Cherokee Morning Song

sounds of drums
and pan flute
and women
voices

so peaceful
in here

i can hear the music
of the pines
and chirps of the
little birds

in a moment i am leaving
my coffee
and start to dance
under the morning
sky
of an indian summer

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To Bob Marley's Exodus

i reminisce the power of the people
clenched fists of the masses
sisters and brothers
nuns and priests holding arm to arm
children in the streets bringing flowers to the soldiers
women bringing food for the marchers

tanks and guns face
and furious words of the dictator

i reminisce the ouster of the oppressor of the people
i see the plane carrying him out to another faraway island
no blood is shed

the flowers have power
the prayers have weight
the masses have the voice
God watching over.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To Mikis Theodorakis

i stand up
stretch my hands
towards the sky
as though i
can reach and catch
one of those
faraway stars....

i close my eyes
and slowly i raise my
left foot and then
the right foot and then
what i am doing is
to dance, and dance
while no one is
watching,

alone, always alone
at any time
until the music
stops...

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To Mozart Looking Over The Window Of The House

a blue bicycle passes by me
a man in black biker's short speeds his pedaling
his red cycles on slippery asphalted road
past across
the rage of the afternoon rain
splashing water
to a number of blank minded innocent passersby
creating curses
of sonamafithes! and damyous!
and f****you!

Omg! How could i have expressed what i feel
for this passing slimy slippery wet day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To The Clock Ticking

that last servant of the house
finally leaves

she also had to go to sleep with her mother
it happens this way sometimes

he is left alone and as he tries to sleep
he feels that the big mouth of the house is eating him

swallowed his body listens to the sound of the clock on the wall
ticking and ticking as if time is running out.

RIC S. BASTASA
Listening To The Heart Sutra In Mandarin

hands on the table
mouth closed
eyes focused on the
blank screen
ears wide open
the mind closes
the heart discloses
another form of joy
in Buddhist chant
my head sways
to the left and right
like a stalk of lotus
caressed by the wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
my talk need
not be my walk
as my silence
need not be yours
my completion is
not your presence
neither is my absence
your very own pleasure.
there are mysteries
that we always keep
we go into dark
corners making it
the most
we go out of the tunnel
fruiting into the silence
of our own light.
so i do not have
to bother you
by being with you
neither have you
to disturb me with
your instructions
on how to...
i am a boat in the middle
of the ocean
got no oars
neither a captain.
i float
at night looking at
the stars
listening
to the voice of
distance.......
Listening

listening to
Buddha while
half-asleep then

waking up renewed
to write another
poem for myself

darkness turning
to light as leaves
begin their fall
towards the end of
summer as winds
leave land to sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Literary Tongue

at first i like the hands
those huge hands to cover the whole of my cold body
and then i begin to like the fingers
those that crawl and make my body warm
those that fill the orifice of my emptiness
those that caress my hair
and travel from my nose to my mouth
to my neck to the last tip of my toes
and then i like the mouth too
with its tongue that speak about gentleness
and make me a little bit heated
and brave
and then i am finally stuck with the tongue
the surrogate part of of them all
it speaks
it licks
it travels from the tip of my hair to the tip of my toe
and then it stops
hides inside the walls of my teeth and gums
and stay in the house of my mouth
it also knows
when to stop and just be alone and silent

RIC S. BASTASA
Litters Of The Mind

despite the rancid ambrosia
it has the capacity to produce them
and they accumulate and some are beginning to stink
like the famous shit.

despite the leavings that you read
and you think you feel so cured about them.

eye written, these are acts of throwing them all away
in the different pages of history.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Bird

little bird
gets away from the flock

lonely on a wire
the sun sets

everything fades into
darkness

except the little bird
inside my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
little bird of love and desire
do not perch upon a twig so far from me
fly a little bit closer
my heart is full of love and desire too

come closer and hover on the soft spot of my chest
there is a nest there

where you can rest
where you can soundly sleep

come little bird live with me
sing me the songs of love for i am weary

sing, sing, sing little bird and live with me
for i am weak and weary

when my eyes close little bird
come and heed this lover's last bid

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Birds

at the cave
one afternoon when the day is closing
a breath of bats

on the hillsides
a string of little birds
like tiny stones
thrown to the fields

the sun is through
the moon rises from the hills again

we sit side by side
watching this gentle glow
this nature's show

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Black Bird

little black bird of Lia
flying away to Arizona

how is that little black
bird? what is it doing

in the desert? watching
how God paints a very

red orange sunset and
how the wind of the night

erases everything? Little
Black bird of Lia, what

is the reason for the
the leaving of devotion?

is sincerity still found
on that desert flower

blooming without water?
the cactus and some thorns

my loneliness deep like
the desert night, my longing

wide like the wind, my
illusions that life still

imitate art, that i can be
myself. Blackness and wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
and the old man with a sigh murmurs upon himself

'little bird, little bird,
how sweet is your song
how i wish i can listen
some more time'

and the little blue bird high on the tree stops to sing
and looks at the old man with pity
tweeting

'my dear old man
would you like to be a little blue bird some other time? '

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Brown Boy

little brown boy
blue
skipping on a rope

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Child

when you have learned how to climb
the ylang-ylang tree
you finally find the nest of the brown sparrow
and you come to me
bringing four tiny eggs

do you not see two sparrows perched
on a branch?
do you not hear them singing their own
funeral hymn?

sorry, i am out of touch.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Comfort

at the end of the day
we give in
sensing the coming of
darkness
we settle
for what is given
deep into the middle
of the night
we are taken into
the secret homes
of our dreams

there we are helpless
tthere we are
nothing

we realize we are but
flashes of light

more like the
flickers of the stars
in such a vast space
of emptiness
& perfect silence

to comfort us
when we wake up
a bright morning
gives more
offers

on the sea
some boats some seagulls
on the shore
some fish
newly caught

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Dancing Girl With A Black Hair

the little dancing girl
has a long black hair
with twin dimples
on her mabolo cheeks

she dances in the air
she dances in the water
in the hills, in the clouds
at night, in vast space

she dances in my dreams
when i am sober
when i am drunk
when i am engrossed
in something else

she is the brown little girl
with a long black hair
the dancing girl like a
whirlpool in my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Did I Know About These

angels’ wings and songs of
nymphs in forest nature true
lovers meet
and kiss and learn the
myths of love
all beautiful creatures
fly and swim and dive
gossamer haze and blooms and
bosoms fair and just and
calm and breeze
hush and brush to
cheeks and claps and grasp

oh how lovely
something now without eyes
I see I see I see
Oh how lovely

such beauty, the poets
sing, in lyres, in guitars
and violins, such loveliness

little did I know about these & those
and this & that
until all of you
take me by your side.

let me in i am home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Did They Know

little did they know

ah, perhaps they didn't
that he had been sitting
all night under the moon
till it wanes itself
and then gone

they didn't know
he loves the sun more
he waits
for the next morning

but the sun does not really care
he knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Dindin

now the sound of the rain
makes her see ghosts
lots of ghosts
white women with long black hair
muscular men with monkey's hair
all over their bodies

she cries her pains
out to every dropp of rain
that hurts her body

Little Dindin suffers
and she points to the rain as the cause
of her pain
lots of pain
her heart bleeds but no one sees it
now they are confused
about Little Dindin's malady

the medicine man
shakes his head for not knowing the real cause
the doctor says there is nothing wrong
with her pulse
or nose

Little Dindin is sad and sick
Because her mother left her
It is her that suffers most
When another marriages goes
Into the rocks
And no fairy tale in any book
that she reads
Cures the sickness in her soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Green Turtle

You are fed up
of being  A little green turtle,

Wanting to fly
Seeing the clouds in the skies
Drifting,

Pray for nature to change you
Extend your tail much longer like
The braided hair of Rapunzel,

Get off the house
above you
And be a little bigger than
what turtles are supposed to be
And nothing greenish now,

Little green turtle
You can be white & flimsy
and even taller

On some cellophane wings
On longer swinging paper tails
On a proposed compromise
Of becoming a summer kite

Inanimate

But steadily flying by a strong string
Wherever the boy is pulling
That is where you are going

Do You still like it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Happiness In Ho Chi Minh

met a street urchin
in ben thanh market

his eyes focused
on a toy that he
cannot pay i asked
how much and i paid

for him and he showed
me a smile and said
cam on.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Inconveniences In Life

this no perfect landscape
something is always missing
no matter how you try

i get a room
that air-conditioning breaks down
little inconveniences
make a bad day

you stroll in the park
the trees are dead

you take a boat
to be far away from trouble
the storm comes
unexpectedly

you promise
you shall take the plane
and you did

it crashed

tell me
where are you now?

if you only stayed in the room
you should have known
little inconveniences do not
kill

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Joys

little joys like
sipping tea and
taking a bite of
chocolate bar
and letting it
melt in your
mouth or
simply sitting
on a rocking
chair staring
at the blue horizon
at the beach

or tracing this
mosquito landing
on your arm and
crushing it with
your palm

you take it
for a clear examination
a broken wing
stained with your
own blood

these joys
vis-a-vis
a huge void
behind you
infront of you
and all around you

you are not
anymore intimidated
i’m sure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Lives

some little creatures
just around us
making tiny sounds
the cicadas
underneath dry leaves
the worms singing
on hollow grounds

the ants
working for food
to feed
their queen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Sacrifices

chopping of
some letters of
a name
shedding off
skin for
the change of
the seasons
giving the palm
of a hand
and then the
elbow
and then perhaps
even the
whole body
of the fool

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Talks

now i know what
little talks serve
what trivialities
accomplish

we become
part of a happy island
floating on the vast ocean
going somewhere
to a place which we
do not know
but somehow we are
never scared.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Things

little things are little hours
they drip and we hear the sound
of waiting. Long hours. Unslept.
little petals beneath my feet
buried memories. Rising.
Apparations of glows.
Tie a ribbon in my ring finger.
I remember. I slew forgetting.
dripping remembrances.
Steady streams of strums
Guitar music from the bedroom.
I am ablazed with desire.
I hear your steps getting inside
my skin. You touch me. Some vines
begin to creep. A flower grows
out of my head. You are the
sun. A morning is done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Things Crawling Inside Your Mind

little things
tiny as ticks
or fleas
go inside the
veins of your
brain
tonight when you
are soundly
asleep

then you dream
about the sting
then you feel
the lapses
of your neurons

you are supposed
to wake up
the following morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little Things In The Morning

a blue fan,
whirling blue hands
a three some

it is cold
and they simply
wait

an orange glass vase
a red tulip solo
with the green leaves
pointed
like a sword
of a knight

some pearls
hang there

a daffodil with
long stalks
still uncut to
the desired size

some roots
growing at the
tips of an old
vine clinging
by my window

a ray of light
touching a
jade princess
that the bride
and groom
gifted me
three days ago

a bonsai beside
the blue fan
some dusts
and here i am
trying to bite
them all again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Little White Bird

little white bird
now that i have set you free
from my hands

to the winds you shall go
to its whims shall you be

search the skies
map out your freedom
be carefree

little bird
do not look back
i am in the prison walls of my mind
still thinking about your white wings
feeling each feather
in every patch of my skin

little bird, little white bird
how pure was that love?

RIC S. BASTASA
Little White Dainty Daisy Opening Upon Such An Early Morning

little white dainty daisy
too fragile to believe that this
mighty bee
loves her

too young a bud
to open upon an early morning

the hairy bee rushes to take
everything from
dainty daisy

all her nectar
the might and force of the sucking and the sting
are too much
for her taking

upon the ground lies
the purest of all petals

when the sun & winds & clouds finally come
oh, there is so much weeping

RIC S. BASTASA
Live For Today

live for today
grab the moment

ask me if you
can hold on it forever

no you cannot
time slips like sands
in your fingers
like water in your palms
like ice dissolving
in summer
like rivers flowing
to the sea

live for today
and let it go
for it will be the past
that you cannot
hold on
forever,

and what about the future?
live for today still
the future may not come.

RIC S. BASTASA
Live Life

live
live the life you want to live
live the way you want to live the way you want your life to be

pursue your dreams and dream the dreams that you pursue
live your life live your dreams touch and reach for all these dreams

do not think much there is no point to so much ponder and banter
live, live, live the life that gives you life

can do this is our main business my friend,
the living must live the life of the living

we die, we die for sure, in our own time, in His own will
ours is not to destroy this life we have
this gift
ours is to live this life, why bother about dying?

RIC S. BASTASA
Living

there are so many things to see
in darkness
the darkness that you create
by the mere closing of your eyes

so many black shapes to touch
too pleasing to your fingers
it is when you wake up
when you go into the light

that gleaming shapes begin to cause the pain
and no one likes it
now you have to choose
where to live
and when and how

you must begin from the closing of your eyes
the point where your heart starts to open

RIC S. BASTASA
Living A Belief.....

If we really have to trace
each trail

we will arrive at the conclusion
that we do not really know

how we have reached here:
the success stories in our heads

the fortunes in our hands,
the wisdom that lands inside our hearts

the moments are there felt but
what explanation do we really give it?

i was weak, my bones are threadlike
my wit a nit, my ears are like slits of lights

i do not really know what changed me
you look at me with envy and i am humiliated

for i do not know what made me
perhaps, it is this belief, this faith

this goodness that seeds in me that grows
into a tree of life

i do not know now, i am thrown here
i do not have a name, my body is not mine

my nerves have become streams
my mind all unknown places

my heart a paradise, my eyes all stars
everything are windows to the world

that i live and so believe.
Living A Clean Life

the grasses of the garden
are trimmed

and it looks so clean
and neat as it keeps on spreading
its capacity for longing

i wonder if we can be like the green grass
if we can be like the white sky

so beautiful yet true to their nature.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Alone

does it follow that
living alone makes you
die for us?
or leaving alone?
does goodbye mean
death to friendship?
there are other modes
terms of endearment

hello for instance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Alone Wisely....

well i have learned
to live alone
to depend upon myself
and to rely
on no one
else

it takes time,
much time
upon those ember skies
up and below me
it was as though i was
fully laundered
by
grief

sorrow is sonorous
soon it becomes
monotonous
until such time that
it becomes so natural
and so ordinary that
it does not affect
us anymore

and then we live
well in the
numbness of our hands
our feet on those fires
and wide eyed coals
walking smoothly
without much
fanfare

well, we learned
to junk
drama
the curtains fall
the theater doors
close by
itself at dawn

we are here in this
park of life
merely sitting on one of
those benches
watching all those
who pass us by

we do not wave our hands
neither they
we do not greet each other
feeling too preoccupied
with our chosen
solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
Living And Existing

i should have played
a trick on you that i have never existed
but you
how can you ever believe that

i never tell the truth
and since you think that i exist
since then i feign
that i have ever
lived.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living And Reliving An Experience....

it is nothing but experience
it shows, it is felt, and then
you draw it back again nearer
your face, take a closer look,
analyze, and feel and
reflect, many times, digest,
expand, do not decorate,
take it as it is,
freeze it, ...stay still,
be a sculpture, or a ladder,
a pillar, or even be a bowl
of water,
do not titillate
visualize, taper, sharpen,
no rattling please, just
the closer look at the closing of
the day....

it dances before you,
shows its best, becomes a tree with
so many ripe fruits for your
picking

really, this is what experience is all
about.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Happily Ever After......

there are so many stories to tell

no, not anymore from the beginning
i may not finish it till the end

there was this old man who died stealing
fish from a store and rushing away to cross the road
where he was hit by a bus rushing to fetch tourists
from the airport

there was this girl who got enthralled by the lights of
the great city who left home with a red head pimp

there was this father who made his wife his favorite
punching bag until she was pronounced dead in the hospital
due to a brain hemorrhage

there was this lying politician who cheated all his
constituents of their public funds who finally served
his last term in jail

there are stories of murder and justice of corruption and
redemption of heaven and hell of right and wrong

but i know what story you need and i know that it is all about
love and i do not want to spoil it on a holy Sunday morning

where you are supposed to go to church together and sing the songs of praise
and feel the all the glories of grace and divine and human affections

and feel
that well sought ending of that most demanded story of

living happily ever after......

RIC S. BASTASA
Living In A Very Silent World

tonight is like
diving in the
deepest part
of the Surigao
Trench, there
is so much
silence and
all the rocks
and corrals
and fishes
and seahorses
and urchins
and grasses
are not talking.

all i see are bubbles
rising to the surface
and the bottom
of a boat passing
over my head.

RIC S. BASTASA
when one lives inside his mind these things may happen:
there is a rabbit, he smells a labyrinth and goes inside one of those
entrances, holes, and feels finally that it is falling and falling
into a deep abyss and
lands on a certain floor but there is darkness everywhere
and the labyrinths multiply like cancer cells
and it tries to find an entrance again,
feeling lost he smells nothing and begins to panic since the labyrinths
spread like some capillaries on the skin...

the palpitations become a ticking bomb and before the rabbit knows it
an explosion occurs, and the rabbit becomes one crushed red melon...

the mind however is a Good Samaritan, it blanks itself,
closes the eyes, and opens them again to see new beginnings...

the moral lesson is this sense of loss and
the euphoria of having found yourself again in the same mind

now there are no rabbits coming out from the magic of the black hat
there are persons, friends, superiors, subordinates, acquaintances
faces that you can recall with their name tags on

it is a good sunny day. Walk under the sun and forget about those
convoluted thoughts. Now live within your body.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Life

upon a race
to win
one must dash his way
towards
the finishing line

it could be like life
when we want to win
we dash
to such speed that we
ignore the faces
of those
beside us

we imagine the cheers
and the awarding
ceremony

you know very well
life is never a race
and the finishing line
is kept concealed

there is no point dashing then
or ignoring those behind
or beside us

life is living life
moment by moment
glass per glass
chew carefully what our
forks carry inside our
mouths,

savor, don't rush,
intertwine, commune
on bare feet feel the
texture of the ground.
Living Life To The Fullest....

did you run away from yourself?
for how many years now?
are you happy on this?
are your feet still under your control?
do your eyes still make those tears?
do you still figure out the message from those stars?
do you still believe that there are those who never cease loving you?
are you peaceful now?
do you commit your self to another despite the pain?
do you shy away from those who keep on hurting you?
do you love yourself?
do you continue knowing yourself?
do you like being alone now?
do you know what songs are found on those beaks from white seagulls?
do you hum the songs of your soul?
is your soul and body synchronized?
do you like to quit?
if you do, please do not proceed.
there is no use.
the questions keep popping out
like those lotuses blooming on the pond
like those mushrooms on the rotten haystacks
after the thunder and the rain.

have peace, do not mind.
live the moment
for there are really no clear-cut answers
to life that is lived
to its fullest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living The Fulness Of Life

the fullness of life is not in the overflowing
neither is it the shortage and the drying over

contemplate on a glass of milk
nothing spilt
nothing wasted
every dropp
inside your throat
flowing
satisfying just enough
for that thirst
in your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Living The Moment....

every morning
is an offering
of what i can be...

there is no bother
what lies ahead

for i live by
the moment
it is like a bowl of
noodles
at the breakfast table
which i savor
with fervor

as the news on TV
flashes
the recent clash
between two warring
groups
competing on some
murderous
ideologies

they are killing one
another
over a strip of
land

they say
their gods have
inspired them
to annihilate the
other
like pests over
the cornfields

the news goes on and on
from one violence
to another

kidnapping for ransom
abortion
fetus thrown in the river
pollutions of the air
and the minds of
people

i like the taste of
this sea food noodle
and then i will have
a ripe papaya
for dessert.

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Upon The Expectations Of Morality

i can live on a mirage
i can just be a fume floating on a desert sand

in our union i wear a different covering
i am more attractive there and you want me to be in that shape forever

all the rest there are smiling and i tried to have one too
you love me but i have never ever told you that i love another

the years are burdens but i take all those passions
i am a strong man and i carry this weight

it is absurd it is an irregular shape and i am having a hard time
locating the center of gravity of my being

this is what is unhappiness all about
i keep on saying i am strong

i write a letter to a friend and i draw a cat without a mouth
i understand but i am doing nothing

the cat knows the pleasure of its paw and its tail
but it has kept its mouth shut

RIC S. BASTASA
Living Upon The Expectations Of Morality (2)

i can live on a mirage
i can just be a fume floating on a desert sand

in our union i wear a different covering
i am more attractive there and you want me to be in that shape forever

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but it has kept its mouth shut

RIC S. BASTASA
Llamó Despacio A La Puerta

it will take years
as what father did once
when he was still alive
once when he left all of us
for another country another house
another love another memory
before he comes again
to knock gently on the door of the house
that had been abandoned completely by all of us
when what he touched was only dust
when what he breathed was only the sighs of the walls
what he did there how could we know?

we were then busy with our own journeys

you build a new house in Nanking
i traveled on a train bound for Beijing

we visited mother in the Netherlands
we love the scent of flowers in Heidelberg

where did he die? when?
where was he buried?
who knows? we were not interested
and we did not know

it was too late for us to know
the gentle knocks of the door
on that abandoned house covered
by those banyan trees
nameless in the country of our
past.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loboc River Cruise

we finally huddled in a boat
well decorated with some flowers
like the one in the Rose Parade
the boat slowly sails in the River
with a matching band of guitars and
animal skin drums
a woman sings another woman dances
as we see how the brown river is sliced
by the boat on the water
until we arrive at the end of this journey
where there is a waterfall
and then we turn back
to our way again

not really monotonous
and not a waste of time
been here i think seven times
but the river still sings
a lonely song
in my
heart

legend says....
there was once a beautiful maiden....
her heart was broken...

RIC S. BASTASA
Lock The Room And Throw Away The Key.

today he got
a big stone and carved
in there
the words, 'Never Again'

seven days the furies
chased him
he could not run
though his feet are strong
he could not sleep
though his eyes are too
weary

happiness was a flash
the suffering was conflagration
someone may say
there is nothing wrong
but your body tells it all

the words are written as promises
'never again'

and it will always be that,
lock the room and throw away the key.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lofty Poems

elevated like a railway that is powered by electricity and that runs on a track that is raised above the street level.

exalted like one that is of a high moral or intellectual value

elevated in nature or style like an exalted ideal argue in terms of high-flown ideals

'a noble and lofty concept'; 'a grand purpose'

grand, high-flown, high-minded, idealistic, lofty, noble-minded, rarefied, rarified, sublime

lalitha if all poems should be like that, at poemhunter, where can the 98% of the poems be posted?

RIC S. BASTASA
Logically It Should Have Been You

if the brain is the heart
i could have loved and married you and lived with you
but my heart has a mind of its own
always at war with my brain
my logical choices versus the glowing of the heart
what could have been
and what must be
and what should have been
all these are discarded because the heart
says this
and i followed it
to the last letter of its sigh
its longings
its quivers
and to the end i may have regretted it
telling myself
how dumb had i been
the heart has its own reasons
which i cannot fathom
it is strong like the flood of the river
and i was weak
till i met the punishment
death of my mind
resurrection of my spirit
a broken body
a living heart
i have always chosen love even to the extent of my loss
my own eternal damnation
my inevitable perdition
but all is still fair in love, so they always say it
and how can ever dispute
the words of the wise
unless, otherwise, i deny what i have always been
a heart always full of love
and an empty mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Logorrhea....

Hast thou
a communication
disorder

that talkativeness
in incoherence?

RIC S. BASTASA
Logos

the more you think so clearly
the more you become less of yourself,
this is revolutionary to our essence
as the thinking mammal
that without ideas we become trash,
a shell without flesh
a glass without water,
a house without a home,
a carriage beside the
dead horse,
a desert, vast sands, fierce sun,
mirage in abundance
no matter how hard we look
and focus
we only see dreams....

RIC S. BASTASA
oink!

toink!

the pig is gone
and the mocking bird
flies away

zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz->

RIC S. BASTASA
Lone Bone

and then when we arrive at the prime
after a hard climb only to find nothing but thyme

life tastes like lime and we begin to mime
what to us was all grime and slime

to our face the ill-winds are blown
and what remains is the clown

we feel now that a clone has grown
inside ourselves we find what we own

the seeds have been sown in the throne
of the stone where our lips are sewn

the moan is thrown
& now back to the lone bone

RIC S. BASTASA
Loneliness

When I turned my
Eyes to the place
Where I heard
Someone calling
The only one I see
Is my own shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
Loneliness As A Concoction...

to escape
asphyxiation
i open
one of the windows
of this lonely house

and wear
my self-made gossamer
wings

i do not land
i skip from sky to
sky

drift on clouds from
nine to ten

i try burning my
skin with the
sun's terms of warm
endearment

it will be a whole
day affair

i speak to no one
and no one speaks to me

so many
so many words trickle like sunshine
in my hair

thoughts of you caress me all over
like a flood of light
on the grasslands

when the day is over
i go back to my room and
lay my self on the floor as i hang my
wings on the ceiling

i repeat this all day on the other days of my life
and so i am not destroyed by the harsh forces around me

the daily escapades and isolation make me live
despite the fact that loneliness is my only bread

RIC S. BASTASA
Loneliness Is Like Cancer

loneliness is like cancer
you do not know the cause
it is there inside you
and you cannot see its face
and you cannot pinpoint
the cause
you cannot find the root
and its branches
but you can see its fruit

the ugliness of death
the poison that kills every nice part of you

but at the end
when everything is over
the cancer that causes you pain
can be that liberating

death is freedom
from pain and loneliness
and cancer is death
for all these
sufferings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loneliness, In Two Simple Shapes

a stone losing
a shadow
in the desert
one afternoon

witnessing the
funeral of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Lonely Filipinos

Some lonely Filipinos
Working for a living
Read poems of
Happiness
To appease their
Feelings of loneliness
Away from home
Here in a foreign land
At freezing temperatures
They wish for
Sunshine, and blue clouds
White sand beaches
And warm embraces
Of loved ones

Sometimes loneliness
Wins and they look
Inside themselves
Finding certain strengths
In old Molave trees
Flexibilities in green
Pliant bamboos
And sampaguitas scents
Or could be ylang-ylang
Perfume,

Or they resort to food,
Cook the adobo & dinuguan & puto
On wintry days perhaps,
And to really kill
This rampage of boredom

They make thin slices
Of raw mangoes
Dipped in bagoongs,
Black paste of shrimps
The taste lingers
In taste buds and
Tongues start to
Water,

To green slices of raw mangoes
Salivation is easy.

On these thin slices of
Green raw mangoes
Perhaps the Filipino
Forgets what loneliness is all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
Long Engagement....

here we are
living in one house

the roof does not
leak as they predict
the floors still shiny
much to their dismay
and theira  will be
that intriguing envy
as wide as the sea

here we are still
dining on one table
sharing a conversation
sipping same coffee
dipping same bread

hearing the same
sound of the spoon
and fork watching
same TV shows
and still go for
same sunshine walks
together always
together
clasping tightly
to such frail
hands

we're siblings now
of the same faith
forgetting that
for once we were such
sweet lovers....

RIC S. BASTASA
Long Poems Do Not Entice Me

first, i have other more important things to do.
second, i do not have to think some more
third, the short ones are crisp, without much words they already tell me what is its world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Longer Thoughts

got long thoughts recently like long bamboo poles
with oil around its body
can't climb further
feeling the falling of
helpless ideas

the man sitting over there
says
idealism is lost and we are
hopeless

on the first day of November
above those fluffy skies
near Sulu sea

i sing a song about breaking
days, digging hearts from shallow graves

somehow i think sorrow must have
split ends
cut them and have them
their short hair
some bangs like cute kids
in Sunday church

i think I'll go out, and have a short run
sweat out and be mad.

RIC S. BASTASA
at 3 o'clock in the morning
i got the dog
put it on my shoulder and
took it inside my room.

though afraid of fleas
i took the risk of sleeping
with the dog
for fear of the face of longing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Longing For A New World

i long for the world that you have been talking about
out there where there are no more wrongs
where time is eternal, hence there shall no longer be any past
and the future will be strange and the now never ending

shall light be blinding? shall darkness be forever barred?
i am still here with choices, and have always been defeated.
i am caring for spiders learning from their patience.
wait for me, i shall tend some birds and embark upon their wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Alikes Cannot Be Love.

you look like
my previous love
and i may think
that i can love
you and that
i may try you
but it is not
the same and not
the case,
look alikes
cannot be love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Antonia

well, antonia
it is a fact of life

the flowers and weeds
alike adore you like you
were the sun in the garden
of eden

the rivers look for you
the mountains like your coming
and leaving

but look antonia
you are still a nobody
you are not the sun

you are still you
and no one knows you here

RIC S. BASTASA
Look At Death's Face It Is Grinning At Us.

oh the fortunes you
keep for long
the money you saved
for all those
passing years

the mansion you
just built
a new car to add
for your collections
the beach house
the farm

the fat cow and the
race horse
the flower garden
and the fountain facing
east
the feng sui and
the talisman

all in vain
you are taken now
into nowhere
and we do not even
know
if you are coming
back

you must have
miscalculated life
and look at death's
face
it is grinning at
us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Look At The Picture Carefully

the rails are made of steel
some stairs that you must remember going on top of a hill
recall the chocolates, the one that no one eats but only sees
many of them, yes there are many of them and one is awed
how does these round hemispheres
chocolates come about

oh there were stories told, a myth of a man and a woman in love
one was a giant and the other just a plain woman like you
love unrequited and giant tears fell and
i do not have to continue, you know very well what i really mean
it shall answer your question
where,

i try to edit the picture, the one that you are afraid of,
because in truth your left hand was holding his belt near his
erogenous zone and your right hand was somewhere else
i need not tell you again

as he protrudes his most important weapon to please you
something abdominal and
pelvic, and he was confident about you loving him for those nights

on the island, where memories were woven like a tapestry of the native
woman who fell in love and at the end was rejected

this is all a riddle to a reader who does not know you, but to you for sure
all the details come back like some distant relatives who hurt you

and you do not, as expected, do not want to face them again.
he said something and i will not forget it,
don't worry it may be painful

but rest assured, it was so lovely, and precisely it is the reason why
i finally write these lines

yes, love sticks like a coconut milk with brown sugar, heated for a while,
and then we make it cool on a banana trunk, we harden it and then
we always like eating them....love is always sweet, don' worry, i will pretend
that i do not know you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Carefully

when your feet
land on the desert
look carefully
rest a bit and breathe
a while
the hot air and do not
be frightened
the mirage may mislead
and the far distance
may be too drowning
but look down
on your feet for beside you
is this little flower
purple and too tiny
in full bloom
too pleasing
to the eyes
of the one
lost in
his affections

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Closer

You are angry
Slap me
Slap me harder
Lose your anger

You are sad
Cry
Cry the loudest
Do not mind me

You are violent
You are raging
Kill me
Shoot me
Stab me
Chop me
Into tiny pieces

After this violence
Collect the pieces
Connect the puzzling pieces
Get the image
Take a closer look

It is you
I am you

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Closer: Please Do Not Forget

You are angry
Slap me
Slap me harder
Lose your anger

You are sad
Cry
Cry the loudest
Do not mind me

You are violent
You are raging
Kill me
Shoot me
Stab me
Chop me
Into tiny pieces

After this violence
Collect the pieces
Connect the puzzling pieces
Get the image
Take a closer look

It is you
I am you

please
do not
forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Me In The Eye

Look at me in the eye
I am strong now. I can
Look at you closely
Unharmed. You change
Me to stone? You can’t
I am ready. Look at
Me in the eye. I am not
Scared anymore. I can
Look at you with nothing
To feel now. Years of
Binding. In the room
Of love I have confined
Myself. To your coldness.
I could have died. But
No, I have managed
To keep this heart
Soft. Alive. I am not
Broken. I have not
Allowed it. Look at me
In the eye. I have loved
You. Time heals. I have
Gone beyond loving you.
I am now free. You
Cannot own me forever
In your cold hands.
My heart has wings.
It has its own feet now.
Jumping with joy
To its newfound
Freedom. Love of myself.
I am now myself whole
Again. I love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Look Out Into The World Into An Immeasurable Space

look out beyond the window of your house
fly if you will
with the wings of your mind
penetrate the darkness of the night
and do not be blinded with the brightness
of your heydays

look out beyond the window of your own space
fly if you will
with the wings of your making
soar to the heights of your imagination
and find out what is really there
with the hands
of your present

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking And Going Back...

there were layers of years.
you were on one of those layers. You are blue,
a line of blueness, in between those other colors,
You are always the silent kind of blue.
They skip you and find you one of those insignificant lines.

The years pad each other like the barks of a tree.
You are one of the bold strokes now. Time does it.

They you go back to that old layer. You were blue.
You make some squeezes, and etchings on those other lines.
They squeak like rats.

You tell them that once you were there and you were the blue line.
They fully remember. But there is no difference really.
Your thinking is misplaced. You think you are different now.

No, they didn't. You finally regret going back.
You retreat once again inside the room sit on the chair.

You are a blue line. You corrugate a little bit like a magnetic ecg line.
But it will not last. You are a straight line now.

You watch TV till midnight. There is nothing significant.
You are still a blue and straight line. That you have to accept as a fact.

You turn off the TV. A nice sleep is always a better alternative.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At A Pair

as i turn my back
something happens behind
a hand lands on a lap
and i
imagine it happening inside my mind
and i follow it with
this quick turn

they're there a
lovey-dovey pair

their smiles
and tongues-in-cheek
confessing an innocence that is hard to spell

something that they swallowed
like an open secret
inside their throats

the other lonely student at the other side
of the room scribbles something
on a note and he passes it to me and it says

society tolerates its own sons of aberrations.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At The Face Of An Old Man....

when is see that old man,
whose face is hardened by the changes of the seasons
by the cruelty of time,

his skin is dark brown, thick as a pachyderm

now loose, and bones curving
like a question mark of
existentialism,

he must have been tough, as i bring him back to the past of his youth,
riding on a black horse, carrying his scimitar
conquering tyrants

worshiping God and wooing his woman
making love
gently with the softness of her being

and i go back
on that wrinkled face, bowing to his destiny,
surrendering
calmly to the embrace of death
his final friend....

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At The Past...

when i look at the past
i will always have something to say

i can write all the days of my life
simply glancing at it like it is

a movie watched by Howard
for months without a bath or break

i do not think that it is crazy
to go over the past images over and

over again, there is much to see and
say, for in there, i had always been

muted, i was blinded, in such a
deafening helplessness

now, i must ceaselessly mention it
to the world, as a matter of coping up

on such a short time, on such a
breath that is so limited, so so limited.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At The Stars

on top of the roof
i lay my head and gaze at the stars

i feel so tiny.
in fact, tinier than each of them

the world travels and the space so wide
my arms are like twigs

i feel humbled and words accept
the fact of their uselessness

i feel this journey
alone and hoping that someday this must end

silently, onward to unexpected glory
whatever mystery is there, i must listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At The Universe In Our Very Callous Palms

our prayer is
our work,

our praises are our
hands
stretched to find
the shortness of breath
of other
people

our blessings are
the rains

our achievements are
what others have become because of
our endearments

and let our failures be
the success of those who really need it

let others live
let them be what we are not

our faces are the faces of
God

looking at the universe
in our very callous palms

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At You

looking at you early morning
makes my nerves run like kids
desire rises to the skies
like smoke of my fires
seeing you naked in my dreams
walking in the sands of my seas
strands of lights from my heavens
in a flash you come and in a flash you leave
and then the rain of pains
i become this soil
absorbing everything
cracks and crevices
holes and emptiness
mud and muddle
drenched and flooded.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking At You I Shall Tell Some Stories

looking at you
i make stories about your face
lovely stories (though there were betrayals
of the skin, i decide not to include it there)
for a person like you shies away from pain
from that which burns
all these you try to evade and so you keep running away
from everything that signifies
heat and fire)

but so much so for that
my stories travel to your hands
(i have this theme about tenderness
caress, affection, love and love
and holding one on top of the other
fingers intertwining) i
do not want to stop in there

my stories shall travel to your feet
and i shall remember
(those stamping of the feet
on the ground
not the dance in bed
but the leaving of footsteps
the closing of the door
and the final sound of the
thuds)

the ending will be sad
there was someone who left without saying goodbye
while the other
was still in bed soundly sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Back

the form was presentable
i look at the eyes again and
tell you, ah, those eyes were
my father's eyes,
and my father was so handsome,
until, time used him, there were
lies, and it infested his body
until he got so weak and
then he died in all
despair possible,
i look back and find the reasons
for betrayal,
they were beautiful reasons
and then i understand
those sad eyes, those tantrums,
the dead dog
the fish surrounding its rotten flesh
feeding upon it
until it sinks as pieces of bones
the foul smell
finally buried in the water

the white ghost floats in the river
and always in fidelity
it sings

there was no regret for the
beautiful reason
there was only Eros,
the warmth in the flesh that entered
in the thighs,
and the pleasures that
no one can ever forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Back At All Those Failures...

now you are here again
back to
failure,
just like yesterday
or ten years back
so many of these
varieties,

it shakes you for a while
but then you go outside, jump,
go beyond so many fences
and then you are free

you look back and you are not scared anymore
everything was all parts of a whole
and it was beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Back At Sagada Mountain

the mountain
looks so cold with
its hood of fog

the flowers are curious
the houses mum

we take the early walk
shivering on such a beauty

RIC S. BASTASA
i too look back at those green things
from the point of view of my
green thumb
a vegetable garden without an aphid on a leaf
a row of roses, lush green leaves
and red blooms
some petals falling due to the
wind
a line of green mint trees along the path
leading to the highway
sounds of motors threatening what green there is
i come back and settle on this patch
of green meadows
and grass and gray shade
my own shadow cast
on the huge gabi leaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Back To The Mountains Strong

when things go wrong
we struggle with so much
silence

sometimes a whistle can make
a good pretension

a slight tap on the back
a hug can make a good compliment

with us
there must be more to this struggle in silence

the years have been adding up
like layers of soil upon a hill

we dig into all these layers
to find roots

they are not dead yet
the trees may have no leaves and

all the twigs may have dried up
and when you cut it

each shall give up its hollowness
too easily in a snap of your finger

the layers are pictures of what we are
what kindness we extended to our shortcomings

we look back to see mountains still strong with their peaks
we look forward to the endless horizon of the seas

there are two suns now
you and I.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Backward And Lying Down

in this kind of love i look backward
to find you
so filled with desire and i lie down to
fulfill a promise
tonight
the stars watch on this agony
and the moon is filled with envy
on this new kind of love
between us
beyond them
in the books inside its pages written
long ago
by those who died and we were told
they must not be remembered

vampires, and wolves, and biting bats
moaning the nights through
and howling
for the denial

tonight between us we shall speak no word
the world takes a step forward
and reverses its orbit

we lead in this reversal
we tell them there is more to this
more, more, and as usual
insatiable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Far Away....

i have read what you have
written that nigh, the poem,
something too personal to you,
bringing back the past with your
bare hands, not really handing
all these to me, something
too personal, you close your
hands, and then look far away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For A Cure.......  

if by chance you have heard  
it over and over again  
and you feel that it is getting  
to be a burden  

try going to the mirror  
and have a closer look at your self  
find a face behind it  
it is not yours and it is confused  

try listening to the words he is  
saying at the back of your head  
you may find someone who sounds like  
you too  

someone saying just to make a sound  
in that empty room  
someone hissing like a snake looking  
for a rat to eat and fill its hunger  

looking for a cure to its disease  
mumbling, chanting hoping to find in one  
of those letters a lead, a tip, a cue  
for that still unknown medicine.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For A Valentine

most of the time, she goes home early
never fails to visit the church and pray

she has been this way, hollow, empty,
the prayers never make her full

sometimes she extends her time in church
looking at the other faces hoping to find someone

that may like her, propose her a marriage
that at her last trip to love, she may not refuse

or have the right to, she has no right to choose now
at 33, she prayed so hard, and gave bigger tithes,

sponsored masses, and offered masses for her
dead ancestors,

until one day, someone paid her a special attention,
and she promised herself, she would not refuse him,

she married finally the priest, and so the emptiness
from her heart, transferred to the hallways of the church.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For An Opening

the guide for an opening is light
or water
on some crevices they always know
how to whisper
that in there there is an opening
and you must see it
and start from there
the message has always been
let there be light
so your eyes can see
let there be water
so you shall not thirst

darkness at the end had always been a loser
and dampness glows to a warmth of the spirit
what lies there soon flies
and the silence always turns into a very sweet song
there is hope
like a flower that grows in the wild
soon there shall be this meeting
of the most beautiful day
your feet shall begin to dance
your mind flying like a hawk
the skies all embracing

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For God

it was the wrong choice
looking for God
in far places

in Bethlehem
a tour in Israel and Prague
in Medjugorie and
France

what mediocrity and
what expense!

pause
and be silent and listen

all the while
He is inside your heart
waiting
for your knocks

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For Meaning

she comes to an age
not of reason but of trying to figure out
what she really means:

a mother for kids
a doctor for the natives
a vagabond for life
or an absconder from
her past

whatever that means
she will take the chances
she goes on a trek
on the mountains
moving on
for greater heights
looking for
meaning
re-creating reconstructing
some pieces of herself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For Power

perhaps filled with love
after the lust
he sought power
found it and drunk it
he got drunk
and got dizzy and
got tipsy and then he
got lost along the way
and then he said
what he really wanted
was love but then it is nowhere
to be found...
he met regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For Something

he is looking for something
he knows what is it
and he can really find it
at the exact location
where it may be found

there is something in
that something however
that prevents him from
finding and touching it

it is his own mirror
when he touches it
he breaks into pieces
and dies in an instant

he is looking for something
and he knows where it is
exactly found, he knows
what happens next and

so here he is pretending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For That Blackstone

the black stone is not significant
there is nothing in it that makes you be amazed
it is round and not as shiny as your gem
the diamond that glitters in your hand
the black stone when put beside
become nothing,

but it is my black stone
my silence lives there
my rage is kept there
even my love is there

how can you understand
what i am when the black stone
my essence you do not mind

it is round like the truth
it is hard and harsh like all realities
it is silent like the night
it buries itself somewhere
that place where you have never been to
it is a mere black stone
it is mine alone
i am that
black stone, but you never want to remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For The Best Metaphor Of Rest....

i am still looking
for a metaphor that best suits me

one that can put a good color to a
demise

of noble thoughts that
soon shall leave

all of us, i am still carefully sorting
scent, color,
shape,

and texture

what appears in my mind is purple
but it will be too royal when i am not

scarlet is a little bit scary

perhaps

while will do, it will be the scent of a flower
wilting

as the sun fades away to give way to the reign

of the princess of
darkness

darkness is not evil, it is a way of giving in
to sleep

that is sound and
evernal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking For Water To Drink

Sometimes i have only myself to blame
why i am searching for
water in that wide, long and faraway
desert

what aggravates my offense is that
i am doing
it alone by myself

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Forward To The Last (Whatever Is It, I Can'T Tell You)

in a state of haste and
disinterestedness
one looks forward to the last that one can
do,
it is an obligation after all,
art turning into work
less the feeling of awe
into that
choked creativity
the eyes ache
the arms are loosened
one feels the wholeness scattering
into bits
falling
and shattering sounds
of brokenness

i know these are all not clear to you
you doubt
precisely this is the real motive
the clearest and most
accurate intention

i just want you to think some more
about us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking In The Skies

Looking in the night skies
Alone in the park
I see this monstrous space
Pass by.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Through The Window Of The House

i look through
the window of the house
and then i begin
to forget
that i am sitting by the window
wanting
to explain how loneliness can
be too consuming
to mankind

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Up....

now i know why
everything seems to be
going to the sky: the trees
are arms raised
the rooftops are not
mere blockers
of the rain
the floors catch us
the stairs always
wind
the air rises
eyes that do not look
down for sand
and pebbles
they too, search for the
Almighty
they too, look forward
for what is not
yet here on the muddy
paths of the earth
not just stars
not just stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking Upon A Child

looking upon a child i compress my years
like how i keep the lines confined inside my palms.
i stop for while following where the child goes.
his hands are buds, his feet as small as a saki cup.
his eyes as innocent as an oil lamp waking on a dark night.
his hair are soft and silky like a kitten fur
his sounds like the arrival of morning on the grass.
i hold his tiny hands and i am back to my senses.

he calls my name, but i am no longer there.
i am back to my room. It is as crowded as a storehouse
with papers and books and chairs and used clothes hanging
on the beams and walls. Some old figurines bathed with dusts.
Some dried spittle on the floor. Some unopened off-white pages
filled with age.

i wonder, despite this crowd of things and thoughts,
despite the fullness of the wind from the window
there is still the wide vacancy of space. Inside the heart longs.
Inside the sound howls. Inside something so faint shouts.
It is the sound of the child still calling my name.
It is looking for me and i am never complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Looking....

i stopped looking outside
and henceforth
scrutinized what is stored
inside the heart
there is more to be felt
now than
thought,
there is more still undiscovered
uncharted by
the ships of my
imagination
there is more struggle of the
native feelings
who wins at the end
i must feed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loquacious

this afternoon, i talk a lot, and the more i talk, 
the more words flowed from my mouth, the more i become less 
of myself, 

that is the irony of talking, the more i empty myself of this burden 
using words, the lighter i become, the more useless i become of myself, 
words and more words, 
the more i have of them, the more meaningless my thoughts have become 

and they who are listening have become more silent than ever, 
i know, their minds are somewhere else, and i know that they know 
that there is this spirit in front of them so restless, 
wriggling like a worm, jumping like a horse, flapping like a bird 

wanting to get rid of something: the fruit wanting to be free from the worm, 
the horse from a gadfly, and the bird from the pricking flea.... 

what else can they say? they must have been saying. 
we perfectly understand, we have been there, we were once a fruit 
with a worm in our pulp, a horse with a gadfly in our tail, 
a bird unable to get rid of the flea.... 

we were rotten once, we jumped the more, and now we are flying away. 
what a life we have, we are never free, and we are never for even once 
comfortable with what we are and what we have.... 

what we do not have of course, is what bothers us the most. 
be it a horse, a bird, or a fruit, a flea, a worm, a gadfly of old 
like what Socrates once mentioned before he took the fatal poison. 

well he died, and here we are always trying to remember. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Lord From My Tongue, My Mouth

Lord from my tongue, my mouth and lips let there be gently words,

from my tongue let there be formed inspiring words like rose petals

let my mouth open like a beautiful morning breaking between two shadows of hills

let my lips give a smile as sweet as that of a kitten

let this poem be as sweet as a flying kiss gently so gently landing on hers

RIC S. BASTASA
Lord, Let Me See Your Will For Me In The Big And Small Decisions I Do

Madeline,
we are motes and moles.
Unique protozoans,
green moss sticking to black stones
slippery on the banks
of the river.

I've read your prayer.
I am eating each word.
I am imploring each syllable.
I like them to be tiny boats sinking into my ocean.

On the ocean floors
i build my rocks.
In those corals that dance
with the salt
i too shall dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loreena Mckennitt, The Old Ways

IN the desert
A camel
A lady
Riding
Against an orange sky

The lady in silk

She is running away

From the hot sun

In the desert
The sun is confident
Following her

In the full view

After all, the desert where the camel
And the woman walk

Is the sun’s best friend.

The usual old ways do not know betrayal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lose Your Mind

Do not tie your mind
Lose it
Set it free
Do not strain it
Let it go
Alone
It comes back
Wherever
It wills

RIC S. BASTASA
Loser
	hey were wrong
when i bend
my knees

when i bow my
head

when i close my
eyes

when i hit my
chest with
my fist

they were wrong

thinking
that i am the loser
who surrendered

deep within me
i am not this loser in their minds
too shallow
to see
what is beneath me
inside my heart

i am recovering what was lost
and repairing what
was broken
putting all the pieces
back
together

in prayer
back to God
i know

i am still the winner
Losing A Wallet

i suspect it was just right there in the sala
of the house of my friend
'twas her birthday and i just cheered her up
with my jokes
and i managed to have a little dance with her
and everybody was happy
until i got inside my car
it was already 11 o'clock in the evening
and then i arrived home
finally to find out when i undressed myself for bed
my wallet is missing

i am getting old and i am careless
on her 50th birthday
i guess we must have felt the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing A Watch

losing a watch
you realize
the importance
of time

you go back
to your room
and search
for it in the
bathroom

it is not there
anymore, you
cannot sleep
and always think
where the hell
could it be

you use it in the
morning and it
was still with
you at the office
and you figure out
if it was still on
your wrist, you

wrestle with
remembering,
retrace, recall,
piece by piece

imagine if it
was yourself that
was lost,
you manage
somehow to
find where were
you from the
beginning
back to your watch
where could it be now?

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing Hope

the pulp of my past
decays in the lines of my palm

and if my mouth shuts up
because of somethings unswallowable
such as bitterness and unbearable sourness

i then think of you

nights of unease
as frequent as the rain of december
and because of coldness and feelings of
wet rags and moldy shoes on the rack

because of all these
and in a few steps towards a line of bushes
a few glances of clouds and horizons

my hopes are lost as clumsily and
irreparably as
a stone rippling its way to the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing Life Gently

sitting on the sand
taking a handful
of its whiteness
looking sadly
how each grain
falls gently from
my wilting fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing Love

cellphones cannot keep love.

e-mails cannot substitute for lunch
just the two of you
over a plate of spaghetti
a cup of coca cola

skypes are imitations of
our sounds
sometimes we are not the way
we sound in
cyberspace

there is nothing like it
when we keep love burning
upon a tryst in
a cottage on the side of a hill
inside a room
with the light of a candle

it is a warm bed of hay
away from the city

the android cannot sum us up
in facebook uploads

we go back to holding hands
strolling upon a mountain trail
under the trees

how can we lose love? how can life slip from
our grasping hands?

tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing One's Dignity

you like free meals
they taste so well
nothing is bitter
everything is sweet

why do you like a free meal?
you save much for yourself.
why do you save much and not
spend anything for yourself?
you are into the vice of misery.
You are the miser storing much
and still beg for more
hence the free meal.

there is no such thing as a free meal
if you only know the real score
you could not have eaten that free meal on the table.
everyday you eat this unnecessary gratitude
tomorrow you shall pay it

with what? your dignity, even your whole life.

RIC S. BASTASA
the question is, where do you go from here?
are you as confident as the river
that is sure of the sea?
a tree whose only fate is upward
a cloud whose only joy is to drift and make rain?
we are neither the trees or the rivers
or the clouds
we are beyond all these metaphors
and must answer for ourselves: where are we going?

ah, i know where i am going
do not blame me if
at the end of our destinations
we shall find nothing
do not blame me if you are lost
neither shall i blame myself for this 'lostness'

it is my essence
directions actually do not matter
look at me, i am here, i am writing and i am not going anywhere
ah, i lose myself
because i want to finally find it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing The Little Bird

a reason is a little bird
resting upon a bough

i see it unable to spread
its wing and so i take it

inside my palm and give
it warmth. It sleeps inside

the darkness of my hands
but i cannot hold it for

long as it is night time and
it has by itself take time to fly.

i lost grip of that little bird
and now i must keep this

little warmth left inside my
hands. So i may also live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing The War

you prepared for this war
all the weapons sharp and new
you sketched all the plans
every detail well accounted
in perfect timing to the zodiac
all the stars and planet align
to the expected success

yet we all fail
and you bleed that much
your mind beyond repair
you scream and bang your head on the wall
i watch you
coward, unrealistic fool,
unaccepted to life's reverses

failure is part of the cycle
welcome it
just like you drink to your success
when failure comes
drink with its hurt hands
celebrate failure
then sleep
for tomorrow we prepare again
to this war of life
these challenges of our lifetime

RIC S. BASTASA
Losing....

.. and then it was my turn
to go down
and simply be down and i toss
you up and then
you are on top of me and then
i say: it is just perfect for me...

RIC S. BASTASA
Loss Of Words

we take this ride
to nowhere
i hold your hand
you kiss me
i whisper
you quiver
we sit beside
each other

we look forward
to the road that we are
together taking
for this moment
we look beyond us
we lose ourselves
to so much love
or the thought of
so much love
renewed to these
vows, we become
two fused souls again
we accept
we have no words
to say

even to describe
the feelings of the moment

the mouth of silence is too big
its belly much bigger
in there we shall rest
with so much comfort

RIC S. BASTASA
Loss.....

he talks about how the three stars fell from
the sky that night
nothing is lost
there are still a thousand stars left

last night
the moon fell off from the clouds
into the lake
and his heart was broken
there was smoke after the splash
and then the light was gone
borrowed as it was

this morning
my sun did not come...

naghisgot siya
sa pagkahulog sa tulo ka bitoon
wala'y nawala
daghan pang nahibilin sa langit

kagabii
nahugno ang iyang dughan
sa dihang
nahulog ang bulan didto sa
lanaw
nag-aso ang tubig
sa tumang kainit
dayog kawala
sa kahayag nga hinulman

karong buntag
wala mitunga ang akong adlaw
Lost

When you are lost again
Open your eyes in the dark
See the labyrinths
You will see shadows moving
And hands groping
You will feel breaths grasping
You will hear hushing sounds
You are not alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost Among The Flowers In The Garden

a white butterfly
hovers among the white flowers
in bloom
in the garden
it stops for rest
and gets still

it is lost in there
and you cannot see it anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost And Going....

to think of you and you alone
i am bound
and i am feeling so down
feet stuck to the ground

i must learn the art of detachment
i am free
i disregard home
i travel alone
i am searching for what i have not found

i have nothing
no one holds my hands
my pocket keeps them
inside warm

i please myself with the wonders of
the trees
the space that grass occupies
the heights of mountains
the rush in the waterfalls

there is this river
that flows and flows and flows
untiring

i am bare as clear morning sky
birds do not live there
i want the way they fly away
telling no one where to

sometimes we let go
our hands sail our feet kept like rudders
folded

i am this air
bound for nowhere.
Lost Father...

he was once a priest here
having a disagreement with the bishop
he went on board
took time to rehearse life in Florida
took some time riding moments in San Francisco
onward Chicago
moving East and then West
and landed a job
loading Goods,

in his sixty
he posed half nude in a picture
taken by his
part time girlfriend
no commitment he said
because life
is one flitting moment
unable to
stay at a fixed point

he posted the pic
in facebook

i guess, and this is my opinion
i looks
pitiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost Forever.....

all things are meant
to be finished
journeys always have
end destinations

there is always a
titration point
a place where people
end their race

some people take their
rest and say
oh, we're finished

a precious crystal
finally breaks and not
a day is wasted

all mortals die and
that the meaning of its
being

some keep their masks
of denial
hungry and thirsty still
lost forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost Forever.....(2)

all things are meant
to be finished
journeys always have
end destinations

there is always a
titration point
a place where people
end their race

some people take their
rest and say
oh, we're finished

a precious crystal
finally breaks and not
a day is wasted

all mortals die and
that is the meaning of its
being

some keep their masks
of denial
hungry and thirsty still &
lost forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost In Daily Routine

lost in daily routine
the nerves take revenge

look how can you
not raise a hand?

there is a hole
covered by a river

there is a void
covered by flesh

my feet find it hard
to walk toward the church

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost In Meaning....

a dandelion
against the wind

the wind spreads
each sleeping willow lightness

you watch it
and give it meaning

so light as a whisper
the soul sings

you follow one
landing on the blade of grass

you shed off
a mask

naked you fly as light
as a piece of dandelion blown by the wind

you are lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lost In The City

Hey, froggie!
Why are you
Jumping in
An asphalted road
There will be no
Sound of water

RIC S. BASTASA
the sound of your poetry is just perfect,
in fact more than perfect, it has the tongue of the witch in mindanao
with the length covering the distance between the roof and the floor
and it knows well how to tickle
the numbness of nerves in my mind
it knows how to deal with words, it is bilingual, it is piercing
it creates the labyrinths of mystery
and marvel and wonder and amazement
it know where to start
from the very ordinary handle of a kettle
to the face of the ladle to the the tails and ways of those grinning cats
looking for love on the roof that night
it has a way of making the ash so significant
from ordinariness
to the metaphysical
from the usual hello to the
surprising goodbye

giving life from the fire that i have long forgotten
it is perfect, more than perfect
i am amazed
there are more meanings that i can attach too
under my skin
and then i am lost

to be candid, after reading them, i have convinced myself
yes i like it
not the tongue, but the words shaped by the tongue
but i cannot really remember what was said
i have not understood what you pointed out with your hand

forgive me
but i am going to the next page
the one that speaks about love to the heart
without so much sophistication
the one that simply says: i like you let us talk.
Lots Of Air In Here

got migraine
and tired of my doctor’s prescriptions
which after all
lead to more complications
i decided to see my
quack doctor in the mountains
nearby
got inside his cave and
he chanted to the gods
of the trees
and the grasses
to the nymphs and elves
and dwarfs
to the gods of the underworld
and he came out with
an answer

'dear sir, you got lots of air
in your brain! '

o? i got brain.
My consolation.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lots Of Listening And Enduring...

the bodyguards
are here
and he is feeling
like under
arrest, but that
is life here
in the seasons of
danger

shall i forget
how to speak about
spring?

how i miss those
freedom birds flying
in the forests of
solitude

sometimes he asks
is this the door that
i really want
to enter?

the house of chaos
where i am supposed
to place everything
in order

i am ready in this
armor of silence
lots of listening
and enduring....

RIC S. BASTASA
Lots Of Love

lots of love out there
buy one take one
if you want to buy
even all of them

but priceless love
knows no price
it takes sacrifice

a love freely given
is the only true love
we can have and
cherish and keep

maybe even forever
and ever forever

i can taste it
and return it
but surely i
will miss it

because it is true love
that i cannot buy
that makes my heart full

it is the love that i set free
and freely it is the same love
that returns to worship me

RIC S. BASTASA
Lotta's Haiku #s 1 To 5

1
evening in saffron
half moon is a half world
heaven closes in on me

2
dried flowers in dried field
the sun's brittle rays
i kiss the morning goodbye
tight-lipped

3
memories of grasshopper
waiting to adore the sun
i sit
in meditation

4
former worlds are deep in our hearts
sand dunes are marked with their footprints
i look for tomorrow
and watch for rain

5
the bells of prayer rings at six
butterflies blend with the flowers to rest
i raise my arms
to greet the evening

RIC S. BASTASA
Loud Music

at night the confused neighborhood
turn on the loudest music in town
they think that everyone is lonely
and that all the lonely people have
thirsty ears
longing for the loudest music
till everything burst
and they become satisfied that this world is fair
they cannot sleep
and so must you, but I keep this peace
uninfluenced by any word of the town
a peace within
that can sleep even when the town is at war
against each other
even when this world crumples like a leaf
in the hands of
a child
without a mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lousy

on summer
he sleeps most of the time
and one wonders
why
when the sky is blue
and the air is fresh
when laughter is
arriving everywhere?

RIC S. BASTASA
Love

the ability to love the person who does not love you
to be kind where
there is unkindness around you
to be in pain where
there is no such a necessity
to be silent
even if you are innocent
to bend
to bow
because you have so much to give

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Aflame

i do not wish to give you
what i do not have

they are all lies and nothing
beautiful grows from the petals
of my empty words

i have only this heart
ablaze with fire

it is only this heat
this flame
that i can offer

there is no promise from its
firewood that this thing aflame shall last forever

take me as i am
and look at me with all understanding when at dawn
i turn to ash again

RIC S. BASTASA
Love And Desire

'Love and desire are the spirit's wings to great deeds.'
Johanne Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

denial to this principle
now that there is boredom
there is a need
for you to realize this matter,
alright, you are love
i am not, but i can be
at most
a moment of desire

there is a bird with one broken wing
let it still soar the skies
before it finally dies

RIC S. BASTASA
Love And Hate...

the brain surges
like water hitting
a rock in the middle
of a storm

the heart is the yogi
still inside the cave

the sun and stars align
the moon falls

all the gold melts and
then magma flows

like blood to the
veins of the earth

when everything cools
down the drain a new

flock of birds come
seed begin to sprout

love dissolves hate
evaporates in thin air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love And Imagination

your hand over mine
i am opening and you are
closing in
trying to keep my warmth
to yours,

i close my eyes and there you
are inside me,
the heart is beating for love
and no other

i levitate at all these quivers
how do i imagine mutual love
since i have never had it since
i have loved someone before
and she said we were not really
meant for each other,

i open my eyes never catching you
you are looking somewhere else
to that window where trees are
lining up for your kind attention.

you do not really love me, i know
how hard it is for you, and now i am
giving up, letting you go, finding
you, finding love, finding your own
version of what should be forever yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love And Lust

Each shall have a room, as they are distinct
  As love is blind, lust has eyes wide open for its games
  As love is day, lust is the night at the bar
  As love speaks the truth, lust can just lay silent looking for the tasty froth
Love need not be beautiful but lust makes it a requisite
Love may abstain, but lust cannot
By its nature it thrives in banquets

Love is pure but lust goes to mud in all wild wrestling for what it desires
I can love you without lust
But you may not like it after all
I love and lust you

And in you
Love and lust shall
Hold hands, kiss tight, hiss all the night
Love and lust
The two becoming one
To both of us

So this union may last
This communion of souls.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love And So Many Deaths

you are
rooted to the
fertile fields of
our conversations

you are not
just an imagination

never another
pagination of
my book

a hard cover
with bold letters
that cannot be ignored
by the switching off
of the light
in the room

i want to puke
to take you out
of my system

you are a mass
of growing cells
in my body

you are root
words
an imagination
that is real
a book
a cancer cell
inside my brain

you are killing me
i am dying
you are telling me
this is what love
is all about

it has always been
an old link: love,
deat, 
love, death.

love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love As A Drinking Glass

love can be a glass
where you put water to drink

on the other hand there is another way
of looking at love

another way of using the glass
which is filled with water to drink

you do not drink it
you offer it to the most thirsty one

someone you do not know
someone who needs it most

do not ever
ever throw it away

RIC S. BASTASA
Love At 65

what we have
is companionship

we enjoy our
intimate talks

in this house
with a glass window

overlooking a garden
of trees and flowers

the rain drizzles
yet the sun shines

both worlds are there
moon at night and wind

i still have roses
and chocolates for you

and you give it to
our grandchildren

and you still whisper
to me
' i love you'

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Back To You

love gives and gives and always giving
it looks back checking if there is still something left
there are still a lot more to give

do you still recall the miracle of the fish that were few
and the bread not due to you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Can Be

LOVE can be outdated, we see how it fades every morning when we rush to leave and forget the kiss, when we seldom talk at night when we think that we may see each other again inside our dreams when we realize that what those poets of love who are talking about eternity have degraded themselves as liars like us

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Can Never Be Wrong...

it is better to love
that to be right

as if love is always
wrong and wronged

in some cases you
insist love can be

wrong but i always
believe love is always

right and can never be
wrong and so here i

am full of regrets for
i was never wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Dialogue

love restrained
soon finds itself
answering
unasked questions,

reversals you
say
answers first
before the
questions

mysterious ways
unfathomable
depths

short feet and
clipped wings

claws surrendered
beaks tied

white banner
on enemy ships

things that squirt
like squids on black fluids

we are lost somewhere
soon things clear

like oxidized stains
wrinkled hands

wash your face
hide the tears

too many hands
for me coping up
i am a body
touch me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Flows

I make a mirror
of you
and you see me
naked

i am beautiful
in the dusk
as beautiful as
you in the
dark

sooner we become
dogs
in love with our
tails

we spin around
the corners of our
dreams

i follow you and then
i hold you
my tongue is yours
my hands too

later we shall feel
how dams break out
how waters escape
how pools of water
become rivers
how swamps become
flooded waters

this is the journey of
two wooden boats
without rudders
without sails
Love For Children

how can you say
you will love the children tomorrow?

you cannot, for when tomorrow comes
they're children no more
and they will just be like you
telling me again
to love the children tomorrow

love the children now
or you never love them at all

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Fuming...

like lunch
at a time when temperature
rises,
you need an appetizer
chili for instance
that red hot one loved
by mexicans,

turns me red
all over
makes me feel
so alive

feeling like a
toro
my nostrils are
growing
smokes...

it is also the way
a poem is written

there is music in the
air
love is that perfume
in the room

and you are not alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Has Nothing To Do With Virgins

i have long
discarded
unicorns

love has
nothing to do
with the
virgins

it has something
to do
with the usual
things that we
do

making everything
unusual
familiar

nothing to surprise
us
nothing painful
because
we have become
used to
all that is
there

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Hate Relationship

i see you, seated on the staircase, the old one
left by your parents long dead, and

you are crying there, some tears falling on the
carpeted floors, so your sorrow is invisible

to his eyes, when he comes home, you put on a smile,
like a light that you switch on when it is dark,

it has always been that everyday with you,
and him, and he tells you every instruction to keep that love

burning, you listen, but as soon as he goes
to another place, far, and you sit again on that old staircase

counting the rails and the chairs of the house
you begin to think honestly, that this affair is nothing but a

fraud. It is only him. But to him that should not be, as you he goes
away for days, and you keep on staying put

with all his instructions. You worry about the electricity of the house.
and the gas that keeps the oven hot for the bread
and the muffins

but for how long. The tank of gas will be empty soon.
and what he will find in this house, when you decide to end it all

is just the muffin that the ants of the house
are still eating. There is always a season to end what was started.

soon. It will be. You sit on the stair, looking out the door.
You will know how to make the dust. Soon, It will be.

He will never know.

RIC S. BASTASA
to face the one we love  
is to freeze time  

we do not want to make the hands of the clock  
move or dance  

we make the world stand still for us  
to hold the moment  

for love in this corner is left unrequited  
and the love we only have simply walks away  

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is A Burning Bush...

love is a burning
bush
in that hidden
mountain
but when i go back
there
i will not remove
my shoes
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Everything

i agree completely,
love is everything,
sex is too,
with love,
sharing of resources
this body to another body
with all the love we can give,
love is everything, love is everyone,
love is and will always be
for everyone

man and woman
man and man
man and nature
nature and nature
woman and woman

and always with
GOD
in between.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Giving

love is giving
and it gives all
love surrenders
and it surrenders all
that love has,
love bares its body
and love for love
takes the body

opulence and abundance
cascading hair on the shoulder

the test is when everything is given
and nothing is left
and if the other remains
having taken all
that i think is what love is all about

when you give it all
without regret
like a tree giving away all its ripe fruits
to the indifference of
the grass and the ground

a seed soon sprouts anyway
to regain back what was lost
without forgiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Giving And It Gives Everything Away

love is giving
and it gives all
love surrenders
and it surrenders all
that love has,
love bares its body
and love for love
takes the body

opulence and abundance
cascading hair on the shoulder

the test is when everything is given
and nothing is left
and if the other remains
having taken all
that i think is what love is all about

when you give it all
without regret
like a tree giving away all its ripe fruits
to the indifference of
the grass and the ground

a seed soon sprouts anyway
to regain back what was lost
without forgiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Looking Into My Eyes

love is looking into my eyes
and i who is so deeply in love
returns gaze with equal gaze
desire seeping like
water in a very dry sponge

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is No More?

Do not say that love is no more.
IT only dies when the mind dies:
Pure desire must not relinquish its form
Lest the joy that is ample
And its clarity shall expire.

The pain of the past, do not grieve.
Vain is your regret. What is worst?
The unwillingness to change,
That is, in fact, the real disgrace.

In a sense no desire is permanent.
Like anything else, it is subject to change.
Your grief may modify your nature,
Innocence left, indifference wills.

You must leave me.
There is no recompense, no pity,
There is no cure for deceit,
Or any assumed silence,
Nothing can conceal the mortal loss
That we are bound to repeat

We move for change.
That is the only relief.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Not All Love

love is sweetest
when it is all mixed up
with
lies and deception
truth and devotion

with all these
we become so real
there is no more illusion
that in some other ways
we have pretended
to keep this love boat sailing

there are sacrifices in some pretenses
in the spirit of keeping our dignities intact,

how many times shall i tell you
that with you i can imagine a bright day
in the middle of a heavy rain?

love is not all love
it is also a resolve to love when love begins to fade

it is also to endure that lonely night
because i have to wait for you

it is also to lie that i am in pain
because i must love you till the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Not An Easy Path

in fact, there is no ready
use and wear path for love

it is always wild grasses,
untamed shrubs, wild bushes

along the way, and i am ready
always ready
for the unknown

the consequences, the pain
of loving

and the possible bliss
the ecstasies

simple enough, no guts no love
forget the glory

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Not Taught

love is not
taught
it is there
already

as a seed
it grows
wherever it
is found

rock, mud,
sea, sand,
even in air
on fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Nothing But A Word

love is a word,
that we always mis
spell, that we
always miss,
spell, that we always
look for
and when we find
what we think
is love
so pure,
so true
and so enduring

to an irony
we surrender
love is too much
to hold
love is too much
to keep
love is more
than what
we can afford
to a certain
point love
overflows
like a dam
that drowns
us
to a certain
extent
love conquers
us

everything
changes us
from nothing
to something
beyond us
love is nothing
but a word

that we
cannot ever hold
that we
misspell always

and we like
eating such word

love, in this
indigestion, this
sporadic outbursts
of gas inside
our guts and intestines

burp

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is Nothing But Arms

do not expect much from me
my love is nothing but arms and feet
the hair in between those
pelvic bones
it will not even take that long to deduce
what is important
15 minutes and then it is over
just like
a viral injection or a blood test
for something
horrible

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is The Answer

i guess
love is more of
sort of a
question

so while young
you better ask it
find it until you find your skin
with a lot of furrows
and regrets creeping on
your marrow
and then sigh, sigh, sigh

love indeed is the answer
old age accepts it with
resignation

i guess it is sort of
loneliness accepts love
whatever
be it a question or an answer
it does not matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is The Greatest...

faith is the
lady in
pure white

hope is a
little
bit orange
sometimes reddish
with its flint
and sparks

love is taking
all the colors
like a rainbow
in the sky
like a sunny day
even burning
on winter's fray

and so it is the
greatest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Is........

love is
when the body does
not long
for warmth
the nerves dry
lie raisin
and the
hormones all
spent
like ants consuming
all the icing
in that cake

and yet
you two still dine
together
upon a candlelit
night

and before sleeping
talk and take
time about
other
beautiful matters
of your
lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Life It Is The Only One You'Ve Got

love life my friend
it is the only one
you've got

you have loved
love once
it did not love you

so now my friend
learn to love life
it shall live with you
through and through

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Lives In The Kingdom Of Your Heart

the sole path
is your soul
you travel
alone
there is no other
way
you search for
that place
reserved for you
there is
no other

the heart

live there and
listen
emotions come
like the sounds
of drums
rush like a
river
ripe for the
flood
of inspirations

do not look
around
do not look
back

you must not
look down
lest you fall
into
the abyss of
oblivion
it is the heart
always

stay there and you
shall never
be another failure

the heart is where
love
is king to its
throne

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Love Love

i have reserved
two seats
for our jeju island
adventure

save january for that

and what about february?

do not forget
valentines on the fourteenth

it will be
another bedtime....ha ha ha

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Making Inside The Comfort Room

we pretend
that this is the
church
that this is
the favorite
confessional
box of the
priest and
his favorite
concubine

we pretend
i am the parish
priest and you
are the wife
of the mayor
and now you
kneel before
me without
a lace
without
clothes

i preach
you
the

naked
truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
i wish i can love you for what you are,
as you love me for what i am,
but in a thousand ways, that this world spins,
things apparently do not seem to be themselves,
you have loved me for what i am not,
i have not loved you for what you are too.

the pretensions will never be over.
snowflakes dissolving,
water turning to ice again in seconds

those that i leave behind
are becoming rocks again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Me Not Anymore

you have seen the prince in me
descending from the sun riding on the clouds
and you have loved me

we meet in your dreams and make love like we are true lovers
in haze in specks of light you touched my face and body
and then i leave you empty handed with nothing but memories
and you cried you miss me

love me not anymore for i cannot be with you
what do you expect about air and fantasy?
what can absence do to you except to make you as lonely
as a dripping water from the walls that divide us

in your next dream i shall come as a villain
in a black robe and i shall wear the face of evil
and i shall give you fear and hate

and you shall not long for me anymore
i have loved you too
but things don't just fit
for both of us
in strange worlds so different and apart

love me not anymore, for you cannot be mine
i go, but i shall not forget, you must
i am the absence
in the field of your love and longing

i am as useless as a sand dripping from your fingers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Me Tender Love Me True

once i said these words
and you loved me so

time betrays true hearts
lovers fall out
like snowflakes from
oaks

now i do not bother saying
these
but how i wish to be back
there

under the cloak of the night
the jewel moon
for given the chance
i must say these words again

how swiftly the wings of time fly
how hollow are the structures of words
the termites finally win

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Must Be Said....

i open a door
and tell you the secret
magic words
for you to open it when
you need it,

yours is always closed
(i want to ask why
but i do not have the courage
of my own magical
wand which
i cannot use for you because)

i want you to open it yourself
and i like
really like to go inside
but i want you to say it

you know how some people want
to be loved and how they
want it said not just done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Need Not Be Permanent

love need not last
otherwise you have been asking for much

love need not be forever
for it is we that love and mortals are we
shall we demand something like love immortal?

love need not make promises
for love is true and true love do not make promises
since promises are made only to be broken

love need not be happiness at all
for love is freedom too
and the quest for happiness has become a prison for most

let love be like a bird
flying free and moving to places it has not been too
relying on instincts and spontaneity

let love be just a moment to moment
a touch of the hand a kiss on the lips a gaze

let love know
that goodbyes are right there at the corner
that forgetting can be just the cure for love's innate pains

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Note # 30

we stop making love
in bed

there is something wrong
with our nature

hormonal imbalance
the doctor says

you shrunk like a leaf
fallen from its branch
i dried like water from
the swamp

no fish wiggles here
no bird has for the night
roosted or sang

we stop something fleshy
or juicy
but love continues
move to its own happy
destination

we have coffee together
we hold hands in the park
we look still full of love
at 30
times 3....

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Of My Life

love of my life
you hurt me

love of my life
you leave me

but love of my life
you are still my love of my life

it's me who loves
and me alone to love you with all my life

abandon me
or even kill me

i give you a smile
a grin before i die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Oh Love

love oh love
you stand there alone
and then i call you
and you smile
and you come near me
and hold my arms
and tiptoe
a little higher to kiss
my lips

what shall i do?
they are all watching
shall i set you aside
because of shame?
shall i hug you tight
and kiss your lips
and close my eyes
and bend over you
and tell the world
that you are love
and i do not mind
what they say

take me take me far away
it is none of their business anyway
take me and satiate me
i am hungry and thirsty

crush me, i am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Or Use? ...

when she falls in love
at her age now
at 60

after two husbands
and three operations
she falls in love
wholeheartedly to a young man
agile and active
and too caring for her
weak limbs

she declares she has never
experienced this thing ever since

the young man kisses her
from toe to hair
washes her feet
cleans her back
puts lotion to her skin
combs her hair
cooks for her
and does the marketing
and drives her around the
city when she gets too lonely
carries her baggage
takes charge of her businesses
collects the rent of her apartments
and delivers goods for her
buyers...

she is in love
and she boasts that the young man is
too good for her demands
the man is a miracle
God's answer to her prayers
God's gift to her faithfulness
she surrenders everything
her body, her soul,
her bankbook, her properties
her secrets
her biography
her house and stocks

everything, everything,
in the name of love.

the man is good
and when away

secretly shows his
wolfish grin
to the world that now
spins around the
tip of his fingers....

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Poem #2

it is when i see
you facing a
window
alone and
silent that
i begin to
think of
a love poem

i could have
been the
window beside
you where
you put your
hands

or the road
outside
where you
put all your
gaze

and i could
have loved
the position
of the sun
early that
morning
feasting on
your face

in times
like these
i make a
series of heaves
of sighs
like i am
short of air
wanting to
be at your
side but then

the walls between
us have said
it all: it is simply
impossible

even
for you to read
this love poem
that i have
just written.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Poem #3

i could have
believed
in love potions
and sorcerers
if only to make
you love me

and i could have
deceived you
to drink the
glass where
you think
everything is
just plain
crystal clear
water

i could have
insisted that you
can love me
that you must love
me that i am dying
and that i am
a very lonely soul
floating in the
limbo of my
aching heart

but no
i cannot do these
fraudulent
undertakings

i have seen birds
inside their cages
dying because
they are denied
the freedom to
love and i cannot
kill you,

neither shall i kill myself because i have loved and lost again for the nth time of this lonely game that we all play.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Sometimes Goes Out Of The Window

when two mouths go hungry
when there is no glass
or water
when the house is empty
or when there is nothing
to even smell
when everything are but shadows
of a bat
when the only song is the song of
an earthworm
that you can hear only in your mind
there is no use of playing
games to delay
the flight of love out of the window.

love also needs a little convenience
such as a glass of orange juice
a slice of cake
and air that enters a room
to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Still Hurts. Freedom Yet Has To Smile.

you are the melody
that is constantly playing
in my mind
every day and night
i listen intently asking
why every note of you amazes
me as though this music is
itself an eternity

i wait for the day when this
music stops
when my mind and heart is emptied
of all its nuances

i can soon be a bird flying with
only the air as music for its ears
listening to no one now, not even
love as you would want it.

Love still hurts. Freedom yet has
to smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Struck

drunk last night
with someone else
who left
you at dawn you
scamper to the
shore
before the sun rises
to pick up
those fallen
stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
Love That Won'T Last

when i tell you that i love you
please do not
ask something that lasts
forever
for i am a man
simply a man
and i am
not
immortal

my love lasts
while i last
i last only for a moment
like a flower
that blooms today
and then
tonight is blown away
by the slightest
touch of
this
divine sigh

do not see me as a bud
of this
flower that in your mind
blooms and will last
forever

i am man i am mortal
at any time i may die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love The Second Time Around, Breaks And Unbreaks You....

love breaks you

time sandwiches

another kind of ham and cheese
and lettuce leaves

another love comes

healing you

giving you back your hands

you hear

your heart beat again

it sings

but this time much sweeter

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Turning Off.
	his is the trip of
touch and go

nothing to repent
nothing to repeat

once here i give love
and then it is over

there is no coming back
the hours are consumed

in this trip it will always
be a moving on and on and on

everything behind me fades
everything loses themselves

once fog, once mist, once
a shadow, and then all the lights

and then this darkness, this sleeping
sorrow's hibernation, love turning off.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Unabated

everyday inside your room you worship a face
like a god
you close your eyes and dream of that kiss
of that love
that makes you love the pillow that makes you
hug the warm embraces of the blanket on your bed

at noon you see the face you love and you wish you can hold
your hands to hold his lips and plunge in there like it is a pond of water
you dream on that broad daylight making love where others are too busy
making life to live
you refuse to see the stain of this error
wandering like a woman in the forest land beside the tiger
you do not have any sense of death at all
on this love prohibited by the rules
on this love that destroys your soul
on this love that leads to the perdition of who you are

time. leaves. dusts. faded sounds. pastel blue colors of the hours.
the rivers overflowed.

you are drowning in this crazy flow of love unabated.
it is wrong, the windows keep telling you as you stare on the ground floor.

and then you jumped. and they shall hear nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Uncontained Love Unfulfilled

You must know him more
I sent you his name the place where he
Used to live the journals he wrote
His philosophy his religion
His one and only love
He left her
For the melancholy he never fully understood
The doubts he had in his mind
Coiling like a snake around his neck
His body the faith he claims he has
Love uncontained love unfulfilled
Not totally wasted but made him
Live the years without her
Then she came back sat beside him
And died

His name was soren, she was regine.
Today his name is mine, she must know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Unspoken, Unknown

we sit beside each other
on a bench at
the well lighted
park
at night

and what you know
is only

that it is Christmas

the neon lights
keep
on blinking
to the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Upon Another Murder

and he would ask the same question
over and over again

'why did Love end with such a brutal death? '

the sail should have been smooth
the sea as calm as silk upon a horizon

that room that night was the sole witness
how Love failed
How his eyes looked at Love as Lust

another body is sprawled on the floor
bathing in blood
upon multiple stabs of another one blinded
with Love

Where is the Love that assured him
with all its advertised delights?

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Was Always There

from the beginning
love was always there
though we may not have
seen it
or known it by name
or have not been too
familiar with its
face and body

and then i see you
and i know it is love
that i have seen in
you though you do not
know it because i
will never tell you
and i will never show
any gesture
of its affections
any terms of its
endearment

i am forbidden
by love to speak about
its other face
you have never seen it

it is the other side
of this green patch
fenced with barbed wires
and shut with steel locks

this is love's hidden silhouette
the unrecognized
angle that
most of you has seen

as ugly as
a harsh cannibal eating its
own flesh and
kind

i should have not spoken about it
as it will crash the ivory tower
of my world
the castles of my cloud

but love is always an unfolding flower
willing to yield to its own
death only to see
the light of the
sun

i should have not hinted you about it
because it is sadder than the ten sorrows
of ten widows whose husbands are
soldiers killed in the action
of a cruel domestic war

but no, i have gained the courage of my
lamentations
and so here i am muttering to myself
munching my own words
on this
unhealthy monologue.

love will always be here
but i am forbidden to say its name
and as usual
it shall be aborted and then be buried
but how can i ever forget it?

i know i can't but soon i will. i will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love You Always Expect Love That Is Sweet And Enduring

we were once in love
i will not deny that
we make love almost every moment we look at each other
in the beach
in the camarin
in the house of your mother in the house of your friend
we like making love and we were content with what love is
for the time being
in the flesh,
we mature like some ripe fruits and we have no other option
like the fruit we fall
to the grounds of questioning ourselves
will this love be real even without the flesh
of the fruit?
will this love be true even without the leaves
of the trees?
will this love endure even when the tree is cut
because it will bear no fruit any longer?

i promise you love and i put the word there forever,
but i never told you that there will be no pain
we compensate
we shall also be both broken......the sweetness shall not last longer,

but it is not the end yet, the sweetness shall linger in the memories
of our youth
when we wilt we shall be ready with our new seeds,
the rain shall make
the seeds grow again
time showers it with longings

and we shall now watch the flowers and the fruits
from a certain distance...

RIC S. BASTASA
Love Your Work

just love your work
and tell you what

the work does
it all for you

just sit there
do not even think
or lift a finger

your work hands
everything to you
in finished forms
perfectly perfect

love your work
and everything is done
without noticing
the existence of time

love your work
the table comes to you
all set and all you have
to do is simply sit,
eat and relax and
wait

kewl.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love, Live, Believe.

in the theater of your
dreams
you are the lone performer

two chairs and a table
serve as your usual audience

there is no need to introduce
yourself
they already know you
from day one to day end

you recite a poem or two
sing some of your songs
and then you dance the tap
and do the Latin steps
a little reggae
and gangnam

this is your small world
who believes in you
it does not matter if this is
another delusion
which may need further elaboration
for a possible brain concussion

it makes you happy and secure
for the moment
and it is the most important thing
keeping you sane
and happy...yes happy

that to me is the most important thing
of all the other important things

since no one gives it to you
then you give it to yourself,
and that is the most important thing that you can ever
do. Love, live, believe.
Love, Love, Love

the lady with a veil is
pure and he really wants to make her happy

the night is young and she removes her veil
her face is so beautiful

more beautiful than the moon on the placid
lake

they are in love
beyond the purity, beyond beauty, beyond their flesh
beyond the moon, beyond the lake

love is at its summit
when the last word is finally said

it is intelligible
one word that the whole world that night perfectly understand

HE has finally found home in her....

RIC S. BASTASA
Love, Love, Love.....

from now on
i shall not give importance
to you. You never cared
for me. You always made me feel
that i fall short of your
standards
that i have not followed the
rules of your game
that i do not deserve you.

last time i told myself that
i leave, that i go to a place
that promises me love,
that i better have someone who
loves me more than
i do.

perhaps i have not learned at all.
mother says i am hard headed.
father had give up on me.
my teacher says i am incurably
romantic
and clings to love no matter what.

i am back to your arms
oh they are cold and lax.

what is love? i ask myself again.
it is loving and just loving, even if one
gets hurt.

never mind. I will be responsible for
all these.

let me be your sun.
and your moon,
and your stars. let this homeless
be your home.
Love, Love...

i shall betray you
for as many times
as you are still willing
to love me,

i am amazed
for you are still pure
and patient
and gentle, and kind
and ever loving
still

to test you,
i shall betray you for as many
times as you shall
love me,

you are love,
love you are love,
pity me,
i am not.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love....

teil me
love does not disappear
but i do not believe them anymore
because one day
love disappears but i agree with them
those who say that
with firmness

we do not tell its disappearance
we want to keep the home in exchange for
the lie that now you know they have always
maintained

in exchange for love that
goes away
we keep the structure and we tell those
that ask us
like the way you ask once

love is in the air
love is not jealous
love is patient

and the last statement that love is blind
now assumes a new sight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love.... Me.....

you want me to make a love poem
i will write one
crisp and sweet
and intentionally true

then you will read it

and then you will ask what do i mean
by those images that
you have seen
but cannot figure out
since some hands come out
from the belly
some eyes are put at the
back of the head

i will not tell you

you have always misunderstood love

me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love....My Dear...

This is the garden
where yellow daffodils bloom throughout summer
There are trees around here
where birds build their nests

Birds sing and play
feeding on sesame seeds
in a small house I build for them
hanging on the
gutter

This is a cozy room my dear
where I undress before you
without feeling
any shame

RIC S. BASTASA
Loved And Lovely

you cannot
reach a shot

the guava on the tree
is useless for me

the cloud cruises
above the ashes

behind the house
there lies the mouse

the afternoon teases
in orange bellies

loved, and lovely
forgotten yesterday

RIC S. BASTASA
the lovers enter the little hut
at night the sea breeze is colder
there is no moon

t hey get out from the little hut
someone follows

he comes back
the lovers are gone

the wind blows
the window flaps

the door closes upon itself
another story of love

he sits on the sandy shore
self-pity sings an aria for him

RIC S. BASTASA
Loveless And Sexless

are you going on an ascetic
adventure?

i ask you how is your sex life
you said none
and so i ask about your love life
and you said
that i better ask about your sex life

and you said there is none about both
and so i ask you
about your life, on such a very basic question
you still have no answer.

let me ask you: how about death?
shall i have your answer now?

RIC S. BASTASA
Loveless.....

Tina knows her way
try looking on the way she sways her hips
and walks on her feet on stiletto shoes
a la maya angelou
her goddess and idol and role model

she dresses the way she feels she likes it
sometimes she looks like a Christmas tree
or a refrigerator less the handle and the metal stand
for she is short and a little bit fat

(nothing flattery about her bangles
and her tinted goggles with matching
lavender ribbons on her hair
and scarlet bracelets on her arms
and her platinum trinkets and golden anklets
and diamond earrings

all genuine and expensive
branded)

she goes around town with her motorbike
and to all that she meets she says
the loudest hi! and bye! and take care!
and i will miss you all!

she has a good job as the youngest
civil registrar in town
a position which she got
upon the influence her dad
who is an incumbent judge

her shorts are really short as in short short
and her spaghetti blouse is too tight on her
petite breasts
she tans herself into chocolate brown
in Boracay summer escapades
and indulges her nails on computerized prints
she does not cook
she has money to eat in expensive restaurants
and she travels a lot

searching for love, for the man of her dreams
her destiny her castle in the air her happy world

she is loveless and she does not want ever to be lonely in her life
but she is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovely Lady

when you close
your eyes
and feel my presence
i too feel it
even if i am on the other
edge of this world

we have to believe
in presence
that is all that it costs
for us to be here
again together.

RIC S. BASTASA
roots making love  
to nearby roots  
tight and intertwined

trees budding  
leaves lush  
trunks like steel  
like man  
in his twenties

clouds are flirting  
treetops are reaching  
for little ecstasies  
like rain finally  
bursting

to mountains parched  
hungry for water

heavy rain  
flooding the rivers  
like multiple orgasm  
of a woman

lightning and thunder  
like beds creaking  
and short circuits  
of emotions

then follows the calm of  
the night  
on contented sleeping  
cicadas

the night is pregnant  
with stories

twilight breaks in tears  
for the rumor mongering
and talkative
days.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovely, Lovely, Lovely Memories

By an old river beside a bamboo grove
She bathes herself

Only the bamboo leaves hinder
Your view of her long black hair

As she splashes naked in the
Clear River.

Lovely 2

There is a nipa hut on the side of a hill
You meet her when it is dark

She lights your cigar
As you get near her

You decided to smoke later

Lovely 3

You are rocking yourself on a rattan hammock
On a late afternoon when the rest go home

It is Saturday
She stays
You watch her come near you giving you something

She says it is the key to her room and she is all alone tonight.

Lovely 4

The cogon grasses have grown tall & thick on the hillside
Both of you hide in there

Nobody sees you
The tall cogon grasses dance wildly to the slow wind

Lovely 5

Four years in the university studying chemistry
You return home finally

You embrace your old mother meeting you by the door
Outside you see the guava tree filled with its ripe yellow fruit odor

So heavily laden like a big Christmas tree

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovely, Lovely, Lovely Memories Too

Lovely 6

On Sundays papa buys some kilos of big crabs
He cooks them and puts shredded coconuts inside them

Cooked in pure white coconut oil

All the family prays for this sumptuous dinner
No one is late & everyone is present.

Lovely 7

The white ducks all gather in the backyard during the black night
After eating brown snails in the green ricefield the whole day

Early morning you gather all their white eggs
Scattered everywhere like white stones

Your big brown basket is full as they look at you without any quack.

Lovely 8

It is midnight and everyone is asleep
You hear the slow rain dripping by the window pane

On a nipa roof
As you write your 8th love poem

Her face is still beautiful even when completely asleep

Lovely 9

25 years you have not heard of her
Tomorrow is Valentine’s Day

In your email a valentine’s greeting pops up
It is from her and you save it

Tomorrow morning you will open it again
Looking for the right words to read.

Lovely 10

Your music teacher now at 76 drops by
Your house this morning

You are invited for tea in his flower garden
Then he plays some pieces of Mozart

A little white dog wags its tail at you
As your heart jumps with joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovelyb

despite what you say

despite what you say
that you are happy in America
this i tell you

your wry smile says otherwise

the way you look at me
reveals what you are not
inside the thick brown mask
lives sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lover Boy

You’re like a fighting cock
On a hill
Crowing

All his concubines
Are the stones
And his hen
Has not laid any egg

He’s got no balls either.
Just bloody combs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lover's Delight

can't explain what boredom is

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovers' Delights

we only have one apple
i am holding it in my hand

i take a bite and
you follow

we take turns
we like the crunchy sound

the sweetness of
the crunchy apple

until the apple is consume
we hold each other's hands

we look at each other's eyes
we feast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovers In The World Of Words

we shall be lovers
in the world of the words
you can be a pronoun
not a name of a person
and i can be a verb
making love with you

in the world of words
you can just be a phrase
and i can be a clause
we can make a sentence
not a question but this
interjection but not that
loud but something so
discreet like a moaning
sound of a woman
titillated by a man inside
a scented room and then

for all we know in the world
of words we have become
a beautiful poem of love

insatiable desire, endless
quest of our real meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovers Meeting Beside A River

two lovers meet beside a river
they are on to something prohibited
but they cannot be stopped
by your beliefs &
dogmas and

penal laws do not work at all
to give them neither fear
nor regret

for their love is strong

so strong
so uninhibited
the feelings that gush like a river
flowing

naked they touch their bodies
their hands exploring all the possibilities
of love
they kiss, they make love
they lay their bodies on the grass
rolling, one on top of the other,
tight, and warm
sweat and salivations
until the apex is reached
the climax of love
the ecstasy
the fulfillment and then
the much needed rest
the other one sleeps
and dreams
the other one smokes
blows a breath
to the sky
makes circles
and plays with the
images of the clouds
at night
when the moon shines
so bright
and the star glitter

no one knows about this
except the river and the trees

the trees sing
the river flows

and then the sun shines
the morning after
the two shadows are gone
leaving some traces
on the grass

dried sweat
disturbed grass
some maps
without names

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovers...

the moon's chin by the window
giving light to my chest
she gets in without shame
on polished skin
i lay on the flat floor
ready to receive and support her most
gentle fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love's Betrayal....

consider me
an expert on the techniques
of love's betrayal
you who do not trust the wind
and the sea
lives on the song of the
seashells
the years die
time shrinks like bread
without yeast
in your mind i have always been
the traitor
my hands tremble
i could have said more words
to appease
the stone in you
but you left like a bird with a broken wing
you fell in the middle of the sea
gone
like a pebble thrown
from a cruise in the waves of the Indian Ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
Love's Favorite Sister

if my love
has caused you pain

perhaps we should meet
again

and be with love's
favorite sister

her name is
Forgiveness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Love's Pains

when love looks at you
you move out
show your back
and make a smack

at me
i, who clings to
a love
unrequited

you who loves
another
is a tongue-in-cheek

you who
finds all these
irrelevant

i, who is full
finally finds
an empty bag

when you left
i kiss the air
that still carries your
smell

you who does not
love me
has the laughter

i, who love you
rains the tears.

you have the sun
i have its other side
the darkness of
a loveless night
Love's Triumph In Isolation

joy faces me
two hands hold my
hand calloused
by sorrow

the past fades
your fingers
entwine with
my fingers

as we walk
to a distance
no word comes
to say to sing

there are trees
and palms and roses
there is a bright day
ahead of us

such a beautiful world
we affirm

love can triumph
in isolation

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving A Widower

your way of loving a widower
is a way of saving your life

not that it is this kind of long
distance love with nothing
to use but
just a voice in your wilderness
and some sweet talk
for at least once a week
or twice a month

but this can make what you have
in suspense
another four years to wait till
his youngest daughter graduates
in college

you wait
you like the drag of a promise
the years pass by
and then you look yourself at the mirror
the wrinkles tease you
you have been deceived
and now you find the chance
of saying no
time passed and you say
i had enough of waiting
now i can have my own life
within my hands
and i will shape it the way i like

and then you are alone again
but happier this time
deep inside you
it is what you actually wanted
and you have chosen it

like it is your destiny
you say you want it and
then finally declare
you don't want any

like you throw a stone to the sea
to make the ripples
but what you wanted to see
are ripples disappearing one by one
and the stone finally sinking
deep down under
until it is gone and you sit and stare
and heave a sigh

finally you leave a smile to the setting sun
and then take your way back home

i guess no one is still waiting
you take the key from your purse and then open your door

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving Beyond Love To A Happy Ending

there is something else
more than love
or lust

there is something else
going on outside us
no one can ever know
because they only see us

never had they lived with us
so we begin to fall in love
it is not like the ordinary opening of beers
or stirring of milk
or the seeping of tea together
on Saturday afternoons

i believe there is something much
nobler than these
that we must recognize
i believe that when you sleep beside me

she does not really care what is going on outside her
her body is as warm as mine
we trust, and that could be a happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving It....

i am not good at
discerning which is more
important

i mistake the importance
of the fish with
that hook, and the fist with
that watch,

i am not good at it,
i accept, the way i compose
poems instead of making
more out of life, its sap
and bones,
its eyes, i must have
been blinded a long time
ago,

you laugh at me, this
emotion thing, this sunset
irrelevance,

i should take another car,
move to another house
give more importance to my
state,

instead i went to mt. nebo
contemplated on the sculpture
of the serpent and
the cross of moses, and you
give up on me....

meanwhile, i move on.
and i love it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving Mother

i remember
loving mother on her
last hours on her
deathbed

spider webs
embroidered in her eyes
blurring from the
morning light

unable to read us
simply imagining
the images
flashing like neon
lights one evening

on that last day
she called my name
and she asked me
something
but i did not answer
anymore

i told her
it is time for her to go
that she must go in peace
that an angel shall meet her
like the light at the end of her tunnel

i held her hand gently
and she closed her eyes

i said a prayer
to send her there.

outside it was so peaceful
not even the wind was there
to make a leaf fall
then the sun shone
and light entered the room
filtered by the glass window

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving Our Bodies But Only For A Time

i shudder on a possible answer
on the question of
what is it that really makes me desire you?

the temporary and quick answer of course
is your body,
those hands, that hair, those legs, that skin,
i have touched you and it is so good,

but i am worried for how long shall this answer satisfy me
time is staring at me and gives me that quizzical look
of fading and waving
that undulating shape of existence that soon surrenders
to reality

this reality of passing, this change,
this moving away, those leaves that fall and rot and become nothing
but another layer of insignificant ground,

and i shudder again to the next question, as i prepare for the shudder
of my next answer,

i am terrified at last, finding out
that there is nothing in you that is worth loving at all,

that i am but trapped in my body, trapped also into your own body
and we are in this same prison for quite a time

the seasons give us keys of awakening
there is finally nothing in us that is lovable at all

and we see it now, as we glimpse upon the veiled face of
the incoming death

we were fooled, we know that,
but it does not matter now, we have learned and by all means

we are ready to go.
Loving Our Careers

sometimes i wish
God will give me old age
where i can
be another grandfather beside
a grandmother
and around us our
grandchildren

all noisy and naughty and
filling the old house with joy

there will be no blackout
and food will be served upon a call
of a small child
even with a small cry
the maid will be ready

it is only a wish
and will never be possible

we don't even have a child yet.
and we are already old and weary of waiting
what God once
promised which we perhaps did not hear
clearly
because we were then busy
loving our careers.

RIC S. BASTASA
I've been loving to see you live,
perhaps i live because of you, since you are the
object of all the world's gentleness,

I do not, actually, care much about the length of life
as i go for the quality of it,

For what does distance give us, except the mirage and the haze
and the lone silent hours of the days that give us nothing but the
boredom of repetitions?

I care much about this feeling, this transitory migration of
our caressing,
when it is gone, like a mist of a cold morning, what do i have in
return?

The sun is not ours, It is a traveler too in the randomness of
its bloating and shrinking

I am melting with your loss, and like ice which has no more meaning
for spring, I admit, i have resolved
to go back to where i was once air, and be gone for a long, long while.

who knows? when i come back, i will be in the same garden, the same
leaf, the same vein.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving What You Do

it is the love
in what you do
that makes you love
even if what you
do rejects you

poetry for instance

you write with a suspicion
that someone out there
twists her lips

scratches his head
complaining that this is not the way how to do it

you may have known the devil
telling you to stop or jump or
just be one of them
in their devil-may-care attitude

you see no angel around
but your love of this work keeps you going
the passion to care
for words and arrange them to create
a picture
of your own beautiful world

a mirage of oasis for your hunger
an ice castle in your messy room
a theater where you are your own actor
and audience at the same time

who claps for you? just you
and they think you have gone out of your mind
but you are not

you feel the passion of sanity
and beauty
the urge to just be another scribbler
for nothing

this is it.
creativity, no one pushes you
no one pulls you
there is this spirit that keeps on telling
you

you are beautiful
you are divine
you are meant for something greater than yourself

you dream and that is enough reward
you do not make a name for this

beautiful ennui
sacred search
temple of the tongue
river of the mind

ivory thoughts
a fountain of feelings

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You

loving you
i shall rejoice
clapping with
one hand

you ask me
if i can fly
using my left wing

you make a
collection:
this matter is impossible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You For What You Are

when we met
years back
you are what
you have been

i never
demand for any change
we only content ourselves
with what was there

you are yourself
and that's good enough for me
i am myself
and for what i am
you may take me

we ask nothing more
we simply have to look for that feeling
that makes us one
despite

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You In Silence

do not talk
i am watching you

any word
from you can
destroy my
imagination
of you

a beautiful flower
in my gaze
must have no word
for me

it is the wind
it is the sunshine
just the scent
of petals and
leaves

i can only love
you in silence
and any
syllable can
destroy
what is there
to take
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You Is A Commitment

as you watch TV
I compose another poem
i think about you
as you watch that segment
of a magician turning doves
into air manipulating flowers
to become fragile butterflies
it's the magician that amazes
you to no end
at night before you sleep
you like to mention
those butterflies

tonight i write about a butterfly
turning into a woman
wanting to stay on my hair

i do not like magicians
the magic is dead
but even if you like magic still
i won't tell you what i feel

loving you is a promise
that i will fulfill
perhaps i must start believing
in magic
or else everything becomes
a matter of a
contractual obligation
a matter of loan with a mortgage
as security
where feelings
become irrelevant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You Is Crazy

loving you i know
is absurd


crazy
and hazy, for i do not
even know you,
but the image of love
still
sticks in my mind,
this imagination
of you
like a phantom
in the opera of my
brain

i like to dissolve
this feeling
in the ocean of
forgetting,
but how can i?

i who needs
you, as an inspiration,
you the unknown
you the mystery

you keep me alive
everything interesting
tasting half
or even just one-millionth
of what i have
not actually touched
and seen

you are the unknown
you are here
beside me
still without a name
and body.
Loving You Is Never Easy

loving you is never easy

day to day
i have become like a toy
to you
and you have become
Papa's only child
dismantling parts
and leaving them
in disarray in the floor

i am those parts
dismantled
but i never really mind at all

i have always lived on the premise
that loving you is never easy

love is difficult but no matter what
love is still love

a magnet that takes all the parts
and reconnects them all again
puts them in their proper gears
screwed and bolted and
arrive at moments of complete repair

and then you play again
and this is where love recoups itself

you are happy and that is reason enough
why the breaking is not at all bad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You Loving Me

loving you is the only
ting i can do

loving me loving you is
another

but you loving me can
be another thing

another miracle that i
in my own life, wait,

and so least expect, but
it can be, another thing,

that thought of you loving me
loving you, till the end,

is still another thing,
in that twist and turns of

words, the juggling of
feelings, the pride of hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You Till You Become A Part Of My Darkness

my love
my tiny spark of light
i shall love you
i shall keep you within the confines of my hands
inside the secret of my palms
i shall love you
till darkness comes till you become but a part that dissolves
within my arms within the boundaries of my flesh and bones
until you become a part of my own darkness
my own silence my own solitude
till we become but one with peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Loving You..............

small things begin to count

a lot just because i am in love

with you and whatever touched i follow

what used to be insignificant or trivial now

assumes importance that high seat on the

stage which i used to own becomes nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lovingly Dreaming......

it is like
making love while you are
asleep

you are in there
thinking about someone else

she thinks that you are honest
when your eyes are closed....

tears

did i not tell you correctly what is this
all about?
there is a way to be happy and the earlier
you accept what real happiness is
the happier you can be

just be yourself. do not gather much.
do not think much. do not expect much.
there is much wisdom in being alone
opening the window of the house
sitting on one of those chairs at the veranda
watching the trees and the clouds
slowly sipping coffee
not rushing with the sweetness of
a little bitterness
for coffee is good the lesser sugar
you put on it
its coffeeness more savored
without much mixing to dote
it is just dust.

RIC S. BASTASA
measuring
your kind of life with
the digits of your
bank account

you do not want to
spend
life anymore
you just keep it
like the money
inside your
pocket

time is cruel for you
comes the day
and you do not notice it
everything
shall be taken
in one blink of an eye

your favorite dog
will not even remember to wag its tail
when you signify
that you want to be back

everything can never be ours
our hands give way
and there are slips always

holes

RIC S. BASTASA
Luck

he is in the middle of something
Painful
Choosing between slashing his wrist with a blade
Or firing a bullet in his head
In the middle ambiguities
he stopped

You called.

What if the blade slashed his wrist?
And blood squirted on the Floor like a basin of water
Like falling tears On his cheeks

What if the gun fired?
And his brain spills on his chest

What if you did not call?

It is the middle of pain It is the middle of confusing things

Sometimes, it is the middle That saves.

Luck.

RIC S. BASTASA
those without the know
and empty
dispositions gets chosen

just to shame you
on a volunteerism

of morality and goodness
waiting for your
reward from the
heavens

Oh my goodness
he chose the uneducated fisherman
to lead you to
a political glory

a plain housewife to be
president of a country

a baby boy on the
cow's straw house as
his messenger of hope

you see
how jealous could you be
how green-eyed
how shamed

do not think anymore
do not play cute and meek

there are no standards after all
except a broken heart

meek, humble, pure,
and restless
and do not forget: always to listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lucky Charms

the green jade
laughing buddha
from beijing

is teasing me
how can sadness be full of
justifications?

the dragon phoenix
from shanghai
hints that love
is always sweeter
the next day when
you will have all the
necessary
money

RIC S. BASTASA
Lucky Grandpa

to reach
72
is a feat,

sorrows have
been buried
in the forehead

grief eaten like
green sour mangoes to
delight

how many misfortunes?
can happy pieces equal the
sad ones?

Grandpa, you are lucky.
You have aged.

Fine wine
Sweetest to the taste buds
of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lucky Oscar....

with his trembling hands
a man hands a glass of water
to his very sick wife,

he hears her scream in pain
and holds her stomach
in agony hoping perhaps that her fingers can heal

outside the rain pours heavily on the trees
the pavement is now flooded with too much water
a tree falls upon a car
wreckage here and there
as the wire was cut and flares

it is cold, but it is still colder inside

and if cold is sad, it must be sadder than sad,

old age is unwanted
for those who cannot tolerate all these agonies
i sometimes ponder
about Oscar who died at the age
of 25, and at this point in time,

i guess Oscar was luckier.
he never saw what i am seeing now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Luke Filewalker

what you have you found about me
and my files?

lots of virus
nothing about aids
some worms, and
clots, and
scars,

makes everything slow down
as they used to be

can't find love in the files?
what did you find somehow?

are these matters transparent?
can they kill?

there is a hole
a void in everything, do not think that it is just contained
in the doughnut

there is a void in
love too, nothing much in lust, i tell you, i have been there,

for one thing, you think too much about what people say
God's judgment

i admire Rey for telling me
he is just human, and will be human in the form of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lull

time is a lullaby
the being inside a being
is like a baby inside a cradle
of the arms of a mother
inside is inside and further is another further
somehow when farther goes farther
there is more to become
rather than find an exit and then enter
another door and close it and live there
and then bone after bone
you take away what is left of
the self after the flesh is consumed
by another hungry flesh.
there is a lull in boredom
there is a escape that longs for
another greater escape.
i know you're tired listening to this
but does it really matter?

RIC S. BASTASA
the structure of
life and our belief system
must be simplified: yes,
there is man
and up there is heaven
and down there
is earth, it is very much like
the Japanese
flower
arrangement, and come to
think of it,
the woman stands up
and registers
and objection: 'where is my
place?'

actually, this makes no
sense,
this poem
it is the lull of time
unused
the rhythm
of aching eyes
and boring existence
the way
to complicate things
like some
pubic hairs....thoughts
entangled
to the traps of the
webs
of the spider-woman

one eye looking
blankly
at the monitor
the other betrays it
with
a non-mindedness
the numbness of sight
the shortness of time
and the lack
of genuine breath

where it the exit
door from all these lulls?

RIC S. BASTASA
Lunatic....

too much intimacy
reflects like a mirror
in such a way that i
see myself
completely in you
and that will be
very painful so i shy
away
i put the mirror under
my bed
cover it with a page
of a book of
poems
and then i go out
of the house
sit on a bench
and reflect again
under the light
of the
full moon....

RIC S. BASTASA
my lunch with her
could have been my lunch with you
and we could have laughed harder together,

we could have discussed well about Geronimo
his beautiful wife & kids
his lonely life in New York
and his being in love (with someone else)

this, perhaps is the most interesting part
and we could have talked the whole night till the breaking of dawn
when all the stars begin to hide in too much light
fading to the ocean of morning light

but once he said
and he was telling me with all the seriousness of a man
who does not want to be hurt anymore

that love is never a joke
for to him it has entailed not joy but pain
not an open door but a closed gate forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lunch Is Ready

you must have read before

that when a man is made to choose
between lunch
and poetry

he must choose lunch
it is 12: 20 noon

and if you wish
please finish this poem for me

make it say something
about hunger
the pinch in the stomach
the lack of guts
the impatience about life

for the meantime
i'll take what is offered on the table
i still have to chew
another idea that is fed in my mind
another poem
shaped like a fried chicken
scents of lumpia shanghai
images of white rice
exuding some fumes in
the light to the ceiling
clinking sounds of silver spoon and fork
and flowing clear drinking water
in the glass
in a whoosh

and the usual conversations
of sweet nothings
displayed on the table
like a soup
of bird's nest
Lungs Always Feeling Empty Still

to write is to breathe

exhale, inhale, exhale,
inhale,

lungs always feeling
empty still

RIC S. BASTASA
Lurking In The Corner

lurking in the corner
can be as devastating
as being so alone
in a very dark room

a self-inflicted sickness
a choice
a coffin that one makes
measured to the size
of his own body

the hand must know
how to open the door
and the eyes must learn
the innate beauty of its sight
as the heart
must sing even in the middle
of an overwhelming sorrow

petrification of a soul
devastation of the mind
the rotting of a very young body
why should it be so voluntary?

RIC S. BASTASA
Lurking Lights

the lights lurk
and find their ways to the
bamboo slats

ey they paint the curve
of your body
naked on the floor

who took that warmth
away like
a diffusion of
sweetness

sugar dissolving in a
basin of water
now indistinguishable

i believe in you
but i must leave you know

we are bodies apart now
except the bridges of our breaths
the imaginary ropes of
memories
binding us
like fools.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lust

my lust is so intense
hot as cinder and solid as steel
and immeasurable
(not the 13 inches in your mind)

love it
but it is only momentary

it does not have the character
that stays

it soon leaves you
for it is not a memory

my lust does not last
it is rust.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lust Sailing On The Sea Of Desire

sail with me
on my boat to the sea
your breasts my paddles
my pelvis your floor

sail with me
in the ocean of desire
lust with me
on this little leak of my
boat to the sea

sink with me
to the deepest thoughts
of the sea

learn with me
the meaning of love
the true meaning of true love
death of desire
rising at the end
to the greater joys of foam
at the surface
the sun, the moon and then the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Lust Wakes Me Up

...and then i hold
on to my body part
all my senses
wakes up
active on one
objective

to please my mind
my body

another mountain to climb
i descend

i ascend to the sun
and then

i rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lutos Baki Lotus

Gidan-agan sa bulan

Bulak nga gahubo
Sa iyang mga dahon
Sa ibabaw sa lim-aw

Sa ibabaw sa lapok
Daghan kaayong
Patay nga mga lamok

Didto sa labing lalom
Wala nako masabti
Ngano nga nalumos
Ang usa ka baki
Nga unta kabalo man

Kini nga molangoy
Moambak, mosalom nga
Hamtong ug kahibalo man
Unta siya kon unsa

Ang larawan sa gugma

RIC S. BASTASA
Luv 4 U

the best poem
is the unwritten one
unseen one
but more felt

like wind in my hair
like water dripping
from my fingers

like love
inside my heart
that is always
there
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Luxury........

never mind
technique, or the
mastery of
language, all
these are the
peripheries,

what matters
most is the
acceptance that
we are all
pachyderms,

selfish, and
well, who cares,
we all write for
our own
happy consumption.

RIC S. BASTASA
Lynnebelle, Concisely Speaking

Loveless
But lovely
Still

Alone but not
Really
Lonely

RIC S. BASTASA
Lynnebelle’s Proclamations

Loveless but lovely
Still
Alone but not
Really lonely

Adding another
Age
But not old

Moneyless
But feeling rich

Not laughing
But smiling

A friend to all
Beloved
To none.

RIC S. BASTASA
M & M

before breakfast
i like to see the different colors
of m & m
chocolates inside my tongue

so many of them
as i begin to write the different
colors
inside my
early morning
thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
the stars above him

their silence speaks more
stories on the night sky

a man lies on the grass
looking for Andromeda

the rain starts to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not wish to have a halo
above my head
this early morning

angel,
just be invincible

i have always maintained this in
my mind
i am better in this
frail body, these brittle bones,
these tiny fingers

society gives respect to
the kindness of feigned weakness
the humility of
having to appear like a hollow tree

as i step out of the door
i take the shape of this pigeon

the messenger of soft wings
whiter intentions

RIC S. BASTASA
a dura lex(sed lex) glass is different
it does not easily break
despite the series of falls
but once when you hit the
point of its most vulnerability
it breaks into pieces that
more or less
take the shape of diamonds

just like you when you go into
the most seldom sobs
diamonds are the shapes of
your precious tears

RIC S. BASTASA
of what use is the whiteness?

the purity that you have maintained in the color of your soul

of what use is the red in your center?

it is just a piece of art pure aesthetics without any function at all

forbidden flap full of flimsy fabrications

you cannot put salt in a flower and say you want to preserve it like some sort of peppered pickles

white soon shall turn to a bruise freshness into a contusion

ponder upon the shortness of the life span of the butterfly

get wild like a snake bite, bite, if needed, bite the delicious apple of discord

savor.

RIC S. BASTASA
On certain compromises
we agree on a certain indifference
we may not let them know
that within us are the wounds
that never heal
the broken pieces beyond repair
but everyone in this big house
shall never know
what is real what is true
for they must survive just as we
want them to live well
we feed them fabricated dispositions
longer lines of smiles
well trained caressing hands
eyes without any conscience
the incapacity to tell which is
right and which is wrong
and they must believe that
there are no termites on the
ceilings and the walls
no cockroaches in the cracks
of those kitchen sinks
no scorpions underneath those
wooden floors beneath those
foul foundations

'well done' says the law.
we are just behaving that way
good citizens of this republic
deal with usual turmoils

'we are always ready to sacrifice'
we tell them with uniform cliches.

RIC S. BASTASA
M3...

the dance of life is a circle
few have realized that there is a need to escape it
bore a hole somewhere
and break the
cycle

they say out there there is more to
this circle

there is no sorrow
and mind you there is also no happiness

and they say it is perfection
what mind are they using?

what light? what walls are still there that
they speak so differently?

until now
like a buffalo i wallow in mud
but with due respect
i am so well rested
in the murky waters of my
content

RIC S. BASTASA
this is a bright day for us
the sun is mild, the air is 26 degrees,
the grass carry the morning dews
the flowers are fully dressed with their
bright colored petals to please the hours

inside the house the leather furniture
glosses over an event
the walls are painted white the beams
and trusses all yellow green
the garage is finally porcelain tiled
expensive tastes dominate here
time is short, the weather gives in
for something that won't last
and then the dirge marches in
a Sunday dress, beloved mourners
the prayers are sung, the candles lighted
another important shit is gone
in this far away town.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not at all about sadness
leaving is not sorrow
parting may be but it is on the other hand
sweeter if only we understand some more about the beauty and freshness of other places of the heart

swell

there is this reddish part of meeting new faces and shaking new hands exchanging (glances) places and trekking new terrains

thinking about clouds and cliffs the excitement of falling into the eternal abyss of that infinite emptiness

where is the floor?
in this bottomless ponder where is the end?

if you only know we are in the middle of this

up there there is nothing to hold down there there is nothing to hug

here, there is only my hand it is not a place but it will take you there
have you tasted the purity of honey?

it is sweet but there is no sugar in it it sticks.

RIC S. BASTASA
M5

You will miss this.

It is not here anymore.
When it was here, and for a long time,
It waited for you, made some unusual poses
So you will notice,
But you are so naive, a mild term,
You are so busy &
Indifferent and so it left you
Like M5 a robot

You say you will miss it
Because it is not here anymore.

We understand.
You do not really mean it.
Love is never there.

Robotized, how can you love again?

RIC S. BASTASA
my mornings are good news
most of them are spies arriving at the house
giving me the secret codes in ciphers
and the whole day i spend my time
deciphering what my gods are telling me
do this, don't do that,
proceed this way, you meet this man
do not say your name, he will brief
you on something new and exciting
avoid the limelight, be at the background
see but do not be seen,
keep a low profile and work on the blunders
read the morning news again
and see if everything is done

Mr. anonymous, are you happy now?
on a cup of black coffee, and a paragraph on
page one of the Peninsula
shall your focus be. Tomorrow on the
Perhaps, and then on the hullabaloo
the Tallulah and the Shalna
and the Oh my God this can't be
but It Is, It happens,

Trafalgar, de javu, Javelin of Janus,
Spears of Spartacus, Sword of Damocles,

Where's the Golden Fleece? The snake woman
just escaped leaving all her eight children dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The world shakes again
and people begin to count the numbers
they forget
what is important is always the quality
and, for which,
no matter what the numbers are,
they do not matter anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
as you lie there
on dried tears, shall i summon
more light, to lighten the
darkness of your
eyelashes,
shall i summon rain
to cool the windows of
the soul,
must i bend some more
like the reeds to
kiss the lovely
pond of the marshes?
i wade naked to your
waters,
but can still see the rain
inside your eyes
those broken glasses
inside those dreams
i stop beside a boat
but then i cut the rope
and let it go
it is dark now,
and i do not know
what a game is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maalaala Mo Kaya?

in worship of the truth
love bends
the chaos begins

the porcelain shatters
and she picks the
pieces piecing them
all again

the cracks insist
that this is something wrong
waste of so much pain

she insists on the power
of truth's liberation

she bows to take all
the consequences

the writer of the story
makes the truth victorious
and love is regained
the pieces back to their places
the family is whole again

in real life however i wonder
what if she just kept things to herself
conceals the truth for good
and no one should have been shattered
just like what my mother did

then there would have been no story after all
no one would have been listening
for an hour or more
wondering what happens to truth at the
last episode

mother was indeed different
for like the earth she believes that not all
need not be known
some things that hurt may better be left
unknown unsaid untouched

i guess i agree with her
underneath this earth some magma keeps the fury
at the surface the earth keeps the peace
the harmony and the moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Macabre (A Poem From Mte)

Stillness of quiet countenance
Sleep ebbs to slumber
Time pauses
For life is almost to pass.

Still conscious
But retiring
To letting go
For knowing what lies ahead
Is rest eternal.

Peace, at long last
Consume my being
Pain no more
Of this life unending.

Whiteness of pure bless
My soul will rest.

I shall not think
Nor wonder
Neither strives
For the time has come
For me to cross the unknown

The west is calling
The amber sun retiring
But darkness not to welcome
But light encompassing

Come all you who passed
This portal of completeness
And welcome this poor
Wretched sinner.
To your indwelling

Let us rejoice and praise
This mysterious destination
For I know I will reside
In His all loving compassion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Macleish Diminished....

A mute

Dumb
thumb

Silent
casement

A wordless
flight of birds

A motionless
moon

Leaving
night-entangled trees,

Leaving
memory
the mind -

Not true

For all
An empty doorway

A poem
But

RIC S. BASTASA
Mac's Choice

the boat left at 9:30 that evening
at the port there was a show of firecrackers

we both watched it
when it stopped he continued talking about the possibility
of this brother's feet being cut off

gangrene, but this brother had chosen death rather losing his feet
dead is better than being alive and being unable to wear
a pair of shoes

it is not unique,
or bizarre

or being stupid and hardheaded,

there was one who had never to lose a foot or hand
but then
when he concluded that life is absurd he banged his car against the wall

and killed himself.

mac is a category not by itself but of those
who are brave enough
to call it quits

when essence is no longer essence
the accessory must give way

sometimes i think of it before everything else
the boat sailed the whole night with it hoary sound
letting out grey smoke
into the air

at 6:30 in the morning it docked
somehow i thank god why with all these weird thoughts
no one
(including myself) jumped over board and then be forever lost
i admit i admire mac, but i am not mac.

RIC S. BASTASA
Macte Animo! Generose Puer Sic Itur Ad Astra

Wake up Youth
Cheer Up
Smile and Laugh
& Dance

Do not Just Sit there
And be so Uninvolved
Have some wings
Young Men & Young Women
Of this World

This is Poetry
And This is the Way
to The Skies!

RIC S. BASTASA
Mad

mUTUAL
ADMIRATION
CLUB

meeting at 12
midnight

i love poetry.

is it poetry?
really?

scratch my back.
my hands are too short
to reach the fleas.

my feet are too long
to kiss my ass.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mad Mud Man

a man in the expression
of mud,
carries something dead
wrapped with
cloth and
mud,
walks senselessly
around
a busy city,
when he finally commits
suicide
what then?

he ends his life,
do we have to follow?

this is still the same law
the fittest must survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Madame Minda

i remember when i was yet so small like a
snail,
mother took me to your house where the roof leaks like a wooden
boat
and i was gazing up my eyes fixed on some stars that night like a
telescope
and mother pinched me in my arm afraid to offend your poverty like a
worm
but then i could not be stopped and i spoke so loud asking mother why are
they so poor like a
rat
and mother silenced me with her hand covering my mouth and you pretended
you did not hear anything like a
pig
you stared at me but i could not be outdone i also stared at you like a white
pegion
that was how it was Madame Minda, we started as two opposing river banks
we never reach each other like you were my broad back and i am a short
hand
that never reached your heart
i never miss you and you never ver are you i simply keep it
to myself like a
wart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Madonna

a boy sleeping beside
his mother

he stops sucking his
thumb in the middle
of such a peaceful
day

the mother sleeps too
and dreams

about his boy who shall
become another soldier
of Israel

about this war that
has no seeming ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Madungog Mo Ang Tingog Sa Kahilom.

sabta nga kining
mga balak
yawyaw sa kalag.

ikaw nakigsandurot
sa imong kaugalingon
nga mora bag ikaw duha
ka buok diha sa imong
lawas, o kaha ba sa
lawak sa imong
kasingkasing.

nianing bahina dili
ka kadungog nga dunay
mosungog unya ingnon
ka lang nga ikaw naunsa
ba nga mora mag
gidungoy o giatay.

kini man gong
pakisulti sa atong
kaugalingon wala diha
sa binuang.
ang-ang naman og
ang imong kaugalingon
imong yagayagaan.

makaingon ta nga kini
tinood. Walay komedya.

sa lugar nga ikaw
makiglamano sa imong
kaugalingon, nakighinabi,
madungog mo ang
tinood nga tingog
sa kahilom.
Mae, Or Mai

Mai, the mountain of gold
and look at that monkey,
merely sitting on it
wallowing in poverty
for the past 100 years

RIC S. BASTASA
Magellan

your name is
taught in school
what you did
you have become
a discoverer
of what we already
had
how can i ever revere
a cruel conquistador
as you?
i suggest that they
change the
books of our
history.

RIC S. BASTASA
Magenta Edge Rose

my sighs shall upon
thy petals rest
my hope shall imitate
the buds
my past i bury deep
down to
where your roots
go.

RIC S. BASTASA
Magic

show, hide,
conceal, show,
mislead, distract
show, hide, show,
distract, put,
smile, show, hide,
distract, pull,
put, laugh,
	here, your
hand is smarter
than their brains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Magic Brooms And Magic Pebbles

We may have all these kinds of magical things
Needed for some magical solutions to our
Own problems, our problems the two of
Us in these confusions, these wars,
A magic broom for you to fly away to magic land
Where perfect handsome prince could be waiting,
A magic carpet for me where I can go to Arab lands
Dancing bellies sway where sweet date palms grow
Throughout a thousand magical, starry desert nights
A magic pebble that both of us can swallow
And khazzamm! Khazzam! We become what we all desire,
The forms of our dreams the powers in our wishes,
A genie from a magic will do too so we can be educated
And cautioned with only three limited exclusive wishes,
But no, no, no my dear, I face you and you face me,
We are in this, through this, by this, and for this,
We now, we two, must be all against this, together.
In real flesh, in real gazes, worldly till the end of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Magic Of Your Eyes (Armik)

There is magic in your eyes
I melt like ice
When you look at me

You look at me some
More

A stare
A glaring stare

I become gaseous
I am invisible

I float
I feel as though
I am nothing

I am lost
But that would not be enough for me

I shall take my own revenge
In this game of lost love

This unrequited love

Your stare
Your glaring stare

Too painful

I shall become gas
And you breathe me
Into your heart

I am
Invisible
Now I live there
Do I have to tell you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Magicians Learn To Erase The Future.

what happens when all our vested interests are gone?

when i find no use of you and you too, mutually, otherwise set aside, modesty and humility combined in a salad bowl of howls and brawls,

and you find me of no use at all. an encashed check, a candy wrapper, a shoe without a pair, rotten tomato, wormed apple,

flat tired car, used and worn toothbrush, a torn coat, a broken wand, a left over bone of a fried chicken from the party of dogs,

what happens then? well, we become strong, so strong, that we become more silent.

deep within we want to get rid of each other. outside the weather is good. people plan for their next vacation. mothers buy ice cream and fathers pay the bills.

children abused the goodness. no one grows well enough with healthy teeth.

deep within the wars are made. deep within explosives are stored.

the mind learns to make traps.
the body skilled in restraints.

deep within, we want to get rid of each other.
magicians learn to erase the future.
it is not even there yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Magnified Red Rose Petals

rose petals
magnified

i see morning
suns rising

from the red
red sea

i see scallops
cups hands i feel

love i throw away
sad memories

i say
forgotten and
forgiven and
i am ready for

love's
happier second
chances. I am

in love again
there is no fear
i can bear
what is there
whatever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maintaining A Good Relationship

it is like
riding on a boat
one summer
when the sea is blue
and calm

despite the
good weather
we still have to
situate ourselves
for a balance

otherwise
we will sink
and that would be
a lot of
shame

or even if
not the shame
i cannot
imagine the
pain

maintain the balance
keep the
poise
have a little composure
rise
above
this discomfort

as i whistle
to please the
wind

RIC S. BASTASA
greater things
indeed are pressing

pain is but
another ingredient
of genius

sorrow is its song
lament its language

death its perfection
at the end is the
glory
of our redemption!

so cheer up!
Young man
grab the pain
take all the sorrow
it is all your gain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Makamatay

sa sulod
anaa ang mga laraw

sa gawas
anaa ang hisgot hisgot kabahin
sa mga adlaw

ag didto ko sa lapyahan
wala na gani namo nahinumdumo nga
unta ang among tuyo mao man unta
ang pagkaligo
sa dagat

ikaw nga nahibilin sa balay abi
nako ug duna kay mga bisita
nga moanha lang kon wala ko

ang nahitabo nanglakaw tas
lain laing agianan
kon magtagbo man kita
kana kon gabii na

ang atong mga hisgotan disir
ta matulog dili kabahin nato
gilikayan nato kini
hadlok ta sa mga tinood

lahi na ang dagway sa tinood
dili sama sa mga bakak
humot, lami kan-on apan kon
idayon, ayka, makamatay.

RIC S. BASTASA
and so they tell you,
be brief and concise,
you try to follow
you flow on some
self-imposed restraints,
a brief river on a
concise ripple,

you opted instead
for silence and with
full respect for the
instructions of the law
even the fish there
tiptoed on a
tutu.

what a mockery!
the snakes hissed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Make It Short, Know When To Cut...

we'll make it short
like some sort of a curt,
know when to cut
what is take from the gut.

time is an eagle flying
and you are at the edge- sighing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Make It Simple, ...Natural...Beautiful

what is simple
must be natural.
in effect it
will be beautiful
to see, to feel.
do not add more
eyes to the feathers
it will look like
an outdated peacock.
your woman has a
hundred arms, are
you really making
your goddess?
a house with a
thousand windows
has become nothing
but a space, and
everything important
slips away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Make- Over Of The Soul

a new lady
rises from her
old self, now
wearing no
make up
no earrings,
no expensive
dress, she begins
to look outside
carry her colors and
palette and brushes
and begins
to paint the trees
and birds
and the clouds and
seas
in the new canvass
of her life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Make The Most Of Midlife

if you wait about what midlife has to offer
you become a loser
because you expect an offering of such age

midlife is an age of giving
of making other people's dreams come true

make the most of it
let others grow let others have their own way

watch them
bloom
watch them
find their destinies

watch them
laugh

and then you are
what you want to be

a kingmaker
a dream weaver

a happy person
simply watching time go by.

RIC S. BASTASA
Make This World Not A Tear

make this world
not a tear but try
making this a big
mountain that we
can climb and
up there sleep
with the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Make Up Your Mind

make up your mind
from this day
forward
take your step
and walk

away, let not bad company
destroy you,
be yourself, shape your body
clean your mind
and be free

there is no use carrying
that past and be
so slow
you are never meant
to be a
turtle

your mother
was once the best flyer
she was
a bird in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Jigsaw Puzzle Of The View

pull out sunset down to the sea
hide it on the horizon
pull up the seagulls and put the
moon at the center then scatter
the stars like seashells and finally
get a picture of yourself and cut
your face and hands into pieces
be sure to mix the fingers and
interchange the left from the right
cut some more of yourself into
differs sizes and shapes

let us see how she really cares
let her solve the jigsaw puzzle
let her make yourself whole again

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Candle

i pick up the pieces
of melted candle

despite the wastes
left-overs of those already used

burned, i cut them with a sharp knife
like bread crumbs and

put them all in a small kettle
a little fire melts all of them

i got a thread a slice of tin
as weight inside a mold

i pour the melted candle there
and set the newly formed one aside

i reflect upon life
i reflect upon the people with wasted lives

vis-a-vis
the new candle that i made.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Match

some questions:
tai chi's age please
height, weight,
sexual preferences
favorite color
any allergies?
recent operation
drugs taken recently?

the same thing
with Mr. Taylor

and ms. tai chi,
this is important:

do you still wet
in bed?

(ha ha ha)

same question
go for mr. butts

(and hope they
are not just
one and the same
person)

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A New Piece....

somehow
separation is painful
but it is a necessity
and soon you learn to live
with something new
the one you meet
and becomes more interesting
than the one that
you have to forget....

too, an art, cutting pieces,
and letting them go
into the air into the floor
into the river

i am not that kind
to pick up the pieces and make
another mosaic again
like a window in the old
cathedral

i like the new cloth
a new thread
a new needle, my old hands
carefully
cutting a design
making a new piece
for my own
delight....

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Part Of Me Dumb

there are always rules
most of them
are not for our liking

we like some other
rules
those that make us
free
but there aren't so
many

we conceal
and try our own
way of making
ourselves
happy

we resort to masks
we find
shelter in the
covering of the
night

we embrace the
cold arms of
dusk
we like it here
to maintain our
decency
for the day
where we
do not smell
decay

i make a part
of myself
numb
no not my ears
it is something
else
that we do not
talk about

i make a part of
me dumb for
you so you may
love me
as i pretend loving
you

there is however one
thing so alive
no it is not love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Poem While Chatting With Friends At Facebook...

why do we really have to think that seriously
to an extent
we lose ourselves in those ideas

we failed in the grace of spontaneity

just write what comes at the stairs of your consciousness
open the door and let it enter
welcome it
offer it a nice seat

do no ask from where it comes
why it is here or what happened to it
why it has drifted here
what ill wind caused it?

offer her a bed to sleep in the room of your heart
after a sumptuous dinner

after you have accommodated it
go back to chatting with your friends in the internet

they have long been waiting for your answers to their questions
definitely trivial
those that do not change the course of this world

and you ask. 'where are we?'

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
~~~

nganong hunahunaon pa man gayod kaayo
mawala na hinoon ang

spontaneity
isulat lang ang unang miabot sa hagdanan sa imong utok
pasudla sa pultahan
og palingkora sa imong bangko

ayaw na pangutan-a kon dis-a kini gikan
og naunsa kini
nganong napadpad siya sa balay sa imong panumduman

imbitaha nga matulog sud sa lawak sa imong kasingkasing human sa usa ka panihapon

kon mahaluna na siya
padayon sa

chat sa imong mga amigo og amiga
nga ganiha rang gapaabot sa imong mga tubag sa ilang mga pangutana

asa na gani ta?

RIC S. BASTASA
Making A Self Busy

there are many reasons
the fingers fall short of the count
the mind continues to invent
and the body resigns
but everyday this matter of
tiring out the soul
does not stop
and if soon the body gives up
the heavens shall celebrate
the feast of angels
the showdown of saints
the smile of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Connections

Tendrils grappling in air
Making connections be
It the wind or something else
Out there

Just to hold on to what when

Thin green sword-like palm
Hawaiian leaves stretching to the
Blue skies and sun
Making connections to whatever
Is who knows what slices thin some
Spaces in between light and dark

Some shadows playing like small
Children in the night park playground

Anything to touch life
Yawning to what-is if-this-could-happen
Then what?

Powered Rockets bulleting to space stabbing
& Lots of jet nozzles buzzing to
Vast dark silence clean cutting lines
Colored smoke curving with light

Making connections to planetary skies
Moon, Venus, Jupiter

On to Pluto to Zeus what if
One baby-finger touching fine fish
Fins swimming in ocean-space out-there

Making connections in between haze & fog
What if it is there that which lies next to this
Next to us from far and they can be then near

We are all tendrils rockets baby fingers space ocean fish fins
Making connections this empty hands loosened fingers
Dripping sands and spilling fine touches to wind chimes

Pointing stretching making fingers in between
A short distance making always always

Connections to what if what if I am there too.
Chances are, you chase and find them, footprints

They were once, and they all left, just seconds away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making It Simple...

after you are through
as you keep it simple and
understandable and ready for the next
user

please
leave it
empty....

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love Despite The Crowding Thoughts...

discourage all these
don't bring this blanket upon your hill
we juxtapose realities
i am water to your funnel

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love Inside A Dream

when i go to bed tonight
my arms will be empty

i will be sad like a broken beam
no one repairs me

no one comes to this room to bring
a torch to put the curtains on fire

there is no delight on coldness of
the floors as though there is death on every footstep
that i make

i cannot be defeated
my empty arms shall be filled with my own body

i shall kiss my hands
like they are ten lips in all

i shall perspire like a candle
burning my own light

and then i shall sleep and travel another journey
towards that wish to be with you again

you are there softly treading upon a grass
i shall be there touching your body with my hands

we shall make love
we have no names.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love To A New Person

i do not wait quite that long to have you.
i like your hair, you had it cut finally.
short, but still silky, i touch each lock
like the way i feel
wool, sliding my hands behind you
and then
my finger lands between your lips,
not for anything else,
i do not want any word from you,
neither from me,
this is the moment i have been waiting for
all my life
to be with you, on this short moment,
like your short hair
i feel your lips close to mine,
i savor your breath
unto my own mouth,
your spirit unto mine, i breathe
through each lock,
silky, smooth,
too lovely still,

now, i die embraced by the
understanding of your
arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love To Earth And Sky

the firm body
of forest night lays upon
a dream of wet leaves
softly sleep lays its weary hands
upon a labyrinth of
blue veins

blood pushing each corpuscular mate
into the pinkish blushes
of an excited morning
the hands play their piano songs
dreams burning real
heat dissipating upon
the thighs

bursting as white cumulonimbi clouds
above the shadowy hills

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With Art, Religion, Philosophy, Putting Passion In All The Proper Places Of The Earth...

i made love to books
kissed each page
hugged each chapter like
no other
licked all its covers
slept with it for years

and i made love to
a career
all years showered without spare
my hours are dissertations
all days marked with treatises
all hours danced with
possibilities about a new realm
of academic stairs

i wore caps, those black ones
i was obsessed with black robes
tickling life
with probes

murdering the birth of lofty desires
my life is miserable
without the passion with you

your body i have drawn in canvass
and i throw away all paints
and Chinese brushes burned

your gaze i sculpted on a tree
and the tree was cut
turned into firewood
ashed...

passion is still there wiggling
like blood in the veins of my arms
pulsating like a breathing salamander
on the ceiling

the room breathes at me
the bed creaks
because i am lying about myself
and suppressed what should have been more

passionate on the grass
and the shores of the white sandy beaches
somewhere in my dreams
the wildest ones

but i learned a lot of wisdom then
got an A+ on restraint
cooling down
like winter ice like beautiful crystals
on my palm

and i learned where to put passion
somewhere
where i can be perfect again like
the gods of the witty wind

i made love to books
ejaculated on each page
licked each hard page

and i have learned to live
my life
like a gentleman in the room
where faces of men
are straight like Gibraltar pillars

their arms made of marble
their minds
solid as steel and i do not stop
to put where passion must be put
in the proper places of this earth

i made love to mountains
kissed the fog
and licked each cloud
slept on cliffs and
got high
on the wings of the birds of my
youth and
imagination

i am entangled on the white thighs
of poetry

my soul my body my hands
made captive
all century....

and i made love with freedom
penetrated love,
ate passion
chewed religion
and i made love with art and i made love
with philosophy

and now, everyone loves me
or at least that is what
i think to be....

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With Solitude

i make love to solitude
and i like her
she has no words but she speaks
well
about how this world is going to be lived
well
how to walk with wisdom
regain that posture of confidence
despite
the uncertainty of that
destination

i make love to solitude
most of my nights are lighted with nothing but stars
impregnated
she goes somewhere
still longing for my kiss

i have become a stranger no more
to myself
and perhaps even to you
divine
silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With You

making love to you all night long
till dawn when light starts to caress our shoulders
your hair on my hair
your lips clinging to my lips
your thighs asleep on my thighs
your legs still on top of mine
your tongue still playful with my tongue
how can we forget all these things these images these colors and scents
still clinging to our minds like vines still sticking to our skins like a disease
how can we ever forget all these?

it is all in the mind, it is all in the heart, and in both
where can forgetting be? i am in love with you and you are in love with me.
in both, in mutuality where can forgetting be?
it is all in my head, it is buried in my heart like the treasures of my God.
where can forgetting be? where can death be?

it is forever, it is endless, it is eternal,
mutual love, desire fulfilled, love overflowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With You Early Morning

you're thirsty for love
and so i give you my body
and you go on top of me
my mind whirls
so consumed
i feel like i am a set of bones
wrangling
outside my flesh
i do not have a soul
i feel like i am just this air
hushing somewhere
imagining a sea
without a shore

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With You In Pain And Fear

you are coming from a distant place
and we shall soon meet
i told you about what i hate
this waiting
and it is the same thing with you
you were never born with the patience
we meet half-way
on a perfect timing
you come and i go
no one waits for another
we like it this way always on a perfect timing
waiting is outlawed
a treaty is sealed
and it has been that way since then
no one waits
you come and i go and that has always been
the way i make love with you

we were happy and then the truth comes
it will not always be that way
for one has to be god and the other has to be a slave
we cannot agree
we parted ways and there in that pain and fear
we have always been waiting forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With You Inside My Mind
	his morning
i watch the sun rise
between

your breasts
	his morning i shall
watch sunset

between your thighs

i shall sleep
on your valley

i shall whisper
my songs of love in your ears

there will be a choir
of moans

and then the perfect silence
resides

in the chambers of
our exhausted bodies and souls

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love....

dressed
how do you expect that
we can make love
in this fashion?

undress then
let me feel the bareness of your feet
let my tongue clean
what dirty feeling you have
for me

let there only be skins
between us
let our lips be one
in this kiss
our hearts beating like drums
on a wedding
festivity

let us close our eyes like doors
opening to another
world beyond us

now we shall have no names for each other
no expectations
plain sharing
nothing more
nothing less...

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love..... Cork To Wine...

to really please my senses
this time
i make a poem without balls

it is something erotic
i do not talk about a revolution
i am away from any motive
a hidden agenda
i step down to the lower level
of social irrelevance

you touch my body
you kiss my lips
we lie down to bed
you are my moon
i am a hill
we let go the bluebirds from our mouths
scatter them
to the universe

they are all free now
as we embrace tightly like
i am the cork
to your bottle of
wine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Love With Her Own Bed

you are just near me
but between us is a door
and between that door
is another door, and so
when you say a word
i have to figure out what
you really mean,

when i open the door
there is a glass wall and
i thought it was you
humming,

it is cold tonight
i am closing a window
out there
i see a black bird perched
upon a branch,

it is cold and i am shutting
myself for any
kind of significance like

what if the bird dies?
what if the bird is you
disguised as a bird?

tonight i cannot sleep
something bothers me
all these thoughts bother me
there is no note
that you are coming back
from that long trip
away from home

was it Sarah who said
that she is making love with her bed?
Making Our Own Space

this morning i wake up late
i see misplaced things
lots of it, like dirty clothes
on the floor
unwashed dishes on the sink
blankets unfolded
pillow cases removed from
their pillows
unzipped pants
missing underwear
tumbled glass
spilled milk on the table
dogs waiting to be bathed and feed

i stand up to get my empty plate
take three spoonfuls of steam rice
and two pieces of fish
a cup of coffee and i go out of the house
sit on a bench under a tree
sunshine above me and air breezing on my chest
i eat alone
and something's good is growing inside me
i love it this way
my own space of peace
amidst disorder
my capacity to choose
what i do
despite the negligence of
others around me

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Sense

if our choice of words
is smooth and reserved like
a lady educated in a state university
they say we make sense,

if you are rich and flamboyant
and ride in flashy cars and live
in expensive mansions in exclusive subdivisions, then by all means
you make sense

despite the fact that you are
immoral, and treacherous and
scheming and oppressive and
congenitally lying with your teeth grinning,

to them you still make sense
they still want to be pictured beside you
and you make them your own property
as they all adore and worship you,

i don't.

RIC S. BASTASA
Making Statement Brief

i would like to
be brief,
nothing to say
anyway
what else?
got mauled by
indifference
is anybody home?

RIC S. BASTASA
Making The Choice Early Morning...

it is when you wake up
on a clear day
upon a very cold morning that
you are shown some solid choices
in the open
with all the pros and cons
as you sip your tea
and have a closer look at the cups and saucers
their gleam and pure colors
of white and blue
as sky and sand

the day is frank
and you are prepared now to take all the
risk
well calculated and
explained

then you grab one
and there is no regret
the light of the sun is warm
and the day is
as lovely as you can very well see
on both sides
of this
coin

RIC S. BASTASA
Making The Choices...

from my rotting belly
words like words are coming out
no one likes them

worms are beguiling
i am misled myself
because from my rotten belly
the worms without my minding
have become
tiny butterflies

then they fly towards my hair
which have become some kind of little flowers
and i can smell the sweet scents of chili

i have forgotten my body
i have become a forest with all these safari stuff
and orchids and wild birds

to my big surprise of course
because i am never asleep i am awake

oh, this workings of the mind
from a rotten body, this junk of our history
shall rise
the wonders of our future, a forest, birds, safari, rivers,
clouds, skies,

everything, everything, you simply have to make the choices...

RIC S. BASTASA
alright, so there is this wing growing at the side of your body and it grows so big and then it spreads itself and then it is flying high in the sky

and then you do not see it it dissolves in space

RIC S. BASTASA
Malacca In Peace

in Malacca
religions mix
like
fruit salad

and they are one
in saying
that tolerance
is smooth and
sweet
and sells like
hot cakes....

RIC S. BASTASA
Malate Hotel

been in that gloomy room
the linens are pale and there is a hole
where a mouse goes in and out
in familiarities

my wife did not like it
and angrily told me that
it will be the last time

alone i went there again
same rat, same paleness, same
gloom
but not completely

i open the window at midnight
to see the dances of the lights
and the crowd of people and cars
and girls
and with all the glass windows

i do not hear the murmurs
and whispers
and sometimes those screams
it is like a silent movie

you were once here too
and you called me
that you had just arrived from
a very long trip

you told the hotel keeper
writing my name on a piece
of paper,
'let him in my room
when he arrives.
we are friends'

it was raining so hard
and i told the hotel keeper
'my shoes are muddy,  
and i better wait at the lobby'  

hot coffee, just hot coffee  
and some happy talks.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Mama Buen

dreamt about her mother
and i woke her up
and she told the story
about
a secret, which i just
met with a shrug
being an unbeliever, and then
hours after
she talked in her sleep and
she screamed and
i woke up her again and she
told the story about
how a friend
betrayed her and then she lay
asleep soundly
until dawn until she feel off from
her bed again
unable to remember the hints
from her dreams....

RIC S. BASTASA
Mama....

the principal of the
high school department sent a note
that you have to see her
as soon as possible

' dear madam,
the school uniform of your son
has creases, the underarm is torn,
and his pants need badly
a washing'

when you arrive there
you only have 30 minutes of your time
you still have unsold fried bananas
and the ice candies are melting
and some customers are already
impatient for their noodles
and freshly baked bread,

you were thinking of so many
concerns
for survival but you assured the
principal,

- -' ma'am, i am so sorry
i will do things as you instructed
but how is my boy doing in school? '

' he is doing well
but you should take care of him'

' madam, i have trained him to take
care of himself
and i have trust in his undertakings'

that was how things ran
the boy had no qualms
understanding that he is loved
though he is not well taken-care of
that mother is just busy
looking for the money
to send him to school.

that boy has become a lawyer
that mother died at 86
happy in her grave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mama's Best....

i fully remember that night
when i lost in an
oratorical contest,
mama was beside me
when we went home
inside the car and
she embraced me
saying that i gave
my best but the
judges by personal
taste chose another.

'you are still the best
my son' she said kissing
my forehead.

i have always known
mama as the best.

how can i not live
pursuant to her
wishes? for in her
before she died
my understanding about
what life is
(it is not a race
but a personal journey)
has since then
become perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mambo Mambo....

always, shall i be held at this hour,
always, finishing what is composed by the dawns of my mind, always,
must i be a servant of the greatness of whispers, this and that, an image after another, hour after hour, and when the sun shines,
the fingers of light caress my forehead, i shall stand and walk, under the trees, contemplating and so fulfilled

RIC S. BASTASA
Mambucal

this is the place
of seven
waterfalls
below it is the
hot springs

beside the pool
is the river where
we can
go boating

we climb the stone
stairs at the apex
where clouds
kiss the cliff

as we watch the
seven waterfalls
we begin
to see the meanings
of our lives

as the noise of the waters
still try to
embroider
the tapestries of
our inner
peace

always there is something
more than those
pictures can give

there is always more
to presence
that absence can
never fill
Man And Nature

nature is always silent
it is cool

man steps in
and cuts and kills
and wastes

it proclaims its
power

rain and thunder
and lightning
and flood
and mud

nature steps in there too
takes what
it can

man shouts and curses
women wail
children are buried
some are lost
unaccounted
and never heard of again

nature is back to sleep
and does not mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Man Can Never Be Alone...

man can never
be alone
even if he chooses
to be
in his own
selfishness

against the light
he shall cast his
shadow

in the middle of
darkness
deep in the night
of his solitude
he will always
hear his
own voice

no ear can be
deaf
no self can ever
vanish

the voice within
never ceases to
converse with who
is there
who wants to dissolve
in the vastness
of the universe

why do you hear
the rain?
why do you smell
the notes of
an old song?

tell me if the
voice mutes itself
tell me

you may lie to
your shadow
you cannot lie
to that voice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Man Heaven And Earth

captured in between
man situates
in the confused state

and he is there
and it is so beautiful to see

earth, man, and heaven
both hands
holding
like a greedy child
taking both
on one grip

lust, flesh,
humanity

can heaven be still faraway?

RIC S. BASTASA
Man Soll Den Tag Nicht Vor Dem Abend Loben

it is still an early day
the sun has not shone that brightly

don't praise the day yet
the evening may be as dark as a pit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Man With A Hat

early night
man with a buri hat
by the sea
boating whistling

RIC S. BASTASA
Man, I Do Not Really Know If I Have Written Something

i like the sound of the poo
not winnie's

i waited for minutes
and scribbled something
on that white tissue paper

and then i made the last moan
and then i sighed
and wiped my bottom

and then i throw away the
tissue and then there
was this sound of
relief, this flushing sound

and then everything
is gone after a short
whirl & whirl and whirl
and swosh

man, i did not know
that i have written
(something so well?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Managing Myself Under The Rain

alone
under the moon
i ask myself
the same questions
all over again
not tired
over these redundancies
i ceased upon
a silence
this incorruptible silence
i raised my hands in
surrender
to the shadows of the trees
to the sounds
of those frogs
to the heavy rain
to the grass that is invaded by
the flood again
i am wet
but this time
there are no salt
like tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Managlahi Na Kaayo

ang mga lingkoranan
sa kan-anan
gilinya nga morag dunay
bayle unya
dapit,

wa ko makauyon
sakit lantawon

ang kaldero walay hanig
sa alababo
ang bag-ong gitaod nga
tiles
morag gibungot

ang di nako ganahan
nga smoked fish maoy
gitanyag sa panihapon

wa ko sukad magpasaka
ug iro sa higdaanan
apar iya kining kanaham

bisag kusog ang ulan
dili mahimong dili patukaron
ang aircon

ang mga timailhan nanaghan
apar bisan pa niini
wala pa gihapon nabungat
ang gipaabot nga pulong

sa akong baba kini
kanunayng nag-ung-ong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Manghinaw....

sa sayong kaadlawon
ako siyang
gipasabot nga kining
tanan
lumalabay lamang
kasakit, kalipay
kasubo, kalami,
kaanindot
kasumo, kalagot
kahiubos, ug uban
pa
mga lamas lamang
sa kinabuhi
labaw sa tanan
ako siyang gipahimangnoan
anaa kanunay
nagpahipi ang atong
Labaw nga
Makagagahom
ako siyang gisukmatan
nganong nahadlok man siya
kagabii sa iyang
pag-inosara samtang wala pa
ako miabot
gikan sa akong mga
gikalangayan
dili na lang sa habog ang
pader sa balay
dili na lang sa adunay
lima ka iro nga
nagbantay
dili lamang sa lig-on
nga mga pultahan
nga kinandadohan
asa naman diay ang imong mga pagtoo og pagsalig?
asa naman diay ang kanunay mong pagsimba sa Diyos?

nganong nagpabilin ka man nga mahuyang?

sayang ang imong mga adlaw-adlaw nga pag-ampo kon ang imong kasingkasing nagpabiling
luyat sa mga kasakit og kamingaw

ah, ingon ka ikaw nga ikaw kana og wala na gayoy makausob pa kanimo nga kon usbon ko ikaw dili na ikaw ka na

magpakahilom na lamang ako kay sa laing bahin karong adlawa atubangon ko na usab ang mga lit-ag sa akong mga kaaway

og mahimong sa akong paningkamot sama sa mga nanglabay og mga lumalabay lamang usa ka sa akong mahikalimtan

og kon unsa man puhon ang imong dangatan sama kang poncio pilato sa palanggana nga puno
sa tubig
ako
manghinaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Mangle Bangle

dramatic spans

years and years of waiting
to get exactly what you want
in what you do

you reflect

the need to wait for the return
of a particular quality of light,
in order to proceed

selecting the mood
waiting for the right time to unfold

about your struggles

uncooperative weather
or other alterations in your chosen thoughts,
in your effort to record faithfully
some tracks of history

all very impressive
such excessive literalness
your only aim,
avoiding feelings

early surrealistic images
to recent staccato cityscape
and suave sculptures
and refined poetry

you were never literal
because at the end
you put the last anaphoric word

exactly,
truth is never exact as they always
demand
ultimately words scatter
phrases mumble
intelligible and i perfectly understand

your thirst for
understanding

RIC S. BASTASA
Mango

in my youth
i did not wait for ripe mangoes
what we experience
is that
they are better eaten raw
sour
makes our tongues twist
and want for more
makes our eyes limp
and want for more
makes our tongues salivate
wanting for more

more of raw life, green hopes,
powerful stains that
mark our puberty pangs
sour memories that make us
want life more
garnished with salt and soy
and shrimp
that makes us ask for more
raw life, slices of salivations
no incantations
pouting lips, grinning teeth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mango Tree

now is the season
for your
fruiting and so beware

they will
start
stoning you

and the more fruits you have
the more stones
will hit you

that is the law
that is the rule

of my place

RIC S. BASTASA
Manhood

in the center of my garden
of paradise
i stand alone
naked facing a mirror pool
where i see my
own image

i raise my hands to touch
the moon
it is golden on a sheen of fingers
touching my body

i squirt
too much light
so many seeds of light

some tiny hungry grass forms
have mouths
open

drinking some dews from the leaves
of my body

this is the cycle of my
solo existence

squirts of light
when the moon fades in a universe of dark space
it is so silent

RIC S. BASTASA
Manifestations

she comes
late tonight
and tells you
she is very tired
that she was
with her aunt
and in the
restaurant
where
they ate
early dinner
where they
drank
light beer and
smoked
some marlboro

and they were
laughing
on some jokes
that i told you
the other day
about married
people who
do not make
do
anymore as
often as they
want to
on the
early part of
their marriage
the honeymoon
that you
do not want
to remember
anymore

and then she
kissed you
goodnight
on your cheek
slightly and she
went straight
to your
bedroom
turned the air
condition
on and then
wrapped herself
with thick
wool blanket
and closed her
eyes and
slept
with all the
lights
on

she curled
like a puppy
that
we bought
yesterday

you guess
she must
be very
lonely in this
kind of
misery

the time
is 9: 30 p.m.
it is
saturday
and it is
raining
and there
is no one
in the house
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
the dead are scattered
buried without the rituals

it's a pity, we are crying
about the victims of this calamity

nature claims
what rightfully belongs to its
hands

manila, you are warned
when will you start to mend your ways?

tomorrow will be too late
the trees once sobbed but manila

you never really cared
you dance your nights in sin and plunder

now the victims lay dead
many are homeless and hungry
with nowhere to go

you weep for they are your children
they are your fathers and mothers
your wives and husbands

now, you must hit your breasts
with your fists
now, you must reform your ways.

RIC S. BASTASA
Manila This Summer

Here you all come
Manila
The City of
Cardinal Sin

A picture of you
is sent
The sun is behind you
Fading

I know that smell
The air from the sea that carries
the news of
A hundred dead rats
You cross the road
Run! Run!

You are staying in one of those
tiny rooms now
Your favorite greeting is
'Excuse me'

They all think that we all love
shrimps and crabs
Which they all think are the most
expensive delicacies that
we all have to wait for hours
creating the suspense of our
palates

They are all wrong
We are too simple for them
and they are too complicated for us
In such a
way that to maintain this balance
We keep our mouths shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mankind is trying to figure out how to stand up,
but
they all fall down the stairs.
They are frustrated for a moment.
Then
they move around,
learns their abilities and surroundings
and
gain confidence as they sit upright and smile.

Then; through a little ingenuity they hop up. Their legs are weak and they fall down again.

They look at their feet like, 'What's wrong with it? '

Then it dawns on them that they won't get back up those stairs any time soon.

Exasperated, they slump down.

RIC S. BASTASA
Man's Dreams

man wants a landmark
man's dream has always been
to build the tallest tower
dreams of Babel
sonorous sounds
widget whispers to justify
his inevitable passing away
and he shall hear a division of people
speaking in tongues so strange to his hearing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Man's Evolution

from the monkey he comes
bringing a banana

then he changes
erect with a stone & spear

then tired with the spear
he carries a gun

and some beer and
barbecue and steak

he faces the TV
more than every day

at last he evolves into
a pig,

happily waddling
in the mud.

RIC S. BASTASA
Man's Evolution From A Fish

granting that you come from a cell which transformed into a fish with propensity for feet, until the tails become a set of feet, when you were a fish then, do you still remember your favorite food?

RIC S. BASTASA
Man's Pride For Safety

while it maybe true
that the red wheelbarrow
does not allow the rain
to drench it in inferiority
but it is the master farmer
that finally decides
whether it should rust
under the rain or not

on the other hand the
wheelbarrow knows that the
master farmer loves
whatever redness it has
even the accumulating rust

the white chickens though
preoccupied with the grains
knew all these glazes

RIC S. BASTASA
Man's Worth

the measure of man's worth now
is not his face value
not his hectares of rice land
not his family name

it is his money in the bank
not even his integrity
not even the ugliness of his face
not even the horrors he sowed

can defeat that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mantra

words that i keep
within myself to keep me going
in my own silent journey
to the other side
of this world

God the Good
of all Goodness
God Omnipotent
God Omniscent
God Merciful
God of Understanding

Take care of us
Keep us from Harm
Keep us always
Under your Care
Make us Yours
Forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Manuela

the way she sings
the rivers of march
reminds me of
someone whom
i made love so many
years back
without the entanglement
of my lonely heart

the way she holds the
microphone
her hands gentle on
the base
her lips too near
the tip
showering it with
droplets of saliva
reminds me
of someone else
asking for my
sweet & kind
indulgence

RIC S. BASTASA
Manus Manum Lavat

it is always with One Hand
that Washes the Other

Friends or Lovers
Husbands and Wives

Two hands dipped On Water
Cooling and Resting

Two Hands Sounding to A Clap
From a Basin of Water

One Hand on Top of the Other
Comforting and Sharing and

Keeping the Silence with the Water
Between them The Time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Already Died....

in this space
in a short span
i've written
something true
and shaking but
i deleted it and
write this instead
something light
and insignificant
for i am tired
writing about us
something so true
and hurting and
i have decided to
spare ourselves
from this matter
for a time: we
set aside truths
for a while, you
know, many already
died.

Thanks we are
still in love and
so alive.

you don't have
to believe me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Always Love The Delicacy Of A Wrong

i always revolt upon
a wrong
so many faces look
at me with disdain

for the wrong had
always been delicious
and so this afternoon
again i walk alone towards

the church asking how could
have i offended them with
what is right.

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Faces Many Personalities

you see only one head
and confident
you slash the neck
to cut off
the face that you
hate

be sad and
be frightened
many faces
many heads
shall grow
forth from
the face of hate

your guilt
gives birth
to all of them
be frightened
some more

you see
you become
one of them
at the end
you cut
yourself
too

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Shall Speak About Love

that life is all about the nice feeling
of being loved and loving

to be true to be always faithful
to walk straight with a love for all

to withstand the trials of time
to be always pure and sublime

many shall speak the truth about love
as the key to the freedom of the dove

i may have forgotten and have become sullen
it is not too late, now, i must ask to be forgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Still Question...

many still question
loneliness,
tracing the roots
and thinking about possible cures

i have aged
my hair has turned grey
58%
and i don't ask anymore

it is a tree
and there are so many fruits
to gather
and satisfy our
hunger and thirst
with them
ripe for the picking

RIC S. BASTASA
Many Voices...

there are many voices
not just two, you keep telling me,
one voice says 'Enough'
the second one says 'Move'
and there are other voices
which i refuse to hear
because i am tired
and there is one that
solely comforts me
'Don't mind!'
sleepy, tender, independent,
mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mapping Out

I am viewing maps
and i know of cities
and secret places

of my heart and when i
take you there

you shrug your shoulder
and shake your head

they are what you
think
as places where i
should live

and so we part ways

you fly away from me
and i become an island
without a tree....

RIC S. BASTASA
March

do not generalize the month of March as the summer sun

there are surprises now with the idiosyncrasies of time

changes here and there and everywhere. I have seen this

hot high noon and suddenly it rains so hard, an overflow

of the canalized emotions & from the sky there flowed the

flowers for the dead, the songs of sorrow, live lamentations.

RIC S. BASTASA
March 16

Patty it is your birthday
and i am suppose to greet you

happy birthday, but i didn't
i change my mind
after all what can i give you
what can i say to you?

your son stepped into the abyss
between darkness and another darkness
he is maimed and cannot say a word to you

your husband's left eye got blinded
with a smirk of boiling oil
and there is no sense arguing what recklessness caused it
who pays for the damage done
where to go and be justified
the scales do not function well these darkest day of the year

your daughter plunged herself into the calendar days of the law
and she has no time with you
(did she greet you a happy birthday?)
how many husbands have she wasted?
she did not like kids i know and you love kids so much

time snobs you and you ask what have you done to its wings
to deserve its sharp claws?
i have no answers Patty, i am too preoccupied with so many theories
about the roots of sorrow
the branches of fear
the poisonous barks of injustice

good luck Patty have another year
make is saucy, try some beer, have a little smoke
they may cure your cancer.

Life is a sad novel Patty
and it will take some more years before it is finished.
Maria Theresa Leonora

I drink water
From this well
Using my
Bare hands

My shirt gets
Wet
Your dryness
Now
Is what I need.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marianito Edited (A Poem)

Slowly the world devours my soul.
Slowly my soul rots in the abyss.
Where darkness looms and emptiness sways.
Deep in the chasm of turmoil
I see no light.

Where is the God Who once touched my soul?
Where is He whom I heeded?
Where is the purpose of my leaping;
into the unknown void,

Where is the light that I felt before?
Where is the ever consuming grace,
Who illuminated me to understanding?
Where is the Love that called me to accompany the Pain?
Where is His presence that shredded me to pieces?

The Awareness that engraved my soul
With his pitiful presence?
I am already gone, is there nothing more than this?
I already have no more strength, nothing more left.
No more life to live or give.

No desire:
To breathe, to waddle and to remain afloat.
I remain in the turmoil of the world’s darkness and pain.
Always stabbed and wounded to the core.
I am already shredded... what is there more to break?
Alas my dear poor soul.
When is will all these end?

RIC S. BASTASA
it is now
mario
with his
parody
again
guitar strings
guitar strums
so
so spanish
my ears
jump
with joy
my ears
have kangaroo
feet
jumping with
joy
to the
skies
to the
hills
mario
parodi
and his
spanish notes
jumping like
fleas
from his
spanish guitar

my mind
has kangaroo
feet and jumps
and jumps
to
a great leap
the
great leap
that
soren
once
had in
norway.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mariposa

White orchid
Tenaciously clinging to
A strong bark

Her nights are lonely
Her days boring
She is suffocating
To too much
A high place
Where she hangs
Herself

She is waiting
For courage
To take her
Away
Take her down
Down to an earthly
Ground away from everything

She does not want purity
It is wasting her own beauty

She wants to escape
And be away
Be a flower to a wild woman
She will be a part of her
Wildly dancing on a dark night
To be crushed by lots of strong men’s hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marital Agonies

she sits on a rocking chair
but she is not rocking it
her eyes stare at the sea without
a horizon
she spreads her legs looking
for a spot to
rest her toes,

he is out there looking at the sunset
his shadow is consumed
by darkness

he comes home
opens the PC and begins to write some poems
mostly about
funerals
unlike before
there were lots of sunrises everywhere as though
mornings are the only
seasons

he pauses, he hears the rocking of the chair.
the TV is off
he cannot find the letters to form the words.
he stares at the monitor
he is silent.

there is no break in this monotonous sound of silence.
he wishes he were a stone.
she wishes she is a bird.

one refuses to grow further.
the other wants to fly away, no matter where.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marital Bond

This knot which binds us
Is killing me
You just don’t know
And I cannot tell you
I am choked
And you are kissing me.
Please, please
Let me first close my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
buried underneath their marital bonds
is love, and friendship and trust

the tie that binds them both cannot be
underestimated

you hurt one, you hurt them both
even if they are not united

despite absence of words
their tongues speak a language of their own
even if there is no word, or a symbol used

it is not their brains that decipher
it is their hearts humming

understanding comes like a curtain blown by air
a presence felt and accepted without question

in bed they dream same dreams
in the bathroom they have the same water

take one, and without delay the other shall follow
old age is their best show.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marivic, The Fine Lady Of Jose Dalman

buried beneath the almond
eyes
is the coffin of sorrow
with
the body of the dead which
you try
to hide forever

it has no epitaph
it can pass as just another
wall
of some insignificant house
that no stranger
may mind

this sorrow resurrects
in the iris and no matter how you try
to deceive your guests
with that waves and waves of laughter
the sonorous song of the sea
still makes itself heard
at the surface of
all pretensions

RIC S. BASTASA
Mark Lloyd

my brother wants to repeat history
i shudder to this malignant idea
but i let him go back
perhaps he can learn much better
now that he is too old
to know the tricks

mark Lloyd is going to be Fink
and there will be loud banging
and more failings
but his dad cannot hear them
as usual the silent screams
are more found in the screen
and it is always away from the hell of any home

fake home
where mother is queen and dad is king
and where everyone are but subjects
and numb ers.

i've seen Fink move away
his face is square
but there are crooked lines everywhere
tiny volcanoes on his face
which my erupt soon
and cause
the flow of magma
in the comfort room

i warned his mom
but her face is a highway without any interiors

for the meantime
there are no cars colliding

soon, i expect something bizarre
it is Fink markig Lloyd
bloody on the street
holding a gun
filling the city with smoke.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marker

I stopped being nice
To be happy for once

And so today
you will find the word
No
in the dictionary of my mind

I will keep things
Short and sweet
I won’t gabble
I won’t give you
A rope to hang you with

I won’t engage
And apologize
Or even explain
I won’t give you the
Fuel to use against me
And I get my 'no'
In quickly

I will set the marker
Right from the
Beginning
So you will
Know where
You will end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marking The Boundaries
	his is yours and
this is mine
you do not step within
my own line
and circle
i exclude you and you
must exclude me
as we mark the boundaries
of our
lonely territories

what if we change
this law of exclusion into the
nicer code
of inclusions like

this is ours and we
are one
we are brothers and sisters
the earth as our mother
the sky as father
and the rest of the humanity
as stars

the heavens smile
the space bends into a vow
the journey though long
and there is no time
nor light years
to mark our differences

there are no more fragments
of this porcelain jar
there is only a spread of silk
in space
and we are the intricacies
of that beautiful design
embroideries of God
sequins and diamond glitters
of that whole dress
in that party of happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Marriage

in one house
they live
as married couple

she sings her videoke
in the sala
he works on his poems
in the computer room

and when the clock strikes
eleven
on such an unholy hour
she stops singing not to
disturb sleeping neighbors

he still writes poetry
till midnight

and when he
goes to bed she is now soundly asleep

and they sleep together
safe in love
that now
does not depend on the physical

but on the music and the poem
on the rhythm and the rhyme
both of them
in their 20 years of marriage
have become
one poem one music

that sex, which was once so good
is now put in another light

both curl up in the cold night
she is the song
& he is the poem
and they are still
one
after all those years
as marriage tells them from the beginning when they all said

'yes, i do'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marriage Is A Package My Dear

marriage is a package my dear
not much of a box of chocolates
you take all, the good and the bad times
you stick it all, the worse and the better,
you are two together from the start till the end,
body and shadow, boat and rudder,
kite and string, hand to mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marriage On A Sunday

the man is albanian
we think he is British, bloody british they'd say.
at six feet five, his built is horrendous,
if horrible means the same as that,
broad shoulders, pluffy, peachy cheeks
glowing in Philippine summer. He is the groom.

the woman is a Filipina, chinky, brownish,
short, petite, too small for his huge kind of
affection, they call it love. she is a mere five feet
long black hair, small arms,
frail, she is beautiful and too innocent
for this kind of an important affair. Marriage.

Her chatmate finally now her groom.
Her saviour from poverty, and family honour.

It is none of my business really. But i have
doubts on this discrepancy.
Love, is this love? Can love bloom
between tall and short, between white
and brown, between the rich and the poor,
between an innocent Filipina girl and
and a bloody britisher? Forgive the word.

Tell me, who's the lucky one?

RIC S. BASTASA
Marriages All

structured dikes
gineered creeks
redirected rivers
turbo generated
whirlpools
dams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marta's consolation
is her service
giving drink to the thirsty god,
preparing the food for the weary guests
the words do not penetrate her heart
as Mary sits there and listens
unwary about what this world eats
what those mouths drink

RIC S. BASTASA
Marvin Brato Sr

May the Good Lord
And his angels
Reward you
Verily his graces shower
Into your holiness and
Nice dispositions

Be brave and patient
Remove obstruction of your faith
And be always determined
To fight evil and
Oppression of the underprivileged

Shout your joys to God!
Relish his Everlasting Goodness!

RIC S. BASTASA
Marvin T.

so what is the color of your sky Marvin?
pink blue?
flaming green?
what is the flavor of your language?
strawberry words
apple phrases
newly fried tomatoes as paragraphs
of your letter
to papa?

ah, the skies Marvin need not be blue
or white as most people want to see them
or as what they claim to be for all
those solidifying years

Marvin, the skies were crazy violet
flaming hues of red trees
it is how we want them
and not them to want us

so tomorrow what will be the color of the sea Marvin?
why not try the stone gray ones?
or turquoise? or saffron?
a sea of daffodils
an ocean of magnolias
an island of vanilla ice cream
anything goes really
in this free world

ah, do not be a turn off
be glad, you are young and beautiful and free
mothers at first may junk you
as fathers always do to their sons
breaking the rules
of the masculine game

but Marvin, take note
you are you and there is no other you
you're so far
the best because you are the freest
of them all

latest dragon
fly sticking all its feet
on the syrups of the
nectar.

RIC S. BASTASA
Marvin's Beer

queer cheer
dear ear sneer
steer fear
veer tear
we're mere
jeer here freer
air dire pier
all clear
adhere

appear austere
come near
desire draw dear
each year
first gear
great year
frontier
pap smear
life peer
light year
revere sincere

fallow deer
far and near
bashir chusmir
mouse deer
orear one year

appear
it's all clear.

budgeteer
bombardier

a case of beer
exovir cavalier
another case
of marvin's beer
Marx Ernst, The Ghost In The Abstractions Of Kandinsky

an old man leaning on a black pole,
a nude plump woman of the renaissance
inside a stomach,
a man with a big fan as face
his hands mere sketches of helplessness
pointing to the culprit on both sides
a black bird flies away
like a comma of a poem
they form a stress of a family portrait.
a hand is cut. the old man has no foot.

i shifted from the eyes of marx ernst
his eyes are shadows his hair clouds
his face a misty mountain

moving on to kandinsky he finished
life with the strokes of bright colors
and he titles it Fugue, a Black Mountain
to an Unknown Voice.

my first time to see them both.
i am stricken with the beautiful colors of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mary Had A Little Lamb

mary had a little lamb
the lamb turned out to be a ram
mary has a little lamb

RIC S. BASTASA
we both know
this game

the masks we wear
the things we do

i hide in the forest of
words
you too behind those
trails and trees of
routine

we have not exhausted
excuses
i am adept at
concocting them

when we make love
it was something else
less than
what we wish for

my mind travels in
labyrinths of
familiarity

i've been there and i
know where i come from and where i am going

inside my mind, this is a straight path
and i am obliged

when i wake up this morning
there will be no changes in the way

all things are put
well, well put and steady

the house shall open same windows
the door maintains same keys and locks

we still are
and shall never part

the sun still shines on the east
(even if we know that it is this place
where we stand that is rotating)

the moon is full tonight
we are ready with the clinks

RIC S. BASTASA
Masochism

when you pinch me
i thank you
i feel the pain and it assures me
i am alive

when you say the words too unkind
i reflect and the words confront me like a flood
rushing inside my throat
and i grapple with my hands holding upon life
i am drowning
but not calling for any help
i rise as a survivor
my lungs stronger than before

when you left me
i thought the pain is like an earthquake
intensity 12
i am shaken and some parts of me fell
i thought i am buried on the chasm of extreme loneliness
they say i am beyond recovery
all pieces gone
but i pick them all and piece them all together
torn but not destroyed
i am back as a piece of art

when you come back
you ask me who i am
i told you another name
i am the masochist reconstructed

i was once your lover
and i thank you for everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Masochism......

these are the sharp nails
that we hammer
upon our heads

we have not spent most
evenings for sound sleep

these are the hammers that
we keep on holding with both hands

the bombs that we keep in our
hearts
that we detonate when we can
no longer tolerate

these are the thousand deaths that
we have experienced
because we love cowardice more
that courage

these are the loves that we let go
because we never learned to stand on our own

these are the glasses of poison that we drink
on most decisions that we make

because we are more afraid
to be what we really are....

RIC S. BASTASA
Mass Communications

after learning
the english language
and having mastered
it so well

now you are on your
own
as a reporter

you have to learn
the language of the
masses again

you an alien
of the masses
must take back
that lost
appeal

i want to make this sound
like a poem
for you
but i know it won't

are you gonna
be poetic when doing
a reporting job?

about the mass killing
in ampatuan?

gee, i guess not
sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mass Produced Creations...

there will be many like gnats
some pests like lice and mice
what we give you will always be
alarmingly mass produced and you
might ask one morning why
are these trash not thrown to the
bins for garbage collectors to take away
why indeed? i too ask myself
the reasons are too rich and
hence too private.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mass Production

like bread in bakeries
like automobiles from factories
like pizzas in boxes for delivery
like ordinary figurines for sale
like drugs in the pharmacy
like pineapples in the farm
like apples in a basket
like inhalers in the nose
like manufactured gadgets
spoons and forks and kitchen utensils
mass produced
without the romance of the personalized work
the interaction of the mind
with the body and soul
must art be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Mastering The Self, Though Uglier At First, And Clumsier...

sometimes you look for a pattern
you walk at the road leading to some other paths
along the way are the yellow flowers
wild with the rain last night
and giving the best
their bests this morning
when you still have to wash your hands
and clean your shoes
and comb your hair
in such a parting mode
between your
chin
a canal of
indifference

there are so many patterns to see
how does this rays of light come like daggers? are they like knives
or simply flowing waters in a pattern of subsumed invincibility?

distrust of self makes one find patterns
like a ship following the lines of the coast amidst the storms
a line of coconut trees
the shape of the horizon that looks like a margin of a paper
a frame of a painting
those van Gogh clouds and towering trees
scrambled patterns yet pointing to a stress
an accent of
similitude

you look at the end
the result gives nothing but barrenness of your creation
there is no unique touch of the self
and no one is amazed
except perhaps the shock that goes with an overrated imitation

damned
one goes back to the point of origin
the sole of your feet
the tip of your eyelash
ugly at first
but evolving into the uniqueness of your spirit
sprite, blithe
dropping the wings
loosening the grip on the expectations of others
now flying
alone and high

RIC S. BASTASA
Materialism In The Ruins

brown little girl
idle in one of the nooks of the
ruins of Ankor Wat

on the poetic side
i thought she is hungry for love
and begs for
affection

having lost her mother to the war
her father buried on those killing fields of
Pol Pot

time has not healed her wounds i suppose
and she must be in need
of a home

her eyes are sunken niches
in those shallow graves of
Siem Reap

nevertheless i must be awakened
that for now all she needs
are nothing but
concrete coins

and the moment she receives them
she runs back to her fold
and dances with all joy

RIC S. BASTASA
Mathew Takwi’s Fire On The Mountain

‘tickle and trigger,
shake and shift,
rock and rush off’

you shall

'whip and whistle,
touch and tear minds
clung to waywardness
like a finger to nail,
that turn society's diamond face
to frown than glee,
bloom and blossom.'

you have

'the incessant determination
to place your own minuscule stone
on the degrading societal wall,
all those whose social, political, economic
and cultural callousness
only help society to sink,
herein pricked'

'this is a sincere and
pious intention to correct
and metamorphose mankind
to be love sharers
and true partners in development'

quo vadis?

RIC S. BASTASA
Matinood Unta

kon itugot sa
mga bitoon
sa akong
kagabhion
mokuyog ako
sa kalay-on
og sa kahilom

palihog
Langit
pakihulog lang
og usa ka bitoon
aron ipiyong ko
ang akong mga mata

aron mabungat ko
ang akong
pangandoy aron kini
sa uhma
bisan og sa sunod pang
ugma
matinood unta

RIC S. BASTASA
Matters Of Observation

it is me lying on a bench
reading a book halfway through
the pages

for a break i close the book
earmark a page
and look at the jack fruit treetop
just beside the house

i am on the second floor
and no one is in the house

my wife is visiting a friend
who just arrived from the U.S.

there is no other creature except
a white butterfly hovering
on a sampaguita flower
in the small garden

the tree has more leaves
but it is not bearing any fruit
at all

i am reminded of those years
joys forgotten and now i am reading
a book about some shadows
of doubts
there is this systems that works
of patronage
refunds

i am situated in a plateau
and my Jesuit professor who dropped by
last night with a
"how are you?" through the YM
must have understood that an
introvert like me has no
place outside
the books

i understand and frankly
i do not have to tell him how i feel about it

inside the pages
the stories are too many
my hero is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Matthew 9: 36 - 38, An Application

you have seen the crowd in zimbabwe,
in myanmar
and in other places

you will have compassion
the helpless harassed like sheep without shepherd
the violence raping
innocence
and the silence after the burts of guns
so devouring
haunting

to a world that sleeps
soundly at night and wakes up in the morning
and goes on and on
without feeling anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Matutinal

few drops of whiskey
to cheer my tongue
wet my lips

energize the bone
that sleeps throughout the night
as she bangs the door
this morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maui

seldom a word
spoken

the memory lingers
like you are

eternity's daughter
a nymph of light

dancing on
dawn leaf

a flicker
then you disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
Maumau

you receive
today a bullet
and a black cloth
some drops
of blood dry
on paper

you feel
threatened
and you do
not know
what to do

this is the
first time
and there
will be
another

and soon
i tell you
you get
bored
about these
threats

and true
to her word
you begin
to eat it
everyday
like lunch
and breakfast
and dinner

so what?
keep your cool
and be
hardheaded
one dies only
once anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
Mawe Mawe

you have your reasons
for disappearing

what they do not want to see
you have covered them all

down to the last word of your mouth
you swallowed it

and keep your mouth
shut, shut, shut

i guess you are happy
on the land of the ice

cold maybe
but the silence inside you

keeps the warmth.
we miss you somehow

and your art of
concealment but where

ever you are now
we wish you the best

if you come back
we are always here to pretend

nothing happened
and nothing happens still

in the bleak future
we are always here to keep our

mouths shut too.
we will always love you somehow.
Max Strong, Some Notes

maxie, the poems are there on a silver platter
you do not even have to read them
you are not called upon to understand each word

(thought each is carefully chosen
to suit a mood, a value, an image
to appear logical and relevant
reverent and working hard to appease
some emotions like a cool fan
to go with hot summer or a hot tea
for the rainy day under the thatched
roofing of the mountain hut)

there are no hours reserved in the making
of a poem, but i accept there is a broken dam
a leaking reservoir of feelings wanting to
be free and claim even a whole village,
bizarre thoughts of a catastrophe
but it need not be that, could simply be
a beehive where each day each worker
goes to the flowers and get the nectar
for their queenbee, for the colony
sweet labot sweet reservoir of words)

by then, on an impulse a poem is made
a quick flash of light, like thunder and lightning
i close some windows i open some
i slam the door i close gently some
it is simply unpredictable like some

(oh yes, they have said it before)

like a candle that melts itself and
then like tears they always take shape
on the side of the body-this poetry
always going for something unplanned
unscheming to the least, it just flows
like thoughts after a nap, like the imaginations
of a child dreaming his eyes anchoring on
that mountain with fog and mists.....

some clouds taking shape on the horizon
brooms, witches, princess, rabbits,
UFO'S  or some flower-clouds
the face of God, the face of the one you love

don't sweat it out, they mean nothing
but by then, when you read them like
you are not thinking, the thoughts come
like angels like some prophets with
drops of fire landing on their foreheads

serendipity, aha! aha! there it is
your face in the mirror, like a ghost that you see
passing by and then suddenly gone
you cannot even believe that it is there

was it there? convince yourself, there was not any
except your  mind, there was a lapse of memory somewhere
a leak of disbelief, but you swear there was really
someone, there was this white thing this face
a ghost, you swear there was something in that poem

and you read again, but you are tired, so much pressure
has been put to understand, sleep now, do not waste your time

it is precious, and this one does not deserve a minute
of your comprehension, a second of misappreciation...

what was there? nothing, i assure you, there is nothing
but just a ghost wanting to pretend that it is real

RIC S. BASTASA
May

May used to be
a nun wearing a white habit
but due to some
misuse of words
which offended her
Mother Superior she was
asked to leave

and she married
a priest who fell in love
with her
left the congregation
so they can
have a life of their
own

if you think that they
live happily
ever after like
the usual story
of the fairy tale book
you are wrong

they're too religious
and they split
like
two like poles
that repel
each other finally
at the last
chapter
of their love story

in fact
it contained only
five pages

RIC S. BASTASA
May I Listen To Your Song

may i be given the honor
to listen to your song?

i am sleeping on the floor
of a deserted room

there is a hole on the roof
and a star fits in

so distant, so silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
May You Find Forever And Not Just Six Feet Under...

may your life
preach louder than your lips

may your lips choose the
silence of the spirit

may your life be happier
than mine

may you be life itself that
is not afraid of death

may you choose the magnanimity
of solitude

may you find forever
and not just six feet under...

RIC S. BASTASA
May You Go To Heaven

this heart is fettered
this soul is shattered
these eyes are pestered
this body is battered

everything is given away
what is left is dismay

hence,

goodnight my friend
may you go to heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
May Your Last Poem Be Not

may your last poem be not about me.
not about you either.
not about us, far from what i conceive it to be.
not about the world, it is as mundane as a soiled shoe.
not about the sky, it is highfalutin like your way of choosing words.
sometimes, you are somebody that i have to reread for me to really
have a glimpse of what are you all about. a broken glass. a sad tune.
a sour milk. a rotten flower. a dead bee. a butterfly wingless.
i like to say some nicer things about you. Like a flower in perfect bloom.
a caterpillar finding the perfect place to hide its cocoon.
a rainbow with both feet on the hills filled with green trees.
a south beach diet. a purse filled with coins. crisp dollar bills smelling like
lasagna pasta.

i want to say everything inside my mind without fear of censorship and reprisal. I
am proclaiming my freedom from restraints. To say something
illogical and senseless and shameless.

may your last poem be not about me. may it be beyond me. beyond us.
may it be not like any other poem. melting in slow fire. shedding off.
lights shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maya

little brown birds with grey beaks and a patch of black
on their heads
three of them
drinking water on a pond of water created
by the little rain this morning

as i go near them
they all look at me and then in a sudden
they all fly away leaving some ripples in the
muddled pond

i never think of them as my enemies
they all leave at once
i do not have a gun
or a club or a slingshot

what i have in my hands are rice grains, nothing but rice grains
yes, rice grains for all of them

RIC S. BASTASA
Maya Is A Philippine Bird...

the philippine
mayas are
not extinct, they can
never be

we do not know where
they lay eggs
but the seasons are
not lacking

when they fly
they are like dusts
the group takes
a face
in the ricefields
of gold

in their brown feathers
and black beaks
quick and nimble,
they look like nuns.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maybe It Is Just Like That.....

as you trim the bushes
outside the fence

i am eating cold spaghetti
with sour bread and i get no
hot coffee

it is a bright day
and the sun is slowly rising from a gray horizon

gone were the days when we cannot eat
if we are not together

maybe it is just like that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maybe Maybe She Remembers Me Again

i imagined her again
that early evening when she over drank her wine
she was bent at nothing
but simply to relax herself a bit
from a broken heart

she was tipsy, she walked towards that room
dimly lighted, she did not close the door
she undressed herself
walked naked and laid herself
on the carpeted floor
which i could see from where i was seated
trying to compose myself
in my own way of recovering from an old wound

she stood again went back to the door to close it
as i did not follow her
she did not smile
neither did she speak a word
but i understood

the following morning she dressed herself
put on her shoes
whistling her way out of the door then closed it
i went back to the usual pretense
i slept
till ten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Maybe Tomorrow

you ask for today  
i do not have  
today, maybe tomorrow

i may have tomorrow  
inside my hands  
wait for another day  
or another week  
or another year

maybe tomorrow  
maybe

i cannot give you today  
what i have is this past  
that you cannot accept  
and i cannot offer you today  
because i cannot afford  
it.......  

today i am nothing  
but tomorrow, if you can  
wait, i may have tomorrow

whole and full  
inside my hands, yes, yes,  
tomorrow,

i have lots of these tomorrows  
my dreams  
my hopes  
inside the basket of my hands  
clasped by the gentle cups  
of my heart

wait, please wait, do not die yet  
we still have tomorrow

that is all we have
a bunch of tomorrows
sweet sweet tomorrows
dreams, hopes, wishes

RIC S. BASTASA
Mayen And Reggie

we wish they meet
perhaps next week
so they will soon see
mirror images of thee

RIC S. BASTASA
Mayet On Cita

Cita is as yellow as squash or egg yolk spattered in the kitchen floor

as thin as a stick of the broom and bald
the usual falling hair and wry smiles

AND
Mayet looks at her with so much pity

Two months more to go the suffering will soon end perhaps on the scourge of pancreatic cancer

All organs fail
Mayet looks frail Searching for the Holy Grail

Who's next to understand the pain? Who's willing to stop the rain?

RIC S. BASTASA
Me

at the moment when i put my head
on my left hand
my left cheek on my left palm
feeling the warmth
of myself to myself
i may say without shame that
here i am again
thinking of you

my mustache is untrimmed
i have not shaved for day
my hair needs a cut badly
i smell i stink like a skunk
my coat has dust and dirt
my underwear has not been changed
my undershirt has dried sweat

i feel so low these days
i have this discomfort of my soul
this pierce of the pins of my conscience
the furies are attacking me
day and night
with the possible weight of disgrace
and ripping grips of my regrets
perhaps because to you i have always lied.

RIC S. BASTASA
Me & U

me and U
WE write poems together
i read yours
and you read mine
hopefully to refine
this craft of mine

me and U
WE need to sip coffee together
on an early morning
and read another poem

me and U
ALONG the shores of sorrow
walking hand in hand
bringing with us
the purity of our intentions

me and U
WE ARE but offerings
me an incense
u the myrrh
or both of us gold together
before that manger

me and U
FRIENDS forever
rowing in a boat
on the river
singing a song
under the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Me And Grandpa Together?

if grandpa were still alive
he could have scolded me to no end
why at this hour
(it is 11: 30 in the morning)
i have not yet done anything for my life

perhaps like chopping wood or pasturing the carabao
or bringing them in their mud hole and keeping them cool
under shady mango trees

or perhaps i could have been in the farm cutting those weeds
feeding the chickens,
and the pigs, and milking cows
and cleaning the pigsty

or climbing coconut trees and gathering all those nuts
and processing them to copra

all these farm dreams of his for me

he never knew what poetry is.

and if he soon discovers that i am into this craft
i know he will call me again some of my favorite names:

lazy-bone
useless ogre
animal
demon
a mouth to feed
another problem of society
rebel
fool
good-for-nothing
infidel
enemy of the church
devil
etcetera
but i might be wrong, grandpa loves me and his only wish is that
i must know how to make our farm the best in the village

the farm that produces the fattest cow
the heaviest pig,
the biggest coconut
the longest corn

i'm hardheaded, very hardheaded

if granpa were alive, i could have set a table for two,
for us, one glass of wine,
under the moon, under the garden
soft winds blowing our hair
in an atmosphere of camaraderie
nothing about sons and fathers or grandpas and grandsons

we'll talk perhaps about women, and poetry and

well, the last but not the least of course, our faith still in God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Me And The Sea

do not expect me to wear
a G-string when i decide to take my swim

i always go naked.
I like always to feel the sea
all over my body

i plunge myself
and feel the nakedness of the sea
too
it's water all over me
all around me

naked sea to my naked body
you know how it feels
it feels like the way we do it
you are the sea
and i am a body
you are a body
and i am the sea

so simple and yet
what a bliss
naked, deep, blue, watery
wet, slippery, salty,
sweat mixed with the salt of the sea
two naked bodies
feeling
salt, earth, sand, fire

RIC S. BASTASA
Me For All

i shall satisfy you all
none shall go home without a gift

i give you the beauty of
a silent face

to another the fullness of
open arms

and to the most patient of them all
i shall give what i have always kept

for quite a time
this nothingness of the mind

this anticipations of the soul
this path that leads to more

gardens of flowers in that
fertile fields of free formations.

RIC S. BASTASA
Me Too........

it is always me too
you fall in love and
go away, me too
you junked money for love,
me too,
you chose love finally
without regret,
me too, and you look at me
and say, you flatter me,
and i say, me too.
it will always be me too.
for i am tired, had the whole
day working and here we are
drinking beer and talk about
senseless things such as love
and choices and settling down,
deep within i say me too
me too, and it is dark and
it is time to go home
and your husband is worried
and always texting you, and
me too, me too,
i want to end this chatter
this senseless talk
and i say it is really time
to go and i send all of you
to the door and you
take your cars
and worries,
and here i am closing the gate
of the house
turning all lights off,
i take my
much needed sleep.
me too. me too, really
me too. just to avoid
a confrontation
another discussion,
i want this ended,
me too, me too, me too.
have a good night
all of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Me?

i take a look at your cravings, i listen well t your sexy stories, i sense your smell,
i relish a relationship, i feel your tickling whispers in my ear,
i may be busy, but i am not blind
i may be lazy, but i know how to enjoy
making love with you
tonight and
tomorrow morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mea Culpa

I just said that he is too girly for the blonde hair
i guess it angered him
and so he blocked me.

To my honest opinion,
he must be still that girl
within the man.

Hope the sun rises again
in the East. That little boy
still angers the emperor
with his invisible clothes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mean Erotic Poems

as i arrive you go away
in an instant
saying bye
i got to go, i have a date on the island
somewhere
distant, so distant from you

you left a note telling me my erotic poems
are mean
and not exciting and not turning you on
like a woman should be
reading about sex, sympathy, some tea and company
some smoke
making love to the red curtains
some hard liquor
to make your breast stiff
and

a fighter, like the way how hard i turn on you
and like the way my hands go wild and smash
the softness of your thoughts

you leave and heave an ending sigh
your signature
of

i hate you, i hate you, i hate you
perhaps even promising not to read
any poem
of mine anymore, anywhere, anytime

i understand,
the poems are mean, they are not meant for you

they long for someone
somewhere and her name lingers still
in my arm like a rose tattoo
there is a thorn there
always and some drops of blood
dried

now, more like some drawings, mere drawings of my youth

RIC S. BASTASA
Meaningless Noise

the little baby that crawls from the cradle
to the kitchen,

the boy that walks from the village to the
city,

the same man that starts some lines, ponders,
and assembles thoughts and speaks
and

writes this poem,

it is the same man that speaks upon a rooted silence,
at the top soil, there is nothing much to say

perhaps only some leaves with worms
the usual predator-prey relationship, parasite-host thing

it is the same ramble at night
loose, nameless, meaningless noise,
streets without directions,
intemperate, mocking, purposeless,

read it again, find something if there is really something
dichotomy, dialectic, idiosyncrasies,
paradox

thinker, speaker,

speck, stink.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meanings...

scattered
practically (hmm probably)
thoughts are
like dry, yellow, leaves
already unsure
from which twig did it
come from

no one asks about
the history of a leaf
no one

there are too many of them
meant either to be
blown away, buried upon their
own kind,
layer upon layer,
rotting upon one another
or simply just to be burned
heaps of them
turning into smoke
phantoms against
the rains of
dark skies

we are leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
Meanwhile

outside the children fly their kites
meanwhile
we stand here by the side of the railings
meeting the
winds of change

tell me, what is it? what is it really?
will this be forever?

will this be the last of what we can
give?
will this be
simply kites?

RIC S. BASTASA
Meanwhile A Turtle Mocks The Monkey

confused
you think there is no
connection

a boy watches a butterfly
without a mirror

a picture of you and me
in glass breaks that evening
falling from its
place

iraq was deceived and a bomb
explodes in a night market
somewhere in davao

on a still pond you find
meaning
until a pebble is thrown
and the ripples
runs towards your
reflection

it is obvious
it is the disturbance which
created its meaning

it is your anger
why things do not fit in your mind

why are they not
following what you have thought
of now and in the future

meanwhile a turtle mocks
the monkey when it is finally
set on the water
thinking that it could be the
end of its
oppressor

RIC S. BASTASA
Measuring His Life

with coffee cups
something to wake him up
from a deadly
stupor

the last cup of coffee
is reserved
for his elegy

at this point he expects
no one to drink to that

except perhaps the
nod of silence
the standing ovation of
the wind's
tired hushes

RIC S. BASTASA
Measuring The Length Of Silence....

do not fathom my silence

it has no bottom
no floor

when you try to measure it
with a rope
there will be no rope
of this world
left

RIC S. BASTASA
An exposure to media, the press  
Is dangerous, an overexposure, worst damaging,  
You lose an image, you lose yourself,  
And people would not mind, who are you and what is your name,  
how did you do it, not what did you do, and that would be the end of you,  
I do not talk to media since then, it has always the last say, I shy away from an  
interviewer from a media coverage, from that writer  
Who smiles at me, taking carefully what I am saying  
On a certain legal question, only to find out,  
The following day, he says what I did not really mean in that proper context,  
In what I said to him and which he twisted,  
I had that bad experience, and  
Had not recovered for years, walking in the city,  
Without my head, all to my shame and loss,  
I did not mind, my deeds my fingers will speak for me  
Eventually, and my conscience shall tell my vocabulary avenging finally that  
The better plural form of media, after all,  

Is mediocre,  

of course, its correct singular form is still  
Media. How can I argue with you, medium man?  

RIC S. BASTASA
Media Vita In Morte Sumus

sometimes as we hear the eulogy
of the love ones departing
we sense this Death in the Middle
of Our Lives...

As one departs as the Others Cry
As children look without understanding

What sorrow is, what Pain is
We feel the void scratching deep

Down on some recesses of the Heart
This Emptiness that somehow also

Gives us the Courage to Move On
In us these little lives also depend...

RIC S. BASTASA
Medical Terms Of Emancipation

funny but
they know how these medical terms
work
for an emancipation
plan
release from pain
and bigotry
and
anxiety

yak capsules
kisspirin tablets

and last night she prescribes

six tablets of Biogesex

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting A Wise Man

he has thick glasses
and he talks about the world as an asylum
of mad poets and wise people gone mad
he is amazing
and i think he is one wise man
that i should listen

i followed his footstep
he says this is all leading to God
a cure to all my addictions
to whatever

i tried to walk beside him
but he has always been a fast walker
and so i just follow and follow him through
all the years of my life
so sad
i lost my interest about my own life
i have gone mad too

he did not mind at all
he only said, i am one kind of a fool!

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting Dureza At The Church One Sunday

the eyes speak the familiar
and her eyes are talking about me
and my eyes too glance at her
and both eyes are talking in
careful whispers of silence as
the priest is still saying grace
before the mass ends,

and peace be with you we
bow at each other to the left
and to the right and then our
eyes glance again speaking
carefully the whispers of our
past sins, and i look at her,

my God she has aged a lot,
i even thought she is her mother.

we have nothing to remember.
we left the church not saying
any word from our mouths,
my wife pulls me to the car
there is no looking back she
says, there is no looking back.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting Kelly....

slow breaths
teach me about my life
how to live it
for another year

i wish a happy life
with you
slow, careful, penetrating,
gathering me inside my self,

a nest of feathers a warm
dwelling a steady tree top
of the hill

i breathe in i breathe out
to find God here,

did you not tell me that
all these things are just
made up?

for those who rake the money
for those who rob us
for whose and for whom?

exhale, inhale, there God is.
it is easy, easier than all those
dogma

all the statues fall and crumble,
and we will all be alone, alone,

tossed from one stormy sea to
another, without sails, and paddles,
without those machines,
and compass,

it is reality, this is reality,
we all must be attuned to this
channel, this station,
this calamity

this is the meaning of a purpose
the meat of our humanity

i breathe you you breathe me
we are inside each other now
all lungs and mouths

into the sea, into the storm
after all, what is fun without it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting Lao Tzu At The Foot Of Zhingzang Zou

i bow before him
as i will be leaving
and this he said to
me, famous Lao tzu

'be Content with what you have;
rejoice in the way things are.
for hen you realize
there is nothing lacking,
the whole world
belongs to you'

i was so guilty
for i still dream of
butterflies and
vanilla flavored
magnolia
ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting Lao Tzu At The Foot Of Zhingzang Zou: I Am Placing The Letter T In Hen, Sorry.

i bow before him
as i will be leaving
and this he said to
me, famous Lao tzu

'be Content with what you have;
rejoice in the way things are.
for then you realize
there is nothing lacking,
the whole world
belongs to you'

i was so guilty
for i still dream of
butterflies and
vanilla flavored
magnolia
ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting The New Year

all the dogs
will scamper for safety
inside our room
as firecrackers hurt
their ears

insensitive humans
driving all the good spirits
filling this world with
noise and
superstitions

we turn the music on
those classical ones
perhaps Chopin's requiem

we have closed the doors
and windows
seal the room with the
glassy silence

we both lay in bed
side by side
to bid the old year
goodbye

soundly we sleep
calmly in each other's arms

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting The New Year...

we do not wish to meet this new year
with firecrackers
we get away from the tradition of noise
and wild merrymaking
the smoke that chokes us
the rubbish that we give to what could
have been a neat morning
we pledge that what we offer for the year
is the peace of the hearth of the home
the silence of the moss
the coolness of the pond
the songs of birds hovering on
the twigs of oak trees and
the softness of the ferns

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting The Woman Who Never Believed In My Pursuits...

you were older
and i was the youngest.
i dwell in my silence
you always want a jam.
damning door. i keep
the pages of my books.
beneath a lonely light
inside the room.
i was disturbed but
i did not mind.
you were older and
mother never knew
that i was more responsible
not to tell tell the truth.
i live in the future
you abused what is there.
you hair have gone white
i keep the silence of my
flesh. My lips jammed.
a door did not open and
the room has become more
like me, abandoned, silent
and strong. soon, they
was joy in being alone.
i traveled alone by myself
to lands i have not known
its streets are without
names. Mixed Romanians.
The crowd of churches and
heavy rains, and dracula
and that old castle.
you have no remorse.
you had always been
older, brewed pride and
yesterday i drove my car
pass by you and i stopped
to pick you up from that
purposed misery.
i mumble to the mirror
what i clearly understand
but shall never say with
that desired clarity.
Silence is a domesticated
enemy and the fruits of
its endurance come late
to the dying floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting Tito

meeting tito is surely an interesting event
he finds anyone interesting to include
yours truly

today he wants you, if you meet him,
at nine
when the girls are there already in the plaza
practicing the dance
of the coming celebration

(breathe, gasp)
he wants you to join the in the parade
with your bare feet
as part of the works of
the sisters of mercy

as i told you i like him but i commented though
what merciless sisters you have
and for what reason do you intend to punish others
for your beliefs?

i think, with the way he sways his hips,
i think, he is gay, but i keep my mouth shut
for as my wife says
it is always none of our business
and they have the right to be.

i think, i must agree,
the world is a circle and it is not narrow
the rivers keep flowing
and the sea has always been the most kind receptacle

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting You Again

meeting you again
reminds me of my own failures too

our eyes meet
and the flame of reminisces begins to flare

i look at the side of this stone
church and wander again to the world of my own

imagination: a green hill, a rising sun
a spread of daisies, a cloud of butterflies

a sea of opportunity
into the mist of forgetting

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting You At The Basement Of A Friend's House

we are stranded
unnecessarily on this party

among friends the glasses
of red wine clink
for some longer hours of talk

hi and hello exchanged
places among them

but between us there is something
else and moves in
mysteriours ways

a wink, an understanding of something
else that we easily understand

even without the signal of a hand
our glances moving towards
the dark corner of the basement

we meet there in so much
haste and silence
we kiss, we rub our bodies, we
entwine our hands and hearts
without shame

we explode. we stop somehow
on a certain edge
where we are helpless and
guileless

we look at each other still
missing the glow of our eyes
we touch again, we kiss again

there are crumples and creases
we breathe this restlessness
we arrange the parts of our bodies
on a restrained mode

and step out this door away
from the basement to join the rest
of the clinks and talks and laughter

we assure ourselves: nothing happened
we pretend, we are intact. we believe that none
of all these are true and then

we thank ourselves
for a another day
away from us, away from them,
away from this restrained world

unleash me again, i tell myself, goodbye

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting You On The Street

After all those years
We meet on the street
With your husband
I ask the permission
To talk to you
He doesn’t give it
You are very silent
Your heart bleeds
I leave you again
To die again and again

How many deaths shall
I have? On my cowardice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meeting You That Evening

meeting you that evening
the enchantment seems endless
my heart has wings and my hands
have magic wands and my mouth
has the magic words of love

it is a fairy tale, and we sleep
in that castle in the clouds and
the soldiers listen to my commands,

and then i wake up without you
my princess turn into an old doll
my magic wands mere matchsticks

love imagined, love unrequited
a bitter pill, a deadly potion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meggie: Vain Repetition

we cannot
eat that early
we are
so hungry and
now angry

omg!
her prayers
are too long

when she could
have succinctly said:

bless this food
oh Lord
it is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Melancholic....

I have my own dreams
i keep them in my house
and no one sees them

every night i look at all
these dreams of mine
my treasure, my gold
they do not glitter anymore

i have my own rusty dreams
and i keep them inside my house
there they all turn to powder
to dust, to nothing

one night i am tired of all these dreams
put them all inside a box
and throw them all to the sea
and then the sea has all my dreams

now i have my house without dreams
it is an empty house
proud with nothing but myself alone
i am the dream of this house
it's only dream

soon the house shall be gone
soon i shall be too gone

someone shall build another house
another dream......

RIC S. BASTASA
you must learn the greatest art that love
has bestowed upon lovers: forgetting
to ease the pain, to heal the wound,
to make the skin as smooth and firm
again, as though love and loss do not
go together.
There is this love that loves, and being loved.
There is also this moment of being tired.
The beginning of losing grip to the hands of
promises. There is this crowded room
with cactus and wine glass. The thorns
alive, the glass remaining untouched.
The wine losing its essence.
The feet wanting to go astray.
There is this door that closes
And shall never open again
Except for another face
Another voice.
Melissa, i will speak about destiny.
You have tried to take the trip to meet it.
It is not there. You played the saddest piece
On that violin, yet there are no tears.
You lose this time. And I am not surprised.
You are meant for someone else
The one with the better face,
The hair more shiny
The one that cries for you
When destiny once evaded you.
You must recall his name.
Because he is no longer here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mellowing

you finally lie in bed
feeling nothing warm on your side
you put your hand on the forehead
trying to regain darkness away from
the lighted bulb
you have nothing in mind
even love
there is no use reminiscing
that makes you sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mellowing Down

mellowing down
with age
you are ripe
for this surprise

you prefer
now a boat
docked on
the shore

you like the
hammock
made of
soft threads
whiter
cloth

you do not
like a boat
sailing on
a stormy sea

too unlikely
of you
as a man
known for
his restlessness

you dream
of this purple lotus
growing
right there in your
lap

you dream of
a man putting
all his books
in one sack
how can i ask
what all these
signs mean?

with due respect
i shall take too
my last dip
in the sea of life

RIC S. BASTASA
Melodrama

poverty drives him away
as she stays in the faraway village

her hands cold her heart so empty
he works so hard in the city

the promises of love makes him endure
the pain and sorrow

she waits for those long years
she keeps herself pure all for him

he comes back bringing his fortune
now wanting to ask her hand in marriage

her parents force her to marry
the son of the rich merchant in the city

disappointed she kills herself
she is found hanging on the ceiling of the mansion

he leaves the place wanting to forget
he writes love poems that end in tragedy

always in his dreams she is with him
the following morning he meets his happy death

RIC S. BASTASA
Melted Chocolate

in your land where
snow is
you have shown
what firm is,

we are inviting you
here in our
place
just a little inch
from the equator
let us see
what
& how firm was....

RIC S. BASTASA
Melting With The Shadows Of The Trees

one tells me
i have only a few months to live.

will it bother me?
i only tell myself
everything is a possibility

dying is certain, so what's the heck?
i don't have any baggage
to carry,
neither do i have so many things to hide
or keep
and worry about them
as to who shall have them

she is worried about me
do i have emotions? am i numb as a rock?

i tell her, i am a cliff
i look beyond the sea,
i am a friend of the wind
i have a grasp of heaven

to live is not really to just live
it is also
by essence to think beyond living

to know that everything here is just
part of the total picture
a bit of a pixel

that there are still missing pieces of
this jigsaw puzzle

it is like
packing nothing
walking barefoot on the grassy hill
passing a river
and walking some mountains
it is like
walking in the dark
and melt
with the shadows of the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Memories

they are here again
but i cannot touch, smell and taste
them anymore
i can hear but slowly they become
so distant
until what i have is this air
filling my lungs with so much longing

RIC S. BASTASA
Memories In My Mind

The red and orange hues
Of sunset
Fade too quickly
As you see
Once all
So beautiful
Then nothing
But darkness
Even with
The stars and
The moon
Just like these
Memories
In my mind
Growing old
Thoughts like rain
Ceaselessly
Dripping

RIC S. BASTASA
Memories Of Sol

sol, sun, light, brightness, warmth,
parasol, black canopy, above my head
your hands hold
my protection your fingers at the pole's end
sol, cheers, and laughter
and thoughts and greetings of the past
to the uncertainties of the future

sol, sun, light, and then orange and red
and gray and lights out.

it was another declaration
of death, little things you remember
but soon you forget

because the morning with a new sun
as another white orchid blooms by the window
is so beautiful to the pleasure of the eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Memories Of The Old House

In our old house
Paved with limestones
Many ferns and moss
Grow
But though how lush
And numerous have
They become
My memories
Still outnumber them

RIC S. BASTASA
Memories Of You....

everyday
the heart goes for
a drinking spree

the memories of the past
are guests
reminiscing about us

there in the river
the ricefields, the camarin,
at the coconut dryer

beside the hill under
the kamatsile tree

dawn always brings me
its whispers

that you will wait for me
till the next chapter of our
next life

i have this profuse
sweating
my thighs are
wet

matag adlaw
adunay tagay ang kasingkasing

nagsandurot ang mga
paghandom sa mga kaagi
kabahin natong duha

didto sa suba
sa basakan sa kamalig
sa landahan

sa bungtod sa ilalom sa punoan
sa kamatsile

adunay mga hunghong
sa matag
kaadlawon

paaboton mo kuno ako
ugma damlag
sa laing hugna na usab
sa atong kinabuhi

hagkot ang akong mga singot
nagbasa ang akong
paa

RIC S. BASTASA
Memory Lane@tabon

lately, he has been talking about separations
how painful the process can be at the start
just like a wound with a pus
but somehow when that infected thing
bursts and the cause is removed
the relief that is felt justifies all the
fears and anxieties

she likes it too
the way she dismembers a wing from the
body of a bee
how its sting has to be extricated so that
it cannot penetrate another flesh
and cause inflammation

he too remembers how he once disassembled
the toy robot that Papa once bought him during
his 5th birthday
when Mama went away packing all her things
and took the bus to ozamis

things repeat themselves and they all know that
and some people despite this knowledge allow these things to happen

not because it is painful but because it finds at the end
the reliefs they are seeking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Memory...

winged white bird
hovering
nesting in my hair
staying
inside my brain
laying
eggs inside my
heart

heard the sounds
of hatching...

RIC S. BASTASA
Men Of Light

everyday
these men of light
spreads
the essences of
grace
praising God
and
asking for the forgiveness
of the sins
of others

like an eclipse
it will be dark for a while
but not for long
i will let light go
for the meantime
i shall be the
moon

silent and
thriving on a borrowed
light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mend And Build Again Our Healthy Walls.

we bury the hatchets
we remove the thorns in
our heart
we cover the wounds
the healing continues
brothers now, we shall
thrive in this one and
only planet that we
live. So long. Let this
war be ended.
Let this enmity be
forgotten.

there are only the two
of us left and look at
this mess, be not weary,
we have so many things
to do: mend and build again
our healthy walls.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mens Sana In Corpore Sano

sound mind in a sound body.
sound words in sound thoughts.

peaceful pond and the silent moon.
still air and still thoughts and leaves sticking

on the branches and flowers facing the heat of the sun
guiltless and proud and stubborn to live

thick grass faithfully spreading its evergreen blades
rivers running unstopped by drought and minds

keeping on with its own poetic creations
undeterred by sadness nay strengthened the more

loving life no matter what the consequences are
keeping the preciousness of every moment

not wasting a second for envy or hatred or indifference
no idle moment eyes sharpened to the changes of nature

deciphering the message of our existence
opening the meanings concealed on the folds of the nights

waiting and waiting till the ripe season comes
and leaving when the right hour comes no attachments

waving life like a flag and marching our feet to the victories
of our longings working as a team and winning at the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mentor... Reconstructing Carl

to brilliance: appreciation

but to those who touched
human feelings: gratitude

the growing plant
and the soul of the
child: they need more to
what a raw lecture is all about,

they search for
warmth
the sun's comforting
light

RIC S. BASTASA
Meop-Itna 90

say hello to the world for me
it is not talking to me
it is offended by the words that
i am saying to the sea
and to the mountains
the trees turned themselves into shadows
the clouds hide the shapes of my thoughts
the colors all turning into heavy rains
soon the typhoons gather in one assembly
the piers shall no longer be ankles and bones
the waters turning into glaciers
we are ships frozen in the middle of the sea
we look for another world
in the skies in space we must deny our eyes
we pick up the fossils of our ancestors
the black gold we leave behind as sands
what stories shall they tell
to the crocodiles friends of the dinosaurs?

RIC S. BASTASA
Meowwww

Jane finally made it
to the United States of America
leaving a small hometown
that gave her nothing
but yawns,

on this Halloween
the first time ever since this is not a custom here
(in her little town in Mindanao)
she got herself into a cat costume
and says Meowwwwww!

a la Cynthia, the dead female cat
that purred till midnight
before the house was burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
merciful is the good lady who looks
at you not with the merit of what you have done

she probes the contours of your heart and when she finds
the purity of your intentions
the goodness which is hidden from the pressures of your world

unlike justice that records all your wrongs and metes the penalties
mercy takes you with her compassionate hands
and smiles at you with her lips of forgiveness
she kisses you and tells you
you are saved

RIC S. BASTASA
Mere Passing

the wind came
with an outpouring of a heavy rain
the trees trembled
the wind was strong
and the rain seemed not to stop
as i hid myself behind
the door

and then there was this silence
making a statement

one must suffer gently
sip bitterness
like it is a concoction
of exotic tea

RIC S. BASTASA
Mere Words, Mere Scrap

the wall clock
takes the shape
of a wooden table
and the hands of
time stop
sounding the hours
of a happy life

the twigs of our
hard earned
learning cannot
withstand
what is set to
happen on
murderous
moments of
a martial law

a mountain of beliefs
the green valley of of
principles which we accept
from a dictator
as solid and unchangeable
are at a distance
paradise but when we
arrive there
was a horror

we try to define our
perspectives
and reinvent our molten
selves

when i was a child
i felt the swiftness of time
on a hot summer day
upon an ice drop on my hand
and tongue licking sugar on
water upon a bamboo stick
on an assigned usual essay
how i spent my summer vacation
my mind whirled in search for
satisfaction with my old teacher
in mind: how to make her happy?

enjoying jack-fruit flavored
ice candy in the store nearby
with only one peso in my pocket
in 1970

i was thinking how to sell time
and make most money from
mere words, mere scrap.

RIC S. BASTASA
Merry Christmas Cindy

we're on the same plane
this 24th
and she is bound for home
from the
u.s. of a.
in the state of colorado
to Dipolog
in Miputak

her dad just died.

her husband had to stay
without work
there is no pay
and they need the money
for daughter's
rehab....

merry christmas cindy
i know it will be hard
pretty hard

merry christmas just the
same Cindy
be happy

look around you and
be sensitive
to all the other lonely people
in this world

saying: merry merry christmas
everyone
from my family to yours
and to all

(less the hopelessness
a discount for misgivings
adjust a little bit)
for all those failures)

the plane has landed
and cindy takes her bag
i wave and she waves back
saying: merry christmas

too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Merry Christmas From Around The World

Afrikaans: Gesëende Kersfees
Afrikander: Een Plesierige Kerfees
African/ Eritrean/ Tigrinja: Rehus-Beal-Ledeats
Albanian: Gezur Krislinjden
Arabic: Idah Saidan Wa Sanah Jadidah
Argentine: Feliz Navidad
Armenian: Shenoraavor Nor Dari yev Pari Gaghand
Azeri: Tezze Iliniz Yahsi Olsun
Bahasa Malaysia: Selamat Hari Natal
Basque: Zorionak eta Urte Berri On!
Bengali: Shuvo Naba Barsha
Bohemian: Vesele Vanoce
Brazilian: Boas Festas e Feliz Ano Novo
Breton: Nedeleg laouen na bloavezh mat
Bulgarian: Tchestita Koleda; Tchestito Rojdestvo Hristovo
Catalan: Bon Nadal i un Bon Any Nou!
Chile: Feliz Navidad
Chinese: (Cantonese) Gun Tso Sun Tan‘Gung Haw Sun
Chinese: (Mandarin) Kung His Hsin Nien bing Chu Shen Tan
Choctaw: Yukpa, Nitak Hollo Chito
Columbia: Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo
Cornish: Nadelik looan na looan blethen noweth
Corsian: Pace e salute
Crazanian: Rot Yikji Dol La Roo
Cree: Mitho Makosi Kesikansi
Croatian: Sretan Bozic
Czech: Prejeme Vam Vesele Vanoce a stastny Novy Rok
Danish: Glædelig Jul
Duri: Christmas-e- Shoma Mobarak
Dutch: Vrolijk Kerstfeest en een Gelukkig Nieuwjaar!
or Zalig Kerstfeest
English: Merry Christmas
Eskimo: (inupik) Jutdlime pivdluarit ukiortame pivdluaritlo!
Esperanto: Gajan Kristnaskon
Estonian: Ruumsaid juulup|hi
Faeroese: Gledhilig jol og eydnurikt nyggjar!
Farsi: Cristmas-e-shoma mobarak bashad
Finnish: Hyvaa joulua
Flemish: Zalig Kerstfeest en Gelukkig nieuw jaar
French: Joyeux Noel
Frisian: Noflike Krystdagen en in protte Lok en Seine yn it Nije Jier!
Galician: Bo Nada

Gaelic: Nollaig chridheil agus Bliadhna mhath ür!

German: Froehliche Weihnachten

Greek: Kala Christouyenna!

Hausa: Barka da Kirsimatikuma Barka da Sabuwar Shekara!

Hawaiian: Mele Kalikimaka

Hebrew: Mo’adim Lesimkha. Chena tova

Hindi: Shub Naya Baras

Hausa: Barka da Kirsimatikuma Barka da Sabuwar Shekara!

Hawaiian: Mele Kalikimaka ame Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

Hungarian: Kellemes Karacsonyi unnepeket

Icelandic: Gledileg Jol

Indonesian: Selamat Hari Natal

Iraqi: Idah Saidan Wa Sanah Jadidah

Irish: Nollaig Shona Dhuit, or Nodlaig mhaith chugnat

Iroquois: Ojenyunyat Sungwiyadeson honungradon nagwutut. Ojenyunyat osrasay.

Italian: Buone Feste Natalizie

Japanese: Shinnen omedeto. Kurisumasu Omedeto

Jiberish: Mithag Crithagsigathmithags

Korean: Sung Tan Chuk Ha

Latin: Natale hilare et Annum Faustum!
Latvian: Prieci’gus Ziemsve’tkus un Laimi’gu Jauno Gadu!

Lausitzian: Wjesole hody a strowe nowe leto

Lettish: Priecigus Ziemassvetkus

Lithuanian: Linksmu Kaledu

Low Saxon: Heughliche Winachten un ‘n moi Nijaar

Macedonian: Sreken Bozhik

Maltese: LL Milied Lt-tajjeb

Manx: Nollick ghennal as blein vie noa

Maori: Meri Kirihimete

Marathi: Shub Naya Varsh

Navajo: Merry Keshmish

Norwegian: God Jul, or Gledelig Jul

Occitan: Pulit nadal e bona annado

Papiamento: Bon Pasco

Papua New Guinea: Bikpela hamamas blong dispela Krismas na Nupela yia i go long yu

Pennsylvania German: En frehlicher Grischtdaag un en hallich Nei Yaahr!

Peru: Feliz Navidad y un Venturoso Año Nuevo

Philipines: Maligayan Pasko!

Polish: Wesolych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia or Boze Narodzenie

Portuguese: Feliz Natal
Puhto: Christmas Aao Ne-way Kaal Mo Mobarak Sha

Rapa-Nui (Easter Island) : Mata-Ki-Te-Rangi. Te-Pito-O-Te-Henua

Rhetian: Bellas festas da nadal e bun onn

Romanche: (sursilvan dialect) : Legreivlas fiastas da Nadal e bien niev onn!

Rumanian: Sarbatori vesele

Russian: Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva is Novim Godom

Sami: Buorrit Juovllat

Samoan: La Maunia Le Kilisimasi Ma Le Tausaga Fou

Sardinian: Bonu nadale e prosperu annu nou

Serbian: Hristos se rodi

Slovakian: Sretan Bozic or Vesele vianoce

Sami: Buorrit Juovllat

Samoan: La Maunia Le Kilisimasi Ma Le Tausaga Fou

Scots Gaelic: Nollaig chridheil huibh

Serb-Croatian: Sretam Bozic. Vesela Nova Godina

Serbian: Hristos se rodi. Singhalese: Subha nath thalak Vewa. Subha Aluth Awrudhak Vewa

Slovak: Vesele Vianoce. A stastlivy Novy Rok

Slovene: Vesele Bozicne. Screcno Novo Leto

Spanish: Feliz Navidad

Swedish: God Jul and (Och) Ett Gott Nytt År

Tagalog: Maligayang Pasko. Masaganang Bagong Taon
Tami: Nathar Puthu Varuda Valthukkal

Trukeese: (Micronesian) Neekiriisimas annim oo iyer seefe feyiyeec!

Thai: Sawadee Pee Mai

Turkish: Noeliniz Ve Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun

Ukrainian: Srozhdestvom Kristovym

Urdu: Naya Saal Mubarak Ho

“Aap sab ko christmas buhut buhut mubarak ho”

Vietnamese: Chung Mung Giang Sinh

Welsh: Nadolig Llawen

Yugoslavian: Cestitamo Bozic

Yoruba: E ku odun, e ku iye’dun!

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no oxygen in the university
like there is in the house
beside a hill
where the river flows
and some birds sing

yet you too miss the city
and you go back there
and live a life
of both
city and rural
like a pendulum
to and fro

all because poetry
tells you to do so

flowers and poles and clouds and skyscrapers
and waterfalls and
citystreets and cafes by the side
and then back to
a picnic with wife and kids
on the grass and plains

RIC S. BASTASA
Mess, Dirt And Stains, And Learning To Love What Is There Because You Have Nothing Else Anyway

you say welcome
this is the house

as you enter the
door you can see
the chairs in the
dining table talking
louder than before
all in different
directions

it is a loud house
and you just don't
know where is the place
for the hangers and
the mortar and pestles

and those
clothes are roaming around
like hell
looking for a line
to hang themselves
at least
for propriety
and comfort

in the kitchen the
unwashed dishes are
singing in a rock
concert

cups are still messy
with coffee and
some chocolates
freezing on a cold
temperature today
they are bearing
their own hack wounds
the dogs are sleeping
on the floor
and they have not
experience any form
of bath at all
and the fleas are
jumping in a circus
they do not care
who you are and what
you do or what you
say
are you a guest?
guests are made to
suffer here
you have to clean
your own room if
you want to spend
the night and sleep
with all risks
like a snake may
enter through the
ceiling of this
stray house
the house itself is
crazy
the foundation is
on the sand
and the beams are
termite stricken
the windows are
having all sorts
of skin diseases
and the pillars
are failing supports
they shake when
you step on the
floor

you say you must
learn to love this
house and its
dangers and mess and
dirts and stains and
dusts and mud
and all those shattered
glasses
and burnt sofa
and ashed curtains

you are a vagabond
and he is a gypsy
and you have nowhere
else to stay

however if you are
patient enough
stay for a while,
work hard, earn
your own money, and
be ready to move
to another pretty
and clean and well kept
house the next day

and if you want
if you have no traumatic
experience at all
about a family
you can bring your wife
and your children
along with you

gee, did you regret
having married that early?

RIC S. BASTASA
Message For The Day

Don't permit your misery or defeats to depress you. Rather let them be steps by which you descend the deep mine where we find the precious gem of holy humility.

- St. Paola Frassinetti

may our loneliness make us more humble and holy

may we make depression a fact of life, an offering to God.

RIC S. BASTASA
the room is full of litters
the underwear is on top of the headboard
the shoes are far from each others' gaze
dirty clothes roam like wolves
and the bulb lights are filled with dusts
moths are dead
and mosquitoes reign the nooks
cobwebs look like fog

but i know how to paint
something so orderly in my mind
i take the brush of the brain
and the tints of bright colors
it is not denial
but it is just a matter of choosing
what reality i want
i become blind to all these mess
i only select what i must accept
so you see
my world is as beautiful as yours
i sleep soundly at night
as the ants and the scorpions
make their wars.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is the same sound of the
electric fan that still
dominates the smallness of
her dark room
but just the same as she is tired
and lonely
and feeling so abandoned
and helpless
she takes her own refuge
on inexpensive
sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the midst of suffering one goes back
to the things that are free

not even those expensive things please
when one is sitting beside the man with the scythe

one cannot run and flee and cannot even lift a single
word to say

exhausted one takes the shelter of sleep
inside those indifferent blankets

RIC S. BASTASA
Metamorphosis

it is not the story of
the worm turning into
a butterfly
but it is really that
black hairy worm
eating a leaf
after days and days
turning into a butterfly

i do not have the right to hold it
i only have to see it
fly

away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Metaphors For Joys And Sorrows

night and day
one earth simply rotating
around its axis

joys and sorrows
one man simply changing
emotional gears

two hands clapping
to One God

RIC S. BASTASA
Metaphors Of My Existence

from far
i like the way you look at me
you believe that i am one of those stars

sometimes
you tell them that i am a moon
in your night
much useful as a sun
in your
rainy days
between two hills
of your
misfortunes

i have become your metaphor
and to a certain extent
an illusion

a magic to your eyes
and i have become
those skillful
fingers with
white gloves

i don't take rabbits from
black hats
no flowers from sticks
no crispy bills from
crumpled newspapers

i am real and when you get too close
i have fears

for like stars from far i am magical
and soothing
but when you get near
i can burn
everything
i am a rage of fire in combustion
a glowing ball of
with skill in annihilation

during intimacies
what moons can really be?

rugged terrains of grayness
with lots of holes and emptiness

my sound is the howl of distances
my affections nothing but
the coldness of my
isolated instances of discomforting
circumstances

this far i may be all kindness
to you
a morning sun
a glowing dew mistaken as a pearl
a cold fog of softness upon
the trees upon the arrival
of nights

if you come closer
I've got everything that destroys

the universe knows
that i have brought so much havoc
in nearness
the collisions are
unimaginable
harshness

hence this isolation
this illusion
for i am kind when i am distant
i am best when i am extant
forget me, i am chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
Metaphysical Discussion

inside the class in philosophy
the professor stan, an old jesuit, with a long white beard,
on a very silent disposition, like a buddhist monk, but in white cassock,
he sits there in front of us, puts his black book on the table,
sits like a Frenchman, and begins to open his mouth, stands
and writes on the blackboard:

WHAT IS DEATH?

that is the lesson for the day, the year was 1982, at the ateneo
de manila university, his name was Fr. O'shaugnessy, Irish, and wise,
finished his doctorate in Loyola University, and he looks at me and
asks me, 'What is death, Ric? '

and i had the answer ready from the metaphysics of Hiedegger

. The word.... has a crucial role in the work of...Hiedegger. Hiedegger
defines....an individual's confrontation
with meaningless
and the discovery that the only
justification for one's demeanor
comes from within....that responsibility will
therefore be acknowledged.

that i will surely die
but between life and death
i must be responsible enough
for confront the inevitable
later
that for the meantime
i must live
and confront the demands of life....

and then my teacher
faced the wall, not listening well about
what i had been saying
on the verbosity of it all

and he wrote on the blackboard
What is death, what will you do if you will die today?

Write an essay, he made the instruction, I did not submit anything

And for that he gave me an 'A'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Metaphysical

we who are the owners
of the sky
have fears now, the dragons
can fly and can
steal the moon and the stars
the iguana
can swallow the sun and the universe
has become nothing but
a grain of sand, minuscule granule
of shattered glass like
gnarled horizon, multi-pleated
space, breathing gravitation,
wave upon wave, we are an hour dead
from the past.

RIC S. BASTASA
Meteoric Nature....

we are simply meteors
passing a boundary of space
and the way they all look at us
with amazement
carries with it the fact that
we end with the soonest,
quickest fading,
it is as though
we did not pass that moment
of spark and speed
that they easily forget
after a short gaze

and if they remember
if we must insist
it will still take time
because we are so sudden
that sometimes they think
that we are but
figments of an imagination.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mga Panganod Ni Narcissus

Sila nga naglutawlutaw sa langit
Mihapit og hunong sa usa ka tin-aw
Nga lim-aw sa kilid sa dalan,
Mitan-aw sa ilang mga dagway-

Mga gapas mga kumpol sa
Mga nagkadiayang panagway.

Giganahan silag tutok sa ilang
Mga lawas ug ong.

Nagtindog ang mga balili. Nagpatigkong
Ang mga lapokon nga suba, naningala
Sa mga panghitabo sa gamay nga sapa
Nga gitugpahan sa mga habog nga panganod.

Ang usa ka isla sa mga sagbot
Nagpaanod paingon didto ug nahadlok
Baya ang mga panganod ni Narcissus
Mipanaw palayo hadlok madakpan.

Wala kunoy tag-iya kanila ug dili
Usab sila kamaong mahigugma.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mga Puti Nga Tulips Halad Sa Sayong Kabuntagon

mohilom sa ta kadyot
bisag mga singko minutos lang
alang sa duha ka mga
bag-ong nagpatay gahapon
didto sa Petron Station
atbang sa KNAS

duha ka lalaki ang naghinandosan
sa ilang hait nga mga kutsilyo
sa kilid sa ilang tiyan og
tunga-tunga sa ilang mga dughan

silang duha gayod ang
nangamatay sa akto
og ang ambulansya
nga miabot wala nay
nahimo gawas na lamang
sa paghatod nilang duha
didto sa Funenaria ni
Gamalinda

og sama sa pelikula
miabot ang duha ka pulis
apan ulahi na

og ang mga tawo
nangusisa apil na gani
ang among usa ka katabang
nga nagpalit lang god unta
og usa ka kilong asukar
sa tindahan ni Maricar

lain na usab ang milalin sa atong kalibotan
og gihaya anang walay pulos nga hinungdan

usa ka bilat lang ang giawayan sa mga kanahan,

usa ka manguhitay og lubi, giselosan
ang driver sa habal-habal nga
suki nga sakyun sa iyang asawa nga mamaligyaay og mga prutas og otan

nakaingon ko sa akong kaugalingon
sus! bilat lang diay ang giawayan! pagkasayang!
kadaghbang bilat sa kalibotan
nagpasad man gani diha sa kalibonan.

pagkabuong gayod sa bana! pagkakiat usab sa asawa
pagkabutakal pod sa driver sa habal-habal!

pagkasayang sa mga kalag
pagkamabaw sa ilang tanlag

RIC S. BASTASA
Mga Sugilanon....

ang dagat karon
morag sanina nga seda
kadton gigamit sa
kasal ni mama
nga gihilos ni lola
nga gisunod
sa iyang kamanghorang
apo nga
babaye

daghang sakayan ang
misubay sa
kalinaw daghang
mangingisda ang milabay
sa ilang pukot

ang mga kanaway wala
sa langit
walay bisag usa ka tunob
ang nahibilin sa balas
nga sa kanunay gipapa sa
mga balod sa dagat

ang dakong iro nga puti
nahikutulog pa intawon
didto sa bugnaw nga balas
sa baybayon

nagpaabot ang batang lalaki
nga unta moabot na ang kusog
nga hangin
kay paluparon na niya ang
bag-ong tabanog nga hinimo
sa iyang tatay nga
gipalayas na sa iyang
isog na nanay

RIC S. BASTASA
Mice

got a mouse
in my hand
and it is hiding inside
my mouth
it wants to come
out
but no, it will stay
in my throat

you sound like a
kitten,
este a cat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mid-Life

she wakes up at 3 a.m.
with a nightmare: she is on a bridge
below her the flood, waters raging
carrying driftwood, some houses, people calling for her,
deaf she moves on to the other side
on white gown less the bouquet
a man in black suit waits for her
the water rises and then all the screams are gone

the man becomes a mist
her hands tremble
her diamond ring falls to the water below

the water rises up to her waist
she shouts for help
there is no boat and the other side dissolves with the man
a mist covers her

she closes her eyes and then she is taken away by some hands.
she wakes up grasping for breath.

her pillow is wet with tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Midnight

She is the only one that moves now
Her soundless feet keen on the floor
Her silence seeps
In empty corners where all the sorrows sleep

She dances in the grace of afternoon petals falling off
Her cold breath hovers
In the roofs that vigil the death of the noisy crowd

A loner
A curious clone of a black ghost
She visits abandoned rooms
And cracks stories concealed by the muted angers

She drops a secret like a feather
Floating and I though awake
Throughout her wakings and walk-ins
Could not recall having caught one
In such slowness
What she really says amidst the silence
Or meant in all these dark passages

The mirror on the wall stares
And glares at me with anger
One must have just died
The killer fled
Hidden by her black capes
Another secret I supposed
And though I thought
I knew

She had already flown away
Like a black bird into the night
I want to make some rains for her
Or offer her a lace of my tears
But by then another morning has come

Gently touching me
With flowers
And dove on my palms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Midnight Birds Sometimes Make Their Wailing Songs
Waking You Up In Shivers.

in that dark nook
in a not so well known
folk house
i sit listening to the
kind of music
that you love playing

mostly, sad, and deep
like a wound that refuses
to yield to
a healing balm

i have my glass of wine
for company
its alcohol also appeases
my appetite for
longing

for always loving you
my precious illusion
my mirage in the hope of
finding an oasis
in the desert
my flower on the top
of the mountain where cliffs
always remind me
of the enduring danger

guitar strings of love
violin loneliness
the angst of those piano
keys
the tragedy of ivory
the pain of broken glasses
and empty beer bottles
that lie drunk the following
morning
all those trash and
garbage of love stories
which we always hear and
bear with
all those kinds of
having been
related and elated and
dumbfounded

stupidities abound
foolish people mushroom in the
darkness of this folk house as you
begin to play with your own
sorrow

i must be drunk
and i close my eyes to be carried
away with your music

on those lonely alleys
and pathways
on those houses with doors
and windows closed

as one enters the abandoned
shack
turns on the flashlight
gets a lighter
clicks it
to find a dusty candle
to light another night
at the foot of the hill
surrounded by
forests and mountains

midnight birds sometimes
make their wailing songs
waking you up
in shivers
some though like those
pink nosed monkeys
make their love calls
to those
who are ready for their
heat season
violently shaking those
trees
and then the sounds of
someone falling to the
river
reverberates in the air
oh, another one is hopelessly
in love
full of lust
and lacking the compassion
bereft of love
nil in affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Midnight Voice

the voice of midnight
is the voice of clarity.

it is like an empty room
and a pen is dropped.

it is the sound of
reverberation.

it is loud.
so i stay till
midnight
dissolves in the hands
of the clock.

i follow its trip to
diminution.
towards light.

and you, who follow
what i am following
shall hear the depth of
the well
filled with water.

you hear the wholeness of a voice.
like a toad.
when it rains so hard it sings.
that is the song
like the song of the
heavy rain.

i know you will love this.
it hurts.
it hurts so hard.
and because you were hurt,
you identify with it.

knowing a friend
who listens to you
when you are hurt
and who write about you
gives you the sense

of home. And you sit there
facing the mountains by your window.

how peaceful can it be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Midnight.....

somewhere
between two half slices
of a bread

a man slips in
with a mayonnaise
in his soul

the two slices close
him in
perfectly to make him
feel
that this is a world
of the burger

comforted
he waits for the other
to take the
best bite

all in his life
he simply
wants to be consumed
by hunger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mikis Theodorakis Collection

i am getting
greek
tuning in to
mikis theodorakis

see me hop and huff
and buff and puff
see me raise my hands
hear me clapping see me
dancing to life

come, come join me
in the celebration of
a new life
leased on a bright
Thursday morning

for tonight they are
going to kill another one...

RIC S. BASTASA
Mimicry

For how long can this butterfly
Mimic a strong green leaf?

It depends on the memory of the
Caterpillar

on the other leaf wriggling

RIC S. BASTASA
Mind Your Own Business...

do not measure me 
with your measure
we have the same eyes 
you see and i see but
we never arrive at the 
same point of view

as you dip your tongue 
in salt and pepper
i dip mine in milk 
and honey

always remember my dear 
fly's hell is spider's heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
Mind, Heart And Time

the mind
is a pen that
stitches
the broken skin
of the
heart

the heart when healed
makes the mind
sleep

it sings like a
wind
that touches
the heights of
cliffs

the coldness of the
fog
that hangs upon
the trees
turns this place of misery
into
a temple of beauty

the mind wakes up
a stranger anew
to what it had been seeing
in the face
of that river without
banks

RIC S. BASTASA
Mindanao In Mourning

i know of a place
my grandfather once told me
a promised land

mountain ranges
lakes and seas
hills and valleys
blue skies
rain and waterfalls
wild deer and pigs
and birds and
buffaloes

Mindanao

the place
unexploited

rivers and shrimps
and crabs and
shells

my great grandfathers
speak well of this land
where we have lived
with pride
and peace

Mindanao
our inheritance

my grandfather when
he hears
how the farmers are
killed
asking for rice
instead are given
bullets
Mindanao
now cries and mourns
for months
and years.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Minding....

when the eyes of the other
look at you
you begin to feel the insecurity
of something like
what is she up to?

this fat? this loose skin?
this thinning smile? these falling locks of hair?
a stooping shadow?
sleepy eyes?

sometimes, no matter how we hide
they take away the covers
pull the curtains and break the doors
loosen the hinges
and throw us with so much light
that we become blinded
and helpless

and so it is the decision to be strong-willed
that matters
love goes out and
desire fades
and health fails
and bones break
and sight dims

we are what we are
because we decide to be
what we are

just like the way i am
no matter how you see
what is outside
of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a flow of the river
like a stream of
my consciousness
that does not mind
driftwood
it minds its own sound
of flowing
on and on

there is no complaint
what burden is carried
what winding ways
to ease
that which is held with
least resistance

tere is no rock so high
and hard
tere is no obstruction
this river
that goes on with its song
on and on and on,

mindless of everything
the stones and birds staring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mine Doesn'T

as i once told you
it is easy to rhyme like

roses are red
violets are blue
flush the toilet
when you are through

or try
this one

eine meine meine moo
catch the monkey by the
tor

but i do not like
rhyming
it is simply
not enduring

it is a matter of
style
and anyone can
be a poet
if he simply
devotes time
to the bursting of emotions

like sun, like
the first day
when rays spread like
hands on the
breasts of the
mountains

most poems rhyme
mine doesn't.
Mine Is Annabelle

oh i see
you named
your puppy
laura lee

may i suggest
another
name
with much
significance
of poesy

please
call her
annabelle lee

in honor
of mr. edgar
allan
poe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Minimalist At The Last

at the last hour
he writes it is

u.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ministriles De Marsias: Stral Fungente D Amore

Ten angels praising
Ten angels singing

Alleluia alleluia alleluia
Praise be God
Praise be God
Of the MOST HIGH

Angelic voices
Pure pure pure

I am listening
My neck is growing
Giraffe like
My thorax is
Inflamed

The sound of heaven
Is to me, unbearable

Praise be God
Praise be God

I am listening and my ears are growing
Elephant like
I am flapping my spirit

The sound of heaven
Is to me, uncertain

Praise be God
Praise be God
The Most High

I marvel at the sound of ten angels singing
I marvel at the sound of the angels praising

My heart is growing
My body is shrinking
My brain is shrinking

Look! Look!

Praise be God
Praise be God
The Most High

I am a huge heart
Jumping with joy
Filled with holy air
Like a rubber ball bouncing to the sky!

RIC S. BASTASA
Mirror Image

a cloud shapes a geese
then hover on the clear pond
looking upon itself,

enjoying to the full its
own way of changing things,
even itself,
it forms another image
of itself,

now a cloud which is a cloud
but still not contented
it shifts places
then loses itself to the
caprices of the
south bound wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mirror Poem

to forget
that we have started
it is about us
and oh, i remember it
feel well when the noise is gone
in darkness, with hands that
with eyes that see well
i wait for the night
but nothing comes out
at noon i try to remember it
which i forget writing
there was a thought at dawn

there was a thought at dawn
which i forget writing
at noon i tried to remember it
but nothing comes out
i wait for the night
with eyes that see well
in darkness, with hands that
feel well when the noise is gone
and oh, i remember it
it is about us
that we have started
to forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Mirror, Same Face As Yours

So many of you here
Still dream
Longing for the fire from
Those distant stars
Many of you
Still hope to lessen
The pain
Or get rid of these
Miseries

Tonight you will raise your arms
Begging for the moon
To shine upon you with
Hope

How poor
How miserable
Your faces show
The malady of mankind
Your wry smiles
Feed upon the
Dry lips of
Hopelessness

I look upon the mirror...
I stare upon it closely like a microscope.

My face is same as yours
I feed upon
Your helplessness
I swallow
The same hopeless case.

RIC S. BASTASA
Miscellaneous

he collected stamps
of various colors and kinds
those that he really liked
or loved
and keep them all
in one album

he is called
promiscuous
despite the fact
that he never
tore any stamp
or anybody

he need not worry
promiscuous is
just the synonym
for miscellaneous

RIC S. BASTASA
Miserable Bird

there is a bird
that sings in the wilderness

it is cursed
it can sing beautifully only when no one listens

when the morning comes
it is dead

RIC S. BASTASA
Miserable People
	he miserable people hug themselves
during the cold night
when the rain seems not to stop falling
	heir silence warm themselves
their dreams converge
their loneliness together forms
a blanket of comfort
amidst this confusing darkness

with hands clasped they start their prayers
for those who did not survive
the loneliness and length of the chant
those unheard of
and those who left for good into a destination
unknown

RIC S. BASTASA
Miserable You.....

it's like you were
trying to teach the moon
how to shine
the fish to swim
the bird to fly

it's like you were telling
the sky
to make boundaries
the storm to know what is calm

i guess you never know what you
are doing
but since you are a friend
i shall keep on listening

an old man begging for food
looks at you with pity

RIC S. BASTASA
Miserere...

ey look at us
as another misery,
not knowing that we know
beforehand what
misery was
its color and
feel, in fact, we had so much
familiarity with it
that we already know how to
pretend that we
do not know it,
its face
is everyone,
its journey
all ours to make

and so i do not speak
neither do i listen

for in truth i have known much
about it
and the talking never solved it
neither is the confession
it is still there

the point then is simple
it is part of all these structures
the stars are not impressed
and the moon
as usual
does not mind....

RIC S. BASTASA
Misery Always

misery always smiles
at the misery of others

there is this law of diminishing
the pain when others suffer with you.

with you reading my lines
how can i be in pain?

RIC S. BASTASA
Misery In The City

we arrived
together last
night

tired we went
to sleep
airtight in our
dreams

one wakes up
goes to the comfort room
hazily
back to sleep trying
to cope up and
remember

what was it? what
was it all about?
why? why? insistent
upon an existential
query

but sleep is nil and
the love of forgetting
wins this time

you are more agile
and flexible
adapted to whatever
happens
knows your ins and outs
and the escape window
and the extinguishers

i am left behind
helpless
without flesh and bone
feeling like
cotton and feathers and
air...

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this philosophy
(and i assure you it is adopted by many
perhaps,
without their knowing it) that-

when we make ourselves miserable
people who are miserable
(and the majority is miserable
for quite long)
...will love you for it, since you are like a fallen angel
from up there
and here you are without wings and muddy and bruised
and very much like all of them
and now
with them.

they will love you for this misery
and since you have not really experienced true love
(since you feel that you are abandoned
and molested by whom, how do i know?)
you accept
love in misery
misery loving another misery
misery that seeks company
and here is company....

and so look at this paradox of you
(you do not deserve this, but you choose it just the same)

happy, so happy, in the midst of miserable people
wallowing in misery

the big house in the exclusive millionaire's row
where you once lived
waits for you

you can be there anytime you want
as you still immerse in that feigned misery
Misery 101.
They will give you a grade for that.

Have fun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Misery....

if you are on top of the cliff
and you watch the world: the green valley
teeming with forest trees, the birds in v formation moving away from you,
the fog on early morning thinning and finally
showing to you the horizon of a blue sea
the white line between the land and the water
you may speak then of the beauty of this world
less the miseries of the heart of
the spectator in you
trying to erase
what lies
inside.

RIC S. BASTASA
Misplaced

when he sees the breeze
and hears
the silence of the grass
when he begins to hear
the voices of angels
when he claims
that every morning
God is there and begins
chatting with him

RIC S. BASTASA
Miss Ibyang

come
reunion time
ms. ibyang will not
be joining

she was first honors
during high school
but her mother died
her father lost his job
and she has other
five younger
siblings to tend

she helps the family
sells fish in the public market
she has a loud voice
for all the buyers to listen

she did not marry
she is 56 now
her hands are rough
she does not smell good
she has wrinkles on her
face
her arms and
thighs

and what good shall
that reunion do to her?

expectedly they will all
ask what happened to
her after all those years

and if she is honest enough
five hours will not be enough
for her to tell them
of society's injustice
how she could have taken
that scholarship
except the fact that some
other sons and daughters of
influence
just the same took it away
from her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Miss Melancholia....

sorry miss
you can't stay in my
place for
long

if you stay some
more days
you've got to pay
me more

this is a very simple
place
two doors
three windows
one stair
thatched roof

this is my place
reserved for
happiness

if i allowed you to
stay
it is because you have
no other

but as i told you
you really can't stay here for long
friends are coming
and laughter is beaming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Miss X

miss x
i will always remember you
like a hot green tea
inside a very white
petite porcelain cup
one rainy day
i sip slowly
something bitter
and warm and
still ever refreshing
as i sit on a cushioned sofa
at the lanai
facing a garden of blooming
sexy pinks

RIC S. BASTASA
Miss You Too

i got you
inside my brief

inside my skin
inside my heart

i got you
inside my veins
inside my system

i got you
and no matter what

there is no going out
my brief, my skin, my heart, my veins,
my system

don't budge, you'll inside my bulge

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing Her

it's been a long time
he had been away...for weeks

she takes her bath
and perfumes her whole body

she cooks him
his favorite pasta

and mixes his
rum with coca cola

she kisses him
and drags him to bed

that early night
she anticipates the grand fireworks

from his eyes
and tongue the wild clean-up

of her longings
the wholesale satisfaction

of her wildest dream
where they must turn into animals

horses copulating that long
she is no praying mantis

to eat him
and leave nothing for tomorrow

after the last dropp of sweat
she falls asleep

he takes a cigarette
puffs his smoke towards the ceiling
forming the beautiful face
of the one he truly loves

back to his past
where he was once the angel with the whitest of wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing Home....

riding in a gondola
listening to the songs
of Venice
gazing beyond somewhere
missing home

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing Link

So there you are
The missing link of my life

I was having something
Blank in my mind

And things do not fit
Nothing fits to this “it”

A square pig
In a hole,
A fish on a hill
A chicken on the sea
A snail in the city
A fan on the freezer

Me to nowhere
You somewhere

For a time I was walking
Without a direction
Without anything in my mind

Things simply do not fit
And there you are
Standing not looking also for
Something specific

And we found ourselves
We fit
We simply talk without bumps
In our throats
We simply enjoy each other’s company
You laugh at my jokes
And I like the way you talk

We fit, now we must live together
I am the thread to your needle’s eye
We fit, you and I

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing Naruto-San

missing the hissing of
the fire
heating the pot of beans

as the male rain begins to
pour on the
woman earth where all the
flowers begin
to giggle

RIC S. BASTASA
feeling lonely i sit on the stair
look at the long road away from home
thinking of some old friends
only to know
that most of them already
passed away

sometimes i wonder when is my time
to join them and have fun again
like we were once children
bathing in that shallow river

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing The Candies

she knows that the child
in me
misses the
candies
of the store

the lollipop
the chocolates
the mints
and the
buttered ones

she knows too that as a
man
now ripe with the age
of libido

i too miss
Candy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing The Muddy Pair Of Shoes....

at this hour i am talking to myself
senselessly, a talk that is a talk without any
purpose of an explanation or of trying to
understand, it is like simply standing beside the
rails of a house on top of a hill
beside the sea
and it is nighttime and what you see all around
is black and bleak
and so to keep yourself preoccupied
as you do not know what to do next after this hour
you keep on talking and talking
to yourself in
the anonymity of silence

it knows how to respond and keep you
sane.

then you go back to the kitchen door to
smell what is next
not black coffee this time
just red wine and pork chop

you make some roots
on the floor
you chant and grow some tendrils on
your hair that reaches the
bland cheek of the ceiling
somehow you want to kiss this
absurdity

not the kiss of death
just a kiss without any meaning
letting time pass

waiting for the light of the morning
loosen tight chests

getting dressed again
looking for the pair of muddy shoes
Missing Those Old Times

moon
sun stars
clouds
trees
seas lakes
hills

are these all
that you can say?

there are those that
must be given: light, mist, waves,
depths, rolling
green
hanging cottons

we sometimes need to feel
what movements they have
drifting, wavering,
dive, thunder, lightning
softness of blue
softness of silk,
coldness of rain

and then let us move somewhere
into hands holding
our bodies side by side
against the coldness of the
ground and rocks

it is the intimacy that we lack
the sticky wetness
that we have forgotten
the entanglement of
lovely thoughts
the odor of dreams
the sweetness of our tongues
bones and cartilage
cinnamon and vanilla
sauce and pineapples
sugar and salt and the bitterness
of some herbs
all these ingredients
of life
they all make us whole again

not just stars and sun and moon
and sky

it is when we lie on the grass again
to see the maps of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing You

always i am missing you
every moment when i begin
to compare the now and the
what had been there.

always i am missing your
sweet-nothings when i touch
the rough edges of my own
walls and doors, these that
enclose me

always will i miss you
when i feel that i am thrown
to a dungeon of lions when
i hear the sounds of my
yesterdays with you

always will i remember you
when the rain begins to fall
when a woman opens an
umbrella when i stood tall
beside you.

it will always be a sweet remembering
when another bus leaves this town
when another man waves his hands goodbye
when the dusts settle on the locks
of his hair and skin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing...

she lays her head
on the soles of my feet
and then
after a while
takes her light sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not wish to dirty the white veil
that covers the face of the one i love

truly as i kiss the white skin, i do not wish
to shed a tear, to spoil the purity of my intentions

my heart bleeds as you say
i do not love you for how can i really love you? how can i?

i understand how the planets move, how this galaxy takes care of its course,
there shall be no change
of direction, whatever, whether the reason be

the magical love, the fantasy of being, the all-out giving with nothing left,
a love so pure equated with zero, when you give everything, when you crumple like a leaf, when you are consumed by the strong blow of a sigh

i have loved you all my life and i have given everything i am all for you
what more do you need of my stupidity? you are the whirlpool sucking all that i have, and i have let it that way

for nothing.

how can you ever love me? i too ask that, and i know the answer, but unlike the planets and the stars and the galaxy not swayed by pain or bliss,

i know the answer and i give back what i have taken.
i give back silence, and then i bow and then i die and then i am gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mistaken For A Need Of Affection

the charity of the heart
can be mistaken as a beggar asking
for affection when
in truth the act of giving is a matter
of following God's passion
to give life
offer love for more love
making love
to fulfill the promise of life
to give it that much needed
sense of posterity
the laying of the foundation for reason
to be alive
in the hearts of those who no longer believe
in logic

RIC S. BASTASA
Mistaken......

moved by nothing but
pity
our love for the inferior
kind
has been mistaken as
lust
our concern for the flight
of that
strange migrating bird
has been twisted as another form
of pornography

just the same we continue what
right we can do
their mistakes cannot be not ours
if we submit
to another fear that we may lose
what we have
so unskillfully finished.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mistaking Paint For Faint

it is the rush
but why the rush?
it is the shortness of the breath
of time
inside the nostrils of
the unwavering
what the mind means
goes with the sound
and the fingers
as lousy as
then

the building
faints
(nice metaphor)
when what is meant
was that
the building is painted
white, a while, you mean?
gosh, this is the rush
of life
committing to a
commitment of mistakes
here and there
but why bother?
it is something that you leave
without paying much
attention

off you go,
let them bark
like dogs on the
wrong tree.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mistress Of Mind

o mistress of mind where are you going?
stay and be with me, i am truth yearning
sing me what is desiring
go no farther, be sweet let 's pet
kiss my lips in this lovers' tryst
you must be wise enough to know
tell me what is love? what is lust?
it is not out there, it is here.
present pushes, real pulls
what is out there is still not sure
hugs delayed is love denied
come and kiss me, make love to me
sweet and severe, soft and tender
this we must this time endure.

A youth, a low boat, a bay lot.
Oh ten kisses, let us sing the key note.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mists...

A veil on the face
is finally lifted

a white silky blanket on that morning
mountain
doubt
slowly clearing itself from the mind
packing up and leaving

bluebirds flying away from
the silence of the tunnels

water and oil
separated by a plastic funnel....

RIC S. BASTASA
Mixing Time Your Way

so, on most of the days
you teach literature
and you said you love it
you never worked
at all,
and then on some peculiar days
you spend your body
spread on a much
needed solitude
that boulevard,
there are days you go
brisk on
a real estate business
you've got to make money sometimes
lest you can't survive
these harsh times,
and then you are back to what
you are
a poetess mixing time
taxes, teaching, real properties
solitude
sitting on a chair facing the sea
scribbling
reminiscing

RIC S. BASTASA
Moaning.....

at the public bath
in romania
i saw you alone and

beautiful. I stared that
long enough to ruin
my desire for true love.

to love sometimes if you
notice is to destroy an old self.

carve. sculpt. even if you are
not the same anymore.

to be different. I dare.
but it will just be in romania.

back here, i am the most lonely
soul. A temple is destroyed.
a volcano erupted. So many died.

but i am alive and will
be back in romania to be in that
public bath again

to see you and i have high hopes
that i may be with you to touch
you and kiss you.

i like the sound of the water
it is moaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mocking Bird

and there it was on my roof again
mimicking the sound of the dreamer
it is singing the songs of fantasy
and sleepy
it forgets itself and becomes the dreamer

someone who was awake throughout the night
does not believe in dreams and fantasies
notices the difference between its voice and the dream song

gently he speaks of a homage
to a voice whose mouth had long been silenced
whose tongue was cut & thrown away
whose letters of his name was carved in stone

the mocking bird knows the difference
and then it turns its beak into utter silence
and then it flies away wanting to cut its wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mocking Bird, Mocking Man

he is sometimes
tempted to mimic a mockingbird
that mimics him
most of the times
on top of the tree fronting
his window where he
faces the sun and moon

the mockingbird mocks him the moment he mocks it
and he in turn mocks the mockingbird that mocks him when he mocks it

both of them are bored
and have nothing good to do

they mock each other
morning noon and nigh time
bird man bird, man bird man bird

in truth the man wants to be a mockingbird
in truth the mockingbird wants to be a man

the problem is
no one is talking and no one is listening

no one wants to be himself/itself forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Modern City Romance....

no more
cherry blossoms

old dreams
they are

it is all
buildings and
road that
never end

at night
i dine with you
on the
30th floor

beside us the
moon
and the glass window
immersed
with stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Modern Day Agnostic

he hears the church bell ring
early this morning he hears the footsteps passing
by his door going on a worship towards the holy door

he keeps himself mum
unmoved by any invitation

he is thinking will the door still open for him?

RIC S. BASTASA
Molting

underneath
the mud
above are the sun and wind
upon a pile of
dead leaves
lies my
thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
Molting Snake Of Nineveh....

Benny, it is because you want to please them
that you stay indoors
like a decorative vine
choking itself on the
dark beam of the house

i remember we finally make it
to the shore
but still imprisoned on that thought
of not giving them all the worries
you never step on the deeper part of the
water
you prefer the shallow ones
as water like tongues
wave after wave
lick your thighs and tickle
your toes

i am trying to discover what food
have you eaten
what did they feed you for all those
years
of cloistering?

Benny, look, you must understand
that they are all dead
we both buried them
on that pompous day

you need to be shaken
you still need to be hurt again
you need to jump on that murky river
that threatening dark blue
portion of the sea
where the giant octopus shall eat
and then
vomit you

or that shark that gives all the
fears
that big fish bound for Nineveh
it must swallow you whole

and then spit you out in another
crazy town

perhaps you can be returned again
back to the
smiling self, the happy one
drunk and then resurrected

as i ponder today on the snake molting
in pain
to be its biting self again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moments And Moments

a day well worked
a night well rested
an hour of contemplation
a minute of friendly talk
each second counts
a life well lived.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monday

another holiday
for people
to think some more
whom to vote
on May 10,

less empowered
they are like
Jews hauled by
the cahoots of Hitler
to be burned
somewhere

money, money,
poverty spoils
the true face of
freedom

my cousins are mad
at me
for taking the liberal
stance
that all the tenants
must use their own
minds

use the limited light
of their lamps
to light their paths
during the darkness
of their lives

i respect their choices
in this
baby democracy
still getting milk
from stepmother
America
Money Is Nil....

on a sunday
someone does not go to
church

he goes to the flea market
sits on one of those old chairs
buys himself
coffee,

sipping life watching life
too go by

mostly alone. The market is
one of those crowds.

it is just one cup of coffee

money is nil.

RIC S. BASTASA
Money Is Not Everything

at the party
they are not drunk yet
and they are talking
about money, and i begin to brag
about pisyu,

how i
dress the bottom of pisyu
who eats anything
and keeps everything
but does not
expel anything,

rich pisyu knows where the
money is,
and all you have to do
is please it
with your
ringfinger
and money comes in bulk
inside your
trunk,

at the party
they never talk about
my own
peculiar
loneliness

they avoid my eyes
because my gaze is deadly
and transforms them
into stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
Money Laughs

i shoot an old man
with my camera
taking a tired face

inside my monitor
for posterity of misery

i shoot the old man
telling him that financial aid

is coming from the
United Nations

the old man sheds some tears
i guess

to be more convincing

money is a very
efficient film director

i shoot an old English professor
who is dying

of attention
and then i talk to money

and money laughs
finally convincing me

that it can always change
the mood of anyone

even my own
some kind of pretension

RIC S. BASTASA
Money Money Money

money makes sense
sometimes we make sense with what makes sense
money money money
makes this spin a little faster
we want to make more
and then we see what we do not want to see
gnarled conscience
whorled integrity
shrinking soul
lost self.

money money money
makes my world dimmer

makes us happy somehow
but for how long?

RIC S. BASTASA
Money Money Money.....

it is yours
i know it is yours
i know it will never be mine

do not misinterpret me
i never wish it could be mine
i advise you
i do not wish it to be mine

i only wish that you should have kept it forever

now you have chosen to part with it
now you perish with it

God bless you.
i must have mine too but i must work hard for it.

God bless you.
i am never its slave

you have become another foolish hoarder
God bless you. God forgive you.

It has made you the most selfish
miser in the world.

I have no wish but to have a little only.
I will spend it. And then i am free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monica...

do not adore me,
i am not one of those gods
of your past
or your present, i do not exist in the future
there is none for us
or for me
for i am destined to simply be
a soap bubble
early morning being played
by a reckless
kid
in our place,

i admit i write
because i have only a very short hour left
to cherish
i know what is there three meters away from where we are sitting,
it is the longest stretch that i can make
do not ask
do not take this as a puzzle for you to solve
time unlocks the door and the answer comes out
like a light bulb that you switch on in the dark

if you only know what i am seeing
when i write these lines
you will never like me ever
ever in the last hours of your life

i am seeing myself
in these flashes of films
and you shall not believe
how you can hate me later on
because you think that
you understand me
completely

monica i am never myself
even once
in that ticking clock
i am not a hidden treasure
that you can share with anybody
when you finally find me
in one of those nooks
unlighted
i can only think of one option for you
and this was the same thing
that i did
when i found the one that i truly love

i keep my mouth shut
not because i never loved anymore
anyone

but because i was never loved
by what i really loved
because there is no point of co-mixing
where water
and oil meet.

i shared you once
the story written by Sartre

and i will repeat it
Monica, there is really
NO EXIT.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monkey Business...

I'VE SEEN your picture
fat lady, with curly red hair
thick arms, thin lips, red scarf
transparent blouse
bra-less

peach cheeks,
broad shoulders
thin eyebrows
cascading
necklace
diamond earrings
golden brooch
bare feet
big smiles

i almost forget you
you have turned into
someone else
that i cannot
identify with
anyone here

and you have taken
another name

i know what depression is,
how it is very much
food related
lots of soda, lots of cheese
and pasta

big bites of black moist chocolate cakes
long lonely hours
many nights of pondering
schemes of separations
strategies for surviving life
without
anyone to cling to

money, money,
it is worth having now
makes you
more powerful you know
despite the
sorrow

i know
like me
you imagine more
places to hide
more secrets to keep
more plans to
execute
more
unfinished
business

i deviate a little
from law to
literature
(and pornography
yucks!)

it is one of my old antics
and kits for
survival

a poem here
and a poem there
an alias here and another one
there in another place
with another set of
people

i love strange places
aliens
make my 
travel more 
interesting

you see,
i do not get bored now
i have many faces
i grow more eyes and hands
from this
worn out body

I'll add more legs
and perhaps

if it makes you more
comfortable with me

I'll have more tongues
and
a longer tail
shiny
and scented
to the odor
of earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Monobloc Poetry

man sits
on mono bloc

facing a woman
standing beside
a mono bloc

chair, man looks over
the window

woman leaves
mono bloc chair

solo mono bloc
on a monologue

monochromatic
point of view of

a mono bloc
chair overlooking

a window without
sun
night rain

fog and dog howl
mono bloc chair

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue #1

what now?
nothing.
it is like
frying
all the fat
melting.
what can you say?
a lot.
do you want to undress?
i am cold.
what now?
there must be something
important still
unspoken.
but it is nice to keep it.
so?
hide in silence
carry with you that secret
to your grave.
what about them?
oh, they have their own
rough journey too.
it is fair then.
yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are so many voices.
inside.
don't tell them,
they will concoct stories about you
during their parties.
but i join them in their table
and talk about
politics and
economy.
they think you have nothing at all.
you are flimsy.
i don't mind.
you are a choir of angels.
how sweet to hear
i close my eyes
and then i feel
heaven.
Idiot.
why are you like that to me?
we are friends.
stupid. you are so trusting and
so you are a loser.
be a fox.
i am not a fox.
i like being a dove.
moron! moron! moron!
that is quite repetitive.
and you are so cruel.
have faith.
that is the only choice now.
let life do it for you.
throw away your
planner.
listen.
i don't like you but i can't get rid of you.
you are myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue #3

how kind of you
you wait for life here
you are sitting, sipping coffee, watching the first sunrise by
the bay window.
relax.
how stupid of you to imagine life as a force
a knight of the morning
riding on winged white horse
inviting you for a ride
on the clouds.
i am not stupid. i am not stupid.
shut up.
there are so many things that you do not know.
I AM A forest of
mysteries.
I have secrets. flowers, worms, seeds,
stones,
ants, scorpions.
so you are into insects now?
small time.
you do not understand. these are metaphors.
i am not a poet.
you are a liar.
i am a lovely, attractive liar.
but terflies hover and hover around my head
loving my hair.
my hair are waterfalls.
do you hear the sound?
it is the sound of magnificent water.
it is power.

seriously, do you like to like to have a
shrink?
don't try me.
I can be so silent with your violent insults.
i am an artist.
no you are not. you are cheap. you are taking yourself seriously.
look at you.
yes, i am human.
are you god?

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue #4

the market is your hiding place.
you buy everything. Leaves. Roots.
buds.
the vendors please you.
the prices are haggling. you love it.
i write.
the words, letters, phrases are my
safe-houses.
i am all too exposed to darkness
look at the color of my skin.
bruised blue.
i wonder if i can be under the sun this morning.
what happens to my bones?
they are turning into powder.
nothing holds my flesh
my nerves are scattered like powdered pepper.
i like to blind you and make you sneeze
perhaps, you will know that i exist now?
i don't exist. i live.
do you know the difference?
you live in the shallow waters. you have all your fun.
i am inside the deep ocean
grappling for breath.
i pray to God to turn me into a whale.
i like to live a hundred more years and be in
every continent.
In my own way of mystifying
beautifying
loneliness.
you have arrived finally with a basket of vegetables.
the room smells like a salad of broccoli and radish and
and lettuce.
i am a letter under the cover of a poem.
you are angry.
and you do not look for me.
i will be in a coffeehouse tonight and they will find me.
they will read.
they will read.
these bald men, with suspenders for their eggs.
these bearded men who smell like dry soil from the desert.
do you know that smell?
i know.
they will wonder, what is this nitwit trying to say?
a mole. a transformation. into a rock, a haven for scorpions.
they will put their pointing finger to their chins.
silence.
contemplation.
dim lights.
beer. so much beer to fill their brains with.
foam.
i am waiting. i am famous now. they are making me the object of their discussion.
but it will be hurting, they will bombard me with their own shortcomings.
how they fail. how they stumble in their pride.
they dig their foxholes for defenses.
their children do not know their names.
their mothers are still looking for their umbilical cords.
for a while they will be drunk
some will dance naked, and their bodies are not good to look at.
ugly.
i vomit. i make the room smell like
the manger where the famous baby was born.
this the place for a beginning.
i do wish them dead. they are needed.
the world will be horrible without them.
i am shaken.
and finally i arrive at the conclusion
that after all, with all of them,
all drunk and lost and hurting,

life is still worth living.
Monologue #6

the world is not a big white plain
not all green grass where your eyes would dance singing and
delighted
like a Mary Poppins.
there are so many mountains, sand dunes,
pits, volcanoes.
not all rivers have bridges.
so you leap.
and no matter how you try to avoid cliffs
the come to you.
and you fall.
and you die,
but if you do not die
then by all means
heal yourself
live....

broken, limping, hurt, so hurt,
and you want to die again.
the cliffs laugh at you
they do not come like servants
when you need them
most.

do you not envy me? look at me. All the pores of my skin
are smileys.
am i not funny?

you complain, you shout at me.
Liar! liar!

are you not too? You lie in order to heal.
you heal yourself.

Liar! Liar! Liar!
hello brother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue 1

it was only last night
that i noticed that there were
only two fireflies
lighting the mahogany tree

the other day
they cut the chico
for they need firewood
the little boy once told his mother
that a white fairy lives there

what is the point?
the white fairy owns the tree
and it is only the little boy who believes about this

the chico tree is where the fireflies
sleep in the morning

two fireflies have not accepted
that their dwelling is gone
now they entertain the illusion
that the mahogany
could still be the chico tree
in their own minds.

that is what the legend is.
and you may not believe it.

now that boy does not believe
in white fairies anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue 2

far woman shrouded in loneliness
weeping
a hundred days of grief
bleeding blades of brass
bells tolling for another funeral
of the heart

far woman silent as a continent
calling my name
for a thousand years and i, who is here
rooted to the present joys
slowly dying
to the chants of my guilty conscience
beside the
cruel furies
in bed my hands rest at the tomb
of my chest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monologue

it is not
that easy really
when finally
you find yourself
alone
and when you begin
to relate to
yourself as a friend
whom you can
begin to confide with
and as you
start on a certain
intimacy
from one secret to
another
you realize that
this same self
opts not to talk
about it
and tells you with
finality that
it does not really
remember
specially those
painful ones and then
you embrace the
silent moment
and without much
fuss you convince
yourself
for once that this
matter is
fully understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monosyllabic Monologue Of The Self

IT IS 11: 46 p.m. Philippine time,
i wake up feeling so congested,
messy, perhaps it is all about the dream
i just had,
climbing a very steep mountain
to take something
that i have forgotten
and then i go down
only to remember
which way, whichever
the feeling of being exhausted
so unlike the washing machine
or the egg beater
and the blender
all mechanical without complaint
of being overused by its
master
so unlike me, oh, here i am again
complaining about my
existence, the worm that waits
smiles
wanting to get even with me
there is something wrong i know
in this monosyllabic monologue of the heart
empty like a soccer field after the game
one shadow left
still looking for the ball
the noise fading in the horizon
light is taken back
yet the sigh is still insisting
that something is left
like a coin or a cigarette butt
nonsense
he strikes back, stupid foolish
sigh, and arms
emptied of content like a
soft drink bottle
left out waiting for the garbage collector
to pick it up
nonsense, now i must say
waste of time
loveless still.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monotone

i agree with you perfectly
that the sound of the waves of the sea is a monotony
we heard it before and now
i do not want to hear it again
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
lady of the night
so silent in the sky
descending through
the river and sitting on
the marsh
so soft and gentle
as i wade through the water
as i rise and sit on the
bank bathing to your
yellow light.

how i wish she arrives
tonight for another round

of worship

to the moon in the sky
descending and sitting
on the marshes of the
river....

RIC S. BASTASA
Moon And Poetry

what then happens when
the rain stops

ah, even the sound of the
fallen leaves

what then after all the
stacks of papers are removed

all those stuff you cared for
all burned

then the ashes on your feet
the sighs of your longings

then the sounds of arguments
fade on those halls

what is left? who is left out?
can you suffer all alone?

when you enter an abandoned
house

open the door and what greets
you is the silence of those

empty floors, all furniture
taken, windows closed and dusty still

the heaviness of all emptiness
hangs on your shoulders

you must leave all these in exchange
for that open space of trees

and flashing landscapes on the trains
as you surrender back to your one and
only home: those distant stars hanging
on the vast skies, moon and poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moon And Stars....

so your divorce is finally granted
it is liberation day indeed
you have experienced marriage as a shackle
worthy of suffering and martyrdom at those first few years
all for the sake of the children and now that they have
grown up and will be living their own private lives
you too shall have a share of this newly-found freedom

it is here where forgetting a man named Robert is a merry thing
and being away from him completely is a well chosen vacation.

i admire your courage.
your decision is correct.

i have not met Robert but i must have heard it right that
he had chosen to live with the monks in an undisclosed desert.

such is life. He inflicted all the pains in his hypocrisy.
you suffered. Now it is his turn to say that you have finally
deserted him for someone else.

the predator and prey in the cycle of our humanity.
you are going back home to your country meeting an old mother
who shall die happy back to your care.

the two kids have become men and shall take their wives
buy a house, find work, get preoccupied with hopes and dreams.

to each his own now. Like you. At the end there is only you.
the rest are them. What once started goes back to that beginning.

seed back to seed. dust to dust. Moon and stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moon Over You

on a Monday
morning
i go there
wanting to
see you

expecting that
love is in the air

sea breeze
blue skies
green grass
on the garden
some red roses
white daisies
ripe grapes &
strawberries

i am moon over
you and comes
this absence of a

noonday, till
late night, i am

still moon over
you, this hopeless

loveless romantic
waiting for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moon Song

for your moon is my moon
and my moon is your moon
the way we were together
together together
together
the way we were together
together
my friend, for my moon is your moon
and your moon is my moon,

is it not lovely?

RIC S. BASTASA
Moon Struck

MOON over you
Once in a blue moon
i was
moon over you, once in that
blue moon, i was,
as stupid as you,
moonstruck and blind
and too trusting,
pleased and gulled
and pained.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moonlit Night

do you remember
the moonlit night
when i take your hands
but i have never
taken your heart?

it was sad indeed.
you do not remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
frail lady Emily Dickenson
That is moonyeen
the girl of the night of chat
the student of the law website
asking questions
about some directions
what to do with her life
where to go
why
she is asking why
she is asking me why
i am making all things hard for her
as i threw questions of law and facts from a pile of law books

while i keep on writing my poetry and enjoying every situation
she has to read her
political law
her constitutional law with utmost logical objectivity

she is asking why i have made life hard and harsh for her
why i am cold and damp setting high standards on her legal studies
as i enjoy my craft of writing poems everyday

for days she is sad and would not chat
she shuts herself to all her difficult questions
while i
have sweet conversations with myself

i know her predicament though
she burns her candles with the law

while i sit peacefully under the cool shades of the trees
reciting all these love of life this zest for living

on the other hand moonyeen had to study her law
submit to the definitions of justice and equity

i have had all of that unjust stuff for years those dusty law years
and they serve no other purpose but for me to earn my living
to support my poetry and my love for this silly stuff
nonetheless makes me fully human fully alive!
these poetry which at the end will render
a disposition

who ever told you that life is fair?
whoever told you in the name of all our laws that life is fair?

that is the question assigned for moonyeen not just for this semester
but for the whole span of her lifetime

while i make my poems and read them all alone for myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moral Lesson For Today

if one knows
the reason for pain
one can endure it
for days

for a lifetime
the pain becomes nothing
but a lifestyle

everyday
is an offering
and the pain is taken away

somehow
in understanding the meaning of its source
the reason of its existence

one misses it like a long lost friend
and once when you meet it again
you hug it
you shed tears of Joy
and when it leaves
you want to be with it
you ask that you join it in its lone journey
but you are refused
for pain has its own life too
its own span

then you take pride in this understanding
you feel like you are god
crucified and redeemed
whole and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morality?

the taste of pink
cotton candy inside my mouth
the way i drown upon
your gaze

your way of evading
my plea
the emptiness that
salivates

upon another dead
dream
the one that makes
you feel good
after

society says it is
prohibited
you follow the
dictates of your heart

the strong voice
of conscience
you look at the mirror
no one is behind you

RIC S. BASTASA
More Questions For The Untamed

for how long shall my
patience be deep
and hollow
and for how long shall the
echoes sing
the soprano?

deepe is the hole in the heart
long is the journey of the mind
how short is the
sight of the eyes?

RIC S. BASTASA
More Readers Say Your Poems Are Good

more readers
write you, i like your poems, excellently written
i can feel them,
i can relate to them,

true you tell yourself, how these poems are written with
all simplicity and humility
experience-based years ago and now coming back
in metaphors as a matter of remembering

what happened, how, and
importantly why,

but sometimes he has regrets with some other poems
written and
not so appreciated because they are too deep and
need a lot of deciphering,

too personal,
metaphors too well derived
from some darkness
when he was all alone gripped with fear and trembling
to ghosts that do not exist

a beautiful mind,
the crazy mind he had in the dormitory
in the cemetery, haunting him

his passions on some squeaky beds
and foul rooms
cheap motels having a love affair
with a woman he never loved
but whom he pitied,

makes him feel
so inhuman and he writes them again
with a sense of betrayal
and self
humiliation
they do not like them
people ordinarily do not like
such poems,

bad poems, not relational, but more of

selfish, selfcentered, egotistical
like my mirror,
my walls,
my fences,
my closed windows,
a closed train station where the trains are all grounded
broken wheels

well, he bleeds for all these
but what can he do

they find them irrelevant,
the poems he likes most
are unpopular

the readers junked.

RIC S. BASTASA
More Shall Be Written

how can one really stop writing
when you love
to write when you leave everything suspended
because of the love
of writing
when you are prepared to leave everything you
have
and throw everything in your hands simply because
of this piece
in my mind this idea this thought
has to be written today
immediately

how can one believe that there is nothing to be written
anymore
when what i see are bunches of grapes, those ripe ones
about to fall from the branches
heavy on the vines
when what i see is a cloud heavy with rain
about to fall and burst on the peak of mountains
when what i see
is a tear shaping in your eyes again about to fall
on the slope of your cheeks
or the laughter that you pocket out
the smile hiding somewhere
like a sniper
now wanting to shoot and kill
and you are here
gazing
taking this innocent stroll
my new victim

how insensitive...

RIC S. BASTASA
More Social...A Part Of Thoreau

The wild goose is more of a cosmopolite than we
he breaks his fast in Canada,
takes a luncheon in the Ohio,
and plumes himself for the night in a southern bayou.

Even the bison, to some extent,
keeps pace with the seasons
cropping the pastures of the Colorado only
till a greener and sweeter grass awaits him
by the Yellowstone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mori

have you gone to the land
of the more or
less? where less is more
and more is less?
have you gone to the streams
that sing of hills
and of hills wondering to become
streams?
i have been there
and it has all been confusing
at first
but then i arrive at some ponder
fonder
moments of my times
and indeed
they are true
a world sinking a sea expanding
a universe moving
space bending
black holes sucking everything inside me
bang!
a big bang!
i am born again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning

early morning the house is as silent
as a feather falling
on the floor

the cat wakes up and checks
what it is

it is like him, silent as a cat
silent as his master
not wanting to wake up

no one boils the water
to make a smell of coffee in the air
time drags like a snail
convoluted like some thoughts
like Hamlet's
to be or
not to be

it happens most of the time
fate resolves itself

RIC S. BASTASA
that red ant is too small
for the mountain of
a grain of steamed rice
cold grain
alone on the floor
but he carries it
for something useful in
mind
for the queen

never has it resisted
a challenge
to serve
it does not have a back
to turn
in silence
it carries the burden
ears as antenna
detecting what must be kept
for good
for use
for other's consumption

it does not eat
whatever it finds
it simply does its duty
and gives

that is his treasure
must we too
open our ears
receive those messages
not keeping
any wisdom like a treasure
in the islands of
our convoluted brains
and simply giving
what we find
to all those thirsty
minds?

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Blues.....

i sit beside a soft
sky blue curtain
as i face the monitor
and i am taking the pains
of sight
i decide to stretch my
hands to the
ceiling
and breathe
deep and take my gaze
beyond this
old glass window

out there is the old house
that i see here
everyday

the caretaker
has taken the weeds this morning
and the land appears
naked
as some trees are
cut to give way to a
space of
sunshine

the rusty grills and
roof tops are
newly painted

a face-lift of
an insignificant landscape
of a house and
mini
forest

despite these new
mechanics
there is nothing
significant in this day

i go back to work
concentrate on my fingers
tire my brain
and think that i should not have been
swayed by
small outbursts of
emotions which should not have interfered
in my
bread and butter thing

i am split and
two faced and i feel like i am
a Picasso painting of
a woman
who is afraid to
focus in one
direction

i like to be a bust of
a hero
staring at anyone who pass me and
give them that sense of guilt
that the real mission and the noble purpose of life
is always
unaccomplished

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Breaking

morning breaking
on a promising day
without rain

hardheaded stars
still hanging
on the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Chat With The Lord...

How great you are O Lord,
We worship you

How great we too are
When we pray together

How great is Peace
When War sleeps.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Compromises

breakfast is heavy on the
table
you only pick a cookie
and take
a sip of coffee
then you watch a part
of TV's morning news
then you leave without a
note of where you are going
you lock the door of the house
and the windows too
the dog stays with a neighbor
the car engine starts
you drive on a compromising idea
you will be back

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Craze...

got no breakfast yet  
no face wash  
no tootbrushin but here i am  
conversin  
with sumthin or  
some1...

yucks, i smell like  
rotten fish saladized with  
alligator  
pear  
and saltless but  
urinated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Has Arrived Late....

the puzzle remained

that night i went out of the house
made a stroll

feeling the coldness of the wind
the hollowness of the
plaza

as all had gone to their houses
to sleep

i was the only one perhaps
perchance awake trying to make
a conversation with the poplars

my professor in philosophy once
said that trees talk to
lonely people

as they too are bored unable
to take a stroll
towards another mountain.

i am searching for explanations
how lonely people come about
how some have failed utterly to
deal with it
taking their own lives as though
these lives are their own

i walked past midnight
morning had arrived late.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Has Broken

like your well taken cared of hymen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Inventions

always the morning
brings me a bouquet of flowers
and i smell them
and put them in a vase
with fresh water

in return for this goodness
i keep promising myself
i should be good and i
should practice the charity
and spreading of love

at least in this morning's
words from
my own inventions...

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Light

morning light
comes as a stab to my eyes
like your stare
last night
when she kissed me
on the lips
when her hands tightly held
my swelling
crotch and i
did not make a sound
of that lovely
protest much to your
jealous chagrin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Memory

all i see is the mist, on top of this hill
the bloom of flowers are hidden
at night my lover comes concealed by darkness
and at dawn, after a tryst, she goes out again,
oh, she comes like a happy memory
but like a dream, she cannot stay that long

in the morning when she is gone,
as i watch a cloud coming,
it is her that i will always remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Mumblings.....

ten dog always knows
who is its master,

the master likes it
of course,

we however, remains to
be the sands in the desert

thirsting for water
thriving on tiny violets and

caucus and scorpions and
rattlesnakes,

we have refused the name of
the source of water

we infused instead the comfort
of the night

relying on the thick blankets
that we have kept for ourselves

the camels brayed,
the stones are so silent

the palms sing
the olives keep its oil

the dog barks at the
wrong tree

the moon sails and
falls upon the edge of the horizon

the riddles keep a shape
of a face shaking its head
there is pain on my right side
there is something living in there and growing
it is silent
and decent and reserved
it is blind and like all blind creatures
its sense of touch has been well defined
it is touching me
and listening

i am ignoring it
it can take me soon to places that i know
exist and can ostracize me from
friends
it can silence me too
like a raging river that finds its
place of peace

some brown leaves float there
on undisturbed waters
i can hear only the soft wings of butterflies
fluttering

somehow there is pain that sometimes i cannot ignore
but i have accepted them
as my new friends

it will stay with me and then will take me
and i will be gone
but i have always been a brave man
and i am not
at all
complaining

after all, i own nothing and will take nothing
it is it that owns me and so it is it that will take me
Morning Observations

the first sunshine
kisses the hump of
the newly cut tree.

or

the hands of the sun
caress the wounds
of wooden slabs.

or

the wood cutters
sing rebel songs
away from the
forest of Jolo.

or

it is not normal
not to hear the sounds
of bombing in the skirts
of the marawi city

meanwhile it gives
comfort that military
checkpoints are only
about two kilometers
apart.

RIC S. BASTASA
morning has come and you wake up and open
as a form of instinct
your computer.
Teeth not brushed.
Hair scattering.
Mote still in the eye.
without thinking you
start scribbling.
Type what is in
your mind.
Instinctively.

This is what you want.
Morning as a form of
literary instinct.
No serious thought
just plain stream of
consciousness.
You pause.

You look outside
the glass window.
Pierce through.
There are no people
here.
The pavements is
as silent
as the wall.
Mute World.

The air blows.
Leaves fall.
Some careless
droppings
of migrating
birds.

why is poetry getting
to be an instinct?
Habit of the mind.
Exercises of
the heart.
Like plain
jogging.
Stretching of the
imagination
like arms
of the sky.

The sun comes out.
Light scatters on
my scattered hair.
I feel the
thickness of
my gums.
Teeth are always
patient.

Heart beats.
Mind shrinks.
Words dominate.
A new world
is born.

You do not exist
in my mind.
i deny you.
there is no space
here.
i point to the
tip of my
head,
i touch the
side of my
chest.

I forget
one thing.
Someone
is here.
always
instinctively
unnoticed.

O God!
Is that you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Praise......

to the gentleness of
the sound of the early morning
rain
on the glossy leaves of the
lanzones trees
to God be all the praise and
glory....

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Ritual

morning offerings
a rested mind opens itself to
a leaf of a tree
another heart feels the
dance of the
still wind with the vines
the slow steps towards
the path
leading to the valley
are chants
when you arrive there
you become a temple of peace
overlooking the hill
meeting with the embrace
of a distant horizon
the sun sees this
and so it glows

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Song

this is the song of
the pillow and the blanket
when you splash them
in the air and then
you fold the blanket
and put it on top
of each other and you
set them gently aside

this is the song of the
yellow green venetian blinds
when you pull the strings up
and you let in the light

this is the song of the doors
and the windows when you
unlock the knobs and open
them to let all the sounds of the
day enter your house

this is the whistle that comes
out from your throat when
you shape your lips like
a pout where good thoughts
are let in and then the notes
begin to fly like some birds
on a clear early morning sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Songs

the sparrows are here
taking the grains in the backyard
yesterday
i have thrown them
now i shall watch them all
pecking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Star

where have you been
morning star?
was the night not
enough for you?
alone shall you
twinkle till noon
but no one shall notice you
none shall admire
your inferior light
against that sun
in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Tv News

Nothing entertaining on TV  
the struggle for political power  
the shortage of water  
the death of the anonymous  
the burial of a corrupt politician  
the arson with late firemen  
the rising of prices  
skyrocketing taxes  
the accidents on the road  
Iranians and church goers on rampage  
deaths and more deaths  
nothing about remedies  
nothing about hope  
the firecrackers soon stopped  
the 4th of July feeling

breakfast of scrambled egg  
and rice and  
local coffee  
no sugar  
less salt  
this obesity and strangled mind  
there is a fly hovering  
on the cold slice of beef  
cold cuts and nothing green  
like lettuce perhaps  
something is wrong  
i always think that something is wrong  
from this corner to that edge  
th en the black out again  
shortage of power  
rising rates of electric bills  
and water bills  
lousy services

i turn the TV off  
walk away from the table  
sit on a chair  
and watch the rising sun
i ponder upon all these
and i know
i can do nothing

i have this one last freedom
that any government cannot take
cannot abuse

dthis freedom to think
this freedom just to be myself
dthis solitude
this watching of the plants
growing freely
in the garden

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Vibes

sunshine
dancing on my shoulder
a friend beside me
grasses are so
green today
no dusts on my feet
an hour after
the rain
some white petals
on the ground

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning Walks

morning walks you spend alone
time squandered
without the sun fully shining

you see a gray horizon
feeling the limitless stretch
out there

shadows of trees
foggy mountains and

this sad bird still sleepy
on a branch of a tree

underneath the grasses wilt
and some unknown footsteps

you stop for a while to think
and then you keep on walking

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning, Noon And Nightime....

it was early morning
when what i am is merely hearing voices

and all i can do is look at those faces
and sometimes make a stare

at noon, i have learned many things
and i begin to speak their language

adopt their way at looking at this world
and attempt many times to understand each part

i've read on the papers that evening
about a woman who jumped to the sea and was never found

there is the shiver that goes to the bottom of my marrow
i check my bones

some people have become periods of the long paragraph
i judge them sometimes and put those flowers of sympathy

i do not sleep till dawn
my hands are resting on my forehead

my eyes are painting the ceiling
and my feet are buried on the ground

such is the case of some complaisance
as morning arrives again singing its blue marks

upon its cheeks are tattoos
which i have mistaken as scars

there are always other matters
i sleep with them now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning, Noon And Nighttime

A baby crawling
A man surging to sex and moaning to his ecstasies
He is strong
He conquers
He forgets

Where he comes from where he is going
Why he is here

Time. Morning, noon, and nighttime
The seasons that it owns: spring, summer, autumn and winter
The rainy days, the sunny days, colder, warmer,
Freezing and melting,
Sunsets and sunrises

Sensations of time passing, how quick, how fickle
A click and there I am now fifty years old

A swinging of the cradle and how many swings were there
That I remember
And now I am seventy years old

How quick
How short

Time runs so fast, we always talk about the time that ran so fast
We haggle
Time is too short for what I am for where I am going and
For why I am here

It was something thrown and it does not return
Like a word that once was said

You were strong and so arrogant and so unkind

Now you are begging
Kneeling,
Bowing
Kissing time’s feet
Rises so humbly with the help of a cane
Trembling
For mercy
Compassion

There must be a way to an extension for some
Things to be finished for a mission to be accomplished
For such real reason why I am here

Why
I
Am
Here?

Time knows no regret Time does not explain
Alas!
A beggar does not choose and time is his most cruel master.

He does not even hand in some crumbs and
No drops of water
Time is silent and so secretive and it even
Wouldn’t have a word to say it remains unseen.

Alas!

RIC S. BASTASA
Mornings (2)

things that i really love doing at night

midnights are hagglers
dawns are bargains and light begins to leak on trees

mornings are breakfasts of my regrets

for things i have never done with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Mornings Are Reborn

i do not like to think that
mornings are broken
like fragile white porcelain
like eggshells and glass figurines
and wine glasses

i like to see a morning reborn
dressed in light
on a pedestal of green grass
coming out
from the shadows of the tall mountains
touching the skies
regal, and fresh and cool,

i like myself to be just that
reborn
blank and still wanting to live
a life that is full
alive and like the arrival of
my morning
i like it be silent like
cat's feet
on the carpet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morning's Commotion

outside the house
the commotion starts
with the chickens
pecking each others'
feathers for
the lesser number
of grains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Morsels

if you think that i am but another dog of yours
of the lesser breed or variety
then please yourself
by simply giving me morsels
on the floor

but to shame you a little bit
i am a civilized dog
i do not bark for food
i wait and even if humiliated by you
i do not bite

i am a pleaser
trained for entertainment
i know how to dance
and take orders from you
for me to do catch
roll, stand and sit and chase

and to be honest with you
i am more of a faithful dog
that does not know how to backbite my master
even though
i have already known how to speak English even before you do.

but i keep this a secret
for i still hope that you give me your bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mortal Love

mortality does
not ask for love eternal

mortal love
cannot outlive eternity’s edge
to an infinite span

mortal love
does not ask forever
never

mortal love
makes lies, makes changes,
twists and turns

mortal love is simple
like a dimple

one tongue
to one earthly word
nope

may do
may say something else

It is only asking
That you love
One day at a time

With all allowance for change
For a wider space
Leeways
Choices

Mortal love is free
frivolous

this love of mine
Today is just enough
mortal
And so rightly deserved

A mortal like me
Also bleeds
Weeds filled

No promises, just a hug, an embrace
And

A kiss, then could be, goodbye.

Because mortal love
Dies, like a wind passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
Mosaic, We Abide

weird-weeds & beetles-bad
unkempt, black fouls
time snobs
fingers-a-pointing
darkness-a-reigning

sweet flower blooms
of summer
butterfly lightness
a flutter
sunshine color rainbows
flumes of clouds
flutes of wind
nature strums
such beauty music

heart bleeds for beetles-bad
and weeds a weirding
rejoice for clouds and flumes
of colors and flute winds

we abide by nature
in perfect goodness
excludes none
punishes no one

weeds a tumble
to flutes singing
and clouds drift
to rainbow colors
rains still showering
earth’s thirst
quenched

everything still
colors mix
sounds blend
bad, good, weeds
flowers, beetles
butterflies

all a flutter a chew
all beautiful
whole and always
a beautiful mosaic

we abide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Most Of What I Have Is

Anger, bull anger, dragon anger
Tiger anger,
Strong anger of twisters,

For the one I truly and truly love,

The desert and the volcanic ash
The ungiving, the unyielding

It is like,
A dead pond

Murky, brackish water,
It is the dwelling of
A porcupine-fish, just that,
It does not even swim
Or tried learning the art
Of swimming

It is my pain
This is my pain that I painted
On a piece of paper
One dark line in black
At the end at the rightmost tip
Is the red
Tip of iron-hot jagged-edge acetylene torch fire

It is aimed in my head in my heart

It is anger
That is angry to itself

And so everything in this pond dies,
The moss, the lilies,
The tadpoles the catfish the last catfish
Of this pond
Died the other day the frogs Stopped croaking since
The toads found warts on their throats
It is anger

A blizzard
Burst my eardrums

She may sing the songs
Of love to my deaf
Ears
Perforated Eardrums of anger

It is anger That keeps me alive
Its only desire Is to kill This anger this looseness

RIC S. BASTASA
Most People.....

most people
live without ideals.

most people are poor
and their main concern
is what to eat today

and so from this premise
what necessarily follows

is that they do not
construct ideas and hence

they are not ideal and
idealism is not the concern

of there minds of there days
and night spent in nothing

but little pleasures to
propel them to live for

another day another useless
routinous struggle what to

eat what to bring what to
keep what to live for.

RIC S. BASTASA
Most People.....(Revised)

most people
live without ideals.

most people are poor
and their main concern
is what to eat today

and so from this premise
what necessarily follows

is that they do not
construct ideas and hence

they are not ideal and
idealism is not the concern

of their minds of their days
and night spent in nothing

but little pleasures to
propel them to live for

another day another useless
routinary struggle what to

eat what to bring what to
keep what to die for.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother And Daughter

tonight i have a good image
when mom and daughter finally meet at the airport
somewhere in Chicago

she brings her favorite goodies
from the Philippines islands

once a year, once again
the bonding begins

she teaches her what happiness brings
she tells her stories about what missing is all about

she is taken back to all those years of her youth
she edifies her goddess of love

inside the house the talking of their own language
can be heard as a chatter of two strange birds

outside it is snowing
inside the fire begins to burn

and the young children watch them
awed, amazed, delighted, so delighted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother And Son

the son that mother has carried on her arms
has become a man
grown up by her milk and lullabies
she looks up to him
when he marries and brings her
grandsons to make her remember
how babies become boys
how her arms have become cradles
the man has become a soldier
and he goes to war by mandate
he fights the wars of his state as his own
his mind circles on mama, wife, children and friends
and patriotism to his country
his valor his word of honor
his choppy cell phone calls
marred by the heavy rain
and howling sounds of dogs
and thunderous sounds of explosions
choppy are his words
like what he is feeling
in the deep heart of the forest
where the war is being raged

meanwhile, in the office of these
state leaders, these politicians
they make the strategies
on a bottle of wine and slice of steak
sometimes laughter and some jokes
in the comfort of his wife and children and friends
in the warmth of his home
and in his garden where the flowers bloom
where the sunshine is warms his
face smooth, untouched by the hands
of the heavy rain in the forest

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother Earth  And Sons

the child insistent
shakes the tree and so
the fruits fall on the ground
some not ripe though
and he does not
eat it
what a waste
but mother never says
a word

the child grows
spoiled as mother is
tolerant

the man remains a
child and mothers get old
he shakes the world
mother earth now
as silent as mothers are

the earth shakes
and all the children are buried
under the cracks
the fire within
like hell burns

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother Goddess

a circle of stars over
her head
hands holding white
flowers
her feet on top
of a snake

her long black hair
smooth skin
wavy eyelashes
slender fingers
virgin
pure
mother of all

in plaster of Paris
painted and revered

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother Goose

she leads her young
towards the green grass
feeding on what is left
by the storm

no big talk
with her everything is always alright
nothing planned
nothing schemed

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother Sparrow Leaves Not Carrying Anything

the mother sparrow does not
know about a funeral
how can it hold a white flower
entertain meaning
using its black, short beak?

today, her young sparrow
lies dead
shattered wings, severed feathers
the worker-ants are sensing the scent of blood
the delicacy of sparrow meat
and now carry them all toward their
queen
underground

there is no memory for mother sparrows
there is no son
the fledgling is gone, gone

then she flies far away
to another season
not carrying anything, not a seed even inside her gut

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother Universe

IT took so many million years
before men finally realized
that this universe is
a female

feminine so feminine with
stars as accent for his black hair
moon as brooch
sun as golden gown
with all flare ascending the
stairs of heaven
the earth as her soft bed
at night laden with trees and flowers
and soft grass too

she got this black hole
sucking everything masculine
inside her radioactive womb
and with a bang
she gives birth to another set
of stars

another family
in the line of galaxies
heavenly family trees

RIC S. BASTASA
it is your day mother
i know how hard it was
when i was a child
hardheaded i was
more than a rock

all your life you love me
more than the rest of the siblings
you did not say it
your actions did
all the time

perhaps we belong to the tradition
of the unspoken
we never confessed our love for each other
you hold me by the hand
and carried me
there are no words
no instructions
you must have been thinking about so many other things
to give
me the best

i have seen the best in you
grandma despised you
but papa insisted on loving you
and you had kids
and you had all those
surviving years

how swift time with all its wings flew
when you were gone
i see how you closed your eyes gently
as i held your hand

i assured you
there are angels
and that light
shall guide you

you had a happy death
and i do not have any regret

you are happier there
i know, dearest mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mothers Always Want Theirs Sons To Be Happy

mothers always want their sons to be happy
and so even if they marry someone
whom their fathers dislike
it is always them who settle for a compromise
and tell fathers to be flexible sometimes
not to hurt the hearts of sons

but sometimes when sons want something else
that only mothers understand
something that fathers cannot really compromise
mothers still compromise
and walk a mile farther
just to make their sons happy
and their sons leave them
to places that only mothers
by their loving hearts
know.

only mothers, yes only mothers,
and no one else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother's Death

(for Tony Liao whose mother died)

she is rested and will be travelling to another
world beyond ours
she will be remembered as a mother
who gave birth to you
and took care of you
so that you are what you are now

my friend

we shall offer her flowers
and prayers

she is rested now, and we shall not disturb her some more
the world takes care of her flesh and bones
the heavens shall welcome her soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother's Last Hour....

at the last hour
it will be absurd that with
all these
late things you still have
to ask for a pen
and paper and
write the last poem of your life.

know well, at the last hour, everyone
becomes a haze, no one is amazed,
and you situate yourself into a maze
of your own
hidden labyrinth. No one says this
clearly. No one sees it anyway.

mother's last hour was spent holding
my hands
that comfort her that she will be met
by an angel carrying a
light in his hands

and with a nod they walk together
towards the open door which closes finally
admitting no one

the last hour is silent and then
a burst of cries come in
like a bomb inside the room
exploding
with only one
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother's Love

mother's love is
unconditional
whatever that means
it is in the face
that only your mother
can love,

it is like a clean loan
from the bank
without terms and
conditions

no time frame when
to be paid
no interests and penalties
you need not even
pay it

that is why
mothers always feel
bankrupt
but mind you
they do not bother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mother's Steamed Rice

the sweetest song from the kitchen
that i hear
is mother's steamed rice
its smoke rising
to the ceiling
of our old wooden house

the smell so fresh
so sweetly scented with
pandan leaves
so heavenly
in broad daylight
i can see the moon and stars
beside the plate full of white steamed rice
are five pieces of salted fish
their skin charred with the cinders
their eyes staring
poisoned with so much envy

RIC S. BASTASA
Motivational......

i am relentless
i know myself
i can endure this
to face my better self
no matter what it shall
cost me
i will not quit
i will fight
i will listen to my dreams
i deserve more than this
i am powerful
no one can kill this human spirit
i am unstoppable
i cannot go to life with these
brakes on
everyday everyday
i believe in myself
this is my day
and nothing
no one can stop me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Motives...

at the point when minds do not mind
when you are like a haze
or mist that the morning is too familiar
with such that
when you are gone
no one notices
who comes and goes

the motives come in hordes
and ask you
which one? ahh, i pick the one for which i am sure of

it is not the money
not the fame, it is the letting go of what i treasure

it is the scratching of what itches
the releasing of what is jailed

it is freedom and compassion
the doves and the flowers

it is the road and the journey
it is not the cottage that provides temporary rest

it is the homing
that permanency that we are all thirsting

it is always there in that distance
it is not here, not today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Motoo Na Kaha Ako Nga Ang Kamatayon Pagpahulay Na Gayod Sa Dayon?

kagabii
namatay ang pari

nalilong kuno
siya matod pa sa iyang katabang

unya na nabalintong
dayog
kamatay

niadtong buntag
daw
naligo pa siya sa suba

gibilin niya ang iyang mga katawa didto

kanunay niyang gihisgotan nga
daghan ang wala makaangay kaniya

namalandong ko
kon unsa ang mahitabo
kon wala na ang mga nahigugma kanimo

motoo na kaha ako nga ang kamatayon pagpahulay na gayod sa dayon?
Motor Sounds At The Streets....

waking up from a nightmare
there was this woman in black
leaving the house
and
blown by the ill wind
towards the
rugged terrains of the
mountains

gone.

as i rub my eyes
from the dusts of sleep
i am met by the crazy sounds
of the motorcycles
down the street
at rizal avenue

this is a cruel world
so unforgiving
this is the world that that black woman
is shaping
from her rough hands
from those unpredictable movements
of the lines of her palms
imagining doom
always looking at the end of her world
stars shutting their own lights
planets turning into
powder
meteors hitting one another
like kids without
their mothers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mountain View

after the night of love
i sit on the bamboo stair
facing the wide expanse of
mountains before me
beyond the horizon of fog
and smoke from the tiny
houses five hills away
and down the plains the
winding river taking the
usual routes of least resistance
i have seen wild carabaos grazing
white horses running with the
winds and the black birds
flying high seeking their prey
of chicks unprotected by hens.

i am amazed by this macrocosm.
How can some be so greedy amidst
these bounty? Can his hands hold
all the mountains? Can his mouth
drink all the rivers? Can he catch
all the black birds and put them
inside his cage? I know he can't but
i know he will. And that is the reason
why we are here hiding in the bellies
of these big mountains, siding with the
shades of the trees, taking inspiration
from all the stars, the moon and the
boundless sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mountaineer

they do not climb mountains for fun
they live there
eating bananas for breakfast
no fish
it has become too expensive
like the pinch of salt that now they can hardly afford
no chunks of brown sugar
used to have some
dinner is uncertain
and supper is still a possibility
with herbs and
stolen potato
and some edible frogs and
worms

the children are thin and uneducated
the father is lean
and has no means of livelihood
except to climb the mountains
find the forest
and by luck still find some honey and yam and roots
and small snakes
no wild animals to eat
they are all shot by game hunters in uniforms
and the mother
is bloating six months pregnant
for her
12th child

RIC S. BASTASA
Move On Baby

goodbye baby
move on

i am stopping here
for a while
i am picking some
marygolds

RIC S. BASTASA
Moving In Circles

when you say we are moving in circles
i always have in mind

endless endings
no left no right no tip no beginning no end

endless beginnings
as we move in circles be it in birth,
baptism, marriage, death
i always have in mind this circular path
where we start
where we think we will have the end
only to begin again

and we both think
isn't this rather boring?
isn't this meaningless

moving in circles

i look at you again
for the first time

i ask you,

do you stil love me?

i am being circuitous
but i always feel the need to ask so you may answer

and then i always get the feeling
when you say you love me

that in this circle
we have just began and we taste
how sweet was it once
and sweeter is it still
this time of the day

RIC S. BASTASA
Moving My Way Back Homeward

you look superb
and i could have loved
you more
but the way you hold
my hand
the way you take glances
that little impatience
has signaled
a hidden cruelty and
the foreboding of
betrayal and hence i shy
away

i take back my senses
move my way to home where
true love still
dwells.

RIC S. BASTASA
dark silence flies like a little bird
and hovers on the fields
of our beings,

it drops some of its feathers
in the hollow spaces of our
chosen galaxy

the land listens
and so be quiet,
on this day, be firm.

look at them, the brightest star beside the moon's
half-circle

they have no wings
but they are slowly moving
or are we just
being deceived

between two horizons, a man stands and
settles on his slender shadow

he touches his face and then he is gone
in space, into the hole of his universe

i stand alone on the sands of my past
i dare not question
or breathe or moan
or step backward

i am still, and then my eyes close
under the silence of the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Moving On With Our Own Lives

you do not expect me
to carry regrets as though i am the loyal descendant
of Sisyphus

you know me
you once loved me as i once loved you

i am fighter
always a survivor
i have known defeat
and respected its verdict

i move on with my life
it is my obligation not much of a right
i have no one
except my self

i will not see you again
not with tears in your eyes
for you might as well become my burden

let me see you smile
let me hear your laughter
let me see you happy in his arms
let me see you hugging your children
let me see you with your family in the garden
on a barbecue party

now, i am happy too
i move on
that is what i can only do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mozart On My Ribs

Mozart playing
horn concerto # 4
my ribs like ebony keys of
his piano

my thoughts like birds coming
out from a rusty cage
my heart rising out from my chest
like soul from my body

on the other hand
how softly the leaves fall from the branches of the tree
so musically numbered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mozart Overture

this is quite different from
a trance
the music that curled in my sleep
on that soft blue sofa
foam, cotton, kapok softness
on my head some notes of
a lullaby
some notes getting into
my ears and my nostrils
a deep sleep
inhaling

this overture is quite different
it is the rising from this deep sleep of
kapok,
foamy softness

i rise and
stretch my hands to the ceiling

i wake up and
i hear
the notes come again like
dripping morning rain
from the nipa roof
falling on
some white pebbles
on my pavement

like my tears

RIC S. BASTASA
what you do not know is that when i write a poem
i have mozart's piano music behind my mind
for instance take this one,
what is the plan? what is the theme of this one?
i am focused on the notes of beethoven
running wildly on the screen
of this computer
which of course, you may conclude, like an ordinary mortal,
that these notes somehow cannot be seen
running and running as they seem to be
for they are just in the imagination of my mind
like this poem
what do you think is this all about?
is this going to be about something
as you
and all of you would like to have,
a poem in utility like your car that finds significance only
for as long as it starts to run
like your tissue that you take without so much fuss
when you sneeze and you need it badly to cover your mouth?
this poem is not about it
it is simply a musical piece that plays itself
stays in the middle of your thoughts
fertilizes your imagination
and yet fruitlessly, it merely passes in your mind
and then stops
and then you say, it is not like my car, not like my tissue

just this one: nothing at all for use, but for time to let it pass itself,
to survive the stagnancy of your hours

RIC S. BASTASA
Mozart's Requiem

many of us keep walking
early this morning
not wanting to be weak
and later on submit
to the calls of death
i put on my earphone
listening to Mozart
that sad part there
of his requiem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mr. And Mrs....

she asks him if he misses her
it's been a month
and there is no word

his hair is tangled
his eyes dry as a desert
his hands do not have the warmth of the sun

and he told her yes
she knows it is not true but she pretends
in the same manner
that he does

and so life goes on and on and on
and people believe them

what a happy couple!
oh, those happy days
those long, long, enduring years

RIC S. BASTASA
because of pain
which this world so requires
you rise to a certain level of visibility
you have shaken the hands of
the cirrus
and you sit upon the crown of
red
wood Californian trees
this time you have many sources of
survival
the dew on your roots
and the water that is trapped in those thin air
above you

pain has taught you to
occupy both the sky and earth
and of course
those whom you have
surpassed do not like this
matter of
what they call us betrayal

and so they change the rules of the game
calling you
an Asian ambitious nitwit
the brown monkey with damaged tail

you are not shocked
you expected this
and that is the truth
and so you live alone, towering above all these disputants
you have a new name now
Mr. mutant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mr. Native, Now You Must Go...

mr. native
now that you have grown into a man
and learned
everything that we have taught you
now, you must leave
for you no longer accept any rules from us
you are big
your hands no longer fetch water for us
your mind no longer obey orders
you are free to go
and be on your own now
take nothing
for we have nothing to give to you anymore
with your freedom
now you must have burdens
with your liberty
now we have nothing to watch
we are even now
as you must with speed dispatch
what you want to become
we are not your masters anymore
as you are no longer a slave

go fly away, strong bird
find your worms
and monkeys
find your nest
and fly the seas!

RIC S. BASTASA
Mr. Poet Messenger.....

you do not
make it
it simply pours
like rain

you do not invent
it comes
it shows and talks
and touches you
you simply retell
what was told and
what was shown
it is not yours
mr. poet messenger.

be awed, be a song,
sing, sing, dance
be amazed
be so silent

it is not yours
mr. medium

RIC S. BASTASA
Ms. Imagination.....

sunset with you along the boulevard
holding hands
wet glimpses
cressing your hair
more than often
a very slow walk
as we hear the soft (as
though
sounds of love) songs of the waves
of the sea as though
licking the skin of the sandy shores...

some children are looking
and their mothers too
and we who are in love simply do not mind
we have only eyes for each other
hands for our hands
as our skin rub sometimes
when we become too close like ham to sandwich
as something in us begins to grow
like a seed overcoming the veil of the earth
on some beautiful changes we strive
how we look at this world beautifully
with all excitements...

i give you a word for it: melodramatic

i may imagine of a room and a bed and dim lights
and smell of sweat with lots of moans and then the silence
of exhaustion,

tell me more about this: say what you want to say
ms. imagination.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ms. Magpie (Reposted) ...

you identify yourself in the mirror
and you pass the test
of self-criticism,

you have become more than
a bird,
and true to your calling,
you have become
his rare
beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Missing You

NIGHT after night
i shall miss you

pouting lips
sleepy romantic eyes
long smooth neck
soft hands without visible capillaries
warm breasts
and banged hair

night after night
i look forward to your hello

the goodbyes are sad and many
but i do not mind them anymore

one ecstasy
a thousand pains
recycled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mt Fuji Undressed

the tour guide
say we are lucky
mt Fuji is undressed
today

RIC S. BASTASA
Mt. Tapias

my only mistake is
having forgotten
water

i have underestimated its
700 or so steps

it is still dark
and i am struggling for
height

the steps are stages of
what i can achieve

i reflect on all these
with reverence

reaching there i see
rolling hills
bald and brown
with some grass
and isolated trees

donw there are houses
approaching a port with
docked boats from
El Nido
and Manila

guests are pouring in
wanting to see
what is virginal in these
islands

i am half-naked
when the sun comes with all its
golden tendrils
i have not talked to anyone
but My God

i am full and
bursting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Japanese film director Yasujiro Ozu's grave only has the inscription of the Japanese character 'mu,' which means 'nothingness.'

shall i say that
i have been there
and found the same
thing too...

it was all
mu.

but anyway
we who are still here
have to move on
to the next chapters

still searching
for the
non-mu.

who knows?

something to touch
and keep burning
in our fingers

someone to hug and
keep this life
moving

something to live for
that quintessence
that we must have
to put some meaning
on those walls

RIC S. BASTASA
Much Water

if you believe that a cat
can be a dog by heart

or that the dog can
later on identify with the
scruples of the cat

if you think that a cat
can ask the fish for a dance
without licking its fins

or the kingfisher can for
an hour have a nice
conversation with the
catfish in that clear pond

if you think that an ell
can finally find its place
beside a ladle in that
old and dirty kitchen

if you somehow imagine
that a mice can worship
a cat for a god

then you are a deviate.
and if you are one, then
you are a revolutionary.

most of the people who
read this believe that
what i am saying is
fiction. And they won't
take it seriously.

if they think that this
kind of writing is poetry
then there is also something
wrong with them.
they too are revolutionaries.
they believe that something
impossible may happen
if it sound as beautiful as
the cat singing in harmony
with the mice and in that
orchestra the dog serves
as the conductor and the
rest are either doing the
drums or the violin or the
piano or the cello.

on the river the fish come
out with their open mouths
saying: what a wonderful
world could this be!

though our land does not
contain much water for
them to live and love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Muddy

The rice planters
Are all muddy
Except their dreams
of rain and songs

RIC S. BASTASA
Mudita

you look inside yourself
and you smile
the way things are growing
inside your mind
& body

i am looking at you
with all the joys in my heart
keeping your
beautiful smile
as a memory
that will push me through
in another door
of my history

RIC S. BASTASA
Mugna

kamao kang magmugna ug palasyo
sa tungatunga sa isla sa halayong baybayon
diin taralon mo ang imong pagkamasulob-on
aron unta ikaw magmalipayon
sa tanang higayon

maghimo ka ug paraiso
diin ikaw mao si eba ug siya si adan
hubo kamo apan dili ngil-ad
walay halas ngadto
ug walay mansanas

manga o makopa
ang imong ibutang isip prutas
mamati ka sa pulong sa diyos
aron walay mamahimong sala
aron walay silotan ug mag-antos

pagka-anindot sa imong mugna
palasyo man o paraiso
kamo lang duha ni adan ug ni eba
ug ang Diyos

mao kini ang imong mugna
apan wala dinhi ang uhma
kay bakak ang tanan
ug walay kamatuoran

RIC S. BASTASA
Muhteşem Resital

it is just
a little bird
chirping
upon a branch
of a not so known
tree
in the peaceful
neighborhood

but we all
stop to listen
and our hearts
are filled with
gladness

all beautiful
songs
of this world
come from there....

RIC S. BASTASA
Mulling Over

you're at the disadvantaged position
you mull over
those who have already abandoned you
burnt the bridges
stole the fortune
living la vida with another vida

by your window people pass by
not looking at you but cannot just say
that you are another
wasted resources
could have been better
if
thrive on another

dress up, comb your hair, feel good
shoot that ball
on another nice
attempt...

RIC S. BASTASA
Multifaceted, And Belonging To No One.

the words have taken you away from a place
and you explore all the other possibilities of your being
'this could be the place you are looking for' says the exotic,

you wonder how silent you have become in the letters you write
in the wind
you have become a listener of its own sorrow
and then you remember the room where you live
the floor and the dirty mat

and you ask the wind to take you back to the place
where you belong

but it is not there anymore. The place must have changed
you theorize
you touch a pole, you caress the wall

you invent another room and here i am you tell yourself
i am still myself no matter what

they say when you write a story you become many persons
you create a password
inorder not to be lost in your inventions

you cannot be another glittering diamond
multifaceted, and belonging to no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Multiparous....

introitus
multiparous
no smear,
this is
what we have
to master
this morning
once 19 he
never had one
until this
30 year old
unhappy woman
drunk and grieving
finds him as prey
to her
set of lies

she is the spider
on the web of
gossamerous world
and here comes a
fly without experience
trapped and
wrapped and
eaten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Multiple Choice

tell me which is the TRUE from the statements below:

(a) it is a must that you know all about me
(b) that i must be on your side
(c) that i remain a mystery to you
(d) that you quit me altogether
(e) that after all i am nobody but a big lie

now choose.

Answer: see me in my room at 9 p.m.

RIC S. BASTASA
Multiple Faces And Vulnerability

shall i pretend to you that i have only one face forever?
you are silent
you think like a deep river
despite the storm when the waters from the mountains come
force you to rise and run and rage

you are my night and day
you have seen the changing of my hues

i turn red like a rose
become white like a carnation
become sturdy like a bark of the oak tree
sometimes i turn into stone

you see me and touch me with your wind and mist

like a diamond i wear some corners
some faces for me to glitter

to find meaning in the life that i carry within my arms

a lull
rocking of my feet
mechanisms of my coping up

in your silence i set aside my masks
and face you
shed off some faces and look at you

i become so vulnerable
as you kiss me in my lips

i quiver
i become so light
i become so alive
i become so real

all the other faces fade like a fume from the funnel
Multitasking

your body finally succumbs
to sickness of multitasking

talking and listening at the same
time to two or more persons
behind and infront of you

the lack of sincerity
and full attention to a thing
a person
hurt because you have to use
not just a face

not just a hand but too many hands
doing many things
at the same time too many minds
thinking so many thoughts
all at once

after all you are no superman
you are just
the simple man trying to be
much better
than yourself

the body weakens
the mind surrenders
you need sleep
and be away for once
from this ever demanding world

of pretenses

RIC S. BASTASA
as i write this poem i am downloading music 
copying them from the cd to 
Windows Media Player for all these Bossa Nova Experience

Call me, A certain Sadness, The Trouble with Hello 
The Shadow of Your Smile, Fly Me To the Moon, 
NighT aND dAY, hEY lOOK aT tHE sun, HeRE'S a RAiny Day, 
Put a LIttle Love Away, 
Where is Love?

it takes time to choose the music to load and to check 
if everything is proper and so

i also take a glance at poems 
the First Fifty Famous Poems of this World 
read some again 
reviewing how does each word feel and fall and rebound in my 
heart

i write some, well, i am not that really serious about what to write 
i just write what comes to my head and when i think i ended 
the making of this poem

i read what others write, not really admiring their wisdom 
or style or what they write there as some trash 
garbage, but just the same to while my hours away doing other things

i still read them, building this interest to know what this person who claims to 
be a poet is driving at 
some nails for hard wood, sounding like carpentry 
well, i don't really believe that poetry can change this world 
my world 
of multitasking, hopping from one task to another, like

island hopping with my friends in this archepielago 
from one white sand to another and taking some beers and 
juices

these juices of the mind and of the body, lustily flowing from my thighs
as i wipe them and learn to live a pure life
from the perspective of the Holy Pope, oh well, i don't judge other people
and i simply forgive them

like myself, i am not so hard about myself, not even on poetry
since this is just fun
clean fun, writing

opps, another cd to copy now,
i will have

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes, Paper Mache, Make it Easy on Yourself,
VINCENT, . Breaking Up is Hard with You, All the THINGS you ARE,
LIGHT My FIRE, Love is STRONGER far than WE

and CHopin and bEETHOVEN, AND iL dIVO
AND

AND OF course,

I honestly LOVE you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Murcia

How can I be disappointed with what you have given
when I did not expect too much
i began with nothing and ended with nothing
and that is fair enough
now in my silence you ask for a word
in fairness there shall be none
when I left Murcia it was still dark
i walked a mile away and that was good enough

RIC S. BASTASA
Murdering Ambition

it is an overgrowth
protruding on my forehead like a horn of a bull
its uglification of my being has become overt
and destructive
and so i have decided to cut it with a sharp saw
not to hurt myself
since its sharpness is inside the temple.
there is this content of the air
the one that drifts but for a time refreshes
the one that is with us when
the sun gets so hot
when the temperature rises
when the heat wave kills.
ambition, i am letting it go
since i still have many other good things to do
for you, my people.

RIC S. BASTASA
Murdering Poetry

you have neglected metaphors
you have opted for the story of prose

like the way you cut off the wings of a butterfly

or rolling into a ball the string that makes the kite kiss the sky

you pick up the scorpion and crush its sting with the bareness of your hands

you have learned the forbidden skill of choking the wind and the poem

becomes breathless
dead on the face of the earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Murmur Upon A Self During The Party Meeting Some Unauthentic People On The Row

most of the time
we hide anger
about almost
anything
to anyone
and we say hello
ask
how's life doing
and go to the
details about
their kids
and dogs
and then the conversation
moves on
like a home
pet, a bird, a vine
that we
hang and
see and appreciate
upon all these common
denominators of
i own this one
and i am
happy with what i have
and shall
leave to this earth
layer upon layer
the talk
settles like
we are all the same
but somehow
some rise above the
rights to property
higher
than what the state
can take pride of
as though
this world has no end
as though
this is the only
place
permanent
everlasting

RIC S. BASTASA
Murmurs Of A Tired Academician

in the far village
the mob rules, the

majority are not
educated, and they

build cockpits near
the church to shame the

priest, and on some religious
hours, they put the cocks into

that grand fight, and they shout
and stamp their feet

until their own Christ declares
who the winner is

meanwhile the lonely man
puts into writing what

he cannot really understand
why the undesirable is famous

why the vices prevail
why fights are exciting

the men come out from the
cockpit
smelling sweat and

taking dead fighting cocks
and losing money

and when they arrive
to their homes
there is nothing to eat
and tomorrow there
is nothing to spend
the violence of vices
the silence of so few

the death of a good education
the triumph of drunkenness

when you bring this out
in the open
the mob shall kill you

RIC S. BASTASA
Murmurs Of The Rainy Mind...

the shadows of my mind

need not be
the shadows of my body

the spirit longs for more
of its much needed solitude

in crisis
it states what it has long desired

that which the body keeps on denying

genuflecting knees
hitting hands
bloody backs
worn feet
torn palms
broken limbs

the words come out
much different from a thirsty mouth

it is not the word
it is the act that tells you more

it is what is done
it is not what is said

there is a house in that far mountain
it rests upon its feet
no one lives there
a stranger cloud sometimes comes a drifting
it sees the emptiness of the surrounding
the humid bedroom it feels though from a distance

and just like the rest who knows
they take refuge in the silence

words are never to be trusted
it is merely the sigh of the falling rain

sometimes you hear the tapping of the rain inside your mind
and you look outside

there the sun shows you
what sometimes are illogical

RIC S. BASTASA
Music Maestro! ...  

what is regret?  
in this party, i never invite it,  
comes hope in full gown  
well scented and full of  
fresh flowers on her hair,  
come fidelity as formal as  
ever with diamond necklace  
and golden brooch,  
comes truth in candid poses  
skimpy and cleavage exposed  
wow legs, skinny backless  
bare and daring cheekbones,  
comes trust  
regal gown and sprayed firm  
dovetailed hair,  
where is regret? that sad woman  
wanting to be in,  
i call the guards not to let her in  
for she is a contagion  
and does not deserve to be  
here in this dancing hall of  
my life  
turn on the music  
and let the dance in circles begin.  
maestro!  

RIC S. BASTASA
passion, it is the sound of
blankets and
pillows it is the song of
bedroom and
shower that make our hearts
join in the symphony of
the choir of passionate
melodies, remembering and
contemplating
on those satisfied nights
away from the usual crowd
of lonely people,
and so i ask where is the passion now?
what table what space have you
put it? what are those chairs
with no one sitting there?
those cold coffee cups
and burned cigars
a room filled with smoke clearing up
with time
i guess we have a role to play
in this domino of jejune
this long waiting
passion must be reborn in books
and monitors
those poems unwritten
because you have encircled your body
with flimsy arms
fingers melting into water
feet without soles
shoes with molds because of
non usage
dead nails that you have not pulled
or cut
sow the seeds again
on those grassy fertile lands
of forgotten desire
come with me, i am alone in my bed
we can talk and then
decide
what we can fill with those blank spaces
those closed doors
those broken stairs
our eyes may wink again
and be
sympathetic at last....

RIC S. BASTASA
Mustering Another Art

leaving you is quite an art
not to hurt you i signified that i will stay
another hobby is mustered
that of having to ignore
something so important

welcome life
leave it.

RIC S. BASTASA
mute
shall you play me the piano
on the beach?

nude
shall i swim in the sea
for you?

so many questions
about our own existence
about love
as slippery as the water

silence
shall we embrace it
deep and blue?

RIC S. BASTASA
The stars as usual
are mute
still as beautiful
as the
drifting moon

the old man asks no
questions
wisdom is content
on its sealed lips

it is cold and the night
is longer
when you are waiting for
no one
in the hollow bones of the
hours

something beautiful as always
comes to you without a mouth

and you too has no word to
speak
the choice has always been
a kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutual Admiration

you are indeed so
beautiful
i have seen
myself
in the mirror
of your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
this is a world where
everything must be mutual
you scratch my back
and i will scratch your
we organize a club
which is exclusive this
Mutual Admiration Club Incorporated
in this way
we are all secure
in our own self made comfort zone

no matter if what we say are lies
and truth shall be envious about us

our motto: we shall survive
our vision: share happiness, and the sorrow
our mission: live and let live

and surely, we shall humiliate death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutual Agreement

i know that you are here
and you see me pondering upon each letter
folding spaces and
making sense out of nothing
perhaps

i will not disturb you with a
hi
i may oblige though
with a sigh
this is a mutual agreement of islands
there are no bridges in our separate silence

i like not to touch no one in the same manner
that i like none of you to touch
mine
we raise our hands to the sky
begging for more silence not for mercy
we have love
we have loved that much and were broken
but coping like
lizard's tails repairing the cuts

i am an island of light
i hole of silence
keep this medicine of distance
swallow the pill
to make us all well in this quest for
a peaceful independence

actually i like it this way now
i am not proceeding in any visible journey
my feet are not tied
neither my hands in chains
as i prefer sitting down on the sands
sipping what remains of
the fading light...
Mutual Dislike

to keep the peace
in the middle of a mutual dislike
we sit side by side
our eyes however
refuse to see
what lies ahead for us

soon we shall take the twist
south to north
sun to moon
at the edge of all these
one must sink and the other
must rise

i am heavier.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutual Fondness

mutual dislike
can be fun, but
when mutual fondness
comes
i finally find
myself in
speechless places
because as the
saying goes
a mouthful of happiness
cannot make us
speak
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutual Itch One Lonely Night

dthis mutual each we have
one lonely night
when the moon sails in the
black sky
and the stars are too near
like lilies to the sailboat
on the placid lake,

i scratch my itch
you scratch yours
but what about our backs
those parts that i cannot reach
and you cannot reach
too

we follow the natural law
i'll scratch your back
and you scratch mine
no more no less

we are just
but friends,

tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutual This Morning

as i open up
you pop out like an
email
at YM

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality

i like your ears
you think
i am just flattering you

i suggest
you see your ears
using my eyes
as your mirror

still you do not
trust me

how can you be so indifferent?

i will buy you a mirror,
and now
use it, see?

your ears are
so beautiful

because
they are deaf

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality And Love Forbidden

got your lingerie
so please hand me my
underwear

now we can go back home
to each his own

when we come back to this place
sooner or later
we must bring more courage
to bear more guilt
to set aside more pains

i buy you flowers
bring me some cigarettes.

i read you my poem
as you caress my abdomen

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality Galore

the reason why i want to be you
is because you like to be me too

we become mirrors then
i to you
and you to me

what i do you shall do
and what you do i shall do too

it happens all the time
and all the people in the neighborhood
talk and laugh

about this mimicry
they call it crazy

we look like a melon cut into
perfect halves

how boring, how nauseating
because you are still a woman
and i have remained my own man

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality In Invisible Mode

i am
and you are
almost
at the same time together

and then
we are offline together

i know
the truth, we are simply on the invisible mode

when no one wants to talk
no one wants to forgive
and forget

and then we continue doing what we are doing
i write a poem
and you write yours
and we post it
using different names
almost at the same
time and we know
that poem and this poem
for whom the bell tolls
it tolls
for thee, ah, it is hemingway again

one of our favorites.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality In Kindness...

the chickens
so many of them
make a music for him
who sleeps
on the haystack

he gathers the grains
to feed them
early morning

to the chickens
they found a master
at last

RIC S. BASTASA
Mutuality....

i do not wish to go to your house
neither shall i wish you
to enter mine,
i never share this temple
to anyone,
in the same manner that you
are too careful with each
soft and tender
structures,
a roof of thoughts,
floors of values,
pillars of strength
windows that are not afraid of the rain
stairs that know what
majesty is there to carry
beams that hold
what we must be
till the end
of summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Brother Is Looking For His Son In New York

surprising indeed
for my brother to look for his son
now bearing a different family name
after 18 years of neglect
when the boy already found
his own home

he wants to file a suit
and he asks me what to do
and i told him

your son is not your son
anymore
and you were never a father
in the first place

so what the heck, brother?

RIC S. BASTASA
My Promise To My Dead Mother
	onight mother
i will dream of you
again
and you will talk
to me in whispers
as i grapple with
ciphers
tonight mother
i promise you
i will not wake
up until i get it.

you who always
think that i am
intelligent.

tonight mother
i will not fail you
again on the same
shocking lapse of my
my usual excuse
of insanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
My 10th Poem For Tonight

this will be a poem of thanks
for those who still believe in me

my poems no matter how silly sometimes
no matter how they try to be be deep (& strong)

as deep as all the women i have loved before
and still want to love still even now like i am a very

passionate & discriminating lover, like i still can do,
what young men do, and give them all they want,

the mighty explosions on the fourth of July
and the bursting of all my birthday balloons,

on this tenth poem, i remember you all,
thanks for finally leaving me, at least i have

still other chances of choosing the other delight,
the latest specialties of the

famous houses and resto bars, and
latest craze, those patient young ones

who are too understanding enough
to listen to me and tell me that my time

is not yet over, that i am still a man, that
i am still lovable, that even without teeth

and without my claws, and growls they still make me feel that i am this tiger,

this lion, this man still wanting some more.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Age

my age is not a number. 
it is the manner of gathering 
words 
now more careful and 
choosy, 
not really cool, but 
just faithful 
to the nuances of 
every syllable 
my age speaks only 
for itself 
since no one listens 
and i am aware 
about this incoming 
calmness 
the boring day 
when you say 
that i am more 
irrelevant to your 
presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Answer To Her Letter

sorry
for not having answered your letter in understandable prose
as it will be hard for me to do so
i am trained
to think
in a language that must not be easily understood

dr flows in of stone
and trickles of rain
that must be hard, and stoic, and solid
and yet
must in time
be fluid
to an adversity

patience
tickles like drops of water from a high stone inside a cave
to meet
its destiny
down the river underneath the trees and rocks

what do you see?
you will see nothing except some words that meet you
hiding in their own meanings

some words are better seen
but must not be said
in utterances
the words die their own deaths

the meanings dissolve
in their very structures
like ice melting
water turning into vapor
and then
gone

you try to hold on to mist
you breathe
you live only in the memory

RIC S. BASTASA
My Art My Love

i do not have flowers in my hands
and so my hands
have become flowers

all because i love you

i do not have sweet lips
but my mouth shall be as beautiful as a pond
with goldfish teeming

all because i really love you

i do not carry the world
but myself shall become one world for us

just because i have loved you

forgive my shortcomings
forgive my unannounced departure

i am a boat leaving the port
i am a train leaving the station

i promised myself nothing will change even
without you

the roof shall not leak
the floors shall not fall

because i have loved you more than anyone else

i shall be as normal as the rest
nothing idiosyncratic

because i love you and i cannot love you

you are my secret art &
i shall not sign my name on you.
My Auntie Zousy

auntie zousy works
as caregiver for years in chicago
to raise her grandchildren

she sent her children
to the university and they got married
and got separated from their husbands

messy, the life of auntie zousy had
always been messy but she survives
somehow
always on the go
finding work as caregiver in the
united states of america

she's 75 now and on her birthday
a party is tendered
surrounded by her 30 grandchildren or so
and inside the grand old house
of her ancestors
the laughers redound
reverberating the happy sounds
of a big family

i look at her
she is short, and emaciated and
her cheekbones show that she is not at all well

sickly, that is what auntie zousy is now
bent and misshapen
and yet in her silence
she has not surrendered
to the sacrifices of
love for the family

her grandchildren now sing
her a happy birthday
and she blows her 75 candles
in one swift breath
suddenly the room is dark
and smoke rises in the air
and she makes her
silent wish and then the lights
are turned on and laughter
follows as it will always will

happy, so happy, that is what
my auntie zousy is all about
a life of sacrifice
a lifetime of service
a life full of family laughter
a life full of love

age has not stolen
what she has treasured
now she waits for something
more exciting

perhaps, a happy death
a funeral surrounded by all
the grandchildren she always loved

RIC S. BASTASA
My Best Neighbors

my best neighbors
are those that do not mind me
though
there are times when our paths
cross
and so we say hello
just that
and then we go back to our
own preoccupations
our poetry our short stories
our dogs
and chickens and our higher
fences this time
our roofs do not meet
our garage gates do not face each other
our plants are different
we never want to have the same lawns
our fruit trees do not bear fruits at the same
that would be an insult
(how crazy have we become?)
their cars do not make any honks
we keep this silent agreement
this noiseless world we live in
this mind your own business thing
when it rains so hard
we do not open our windows and look outside
(are we afraid to see our sad faces?)
we are what we are
we do not even know each others' names
how cruel
and yet how peaceful.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Black Dog.....

i miss my
black dog

dog waits for
me on the side
of the road

when i arrive
home from work
he says nothing

(he cannot say
anything
like the way we
use words

to lie) ....

you must know
the difference

that dog
never makes
promises...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Body Floating Like....

feeling light
upon a sea of silk

my body
floating like cotton
thread

a needle's eye
looks at the sun
raisin

thoughts are sewed
on clouds as cloth.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Body Is Silent

my body is
silent

in bed in waits
for you

my mouth waters
my hands still on the
blanket

my legs motionless
my butt a wall

my body is silent
like earth
waiting for your sun

if you come as rain
i shall be all flowers
all grass
all pebbles all sand

you shall never be
enough
in the silence of
this body

RIC S. BASTASA
My Body Is Not Yours...

love has a reference point. Even the earth has the sun, and the galaxy has the star.

the body has the heart but it could be another part of you or me.

my love for you too has it focus. You expect some other lust. Inside my core, i only carry with me the gaze of your eyes.

i am tired and i need to be in love, even with just that shadow, for my body is not yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Breath To The Atmosphere

this is my breath
against the sun against the light
particles of water
from my throat
complete with the virus
and the germs
of my oral existence
do you like to catch it?
airborne some people are dying
without their knowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Brother

my brother is a seaman
he sends a message today
through his
cell phone
that he is passing by
New York & hat
possibly he shall
for the first time
meet his illegitimate son
and possibly
Delia.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Brother And I

it is December and I have not opened
my book in civil law
for days now
except this book of poems
by Olav Hauge

nevertheless i am excited
joyriding in a pick-up with my
long lost brother
and drinking from a bottle
of tanduay rum
we are groggy and we do not have
any place to go
we are just together
and i am driving

if i fall asleep in a minute
something really bad may happen
but how can we ever mind?
we can be dead at any time
and be without any
regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
My Brothers And Sisters

they take pride
that we are loved
and that we have been
strong in this love
among us until my father
and mother died
and after they were buried
the attorney
showed the last will
and testament.

that was the end of
the good relationship
brothers and sisters no more
when confronted with
different slices of inheritance

after all money and wealth
or property
become thicker
than blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
you ask me once
what are the chances of restraining

my demented summer
the torments imminent

the conclusion about to be written
by the hands of those who are

here to judge
i tell you until the next falling of the snow

until the consummation of
desire until the death of passion

until the day when i am finally
buried in the sand

shall all these be
considered finally meaningful

RIC S. BASTASA
My Childless Home

i have a home, not just a house,
you may disagree, but it is a home to me.
my heart longs for it
and my body likes to sleep with it.
i have this home and you may see it
and feel it, like it is your home,
but then you may complain,
there is no sound of a child yawning,
or a kid playing with his toys,
there is none in my home, but it is the sweetest home
i ever had, a simple home, with windows and doors,
a wife serving me dinner, only for the two of us
a table, two plates, two cups,
a set of spoons, a hot soup, and a happy
conversation.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Choice

finally i try another choice
to signify the mood of the day
it is not
my day anyway
it is as slippery as
sodium hydroxide

silhouette of a lone cowboy
and his favorite horse
against the backdropp of
a flaming sunset
and then
the winning of the dark night
bringing the triumph
of the silence
of the cliff.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Cold Hands

my hands are cold
when you left me last night

i place my cold hands
beside my heart

as it still burns with
the fire

that your love
last night ignited

RIC S. BASTASA
My Comment For You, M.O.

THE words are few
each syllable keeps a code
i confess i do not
understand any
but i repeat each again
like i am
a Buddhist chanter
in midnight peace
as sleep chases me
and makes love
in my slumber
it is joy to be with it again
seeing heaven
God's face that they all have
been spitting
i confess again
i cannot understand for i am not at peace
with my past
insufficient for my future
and badly making the present
on a twisted morning
i read the lines again
brief crisp
sounding like my
worst poems....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Conclusion

I come to the conclusion
that it was not wisdom that enabled her to write poetry,
but a kind
of anger
this desperation
and hatred for all men
and mankind

not of instinct even
neither inspiration
the one that you find
in seers
and crystal ball owners
or gypsies
and Cassandras
with a gift
to foretell the future
and the Armageddon
that is coming
to our town

she has not delivered
any sublime
message
at all to me
or to the rest
of this forlorn
humanity

she means
every word she says
and she proclaims
she understands
all of them
word for word
line to line
poem to poem
like the scars
of her
grandchildren
and the
wounds
of her husband

like she knows
everything
from the tip
of my hair
to the tip of
my toe
the origin
of my sorrow

unlike the medium
be it Moses
or Elijah
the emissary
of the holy holy
God
who delivers
the message
without knowing
in the least
what the message
really means

and good
God gracious
she is unique
and so
differently
different
from me
or us
or the rest of us
morons
to her appearance

she says
she is finally
leaving and all the choirs of the angels in heaven
all sing

alleluia!

RIC S. BASTASA
My Confidence In You

they say
a dying man
has no time
for lies

at last
someone has to
tell the
truth

i have confidence
in you
your lips are forever
sealed...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Corazon

before i sleep let me write this one

it has no meaning
it is but just a marker of what i feel

feelings are like water
with no monuments

boundaries always change
and so riparian feelers always quarrel

over nothing over something that simply comes
and goes and goes and comes like

a pendulum of floods and dry bed upon
a common river

what is see are dead woods drifting
old people holding their young crossing a river

boulders of stones on the side
a river bank without any growing plants

what i am marking is not even time
i do not know what it is

i write this one
when by chance i read this again

i know i will remember something or someone
or if at all i will remember a wall without words

a street without a name a pair of sleepers left on the sands
or i meet people who sound like me but whose faces are blank

you must know what remembering is
it is always incomplete

some details are missing but there is a shadow
a stroke an outline of what once made you happy

what once made you fly in the heavens or
what also one gave you all the pains of falling

a double edge sword that is what i am writing tonight
an i remember the face of truth

yes, it is a Picasso.
A paloma.
Labios. My corazon.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Creator

to places that i have not been to
someone was already there for me

for those that i have not yet seen
he simply describes it for me

for those that my skin has never felt
he already sent the feelers for me

for those that may have killed me
he had already taken death for me

for those who say that they never miss me
someone says he wants to see me and hug me

for those that i have not known and worried about
someone knows the answers someone takes the clout

RIC S. BASTASA
you do not believe when i tell you that i write everyday
it is routine to me
so my poems
are like
breathings
inhale
exhale
a poem
here a poem there

writing has become like a beating of my heart
so every beat
every pulse
is a poem made

like one kind of a factory
mass production
of breathing and beating
i have developed sort of too much familiarity with this kind of poetic activity and
it has become so
so ordinary
and so much familiarity comes my contempt for my daily poetry

it is nothing extraordinary
it is like washing my face
 brushing my teeth
 cutting my nails
 going to the office
 teaching my class
 reading books
 walking the dog
 taking a morning walk
 lunch with my wife
 listening to
 lawyers argue
 their cases
 in court

all these are so ordinary
routinely clockwork
and they are nothing
they are
my poems

my daily bread.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Darling

my love for her always boils down to
money, credit and ATM cards, and
trips and vacations,
expensive clothes, and flashy cars
and a modern house
in the suburbia

she slides
my ATM card, relies on my credit card,
and plans my trip to islands with white sands
and expensive margaritas

she imagines the next trip
in Hongkong, Singapore, Thailand
China,
and Austria, and i jokingly add
the North Pole
just to check how white are the glaciers
and how warm is it
inside the igloo

and the United States of America
Las Vegas, and Texas
and visit some of her friends
in Chicago and California
not to mention her New Yorker
friend from Tondo

expensive dreams of my darling
but i do not really mind,
she will soon pay for all of them

you bet.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Darling Inday

hey darling
try to check
if you are not dyslexic
why can't you
understand
my short
obvious lines

why can't you read
between my lines
why can't you see
the tongue
in my eyes
saying

it is just you
you! you!

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dear Sir

For Mr. GIL RAVAL

Bert may laugh at the height of his agility, bombard you with arguments how life is lived and wasted when spent on some musa velutina, bamburantas, or hibiscus rosa seninse, scarlet sages or butcher’s brooms,

But as you say it,
Some seeds simply need to be put in the punctures of the ground,
To put up the golden showers
Bursting, brushing to such a lush of green bushes
As I see it, you have an eye for wanton beauty
And as he has none
That is a major fault

How you viewed life must be seen through the eyelets of the ferns
The whole world viewed in the opulence of dancing ladies crowning
The decay of trees abandoned by the millipedes of boredoms

Life is a veranda lavished by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Tsaicovsky, with some Pavarotti, and Bocelli, Carmen, and Cossette or perhaps by Kazantzakis, and Rushdie

Or fettuccine

I plant an earthstar
So we look down to search its twinkles

You shall be my refuge, my hush
As I am a weary dragonfly

I have seen how you built a world of majestic mockery
Not much gold but greatly green
Hypnotic amidst the chaos

On this day, our narrow paths converge
And to my surprise, my footprints have same size as yours
Carrying the same marks (or even same brokenness)
Whoever knows me, knows you,
My fears drawn from yours, my hope springing from your source

I say, my dear sir, you have lived a good life and I shall be crafting mine

Behind the pompous stars
Unaffected by the nitpickiness of the ebbs of the moon’s tides

We let our eyes fall, malfunction, and even dissolve into tears, gone
We shall grow nothing but ears throughout our bodies

We are a listening duet
Listening to colors of the marguerite, the night scented jessamine, Xanadu, creeping jenny,
Or the angel’s trumpets

Listen to the notes of the words
The message according to the lashing green garden
The song of the freely flowing wind
And deep within a
Singing silence

Now, take the highest jump of the lightest flea
The last wish of my dream
Towards the endlessness

RIC S. BASTASA
My Despair

In this wilderness
This despair, night after night, I sit
In the chair of my madness
I sleep in the bed of my loneliness
My hands at the back of my head
Weighing bitter thoughts
Suffering
Trying to figure out
Where is the exit
Of these all

I seek refuge in you
From the darkness of my years
I seek your light
From my cabinet days
You are my innermost desire
Insatiable
You will be my eternal torment

RIC S. BASTASA
My Destination Is Not A Human Port

my destination is not
a human port

i have this ocean to
cross

this boat-body to ride
these hands to grasp

soon this journey shall be
over

there will be a leap
and i must do it

the wall is not that thick
my spirit can penetrate it.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dream

My sweet love
Like a sweet
Dream

On my dark
Night

Also goes out
Shuts down

All Technicolor
Images
Fade

Like all dreamers

Love also
Wakes up

And goes on and on
On everyday
Undertakings

To morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dream Has Always Been On The Other Side Of The Mirror....

you may think
i already have everything
let that be
let it stay if it makes
you happy for me
but i don't have someone
real. I have one regret
not having kissed what is
real for it seems
that the dream as illusive
as the heart of the wind
or a ghost had always been
on the other side of my
mirror.

at night in the depths of
my sleep we meet
we kissed and touched
and stayed for long
and then i winked and woke up
back again to my world
of illusions

the norms are here again
the laws that bound me
straight-faced and silent
lonely and weak.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dream Regarding The Two Beautiful Birds

i
how do you get to
hit two beautiful birds
with a single
stone?

ii
or how to make these two
beautiful birds to get to stay
beside my window sill?

iii
how do i make these two beautiful birds
happier?
shall i make a bird house on a tree
beside my house
and give them grains every morning of the day?

iv
how do i make this dream about two beautiful birds
into a reality? they keep on chirping inside my mind
wanting to be given the realistic form of wings

like some eyebrows
wings flapping just above my eyes
the mountains my cheeks
my mind the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dreamhouse

first it must have a path
of polished flat stones
leading to the door of
strong wood from the
deep forest locked with
a golden knob and the
windows are made of
glass where i can see
the moon and sun when
i lay my head on a pillow

the living room must
be not so big to keep
us in whispers just the
two of us in intimations

and then the bed must
not be so warm so we
can be there to make
it warmer and even
hotter a little bit to
accommodate our
hidden passions

and then there is
this secret room where
my heart and soul shall
stay, that even you my
love shall never know

this is my dreamhouse
you are always free to leave
when your love finally burns out

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dreams Are Burnt Petals Of Ordinary Flowers

my dreams are burnt
petals of
ordinary flowers

the sun hurts
dries every last leaf
on the vine

if the rains come
it has no purpose but
to make the rest of these dying dreams
to rot

it is a fungus world
there is no space for
growing
new dreams

but i keep the seeds
again
and they all still know
that art of
waiting

forever lies
in the softness of each
inner core

time is hope
and there will always be a room
a niche
for another growth

RIC S. BASTASA
my dreams are made of wires
they rust in the air and in the rain
and i keep them
all these dreams in their own fading
in their own
uselessness when all else fail
and when i am no longer dreaming

my dreams are made of sands
and water and dusts

you know what i mean of course
like the way you feel
when what you dream finally fails

RIC S. BASTASA
My Dreams....

my dreams shall mend
what reality has forgotten like some kind of cells
lining up to fill a
wound,
they say sleepless nights are destructive
and kills
but it is the time for reality to keep up
and stabilize those that dreams
cannot make

and so the two are here
dreams and realities
they love us, and we keep going

RIC S. BASTASA
My Ears Are Getting To Be Leaves

my silence
is growing
and i feel like
a tree
my ears are getting
to be leaves
and hear the sounds
of more
silence
my feet are happy
with its roots
the ground has become
its new family
i am still upon a
hill of my
new civilization
for i do not need much
not even
the dream of rain and
nor a drop
of dew

and since then
the world has become
too calm
its noise numb
its wars
only flints
and the wish that one
must still stick to it
just a tale.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Ex-Girlfriend

must have i done her such an unforgettable wrong?

after 25 years her name pops up somewhere in cyberspace and i tried to call her back not for anything else, but for friendship's sake of the good old days,

without giving me a little dignity of an answer she leaves right away

to her, i am non-existent, a non-entity, not even a name of someone she used to love.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Existence

have you seen how a paper
falling from the 6th floor of the building
is blown by the strong wind
into the sea
into the nothingness of dissolution
when you finally
lose it
when you think that your eyes are failing you
when you think that you are dying
when they that see you
across the glass walls
think that you are the one
that perfectly normal and happy person
unaffected by
no other.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Experience Of You

i have progressed
in the satisfaction of my desire

i started with the flesh
oh! it was memorable
your lips and tongue satiated me for years
your firm body & supple breasts were so useful
and i had it to the full

but it did not end there
of course
what i had later were the bones
and sockets of your eyes
and dried veins of you once
beautiful body

it is terrible to think
about this reality!

i remained to be your lover
the faithful and consistent one

and what remained of you was dust
and i ask myself
was i that foolish to stay longer here
and love dust
all my life?

and then the wind came and blew you away
scattered whatever were you
on the trees and the seas

and what i have of you is nothing
i can use my imagination to make you stay
but i have become so mad and fickle

i must forget you
but i cannot
i nurture the spot where those dusts stayed once
i am empty
i am incomplete
and this is the end of the story

i wish upon death
one night to come
and get me at once.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Eyes Still Tell The Truth....

i know last night
that you really wanted
to sleep

your eyes beg but there
is something
within which denies them

i decided to be just
be one happy
smallness. So i closed my eyes.

If sleep too does not come, i tell
it i have done what is required
of my
senses.

there is no point of discussion as
we prefer this silence to be
the main solution

for all these, no word is a justification,
we look forward to the integrity of our
actions.

i pity you, i may add, i love you,
to love you i must, it is a matter of
trying another art form...perhaps calligraphy

yes, we are tired of words, which they
handed to us and which had long vanished that
capacity for meaning,

my hands lie. My eyes still tell the truth.
And so i close them.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Face

you only see half of my eyes
a part of my nose you shall kiss
my mustache rugged like the mountain ridge
of cracking stones and parched mud
of wilted grasses under the cruel sun of long droughts
my lips are thick as the dark night and
silent like the short lived dusk
my beard are uncut for months now
my hair black and long is blown by the wind
always eastward bound
blending with the bleakness
of my future.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Fate

try vanishing me
i like being the wind

throw me into the desert
i like it when i become sand

turn me into a turtle
you may not give water

whatever you do
if it is your will

gladly shall i accept
it is my fate

RIC S. BASTASA
My Father's Blessing

I am my father’s best
I am his blessing

I do not cry during
His funeral

I do not grieve
Because he is waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Favorite Coffee You Insist

coffee

my coffee
my favorite coffee you insist

at noon

you choose the best salad of the place
you like Greek

in the afternoon

you pamper yourself with the best bagel
and your favorite choco this time

in the evening you're full
and you vomit everything

the body system has changed
and it is taking revenge

and you cannot choose
the coffee is fuming madness to the air
and then it gets cold
and keeps on bragging ' now, i can't have you and
you can't have me'

you can choose to die however
and take it
and if you do not embrace hope
deep into the sadness of denials
you can always drop the cup on the floor
and feel happy
about its breaking

the teaspoon is puzzled
all alone on that blue mantled table.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Feet

my feet can never be any
bigger
than the dropp of the rain
that the pregnant
cloud is shedding

i cannot hold this world
with my arms
my palms fall short of the
width
necessary for
the holding of the
fruits of the
loom

i am confident
nothing is there to harm
my beliefs
for tomorrow's siblings
of early morning
naps and
piques.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Feet And Hands Never Fit

YOU keep a box
like my size
my head is still larger
than that
my body much bigger
and my feet and hands
never fit

I keep the movement
between here and there
like time and home
and chasing and hiding
and saying and
then in my chosen time
this silence

You keep that box
and you call me and say
This is your home and
You live here
You'll have no worry
about growth and change
This is the place of
painless plunges

I know my name
Every curve and edge of
my Body
I take these fingers as friends
and rivers
My self is not your boat
My mind not your port

I am myself and my secrets
I have a home and this
Comfort room
This tower, and this vision.....
My Findings Of You

you have the ground ready
but i think it lacks the sincerity
of fertility,

try sowing the seeds of your imagination
look at what sprouts from there
fake mushrooms that poison the brew
or legumes that provide nitrogen in air?

do not be afraid of thorns
they are the initial marks of real roses
neither should you be afraid of snakes
they are the precursors of medicine

do not be afraid of the rage of the rivers
they all lead to your freedom to the sea
do not be afraid of heights and mountain tops
they are the only chances for us to rise

RIC S. BASTASA
My First Kiss With You

my first kiss with you
was first class
like a mabuhay seat of the Philippine Airlines

when you left
my lips did not stay closed and vacant

there were more kisses in my life
lips upon lips like
sheets and sheets of paper on top of the other

but my first kiss with you
was ever the first unequalled

and when they kiss me when i am alone and lonely
it is your kiss that sticks in my mind

first class, the rest are nothing but
second rates, second hand, and less remembered.

RIC S. BASTASA
My First Taste Of Happiness

my first taste of happiness
real happiness
was not the sex

or the petting
or the kissing

it was the simple

'yes'

from you, the first day when i fell
in love
with you

it was when i first learned the word

'yahooooo00000000000000000'

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend

today i read your poems
and they are bland
like sandwich without
cheese and mayonnaise.

i empathize with you
but you never know how to
write empathy in poetry

your choice of words
is like tending a garden without
any flowers except plain grass
and dead twigs
no butterflies or even wasps
nothing about the valor of the ants
or the flamboyance of the
sissy dragonflies

i pity you
but somehow i like you
for being dumb hardheaded
investing so much time
in poetry rather
than medical technology

i like you once when
you made a poem about sex
and the details of the kama sutra
that was what was most exciting
about you

of course, you have never written
about Jesus
how he walked on the water
or Moses or Abraham and their
religious triumphs
which is the only miracle
known by me from you
i like it more
when you hinted that sometime
we meet and drink and be merry
(and here is the most awaited cliche)
for tomorrow
we die.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend From Chicago Says Bless You

on his third marriage
he still has preschoolers
at an age where
he is supposed to go
on a Caribbean cruise
or a getaway in the
Bahamas

his first marriage
was a case of betrayal
while he works away
from him
his wife invited her man
in the marital bedroom

his second marriage was
worst
the woman turns out to
be a lesbian

his third marriage is a kind
of suspense
ten years younger than
his actual age
and bearing him
for now three children

and he is looking still
for more spills

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend From Chicago Says Bless You (Revised)

on his third marriage
he still has preschoolers
at an age where
he is supposed to go
on a Caribbean cruise
or a getaway in the
Bahamas

his first marriage
was a case of betrayal
while he works away
from home
his wife invited her man
in the marital bedroom

his second marriage was
worst
the woman turns out to
be a lesbian

his third marriage is a kind
of suspense
ten years younger than
his actual age
and bearing him
for now three children

and he is looking still
for more thrill

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend How Can You Ever Trace Me In That Labyrinth?

in that labyrinth once you saw me as the minotaur
i went into hiding and changed my form
i became a faun, and when you found me with my horn and tail
and lots of hair and goat-like musk, i changed again
into another mythological animal,
a dragon spitting fire,
a centaur, a snake with eight heads,
a dinosaur, a sphinx,
a lion, an eagle,
whatever form i assumed, you still find me,
and sometimes i wonder how have you been following me
through and through in this labyrinths of my hiding
and concealment in masks and names
myriad, escapes and exits,

despite all these, you still find me.
i know one thing, but i will not tell you.

The riddle of the Sphinx
you must know, if solved, crumbles my existence
into ash,

or like a leaf, under too much scorching,
crumbles me into dusts.

Please do not tell me the answer.
Make me live a little longer inside your innocence.
Let the chaos stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend How Do I Smell?

you said i smell
exotic
(is it a smell?)

i think
erotic, but no forget it

i must be erratic.
thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
my friend things are different now
changes have come
and the order of the world
inside me has been
thoroughly
reshuffled

i like to think that my heart
is above my head
when we first met
and i was then
to bold to
hold the balance
between
rush and rash,

but it is different now
i got a name tag
and it is white
and laminated and
electronically
coded

much as i like to see you
in your world
i cannot anymore

i am bound to the law
of my ancestors

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend Now....

been away alone
for days
in that faraway land
and not missing you
as i try to fathom
who am i...

it is this adventure
this intense exploration of
a self that keeps me
going in

this mystery, i have bloomed
into another kind,
some flowers indeed
unfold at night, some
exude their scent in
a desert,
defenseless, some are
plucked
and thrown away just
like that...

and this meaningless
state is
what existentialism
touches,

i am different i am
strong
i can survive without
you
i hold my own hand
shaking it

as another friend,
forgive the foe in me,
two hands in one body,
feet that walk now
in same direction

in this faraway land
i am finally my own friend now.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend Peony

my friend peony:
hand me the seasons

beauty, joy, hope,
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend You Must....

we always want to spend
Christmas on the beach

what is it that we want to be reminded of?
the sands?
yes what about the sand?

when we arrive there
the kids run to meet the sea with laughter

the sea breeze is salty yet cool
the trees are tall and big and shady

the silent sands are peopled now
we will be too busy with fun

feeling saved and going public with
all that happiness gives us

the silent sands look at us with a gaze
it has a record of the past

it has absorbed the memories of the sea
it looks at us with pity

what is it about the sands?
and their silence?

i think i know it
but my friend you must find it yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend, I Bring You Cheers

hola! que tal amigo!
i bring you good cheers

a bundle of joy
a pack of good health
cartons of confidence

Food grade plastic containers

A place to discuss about electronics,
computers
and other technolog
that can make our day-to-day lives

simpler and easier!

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friend, I Have My Arms For You...

you feel the flight of a dove
yet you have no wings
you haven't felt feathers
you are sad, and so i offer you
my arms, it is cold

you coo.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friends

they are my friends because
i am one with the money
and they borrow
and not pay and borrow again and i let them
and they do not pay
and they come
to eat in my house
for free dinners and some snacks
and tell me stories
about their sorrows and problems and their
broken ambitions, and i am left with no choice but to listen
and stop for the meantime
doing the things i want to do, and they call
needing more
and asking more and pouring out and i assure them
i am here
and i am here to listen and cater and always
be their friend

but soon, these, all these will be over
i am tired
being abused by these friends
i guess, i must stop being stupid

i have decided at the end
to lose them and junk them

today, i befriended myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friends Are Leaving Me

my friends sing so well the songs of the masters
by heart they memorize the instructions
and day to day they chant their names and their achievements

they all leave me here below the mountain of Individualism
up there they commune with their gods and goddesses
drinking the finest wine and clicking their wine glasses &
then the orders are given and they must in time obey

do not pity me, i am here sitting beside a rock
unprotected by the scorching sun
trying to recall by memory the best of my old poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friends At Ph

we must be hope
and excellence
we are both
compassion
and valor

easily we can get badness
in quantity
the road is wide and smooth
and popular
lying close by
in our houses

in front of excellence
the gods have put
sweat, and a long
and narrow road
steep and
obstructed

we shall be the yardsticks
of quality
we now get used
to this environment where
excellence and
refinement are at
most expected.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Friends, Thank You Very Much

my friends, at the end of the year
let me thank you
from the bottom of my heart
despite the tragedies and
difficulties, you have been with me
in the highs and lows of my life,
let me thank you then
for the kind support
for the advices
for the hugs and pats on my shoulder
without you i would have not been here
in this place where the beams are stronger
where the walls have been taken away
where our roofs look directly into the skies
to see the myriad stars

without you i am nothing
let me thank you then

everything in me shall be changed for the better
except you my friends

you will all be the same friends of mine
older, bolder and happier.

happy new year, a toast for good health, happiness,
for prosperity, for more blessings from God.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Geisha

She welcomes me home tonight
it is raining and it is dark and it is cold
she gives me hot tea

then she turns off the lights
She gives me the

non-tea.

RIC S. BASTASA
My God

my God is just around
like a friend who reads my poems
in the midst of his professor's lecture
on oil pipes and cracking chemistry
my God is silent
like the glass sculpture on my desk
my God is patient
like a blank paper on my table
my God is filled with possibilities
like a pen ready with its ink
my God is forever
like the series of green hills
extending an infinity of my thoughts

my God!
i am tired, i am overworked, and i am always late.

RIC S. BASTASA
My God.

there will be
restlessness until
i shall have
you,

just you,
just you,

for i have sprung
from you
for i have grown
from you

how can i detach
this life from yours?
how can i die
without you?

it will always be
just you,

My God.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Goodbye Has No Money In It

her hello has some
numbers
she means money
and she means it well
and so
i said goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Grief

my grief cannot
be yours
i like it to be as
private as
a funeral of the
poor janitor

but my happiness must
be ours
like the birthday of
the president.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands

my hands have ten rivers
there are furrows of sorrows in the destiny of my palms
no mountain peaks to view the world
holistically,

my hands have ten crystal clear ponds
my hands mirror my face
my hands surrender
my hands open

they are all yours too and you are so cruel
you are telling me like you detest me in the residence of your full moon

you do not need rivers, you had enough of my surrender, you are ashamed
of open hands, you touch me and then you make a plea

'please close your hands and with your ten rivers, please sail away from me! '

i know what a full moon is. I too had enough of its light and silence.
i have the nerves of the stars, and i know what sailing away means.

let me thank you for your dark skies, your clouds are too heavy for me.
i am raining tears, too salty for my ten rivers.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Are Broken

I play your game
at nighttime

when mothers no longer
watch their
favorite sons

when fathers do not
care because we can already
fight for
what we think is right

they are old and
tired
so they always look
forward to
the last journey

this hour i sit behind a door
unloading a
baggage while you
take some more
what you can not anymore
hold

i won't play anymore
my hands are broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Are Trained To Make The Silence Of Those Coffins....

i am attuned to silence
i was brought up in the world of noise and confusion
and daily oppression where sometimes i think love is an illusion

please do not provoke me into words i am restrained to this world that i have grown
do not challenge me to say the words of hatred and humiliation for i do not have them

but soon if ever having learned from you i may learn to hurl the stones that David once hurled to a Goliath

my hands are trained to make the silence of those
coffins....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Clapping....

to console
myself
in this room
where
my shadow looms
i oblige
for the sound of
my hands
clapping....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Holding Some Shadows

On white laces and flowing
Whiteness of dress
You walk towards a breezy
Shore on some dreams
Your black long hair flowing
Blown against your direction
Your soft hands touch your face
In disbelief
Why this sadness must come and
Happen and linger
In your almond eyes

Sadness like the night
Hovers you except for a surprise
You hum our song
From your heart
And though faraway I will always
Be there
My hands holding some shadows
To comfort you

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Must Be Magical

my hands must be magical
to make your body sing
my fingers must be probing
to find every moment of loving
my eyes must be the fountain
of understanding
my heart must have that enduring
patience
of the gutter to the rain
guiding pleasure not to drain

you need me as i need you
whatever be the price!

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands On My Head

my hands on my head
not to feel what hair is all about

remembering the
hairy feeling and the aftermath of desire

it is over
my hands on my head
for surrender

i do not kiss and tell
my hands on my chest
like holding some treasures
of gold and silver
that is what we are now

i have these seeds of silence
i sow them
and slowly and so patiently i am having this sole opportunity
watching them all grow

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands Soaked In Indifference....

upon a torn garment
of yours
as you stand inside
your room
lies love, at least
to me, in my loneliness
lies what i call love,
and you laugh,
you never feel that
it is,
for it is a part of you
that you want to
keep in lament, away
from me, from the rest
of the longing humanity,
i touch it and you feel
how it is to be loved at
least, how you shiver,
feeling my hand
soaked for a long time
in indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hands To The Sky

when finally you admit that what you told me about the sea was not at all true, i told myself, it does not matter for i have sailed it and the journey was smooth, the nights filled with stars, the silence as beautiful as the woman in my mind.

people lie and that is acceptable if the reason has always been as a means of coping up with the harshness of living.
that people lie is not a lie. it is a fact that we simply have to endure, give it a shudder over our shoulders and then we simply do the next chore as though nothing is worth talking about.

whatever you say is negligible. i always turn to myself and resort to the truthfulness of an experience. It is the first hand experience that says nothing at all and yet has never never ever lied to me.

my feet on the ground. my hands to the sky. my eyes closed.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Happy Heart

i

there are tables
specially made for our kind

and some chairs too

they are made for
solo settings

ii

i sit on one of those
chairs
most often

and i eat on such
tables
more than what is
necessary

iii

sometimes people
stare at me

i eat alone, i sip my own cup of tea
alone

and it does not
really bother me

i am familiar with such
feeling
i am at home
and my heart is still a happy
place
for my dwelling
My Heart

as my heart is not made of wood
please do not hammer it with your nails

not of iron
please do not test it with the hottest fire

not of sand
please do not take it carelessly with your open fingers

not of paper
please do not cut it with your scissors or crumple it with your hands

because my heart like yours
is made of flesh and blood

handle it with care, do not stab it because it will bleed,
caress it with your hands and place it near your heart

it becomes a bird and it will beat and fly and sing

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heart

without the usual sex
you will shut me out of your life

i can give you back that illusion
willingly and slowly

first my eyes, then my hands, then
my precious
tongue

second, my thighs, then my toes
my nipples

third, i can compromise
with what is inside my brain
i can change my
point of view

that i can be sometimes
a dog, or even a fly
but never a creature with wings
since you hate
flight

you can have everything in me
even my shadow

but there is something that i can
not give you
my heart

I've been looking for it too for years now
it's gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heart Aches

my heart aches

i have not given much

i have not achieved much

i have kept so much dusts so much wastes so many unnecessary things, thoughts, ill-feelings, indifference, hate, dismay, disappointments inside my mind inside my heart and so overcrowded

this heart is choked

this heart is heavy

this heart is full

this heart must unload, reject, delete, free what is unnecessary unload, this heart must unload now

emptied it is freed

it breathes

it is lightened

it is light

it is free

it is a bird now flying so lightly in the sky in the wind in the heavens...

a light heart an empty heart
it must be.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heart Is Made Of Steel

the way the people around you
make you bleed
the way they laugh and chide you
the way they leave you helpless
in your sorrows
the way they survive on their own
proclaiming independence
from every man's concern
and the way i discern it
time and pain has made my heart
steel.
my gaze sharp as a knife
my hold as hard as pipe.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heart Is Stained With Utter Loneliness

departure has no color
really
but when you leave me
my heart
is stained with utter
loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heart Is Yours But It Is Destined To Wander Far

my heart is yours, all yours,
it beats to the beating of your heart
feeling nothing but you
all those
all these years
it has the hands of your hands
it sees what your eyes see
it was born for you
it will stay for you and die for you
only if you ask
but you didn't
you did not entice it with the breath of your heart
and so slighted
my heart shall wander faraway gasping for breath
wanting to die
this moment
but you
do not really mind
you think it is nothing there inside me
like it is a tumor
maligned
malignant, it is dying and you see it
wandering away gasping for breath
while you look
away
and find someone else among the stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Heels Of Achilles

my loving self
ahh, you know what tickles
me

these armpits are silent
my toes are patient

my loving self be silent
be patient

i, too, have these Achilles'
heels

poor mother bathed me in the
river Styx

i can't in life forever
wear my iron shoes....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hell Of A Private Driver

at long distance travels
i get this hell kind of a private driver
who does not care if he dies
or i die
as though life in this instance
has no meaning
at all

recklessly, i say no word
and he says no word
perhaps we feel the same thing
when we left
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
It is not a house, and so it is not a piece
Of structure, not the roof or
The floor
Or the kitchen or the living room,

My home is where I grow
Wherever it is
Where I become fully myself
Alive &
Prosperous in my endeavors

It is where my most important
Work is started
And finished and
Appreciated
In this sense my home becomes
A certain place
Where I am accepted
& affirmed
& appreciated
Where I have self-esteem
Where I
Do not feel this sense of
Sickness & death
This alienation

It is when I travel so far
Searching
And it is where
I must return and always desiring
& dreaming
To be back
And find it again
With all anticipation
This is also my home

My home is not what I buy
And pay
It is what I made
For myself
My personal touch
My own way of showing
What I am
And can be

And as one what one writer once wisely puts it
My home is not a house
It is me
It is people

It is the people around me
It is the love that I give
And they give in return
That makes
My home and it is where
Despite everything
That I am truly
Always
Homeward bound.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Home Is Where My Heart Is

my home is where my heart is.

the white furniture are the veranda
the black umbrella at the side of the door
the green grass the lush trees
the pathway filled with pebbles
the ceiling with a fan
the stairs without dust
the railings with shellac
mahogany smell of walls
the well at the backyard
the smell of bacon at the kitchen
scrambled eggs and fresh milk
every morning
the smoke rising to the roof
of white steam rice

mother calling us all
and father waiting
praying for grace
and then this hearty meal

RIC S. BASTASA
My House Is Far....

my house is far
and at night i drive alone

it may be the same lonely road
at first i may have
disliked it

but time and the weathers
are good teachers

it is when we are alone
that we begin to talk to ourselves

when we become close friends
when we realize we are stronger than that
day before

when i arrive home
my five dogs meet me as though i am their god

my wife waits for me
and every arrival is always a sweet story

my house is far
but despite all these it will always be my home

RIC S. BASTASA
My House Is Small

My house is small
Cogon-roofed
And nipa walled.

Fenced by bamboo slats
Near the shore
The air is fresh
The breeze so cool
Shaded by a tree
And stars and moon

I sleep here alone
With nothing on
Hand

bare

I am a simple man
Barefoot and calm.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Humble Request

please yourself my friend
i stop to make you walk ahead of me
you seem to follow me
and this i cannot do for another day
for i am a simple man
not even a monk that heads the
department of holiness

go ahead, walk ahead of me
for i will stop and rest awhile
to see the red rose
blooming on the mountainside.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Hunger And Fullness And You

it is when i am
hungry
and thirsty
that you are too
beautiful
to me

forgive me

but when i am
full
i must vomit
the truth
that you are
ugly and
detestable

RIC S. BASTASA
My Idea Of A Hiding Place

away from you, i have already in my mind
what my hiding place will be.
i know what i want. just a single room. not a bed for two.
just a glass of water. no wine to make me drunk.
just a single chair. nothing for two butts.
just a small house where i can put my small mind.
i like a leak on the roof.
you know what i want to see.
just a single star. distant and soundless.
so beautiful
as silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Illusion....

your face is so beautiful
it can be my home

your body is so luscious
it can be my dining place

your wholeness
can be my island where
i can be alone and yet
happiest

your sweat is my
water
that i must drink so
i may live
for another day

you are my everything
my world, my universe

how can you be mine?

be mine
be mine,
i chant
a prayer
that you
may hear
me

how can i be
within you?
how can i be
without you?

i am thirsty,
i am hungry
i am dying.
and
then in one wink
of the eye
you are
gone
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Immortal By Evanescence Through Candice

I'm so tired of being here
Suppressed by all my childish fears
And if you have to leave
I wish that you would just leave
'cause your presence still lingers here
And it won't leave me alone

These wounds won't seem to heal
This pain is just too real
There's just too much that time cannot erase

When you cried I'd wipe away all of your tears
When you'd scream I'd fight away all of your fears
I held your hand through all of these years
But you still have
All of me

You used to captivate me
By your resonating life
Now I'm bound by the life you left behind
Your face it haunts
My once pleasant dreams
Your voice it chased away
All the sanity in me

These wounds won't seem to heal
This pain is just too real
There's just too much that time cannot erase

I've tried so hard to tell myself that you're gone
But though you're still with me
I've been alone all along

(thanks, i like the song..it lingers too)
My Intellectual Shortcomings

He loves books
Books that he cannot buy

He gets the intellect
He gets the mind

He gets rich in time
Trusting his instincts

He buys books
That he cannot read anymore

He gets so many minds
He loses his intellect

With all regret to what
Happened, he loses his face

And wants to recover at least his eyes
By writing some of these poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Invisible Ark

i build an ark
invisible to you

i am filling it
with all breeds of
emptiness

when you become a storm
when all your anger
floods
all the space that i
have

i will close all doors
and windows
wait till you are full
and then
gladly shall i sail away

RIC S. BASTASA
My Last And Only Friend

now i have found my last and only friend,
one that lasts with me whenever whatever

ladies and gentlemen, myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Last Reminder

i hope i must have told you about a certain story
of the look-out when he first made his way
to the door of freedom when he said finally
when the movie ended:
that he
who holds the money holds the power.

and so my dear, now that i have given you all the money
i have inside my pockets
go

go and be free from my hands and arms
go
go and be yourself with the wind and the sea
do not look back

do you know how Lot's wife was turned to salt
when she looked back?
go

go and free yourself from me
do not proclaim that love that you have been hiding
go

go and dance under the sun of freedom
leave me

always remember that: now that you hold the money
keep that power


go
i have known you
i have seen the eyes of your greed

go
that place is yours and i shall live in my own place now.

powerless
in the realization that you never loved me.
go
let me keep the pain, do not ever look back
for now
it is my own time to die and be buried in the land of my regrets.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Last Wish

i am not perfect
i have always been human
embracing errors
choosing my own loneliness
but i want to state my wish
my last wish before i finally go
before i die
how i wish to write another poem
this time about us
so tightly engrossed
in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Lies

i know that you know
that i have been making lies to you
but i know that you know that
my lies are sweet
sweeter than truth
lovelier than
what had been keeping
you so unhappy
and so we are taking the risk
of loving
throwing away all our possibilities
catching up
with what is there at this moment
now
when we undress our bodies
and see for ourselves
the more beautiful part of our
naked truths
my lies my love
are sweeter than truths
that never made you smile
in all your
life.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Life

well folded clothes
in the closet
half-opening to
the marital bed
it is more of the
window not the door
more of the wing
not the claws
it is the bird
beside a pane
looking forward to
the best journey

RIC S. BASTASA
My Life Is Just A House And Nothing Else

people say i am a narrow path. There is no allowance for a waterway. There is even no space for birds. No grains along the way. No flowers.

they add, i am cruel above all to myself. I give myself no time for wishes. No dreams. There is no horizon for an illusion.

my life is just a house and nothing else. There is no backyard, no place for dogs to play. An extension could be an office. There is no other path that leads to the circus. I hate clowns.

People say i am mad. I don't mind. I am real.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Life Is Still All About You

I may invent you as unkind
cruel
stranger to my being
me

i pretend that you despise me
my intention is to drive all of you away
from me

so i may not be hurting to myself
so i can free myself away from your
gaze.

it does not work
your unkindness is my unkindness

it is not fair to what i feel
there is something real about you

you are love itself and you love someone else
i am love too who loves you more each day
and who too loves
someone else

when i tell you
about this
what shall happen to my world?
when your world clashes upon mine
what explosion shall take effect?

there is only this ruin
and i may not run away

i created this world and i live here
you are a star so far away
shining
like a diamond
like
a
dot of light
amidst
and ocean
of space
and darkness

it is my own
darkness
here
that binds me
to you

let me be content
with that faintest light
i know i cannot
reach you

i shall imagine that you are kind
and compassionate
that you too can love me
as i have
loved you
so secretly
in
this tomb
in this
catacomb
of my
dead dreams

i imagine
that farthest away
you smile
for me

now i soundly
shall i
sleep.
My Little Bird

I tried to make you feel
What loving ought to be
I ask if you wanted me
To make you mine

But there you are
Running away
In the fields
In the open skies
Running away from me

I tried to ask
If there is something I can do
For how would I know
What you are growing
Inside you?

But your lips are tight
As virginal as
The early rose bud

There is no word
That I hear from the air
Or from the sea
Or from the mountain

I look at the fountain
There is no dropp of water

I look out into the open
And there you are
My little bird
Flying away from me

RIC S. BASTASA
My Little Playful Monkeys

My little monkeys in the forest are all funny
As usual they jump from vine to vine
And fall and rise, and fall from river to river,
My little monkeys with little tails with little
Mouths and tiny baby-like hands, they wink
And play and chase and run and almost like bats
Flying from top to top of treetops from branch
To branch to twigs to twigs, all these cute
Little monkeys so playfully playful in the forest,
In my mind, I play with all of them throughout
The day, till noon, till afternoon, till nights even,

But no, when darkness comes, these cute little
Monkeys all return to bigger higher trees where
Their big monkey-mothers and big-monkey-fathers
Wait and care for them and all hide them in their arms.

And I am all left alone, like little Tarzan boy in an empty cave
feeling so deserted and betrayed.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Living Flower

feel the leaves of this living flower
pierce and burst
the dews still dreaming
this morning
the glow of the sun from the east
slowly spreading between
the hills

you do not notice
the slow unfolding of this flower
through its white petals
now wanting to
open from the hold of
your fingers

my living flower
blooms today
it is telling the world
what freedom is
and its purity

and its being so temporary...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love

My love like
White,
sweet scented
Sampaguita

Also wilts

w/o water
w/o warm
sunshine

w/o you
my love also dies.

Please understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love For You

you buried something
deep,
in fact deeper than burying
someone
who died nine days ago,
since you want to forget
and forget
this forever, something that
you lost and would want it lost
and not want
to recover

from a distance i look at you
and shed tears for
what you buried
without much pomp of a ceremony

i pity
what cruelty you have to yourself
i bring a flower
for that which was buried and lost
it is something that i always
cherish and
remember with all the gladness of my heart
with all the gentleness of my soul

my love for you
deep in the layers of time
buried
still blooms

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love For You Will Not Die

it is a beautiful feeling
deep inside me

but it is like a seed that
sprouts with glee

only to find no window
towards a living light

you want it to die
but it never will

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love For You...

when it cannot be measured
it is not real,
no data, no reality,

no weight, no matter,
no distance, no work,
so you are here
wanting to measure
my love for you

i am asking you
have you measured its weight?
its depth?

you and i shall die,
without even knowing it.

it is enough that i live with you all the rest of my life

distance, time, weight, and even color and taste,

become immeasurable.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love Is A Rainbow

my love is a rainbow
my only bridge to you
colored and arched
bent and reaching
it appears usually
after the rain
my love is a rainbow
that you remember
not for long...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love Is Ambitious Like Air

wanting to fill
every emptiness
like air
filling every
space
my love fits
in and takes
the shape
of you

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love Is Forever

What you leave
Is an impression
I look at the moon
I look at the river
I look at the sky
Your face is there
My love is forever

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love Is Like Ice

For my love is like ice
Put it in your armpit
It will melt
And make you wet

Put it in the coldness
of the freezer
in your ref
It will harden
And even crack

Put it under the
Sun and it will
Evaporate

Put me in your
Mouth and let
Me melt in your
Tongue
I become the water
drink me
To quench your
Thirst and i will

make You live

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love Is Not Like A Poem

the years of experience
of being real, concrete as
cemented pavements, real as
these hands that are warm
and callous, love has not become
like a poem
where metaphors are written
for more understanding
pulsating hearts
and other nuances of
sly literature, words, and more words,
and more connotations and denotations
of this image and that image
this scent of roses and colors of sunsets
too beautiful to behold in our mortal
eyes and bleeding hearts

my love is real, it feeds on love and thrives
on your love, my love is real like stones
i hurl and disturbs the calm waves
of the sea,
my love is not like a poem

need i say, it is more than any poem
beyond metaphors
and images, the face that i touch
the lips that i kiss, and the night
cold enough for us to think
that we badly need this hug.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love, My Darling, My Lady, My Wife

i count the years with you
 ten fingers and two toes

i have become well rounded:

not just a mathematician
 not just a philosopher

i have become a poet as well:

feeling short of the numbers
 explaining the reason for my being
 and writing the saddest poems ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love, My Only Love

i take pride
that i am the only one alive
at dawn
when the rest of the house
is fast asleep

i have written poems for you
about us
love poems, yes, they are all
love poems
to include this lust, this passion
of truths

tomorrow on sunken eyes
i will tell you some more
about all these
about us

beside the cup of coffee
and the bread
put your white handkerchief

i will talk about bliss
something about joy
but there will also be tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love...

two eyes
are boats
your face is the ocean
there are
black moons
there is a whirlpool
in your lips
i am this driftwood
sucked
by desire
of your throat
your teeth
are axes
i am
the food to your
soul
and so
you shall
live...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Love

there is always a way of
telling it without you knowing
that i was already said

i know the way to your heart
and i was there
but you were never there
for it seems to me that you
have been segregated from
the one that feels

there is always a way of being
there without you knowing that
i was there

i have mastered it for you have
always kept the pain for you have
always made me feel that pain

there is always a way of being
together and yet not be seen
with us in those hands with us
in those shoulders

i love you and i could have loved
you. But there is always a way to love
without having you, or you having me

i have not understood you but it
was best that way. We only wish to live
and then be gone forever.

My love.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Lover

my dear trusted lover
Is an Amazon

she has killed three military men in the hills
for love of country

For now
She tells me she loves me
And I love her too
we confess

tonight i am a japanese samurai
and she will just be my ordinary geisha...

RIC S. BASTASA
My Madness

touch my madness
with tenderness
please have compassion
to this madness of reason
that i cannot spit out
or rubout with a clout

there is no conceit
in telling you
what they all accept
that there is no genius
without some
coloring
or adulteration with

(is it hard to say
the word?)

madness.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Magic Moment....

i ask you
to clap for me,

i am the
magician
and i have
a wand

history wise
i have turned a
toad into
a king.

a pumpkin into
a house and a mouse
into a horse,

you are not
impressed i know

but i ask you
to clap for me

and indeed you
oblige with
one clap with one
hand

well, it is zen
you brag
the Buddhist you

you want to
outwit me
the magician and
i believe you

and so on top of
my career
and behind this
lament that i keep
(for you never
love me anyway)

i perform my last
magic

which i know will
of course not
impress you at all

at any rate, this is
the magic,
i disappear
completely from you

and you shall never
find me again.

RIC S. BASTASA
and so at the end
we rediscover that my
melancholy
is your melancholy too

we cannot describe
how deep the roots are
and how rotten
the trees

we were counting the
leaves falling
we want to measure
the length and weight
of the heaps

i do not bother myself
now
we have become so
different
like crisscrossing
lines
with endpoints
crazy somewhere
not wanting any
meeting

RIC S. BASTASA
My Memory Of Elder Sister

On my 6th birthday my papa and mama split
my elder sister came with a gift
a bigger box wrapped in
red shining paper

I opened it
A brown sweater that fit me well
that cold night
i was feeling warm
and safe

still loved by someone else
but not the roots

RIC S. BASTASA
My Memory Of Stalactites And Stalagmites

a path of water underneath
the earth
as rocks from opposite
directions
want to join antiquated hands....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Memory Of You....You May Have A Place In My Heart, But Not In My Life

there are just
to many
more than those
grains of
sands

or molecules of dust
dancing in space
to make a castle of
clouds

if you wish to reach
me
you have to sift through
this
screen of my own
humanity

be not a rock
or a stone be not a leaf
or a pen

just be what you are
my memory....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Mind Was Full Of Ideas This Morning

my mind is full of ideas this morning
while i am walking alone
on the grassy path of this mountainside

i am so tired. I take my rest sitting on a log
rotting under a tree.

i gaze on the ricefields just below this hill.
some white herons as usual fly low
some sparrows regroup themselves and
scatter in an instant like a confetti of dry leaves.

the sun comes out in glory
proclaiming though its reign on this corner
the gumamela flowers on the side of the hills bow down
and bloom again

i am amazed on the beginning of this beautiful day.
The butterflies flutter on the bushes of white petals
of these wild flowers. I see a nest with three small white eggs.

the sound of waters cascading on the creek.
some leaves are carried away. A fish jumps trying to catch
a low flying dragonfly. Some dew begins to lose their
glow on the bamboo law of evaporation gets in.

Lost. I am so window of my heart is open.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Modern Day Rapunzel....

the rain is the wall that divides us
i whistle
to make a connection
you open the window
and we created a world
between us

i need to climb
the long stretch of your golden
pigtail
to finally kiss you
my Rapunzel

RIC S. BASTASA
My Money

Say you love me
Say you love me
That is the only aspect of my life that I am missing
You saying you love me

I wait for years for you to say that you love me
I have stayed so long alone
I work so hard like a carabao

i have saved so much money
Now please I beg you

say you love me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Morning

the house is surrounded by trees
and birds sleep there
some of those who do not have fears
made their nests
and this early morning i hear them sing

chirp if you may call it
but there is this feeling that nature is there
in the songs of birds
and the hush of the wind and the coming
bright rays of the sun

my dog is beside me
still asleep as i begin my prayers and rituals
for the day

behind the black shadows of the trees
the gray horizon starts
to brighten and now the mountains begin to
appear in view

their peaks touching the skies
as the clouds hang and float and drift....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Morning Friend

i speak
to you my
morning

i am unloading
what the
night
has given me

all the darkness
all the silence
all that makes
the damn damned

morning
you are not my
enemy

i shall come to
you with
flowers in my hand

i shall confide
to you
what the house
upon a lonely
rock
has not forgotten

listen to my
woes
of the night's
storms

morning friend
you must
understand

tell me then
what days
are storing

RIC S. BASTASA
My Mornings Here

in this sleepy town
where there is always rain
i thrive on the songs
of little birds
their notes chirping inside
my mind

i feed them grains of poetry
and they appear healthy

i grow some trees where
they nest and lay eggs of ideas

in this sleepy town
my burdens are light
my canvass is the darkness of the night
my hope is a star
hanging on the tree without leaves

a cocoon opens and gives birth
to another yellow butterfly

it flutters and finds a white daisy
and they kiss

i watch wrapped by the rays of the morning sun
i ponder if this will ever end

RIC S. BASTASA
My Mother Said

one day
as i almost
died laughing my

mother said
not to laugh
out loud because

the volume
of my laughter
shall be
the same
volume
of sadness
and tears
that follows
after

take moderation
she said
do not howl
or wail

do not have
a brouhaha

take the
little giggle
and the smile
take
the little pinch
of pain

in happiness
and sadness
let there
be caution
like day
and night
not so glaring
not so gloomy

live in twilight
stay in dusk

RIC S. BASTASA
at the table i tell you that we are lonely by birth. 
you remember a song, a song of death, those who are still here
sing it.

it is an accepted fact that a few days from now you will no longer be with us.
on a sunday afternoon, you will be taking all your things here and on a monday,
the table is clean, the cabinets are empty, the cover of your chair will be taken
away.

another one shall take it.

i understand the void of leaving. You leave it, or you take it, but it is a void, a
space that will not fill itself for years.

we shall sing farewell, you promise you will not cry. you are not a cry baby, you
claim to be.

on a tuesday, when you are alone in your house, when you do not have to wake
up early, when it rains, where there is no phone call, when all of them are gone
to the office, when you will only be with the house cats, while the dogs yelp
outside for their meals,

hmm, let us see. I already wrapped a gift for you which is still on your table,
waiting that on a wednesday you will come back telling us that you have
forgotten your refrigerator magnet, or that stationery, or that stapler perhaps,

let us see, if you can hold on and tell us again that you will not cry.

my mother used to say the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Mother, My Father, And My Country

In the rain and storms of my life
My father is the boat
And my mother is the lighthouse
My country is the land
Where I am safe and sound.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Motorcycle

i bought one in 1998.
i left it to the care of my brother-in-law and it was well taken-cared of. Shiny.

Then he broke his leg because of the black dog that crossed the street early dawn when the streets are still dark.

then my other sisters and brothers claim that they have rights over the wheel, and the cover and the steer. I keep my mouth shut. And they were talking about the prostitute, how cheap she was, and still roams the street at night looking for her prey. I think she is the victim of a vampire.

and then everyone takes a ride on my motorcycle inventing the names of the places they want to go. I keep my mouth shut. About the prostitute about rights that were not there.

and they ask me about a name. Who? and they demand the exact place where she lives. But most of them ask me: why?
i guess they know better.
but let me answer them
straight;

The motorcycle is
the prostitute and they
are the ones
who are cheap. They
cheat and i am the victim
and they are the
vampires.

do not ask me now.
i am in the middle of my anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Name Is Ricky

i buy and sell pigs
And i am living in one of the islands in the Philippines.

Me and Jeanie.
I almost forgot are still planning to marry.

If my marriage gets annulled finally next year this February.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Name Is Silence

when i introduced
my name to you
i know i have violated
the code of my
ancestors
i know i have disobeyed
the command of my
father

because silence
cannot be uttered
and uttering it
simply negates its
essence

when you write about
silence
the word begins to
shout
and silence runs away
losing itself
like light blending
with light and then
what you see
is nothing

but itself in invisibility
hiding in its own body

RIC S. BASTASA
My Name Is Sorrow....

talking to Julita
is me inside a mask
she may have known my
old face but she will
never see my mask for
i could be another

sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Name Written On A Streamer

my name flies
letters in bold and colors waving like the sea
two names, appearing like twins
on a streamer as though welcoming
to the fold a big time politician

my name is just a name
like any other else's names

it is not me, of course,
i may call myself an angel
but my wings are broken

my other parts cut like a picture
of a jigsaw puzzle
one by one you must pick up
the cut pieces

you fit in there then you make
me whole again

RIC S. BASTASA
My New Dream House

IF I build my new house
i like it this way:

I'll have jokes
as facade,
Of course, the
entrance shall be
a Smiley
The veranda is
a Singing Lady
The sala a pool of
Spoof
And the dining room
should be
a Vending Machine

NO one enters my
Room
It is violin
Playing Beethoven

And to honor
Van Gogh
The grass in the garden
shall be blue
And the clouds shall
be violet
and whirling too

And by the way
The ceiling shall be
stars
and the Roof shall be
Humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Night Starts With A Dinner

with you
night starts with a dinner
candle lit
accented by magnolia
at the center
of the table
face to face
we explore
the universe
inside our eyes

i whisper and you
do not answer
your lips pout
on the secret that
i have just
revealed

RIC S. BASTASA
My Only Faith

let me tell you again
my friend
that my only faith is that
with God
i can never be alone again
that with his grace
i can always be lifted
by the power of
His wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Only Fear

my only fear in life
is to live that long enough
when i become no longer a
news, to you, sad or happy,
when i no longer matter
as part of your diary, when
you have already gone and
i am left still counting the days
of my exact departure, but i
of course know, that it is not
possible that we leave together,
i think, i am always destined
to be left alone
taking care of all the mess
that you are leaving and i say
'no problem', i can manage,
i am used to all these musings.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Only Garden

i did a painting
years ago using
two colors only:
red for the buildings
and black for the smoke
there are no windows
no roads

those who watched it
thought that the
buildings are fire
and hence the black smoke
emitting all the pollution
inside the room

no one died

but i wished there were
they should have been
asphyxiated by the
ugliness of the system
i wanted more black smoke
to choke the space
left by the numbness
of the occasion

the room was breathing

i realized i was angry
paranoid about what should
come clean in the future

it was me who was dying
and so i left the room creating
a space for myself
outside

there you are
my only garden.
My Outbursts Of Bliss Sometimes....

no matter how i read other
poet's poems,
or how long have i
spent time browsing
each dramas,

i always end up
with myself, asking the question,
what i am up to?
what is it really?
what business does i have
over their
hang-ups on art
and poesy?

or a declaration that
i have my own style
my own sighs,

my own path
of melancholy...

i would be unfair
to myself
if i do not mention
too

my outbursts of
bliss
sometimes....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Belief

there is always a time to change
everything is changing
you are not an exception, sort of saying
this corollary
there is always hope,
every rain in our hair is hope itself
every darkness in our eyes
is hope in the making
the pain inside is hope speaking well enough
everything hopes the wrong way perhaps
looking for what makes us happy
which is not really the thing
don't think about it, keep moving,
and when tired,
sleep, dream,
dream of bridges with flood beneath it
you are on top of the situation
invent wings, and claws and be any kind of bird
settle down
and be a stone for the night
there is always this transformation
because hope is there
there is always change making changes
you just fail to understand
this body, is not your body, it is not yours,
this soul is not yours,
you are a dropp of tear in the ocean
the same salt
everywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Blood

Life is here. Did you ask why it is here? 
Did you bother to know what is its real name?

Life is here. I never ask it to stay. 
It stays anyway.

When it leaves, i have nothing to pack. 
I leave with it. I do not leave a name.

Life has wings. Got mine too freely given. 
Broken wings. Stained with my own blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Darkness

This is my darkness
Not yours

Something personal
Unshared

This is my own war
This darkness

Got no armies
Or weapons

Something personal
insignificant

Got no enemies too
Except myself

This is my own darkness
My own war

I am stepping into it
Now,

on this theatre
of war

move away from here.
i don't need light.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Emptiness

morning
is an empty slate.

i go outside
this room into an open garden

rays of sun arrive
upon leaves soundlessly

mushrooms grow on the sides
of the old narra tree

i imagine i see some
elvess

big biga leaves capture
water and on its edges are dews

i am empty like an empty slate of
morning

sunlight cannot
neither dew
nor nymphs of myth
fill it up.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Game

i am already
attuned to floating on
the air on
a hammock

with my shoes on
putting my feet at the other
end

wearing a buri hat
khaki shorts
and white sleeveless shirt

then i talk on the
cell phone
though no one is on the other
line

as your group pass me by
loudly laughing

=============================================

anad na ako
nianang magduyanduyan
sa hangin

nagsapatos nga gipatong
ang tiil
sa uway nga duyan

nagkalo og buli
nakashort og khaki
nakasaliko og puti

dayog sulti sulti sa cell phone
bisag walay
kaestorya sa pikas

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
linya

samtang nanglabay mo
og nangatawag kusog

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Kind Of Poetry....Conversations Of The Soul...

oh, it was just
a conversation between
me and my soul, sometimes
with you too, but
mostly, it was just between me
and myself.
it was at that moment
when i do not know what to say,
when what i think was best
came along the way.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Language

it is not as sweet as English
neither romantic as French
neither lyrical like Spanish
nor authoritative as Greek
nor mystical as Latin
nor progressive as Chinese
nor deep as German nor
friendly as Thai and
neighborly as Bahasa

but my own language
lies inside my heart and so
lovely still that i speak it

as musical as the language of my soul
as lyrical as the movement of my body
as heavenly as my God that speaks to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Mess

perhaps you have heard
most of what i am saying

but you have not touched me
the way i have touched you

perhaps i have given you hope
and then i am happy with that thought

but it will of course be a very different
matter when you come to my place

and visit my own kind of mess....

oh, it will be terrible!
and you will not like it at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Path Of Melancholy.

no matter how read other
poet's poems, i always end up
with myself, asking the question,
what i am up to?
or a declaration that
i have my own style
my own path
of melancholy.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Point Of View

i watch you bathe and dance
under the soft rain of
your own
poems,

i am inside my house &
from my window
i am
viewing you
with all delight

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Sea Of Blues...

there is no salt
in your sea of
blue, i guess,
it is all bitterness
in there
but wait
there is a blueness in
the sea
that makes this world
a waving
experience, foamy white
sea caps,
white sea gulls hovering
for a school
of fish
a yacht with lovers
sharing
lives,
a fishing boat loaded with
a big catch
children swimming
along the coast
sunbathing babes
multicolored beach
umbrellas
surfing boards
sunglasses
on my own interpretation
of the sea
of blues....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Shadow

if you want an imagery of someone so true
one that does what you do
and speaks what you say
and one that needs only
a little light to reflect itself
in the dark corner of your life

take that shadow, it is yours, and will never leave you

it needs one thing though:

light

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Theory....

she was only
13 during that time

she played on it
toying with that sole aim

of forgetting
what really happened

still hurts her mind
because it

was too lovely and it
did not accomplish what

could have been
so secret and so perfect

she was only halfway
she did not arrive there

she was too young
and he was too bloody close....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Time...

my time
takes me to the
rest room
to face the mirror

smiles at me
opens its mouth
and shows
once again
another cracked
tooth.....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Way Of Defining Love

when i love
i expect love to love
love,
without love loving love
what can love be?

stupidity,
foolishness, they all have
no place in me

when i love and i am not loved
i pack up and leave.

for love cannot be love
unless loved also in return

for love cannot grow
without love loving love
that cannot just love itself

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Wisdom

swallow that bitter pill

believe that i can cure you

swallow some more
till the bitterness cannot be felt

that is what i always do
smell the bitterness of me

taste it
and then know that i have wisdom

RIC S. BASTASA
My Own Worth

when you begin
to measure the length of my worth
with a tape
or weigh me with your own scales
or wrap me with your cloth to assess the volume of my being
when the numbers come from your mouth
i begin to feel the limitless bounds of my incoming protest
for you are just my peer my co-equal
and here you are measuring me by your own standards and i ask the world:

who are you?

RIC S. BASTASA
My Painting Uses Only Black And Red

black for the shadows
black for the high rise buildings
black for the horizon
black for the heavy smoke
from factory
chimneys and exhaust
pipes

red for the background
red for dried bloodstains
red for anger
red for a revolution

nothing for what is to be done.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Pandora's Box Will Be Your Own Destruction....

inside my room, there, the Pandora's box is kept,
and you who wants to destroy my future, wants to open it

i know what is inside there, i make an inventory of myself, daily,
i count them and make myself familiar with all of them

they are not snakes or venomous bats, or dragons with mouthfuls of fire
not bugs, not gnomes, but be very careful,

i am not worried about myself, actually,
i am more worried about you: can you take them?

RIC S. BASTASA
My Parents Are Wrong

They bought lands
Built houses
Expanded their territories
Saved money
Sent all of us to school

They sacrificed a lot
Lived miserable lives
Lived as misers

For our future

Look at us now
We sell these lands
We sell these houses
We squander money
We were never educated
We give away these vast fields
We do not care

And worst we are ungrateful
We think ill of them
We think they were greedy
We think they were land grabbers
We do not want to wear their family names
We do not want to be like them
We are us, the next generation of their consciences

Lazarus is heard speaking in tongues.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Past My Future And Our Present

i am the Sphinx
of your being
you are the only
one who knows
the answer to my
riddle

do not be arrogant
do not be carried
by the pride of your
knowledge
for it is I
who fell in love
who told you
the answer

do not utter the
answer to the
wind
for it has many
mouths

if you say even a
syllable
my whole world crumbles

my past my future and
our present

RIC S. BASTASA
My Past Where I Was Juggling So Many Things With My Hands

today i met two persons
whose names i have forgotten
but whose faces remind me of
my past where i was juggling
so many things
with my hands

i offer a cup of coffee
to the emaciated one
and to the fat lady
who is carrying her new born baby
i offer a seat
and then gently i walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
My Peace......

there lies the escape door
away from your love

i am going there
alone

there lies a wreath of flowers
all white

there lies those empty chairs
absent all the mourners

there lies your name
there lies your body
there lies my peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Peer At The Ateneo....

it is to me
disturbing when you call
and i am in the middle of
a legal lecture
in the university
and then you ask me if
your wife
is in my place

it is contrary to
the closeness and the happy faces
that you
posted constantly in
Facebook

but my friend
i perfectly understand how is it to be married
these days....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Place Is Still The Same...

i do not know you that much
it is just your picture beside a clean shaven man
whose hands wrap your body as you smile
prudently, shy and composed perhaps
no longer ashamed to tell the world that
you have found the right one for you

i do not know you
i have seen you once in the market place
looking for an ethical
fabric of your next creation

i wonder why i followed you
you do not know me too
you have no inkling as to who i am

this is not a matter of love or compassion
it has something to do with a curiosity
whether you are happy or sad
whether you have written some poems for our existence
some words for our despair and perhaps some notes
for this anxiety

you will never know me for i am far from what you have heard
or seen
i live somewhere beyond the address of my words and creations
you shall never know that place
peculiar in its colors and scents

there is no texture that jibes with any of my moment
somehow, guts tell me that we are born with the same fate
or defects or limitations
that is why i followed you because i wonder how you manage
with that disability

you are in the arms of someone now
clean shaven, looking like an innocent dragonfly
stopping over a leafless twig
and soon, shall die without a trace of why.
my place will still be the same
a cave covered by a curtain of waterfalls
old vines, and dry interior where i never put off the fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Place Of Dreams Is Not Your Place

My dreams are of these kinds
Inside the portals of my sleep
It is not for you to live here
Everything is so flimsy
Ephemeral and
Gossamer-like

So disappear, go away where you
May feel alive
Where you are
Living a life concrete as a stone
A landmark of iron
And steel and sounding cobblestones

My thoughts are see-throughs
That you cannot touch
With your fingers
They go through like the air that
You want to grasp and hold
Because in truth my words are fire
And flames
These are the thoughts of the world
When no man was yet created
When no man was yet alive
It is not your kind of thoughts
Your kind of dreams
These words I have been weaving
Inside my heart and mind
They will surely burn you

RIC S. BASTASA
My Pleasure

to slap your arm
there is a mosquito
biting you

to train you
how to respond
when an insult
is given

to inflict pain
so you may know what it is

because
i think i love you

RIC S. BASTASA
My Poetry

my poetry
is a monologue
this self talking
with myself

it is a dialogue
with you
when you read me
i talk to you

it is a prayer
a connection that runs
through the skies
looking for the
heart of God

RIC S. BASTASA
My Prize

i did not get
served my lunch
after i
lectured for
four hours
on such a sensitive
topic as human rights
and police brutality
inside that room
where some
soldiers
listened.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Prof's View About Romeo And Juliet

by all means his jaw
is wide, and i made the right guess,
my literature prof is
German half American
raised somewhere in
Bronx, but his ways
are those of a cowboy
smart and strong and
too honest about his
views on love, and too
critical about teenage
lovers and so as expected
and consistent with his
lectures for the past
semesters, when he
dissects Romeo and
Juliet, chapter by chapter
though admiring Shakespeare
this he says: it is all about youth
and family and trouble but
essentially R & J is nothing
but about stupidity.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Promise

i promised myself
i speak what i want to say
relentlessly

even if it should result in my own
alienation

i will be free as a fallen leaf
surrendering to the grounds of my
beginning

acknowledging that on the same spot
i shall rot
and end.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Promise To Write For You....

i promised you
day and night

i shall write
to keep it right

this promise is
a rock
no river shall
mock

this promise is a vine
it shall climb pillars and
cover walls and
windows

this promise is my sky
you can see beyond it

in your nights
you shall gather my stars

RIC S. BASTASA
My Question For You

Need I sing accurately?
So that the notes you want to hear shall mount
Straight up
in your lips
Out of the well of my mouth
At noon to compete with the songs of the yellow flowers
Growing around
The brink of your mind
Capturing the different nuances
The things that
Do not weigh those that are light
Those that
Bounce in the hold of your might....

RIC S. BASTASA
My Realistic Sister

when she speaks
there will always be truth to it.

she told you
it wouldn't work
and it did not really work.

see? she is Cassandra.

see? the rails are cut off now
the train stops.

she speaks from the past lives she had.
once she was Cleopatra, she knew any Julius Caesar.

now she is telling me the same thing.
i am afraid, this thing too that i have in my palm

will not work. I am crushing it, but i still doubt it.
i wish it were a bird with strong bones.

i wish it were a fish, with slimy scales
i dream it may escape the way i want it inside that dream.

but my sister was the Cassandra.
her statements become true, and i have fear now

about this black bird in my palm
it is alive.

tomorrow, i ask myself, if i too shall learn
the art of
killing. I guess, she must be right.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Religion

in my religion is the belief of inclusion
because you will always be my brother
my sister, my father and mother,

why do we quarrel over who is clean
among us? or who sinned the most?
or who must be excluded from our
fold? Love is always inclusive of
everyone who too needs to be loved.
It is reaching and not throwing.
It is reaching the skies with our hands
despite our fears. It is the rose blooming
unafraid to show its true color to the sun.
It is you tired and coming to me for help
we look for a place to rest
that which we call home together
we give you water because you are thirsty
we give you food because you are hungry
we give you comfort because you are confused
we take you here because here we are
always living for the other

this my friend is my religion.It is the religion
of Love
and God has always been and ever shall be
Love till the end
of Time.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Request For You

We are in the middle of this dark World,
You and I, too distant
Like poles of the earth
Too silent
Like the deepest floor of the Sea

Let me ask you for your hands
So I may hold them
Like the sweet flowers of our Youth

Let me take you to the light
Beyond us
That my father left me once
Before he left
To another world

Let me be beside you
And feel you
In the middle of this darkness
You and I

Together let us move towards
The light
Let me ask for your hands
That I may hold them again
Feel the warmth of my hands
Hear the beating of my heart

Let me tell you again and again
I love you so much

RIC S. BASTASA
My Room Is Your Room Now

i

my room is your room now
and my arms yours too
my lips are ready for your
warm kiss and you may
have them as yours

ii

for this house is your house
my body is your body
for my love is your love
and my longing is your longing too

iii

this is my heaven and it is yours too
all the angels sing for you
and they also sing for me

iv

you and me in this loneliness
you and me in this hapless mess

v

so i am a tree, a house, arms, lips and body
so i am heaven, room, and window and door

so i am open for you and so you are here with me
you are my guest and i am your host

there is no reason for you to be angry
and if you happen not to like it here
you may leave early the next morning
and please you do not have to say an angry word

RIC S. BASTASA
My Roots Are Joys And The Winds Dance With Me.

i am afraid
i have to cut this
matter
shortly

this cut is sudden
and i advise you to
really prepare

hold your head
or your hand
be conscious of your
feet

i cut paper in bits
and throw them into
the air

do not bother
picking
the wind is their
comfort
anyway

i cut love and
i cut it clearly
and surely

i do not bother
about pain
i am not its mother
anyway

let the pain fly away
they had always been birds
and we are not
their worms
somehow
and then i forget
you
you are never mine
and i am never
yours

my feet are joys
and the winds dance with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Secret Love

I look at you again today for the same
Question, this boring repetition,

Why do I really love you?
(And why can’t you love me?)

Your face is beautiful
I make glimpses; your arms tickle me,
To the bone, your hair makes me shake,
Your lips make my heart beat,
Your eyes, they make me melt
Your nose makes me gosh

The way you walk makes me hungry
For love tonight,
And then you look at me
I shy away, this cannot be

Why do I love you?
(How can I ever tell you?)

I have not. I cannot.
I am crazy. I am mute. I am patient.
I am angry. But I will be always silent
In loving you,

Shall I call it forever? .....Cool.
(You will never know, this fool)

RIC S. BASTASA
My Shadow

follow me, follow me
do not look back, keep on following me
move one step and be with me
hold my hand, hold it tighter
look at me, we'll stop, i'll kiss you
kiss you hard, i'll make love to you

RIC S. BASTASA
My Shadow Now Talks To Me

at the background
you whisper what to do
behind the drapes
and i am a fool

up there
you know what strings are
you are not seen
but you make a puppet
of me

i bluff you too
i dance like a puppet
i pretend i do what you tell me so

the show is over
and then i walk away

i like the way how disgusted you are
and when the distance is safe

i dance my dance
i do what i want to do
i sing to the sky
and the sky listens to me

i have my shadow
and now it is talking to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Silence Shall Be

i find this in the forest of trees
long trees, shady, such that what you can see
are only shadows of leaves
and what you hear is only the sound of the wind
choked between tight walls,
this is my silence,
moist, and soft, between a growth of wild
ferns
rotten leaves heaps and heaps of
rotten leaves
layer after layer of rotten leaves
thick and pushed still to the roots
smashed to the ground
some seeds from the oaks
or maybe from the flowers of the orchids
or some sweet fruits and red berries fall
in there
and they begin to grow
rich as humus is this soil down
the darkness of this forest,
this is my silence
deep inside me
moist, rotten, but soon
lots shall grow
seeds turning into sprouts
to trees again
perhaps taller than ever
some fruits so sweet and colored and shiny
some flowers scented and so lovely,
this my silence
shall be, i am keeping it for years

RIC S. BASTASA
my silent teacher just arrives
from a distant city

her breasts are scanned
on an MRI, and she receives
the cold news:

she has cancer
and the cells have spread
deep to her bone marrow
and spine

she tells me through the phone
without a sob,
her voice strong
and determined like steel

there is no possibility that at
her age of 68,
that she will entertain any invasive
treatment or chemotherapy,

she is ready and she wants for
God's last roll call.

what a strong woman!
what wisdom!

She ends: Praise be God!
The Giver and the Taker!

RIC S. BASTASA
My Single Look At You Can Make A Difference

in my walk along a path of dreams
without resting my weary feet
i go sometimes to you
in your concrete world
where my single look at you
can make a difference

RIC S. BASTASA
My Sister’s Fate

A man comes
To our house
To take my sister’s hands

Grandma meets him
Leads him from the floor
To the stairs
Then for a talk in the
Living room

Brings him to the
Dining room for
Light snacks
While sister arranges
Some flowers in the vase,

Grandpa stares at him
From the tip of his hair
To the tip of his toe,

And then sister and him
Have a sweet talk
On sweet nothings
Just like any lover

After a while,
He is excused
As it is dark
And grandma and
Grandpa have their
Own kind of talk,

And then tells sister,
“He is no good,
We have seen his eyes
And his footsteps
Drop him”.

But her heart beats
For him and she is ready
For future regrets.

Oh, how she follows
Her heart that loves
The man who deceives
her from the very start

(sequel follows in due time)

RIC S. BASTASA
My Smile To You Dear Sick One

it is something that i will give
on my own free will to you

you do not buy it. you cannot steal it.
you are sick and we know it.
you do not wish any cure. and we too know that.

you wish for the time to come.
it will. like a scheduled date. like what you always do.
fulfill a promise. and never be afraid.

you walk alone. that is what you like best.
you talk alone. that is your way of making the poems.

i have nothing to give. you do not know how to ask.
you do not ask for anything.

i am giving you, this smile.
that last one for you. you never ask for it.
i am giving it. willingly.

goodbye. as you close your eyes, i do not expect
that you smile back.

it is enough. now sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Son...

perhaps
sunrise must have come too early
you did not arrive
we waited

we wanted the sunset
to come later but it did not heed us

it came as scheduled
Nature did what i had to do simply

my son
you did not arrive and soon
we shall return to the same place
where you and i
reside

are you still there?

RIC S. BASTASA
My Sort Of Poetry

A group of words that intends nothing
But only me
A group of words running towards a market of ideas
With no intention to buy or to sell
A group of children running towards the parks
Rushing
For no reason but
To play

Or simply a lonely
Word
With no other ambition, but to simply stroll under some shady trees of the boulevard
It has no direction
A mumbo jumbo with
No matching magic intended
A group of words like running cars to roads without traffic signs
Chaotic, dangerous, deadly
Accident-prone
Willing to take a solo flight
Then crash into the deepest sea
Or hit an indestructible mountain
Words that run berserk like kamikaze
When fed up
May take a sudden twist
Yogic stand stilling
Hide if you seek
Die if you will
Absurd
At times defecating,
Farting in the middle of a solemn mass

A group of words invented by my heart and mind
And mine alone
Hypocrite words hand in hand with honest words
Telling lies
And telling truths
And you shall be confused
By all these confabulations
Though not what I really wanted to achieve,
As I have no criminal malice
Except to make this group of words
For its own sake
My sake
My very own pleasure
Tiny pleasure

Now numb,
Now dead
Another victim
In a perfect crime

My own group of words wanting only to be human,
Ought to be,
Must have been,
And always must be

A group of human words
Where burdens are buried underneath
Or in-between
Hibernating mudfish
Molting garter snake
Molten magma
Saved saliva
Spittle
Living group of words,
Pulsating tadpole

Searching like a frisking airport guard trained for terrorism
A group of words, sort of poetry, sort of
My life
Expressing the idea
That some ideas are meant simply to be concealed
To be unexpressed, unexposed
. Like a newly cut- stem
Of a purple allamanda for propagation
For the next generation
Hidden from the sun
Glare is death
Exposure can become invisibility
Like familiarity breeding contempt
Too much
Can be nothing
In effect

Conceal to show the power of expression

I conceal to show my self to you
Helpless in anger
And it is good
Because we all need it

What is there to say?
When everything is there

Like a sea lion sunbathing

Or the penguins in procession

Or the goldfish
Inside a bowl

The noon sun
The full midnight moon

The white cross of Magellan
Or the twin towers of York

The need of not having to say any word
After all
Is the gift of etiquette

I am
Silent in too much noise
Unfathomable by too much layered depth
Of the everyday mores
Thick face
Thin scary skin

Lively feelings meant for the dead
For those better not said, better not done
For those that which these words have done and for those left undone
My life, my sort of group, of own words

All written for the prolongation of the secretive human race
For the preservation of this transient world
In the name of duty, of life, the ought, the must, the mandatory, of all the laws, man-made and
God- made
I shall obey

I have followed
Down to the last letter
All focused for eternity

All these words

Of fingers pointing towards the thousand careful touches of humanity

My greatest sigh of all

This group of words is so dedicated.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Soulmate

there are those who do you no wrong
and yet there is no connection
there are still barriers in the relationship
there are those whom you meet for the first time
and yet the feeling is that
you have been friends for so long

you are the one i meet today
and yet the feeling is that we have been together for so long
i am at home with you
the feeling is heavenly
i am positive about you
the way you smile at me
seems that we have been
lovers before....

we are now
here
we were there
before

i love you
love me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
two old ladies are looking
at what we have not seen

what is it that they know?
that has intrigued us too

did they not think that 'here they are, unfortunate ones! '

'we had passed the test,
let us see them fail'

RIC S. BASTASA
My Speech At The Wedding.

marriage is
surrendering freedom.
you beg to
be dependent to the
other
who is more lousy
than you.
mariage is
degrading yourself with
a grade of
Incomplete.
And you sleep with
the other
after making love
that whole night
where your sex moans
are innumerable, saying
or whispering
in the most romantic
and overused
sentence' you complete me'

the emcee
added:
at the center of both
is God.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Stepmother (For Edgar Andrade Baguio)

When my stepmother first came, her eyes were sharp and bright as little knives. Her youth and my childhood ran into each other - she was the victor. Although my father was still alive, I felt orphaned, depressed and alone, crying by myself, grew up alone. In the first year of peace, everyone drifted. My father went out - returned with gray hair. I have my father to compensate me for the loss of my childhood. Sometimes vague envy found father sitting in silent expectation...

A decade goes by. My stepmother is still as beautiful as at first, though older. She returns to ask my father to forgive her mistake: My half sister has another half sister. My heart was no longer jealous - I only felt sorry for my half sister, who was really too young... I hoped she would not find herself once more on a tipping wagon. My father died, rain poured down in the courtyard. My tears gleaned some contentment: Mother and father together now, forever.

After that she aged quickly, solitary, silent as a shadow, her eyes no longer sharp as knives. When my son entered the world, she was the first to carry him, she who changed him the first time, placed him in the gently rocking hammock. My half-sister asked her mother, only half-joking, Will you favor my first child this way? Lullabies contain no riddles and tears run down forever. My stepmothers silent eyes smiled brightly when my son threw himself into her arms: 'Grandma! '

- Thanh Nguyen's narrative poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
My Teacher

all his life he had only one wish
that he dies
and that he must die a happy death
he prays a lot
and offers flowers and food and treasures to the gods
he makes sacrifices
he purifies himself everyday with holy baths and spiritual exercises
he walks miles and miles to reflect upon the graces
and the wisdom of old
but the gods have their own ways and style
he shall never have a happy death

he was given the status of an immortal god
instead.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Tongue And Your Teeth

my tongue
is a blithe spirit
free bird

finding finally a
little resting place
from its
tiring flight

between those tiny spaces
of your lovely
teeth

you are pearls
i am slug.

that clam in you
flesh and danger lurking
if you suddenly close
i could
die.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Trash

in the house
at the kitchen
one finds that black bag
filled with trash
one has to throw them away
no keeps them

in our mind
in the same manner
there are thoughts
which are trash
and there is the black bag
one has to throw all these trash away

in my poems
i got a trash
got a black bag
and i am throwing all these away

what us have to things
and thoughts
that no one loves?

RIC S. BASTASA
My Tripping

early morning masses
are what i am attending to daily
i am reporting
all my enemies to the Lord
may all of them be
enlightened
and at the end befriend
themselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Usefulness To You

you see
i burn to the fire
of your
tongue

i realize
that paper self
that
i am

it is not that
thick
and reliable
i am light
and

not safe even
during those
rainy days

i am not afraid
to burn

i guess it is my nature

and so
try it

speak, speak some more
give me that fire
those balls of fire
that must perfect my nature

my smoke is
a beautiful fog on top
of those mountains

some sleep on the
trees
without so much hassle

when i turn to ash

perhaps that will just be enough for you
to finally shut up.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Valentine's Gift For You

i am offering you
a ticket to Bangkok
you fly this April
on a 13th
alone, you said
you need
space and time
you said
you need a room
a sailboat
a place without me

and here i am
i am giving you
this ticket for free
see Thailand and
be with the elephants
eat a lot of durian
and just be free

you like it?
say yes, say yes

i like it
i want to go with her
without you too
we like to do it
in a room not well-lit
in Guanzhou
and in Taipie

RIC S. BASTASA
My Venus

cell
moss
fish arising from a
broken shell
less the whiskers
of the cat
a she-goat
rising from the foams
a woman
water body
daisies on your hair
naked
dried by the wind
floating in the sea
the waves take you
to me
i am a lesser god
that you love
i wait
for the making
we shall lie on the sand
to the grass
we are sunflowers
in the sun
and then we wilt
back to earth
in utter silence
of two empty
shells

RIC S. BASTASA
My Visitors This Morning

she comes early this morning
blue all over
and i give her tea and let her speak what is in her mind.

like she is a storm today,
she has given me turbulence, speaking about how abuse
can be inflicted, verbal physical emotional, against her
a woman of virtue
and intellect, she sips the tea and breaks some cookies
her breakfast today, and she continues about
what he did to her

i am listening then the door bell rings
it is him, and he gets another tea
for sympathy and he listens to her outpouring too,
these kinds of abuse
inflicted by one to another
getting to be
so normal an occurrence, that everyone seems to accept
without question,

she is his wife
the man has white hair, and balding, and his shirt
is not well ironed, his face still unwashed,
wrinkles on his face,

she is complaining about his abuses on her person
and he merely listens
and he wants to explain how these matters started
and how they may not be true
how violent can she become
when provoked by her
mood swings

her face changes from calm to something
you will not like
and she does what you may now believe
because she kicks him
she slaps him
and he merely listens
i guess, that explains the mess, that this couple
now intruding my privacy, has found themselves into,

i tell them i have other things to do today,
and since their tea is consumed, then they must now take
their leave

my morning is not that great, actually, i do not like it
and them too.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Way

i made my own way
clear the uncleared trees
clear the sharp leaves of cogon grass
i bleed
drops of blood mark
clear my way
and yet you follow me
in this tryst
my heart is flattered
when you finally said
you chose
you chose my way
you chose pain rather
than pleasure

and the pain is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Way Of Stealing Happiness

i'll take a bite of the luscious grape
break the pulp within
savor the sweetness inside my mouth
play with the hands of my
tongue
i always close my eyes
when i swallow what is supposed
to be yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
My White Haired Woman

yesterday I hugged
a white-haired woman

who once told me
during her English class

as she dreamt a dream
so we too must dream

RIC S. BASTASA
as she was preparing for her usual market day
on some limited pesos to buy the usual eggs and coffee,
she hints and strikes me with:

what if we apply for a visa in the USA?
it won't harm to try our luck in the Great Apple,

i was resting in bed due to a bad cough
this hot weather and sudden rain
this dusty country with bad roads

oh, if you like it, why not try yourself?
if you get an approved visa, why not be like the rest of
our professionals
on a decent job as caregiver

not that really distant to being a domestic helper in Hongkong
and the Emirates

well, i stated with finality,
i can always afford to stay here
work, inch my way slowly to the higher ladder of the
corrupt bureaucracy without really
having my hands dirty on some
issues of law and morality

i may, compromise, as your beneficiary
for your compulsory dollar remittance
and people around us here
your mother and brothers
may name me Lazybone

but honestly honey, we differ on this kind of
point-of-view

this is Paradise here, why leave?
this is the only country we have, why leave?

she does not want any further discussion
she leaves with her small rattan basket to the market

i sometimes reflect on this,
what if i am wrong? what if i am such a narrow minded patriotic
out of touch lazy bone?

i am staying put. I love it here.
I may even invoke God. He wants me to be here.

Fate. Yes, Fat Fate.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Wife's Birthday

a morning kiss
a hug

sex last night
and exhaustion
in bliss

a text message
saying
thank you for
being with me
through and through

my gift
to a lovely wife

i am still
her devoted husband

thank you
Lord on High

RIC S. BASTASA
My Wish For You Now

i wish that there will be
peace above your head
like butterflies so still
on leaves at noon.

i wish you sweet dreams
soft, cool, colors
baby pinks and
pastel blues
white lotus blooming
as you sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Wish For You, And My Own Dream Too

what i wished for you
has come, now you have
found your own world,
and so, you must release
me from your hold,
for i too must find mine,

what you wished for me
is impossible, but i have
not described it yet for you,
you are drawing a cat
with only one tail, and i am
sort of twin rats, moving in
opposite directions, and

this made me so unhappy,
it is this wish fulfilled that
i must find you finding your
own pair of stars settling in
the middle of your hair,
parting confusion and setting
aside the convulsion of
homelessness,

i have no home, it is not in
your bosom, i cannot live longer
in your thoughts,

inside me is a boat moving away
on slow sails, and there is no strong
wind yet, to set me far away.

i am anchored on a port with no
inhabitants.
it is a city without any smoke at all.

i wonder where are all the children
the urchins of the streets of lonely
houses, whose windows are not
lighted, whose paths have no feet.

do you see me living amidst all the Greek nude statues? do you see me as a black bird perched on a electrical wire alone and gazing on the plains upon a heavy rain?

i am always on the side of words because they make me live though hurt so badly, by the meanings of its sentences. i wish i can live some more to see the birth of my dreams as i run naked along the shore deep in the darkness of the night and

then the typhoon begins to blow all that i have strongly within me.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Wish Tonight

May my Good God
Sit on that empty chair tonight
May he look at me with kindness
When i am asleep
May he guide me even
In my dreams
May his warm hands caress
My entangled hair
May he breathe inside my nose
The divinity of his air
May he guard me from demons
May he give more reasons
For living my life with a purpose
And when I wake up tomorrow
May he make me understand more
The justifications for my sorrow
May he give me the moment
Away from a torment.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Wishes For You

i wish that you finally decide to choose
a poem and make it a poem
in your lifetime

the one that is ugly at first
but which does not give up to search for ways to become
another beautiful poem

i wish that you finally give up
on being a doubter
and simply be an ordinary wanderer
not thinking of anything else
but wonder

the one whose innocence is always a blank wall
and free to the ways of the confetti
one who looks up to the heavens and says

how beautiful are the stars!
even if there are none

RIC S. BASTASA
My World

this is my world

walks in the morning
making me think
steps on the rocks
and mud and under the rain
shiver and quiver
and sighs and then
sunshine on my face
soft hands
on my chest

noontime is harsh
inside this cell
of the musts and oughts
and this and that
piles of papers
more readings to make
confusions and even
delusions
breathe and death
on installments
in the office and
this world of work

then sunset
orange and fading colors
remembering my youth
and combing my white hair
and touching her hand
reminiscing some promises and vows

we sit on a background of darkness
on a chair just the two of us
on a table our old hands rest
recalling the poems
we once wrote

then you turn off
the light
your head rests on my chest
my hand carressing your hair
we are so close
that when i sleep
i hear you hum
a lovesong
as you too close your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
My World Is Not Interesting After All

what you do not know yet
of course
is interesting and so
since you have not known
much of me
you find me
a subject
of interest

you keep on tracking me
like a path
that may lead you to
a certain
discovery, and you followed
me
religiously, and i
did not ask you to stop
or refuse
your insistence,

i have nothing to hide
somehow
you have only to know
every part
of me and then
you have reached
my world

surveyed every word
object, thought,
aspirations,
dreams

yes even my dreams
and
you figure out
some possibilities
in symbols
like a dot
or a scribble in stones
or veins
on leaves
and their meanings
and hear
all their claims for
a certain nuance

and then
you finally find that
there is nothing
interesting at all
in my own open world
like a field of hay
or spread of
sunshine

something
that you can identify with
like
being lost, or sad
or panicky

(do you expect an
explosion
or a pandemonium
of falling
and failing
objects?
a volcanic eruption
or the rage of
the seven rivers?)

after all
is a mountain with
green grass
and heavens with
blue skies
interesting at all?

you do not have
to say goodbye
your silence is
enough
for me

there is no war in
my world
there is no destruction
there are no relics
worthy
of my past
there are no worms
in my humus
no fleas in my carpets
no lice inside
the locks of my hair
no stings or strings
attached to
my bones

you see
i am not interesting
at all

do not blame me
i have already told you about that
at the prologue
of my first word.

RIC S. BASTASA
My World Of Words....

words are scattered in bed.
the sharp ones are on my pillow.
blunt ones insist to lay on the floor
blocking sometimes my way to the rest room, for i pee more often than normal.

i told them i am sleepy and what i need now is a good sleep.
i summon the bees, and i am counting the sheep jumping over the fence.

i am a funnel and the words liquefy into my head always getting into the door again

colored letters in my sleep still wanting to tell a story.

RIC S. BASTASA
My Young Brother Sang A Song

it is quite
a discovery
i a mode of hearsay
that allegedly
when my father almost died
being bitten by
his own white horse
my younger brother
who was then
so young
sang a song and sang it well
with all his friends
who were drinking
beer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Myanmar

NOW, this must be true
for every red monk
that the generals murder
ten cyclones shall come

how many red monks were burned alive?

RIC S. BASTASA
Mymemories Of You

the winds are coming,

the sound is harsh,

it is cold, and the leaves

are blown away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Myrmecologist

knowing the ant inside
a page of that book of insects,

in particular that
myrmecology, of its parts

its thorax, a body with
eight jointed legs,
the ocelli,
two antennae, tibial spur,
the compound eye, its sting
and powerful mandible,

you think you master it
as the parts are few
and too simple a creature
for a complicated scrutiny

by even cruelly dismantling
those parts and still identify
each portion apart from the other,

such a shallow learning,
until you
are finally bitten and by
instinct you smash it to death
with your thumb and nail
and smell the scent of
blood in the core of
its very soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Myself

if you think that i am having long hours
because of poetry
you are not completely correct
part of me is also darkness
the rest is light
there is this part of me that tells
you half of humanity
the rest is what i do not wish to talk about.
if you think that what i have in mind is pure poetry
you are mistaken.
i am waiting for something not poetic
it is on the process of an and since i am a free user
it will take a long time.
a very long time, and i in my poverty of spirit
assumes the courage of having to wait
for a long time
for a very long long time
and then when the is complete
i click it to play
and then i watch the show
its characters talk about part of myself
my secret dreams my hidden wishes
there is mixture of a drink
of illusion and reality
of fantasy and fact
but if you think, having discovered this secret
that i am all that
you are also mistaken
for part of me is also the sunrise between two breasts of the hills
the rainbow that extends between the thighs of two rivers
and the the white dove of the Ark
that brings the message of an incoming peace.
if you think however that i am harmony
there you are again
you are mistaken.

shall i repeat my old lines for you again?
now you have it, you are right, in this aspect
for i am this and i am that
i am never complete and i am also never empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Myself At Last....

to enter your room at night
when you are no longer there is to
make me a sense of home of you

i smell your body. it is earth to me.
i kiss the blanket, it is heaven.

i keep a handful of your unwashed clothes
worn by you before we ended.

the scent of your used clothing
gives me still that feeling of me still
belonging to you.

but tonight i will assure myself
that i am not a slow learner to this fact
that here i am
myself at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
Myself With You.

You cannot stop this engine
From running
Fed as it is with the nuclear energy
Of self-determination

You cannot block this again with
Any call for kindness your face of sobriety & propriety
Sustained as it is with the pride
Of its sufficiency, this engine of life

Away from human drama this engine
Of love and belief of self
Plunges into an eternal destination
Or damnation, or whatever

This engine must go, on and on
Unstoppable unconquered unhindered
This engine I call

Myself with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Mystery Inside Us

driving this kind of self
driving within us
driving like another
kind of head on your shoulder
driving and yet so devouring...

driving is the mystery of keeping
driving up with sanity,

driving compromises, neat and tidy
driving sometimes
and then dirty and rusty, who cares?

drive the road, and join the dance
drive lock the room and be so silent

drive talk to yourself and be at peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
finally you find what
discard means
they choose themselves
and talk the language they have
chosen
you do not walk your talk
you cling to the sound
of your heart
you follow the light within
you invent your own language now
like no parrot
happily you wade in your own
water
traverse your own territory
silently
you will find yourself
among the rocks
and pebbles
each unique
each undiagnosable
there is joy
in every color
hilarity in every
damnation

RIC S. BASTASA
listening to the softness of the rain at dawn
opening the mind for the seeping of understanding

how the rain falls on the roof like a caress
how is the water redirected on the gutter
towards the canals of our limitations

canalized we survive the rigors of what the laws expect
no overflowing not a shortness of breath

at the middle of the hour of sorrow we shall hear the festive songs of the frogs in the rice-fields the sun is up but the rains do not stop

RIC S. BASTASA
there are always options
nobody tells us what are they
before we know it
we have become our own
myriad options

self-preservation
love of self and love of the other
obeying rules
not discarding them
making new rules
and understanding some new ones

do not listen
you have your light within
pray
for we are weak and
of limited understanding editions

move on, life always begins
on something exciting
who cares? this is my life
this is my own journey

climbing mountains
sitting on stone
watching another day
pass by
on a caravan of memories
on desert thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
my theory lives thru
as you have said it: these are all lies
lies and more lies
and you know them all to be lies,

but as you said it,
you begin to understand the truth
beneath these lies

a layer of grass
another layer of flowers
another layer of clouds

beneath is the niche
burying the nuggets of
my own wisdom, how i live my life

and justify it later
before God, shall all lies be
truths

RIC S. BASTASA
Nada Que Nada....

at the peak of all these

ramblings, perorations,
at the height of artistic leanings
those that hide behind the
revolutions of the masses
offering a pyre of those
innocent bodies those that steal
a loaf of bread and a slice of cheese

at the peak of all these poems,

so many of them, all subjected to the
torture of the master of
governance, all foxes and manipulative
machines
designed for the preservation of
power

at the peak of all these speeches and
rhyming poetry

what is there to feel? what is there to
reap as fruits?

at the peak of all these restlessness
one can hear the toll of the church bell

another funeral, another march,
ash, incense, last stone, wooden niche,

shovels, mud, heavy rain,
sobs that we always hear and yet keeps

on reckoning, such a short time
badly spent for the fury that will never be

consumed, a problem never solved,
a crisis always in whatever time in whatever
nth life, what is the essence of all these?
let the silence do it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nada Y Nada Y Nada

think about nothing
feel it
like a river without a song
or a cup without its hot tea
give away everything
like you're a paper now
filled with writings
crumpled and thrown away
into the water
wet by the rain and softened
to become part of the earth again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Naidz

haud ignota loquor

Hear me first
do not harm me
and listen to me
because from the
beginning
when i invented the word
now that you read
the lines
now that you connect
as threads
of my thoughts
time after time
when you begin to know
me, let me tell you,
as you relate and
begin to identify...

i have never spoken
of unknown things..

RIC S. BASTASA
Nail.....

if i were only
a snail
careful on its
ways
slow to a caress
in a lovely
locomotion
slimy to what
it touches, then
i could have
loved you more.

i am very sorry
forgive
my being a nail.

RIC S. BASTASA
Naked Beauty....

you worry much
about buying
a dress

you wish for
an underwear

or a necklace
some trinkets

you don't have
the money
but if you have
all the guts
i could have told
you once more
that you are most
beautiful when
naked

with you a dress
becomes a waste
an underwear a
concealment
trinkets do not
make you
feet less beautiful
neither
can a necklace make
you
less a woman
to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Naked Before My Eyes

feeling empty
i sense you
i get near you
feeling your hand
and you look at me
knowing something
that fills you too
i like you to be
my empty cup
to my hot water
i can be more
than hot water
i can be a spoon
stirring you and
you can be coffee too
and cream and
sugar and mint

i can be the mouth
that opens to drink
you as coffee and
surely we shall have
a good time together

tonight i like you
to be more than coffee
and cream and sugar

just be yourself naked
before my emptiness

and i can also be more
than a mouth to you

RIC S. BASTASA
Naked Before You

i pose naked for you

holding nothing not even a leaf a flower

you said it is for art

nude man as a piece of art

nude man as God's perfect gift to woman

i tilt my head i spread a leg i smile a bit

i imagine i am looking at the moon and the stars

all for art's sake

man as a piece of art

i have never done it once

never had it in my whole decent life

you asked me why i agree to stand naked before you

showing the shapely contours of a beautiful decent educated man

it is not for art's sake

to tell you the truth

it is because of you my artist woman

i love you

more that this art

for art's sake thing this human touch
i simply love you

and naked shall i not say it

RIC S. BASTASA
Naked Catch

The rain of March suddenly falls
It catches me naked
In Diwan river

RIC S. BASTASA
Naked Honesty

we are born
naked and then we were dressed by
them who know much better
saying
nudity is a shame

we were born honest
originally honest nothing hidden
until they taught us that
honesty can be shameful
like nudity

when we go naked in the streets
our pubic hairs and
sex organs exposed
they tell us
we have become obscene and
scandalous
that we have committed crimes

soon we will die naked
but they still dress us
perhaps to hide once more
the sins that they
have committed for us

RIC S. BASTASA
if you think that we understand
our suffering
then you are absolutely wrong

our brains float and we do not know
what make it so

our rooms fly away and we do not see
their wings
our worlds fall and crash
and we feel
the impact

we struggle

we like to take our eyes
pluck them from
their sockets
so that we can see the world
outside our
from our own
blindness

we have blackouts

sometimes all our lines are cut
from our pulsating network
of veins

our hearts are constantly
quashed
broken

we devise poetry
to explain all these
and what we have
are mere glimpses
of our
opaque universe
sometimes flashes of images  
like stars  
offer an explanation  

eyes glitter and what we have  
is simply  
wonder  

we walk our nights  
with our eyes fixed  
upon those stars  

the rocks along the way  
make us stumble  
we have bruises  
we suffer all day  

time will tell  
if our self proclaimed  
greatness  
can be a matter  
of justice  

or perhaps it is love's way  
of loving  
us  
we who are crushed  
in pain  
and nameless  
in the history of time  

RIC S. BASTASA
Namelessly

my gaze is lovely
to love it is rooted

it is shy, it gazes when
the beloved is not looking

it is always
unfulfilled, it is always as sad

as a shy look, a stolen glimpse
of the face of my only god

something stupid
really

i do not fear it
i do not touch it

it is as lovely as desire
an inch away from those lips

breath inside a breath
namelessly

RIC S. BASTASA
two shadows intertwine
through the glass you set your eyes
one way

you are outside this frame of love
mere watcher

as you pour out what wish you have
the shadows fuse into one

you want to be a part of it but
there is no way

there is no one to blame perhaps
the stars perhaps the lines of your palm

the rainbow of promises from you always
comes and go

it went inside the mind and then pooped
this toxic waste

this time chained, these flowers wilt
a body of flesh and bones

untangled shamed to dust and with the wings
unseen

flew unnamed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Naming Names.....

i wonder if you feel stuck sometimes,
claustrophobic inside a drum where the exit and entrance are all the same,
well covered, and you are nothing but that stuff inside waiting for the
right opener,
you are sealed,
and isolated.

you do not remember breathing, do you?
you haven’t felt air, and you cannot even tell if it is fresh or stale

you too do not remember having thought of someone other than yourself,
you are too compressed and there is no space for growing
hair or nails or
whatever,

i felt this, and it was a feeling that stuck with me for a long number of years,
such that i think that it is but a normal and
natural occurrence and for such an ignorance,

i never thought that it is worth mentioning or
complaining at all,
that having air is not a right,
that having space is not demandable,
that complaining is irritating to the ears,
and that being in such a
worst state, is -but a common situation in the world,

until you
learn that there is something wrong,
really wrong that you can bet
your life on it,
that if you cannot get it
then it is better that you
kill or get killed

two options only,
you die or you live
nothing in between,
how stupid can i be,
it is just recently that i know this,

and i thank you,
for letting me out,
and making me see that i am not
supposed to be in that drum
and that someone has answer
for the wrongs
that were intentionally
done.

let me
let me now,
name names.

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissism

it is a way
of getting intimate
with yourself

holy cow!

the church is ready
to excommunicate

and society ostracizes
you for that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissistic Solitaire

in front of the mirror
you go naked and rub
your body with the oil
from your bare hands

the room is humiliated
and the mirror is angry

the act is done and
finished and you become

the mirror and you are
as empty as the big
room and then you
sleep as it is the only
possible place where
peace can reside.

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissus

I met this Narcissus one night
in a party tendered by
this Endymion
and there are Adonises
meeting us in smiles and
masculine grace,

and they all speak of beauty
and how these flesh
that attract must be preserved
and rejuvenated

the mirrors in the room
rejoice
they look at their faces
and they all mutually admire
each

then i stop to ask them
why can't they love the other
the lonely and the challenged ones
of this society?

they look inside their eyes
and feel the love they all have
for themselves
the beautiful faces that only them
their eyes can love

this is what i call real ugliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissus (Revisited)

there is a mirror
inside us
and we go inside

it is dark
and the light is
just a promise

we meet our
image
and we hug it
so tight

in moments of
breathing
we think that there
is something wrong

to every kiss of
selfishness
which diminishes
our being

after this self-love
is a journey in that lake
placid

the moon creates a
shadow
cast on a lake
bathed in silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissus Oh Narcissus

how can you ever fall in love
with anybody
when you have seen nothing
& nobody
except yourself?

RIC S. BASTASA
Narcissus Says

loving oneself
nacissus says
is not that bad
for as long as
you give the
same kind of
love to your
nice neighbor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Though his earliest poems are formal and satirical, he quickly adopted the new forms of Brazilian modernism that were evolving in the 1920s, incited by the work of Mário de Andrade (to whom he was not related).

He adopted a Whitmanian free verse, mingling speech fluent in elegance and truth about the surrounding, a few improvements many times quotidian, world, with a fluidity of thought.

to Wikipedia

Notice something We’ve made.

are you jealous?

sorry,
i am not telling
you

that i am writing this one,

i am not telling
you

that i write for you

or myself,

sometimes, i challenge
the hypocrisy

of the poets
who feel the way
you do:

hubris!

RIC S. BASTASA
Narrowmindedness

and then he came upon a town
that did not entertain him

he asks his men
to put it on fire
lash lightning and thunder
and throw the brimstone

flood the river with red blood
the air with fire

simply because he is slighted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Narwal's Answer

Why did Ron chelate himself?

1. he must have mercury in his teeth, or too much arsenic in his hair, or

2. possibly, he wants to cure his autism

3. or he needed to soften what used to be hard water within his brain.

just guessing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nasabtan Ko Na Ang Mga Gipanagna

karong wala ka na sa akong kiliran
sa kanunay gipangita ko ikaw sa
larawan sa uban

sa dalan naglaray ang mga buwak
nga morag mga bitoon
sa langit diha sa kagabhion
nanglupad ang mga kahon

nasabtan ko na ang mga gipanagna
misayaw ang adlaw
mihunong ang kalibotan
og kalit mingitngit ang kalibotan

nauga ang mga sapa
mihunob ang dagat
nanagan ang mga bato
nahugno ang pangpang
nangahulog ang mga bitoon
nahilis ang mga panganod

nahugno ang akong kalibotan

RIC S. BASTASA
Nataliya Ovcharenko- Irina Lapteva

violin music
and belly dancing

how beautiful
they go together

the man behind them
looks intently

the big trees
my God are learning
to dance!

RIC S. BASTASA
Natural Instincts...

urination is always a delight
an act of emptying and this time
when it is over
one feels the happiness of that
emptiness that i have been
telling you
not just the defecation even
but the vomiting of something
poisonous
this is our natural body
it excretes what kills it
what discomfort that has caused
its inconvenient moment
it excludes
segregates expels and
does not want to recall

trust your instincts
when you feel like vomiting it
by all means

vomit, vomit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Natural Tendencies

on the first day
it is a welcome
that night there
will be lot of reminisces
lots of stories
of childhood
merry past rekindled
dinner is served
drinks are aplenty
the salads too titillating
to the tongue
the desserts
an overindulgence
of relative bonding
after years

on the third day
back to reality
people go to work
and you have to leave
the honeymoon is over
and now the
natural tendencies are
here
the door shall be locked
and your bags are
ready

goodbye is sad
but it is natural tendency
in fact
a necessity
dictated by the worst
of our times

the free meal is over
now you've got to work
in order to eat
Nature Has No War...

the seed  
and the soil  
and the rain  
and sunshine  
they are  
all friends  
blend together  
throughout  
my life i have  
ever heard  
war.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature Is

nature
is God's book

and he is
the careful author
whose main
intent
is to please us

with brooks and seas and forests
and landscapes
and birds and
butterflies

and sun and moon
and thousands stars in the heavens

and here we
are his little children
with our
ballpoint pens
scribbling
all his pages

irresponsibly
and possibly guilty

but God smiles
he knows we have fun
and He likes it

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature...

a beautiful day,
don't you think so my dear?

wake up
do not fret but be
be fit

take a walk and
meet the rising us
right between

the spreading legs of
the hills

imagine
nature's breasts
some baby clouds
still milking

the rivers have hands
caressing the banks

the mountain tips
have lips
french kissing the skies

every moment
from now
the sky comes down
making so much love
with the
horizon

day fuses with
night
always on a tight
embrace

kisses from the
stars
hugs from the moon

whispers of eternity
from
edgeless
space on an
always moving
universe
with magnificent
wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Hidden Niche

the stone has learned the language of the moss
in harmony with the stillness of the clear water of the pond
the grasses and the marshes have marked their boundaries
the fog is a white blanket on the foot of the cold hills
the clouds are watching with awe
this peace and quiet

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Indifference To Our Woes....

the sun
constantly rises
creeps
into our skin
just as the moon
comes too
regularly at night
when we are
sleepy
and tired and yet
we always have
words for both
consistently,

we had
always been,
despite
the fact,
this harsh fact
that
whatever happens to
us
still they have no
word for it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Metaphors.....

she is the sky
and he is the chunk
of land
and what connects
them is the rain

sometimes the rainbow
makes the
bridge
and he becomes the
illusion

most of the times
he takes
treasure of the
trickles

the sea looks at them
in sadness.

RIC S. BASTASA
night
and heavy rains
inside a boat
the sounds of big waves
shall this boat
break into a half?
shall there be
another wailing
and then with a snap
everything shall be gone?
the torrential rains
the currents and the
crew on watch
until the light is seen
from the tower
and the port
and the arrival
all sighs gone
what is it? there is none
there is nothing.

and then the rains stopped
the sun comes
it is morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Sense Of Humility

coming like a sunrise

and leaving too
like ordinary sunset

nothing spectacular
like the firecrackers of July

nothing bombastic like
a political speech

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Suicide

even the sight of the moon
hanging upon
a tree

or the river murky with
the flood of the mud from the
mountains

like running blood
like a rope tied at the beam of the house

all, at first glance,
makes this goose-flesh in my body

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Vengeance

on the eye of the storm
you must see the cause of nature's outburst
if any boat insists
the whirlpool shall swallow lives
the wind shall crumple
the metallic wings
of the traveler

like us our eyes speak also
when our souls are tossed on a stormy sea
we only need to wait a little time
when the storm subsides
and then we begin again to speak
the tenderness of love

RIC S. BASTASA
Nature's Way Of Cleaning Itself....

it is all about a washing
flushing out

there is only the sound of water
wailing unwanted

it will be quick and too easy
nature does not feel

it is not retaliation
nature never gets angry

it is just about a cleansing
there is too much parasites inside its belly
to many plaques between gum and teeth
too much pus and tumors at its back

it is all about flushing out
urine and feces

then nature goes up
dresses itself and moves on

unlike you it does not have a mirror
there is no looking back

it walks again not feeling any guilt
not even remembering what really happened

RIC S. BASTASA
Nausea

imagine yourself
facing the computer the whole day
eating lunch and supper
beside it
forgetting breakfast
escaping coffee breaks
disregarding calls
and not taking any bath
at all
imagine it is a sunday
and no one's home
because they all left you
because you
are weird
imagine at night when darkness
falls like a curtain
and you left the computer on
and you become dizzy
your head aches
and there is no one to call for
imagine that this happens
that this can happen
imagine
the truth
the nausea of having too much
of that
imagine this
and tell me if i am wrong about you
shutting yourself
from the world and yet opening yourself
to another reality
one that they have not ever seen
or heard
or felt.

it is your reality and be thankful
you finally find it
at less time spent.
Navroz

come all
ye persians
dance and sing
it is the
day of navroz

got a ticket on
the plane
to sing with the
rain again

come spring
come new feeling
come love
come joy

in this celebration
kiss the occasion...

RIC S. BASTASA
Nazareth

he killed himself
inside his car
just near the airport
after he
deplaned

it was nighttime
airtight
no one noticed it

till morning
when a passerby
reported something
suspicious

his father is ten thousand
miles away
his sister married a
foreigner

his wife is too young for his age
and he is too old
not to fully comprehend what is life all about

from our perspective it is another life wasted
but who really knows if he really is...

he never had a kid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Near Yet So Far Away

you are just a breath
away from my
face. My fingers want
to jump off
my hands to
run over you

and indulge
in the lust of touch
and caress

my tongue wants
to run away
with your lips

my thigh
trembles beside
your hands

you are so near
yet

something holds
me away from you

(how can i
ever explain it?)

as i take
a glance, for the last
time at you
beside the glass window
of the car

i finally look down
and wish that
i kiss your feet

(i am in a
quandary between
shame and
satiation)

so near and
yet so far, i close
my eyes

and travel
inside my veins

my blood pumps
up and says

be good
take care as i leave

you are so
far now,
at the end,

at a certain edge
even the hands of my dreams
shy away

to hold and kiss
your shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
Nearing Perfection....

still waiting for that
day when i will be overwhelmed
by the magnanimity of silence
and i shall have that moment
to thank you all, for by that
time, you shall not hear from
me anymore. I will be perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nearing Sixty

this time
two trees stood
upon an
empty field

above them
heavy clouds
about to
make a few
of the rainy
days

they've grown
leaves
and deeper roots
what with
the time they
have consumed
for all those
years

soon will
be the fruits
and then
the children come
to climb
and gather
what ripeness
is found

this time
the trees stand still
unbowed by
the storms and
the other calamities
of lightning
and thunder

more like
the two of us...

RIC S. BASTASA
Negating Another Famous Poet's Poem

i did not see an owl, i was not at all
careful about what the color of the path was,
i know it was dusk, but i forgot the color
if it was purple or gray,

i did not notice if the owl stirred, whether a fine dust
fell from its wings,

i was whistling, and there were
drunkards singing, and the morning came

i did not feel if the owl quavered, or what,

i am not as sensitive and as eloquent as you,
the light fell, and the path
was all that i saw.

This is your copy from a
daring copycat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Negative Thoughts

you are this kind of man
when shown of a boat
and then you
bluntly ask:

when will it sink?

you are this kind of man
who when shown
of the flower blooming in summer
and a butterfly flying
in the air

you simply say:

they have nothing to do with me
as though

everything is meant for death and destruction
as though
everything beautiful in this world
is nothing but
impertinent and irrelevant

you are too blunt
slanted
and too insensitive:

we have nothing to do with you, too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Neglecting Oneself

I stop by the mirror
to wash my hands
on a public comfort room
I have no intention of looking at myself
like a map
trying to find the path for a
treasure hunt
there is none i think
that makes day
a story for a pot of gold or what
but by chance i am caught by the face of the mirror
looking at me
copying me
mimicking me
as though i am not myself in there anymore
I dread
and so i washed my hands too quickly
and did not bother
drying them
with that paper or cloth hanging on the side
the face is angry
and it is asking
for my
apology

RIC S. BASTASA
Negrense House, Silay

it is retold that in this house
live the ghosts

whose bodies of women and
children
of a religious family
were huddled
sometime in the
1800 mercilessly killed
by cruel monsters
inside the basement

the white bearded man
who sits on one of those antique
chairs
says that cries can still be heard
from those
12 empty rooms

the place is
a historic landmark now
where this old house stands still
unwavering to the
passage of time
unlike those which were
buried a long time ago
by limbo
and cannot be remembered

you cannot feel dust here
as one looks at the world from this window
one can feel
eternity at the fingertip

the words pass by
as i stand still trying to listen to the faint
cry of the
wind from the sugar fields
Neighbor

beyond the bushes
in my garden
in front of the fence
of my house
i hear the sound of
cococonut broom sweeping
dry leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
Neither

After the early morning mass
i walk towards home ahead
of the crowd.

alone i see for another time
the leaves of the mahogany trees
falling

the strong wind comes in
a sudden
i even had the fear that
one of the branches
may break and fall heavily
on the cemented pavement

i stop for a while watching
how the leaves fall
flip flopping
somersaulting
and finally landing on the
pavement
and still blown to the farther
side of the
road

i am reminded of so many things:

so many leaves, so many lives.
zamboanga seige, colliding boats
at sea in talisay,
landslide in sagada
bus falling in a ravine somewhere
in negros
gas poisoning in syria
helpless children
collateral damages on innocent
civilians
twisted governments serving for
the selfish ends of their leaders
so many things

and then i think that i do not
really belong here
i am not one of those who
plan an attack and make it appear
that it is necessary
for mankind to survive
neither am i one of those victims
who can do nothing but
cry in helplessness
and in due time
choose no action but simply to
forget

and begin again as though
nothing bad really happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nekpokhaeia

a flower car
and what do you prefer
white or red roses? and
the limousine,
black or white?

We may dispense with the surgeons
And the plumbers,
And the upholsterers,
Or the carpenters,
But we need the tailor
If you decide to have
New clothes
To fit his social status

We will provide the drapers,

And the hearse for the transportation,
Of course,

We are discussing your funeral

We go back again
To embalming choices,
10 days or 20 days?

RIC S. BASTASA
Nemesis

a painful response to another's undeserved good fortune-

envy, the monster is taking you to the land of no return

it is where people on their best apparel burn themselves to hell

the ashes speak on names that must be forgotten

where can pleasure be at another's undeserved success?

RIC S. BASTASA
Nerve Endings

push them too hard
and they end of
splitting

push them some more
and they
gnash you with pain
on their
endings

relax and stay cool
there is no hurry
for all these

take time
let things go
let the taste simmer
to the nerve
ending of the tongue

savor
what is so tasteful
in the future

keep everything settled
inside the palm
open
spread and let something
pure remain
along the lines
of your cozy
skin

love and love and let go
things come back
if they are really yours
forever
Nessum Dorma

i did a Pavarotti in the kitchen today

our house-help can't hold her tears
finding out that her 16-year old daughter whom she sends to school just eloped with her boyfriend and nowhere to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Net Nerds

i perfectly understand my
dear that all these are but the products
of the
internet
designed for the time being
that we are all
here
trapped in Facebook

fish are what
we are, netted
nerds

i am not surprised at all
when strolling in the park
or malling
or buying the basic necessities of
life
or burying our dead
as the rituals are going on
we meet
eye to eye and we recall
what we once said
and then
take all these as nothing
but quiverings of the the lonely heart

after all these
we begin not to know each other
not to mind what
is happening

'we are all free' and so as expected
we move in different directions
but we thank our boring hours
we have indulged
in much needed conversations
to fill those
empty hours
we know the rules
so we have no regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
Neutrino Theory

events now are traveling faster than light
all these neutrinos of change and sparks and
awes and ahs
and sooner the story of disobedience
and apples and snakes
and innocence and guilt shall be erased
from the face of this
fast winged earth flying towards
a freer abyss where the common state
of falling and rising
cannot exist since the fullness of reality
is in the journey of
afloating

RIC S. BASTASA
never does the fruit of the tree
ask when we pick it to satisfy
our hunger why we must deserve
each sap each juice each pulp

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Dead.....

passion is
heartbreaking

yet there is
this joy without
possible
explanation

pain is
another

it is there
but with passion
it can be forgotten

words
beautiful creatures
white pigeons of
my illusions

mirage in the desert
moon at night above the oasis of
palms

softly pain kills us
but the ecstasy is greater

poem upon poem
flowers with unnamed
scents
showering deep in the night
inside your
dimly lighted room

passion is heartbreaking
the hours are singing

pain is there
but the art of this self
this isolated soul
is never
dead

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Did I Think That I Shall Miss You

never, never, never did i think that for once i shall miss you
but i really do, i have walked miles to see another world
beyond yours, i have preoccupied myself with leaves
and their falling, shifting from those that bloom
to meet the morning sun
i am hearing the songs of newly born birds
in the virginal mountains,
i pick some flowers and kiss them
and savor their scents
inside my nostrils
deep down in my heart
but
here i am back to the trails to the paths of my house
and here i am resting back to the embrace of my lonely nights
watching the stars silently lighting the skies

missing you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Ever Regret Love

when love comes when its arrows penetrate you
do not refuse it
if love is a pool, plunge and get your lovely bath
and if it is grass, roll over it like a shaggy dog
love its form whatever it is

it does not come often
really, true love does not just come ordinarily

like everyday, sometimes it comes and you are not there to really entertain it
and it goes away
and you cannot find it anymore, the rest that comes to appease you are counterfeits

i am telling you because it happened to me just once
it did not touch it
it was so fragile that if i touch it
it may turn to dust and with my breath it is blown away like a dream

look at me, i am old and dying and try looking carefully, very carefully
do not be mislead by my body
look into my eyes

do you think that i am alive?

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Mind If It Is Unjust.

we speak in riddles
what option do we have after all?
if we speak in plain language,
this language of the law and the books,
what do we get? oh, she is frank to say,
you shall be next.
so, you speak so that you
cannot be understood and
people become blind and deaf
and mute
and there will be a big feast in the
city,
power will say, ' come, celebrate with us!
we know what is right! '
and never mind if it is unjust.

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Mind Those Stars....

those stars
they are unreachable
we wish
our hands can touch them
not thinking
that when this happens
we are burned
in return

RIC S. BASTASA
what then
shall i finally
write on this
space

after a time of
thinking what to, why,
and where,

ah, at first i have
thought of emptiness, an open window
an endless horizon
a moon light spreading across
fields and fields of corn,

ah, i have spoken much and find
it so unnecessary, after all,
emptiness is a fact
loneliness is shared by all,

i like the fullness of what was
left unsaid,
a full mouth, a full body,
a hand full of so much
feeling,
a mind filled with thoughts
and memories

what i have written then,
to be honest, actually, it is still

about the way letters and words run
to fill an empty space which is never
never filled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Never Never

Never assume anything
Never take anything for granted
Never take things simplistically
As though
There is no reason
For every

Leaf that falls prematurely

A schoolboy who never wants to go to school again
A little girl who kills herself because of poverty
(all the while it was her father who raped her)

never assume that poor countries exist
because their leaders are corrupt
and all for that reason

the people too voted for them
the people too sold their votes

never assume that only one is at fault
the criminal has his own reasons too

the complainant the more
he will raise his fist and say there is injustice

but you are there for the scales
and you balance them and look at every word that is uttered
and leaves no stone unturned

the sharpness of the knife
the depth of the wounds
the amount of blood that is lost
the possible alibi
the hideous lie
the witnesses who do not blink
the bullet that is left

could be a gun and not a knife
could be the stranger not the wife
never never assume anything
you will be called upon to judge

let the innocent child in you arise
seeing new in everything that meets your eye
that tells your mind
and speak without fear
to honestly
tell that the emperor after all is wearing no new clothes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Tamed.....

i feed this dog
take it for a walk
bathe it
i have shown care
it felt loved
and so it is tamed
waggles its tail
and does not bark at me

i am guilty sometimes
for the envy of my wife
as Shakespeare said
i have never tamed
such shrew

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Was One Well Said

You have spoken much
but never was one well said

words fall from the leaves of
books

but not much heaps of
ideas grow as
seeds

no flowers for tomorrow
no roots to expect

listen more like a fertile ground
that does nothing but wait

RIC S. BASTASA
Never Wasted

a night of poetry
under the moon

that creates a shadow
of you

as companion bearing
much compassion

a whisper of the wind
another one

cressing your hair
mother to her child

it is your silence
that speaks much better

RIC S. BASTASA
Never.....

for all those terrible events
and those that happen almost everyday
for all the talks of horrors about the dangerous lives that we live,
for all those uncertainties in these islands, its history of emaciated old brown population
those past occupation and oppression in the guise of benevolent assimilation education and democracy when one day we all woke up with all the resources taken, shall we be shaken?

No, never, never, never.

RIC S. BASTASA
Never

you cannot paint the face
of pain

such an excruciating pain
you can feel from a distance

you cannot pull that knife
stuck in his heart

you are in pain yourself and
even by just pulling it

you may die yourself even
if the knife is still not

thrust inside your heart, inside
your soul, inside even in your

emptiness. You cannot put this
pain in words. Never.

RIC S. BASTASA
New

so
here we go
roses are red
violets are blue

why can't we try
something new.

talking as poetry
buzzing like a bee

RIC S. BASTASA
New And Old

when you are new
to this world, you always make the impression
that you know how to choose

you delve on exquisite
and discriminating taste

and you always say what is in your mind
you call a spade a spade
and you prefer the diamonds
and the matters fit for the king and queen

but life is not really like that
you fall and bleed
and you find it hard to accept
these skin and bones
the cartilages and nerves that already
know what cutting and breaking mean

time teaches. time heals.
and you learn to let go

and learn to accept what comes
uninvited, the failures and
unexpected calamities

the words 'no', 'not now' 'please don't'
'why me? '

slowly they do not find relevance anymore
and maturely enough you begin

to say ' well, these things happen'
'sometimes they just come'
'inevitable'

'we just have to learn to accept'
'these are realities'
finally, you become a part of this world.
the answer has always been 'yes, and yes'

come, i am human. Come i am brave.
Come, i am giving. Come, take me. Come, i am ready.

now, you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
New Art Form....

you are right.

they learn more without me saying anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
New Cities

we were small when
we first arrived here
and we left only to find
ourselves back again
into this city of
rising buildings where
the trees have been
cut and rivers covered
with sand

we were found by
monsters
when we tell them our
names we were then
set free again

they were with us before
there was a strange feeling
of were we? were we?
what happened?

RIC S. BASTASA
at first we walk hand in hand
tighter is her grip on my palm
my fingers are getting numb
choked
existential disaster
so i slowly slip my hands from your hold
and you notice
so you also let the slip lose
and my hands are free now
and we do not speak about this matter
perhaps because we like it
to happen
and you have seen another part of this life
a slice
sweeter to your taste
the one than can please and appease you
and i let you go
and i imagine myself as the new wind from the sea
spreading in all directions
as i too let myself go
thinking that i may be happier in this

ah, you throw me away as a cat from the window
midway
i have become a turtle now
gladly
swimming in my new river
which i must invent in order to survive
and thus
be not hurt
as you must too understand
as we both look for the same thing

something loose and free
windy and cool
and worth inhaling

i like this water
that makes me fluid
like a squid.

RIC S. BASTASA
New Perspective

dust on my feet on my rubber shoes
stamp a mound of mud drying itself
the afternoon sun so hot
this little boy follows me with his gaze
did I appear so big to his attention
or the world is too small for him to play ball?

we look amazed to the same birds
too playing in the skies chasing the ones
not having the same feathers

the sun sets spreading orange colors
waning and now sprinkles some gray hues
the boys playing basketball sweat like they
were bathing on the rain, their bodies gleaming
like some barbecue on spiced oil

time to go home, it is dark, I have no reason to stay
the little boy follows me towards the road
where the fluorescent light is turned on by the guards

then I look back, the boy was gone
the whole block is lost eaten by this night
and on the island of light on this road
I stand, waiting for my ride back home

then I look back again, I smile a while
that little boy was me, I got lost somehow

I touch my head, I am setting a new perspective

RIC S. BASTASA
New Year....

on the first day of this new year
as the firecrackers mark the end
there will be goodbyes
but there will be more hellos still to come

some chains will be missing
i will be breaking some links
and reconnect with the untried ones
as i dropp some hot potatoes
i shall also select new herbs and spices
flavors of my year
rosemary, not thyme
new colors to love
brighter oranges, scarlet wines
new hair to sport
another softer brushes for my teeth
dimmer lights perhaps
and perfumed pillows
more love and less
talk.

RIC S. BASTASA
New Year's Resolution...

i will keep the sail
there is nothing to change
i will destroy some bridges
and strengthen my defenses
i will be myself
and what destroys me
i will throw back at you
i will retain the flame within
and keep it burning.

RIC S. BASTASA
good news from Rose
a flower blooms in her garden
i am not sure what it is
she is in a hurry
she jumps with joy and she hangs up

a miracle, a miracle she calls me
i do not know i refuse to know

we have been unlucky here
and faithless
but we do not mind anymore

Rose is happy and that is enough
whatever it is
she deserves it

a flower blooms in her garden
and she concludes
it is God-given.

RIC S. BASTASA
News Flash....

i 've seen such a perfect smile
sweet, sweet as sweet, into the building door
you go in,

i am confident about you
strong as steel tested by those years

all i thought was that you love to be on top
and i did not follow you as i like it here
in the garden feeding the white pigeons,

and so you are on the top of the world
watching people like ants cars like matchboxes
clouds you can touch moon as your lover
such a space of stars as your second home,

and the news flashed that early morning
how another figure of fame
jump from the 13th floor...........

RIC S. BASTASA
very well, thanks.
today we are officially empty 'nesters'
our youngest just left for school
he has one quarter to go and will graduate this December,
making his college years to 3 and a quarter.

we're so proud.
he'll take the law entrance admission test
this 26th of the month

Thanks, he's thinking
of applying to California top 6 law school, UCLA,
UCBerkeley,
University od Southern California,
Santa Clara University,
UC Davis.

The acceptance will depend
on the admission test
and GPA.

with regards to the gpa
i'm confident since
he's been a consistent deans lister

our second child is now a registered nurse
and working in central California
and had his first place
less than 5 minutes drive from Kara,
his sister.

RIC S. BASTASA
we are worried
about the failure of the PICOS machine
for this will mean
a failure of election
and what follows next
will be
a bloody revolution

mark my word
mark it
soon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nga Unta Mamati Usab Sila Kanimo.

sayong mumata
mamubo sa tanom
alas 4 pa sa kaadlawon kay kusog pa ang tubig,

sayong mumata
mamubo sa tanom
alas 4 pa sa kaadlawon kay kusog pa ang tubig,

sayong mumata
mamubo sa tanom
alas 4 pa sa kaadlawon kay kusog pa ang tubig,

tak-ang ang nilung-ag, init og tubig, pamalong sa suga sa gawas,
inom og kape, gawas sa balay, sirad-an ang gate kuyog ang tulo ka iro

walking mga usa ka oras, timing alas sais na balay sa balay, ukab sa computer
sulat, basa, dili kalimtan ang balak karong adlawa nga kagabii pa nga gihulma sa
damgo,

dili tanan mahinumduman, dunay damgo nga mitabok ka sa tulay unya mibaha
dayon
nawala ang tulay sa kalalom sa tubig, dunay laing damgo nga migawas ka sa
balay unya
ang balay nawala,

dili tanan mahinumduman, dunay damgo nga mitabok ka sa tulay unya mibaha
dayon
nawala ang tulay sa kalalom sa tubig, dunay laing damgo nga migawas ka sa
balay unya
ang balay nawala,

sigi gyod balik-balik kanang damgo nga di ka na makamao kon unsaon pagpauli,
hangtod karon
sige kang makulbaan kon unsa gayod kaha ang ipasabot sa maong pahimango,

paspas gayod ang oras, morag sigi kang kabiyaan, molakaw na unta kamo
andam na ang
sakyanan og ang imong driver apan mao na usab ang higayon nga ikaw
kalibangon, dili ra ba
sab ka kabuot kon kanus-a mohaw-as ang tiyan ang iyang hugaw, kon kanus-a
ang utong mopanganga
sa imong kinot, duna gyoy panahon ang matag panghitabo nga dili nimo
mapugos mora bag
apil ang tae dunay kaugalingong panghunahuna maong sa dihang
nakapanghugas ka na,
nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

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nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,

nakasuot na sa karsones, ug andam nga nga mogawas,
unya inig balik nimo gikan sa opisina molingkod ka sa ilalom sa mangga unya sulayan mo kini ug
pangutana sa pamasin nga kini motubag nimo, unya kon mahigala mo na kini,
pangutan-on mo kon
unsa ang buot ipasabot sa imong mga damgo

kadtong inig lakaw nimo, nawala ang tulay, kadtong inig gawas nimo, nawala ang balay.
mamalihog ka sa mga bato nga unta mamati usab sila kanimo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nia Na Sad Ang Wakwak

nia na sad ang wakwak
ang lanhan
molupad sa kangitngit
mokikik
bulagon ang lawas
ug kalag
ang ilong ug
ang sampot

nganong nagtan-aw
ka lang diha?
hala kikik na
hala lupad na
sayod ko
nga wakwak
ka sab nga dako

sugod na ta:
pagkaanindot ba
sa pagtakdol
sa bulan

pagkaanindot ba
sa hangin
diri sa taas
sa atop

pagkahumot
ba sa punoan
sa champaca

RIC S. BASTASA
Niagara

all we did
was look at the rainbow
in Niagara

RIC S. BASTASA
Nice Brand New Car...

inside the nice brand new luxury car
(and hence very expensive) rides a body that drives smoothly on the road to the sin city,

inside the tinted glass window with a remote control
screams his rotten soul....

RIC S. BASTASA
Nice Day Today

the sun just comes
and sits upon the hill
starting its usual climb
uphill until it gets
at the center of my
cluttered world

the birds chirp and
the grasses are green as
ever and the the trees
on their thicker leaves
spread their branches
on the blue, blue skies

it is a nice day today
and i am feeling dizzy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nice View From Here...

two sparrows upon
a twig
bringing dry grass
to make
a nest.

RIC S. BASTASA
what i am offering you
is something organic

a glass of fermented wine
from a coconut tree
time makes it
it gives bubbles even without fire

it is riddled
the one how answers it rightly is the drunkard
a happy drunkard
one that knows what love really is
that all giving love
that all open hand

i offer you a glass
which you refuse and i am ironic

'so you are class, huh? ' you like beer,
you like red wine?

you don't drink
it is all right
nothing is wrong with thinking
that if you do not drink then
you are a nice man
you are class A
you are healthy for society had equated a drink with drunkards
which is not the case really

(deep within think you are an idiot)

but never mind, i am still a decent man)

so how is life? how is your job?
and you begin to complain
life is hard, my job is making me a robot
i am not justifiably paid
and you begin to talk about your papa
who now lives in another house with another woman
who pleases him
your mother is a witch
a religious witch who believes on the priests rather
than the dream of a husband

i offer you again this drink
and you grab it.

nice.

RIC S. BASTASA
time swiftly flies
wings of steel and
calibrated always to
outrun us,
we, who do not mind much
what happens next,
we, who are left with
nothing to do
but wait, and wait

at the nick of time
we call it quits

i am not a circular thing
i am flat and without fins
wingless, i do not thrive in
the air
neither in water

i thrive on land
slowly, i walk
whistling

ah! let time go
i don't mind actually

it is nice being here
with you, anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nicolo Paganini

listening to nicolo
paganini with a hope that
i can sharpen my instincts
into knowing what is more
important than just reading
a book or simply wandering
under the stars

guitar and violin together
without any string attached.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nigh Lullaby

A night sings a lullaby to its daughter twilight
soon it is morning and having slept so soundly
a smile breaks between two mountains: the sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Night

noontime is already feverish
until it starts to vomit
darkness
the sun is badly offended
and hides its face
behind the seams
of the shy horizon

then the stars
come with the moon
with their usual
pantomimes

i am watching them
in silence
like a disciplined
european audience
very serious on the
tragedy of
sophocles

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Bends

Now darkness ponds upon the violet hills;
cicadas sing; the tall elms gently sway;
and night bends near, a deepening shade of gray;
the bass concerto of a bullfrog fills
what silence there once was; globed searchlights play.

Green hanging ferns adorn dark window sills,
all drooping fronds, awaiting morning’s flares;
mosquitoes whine; the lissome moth again
flits like a veiled oud-dancer, and endures
the fumblings of night’s enervate gray rain.

And now the pact of night is made complete;
the air is fresh and cool, washed of the grime
of the city’s ashen breath; and, for a time,
the fragrance of her clings, obscure and sweet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Life

ang kahayag duna diay tinago ang mga bulok sa kagabhion
mga pula nga nagkurog-kurog
mga berde nga nagpahipi
mga asul nga nagbarog
mga bulawan nga nagilak aron unta imong kaibgan

nanglihok ang kahayag sa tunga sa kangitngit sa kagabhion
miduyog ang kusog kaayo nga banda,
ang trumpeta, ang mga de-kuryenteng gitara
ang mga kalayo nga nanayaw
ang mga anino nga naglumpat-lumpat sa kalmi
sa panghitabo dinhing dapita
dunay mikirig
lain ang mikaringking
dunay mikariling
dunay nagsabot nga magkita sa usa ka lawak
diin silang duha lamang
ang maglumpongug ug magpyong-pyang

dunay nagpiyong sa kasakit kay gibiyaan
ug ang uban naglantaw nga walay gibuhat
gawas lamang sa pag-uyog
ugpapahapla si ilang abaga
paglabyog si ilang mga tiil og dayon og tikang
sa pagbiya kay dili ganahang moapil
sa pagtuyok sa kalibotan

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Medusa

you are soundly asleep

the barking dogs on the streets
in no way disturb you

how kind had been sleep to your eyes
gently rubbing your eyelids

as i, here, still awake, finding words to my unknowable grief

a worm inside my apple heart
a woodpecker in my head of wood

i am disturbed by eagles flying away from me

how did i ever have snakes for hair locks?

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Murmurs

1. You cannot lock the door
Now, night shall open it
For fireflies to come in
They slept in hiding

Like you, fireflies fly away
Pallid cowards from rain
Lest their lights die in the mist

You wait by the door

As true stars come again
Lighting night skies
My Fireflies shall reveal
Inferior flickers under
The now, brimming
Skies bursting

II.
How many full moons passed
Past your sad window?
Your fingers cannot tell
They’re used to gripping
Rusty doorknobs
A great deal to ancestry
Our human hands corroded
We cannot reach nor outrun
Rust becomes us

III.
If we listen to dawn dreams
We shall hear prophets scream
Nothing
To a mutter

One speaks of the underworld so endless
Unmoving as the sky stretches a distance of lies
No farther
Or it will break

There are no skies no caves
No edges no space
Nothing
To whisper

IV.
We are shooting stars in space
Shot into nothing
Yet we keep on shooting

For the moment
We close down
We set strong feet on land
Like steel gates stilled

We look into our eyes
Tears are dwindling
Thus far, we cannot cease fearing
For nothing

V.
There is God
As the world keeps ears
For each earthworm in the void

He shall hear us
Shouting the questions
Dinning,
Rocking the ruckus of cumulus
In this outcry

He shall know us
By eyes and mouth
By hand by footprints
And the grasses covering all
Night Perfume From The Garden

the kamuning
is blooming with white flowers again
tonight
it is spreading its scent
in the garden
profusely diffusing
inside my room
and then
i remember you
how you make love
with me
throwing away
all fears
there is no obstruction
to love
not even the light
that the morning hands
to our naked
bodies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Poets

we night poets
are not supposed to stay
in the room and write poets
at night
we are meant to be
fliers, bats, and God forbid
vampires
in deeds, hidden in thoughts
least in words
we are werewolves
howling in the deepest
silence of our souls
to those who are still awake
we must be pungent
like musk, restless, unloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Scene

the moon is at the tip
of the tree
like a light bulb
on a beam

under the tree
are two shadows fusing
forgetting much
of what to say

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Stroll At Roxas Boulevard.

Excited.
You rush for that
travel. The clouds amaze you
inside the plane
manila bound.

You like it now.
Alone. A walk at SM
Night stroll at
Roxas boulevard.

You need this.
Go out this room.
Take this walk and that.
Eating alone
Seeing the people
passing by.

Then you go
inside yourself.
No one really knows.
How deep
and silent you have
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Wanderer...

in utter silence
on times when you have nothing to say
it is not only your mouth
that is shut up
it is the whole you
it is like you slept the whole day
and wake up the whole night
with no one beside you
you wake up
finding yourself alone
busy yourself with
a lot of channels on tv
not completing any show
going to the kitchen
eating breakfast at 2 a.m.
surfing the internet
without a definite subject matter
to focus on
just you and the monitor
eye to eye....

RIC S. BASTASA
Night Woman

she lifts the veil  
covering her face
she lies on her  
purple silk bed
she slides the  
curtains back
and then she  
closes her eyes
and begins to  
take her sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nightime

too much talk
at nighttime
is such a waste
of time

let us do something
else
where are your hands?

RIC S. BASTASA
Nightmare

and so i rode on the white car and someone
was driving who does not talk, it was strange
there was this typhoon that kept on coming
and i was holding on the door of the car
and it was raining hard on the winding
and slippery road towards nowhere
fog and mist and a bunch of rain and wind
and then i heard the sound of the car falling on
a cliff and then
there was something that was as absolute as
involuntary silence.
all the fears vanished.

i woke up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nightmares

intense fear
horror
this distress of the night
intense
a plague of demons
in my bed

you wake up
and shake with this chill
you need a glass of water
and a prayer

this negative side
of dreams

and feelings
just feelings

why fear feelings?

RIC S. BASTASA
Nightmares And Dreams

the nightmares come
at 3 o'clock dawn

sweat profusion
and hasty conclusion

fears of ghosts
and i am afraid i am lost

i take the safe side
with you beside

i tell you about nightmares
you kiss me and hug me

this is marriage
this is our late age

and then we close our eyes
to dreams to the coolness of ice

RIC S. BASTASA
Night's Charm

i can think of no other
night's charm
except
you waiting on my bed
after a fresh bath
perfumed neck
powdered back
dimming light
red curtains
burning with desire

and here i am
naked to all your wishes

RIC S. BASTASA
Night's Definition

breasts and pelvis
hands and lips and
butts and asses.

on the other hand
some have fingers
clasped in prayers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nihilism 2011

it could be humiliating because
we claim a space
and there is nothing actually reserved for us
to sit or stand
in fact, there are no reservations because there is nothing to reserve
and because there is no one there
who makes
the reservation that we have always imagined
in our minds....

RIC S. BASTASA
Niining Akong Sulat

Gipatik ko ang akong
Mga damgo

Tutuki ang akong
Mga pulong

Dili labyog sa dahon
Ang ilang mga lihok

Dili na nila kaila ang hangin
Gituok kini

Sa mga pangandoy nga
Wala matuman

Uga ang akong mga ngabil
Naligti ang akong mga ngipon
Mitikig ang akong apapangig

Pil-on ko kining
Akong mga pulong
Katulo kaupat
Kapulo sama sa
Pagpilo-pilo niining
Akong puti nga papel

Isulod ko kini sa sobre
Sirad-an sa akong
Laway ug dili na ako
Mamulong pa

Pil-on ko kini
Sama sa usa ka
Eroplanong papel
Ipalupad ko kini
Sama sa usa ka tabanog
Mawagtang kini ug ang
Tanan maanod sa halapad ug kusog
nga bug-os sa hangin
Ako na lamang ang magpabilin
Kay ikaw wala na sa akong kiliran
Alimahan ko ang mga tanom
Sa akong kasakit ug kamingaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Nine

In your river he can be slimy as a fish
And when you sing,
He sings with you as a bird
And when you flow he flows with you as sand
And to the sea when you reach the final destination
He becomes the bay always looking at you.

RIC S. BASTASA
This is my voice,
Sad, prolonged, fever pitched,
With some intermittent turbulence
In between a concentrated discourse
But
Still in a slow, smooth, sailing like
A canoe on a very clear silent running river
And
Some rapids, and rocks somewhere, may distort,
This voice
Of mine,
Or
At the edge for which a waterfall rages,
This
Voice
Of
Mine,
May sound like a violent fall of a hundred heavy waters,
Not a drip, but a hundred heavy, heavy falling waters,
As though the whole world is falling down
On your
Shoulder,
This is my voice, sad, on a prolonged agony,
But somehow, when tickled may move into
A mystery, not discounting the possibility of
An ecstasy,
A fantasy,
And you, my love, my beautiful reader, may hear this voice
Speaking to you in a hush of silence,
This is my voice; hear it for what it is, that is all that I ask of you,
I am myself speaking. I am real, this voice of mine.
Listen to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ning Adlaw Nga Hulaw

ang mga mumho sa
iro nga nahibilin sa ilang
lawgan
kaganihang buntag

gipistahan sa mga langgam
nga karong hulaw
wala nay mahagdaw

gikuha ko ang bagol ug
gibutangan sa tubig
kilid sa punoan sa bulahan

sa ibabaw sa atop tupad sa
tiguwang nga palmera nga hapit
na usab malaya ang mga dahon
kiat kaayo ang mga tamsi

RIC S. BASTASA
Ning Among Lungsod

dinhing lugar
silong sa dagkong mga kahoy
nga acacia
didto sa tunga ang istatuwa
ni jose rizal
gilumutan na

kadtong baho kaayong
balita kagabii kabahin sa
bag-ong gipusil nga
gibantog nga adik
sa Sinuyak

nasapawan sa milanog
nga kahumot sa
bag-ong gihaon nga
mga pan de sal sa
bakery niadtong byuda
ni kanhing mayor kwan
sa Katipunan

ang mga nag-jogging
sa sayong kabuntagon
libot-libot sa plaza atbang
sa municipal hall
walay estoryahan kon
ngano ug unsa

ang mga tawo dinhing
dapita
naningkamot lang sa
tagsatagsa

dih sa ilang mga pangandoy
o mga damgo
nag-iya-iya.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ning Pag-Inosara Sa Lawak

laing tuig na
usab ang mosaksi
sa kamatooran
nga ako nagsulat alang
lang gayod
sa akong kaugalingon

ning akong pag-inosara
sa lawak
kansa ba ang mopakpak?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ning Sud Sa Kasamok

Ning sud sa kasamok
Dili ko gusto nga ako
Makumot, makum-os
Nga morag usa ka sulat
Nga wala pa gani
Mabasa sa usa ka
Gihigugma.

Langkaton ko ang akong
Mga panit
Aron wala akoy mabati.

Patas-an ko ang akong
Liog aron ako makalantaw
Dapit sa unahan
Kadtong wala pa nako
Makita tungod
Kay ania ako dinhi
Sa lalom nga kasamok
Gitabonan sa mga
Balod sa kasuko
Ug kasakit.

Kon hangin ka nga
Daotan, mag-ampo
Ako nga mahimong
Mga lig-on nga pader
Nga dili mo
Maparog.

Ikaw nga lampingasan
Pila na ka
Mga damgo ang imong
Giyatakan
Og gipatay nga morag
Mga lamigas
Nga imong gipisatpisat
Pinaagi sa imong
Mga lapalapa?
Nadungog ko na
Ang imong ngalan
Og ang imong
Mga tunob
Naaninag ko
Sa ilang mga
Lubnganan

Sila nga imong
Nabuntog.

Ania ako
Nagtagad kanimo

Ako ang pader.
Ako ang mga tunok
Nga mutusok unya
Sa imong
Mga lapalapa.

Ako ang putos
Sa imong bato
Ako ang gunting
Sa imong papel

Tan-awon ta lang!

Mao kana ang
Saad sa akong
Mga mata
Nga kaniadto
Naligo sa mga
Lam-aw sa luha
Kadtong imong
Gibaharan
Nga lugiton.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nipple By Emma Z.

Upon my hill
of beauty
you shall walk
in tongues.

at the tip
you do not
strangulate.

you know what
word is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nitpicking

the monkey is hungry
and to feed its
ego
er mouth, o yes
his stomach, there he goes
again
nitpicking
women.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Attachments

the room where you sleep
does not take hold of you

your bed cannot be part of your skin
and your windows are nothing but

the ordinary closing and opening
of your day

you like a door that opens
to nowhere

you have diamonds in your hands
you spread them

in the garden and you see
how they all glitter for a while

darkness folds and
light of another day opens

you take a walk and whistle
you don't remember the color of the blanket

you forget what warmth was there on that bed
you do not care whether the windows are closed or open

you move to another house
and tell your stories all over again

there is no blink in your eyes
there is no stammering in your tongue

you do not tell them what you love
there are no hands too familiar to hold you back

RIC S. BASTASA
No Body....

once emptied
i fell light but lightness
does not stay
it is like air
it escapes
any container
it has no commitment
it is its nature

i like it this way
an experiment
to be like air
gushing and dashing
no container contains me
permanently
i escape as always
as a free molecule

i own no one
and no one owns me

it is
i tell you our true nature

spirit, yes, spirit,
no body can ever hold us
forever.

no body, no body.

RIC S. BASTASA
right, wrong,  
neat, or dirty  
whatever that be  
he goes for consistency  
loved or unloved  
hate, indifference,  
reunion, departures  
hellos  
he goes for consistency  
stay put and travel  
silence noise  
chaos pandemonium  
he goes for consistency  

moving on always moving on  
with the earth in circles  
revolving upon an orbit  
always moving on and moving on  

what choice does he have?  
if he stays, he is left out  
if he moves on, the horizon is edgeless  

RIC S. BASTASA
No Choice....

if you go back  
your trail is long enough  
to repeat it  
if you go on  
you do not know how far  
will this go  
if you stay  
it will also be dangerous  
but one thing sure  
whether you go back or  
move on  
you will surely find your  
way back home.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Civilization Has Ever Called It Ugly

you get fed up
with woes

and sorrow watches
you
in that well folded
silence

another sadness comes
to you
like a black bird

on the window
it sings

tsits songs sting
your heart

and you pay respect
to its art
with tears

you get tired with all
these

and you wish
that all your brains
should have been
spent
on common commerce

but then you know
it well

money is not an answer
it can be the real
evil
you mumble like
a philosopher stripped out
of sanity

the power to
meet
Angst eye to eye
is Art

no civilization has
ever
called it
Ugly

and that is enough
to lull you to
sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
that night i look at him
the first time i met him
he was not that old really
his smile was like a quarter moon
with two stars
at the middle of his cheeks

that night, after five years, i look at him again

he has thinned a lot
his eyes are like sinking boats
the face is one dark cloud
stars have faded
and there is no more moon in his smile

time is rushing, and has always been a cruel transformer

my wife could not believe
how his misery has uglified him

we have struggles like him
but we did not bother much

did we claim that we are lucky?
nope. Dude we just know how to hide the creases

rationalize the lapses
and perhaps, accept the fact that we are but pilgrims
of the night

time is our only alliance
the sooner we die
the greater the gratitude

did you not say once that punctuality
is a respect for time?

we like to be punctual
in almost everything: old age, misfortune, early arrivals, and final destinations.

did we claim that we are happy, or happier than them? dude, no.

we did not say anything.

we are just the spectators.

we did nothing to make ourselves different than all those who took their graceful exits.

in a minute we said hello and in another minute, we say goodbye.

In theory that is what is life all about. In practice, well, don't make it complicated.

simplify it. No comment.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Crime In Here Jean

staying late
at night
writing poems

nothing to
do and cannot
sleep

no crime
in here jean
just plain
night disturbance
of my mind

always missing
another
good life

sex and sex
and sex and
sex and sex

we miss you.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Exit

history teaches us
about the fears of having no exit

i believe it
that somehow there are no exits
but i work upon such premise

what i have now are simply
entrances

though i have no plans to stay
this long

yet i hold on to the assurances
of little permanences

everything passes away
i suppose

what the hell
where is the promised heaven?

i hold on to the grasp of my fingers
my only consolation

there is nobody here anyway
who says he had been there

RIC S. BASTASA
No Expectations

the clouds are better
for they expect nothing from the wind
tossed from one corner
to another
they never complain

at least, i never hear them
despite the heaviness of their burden

they let go and when it is time
they send the rain and then go away

RIC S. BASTASA
No Fears

walk your walks
sing your songs
write the poems
words sprouting
on the fertile grounds
of your heart

no fear
it is all clear
no smear
love, dear.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Fears, No Hassles

imagine that i am stranded
on an island surrounded by a big
body of water
infested with sharks,

imagine the fear
and the loneliness
and the alienation

but then, i always imagine
that you are with me
and i am with you
and that you are my god
who shall never leave me

and so on this island
where i am alone (i am not
equated with sadness
and loneliness)
i shall think of love
i shall always see
the fidelity of the sun and moon
and the sea that comes in waves
bringing me the
promise
the good news that soon
all these
will be over.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Ideas But In Things

the snake is always a snake
and the scorpion cannot promise the frog
that in the middle of the storm
at its back, it will not bite
they will die together, but that is not enough
fear for being what they
to each they are,
the weeds are weeds and writing
is writing as always,
words that are words, come and speak, and mouths
will always be mouths,
sleepless are we at times on this
endeavor to understand
what lies beyond this
crap, metaphors of stones not reconciling
with roses
tattoos of the arms of a jilted lover
i am composed.
i compose to thing to things
not words, not to think to think
but things
as they are
as they were
forever.

still trying
what this saxifrage is all about
it splits.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Longer A Young Writer

he is no longer a young writer
having written for 30 years and now
at 58
there is nothing exciting about his
words anymore

he keeps doing the trip
a hobby, a side trip, a trick to make his life
worth living

some young writers in town
come to his house for coffee and for an opinion
he gladly refuses them

at 58 going 59
he keeps things to himself now
talking to himself
feasting on nature
graceful with age
mellowing down on his
wisdom
and begging for God.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Matter

no matter how i put my head
to the softness of the pillow
the feeling of falling from the 12th floor
of the Taipa hotel
keeps on going
like there is no floor
like my hands do not know
anymore what to hold

i close my eyes to end this madness
but there is only this endless chasm,
i peep upon an opening of light
to see you once again

how can i be so cruel to worship
the goddess of truth?

i touch my hands and tell my nerves
this is not the right place to hurt
this is not the time

set aside the truth, there is no need for it
one sphinx as a sacrifice is enough for this world
there is this hunger that you know
let it not be known by her

RIC S. BASTASA
No Matter How Much It Will Hurt Me

no matter how much it will hurt me
i am ready to pay the price
of loving you

i still have much love inside my heart
always ready
for another emptying

it does not matter
i am hurt, i will be hurt, and will always be hurt

it does not matter
i get used to it when it happens all the time

RIC S. BASTASA
No Matter What

nothing
diminishes me
not you
not the ground that has given
me space
not even the first brick
that gives me the sense
of a tower
not even the cloud that
first touches
the tip of my own
arrogance

nothing matters
anymore
when everything that i am
falls to the deepest
fissure
the deepest silence
of it all

RIC S. BASTASA
No Matter Where You Look, You Always Find Something

at the start you find things with your hand
the baby that grabs whatever and takes it to his mouth
we begin that way

always

then we are fed up with our hands
we begin to take things with our minds
we read and we make the immovable move
we imagine
we stretch our minds that far enough

until we bleed

it is not the usual blood that we see dripping
it is not thick and red at all

it is the dripping of pain

our hands have become failures
our minds are shortcomings
our feet drag and stamp and wanting to go
we look for something that we do not know

we have this premise

when we knock the door shall be opened
when we ask so we shall receive
when we seek soon shall we find

we found something in the flesh
and we feel so disappointed
we try to find something for our soul
and we feel this despair

cramped in the room
we think some more on that premise
seek, seek, and seek
perhaps we shall find......

RIC S. BASTASA
it is late in the evening
now,
i am sleepy and sad and
i am saying yes to everything.

i accept things as they are.
dreams too.

there is no reason to refuse
for someone who is about to die.

for someone who knows where
and when, to say
no means nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Mending At All...

the law is a
stick
and we stick to
the law
as we take the
beat
of the law's dance
rhythm
they are beaten
and we keep on
beating to the
dance of this
life, this death and
fading silence.

dance to the latin
beat, the salsa, and
the grind,
forget who gets the
pain most

as they say it, dura
lex sed lex, and those
who are broken cannot
need a mending.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Mercy

i close my eyes
again to what i recently see

memories strangled like hair
of a woman
on a barbed wire

blood spurts on the thorns
of a white rose

one evening
when the stars are awakened

by the sound of a man
calling the name of his lost woman

three letters
R
I
P.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Name....

i found an obsession.
like you i never told anyone.
that i am obsessed with
a secret.

pretty secret. juicy one.
an old room with a window to the sea.
feel the wind and see stars.

i am obsessed with a face and
a body. and i feel like a god.
forgive me.

every night before i sleep
i take a peek in secret.
I have fears but these are
overpowered with this obsession.

makes my blood rise to my temple.
i am there in that temple.
No holiness there but everything
is real in that obsession and i feel
myself more.

i am true there but i have no name.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Need To Laugh

don't woah
there it is
the big joke is in the mirror
it is sad
and i don't laugh about it

but sometimes
i really do
i really do
when i am no longer bearable to
myself
when i am much heavier than
i can expect

because sometimes
we lie
we lie sometimes we lie
more often than
we can muster

RIC S. BASTASA
No Nothing.........For E.

i cannot pretend
that i do not know the whole
story

in fact i have read it a long time
ago
when i was as innocent as you

and i cried, and you cried just the same
and there was no way to tell it to anybody
lest it can be mistaken as a weakness
of who we are

i am lost now, and i am trying to find the
way back to my first word,
i am turning back to recall what it really was
which led us to this
uncompromising situation,

i know the whole story by heart
i learned much
but what the hell is happening?

we keep going back there
we keep repeating the same thing
wanting it, always wanting it
no matter what.

how can pain be so sweet? you have
redefined it for me again,
as i write the words, telling the same
story all over again.

if you read this, please tell me where
you are.
as usual we agreed upon this pact,
there will be no telling, no nothing.
No One

no one taught the fledgling
to finally fly and be itself
perhaps
the feathers that grow all over its body
taught it
perhaps just like us
our hearts
contained the imprints
that
just like the birds that haven't known air
too, make us
feel that love

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Came Back To Retrieve What Was Never Written.

doesn't mean the end of the story
there was this boarding house
along Gomez
somewhere in Davao
where i stayed
some years back
when i was young and
reckless.....

at the back is the pond
without fish
so it was calm and brackish
without any
trickle except when it rains
or when a child plays with his stones
and hit
the middle of the water sort of its
navel

the floors are made of wood
and the door where i stayed had not
reliable lock
and someone may enter even without having to knock
or ask my permission

it was the open door
which made so many stories
at night
at dawn
and the pool had always for years
kept its
dead silence

the child was a peeping tom
and had always kept his innocence

the years flooded everyone
spread like confetti in all directions of the world
no one came back

to retrieve

what was never written.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Can Stop Us To Write

and they must know the reason why,
simple enough
we are writers and our essence is to write
for writing's sake
nothing aimed nothing gained nothing lost
we write because we are here
and we are here because we write
we write because if we do not
we no longer become ourselves
we lose our salt we become just like any
flesh, rotten, infected with bacteria
foul, and finally become just dust
on the corner of the road

we write and we keep on writing
because we are
we do not need the praise
or the condemnation
we do not need an audience
or an empty space

we write because we are
that is our essence and no one can stop us

except perhaps when the word is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Changes The Other...

i face a wall
today and i do not
ask any question
i just face it
as it faces me
it has no question too
as usual we have
become similar
not me becoming a wall
neither it becoming myself
we simply decided
to be our own essences
each to each
wall to wall
me to me
and only through
this manner
of our own independence
and respect
do we begin to understand
the rest of what is not there
those we have not seen
or touched
those that we have decided
not to mention
or speak about

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Demands

... that there must be respect
to the wings of a fly, a mere fly
on top of a garbage
from your kitchen,

that there must be respect
to a leaf of a mahogany
on a permission to take it
away from a twig,

that there must be respect
for the handful of water that
you drink from the river,

that there must be respect
for the porcupine fish
from the bottom of the sea
even if it's form be
hateful,

the air is sacred
the sea is sacred
the tree is sacred
like every man, every baby,
every eye
every hand
the spider is sacred
and so is the carabao
resting in the mud hole
after a hard day's toil

every carapace
an empty shell
every grain of sand
belongs to no one

respect and live
on the blessings
of Mother Earth.
No One Escapes From The Hands Of Love

beautiful soft fingers
caressing your hair
your body
your pelvis
your legs and toes

no one escapes from the
whispers of love
telling you about a tryst
a garden
a grassy field
the softest of green
the freshness of air
under the moon
your hand
above her hands
your fingers entwine
to her fingers
in perfect
fit.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Escapes The Past

he is still using the cool words of the priest when he is no longer talking to the stars.

i wonder what he really means with such a curt answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
no one has ever done good
without the
price

that man who stops his car
to save the kitten in the middle of the road
cannot sleep
if the unwary dies

that woman who sends you to school
is dying and finds in you the meaning of her life
at the last hour

that man who holds your hand to save you from falling
is looking for a cure for his emptiness

so far, no drug has cured
his unexplained longing

everyone is in the same boat
they do good not for the sake of doing it
there is always an exchange

it is not just your life, it is theirs too
the pain you suffer is ultimately theirs

and to ease your pain is actually to ease theirs too
to lighten your load lightens their burden too

for in this world each nerve is interconnected
the pain of the toe is the pain too of the head

RIC S. BASTASA
for one sure thing
it is very personal

only you understand
and you are there the

stranger arriving at
a strange land and you

mark every important
corner, to create a

frame between this and
that and that and that

purposely in order not
to be lost. This is mine.

i enclose what is mine.
a child is a property.

the parents forget what
is is no chattel.

meanwhile, one thinks he
is better that he feels worse.

a shady tree and a man with a
bike resting there dreaming a

bout a horse in the race, a
hundred bucks, and a date and

a bottle of beer and sausage,
and German measles. What is

this all about? you ask yourself.
did you build a temple here?
mother was once cruel when she finally got so old she called us names, and always blames us that she died because we never gave us breakfast for the past ten days which the other neighbor believes to be the truth. What is this really all about? Bits and pieces. Too personal. A light bulb builds a blob. A runs to B. B is not a building but a person. A room upstairs. A door is left open and they make love without love. This is the view now.

I am in you but not a part of you. When we share breakfast we do not know we do not even mention a letter. B sleeps with C. C is next to D.

too you read this you nod your head. You pray that you do not continue writing and giving more hints that all has meaning and that it will only take a little time to decipher what ought not be. Chocolate bars. Prison bars. Bench and Bar. Barbecued. Roasted to the blackness of filth. Two people upstairs. No one is in love.
No One Is There (Revised)

i go home
and i open the door of this house
there is silence that greets the face of emptiness
the grass is but a green canvass
sprinkled with dead leaves
shades of brown and shattered sheen of lights
from the setting sun
a burst of orange, a slap of red,
gray colors hover,
black invades and triumphs
tonight, another round of applause
from lonely hands
my feet stamp the dusts
off my skin
the dog wags its tail
i close the door and shut the windows
i turn on the light
dimmer
i begin listening again to
the departing winds.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Likes To Live Here, Where.....

It is hard to live inside
a box
what you are familiar
with is only those four
walls
you hear nothing but your
own voice
you see no sky
you feel no ground
your arms cannot stretch
to its fullest
no one likes to live here

where i live.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Shall Hear It

there is too much
confidence in your voice
it is early morning

and no one shall hear it
somehow you suspect
what weakness lies there
like a cloud that has become
heavy with rain

you wait for the coming
of light
confident on the window
frame

soft and gentle
bragging for nothing
except the sheen
it brings

it is the first day in the
years of your life again

and the first metaphor
is that of
an early morning light

a white rabbit's tail
rested upon the grass

a new curtain
with lace newly put
upon the same old
wooden window of
the house.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Steps Twice On The River Of Life...

it is not the rage of this river.
when i was a child, as mother says,
i keep my finger inside my mouth
sucked by my throat, to keep hunger away
beside the bank of this river

i am the spectator
and the river believes in the magic
of my innocence
it flows always in a distant
affection,

it is not the rage of the river,
it is i, the grown up man who goes swimming
in the river and feel
the joys of its cool waters
always moving on towards
a destination
it is the swimming with a friend
and then
with a lover and then with a wife
and then my silence,

what we do not have we force to forget
it is the bathing in the river
the rinsing and the cleansing of the waters
it is not the rage of this river

and then we become too weak to be in this river
the river moves on and on
towards the deepest sea looking for the
opening

i wait by the bank of this river
many things have been missed
the more important ones
the one that gives the posterity of
my humanity
it is denied of me because of this river
that gives me nothing

all the while i was the leaf that fell off from
the tree
on the side of this river
and i floated because i have nothing to do
because i can do nothing about
the flow of the river
i become the dead leaf that the air
rides upon
tossed and bumped on boulders
till i sink
deep down the river
that i shall pass only once.

time.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One Wants To Remember The Tragedy

THIS Is the old house
that negligence burned

you must remember two bodies
still at arms with each other

less the scream for help
where no help is available

less the struggle to escape
where no exit is found

they huddled upon themselves
as smoke choked them as fire finally consumed them

this is the place where beams fell down
charred and ashed

soon the grass will cover all these
the scream becomes part of the song of the winds

another one shall come and take this
place anew

to grow dreams again
no one wants to remember

what was it all about
shall one forever keep the truth?

RIC S. BASTASA
hearing what you say
in fairness, i understand nothing
but, in honesty, i delight
in the effects of
your choice of words,

what i do not understand
at least, excites me,
and i do not ask for more,
i only want to be happy
at least with you shrouded
all by mystery

we speak the same language
yet i still wonder why i have
not understood anything from
your longings,

or aspirations, or perhaps you
have overdone the use of
metaphors, either that you want
to conceal the most important
part of your speech
so that, hope may come, in the later
part of my life, when i myself
stumbles into grief and utter
lament, and as you very well predict
the exact time of understanding arrives
like a guest who at the party
had become indistinguishable at first
until he drops a glass and breaks it
and the shatter of the what is fragile
pierces the core of memory
into such a pain and blood that makes
everything clear and important.

i too knows the trick of the burning bush,
the warning of sagacity and sanctity,
and last night, when we have met again pretending
not to know each other, afraid of a familiarity
that chokes us, i made a short glance, and then
you assured me that everything is well kept,
well ironed out, nothing leaks in the roof
and no one, not one, not anybody, gets wet.

RIC S. BASTASA
No One......

she carves out
a chunk of wood
then puts the
letters of advice
you be good my son

she takes mud
molds a shape and
writes a mark
life is precious

the son has no time
for all these advices
seemingly what is
obvious is not heeded
less the enigma of
something mysterious

one morning she
takes a cup
the one her mother
left before she
died. An heirloom
which she drops
on the floor and
it was broken
beyond mending
and she said nothing
wrote nothing
and convinced
no one.

guess who learned?
guess who listened?

RIC S. BASTASA
no one saves money for a sickness

as no one marries to prepare for divorce

no one build a house for your arson dreams

no one raises a son for a black sheep of the family

no one sows the seeds for some discord or havoc

and so on and so forth all these calamities

all these shortness of expectations

these disappointments over deaths and debts and vices and violent things

but these simply happen.
yes all these happen and the sooner you accept them the better.
No Poem In Here

this is a blank space reserved for an obituary of a dead poem

prose claims a space though in another glossy page.
plese turn to the next page
those non-poets like me please transfer to another room
this place is for dead poems for those who killed living poems this page this
space is reserved for all of them.

we non-poets are moving out to another empty page
about to be added, if you can wait, mr. poet...

RIC S. BASTASA
No Promises.....

deep in my heart
i want you to stay
and be with us
for the rest of your
days

but your hands are
walls
themselves

your feet have remained
your compasses
of independence

and so you shall walk again
and come back
(sadly) when we are gone

how can our natures be too cruel?
how high has pride towered
upon time's fastest moves?

we are all sad and miserable
sitting upon chairs of gold
staring at all the food that
we have cooked
unable to feast
too tired to eat
and too old to be happy
again

on the last day we blame no one
we speak
we try to open up
but no one
is interested
they too have their own
chosen woes
and as usual
on the premises of
wrong solutions

and so welcome to the club
bear what is unbearable
tomorrow is the last day
and pre-departure passengers keep
on waiting
fro the worst woes to
come and take
them
to stormy places of the
heart

no tears, no hugs
no promises....

RIC S. BASTASA
No Regret For Anna

SHE WAS with the red movement before
raging in four storms

HER BOYFRIEND Dave faced the bullets squarely
defenseless against a rusty ideology

Many, many years, everything seems to be forgotten
Like death, like the pursuit of what is ideal

SHE MOVES to another place, but come December
IT is time for reminisces,

SHE VISITS a place where death once took away love,
Faces it with head high and steady arms

Lights a candle, lay the flowers beside a river
The song of the river makes her cry

EVERYTHING is sad here, and all the people do not remember him
Or her,

ONCE death claimed life, and life surrendered,
Death had taken away from her, her future, she does not complain,

THERE IS one thing though that must remain
INSIDE her heart, true love for the man who died not for her

BUT for country, for the masses
For the Filipino people.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Regret Just Being Like Them....

papa got stuck
with a sea urchin
in the sea

grandpa had first degree
burn at the fire place
cooking his steak

grandma too had a burn
on her skin
spilling hot oil there
while frying her
favorite chicken

mama too slid on the wet
floor going to a party
broke her leg

grandpa said once during his
lifetime: not to have a burn
do not go near the fireplace

if i were to listen to all of
them then i can't have my swim
in the sea
can't have my steak
or my fried chicken
or can't attend a party

well, i have grown up
didn't mind my skin burns,
my broken arm, my thorns
piercing my foot

i just want to be happy
and i have no regret
just being like them.
No Regrets

for writing
what really happened
on that day
and expressing
what really was felt

and when you read it
and laughed
not believing any word
from me

i have no
regrets.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Retribution From Me...

my left foot fell on the manhole and i asked for your help and you said i was just making a gimmick, and i was in pain for days and i could not forget it.

you laughed at my poverty.

but that was long ago, now you are an old man with nothing and i could not really believe it:

why i am helping you?

RIC S. BASTASA
No Wind No Fire

I like you. But you don’t like me.
I love you. You don’t you puke
The way I smell and touch you
You shiver you have goose skin
All around you I fear it somehow
That I may lose you forever

But I know what to do
When you are the wind I become like the wind too
When you become fire I become fire too
When you turn left I do the same
I mirror you I do what your hands do
I become invisible so unlike myself
The one that loves you

One day, I hope, you will love me.
You can’t, one day I am gone.

I am happy. You are happier.
I am gone. You’re sad. There is
No mirror now.

No wind. No fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Woman, No Apple, No Serpent, No Sin....

without poetry
law is nothing but a
cemented pavement

how this landscape
can be too revolting
when everything you
see are big boulders
of rocks and
a sea of pebbles?

no moss, no raindrops,
no seaweeds, no seagull,
no cloud, no wind,

what path shall you talk
about? no flowers along
the road, no butterfly,
no bird, no river, no hills,

what law can exist in
in paradise
when there is no man,
no woman,
no apple, no serpent,
no sin....

RIC S. BASTASA
No Words, No Memories

it is simple
i promise you
let us not make
this complicated

all i have to do
is see and describe
i will use words
but you demand more
than that

you will say
let us make it simpler
than simple
all we do is watch

just watch and feel.
no words, no memories.

RIC S. BASTASA
No Worries

when man cuts a tree
God spreads a thousand seeds

when man destroys a pond
God sends a new river

when man destroys the sea
God sends the tsunami

when man kills the bees
God sends more stings

when man kills the birds
God sends back the wind

so why worry?
for every lost creature

God is Here and He
Creates another

RIC S. BASTASA
No, Play

IN that state
the three trees
were not just trees,

the moon neither,
the night either, and

i was not just me,
i was someone else
and you have transcended
you, you were beyond
you,

such happened, when
happiness overflows,

when emotions flood over
us and we were
so very well unprepared
for it.

we work through the
symbolism
throughout the night
magic follows no
rules...

RIC S. BASTASA
Nobody Dies Of Hunger

i have not heard
of someone
die of hunger, man always knows how to live
not by bread alone

he also knows how to steal a loaf of bread
and there is no more
prison term for
a loaf so to speak
for society knows
the worth of a loaf and
judges know
the justifications for
hunger,

rice, fish, bread, water,
morsels,
dog food, all these, satisfy hunger

but really
i think more have died not of hunger
but of fear

and yes, i agree with you
loneliness also kills

so which is which
that kills you
the fear of being
alone
and being alone and

lonely

strictly speaking, fear and loneliness
are two distinct
feelings, one is still to come
and by
a very long distance
it hits you right
in the head
and then
you fall like you were executed by nobody, no one,
except
by an empty space,
a false bullet shot by this badge of fraud,

extreme loneliness

the murderer again
whose name
is no one but yourself

what a pity!

RIC S. BASTASA
Nobody Wants To Read And Study The Law

nobody
wants to read and study the law
it if is a scene
it is nothing but snow and a roll
of mountains
roads closed and covered
and people prefer
to stay indoors
drinking coffee or
taking naps

the law does not mind
until something happens to
the numb until someone is
damned

perhaps there is a sudden
death
or a mysterious killing
or someone arrogant just
spit in you and you have no
way of getting even

somehow a rainbow appears
in the sky
after a bloody moon at
night
passed with so much
grieving

then you need the law but
it is too late
the night has come
and you do not know who
is there
on the street running away

RIC S. BASTASA
Nocturnal Till The Edge...

my eyes
have wronged
me

my ears are
faithful to my
sound

my fingers are
minions

my heart is
burning

my hairs are
roots

and hence i
am thinking

upside down
must be a bat

nocturnal till
the edge

RIC S. BASTASA
Non Sequitor

Just because she smiles, laughs, dances, plays, says she is ok, seems fine, plays tag, say hello and looks happy,
these are not (un) true (un) necessarily.

(i am bored, and i am yawning, and i am simply pressing words
that i think do not have any sense of meaning at all, i am afraid i am
not authentic or i am just being autistic, chase me, like a child, wanting
to be out from this enclosure, where is mommy? mumbles, rambles,
grumbles, rambles,

fingers running wild wanting to escape the hold of my hands
and feet arguing with my shoes and windows still sleepy for
an opening of a new day, tell me? what is it.
what is it? tell me. do you ever get lonely? do you ever get bored?
tell me? tell you. i am telling you i am bored and fed up and i am yawning
like a cat at the peak of the heat of a tomcat.
words flow like a river and they all rush to the sea of ss.
moonless. grab the hand of your lover. kiss him, and forget that you are
still you. bless the truth and kill all the lies.

stay put. stay foot. steady body. body body.
eyes open. heart bleeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
None Of These Will Bring Disaster

when you lose me
and when i lose you

when you give me
and i give it back in return

when you find me
and i tell you that i am now free

when i find you
and i tell you i am not at all worried

where you are heading
and where i am finally coming home to me

RIC S. BASTASA
we all search for clarity,
thoughts are like parked cars,
diagonal parking,

like game cards, thoughts
reshuffle,
we organize, arrange,
trying to get most of what
is given,

then we reason out
why we lose,
blame it on random
luck is nil,

then we stop, we tell ourselves
this is just a game,
reality is not yet here

outside the house,
the dog barks, we know
a stranger is coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Non-Haiku

it was you who one day wrote a haiku
and she counted
on the strictest 5/7/5
or the 5/7/5/77 count

you do not really know what haiku is
you just like to write
and say anything your heart wants to say
in your brokenness

nurturing day and night your broken heart
when she left you for another uglier man
this really hurts

you are smart
the next day, the title of your poem changed

non-haiku for you
how can i argue?

with a smart broken-hearted ass?

RIC S. BASTASA
Non-Interference.....

it must have saddened you
today
as you visit your house
the one you built with all your
sacrifices

that another woman is setting
the bed
for your husband

or setting the plates for tonight's
dinner

on all soul's day. I cannot blame you.

life is like that. Those in the other
world has no more business
interfering with infidelities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Noon Break Eroticism

the night shift must have been so
damning
the dying screams, the latest victims
of the night wanting emergency attention
the doctors are at home sleeping
and some nurses are sleeping
on their desks
and there
marvin wakes up from his deep slumber
washes his face
combs his hair
and does his routinary toilet
gets this tissue
and wipes his
skin under
reflected by this dirty-white
bowl

he stands up, pulls his brief
and pants and zips
and then he washes his hands
with soap and water
goes out of the toilet
faces the coming nurses
and takes his
late breakfast

the morning is so boring
and it is noonday
back again
to this eroticism

the shemales with
some blowjobs
the virgins with fears
and his groans

that no one hears
in the government hospital
Noontime Pains

Aloud The sirens sound loudly for the arrival of high noon

The world stops
& snoops The heart keeps

Leaps

Even in high noon Pains, stones,
wide eyes till one p.m. and some bland stories to keep this harsh day moving
till five.

RIC S. BASTASA
now i am home
earlier having taken the shortest distance
between office
and this door leading to my house
with a rusty roof
squeaking steel gate
painted red
for luck
the concrete fence
surrounds
the garden
wild and wanton
not having time
to trim excessive
branches
looking out to the
road
(of indifference)
the road is dusty
and the dog meets
me with a wagging tail
and licking tongue
got to open this
old door
hard wood and
now i am entering
this cold house
where curtains
colored green
and some white
laces hang

i sit on this rocking
chair and rock myself
for a while
pleasing pleasing
myself
not thinking about
anything
until i remember you
and your coming
birthday

i open my computer
again
because i remember
some faces
that need my loving
my care
or simply my thoughts
and it is you
on the screen

outside the window
the sun scorches
scourges
everyone

noontime
i am at the height
of this chasm
i want to make
a hole
and make myself
fall in there
i want it
deep and endless

where i can
not just sleep
where i always wake up
where i will
just fall and fall and fall and fall forever...

RIC S. BASTASA
Normally Possible...

that it is nigh time
and morning time at the same time
is not at all false.
look at us, at the extreme,
we are.

this morning is mine
yours is the night and
we are talking.

tomorrow morning
yours shall be that evening
as i walk away from this door
and close it
you shall arrive and open it
and close it again

as i gamble in the light
you shall ponder in the dark
we can never be together
again
in a dado joint.

RIC S. BASTASA
Normally....

blue skies
fresh breeze
green trees
rolling hills
grassy plains
cows and buffaloes
crows and pigeons
man, and woman
and children

tradition, law,
norms, codes,
family.

normally.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is no need for you to ask
because there is nothing to be understood
there is no answer
and there will be no answer that will satisfy
the thirst of your mouth
and your mind
stay there and listen
see the unfolding of that which closes and
opens before you
this is rather exciting
a mushroom standing on its own roof
an anemone opening and closing its fingers
in the slightest notice of your presence
the rocks and the sands are terrible
they stand there
witnesses of so many crimes against the sea
yet their silence is sealed with the permanence
of the hiding, a concealment of
things which must not be revealed.
there is nothing here worthy reading
there is nothing waiting for an understanding
there is only a state upon itself
without a clap, a buzz, a slip of the tongue.
why must one insist that there is a code
a hidden secret embedded in one of the words
a phrase to guide to the exact location of
the treasure of Monte Cristo.
Let us be silent. Nothing is meant.
Nothing is called. Nothing is trapped.
There is only a caravan of words like camels
in the desert. They do not know a thing
about this journey.
It is only me. The Bedouin with an oasis
mapped in the lines of my palm.
A star overhead. The North of my existence.
North Star

if you are lost
find me
i will show you the way
but there is nothing in me there
i am going and going
always going
and i never know what staying means
i am not something that you can grip and hold
i am water i am air i am light
i remain that way
at the north

RIC S. BASTASA
Nostalgia

you visit your mother's burial place
white painted cemented mausoleum
she has a picture on the cover of
her own solitary place
you go near
and touch her glossy cheek
she has the smile
that takes you again
somewhere
in that room where you were with her
she kisses you
while you were this little boy
sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
Nostalgia (Revisited)

nostalgia

i
air that gets inside your room
even if the door and the windows
are closed

ii
the light of the candle
even if it had been
put off a long time
ago

iii
the sound of the mosquito
that still breaks your ear
after it bit your cheek

iv
still too many
buds on the tree which
you thought
died
because of the long drought

RIC S. BASTASA
Nostalgia At The Pier

Two kids waving their hands
By the glass window of this
Interisland boat
About to dock at Pulawan pier
Their father is there waiting
they have not seen each
Other for four years
From australia
Now back to the philippines

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Rabbit

The end
tempts us: there's got to be
a carrot

the owner of the carrots
has one thing for us to do:
unmask a body
undress a face
walk barefoot on the shore
or if you have the same lasting faith
walk on the surface of the river

more carrots will be given
if you fly endlessly in air
or go beyond the frames of space

the list of what to do and how to do it
is not impossible
i am consoled
i have no more time for all these

in that corner i bring my chisel
and begin to carve it in one of those stones

i am not a rabbit. sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Monotony

daily and
routinized like the waves of the sea
of the same height
and frequency,

until one day
something unexpected happens
like
many drowned
so many children buried in the mud and
mothers are crying on the streets

not for help anymore but
for a chain of griefs

there is a scream and this is not monotonous
it stabs our hearts
and makes us ponder

deaths can never be monotonous
our own death in the future
unique and unimaginable and we shudder

it is this nerve that has no ending

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Pleaser Anymore....

i was good  i listened
a pleaser

who wants to stay alone
because one is being left alone

as they prod on the promenade
enjoying their feast of laughter

when one is a pleaser one must
follow even if you doubt

it is not good this time they are
wrong

and so i stayed and thought alone by
myself

they're a bunch of plastic grapes
not sweet to eat

i choose this quiet where i am most
of what i am

it is good and there is light
the sea waves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Poet

Armored
you go out through life
like an armadillo

you do not want to be
touched
like some kind of cotton

when asked
you say, 'i am not a poet'

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Waste Of Money

having to pay
350 ringgits to feel the water
of Poring Hot Spring in Ranau
and to spend
6 hours or more
to be at the foot
of Mt. Kinabalu
asia's highest mountain
on an amazing feeling
that no money can
ever pay
that feeling that i am but
a mist
that Wahib describes
upon thinking
of Allah...

RIC S. BASTASA
Not A Word.....

i agree with the power of a word.

detonating a bomb however, does not use any.

or leaving someone, breaking her heart into pieces. No word.

or pulling the trigger, blood oozing. No word is there.

you talk, as someone listens. The absorbent has no word.

i love you. I will always love you.

i have no word for it to make you know it. it is different.

no word. no presence. not a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Able To Recall Each Word Anymore...

yes, we burn all the leaves
we do not really like to see the ashes on the ground
so we summon the rain
to spread the foul smell of the dead
thin
and unrecognizable and we ask the grass
to spread
as quickly as possible
to cover the tracks

and then that summer what we see
we like to see
green grass, blue sky, fresh air
flying birds, fluttering green butterflies

we love those conversations
though we do not recall each word anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Not All

Not all know what waiting is all about.
Not all flowers bloom and understand what buds are.
Not all rivers flow and know where the sea is.
Not every event knows the wisdom of destiny.

Beware my son, there is not much of us left
we who have read the lines of our palms
and understand the movement of the stars
we who respect the change of the seasons
and understand the reasons for changes
and transformations
not all caterpillars know about butterflies
beware my son
beginnings are there because
there is always an end, and always remember
my son,
the glory and the gladness that is promised beyond us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not All Of Us Can Really Be Us....

at that time
perhaps, i can with
objectivity say
that a mother can also
be a thorn
among her rosy children...

for not all mothers
can be mothers
and in the same manner
not all children are
really children

maybe during all those
joys and celebrations but
in grief, in need,
not all of us can
really be us....

RIC S. BASTASA
Not All Truths Are Sweet

to sweet truths we toast
we clink the glasses
of clarity for they are
those that make us so alive
and those that make us fly
like blithe spirits
in the vast blue skies

but not all truths are sweet
those that are bitter
are also placed on our tables
and we too shall drink them

but how?

shall i like you die
in an instant? without
bidding goodbye
to our loved ones?

no. I must take these
bitter truths
like i am a man
responsible
to a world of compromises,

i too, i know, must
drink the bitter potion,
but slowly and gently
enough to
immunize me from
the venoms of stupor
& eventual death

gentle to myself
these bitter truths
cannot kill me
but must make
me stronger

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Anymore...

honestly, i like to speak
speaking had long been my past time and i supposed
i have mastered the art of nice conversations where i am not really involved myself.
honestly i like to speak with you and have fun with words, taking games with accents and twists of wits and tits,
nothing to spit, just little glitz in finches
honestly i love dialogues but i was once betrayed by your own words and when i was about to take complete action, enforcement or preventive or otherwise you raised your voice, and arms and blocked my hands
and i was feeling so helpless and made a promise to myself never again shall i interfere in your affairs
now you are back with some instructions and i told myself this is a toad this is a horrible snake a killer shark and i pretend that i have no conclusions
all i can say, perhaps, or maybe
tomorrow or just another day, just wait
but deep within i say

i quit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Because We Are Friends

Not because we are friends then I will
Be dishonest, calling a spade a diamond,

I don’t work that way, ugly is ugly
Pretty is pretty, and bad is bad and

Good is good to me, no matter what,
And you show me your face with a

New haircut, and ask me if you look
Good, and I say, you look the other

Way around, is the barber still alive?
Then you show me your poem that you

Wrote last night, and you ask me
What do you think? I think it is

I take a look, read a while and
Twitch my face many times than usual

Garbage, throw it in the wastebasket
And you say I am cruel, I am inconsi-

Derate about how you feel. I am
Telling you, you are my friend and

We are friends because we are honest.
Why not try writing another one again?

I will not teach you though, I write so
Bad myself, feeling so bad, but I will not stop

Being myself & be my harshest critique
I bought another trashcan, bigger this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Beer

at the end of the year

i open a page
of my journal where
i wrote my one
and only dream

a goal,
a wish,

something
that i have longed
for and
may even die for,

i must tell you
i never realized it.

i close back the page

and begin to move on
with my life

it is another year of
broken dream

under the moon
i drink alone

this cold, cold glass
of water.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Bothered

when you understand and really
understand understanding
you do not speak
you only listen
as the other speaks to you
you anticipate when and where and what
you are no longer bothered with the
why.

as others in the corner still scream
crying, this is unfair, this is foul, this is heinous
to understand and really understand understanding
you put your hands inside the pocket of your pants
walk five steps farther
stop on the sixth and find a place for yourself
where you can take your deep breath
and sigh
because you are no longer bothered with the
why.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Completely....

now i have taken
side with power
but not completely
there is still a
space reserved for
dissent
there is still that
tinge of suspicion
that when the time
comes for protest ripe
as it is sooner
rotten, then it will
be back to your arms
again, sparrows and
amazons, those bonnets
and changes,
back to the shadows
of the past
we change paces
we adopt new names
and faces
thin men
fast running women
mosquito resistant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Easy.....

it is not
easy to be short-lived

a butterfly as always
do not make a comment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Even A Memory...

if it is for the feeling only
and nothing but the feeling alone
which means
that you have to leave what should have been
treasured by you,
inside your heart and mind,
if she says, never mind, it is nothing but the feelings alone,
avoid her,
she does not have any substance at all.

she is just the coldness of air
the softness of sand, the height of a mountain,
the breeze of the sea,

she is nothing at all, not even a memory.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Even Mercy, You Cannot Give Your Love

Like a cold dawn
Your love is
Uncompromising
I ask for pity
When we parted
There was none
The morning comes
I say I do not like
Any coffee or tea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Even What?

there is actually nothing
that belongs to us
when we take something
like bread
we leave a space
and that space now
belongs to someone else
and when we eat the bread
something that we have
becomes not ours anymore
to keep
the bread turns to slime
or blood
or just a memory of the
bread we once took
from them
there is actually nothing
that we keep
nothing to hold forever
nothing to reminisce
that long enough
everything we keep is lost
like this thought
these lines
that you like to follow
and wish that there is something
of substance
like a bulb that lights
in your head
but when your suspicious hands
begin to touch
there is nothing
there is actually nothing
not even thought
not even
what?

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Feeling Like It

how many times
shall you change a word
simply because
you do not feel liking it?

how many times
shall this world of ours be destroyed?

how many times
shall this war be waged shall lives be wasted
in the name of change?

this feeling of
' i want change i want something new'
how many times shall we cut
ges and then feel the pain of
desolation?

now, i must leave a space
at the start of the lines. I protest
one blank line
between the sections.

no link. no connection. how many times
shall you do this to us?

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Fitting In Despite All Those Years

sometimes you envy
the monk in maroon peacefully
crossing the street
somewhere in Ho Chi Minh

or even an earthen bowl half-filled with water
with a jasmine flower floating
upon a very still world

you like to take the brush and some water colors
to paint all these

but it is a little crowded world you have there
there is simply no time for wasting
it's a fast paced lifestyle

the lifelessness of the to and fro
the unstoppable flow
trying to accomplish almost everything
without meaning.

somewhere in a dream
you wish you were the monk
or even
the jasmine

and then you hit your chest with your fist
convincing yourself that at a certain hour
you can be so foolish
still not fitting in despite all those years

'how can you be a beautiful jasmine in a concrete wall?
how can you be the monk in maroon in a public market full of
swindlers and screaming spice vendors? '

amidst the mess, in the middle of the crowd
how can you be a dream?
Not Going Anywhere

i remember her
all in white
all dressed
but not going anywhere

she has a name
she gives herself
a little sip
of descartes

and jean paul-Sartre
and the rest
from whom

there is neither
entrance nor
exit

trapped. caught.
claustrophobic.
caustic. sour cream.
cranky

she wants
an immersion in murky
rivers

she cannot thing
of any place beyond
her or us

her hand reaches
for her hand
alone.

my atheist lover..

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Having Obtained The Much Needed Kiss

she is hugless and i am briefless
she is far away from the clutches of my arms
i send my pic hugging the air
she responds by saying she is feeling hot and sexy in there
i send another pic
i am kissing my own lips. How dare? How could i ever do such thing?
Narcissus. Jesus!
she responds, you are a good model for organic farming,

i look like shit. She ends it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Having To Belong

you have not asked
but i am giving it away

i have so much
but i am not keeping any

in fear i live without ears
perhaps for a hundred years

you should have known this wrong
how happy is it not to belong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Having To Finish This One....

she is taking
her shower
and i am writing
a poem

she is finished taking
her shower and
she will be ready

and here i am
still writing this
poem

and i will not be
able to finish it again...

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Here With Us But Somewhere Else

it will be different
it is not the usual cup of tea
not the ordinary
day on the platter of the
sea
not the usual fish that you
catch
and serve on the table
on the usual olive oil
and baked
procedure
you see this is experimental
and people's ears need
not listen
nothing to tear nothing to fear
there is nothing that
you detached yourself from
yourself or
another
cool, keep going, do not stay,
there are still
unexplored islands
violet sands, red seas
buried treasures
somewhere else, yes always somewhere else
it is not here
with us, it is always somewhere else
that on nights
when we are dying and too lonely
we know
this is not our place, but somewhere else
a note from a violin string
a leaf blown by the wind
somewhere else, yes somewhere else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not In The Mood For A Duet...

now what is happening?
we are not in the mood for a duet
we go solo, i sing the songs of the farmers
you sing the song of lovers petting by the
side of the hill

we are happy
parting away
we are two singing birds
drifting apart

soon, without the waste of words
we understand what sweet farewells are
all bitterness forgotten
sins forgiven

and when we meet again
we shall admit, perhaps we should have never shown
what we want them to believe
we should not have told them
what love tales are

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Intended For Me

i land to earth
you are
in the sea

i dive
but they say
you already left
to the clouds

i float with
the clouds
and they laugh

it is funny
you're back to
earth
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Into The Ocean Of Verbiage

too much words
i am exhausted with so many
garbage in this
wasteland of verbiage

this prolixity eventually says nothing
someone leaves
on muted steps

what you hear is the sigh of
nothingness
true, it is true
less is always more

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Just France, I Agree.

they want fairness
after i put the flag of France
after i changed my profile pic
with that blue white and red

people of the world
know where the other killings
too occur

in Beirut, in the Philippines,
in Africa, in the Netherlands,

hence we shall have all the flags
of this world
and we change profile pics every
second of the day
every genocide, every homicide
every vanishing humanity

not just France, i agree.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Just You

i, too, had it, not just once,
but many times, when i
wake up at the wrong hour
and think of you
and then i take my old
favorite pen and
yellow pad paper
and begin to write
a letter for you

you are a ghost now
far away
and i expect you
not to read this
letter that i am
not sending anyway

i will not even
read it
i will just keep it
so when another being
comes whose interest
is poetry and by chance
he digs upon my
poetry books that no one
bothers to read
anymore
at anytime

he may find it there
inserted in one of the
pages between
two chapters
concerning the themes
of love and
death

and perhaps he too
will understand how is to
truly love and be
so unloved because
death has come
to early because
the timing was wrong
because the world
has not understood
because one
sometimes in pain
has no cure
but just the silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Knowing

you walk upon
a path
day by day
without knowing
that upon a precise
moment
you stop walking
only to find
that you are now
standing
at the top of the
mountain

you stop
finally
because there is no more
road
to walk upon

shall you wish
for wings
to fly farther?

are your hands
ready
now
to touch
the nothingness
of
the sky?

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Knowing You Is Respect

I ask your name, what you do, what you are,
You said
I do not have to know you
You are nobody
You have no name
You do nothing
You are not what you are

I am not knowing
I do not know you

We call each other as friends
Blind friends
Two blind friends touching a big elephant
And we shall say different things

You are nobody and I am nobody too
That is identity enough
Respect for nobody to nobody
Blindness is now dignity
We feel the heart
Because we have no eyes
We do not touch
We have no hands
We only speak
Because what we have are only
Two hearts. No eyes. No hands.
A mouth a nose. We are breathers in space.

We are incomplete. That is complete
Respect for humanity.

We are simply breathers. Nobody touching nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Me

yes, the ordinary person that you meet
in our town
you do not even know my real name
other than Mister
but i do not really mind
i like it that way
just being another ordinary person
the one that smiles when you smile
at me
as i pass by you and you too pass by me
i do not stare
not that it is unethical but because i have my own thoughts
to ponder for the day

how i live my life in privacy
away from the mob
the crowd
the many
the extraordinary demands of the society
like how the ocean dissolves me
like a drop
in anonymity

i like just being myself
a glistening dew on the petal of a rose
that i put on the glass vase
all alone on the table

yes alone but not really lonely
just being special
to myself

this solitude
regaining strength from the past,

those old days
when my mind was murdered
because i did not bother to guard it
from the multitude
from them
not me

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Meant To Be Shared....

inside us is this
beautiful turbulent
dream
corpulent but not
that turbulent
as you misinterpreted,
we want to let it out
to show

or even to let it go
but it stays there
like this shy truth

silent and corpuscular

in one way you want to
help put it into words
to let them know

that this beautiful
turpulence really exists
with or without the beloved

d this love of self
and solitude,

yet, accept
this fact

words fall short of their
maximum use,

perhaps it is just meant
to be felt

to be kept to be savored
and never
to be shared....

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Minding

not minding but letting
the little grow
to be himself a man
of his own making
without
the intervention of
anger
and insult, you find
nature's laziness
complacency and
carelessness merely
seeing but not doing
sitting around things
that the little boy could
have changed early
letting him see the
world unfold before
his eyes
until he becomes a
man
shaped by his own
version of the world
nothing about codes
and behavioral norms
then you set him free
telling yourself
i am so sorry for you
now you are on
your own
clean your own
mess

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Minding The Stabbing Silence In Bed

when we sleep tonight
we sleep
as tightly as screws and
bolts
as dado joints
perfectly fit without any space
for a prayer
or even a simple conversation
to patch up
what was broken
to mend the heart
to fence the souls
torn apart
by so much darkness
in this silence.
actually, i do not
mind anymore
i know
what unfinished is...

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Mine But Yours...

Nothing grows except the grass.
Nothing leaps into sight except some stone
and what the stone contains and protects.
Here, far from the beach,
far from the place where the water
returns every so often
rusted metal, moldy wood,
the corpse of a dolphin or a turtle.
The wind does not blow with the force
to propel us as far as the promised then.
The minutes that pass become hours
but never days, they become nights
that never agree to be years,
and centuries in which somebody dies
and someone else, who does not know it, yawns.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not My Neighbor's Fault

On a very peaceful night
Like this
My neighbor sings again
Her videoke
Is still out of tune

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Needing Any Worshiper

once in the garden of
a stir
i stare
attentively i listen to
the murmur of the
water
follow every ripple
and wait till the water
settles again
as transparent
gossamer
of my own dream

time is lost in the
stillness
and i feel like a god
not needing
any worshiper.

RIC S. BASTASA
**Not Of My Doing, But God's**

SOMETHING THAT tickles me for years now
suddenly does not tickle me anymore and i am glad

perhaps, tomorrow I'll change because i am not affected anymore
by what used to tickle me before

something that we want to avoid and yet we like getting into
just the same we go into and it is useless to pretend that we

are not into such a delicious and aromatic indulgence,
and i do not want to pretend some more
that i have taken so much pains
to be clean

I'll waited long for this numbness and here it is, my luck,
and i am overjoyed,

it is this sin that is finally giving up on me,

because the grace of the Lord's mercy has finally won me
on its side of the magnificent fence.

Not of my doing, But
God's. For who am I,
i am weak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not One

in an island of the lighthouse
many have been saved
and well guided

but no one stays here
they all returned home
and no one comes back
to say thanks

RIC S. BASTASA
Not One Is Ever Excluded

it is not actually a matter of who wins or who loses,
not even a matter of who sins or who does not

to know who wins, or who sins,
one needs a judge

but who really believes in a judge who like you is as frail and as human as
i am
as we are

did they not tell you that i am because we are what we are?

i do not wish you to understand me
neither i to understand you, that would be an enclosure,
and enclosures are
asphyxiating

there is a play field leveled for all of us
it is beyond sin and grace, beyond wrong and right,
beyond winning and losing

it is where we meet
where we talk
where we smile and sit and drink together
where we laugh where we can even choose just to be silent

where we feel that we are one
no competition just plain humanity
or divinity
if you want to coin it

i like it that way.
No name just persons
no place just a field, a vast expanse where no one

not one
is ever excluded.
Not Ours

those you have swindled
me or you must have known too well
that we do not sue
or those that angered us
surely must hear no angry words from us
or those who hate us
shall never feel the hate that they expected us to return
for we make the difference
we believe that anger has its own venom
revenge its own claws of destruction
hate its own mode of self-destruction
not us to judge somehow
or act but the
Furies, the gods,
and for us who believe in One Light
and One Path
One God,
it is all His, Not Ours
to Judge
or kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Really Alone

to keep me company
tonight
is this mouse
i am feeding
it the morsels
of my poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Really The Afterlife, Or The Half-Life But What Comes After...

it is what happens after,
the aftermath, not really the shock and
the horror of what is created,
it is the awe, and the wandering
not really lost as you may suspect
not those doubts, for in truth they are
those that which make us
exist,
not existence, but it is the life after,
not the afterlife, it is the breath that i take
after i have exhaled,
that which comes out from my being
not those that still want to enter
inside the veins
and lungs and
caves of my severeness

it is the i after, the am, the feeling that
i am here, alive and still
keeps on writing what i think i do not really know

it is the mystery that surrounds
this whole room
not the chairs and the ceiling....

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Remembering That I Have Written You

time can be a deceiver.
Duane took a poem which i have written years ago.
Interpreted it in a video
there is a shadow of a man at dusk and someone is
reciting a poem in the full blast of a British accent
against a background of
a saxophone
and as i flowed with it
it comes late as a realization that
it is mine

i must have changed
or getting older
how can i be deceived with my own words?
how can i not instantly recognize
the sadness inside
myself

how could have i betrayed
a self
always hoping that in a moment
i can be a happy
man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Saying Anything, Looking Beyond Still Never Caught.

there is something
rooted to your nerves
wracking, something springing
from your head
an idea of desire, lacking
the luster of a perfect image
of love and pleasure, something
hovers on your hair
the locks feel this, and the eyes
are closing like some lights
turning off, preferring the dark
in this endeavor, owning this and
giving it back, and then shadows
dance and fuse, and there you are
not saying anything, looking beyond
still never caught.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Selling Anymore....

the woman is not
that young anymore

though she speaks
quite fluent french

sitting and
loafing in one
of the bars in boracay

the name of the place
is Red Coconut
and there she curls
and crosses
her legs

perhaps trying to
court love
or whatever you
call it

i like to name it
but i can't out of
respect
for humanity

half-nude white men
with big athletic bodies
come for a drink

she smiles and they
smile back
and after their drink move
on to another
place
of interest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Significant

on a jackfruit
tree hangs
a brown
jackfruit

wilted by
the past drought

no one notices
it
except myself
who writes
a note about
its
insignificance

below is
is a dead
black snake

no one notices
it except
myself

don't you notice
aren't you
surprised
why i keep
noticing
these insignificant
things?

beyond this view
is the murky
sea

possibly it rained
so hard
in the mountains
Not The Butterfly

he now prefers
the caterpillar
to bring the
news of his
death

RIC S. BASTASA
Not The Spider....

if by chance you read
these lines
(perhaps at the time
when you are not
busy with that bread-and-butter
thing anymore, when you finally
have time to grab a book
and read or when
you look at the glass window
and find a miniature world
down below that
building)

when by chance you
have come across these
words, and you have not
forgotten me,
and you will say, i miss him,
and you read these lines,

i must make you remember
i too have not read the book
which you mailed to me
(you emailed me, that book
costs you a lot of money,
but you spared just the same,
that that book is a book
of fine poetry, and that

i should stop talking about
everything in this world
or that i must focus on some
other life-changing matters
like politics and philosophy,

i should have told you that
i am a jack of all trades and
master of none,
that at this age, i have
learned to love those
trivial matters like

a butterfly wing, a marble,
a pen, a pebble, a drop of water,
or a tear, or a scratch in an arm
or that skin tag on the left shoulder
of my latest find,

and that i am thoroughly
enjoying this
that i am happy with my life
and that

i simply write just for the heck
of it: lots of fun in here
lost in the web of life

and i am not a spider after all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not The Way We Want It

i put a mark
in this place where i rest

i am so tired
i do not need food
or water

all i need is
a prayer

something that i have
forgotten for all those years

a prayer.
 a surrender.

away from plans.
and schemes, and strategies.

letting go, letting things come that way they should be.
not the way i want it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To Be Outdone

i agree you got class
with expensive clothes and shoes

but you must have to mind
i got class too
with my brand new car..

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To Believe At Once…

plain acting
love
mimicking what
we think is
love

guess it is
all for the
money

hope it is not
that
my mind works
sculpting another
belief

two people are
acting now
giving selves to
selves
love in the eyes
of many
suns
glistening as i
watch
urging for belief
and authenticity

i am growing
into a mature outlook
on this resolve
not to be believe at
once

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To End Before The Task Is Done

we, who remain here
within the fold
we decided not to end this thing
before the task is done
and so it all hands upon hands
fingers digging for what is
meaningful beneath
we had spading forks
but they were more for show
the neighbors look amazed
how we, who remain here
seem united
until then what what must be done
had been done
that they finally know
that the shovel was only for show.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To Judge: The Phenomenon

not to judge
never to educate
or praise
or condemn
or even to philosophize
not to convince
never to substantiate
not to elaborate
but just to carefully see
observe
not even to translate
not to speak
not even to explore
but only to record
about this
phenomenon
to write, that is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To Molest The Trees

do not use wood
in a sense do not cut a tree
do not use paper
in a sense do not write anything there
try using this computer
do not bother the paper the wood the trees
do not bother the pen either
there might be papery in there
like ink from wood like sap from a tree

we were born with thoughts and ideas
great minds

there was no paper in our mouth inside our brains
no trees cut by the axe in our hands
the worlds much safer then
and colder and fresher
and shady

and grassy and flowery
moonlighted and free

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To See And Yet Believe.....

to want and not to own
to undress but not to rip the clothes off
to disrespect and desecrate
not the body
and not the soul

to touch and not to hold
to perhaps pull and not push
to find and not to hide
and to reveal
what is never intended to be
concealed

not to see and yet
believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Not To Take Other People Seriously

a father has a child to take care
mothers have fathers
they form a circle of their own
and you who is outside
this circle,

why take them seriously?
when you are an outsider and an outsider is always an outsider

there is no way for you to be there
for as old as humanity
those that belong to them be it chattels,
slaves,
things,
pots, kettles, horns,
sticks, glasses,
dresses, coats and ties
and children
and parents
and grandparents

they always have themselves
and you do not have them
as they do not have you too

so if i were you
and as you consider me a wise man
take time with your journey
enjoy every moment
pick those flowers along the way
whistle
dance
and if you must
plunge into that cool river beside the path
at the foot of the mountain
savor the water
relax
and just be yourself
Not Tough Enough

when i left home
i was with

strength and then
i tread the ways of life
and met
beauty and lust
and love
desire

i thought i had what
it takes
to be tough
in all these

i plunge and
take the swim of life
in the oceans
of its depths

i join caprice and whims
and bias
and prejudice

and when age crawl
over my forehead
taking away
my hair and
aggression

i realize i am weak
i give in
to the wishes of death
i embrace
the acceptance
of my humanity

and then i give myself
a name: man
Not Well Arranged Days Of Lore

should i blame my sorrow
for not rhyming my tomorrow?

should it be the rush hours of the day
which in truth makes humanity so clumsy?

one puts a responsibility on the hour
only to feel like a powder of the flour

the days are flying like finches on the hills
how can anybody pay attention to his skills

the emotions are coming like soldiers from a war
a war that they lose, oh these bloody whore!

RIC S. BASTASA
Not Yet......

for all the things you know
you keep it from me, as i too
do the same, we,

have no other purpose but to
keep the night alive, to free
it from the

harshness of the elements, the wind,
and sky, the earth
at their safe distances, not to

push and pull not to ruin any stone,
or choke a fish, and so the sea
must still maintain the depths

of our hearts, for we have carved
respect, to the rivers and the
mountain cliffs,

i know you know, and you know i know,
we keep our mouths shut,

we keep the thirst and the hunger
to ourselves, all we want is just this

love, and love and nothing more,
setting aside abysses, keeping bridges,

ourselves in tact in the midst
of a crumbling universe, and so here

we are, cheers, drink to life, to love,
till death, and it has not come yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Siargao (1)

A coral for
a flower,
a big shell for
a vase,
white sands for
water
winds for song
and silence
for the words of
this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Siargao (2)

my dear
when you find love
on the mustache of
of your
lover,
count the days,
for as you said,
the days in the city
do not sleep,
and the word
commitment is
no longer found
and you may
not hear it from the
very tongue
that licks the whiteness
of your skin

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a way to tell you the truth
i can always pretend that i do not know you
i am, as your mom says, compassionate to the
lures of a liar,

last night you told me that you have won a prize
the one that you paid for living
a life that you wished but you didn’t have,

i listened attentively and when i slept late last night
i was moved to another place of having to understand you much better
and deeper

i want you to be another black bird and how i wish
that with your broad wings
you will fly away from me even without notice

RIC S. BASTASA
THE USUAL QUESTIONS FOR YOU

why can't you be the
lotus?

or the cat?

why can't you just
be not
like myself?

we have had
enough of mud

we never wish
nine lives

why can't you be
like an ant?

we failed to tell
you
that even in sands
there can
still be a castle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Siargao (5)

and i wonder
how some people can put
all their love on the
single wave of the
sea

which arrives at the sea wall
bangs its head
and then

after a short while
burst
into foams
gone suddenly
like anybody's whisper

(was it
in fact a
scream?)

RIC S. BASTASA
you make a funnel of me
as you pour out
all the chaos in
you,
i
stretch my nose
a bit,
expand my ears
like a cave
where you
enter my

openness,
my tolerance is an
ocean
boundless,
my hope is
endless,
and i listen
attentively like
a wall
to your
sighs,
i make a tunnel
of myself
running
down the depths of our
souls,
i
could have told
you that
i have a

wish for
a hand holding
a light
at the end
of all these
squandering,
i have one
philosophy

now,
i
travel and

i
do nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Siargao (7)

the Sisyphus
in
Siargao

takes his surfing board
rides
the bosom of the
sea
finds a bigger

wave
slides and then
stands on it
feeling like a
king
of foams

and when the waves
simmer
into a flat
water
he floats again
and again
waiting for
another
bigger
wave

and this he does all
the days of
his life
all the days
of his life
all the days
of his life

not looking for
himself
or anybody
not needing
anybody's
hand
or mouth

not feeling a
body
a soul
numb to
the world

un-
felt too
by anyone....

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Siargao (8)

the shell
with its

labyrinth
is a song
recorder
of the

passing
wind,
a marker

of
time,
the epitome
of

solitude,
the mute witness
to

my
longing

RIC S. BASTASA
Note For Today

it is a nice feeling
to know that today
i just made someone
with cancer
laugh a little bit
louder.

RIC S. BASTASA
Note In The Crowded City

the child is alone
picking rubbish
for his fill

beside the stone stairway
leading to
the mall

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes 1

we are but
dusts in the wind
blown in an
instant
far and gone

we are but
the pebbles the sands
on the shore

we are but waves
coming and going
always
recurring

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes 2

just think of you
and me
you become
too close
to me
for here in my
darkness
i also think of you
as my
only moon
by my window

RIC S. BASTASA
the war is not
over
the sky is falling
the earth shakes
to the
every day
harshness
of men
to men
the war continues
with the
clouds and the rain
still searching
for the
light of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
back to a memory of home
shattered glass
and smoke
of the room
open windows
and broken doors
back to the sands
of time
pouring on
childhood
how thoughts can stab
innocence
how words become tall
for the reach of my hands
how cruel is the air
how love can be as slim
as nil as a girl
without becoming a true woman
how love survives on a river
of tears

RIC S. BASTASA
mystical
profound experience
about his
papa

one who cannot
hear her anymore
the skies
without its million
eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes 6

love
i was always in
love
with you
love
soft as
green as
the grass
i lay upon
love
you excite
me
from a
distance
love
why are you
far
as the planet
pluto
from my
earth?
love
ageless
as ever
far
as the most
distant
star
ever
unreachable

RIC S. BASTASA
If we are to believe in a God, then he definitely was in a good mood when he interfered in the creation of Abel.

In Old Greek, the word blessed was used in pagan literature to describe the highest state of happiness, usually enjoyed by the gods and goddesses.

Abel definitely looks like he was built out of divine material and he certainly seems to enjoy it.

And he has every right to do so. His toned body shows the sensual movement of his hard muscles with every turn he makes.

Subtle ink patterns swirl around his left arm and decorate his body just above the waist, inviting you to discover what is hidden by his briefs.

His dark hair and black eyes give him the look of an ancient gladiator.
With his strong jaws
and teasing mouth you
easily imagine him a Greek warrior.

And his tights and buttocks...
well what else
is there left to say.
They look strong enough
to climb the Mount Olympus
all the way into the Heavens.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes About Grandpa

grandpa had a square jaw
a complete of hard yellow teeth
broad shoulders like his hectares of land
strong hands like his iron bars of words
he is hard on us
he is harder to papa who (if i were not mistaken
had a death wish for him
he should not have meant it
as anger was wont to
be)
he was soft on women
on lots of
beautiful women
grandma died when he was at his
hardest prime
and he had forgiven her
he was strict on codes
he broke all of them
sometimes i thought
he must have been too happy
before he died
crazy prostate cancer
ate him alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes After A Busy Day Entertaining A Non-Deserving Mortal...

i shall never allow
the porcupine to infect
the pigeon

never the thorns of the
rose
to overpower the freshness
reds of those
petals

the last cloud may leave
but the promise for rain shall
not be lost

let the rivers sing for these
let the oceans listen to the whales

there is no ending for goodness
no boundary for love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes Before Going...

it's over.
I'll leave a note,
i did not fight my wars
i let them pass
i viewed each fighter
with dismay
how they failed
and died, and so i think i was wise enough to use my sound discretion,
i did not fight my wars
i let them be.

i watched every mistake
i think i learned a lot.

my teachers gave my silence an honorable name.
and they always remember me for that.

i did not fight any war,
i simply watched and listened.

those who died cursed me
but i did not bother.

before i go, i must tell them this wisdom.
in not fighting my wars,

i won.

RIC S. BASTASA
in that marriage ceremony
bride and groom shall wear
a new ring,
it is a symbol that their
love is
circular, hard to locate
the beginning
and the end, or that
love must be
endless, or could be,
just like most of those
who went on the same
ritual, finally, find,
the endlessness of
suffering or constant
bickering,
but just the same words
must assure, love is, and must,
and should have been
endless,
who cares? for the meantime
the eyes of both
bride and groom are like
black holes
ready to absorb and
swallow
a spaceship or
any asteroid along the way,

and then comes the arras
in the hands of the groom
which he
slowly put to the hands of the
bride,
just coins, ten coins,
intended for their kids,
now numbering two
what if the man loses
his job? and what if the
woman is too lazy to
find one?
who cares? for the meantime
let sex prevail
let flesh do the trick
with or without food
let the love making begin
as early as possible
an hour from now the male guests
shall all be drunk and the women
shall fill their
mouth with all the
gossips

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes For Chirico

the red tower
is the color red assuming
a shape,

turning itself into
a surreal
surrender,

what used to be
a mere
spot, perhaps a drop of
blood, or

a stench of
hemorrhagic
discharge,

or perhaps a crushed
tick discovered
by a lover in the bed
of another

with so much joy
having eliminated a sore
a pest
an itch,

a conflagration
of fire,

an empty food coloring
turning into
lips,

into strawberries,
into love burning
and burning,

enqueued thirst
without quench,

framed by the cold and
bold strokes of
blackness

into a tower.

i, too, assume
meaning,
from the flashes of
red
sore mouth
existence....

sunset now,
restive,
into
dreaded
drowsiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes For Ms. Lorena

She cannot complain
what she will leave is that happy feeling
that beauty and grace have been transmitted to
her grandchildren

if she dies, she is complete
she asks for nothing more

her children have given her more than a bouquet of fresh flowers from the garden
she is happy now and will be even happier for another hour perhaps

resting her tired body on that sofa looking at the kids playing
she rests her head upon a pillow
and then closes her eyes
not wishing to wake up anymore for another painful day....

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes For Not Having Done Enough...

do not complain that there is so much work to do.
for there is so much really work to do.
whether you like it or not there is so much to be done.
do not complain that you have not rested
or that there is no way to rest a while and gather
some bones or bury some dead bodies on the road

to hell with you, do not grudge what is happening,
they just happen, do not question greed and anger,
they are our nature, do not ask me to explain what
is the matter of the scorpion what is there to be logical
about being a tortoise or a frog, there are just too many
toads to be told, too many fish to float from all these
pollutions, caused by man, retold by man, justified by
man, rationalized by man and all about man....

this self-centered infliction of man's dangerous nature,
to hold and to destroy, to keep and to inflate, to see and
not understand, to feel and then be numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes For Rowena....

i guess
you must start with a premise
that you
are not good

or to a certain extent
evil

do not worry
there is nothing to be afraid
it is just a
beginning

then you move onward
to the only
possibility that you have no
choice
but only to become
good

or if you have the
guts
become one of those
gods

or demi-god
or you can turn back into
a certain falling

it is pride
that pulls you back
into
that heinous form

rotten gnat
fallen leaf
mud, humus of the earth....

i guess it is just
a matter of belief
or how you look at it
how you feel

for you to become...

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes For The Suicide Volunteer....

the guy who passed
away this morning by
hanging himself on that
old mango tree
once confessed that he
is no longer happy
feeling so deserted
and that he has no more
reason left to live,

he took his life away
as he owns it anyway,

but no, he left life here
on the ground three feet
down,

and those who mourn
for him, did so, with
superficiality, for in truth,

they curse him in silence,

not for his
candidness with death,
but for his cowardice
to bear life where its
weight has conquered the
lightness of his soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From A Long Road Away From Home

upon this journey
you stop
a while

bend a little
and put
a big stone
upon this
ground

there is no talking
there is no one here

you resume the walk
there is no one there

you bear the silence
of your suffering

RIC S. BASTASA
what you are saying
changes my belief on the innocence of the mountains,
i know that ultimately we are all leveled up
like a vast plain,
the woods and the rivers, oh, they meet at the convergences
of universality,

the old man has missed sorely his granddaughters who went to the city,
and had, since then never returned
no news, the anxiety multiplies like sands

one hears the scream of a woman finding out a man who hanged himself
at the beam of the house,

for now cause, except that he missed the children he loved.

i thought, suicide lives only in the loneliness of city rooms
in the senselessness of alleys and multiple doors,

same human struggle, same void,
same self-inflicted deaths.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From A Tired Mom

Singing along with praise music.

Clearing the thick dust from surfaces.

Sleep coming easily.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Brigs

how big can that fish be inside
a small fishbowl

how crowded can such a small space
appear with it and a seaweed with three leaves that reach the surface of the water

how small can that big fish be in that fishbowl
when it is thrown to the sea

how insignificant can it become?

how the waves can simply lose it
like an atom of air in space that we cannot see?

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Chicago... An Open Book.

know what?
to have my own baby
is really an obsession
i made an attempt
w/ a young puerto rican
(now in her 37 yrs)
divorced in 2006;

she got preggy in 2008
but had a miscarriage after 12 wks!

Felt proud but angry!
We ended up the affair last 2009 Feb;
Moved to Chicago Aug 24/10;
filed divorce in Jan/11/11(Wisconsin):

Final judgment last June 10/11;
Now back to solo flight....
(oh the pangs of pride and anger!)

...I want my life to be an open book;
some kind of legacy to
and for the coming generation -
religious and otherwise;

the 'don't follow' kind of thing;

I have an 'open secret' hurting
and disgusting experience
w/c affected my self-formation
and outlooks!

It's an open secret because
the last to know about it is my family!
Not even my own deceased father (6/5/2005)
knew about what happened to me
after they sent me to the parochial high school
in nearby town!
It's what I called a 'betrayal of trust! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Dante's House Of Metaphors

along the alley
leading to the living room of your house
you put a very
fragile jar

it is empty

i walk casually there upon
your invitation
and i trip upon it

and it rolls away from us

i run to hold it back
not wanting it broken

i catch it and give it back to you
and you smile

we drink to something left
unbroken

we feast on things retained
we choose the flowers that
we have grown in the garden

we keep the silence
of long years still unforgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Fr. D.

First you hate
this government

second you take
the helm
after a deadly
struggle

third and this
is final
what you pretend
not to know is that
you have become
everything that
you once hate

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Her From A Distant Shore

how can you fold a flood and put it in a drawer?

how can you wrap a storm and put it your room?

how can you keep a love letter which says that he is dying?

how can she be so alone in her room waiting for no one?

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From M.

In Tibet
you decided to stay

solitude is a feast
and you listened
well enough

and you descend
down the mountain
and take back
the plains
the city
with your arms
alive

you change
your world
in that dark
night of your
room
you hang so
many stars

you are a new
man now
beyond the grasp
of the
the multitude who
has erased you
from their
minds

you are happy
now
with a smile of
the orange cat
on your latest
postcard
from brazil
Notes From Mambukal

i am learning
from the towering trees

i have seen the right of birds
to have a home

the co-existence of bats and
snakes

the essence of ripe fruits
that must remain on the ground
until they are rotten

when birds leave the seeds
after consuming all pulp
and flesh

the songs of birds
love calls
the hisses of snakes
the chants of earthworms

it was a night
when i dip my body to that hot spring
with healthy sulfur breaths
from volcanic
woman

when i make my self still
listening

always listening
and simply feeling what is warm
and tender

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From My Elder Sister Whose One Year-Old Son Died

these are his shoes
never used by him

d these are his shirts
the best was worn
by him in his funeral

how can i keep a
picture of his face
forever?

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Sea View

It was one of those nights
when my arms are most empty

my eyes are vagabonds roaming
without a place to stay

there is this magnet of the heart
that longs for anyone

you were there and it was wrong.
do not tell me more. it is wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes From Sergs....

we were there for on simple purpose
to pay homage to two dead bodies of lovers caught in the tightness of the
mountain trail

an accident

while the mass was going on for hour we were seated on a bench
facing the high mountains filled with trees

it is a green world ahead of us

i am amazed. You were talking about the idiosyncrasies of other people
the important people who lost dignity in the name of lust, er love
perhaps for the benefit of the doubt

in truth i do not care

i have holes in my cheeks, i have falling hair
i am losing youth to the stupidity of time

it cannot just be a 'tear in the cheek of time'
it must be something else

i have my ears to your rumors
my eyes move somewhere else to the majesty of the mountains
my hands to the sweet coolness of the air

i cannot keep those words
this time you are a friend by

accident. I begin not to understand you because there is so much
beauty in those high mountains

until we parted. It is sad, we have nothing to share
nothing to speak about with so much interest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes Of F.

DO NOT blame me
i have not really seen
fully
how that red rose
bloomed in your
heart

what i only saw was
the wilted one
which you have thrown
as another
trash

But be glad for i
have remained strong

i shed a tear no more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes Of Sendong

so most of them are confessions, 
like rain confessing to the grass in the sound of 
a heavy rainfall 
and in so doing, because it did not know how to stop 
has caused the mountains to vomit 
and the rivers to rise because they too are crying 
and letting go the tears of creeks and ponds 
and sobbing like ten waterfalls and raging like the sounds of 
rocks and mud letting go of their hidden sorrows 

and so why are there so many dead floating in the river and covered 
by logs and mud? 

the rains have confessed about the death of trees 
and corruption of the winds 
and then the names of men come out 
they are the causes of all these sufferings 
the innocent residents of the river banks are 
the ultimate victims 

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes On Campuestohan

i reach
there and it is a dream come true

i am tired
my breath is settled between my chin and
toe

when one gets there
there is nothing to do actually but simply watch and feel

emptied
& then one finally gets to decide to come home again

carrying everything that they have never seen in you
in fullness

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes On Praxie's Concert

it has no more teeth
what it has are deep sunken eyes
like an eclipse
the sound is harsh and the
ambiance is dark blue
and it faded
the tables were already
empty

a lady beside me
has gray hairs
she must be older
by twenty years
like the awaiting of
this concert

she gives me the reason
for watching
she comes from a far place
it was the talks
the refined rumors
i shared what i wish i could not
have said
and praxie need not really
hear this

it is because we were once
together in the room with that shoe-throwing
music teacher
nothing more

we left before midnight
and i think it was enough courtesy
for good taste

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes On Sendai

she was once at Sendai
posing by the port with some close friends
the picture shows a very calm blue sea
there were other tourists
faraway on can see seagulls flying
white yachts, green mountains
white shorelines, well kept stores
some children playing
as mothers keep watch closely

we all know what happened to Sendai
the tsunami ate all the houses and the children and the tourists
and temples and farms
there are no more yachts
the birds are few
and the people have left.

RIC S. BASTASA
they killed a man
right in the middle of the street
and he lays there
with his head hit by a lone bullet
as blood colors the street red

as usual no one is held responsible
the crowd does not say anything

what you hear are the whispers of
the ordinary citizens who have no courage
to voice out their genuine opinions

'he should have been in prison
for a life sentence. Now he finally
met his death in the hands of those
who find the law useless'

RIC S. BASTASA
Notes On The Virgin Island

the island is a virgin.
his explains.
corals in pink pieces
are still untrodden by
any foot, though scattered
everywhere and
appears like a burning sand
from far away

a boat begins to slip
on the shore
opening it for more
spectators like us
on bare feet

the island is no longer a virgin.

a hat is blown by the wind and stays on the grass
a hand cannot reach it

a boy urinated upon the cracks of the rock
a crab drinks drops of salt

a tree there sheds off some leaves
and stays upon its feet
wilting

it is very hot and the women huddle
upon a nipa hut
while the men watch with their
tongue wet with saliva

when the night falls
a fire is built

the night is so cold
some shadows dance
but only for a while
the silence is lovely
no one wants to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing

around his eyes
shades of black
when it looks at
you it is looking at
nothing
there is no sign of
life in the iris
there is only the stillness
of solitude
there is no whirlpool
of happiness
nothing is taken
nothing is given
there is doubt around each eye
there is that state of
unsatisfied hunger
despite the mountains of food
and lakes of drinks
there is this hunger for hunger itself
a longing eternal
there is this lightness that floats
like a cloud
this unbreakability of a
situation
there is this murmur of the femur
the chant of the brunt
nothing is full
yet nothing is empty still

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing (I Am Not Original On This)

The poor have it.
The rich do not need it.
It is more evil than the devil.
It is greater than God.
Do not eat it
For if you do,
Then you die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing About Any 4th Of July

i've seen the face of the
winner

the one who survived from that war
and his triumphant entry in the iron gates of the
old city

he is just one of us
scarred and scared and now simply wants
to stay and just be
one of us

sitting on one of the chairs in the veranda
watching the sunset
drinking beer
smoking a cigar

talking about the mundane event
how to fish
how it feels to gather shells in the seashore
how to make love
for the first time in his life

for life is simple and must be lived simply
like all the rest

nothing special, nothing exaggerated
nothing about any 4th of july

RIC S. BASTASA
inside the house of this body
there lies a treasure of
old tops
and toy cars
and
dusty dolls
a little girl owns it
but soon gives it up for
something else
a little boy loves it
but outgrows this love
for toys
outside the fence of this body
lies a dimension
beyond play
there is this distance far
from the reach of
our frozen wishes
there is this blanketed portion
like a dark umbrella
where light filters
dust
dancing like ladies
to men
like butterflies
there is a dream that hurts
because
it never becomes true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Changes

nothing changes
the silence of the guitar
placed beside
the three ripe oranges

i change.
am the one that changes
beside the
silence of the guitars
among the basket
of rotten oranges.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Compares To You

your nose is a big flat tire
but never did i tell you that there is a need to inflate
any part of it,
it is still the same nose to me
the one that i kissed
and loved
despite all the odds,

what a mess
but what a loveliness!

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Extraordinary Nothing Peculiar

i wake up early today
3 a.m.,
not for any call from
God
as though it has something
to do with the divine and
the miraculous,
telling me what to do
or his angels
for some reminders,
to be good, and kind
and compassionate,

there is nothing
extraordinary about
waking up early,
nothing peculiar really,
there is no rhyme
or even prose in this
unholy hour where
the other spirits
still roam claiming
this hour to be
still theirs rightfully,

sometimes i claim
this is pure work,
legal matters to be
finished and done
on time, or some
personal matters
to be written and
clarified, some journal
entries of my life,
for their reference when
i am gone
dead, to say the flat
word for departure,
but i think, to be honest
with you
(dear reader) i wake
up because some words
come inside my mind,

well, i admit, poems,
some more poems,

to my embarrassment
from my undisturbed friends

they ask, what have i to
do with these orphans?

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Happens By Random

there is always this intentionality of things
people and events
the leaf from a tree falls bearing the reason of the air
the river runs to the sea bringing the reason of the creeks
the sky changes its color bearing the reasons of the rain and the clouds
we all wake up
with new reasons for life
life wakes us up
always on a new beginning

we face the mirror and the mirror gives
us the reasons for going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Has Changed After You Left....

someone leaves
puts a small note
posts it on the
doors and you read
it out of curiosity and
then you shrug your
shoulder telling
yourself with a
happy note that
this world has never
changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Important.....

this is the time
actually, when i have nothing to say,
and with this predicament
i learn
to go into an imagination that somehow
the next minute
i have something important to say

to myself. I stop.
i think.
i must.

i have really nothing important to say

and i am talking to a friend
we chat
and i keep on answering with nothing
really important

i guess we are in the same boat
this broken boat of the mind

no port, no destination
in the middle of the ocean

up there sky and down here
sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing In Particular

i walk inside the mall
with nothing in mind in particular
i am just walking
that is the essence of my being here
i am this vagabond in the city
where noise is loud and so many
where people are always leaving taking rides here and there
where darkness cannot overcome the lights
of the city streets
i have nothing in my mind
nothing in particular
whatever is it
as the night deepens like a flood
of water where the dam keeps its hold
nothing overflowing
nothing in particular and you keep on following me perhaps
trying to figure out if there is wisdom in this
ah, still there is nothing in particular
just like our existence now
nothing in particular
that is the essence of all this
we keep on moving
with nothing in mind in particular
until we arrive at
nothing in particular
that is the meaning of this
nothing in particular nothing poetic
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Is Permanent In This World

the hope of pain
is that it too subsides in time
and happiness too
is anxious
the moment it comes
it thinks
of departure
much to your disgust
they are but visitors
showing
the best
and worst of their wares
moods
and actions

you think you are seeing them
nope
sadness and happiness
they look at you
and rate you

how strong are you
how humble are you
before their
temporary stay
their
faces that come and go

while you are left out
to figure
if both of them
are really true

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Is The Same

the night of love
last night
can never be the same
with another night
with you

a night of ecstasy
never copies itself
there is no replication
nothing is the same
all over again

so shall be we be
in this loving history
today is always another day
last night a memory

now is always the answer
for our longing & quiver

RIC S. BASTASA
you see
i know how to prune
a tree

how to mow
the lawn for the
grasses
have grown crowded
and tall

you see i can
lose some and win
some

i have always done
this
dropping people like
hot potatoes

i always think what is
the use of keeping
someone not looking
to the same direction
that i want

i know what is mine
and what i do not need
and what i cannot ever
love

i can change, and i can
sacrifice

losing you is my
growing up

nothing is wasted
nature is wise.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Is Wasted.

When you posted this picture of an exhausted man walking on the road alone they were worried

a friend of yours guessed that you are going home

your sister does thinks otherwise, there must be something wrong

and i, who do not know you much, a man of few words, bathing always in the silence of your dispositions, actually worries more

whatever happens, i must agree, it is all planned, and nothing is wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Is Wasted...

at night
the red ants
are taking
the last grain
of rice
to the
sleepy queen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Lasts Forever

everything
dissolves, fades

ice, sunlight,
love, hate,

indifference
cannot last

my love cannot
last without you

my longings
too cannot outlast

my capacity to
survive at last

pain pierces like
a needle in my arms

but at the end of
my fingers they

all know the exit
and close the door

of my nails, like
happy endings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Left

so i have to enter  
this door of feelings  
and lock  
this door behind me

so i have to enter  
this door of silence  
and lock  
this door behind me

surely  
when i go i take nothing  
so you  
write your name  
and keep  
it that way

nuten lep

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Makes A Difference

a marriage is going
into a mirage but to keep
this happening
one must keep an ignorance
of what is supposedly right

there is no place for something
right here
the caravan of camels keep on going
in the desert under the orange moon

oh, the sands are silent, soft and
warm, against the coldest night

those who do not know when to arrive
keeps the hope of dreams coming true

a sleep of the night under a big tent
with everyone else: same fate, same journey

and you always think there is nothing that
makes a difference....

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Matters...Nothing...

i know i waste
so much time but
i still assure myself
i have lots of it
kept in my fingertips
inside my nails
into my capillaries
in union with blood
into my system,

one wishes to feel
the numbness to own
it sometimes,
to take pride that
you are a subject
of pain and now
its own master

from this you move
higher
overcoming fences
transcending
cloudy barriers
higher and higher
into this new
awareness where
nothing, no one,
no place,
sky, thin air,
mountain tops,
sunsets to die for
matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Satiates Me No One

nothing
satiates me no one

i was born
with an emptiness in my
mouth

no one fills it
nothing

i may have
confessed love like

the way i cling to life
but there is no meaning

there as nothing
satiates me no one

i was born with the
perfection of

having nothing and
i shall die with

nothing too and that
is all the truth i

have till
the end of this journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Serious

this is fun
and fun cannot be serious
if it were otherwise
there is no fun
anymore
this is fun
anything goes
prose, poetry, essay,
a novel,
anything is fun
even thoughts can just be fun
play with a word
like it were a doll or a gun
nothing serious really
just passing the time after
a nice dinner
when the stomach gets big
and wanting rest
because of
too much eating and dining
and drinking wine
this is fun
writing, making others read
something
nonsensical, and letting them follow
something prejudicial
a letter, a metaphor like what?
a sea that does not exist?
a flower that grows where?
on this cementer pavement?
on these four walls?
on the computer screen?
a bee? how can a bee exist
in thought alone?
unless i get stung and i run
and laugh
about this misery of
boredom.
Nothing Serious About The World

you open the pc
and look at the emails
surf about the word for today
a little facebook
ten minutes
then PH
some lines to reflect upon
just like passing rain
nothing to wet much
the plants are alive
and the ants don't need
much water
the fields are green
and the skies have to be
white and patches of blue
once in a while
already make the day
a better one
you dabble and scribble
and then
off you go
into the real word of
money and work
and some cliches
and the usual
business

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing To Lose...

there will be
no blanks
all spaces filled
nothing to
leave
crowded days
occupied nights

a window for
a frame
something to
see
and contain

a door must
have no hole
fit the door knob
fill
too this
emptiness with
feelings

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing To Spill.....

we go to the mountain
without trails now

beneath the trees
there are no days and nights

we have seen the orchids
and the ferns

we heard the music from the
birds
and the excitement from all
those rare things

the fairies live there
and the unknown spirits

the old man walks without
a stick
the little boy talks like
a man

we climb uphill and we slide
down the bush
mud and leech we hush and hush
like a slush

the same rule is las vegas
is kept
what we did there stays there
nothing to spill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing To Tell, Begin With A Mermaid Story

Accept the fact
The fear that you have nothing to tell anymore
To amuse yourself

writers' block, shutting up, windows closing,
doors locked, mind shrinking,

like the fish vendor who sells rumors & rotten stories
To the streets
You go to the fish market today
Not buying any fish or selling any or even touching gills
so you can breathe

You’re looking for some
Salt
Taking notes of the fish scales discarded
Trashed
Some fish bones & broken fins

some fishermen catching
Broken hearts on their small eyed nets

You go back with fish fins
And fish tails, thicked lippes and round moving eyes

You will start with a mermaid story today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Us But Only In Between Us

In finding you
I find me, in looking for you
You look for me, so in finding you finding me,
We finally find out, there is nothing us but only
You and me finding you and me, there is really

No us, just some things between us, always finding
You and me finding you always finding two

Not one, nothing one, but always two, a separate
You finding me and me finding you in this search in futility

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing Was Unusual

the whole day
was like a whore
nothing special really
nothing so
significant like
something that may
stop my world
from spinning
everything is so boring
and unimportant
until then
when your hands
touch mine

(did you do it
with intention?)

(I did not, really,
i did not, but there
is something there
that was not there
before)

(am i sick
and sentimental?)

today i will let it pass.
let this be nothing.
but tomorrow when
you touch my hands
again,
i will not guess.

i will ask you
(are you seducing me?)

(am i getting old
not to notice this
kind of
body sale?)

tomorrow i will not let this pass.
i will not ask you.

i will get a confirmation.
(will you kiss me on the lips?)

is love an issue here?
i will not ask you.

tomorrow, if this continues,
i will give you a note.

share my bed with me.
tonight,10 pm sharp.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing, Nothing Is Wasted....

these are all my works of art
the sighs of the heart
how much time has been wasted
emotions spent
without any returns at all?

i do not mind.
The heart is a bottle of champagne
that i open
it pops out a loud sound
it is surprising everyone
here
in this small room of our existence
but then
the sparkle and the flavor and the company
drives away
all the loneliness that
we are

these are all the works of art
where the heart sings
nothing, nothing is wasted

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing?

you are everything i have
the sun where every planet in me
revolves
you are every space i have
and i am lost
in your vastness

shine on me
find me
light the darkness that engulfs me
touch me
make me live again

i am nothing without you
you are the sun and i am the emptiness that surrounds
your brightness

fill me
i am this emptiness that completes
the abundance of your heat and light

do not doubt
i am the space that completes you

and this is the irony
the paradox of which without me you are nothing too

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothing's Changed...

this afternoon i was driving my car
back home. And i was thinking something
that may change my life
totally.

i wish i can tell you since you are part of the
picture. Your face is a painting of so many words.

Life with you has been tinted. The colors simply
disappear at the first sigh of the coming of my night.

sometimes, i stop the car along the shore
and there is little hut there where i can rest and sit for a moment.

as usual it is the sea that keeps on talking.
there are so many reasons, so many

why i do not have to tell you about this.
and then i drive my car back home and meet you.

another beginning
of another life, and as usual the conclusion is that
nothing must be changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nothings Lasts Forever

i

the termites are happy
for i have chosen wood,
and learning my lesson
i use steel
the sea breeze sings
with its salt

ii

the cement may be the solution
or the asphalt
and yet my mind changes
wanting to break the hardness
of the stuff

iii

i like things that last
they say i must have the diamonds

oh! something that we cannot eat?

iv

the body turns to dust
the soul escapes
ideas even on paper
meet the burning

v

footprints on the sand
eaten by the waves
a new slate is ready
i step again and again
now i do not really mind
what prints are there
what word is spoken
what ideas grow

RIC S. BASTASA
Notification Of The Death Of Alberto

cousin lauro need not complain
about obituaries
i am tired of his myriad pretenses
this time he says he does not know the address
neither the time of the funeral,
baloney, i sent him the notice two days ago
when he said he was in Tacloban attending
to a business meeting, urgent as it was,
now his baby is sick
but alberto's funeral pushes through
in the rain, black umbrellas open
lauro is not here again
perhaps, he is dead, somehow, we wish
for his uncalled for
indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
Noumenon

a thing-in-itself:

a wicker basket is a wicker basket
you cannot place love there, perhaps just plain fruits and flowers
and perhaps even nothing

because a wicker basket is a wicker basket
nothing more nothing less

in the same manner, i am what i am
and you are what you are

what we feel for each other
or perhaps what i feel you alone
or only
is what i only feel
nothing more and nothing less

if i go somehow inventing that you shall love me
how absurd can this be!

for you are what you are and i am what i am
nothing more and nothing less

and so thanks, i am what i am and i will always be what i am
and you are you, and you do not know me,

and if i bleed, it is i who bleed only or alone
and i have no right to let you know because you are what you are
and you shall never love me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Novameco A Journey

You are lost and you’re telling me you are lost
And you are so afraid about doing things in the usual ways

So you come out from your window
You do not use the door
Or the stairs because as you said you do not like to things
In the most usual ways

You are tired of the usual ways and they do not appeal to your
Sense of exciting
Journey

A journey to the unusual to the unknown desert to the undiscovered
Ways
When you go home tonight you shall take the path of stars
As you wonder
To this place

Where there are not stairs no doors no windows
Where there is no house

And you take the journey alone and there will be no directions
You will like it

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Decide To Fly Away From The Home Of The Pigs

everything has been concealed
for years
i have lived with the pigs
in the mud
and ate the left-over foods
of our masters

but then today
i feel the feathers growing on my side
i have strong wings
my claws are pushing in my feet
no longer hoofs
and hair

the wind from the sea
breaks the truth it brings

on my beak is the break
once upon a time a seagull lost an egg in the pigsty
unaccounted

i was that egg

i am a seagull now
to the full
of my potentials

goodbye brother pigs now i must fly away to the farther seas
to the higher skies

my destiny

RIC S. BASTASA
i have to content myself
with temporary reliefs thinking that it gives me
an extension of time
a pinch of this salt
a crumb of pearl
a grain of sugar

to walk with life and not stop
as it goes on alone with its journey even without me,

i shut the window of eternity
and please myself with what is so temporary in my room
on my pillow that rests my head
in sweeter sleep

there are fewer tears shed rather than the anxieties that go
with living beyond what i still clasp within my hands
my fingers still fidgety
over what is next

i know what is there beyond me but you cannot blame me
for settling for less
because it is too far yet and here i am
still bouncing with the pinkness of my age,
the reddish cheek that i still have
on my face

the wild thoughts that like horses in the pastures of my mind

in short if eternity is true
and the sacrifice is too much

i guess i have to take it later
and for the meantime settle with the
whiteness of this chicken egg
at the center of the scarlet
table
waiting for my hungry mouth
to eat
there is a time for everything
do not blame me for grabbing what is now
this relevance
and touchable
hardness

dthis is the moment that may take me there
who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Do Not Complain...

I know your predicament
it is all hazy
something is intentionally made obscure
purposely to conceal
what is highly
confidential and personal
on the other hand
there is a certain need for venting
of suppressed anger
like she is a piece of old meat
inside a pressure cooker
tenderized
and finally dead
and those that touch her
feels that she is good
to eat.

do not attempt to understand
pain, there is no use
it will not take you to light
and you are not prepared for
the dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Do You See Why I Live?

i am not a magnet
i am just your plain mocking bird
and i do not like to attract people

i am not strange
but i know how to be one
just for the
heck of it

Dum
Dum
Dum

i like to beat the drum!

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Going Back To A Little Seriousness About Life

i have give you a list of games
a to z, back to z then a, and you gape at me
unable to believe,
finding it so hard to believe that in the middle of the city
during a blackout i can be
another black dog with eyes gleaming like
a pen light roaming around
a black canvass inside the movie house
where each hungry city dweller is looking for
something to hold
to eat and puke.

now going back to where we once were,
we never made us
they made us to do things that we do not really do
the way we did it,
we are constrained to escape from the doorsteps
of restraint,
and be free birds, white
in visions, twittering on sky blue skies

now going back to what we are....
where are we really?

i am serious. Are we not lost?
in the middle of this darkness where we think we are no longer stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Know Why It Must Rain Sometimes

there is no significance at first
when age is a little boy, the moon is the moon
nothing else, the wind is like anybody's wind
mother's breaths, like a pillow,
such a small world, of less significance
are the little things, unaccounted
laughters are laughters, sighs are sighs,

but today, the metaphors keep hovering
over my hair, like some flowers in my dreams
turning into butterflies, somehow,
the window becomes a framework of
my future, the door an opportunity
that i, as a pair of hands, must either close
or open,

dthis is it, every word is accounted and saved
and then something grows,
seeds are words now, and the flowers my deeds.

it rains sometimes, a cry for an unburdening.
sleep is again cruel to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Know Why She Loves Dogs

it is her
favorite

the doggie

her uterus
is retroverted

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Must Recall

now i must recall
because i am no longer afraid of my own shadow

it was about the door
that was not locked and without knocking
you opened it

there were no black clouds
only the white sheen of light coming from my body
i was naked and you saw it
it may not have been so good to you
not as beautiful as you perceived me
when i was fully clothed
by the sun

it was a shame you said once
i wanted to forget that and bury it like dung
you never spoke a word
but i know that you have seen it

it was my fault
but now i think i should not be ashamed
about some slips of my flesh
squirting bubbles into the air of our prisons
fluids rushing like unexpected rain

one dark night
the moon bleeds a dim light

it was as though i were the finch perched on a lonely branch
when all the leaves have fallen

bluntly, i must tell you
if you must remember
now that i have the courage to hold my own hips
it was not a shame
because it was the truth about my being

did we not tell ourselves
that one thing about the truth is that it is beautiful?

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Remember It....

there is this cup
shaped like the mouth of a woman
and there is this emptiness
air-like, light, and
soft,
it fills in
but it shall never satisfy
there is this longing
that we know
and nothing satisfies it
we still have
no word to describe it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now I Remember What Happiness Is

What comes to my
mind often when i look
out the window is
this flowerpicker pecking
upon a ripe guava on that
eyearly morning

now i remember
what happiness is

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Let Us Begin

man if he is true to be man, is more real if he is at first
less of himself, when he is empty, when he is emptied,
when he is emptying. It is like the stomach, you feel it more
when it is empty rather than when it is full
it speaks to you when it is hungry

it grunts
it growls
it even howls
and sometimes it whistles

than when it is bloated with so much food
and wine and se in hunger, in the hopelessness
of our state, in the emptiness of our being
we know where we will place

everything.

we will know our dreams, we meet our hopes,
for the first time
we know precisely when to wish,
and where to put them

when we are emptying,
when we are emptied
and now we are sure when we are filling.

let us begin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Speak About Love

after the pain
now speak about love

i told her that she must now speak
about Love,

the love of a man crazy about her,
or her mother on a love unconditioned upon something else
the love of society,
the love of her siblings, the love of her daddy,

after the pain, i ask her to speak about love
after her husband left her, after no man henceforth

or any eye cast a glance on her wrinkled,
furrowed, harrowed, hollowed soul

she does not speak, for now, after the pain, after the harrowing experience,

to love she cannot speak, to silence she got married.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Stop, Face Reality

you have shown me
how to convert
this newspaper strips
into money

how this flower
turns into a white
rabbit

how the rabbit turns
into a hat

then back to a newspaper
strips again

magician, i am tired
of your illusions
how your hands
deftly deceived my
weaker eyes

now i have my last request
please perform this magic:

make yourself disappear.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now Tell Me About The Happy People?

alone, despite your presence
i always feel alone, despite the fact
that i have given your parts of myself,
piece by piece, you remove
my body, and then
now, you try to snatch away my
soul, we want a union,
of all these pieces, so we will
not be alone anymore, but that is
never true, inside you
in the most intimate moment
i groaned, i wriggled, i
exploded, only to find myself
this ash, this powder
of a self, all alone again,
and so i ask you, where do you think are
the happy people now?

so they are dead?
too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now That I Write With Windows Closed

and thick curtains
hang

morning
and here i am
in
a dark room

still writing
lines that do not tease
and inspire

unwashed face
and sounds of brooms
sweeping outside

and motors shouting
and people's feet

on a sunday
in a market

breakfast
served and waiting

by the housemaid
unspeaking

you write the last line
it is enough

things are meant
to begin again

this day, remove
the curtains
open the windows

take a walk
and think of some reasons

why you must go
why she is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Now That The Door Is Closed...

do not challenge me
into this game
of forgetting

the way to ignore
is no longer new
to me

it has become an art
the way to erase faces
on walls

to put names on paper
and then burn them

do not tell me who i am
i know myself well

i have given much
you see i never asked something
in return

so you are never a part of myself
if you were

you were such a stain
and i do well with what should
now be invisible

now that this door is closed
do not utter my name.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now That The Storm Is Gone

now that the storm is gone
brace yourself
do not just stand there
and be amazed
by the sea looking like
a slate of a very
clean paper
without a crease

the boat is waiting
the sun is shining

let us sail and move
where this life shall take us....

RIC S. BASTASA
Now That You Are Not Here

Now, my world is calm,

like a silky sea in the boulevard
where a man sails on his boat
fishing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now That You Have Entered The Palace Of Peace

now that you have entered
the palace of peace
my son, the burden of taking
the cudgels of the cold lines
in your mind is hereby lifted.
you shall take one of the
seats reserved for you,
taste the wine of peace,
drink, you have passed the test.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now The Amor Seco

at the football field
where the players
are either dead
or missing
or sick and still
dying

the amor seco

blameless for
those who come
by reason
of loneliness

shot by their
false bullets
the pants
too have anger

today, defenseless
the amor seco
annihilated like
unarmed soldiers
of our weaker state

RIC S. BASTASA
Now The Mysteries Unfold

the budding is over
the petals start to unfold
and you are there
to see what these
flowers have been
hiding all through
the years of your patient
presence

petals as black as the
hair of a mad woman
scent as foul as dead
rotting fish on the shore

RIC S. BASTASA
Now They Know How To Bite And Make A New Kill

those who are dying
have most of the courage
and so like a molting cobra

tHEY shed off
everything that is old
and with all pain wears
a new body

a shiny color of themselves
shining bravely against
the sun

and do not get near them
by now they know how to bite
and make a new kill
instead of being killed

RIC S. BASTASA
Now We Can Talk

for i have already much
inside my mouth
and i am full.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Are Perfected

there is always death
coming
death has always
been here with us

it is silent and does not
say anything
it is us
in this delirium fearing him

we talk too much
until we are silenced by
death
and death still is silent

it knows
what the ripe time is
it knows
where it is taking us

it knows
that is why it is silent
it knows pretty well
that soon when we completely know

it, we shall soon agree completely
it is beautiful as it is silent
as silence is beautiful

it is filled with so much wisdom
as wisdom is silent with its beauty

it is the only truth
that we must abide

and after that ordeal of pain and
worries
needlessly the anxiety of the unknown
that is spread under our
feet

we are victorious with it
we passed
as we passed away
we join those who are silenced too
in full wisdom and
beauty

dead shall tell you
now you are perfected.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Begin To See The Colors Of My Painting In Words

sadness is painted in some words
that go like a monologue
stuttering at times like one grasping
for breath and yet
still wanting to say more,

you know at first glance
seeing some syllables
about what i feel.......today, the anger that gropes
for words

explosives and
screaming soul while the storms rage on the corner
of the shores

then you ask, needlessly, the words speak for themselves
how is it here

they picture my jagged jaw, my eyes that shout
and curse

sometimes i am surprised with the way my senses
are born
remembering the first cry, the first slap

how it was
for a mother to see my first encounter with reality
how it was

that i have succeeded to simply forget

the colors of the poems i have written last night
screaming red turning to patient blue
and then silent green

and then that feeling of having control
with the purples feeling noble
and the orange still
promising to live for another day

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Cannot Find Us Anymore...

you were made
to choose

us or that
which you said

has provided you
with all the

much needed
security

and you did
not choose us

and now you
cannot find us

anymore for we
too when you had

chosen shall lose
you in return

between justice
and love we too

have chosen: it
is not both it is

either or and
it was painful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Must Remember

that the tree which shed all its leaves
have the fingers which touched us both
when we were under it taking the cool
shade and partaking a love forbidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Shall Write Your Own Poems

You have grown well
Soft hands
A Tender heart
A reflective mind
Going over the past
And finding something
Some gems
And they glitter
In your memory
Now, you shall write about them
They shall speak to you
And you shall listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You Want To Recompense Me With Theoritical Sex

what i have inside my hand though too little
is always greater than what you can promise till next time

as Heidegger says or Kant if you remember
an actual dollar bill in my hand is always greater and real than the
thousand dollars in your mind

you want to recompense me with theoritical sex every night
this cyber sex and all these dialogues of our sexes
what does it compare with the actual kiss on my lips

my night that time with you would have been completely
perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now You, Too, Think I Am What My Poems Say.

i know that your poems are you,
they always say a lot
from the bottom of your heart
i have always felt
what you want to tell
not just me but to this
world,

i must admit now,
without reservations
without any motive
for any evasion,

i am too, what my poems
say
about me, i am too what
my poems think, about me,

i am my poem
and i am true

i think you are your poems too
verily true

we feel it
as we read these poems
ourselves

some scars have become too visible,
some lies straightened
smoother this time, and have become shy
like convicts of some crimes
duly proven &
judged.

RIC S. BASTASA
Now,

Things change
The seasons constantly
Change
Jeans fade
Roads close in
Parallels meet
Look at you now
Not having taken charity
I do not remember much kindness

I am treating you for a drink
Silently to every sip
I savor your indifference

RIC S. BASTASA
Now, Now, New

Things change
The seasons constantly
Change
Jeans fade
Roads close in
Parallels meet
Look at you now
Not having taken charity
I do not remember much kindness

I am treating you for a drink
Silently to every sip
I savor your indifference

The world has turned upside
Down

You are now my new found black bat

RIC S. BASTASA
Now, Who's To Blame?

from the very start
you started it with a wrong notion
you were looking at the roof
you were attracted by the stars on the ceiling
you gaze at the furniture and the
figurines on the living room
huge, human like'

then you gave them the wrong impression
you were mumbling a lot of reasons
you made them believe you

time is not your ally
it reveals what is hidden

time proves you wrong
there are no stars left for they have all been taken
by the moon and sky

the furniture is after all the property of the termites
and the figurines all fake
those huge human like creatures turn out to be
stuffed apes

now you want to cry a sea of tears
but you cannot
your heart wants to erupt into a volcanic sob
you cannot
you force out a smile to prove time wrong
you exude laughter
sounding like a can with pebbles inside its belly

you are a wise man
all of them shall believe you again
now, cry baby, inside the secret room of your heart
freeze the tears

wise man, blame yourself.
Now....

around you are
tense people
the prosecutor is
having a hard time
finding the right
words
the accused looks
down and from time
to time stares
at you, and you look
back, stoic, and
indifferent like a
wall
you have the eyes
of the sand,
the rest are silent
focused on the
proceeding,
a child cries but
then her mother
carries her away from
that gloom,
there are no more
reasons for
fear,
you give a smile,
not so profound,
and then you say
let us begin again.

where are we now?
you stress the word:
just now. Now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nowhere. Miss M.

she went to the city
looking for an encounter.
miss m.
she went to the mall
and waited for
a wink.
miss m.
she went to the park
when it was dark
waiting for silence.
miss m.
she had noise all over.
the horns of the cars
the fast paces of steps.
the rush of bodies.
the shouts of vendors.
and pimps and middlemen
and the last ride towards
nowhere.
miss m.
she had met everyone.
but she had never
someone.
miss m.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nuclear Meltdown...

the first melting you experience is an ice cream
the vanilla and strawberry melting
under the summer sun
and you have fun licking each sweet delight,

now, have a reality check with man's craze
over instant energy it has indulged in nuclear reactors
on top of earthquake threats or fault lines

don't they have that prognostic sense?

now, the people have to suffer
it is not about ice cream it is about
the loss of lives of children and women
and every living thing within the harmful radius of radiation.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Nude In The Mirror

on a cold night
blood rushes in my head

lust blushes
and love says it cares

and ask that
we be tender and gentle to this

hugs and kisses
bodies rubbing and hands caressing

playing the music of desire
on the piano  keys of the body

trembling at first and
then softens to give in to the dance

of love
eyes closed one sees the color of the world

beyond the imagination of light
the wind knows

what the dark night is adoring
mutuality, respect and openness

and then the closeness
breathtaking

a series of explosions
unhindered by your warm touch

and licks and fullness
of tongues unspeaking but

understanding the need and the
flight of two souls
fusing as one and then melting
flowing like syrup of honey

on the side of the glass
dip and sip and swallow the most

beautiful moment and then
the satisfying fullness of silence

sweet so sweet

RIC S. BASTASA
Nude Woman In The Room Alone

her body against the dim light
of the lampshade
shaped by the rays of
the dimming light of the room
she is tired and sleeps her face down
the red linen
her spine is a boat in the sea
her buttocks the round hills ashore
her hair is the bouquet of flowers
her legs are paths
and rivers
her silence is the loveliness of the night
unequaled by the sweetness of the sound
of desire meeting love

the suspense is on the waiting of the knock
tonight love like a river seeks the sea of
fulfillment
soon, the male moon
soon the stars and the masculine winds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nudity

it rains, comes monsoon
tonight and i am alone

i undress and go outside
the house, ousting pride

forgive my nudity, my vow,
this is all i have for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Numb And Number

she keeps on waiting
he is numb

but not really dumb
he is just numb and getting number

numbers come like some significant
ages and hints or guides

as he get number still as she keeps waiting for more
of what does not come

he is not really dumb and neither is she
as she keeps on waiting for what does not come

she is asleep now
as he enters the room with all the lights

off.

RIC S. BASTASA
Numb Arms

numb arms
a pain on the neck
tired feet
and fractured
bone on the hip
failing sight and
losses of memory

they ask you
if surrender is
reasonable

you tell your ear
move on move on
till dust till dusk

RIC S. BASTASA
Numb Heart

i am glad
to have learned the art
of self-denial

when i see another one
of your kind
i have been able to control
the self
that lurks above my head

the one that blows fire
the one that kills lust
and sad to say

love included. Sad
but that is the truth.

now, shall be i be another loveless
shadow searching for its body
one dark afternoon when
all the light of the day
is finally gone?

RIC S. BASTASA
Numb...

the pig is butchered
and one hears the usual
scream

if screams you call it
the screams of
helplessness

of death of a
fat pig
just like all deaths of
the living

but
the images of roast
and fries
keep us

from
sympathizing about
its plight

RIC S. BASTASA
Numbed Guts

the gut is full of
shattered pieces

those that make you
remember nails

the feel of thorns
and porcupines

time has a way of
numbing guts

and then pain is nothing
but recurrences

you have no name for it
but survival

you go on talking the paths
with nothing but

the moon above you
and the silence of the earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Number Games

one is sick.
two is acceptable.
three is not.
four is too friendly.
five is a pity.
six is empty.
seven is lucky,
eight is progressive.
nine is accommodating.
ten is perfect.

eleven is shopping.
twelve is apostolic.
thirteen is superstitious.
fourteen is risky
and so is fifteen
sixteen is ripe
eighteen is legal
nineteen is regal
twenty is full.

continue
counting the sheep
until you get
a very sound sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Numbing The Senses

Everything that is repeated
is numbing the senses
flattens our energy into a plateau
where we then think that
there is nothing to challenge us
anymore

happiness can be boring too
and we travel to look for sorrow
and when sorrow is there
everyday in that plains where
there are only stones and grass
no signal for the phone

and even if you are with someone
who tickles your heels
where Achilles dwells
the stupor comes like an
enemy uninvited to your party
that night

sorrows come like a parade of
sad beauties and you begin to love
each of them

and there is a time when happiness
comes too

it is surprising, you don't like it
anymore

perhaps, you have changed
into a practical man now

delving on the reality of the masses
where you are a stone in that pavement
of everydayness.
we do not invent feelings
feelings make us, that is how helpless we can be sometimes
when we let that be
but somehow when we feel too pushed
to that edge
we rebel against our own feelings that have deceived us for years
and so we begin
sometimes to manipulate feelings
reinvent them and
from said creations we rearrange what we are
and what we can be

less the feelings we are looked up to as the most
realistic
successors of this earth
its deserving
inheritors

we have so many look-a-likes
rivers that flow without their minds on their direction
they just follow the path of least resistance
mountains that grow peaks without thinking
that heaven can be pierced
plains that spread without their hands and arms
occupying what we think is unnecessary

rocks and cliffs and sands and gravel
we are their gods now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Numbness: Spiritual Dryness

currently,
this happens, when the body
in extreme delights, after that night,
after the heat and fire,
rests, sleeps, and dreams
and the soul is out there
nowhere
no longer belonging
to the temple
in space it roams
without a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Nurturing That Broken Heart ...

at that moment when i have learned to forget you
it was then when i begin to feel the numbness of my loins
the uselessness of those between us,
i feel nothing but air in this body, as light as burnt paper floating higher and scattering its black ash on the blades of grass,
desire died, all systems off,
i wake up in the morning even forgetting my name
i walk past the streets heading to the office
all the people are faceless all the buildings are sketches
the usual sound of the traffic are babbles of the mad man
in ward 8, that nervous breakdown that xanor failed to save
a scene never reconstructed
days are numbers, hours run too fast,
i have grown more white hairs due to massive denials,
i send a letter, i will be on leave for days, taking vacations somewhere no one knows,
it is like i am squeezing all the pain like all the juice from an orange
i am the peel without substance now,
i am nothing
the trashcan is laughing claiming me again.

RIC S. BASTASA
O God!

you never really mind
how a finger dips itself in honey
how the tongue was able to lick the tip of the nail
how the arm moves in a dance
and the feet tap and tip the whole night
how the hips sway all those lefts and rights
till morning
you never scrutinized the nerves where they live
and thrived
their roots and tips
their lapses and synapses

until one morning when each part
sends you the messages of pain which are so excruciating
that you begin to mention the name of
God

RIC S. BASTASA
O I Desire You

moon with the black hair of the night
ablaze with stars
i desire you

i lay naked by the side of the river
i am bathed by your golden light

come, come, hover on top of me
let us make love, let us make love

RIC S. BASTASA
O Imagery....

there was once
this lady friend of mine
who eventually turned
into a man,

she wrote in objects

stone-man, orange-head,
clay heart, balcony dreams,

fork tongued, lady fingers,
ginger toes,

spindle hair, snake eyelashes,
lemon moon,

despite our distance
i too wrote her that with all
these images

i think i understand her
perfectly well.

meteor brain, grave shift,
paper principles, love words.

RIC S. BASTASA
O! Grief!

grief

the rain starts falling
softly

on your hair as we step
outside

how can my hands
prevent you from getting wet?

just like grief
is this rain, that starts to fall and stops a while

and falls again and much to chagrin
we have never really learned

this cycle of pain,
this grief that behaves like rain

wets us and makes us shiver to cold
but we keep on going trying to find

once again a very warm
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
O.

o
so round
thy magical
sound
like
om ohmm omm
lotus and moon
and obelisk
and oh
my God
Oh
in the poetry
of looking
at ovals
and poplars
poppies
and pops.

RIC S. BASTASA
Obras De Arte

it is all art
there is not much intelligence
all decors
nothing functional like a picture
of a garden of roses
there is no scent
just words imagining the world
of their existence somewhere
it is all style
there is no bread and butter and
coffee
tea is prohibited and
smoking sometimes is allowed
as coping up
mechanism so with a little drink
that takes another drink
beer, rum,
vodka and the tequila against
the rising sun
in the desert

obra maestra he will justify it
no lasting
but keeps on saying
something too trivial
sometimes is too precious
that it is not
for sale

only for reading.

RIC S. BASTASA
Obscenity

Cristina Davis says:

She said, I love you.

He said, Nothing.

(As if there were just one of each word and the one who used it, used it up).

In the history of language the first obscenity was silence.

This nobody says:

what was obscene really what was said first before the silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Observations Of The Man With A Broken Heart
Spending Summer In A Getaway Beach

mother finally decided
to transfer his son to another
school in the busy city
there was something that she saw
and she did not like it

the son knows it
but like her says nothing about it
all the people saw it
but no one dares to mention it

tabooes are silent pebbles
gritting to the coldness of the waves
not hurting to the eyes
but the ears are intolerant

it is during summer
that the pebbles begin to wear their angry eyes
the sands borrow the glitter of diamonds
the air is humid like a frigid woman

the trees shed off leaves
and grasses begin to wilt
the sea in its silence
has told more stories than the babbling kid

RIC S. BASTASA
to believe that there are heights to my own glory
is no longer possible.

On that day in that room, where they wear
all their thick glasses, their hands have already done
what should not have been done.

I was weak, and my mouth did not open.
They kill every poem i had in my palms.
They were doves.
They said they were bats.
Black bats.
No, i said they are the whitest doves i have.
They are even angels.
They were laughing.
Some giggled.

And they
said, 'Crucify him, crucify him! '

IT was an obsession.
That i have butterflies on my hair.
That there were
red roses in my fingers.

There were none, in fact.
What i had are mere words.
Syllables of my survival.

When i left that room, i did not admit that it was my mistake.
Far from that,
i look again at my hands in the mirror,
and i saw

vines, fragile tendrils, and they are so alive, like
dragonflies.

One understands somehow, that we write, not because we want
to have a brand, a name, a tattoo
a heart, a rose, an arrow, blood dripping

NO. That is not so. We write because we are here and our fingers are always incomplete.

We press our palms on our chest and we say
Look i love myself, and this all i got.

Let me write and let it all be about for those thick glasses
Inside that rules are not mine.

I have mine only to give.

RIC S. BASTASA
Obsession, Compulsion,

when we do not care
even outside the fence
the vines shed off flowers
leaves
what will be left are
dry roots
bravely sticking on the
walls
black ants moving too
away
each morning some dews
care for a visit
but it is the most normal thing
that happens
no talk
there is no conversation
in the world of the living
acidic guts
bitter choices
something is coming
we fear
it is shadowing us
on open mouths with sharp teeth
about to eat us

RIC S. BASTASA
Obsessions Of The Lost Man

i

at the lobby of the manila hotel
you sit on one of the glossy chairs
you hold a square note in your hand
you want to tear it
you sit still and keep on waiting

for no one.

ii

you look at those things near you
closely scrutinizing the
big round Greek pillar
tracing the veins of the pastel brown marble

it speaks a history of this place
the previous war
where your father was the traitor

iii

a compass in your hand
a letter that you have just read
a glass of wine

a silence of your lost world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Obsessive-Compulsive Poetry

poetry, you turn
me on
i am hard, poetry
you bump
on me, i am hard
as a rock, poetry
you lay beside me
like his desire,
you suck,
poetry, you run away
and
regret, poetry you
come back,
spelling
forgiveness and
repeating
lines that were
said before
like a chant of
a Buddhist monk
Om Om Om
OmyGod!
I just come.

RIC S. BASTASA
Obviously  Older Than You Babe...

she stretches her breast
as a way of confirming that the duo
are longer than her hair
sagging
like the way she thinks for
herself now
a train of thought dragged
into nowhere
nothing definite where is the
next stop....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ocean Canvas

grey shoreline
light blue sea
at the end dark blue horizon

shadows of trees
on the other side
farther a hazy dot
the island of Apo

a seagull flies
dissolves to the hazards
of distance

RIC S. BASTASA
Ocean Mist, This One Blurs Me, Misty Eyed On The Beach

well here we are,
in the middle of this ocean
of our respective
existences,

you are on your own
now,
i sail too,
this trip of mine
we catch a
glimpse
of the coming rain, the clouds thickening
over the sea
the horizon blurring
with mists,

like cold smoke
rising from the ice
of our glass filled
with sparkling
wine

we are in this foggy
part of
our thinking
you puzzle me
i like to think some more

who can you be
now infected by
yours truly
writing poetry
as you hide
in the thick ocean mist

blue haze
above salt
reducing
visibility

let nature spray some more
mist
like perfume in her handkerchief

dim like some dead stars
and darken
this universe
obscure the moon
blur my senses
i will try
seeing you
and your shadow
sweet
to my expectancies
of a disciple
draining some thoughts
of your past

let the mist of ignorance
dissolve in sunshine
let the haze of our eyes
clear a little bit
with our touch
to the truth
suspend impression
like liquid in gas

pour more liquor
over cracked ice
so i can have a
good sense of
your blue mist

a vaporizer can do more
adding moisture
to the air we want
to breathe
these harsh times
rain in very fine drops;

drizzle, do not fizzle
diffuse yourself finely
like a jet of water

replacing what humanity
lost

let us moisten with mist
this dryness of our
own distant worlds

ocean mist
i have a name, it is put alive
in the serving of
ice cubes on clear glass
soon hear the voices
of cracks

RIC S. BASTASA
Ocean Park Hongkong

it was not the Panda
or that giant jellyfish glowing with it stings inside that giant aquarium,
no, no, not the dancing dolphins
not the friendly sea lions,
not the thrill of the gigantic hot air balloon,

i must admit it was you who was not there with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Octavian This Time

motionless. this is the circle. you are out.
motionless. open,
parenthesis, i am inside, i am a pause, i am enclosed,
close parenthesis, and you are out. ousted. a bird, a pigeon, born to fly
to get the bud, and tell me, there is peace on the land,

trance. my tongue shrinks inside my throat. i am silent.
i keep things inside. they are gifts of silence. i treasure them
inside my heart, they become my priceless treasures.

my hands. do you touch them like greek gods? what do you offer?
a goat, a calf, a turtledove. rise up, and be a star. reborn,
a chasm, you fall, and you keep on falling,
darkness, and light, getting married in that chasm, and you
are there cradled between them

light. so much light. blindness. gaze. stare. close and sleep.
you ask, where are we? where i am taking you? you ask if i am still
holding your hand?

through your eyes. this is the passage of time. through your eyes.
leaves. flowers. clouds. the sun kissing the mountain top.
let all these stay. in your heart. let them sing about the birds
that build their nests in your dreams.

we arrived. we shall now leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Octavio

'I begin with two words that all men have uttered since the dawn of humanity:

thank you
for the poems that elevate us beyond ourselves
thank you
for the new world that we have gone into
thank you
for destroying the walls and borders of this world
thank you
for making us marvel beyond the ordinariness of our lives
thank you
for letting us see the stars above us
thank you
for making us understand that there are still things that we do not understand
and yet  so transcending
beyond politics
beyond history
beyond time
that despite the oscillations the link has not been broken
man and God, man and man, man and his world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Octavio 2

'If you are the morning tide
   I am the first bird's cry'

i see the bird crying
   in her
i see the morning tide
   in you

   let me reverse
you and her

   let me make you
   feel
what is it to be like her

   let me know
   how poetry heals

RIC S. BASTASA
'We pursue modernity
in her incessant metamorphoses
yet we never manage to trap her.
She always escapes:
each encounter ends in flight.
We embrace her and
she disappears
immediately:
it was just a little air.

It is the instant,
that bird that is everywhere
and nowhere.

We want to trap it alive
but it flaps its wings
and vanishes
in the form of a handful
of syllables.

We are left empty-handed.
Then the doors of perception open slightly
and the other time appears,
the real one we were searching for
without knowing it:
the present,
the presence.'

RIC S. BASTASA
Odd...

it must be
hurting, though, a little bit,
he wonders
why every time he logs on
the rest logs out, or
he doubts, when he is

each name changes to
offline

as though he is
infected with a contagious
disease...

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To A Backbiter

tell me
how do you pick up the pieces of
 cotton that you spread in the air
from the pillow
that you stab with the sharpness
and length of the knife
that is your tongue?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To A Poetry Teacher

she was the one
who introduced me to Shelly

that Ode to the
West Wind still sticks to my
brain

she was brown
and petite
articulate and
witty

the last time i saw her
was at the Chong Hua Hospital

eaten by cancer
cheeks sunk
dark eyes
the almonds in my mine

they say she was
a fighter
they say that she herself
her story
is at best
literature alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To A Seagull

rising from oneself
to the highest
sky
alone flying and
diving
and those who
watch
thought that this
is plain nonsense
for that seagull
may finally shatter
its bird's head
to a rock
it is not as simple
as that
the seagull has
learned the trick
of smashing itself
on the water
like a rocket
with a fuel at
its back

to speed to art
to life!

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To A Strict Lifestyle Of The Past

‘twas the cruel time
with grandpa when dropping a grain
of rice on the table cloth is such a big crime
when you like to eat but you cannot swallow
the food
when you like to drink but the water tasted
as bitter as bile
when the conversations on the dining table
are shallow as affection is strange
as nothing becomes more important
than a future
not be be bound in the house anymore
when papa did not do anything
when mama simply sobbed
and stayed silence
and surrendered everything to God

all we waited is the blackness of the night
black because death is indifferent
because time is not a rescuer
of those who sank into
the bottom
of despair

i recall all these cruel times now
upon a grain of white rice
upon a coffee deprived of milk and sugar
upon a bread without the butter
upon a naked table
scratched with a knife
stained with tears

i look over the window
and stare at the black butterfly merely passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To Erotica

i was prude enough
to deserve their hate
when i avoided you
erotica
my hands are bound
to the old religion
contrasting commands
between the voice of
my thighs
the contractions of my
scrotum
and the call of love
the freedom of
erotica
in the forest where the
trees tower
reaching for the skirts
of the clouds
erotica
you are so beautiful
red grapes are your
lips with dew
on a very cold morning
i shed off my skin
thrown my clothes
i feel the air all over
my body
erotica
you come to me
for i am bound by the
chains of wrong beliefs
about my fire
i am burning now
erotica
be my fire
burn me more
like molten magma
i am an eruption
right in the your beautiful
face
erotica.
i am man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To Francis

we live by this
great adage
that self-preservation
is the first law

this life
of humanity which wars
have attempted to
annihilate
have survived so far
for all those years

the warriors fight and
they all die
but life simply buries
itself only for a while

bacteria move and grow
viruses mutate
and we do not even know
what lurks there
in the depths of the
sea

after the war when
all those courageous
perish
the first thing you
hear
is the mother's cry

in the crib of all
ruins
another baby smiles....

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To Gergeo

before he dies
as he did, young as he was,
the truth in some way
must be told, but not
in the manner that is
harsh, foremost to
his most beloved
mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To My Gecko

at night the gecko
overfeeds
itself with the delights
of cockroaches
in the attic of the
old house
where antiques and
family heirlooms
are kept

i switch on the light
and there the gecko
stares at me and it makes me
happy to see it
full and happy

when i sleep and rest my head
on the pillow
the gecko sings again
on the roof
looking at the moon and stars
against the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To The Green Grass Of Summer

green green grass
spreading slowly on the path
of my feet
treaded upon
such green beauty
covering once
this dust, this mud,
this plain expanse
of ugliness

i sing the song
of green green grasses
spreading thinly on
the pavement

grasshoppers
and ants and some worms
yes, the green green grasses
are still their home

patches of earth
from far
you may see
this stitches
of moss
a landscape
of this earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To The Spinster...

you know much better
i will not argue, so, you build your own house
choose the kind of wood
what color of paint is used
how things must be
everyday, you decide
you accept things as they are
and ready already for
any eventuality: that loneliness
has been converted to
solitude

you have nephews and nieces
too many, yet to no one
has you entrusted your future
or your present life

you reason out
they too, have lives of their own
they are the children of their
own plans
the makings of their own thoughts
and the shape of
their own visions

you walk alone along the shores of
time
complete and self-sufficient
you want to touch their lives sometimes
but your second thoughts prevail
you have your own life to live
the design of your own
house
architected by your own hands
this heart that beats for no
one
but you, and you alone, at the end
embracing your own self
against the strong wind.
RIC S. BASTASA
Ode To The 'X' World....

in his life
one moment
he saw two colors of same light
mixing
in the darkness of
his room
there is joy
in the fusion of that sameness
in tones and
depth
no one is watching it with
delight
except him
perhaps it is that sameness within him
that puts the
understanding of
extreme bliss

the rest of the shadows there
left
and outside the room
he hears the sound of
vomit

there is indeed a big difference
a wide gap
a chasm
that is what they only see
and they conclude
there is no love in that chasm
but only use
and disuse
there is nothing gentle in there
but force
with so much begging for more
understanding
that one may simply have to close
two eyes and feel
and forget and be lost in another
world
where no one seems to survive

there is this prison where one wants to
stay forever
because outside its walls
what can exist is only discrimination

RIC S. BASTASA
Oedipus

how he married his own mother
and killed his own father
was what he avoided
but the same happened

it is as though
they all come to him
without notice and his eyes
did not have the power to see

so he plucked them out
from its sockets
and roamed the earth
blindly

yes, destiny
happens and happens
without our
approval

it is like a door
closing itself
when darkness
comes
and opens itself
again
when light arrives

and sometimes
we do not understand
we do not like
the way things
happen

and destiny grins
right in front
of our eyes
wide open
as though telling us
'you see?'

RIC S. BASTASA
Of All The Stars In The Night Sky

hello.

of all the stars in the dark sky
you are the farthest

the tiniest
and the finest

your glow though far
makes my heart soar like a rocket on the fourth of July

(sigh)
and then gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of All The Words

of all the words
love is beautiful and life is promising

what you left was only
goodbye

and you think it did not matter
there was no falling even

the world stopped revolving
the word spin
too was gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Colors That You Interchanged

i have read it once from your translations:

the red mountains
the green sea
the violet clouds
the blue sands

the black herons
the white eagles

everything goes wrong when you fall out of love

everything goes awry when another lover leaves your door, when another part of you dies your fingers

those that put the color of your paints simply show the distorted face of truth

your hands tremble your fingernails stiff dead and black.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Cottons And Feathers

cottons are found
on the floor

feathers on the table
from the window

the wind blows and carries them
inside
the bed is well kept
blankets carefully folded
and pillows removed
of creases

something inside me is as light
as cottons and feathers
something inside me is well folded now
like blankets
something in my heart are pillows
removed of
any crease

i triumphed i did it
now i can soundly sleep
as the wind from the window
blows me
into the land of dreams
where i can be
nothing but
just the spectator

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Course, Soon You Will Grow Cold

This love of mine
That you always doubt
Despite the passion
We always have,

Is not always strong
To keep you warm
Of course, you soon
Will grow cold as ice
In my hand and so soon
You shall melt like
Water slipping through
My fingers,

I am ready for this
I have kept the other
Hand warm to hold
My other hand when
The night gets
Colder and you are
No longer there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Course, You Are Free

how can we agree
on that same point: i am free

and you are free. Free from what?
and of what? and free for what?

i am free
to do good, to only do what
is essential for my
essence
as man, as individual,
as
the servant of
God,

once i twist what i am
once when i stray away from the Light
once when i do what negates myself
my true nature
i am no longer free. I am bound.
And what i will be thinking is
to escape and return
from that space called
freedom

i am free from evil.
I am free of limitations.
I am free for divinity

which awaits me at the end
of this journey

for i am but a journey
a road

i have a destination
where i will be at rest forever

i am for perfection. I am what i ought to be.
I am this must. This imperative.

I am being.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Dogs And Men And Christmas Traditions

do not ever get me wrong
i am not a negative energy

oh, i just remember Schopenhauer
i do not have to misspell his name
for i know his work by heart
Arthur that's it

the dogs tonight are afraid
all these bombings and noise in the streets
of firecrackers and spending explosions

do they not know how sensitive are those dog ears?

got a book to read and i am lost inside it

do not get me wrong i am not bitter i am just realistic you know

you know what real is i hope you know how it is to be just simply realistic about this life
no fantasies now
no illusions of stars and moons
plain acceptance

dogs do not understand this
a dog's life is all to shallow
and narrow
and there is fear
that this world is nothing
but just
an ending about an explosion

these dogs hide under my feet
like fleas
and i fully understand now
how is it to be an animal
and stupid and afraid.

oh, this Christmas bursts
and outbursts
the children are running
under the smoke
shrieking

how can ever men understand
the loves and fears of dogs?

it is this day of the absurd
and all justifications end
that way
i cannot understand this
and i am giving up

well, well well, this is
actually the true beginning of wisdom

of dogs and men
of Christmases and
left overs

happy dogs and sad men
women with no cares
children with scars and
self-righteous institutions
and more births for sins
and names for new saints

meanwhile, another explosion
is done
merry merry Christmas everyone

do you know why this dog
is hiding in my room?
it is your firecracker you fool!

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Freedom, The Ultimate Need Of All Mankind......

a ripe mango
falls on the roof
at midnight

i am awake
i marvel at ripeness

it announces the
natural fall

of freedom, the ultimate
need of all mankind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Ghosts And Writers....

of ghosts i am no longer afraid
in this room
i do my own thing
i write
and they can have their own show
each to his own
unfinished business.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Gods Among Men

i cannot dictate
what he must want

that will be too personal
and cruel

when he says
that there are still gods among
men
it is sad to admit that
i am not
one of them

i was born a man
lives and shall die
as one.

meanwhile he takes
photographs
of those
that keep themselves
comfortable
in winter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Gods Amongst Men.....

man is always
a crowd and gods
mix,

in the confusion
of sorts,
the become one and
the same

all pebbles and sands
and wind
and night

except perhaps
some flickers
could be fireflies
and

zephyrs
stars

diamonds or
mere
grains of sand
reflecting
a late
afternoon sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Going Back

at a certain point
our feet hurts
we want not just to cease walking
but to stop breathing
altogether
some memories await on the other
side of the road
you cross
and look forward
to something new
you sit on the pavement
like a child
waiting for Papa
you hold your favorite toy
and then you stand
and run
back into the lost corners
of your joys
finding the missing steps
the link to
completion

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Guard Doors And Bird Windows

within four walls
you are enclosed and
you close your eyes
as you opt for the
comfort of darkness
and silence,

you remember words
the come ticking
like the hands of
the clock

each word provides
a scenery of the past

for instance a baby
still struggling to
take its first walk,

a father nearby holding
its hands and watching
so it may not fall,

a mother beside him
with overflowing joy
in her heart,

and so many more
running like a
river from the
forest

you choose the word
which fructify into
ripeness of bliss,

now you are no longer
within the four walls,
the windows come like
sparrows
and the doors standby
like
guarding trees

all of them
provide you
the structures of
openings
like stomata
pores.....

you are free now to
choose
to go where
you want
to

except those
suffocating
walls

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Hopping And Of Hoping

a kangaroo hops
perhaps finding discomfort
on the grass below its feet
or sensing danger
of the strange sound around
it hops
and hopes for something better
on the other hill

i sit here
unable to hop like this silly kangaroo
sensing my gaze
as a dangerous haze

does it ever know
how hopping can destroy
hope that does not know
how to hop?

i hope for some better things
in my life
i will take chances under these trees
resetting some leaves
and twigs
to see the skies
and the sun that must
this morning rise

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Joy And Pain

you get attuned
to suffering

you do not only
know it by name
you know it by
heart,

to such extent
nothing pains you
anymore

when you know it
well
you soon will find
that it is
beautiful

that it
is nothing but the
lovely twin
sister
of joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Lovers And Friends

i like the idea
that once we
were lovers
savoring each
sweetness
in the dark

then we were
torn apart
like some important
pages in the book
another chapter
is missing

what i do not like
about is this idea
that we cannot be
friends anymore

you shy away
even with the slightest
hush of my
hello

are you still in
pain?
you still love
me then?

i am at home
now
with love and
peace

there is only one
thing that i ask:
is friendship
dead in your heart?
Of Mankind's Hypocrisies.

you try to hide your shadow
under a tree
at night when the fireflies
have not arrived with
their Lucifer lights,

the moon comes in the silence
of its rules
the shadow must come out
from its safe hiding place
to bask under the care of its
not so glaring lights
like a persuasion of the
caring mother of your past,

the night is fresh with its
air from the sea
it smells the perfume of
flowers that bloom only
in the darkness of its cares,

'come to me' says the body to its shadow
'it is time to play' begs desire.

the shadow is naked
it is like the truth
it always represents
the real you dressed
with all the fine clothes
of mankind's hypocrisies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of My Beloved

my bed is cold, my pillows too
my blanket not taking the heat of my body
the window of my room is open
to the brightness of the moon tonight
i wish to hear the sound of familiar steps
on the bamboo leaves....

RIC S. BASTASA
Of My Mind......

it is 7: 22
in the morning,
i quit,
i am afraid,
that with you reading me,
i may cause
more harm than good
to you.

i am hungry and thirsty,
i am cold
and now in a hurry,

take your time,
i am out

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Our Own Bias And Prejudice

he is proud
to be brown all over

not raw
neither overcooked

arrogance does not
however
make him brown
as in hardcore
ideologist

for he too loves
the blackness of the night
the orangeness of the sunset
the redness of the rose
the whiteness of
glossy paper

he loves brown
because that is what he is made of

humanity in shades
of rainbow colors
this, too, he loves to see
when it rains
and when the sun shines
early morning
between two cliffs
with a waterfall between

RIC S. BASTASA
for those that come
i am ready
not only to embrace
its whole body
but also to explain
the necessity of
its parts that i too must
accept and love, thus

when i cannot see the stars
tonight
i accept that this happens
often
because
some heavy clouds are here
and they need
to drift and
release their
burdens

and soon it will rain
and all the thirsty fields of the
earth are craving
for water
from the heavens
for their satiation

i have known rain
and it does not surprise me
in these cold times
of my life

& if ever
another big flood comes along
this winding river
carrying drift wood
and mud
and carcass of some
wild pigs and
wingless birds

i still must respect
what nature is all
about
its way of cleansing
itself

& then
on a calm morning
after the storm
i busy myself
collecting all these
drifted things
thinking that perhaps
early tomorrow
i can construct the
bridge of my dreams

or that house
where my new hope
must
immediately reside

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Red Roses And White Daisies

enchanting at first
amazing and fantastic
i am mesmerized
by the redness
i am enthralled by
the whiteness of purity
and lust, and to escape
from this lovely prison
everyday i grow
my wings
inch by inch and then
one full moon
i fly away as the black
bird dissolving into the
ocean of night

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Shaken Earth, Of Breathtaking Sky.

There is a certain seriousness about poetry which i sometimes suppress with triviality hoping to set something more important aside

we laugh, we really laugh so hard, you must remember when we play with words and exchange metaphors

i simply want to be kind to humor which somehow saved us from our own destined perdition

fallen angels, broken glasses scattered leaves, alien winds

when i am left alone sometimes, when you are making yourself busy counting the petals, or cleaning the plates, or accounting for the spoons and forks, or folding the linens

i cannot help but go deeper into the core of my being as i beat my chest with my fist saying

poetry is a serious thing no one jumps away from it like a parachutist and then landing on the field with the honors that he did not die on that impact of grief

when you come back show me that smile that tells me that something in you is changed

just like the way i take things now each letter is accounted, each word has meaning each poem an experience

of shaken earth, of breathtaking sky.
Of Shame And Dignity

i've focused my eyes
on false gods

my brain knows this
and shrinks
in shame

i tried once to
embrace so much
goodness

i am drunk and tipsy
and i do not want
hands to
help me

it is an insult
because i can
always find my way
back home

nobody wants false gods
but in this war
they are the only ones
who can help

infidelity is wrong
but it
will take me there
with you

My Fortress
soon
I shall shed off all these
ruinous skins

When you come
by then
I shall be ready
Smooth, Perfumed,
Deserving and
Dignified

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Simple Things

how do the leaves
cling to the stem? look at them
the wind plays
and not one from the pebbles
dream of falling

the ants keep the hauling
the grasshoppers sing notes
to the sky
that looks down with out so
much sophistication
no streamers
nothing of the band
wagon type

of bare feet that rests
on soft white sands
of the straw hat that covers
the eyes
inward inward
there is really no complication
there is only
this chosen nook
and there one gently sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Songs And Poems And Solitude

it is singing time

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and then back to my

solitude

\&#65239;

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Sonya And Tracy

i am reading your lyrics
and like mifael and candice
i hear the guitar strings of tracy
i see a lover waiting for you
at the crossroad of longing
i can smell the kinkiness of hair
the strong song of a man
agains this dark horizon
singing his soul singing himself
see his soul see his self and
then the music stops and then
sonya you hear the birds singing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Souls And Angels

she says in all honesty
that she has not seen
a single soul
or felt its coldest touch
in her skin as others
seem to imply from
their hair raising experiences
first hand direct
from the horse's mouth

and it is the same with
angels

how could she not have
seen one with
white wings
and angelic faces?

how could she ever
relate to all these
tales and myths
and legends and
storied told by
fools, she says

i know. She has no soul
and She was never once an
angel in those heavenly skies.

So they all condemn
an honest woman like those
witches burned at those stakes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Sparks And Hearts

of what can we claim
that we say deep from our
hearts?

love? overused, abused,
molested, that is what people always
say
sometimes without meaning
anymore
cliches, cliches,

nothing of that spark
for those that come from the heart
without even trying
hard to say it

its the hug that speaks
the kiss that seals
the hand that touches the
shoulder
the eyes that see not
what we are
not

what can we see from
the heart?
veins, blood,
muscles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Strangers And Love Huts....

when we were strangers
i think we were more interested with each other

too much familiarity you must know
breeds contempt and

we forget the first laughter inside the bus
when we were heading for that love hut

inside the love hut when the lights were turned off
we imagine ourselves singing those old love songs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Such Much

Sleeping all alone
Through the long hours
Of the night
Then the day comes
Morning light
I still cannot figure out
How I survived
The loneliness
The emptiness
Of such much?

RIC S. BASTASA
Of The Body And Soul...

upon a fusion, you live immersed
conscious about a self within a self

(as in soul bathed in a body,
body trapped by the roaming soul)

sometimes you sigh
this body is so beautiful and my soul has wasted it,

if i (soul) were just enough,
a transfer should have been made a long time ago

liberating this body and letting it find its own definition of joy
the soul is selfish, having entered it has no key for the exit

these two have been too irreconcilable
everyday is an argument, every night a disillusion

fate, bad luck, inseparability, the absurdity of having to live
on immiscible arrangements

water and oil, sky and earth
the days are running, there is nothing detachable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of The Paleness Of Altitude

up there
a big pillar ends its life
touching the sky

lengths
of vertical distances
in pale
color

blue
horizontal lines
a horizon
of
sea

man
in a dark shadow
diving
to the sea

a splash
then silence
you
wait if a dot
of a head

pops up
no
nothing comes
up

in his
misery

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Things Not Meant For Me

i have not eaten
the mangoes that you
left in the wicker
basket

you may admire me
for that

but sorry
i have thrown those things
which were not
meant for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Things Not Words

a puppy
beside a door

on a rag
a dung of
termites

outside
magnolias
are blooming

a snake escapes
from summer
heat

on the thicket
of moist grass
the green turtle

nothing depends
on someone
else

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Those We Started And Unfinished

there are those which we have already started
years back and still unfinished
no matter how we want to and this bothers us
today. we think how and we invoke why.

there are those which we finished those which we
have done so clumsily and we think we have done no justice
to what have been badly done and we think we are disturbed
that we decided that
this should have been undone
that we should go back to a certain beginning
and redo the things all over again
and give it its shape and color and place
that it rightly deserves

these too bother us.
you keep on going back as dreams
nightmares to be specific
when we sleep they become nagging mouths inside our heads
an old woman wearing black begging to be fed a hearty breakfast
a small child so thin wanting to be hugged by your empty arms
a tiny black bird that cannot sing inside a very small cage
asking you to open a lock
a single leaf on a twig of a dead tree asking you
the hush of a sigh so it can fall and finally be free from the barks
sands of time so dry wanting to be wet with rain asking you
even for just a tear from your eye
so as to taste the dignity of its sorrow

the bother seemingly endless on an edgeless time
and space without doors
we invoke the power of the circle
so we can be just like it
something must have no beginning and no end
and it is given us in this sense of
this forgetting

and just like a circle we move on like the way
a circle rolls itself on the edge of a square table and then
we fall on something without a bottom
that vast ocean without a floor

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Tigers And Rivers

you speak of tigers
and you define it not of its colors or shape or form
but of its shadow
this tiger that lies soundlessly between the
wedges of words
inside the indolence of some syllables
at first i am confused
that this tiger may come to form with sharp
razor teeth and then with new feet jump before me
to devour me
but you assured me, diligently in all the books of your
library, filled with dusts and silence, that this will never happen,
i waited for quite long,
there is this sound of a burst of a gun,
some drops of blood dripping from the ceiling,
i am looking for the scene, the Act, and the characters,
of the play that you have not finished writing,
there is the endless space spreading before me
the rivers flow
from my mouth, and i am carried away, to your glimpse
of eternity.
i am afraid, that your tiger is dead.
i suspect, that the rivers too dried.
i hope for more words, i am tired
the same thing happens in the history of men
promises are made to be broken
tigers are shadowy beasts that exist only in the minds
and rivers seemingly flow like all tomorrows
eternal, they never stop
they never end. Like air.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Twigs And Trunks

the twigs
promise for leaves

trunks offer twigs
and roots
brag of trunks

leaves tempt for
buds

as buds bribe for
flowers and

the flowers say
they can give the final fruit

what i have is a tree
and this tree gives me hope

for the forest, and the
forest the whole world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Two Different Natures

shimmering sea
floating forever on
the waves

landing on the shore

the shimmering is gone
the gray sands are hungry
and there are too many of them

countless
annihilators
of motion and light

earth and water
always part away

the sky is ready
for the ball of fire
that soon
shall take its
needed sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Walls And Fences....

now marlon
you are a man and father
though the
child is not yours but as you take it
inside your arms
you finally have a world of your own
away from us
as you build now your walls
and fences
as you exclude those that
care for you
it is the distance that watches you
now
it is the fullness
that you take proud
the tower on top of the
cliff
leaning upon a
white cotton
cloud

what lovely fig tree are you
no one uproots you now
no one

javi cries
and you shut us away
at least
for the moment
and you call it
glorious, joyful
we wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Walls And Forests

now i know why i have this preference for walls and forests

i have always been deaf and calm and most of you do not like it.

you keep vigilance for my walls have ears and so i may not be deaf after all

and my forest is a city of neon lights and jungle cubicles

there is this height where the moon hangs itself

there is this crowd where no one knows the name of whom you meet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Of Who And What I Am.

neither fame
nor glory

neither sadness
nor grief

neither bliss nor
blunder

no one, not one
can stop this sun from shining

dthis rain from falling
dthis cloud from shifting and floating and

from out of the blue and the
gold and the green

sheer self, light sheen
dthis love of self

dthis teeming confidence
dthis sole belief

of who and what
di am.

RIC S. BASTASA
me too
i do not know who Adria Moya is
or was
or be, as she claims to be

she says she is alive
(how sweet)

but she is not liking my liking her
at 67
and me at 76,

(oops my nose is stretching)

it is not that bad
i can still manage

i am a
Doctor of Loss

it may be unethical to ask a Lady
her age
but i think
i need to know her real name, if she obliges

and from what university did she earn
her
Ph.D. in Stalkery?

I had mine at the University of Loss Vegos.

(ha ha ha, just a joke for the night in your place, Adria
it is noontime in mine)
Off To Bangkok

off to bangkok
then to kuala lumpur
back to shanghai
on to Ho Chi Minh
proceed to Jakarta
and stop over
in Kota Kinabalu
we end up in Cebu
then have a
week of white sands
and blue sea and
clear white skies
in the island of Boracay

summer has come
i leave all sadness behind
and with you my love
how can i be so alone?

RIC S. BASTASA
Off To Cebu And Puerto Prinsesa

the idea is that
we need to slow down
to earn

we set aside what is fast
they won't love us for that

the turtles, look, they
always have those sleepy eyes

we love the burden of age
at their backs

the excitement of savoring
minute with minutes

so off we all go
to the queen city of the south
to the seventh wonder of the world
slow, so slow

are the stalactites and
stalagmites their meeting set upon

the dripping rain
the stillness of the pool within

RIC S. BASTASA
Off To Cebu Skies...

everything
around us are gray clouds

it is cold
it appears colder

the nose of the plane
pierces these cotton world

the propellers
are making ripples of
smoky
reality

i am tired
so tired

even if i do not have to close my eyes
they really have to

RIC S. BASTASA
Off To K.

I KNOW it is colder there
the snow and the colder winds
but with you
somehow when the right time comes
nothing is cold
not even the whitest snow
beside you

or on top of you
even when we are all naked
against all the odds
of snow and hale
we can be all warm
and quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Office Bound....

so many things
to do
a little dread
more dreams
pinch of love
a bowl of bickering
howling hatred
a piece of plum
souring scours
family farting

a vase by the window
of red roses
a glass frame of our
two worlds
this bright day

oh sun, sunshine
a little passing rain
dripping
black umbrella folding
upon itself
wearing news
new shoes and this
blue car
into the streets we
go
office bound.

RIC S. BASTASA
Office Workers...

the yellow daisies
we pick along the way
we put inside a glass vase
with water and some pebbles
have all wilted,

we do not care as each
one of us hurries in taking
a bath, have quick breakfast
of coffee and bread

to the office we keep ourselves
busy trying to make a living
making both ends meet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oft I Remember...

as i place my feet
in another country i step upon
an internet cafe
goggling upon a poem

inspired by the changes of the
of the situation
on some dreams of reforms
i start to compose another poem
for the wind
&
this i cannot forget
a man on the other side
loose tie and
unbuttoned shirt
on my left busies himself
with business receipts
encoding
sending them to his boss
perhaps
to the main office
signifying profits

i still wonder
why a man like myself
wastes so much time
in this
unkind endeavor

there is no money here
but there is something more to it than money
that keeps me going
despite
those marked differences
i am no businessman
neither a worker
for any boss out there
dictating what to do with my life
after that lonely poem
that i write
i rest my fingers upon nothing
the man left hurriedly as other clients
are waiting
he keeps issuing those receipts
and must remit
encode each
over and over again
for an update with
Boss
and then i stand up
walk past him
towards
actually an uncertain direction
perhaps the
busy streets this time where no one
recognizes
the greatness that i still keep intact
inside my
chest
for i am the anonymous poet in this
new country
that speaks not a nuance of my language
the temperature rises
but i still do not dream the need of
a straw hat
to save me from this
killing heat
RIC S. BASTASA
Og Dinhi Namugna Ang Mga Tampi Dili Lang Nobentay Nuybe

sa dihang miabot
siya
gisunog na sa adlaw
ang paglaum

nasuko ang iyang
agalon
gikasab-an siya
nga samag gitakloban
siya sa dakong
dag-om sa kalibotan

'dili ko hingpit nga
tawo, Yo' nga mao
na may hinoony
gikasuko samot sa
gisapot

'wala gipamunit ang
kwarta dinhing
dapita' dalag
pagpangahulog sa
singot didto's
hwerto

naguba ang dalan
natunga
gibulang sa suba
ang yuta

og dinhi namugna
ang mga tampi
dili lang nobentay nuybe

RIC S. BASTASA
Ogenki De

at the gate
ogenki de
that is the
secret
Ganbatte
kudasai

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh Life

i shall let you pass
i won't mind if you hurt
i won't notice if you smile
oh life! let you be!
shall i still have
the use of you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh Lord

bless me for I have sinned
love me for what I have been
for what I am and for what I will become in the coming
time Oh Lord thank you for
loving me for making me live
with the past and the present.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh Most Wise God, My Creator.

what you did Oh Most
Wise God, i must agree,
is still good to me.
you have closed all
options, like the way
you closed all paths
for my journey, and
there is finally only
one way, and this leads
to no one but You.
You seem to ask who
I really love? You
have taken everything
and everyone from me.
In sleep you even have
to take all my dreams
to, and i wake up
sweating heavily, in
all anxieties, i must
say no name again, but
you, that now in this
most alarming situation,
i must have you, for
i must remain strong
and steadfast still
undestroyed and ready
to praise your name
again, for i am your
creation, and now
i know how i must
function. With all
my grief and sorrow
i still have you
today and tomorrow.
for i am nothing
without you Oh Most
Wise God, My Creator.
Oh My!

And Martha asks the Lord Jesus
Why is Mary not in the kitchen
To help me prepare the food?

And of course, you know the
Answer, or if you don’t

Oh my! Start being envious.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh My, You Want To Chat With Me?

I'm sorry but my momma is strict so i my poppa
they may be dead, but they're still strict on that very important point:

'sonny, do not chat with strangers! ' they always remind me inside my dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh That's Right You'Re Just Another Girl

i like the echo of the narrow mountain:

Oh! that's right
You're just another girl
That loves to show of And to feel important at the same time

And to feel important at the same time
And to feel important at the same time
at the same time at the same time
at the same time at the same time
same time same time same time same time
And to feel important at the same time
And to feel important at the same time
at the same time at the same time
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And to feel important at the same time
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at the same time at the same time
same time same time same time same time
And to feel important at the same time
And to feel important at the same time
at the same time at the same time

Oh! that's right
You're just another girl
You're just another girl
You're just another girl
You're just another girl

aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo aldo 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Oh The Folly Of Men

was it said
somewhere else
that Man's folly
is God's
wisdom?

could this be
the same as
Man's wisdom
is God's Folly?

Man is foolish
to love gold
God is wise
to love nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh We Are Very Happy This Christmas (A Poem For The Childless Couple)

oh you ask?

we are very happy this Christmas
the house is crowded
with lots of food and desserts and drinks
all laid on the table
on an ambiance of mistletoe
and candle lights

we are many here
in this big house: Liza, my wife
myself, our five dogs
and three newly acquired
dalmatian puppies.

you see, this all family.
merry Christmas!

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh Yes, Mr. Shaun, The Bible Was Not Written In English

The Gospel of Christ and, in general, the Holy Bible are written with the inspiration of God. The Prophets and the Apostles have recorded in written form a portion of the oral teaching of the Old Testament in Hebrew and Aramaic as well as the New Testament in Greek. These are the original languages of the Holy Bible from which all the translations have been derived. God's inspiration is confined to the original languages and utterances, not the many translations. There are 1,300 languages and dialects into which the Holy Bible, in its entirety or in portions, has been translated.

This does not mean that the translations do not convey the meaning of the Bible for spiritual uprightness of the readers in their own language. On the contrary the Bible should be spread and preached to 'all nations'. The missionaries in foreign lands learn the language or the dialect of the new area into which they bring the Bible and other religious teachings. For example, the missionaries from Constantinople, Saints Cyril and Methodios, sent to Christianize the Slavic
peoples in the 9th century, first translated the Bible and the ritual books into the language of the people.

yes, Mr. Shaun, my friend the Bible was not written in English. IT was written in HEBREW, ARAMAIC, and GREEK....

But i like it written in English too, how i wish it were written in such a language, with a sense of class and fashionable disguise,

for without it, how could i ever understand, God,

oh, my, God!

RIC S. BASTASA
that was when we thought
of nothing but
a game, when words are but
teasers,
when what we assume
is nothing but to be fed
and cared of
when our mouths knew nothing
but laughter

we had enough of those times
and those that fed and cared for us
had long died
and left us now with what they had

we replace what they gave us
now we are no longer their children
we take the turn
of giving laughter in return

see, they are all waiting in the playgrounds
of our lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh!

We met as two consenting adults in some
Busy, crowded malls, and we offered our true names,
We like each other, we love the way we talk
It was easy, we are two consenting adults and we
Met again somewhere, not in the crowded mall
Not in the busy street, not in the church to pray,
We are lovers, we are two consenting adults,
We are the new lovers, and we know what is the
Secrecy of love its sanctity when we as consenting adults
Met again, and we are naked,
We have embraced ourselves as truths not as lies
In the open
In our openness, we swallowed ourselves in utter openness
We welcome what happened
We said it was wonderful we want to meet again and feel
So wonderful
We have the will, we have the free will, we are free

Then you said something while you were alone and distant
Yes it was wonderful but it was when I lost my senses,
You chided me, you were lost when we did something wonderful
And you said it was something dirty, you have indulged in the
Arms of the wrong person, in the wrong hours, in the wrong places,
You even vomited what wonderful was it that was swallowed

By you as a consenting adult, and I as a consenting adult
I thought it is wonderful and I always
Think it is wonderful, I do not know what dirty is
I was not raised in dirt, I do not know dirt, I am not dirty

Days and days, you reflected upon its wonder, the wonder of what we did and
you call me back, you emailed, you texted

You like to meet me again in some crowded malls, in some busy streets we start
all over again to trace the maze of amazement again
You offer your true name again, your senses in full you smile
You are a traffic sign blinking the green for go again

The wrong person is here, he is now lost in his senses too,
You called the wrong number, you emailed the wrong mails,
You texted the wrong number, you will be calling the wrong person

That wrong person has gone away, he is the wrong person to your
Thousand eyes and he has no more reason left to stay. He cannot wait for you,
the malls are crowded, the streets are busy, and the door of
The house is now closed. And he is now the traffic sign which blinks
The red for stop.

There is no one to be blamed, It is our upbringing that brings
the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh! Common

there are reason why we have gone to other places
they mistook us as
hedonists as people who have no pity for money
squandering time
and lusting on the views of the lakes and
yachts

people pretend that they know our hearts
that they know the language of our minds
but we do not mind them

for in truth what makes us happy is still a secret
only the two of us know this

we are creating distances now
drawing the boundaries and building the great walls
of china in our arms

as it seems
the nearer we are to them
we become more strangers to ourselves
but as it has become apparent now
the farther we are
from their words
the more we become
perfect in ourselves

who tells us what is right or wrong?
or what to do for the coming days?
they?

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh, I Have Nothing To Say

Imagine me sitting
On a big rock
Facing the sea

The sea is peaceful
Seagulls are flying
Behind is the morning sun
And at a distance
Is the silhouette of a horizon
Broken by a mole
Of an island

Small boats sail
Fisher folks are fishing
Children are splashing water
Their mothers are watching

Oh, I have nothing more to say
Indeed this is a happy day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oh, I Love It Here...

you put me down
under
and so i live
down under
and i am telling
you
it does not matter

i learn, i move,
i keep saying
oh, i love it
here

you cannot put me
down
i know where i belong
i know my worth
i believe in myself
and i always learn and move
and i keep going

Papa always says
'my son, keep the faith,
no one puts a good man
down'

here in my own place
i keep the fire
i light this darkness
i exhale, i inhale,

oh, i love it here.

RIC S. BASTASA
alone in the house
early morning, it rains

and i stop doing the usual
and listen to

the patting rain beside my
window

a humming bird comes to join
flapping its wings

and stares at myself staring
to it too

i know now how an earthworm
beneath the humus

too sings its song though
no one sees how it does such

feat, such happy moment, too,
alone beneath

and so i learn, that even in
one's being abandoned,

if studied too well, and
adapted to it, the heart still

knows how to sing, the mind
still opens

like the rest of the other
lives to the world still gaping

oh, this inability to throw away
life, to still keep it despite...

RIC S. BASTASA
You haven’t experienced riding in a car meeting a ten-wheeler truck
Surprisingly on a curve
And the driver beside you slept,

You see the truck approaching the car
Where you are inside it,

Something sure singles you out
The unalterable, the inevitable
The collision that could not be evaded,

In that experience, you know what
Inevitable was, you closed your eyes

It was a miracle
You survived.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oil And Garlic And Peanuts

past aroma of
garlic sticking to the oil
to crunchy peanuts

on that tryst
under the acacia trees
on a line of electric lamp posts
we watch the sea

the salty winds touch our faces
we were pure
we only want some company
we had nothing to do

it was the last day
of the garlic flavored peanuts
and then we parted

we were like the winds of the sea
on a short stay
at the boulevard
cooling off some broken dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Ok I Will Scream With You

ok i will stand in the corner
and scream with you
but what word shall i use?
your name? my name?
a curse like

what? tell me?
and i will scream with you
like you have never
screamed before.

try me. I can manage
disturbed kids somehow
because i have been there
before you
were born.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ok, Fine, Whatever

ok, you are fine,
and i am fine too,
ok you sit there
and look at me
i also sit here
i can also do
what you do,
ok, fine, you are fine
and i am fine too,

stare at me
and i stare at you
ok, fine,
i am tired,
ok, fine,
i am also one suffering soul,
ok fine,
i know, what to wait
ok fine,
i know what waiting time is
i dont like to wait
but i wait just the same

it has something to do
with what is due me
and when

it has something to do
with what is given
and what i must receive
and return

everything, not
a thing, i return everything
that is given,
ok, i am fine,
i wait, i think, i ponder, i reflect,

i have nothing
to say....my lips are sealed, i like
my mouth shut
i like my spirit silenced

i like it still here, i am not going anywhere.
regards to
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Okaerinasai

this is the stranger
dusty face and muddy
feet
caulked
he still holds the key
to the old room
his room
opens it
he was away for months
his dog is dead
inside the bathroom
the whole house
stinks
all lines are cut off
it is dark
he arrives at night
dogs are howling
the trees have no leaves
the winds are cold
the path is
grassy and wild
the squirrels left
when he arrives
nuts
the rats stand at
the door watching
his every move
there is a mirror
at the veranda
at the side of the
door
it is hazy
it could be me
in this
horrible
thought

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Age

old age as imagined
must be as graceful as the
gray hair glistening to the
sunset dissolving on the
blackness of the horizon
slowly, gently, carefully
gliding, fading
and with the slightest
closing of the
silent sigh, like a
glimmer
a single ripple
turning into a silk
bandanna.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Age......

old age
says there is no
need to explain

before the gesture
is done
it nods, before a word
is uttered,
it shakes its head,

numbers are
metaphysical, what used to be
a measure
becomes a fluid

it is the air,
the mat, the puppy
that know
how to speak

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Couple

old couple taking a walk
around an oval
slow steps
story filled
post retirement commitment
to be with each other
rain or shine

they hold hands
with the sunrise as their witness
a middle aged woman with
sagging breast
jogs past them taking the speed
of the morning rush

the wind here is not really cold
soon it will be dusty as usual in the tropics of Cancer

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Dreams Are Simple

rubber slippers on my feet
for christmas
fried chicken wing on the table
a cup of white rice
a glass of water

gazing at the stars and the moon
cool winds and shadows of tree
silvery river
a wooden boat and a paddle
with you
beside me

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Fashioned

call me old fashioned
i will not mind, i still cling to marriage
despite the odds.

i am not an angel
but i always know how to ask
forgiveness.

my wife is hardheaded
taking me in again
with all arms embracing

this prodigal husband
this philanderer
with nothing to give but love
reborn
and promises relived

life is hard
fidelity is a long lost virtue
but marriage must remain
as the cornerstone
of life

inside the house still
lies the real home

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Feelings

time knows how
to keep them all
without creases
in an old cabinet

there is a season
for reminiscing
and you go back
to old places and
some faces

your sighs take you
back there
your trembling hands
once again shall
open the window of
the house

you take one of those
and hold them against
your chest and close
your eyes to kiss it

you face the mirror
and try fitting it again

you're too big for it now
and if you force fitting it
the buttons will snap
the cloth will be torn

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Flame

The sun may go out at night
And the moon may go out this day
The earth may soon explode and be gone
Shattered in space and be dust again
Or specks of light
Death may rot this body
The soil may cover me
But this love I have for you
Flames still with anguish
And will not extinguish

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes i admit i miss old friends,
and when i see some of them,
alumnus of the same university
where i spent most of my years,
i feel we are one big family and
i am happy and if there is a need
we shall have our reunions, and get
to recall what we shared before
some old songs, some hardships,
common joys and sorrows
untold escapades, emotions cascade

sometimes i like to go back to the past
and ask where i succeeded and failed, where i was once
aloof and not so cooperative,
i go back with a
heavy heart, and i make some promises
for recompense and be more likable

but then, they have already formed their opinions
fixed their minds, sculpted me to finality,

to a certain extent i am as i was once and
there is no more change from their points of view

i feel they wish that i should have died earlier
and that it would have been better if they have not seen me again.

there is this hard rock, like their conclusions, like fists
and here i am, again under the same wrong impression
now and ever shall be.(forever amen)

i give them the same response: i am used to all these.
and i do not really care if i still continue writing poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Logic

when the road gets wet
then it must have rained.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Man Baring

woe
to you
old man baring
even if you run for
barangay captain
you cannot win
this new game
that you have just
created

woe to you
i had your lies
all your nice pretenses
now old man baring
your life is over

welcome now
to your gold plated room
in hell

you see i told you
i told you beforehand
my dear old man Baring
no one lasts forever

join us now
in the world of oblivion
if you must
with your permission
we give you
the number one slot
in this world
of the unknown

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Man Young Man

when he
was younger
and i was
then
a mouse
he challenged
me to
a fight

he had cheese
and i love it
and he misled
me into a trap

it did not end
there

when he became
older
and i am younger
he fell into
a trap
and i had cheese

and i smile at
him
saying i will save
him

and he smiles
at me

and i walk away
for sorry

i do not really
mean it
ask me how i
learned from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Memories

not all memories are as sweet as honey
you think about those that broke your heart into very
tiny sharp pieces
those that hurt the legs of the innocent
those that shatter the lives of other people
you want to forget all these
but they all come again
as unwanted guests
eating your food, your house they burn
your name reduced to ashes
and then when all of these are done
they go out
laughing and drunk with justice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Memories Came Flooding

old memories came flooding
like overflowing waters from the mountain
rivers came running
wood drifting
some snakes astray
losing direction
leaves too many
for the keeping of the banks
some twigs block
the way of the fish
and the frogs

i am one kind of a very strong damn
i have prepared for these calamities for years
of my silence and storing stones and lime
and steel to make these
uncompromising obstruction

things stop and i am responsible
for anything that destroys and spills
i am this dam and i will stay so calm

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Memories......

i've been playing
with memories

more than all those
old memories

white haired woman
gnarled skin

something's weird
really why

the past is more
beautiful than
today

you are crazy
taking the future inside
a basket

which you carry towards
home which in the first place

still does not exist
for the mind is not a home yet
where love is not
born.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Nights

the night did nothing but talk
the rain fell heavily on our heads
we actually did not figure out what was said

the morning is still beautiful
with sun in her hair

there are no regrets to the haze of age
it is accepted as a natural change

then we went to our chosen directions
we meet again tonight and there will be more stories told

not really that interesting
but there is no choice

this road has an end
we think that there is another exit out there

for a new beginning
when the night shall not talk but touch and kiss and
make love and then restfully rest its head upon the morning's breast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Old Poetry

i always come back
to your arms

i am not happy
but i have no choice

your arms are cactus
but i do not mind

i make most of what
imagination can offer

there will be sun
where there is none

i make rain
i also unmake them

everything are sands
in my hands

i open my fingers
as dams

sands trickle
waters pour

rivers form themselves
i make a mouth

where they can find
rest and be lost in the sea

this is what imagination is all about
one word: survival.

RIC S. BASTASA
Olfactory

sight is out of touch
and hearing is blue

your beloved left you
and he left something

inside the room
you are olfactory

RIC S. BASTASA
Olingan....

in Olingan gold is bursting
the ripe grains of rice are heavy
bowing to the pleasure of
the working hands

harvest time, sacks filled
and the farmers shall party at
night with their families
partake of the bounty that
the Lord has given

the sparrows fly and hover on
the left-overs
the children run in the hillsides
and play
mothers make the sweet rice cakes
as fathers busy themselves with the
sickle and sacks

this is still the part of the world
freed from the jungle of buildings and
cemented pavements
free from the shackles of electronics
people talk and at night light their
campfires and drink and dance

deep in the night when everyone is
taking their rests
this is where love is gently woven
in the beautiful fabric of
human desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Blank Page

i remember that entrance
examination at law school
trying to measure my aptitude
whether i can be a good student
of law in the university
they were asking legal questions
and i gave the answers
with all the brick arrangements of
my reason,
i know what logical minds ask for,
it is like building up and emotion
and then burst at the end
of the line, give a punch, and
don't bother, i mean, do not be
intimidated by all these fools,
Gibran i remember, says that
they all destroy every castle in
the sand that they are making
every minute, very much like
the routine of the waves crumbling
every sand
castle of the mind,
the Dean (modesty aside)
was impressed and ask what
my name is, from what school
did i finish my Philosophy,
i pocketed a smile,
repressed my conceit and
stared at him, gracious,
she did not feel that i am
sort of discourteous
buffalo from the marshlands.

and then she handed a blank
paper, and ask me to draw
an image of myself, of course,
i know what to draw immediately,
i always have in mind the three
monkeys: no hear, no speak,
no see

my favorite Dean, oh, she loves it.
until then, i became a lawyer
but she did not see me anymore
with my (lousy practice).

she died untimely.

I speak, i hear,
i see no evil.

That is my secret
for being alive, till date.
Do you like it?
Will you love me for it?
Do you like the three monkeys?

Sometimes, i want to be
a great monkey. Not one of those
three that i once drew on that blank page.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Blurred Vision

on a foggy hillside
there are white patches
from far
they look like
mushrooms

then i hear the
sound of thunder

suddenly they all
fly away

oh, the white herons
again!

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Bright And Peaceful Day

this morning
the sun slowly
ascends from the
white slate of
the sea

gloriously
it rises to the skies
and then
stands still for
its reign

we miss you here
on such a bright day
when everything that is calm
and peaceful
takes its rule

the mountains are
looking

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Calm River

on a calm river
a wooden sail

and a man paddling
his way toward
a small town

some bamboo
leaves on the

side of this
postcard from

my beloved mama
when she left papa.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Cemented Bench

on a cemented bench
under the talisay tree
dried leaves in heaps

a red ant bites
your foot on its territory

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Certain Anonymity

without a name
and a face
that will be alright
to hide in some form
of dignified
anonymous

but my dear
fellows
try to cheer
a sad soul

greet her
a nice hello

leave her
a thank you note

and try to speak
some words

make her feel
alive
make her feel
that you are here
with her

that this world is still
peopled with people
peopling

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Clear Morning

on a clear morning
the farmer
has just finished plowing
his field

the rain comes
and fills
the muddy field
with more water

a mirror is placed
and the sky look upon
itself

a very white sky
on a crystal clear rain water

a white heron from the green mountain
glides in perfect lightness
on the mirror of water

daintily it walks
and i see not a single ripple
on its feet

on a clear morning
the world is at peace with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Conversation Like This

sometimes we must have a conversation like this:
more than friends
who have not seen each other
for twenty years
you always pat my shoulder
and hold my hand
from time to time
asking me where i
have been
and i tell you i like the way
you talk to me today
we surely miss each other
like an old book which you
lost among a stack of books and letters
and there it is
you finally find it
all pages still there
a love note still sticking
as one of the dog ears

you ask me
what do i mean by us
by me being
more than your brother?

i ask you to make a guess
and you tell me
without hesitation
a lover

i answered
No
the guy will be too fresh
and ungrateful
of your trust

it cannot be
he cannot be i cannot be
a lover
the frame is clearly cut
on a four by four
and the picture of lovers
does not fit well

i say
i can be your brother
since you do not have any

and as an answer to
where have i been lately
i am telling you
i came from a deep sleep
definitely
not from any place where
you will miss me

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Day To Day Endeavor

something that you love
comes to you on a day to day basis
and what you do
becomes you: that is poetry.

congratulations! famous or not
read or unread, bland or too bitter
salty as spanish ham
or as sweet as novelino wine

it does not really matter,
keep writing, no one is looking.

poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Dry Desert

on a dry desert
the night is cold
the moon and
stars keep on
shining, and on
the day the
caravan keeps
on moving,
the sun and dusts
keep them
going
the dream for
the oasis
somewhere
or perhaps of
the sea or
perhaps of the
river
still fills the mind
for those
who are searching
for the water.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Hot Day

on a hot day i take my shirt off
i still sweat
and so i'll take off my pants too
i'll keep my brief
but then it is too hot again
i still sweat a lot
i don't mind taking off
everything
i'll shed off my skin
and then my bones
and then every part
of me

do you like to see my soul now?
if you like it please tell me
i will show you

how do i look now?
do i have one?

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Journey

on a secret journey
the two of us
keep covering our tracks

in silence we keep the
grass alive
the hush always a hush
vespers in whispers

when we arrive at the destination
we look back to the hills and plains

we leave nothing
we taking nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Mood Of Worship For All These Things

he chokes light to kill it

he stirs the water so that he cannot

see the shame of his face

the wind despite the slaps

he cannot despise

the light that constantly chases him

now he blocks by closing the window

outside the rains fall heavily

the banana shrubs and the

guava leaves

the grasses of the plains

rejoice

on a mood of worship for

all these things

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Much Keener Awareness....

the poetess on the grass
offers her set of eyes to the cats
so they may begin to see
the beauty of her lines

when blinded she sees more
of those clouds and flowers
she feels more the waters of the rivers
the songs of the trees
the silence of the nights
those busy days
the ants stepping upon the softness
of the mounds
of sands
beside her feet....

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Night Trip On The Last Trip Of The Bus Bound For Zamboanga

i do not look for any reason
why i choose the last trip bound for zamboanga

it is not important
i take the pleasure of seeing nothing along the road

but the darkness and some street lights
some houses keeping the porch flickering

on some constancy
of having light and caution

against evil.
the rest of the few of the passengers here

are all asleep
tired of the day's business

whatever
i could not sleep thinking about this journey

like a bullet looking for its subject
like a tennis ball dissolving into a dark space

soundlessly, everything moves
inside my mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Night With A Prostitute?

who's using whom?

the lonely man
with his money
uses the body of
the prostitute and
the latter uses his money
for her lover
battering her with
his fists

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Perfect Day

You begin it with a morning walk
Moments of reflection on God’s
Wonders, his creations, an
Early fresh air brushing your hair
Some dews on grass glistening
Some scents on early flower blooms exuding
Some new leaves on the tall trees sprouting

In a while you see the break of dawn
The sun finally breaking out gently
From the crevices of clouds on a wide horizon

Seeing a new light,

Then breakfast with the family
Some prayers to bless simple food
Early morning news, a little talk,
Some crack for jokes,

Then
It is office time
You work, you make judgments
On people’s grievances, they want
Something from you
To be done, swiftly and rightly,
They are thirsty and hungry,
And you have to feed them
Right away, you always think what is
It that is best for all and must
Be done, no matter what,

Then you go back to your home,
You sit on a chair facing yourself
On a mirror for some reflections,
You smile, you are proud, you did
Not yield to the wiles of this world,
You have asserted yourself on some
Principles to no compromises,
You look again at another closing sunset,

Seeing a new promising light,

Then you pray and sleep soundly
Another day has ended again,
Your head rests on a soft pillow
Feeling light like being reborn

Your conscience is clear
There is no stain in your hands
An unblemished heart
Beating for God for humanity

Seeing a new fading light

On such a perfect day.....

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Rainy Day

she flags a taxi
closes her black umbrella
wet in the rain she
enters the
yellow taxi and bangs the
door against him
leaving him for good
on a rainy day

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Rainy Day.....

at the porch
on this rainy day
i watch the
garden

i miss the kids
splashing on the rain

the grass though greener
looks empty and unattended

it is not the season for
flowers.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Serious Matter

Redford White
is dead.
He did not tell us
that he has
brain cancer.
May his brain
rest in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A State Of Namelessness..

he asks me to utter
his name
a la Rumpelstiltskin

for after all
it is his thinking that a name
counts

that a name solves a
problem
and that dropping names
sometimes
creates the
ripples as some people
shiver and
give in

i wonder
why God did not give his name
and address to
anyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Stormy Day

on this kind of acerbity
waves of the sea in agitation
the air in animosity with water
the bitterness of the moon
the bluster and choler of the elements
the convulsion of the sea floor
the eruption of frenzy
the ferment of furor
the ire of the sun
the rampage of the trees and its shadows
an uproar of disgust
the violence of vehemence
the mosquitoes on a wingding of a wrath
the hemorrhage of human emotions
the paroxysm of our passions
the gall of the spleen
the madness of men to men
the ferocity of all these fireworks of lies
the tantrums of temper
to acrimony
amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Storny Day While You Are Driving Alone

you drive towards home
alone
under a strong rain
and wind
the storm has come again
inside the car
you hear nothing
you only see
the mess outside
you

you do not turn on
the radio
there is nothing there
only the buzzing
the FM stations lost
in the midst of this
chaos
you hear the silence inside you
talking
it is tired of the day's
heavy workload

you hear the sound
of the windswiper
you see the water
ahead of you along the
way
as the car cleans itself
so you may see the road
ahead
meeting you
the white bridge,
the thick lines of rain
like walls

like some liquid ropes
bursting on the glass
there are no cars
meeting you
no lights
except the darkness
and
the leaves blown away
from you
you think and you know the
difference:
you are losing your sense
of home

the sense of direction
insists
still towards this road
you do not like it
anymore,
you still think in the middle
of this storm
you want to stop and
watch the river
overflow
you wish the bridge is broken
you want it taken away
dismantled
you imagine there is
no more connection
whatever

you see nothing at the end,
what you see is simply
the storm
you stop again on the side of the road
where the tree shall fall and
you are under it,
you do not think of the car,
or of yourself anymore
what is there anyway?
there is no one waiting,
there is nothing worth meeting
and surely
life is not worth living
On A Sunday

On a sunday
i create a new world

my earth is the hammock
it is the breeze of the sea
that breathes in me
my lungs are the orchards
its branches my veins

slowly and gently
i sleep with the hands
of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Sunday Back To The Past That Papa Left

on a Sunday
the man returns to the sea
to clean the foreshore
teeming with coconuts
from thick grass
bad grass and beetles
that eat buds and
kill

on a Sunday back
to the past again
clearing some forests
of memories
therein

one seeks a redemption
for what had been
putting some seeds again
as anticipations of
the future
that may never come

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Sunday Morning

i like to lay my body on the grass
and put my feet up a rock
so i can see my toes
playing on the clouds.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Sunday, Nov.13

on a Sunday
we did not do
what we are
supposed to do
we hate to say
that they think they
know much better
we did what they
do not like
and we were so
happy
we even forgot
ourselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Sunny Day

the red truck still parks
on the side of the concrete fence

it is TED 413
and still insists that it is

NOT FOR HIRE.

RIC S. BASTASA
On A White Bench

at the plaza of this town
fronting the cafe
where i am now writing this poem

i see a white cemented bench
beside a mahogany tree
three men are sitting
they are talking
and i cannot hear them
i am walled
by this glass wall

one wears a white cap
holding a radio
blue faded jeans
and rubber shoes

the second one
a brown subanen native
wearing a white shirt
with a political ads
to vote for mayor dong

the third one
already left before i finished this poem

i could have described him
but i fell short of time and sensitivity

i ask someone beside me
what these three men are up to

they are waiting
they are looking for a job on this hard times
when the price of rice has gone high
together with the gas

i know you want something more than this kind of write
did i keep you waiting too?
tell me did i keep you waiting too for something that you want me to tell you?
i have nothing to tell you

how does it feel to wait, hours perhaps, for something that does not come/
how does it feel to wait

for nothing? tell me, tell me, if you understand now, how is it to sit on a white
bench beside a mahogany tree, in the plaza, in front of an internet cafe

where i write a poem
and nothing nothing really happens

RIC S. BASTASA
On A Wooden Sailboat

now we shall try riding on a wooden sailboat
to cross this river
it will just be the two of us
with me paddling
and you simply sitting there

the river is still
as my paddle creates the ripples
the sky is reddish
this afternoon and soon it will be dark

you will light our way
as i paddle towards the other end
where they are all waiting
we do not talk much now
we love this silence that wraps us
this silence in another place
this newness
that blooms again

i look at you with anticipation
tonight the room shall only be lighted
with an oil lamp
we shall hear the crickets
and the frogs near the pond
and some birds with strange sounds

some love calls
the mating season has just begun
we have no time to watch
what the other creatures of this far place are doing
we have ourselves now

i will blow the lamp's flickers out
goodnight
we are starting all over again
dreaming

as you take me in your arms
i will remember some quivers
of long time ago
as though i do not know what to do

this is magical
love still exists so well in this darkness faraway from everyone

RIC S. BASTASA
On An Early Morning

on an early morning by the sea
we shall meet
before those who seek the shells
shall have come

do not wait for the high tide
my footprints
you shall not find anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
On An Early Morning Rush

i like it crisp
and wise. I am
on a rush, i
just want it
crisp.

RIC S. BASTASA
On An Island

on an island of light
there are scribblers within and without it

all mute all blind all deaf
and i am one of them always keeping things
so private.

RIC S. BASTASA
On And On And On

There are some other words
Still there
I am looking for the word
To say
The one which can tell all
My grief
There is none to describe it
And so it has remained
Unspoken

And so it goes on
and on and on

RIC S. BASTASA
On Being Defrauded...

a poor worker
has overpriced me for his services
demolishing a house
that was burned
the fire that ate a son
and a house-help
the news that froze
almost to death
the whole city

many nights i could not sleep
i dream of robbers and
crocodiles

but then, (on the other hand)
it could simply be
history repeating itself
or just the usual
things that happen because
they are destined to be

got a mirror
see my face and
nod.

i can do the same thing to another next time.
no holds bar.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Being Here Back To You

time stole you away from me
a long, long time ago
when i confessed
my love to you
when i have defined what love is
and its possibilities
its consequences

the face i want to caress
the body i want to hold
the tongue i want to taste
the lips i want to kiss

you left, i bleed
i have defined pain
and enumerated the hurt
long in my list
my sighs reverberated
in the halls of my
loneliness

now i am back
to you
looking at you
again after a long, long time
when you left me

what do i see?
what do i feel?

i feel nothing now
i have not seen you

i will move on to the next
door of my life
i will open it
to find myself and perhaps

someone else, who knows?
On Blackouts
the guys up there
are on it again,
thinking how to
keep the biggest
slice of the pie
while we on the
lowest part of this
ladder keep praying
for the morsels
crazy world of
corruption
on blackouts like
this
i keep myself cool
on a bamboo bed
under the shade
of the mahogany tree
there is nothing to
consider
anger, a revolution,
i am too old for
that
perhaps another
story
another kind of
exploitative
poetry
perhaps...

RIC S. BASTASA
On Clear Pond

ON a clear pond
not far away from the house
there live two
frogs
who blend well in their
croaking
during the rainy season

contented on a lotus leaf
for a home
and few moths,
bugs and
flies for their
meals
they are happier on this
simple terms
together

there is no marriage
for them to
boast
but it is still death
that does them part

RIC S. BASTASA
On Climbing A Tree

i am up here
and you look at me

i know you are
looking at something
less important

the one that humiliates
me and yet
desirable

it is only a part of me
and the negligible part in you

these we can part with
test we can compromise

inside the room we catch
ourselves in a compromising situation

you know what i mean
and you too mean what you know

the glass is misty-eyed
the weather of course is colder

we know what we did
we know we never know what regret meant

RIC S. BASTASA
On Compromises Of Life

most of all these that
find inside the palms of
our hands
are made of compromises
for one cannot have reality
painted without
the necessary colors, black
white, shades, yellows, reds,
pink, scarlet,

for how can you have sunrise
in monochrome?

one divides a wall between
evil and
good, between gods and men,
one fences out those who
disagree
excludes what they think
are rotten
tomatoes,

this is our world of odds and
ends, of
explosives and tranquility,
of doubts and certainties
of faith and trembling,

the tongue tastes every thing on
the table, weary of the sweetness of
these desserts and misses what is bitter
and sour

the whole of man meets the
whole of this world
and lives in it
on compromises,

he ages, dies, flesh and dust
skull and thought.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Crumpled Things

the brittle piece of chalk
crumples on the floor from the
hands of an angry teacher
her feet stamping upon
us, fragile and no longer
eager to learn
our first view on the violent
nature of those
monsters behaving
like gods

on crumpled things turning
into powder
in the same manner that
bodies turn
to ash
to dust

but must these gods know
inside those crumpled things and bodies
is the air that they have
not seen
the faces of our souls
passing through the storms and rain
rising to find for once
their homes in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
On Dating A Woman Not Your Wife

oh i know how it feels

i wear black
a coat to blend to the night
when i date
a woman not my wife

i imagine a room
a bottle of champagne
a glass

i imagine i undress myself
have my shower
with her
together

we clean ourselves with soap
and water
at the hotel

and then we wipe ourselves
with a clean white
towel

and we spray perfume
to our warm bodies
we imagine
we sleep tonight
and do
the things we have long imagined

we imagine
we wake up the following morning
some light
filtering in
the venetian blinds

some lights
stab our eyes
and we feel the hurt after
the pleasures
that even outside the room
of the hotel that night

we still imagine
sometimes we imagine we have no guilt at all
but it is always there

we still imagine
and we imagine we can sleep soundly

on eyes closed
we travel somewhere else thinking about the first paradise

RIC S. BASTASA
On Early Morning........

close the place
where you hear the songs of tiny birds
in a nearby sky

where you hear the whispers of the grass
on the hills

the flowers of solitude bloom tonight
and slowly falls on the foot of the mountain

on early morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Early Mornings...

every word is chosen
some discarded like chaff from the grains
but not every feeling is worth its showing
some chaffs in this perspective
are meant to be kept
somehow

when the wind comes and begins
to blow all these chaffs away
the fear is there
that some may get blinded
somehow

somewhere is a place to stay
and keep all those sad memories
bury them like the dead ants
so they cannot build their empires again

RIC S. BASTASA
On Eating....

the best way to eat, and healthful at that
is to chew what small food is there,
savor the taste of every molecule,
and swallow bit by bit like pulps of orange
sound a bit, of this ahh and ohhhs
and say over and over, oh this is great
let them all hear the slurp and your burp
and don't mind what the other people on the
other table say

like you you are paying too
the price of honest and candid living
has taken the share of shame and glory
had been full and shall be filled again
moment by moment, piece by piece,
molecule by molecule,

on such an atomic existence,
till the next nuclear burst.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Fame

it does not really matter  
that my name is not carved in stone  
i am not dead yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Finding Myself Alone Again

i woke up last
night past twelve
and suddenly
finds myself
(upon a realization)
that i am
alone in bed

i feel so guilty thinking
(since you are
so good to me)
that i am happier
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Finding The Beautiful One....

built within our souls is
this sense for beauty
we have not met it yet
but we know when it comes
we sometimes try to be familiar
making it as cup to coffee
but to no avail
we erase what we write
many times over
and say, 'this is not yet
what it really is'
we go into a deep depression
wrecked like a boat to a storm
when it arrives finally
like a lover
we can't stay like posts
we dance. we jump with joy
and we tell the moon to go on drifting

RIC S. BASTASA
On Getting Old

when i was a child
i don't really know how significant is the
mona lisa
smile, at first glance nothing in it is delicious
like a chocolate cake
or a red lollipop
or magnolia drumstick

i remember
how you snub the red wheelbarrow
what is it in a rusty wheelbarrow that stirs mankind
into deep thinking?

now things have changed
the sigh has a lot to say to the wind

the air has a heart of its own
the sea becomes a body of a woman

the moon a beautiful face
the night is not a place for fear
but for desire

romance spreads in the air
and the flowers that we pluck for play
may better be
staying to bloom at their stalks

we watch things rot
flowers that wilt and give up their gnarled petals

time indeed makes us different
when the sunset comes we become too cautious

we choose the words
we place our hands properly on the table
our eyes sharp now

to every detail
inside the labyrinths of our hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
On Going And Coming

It is a creation of
big difference when you leave
a house
and someone closes the door
and then you
gather the purposes from
the strangers that you
see
in those places where
you are most
alone
like you are gathering
different kinds of leaves
nothing but leaves
this time
and then when you come back
home
inside the plane that carries
you offering you
nothing but
the cumulus along the
skylines
you find finally someone
who is also waiting for
your arrival

the same person that closes
the door
is the same person who opens
it for you again

and then you turn off the light
upon a beautiful evening

RIC S. BASTASA
On Growing A Beard....

i say it is
weird when you grow a beard
just to keep
yourself warm

it is summer
do not grow any skin then.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Hanging Your Tears In The Air To Dry

amidst the fog
beyond the mist
i transcend to see
all the pearls
hanging along the
gray lines of the
blue sky

RIC S. BASTASA
On Having Connections In The Judicial System

you always
think about
a connection

ask me
i do not have
a connection

but i know
about connections
and how, i must tell
you now,

how it has demeaned
us all.
how it has destroyed
the system of

right and just,
of the upright
and the meritorious,

i am disconnected.
i have disconnected myself
from all your

foolishness. i have an
educated guess,
i have calculated the
risk,

i just think that you
do not really know
what you are saying....

RIC S. BASTASA
On Heat (Edited)

the bitch wants the steel gate opened
the black and white spotted lover is waiting outside
these animals operate on the scent
everything is hormonal
there are no plans
the itch comes at any moment
and the one that satisfies the need is always waiting
there is no courting
nothing about marriage or problems about the dowry
or the papers
there are no priests no judges
in their dog world.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Her 59th Birthday

she was the first to gift
me a brown sweat shirt when
i had my 6th birthday
and i could not really forget that

now on her 59th birthday
she took charge of everything
down to the last detail of the flower
that gives accent to the
center table to the cake's flavor
and the ginger slices that
go with her fish fillet

she is the bread winner of the family
her husband is weak and
good for nothing

what can we do? we must love what
she loves
because we love her too.

time is like a slimy fish
it swims inside our hearts
eluding the hands that
want to catch it

we were talking about
another sister who is sick
with no one
in the hospital

there were other talks
whatever
i did not pay attention anymore
i have my own
version of insecurities
and i do not wish to tack
it on their piles.
we said goodbye
the night was deep and the
longing continues
deeper than before

RIC S. BASTASA
On Her 78th Birthday

the cake is not really lavender
as i see it, it is as dark as violet
and not really purple. and the
color of the table covers is not
so pleasing as what a birthday
should be, and the tributes sound
more like an eulogy.

i ask my cousin if this event is
such a joke? or her last birthday?

her grandchilren too cried when
she shed her tears of joy when
her most favorite son did not
make it from a farther state.

she should have been happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
On His First Year In The Study Of Law

soon you will learn
how power is sown
here
they all start from the
good grasp of the law
memorizing
the essence of
its spirit
intended for that perpetual
quest of justice
and peace but at this early
you must have realized
mr. novice
that that is only a matter
of euphemism
for after all those years
of hardship
you shall then insist on
reaping the fruits of your
intellectual labor
for in the skill of your hands
and your wits
less now the humor
you will know by then
how to make the needed twists
and blend the turns
the law now becoming
your ardent servant
to pursue that most private
pursuit of personal happiness
totally disregarding
the demands of public welfare
that greatest law
set aside
in favor of your
selfish interest...

welcome
take the initial seat of power
and now we prepare
you for that insatiable greed

RIC S. BASTASA
On His Retirement

his face speaks of weariness
as he received his last plaque of appreciation
as i shake his hand
i sense resignation to life
when he takes his seat
he lifts his grandson
fair-skinned and smiling
the ultimate continuation
of his unfinished mission.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Imitation (Will That Anger You?)

L'imitazione del male supera sempre l'esempio; comme per il contrario, l'imitazione del bene e sempre inferiore.]

Respicer exemplar
vitae morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem,
et veras hinc ducere voces.

Pindarum quisquis studet aemulari,
lule ceratis ope Daedalea Nititur pennis,
vitreo daturus Nomina ponto.

Dociles imitandis Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus
C'est un betail servile et sot a mon avis Que les imitateurs.]

Der Mensch ist ein nachahmendes Geschopf.
Und wer Vorderste ist, fuhrt die Heerde.

Paradoxically though it may seem,
it is none the less true
that life imitates art far more
than art imitates life.

Imitation is suicide.

One who imitates what is bad always goes beyond his model; while one who imitates what is good always comes up short of it.

No man ever yet became great by imitation.

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.

Most people are other people.
Their thoughts are someone else's opinions,
their lives a mimicry,
their passions a quotation.
Those who do not want to imitate anything,
produce nothing.

To be as good as our fathers we must be better,
imitation is not discipleship

Insist on yourself; never imitate.

Posterity weaves no garlands for imitators.

Imitation, if noble and general,
insures the best hope of originality.

And now, weigh the pros and cons
why have i imitated you
and you imitating me

the great writers
above speak beforehand before us

and i have not heard ever
one of them complaining
or angry

perhaps
they are not to shortsighted
insecure
and shallow and short-tempered

precisely, they are great.

and here's the last saying for the day:

Imitation is the sincerest flattery.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Isabel Allende, A Tribute...

the tales of passion
are here again

i listen to Isabel
on her feminist stance

evocative
of future actions

the woman planting
trees in Africa
the others who
showed strength
in detention
saving their girls
the artist who advises
to keep the
good posture
and never cough

in sum
i am amazed on this
lazy Sunday
as i am looking for
words too
relevant to this passion
this existence
that rambles
and grasps for
the meaning of the word

i.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Kissing Oneself

a cat licks its own
paws and
body

self-cleansing
i suppose

the waves of the
sea kiss
its own shores

nature's course
i suppose

a dog chases
its own tail

instincts perhaps
i still suppose so

and when i say
i kiss myself
as you kiss yourself
too

my lips licking my
own palms

your tongue
tasting the salt
in your fingers

nothing narcissistic
i suppose

it is the possibility
when all love fails

self-love
self healing

a way of sensing
the exits
through
the labyrinths
of our illusions

will that be wrong
my friend?

RIC S. BASTASA
On Leaving At The Right Time

one good thing with us
is this: we know how to forget
and we know how to begin
less the remembering
when we meet again, we always
talk about food rather than
review the pictures
we struggle again for the old songs
recalling the lyrics
We take some glasses of cold water
and resume with the conversations,
we laugh so loud the neighbors are disturbed
and we start to dance the chacha
and the tango
then we exchange gifts
and once more thank each other again
for this new encounter
a revival, a reconnection, a rebonding
of our hopes and dreams

of course, when the right time comes
we leave because we also want to forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
he locked doors which he decided not to open anymore.
and that was long time ago. he forgets all about those doors.
this day he sees a door open. He gets inside a restaurant
for an early morning breakfast.
Someone sits there looking at the window where traffic on the street is slowly
building up like fire.
The crowd outside is noisy but silenced by the glass door.
It is the real world.
Breakfast is slow and gentle and savory.
He got the coffee of his life from another hand now.
Egg has always been sunny side up. And bread is now
preferred than rice.
The smell of coffee, its sweet fumes rises to the ceiling
where light enters by the side of the roof.
The room is bright now.
There is always a blank face to everyone here.
The waitress is looking at us.
Evidently, it is not whether she cares.
It is more of like, well, as usual, she means business.
Life is always a mode of serving you and then you pay.
What more do you expect?
The world moves this way. No one serves you because
of love.
It is because she too must live.
And not just you and your floating soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Losing The Beloved

now they will tell me
to appease my deep sorrow
that the beloved has become
a part of everything
that after all
nobody is gone

that the beloved has become
dew, a glint of snow,
the flower in bloom
the sea and its waves
the sand and the dunes

can't believe it
the beloved is wrapped in the hands
of another
happy around the arms
of the beguiler

am not comforted at all
got to find other solutions
other than
poetic illusions

RIC S. BASTASA
On Loving Love

i ponder by the side of my door
here i am
loving you

not thinking about tomorrow
not minding the past
or even today

you come near me
taking all my breath
here i am loving you
loving love and not anything else

RIC S. BASTASA
On Making A Poem For Both Of Us.....

we want to make a poem
the two of us

it is more like getting
little patches for a souvenir

my mind begins to burn
I'll take you under the moon

we start to make one
& it was quite a big fun

it is not meant to be heard
or read

it is meant to be done

RIC S. BASTASA
On Making Mistakes

now, i too have learned to live with mistakes.
i have accepted the idea that mistakes sometimes come uninvited in the house of our own imperfections
you comment that this should have been that a post here and less light over there
a rug is better neutral in color a bird should not be caged
and i listened carefully to every advise that you make
i nodded you have better ideas and i assured you that i always take note of what you say,

and then when the party is over
and when all of you leave and i am left alone
i stand beside the door waving my hand
letting all of you go, and saying
take care, God bless us all, and have a nice trip back home,

i heave a sigh and goes back to the place where we were seated
i put my hands back on the table with left overs
and ponder upon every conversation and then i look around
for all the imperfections around me and i tell myself:

there shall be no change.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Many Nights With You

on many nights with you
let me thank you

i have felt this emptying
of all that i have possessed

i am now light as air
and so i must go

to places where
i can be full again

RIC S. BASTASA
On Mat Weaving

we gather the leaves of the buri palm
sort them and cut them to desired
width and lengths and dry them
and in time
weave them into mats

we make the designs and
dye them in colors
like birds and flowers and
houses by the mountains

and then when we are finished
after such a delicate and
tiring work
we look at these mats
and then we use them like
other useful items

we spread them on the floor
inside the house
or we spread them on the grass
under the tree
and then we sleep on them

and then we make our big dreams
or the small ones even

we relax on our own creations
perhaps just like

making poems

RIC S. BASTASA
do i really know him?
no. i do not know him
for he was never my friend
and neither am i his friend.
we are different and do i really
like his music?
no. i do not like his music
or his person, even if the world
shall love him for what
he has given. Music.
can i say i love him?
no. love is a personal thing
too personal a matter.
do i need to pretend that
i adore him,
now that he is dead?
no. wherever he is
he belongs there and
i have nothing really to say
as important as his demise.

but so long, i have my journey too.
and it is not that easy.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Mutuality....

the beggar of a relationship is not blind.  
his eyes are sharp, keen as the eagle's.

he may be limping, but his legs are perfect  
for the Olympic marathon

he is in a pitiful state, not able to understand  
that mutuality is a requisite for true love  
that in happiness, two must dance the tango  
of give and take, like cars enjoying the luxuries  
of two way traffic, wide highways, accurate directions  
on proper speed limits, full gas tanks,  
good brakes,

and on long journeys, the luxury of having to  
stop and shop  
and find the best motel in town  
enjoying the scenery on top  
under the fullness of the moon  
and the twinkles of the stars

in one moment, when a star falls  
both of you, shall make some wishes.

RIC S. BASTASA
On My 10thousandth Poem

when i reach that number
it is because of the days that bore
it is because of the pain that does not cease
or he joys that jump
the bliss that soars in the sky
like a bird untiring about the flapping of its wings
that seagull that dives like an odd ball
to the surface of the sea
or that eagle that keeps its sharp gaze
on the tiny prey
i am lost
but i know how to find myself in the words
of the nth poem
it is the flow of the river
which does not just end at the sea
it is the waves that keep on going and reaching
far away
it is the story that meets a story and tells a story
upon another story
it is the desert sand, the Bedouin
and his princess
it is the oasis that source of life
these poems or whatever you call it
when you are angry because
they are not
but whatever that is
i am a consciousness
and also a trance
i am speaking i am listening
i am myself i am not myself
i a confusion and a certainty
now you must understand that there is nothing to understand
there is only the emotion
that goes on and on and one
simply because i remain alive
simply because i decide to keep this life
moving upon itself
not on another man's decision
not mine alone
not mine but upon itself a being on itself...

RIC S. BASTASA
On My Fiftieth Of The 449th

it is on this day that i begin to count
fifty days of my Pentecost feast,
i have arrived at the significant
30 plus 20, and did not God promised
Abraham that if there are fifty righteous
people in Sodom and Gomorrah
he would refrain from destroying
the twins?

The unmarried man who will have sex
with a virgin has to pay 50 shekels of silver
and he has to marry her and never divorce
her.

this is the symbol of my deliverance
50

there shall since then be no burden.

RIC S. BASTASA
On My Own Terms

relating to you must be
on my own terms says the sun to the moon
we don't see each other
neither shall you expect me
to dance your night away
we know the terms of our existence
the closing and the opening
of doors
in such a manner
that when you open i close
what is there
or perhaps that for me to live
so must you die.

it is sad, indeed overwhelmingly
tragic,
nature's laws, our terms of engagement
darkness and light
life and death
you and i.

RIC S. BASTASA
On My Own Way Of Looking At Things

somewhere
i must see on my own
do things
the way my hands shall make
what my mind knows
there is no sense being
other people
they have their own feelings
their own
makeshifts, i, venture,
on this
undrinkable, what you left
as unthinkable
the non doable
left along i must grown my own
wings and
fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
On My Way Home

this time
the stereo is turned off
i hear my own breathing
the sole music on my
journey back
home

every heartbeat
speaks of
home,
the road gets narrower
side streets become
a hazy line
trees are not trees
and lights are
dimmer
on a sky without stars

i want to hear
what silence wants to tell me
about words that i have
left unsaid
because they are too
painful

this time i breathe
my own soul
this time it owns me
closer to
the letters of my
conscience

all i want is to be home
again
with nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Origins........

it was hot
really really hot

the way we
search for the footsteps
of God

behind all of us
are the onlookers

perhaps wondering
why are these strangers
here
what are they doing?

we continue the trek
as aliens

the mumbling goes on
on those tunnels

i too ask: why did God
choose this place?

i still believe in
ironies, more so in
paradoxes,

the art of decomposition,
thoughts reversing,

times too grow
backward towards its
own roots

back to the seeds
on origins of silence.
On Other Causes...

the hunger for the word
is like a savanna without borders

you open some pages
surf the web, and find some sites attractive
and they invite you
and you read the pieces and begin to like them
and even believe in their causes

they like you and begin to send messages
of solicitations

it sounds like: 'the children of Country X are hungry'
' Country X is in need of your help. Why not pledge $50 and then
we will spread the word? '

it seems everything boils down to money.
I am turned off. Tomorrow i will find another. Or perhaps, never.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Passing A Hanging Bridge

on passing a hanging bridge
the sway can be felt

you will be there alone
not in two's
not even to be with the person
you love or your trusted friend

not that there is no valid reason for that
the hanging bridge may feel your weight

and give in and you may fall with it
and die in an instant

there are rules to be borne in mind
you are not suppose to look on either side, left or right
or look downward otherwise you will feel
being sucked by the raging river below you
and then you become nauseous
and then eventually you fall
and then die crashing
on the rocks

i have reflected on it that day after i passed the hanging bridge.
it is like life itself. I must pass alone. I must always look forward.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Paul Cezanne' Women Bathers

there is no other story to tell
about women bathing nude but
nothing is exposed like a real strangled pubic hair
or the splitting of a woman's flesh to see
whether there is blood in their arms
and wrists.
the river freezes. there is no motion for fluidity.
the women are stuffed like dolls of cotton and rags
sewn and brought together to form
the faces of humanity.
i know g Paul's time it is a sin to tell a lie.
It is also a graver sin to tell and expose
the so these women did not have nipples.
What is inside them is just this thick paint
of paul, always trying to conceal what is important.
i feel so sick about it.
But it is still so beautiful as i now, tell you about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Positive Thoughts

it is easier to have all the
positive thoughts
cure for the harsh day
countermeasure for
the indifference of those hours
it is advisable though
to be vigilant about what is real
and they may be
negative after all

cautious as a cat
you know when to jump and still
be so alive
on the ninth life

RIC S. BASTASA
On Relishing Small Pleasures

a cherry in my tongue
playing with my gums and teeth inside my mouth
not a bite just a licking
sweetness cherished in every nerve
of my tissues

not to be swallowed
or chewed
but wrapped with the layers
of my saliva
every moment every second
the glory of
lickin' good.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Riding The Carousel

do you know why i still like riding that carousel?

or a merry-go-round? because i like to be a child again.

because i am always a child within and a child has
and will always have a father and a mother watching him
taking his merry-go-ride as though he will never be in pain

as though this world is just a row of horses and a music
that never stops
where children will always have fun
safe and fine.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Running Away

when you step on the floor
when that door opens because of your plea
to be in

when you are in
you discover that the monster is in too
and you want to step back
and go away

running is the first reaction
but soon
it is not the correct solution
it is not too late yet
you make a plea again to enter the same room
where the monster is in
and you decide to confront it
you know that you will be losing in this war
the monster has sharp teeth and a mouth without a jaw
hence it can swallow you whole
without much effort

then you think of another mighty solution
you stand still
then you sit down on the floor
you close your eyes
and plunge on the abyss of your silence

you know what happens next
the monster is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Some Baby Steps And Baby Breaths

welcome to my world baby
this is the way
to reality, i will take your tiny hands baby
in my calloused hands i will guide your little steps baby
to my own self made ways
look at my eyes and trust how i look at things
and places and people
come! come! come!
i will move a little farther so you will
move a little closer
i will leave a little space between us
that which
makes you feel the emptiness
i have
i had once that i myself was compelled to fill
there is this chasm now
baby
that you have to jump in your clumsy ways
you will not fall or stumble
or if by your innocence and slower
ways
something happens
i will always be there to catch you

come! come! come now
my baby! grow! grow some more!

i am tall, i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Some Departures

everyone is a moving particle
when someone in the household says
that he is leaving
i do not ask where and why
i ask when
because the next thing that i am concerned with
is how to find
someone to substitute the vacuum that
is left

no one is indispensable
leaving is a matter that i understand
and i am not hurt
even slightly
i welcome it
as a form of a pain rehearsal
after which
depending on the number
the sourness or the bitterness of the taste
in my tongue
i may finally say, well, this is it, this is pain,
it does not hurt anymore
and i tell myself
congratulations you have reached beyond
the threshold of routine disposal

d this is my house and my home
i promised myself that i am not leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
On Some Refrains Of Your Heartache

back now
to some refrains of your heartache
days and nights
same faces
wounds and scars
a broken heart
trembling hands
lonely walks in the park
closed doors
sad moon by your window
a sad song from far
tears in your eyes

try again, try again
listen a bird is chirping

RIC S. BASTASA
On Some White Corpuscles

your teeth are yellow and you say these are healthy teeth
you must envy
these yellow teeth
your eyes are happy, they are smiling till the last day,
and you are proud saying
look, these are happy eyes why not take a picture
of them and copy them
to be your eyes,
your skins are tight and you are too very proud of them
these skins hold my bones and there are no rattlings
in the house of your body

then i ask what is your problem then, why you too
take the walks in the morning?
you said your hemoglobin count is low and you sometimes
faint and your lover is worried always taking you limp
in his arms when you kiss in the dark,

i see, this kind of thing to a man of your lifestyle,
i need not ask if you have been taking large doses
from his white corpuscles,
from the cartilage between his legs,

something too personal you say
there is no envy somehow
you close your mouth hiding your yellow teeth
with some sauce still
about to dry on the gums,

last night, you say, was the best night you ever had,
something new
fresh and you are frank enough to admit
something that you always eat
and swallow

will not last you a life time
love to you, is always, a temporary, fleeting thing,

a fact too tight like your skin
holding all your dangling bones

RIC S. BASTASA
On Somethings Unclear, Occluded, Clouded

what i tell you sometimes are clouded,
hazy, misty, something that you receive and always pregnant with
the other coming questions
which of course,
i cannot answer, by their very nature, i am telling you only what
i have seen, not even what i have heard from them

hearsay (i just suppress them, folding them like shirts
and blankets in my cabinet) but

i am telling you the truth

and your face moves sidewise more often in disbelief
how can such a man like me be so foolish talking nonsense

(on something always so incomplete
and impenetrable) , occluded, shrouded sometimes in mystery
our minds unable to cope up
our hands simply of no use
because we cannot touch them
our eyes too
unable to see, our sense of smell
in utter futility

i am not stupid, honey, some things by their very own nature
are incomplete, shrouded, mysterious,
and cannot be relayed by words, not even by thoughts

simply because they are
and we can do nothing about it, except

to see, and just be silent
because they are divine

RIC S. BASTASA
On Stevenson Syndrome

lowly
writer are you
dwelling
in an indistinct island
namelessly

if you write about
the rain
it is nothing but simply
rain

your sea is not
their kind of sea
though
its blueness
is same without
shame

unless you are a
Louise
when he writes about
the rain
and the sea
and then
suddenly everyone
becomes
crazy
figuring out meaning
where
actually
there is none

RIC S. BASTASA
On That Day

on that day the color of the sun
shall be as scarlet, as red as drying blood

the clouds shall all be gray
and the sea is darker than blue

the air is humid and the sounds of
rocks grinding themselves to sand

shall be heard. You will not be there
to witness the birth of a new sun

the moons as round as the halo of light
on the head of saint

the silence as deep as the sea
the murkiness you must condemn

but only for a while. The light in your eyes
comes out. The angels sound their trumpet.

The skies split into two.
You shall hear the sound of the rain.

The sky is not empty.
And the stars shall stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
On That Empty Glass

on that glass
empty as it is

donot fill it with
mere air

pour all that you
have
from sighs to
leaping joys

and wriggling pains
and screams

and creeping
anticipations

leave it under
the sun
and let it stay
under the moon and stars

in the middle of the
night
drink it with some pieces
of dreams

savor life
rub your body to another body
tell you what

you shall see a glimpse
of the face of God

RIC S. BASTASA
On That Lonely Table

when i entered the house of
grandpa
grandma watched my every
step

she was strict. each gesture
must have a reason,
each step must be according
to a tradition

which she had no power to break
but had always upheld
and to which i have had the moment
to judge her
that she was unhappy even in the
last hour of her life, truly

grandpa loved her but like other
men, he had his own love stories
to tell, escapades that grandma
knew but never talked anyway,
since that was part of the
macho code,
that a good man
must have had more experiences
than a woman,

philandering was acceptable,
more children, more happiness
and the woman stayed in the house
doing the cooking and the praying
and the patience
to love the man who had always
betrayed her,

back to grandma, she invited me
to eat dinner,
and i had problems with the rituals,
of spoon and fork, of this saucer and
that china, that porcelain where soup
was served like a

precious liquid which i should not
sip sounding like a faucet
which made me feel that my brain
was going to the drainage
of cockroaches deprived of self-esteem

she watched how i placed my hands
on the table
and i was already conscious how to eat
and not satisfy my hunger
it was not the embarrassment but it was the
hatred about hypocrisy

from that i learned to love papa more
who taught me well, and which i could not forget,
that to eat with my
own bare hands
was like fondling my own penis
where ejaculation comes naturally and
without any guilt at all.

grandpa was quiet and firm
his stoic silence was more honest
than grandma's
well arranged words which
were like all her gadgets
of etiquette
on that lonely table.

RIC S. BASTASA
On That Same Hour Of The Night

on that same hour of the night
while you
were drinking your beer
alone
and taking big bites
of your beef steaks
and releasing
your stress
on some sticks of
imported cigarettes

on the other side of the table
too
sit two other friends
talking nonchalantly
like the sound systems of
the barrio

the wave their hands
shouting their names
telling me

that these times
they too know how to still enjoy
life and forget

and that i am always too far away from them
in my own kind
of indifference
in my own way
to disregarding
other people's selfishness

and they ask me if i have not forgotten them
their names the place of their origins
their true faces
and how the scars and violence have changed them
how they now learn
to look the other way around and bury themselves
in the small pleasures of smoke and alcohol
defining for once
what is despair

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 50th.....

on the 50th of something
for the nth time of his
stupidity
but its time he stumbles
upon same stone
he hurts himself again
but again on the nth time
the monkey that sees
him stumbling all over
again
laughs at him and seeing
same monkey
he laughs at himself too
on the 50th time
and here he is
with all his monkeys
making this sad world
a little bit
happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 18th Year Of Marriage

on that first day
of the year
we start to be on our
own

she washes the dishes
cleans the fridge
folds the blankets
dusts off the
furniture
changes the drapes
and the
table cloths

i feed
our three dogs
mop the floor
and mow the lawn
and trim the
bushes of the
garden

we have set boundaries
between love and work
and strengthen
the fences
that keeps our house
from outside
invasions.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 1900th..

it was simple
we did it simply
no pretensions
no copying just being
original
just like what is
here is here
and what is there
is there
just like common
sense,
when it moves
follow it
when it stops
stay for a while,
all for
spontaneity
nothing more
nothing less
and they read
you for that

because you
are you and
you keep on
being you

no more
no less

and they will
be amazed
how numb are
you
how unaffected!

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 20th Day

on the 20th day of this month on the 20th year of my life, let me treat you to a free drink, on that much awaited day congratulate me at most, i will by then have conquered myself.

is it not a feat by itself? myself my foe finally my most revered friend?

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 25th...

i am repeating
what usual things i have done
and will always be doing

there is always a room for
my silence
how i keep it always as a seed
growing
and just that
forever.... a seed

its fruits are nowhere to be
found
it has never even bloomed

a seed in my mind
like cancer

restrained, controlled,
well kept

now this silence
takes its toll at the count of
ten thousand and five hundred
solitudes.

i take my cup
drink the wine and i am praying
that let it not be taken

Thy will be done.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The 26th Of July

i will have a room
at the Waterfront Hotel
Room 302
i will be alone
and will not
tell you
that i am there

it will be a big surprise
for you
unless you read this poem
today

there is a promise
in my words
each syllable has
desire
this poem shall be
a poem of passion
for us

this poem shall
not lie
this poem shall wait
for you
this poem shall
give you
so much pleasure

i have taken
already the element
of pain
and disgust

this poem shall see you
and you shall
not be disappointed again

yes, davao on a big day for just the two of us
On The 29th

what shall i recall on the 29th?

shall i recall the squander of time
and remember how fruitless
is the tree of time

how lushful are the leaves
how strong are the trunks

and yet so fruitless
like someone might have said

that this tree deserves to be cut and burned?

on the 29th
what shall i tell you about myself?

i shall tell you that i have lived so fully
that i have not wasted all the days of my life

that i have done my duty
that i have kept all my responsibilities

that i have kept my word
to love you with all my soul, my mind, my heart

that i have not betrayed my promise
that i have won my wars

that i have fought loneliness
that i have chosen happiness

on the 29th
i shall throw nothing away

except perhaps this little party
for a few friends

i blow some pains
on those little candles

48 in all, and i will keep the 49th
still for the next

happy birthday to myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Barrenness Of The Desert

it does not mean that on that arid desert
where barrenness defines itself
in an ocean of sand
a space of heat
a huge territory of howling silence,

be surprised when soon you stop and look upon a little patch
a very tiny violet flower says
love lives here
love lives here.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Beach

the sun is up.
the pebbles are hot.
the trees are brewing their greens
to the pluffy blue clouds.

we huddle together on a
thatch-roofed hut by the shore.
the waves splash on the
side of the big rock.
the sands gleam
some diamond sparks

the horizon is silvery
the cove curves beyond us
a little farther
a nude man approaches
another nude woman

and they run towards the
blue waters of the sea

we watch. This is new.
This is happening
in this country.

we watch closely.
and then the clouds
turn gray. The rain comes.

some leaks on the roof
of this hut. We listen.
We still have too much
to really learn.

we pretend we are
innocent about what is
happening.
On The Brink Of Something...

I've seen a glass
full of
water on an edge of
the table

on the brink of
falling,

i am watching it
and i very well know
how it feels

RIC S. BASTASA
On The East On The West

just as the children of the east
gets with
playing with their small fingers
under the rain
chased by the agile feet
of happiness

someone somewhere is an old man
seated on the west
his white locks of hair hiding
from the rain
listening to the sweet refrain
of its music
as it falls to the ground
trying to sense
the when of things to come
waiting for a
happy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Emptiness Of Our Chairs

we can always have flowers
for a sky
and trees can be our
walls
we can then invite
others to sit
on the emptiness of
our chairs

RIC S. BASTASA
On The First Bright Day Of Your Life...

the rush comes
on a clear morning
upon a brighter day
when the sun
for the first time of the rainy month
appears in the skies

inside the house
you recall the curse...

RIC S. BASTASA
On The First Day Of This Year

new year.
the happy faces
in those
pictures in
Facebook

i hope
are not pretty lies.
most of the time
they are

on the first day of
this year
of the water dragon

we shall play a
new game
breathing fire

growing wood on
water
believing in
what is not credible

on the first hour
of this year
or even the hour before
that
you shall begin
disliking me

every part of me
but as a compromise
i will just
be sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Foot Of The Hill Is A Child Near The House Playing Alone

what are pebbles? you know how to impress this kid asking you to draw a rainbow that bridges two hills

on the foot of the hill is a child near the house playing alone, and such loneliness makes this kid by your side asks for flowers and birds and skies,

and you tell him, ' kiddo, these pebbles are seeds' and even if you throw them away because you do not like their silence and hardness, they always grown on the side of the hills bridged by this rainbow where the lonely child of your sorrow dreams too of you to be with him

one day, when imagination and reality blends like body and soul, like yeast and dough, like salt and water, like man and woman, like roots and rocks.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Grass

there is a baseball
alone in the grass
waiting for the kid.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Island Of Lilitao

THE boatman says we will be here only for a short while
why? because this island of Lilitao shall soon disappear

we are not scared we think that the boatman is just joking
and so we take time stepping upon the golden sands

pit-patted on its green blue waters
wading our bodies feeling the salt and silt in our hands

soon, a huge cloud comes, bringing with it the rain and thunder
and then it becomes dark and the boatman serious as a man with the hood

of death signaled that we must rush to the boat at once and save ourselves
for indeed the island as predicted disappeared

the sea has swallowed it, but as the boatman says,
in the next hour, it too shall spit it out.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Last Hour....

incoherent
hour

nostalgia vomiting
nostalgia

hands wrap your
body of
hands

desire is gone
welcome

total blankness
you leave everything

to God to
God

switch to switch
turns off.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Last Minute That You Boarded The Plane

on the last minute that you boarded
the plane
and you think
it is the one owned by God,

sorry, so sorry, that plane left
a minute ago,
and you were not
on its manifest

you boarded the wrong plane
and that is the truth

enjoy your ride,
and pray

who knows
you may catch up on the next flight
to purgatory.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Long Road To Pagadian

1979. rough times.
there was this
no man's
rebels
dead bodies
were unaccounted for
on the road to
Pagadian.

we were on the bus.
it was a long travel
north of this
coastal island

the seagulls were
at sea looking
for a catch of
silvery fish

we pass them by
the bus was muddy
and the rain fell
hard on the roof
and we closed the
glass window
afraid to get wet

slowly your weary head
inclined towards
my muscular chest
and rested there

and you began to
sleep soundly and
weave your own dreams

i smelled your soft, black hair
and i saw a beautiful face
with luscious lips
red as a rose in bloom
an inch away from mine

i could have kissed you
without your knowing
a slight touch could have
perfected love
on your cheek

but i didn't.

Now i ask myself
if i ever have any regret
living a longer life in this
world. I have an answer.

it was a long, long travel.
and we at last arrived there.
the rain stopped.
the sun started to shine.

i still ask: why did i not kiss you?
why did i not even ask your name?

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Merits

shall we take pride
on the merits of our wounds?
or rather shall we submit
to nothing but mercy?

May God teach us.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Next Trip

She will not be dismayed
Today, if the bus leaves
Without her,
That bus is full
There is still the next
Bus,
Now, An empty bus
A special trip
For her,
She demands
That no other rides on
This empty bus
Chartered
For the next trip
To nowhere
She must know
She must not
Be dismayed,

It is her
Last trip that she
Had long wished,

She expected you to
Understand, and
That you be not sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Night That You Are Not On My Side

last night
the bed feels like a glass
without water
the blankets are like eyes
seeing a blank ceiling
the lampshade has a tongue
of light untalking
the floors are indifferent
the door is hinting
about what hate can do
to the windows that close
like fists

the heart grips for a hold
on its veins
tears want to see the
waterfalls
the mouth bites itself
the teeth gnashes
to a steady gum

simply because you are
not with my side.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Other Hand

You are no less than anyone, you are more than anybody
You are special; you have the right to be given a name yourself

You have the right to be

And so when you let go these thousand poems of yours
In the sea of ideas like atoms in a limitless sky in a limitless space

Be there. Try Floating in there and see a single word from one of the thousand poems you made
They all call your name

I am yours you made me and I have become significant I have become special
Because of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Other Hand He Calls It The Thousand Monkeys

on the thousandth
monkey
you shout
o my god
i made it!

the monkey
hangs and shifts
place from
vine to vine

jumps on the river
and swims
finds a fish
and eats it
rises from the river
and dances on
a rock
under the morning
sun

quite exciting
the other monkeys
did the same

except for one
he sits by the window
watches the running of
time
dust after dust
dusk after dusk
waiting for
the big break of
his own life.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Other Side Of Father's Day

not all fathers
are good
and the children
are skewed

forgive them
O Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Other Side Of This Equation

beyond poetry
do not think of something
deep and mysterious

it is this ordinariness of our
everyday life
that comes after

i am finished with the last
poem for tonight
i will be watching the evening news
as i sit on an old hard wood
chair reserved just for me
as i start opening my plate
and wipe my spoon and fork
with this soft white cloth
on a menu of soft rice and
unsalted fish and green
leafy ferns heavily spiced
with onion and red ripe tomatoes

beyond poetry is this eating
this dinner and this listening
to the happenings of events
around us, this comments of
tsk tsk tsk
and u huh. and what the hell
is happening to this country?

this waste of lives and waste
of so much time on matters
of injustice and defrauding
and blinding and shutting
and shouting and shooting

after this dinner i may read
some poems again and even
write some more, but it is
getting late, and the door
is locked and the windows
are all closed and the wind
has come with a stronger rain

earlier this time, i have decided
to sleep and stop minding what
is happening to my surrounding.

beyond poetry, too, is rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Other Side...

defrosted trees
melting ice

sunny waters
silvery river

Asian tripping
Tipsy.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Pond

if i were to choose
whether
i be this flowering lotus
or the croaking toad
on the pond

i will choose
as a matter of  compromise
both

a croaking flowering lotus
sitting like a toad then
splashing on the pond

pleasing everybody

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Pot Of Hypocrisy

there is a plant there,
lots of green leaves
concealing the color of its twigs
and hungry always
for the sun's attention
there are no flowers or
fruits
it has no power to bear
what it should have given
like the rest

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Same Boat

feel the wave under my feet
i am with you

on the same boat
do not look in the dark blue
of my depth

it is too dark
life your sails like the way you lift
your eyes

to the sky
we are free this way

only this we are unbound
to the boundless sun to the sailing moon

seagull souls

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Same Journey

how can the rest of the clan
forget you?

when you first arrived here
we heard you cry
from morning till nighttime

your mother had a hard time
tricking you into a comforting silence
with a hum
and then a lullaby
and then a hug as she buried your face
into her bosom

and then as common animal instinct would have it
you began to suck the nipples of
life and sucked it so well
like a greedy
insect to the nectar of the flower
in May

milk was such a taste that finally
brought you to a contract for life

we did the same and so we understood
everything

our fathers recalled it for us
because we too had
thoroughly
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Same Journey, Discover My Good Humanity...

i have not used words
to conceal my thoughts,

outside this little world
of mine,
i wear those thick clothes
cover my face, wear the
dark sunglasses,
my actions hide me
to protect me from harm

but in this secret hideout
i am using words to
slowly reveal to you
who i am, and where i am
going
what my aspirations are

many have not understood me
their inability to go deeper
beyond appearances, clothes, ties,
underwear, nameplates,
pins, buttons, shoes,
shirts, balls,
and
expressions, gestures &
endearments

despite these hands and
fingers that sometimes
send the wrong signals,
a body that you can detest
as something that possesses
cruel feet
and crazy nails,
thick skins, and freckled
faces

this i must tell you,
i am not a bad person
i am as good as the other
that you know
my words will speak for me
on this
whiter portion of my
existence
with you, my reader
my listener

i regret all your conclusions
you have settled for the surface
shallow, irrelevant, cowardly.

i wish we can be in the same boat
to this journey,
spend time together, lots of time,
lots of interchanges of words,
perhaps you will begin
to see the good in me,
inside my heart i am as human as
you, one that after all,
needs too to be confirmed
about his goodness,
his inability to do evil
because of the sameness of
our journey
same pains, bearable sufferings,
occasional disappointments,
patent patience

we both do not wish to go
to hell
you say it well.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Same Road...

that night i passed by the road
leading to the house where i live,

someone died on the road
i did not mind i am heading for home

this morning while going to the university
another body sprawled on the road, another dead body

there is a crowd of people
curious but not mourning

i do not stop for death
i am going towards mine and we who are still leaving cannot really be lucky

everyday we are dying
we simply have to wait for that fate
ful time
it is our turn we do not have to anticipate it
every hour
a part of us dies

it is enough sharing this moments of death
and so i said
i cannot stop for another person's death

destiny has once taken him
and there is nothing that i can do

i am also just merely passing by...

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Sands Of My Solitude...

pull the boat
that will take us away
from this
mess island

i wait
on the sands of my
solitude

upon the calm shores
i shall figure out
what next to do

do not think
that leaving is always the
possible solution

on my doubt
i shall sustain what remains
to be done

i have slept the
numerous passages of days
when i wake up
the moon shall speak to me
about the fate of some
stars

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Second Night

i like the
wall
of separation

within it
is the silence
that i could
have written
since
i cannot
speak it

i tried
many times to reduce
the color
of silence
into something
like
black here and
white
over there

i want to capture
it in
some letters
like bars
and rectangles
formed
by my hands

i have never
done so
well

i am not good at
capturing
the perfect moment
it escapes
always it escapes
always
it escapes

because it is
free

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Shallow Creek

on the shallow creek
there is an old mud fish
still as a stone
the light changes it
into a wave
logic says it is there
instinct wants to catch it
human need says it is good for breakfast

the poet in you simply loves to watch.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Shore

One child on the shore
With a stick on his hands
Writes on the sands
Some drawings

Playful
A wave comes and slides
On the shore
The drawings are gone

And a new slate is given
By the water that runs
That advances to him
And later surrenders to itself

Another young man
Draws a heart on the sand
Swearing a love eternal
All encompassing

A wave slides forth
And comes back pulling towards itself
A new slate is made again

The old man comes later
Writing his life story with a cane
The same wave comes again
Slides forth and pulls itself

An empty slate
Sand so smooth and blank and plain
Gleaming anew
To the blue skies

Everything looks playful,
Indeed. The sameness and the
Constant repetition. The cycle.
The monotony of life.
On The Shores Of My Island

on the shores of my island  
are rocks  
and stones with sharp  
teeth  

do not come  
with bare feet  

if you can invent wings  
try putting them on  

i am a friend of birds  
and all that  
is taking the softness  
and blues  
of clouds  

the breeze puts the music  
to my shells  

they are all empty  
the hermits are dead.  

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Side Of Utility

beside those silver railings
you stop to display your wares

nice looking indeed
on white cloth
skin behind
lust wanting to jump out
into the
open

the mall is crowded
with too many people
your eyes caught mine
you know how is it to trap
and perhaps
wait

i stare at you and then i close my eyes
i am imagining what is happening to me

what can 15 or so minutes do to my
entire life?

shall it ruin the palace that i built for
years?
shall that beautiful facade turn into mud?

i wake up from this stupor
and then i walk away
i turn around
to check if love is there
on the side of the silver railings
of the crowded mall

and then
you too are gone

we are simple mist in the garden
of leaves
that even without light
we dissolve
because we have decided
to be false.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Stormy Days Of Our Lives

in the garden of lust
give it a little dignity
in the secrecy of
intimacy
we can't get rid of
the flesh
try giving it the gentleness
that it deserves
give music to its moans
do not humiliate it with force
speak the name of love
as you
slowly close your eyes

lust is love's twin island
we slip our tongues
like boats there
on the stormy days of
our lives

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Surface Of Impenetrable Things

once when young
i played on the skill of my hands
to touch
what others dare not,

fire
and heat and cinders
and flints and
glints
and bubbling water
and sparkles of wine
fermenting
anger

age has given
a tray of pain
a glass of bitterness
a pail of failures
and the mind mellows down
too slowly like
a fruit ripening
gently

there are bottomless abysses
deep wells unreachable
by the longest rope
there are dark holes
and blunt corners
there are ocean floors
without names

and then the time has come
not for surrender
in the hopelessness of it all
it is the time for the quieting of
the rage
the stilling gesture of nature
that somehow
things at the right time open themselves
like arms wanting to embrace you
the secrets revealed
the understanding as wide as space
as deep as the edge of this
mysterious universe

always at the right time
always shall the proper season come
soon, soon....

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Surface Of Things

when you see
only the surface of
things
like coverings

a table cloth
hiding the legs of
the table

gloves that hide
the wrinkles of
hands

closed
windows that
conceal what happens
inside the room

you see nothing
at all

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Third Day

seven days i will be silent
not that i embrace silence for no reason at all
not for the sanctity of its doorways
and halls
no not at all

seven days i will not talk to you
because i live in the shanties of my madness
because i thrive on the food of my doubts
for love that do not have mouths that speak
for hearts whose doors are shut
in the narrow paths of your shallow minds

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Verge Of Forgetting

i have mistaken
tuesday for a wednesday

i left my cellphone
on top of the lectern

i bring the wrong book
in class

mistaken Judy anne
for a Van

oh, i forget perhaps
that i am getting into a

fifty-one
wrinkled still in

love,
rusting love

beside me in this
room

is the sea
and i am this iron

wrapped in
white salt

i do not wish to
correct all these

i am prepared
into this forgotten
ness
time shall come
and claim me then

without a trace of memory

and that will simply be happiness for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Wings And Claws And Beaks Of Poetry

lame, i walk on the crutches
of poetry,

wingless, i put on the feathers
of words,

i get these beaks
of metaphors

to feed upon
the richness of meaning

i am a hundred birds
on a hundred wings

i have claws and beaks
and eagles' eyes

on the flights
of the madness of poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Wings Of Change We Shall Ride

yes, we shall take the hitch ride
towards the place we have never been too
we shall ride on the wings of change
whatever that be

Big Black Eagle
Night Hawk
Blue King Herons
Brown Sparrows

Yes, we shall take the chances
and grab the changes

This world is gone
And those who are left out
Are going Nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
On The Wings Of Fantasy

early this morning
you wake up with nothing
to fret about

pre-valentine feeling
of having nobody
and feeling nothing
about the coming
day of the hearts

you say better have
nothing than
a head-ache

i say, babes,
not guts not glory
no pain no gain

and you say
it is not the end of the world

and i say
the world does not end
only humans

and you say
you don't have to beg
luck and love does not seem
to like each other

and i say
try the blessing side of love
try a little flirting like you are a bait
thrown in the sea of love
and get the share of your fish
in that big ocean

then you sighed.
because you don't believe that it's gonna happen anymore.
end of the conversation.

i could have said: try and try until you succeed.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Their Days Of Lament

the lady with a black veil
is asking: how could you send the clowns
for us to laugh
when we are still mourning?

and the clown was there quick with
an answer: a big smile as big as the half moon
an acrobatic skill like a boneless earthworm

why should sorrow be overwhelming
when happiness is there
aplenty
lurking at every door of
thought?

RIC S. BASTASA
On These Dry Seasons Of My Heart

on these dry seasons of my heart
the dry leaves heap and
i tread upon
them all

the sounds of crumpling
are no longer confusing

RIC S. BASTASA
On Thing With You....

before you arrive in the house
you always announce your name
makes me wonder
what is the reason for this?
do you wish not to catch me
with my philandering?
do you see to it that you will
never know
what i have been doing?
you do not like to confront the
pain of knowing?
and so when you come
the mess is already cleaned
every chair and table on their proper places
blankets with stains of my infidelity
are changed
with the newly laundered and ironed ones
the pillow cases are soft and scented
and the bed as usual
are like my arms ready
to serve as your home again
for my heart has no other wish
despite my sins
but to provide you shelter
whatever may be the case.

RIC S. BASTASA
On This Date

i still remember
how is it to stay in a room
and lock it for a day or two
not watching TV
neither talking to a friend
nor eating anything

early fasting for an early
black bird
nesting on my head

i agree with you
there is no amount of comfort
no flower or cloud
can sway my lips to smile

it was bitter
something so hard to swallow
time is a comforting mother
nurturing a child
crying in the wilderness

RIC S. BASTASA
On This Day...

we've given up form
this body
we've embraced
content
this spirit....

RIC S. BASTASA
On This Journey Recite Me A Poem

on this journey
recite me a poem
come closer to me
let me smell your
warm breaths
let me feel your
plump breasts
let me touch
you as you
recite the words
as i hear your song
let me be with you
on this journey
to your inner self

RIC S. BASTASA
On This Silly Hill

On this silly hill I remember the silly things
That we did
We were so young and we decided to pick
Some ripe mangoes on this silly
Isolated hill away from
Our teasing
Silly friends

And I really liked her a lot
My heart was trembling
Her heart too quivering
We felt we like each other
Feelings like hot chili
Heating our ears

We said we love each other
We promised to love each other
Till the end of days

And so I climbed the mango tree
And picked the most luscious
Delicious mangoes as may be gleaned
From their color and shape
Thinking all the best for her
That I could give
To her

I put all the mangoes in my shirt
And I was silly looking silly like a tray to her
And she picked them one by one
Near my chest lower to my tummy
Nearer to my bulge

I was breathless
As she took more
Ripe mangoes from me
Slowly
Gracefully
Peeling with her mouth and tongue
Licking the yellowish pulp
And she said the mangoes were all
So sweet smelling and delicious
Like me

She was craving
She was raving
I was simply receptive
Giving in
All
To what she wanted

She touched my heart and we were silly
On our teens we did
What married people did on this silly hill
Isolated from silly friends

We did something adventurous
We had something marvelous
We did all those silly things
Like wild horses
In nature’s ways
Galloping
Breath taking

The years passed and now I am reaching fifty
Looking back I remember the silly things that we
Young silly people on our early teens did on this silly hill

We went and parted and she married the right man for her
I too went my own separate direction, taking a wife on my own

Looking back,
I feel sad,
I feel happy
What we silly teeny people did which we think was silly

Was all done in the name of pure love so endless
We were all virgins in love & we all thought of nothing else
Love and love and love
The mango was a symbol also of love
The silly hill was the seat of love
The mango tree was a climb of love
The isolation was all in the name of love
The whole was but love’s marvel
Love’s adventure

Love and love and love was all that we had
All love and love
Pure love
Unmixed untainted unblemished unadulterated
And they think it was silly
And I once thought it was silly

On that silly hill remembering the silly things we did
The silly things we said and promised

We did not talk about money, politics and family strategy
We did not bother about inheritance, a family name, a community reputation
We were not told whom to marry and when and always why.

Love can be developed and marriage can always be arranged
That to me are the silly things that we people do to ourselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Those Killing Fields....

the scarlet soil
of the killing fields is
made fertile by the
human blood,

skeletons in the closet
are buried there
the guns are plows
and the seeds are
those of discord

names of the dead
are sprayed
tears of the widows
and fathers and
mothers
keep the salt levels
for the coco minds
to flower and fruit

the sun is made of hatred
and the moon is one deep red
disc
filled with the clouds
of distrust

mourning birds roost
on the trees where snakes
are always ready
to eat what is alive
and weak.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Those, That Which, Remain Unsaid... But Obvious

i am about to sleep.
my eyes droop like an old man
defective spinal cord restless on the furrowed muscles
the arm lifeless, the head bowed,
the hips on painful joints,
i couldn't take the thoughts of
dry river beds and what the women
who want to wash their old clothes
could have done without the
usual running rivers,
and i ask myself what's next to the
pebbles, and the scorching sun at midday,
what's deep down under the
dead moss, the fish
without their usual flesh,
the bones all white and
sharp, what's next to the warmest
day, when all the laundry women
have gone away?
yes, what's next to us
dichotomous concepts
of tradition?
what is next to these flailing legs,
those rusty earrings not made of
gold?
what is next to the coldness of our
words? our selves on arms raised
wanting an eventual surrender
those kept and remaining
unsaid.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Time Can Heal A Broken Self...

mama once told me
that if i am hurt i must simply let it be
let the blood flow from a bleeding heart
leave the wound as it is
no word of comfort can heal it
only time will,

i need not scream and ask for other people to help
mama says, they too have their own broken selves to repair
a suture to nurture
no word of my comfort can heal them
because only time will.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Tiptoes....

i feel so light
today, enlightened
illuminated

i feel like i was
that coin that you
dropped from the boat
to the sea,

i have weighed a feather
on my palm

how light the dew on
the leaf of morning

i have seen a dream
walk on water

a hover boat coming
a flake of snow in the sky

i feel so light
and i begin not to know

who you are
what to me you are

this the lightness of thought
fluttering near my lock

of hair, sighing, breathing,
whispering on tiptoes

RIC S. BASTASA
On To A Certain Fullness....

When the cup is full
when everything runs
over its edges,

there is no stopping
it is the nature of this
thing

it runs it fills
it overflows
it rises
too
it goes beyond its
limits
it transcends
the horizon the sky
space

this is the nature of
this thing
it does not die
it goes on and on and on

beyond pain beyond
happiness
beyond the laws of this land
not a tree anymore
neither land
nor air

this is the nature of this thing
like a piano note
of one classical piece
riding on
from one molecule of air
to another

all eyes are misled
and this thing does not feel
it goes on and on and on
and on and on....

RIC S. BASTASA
On To Another Gate...

the limits are found within the boundaries of the four-sided picture

beyond that no more, your conscience says
Foul!

there are edges of our tolerance
the threshold, the hope and beyond hope
is what?

you always end up something with a sigh and a saying
that there will be no regrets

you go back to daily living
another poem, another day, another sunset

then what? you ask yourself,
there is only this compliance of being here
there is nothing to conclude that everything else had been exemplary

this gate and then another.

RIC S. BASTASA
On To Hongkong On To Shanghai

got this trip this end of march  
on to hongkong then to shanghai and then to thailand

she feels the excitement  
chinese cuisine, great walls, thai dances  
cheap jewelries, fashion clothes, river trails  
exotic architecture, disneyland, and seedless durian

sometimes, i think about this escapade  
i imagine when i am there  
hongkong taxi, and chinese resto  
i could have them here in chinatown

and disneyland, oh i am not a child anymore  
for these ariticial fantasies  
and what does thailand have to offer  
but stinking elephants

at my age, no magic is possible  
waste of time, waste of money

but she likes it and she's happy about it  
that is more important

i am, nothing, but passe,  
a past living in the past, not looking  
for a future, not even the present

as to how it tastes, i am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
On To Something More Concrete

i

i check on the word 'grass'
not in the wikipedia
i check that word outside
i step on the lawn where grass is
i sit upon it and lay my head upon its softness
the grass is cool and comforting
early this morning

ii

i like to check on something more concrete
than what the word signifies
the puffiness of the clouds
the blueness of the skies
the coldness of water
the salt of the sea
how the waves travel and arrive at the shore

i lay my body on the sand
open my eyes to the sky and trace the paths that clouds travel by
i swim to the coldness of the sea and taste with my tongue its salt
i touch the waves
i wait upon the shore and let my hours pass away

iii

this is the earth where i live
where i step upon
it is real, it is never fake
it is as concrete as each word signifies

iv

i speak now to You
Let me thank You for all these
I am alive.
On To Something New....

sometimes
we sacrifice what we do not want changed
we give in
by breaking a wall and throwing away those pieces
giving birth to a certain space
that can make a window
outside our house
then we sit on our chosen chairs
look at something new
without saying anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
On To The Lighter Side Of Life

Time for the lighter side of life
Like standing on a garden seeing flowers bloom
In a constant rain
Looking at
Red petals of a china rose,

Seeing a yellow butterfly
So lightly floating in air, fluttering
A very light sight
You seldom see, you have been too
Contained inside
The theoretical workings of your mind,

You are touching leaves
Of a maiden’s hair, it feels so light
Some morning dews like pearls still
Attached to a white rose
You touch it with your fingers,
It feels so light, you take some deep breaths
And some sighs, you stretch your body,
Touching some dancing ladies
In full array in bloom in
Sunshine, you touch sunlight

It feels so light, so light you feel like
You are levitating to all these now
You miss these lighter things,

Your head is heavy with a lot of nonsense things,
Your neck pains, your heart pains,
Perhaps it is time to breathe,

now embrace these lighter things.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Tongue Cutting..

must i be aware
that this tongue cutting thing
is nothing but
a metaphor?

Gosh, i love this
tongue
that can still give a hundred
pleasures to those
lonely kittens out
there

do you see those cats?
licking their feet
and hair and
cleaning all over again
every sunny mornings
their white
figures

RIC S. BASTASA
On Top Of Me

on top of me
you proclaim your glory
you moan
in sweet agony
you hold my hair
like i am your slave
you lay your soul
like i am only
a thigh
you push me
like two legs
of a male body

you close your eyes
and claim
myself as another
conquered territory

i look at the ceiling
looking for leaks
i grip the blanket
on the side of the bed
groping for
confidences

i go inside myself
asking my soul
if a love poem
is possible.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Turning Ten (For Edgar Andrade Baguio Who Thinks That Poetry Should Not Narrate)

The whole idea of it makes me feel like I'm coming down with something, something worse than any stomach ache or the headaches I get from reading in bad light-a kind of measles of the spirit, a mumps of the psyche, a disfiguring chicken pox of the soul.

You tell me it is too early to be looking back, but that is because you have forgotten the perfect simplicity of being one and the beautiful complexity introduced by two. But I can lie on my bed and remember every digit. At four I was an Arabian wizard. I could make myself invisible by drinking a glass of milk a certain way. At seven I was a soldier, at nine a prince.

But now I am mostly at the window watching the late afternoon light. Back then it never fell so solemnly against the side of my tree house, and my bicycle never leaned against the garage as it does today, all the dark blue speed drained out of it.

This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself, as I walk through the universe in my sneakers. It is time to say good-bye to my imaginary friends, time to turn the first big number.

It seems only yesterday I used to believe there was nothing under my skin but light. If you cut me I could shine. But now when I fall upon the sidewalks of life, I skin my knees. I bleed.
-Billy Collins

RIC S. BASTASA
On Understanding

if a cliche
can be used for you to understand, by all means
i will use it
without much ado, whatever that serves the purpose
to build this bridge of peace
between u & me
i will do it at once,
without much thought

there is no need of a degree supposedly
to understand
the basics of truths, one must simply be a man
or a woman to
understand and be understood
no need to
high falutinizations
factoring of meanings like some algebraic equations
to unveil the identities of numbers
or discover metaphors here and there
nothing Frenchy
or Latiny, just say what is in your mind

make it simple
say what you feel
if you really love me
say it
plain and simple

and if
it is really true from the bottom of your heart
you do not even say
it
i do not need words
please

just do it

RIC S. BASTASA
On Vacation

everything is poetic here
that i do not like to write anymore

it is more of seen and heard
no amount of words can capture it

the two of you are dreaming
after making love

RIC S. BASTASA
On Valentine's Day

here, it will be a beautiful morning  
the sun has come and the flowers bloom  
and the birds still sing their love songs in the air

it is a special day for me, a dinner for two, candle light  
in a seafood restaurant beside the sea  
peace and quiet and cool sea breeze from the pacific ocean  
at the middle of the table  
a white rose, beside some crabs, and jasmine rice,  
and crispy fried shrimps,

the desert is buko salad placed in the coconut bowl  
with slices of apples, pineapples, and cherries

San Mig light beer for me and Sprite for her  
we indulge in the usual conversations of husband and wife

simple, honest, faithful, and happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Vangie...

everything for love
the echoes of the heart
love, love, till it hurts
there is no regret
for time, money
emotions lost
and wasted,

did not the Lord give her?
two hands: one for her and one for him..

RIC S. BASTASA
On Wasted Mornings

the trees are waiting
and the paths are smooth
the flowers start
to bloom
and the sun peeps
with gladness
between the mountains
the ants are busy
and the grasshoppers
sing
the rivers flow
happily to the sea

and here i am
on this wasted morning
composing verses
that no one
reads.

RIC S. BASTASA
On Watching The Picture Of A Baby Smoking A Cigarette

you think that it is funny
no i don't

there is a disaster hidden
on what you think is a joke

they still think that
you are a baby

helpless with that habit
of slowly killing yourself

RIC S. BASTASA
On Wet Feet

on wet feet
from the spilled
water of a
broken hose
you begin
to write on
a theme

something that
makes you shiver
something which
you once remember
as something
chilling, the one
which freezes you
one dark night
because of fear
the one which
made you
tremble because
it was so dark
and cold and
you do not know
where to go
what to do
and you hear
your friend
shouting for
help in that
deep forest

and then the
silence and since
then you do not
know the function
of ears and
fingers and hands
and feet
since then
you have forgotten
to run away and
to listen and
to touch

since then
you do not anymore
remember how
it was to be
really alive

RIC S. BASTASA
On Writing

unlike those who have already names
encrypted in royal tablets

i, this candid, good-for-nothing
scribbler

servant of the simple words,
direct from the heart

a knife of my mind
stabbing sleepy somethings

and someone Else's
hereby offer you the most straightforward request

that for you to be one of us
there is only one thing to do

think for yourself and write for yourself
and do the things you like to do with sincerity

you may read much
a roomful of books written by those who had been there
centuries ahead of us

but always take note
you are either more or less than them
perhaps in reality
much lesser and this will be a big
dismay

a retrogression
a depression for not being one with/of them
in tone and performance

they are expert acrobats in the theater of words

as you begin this journey finally
relax, be cool, as i am telling you,
begin from the heart
walk with the free and open mind

let your hands fall freely
beside your thighs and then step outside the door

take that walk casually
as though you are heading for nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
On Writing...

because there is no one
you can trust now,
feeling so alone, and have no one to speak to
with honesty,
you have decided to befriend yourself
welcoming to the house of your body
your soul, your best friend now,
sharing bed with you, looking at the stars at night
with you,
and since the world is so silent
and sad
there is no choice but to talk to yourself
to the trees
the grass

and then your hands
become one big river with ten tributaries
all move towards your heart
your mouth

and from which
since then
writing begins...

RIC S. BASTASA
On You Tube, Listening To A Blind Girl Singing

she is singing
don't walk away from me

this little brown girl
is blind

she touches
she reads through her fingertips
she sings

i am touched
i too sing with her
don't walk away from me

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Birthday

deny, deny everything
the past conversations and those that hurt you
pinching and twisting you
deny them, deny those that make you empty
and useless, those that make you feel
powerless to all these
that confront you
suddenly
like you are unprepared even
for buttoning your shirt
deny, all those that try to harm you, do not
give them access
fill in all the abscesses of your longings
take time in combing your tangled hairs
and making your breasts soft and
supple
hang on to all the good things, the smiling things
those that are sweet and tender and
soft
memories that make you sing
and dance
stretch your arms to the openness of those that
are still to come
laugh, dance and say to yourself
you deserve this break in your life
you are you
and they just don't have the right to take that away from you
woman, lady, lover, mother, girl
child, baby
cell,
thought, love, space

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Birthday My Friend

on your birthday
let me be the funny blue greenrog
sitting on a light green line
with a red tongue
bringing you four yellow and orange daisies
with a caption

Thinking of You!
with the matching sleepy eyes
evoking (ehem!) protruding
romance (?)

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Birthday Tomorrow

tomorrow is another day
where you mark another boundary of awareness
your mind adds another layer

the layers of the past like onions that you peel
with your fingers
your eyes staring
taking each peeled reality as a must
the tears fall
your eyes dry

tomorrow you shall say thank you
you have lived and shall live some more
you shall be sorry for those who died
for those who left you
empty halls and empty rooms

you have more reasons to live and continue
what they have really wanted to do
but didn’t have the time
hastily cut and utterly wasted by untimely deaths

tomorrow my friend
you must start wearing beautiful eyes those that smile
those that must assure the world
about a fulfillment of its dreams and wishes
those that must affirm beauty and wisdom and truth

shed off old skins and take the new ones
a brave mind, a calm spirit, a determined body
take a self that can hold much
because others are weak and failing

look out for dreams that shall make you whole
gather the fragments, make this mosaic of love and happiness
take the petals of happy moments one by one in your hands
put them in the bowl of your emptiness
put there the cool waters of your composure
take all sense and scents and sit in solitude
be not disturbed about sadness and insecurities
all these are now under the soles of your feet
all these are now taking their own defeat

you stand facing the sun, brave and bold
there is more to hold and to mold
there is more to be done in this world
there is more to be written and spoken to behold!

(happy birthday, one day more, another destiny)

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Birthday...For L.

when you were born
mom did not tell you that the stars in the sky
made a thousand winks

a feast of lights
and a rendezvous of universal droplets of
distances

all the planets however maintain
there respectful distances
trying to show how dignity works

what they did not tell you however
was the silence of the world
tiptoeing not to disturb you with your
first cry

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Eleventh Birthday

on your fifth birthday
you will begin to know
what happiness is
you will soon grow
reaching your eleventh
then sorrows begin to show

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Throne

at the rest room
you sit on your throne
you make a poem
and recite it
as you excrete
what has been bothering
your mind
things arrive at something
that becomes over
and then the relief
that you are still alive
reigns
perhaps only for a while
but it is a moment
of glory
that you keep in your hand
and then surrender
without much qualm
and damn

RIC S. BASTASA
On Your Wedding Day

it was time for the cake and the wine
the usual ceremony
like all weddings in our place
where everyone gets invited on a grand party

and there you are on your white suit
polished hair, shiny locks, the wedding ring now in your finger
the silver knife was handed
and you slice the chocolaty wedding cake with white icing laces
and some roses and tiny leaves

you sliced a big chunk and with a plate and fork
you handed it to her mouth
she was confused how to swallow such a big chunk
but she managed just the same
to take it
she did not ask you to divide it into smaller pieces
but how she wished
you were kind enough to do it for her

then the wine
the cork was too tight and then it was opened
your again poured much
more than half the glass and your arms entwined
you hand her
and she was obliged to drink that much
she whispered
it was too sweet and she did not like it
she wanted the usual wine
sour and sweet and a little bit bitter

and then yes the doves
you were not gentle in taking them out from the cage
held them too tight
and without taking any cue from her
you released your dove ahead adn she was again confused
and even slighted

a big chunk, a very sweet wine, doves that did not fly together
it was not just me who noticed it, some people who saw
what happened did not talk about it

now, the town is making a guess
whether you marriage will last
whether the pattern in your broken family shall not be repeated

your brother, your dad, your sister
they now live separately from his wife, from your mother, from her husband

but who knows, you will be the last to stand up
the last of the mohicans, the movie that you have not watched yet

but soon you will
because from there you must take your important cue

RIC S. BASTASA
Once I Had A Secret Love

My foolish heart
Once had a secret love
On this computer
It was so foolish
My secret love and i
The secret lover

So secret, we do not
Even know each other.

Once I had a secret love
My foolishness is not a secret anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Once In A Blue Moon

once
one must see only shadows
of dragonflies
going crazy above
the lilies

once
one must reflect on the
the beauty of the black
night above the foul smell
of the brackish water

once
one must stop and listen
and be shaken
by the sound of the quakes
of the beating
of the heart

once
one must be dead only to
realize
that once there was life
and it was precious
and it will not come again
to remedy the loss
to compensate
for what is irretrievable

RIC S. BASTASA
Once The Idea Comes To My Mind

i may find a pen and make a note in any of those papers in my pocket anticipating such a situation of radiance without light at all i may have captured the new idea on paper in writing, so it may not escape and slip like an eel like a droplet of water on my raincoat from my head,

but sometimes, i am too lazy to listen and impatient to write what comes to me as a gift and i let it go, let is slip in my tongue like a spit a phlegm

after all, it may not be important, so important that i may soon die if i forget it or the world stops spinning or this whole world ends,

there is no such an idea, there is no such person even, so indispensable, so important

there is no such line no such poem, everything here is always something throwable into some trashcans

sometimes, i have them inside myself, and then without so much regret i vomit,

who cares anyway? oh well, nobody, except the critics who are there always to kill your urge to write poetry, who are always there to compare you to someone deserving the laurels of despair, the crown of literary gall the thorns of misery
i like this to be as simple
as this:

once there was a
flower
a very white flower
blooming
in my garden

and once there was a bee
a very busy bee
getting nectars
from the flowers in my
garden
except from that very white
flower
in my garden

the bee died
the flower died too
and they never really lived
happily everafter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Once There Was A True Love

once there was a true love
no poem was written

and then that true love
somehow failed

and since then
hundreds and hundreds of poems have been written.

RIC S. BASTASA
Once There Was Darkness

once there was darkness
that is the beginning of it all
actually.

And we did not like it really
and so we prayed for
light and Light was given
as asked.

And then we embrace dark
ness again as we get blinded
with so much light.

We shift between two states.
We know how is it to be blind
We know how is it to see.

In both states we see what the
other cannot singlehandedly
offer.

At the end, we find all of them
to be one. In unity. Then we
think we understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Once Upon A Time There Was Pleasure

when you were younger
oh, you remember the things that you've done

so much pleasure there
all over

your finger tips, your tongue,
your feet
pleasures reside in every mouth
lips
the giggle of the lone navel
the electricity in your
hair tips
the curve on the nape
the secrets of the thighs

you smile
over such memories
when you are alone
sipping coffee
one afternoon
upon a very cold day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Once, If Memory Serves Me Well, Life Was A Banquet Where Every Wine Flowed And Every Heart Revealed Itself.'

once
in that banquet table i drink
and got drunk and danced so wildly
and exposed
my nudity, and people laughed at me
and said: there you are
you are not like us
you are too tiny like a gnat
and stinking like
a glut

i slept that night and they all left me

that morning i gathered my shirt and brief and pants
combed my hair with my fingers and cleaned myself with my own tongue
like a cat with my paw

i gathered all the pieces all the days of my life
and began assembling my parts
alone because they all left me because they all find me ugly
and disgusting

and then i left the place and searched for home
far i have walked and traveled
and never rested

only to find that everything is just within the reach of my own hands
this heart this mind this self
who else? but me, this love this hurt
this peace

the rest are but appendices
and must be discarded.

now life is a private show
even if you cry alone, your tears are still yours
salty, but not bitter
wet but still gleaming.

RIC S. BASTASA
One

just like anything that you did in the past
you started like
a gasoline spilled
on the cemented road
and a matchstick lighted
it and the fire ran
like a will o'wisp
but as usual it was
just a very short
procedure
of a flame
that once lighted
your
paths of pain
your wish for relief
and then everything

simply turned off automatically
and you
began to do something
new & strange

that which shall not cease
your way of
breathing life to another life......

RIC S. BASTASA
One Afternoon By The Cafe...

YOU get attuned to talking to yourself
while sitting on a bench
with coffee held by your left hand
your right hand simply doing nothing
you see the people passing by
like the hours in your
mind
like the hands of the watch
circling
busy, really busy
concentric and arriving at nothing
actually
it is the best that happens
in an afternoon
like this one

the manic days of March
meandering mind
reconnecting
readjusting....

RIC S. BASTASA
One Black Bird Dead

three black birds high
up in the air
flying
playing this early morning
on their
swift wings

i heard a single shot from the
hill and one black bird fell
the other two birds continue
to fly away
so frightened

they continue flying away
from that hill

a man with a brown cap emerges
and picks a dead black bird
on the rocky ground

RIC S. BASTASA
One Dark Night

I hang a dried porcupine fish on the ceiling,
And with a nylon thread, in the dark, it looks like it is having a nice swim in the air.
I didn’t mind it has taken life, and so

When friend Sammy drops by,
He calls it art.
Inside me, it is what I call myself, an air porcupine; I love the spines all over me,

So no one touches me, and I would hurt everyone near me,
I call it my life, what does Sammy know anyway, except a claim for art,
One dark night, the porcupine fish got carried about his swim
And plunged into my open mouth and clogged my heart, I struggled for breath
From then on the nightmare did not stop.... life moves on with the porcupine fish.

How would Sammy know that art has coarsely etched life? The spines all over me,
The porcupine swimming in my belly, my chest congested, my tongue tied, my teeth gritting, my heart bleeding in a hundred pains with a hundred wounds.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day

one day
your feet take you to the cemetery

on tombstones
you pass by and read some names

you read a name
and you shall remember a certain poem

dthis is his name
he is dressed and he is not going anywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day I See You Naked Bathing In The River

one day i see you naked bathing in the river
we are lovers and i could have called your name
and then i go naked myself and then we bathe together
and make the most of the youth of time

i hide behind the leaves
to feast on your beauty

more beautiful when untouched
more sublime when unconsumed

it is the distance
something beyond the reach of my hands
beyond my grasp
completes us

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day In The Village Of My Ancestor

silence works with
silence

they go hand in hand
strolling

on the pavement beside
the grass

some butterflies hang
on the twigs

clouds pass by
winds are hushing

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day In Your Life....

one day in your life
you make other people live
you design them
not in your image
but in the image of God
and then for all the days of
your life
you tell yourself
i have done my duty
i have lived
my life to the full
i made others live
breathe and
survive
i made others
find God
finally and that is
enough
happy moment
till the end
of that one day in
your life......

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day More

one day more
another night passing by
you realize

you don't need anybody to define yourself
you don't need a flower for your hair
not a rubberband to bind the locks

one day more
and another darkest night

you close your eyes and grow your wings and fly away
and see everything so whole from a distance

and you say, what a mess, everything has been wrong from the beginning
things that you have seen and touched
and regretted having seen and touched them
for a long time

these unimportant matters, that we hate and love.
we float, and see those that drowned.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day More, Another Day Perhaps

his lines have always been sad
you will later get a taste of his ways
a custom
not really a trend, it is just that way
with him

a mystery, a mist, mostly moments of mourning
be glad he did not mention about the funeral
and the wake and the wailing of the women

but this matter about sorrow and pain
can be a subject of a discussion
a matter only of an asking
a favor for no favor
perhaps just for a change
like you want another menu in the resto

italian lasagna will do
or a beef steak for two

he is not that hard to please
he will cater to your request

he'll take you to a merry-go-round
and have a ride the whole year round

he will promise, one day more, another day perhaps
a happy poem, a victorious line, triumphant warps
just wait for he is still wiping his tears

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day When You Cannot Go Out Of The House

you look out
the window

savor the view
of the rain
drenching
the yellow guavas.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day With Myself

one day
i will find myself
and we will have a handshake
then we sit down together
and drink from
one glass

we will not share anymore
that empty glass that
we keep
for one day we shall have
a glass that is
full of knowing
what lies ahead
when we shall
then become
another
bygone.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day You Dissolve Into Whiteness...

a white car waits for you
at the white side of the road
you are in your white suit
white socks and white shoes
you are white yourself
pale lips and snowy face
dusty eyes, clear tears
falling down to your cheeks

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day You Like To Go Somewhere

one day you like to go somewhere
and a friend who meets you asks 'where?'
and you do not answer
not because you detest him
but because you do not have any answer
and you ask yourself 'where is somewhere?'

and you walk all the days of your life
to that 'somewhere' figuring our where is this somewhere?
everyday. Time passed. Your hair turned gray.
The path has become a highway. And neighbors have taken
in some strange names. The children in the playground
do not know you.

you meet you friend, the one that you met before
the one that once asked you 'where are you going?'
and you tell him 'i am going somewhere' and i have been
going and going somewhere to a place that i
still do not not know, but now i know it

i am going somewhere inside me. I am walking all day
yet i have not covered any considerable distance.
I am going somewhere. It is that somewhere that arrives now.

This death unto oneself. This promise that i too, will arrive
at somewhere else.

And then the two of us, take our glasses against the
rays of the setting eyes are focused on the dimming horizon.

We are silent. And forever we will be silent. Tomorrow, you will
speak for us, on the same lines, 'I am going somewhere', because
you have never gone there yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day You Meet A Stranger

one day you meet a stranger in your house
and you very well know his name
and you serve him coffee
and you feed him fish and rice
the dinner that you can afford, and you tell him
stories about your past and you go beyond
you tell him about your present, your woes and of
course some happy experiences, and you go beyond that
as you serve him some glasses of wine
you tell him about your future, your questions and your hopes,
your anticipations, and some fears, some longings
you tell him that somehow you are afraid about the uncertainties

and then the stranger faces you
his face is exactly you, everything, everthing, you shake his hand
you know his name very well, and you stop this dramatic thing

having a monologue with yourself one cold, and lonely evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Day You Stop By A Bridge And Just Sit There

and gaze at the rage of the water
under
the brown river gathering all the nuts
from the mountain
after the flood

murky, all murky
you sit there staring blankly
down
under

and you get carried away
floating
like one of the coconuts
not minding
direction

RIC S. BASTASA
one day the voices will leave you
you have long asked them to go
and you will be all alone and you will sip silence slowly
one day you will say you are at last free
the vexations all gone with departures
at first you get relieved and being new to this situation
you open the door and run to the yard to play
you become a child again riding on the swing
you stretch your hands and waive to the trees
you remove your shoes and feel the grass on your feet
one day you become naked
you have been dreaming of this all the days of your life
one day you soak yourself to the salt of the sea
and tan yourself with all the sun you can take
one day you will find nothing significant in these changes
you want to give all these up
you press some numbers on the cell phone
you want to go back to the sound of the voices of your home
one day you will realize you are nothing but a deep longing
an empty space an absence wanting some presence
one day you call each of them you want them all back
you bend you beg you implore for some more
the vexations and the whispers and the screams
for they have long defined you and have become a part of all of them
one day you confess you belong to them and have identified with them
without them you are incomplete you have no meaning.

one day you will embrace all of them, pain as brothers, sadness as kins
one day you become so true you become whole again

RIC S. BASTASA
One Egg

gOt but one egg
more
the broken shell
who can repair it?

gOt one egg still
and it will be for yOu
you may suck it again
like the way you sucked my being
last hOt night

i am sucked and i give it all
i am empty and i am full
one egg lies on the plate
and you still want it raw

slipping so smoothly in your throat
like a slimy
kind of lOve enjoyed by secret fools
like us...

RIC S. BASTASA
One Evening

one evening because the walls of the room
are shrinking,
feeling as if i will be crushed by its four corners,

i finally decided to close the windows and open the
doors to try to see if there are stars outside
and if the stars can relieve me from such a
claustrophobic impending death,

i step out into the open and sleep on the grass
to feel the coldness of the earth

i lay my body my arms stretched as far as my hands
can do in creating distance between my feet and my
center of gravity,

what i see is a dark sky and infinite space
i feel like a grain of sand spilling from a giant palm

i agree
i am insignificant
that room becomes nothing compared to the fear
of incomprehensible choices

an ocean of freedom
continental responsibility
i feel so drunk drinking too much space from a glass of my gaze
to this vast universe

nauseous still
i stand back to regain my composure
i go back inside the room

and then the wind howled
outside like an angry master

back to the comfort of my blanket
i promise myself a good sleep.
One Face?

shall i pretend to you that i have only one face forever?
you are silent
you think like a deep river making no sound at all
despite the storm when the waters from the mountains come
and force you to rise and run and rage and they accuse
you of having caused the flood
as i watch in sadness

you are my night and day and you have seen the changing of my hues
i turn red like a rose
become white like a carnation
become sturdy like a bark of the oak tree
sometimes i turn into stone
hard and unmoving
you see me and touch me with your wind and mist

like a diamond i wear some corners some faces
for me to glitter
for me to find meaning in the life that i carry within my arms
a lull sometimes
almond eyes a rocking of my feet
these are the mechanisms of my coping up
to be a man

in your silence i set aside my masks and face you
shed off some faces and look at you
with the eyes of my soul
oh, i become so vulnerable to the truth of this one and only face
as you kiss me
in my lips

i quiver i become so light i become so alive i become so real
as all the other faces fade like fume from the funnel

RIC S. BASTASA
One Fool Asks What Is His Name And Why He Is Here...

someone believes that he can still hide himself inside those tinted sunglasses

those that know him very well enough too pretends that he is a stranger

one fool asks what is his name and why he is here...

RIC S. BASTASA
One For The Road

just you and me now
we end the stories
we call it a night
i offer you the last drink
one for the road

i will be left here
alone again with an
empty glass and
another bottle of wine

i let the drink take me
to another bout of drunken
poetry, one that forgets myself
as part of this world
one that dissolves me like
ice cubes, for you know
my friend this has been
our longing: there is no
you and i, there is no us,
there is only drunkenness
for this unbearable lightness
of our being.

RIC S. BASTASA
One For The Road...

one for the road
that is the last thing

and i had it
one for the road before saying

good night to my friends
who must leave me

because i have decided that i
do not belong
to them or
their causes anymore

there will be no deaths between us
we part

now i must plunge
into the river

of my own doing my own making
the water is in my mind

moss grow on my head
fish start swimming in my brain

there are turtles in my tummy
carrying my own houses

to my long journey.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Gets Used To All These

one gets used to all these
these and that, matters of the heart and soul
veiled with secrecy, worshiped as a secrecy
a devastation of the mind
a burning of the soul but no matter what
we both are here
still strong and silent in pain
rejoicing that oh,
somehow God has a plan for each of us
dead or alive
a room is reserved, a blue sky, a full moon,
a shining morning sun
a white butterfly, a scar that heals
exciting walks of life, stair by stair we tread upon
milestones
we shake our hands
we are here, and move on to the next, where no one
no one
can say, that this is all we have,

look over there,
there is more to all these

go.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Hand, Alone, Cannot Clap, But Somehow It Can Still Touch...

alone with nothing

but
integrity

somehow

everything is within the reach of one hand

it cannot clap nevertheless it knows

how to point and still

touch the sensitivity of the heart...

RIC S. BASTASA
One Has To Cook For Dinner....

another leaf
has fallen from

my window the winds
of loneliness are

coming. Pay a little
homage, but it will

not be that long,
it is getting dark and

one has to cook for
dinner, prepare the table

for all of us, we pray,
we eat together,

retell a story, sip
wine and keep ourselves

intact, till the night
summons all of us to sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
One House......

integrity has
to start with a house
and then you
utter a word which
lives in that house
that you
consider too
as your
home

you have one word
one house
and then they know
where you
really live

RIC S. BASTASA
One I Take A Closer Look At My Picture

i was the man
with that black shirt
perhaps what i do not know
is that
i love black
subconsciously
and then i see time creeping
on my white hairs
and then i take a closer
scrutiny on that
pocketed smile
there must be fear somehow
yet there is that glow
of courage
i look straight in my eyes
in that picture
i love black i must admit
it delights my senses
it is warm
and dark like the night
and the storm
and the fallen trees
somehow
i confirm upon myself this
blackness that i love

and then i swear
i love myself and
no one takes that
oath from me again.

RIC S. BASTASA
One In A Dream

Could it be
That we are one in a dream

Is it possible
When there are too many dreams

And then there are too many of us
Making promises

To our own shadows
And then we fall short of limbs

And then we wish the dream shall end?
Too many of us talking and not meaning anything?

RIC S. BASTASA
One Is 16 And The Other 18

the police officer arrested them
last night while they were strolling on the park
and this is the story:

he asks for their names and they say they have none
he asks from where they come from and they say
they do not really know
he asks them where they are going and they tell him
they are still undecided
he asks them what is in their bags and they say they are just nothing
he asks them some more and they say
they have nothing to say of themselves

eyes came from nowhere
and they are heading nowhere

and the police handcuffed them
these vagrants
these potential terrorists of this rural place
where the people still love peace

and this afternoon the police officer brings them all to me
and he tells me about the whole story
about his questions and their answers

and i am looking at them and they look at me
straight in my eyes
with dignity and without shame
with all pride

that they are telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

that this one whose age is 16 and this other one whose age is 18
are simply talking about
themselves
and about us
and about the policeman himself

and surely, i agree
we have no names, we do not know where we come from and we do not really know where we are going

we are all like that, in the strictest sense of the word, except for our little pretensions

and so i ordered the policeman to release them all and let them be themselves and let them go in peace and finish their journey with all ease

RIC S. BASTASA
One Last Question

what we were together
course shall be forgotten
things will always be that way
to include that previous
us, for now our paths are
separated by this chasm
canalized by the cabal of
destiny
i won't argue
neither shall i learn the
wisdom of a fight
i let things go
like rivers taking the least
resistance
but before everything else
let me be assured
of the last question
and you must answer that
with this one life
precious as the last breath
you must devote it
for no other reason but
charity and love.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Last Wish

we shall be back to that old grass
lay ourselves side by side
and then describe the ways of the zodiac
finding ourselves our own place
in the wide space

i remain as the Aquarius
shall you be Pisces still?

RIC S. BASTASA
One Man's Mistake

something sad
same things over and over again
like a chain of dominoes
waiting for a time
one slab, one fall, hell for all.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Morning

the unbearable night
closes the eyes
to an imagined sleep
the following morning
traces of black stripes appear
on the linings of the eyes

the other one understands
when love fades
leaving traces of sighs
and what
ifs
one morning

RIC S. BASTASA
One Morning In Labason

at the retreat  house
one morning
when the mist are still there
hanging on the trees
they find the priest
dead in his room
his neck rests on the chair
as he is in prayer

he is dead and they begin
to sing the hymns
praising God and
thanking Him for his
lavish love

the nuns come later
all dressed in pure white
inside the
perfumed church

RIC S. BASTASA
One Need Not Understand What Is It All About

to fully enjoy
what the sea offers
one need not
understand what is
it all about; no need to dissect
each wave,
the troughs,
the low and the high
points
you do not really
have the exact number
of its salt
you simply dip in there
submerge your head
close your eyes
rise from its belly
wet and
happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Night In Monte Alegre

i see the sun
set in Monte Alegre

A White brow
framed by the window

long white hair
flowing like a polluted river

upon the neck of
an old woman

holding a cane
such trembling hands

worn out
stopping on the edge

of uncut fingernails
eyes

fixed upon
the nothingness that

i, who sit there,
am, beginning to see

it is not horrible
darkness creeping

upon the black thigh
dry blood

scarlet night
dead in Monte Alegre

RIC S. BASTASA
One Night She Reads My Poems

one night she reads some of my poems
those that speak about leaving
images of sunset and dusk
a bird flying away from the cage
a stone thrown to space like one tennis ball
at night
something that is gone away
for good

she feels each line and well
every metaphor she understands

and she asks me if i have something to tell her
i smile and like Robert i play nice and then i utter the most philosophical word in the entire history of humanity:

'nothing'

RIC S. BASTASA
One Night Stand

a one-night stand is easily forgotten
because it usually happens when the world is drunk
i mean, both of us, for on such a one-night stint
we stink, and we smell what we hate,
betrayal of our innate dignities,
we fear,

about what tomorrow shall say
about our shamefulness,
and on the following morning after we have stained
every skin of our body,
we take a thorough bath,
we wash our body with scented soap,
lots of hot water,
we avoid the gaze
we seem to think
this is all a mistake and we do not want to repeat it,
ah, promises of another mad lover,
we think of the money involved,
and the wasted time,
and the fear of being discovered by a neighbor,
we get out of this mess
not remembering any name
mine or yours,
we hate this, we like to tell the bulb
we switch it off,
and then we go back to the lighted world
outside the door.

another night knocks,
i press your number on the cellphone.
this madness, on the other hand,
i tell myself, is keeping me sane and alive.

another one-night stand
is in the offing. Delicious.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Of My Happiest Days

father and mother that time
split
like a bamboo unable to take
the sway anymore of the
wind's selfish dance

and you sister
remembered my birthday and
you gave me this gift:

a brown sweatshirt inside
a brown box
wrapped with brown manila paper

cool earth i touched, the place where all my roots are
and you are there as i poured it with tears

not the sad ones my dear sister
but tears of joy for your kind remembering

RIC S. BASTASA
One Of These Days

sort of a promise
one of the 360 days...
just one,
not two, or three, or even
just half..

RIC S. BASTASA
One Of These Days...

I HAVE a dream
someday, the good like us
must triumph...

i share this dream with you
because you are a good man too
one of these days
the world will be greener
seas freed from pollution
water resources shared
food, shelter, clothing
becoming a right for all
without discrimination....

i have a dream for good men to fulfill,
and this i am sharing with you
because you are a good man too

shall we be silent some more
for the bad to
run over us all?

good men as we are
we must fulfill this dream
a world for all of us
less the greed, the abuse of power,
the brutality upon one another....

RIC S. BASTASA
One Of Those Birthdays

i found finally the photograph of us,
five children
three sisters and two brothers
different faces, mine is an aquiline nose,
the first has white skin, and the second is the
dark brown cookie,
and the third has a long straight hair
square jawed,
i always felt that i am
out of place, barefoot
and skinny,
and silent despite her pinches
on my side
i am not misbehaving
in this photograph
except the youngest brother
who compromised
with a pose
two minutes and then ran away
not wanting to be
a part of anybody else's
advices
good or otherwise.

i guess it was Friday,
January 29,1976, and if i am not wrong
it was one of those
birthdays

mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
One On One With An Empty Glass

the final confrontation is finally set on the table
the mantel still pretends to be clean
the morsels are polite and the empty glass is civil

just a while ago, it was filled with water
up to the brim and now it is thirsty again
and it stares at me begging for more
but i give it silence hoping that it shall remember
what origin it has
from the department store

it stares at me and threatens me with the pain of emptiness
it does not move
giving me the semblance of an earth that stops to spin
nothing falls and the possibility of freezing is pestering me

i lay my hand on the chest telling it that i am not at all disturbed
i listen to the rhythmic beatings of my heart
i bite my lips like bread using my teeth
i close my eyes and begin my journey inward
my gut

i remember the sound of the broken glass
i recall how i sweep the shattered pieces
i still picture myself digging a hole and burying what should be forgotten

i do not sleep and i do not dream much
i breathe more air and then i awaken all my senses
the glass is empty still and it is there to manifest a surrender

i have learned to fill my lungs with air
the moments pass away taking all that i have and now
i am full.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Rainy Evening While Walking In The Boulevard Of Broken Dreams

i thought that i should
be alone
walking in those streets of sorrows

i am mistaken

there are so many of us
like the sands in the shore
like the stars in
the blackest sky
like those fireflies
swarming on
the tree
like the rain
that kept on falling
on that evening

RIC S. BASTASA
One Saturday Morning At The Mountain Top Inside
The House

it is raining outside
it is the habitualness of the image that flows inside us
green grass and rolling hills and clouds a drifting
the sound of rain like footsteps of children playing under the shower from heaven
i sit upon a chair looking outside
i am not thinking about anything simply watching the rain
the green grass
the trees the sea and the horizon that extends more than what my eyes can see
more than what i can contain
this empty bowl with a wide mouth open
this hollowness that cannot speak because it does not have the exact words to say

it seems to me that the correct existence that fills this void is nothing
but the silence of the trees, the grass, the hills and the far away seas

RIC S. BASTASA
One Sided

i am a fool.
it takes me
a long time
to realize
that i am the only
one interested
to know more
about a long
lost friend

to my ten questions
he has all the answers
which i think
is fair enough

he never ask for
once
any question to me

and mind you
i count
the missing years

35 in all.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Sided Love

what is it?
all right
or all wrong?

is it only the left
or only the right side of
love

is it the inner side
or the out side

if you give me a one sided
love
please give me
the right side
of it

feels right,
right?

RIC S. BASTASA
One Small Victory

just one small victory
comes from the ant
winning the bid
in carrying this crumb
of bread
sans feeling
of love or liking
for the Queen

in the name of the Kingdom
the anthill
shall celebrate

it will be a holiday today
the soldier ants
in laxity

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this sense of awareness
like sleep that creeps slowly to my eyelids
i know it is you but i keep on dreaming
hoping, that it must not be you
but someone else, the one that i
long for. But no, this is my face
and your face, and what else do we do
on a cold night like this.

we sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Summer When The Wind Was Strong

This is the place, now we are here again

I remember that summer when the wind was strong
And everything around us was dry,

The acacia trees towered and showered us with
Round leaves falling and falling and falling

Some birds were there and they flew away
Some cars were there and they speeded away

It was getting dark and it was a dry summer
We stayed there for a while when the leaves fell

Then we went under the trees not seeking shelter
But to catch those leaves falling and falling and falling

We are trying to feel again what falling was
We are here on this summer, we see the leaves

Falling and falling again to the dry wind,
We try to recall about us, but there is simply

Nothing about us anymore, but just the same
The leaves fall and fall and fall, we see them reenacting

There is that meaning; there it is in the falling
But we have outgrown it, we look for more, we hope

We can find some more, something beyond us.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Sunny Day

He prepares
and the way to do that
is first to
take out everything

not just the cap
the shirt
the shoes and
pants

it requires the
elimination of all
barriers

body: skin and flesh
and bones
the drying of the
blood
and the cutting of
all nerves

you try to imagine
the pain
but you are not there
anymore
to feel it

you have moved
to the next level
and i cannot say
about it
anymore

perhaps i can say
it is like
a cloud, a mist

or simply a drop
of rain
evaporating
one sunny
day

RIC S. BASTASA
One Thing That I Miss

one thing that i miss
is not found in you,
it is something, yet it is
illusive, like a an eclipse
in seconds
i dim the world
only to disappear and give
you back
your own light
but you will miss what i miss
and i come back only
once every thousand years
of your life
sort of
you do not find me and i do not
really find you
we meet and we miss again
like parallel lines
always going seeing and talking
and in the silence of it all
always unflinching

two lines that never
meet

d this is the price that we pay
for our
sacred hypocrisy.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Thing With You

one thing with you
is this belief that i am nothing but just the idea
that i have been feeding you.

is it really only about sex?
i like it to be that way, but it is not really

i am a leaf feeling my way all through the air
floating like a feather from a restless bird high on air
scratching its side and then
letting go

i am a leaf falling
enjoying my trip down to the bottom of the earth
looking for a landing field,
a green green patch of grass

i like the dews early morning
i like the trees where the fingers of the morning sun are piercing
like a miracle

there is one thing with you
you do not believe in what i believe in

what is it? let things be themselves as they open.
do not think. just watch.

RIC S. BASTASA
One Typhoon Day

come typhoon
i walk along the shore
and think of you
i told the sea
what i felt for you
i left the shores
the waves rage
taking in
the shells the fish
my footsteps
on the sands

RIC S. BASTASA
One-Legged Houses....

finally we have
to decide now

not to talk about
the shreds and
shards

the sounds of
broken pieces of
glass

why not hear the
clinking of those
wine glasses
to cheer those who
by now
must kiss each other's
thirsty lips?

need not be about
those bees
and flowers

i like flying pigeons
those who have
roosted for so long
on one-legged houses

RIC S. BASTASA
Onion

life upon life
layer upon layer
in between
are the tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Only For You

a one night
stand
in the city

just one
night
one light
one brave night
one lustful night
just one
night stand
and then
we go
all covered
against
the rain
on that
one lustful one night stand

will you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Only If You Love (Less The 'Me')

only if you love
will this stone turn to bread
this water to wine

only if you love
will seeds sprout and grow
into trees and be fruitful again

only if you love
will this arid land regain
its softness and fertility

only if you love
will this frown turn into a smile
into laughter into a reverie

only if you love
will this house become a home
this hut magically transformed into a mansion

only if you love
will these birds sing these clouds drift
these rivers run these world rotating

only if you love
will this heart beat again
these eyes blink and wink
these hands open these feet dance

but you never loved
but if and only if you love
all these would have happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Only If You Love Me

only if you love me
will this stone turn to bread
this water to wine

only if you love me
will seeds sprout and grow
into trees and be fruitful again

only if you love me
will this arid land regain
its softness and fertility

only if you love me
will this frown turn into a smile
into laughter into a reverie

only if you love me
will this house become a home
this hut magically transformed into a mansion

only if you love me
will these birds sing these clouds drift
these rivers run these world rotating

only if you love me
will this heart beat again
these eyes blink and wink
these hands open these feet dance

but you never loved me
and i never ever told you

only if i had the courage to tell you
all these could have happened.... who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
Only If You Love Me Truly......

do not ever
challenge me at the
weaving of
stories

for i was born
as a story teller
it is where lies
become
more beautiful than
your truths
your documentaries
about ruins

my previous life was
that of a spider
spinners of dreams
using my own fluids

a castle from my own
mouth
a ship from my own
saliva


do not ever challenge
me to always love you
for i too can be a weaver
of lies,
i may deceive you in
those one and thousand nights
trap all stars, fish the moon,
capture the sun for you

i can build a fire in your
snow
i can make you walk
on the water
only if you love me
only if you love me truly.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Only In Sleep (An Attempt To Be Relevant)

only in sleep
shall i make love with you
only in sleep
shall you caress my body
only in sleep
shall this love have
mutuality
only in sleep
shall we two become one
only in sleep
shall passion be
only in sleep
can i be true

after this sleep
one takes the mask again
dresses up for the
coming hours
well poised and respected
one meets lies with lies
quick as a sparrow
meek as a dove
but foxy still
with all your wiles

only in sleep
shall we all be weak
only in sleep
shall love
be love

RIC S. BASTASA
Only In The Philippines...

against the M-16s of the
30-year old dictatorship
were the yellow flowers

the petals in full bloom
toppled the iron cannons....

RIC S. BASTASA
Only Then....

always from within
shall we make a beginning
we are like
the vacuoles of the cells
on an inner struggle
to fill in the gaps of
our anonymous existence

always from within
shall be start to grow
the heart
the intestinal spasms
the push outwards
to find the sun and take
in back
the air inside our lungs

we are always from the
stem
cells protruding
to have roots and become
the tree and
have leaves and have fruits
only then
can we say we belong to the world
only then can we say
we are us.

RIC S. BASTASA
ontological insecurity

because you see me as
an instrument i have become
a spoon to you
sometimes a cup
you take a bite and you
pour something hot
and cold in my
vessel shaped soul

i have long wanted
that you see me as a body
a man
a person walking tall with my
dignity intact like
a belt around my waist

do not forget i am an individual
i have dreams
and i have pride
do not give me another name
i have been christened
and my name will always be
mine alone.

ric s. bastasa
Onward To Destiny

today i
must deserve a little break
for what
i just did

i've been talking
to myself
listening
and commenting
upon what
i think

i am not alone
anymore
i have become
my own
simple symphony
of voices

little voices
that celebrate upon
my wholeness

upon my own
self-proclaimed
independencies

today  i shall walk again
the paths of
my choosing

i shall whistle
my dreams to the air
i shall be at home
with my own hands
i shall be confident
to the directions
that my feet
are taking me
for today i am 
free 
to fulfill the promises 
of my 
destiny 

it is there 
waving its hands to me 
saying 
through the whispers of 
the wind 

come ric, come 
i am your destiny 
i've been here 
and always ready. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Onward To The Next Journey

in that dream
you stared at me as though i am the most
guilty party
that i owe you a lot of explanations

and that i must repay
and give you back
what i had taken

i felt so abused
we danced the tango together
and we made the right steps

if we fell on the dancing floor
it was because
the lights went off
and we did not know about it

you know how i held your hand
it was tight
i was afraid to lose you

when the lights went on
and it was quite long

you were already taken away from me
i did not know who
i thought it was your decision
until you came inside my dream and

told me
i was not so strong and let you go
i have set the years free
i am now outside the prison of my younger years

the tree had borne so many fruits
there is no regret at all if it died at the wrong time
i have no dreams
and i have accepted what those years have given me
until you come again
when my arms are frail when my hands are closed
it is funny
fate is funny, let us just laugh at it

meanwhile i am ready for the next journey
it is not a dream, let us see.

RIC S. BASTASA
Onward....

the isolation finally makes
him thrive
he lets go of all those unnecessary parts
of him
he is pure soul now
traversing
another matrix
looking back from the
thick glass wall
that division that separates him
away from its
origin
he makes the comparison
of these two worlds
now with his ephemeral nature
he finds a new home
there is no language
no culture
he is not yet sure
not having mastered
this recent contention
for one thing
he has no feelings anymore
but only reason
it is like a painting
hanging in the air
glossy in the colors of
illusions

either waking
neither sleeping....

RIC S. BASTASA
Onwards, Forward

we who are left
have no choice, we go onward
forward, we have nothing to lose,
except the traces of our
erroneous steps

we who are down are lucky too
for we have no other direction except to go up
we cannot stay here
for what choice have we?

those who are there already
i know, shall find nothing as significant as a mole
at their backs
and so what choice have they?
except to come back
and retrace the better past
the excitement of what once
were

those who are up there
have no other options but to fall
and the higher they got
the painful
the hit, and they get crushed
and we who are still moving
to that direction
must take time to reflect

perhaps there are other ways
not to harm finally
our stupid selves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oo, Puti Ko Ug Itlog

Angkonon ko
Nga puti ko
Ug itlog
Kon sulongon
Ako ug sundang
Sa akong
Buotan nga manghod
Kay bisan unsaon
Balibalihon
Igsoon ko baya
Siya gihapon

RIC S. BASTASA
Opaque

beauty is there in the opaque
things near him,
heart embraces
all of those that are not obvious
to the eyes,
frail humanity opts
for what is there laid
in openness

hurt, the option for
what was not there
clear as pain,
and
bloody, regret comes
bowing,
bad choices, self
inflicts upon self
nature sighs

patience waits
hardness cracks
like shells on
the feet of mankind

RIC S. BASTASA
Opaque But Real

as opaque as a dream
the white shell of an egg
against the light
of the flickering oil lamp

a circle within a circle
substance within substance
content upon content

sure reality concealed
behind a mountain
where a thick fog still hangs

RIC S. BASTASA
Open Ends....

do you live life
generating your nature?

that a pig must be a pig
destined as pork?

in the same manner
that flowers must always be
only for display?

do you think
nothing but only your happiness?

do you not see how others
are?

tell them how life must be lived
and spent so well?

tell me
shall the dove coo forever
the lion lesser without its roar?

have you ever asked these
questions?

do you like some answers?

will you ask me
about tomorrow because today
is lived
lesser than what
yesterday should
have been?

do you still like me
to ask
you all about these
basic
which had long been
disregarded
because
life must never be
a question
but
a declaration?

RIC S. BASTASA
Open For A Moment, Even Just For A Moment

open your hands you may soon close them
like the child playing his fingers to the moon.

open your mind you have nothing to lose
there is everything to gain even for a moment

i have seen how the flowers open their petals
during the rain and how some petals even fall
to the ground and get crushed and muddy but
oh, i have seen how meaningful it was, how

beautiful the surrender no matter how poignant.

RIC S. BASTASA
she pops up in my messenger window
i say hello
and she says she jsut got out from her bathroom
and i tell her
wow fresh flesh
wet body still filled with so much desire
and you said 'i look like a blank paper
got to have make-up and dry myself
and comb my hair'
and you ask if i have eaten my breakfast yet
and why am i not in church today?

then blackout, as usual in my place
on an early morning sunday
8: 39
offline.

i am thinking about what you just said.

RIC S. BASTASA
Open Pages

there is no use hiding
the book of my life
i leave all the pages open
for you to read
and perhaps learn
from who i am and
what i have become
from those usual regrets
that always come late
as usual....

RIC S. BASTASA
Open Palms

morning demands
the laying of open palms
on the table
and the palms agree
and then the wind comes
and took all the lines away

the hands do not mind
this is the last day of the body
the heart is full of joy
the mind has no word
the eyes close
and the lips finally sealed

RIC S. BASTASA
Open Sesame....

because i care for you,
i must learn to love the intricacies of paranoia,

time must cure
what friendships lack

Open Sesame!
let the caves open their doors
and now
display the jewelries, and
shining glories within.

the mind eats up
what we store
let all these be consumed
so we can be light as sparrows
and learn again
how to fly

RIC S. BASTASA
Opening A New Window

come to my room
let us open a new window
that opens to another window

look at my face
and hold the side of my body

i will caress your hair with my hands
hold your body softly as a wind holds a feather

my fingers shall travel from the tips of your hair
down to the last tips of the toes of your feet

let us be happy, let us try opening another window
let us see the other windows hidden from our eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Opening Just Like Everybody Else

it is always easy to
open
all you have to do is
spread
sometimes you get so
thin
and people do not notice
even if
it is you at
all

it is always safe to open
together when they open
like umbrella during a sudden rain

dthis way
no one minds you
no one notices what you are
dthis way
you are safe and comforted

everyone is like you in the open
no one is unique
and no one hurts you again

RIC S. BASTASA
Opening Up

like a bud i try to open up
one summer’s day
eager for the rays of the sun
and the coolness of the wind

but then
something goes wrong in my sepals
the twig twists itself
and the bud wilts

something goes wrong
how can i ever tell you about the reason for the wilting?

RIC S. BASTASA
Openness

a house without doors
and windows
walls and beams
entertaining some other
somber possibilities

the wind takes shape
the fluid runs and drips on the
four corners
the sun moves up and down
until the correct idea of what
a house
gets in

who once said that only
from the heart can
one really touch the sky?

RIC S. BASTASA
Openness In Prayer

the walls of the
house are thick
and high
the windows are
closed
and so are the
doors
the roof is taken
away
for you to see
the sky the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Opposite Directions

there will always be different kinds
of excuses
when opposite directions meet
without being obvious
of the real intent

there is the underlying intent of
not pairing up twin objectives
but the need to be inside the fence
keeps the pretenses building like
stairs and window panes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Opposite Ways

that's the way it is
those who profess to love and be loved
finally find themselves
in their opposite ways

to love and to hold
farther,
translating distances, recapitulating dispositions,
transposing what-ifs,
wasting time
on the sweetness
of nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Opposition

strong bow
opposed by a string
the arrow shoots

RIC S. BASTASA
Opression

a woman with long hair
on a pink blouse
on the street
is pulling a boy
with a yellow shirt
towards the other side of the road

onlookers
have twisted faces
their arms loose
inside
their pockets

RIC S. BASTASA
Optimist

at the back of his mind
he knows he can do it

less the nevertheless
sans despite and respite

a ball of fire keeps burning
inside his heart
his feet have wings
his eyes light rays of the sun
penetrating the abyss of the
unknown

black clouds open
whirlpools stopped
every element in celebration
for his entrance to
the higher level
the existence of lightness
of this free electron.

RIC S. BASTASA
Options…

when love dies
opt for commitment

someone will ask
where are you promises?

when love is drunk
wait till it becomes sober

when love is wounded
why not try healing it?

when love is lame
or its bones becoming brittle

when love bleeds
when everything seems to be hemorrhagic

why not rest for a while
and ponder about those promises

about that vow
for better or for worse

about that option
to be with each other

till now
and forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Or

the finger
the lips, the foot,
or the paper bills,
or the bank book accounts,
or the relatives, or the priest

in the house, the rails,
the forest,
the kitchen, or behind the janitor's store room
or the cave
or the garage,

whatever, if love is love,
it must survive, it may suffice

RIC S. BASTASA
Or Existence

look at you
you take pride of myriad leaves
of branching twigs
of a sturdy trunk

you are saying you are
well rooted
and strong and no
wind is good enough
to uproot you

look at me
i have no roots
i am bald for i have not
a single leaf
from my imaginary
branches
from my twigs which you say
do not exist at all

you laugh and take pride
with what you are
and what you own and what you keep

i am invisible and i have no word
that i own

i am not even a wind
since i do not touch your leaf
and cannot let you feel

i do not doubt that it is my mere silence
that horrifies you

and i thank myself
for just being this way
i have no name
i have no self
i merely pass by
and i do not come
back

and so beyond myself and all these
you are nothing too

as i perceived myself to be
not a wind not a sound
nothing about roots

or existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Or Love, Why Not?

if you cannot resist it
then embrace it as well

if you cannot eliminate it
there is only one meaning
it is you, it is yours, it will
always be there

love what stays with you.
pain for instance.

RIC S. BASTASA
i tried to say
that i am tired of poetry
and then someone from behind me
shakes his head and says
you were always in prose.

was it an insult after all?
was i not into
poetry?

or simply heresy....

RIC S. BASTASA
Or Tears And Then Gone

Goodbye,
Like all things
And sensate
Humans
I go I pass
Like the dew
On the leaf
That you
View
As pearls
Or
Tears and
Then
Gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Or When You Are Inside A Dark Room

and all are solid walls
you hear no one and no one hears you
you stand and grapple for light
your hands feeling the sides of
the walls
you panic for an exit
and still there is none
you calm yourself
and sit on the floor
you close your eyes in this darkness
and see the light inside

is this not a relief? you breathe
deeper like you are throwing a rope with a pail
inside the hole
of a well

you hear nothing yet
until it hits the bottom
and then you settle for something
so temporal
like this: i am alright. Things will be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Or Will Silence Do All The Cure?

his papa is always wary about the way
things are put
for instance if a glass of water is put at the extreme
edge
he expects it to fall

he does not like the idea of falling
much worse the sound of breaking
the site of shattered pieces
makes him
furious

what past had he? what his parents did?
what did the last war show him?

how many times did he lose love
to another? losing face? losing a family?
a name?

how can he ask him? how can he wake him
up to the truth that all these are
but illusions?

will water from a pail help him?
will a walk by the sea make him calm again?

or will silence do all the cure

RIC S. BASTASA
Oral Intercourse

in a social intercourse
two worlds are born-
a sponge and a ladle.

somewhere there is
a horseman and his saddle.

a desert for the first time perhaps
experiences rain

a blanket feels a woman
a shower wets a man.

in this oral intercourse
we discover islands within ourselves
we too are uncharted oceans
where sailors
wait
as the lighthouse begins to blink.

RIC S. BASTASA
Orando Laborando.

it is not his name

it is
this prayer
hand in hand
with prayer

these are the hands
that clasp
after a day of
plowing those
arid lands

the silence of the stones
after the
pebbles have
gritted

the chair facing
the sunset
after the door is
banged

it happens when
we finally rest
in sleep
after we shout
to one
another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Order Of The Ay

put a smile
on your face

if you notice
me, kindly

put a 'd'
in my 'ay'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ordinary Comforts

soft petals of
a pink rose on
your palm

wind chime by the
door way

beyond you the
endless horizon

your feet on the
sands

you eyes closing
to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Oriental Girl

she covers her mouth with her fan
she looks down when i look at her
and when i look at another
she fans herself as though she is fuming
with madness
she closes her fan
walks away
i am not foolish
i know what to do

RIC S. BASTASA
Origami Me....

the way you fold a piece of paper
to make those cups and flowers and cranes
never stops to amaze me,
you know how to make use of mere scraps
into art, into something as useful as a cup
into something more meaningful as
those hundred cranes flying in the skies
on the minds of excited children

origami me, make me more artistic,
more useful

i am a mere scrap of paper flat on the table of this universe
Oh God...

RIC S. BASTASA
my ambition in life
is not to follow any path
not to close my mind
on something that
they believe in

i like the wanton
exhibition of ideas
in the circus of life

bearded women
fire eating men

and people who do
not believe in anything anymore

i like a grassy mountain
there is no path in there
and there are no footsteps.

i like a north star
to gaze upon my window

i am not here to follow
i am not here to lead

i am here to watch and then
write what i have seen

for those who are blind
they may see through my words

RIC S. BASTASA
Originally Yours

challenged to be
original
i quit. i am not
original i am a xerox
copy of
another mind
i am a duplicate
of another carbon
copy
i am an imprint
of another zealously
i use other people's words
i listen to
every syllable
and they all stay
inside my heart
like decanted
mass from acetic acid
from coconut
wine.
i am not original
i look at myself
in the mirror
i am not original
but i put on a smile
i am too
one kind of
a handsome
copycat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Orlando's Cafe

I sit alone on a black painted chair
putting my elbow on the black painted table
fronting a gray painting of a man
gathering rice
a Romano,
i wait
i close my eyes
to a cat nap
i hear the conversations
but i am not interested
of people on the other table
i imagine two lovers, a fat woman and
a skinny man
sharing spaghetti and coke
while a mother with a white skin
feeds a small slice of pizza
to her English speaking girl
who keeps on saying
that she changed her mind
into not eating another piece
of that Hawaiian menu,

the fat woman looks at me
wanting to tell me
why i am lonely
as though
when one sits and eats alone
signifies nothing
but loneliness

i could have told her
it is not the case
that i in turn suspects that
the skinny man
perhaps is the loneliest man
sitting watching a
fat and unattractive woman
before him
at Orlando's Cafe....

surprisingly i realize
i have become a man of few words
actually
i am too mindful of myself then
conscious
that throughout that time
i never uttered
a word

it is my mind that does the talking
as though
everyone who are there
are all the more lonely
as i try to capture
them all
within the framework
of some
consonants...

RIC S. BASTASA
Oroquieta

hot summer
on a rattan chair
facing the
blue pool
under a coconut tree
sipping
coca-cola

the table is full
deep fried crabs
buco-pandan salad
steamed rice
red watermelon
sliced
into tiny mouthfuls

meeting old friends
embroidered memories

silence struts
tumbling laughter
reminiscing
golden treasures
of those
youthful days

RIC S. BASTASA
Os Meus Desejos

for you my love
three red roses

to appease
the anger of

the thorns and
splinters.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oscar's Drawing

oscar draws a woman
with a long black hair
and light brown skin
holding a big Grey cat

her red lips are tight
as a bud
her cheeks do not
have a dimple

her eyes are blank
without a blink of an eyelid
very much like the cat that stares at you
when you steal a glance at it

i ask him if he can compromise a falling leaf
at the back of the woman
or a little red sparrow flying away from a branch
of a tree to a blue cloud nearby

at least there is a movement to feel the wind
or something to hear like the fluttering of a wing
as a matter of compromising
the smirk of mellowing sorrow

but he does not say any word
and without batting an eyelash
he puts in there
some old letters which he kept for quite a time
inside an old family trunk
a little bit blurred and
distant so i may never have
the chance of reading them again

something so sad maybe, but i think Oscar
knows what he is doing with the scar
he knows the ways of the
deep, the mysterious and the beautiful
Ostracized

those who know they're
from the line of birds
had long flown
to that far away horizon

i watch them
and i have felt this eternal longing
this envy

who am i where i am from
that usual question that you too ask

we were never human
we were never treated that way

they must be the only ones
they must be the only human beings here

for they tread upon us so we must be stones
for they hit us so we must be walls

inanimate, unfeeling, degraded,
diminished,

destined for banishment
and extinction, ... we are not theirs

we are not their brothers
we are never part of their lineage

so why worry about them? we are stones that
hit them too
we are walls that separate them too

from each other.
Other Flower They Can'T Refuse

INSTINCTIVE

in the garden
the flowers bloom
sans the
talking

they're just flowers
we know them

in the garden the buds
pop out

to bloom and to become
just like any
other flower
they can't refuse

RIC S. BASTASA
Other People Have Become  Hell As You  Defined It

and so
i must believe you

other people have
become
hell as you
defined it

you keep
boundaries
and not a foot
shall step
within it

love is superfluous
you've outgrown it
and you have learned
how happy it is
just to be left alone

in fact
you have considered those
who married
and have kids
as
unlucky

the world is not safe
anymore
for kids
or married people

let the single
die in peace
no one cries for them
no one sends them
in their grave
with so much
sentimentality
no ritual
no drama

an ex-lover has
called four times
and you did not
answer

it is unnecessary
no one completes you
for you have
all concluded that you
are the most
complete

(lonely woman
in this world)

i never said it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Advance Given Gifts

for in truth
our gifts had long been given

the wrappings
torn and thrown away at the backdoor of the house

i have mine
a string of common surprises

and i am enjoying it to the full
there is no need for me
to see what you have gotten
envy is unnecessary

I've seen the way the days of my life
take the life of a door
opening and closing
with a lesser sound

nothing so dramatic
nothing to expect about
explosive expletives
the hinges are cheering

i like it this way
when you are gone somewhere
to that trip of your own
soul searching games

i am alone in the living room
inside a glass wall
borrowing the light from the fields
of greens and yellows

as i read
what new books i have

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Arrival

our arrival is greeted by the wagging of a tail
and the jumping of a dog long denied
of company.

our arrival is the opening of the windows
the winds come
and once again kiss the furniture
and the room shows once more
the luster of an almost forgotten
fullness

our arrival shall keep the blankets
warm again
it shall unlock the bolts and shall
once more open a closed door

our arrival shall give us the sounds
of faucets
the flushing of an old water
inside the bowl long silenced by the
kind of absence that
sometimes want a revival of newer
perspectives

our arrival is a reconstruction of ourselves
for once again
we shall make the questions open
and then, if you only know, the meaning of things

that grow again, like seeds, these, all of these
shall make an arrival interesting....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Bird In Your Cage

we have this bird
we both own it and love it and care for it
our bird
and you have this cage
that you only own
golden, new and strong and as you say it
so reliable
that when our bird is in that cage
it will be safe
and cannot escape

we feed this bird together
and give it water and birdseeds
and a place of twigs and swing
where the bird can play
and perch upon
like it is on a tree

days and years
we keep this bird in your cage
and we see it is dying
and wanting to be free

yet you say, this sickness is just temporary
time heals what has wounded it
and shall forget the power of its wings

days and more years
we keep this bird in your cage
and i have not listened at all
to the sad song of that bird
her waning chirps
her weakened wings
her way of losing hold to the dreams of its wings

today we see this bird is dead
but you have no sadness at all
you say, you will buy another bird
again to be kept in your cage
i could have told you
i am the bird in your cage and i too have forgotten the power of
my wings

i could have told you, i have long died
and have forgotten what freedom is, what love is, what i am

in the first place. How can i ever tell you?
you are my cage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Blindness...

do not tell me
that it is only the rich
who are unjust

injustice is encompassing
it has nothing to do
with social status

or gender, or color or race
it is innate in all
once greed infiltrates the
heart
this envy drawn from Joseph's
brothers

it is that which comes
out
which defiles us all

theft, murder, adultery,
wickedness, deceit, sensuality,
slander, pride,

it has nothing to do
with what lies outside us
it is within

this separation from
the Divine
our lost paths, our visions
limited,

our blindness and
deafness
this shortness of
faith.
Our Capacity To Love

limitless
is our capacity
to love
and care

measureless
is our
gain

did i load you
into my being
and would you
like the image
of having to
unload you
at the end?

or would it rather
be lovely
to make you a
part of myself

a rose tattoo
or a scar?

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Chains

we are chained
we know that
we feel it everyday
we like to find solutions
our vision
our objective
is freedom
but everyday we are chained
we know these chains
we carry them
and they make the sounds of steel
and iron
we wear it in our necks
and on our feet
we feel the dangling of the weights
we have broadened our shoulders
and sharpened our wits
to know well these chains
to carry them all
still with dignity and pride.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Choices...

IF, only we are alone,
just you and me in this island,
IF, you only care for me
and I for you,
IF, there are no other
creatures, no other species,
no other person
distractions of this
love just between
us, pure bond, roots
and twigs, all of our
own leaves,
our skies and
shores,
our rivers and
mountains,

IF, and Only IF
this love could have been
but ours to share,

BUT my dear,
we live in this world of choices,
oceans of desires,
islands of partings,
we are crazy for change
and benefiting from
varieties,

AND so we decide,
which way to choose,
This of That

Do we drift away or
do we stick it out
like sugar solution?

sweet and sticky,
or charred and bitter?

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Chosen Heavens....

back to square one
again with you
for the nth time
my dear, it is just
a story, it is just
another poem
and it is not about
me or us, it is about
them in us, about you
in me, about us in them,
everything is
interrelated, interconnected,
we do not suffer much
as them, we have not loved
much as us.

it is early morning,
do we have to be a part
of this weak generation
again?

as i told you, for the
nth time,
we live, we are strong,
we love and we are
happier, inch by inch
towards our chosen
heavens.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Chosen Solitude.....

well i have learned
to live alone
to depend upon myself
and to rely no one
else

it had taken much time
upon those ember skies
up and below me
it was as though as was
fully roasted by
grief

sorrow is sonorous
soon it has become monotonous
until such time that
it has become so natural
and so ordinary that
it does not affect us anymore

and then we live
well in the numbness of our hands
our feet on those fire
and red coals
walk smoothly without much
fanfare

well, we learned
we lived so well
drama is gone
the curtains fall
the theater is closed

we are here in this
park of life
merely sitting on one of
those benches
watching all those
who pass us by
we do not wave our hands
neither did they
we do not greet each other
feeling too preoccupied
with our chosen
solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Commitment To Life....

there are those
who did not make it to
crhistmas day

we mourn for the passing
of our economics teacher in
High School

we condole those who survive
him: her two daughters and
one son

He will be joining his daughter
who died ahead of him
and his Junjun

We bring him flowers and send
him our prayers

He made it through life
we know with so much pain and
loneliness

The joys and other happy moments
were lesser
But just the same he was thankful
that they happened.

We shall remain in vigilance in the
midst of the suspense and thrill
too of our lives.

As we keep on living, holding on to
Life despite, we pledge, to keep the
writing true and alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Common Bond

here we are
singing songs in the wilderness

behind us
the sands of the desert are waiting

up there
another high mountain to climb

above us
are clouds of drifters

everything is uncertain
that seems to be the only sure thing we know

hold my hand, my friend
we shall be singing songs in this journey together....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Common Fate

i shall pretend that no one is deceived
myself included,

for what is my reason for being here?
you know it

it is not you, but the rest of those who cannot speak
about their sorrows

you deceive us, we shall not measure time for how long
we shall not whisper about the harshness of your winters

we have our own droughts to paint
and we are painting it so well so the world can see and perhaps
soon
shall reflect upon it that...

we who are innocent about our comings and goings
we who are blinded by the moments

do not deserve all these

i do not listen to your laughter
my ears are never made for you
i shall not feel you
my hands are made for more than what
your kind of materialistic stuff
can hold or contain

you shall continue deceiving us until you shall learn from us
and when you stop
we shall shall move on with our journey
until you join us
sailing in the rivers of our own sorrows

for we are made of grief, for we are all but sorrows ourselves

soon,
perhaps, we shall be one in all these
always deceived always persistent always patient
always longing

for that moment
always a common fate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Dead Ancestors

we always remember
the souls who left us some
fortunes

lands that we already
sold
money that we have
already spent
some jewelries that
we pawned

we light candles for them
and bring them flowers
and we remember them

for loving us
despite our failures.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Differences

we sit inside this lonely train
on a trip
that we have chosen

i look at you
writing on your laptop
but you do not mind

when our eyes meet
i evaded you by looking
over the window

the trees that pass us
and the mountains
like a game cards shuffled
before us
in such a fast speed

as i see it you look
like this poet wanting
to be alone by himself

i am a poet too
in my own right
in my own far place
away from you

i want to ask you some
existential questions
but you are so busy
and so engrossed
in deep moving thoughts

sensing our irreconcilable
differences you close
everything and transfer
to another room
wanting to be alone
with no one to talk to
except yourself

and here i am
talking to myself
this bored copycat

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Disaster

a poem
you composed in Baguio City,

i contemplated at the
Lady of Lourdes,

as i read it again and again
was much like of

buildings leaning upon another
on the side of a cliff

if i touch one word
we both shall fall like a domino
unto another domino

and here is such a artful fall,

no one notices that it is
our disaster.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Dreams

in the morning
we talk of dreams
assume the colors of flowers
and the glow of sunrise
our quick legs and nimble hands
take us
to the strong pillars of hopes
and our eyes look far
reaching the foot
of the rainbow
on the other side
of the hill

at noon we are wary
and our arms stretch for more
we draw more dreams
taller like the skyscrapers
and we assume the wings of
birds soaring in the skies
and taking dives
on the waves of the blue
sea

in the afternoon we feel
the stabs of lightning we heard the
thunders of some failings and we try
to stretch our imaginations
for understanding how things did not happen
the way we dream them to be
how others fell how some of our friends
die with eyes shocked for the
sudden defeats
the crushing of the edifice
the removal of the beautiful facades
the breaking of the borders
the pieces of dreams shattered like
fragile glass before our
very own wrinkled faces
beside our bleeding feet
we finally find the truth and accepting it
we mellow down like marshmallow
we sleep deep in the night
without any regret
for life has been fair
and soon we all shall leave here

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Dreams Can Be Forgotten

our dreams are mere dreams
for what are dreams but dreams
and nothing but dreams
unfulfilled and so we
rationalize
that dreams are nothing but dreams
anyway
unfulfillable
as what our primitive natures
have always been

we then shift to the realities
that grab us
rather than we grabbing them
like personal properties
like a soap that we think must not
slip from the hold
of our definitive hands
and look
it falls right there at the toilet bowl
and we shrug
not to pick it
that feeling that something we held
has become dirty
will always be there to haunt us
but we learn the lesson well
as we shrug our
shoulders
and curl our lips and eyelashes

'so what? ' i'll have another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Eternal Gaze

def. in my mind
smothered the
lively dance of
truth

what is the matter?

inactivity that timidity
to change
has taken the neck of
time

a rope hangs on the wall
the beam is inutile
the wind is the usual
stranger passing by always
busy for what is coming

what is really the matter?

things have become more
elusive for us
we cannot hold the essential
and the quintessence of our
living
has been sorely missed out.

the hope to touch the moon
in your eyes
to caress the black hair of
our nights
the dream that we are on
the beach
much loved by the sun
and the openness of our navels
the flowing oasis the full fluidity
of our destinations
our gaze eternal.
Our Ever Thirsting Ignorance....

one does not go out into the open fields
to carry a book
read and pour upon all interests
in a picture
of birds and trees and
lakes,

one goes out into the open to watch a flock of birds,
homing
to a tall leafy tree
and hearing them all chirp
or sing

one goes into the sea to sail a boat
fish,
or swim and see the colors of the corals
or feel a school of
rainbow fishes

one finally leaves the book to its place
between the shelves

out there into the open fields
lies the unending pages of days, the lessons that no word
or groups of words
can ever trap,

for real knowledge like fish in the ocean
like whales
so huge, and slimy
always escape from our grasp leaving us the sound
that till today
shall mesmerize us
in the continual mysteries of
our thirsting
ignorance
Our Eyes

OUR EYES
do not actually see
for they are nothing but windows
to our soul
it is our soul that sees
through our hearts

blindness of the eyes
makes the heart see more
beyond
what is just there
within our grasp
gladly, beyond
what our
fingers always touch

what our lips
just kissed

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Eyes Are Busy On The Side Of The Streets The Houses, The Trees, And The Passing Scenery

there are conversations in the bus
we keep hearing without paying much attention

their lives are temporary
and they last while we are still inside it

always hoping
when to reach that final destination

our eyes are busy on the side of the streets
the houses, the trees, and the passing scenery

in a flash of seconds that keep on
changing more like stories about here and there
in pictures

you may keep your silence and then pretend to
the man beside you that you are listening to him

and that is easy, and he keeps on telling you the stories
of his youth, the cares of his wife, the hopes of
his children,

and you would not bother stopping
him or inserting your own version of yourself

who cares anyway? you have your own stories to tell
to yourself which you cannot tell anyone

lest there be no more secrets, no mysteries
lest there will be no longer you to keep and cherish

you know it well, once you share a chapter of your life
it ceases to be you own,

it now belongs not only to the lonely
man beside you, it starts to be owned by the world
this world that owes you nothing
and in return, you too, owe nothing to it.

and then the bus arrives and you step out
and you leave him, wondering perhaps why
you are the listening type.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Eyes Dispensed.

this act
sucks my soul out of my body
emaciated, and left out, and exhausted
meanwhile the soul becomes fire, changes from time to time
into metaphors of bird, stone, cloud,
and even a river,
there is always a flow, a flux, a rising,
from a falling and stagnancy,
like a stirring rod in cold water inside a glass
putting a whirlpool of possibilities.
this is art, life, transcendence,
this is us
souls always searching for other souls
our eyes dispensed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Fates....

ad so must i tell you now
about the persistence of the dropping rain
from the gray sky
to the roof following the gutter into a hole
into the graveled ground
into the canal that takes
everything back to the river

its passage had always been the most usual route
of the passage of any normal water
once free then tightened into a route
then spread into
a vast solution
diluted in a mass
of murky fluid world

i sometimes think if you heard the drops of rain singing
upon their arrival
their non-complaining songs
winding through all those guttered
existences

i sometimes wonder if you in some ways
remember
how we are alike sometimes
to those drops
to those dis-integrations
which are necessary
for the birth of the sea
and the branching of other
tributaries

like fingers of the hand
like hairs in our head
like some visions splitting in
the other junctions

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Feet

his feet speak
the obvious intentions as he enters
the door of hidden affections
they leave marks and her mother sees them
and tells her whether
he can make a good husband
a loving father to all your children

it is not the hands who are too conscious
about what signs to make
not the big mouth attuned to lies
and not the tongue with sweet tastebuds
not even the eyes which are prepared to deceive you
to its long gazes

you must listen with the ears of your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Final Option

we're on the same trips
mostly leisure

we keep on saying
what options do we still have?

we hop from one island to another
we have become missing most of the times

we opt for our privacy
and friends are asking what is happening

one day we walk hand on hand on the park
and it is raining so hard

we keep on asking, what options do we still have?
to run? we have been running away

we do not know what to find really
and we do not ask anymore

the options are all here
inside the house and well fenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Final Wish For The Magician

between us and the magician
what do you find?
the ahs and ohs and omgs
it is his hands and it is our very own eyes betraying us,
we wish that all these miseries can be solved
with the use of the sleigh of his hands
we reflect once more when we are so silent

his hat giving birth to rabbits
his black baton turning into flowers
his handkerchiefs into butterflies
his newspaper folds turning into dollar bills

the magic does not really work
we take things as they are now
and we let him know at the end of the show
we wish that he'd disappear from our view.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Fingers Are Crazy

the only
requirement to be a
poet, whatever that word means,
is the spontaneity of the heart

set aside the mind

our fingers are crazy
our tongues always want to sing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Fingers Speak

these words
are glimpses

they are small
windows

opening to a
landscape of

us, of all of us,
our fingers speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our First Impressions Can Be Dangerous

at first glance i thought she is listening to a sad music
that she is wearing a head set

she is crying
she is fetched by a military chopper
leaving the dead
in a place where she cannot be safe

her little girl is nowhere to be found
swallowed by the water

she is the sad music after the storm
you do not have to cry
just listen

and do not be like me mistaking her
as a woman who loves sad melodies and
then sheds her tears

I'm sorry.
We are sorry for her.

Our first impressions are dangerous.
The first glance can be misleading.

Until we read the whole story.
Until we pay attention to the details
that we miss because we are too busy
with so many things.

And so this time, i miss the tree,
because i am lost in the forest.

Let me say again. I am so sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Fragile Selves

people always
do not know the real us

we are always this
stuff inside
gold-plated and
on elaborate
inamoratas

people theorizes us
like some political guesses

revolutions that do not
materialize
peace that always trembles
on false alarms

we invoke the law of
our privacy
our intimate parts remain
hidden
in our fragile underwear

people do not know us
we have always been fearless and free

they sleep on their silly
speculations and we greet them with
smileys on the road

in the room i lean on a leather chair
rest my chin on my hand
and read the world from afar

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Freedom Is An Individual

at the end of all those perorations
you enter your room passing by the mirror on the wall
at the side of your door
you pass slowly upon the image of yourself
finding your own view of the world
correct, unique
you must affirm that very basic principle
it is your life that you are going to live
and nobody else's life
it will just be once, there is no repetition then
of that error if that be
of that correctness, if it must be,
you look at your hands
you open it to see the lines of your palms
closely your eyes gaze upon
these destinies
that choose you
you are after all
free and must follow the path that you see
in there
there is no one else
just you

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Freedom To Choose

Of goodness is human nature
Made of
And to good he must choose
There is no other
Lest he renounces and
Negates humanity

To choose the bad then
Is departure from
What human nature is

Lost, he chooses the
Part not of his whole
He rots, he dies, he becomes
Nothing

To grow and be the good
That he/she is
That is what perfection &
Fulfillment is all about
Man is all about it

For what use is man
Or woman turning to evil
For what purpose will that be
Except his destruction
The total annihilation

Were you born only to
Be destroyed? Were you
Created only to be broken?
You are not. You are meant
To be the perfect self
That always waits you there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Games Of Chance, A Game Of Chess

whether you like it or not

(are you a man who wants everything to be too secure
without any risk at all?
say cannot proceed further)

our lives are games of chances
every moment is a choice
every hour is a risk
every minute is a bait

sometimes we are the pawns and they are the kings
and bishops and queens

i am talking now of the game of chess

sometime we kick back and we become horses
and we invoke the power of the church
we take the robes of divine power: Jesus is King!
the King in us gets authoritative and checks the
queen of her fidelity
we impose taxing obligations
we make love and take the necessary romance

in a further note however, i like the feelings of being the spy.
roving eyes, ten to twenty disguises, and when caught in flagrante

i always say, 'Hey, i am just an ordinary poet!
what can poets do? Can they do harm to you?
Can they put the bombs and kill thousands of innocent people?
Do they ever know what 9/11 is? Or ' What do poets know about middle east
issues, ? The Palestine Thing? The human rights problem?
What do poets say about international humanitarian law concerns?'

Perfect! Too perfect! The agree on one thing: Poets are fools!
They laugh and cry! Those mean and serious thinkers of our society!
They bound me
And in pity
They all set me free!

Like a turtle, I was thrown to the coolest river...

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Globally Warming Neighbors

our neighbors are
weathers
more of the global
warming type
in short
unpredictable

so unpredictable
that i can't just figure
out which is the
sunny one from
the wet one

during thunderstorms
they laugh
and when the sea is
calm tonight
they all stay in their
house and
get drunk

we are the chameleons
to suit their changing colors

you expect that they
will like us

so unpredictable are they
they still didn't like it
'we hate chameleons'
' we like melons' they shouted.

until one day
we gave up
we decided not to mind
and use
the ignorance
style
and then they
group to smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our God Of Happy Endings

we are told today
to focus not on the crucifixion
but on the Rising of the Lord
Triumphant over Death
Saving us all
from Sin

we are told that our God
is not a sad ending
but a happy one
loved by Him
showered by his blessings
molded by his
Never Ending Love
where we live
Happily Ever After...

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Hands....

tonight
as usual
i never wish
to be a star
coz i know how
lonely space is
how depressed are
those nights
out there

you see
i know what
brightness is
i know
what a star is

tonight
i have a glass in my
hand
and a little drink
and a little talk
with you

doi need some
more?
doi wish something
far and
unreachable?

all i need is your
hand
and my hand
and when they hold
each other

doi wish for more?

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Hiding Place...

we have a hiding place
it is not dark

it is the outside that is
dim

there is a circular fence
an aqueduct for a door

you know where to find me
when they think i am gone

you do not not have to go there
because you do not love me

we have a hiding place
and we do not speak about it

it is lonely there
but that is all that we've got

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Home Is Faraway From There

on the last day
our nerves went berserk
at the 29th floor
we viewed the
river again
and since it is so cold
we closed the
glass window
and now we
remember what you
have long said
about what home
really is....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Home...

the constancy of the heart
the restlessness of the spirit
the familiarity of these hands
mold the meaning....

that which happens every night
and day
becomes a habit
and routine
there is no more meaning to what
was once
electrical and sudden and
intermittent,

neurotic impulses giving all the signals
of something
euphoric
we all pass that way,
one, twice, thrice...

like the moving line of the graph
at first it goes up and climbs the hill of fortune
then for no apparent reason
just like what usually happens
something that is up
has no option but always to come down

law of gravity works through all
these emotions..

then someone begins to utter
the word 'home'

where the heart is
where the mind crumples like a scratch paper
with all the unnecessary etchings
where the fragility of porcelains break
into unbearable pieces
who recalls them and who puts them all back as though nothing happens?
the scars of the cracks will always be visible
there is nothing that can be concealed forever
and the guests shake their head and leave

because the party is over..

we hear the rain on our rooftops and we admit the subsiding and finally the stopping of the heavy pouring
now it is a clear morning and no fog hangs on the hillsides
of our paths towards the garden of Eden

home is no longer just a word.
it is a sculpture and with some colors perhaps
it becomes us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our House Is Strong As Ever

the two pillars
have stayed their two
distances

alas! our house
is strong as ever

thanks for the
song of the wind

let me be
grateful to your
deeplening
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Ignorance As Always.

the skulls and bones of time
are its mouths that speak about how the
dead finally catches with us who are alive
with our very own pride...our ignorance as always.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Incompleteness

the turbulence inside
me is the most silent
creation of
my new self, it has learned
a lot since then
when turbulence has
been equated
with chaos, sooner
you will embrace
turbulence as
the lover's other
side
without which
love cannot contain
more meaning
it is the confusion
after all that
brings us
to its arms
it is the dissatisfaction
the insufficiency
that incompleteness of
our being
that makes us
understand the
soul of
solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Indignities....

Everyone of us here is
in one way or another, and by all means,

exploited. Look at these bloated masters
for whom we
serve so blindly,

they have become coated with
fat
and they all look rich and
sick and
filthy and they pat our backs
and tell us that
we are all doing good

technically, we are,
fools, modern academic fools,
idiots,

we have made monsters
who leave us nothing to ourselves
but our
being undignified

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Innate Human Goodness

a chicken egg
is thrown to you
by instinct
you must catch it,

same thing with
a lost kitten meowing
for help on the
busy street,

you have to take it
to your house and
feed it,

even a helpless newly born
pink skinned
mouse,

you see, the theory is this,
that kindness and compassion
visits you
in the guise of all
there miserable creatures

as you said,
same pain, same fear,

and it will be same
empathy that
automatically grows
in that
barren garden

we always wish for
flowers...

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Inner Wars....

we what must fear most is not the war
that eliminates us all

when we are all gone, no one's telling
about what misery was there

we dread most is the war within
it is everyday and no one knows that pain

you cannot signify
or if you will, shall they be genuinely interested?

they too have their own inner wars
arguments and heated deliberations inside the

conference rooms of their hearts
against the mind

like bow and arrow is this spirit and body
like night and day

this struggle for morality
the good that we have and the evil that we embrace

the guilt that settles like sediments
at the bottom of the deepest river

the way we smile when we meet friends
the way we burst into tears when we are finally alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Killers On The Loose...

what they killed
was nothing
it was just the body
we agree
it was never what in us
remains
to be

eternal and wise
good and inevitable
strong and indestructible
this force
this life that moves with
the galaxies
carried by stars and
embraced by the bosom
of space

when time shrinks
when understanding expands
when perfection is reached
when you and i do not have names
anymore
when we become unrecognizable
as fabric of
flame
without end.

they have never killed us
they live here and
died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Lady Of Peñafrancia

i confess i have touched
a virgin in
Nueva Caceres

The one who rides
upon clouds

The lady who is carried
by a boat along the big
river of Naga

I have marveled at her
beauty
I bow my knees before her

Confessed to her
How guilty i was for moving against
the pleasures of the masses

I shared with her
My own silence against the noise
of their world.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Life Here On Earth

it is all about mumbling
about nothing at all... some

however,
make a lot of noise
and chatter
hoping that they can
be heard
and be adjudged as
something or someone
or somebody, but..... the ashes

tell, the wind blows, and leaves
that scar of
nothing on
the floor....you rebel upon this, , ,

thought, claiming...
we were born in paradise
descended upon
our parents from that apple tree
of an ancient life,
progeny of the
classical times, ...

everyday, everyday is everyday
echoing
suffering, temporary bliss,
worked out joys, worn out lamentations,
grief, tears of magnitude,
humanity undressed
thin emaciated bodies
hungry and painful minds
....tell me what is there
to say that life is worth living? ...ah,

if only i was not brainwashed
with all those
beliefs that stick to my mind
like goddamn
hell, .. i should not have hoped
about rewards
on those rooms
reserved for those who survive
the hurts.

i wait, i am patient, i am kind,
i must be anxious, hoping that
it is not nothing but something
somewhere, someone,
somebody, ...that i live in this
real world
with a touchable future....i am

my hands, my body,
i am
spirit, i am mumbling, ...i am
not
nothing at all.

the world has a thousand eyes,
a million hands,
when it speaks it does not waste
any word.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Limited Nature

our limited nature is obvious
our hands only wish for the sky
they cannot touch them short of length as they are
and so our eyes too
they cannot pierce what is behind the mist and the frost
just like our feet
that stamp only some footprints on the grass
and leave some anger behind a path
our hearts can only love what they see
our skin for what it feels

i wish to tell you
that we can go somewhere in the world of imagination
even enter the doors of fantasy
where all our senses ride on the wings of infinity
there are no limits there is no time
too much bliss that we soon forget
about us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Little Spaces Called Self...

it is something that you steal
from time, and time willingly gives it to you
so strictly speaking
it becomes more of a gift
that makes you too light
and the burden becomes a little bit
bearable
and somehow you put on a name
and you like it
you begin to dance with all delight
you love this moment but you cannot have it all
it is a just a moment of ecstasy in your life
like some fireworks
and then it is gone and you do not chase it
because it cannot just be
it is destined to be beyond the permanent hold of your hands
it is like a licking tongue
and then the mouth closes
you like some more
but there is none anymore
and then you go back to your room
not feeling any guilt at all
why? because you had a tryst with yourself and
your dream and your
fantasy and your wild wishes
and then you are
satisfied like a dog taking the bone
with its teeth
back into the safety of its
urinated territory

yes, our own world is our little space.
in fact, this is just what we need.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Lives....

as i cover my steps
on the sand
as i step near the
waves
wanting all my steps
gone

you write a memoir
you marry and have kids
you build a new house
make a scrapbook of your
past and
even buy an insurance
for the future

you think there is a big
difference between us?

i have taken the leap
and the dive
i have taken a journey
alone and with a group
i have taken so many
pictures of the places
of us and them and myself

i have stared at you
many times
i have talked with you
and played with you
we watched movies
and even tried to eat
same food and drinks

i also want to make a
difference
i do not like us in this
parallel lines
at the end there is really
nothing the same
the dissimilarities dissolve
like light in the deep
blue water

you think we are really
different?
mark a date in the calendar
find time to write the numbers
ad infinitum

we all end up in the same
place, well, though not at
exactly the same time

neither can you choose.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Lives.....

we stop the car
upon a graveled road
beside us a row
of old trees

overlooking a
pasture where cows
graze
at the right are
mountain ranges

above them blue skies
beyond them the sea

they are on this grassy
place
vast expanse of quiet
fields

bound for the city
for our daily lives

we leave childhood in
place
with these silent
cows grazing

the rivers run towards
the sea
birds stay for a while
and then
migrate elsewhere....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Lives.....(2)

we stop the car
upon a graveled road
beside us a row
of old trees

overlooking a
pasture where cows
graze
at the right are
mountain ranges

above them blue skies
beyond them the sea

they are on this grassy
place
vast expanse of quiet
fields

bound for the city
for our daily lives

we leave childhood in
place
with these silent
cows grazing

the rivers run towards
the sea
birds stay for a while
and then
migrate elsewhere....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Loneliness Talks To Us In Images

our loneliness talks to us
and we try to listen with some memories
that refuse to die in the recesses of our minds

our loneliness are like hands that touch
our breasts and backs
giving us the pain, unnecessary pain, those that we could have
met with the shrug of our shoulders and wipe with a short
slash and sleigh of our hands

we talk as we sit on thick blankets on our bed
we gaze at the glass door looking for the sea and the mountains
at the other end of this island

we are not at all mindless, we talk like civilized citizens confronting
loneliness with why's and how's
we drink tea and offer it with some delicacies
sweet to remember but after wards the bitterness sinks in
like silt and sand to the ocean floor

sometimes i get fed up with this drama. i say i quit. i say i am a happy
person and i do not deserve this kind of confrontation.

i open the door and let the noise in. Loud rock music and
lots of arguments about weight and shape

i occupy all space. Airtight. I breathe and then I laugh the hardest.
Like a hippo.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Love

sweet love enters the mouth
from your mouth
sweet love from the sweat
of your body
sweet love from the fluids
of your groans
to the stiffness of my
pleasures

love hovers in the eyes
closed eyes in ecstasy
that is what is truth
that is it all about

the time for growing old
and death comes
i take everything every fluid in my mouth
and then i look at you
with all the wasted years that we share
i hear you speaking through a sigh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Love For Now, So Please Be Patient

Though the rapid waters
Are divided by this
Big rock
At the end
The waters are united
Again
Like this love
Of ours
For now

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Loyalty

amidst the loneliness
that keeps us in this old house
this is what we can do: you sing the videoke
i face the monitor, and i write a poem about us,
25 years on monotony like the sound of the waves of the sea
overnight a boat that takes us to another island
25 years of tolerance about our own idiosyncrasies
another twenty-five years
and another twenty-five years
this is our pledge of allegiance to ourselves
husband and wife
alone, in an old house, left by those behind us
for bitter or for worse

er, for better or for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Metaphor.....

the universe
is neat and ordered
and huge

it is ours.

we share it with
our moon

as you are moon
over me

as i am moon over
you

the universe is
shifting and it is
neat and huge and
silent

it is ours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Minds Couldn't Find A Place To Land

i could have
done more
i tried not to
say much
except for this
fact
that we all lack
the time
we need

the clouds
oh the clouds
the mists
are coming

our minds
couldn't find
a place
to land

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Misery

OUR MISERY
comes when we see the forest alive
with its trees
though no one is tilling its domains

when we see the flowers bloom
when the rain comes
when the sun shines without promises
of the rainbow

our misery
of having all the fears
envious about the birds that play in the air
without having to think
what to eat tomorrow

why do we worry much?
why?

we work to death
death comes anytime
even if we do not ask for it.

ahh, this misery of
lost thoughts
of words unsaid
of words said
without knowing what we really mean

of those that we do not mean
of those we really mean
and regret having said them

ahh, what am i tonight
an insomniac again
accepting anything
the unknown ghost
staring and then taking off...
Our Mouths Are Singing

last night
i was a flat tire

it is the usual
deflation that

makes me sleep
and she is not surprised

anymore why we keep
this matter happen

the reasons are laid
on the dinner table where

the food has gotten so cold
and the mantel unchanged

we keep busy
that is the only way to live

we keep ignoring
that is the only way to learn more

and keep the parts of the house
intact the furniture stable

on four feet on dusty existence
on days that we let go

because there is no more reason
to make them different so

we can stop and gaze for a while
and say we love to be here

when the news of any disease come
we do not think anymore of hospitals
or recall the best doctor in town
or whether we sacrifice time for it

it is enough it is enough
our mouths are singing

we do not think whether we
have gone crazy

we have no time for all these
we think of place far, so far away

and if there is only one that offers
eternal shelter we are ready

to set aside home, kin, and
memories

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Mutual Foolishness....

i know for sure what is the end of that line,  
it is a point concealed  
it rolls,  

and stops at the edge  
seemingly it is asking why it must stop at some time  
and be  
known as something else  
what it is not  

i have become an accessory  
the point is for that moment hidden inside my palm  
pretending as a mole  
a mystery they all confess  
during that  
confusing hour  

it could have been a dove of peace  
a leaf on its beak  

i know now how is it not to know  
because i have known and felt how is it to be nothing  
from that beginning  

i could have told you when we first met  
all that is necessary and all that is less and yet so full  

but we were so foolish then  
to believe that time  
has the virtue of eternity  
that love is a light refracted in the sea  
deluding us to  
believe about depth and  
clarity.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Neighbors Who Want To Be American...

our neighbors
who still retain their
flat noses and
brown skins have taken
time to take a party
in their homes

drinks are served and
the menu strictly
american, and they cheer
each other

'we love america!'
there is no place like america!

it is sad, or
say it is also funny

how Filipinos hate this
brown skin
wanting to be like the
uncle sam
tall, and bearded and white
and very much

unlike them in everything
manners, ambition, and vision.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Numbness Along The Road Leading To Our Destiny

that night i passed by the road
leading to the house where i live,

someone died on the road
i did not mind i was eagerly heading for home

this morning while going to the university
another body sprawled on the road,
another dead body

there is a crowd of people
curious but not mourning

i do not stop for death
i am going towards mine
and we who are still living cannot really be surely lucky

everyday we are dying
we simply have to wait for that fateful time
it is our turn we do not have to anticipate it
every hour
a part of us dies

it is enough
sharing these moments of death
and so i say
i cannot stop for another person's death

destiny has once taken him
and there is nothing that i can do

i am also just merely passing by...

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Obligations Towards This World

showered with rights
from birth and even to the last breath
i also impose upon myself
these obligations: that i be not another burden
to your suffering
that i be but a gentle wind passing
touching your hair with the comfort
that i like you
is another free soul
a body with the limitations of my skin
so my bones may not fall
before you
that i must project the image of
the smiling
cheerful son of God
the pains i subsume
the hurts that i do not bother myself with
the walk of a man satisfied
with what is given
the look of the day's happy hour
alone, must i suffer
alone, i must not tell

for you too have burdens of your own
shall i have the shame of
adding mine?

i go where fate takes me
and i won't stop till everybody is happy.

that i am not a burden to you
and you not to me perhaps,
is enough of this good life

a basket of white daisies
an apple in my hand
a little singing bird on my hair
a red rose for you.
nothing is taken from nowhere
as there can be no beginning if there is no end
there can only be conversion from one form to another
everything starts from a substance
an energy form
a disturbance of a stagnant clear pool
a mass of light
that suddenly burst into flames

at the tip of these all
you cannot pinpoint where is the start
and where's the beginning
all shall accept what is given
and all shall give back what was taken

the face of humanity is no one's face
as it is with a dropp of rain to the ocean's body

that is our only hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Dance....

in the darkness of our
nights
we shall dance
my love

just the two of us
and our shadows
that the moon so full
shall fill with delight

our music is our silence
oh, many shall join us
in this merriment

the sands of the shores
the leaves of the coconut trees
the winds of the horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Film Fest

after
that you are supposed to
puff some
smoke in the air
to the ceiling

it is not worth
the talk
it is that which
is better
when done

in the story
i rise from bed
and put on
my body
like a pair of
pants
after
the underwear
which was lost
somewhere in the
silent
corner

and you are
left alone
wondering if there
is another day
to begin
with

i follow the
way one must close a door
not to
insult it with
a creaking sound
of
humiliation
but all these are nothing
but imagination
and just between us
who never wish
to be blind but have in fact
become
blinded by what we
are not

life is like that
and we follow the script
to be faithful
to the one who suffered
enough
to write it
beautifully
as though it were
his last

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Greatness

We do not need kingdoms
To be kings, we do not need
Lands and money to be rich
And be powerful and be famous
And be great to the eyes of men

We only need our simple selves
At peace within our hearts
Admiring the greatness of God
And His Wondrous creations

We only need this humble humanity
Inside us always looking at the
Others’ mysteries always thinking
The true world beyond us on this journey

Our own greatness lies in our being ourselves
Knowing what we are and fulfilling the purpose
Of why we are here and what we are destined to be...there

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Kin

our own kin
name tags on my chest
genes in my flesh
our own skin
bearing our own family names
tattoos of our
marked existence as part of this
and that
roots
on our feet
and vines in our hands
wherever we go
we are us
our own kin our own skin
our identities as sons of these fathers
and mothers
as favorite grandsons
hope of the family tree
integrated
not grafts
but twigs and tendrils

despite our hatred
of the roots
we still are
leaves and
branches

how can we get away
from these that made us grow
into treetops
overlooking the mountains
of our lives

somehow there will be change
to norms
new laws for family ties
the right to take myself
from a name
to have my own house
inside my body
to get rid my veins of the
bad blood
to remove their nails
embedded on my toes
and fingers

somehow
know me as i am
and not a part
an extension of whom and
where

i have my on why you know
listen to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Way Of Giving Up Life

at the hotel's mirror
after a cold bath at night
i look at myself,

i sighed, i have neglected
what i am,

what i was was once
strong and beautiful

perhaps, i have never loved
myself well enough

my skin are loose from my bones
my stomach is bloating

there has been too much craving
for food to conceal what i have lost

there is so much sitting down
upon those dismal failures

i could have run away that fast
away from dismay

i am tired, i have decided to let go
beauty, and wit and ego

let them have it then
i have no more reasons

valid enough to keep me firm
and fast and alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Own Way Of Life

it's not at all shameful to text the island of mist

it's not an embarrassment to say that you hear a red voice

if you are feeling uneasy
well, it is not at all surprising if at the last hour we choose to live by our own understanding

our own set of ethics
our own way of life

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Paradoxical Natures

for we are like
the darkness and light
when we meet
we are twilights
we are the dawns of time
the sunsets that
they love to watch
where passions subside
and then rekindle

we are the meeting points
of parenthetical departures

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Paranoia

the uncured disease of mankind had always been
that the earth is the center of the universe
that man is at the center of all these
that he is loved by the skies and the seas and the mountains

that i am the center of your attraction
or that i have loved you truly too
these are the demands of illusions

the sun is just one of the thousand stars
though it may be true that it is the center of our universe
that you may have loved me truly and i may think that i am the only
star in your universe
how hopeless can i be thinking that way
when the truth is just i am just a dust, a speck of this vast space of dusts

one night i stand in the middle of the grass and looked at the stars
i feel so far and so tiny just like Venus that planet that glitters in the north.
human love is as small as a grain of sand, yet somehow we imagine that
as a Saturn in the planetary system.

i am not saying the truth that indeed we are nothing but an empty sigh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Philosophy

we do not look for what
is not there
we only look for what
can be found
the possible
the one
that
our
hands
can
touch
and
hold
and keep
and
treasure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Picture Under The Rain With A Black Umbrella

we had it under the rain
it is in the picture

i wrapped my arm
around your neck to
your shoulder

one hand of mine
held the black umbrella

one arm of yours wrapped my waist
the other hand holding
on my shoulder

the weather was so cold
there was fog around the mountain
rain poured heavily
and we were smiling

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Places Of The Heart....

been to places of the heart for quite a time with you

there is no panic as to what and where's next you my dear has become my compassionate gear.

something beyond the places of the flesh inside these mercies and tenderness we sleep with spaces as you too cry yourself from all these sorts of emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Points Of View

We now differ on how we look
At things. I am silent. I want to be silent.
You wish we are noisy. Or at least
We must talk.
You wish there is a glass of wine
In our hands
I still think we need coffee.
I am secure. I feel that so.
Your hands are shaky,
Reflections of the waves
Inside your mind.
You are picking on some little
Things that grow on the
Pavement. You want to kill them.
I say, I gesture, leave them
Let them be.
I situate myself on a hammock
Riding with the wind
This afternoon the breeze is cold
From the seashore.
Finally you do not resist
Getting near me and you complain
“I hate this place, it is too lonely
For me”
I do not mind. Deep inside my mind
I like this place. It is too peaceful.
I swing with the wind
With the hammock. You hold it.
You want it to stop.
I look at you and you cry.
Tears flood the creeks of your cheeks.
I cannot wipe them now.
I know, you want to leave.
I am silent. I am secure now.
I ride with the wind on the wings
Of my dreams.
I am listening to the
Footsteps of the ants
I am counting how many
Time the grasshopper jumps.
I like it here. It is peaceful

Now go, find your place.
Your dreams. Take your trip
To your sighs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Possibilities

the big typhoon
has left us.

we do not ask
any questions

for instance
why are we born?
where do we go
from here?

you just had
the uncertainty
and you demand
nothing more
nothing less
explanations do not
work anymore
justifications are
not teasers

the possibilities are
what we do everyday

cleaning the yard
sweeping the debris
burning the leaves
making firewood
dusting chairs

there is no need for so much
talk
one mouth is never enough
in this world

after all
we can always live
without ideas
no arguments
can appease us
not even answers
from them
damn experts
and psychics

we can read
Ulysses
we can imagine
another war
in Troy
or another Samson
betrayed

we can switch
to soap operas
and just be
nothing but
ordinary tearjerkers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Prayer

our prayer is not to have
any burdens
ah, burdens are anywhere
for these
make us real men

our prayer is for us
to have wider shoulders
stronger arms
swift feet like mercurial
wings
so we can carry more
than the rest
of those who
are defeated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Prayer For You...

Your loneliness is actually
Killing us
Softly like a song
Like a poison
Silently spreading in our
Veins through your
Bad blood

We do not owe you a thing
and So we have to avoid you
You are perhaps
Our bad karma

Do not blame us then
When we finally decide to erase you
Like an error
We must delet you
Like a dirty rug we have to throw you away

We are home now
Away from you.
Nevertheless we wish you all the Luck
The bad one
Nevertheless we shall always pray
That you may have
A very happy
Death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Pride Lies In Leaving No Footprints At All

we walked
for quite a long time
traversed some
rivers
followed some
storms
and finished
a desert
into the plains and
then stopped on some
islands
and sailed the seas again
and we did not return
even if we did not really
know where to
go and when to stop

we did not
entertain reasons
anymore
we just let them
pass us
by

we did not
know each other
very well

our pride lies
in leaving no
footprints at all

and they were
shocked
but we did not
believe them

RIC S. BASTASA
there are so many things that we cannot really have
sometimes we complain, feeling the injustice, disgruntled over
an unfairness,

when we were young, we wage a rebellion,
about a system that did not satisfy our longings, that give us pain

many died, the system is cruel, many suffered, because they are
too unforgiving,

those who still live, spend their dignities in prison cells
hidden from the light of the sun, the promises of the day,

we who live in the silence of our disgust have chosen the silence
we too suffer,
we die so many deaths everyday
we want to bury ourselves
but our progeny stopped us

now we are attuned for all the other things that we cannot have
we embraced more silence, we have become numb and we claim some slices
of this wisdom

in our hearts we cultivate this culture of indifference
like rats deprived of our fields, we transfer from one hollowness to
another

the things that we cannot have have become more real
as real as our tired hands, our fed up brains, our decimated human
existence

we have worked so hard, yet the things that we cannot have
still remained hanging above us like ripe fruits beyond the reach of our calloused
hands

we begin to accept these things that we cannot really have
we bowed to their being unreachable, we focus our sights on the ground, soft,
dry sands,
we take a handful, and all of them slip from the hold of our palms from the slits of our fingers

we have so much of these things now, and they have become innumerable. our young who have become bold and brave shall come in, to repeat what we have started, and unless they win

we still can never have them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Relationship......

i assure you
in stability our
relationship can
still thrive

without the use
of words
without sharing
cares
without any mention
at all about this
love

or this growing
indifference this only
pale flower in the
desert of
our own time

i have this hope
the sun is still rising
and the moon
still keeps floating
full
consistently once a
month....

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Secret Can Kill Us.

i know that you know
and i know that you know that i know

but we agreed on one thing after that night and following morning
no one's talking
we keep the dignity of silence,
the sorrow of more silence,
the sweetness of
nothing
at all

what's the use of telling you about what you know that i know?

will it serve the purpose of telling us
that there is something wrong
and that it should be stopped
or at least mentioned and
discussed and then corrected?

dare me.
you know what happens next.

i'll die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Secret....

we can see them
climb the stairs we are on the ground
with the grass
we shall share the excitement of
the beginners
we pretend we have not gone there
we shall not tell them
what we found.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our See-Saw

our see-saw

you are up
and i am down

i am down
and you are up

i get bored
and tired
with this routine

so i give you
the surprise
of your life

i step away
suddenly
and you fall
to the ground

now i am
happy to see
so angry

and so alive!

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Shelter Is The Purpose Of Our Creation

IT is the intention to gain
that makes one creative,
and so when the gain is taken
one sulks back to his
stagnant self,

the intention to be happy
is one thing too,
as though the purpose of having this life is simply
happiness,
that when one is sad, life becomes
meaningless

a slave of feeling, a roller coaster of emotion
one is a rider,
when the ride is over, what then is next?

the roller coaster stops
one gets out from his seat and bind

you take a walk, remembering the highs and lows
and this soon shall stop

there is no roller coaster in the house where we live
will there be no excitement anymore
when we feel nothing
shall life and dreams cease too?

we are not our creators
we are created for a purpose
and this we must discover
and there we shall take shelter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Sins

our sins are like stars
shining through the night

and so i will not lie to you
neither should you about

the sins we shared that
wake us up after a sound

sleep when we start to
wash our dirty faces.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Situation

as soon as we are thrown
inside the unnumbered room
the door is locked right away
then we cry for the unknown
and for the uncertain we weep
but this will be
only for a very short while
there are temporary hands
warm and soft and sweetly scented
that give us care somehow
like our mothers

and then we are confronted
with chunks of happy moments
peaceful pieces, jumping joys

and some hibernating herbs,
bullying blurbs, berating bricks,
blunted bulks, grating grips,
as accompaniments
so bad for our daily dabs
and then we stop on some moments
of lucidity amidst the madness
we think we know
we rationalize a lot
we want to get out sometimes
but the door is still closed
and even if you force it
or utter the name of all the gods
it still won't compromise
for a peer
it won't obliged to open
even for a second
no glimpse is allowable

we are told to continue with the
journey which is more
inside than outside
we become weak and weary
yet filled with justifications already
aging with wisdom
furrowed fears
hallowing hell

we surrender to the aegis of age
and come up with the idea that
everything has been so fulfilling
we admit whatever comes and
we let go whatever goes away
we comfort ourselves with all
these learned peppered philosophies
saline songs, popcorn poems

and then the door opens again
as you grasp for the last grip
anticipating for what you have not
ever seen before......

(you pass away not having said
those words, i respect that secret)

they say there is so much light
at the end of this timid tunnel
and the future field that we tread once again
is peacefully perfect
the silence so unlike tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Souls Are Candles Of The Creator

We're all put aflame
we shine in the dark

we are all consumed
not by fear but by bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our State Of Affairs...

we shall say, we are honest,
there is no cloning, nothing imitated, we are
trying to be original,
we do not listen much, we talk much,
we write much, in fact,
it is an everyday undertaking like defecating
and brushing of teeth
and looking at the mirror
and washing the face
shaving and combing the hair
and talking to oneself

nothing makes us that happy
not money, not honor, no laurel leaves on the head
not a number of unfaithful lovers
or plastic friends,

this makes us happy,
another one 'bites the dust' another lousy thinker
writes,
another mouth opens, another ear breaks,
another one comes to you and says

is my poem good enough?
to you, another one belongs, this non-exclusive club
of breathers, of
'lunatics' of persistent lovers
junked most of the times
and yet lovelier still
the second, the third time,
the nth time
around.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Throats Are Like Boats With Leaks
	here are places
where we are not supposed to be
but we found ourselves there
stuck like a nail,

(and there is no hammer)
	here are situations where we
speak so loudly
complaining, but we are never heard
where we dance
but we are not really happy
where we have more than enough
but which we just keep

(our throats are like boats
with leaks)

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Time Together....

there are times
when you have nothing
to say really,

not only that
there are times when we are
so inconsistent with
what we are saying such
that we do not really
understand what we are
doing

this is our time
together. we have nothing
to do anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Truths

i
they were first
the baby's hands opening
slowly as fingers

ii
God has a fan that
He spreads open
to display

iii
then he closes it
all fingers as one folded
fan

iv
it is us
all truths kept back
to the Hands of God
so lovingly kept
back to its
proper place

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Two Souls

my soul is as distant as the seven oceans
to yours

what long bridge shall we make
to connect them?

the silent patient bridges of time
eons and eons
till your ghostly fingers touch mine?

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Vendor Friends

So we keep on writing and writing or working and working, or playing and playing
we think we have the fun
or even the dedication to art and living

how foolish have we become

someone rakes the money. someone takes the income from the sweat of our soul. someone reaps the fruits of our labor.
as we grieve. someone is laughing.
as we sink our eyes down to the bottom of our lamentations someone out there sells the stories, sells the flowers,
sells us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Very Own Cruelties

Our cruelties lie
sometime in asserting the truth

we say
no matter what
no matter who
whatever

it was in my silent assertion
of the truth of
who i am and was

my words speak something else
my thoughts run in another direction

my actions are black horses
racing against the white ones in the same chariot
of fire and ice

you are crying in my air balloon
as i look at the hills and the plains
as i touch blue clouds
as i fly away like a bird away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Very Own Humanity....

...and this i keep
on thinking, how the moon keeps
faith in its light in the night,
how the sun keeps shining on
the days of our lives,
how the waters keep their cool,
how the mountains keep
their pride
how cliffs and waterfalls
keep the amazement,

and so must we in our thinking
abilities,
our rationality, our very own
humanity, which exclusively belongs
to us,

unless you waive it, detach yourself,
from the truth of our innate goodness,
unless you join the dogs and get the
fleas,
unless you go with the the buffaloes
waddles in mud,
join the pack of wolves
indulge in bestiality, but

this you must keep in mind,
no matter what, you are always human
and deep inside you is that voice
which calls your name,
as sweet as you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Very Own Sounds....

we are but one of those raindrops
when we listen to how we sound
we always refer to the cacophony
of the massive rain and we do not

really figure out clearly the sound of
ourselves and when we describe it
we say we are the cicadas singing
during summer nights blending with

the sighs of the dry leaves and with
the wind we tell them that we are bleeding
but that soon we shall be healed and
what sings most in their silence are

the scars, No longer threatened no longer
scared.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Very Own Story

our ways meet
and then we fuse as
on highway of
engagement letting in
those which are huge
and heavy
until we realize that
all these are too much
like rain overflowing
a waterway,
we do not like the sound
of horns
and blasts of boats
passing
we soon narrow down
until we part
at the junction of our
separate beliefs
we end in a horizon
blind to the mists.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Way At Giving Poetry A Contemporary Name

poetry is just a flow of the river, taking away what is floating there
everything, from the heart to the vastness of the sea,
you get carried, not just by the substance of the river in-itself,
but also of the sound of the flow so uniquely yours, unequaled even
by the perfection of those who were here ahead of you,

you get carried away, you become the river itself, the leaf, the sand,
the bubble, the fish, the twigs, the paper boat, the shadow of the clouds
the mirror of the sky, clear so clear, murky and so murky, you flow
to be one with the sea, the horizon, you become more and less,
you get carried away both with the bulk and the bulge and the budge,
you get carried away, you lose yourself with the wind, you hear all the
sounds, you talk and walk, and then you feel the happiness of the earth
and the sky and the whole of the galaxy.

There exists no borders of time. It is all space. Bliss.
There are no lessons, not even visions, there is only the universal lull.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Way Of Concealing Reality With The Use Of Words...

it was useless
nothing is learned
nothing is given
nothing is taken back

i was only using words
is that hard to understand?

it is
it has become even harder to grasp

words conceal
and reality is no longer what it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Wish......

we do not wish to write the best poem
we only write what we feel for the moment
we do not compete for any metaphor
we have nothing to exaggerate
we are not proud of our misfortunes
we never sanction our own misdemeanors
here we only express and if we have fun
then that is only consequential.

RIC S. BASTASA
Our Years

the years make us familiar
it is the contempt that brings us closer
to the extent of disrespect

as i am eating my meal
you cut your fingernail
on the table
but i do not mind
precisely my thoughts are flying
like birds away
from you
the tunnel of silence without light
visible at the end

you must wonder
why my words are getting nil
and i have too
become choosy on what to say

i still have respect
for myself and will not be swayed
at telling you
the truth of how those years have
expunged
what bad taste is there
for lips which have nothing to offer
for bodies that are warm
yet devoid of love
and meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Out Of 15 Only Two

as i told you
it is the survival of the fittest
but there is no one to blame
for your exclusion

there is also luck
the sister of chance

you prayed but it
was not heard
heaven is too far
perhaps it has closed
its ears
to your pleas

there are no unheard prayers
there are only those which cannot be granted
because they are not
good for you
the gods know better
we are weaker

there are seasons
some flowers do not bloom for this month
they wait
others compromise only
on some years
not all trees bear fruit in November
there is such word
as waiting

do not give up
try again
persist and be patient
soon your time shall come
it is not a lie....
Out Of Touch....!

ouch! ouch! ouch!

the guy is out of touch.
lacking in focus
he kissed the wrong girl
and sleep with her
in the wrong couch.

now he likes being
out of touch again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There

out there
you find sunshine
it will make a tan
out of your fair skin
out there the sea
it has a song for you
the breeze thaws
what is frozen in you
out there
is another person
waiting for your kiss
out there
another heart beats
for you
out there
a tight bud waits
for your touch
so it may bloom
a flower
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There (4)

look into the
galaxy

find comfort
into the wide space

why worry so much?
ah, there is no you,

in there, there is no
us, there is nothing in

there, there is
only the idea

bursting and then
the intolerable silence

of our existence, so
why worry?

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There I Shall Meet You Then

out there
after all these things are over
there are no more wrongs
there are no more rights
out there
we have no names

i shall meet you then.

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There In That Blue Ocean Seen From Here
Shadows Of Ships Are Sailing

dthis morning
the fog is still hugging
the trees

slowly the sun peeps out
from the breasts of
two hills
in this tiny village far
from the city

i am singing a love song
a little mix
of sweet and sour
a tinge of bitterness
a vast universe
lies here
beyond me a horizon
of loneliness

out there
in that blue ocean seen
from here
shadows of ships are sailing

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Out There In The Brightness Of Light

Ang akong pagdawat nga ikaw
wala na
mao ang lamdag nga naghatag
og hulma sa mga butang makita.
Sulod sa hamugaway nga lawak
sa akong alimpatakan

in accepting that you are no longer
mine
you provided me with the shapes
and molds of
things that i
for the first time
did not see
inside the spacious room of my mind
i waited for the
morning light and when my
eyes were filled with
so much light
all the shadows
finally departed
for
they cannot withstand
the profuse light
that i now have

then from here
i will see you again
with this brightness
in that place
where we can never
be parted

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There Is Space

Sometimes I envy what is out there
So much space
I can always get some and smell
A brand new day
And live there for a while

It is not my place however
It is too big it is too wide for me
Coping up will be hard
I was born in a nook
Mother liked the nook for me
We are tight in there
Nobody else
What we wanted is nobody else
Between us

I like it here I live here
Go away

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There, A Mishap

out there is a crowd of people
motorcars stop and the blinking of the ambulance
look like the eyes of a frightened child,

two motorbikes collide at top speed
two bodies lie bloody on the road
pictures are taken
no one touches the placement of the broken glass
the stains of blood on the leather seat

another mishap
another realization that death comes
when you least expect it

i lock the door of the car that i am driving
i swear i do not want to have any involvement in this
i take speed and dissolve in the dark distance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Out There........

when you utter
the word bird you put the bird in prison

do not say something that puts
something in its cell

it is thoroughly unfair
to yourself

who bored, in those years,
finds nothing new in another bird

your hands feel the rushing of the water
cool, refreshing, passing,

nothing is held forever
it is, and will always be,

somewhere,
sometime, else-wise,
out there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Outcast

do not wait to be told
to step out
because there is no place
for you inside
this circle

and be not sad
there is more space
outside the circle
and many
are waiting
to be with you

who needs
exclusivity anyway?

RIC S. BASTASA
Outflow

as you walk
you already think of the words
putting colors to the letters
giving them scents
and shapes and
images

your only direction

home and
poetry

then you lock the
door.

RIC S. BASTASA
Outpouring

an out pour is not a prison
 cell, it is rain
 it falls and scatters and
 spreads and
 all those who worship it
 got wet and caught and
 some run while some merely stay
 and take their blessing

walking, singing, enjoying
the outpouring
of the
night rain outside the train
of feelings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Outside And Inside

this early morning
the rains are raging
outside is a rampage of
blown leaves and trees
you are afraid may
finally be uprooted

in the room
the brown dog sleeps
beside a wooden wall
on the floor

the glass doors
& windows are closed
the silence reigns

inside you begin
on another journey
you began last night
on some short breaths
until you think
you had a nice sleep

inside there is something
that rages
it is not the wind or the rain
it is something else
that you want to know
more & more

RIC S. BASTASA
what is seen outside
is the thick covering
a la crocodile skin at
the Ma-a Park,
the people watch without
anticipating much of
this anger,
the man pokes with a pole
the long mouth
and water splashed
from the big tail
throwing the weight
to as much as
a thousand kilograms

no one imagines
the anger of the imprisoned
ones,
no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
outside is the silence of the crocodile
in the river of life
ready to eat the one who shouts he is free

inside is the howling dog
day and night
seeing ghosts and strangers

does it really matter then
whether this being is outside or inside the circle of life

you call it a merry-go-round
as though this world is a carnival
in truth it isn't

i am not talking about love
the love that burns and then fades out
i am not talking about society
the rules of acceptability

it is something else
it is greater i know it is greater that what you usually think

it is inside the circle of my heart
inside this body
you know it i know it

but we can never tell
it does not really matter now

the sea is calm tonight
you are beside me
i touch your face
and we are not talking anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Outside Is A Bright Day Which Serves No Purpose At All......

the house help takes refuge
on the hip hop music as the old man
his master sleeps after so much ranting
why he is abandoned

it is Sunday and Tom Jones songs
are played over the radio
where the old woman listens trying to
remember what youth was

the children and grand children
have already lives of their own
and always finding no time to this
place where they all come from

outside is a bright day which serves
no purpose at all......

RIC S. BASTASA
Outside The Orbit

the galaxy is too big
and planets do not really care
and stars too
that glitter but
indifferently

out of orbit
a planetoid goes free willy
another uncertainty

soundlessly trekking
in the pursuit of its own space

RIC S. BASTASA
do you remember it?
the rain, it was outside us when we parted
the boat left a furrow on the sea
and the waves ran until everything was calm
and then i went inside a room
the windows all glass
the drapes dusty
and the tables and chairs so cold
like our feelings
and then outside the rain began to fall
when you left
i just watched the dissipation
just that
things happened and we let them be
we were not the masters of our fate
the stars write their lines
and they take the course
of the journey
we followed suit without a single question

RIC S. BASTASA
Outsider

i had it once
walking with a friend
meeting his lover
along this crowded
alley to the mall
then, they look
at each other
with dreamy eyes
hold hands,
sit together on
a chair on a round
table and they
speak their own language
and speak some more
on anything
sweet nothings

i become
non-existent
i have become
to them the perfect
outsider

love the circle
that takes them
exclusively in
where everybody
are outsiders
mindlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
Overcoming A Writer's Block

Stretch!
If you can't stand up,
stretch as many muscle groups
as possible while
staying seated.

Try tensing and
releasing various
muscle groups.
Starting from your toes,
tense up for perhaps
five to ten seconds
and then let go.

Relax and
then go on to
another muscle group.

Breathe deeply.
Close your eyes;
then,
fill your chest cavity
slowly by taking
four of five short deep breaths.

Hold each breath
until it hurts,
and then let it
out slowly.

Use a calming word
or mental image
to focus on while relaxing.

If you choose a word,
be careful not
to use an imperative.
Don't command
yourself to
'Calm down!'

or 'Relax!'

RIC S. BASTASA
Overcoming The Pains Of Reading Too Much

when the eyes ache
i see camels on a journey to a long desert at night time

the aches are but temporary
a contrary thought that wants the pleasure of the dumb
it shies away from the pages of a book
desert sands at noontime
skulls of horses and skeletons of
some brave Bedouins
losing everything for the love
of the unknown
oasis,

i battle for more air in my lungs
as simple as a series of sighs and deep breaths
a roomful of
fresh air from the window of trees

then the sign of the triumphant flag is sounded
at the temple of ivory
these eyes are clear ponds now
not a fish lives here
it is a diamond with many faces
a winning of psychiatric wars
a proclamation of sanity regained after too much struggle for
the purity of intentions

the world is calm
there are no ripples of doubt now
pain is a mathematical problem that you have solved
a formula is found and like the rest of these eurekas
comes now the
explosion, a big explosion,

this time everyone is saved
it is not what you think, you have been honestly suspicious
now, shout.
Overflowing

The glass you have in your hand
Overflowing juice
On the white mantel

You laugh at me
I am filled with envy

And then you notice
The mess
Of this overflowing madness

You want to make things
Clean again
You take the excess
And throw them away

You rub it with rags
The stains are there and
You regret
These matters of
What you do not need

I wait
And inside me I too laugh
You could have given things away
Throw them all

If you only ask me
That was what I did when I was young
And too hardheaded

I’ve known what overflowing madness is
Once, twice, thrice
Almost I was destroyed
And I did the throwing before it was dark
And it was not too late
And I had no regrets
Overflowing Manifestations

the years beyond our fingers
have taught us
more than what we can imagine
piercing walls
breaking ceilings

the windows are amazed
the stairs disassemble
and walk as feet

who can estimate the
emptiness of the container?
what amount of voluminous
sighs can it contain?

has anybody underestimated
man's nearness to his God?

has anybody explained the
contagion of divinity?

who is the doubter? who is
the man who was never thrown
into the oblivion of doubt?

we have evolved we have conquered
we have overshot this meteor existence

the silence is solid
the depth is never told

we are through with the test of
the circus
we have changed costumes
we are in this reality now

of a fantasy beyond fantasies
a tiny light rising from the slits
of the blinding expectations
we ourselves are amazed
we are beyond containment

the overflowing grace manifests in the songs
that our journeys are singing to the nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
Overheard From A Caller Inside An Internet Cafe (Can There Be Something Poetic In This?)

......(can't hear it)

on monday?
oh i can have it on tuesday?
....
yeah i like to meet you
....
maybe your parents will be angry?
.....
that is very loud i can hear you
ha ha
there is some music

ok
i think i better text you
yeah i can hear
(noises)
yes huh
...
so you're in the house now
...
i see, ok, ok
so i don't want you be travelling...

....
can i call you tomorrow morning? what time do you want me to call you?

...
yeah, i'll send you text messages
...
nice to hear you again...

ok
... i call you tomorrow, .. goodnight.. bye bye
ok i call you again tomorrow.
Overheard From A Rabbit

It is nice to be a turtle sometimes
slow and sure and humble and little
and be the river's well sought friend.

it must be interesting how it feels
when i carry my house
on my back without anyone talking
about it

RIC S. BASTASA
Overrating

love is always overrated
you tell the emoting ones

because you have also
overrated
politics
you destroy families and move on to
other places of
rebellion

it is a matter of
point of view

for one whose life depends
on whether he is loved
love will always be
overrated
in such a way that if love fails
the whole world
falls upon his shoulders and
breaks him
down into smashed
pieces
fragmented self
looking for
wholeness

same with politics and
adoptions of social causes

one immerses
oneself deep into a world
that has no hope for change

the rich always winning
the poor dumped
into the chasms of
a series of deaths
life is the one that is always
underrated

nature does too in one blink of an eye
bodies over bodies
buried over rotting bodies
and the world that cannot take the stinking
situation
burns all these
to erase it also
in one blink

we like a world that is green
well covered canopy of green trees
wrapped with vines

blue skies
fresh air
smooth seas
rolling mountains
singing springs
winding rivers
rainbow colored birds

but always we do the reverse of what we really wish for

trees are cut
virgin forests raped
white sands and blue seas tainted
with our own
trashy way of doing things

drastic destruction
unthinkable murder of nature
bleeding earth
crying heavens
flooding plains
breaking dams
bleeding peace
a bloody world.
Overstaying

one who overstays
finally can be shamefully
evicted

the thick faced woman
is laughing on the faces of
angry people

she is teasing a
revolution
for her own pleasure

RIC S. BASTASA
Overture

the sea breeze sings the first note
our faces some blank pages
the post stands still
i go near you and start an overture
as simple as hello
and then we keep the song singing
upon its own lyrics and notes
the theme of course, we all know

solitude transforming itself into bliss
and when we part i shall tell myself
oh, there are so many things i miss
like joy, and peace and happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Overused....

he would love you
until the roof of the earth
falls to the ground
until all the stars are dead
until all the sands of the shores
shall have vanished from the
sea until all the oceans have
dried until everything has
become a desert...old crap.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ows!

i don't really believe
in people who criticize
much
they don't know really
how to do
it
that's why
they do what they do
unless
they put up
i think they must shut up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ows, You Opted To Be Free?

hmm, ok after a careful analysis i believe you.

your option to be free remains to be an option.
open ended and just like any open ended question it needs a very serious presumption:

you know what prison was.

and you opted. you exercised an option.
i guess you were free from the very beginning, otherwise how can you ever have that option to be free.

explain within
24 hours, why are you free

RIC S. BASTASA
Oxymorons For Her...

someday
i will tell you
about
happiness
and
freedom

for now i have
a chain of
flowers for your
hair

or a swarm of bees
from my
hands

could be a beautiful
burden on
your head

or
a danger which you
have to face
and yet
if you are triumphant
at the end

such sweetness you
can taste
and perhaps not
endure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ozy...

the fact Ozy is that you are dead
and no one remembers you

what remains of you is the usual sound
of the vast desert
bubbling on too many
consonants

you hint you were once a king
and built the biggest empire

they won't believe you Ozy
it was too remote
and time wraps everything Ozy
like how the spider
wraps and eats what it catches
by its slender
hands

Ozy you're cool.

i mean you are as cold as the snowflake
that lands on my skin
and in an instant melts
just like the rest Ozy,
&
me included

our destination will always be
that name of the
forgotten train station

but who knows if by chance
we reach
the promises destination

that on the other hand there is such thing
as an afterlife
the promises of forevermore.

RIC S. BASTASA
PLEASURE

Pink nipples and
Cow’s milk on my table
On my bed
Your pink nakedness
Spread
Dipped
In the grassy coolness
Beneath a gray, open space

I touch your pubic softness
With my jitters
I breathe in the smell
Of your earth
I exhale caress
Like my tongue
Dripping words
In your ears

I lay back
My legs spread
Towards the moon

It is the night of my life
And I shall long for you always
I am burdened
But your weight
Shall smash me into
Meteors of my galaxy
And I shall be light
Piercing into your darkness
The darkness
That I now so loved

I am still
I can quiver
To this night of loving
And I must not stop
To this undying
It is this
When our bodies
When our two bodies fit
Into the hollowness
Of our solitude

I shall have a soul shaped
Into hands
Putting a red rose
Between your lips
And giving it longer life
I dampen it with
My truths
The fearful dryness
Shall be lost in the wells
And the rivers that won’t dry

My hands shall map
The secret paths of your body
Your lines shall melt me
Your touch
Shall cause the rapture
Of my stillness
To an endless space
Of our universe

I ask how
The cruelties of this earth
Shall conceal the sweet contours

Of this pleasure
A small world of the
Damp, wet, and gray,
Of the heat, the dripping and
The force and softness
Entwined in the oneness of
Irony and even disbelief
That I that I can make
This world
Through closed eyes
In such a closed space
Yet bursting into
An infinite openness
The silence of a thousand
Quivers
Savor, savor, savor, the pleasures
Of my small world
Unshared by the multitude
The crowd unthinking
As it is only you
I care
I worship

I kept inside
Unshared by all
My little pleasure
Yet encompassing my whole universe

Unfathomed, unscaled,
But now totally known
By me
By you alone

And words
Find no space
To justify their existence,

Ahhhhhhhh, -

RIC S. BASTASA
in the same manner
i never expect you to take me
to you,
lighten my load
and please me
with your ways
swan-like and
peacock colors
there is the solitude of
your pond
the pale blue in your
clouds
there is the reality
of the croaking of your
frogs
the imaginary place
has welcomed me
like i am a part of you
since
no regrets i take
you as you take me
in this marriage
of our arts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paabota Lang Puhon...

kay dili pa gyod
panahon
maong dili pa nimo
maangkon

ang hilaw nga mangga
sama sa hilaw pod
nga bayabas
moabot ang panahon
sa ilang pagkahinog
dayog pangahulog

ang adlaw mosalop
ang dagat mahunas
ang mga dahon malaya
ang dilaab moundang

walay pagdaogdaog nga
molungtad
sama sab sa kalipay og
kalamposan

moabot ra ang panahon
paabota lang puhon

RIC S. BASTASA
Paaboton Ko Ang Pag-Abot Sa Banag-Banag

paaboton ko ang pag-abot sa banag-banag
sa akong kaumahan
bisan pa ug lubog na ang akong panglantaw

mga luha nga mobaha sa akong aping
motumpag ug moanod sa akong mga pangandoy

ihapon ko ang akong paghanggab sa hangin
tigumon ko ang akong kusog
sa pakigbisog sa adlaw

paaboton ko ang pag-abot sa banag-banag
andam na ako
nga makigbisog sa adlaw

ako ang kaadlawon andam na ako sa akong pagkamatay
andam na ako nga magpaabot unya sa akong pagkabanhaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Pacific

i do not belong to anyone
nor to
any place

i am always unattached
not because of
fear
that i may weep and wallow in grief
when i am finally detached
like an umbilical cord
cut and blood flows like
water in the faucet

i am no
bark to a tree
or leaf to
a stalk

i am no flower
that blooms one day
and wilt
upon the setting sun

you must understand
i like it here inside my heart

i am alone
in this secret dwelling
peaceful and calm
like
the pacific ocean
in a saucer
of white porcelain

i say loneliness is not
my cup of tea

i am my self's best friend
and we can both take a walk and talk
all night long
without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Pacman's Lesson....

perhaps
he had taught you
a lesson on
how to win a fight

sometimes
you just have to run
and run

as a mode of a defensive
stance

and by running away
from an aggressive
enemy

you win
and this they cannot
accept

but it has
become a fact: the runner
has become
the new winner

RIC S. BASTASA
Paco De Lucia In Guitar Strings

the guitar strings of paco de lucia
are not new to me
the sound of his spanish guitar
strumming on my mind
they were with me
in my childhood
with my friends
we get a smooth
long and strong
coconut palm
take it on top
of a hill
covered with green
carabao grass
and we ride
on the palm
slide it
on the hill
and

yehey
yehehey
yehey yehey

we laugh
so hard
my little
brown friends
that
the foreign
white visitors
call monkeys

we take
the coconut palm
on top of the hill
we ride on it
and we slide
on the
hill
green
with
carabao grass
grass

yehey
yehehey
yehey

we tumble
and roll
when we
reach the
foot of the hill
covered with
green
carabao grass
we
crash

there may
be some bruises
on our arms
and
legs
but we
laugh
we enjoy
the sliding
the falling
the crashing
on the green
green
carabao grass
we
crash

yehey
yehehey
yehehey

we are
the happy
little brown
monkeys

yehey
yehehehey
yehey

we are
happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pag-Abot Sa Mga Panganod

sa pag-abot sa mga panganod
sa ibabaw sa atop
sa akong mga panglantaw
dili ko na ilarawan pa ang kasubo
ug dili na ako mamati
sa ilang mga pagbakhao aron
isugid ug imantala ko kini kanimo

dili ko na lantawon unya puhon
ang pagbaha sa kasakit

hapit na mahilis ang akong mga mata
ug akong mga kamot ug mga tiil buot nang
mokaratil ug dagan palayo kanako

panahon na sa pagbag-o
pagalikayan na nako ang pagbaguod,
ang pag-aginod ug pag-agulo
sa kagahapon apil na ang karon

panahon na ang paglabay
sa mga dahon sa kahiubos
nga hagbay rang nalaya
sunugon ko kini aron ang aso
maoy mosigilon sa ginoo

panahon na ang pagkuyog ko sa kalipay
bisag kini lumalabay

usbon ko na ang tanan
mokuyog ko sa mga kahoy
sa paggitib sa ilang mga sanga
sa ilang tukmang panahon

moadto ako sa luyo sa dag-om
nga panganod sa atop sa akong
huna-huna ug molipot
didto diin ang kahayag sa adlaw
alang kanatong tanan
mukuyog ba ikaw kanako?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pag-Abot Sa Saktong Panahon

(kinamote nga pagbinisaya sa balak ni Derek Walcott, "Love after love")

Moabot ang panahon
Diin, sa tumang kasadya,
Imong sugaton ang pag-abot sa imong kaugalingon
Sa imong pultahan, sa imong samin,
Ug kamong duha magpahiyom sa inyong panagkita.

Moingon siya, Lingkod. Kaon.
Imong na usab nga higugmaon ang estranghero
Nga mao ra pud baya ikaw.
Tagayan sa n og pan. Ibalik ang imong kasingkasing
Sa imong kaugalingon, sa estranghero
Nga nagmahal kanimo

Sa tibuok nimong kinabuhi, nga imong gisalikway
Tungod sa laing tawo, siya kinasingkasing nga nakighimamat kanimo
Kuhaa ang mga sulat sa kabinet,

Ang mga larawan, ang mga sulat sa kahiubos.
Paniti ang imong dagway sa samin
Lingkod. Pagpista sa imong kinabuhi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagamyanay Ta

Pagamyanay ta.
Akoy sugod: tamsi.
Ikaw sunod: ulod.

Di ba gikaon sa tamsi ang ulod?
Pildi ko. Ikaw na pod: iring
Pildi ka kay ang ako lusa-
Lusa sa iring nga kutoon.

Taym sa, naa bay kuto
Ang imong iring? Pildi ka,
kay walay iring nga kutoon
Basin ang iro-
Pwede kining pulgason.
Basin tungaw.

Ikaw siguro-
Ang imong itlog gitungaw
Kay nag-iring-iring mo ni inday dapit
Sa kasagingan nga may lam-aw

Undang ta. Pwede ba padak-anay
Na lang ta’g kasing-kasing?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pag-Ayo Og Pagtambal

Hawid sa sidsid
Sa saya sa Ginoo.

Kinsa ba ang
Naghikap kanako?

Tabon sa panyo
Ni Veronica

Diin milakra
Ang nawong sa milagro

Iyubit lang ang pulong
Ug mamaayo ako

Lapok sa sapa
Ipaghid sa mga

Mata nga dugay
Nang nabuta.

Ilabay ang baston
Ug dagan pauli

Sa inyong balay.
Ayaw gyod panugilon

Mao kana ang imong
Balaanon nga tugon.

Sulod sa pultahan
Sa Chong Hua

Hikap sa tiil sa rebulto
Ni Birhen Maria

Sinaw ang estatuwa ug
Humot ang sampaguita
Milabay ang patay
Pinutos og habol

Manguros ka. Kadugay ba
Sa gipaabot nga pagpahulay?

RIC S. BASTASA
topsy-turvy world

a leaf flies
on a submerged sky:

a clear pond

dahong napalid
sa naunlod nga langit
diha sa lam-aw

Tapsiturbi

Ayaw palihug
Isul-ob ang akong
Brief
Kay basa pa kana
Nganong nabutang
Man kana sa imong
Imong bag?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagbiya (Departure)

people are moving
moving out
sīging balhin ang mga tawo
palayo

there is always
departure
anāa kanunay
ang pagbiya

the melancholic breath
of deserted houses
pollutes
the seaport

ang masulub-on nga gininhawa
sa mga balay nga gihawaan
nakahugaw
sa mga pantalan

a case of hands
still waving
is shipped
to another shore

ang sudlanan sa mga kamot
nga nagbabay pa
gidala sa barko
paingon sa laing lapyahan

tears are bottled
and frozen
in hearts

gibotelya ang mga luha
ug gipagahi
sa kasingkasing

old friends
have no friends
to go to

ang mga amigo kaniadto
wala nay mga amigo
nga pagaadtoan

people prepare
to forget
nangandam ang mga tawo
sa paghikalimot

RIC S. BASTASA
didto ko sa punto
diin gipangsulat na niya
ang mga pagpangayog
pasaylo
pasalamat
paghandom
panamilit sa iyang
mga minahal
pila ka oras ayha
na siya
pusilon

apil pod tong
wala tugti sa mga
guardia sibil
nga siya sa makausa pa
gakson na unta
sa iyang tiguwang nga
inahan

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghawan...

gisulayan na nako ang paghangop sa mga yano lamang wala na ang bulak nga atua sa florera gani ang tubig didto natunga naman seguro tungod sa kainit sa panahon karon

gipatangtang na nako ang kurtina nga seda nga puti nga morag putong ni mama ang panapton kaniadto

gusto nako nga hawanan una ang tanan pati na gani ang lamisa nga gikan sa kahoy nga nangka nga tinanom ni tatay sa bata pa siya apil na usab ang mga bangko didto sa tungatunga sa balay

ang akong lawak nahimong usa ka panigahan nga walay sulod ang gitakos karon mao ang hangin nga tumbas sa kahaw-ang nga gibati sa dughan,

ang mga yano ang mga paghaw-as ang ubang gipanglabay nga wala na alisd, sama nianing tanan mao ang sinugdanan aron sa ikaduhang hugna dawaton ko ang kinabuhi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghilom

sakto na kanako
ang dagat
diha sa tingbagyo
ang mga balod
ang pag-awas
ang lunop
ang pagbalikbalik
ang kusog nga hangin
ang balay nga
nahaw-as ang bata nga
nawala
ang nanay nga naghilak
ang tatay nga walay nahimo
ang manghod nga nagsugod na
usab pagdula
balik didto sa nataran dapit
sa taboan

domingo karon
daghang tawo daghang baligya
lapok ang dalan
kusog ang ulan

sakto na
palihog. bisag usa ka pulong gikan nimo.
ayaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghimo Ug Banig

mat weaver, english ka na sa manghimoay ug banig
sa amoa ang tawag ana niya
tiglala ug banig
pwede buli puede pud kanang mas humok pa
kalimot kos ngan
apan actually tanan nga dahon basta humok lang pwedeng
mahimong banig
ang importante lamang nga kabalo molala ang tawo
pwede ganing maghimo ug
sanina, kabalo kas barong gikan sa pinya, jusi ang tawag niini

si papa kabalo maghimo ug banig
ug among silingan nga is asion, mas kabalo mohimo dili lamang banig
apil pa gani ang buyot (kanang sudlanan sa humay)
ug pati pa ang kalo

imbitahon ni papa si asion ug siya na ang magdala sa buli
aron maghimo ug banig, buyot ug kalo
libre ang pamahaw ug paniudto apil na ang sweldo
sa tibook adlaw
moplastar silang duha sa among kamalig nga ang atop nipa
bugnaw sa ilalom sa dakong kahoy nga kaimito
ug dayon patingog sa radyo mamati sa mga drama
kadtong kabahin ni saturno
kadtong estorya ni flora del cielo,
oi, kabalo sab ka, kadtong kabahin ni maria flor de luna

dayon maghimo sila ug koter, mag-inom, mangatawa,
samtang maglala sa banig
inser diri inser didto sa mga pinutol ug pinauga na
nga mga dahon sa buli

bata pa ako, ug kadugay na sa panahon,
namatay na si asion sa iyang katigulangon
namatay na si papa sa 'sagpa sa dautang hangin'

hataas nga estorya ug ako na lang kining mub-on
naglala silag banig
ug makita mo ang ilang agi, ang kalapad sa mga banig,
ang kolor sa mga tina niini,
ug ang kabugnaw niini
ug samtang namati silang asion ug papa sa drama
ako nagalantaw kanila
nahikutulog sud sa ilang mga banig
kaniadtong panahon

malinawon sila, bibo, malipayon sila, sa paglala sa banig
mora silag mga mambabalak
naghimo sa ilang mga balak,

morag banig ang tanan, atong haguan, ug unta pagkahuman
atong makatulgan
ug sa atong halawom nga pagkahinanok
magdamgo kitang tanan

pagkaanindot gayod unta

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghubad Sa Balak Ni Candice # 10

a chasm in time
buried in my thoughts-
a leaf sinking deeper and
deeper...in the pond

Liki sa panahon

Nahulog nga dahon
Sa champaca
Mitusak sa nawong
Sa linaw nga
sapa

RIC S. BASTASA
procrastinating

□

It's autumn now
feeling guilty...
my old rusty bike

padugaydugay

otomna
giltiko
natay-an akong bayk

nagtinapulan

tinghulog sa dahon
sagbot sa nataran
kapoy ug panilhig

pagdikidiki

nangahulog na ang mga dahon
gabaan kaha ko?
kataya sa akong bisiklita

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghubad Sa Balak Ni Candice # 8

dazzled
□
after few poems...
outside, looking for the stars
lost in city lights

humag pila ka balak
migawas, tan-aw sa mga bitoon
nawagtang sa mga sugang tagasyudad

Human sa usa ka balak

Mipasiplat ang mata
Sa mga nahilis
Nga bitoon sa langit
nangopya

RIC S. BASTASA
Aging

A calm afternoon
Sudden wind touching the pond
Wrinkling reflection

Agi

Kalmado nga japon
Kalit nga hanging mitats sa pond’s cream
Kunitz nga samin

(pwede pud)

Hapon nga kalmado
Kalit nga nagtsansing ang hangin sa sapa
Nangunot na saon na lang

RIC S. BASTASA
Duality

A gloomy wintry night
Standing between two lamp posts
My pair of shadows

Four wheel drive

Wala na sa Mindanao
Nagtindog sa tunga sa meralco
Ang gunting niyang anino

RIC S. BASTASA
Paghubad Sa Balak Ni Candice #4

peril of vanity

sunbathing for hours-
her shadow shifted

(dapat)

adlaw naligo sa pila ka oras
ang iyang anino mibalhin ug kurso

(recommended haiku form)

sunbathing for hours
her shadow shifting

Peril sa baniti

Nagbulad sa adlaw
Midagan ang anino

alpiril sa baliti

nagpauraray lang sa adlaw
na warrant of arrest na!

RIC S. BASTASA
spectral

stepping out of the hot shower-
...a ghostly
reflection

wakwak

Bag-ong mata
Nakita ang iyang nawon
Sa tubig sa baso
Nahimutang ang pustiso

kalag

paggawas sa banyo
...iyang naaninag
ang kalag

RIC S. BASTASA
topsy-turvy world

a leaf flies
on a submerged sky:
a clear pond

Tapsiturbiworld

Nagleaving on a jetplane
Ang Honda
Sa sapang na-facial

RIC S. BASTASA
insouciant
swelling up river
wild ducks wander down the road
vehicles swerving

mihubag nga suba
badlongon nga pato sa karsada
mga auto nalipat

Nahubag nga suba

Gihapuhap sa mga
Tiil sa pato
Ug sa iyang
Upat ka liwat

RIC S. BASTASA
Surrogate

no sunset today...
I'm redirecting my gaze
to bright autumn leaves

(komedya lang ha)

kay wala ka man

kay wala ka man lamang karon sanseta ka
akong ibalhin ang akong mga lantaw
sa gidauban nga mga otomlebs

(mas binuang ni)

Gate ni zorro

Way sunset karon
Ibalhin ang akong giz
Sa gagilak nga mga dahon (nya kay wa may autumn sa sta catalina, iblanko lang nako ha?)

RIC S. BASTASA


Pag-Inosara

matun-an mo ra ang
kaanindot sa pag-inosara

mabantayan mo na ang
kaanyag sa kinaiyahan

mabati mo ang paglupad sa
pako sa salampati

ang ungad sa simod sa
malipayon nga anay

ang pagkatulog sa itoy
tupad sa iyang inahan

ang panaw sa dahon diha
sa sulog sa sapa sa kahilom

RIC S. BASTASA
unsang orasa na ba? maoy pangutana sa mga bintana diha sa mga silya nga atong gilingkoran, apan ikaw nga karon pa lamang miabot sa america wala gayod magpapugong sa imong gibati. unsang orasaha na ba? mibalos og pangutana ang mga bungbong diha sa mga bintana nga gusto na nga manirado, apan ikaw nagsugid pa gihapon nga didto sa sulod sa pultahan sa mcdonald's ikaw natulog kay wala ka nay kapuy-an didto sa chicago, ug wala ka na gani kwarta. nghuy-ab ang mga kurina ug ang mga alugnan diha sa sofa nahikatulog na, apan ikaw sa imong dakong kahiubos sa america, nagpadayon sa tinuod nga panghitabo dihang ikaw nagbantay og mga tigulang nga milabay nimo og baso dihang ikaw nawad-an na sa paglaom. bug-at na kaayo ang akong mga mata. nangahapla na ang akong mga pilok. wala na ako kasabot sa imong mga gisugilon, sa imong lalom kaayo nga kaguol, diin ako maayong pagkahulog sama sa usa ka lalom kaayong dagat. gusto lang nakong matulog, apan ikaw nagsulti nga gusto nang mamatay, moambak sa usa ka tuay nga habog kaayo. wala akoy labot kang bisan kinsa. wala akoy labot kanimo. gusto lang nakong matulog kay ako gikapoy na og pamati sa mga kagul-anan sa ubang tawo nga walay hunong sa pagyawit. gusto nako nga moundang ka na, gusto na nakong magdamgo. palihog, gihangyo ko ikaw, nga atong kutloon ang mga bunga sa kahilom, sungkiton ta ang iyang mga dahon, ug atong ihapnig sa atong katre. palihog lang, mangatulog na kita. ay, kasakit! wala ka ba laayi anang kangitngit?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagkalinaw Sa Baybayon Karon

Pagkalinaw sa baybayon
Morag nanay nako nga walay kibo
Naglantaw sa unahan
Naglingkod sa gamay nga
Bangko sa among
Payag

Sa unahan adunay dako nga
Balay
Pula ang gate nga puthaw
Adunay tatay
Nga dako ug lawas
Hubo ang ibabaw
Nagdala ug tukog
Gadali morag adunay
Gigukod
Gitawgan ang iyang
Anak nga
gwapito nakigdula
Sa akong manghod
Sa among
Nataran

Nalisang ang bata
Gibunalan sa
Tukog sa lubi
Ang iyang tiil
Dagan pauli
Sa ila
Human sa kusog
Nga hampak
Sa nagukod
Nga amahan
Nga dako ug lawas
Ug hubo ang ibabaw

Sayang
Pagkamalinawon
Gayod unta
Sa dagat
Sa sayo
Sa kabunyagon

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagkamalinawon Gyod Unta Sa Dagat

Pagkalinaw sa baybayon
Pagkahapsay pagkahilom

Morag nanay nako nga walay kibo
Nanudlay sa iyang buhok
Naglantaw sa unahan
Naglingkd sa gamay nga bangko
Sa among payag

Sa unahan adunay
Dako nga balay
Pula ang gate nga puthaw
Adunay amahan
Nga dako og lawas
Hubo ang ibabaw
Nagdala og silhig nga tukog
Gadali morag adunay gigukod
Gitawag ang iyang anak
Nga gwapito nakigdula
Sa akong manghod
Sa among nataran

Nalisang ang bata
Gibunalan og silhig
Ang iyang tiil
Nidagan pauli sa ilaha

Sayang
Pagkamalinawon gayod unta
Sa dagat sa sayo
Sa kabuntagon

RIC S. BASTASA
wala na man untay
ghom ang mga patay diri
kanato

gakawalwal gayod
pagkabuag gayod natong
tanan

ania nanggiaway kita kabahin
sa patay
kabahin sa iyang paglubong
kabahin sa dungog nga iya
kuno gihapon

hagbay ra kini siyang nadugta
didto sa ilalom sa yuta
karong gikalot na usab ang
iyang lubong
giabrihan pag-usab ang lungon
gikuha ang mga bukog apil pa
gani ang unta hagbay rang
napalid nga mga abog

anaa ang mga bungkag nga bukog
gihapnig, gisulod sa laing lungon,
gisirad-an, gisuroy,
aron ingnon nga dungganon

sulod sa atong kasingkasing
kita ang mas nasayod
walay pulos kadton tawhana
nga karon bukog na
ugma, mobalik na siya sa iyang
pagkaabog

kinahanglan pa ba gayod
nga awayan nato kana?
ang lapok bisan pag itupad sa
mga bulawan
magpabiling lapok
dili mapapas ang dugo nga uga
sa bato nga mibuno sa imong
agtang

adunay mga butang nga pasagdan
na lang
aron sa hingpit hikalimtan

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagpanglimpyo Sa Balay Namo

sa dihang nanglimpyo
si tatay
sa among balay nga
dugay na nga wala maatiman
sa among mga sinaligan

mitabang mi

gisprihan namo ug baygon
ang mga suok suok
da, patay ang daghang mga
ok-ok

giguba namo ang mga salag
sa balagtok
daghang nangamatay gawas
lang sa nakaikyas
apil pa gani ang mga bag-ong
gianak nga mga bagtok
nga gibiyaan sa ilang mga
inahan
patay gayod silang tanan
ambot wala may nalooy sa mga
bagtok
nga kusog usab nga mikutkot
sa mga sanina ni nanay ug
ni tatay didto sa daang
aparador

pagkadaghang sagbot nga nasilhig
abog nga nakahig
mantsa sa salog
nagpasad nga mga dahon nga
miabot didto sa sulod sa lawak
ni lolo ug lola

kapoy baya usab ang manglimpyo
nagkaduihay ang mga singot sa huerto
milaylay ang among mga kamot sa
pagsilhig, mikurog ang mga tiil sa dugay nga pagtindog

walay samok ang maong pagpanglimpyo
walay nangutana nganong gipatay ang mga ok-ok, ang mga kuting, ang mga garapata,
ang mga balagtok, (nga gani ako nalooy man gihapon sa mga bag-ong namuyo didto)

human sa pagpanglimpyo nahapsay ang balay, sinaw na ang salog, wala nay mantsa diha sa bongbong, wala nay abog ang mga lingkoranan ug lamesa, wala nay sagbot sa mga lawak, nahiluna na ang tanan

pag-abot sa kagabion, dungan kami sa panihapon, human sa pag-ampo, among gisaloan ang kalinaw ug kalipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagsalop Sa Adlaw Didto Sa Dipolog

ang pagsalop sa adlaw
didto sa boulevard
mao ang kataposang
pasalig niya nimo sa
malinawon ug mabulukong
hinapos sa usa ka dili
nimo makalimtang
panagbulag

RIC S. BASTASA
Pagsalop Sa Adlaw Sa Katipunan

Gihakop ni Dante ang larawan sa pagsalop sa adlaw
Diri sa among gamay nga lungsod. Unsa ba
Ang iyang buot ipasabot- ang adlaw iya mang'
Gikutang sa tumoy sa guba nga pantalan?
Dili man unta siya kabalong manigarilyo apan
Ang pagsalop sa adlaw sa Katipunan nahimo namang
Usa ka tumoy sa posporo nga hapit na nga mapalong.
Nahuman na ang pagdilaab. Hapon na gyod diay.
Midalugdog ug mikilat dapit sa kalubihan.
Ug sa kahadlok sa mga panganod, nanago sila
Didto sa likod sa tami. Giusikan ko. Wala nako
Makita ang pagdilaab sa gugma niining dapita.
Ang akong naabtan mao lamang ang kagubot
Sa mga balod ug ang dayong pagkamatay
Sa adlaw. Dali-dali ang paglubong niini,
Wala gani'y pag-novena, wala'y pagpangadye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pahimangno Alang Kanato

Ang unsang parte sa lawas nga dili kuno gamiton
Sa kadugayan sumala sa balaod sa evolution, kini mawala.
Sama sa isda nga milayas sa dagat, nahimo kining tabili.
Ug kadtong mga langgam nga misalom sa dagat, nahimo kining mga pali.
Ug kadtong mga lumot nga naghandom nga mokiaykiay, nahimong ulod.
Kadtong mga lapu-lapu nga nangambisyon nga makalupad, nawad-an
Sa himbis, gituboan sa mga pako, ug nakalupad sa mga panganod.
Ug busa kita kunong mga tao, maglakaw gayod, kay basin mawala ang atong mga Tiil. Dili magtinapolon ug magsigig sakay o pabug-at sa uban. Kay basin mahimo Kitang mga yugo sa kabaw, o dili ba maupok ang atong mga tiil
Ug mahimong puro sampot na lang. Labaw sa tanan, dili kita
Mag-undang ug hunahuna kay basin ang atong utok. Mokubol ug mahimong Mga bato daplin sa suba nga labyanana na lamang sa mga tubig ug lingkoran,
Id-iranan na lang sa mga lubot sa mga walay kasilyas.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pahinumdom Alang Kang J.

sabta nga kining
tanan wala diha sa katuyoan

kahinumdom ka niadtong didto
ta sa bungtod sa bandera
nga unta mangatkat kitas mga
punoan sa mangga nga
walay tag-iya
diin naghitik ang mga hinog
nga gitalumtom na kaayo?

sa silong sa kahoy
nangatawa tang duha
kalimot na gani ta kon unsa
kadto kabahin

unya nalimtan nato ang
mga nangahulog nga manggang
sa ilang talumont
nagpanghagad nga puniton

walay katuyoan ang kalipay
kon moabot malimtan ang tumong

unya ang panahon motikig
ang mangga nga nahulog nasawo sa
hangin

samtang ang yuta nga gakaduhingoy
sa cogon
naglaway intawon

RIC S. BASTASA
Paigot

paigot sa baraha
sama usab sa
imong gustong
mahitabo
sa ato kunohay
nga panagkita

laing ngalan
gamiton
butang og picture
nga dili imo
komentaryo
nga morag
giganahan ka
sa iyang isulti

ganahan pod ko
anang paigot
usahay

sud sa kwarto
palongon ang
suga pulihan
og gamayng
sented nga kandila

dayon maghubo
ka hinay hinay
ipabilin ang
panting nipis
og gamay
kaayo

mosayaw kas
akong atubangan
maghaploy
haploy kanimo
ang kahayag sa
bulan
hangtod wala ka
nay sapot

og ako sa akong
kakapoy
nan nahikutulog
nga naghagok

mas hamis ang
mga paa ni
mariana didto
sa puerto galera

mas maayo siyang
mopaigot
sa iyang igot-igot

di jud ko
maghisgot
nga wala magsilbi
ang imong paigot kay
sapyot kag
sampot

RIC S. BASTASA
Pain And Sleep And Your Best Friend....

when you are in pain
you have no choice but to bear it
in silence, because any kind of
chatter
will simply aggravate
the wound,

talk is just a coating
perhaps, it will give a temporary relief

for those who hear your pain
they remain disinterested though they show that
empathy on their faces
but sooner shall you realize that it is not their pain
and they do not deserve it

pain shall always be personal
it is just yours, and it awakens you from that deep slumber
of pleasure
and complacency

when you keep on sharing it
they will pretend to continue listening
but if you know what is in their hearts
deep within
it will be shocking

soon they will relay your pain to others
who will be asking who you are
and what bad karma has come to you
what sins have you committed
which to them
have remained
unforgiven

categories, categories,
they have categories, sins and bad karma,
crime and punishment seems to be sisters
living in the same house

'who cares? ' that is the question that hangs in the air of indifference
'who are you? ' its cousin.

the sooner you know this, the better for you

you take retreat inside your room
put your hands on your forehead
to check if you are still alive

it is just between you and the ceiling now
and that occasional lizard who is more interested on how to capture its next prey, that mosquito
which if caught, does not matter also to you

when you cannot bear it anymore you resort to talking to yourself,

it is now between you and yourself
ah, you are finally your best friend now
and you keep on talking
and talking, with matching pauses in between

this time the pain subsides a bit
you have invented a new self, who can talk to you and assuredly, this self knows no betrayal upon itself

betrayal, if you define it, is always the other the next of kin, a brother, remember Cain?

you sleep now, time comes, gives you the blanket of relief puts you into another world,

& it is restful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pain Has Always Been Poetic

everyday
pain is poetry
please do
not demote it
to your
layman's prose
do not degrade
it to your
language of
abuse
let it stay
beautiful in our
hearts
we need it
to be that
way in order
to survive

RIC S. BASTASA
Pain In The Guts Of The Man In The Gutter

the gutter is not the nicest place to live
all the while you are too common and unnecessary
dispensable like a woman's napkin
but you live there just the same
there is pain in your stomach
you lose your guts
and when you die they do not mind at all
all people die anyway
and always there are others who replace you
from where you are
and then you are forgotten
you try to write some things in your journal
hoping that someone accidentally reads them
and you may have justified
your having been here, for once

they have no time and they too have many things to do
always
they come and go and leave and die and then finally forgotten
like nothing is really significant in this world
just like them
and you

and so why bother, why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pain Is Us

pain is us, the forest feels it. 
pain is us, the seas suck it. 
pain is us, the air is choked. 
pain is us, the trees are cut 
into pieces, and we write the 
pain on paper. 
pain is us, the earth is holed 
and all its black intestines 
all burned, our wars never ending 
our selfishness stretching even 
to the tiniest star that we still 
want to own, on paper, like 
torrens titles of the glitter. 

pain is us, unquantifiable. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Pain With You

forget friendship
i want to live
in your bloody bosom

RIC S. BASTASA
you have snubbed reality
that long,
until its strong hands with
sharp nails
slap you, and you are awakened
because it
hurts you,
not because it has loved you
for long,
i think, since time
immemorial,
pain after all,
is the best teacher

as happiness seems to
be the
useless flatterer....

RIC S. BASTASA
Painless Goodbyes...

cutting
your fingernails
a severance
of what grew
from you
once

RIC S. BASTASA
Pains

pains for breakfast
noon and

i am tired, and so
i must take it

bliss for the night
peace with
myself and

submission to God
Almighty. Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pains Of Memory Lanes

one can never throw
just like that the memories of the years

eye're like sea corrals on the
floor of the sea
like shells clinging to an anchor
of the ship

like a rust on the steel keel
like tattoos on the skin

anything permanent that we try to remove
gives that pain

the hairs on the armpit
the nails we try to cut from ourselves

the cut navel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paint My Life

let me at least choose
the colors
red for love
blue for my sorrow
gray for my confusions
do not draw me in
bold strokes
for i was never brave
do give me crooked
lines
minimize the straight ones
my eyes are two moons
my feet are trees without roots
my face the sun
its rays my hair
my whole body
a driftwood
my moles be islands
my hands are branches
without leaves
praying to the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Paint My World Please

i like the idea of you painting my world
so please paint it as you so suggest

only in two colors
black and red

nothing white, it used to be

RIC S. BASTASA
Pakig-Away Kanako, Ayaw, Kay Imo Ko

pakig-away kanako ayaw
magkuyog kitang duha, hinonoa
sa atong nag-ung-ong nga
tam-is kaayong mga lusok
sa atong gugma
dili nato iluwa, hinonoa,
atong usapon, atong tilaan
sa atong mga dila
ilad-ok ang kalami
sulod sa atong mga
naglaway nga mga
tilaok

===============english translation==================

fight me not, think

fight me not
we shall be together, forgive
in this love impending
spit it not, think,
let us chew, and lick
with our tongues
and swallow the taste
of its sweetness
inside our wetting
throats.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pakighinabi

ang pakighinabi
kabahin lamang sa duha

sa una, ikaw og ang
bongbong sa imong lawak

miapil ang lingkoranan
tupad sa higdaanan

dayon nagpadayon ang
bongbong sa pagpamati

sa imong gisugid sa imong
giiyakan sa daghang katuigan

hangtod nga ang pakighinabi
milapos sa pikas nga kahaw-ang

karong, ikaw og ako,
ako nga ikaw.

tingog sa ilalom nga
mihiwa sa kasingkasing

RIC S. BASTASA
Palaban

Sa imong kagamay
Labaw gamay sa kadako sa tungaw
Sa ginagmay kulisaw
Sa kang nanay ug tatay sige jud kag
Palaban

Ug si nanay ug tatay
Tungod sa imong kagamay
Nga labaw gamay sa kadako sa tungaw
Andam gayod kanunay
Kanimo molaban kay ikaw sige man pod nga
Palaban

Patay na sila, midako ka na, dako dado gamay
Sa tadjao
Wa ka nay kadaganan kon dunay mangaway
O manaway
Wa nay kanimo
Molaban

Mingaw di ba? Hadlok pod di ba?
Tago-tago lang kon dunay kahadlokan
Di man gani ka kapanagang

Apan sa kadugay nga dagan-dagan ug tago-tago
Nakat-on ka ra gayod
Sa kaisog sa pag-inusara
Natagboan nimo ang bag-o nimong nanay ug tatay
Kanang molaban gayod kanimo
Kanang mag-lig-on kanimo kanunay

Usahay molagom ang imong nawong
Kay nasagpaan ka na usab sa dautang hangin
Usahay molabhag ang imong sampot kay
Nahulog ka sa atabay sa kalaay
Usahay nalisang ka sa dihang miabot ang
Balita sa kanser
Gluom mo lang kani hangtod kini
Mikobol sa imong atay
Apan bisan pa sa tanang hulga ug kahadlok
Mikalma ang imong mga panglantaw
Mikitiw ang imong mga tudlo
Mitig-a ang imong kasingkasing
Wala kini malumoy
Milantip ang imong hunahuna
Mitusoy ang imong mga panganduhay
Paingon sa halayong dapit sa imong mga
Wa maparog nga pagtoo ug pangando'y
Sa lain pang umaabot nga kinabuhi

Nagpalaban ka sa imong mga balak
Ug dinha nakat-on ka
Nga sa imong pagkagamay
Dako ka diay

RIC S. BASTASA
Palaban 2

Sa imong kagamay- labaw
Gamay sa tungaw- sa ginagmay kulisaw
Sa kang Nanay ug Tatay kanunay gyod ka'g
Palaban

Patay na sila. Midako ka na-
Dako-dako gamay sa tadyaw-
wala na ka'y kadaganan kon dunay mangaway
O manaway. Wa nay molaban nimo.

Mingaw di ba? Hadlok pod di ba?
Tago-tago lang kon dunay kahadlokan
Di man gani ka kapanagang.

Apan sa kadugay nga dagan-dagan
Ug tago-tago, nakat-on ka ra gyod
Sa kaisog sa pag-inusara. Natagboan nimo
Kanang molaban gayod nimo.
Kanang mag-lig-on nimo kanunay.

Usahay molagom ang imong nawong
Kay nasagpaan ka na usab sa dautang hangin.
Usahay molabhag ang imong sampot kay
Nahulog ka sa atabay sa kalaay
Usahay malisang ka. Pananglitan dihang

Miabot ang balita sa cancer. Giluom mo lang kini
hangtod mikubol sa imong atay.
Apan bisan pa sa tanang hulga ug kahadlok
Mikalma ang imong mga palantaw.
Mikitiw ang imong mga tudlo.
Mitig-a ang imong kasingkasing.
Wala kini malumoy.
Milantip ang imong hunahuna.
Mitusoy ang imong mga panganduhay
Paingon sa halayong dapit sa imong

Mga wa maparog nga pagtuo ug pangandoy
Sa lain pang umaobot nga kinabuhi.
Nagpalaban ka sa imong mga balak
Ug dinha nakat-on ka
Nga sa imong pagkagamay
Dako ka diay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pale White

looking for lost love
pale white

the color of the sky
on grounds past bombed

luck was patient
once and twice

then peace comes
love looks upon what was lost

flashy red gloves
maggots on a red apple

no one welcomes this
madness
there is only respect but once

time heals all
time heals all these pain

each one
suffers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Palpable Mistake

mistakes are palpable
sometimes and equity
demands a correction,

some mistakes are
so serious however,
death is demanded
by strict justice and

divinity weeps for
another soul wasted
humanity pretends
another victory
a triumph for its
blood thirsty instincts
another life is taken
in payment of a debt

I have read it somewhere

they have thrown the last stone,
and
Jesus wept,

RIC S. BASTASA
now that we are here
inside this dark room

i give you the right
to undress me
to touch me and
caress me
to kiss me and lick
my body and feel

what i want you to
feel and hear what i

want you to hear
this beating of my heart

this radiating love this
palpitating pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Palpitations...

THE room will
not be locked

the light in
the kitchen will
be switched off

if it happens
that the room is locked
thru my inadvertence
which is far
from the truth

find the key under
the beside the doghouse

open the door
smell the perfume

i shall wait for
you till dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
Palpitations...With Corrections Now

THE room will
not be locked

the light in
the kitchen will
be switched off

if it happens
that the room is locked
thru my inadvertence
which is far
from the truth

find the key
beside the doghouse
open the door
smell the perfume

i shall wait for
you till dawn

it will be
exhaustive and

it will be so
fulfilling

RIC S. BASTASA
Panaghoy Sa Suba

Nanawag ang kalinaw sa
Suba sa loboc
Nadungog ko kini
Sa walay pagkatagbaw
Balikbalikan ko kini
Sama sa usa ka dalan
Padulong sa among
Balay nga karaan

(English)

The Whistle of the River

Serenity is calling
in Loboc river
I hear it
To no satisfaction
I want to be there again and again
Just like the path
Going towards
Our ancestral home

RIC S. BASTASA
Panamini Choi!

tambag ko lang unta
kon magbuhat ka og sala
panamini una
ang durian

kon mohinog
bisan asa nimo tagoan
ila gyod nga maatikan
kay mangalimyon man!

RIC S. BASTASA
Pandora Is Her Name...

no one wants something
to decipher
everyone wants a path with
sights to see
not a forest within where
the moon is rare where the sun
simply tells you in trickles of
light what it really is.

it is the obvious that most
creatures feast upon
worms on leaves
birds pecking on grains
on a grassy field
children chasing balls
women fixed on the mirror
men riding on their horses

wars mostly, rather than peace
arms, and weapons of destruction
no one wants to decipher what
is hidden here, this is a closed box

it's name is Pandora, and she is
curious and mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pangutan-A Ang Istrikto Nga Hardinero Palihog

nakaangay ka sa
kaanindot sa iyang hardin
sa mga buwak

sa kaanindot sa naglinya
nga mga kahoy nga morag
kawhaan ka mga kaluha

walay milapas nga sanga
walay nasalaag nga dahon
walay balikog nga gamot
walay nalamog nga sagbot

pangutan-a kon ngano

adunay hardinero nga
nag-atiman niini nga
istrikto kaayo nga sa
matag adlaw atua kanunay
nagbunglay sa mga
sagbot nga sa matag buwan
namul-ong, misukod sa mga
milapas dayog gamit sa
iyang sanggot aron
putlon ang wala mitupong

pangutan-a ang hardinero

kon aduna bay mga pagbati
ang mga dahon nga gitipi
ang mga sanga nga giputol
aron magtupong aron nindot
tan-awon

alang kining tanan kanimo nga
gusto nga ang tanan hapsay
ug nindot gayod lantawon

pangutan-a kon sila gisakitan
ba? kon sila nakaangay ba
sa kaanindot nga imong nakita?

pangutan-a kon ang mga dauban
wala ba gibatig kakapoy sa kalayo
nga siging siga sa kabunton
hangtod na gani sa kagabhion?

pangutan-a ang mga abo diha sa
yuta, ang mga dahon kaniadto nga
buhi, ang mga sanga nga kaniadto
lig-on? pangutan-a ang aso nga
gihalad didto sa langit?

RIC S. BASTASA
small son
like a toy soccer ball
yellow and black spots
in the warm hold of
Papa the giant
to his mind
his hands are powerful
against the walls
and tall buildings
against the hot horizon
he laughs
at son who raises his hands
in total surrender
not afraid anymore
if ever he falls
Papa is the giant
his words are true
like walls and tall buildings
like strong hands
like laughter
like white teeth
like words of comfort
of horizon's assurance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa And I

Papa always brings his bolo
wherever he goes out from the house
during those turbulent times of our lives

'these are what fathers are for
these outlaws must know
that we also know how to protect ourselves! '
he always tells me that
when i was young
and innocent and didn't know what wars were
why other men were cruel to their own gender

when my turn came
i begin to bring my gun
my wits
and my distrust

'this is the reason why i was born' i tell myself that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa Don'T Preach

got to read some of his poems
and i like the way
he writes his papa-don't -preach themes,
so enlightening
and since then i stop writing my own
versions of
papa-don't-preach poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa Knows Best....

all you could have done
as a better option
is ask

Papa always knows best
He sees beyond
the longings of our hearts
He knows
you have failed again
but what do you get
from your lapses?

His compassion
His most understanding silence
That simply touches your
Hair again
Never, never for an instance
Hurting....

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa on the Horse As I Remember

Papa rode on the horse
the White horse

He was so cruel
And he would not Feed
The white horse For days

One day
They went to the Sea
The white horse And papa

I wished the White horse Would swim To the other island And leave Papa for good

He was so cruel
And he would beat The white horse For days

But the white horse Stayed she was not fed For days

One day
The White Horse Got mad And bit Papa to death.

I did not wish
The horse
Would eat
Papa whole.

I too would be
Cruel then

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa You Have Long Been Dead

you come back
as a very young man
wearing levi’s pants
and adidas fitting shirt
you are smiling
as you open the knob
of our door

i do not like this lie
papa you have been dead
in 1987 and there is no more
reason for you to be back
goodbye had been so
well said

you close the door again
goes outside us
less the smile
the truth must seal
the distance between us
papa
the past has no more use
the future too fruitless

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa....

he's the newest Papa in
town carrying the brown baby in his arms

the tiny nose is not the same as his
aquiline shape
the lips are thick his aren't
the heart-shaped face does not jibe
with his square jaw

somehow there are clouds of
doctor
as he looks closely on that fragile
creature which is now at the very
mercy of his arms
and hands

the little angel shapes a smile
as tiny as a flea
jumping to his heart

everything is forgotten
all the clouds suddenly disappear

in flagrante
he falls in love
the one that accepts and
knows not
what rejection is

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa's Birthday Today

he was a day short for the day of the hearts  
but he loved so well and gave himself all for mama

some fights may be on the usual domestic chore  
but no physical abuse that was what i saw, the real score

born on the 13th, he lacked a day more  
to complete the whole heart's picture

he died with a broken heart and he once broke many hearts too  
but that that was long time ago

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa's Bitter Words

the bitter words
from papa
a long time ago
are the bridges
of my
islands, and as i recall
each words
the islands interconnect
to find myself
whole

and then when i finally
understood his message
i visited his
grave and i said
thank you
for the time and the
effort
of hurting me.

i have seen
for once the light of
my darkest nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
Papa's Lone Journey In The Mountain

and then he writes in his diary: i was alone in the forest
with my horse, i sleep under a big tree watching the full moon
the wind blows from the sea, far, far away, i lit a cigarette, open
a bottle of wine. It feels like i am a fishing boat in the rain, sailing,
asleep in that long and winding river.
and then the rain begins to fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Papel Nga Salog Sa Dagat

ang bulan ang adlaw
ang mga bitoon
mga pulong na lamang
nga sa papel
milugdang

papel nga salog sa
dagat
lapis nga kuhit sa
langit

kasakit nga mikudlit
aron mausob ang agianan
sa tawong di palaran

RIC S. BASTASA
Paper Rose

you smell like a rose,
you look like a rose
you have some dew
on the petals of this red,
red rose,
but you do not wilt
until then
i know that you are
this paper rose
this fakery

then you say
you do not fear me
i do not intimidate you
for real

this paper tiger

RIC S. BASTASA
Para Kanatong Mga Lalaki

akong basihan ang sulti sa akong lolo,
ang lalaki kinahanglang adunay baroganan
walay daghang pulong
kay ang iyang pulong usa lang ug dili na kani maparog
kon iya nang mabuhian

ug misunod ang akong amahan
ang lalaki dili alang sa panimalay kon dili sa darohan
dii ang iyang mga kanding, kabayo ug mga kabaw
sa daghang sagbot matagbaw

nadungog ko sila sa klaro sa wala pa sila mipanaw
apun bisan sa akong tumang kamingaw
gidasig ako
sa paghatag ug kahulugan kon unsa ba ang lalaki
kon unsa ba ako

tawo gihapon ako
usahay gani mahutdan sa pulong
usahay mawad-an sa baroganan
usahay mabalian ug bukog
usahay magkiang
magsangkiig sa kalibog ug
kahadlok ug kabalaka
kon unsay dangatan sa akong
ugma sa akong kapalaran

masayop usab ako madam-ag maulawan
mawad-an ug kusog
ug sakto nga barog

usahay moiyak usab ako sa tumang
kasuko ug sa tumang kalipay
nasuta ko kini sa akong
kaugalingon

ug sa tumang paubos
gidawat ko ang akong kahuyang
ang akong kakulangon
sa akong kaugalingon

ug labi na sa tanan gidawat ko
ang akong pagkinahanglan
kanimo babaye
karon nga akong gihalaran

RIC S. BASTASA
Para Sa Akong Giibogan Nga Doktora

minyo ko minyo sad siya
di ba patas ra?

gwapa siya, gwapo sad ko
kabalo siya mo drive kabalo sad ko
bisag walay manobela
bisag dili innova

magkita mi sa walay pagpamakak
mga mata nga sa kaibog sa usag usa walay kurap kurap
mag estoryahan kanang dili mga batang gagmay
sa klarong sabot aron walay magbagotbot

minyo ko minyo sad siya
ang pangutana: unsa bay problema?

sus ginoo ko, wala
kay kami, baya tiunay nga barkada

RIC S. BASTASA
Parabiosis

you have
taken advantage of
my gastropod shells

for i have
been away

hermit crab
are you my
wife?

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradigm Shift

here he is again
looking back, seeing the pictures of
some friends babysitting
grandsons and
granddaughters

he is taken to far places
by his mind

and then he looks inside telling
himself,

' i'll cross the bridge when i get there
i am different
i am strong
and i am not following their paths
i have my own place under the sun
and i am happy
facing myself in my
mirror'

he shifts his gaze to an island
where once he planted all those
green coconut trees
full of nuts

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradise Island

the white moon stoops
and recedes behind tall
cocoanut trees
its rays of light shimmering
on the ripples

the waves come to me
my boat as purple as the
feelings i have
sail on and on
away from your island
of paradise

RIC S. BASTASA
unbelieve, what i have told you.
you like the unbreaking of hearts, you ask for that, and i am going to give in.
unbelieve what i have impressed upon your skin,
a tattoo of a heart with cupid's arrow
bleeding, please, try to remember how
someone has broken your heart
and there i was singing you a love song,
and you say how kind of me to listen to the dripping of your sorrow,
those nights when you only believe about the moon's story,
and there i was singing you a love song,
and you believe me,
unbelieve what i have told you
believe what is now put before your breast
it is the sun and the inkling of the tendril
to a certain bloom

a breaking of day, hands holding on,
in friendship.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradox (2)

it is not the good on the other
neither their badness
they are irrelevant in this quest
for excellence
or the search of the good self
it is this loneliness
within the heart
that sings that finds what goodness
is left
within the confines of our being

at the end, it is the question and you
as the answer
facing one another: who i was
who am i
who is this that has become?

myself in a nutshell is my sole concern
the rest only
also, think of themselves

well said, everything is always a personal matter
like a thought rising in our minds
like a dove finding a nest in the home

RIC S. BASTASA
the gods of the little nook
universe have cursed me not to be happy and not to be able
to say what i really want in order to live fully.

i know my hands
i know the significance of each line in my palm
but the words are like forceps
that are pulling my nerves

the pains are indescribable
but it is only my silence that is the clue to my redemption

i am put in a box where i am fed some trickles of light from leaks
like pores of my skin

i know what to say but when i say the first word
the box starts to tremble it is forbidden

i tried it once and some of my roots were cut
fate is treating me like a tree without leaves

out there in the fields i see images that please me
shadows of love and bliss and immeasurable joy
the immensity of my humanity

i am sure if i touch one of those little things
sands of diamonds
my back shall grow its own eagle
wings

i have never done the things that i did in dreams
my immense joy immeasurable
i am powerless as an ant whose legs are cut
when i wake up

i boast to those who follow me that i am a black bird with shiny feathers and that
i have flown both edges of the world
that i am bringing with me all sorts & songs of happiness
they have never seen my heart they only heard how it sings so well
i am glad

sometimes i wish that i have a mastery of who i really am
i am free i am chained i am at war with what i was.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradox Of Home...

i must slow down and try to stay home
that is your message today,
i am not surprised, home has always been
my sweetest prison.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradox...

so many and yet so really few
in fact, there is only one among the many

so long and provoking and yet in reality
it is so short and surrendering

the active is actually the most passive
and the front is (from another perspective) is actually the back of this great wall.

welcome to the great divide.
have a seat, relax, and wait for your guide.

for what you had for years
is actually just a moment ago
in a second, just a wink in the eye
ah, your name your great wisdom
is nothing here
but just a speck and a folly

it is funny and yet it is so true.
come, undress yourself, your clothes and
jewelry and watch, and contraptions
your buttons and zippers
your socks and shoes
are of no use here... your body does
not serve you here anymore
no touch nothing about a kiss or
a hug
you do not make love here
you shed off

you are yourself now, feel what air is.
welcome. The transition will be short.

Eternity is your teacher.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paradox: Lenten Reflections

it is when you feel so strong
that you become weak
when you have learned too many things
that you start to feel
that you know nothing
when you feel you are so blessed
that you become so empty
when you are too near to God
that you become too distant
when you feel you are so loved
that you are forsaken

so we start with nothing again
to achieve the fullness
to be so forsaken to feel being loved
to be emptied all over again
to become full again
to reach an end
so we can start all over again

to be reborn in order to die
to die and return back to dust
to gain eternal life

for in truth our wisdom is nothing
but all foolishness to him who gives it
for it is in giving everything
that we get back what was missing

RIC S. BASTASA
Parakiwahab

a good house
is never
finished, in the same
manner
is this good man
this good poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
Parallel Lines

in our world
parallel lines do not meet

be surprised
in their world all lines meet

and then dissolve as
dissipated light

all becoming one
space, opening

into a new world of
antimatter where

dead and life
hate and love fusing as

One.

RIC S. BASTASA
Parallel Lines (Revised)

in our world
parallel lines do not meet

be surprised
in their world all lines meet

and then dissolve as
dissipated light

all becomes one
space, opening

to the new world of
anti-matter where the reasons

of the heart also become
the reasons of the mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Parallel Universe

pretty sure
is the
cross-eyed
cross-eyed

the existence
of a parallel

universe, universe
is true, is true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Paranaque

there is an old dog
white and stinking
its chains are made of silver
its ribs protrude from the side of its belly
it has a house with a red tin roof

its head touches it when it sits
upon a cemented floor
its master is an unmarried man
who is always away on vacation
this dog does not need milk or bread
or bone

it is dead
a long time ago

RIC S. BASTASA
Paranoid

he did not make love with her
for weeks
and she thinks that there is something wrong
with everything: her marriage, his sexuality, her sanity.

she goes to the psychiatrist
gives her the necessary prescription
not drugs

simple: keep her mouth shut
her mind clean
focus on the spiritual side
and reminds her of her actual age

she needs to behave a little bit
now at 83.

RIC S. BASTASA
Parasite

you must be a good man
you still smile
as the leech sucks your blood
and it is bloating

RIC S. BASTASA
Parents

and so she compared
parents as diamond cutters

that with the skill of their
hands in cutting the right
size and the right proportions
precious diamonds are made

that with recklessness and
negligence what are produced
are nothing but shattered glasses
without the glitter of the lights

RIC S. BASTASA
Parmenides

multiplicity
of existences
forms and motions

an appearance
of a single
eternal reality
is here
and now &
then

all is one &
non-beings like you
are illogical

RIC S. BASTASA
Parroting Courtesies

my niece asks me to hand a spoon
and i ask her to say 'please' and she utters the word
(perhaps her mama does not teach her the word)
and i hand her the spoon and she is afraid to say the word 'thank you'
and i tell her to say the word and she says it as though it is a strange word
for her (perhaps her dad, who is my brother seldom uses the word in their house)
and then i tell her after she says thank you 'welcome my dear'
and she giggles, perhaps the words are ticklers to her frail body
to her small hands, to her fingers which grabbed the spoon as though
there are not so many

so many spoons in this world, we know that,
but the courtesies are forgotten, as this happens i feel like i am
parroting words, and sometimes i reflect: do i also really understand
these words, deep down to the longings of my heart?

thanks, but am i that really thankful to God?

RIC S. BASTASA
Parted

when we are parted
we do things that we were prohibited
that is the agreement
you on your own
me on my own
feet that know how to dance the tango with the
other woman next door
you dance your foxtrot with the man of your dreams
it does not matter
we made a pact
to each his own
no one cries a river here
no river runs in our veins
there is only the day of our parting and making real stories
for us to share
tonight
it is weird they say
we are another breed
but we are happy
happier than all tabboos combined
those leashes
that transform us into monsters
these liberating things of the spirit
nothing for the chains
all for the art of it
the deviations, the derivations
the experience which are new
and tonight when we are in our arms again
we will listen to our stories
mine had the mole at the loser part of her white thighs
yours have the most hair
scented like a faun
i had a unicorn and you had
the tridented creature
still without a name
or that which you can no longer remember

when we are parted
we come again in the same bed
now so renewed
envigorated to know what differences
can make us love
again
this time sweeter

RIC S. BASTASA
Parting Ways

When we finally part ways
I must have done right
When I hurt you
When I look at you again
In a different way
Not very much like
The true love that
I once felt

When you undress
The nude body has no more use
Of me in this newfound
Loneliness
Our souls now
No longer understand the true meaning
Of our feelings
We shall now fly as transparencies
On different directions
Under the cover of darkness
I am still me
Unbroken but a little bit colder

RIC S. BASTASA
Pasayloa

pasayloa

kay ang akong balak ug uban pang balak nga umaabot karon sa akong kinabuhi

sideline na lamang sa akong ka-busy, maglala na lamang ako sa akong mga pulong samtang

nagpaabot pag print sa akong mga legal nga buluhaton sama sa paghimo ug desisyon sa mga kasong na-trial ug nahuman kagahapon

mahimo ko lamang ang mga galay sa akong mga tudling kon ako mopahulay sa pagbasa sa desisyon sa korte suprema

well, poetry has become just a diversion, sort of parang excuse lamang kon motaas na ang pressure sa trabahong nagahatag kanato sa atong bread and butter thing

apan sa tinood lang, kon aduna pa untay kwarta sa poetry nganong dili gud ako mag full time of poet diha kanimo

bahinon gayod ang oras time for relaxation, poetry ka na, time for real work, lahi na usab kana
diretso lang baya ang pagsulat sa mga balak, usahay, wrong spelling, usahay, walay lami ma reflect ang pagkawalaygana sa pagsulat

usahay plastic sad, hisgot sa mga bulan ug mga bitoon, sa mga suba ug dagat, ug uban pang mga bulak nga wala gayod masimhot sa imong ilong nga gipaningot sa kakapoy ug kainit sa panahon

usahay, mora ka ug gadagkot ug kandila, halad sa mga kalag nga wala na nimo mahinumdumi nga naglagot na kanimo ug sigeg padamgo
dinhi, ang kanindot, sulat que sulat, walay direksyon, mora ug baha sa tubig subay sa suba nga morag halas nga galikos likos sa daplin sa kabukiran

bisan unsa pa ang buhaton, balak lang gihapon ang tanan, usahay medyo sekreto gibulgar sa usa ka simbolo, images kon baga, morag padaplis daplis apan paingong gihapon sa tinood,

opps, nahuman nako ug print sa akong mga sinulat kutob ra ko diri
di ba, sideline lang ang pagsulat sa balak?
ok, sorry, hataas uyanot ang imong gibasa abi nimo ug unsa

wala lang, morag wala lang, apan tutuki, di ba may kamatuoran?
nga sa hataas nga prusisyon, sa simbahan ra gihapon kita paingon.

relax lang, unya naa na pud koy balak, kabahin sa wala, apan actually duna baya.

kon wala ka kasabot, ayaw kalagot, kay ikaw ra gayod ang mag-ugot.

for the meantime, trial sa ko.

time sa,
kaihoon na hinoon ko da.

RIC S. BASTASA
look at the child at Pasil
her face is dirty
she has not taken a bath
she smells like feces
we all know her name
we have talked to her
once, twice, thrice

yet we have done nothing
to give her breakfast
we have done nothing
to give her clothes
we have done nothing
to make her smile

RIC S. BASTASA
Passing By The Stalls...

As i pass by the stalls
along the dirty streets of the town
after the fiesta
when all the vendors have gone
selling the same wares to
another town
i feel the sadness of the constancy
of departures
i am comforted by the sense that time
passes us by
that there is nothing permanent in all days
sorrows and happy moments
and then i meet a little child
without a mother holding her hand
perhaps lost
and surely so neglected
and then i see this white dog
crossing the street
and then a big truck comes
over speeding
and then i see another element of time
the way it sometimes
snatches life
from a mere dog but there is this feeling
that strikes me
as though the little child is still there
as though the street is finally cleaned
as though i am
no longer alone
and lost
that res gestae speaks much
on such a dying declaration.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passing By.....That Is What We Feel...

yes, we write to let the world know
how we feel

we do not dictate the world how we feel
and what it should feel

we know we merely pass by but when we
take that moment

we have to say something about that moment of
passing

what we do is just to mirror
our faces in time

by then time assumes its own meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passing The Inkblot Test

a butterfly is a butterfly
is a butterfly

and batman is batman
and the clown is nothing but a clown

do not make the bat fly
do not let the clown splash in melting butter

and just be the man that you are
stay there do not float in air

it is just an ink that blots in its reflection
it is just a piece of paper on your hand
it is just stationery

do not give movements where movements are not there
always remember newton

an object at rest will always be at rest
and an object in motion will always be in motion

unless acted upon by an unequal and opposite force.
stay calm, now take your glass of water and then
swallow your medicine.

how can you ever faill this test again?

RIC S. BASTASA
Passing The Rocky Mountains Somewhere In Arizona

heavy, and faceless
hard, on some pressure
it cracks, and creates
a face
for all of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passing Through Me

a shattered mirror right under the bed
reflecting light from the holes of the wall
that the termites ate,

you pass through me when i speak to you
you leave me a scent of stone and ash

that is how i know about all of you
now try recalling, what do you know of me?

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion

to everything that passion does
there is this bleeding after which
perfection follows,

honestly, girl, i prefer it that way,
there is always a way to
perfect what we lost what we missed
what we are not,
what we were, what we are longing,

give yourself a chance, hold your breath,
let passion blind you
and then see so much light,
be perfect, because you were once
before they
tried to destroy you, come, come,

drink this blood, think of wine,
eat this body, think of beef,

we die, and then we are resurrected.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion And Compassion

passion
and compassion

you make love
to the one who have
always detested
you

compassion knows
how to hide
true feelings as it
closes its eyes
and imagines
what is real and
pure

your passion has
gone mad
self-centered upon
your groin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion As Defined Inside Walls

to step upon a door
and close it

to stay inside a room
and fortify walls

to sit upon a sofa
with someone you love

to talk and talk and
then to live upon a

beautiful silence
and then be undisturbed

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion Is My Brain

now i realize
as i go over the naked pictures
of you my desire
my lust
my love to the extreme
passion is my brain
my brain is passion
it cannot clearly think
and love
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion Of A Man

His fingers are strong and determined
And when he loves you
He chases, and follows you wherever you go
Like a river flowing like a brown river flooding
Scurrying its way to the mouth
Of the sea
Taking the least of resistance
But if obstructed
Like the river
There will be an overflowing
A strong raging of the waters
Of his fury
Taking everything
Houses trees fowls
Children, men, and women
And boulders
And lands
Those that block his way

His arms embrace you
And he suffocates you with the pungent odor
Of his masculine love
He breathes deeply saving all his strength
He holds you tight
His chiseled muscled body pressed
Against yours
He bends he stands he kneels he bends
Again he bows to you
Touches you from the
Tip of your toe
To the tip of you
Hair and he surveys
Every inch of
Your flesh-territories
Obeys your wishes
Takes your command
And your desires
In full obeisance
Like a slave
He breathes deeply taking the strengths
Of a hundred bulls
He breathes in the force of the forests
And the trees
And taking all the grace in you
He thrusts at you like a storm
A strong wind
You are at the center of his power
You are loved you are not destroyed
You are one beautiful weakness giving in
To this force his strength his thrusts
And when this coiling
These bombardments
These lovely conquests
Are over
As he eats whatever
He needs to make
His fill
Of your love
Famished as he is
To his longings
Of you
Like an overfed boa
He lies next to you
His eyes gentle
His hands so tender
Resting on your breast
Caressing your thighs like a soft wind
A soft breeze from the green trees of the valleys
His lips to your nipples
You are warm and wet
In so sweet still warm embrace
It is over
He is exhausted
And you are
Satiated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion Of A Poet

in the world of the poet
passionate about his next poem
there are many trees reaching
high upon the skies
there are bluer skies up there
there are black and white birds
blending
day and nights
dusk and twilight
there will be more things to see
in colors and tastes and
scents of onions and
roses
there is no world as passionate as
a poet in love
with his craft
his beloved asleep in the beauty of her
closed eyes
his lips touching the nipples of her breasts
his tongue unraveling the magic
of a navel
in the world of the passionate poet
there are never aching eyes
perhaps only
an aching heart still wanting to embrace
so much love

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion Of A Woman

A woman’s passion is easy to understand
The usual silence is her overwhelming
Yes,
It is her no that is consuming her really
A no to a kiss
A no to a hug
A no to a holding of her hand
A no to the fondle of her plump breast

A monster eating her
Longings and whims
Her desire
To spread to love against the skies

She will tell you
And she means it
She will kiss you with a
Spider’s kiss
Her hug would mean your surrender
And when she holds your hand she
Says there will be no stopping
There will be no excuses
There will be no reservation anymore
And when you fondle her breasts
She will rub your muscled chest
Her manner of hitting back
She would kill you if you would not
Go down under
And dig deeper
To her soul
Her fragility
Her unique nuances
Her calling sounds
Her moaning
Her way of loving you
A manner of reciprocating
Your advances
She is true too
In thoughts and in deeds
For what God has joined together
Let the man go further under.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion Somewhere Else, Concealed, Talk Of The Town, Shamelessly Still In Love.

somewhere in
negros occidental

the exact name is
la carlota

another soul
is restless upon
an unwritten
poem

tomorrow morning
he will be the first
thirsty man
to buy cheap coffee
in the marketplace
of the common
people

i expect him to be
calm and
silent, in another moment
of solitude

a rock amidst the
crowd,
filtering the meaning
of his dreams,

of course, it is
not easy to know him
i do not dare
his secrets are too
many

sometimes we talk
about what we are not
interested in
and i can sense it

everything seems to be
a literature of
evasion rather than
passion

somethings they say
cannot be passionate enough
to entice us
to stay., , ,

one lady who just passed
the bar
yelled, and declared,

'you think that it is
just for the passionate?

you are wrong'

there are duties to papa
moral obligations to the church
respect for what we do not like to
do but must be done just the
same

because, because we are not alone
in this world
and we cannot really survive
without them, she concludes

tomorrow she will be honored
with a party in the village

a pig will be slaughtered and
she will be the talk of the town,

she will marry the man
that she does not love but
from time to time she will
travel to meet her true love

bound to another woman,
and the same statement shall be made,

'some things are done because
of duty, not necessarily passion'

passion somewhere else,
concealed, talk of the town,
shamelessly still in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Passion....

one thing with passion is that it is always burning
one wonders
where is the source of this hearth?
why are the flames so red and high that at times the become like
tongues of fire
licking the skies?

one thing with passion is that it is hardheaded and despite
the signs of weakness due to massive heating
exhaustion that sets in like a disease
it continues just the same as though it does not know what death is all about

the passion that makes us alive but which kills us though
a drug that forgets time’s race against itself
this passion that does not know who are friends and who are enemies
leveling people like a straight line of the horizon
where the sun finally sets
and dies with the
darkness of the night

this is the last thing about passion
it finally meets eternity and somehow you just do not know it
when it comes and takes you away to its permanent home

RIC S. BASTASA
Passionate Journey

flowers along the way
we pick like children at play
i pick the pebbles too
and count from one to two
and two-some we throw
beside the pond to see
how splashing splashes
amidst the stillness of the night
on this passionate journey
the moon sees us
and the stars too
and oh, without the sorrow!

RIC S. BASTASA
Passivity

it is different now
gone where the days when i pursue a dream
forcefully

bombarding walls and breaking doors
and jumping even from high windows

it is futile
forcing ourselves is infantile

ah, the flower does not move
for unlike the birds it has no beak and claws and wings

yet, the sun loves it more than anybody else
slowly unfolding, its petals passive to the caress of the wind

there is no work to be done
a dream unfolds,

we watch with all anticipation
there, there is the satisfaction

RIC S. BASTASA
Past Pains

like a train
moving towards
a destination

past pains
fuel of my future

one takes them all
cures the fall
ushers the soul
to the goal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Patay Na Intawon

dili na nato
awayan ang iyang
kamatayon

labaw na nga
dili na nato awayan
ang iyang paglubong

nindot na ang
panagbulag
kita buhi pa gihapon
siya patay na intawon...

RIC S. BASTASA
Paternity

beside the house
he sits on an inclined rattan chair
his feet rest on a graveled ground
his head focuses on
a rooster beside
a chicken leading its chicks
to feed on rice hulls
spread under the
mahogany tree

how many months pass
when the two were
put here?

oh the rooster has
fathered a dozen chicks
and proud perhaps
he crows loudly
announcing his
paternal joy!

RIC S. BASTASA
Paths

there are so many paths
and there is only me
and with you
there are only two of us

please do not take mine
it is too narrow
please do not go with me
i am simply
not comfortable with anybody

RIC S. BASTASA
Pathways Of Life

i walk the
straight path and no
one noticed me,

the straight path
is the most ordinary one
you can have here

at first it was boring
when no one
notices you

so i tried the twisted
path
the one that is crooked
from bottom to
top

the old women scolded
me and the old men said
i am a
big disappointment

the men and women of my
generation
still did not mind

they are busy
taking their own paths
and these are the
paths
which are neither crooked
nor straight

sometimes we look at each
other
and we nod
without saying a word
we feel
that we perfectly understand each other all along

there are paths you know which are neither wrong nor right

ey simply have to be trodden

RIC S. BASTASA
Patience

the ability to be
with the person
you love
and have all
the opportunities
for both of
you
a dark night
a private room
an anonymity
and yet
you do nothing
except to
have a nice conversation
some laughter
and then when it
is time
you simply touch
the hand
and say
goodbye

RIC S. BASTASA
Patience Of A Big Brother

i am so sorry
for your hunger
you see
i still have to apologize
for eating
my share of the family cake

with you
younger brother
i still have to admit and be sorry
even for your own
mistakes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Patience, Patience
	he child with a black coat
on this cold day
sits there beside a brick
church of spanish
architecture

the yard is quiet except
for the sound of the flapping
of doves feedind on some
rice grains

the boy has a black hair
and his feet are stained with
mud his fingers dirty with
some sticky sauce

he spreads the rice grains
from his palm to the
muddy grounds

the doves hover and land
on the spot where the grains
are freely spread

he sits with them
surrounded

the doves are watching him
and he watches carefully each
dove that eyes on his grains

he likes to snatch just one
to bring home to mother

the doves are too careful
it is just the rice grains nothing more

eye to eye
both wait for what shall happen next
Patterned...

i must remember
we all love sunsets
we waited in fact
when it comes
by the sea sometimes
or on the grounds of
the university
we face the mountain
of curves and we
are silent...
we know what doubts are
and we make promises
never shall we be this and
that..............we shall only
be what they want us to be
what is likable
and acceptable.....we are so naive
and young and
so innocent.....when ages come like
layers of earth for
each kind of deluge
we accept we are wrong

we only have to be us
we do not have to be what they want us to be
because we have become
so unhappy.......after all those years we meet again
on the grounds of the university
waiting to another sunset....
we hate one another now
we have assumed patterns
we have common shapes
we are almost identical
all unhappy pieces of their art
........we finally shy away
parting....we hate sunsets
more than ever......
we forget our names
we did not have any.....well anyway...
who are you?
and where are you going?

how sad and tragic
these patterns
these common pieces
these us and them...

RIC S. BASTASA
Patterns

we look for patterns of success
and we look at their lives
those who made it
to the top
and those who amassed what fortunes
are there
on this earth available to all those
whom you think
deserve

the efforts and strategies
the patience and hard work

you find yourself without a dime
homeless and
deprived

there are not patterns
not even luck

there are only those who are there and do nothing
and yet they get all

fame and glory and fortune
you ask yourself today

what have i done to deserve all these?
God has no answer.

kneel and just pray.
Your fate will always be yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Patterns....

at the airport
the big difference is shown
you must have noticed it
as simple as
go your way and i go on my own way too
both seemingly saying

'good! for i don't care! '

what we showed was correct in a way
that smile that means nothing
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pause 6

pause
silence
more silence

it is my belief that in times of our silence
when we pause a little bit
from so much talk
and (nonsense)

we simply let God pass
and we pause some more sensing this air of holiness this divinity
that is simply
not found in ourselves

malice sometimes gets shamed
and we are silenced

but i know with our caliber, it will not be for long
we talk again
unceasingly as though the words in this world will be out

and there is no more word
left for tomorrow

(oh, what a lot of nonsense!)

let us pause again, i am a little bit tired
for once let us be silent and be happy within the confines
of our soul

leave me alone

RIC S. BASTASA
poetry
does not stop
cannot stop
you
it does not kill
cannot
two violins
blend
a love song
life
aspirations
heavenly
bliss

how can you
be out of tune?

RIC S. BASTASA
Paying Tribute To Depression

you grow seeds of sorrow
on the earthen pots
i don't know if you grow them for me
so i may see what buds what flowers
have sorrows
days and years
they have become trees of your depression
i have seen how you thank
each leaf and twig
for all the poems spread to the winds
of change to the fields of time
filling in each space each furrow
each empty interstices in your marrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace

i

there was this myth
about the lost sandal in Lake Lanao
that unless it is found
peace cannot be recovered

ii

i remember about what the little boy did
the hero
when he lost his slipper to the river
he then threw the other one

iii

you see
what he was driving might be
that peace is a wholesale matter
take all
or nothing
it is either you have peace
or you have war
there is nothing in between
their diplomacy

whatever is found in between
there is only hypocrisy
there is only strategy

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace And Happiness

For the things that you cannot have
For people who cannot be with you
For love that leaves and dies
Tell yourself, they are never meant
To be yours

For the things you have now
Tell yourself that that they are meant
To be shared
For persons who are with you
They are meant to be cherished
For love that stays and grows
Let them be
Water them with your care and
Love them too with a love
That is meant to be
Long lasting, forever, eternal...

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace And Propriety

in the name of propriety
to cats we must be cats too

you know what happens when
we show to the cats that we
are really dogs in feelings and
actions,

there will be a chase of course,
and chaos, and there will be war
and there will be losers and
winners,

and in this matter
and manner of speaking we choose
to be dogs to assure that we win

but that is not always the case
the cats have advanced in their feline
technology and breeding

so my dear, let us just be proper
to cats we shall be cats
and make this world a happy place
for all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace In The Garden

now, all the jolojano
chickens are behind bars
and the flowers are at peace
the leaves confident
the roots are stable

now you take one of them
for a celebration

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace Is A Demanding Goddess.

now she does not
require white doves
or sheep
or even a cow
which you have to
slaughter before
her majesty

she requires
even betrayal
an ambush
a ruse, a brutal killing,
include the children
and the women
and even the unborn

you will see all these
terror and horror
of those hours

and that will be the test
if you really
wanted peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peace Man

when this war
begins
do not blame the
leaves of
history books for

they have not neglected
us with their
strong words printed
in the boldest of
all letters

a man is letting go a
caged pigeon
a woman is wearing a
crown of
butterflies

with those fragile fingers
on their bosom
they had been telling us

MAKE LOVE
NOT WAR

RIC S. BASTASA
Peacefully, Perfectly...

when mother
was in the hospital
and she was
dying...but yet
unable to accept this
fact of life,

i held her hands
closer to my chest
assured her that
there is nothing really
to worry for we
can manage our own
troubles,

and i told her more
about a beautiful angel
waiting for her at the door
who shall guide her towards
her own room in heaven and

that was how she closed
her eyes to eternity
peacefully, perfectly...

RIC S. BASTASA
Pebble Justice

he picks up a pebble
and throws it into the sea
from a cliff
he asks: this is not a place
for pebbles
so this is not a pebble
i will return it to the sea
and be with the sands
and shells and
waves and winds
and seaweeds
and crabs

does he not wonder at all
if he has the power to decide where a pebble must be?

sometimes people assume so much
behaving like a god

must he think a little deeper and realize
that what is proper for the people  is not proper for a pebble
that pebbles too have minds of their own
and who know if the same pebble to thinks
that the cliff is not the place of man
assuming to be its own god?

must he be considerate enough that pebbles too have
their own invisible feet
and well developed brains
and that when the man throws it into the sea
on the ground only of
impropriety
that the pebble may have objected it vehemently and could have
used its own hidden powers
but only that it did not show it
by reason of pity that this man
is so dumb
and so limited
in the flesh of its
own selfish
understanding?

does he not know that a pebble too demands respect
have privacy
and soon shall take its
inevitable revenge?

'bury mankind! they have thrown us away
without our consent' that is their clamor now
in their own
Pebble Court using their Pebble law
to be judged later
by their Pebble Magistrates.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pedicab Driver

take a ride
he pedals you
to progress

RIC S. BASTASA
Pedring

when you said you were coming
the men have already prepared the boats
and the women
their food for the kids

when the clouds drift away and
comes the darker ones
the roads have become deserted
and the city as silent
as a cemetery

nevertheless they know when you come and rage
and everything has prepared for the worst

trees fell last night
the boulevard cracked
and engines of cars drowned

and then the rains fall
all eyes stare forming images

that eventually do not come true
i sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pedro....

the seven year old
orangutan
takes the grape from
the fat woman's lips
barely 18,

perhaps her wish
is to see Pedro turn
into a real man
so he can have her
for dinner.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pee Itch

this is the only
hiding place
a resting place
from so much
unrest

this is my refuge
away from
religion

this is my secret garden
away from pollution

i pee here
and i itch here

i undress myself
and you love it

i do not speak that
much i only write

you keep on hearing
and searching

we meet here
without seeing each other

we laugh
without hearing the laughter

and when we leave
we know

something is left
but we are not certain what it is
exactly
Peeling Life Layer By Layer

like onions
(let me say this again
on an overused cliche)
we peel our lives
layer by layer and we shed
tears

i have done it
and (let me say this once again)
i arrive at the core and
whew! (did you notice it?)
there is nothing worth seeing
there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pen Light

it is in the movie house
where the pen light gets more of its relevance
you figure out the seat
with its slit of light
as you ascend
as you find that emptiness
right in front
of you behind the darkness
that you have
chosen

in broad daylight
when everything runs carefree
and obvious
nothing seems to be right
everything goes berserk
awry

sometimes i equate darkness with
being cautious
that with such a tiny light
one cannot stumble

like what the pen light does
too tiny
and yet we can never think
that we can do wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pencil Sketch

sometime in 1985
you sketched an eagle
beside an egg
its newly hatched carbon copy

you wrote there
'for another flight! '
(muling paglipad)
beside it is a computation
40 x 3 = 120

can't really figure out what that means
but one thing i am sure of
you miss those college days
when law was still new to you
when everybody was a complete stranger

now in the land of the snow
a mango seed is buried

but deep in my mind
i sense that difficulty thinking

how can a mango tree, if there shall ever be,
thrive on the harshness of the frost?

RIC S. BASTASA
the hours passed
i was just sitting
just sitting and the hours passed
as i did not bother looking at my watch
and time too in its patience with all my curiosities
in those dwindling pathways of thought and provocations
self-imposed like a punishment of myself for doing something less than perfect intolerant still of my shortcomings i am and will always be forgiven for growing the white beards putting more wrinkles to my hands, listening, passive, doing nothing and by being so have completed everything, in a longing that longs no more....

RIC S. BASTASA
Penumbral Grace

partial shadow
between regions of full shadow
(the umbra)

umba! umba! umba!
umba! umba! umba!

and full illumination,
cast by Earth,
the Moon,
during an eclipse.

caramba! caramba! caramba!
caramba! caramba! caramba!

partial lunar eclipse,
a portion of the Moon's disk
remaining within the
penumbra of Earth's shadow

the rest is darkened
by the umbra
grayish outer part

a sunspot.
Compare

umba! umbra! umbra!
umba! umbra! umbra!
umba! umbra! umbra!
umba! umbra! umbra!
umba! umbra! umbra!

shower me the grace
of your Umbra Oh Lord!

RIC S. BASTASA
People Change In Victory....

if he wins
and he won
he will not
be all alone
just like
what we have
who we did not
really expect
to win but he
won, and like
the other one,
all bastards,
and now so kind.

RIC S. BASTASA
People Have Their Own Versions Of Truth

it is anger
that justifies their
expulsion of the truth

there is only one truth
i suppose

but in the court
truth becomes a sixteen-headed
monster
and each head keeps on saying
i am the one

one by one
reasons slew each head
until the single truth
comes out
alive

on a tongue of fire
it burns us all

RIC S. BASTASA
People Of Yesteryears

it is nice to meet people
of yesteryear
saying hello and then the
usual
how's life
how are you doing
and then they rush
for something else
their cars are waiting
or the plane's flight
is an hour before
they're always going to be late
i do not expect much
i understand perfectly
this is a case of islands
existing but not fusing
touching no one
and no one touches no one
goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
People Swim Dive And Die....

those who
understand
do not ask
why you have
been throwing
all those
diamonds away

diamonds are
useless pieces
of glowing stones
thrown into
the sea

and those who
know your reasons why
fully understand
this wisdom

on the deepest
part of that sea
people swim
dive and die....

RIC S. BASTASA
People's Indifference

people who pass
by the house
always stop a while
taking time
to look at the window
which is closed
the whole day
the stairs still have
dry leaves
at the back of the house
a boy is screaming
the fence is closed
and a white dog is yelping
wanting to go inside
as people pass by the house
stop a while take time to
have a glimpse
and then leave
doing nothing about it

RIC S. BASTASA
Pepe

i think you are lost,
living in that alien country
that refuses to
acknowledge your presence

home is crying to have you
dying to embrace you
happy of the thought that soon his son shall come back
and be in her skirt again

you are lost, indeed,
you are crying, so bad that you cannot see the world because of your tears
you are sad and indisposed
everything is wrong with you now
the surroundings want you ousted
they like to throw you out of their fences

but you are doing nothing about it.

so? good luck, take care, and well,
be good always

RIC S. BASTASA
Pepe...

he poured all his dollars
on fake brands

RIC S. BASTASA
Perfect

explains the swan
everything is a mistake
it is perfect

RIC S. BASTASA
Perfect Crime

the walls have as always been mute
the lizard who sees it left to another ceiling where
there are more mosquitoes
the curtains are dirty too
and dusts and stains make a good companion
and so the only witness left
to testify about the crime that has just been committed is this
cockroach

no one believes what it is telling
no matter how truthful can it be

and with one stroke of the insecticide spray
everything is erased away

the walls wish for a tongue
the lizard comes back and has nothing to tell
the mosquitoes are inside its belly
the curtains are tied with a rope
the dusts are blown by the wind
the stains fabricate another companion

a funeral for the cockroach is done
i am present there, and i too have nothing to say
about the murder

pure white magnolias are laid
on the ground
on that bright day
it rains....

RIC S. BASTASA
Perfect Match

warm chocolate
in a cup
beside a toasted
whole wheat
bread
on a rainy
day
and a poem
to read
silently

RIC S. BASTASA
Perfection

it is
just too good to be true,
man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps A Poem For The Recent Violence In Paris

the numbers of the dead
are many
and that is in the place of
your dreams
one of those found in your
bucket list
this place called Paris

the world mourns and presidents
expressed their words of
sympathies urging all the people
to keep this peace
about the madness of the few
and the persistence of violence
of the misguided

i will be spending more time on
CNN
and perhaps i may shed some tears
too and even express my deepest
sympathy for those who were mercilessly
killed while drinking beer in the pub
or watching football or intently with
ecstasy listening to the concert of the hall

meanwhile in the interior places of Olingan & Galas
and Sinaman
some farmers are busy harvesting their golden
grains for drying later under the sun which
after some days shall be kept in their camarins

meanwhile some children bathe in the river
and then catch fish and go home whistling
some native mothers are singing lullabies for
their babies to sleep soundly on their cribs
the winds blow in the mountains
the trees are at peace on the plains
the carabaos and goats and cows graze
upon the lushing grass on the side of the hills
meanwhile another a lover waits under the
coconut trees for an anticipated tryst
as the woman of his dreams is still washing the dishes as
her father is about to sleep after a hard day's
work in the farm somewhere in Sinuyak

they have no CNN and no worry about what
this world shall become

i should have envied them i suppose
but how can i really?

RIC S. BASTASA
	here is no intention
to compete
it is just by coincidence
that we meet
and i begin to notice how
beautiful are you

objectively you are ugly
and i blame myself for such
a low standard
but there it is
this amazement why such an ugliness could still trigger
desire

at this point in time
logic fails
what matters most is this
feeling that i am alive
and that i desire you

perhaps at night after making
love with you
i can write objectively what
is real from what is not.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps I Am Just Tired

at first
i may feel sorry for you

it does not linger somehow
there is no ash in my forehead

on a second thought
i feel proud of myself for having told you the truth

we can be blessings
in disguises having given you pain

at night when i am all alone
i think about it

i feel like a bow
life size

with all strength that i have mustered
i shoot you in that darkest night of your life

i feel the speed
it is more godly or godlike

there is divine contempt in me
but with all my good intentions

i tell myself
it is all for you....for you...all for you.

when i did it, i never thought of a name or a face
i did not even think of myself.

last night i rest my head on a pillow
i had a very sound sleep....perhaps i am just tired.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps I Should Have Asked The Right Questions

PERHAPS, i ask myself
again

is it the fact that you
have given importance to yourself that
you begin to fear?

what fear is that? to lose face?
to find yourself at the edge and then it is so light
and the wind from the sea blows it away?

why do you struggle so much about a humanity which can be
erased at any instance?

why do you struggle about a self that can be taken anytime
even for not reason at all?

there is no charge and there will be no trial.
at the next door that closes you will thrown away like
a tenant who has not paid the rent regularly

Perhaps, i ask myself again,
i must not have asked the right questions so i have not obtained
the correct answers.

Perhaps i have valued much someone who has no value at all.
Which can be tossed anywhere anytime. Which has
no specific destination.

Which it stops breathing, and buried, nothing shall be heard about
itself anymore.

Not even history shall remember you. History itself in the final
day, is, too,
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps Just To Myself Alone.....

perhaps to leave a mark
of what i am
i must leave a memory of
us,
but it is not just possible

there is no us

we're like lovers who
got entangled in the arms of
foreign cities

so perhaps to leave a mark
without us

i can just write and write
anything i wish

anything i can imagine that
could have been a possibility

or perhaps i can tell you
that the best i can do is to accept
that without you my life
can still be a beautiful thought

whatever,
i still must a leave a mark

a kiss on the earth's surface
that perhaps you can
feel

sometimes i laugh at myself
awed by the
wonders of my
own grasping about what is this
loneliness
all about
perhaps after i have crossed this
border
i shall remember

perhaps alone i can smile in the
mirror
and then finally
tell it all

whatever, perhaps just to myself alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps She Did Not Really Want To Solve It

i think so.

she puts gasoline
and lights it

everything gets burned
in the process

i hear her wild laughter
before she gets finally charred.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps This Is What Aristotle Really Meant

Just explored the extreme right
and i am about to break
into tiny pieces
which i think i may soon find
too hard to
recollect, and so just as i had
the extreme left
which broke my leg
i shall now tread the middle
of these choices
into the shades of moderation
where i can make both ends
meet somewhere into what i shall
call as
myself.

perhaps this is what
Aristotle really meant

half human half God
half bird half frog.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps This Way

perhaps in this way
as i take you into so much
familiarity
i may soon forget you
and so i take you like i am
having breakfast
and lunch and dinner
like i am washing my face
and feet
or my having to take a bath
everyday
every night
like you are water and soap to
my existence
but to no avail
you are still a diamond ring
kept so near
to the beatings of my
lousy heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps To Basho The Twins Are Boring

He himself does not want
To be imitated

Too boring like
A melon cut into half
Mirroring each other

Aren’t these twins
Boring?

Or Basho was just envious
He may be a poet of his age

But his poems never bore
Him a son

Or a mirror of his own face.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not that you are not
beautiful and witty

truth is you are
truth is that you are like a garden of sweet flowers
and bees come looking for your comfort
your nectar

truth is you are as logical as the order of this universe
and so there are no collisions of planets and stars
no chaos

you ask me to love you
oh, i am flattered and i feel that i do not deserve your
kind attention

you cry like a mad woman deprived of reason
and you run to the streets like a car without a brake fluid
and people blame me for all these mess

i am cruel

let me tell you
why i cannot love you as you want me to

you are always a reminder of her
and our past and i am still struggling over said storm
over such rage

and i still feel like i am drowning man and
i swim hardly enough and there is no island near me where i can possibly land
my mind and heart and rest
and then save myself

there is always this unexplained mystery of
fear

and i still move my arms like a butterfly
one winged hoping still that
i may live and then perhaps have the chance of loving you

RIC S. BASTASA
perhaps
when one is conscious of
an impending death,

time becomes a
line thinning into
lips sealing
itself

one falls out of
words

settles upon a chasm
of silence

trying to forget
what good is there that remains
in life

imagining what is next
a door that opens
to someone waiting bringing light
upon his hands

signaling you to follow
and never look back

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps, I Expect Too Much From You....And So Here
I Am Feeling So Disgusted

words flowed
like some reunited letters lately

the concepts come out
from the mind

still like words, syllables conjoining
there are no images still

i wait, i am waiting, i keep on waiting
like a commuter of a train

perhaps i have expected too much from
you
something graphic
like sun rising from a hill
in the full majesty of its
inborn light

after i have read
everything that you have written for years
following each like
the running ticking seconds
of the hour

i feel so disgusted

stalks without flowers
ladies stuffed like mummies

mountains bald deprived of the
green and yellows

there is a world without
sky and sun and sea and dolphins

a patch of light without
a hue

i want to see those prisms
refractions

interactions of colors inside
the depths of
our souls

perhaps i have expected too much from you
and so i am disgusted

give me your world
i will scatter it with stars tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
i like the way you imagine yourself to be more rooted to earth.
As though, earth is all the wealth we can have.
As though, what is in heaven is more or less the same as this earth can offer.
You mention about stem cell therapy.
It is like saying that you want to be here forever
Live life and if there is a chance never to die
or if there is this Second Coming
that you must be one of those counted not to die and still witness
the coming of the Lord in Glory.
You shall meet God without the pain of dying.
That is a good idea.

For how long do you stick to this ambition of painlessness?

You know what a tree is? Sometimes they are cut
Then made into planks
Sawed into desired measurements
Planed into a desired smoothness
Lacquered
Only to be made into another
nich
or coffin.

I like the way you love life.
Perhaps even love it forever.
I have it and will be having it in its fullness.
I guess i have arrived at the point of just not wanting it anymore.
Not that i will end myself,
that is definitely far from
it,

I am just excited and i want that this waiting be not that long.
I wonder how is it to travel with my own
Gossamer wings
in those unknown skies
into those
uncharted oceans of
spaces.
Perhaps by then I can fly to Venus
and perhaps I shall tell you that there are more lives
and views
and perspectives
in there.

More beautiful than you can imagine.
perhaps, I can tell
you
later.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perhaps.......  

HE HAD been all to obliging

in fact he has become more of a dog to you as his Lady

Gaga as you throw a stick on the air he runs as fast as he can to catch that stick and carry it back to you with all that wagging tail

and you laugh and you consider all these as nothing but part of the show that game that slavery of emotions and tangling

and Lady Gaga you are, as complete as an imitation of all the fakes,

meanwhile he is in the state of your hypnotism but always remember no one is asleep all the days of his life and soon when he wakes up

he shall puke in front of you and curse you and i dare not look at what happens next

at the end, hopefully, may the end be well, may it not deviate from the usual formula of an acceptable movie: happy ever after, perhaps

RIC S. BASTASA
Period Of Adjustment

In haste you accept me like
Whirlwind
Romancing the cliffs and stone

Then we settle for the nest of
An eagle
Up there where no one climbs
The eggs are safe

What have I become of myself?
Something you feed on
I am still this fish
With scales and gills
Unable to adapt to your lungs and beaks
and your threatening claws
and wings

RIC S. BASTASA
Permit Me To Say It

alright, we are short of the patience
to understand,
let us talk, let us remove the condition
of having to talk with sense,
that is not important anymore
we talk together, let there be no
objective of having to understand
what is this
or what is that
what do i mean and what do you mean
it is at this point when both of
us are angry
very angry indeed
let us scream and shout
let the neighbors hear that we are at war
they will not understand
neither will i understand this
let the pressure rise
and let that be released
that is what is important
we scream together
and if everything is gone
and done
let us talk again
this time, i will be patient
and this time you must
also try to listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peroration At 5: 43 A.M.

the mountains may howl like wild dogs of the desert nights
but wake up, focus, and listen
for in reality they are not but only creations of the fears of your mind
sounds are as deceiving as the limitations of the eye where

the hands skilled in deception can very well deceive the deceiver
of things that you must understand do not attempt to overwork
things settle, mud in water, dust on leaves and furniture
keep on waiting like a monk facing the first morning light

let things simmer, let your tongue savor the breathing of the soul
be the patient receiver, indulge in the luxury of silence,
no one knows perfectly what is right, what is good, what is beautiful
everyone are relatives, as everything is, one point of view to another

one's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist
one woman's lover is another woman's infidel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peroration This Morning...

When this world ends
(which i honestly think does not)
Let all the choirs of angels in the Heavens
sing
(do you still believe about those angels?)
When you end
(translate as dying or
died; which i think is also sure to come
everyone dies anyway)
your life, for sure, i bring my own dues
to you: white flowers and some
catholic prayers and candles
and your favorite
rice cakes and
coca-cola soft-drink)

when i die
someday
(never mind the exact date)
i will wear the best smile i have
and my face
(since i cannot speak anymore
understandably)
shall send you the message
that I have also done all the things
that i have always wanted to do
that i have written all my
assigned poems
that i have followed all the orders
and commands
that i had lapses too
(but i have always been forgiving
to myself
understanding all my
limitations and
strengths)

that i have indulged in so many
restraints
to please my God and Earth and
Sky
that i have lived in the light
and savored some little
shadows of doubts
and felt the coldness of
darkness too

that i have lived fully as a human being
and that when my last breath is given
that i have already prepared myself
to the next stage
ready for the next house
available
for all the comings and goings of
the changes of
our seasons

and that for all the things that i have not
felt and known
and understood
I leave them all
in the mercies of
God.

Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peroration To A Friend Who Is Finally Free

i have always wanted
 to write this
 but i feel sorry for myself
 always forgetting
 it at the end
 of my usual work

a busy day

i am reminded of you
 as you explained yourself to me
 at the third floor
 of the academe

beyond us a row of trees
 a path filled with stones to solve a flood
 there were no birds
 it was late in the afternoon and
 the sun was slowly setting giving us
 the feeling of
 a fading day

the one that makes us feel the
crawling of age in our foreheads
we are not getting any younger
i told you

you are busy enumerating what
happened
what you love most and how this loved most thing
rejected you

you roam the city at night
living life in the arms of darkness that does not really care
what happens
afterward

you love the toilet
you want to make it your home
i am surprised with
dthis kind of revelation
but somehow i am having hints

and the surprise
slowed down like a car
about to arrive at its
parking area

you reminded me of things that really delight the senses
the tickling feathers of the armpit

of times that must set us free like prisoners
in the desert where we are so thirsty of
rain
that does not arrive as
expected

so we content ourselves with the moon at night
and some
dreams of oasis
and palm trees and
black Bedouins
and big and tall horses
of an Arab king

we spill the sands in our
fingers
and breathe
the scent of jasmine
and dates

i do not wish to get away from this thing
that i have long wanted to write

for the simple purpose of informing you
that i do not work
on happy thoughts anymore

i do not target happiness like a dart to a
red dot
i do not bet on some lotto numbers
i do not dream getting to be a millionaire one day

hitting the jackpot is no longer
my cup of tea

i learned this: those that delight us do not make us
healthy most of the times

after a taste of the dropp of the sap from the
forbidden tree
or its fruit
which is so attractive in its
red ripeness,

you begin to weaken
to the poison of
a momentary desire

oh, it is so temporary if you
accept it

there were many times, and i always remember them
when i close my eyes
after midnight
when we are so exhausted about the search
that pursuit of
happiness

when as an
afterthought
i begin to settle for the quadrants and numbers

i have been mathematical in my approach to life
in fact
more legalistic about it

what is sweet to the tongue eventually
ruins the teeth
what tickles the heart wounds it a bit

sometimes in fact
seriously that you think you cannot recover from pain

you waddle in misery like
a buffalo to a pool of mud

now i am into the codes of existence
that laws are made purposely to give us the guide to the right path

it is not the pleasure
principle that works

it is the gaze into what is good
and right and just

though it may be
so bitter
but it remains to be
so beautiful
in fact

i have not told you everything yet
and i do not wish that you understand this
but i must tell you

i have chosen my own time and place
and i am happy

you may tell me i am not myself
that this is not my rightful place

i live here and i am going to defend it
you go where desire
where your heart takes you
you are free, you brag about your freedom

let me know how freedom
defends you
how your heart falls into
boredom sometimes
and changes like
the seasons of this
earth

(you should have known that freedom is a responsibility
a choice that you make in the oceans of choices
and that is where pains are most self-inflicted

know, that your choices may not at all be right
because you are guided by your own emotions)

that is a matter of my personal opinion
i treasure it,
it is mine and
mine alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Perorations On Late Evening

i thought i have nothing to say anymore
it’s because i have said much and someone who listens
must be pestered,

this man is saying nonsense, how come he has always something to say?
a to z, agitated to zipped.

i myself, am amazed
why i do not cease, where did all these parrots and monkeys come from?

am i simply parroting? am i not a monkey making noise?
what for?

there is a disturbance,
this sickness that is looking for a cure from words

i do not intend to make paper herons
thousands of them so i may recover
and be whole again

splinters, graffiti
a shower of tiny paper cuts
in different colors falling out from the 17th floor
mistaken as
a celebration from the passers-by

i always have something to say for as long as the words live
for when words are said, i continue living

smoke from the train, it always gives it the impression of motion
like the smoke from your mouth
those who see it are happy, ...you are still alive and
they can now sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Perseverance

little flower with
deep blue petals
blooming
on white desert
sands

RIC S. BASTASA
Persistence Of Love...

there will be no flowers
on my head
no laurels

this does not however
make me stop

to praise the sun and
whisper love still
to the regal moon.....

RIC S. BASTASA
this person
comes to the house
rings the bell
and opens the door

there is nudity on the face
that i see
something inside me boils
because there is fire
at my bottom

then this person tells me
something
that i already know

something light and does not
bother me (I think so)
there is nudity in the body
and when this person turns
so i can see the back
of the body

what i see are two dimples
that tonight bother me

i am struck
i am stirred
the potion finally works inside me
i am not in love
how can i ever be in love again

i am lustful
seeing those two dimples at the back
that leave me
awed at the beauty of the flesh
this sin this greed
unsaturated.
Personal Touch

even if i have to see through
your eyes to see
the same moon and stars
tonight
there will still be a difference
how beauty is felt
how the loveliness is said
for always there will be a personal touch

the soul i have always shall find
a way to flicker
much like a star that you will point
so different from the rest

like the star that i have so loved and lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
after a hard day
the day of the letters and convoluted thoughts
i glance upon the pages
of the virtues of
lust...smooth skins, beautiful lines
flowering into curves,
butts and in betweens shaved by the razor
of art, hairless
and so alluring to the hairs of my senses
my armpits giggling
my saliva excited so excited about what i can
touch in the mind of the
tired day...this is the start of selfish pleasure
so convenient
nothing to dress for
so cheap
after
it lulls me to sleep and dream

tomorrow i will be out again on a rough journey
after the pleasure
of my lone body.

Ric S. Bastasa
Pessimism

the hands of pessimism
touch the arms of the overconfident
and somehow
creates the scenes of vigilance
and though
nothing that bad happens
the consolation is there
like
sometimes my dear things like these
do happen
and we have no right to complain
these things are like the seasons
spring and autumn
winter and summer
day and night
like the faces we wear on occasions
of our human affairs

do you see how my eyes have put
upon themselves
the correct lenses? not for me to see clearly
but for me
to close my eyes and rest and sleep

only for a while, for soon i shall be prepared
for another crying game.

RIC S. BASTASA
Petal Attraction

this
the bee cannot
deny.

RIC S. BASTASA
Peter Patter...

i must not be stupid enough to know that
i am stupid but stupid or not i must realize
that stupidity is not that stupid
sometimes it has flashes of wisdom
wears its whiskers
smokes pipes and
wipes that stupid look that makes other wonder
it is just the look?
or the spook?

RIC S. BASTASA
Petite

I met this petite lady
she was still on her second year
of a nursing course
when her aunt retired as domestic helper
in bakau

she had to take over
the employer paid for her passport and documentation

she works there for two years
vacuuming carpets
washing dishes
dusting off walls and windows
taking care of a baby
and sometimes cooks for visitors

she is round
and will do everything just to earn
her money
and please her parents
back home

she is 25, too young to be a family bread
winner
and an export labor
a heroine for another
locally written novel

she has her boyfriend back in mandaue waiting
but he could not meet her at the airport

her parents do not want her to marry
the jobless
Pinoy

'home for good', she says when she bids us
goodbye
deep inside me
i wish her independence

i know that happiness
is too elusive

but anyway i wish her that
too

RIC S. BASTASA
Petry En Masse

like bread in bakeries
like automobiles from factories
like pizzas in boxes for delivery
like ordinary figurines for sale
like drugs in the pharmacy
like pineapples in the farm
like apples in a basket
like inhalers in the nose
like manufactured gadgets
spoons and forks and kitchen utensils
mass produced
without the romance of the personalized work
the interaction of the mind
with the body and soul
must art be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Phainomenon

i like it when it is like it
i see you when i see you
i perceive you and i will not use any word
and reduce you as a poem
or a piece of literature
you appear to me and i look at you
i will say nothing but i will only feel you
when you leave you leave and i will not say goodbye
because it is this philosophy that works for me
that must work for me
i see you when i see you and there will be no goodbyes
there will be no plans for the next tryst
there are no schemes for the next hello
perchance we see each other again in a dream
or in an illusion
then it will be like it as we feel liking it
for i am a bound man and you are a chained woman
and next time when we see each other again
we may always pretend that there was never was

so it is like this, i see you when i see you
there are neither hellos nor goodbyes

and it is this kind of arrangement and understanding
that we shall keep this love burning
till then, somewhere, somehow, when the feelings remain
to be true to their respective callings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Phenomenology

there is more happiness
to seeing a flower
bloom
on its stem

rather than
pick it
and put
it in a
vase

there is more
to a bird
that flies in the air
than keeping
it in the
comfort of your
hands

there is more
to watching the
world go by
and let
your eyes see
the passing
of each moment
rather
than freezing
the moment
either
in mourning
or even
in bliss

there is more to seeing
than thinking
and dissecting
why things happen
why they ought
not to happen

there is more to this spectator
who marvels
at the beauty of the full moon
and the peace
seen in the silvery river
rather than the
analyzing why the moon is full
and why the river
must be silvery

there is more to life
sitting down than standing and running
and conquering and owning

there is more
to the lotus rather than the fish
and the bird and the cow and the snake
or the spaceship
or the weapons of war
that you use
to control this world

there is more to peace
than bickering
and worry and painstaking
concerns

there is more to wonder
and wander
rather than speculating and
systematizing

there is more to nothing
than having everything
that your hands
cannot hold

see the seepage and the spill
there is really nothing much
to hold to keep and to cherish

let go then
the sands of our wishes and dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Phenomenon.....

there must be something that
we take with us
from a night. Not a fist this time.
Perhaps a hand keeping
a thing as fragile as a figurine
of a ballerina from
spain, or an egg of a quail
or could be
a flower, or something that
crumples like powder
a butterfly wing. Not a fist this
time please. Or a sigh. Or
something that pollutes the freshness
of the mind, at dawn, when we try
our hands ready to return what
was taken from one a bright morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Phenomenon

beside the sea
darkness fades away

streaks of lights between
cocoanut leaves

a warmer sea breeze
ciaressing my body

footsteps washed away
by the early morning waves

so gently
my soul slips away

RIC S. BASTASA
Philosophy As A Poem

it was all philosophical
one side of it was clearly phenomenological
(which leans on the pedagogical)
and the old lonely people listened as though he was playing his violin
the music pierces their weary hearts and the silence seemingly
agrees that they all need to die,
'this is the exit' he points to an absurd door which looks like
a wing,
and when they get near the wing flaps like the seasons of the times.

those who are new to the place call it
poetry.

deep in my heart i know it isn't
because it is not magical and less musical than expected in
a sing-song structure of a lyric and
far from it
not porphyritic. whatever that means, it inserts itself in one
corner of my mind,

it was a wooden boat, blue and scorched,
floating on a very clear morning water,
preoccupied with its shadow like narcissus bending forever
towards itself and then

dies of that self-love
burning himself into the ashes of selfishness

but why is he remembered? why was he there?

RIC S. BASTASA
Philosophy Coming

philosophy always comes
when i drive my car alone and it is at night when ideas come like
visible fishes on a clear pond
i hear fins, and i see them glimmer like ideas
in my head

it is at the exact time when ripples come
and the water is disturbed and
mud becomes excited

you try to figure out what is in the making
this turbulence of mud in water and fish and ripple
creating one distinct world
of ironies and
chaos and it is when mud settles again when the water gets into
a form of film
that you are satisfied about clarity that you still miss

it comes after a muddy eddy
after a ripple and the calm comes back to you like the hand of
a missing loved one

caressing your hair as she arrives and pulls you gently to bed
to sleep and be rested

RIC S. BASTASA
Phoresy........

it was a case
of taking advantage of
a visa transport

you, girl, marrying
an old american
just to be in Wisconsin

and once there
you look for a job and
be on your own
and you write your mother
you left the old man
for good....

and who would be a
slave for no reason at
all?

you stoop to conquer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Photographers

ye go to placid lakes

to find the pictures of nature's best

tese fishers

of the faces of nature's bliss

the green marshes of the pond

the fading sun

the fish coming out of the water

a leaf floating

the pines blown by the wind

shall they capture too the scent

of the flowers?

the pungent snake hiding under

the rotten bark of trees?

RIC S. BASTASA
Photoshop

stepping upon a dome
on your giant foot
over-sized sneaker
man, you create another
world
you know it, an illusion
of size and grandeur
it is not there
i look at it
on a short glance
and then i fast
paced
open another page
looking for something
small
but at least true
something cheap but
at least
truly beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Photosynthesis

a light
traveler tired
rests upon
the smooth spot of
leaves,

there is something that
is eaten
but always not consumed

leaves grow more leaves
fruit upon fruit
are the hours
upon a tray of days

light leaves
the world lets darkness
sleep upon
its satisfied
bosom

RIC S. BASTASA
i know how busy you are
how stressed is every nerve
in your flesh
i say hello and you complain
about a lifestyle that you never choose
the work of a lifetime
service to God and mankind
outstanding woman
in the field of finding the cure
to human ills,

you blurt to all these weariness
at first i cannot believe it
you demanding outright sex inside your car
which i think is very unlikely of your stature
a woman known for her moral reservations
admired for her religious restraints
but here you are
wanting to through everything out of the window

i pity you and i do not refuse to serve
the goddess of humanity
it is crazy i keep telling myself silently
but this is reality with you

i kiss your hair
you suck everything that i have only for myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Physical Beauty....

just look
at the body
it is before
you, stretched
and shining
keep looking
adore
and feast
upon this
human thing
of pomp
and beauty
go near
and feel just

do not listen
to what is said
and how it
is said,

everything is
ruined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Physics

no matter how hard you push
if nothing moves
when distance is zero
no work is done

this is not the same with the spirit somehow
without distance
and without effort
through God's mercy
one still gets the door of heaven opened

RIC S. BASTASA
Physics And Love

do not ever think that parallel lines
never meet

that is what geometry is teaching
you, because it is all linear and straight and
cold

because the Pythagorean theorem
after all
has not proved that at the tips of
triangles
the possibility that a heart grows
is so remote
on a chance of
winning a lotto game
even

in quantum physics
light bends to the bosom of
space

in love too
distance does not matter
darkness bends
to light
kings kneel on the legs
of slaves
crowns fall

and tongues love
what ordinary mortals detest
licking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pictures

what we had are pictures

in black and white

like what we are

in real life in real undertakings

this world without color

without hope without affection

in black and white

how can i ever tear them?

they are old and so durable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Piercing

salmon slices
porcelain platter
wasabe sauce

RIC S. BASTASA
Piercing The Blue Sky

the flag pole
of this country makes love
to the freedom
in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Pigeons And The Woman With A Straw Hat

at the bus station
the white pigeons hover
on the morsels of bread
thrown by a brown boy
from a window

a woman with a straw hat
on mini skirt
long legged
short haired
steps out of the bus
carries a red bag
and slips away past the
merry eyes of
men

the boy's mother
closed the window

RIC S. BASTASA
Piles Of Books

on the table
the books pile up

i am a reader
of its content
who feels that
there is no time
anymore

that time is a small
child
on the lap of the books
that look
like mothers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pilipinas

pilipinas

scattered islands
endless shores
blue skies
green rivers
exotic talking birds
nipa huts
verdant mountains
fresh breeze
tall trees

of many creeds
and a million or so
brown people

they are leaving you
for America.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pillar Of The Morning

the sun always
rises
on the east.

that is the first
pillar of
my faith to move
on
to wake up
every morning
and feel
the warmth
of the first ray
on my palm.

there is always
a beginning
to begin with.

now, there is
another.

the first drop
do the rain

i expose my
tongue to taste
a blessing
from heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pinch

i look at my face wrinkles are being drawn like a plow making furroughs on the ricefield,

wrinkles, i am getting wrinkles,

i look at my arms and i touch it, they are loose now, like some clothes hanging loosely in my body, emaciated by lack of nutrition,

i look at my hear, i open it like a pettry cash box, i see some scars and some loose coins for change, i like to break it open and leave it that way, i am saddened by this emptiness, this pain,

i stand now in the mirror with a picture on hand of my youth

i look many times finding how time drenched me with old age, my hands beginning to tremble my mind forgetting more and more of those memories of my youth,

i refresh myself, i get this clip and pinch myself, i remember

i am still alive, and that is luck enough, a friend of mine just died today, cardian arrest, and i am trying to do some little thinking, what if i will be next?

i am finite, i pinch myself some more, some more, some more.....

till i turn blue, till i bleed, who cares?

RIC S. BASTASA
i am aware of two things:
what is done and what is said
they are couples estranged
one lives on the other side of the river
behaving like a fox,
the other lives in an island with lions
behaving like a squirrel,
it is hard to discern and pretend
as though nothing is happening
right under our noses
Pinocchio

RIC S. BASTASA
Pity The Violets

in the desert
some tiny flowers grow

the sands are blown by the wind
and we cover our eyes

we do not want to be harmed
we continue walking

in the desert some tiny
violets still grow as tiny as sand

no wind is that so cruel
to blow them all away

RIC S. BASTASA
Pity...

I have only pity for my poodle name Pretpret (ditty for Pretty)

It is always following me wherever i go and sit beside my feet so i can feel the warmth of its belly

It is expecting me to go for a walk this morning and it will be beside me guarding

But i am not taking my walk today

I still have to organize my thoughts and write some poems

I pity the sun Now it is shining without me

I pity the paths for it is empty without me

I pity the grass they spread their beautiful green without me

Don't you understand what pity means?

Oh, it happens when we are not with them because we prefer to be with words juggling with the letters playing with the sounds of syllables...
Now, i am going out
What pity does i feel for all the words?

I must pity the study room
for it is now empty

I must pity the books
they are now closed

I must pity the stairs
missing the sounds of my footsteps

and so on and so forth

feel it
the world is such a pitiful emptiness
without us

we can be noise and disturbance
sometimes
but the world knows
we are important
for without us
the world is nothing too
but God's useless
creation....

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain

spread. white.
thin. two x two.
rectangular,
you stretch your imagination.

open a scar again.
remove the cut.
undress.

open your lips.
pout.

kiss my feet.
rise.

kiss my head.
i will kneel

don't. please remain standing.

my tongue can do it.
only for you.

i cannot say a word.
tongue tied.

i am licking a stamp.
preparing this mail to a faraway lover.

i remember what licking is beside a stamp.

my feet are too small for this task. i may ask the help
of four hands.

i have only one
held by this hand.

too much silence here.
i have this thick blanket
and the wind is
too cold.

there is a point
that i toss with my nails

it rolls like a line
and

i am connecting to you
thighs. thighs.

strong legs, and a very warm
pair of lips.

how can i be numb?
you are far.
that is not fair.

i make love to you.
my mind is a traveller into that thousand nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Cacophony

when i walk alone Colon
i remember being treated for free barbecue
by my sister during her student days,
(it may not be important to you but it is
to me, for it was the first time that i have
had a free barbecue
with white rice wrapped by coconut leaves)

nothing significant really like it is an ordinary day
but there is one thing that i cannot tell you

i have seen stars there,
people who shine ordinarily without anybody knowing
that they are stars in their own right,

ordinariness felt
something that pleases you when you walk
and no one knows you

independent, open, nothing significant
you become real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Cat

i do not have the mood
for tautologies
and dialectics
and metaphors

so a cat is just a
cat and the printer
is just another printer
and the bloody ink
is just the plain
bloody ink on those
literal floors

but i like your
idea of the cat calling
for a cat's nap ang
perhaps a little pat
on her back

cats too have
birthdays and
metaphors may
convert them
to wives and
concubines

cats and moons
struck and grinning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Citizen Juan De La Cruz

he thinks he is part of the government,
correct,
he is part of the people whom the government taxed
taking his money
and later some of his property, his chicken, his pig, his carabao
his plow,
then the government enters into war
plain juan de la cruz becomes the soldier
killing another soldier
in the killing fields in the mine fields he will soon lose his arm
if not both his feet

plain juan de la cruz
then the rebels come, the insurgents, the belligerents
juan de la cruz is not in his house
his wife and children are now the pawns
the victims
the servants
the wife cooks for the comrades the child runs to the nearby store
to buy cigarettes and liquour
then they too will ask for the chicken, the pigs, the carabao,
the rice and some vegetables and beans and
a little money to support their cause

plain juan de la cruz
plain citizen, will he survive the war on both sides?

let us have a sandwich
for a metaphor, this poem looks like it,
plain de la cruz is in between

and he has no choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Description...

....and so i finally
found it,
this charm of simply
telling you
what is in my mind,
no extra color
nothing about perfume
just the plain
color of my skin
my sweat,
my fears, and wishes

it is like seeing stars
outside the house
and then coming back again
to your study table
and begin
writing about it, nothing added
but plain
description

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Rumors (But I Think, True)

Lady teacher meets girl

seven years they're on

one time
we chat
me and lady teacher

joke joke just plain jokes

i sent pictures of sexy women

bomb boobs sticky stares blonde hairs long legs welcome hands rose lips parting legs smooth hands nights that you can't forget promises of earthly pleasures flesh flesh flesh

girl gets angry

complaining that they are too dirty

at 19 she's crazy
receiving dollars from ma'am

and plays

innocent

ma'am gets divorced
from hubby and
takes in
son for good
junks husband
like
dirt

girl is boating that she
head to heels
with ma'am
i mean the lady teacher
with latent lesbian tendencies
now on forest fire

she is in love
with mama

give her the f sign

too young to be a sucker

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Silly

a red ant bites
her red fingernails
mistaking it perhaps
for strawberry
candies

RIC S. BASTASA
Plain Spring Onions

If you only see plain spring onions
put beside a plate with sunny side up
fried egg
by all means you are normal and
live simply like all the rest

but if you say otherwise: saying that it
is an ovum fertilized by sperms, and
make other stories like, a teenage girl
is having sex with her Philander, or
that Psyche had a love affair with Cupid,
or that to avoid unwanted pregnancies
the man should have used Trust condom
or that the woman should have used
pills, or that someone has been fooled
by another into meaningless sex,

if you have this sense of imagination,
then i have to welcome you here,
you are creative, and you are one of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Platonic

Two men naked
sleeping in bed
waking up at midnight
telling all stories about
love and affection
bodies touching
not a skin shakes
not a bone rattles

Back to sleep
To each his dream
After a tap on
the shoulder

RIC S. BASTASA
Platonic Love

don't mistake
the kind of
love that
plato offers
during
his times

you say
platonic
one that
is pure
and free
from lust
one
that merely
gazes
at the other
without
hormonal
considerations
nothing
chemical
but pure
feelings
of being
intimate
and
sweet

i hear
it once
that plato
also loves
boys

and he
must
have called
it
platonic

baloney

RIC S. BASTASA
Plausible

we resort to something plausible
to explain
our inner struggles
a pain that seems
endless
recurring
resting only on some
corners
for a while

we resort to something easy
to explain
our misery
and soon enough
we exhaust
everything plausible
we look
for openings to find
another entrance
of belief
a cool resting place
of faith
gaining a little insight
of confidences

some tell us
to get an anchor
i try this and that
only to find
myself again floatin
like a bouy
feeling so light
like a styrofoam
my nature is to float
rebelling anything
that sinks
to the bottom
wanting to see
the sun
and thus experience
this
blindness

God must be
so forgiving
I am still alive
and always
searching
questioning

a curious child
whose curiosity
may kill a cat

RIC S. BASTASA
Play Just Play

oh do not rely on your intellect too much
reasons have failed me
not once but most of the time
destroying my heart
for not
considering my emotions
junking what i feel
like i am a stone
aloof in the river

what i do now is that i play
like a child
ruled by my instincts
dictated as i am
by my conscience
about my inner necessities

it is this creative mind
now
playing with the one
that i really love

this passion
for doing what i really love to do
to include
this poetry
and loving you

RIC S. BASTASA
Play Me A Whisper

play me a whisper in my ear
where i
whimper
and tremble
in desire
(that is your
word not mine)

play me softly a whisper of love
in my hair
i let you
and tell you how it means to me

play it on
turn me on, i let you know how much it means
to me

my hair thinking my skin whimpering
let me have your whisper
now not in my ear
let it be in my mouth
let it stay
let it stray inside my tongue

play me a little soft whisper
not in my mouth now
but in my heart

let it stay there for a while
and then play me another whisper
not in my heart now

let it be inside my guts
down in my belly
let it go deeper

let it escape in the toes of my feet and let this whisper
dissolve in a distance in the infinite silence of the space
between us

RIC S. BASTASA
never mind the time
no one keeps it forever

spend it
on a poem
just for fun
about nothing
or anything

do not be so
serious like you gonna
die in a minute

keep the words going
throw them all away
with so much
grace and beauty
feed them to air
on their invincible
tongues
their cold sharp
tooth

be casual
do not think much
for there will be pressure
and you shall erupt
like the volcano
in Hawaii

this is just play
be cool
just be as cool as a man
lying on a hammock
swinging

or like
children frolicking on the beach
looking for shells
that shall sing them songs
away from their
smoking mothers
and drinking
fathers

never mind the time
it melts upon itself
even without the wind
it goes away
even without you
no goodbyes
no hellos
plain going and going

keep on writing
do not think
do not be conscious of the words
they will choke you
and demand that they be
uttered with style
or written with
undeserved fashion

imagine the flights of
birds flying back to
their unknown
homes

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing Cool

you do not like
what you are
hearing
something bad
something really bad
and makes your day
really really bad
and you do not
cover your ears
you look to
another direction
and you bring
all their attention
there

'that is a dragonfly
you see, it has
a very red tail! '

and they
think that there
is nothing that
really bothers you
a bit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing Hard To Get

playing hard to get
is not easy

mind you
when you refuse an
offer
they keep lining
outside your
door

(reverse psychology
works, i am
telling you

my prick is not
cheap)

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing In The Dark Beside The Full Moon

it is dark,
the full moon arrives
hovering upon the marshes
the waters become one
golden sheen rippling as the
shadows of birds
lay on the floating lilies

a wooden hushes
it is wading as
the young man paddles silently
on the water
the woman below him
sings a beautiful love song

it is time to play.
it is dark and the moon is full tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing Sudoku With You On Late Evenings

we have been playing
s
uduko for the past
late e
venings and we delight ourselves
with the p
ower of
umb
ers, from 99 to 69 to 66
we n
ever embrace no.1
and
z
ero, we know what they mean
and we do not really
want to mean anything to numbers
on late
e
venings
we settle only for equations with
quicker solutions
sudokus with lesser spaces
no doubt
only fillings of feelings
coping up with what we are not
what we think
do not matter somehow
what we do
we do
we d
ance and
m
ake love with numb
ers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing The Games

what i see
is this game
they all
play it, always
one is hurt
always there is
this to and

fro and up
and down
and swinging
between two
sides, pain for
you and
happiness for
me
you wish that
i too take that
pain

you can
no longer inflict
it on me

i've had enough
and i am not passing
it to somebody

passing the buck
of blames
and failures

if i give it again
let it be like
a bride throwing
a bouquet
of fresh white lilies
to the wannabe
Playing The Games Of The Child....

when you get to know the system
get inside a matrix
lose yourself in its maze
you wish to find yourself again
inside a body,
since you feel more of yourself as
someone else
greater than what it was once before

you seal your mouth, you diminish lips,
you bow down, and then close your eyes

you finally say, there is a place greater than this
this is temporary and there is nothing worth getting serious

you play games with the child near you
with the child inside you

and then you survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing The Games Of The Heart

love, sometimes finds itself grieving
on matters of the heart

someone you love
someone that can never be yours

someone that is forever
but has no right to be there,

even in thought
you want it forgotten but it is impossible

you find someone
other lips other bodies other breasts

wanting to forget a love that is true
you begin the games of the heart

in wanting to heal yourself
you now take all things for granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing The Role Of The Fool

ONE Day
the wise man plays the role of a fool
in the market place
he meets the wise man
of the town

he pays homage to his
black cap
the mark of the wise man
in that little
town far away from
civilization

he bows to him
and does not utter a word

the wise man
signals him to stop
and he looks at him
direct to his eyes
like a comet
shooting the blackness
of space

and the wise man kisses
his hand
bows down to him
and hands his right hand to him
for a handshake

obviously the eyes of the birds
of the same feathers
understand their
chosen silences

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing With Life

don't just sit there
the playground of life
is as wide as the ocean
is as high as the heavens

do not frown
life is never meant to be down
smile, laugh, dance if you must

learn to choose today's happiness
leave the past with its own sadness

play life and be the smart kid
run, twirl, and jump if you will,
take the plunge
and be the sponge
adsorb, listen, hear
and sing if you will

life is a basket of fruits with so much to offer
life is a bouquet of flowers always for the other
life is a school of fish always swimming somewhere
life is a reunion of friends and you must be there

RIC S. BASTASA
Playing With Words

Sometimes one gets used to words
And they are uttered without really anything to mean
Like one kind of a routine
Like you’re one kind of a boring bookworm
Office house
House office
Church on Sundays
Seldom (having sex in some
First time places)

Sometimes one goes to the toilet without
Switching on the lights or having to open one’s eyes
There is a memory
Of what comes first and comes later
Of what one need not think anymore
Something so ordinary so invisible

We forget what meaning is
We die without really knowing why
There were words then
We remember
There is no more chill
Like a red apple that you love to bite
Fresh from the ref

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasant Departures

waiving hands no tears heart beating for home no looking back a mind stores memories of orange sun white sands cold night all embracing arms letting go your perfumed body dried sweat limpid thoughts like a new pond from a recent rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Be Gentle

on a promise of love
your feet tread upon mine
i am hurt
please be gentle
a little bit
it hurts and yet you
do not mind
i am shedding tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Be True To Our Mutual Lies

please be true
to these mutual lies
as we lie
and kiss
and roll
and make such a quick love

do not make any moans
or calls
do not not kiss and tell
do not
be too possessive of my
body
my soul
my mind

these hands are strong
and so warm

you know, when these hands hold you tight
you know

these are not just yours
you know
these hands love you too like how these hands love

the rest of you, my all true loves
and them

they may not believe us
true to our lies
protective of ten fingers loving many lovely women
all worthy of my strong loving hands

my hands are made of ten fingers
there is no way that

these hands can be monogamous
you love me so true
and you would not have the folly to tell me that i have not loved

and loved you well enough

we must both be polygamous, and we must tell the world
we are true and we exist.

we lie because the truth is they are nor prepared for what they are too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Do Not Ask Me

please do not ask me
why there are no rainbows
in our skies
perhaps it is just that

or perhaps it is because
there is no rain
and please do not ask
why there are no rains
perhaps it is just that

rainbows and rains
they must come together
it is the slow trickling
of rain that makes the
rainbow show its
true colors to you

please do not ask me more
i also have questions to answer myself

why is there no sun today?

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Do Not Ask Me How A River Feels

children bathe in the river.
we were children once, we bathe in the river
we float and go with the flow of the river
we lied to mother we were afraid of father
but we were children once and we bathed in the river
we all know how a river felt
throughout our bodies

time runs like a river how many times shall i tell you that

we had mud all over
we were once children we grow to be men
strong arms and swift feet
we caught fish

we claim to be men with responsibilities
we are still children at heart we still feel the rivers running on our skins
i know, i still know how a river feels
time does not know how to kill the feel of rivers

do not ask me then if i have forgotten the river
we are men with responsibilities we have gone away
far from what we are

the river still flows and it will never stop

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Do Not Be Another Poet Biting The Dust

please
do not be one of those poets biting the dust
this is not an arid land
a desert
this is a paradise, a place where rivers from our hearts flow
where we like to hear birds singing
where clouds drift like our freedom to be where we want to be
please
do not succumb to the call of popularity
there is nothing there but an empty bag
a wind in our heads
please
write because you want to
not because you want to be read
but because you want to sing to the gods
because you have an offering
to the altar of the divine
without expecting anything in return

look at the bird flying in the skies
ye do not skyjump or go
into an exhibition for a show

eye fly because they have wings to fly
we write because we have many poems all waiting to be written
we are poets because we are here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Do Not Be Disappointed With My Poetry

in the first place i do not really rhyme
not that i can't but i don't because i like it to be just that

like my life, i do not really rhyme with the world
there is more conflict
than harmony, i do not jibe and jam well with

yes, anybody, it simply takes time for them to really understand me
more more time for me too to understand them
and like them
and like me, as though living life is just a matter of liking each other

period, and not really trying to learn and be compassionate
and have this little sense of tolerance
this sense
of perhaps, he is just ekking his way to a steep mountain of his
trying hard
(copycat) of just trying to live in authenticity

honesty, that is the simplest word we can say
i always think of other things
sometimes people are just cruel
they want patterns they want people to be like other people
setting models
and trails made also by men and women with the usual human brains

poor judgments come and we do not bother we simply want others to
live normal lives
nothing deviant, shy away from the genius of ingenuity
trekking new paths
not minding the dangers of the unknown spreading like a red carpet
before our feet

back to poetry, this is my poetry and by now you have noticed
they are written as they come inside my mind
no patterns no molds no shape no expectations no
AA BB CC DD

just plain talk, spontaneous, like a tear falling from your eyes
shaping itself to pain and then falling without style

like a candle melting to the fire and shaping itself
in the air
there is simply no dictation of where and how and what

like ourselves our lives like chocolates in the box
of Forest Gump
we just don't know what we really get
we just let go
and let live and then die and be buried
tears for a while, and then

yes, forever forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Do Not Give Love A Bad Name

i got one request
 to you
 for all these years

when you leave
 please don't give

love a bad name.
 please promise

 to keep the name
 of love in goodness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Don'T Go Tonight

little bird
please stay

sing me a song
to last me

this darkness
this loneliness

little bird
please stay

make a nest
inside my heart

put your song
inside my mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Don'T Say Any Word

what happened during the night was strictly between us
let the stars and the moon be our witnesses
when the morning comes with a break of some news
let that be not about us
please do not say any word for the birds and the flowers
these things are matters of the bees
let not even the ants know or the earthworms
or the snails and the clams of the rivers and seas

please do not say any word, It is enough that both of us
keep the secrets of our past joys and present pains

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Keep The Pain

please keep the pain
do not attempt to throw pain away
please be patient
do not scream do not tell the neighbors

do not shame pain by running wildly on the streets
screaming about your pain
please do not create a scandal for this
honorable family in pain

please keep the pain for a while and be honorable
there is decency in pain
keep this pain with a clean face on a smooth disposition
let your arms lay there
appease the pain
as though pain is a baby that you want to put to sleep

soon it will go
nothing is permanent in this world
nothing will last forever
the pain may not subside but soon it will have its right time
it decides to go by itself
there is no choice

we will have this pain too
our pains in silence
because we are honorable too
you will never know
we will never tell you we are decently in pain too

we are honorable
we do not make presumptions that we will survive
but we will
these pains that make us decent and honorable
our faces will not show these pains
we will not even tell
we just keep them without complaining
we are decent we are honorable
we are the survivors

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Open The Page And Read The Poem That I Have Written Only For You

this is the best poem that i have
once written
only for you and i think
and shall always think it
to be so

my best poem:

i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Read This Poem

thanks.
but there is none here.

proceed to the next page.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Remind Me Once More....

no one amazes me
always i think: we
are humans,
imperfect, limited,
lapsing,
falling short of
what is
real...

there is always
this thirst this hunger
this longing

a wound that does not
heal,
a restless heart,
a journey
not yet ending....

nothing amazes me,
please remind me once more

My Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Stand Up

for those who want to die
please stand up

for those who want
to be counted as another
victim of injustice
please stand up

for those who want
to be imprisoned without
a guilty hand or mind
please stand up

for those who want to
disappear from this world
for those who want
to be mothers and mourn
for the death and disappearance
of their sons
please stand up

for those fathers and wannabe
breadwinners
soon you will lose your job
and soon another depression comes
please stand up

for those who expect too much from government
only to be disappointed
on a rising statistical data
for unemployment and inflation
and market crashes
please stand up

for those who want to be
a part of a sea disaster
or an avalanche or a tsunami
for those who want to be
part of the manifest of those
who perish either
by fire or water or air

for those who perish
from a calamity
nature-made or man-made
please stand up

tell me your name,
state your address
and telephone number

you don't want to be in?

good heavens!
the judgment committee
has already taken your name

this is the inevitable
this is not preventable
and so
prepare, the next day
it shall be you or her or him
(or me)

thank you
for not standing, destiny
shall make you
stand just the same

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Stick To Love....

when love is gone
the flowers turn to sand

when love is consumed
the butterflies turn to stone

when love is nowhere
to be found
all life ceases

there is no air
there is no water
there is no sky
no earth

no nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Stop Death

I want to sleep now
Please switch off
The computer
And stop thinking
About death poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Tell Them We Also Have Something To Say

for those who say,
'we do not need you' because
we cannot do anything
to add to the pile of money that
you are stacking like
a stack of hay

because we do not
serve your ends
and we just don't follow
your orders
and illegal commands

(we already packed up
and left, we were fools
not having said what
we wanted to say a long
long time ago,
we
were fools in ranks
and importance)

please tell them:

'we don't need them too'

we have other places to
go, those doors that still
open till night,
those arms who are
willing to hug us

there is another future
waiting and the air
is fresher for another
beginning.

please tell them we are
here and we have no
regrets

please tell them
there are still places for
good men and women
in here

indeed the world is wide
and there are many choices

always.

RIC S. BASTASA
Please Understand

Have a little consideration
For my unpoetic
Choice of words
I know they are not
To your liking

Your taste is
Professorial chair-like poetry

Distinguished literati

We are different

You write in the name
Of literature
Perhaps for a prize

You really have to follow
What the awards committee
Says in the rules
Follow page one
Do not disregard page two
And the last rule is

Do no deviate
Do not be a deviant man of
Literature of poetry
Of music
To their ears

I write because I do not know
How to live anymore.

This is a life-death situation
And there are no rules

No specific authorized physician
For this sick, dying man
Those that heal, come
Those that know how to heal, you are welcome.

Tersely put, I write in order to
Live everyday of my life.

Not for fame, not for honor
Not for a chart, they are not necessary.
I have no use of such. Give it to the Lady or the
Gentleman out there, who is grappling with a name
Not with life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasing The Body

in pleasing the body
you imply that the soul cries,

what choice do i have
when this body dies?

in pleasing the soul
the body must suffer?

tell me how to please both
please hand me the broth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasure (Upon Request, I Am Posting This Back)

Pink nipples and
Cow’s milk on my table
On my bed
Your pink nakedness
Spread
Dipped
In the grassy coolness
Beneath a gray, open space

I touch your pubic softness
With my jitters
I breathe in the smell
Of your earth
I exhale caress
Like my tongue
Dripping words
In your ears

I lay back
My legs spread
Towards the moon

It is the night of my life
And I shall long for you always
I am burdened
But your weight
Shall smash me into
Meteors of my galaxy
And I shall be light
Piercing into your darkness
The darkness
That I now so loved

I am still
I can quiver
To this night of loving
And I must not stop
To this undying
It is this
When our bodies
When our two bodies fit
Into the hollowness
Of our solitude

I shall have a soul shaped
Into hands
Putting a red rose
Between your lips
And giving it longer life
I dampen it with
My truths
The fearful dryness
Shall be lost in the wells
And the rivers that won't dry

My hands shall map
The secret paths of your body
Your lines shall melt me
Your touch
Shall cause the rapture
Of my stillness
To an endless space
Of our universe

I ask how
The cruelties of this earth
Shall conceal the sweet contours
Of this pleasure
A small world of the
Damp, wet, and gray,
Of the heat, the dripping and
The force and softness
Entwined in the oneness of
Irony and even disbelief
That I that I can make
This world
Through closed eyes
In such a closed space
Yet bursting into
An infinite openness
The silence of a thousand
Quivers
Savor, savor, savor, the pleasures
Of my small world
Unshared by the multitude
The crowd unthinking
As it is only you
I care
I worship

I kept inside
Unshared by all
My little pleasure
Yet encompassing my whole universe

Unfathomed, unscaled,
But now totally known
By me
By you alone

And words
Find no space
To justify their existence,
ahhhhhhhh, -

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasure And Shame....

pleasure most of the times
likes the company of shame
tradition like a strict
grandfather makes you think
twice, what if?
morality is a close relative
with a hammer
that when you start losing
your sense of balance
it pushes you
to a chasm where you
fall
without end.

a powerful Jedi
inside your heart finally
claims victory,
he shows you your face
and you shall
love it: follow the rules of
this game,
take the usual path,
a deviation
traumatizes, freezes you
like ice and with
a little heat
soon cracks into a
meltdown

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasure Without The Use Of Money

watch the dew
early in the morning
they glitter

look at the
rising of the sun
with so much
gentle light

the trees
are friends with
the sea breeze

the sands spread
peace on the shore

the sea brings
you the songs of
the waves

the clouds drift
so light
without any attachment
for things

the birds have
always the sky
as their playgrounds

look around you
just look around you

joy flows in your heart
and all these
are free

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasures

a smooth flow of chivas regal
inside my throat lingering
but only for a while,

a white flower carried by this vine
on its soft tendrils crawling an iron fence
a trellis as lean-on

a salmon sushi bathed in soy bean sauce
and a fingerfull of wasabe
inside my tongue the chili running
towards me throat lingering and
rising in my nostrils in my brain

hot green tea that i sip
slowly
chopstick on top of a teriyake
a bowl of seafood ramen
its flavors rising to the lamps
of the ceiling

i face you and you face me
at this moment
we nod to make another sip
of life
we face each other again
remembering a promise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pleasures In Giving

this morning
you take the water hose

turn on the faucet

you squeeze the hose
and water is spread on the bush

flowers are thirsty
for those nights without rain

an early morning shower from your
water hose
gives the feast on every leaf, on every branch

on every cracking soil of this earth

it is the pleasure of giving
that makes your heart dance

with the clouds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Plena

we danced the whole night
two for the usual
tango

we had tequila
salt and fresh lime

we rest on the soda
our feet on the stool

we look to the skies
dotted with countless stars

the fireworks come
our minds exploding with so much joy

oh my gracious God!
we have reached 2013! ! !

RIC S. BASTASA
Plethora

In my other incarnation I live out such a plethora of conflict that you wouldn't think I'd survive, would you, but I do; I wake up enraged, go to sleep in numbed despair, face what I know perfectly well is condescension and abstract contempt, get into quarrels, shout, fret about people I don't even know, live as if I were the only man in the world trying to buck it all, work like a pig, strew my whole apartment with notes, articles, books, get frowzy, don't care, become stridently contentious, sometimes laugh and weep within five minutes together out of pure frustration. It takes me two hours to get to sleep and an hour to get up. I dream at my desk. I dream all over the place. I'm very badly dressed. But O how I relish my victuals!

RIC S. BASTASA
Plucked Chicken

Last night I stood before
Lolo Enggoy’s mirror
When he died in April
I never cried
In the holes of my eyes
I jump
Into the suicidal cliffs
Of his death
Carrying with me my fingers
My hands
I travel where I come from
Where there are no footprints
Into blindness into nothingness
Into vast dark silences
I return to the surface
Of my eyes—
The mirror breaks to the floor
In a hundred bleeding piece

RIC S. BASTASA
Plums.....

the fact is you love plums
you have always loved plums
and father did not like it

mother too dislikes it
plum is too unlikely for you
she hates this idea of you
loving plums
but just like the rest of
the mothers
she remains silent about
this outrage
she respects plums though
she vomits

the rest of your life has
been about plums
and the community has
extricated you from them
plums is so much
for tolerance and so you

left, you carried this plum
which makes you live,
this plum dreaming, this
plum surviving, and you wonder
why do they not like you liking
plums?

what is it that makes you
hate them? you hated them too
for not loving plums
and everything seems to be
all about plums

and you never like this
happening, until you died,
and plum is not even real.
i have taken the plunge
deep in the bosom of the blue sea
into the depths of the ocean
to be with the fish and the
corals of this sandy floor

there is no coming back
there are no reasons on the surface
there is this final plunge
searching for eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Pnoy

let me be counted
i am in

i am the odd man
in that system

count me in
open the door
i belong here

in the scale
that swings for her
i am the panther

count me in
i serve the good
you are the one

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem #21

at this point
i am short of words
i like to make a poem
which must show
the feeling of having
nothing to say

will it be like
this?
open ended like
a mouth gaping for
another kiss?

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem As Conversations

a poem for ramona
and a poem for jean and a poem for candice
and a poem too for yuri
and a poem too for emma and another poem for hannah
and another poem for allan
and the rest of the clan
they are but
conversations sticking to my mind
and through these poems
i replay them
and you think these are not poems at all

precisely, these are conversations of the living
the living word
the word that still cohabits with us
we let them out from our mouths
but you do not wish to recover them

did you mean them all to be said
with the terms and conditions of truth?
i am recording them
and i am replaying them through these lines
i look where truth
lies
i find some and keep them
and these are these
on these lines

a poem for you a poem for the world that we all make
what we say is what we get

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem Between My Legs

Do you think about something beautiful?

One you can also touch
Something also beautiful

Think of my poetry
That would be pretty

But I can give you more
Than that

Something more beautiful really
Lies between my legs

Greater, stronger
And more beautiful

Than my poetry.

Oh common
Thinking something more beautiful
Beyond that?

Then, grab it with your
Honest hands.

Or your trembling lips

This poetry
Between my legs.

RIC S. BASTASA
outside
the morning is very cold
as i open the
door
our dog is there
lying on the
rug

the way he wags
his tail
convinces me
that he may now
enter the kitchen
of the house

he gets his favorite
bone

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem Dedicated To A Roof

we did not buy the sound of rain
we should have bought some

take them in our house
for it could be summer sometimes

we could have reflected upon the rain and the roof

how the roof has protected us throughout the night
and how we never cared
how we never thought about its
dedication and consistency

how profound is rain
how we must realize
that till now we do not know how to make it.

how soothing the sound
of its release from the sky
what falling is
to the bottom of our hearts

how cold is the night now
and how we needed a very sound sleep
to dream again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem Entrusted To Be By Lina S. R.

Neither door nor gray day-
light nor your daughter singing with you the family anthem -

Nothing at all, nothing could have warded off the resolute assassin.

The faithful wore danger on their faces
at your funeral. On their tongues, gratitude was sour candy

for their son who exposed what's opalescent
in the daily dung-heap of the news.

Almost everything, almost altered to keep me living the lie:

the wife daring me to refuse the last
look on the corpse, and myself

braving not even a singular stolen
glance at the wounds on the broken cask of a

face, and I, washing and combing my hair daily,
daily during your long wake.

One and a dozen shrieking years across and over
the glistening offal of this ferocious island, and I,

I haven't begun grieving yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem From Frances R. (1)

i sang a sad song last night and they all liked it.

i rested for a while on that soft chair on that table by the corner like a very lonely stranger.

i listened for the singer after me with his guitar singing another love song.

not for me but for all of you.

i smoked my marlboro cigarette and breathed out some smoke like what the rest were doing in that crowded karaoke garden,

a tissue was passed, i looked at it on a pinlight
i would be singing again another sad love song as requested by all of you

that time it was the song that i had written myself four years ago
i had given birth to two lovely daughters then when their father left them

i took my guitar went on stage and started to strum and sing
a song i had written years ago, some memories rushing back to me

all of you were silent then with your glasses of wine and smoke holding hands to your girl or man on your side pressing some soft flesh and felt the sad song of love creeping like a vine in the air

you waited for the moment when i will cry again lights and eyes focusing in my eyes

i didn't cry anymore on the stage as you saw me once crying. my tissue was wet with tears just a moment ago when i sat like any stranger on that table beside an empty chair.

it was dark on that nook.

RIC S. BASTASA
what you say i keep within 
i listen and then i filter and then i give you that gaze 
the impression that you matter 
you have been suggesting that life must be relaxed 
a little bit, even a little, like a tiny spark when stones 
are rubbed when fire, who knows, is born 
for another conflagration, 
ask me no more, i gave you the gaze, 
you are not dumb you know what i mean 
you were not born yesterday i never say that 
but you must understand 
i've got so many things to do in my life 
and i have no time for talks 
i put my hand on the table as a mode of 
surrendering to the greatness of toil 
i scan the pages of what we have not learned 
i read each line carefully 
i do not really understand but i am telling you 
this word had kept my faith 
each syllable moves me pushed me 
i know not finally where 
but i take pride: i got direction and i keep this 
compass 
north to south, east to west, sun or moon 
or even the stars 

yes you hinted upon a star, but this is never 
in my heart 
i keep this boat sailing, i feel the wind, i like the waves, 
but there will be no anchor, 

there is an island, we are not landing. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem I002

a challenge is set for the old woman
at bay
her gray hair she takes pride of
her scars
the wrinkles of her hands and the
failing memory
what she remembers she keeps again
treasures in her mind
her youth was joy and her fruits
so many

now she retires and in silence keeps
what is adorable
work is here and in her hands the records
of her past glory are still written on the lines
of her palms

there is no complaining about what is here
for if your youth did it
why can't age be another triumph?

if you choose complacency
everything will be wasted for it is the end
line that matters

here lies an old woman who won her youth
hammered with all the concerns and never surrendered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem I003

a day well spent
in utter toil, each second justified by another second,
more minutes come but you are not threatened anymore,
you know what to do with this body in harmony with your soul
together they conquer what is feared what is disliked
what is abhorred by many.

RIC S. BASTASA
the dogs keep coming here
shed off some hair
leave ticks and fleas
some mud and dust
from outside
and you know very well
how dirty this room can be
but you keep on doing
what you ought to do
not minding how this mess
will be contained perhaps
now or later or never
just the same these dirty dogs
are your dogs
mess solved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem On A Sunday #1

nothing is really useless.
even those who only wait, has that function.
waiting.
and it is a sacrifice, just imagine
you, at the train station,
wanting to leave and be somewhere else,
yet you do what you are assigned to
do that whole week,

waiting. It saddens me.
I tremble to some extent.

Like a heavy thud
of impatient feet, throwing away the shoes
that serve no purpose.

on the other hand, i assure you,
everything has a purpose.
the cup, the saucer, the teaspoon
and the white
sugar & the coffee,
they blend and you take your day
sipping.

in your world,
there are lapses, something glitches
you see slipping moments,
and you sigh.

ah, do not worry,
they also do what you are supposed to do,
they serve us &
you serve them

a bowl of cherries, a can of laughter,
a nugget of wisdom,
and time

this time, we note what ponder can do,
what blankness can paint
what seeds can sorrow grow?

RIC S. BASTASA
Poem Written While Waiting For Someone

actually, i have nothing to say.
there is nothing good in here.
there is nothing worth saying

i keep on counting the minutes.
they're too long like snakes wanting to bite me.
i want to bite back and eat their heads and tails.

she is here now. I love her.
i keep my feelings inside myself. There is nothing to say.
I am afraid to offend here.

we are finally leaving. Everything is good now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poemhunter

A shelter of truth and lies
I am toying with my
Computer keys

then the poems
are posted

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetess

now that you have awakened from the deep slumber
you shall rise and meet this bright morning

do you see the sun rising from the thighs of the mountain?
do you hear the songs of birds from the mouths of the caves?
do you see how the trees dance to the caresses of the winds?
do you feel the coolness of the dew hanging on the blades of grass
as they all touch the soles of your feet?

eye have been waiting for you
eye are the images of your poetry
eye are the symbols of your greatness

my dear poetess, how can you ever stop writing the words?
how can you ever stop to sing the songs of beauty?
how can you ever deny the true nature of your being?
my dear poetess, you must begin to write again
in all these, you shall not die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Co-Existence

when i write
there you are, you read
and i do not demand much
if you comment

when you write
i read yours too, and you do not demand much
if i copy your lines
and put them inside my heart

for that is the only
towards a symbiosis
of our mutual poetics

like cigar to my lips
like strawberry candy to my tongue
like rib from my side
like bed to my body
like mouth to my finger
like thighs to my
strong hands
like firewood to my
forest nights
like tent to my rain
like moon to my
winter roof.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Existence

i have found them, the things that cannot be lost
education, and patience,
my steady face...inside my room,
the mirror that looks at me
always, these eyes

i shall always keep what treasures i found
you, and myself, that time so luckily gives
our lips, our bodies, our mouths
we never exchange them for anything

we found what we deserve: the poetic existence
of these beings.
that stare and droll, these eyes, these hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Existence

there is fire in my head
there are fires burning
in my fingers
there is a big fire in my guts,
there is this hearth
in my darkness
there is so much light
in my heart

yet i am not burned,
yet i am not consumed

nothing scalds me
for all Thy Glory.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Heart

this poetic heart bleeds,
but you will never see blood,
there is pain, pulsating
and pricking, needles and pins
without the cushion, but there is not
a sense of bother, it is here,
and it is there, and it is everywhere,
the body does not complain
to this routine, of self-genuflection,
this is it, and it is familiar, like
old friends meeting again
with white hair and wrinkled
faces, it is full, and it knows
what emptiness is, it releases
air, it deflates, it becomes too light,
it becomes a blank sheet of
white paper. Words
write themselves. Thoughts land
like doves. It is wide like an
open winds are cool.
And seagulls begin to fly low.
Catching fishes.
Sea caps and lonely sails.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Intrigues

just leave these
intrigues
the morning
is beautiful
and there are
many other
poems to write

did i tell you
that they still
beg to be written?

did i tel you
that time is too
short of the haggle?

did i tell you
that these poems
cannot wait and
that if you let them
wait
they simply go
away without
any word?

write another one
and if someone
wants to own your
creations
let that be

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Justice

That in the end
it is the good that triumphs
over evil,

in the class, you disagreed
and you call it mere theory,

outside, the storm has prevailed
waters rise into a flood
tsunami is coming and the rest of
humanity scamper for safety,

the rich still continues with their
luxurious lifestyles,
the party is not over yet,

your jaw gives a rebellious gritting
of teeth

your poems multiply like a virus
meanwhile...

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetic Symbiosis

perhaps
we too are like
monkeys

i scratch your
back
and then you
scratch mine

and we are all
here
up on the trees

below us
the wide murky
river of
life

always flowing
always raging

RIC S. BASTASA
invisible and
off tangent but like air
is too necessary
without which
the question of living
becomes
too miserable

heavy clouds
filled and
now dropping its
excess
into the dry
earth

it is a shame to
be brutally honest
hence
the metaphors...

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetics 3...

there is fire
and the room where you
live
for years is about to
be eaten
by its hot
insatiable tongue

you scream but
as usual
the firemen are not
coming

you open the windows
take one
exit
step upon the stairs
halfway
you jump into
your own salvation

the people are watching
you are naked
and they all clap
because
you finally decided
to save yourself
from that fire
that you yourself
invented...

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetics 4...

good for you man
you are lucky
filthy rich they say

when you are filled
with guilt
you fly to thailand
and ride one
of its boats on the
mekong river

you float upon the
murkiness of your
thoughts

that is good
your neighbor touches
his chin
and nods

people here have been
killing themselves
as though they have
nine lives like
the legendary cat

of course even with
nine lives
because of that hasty
hate
they never ask
whoever
that they come back
and begin their
beings again

so no one has ever
spoken inside
that dream
no one haunts like
a horror story

everyone speaks about
a certain silence
hints about a slim sorrow
it is a world of
anything goes of
anything said
but there is nothing
really direct as
flat as a wall with
white paint all over

there are sketches, etchings,
somethings
come-ons, let go's
no one minds at all
everyone is busy
wanting to understand
but no one really
does
the real thing

swans floating on the river
butterflies floating on air
dirigibles exploding finally
over the news...

RIC S. BASTASA
'DEEP IN MY heart
i love you' this is the first song of the morning radio

the patio smells urine
the covering of the chamber pot is left open
the old man saves his urine
for ten days

you imagine nothing
i can see the blank wall again
nothing red like a rose

then you laugh so hard
the glass falls off from the sink
breaks its mouth on the
marble floor

you have a canvass of manila paper
and a black crayon and then
you draw a man with twenty tongues
and a very big mouth like
manila bay

you put their the name of the man
who broke your heart
fifty times

tore your being apart like a broken
hymen of your first love

you must have remembered your first scream
of that pain
and then you finally come to the conclusion
about that regret
not having feasted upon that pain again
that crazy man
he never asked you again for a date in that
fungal hotel
nosy bellboys
broken locks of the door
and greasy floors

RIC S. BASTASA
in april
the firetrees are blooming
beside
a very calm lake
where some swans
make
a show

we take our
seat
on a bench
watch
the world glowing
with beauty

the two of us
isolated from the thought
of
the nuclear leak
in Fugushima

RIC S. BASTASA
the words of passion
keep me alive
each syllable is a red
corpuscle
the phrases are
taking in commas,
more of them
are making life a little
bit suspenseful

hang in there
hold more hands
these commas
grip and stay cool
like a poem
heartily written

RIC S. BASTASA
Jose de la Cruz: I've never entered church again
and the priests have forgotten my name
my face my
everything

i am a stranger now
estranged, detached from the navel of
the catholic religion
i do have a navel myself
just one
lonely, isolated navel
uncleaned
unwashed with alcohol
i am unhygienic
avoid me i may contaminate you
i am jose de la cruz
convicted of bad faith
lost and
hiding

do not judge me
i draw the face of God everyday
using my own
words
i am a mumble and a bubble
do not mind me
i am still searching for apertures
gasping for light
simply wanting to be original
not copying the bible
away from the mob of those
religious piteous
copycats

save yourself as i also
want to save
me.....
early morning
i am confronted with
a choir of
black birds
crowning the fruitless
mango tree
fronting my window

RIC S. BASTASA
beyond this house
where we live
more or less
ten meters away
lies my neighbor's house
painted white
with a blue roof
and magenta windows
some walls are made
of glass

honesty there is peace
among us
who are still on unspeakable
terms

on good fences
higher than ever
we have become
perfect neighbors

there is independence
when fire breaks
we are ready with our own
pails already
filled with stinking water

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetics.....

waste of time
but cannot be disregarded

sort of
a stopover island
where this plane
refuels
without which it
cannot
arrive at its final
destination

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetikos...

it is not tiresome
it is something that you do
because you need to

it is a cure to
a certain literary disease

there are no rules now
just pure
emotions running over
a brittleness of the
the mind
set on what should have been
greater
than thoughts built like a great wall
stretching
to something like an
eternity of
half-deaths

a string of bean-like
probings
somber, and sometimes
even sober
yet drunk in some sense
of a context

i do not really know if you
are there
reading

it is not necessary to be read
it is the release
of what is stuck here like a bone
of a fish
inside my throat

something that i hold for the night
and having
myself more than satisfied i let it go
like it is
some kind of garbage an excess
an appendix

RIC S. BASTASA
when you begin
to love this art you are into
another possibility
of carrying the whole world
in such a beauty
and grace
in your own hands
the possibility of drinking the ocean
in your mouth
the hatred dissipating away
and love settling finally
inside your heart

full of delight
to such a wonder.

RIC S. BASTASA
such is a waste of my time
and i regret this indulgence
which to my mind
has become my own self-inflicted
torture
as i have other many noble things
to be done
to glorify myself like some kind of
a hero to my time
and place

everything is just passing by
everything is temporary
we will not be here for all time
we are just light fading
water drops
or some appearing rainbow and then
quickly gone as though nothing
significant had happened

somehow i must realize
there is this little benefit
for a moment i am like a fruitfly
alive on such a juicy rotten apple
with a worm and a mold thrown by
a child who is angry about his
mother driving a car on a very busy
road

it is this temporary feeling of
anxiety that does this trick
somehow it disappears when the last
line is written
as though a sculpture of a bust is
finally finished and
it is left there alone in the room
smiling after the light is turned off
and then the room is locked.
it was not as serious as
cancer stage 4
nothing of that sort
it was more of having to see
a buffered tab
and then for the meantime that
you wait
and the waiting is indeed long
as the signal of the town's server is
weak
you begin to scribble
and doodle like a toddler
you write
whatever you think
without being responsible really
for what
they will think

turtle, rabbit, monkey
stone, thorns, banana river
you have to make a link
and understand
what is this boredom
all about,

the rest of course
is nothing but porn....

RIC S. BASTASA
it starts as a quiver of a morning
strands of light carry the sprouting words
to the bedroom at night
even in the middle of sleep
words bloom into flowers
perfume spreading in the darkness of my soul
it becomes a habit a lifestyle
an addiction of the divine
shedding off some skin like
an onion

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry And Politics And Law

to begin life again
you stop being an artist

which means no poetry
nothing about art for breakfast

plain sunny side up egg
orange juice and the job section
in the news

poetry is instability
art is being lost and weird
there is no money in there
but unnecessary emotion

it is not new stuff
normal people you say talk that way

you are wrong
i have money, and fame and honor
i landed in a high position
makes decision about other
people's lives and their properties

it is the light of the day and the
people that i meet that make
stability

art fills in the gap to maintain
a high sense of sanity
poetry creates the music
its cadence and rhythm make
the march smooth and sound

its depth has made the river
navigable
and its shores have become
the comforting port of
my weary soul
Poetry As A Ritual

poetry has become
our ritual.

it is like washing
your face
after waking up.

brushing your teeth
after breakfast.

removing the shoes
arriving home from
office.

putting pajamas before
going to sleep.

no, it is not watching
tv to make you sleep.

it is more like, if sleep
is slippery, putting
on the table lamp and
reading your work.

when it becomes everyday,
with everybody,
how can there be somebody?

we are simply looking
forward to life.

as usual.

RIC S. BASTASA
discover that poetry
are mere feelings, others
who succeed at this
craft have nothing
to tell really,
falling out of logic
and taking side
with images
like a slide show of
children's pictures
with their overprotective
mothers in
fantasy land,
riding on teacups and
having pleasantries
with Alice
in Wonderland,

know that poetry is
a crutch, a dam of
emotions, to protect
the fields of corn
below the belly of
the great river
of destruction,

you write more with
a numb left arm now,
the fear spreading
on the chest, as the hour
gets creepy, and
threatens you with
a sad goodbye.

there is a rush here
to take the bus
you're late for almost
every appointment,
it is raining and you
have no umbrella,  
you step inside  
only to find that  
the heel of your right  
shoe is broken.

fear has more to offer  
now, than love and lust.

and then, you keep on  
writing about it,  
as though, words can  
help.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Be Glad, Dance And Sing

despite the hectic schedule
always there are reasons for a busy day
nothing to loaf
and not a crack on the wall for
what should not have been done
nothing to peep
people are waiting outside
deliberations without end
but be glad my Lady
dance and sing
as i close this room
to dance and sing with you

let the world spin
even without us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Becomes Us

where does poetry come from?
from my heart? no, not at all times

it comes from you, i learn it from you
when we talk,

when you too, tell me about the lonely life in the village
the slow sailing boat that you were taking,
the silence of the lake and the occasional ripples from the mouth of a fish

poetry is a social thing
it rises from a fountain of humanity
from a river where we take our baths
from the rock where we dry ourselves under the sun

you are never naked, but i would have preferred it
that way

honesty is nice, but you have to sometimes pay the price
i guess, you are afraid

people of the past were not kind
and some are still having a hard time understanding what kindness is

what humanity is, what life is all about
what poetry is driving at like a hammer to a nail

poetry is a reaction, and you are the stimulus,
on that push and pull, on that tagging and haggling
we are poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Blog

my daily poetry, a blog of nothing but thoughts of

stone, petal, raindrop,
a threadlike composition of colors and scents and personalized designs

depicting mood swings moral, amoral or otherwise

goes and goes like a train of thoughts day by day

chronologically relevant trying always to figure out who am i

really

it is not to entice or corrupt

it is merely a signification of

here i am
are you there too?

no climbing
of ladders
or blowing of horns
no choir
of angels
or boasting
of this

oh my God
what a coincidence
you think
the way i think

nope, there is nothing
worthy of my poetry
even myself

this write, all the poems
but a poetry blog

and so by now
express your angst

shout, rage,
cool dude, subdue
subdued

a stream
of consciousness

the turtle swimming in the
deepest part of
this ocean

clouds like cotton
submerging
to your pond

i watch, yes, let me watch
i speak, yes, let me speak
truly, i am not interested,
i write,
because i have something to write,
this destiny,
of i cannot get away,

yes, call me a rambling thought,

i am, i am, i am
it is all about, this i am, i am, i am,

today, i am, i am feeling this heaviness
and you sit
in the dark corner, telling me,

why do you write poetry,
and yet here i am dying, and you do not really mind.....

i beg of you,
don't try to figure out, to understand, i beg

of you,
this is nothing, go away, go somewhere

i am a cloud, i drift, i am this space groping for letters,
a word will not do, i beg, i beg of you.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry En Masse

like bread in bakeries
like automobiles from factories
like pizzas in boxes for delivery
like ordinary figurines for sale
like drugs in the pharmacy
like pineapples in the farm
like apples in a basket
like inhalers in the nose
like manufactured gadgets
spoons and forks and kitchen utensils
mass produced
without the romance of the personalized work
the interaction of the mind
with the body and soul
must art be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry In Fibonacci Sequence

i listen,
to this sound
tonight i
see my
body,
i start from here, this syllable
there is beyond this body, this face,
there is this shape of my soul, its scent exuding, my aura
beyond this is the light that my soul is wanting to reach, the sun, the Sun.
there is a word
it is first.
there is no change possible, it does not move, it is printed, it stays forever, here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Is An Accelerator Of Time

i wake up
at 3 a.m.
symptomatic
of old age
and i open the
PC and start
scribbling
whatever comes
to my mind
a memory
a plan a
stream of
consciousness
that i simply
let go
like a flow
of an idea like
an electricity
running inside
my veins

three poems
and then
i stretch my
legs and
wriggle my
hands and
blink my eyes
grasping for
something new

now it is
4: 42 a.m.

how fast time can
run
to a man as slow
as i am.
Poetry Is Not Just A Word In The Vocabulary Of Our Thoughts

meaning can have a problem
without a concrete equivalent.

a flower can only be a word
and word cannot tease our senses
if the petals are not shown
if the sun does not reveal its colors
of red and white and blue
if scent is not smelled by our very own noses
if wind cannot be cold if
leaves cannot be touched
if nerves are not tickled
for what can a face of love be
if not in the face you love
for what can God be if your hunger
is not satisfied?
what can our hands be if warmth
is not felt in your very own palm?

poetry can simply be vocabulary
if there is no dove in there that flies in the
very air of your longing
for what can poetry be if i have not touched
your breasts
kissed your lips
if we have not slept together that night
when we are too lonesome
lost and deprived?

how can i appreciate poetry in spirit
there are bridges of the skin and flesh
its rivers of feelings can take me there with you
its fire from within, its rage from without.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Is Not Just Feelings

i have long said
that there is no definition to poetry
it is
sui generis, a class of its own,
a evolution of meanings and a transfiguration of words
into substances beyond
the limitations of our minds,
if you say that poetry is feelings
what is then
those that we have not even felt and yet
strikes us as
poetic?

an enlightenment for instance
a divine revelation handed in a dream
in the form of metaphors

what about those that strike us
like a red wheelbarrow glazed with the rain
beside those white chickens?

what about those live frogs in the imaginary gardens
of our minds?

what about a new philosophy of life?
or the promiscuity of the glands?

there are no boxes that can contain all these
in one container

let the poem be just a river
going anywhere
let it just be the sea taking us anywhere
let it be the waves
to and fro arriving everywhere

or what? you name it, you 'll have it.
Poetry Of Things

centric circles
my universe is not your universe
i am a circle expanding and too
i am a circle shrinking upon itself

 parchments of cloth mama's crochet
patches of moments child's chilling
chimera chimes of Chippewa

a blue butterfly kept on moth
balls, purple feathers, a white trunk
a T-square, a picture of Nefertiti

georgia o'keefe, a poetry of things
an art, a form, a shape of pain, a mold
of molds, we relate to this pain that
clings to our feet like anklets. We are.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Redefined

an attempt
for something
that you
are not good at?

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Time

forget work for a while
leave the paper piles as they are
let them grow
up to the sky

let reality be a mountain
before you
and let things work on
themselves
let them have hands
and feet
let them have wings
and fly away

it is poetry time
my heart is king and the rest
of these fantasies
are nymphs and fauns

come butterflies
come stars
let them know that there are wings
and light and fire and glitters and diamonds

comes the moon shining
this lady coming too early at noontime
dancing on my table
with fireflies and lies

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry To Me...

you open up
like an umbrella
yet you are closed
against the harsh heat
of the sun....

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry Writing

how i can i ever stop
when this act has become my life?

how can i ever tell you
about sleepless nights?

my painful eyes, my bleeding heart
how can i ever tell you
about these parts of me?

let me smile and laugh with you
my poetry shall tell another tale

and whichever is true,
ask the wind and it shall tell you
as my chair, ask my window
and they shall tell you

ask my eyeglasses and see
what i am seeing, try to taste
the salt on the floor,

they may be the residue
of my tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Poetry, Poesy, Ars Poetica, Erotica,

i am hooked to you.
i need rehabilitation
in China, the bamboo rafts there
can help, i will sail
on the Yangtze river
together with you
my rudder on the shallow
jade green waters,

i shall hear robins making
love calls,
i am stuck on this trip
lots of rainbow illusions
colors in my mind
i am jailed in your arms
my heart enthralled to
this injunction

everyday i set aside other
works, the plants are wilting
and the trees are dying,
my dogs are hungry
unfed
my chickens cross the
fence
to feed on other grains

i am stuck in here
because i like it here
China can wait
the chickens may die
even my dogs
let them be impounded.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poets

the frogs of course
love the sound of
their own tribe

just like those who
fuse their own vocal
chords to form a choir
of monotony  just like
the most common
bumping and dissipating
waves of the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
she, too, dislikes it, because it gives her the feeling as though
her head is taken off, makes her body cold so no fire can ever
warm her again. One does not look on poetry as a closed work, the poems go on
and on
at all times on one’s head, and snip off a length.

You mush remember the homely definition,
Poetry is the best words in their best order, words in their nth power.

Bony ideas, bloody nerves, held together by the delicate
Tough skin of words...

Words...words...

I agree, I have never started a poem where I know the ending
Always the ending is unpredictable.
Poetry is your personal
Expression making it public, a revelation, a revolution of sort, you throw a pebble
to the world.

In essence, poetry is an emotion, said, written in measured motion,
And that motion is an art.

Drip pity, drip pity, drip drip drip drip

Like a dripping rain, from a leaking roof, while one sleeps
To its rhythm.

A wording of highest thoughts, appearing as a
Remembrance, it does not really mean anything, it is simply magical...

But be.

You make a poem, but the reader recognizes it as his own,
But there is no accusation of thievery or plagiarism

A sea animal, evacuating to land, and now wanting to fly in the sky, that is
poetry.
Making familiar things rare, as though they are
Not familiar anymore.

Giving habitation to airy nothing.
Giving nothing to everything.

Giving a nobody a nice home like he is now a somebody.
The invisible, made visible, and the visible made invisible.

A quarrel within himself.
In his tranquility, he recollects powerful feelings, and give in
To an spontaneous flow of giving.

That is poetry. Giving, and always giving, no taking, nothing taken.

I, too, dislike it at first.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poinsettia

showy shrub
scarlet bracts
beneath the small
yellow flowerlike
inflorescences

so beautiful to see
but the drops of
its white sap
may cause the blindness
of your eyes

sad poinsettia
alone she prays
to the sun
to restore the sight
of the man
she deeply loves

RIC S. BASTASA
Point Of View

gentle rain
drizzle caress

water needles
piercing earth

hushes of leaves
and whispers

screams of
the silence of the stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
we're in this
undecipherable
illusion

sticking to our
mind
undecided with
what to do

RIC S. BASTASA
Political Animals

You're a newcomer
and so you want to impress
me
that changes are imminent
and that i should know
that you are the best person
to do the job
and i must then support you

you babble on the
misdeeds of those who
are sitting there
and you must oust them
so you can
do much better

i am tired to all
these

i have put mr. x and i have
ousted mr. y

and after years
one has become worse than
the other

there must be wrong with
the system
which can change x
very much like
y, and y
has become another
bitter x

ahhh, human nature
who can ever trust one?

RIC S. BASTASA
Political Cannibalism

glass,
do not talk of honesty
there is none here
it is not a man
neither is it a woman
could be
an eunuch
that keeps things normal
by not saying
anything
it is the silence that is
honest
it is not her hands
for they do what
is not said anyway
so glass
do not give me that
quibble
there is none here
not even loyalty
welcome to
the politics of
survival
now
choose, eat,
do not
think.

RIC S. BASTASA
in this country of mine
there is so much politicking

they want to know my color
they want me black
pure black
the other side wants me to be white
unadulterated white

i tell them i want to have no color at all
i just want to be myself
like a neutral transparent rain water
and all of them are angry
i cannot please everybody i said
but they do not listen

they put politics in the pulpit
in the market even in the cemetery
they put politics in the air and in the water
and in the soil
and even in the sub-soil
the worms are getting political too
and even the hawks and finches

the pebbles have no choice
but to go political too
they are now in disagreement with the river
and the bamboo trees

there is chaos in the mountain
the waterfalls rage
and then politics eventually destroys the ecosystem
and the heavens and the purgatory

now there is only hell.

this morning they put politics as breakfast on my table.
i decided finally not to eat any.
Polygonal Time....

the change
has many sides

it is not just
a circle

polygons
it is my truth

there is
one that overruns
and there
are others
that succor
others succumb

filters like
a comb
traps like
a net

explosive
at times

blind, i hold on
time like a rope

with a stone
and a thud....

RIC S. BASTASA
Pond World

if this world is only a pond
of crystal clear water
the mirror of cotton clouds
the intimate half of the sky

if this world is only a matter
of the moon sitting softly
on the comfort of the marshes

or some whispers of the reeds
and an offering of beauty
with the petals of the pink lotus
and leaves opening to space
embracing everything in a universe

i would not have walked away
and looked for my star
i would not have followed what
the fingers of the sun hinted
i would not have believed
that somewhere at the foot
of a rainbow lies my pot of gold

i would not have succumbed to
the misery of the worms the
tragedy of the broken wings

RIC S. BASTASA
there is something about you that i detest
what i clean you make
dirty all over again
what i do not like you keep
doing
what i want to be kept
you take it and display
on the neighborhood for all of them
to see
you oppose me
my love is hate for you
my life is death to you
this time i like it
how is wish that you must go
away
and if this be your philosophy
then i must
stay, i must love, i must sing
i must keep
what life is
till the end.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pondering About The Homeless Birds...

the sounds of dislocated birds
(homeless ones)
mark my morning, here,

far beyond, the mountains are
denuded
the trees are cut massively
man's greed again,
the caves are invaded for some
kind of a need for bat soup,

slashing, something of that sort,
the saying goes, as God creates,
Man destroys.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pondering About Time And Love

by appearance
time is like a river
in spirit time is
nothing but
air
you breathe time
and become
part of its
history
love is a vast landscape
it moves
like a film inside
our eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Pondering Upon A Loss

sometimes i stop walking and rest under the shade of a tree.
i look at the clouds always shaping their faces.
i feel the wind always changing their songs and their directions.
i look at the mountain, high and steady, unmoved, unmoving.
i transfer my gaze to the river, its job had always been to flow searching for the opening to the sea.
i listen to the chirping birds, i wonder how they fly and flee.
i look at the grass, still slowly crawling to cover the earth.
i ponder upon a loss and i do not ask any question.
i dare not the sky, where the say the gods live.
i do not question the sun, its job has always been to shine.
i have no questions now, upon this loss, i have only submission.
i keep my emotions steady. I control my fate. It is my only job left.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ponderous

lips rest on the fist
eyes nailed on the other
side of the road
crossing the glass boundary
of the window

something crosses the mind
focusing on the stillness
of time that does not run
for a while

on a standstill you capture
an idea
and then you shift your glance
once more
to write the words arranging
their placements
like they are all about to perform
a dance number

RIC S. BASTASA
Pongpong....

it is a nice feeling
when Pongpong goes with me
making
the rounds of
morning
always ahead of me
telling all dogs
to give way.

poor white cat
chased towards
the gate of its own
house

in the Park this dog
is king.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poor Creature, You Are Not Effective.

unjustly treated
i decided not to leave

i did not dust my sandals.
i did not curse.

i stayed because i like it
and i am not affected by
anyone.

treat me unjustly i am still
myself.
Poor creature, you are not
effective.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poor Man In Cyber Space

he got no
e-mails
or if there are any
they are
all spams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poor Man Rich Woman

as he kisses the bride
the camera clicks, the shooter
has taken a long time to
forget and then forgive.

it is not love, it is lust.
utilitarianism is not far behind.
marijuana is a tool and here it
is used to the most, poor man
rich woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
Popping Out

people keep
popping out
not surprising
they have been
there and i
pretend they're
nowhere.

life is like
that
presence
ignored
ignored
presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
without the numbers
and the name
for what is popularity
then?

i like the privacy
of incognito
walking all alone
along the
busy corners of the
mall
taking all its own
time
outside
tasting the
sweetness of
the park
and the familiarity
with the
streets

watching time
passing by
savoring the
slow pacing
of loafing
thinking and
pondering
without the
shallow
shrieking
screaming
demanding
mob
who for all you
know
has always cheated
on you
and if you are not
too careful
at the end
steals and
destroy you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poquita

She was my playmate in the river
We swam together
We had no breasts then
We only have thoughts so clean

I went to the university
She went to a far city
I came back to serve a town
And she is nowhere to be found

With her beauty and brain
She can make a stately queen
A lawyer, a doctor, a catch for men
But she never was, as what I’ve seen

Mo longer innocent and fresh
She has become a vendor of her flesh

RIC S. BASTASA
Porcelain Artist In Japan
	here will be no
another man who was nice
during the courting stage
but changed
after the marriage
after all the good in her
was taken away

her porcelain art
pleases her now

she pours all the blood
of her heart
in there...

RIC S. BASTASA
Porch *

Because it was what we thought was meant by family:
Laughter.
A new house.
A party in the garden where the tables were filled with young faces. Who did not want this true and tender accomplishment?
This just reward handed over to the world’s honest men,
its citizens.
Every house rested on its joys.
So when one of the guests nudged a glass when she was telling a joke which fell on the floor and broke,
we laughed.
We were accountable merely for our own mistakes and committed solely.
And everything was part of the good story,
really.
How could we not love what it cost?
Crack on the marble floor just set,
dent on a polished kitchen door.
A small window overlooks the children,
one nimble,
one frail,
balancing
on the far edge of the porch.

*by

RIC S. BASTASA
Pornographic

it is all in the mind
the breasts like coconuts
satisfying the hunger within
the skin exposed
to enliven
what is dying
the desire
to make us see
the color of the wind

to feel the other and see
the rainbow links two distant mountains
to make the waterfalls
convert their rage into songs

there is so much beauty
in our bodies
when we get naked
when we do not think
that we are dirty and pornographic

Adam and Eve were not born
with gowns and coats
God loves them for what they are
naked and true and
with malice towards none
to beauty they are one

RIC S. BASTASA
Portraits...

she lays there
her legs spread on the table
like a turkey
dinner

he kneels
and surrenders all that he has owned
he breathes
and then takes time
to take back what he has exhaled

it is a picture of having to give
and having to take
someone may call it love perhaps
but actually
it is not what is intended to be

it is but a portrait
and nothing else
it is still life
it is nothing but the connivance of the brush
and the paint
and the keeping that lies within the boundary
of the frame

RIC S. BASTASA
Porumbescu

at night
the cry of violins
permeates each nook
of this
tiny town,

i am inside
its tiny embrace
a dot
in the long sentence
of eternal
violence...

RIC S. BASTASA
Posterity? ..... 

you are sociable, articulate,
you speak and remember, you are both
a mouth, and
a memory, and so you keep albums,
black and white pictures,
everything that your dad wrote,
every piece makes you
remember
the greatness in us, of us,
all about us, and i say, all these self-serving
keeping, what are they for?

footprints in the sand... waves are eternally
erasing everything, the activity is always
covering

this is the origin of all that is new
fresh and beautiful, we give way, they all come,
we hide behind those furrows,

we are underneath the sheets,
we are the other last layers of those striated formations
no one digs us, we are buried,
some archeologists make the findings

(sigh) we are not what they are saying
how can we live for another 500 years?
tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Poverty

he is arrested today on a charge of grave threats against his very own aunt who owns a store selling rice and salted fish and sugar and coffee and eggs and mongo beans

he has nothing to eat and hurt his back and cannot really walk straight like an ordinary man

yesterday he asked a little help from his aunt for he was so hungry and had not eaten his breakfast as last night it rained so hard and his lamp went out and could not catch the American frogs on the pond that taste like chickens for his supper with his mother and two other siblings who are very hungry too and there are no more bananas and potatoes in their farm which did not yield a good harvest of rice as the cost of fertilizer has gone more than twice their price last month and they have nothing to spray to kill the army worms

and the clerk asks if they have no chickens and there is none as all died because of bird flu that came too early this year

and he was too angry because his aunt would not give them a little rice or at least let them borrow for the meantime that they have no work because the municipality is laying off all the casual employees that dig the ditch along the muddy road

and so he threatened his aunt as he was so hungry and he took the chupa of rice and a cup of mongo beans and a piece of salted fish for home

and so he is arrested today not just for grave threats but also for theft

he is the thief that hunger and anger have successfully molded before our very eyes that know no pity no compassion, and we shall now ask:

what is the verdict your honor? is he guilty as charged?

RIC S. BASTASA
Power

power has built itself
permanently on citadels
you, an ant, cannot take
the place of
their monuments,
look for wood, conspire
with the friendship of the
termites,
the timid worms,
live on dungs, and
begin the song of sorrow
time listens
the storm comes,
tsunamis multiply,
earthquakes, and
floods,
you, the ant, takes only a leaf
to survive,
a grain of rice
will be too much,
a dew for survival,
soon the citadels of power
crushes to the ground
including the king and queen
and their servants,
they all rot,
and you, the ant,
and termites long hiding
on rotten wood,
and worms surviving
on the humus of dung
shall build
for a beginning,
a hill, a path,
a throne of dung.

RIC S. BASTASA
Power And Children

it does not know how to whistle anymore
that which a mother does when she does not know
when father arrives
during the domestic wars among brothers of the land

it is arrogant and it does not know reason
it kills and hurries to hide its sins
murder and betrayal

without blinking eyes without trembling hands
there is only the constant triggering

bullets flow like water from the rocks
on such sounds of horror
the faces of men are shaped
the hands of children
fragile as a rose
disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
Powerful Star

I see you powerful star in this vast universe
How you behave as a sweeping meteor
Ravishing me with your glare and air
How I hide away from your danger
How I am amazed by your absolute power

You have taken me in contempt
I am but this dust in space that
You want to take and be nothing
But a dust in your tails

You chide me you see me as nothing
You spit over my being so tiny so insignificant
But mind you powerful star
I have you always in my mind
Waiting for the Big Bang when at the end
I can be the Sun and you beside me
What can you be but be so distant
At the end, so trivial so insignificant!

RIC S. BASTASA
Powerless...

he has steel hands
arms are made of platinum poles
the brains from
specialized computer chips
he is as sharp as an unused
sword
but he is useless in this struggle
for power

last night the old witch
betrayed him
a single lock of his hair
is taken by that woman
of use,
now, lies another Samson
defeated

but not yet dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Practicing Loneliness

it is the i in we
that has attached like epoxy,
indistinguishable like
pinch of salt to water

sugar to milk and
xanor to beer

tonight i will be alone
sitting on a chair facing the outline of the hills
light fading out
until what i see is only the flickering stars
above a sea of darkness

i will feel the chill of the cold night
a silk of mist hovering over my skin

it is the i, away from you and the we dissolving finally
decanting the i,
purifying the i in me

soon, i must learn this trick
of being one with me

in the darkness, in the cold,
i keep myself warm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pragmatism

it goes like this,
what he taught me
when i was small

son, it does not matter
which comes first
the chicken
or the egg

what matters son
is what makes us full

pragmatismo

dili na importante
kon unsay nauna
itlog ba o manok
ang importante
kon unsay makabusog..

hindi na mahalaga
kung alin ang nauuna
itlog ba o manok
ang mahalaga
ay ang nakakabusog.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pragmatism And Utility

it does not really matter
for the utilitarian if
God exists
what matters most is:
if God works

RIC S. BASTASA
Praise

praise lies within
the confines of our fences
something beyond this fence
lies
where praise is not a word
it is
so unnecessary

something beyond
us lies this something
waiting
looking
silently, he deserves it
but does not want it
he gives it
but does not want any return of it
he smiles at us

the way we haggle for the stars
when what is perfect
is starless when what is complete
is just
space

what is enough
light
illuminating this lock of hair
and he calls it
perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
Praise Be God In The Beautiful Morning

the grey sky turning golden
fishermen arriving with fish on their nets
the baby asleep in the cradle
mother sweeping the leaves
under the trees
children washing their feet and faces
boat sliding on the clear water of the lake
the buds unfolding
mongo seeds sprouting
ducks on the river
geese in the air

praise be God for this
beautiful morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Praise God On High

Praise God on High
He sits there and knows why
The reason for each housefly
From fungi to the pie
Even those far and nearby

Praise God on High
The Owner of the Sky
The sweetness of July
The secrets of my Sigh

He knows them all
He sees my fall
With love install
I hear no yawl.

He is what nature's sprawl
The snowfall, the menthol, the cat call.
My faults he does not recall
Everything in Him is so beautiful.

Praise! Praise God on High
For He has the Perfect Eye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prayer Of The Starfish

star from heaven
thus prays the fish
please do
not ever fall.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Prayer To The Magician.....

a child may wish you were here
pulling a white rabbit from a black hat
tearing newspaper into bits and with the sleigh of your hand
convert them to dollar bills

flowers from your wrists
rainbow from your fingers
rivers from your mind
how did that rod turn into a snake?

someone is disgusted
away from the bravura of the masses
his silence you cannot hear
and all he wishes is that you disappear
from there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Praying For The Return Of Pleasure

when love is gone
to another island
crossing the sea
i pray for pleasure
i light a candle
and offer the flowers
for the grand icon

the winds are strong
there is storm coming
and love may not return

the icon smiles
for the truth is
when love is gone
it is gone
and there is no promise
that it will return

in the eye of the storm
love sinks and cannot come back
anymore

there are no reasons
for separations
when love is broken and
beyond repair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Praying For The Sky

the decision to change
for the better-
like getting rid of a fat body
and having a new athletic
fit one

all for health and all for beauty
and all for the good guts inside us

what is it like Sammy?

I am not a snake
but i read it
and then i know how it feels to molt
like one
with all the accompanying pains
the moment
you shed off
skin.

in this ponderous moment
i am shedding off an old self

and like a tree that sheds of
all its old leaves
you do not have to tell me how i look

a tree without leaves all fingers now
bare, thin, dry,

but praying for the sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
Precipitation

(This comes from the wikipedia in a research made by my Nephew, a high school dropout, who still has a year of Thinking whether to go back to school or not, and he is no Good writer, simply cutting and pasting this report as follows :)

In meteorology, precipitation is any product of the condensation of atmospheric water vapor that is deposited on the earth's surface. It occurs when the atmosphere (being a large gaseous solution) becomes saturated with water vapour and the water condenses and falls out of solution (i.e., precipitates).

Air becomes saturated via two processes, cooling and adding moisture.
Precipitation that reaches the surface of the earth can occur in many different forms, including rain, freezing rain, drizzle, snow, sleet, and hail.

Virga is precipitation that begins falling to the earth but evaporates before reaching the surface.
Precipitation is a major component of the hydrologic cycle, and is responsible for depositing most of the fresh water on the planet.
Approximately 505,000 km³ of water falls as precipitation each year, 398,000 km³ of it over the earth's surface area, that means the globally-averaged annual precipitation is about 1 m, and the average annual precipitation over oceans is about 1.1 m.

My nephew is a mediocre student
A moron who hates school
And I do not really mind
It is his matter of a find

He can have all his quick dives
And consume all his nine lives
Nine night lives of a cat
If he dies or gets into trouble
I remain his loyal uncle,

But so much so for that
I will not be talking about him

I will be talking about
The importance of precipitation

The factors of precipitation
The precipitating factors

Why my friend in the Hall of Justice
Swallowed a bottle of pesticide
In the comfort room
And he instantly died
Leaving a wife and five kids
Leaving the vacancy of an interpreter

Why did he ever do that?

Was his soul an atmosphere largely
A solution of bad memories of past gases
And becoming saturated with
All his present unacceptable gaseous
Solutions in his being
He has
Become saturated with a devilish vapour
And the foul liquids of his minds
Condense and fall out of solution

Precipitating into a giving mind
Surrendering like a hopeless enemy
Going towards enemy lines
Raising a white handkerchief

Here comes another loser
Here comes a surrenderee

Giving up
He becomes so saturated
And so he commits himself to such a simple term on which we call commonly call a

Suicide?

Could it be that denial is such a bad gas
And the precipitating factors of indifference
From those inhuman around him

Made him finally fall as

A dropping of another rain a precipitation which we shall now
Assign in such a very simple term as

Self-destruction.

RIC S. BASTASA
Precisely....

the day comes
when we desire nothing
and on that day
you become perfect

precisely, no one is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Predator And Prey....

the black cat
sits by the window
cleaning its paws
with its red
long tongue and
on the other side
of the house where
a tree is fronting
a tiny brown sparrow is
learning how to fly and
the cat stops licking
its paws and looks
attentively to its
future prey and the
tiny sparrow sees it
too and with all
its strength flies
away toward the
blue sky far away
from it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Predator Prey Early Morning

i could be an early bird today
that catches no worm

but i do not really mind
being early is enough

having to find something to eat
because there is nothing yet

to prey upon a chance
is another

at most
an early bird does its best

one time
after another
time

till it is finally
eaten
by another early predator

who makes
the same complaint

RIC S. BASTASA
Pre-Departure Dialogues...

now my words
have become
an ordinary conversation
at the pre-departure lounge
of the airport
everyone is anticipating
home minding the number
of their luggage and
checked-in baggage
there are talks
but no one takes them
seriously
on the level of
superficiality...

RIC S. BASTASA
Pre-Departure Poem 1

my eyes ache and i am afraid sooner
if my hardheadedness persists a little longer i may
become one blind old man
begging for mercy and looking for love

justly enough did you say that love is blind
that true lovers cannot see
that mercy is grace?

my heart aches and soon enough i may become
a heartless old man remembering the pieces
of broken hearts and shattered memories
scattered on the floor
of my past

mirrors gleaming with light reflecting
many faces with eyes flowing a river of tears

RIC S. BASTASA
when i am gone
please do not think of me
because frankly speaking
and this may hurt
but this is true
and may liberate you
as wont
would have it
let me tell you
in the honesty of my
hands stretching out
for emptiness

i do not think of you
i will not miss you and
don't cry don't scream
you are a fool
loving someone who never
love you

is it harsh? yes it is.
i was there not just once
but many times

i am angry at yourself
i am angrier to myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pre-Departure Poem 3

did the white rose know
that the thorns
on her side
just below her petals
are the ones that make
her appear
pure and beautiful?

it is the logic
of contrast and the
art of elimination
that work out well
in making us
give the most
of what we are
and not the idealism
of the category
which only says what
we ought to be
we become because of
constraint and
necessity
and so here we are always
on the reconstruction
not because of the fulfillment
of desire
but because of the
prosperity and intensity
the industry of pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Predicament

On this red spot
I mark my plight

A halt
A hole

A standoff in difficult times
I want to go, but you are rising

An impasse
A white waving handkerchief

Your tears are holding me
Like clutching claws.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pregabalinsky

to remove the pain
a man resorts to the promises of pregabalinksy

it is the land of the drowsy
that keeps you at peace
with the world, birds flying in slow motion

the white cabinet stands there like a guest
in familiar terms like a penguin less the sea caps

hope settles on a soft sofa dressed in sky blue
imagining it to be a cloud
something in you floats and settles elsewhere

on your bed of roses, wet with your tears
you want to connect things toe to toe like a logical

arrangement of your ideas before
or was it long ago, when you finally lost the validity of

your arguments like trees shedding off leaves
breaking its twigs with the slight touch of the wind

from the North of your sun to the eastern part of your moon
'there is no star' you point to a black space embracing you

'yes, there is none' the darkness takes off its cape
and dresses you into invisibility, into insignificance as you close your

eyes in gentle surrender. You are a star now
meteor, taken into another galaxy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Kafka

one morning
when i discover
that i have turned
into a cockroach
you may write
what i will
do
you may theorize
that since i will be
to shy to go out
of my room just like
what your character did
then i may lock my
room, not eat,
and only talk to
my sister
that i may soon hate
my father
and will soon forget
my mother
i can relate to all
these based on my
readings
but i can see
what i can do
when i stink and
soon fear light
when even the air
which is suppose to
hush a lullaby
now hurts too
just like the rest
of those who
are close to me
and turn themselves
into disgusting monsters
more disgusting
than my being a
human-cockroach
you know very well
that i am brave enough
to force the door
to the other room
the one that none of
you has ever entered
i can use a knife
an ax or a hand grenade
i can even use a bomb
to break this
back door open
i am brave and
will always be restless
on a broken wing
of a bird i can
always still manage
to fly
away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Love

she undresses herself
facing the sun in the window
inside this house of
green curtains
she shows her back
and takes a glance at me
turning the left side of her body
and then she
smiles

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Love Tropicale....

then there is
this quiet
sunset in a transition
darkness is sprinkled with
bright stars

tonight is lovelier
the moon is a boat
sailing on a dark cloud
kissing it
is a lonely star
under these heavenly bodies
is a nipa hut where
two shadows fuse against
the light of

a lamp blown away
by a man's whisper
to an eager
ear

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Love Upon A Rainy Moment...

The rain
falls heavily now upon
the plains
the shadows of the hills
turn foggy
turn foggy
turn foggy
the air is cold and
wavy
wavy
wavy
upon our hair
we hear
we hear
we hear
the whispers
the whispers
the whispers
of love
of love
of love
incoming
incoming
incoming

the door is
the door is
the door is
excited to be closed
excited to be closed
excited to be closed
and the drapes
and the drapes
and the drapes
and the windows
and the windows
and the windows

light in the room
light in the room
light in the room
desires
desires
desires
to be dimmed.
to be dimmed.
to be dimmed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Seeing More...

it is when
the eyes fail
that you
begin to see
what these really
are......

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude To Sleep....

at night as
i begin another
journey towards a
dream
i hear the earthworms
singing

RIC S. BASTASA
Prelude.....

it does not tick
there is no more click
if it has
it was only a little bit
lighter as dust
in my cheek
the old feeling that
old craving is
gone
and now or if not now
tomorrow
before the sun comes out
in the open
i shall state my
freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Prematurity

it is still an early day
the sun has not shone that brightly

don't praise the day yet
the evening may be as dark as a pit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pre-Menopausal Drama

when you leave
your panty on the
white tiles of the
bathroom
and a cockroach
comes along
and sniffs it
i, your husband,
shall pick it up
and wash it well,
i think, i must be
the one to understand
you more
in this period of
your shaky existence
when all the
love is
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Preoccupation

the whole day is a Moslem holiday here
and instead of watching a movie
or going to the usual white sandy beach
and have a sun bath

i preoccupied myself with reading
cases about void and annulled marriages
on so many grounds from alcoholism
to genital incompatibility to
homosexuality and
psychological incapacity

until my eyes get so tired that
i decided to lay my body on a bamboo hammock
and have my own kind of swing

like i am a wall clock
taking my own rhythm and beat

there are so many of them in my country too
those who think that marriage as an institution
has become a mental asylum

with numbered wards and screaming patients
straitjacketed to traditions and
religious convictions

but enough of these stupidities and
helplessness

for the meantime i will read the latest
poems of Carlo Betocci
something about summer and the shadows
of mulberry trees

about images that must comfort us
in these times
of my doubts and feelings of loss.
Preoccupied...

the paths mend
to themselves
grasses know how
to sew what
familiarity is torn
the rivers too
know how to wind and
unwind
they curl upon
the banks and
carry those lonely
rocks
the tree that were cut
are quick with
their buds
the clouds that flee
come back with
glee
the horses that die
always replace
what is gone
with a number of
their youngs
these changes
mesmerize
these new views
hypnotize
and those unwary
and preoccupied
do not notice that
we have long been
gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Prescribed Thought A Prescribed Mode Of Action

There is no such a thing
There is no such a thing as a most natural way
There is no such a thing as a most natural way of expressing a thought
There is no such a thing as a most natural way of expressing a thought a mode of action
There is no such a thing as a most natural way of expressing a thought a mode of action a form of logic
After so much thought
After so much thought about loneliness
It becomes apparent
Logic can no longer be relied upon
Logic can no longer be relied upon as a base for studying the structure of language
The structure of my poetry
The structure of my soul
The structure of my God

I dare think
I dare to know
I dare to think
I will not be hardwired from the thinking of my birth rising from some dogmatic slumber.

RIC S. BASTASA
Presumption Of Happiness...

she misses
being lonely,

she quips
and plunges
in Bahamas.

RIC S. BASTASA
pret my dog is happy
doesn't milk her puppy
she lets them die
and does not lie
pret my dog not a rodent
uncaring and independent
she kills her puppies
and lives like the hippies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretend That It Is Not Important, ....

to something that you do not want to lose
give it
its non-importance, take it for granted,
no one minds it, no one likes to take it,
it stays,
no one is interested, because you make it
not interesting,
so? you'll keep it for years
and it will be yours,

what we take as important
they will always consider taking it away from you
the secret is in the pretenses

when you are ready to dispose it
everyone begins taking other things from you

this pain thing, this motive to inflict pain
this is what they always want to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretense

if you only cared
as i do, you could have
appreciated
my little pretenses
they are not the usual
inconveniences
they are the tickles
the taste of pickles
the scent of ripeness
the smoothness
of love
what delights us
we must say
no matter what

reality that hurts
what use?

time is too short
for truths that kill us
time lies within
our own points of view

now, ride in fantasy
come with me
for i am yours

this is  pretense
this is happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretenses

this is what
they want to see of you

a handsome face, strong arms, clean fingernails,
broad shoulders,
determined eyes that look always forward
scented ears
the best feet and
good standing,

to please them
you give those parts to all to them
and what you will get
in return is the
applause,

everybody is happy,
except you,
it was not you,
it will never be you,
you are in truth not the one that you really are
you only comply what what they want to see
and surely they will get them
they will get
what they see

you go inside your room
slowly disassemble yourself
all those beautiful parts

a handsome face, strong arms, clean fingernails,
broad shoulders,
determined eyes that look always forward
scented ears
the best feet and
good standing,

you lie in your bed without looking at the mirror
it takes only the rattling of your bones
to tell you who you really are
then you close your weary eyes
and sleep

the dream will join you in these truths

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretenses...

what you see
is what you get
that is the policy
here

there are errors
and you get them but
i ask you
not to stop

correct them in your
mind and then
move on to the next
page

it is blank and you
must now have to write
on your own

do not repeat the same
errors
hold the flashlight and
switch it on

let there be light
you must say so
and pretend that you
are God.

RIC S. BASTASA
pretpret

romantic pretpret
poodle under my feet
wanting to sleep
with at least a part of his body
touching tenderly
a part of my toe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretty

pretty is sweet and rose scented
i go only for the hugging and the caressing
she licks me though on my feet and toe
but no matter how lonely
i do not sleep with pretty

i still have fears of the fleas

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretty Rich

betty flies
to korea
with hubby
dave
just to watch
the bursts
of autumn

RIC S. BASTASA
Pretty Smart, White Liar.

there is in them which
we will never have, perhaps fame,
but we do not really need this,
perhaps only perhaps

there is in us which they will never have,
perhaps, only, perhaps,
but we keep journeying through the night
and when we survive
the darkness and soundlessness
we become fierce as ever

it is this anger that feeds us
into life, but which, we perhaps, keep suppressing
love is love and it is what we say
even if, perhaps, we do not really mean it,
perhaps, anymore.

pretty smart, white liar.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pre-Valentine Lines For My Love

surely my love, my only one
(believe me, you are my only one)

i enjoyed every moment with you
my love, my lover, my friend, my mother,
my teacher, my playmate, my bedmate,
my goddess, my fortress, my enchantress,
my mattress, my blanket, my pillow,
my bathroom, my kitchen, my living room,
my house, my garden, my veranda,
my plaza, my mall, my market, my port,
my golf partner, my right hand, my manager,
my window, my door, my key, my car,

for indeed, my wife, you are everything to me.
let me just be a mere husband to you.

happy pre-valentines dear. let us make all the love available tonight.
i am tying this yellow ribbon on a tree, and it is you alone who can untie it

this very sensitive twig, covered by a fig leaf, this little bird
that flies only to your belly, your lips, that place between your legs

RIC S. BASTASA
Previous Worms

do not worry
one cannot just be a stone
forever

we grow
we evolve into our
destined
higher states of
being

blaspheme your
human nature
be the next
god
beside the gods

haven't you heard
what the snake said to the
apple?

you can be
another Eve

or you can be the
next tree

it depends really
on how
strong is your
faith

into the higher
state of
what you can be

if you worry too much
you can be
the worm
that worrier buried
underneath
the moist soil

if you dream
you can grown wings
you can fly
you can escape from the bondage
of how limited
you are

if you wish to be like them?
will the gods and goddesses worry?

the won't
they are afraid to become
their previous
selves as worms, you know.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prick Of The Thorns

reality is not in the red petals
of the rose
decorated with six drops of dew

it is in the prick of the thorns
piercing your skin
letting out drops and drops of
blood

it is the pain in the mind
when the body starts to move out of focus
when the heart
begins to sing the old lines of the blues

RIC S. BASTASA
Pride

pride settles for many words
words that stab back like the knives of the knaves
shimmering and sharp and shaking
pride flying without wings
scaling the heights of mountains
hollow body without bones
feathered without flesh
pride too light for wisdom
too heavy with reasons less
pride jumps out of the cliff
lands on the sharp stones
curses and crushes upon itself
bloody and shattered and pierced
mourns for no other
but itself unto itself losing
all upon itself knowing pretending

RIC S. BASTASA
Pride And Privacy

i know how to compromise
not with the crowd
if you really miss me
we can have a
tea for two
in my private jet
to Hongkong

RIC S. BASTASA
Primary And Secondary

bread and butter thing
water and white rice on the table
eggs and vegetables
spread on the covered table
these are the primaries of life

poetry is at nighttime
reading aloud
composing some more
analyzing other poets' works
telling to yourself
this smacks the senses
this strikes the core of my being
this will not make me sleep again
invigorating
worth the lost salt of myself
not looking back
moving on
sailing on the boat in the middle
of such storm
seeking peace
sleeping alone and dreaming

these are the secondaries of existence

tomorrow can be
incompetent
today is the most evident
the past is duly taken
notice

the void comes
and then to its wings i take my daily ride.

RIC S. BASTASA
things meeting you
though new need not surprise you
for you live here
and it has been all those years
you are familiar with the labyrinths
of feelings
nothing shocks you
or numbs you
you are alive and everything around you
speaks to you
in the language of the heart
the feelings of the hands
be glad
you live here and you like it here

our world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prism

you do not know
who you are
what persons live in you
blue, red, yellow
unless you pass
through me

for the meantime
you are named light

RIC S. BASTASA
Prisoner

because
you handcuffed him
not a hand
can be raised
for him to
swear to an
oath to
tell the truth
and nothing
but the
truth

RIC S. BASTASA
what if you
have no children?
what if what is left
of the family is
just you and your
spouse?
what if there is
only you?

will you be less
of what you are?

RIC S. BASTASA
Proclaiming Independence

independence
is a responsibility

to know where
you are heeding
to know what to
do
what purpose
what motive
what good is left
after all
these cruelties of
friends and
foes alike

you are alone now
but never lonely
never afraid
never lost

there is no thought
left for the selfish
quest
automated to this
cause
for humanity

another year ends
and another years begins
not a slave anymore
about time and its
grips
but a master of this
universe
self-sufficient to its
cause
shining like a star
nurturing like the moon
powerful like the sun
for what is this
green grass of home?
your independence
homes for no home no more

anywhere is your
everywhere now
eye to eye with Moby Dick
parting ways
and this courage without
hope
this living without
questions
moving on, moving on

life a force of life
to the movement of the water
to the spins of this earth
with the whole universe

RIC S. BASTASA
Procrastiation 101

piles of records
wait like executioners
have no plan
of putting my
head for the
cutting axe

they can always wait
while i dance
while i climb mountains
and see the fog
and the ships below
the wide expanse
of the sea

meanwhile i am sipping
tea
and savoring this
slice of cake

this slice of life
how can i let them
waste it?

i am stopping by the woods
to listen to the birds
i am roaming the forest
for the flowers

i like to stop for a while
and wade on the river
i like to flow like the wind
to the willow trees

let the pile of records wait
with their axes and spears
i will then offer this body
for their feasts...
Procrastination

in love with
wait a minute
talking to lots of time anyway
tomorrow is aplenty
postponing what
today could have done
efficiently

nothing does better.

RIC S. BASTASA
Procrastination At 6 A.M.

the book is open
page 103 is waiting

to be read and to be
understood yet

you are into something
more that pleases your hands

it is the action now and not
the contemplation

it is the moving on with
what the lips shall utter

to make you understand what
is losing and what is regaining

what is it to decompose and
retake the composure

you do not read between the
lines of a fusing self

the book closes upon itself
showing you the face of the

trunk, solid, stoic, and
bland.

RIC S. BASTASA
Procrastinations Of The Hands

what to do? you know
when to do it? wait a while
there is so much time
unwind, spend more time
to what is unnecessary
loaf like a unleavened
bread
skip the moment
and stare and then record
all the things that you
miss

there's so much undone
but more happiness of the mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Procrastinations......

always i say
tomorrow and i ask
yes tomorrow and i
answer
back yes tomorrow
it will be tomorrow
for all these things
that i do not really
like doing their place
is tomorrow
for tomorrow never ends
and it pleases
me not doing these things
that i really
do not like to do

but just the same must
be must be done
yes tomorrow

the heart knows
i must do what tomorrow what
must be done
the heart bleeds
for tomorrow is always tomorrow
and must be done
tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Production Line

much is much and
so many is like sand sprawling
on the shore... so much so many
and one who lays her body on
the sandy shore
takes sand for granted just another
part of this mass production of
things in her ordinary world: rocks, pebbles, stones, sands,
what value can there be on a speck of dust
a grain of sand
becomes like her sun, too ordinary for her sunburn-skin

what's got the sun to do with me?
or the sand?
her sunglasses speak for her
in the middle of her empty hours
basking under the sun

production some times, so much for so many
meaninglessness growing like fruits of the poisonous tree

i could have kept one, just one
kept it inside my heart, i could have known what is precious,
diamond, just one,
glittering in the darkest hour of my night.

but there is no one really, all i have are mass produced, and
like sand, i lay my body on the shore, spreading so thinly without feelings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Professional

he is the man
who sits on his
big black chair
smoking a cigar
earns a lot of
money by
simply doing
nothing

lots of phone calls
though
either for the safari
in south Africa
or the affair
in Jamaica

RIC S. BASTASA
Professional Virgin

the old town finally gets tired
of her and junks her
like an old tramp
no one likes the sound
of her name
and so she leaves this
old town too
takes the bus and travel
miles and days
until she finds this sleepy town
innocent in its manners
and gives her respect

she wears her new clothes
and sandals
she tells them a new name
she pretends she is innocent
not even knowing how
to use the spoon and the fork

in this town
she is precious
she is their virgin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Profiling...

the glasses are taken
and what you see is
just the face,
the eyes that look beyond
what the heart feels,
the skin with furrows
exposing all the years
the white locks of hair
expressing
those days of chaos
the mouth kept shut
hiding all those
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Profound Ideas Are Taught In Simple Things

wasted time
on dry sands slipping from your fingers

love on the petals of the
red rose

precious life
on the air that we cannot see
and yet we breathe daily
unseen
and yet so essential

old age
on the sunset dimming and dimming

until everything is dark
night
death

and then eternity
in the moon and stars and the space endless

our mortality
to these naked eyes seeing only what lies there

and here
and not beyond

RIC S. BASTASA
Profundus

DEEP and dark
silence probing
gaining more
silence

profound
and interesting
it is this that we
encounter
and cannot comprehend

stunning!

RIC S. BASTASA
we slept under the cover of the trees
those old ones with leaves spanning a hill
we were so tired from a great escape of the crowd
we slept like we were dead with all the fears
we did not remember dreams
we were not allowed to cook
we had to transfer to another place after we woke up
we trek the mountainside again
leaving the profusions of light from the morning sun
seeping the leaves of the old trees
filtering what the underground bush does not really need
we had the life of the vagabonds
inside the heart of the rebellious
there was always no permanent place to stay
for life is but a journey and every scene is temporary

RIC S. BASTASA
Prognosis

perhaps i will miss you
but i know
it will only be for a certain
while

then temporarily there will
be uncertainty
of what i can do in your absence

time, time, more time
at a snail pace of sorrow and then
in between there is this emptiness
that starts to expand
like a cold air under the bed
moving towards the window
scattering to the
sky

and then
i look back and see myself
how i have become so
wasted

and then
one gets fed up with missing
one get tired
of loneliness

things come before you and
some sighs keep repeating themselves
like the monotonous sounds of the weeping sea

and then
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Projection

you don't feel like talking
to myself yet i insist that we talk
things out
thresh the chaff from the grain
smoothen the edges
remove the creases
before the sun sets
you don't mind me at all
and now you are telling me
that i am angry at myself.

it is solved. You feel for me.
Now i can sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prolific

he will not be a river
that runs dry
come drought

he will be the sea
as always
deep and blue
and mysterious
and he will speak
everything
interesting or not
from continent to
continent
from shore to shore
till everything
becomes the sea
till all the islands
are erased
till all the glaciers melt
till the world
becomes eaten by
the mouth of the
big water

he will never have
the writer's block
for in all truth
he will be everything
but sense and
nonsense
with the domination
of the latter of course

and you
who is curious shall read
till the last word
because you too
expects much
and then you make a sigh
you relate
and say i am also what i am
sense and nonsense
wise and otherwise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prometheus V. Hercules

to think the consequences of that
leap before the
leap
Oh Prometheus
how many pains do you have to suffer
before the Pain,

Hercules
suffers only once
he leaps when he leaps
and the Cliff
is still a Cliff.

RIC S. BASTASA
Promise Me My Love

promise me my love
that you will no longer mind
our little differences
that from now on
you must begin to see
the forest
(the whole of me)
rather than the trees
(those trivial things
that you bloat
that make me float
and take me away
from you)

promise me
that for better or for worse
you will love me

till the next life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Promises Promises Promises

promises promises promises
sounding like
the biblical rameses rameses
rameses
so noble, and so
adorable
but like promises promises and
more promises
they are made more
to be broken
sounds
like a broken hymen

RIC S. BASTASA
Pronouns

NOW i am very careful about my pronouns,
I've been hiding from myself and from you.
You are what i have concealed from the rest
of my humanity. You are an ambiguity that
must remain in that timelessness of a pronoun.

They can be annoying. They are sometimes
dictating how to be us, this I in you, and this
You in me. Nevertheless, in the pursuit of pleasure,
perhaps at first, and then in the fulfillment of love
later, if this be love in fact, then we can get rid,
of the senselessness of our masks in grammar
and syntax. There will be a time when i will
use your name and then put it beside mine.

They will protest. They will continue making the
rules.
But You and I, and Us, have already made it
from desire, to love, to forever, or if fate is not
in our favor, then....death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Proper Anonymity

at the age of fifty
i should have been somebody else
someone great
greater than the sun
famous, rich and
powerful

somebody
bigger than a rock boulder
beside an old mountain
for which travelers look at me
as a great story that they
can always tell to their
children and grandchildren
on the night times of
their lifetime

i could have been a strong river
wider than a lake
bringing all sand and silt and
storing them all
in my own huge basin
where all tourist come and
praise and then plunge themselves
for the unforgettable swim
of their lives
in the watery belly of
my greatness

but at the age of fifty
(just like everyone else
who drown themselves in the alcoholic
contents of their bottles
and who smoke their cigarettes
endlessly like a chimney
in winter)
i am still a nobody
my name is very ordinary
and people who pass by
do not even give a glimpse
as though i am, at least,
a human being
with the face like the moon
boosted by
a crown of stars

i dream,
i dream big, much bigger than your dreams
when i was young
but all my dreams have become wasted
dumped and burned and
in-order to live in peace
i have forgotten all of them
buried them alive
screams drowned six feet below
the ground

this is existence now
it is not i who is the center of this universe
it is the sun or
someone else who still believes that he is the sun
or can be
with all possibilities statistics-wise
the only sun
surrounded by all the planets
and accommodated by
the vast expanse
of space

my mother says i have become a mature man
by this she means
i have accepted what i am and where my place is

i guess we all have the same story
we are finally here
in the greatness and peace of
our own anonymity

in the ordinariness of routine
waiting for our own
chosen (hopefully)    happy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
Prophylaxis

as an advance guard
the tooth without the lips is the real leader.
it cannot speak for itself
no one, nothing speaks for it
since the tongue is numb & sick
and the lips find finds it a shame
in fact it tries to conceal it
and so you know what happens next
the tooth creates the pain
and all it does is
this gritting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Prose V. Poetry

in geography
prose is a vast plain
there is no challenge
to a sophistication
of understanding

poetry is a valley
mountains embrace you as arms
there is an ascent
that leads you to the stars

prose is plain hello
poetry makes love with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Protesting Frogs

frogs protesting
picketing
on polluted pond

not only in the
Philippines.

RIC S. BASTASA
Proverb Poem #2

'Nothing succeeds like the appearance of success.'
Christopher Lasch (1932-1994)

the tenet remains
fake it
until it becomes
true

so today
appear and dress like
you are a success
how can failure
understand
this?

RIC S. BASTASA
Proverb Poem 1

'An infallible method of conciliating a tiger is to allow oneself to be devoured.'
Konrad Adenauer (1876-1967)

devour me
that is the cry
of the hungry
there is no fear
anymore to be in the place
where his hunger
lives
deep in the stomach
of the tiger

annihilation of the self
sometimes become
the solution
to the unbearable
weight of being

RIC S. BASTASA
Proving Power

some prove their power
by destroying what
others built

and some get so disappointed
their power to create
seemingly defeated

and the other merely looks
with indifference

and one takes the courage
to ask

is God sleeping?

RIC S. BASTASA
Pruning A Very Long Poem

THIS IS A VERY LONG POEM AND I WANT IT PRUNED:

I used to like gardens, putting flowers on the row,
Tending the soil, cutting the grass,
Removing the weeds,
Pruning the lush greenery of trees
And making the flor-de-luna vines
Create a certain impression
Of a landscape,
A certain motif
A theme of gladness
Something to cherish

I take a good look around my
Little garden
And then I would sit under the shade of flowering champaca trees throwing fragrance
Sprinkling perfume
The neighbors say that the scent of ylang-ylang even reaches their houses
And the white sampaguitas so exuding
I used to dirty my hands putting soil on the flower pots
Designing landscapes of love
And patience, curves and hills,
And tend to all the colors mixing in space,

I used to

I am telling you I stopped
When I married,
My wife comes to my garden
And rearranges everything
She puts what she wants
And pulls what she
Thinks repels her
She cuts the flowers
Puts them on the vase
And uproots some species
That I love
And soon the garden has not become mine
Crowded, and strange
And what used to be my little garden
Green Bermuda grass and patterns
Red Anthuriums heart shaped
Pink Dahlias praying to the sun
Orange Gumamelas dancing in the wind
And yellow dancing ladies beaming with pride
Olive Palms waiving to passers by with all cheers
Violets so assuming
White lilies in pure dignities
Lotuses in meditation moods
Husky Cactuses confident with thorns
Finger Ferns so fine and cool

My garden
Now is a forest
The wanton chaos
My garden is gone
All the patterns changed
Drastically

And she asks me
She asks me
Why I don’t tend the garden anymore
She asks me
If something is wrong
If everything has gone wrong
She asks me if I still love my garden
She asks me if I can begin planting some seeds again

She asks me if I still love her,

AND THIS IS HOW I PRUNED IT:

I like gardens
I don’t tend the garden anymore
I still love her,
Pruning, Cutting, Trimming

today i shall trim
some wants, i will leave some needs,
i shall cut protruding branches
of bias and prejudice

i will suffer more pains in the
process but
that will just be short
and temporary

i will check my roots
remove those
dead and unnecessary
undergrowths

by then i shall look prim
and proper
well shaped, and ready for
spring &
bloom so well in summert

RIC S. BASTASA
Psalms 100: 1 - 3,5

all the lands and all the people here
this place where I live

make the noise
that is joyful to the Lord

let us serve Him with gladness
let us sing Him the songs of praise

it is time to be with Him and know Him
He made us and we are His
Sheep in His pasture

The Lord is Good and He is God
His love endures forever
and His faithfulness goes on and on
For all our generations

Praise Him

RIC S. BASTASA
getting no response at all
from calling me names
short of
a nickname
bound for copulation
you finally give
up
curl in bed and force
your eyes
to close in order
not to witness a
clue to ferocity and
hardheadedness

and then you try again
without any
name and you use this one:

pssssssssssssssssssssssssssssst!
catch me a bird
and push
it in my belly

RIC S. BASTASA
Psychiatric Sessions

in Vietnam
i had noodles
almost everyday
except for the
genre bread
and some
shrimps i miss the usual rice
which they
do not serve there
and thinking of rice makes
me miss
my own country like you there in Ontario
i began to count my days there
in my fingers
and then my toes and
then i decided to
come home for i cannot imagine
myself as a piece of a
ceramic figurine
which fell from that
display
breaking into pieces

it is very expensive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Psychological Comfort

a dog (a white poodle) sleeps against a wall of cement (unpainted still)

a man (who just woke up) with unwashed face opens the computer, surfs for the morning news,

checks his emails, comments on the Facebook, reads PoemHunter, and then begins to press the keys

another usual poem, another useless endeavor
time runs so fast, the sun is up, walking is dispensed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Psywar

let me see
what side of the fence
shall you
take?

let me tell them
what you are
and what they did to you
that you do not
like

let me see both of you
in a state of war

let me see if you come
back to me

and then i will also know
what side of the
fence shall i take.

RIC S. BASTASA
Psy-War Of A Relationship

one thing with her is her honesty
thus when she says
if you want to go, then go
don't look back
if you keep hanging on that rope of pride
go hang
hang everything alive
kill and be just one of those names
she means every word
she knows how to live alone
and have no regret

one thing with her is her honesty
for tonight over a glass of wine
surrendering to loneliness
back to its cold arms
she finally sheds her tears

she takes the tissue and
wipes her tears
and then begins again
moving on
to another quest of this illusive thing
called happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Puccini

imagine
a butterfly
lost
blown by
the wind
to an island
without
a coconut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pulang Bato

red stone, acryllic, try the metallic
one, nope, the pulpy, the fleshy ones,
three little red riding hoods, oopps,
no, i mean the three tiny tips of
the tipsy trips we once had at the balcony,
whine, wine, whiskey, and rhum, so much sparkle
of the perks at the jerk of the parking lot.

a lot, i need a lot of the reddish cheek
of the red stone, something seething
teething, and too lovely for my skin
slimy, slippery, streaming, steaming,
i love every scent of you. I jump in there.

There were flowers and butterflies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pumping Water At The Old Well....

since there is no electricity
you pump water from the well,

it is still dark, and the chickens are still on the trees,
you sweat it out so you can have water in this village

memories keep flashing scene by scene
when you were once a young boy doing errands for mama

when you were ordered to take the morning bath
but you simply ignored it and climbed instead the balimbing tree

the branch gave way and there you fell
mama was hysterical as you lost consciousness

your memory stopped right there and then
you were always a disobedient boy and now a man

it seems that there is still no difference to speak of
and you remember someone wise enough to say that the child has always been
the father of man

you pump more water and now you know what this really means.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pungent

your life
is pungent
like the expensive truffle

when i take it
in my mouth
my whole body
shivers
to such a
delicacy

try taking care of
it for once
good luck

RIC S. BASTASA
Punta Cruz

THE adventure of my ancestors
from Bohol
where poverty drives them all the
promises of Mindanao
is land-marked by the
cross planted
on the shore of Miputak
to protect them from the
attacks of the
pirates
godless men from the south
who without mercy
took away their women
and children
as slaves and
concubines.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is the other side of the mountain
made of dessert sand
nothing interesting in there
no gems,
everything diamond-like
is just imagination

when a friend asks about this side
we tell all these lies
that at its foot is a comfortable cottage
that beside it is a river
there is a white horse,
birds often make a stop-over here
trees are fruiting
and flowers bloom all year long

to be fair
there is also something true and beautiful in that
other side

but no one knows it except you
and on that same side of the mountain
you still make lies

afraid that someone shall take it away from you
because you are weak
and cannot protect it
from the invasion of the masses
from the shallowness of their minds
their incapacity to understand that in there
everything is good and can be seen and felt
but not a bit shall be taken

it is the world where the spectator must view
the world with respect
because it is untouched because it remains
to be itself

untaken, untouchable,
pure, and hence can never be us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pure Feeling

so you desire nothing more except
pure feeling,

how can i write about feeling?
pure feeling?

yes, without words, without borders
no laces,
plain cloth, sand on the pillow

mold on the hammock,
lost worm wriggling on the shiny floor,
bird flying on brisk wings
towards places that i imagine,
depth into the sea
breathless

i lay my head upon your thighs
without looking at your eyes as i close mine in full trust

you thrush upon me
in the darkness of it all

love that rebuilds my empire
desire that puts moon on my evening sky

pure feeling
no direction, nothing to ask and nothing to give

i ask sometimes if i am right
if it is possible.
Purification

high fever
your eyes losing sight
of some images
crisscrossing your
mind

you speak names
they hear
you mumble some
facts
they understand

you don't
you are on fire
you are burning
with so much heat
your hair
smells of burnt ashes
you are charred
almost to death

that is how the
feeling goes
on this purification

you wake up
the following morning
naked
and pure and very simple
you face
the window
and greets
some birds
singing on the
window sill

your eyes meet
and they chirp
seeing
the new you

you stretch
your arms
and close your eyes
this is the beginning
of your
happy moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Purple Opulence

purple petals in opulence
closer, hanging, in bunches
like lilac flares,
and cascading like
colored fountain
somewhere in
Chicago spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Purple World

in a purple world
lavender clouds

a violet day
dusk pool

shadowy trees
black grasses

sickle moon
gray mountains

tiny stars
reflected on the lake

let me ask you
were you there once?

RIC S. BASTASA
between us are the gaps
of years
the oceans are faraway
and there are no islands
that remind us
that somewhere or
sometime
we can be connected

i only have wishes
that this body may soon rot
and another body
in place to lead me to
your haven

or that my spirit shall fly away
like a hummingbird and
look for another flower
a dwelling of my
untouched desire

you ask me if i am happy
what metaphor shall i use again
to mislead you
into a thinking that fits my
puzzling state?

a long time ago i have all the answers
a map where i must go and find my
self as treasure
as home

now i only have that sense
that it is there and yet it can never be found
or if found
i know i cannot fully understand it still

happiness is hard to spell
how can i ever pronounce it perfectly
till then?

RIC S. BASTASA
Push Me To The Edge

in a little time you shall push me
until i arrive at the edge
my shoulder is about to feel the crushing
of the wall and the marks of the fence
write upon my skin
the limit of forbearance

soon i will show you how wings grow
how flights are made
soon you shall know how lonely can life
go without me

i wish you will cry
on the other hand i am definite you won't
your world is not mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Pusher

have patience for a i am the pusher of your dreams
the wheelbarrow of your ideas glazed by your tears
beside those
black wild chickens
have courage for soon you shall rise
above my little spring

RIC S. BASTASA
Put To A Test

you put my love
on top
of this crucible

you put it
on fire

you blaze like
a fire in the forest.

i turn to red
porcelain

it is hot as hell
(as though
i was once there)

you form me
in the shape of
your love

i turn to fluid
and then after this
crucible test

i turn solid again.
there is not much change
inside, though

i feel stronger.
break me for i am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Puti Nga Ikog....

gisulayan nato ug
patong ang usa ka pulong
sa laing pulong

morag kalo sa ulo sa usa
ka tiguwang
morag bata sa iyang
abaga nga
morag gahimo sa
iyaha nga usa ka kabayo
samtang siya
ang naglingkod sa montora
samtang gahawid sa
bunal nga morag ikog
sa pagi

kining pagpatungpatong sa pulong
maoy nakaingon sa
kataposang nilugdangan

ang pagkahagbong ang
pagkakay-ag ang kusog nga
tingog sa pagkahulog dayon
ang pagbanos sa tumang
kahilom kay dili ka buot nga
ang bata nga malipayon
sayong mahimong lain na
usab nga masulub-on nga
sama kanimo

sagdi lang, inig kahuman
niining tanan samtang nangita
pa kitag paagi nga walay
mabasol, mobalik ra usab
ang kinabuhi, modagan ang
bata, magdula-dula sa gawas
sa balay unya makit-an niya
ang tinood nga kabayo
nga sa kakulang sa iyang
pagsabol wala siyay kahadlok
nga basin ug masipaan siya
samtang gisulayan niyag
hikap ang kaanindot sa
iyang ikog nga puti,

RIC S. BASTASA
Putting A Person In A Box

when you put
a person in a box
the box becomes
the person
the box does not
grow
it chokes
the pharynx
and shuns away light
even air
the box cannot die
it stays as a
box for years
sometime when
you are anxious
you open the
box
only to find out
that the person
is not a box
and he is not
there
anymore
it was you inside
it
and it too was
gone
and you did not
notice
the box
the person
and you

RIC S. BASTASA
Putting All Creativity In Cessation.

words become
monotonous when
oft repeated without
any sense, this
vain repetition
is filling the
space of
thought without
rhythmic dissonance

upon uniformity
sleep comes victorious
putting all
creativity
in cessation.

RIC S. BASTASA
Putting All The Eggs In One Basket

Every time I leave
Mother always reminds me
This: do not put all your eggs
In one basket,

Because when I fall
All the eggs will break and I will be left with

Nothing.

Even a nincompoop understands that.

Oh mama! I do not have those many eggs
And she does not have any basket,
We sure both, have nothing to lose.
Thanks for the reminder, anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this lady-judge
who had two talented and intelligent sons
with leadership qualities

she loved them so much
her husband is a lawyer who defended the poor
and the oppressed

they live on top of a hill away from the rest
they live a very private life
and mind their own affairs

her sons believed in an ideology of liberating the poor from their chains
left her home and fled to the mountains
the military searched them
and they vanished

there were many things that were rumored
one body was found beside a river ridden with bullets
rotten and worms were consuming each wound
another body was later found on the other side of the mountain
under the forest trees with a face that is severely disfigured

they speculated that they were the bodies of her two sons
missing for years and now thought of dead

the lady judge is strong
we do not speak about it
if she were weaker she would have gone insane
her husband got sick
and found no meaning in lawyering for the masses anymore

i must remember this
and write about it
because no one has done it

this i put on record
we did nothing to appease her
we did nothing to
put into the hands of the law those culprits
those were the harsh times

we only prayed
we only offered flowers
we only left towards our own respective homes

RIC S. BASTASA
Putting My Feet Inside Your Shoes

empathy

i shall enter your domains
vicariously
from my mind
to your feelings,
and thoughts
it is the same
sadness i have
been keeping
like your ring

i may lose
myself in the process
of loving you much
like rain pouring
all over you

it is me
here and now
with you
i can always
feel you

i shall kiss you
you will be nearer
to the beatings of my heart
the quivers of my soul

by this
i too, shall become
the mirror of myself
we become one
in namelessness

it is me in you
it is you in me
Puust Ja Punaseks Ette Tegema

you cut a tree
and make the wood

you take the wood
and paint it red

my dear friend
let us filter the river
let us make things clear

Selge nagu seebivesi
as clear as soapy water!

RIC S. BASTASA
Pyrrhic Victory

how do you make coercion
your ally?

will you try to use
the moral lesson
that teaches nothing
but fear?

i shall run the risk
of this Pyrrhic victory

to have you in
my heart
and yet negate you
in my flesh

and that ally of the mind
exploits
and negates
my triumph in love

RIC S. BASTASA
Qou Vadis, Melvin

Let us start with
An immovable object
Meeting an irresistible force,
What happens, Melvin?

Start with a glass
Half filled,
Half empty,
What now Melvin,
What do you see?
What will you say?

Or the most common
Argument of a hand
With a small bird
Held by an old man,
And you are the young
Boy asking, what do
You say now Melvin?
Is the bird alive or
Dead, is the bed forever
Remembered or forgotten?

A squeaking bed,
A bed,
Now, just any kind of bed
Reduced to an essence of bed
Like any other kind of bed
Where you sleep, in fact
Where everybody sleeps

The bed is now forgotten
And all squeaking beds
Are similar, nothing significant
And all the faces you met
Are similar faces in the
Marketplace, in the most
Common places of your heart,
That is forgetting something
That you cannot really forget,

Make them so familiar, so ordinary,
You get immunized, you get so numb
All of them similar, so affordable

Nothing hurts anymore, nothing
Even if you remember, there is nothing anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Qou Vadis?

he said one night he got the moon
under his arms and he was serious

we were so afraid and so we believe him
he laughed so hard
that the moon fell out from his arms
it escaped
and took its comfort again in the skies

he gazed at the moon and realized
there is logic for things to be just right there in their proper places
we confirm him again
back to our arms

he bleeds and now he shall be healed again
even without the moon under his arms

where to, cousin?

RIC S. BASTASA
Qouting Ducky

Don't argue with an idiot;
people watching may not
be able to tell the difference.

RIC S. BASTASA
Qua Patet Orbis

free dreams
fill this world with all your dreams
as far as this world extends
no warping of time
no black holes of simplifications
move in and fly with the wings
of your own
mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Quaerite Primum Regnum Dei

lots of failures, huh?
that is not the way you like it
but it happens
because you lack one thing man
you have been searching
for your
self and there is no self
to begin with
self-esteem at the end
destroys
the presence of the
almighty

try again
but this time seek first
the hidden kingdom
of God

RIC S. BASTASA
Quarter Of Seven

indirect bribery
escapes my mind
so i open back
the pages
of what he once did
when he was
on top of it all

that power that
corrupted him
absolutely

that lack of skill in
mastering honesty

sometimes these
capacities are forgotten

regret always comes late
pain sips souls on the other hand
earlier than the
cells and bars expect

RIC S. BASTASA
Que Sera Sera

They content with
the images of themselves
proud of the genetic chain fulfilled
through their children
Yet they are empty too
for sometime
Just like me
Though i entertain not an image
of anybody
NOT even myself or the other self of myself
IT Is the NOw that i embrace
on a door that closes and opens when i step
outside

i sing, que sera sera
whatever will be will be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Que Sera Sera, Whatever Will Be Will Be

Three blind girls did sing
This que sera sera song
This whatever will be will be

Their voices did blend well
Their bodies stiff in their darkness
Since birth then today they come
On a heavenly cause

The three blind girls did make us cry
As we all watch them
How long have we been blind too?
Uncaring about those with disabilities?
Those who are deaf, and blind and mute
Those who cannot sing and walk and talk

We watch them sing we saw our tears falling
Have they too opened our eyes from this stark blindness?
I still cry today, though there is no need for you to see,
I, too, grapple, with my wide eyes open
This darkness at high noon
This muteness with my gaping mouth wide open
This silence amidst the boiling noise
Inside these vast and empty halls

RIC S. BASTASA
Quem Deus Vult Perdere, Dementat Prius

literally, for whom the gods
would destroy
they first make insane...

do not waste time
pretending
seek the help of your favorite
shrink

the gods must be angry
and now you must go crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quem Di Diligunt Adulescens Moritur

the comfort
must be inculcated in your mind

that those who die young
the gods so dearly
loved...

when Deneb was taken away
at 3
the gods must be crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Queries...

what is shorter than short?
bluer than blue?
the pale shade of
humility?
what is life short of life?
what is it that does not really
please?
what comes before death
what is it that lives after?
what was there before
we were born?
what permission have i given?
what is the reason for asking
undefined questions?
what limit can i put beyond
my expectations?

what if? i do not.

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 1

how can i ever stop writing?
how can sadness be a non-sleeper?
how can an insomniac be so
insistent, hard headed? and so dumb
that it cannot count how many sheep are left
when all of them are
dead?

how can one be impossible? how can madness be so irresistible?
How can God be so holy and so distant like the eon distances of the sun? Those
light years, which we thought to be flashing?

how can i ever cease? Now, stop it, Maman says,
I am getting dangerous to myself.

How can one be in pain and yet so happy?
How can one be so mundane and yet be so divine?

Now the human being in me speaks.
I guess, it must be true,
likewise, experience based.

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 10

Something is missing

and yet why __id
you not writ__

it __s

a real _ _ought?

it is inevitable
and why are you afraid
about it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 2

i think i am Bukowski's reincarnation.

if he hears this, shall it make him happy?

If he still hears

What if, granting that there is no such thing as reincarnation,

what if he hears this and he is not drunk?

will this make him mad?

what if, in truth, he was never mad into drinking and that poetry was really what he hated it to be and yet it just happens that he has no choice but to write

because there is no vent to his inner angst?

what if, i never really want to be anybody else?

because there is only me, and that i am not also a reincarnate of anybody else?

that is the question.

i AM PRETTY

sure, I am not Bukowski.

RIC S. BASTASA
ONE guy, wearing an expensive black suit and a pair of shiny black pants with matching glossy black shoes, thinks that serious matters need not be mocked and that there is no place for something funny.

I guess he is a lawyer about to appear in a court of law and he is about to defend a multimillion damage suit.

His face is grim. His hands are made of brains. His bones are titanium. His brains are Apple computers.

I am having fun. I am laughing hard. I am dancing the boogie.

And he detests me. To him i am Mediocre. Society discards me for i am not serious in solving problems and chaos.

I ask him to fly away.
Geeeee, he can't.
But i kept my mouth shut.
I ask, Is he Mad?

RIC S. BASTASA
The problem with your declarative sentences is that they are all conclusive.

Then your interjections have become too shocking that we cannot really think that deep and well, intelligently.

I think you better try those clauses...and better still have more time with interrogatories, like

Is it true? Like, why is that?

Now look at you you look so open you look so beautiful, like an open door and open window

A river with a mouth A Suez canal

Oh, my, you have such an open mind?

I don't wonder that 'wander is still the beginning of your step to wisdome'

Is that you really?

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 5

if you are so sure
of yourself

beware! ! !

where there is no doubt
you are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 6

It is when i am weak
that i become so strong

it is when i am doubtful
that i become too real

it is when i become unreal
that i become truly myself

(was it also when God became Human
that he becomes God?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 7

Did i stretch my mind too much?

wait, am i about to snap?

am i a rubber band or something?
wait, how elastic can i be

to genius and madness at opposite ends?

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 8

An empty cup
is not
full of
air?

it is filled

with nothing?

is air something

or is it nothing

because you cannot

see it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Question 9

now i shall
repeat the same
question
to you- -

are you a butterfly
dreaming that
you are a man?

or a you a man
dreaming
that you are
a butterfly?

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions And Answers Between Old Couples Still In Love

and why do you hold my hand?
because i don't want you to fall

and why do you fear that i fall?
because i am your husband

and why did you become my husband?
because you said yes on that day

and why did i say yes to you?
because you love me

and why do you love me?
because you are so beautiful

and why am i so beautiful?
because you understand me

and why do i understand you?
because you love me.

now let me hold your hand too.
i do not also want you to fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions For The Rain

the rain has arrived
heavily with so many questions

why have the children gone sick?
where has the mother gone?
why is this woman still waiting for the lover?
and why did the lover not come?
why did the cruel men butcher the carabao?
and where have all the good men gone?
where are the stones to sip the rising water?
where are the firewood to signal smoke?

when will this rain ever stop?
it is cold and there is no fire
it is a lonely house since no one lives there
it is going to flood and more shall drown
and more shall die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions Of The Termite

i will nibble all
i will start on the brittle
part of the past
that the owner
left to be
forgotten

crumbly
sweet
delicious

even if i am used
to this
i cannot but stop
asking

if the past is delicious
why was it left to decay

=================================
pangutana sa anay

kutkuton nako ang tanan
ari ko magsugod sa gabok
nga kagahapon
nga gitugyan sa tag-iya
sa kalimot

dunot
humok
lami

bisan naanad nako
ani di gihapon ko
kapugong
og pangutana
kon lami man ang kagahapon
nganong gipasagdang madunot

- JONA B. BERING
Tuburan, Cebu, Philippines

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions...

do we ever know for what reason
that the sea which used to be coy and calm
has become violent when it landed
in that island?

do we ever know why it has taken a thousand lives
when it has no use for them?
is it hungry like a man deprived of food
or thirsty like a dog not given water?
does this water, this sea ever feel
the loss of mankind?
or is it just one of them, numb and insensitive
like the mountains
and stones?

does it hear the sobbing of those who are left
in pain and madness?
does it not fear too their capacity for
retaliation or revenge?

the sea and man
what relationship have you really?
friend or foe?

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions......

lady, (lady in black
gown, black hat, and
hand-gloves)

why do you want your
coffee black?

why do you always want
bitterness?

why always alone
sitting on a chair facing the sea
and drinking the salt of
the breeze
with your black coffee?

why sip bitterness
when
to my mind, coffee would be
better with cream
and honey

with someone beside you
facing the sea and
savoring the salt of the sea
with that black coffee of yours?

lady, why mourn
when joy is just around the bend?

why can't we be alone
together?

RIC S. BASTASA
Questions?

i am tired of questions
all of them
too familiar and all
with ready
homemade answers

canned questions
and answers
in one book
scanned for years
and you all know them

canned laughter
canned faces

canned souls
canned and caned and chained
bones

they rattle and they shake
and roll

i have no answers.
i am throwing all these questions away.

i live everyday. i look at the trees
and the forests.

i simply live. Now.
i have no more questions.

neither will i demand
any answer from you.

go, go, find yourself.
i stay here wanting to find nothing at all.

i guess, after my 48 years
there is this truth
that i find: there is nothing

nothing to find
nothing to expect

nowhere to go
it is just this and this and this.

the one that i have in my hand
the one that i keep on holding
i enclose it and keep it warm
and alive

and you do not even care
this is it: me, myself, and I

RIC S. BASTASA
Quibble

Write about love
The greatness the loveliness the thirst the anticipation
Of love
The night of waiting for love the dawn consumed to writing
About love the joy the ecstazy of the lines in between
You, my poet so well engrossed

Here I am pretending sleep; it is you that I miss,
Dreaming that I am waiting about your kiss

RIC S. BASTASA
Quickly

quickly they did it
under the shady
tree and nimbly
they left

in a hurry they forget
they rush
to a flat edge and fall away
like broken glasses
from the tiled sink

now they want to remember
but there is
nothing more left
everything rushed
to the wind
of the oblivious.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quid Pro Quo

A tooth for a tooth
An eye for an eye

You know what’s next

(ok, just in case you
don’t... until all would
be toothless and blind)

a lie for a lie
hmm, hand them
brand new brushes
each
&
more colgate toothpaste
please

they’re all lying on their teeth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quiet

i hold a needle
in my fingers
and i let it fall
freeing it
from a black
thread
into a persian
carpet

i hear
the sound of its
call

and it is so quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quiet (& Still)

quiet
this princess that dwells
in the secret pond of
my heart

the lotus
that blooms
in the stillness of the water
above this mud

quiet
the stare that i give
to darkness
to death

quiet
the hands that despite
the odds
willingly shall surrender
to God's law
shall abide

RIC S. BASTASA
Quiet And Easy

It is when you work so hard and dispose your work efficiently that they notice you and soon will give you a bigger workload.

the old men in the circle know fully well what to do. Keep being lazy. Do not let yourself be noticed by those who are up there sipping coffee.

Be like the rest. Ordinary Guy. Or just be at the middle. Do things in moderation.

That is the best place. Quiet and easy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quintessence

you should have known
this
quintessence

man is
always
a traveler

the journey
is this
untrodden
path of
dignified
solitude

this loneliness that
justifies
itself with
the sweetest of
all pains

RIC S. BASTASA
Quit Poetry For Good.

THE POET FROM OSLOB

with poetry how can he
survive
these harsh times
when prices for gas, water
and electricity are always
on the rise?

how can he feed his two
kids and a wife with
no work?

his is not the
suffering of the thespian
whom he says
is on
pseudo-suffering
like a soap opera
or that serial on
tv every day where crying
is non-stop and
slapping is
forever

the latest from him is that
now he is in manila
applying for a construction
job in Dubai

and hence has quit
poetry for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Quite

WHO does not love
the quite? that peace that caresses
the convolutions of
the brain
who is not in love with a floating lotus
flowering on top
of a mirror pond

the clouds too are moving on with their lives
but as silent as the glaciers
the worlds spins without sound
the Milky Way is like an spacecraft
bringing us all towards the direction
that it only knows
by heart
with all the
quite....

RIC S. BASTASA
Quite A Long Time You Feel What Is Missing

quite a long time
you feel what is missing
you mark time as a form of a tryst
one day you will be one again
fused in arms
you are too innocent about time
how it changes hearts
views, perspectives,
the one you love has arrived
and the questions begin to be asked
who are you and
why are you still here

RIC S. BASTASA
Quitting

quitting is putting
all the trust and faith
in yourself alone,

on the other hand
there is someone
who keeps on moving
not by the force
inside him but something
outside something beyond

how can there be quitting?
the force is auto-subsisting

RIC S. BASTASA
Quitting....

we have decided
to call it quits,

just that. just that.

in one blink of your
eye
after, everything is closed.
everyone
ceases.

i would have uttered...
it is for the both of us.
it is good.

i have not dared.
it is not that respect for
the good times.

the end of everything
as you well know is the soundless
fall

in slow motion.

RIC S. BASTASA
the injustice of course lies in the camouflage and she knows all these but she never mentions that to you for she cannot live without you that even the hint of a possibility of a parting, just the slight movement of the finger from the hand she then starts to cry and touches you and tells you that you must never leave her for she has nothing and no one

you are a man of compromises and you live between night and day

you always miss the stars but you cannot even be gazing for them even for a night

you love to play under the sun and take time at the beach and play ball and bathe under the softest light but you cannot have your feet settled on the sands

this is what happens when you have not decided categorically one hand in heaven and the other in hell and your body wiggles as your face is divided your eyes are crossed and your feet cannot dance the way it should have been done perfectly

on that harmony of love and affection because you have chosen only one.

RIC S. BASTASA
the mind is engrossed in thought
the word is embossed in the skin
the tattoo speaks to you
and you ignore what is too obvious
and immobile

at the beach
i pass you by
and you take a slight look
which i surely will not mind

then we face what is beside us
we hold the hand that feed us
we live in the house
where love is another stranger
that does not know
us.

RIC S. BASTASA
he does not take things sitting down now
the legs have reminded them of their impatience
the hands are wary and the eyes are no longer skeptical
one must stand

one must take his stand now
the crowd is taking that one voice of the brave man

then he asks himself, what for? everything had been lost
most of himself had been taken away
and there is nothing left except the mind that he completely owns now
that thought that he will never speak about it
because if he will
the world will be lost, the castle of illusion shall crumble

and those that who know courage
for the last time
shall die

and to choose between silence and leaving away
and having to see a world ruined by another hurricane of ideas

he's rather have
what it takes the lie to survive, darkness retreating
to give way to light

another new day without change
another peaceful day with some tolerable tales

it is not the right time yet
perhaps, tomorrow, yes, perhaps when i am no longer with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
no matter how tight you hold captive
the cat on the rope
even if you shut it from the windows of your world
into the vacuum of
the most silent of all indifference
into the consuming fires of hate
you cannot
hide the voice and put the face into
the insignificance of the ash
because the dust is dust and it will always speak
about the truth of an origin
because the past intimacy rises again
to put you back at its own prison
and in that clear pond where you once sat and took a look
there, there you can see again
the face of
Narcissus, the shadow of selfishness
it dives and then die there again

RIC S. BASTASA
R.

Rigor mortis
the body that stiffens
because when it
died no one was in the house
the wife hates him
and the kids detest his
bad taste

Regimentation
that is.

RIC S. BASTASA
R. M. A Revelation

when he opens up
the world closes in on him
the headman closed the window
the woman with the white long gown
closes the door
they will change his name
the one that fits his revelation of who he really is
then he moves on
to a new life

this now he is as brave as a lion
carrying the truth of his sharp teeth
his strong legs and claws
make the great leap

from one cliff to the other
below him the abyss
between him
the invisible bridge of his connection
to the the truth long hidden

he is silent now
but free
his solitude becomes a tree with long leaves
full of flowers are the branches

now the butterflies like him are free
like a chameleon tired of changing hues
he sticks to the color of the wind
the warmth of the sun
on the lush grasses of the plains

RIC S. BASTASA
the years
are magnanimous
enough to give
you these
dignified wrinkles

what youth did
to you?
what brim of
overflowing happiness
was there
which are gone
which are no more
than just but
memories we cherish
since we cannot
take them back
again even in our
usual denials

i see you in old
age now
much the same as
myself

we feel young as
always
despite the timidity
of our flesh and
bones
we feel the rancor
of the tremulous
fingers
hands that cannot
hold much sands
palms with broken
and gnarled lines

no regret my dearest
our time has come
and we are taking exits
with the setting of the
sun
so tenderly, so discreetly
that tomorrow morning
when the rooster cocks
and the chickens jump from
where they roost
no one notices our passing
away

everyone does as mandated
by life
on with their new houses
new plans
on with their next seeding
with their coming weddings
and baptisms

soonest, the funerals
and the elegies
and dirges of those
who like us do not want
to remember
anyone or anything.....

RIC S. BASTASA
he does not know how to make long letters anymore
 circuitous comments are strangers
 in fact, he has become a one word man saying

thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
i let the darkness of dawn
fade away
as i sculpt metaphors
from the night that
gives me nothing

a restless night
an empty room
on dead lights and
dusty drapes

one from another world
could be another room and
another house
figures out that this must be
one happy world
of ponderous loners and
there are too many of them
worshiping the Word
bowing before no concrete
images
letting themselves be carried
by the fluidity of their own
thoughts: the three faces of time
its 24 nooks,
the fast ferries of its trips
hoping that one sees the
light houses in this dark moments
that in the following morning
when the sun is bright
one can see an island
one arrives at the port of destination
and then disembark
for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
Radio And The Laundrywoman

the radio is on
and the life of the laundrywoman
now begins

RIC S. BASTASA
Raffy in Las Vegas always knew what to do with his life.
Nothing submerged, suppressed, everything waiving like hands
Welcome, welcome,
Happiness, there is no tint of sadness on his face
Lovers abound, There is no shame,
There is always that touch
That tickles his legs
Of hair and
Tongue,

He forgets home where his face is stuffed
Like a bear.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rage

things are running wild and not in what you wish them all to be
some are running against you
and some are exploding before your very face
indistinguishable
untouchable

ugly and not worth the watch
you feel that there are storms coming inside your chest
you wait

what for? you are one that seeks self-destruction
you wait
for another explosion to include your whole being

lost and never found

RIC S. BASTASA
Rain

The logic of rain
Is that when it comes it makes
And always makes the road wet.

Can the rain be illogical at any time?
Can the road also conspire? So that

When it rains the road would have its way
Of not getting wet, and you are somehow
Confused
And reason out that this cannot be true
And that logic
Will always be faithful to you.

Beware. The time comes when the road
Deceives you. It deceived you once, and I can
Deceive you some more
You always walked on it
With a raincoat
When the rain came
The road hid
In the flood of your asphyxiated mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rain At Dawn, I Am Silent As Usual

what i like most
is the sound of the
rain at dawn
when i am safe
curling half asleep
inside my room

and then i start
remembering you
you were wet
and i came with
a red umbrella
my arms around
you and your arms
around me too
and then we walk
towards a shade
and then we fade
when the rain
finally stopped
and then we parted
you finally took
your ride for home
where your husband
and children are
waiting for dinner

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this rain between my thighs
there is this cloud inside my abdomen
it is heavy with something
that accumulates somewhere
and within there is this
tickling and tingling of everything
i feel for you

in your absence
the clouds get so heavy and my abdomen
gives in

the rain falls under my feet
and then i know
it is the ripe time for sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Rain Feeding

even in the planting
of rice
these brown people have
remained faithful
to the blessings
of the rain

it is fate always it is
fate and will always be
reliant on faith

outside their brown world
progress came.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rain In Summer

the old wise men say
de that when it rains in summer
dhnen there is a feast in heaven.

ulan init

ulan init
pista kuno sa langit.

(an old bisayan proverb)

RIC S. BASTASA
Rain Songs....

i have figured the sound
of tears
its rhythm from the moment
you turn red
and sob
and then i hear again
the songs
of rain
from that faraway
forest mountain

i, too, was all alone
figuring out myself the song of sorrow
how leaves fall
how grasses wilt
how the termites build their empire
upon the bones
of tree trunks
how the ants
eat the monkeys'
failures.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rainbow

rain comes unexpectedly
and i take shelter under a tree

looking around
for comfort in the cold

a bird sings
on a branch and

i listen to the notes
floating in the air

needles of rain
soft light arriving on the hills

a rainbow
bridging two feet
over there

i watch this beauty
i smile for a promise
that the Lord
has restated in my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Raindrop On The Eye Of The Wounded

'A dream
As a particle in eyes
Remains as tear
Wounded desire'

wounded
tears fall and
to mark the
anniversary
of pain,

dew at the
middle of
the leaf,

eyes getting
to know
another water
form,

a raindrop..

RIC S. BASTASA
Raise Your Hands To The Ceiling Touch God He Is There.

from a big pile of paper works
you turn on the music gangnam style
you face the mirror gaze at your increasing wrinkles
your haggard look and crumpled shirt
and you switch to loud music
and then dance.

who cares? the world is full of music
and this body wants to dance

raise your hands to the ceiling
touch God
He is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramble Of The Life In General

at home
work is everyday and life
follows always
the needs

and routine is hard
everybody is not certain
in life generally because
it does not follow

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramble Of Thoughts

Left,
the many happy
years
we've got

stick
around until
110
i am
at least

Lose it
use
you've got
it

RIC S. BASTASA
Rambling

everytthing is rrammblinng
here
one gets to know one
she is studying as an actress
the other one is doing something
to impress
making money
what is he interested at?
got no answer
music plays
and we listen
got to go there again
to meet the gypsy
but my lover is true and will come
back to me someday
it's over.

RIC S. BASTASA
you once
had best friends

time breaks
bonds
you refuse to
accept
broken friendships
you hope
someday
that relationships
repair
and heal
themselves

you move on
rethinking
promising that
you can
live alone

chats are
everywhere
nothing serious
about
long lasting
and true
friendships

they cause pain
during
break-ups
too many
unkind words
said

others come back
for some
utilitarian
reasons and

you have learned
a lot
nothing lasts really
friendships are
like promises

like things that you
take in the house
and simply
outlive their
importance
or need
or use

yes, it has always
been the use

you are not
that
never a user
and
they are
and will always
be

and so
here you are
chatting with
yourself
in some kind
of poetry

you always plant
the seeds here

and there is no
pain in
seeding
you never get
the chance
to taste
its fruits anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
when we follow the webs of thought (imagining a spider spinning its own saliva to build a trap, a house, a work of art clinging like fingers of silk in space,) when we follow the streams of ideas that we create, and we do not really have anything in mind, perhaps we see black spiders floating in the morning sea of space, and then we keep on expanding and spending time, i tell you, perhaps, there is a sting of a bee, that we want to ignore, and the pain is just a word, that we type and set aside for a while as a meaningless mark, we have no purpose, we are trying to empty a load of thoughts not to explain it but to eradicate ourselves from a complication of doubts, but how can we? the words keep coming like we are shores and they are waves, we want to expel something, and we follow a trail of irrelevance, a bush of irrationality, there are colors and shades of colors, and you ask, ' what colors? ' oh, these are colors of coldness bluish, sky like, and if you ask, only the ball of thorns inside the heart has the ability to give a complete answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rambling Thoughts This Moment

the thrill of the rope is just the beginning
of my regrets
superficial grace,
there are other simple ways which cannot just be replaced
because they are the permanences
of loving memories

sometimes we need to wear the masks
just to be plain happy
at least for the moment
when reality sinks and hurts and becomes so heavy
and unbearable

this boocrap, please hear and listen
do you listen still?

now what? steady, steady, keep moving
the hands that still manage to write

keep the thrill of hope and set aside the rope

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramblings

You cannot lock the door
Now, night shall open it
For fireflies to come in
They slept in hiding

Like you, fireflies fly away
Pallid cowards from rain
Lest their lights die in the mist

You wait by the door

As true stars come again
Lighting night skies
My Fireflies shall reveal
Inferior flickers under
The now, brimming
Skies bursting

II.
How many full moons passed
Past your sad window?
Your fingers cannot tell
They’re used to gripping
Rusty doorknobs
A great deal to ancestry
Our human hands corroded
We cannot reach nor outrun
Rust becomes us

III.
If we listen to dawn dreams
We shall hear prophets scream
Nothing
To a mutter
One speaks of the underworld so endless
Unmoving as the sky stretches a distance of lies
No farther
Or it will break

There are no skies no caves
No edges no space
Nothing
To whisper

IV.
We are shooting stars in space
Shot into nothing
Yet we keep on shooting

For the moment
We close down
We set strong feet on land
Like steel gates stilled

We look into our eyes
Tears are dwindling
Thus far, we cannot cease fearing
For nothing

V.
There is God
As the world keeps ears
For each earthworm in the void

He shall hear us
Shouting the questions
Dinning,
Rocking the ruckus of cumulus
In this outcry

He shall know us
By eyes and mouth
By hand by footprints
And the grasses covering all
Ramblings And More Ramblings

i like talking to myself, and so i just keep on talking
about anything else
no one hears it of course except myself
and like this sentence construction there is no period
not even a comma for this is a kind of talk that does not want to end

only when you are around and you talk endlessly too when i begin to listen.
and attentively i give everything to you
you fill me with words and words and the conversations keep going

i like to think that i am making a poem for you silently in my mind.
but it is not

i am more of going inward lost in my thoughts unable to find where is the way
out of this journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramblings At 1: 37

the background
is a garden of roses

fresh red roses
with lots of thorns

and then the white lady
with falling hair comes

with a pair of scissors
and the roses fear no more

for their daily deaths
their executioner is here

this art, this lady with
a commitment to cut

the finer and more beautiful ones
as offering

for her long dead husband
crushed by a war

of suppression and depression
face derided

face off, slashed wrist and
compulsory writs

she picks one for me
and i write one crazy poem for her

just being fair
to madness and art and
compulsion

RIC S. BASTASA
what humiliates us is us.
it is the thought that we are humiliated that
humiliates us, not them, who
are but perspectives, minds that we have no
power to fathom, eyes that look where they want to,
it is a matter of decision actually
to be humiliated or not

in the same manner what give us dignity is us.
what we think is what we are
and we are dignified for as long as we think ourselves to be
the manifestations matter, we agree, but these are perspectives
still that matter not to them
who are preoccupied with the art of living
and the eventual and slow
deaths that everyday enters upon us.

everything are mental constructs
to keep our pieces intact we grope and always collect
and think that we are whole again and again
like a chant, a whisper
winding to our ears

do not be too sensitive
no one can kill

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramblings Of A Researcher

bury the head
deep into paper files
like one cormorant
looking for
deep sea fish
one finally longs for
air to breathe
a face to see
like the one you missed so much
yet you cannot even
touch
you rise with the fish
on your beak
swallow everything
but nothing satisfies
not the books
not the fish
not even that face that you long to see
this time
it is the memory of the deep sea
that entangles you
like a flower
vine creeping
holding on to the trellis

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramblings Of The Past.....

you go into the details of the leaf
all parts of it
the map of its veins
the inner part
the beauty of something that goes
molecular
that goes viral
until then green becomes a space
and space becomes
its utmost form of
universal nothingness.

x x x

for love is but some details too
those fingers that caress your hundred locks of hair
the layers of the lips that touch yours
the chambers of the heart
that serve as house for the restlessness of youth,

16 years old meets 15 years
on the grass
that cold evening under the moon
full of memories
that now refrains itself from being
told

how are these wounds doing to you?
those healing years
and the homecoming
that smile which says, ' oh my God, was it I really? '

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramblings On A Sunday Morning

the white poodle keeps wagging
its tail
looking for my preferential attention

the motorcycles on the road
are noisy again

some children keep on tapping
their feet
imitating the dance of the
penguins

on the other hand the old woman
slowly ekes his tired feet
on the way to the church

the church bell keeps on its clanging
saying today is Sunday

i got no weekend
on a crisis of the pages of the books

some poems to justify
my contempt for rites and rituals and boring sermons

do not judge the cover of the book
until you dropp dead on the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramona

laughs so hard
that even sorrow smiles at her

fights so strong that even
fate accepts its defeat

loves so true that even hatred
walks out of the way

and lives life so well
that even death still loves
to see her exist...

she is safe now
i hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ramona Remembered

you finally cracked when the teacher said,
life is unfair
you cannot accept that fact that sticks in your skin
like a tattoo since birth perhaps even till death

the unfairness of it all was the shutting of your light
for Ramona
like the sun you could have shone like a very bright day
in the middle of this darkness

now, the teacher comes to class with nothing but a piece of chalk
and convinced he writes there on that blackboard

indeed, life is unfair. He packs his things and leave for the mountain
and since then

no one hears about him again.

i am staying in this university and will continue writing all about these.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rampage....

direct to the point is blunt. So we look for the river that runs and winds its way beside the foot of a hill, taking the proverbial path of least resistance.

be logical, hit the center of your universe. Answer me directly, like a yes or no, nothing in between for some collateral justifications, point blank, no powder burns,

you are looking for meaning, as though, if you fence a house everything would be safe, the dog wagging its tail,

the parakeet teasing the women, the echo that keeps fidelity to your calling, the fog that beautifully cautiously walks beside the trees and then blindly an old man asks you what time does the train leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Random

it was pure random
when i married
you, i thought it
was not true
it was like i was
sleeping and then
i woke up and there
i found myself beside
you and the cameras
clicked and then
we were proclaimed
as married by the
clapping of their
hands and the
clinking of their
wine glasses

pure random
i thought it was
wrong

RIC S. BASTASA
Random For The Moment

tut, it's just me when i grow old,
poo, after all, some men are born great,
singing the love song
of winter's night, hurting thoughts,
kisses of life, because of you,
the women of saudi arabia are tried by fire
round and around,
mysterious mists, and red presence
as they all want something new.

RIC S. BASTASA
Random Images

i

two lean figures
dissolve
diffusing
diluted to the solution of distance
a fusion with sunset
then darkness like a black blanket
on a bed of trees and grasses

ii

a soul rises from the body
senses still complete
the hearing but not talking
the joining but not being a part of
anything and anyone else
a guiding light
an exit of the tunnel

iii

a rose bud wilting
petals falling from the sepal letting go
raindrops from the roof
the last leaf
the red ants at the foot of the tree
a dead boy discovered on the cliff
a rope covered with dust
a bottle of mineral water emptied of its contents
a man snoring at the beach drunk
a woman undressing herself
plunging her body into the deep sea
looking for the pearl of great price

iv

'is love dead? ' you ask the lady of the night.
'will love die? ' you are philosophical with that last glass of wine.

'Love cannot die' you have read it somewhere but you cannot remember that book, the page, because the dog's ears are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Random Images At 2 In The Morning....

smooth
comes after rough,

not that easily,
time, waves, rage,

tongue and
chopstick, and

moon and skin,
abdomen,

tongue and lips,
too much tongue

tied, tight and
slippery, that

hold of so many
hands,

sliding doors and
candle lit

rooms with aroma
of pepper and

chandeliers above
plaster of Paris

heads, busts, and
strong legs,

i gaze at that
but my true love

is over there,
not really desire

which is much
hidden under those

layers of formal attires.

RIC S. BASTASA
Random Pickings...

i do not wish
to lose the spontaneity of
my beginnings

the moment a thought
as guest arrives
i must, out of respect,
treat such a
delight

words are picked up
from her luggage that
we carry
into her room where
she sleeps for the
night

the following morning
seeds sprout on the floor
soon a bush, soon
a tree and very very soon
the fruits of
the vine by the window
a hummingbird hopes for
a flower

when she is gone there will
be another arrival
sadness and despair
tears flooding on the stair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Random Thoughts

i

i YET have to
see a little black girl
wishing that
she is white.

ii

that little brown girl
over there
sitting in one of the
dark corners of her own
messy tropical world
wish that her skin
is white her hair blond
her parents
either British or
American

iii

i wish that kids
shall remain as kids forever
not minding
the color of the skin
when they become
full blown
adults.

RIC S. BASTASA
Randomly Fools Move Against Strong Sunlight

randomly a
speck of dust
moves among
the myriad dusts
against a ray of
noon light
getting inside
a door half-open
inside my room

wanton is the
action of this
glutton ion
in a grand reunion

species of their
own kind on trails
so undefined

streamlined untwined
come moonshine

scattered molecules'
ghouls sub-rules and
cesspools turning
into the whirlpools
of all fools

RIC S. BASTASA
Randomness Of Thoughts

it is a rush,
there is no time anymore,
been busy,
lots of books piling up to read,
lots of papers to write,
many people to please and pamper,
all pleasing tiger,
losing all teeth,
resigned
to the comforts of society's pleasures,
yet still has to keep on
doing
what is it?
no direction, this wind,
no wave, is this sea,
words without assuming any meaning,
flowing
water seeking its own
level, and
why are you following?

same here
same there
you &
I,

IN THIS VOID.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rapid Thoughts Without Directions

i see a movie
i expect that at least this will make a difference
but it is just like the rest
saying love is still the best
solution to all the problems of the world
i do not even know which to believe now
all the actors have the same faces
all stories sound like the others
the music does not appease me
until it ended
with the sun at the back of the world
hiding
due to shame.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 1

IF you read any of my poems
do not think that i am in there.
if you think that i am in there
you will lose yourself
you will be like a stone dropped
in the middle of the ocean
thinking that i am part of the corals
or that i assume the shape of the
shark
or hitch upon a sperm whale
and then you expect that i can take
you to places

No. If you read any of my poems
think that it is not me in there
but someone else, like a rat
or a pig, or a dog
the one that looks for something else
you know what rats look for
cheese, you know what pigs look for,
left-overs, you know what dogs look for,
the bone

then if you have finally finished reading
the poem
try reflecting light from the mirror under
the bed
and see if there is a face inside it
try pondering

or try not even thinking about any of those
that drifting cloud resting upon the shoulder
of the hill
or the sun shining like a king
or the moon cool upon the marshes
savoring the peace of the night
upon the river's face

now, you are here
there is nothing in there except those feelings.

and you know of course what feelings are. because you are one of them.

cool air, silent sighs, heart beats, rushes of red blood on your cheeks the angry word, the proposition of solitude the pat on the shoulder and then the drying of tears and too the unstoppable laughter the smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 10

i am finished
and i wish you well.
take care.
be yourself and please
do not mind me
at all.

i am an empty cup
but i do not wait for any rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
now one can figure out
what this really means, except you
because this is exclusively for you
if you are really true
in deciphering what is missing
or what is obvious
too obvious and too wordy that you
cannot finally recognize it

but this is all about you
your shadow cast in stone
it is too small and too deceiving

i know what is that verbosity
we do it during parties and people misunderstand it
and misquote it
as the progress of the pillar
the stability of the wall
the highness of the fence

now, i give you a hint and you may not mind it
after all
your world is inhabited by busy letters
and not a syllable must be wasted

it is the message my dear
so do not accuse the messenger.

RIC S. BASTASA
you must have heard about what they are saying. 
i say, you have seen shadows cast on the walls of ignorance. 
my hands are not birds. 
they tell you that they are scissors. 
my face does not have gentle eyes 
did they tell you that what i have are raging balls of fire? 
i have heard what you have heard too 
that in my world there lives the eye of the storm 
that in my orbit, there is this path that destroys 
evry passer-by 
or even the innocent traveler, 

i am tired of all these 
shadows and shadows 

they have not gone deep inside the oceans of my being 
they have not felt the gentleness of my sands at the bottom 
they are wrong 
but in my silence i do not wish to correct that impression. 

i know myself and that is enough 
instruction at the gate of Delphi 
where Tiresias is waiting. 

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 4

I once laid my body
on the white sand somewhere in that place
where no one enters
as a stranger,

i buried my head in there
and tried learning how to breathe
without air.

i have learned the meaning of death
i have valued the essence of life

since then.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 5

UP THE Bridge
painted red
one stops his car
and steps outside
to feel
the rage of the sea
below

it is inviting
but who wants to
respond?

not me.

RIC S. BASTASA
do you remember
rice fields? try imagining
the green rice fields,
put some hills
more hills, and put a gap
between two hills,
and put the sun
shining brightly
and then put some black
buffaloes grazing at the
foot of the hills,
and then on the left side
try putting a nipa hut
a window and a little girl
looking out for sparrows
and on the right side
put the running river and
a jumping fish

do you still think that this
could be your home?

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 7

i imagine you at your office
perhaps at the 105th floor
and you are busy with your
usual paper works
everything about strategies
how to make more money
and deciding about other people's
lives, their properties and
their liberties

now, try imagining if i can still
imagine
if you can still imagine me?

oh well, forget about it.
i have other plans myself
and waiting for you at the ground floor
could be nothing
but a silly wish.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rat 8

it is nothing about rats.
this is about life.
the universal life, the life of
a star
or the survival of the rings of
Jupiter

dthis is about the mitosis
and the splitting of the atom
and the mushroom
and the bikini.

dthis is nothing about ourselves.
this is about a broken world
trying to heal the broken patches

dthis is about a black hole
something that we feel
though we have not even seen one

dif you are bored
di tell you, this is about nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
this morning i read about a red hen
laying eggs
above the hay stacks
waiting

and there is this young writer
saying that
he is the hen and that his mentor
is the one feeding him
and that he is laying the eggs
and that he is waiting for
a surprise

know what? i get bored about
other people's ego

as though everything is about themselves
and that i must have to read
about them
crazy.

sometimes, i feel so angry
i like to kill that red hen that has not laid the golden egg.

i feel so humiliated sometimes
about self-centeredness

i like to let things pass and then
sit alone and empty myself like a bag without any content.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ratatoulie

how a rat
is torn
between
pretending
to be
a rat
and a
human being

how a rat
dreams
creates
invents
mixes
cooks

how a rat
can have
taste and
language
and
be so different

how a rat
makes
you remember
sweet memories
of youth

how a rat
finally becomes
so human
heart changed

could be
just a story
an ordinary
story
to put you
to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Re Viewing A Broken Hear

t is the moment when you kiss me
And hug me that I feel the pain
Thinking all the while
In said close, tender moment
The shortness of space
The end of time

Between us
The acceptance that the kiss is a marker
of our defeat

The passion shall be short
Time kills
Time buries me again
on the sands of regrets

On the widening space of emptiness
We shall left behind us
That need for more explanations

When you close your eyes
And without a word
You shall go
And be in the arms of the man
that now completely owns you

RIC S. BASTASA
Re: Cleaning Time

it has been quite a long time
when the cleaning has not been done

the cabinet is dusty and the floors stained
the walls bearing the unnecessary marks
words of protests are written and the door
creaks with hinges not oiled for long

today i am looking for the clutter of
those i do not need
the garbage has to be discarded
what has piled must be inspected
the unimportant must go

i also speak about my anger
my indifference my selfishness
like garbage they must go too
lest i be like those that i have spoken before

RIC S. BASTASA
Read Aloud The Poem Of The Dying Soldier

PLEASE read aloud the poem of the dying soldier in Afghanistan
Who gave all his heart, his flesh, his soul, his intestines
who spilled his bloood in the desert sands
this very hot day
because his country has waged a war against
Another country away from his home

So God may hear it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Read My Lips

verbal silence. read my lips.
if you see them.
read the words. read it here.

these words. read them like
flowers in the garden.

despite these words speak a little.
tips of the iceberg. They are less
compared to the color of my eyes
the warmth of my fingers
the suppressed beatings of my heart.

despite these words that you read.
if only you can see my lips.
if only you can see my face.
and body, naked on the flowing sheet of
pure paper. IF only you know
what silence means, how emptiness
eats it, if only you know how inferior
verbs and adjectives are
compared to the caresses of the hands
and the tenderness of the fingers,
touch.

read the lines silently.
these words do not shape my lips.

they come to your eyes.
in the silence of your understanding.

ever shall they speak
about me. they only talk about
the hands that write sometimes
without any meaning at all.

infinitives are not infinite.
neither do verbs know what is it to be still.
and adjectives talk only about the surface.

depth under, the noise begins.
and silence of the verbs move to another side.
now, the mountains of ideas collapse
and bury the casualties of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Read My Mind

would you like the cliche
of having
to read my lips?
people read lips some people
only kiss
to read the essays of the heart
some go for love
in bed
wanting to squeeze what juice is there
hidden in the pulp bits
of suppressed desire
they extract
until everything becomes as dry
as sponge
deprived of water
light as air floating between that space
claimed by both
the roof and the ceiling

it's funny, you come out of the room
with a quiz
and there are no answers
for there are no questions

what do they need from you? you ask.
if you pay attention, they only need your time
and when this is taken
you become one of those thrown away
garbage of an imagination
flower without petals
glass without the gleam
of promises.

RIC S. BASTASA
Read My Morning Poem

shake and rattle.
rock and dock.
lick the side of your cup and sip hot coffee and think about what it is to be a loser.

i like your game.
Hide and seek.
Lick and Bite.
Pretend that I love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Read This Aloud

i am beautiful
i am not alone
i am self-sufficient
i am kind
i am happy
i am peaceful
i am living in the grace of God
i am human
i have erred &
i am forgiven
i am exuding happiness
i am a ray of hope
i am the sun of warmth
i am the rain of satisfaction
i fall upon the grass
i give life to the earth
i am like a bird singing on a twig
i am a song in the air
i am a lotus sitting on a pond of water
i am a river flowing peacefully on the banks of the Nile
i am the child of the universe
i am a star
i am a tree

i am a leaf
i am a rose
i am a sailboat sailing peacefully at sea

i am everything that i can be
i am a wish
i come true

i am the happy child of God
i am loved
i know how to love
i love
i am smiling
my eyes speak
my mouth waters
to the sweetness of this world

i am everything
i am this universe within me.
i believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading A Long Letter, Alone

last night he
had his back turned
at her,

she woke up
watched tv
and
wrote a long
letter

now he is reading it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading His Palms For A Hidden Fortune

life's hard he says
he is weary
and wants to die

when he sleeps sometimes
he looks at the lines of his palms
for answers

and then he closes his eyes
as his fingers hang freely beyond
the edge of his bed

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading Mahmoud Today

he passes away
mahmoud, poet of the arab world
the greatness of the man
so the world shall mourn

he met death with a stare of his eyes
he too belongs there

he is not his
he is not ours

today there is reason to ponder
his life his death
his poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading Rumi.....

it is dimming
night is coming
the woods will be gone
you only feel
what the wind wants to
reveal
will it be the same
fear over and over again?
turn on the light
and the music
learn to live with it
read rumi.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading The Poems Of Other People

honestly i should be flattered
why you keep on
following every poem
that i have written

i know how hard it is since
there are thousands and
thousands
of these
posts,

i know what you think
that poems are maps
towards
who i am really

roads that lead to a
city
a rainbow that gives
the myth
that at the end of it
is the
pot of gold

you really flatter me

but what if these are not
maps
or there is no rainbow
of there is no
pot of gold?

what if we have the same
thinking
that there is really no
self

no city
no map
what if there are only
whims

or there is only shame
or death

what if
these are just footsteps
of a lost man
and at the end there
is only a cliff

where the man jumped
and killed
himself

it could be
so horrible

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading Your Love Poems

how i wish i could have
written much better about my

last nights with her
her 30 styles of moaning
a la
script of the vaginal monologues
her way of conquering
my territory and putting
her mark of flag
somewhere behind my back
as i bite my lips
because of a blending
of both pain
and pleasure and some others
which words
evidently fail in representing
what ecstasy was there
on those last five nights

moonstruck about everything
that was both hot and wet
i bowed and stared
at the center of my
being

the sun turned off
the moon disappearing
breathed snoring
in tiring perfection

love too elusive
to the hands of words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reading Your Sad Letters From Far Away

twas like making
commercial hotcakes

mass made and sold
at a cheaper price

then given to everyone
who even do not need it

feeling so cheap and vulgar
and i said thanks anyway

keep the trade
make the cakes and fill the

world with stuff like that
solve the hunger that is no

longer there. Precisely.
emote freely, keep safe and

just just be happy in
the most simple terms

do not complicate what is
at most honest and sane.

RIC S. BASTASA
Real And Unreal...

in the imaginary garden
the real toads are croaking
in that imaginary room
a real person is
thinking
in that imaginary thought
some real things
are broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Real Beauty.....

love the wantonness
of the noodle

there is not much
beauty in a manicured garden

nothing in so much order
just structures

do not put on a frame
a falling leaf

do not detach the sea or
the lake

at random, in chaos,
perhaps under no law

real beauty lives as
it dares.

RIC S. BASTASA
Real Fiction.....

There is a conversation where we keep on
talking but we are never really involve
as we tend to show it,

we name names, and try to make the impression
that they are not really us
we concoct imaginary stories but which really happened
where we are really the characters involved

but because we are not acceptable by this earth's standard
we tell them those who listen that these are all the makings of the mind

but the fiction was so real, images so vivid, places so tangible like
rocks and brooks, and the birds that we tell flew away from us
left some eddies to our minds and their minds wonder why there are
winds in their ears too circling and

soon have made tornadoes carrying them away all at once
and they no longer know where they are and where they live
and what their names are

you are with them all the while assuring them that soon this will end
that there will be no pain in this imagination
that they are not really true
that soon everything will return back to normal

that everything is fine. But soon there will be another screaming
and they will find that you are no longer there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Real Is Beautiful

when you go back from where you
once stayed
you notice that there is a wrong there

and it is messy
very messy

and your friends who cannot believe it
call your attention

it is a shame they say
and it will be damaging to my reputation

but i have no plan correcting it
i leave it there
to show me who i was and why i am at present
elevating myself to another level

after all i am the fruit of so many errors
an improvement of my past mistakes

and i am real

and so i leave things as they are
unretouched and no matter how erroneous they had once become
i still think
that they are so beautiful

because they are real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Real Play

this is no longer the play
of children
when we begin to look at the sun
direct to our gazes
when what we see is too much
light
that hurt us
when everything that spreads
when we close our eyes
to rest
is all bloody red

this is not a play anymore
the silence is too mature
it can kill

i may excuse myself for a while
take my sleep
get rid of you
and forgive myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Realities And Illusions...

far pastures are always
greener
the sea out there beyond
this horizon is
deep blue
in our deserts
there is a show of mirages
floating princesses
hazy kingdoms
air fantasies

others are so realistic
and perhaps luckier
they always love what is here
and care for
the now
the distance is an illusion
beyond us is
a rarefaction
light bends and begins
to lie...

RIC S. BASTASA
Realities Of Our Lives

on the day that we were born
we were tight and glossy
they worship our slightest smile
our laughter they always adore
they are proud of our hair
everything in us is divine

time strips us slowly
the days peel us
we are like slaves stripped of
every possession

we bleed and we shed off tiny
layers of our skins
the surface gives up to what is deep
within our structure
there are pains
stabs of light and piercing stares
we are laden with guilt
and we go to some places
to unload what seems to sink
us to the bottom of
our chaos

soon, time is fed up
laughing at the way our bones rankle
proclaiming its triumph over
every loss we have

we are not shaken to this truth
about dying and the fact that soon we will be forgotten
we were so kind to give up everything
we were so truthful to our nature
we are strangers and we are not permanent dwellers here
we tell time
we were meant for something beyond it
we are loved by the gods
and we finally join them for the final feast
of our lives.
Reality

for all its failings
Reality is
still lovable
because it is the
only truth
available
it is the only door
that leads
to freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
you sleep in bed till 10 o’clock in the morning
the room is closed
the only hum you hear
is the electricity
of the aircon,
light from the keyhole
strikes at your leg
it hurts
your eyes half open
you want to set it aside
you move a leg
and the light is still there
sticking to the wall
you close your eyes again
there is nothing to do
yesterday you get fired
and there is no
rumor about another job
this is it
let somebody worry about you
there is nothing
you can do about them
tonight mouths will scream
at you
the light in the keyhole
is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality And Fantasy

i

he turns into a frog that night
when his wife kissed him on his lips

ii

the curse goes on until his paramour
kisses his navel
and swears that she loves him

(not his money)

iii

his pocket is emaciated like a
malnourished African child
that worst drought in the history
of the desert

iv

if he strips himself of all his skin
an expose himself candidly to the sun of truth
bare and naked
he becomes a king again
in the castle of his dreams

v

meanwhile sleep takes him
death sits beside him with a lasting reminder
‘thou must be pure’

RIC S. BASTASA
reality has a picture
an old one, still black and white
for which i have
this love-hate relationship
of keeping it and
then throwing it away
again

reality has a way of showing me
that i cannot escape
and here i am as always
visiting it alone when no one is watching

we are friends finally
and we keep secrets

reality knows how to keep this secret
this Sphinx of my mind
that black bird with strong wings that
can fly away whenever it likes
to

and stay on top of the situation
saying:

' i can manage the weight
of silence'

reality this venomous snake that bites
me and can kill me
even
but through time i have taken much
dose by
dose
teeth to
teeth

and so
i gained this immunity
of death and pain

'we get attuned
to heat'

the desert has this
wisdom
somehow

reality is skin to my bones and flesh

or bones and blood
wrapped in sealed
epidermic containers

i have all the options for lying like the other woman
next door
and then suffer
and then be too unhappy
or just
be the happiest man
for the moment

two faces, day and night
when we get older we know what is this all about
and it is not even worth mentioning at all

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes
it will take time to know
that not
everyone loves you and
when you finally find
this
the world becomes so
real as in truth
if it is made of love
as others want to impress
you with
in the earlier days of your life
it too
is made up of
hate, and as i discovered
it myself
lately, in fact,
it is composed more of
those elements
of indifference
as you see there are more
rocks, sands,
trees, stones,
driftwood
cliffs, and deep
oceans

less are the bridges
rainbows, rivers,
lesser are the
lovers, those good
men with
pure hearts,
least is love and
affection
kisses nil
hugs rare.
there is something inside him that moves

it feels like a sparrow wanting to take flight from his mouth which had been closed for quite a time now

soon it will come out and he imagines something more beautiful than a sparrow

this beautiful thing could also be a bud wanting to come out from his teeth to bloom into a red, red rose

the beauty of a flight finally coming out from its shell of a mouth or the red, red rose slowly unfolding to meet its perfection

but along this imagination reality, as usual, bites, and keeps on biting like a snake releasing its deadly venom to his veins

his fear has finally come this something is neither a sparrow nor a rose

the following morning he wakes up spitting it out and it is nothing but just this usual human spittle and it
stinks......

RIC S. BASTASA
Dream! Dream! Dream!
Fly! Fly! Fly! into the blue, blue, blue skies

Then you tire your wings of dreams your wings that fly and fly into the blue skies

Then you rest and pause and fall to this rugged land

It is rough and rocky and graveled and sandy
It is hot and arid hurting your eyes your legs your feet

What you see and feel is reality
And you do not have wings now
All your dreams did not come true

In this reality, I welcome you partner.

we shall live here for a while.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality Is An Elephant

reality is an elephant
what you touched was only the trunk

be not blinded by the hand
or the eyes

or take it from Plato
the kitchen is only a deception

it is just a play of the shadows
of the cups and saucers

the forks and spoons and
napkins are all illusions

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality Is Killing Lots Of People

reality has been killing a lot of people
those who dare sometimes they do not recover
despite the surrender
hands raised and heads bowed
reality still kills
heads hanging on the gallows
wrists cut and bubbling foams on the mouth
that case of poisoning was never incidental
it was real and true and harsh
but that is what reality does

the only thing that kills reality
is not rage
there is this submission to truth
the gentleness of acceptance
the tranquility of avowal
the simmering of guilt to the divine
the touch of the hand of God
the light eternal
that pierces the darkness of the crevices
of our souls

it is only this
when reality is dead
and you find yourself
alive
beaming with light
teeming with life
so silent in your newly found joy
still unnamed
undefined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality Is...

the good ones die young,
the swindlers thrive and the crooks
progress
the hero unlike in the movies
dies earlier
and the antagonists
party.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality On Sunday Mass

the sunday sermon of
the priest on tv sometimes
becomes noise
to me but in reverence of
the church
i do not switch if off i
do not change the
channel
like the life we live
we tolerate
the religion of the angry
self-righteous and
always soliciting
church

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality...

outside the door
as you close it
you say it is sunny
and the clouds are
blue and the sky is
clear like a transparency
of a class,

inside your head
there are dark clouds
and when you sleep
in bed when the heart
beats faster and faster
you see a heavy downpour
of rain as you close your
eyes as your fingers begin
to shape a fist,

the room is one empty
storage of chaos
the confusion is
spacious
and something cannot
really be filled,

unless, you retrace
some steps behind you
until, you say
i accept i have not been
loved enough and that
you have never loved
that much in
return.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality... Three

the sun is up
at 8 o'clock and here on this muddy path
we meet

i know you
i look down my feet
you pass by me
i see only your shadow
at a side glance

you take a past pace
i think you even want to have wings and fly
that instant

this is what mutual dislike is all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality...One

in a field of grass
underneath the morning clouds
a man with a black hat
white polo and marine blue pants
rides on a red motorbike
followed by a brown dog
and a black horse

one upon the other they tread
upon the road that you are talking

blue birds fly the skies
above the poplars

RIC S. BASTASA
Reality...Two
	hree well covered farmers
plow the rice fields
beating the carabao
under a drizzle of soft rain
this november

at the right side of this scenery
a herd of carabaos graze
vast expanse of grass and
beside them two children flying kites.

on the telephone wire
two finches watch

RIC S. BASTASA
Realization

to give and give
and want nothing in return

that is the higher realization
the left hand is a doer
the right hand
is blind.

RIC S. BASTASA
when we meet
i see hallways and
a gate and a hollow alley
and i have not
hesitated to
bribe the guards
and so i had all the ease
going in
where i am not supposed
to be
because i ought
not to belong there
damp rooms
and dusty curtains
and rusty pipes

faucets leaking
and rats
running on the ceiling
and cockroaches
stepping on
cheese and
bread

flies on cold coffee
and fleas
on the off-white linens

i give in
because you are there
waiting for me
and in this kind
of compromising
situations

i have always been
weak.
Realization....

at the height of
fifty thousand feet where
the island looks like
a mole on the
cheek

you begin to realize
everything in life
is so uncertain

death can happen anytime
anywhere
and there is only one of you....

then you hate
thinking about everything
that much

RIC S. BASTASA
Realizations

it was not that long
ago when i want to give you
something smooth
as silk
or soft as a morning
glory petal
those which are
understandable and
clear
and acceptable

it is like a sculpture of
a chair
edges smooth
well defined
ends

or a baby with a smile
as real as
bow and arrow

but time makes us
strange
and make us pretend that
we understand everything
everything

there is something
that justifies our age
and that is when
we begin to accept the unreal
and embrace
the absurd as though they are
our genitals

they are here
and we become a part of them
without any
questions asked
and then we become as happy
as the breeze of the sea
early one morning

the reasons become accessories
and then finally
they are nothing but left-overs
that we feed
to the dogs unfed for days

RIC S. BASTASA
Realizing Reality...

we have been filled
to the brim
our contents are overflowing
what is it that we can choose?
except to
empty what is full
to discard what we think we can
we do not rationalize anymore
there is simply no place for
this
at this time of the
state of our affairs
when we are moving without an exact direction
where we have to confess
that all our compasses
are broken
our fingers do not point
to the north
the skies are cloudy
and cold
in such a paradox
of cold
and heat
all co-existing
actually we must profess
that understanding had always
been at a loss
the confusion is gaining ground
and then we
begin to understand
we walk cool
there is no rush
our minds are empty
and we have
become
so confident
saying this is it
this after all is the truth of my existence
this purposeless life
this non-fulfillment
of desire
this luster lust
then we stand against the sunset
welcoming
whatever happens
what happens happens
and must happen
and what do we have
we have nothing
to lose

oh, pinch us
we are real now
we are not sands anymore
but stones

RIC S. BASTASA
Really Maddening....

for how long?
i ask myself.
for how long? i ask
myself again
and again

you will not understand
this question
you cannot relate
we are so private
in this secret but
it is indeed sad

for how long? it's been
twenty years, it's been
twenty long enduring
years

maybe not, maybe be
no more
next year. It is really
maddening.

RIC S. BASTASA
but i am used to these bad times
you see
these happen most of the time, we get used to these bad times
and after a while we are no longer affected,
no longer ruled by these bad times
and we become numb like we are prepared for an operation
like the way how my gallbladder
was removed four years ago
and people
call me sweet and women taste me and say i am
sweet and i like it

the bitterness is gone now
and i am ready for something new something sweeter
come what may
i have open arms and interesting eyes that speak the language of

yucks! lust.

do you want to taste this chunk of lust?
or a slice of happiness? they call it love,
endearment, but i like it
when it is simply called by its plain name
no euphemisms

lust, lust, lust, just lust, no heart
i want a heartless love affair
one that does not hurt

let me share it with you, but first tell me

were you once bitter too?
Reaping What You Once Sowed...

many years ago
there was no closeness
that stone that i was
cannot remember

now, there is a tree
touching the sky
on cold mornings

it has an intimacy with
the sun
and you look at it with
admiration

you are the grass now
the bird in you has flown away
you want to be counted
as part of the element of the sky

it is too late
they have known much of you
and you fall short
of the greatness
that they now
possess

accept that life is like
a wheel
you are not part of the
hub
you are the beetle
crushed
and dead....

RIC S. BASTASA
Rearrangement Of A Poem

there is hope
because someone still believes
and there is love
because there is still hope
and the inner flame remains
because there is love

thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reason

i won't touch you
i only take a look and feast my eyes on you

i know what happens when i touch you
you turn into stone and i become fire that cannot burn you

i burn all night and day because i cannot touch you
because i won't dare

i burn all of myself without gaining from this heat
i burn myself in sleep

there is reason that this fire cannot burn
it is like you it is stone

it is the only one that i can touch
the one that now i can fully trust

this stone is cold it is very cold
look at me the burning finally stopped

look at me and if you must feel me
to your hands i am dust i am ashed

RIC S. BASTASA
Reasons

do not reason like a stone
staring at you asking for some
justifications about the flowing of a river.
Thoughs, plain thoughts. Nothing to argue
about how the feet must go, without the hands.
There is no sense. The head keeps dignity.
And the heart plans a revolt of an outburst
of red....more red, like a blend of carrots
and a squeeze of oranges, and a roast
Splashes of blues and greens.
Strokes. Brushes of realities.
Blend. White and Black. Faceless.
You are a brick wall. Tinged. Tanned.

You pretend walking on the sea. You ask
for flight. This is the island of loneliness.
There is no boat. No bridges. Just hands
without fingers. Mouth without lips. Shine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reasons For Rapture

damn were reasons for rapture
more are coming and the heart merely listens
weak, and submissive to the speed of the
brain's efficient delights: logic, pertinence,
materiality, relevance,

reason brags, a smooth line, without curves,
a stare of the eyes, unblinking to emotions,
if this is this, then this must be that,
and given the facts, these are the only
possibilities, nothing obscure, nothing absurd,
and everything went on smoothly like a jet
propulsion creating a smoke sort of impression
on the clouds on that clear day when you held
your hand at the tip of your cap, solid and stable,

on the day of the hearts, where can reason be?
you receive no calls, no text, no card, this is passe,
no rose, no email, no greetings from the gate or
the path where you pass your life, tears flow like

regret that came late, always late, well, this is not
the end, you are strong, you know what to do,
embrace reason again, and feel like a new machine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rebecca

your father killed a friend of his and
now he is in jail and what your mother knows
is only to put the kettle over a fire to make water hot
she does not know how to make you all siblings live and grow to be reliable men and women

and so you are here with us
to help us on our domestic chores: wash the dishes clean the house nurse grandmother and cook our meals

years of your hardlife trust solidifies and now you tell us that you are going to marry this hardworking man from Cotabato

we like you. to stay. but no we cannot hold you as your eyes speak of a flaming love

our hands hold a dove and we open them to let this dove fly to her destiny

just like you rebecca you shall be free now go! find the path where your heaven lies
Rebecca For The Third Time

whoever put
the bust of Abraham
Lincoln by that
door
must be answerable
to you
Rebecca.

May your
soul rest in peace
for slamming
Hilaire Belloc's
door.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rebecca On Another Note

why did you slam the door?
now, do you regret
that you have finally died
just because you slam
the door
and then this poet who writes
about you
kills you with a mere slam?

don't you think that he is not just
witty but too
a little bit cruel?

RIC S. BASTASA
Rebirth

from the fertile
grounds of
silence

your tender
caress

shall give fruit
to a very lovely
smile

to the envy
of the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
inside my mind are the stories they all related to me
when i was small, mama, what i like about mama,
was her story about the elastic man, who saved his
woman of affection from the deep well by simply
extending his rubber hands.
papa cannot be outdone, who with his reserved silence,
when we rode horses, and checked the tenants of the land,
told about the story of the emperor who had no clothes,
my son be always aware that people cannot be trusted
verify, check, counter check, do not believe outright.

there were myths, and parables, there are theories
so many reminders about survival kits,
about being calm and reasonable, there is no rush,
time heals, people forget, sins are forgiven, matters of
the heart must be kept inside the chest, and the family
must always be the first to consider, less travels, save money,
keep secrets, everything in moderation, keep the readings,
donate to the church, be friendly with the powers that be,
compromise with the communists, give in to what you cannot
control, save the house, remember friends, be kind to animals,

i am sculpted. I am like a stone shaped by the rain and
the air. I am tired. But i am not giving up. I like to be a new
house, not the renovated ancestral one.
I like to be in a strange place. I am going away then.

at the top of the mountain alone, (and powerful) where i
can think more, discard all my built-in beliefs, i carry nothing.
i talk to the wind. I look over the plain.

I sit alone and watch
the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recall The Vow

in your troubled times
when yourself
appears as three
separate entities

the id
go and superego

when all of them
fight
for their rights

and you go crazy
driving three horses
in different directions
on the same
chariot and
yoke

you call them
let them sit
comfortably
before you
and discuss
the point
of peace

where they
can be
united

you recall the vow
the covenant
of lust
and love and
standards

give them a day
each
to live and breathe
give them
each the space
y they all deserve

now be free

RIC S. BASTASA
Recalling The Thousand Cranes

if you recall i made a thousand
paper cranes too
hoping to save a soul
from the body of the burning
flesh

the ten thousand cranes
were useless

she died. i live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Receive What Ye Shall Ask

receive, ..Ask, .......................... and ye shall
So.. i........................................... did..did i So?
my answer... was swift, harsh was my answer
what is asked..for was not..............my anwer
i needed what i received.... to me unbeknown
answered.....................are prayes sometimes
underlyings within graced you least expect by
them delivered, Him should we Give, for such
privilege we thank, ....all in newfound wisdom,
our needs, for receiving, receive...... what ask
shall, .............................. yeah, .......yeah, ........yeah

RIC S. BASTASA
Recent Instructions From Noel

Always make your future bigger than your past
Always make your contribution bigger than your reward
Always make your performance greater than the applause
Always make your gratitude greater than you success

On the premise:

That there is a future
That there is a contribution
That there is performance
That there is gratitude

There is no future, no contribution, no performance, no gratitude

The past shall be erased, the reward does not matter
The applause unnecessary and the success a surplusage

I do not need a reward, an applause,
And I do not need any success

Finding a soul in paper clip
Finding a frog croaking in my throat

There is simply no brain on this bond paper

Air in a vacuum

A grand future in today’s little happy faces

A red rose tattoo inside my ailing heart

The best talk in my silence as mute as
A dead ant that cannot climb
The coconut tree

Of the elephant in my palm
Or that little bird in my hand
And we were guessing
Whether it is alive or dead
The little child always laughs at everything
And we simply do not know
His logic
We forget once our childlikeness

We simply forget
The reason of the heart

It is simple

There is no future in my books
There is only today

God bless you, Noel

I always Live for today
The moment
The second
I always see my life in the fresh leaves of lettuce
My future in that in the red rose dewy in the flower vase of transparent glass

And what IS that?

Yes, eternity in the grain of sand
Today in the glowing dew.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recklessness

we were not reckless really
when we were so young
your cheeks as pink as peaches
my fingers as firm as twigs
you got hurt you once told me
when i had fears touching you
we were so young then
and the words of the elders
were always harsh and threatening

we were not reckless really
we always obeyed them
bowing our heads and kissing
their hands and not answering
back and obeying them
without any complaint

we were not reckless to the
letter of the law and to every
dictates of their cruelty
and they successfully crushed
the love that was so lively
inside our young hearts

and then they all died and we
offered prayers but deep within
our hearts we wanted to tell them
they have caused us so much sorrow

and now we do not really know
how to be happy we have forgotten
every guide even for little joys
they have converted us into stones
numb, unfeeling and dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reclining Woman

because i love you
i can make use of a single line
and in an instant see you:

a face
a body reclining
on a sofa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recognizing Her Excellence

my attention shall be focused on her
she glows like a star now
and i look at her in the sky
i smile
she was once from the earth
where i live
where i am mud
where i am a part of the sand
sometimes
where i once told her
this place is not for you
you are destined for
something higher
than us

you are one of the daughters of the gods
and you must rise
and take your right
to be

good luck....

RIC S. BASTASA
Recoil

now i am king and now
this is my universe.

and that comforts us once again
that when no one is reading or watching
then dance as though it is your last

sing as though
no one likes to listen

live life
the way life wants itself to be lived

in such a short moment
let there be no rules, let every line be free

let there be only you
in this office break, and say to yourself
i am not dead yet

RIC S. BASTASA
i went back
looking at old pictures

mama's smile when she got hospitalized
for diabetes
stings me existence
as though there was something
wrong with me
when she was
there

papa was well behaved during my wedding
i recalled
he was never one like that before
maybe he was happy
either to get rid of myself
in his house
or that i
shall suffer the same predicament
which he had
entangled himself
when he got married
to my mother

i can be unfair
i can be ignorant as
you like to
see me
as a blank wall

bad thoughts
lonely memories
the incapacity
to remember
some happy
moments
despite their
detected presences
but i wonder sometimes
how things may appear
different
from a distance
that i measure
upon myself

it is like i have bad pieces of me
that i form into
a collage
and yet when i look at it from afar
say here
it has become
the best painting
that for once
has brushed inside
my
mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recollecting The Shattered Pieces

if living life and
recollecting its shattered pieces
is as easy as
gathering calachuchi flowers
and making it
into a garland for your
neck
i could have done that
even in a few minutes
for i have long hands
and my arms are still
strong and
i can still climb
like the coconut man
but it is never like that
and it is
never the same as it
once used to be

my lungs have dried and
narrow tubes
like the thin capillaries of
a leaf
which you inserted in
one of those pages
of your book

i always ask for air
more and more air
but you heard nothing
like this world
which holds all the air
from the trees and the seas
and yet has nothing
to give
to that dying person in
need.
Reconciliation

on slow
calculated steps
shall you approach
a door
you knock
there is no hesitation
for a reconciliation
on a remorse
pain shall be
forgotten
and then the door
shall open
the embrace waits
tears fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconciliation Day...

rock the world
leave the past
dance with the
hot bodies of the
present, drink
margaritas, and
forget bloody
Mary, think of the
future as your child
running to be
embraces by
your strong hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstructing A (3) ....

Love,
Friendship
Prayers
you can always have them
and give them anytime...

Smiles,
Hugs,
they are always there for free...

All these, Aldo, the kind friend, is always willing to give
At any time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstructing A. (2) ...

WE met at the mall and you look so beautiful in your outfit must be made exclusively for you

...

but i have decided to forget you.
i can.

i do not own you.
you are anchored to your own shoulders.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstructing A....

TO forgive and love you again
let me see, let me see

let me sleep my night through,
let my money comfort me
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstructing An Image Of Self

to reconstruct
he took some portraits of himself,
in different angles,
went to the photo editor
adjusted the lighting,

contrast, experimenting on the hues
the frames, and then saves each
reconstruction,
abstracts, hides the bad spots
revises,
and then puts the mixture of gray and white,

someone opens it
and sees the different faces of yourself
and concludes that indeed
you are in deep thought
contemplating
on shedding off
the unwanted ugliness
that had long been residing
in you
it makes the feeling that
contains that needed
saving grace

it can be a lie
but it can also be redeeming

I've seen it myself
i feel the gladness of the soul
in me

go on, take more, reconstruct some more

live!
live!
make the most of life
hide the ugliness
embrace the power of life that beauty
promises to give
you

is it a lie?
don't bother
make use of the bad
side
take it to the
good......

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstructing The Self...

finally he fell into the trap
of his own thinking
a spider's web that his own
saliva had woven
now unable to move
like a baby elephant
not overgrowing the very
rope that tied
it to his youth

it is here where chaos
destruction and explosion
must play their own
parts
to rebuild subsumes within
its own skin
that capacity to self-destruct

three days three nights
another you must be born again
a new pair of eyes
that can withstand
the latest light of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Reconstruction Game

you know
that when i write
i am not
inside
myself, i am somewhere else
and you try to catch me
with a phrase
that reminds me of someone
that you know
i love, but i have outlived
your wits
and i have learned to live
somewhere else where
you do not know
how to find me,
and i keep talking
and you pretend to listen
but there is no
meeting here
just the passing by and
letting go
and yet keeping in touch
just in case
things break down and
we need each other
again
to reconstruct
and
be whole again
like

a machine with
its bolts and screws.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recovery Disc

i know what you are up to.
i know that you do not forget pain and i know that that pain is still there and no
matter how you hide it
it comes like smoke from an old
dirty chimney
and at winter time it shows all the black soot
the gray smoke from the house
to the sky

i know that when you invite me you do not really mean to please me.
you just want to show the changes in the house
the rearrangement of the furniture

it no longer the rose in the vase but
a carnation
that you say is loved by another
but not you

i know what you are up to but i have already prepared myself for that
in my heart i must tell you
pain has no bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Recuerdos De La Alhambra

the walls listen to the sounds of
spanish guitar
strings playing the

recuerdos de la Alhambra
silence stills itself

on this windless noon
the fan did not move and the

wooden chair is stifled
if it has hands it would have

chifted and it if has the mouth
it would have said

'sublime! '

the carpet that keeps
the pin
does not have wings

it transcended the feet
a revered existence

lofty, splendiferous.
i felt something
diving
penetrating my
emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Red African Daisies

texts red African daisies
that i carry in my hand

remind me of mother
and her anger

for once i was her son
and i uprooted all the African daisies

from her garden
and let them all die under the sun

that was during the middle of Lent
when Christ they say suffered and

finally died. That was the time
when knew for once what rebellion was.

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Carnation

draw is nothing more attractive
as a defense of pretense
than a red carnation in the pocket of
my black suit

it is the fire that catches you
and here i am
appearing as your cage of love

you expect more fire in this
you are more beautiful now as you finally taste
ash and feel the powder of burnt
skin.

draw is no fire in me
not anymore none anymore
there is only this oblivion
see it and leave me i am bothered no more

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Flower

you are a red flower
on red leaves
on red stalks
on red branches
on a red soil
fronting the
red mountains
and the red wind

you doubt
whether you have red eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Rose

red rose raped
apparently for no reason
by this bee
without a sting

well, what nature can hand
on a stingless bee
is a verdict of an acquittal

midlife crises
that is the ground
precisely

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Sando

black out.

on the other side
i hear your voice

i peep
seeing you in red sando
your face
against the candle light

sweet voice
red sando to me
is the fire of
love
radiating waves
of desire

i am wrapped in this
darkness
on the wrong wishes

i must study restraints
again
in chapter one.

i know i can' t have you
i know, i know

you belong to someone else
ditto with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Skies

that afternoon the skies are red
as tulips
the emotions however are like
stones
gray and dry

the world is sac-like

and one wonders
if music as a harmony
within the heart of
solitude
can still jibe

come to think about it
the active element
is still you

work it out then like
a piece of art

a sculpture of rivets
a canvass of smoke
a poem about chalk
and erasers,

diverse, reverse, collide
like water molecules
in sulfuric acid

RIC S. BASTASA
Red Sun, Black Air, Tiny Lights Of The City

Red glowing sun, fire, flames, hot spittles
To the tiny lights of the city, this city of sin,
Black air that we breathe, smoke rising from
Our hair, warmth from our armpits, sighs and
Quivers, the longings that never stop, and the
Rain that fall heavily today, our thirsts still
Thirsting, our hungers still hungry, our instincts
For destruction coming out from our throats and
Hands, we can do more than what Is expected

We break some twigs, we pluck some flowers
We never thought about the problem of how
To reconnect twigs and flowers and scents

God creates, and we are so hardheaded
Ours is always to destroy and then leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Redeem Yourself, Boy

You botched
the last blow job
but can redeem yourself
on this one

compensate now for some fault
repair the defect

the redeeming feature
of the plan
its simplicity

your saving grace
your sense of humor

Shop for books,
music
and more

FREE

restore honor, worth, reputation

fulfill a pledge
convert

save yourself from a state
of sinfulness
and its consequences

such is the meaning
of the word
redemption

RIC S. BASTASA
Reductionist

you do not have to give me
the whole of you to love you
a piece of your mind is enough
it may not last a lifetime but
it may help me survive as i
begin to gather the shattered
pieces of my being, as i begin
to assemble my eyes, my nose
my arms that you have taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Redundancies

the contract is null and void
it was part and parcel of the fraud
involving Cash money
laundered in Hot heat

such is a Dark black night
Frozen ice still hangs on the trees
True fact it is
with a muddled Past history
Free gift from his lover
taken from a Safe haven
the Time period
must also have
Basic fundamentals
it is my Considered opinion
that the End result
even though of Different kinds
involving as it is with Individual persons
and their Personal opinion
leaning on True facts
are as Equally as good
as ours Combined into one
and then by Consensus of opinion
and Lapse in time
let me think that First and foremost
everything shall be Full and complete
at last we have come to
the final end

Stupid idiot

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflect Light

be a mirror
reflect whatever light is available
under the bed
give them what they
give you
it will not be too generous
but it will
be fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflecting Upon A Series Of Experiences For This Day.....

The experience has always been a shaping and reshaping seemingly without end like a journey to a horizon that has no limit to the exhaustion of the eyes.

It will always be an invention, and reinvention, like having to hope for hope because there is nothing good happening to life, it is like looking at a room, sitting on a sofa, staring at the ceiling, looking beyond the glass window by your side,

and always asking, why is this room always unfinished, this house always a question of why? and for all we know, we fail to look at our own feet, to reflect our eyes on the mirror and assure ourselves that the hours actually also know how to wait for answers,

actually, when i look at myself, i look at a stranger, but i know the name of course, but there is more beyond to this name, there is something speaking but never really known something inside us, that is with us, but detached, talking with all honesty, saying

'You are wrong! There is something that you need to correct!' 

Tell her, do not be afraid, Go! Go!

This is divided self, inside it, in this chest, there are small cabinets,
more doors, more windows, and endless tunnel without light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.2

when you arrive here
there is no stone not a single stone
there is no moss not a single hair of a green moss
then there was the pain of waiting
time is always delaying its coming
trains stopped and cars are having flat tires
but you are faithful you keep on waiting you entertain promises
like dear memories or dreams or wishes that come true somehow
and you waited for so long

now this place is filled with stones and moss grow in each body of the stone
the waters spread their territories and land is emaciated
and the house is covered with water and the roof is gone

and there is nobody here anymore and it is only i who remember you and
i tell them about you and they do not believe me

and i feel like i am a ship that just sunk.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.3

when loneliness is overwhelming
miracles happen

tables speak to chairs and
chairs are amazed to their
new actions

the roof cannot be stopped
telling something to the floor

and the garden too and the fence
and the stair and all of them here

entangled in a relationship of such closeness
that you begin to stop thinking about how to end
and lose yourself

presences are born and they begin to speak
and it is you who has become one inanimate human figure

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.4

here i am turning off the
stereo of my car
listening to the silence
inside that now
tries to speak to me
in the language that
it knows the one without
words of course the one
that only both of us can
understand without really
trying: the car and i.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.5

there is always this
unspeakable happiness when
after the day
you have inculcated some ideas
to the young minds
honing them
hoping that they shall find
themselves in greater heights
that they shall rise above
the sources of
their inferior beings
that as students soon they shall
realize that they can be much
better than you
their mentor

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.6

as i told you once
when it rains in pours

you break the good news
you now have a new found job in canada

now it is raining luck all over you
wait when it shall rain men and money

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.7

i got your missed call
i was then too busy and
almost forgot about it

until this morning when
i am overridden with guilt
i call you back asking why
you called and you tell me that
she is finally breaking up with
you and selling the house and
lot where both of you had been
living for 25 years

she will get everything as you
had never been gainfully employed
and you say that you will leave
even before the sale
and shall settle in the farms somewhere
in Davao to live alone there

and i say that is just perfect
with an inspiration that you
will have then a very good chance
of beginning anew
find a new one who loves you without cost
and finally forget her as she
does not deserve you

and i end the conversation with don't worry
there is always a place for everyone under the sun
that there will always be new beginnings
and that no one is poor or rich forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 0.L

we live in this same house it is big
and the living room is having three sofas
and the stairs are narrow
like a single bamboo
it is designed in such a way that departure is nil
that we must get inside and never bother thinking about getting out

we know leaving is extremely painful even if there is a promise that someday
wounds can heal and we take pride that we have forgotten
but leaving is a reality it is flood a deluge
and we are invaded with water and we drown
that is how we feel when we speak about stairs and roads

you know i write this because i remember
you see how smooth is my skin and there is no sign that there was once a wound here

it is only you who knows where it is but i will not ask you anymore for details
we speak about something else about the boat the wend sliding smoothly under
the bridge and the man that sang you a song when you pass overhead like a bird
flying away

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 1

yes, Luisa, the more we think
about our future,
the more we forget the present

look at us, our faces are folding
like tents in the middle of the rain
because we have thought much
about the future sunshine

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection 88..

on a small aquarium
we can always be small fishes
on the generosity
of sharing whatever
available space

but we are not destined
to be simply like that
everyday our gills breath
for the salt of the ocean
dreaming of the corals on
the deepest ocean floors

and then we are finally thrown
to the sea
the oceans challenge us
to swim faster
and fathom more depths
we develop our own
radars
we grow into the sizes of
whales
and some opted
as sharks

that is life again
air that always occupies
volume

flexible like rubber
without that snap

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflection Upon A Nail

How can all
those hammers
hide the sharpness
of a nail
- a body drawn
to the grave of wood
its head
finally lost
with so much
force?

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflections

i

a certain garden is in flames
i wonder
who put one of the leaves on fire
she calls it
my garden of wonder

ii

she continues
that her heart can take any form
a grazing grass for goats
a nunnery for spinsters
for the caterpillars, a big leaf
a cradle for a baby
dinner table for two
a handkerchief for tears

iii

he says he only believes in
love
hate is only its absence
where a queue ends
it always ends in the love
of humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflections 101

he writes not because
he wants to be read and
be understood

got him wrong really
he writes because he likes
to live

life writes upon himself
and so he writes upon life too.

RIC S. BASTASA
this is not a matter of search
anymore
but an addiction a routine
that you take day by day
because you have no one to talk to
or if some people enter your door
and talk to you
it is nothing but the objectivity
of a certain
professional determination
no one talks about directions here
or the significance of
a thought
or the finding of the correct meaning
of life
everyone is preoccupied with
problems and there seems to be
no solution anymore that
clicks to what must be or ought to be
people are crazy
falling into traps of a meaningless
existence
they know it
but refuses to acknowledge it
and you keep on staring to the faces
that becomes a circus
performance
tightropes and acrobatics
then you look outside the window
towards the sea and
say
what a wasted life
what a fool have we all become

all for the money
and so much garbage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflections On Good Friday Of Lent

reflections on good Friday are always personal.
there is this room which is also very personal.
you are there and He is there and both of your are having a very personal talk,
you do not share it, it is very personal
there is a room inside your heart, and He is there listening to you.
He lives there all the years of your life
and you still do not believe it.
On good Friday you take the episodes of your life and you simply remember those that give you pain,
less those that make you happy, images, so many images come like guest on a feast which is very personal,
you serve them drinks, and food and then all of you begin to remember and agree to forgive and then all of them leave and you tell them it is good that everything is now forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflections On The Water

A Blue cloud
shaped like a bird
spreading its wings
on the water,

a clover leaf falls
creating some ripples

a fish jumping
trying to reach an
odd shaped flying
insect,

my face is crooked
waving like
a silk scarf

reflections of
half truths but
naked still

RIC S. BASTASA
Reflejo De Luna

the way to dance
i hold your hand
you hold mine and
i signal through
my body that we
move one step for
ward and then two
steps backward and
later for a variation
when we sweat we
move side-wise back
and forth like a leaf
blown by the east
and west monsoons.
in this broad day
light, the moon and
the stars can
be felt by the
locks of our hair
by the tips of
our warm fingers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Refraction

between you
and me
something
bends

RIC S. BASTASA
Regaining Freshness

every time that i say your name
my wilting tongue, a leaf about to fall,
slowly regains its green freshness
maybe, not for long, it will slide
back to the branch of my throat
and fall back
to the blooming
petals of my heart

Matag litok ko sa imong ngalan,
ang lawos kong dila, dahon
nga hapit na unta matagak,
inanayng nalunhaw pag-usab.
Hayan, dili madugay motidlom kini
balik sa sanga sa akong tutunlan
ug mopatighulog ngadto
sa mao pay pagbukhad
nga biyuos sa akong kasingkasing.

Vicente Bandillo

RIC S. BASTASA
Regaining The Prestige

all you have to do is wait.
you do not have to do anything.
let them finish
themselves off, and you who merely
sit and stand
and sit again
regains what is reserved for the chair
and the window
frame.

hope you know that
there is always a season for everything
leaves fall
seeds crack
the fish that hibernates
you think is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Regarding The Massacre

23 is not a stagnant number
of the massacre
it will rise like the tide
till it gets to a hundred more
these insane murders
in the name of politics

a white foreigner beside me
chats with his Filipina girlfriend
saying that life is insane

he makes a point, i agree,
deadth is inflicted and there will be no reasons left

i have another definition of life now.
It is insane.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not know much about turtles
but i like to know one
they say turtles are not really slow
they are just gentle
and cool
as they live more in the water
rather than
on land

i have regrets though
not having known
that turtles
just want to be slow
and be not rushed
like
they are forced to be what they are not

by this rabbit
but there's one thing though that hurts
when turtles claim the value
of rationality
as though it is the only ingredient of a good
personality

i like to say, i like emotions too
turtles and rabbits that feel and tell the world
not to hurt each other anymore
but just be themselves
and be free and
be loved
and be appreciated
for what they are
unique
and long for a clique

i still think that this world is as beautiful as me
as you
as we together
writing poems and have fun
wading on the pond and basking in the sun

come, come, let us join our hands
rabbits and turtles on strong bonds

smile!

(see we have this picture now)

RIC S. BASTASA
Regret As I Piss

i piss
and look with
affection
the tool that i
am holding

the thought
that it was inside you
last night
makes me
jerk

RIC S. BASTASA
Regrets

mushrooms of
tall buildings
and concrete roads
steel rails
pavements made
of red bricks

where will the stars be?
and the snails?

RIC S. BASTASA
Regrets Galore...

the drag is quite long.
it takes us to a street of dryness and dust makes eddies behind our feet.
i remember those dead gladiators being dragged away from the theaters
i am amazed as Luna was once and he painted such
Spolarium,

Death and being taken away
No bargains.

the drag of life is quite long. There is thirst and hunger.
when you sit upon an old chair and look far into another island.

No one waits for you there.
all you have here is the cold wind, the haze outside, the howling silence.

everything from me is taken away.
i had the foolish thought that all the while you love me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Regrets Of My Life

i have not passed the paths that you have
taken, those that please the skin of your feet,
i never for once, did not pass through them,
i never heard the laughter of the vagabonds,
danced with the gypsies, made love with the
buxom girls, listened to the guitars strummed
by singing men under the golden moon,
by the side of the river, with the coolness of the
trees, the spreading grasses as pillows
of the happy nights.

i regret taking my journey alone, the paths winding,
the climb too steep, the mountains too high,
the cliffs too dangerous, my nights had been
sleepless, the winds too harsh, my life too lonely,
for such a young age, the years should have been
spent frolicking in the woods, swimming in the river,
sailing the seas, conquering the fears, clearing the
shorelines, taking control of what what was there before.

i regret shaping my face to those frowning models.
i regret not having sung my favorite songs under the rain.
i regret not wasting my life to the bitterness of goodbyes.
i regret living a life of abundance and yet empty.
My spirit sighs, my hands not holding for something that must last.
My heart still thirsts, my mind still hungers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Regrets...

away in china
you leave everything
in their proper places
furniture and
toiletries and blankets
and belts
you do not carry a thing
that reminds you
what sadness is
or was
then you find
yourself in a land
where no one
knows you or
understands you
where language
becomes a problem
and then you
fear
if this will last forever
this having to forget
everything
this attempt to learn a
new language
and learning a new
self
that perhaps can
set you free
and eventually you find
more prisons
in there
and you want to come back
and whisper a
familiar word back
there to
open some kind of
closed doors
and you find out
there are more
opening arms right
there and you
begin to miss
what you want to
forget
or hate
you want to fly back
on those
old wrinkled wings
telling yourself
i have forgiven
every mistake
and i am ready
to face
what i wish i was not

RIC S. BASTASA
Regrets

i SHOULD have asked God what i shall do next with my life since

i have already prepared more than what i can handle since

i have already saved more than what i can spend

my neighbor friend who did the same just died today...

and i am looking at myself in the mirror closely

RIC S. BASTASA
Reification

For instance,
a triangle will be perceived in picture A,
although no triangle
has actually been drawn

In the same manner
must you look
at the illusory contours
of my being
through its
fingertips

Through the hairs of my skin
you must find
the wholeness of my body
these toes
these locks of hair
must you feel
everything that loves

RIC S. BASTASA
Reincarnate....

she says she had been here
once
she remembers the exact
details
he was frying an egg
sunny side up as she wants it
to be
she sits on one of those rattan
chairs beside a
mahogany table

he is about to put a cup of coffee
brewing on her table
and that is it...

there was a big bang...flashes of light... then
darkness... reality sucks...

RIC S. BASTASA
Reincarnation

Somewhere
I think of you
Somewhere
I remember you

You are with me like the wind
From a faraway land and I know it is you
The way you kiss me still makes me quiver
Wind-lips touching my cheeks my neck
Wind hands caressing my arms my hands my chest
Wind-body hushing pressing against my body today

There is a sense of longing about two
Past bodies,
Two past warm bodies pressing to
Past warmth and past time somewhere
Only that it is too hard to remember the details
Of that past love, past the season, only that it is hard
To remember why that love died untimely

Now we are here, I am in this present body of a writer
For some reason you read me in your present body of a reader

You are telling me that something in my poem catches
The eye of your soul and you begin to remember
This is him, this is him, he was there with me before

Your way of telling me without seeing me is a feeling too
We were there before we were together we just can’t remember the details.

Today you are the thought that touches me like the wind-mind
So gently, a thought comes to my brain, a feminine thought claiming
A right that was there before, and which today vehemently denies.

The present seals it with birth.
Locked.
Another death is needed to open it.
Reincarnation Revisited

when we meet again
we keep
the indentation of distance

somehow i touch you
but you deny it

when you comply with
a wry smile

i shall pretend that
nothing affects me

then we go hand and hand
in the journey

into another time another place
begrudging

i must realize that these are not the hands
i love

into another body into another mind
i know what i am looking for

how shall i know that it is the same soul?
shall my heart still recognize whom?

or this love is nothing but another kind of fading light
and into the darkness also shall forget itself

its roots
it flowers all gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reinventing Absence

absence
reinvented
i must remember its face first
before i can go on
with the restructuring
i am looking for it
it is not there yet
i grappling with a lot of presences
soft and twisted
gnarled and whorled
and dumped
and pliant
i want to touch it again
despite the pain
it is not here yet
it is far and dark and
uncertain

RIC S. BASTASA
Reinventing Loneliness.....

what it is like to gather all the empty shells again 
put them in a basket
take them to your room and turn on the study lamp
relax yourself and scrutinize each shape and color
and from out of the past memories
you reinvent things like the way you put the shells 
on the table
create another entity of these unthinking things
like the way you map out a journey for the soul
towards your belief for eternity

the shells are scattered but soon your hands shall
learn what to make most from each of them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reinventing Love...

nothing goes sentimental
with the leaves and twigs

the creek moves on and follows
its instinct to the river

the clouds drift without sighs
the grass watch with indifference

just like us both
i just love it the way we reinvent love

with so much independence
seemingly with so much detachment

we are like birds flying in opposite directions
only to meet when the circle is completed

RIC S. BASTASA
Reinventing Ourselves

'Poetry has a great digestive system and can consume and recycle almost anything. It's the poet's persona that gives meaning to the process. The first important act of the imagination is to create the person who will write the poems. And that's not the end of it. We have to invent and reinvent who we are until we arrive at the self we can bear to live with and die with. Art demands of the artist the capacity for self-renewal. Without it, art withers. And so does the life.'
- STANLEY KUNITZ

what you were is not enough.
what you are is not enought either.
what you will be will always not suffice.

if you are a sigh
turn yourself into a word
if you are a word
reinvent reconvert
recycle
be not just a word
be a phrase
be this sentence
be this paragraph
be this short story
be this novel
be this universal prayer
of marvel

do not just be a nail but be a hammer
do not just be snail but be sparrow

what if you are nothing at all at the end?
then be the perfection of nothing
just be the best
of this reinventing

RIC S. BASTASA
Reinventing Relearning

there is an age
where we relearn everything
where there is no
iota of what we know
where we throw
every garbage that we saved
for years

we go back to youth
everything becomes too interesting
nothing impossible

the first touch of rain
the first kiss of sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Reiterating Arsie
	here are questions
that are not meant to be answered
you know that
there are answers that do not answer
the questions
you must know that
there are those that need only the affection of the hands
the sympathetic gaze
the tap on the shoulder
the way you say hello for no reason at all
when you ask
not about what time it is
but when
the plane leaves and when it touches down
to finally
reach home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rejecting The Walk…

de, walk is
negligible, compared
to the
words that are like
ships
homing to the ports
of my mind
like pigeons
roosting on the branches
of my hair
for, now,
tree, sea, boat am i,
rolled into
one

RIC S. BASTASA
Relating To A Certain Sadness With You

When the world was new, I could not relate
To the loneliness of the song with you,
The colors of its sounds were too vibrant,
mostly red
And orange, and the coolness of green
Preoccupied my eyes to almost everything.
I was not interested perhaps,
I was too busy listening to something else.
My hands are crazy.
You did not mind of course.
You wait to the
Slit of a new opening where you think that soon
I will understand. I was moving here and there
Like a pendulum
Under the principle of pleasure. Both of my hands
Are holding on to something that I can easily
Give up and then feel nothing. The craze of letting
Things go and then forget and then embracing
Something new again.

There is something
However that is meant to stay that when it is gone,
You go with it and then you are lost.

There is this certain sadness with you that lingers
Like a very lonely song. Everyday it plays itself
Like a bird alone on a twig. It does not go away and
Enthralls me and then after it has unloaded all
The beauty of its notes, how it pleased my ears
It stays unmoved and then keeps on its
Chosen position until darkness hovers in
Like a blanket to its black beak.

There is this silence
That stares and then tells you its name
Honestly
The syllables of which sound very much like yours.
You know where it lives and so you do not bother.
Relax Orange

if you look for sense
for sure there is none
this is the place of senselessness
like the birth of emotions
and the death of emotions
funeral like things are moving
at times
there are baptisms of fire
when you arrive and you expect
for the sun
inside your room
the moon hanging by your window
or the stars
laid in bed like a twinkling mattress
well, it is a crazy day
the rivers are playing football in the banks
the ocean is praying for rain
like a nun
the mountains are playing bowling
with the hills and mounds
i am not thinking
i am emoting i am not writing i am playing
games that are not familiar with you
it is like
oh well, catch me if you can
don't get mad, we have a lot of them here
and don't be too serious
they are waiting to be listed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Relaxation Of A Native Woman

the night is very cold here
on top of Mt. Malindang

the old woman sits on the ground
(there are no chairs here)

puts her arm on her knee
and begins to roll a
leaf which she dried under
the sun the whole day

she tears a small portion of the tobacco leaf
rolls it on the other leaf and then she
lights the roll on the gas lamp

she puffs her smoke
to the moon.

everyone understands
what silence is all about

there are no more stories
from exhausted bodies

the souls are rested
on top of wilted grass

and then everybody is
fast asleep
for tomorrow's same work.

i am new here and i
am beginning to understand

what is this big mountain
all about?

why is it here
and why the people are not
at all complaining?

RIC S. BASTASA
Relaxed Feet On The Table Surface

we do not wish to explore more
what life is
we are here we must live it
in daily celebration

i like the sunrise with my feet
comforted by the surface of the table
my shoes are dirty
but i never mind the weeping of the table cloth

i got lemonade on my hand
pancake glazed with pure honey from the farm
the world is standing still
i shy away from silly talk this time

RIC S. BASTASA
Relearning

let not us be a currency of fixed value
there is no such thing
even a coin or
a stamp

you must have known by now
what nature is, what we are, and
where we are going?

reeds on the marsh
lilies floating on the river
a flower that one day lives
and then tomorrow dies...

on the other hand
are the seeds and cuttings and
grafts...

tight lipped buds still wanting to speak
listen!

RIC S. BASTASA
'Release Me, You Fool! '

thrown into the water
who cannot learn how to swim
if the only choice left is to drown.
thrown into this world
there is then only one conclusion left
if the only choice left is that you die anyway,
you better choose living.
a stone however learns nothing,
thrown into the air or water or anywhere
it remains what it is: a stone always
you catch it, you hurt your hand, you hold it
for a while, and then take a closer look and
even ask it how it feels,
did you see its eyes? it has no reaction at all.
it teases you, as though saying, 'release me, you fool! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Releasing A Treasure...

do not find me the will
or that reason
to release this treasure to air
to remove this from
me,

find me that feeling
that rain that wets this dry leaf
so that i can be alive again
green with
dew

find me that sun
that makes this wilting grass grow into a
carpet of dreams

give me the moon
that shall spread its golden sheen again
on the gray surfaces of
sadness

find me the brook
of eternal waters
so i may not grow old somehow

give me the impossible
so i can live forever with you
utter the word
so the i and me shall become
once more
the us again...

RIC S. BASTASA
Relics Of Love

the moon took away the memory
of you
the wind conceals the secrets
your shadow dissolves in the
days of my life
the river constantly murmurs
about what happens to the forest
jewels

my hands are closed
they do not open to the water
the rain is no exemption
to this hiding

but then the blankets and the pillows
where the locks of your hair are homed
still whisper your name

in the crevices of artful rocks
your face is carved

RIC S. BASTASA
Religious Fervors

ALL towers
be it in Thailand or Singapore
all mosques
minarets be it in the Philippines
or Vietnam

always
point to the same
Sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
Relying On Feelings

tonight sleep is cruel.
she does not come to you and you go anywhere searching for her breasts, you are a new born child wanting to suck the milk of life from her teats, and you want to take her like she is a sow, and your hands are ready to caress her hair and her soft body but she is cruel and so insensitive and despite your endearments so she may sleep with you tonight

she keeps that cruelty of a lover long jilted by you.

tonight sleep takes its vengeance.
and so
you have to compose the lines again to appease her.

speak of love, write about lovers making love beside the sea under the moon above the softness of the sands
tell sleep about love on top of love caress sliding like a spill of honey to the lips of the beloved the tongue wriggles in such sweetness the mouth opens and takes every dripping desire

plead sincerity and beg for mercy. perhaps, by then, sleep would be too kind to kiss your mouth and gift you with a bouquet of sweet roses for dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remedial Law Prof

remedial law prof
has cancer of the prostate

he has enough
of life: five children practicing

their professions and 8 grandchildren
to cheer him up

he is 78
and he says he is complete

no chemo
no surgery
nothing

saw him this pm
teaching still as if the bad news is nothing

living life
and giving it the chance to end itself
with all grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remedial Measure

to learn to live
with nothing but our own
bare feet

on the soft green grass
away from home...

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember

remember what we all did
when we first landed here,

we cried a lot.

remember when we leave
they cry a lot.

us? we didn't. we like going back
to that home
where we come from.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember David?

no, not the one
that lives in Dakota
don't you remember him?
he lives in his pants
stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
IN drawing my face
you rely on the lines
given by my words

in poetic motion &
on the night when
you are alone you
recall a face of

someone you love
you utter my name
and then i hover
like a dream

what am i like?
am i just a kiss that
gives the drafts of
the light careless wind?

on such a dark night
like this when what
you see is nothing
but a thought of light

close your eyes and
open your heart
and let your hands
fall freely like the rain

i become real only
if you still remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember My Own Body

your youth
is what we lack

we have taken
the alleys and we
have survived

wisdom has grown
like lotus above
the murky waters
and the mud

your youth is
what we lack now
and what we lack
we love

how can you
tell me what love is?
you cannot love
back

we see you in the morning
sun
we fade in that most beauteous
sadness of our
past

i go out of my door
swim to the sea and then
remember
my own body

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember That Silence Is Sometimes The Best Answer....

smile,
stand there,
look at the
outside world,
go back to
your room
lay your body
in bed,
put your hands
on the side
of your body,
feel the softness
of the linen,
close your eyes,
sip the silence
of the room,
do not disturb
it with your
sound......

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell me
the truth
remember that?

We used to live by it.
And you know
what's so good about the truth?
Everyone knows what it is
however long they've lived
without it.
No one forgets
the truth
they just
get better at lying

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember The Jar In The Yard Praying To The Moon

if you remember me
you must remember too the
empty earthen jar
places at the middle of
the garden
it has no water
it has only air
but the flowers in the garden
adore its
invisible fullness
even when it rains
it feels the emptiness
of the waters
and even when the sun shines
all day
it fills the fullness
of the light
for in truth
there is always reason
for one
who never ceases to live
to crave for
even, death, to know
the beauty of
what is there
and is there not.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember The Promises, And Then Forgive

remember the promises
of love
remember how they were broken
remember
how new promises are made again
remember
how these new promises are meant
to be broken again and again and again

but you will always do the forgiving
and forgiving again and again and again

society hates you
but you still love her over and over again

that is love..................

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember The Three Stars?

do you remember the three stars
one night that we have been seeing
during those dangerous days
of our union?

did i not tell you to take two,
as the other one has been taken
by another person that i love?

you have been keeping them
all those years
and nothing really happens

how you kept the glow
was a waste of time, really,
no other stars pop-out like
a round white mushroom
in the dark sky

your time is over.
I am retaking one of the two stars.
It is mine.

Now i am taking over
my own dark sky.
I will hang the star
named for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember This

it is at your
worst
when you have
written
best

it will be
this paradox
that when
you are at the
bottom
you are actually
at the
top of them
all

when death is near
life is waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Remember......

a person is
interesting
any person is

each has
a story to tell
a struggle
each has
moments of
his own

each is a beautiful
song
listen
and listen
and keep listening

sing with everyone
in the harmony
of the human rhythm

it is a misery
joining with other miseries
to create
finally the
symphony of the human
situation

each man is a note
each creature is a score
each joy each sorrow
is our own

in that song
where everyone is
a speck of dust
dancing against

the light.
Remembering A Beginning

at first we need the push
and when we fall we curse and blame and even take time for revenge
this happens many many times
and then we run out of feelings, we want to rest, and take some deep breaths
there is a broken window of the house which admits light
there is a leak somewhere
and our curiosities have become geometric in shapes and movements
we are no longer pushed yet we volunteer to fall only to learn
the magic of flying
there is a link then between force and a kick and a fall and a necessity
to save oneself from dying
it is a realization of wings and wind and how the two
must go together to find the right direction
we remember the push and the pain and then we somehow
like all of them now
the first time, we undertake thanksgiving.
The beginning of grace, the first taste of freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering A Face

i saw that face before
but i just can't remember the name
delightful like a glossy red apple
alone in a tray
the face sees me as a face too
deja vu
we remember each other
as delights
like flowers newly picked from a garden
then put in a vase
against the morning light
filtered by the green drapes
we recall
and then we remember what happened
between us
sometime ago in another party
when we were drunk
we smiled with each other
and the we transferred our gaze
to our respective partners
their hands on our laps
i guess
they have no idea
even the slightest hint
of what we are
and what we did sometime
that cold night
when we were just strangers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering A Friend Through The Fish

we keep when we were children
our treasures in a form of a fish
inside our own little secret ponds
we never intend to share them at first
we fear the adults who steal
we dislike them minding us
telling us that fish is not interesting at all
that the pond is just a very small world
where our minds are convoluted
like intestines of a fish

do you remember the flood
of adult water spreading rising higher than our knees?
it was very sad
all the fish we kept were taken away by the indifference
of the majority
we give up
we went to other places
and then we became too lonely
they want us to hate the fish
to be like them

and so here we are still keeping the fish
in anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering A Memory Under The Moon

the way your eyes look at the way they look at you
you generate an electricity of meanings
neuron to another neuron making synapses of my static existence
images of lonely shadows grow like leaves in those illuminated trees
by the promise of the moon
that silently sails upon the seas of my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering A Poetry Teacher In High School

her powerful voice is thunder
arriving on time
in my quiet moment and
like a mushroom
i shed off all
my shadows to the cracking ground
rain
my spores lay ripe for
another seeding and
growth mushing
forth

she reads with all passion
the lines of Milton
and Shelly and lo!

blithe spirit in me flies
in the classroom

in my restlessness since then
i shall always remember her

she sowed the seeds of symmetry
metaphor enamored in semaphores

now i am sighing forever
looking for the right word to this unfinished poem
of my youth

old age comes
sans any thought of surrender

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering A Summer Fling

we were short of pillows
and blankets
and it was raining hard
and so cold
inside an empty room
in fact
antiquated, abandoned
and dilapidated
windows
where we hear the
thunder and see
the lightning
cast two shadows
fusing as one
in fast motion

two short lived
and swift
but i can still
prettily remember
the sweet scent
of our sweat
the moaning sounds
drowned by the
heavy rain
and the silence
of bliss
which reigned
after

we left early
morning
since then
there is no
word for
each of us

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering An Old English Teacher

i look at him
he has only one tooth left and his face is like a tin roof
corrugated with too much heat and pressure
i do not blame it with the english grammar that he once taught
us with rigidity,
his degeneration or
degradation has something to do
with the way the walls around him
keeping him away
from the glow of the world and the glitter of everything that he is
supposed to own and
behold,
i look at him
his running nose cannot be stopped by any handkerchief
that i gifted him on his
78th birthday, he does not want to use any gift, he does not want
to remember the good old days,
he wishes a happy death he said this on the nth time
i detest this kind of
unwanted endings, but i look at him again, this time i utter
empathy
what can i give this old man so i can repay him what he had given
when words were so hard to understand
so harder to use with facility?

i look at him again
his eyes are tired wanting to get eternal sleep
his hands are shaking like a face refusing everything
turning clockwise and counterclockwise

he wants to die but he just cannot
i look at him and now i am willing to give him all my fears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering An Old Friend

now, i found you,
bald, and fat and black lipped.
your shirt is tight wrapping your loose body.
the abs are gone
and the smile is having the pangs of pain, if i may say the
exact word: the angst still hounds
and sounds
the memories of the hissing snake
looking for a secret moist place to live
for another day.

now you found me too
very much like you, the shape of my body,
the tone of my hair, the sound of my cracking bones, and the silence that reigns in my lips.

it is not that we are afraid to say something we feel within
but it is just that we have nothing to say anymore

perhaps we are fed-up with the oral word we keep our minds to searching the right words of our existence

nothing about verbs anymore
but mostly
about adjectives
more in the past tense
and too interrogative

let me explain this to you, somewhere perhaps, perhaps,
when we meet again

but how can i? as you said, our worlds are torn apart by a distance that we cannot bend to shorten it
to make it closer

don't know, i still have to find my way back home
that friendship that we thought
may last.

i have my own world too,
and i know, you will not like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Bukowski.... Hope This Is Nothing New To You

So You Want To Be A Writer?

if it doesn't come bursting out of you
in spite of everything,
don't do it.
unless it comes unasked out of your
heart and your mind and your mouth
and your gut,
don't do it.
if you have to sit for hours
staring at your computer screen
or hunched over your
typewriter
searching for words,
don't do it.
if you're doing it for money or
fame,
don't do it.
if you're doing it because you want
women in your bed,
don't do it.
if you have to sit there and
rewrite it again and again,
don't do it.
if it's hard work just thinking about doing it,
don't do it.
if you're trying to write like somebody
else,
forget about it.
if you have to wait for it to roar out of
you,
then wait patiently.
if it never does roar out of you,
do something else.

if you first have to read it to your wife
or your girlfriend or your boyfriend
or your parents or to anybody at all, 
you're not ready.

don't be like so many writers, 
don't be like so many thousands of 
people who call themselves writers, 
don't be dull and boring and 
pretentious, don't be consumed with self-
love. 
the libraries of the world have 
yawned themselves to 
sleep 
over your kind. 
don't add to that. 
don't do it. 
unless it comes out of 
your soul like a rocket, 
unless being still would 
drive you to madness or 
suicide or murder, 
don't do it. 
unless the sun inside you is 
burning your gut, 
don't do it.

when it is truly time, 
and if you have been chosen, 
it will do it by 
itself and it will keep on doing it 
until you die or it dies in you.

tHERE is no other way.

and there never was.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Carlota De Pio

she walked into a desert room
where the window looks out
directly to the open galaxy
where shooting a star
is the only common game

and the only trees
she saw are open hands
without roots
the people maybe
had walked out from
there a long time ago

(but how did she really know?)

the only water there was a drop
hanged frozen
between the ceiling and the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
by accident you come across 
an old picture 
you recognize the face of your father 
beside your mother 
with his gun on the side of his body 
as reservist of the army 
you look closely 
your mother pouts 
and she is holding on to her 
white skirt 
you father's right hand grips 
his gun 
while the left holds on to 
the chair just behind your 
mother's neck 

there is a baby being held 
by your mother 
it is sleeping and it looks 
like you 

your father does not like 
you and you know it from the very start 
you know how to pretend 
till he died 

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a ritual to serious writing.

you close the door, then the windows, you turn on the air-conditioner,

you switch on light, not that harsh, like it dimmer, but not that blinding,

you do not actually think, you let your fingers do the talking,

there is nothing in particular but the images come and you want to capture it with your eyes, but the dreamer wants everything shut

mouth, ears, eyes, and a new world opens you have never been there

everything is new....this awe and wonder, you are not even a child, you do not know what you are

a spirit perhaps, remembering for once an old time

and this is where everything begins to be written.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

I'm am going out fishing
ideas

Do not laugh if you see me
fishing in the
public plaza

I am telling you
fish swim in the air

And i am catching them
with my net
of hands

Do not ask me why
I am lighting the trees
during noon time

I am telling you the
world is just too dark

I can see the fish
like stars in the skies

My fishing poles are
my ten fingers

Believe me
the deep blue sea
is now
wading in the park

My boat is the kite
that is flirting with the coldest
air
tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Grandpa

grandpa was strict
i remember
for a Red Cross Donation
that i asked from him
and which he considers
as my debt
he did not forget
to remind me and
thus collect

i was then 12 and he
was 60
i was disappointed but
he did not mind
a debt is a debt and must
be paid

the years may have buried
him for good
but the memory of a debt
paid still lingers
the numbers are clear
as always
some words may have faded
but the feeling
sticks like a scar
in my face....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Grandpa.......

he sees to it
that there will always
be extra porridge
in the kitchen

not for us
but for those weary travelers
who may have lost
their way

food must have no name
trees do no choose whom to give its fruits

there must always be food for everyone
even if he has no name
no position
no money to pay
no future to mention

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering J.

TWO kids on the side
of the river
and there was a big boulder
sort of the Rock
on the other side
in between is a deep dark
portion and they swam toward
the other side
climb the steep stone
and on wet hair and
dripping waters from their
skins
they bask under the sun
and feel all the warmth
of that friendship
above their heads the white herons
pass by

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Jong.....

she predicts
six months only she said
we cannot last that long
and we hear it
but are not bothered

we believe somehow
and it is basic
nothing lasts forever

we work so hard
we forget the hours of the day

she goes around
talking

three months are all she had
and then she was buried by those

who pity her
and give her the much needed understanding

i am one of those who
send her off
to the other side of this world

i utter friendship
i keep it

what i can hand her with dignity
is just the forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Kierkigaard...

i have the cold arms of
the earth
wet mud, my mind is a dew
on a leaf,
my spirit do not soar
like a rocket in
space
i have numb thoughts
about this
once loving arms
i have only ceilings without
stars
the heart is like a drum
torn at its center
soundless at
dawn
i want to go somewhere else
to places without
names
i am a future annihilation of
what was once
constructed
a hardship that wants to
fade
a love that looks like
faded blue jeans
desire is a straight line of that
machine
telling that someone is dead
there is this strong odor of chloroform
in the bedroom
one can hear the song
of the ticks
the curtains sigh like air
the pillow does not murmur
there is this hum imagining the
face of someone
you know it but you cannot say it
things like these happen
they do
and then we say oh i am so sorry
i am human and i will always be
'sadder than sad, bluer than blue'
the contempt of my silence
the thrill of what to do next
the blur of the moment
this sickness unto
death....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Mama....

you must know how is it to swim alone
with nothing to hold on except the waves and foams
seagulls above you and deep blue skies
the shore is faraway and you rely on no one
you retain that faith in your arms and legs

back to the essence of a body and mind and
above all that spirit
that does not know how to quit how to drown and
die.

mother had always reminded when she was still alive
' do not swim alone, it is too dangerous
the ripping current shall take you with all ease'

it can not be avoided, mother, he tells her on the grave
bringing salt and sighs, ' it is a fact, mother,

you did not swim alone, and yet, you ventured on your
own sea of sorrow, there were us. but it was always you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Merrian

she was fat and
(ugly), thrived on
veggies, curly hair,
brown skin, had humps
at her back like a
camel, never like
bohemian rhapsody
until she died, alone
in her bed, away from
her mom, also sick in the
other room, beside their
old house a
santol tree, with falling
leaves, sounding an autumn,
upon a humid air, she liked
guitar, and a man, who never
came to his life, she
cried hearing

' i killed a man', which she
never really did,
until she died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Monica....

remembering tina turner
with her husky lovely voice
is remembering monica
in olingan
my tiny village of my
boyhood
where the coconut trees
are tall and
reigning

one day we picked
ripe oranges in the orchard
of my papa

she was singing a tina
turner song
when a venomous snake bit
her on her knee

she died instantly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Mother

my mother was cool
like halo-halo
she was too private
and exclusive
to me. The rest about us
was always kept
as a secret.
When she died
she left me the sweetest
smile. The rest of my siblings
cried. Their faces broken.
They want to curse
and think that life is unfair
that God did not hear
their prayers.
I kept tradition. I wore my
tinted sunglasses
i shed no tears at all.
She told me God is fair.
She took pride of her love
for me. Always for me.
When her coffin was finally
laid, I smiled.
She found rest and
She is happy that I am
the only one
Who understood her.
My happy mother
I remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Mother Today

I know mother dear
You were never alone in your life
Because you always
Embraced me
My warm blanket always
During those cold nights
When papa was always away
On his personal journeys

I know mother dear
You always have many thoughts
Forethoughts
Second thoughts
Afterthoughts
To everything that you think and do
You have always
Considered me
More that anybody
Even setting aside
What you are to yourself
In the hierarchy of things
In the order of events
It was always me
Above all

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Mother's Song.....

there are so many things to be written
the mind asks

the mind begs to be excused from all these rantings
which it thinks is no longer artistic and perhaps not serving well
the noble interest of the masses

the loss of idealism and the insufficiency of future guidelines
as to what is beautiful and true

you outlive use. you raise your eyes to see beyond this fence.
it is always greener out there
the wind that touches your hair is saying promises

you are a tree rooted to your past. a black dog keeps on barking
till nighttime and you learned this numbness of the stone

the children keep coming everyday to tell you about the goodness of
their spontaneity. They play tricks and climb and break their legs.

the thoughts are harmlessly journeying on the terrains of the forbidden. it is still
a secret that not even yourself dare to know.

you are like an old cabinet with lots of layers. Inside, inside, more on the inside.

morning has broken the spell of this misgivings.
you look around the beauty around you. Then you start a hum

until you begin to sing the old song that mother once taught you
when you were sucking your thumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Papa

Real work is plowing the fields
clearing grass, tilling land,
growing corn, raising chickens,
grazing cows, pasturing carabaos,
fetching water, repairing roofs,
sowing seeds, fishing in the
river, killing birds,
past time is drinking tuba,
killing dogs, eating snakes
dancing in the barrio halls,
smoking tobacco, womanizing,
boxing, shooting, hunting,
scheming gains, expanding
territories

i did not like it. I carve my own
path of stones and pebbles.
took up law, write a lot,
compose poems, write short
stories, exposing our wrong
traditions, the limited views
of decadent ancestry.

i hate what we did. But just the
same he made me what i am.

I visit his grave. Light candles
for him. Less the flowers which
he never liked ever since he had
seen the first light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Papa When He Was Still Alive......

i remember
riding a horse
with papa
for days
to visit his
land
five cents away
from heaven

mama did not like
it
worrying about boas
in the forest
or black birds that
eat monkeys
or big rats that kill
deer

we followed man's trail
behind us cliffs
and cliffs
we are high above sea
level
sometimes we only saw
fog
and lots of fog
but papa kept on whistling
for the sun

up there we arrive
a hut stood
with his native servants
and a young woman
whose name mama cannot
mention

for weeks we stayed there
with roots crops and
wild boar's meat
and bird's eggs
and chickens.

papa never liked the city
with all its guile
papa never loved grandpa
greedy as he was
not giving the fair share
to the servants

and grandma died early
and papa was happy and aunt
lived far away in the capital
city living with an
aristocratic man serving
the president

there were only two of them
and there were only two of us then
and he told me
never mind, never mind,
we always have enough
ok, no one dies in hunger
no one dies in humiliation
no one dies in loneliness
no one dies, no one dies,
keep knowing that.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Peter With His Guitar And Paganini And Linda

what do you remember
paganini?

ah, it is peter
who plays the guitar for
linda

it is about love that
died
a flower which never
went into fruition

ah, you remember peter
and the dry river bed
somewhere in malala

ah, you remember linda
whose hair was pulled into
misery

ah, you remember society
its rules, its stones, its
unreasonability

ah, you remember the sadness
of many lovers separated from
each others' arms

ah, you always remember
what is grievous, and cruel and
harsh

well, peter played his guitar
so well,
and we all cried in vain
Remembering Sunday

when all of them
left for Sunday mass
do you still remember
what happens
behind that door that
you closed?

on your 15th wedding
anniversary
i still remember it

am here as guest
and my mind is silent
as curtain filtering the sun
from a window pane
this morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering The Emperor....

to explore the boundaries

between
meaning
and
non-meaning

, the outer edges
of comprehension

, disrupting
cultural

norms.......i hear you.

u live between them.
i live here in the middle of
the boundary

once i said, there is no
meaning,
and then i shifted to meaning
to save a boat from sinking
since it carrying a hundred
kids,

i was not there.

where is the meaning of the boat that sank and killed
all of them?

to live you delete any meaning of that form.

to live, you draw a boat, you put children there
and you put the good weather, there was no storm
after all

the blindness of the elephant, the waking old men
the kindness of the emperor who smiles at the child

there is no cover. that is the meaning of that truth.
the truth is the nudity of it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering The Old Notes Of The Love Song

same boring refrain
you must tell this again
a man
stroking the ukulele
with nothing but
an old broken
love song in his mind

makes you sick
and vomit
but that is the truth
and i will take it
with a good
candid
heart

don't you ever know
how to listen
and be hurt?

hurt me again if you will
but i love you
still

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering The Philosophy Writing Club Of 1980

the ark, the cover is a drawing of
three yellow sunflowers on a yellow cartolina
it is cynthia v.
on the loose, and there was norman naromal, edith requina,
flor chamen, elvi tamayo, ruschel salvana, lino moleta,
boni quirog, susie cantos, bong jabla, paul suaybaguio,
bong daray, jean lim, james piap, elsa lee, marking que, greg casino,

we thanked fr. moga, lilia, fr. esquerra, fr. barcelon, and everyone,
we thank them for everything

there were small brown birds of the common species
on the Ark of Noah

i was there on pages seven, ten, eight, and nine
on the three levels of seeing

there was this man who was trying to figure
things, who am i? what i am up to? where am i going?

his name is

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering The Simpler Days Of Your Life

it was when your excitement
was only the strong wind
for the ripe mango to fall for
you to pick

it was when your sadness
was only about a failing grade
on a math quiz

it was when your happiness
was the carabao ride
from your nipa hut to
the public school

it was when your sweetness
was tasted by your mama
like an icing from a cake

it was when your escape
was the plunge in the river
with your naked friends

it was when your conversations
are about fairies and princesses
and frogs and lost shoes

it was when the coolness was
the thick grasses spreading
on the plains

it was when joy was the playing
and bathing under the rain
on the month of November

now these changes have made
things more complicated
people hard to deal with and
a self that is deeper, darker
and difficult to really understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering The Smell Of Youth

smooth pillow, warm blanket,
a woman's body so white
and calm
light is shun by the door of the room
on closed silk curtains by the window

i still taste the youth in spring
its perfume still remaining in the air
late at night, the same smell
comes even in my sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
it was when there was not water anymore
when i remember thirst
i hold the glass peering carefully if there is still any water left
there is none and so i go on and on the usual way that was
everything still contained in the vessel of my childhood
the ordinary wants still unsatisfied sleeping the whole night in thirst
even so thirsty in dreams until
finally forgetting thirst

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Those Leaves Of Summer....

i remember the day when Papa
quit smoking, when he promised not to visit
the cockpit anymore and gamble
and he fulfilled his promise,
and the family was happier then
less the fights, gone were the loud arguments,

i remember the day Mama died
because of joy
i remember how she resurrected from the dead
because of promises fulfilled

i remember those days of rain
how we bathed joyfully under them
how our laughter mixed with those drops of tears

i remember most those sunshine days
when we rode on galloping horses on the mountain trails
i remember those poems written for the beautiful orange-sunsets
citrus flavored moments
smokeless in the boulevard
pure healthy talk, less the worries, diminishing darkness,

well, those were the days that i like to remember
and by now, you must have noticed how easily i too forget them.

those leaves have fallen, and what we did, if you remember
was burn all of them

must we keep burning still?
leaves all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Us

there is more beauty
to horses wild galloping in the
plains
together

hairs long and silky
brown black and white
tails plunging like scarfs
on the neck of
lovely women

i remember us
naked

alone in the room
and waiting.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering What We Did When We Were Young...

we were young
we danced our way to Galas
spent nights there
with all the girls

how the flowers at their
early days
were plucked unnecessarily
we did not enjoy
how they bloom to the fullest
on such a bright day

we had our batch bathed
in the river in Olingan
fearing no rumored crocodiles
we swam like mudfish
and from tall trees on their
branch the blue kingfishers watched....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering You

when i remember you
and when i utter your name
my tongue
a leaf about to wilt
soon regains its green lush
and tendril begin to grow
like roots spreading
down to my throat
reaching the trunk
where my heart
starts to breathe

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering You From That Abandoned Place

defect the building is abandoned
defect no one likes to live there forever
where
recorded deaths are
unexplained
till the years

defect the door is open
defect it cannot close
the door is taken away in fact
and there is no
window anymore
neither the sea where it looks into

defect the fields are brown
for the grasses are burned by the drought
that regularly comes
the rains have promised not to visit this place again
and so
there are no butterflies or bees
of flowers
no dew

defect the place is very
unpoetical
but just the same because of you
because we once made love here
before that
unexplained suffering
that death of our innocence
i am
having the courage to remember it
and devote
this poem for it.

i never ask
neither wish that we see each other again

because i still want to live
Remembering You On A Hot Summer Day

college was not that cruel
we were in fact crazy, looking for thrills
dark movie houses, we tried to know what
rubbing means and touching the wrong parts
of our bodies, we spat we swallowed some
errors and laughed the hardest when we
finally got wet... with what? with whom?
when was that? do you remember?
do you miss them? or me?

the campus grounds were always greener
the trees with more leaves
and the chapel were full of us
worshippers
we had written more poems
that now when we try reading again
our bodies shake
we giggle about our romantic clumsiness
when we fell in love
to the wrong person the wrong time the wrong place

you left the country for good
hmmm, chicago and new york and maryland
dollars, in the name of the mighty dollars and
family above all
college and a new house, a farm to develop
students to send to universities

it is a hot summer day here
i am getting older and
hmm, not really lonelier, just missing you
just plain nostalgic moments

this clumsiness of being out of love
when everyone is getting over with poverty
escaping away from third world prisons

this sigh of not being one with the rest
they have forgotten how to read
the lines of poetry, moving on with their lives
away..... where can the rest be? i do not know...

but just in case.... here i am...it is still me
on a hot summer day...those college days...still clumsy...

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering Your Friend

You still keep the yellow crumpled paper
With a note “I love you too”

She calls you
To see her tonight she promises you a kiss in the campus dance

For this valentine’s celebration
the music is so mellow you feel like a marshmallow

then she finally kisses you
your best friend winks and kisses her girlfriend too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembering...

when all
the ipil-ipil leaves
fall to the ground
because the
bark has
given to the
fangs of
fungus

somehow
the leaves help me
remember:

for instance
those wasted days
of December

opportunities
flying away
because i never
grab them

words that
were uttered
which i never really
mean
but hurting just the
same

so many lovely days
but filled with
lust

great thoughts
squandered like
the anger
for money

so many things
so many fallen souls
rotten selves
unredeemed....

RIC S. BASTASA
Remembrances Of The Chemistry Laboratory

this is the middle of the journey
there are many more mirages

illusions to uncover, deaths to conquer,
more time is devoted to filtering doubts,

decanting those seemingly insignificant
experiences, purifying the adulterated

legacies of great human thoughts,
digesting the chunks of abrupt and

wholesale misgivings, powdering those
less understood, mixing with mercury

to extract the gold in those passing years,
poisoning the mind, destroying everything

unacceptable, dissolving failures,
subjective processes, finally getting nothing

but kernels, a little chaff, on the petri dish
inoculated bacteria, tested with fire,

eyes gazing at the clouds from the window
of the sixth floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminders For This Day...

Early in the morning
I will be picking the goat from the mountain
It is the payment of your
Occupation of
my land,

AT noon i will be getting my ticket
for Saigon
Booked in a Superior Room
for Two

IN THE evening i will give finishing touches
to what i have written

I would like to be fair and square with you.
I like this life
I love this work
and I am not moving out.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscences....

to descend the stairs
gently, to go down silently

life, sundown, fading

to ascend the stairs fulfilled
to open a door
to sit by the window waiting

you remember that instance when you as the young boy jumping over the fence to explore the other side of the house

transcendence perhaps you can reminisce

how you flies the kite how strong the wind how cold and yet how happy the sounds of laughter of your youth

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing

i look back to the last day of last year
i leave you there
you are enough for me
the pain has lingered
but today
i am finally removing your picture
in my mind

i empty myself
i look forward to another image
that must make me live
and be so alive
for the coming days of this year

goodbye i had enough of the pain
i must succumb to an overwhelming gladness of
my own freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing Fear

friends, do not fear fear, find it, it exists for a purpose, try blinking, look inside, there is city there of shadows, of black lines and blunt curves, and flower of thorns and there is no free ride there, the paths are winding, and there are no directions, no one tells you where to go, and what to do, everyone there just keeps on doing and doing and going, no words, there is that world of fear, and in there it is a friendly fear, a teacher, makes you numb and strong, and thinking, and when you reach the heart of that city, you are no longer a fool, not a coward anymore, ask me, i live there,

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing Joy And Pain

moonlight, grass, a tree
whispers,
uninhibited
loose,
tight buds,
strong arms
a blanket of a pair of legs,
an outburst

the silence of compassion
the seed of love
a night that cannot be forgotten
and then

the parting of time
a name deleted from a phone book

forgiveness and moving on
birds flying away, the sound of a ship departing an island

dancing again
in another place
trying to forget
a drink, a toast to
the only self
you've got.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing The Dorm And The College Years

i had the chance of looking back
at the pictures of our college years.

the thin guy
so shy just making himself felt
at the corner of the hall
when she comes
the thin guy leaves at once
hiding his face
behind the pile of books
at the library

at the beach one Sunday
he is at the back of everyone
only his face is shown
his body again hidden from
the fat guy in front

he had crushes on those
tall women with big breasts
and white legs
but he had no courage
to be himself

i look at the pictures again
and i begin to laugh at myself
i could have said all that i wanted to say all those years
but i was a coward then
and lived within the world of my own
like the rain man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing Those Carefree Days...

the days are coming and going
the coconut tree that you once planted at the back of the house
has become so tall
and fruitful
rising above the roof and the other trees
growing at you
neighbor's backyard

the nights are dark as usual but soon when you begin to look at those hind sides
carefully
you will notice a collage of stars
blinking
like city neon lights

a comet once passed this path but you were then asleep
preoccupied with the thoughts of
your past

those cliffs that you have not climbed ever
the deep seas that seem to warn you about some people
people in the past
drowning

do not fear
bright mornings are still here everyday bringing you a bouquet of red roses
and scents of coffee
and toasted
bread

just be patient
high noons are temporary
the ticking of the clocks shall soon fade away to the voices of your carefree days

once when you were a kid
playing under a heavy rain
with your best friend
on some games of
mud
a long, long time ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing...

ON THE floor
on the red carpet of this floor of this room
there is no wind
i am still looking at those imaginary leaves
of summer,
this shore is a seashore and i am the shadow
listening to the songs
of the seashells

there is no ill wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reminiscing......

once you reminisce
a face, your eyes look attentively
the focus thins out
to the body
you spread some thoughts
that form a funnel
where all memories pass through
and settle
on the base of the bottle
it is empty
and then it becomes full
and pulls you deeper
you feel that you are sucked
by the mouth of
another emptiness
you struggle
the past becomes hands grabbing you
towards what
were buried a long time ago
it is hard to breathe some more
in this situation
where you are alone and crying
and screaming
but for one thing
there is no audible sound
there is no
visible tear
it is like Alice falling into the
hole of the rabbit
and so many possibilities happen
on the same ending
all pigments
to your red imagination
you pinch it
nothing shouts
there is no flesh
there is no bone.
Remiscing What You Surrendered...

you stop in a certain space
you spend time
sometime longer than what that space requires
then it gets crowded
space grumbles
and time wants to run faster like a leopard

at a certain point
you become a passive observer
like a marker of the road
you forget speech
because time does not give you words
you lose sight of corners
space is arrogant

it is only for a while
you gain flesh
you remember syllables
your bones get back that hardness
that it has surrendered
before
because space and time give you
love, and affection
and then suddenly strip you with it

it is not late
there is still a few fireflies resting upon
a crown of leaves

you glisten
now a meteor you move somewhere else
because you
do not fail to remember

going there is remembering.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remorse

the past has wrongs
buried by the sands
of time
and here you are
the wave
restless anew
rolling like a mat
trying to wake
them all up
asking
for their names

what for? i ask.
for nothing, you say.

RIC S. BASTASA
Remote And Unconnected, But You Can Assemble Them Yourself

i must have said it before
and here you are telling me that
someone said it,
sort of pretending that it wasn't me

the church that you destroyed
and built again

i missed the old facade
where God must have been there waiting

you changed the lights
paved the way and made it too smooth for me

what i see is a cheap structure
to my utter dismay

but you are too good to be tackled
too kind to be toppled down

and so i healed the rift with a laughter
that you can never hear

there is still the guilt that lives at the bottom of things
but soon i will dislodge it

it does not deserve my dwelling
which is always waiting for something else for something new

the old clothes are burned
old needles shall use new threads to sew another pattern again

RIC S. BASTASA
Removing The Denial

at that time
before love was professed
there was already a hint
of the hands
which closed and took the form
of a fist
and the eyes which looked away
from the intended
focus of the
imagined bonding or that wish
for a
more serious togetherness that
promise
of forever i shall be with you
that time shall bless us
when we become one
but no
the eyes of reality are awake
there is no such love
no such state
but only an illusion of you loving
me and i was too stupid to
believe that i have wings to fly
that i have this lightness
to reside on the clouds

i stopped looking
i breathed deeply summoning all the powers
of the wind inside my lungs
and i took all the courage to tell you
this is not right
and we must quit

and there there was this certain
quite that i have learned
slowly to spell
correctly

i remove boldly with my bare feet
that filth of denial.

RIC S. BASTASA
Renewed Self After Being Broken By Love's Illusion

you are not my reason anymore
for my arguments

i am my own reason
i chart my own matrices

i situate myself and
then claim my freedom

it is not easy to be weak
it is too inhuman for me to surrender

who are you? a tumor to my brain
a clot to my blood

a clog to my vein
i shall remove you from my system

i have more maps to draw
more places to hide

i am not afraid even if you hold me
i am hard as a nail i am slimy as my ulcer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Repeat

a pot of flowering magnolia
beside a window below it
a man walks
innocently

i who sees what happens
next
closes my eyes
in utter
invocation of what must be
only a simplicity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Repeated Oppression - A Tradition

a bird in the sky
looks upon the sickness of
the ant

poor ant it has worked so
hard
and does not own even the
sand
of the anthill
empire

when the ant dies another
ant
shall replace it
stronger
and dumber

the chronicler tries to
justify that the life of the
ant
is the beauty of a
biography

a school of fish the bird
has eaten
its eggs upon a nest have
all hatched

another bird in the sky
looks upon the ant
which has a tradition of
sickness
which has never healed

RIC S. BASTASA
Repeated Poem...

there is a handsome young man
residing in a far away mountain
he writes love poems...

it so happens that there is this
lonely woman who reads each poem
and amazed by said poems
she climbs the mountain to see the
man and tell him that she
loves him too...

the man is puzzled and the woman asks why?
those poems are not
for her, he says
and the woman is sad
goes down the mountain telling herself
that the handsome young man is a liar

and that from that time on
she will never read any of his poems....

RIC S. BASTASA
Repetitions

from a hill
you go down the plain
you pass by the river
and take your time
feeling the water by your hands
and sitting on a rock beside the bank
you let fall your feet
just feeling the water
pass by your soles

the coldness of repetition
the monotony of its sound
you hear all these
and feel
every moment of your life

there is no complaint at all
it is
and will always be
so refreshing and so beautiful!

RIC S. BASTASA
Repetitive Of A Nostalgia, A Moment Ago
	here is no poem that can stop
this mess
this furniture of the room are not in place
the table is under the rain
outside
the chairs are crumpled like paper
in the drain
the books are opening their pages to the skies
the pens are shooting like
arrows in the air
no one can stop the dead
not this poem that only counts
those who want to be buried
no one can stop the grief
not this poem, not that poem
no poem can stop the flood of all emotions
no poem can resist
the burden of carrying all these
like a carriage like a coffin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Replay....

there is this desert
which is full of love
there is nothing in there
except the ostracized
ostrich
you like it somehow
saying, ah, love is still
the answer

there is this paradise
full of greens and reds
fenced by the rules
loveless,
you do not like to live there
despite the
comfort of the
apple trees
and the scents of the pines
and the coolness of
the blueness of the
coves and
the clouds

now you must make the choice
which one? i have chosen mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Replaying Mozart's Serenade #3 In G

middle age sits on a bench
at the park
just watching people pass by-

a fat lady with a pink purse as small as as a snail
a thin man looking like he's dying of tuberculosis

a little boy being held tight by his mom smiling at me
two lovers as sweet as sugar and walking too close like a glued pair of slippers

middle age sits alone and laughs loud like he's winning
this lonely game of optical illusion
this trajectory projection

middle age inside this cell of himself
looking for an opening

RIC S. BASTASA
Repost Pn A Memory

When the world was new, I could not relate
To the loneliness of the song with you,
The colors of its sounds were too vibrant,
mostly red
And orange, and the coolness of green
Preoccupied my eyes to almost everything.
I was not interested perhaps,
I was too busy listening to something else.
My hands are crazy.
You did not mind of course.
You wait to the
Slit of a new opening where you think that soon
I will understand. I was moving here and there
Like a pendulum
Under the principle of pleasure. Both of my hands
Are holding on to something that I can easily
Give up and then feel nothing. The craze of letting
Things go and then forget and then embracing
Something new again.

There is something
However that is meant to stay that when it is gone,
You go with it and then you are lost.

There is this certain sadness with you that lingers
Like a very lonely song. Everyday it plays itself
Like a bird alone on a twig. It does not go away and
Enthralls me and then after it has unloaded all
The beauty of its notes, how it pleased my ears
It stays unmoved and then keeps on its
Chosen position until darkness hovers in
Like a blanket to its black beak.

There is this silence
That stares and then tells you its name
Honestly
The syllables of which sound very much like yours.
You know where it lives and so you do not bothe
Repost....

a house is built
made of bricks, red as blood
at the center of the island
black as a mole
at the middle of your right cheek

it is fenced by the locks of your hair
it is guarded by the cautious tongue of your face

at the other side
bounded by a big brown river
is a cottage
no living room, no kitchen
not even a restroom
it is just a square cottage
with roof leaking
where i can see the stars

if you know me well enough
for years that i have been with you
and for days that i have left you
you shall know where i live
and if you love me well enough
you'll take nothing with you
to follow me

and i know you will never be lost
until you find
the place where my heart sings

RIC S. BASTASA
Request

love not the fading of the light
darkness is its only offering

oh the light of the moon and the stars
oh there may be too many of them

but their silence is deadening
their flickers merely an additive

wait for the twilight for it
offers you the breaking of day

the light of the sun
the merrymaking of the flowers and bees

the whispers of love in the air
the playful waves of the sea

love me not
for i am only the friend of the moon

please go
i have nothing but the empty promises of the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Requiem For The Year 2011

at the last hour
we march toward a common grave
bringing the flowers
and some stones

eyear is kept inside
a niche laced with white silk

slowly the men with strong arms
lowered the niche
to the newly dug hole
seven feet under

the women with long black hair
wept beside their innocent children

the year is buried
as we then throw the final stones

then it is covered
with its soil returned
until it is full
and then we put the flowers
it is over
now

and then we go back to our houses
it is nighttime
we close the doors
and open the windows to see
those beautiful stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Res Gestae

it is his belief that nearing death
and conscious of his end
feeling the lazy flow of his blood corpuscles
on his nape
the numbness running from the tip of his ring finger
to the veins of the heart, that

a man shall tell the truth finally
about his hidden love
his thoughts long buried like a lost treasure
in the secret recesses of his brain

she waits as his head rests on her lap
she has been waiting that long for him to tell the words
of love

he closed his eyes surrendering his soul to the heavens
he did not say anything at all
not even her name

despite that she shed some tears
letting him go finally where his destiny takes him

taking revenge she writes in her diary
that on that day she shed some tears of joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Res Ipsa Loquitor

my sister is so dumb
she believes her husband
when he said
he was just smelling
the other woman's cheek
& not really kissing her

RIC S. BASTASA
Res Ipsa Loquitor (2)

let the poems
without mouths
and teeth
without lips
and tongue

let these poems
speak for themselves
let them be
take them for whatever they are
their appearances
let them smell the way they exude themselves
let them be
let their essence be within themselves

even without our own thoughts impressing
imposing dictating
destroying
annihilating

let the poems be like dew
dissolving to the warm rays of the sun

the poems-in-themselves
even without the necessary
english-ness...

let the poems have no shame
in whatever language
in whatever form

let the lousiness be a poem in itself
let the ugliness make you feel its ugliness
let the beauty be there
side by side with everything: darkness and light
evil and good
order and chaos
stars and explosives
pins and touch
holiness and profaneness
etc and the exclusive
specifics and generalities
you and them

and let your feelings go beyond all these
in that field where anything does not matter
where there is no more bother
but just this companionship
this togetherness this wonder
this bewilderment without end

this forever-ness, this eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reserve This Space For The Anonymous

be glad you have a name
the one your mother thought
when she first conceived you in her womb
the name the world has given you
in letter bold and big and strong

you have been there
on the mountain top and it was cold
and so silent

now is the time to come down
and meet your friends
and dine with them

you leave the clouds and be
with earth you leave that space now
reserved for the anonymous
faceless, weightless, empty
let the unknown be full and let it be there

you have breathed the thin air
you felt the clouds in your fingers
you have kissed the sun and you did not burn
clip off your wings and come with me

on an afternoon walk we shall see the sun
setting so beautifully

RIC S. BASTASA
Resolving A Grudge

correct the shout
because the arm is painful
forgive the scream
because the mouth is full
forgive the sadness
it is not self-inflicted
forgive the brashness
it is not intended

correct the croak
because the rain is falling
the crickets are hiding
because the children are coming
the children are making fun
because the river is full

RIC S. BASTASA
Resort To Nature

because they prohibit water
and glass is hidden

someone has to use & avail
what
nature has given

the hands and rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Resort To Sleep....

in search of happiness
one gambles
one risks too much in the name of love
or even lust
one puts at stake his one and only life,

then one gets it
satisfies itself, even extends beyond it
to such an avarice
of all those
darkest and happiest moments

what comes after of course
is this pain
that goes hand in hand with happiness

for they are always together
and one grips it
counts it
and seemingly to such an extreme cannot endure it
anymore

one gives up

resorts to sleep and
dream again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Respect And Silence........

you do not deserve it
but no one is telling.

you are my friend, i
too can lie.

tonight you will be
in the home of my arms
safe and warm

studded with stars
your sky
gleaming with pride
galaxy

art anyway is but an
imitation
fake, so what is the heck?

in our own ways we are
all artists
as we toast our drinks to
our muses

up there, they are dead.
down here, we quarrel. or
if we are silent, it is
because of respect....

RIC S. BASTASA
Respect For Freedom

we have fully understood
our true natures
and so we have resumed
our peaceful existence

to each his and her own.

RIC S. BASTASA
Respect For The Death Of A Fly

A fly got stuck
right in the middle of a spoonful of honey on the dining table.

i watch it die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Respecting My Silence

boredom comes like a wilting flower
and you like to save yourself from seeing

how such a kind of living thing die
so gently facing the sun and letting

the air take its scent and substance.
i look at things differently now. Let the

petals take the form of a fulfillment.
Let the lone leaf grieve for a passing

Though momentarily we know that.
Things come and go, moving to and

from a scale of one to ten and then
back again to zero. Wisdom. There is

so much wisdom is our silence. And
she says, that is one thing that must

also be respected, like how we take
the melting of a snowflake in our palm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Responsibility From The Words Of Grandpa

we all eat together
partake the white rice and the
fried fish
and home made coffee
every breakfast
as he tells stories
about his exploits during
World War II
and then when everyone is
finished listening to
every word
from his mouth placed
on his square jaws
he makes the last remark
that the last one to leave
shall wash all
the plates

RIC S. BASTASA
Responsibility.....

up there
the world gets
to tiny

you float and
imagine
you have a pair
of wings

it will be just
an hour and
a half and then
the plane touches
down
back to the place
of your
birth

no one meets you
at the airport
and when you arrive
there is no one
there to make you
call that this
house is a home

well, you open the
door with that key
and put your bag
in your room and

you go to the kitchen
check for water
a very cold water
to quench your thirst

well, after that drink
you open the window
look at those untrimmed
bushes
those wild trees
and just like your days
your life
wild and needs pruning

there is no time for
this
you go back to your
working room
and see a pile of folders

cases to read
you ponder
this is not your life

oh well, this is other
people’s lives and they
are in your fingers
your blank sheet of paper
the keys of your computer

so? do not think about
your own life
think about the lives of
others

the paper that you cut
into pieces
the words that you want
saved for the day
the lights you turn off
the nights where you
start a bonfire

you are now tuned to
silence
there is no need for
confusion
the world waits for you
so that it can spin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Responsibilitys

when i open like the petals of a flower
you are the sun to receive me
i do not burn in your heat
for it is as gentle as the morning rays
of the lovely beginning

when you close your house and hide in the orange tinge of your bedroom
i exude a certain scent so enticing
so you may sleep with some dreams

and i shall be there with you
you have become a beautiful face
and i am the flower in your hair

whatever, i am responsible for this art of loving

whatever, wherever, whenever, we shall meet again

when you become a fruit
i, may even assume to be the last worm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rest Benefits

retreat not for defeat
but for rest, plan strategies
dream, imagine, give way
for reason to take a break
let the heart speak for a while
then when the morning light
arrives on the shutters
and lands on your bed
and head
wake up again, take a deep
breath, and dress yourself
well equipped for your
next war of the day...

RIC S. BASTASA
Rest...

there is a time when you like to surrender,  
everything in you is weakened  
eyes are sleepy and there is no glaze on  
the eyeballs as though it is staring to nothing,  
your shoulder hangs but no one is choked yet  
the rope is still an icing of the cake  
the last sound a tip of the iceberg and you  
want to go to bed and rest and take some sleep  
but sleep whips you with sharp beatings  
you are wide awake wanting to write about all these  
miseries but you cannot  
your hand rests on the shadow of its weariness  
your pen becomes simply another imagination  
the bed hardens like wood, feel its being steel,  
your back aches, yet, whatever you do  
ot any position does you good,  
just the same your eyelids dropp dead  
no one can stop you anymore  
signing 30. i mean... death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Restive

that early morning
when the sun just comes up
from the mountain side
rising to
the cone top

a yellow butterfly as tiny
as my nail
flutters over a red rose petal
holding still
on a dew

slowing down
this small world where i live
becomes a home

my nerves rearrange their postures
resolving
an entanglement

now restive like a goat under
a sycamore tree
chewing grass

RIC S. BASTASA
Restless And Freed

there is something in me that cannot be held by love
no matter how gentle are its hands
no matter how careful

love warms me but i escape
love caresses me but i long for more

there is something beyond love

it is not in the sky above
it is down on my feet

the freedom of the dust
the playfulness of the wind

so do not just say you love me
do not be too careful about me

there is something in me that is restless and free
something that you cannot gently hold

there is this wild fire burning
and your love cannot put it off

i long to fly on the wings of my senses
and you can not stop me with your fences

RIC S. BASTASA
Restlessness

stay put
be a tree
spread
your roots
extend your branches to the skies
have more leaves and let some birds
make their nests in you

learn to know the sun better
then the moon
and then when the night is so dark
imagine a crown of stars

they become yours
without doing anything

stay put
be a tree
do not
do anything
do not move
just grow
and be
yourself

RIC S. BASTASA
Restlessness In Stillness....

....because i am discontented
here i am making it my own way, because no one remembers
here i am remembering me,
because.....
no one satisfies my hunger and thirst here i go
trekking my way
into everywhere, and tired, and
disappointed, here i am
making a set of wings for me,
these wings without the feathers of a bird,
these wings without need of
a wind,
because i feel so alone, here i am, inventing
company,
i give birth to words, and sentences
myself with
all its punishments,
this newly found joy in the prison of my thoughts
in the vast expanse
universe of my endless and
limitless imagination
this self without a river
this river without water and stones
this floating
existence
an angel without a wing

because i am never appeased
here i am exploding my own firecracker

a boy driving his demons away
with the use of one finger

because i have more to say
in this fear
here i am unceasingly writing
who knows if i finally find you and then
i can absolve myself and after telling everything
i can finally find
my own resting place

here i am, silent and still and staring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Restlessness Of The Spirit

to chat after midnight
and to continue to read even
when the eyes begin to fail to see the light
to write
whatever comes to mind
another poem
recalling the past
mistakes uncorrected
a new word to redeem what the self lost
retracing the patterns of the usual
hands in surrender
fingers without thoughts but still moving to capture a syllable
fretting flitting
whatever
sleep that seems cruel to
dreams
this inability to choose to cease then i tell myself
i do not really know a thing anymore.
about you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Restrained, Subdued, Standstill River

subdued
but never defeated

always loving but never
really loved

arising
and then falling again
to reclaim

what earth is always
reserving

clear, now cleared
the river turns into a mirror
to reflect

the moon and
stars

RIC S. BASTASA
First Prize and the most popular receiving 3.6 million hits from among the educated and poetic members who taught poetry in their respective universities, for the reason that the poem has universal appeal:

Christmas is coming,

The geese are getting fat,
Please put a penny
In the old man's hat.
If you haven't got a penny,
A ha'penny will do.
If you haven't got a ha'penny,
Then God bless you.

Second Prize, receiving 3.2 million hits, for its being an open-ended poem with some matching questions as to the existence of the real segregating the un-real, the black sheep and his charity to a master, which appealed to the philosopher-poets in American and Indian universities:

Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes, sir, yes, sir,
Three bags full;
One for my master,
And one for my dame,
and one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.
Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes, sir, yes, sir,
Three bags full;
One for my master,
And one for my dame,
and one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.

THIRD PRIZE goes to the poem below which got 3.1 million hits excluding the
votes of the babies, aborted, and the unborn who still cannot play with the
computers putting most of the poets in a state of stupor, a hush, an effect of a
surreal and magical lullaby metaphoric of sleep and the variations of the word,
and its other connotations of peace, rest and divine quite:

Hush-a-bye baby, on the tree top,
When the wind blows, the cradle will rock;
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall.
And down will come baby, cradle, and all.
Down will come baby, cradle and all.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS: The winning poems above mentioned written by unheard
of poets from the United Kingdom, Canada and the U.S.A. shall be posted at
poem hunter in the top charts for 2008, and the winning poets shall each receive
the most coveted I-pod. Decision of the Board of Judges is final. No questions will
be entertained. The Poets will be honored with a simple and exclusive ceremony
plus free snacks at the White House on July 4, 2009 at 9 o’clock in the morning.
President George Bush will hand the I-pods personally assisted by Osama Bin
Laden, who is making peace with all his enemies

all in the name of poetry.

To all the poets in India, Nigeria, Mauritius, Africa, Malaysia, China, Mongolia,
Bangladesh, and the Philippines keep on writing.

Who knows if you will be the next poet laureate for 2009?

THANK YOU.

RIC S. BASTASA
Resurface

this could be the word of the
day for our conversation
you check from time to time if
i am still around
because as you said
you do not like monologues

for all you know i was into something
deep
like i am a turtle lost in the foams
and swallowed by the mouths
of the sea waves

and because you hate monologues
of course i have to use your word

i resurface.

But that is not what i really mean,
there are ghost swimmers in my being
those naked fairies
or they call it furies
in the blood of my veins like
viruses
and when i begin to think
seriously like i am about to die
in a minute
they do what i do when you feel
that you are alone

always they resurface
saying
that it is not good for me to go
because i still owe
them a lot

whatever is that
my mouth is dead.
Retaliation

she says she likes to do it
at 8 tonight
i say i am tired
maybe at 5 early morning
he shall be turned on

at 4 a.m. he hints her
about the tryst
she too knows her way
she now says 'no'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Retrace

in Dumaguete
at 4 o'clock in the morning
you went out of the ship to take a walk along
the boulevard: an old one
with a story to tell
the one that you like to hear
again and again

this time
the heavy rains intervened
forgivable as it is the first heavy rain in the city
for the past five months

people stand along the side
of the covered pathway
watching
the rain

you sit on one of those benches
where breakfast is served
cheap

fish and rice and coffee
the roof leaks
and drops of rain begins to hit
your shoulder

a man beside you
with some tattoo on his arms
looks at you like you are the man whom
he had been searching
all the years of his life

you stare back
sort of saying
you are not afraid
for this encounter

he looks away knowing that you also know
what betrayal is
what a war is
what killing fields are

he sidesteps your gaze
unzips his fly
and urinates pointing to the heavy rain

this is pure disrespect to the rain
you stop eating
brace the rain beyond the roof
bathes there
and walks away from there

this world is not absurd
it is logical
it knows when to stop and to begin again
when to stare back
when to back off and when to retrace its steps
along the boulevard

now the stories are becoming clear
and then the rain stops
you remember that was the song
precisely the lyrics are intact

but what for? you ask again
over and over again

you are so foolish.

RIC S. BASTASA
Retreat.....

AFTER You say the truth, when the other merely
gives you nothing
but that
silly laughter
you shrink back into
a nook
becoming a creek
winding your way
back
under the
bamboo grove

Before you finally recede into a thin surface of sand
you take a glimpse of the sky
to take the much needed look of the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Retreating To The Coolness Of Life

the sea is calm this morning
and you try a little casual walk
along the shore
you stare at the horizon
you wish a cyclone
a tsunami
a whirlwind
a whirlpool

you wish the eye of the storm
you wish for the
hole of the earth to open up
and swallow you
whole

no one of this nature
does it for you, however

the sea is still calm and the sands so soft and fine
the breeze touches your face
the sun ascends and finally on this sunny day

you go back to retrace your steps
find the shade of the tree
retreating to its coolness
now you still hope to find a dream
a body

life is patient and still wanting
you

RIC S. BASTASA
Returning Home

Now I like to return
To my home
I left years ago
To see the mango trees
Flowering again

RIC S. BASTASA
Returning To The Homes Of Our Selves

last night
we are even,

i was about to tell
you about a wall i am making,

you said it first instead,
your wall in invincible

both are unseen, but only felt
we celebrate this mutual wish

we are so near
there are only a few words that divide us

and yet we are so far
and we feel it in trembling

what we do not see
when we first know love
are the same unseen dimensions
that make us go home

when i arrive there
i meet myself and you too tell me

that in your world
you have met the true self that you are

the days are over
the nights are longer

the full moons are gone
and so are the stars

did i not tell you that sometimes
it is in the dark that we see too well?
Reuniting The Rehash

the pieces do not remain as pieces
in a certain longing they come back and
find a way to compose themselves again
like a quilt

an abstract painting of green leaves looking like
some cuttings from a woman's old dress
and black twigs protruding from a canvass like
some needles and pins
reuniting into a unified creature in space

a porcupine fish perhaps
or a brown cone from a pine tree
images of the past summer
streaks of light at twilight after two shadows
finally say

'it is over'. They had enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reuniting With A Friend

at that point when
we start to share what
happens when we were not
together
the clicking of the clock stops
the world stops spinning
and on and on the friendship goes
like a wheel
with our laughter and cries and
wishes and dreams
like the rain on the river
the fishes jumping
and stirring the water to
an endless passion to
swim

RIC S. BASTASA
Revenge

in revenge
the rain
tears off
the banana
leaves
doing nothing

panimalos

Sa kalagot
Gibitas bitas sa
Ulan ang mga
Waly nabuhat
Nga mga dahon
Sa saging

RIC S. BASTASA
Revenge (25)

i am indifferent
greater than that i am angry
but nothing in my face shall show it
this anger that
spreads inside like a polluted
mining pool
to the river
this stored fear
like yeast in poisoned bread
which soon
you all shall
eat

RIC S. BASTASA
Revenge On The Greatness Of Others

when you win
you are into the side of danger

you think that you are the sun now
and the rest are the grasses who need to worship your fingertips

most winners are actually losers
judged by a few who nonetheless see the world through their

lopsided sights, their biases engraved on those medals
their revenge on the greatness of others finally accomplished

RIC S. BASTASA
Reversals...

to make you believe
that something is not true
i must deny the truth
about what really happened
out there at

the top of that plateau
where each slate levels off
to the usual

must i invent some pictures again
to convince you
that she was not there?

must i draw a river to make you
believe that once upon a time
a little fish swims its slimy way
into my mind?

must i make a twist of words
bend some phrases? must i end
a clause with a semi-colon?

truth sometimes feels insulted
on that day when Thomas demanded
that he slips his fingers on the
side of the newly born Christ
who should not have been touched
because it is still on its way
to perfection...

RIC S. BASTASA
Reverse Psychology

in truth she
invited you
with a hope that
you will not come.

you are foolish enough
to believe that
she expects you to come

and she is also foolish
to expect that you will
not believe her

RIC S. BASTASA
Reverse Psychology (2)

last night
actually late last night
i was about to sleep
when this someone pops up
saying

'i'm depressed
got a broken heart
which cannot be
mended'

the masochist is
here again
and i tell him

'take the cure
how about suicide? '

'i am not
joking' his reply

'i am serious
take the cure
have a happy suicide
get a gun
and eat the bullet'

the following morning
we meet at the junction
of Camus

i think someone, if he
really means it,
has to go to the other side
of this earth
who knows? it is the place
called happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Reverse........

love me
till i bleed
till i drop dead
till i sound like the moan
of one rainy morning
till i taste like a bitter wine
till bitter becomes sweet

love me oh love me even for not
what i am
just love me
without a word without a question

for i have no answers, you want answers?
i will manufacture answers just for you to love me...

love me, love me, i order you to love me.
made me believe, make me wander, make me wriggle.

i am testing you. i am putting you in my shoes.
for i have never, never really love you.

repeat what i am saying. Now you say it yourself.
tell me how it feels.

RIC S. BASTASA
you chose without doubt
an inconvenient life
you think your arms are stronger than steel
that there is nothing slippery on your hold
your hands are spiders

you must have prepared for this
i have nothing to say
and will never say what i think are whales
in my mind

you have chosen the cross in the Calvary
mistaking everything as love
or Christlike

you bleed into your own death
everyone stares at you with sadness
asking

' Can he make it? 
Is fate with him? 
Has he talked to God about this
sensitive and painful matter? '

you are young but we are not
underestimating the orange birds in your eyes

so must you go now
do not take any word from us

be proud you have what you claim
will make you survive

there is a word from your father
'Son, do not ever come back'.

perhaps your father did not really mean it
or perhaps he was just very much disappointed in you
sometimes i ask why things are not working
the way we want it
but i stopped asking then

Let go
let go

This seems to be the motto
People just come and they just go

away, and no one has ever stopped
what they want
where to go
how to spend the days in their lives

you may ask me ' Can you help me, please? '
i have already told you, 'I can't anymore'

Lest you be not responsible.
Lest you do not become the real man
for everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Revised Poem For The Busy Businessman

as i place my feet
in another country i step upon
an internet cafe
goggling upon a poem

inspired by the changes
of the situation
on some dreams of reforms
i start to compose another poem
for the wind
&
this i cannot forget
a man on the other side
loose tie and
unbuttoned shirt
on my left busies himself
with business receipts
encoding
sending them to his boss
perhaps
to the main office
signifying profits

i still wonder
why a man like myself
wastes so much time
in this
unkind endeavor

there is no money here
but there is something more to it than money
that keeps me going
despite
those marked differences
i am no businessman
neither a worker
for any boss out there
dictating what to do with my life
after that lonely poem
that i write
i rest my fingers upon nothing

the man left hurriedly as other clients
are waiting

he keeps issuing those receipts
and must remit
encode each
over and over again
for an update with
Boss

and then i stand up
walk past him
towards
actually an uncertain direction

perhaps the
busy streets this time where no one
recognizes
the greatness that i still keep intact
inside my
chest

for i am the anonymous poet in this
new country
that speaks not a nuance of my language

the temperature rises
but i still do not dream
for the need of
a Cesaro hat
to save me from this
killing heat

RIC S. BASTASA
Revising A Belief

sometimes i think of you
and the memory of the boat
docked upon an old port
comes back

there is no sound of rain anymore
when the rain falls and
makes my hair wet

i am not disturbed at all
i begin to smile at myself
and the one who notices me thinks

that i am happy for the world
and at ease with everyone
the old woman who sells cigarettes
is the one that has wisdom

there is nothing really personal in this world
it is all business and so
one must manage his own
keep sympathies and avoid any

unnecessary conflagrations any
entanglements that can cause more
repercussions these self-caused pains
because all the while

you were so stupid enough
to think that love is pure and giving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Revising Kobayashi....

kobayashi's
ducks quack and quack

in here in this heavy
traffic
i am stuck.

RIC S. BASTASA
Revisiting A Friend.....

i have a friend
short, white and
more of the silent
type
when he was young
and dashing,

....(13 years passed
i have seen leaves
falling freely
on the park
on those humid
and dry
summers.....)

i meet this friend
again
now bald, aged much,
still short
but no longer dashing

i did not say
any word to tell the
truth
but i get curious
somehow
about how he gets
lonely
and live alone by
himself
thriving on
a distant
lover...

that was the last
encounter
and it seems to me
that after that
confession
...it is a secret
but not that bad

now he hides
went back to silent mode
shrinking like
a warp
of time whatever that is...

i have a life to live
and it does not matter

summing it up
i wish him to pursue love
and always love....

RIC S. BASTASA
Revisiting An Old Self

wingless, the old self
situates on the road
that we once passed by

damn, it is thin and lean
and tall and hungry

it is thirsty, and neglected
it has screams never heard

damn, that old self stinks
scared and fearful of the touch

damn, the old self knows not
a smile or a hug

damn, the old self dies
damn, the old self is gone

and here i am looking at it
dusts of the past

on wings i fly to the new world
of dreams that come true

of truth not bent
of this reality that never changes

no longer a shadow
no longer a body

celestial beside the stars
on thrones set for the permanent

in the silence of the heavens
the new self smiles

RIC S. BASTASA
Revisiting Narcissus, After A Friend Mentions Him In A Party

there he sits by the pool
seeing only his reflection

how handsome he is,
ecko watches him with pity

how the world moves and changes
there will be no concern whatsoever

and this includes his demise
how others say, he so deserves it

selfish narcissus, did he ever care
about his echo?

RIC S. BASTASA
Revisiting Our World Of Dreams

even in the room of my dreams
when i invited you in

you are till looking for that
squeaking bed

of long ago, when we were so young
and unrestrained

as the wind that gushes forth
from one window to another

i want to reinvent its softness
all its four legs

but the mistress of my sleep
dislikes it

what we have here are flat
uncatalogued floors

a room without walls
an empty space without stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Revisting Schindler's List

i look again
closely on the faces of
the children

a girl hides under the
bed
in that abandoned house

outside
everyone lies on the road
without life

a boy with a white bonnet
raises his hand
makes the sign of a slashing knife
around his neck

the architect was shot dead
right in her forehead
as she was discussing
the weakness of the building

RIC S. BASTASA
Revitalizing Your Life

there is nothing
too serious about this
game of

adding life to
some tired
cells by way of

simply smiling at the mirror
seeing a face that you really own and

then affirming what you are and
will always be

or

trying to change the color of your hair
or

cutting your fingernails
to make you

feel clean
and perhaps whole again

like a noun
connecting to the nearest verb

to tell
another chapter of your
story

that perhaps may
interest

those who are
shedding off days like

dirt on their
skin

RIC S. BASTASA
Revival Of Vows...

she accepts each sacrifice
as a stair
leading her home

they're going together
hand in hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rhyming Life

rhyming life
we try it

we listen to
the drips of
rain from the
gutter

we wonder
why the rain
stops

we feel the
sensation of
sunshine like
droplets of
warm light
from the window

we pulsate
every red blood
corpuscle that
enters
the brain cells

we feel the beating
of the heart
near the other
person's heart

we listen carefully
we wish there is more
rhyme to random
arrivals of
molecules looking
for crack on the pores
of our skins

let me be honest
with you
i am numb and i
feel none.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rice Fields

newly dressed
by the plow's caress
the rice fields
regal themselves
in brown skirts

islets of water
from a distance
appear like dew

RIC S. BASTASA
Rickshaw

barrow, buggy, curricle,
dolly, dray, gig, gurney,
handcart, palanquin, pushcart,
tilbury, truck, tumbrel, two-wheeler,
wagon,

stop in there
there is this red wheelbarrow
and it looks like
a poem to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Riddle 2

A Food for You and Me
My first is in fish but not in snail,
My second is in rabbit but not in tail.
My third is in up but not in down,
My fourth is in tiara but not in crown.
My fifth is in tree you plainly see,
My whole a food for you and me.
What am I?

RIC S. BASTASA
Riddle 3

Look in my face, I am somebody;
Look in my back, I am nobody.
What am I?

RIC S. BASTASA
Riddle Of Marie

a room has two doors
for two faces

two arms for two
inconsistent windows

its leaking roof
for a broken eye

a ceiling falling for
a breaking self

the floor is always
its saving grace

a warm bed can
invent a promise

RIC S. BASTASA
Riddles And Riddles And More Riddles

the riddles are not getting rid of me
and they keep on multiplying riddles and riddles and riddles
without a hint as to the answer
but i am not at all surprised or frightened or eager to answer each
mystery, i am relaxed and comforted to the idea of
myself:

i am a question without an answer.
everyday i grow and i know not where these tendrils are anchoring themselves.
i go where the wind hushes where i think i may feel better.
i put my feet on the ground and the ground moves like a planet orbiting
its own path within its unknown universe.
i breathe the air to live some days more but what is it that makes me alive?

i am not frightened anymore.
I get used to all these: i do not know. yes, i do not know. but

i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
Riding On The Clouds

there are friends of mine
who ride on the clouds
never was there a storm they say
everything is light
no one falls and gets hurt
at Ward 9.

i visit some of them
and i keep on listening.
I don't talk anymore
because of inner
fears.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are a blithe spirit
a very light bird with a bleeding heart
to save yourself from lack of sleep
you begin to ride on that thin thread of silence
there is this fragility that keeps itself whole
like an eggshell
keeping a substance that waits for the right season to grow
i keep you on the comfort of my palms
and watch you closely
like a sprouting seed on the soft decay of leaves
you are asleep now
you heart stops to bleed
and then i begin to dream about us tomorrow

i stretch the thread of silence trying to fathom
how long
how strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Riding On The Wings Of A Butterfly

i walk the dream
where the street
breathes in the shadow
of moon-light,
the lovers night.

oh, sweet love
long time coming
longer time whispering
us free.

i sing your eyes
as willows
stretching into
the ever passing winds

i speak the words of my heart
i sing the songs of my dreams
i see in the water
your image
and it’s true...

as i ride on the wings of the butterfly,
i offer you a rose, if given the chance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Right Of Passage

this is not the first day of my life
and this is my right to a final passage

this is the fall
where you my love, cannot catch me anymore

this is the moment
where everything about me
dies
but perhaps cannot be said
to be lost
or utterly wasted

i cannot be one who must be afraid
this moment can be the last event
for something greater
than myself

need i say goodbye
need you wish me all the luck

let me touch your face for the last heat
in my hands
let my eyes have the last glance of you

the hour has come
for these tired eyes to close and take
its deepest plunge in sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
i may tell you
that this is all a matter of
story telling
the one that you invent because the nights
are too long
and slow
and they all drag you to your bed
and the linens
do not make you sleep

meanwhile the ceiling plays with
the lapses of the lizards
as mosquitoes kept being fooled by
light and
shadows of the hands of the the
restless arms

i think i am wrong
most of the times
and i give always the impression that
i master what is
right and
adorable

i give you respect
through the signs of my fingers
and the unspoken words of
my mouth

and i beget respect
like leaves upon leaves of the crowning
glory of the
living tree

i am wrong this time
this is not about the world or
the stars
not even about you but this is all about myself
it is boring
it wearing the eyes that are disinterested
there is this routine
the break is unseen

i guess, i am right this time
when i tell you that
you must go...

RIC S. BASTASA
you keep my secrets
i think i will love you more
but i will not be telling
you since for a change i am
also paying for all this rubble.

i keep telling myself this is
not about you or love or me or love
this is just about letting time pass
and then coming back to my senses
when everything is calm when passions
run away and leave me sane with my
upheaval, when i find myself finally
alone, strong, firm, decisive and
right.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rila Monastery In Bulgaria

potable water
runs there
without ceasing

fresh air
and enticing silence

if only my
soul is free to
get out of
my body

it could have
danced
so well

RIC S. BASTASA
Ripples

what i do always creates ripples
sometimes we forget about this
when a butterfly's wing is broken
it too creates a ripple in the wind

when a mouse is trapped
the chickens have reasons to be restless
when a dog cannot howl at night
the moon becomes wary about it

when i gaze and throw nothing but silence
you may not believe it but the world trembles
when the world starts to slow down
it soon follows that mosquitoes get frozen

things and people and event are always interconnected
like ripples of the pond like dimples on the cheek of the battered woman
one cannot fathom this
because there is not much pain yet

RIC S. BASTASA
Rise Up Lazarus

Hell is Other people
So now rise up Lazarus and Just Be yourself learn learn
To talk and laugh at Yourself, lazarus
From the dead of the commons From the rotten flesh of the others among the rest Rise up Rise up And be yourself again
A pine among the redwoods A duck among the geese
Don’t bother now Being yourself is redemption enough

RIC S. BASTASA
Rise You Must Rise My Friend

you have fallen
and now enjoy the only possibility
you must have
you rise
like a bubble from the breath
of the fish in the sea
to the air and sky
to the sun
do not shrink like a melted candle
in winter time
enjoy the cycle of this life
when you're down
you have no choice but to go
up.

RIC S. BASTASA
River Bund 9: 50 P.M.

they do not speak your language
neither are they interested in you

you pay for everything
in this search for the cure of your loneliness

you sail on a dragon boat along that river

people are teeming
cameras click
on those tall buildings dressed in colored lights

there is a journey of lights
but not arriving
at any place

you stand there
holding upon one of those railings amidst the crowd

there is this revolution going inside your heart
saying 'i do not belong here and
tomorrow on the first flight
i shall take my way back home'.

RIC S. BASTASA
River Of Tears

my eyes ache and i am afraid sooner
if my hardheadedness persists a little longer i may
become one blind old man
begging for mercy and looking for love

justly enough did you say that love is blind
that true lovers cannot see
that mercy is grace?

my heart aches and soon enough i may become
a heartless old man remembering the pieces
of broken hearts and shattered memories
scattered on the floor
of my past

mirrors gleaming with light reflecting
many faces with eyes flowing a river of tears

RIC S. BASTASA
River...Flowing...

the river flows
it is not the way
the rocks want it,

the clouds float
perhaps the air carries
them but they choose
when to disappear

you have no control
for what all these natural
occurrences

everyday you try to
control yourself opting
to do what could have
been right

and then you go astray
and run towards those
mountains trying to figure
out why

and these you take upon
yourself: nature does it
best, without much fuss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rivera's Place...
	here was singing,
the girl with a pigtail has angelic voice
the guy beside her strums the guitar
most of the good guys here
have white hairs
and the women are fat,
no one seems to be sexy
attending
the funeral.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rivers Resting To The Common Sea

by Chance i watched
The Bucket List, and i cried
at the end of this movie,
i am alone in the room
as she goes to church,
i get cold, sick
and not desiring
anything,
i have become a different
person then,
a stranger to myself,
unable to understand
that i must anchor my mind
to a certain faith
a belief that
is more important than
myself
or this world,
i have that ending
that we are all rivers
finally going
to the same sea
and there
be silent forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
i agree
education is the key

when the door if
finally opened
in fact a long time ago
and

we already had
333 years in that
Spanish convent and
43 years of
that Hollywood experience

another door has been
closed
and still
the key has to open it

one door leads to
another
same key

the young keep on getting
that key
another door is close
more keys

each key has become
more expensive
and some have thrown
that key away

meanwhile the Authority
is asking
that doors outside the country
be opened

export labor
brain drain
that is another key
problem

on the other
hand
it is not the money
it is the open mind
resilient to
poverty

taking time still to laugh
at those hard times

i agree
despite the irrelevance
it is still
the rightful key

the door is open
and we are inside it
no one
no one can take this house
again
from us

RIC S. BASTASA
Roaming

light roams the earth
as we too roam like
light
we are the mirrors of
our souls looking
for company
gets too lonely sometimes
a loneliness that wants
an irritation of
the other lonely creatures
out there
wanting to get even
like a seesaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roaming...

when the soul is blocked
there is a reason, could be that the soul has become too familiar
and as it insists, has become too unpleasant
for the body,

at 2:30 in the morning the body is behaving like a dead man,
pretending, perhaps since there is still that
alcoholic breath, saliva sticking and
nostrils wriggling

a mosquito bite becomes too irrelevant,
a cockroach tumbles down on your hair and
laughs,

nothing is happening to life,
the soul and body at war, there is this room closed,
morning light seeking an entrance
to a night window
that is still magnetized to
dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
Robert Revised....

the bird flies away from
the bough
the ginger cat caught
and ate the ambulant rat

RIC S. BASTASA
Robinson's Faura

i close my eyes
my feet stretch to the floor
above me
the wide roof of the mall
the noise of the
chatter
crowds inside my ear
as i wait
for you
my dear friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
Robot

inside the nest of your marriage

your husband with a thick face

has changed you into a robot-bird

with mechanical wings, with a beak

made of steel and with claws made

of magnetic wires. another sadness.

another cruelty on the nest that

they expect must bring love and

rest. You give me a blank stare and

i said to myself: i perfectly understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roca

lovely rock
heart shaped beside the shore of this old
historical spot

g-spot of jose meeting josephine
they made love here, so much love, to the envy of the trees and the vines

the moon so full and the stars too many
in silence

they have no stories to tell about the the traces
where they went
how they die and how we ought not to remember

pain buried on the sands of time
springing as corals and crustaceans from the deepest floors of

the bleeding heart to the deepest sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rock Me

don't be shy.
be direct,
rock me baby
i am tired.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rock Me

because you fear me
and i fear you too
because we are afraid what happens next
in that farther place
we finally stopped molding more words
for our mouths to sculpt
we smoothed the edges of silence
like a jewelry for brides
we admire its gloss
its glaze that to no end
have amazed our very eyes

that is its beginning but fear like all other
stories and novels shall end

i sit here looking at you pass me by
i have no expectations of suns and moons
i am learning the art of rocks and stones
it is my silence and hardness that shall speak for me
i am rooted without branches
i shall bear fruits without those leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
Rocks On People's Heads...

people carry
rocks on their heads

nevertheless
all pretend not being
affected with such
a burden

still looking young
and head high
when they meet on
the train
or walking past the
streets

busily they move on
fast and since these
rocks are all invisible
nothing nothing
seems significant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rody

after how many plays
and stories written

Brody has remained an
undergraduate

his impatience for listening
has grown fangs

venomous he scares
those who could have spoken

about what his truth is
his inability to take the shape

of the mold
where he wants to fit in

genius i know he is
but look at him

he is always overtaken by
the worst nincompoop in town.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rody, The Impatient Genius

after how many plays
and stories written

Brody has remained an
undergraduate

his impatience for listening
has grown fangs

venomous he scares
those who could have spoken

about what his truth is
his inability to take the shape

of the mold
where he wants to fit in

genius i know he is
but look at him

he is always overtaken by
the worst nincompoop in town

true he writes
in fact the best in the city

but i guess
Brody isn't that smart enough

to know what a system is
and to fear its wisdom

RIC S. BASTASA
The true spirit does not start out with a system of preconceived ideas.

The true spirit possesses absolute liberty and unrivaled courage.

Each man entirely free to search wherever he pleased for the spiritual explanation of the spectacle of the universe.'

RIC S. BASTASA
Romance In The Plain...

the plateau
exists too in a relationship
since it is plain
we begin to play our
usual games
not the hide and seek
but
the trip to Jerusalem

under the sun
we haggle for chairs
like all forms of reality
others must
stand and
be left out

when the sun goes out
we play the serious game we know
so intimate
and so private
that romantic night that we
never forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Romance Of The Beard And The White Woman

a middle aged man with beard
is chasing a young woman with a
white skin into the room they meet
where the pillow which had been
light and soft in bed suddenly carries
their heads
the bed their bodies in fire
the embroidered pillow case finally
bathed in sweat....

RIC S. BASTASA
Romancing A Red Cherry Inside My Mouth

got one cherry
inside my mouth

letting it stay there
as my tongue

toys with a red
sweet cherry

my lips, my lips
drenched

with such sweetness
i salivate

prelude to love
tonight

watery cherry
bursting in red

sweet blood
spreading on my tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Romancing The Poverty Of Other People

you look at the poverty of other people
romancing it like a metaphor in your poetry
the color of a man's unwashed shirt with mud
and blood, dried sweat,
the sound of a hungry baby like the sound
of thunder coming from the breasts of mountains
the ignorant woman like a beautiful native naked
and bathing in the river and rising like a famous nude painting
their poverty to the rhythm of some blues
the colors in brown, and black and violet and scarlet
the trembling hands and biting lips and blank stares
the blackest background ever
to a future as bleak as ember
to a poverty hopeless as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Romania (December 2009)

lured by bloodcurdling tales
we made full trips out of Transylvania’s castles
and lovely medieval Saxon towns
like Sighișoara,
where the ‘real Dracula’
(Vlad Țepeș ;)
first grew his teeth.

the suspense
made me forget
what Liza did.

RIC S. BASTASA
Romans 5: 6 - 11

we are weak and ungodly
no man dies for a righteous man

God dies for us
sinners

it is death, like anything else
that reconciles

mortal to immortal
divinity bowing low
to save
the mundane and
earthly

think of love again
how you swallowed your ego
how you surrendered
everything
just to love the undeserving

RIC S. BASTASA
Ronnie

My friend Ronnie when he retired as literature teacher invested his money in books

he bought crates and crates of books from the United States and brought them to the Philippines

to include a number of his favorite poetry books bearing such authors as frost, walt, derek, etcetera and he invites me in for some hours as he loves to read these poems aloud and discuss the meaning of each metaphor

for he is a poet in his own little way a right he claims somehow and modesty aside i also write some published sometimes and he finds me a compliment to this blank spaces

and so we indulge in this higher state of literary affairs until he could not accept that i know more about his favorite poet than he does

i mean, i know it by heart he sometimes gets away from this kind of loving until he gets offended and shies away from my own way of intellectual desperation

he did not invite me anymore his books took the revenge letting in more dusts more dusts more dusts
with no finger prints

until he died, his greed for books went with him
the books that till date,
remained virgins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rooted To Reality

the stars faithful
to its glittering even in the storm

the sun without failure
shining every morning

the moon afloat on the river

sailing by the marsh
soundlessly

the creeks that flow
against the pebbles

the grass that spreads
itself upon itself

the clouds that drift
incessantly

the self that lives
despite

the consciousness that thrives
amidst the numbness

of the dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a seed
beneath you

it grows
and you feel it coming out from your mouth

and anus

from your mouth is the tendril
like some form of a hand

and from your anus
roots
spreading down to your feet
trying to make you still
fixed

the tendril stretches and multiplies
and tries to reach the skies
it is pulling you
making you envious to the wings of the
black bird

meanwhile the roots are getting stronger
dereeper and
fierce in the silence of its
goal, always, always to fix you
and make you
feel a prisoner of this
earth

two things, two contrasts
between all these

the heart, and now you must choose and listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roots In The Water

It must be the water
It must be where you chose
Living
Could be those clouds
For you have grown profuse roots
Of opulence
Why do u float
Still?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ropes, , , ,

an umbilical cord
is a rope
mother cuts it
for good

despite this
an imaginary cord still exists
between two minds
a bridge
where no one wants to
walk

imagination is cut
there is now an empty space
sort of conceived
independence

for me to grow
and be full
between us the bridge
must be broken
no ropes this time
no binding bond

between two continents
will always be an ocean
giant ships travel
a hundred whales
swim

i like is this way
between us
the Pacific ocean
no islands
just waves so huge
that sometimes
we are brave enough
in hopelessness
no ropes this time
no hands and arms
between us
this blinding darkness
this utter silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Roro's Birthday

they strong men hauled
the videoke box on top of the hill
where the nipa hut stands
and they all connect the wires
beside the natural spring of water
and then Roro sits beside his
birthday cake and they all
sing

happy birthday dear son.

in a minute the roasted pig
turns into a makeshift
of bones

and then Tata and her mother
begins to dance
the chacha.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rorsharch’s Test

Remember those inkblots
They have them ready
For you to tell them
About you

And so you begin
With the story of a Big Bear
With sharp claws
Hair all over the body
Big feet, and you said the
Big Bear is walking towards
The forest looking for Mama Bear
Who left little bear cubs,

And then you go to the next
You said you saw clowns
Teasing each other and they have
Extraordinary penises hanging
On their clown pants. You think
It was really funny. You were
Just honest.

Then there was a Big Butterfly
Lots of colors and you describe
Wings spreading and you said they
Are flying towards a warm place
Because they look so cold and oppressed.

Then the Big Bat and you said you
Are viewing it from the top
And it is flying
It is flying
In such a speed
Faster than sound
Jokingly you told
Them how Einstein
Discovered the law of relativity
All because of this Big Bat
Flying faster than a speed of sound
Its mass shirked and light got
So distorted it lost itself in space.

And you look at the analyst
Call it the psychiatrist
Her eyes rolled and she
Blinked and she moved her
Face sidewise. She repeated
If the bat, the bear, the butterfly
The clowns move
And whether they move so fast.

And you said,
Definitely yes.

And she scribbled
Her secret notes about you

You know she’d say
There is something wrong
About you
You are schizophrenic
To a certain degree
You need to see a
Full time psychiatrist

And you laugh

You have read about the test
And you could have pretended
Sanity
Do not say the bat is flying
Do not say the clown is jesting
Do not say the butterfly is fluttering
Do not say the Bear is shaggily tramping on ice
Make them still
Normal no movement
Something sane does not move
Something normal is still
Stationary, unprogressing
Reality is ecstatic. Reality is something that stops.
A statue. A mannequin.
Reality is a picture. Dead piece of paper.

No imagination
No metaphor

You will be a hundred percent sane.

You know what she wrote in secret
And you treat her for dinner
Candlelight, you ask her name
And tell her jokes
And tell her about yourself

You are a poet. You have imagination.
You have metaphor. You make objects move.
You have bats that fly for good reasons
You have clowns that dance the salsa and the boogie.
You have butterflies that flutter in your imaginary gardens
You have huggable bears.
Papa bear kissing Mama and little bears pissing them both.

You are trained for some creativity. For some action.
You are a fertile field where rains come and flowers grow
And birds fly and sunshine comes with colors of seasons in a prism of raindrops.
And by all means, you tell her, as you sip your champagne
Glass gleaming against a lazy light of this cozy café

"By all means I am not crazy. I am just a poet"

She pretends she understands. She sticks to her science, of course.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rose Mary

did she get what she wanted?
one may guess

she got a family
lived in a house
a husband on her side
kids that gave
the sounds of laughter
in the room

her regrets perhaps
i think i know
not having the time
to write a poem
about the sunrise
the warmth of
days

i do not judge
but i think she deserves a break
the luxury of solitude
the pleasure of just being
herself
away from the senses of
chattels and
tea cups and
those diapers
and dirty floors

Danny thinks otherwise
to each his own

and so i go back to what i said
Danny we can only guess.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not hate me,
for i am, this is all that i have
wind in your palms
when you close
you know what happens
when you open again
you know what is next

love me then for what i am
a rose in your lips
when you say something
like
i love you
you know what happens next
surely

RIC S. BASTASA
Rosebuds, Dreams, Songs

perhaps,
a love song, a leaping heart
in joy,
perhaps, it is everything,
an ocean, fire in the woods,
a gentle rain,
dreams that come true,
memories of childhood,
guitar strings,
perhaps, they do not know
a deer, a twine,
a wind, a wave
perhaps, we all live forever,
eternity and a love song
perhaps,
something you must know
a whisper, a hug,
farewell,
perhaps, it is
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roses And Birds

red roses blooming
birds on trees chirping
sun shining
green grass

all but
cliches.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roses And Birds...

it is when the roses are
in full bloom
shall all these bees
make their
wings too strong

RIC S. BASTASA
Roses Are Red

roses are red
& violets are blue
flush the toilet
when you are through

RIC S. BASTASA
Roses Are Red And Violets Are Blue

i

roses are red
violets are blue
other poems rhyme

but this doesn't

ii

roses are blue
violets are red
sorry but i interchanged
the two

iii

roses are red
violets are blue
please flush your poo
when you are through

iv

roses are red
violets are blue
you only read
poems in bed

v

roses are red
violets are blue
i am through
now, continue

RIC S. BASTASA
this is the situation,
soon you will find
you live in prison walls,
and those who see you
tell you
you have no God.

perhaps they say that
since they see no
icons on our walls
we bow not
to sunsets
we make no wooden
crosses

oh, let us tell them
we've grown roses in our prison walls
on the fertile grounds
of our heart
we speak to God
in our poetry
with all the silence and
gentleness
and patience of the
snail

we have gone beyond
wood, and stone,
and images,
we have passed through
all these walls
man-made as they are,
we have jumped over the
fences of
the flesh, and they who use
their eyes
in the middle of their own
human light
do not see
we, have, only, hearts.
we, are, pure, hearts.
we, are, love, solitude, in privacy with our God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rose-Scented.....

when you sleep with a
broken heart
the eyes that ache
with lost sleep
and the hands that
fail you

you drown in sorrow
but in a certain miracle
you do not succumb
to death's
final offer

you rise from a whirlpool
of grief
nauseous

as usual a broken heart
like a salamander
mends itself
repairs its chambers and
begins to make
a lovely sound, a call to

love again, as the eyes wake
up for another
romantic moment, the hands too
hold unto another pair of hands

the whole system in you
reinvents
discarding old memories
buzzing
for a switch
that gives a brighter light
in that room
rose scented.
Rotten Memories

a pen that you just keep
but you have no time using,
an outmoded cell phone
that you are not willing to give up,
a creaky bed, a rusty pin,
a handkerchief with an embroidered
name of your someone special
a old diary, a tiny wild flower
between the pages of your
favorite book, locks of hair,

what do i really need these things for?
ah, memories, rotten memories,
so sweet still.

RIC S. BASTASA
Routine...

it is the same over and over again,
no change, nothing unfamiliar,
the terrains we master,
the confrontations too boring,
all words, no images, nothing about
metaphors, trains and rails, sky and grass,
winds coming, and eddies leaving,
air filled with dust, leaves blown away,
women with straw hats,
hands of children, whistles of husbands,
what more can this world give us?

perhaps, a global erasure.
when we all perish, when no one blames
anybody anymore
when cockroaches begin their rule.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roxas Boulevard…

yes, the sunset is terribly beautiful
saffron, silky, smooth,
mellow fire of the philosopher that we dearly love

we can endure the stink of the dead bay,
it is the funeral of the earth, rotten,
the courage of the vultures
dead fish floating
rusty keels of yachts

yes we are the reminders of sinking flesh, of fagots eating the brains of those who cease to be alive, we pass by like ephemeral orange.

RIC S. BASTASA
Roy C.

he was not coy he was open
and he knows how to use words to make you
feel at home with his own
angst,

his name was Roy from Subic Bay
and he knew how to play the flute like a member of the heaven's choir
he was sociable and mixes will all the sectors
of the people

he was clean and spoke well about the necessity of being clean
and shaven
we envied him and we wanted to be like him in all aspects
and these made us lonely all the while
as we lost contact of the uniqueness of ourselves

we were lost along the way and we stepped out from the enclosure.
we came to know later

that Roy was gone and could not be accounted for.
how was that? we still ask that question all over again.

now i am 50, clueless and
realistic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rubber Ball

When you fall
hard on
a cemented floor
bounce back
and go higher
to the hands that
caused your
falling
let those hands
not catch you
let those that
causd the pain
miss you
for now you have
freed yourself
from the clutches
of temporariness
bounce back
move higher
befriend the clouds
and learn
the tricks of drifting
till you
settle finally
in that
heaven....

RIC S. BASTASA
Rubbing Your Body With Sponge

work the hardness
of a day until it gets
soft in your heart
massage the sores
of existence
figure out the
leaks of lights
drink space and
open the mouth
like a cocoon
set free a monarch
butterfly
watch the colors
fly like a rainbow
disappearing
so the rain can
stop to shower
becloud and
be still

relax the sponge
let the skin
open its pores
Ruben's Mansion

it is not a house
in fact, it is a white mansion
placed on a one-hectare lot
surrounded by a well-manicured
garden and flowering shrubs
and fruit trees
one that everyone cannot but
always admire

when they come
and watch
Ruben’s mansion
taking 2 years to finish
and 12 million pesos
in expenditures

as you go inside
the glass door opens
leading you
to a living room
twice as large
as my own house
in a remote barrio

the furniture are carved
from molave trees
shining with shellac
and glistening
with opulence
the motif of this
house

the kitchen is huge
four times as wide
as my garage
accommodating only
my second hand car

and the garage
is one that can handle
a party for the night
of ten tables and
fifty chairs and
a hundred people

one wonders
why Ruben has to make
a mansion like this

sheer taste perhaps
or his money
simply searching for something
to buy and spend
looking for some
vents

did he remember
how as a child
the family was shamed
because visitors
from Bohol
in 1970 could not
be accommodated
and they all murmured
how poor they were?

it must be traumatic
for Ruben
as a child
and it must be some
trauma
that molded his dream
to build a mansion
like this?

(or am i just
jealous
of his ambition)

i need not ask some
more
his lips are sealed
he is dead
and he has no way
explaining
a sensitive matter as building
a mansion
while the rest still
thrives on
mediocre houses and
unfinished makeshifts

and no one lives
in this house anymore

perhaps some dreams
still live here
dreams unfulfilled

and once fulfilled
these dreams now
refuse to die

a mansion is still a house
and when no one lives there
need i say

that it is never a home
and after this party
tendered in the name of Ruben
we all go home
and then think for once

i must build a home
and for the meantime forget about a mansion

or just a house.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rubs Her Head Under Your Hands

It's what happens after the party
Which haunts the most.

The left-overs litter on the table
The plates are like faces of people looking at you
Saying 'what now? what's next?'

You will be keeping memories
Of those people who leave you
Because they have their own homes
Away from yours

The table will be empty again
The chairs too and the veranda
Will be very silent

You go out of the room and lean
On the railings of the stairs
You look at the heavens
To find out how distant are the stars

How beautiful are those which you
Cannot touch

Until your favorite cat comes
And rubs her head under your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Rumor

the stone of
discord that
you throw
at the beehive
daring and
divisive!

RIC S. BASTASA
Rumors.....

wisdom is rumored to have many beginnings,
subject to so much interpretations
is this: that fear is the beginning of wisdom,
that fear of God
that fear of one who loves you so much
and whom you want to love but you
for so many times
failed,
that to some however, the beginning of wisdom is wonder.
and so at night
you walk outside the house of your dreams and you
gaze at the stars
and you are lost and you stumble and you hit your head upon a rock
and you are bleeding

that fear of God, that wonder that makes you bleed,
perhaps.

RIC S. BASTASA
Run And Dance And Play

'The mission of poetry is to create among people
the possibility of wonder, admiration, mystery,
the sense that life is marvelous...
To make life a marvel—that is the role of poetry.'
- OCTAVIO PAZ

she finally admits that she likes octavio
but she does not understand him, and i quip

that if that is the case, you must stop reading him, he is killing you
and your initial desire to be in love with poetry

isn't it that the mission of poetry is to create this marvel?
this admiration? this feeling that life is marvelous?
that there is still this wonderful feeling left inside us
despite the odds?

if octavio makes you wonder about more wonders
continue reading the magnificence of his lines
marvel, marvel, marvel

but if he does not achieve that purpose in you
try reading back those nursery rhymes
those that make you feel better and make you
go back to the niceties of your childhood

run and play and dance and sing

RIC S. BASTASA
Run For Reality And Please Carry Some Dreams

don't waste your time looking back.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Running

running away
like a cat
trying to
catch its
own tail,

keep on running
try catching
a shadow

keep on running
sweat out
the feeling of
air and breeze

and smoke and fog
all whipped up
by this wind

keep running
pursue the reasons
why one must keep running

does it really help
you cope up
with what you are leaving?

RIC S. BASTASA
Running And Running Away

running away
from honesty
not touching
anything
not touched too
by anyone
you keep on
running and
running away?
no one is reached
no one reaches
for you
you keep on running
and running away
from no one
but yourself because
what you touch
bites you
and what you love
is always a stone
thrown at you
and so you keep on
running and running away
from honesty
and having gained speed
you have become the
fastest lie
that even the winds of
the northern seas
cannot catch even
a glimpse of
who you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
Running Away From You....

to run away
is never to come back

i have never ran
away from you

count the years
and the day when i am
back to your
arms again....

RIC S. BASTASA
Rural Scene

what you see
is this:

a straw hat
covering her hair
against the sun

she is just a
shadow

her eyes look
against you

you are blinded
by her
presence

her lips are
not delightful

as her hips
are no longer swaying to your
dictates

this is what you do not see:
her tongue
in cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
Rural Sounds

mooing cows
barking dogs
flowing river
grassy plains
hushing winds
tall mountains
foggy hillsides
rising cliffs

a little brown boy
harvesting water apples
a little girl lifting her skirt
to catch them

father plowing a rain fed field
elder sister washing dirty clothes in the river
brother catching fish for breakfast
mother cooking rice

smoke rising from the chimney
reaching for the gods residing in the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
things rush
events want us to run faster
time is silent
actually it is as silent as a
still painting of
melting candle
but the hands of the clock
creates all the noise
with its new battery
of anxieties
running in circles
arriving
at nothing

all of these
around and above me
want to make me run
and rush
to that finish line

i am not an athlete
neither am i
performer of some
incentive loading
companies

sorry, i am nobody's
personal property
i keep this hobby
wearing the hobbit
of the Franciscan
probing what is real
and spraying red paint
on what is
fake... x is
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Rustic Town

down the road
this summer coats the leaves of
mahogany trees
looking more like snow
for the soil here is off white
like the gleam of pearls
when it rains hard
the whiteness of the soil
is smooth like
a porcelain jar from faraway
Osaka

nothing is fast like a gazelle
gently events unfold like a slow motion film
where you savor each sequence of
a story
told by an old woman
her head turbaned by her self-woven
cloth
passed to her by so many
generations

at night the cicadas have become so silent
just a while ago before the curtains of the day
are folded into sheets
of forgetting
the cicadas have engaged themselves
in symphony of songs

then we witness the coming of fireflies
adorning the crowns of trees
as though someone queenly is coming
to grace a night of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Ryokan

Who says my poems are poems?
These poems are not poems.
When you can understand this,
then we can begin to speak of poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
the myth of sisyphus
somehow after 50 years
is no longer a myth.
the rock is as true as the
inclined uphill
climb

i breathe
and take some air
for i shall climb again
and put this rock
and roll it down again
and put it up again

i breathe
more life
and haven't mentioned yet
that death
is a reasonable option.

RIC S. BASTASA
S10

Wacky thoughts
the legs dance
the hands wave
and the head shakes
wacky days
dancing suns and
whirling hours
mind parachuting
on no man’s land.

RIC S. BASTASA
and how do we know that God speaks to us?
invoke the beautiful garden
there will always be a gardener
even if you do not see the wind
but the rustling leaves can tell
that is God, appearing, manifesting
but i want him to use words, to utter
what i also utter, i want him, to speak my name
as a master shall call a servant at dawn

50 years i waited, and all i have are still metaphors
labyrinths, i want and pray
that God be literal, and candid and frank and
straightforward, as one friend would call me

hey Ric, what's up? did you give bread to the hungry?
did you visit those who are in prison?
did you check if justice is done?
did you care for the poor and the oppressed?

could be in one dinner when he sits with me
under the light of the fluorescent lamp
nothing about my imagination that he speaks through my wife
or through a visitor or through an event
or through an accident that did not happen
nothing like that, and in this case to be frank with you

God has not spoken yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
a burning heart, he says, he has a burning heart
and i imagine a burning bush, as we wonder how come that
there is also an eternal fire that does not burn
and char anybody
a burning heart and it does not stop to burn
there is still pain in there, but the burning heart is never consumed
it burns love, and pain is always lesser
there may be no joy anymore, but the giving insists
everything, everything take them all away
that is the only meaning of the burning heart
always unconsumed, never charred, a stranger to the ashes.

RIC S. BASTASA
one thing with thought is that it is fluid.
do you like them to be stones? the sculptors are ready with their hammers.
one thing with flexibility is that something always wants to remain open, a door for instance.
sometimes to wait for the beloved it is never locked till midnight
or that window that misses the moon
it never closes till twilight
for the love of light and cool air
some have to be apertures and orifices
my mouth is open for love my arms are unclosed circles
my heart grasps for air something in it is still open
in fact, as you have seen it,
in its unclosed state, it is still bleeding
my mind is open functioning as a parachute of my ambitions
my body does not actually mind what happens next
trusting in words, in another glass of red wine,
cherries for the tongue
the last one for the road, who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
a candle melts as fire gets too near,
water saves the drops
that fall upon the glass,
shapes of freedom are formed
melting ideas solidified by
cold and contained once
again in water and glass as the
man that owns the scene
finishes its work and
leaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
the walking days will still be there
sometimes we shrug our shoulders feeling sorry
the day is over
and one body is still stuck on the seat of questioning
forgetting that this is merely another walk
on some short destinations
arriving there we disembark only to be told
to walk again

it is not weird
it is. it is. it is.

it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
let the days pass
let all the dreams ask

why are we still unfulfilled?
when will we become true?

let the days pass
let the mind be as busy as a marketplace

let the haggling be haggling
bargain bargain, compromises

let the days pass
let the hair on my head be all white

let the days eat me whole
and let me fade like a ghost

let there be none of me again
i have had enough

RIC S. BASTASA
now i am hearing the rushing steps
of the fish vendor
towards the market
passing by the road fronting
my blinds

a busy day,
the red ant below my feet is at it again
finding some crumbs
of cookies
under the computer table
beside the swivel chair

i always have a word
despite,
the ant wonders
why are you doing this?

the nails have no feelings
and so are the feet of the chairs

the monitor is a eunuch
the room fills itself with so much mess

rambling books
scattered papers still unread

piling folders and
dusty nooks

the light brown curtains need
badly a laundrywoman

the walls are calling for a painter
and the floors yell for a scrubbing and mopping

this is the earth of being
needing an update a cleansing of some sort
a deluge perhaps
and what must remain must only be the essentials

a pen a piece of paper
discard the table and the chair

for man can squat
and still relate to what is bare and empty.

RIC S. BASTASA
cold wind on my skin
from the sea and mountains
i am at the middle
and my heart is warm
i am unbeatable
i walk in the middle
buffered and
secure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Essex
in Essex the black ravens are hovering
on a tree without leaves
it is cold here
snow on the roof and on the ground
frozen mailboxes
of long time ago
when the emails come forth
saying
Essex Essex
the world has changed
and you have remained there
constantly wondering
waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
early morning eyes
fresh from their dreams

the mind recalls
the heart confirms

all the emotions still contained
vivid images in technicolor

the hands summon the fingers
write, write, write

strike while the iron is hot
cliche, cliche

now the thoughts rush like a flood
from the forest mountains

the fingers are adept at all these
one with the mind and heart

and so here we are again
slaves of our art

redeemed risen anew
maybe still cold and perhaps even frozen

thaw
melt only to be solidified again when the sun comes

irony of the mind
paradoxes of the heart

listen
to you i am saying nothing

it is for me
in the labyrinths of my confusions i am trying to find my way out
trapped fly in a bottle
buzzing for its wish for freedom

genie
wanting someone to rub its ancient lamp

if you let me free
you may have four wishes

and that is not just a promise
it is a contract

morning thoughts
tunnels without end lights yet

there is yet no exit
and so you still find me here in my own shadow

fog and mist
trails filled with tall grasses

up there is the house of my intentions
a figure waits but i do not know yet who

surprises surprises
anticipations of life

these are all the reasons
hazy as a refraction of light bending upon a glassy vision

RIC S. BASTASA
i like to tell you but you know i cannot.
and so i resort to scribbling some notes in my private part
(a journal, i mean it)

dear x,
please be mine tonight
do not mind the rumors of the day
love you.
i am algebraic.
an equation unsolved. dear x.

please be there tonight
i have money, please do not mind the morals of the morons of our days.
i love you.

this is y.
y still is a why, and there is no answer
to my own stupidity. dear x.

dear x. please do not mind me.
you are the lesson of the day. you are the morals of the morons for the day.

dear x.
i am nearing the conclusion that i must be crazy. dear x.

inside the office i work all day and always thinking about x.
dear x. dear x. it whispers a solution. this is y and and this is x.

i snap a mosquito and it is dead between my palms.
dear x.

why do i love you dear x? and why can't i tell you about it dear x?
why can't i even utter your name?

i must be a coward dear x.

on the other hand, i must be strong too.
I got an A for self-discipline.
a B+ for compromises
and a C for cooperation.

my life is not an F.
dear x. i am happy now. i forget about you. and i shall lie about you.

got an A too for all the denials.
gr graduated summa cum laude for living my life through
despite a very lousy dissertation that my professors consider as perfect.

i wonder
why are their standards wrong?

dear x.
this is y. forever we shall remain unknown to ourselves.

that is the reason why.
we are better this way. ghosts forever
roaming the streets of
horror.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Basakan Diin Hinog Na Ang Kahumayan

Hinog na usab ang mga lugas sa humay
Sa among kaumahan diri sa Katipunan
Bulaw ang bulok sa mga basakan
Daw sama sa bulaw nga buhok
Sa matahom nga amerkana
Nga akong mahinumduman

Mihunong ako makadyot
Sa kaanindot sa akong nakita

Apan sa tinood lang
Mikawat ako ug lantaw sa
Dalaga nga naligo sa sapa
Sa kilid sa mga bulaw nga
Basakan sa among kaumahan

Taas ang iyang itom nga buhok
Lagom ang iyang pamanit
Apan bus-ok ang iyang dughan
Ug ang tubig nga mibasa kaniya
Mipasihagsihag sa tanan
Nga gusto ko pa nga makit-an

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Bukid Nga Bulawan

nunot sa pagkatkat sa taas
nga bungtod ug paglabang
sa suba nga galikos-likos
sama sa sawa

nadan-agan na gyod
ang payag ni anding
nga nagpatunga ug
gipailawman sa kakahoyan

nag-andam na diay silang tanan
sa iyang banay ug nagdukdok
ang iyang anak nga lalaki
sa dako nga agong

ug misayaw
ang iyang anak nga dalaga
samtang giihaw
ang usa ka itom nga baboy

nagluto sila og dinuguan
nag-adobo og naglata
sa upat ka tiil og naggisa
sa mga lumo og unod

pakahapon atubang sa
adlaw nga talisalop na
nanglingkod kami alirong sa talad
ug gatagay dayon sa tuba

nagsultianay kami
kabahin sa akong tuyo
kabahin sa iyang utang
nga dugay na kaayo

nga wala niya nabayri
gidugangan niya og tagay
daghang baso pa
daghan pang sumsoman
nga sinugbang baboy
hangtod nga kaming
duha nangahubog
hangtod nakalimtan

ang utang hangtod
wala na mahisgoti
ang pagkobra sa bahin
sa saging sa yuta

nga iyang giugmad
wala na mahisgoti
ang mga mais ug humay
ug ang mga kamoteng kahoy

ug mga bunga sa mangga
ang among gihisgotan
mao na lamang ang mga idlas
nga langgam nga pula

ang balahibo sa dughan
hangtod nalimtan na
ang buluhisan ug ang utang
apil na ang kahakog
sa akong lolo ug tatay
ugma sakay sa kabayo
ni anding mopauli ko
nga walay dala kon dili ang pasalig

sa mga bag-ong tag-iya sa bukid
sakit pa gihapon ang akong ulo
ug nagngutngot kaayo
akong mga tiil sa kalayo
sa among gilakat ug mitapot
ang kahumot sa ylang-ylang
nga gihaplas sa tabonon nga panit
sa anak nga dalaga ni anding
nga nauga nunot sa baha
padulong sa akong dughan
latas sa duha ka aping
Sa Dihang Akong Gikalibang Ang Balak

Naghinuktuk
Nag-atubang sa
Concrete wall
Walay specific
Nga gihunahuna
Kay kada
Buntag baya
Ako malibang

Miutong
Tubol baya
Ang unang
Gikalibang
Hapit magisi
Ang akong
Anus

Misunod ang
Medyo tubigon
Igit agi
Siguro sa
Hinog nga
Kapayas
Nga akong
Nakaon kagabii

Ug nahuman
Ang tanan
Apan sa dili
Pa iflush
Ako usab
Gireview ug
Tan-aw

Walay mais
Wa baya koy
Nakaon nga
Mais gahapon
Humay baya
Ang among
Kinaon

Walay luha
Sa akong igit
Apan yuna Pa

Adunay pula nga
gakumpol
Sa akong tubol

Dugo?
Wa man koy
Nakaon nga
Dugo

Dugo gayod
Aduna gayod diay
Dugo ang
Gikalibang ko
Nga balak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Dili Madugay

kadiyot lang kita dinhi
ayaw na anang mga kabalaka

ug mga kahiubos
labi na ang kapungot

usa ra ang atong padulngan
ang lubnganan

ug didto labaw na
nga walay pulos

didto diin labaw pa
sa semento ang kabugnaw

diin lihokan kaayo
ang mga ulod

sama dinhi diin daghan
ang mga wala'y dalunggan

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Gabii

Ayaw kahadlok. Ang tingog sa linti
Tingog kana ni Tatay. Ang hagunos sa hangin
Tambag ka na ni Nanay. Ang kilat
Kihat kana ni Ibyang.

Katulog lang. Ayaw kabalaka kay niining

Nasod sa kalayo, ikaw ang tubig.
Sa imong balay sila mga anino
Lamang. Manglabay lang sila.
Ikaw ang tinood nga lawas.
Ug magpabilin ka.

Kon makakita ka og
Sigbin nga nagtuwad sa imong salog,
Ayaw kahadlok. Ikaw kana nga gisulaya’g
Lumping sa kahayag sa bulan
Ia imong bintana diin
Daghang lumot.

Basa ang siradora. Ayaw kahadlok
singot lang kana ug mga higala mo sila.
Tinuloan sa imong atop nga buslot.
Miulan na. Nagsugod na
Og tulo. Ayaw kahadlok
Nga ikaw mabasa. Miyukbo lang nimo
Ang langit. Gihatdan ka lamang
Sa daghang linya sa imong
Mga balak karong gabhiona.

Ug anaa na pod ang mga baki,
Pamatia. Nagsugod na og pangharana.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Gamay Pa Ako

Sa gamay pa ako gipakuyog ko nimo
Aron manginhas sa bukana, didto

Diin nagtagbo ang suba ug dagat, didto
Diin nangamang ang mga kinasong,

Ang balat, ang mga gagmayng kasag,
Ug mga kugita. Ako nga dili pa kaayo

Suheto sa atong panginabuhi isip inahan
ug anak, sa imong pagpangita’g sud-an

Sa atong panihapon, nagkadam-ag-
Dam-ag taw’n ko sa danlog nga mga bato

Ug mga lumot. Nisyagit ko sa kasakit
Sa dihang natunok ko sa tuyom nga saag.

Gipaihi ko nimo ug imong gihidhiran
Ang akong lapa-lapa, duha na ang imong

Gipas-an sa akong katapolan- basket
sa atubangan, ako sa imong likoran.

Dihang ngitngit na, aduna na kita’y
Sud-an sa atong panihapon. Gihayagan

Sa lampara, naglugit kita sa mga unod
Ginamit ang alpirel samtang namati kita

Og drama kabahin sa mga sirena. Karon
Nga dako na ko, ikaw na ang gapandol-

Pandol sa atong nataran, sa atong karaan
Nga kusina. Labaw na sa lampara

Ang kahayag sa atong talad-kan-anan.
Dili ko ikaw biyaan, nay. Ako usab andam na
Pag-agak nimo sa imong paghinumdom
Sa atong panginhas dihang ako gamay pa.

- RIC S. BASTASA

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Hingtundan Nga Kuno Akong Gimahal

Sa tiilan sa taas nga bangaw
Anaa ang sulbad sa atong kamingaw.

Sa habog nga bung-aw
Pangitaa ang tungaw.

Gaksa ang iro nga maayong moaw-aw
Dayon sakay sa tambok nga kabaw.

Didto ta magkita sa Davao.
Himamata ang akong kataw.

Sublion ta ang atong mga laraw-
Supaon ang mais, apil na ang pakaw.

Dili ko matukib ang akong kamingaw.
Ang akong kaulag dili na kini tiaw-tiaw.

Kanus-a ba kita magkita sa isla sa Talicod?
Katol na bayo kaayo ang akong likod.

Kalimti ako ayaw, pangitaon ko ang katagbaw
Dia ko gapaabot tapad sa plato nga bahaw.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Imong Impyerno

sa pag-abot nimo
gilibot sa imong mata ang
dak-on ug kalapdon sa balay

mga lingkoranan nga tugon nga karaan
gasinawsinaw sa matag-adlaw gitapohan
sa hagdanan pasaka sa ikaduhan undana
sa lamesa nga puno sa pagkaon
abi mo ug mao na kadtong tanan

apan sayop ka, buang ang namuyo
sa maong balay
ang tiguwang nga babaye nga inahan
kuno kadto nagkaon ug tanod
ang igsoon lalaki nagdula sa gabas ug
martilyo siging gidokdok ug tabas
adtong gabok nga kahoy dapit
sa kusina

kadtong babaye nga imong gikaibgan
dili kasugakod ug sugilon kon unsay
nahitabo niadtong gamay pa siya samtang
gasulirat ang iyang mata sa dihang ang
iyang ig-agaw nga lalake nga taas ug barog
dunay gisuksok sa iyang ailingagngag.

nakasakay ka na sa sakayang buslot.
matag adlaw gitapakan mo ang buslot
unya karong tuiga mao na ang ikadisinuybe
ka tuig sa imong tinipigang kabuang.

pit senyor, pit senyor walay hunong ang
imong pagsyagit didto sa tungatunga sa lawod
sa kalayo sa imong impyerno.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Imong Mga Balak

gamhanan gayod ang imong mga balak
higala ko
sa mga panid sa pulong dagitab

gibasa ko kini kaganiha
sayod ka
gibasa ko na usab kini karon
sa akong pag-abot
halayo sa kagubot

nakakita ang mga buta
nakayubit sa mga pulong ang mga amang
nakasayaw ang mga bakol sa kathoh sa imong mga pulong
nakadungog ang mga bungol

nahingangha gayod ako
sa mga kausaban sa tanan
nahimong bino ang mga sapa
sa akong tiilan
nahimong pan de sal ang imong
catatam nga kaniadto
patay na
ug ang imong mga bukog wala
gayod nila maputol
bisan pa sa ilang mga kasilag
ug sa kasuko

gibasa ko kining imong balak
sa makatulo
ug mipiyo bayana ang manok
ni san pedro

mipahiymo ka higala
karon nagmalipayon ka na
kay ako nakaamgo na
sa kagamhanan sa imong mga linya
ug karon tugiti ako nga
mangutana

kon kining tanan gikan ba' sa kinailawan sa imong kasingkasing?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Imong Pagkamaayo Moluto

Saludo ko sa imong pagkamaayo moluto
Sa akong mga paboritong putahe.
Sakto sa timpla sa asin, dunay gamayng tam-is sa asukar,
Ug gamayng aslom sa biyasong nga moigot-igot sa akong dila.
Duna puy gamayng kapait pero lami lang gihapon
Sa akong panglasa. Humot. May pagkahalanghalang.
Maayo g’yong pagkasagol ang mga sibuyas
Ug ang kamatis ug ang ahos ug sili ug luy-a
Nga gigisa sa mantika sa baboy ug
Sa aslom nga suka gikan sa bahal nga tuba.

Saludo gayod ako. Nabati ko ang imong gugma
Sa sulod sa dughan sa piniritong manok. Sobra nga gugma.
Morag gabukal nga sabaw sa tinolang manok nga bisaya
Nga gitanglaran. Saktong pagkalata sa kalayo nga gikan
Sa bukong ug takong ug lahing sa lubi. Dili mosabod kon
Birahon ang unod sa bukog sa pakao ug sa paa. Kadako gayod
Sa imong gugma kanako. Gibati ko kini sa imong
Lami nga nilutuan sa matag kaon

Su’d sa akong tilaok, lapos sa
Baba sa akong atay ug ngabil sa akong kasingkasing. Mihagok
Ang akong tiyan sa tumang kabusog. Langitnon.
Apan karong gahbiona, aduna kay gitulo nga mas lami pa gyod
Kay sa piniritong manok ug tinola. Humok nga karneng
Baka. Imo kuno kining gibunalbunan disir
Gihumol sa suka ug gamay nga asin ug paminta. Ginapahumok
Sa daghang latos sa habol nga sundang sa tadtaran nga tugas.
Ayha nimo gipabukalan ug gigisa sa gamay nga mantika.

Akong gitilawan. Mas lami gayod. Mas nanam. Mas sabroso.
Surop ang kalami sa tanang buslot sa salog sa akong dila.
Lapos sa akong tilaok, sa kasing kasing sa atay sa tiyan sa tanang
Liko-liko sa akong tinai. Nagdumili pa gani ang akong lubot
Sa pagpagawas niini.

Gipangutana ko ikaw. Akong giunhan nga dili na kini gugma.
Kay natilawan ko na ang lami niini. Mas lami pa kini sa gugma.
Ingan ka. Ang kaloooy imonggilamog didto. Ang pagsabot
sa mga kasaypanan. Ang pag-unong.

Ingon ka mas lami kini sa gugma. Kay ug kon wala na ang gugma
Usa lamang ang imong pangayoon kanako. Bugti sa imong
Pagkamaayo moluto. Pangayoon mo ang kalooy.
Andam ka ba mohatag sa imong kalooy bisan ug wala
Na ang gugma? Andam ka bang mounong bisan ug wala na
Ang kalami sa mga niluto?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Kadaghan....

tungod kay kusog na man
kaayo ang ulan
ang lusok niini wala
nay bili,

tungod sa pagbaha sa kahayag
ang adlaw morag wala na lang
diha sa mga panganod

sa tunga sa lawod nagpunay
ka ug bugsay sa imong sakayan
unya wa ka kaila kon unsay
ngalan sa dagat kon unsay bili
sa kaasgad kon unsay gamit sa
mga balod ug hangin.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Kalisod Sa Pangutana

sa kalisod sa mga pangutana
sa kinabuhi alang kaniya
igo na lang siya pagduko
sa iyang ulo ug gapahiyom
nga nagpiyong paingon
sa yuta- nakighimamat
sa iyang duha ka tiil
ang iyang hunahuna

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Katre Sa Pakigharong Sa Kamatooran

Ang mahitabo sa katre dili bakak.
Tinuod. Hubo kamo sa kaugalingon.
Hubo kamo nga makigharong
Sa inyong mga lawas ug hunahuna.

Ug pagkahuman sa lalom nga pakigkita
Ug pakighimamat sa inyong mga kalag,
Magpahulay. Dayon magbulag.
Buot ninyong maghiusa sa hangtod.
Apan aduna siya'y lawas. Lahi. Langkat.
Buot sa inyong mga hunahuna nga
Ipadayon ang tanan. Apan lahi dinhi
Sa kalibotan. Malangkat ang usa ka
Bungbong. Madugta ang mga haligi.
Molupad ang mga atop. Hangtod nga
Walay mabilin. Mao kana kitang duha.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Laing Bahin....

unta

dili mo na isulat ang bahin

sa pagbiya

morag adobo nga wala'y

pamenta og asin

nawala na ang kananam

bisan gani ang

humba

wala na say lami

kon kini balikbalikon diha

sa atong

pamahaw

irog irog gamay paingon

sa kalipay

unta ang imong

isulat kabahin sa panagtagbo

karong gabii

sa duha ka uyab nga dugay

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13984
nang wala magkita

didto sa ilalom sa punoan

sa mangga

silong sa bulan nga
tibook sa

kalangitan

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Lapyahan Sa Dagat

Kawras sa iring
Ang akong kagahapon
Gihandom ang bukog
Sa isda sa akong
Tutunlan
Kana ang akong karon
Ang imong kaanyag
Ania kanunay
Sa akong kasingkasing

Hagki ako pag-usab
Sama sa kainit sa adlaw
Sa bag-ong kabuntagon
Sa lapyahan
Sa linaw nga baybayon

Pagkasakit ba
Sa wala pagkasumpay
Sa atong mga damgo
Mga putol nga damyo
Mga nangabungkag
Nga tulay
Nangahulog sa suba
Nangahimong mga
Gagmay baroto
gianod sa sulog sa dagat

Mga tipik
Mga dugmok nga bildo sa akong
Panumduman
Gusto ko ikaw nga hikalimtan
Apan anaa ka kanunay
Sa bulan
Sa mga bitoon
Sa adlaw sa huyuhop hangin

Asa ba ako paingon karon?
Asa ko kaha ikaw ilubong
Sa tumang kalimot?
Pasayloa ako nining balak
Nga kanimo nagahandum
Sa lapyahan sa baybayon
Sugdan ko na usab
Ang pagkulit sa puti nga balas
ang imong panagway ang imong ngalan
Didto nahipatik ang atong duha ka kasingkasing
Mitulo ang dugo nga dili nako gustong makita

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Mga Sagbot Nga Haskang Hiloma

kahibawong motago ang mga kasakit
og kahiubos sa usa ka dapit diin dili na
sila makit-an
morag mga tagolilong
morag aso
morag mga hinungaw sa init
kaayo nga yuta nga kalit lang
giulan sa usa ka kaudtohon
sa Marso

ang imong makita mao na lamang
ang pahiym sa adlaw
nga mihalok sa yuta nga
kaganiha nag-alburoto

ang imong mabati mao na lamang
ang huyohoy sa hangin
ang awit sa usa ka tamsi nga mibatog
sa punoan sa bayabas

ang imong makita mao na lamang
ang mga pungpong sa mga hinog
nga bunga nga andam na nga mahulog
diha sa kasagbotan
nga haskang hiloma

diha sa imong pahiym
nga haskang hilawa

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Misa Ni Fr. Roman

Sa pag-isa nimo sa
Kopa diin giipis ang mompo,
Sa paghawid nimo sa puti nga ostiya

Sa paglitok mo nga mao kini
Ang lawas ug dugo ni Hesukristo

Miduko ako ug sama kanila
Miluhod dungan sa pagkiling-kiling
Sa gamay nga bagting.

Nipiyong ko.

Pasayloa ko, Father Roman,
Kay wala ko’y nakita nga Hesukristo
sa akong dughan

Wala ko’y nabati nga kinaadman.

Ug diha sa akong silingan
Wala ko’y nakita nga kalainan

Ug diha kanimo nga nagwali
Sa akong atubangan
Wala ko’y nakitang timailhan

Ngitngit gyod lagi, Father Roman
Bisa’g lamdag ang simbahan.

Saba gyod kaayo, Father Roman
Bisa’g hilom kaayo ang mga lingkoranan
Ug mga haligi ug bungbong.

Samok gyod gihapon bisa’g ang katawhan
Nangaamang, nangabuta, nangabungol.

Pasayloa ako, Father Roman
Kay mao kana ang nakita kong kamatuoran.
Gitawag ko nimo nga makasasala.

Tungod ba kay gibuka ko
Ang akong mga mata ug gitagoan ko
Ang duha ko ka kamot sa akong mga bulsa?

Gitaktak ko ang mga abog sa akong sapatos
Atubangan sa pultahan sa imong balay.

Wala didto ang tinuod nga simbahan

RIC S. BASTASA
(hubad sa Iningles nga balak ni Mark Strand)

Nabuhat nato ang atong gusto.  
Atong gibulabog ang mga damgo, gipalabi nato ang dagkong kakugi.

Ang matag usa kanato, naghangop sa kagul-anan  
Ug atong gidapit ang kapildihon sama sa usa ka naandan nga dili maputol.

Ug karon ania kita dinhi.  
Ang panihapon andam na ug dili ta mangaon.  
Ang karne naglingkod sa tin-aw nga lanaw sa iyang sulaan.  
Nagpaabot ang bino.

Pag-abot dinhi  
Anaa ang ganti: kay walay gisaad, wala usa’y pagadalhon.  
Wala tay kasingkasing o makaluwas nga kaambong,  
Walay dapit nga kapaingnan, wala’y katarongan nga kita magpabilin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Pagkatinuod

sa pagkatinuod
kon akong hunahunaon
sa maayo
bisan ang pagkalot
sa akong itlog
tungod sa tungaw
ug timos

pangadye baya
kana
gihapon
katol, morag Ginoo...

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Punoan Sa Lanzones

Lahi baya kon mokaon ka og lanzones
Sa taas sa iyang punoan.

Tapad sa imong aping ang mga hinog
nga pungpong. Mokuha ka

Og usa ka buok nga lanzones.
Dali ra kang mabusog sa pagbuot

Sa mga asul nga mga panganod sa kilid
Sa imong duha ka kamot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Sementeryo Sa Dihang Mibisita Ko Kang Nanay Ug Tatay

Nay tay
Ania na usab ako mananghid kaninyo
Ugma
Moadto na ako sa mental hospital
Kay aduna na akoy
Reservation didto
Basin didto una ako magpuyo
Bisag tulo lang ka bulan
Ug ma-extend basin
Tulo ka tuig depended sa akong
Pagmugna ug mga balak didto

Didto man gud kuno kasagaran
Mamugma ang pinakanindot nga
Mga Balak

Mao nga nay tay
miboluntaryo
Ako sa pagsulod didto
Sa ilang pagtugot

Sayod ko nay tay nga kamo
Nangimbitar usab kanako dinha sa inyong lugar
Diin mas nindot pa ang mga balak
Kay sa gimugna didto sa taga mental hospital

Apan sayod mo nay tay
Dili pa ko andam mosulod sa inyong kwarto
Kay daghan pa ako ug tinagoan
Nga dili jud ninyo mapasaylo

Adto na ako nay tay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Silangan Sa Kasadpan

Samtang ang mga bata
Sa silangan

Nagtampisaw sa
Pangaligo sa ilalom
Sa ulan

Lahi usab didto
Sa kasadpan

Diin ang tigulang
Nagpungko

Sa iyang pag-inusara
Namati sa tingog
Sa ulan

Naglantaw
Sa pagkahulog niini

Sa yuta nga sa kanunay
Nagpaabort sa
Kataposan

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Taya Ania Nabutaan....

ania ka haduol na
sa tungang gabii

samtang nagsulat ko
anaa ka usab diay diha
mibasa kanako
unya dili kitang duha
kaila gani layo man
gayod unta kita kaayo
apar naa koy gibati nga
kalipay, nga mora bag
kita nagtapad unya
gibati nato ang kainit
sa atong mga kiliran

abi mo nakatulog ako
ug sayo sa kakapoy sa
akong mga buluhaton
unya sa akong pagmata
karong orasha akong
gihagpat ang akong mga
damgo sama sa paghagpat
nako sa kalamunggay
aron akong ilunod sa
lamian kaayong tinola nga
malasugi,

karon ani ako ania
sa akong kaugalingon
nakighinabi sama sa
naandan, apan duna
laing nahitabo nako
karong gahbiona,

dili kini kabahin sa mga
bitoon ug aninipot kabahin
kini sa kahilom nga
sa tinood diay sabaan
usab, kay abi mo ang
kasaba usahay dili diha
sa pagsyagit, o sa pagyama
yama, sa pagyubit sa pulong
apan kabahin usab kini sa
kasingkasing nga gustong
mahigugma apan dili na
niya matuhog pa ug balik
ang mata sa dagom nga
sa akong pagsusi
sa kadugay sa paghikalimot
sa taya ania nabutaan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Tinood Lang

sa tinood lang
sa sulog
magpaanod-anod
hayahay ang
pagsubay diha
sa abay-abay

wa kay ngalan
kuyog sa tanan
dili ka mahisgotan
ikaw ang tanan

mahimong hayahay
apan sa tinood lang
wa sab ka malipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Tumang Kalood Gisuka Ko Ang Nanglabay

sa dihang
nakita ko ikaw pag-usab
didto sa usa ka
dungguanan

naglagot ako sa
akong kaugalingon
kon nganong kaniadto
sa akong kabatan-on

nahigugma ako
kanimo
diha sa tumang katanga
sa kagahi sa ulo
sa pagkawalay-buot

sa tumang kalood
gisuka ko
ang nanglabay

RIC S. BASTASA
Sa Wala Ka Sa Tuo Ko

Usahay, maglakaw akong mag-inusara
Sa karsada sa inyong dakong syudad.
Dili ko kaharong magtan-aw kanimo
Kon ikahinagbo ko ikaw
Sa sementadong dalan.
Ikaw naglakaw usab nga nag-inusara
Hangtod sa kaadlawon
Gikan sa halawom nga kagabhion.
Gasadsad ang akong sapatos
Usahay sa akong kahubog
Ngdala og daghang lapok,
Lamog sa abog. Ug ikaw usab labaw pa
Kanako. Mas bug-at ang imong
Tiil nga walay sapatos. Guba nga tsinelas.
Kagabii nagtagbo ang atong mga panan-aw.
Wala kita magasinultiay.
Nakita ko ang paglabay
Sa hangin sa imong aping.
Napalid sa makadyot ang imong buhok
Morag dunay buot ipasabot kanako.
Nangamay, morag nag-igon
Hawiri ko. Ayaw ko biyai.

Apan wala kita magasinultiay.
Sa wala ka. Sa tuo ako.
Ug ikaw li-dali
Sa paglakaw mora bag dunay
Balay ug mga anak pa nga paulian.
Sacred Structure

your eyes do not see
the dark has no scrutiny
it is the prism that does
all the trick for you

you will be deciding
the lives of ninety million more
yet you leave inside the core
there is always this bore
inside the chest of the sore

i wonder how you write
about liberties and their lives
in solitary confinement
you take pride in your refinement

in the future someone writes
about your destruction
of the common, the lowly and
the poor, and you will see
with tears falling from your
eyes: this cannot be! this cannot be!

the damage has been done
your death is not enough
to pay for the devil puff

RIC S. BASTASA
Sacrifice

ignite me

ignite me with just a spark
from you in the dark

and i will be this fire that burns
that lights from day till night

to warm your body
and guide you in your way

and when i am ashed
tell them if they ask

i have done my duty
i had it my little own way

from the spark of your love that never dies
i have become the constant sacrifice

RIC S. BASTASA
Sacrifice Of The Stone

a stone has always been a stone
numb and
silent on the side
of the pond
cool on the top
of clay

it likes it that way
no sadness
no happiness either

today
it ceases to be mindless
to the clouds
that it has long disliked

floaters
and drifters
these clouds
have always
chided his
numbness

the mosses beside
its belly
are dying of
dehydration

rain is needed
for its friends to survive
and so
here is the stone
smiling
and humble and
begging

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad (But True)

a poet in residence
published his last book
in 1982

his body was discovered
several weeks later

at 49
it was found next to a bottle
of gin and a
.44 caliber gun

RIC S. BASTASA
i read again and again
the poem you sent me thru email

it is sad, beautifully sad,
like sunset, then the moon less the stars

it speaks about the universe
our humanity our capacity to transcend
misfortune

i like the way it builds itself
how it starts as lock of hair and then
transforms itself into a human form
like how a womb evolves
into a woman's only girl

i read it again and again looking
for that happy angle that possibility of

us, but there is nothing there
where i can fill my emptiness the way you
squander love into the sea

like words spoken without the heart
in the last line love still does not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Lady

in her world her tears
are pearls
her cries are songs
of the beautiful women
her loneliness is a bed
of soft parakeet feathers
the oppression
day by day is a way of life
her hands are the ears
of a rabbit
they have learned to
listen
her lips are tight buds
and had always forgotten
how it is
to bloom

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Memories Of Home

The lightning flashes
The thunder roars
I hear old family voices
I see sudden memories

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Memory One Autumn

the leaves fall from the brown bough
pale yellow leaves of autumn
their paleness clings to my brain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Sunset....

When one sits for a while
beside the sandy shore and contemplate
on the pouring of light
early morning and the
fading of light in the afternoon
one feels that
the sun too bleeds blood
after a struggle
though you smell nothing
and touch nothing
and then you comfort yourself
with the feeling
that this poetry is nothing but
a state of the
mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Times

i surf the face book of old faces
i was very thin then, and silent looking
my eyes are still sharp and i remember
not one of you wants to speak to me.
your hair was curly and you sat next
to the girl who said she really loved me
the other one kept the teasing
making the match that i did not mind
the last girl was as thin as myself
but ate her words about staying
patriotic.

After graduation i left immediately
someone promised to kill me in the city
so i left for the hills for i have my friends there.
i was so afraid and needing all support.

The rest of you went out of the country
looking for greener pastures, married
old and having only one child with
blonder hairs. I look at the pictures
again. Time passed so quickly. As
quick as thunder, and lighting. I got
hit, and i feel dying. I am here with
no definite plans, no place to go except
old age, and a mortuary insurance all
paid up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad To See

it is sad to see
that in the middle of the rain
you go and you
leave me here
so guilty

when the rain stops
there is no peace
inside my mind
the rain goes on

why are you doing this to me?

soon i shall forget you
as i drown and
finally die
inside the flood that you
have caused me

RIC S. BASTASA
Sad Twist Of Fate

for years
you swear you cannot love me

and then this time
you change heart and say you love me

i have only one day to live
and what shall i leave you then: sorrow?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sadness Over The Place We Left Five Days Ago

We left the place
and we will not be coming back

it is a definite resolve
since we did not find ourselves

we have been looking for days
as though we are lost and beyond finding

we pack up
and then we go

we remember only those rocky mountains
those deeper blueness of the seas

we had footprints on those steps
going to the secret lake

if you follow
you must have seen

dried memories like
blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sadness Tops Them All.

in the honor list
Happiness gets first.
Sadness cannot make it.
Top Ten is merrymaking.
Grief is an outsider.
But everyone gets out
of the room
to be inside the bus
back home.
Before that is the
tragedy.
All those on the honors
list die.

Here, Sadness tops
them all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sadness, In Consonance With Lady Grace

long cold nights
one wonders

if German sausages are still
delicious if charred

RIC S. BASTASA
Safe

you are safe
with your built-in principles
gauges of the sages
in all ages

that when something or someone
a cure-all
or a please-all
or an offer of the whole world
right in the opening palms of his hands

you always tell me

'oh my, this is something too good to be true'

and you say no
and you are safe and at the end i am amazed

you have always been right.
out you go, now in the far away land, contented, looking at all of us

we feel we are all fools
and he is there smiling as the great wise man
his feet rooted to the realities of the earth
his hands stretching to the possibilities of heaven

and i think, he is correct,
and i admit, i still need to learn a lot of things from him.

a friend who tells me who am i really.
no holds bar.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sagada Stills In A Floating World By Marjorie Evasco

If with images
If with words
I
You
could catch
on photographic film on silk paper
a likeness
of
You
of me
in Sagada
I would have
You would
have
to sit a thousand years
with master of austere
Light
Measure
Masferré Shikibu
To learn the process
of rendering of
staining

Silence

Sound

RIC S. BASTASA
Sagada Tryst

The roads
move around the side
of high mountains

fog hover like an ocean
upon the valleys

at night the cold
seeps inside the skin
and bones

the pine trees are tall
and the rocks dress with moss

we gather around a campfire
of dried pine wood

we sit upon smooth stones
we share the sanctity of silence

this is the place
which time wants to take back

RIC S. BASTASA
Sagdi Lang Ang Akong Pagkasuhi

kon magpareho ang atong
mga tingog
dili lami pamation

pananglitan ang tanang
tingog sa gangis
sa ting-init
dili ba god sakit kaayo
sa atong
dunggan?

ang sitsit sa halas
bisag upat lamang ka
halas nga nagdungan
ug tago diha sulod
sa kakugnan
dili ba god sumo?

gani mawa man ang
atong kahadlok basin
ta paakon

maong paglipay nga ang
akong tingog
suhi,
dili ba ang suhi nga
tingog
sama sa suhing bata
mao may
makamaong mohilot?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sahara Desert

for lack of love life
or any sexual activity
in new york
or even in san francisco
a friend of mine
says
he feels like he is
the sahara desert

dry and dying
to be indulged..

RIC S. BASTASA
Sail Boat On The River

at night we go boating
along the shallow part of the
Dicayo River
when the moon is full and when
the winds are gentle

i paddle our way to the place
where she lives
the river gives a silvery shimmer
on the silent banks of the river

and then i begin to hear her hum
our favorite love song.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sailing Long Along Alone

you sail along
alone on a mirror of water
aboard a light bamboo raft
at the other end
you create a direction
the clouds glance at you
down below the
water level
finding this matter of drifting
too interesting
there is a relationship
developing
sailing all alone along
the surface of liquids
languid and languished
lean and light
a flight from a fight
this fool full of fear

RIC S. BASTASA
Sailing On...

there is this mutual dislike
an expected repulsion

is there a need to say it?
must there be more insult

to an injury that refuses to
heal?

the world is a wide ocean
a vast continent

we must simply forget
and sail on...

RIC S. BASTASA
and so tired of the weepy willows,
ironic about the daily news of love
abandoned, lovers abscond,
about a love lost, lover betrayed,

you heave a sigh and for once
agree with your feet to stroll the
shores of love: the hermit
crabs finally exchanging
shells for love beds, the worms
giggling for new partners
setting aside hermaproditic
decisions, the seagulls mating
on air and on top of the roofs
of boats moving out to sea

wave after wave of love
you sail out to sea all alone still
wishing that on the other island
you shall meet your best find.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sakay Sa Sakayan Sa Nagbugsay

sakay ta sa sakayan
ako ang magbugsay
pauli sa imong balay
tabok sa tampi
daplin sa dakong suba
ikaw ang maglantaw
sa unahan ikaw ang
moawit samtang ako
ang mamati samtang
ako ang maghatod
kanimo ngadto sa
imong pahulayan.

ayaw kagoul ayaw
ug kahadlok ayaw
ug kabalaka kay
sa imong balay
pahulayan wala na
ang kasakit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sakei

yasai ramen
hot and fuming to the
nose

tongue is
familiar to the
taste of
Japanese

noodles and you
recall same old faces
that make you smile
facing the
passing crowd of
people
in the mall

the banana split
comes later
beside
vanilla ice cream

you chin is
resting upon your
fist

everything is
tolerable here
until

the toy train comes
towed by a
plump white kid
whose hands are
tightly held by
a strict grandmother

what we see
sometimes turns sour
then bitter

at first glance
everything is sweet and
we think
that sweet is forever
and desirable

smooth relationships
nothing messy
but it is never that way
mind you

RIC S. BASTASA
Salad Bowl Of The Day

the day's bowl
birds' chirps
drops of honey
a green leaf
soft fingers of
the sun
an open window
a patch of rosemary
whispers of the
winds
a memory of you
blank eyes
a waking heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Salad Poetry

neruda’s chicken nuggets
whitman's elbow macaroni
william's mayonnaise
dickinson's olive oil
a little of elliot's salt
and robert's frost, brautigan's catfish, lowell's skunk,
sea canes of walcott,
bishop's broccoli with armadillo meat
yeat's yeast bread
an afternoon of friends
in a party with robinson
spring ice storm on mountain road in the poconos,
as mayer says the grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Salagma

sa dihang
naminyo
ako kanimo
salagma
lamang kadto

abi nako
ug dili
kay murag
daw sa talahaw
ako murag
ahanaw

ug kalit
mipakita
na ikaw ug
ako nagtapad
nagpapicture

salagmaan
ra abi nako
ug dili mao

RIC S. BASTASA
Salesgirl Sa Mercury Drug Store Sa Quezon Avenue

ang iyang
ngan Love, so ako siyang
gitawag og Love

putation, bawod ug pilok
bata pa, gwapa, dili kaayo
taas,
mubo ang iyang buhok

morag lunhaw nga
kabuntagon ang iyang
mga mata

gitingob nakog palit
ang akong tambal
sa high-blood unya si Love
nangutana kon
molarga na ba kuno ako
sa america

mangutana ta ko kon
mokuyog ba siya, apan wa
na nako dayona

naa sa kilid akong
asawa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Salestalk

here comes the
Vietcong
selling a dragon fruit
anticancer
always good for
your health
take it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Salí Despacio Para No Molestar A Nadie

the moon
left quietly
so not to
disturb
even the silent
stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Salimuang Sa Kanahan Nga Nangandoy Ug Anak

Ang amahan kugos ang duha ka anak
Ang inahan tapad
Posing silang upat sa kilid sa mga tulips

Balhin na pud sila sa tunga
Dayon sa tuo Sa wala Sa sentro

Pagkaanindot jud tan-awon ang ilang family Picture,
gusto sa pud unta ko pa-take ug family Picture

Pila ra gud unta pagposing sama nila
Maka-afford man sad kog bakasyon diha ba
Palit ug round trip ticket
Kuyog ang akong asawa
Maka-afford man sad kog palit ug digital camera
Bisan pa gani ug paliton nako ang mga tulips
Kanang tanang klase sa kolor

Apan ang problema ug duna bay baligya
Nga bata dihang lugara
Bisag for rent lang, para posing sad ming upat
Aron duna na koy
Family picture with the tulips in the states
Dayon akong i-email sa akong mga
Close nga higala

RIC S. BASTASA
Salimuang Sa Kanahan Nga Nangandoy'g Anak

Ang amahan ug inahan kugos sa duha ka anak,
Posing silang upat sa kilid sa mga tulips.

Balhin na pod sila sa tunga,
Dayon sa tuo, sa wala, sa sentro. Pagkaanindot gyod
Tan-awon ang ilang family pictures.

Gusto pod unta ko pa-take sama ana.
Pila ra ba unta’y pag-posing sama nila.
Maka-afford man sad ko'g bakasyon diha ba.
Palit og round-trip ticket
Kuyog sa akong asawa.

Maka-afford man sad ko’g palit og digital camera
Bisan pa gani og paliton nako ang mga tulips.

Apan ang problema og duna ba’y baligya
Nga bata dihang lugara
Bisag for rent lang aron posing sad mi
Aron duna na ko’y family picture
with the tulips in the States, dayon akong i-email
sa akong mga close nga higala.

RIC S. BASTASA
Salvador Dali Poem

writing what i want to really mean
in a fashion that the surface must be unbelievable
imagine snow in the desert
grass in the sea
penguins on the hills of sands
lions sitting on the pews
fish swimming in the air

but mind you the fish, the lion, the penguins, the grass and sea
and hills and sands, and those pews
oh, they are all really really true,

touch them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sam Keen

'Human life is a journey whose end is not in sight. Searching, longing and questioning is in our DNA. Who we are and what we will become is determined by the questions that animate us, and by those we refuse to ask. Your questions are your quest. As you ask, so shall you be'

well, it boils down to
i am here
who i am
where am i going?

and soon i shall be
actually it also depends on what you ask me to be

it is not just me
it is also you
and us

for how can i be me without you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sama Sa Mga Pato Diha Sa Tubig....

namahawa na kaha sila wala na igdungog kon asa na dili ba kaniadto mora silag mga sayaw-sayaw sa punoan sa mangga? ang uban nagpadungog dungog nga magsalag ang uban misaad nga moawit sa matag adlaw aron ang kasubo nato dinhi unta mahupay ang uban napakita sa ilang mga pahiym wala koy nakita nga nangyam-id niadtong pagsugod apan pagkagamhanan gayod sa kalimot og ang uban nga masaaron gitulon sa dakong baba sa kaligotgot ang uban nagpadaog sa mga bangkil sa kasapot og sa gamay lamang nga haguros sa hangin nanglupad sila sama sa mga langgam nga hadlok sa ulan sa linti sa dalogdog kita na lang duha dinhi gusto unta nakong makita nila ang atong gisaloan nga kalipay kalipay nga dili matukib sama sa pagtampisaw sa mga pato diha sa tubig

RIC S. BASTASA
Sama Sa Usa Ka Suba

Ang kinabuhi kuno sama sa usa ka suba
Diin nato gihinay-hinay og hulog

Ang mga talulot sa atong mga bulak,
Hinay-hinay og kuyog sa dagan sa tubig

Hangtod nga layo na kini sa atong
Panglantaw, ug isunod nato paghatag

Ang atong mga dahon, hinay hinay lang
Gihapon nga atong ipaanod ug ang atong

Mga sanga ato usab nga ipiyal sa suba
Sa atong kinabuhi hangtod nga mahurot na

Ang tanan natong mahatag. Tan-awon nato
Atong bulsa kon duna pa ba kitay mahatag

Kay kon wala na, moabot na ang dili
Kapugngan. Ihatag na nato ang atong

Lawas, ug dayon ang atong kalag.
Kasagaran buot nato nga magpabilin

Apan dili kini mahimo. Anaa ang balaod
Sa suba ug sa mga talulot sa mga bulak.

Ipaanod ang tanan. Ang tanan gayod.
Atong iuli pinaagi sa pagpaanod.

RIC S. BASTASA
Samadhi

an old man
sweeps leaves and
twigs
upon the grave of
his master

an old poet
loses himself
upon a frog
that once jumps
into the pond

the last one
was lost
in the middle of
the green ocean

in this poem
something is
happening

RIC S. BASTASA
Same

On a Sunday
at nine
he sits by the window
watching
people passing by
bringing their burdens
he is not part
of this
sacrifice
he is the spectator
watching the day pass by

till the next level of
his lazy enlightenment
the sun fades away
and now the moon
he sits by the window
imagining
the night away

it will be the same on
another day of his life
this spectator

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Boat....

we are on the same boat

all our hands are paddles here

another storm is coming

the heavy clouds are calligraphic over there

bold and dark are the strokes of our longings

i do not ask
i do not wonder why all of us are not talking....

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Canal Odors...

a stinking dog sits below me
it has a way of feeling my feet
with its canal flavored tummy

affection it shows
and that i must understand
despite the dislike
i must somehow reciprocate it
with a pat on its
back

'nice dog' i say
faithful all the way

with its ultra sense of smell
it has not registered any complaint at all
about myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Ending...

stories about the lives
of people
i've read them
throughout the night
after work
i hear no footsteps now
on the road
where this window
faces
the trees are as still
as a picture
of trees in colored
books
it is still the usual
sameness of
things arranged
every day and
night

da dog sits
beside my feet with
my brown socks still on
fitting themselves
on yellow
rubber slippers

it is the same ending
composing a
poem like this one
that you are reading

there is no option to
be unique
or different or
outstanding
so you can notice
what i am
not or what can i
be in the
next few minutes

i have no other ambition
but to take another
sound sleep
tonight and so
we have to part ways
again

it is my night now
as another morning in
you begins
to unfold like an umbrella
that you have to take
because you have
conceived another
rain...

well, rain is a good
beginning

as a sound sleep that
visits a very tired man
makes a good
same ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Ending.....

i am confident
that you will read this.
i know that you have been reading
me.

so i am writing this to inform you that
he died yesterday.

Unlike the others, he was not killed,
No, he did not also kill himself because
you know very well that with the way he loves life
and enjoys its zest, he would not
dare pulling the trigger
on his throat.

he died,
the reason is consistent.
even before i left you you already know
what is that reason,

if you believe that he can be forever in love with life
and enjoy its zest,
you are wrong.

he lost control. he went to the wrong places,
took the wrong medicine and live with the wrong people
in the wrong country.

he wants to correct a wrong with another wrong
showing fully well his lost faith in life,

he rebels. he learned to hate poetry. he stopped writing since
then.

sunsets are no longer significant to him.
migrating birds are nonsensical.

he did not like fine dining. he went to the mountain.
perhaps practiced yoga there. brags that he eats only worms.

he comes back to the city to find his wife and two kids. stays mostly on the sea. had all the salt of this world and then closed his eyes.

one thing i can be proud about him: he did not kill himself. you must learn to be brave. Live your life. Do not mind anymore if you are true to yourself.

it is irrelevant. Happiness too is immaterial. As sadness is. Same boat. Same river. Same ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Message

like vincent

aldo this world could have loved
someone as beautiful as you
could have,
it didn’t
i never did and never will
listen to one as deep as you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Same Place, Same Song...

because the song is played
you have no choice but to remember it

at first you say it is just a song
and you are a man

the song goes on and on
and beneath the song is a big river wanting to end its life joyfully
into the sea

because you are alone
and you have no one to cling to
you follow the river

and the flow goes on and on and on
and then you drown yourself inside that big river

now you have chosen the song
and it has become another part in you

it settles in your heart
and then you pay the bill, do not finish your beer and you go away

to have a dose of fresh air
same boulevard, same walk, but now at a different time

because this place has become
a part of you

and then you drown yourself into said memory

what a joy can this be
again and again and again.

RIC S. BASTASA
you give her space
because she needs it
she is blinded by your
light, there is simply more of
your immensity in her and
you pity her for that
as she is handling more
than what she can take,
and so today you go
on different destinations
she will have her own way
and you will not ask
where she is going and
when she is coming back...,

ditto.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sammy You've Got Mail

I am imagining how you look today, perhaps you do not have time
to cut your nails anymore
no time to trim your beard and
shape it like a nest for a bird
no time to wash & shampoo your hair
to give it a flowery smell
no time to brush your teeth to make
then appear pearly white to the girls
perhaps you have not taken a bath
for forty days and so you stink like
an unwanted skunk on the lake
why Sammy? don't you like the beauty
and goodness of life anymore?
why? do people shy away from you
or you shy away from them?
what did you put at the center of your
universe? God or you?
Sammy life has got a lot to offer
If and If you make God as its center.
Try it, and if all these else fails
Come to me I'll give you the best
Assistance for the suicide in your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sammy, The Nurse...

just a question,
can pink imagine pink?

you are the pink flower
miles away
blooming in the whitest
winter

supple firm pink
the centerpiece of the
earth's
feminine beauty

men can love you
in your imagination

but you telling it
is another consideration

talk about something better
the one that you love
to hold

the one that you can boast
for the night
when you are alone
with lust

talk about cliffs misspelled
about erect postures of
the coconut climber

the wine and the frog legs,
the adventures of the pink soul
do not burp.

RIC S. BASTASA
Samtang......

samtang dili mo pa makita ang hangin
samtang dili mo pa makumkom ang dagat
samtang dili mo pa mapupo ang mga bitoon diha sa langit
samtang dili ka pa makahibalo unsaon paghimo ang buwak nga antuwanga diha sa iyang sanga

nan, dili mo pa gayod masulat ang pinakaanindot nga balak sa imong kinabuhi

RIC S. BASTASA
San Antonio

san antonio
lead us to a place

where we are lost
and let us find

the way where we
can find our

way back home:
an empty space

a nothingness
a place where the

walls are not painted
where the doors are

not locked where the
windows look out

into an open universe
where all of us

are alive with living
fires where we become

shooting stars that
children see whose

mothers tell them:
make a wish!

RIC S. BASTASA
Sandy's Kid

Sandy's
eleven year old kid
introduces
himself as Kevin
and he is
asking me what
do i want
to know

there is
this silence that
is like an ear

'am i disturbing
you? ' he asks

'not really' i answered

oh Kevin
you must be another lonely kid
in town
whose favorite sport
is wrestling

mad against mom
and a dad who is nowhere
to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
Sanity...

did you know there was this woman who took up law
and embraced practically each word in her heart
only to find out
at the end of the series of lectures
that in reality

life is unfair

and that the purpose of the law is to level the fighting fields
women elevated to cope up with cruel men
and natives given the guns to learn the adage
that after all
strength is might and might is the real law
that the weak loses their
thrones
to the wolves and foxes and snakes

eventually she had a hard time balancing
realities from concepts
and literally she lost her mind
and heart

she left
and roamed the world like pure air
her heart did not turn to stone
her mind did not turn into water

i heard she writes poems
she keeps them
forbidding others to read them

i have conclusions
and like her
i always keep them to myself

because i am still sane...

RIC S. BASTASA
Santana's Game Of Love

It just takes a little bit of this, a little bit of that
It started with a kiss
Now we’re up to bat
A little bit of laughs, a little bit of pain
I’m telling you my babe
It’s all in the game of love
It’s all in the game of love
It’s all in the game of love
Let’s play the game of love

Roll me
Control me
Console me
Please hold me
In this game of love
I’m out here on my own

(excerpt from a song)

RIC S. BASTASA
Santorini Santorini

santorini santorini
Zorba zorba shall i be.

we shall dance
the zorba the zorba

i have so much to take
i have so much to give

we have so much to laugh
we have so much to drink

in santorini in santorini.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sapaw

gibalikan nako ang nangagi
gihinayhinayan ko og langkat
ang mga nagsapaw

nga panit sa akong nawong
ug gilantaw nako pag-usab
ang mga kalipay sa akong kabatan-on

kadaghan kaayo
sa mga saad nga gipatik nako
diha sa panit sa mga kahoy

gilantaw ko pagbalik
ang mga lunhaw
ang mga asul
ug ang mga gilak

ang mga dahon
ang mga panganod
ang mga bituon

gihikap ko ang akong nawong
gapiyong ko sa kahamis
sa akong kagahapon
akong gihapuhap akong ngabil

atua ka pa gihapon nagpuyo
sa suok sa akong unang halok nimo

RIC S. BASTASA
Sarcasm

lonely: i
lonelier: you and i
joy: you
ecstasy: still i
orgasm: just you
pragmatism: you and i again
marriage: of course, takes you and i
survival: you approach the i
at the end: just you and i, society demands a decent funeral

RIC S. BASTASA
Sashimi Loveliness

there is still something
raw in that relationship which
takes years to
grow
the tendrils of illusions
soft

it is like
salmon sashimi
sushi
bathed in wasabi cream
green hotness
which i leave softly still inside
my mouth
which my tongue savors
like
a pearl
a treasure of sesame
oil
with rice wine
and ginger

pleasure bathing longer
in the pool
of time

i love that raw peel
cold lemon juice
around my gum
that my teeth have long
readied
to take the
last bite

there is something delicious
in love that is raw
watery softness
hidden tenderness
unspoken
because the mouth is
closed
and full
so privately
uninviting

RIC S. BASTASA
Sassy Sunday Here......

white sands and
the sea breeze and
hammocks and
coconut trees and
watermelons and
barbecue, a bowl of
rice, and wife and
friends, and my dog
waggles his tail
aboard the car.

RIC S. BASTASA
Saturation Points...

buying furniture
is not an option, where
do you put them
in this crowded house?

clothes are a
no no,
he is fat and
clothes don't fit anymore

the spoons and forks
we have enough of them
left unattended
they rust in their secret
places

in the kitchen
the porcelain plates
are glossy
we become speechless
of such
beauty in fidelity
despite the fact
that we stop giving parties
and they have
become of no use

unlike before
we cook the traditional way
with firewood
and chimney and we
send the smoke to the
sky

our way of communicating
to God
daily.

now, we have become
too secretive with
technology
in our privacy
we do not keep any smoke
because we know
we cannot hold them
no matter how closed the
windows are
they always keep and
tell the story

guess what?
there is a need to buy
more blankets
we are feeling this
kind of indescribable cold
for the moment

RIC S. BASTASA
Saturday Morning

the maids here just do it
removing sofa covers
changing them all over
something new the old has to go
washing drying and ironing
on a saturday morning

she goes out to
buy some veggies and spices
the flea
market goes awry on a
saturday

just sit there
and don't smile
nobody seems to mind
what you are
what you do
what you say

just be silent there
pretend
that you do not exist
don't smile don't ever make a sound
and make them think that you are laughing

one maid looks at you
she is young
and intelligent and she is asking
what are you doing
in your computer

she does not think you are lazy and crazy
she is just curious
what is poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Saturday Morning 2010

just surfing and chatting

with friends and acquaintances

nothing to love
no one worthy

the face of love
shredded by the

shard blades of
broken memories

from now on
he says it's all about

the flesh and nothing
about the spirit

nothing to love
nothing worth it

someone to have sex with
at night

someone to fill the emptiness
and the void

someone to talk to
during late dinners

someone to say goodbye
hellos not that warm

what is true love?
he does not know anymore
since then,
since then,

when his heart was thoroughly broken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Saturn

So you fill yourself
with food and drink
and with a bloated tummy
you lie in bed
spinning, spinning like
a Saturn, huge, in your
own planetary system
content with your
rings of ice
not worrying where
you are going
certain upon the
flight where stars and
meteors go together
in the blindness of
the laws of
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Save The Zzzs, For My Friend Who Cannot Sleep Tonight

Skip the nap

Back to the womb
make your room
comfortable
make it dark and
quiet

make an amniotic
temperature
remember
when mother
was pregnant of
you and father
was putting his
ear
listening how
you kick

take a deep breath
wear your warmer
pink pajamas
keep an extra
blanket
on this cold and
damp night

keep your laptop
away
from bed
this bed
is only for sleep
(and sex
if you have
your partner
with you)
worry time
is daytime
tonight
is sleep time
do not
distract your
eyes
with the problems
of the DAY.

make your routine
same night
same sleep time
a nighttime of relaxation
meditate
relax your muscles
it is sleep time
now

and do not forget
Work out
regularly

i tell you
tonight
will be your soundest sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Saving A Drowning Man...

just because i have saved the drowning man
then i shall be forever responsible for him?

i disagree.

i saved a snake and it does not bite me.
i sheltered a scorpion, i adopted a crocodile
put them in their comfortable homes

and the world has since then become a happier place
for man and snakes and beasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Savor The Moment And Let It Last Even Without You.

this is Sunday morning
and what you have is fever
a sore throat and a mind which
wants nothing but to be rested
on a pillow

others have gone to a picnic far
away from town
some friends agree for a hunting ground
to kill birds and ducks
some have opted for a dinner buffet
in the city

'what is the matter with you? ' a friend
from New York is asking
'you cannot waste your life, there is so
much to to New York' he eagerly
makes the tip

my life is here
rotting and i want to be everyone's
fertilizer.

'just a joke, i tell him'
i am going swimming and it is heavily raining here'
would you want me do it for you?

and there's the irony of it all
fan in winter, hot soup in summer.
as always, dislocated life, wrong timing,
wrong person, wrong attitude,
everything seems to be wrong

from the point of view of others
who, after all, has not fathomed what
happiness really is.

so simple. savor the moment and let it
last even without you.
hear the chirping of the birds
on the heat-season of their aviary romance.
more eggs on their nests.
more fledglings, everything new
helpless and so lovable.

as is, where is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Savor These Realities....

my dearest
we are here
we are not watching
fake mountains

i am holding a
real red rose
not those
fabricated ones

we are trekking
on real paths that
wind themselves
on the bellies
of real lovely
mountains

let us savor
these realities
for soon
we just don't know
when all of these
shall be gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Savoring The Images Of An Early Morning Sunshine

needles of light
pricking your face like Chinese
acupuncture

blue and white butterfly-clouds
gray crab-stones
beetle-pebbles
showers of golden-dusts
emerald mountains
ruby-twilight
turquoise-blue-dreams
diamond hopes
platinum-self.

RIC S. BASTASA
Savoring The Silence Of Privacy

actually we learn more
from ourselves by not talking much
words are assuming
the sounds of rain
sometimes unnecessary thunder
everything still
like quite quiet
words become to crowded
on such a limited space
words that are meant not
to be uttered
because they are too precious
in our privacy
not to be shared
and we learn more from this
respect for stillness
for the poplar state
no wonder how God has not
put mouths to this earth
which when it speaks
shows its tongue in tsunamis
its screams in volcanic eruptions
its fears in quakes

i am studying in my lifetime
the art of silence
the beauty of words unspoken
on my lips
are embroidered tendrils
of climbing
morning glories
on the trellis of my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Say 'I Have No Toothache' Twenty Times....

a man realizes
that one way to survive
a toothache
is to look at the ceiling
and say
'i have no toothache'
twenty times....

RIC S. BASTASA
Say I Love You To Yourself...

now why do hate yourself?  
just because it is getting weaker 
and cannot earn you more income 
as expected?

oh, do not be so cruel  
be kind, as you are kind to other 
people  
so must you be kinder, if not 
kindest to yourself

it is time now to sit down with 
yourself 
relax on a bench in the park 
watch children play 
watch the old couple take their 
stroll 
on a Sunday afternoon

listen, just listen to the sounds 
of the 
weaknesses of this world 
watch its beautiful way of fading 
and slowing down

watch the best sunset ever 
in silence 
and say, i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
suffering shares the same eyes,  
same point of view  
and as i see it  
sufferers take the same road  
of voluntarily taking so much  
suffering  
on their hearts  
sort of having learned and loved  
what suffering gives them  
and when sometimes they met  
accidentally in the park or in some  
Chinese restaurants  
drinking their kind of tea  
when their eyes meet  
they easily know the names of their  
existence  
without need of introduction  
and despite this seeming familiarity  
less the trifle  
after having a short look at each other  
they nod their heads  
their lips back on the cup  
and without much effort to avoid it  
they continue the sipping  
slowly, slowly,  
and when the cup is consumed  
they take leave  
say no excuses  
and never really really  
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Say That Always, Life Is Beautiful! '

Keep on running keep on running, run away, she keeps on saying that to me. i am hardheaded, stayed put, stand my ground, and ask, who is she?

no one tells me what to do with my one and only life
i live it the way i want it: not so good perhaps, but it is, and will always be mine alone.

not even the sickness can sway me to grieve
not even your cruelty can make me change my mind
to live, and to live fully and to say that always, life is beautiful! '

RIC S. BASTASA
Saying Thanks To You

you know it very well
and if we see each
other again, you may
take a gaze, or glimpse
a little, but i am ready
to forget
there is
really a need to
recall,
what for really?
what is your
reason for
coming back?
everyone is nowhere
to be found,

i swallow
that fear, that shame,
and i will face you
and i will not be afraid,
to say, ‘thank you’

RIC S. BASTASA
Sayo Sa Buntag

Kagawson na gyod.
Midagan ka paingon
Sa tago diin duna'y
mahulog.

Pag-abot, gahubo
ug milingkod ka.
Mipiyong. Mitakilid.
Mipatunga. Mihawid
Sa kilid. Mipiyong
Pag-usab. Miagulo
Sa kalami lamog
Ang dyutay nga kasakit.
Mora ka'g gigawsan.
Ay, kahayahay!

Gikalibang na nimo
Ang nakaong santol, pinya
Ug kinilaw nga bulinaw.

Nabasa nimo ang sinulat
Sa usa ka banggiitan
Nga Amerkano nga kining
Klaseng panghitabo
Diha sa imong sampot
Ug sa imong pantawan
Usa ka dakong kalipay
Sama sa paghimugso
Sa usa ka himsog nga
Balak. Busa paglipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Says Romeo To Juliet

what time shall we meet? tonight or tomorrow night?

RIC S. BASTASA
Scaling.....The Slopes

there is this
blindness which society
loves

it is justice, the blinder
it is, the truer its verdict.

the blind one holds a sharp
knife on one hand and a weighing
scale on the other

blindly it slews what blindly
it thinks was the cause of the calamity

on those blind times, on those
blind actions, the head dragon of
society continues to scale the
slopes of the mountains of injustice.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scar On Your Left Arm...

the mirror is always a good metaphor for solitude, on cold nights, the mist sticks on the glass, despite the coldness in solitude you sweat, there is heat inside you warm body, groping hands, the mirror faces you, blames you and ask: where have you been for all those years?

(sigh, emote, undress, on uncut pubic hair, somehow you manage an attitude of purity)

i am here with you. all these years. i am. Faithful as a rose tattoo.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the fields of your dreams
we were never just scare crows
we were the flowers
that bloomed in June
the dews of dawn in May
the merry makings
of December
the promises of January
the forgotten deaths of
April
in your life we cannot be
disregarded
we are the integral parts
of you
do not look at us as though
we are just
your scare crows
we are your rivers too
sometimes you touched
the sides
of our being mountains
and we shiver
like a squirrel
the one that runs away when
you begin
to move in.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scarred People

one rainy day
the scarred people
decide to take the plunge
on the murky river

eye go naked
not for anything else
but to simply see who got
most of the scars
from their faces
to their feet

someone wins of course
his scars look like snakes and
centipedes
practically naked he looks like
a leopard

yet he is the most gentle person
of them all

they take their plunge into the murky river
following where the flood
may finally hide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scars

sCARS are Trophies of suffering
Display all of them
and They will be Pleased
and you will be
Staying CONnected witH tHEM
for EACH ONE
EACH scar
is always a part of the whole
of uS
for no one stays as an Island
One broken wing
Ripples the Sadness
and Sorrow Throughout
This Wide Universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scatter

sky and
earth can make
a compromise
between them

air, and sun and
moon too, night and
day, and between us
some words,

know by now
that for this world
to keep on
revolving, there
must be some compromises,

win some, lose some,
you cannot have
all of me as i cannot
have all of you,

go, come back, go,

come back,
do not stay, as
i will do the
same.

a part of my time
a part of my place.
some space between.
air to take in and
sighs to take out.

let us scatter.
spare some pieces.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scattered And Free

the normal mind goes for
a unified view

thus whatever is scattered
like stars the mind grapples to gather for
a heap of leaves

thus whatever is dissonant
the mind summons upon an eclectic rampage
and creates a harmony somehow
to put music
in one note

but no matter what this normal mind does
what this universe opts
is to explode and create a bang
and scatter some more
all its
hidden particles

what order there is
the flux sucks them all into a big hole
and at the end of its tunnel
vomits whatever is taken
and spreads
everything like dust from the
rear of
a speeding car

one looks at it
in isolation
and one sees a chaos that is more beautiful
than a system
than a cabinet of clothes
with a lock
of a closet

wanton beauty as one wants to put it
the rain that drops without a count
the sunlight that burst without
cadence
the river that flows in rage
without numbers
the clouds that drift
without
a specific direction
the waves that rise and fall
and reach a shore
without staying
upon a permanent
dwelling

all these from a distance
make me accept
the crazy cadence of
disorder
that my normal mind wants to grapple
into a cat fight
a struggle that i still want
to understand
a wrestle that wishes
to win and
stop

at the end let all things be
scattered and free....

RIC S. BASTASA
Scattered Morning Thoughts

the rooster
has already crowed many times
as i wake up early
at 4.

i sum up a life.

your life and mine, we sum it up.

has the nights lied about who we are
behind our motives?

Love too has many faces
and it speaks in many mouths.

i sum up Love.

It is measureless, no exact dimensions. It is always
saying beautiful places for us.

a paradise. Where is it?
a bed. Is it cold now?

the roosters are crowing
they are not love songs anymore.

the nights has stars till morning.
we never notice anymore.

we walk in different directions.
we promise nothing.

It is always the sound of bus fading on the street
as it moves far away, far far away than we can with limits
understand.

The rain starts to pour. The roof is a chatter.
The oasis of silence is gone.

The journey of the camel has begun.
We take shelter in that departing kiss.

For onward we go, looking for the city of our lives.
Without maps and compass.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scene Beside The Cemented Fence

a red motorcycle
stands beside
a cemented fence
where some vines
with yellow flowers
are stucked

beside it is a
sky blue van
which is open
and empty

a man with bold
big stripes for a shirt
is pressing keys
on his cellphone

the window of this room
is closed
and the world is seemingly
noiseless

except for the child
who runs to the other side
of the road
because the mother
is busy asking
questions to the
banana cue vendor

a big truck on a fast speed
is approaching
the innocent child...

i cannot hear the sound
of the big screech

people are crowding
rushing

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
and i cannot see the
child anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Scene One

i am seated on a chair
naked and you kneel before me
naked
you lick my in between
and suck it
i close my eyes
imagining the bursting
of another universe
you stand
and kiss me
you lick my lips
as i hold your body
the center of my
new world
we are in this
act of creation
like God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scenes Of Losing

the earth is colder now
the leaves keep on falling
the winds are harsher
swift and sweeping,
the skies are turning gray
and clouds are getting heavy
the waves of the sea are getting bigger
waters rise and flood is getting near
lands recede, grass drown
wells polluted,
landmarks gone.

i've been looking for you
with a hope that you are still alive
and still mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scenes.....

the night is
a mannequin

and we are
the recent
harlequins
in the room

the night is
no longer a mystery
it is colder
and the lights are not
turned off
because of fear

dimmer
like promises

the floor is silent
like the carpets
the dusts invade
like a catacomb
ambient

the scenes outside
are horrible
dead birds hanging
themselves
on the twigs of
a fungal tree

nevertheless
a bunch of ripe guavas
wait still
to be picked by some
hands of the
boys.
Scent Of Rotten Meat

Rafflesia
Titan arum
North American pawpaw

For flies to pollinate them
They must produce
The scent of a rotten meat

Name names in
Your rotten world, now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scents & Flavors

Your hair
Ancient Egyptian kyphi
Your feet
Lavender oil
Your armpits
Palo santo wood
Your neck
Frankincense sticks
Your lips
Benzoin absolute siam

Your heart
Red strawberry

how much would that be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Schadenfreude

this word amazes me
one day
i write it on the surface of
my table

when i look at it
i always remember the names of
people
who wait for that biggest laughter
when i fall
and be on that pit of
of boiling oil
where i am fried
and charred

on the other hand
i am no exception either
delighting
on your failures
and misdemeanors

there were many
& there will be many still
in fact
countless if we have to be too picky
about it

all my fingers and toes are not enough
and my days are so delightful
that i forget about
my own precautionary measures too

i too fall and will fall as many times
as falling does upon its own
fall
like a jack-stone ball

you see
we are a happy community
rejoicing upon our
own shortcomings

feasting upon our misfortunes
a toast!

rejoice
for we are the real people
in our lapses...

RIC S. BASTASA
the seed sprouts
and tells the true story about
its being embedded
beneath
the coat of its being

beneath the fertile ground
promises of leaves
and roots

the sun is too harsh
to face
the moon too cold

survival is the aim
of every
red ant

the tree is big
and tall and the clouds
are friends

one day
it learns the song of the grasshopper
after which
the conversations become as nice
as buds

there are truths to hide
words to decorate
sweet
white lies

the story begins with
a whim
caprice its complication

there ought to be a nice ending
a freeing
it is all about the full blooming
of a red rose

i have all the petals inside my hands
to complete the
story

you love it
do not tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Scorching Summer In 1981

in 1981
i met her
she was then
a poetess

we were engaged
to talk

and so we had
a tryst
under a tree inside
that walled house

it was summer
and the grasses were
all brown

it was a useless
meeting
we did not say anything

we were meant for
nothing

we were only engaged
to talk

RIC S. BASTASA
My sister saw the black cat inside my monitor
Black fur and sharp eyes
Piercing like sharp claws
Whiskers like catfish
In the mud,
It was staring at her
And felt its anger,

Of course, she did not like it,
She complains
Why of all screensavers

Anthurium (oh she loves Anthurium
Red and white anthuriums)

Or four horses, white grazing horses, brown galloping horses
For some screensavers’ lucky charm,

Why the black cat
As screensaver?

It was just the head of the black cat,
Nothing else
Nothing more, popping up in the screen,
A black cat as wallpaper

(Like one that unzips automatically
The zipless type) ,

And I am afraid she may not like
The sudden popping up,
She fears it may jump in front of her
And scratch her and totally scare her off
Her years of
Prudence,

And easy submission,
And her tradition,
Her sense of
Propriety
And piety
It is indeed a delicate
Issue

She had not seen, to my mind,
Anything yet,
The way I scratch my head
And turn it sidewise
Once or twice to say no
Ordinarily

And inside myself, I was laughing,
She is scared
And funny
Skinny sister
Emaciated by too much
Keeping
& unforgiving

I was not scared because
Anyway
She cannot understand
Me
My trauma at 2
My love at 15
My longings for all those years
Carefree days in the river bathing naked
With some brusque
Friends and their passion for
Carabaos
& then there were

Some sad stories about the cats in the alleys
Black and white
Those that I really love and caress &
Died and
Those I cannot really mourn
& love
In the open
What will our neighbors say?
It is always the favorite question of my sister
They would think that I am crazy
I am cheap
I am an embarrassment
I am a burden
And deserve nothing
The whole family will be hurt
& suffer incessantly
Unnecessarily

As a matter of compromise
The cat, the black cat as screensaver
Shall be changed tonight,
But frankly, I love its
Sharp black eyes
Warm long black furs
I would still touch them
In a dream
Slide its furs in my armpits
And I would giggle, giggle, giggle, and giggle
Alone
Away
The whole night giggles, giggles, giggles and giggles
Deep and
Dark

It is the being of giggling, the giggling,
Yes
My dear sister
It is the giggling
That counts in my being
The whole being

And I am telling no one
And I can’t tell anyone

Who is really interested about
Dead black, foul cats, with black furs
For jinx?
Anyway, I’ll save
In the ‘shared pictures”
The
Black cat, and in nocturnal
Dreams I’ll have scratches
All over my body
Of this black cat

My decision to be unwise for once
Is now

I am laughing inside myself
(ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!)

I face her,
My skinny sister
Un-giving
She faces the black cat
Sharp eyes facing her,
She sees the head of the black cat
And she can even touch
My face because of that
Certain closeness,

But she will never, never,
Never know
The real name of that black cat
And the new name I call myself

(Me, a name I call myself
Fa a long long way to run)

Because, oh well, she never asked,
In the first place

RIC S. BASTASA
Scribbling On Your Wall...

it is
the bitterness
that
makes his house
stand
the doors
open
and the windows too
it is the same
bitterness that
welcomes the wind
that sways the
curtains
that keeps the
ink fluid
that makes the
pen write....

RIC S. BASTASA
Scribbling Some Lines

scribbling some lines
forms of escape from
traps and grills
lines that give us wings
to fly
lines that give us claws
to defend ourselves
lines that shall make
us understand
what knots are there
that we cannot untangle

but sometimes i go within
and inside myself
i say: what for? does understanding
untie the knots that entangle us?
my friend, there is no need
to understand
no amount of understanding
can set us free
just go, walk, and talk
and take your time
comfort yourself with
a little drink
a little smile
a little rest
a little of everything
for soon
just like anything
everything puffs out
and becomes
over.

RIC S. BASTASA
DEPRESSION is not a sign of weakness
it is a sign that you have been trying to be strong for too long.

Put this as your status if you know someone who has
or has had depression.

Will you do it and leave it on your status for at least an hour?
Most people won't, but it's mental health week
and 1 in 3 of us will suffer at some point in our lives.

Show your support good people.
I copy and pasted, will you?

RIC S. BASTASA
he first sculpted a very shapely body of a woman
thin arms, slender body, soft fingers,
porcelain smooth skin
supple breasts
complete with a face
and other
body parts to the last detail
possible
then he sculpted the man
the usual man with strong arms
gentle eyes and well chiseled
thighs
complete with a face
and other body parts to the last detail
possible
he is so kind enough
to leave the two
in the privacy
of their new found existence
that his chisels
and hammers gave them
despite the fact
that he is gay

RIC S. BASTASA
Sea Flower

sea flower
that fell on the white sands of the shore
beside my footsteps

her petals
entangled on some twigs

her scent spread out
thinly

the sea breeze takes
it away

as i sit merely watching
and then

the morning light comes
warming my
cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
when my heart sinks
in the deepest part of the sea of melancholy
i believe
that it can survive
on the evolution of sorrow
when it creates its fins
rising from the sea
it assumes wings
fish-bird-heart-of-man
still alive
boatman, rocket, star,
a heart of stone,
this heart of mine
without prejudice
to love that may soon come
again
i know, i believe
i care.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sea Sick

i am an old man now
when i take the boat for a ride back home
passing the islands
and stopping over some ports
i get dizzy

as you all enjoy the trip
i lay in the corner
with my vomit

contemplating again on something
stable and steady

RIC S. BASTASA
Sea Story

At mararison island
You are my starfish
I am at a loss
As a clam
While the other black sea urchin waits
For the perfect time
To kill

The boatman fails to tie
His heart at the anchor
Then the storm comes

RIC S. BASTASA
Seagull

at first to be frank with you
i am choosy: friends and circles
i go for only two to three
not four
for they will be too many
and expensive to maintain
at a certain level
of intimacy and familiarity

i change like the ordinary rest
one gets lonely
sometimes and needs a broader
circle of friends
somewhere where you float
and not settle
where you hop from one island
to another and feel
the excitement of
not being true at all
playing a lot of game
learning new ones
embracing everything
a friend to all
but not to anyone anymore
one learns again
to be alone in the mob
of faces
a sea of people
you begin to sail
as a boat
for all
a seagull...among

RIC S. BASTASA
Searching

GRASS Blades
on the marsh
like swords
pointing to the
skies,

empty open hands
like twigs
at winter time
asking for nothing

come spring
a bud gives hope
another one speaks
of a promise

from a glass window
upon a frost
the eyes are gazing
waiting for a sunny
day, looking for light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Searching For Meaning

some travel far and wide
sailing the oceans
flying the skies
from edge to edge
shore to shore
to find the meaning
of their lives

some just stay
and listen
and be so silent
listening to
the beatings of their hearts
and find something
steady inside
a flame
alive

and they say
they found
themselves
there

without even using
any word
or even
a sigh

because
there is nothing there to see and speak

RIC S. BASTASA
Season Of Loving And Dying

i

the season of loving
is the song in the morning
you keep humming
because the love last night
was so warm

ii

on the next season
comes that of the dying day
when things are kept inside
for fear that others may steal them from us
when we lock the doors and windows
when we light a candle
in the darkness of our souls
when we seek sleep
because light begins to hurt
our eyes
when we take shelter on dreams
because reality begins
to hurt

RIC S. BASTASA
Seasoning Of Joy

'It is a fine seasoning for joy to think of those we love.'
Moliere (1622-1673)

without you
everything tastes
bland
my taste buds
are dead

i only have to think
of you
to savor the sweetest
taste of honey

i still love you
despite the death
of love
inside me.

RIC S. BASTASA
you know the seasons
how the horizon changes its background
light, fading, darkness coming, dusk and twilight
and morning and noon and night
we have embraced all these
how many times together?
the rain and the drought
the swollen river and the emaciated
trees and the falling of the leaves and the budding
and blooming and the seeding
over and over again

we are carried with the seasons
and we too carry all these changes in our hearts
not for just any reason
but that we must learn to love and be patient and be alive
do not tell me about death
for surely it will come by itself and we can do nothing about it
tell me about what you do
to make another one happy
no! do not tell me about how you make yourself happy
that is not our essence
we are meant for something else
we have a purpose
we did not come here by random
by sheer luck or the popping out of circumstances and chances
tell me for once
no! do not tell me why you are sad and lonely
i have all the reasons and i have known them all by heart and soul
tell me for once
why you failed to live up to the true nature of yourself
the ought
the categorical imperative
the seeking heart the loving and the tenderness of the caress

tell me why you have given up life and refuse to listen
to the palpitations of the heart
tell me no more about
the selfish longings of your mouth and tongue
the journey of your fingers
the watery nature of your hairs
tell me about a flame a flicker a ray of light
tell me about hope and desire to more
to be beyond the grasp of your hands
to be beyond the steps of your feet
tell me about the secret tunnel of your mind
and the light at the end
an exit a door opening a window with the wind

and then i shall also tell you about myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seasons Of The Self

at the first hour
this morning
he puts his best foot forward
at noon
his hands the best palms
the plain white fingers
to the sun
in the afternoon he feels betrayed
and asks himself
what is he doing? for whom and
what for?
at night he stops
meditates upon
the deeper oceans
of his whale
existence
he sends the message
to the other end of the
continent
he says yes
what am i doing? what for and for whom?
there is an answer
but it is too late
the desert has already
become true

RIC S. BASTASA
at the F seat of
the plane
the fat man with scattered white hair
talks that his daughter is
graduating tomorrow
in high school,

the E seat man
makes a link that his son is
graduating this afternoon
in the elementary school

they are overseas workers
from Jeddah

they are talking about salaries
and other incentives

the thin one brags that he
can work overtime and on fridays
he sidelines as driver
in the desert
road

I am the D seat man
i close my eyes and take my sleep

the plane sails like a ship in
a very calm sea &

i really have nothing to say.

RIC S. BASTASA
and then the children
come to you and you cannot tell
who was it that
you have carried in your arms
a long, a long
time ago, for now they have changed
faces, most
of them have lost the pink luster
of love
and innocence and you shy away
from each
whose thoughts are no longer the same as yours
and you are caught in this
paranoia
that they are here finally to dislodge you
in this overcrowded
face of the
earth and so this is what is
happening next,
to escape from their
wrath
you go back to being a child again
relearning
the art of innocence
via those self-made diseases
those pretensions
of youth
unlimited

RIC S. BASTASA
Second Sunday...

february is fickle
one gets inside a room, closes the door,
and spreads the mat and
turns off the light, but february does not
sleep, it boasts of love
till dawn,
there is an exit door at the left side
of the room
covered by a waterfall and
the sound of
birds mating, you know, calls, like that,

somehow, february is fun,
funny, makes the hearts of lonely people beat again,
dances under the moon,
begins to love again the rain at midnight
plucking rusty guitar strings
and kissing moonbeams
passionate as the
night blanketing the tall trees
erect to the
cold.

i like february, but i have none
for now.
the second sunday may prove
myself wrong,

she is coming, literally.

RIC S. BASTASA
Second Thoughts Of The Past

Her soft hands half-open
About to touch mine
I shapes some words inside my mouth
My tongue almost slipped
But I stopped the conceived utterance
We left without saying goodbye
We traveled paths
That never crossed again
I sometimes think this time
What if she touched my hand
They were trembling
What if I uttered the words
Necessary for said occasion
"I love you, please do not go! "
Why did I close my mouth that day
Why did she not touch me?
Love should have won.

RIC S. BASTASA
Secrecy

secrecy is a room
gaping

when i enter this morning
it closes itself

and says it will not open
again

love is demanding
exclusive

outside lies hate
you keep it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Secret Garden

There is always a place where a soul shall rest.

And you never have to find it or ask

It is the garden that comes to you

It is the secret that opens itself

When you are ripe for it

When the hands of the clock finally touch it

And you shall smile and change into such lightness to flight

And just like them you shall never think about us again or even
Coming back
To our chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
in trying to escape
away from you
i touch other faces
kiss other lips
and make love
with other bodies

nights and days
looking for peace

it did not really work
despite the cork

i still love you
i still miss you
even in sleep
in the middle
of my dreams
i still want you

let me face you now, though,
but still, i won't really tell you

(i love you. i really love you)

RIC S. BASTASA
Can you keep a secret?
I ask you
I will test you
About my loneliness
It is a secret
That I keep
And I want to share
It with you
If you can keep
A secret

You cannot
Keep a secret
Today a friend
Calls
911
For me

And so
my loneliness
Has spread
From one mouth
To another
Throughout the world

And all my friends
And acquaintances
Call today
Telling me

We share the same secrets

But I am lonelier
ever
I have another secret
That I can no longer
Share with you

You cannot keep a secret
You never knew
what delicate means

RIC S. BASTASA
Secrets Of The Loving Person

the room where you sleep
does not take hold of you

your bed cannot be part of your skin
and your windows are nothing but

the ordinary closing and opening
of your day

you like a door that opens
to nowhere

you have diamonds in your hands
you spread them

in the garden and you see
how they all glitter for a while

darkness folds and
light of another day opens

you take a walk and whistle
you don't remember the color of the blanket

you forget what warmth was there on that bed
you do not care whether the windows are closed or open

you move to another house
and tell your stories all over again

there is no blink in your eyes
there is no stammering in your tongue

you do not tell them what you love
there are no hands too familiar to hold you back

RIC S. BASTASA
Seduction

she is not direct
she once lived in the land of winding ways
she was brought up in the house where suggestion is an art
where imagination is fertile

she says she just had a nice warm shower and she is putting on
her pink lingerie
the night is cold and she is closing the glass window
and made the lights dim inside her room

on the phone she says she likes victoria's secret and
she is spraying her breasts and ears
her hair smells roses her tongue spanish lemon

she says her lips are moist and she has taken a bite of red cherry
a chunk of chocolate and she says she is sipping her mint flavored tea

she says she wears no panty and bra when she sleeps tonight
alone in her room and she reminds him
she forgot her keys inside his electric blue fuego pick-up

she reminds him it is 11: 30 p.m. and suggests that she is not sleeping yet
that he may bring the keys for her to keep them tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
See The Light (An Answer)

i am the light
of your soul
open your eyes
see the light
i am a body burning
i am a soul consumed
i am the light
of your soul
You are burning
You shall soon be also consumed.

RIC S. BASTASA
See The World In A Stand Still.

you sound like a robot.
unaffected, and unable to say
the nuances of the wind and the
chimes, the sounds of the gritting
pebbles on that sandy shore if
your remember
the boat that has arrived with a
fisherman who got not a fish for
his waiting daughter and wife
but who deeply loves him for all these
deficiencies....

be free to be you. Gather all those
that you see along the way.
Do not think. Sway to the breeze.
speak the first word.
do not mind the books.
discard what you learned before
you have embraced the first
consciousness.

junk every learning and then
walk away
and if you bathe in the nearest
river, be free to get naked
for it is here where nobody sees you
that you shall be you.

hear the sounds of the splash of the waters
lower your body, let your head emerge from
the depths and then see the world
in a stand still.

RIC S. BASTASA
See You In Siberia Too

See you in Siberia
The nomads are waiting: the Yenets dancing on the sleeping land,
the Nenets are bringing their cats with kittens,
The Huns are not longer in their fighting mood
The Iranian Scythians are making kites for the winds in the snow
The Turkic Uyghurs are playing their flutes.

Let us remember the Khan of Sibir in Tobolks
who endorsed the Kubrat as Khagan in Avaria.

Be glad, Aldo, for the Mongols are gone.

Come summer, read those poems.

RIC S. BASTASA
See You Soon

a white butterfly
bidding
goodbye
to

a black butterfly

beside a very
white flower

RIC S. BASTASA
 Seed

you think
it is dead
and you
bury it

one day
it rises
and cracks
the earth

it peeps
and gives
you
the finger

RIC S. BASTASA
Seed, Qou Vadis?

seed falling on the ground
brought by a night bird
wet by the rain of dusk

you have no choice
but to crack your hard covering
and then grow

some roots and leaves
in time's blessing
some flowers
then fruits

then the silence of the wilting
follows
to be back into a seed again
eaten by this night bird
and thrown back
to a distant soil

seed,
you must begin
your cycle again

for what choice do you have?
the night bird does not
even know
and the soil simply receives you
and the rain of the dusk
simply wets you
and they do not even know
what & why
they are doing all these

this is the cycle
of the seed of life
and wilting and death
Seeding

seeding the clouds
with doubt that is what i do

for you i fly
the skies hovering
on your face. I kiss you.

and then you cry.
and then the clouds rain
and rain some
drops of your pains

i see this pleasure.
i give you clear skies.

hoping that that is
all you want. And then

you tell me. You want
them blue, in fact,

bluer than blue. I shake
my  are not

just irresistible. You are
also impossible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeding Time

after the bloom of the dandelions
the winds from the south come

it is time for seeding it is time for flying away
they leave now
not knowing where
they soon stop

the next batch of dandelions grow
how can there be sorrow?

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeds

in the fertile fields of our beings
tiny seeds are sown
and they always grow
and become flowers

they also exude scent
and display bright colors
to the sun

and they wilt before
we know it
simply because we are too busy
we could have given
these seeds enough time
to see how they become
themselves

so beautifully that we could
have adored them
even in a single moment
a very brief moment

yet we didn't and now we are sad
in this regret
this reminiscing

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeds Of Life

the seeds of life are inside me
and you shall be the fertile ground

ninety moons shall be fed
and then you shall bloom with the fullness of the last moon

the rapture comes
i shall proclaim your glory

i shall kiss you as i close my eyes
tails of comets appear
my universe explodes
giving birth to
your star.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing Hope On The Ground

i see hope in the seed
sprouting on the ground
lifting its head
giving way to the green
leaf
to roots and then throwing
away
the covering.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing The Latest Picture Of Jojo

in America
Jojo has no choice but
to become
a man

no one cares for him
and so
he must care for himself

lest
he perishes finally
and without any significance
even
when he inhales
his last breath

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing The Little Girl Inside The Lady's Body

if only
you see the little girl
with a pink ribbon
and white ruffle
dress
inside her
&
holding a rag doll
in the image of
your sister
when you first
gifted her
on her 4th birthday

or your mother
when she too
was once
the cute little
girl
of grandpa somewhere
in China
in that old
black and white
picture
that was kept for
long
in that rosewood
trunk

the molestation
rape
sexual abuse
or any form
of harassment
could not have
happened

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing The Motorcycle Leave

behind is the dust
behind the dust is you
when the dust settles
the tear is gone
someone sits there waiting
expecting no one
anymore

the town is silent
as though another nuclear bomb is thrown

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing Their Causes

to each his own
causes
they all preach
on the sidewalks
of our lives

i ponder
and even in my own home
i reflect
on all these

like the messages
in my emails
they have become nothing
but spam

i got my own
but i don't preach anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing Things In The New Light

adjust the focus
light and dark
far and near
and then see
the real

thing
or the person

from here
you may
see...

tell me

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing You Carefully

seeing you carefully is no easy job for me
i do not easily jump into conclusions
lest there be an injustice on the description of who you are

the magnifying glass does not serve any purpose
you are more than the little details scribbled in your skin
something in you slips like a slimy fish, and i am trying to catch it

the fish net is useless, the mesh too large for one as minute as you
you are too small to be caught, too smart for the nylon threads

i try yoga, and in deep meditation i use my mantra, i chant and fall into
a deep sleep, i dream, i go into an astral travel to be with you

and there you are, in the silence of the stars, in the brightness of the moon
your soul, as beautiful as the goddess of secrecy, without flesh, now
as infinite as divine. At the end, i failed to utter your name.,

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing You Makes My Heart Burn And I Stop The World Revolving

Seeing you my love my heart begins to burn and burn and burn
Unstoppable to fire
I pause and look at you and take a hard look at you some more

You are simply beautiful!

So beautiful to behold in my burning burning burning heart
Unstoppable to fire
I take another hard look
I stop the world revolving
To see you again and again and my heart burns and burns and burns
Till I am consumed
Looking

Just the mere idea of looking at you

You look at me
Our eyes meet

I am speechless
And look away to the other side of dangling things

The world revolves again and I with it
Leaving you because you can never be with me

In this
Revolution

Meanwhile you wonder why the place where our eyes just met smells ash
I said something just burned sometime somewhere perhaps last night or so

And so

You will never ever know

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing You To The Fullest...

i want to live
a life that is full

love it more if it
is the fullest

the way i see
a bunch of ripe mangoes

hanging from a tree
or those black grapes

freely attached to
the vines

a glass filled to
its brim

waters rising from
the banks

i like that hat of
yours covering

your hair, your forehead
i love that smile

that fills all of
your mouth that shows

a row of pearls
the pinkness of a tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing You Watching Tv Sleeping

On a rocking chair you sleep again
While watching TV and I rise from

My bed not faraway from where
You are sleeping in front of this

Colored TV on a loud volume
With slowness and respect

I touch your cheek and you
Wake up rubbing your eyes

Asking me what time is it,
You have slept again and

I have to wake you up again
In this cycle of pain and unrest

It is late and the night is deep
And dark, some dogs howl

In the street another stranger
Has arrived to this town again

It is late you have to transfer
To my bed where we will again

Make a warm embrace as I tell
You, I love you as I will always will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing Yourself In A Mirror

on a fading day
between your busy hour and that moment
when you want to stop
or quit

you stand in front of a mirror
and ask yourself: is this worth it?

there is this voice which says
you must quit, you have had enough
there is no use
of another day

you stare and another image stares back at you
it is worth it
there is no justification to quit
you make
a difference

then you tighten your belt and with your hands
you iron out what is creased
you promise
you will go neat with life
you will finish what you have started
the voice comes assuredly like a
conscience
you make a difference
you are not a quitter
you are a winner.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seek Not Yourself But The Other

The self that you are seeking
Is not you
It belongs to someone else
The more you seek yourself
That more you shall be lost
In the maze
Of your own selfishness
Seek not yourself
But always the other
Beyond
There you will find
What you have been seeking
This bliss
This outburst
Of love and compassion
In the oneness of this universe
Where you are but a drop
In this ocean
Where you are but a speck of dust
In this space
You are the air that you are now breathing
Inside you
Outside you
You are here in this nowhere
That you feel
now, you are not alone
happier on a singing air

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeking Refuge

'And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.'

- T.S. Eliot

you have gone that far to the edge of that cliff
where you now stand
to explore all the possibilities of touching a cloud
and now that you are touching
this cotton dream
you are feeling nothing at all
you look down
below your feet to that village near the equator
that you left years ago
and you think finally that everything amounts to nothing
except that pink cotton candy
that you once tasted
as the best metaphor
for your dream-cloud
your cotton dream
so sweet to your teeth

come to think of it
it is never too late to build this bridge
rather than jump
and die in that muddy river
just below the cliff
where you are now
still standing

RIC S. BASTASA
Seema You'Re A Winnah

you say
you lose
everyday

you mean
you lose
yourself

and never
find it

lost as in
lost as
in really lost

yourself?
that is what
God wants
us to be

he who loses
himself
in his name
finds himself

OmG,
seema
you're a winnah!

RIC S. BASTASA
Seemingly

things seem to be
but upon a deeper silence
without even looking things
are stopping to wait for you
and then happily you go

your heart is full
and no word deserves to be said again

RIC S. BASTASA
Seemingly You Like The Grey Area

i admit i live there. I live in the places of dawn and twilights where i have learned to tinker about anything.

dark are exceptions and exemptions there. it is no longer black or white, or either/or, it is a ray a rainbow of possibilities. I embrace gradients.

it is the meeting place of lost elements when they do not fit they come looking lost and then they say they finally find a home.

here they are accepted there they are excepted.

not that black and whites are not acceptable. No. and Yes. Not that. it is, 'it can be'

it is always here a myriad possibility where you become yourself that way you want it. Taste. Smell. Tick and Lick.

Imagination so powerful.
Unlimited thoughts.  
Impossibilities becoming possibilities.

This is the grey area.  
I live here. I am happier.  
Do you know where this is?

Come. Undress their colors.  
And know at first that in here  
color does not matter  
they mix, and there  
is no limit to their  
shades and pastels.

RIC S. BASTASA
we think about life as a seesaw
a balancing act
of two different weights
at the center of the
fulcrum
someone pushes another
one makes the shove
to create a pleasurable
game
you, up near the clouds
as i fall down to the plains
of the earth
we look at each other
on smiling eyes
mouths in loud laughter
excitement spread all over
space
you become confident
to my push and i become
trusting to your counters
until one of us decides to
jump and leave
the sound of the
blag of the world

RIC S. BASTASA
Segregation

to make myself special is a sad thing,
for i may then be segregated
away from you, and i cannot take in all the sadness

let me just be an ordinary frog on that clear pond
blessed by so much rain
croaking happily with you

i do not need so much land
neither the sun
for with you, the moon and the marsh
and the reeds
are good enough,

let us have this good time swimming together
beside the tadpoles

RIC S. BASTASA
Segurista

umang nga gakamang kanunay
dala-dala ang iyang balay-gamay
kay hadlok masunog ang baybay

RIC S. BASTASA
Segurista (Wary)

he hermit crab crawls
always carrying its small shell house
fearing that there might be fire on the shore

umang nga gakamang kanunay
dala-dala ang iyang balay-gamay
kay hadlok masunog ang baybay

RIC S. BASTASA
Sehnsucht

Between this
and that

this fullness and
this void

there is this
bridge

that my feet
like to remember

was i there
once?

memories fail
like broken pens

i have a finger
it points there and there

i want to remember
but i can't

this sense of belonging
thru a longing

there, it is there

fog on top
of a mountain

feathers
inside my brain....

RIC S. BASTASA
Seldom

happiness is seldom
it is the trend nowadays
when our hand grapple for
what we do not yet master

for instance last night
when you were asleep
i was touching my own thighs
in the dark
i was familiarizing with the lines
of my face down to the
belly

in the darkness of my soul
i still keep on thinking about
someone else

someone whose love you
have taken away from me
someone who weeps and
does not speak
someone whose heart has turned
into stone
whose door has become
a wall
whose windows doubt
whether to open for the sun
or not

RIC S. BASTASA
Selective Memory

It is not about love, far from it,
It is not about us, we are already parted
It is not about the world that is too much
For me to think of and bear
You must remember, no not about the wedding ring
You pawned it, you must remember
This is not about our home, you ruined it
We do not think about the children
The court shall make the ruling, this is not about
My emotions, I have squandered them all
And you wasted all of them, I have thrown them
All to the garbage cans and the dogs are feeding on them
Do not forget, this is just an ordinary civil relation,
You owe me money, and I am here to simply collect them,
There is no need to complicate, there is none,
And here is the promissory note that you signed
Many, many years ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Centered

you started it
and i was just trying to put the finishing touches
and then you cried foul
and call me names

i am just returning what
you have given

and then you said it was dirty
and so unbecoming
of me

you feel that you are a star in your own universe
so be it

burn yourself to death
with that self-made glitter of yours

i am a pebble that you have disregarded
i stare and i do not know how to laugh

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Centered You

that the sun revolves
around the earth is not at all
a farce,
that all the stars and planets
and meteors and
other galaxies revolve
around the planet
earth where
you are situated is not at all
an outmoded
astronomical belief

the way you speak
and believe in yourself
speaks highly
of this 'truth'

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Centered....

the blond
has a hand that carries a cone of
vanilla ice cream

it is summer

he looks at the sea
and lets his ice cream melt
not licking it yet

the sea is so blue

a woman looks at his
well chiseled body his
butterfly back
his abs and
strong arms

the ice cream melts

the man looks at the sand
and estimates the size
of his shadow

the sand is so white

the woman with her long black hair
in a two piece
the main attraction of this poem
backs out
and buys her own cone of
vanilla ice cream
and she licks it until the ice cream
is consumed

the man goes to the sea and makes
his needed dive

indeed the sea is so blue
and it is a sad summer....

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Defense From Love's Twisted Shape

i am
tired of minding
love,

it is twisted and
it is twisting me

it is hard headed
it is not learning anything from
my logic

now i have decided
not to mind it at all

my glimpse shall be
its luxury

now i prefer talking to
the deaf woman
dancing with the blind

singing with the mute
listening to the crowd

this love is cruel
i will not allow it

killing me without
my own defenses ready

RIC S. BASTASA
when old age visits
actually you do not immediately detect its presence
somehow you love to deny
its inevitability
you keep yourself busy and
focus on the strengths
and flexibility of youth
until you finally find it
sitting beside you
and both of you are drunk
making merry
trying to forget the numbers
as the wrinkles
become visible
spreading all over your
body
your skin losing the luster
turning into
a waistline larger
than what you think
and you look at yourself in the mirror
oh God
what an oversized shirt
what a lousy pair of pants
you cannot even recognize
that the bald man
in front of you
is really you but thanks God
you were given
the bonus of
these unearned years

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Discovery

life is only in the doing
those very unimportant matters
(shall i enumerate them?
they are not of your liking
you who love
highlights
fireworks
and what is on top
of the building
beside the
starry skies)

i do now the most simple
things: sleep, sit, stand
sit back, sleep again
walk, talk to you,
cook and eat
and defecate,

there is no more ambition
nothing of those
fame getting stuff

i just discovered it.
Less is more
Simplicity is beauty
Life is just a moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Gratification

what my hands hold
you shall hold....is this what you came here for?
you hold my body like i am your lover
and now you try to capture the spirit within it

you can't, i have long told you
love has already left the dwelling in my heart

there is pleasure and it is dancing wildly like there is no more yesterday.
it is celebrating because in truth it hates me
like i am its molester
and now it sings like a burlesque dancer at the bar

it knows my secret and she keeps on telling
every people that she meets

that guy is dying and soon i shall be complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Gratification Imagery....

the usual right hand
and the biggest vein

raindropp and
gushing forth
the final wish
and relief

no guilt now
just the release of what lies
buried underneath
the flesh
and bone and
meat of
your contention

RIC S. BASTASA
Selfie

This is one of the newest words added to our dictionary. We invented it. But before it became a word, we had it already a long time ago. When you stroll on the shore alone and thinking, when you travel alone and sit on the bus and looking nowhere, or when you live alone in an apartment and anticipating that someone soon will join you to comfort you, to fill you with that emptiness, or when you arrive in an abandoned house and you stand at the front yard assessing the damage of the storm in your head, when you walk around the plaza and no one recognizes you anymore because you left the place 25 years ago and there are now so many changes that fail to account you, and when you know no one whom you can ask to take your picture of all these,

by all means, these are all you worry no more. You admit that you're lonely at times. But you are happy.

There is not enough of you, in this long and lonely road.

RIC S. BASTASA
Selfie......

selfie

ang imong bugas

bugas sa aping

batok sa iyang bugas

bugas sa agtang

hilaw ang iyang

pahiyom

samas kahilaw sa

imoha

maong ang nagtan-aw

usab

sama nako

gibatig

sama sa kaaslom

sa manggang

bisaya

nga naa pay tagok

sa iyang baba
Self-Inflicted Pain

a mosquito is biting
my face

my cheek and my hand
argue till now

what proper thing to do
a mutual concession perhaps....

RIC S. BASTASA
Selfish Religion

this is my body
it is firm and it is strong
it is beautiful

you worship beauty
you desire what is firm
you love what is strong
this is my body and
it is beautiful

it is sacred and
you cannot touch it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Pity

when you arrive home and there is no one when they all left for somewhere and you do not know when they are coming back

you sit on a sofa you hear no sound there is no note no word the cellphone mute and there is no sound of any car coming or at a distance dust or smoke moving towards where you are silently seated

you then feel it

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Portrait

after she paints
herself in the canvass
she puts her
signature there

mebyme.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Reflection....

i am looking inside
myself
trying to figure out if
there are traces of
envy

the denial is there
hope is dying
ambition wants to soar

i am afraid how my eyes
are looking at the world
how my mouth speak about
the evil of others

(do i have my own wolves
too? how many elves are
there maneuvering
my moves?)

i look for you
to be my mirror
you speak the truth
and i do not complain
if you inflict the
pain

for with you
i do not suffer alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Searching

we always want to spend
Independence Day on the beach
what is it that we want to be reminded of?
the sands? yes what about the sand?
the grains?

when we arrive there
the kids run to meet the sea with laughter
the sea breeze is salty yet cool
the trees are tall and big and shady

the silent sands are peopled now
we will be too busy with fun
feeling saved and going public with
all that happiness gives us

the silent sands look at us with a gaze
it has a record of the past
it has absorbed the memories of the sea
it looks at us with pity

what is it about the sands and their silence?
i think i know it but my friend you must find it yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
after that anonymous talk
(since you never revealed your name,
referring me to
Rumpelstiltskin, to my chagrin,
i realized,
how low is your opinion of myself,
how debased have i been
with your figures and
stories, that i myself, have not even
bothered for years,
simply because they are not true
and which you tried to impress
upon me as
God's truths,
and as you advised, i look at myself in the
mirror
and i look at it with all compassion
and i tell myself,
this is all i got, and this is all that
i can love
because you cannot
and never dared,
but just the same i say, thank you,
and at that time,
i tell the mirror, i wish that creature
a happy death someday,
one, where after smiling,
one can hear the chasm of the earth
divide, and there
the intrigue is swallowed
whole

i do not know you
so how can i say what you are too,
coward!

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Talk In That Secret....

at the end
i am about to cry

something bothers me
somehow
i can't

i hold the knob of the
door
tightly
i want to go out from
this old house
and be with you
but i finally loosen
my hold
and go back to the room
of myself

the law speaks
tradition warns that something
may happen
and i cannot take
all the possible
harsh
consequences

and so i give up my life
and meaning
i stay in the comfort of ordinary
days
unhappily

but it is worth it
when i come back i find a house where i
can still live

it is you that makes me live some more
in the blur of our memories
when you are finally gone
with no address to refer to
(you never write me letters)
i stay put on my chair
and immerse myself in the deep silence
of my sad thoughts

it is the case again
of i want to go but i must stay
same rehashed argument

when i ask you if you are happy
your answer is yes and no,

but i understand it perfectly
it is the same answer that i write
in my journal
in those three perfect days

i forgive myself
but i can never forget you

love stays
but time shall always try to vanish it
without
our consent

RIC S. BASTASA
Self-Talk Is A Prayer.....

i have nothing
so urgent to say to you

i am at peace
and here i am savoring time
like the way i am chewing gum

that lost its sugar

i have nothing
to say anymore to you

i admit
i have not said anything at all

despite all those
well chosen words arranged like books in their shelves

there is an age
where saying is admitted to make no difference at all

where secrets are not secrets but irrelevant
squabbles of the heart

they remain buried
but they will not be dead

the remain invisible like air
but still very essential

my lips are gravestones
that is when i discovered that self-talk is actually a prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
Sense Of Humor For Reece Kay

i laugh so hard about your joke
i'll take the hints
of the sneeze and the orgasms
and the tissue
and some pepper
the woman on the train with you,

now laugh,

i also laugh with you, yet not knowing me
really
we are miles apart, and you with your
present problems
losing one of your identities

this danny reynolds, you tell me
i do not have they say
this sense of humor,
Loll
Lol,

it is unjust to say the least,
in my country one day
i was admitted to the maternity hospital
on bloated stomach
filled with laughter
they think
i am pregnant.

(ulol!)

oh, lol!

RIC S. BASTASA
Senseless?

senselessly
make sense by being senseless at times
we all need that
to realize we are not what we are after all
we too are what we are for what we are not
senseless and
numb

tencelessly why worry about sense at all?
bipolarity

flesh and spirit
mind and matter
brain and brass

don't you worry
take some beer and smoke
watch what happens to the world
in conflagration
of senseless thoughts

loafing is the work of another genius
when the mind simply drifts like a butterfly
on a windless day
shopping for petals in the garden
of no-man's land

RIC S. BASTASA
i will no
longer guess

i tell you
and i bow before
this

the meaning of it
all is that
there is no meaning

and so the senselessness
has become
the one and only truth

its sound is
barbaric
and its true nature
is uncertain

this the true journey
grasping of air
to breathe and simply
live all through
it....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sensing An Old Flame

everything's changed.
the park is gone.
the tree is cut.
the creek dried.

a row of houses here.
the residents talk different languages.
i can't find the big stone anymore.
the walls have gone higher
and i can no longer see the bend
of the road. People move to places.

and we come back to reminisce.
some strings of light. some shapes of shadows.
we try to figure out.
what was there once.

i see you. you see me.
we know what to say.
we know what to do.
what we did once.

amidst all these changes.
we decided there will be no changes.

hello and then goodbye.
these words had always been
a nice pair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sensitivity

do not be oversensitive
on this skin of mine
it is nothing compared to the
lusciousness of your lips

take pride
that i have stopped smoking
after you
kissed my lips

after this
i will long for more
dawn time till the break of
morning

i need sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sensitivity And Imagination In The World Of Poetry

the pebble that you have
collected from the shore
last spring

breathes like a tick

the paper clip that lays on your
study table
begins to

move like a maggot

something is more beautiful than
this
sensitivity widens
imagination
paving more pathways to
the colored world
of dreams

the blank paper begins to have
a face
shaping a mouth
a tongue
that shapes a smile for you

the table becomes the sea
where sailboats take its long journey
nothing
no one falls at the edge

they just fade.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sensual Night With Sense

you lay with some memories
your eyes fix on the ceiling
where images
begin to dance
like some fairies
with silk hair
and gossamer wings

you tire
with fairy tales and fantasies
you begin
a more mature approach
with your longings
inside this
empty room
for the night
where your waiting
for her
has become another
failure

you close your eyes
and look inside them
you hug your own
body with your
own arms
you bury yourself
on soft blankets
and pillows

you submerge
in ecstasy
your heart
throbbling
like crazy

and then
a raindrop
begins
to fall from
inside your
pains

falling
on the mountain
of your groin

you dropp dead
eyes closed
the pain
disappears
like some clouds
blown away

by this new wind
of coping up
and learning
with sense
sensuality
in automation

a flood of emotions
rush
to oblivion

tomorrow you wake
up and face a new
day again

ey they say you are a mature
person living life
that way it should be lived

coping up
self-automated
no misery seeking company

just being alone,
strong, and not needing help
from anyone.
Sensuality

Do not be slighted,
Lust, return to me
when i am strong again
when my skin feels
the tickle and the rub

Do not be shy
Come to my bed again
For my sheets are warm
My pillow dreamy.

Come back to me
AT night when i am alone again
Caressing my body
In sin

Sensual pleasures
Come and feel the dryness of my
Thighs
The blessings of my arms
The tenderness of my heart

For now I welcome all these
I am alive
I am hungry and thirsty
For Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sentro Sa Uniberso

Ug miabot ang adlaw nga gihimo
nimong sentro ang kaugalingon
sa imong uniberso.

Ikaw ang adlaw. Milingkod ka sa tunga
Sa imong balay. Ang mga lingkoranan, lamesa,
Ug mga aparador mao ang imong mga planeta.

Mipiyong ka, ug gihipos mo
Ang imong mga bukton. Gikumo nimo
Imong mga tudlo. Ikaw ang adlaw.

Ikaw ang sentro sa tanang mga nag-alirong nimo.
Nahimong kawanangan ang imong kwarto.
Ang kahayag nga nanglusot sa buslot

Sa imong bungbong ug atop mao
ang mga bitoon, ug ang bulan mao ang planggana
Sa imong pansayan. Naghimo ka sa kaugalingong

Luna sa kawanangan. Pagkahilom. Pagkanindot
Sa dihang nagsugod na ang imong paglutaw
Ug pagsibog layo sa imong gilingkoran.

Nindot ang paglawig. Morag usa ka sakayan
Sa tunga sa lawod sa dagat. Buntag na. Misulod
Ang imong iro. Mipaghot. Mikiwil ang ikog

U mitila sa imong mga tiil ug kamot. Mitan-aw
Sa iyang amo: opaw, pangag, nangunot ang agtang,
Walay panghinguko, taas ang bungot,

Walay kaligo, dako og tiyan, walay pamahaw.

Sa tanan, alang niya, ikaw ang kamatuoran.
Separate Lives...

with too much use of the mind
one forgets sometimes if one has feet
if the ground is still there
the floor becoming insignificant

the arms too disappear in the air
fingers forgotten

you float in the middle of the sky
inside your room
unmindful of the real situation

someone knocks on the door
the knocks become fast and loud
and you fall on the floor
with a big bang

it is night time again
and when you go out of the room
everybody is already silent inside
their rooms perhaps sleeping
or making love

you open the refrigerator for a glass of water
you take a pill
and then everything is at a standstill
you wish you have no dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Separate Paths

there are so many paths

and there is only me
this path of mud and holes
and with you
there is this path that i do
not really know
surprises kill me at times
but i keep the pain

please do not take mine
it is too narrow
please do not go with me
go away, please go away
i am simply
not comfortable with you

take the widest path you have.
there are many of you
and the noise is everyday.

i love myself, this loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Separated Between Two Walls

between two walls
i find myself in but
i do not tarry, i am,
the resilient wind
and i lift myself up
and see the walls
from a distance.

they say they are
protective of me.
they say they want
to keep me safe
and at bay with what
is right and true.

the walls of fantasy
and the
the walls of reality.

these are not walls
sooner i will make
them myriad openings
exits and entrances
to the house of my
peace and happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Separations

Tonight my wife shall watch the full moon
Alone over the hills in Katipunan
I think sadly though of her
Too young to understand this sudden separation
Remembering once again our love in Cagayan
In fragrant mist, her black hair is damp
In the clear moonlight, her hands are cold
In the distant mountain of Tabon
I lean over this bamboo grove
While the moonlight tries to dry some tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 1

even fire produces
its best light before it dies,
the most beautiful petal
is the flower's last
the most beautiful part
of the film should be its
ending, and this I like
to happen in my life
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
these are all experiences
like 'I've been there'
and 'here and even
gone tomorrow, like a dream
our love for illusions
what we become
a nostalgia
we like to hold like
frost and mist.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is something
so important that i want to tell you
but i just can't and knowing that
you insist, and you do not want to be
refused, and so i walk towards you
as though you are an open window
and i look at you and i see a night sky
without the moon and stars
and i am the candle light - -waning.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 3

the man aims a gun at me
who knows his name? but i know his eyes
bland, and tasteless
it is not seeing for itself
it is dead as stone
whose slave are you?
it does not mind and i look
straight to the gut of the barrel
if it bursts, - i will say, thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 4

pain is the seed
sown in the heart
time is the silence
which grows the root
of thirst for God
and patience twigs out
buds of hope that
finally brings the
flowers of our divinity

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 5

having known
that you love me
the surge of the sea
comes taking Samar
to Bohol where hills
grow mountains
touching clouds and
then all the fish jump
at night to kiss the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 6

we can be out of
touch sometimes and
people who see us
are so patient and with
so much understanding
dismiss the crazy idea
and say with comfort that
there is nothing wrong
with poetry - - just wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 7

the one that makes us 
feel good
must be too written
like floating birds in the sky
and swimming petals on the river
the dancing fish on the pool
the magician with his rabbit
why? we really have to.
we must still live.

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 8

i pass by the river
this morning and see
some children bathing
i hear the sounds and
the splash of the water
and the throwing of stones
and the loud laughter
and then i am taken away
flown to the farthest sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon 9

while in the car
alone driving myself
towards home
slowly i take the road
with a song in my heart
'how great thou art
O Lord my God'- -
fear turns itself off
hope flints, love's ablaze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Septon, Desperately Looking

to find myself
i must find you
and so when you
are lost
i must be lost with
you
if you are lost without
myself
i will be lost forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Septonisque

what they need is
nine, so, don’t leave it at eight
it lacks the hour of one
do not be too early then
or too late
cater to what is required
otherwise it makes no sense
what is needed is nine
though ten is kind

RIC S. BASTASA
Serene

A sea of cloth on an early morning
A wooden boat afloat
The cloth of blue and gray clouds
Still touching
Hands and Lips
A man wearing a straw hat
A woman on green skirt watching
Him sail back,
A child cradled on her arms
Serene in sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Serene Love

as we step into the
clear water of the river
we create the ripples
we lose sight of the
face of the blue clouds
we find for ourselves
an embroidery of
drifting leaves

we dip our bodies to
the coolness of the water
i search for serene love
at the bottom where
you are waiting

we kiss and embrace
beside the slippery stone
the moss is green
each step as slippery as
an ell
each kiss and breath a
bubble we send
to the surface of the river

the water flows farther and farther
until we begin not to see what happens.

RIC S. BASTASA
Serenity

inside the mall
with so many people
you are part
of this senseless
crowd

you turn off
a switch
somewhere
first it becomes
soundless
then you
changed
adjusted the
colors
to black and
white

and then
you sit there
on the table
and watch
everything

RIC S. BASTASA
Sergio Fiorentino Playing A Schumann

He shall patiently play
him a piano piece a
Sergio fiorentino
And he will
Mimic a Schumann piece
Because

Today he sees him
In full view
Bathing naked
On the river
He is a big man
Like himself
Now he comes
Back to the river
Where they once
Bathed as children
Naked and so
Blessedly innocent

There is malice
Now as he is
Big and muscled
And some black
Hairs decorated
His manhood
His armpits
His thighs
And his
Chests

He calls him
To join him
As they were
Once children

To have a river
To cleanse them
Both
“come, come”
we shall have
a bath in this
river of our
vibrant laughter”

he was inviting &

he was excited.

so
He took off his
Clothes and
Every covering
Of his body
His second
Thoughts and
Taking courage
He jumped
Into the river
Where he
Stood naked,

What he will say
He is prepared
To defend himself

It was him
Who made the
Invitation and
All he did was
Simply to obey.

He promises
There will be no
Regret whatsoever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seriously Speaking This Time

well this is what i can say
even without you
asking me,
about poetry?
well, it should not be taken seriously
it is just
poetry anyway
nothing serious like a man dying to get to the hospital
inside an ambulance
if only he hears the sound of that goddamn ambulance
oh my
he must have known that it is
joking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Serving God So Well....

so many things that you do
with so much pleasure with so much esteem

beyond money and awards
noble

when you drive yourself to your way home
at night on that long dark road

you hear music inside your heart
your fingers move upon a beat of indescribable pleasure

you are your best friend
in silence

when you arrive home there is no one there
no child greets you

you remove your shoes
undress

naked you hug your bed
soft pillow

you sleep like a dead man and when you wake up
the following morning

you become a new man, strong, and firm and smiling
to the sun by your window

there is no one here
you feel confident,  God is so alive inside you

you have served Him well.

RIC S. BASTASA
you were beating around
the bush
when you are supposed
to hit the root
and not just simply lie
there running out of steam
and this comes direct
from the horse's mouth
as i drop the line

set it free, it is not
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Setting A Love Poem Aside For A While

I set aside a love poem for a moment
let us all pause in silence
in prayer
for the lamentations of Bohol.

i gaze in silence for the
the destruction of Baclayon,
the sinking of the bridge,
those tilted houses built
from the savings of the years,
the screams of those who
were shaken
for those who ran away for safety and found none

i offer my silence for those who died
and for those who are still unidentified
i lay my silence to the cracks of the earth

my silence for the children and mothers
whose screams sank, faded, and

now cannot be heard anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Setting Free The Little Black Bird...

and this i remember
when i was yet a young boy
in a far away village

i caught a black bird
in my handmade trap
and it was trying to
escape from the hold of
my hands,

at first i liked to bring it home
and show to father
but then i looked at its eyes
begging for mercy to be
set free

and i heeded to its flee
i released that little black bird free

x x x x

it is the same now between me and my body
this trap and this soul that begs now to be set free
this little black bird begging for mercy
it shall be set free
that young boy understands
it is this body.

RIC S. BASTASA
Setting The Bird Free

after you have set the
bird free
look!
your heart grows wings

and too
it starts to fly
high, and higher in
the ever blue skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Setting The Small Fry Free

a small fry
is caught the
net with a very
fine mesh

you are the fisherman
who catches the small fish
in your hand
and then you sail back
to the sea
setting the small fry free!

RIC S. BASTASA
Setting You Free

i sit here with a gavel on hand
dressed in black
you fear me for what i can do
for i sit in judgment of you
i look at you
and find this tranquility of your
spirit and i humble myself before
you, an innocent man
silenced by the cruelty of the laws
of his brethren
and then i bang the gavel
setting you free and then
i get down from the heights of
man's self-made bench
glossy yet so cold and then
i shake your hand
it is warm and
it had long been
thirsty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Settled

the wind went to all directions
the trees so confused
the rivers crisscross and the
sea like its waves was bewildered

the north star looks upon them
silent and determined

RIC S. BASTASA
Seven

some stars are falling and falling

across the dark skies

you look with awe

and make your many wishes

RIC S. BASTASA
Seven-Sided Poem By C. Drummon Translated By Souza

When I was born, a crooked angel,  
the kind who live in shadows,  
said: Go, Carlos! Be gauche in life.

The houses spy the men  
chasing after women.  
Perhaps if the afternoon were blue  
there wouldn’t be so many desires.

The tram passes by full of legs:  
white black yellow legs.  
Why so many legs, God, my heart asks.  
But my eyes  
ever ask a thing.

The man behind the mustache  
is serious, simple, and strong.  
Almost never talks.  
Has a few, close friends,  
that man behind the glasses and the mustache.

Lord, why did you abandon me  
if you knew I wasn’t God?  
if you knew I was weak.

World world vast globe  
if my name were Job  
it would be a rhyme, not a solution.  
World world vast globe  
vaster still is my heart.

I ought not tell you,  
but this moon  
but this cognac  
gives us heartache like the devil.
Seventeen

we shall start being true
to ourselves like how the world
started
in light, we shall start being true
to others
that give us light too,
words and actions
all true
all so beautiful to touch and hear
and too beautiful
to our smell
and so good to our sight
our eyes too
so beautiful
how we look at ourselves
inside us
then when all these are gathered together
like some firewood and leaves and
cinders
we shall burn
we have fire
we have smoke to offer to the skies
then as we inhale and exhale the last fires
within us
we shall begin again from the beginning

we are not ready to write everything
every detail
of that fire that kept us burning

in our hearts that keep on loving
soon they will

RIC S. BASTASA
Sex Before And After

at my age, there is more...
before and after...

at my younger age, there is a need for more sex,

before dinner
after midnight
before dusk
after lunch

at this age of depression, all these years of tension,
so much pressure, there is a need for more sex....

before noon,
after an office meeting
before going home
after a vacation

at this moment when crisis looms, this global recession,
this legal separation, this pending divorce, this global warming problems...
there is a need for more and more sex...

before death
after another birth....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sex Poem

a Spanish cannon
is bombarding
the closed, steel
door of the castle

RIC S. BASTASA
Sexual Harassment For Gatiting

some finally gave up,
the office is so boring and so this thing on
sexual harassment crops up,

boss to subordinate
'close the door, kiss me,
i will slide my hands inside your
panty, i am lonely, please do
not tell anybody, i am in love
with you'

subordinate,
gooseflesh, feeling hell
wanting to run away but cannot
closes her eyes, some tears falling,
sweating cold, flesh trembling
hands shaking,

she runs outside his room
goes to the comfort room
for women and there
vomits everything
the devil of his saliva
and his horrible scent,

case will be filed
he will lie and she will
be getting support from the other
clerk,

he is dismissed finally and
put to jail,
a true story, well documented,
and now i am sharing it to you,

and here you are:
hope it does not happen
to you
happen what?
that i be sexually harassed.

funny.
but i know you are not laughing,
something wrong,
perhaps.

i like to vomit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sexual Starvation And Imagination In The Middle Of A Calamity...

as she saw it
on that clear day she
remembered

how the tornado came
and sucked a house and a cow
smoothly to its
throat,

the house was gone
it did not spit the whole cow
and the tornado left

the grasses on the yard
were thick
and lush

she was so amazed with what she
saw
there was no fear in her eyes
it was pure excitement

she felt ecstasy
her groins excreted sweat

RIC S. BASTASA
Sexually Twisted

like a dog so deprived
of food
my handsome friend
while asleep
dreams of bones
and ribs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sexy Sexy Sexy

there are so many things
that one can remember about the word

pumping,
the serious mechanical ones
talk about
water and

body building and healthy
options

but there are those who are
tired about
goodness and hard activities

there are those that
spend time at the beach
watching someone so sexy
with sunglasses on
eyes feast and
tongue salivate
like a dog thirsting
about summer

you pump blood into
your head
your heart understands
somehow
this need

on something so sexy
for the moment
for this moment only

RIC S. BASTASA
Sexy Woman

white clouds
blue sea
green long island
on the shallow waters
a woman faces me
white bra
white panty
(two piece)
at the middle
the water touches
the center of her
being
the grass of her earth
is wet
she walks away
dripping
her hair is long and curly
black
she does not own me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shade

by the shadow
of the mountain
i am taking
a shade

on the shade
of a tree
i take my
shade

on the shade
of my body
i am taking
my shade

on the shade
of my soul
the mountain
the tree and
my body
also take
their shade

RIC S. BASTASA
Shades Of Black And Gray

silence has only one color
it is gray
scaled between the extremes of
black and white
susceptible as you must know
to the shades of
different interpretations

sometimes mine is dusky
the color of scheme and strategy
it is like a dog deprived of food
sitting on the last stair of the house
raising its head
scattering its eyes
figuring out how to steal
the goat's
clavicle....

RIC S. BASTASA
Shades, Shades. Shades....

first there was grey
and then its fifty shades
later (perhaps out of that
billionaire amazement or the
shades of it)
come the shades of green
the ever ever multiple shades of
imitations and
other fabrications
thirty shades of confessions
forty shades of
regrets
fifty shades of contemplations
but one and only
shade of death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadow

i am asking you
if you have something
to say

why do you keep
on following me?

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadow Of A Fish

i swear i have seen the shadow of
a dried fish
its head hanging on the chimney
on a very long thin thread
of life and death

i like the scene of its shadow
dancing on my empty white
porcelain plate

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadow Of Doubt

oh! i know that you are there
just lurking behind
my own light
but don't be angry
for i don't
really mind

for whether
i like you or not
or whether i finally get rid of you
strangle you and kill you
finally (am i a serial killer?)
nothing changes the truth
that i am part of you
and you are
essentially a part of me

ah, you wait when i am
pure blackness
when my light is gone
when everything is nothing but absence

you reign, you win.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadows Of All Of You

Outside it is dark
i am the only one
on that open road.

everyone is inside
their houses now
with their loved ones.

outside i am the only
one walking still looking
for a home.

my heart trembles for
this, my brains flying
like birds looking for
more edible grains.

time is warped
i still like the past
the future is a vague
misty colored window
where i only see
shadows of all of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadows Of Wolves

we made an agreement
it was carved in stone to your mind
i agree there must be no changes
without prior notice
but you change it a bit
and so i am canceling the whole of it
that is what it is
carved in stone, put a change
the slightest one
can break the whole of that stone
a little change in temperature
or pressure as the case maybe
can make this world crack
without prior notice
now don't cry foul
for both of us prior to that
have assumed the shadows
of the wolves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shadows Thinning Out

you all know
that the shadow thins out at noontime

at high noon
the shadow and the body become one

there is no more speculation
about why the shadow and the body are different

on extreme light
you see the truth casting no shadows of doubt

something false flashes not shadow
at this moment

such thing happens on the power of the stare
when an eye looks straight to another eye

when the other sobs into a cry
then the telling of the true story begins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shakespeare Rejected

not at all amazing
that Shakespeare in his time
was rejected
for genius like wine is fortified
by age
becoming so valuable
through time
and peers cannot understand
society rejects
what the world later on
values as a gem
discovered buried in the layers
of time's hasty
shallow judgment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shaking My Head...

on this month of June
the mango tree fronting our office is bearing so many fruits

the children are happy hitting it with sticks and some who have the money use the slingshots

i can imagine myself being hit with round stones

i shake my head many time from this glass window.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall I Miss You?

the port sits there
the waves of the sea begin its travel
you are on the trough
and the ups and downs of the tides
shall take you away from me
you are in the foams
and i am in the mist of the mornings
the fog of my doubts
has given me
what certainties i need to
make me strong

once i wrote you a letter
when letters were the trend of those
lonely day: dear beloved, i miss you
but i guess that letter (which i somehow
regret having written
signed by another foolish pen)
must not have reached your
faithfulness because your
patience has not afforded
it the dignity
or concern of an answer

time is kind
it makes us forget and even forget
and forgo and
teach us to live
with a purpose saying: go on, move forward
that is the only choice

now, i have this pc,
i have your email address
i want to tell you: dear miss sue
i must honestly tell you
that i am happier now
without you.

i did not send it.
coz it does not really matter.
i have my own life now, and i am
this fat, contented cow
grazing on the green fields
of my endeavor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall I See You Again?

your long black hair
blown by the wind of the sea
you eyes closing to feel what is inside you
some tears unseen from a distance
you embrace yourself in the middle of this
ice-cold morning
you stand there like a lonely post in the desert
the wind howls and the rain begins to fall
you run for shelter
wet and cold and i see you but i shall not ask for your name.

i remain here also drowned by my own storm
but i am not running for shelter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall I Tell You That Once We Were Broken And Unconnected Pieces?

when you find a chain
pick it up

when i find my chain
i pick it up to

and then when we meet
we connect these chains
like some missing links

and then when bound
together we will shout
our newly found freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall I Throw The Filter Too?

words begin
to filter thoughts

after a longer time
the stones separate from

the water and then
you have to choose now

which to throw and
which to keep

which is clearer which
is more solid

more heavy and worth
the price of taking the

weight or letting go
that which keeps us cold

words become either
air or light and when

you begin to learn which
is more useful or

important, you think
twice about this matter:

shall i throw the filter too?

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall She Throw Then The Apple Of Discord?

out there is the calm
and the harmony of the leaves
and the grass
the silence of the ants and
the privacy of the worms

she does not like this
she needs the chaos to divert the
lulling ennui
that will soon numb and kill her

and so she climbs the only living
tree at the center of this paradise
gets the only apple
that she throws under the trees
beside the grass and flowers
and then the discord starts to unfold

now she watches all of them in their
domestic wars
the trees shake the leaves
and the worms are eating the barks
and the ants are building their empires
on sands

simply because they have turned
the blind eye the deaf ear
the gaps of communication bore
the holes of pandemonium

she sits and weaves herself a bandanna
now she is ready to go

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall There Be Fake Stars In Heaven?

i once named you
as one of the stars in heaven

every night
though distant
i look at you
my true star

time is cruel with its
storms and
rain
and there are times
when i simply
gaze even if i see
nothing of you

the years are patient
and the leaves of
thoughts keep on
covering what naked
bark and trunk
is there upon the being
of my existence

one night
when it was as dark as
the color of
depression

i begin to ask
if in the heavens too
there are fake stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall We Be Shut Off?

water on our toes
we look down the minutest detail
of this
wandering

moss and pebbles
sand and
foams
and clouds and
winds

up there
we shall not be shut
like night

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall We Depend Upon You?

the stairs have
been broken,
turning into firewood
it too burns the
house

the bridge of the river
is also taken
all pieces down to the
drain of the
river

what now? what shall
you do with your fury?
what shall we
profit from you
powers of destruction
your capacity for
annihilation?

make us all disappear
we have nothing now
except our presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall We Return To The Place Where We First Met?

SO, THE road has ended,  
what have we? a dead end,  

we cannot go somewhere now  
we have no choice but to confront each other  

you face me and i face you  
what have we got? i got nothing, you got nothing  
we are nothing  
now returning to that wish that we can be full that we can be someone or something  
bigger than ourselves our dreams  
what have we now? what have we become?  
we are nothing and we are not saying anything about it.  
we are martyrs of this nothing game.  
we go back, since this is a dead end now.  
that is the only choice. we must remember and go back there where we first met each other,  
and that was what was it, face to face.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Shall You Pray?

when the boat
sinks
know where you escape

when the house
crumbles
know where to go

when the world ends
as everything ends
and you know not
where to go
and you know not what
to do

shall you pray?

RIC S. BASTASA
Shallow

forget the deep
we have experienced what drowning is
the past is over
we begin again for something new
this wading
in the shallow waters
we bear witness to the whiteness
of our flat feet
we store some confidences
we throw unnecessary fears

sometimes
being a pig gives a nice feeling

how does it feel perhaps
to be a buffalo wallowing in the mud?

not thinking about what they think
not thinking about the
strict codes for tomorrow?

time's getting too short
the hands of time have been too cruel
let us take this moment
little pleasures that may last us for
another short lifetime

let 's swim, let's get muddy
let us be happy

forget how was breathing
when we were in the deep sinking

RIC S. BASTASA
Shallow Days...

well, there are
shallow days, nothing deep

something for my
feet,

above me the sun
one and only one sun

just the sun and my head
and the shallow waters
on my toes

and the noon time walk
when everyone is as usual

having lunch, and
my toes get wet and i

am making meanings
on the shallow waters

the body in the middle of
this air, the hands are like

eagles flying. the fingers are
turning into feathers

RIC S. BASTASA
Shallow Questions

after dinner
the birthday party of her spinster sister
the usual fried chicken and rice
long noodles for long life
an imagery
of so much superstition
some yellow mangoes
sweet sour
red wine on the table
some fine classic glasses
a toast of
her having to have another year
of boredom

some questions after some drinks
a little drunk he must be
some personal questions as he carries his baby
the mother is lazy i think
and they must have quarreled with her mother-in-law
i don't mind
i keep my own mind
there are other concerns
but he is drunk now and asks me
why i don't go to church on Sunday for the mass
i evaded such a lousy question
an interference on my religious belief
my own convictions
God is somewhere and has a permanent residence
In my heart in my mind in my body in my soul
etcetera
but it is the dinner birthday party of her very lonely spinster sister

i beg away from a drunken discussion
about God and Politics
No heated debates this time of the year
this moment of happiness on a birthday like this
Jokes and light matters
Feathery and Smooth and Comfortable must be the theme
and Points of Convergence
i shift to something life.
'Hey, you have grown more hair, my friend'

we i think, is a happy ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shallow Thoughts...

along the shores
where the salty vines have covered our tracks
the coconuts are growing tall
and being so nearly planted
their leaves reach for each other

in a little distance
the heaps of dry leaves and husks
make a mountain
and now covered by the vines
and so concealed

beyond this place is a grass-less space
it is where most of the strangers stay
the mass of people gather
and bask under the sun

the gates here are closed more often
there are no kids
neither are there old people who take
their leisure here

this is my own place
so private and so deserted
i would like to call it another solitude
but the coconut trees without nuts
on this rainy December
signify otherwise

it is lonely, the hut speaks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shalom Center, Rm C5

this room is
a mess
and it is easily
eating
two days inside
me

this mess is
mine alone
and i put a card
at the door knob
which says
exactly as i want it
to be

Do not Disturb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shalom My Friend....

shalom my friend
we have our own place
in the here and there and
even in the nowhere
they've got theirs and
they have become obvious
like rocks and marks
and lighthouses and tall
buildings and even suns
and moons

we have become one of those
anonymous stars spread in those
enormous skies

sparkling with the millions
and trillions
unaccountable beauties
with all their mysteries

the great one
you must know is still having a hard time
figuring out
what is our name.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shanghai Wrap

he spreads himself
like a sheet in bed till
the morning hours

no one is there to
share his heat, no
one, no one

no one, and so at night
he comes
folded
as tight as shanghai
wrapping
fried in the heat of
his
unrequited love
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Shanghai: 8 Days

through the eyes of a fish
one copes up with mirage
in the desert where you do not
really belong,

how you survived the heat
must be a miracle
with cactus as food

i am definite about you
how i wish i can have the hands
of the squid again

RIC S. BASTASA
Shanghaied

shanghaied
to hawaii
the lupus
patient
many years
ago

to save
a democracy
in my
country

then followed
the widow
and then
and tobacco man
and then
the bearded
playboy
and then
comes the midget

we shall love
her for her
thousand lies

RIC S. BASTASA
Sharing A Cup Of Civet Voffee

we share this cup
Of civet coffee

A delicious excrement
Of a cat

It does not make any
Coffee different

But how people see us
With its high price

makes it So.

We have not discarded
This show for vanity

we have saved however,
the
Civet cat

from its potential
extinction

RIC S. BASTASA
Sharing Logic...

if you do not want the cat to climb
your table and eat your fried chicken legs
then put them all down flat on the floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sharing Secrets

I was told
that a secret between
two people
remains a secret
when one of them
is dead

that is the risk

but today i revealed
a secret
to another who has
a secret with me

we were whispering
and hushed and
Blushed

one sheds tears
and binds herself
to chains

i grow wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sharp Incision

i cut through you
sharply
on a bloodless incision
you won't believe it
until i do it to you,
like this,
close your eyes
and i will kiss you
i have a knife
on my tongue
and it will cut
a slice of your
throat down to the
chamber of your
heart and you
will know
love,
it kills us,
bloodlessly,
explodes
without the sparks
of the 4th of July
you fell like running naked
under a blue sky
and then
it rains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sharp Knife

come to me as if you are a basket
full of luscious, juicy, sweet mangoes
and i will come to you as though
i am one sharp knife with all slices of
dreams in my hollow head

RIC S. BASTASA
Shattered Pieces

shattered pieces
my hands shall pick you up

and they will bleed
to make you whole again

shattered pieces
when you become whole

will you love me?

RIC S. BASTASA
She Admits She Keeps Her Thoughts To Herself

she shares a world
the room where her children make most of the mess
and they say all the
possible excuses
arguing as though they are all lawyers

she talks about the small cubicle
on the 17th floor
somewhere atop
New York

she swears she might have been
transshipped
to another place but the place where
she was born
was never taken inside her
guts

i listen attentively and can tell
that she wants to keep things
in their original flavor
like ginger and spring onions

but as usual
what is said is normally different from what is done
she is right
she may share her world but she keeps
her own thoughts to herself

and it is fair
since that is what i am also doing now

RIC S. BASTASA
She Asks Me How Can I Tell Rain From Tears?

we are walking on the free lane
of love
and it starts to rain
and we have no umbrella
and she stays near
my side that i can
smell the scent
of her hair
and she looks at me
and asks me to stop
awhile
and she asks me
if i can tell the difference between
her tears and the rain

and i say yes
my love

i kiss her that long under the heavy rain
and i know how salty are her tears
how deep is her sorrow
and i tell her after

your tears are so sweet.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Asks Me How Should My Coffee Be?

and i tell her
have it as hot as
global warming
up the brim full as full
put lots of sugar
and cream
a spoonful of coffee
black as the night
when all the good men
want to die

RIC S. BASTASA
She Brought Them All Kindly To Her Grave

of course i know what coldness is
apart from something that is cool

when mother died her hands were extremely cold
for my hold
i let them go
there was no sadness
there was that happiness of letting her rest
and giving myself a little space

for tomorrow
when coldness comes again in an empty room
with open windows
i know not what panic shall be

my hands are extremely cold these days
when i kiss them
my lips become frozen
they break like glasses

i cannot speak
there is no way that my tongue shall give in to
words
it cannot face coldness in the mirror
of my face

since you ask and you demand an explanation i open my hands
and i let your hands touch them

i cannot speak i am afraid i will be cruel
you must hold these extreme coldness for a long time
so you can all let them go
like white birds against a dark sky

so you can also experience what happiness
i had when i let go off
mama's fears

when mama closed her eyes
because what was important she knew
need not be said anymore
she brought them all kindly to her grave

RIC S. BASTASA
She Built A New House

she built a new house
on top of a hill

she had it painted
and it looks like a grass

she installed a narrow door
and a cross in the middle

she is old
and i know she wanted

a tomb
a mausoleum

she wants me to write
a letter

and with all these
what i wrote sounded more

like a epitaph for
her

i remember this
'here lies
the body of a woman
untouched'

RIC S. BASTASA
She Carried It Gladly Beyond....

the world waits for what we say
oh, we must have said everything already

the world still waits for what we really
have to say
because it knows we still have not spoken
what is in the heart

it waits for the hour before that
when only the truth is spoken
he spoke,

and passed away, mama didn't
i know, because like the world i keep on waiting

she carried it gladly
beyond a la
cumming

i am happy the world does not need really
to hear

none of the ear's business

RIC S. BASTASA
She Chanced To Dream

on years,
on the dance of whispers.
where have we gone

when the merry pranksters
painted the soul
of a child to woman born
where dares she grow

from wood stock
she chanced to dream
but what did those
years, mean.

she thought they
would stay... forever.

but a child to woman grows
it’s all a body knows
and
it’s the stains
that paint
on one’s remains
as they ride the wind
sweet wind

and so,
still she rides
on tomorrow’s dreams
sweeter wind stitching
a wood stock witching
never...
and always free...

RIC S. BASTASA
She Comes Again But You Will Remember

she comes again inside this dusk
with another mask but as soon as she sings
you begin to remember

the flowers of her youth
the bridge that fell
the chain of daisies on her hair
one bright summer day
the meteor's tail
the guitar strings
the violets and roses and the dance
in her circle of life

you recognize her because frankly my dear
she is also you

RIC S. BASTASA
She Complains That She Is Not That Weak Woman In Passion

What you read is all there is
If you cannot relate
Then no problem
If you are not that woman
Wriggling in my poem
Then let it be another woman

Another woman that
You mock
That you think is
So unreal

A woman who is not you
A woman who cannot be you
Is still the real woman
That I hold and love and cherish
She is still the woman that I love very much
She is still the woman that I can die for
She is the weak woman in my arms
She is the woman hiding in my embraces
She is the woman longing for my love
She is the woman who cannot live without my love
She is the woman who is by my side
She is the woman lovable to me

We made a vow
And I will be with her forever
Without me she is incomplete
Without her I am incomplete
We will always be together

Will you hate the woman that I love?

Drop her. She is mine. I'll catch her.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Did Not See The Lilacs When They Bloomed One Summer

in the past sense of my words
she had not seen the lilacs when they once bloomed in her garden
i swear they are so beautiful hanging on their stalks surrounded by their heart shaped leaves
like a bouquet offering of spring
for the first rain

RIC S. BASTASA
She Drinks My Soda

at the beach resort
she took the coca-cola
that i have started drinking
on its mouth

she drinks too the mouth
of the coca-cola
for a while until such
time that it was half
consumed

she returned the bottle
less its contents
her 'thank you' was
the sweetest

RIC S. BASTASA
She Gets In

dawn silent
gate creaks
she is in

RIC S. BASTASA
She Had Too Much She Had Too Little

of this
she had too much
of that
she had too little
and of this and of that
i am a little bit confused
what to take
what to discard
what to leave
what to believe
buy this buy that
throw this throw that away
i take a step forward i am told to take another step backward
i think it must be this
but i think it can also be that
of this and that
of these and those
it does not matter what she really thinks
i have my own thoughts now
about this and about that
i will take this
and only this
from far away London
i shall have thoughts of my own
now.............................................

RIC S. BASTASA
She Hates Monologues

when i am silent
as a fog
by the side
of an abandoned
mountain

she hates it

she speaks
to herself
like she
is disregarded
by her
lovers

like she
is in a trance
of sort
and she says

i hate monologues

well, i give
her the message
she must
do what she hates
at times

it is curative

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Asleep

she lives in her own dreams now
leave her
you wake up
to a certain reality
that now you
discover
there is no more
rainbow
between her and you
there is no
pot of gold
at the end

you feel
the cold  mist
around you
you are
so lonely
you wish
upon a storm
and not
upon any star

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Bored

a routine for boredom  
at 4 o'clock in the afternoon  
she goes to the city  
to buy something that must distract  
her attention  
in this messy hours of the day  
when all things simply look the same  
indistinguishable

two parts have become too distinct

one part needs a name  
the other stays unknown  
to keep life interesting.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Dead...

perhaps she had
enough

there were men in
her life, ah, that is expected

one must be open
to something that is neither right or wrong

there was even a priest
it is sad

when they begin to pretend
that they do not know each other

in Boracay someone judges her
but i prefer the idea that there is that realm of

something that is above right or wrong
that feeling of extreme joy

when everything becomes, no matter what,
becomes a part of the many things

forgiven,
they say she won't reach valentine's day

she had her own time of the
hearts, she lived a life without regret

she had her suns and moons and stars,
she bathed in the same river where we once had all these

today she is dead
and the goodness, all the goodness in her must triumph

who are we? we are the mourners
and please do not, do not ever say those bad words
please, do not even whisper, we know.

may her soul finally find the peace, and love that eternal affection that only God can give.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Fading And Then The Night Swallows Her
Including Her Shadow Of Doubt

while she was at the height of her fury

like a dragon spitting fire on him and not stopping

he merely looks at her unaffected though a portion of his lips twisted a bit

as though saying this woman is impossible when will she disappear?

she is emptying herself and she wants all the fire to burn him

but he knows how is it to be a rock and a salt

he has mastered the art of being a nobody and hence he thrives

she is fading and then the night swallows her including her shadow of doubt

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Homely

she is homely
heavy legs, dead toenails,
crooked limbs, thick lips,
round eyes like a
soccer ball,
twisted, twitching face,
wild eyebrows,
entangled hair,
rough skin,
flat nose,
by all means she
is not like the rest
who are lovable
but i know you noble
man loving a
betty la fea,
for if you do not love
her,
who may ever can?

thanks to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is In Love

she is in love, how can i not notice it?
she wakes up early, goes into her garden
and sings a beautiful song, very early this morning.
she waters her roses, and feeds the chickens.
she cooks breakfast. The eggs are fresh.
The meat well cooked and so tasty.
The coffee smells the aroma of coffee.
What else?
The room is clean, the kitchen so well kept.
My polo shirt is ready, my socks, handkerchief,
my underwear, my shoes, my tie, they're all
placed on bed for me to wear today.
The room smells with perfume
Her favorite, Victoria's secret.
She kisses me twice now, and another one
before i leave.
Life is beautiful, she repeats it again and again.
She stays in the house now. No travels this time.
No loafing with friends.

Tell me that i am conceited.
She is still in love with me. Now on our 12th year of marriage.
I look again at our wedding ring. The tiny diamond there still glitters.
Against the sunlight. Against all the odds.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Looking For The Simplicity Of You

she is looking for nothing but the simplicity of the sea
the plain salt in water
you may even remove the bluish part of it

she is expecting nothing in the landscape but only the grass on the hills
you may remove the house nearby and the running brook

the moon at night need not even be there
the star can be dispensed with

you may only give her the darkness and the silence of the grass and the hills

she is looking for nothing except that you
the one she loves must be there tonight

you may even dispense with the body
the hands and the face and the thighs

you may take them all away from her
she needs only the presence of your words

or even if you take the last word that you cannot give
you leave her the sigh unspoken by you

that will still suffice
she loves you and it is enough for her to last for another day

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Mad

she is mad because i take in
an insane electrician of the house connections

and yes there are explosions like the fourth of July
short circuits here and there
and the kitchen burns itself

so much go out
i let out what we had stored for years

and then we go out of the house laughing hard
we simply get rid what we do not need and then we become too light
and happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Mother....

that early morning
the old woman who served well
the government of this Republic
until her retirement
visited me in my working room
and she asked me how am i doing and
i told her that everything is fine and
she commented that she is seeing light
in my face and that everything must have
been smooth and easy and i answered that
probably it is because God has made it
possible for me to survive the ordeals of
our justice system and she assured me
that the Holy Almighty will always be
behind us, and we did not notice that
we have been holding hands for a long
time until she felt uneasy about the
unusual matter and i took away my hand
from her hand and i felt the unseen
energy running away from me and
i wondered if she was an angel sent
to me by the Lord of Justice
but i shrug the idea off for
everything here is real and
perhaps if things happen by reason
of miracles, then it must be.

for the meantime, we cut short
our concerns, work is here and
invading us and we have to part
finally.

God be with you, she finally leaves,
such words of comfort.

she is mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is No Longer Innocent About The Ways Of The World

you think she is as fragile as a thin glass of cherry wine
that when you touch the tip with your finger
she blushes and the glass gets warmer with your thumb
its bottom at the mercy of your palm

you like to think that she is a flower blooming on the month of May
where the dews are as careful as the sap of the red melon
nothing that stains the skin and dirties the white linen

then you discover a lot of things
first, the way she uses the pillow putting it just bellow her buttocks
then the way she calls your name like the hush of the break of day's breeze
from the distant sea
mournful and yet so awakening to your senses
the way she puts her legs and spreads her arms to hold your body
she is like the full moon peeping over the window that you open
you let her in and she sleeps like a fantasy dream on your bed

every sense of you wakes up like there is a fire in the house
adrenalin rushes inside your thighs
you are undressed and in the naked truth you come to her
something unspeakable
unfathomed
giving you the freedom to plunge in the paradise
long denied by them for you

you found the map to her labyrinth of pleasure
and once there
you do not want to leave

this is your home
your niche where your hands thrive like the needles of grass
where you mind glows like the stars
alive and singing

this is pleasure immeasurable
her lips her breasts her arms her abdomen her eyes
her hands gripping your hands
her feet entwined like the vine to the pillar of your house
her soft voice her moans

the cock is crowing and by all means say hello to a very
nice morning

a new day to the first day of your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Not Also Looking For Anybody.

...And then we behave like beggars in need of affection

if you see us dressed on our Sunday's best
waiting along the busy road
for someone who never arrives
you would have known what pity is all about

we eat time, we squander it
like a prodigal son,
we do not mind what is left

loneliness too is tiresome
expensive and senseless

you know what i mean
look at you, you are fully dressed
‘but you are not going anywhere’
you are waiting
for no one

there is one who arrives here
but what a pity
she is not also looking for anybody.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Playing Misty With Me

i do not mean that this fling can cling
and hurt, it started as a minor poem in my heart
and then she swallowed love hook, line and sinker,
taking this bait, he thought he loves her,
it does not work that way for something deeper than a mere
poem of the minor category
the mist is being played and the fatal attraction grows
into a murderous affair, and she might be there holding a knife
and Alex comes to the scene and finding her
shoots her with a gun.

she bathes in her own blood, the police came again at the late hour of the night.

God! thanks it is just another nightmare.
I wake up and take a glass of ice cold water.

I need to go back to sleep again.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Right

with all the loves
i have wasted
i must visit the
church and light
the candles
for each love
that i have
squandered
on each boulevard
each park
each boat

each port
each kiss....

i must offer flowers
for the death of love.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is Sleepless, She Is Probing

They read your lines
They perhaps like you
They try to read you
In between
she is sleepless
And she pities you
she is probing
And she writes for you too
And you feel so honored

Comes our arrogance
You say you write
Only for yourself
For art’s sake
You say you cannot
Write for no other
You say you cannot
Stop writing
Your essence is just that
To write for no other

To write or you die

Be kind
Let them read you through the night
Let them follow you
Warn them though
They may have followed
A blind man eking his way through
His darkness

Without even a cane to feel his way.

The Virgin Mary
And Veronica
The crying mother
And the cloth to wipe a bloody face

Don’t stretch further
There is no Christ in me.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Is There

i see some bamboo poles
lining up
on the shallow sea
she is there
watching some fishes without fins
without scales
she is there on some exclamations
this cannot be!
this cannot be!
the fish i know have fins!
the fish i know have scales all over their elongated bodies!
the fish i know can swim!
why are these fishes dying?
why are these fishes swimless in the sea where they belong?
yes my dear, the fishes and the sea, you do not belong there
the fishes are not yours and you do not belong to them
they have their own salty, slimy, scaly world,
they have gills and fins and round eyes

that do not blink

so you cannot tell them what to do, what to become.

in fact, you are neither fish nor fowl

RIC S. BASTASA
She Jumps

she jumps into a pool of water
her hair falls freely and she
dives in the deep blue spot

she is lost in the fog
she creates the ripples in my mind

she rises like the moon
from the night clouds

i bite my lips as i watch her
she is such a lovely poem tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
She Likes A Dimmer

She likes a dimmer
On a yellow chandelier
Dimming
A little bit dimmer
Than yellow sun
Fading to light orange
To darker
Reddish sunset
On a sea horizon
Where everything
Turns to gray
Then dark
To total darkness
Of her night

She is simply
Dramatizing
Her life in
Old age,

Like fading colors
To a fading life
In ages past
Like forgetting something too painful

The yellow lights dimming
On the chandelier on a
Dimmer does the trick for her

I too like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Likes It Here

she likes it here
inside this small aquarium
she is the most
beautiful goldfish
alone with
her own
bubbles

RIC S. BASTASA
She Likes To Begin Again

she likes to begin again
on some new lines of her poetry
a brand new metaphor
like a newly born baby
to a mother crying with joy
as father watches

she likes another beginning
it is still sad
deceiving herself that the end
approaches her like a candle
about to burn the floor

sometimes i pity her
embarking on a new journey
of self-denial
another trip to the land of lies
but somehow it is good
or better shall i say
at least
she is not riding on that old angry train
again

RIC S. BASTASA
She Loves Her Hair Stretched

accustomed to curly hair
when we were yet children
living in the same house

I feel uneasy why she
wears stretched hair
And she takes pride
about her new found fashion
And taste for something straight.

Curly hairs and split ends
Never gave her luck
She got an ugly husband
Who does not understand her
Rich maybe, but slaps her

It is time she gains confidence
In herself to a newer face
A stretched hair, straight
And candid and ready to
Fight now, win or lose,

At whatever costs she must
Deny her old self, the one
With the curly hair, she is
Ready for the consequences.

Her right as a new woman
With stretched hair is now

Or never, she has no time left
Anymore for hiding and cowardice and tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Loves Me ........

last night she woke up
to an unholy hour
felt my chest
and thought that i was dead
which i played
so willingly to test how she
reacts to said
circumstance

she loves me.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Makes Me Remember

she is old, her hair diminished,
still black but dry, and her skin cannot betray
her being overworked and
abused by society,
i face her now and she reminds me
that she was the one who took care of me when i was a baby,
mama was a teacher and papa was a drunkard
yet he was rich by that time's standard,
glasses were thrown away from the kitchen and broke themselves
on the pavement of the strangers,
she took care of me like a mama,
forlorn, and betrayed she asks money for the rum
i give her, and she is happy now
i look at her again when she leaves the place
she is disappointment looking for some pleasure
to forget,
she stinks but she is still one
of the family treasures.
mama died and if she was only her
i know she would hug her
as tight as an apron
on her waist.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Masters Now The Art Of Losing

at first she lost a coin
then her purse and then her bag and then her blouse
and then her skirt and pants and then it went back to losing her underwears

until she becomes naked

she gets used to losing and when she finally lost herself
she did not complain

she is used to losing she has mastered losing as a form of art itself
she has become an artist and losing has become her main business

now, i have loved her and i am having this problem
of finding her

i guess i must learn too, this art of losing

RIC S. BASTASA
She May Have Told You

she may have told you that i do not write for you
since i write for her
she may not have lied to you for she tells the truth
as she loves me too
but she must not have told you as i have not told her
that i love you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
She May Not Come

she leaves at any moment
when she wants it and we
who are left live on our own
resources. We are sad.
In darkness we thrive.
Each sharing a slice of
pain. And then one day
from out of the blue she
comes and says, why is
everything dark? Why
black? Change it. That is
not the right color.

She does not have any
sense of light at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Must Too Help Me Forget

her silence stabs me,
despite any word
i say
water on the hot cinders
of hate,
she keeps on
fueling that unresolved
anger,
she must know that
i am having too
my own hard times
harsh as hers
in that foreign land
all the while she thinks
i betrayed her
and cause the brokenness
of her future,
no, it isn't
there are words that i cannot
say
words that also kill me
at one moment
she must still
not know them unless
she forgets me

there is this freedom
inside
and i still have it within
she has no
right to enter

RIC S. BASTASA
She Needs A Jealous Man

she needs a very jealous man in her life
to make her feel that she is lovable
that she is still worth the hassle
that she is still a crystal bubble
she needs a very jealous man
to prick her so she can burst into
a very lovely flower
to face the sun with beauty and this time

with oozing sex appeal and more this time
with concrete self-confidence

RIC S. BASTASA
She Needs Years To Make A Poem

i am not surprised with what she just said
to make a poem of her life
she needs years and years
perhaps a hundred years
if need be to make the best poem
of her life

her words are days and days
her stanzas her dwelling place
her commas and punctuations
her naps and long hours of sleep
her poem is her life

she lives inside it
she breathes every word every letter
and when she reads it when it is finished
she speaks her last, hounding silence

RIC S. BASTASA
She Plays Too Well

she plays too well
he is amazed at this
when his anger
melts into love
when his love
melts into the sense
of the
divine
the silence clings
like a vine to
the wall
the cold winds
blow
the leaves undefeated

he tells her
well done
he asks her
to slow down a bit
so he can savor
the notes of her song
like sweetness to
his tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
She Really Deserves The Best...

inside last
night's dream she
appears again: light skinned
too young for her age
smiling
seducing you to be
in her side again

you have actually
forgotten her name
but her face speaks
a language that
makes you remember
what it was before
between you and her
in that past

she holds your hand
she does not speak
she takes you to a
very silent place
where she plants a kiss
on your lips

you love her
still
that is what you
can only recall
but you cannot
love her anymore
and that is
a matter of
a firm decision

you left her again
but this time
she is no longer
crying
when the dream closed
like a door
and you are out
into the open
field of your
disposition

you are definite
there is no guilt
there is only that
happiness
that somehow tells you
she deserves
the best

and you are not just
that.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Returns I Refuse....

if you have lots and lots of money,  
this you can do: burn them and laugh.

for instance, there is this old woman  
so stingy, she does not buy anything

for herself, lends money at high interest,  
collects everything in deposit, she

does not travel, money is meant to be hoarded, she does not give to charity,

what a waste of money, all the idle lazy people in the world, she does not even help relatives, sad to say even her kids, left her for good, and she is left alone in her bed of money, she masters loneliness, despite, it is the money that makes her alive at 85, she remains to be that way, except for the flattery and that gullibility, and this she did, she burns all her money and it was me who laughed, for regret always comes at the end, she returns, i refuse.

RIC S. BASTASA
and how is it going?
it is bad, i said.
before the year ends
the flowers wilt, since
no one is watering the
pots. The pigs are
butchered and i can
still hear the wailing.
it is hot most of the
time and the drama of
leaves falling still
stick on the mind.
There were heavy rains
too, the bridge soon
will collapse. The waters
rise eager to gobble
the nearby weak houses.

You are just bitter, she
said. The sun is bright,
winds are gentle, and people
are in jubilation.
The poor are buying gifts.
The children are laughing.
And promises of good tidings
and good will are abounding.

Maybe, i answered. I am just
more real than the rest of you
here. Still dreaming and hoping
sticking to the world like
worms and leeches.

You are bitter, she said.
You have never loved at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Says

she tells me before we broke up
that i may be able to love two persons at the same time
but never at the same level

and so she gave up on me,
and i think, (i did not tell her of course)
i am happier this time
without her.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Says She Is Not The Fourth Woman

I give her the benefit of the doubt
Well, when I wrote that poem she was inside my head
And I dived as a submarine
Into a little sea of understanding
And she is the periscope

There are waves and
Some uncertain destinations

Where to go
Where to stop

How to describe the places above land
And underwater

She was in my mind when I wrote that
And I gave her a lot of forms:
a bird,
a bat,
a dinosaur,
a fighter,
a warrior

And I was so sure about her, because
She once told me
About her agitations

I got premonitions though that when she reads it
She will deny herself
The pleasure of seeing her own movie
Her own character in the game
That she loves and she is
Really into.

Indeed, she says she is not.
I give her
Due process. She may not be that fourth woman
But to my mind
she is and she giggles in my brain

And she even asks me: how much is that brain?
That pound of flesh? Did you buy me respect?

Darling, my brain is yours through and through
My flesh is just a finger away, a lip away, a tongue away

Respect is not for sale,

it is earned

with time, and
Honesty
To feelings

Now, I give respect you respect.
You are that fourth woman.
You are the woman of my life.

I appear to you naked.
Touch me. Feel me.

Be honest.
Say that you love me.

Tell me that you care.

I am your submarine. You will be my sea and I will not be afraid

Of uncertain destinations. I am bound to be lost anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Says Ten

I say two words
She replies with ten
Summer is hot
And bickering
Like a flame

RIC S. BASTASA
She Says That A Kiss Is A No-Brainer Task

her face shows it
unkissed, she destroys the
best medicine
of a woman's
lackluster

but she is right somehow
it is the heart
we use, when we like to kiss

RIC S. BASTASA
She Sobbed.

He wept.
Finally, he left.

She couldn't believe it.
She had doubts.
And her doubts finally devoured her.
Hook, line and sinker.
She is gone too.

But I finally hear the sobs.
On air. There is no one there. It seems.
But I know. It is her.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Tells The Truth And No One Believes...

our belief has been
that i dying
we conquer death
that in giving
we conquer greed
that in losing ourselves
we find ourselves
at the end...

(in the ironies
however, of life we
thrive;

upon the hunger of
others we are blind
we keep water away
from the thirst of
the masses
we progress because
we oppress
and from behind every
fortune that we amass
a crime is hidden)

we continue with our
solemnities:
we support charities
with publicity
we like our faces
seen on TV
we hug a child to
convince them of our
love for the helpless
and the new
we like our names put
in the posterity of
all those walls
we like a street named
for us
we put a pillar in society
bearing our ancestry...

comes now Janus
double-faced
comes now the diamond
of multiple behaviors

there is this Cassandra
screaming at the crossroads
of history

she tells the truth
and no one believes...

RIC S. BASTASA
She Walks Her Talk

Ruth is a nice woman
she does not climb the ladder
the ladder climbs for her
i remember how the ladder puts
her feet on the step
and the ladder keeps on carrying
her to the top
so that she can see what is wrong
with the plain
and she does what she is supposed to
do
trimming the stars
dimming the heavens sometimes
to create the ambiance of
an accommodation
she does what the gods tell her to do
down to the last detail
sacrificing sometimes what she thinks
is right from her own human perception
the trees love her
and so do the sand and grass

i am telling you i love the woman
you know it well
she walks her talk.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Was Simply Looking At The Bulge Of My In Between

I wanted something else, more than what she really wanted from me. I want a talk, a longer talk, a sleepy talk to while my boring hours away,
And she looks at me differently, her eyes falling in between my legs, Trying to unzip me by her looks, her hands busily slowly sliding in the pockets of my pants,
I did not complain, there is no reason, and it would be humiliating her Own kind of simple joys as a woman,
She takes the first initiative that is her style, she is not recessive

She slides her fingers holding my Bulge, respectful of her courageous tenderness,

She is heating me, I pretend I am gentle, and I keep on talking About something else, like how I cared for her, when she’s lonely I can be a listener

She’s drunk. And she is an honest woman, her fingers gripped Me frankly demanding that I should not talk

I shut up and gave in. She will have no regrets. I gripped her hands And lead it to something she really liked

She is drunk, and I am so forgiving. She will start her dinner and she need not speak

Her mouth is full.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Wears A Scarf

loss of hair

she wears a
bandanna

even inside the house

we do not ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Whipped The Little Naughty Boy....

because mother did not take him
to the funeral
he took his own unique revenge
uprooting all the blooming African daisies
in her garden
and taking everything to the road where the big
truck runs them all down over

when mother saw it she wept.

she whipped him so hard that he almost fainted.
and both of them could never forget each other.

the map to forgiveness was lost.
and love is an island hidden by a giant fog.
the only boat available had lots of holes.
the childless boatman died.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Who Wears The White Hairs

she who wears the white hairs
teaches me what to do with my life
i embrace her and take the clue
from the scent of her wisdom
earned by her for years and years
the weight burdening much
on her bare shoulders

her wrinkles speak of the struggles
of the past warring on the moles of her
cheeks the furrows where tears rush
and fall and then seep on the floor

i kiss her tonight for it is her birthday
and i whisper to her my gratitude
i smell the sweetness of her soul
and it sinks deeper into the recesses
of my heart: here is the lady who made me

i once remember the Chinese eyes in me
my brown skin so tight to my bones
my complacency removed from my youth
my mind soaring like a blithe spirit in the air
she was there all the days of my life
teaching, guiding and patiently noting
what i lack, what i need and what i must be

soon i shall have her white hairs too
her wrinkles her sad smile her own death
soon like her i will stand proud too
she did her best and we were brought to the test
she does not mind her passing we are ready for the timing
we shall switch roles, she dies we save more souls

RIC S. BASTASA
She Will Speak About Some Men

almost bald, some hair have consistently fallen
bigger tummies
bloated to some earthly experience
the men of her life
smelling beer
and saline sweat

but always she will remember them
always feeling sexy

the dark room
the musk perfume
the warm blankets
some pillow cases
smelling pungent still
inside her lonely mind

her heart has stopped bleeding
the men of her life
oh! they were sexy too
tall and strong and naked
always penetrating
her emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
She Wins This Time

She takes my mother-in-law
She knows what weakens her
And she wrecks
What used to be smooth
She plants the wrinkles
Of this legal relationship,
Then she will be taking
My wife
And there will be pain
Inflicted somewhere
Somebody gets hit so badly
She does it
She sees to it that it will be me

But no one knows it is her wrecking
Every dream I have, every plan I set
Every posturing

She wins, I give her a win
This time and tomorrow she still wins
She takes everything from me

But I have no worry at all
She is instrumental to my perfect plan

On the day that I enter this house
And mingle with her
My only plan is to be out of the door
To walk out from this floor
I could have jumped out of the window
Or break open some walls
Or take the ceiling to the roof
Where I can breathe
Where I can be out from here
And be gone with some drifting clouds

With her it was so unnecessary
She does it for me
She does it all for me
And with the thinking that she is winning this game

And this time, sorry to tell her,
This time I win.

RIC S. BASTASA
She Won'T Last Long There

at her age of 66
she won't last long
in the land of the
snow

anticipate that on
the 30th day
she will be back
worried about her
pig, and jack fruits
and chickens
and dogs

missing her daily
prayers in the church

RIC S. BASTASA
She Wronged Herself

what was wrong?
she took a corner
and put herself there
for the whole day
she stayed denying
the demands of
movements like
the way the fingers
must wriggle for the
hands like the way
the hair must dance
with the wind to
freshen the scalp
to make the brain
alive to put life to
her eyes

everything is wrong
she wronged herself.

RIC S. BASTASA
She....

she is a tiny yellow
butterfly
that hovers over
my ring finger
too fragile
i keep my fingers
open
throughout the night
long.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a way
always to detect if
the water has
a fish, though the
river is brackish
and murky. even the
mussels in the mud,
even the shells on
the sands, ...the
stars in the heavens
are obvious at night,
the winds that carry
those dead leaves
plucked from the life
of the trees,
the sun fading sinking
to the depths of the
horizon, ....
there is a need to
spend time, to simmer
yourself, and be with
them: shells, mussels,
fish, and sand.

RIC S. BASTASA
you shift from poetry
with regret you must
get into the ramifications
of the law of bread and
butter, you want to kill
time and just lay there,
the law, the law, how
dry can these laws be,
you gaze outside the
window, sighing, looking
to the blue sea and
feeling the breeze salty
to your brain, ahhh, it
is this salt of the earth,
talking. I shift my head
now to these lines,
i live for the moment.
now, back to what i
detest, this bread, this
butter, i too live here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shikataganai (That's The Way It Goes) ...

(i got to scramble your words
to build a poem which may not be a poem at all,
who knows what a poem is?

chopping a celery and
putting it in the middle of a salad,

pouring hot water to a coffee
inside a porcelain cup...

to qoute:

I cannot help but smile
at the fine touch of wit
mixed with irony bits.

I may know well that
wakarimasen

Get it often when people
try to avoid further discussions

may just take the

I don't know
into their arms,

holding tight to those words
as there would never be
another chance
to find another ways
to solve a problem..

RIC S. BASTASA
Shimsu

shimsu is
lying on the
ground
dying and my
wife who has
attached herself
to such a
grey hound is
crying....

RIC S. BASTASA
Quote of the day:

'Whatever you give a woman, she will make it greater.
If you give her
sperm, she'll give you a baby.
If you give her a house,
she'll give you
a home.
If you give her groceries,
she'll give you a meal.
If you give
her a smile, she'll give you her heart.
She multiplies and
enlarges what
is given to her.
So, if you give her any crap,
be ready to receive a ton
of shit.'

RIC S. BASTASA
my hands are trembling
on your story
of a plot that vibrates
with fear
like the leaves of an aspen
one autumn breeze

like i were a child
quaking always
asking for more

like the quivering
poplar tree

my shaking knees
on shaky feet

i changed perspective
about this
shivering

i must see
the sparkling lights
from some shivering
crystals
of the chandeliers
of this
old house

where this family
of mine
still thrive

wanting to get
rid of
trembling hands

RIC S. BASTASA
Shock

a chick away from the hen's wings
on the ground
looking for grain

a hawk glides
and takes it

too late for the hen
the clouds drift by

the sky
shows no sigh of shock

nature's normal ways
a predator is taking
its much deserved breakfast
plain strategy
a skill for the kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shocking Stories....

i

the vulture preys
on the carcass of the helpless
victim
robbed and killed in the desert
abandoned
with fellow vultures the feast
is not over
it will continue for days

ii

the old monkey asks for food
and help
as he sits upon his mountain
of gold

iii

crocodile that lives on
the murky river
denies
that yesterday it has swallowed
an innocent boy
from that uneducated village

RIC S. BASTASA
Shocking To The Conscience Of Man

a young woman
in maroon
dress with a
red scarf
sweeps the side
of the street
with her
broom

an old man walks
slowly
from the gate of
his house
across the street

and then
suddenly
one crazy guy
on his loud
motorcycle
passes by

i can't tell
you what
happened next

you're
eating apple pie...

RIC S. BASTASA
Shoot Shoot Shoot

in his firm
steady grip
in his hand
is the bow
of all creative
ergies

RIC S. BASTASA
Shoot The Shooting Star

you wished upon a star
the first star
was a fake
you wished upon another star
it was a failure
you wished upon the third star
it was useless and gave you nothing
you wished again on the fourth star
it was ungrateful and took almost everything from you
and then another star
and then another star shooting before you
they all gave you despair
and you believe not
on any star anymore

then you learned to live
without any star
the stars are not true

and you are so disappointed
with all the falsities they are telling you
finally
you have this shotgun in your hand
and then this lone shooting star came one night
splendid in such a dark space
you shot it
hit it
and there it exploded, shattered

it was the only star intended for you
and it was true

RIC S. BASTASA
Shooting Stars

those were the stars
where you say all your wishes

they're all gone now
they live their lives only in seconds

RIC S. BASTASA
Short Contemplation....

you look at your face
this forest hair
the space is too small
for the feel of prison
you find a mole
it is an island where
you can stay
you look closer there
is this pore in your skin
you think
there is something in there
that can possibly
make you free...

RIC S. BASTASA
Short Poem...

when there is nothing to say?
ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
you create the hero
and then the
villain
and to make the
story short
the hero finally
gets hold
of the gun and
points it to
the head of the
villain
pleading for
mercy
and then
bang!

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie #1

anticipation

a bowl unflushed
there is no
more blood

kahinam

Wa pa maflush ang
Bowl
Wala nay dugo

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 1

a rainbow generation
after the rain of turmoil
whistles its way
towards the church
for the wedding of
anger and empathy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 2: Turn Your Hate Around

there is so much hate in you
it is too tiring to feel
much tiring to think beneath
this drums of despair
turn it around like a clock
finish the night
with one revolution of the
hands of time
get done, dance the reggae
or the waltz with me
be fed up, be guilty
time for change
open that fist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 3 My Defense

my defense is simple enough
for you to hear
it is the whisper of forgiveness
the joyful dance of reunification
around the circle of our humanity
come, come
our defense must not be revenge
it's God's.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 4: At Home Or Abroad

at home, all these mountains are ours
abroad, all these dreams are ours
at home, all the people are our brothers
abroad, they're not, they're the others.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 5: Bondage

i do not ask you to
set me free from the
bondage that i always
revere, these chains that
i love, that i worship,
these golden chains of
my dreams, that i still
wish may come true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 6: Coming In And Out Of Your Life

sweet angel voice
the last time i cried
you hear it somewhere
on the mountains with
ice caps, the echoes
reechoing, without
stopping in my mind

let you go
but i can't you know
and even though
i am not with you
i need you so.

kill me softly then
with that angelic song
asking for
my freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 7: Ships

ships in my mind
sails in the ocean
seagulls flying
at this hour
sleep is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
can't really smile without you
but let me try smiling within me
be glad, you cannot murder
me with your absence, look at
me inside myself, i am alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shortie 9: Baby You Will Always Be Mine

i decide it for myself
baby you will always be mine
in the realm of thoughts
in the fences of my dreams
baby, you will always be mine/

RIC S. BASTASA
Shoulder

pains on his shoulder
creepy
like snakes looking for
the big bite

poisonous
lethal bite for the night

dead ma
a white man does not understand
what is it

deadma
no one's dead here

it simply means
the unmindfulness of the surrounding pain

or the itch
and the scratch

the fingernails have reasons
not to scratch anymore

too disturbing
too important to be give the attention

leave them do whatever they want
and just like anything else
they too leave
when not a pinch of attention is given

or the pain becomes a part of routine
like a the chase of the blinking signs of traffic on the road

RIC S. BASTASA
Shoulders Support The World

There comes a time when we no longer say: my God.  
A time of absolute purity.  
A time when we no longer say: my love. 
Because love proved useless.  
And eyes don’t cry.  
And hands only weave in rough work.  
And the heart is dry.

Women knock at the door in vain, don’t open it.
You stay alone, the light goes out,
and in the dark your eyes glow enormous.

-Carlos Drummond De Andrade
translated from the Portuguese by Len Sousa

You’re convinced, you no longer know suffering. 
And you expect nothing from friends.

Old age matters little, what is old age? 
Your shoulders support the world 
and it weighs no more than a child’s hand.  
The wars, famines, and talks in buildings 
only prove that life goes on 
and not all have freed themselves yet. 
Some, finding the spectacle barbarous, 
prefer (the delicates) to die. 
There comes a time when there’s no point in dying.  
There comes a time when life is an order.  
Merely life, without perplexity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Show Me The Happy One

show me the happy one
and i shall show you

the dead one show me
the man who says the wars shall end

and i will show you
all the dead lining up the streets

witnessing the end
of the wars that mankind has invented

RIC S. BASTASA
Showcase

socialite clouds rest on the top
of Malindang Mountain
the common trees look at them
with envy
the grasses chide that there is no point to this
the clouds are meant to pass
the trees are meant to be cut and burned
and the grasses win.

RIC S. BASTASA
Showdowned

i was following you
holding a camera
and shooting an old
chinese man sitting
beside the door of
his chinatown store

i was expecting
something more
about a showdown
like that old man
defeating Bruce Lee
in a common
KungFu Film, or

him becoming a
flying tiger over
bamboo trees
showing his
magic prowess
against a lioness
chinese actress.

but i understand
completely there
is no such showdown
in chinatown
except the camera
shooting an old man
and then you go
back to your room
watching the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Showing The True Color

when i wake up this early morning
she was not already beside me.

i do not want to rise and fold the blanket
and go somewhere else.

or read the papers, or sip coffee, there is
this laziness that infects my bones, a disease

of meaning, another slow day, the routine is
eating me, and i behave

in a manner that i am like a lame duck being
aimed at by all the bystanders

i am opening my eyes, and the ceiling is off
white, it has been that way ever since i got married,

why did i leave it that way? i have the money to have
it painted pure white, like a very clean slate where

i can write what i must mean, but i didn't, i let things
that way they are from the beginning, and perhaps

they will still be at the end. This is what i do next,
always always i do this: i rise from my bed, go to my
circular mirror and look at my face, they also do it,
and then i touch my cheeks and chin, feeling the roughness

of the beard, how they have grown long and so untidy,
the razor is ready, and the soap and water, but this time

i will do what i cannot do the other days of my life,
i will not trim the unruly ones, i will not wash my face,

i may slap myself, and then i give the mirror the grin
of the man that is used to all these doubts and shame.
i will tell it, i am now then i will the bathroom another tune for my whistle, nobody, nobody but me.

RIC S. BASTASA
I am away from home
It is nighttime in this big city
And i am inside this room
Writing
Absurd travelling
Flying that far only to write about same
Things over and over again
Like a boat moving in circles
Yet
I am not tired
Sleeplessly
Ignited by joy that i am alone &
Still managed
To be
Sharp and
Sane

RIC S. BASTASA
Shut Up....

the sea is enough
with its waves and foams
and driftwood
and sunken boats
and swallowed screams
and missing
names.....

no word please.
I've had enough.
even from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shut....

there is so much
in the heart
the mind is a swimmer
it is waiting for the
highest dive
the spirit is the light
inside a
refrigerator
the mouth is a closed door
the tongue is
still drunk

RIC S. BASTASA
Shutting Up....

if i only
knew

the objective of
art is to keep things
in order

convert chaos into
a well kept room

no messing
everything neat in its place

perhaps
that is what i am doing right now

threshing out
emotions early morning

putting them inside
a canvass of this monitor

a window
where emotions take the shape of words

shit
shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shutting You Out Of My Life

i hear you speak
i like it.

It is past however
&
there is this fear
that with you in my life

i may cease
to be what i am.

so i think at night

if like a bulb by the kitchen
door outside the house,
i should switch you off
the one that
sometimes we like to forget doing.

if i continue adoring you
i will be lost
and if i allow this for more
days,
i may not find myself again.

so i shut you out
the way i close a window
the way i pull
the drapes from the ceiling
to the floor
to put back the cool shade of dark,

you must understand
i could be
my own disaster too.
Shy

para sa mga bisdak
shy, bow

shy taglaba, shy tagluto
shy mangompra
shy magbudget
shy hawod
shy magbuot
mao nga
ako? na lang mangambot

RIC S. BASTASA
Shying Away

when the two young
creatures start to tease each other
at the beach this sunny day

the old creature
looks the other way

he shies away
not wanting to remember her anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Shying Away From Shakespeare

i know how is it to love
Shakespeare or
Shelly,

he shakes you and peels you
like a pear
hits your brain with his
spear

and so does his ally
Shelly
makes you bleed
and suffer
the agony of the
intellectual spasms

i burn poetry books
only to miss them again

this masochism at the level
of an obsession-compulsion
malady

i quit them both
and write my own

i am not great but
i have learned how to live a happy life again

RIC S. BASTASA
it is not the falsity that makes someone shy away
it is the truth that like a turtle plunges deep inside a pail
of left-overs
showing its head only when all of them leave

and as he again recovers his privacy
he finally shows the house of its body.

RIC S. BASTASA
Shying.....

to write and keep
on writing he says with
final conviction requires
zero talent because all you
have to do
is to keep on writing
even without purpose
even without knowing what
comes next
what happens after

but there is a way to
make a difference
shy away from fame,
respect the masters
by never never ever
telling them your real
name, and when they
ask for it and find you
tell them it was not
you and never you for
as you see and you swear
you were never cultured

never intellectualized
never influenced
never knew whether the
rules in tablets exist
like the law of Moses
you never was a learned
gentlemen whom women
adore and dream about,

you swear again,
fame is the most irrelevant
thing and you never
liked it.
Si Papa Ug Ang Iyang Puting Kabayo

Usa ka adlaw niana
Misakay si papa sa iyang puting kabayo
Padulong siya sa baybayon
Aron sa sayo maligo
Walay kaon ang kabayo
Apan si papa walay puangod
Siging bunal sa kabayo
Siging syagit nga magpaspas
Ug dagan hala paspas pa gyod
Ug dagan kanang morag naglupad
Sa dihang naa na sila sa dagat
Gusto ko na untang sulsulan ang
Puting kabayo aron molangoy
Kini sa pikas nga isla aron
Dili na kani mabunalan
Sa akong walay puangod nga amahan
Apan wala akoy nahimo
Sa kaisog sa akong palibot
Usa ka adlaw niana
Miabot ang dautang balita
Adunay kunoy dako nga tawo
Gikilaw sa iyang kaugalingong kabayo

RIC S. BASTASA
Siatchon?

what i shall remember about you is your claim
for the beauty in selfishness

that giving makes more selfish people
more selfish than ever before

and so on your birthday you take refuge on one of those beautiful
ankor wat temples

freed from the clutches of humanity
walking the streets of the night market alone

not giving anything
neither taking anyone

RIC S. BASTASA
Side By Side We Must Go Beyond The Boundaries Of Beliefs

as you followed me
not to earn your ire
neither you
earning mine
i also followed you
and that makes it fair
enough
i get to know each story
about you
and you getting mine
then we share each
others' ups and downs
sometimes we rest upon
some shadows
getting the answers for
our riddles
time
gives us the moments
of who and what we are
we discover secret gardens
collected pebbles
we sit side by side now
watching
waves rolling upon our
feet
do you follow me
again?
who shall follow whom
when we are holding
each others' hands
like the river and
the hill?

RIC S. BASTASA
Siempre Me Quedara - Bebe

alone in the boulevard
amidst the rush of evening
people, i am, one of those
who come here and drink some
more of these sunset glasses
while feeling the surge of
life passing by all of us
where loneliness gives more
color to the blandness of
the majority of human frailness.

RIC S. BASTASA
with grief are black veils of women
trying to filter the gleaming of tears
with grief are the hands trying to
sift and shift the sounds of the cries
with grief are women
mourning for the deaths of men
for the loss of children
for the rape of the earth
the thin crust of morals
dirt of the feet
dusts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sigh

OH how beautiful is
the moon!
Oh, how beautiful are
the stars!

They need not be
mine.
Wonder is enough
To be amazed in their
natural beauty
is enough.
Beauty need not
be owned
to be beautiful.
In the realm of the
hearts,
beauty lives there
and that is enough
for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sigh Of The Returnee

it is not the fullness that
overflows
it is the emptiness

of the house when you arrive
when the door that feigns the abundance within the room
finally surrenders
to the brokenness of the hinges

it is the fullness that spreads
too quickly like an ink of the squid
from the previous paths
of its escapades
from the threats of the predating ell

it is the silence that fills
the nothingness that sings
the unmoving furniture dressed in dust
the tempura that is left uneaten
and now
filled with
molds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sighed

i'll miss those days
when both of you and mom
are going together on a trip
and there is no more news
what is happening
in your destination

i like the silence for once
a news blackout
where i can also be left
alone
tending about how i am
going
with my own self

i will miss those moments
when you tell me that you are having
fun with mom
and telling me that she is one ideal
woman

...i like it

she is never my mom and
i erred having you

i think i miss myself with the
other woman
who left me with all her tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Signs Of My Old Age

just wet my pant
this morning
i was holding it
it was too short
to be seen
after i had it full
in my mouth
the bottle
of mineral water
in my hand

RIC S. BASTASA
Signs Of Your Times

at first
you forget what
you recall
and then
you forget what
you have
forgotten
finally you choose
not to recall
anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Signs....

a pending volcanic eruption in Irosin

earthquake in New zealand

protests in Libya Iran

mUBArak ousted floods in Punta

mispelled wordss trgemblin letters

shattered beliefs bloated stomachs

thorns in the throat

goiter, cancer, hypertension

series of deaths February and March

Matchs ticks...

RIC S. BASTASA
Signs?

you dream of the storm
last night

shaken
you go to church to pray

will there be
another catastrophe?

God, please
protect us
helpless, and
innocent

unable to see what
lies beyond
this storm and darkness

as you are praying
a black butterfly passes by
and it is
so sudden

RIC S. BASTASA
Silence

silence is when you simply
read the lines of the person you miss
and stop right there

you remember the past
with no regret you say
she was your first love
the first penetrating love that you cannot ever forget
like an arrow from a bow with a string stretched that far
shooting deep into the chambers of your heart
that you can hardly breathe
you almost die because of too much bliss

you stay there
like a vacant chair outside unkind for the night
thinking some more

what if you did not say the words which hurt her
you could have been together still
happy with each other
you could have given her children
there would have been laughter and chasing and playing
in the room of your house

you stare at the window which is open
to a place far away

there is no regret
you keep on saying that
there are no possibilities anymore for the chains of love to reconnect
there is no more bond
to a past left to rot in the gutters

to your wise judgment
she is dead
and she must be dead forever

you are honest enough to admit that at one time you love her
and you gave her that love without expecting something in return
it is sad
she never loved you
she felt nothing
even with the feeling of the smallest grain of sand

facts and facts of a broken heart healing itself with years and years of bitterness

it is alright now that you have survived in that faraway land
with some autumns and winters
and summers and springs

do you feel better now? no regrets, bury her and say some prayers too like you were one of the merry men without sighs because their wives left them
and they felt it was for their own good and that at the end
all will be
back at their right places

RIC S. BASTASA
Silence Beacons Silence.

the dark room
has played you with
its usual tricks

you smell perfume
you felt heaven
you even told your
mother that
you have seen the
face of God

Until you step outside
the door
which at first held
its laughter about you

the world has so much
to offer
the mountains' mouth
call you into singing
and the sea too

the birds have spoken
and the clouds by their mere
silence
even tell a lot

more truths come
marching in like soldiers
bound for the war

and it is not a
question of perfumes and
happiness anymore

issues come like rain
and thunder
silence beacons silence.
silence is a form of vindication

to the harsh questions in life
do not give it the dignity of a mind
stay silent
mum

to a recent calamity where dead people
teem a once busy street
silence is a blanket
cover them all
stay
calm do not weep
weeping is letting it know that the calamity has won
over you
stay
solid like a pavement

a widow may waddle in a sea of depression &
sing the same song over and over again
asking God that the burden be taken

when you see her
all her hair turn gray
her eyes sunken
her cheeks hollow like a nut without meat
her looks hazy like a foggy road at night in the mountain

do not say any word
stay unaffected
hold her hand and make her feel that you are secure
still
in the chosen space of your
inner silence

silence is your private space
where you are lone ruler of it all.
Silence Is Like A Spool Of White Thread

silence is like a spool of white thread
take the the tip and walk away

at the end
after you have traveled a very long distance
you come back and tell me
if this is worth it

the long silence of the white thread
what did it tell you?

you come back.

RIC S. BASTASA
Silence Is Musical

silence has a way of
lulling us to sleep
it is the womb of the
hush of the falling leaf
the whisper of the ground
seeps in
a dream without
a soundtrack
sunsets and sunrises
in one minute.

RIC S. BASTASA
you're of age now,
you look older to what you actually are.
i do not call upon you to respect me,
i do not impose it, i like to earn it,
i will not say a word, that i am much better than you,
no, i will not show it, i know, i am,
when you look at me without a word,
i bow my head, courteous to what the world
offers me
you go where you want to go
conquer the world as you may
with all might
and force and and

disrespect, cutting the trees of power
and mowing the grasses of the common people
leveling
digging graves and showing that you deserve
this
to live like a king of the frogs
you croak like Tarzan
as i sit still and listen and look with authority

you must know that silence is power
and noise cannot enslave
you must fathom the wisdom of the deepest sea
how it rules the depths of the earth
without the sound of its waves

silence is power and i am making it grow
inside my heart
you heard it well enough as you have decided
to make your mouth shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Silence Sputtering....

rain from
the roof tops
finding its
way to the gutter
exiting
at a post of the house
near me

sputtering
my silence that hides
in my
unutterances

RIC S. BASTASA
Silenced.....

i am done
throwing a bowl of fireflies
into a dark sky.

so here i am
watching, silenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
Silencio....

Still on the
Insistence of the fading
Lights where the boredom is not well
Estimated, despite the presence of the
Nonsensical, numbness never felt that much
Craving for more of the clues for more
Inspiration, on such a lovely
Opulence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Silent Cocoon

at the end
to make yourself a shield from all those
invasive matters of the
heart
you keep yourself enclosed in that
same cocoon

always that same same cocoon
hard so hard outside

dthis time you promise yourself
there shall be no butterfly ending

more of keeping
the silence of that cocoon

hanging upon a twig
under those
dead leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
Silent Screams

the artist in you
even in the silence of this breakfast table
still knows how to illustrate the state
of our beings

since the words are consumed
and the mouth is tired
and the neighborhood have been to noisy
with their own lives
screaming on the bustling sounds of jets,
sirens and ambulances
the sound of the city
the cries of the slums

you sit with me
get your spoon and poured some sticky choco
on the plate

the choco screams
i hear and see it, but just like you
i maintain the decorum of silence
our code of living life
to the fullest till its last drop

RIC S. BASTASA
Silent Stones Peaceful Pond

the stones are silent
the pond is peaceful

i have nothing to say
i have nothing to look for

there is nothing more
that i shall ever find
nothing that i shall want

RIC S. BASTASA
Silhouette Of Pain

I was too young then
gazing at the door
when you promised
that you will come.

we co-authored love
and we parted.

you got married and
i got married too.

so many events make
us forget, our paths
did not cross.

i am getting older and
i sit on the same bed
gazing at the door when
it shall be opened again
hoping that it will be
your hands again.

i am a silhouette of pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unwanted pregnancies
Women into adultery
& men in concubinage
dropping out of school
into drugs
driving children away from homes
resigning from a job
when times are hard and job is scarce
not compromising with politics
having principles
keeping integrity
taking care of old people
devotion to the catholic church
reckless driving killing a pedestrian
trusting a friend
divulging secrets
not attending a class reunion
snubbing a mother-in-law
ignoring a reader
loving myself
thinking about the past
preoccupied about what happens next
taking hypertensive drugs for maintenance
loving a wife
caring for the dogs
writing poems
listening to a lonely friend pouring out
breathing fresh air in the boulevard

questioning the meaning of my life
asking, where do I go from here?

Hearing tv mass
Cutting off relationships
Getting into new ones
Giving away old clothes to the poor
Buying new clothes
Not keeping your body in shape
Saving so much money
Not buying a new car for this year
Keeping distance from relatives

&
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ve

These are some of the silly things that humans do
Sometimes

& lastly, calling other people

sil
ly

for writing this

crap

and reading this

crap

till dawn when nobody

is

a
ski
ng.

RIC S. BASTASA
Silly Talk, Shallow Talk

what
who
where
when

who?
what?
where?
when?

who?
who?
who?

OMG!

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Blessing

3 p.m. we sit on a chair
the table has a tray of ripe guavas
four slices of toasted sandwich
two cups of coffee with cream
italian pasta and a nice conversation
lasting for a hour or more
the air from the sea blows and
refreshes our bodies and then
we try your new salad combination:
buco and durian chilled last night.

we gaze upon the passing of 12 years.
nothing changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Joy

a man paddles a boat
on a crystal river
the moon shines brightly
the head of his beloved
rests on on his chest

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Joys

I go near you and the skin in your arm
Just an inch away is too warm for me

I get hot; you do not know it.

We talk and talk
I am giving instructions on some words
For you to transcribe

You look at your notes as you scribble
Your pen busily
I am looking at your hair so black so
Silky and must be so soft to touch

I get hot; you do not know it.

Then I stop talking and you look at me
Again saying, is there anything more sir?
I look at you & you look at me

It was enough mutuality that I seek
Just a simple short gaze
From you this morning
A meter apart

I get hot; you do not know

All these simple joys you are giving me
We are already bound
To our respective chains

We are inside our
Respective prisons

I always get hot seeing you
Near you but it is better this way

And you will never know about me
I get hot always alone
It is you always in my imagination.

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Matters As Rain And Night

we sit here
on top of this floor

seeing stars
and feeling the touch
of a dark night

through the air
from the sea

you recline as i stand
to go near you
and touch your body
with my lips

we close our eyes
as i move closer

scents of flowers
and tastes of salt and sugar
and these little
sips of something sour
and bitter

our hands move
to explore the
contours of our bodies

naked before the moon
and everything tonight

nature, as always
shall be speechless
to the ways of love

to the manners
of lushing lust

mixed feelings of
the satiated and the
satiator

tonight, yes,
the two of us on this

nocturnal trysts of
outbursts and fusions

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Things

simple things are the simple thoughts to a

simple man
like me

simple things like a coin where there is no face of me
or you
but it can buy me something to shame me of my
poverty and helplessness

a simple yawn
i haven't really slept
to the minimum that my eyes need

and look at these eyes
they are sinking to my sockets

a simple
word is all i need and i will always repeat it

'love'

'me'

this is the simple man, let there be no complications
about
spelling
or ethics

i am a simple man and morality is too hard for me to understand

all i ask is that you must

love me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Simple Trust

you let me go
to find myself somewhere
unknown and far away
you nod your head
you know that i will come back
because you are always
my home

RIC S. BASTASA
Simplicity

before a table
a cup of rice and
few pieces of fish

you put your knee
near your mouth
as you mold
sticky white rice
with your bare hands

you open your mouth
and swallow what
you have inorder
to live.

(shall i say
poverty?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Simplicity Of His Art

to demonstrate silence
he takes a stone
halfway
submerges it in water
he leave it there
until the moon comes
he watches it
with coldness

RIC S. BASTASA
Simplicity Of Just Being Alone

four yellow petals
on a green stalk
no thorns
the sun above
the sea below
a bee and a butterfly
in a small garden
three pebbles
and a droplet of
water
no tears no sighs
breeze
no sound of radio
you sit alone
on a wooden floor
beside a door
not waiting for
anybody

RIC S. BASTASA
Simplicity Of The Music Of The Spirit

attuned
i pluck the strings of guitar

and music
is soothing as usual

my spirit soars
leaving a painful body behind

now it is
the song that plucks the guitar

strings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Simplifying Life

back to the basics now
when it is hard soften it
when is dry
wet it
when it is too hot
wait

when it is bland
put a little salt

or a pinch of sugar
if you want it a little bit sweet

or sour
then use a little vinegar
or
add some drops of lemon

a cube of seasoning
or to appease the tongue

put the black pepper
or the chili sauce

when things are frozen
thaw it

it is just like life
when things get rough
my dear
be tough

RIC S. BASTASA
Simply Must You Speak The Truth...

tonight,
the air spreads the news
our single witness is the moon
on windows that open
on lights divine and yet dim
skin to skin, no clothes to bother
like the way you make love with me
when you feel like it say it
do not attempt to choose the word
euphemism does not work here
speak the truth
in simple terms

RIC S. BASTASA
Simultaneously

did you see the image?

one is about to leave
have all things packed
ready for the door and his motorcycle
the key on hand
and shoes ready to kick for the final hour

on the other hand
there is someone who is not ready yet
still stuck on his personal computer
figuring out
what to write
despite the pressure of the world outside him
like paper works
and family demands and nature's frolicking
or the tease
and the appeasement of what tomorrow may bring

there is another soul searching
for meaning
through the fingers of the hands
there is someone indifferent about what this world is all about

it could be me but how will you know it
back to zero back to square one

imagine the image.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sin.....

I've seen greatness
i love it,
i feel the wings
of the eagles of
this land

i, decrepit and
aging
lowly
creature of the
cold and slum
marvel on the
sharp claws of the great minds
ahead of me

I've seen them live
on the ivory towers
of their heads

i come late
and people ask the reason
why i seem
to rejoice
on that predicament

i bring no explanation
i have no flowers in my hands

i believe in myself
and though i worship great minds
i do not
imitate them
their passions and fame
are all theirs
they deserve a name carved
on marbles
and stones
on bold letters of gold
and embellished with
chunks of
polished diamonds

i repeat
i do not imitate them
i am like no other
i am original
like sin.

RIC S. BASTASA
Since It Is Midnight

and since there is no prince who is about to chase you into love,
i think i have to agree with you that shoes when they are left as you walk away do not really matter.

now, i am learning from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Since It Was Only A Misencounter

since it was
only a misencounter
as termed by you
hence only 64 cops
were killed
if it were not it would
have been more
monstrous than
expected

the number may
continue to grow
but by then
i have to search
another word
for you

RIC S. BASTASA
Since More Is Given To Me

i just realized that
since more is given to me
talents, money,
luck, honor,
i must give more
since more shall be demanded

this is the law of charity
that i must confess
(some say that this is
pure conceit, i say
nothing except to
accept this truth)

I am still lucky
for God has not yet asked
me to surrender
everything that he has
entrusted.

I am but a steward of
this fortune,
Everything simply passes
through me
like a bank teller.

RIC S. BASTASA
Since We Are Still Here

since we are still here
we make the best we can
to make the stay
worth the while

we may have longer hours
of boredom
we may have more hours
for the small stuff

we sweat all these out
small stuff, little things, trivial matters
somehow we ask why?
oh, these little things if we do not mind
they make the boat leak
they make us sick & make the boat sink

RIC S. BASTASA
Since You Also Love Me And I Am Married

then there
is only one solution
and i agree with
you...

clone me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Since You Are A Friend

then you
must know me

i've been angry
and soon i shall be angrier

but no i won't
for you know that i also know
how to get
even

RIC S. BASTASA
Since You Are Too Human....

there are always choices  
we are born to these oceans of choices  
wave upon wave  
we travel to choose  
then we land and take feet  
upon the sands  
into the gardens  
on rocks  
and rivers  
to the heavens we take the shape of clouds  
and rain  
for we have learned  
this art to evolve  

now tell me who owns us?  
tell yourself that, we cannot hear you  
you are too human  
and earthbound  
you are stuck on the chains of your  
self-defined treasures  
that finally bury all your bones  

soon we shall turn back at you  
dusts, all dusts that we blow and scatter  
to all the rivers  

if you remember leaves,  
you shall remember us...  

RIC S. BASTASA
Sinful Duet

our sins are like stars
shining through the night

and so i will not lie to you
neither should you about

the sins we shared that
wake us up after a sound

sleep when we start to
wash our dirty faces.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sinfulness

it is like dipping my tongue
to so much sugar and the time has come that what is sweet
has become bitter,

it is like burning my whole body with gasoline until i become
the remains of myself, ashed,

at this moment, i confide to God,
you are correct, i should not have liked it at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sing For Me

sing for me
if you wish, sing for me a very lonely song
one that fits the darkness of my days
the sound of my silence

sing for me
the song of sickness unto death

i am burying the dead memories of my loved ones
their souls still waiting for their guiding lights.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sing For The Rain

the frogs at
three o'clock in the morning
sing
for the rain

i provide the lyrics
'coldness is real
it is
lonely in here'

but look at us
and hear us

we are singing still
for the rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sing!

LET THOSE
who have no voice
sing

let the mute talk
let the blind see
let the deaf hear
let the maim walk

LET THOSE
who have no courage
fight

God tells us so.

RIC S. BASTASA
Singsing...

ang singsing sa kaminyoon
wala mag-alingasa
sa dihang ang iyang taas nga kumingking
mipunit sa tam-is kaayo nga ubas
tupad sa pula kaayo nga mansanitas

RIC S. BASTASA
everyday he makes the choices
feeding the bad wolf
he chops his heart into chunks
and throws them
to the serrated tongues of
sin

at the end he is eaten
the flesh of his body sliced

and in all the nooks
of his room his friends
look for him

he is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sipyat

Sipyat ang usa ka bulak nga manirado
sa iyang mga gihay inig gabii
kay sa kalibotan sa mga lamian
ang kagabhion baya maoy pagpangabre
sa mga gamingaw nga kasingkasing,
mgd dughan nga haw-ang
sa mga bulsa sa karsones,
ang pagkagisi sa mga sidsid
anang mga pang-ilalom,
anang mga tabon-tabon.

Sipyat ang mga bulak
sa ilang pangindahay nga di mahikap
ang mga pungpong sa kalipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sister And Brother

why do we have to be vigilant
about each other? a little complacent
one finds himself defrauded

a sister swindling a brother
this is not rare
a brother fights for his inheritance
that sister takes
without being just
unable to agree on common terms
they bring each other in court
not surprising says the clerk
we are attuned to this
as early as Cain and Abel
sibling rivalry is not nil
murder is near
roots are bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sister D....

you were 5 years old
thin and
sickly,

what you cannot forget
was that birthday

when papa gave you a chicken
with white feathers
when he let you ride on his horse
to the sea

with five sisters
there is one who gave you
a brown sweater
to protect you from the cold
month of December

know what?
it is really true
you always remember
people who once
made you feel
good

their kindness sticks
to your skin

even if the seasons
change
even if time passes by
like
the way the snakes in
your place
molted their
bodies
peeling off
from one pain to another.
Sisyphus My Friend

sisyphus my friend
what rock shall we roll
tonight
on this hilltop?

tell me, what size of rock
fits my size today,
i am big and my shoulders are broad
i have a happy disposition
i am used to all these
burdens and they all seem the same to me
i get used to rolling rocks
and i like them all
they all feel the same to me
you see, my friend,

nothing is heavy now
nothing hurts
nothing is worth thinking
nothing is worth complaining

i like everything
i like all these burdens

everything is a play now
a game
a gimmickry, a role playing, a sham,

and i am so shocked
why they write about us

why they think
we are stupid, dumb, and so unjust

come my friend
let us be as absurd as ever

come my friend
let us be great
let us carve our names in stone

twin sisyphus, the confused,
yet, still so strong...

RIC S. BASTASA
Sitting By My Window

by this window
my world is made and seen

you pass by
a lonely shadow

shaded by the
full moon

in silence you
always pass
by and i sit by this window

seeing you
my loneliness
reflected in yours

this is our world now
you pass by
while i stay always looking

what passes away next.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sitting Upon The Stairway

lean upon
a rail of the stair
your head
finds a wall
thoughts in prison
bars
of the mind

the feeling of
being compressed
arrives
this early morning

eyes ache but
not squeaking
poor set
these tools for
that are dependent
on light

hands like driftwood
land on stair ways
upon the steps of
your perceived luck

you will be luckier
yesterday was a curse
the stars last night
keep saying

in this little town
some roads are still on
their way to somewhere
else

a bus flowering with
people
windows all blanks
filled with
straight faces
passes you by

you are staying put
there will be an absence
that they will not
ask or miss

dusts from the street
layer upon your eyelids
and you do not blink

you bite your lips
tasting another flavor
of your own blood

RIC S. BASTASA
Sitting, Waiting

sitting, as simple as sitting on a stair
you look around through dragonfly eyes
from higher places
like a cliff overlooking a village
closer to cotton clouds
patches of hissing
winds up here,
alone,
you sit, sitting is simple, it is not complicated
as waiting which is heavier sometimes with a person who is not
showing some shadows for the coming,
sit,
i sit,
i am sitting viewing a wide horizon, a vast expanse of a field,
some white herons heaving leaves blown from dead trees this summer,
they fly away
from you, they fly away from where you are seated, from your country,
you remain sitting,
sit, like a dog to his master telling him to sit,
sit,
it is simple as being yourself alone, not even waiting
things end in darkness
dust settles finally on the ground after a truck fully loaded with almost
everything leaves
the road heading far away from you,
you are not waiting for anything
you have no time
left for waiting, everything leaves and goes away, always everybody
utters the word goodbye
except these, the rain, the rain, there are many of them,
these hordes of rains

they are coming and you sit and do the last thing possible
listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Situationer

cold hands
drooping eyes
heaving sighs
late arrival
sitting on
a chair
staring on
the wall
thinking and
then undressing
and switching off
the lights
and then
shutting up
inside this
dark niche

come colored
dreams
forget forget

another time
another sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Six

A red hibiscus that blooms
In the morning
Closes, wilts, in the afternoon,
You expect another one of its kind tomorrow,
A china rose,
Your night life,
At the outdoor café, sitting on light fabricated
Silver chairs, sipping tea, puffing smoke, sipping
Margarita, gazing
Slight stolen looks
At young handsome
Men rated per hour,
It is your policy of giving false names and wrong address,
They know
What you are doing,
They understand
Your needs & wants
For a fleeting night
A cure for an itch

Momentary piecemeal pleasures,
Allusions about a broken love of what used to be,
Illusions of what you could have been,

Momentary
Thoughts, momentary projections, when you make love with your catch, as you
puff your smoke to
Confuse the ceiling with your gaze of momentary
Emptiness,
You are the first one
To leave, after paying the bills,
They always pretend asleep,
While naked,
As you leave his due on the side table,
You go home on shriveled hair,
Driving a red car,
Smokeless to the road,
Your cellphone rings,
Your son in his father’s house calls
“Mommy, I want to go home”
“I am driving, ’you call him,
A flash of momentary happiness,
A momentary sadness,
Flip-flopping to your mind,
What are these really, these that meet your gaze for something that should have been permanent,

That red hibiscus, that blooms only for a day,
Is ephemeral,
Like stolen nights,
Like the way your child calls you, because father is always away,
“I am in Cebu for a week”, said many times over and over again,

Her stint for a night is ephemeral,
Electronic calls are ephemeral,
A happy home, her dream, was sort of, kinda like red hibiscus
Ephemeral too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Six Fifteen In The Evening

got to go
got a class at 6:30
and it is a long drive
to the university

just read your poem
about this Adonis thing
and the dog barking the wrong tree
and the calming down of
a car travelling on a narrow pathway
which might hit a pole
and there might be trouble

please, poems have nothing
to do with our realities, but just
imaginary gardens with
imaginary toads in them.

gtg.. i will explain later.
there is no volcano erupting

it is just about the universal
angst of the universal man in his
universal brief.

nothing grows nothing dies

RIC S. BASTASA
Six Thirty Nine In The Morning

it is raining
but the way the things are going
this morning seems to be so soft and gentle
tiny needles of rain like some snowflakes
in my mind

i have not been to chicago or to new jersey
or to any place where there is snow
where the coldness perhaps
strikes at the core of the heart

where my loneliness
though how far taken to make it
disappear like a car running to the farthest road
and like a dot dissolving in the horizon

shall not perish
not even diminish like a number five
subtracted from four

it is cold even when the sun starts to shine
simply because
you are not here with me

RIC S. BASTASA
when she says goodbye
waives her hand
and sort of cry some tears
like she will be missing
us all a lot,

try not looking at her
let her be
if you must
climb some stairs
or feed the chickens
or busy yourself with the pigs

let us see
if her goodbye is honest
if she does not have some crocodile tears
if she comes back
again on the same
ship taking her away
let us see
actually, i do not have any plan
welcoming her back
i have found
my life and she is not a part of it anymore
even a doorknob
or a button to my
shirt or a cuff link
her hands are never
ture.

RIC S. BASTASA
Siya Nawad-An.

wala sa hunahuna nga
gisulat ang iyang mga gibati

una, wa siya'y tumong nga kini
mahibaw-an sa hingtundan
kay sayod siya nga ang iyang ipugas
mahimutang lamang sa umahan nga
kabatuhan

ikaduha, mga pagbati lamang kini
nga mas angayan nga isabwag sa hangin
nga sama sa mga dahon
ipalid lamang
unya dili na gani mangutana kon
asa kini sila
milanding

ikatulo, ang iyang dunggan og mga
mata hagbay ra nga nanira
momata lang kini aron matulog
mamati lang kini aron maalaan
nga siya ganahan pang mabuhi

sa kataposan
ikaw lang man seguro ang misalig
gihapon sa kamatinud-anon anang
mga pagbati

siya nawad-an.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sketches For A Fine Day

actually i like the sound of
brooms sweeping the street today

a young girl
short for her age
and brown and
bow legged

does her assigned task in the street
gathering dead leaves

as i watch
it is a bright day

the street light is turned off

a young boy's hand is held by her mother
crossing the street
waiting for the school bus

a white dog pisses
on the side of the trunk of the
mahogany tree

a black car from the right side of the village
wheels its way towards the boulevard

a young woman with short blue jeans
jogs along the green valley

the sea is sky
blue and the sun slowly rises from the horizon

like a man's face peeping upon a table's edge
the long line of trees along the faded street

RIC S. BASTASA
Sketches Of Life

early morning
it will be the same sound
of cocks
crowing,

harbingers of
a new day

up on the tree
their only guide whether to
take the jump
to the ground is the
sun,

she is safe in sleep
as i take the usual journey
again
with all the cocks
crowing

the trees have black leaves
roads and fences are bold strokes
of the Chinese brush
from a painter in Vietnam
i remember
his feet are cut

one wonders if we can be whole
again
when the fragile glasses of our arms
are all broken

early mornings when
the hens are silent

when the ref murmur
a nameless song

when i sound like an empty
gong
love emaciated
like a malnourished
African child

one exhibits the boredom
of his words like
one malling without anything
in mind to buy
nothing specific except
the will to kill time
that does not serve
any use

at the pasta room
where the tea people are not around
on one table the two lesbians are drinking beer
while the two queers on the
other table near the rest room
are exchanging some pleasantries
of notes
they are not singing
but giggling

a man that they call as dark and handsome
passes by
it is strange because he is not wearing anything
his face is covered with black cloth
as though he is bound
for the gallows

there is yet no food on my table
the waitress is busy biting her nails
the mother beside a kid is slapping herself

it is strange here and i put some money on the table
and leave

i need some air to breathe
this world is suffocating.
Sketching My Face From A Mirror

using a ballpoint pen i sketch my face
from the mirror

looking carefully on every line of my face
i let my pen run tracing
every year
of my past stopping
on some pores and hairs and moles
marking some
points of emptiness and hiding places
and foxholes
and burial grounds
and long boulevards
and tunnels
and plains and green fields and deserts
and mountains

yhey are all on my face
my eyes looking at my eyes
not completely
with disgust
the parameters and contours
of my past

on such a beautiful face as this
how can i ever fail
the next time
around

RIC S. BASTASA
the shadow is cast
on the wall

such a tall shadow
without feet

against the wall it edges
itself like a huge
wormy creature

not slimy though but snail paced
is the loneliness

of this kind of betrayed
existence

a few drops of rain
actually tears fall from the sky of

her cheeks from the veins
of her heart

from a memory of a madness
that she keeps to herself

with the city on her heels
at the command of the fingertips

of the darker master
dead unmasking the color of blue neon lights

light like pins and needles
of pine and silver

very much unlike the hands
of the past lover long gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Sketchy (2)

how dare
am i
sketching flowers
in her garden
and coloring them
all in blue

she cries

when she sleeps
i change my mind

got some colors
put the stars
and a moon

glows of red
and sparkles of light
bursting
petals of yellow and
orange
sun
flowers and
lush of
grass
green and spreading

she wakes up
and smiles

i am no longer there
into the world
of blue oceans
i have
swam

RIC S. BASTASA
Sketchy Ideas Of A Would-Be Dead Philosopher

it is like a picture
of me
smooth, colored and edited
but it becomes too unlike me
deep inside
i am chalk and charcoal
with some fuzzy fleas
crawling inside the locks of my hair
searching for answers

it is like converting something so obvious
into something too hazy
because it becomes more real
something felt
away from something only thought of

RIC S. BASTASA
Skull Of Life

against the backdrop
of an evening
light
lies the skull of
a busy life

in the morning some gnats
put on the dress of flesh

in the helplessness of the
veins
the rain water shakes its
locks of hair

a butterfly comes here once
in a while
as an inspiration of the
poetess

meanwhile the rivers sings a song
of a triumphant
arrival to the sea to the sea to the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Sky

white skies
look upon
the earth to
grasp the
tiny reasons
of the sands

RIC S. BASTASA
Skyline

clouds
hang there

dripping rain
us, below
them

the sun arrives
naked

all clothes
gone...

RIC S. BASTASA
Slashed

EITHER/OR

either you're the prey
or the predator
the parasite or the host
the swindled
or the swindler

either you're
the slave or
the master

between this either
or is
another choice

but in effect
you are just the
separator

in other words just
a symbol.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep

slowly i lift this
soft blanket

i slide my soul
inside this warmth

like it is my body
going to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep And Love

ingulfed by
a sigh
you unleash
sleep

sleep has
not cradled
you

you wish
for its hands
taking the shape
of a fist

you wait
but when it opens
it caresses
another hair

and so you
persevere upon
a thought
that is drunken

upon a sigh
that takes another
sigh

you moan
and love
finally
remembers

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep And Snore

the sounds of its steps
arrive inside the room
on the silence of the blanket
white and thick
on the hum of the night breeze
from the sea
sleep begins to snore

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep As Endline.

what we must accept is that turning point
of simply remembering

pieces of self that we pick along the road
and reassembling them again like a robot

the jigsaw puzzle is nothing
our minds are no longer bothered by a clutter

the whistling man is picking daisies along the way
counting and plucking each petal like a girl

at the end of this waking and walking game
what do we really get?

not even memories, they fade like denims
what we have is perhaps a scent of dying roses

which reminds us of regret and hate and which
we finally throw away as trash

it does not matter who gives it
we retreat at night, ponder upon these things get tired

and sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep Mode

the hands clench,
make a shape of a beautiful fist
but do not strike
lay themselves down on the
table of wood
beside a lemonade
and then put themselves
in a sleep mode

fed up for the day
with wars on TV
about the struggle for
democracy

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleep Now Baby

sleep now, it is dark, 
darker than before, 

sleep now, it is silent
the night is so silent

silent than ever,
so sleep now, and
dream, and

be inside the colors
of your dream

crimson, and
skyblue and
yellowgreen and
lavender and
scarlet and
red orange

there is a tree
there, full of
poetry....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping

it is alright really to sleep for a while
for a day, or even for the whole week,
if that is what you really want.

do you really like to take the much needed sleep?
just asking you from the bottom of my heart.
you may. you must if you really need it.
you must if you really feel like doing it.

you may finally decide to die.
it is your life. you wear the desired shoes.
you take the color that you intend.
it too, shall be your chosen death.

we may mourn, but you know that we too have our own concerns.
we cannot mourn for that long.
we have our journeys too.
our own battles, and when you lay there, a dead man on the street
as we rush, we may forget to bury you.

it is time that you too must learn to bury yourself.
it goes naturally, as a consequence of your learning how to die.

as others still fight to get their last breath
you take the plunge.
into that darkness, into that emptiness.

meanwhile, this saturday, we are set to go on a picnic.
under the blue clouds, we may talk about you.
i am not sure really. perhaps. maybe.

do not blame us. we have chosen life.
we also know how to forgive and then forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping On Bad Dreams

the house sinks
down to the bottom of the sea
the trees swallowed by
mud monsters
the biggest wave comes
like a huge tongue of the
of the Giant Lizard
swallowing kids and houses

watching all these
you dream of a glass of cold water
a light switching on
throughout the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping One Night Under The Cover Of The Sky

lost I finally find myself
on tired feet
beside a jagged ridge
where its tip
almost touches the
night sky
beside the handful of
stars

and then I lie down
my head facing up
the widest space of my
life
I feel the emptiness
wrap my head and
body
and I feel the wondrous
power of
God all over me

awed am I
and now on top of the world
I hear the hush of the wind
whispering finally
that with the stars
all around me

I am never alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping Time

when their eyes
become sleepy like
falling leaves
of the evening wind
like windows
closing
like lights being turned off from
a distance
i become a bag egg
refusing to crack
as others wait
what is inside the shell
i sort of close my door
and continue
what i do and
never stop doing it.
you know what i mean
as you are
following what i am doing now.
i am not alone in this
for you are here with me
doing the thing
that you cannot stop doing.
i know what you mean
and i know what you are up to
what you are at
what you want to do
till darkness cracks
to a morning slit of light.
you know me now
for i do
what you do
too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleeping Together And Then Leaving

what is a cold
morning to
a warm blanket?

what is warm blanket
to our
warmer bodies?

but love is always
warmer than
everything that is
cold and
unforgiving

Time lurks and
silent as a tiptoe
slowly takes
everything away

leaving the blanket
cold

colder than the
morning

that keeps the tears
and grows
those fears

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleepless In Mindanao Island

the mind is nude
the air is warm
inside this darkness
a single lamp
flickers... i am sleepless
again in Mindanao island

the last window is closed.
the monitor lights and blinks
and the sound of the keys
start to run, fingers playing
on words, words
making love with thoughts
the ecstasy is felt once,
twice, and then the rapture
of beauty, the dance of grace,
the steady trickle of
emotions, there is music

this poem for you.
love and sleeplessness.
lust and restlessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sleepless Nights

sleepless nights
are always involuntary
for who wants not
to enjoy the rest
God's gift to a busy
man earning honestly
his keep

beyond our will
sleeps sometimes is cruel
refusing to visit
the windows of our
eyes

the whole night you
wake up
recording the night's
travails
keeping in touch
with the lives of
cockroaches
and mosquitoes

it is a cruel world
but you have not erred
not sinned and so

so you are forgiven.

RIC S. BASTASA
a beautiful horse
in the same manner that there is
also a beautiful cat
a beautiful rat and a beautiful
fish, a beautiful woman
like another beautiful man,
a beautiful mountain
a beautiful river
so many things and people
beautiful today
like the leaves of the
fan
cooling and refreshing
my taste and
quest for beauty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slip Disc

at C-6
and C-7
the numbness is
far beyond
the real cause, it spreads
at the tip

and you are so confused,
things are not working well,
and the flesh and nerve swell,

it is not a plane or a place
not a car

there is the bamboo inserted
between

your spine surrenders.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slow....

slowly
one finds what had long been missing,
it is not seen
it is just felt by the lines of the palms
by the tips of
the fingers
slowly one remembers the scent
it is not seen
it is getting inside the nerves
of the nostrils
and then one begins to remember
and then
the lips begin to part
shaping that
lonesome
smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
did we not believe that something that is fast
is good, equating it with the benevolence of efficiency?
we are convinced and we get carried away
and so our nerves are fast our bones do not rattle
our feet keep on running and our hands are always on for something
something to do as though idleness is death
and sickness, as though rest is a mortal sin and death is heinous,
our eyes roll and we keep on talking and talking about plans
plan A, and if this does not work proceed to plan B,
B-1 to B-5, and everyday is always a commotion
of beeps and buzzers, and the doors keep on closing and opening,
ever shutting up like our mouths
meetings and overnight discussions with what to do with this world
too, it is never at rest, spinning on its axis and engaging in revolutions.

old age comes with staff and near blindness, arms shaking, feet mossy,
and minds getting stoical to doubts and confusions: it is time to stop
to slow down a bit, to know what wishful thinking is all about:
what if? there are ifs now, and soon there will be a bed of regrets
to bury our weary bodies, soon, there will be a silence not
anymore wanting to ever speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowing Down A Bit

to calm myself
from this anxiety of the usual
procrastination

the sighs are not
helping me
some packets of clean
air inside my lungs
are mere tourists
living the scene after
a view

somehow i tell my feet
we have to slow down a bit
my brain shall empty
everything
like a garage sale
selling everything at a cheaper
price
all these used and
second hand
beliefs

i rest upon a chair
put my feet at par with my eyes
my toes breathe

and listen to the
sensual classics
of Beethoven

it is 10:07 in the morning
the sun is slowly climbing upon
a coconut tree

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowly I Go

snail paced
it will take me nights
to earn
the distance of the
bridge
between your two eyes
i am not
rushing my existence
in your face
savoring every
taste every scent
every love
that i have found
in there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowly And Surely

slowly but surely
and surely is slow is
and slowly is surely is
a snail climbing its way
up riding upon the merits
of its saliva
slowly, slowly,
winning whining
whining winning
till all of them drop
dead and slowly but surely
does the snail take its pace
as the rabbit
watches upon the tease
of sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowly Slowly

slowly the slow snail
slowly climbs the smooth
side of the nipa palm
on the side of the river
slowly, slowly the slow
snail takes its sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Slowly You Slay The Monster Growing On The Left Side Of Your Shoulder

in time's affluence
you become another
tanka poet,

slowly you slay the
monster growing on the
left side of your
shoulder

very much looking
like you

RIC S. BASTASA
Slug And Pearls

my tongue
is a blithe spirit
free bird

finding finally a
little resting place
from its
tiring flight

between those tiny spaces
of your lovely
teeth

you are pearls
i am slug.

that clam in you
flesh and danger lurking
if you suddenly close
i could
die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Small Is Beautiful

small is beautiful
black is also beautiful

be proud for you are small
and he is black

I'll be between you both
i am medium sized and
i am brown

RIC S. BASTASA
Small People

we are the small people
we take the size of the dusts
and termites
down to the minute cells
the virus
and the neurons...
we have the capacity to hurt
without your knowing

so be cautious
try using the microscopes before
you say you are taking control

we are the small people
we know you but you do not know us

RIC S. BASTASA
Small Time

small time, you call it small time
writing
is small time, there is no money
in writing, like a
politician, look at him, he does not
write, someone writes for him
and he gets the prize
the money
the pot
the jackpot
and look at you
you keep on writing
and writing
and writing

oh la la
poems, fit for a woman
her limited mind
her gullibility
her passion for words and words and words
her imagination

and look at you
poor man, poor, poor, poor
what you give
to this world, what are you giving to this world

it is not even a flower
just a poem for her, and you claim that you are winning her heart?

RIC S. BASTASA
Small,

for under your feet
you do not see the ants
until you
feel the sting of their bites,

the bee
above your head
will its buzz
be enough
for you to mind its
existence?

a flower has no mouth
a mountain has only its belly
a wind simply whispers
the sea as usual have no feet
the clouds have no hands

when will you ever mind them?

until something happens in Tokyo
you must have uttered the word

sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Smallness....

believe
that you are
the sun

let me just
be a pebble
under

or a grain of
sand
or a
paramecium

one day
you will discover
how is it
to be small

in our journey
towards the
unknown
with the other
galaxies

polka dots
in the universe....

RIC S. BASTASA
Smile

smile,
i've seen your world fall
upon your face
your body bent
like
weakened Atlas
this world is too heavy
to bear
only if you know how
leave it
let it roll upon other
people's back
get away from it
join me
i am air, floating, i am like air
drifting, i am an eagle
sightseeing
looking for my prey
my breakfast today
i am the rain
i am whatever i am
because i believe it that
way
because i can be
whatever i can be
a matter of choice
a decision to be light
lighter than
a red feather
brighter than the
crescent moon
steady like a
rock of Gibraltar
so temporary like
dew.

RIC S. BASTASA
Smoke

smoke from the chimney
rises to the sky
and then gone

like us, did you not notice?
we are from here
this heart and then in pain
we rise up
we mix in space
there, do you see still us?

i do not see me anymore

i am fog dissolving in the morning
i am mist dissipating on glass
i am smoke
rising to the sky from the chimney
and then gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
Smoke, Alcohol And Talk

something in us
feels the need
for smoke for
alcohol
for talk &
more talk
to keep us
sane and
going

it is not at all
times
that talk is there
so we
compromise
with
smoke and
alcohol

we must not expect
much from
talkers

they too need to
talk
somewhere
and with
someone else
other
than us

smoke gives you
the idea
about how is it
to float
and be gone

alcohol
illustrates
the value of
loss
the need
to take in something
without
gaining
anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Smooth

i want words
to be smooth

smoothly said
and smoothly
understood

like rum sliding
in my throat
directly inside
my belly

smooth as tiles
on the floor
effervescent as
your breath in
my mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Smooth....

you squirt like a squid
holy squirt, black splash
to a green sea

you squirt everything like a
filthy squid
everything to the greenish
portion of the sea

all the anemones sigh
sea corals dance
all spawns of womanhood
spread all over the
vast green

on the surface the object
of your desire is half-nude
fishing a dream

you never for once told him
about your hidden song

he is smooth, cool, able bodied
all the while wanting to catch you
and take you home
alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Snail Paced Ironies Of Love And Marriage

A man plays with love
like a kitten to a ball of thread

the thread rolls a length
that a kitten cannot locate

and then a man finds love
but there is nothing to bond with

just as the kitten cannot
relate a bone to that of the puppy

so does love and permanence
so does a lifetime and a spark

come to terms with
and life crawls on

upon a slime and a stalk
snailed, hard covered, slow

mindlessly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Snakepit

when you find yourself
inside a snake pit
you can not just be naive
to be bitten and even
swallowed by another
snake
you become a snake
yourself and bite
as many as you can

this is the law of the
survival of the fittest snake
and when you emerge
as the victor

go back to your form
coy dove, white feathers,
lovely beak
gentle claws

RIC S. BASTASA
Snap

shadow running
no shelter
bang! bang!

RIC S. BASTASA
Snorkling

as she drops her body
to a clear sea water

on refracted weeds
and blue and silver fish

as she takes into her mouth
the breathing apparatus

he looks at her with so much pity
i know there is no more love

he could have let her go to the depths of death
but we were there looking at him

we are not angry, we are indifferent
we snorkle to see beauty and not ugliness

we keep on breathing
we all want to be alive despite the storm.

RIC S. BASTASA
Snorkling At Crocodile Island

you jump into the sea
with a wish
to sea the world of the fish

blue and green
and some bubbles
and slimy and slim
and slippery
to hold

you open your eyes
to the world of seaweeds
and sea urchins

you find something different now
the world where you do not utter a word
to describe
if something is beautiful

you find something's shut
up
your ears and nose and mouth

you open your eyes
to the possibility that in the world so beautiful
as inside the sea

you need not have a nose
a mouth, two ears

because beauty need not be said
they can only be
seen

and contemplated upon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Snow

i haven't felt and seen snow evern once
perhaps in movies or on tv
but with you this evening
cold and closed and not giving in
to my touch and conversation
looking at someone else
from this table where we are
seated, i think, i know what snow is
what snow storm is there
inside your mind

RIC S. BASTASA
inside that cheap apartment
you sit on the chair facing a dining table

a bowl of oatmeal
a cup of coffee
three asparagus sticks
sea noodle cup ready for lunch
crackers and biscuits for dinner

Mozart is played as you look beyond
the glass doors and windows facing
a clean sheet of snow covering the path
leading to the gate and the road
on the other side of the house

Facebook is open
and you just take a peek on those that drop by
and say hello

you write a line saying,
'dear friend i am editing some pictures...'
taken last night at the party and you will be emailing
some of the happy pictures back home
those with the smiles of the big snowman

it is another lonely night
you want to kill yourself but you just
can't because some people who love you
wait for you back home
as you promised

'whew! The pictures are simply out of focus!'
your hands keep
busy
always on some other things
to keep them out from
that barren desert
'Cool! ' you make a comment on the Friendster picture of a friend hugging a new boyfriend in Hongkong.

It is so cold. It is so lonely.
But it does not kill you somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Snow Storm

i cannot write it
there is
simply none here.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Be It...

it is nice to be drunk
i know that feeling
no hesitations, no restraint
what is there is that
flowing feeling, that well
wished spontaneity,

and so here i am
drunk of wine
drunk of you
drunk of love
drunk of practically everything

and i am writing
do you feel it?
do you feel love gushing forth like
the wind
from one window to another from one
space to another space
to the world to the milky way to another
galaxy

you hear a sound
it is so sweet
you feel life
it is pulsating in your veins
you taste love from one lip to another
from one thigh to another thigh
you do not care about names anymore
or what place is this
you float like a spirit
you sense this freedom
this being anywhere

you are alive
and that is the only thing that matters...

RIC S. BASTASA
So Contagious

i only have
to smile at you

oh i become
one contagious guy

i only have to begin it
by smiling at you

RIC S. BASTASA
So Estranged

so estranged are we, on this outrage
exchanged, we trek on this range less the sage
powerless, breathless, penniless, even hopeless
thriving mess, we suppress, in disgrace, lots of stress
we transgress, and confess, and nonetheless on hydraulic press,
yet so strange, i wonder how, with so many misfortunes & miscalculations
we survive, we revive, we are vilified: we are the masters of innovations
we mustered the complications and recovered our reputations.

RIC S. BASTASA
So How Many Women Do I Really Have In My Life?

i was never lonely then.
to have all the many women in my life.

first, there was this Lady Luck,
then Mother Earth,
then the Chairwoman of the Jury
then the Girl Next Door,
the Most Holy Virgin that i kneel before and Pray,

did you hint that i must face the Goddess of Peace?

RIC S. BASTASA
So I Can Be Full Grown Again

i meet them only once
and miss them more than
many times
in my mind how can
i begin to get rid
of each face
that clings to my heart
like leaves
that climbs to the mind
like vines
i am happy
to love and be a loser
once again
to such a pain as
beautiful as a longing
as sad
as shedding skin
so i can be
full grown again

RIC S. BASTASA
So I Can Be What I Must Be

i never got what i want
never had what i love

i'll put it on record
in caution of the cord

the days are coming fast
meet me in the face and go away

a few days more and soon
this will be over

it is good
for i hope for somewhere else

for someone not like myself
and for someone not like yourself

who knows? life and death will always find a way
so i can be what i must be.

RIC S. BASTASA
So I Chose Finally Me

how i wish i could write the simplest lines.
perhaps in a poem,
the one that gives me joy
in something less.

it could have been just the word
'you'
but you are so complicated
like an epic, and so at the end,

RIC S. BASTASA
So I May Forget You

so i may forget you
the one that i truly love
the one that persists in time
like a moss to a stone
i have decided to be
with so many
and so shallow and so fast

swift, supersonic
ball of fire.

alacritous,
fleet footed bird
high up in the air
and diving headlong
to the ground
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
So It Will Be Taxes For The Meantime

so these weeks and for more other weeks perhaps
it will all be about taxes: allowable deductions, exemptions
and assessments, and avoidances and
perhaps evasions
be careful
be careful
do not be too gross in setting aside the poems from those
stack of notes and in depth-studies
something might go wrong
in your stock of metaphors

you need balance
have poetry during breaktime
and some more poetry before going to sleep

but i find poetry more useful
before i start my day with taxes and new laws and circulars
and even before i bang
my gavel
the poems seem to make the
reminders: this is life, this is humanity,
there is God and every man and woman and children
are his children and flock and friends

be careful
be careful

your poems shall judge you in time
and their Furies shall soon come and pull your hair
or the nymphs shall take you to the green valleys
by the side of the cool rivers
your conscience speaks to you
at night
your pillows your blankets
soon they will speak

what time is it? it's still 6:36 in the morning here.
you see? i know that you know that i am true to what i am saying.
So Long Lonesome

let me say
You did not find God
He finds you,
so long
lonesome
God loves you
much better than you
do.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Essences Have Been As Always Forgotten…..

be content
with what you have

i, too, it is
more than enough
that i
still leave

i have to close
my eyes
to know once more
that i am
breathing

so many essences
have been
as always
forgotten…….

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Loves....

such beautiful eyes
riding upon a very
sweet smile

a boat arrives thru
the river of my love
into the shores of my
heart into a home

i must be in love but
why to so many at the same
time? i doubt now, these

lips keep on talking about
love, and love and love,
my heart used to brag,
love is only once, the rest
are but shadows that on
a very clear day, disappear.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Poets

so many poets
so many poems
all popping up like mushrooms after the lightning and thunder

no one comes to see
no one comes to say the mushrooms are not so white not so good

so many poems
so many poets
the readers are few, the readers are lesser

but what can you do?

what do you expect?

well, i am just writing my diary, and i am the reader who reads it myself
to ease this pain,
to let myself know that with all my unrequited loves, i still dare to write
and exist.
and i don't really care.

so many poets
look at these poems
they all look and sound the same

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Silences

it is no longer that question
whether one is happy or not

it is a matter of just meeting moments
using the eye

feeling those hands
and then as usual making goodbyes

it is a routine repeating one after the other
meanings rubbing elbows with other elbows

useless chatter empty promises rolling stones
nothing mossy temporary wetness

sunny days cool shades eyeopening
nothing pleading

washing out letting go
social cliches drained brains

broken hearts repairing visions
living more making more beginnings

candle lights and then the pretenses of
so many silences.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Things Beg For Understanding

so many things
beg for understanding
so to arrive at that place
you draw a map
like some hands of trees
veins of leaves
it is like writing a word
to capture a bird
hoping that in touching
the feathers
you will understand
each other's longings
this is what writing is
all about
but then when you
keep an accounting
they begin to worship
you: this not knowing

is itself
amazing.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Things To Do.....

do not say that you have nothing to do,
there are so many things to be done, to be fixed,

do not kill the clock, its hands are very much alive 
like ours

do not silence its ticking, lest matters become 
unbearable. The rope and the tree, the blades of

ggrass where dew await for the coming invisibility again,
glitter.

even in sleep our minds keep on going, our eyeballs play 
a certain rhythm of the waves that arrive on the shore of 
ourselves,

foaming....

RIC S. BASTASA
So Many Things To Write

but all i got
is lesser time,
a bad neck,
a painful back,
and frequent
blackouts.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Depends

so much depends
on the pink sprinkler
beside
an iron pump
glazed with rust
where the
black hens and
the red
roosters bump

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Depends As I Once Remember It Then

so much depends
upon a swirl
of paints
of yellow
and green
and violet

so much depends
upon the silence
of the plow

so much depends
upon the farmer
still

so much depends
upon your
vanishment.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Depends On This Experience

one night when you arrive home
it is you that opens the garage

you have to step out of the car
and expose yourself to this inevitable coldness of a nightfall

no one is home
tonight

when you open the door using your own duplicate key
you switch on the light

no one is home tonight
the garage and house is now well lighted

you close the door and all the windows
you go straight to your bedroom
&
switch on the air-conditioner

you feel the arrival of a very cold packet of wind
from the tip of your feet
and it arrives like a jackal
as you begin to imagine it to be like

the one that you read in those horror books
it howls so loud trying to break the tympanum of your ears
and it is going to bite you
with its sharp eyes and teeth

but there is something so wrong with you:

you are not afraid, you do not mind jackals,
and now you are ready to bite this crazy one

you like this cold, and you smell the frost
you lick it

there is something so wrong with you:
you are aroused, and you do not like to sleep at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Reality Is Unreal....

when i first saw it
and i was young then, young as
uncut as i was once,
it was like i was sucked and
swallowed and
i could not find myself
where i was,
i was lost in the
whirlpool of
the recent and the
unaccounted,

i did not regret when
it first happened,
i was caught and i could not
just escape and i loved
it when i was in that
prison
it was exciting
and i was like a Pepsi cola
bubbling

then i frequented the occurrences
it was like bathing in the river
washing myself,
drying and diving and retrieving myself
again and again
as though i am
both bait and hook and
trap
i was always caught
and i did not mind it
i simple loved what was
happening
as an oppression
of the corporal works of
'love'

then i got older
older and older and then these matters
are nothing but works
of art, literature, and mumbo-jumbo
there is nothing magical anymore
and come to think of it
i feel so guilty
that this reality does not
make me live

so much of it
so much of the reality of pain and
regret and
guilt
is so
unreal.

RIC S. BASTASA
to be honest with you
so much of my time has been taken by this
foolishness
so much effort
squeezing my brain and stretching my bones
and pinching my ears
and biting my fingernails
this poetry
but what can i do?
i am hooked to its whims and caprices
it imagery and
logical imagination

got no regrets somehow
i still love this 'imaginary garden with real toads in them'

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Time...

time has become a big room
complete with amenities, there
are windows, light from the sun
comes freely, and the floor shines,
the doom jams strong, all framed,
there are lots of things to be done
and with so much leeway,

the problem is the bed is
so seductive, and one is confused
what to do, what to begin with.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Much Worrying As To What Happens To My Inheritance When I Die....

what i like
for the moment

for the moment
is this
favorite dog of mine
curling under my feet
soft brown hair
touching my toes
do i have really to worry about the future
mother?

RIC S. BASTASA
So Often

we are caught empty handed
and time laughs and then asks: what have you done to your collar?
it is destructive of your neck
it is choking you and you still say you like the color of the buttons

we are caught so afraid and we are silent about this
and time begins to frown
and leaves us all
askance, and we ask what fraudulent creeping scorpion
has time become

it bites and takes a portion of our limbs
but then
we also learn this kind of game and time confronts us

we know what it will say
and we are ready with our silence too
after all
time was never a friend
all along it has always been a foe
giving us that feeling of slippery eels
those thorny porcupines
those roses that enthuses us only for a while

then we are again reminded of the wilting
and the passing away
of what we think belongs to us

RIC S. BASTASA
So Soon

So soon
he shall find his way
to the top
of the mountain too
just like you
but this time
he will not promise
anyone
that he will fix
whatever is crooked
and misshapen
on the horizon

he will sit there
take his deep breathe
and watch
all the phenomenal

RIC S. BASTASA
So Tenderly And So Lovely

the saddest day
of your life
is when you rise
early in the morning
doing all those
usual things and chores
until the sun had
risen up from the faces
of those mountains
and you have not noticed
the hidden magic
of its thousand fingers
of soft light
caressing those mountains
and hills
passionately kissing
all those
tendrils, so tenderly and
so lovely

RIC S. BASTASA
So There Is No Us Really

my heart longs for your love.  
i wait like a stranger waiting for the next bus  
to take me out of town  
perhaps for another vacation  
where i may find myself again  
to discover some hidden joys,  
to make my skin ready for  
another peeling for some  
new feelings perhaps  
love, or desire, or lust,  
but whatever that is, my heart still  
longs for your love, i had you and  
i did not have enough of you  
and then you said no,  
this is enough, this is arriving us  
at nothing. I let you go, you ask for  
freedom. My arms since then  
are as empty and so light as  
floating balloons taking the chances  
on air. I know you see all of them  
bursting.  
You feel the essence of my silence.  
Tell me what is it?

It is about a patient love, like a stranger  
waiting for another bus to take it out of town.  
Still finding more chances to find you  
back again so my arms may not be  
as light as a floating balloon taking  
its chances for an upward air.

RIC S. BASTASA
So There Will Be Eternal Peace

the war rages on
many will still die
i grieve
but only for a while
and then i wish

and this is something
which i myself rebel
that with this unceasing
conflict
i finally wish that all will
perish
and that no one shall live
to start another war
again
so there will be
eternal peace

RIC S. BASTASA
So They May Jump And Kill Themselves

I am sick
And tired
I let go
My dreams
Resting
On the
Cliff
so they
may jump
and kill
themselves

RIC S. BASTASA
So This Is All A Game

So this is all a game
I put my name tag on
You look at my face
Complete

And you are there lurking
From a balcony
Looking at me

I am real. I am the specimen.

You are all wearing masks
In a balcony of
Darkness

I am real.

And you all laughed so hard

"How can this real guy be so stupid?"

The bastards are still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Tired But Not Upset

some friendly metaphors
fly like tiny butterflies all yellowish
hover over my hair

i am tired and they make a show
of acrobatic letters and flowing words
like a cool stream
beside a hill

i am not upset because all i need is sleep.
and they understand
that sometimes

i may not write about them and their
unusual existences
like an aberration of light
a rarefaction
of lengths and a contortion of shapes

and they leave
but i whisper to one of those whose wings are too small
for its fragile body

perhaps, soon.
soon.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Trivial...A Promise

tomorrow at nine o'clock in the morning
he shall have his ears cleaned
of wax,

he shall buy an new mouse
and a new keyboard for his private
computer

he will not talk about his malady
that will do nothing but destroy his new day.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Unlike Me.....

there was a time
when you are so in love
but you did nothing

there was that time
when someone was so in love
with you
doing everything and yet
just the same you
did nothing

it was more of letting things
be, letting people be,
letting all come and go
on the basic premise of
numbness

you do not mind, you have
nothing to do with everyone
with everything

i envy you, you are perfect
to me, you are never wounded

firm stone, nothing to do with
rain or shine

i envy you, so unlike me:
wounded, and bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Very Young

pretty young one
you know how it will be
soon when you grow old
without us

pretty young one
you will know how this journey
will be when we start to sail
without the rudder

pretty young one
what will you be when i am dead
and gone?

oh very young one
what will you leave us next time?

RIC S. BASTASA
So Weary And So Dedicated Sleeping

it is this painstaking
choice of words
for a nice handiwork
knitting some fairies
in some
mathematical colors of threads
some butterflies
and flowers in bright colors
using strictly the mandate
of numbers

a painting in cloth and threads
taking her
time
when she is finally
hypnotized
falling into a deep sleep
inside a room
where she is alone
on a dim light
of her loneliness

i open the door
to check on her

i see the handiwork of God
a woman so indulged
so engrossed
in her art
so weary
and dedicated

sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
So What Are You Doing With Your Life Now?

She says

She stares blankly on the wall
She is busy
Counting the lamp posts on the streets
She is so busy
She thinks God is preparing something
Grand for her and she is so busy
Too preparing something for God
Who prepares for her.

I am amazed
I ask her

"So, did you stare long enough on that blank wall
Was it really blank? Did you really stare?
What made the wall so blank? Is the stare really
Worth making on a blank wall?
And how many lamp posts have you counted?
Is the street filled with lamp posts?
How is God? When will the preparation last?
How are you doing with God? Is God busy too?"

She is a little bit understanding to my way of thinking.

"There you are making a poem again. You have never changed."

She said.

RIC S. BASTASA
So What Do You Expect From The Title?

the poet writes the title
first,
he is the messy kind
that writes
whatever comes first
even though
literally each word
seems not to be significant
to the next one

practically like strangers
coming together
inside a train
whose common ground
is only to go somewhere
else

nothing like
care, or affection
they merely stand there
and wait
and then take their
respective
exits

he writes: so what do you expect from life?
changing it later:

so what do you expect
from the
title? trying to conceal the essence
of his question

and then he keeps on writing
like a lost kid
looking for its mother
who seems to be very busy
with her own
kind of obsessive
compulsive shopping
and then you arrive at the
end line which says: hey why are you stalking me?

changes it later to
something courteous: do i know you?
are you following me?

do you like me? funny, but
sometimes it is true

RIC S. BASTASA
So What Is The Gender Of Your Computer?

The men's group decided that 'computer' should
> definitely be of the feminine gender ('la computadora'), because:
> > 1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
> > 2. The native language they use to communicate with
> > other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;
> > 3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long
> > term memory for possible later retrieval; and
> > 4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find
> > yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.
> > (THIS GETS BETTER!)
> > The women's group, however, concluded that computers
> > should be Masculine ('el computador'), because:
> > 1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
> > 2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;
> > 3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time
> > they ARE the problem; and
> > 4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited
> > a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

The women won.

RIC S. BASTASA
So What? ....

yes farther
is always the greener pasture,
gotcha
but what?
when you write about it
it is great and
they clap their hands
am so confused
when i start to
talk about
they all leave
one by one
like trickles of
rain
until i am left
with nothing
but your footsteps
on mud

can't figure out
why?
is there is something
wrong with the way
i part my
hair?

RIC S. BASTASA
So What? So What?

so it was the red pepper
that fell off
the salad bowl,
not the green one,
so then?

what? am still confused
what is art?

RIC S. BASTASA
So Where Is The Sunflower Poetess?

you will have a chance seeing
the sunflower
poetess
only
once,

a glimpse
you love it but you can only love it once
when it faced the sun so bravely
chanting

singing her one and only song
then she goes away
like the sunflower
wilting

bowing to the ground
surrendering her many seeds
falling scattering

it is only the rain that comes
to bring her back to life again

her seeds sprouting
not just with a mother song
but children's poems
all along.

RIC S. BASTASA
So Where Will You Start?

you do not start at the end
you will not be understood
but you insist
to start from the end itself
it will be interesting you say
and they will follow you through
confused
they will mind every word
because they cannot understand
it is the end
you say is the most important
the most dramatic part
and that is all that they want
so you start from there
and end from the very beginning
inverted
but not really perverted
not for the fun
but for the run, now i understand you
like rashomon
more arguments shall come
like battered wives
complaining about their husbands
like children lost
finding their home in the streets
like some of us
wanting to start with nice endings
always finding hard
to end with new beginnings
for a start
but indeed, there is nothing
that is so hard
that cannot really be learned

RIC S. BASTASA
So Why Bother? .......

we always feel short of
time
this feeling that we have
not really done
enough
that something is left undone
that someone is left out
uncared

yet if we see how we simply
talked and talked and sit by the cafe
watching time pass us by
we could have realized how inconsistent
we have become

we all wasted time and then we tell ourselves
we lack time
as usual we do it
making fools out of our failures

and then justifying, 'well at least i am
happy. I always have time for myself.'

let time pass, we do not own it anyway.
it is meant to be with itself, so why bother?

RIC S. BASTASA
So Why Should I Think About You?

i think of you when i
write this and then i keep on writing and too keep on thinking still about you
what we did and what we did not finish doing and what i think about what you
think when you were doing it to me.

there is this orchid with white petal on the bark of a narra tree and there is this
caterpillar lost upon the luscious leaves and i understand perfectly that a home
can be a consumption

that relationships are rituals of a feast on something so delectable and delicious
within the mantel of our beings

did you know that we were like eating our souls together and that we like the
food that we serve upon each other that we forget that we are half consumed
and about to be gone into nothing?

i keep on thinking of you and then i was eating you like bread to my mouth
like ice to my tongue and
then it was sort of late for me to know
when i have already consumed you
and then you have become nothing to me.
at the time when my mouth
closed like a door at the end
of the happy hour

and that is the time that i tell myself

i have forgotten you.
Like food in those cheap eateries,
the taste no longer teases me.

So why should i think about you?

RIC S. BASTASA
So William Is Not Dying

i have long told
you, a poem is
detached from
the poet

the stranger
talking to you
might have been
talking about
another stranger too

be detached
like
a mirror
and yet
so immersed
in the image of your
own face

the realities we write
are lies behind
the realities of others

william has just told
you the reality of death

and he pretended it was him
in that coffin surrounded by
friends, parents
and children
and lovers
could be just
all in his mind
but the truth
has been told
and you
received them
fairly verily

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Are Back Reading This Poem Again

I see you sitting alone in a coffee shop
Two cups of coffee now, just to pass the hours away
Waiting for nobody
You pretend
Busy with your wireless laptop
Typing some words
Looking at the road beyond the glass walls
Cars keep passing by
Not one is stopping
Shall you pretend some more
That any of those cars is the inspiration
Of your write-up for today?
Okay, you are into advocacies for women
For the underprivileged
For the kids
For those who do not know how to smile
But let me suggest
As you read this poem
Back to my arms again
This time
Take more time with me
In this game
Of loneliness this passion for boredom
Have compassion to both
Of us-lonely souls searching meanings
In laptops in coffeehouses on more
Cups of coffee

I am taking the mug, it is bigger
And its holding effect is a little longer
And some cigars this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Are Leaving?

on to a series of song
g for the night

tomorrow you shall leave
our country

you bring your guitar and
beautiful songs with you

to the foreign land and
there you shall suffer more

loser!

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Boil Down To Money

how long did it take you
to boil down
all about
you
things and people to money?

was it long enough
to find yourself
sitting on a bench
and then
think
of green bucks
and tell yourself

this is the real world
why did they not
tell me
in school

why was not
it studied
as a curriculum
in the university?

why did we study
religion
or ethics
or philosophy

when

when when everything is said and done
it is
after all the money that matters most of all

the more i have
that more i want to have
all these money
money talks
and so here you are listening,

got some you say, and it will take a lot of sentimentalism
to part
with some bucks, and mind you, just like them
all of them in this world

no one gives money
without something in exchange

you see,
that is the truth that you have discovered
and you are sticking to it

boil all your sentiments
and values and
let things simmer down
money, money

the flower of all evils,
now smell it

and think for a while
what life
will it give you

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Don'T Like The Sour Man?

so, here you are again, feeling sorry for the sour man
the one who does not know how to stretch his face
to make a smile
the one consumed by the ghosts of his own worries
that never came
the one who stays in the nook
afraid,
you do not like this sour man
scared, not easy to handle, expensive
to the pocket
you do not find him
a good company to your sports
laughter
and happy-go-lucky
merry, merry, merry,
round and round
telling people hey life is short why not just enjoy every minute of it
savor the moments
lick every sweet dropp of life like honey to your finger

finger licking good
till the last dropp till the supply lasts
take today, today, today, why worry about tomorrow

oh, you do not like the sour man
and you are angry at him

well, it is sad, the sour man has conquered you.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Feel You Do Not Like To Work

something stopped when you said it
could be the clock of my life
or the chimes of some bells
in my fingers
when you said your lines, that you do not like to work
because the haiku
and the tanka are all there like children
waiting to play with you
they want to be written
by nobody but you, just you, like some animated kites
wanting to fly from the strings of your hands
now having air and tails

i feel the same, i see this river bed drying and i am like a dam
filled with water wanting to burst and flood
the earth
with poems
i am this cracking lips and inside is my tongue wet
so wet with this fluid
wanting to spit what i have inside me
but i am not that true
to this calling

the dam is fortified
and my flood did not happen
and my tongue likes to sleep
tired and so afraid
swallowing everything
and so
nothing revolutionary really happens

time can wait,
i need sleep, i need to eat, and i need a little rest and
silence tonight again
with the uncomplaining stars

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Have Not Really Danced With Me

to make a poem is to dare
to be naked and then dance
like a tongue of fire

i dance naked before you
and you watch me with all pleasure

i am dancing in an island of light
while you keep yourself concealed in the dark

i know that you like going naked too and dance
like the way i keep myself alive at night

but you have restrained yourself as you
continue watching me in a trance

in the dark you are naked too and your
spirit is dancing with my body

but what can you do
it is you who have cut your feet yourself

and so you have not really danced
with me

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Have Read Merli Alunan's Poem

i know what merly wrote about
how to search for the man of your life
there are many choices
and she enumerated them one by one
which accounts for the length of her lines
the witty one that may slap you
the dumb one that may embarrass you
the fat one that may only love your cooking skills
and the thin one that may offend your menu
and the scheming one who may look at your account
and the real one, the one that loves you
who may have died many years ago

do not worry so much about looking for him
if he is alive he will soon come to take your hand in marriage
and your dreams of living happily ever after may soon come true

do not force yourself on the recent one in cyberspace
he may not be the right one
whose name is 'soul mate' and forever your life may always
be half-empty half-full

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Like To See Things Upside Down?

let us try
how does it feel when the clouds become the sea
when the stars
become the fish

oh you will like it.
when you exchange
places and forms
with the gods

they won't.
they never will.

so just try seeing things as they really are.
be human and wait for your turn.

for the meantime let us eat dinner
and watch the next episode of our favorite show.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Tell Me

so you will tell me
God so loved us but he is no longer in speaking terms with us
for we have offended him since the time of Moses.
so you will tell me that all i have to see is the grass,
the beautiful flowers along my way, the blue clouds,
the sun that rises without failing, the moon that comes out without trying,
the rivers flowing, the sea constantly giving us the waves,
the fish and fruits and animals and
money and things and work and house
all these through these and by all these
God is speaking.

must i disagree, i know, you will not hesitate to crucify me,
and put me into damnation, as this heretic to be burned in electrical stakes.

i don't know. who ever killed God? can man kill God? I don't know.
into softer things, into higher things, into the cool shades of heaven.
into the comforts of belief, into the fold of faith.

where do i leap from here? Speak to me my God, i have big ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Were Told To Just Sit There And Relax.

i've read everything then
and found a map of those disasters
which until now we cannot speak
with candidness for fear of
another disaster so we speak in
codes, like,
a disaster is not really a
disaster, it could be something
else which we understand
by just the two of us, for i am here
and you are there and we meet here
in this kind of decoded
disaster, like a friend need not
really be a friend,
but a mastermind, of sorts, and going
to the beach to take a dip, is
not the sea we mean, as it is something
else, and this is what is happening now.

you read the same paper authored by an
unknown guy, who of course, we both really know
who he is, and it is too disastrous, a monstrosity,
of a line of keels, and calibers, of course,
you know who and whom, who fell from the stairs
and who kept the key to this tunnel of
violence.

those who authored it are right behind you,
carrying the cross and the candle, and speaking
in tongues, and you look at them from behind
as others say the impossibility of it all,
but now you are convinced of the disaster,
and the authors of the same.

it is not time yet, so you were told to just
sit there and relax.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You Will Know Where You Will End

I stopped being nice
To be happy for once
And so today
you will find the word
No
in my dictionary,
I will keep things
Short and sweet
I won’t gabble
I won’t give you
A rope to hang you with
I won’t engage
And apologize
Or even explain
I won’t give you the
Fuel to use against me
And I get my 'no'
In quickly
I set the marker
Right from the
Beginning
So you will
Know where
You will end.

RIC S. BASTASA
So You’re On A Mission Again

Where is that
I do not have to ask
Why is that
I do not have to ask
When is that
I do not have to ask
I am not interested
I am simply disinterested
I am not giving attention
To you and your excuses

Who is that?
It is all about you
Yes it is all about you
For whom is that?
You tell me it is for them
The poor and the underprivileged
The marginal and the oppressed

I will ask you again
For whom really is that?
And I will give
The correct answer

It is still for you
It is all about you

You you you you
You you you you
You you you you
You you you you
You you you you

It is never about me
It was never about me
It was never about us
There is no me
And there will never be us.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
So You'Re Here

hi, you ready for the next drink?
a couple of minutes
hi, (silence) got to make this out
a triumph for anything
was it?
i guess not
take your time
will you do me a favor
hmmm
millions, ... there is a baby, , ,
would you mind going out
again
and saying that you are mistaken?
take it easy
i'll tell.
(goes out and closes the door)
steps are coming
dark room, narrow alley,
white floors,
motors running.
i mean it baby
you're the only one.
thank you.

RIC S. BASTASA
So?

...oh, the rat says
she has her own world to share
with all the twists
and short stories to tell
but nothing
about poetry
lest she be nothing but
a second rate trying hard
copycat

she is honest
and means every word
and means that what she says
is her own world shared

the messy room? the missed momma
the hardwork in the office
all these stuff

on the other hand
i still assert
that we too write for other people
empathize with them
and they too become sources
of our own literature
a shared world
a study
a way of putting our own feet
in their own shoes

and i tell her too
i am missing
i lose myself in the world of other people
and find myself
under the moon
hanging its face on the twigs of a
tree
that i too feel the shadows
of the wind
hear the voices of the desert
attentive
to the protests of the waves
of the sea
the rage of the storm
the implacable
chatters of those who
never want to die
as early
as the bud that the
child nipped.

RIC S. BASTASA
So? Better Not Do It

what you do today
like putting a black ribbon
to your red hair
soon
they will know it and they
will propagate you like a vine
in the air
and people will believe because it is true
you put a black ribbon in your red hair
and you eyelashes wave like a storm in
Taiwan

if you do not want any talk
any scandal in your red hair
there is still one important precaution

don't do it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soap

you wish i were true
to every word i wrote in my poems
like sadness
that i must be sad when my poems
talk about sadness

like separation and disgust and pain
that i must suffer
with the poems i write that i must have despair
and pain too
and disgust
for every word of disgust written in every word
in every line

how cruel of you
how cruel of truth
how can i justify my death when i speak only of death
and in the very poem
where i write the word
death

there is soap
there is this box of untruths in pandora and when i open it
they must spread and you may refuse to believe
me again

but it would be very cruel of you
to make these poems
all these poems be my life my only life
and lived
and day by day lived in accordance with the
mouths of these poems

carapace
is the word, it is like i am putting my feet in another person's
shoes

then i write, and i could have written about this word: happiness
joy, bliss
ecstasy, light, and amazing glory

i choose not to,
i think, i have too much of it, and i do not share it for now
there is no necessity
and i cannot really help

with so much loneliness and sadness out there
with them i stretch my hands to hold them and feel them
and they all become

myself. it is not soap then, and there are no bubbles in the skies
there is no child playing amazed by the bubbles that burst and by the
bubbles that

are so abundant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sober

t'was that moment
when he realized
he was never true

awake
he keeps on telling her
'i love you'

and she who knows
what is drunkenness
and sobriety
keeps on believing him

'it does not matter'
she is happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sober And Learned

so it is like playing
the piano without looking
at a book of notes

the fingers keep playing
and the music keeps its own pacing
like both are dancing the
tango together

there is no place for a sigh
in this place of revelry
all you see are the hands lifting
their glasses
foaming beer and loud music
and souls coming out from their
bodies
wandering in those smokes and
dancing to the wild beats of
the music

the way to lose and then finds
ourselves back
sober and learned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sober……

the house where
you live
has a ghost,

a white lady
whom many had seen

every night when
you are away

enjoying the night
with someone else

whose name you
cannot even recall

every following morning
when you are finally

sober.

RIC S. BASTASA
Social Chickens

i wonder why the
white and red chickens
escape from their
house

tonight they roost upon
the branch of an old
tree
so high that they can
see
above our fence
the road

the red and white chickens
too of my other
neighbor's yard
roosting on the other tree

RIC S. BASTASA
Social Studies

i

a mother taking care of
a son who just had a nervous breakdown
there is no way
for a mental asylum

ii

there is this woman who writes poems
translates them from bisayan to english
making the poems
the little burdens of grammar school

iii

there are siblings who quarrel all the days of their life
forgetting the color of their blood
too near and so too far
cutting navels, making fences, choking necks

iv

how did we end? we started with some social sketches
defining what social studies is all about
sweet nothings, and trivial matters
bridging gaps, comparing black and white
and dreaming of rainbows

v

no lust. a friendly chat. something platonic.
a brother to a sister. birds hiding some wings.
oral intercourse.
social studies. a little poetry. a human craving.
empty. full. empty. lull. wanting to go.
but staying still.

vi
oh my, i tell myself finally as we say goodbye
i still have work to do. something legal piles up.
an issue on international law. some circular reasoning
begging the questions. i lied.
in fact, i am still here.

vii

back to poetry. some metaphors are popping out
the ceiling speaks. a lizard shows its tongue.
speaking. come, come, catch me, i am a meta4,
this is absurd. the ceiling sings.

viii

8. this is the number that climbs up.
complete and round and round like two moons
up and above. over each other.
a monkey. a cat without ears and a hidden tail.
free thoughts. use the period. breathers.

ix

nine lives. do i get nine lives after twelve years
of writing poems? no it is not just twelve.
i am 49, and i will turn fifty, on the nth poem.
jalousie songs. palm trees opening leaves.
roots i hear roots ripping my robes.

x

this will be the last. ten. put an o. and you know what i mean.
the white people do not understand the power of (o) ten.
they do not speak the brown language. Or the black one.
stiff and hard and long. nothing lousy. or lusty. just clean fun.
a play with words. what can words do? did you say you cry?
this is the last. and you know very well. i have to go. i made
promises. i have Frost. And Neruda too. and yes, what about
myke O?

social studies. nothing about the P.... I'm finished.
Society Could Subsist Even If Everyone Does Nothing

You worry much
Doing this and that
Cooking the rice
Washing the laundry
Cleaning the house
Feeding the pigs
Cleaning the yard

You are doing everything
And taking everything
You are having the
Burden of this world

And I pity you
I am here
Sitting watching
The sunrise
And marveling
And I
Simply wonder
About everything
Everyday
All these things
Are always new
To me
And this
Afternoon
I will be marveling
At the orange ness
And redness of
Sunset

The cool evening
The glitters of stars
And the song of
Night birds
And the hymns
Of the nearby
Church
And you complain
Of back pains
And a sprained
Leg and a cracking
Bone and a nerve
Wracked and wrecked

The problem with
You is you are
Overworking
You are at fault

Society could
Subsist
Even if everyone
Did nothing

I have things
And nature
To enjoy
And talents
Not to
Waste

The society where I live can subsist even if I do nothing.
And you are not a part of it. You refused to.

RIC S. BASTASA
my country is rooted to the sultanate tradition, one sultan and his children and four wives ruling a territory those that block the way are beheaded, though not really that literally in the modern sense of my world, they finally name it a dynasty of political warlords and rag and drag leaders, one must know the word kowtow the figurative language of toeing the line and fidelity or else fatality, somehow, in my own little way, i think, there is a need for relief from this secretly hated tradition of putting power to the few families over a long, long time like an old classical novel of War and Peace, and somehow i like to go on the Color Purple midway between Fiddler on the Roof and Gone with the Wind, my mind bloats and i become a daydreamer of sort, detached from reality of abc, to xyz, i do not quit, i continue dreaming for change and relief i travel to America and Canada, meet some friends, and get to know how they are doing, flying kites and rolling snow balls, and chasing rainbows so to speak, after all is said and done, i come to the conclusion that i go back in my country and meet the Sultan again,
missing me, his long gone son.

RIC S. BASTASA
Socrates Revisited

an
unreflected life
is worth
leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
it is nice, he did it
well, the word gnat becomes
a real gnat, and the tail
gives way to a parody,
and there Socrates stood,

he knows his ways to
another reality, the gnat smells
like a gnat, and it sounds
like it is flying and the tail
begins to whip, and then

the tale is woven and we are
there stultified having spent
most the much needed time,

we smell gnats, we hear flying,
we face Socrates, and then
just like the way it ended
a long time ago, we all mourned
for the loss of a great man,
and we call him beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soft As Reed But Hard As Steel

you know how
is it
when you step
upon me
as though i am
another
pathway or
an old
shoe

i bite
and i transform
my teeth
into fangs
my saliva into
deadly
venom and
i spit upon
you to
maim you
and if need be
to kill
you

i could be
you best
friend sweet
as
sugarcane
but when you
disrespect me
and attack
my own
domain
i am as cruel
as your
worst
enemy
you should
have known
better

RIC S. BASTASA
how can i divorce a wife who keeps me posted about my whereabouts
briefs me about her likes and dislikes
washes my brain and lets go my mind
to
our mutual desire to be always together
wherever and whatever
oh!
my mind is as soft as clay
and she shapes it with her loving hands
into very nice pottery

i used to like to wander
and then i ponder

my wife is still the best
excelling from among the rest

she lets me fly away and here i am
coming back to her arm like a very meek lamb

RIC S. BASTASA
Soft Cotton In My Heart

on my way home
inside the car
silence speaks to me

i imagine God
who is so forgiving

we talked
and i told him
i sometimes took
some initiatives
and gave my best
to love
what i did not
fully grasp

i gave in
finally
his will is
best for me

with so much pain
i declare
that there is just
little

a tint of
inconvenience
which has not
killed me
these years

i thanked him
for giving me
that glimpse of
the face of
death,

more so
of the side in Him
that i
slowly touch
like some soft
cotton in
my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Softly The Truth Speaks And Wins Over You

what? you wage war against the truth?
through all your wiles and lies?

you will be powerless
you will not win

you kick against the spikes
and wound yourself

you spit to God
you spit on yourself

calm down
and think

and listen, hear the truth
softly speaking

always winning over you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sogno

A blind man
has a beard
uncut for days
for weeks
confused and
abandoned,

he begs in the
streets of his
misfortune
with his cane
as his guide
with his can
as begging
symbolism

i take him in
bathe him and
dress him and
feed him like
he is my only
brother

at night as i
begin to play
the saddest tune
of my violin
he sings an
aria for me

together we
dream
my eyes see for him
his heart sees for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
the sun still brightly shining to the glory
of her husband and two sons
sleepy
from too much work
and yet still manages an email or two
to assure us
that everything is okay,
that life is beautiful
that life is fine
with everyone
wishing me and my wife
to have a vacation somewhere,
well,
sol,
my friend, the sun
may you keep shining
through and through
let the sunshine
come
let the flowers grow
let the grass be greener
as we take
our glimpses too
of the moon
this evening
just the two of us together in silence,
because we are not sleepy yet,
thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soldier

it is a nice life soldier
is it not? you are well fed
and you are given the power to kill
with rewards even
if you have killed many
of our enemies,

you are well traveled
and well trained
with all those free high powered guns
and ammunition

you do not have to spend any neuron
in your brain
you only follow orders
and that is what matters most
like a guard dog, a sniff dog that amazes
me at the airport

soldier, i like you, but i cannot be one like you
because for reasons unknown to you,
you also kill some of our
brothers in the name of the state
and this world, in the name of war and of peace

always following orders.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soledad

in true faith to her name
she lives alone in a small house
on the side of a hill

the trees are cut and the grasses
have grown taller
the house sheds of window panes
pillars recede their heights

soledad in true faith to her name
continues to live alone in that small house
on the side of the dead hill

she waits for her beloved
who long died in the war.

RIC S. BASTASA
Solemn

sit on a chair
beside a bush
put my feet
on another
chair and then
i lay my head
on a pillow
facing the
moon and
the stars

i close my eyes
and feel
the lightness
of the world
around me

tonight
is the solemnity
of solitude

i am but
a witness
of its
events

RIC S. BASTASA
Solicitor

she enters the door
and i ask her to be seated
polite
i am to a stranger
i am busy then
on a paper work
that could not
be finished in a day
her curly hair
signifies a complicated
request
for money,
i am shocked to this
kind of
felicity,
turned down the
request for
sponsorship on
something
that i cannot watch
i am not a
politician
go somewhere else
i do not
kowtow

RIC S. BASTASA
Soliloquy

in prison
am i
inside the mystery
of your arms

i lose myself
and i tremble

i search for my soul
it is nowhere

not knowing what to do
to regain who i am

i explore the labyrinths
of your heart

every chamber and corner
and passage

there is that exit
of familiarity

outside i see nothing
but contempt of you

RIC S. BASTASA
mad at my arms  
i promise not to stretch them  
keep them  
tied to my body with the  
strong rope  
of my fingers

i am fixed by the  
locks of my hair  
and cannot move for days  
in boredom's kingdom

i try to take control  
of my speech  
i bite my tongue and it bleeds and  
my mouth drinks  
all the salt and red corpuscles  
the platelets  
decrease in number

it is like that  
it happens sometimes  
on the verge of  
something killing

i am drinking myself to sustain myself  
from this  
fixation of the teeth  
and gum

i close my eyes and remember  
my eyelids are restless  
about  
the code  
that i am the king of this  
small universe  
of a human body

my heart is the planet
my head is the sun
from now on
the emotions are caged like a
white bird
restrained to the vertical lines of
a cage
the waters of the mind
are squeezed and shall flow as directed

kept well inside
my solid dam

expect the next thing that
happens
the one that you dream
about

the bursting
of the bubble and the
explosion of another
wild
imagination

fireworks on the
jolly days of
july

RIC S. BASTASA
Soliloquy #3, On Imagination

so i may not be flushed out from the system
like any fecal matter
i comply with what you ask of me
i am now a flower
and behind me are blue clouds
and on my stalks
are leaves

no thorns, no worms
for you do not like them

now it is your time to love me and keep me
forever
you must pretend that you are not a worm
that you are not a relative of the thorn

now it is your time to become a bee
now you must buzz around this garden in our minds
now you must pollinate me

it is all in the imagination
imaginary bee imaginary flower
how perfect can our imaginary world become!

kiss me in my imagination
shape your thoughts like the lips of a lover
now all too hungry for my love

RIC S. BASTASA
Soliloquy For An Early Morning Sigh

syllables soon
form the word
that you want
to utter this early
morning, they
lurk there for
the whole night
like a cocoon
and then something
like a moth comes
out and so you
open your mouth
something blue and
winged and beautiful
and it flies away
like a pebble that
you thrown away
against the dark

you may pretend
that it does not
know you but hell
sure it knows you
well enough and
it is seeking the
help of the dusk

who can deny it?
not your heart that
stil still beat for love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soliloquy...

life is hard
you always tell me
in every chat

there is no money
and there is no work
people are hard up
that is how you see life

i am far from you
i live in an island
where there is no mall
no roads
for many cars
and there are not much
people to relate with

i overspend my time
to nature's offerings
trees and sea
shells and cats
wind and songs
green grass on the plains
hills and climbs
rivers and rocks
these are all i have here
all these i do not own
and yet
i have enjoyed most

i got not much money
too
but i have much time
i do not have much friends
but i have myself
this best friend of mine

you see
life is happiest most
when spent
without itineraries
nothing to buy
nothing to need

for i eat a little
drink a little
and just live a life
in wonder

i write and never stopped since then
when i discovered that words speak to me
more than i speak to them

this is an interactive world
in the irony of solitude
the paradox of life when it exudes
itself most
in the darkness of our nights
in the silence of our desires
in the liveliness of inactivity
in the kindness of leaving ourselves
alone from
the loneliness of the crowd
in the anxieties of
what we can never be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Solilukoy

nangutana ang amahan
nga nabyudo
sa pag-abot sa kwarenta
dias gikan sa haya
sa iyang asawa

unsa ba ang anaa diha
sa taas sa balay? mihangad
siya nga morag nangita ug
damgo didto sa langit

walay tawo diha tay
hagbay rang namahawa ang
nagpuyo nga
magtiayon sa dihang wala na
sila nagkasinabot
sa ilang mga gibati

karong gabii dalhan mo ako ug
batan-ong babaye
gusto ko nga diha ko matulog
sa abogon nga katre

mihangad sab ang anak didto
sa langit
gisubay sab kon duna pa bay
nahibilin nga damgo alang usab
kaniya

sulod sa iyang dughan nagbalik
balik ang pangadyeon nga unta
iiway siya sa kadaotan

'...ug dili mo kami itugyan sa
panulay
hinonoa luwasa kami sa daotan'

unsa ba ang daotan? nangutana ang
wala pay buot nga kamanghoran
Solitaries...

no one stops you
from being solitary.

no one stops you
from being you as

you never stop them
also from being them

solitary posts along
the boulevard after

a heavy rage of the
early morning rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Solitary...

you fit in
you don't

square peg in
a round hole you are

you try again
they all rebel

you junk them
they laugh

in your island
you are king

in that crowd
there is no peace

why
bother?

RIC S. BASTASA
Solitude

early morning
when dusk is about to leave

a dew glistening
at the tip of a rose petal

sunlight comes
gently dissolving some pearls

into thin air leaving
this warmth inside my heart

light pulsates like
blood so alive rushing in my head

my cheeks redden
a little bird starts to sing on a branch

RIC S. BASTASA
Solitude And The Song

alone i only have to treasure
the peace in my mind
my heart sings but let no one
hear it
not even the leaves
looking for a song
their ears dipping
in the wind

alone the Furies lets me
on the clear conscience
there are no fears
nothing itches nothing bites

there is only the soothing
effect of words
the lines that lull me to sleep
in the hammock of
my dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Solitude And The Sunset

if you wrote your poem
in a room without walls
mine remains inside
my brain
while i sit on the sands
along the seashore
staring at the setting
of my sun

kon gisulat mo ang
imong balak
sa balay nga walay bungbong
kining akoa
nagpabilin lang sa akong
utok samtang ako
naglingkod sa balas sa
daplin sa baybayon
mitutok sa pagsalop sa
akong adlaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Solitude, At Its Best Use...

amidst the mountains
with all its trails and enthralls

in the void and stillness
in doors without any exits

us, you, they
all past pronouns now

getting to know the me better
it is

i....just

RIC S. BASTASA
Solo

he takes his stand
and claims the right
to be where
he is
he holds the phone
and sings
his song composed

in front of the
wall

his chairs and table
his beam
his audience
attentive

RIC S. BASTASA
Solo Flight......

Flawless
skin
smooth to my
hand

beautiful body
rising from
the sea

moaning sound
scents of flowers
abound

inside a room
i am alone

wildest in my
imagination

RIC S. BASTASA
Solving The Problem....

you have come to an age
where feelings have become
mere decorations of your
hours,

as you look at that christmas
tree your feelings have become
nothing but decorative balls
depending on the season kept and
then exposed again and sometimes
if too worn and irrelevant
are simply thrown away

you have graduated from all these
nonsense, grabbing all the way, now
the most important matter, this logic
of living life, freed from the waves
of uncertainties, loving the unlovable,
sticking to unreliability, mourning
for the living, even mourning for yourself
who is all too alive for your unbecoming
tears.

you have come to the age of reason,
that is how they call it, so, keep it
up, live it, avail of all the dimensions,
use the xs and ys, and find the answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Aspects Are Irreconciliable

this is the story
you meet someone whom you think is very interesting
and you go to a busy place
buy beer and talk a while
the usual get to know scripts

more bottles to make
a certain familiarity
more words
and less periods
less question marks now
more of introspection
and then
all the questions are erased
the answers are too much to take
the conversations drag
and contempt comes at the last drink
'one for the road' the other says

you leave and you realize
home is always sweeter even without
anyone whom you at first think is very interesting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Birds' Cries

There is nowhere
To escape
From the
Harshness of
This world

That is what I think

In the mountains’
Farthest
In the forest’s deepest
I still hear
Some birds’ cries

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Changes That We Need

we need to fill the cracks on the walls
some trickles of light may hurt
on the roof the rain as always will be bad
for the floor
some leaks must be sealed
the stones on the pavement choked
by the grass that has been crawling
for all the years
i have to pick up so my foot may not
be hurt
and then some goodbyes maybe said
even without the hellos yet
we settle, that is a good word,
we move on, i think that is much better

i am closing a door and so i am opening
a window like what you are doing
i am taking sleep only to be taken by a dream
i am flying only to stop for a while
tomorrow is a new day, as always, i am not closing
my eyes for another view of the sea

there will be new seagulls coming but i have
stopped counting each of them since then
as always they shall feast on my schools of fish
and i do not really mind at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Chunks Of Bitter Realities

some chunks of bitter realities are handed to him.
the rule of the game is: do not refuse, take everything with all willingness.

the game continues and from day to day, he has become
the most acceptable yes man.

he continues receiving chunks of bitterness and he keeps it to himself.
there is no room for complaints. that is another rule of the game.

at night, when alone, with all the bitterness, he looks upon the pages of
an old book, the one containing the pictures of his friends back home,
in school where he finished high school, in the university where he finished
his degree with honors.

damn, he tells himself, ' i am much better than them! '
yet he never really made good: he remains poor, and unknown,

and envious. Life must be unfair. Or God must not exist.
He becomes a doubter.

Agnosticism was never his trait in college.
He was handsome and girls were pulling him right and left.
The professors loved him and exempted him from taking the final exams.

The years are cruel.
The government is unfair.
Power is slipping from his hands.

He sleeps and finds rest in his dreams.
There is something wrong with the system.
The good are not rewarded.
The bad triumphs.

HE could not ask WHY?
He is into this game. There shall be no complaining.
He is here. There is no asking now.

Tomorrow, he washes his face, removes the iota of doubt.
The motes of confusions.

He goes into the office. He is the yes man for now.
There shall be no grumbling.

THAT in fact, is the rule. The attitude acceptable.
And so his silence remains. Until his ps.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Deadly Drops Of My Being Fell On The Floor

i am tired of
blood
or even
orange

some drops
from me
fall on the
floor

and i regret
why i
never kiss
you

i regret
why i
am a coward

why i shy away
from
what makes
me complete

some drops
of my being
fall on the
floor

dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Denials Are The Most Truthful Image Of Truth

the sound of poetry
is the sound of denial,

not all denials are
horrible

some denials are the most
truthful image of truth

and behind all these the most beautiful sound
of your poems come
in the form of hidden honesty

the one that says i am not here
in front of the other.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Fireflies Under The Full Moon

shiny creatures
of the night
you glow
in full splendor
with fire in your
bellies

the day
remembers you
as a meadow
resplendent
with wild flowers
by the side
of the mountain
forest

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Fun With Balloons On A Midnight Candle

some colored balloons in my room
floating towards the ceiling
they are light
wanting to escape
their nature of flight

they can fly away from this roof
and they all gleam on borrowed light of the moon
like some colored lights
fruits, floating fruits dissolving in dark skies

above a midnight candle
they stay for a while and travel a certain distance
in this heat this dark confusion in my mind

each shall burst, i have not heard this sound
cracking in this darkness
floating, i am, it is me, how well do i know?
this burst this natural death
in space

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Hands

some hands are always
ready to hold a flower
and hand it
to another

others however
have remained closed
like a rock
where no flower ever grows

how i wish
that this world shall be filled with flowers
like hands
that open like buds slowly blooming
caressed as they are
with the warm rays of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Hidden Lines Of The Traveller Who Just Arrived

faraway
no one is talking to you.
you are
shuttered like an open
window

there are leaks
you cover it
with silk cloth

smooth silence
gleaming colors
of gray
like the body of
a catfish

and reddish
bloody
imagination

turn to pink
my blue day

and admire the
transformation of
your thoughts
like a twilight

there is this orange
that smells like
an orange
because it is
orange

you touch it
and peel it and
taste it

juicy existence
palatable life
dripping sweetness
crushed pulps
bursting bits
soft bites

the room changes into
a home
and you lay your head
on the pillow
thinking good about
the ceiling

it is not the harshness
of the wall anymore

there is no obstacle to thoughts
piercing to the
wood and playing with
the light
bulb

things go and become a lively game of shadows
the lizard and the fly become
one in
that chance
of
predator-prey
relationship

i guess i must have been too personal
that the mirror
fails to relate anymore
to a face
facing it
all day long
waiting for no one

there is no letter somehow
in fact, there is no one inviting
or invited
where am i now? what mistake have i done
to the books?
did i betray the pages
and argue myself with those
ears?

so long. so long.
I've been hiding and the pain of putting my head
inside the bag
that having to breathe so hard
in the sacrifice
of monks and
novices.

i am letting go a part of my index finger
the baby
does not have to notice it
since it is
asleep like a fish inside
the tank of water

figure out then
why am i doing this
writing for nothing else
but selfishness

offering kindness
where it is not needed
actually

i am playing with fire
like an eater
there is no one hurt
in fact
everyone enjoys it
like a show in the circus

my mouth smells like gas
babbling tongue
my soul is burning and i do not want it
put off.
Some Houses Along The Road

as we speed up in a bus
heading towards home

the houses along the road
are like pages of a book

as fast as they can
they want nothing of these

sad memories anymore
they must be forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Images That I Want To Remember

my little brown dog
bringing back
the black stick
that i have thrown
to the yard

the gray gravel
and purple pebbles
scattered
on a pathway
to her garden

the ylang-ylang tree
still blossoming
on this hot
month of november

a parked maroon
pick-up
some leaves
falling on the
hood

glass jalousies
still closed
some dusts
on the computer
keyboard

opening something
closed

and
dusting off
some unwanted
memories

my hands
shall caress the
letters
and i shall start
thinking again

what now?
where to?
and where
and why?

i am empty
and i am now ready
to fill myself again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Kind Of A Face

shall i pretend to you that i have only one face forever?
you are silent
you think like a deep river making no sound at all
despite the storm when the waters from the mountains come
and force you to rise and run and rage and they accuse
you of having caused the flood
as i watch in sadness

you are my night and day and you have seen the changing of my hues
i turn red like a rose
become white like a carnation
become sturdy like a bark of the oak tree
sometimes i turn into stone
hard and unmoving
you see me and touch me with your wind and mist

like a diamond i wear some corners some faces
for me to glitter
for me to find meaning in the life that i carry within my arms
a lull sometimes
almond eyes a rocking of my feet
these are the mechanisms of my coping up
to be a man

in your silence i set aside my masks and face you
shed off some faces and look at you
with the eyes of my soul
oh, i become so vulnerable to the truth of this one and only face
as you kiss me
in my lips

i quiver i become so light i become so alive i become so real
as all the other faces fade like fume from the funnel

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Lives Are Destined To Be Wasted

it has become my habit lately
to sleep late at night
and wake up late

breakfast is forgotten
and lunch sometimes is set aside
lack of appetite
the absence of life
the blankets unfolded
the windows unopened
the darkness kept like a cold that does not leave me
like a flu
this fever that makes living inconvenient
yet providing all the reasons
for not being part of everything in the family
that i hate to relate with

i have broken drinking glasses
on clumsy hands
sleepy moods
ups and downs of my life
downs mostly
this desperation that keeps on staying
in my room

i turn off everything
i want mostly those associated with endings
a glass of milk
that my puppy drinks
hotdogs cold and greasy
i cannot eat them today

my polo shirt is ready
my pants well ironed
some calls from the office
on an emergency conference

i am sick i have aches all over my body
they say i need a doctor
or i need love i must have a lover
and change them as often as i change
the cover on the chair

you guess it right
some lives are destined to be wasted
i am having mine
and i am ready with this garbage can

in a minute

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Lizard Thoughts On Another Night When I’m Alone

the lizard licks its tail
in a playful mood remembering
the younger days of its
short life,

IT is playing with light
wishing that there will be fire on the ceiling

too eager to please itself
upon itself
which by the way is our way of defining
what narcissism is all
about,

the lizard bit its own tail and
eat it

not worrying though because it can grow
another tail
in the manner of
auto-regeneration
which we humans do not have
really the ability to do

i watch it closely
like the cover page of the poems
of Gratian

still now, i cannot really figure out
whether
envy has seeded its discord
inside my
heart

or i am just hungry myself
and wish i had a tail
for me to eat
for supper....

RIC S. BASTASA
Some More

it says
it needs some more
and i frisk myself
touch my pockets
there is nothing
more in there
nothing more
inside myself
but for the love of it
i go somewhere else
borrow and beg
to give you more
this passion to give
this humanity
to make another live
some more
until i bleed
my hands tremble
there is no grumble.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Morning Lines For This Old Village

At 5 in the morning
the bells toll the church
calls everyone to wake up and pray

you cannot just evade
a religious responsibility
upon a loud call

and then the women come out of the house
with their prayer books at hand
rushing to the tiled floors of
religion

when everyone is inside the walls
and when the bells stop tolling
when the windows are still closed
you begin to hear the
birds singing

fifteen minutes later
the early worms are ready for their pecking
and from a distance
you hear another call from nature
the sound of the sea breeze
the choir of the leaves of those
trees lining the old boulevard of
our broken dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Mornings Are Like Christmas Socks Hanging On The Door

you wake up early
you open the door
and with excitement
of check what was
put by santa claus
on your red socks

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes About You

reading what you have
written
excites me.

I salute your
sweetness in
being candid to every word.

reading one poem leads to
another
until i get to know you
every hair lock
every nail
bite.

and then i experience
not just the
high of your thoughts
but the
fear too, that i can be soon like
you

lost, sad, and in pain.

and so today i call it quits.

after reading you
it feels like visiting Beijing
and then
promising myself that
i shall not return
to such place
again.

there is this exhaustion,
that rises above
the respect for what is old and
miserable.
RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes For My Being

the transparent thing is left.
the opaque ones continue to strive for light
those which we touched finally surrender
they are contained in a life span.

we are the eyes that see well in darkness
sensitive to the fragments of light
we let sparks arrive and then we let them pass
we do not need much of the glimmer and the simmer
we know our containers too
when we pass away they shall never know what grief is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes For Paris.....

the numbers of the dead
are many
and that is in the place of
your dreams
one of those found in your
bucket list
this place called Paris

the world mourns and presidents
expressed their words of
sympathies urging all the people
to keep this peace
about the madness of the few
and the persistence violence
of the misguided

i will be spending more time on
CNN
and perhaps i may shed some tears
too and even express my deepest
sympathy for those who were mercilessly
killed while drinking beer in the pub
or watching football or intently with
ecstasy listening to the concert of the hall

meanwhile in the interior places of Olingan & Galas
and Sinaman
some farmers are busy harvesting their golden
grains for drying later under the sun after which
after some days shall be kept in their barns

meanwhile some children are bathing in the river
and then catch fish and go home whistling
some native mothers are singing lullabies for
their babies to sleep soundly on their cribs

meanwhile when a lover waits for a tryst
as his target is still washing the dishes as
father is now going to sleep after a hard day's
work in the farm somewhere in Sinuyak

they have no CNN and no worry about what
this world shall become

i should have envied them i suppose
but how can i really?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes From My Heart

there are some notes inside my heart
you need not sing them
for they are sad

you do not deserve this sadness
and i do not preach
the philosophy of loneliness

i may have told you about sorrow
a hopeless tomorrow
but i really do not mean to

you are young and restless
learn the songs of my youth
open my cabinet take the box out there

with the drums and the trumpets
play the song and learn the dances
of the wild and the listless

bring me the flute for i am now
at an age where solitude thrives best
in the quiet i shall remember her again

RIC S. BASTASA
it is this old road that
i always remember and then
i go back to it
wondering if it by itself
shall also change somehow
i pray to the
silver sky that i may not
recognize it anymore thinking
that i can be free
at last
but it is a hard road and even
if the rocks and thorny roses
have all been taken away
by some adherents for
a reconstruction of its
face and body
it still wears the same face
of a very lonely woman
with a pointing finger
at me and full of guilt i bring
it flowers
and it offer it some of my
old poems which are
like rusty nails
not fit for any joining of
wooden planks
to make a stair
or a beam for a new
house
it is here where you hear
children laughing
but of course
sane as you are
you can not insist anymore
that they still
live here
for they all died in the
places of your
memories
and now like all these
calls you must endure
the deafness of
a prolonged
emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes To A Friend In Florida

alone in your room
as usual

you turn on the tv
and then you turn it off

you hear the sound of the
wind from the city getting inside your room

you welcome it
no one is alive here

all mosquitoes and cockroaches
have been eliminated by you

there is a sound inside yourself
telling you: when will this stop?

what is it? you ask
it goes back to sleep it is too tired to confront you

this room is only for sleeping
no one has been here for once to make love with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes To Ponder Between Two Life Beginners

Selfish humanists are that way
i don't know
i have to find it out within me

we are supposed to do good
because it is an end in itself
not a means for another end

still learning about myself

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Notes To Take Up Later

been on some errors,
i put note one,
been on some redundancies,
and unnecessary statements.
been to what i lack, and forgive,
i project

so there are those who teach
because they fail,

those that are here to cope
with what they think they have not done

i have some notes for life
to make it better

when this war breaks
i only need a place where i can sit

no need to run
no need of notes

we have nowhere to go,
at least we shall for the last time

talk. Just talk.
Some Notes Why We Shy Away...

perhaps we shy away because
we did not get much

oh that is wrong, we already
got much

or perhaps we wanted more than
enough, or more than that much

so we shy away like that and leave
the giver with a heavy conscience

but we have our own miserable fault
or faults if i really have to account

for that, oh, when she got sick we
shied away, oh, when she got too lonely

did we care? we did not, too pay
attention to her needs of warmth

of flattery, which those who want
to take something from her are

very much willing to give, and we
thought we are not like them,

we shy away because we tell the
truth and we hurt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Of The Choices

we have choices, let us try some of these

can we be mirrors, reflect light and share its brightness
to other whom we think still live in the crevices of darkness?

or can we just be open windows letting light pass through
retain our space and have more breathing moments?

there are those that bend light and make illusions of depths and shallowness
there are those that crack and break and shattered pieces they become

there are those who are merely passages, channels, gutters, streets
letting them all go and make their own choices too....

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Of The Doctors Who Only Go For The Money...

someday i will write a story about some doctors
swallowed by the big mouth of their love for money
and when they are finally swallowed digested by the fangs of their greed,
i will invent those long winding intestines
with lots of hydrochloric acid
so that all of them shall become nothing
but fluids
discharged smoothly in my
anus
as i feel that pleasure of excreting those
that consumed my
budget reserved for other
works of charity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Of You Will Be Dead.

welcome to the world of terror.
please be seated.
enjoy your complimentary drinks
and luxurious accommodation
a big room with opening windows to the sea of commotions.

enjoy your meal
have fun
drink your California red wine
smoke Cuba
laugh with the rest of the gang

who knows what this future brings
some of you will be dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Open Ended Statements

be happy sometimes
that people are not blunt
they have open ended sentences
giving you the options
of what should have been
said on their minds
again you supply the missing
links
it could be another verb
from a nerd
or an adjective which you do not
like to read
you read from their lips
and begin to say the missing
word when you are
alone and ready to cry
without anyone seeing you
life is like that
one must appear as brave
as anyone can be
in the broadness of
daylight
in the privacy of your life
nothing is missing.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am surprised with some
people writing nice titles on the wall
just walls
there are no doors where i can
be in and take some drinks
and eat
or dance and sing,
there are only graffiti
of paper and colors
there is nothing there but
signs where to go
but there is nowhere to go
really.
it's a pity but what can i do
it too is reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some People Are Afraid To Show Their True Colors

i am not
i don't hide

i have nothing to hide
i am what i am
i am brown, i am a Filipino,
and I am not afraid, I am what i am, i show who and what i am, and i take
responsibility
for what i am
for what i do for what i say

mountains do not hide, how can they? the seas keep their bodies in the open
their waves blown by the air, for how can they be what they are when they are
in hiding?
the trees and the plains, the valleys and the hills, what can they be if they are in
hiding? shall you see a vast desert of them then?
the air, if only they have that nature to be seen, they could have assumed such
forms that you see, they too are happy to be seen so that you may believe in
them,
for in truth, those true and giving do no hide, and if you cannot see them,
they always try,
in some conceivable manifestations,
in some shapes, colors and forms
like some leaves falling when the wind passes by,
like some trees bending, like some pieces of paper blown to the other end.

why are you in hiding?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some People To Avoid And Not To Abide

ey they come handing you
an envelope of
problems
crazy people asking for
solutions to their
well
self-made puzzles
for which they know the answers
but ask you
just the same
and then they shed tears
and show the inept inconvenience
they are always wary about
anything
ticks and termites
monster clouds
acidic rains
rising tides and
global warming
the killer whales and
melting glaciers
the dangers of too much fat
and hedonic hunger

to calm them you serve them tea
but without respect for time
they keep on knocking you

for actually they are lonely
unloved in childhood
and rejected by those who
are supposed to love them

you know this
and you tell them to leave
for you have other better things to do

and they leave
yes
but when they are on the road
with their driver in flashy cars
inside
they smile
for this remarkable success
of spreading
what loneliness they suffer
they get even
but you shall not allow it
the next time they ring the bell of your door
you are surely
out of town

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Portals

as you enter
this solid portal you heave a sigh
and realize
the minuteness of the sand granule in your being

you go inside and keep your rage
time calms you down
and the shortness of your breath says

it is time to leave, and you summon haste
like some tiny wings on your feet

you're gone and those that stay
mind you, are not disturbed at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Possibilities Of Moving Up The Ladder Of Awareness

d. the first possibility is,
and this is what we believe,
that there is really light
beyond us, and we will soon
see after so much sufferings,
the test, the trials, the fittest
the blessed shall see,
how can we refuse to
believe it without being
condemned to float
in an eternal abyss
without a bottom.

d. the second possibility is,
there is none. this nothingness.
that we are not after all blind.
that we are given the light
inside our little minds.
that we are fireflies of the
night and the reality is
nothing but just this tree
this dark sky this cold air
the moon above us. mute too.

d. there are other possibilities.
myriad possibilities. under the sun.
everything is possible. we believe
what we want to. endless theories.

what matters most is you believe.
for those who stayed, they admit they are blind.
and for those who left, they brag that the have seen the best light.
words, ideas, beliefs. faith and a little
disturbance. this ripple in the water
because a raindropp has started to fall
and i feel it right g on to the next ladder.
but another doubt backsteps my feet.
onward. my own little mind, seige the light beyond.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions

for years of harnessing the horses of word
scrubbing the back of phrases
what shall my hands become?

shall these hands be a vase for flowers
wilting in your room?
shall these hands be barks of trees
where your moss and lichens thrive wild?
shall these hands be finally exhausted
and grope again the shaken beams
of my own confusions?

or soon shall i speak in tongues
in the tower of babel
shall my thoughts become tribes
scattered in different directions?

shall i soon speak like you on the eloquence
of the pedestals?
i look forward to this art
as a savior of my crucifixion
i look forward to Frankensteins finally
converted as angels
as fairies in the lands of my fantasies
or shall i be roaming on the fields
of realities
stark and open
lighted with the sun and
refreshed with the true winds
from the waving seas?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions Cropping In My Mind

The steel bars
are eaten by salt

rust is a fading
memory

the wooden frame
of the window turns
hollow

the termites are
disappointments

what then lasts forever?
your love? your heart?

it settles for a stroke
in just one stroke of

neglect of a mistake
and so?

take note, nothing,
nothing lasts forever

your soul? do you
still worry?

a bush that burns
a flame in flames

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions For Janna

how can you
separate a man from his person?
or a person from
a man?
do you dissect him like a
frog
and soak each body part
in formalin?

and then you say
you need more time to study
to know
the man and love
his person?

how many scalpels do you
need
to asses how his
brain
understands your
impatience?

you need a glove
not to infect your hands
or to infect the person
his heart and
veins
for you to know
how long can he
love?

will his person be
different
just because you do not
like
the man in him?

janna, it is not that
simple
you cannot ask this
time and
demand for quick and
straightforward answers

man is complicated
his person is a fan
with so many leaves

he is a growing bean
and his stalks are not
reaching your
skies....

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions For Love's Possibility

when i
state what
i think
is my
love
for you
and then when
you finally
know
about this
silly
matter
does it really
matter?
granting that
in
such a remote
possibility
that you
shall
love me
too
are you sure
that i
too will
take the
risk
of dying?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions For Me...

perhaps i am too serious as a mountain
unmoved by the grief of those
clouds drifting
seeking comfort in the air that now
dominates them
because they have no direction
where to go
and no reason why they are going there
i am too serious, people are damned
and they do not make a sound
about this mountain that does not move and keep
on numb
and unfeeling and indifferent to what is happening
to the river
the snails and the squirrels and rats
and grass
perhaps i am dead
perhaps i am another senseless mountain
not knowing why i am here
perhaps i have become a stone
a grain of sand
a gasp of air
perhaps i have become another meaningless cloud
hanging upon
my side...

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions For You

How can these eggs
Break a stone?

And how can your
Spread fingers
Be a spoon?

How can you hold
Two watermelons
With one hand?

How can you be
Happy with
A thousand
Desires?

How can your
One hand
Eclipse the sun?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions For You This Morning

do you smile?
or have you forgotten how to smile to people

do you know that they too
are lonely and scared?

do you know what a hug means?

do you hug
the homeless ones?

you use things
no argument about that

you use people?
that can be a good question for you today

do you love yourself?
yes yourself too?

not just them in co-dependency

wash your face
with the gentleness of water in your hands
dove soap it

wipe your face and look at yourself in the mirror
comb your hair

spray perfume in your hair
the smell of lemon grass

you don't like it?
pick your choice

you have choices
you make decisions
please yourself
be free
and come to me

thus says the Lord your friend for a lifetime
beside you
as always

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions In My Mind

Do I have to brag that I
Have a thousand dreams?

Do I have to tell a lie
To be more honest to all?

What makes lies white?
What white lies are permissible?

Do I have to dream a thousand times
To be called free?

Do I have to be friendly
To be good?

Will my youth justify
My old age?

Do you have to read me
To say that I am a good writer?

Do I have to have power
To be responsible?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions In My Mind...

how does my silence
blend well
with the sounds of the cars
outside my hotel
window?

how can my prayer
co-exist with the heavy rain
tonight?

how can i be so helpless
despite these strong arms
these legs
this mind that probes like
a scalpel
to a restless tumor
in the brain?

how can i be so timid
against the rage of the other people's storms?

how can i not be myself
despite my
own knowledge?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions To Himself

he suspects he must
have said something that
offends your
divine sense
for you have gone away
like a sigh
at night,

he thinks the mind of the
depth well, the only oasis
in your Sahara
what poisonous insect flew
over there
that rips the senses of the
fullness of the
water

on the other hand,
he justifies his decision to stop
thinking about the righteous
camel that walks the desert
with the Bedouins

there is more beauty to the moon
now that he is alone
whispering nothings to the distant stars
dreaming about the sea
wondering if the starfish is still there
trysting with the
urchins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Questions To Myself On My Quest To Happiness

ask me, and i will answer:

i got what i wanted from this life, but despite that fact, there is still the question to and fro like a doubtful philosopher like a pendulum of grandfather's clock:

what did i really want?

i did call myself my own beloved (am i not narcissistic in this sense?)

i felt myself with my own fingers, my chest, my body, my thighs, my feet

so attached to the ground like i am monument of a war hero, but there is still this question that walks to and fro on the yard, like a doubtful philosopher:

who am i really? why am i here?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Raindrops On The Roof On The Leaves Of The Bushes

it is a rainy day today.
rain falls unceasingly on the rooftop
tracing the hidden ways of the gutter

falling gently on pines and leaves
of gentle bushes planted beside
a steel gate

painted time comes
when the rain is so gentle and slow

pouring in rhythm with the swaying
of the palm leaves

every dropp like the meeting
of a dew to another dew
glistening before my eyes

gentle sounds of raindrops
in cadence like a hammock
a swing like the flapping of
a pigeon's wings

as i write this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Ramifications Of My Being

why did it take me
a very long time to see the beauty of delay?
the wonders of loafing
the excitement that procrastinations have caressed
in my whole body?
why did you not make me understand
the kindness of postponements?
the usefulness of emptiness?
the fulness of this hollowed
existence

had i known the joy of absence
i should not have come with you
had i felt the perfection of myself

alone

i would not have consented
the world to
touch me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Reasons Why The Dog Is Chasing Its Own Tail

it could be that there is a flea at the end of its tail
and it is wanting to remove it

it could be that it simply wants to call your attention
the way you laugh
and it simply wants to please you

it could be that he is a chaser by nature
instinct, its history of chasing sheeps and foxes
in the farm in the forest

or it could be something else
beyond our comprehension
because we have not been dogs
for once

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Sailed West

some sailed west and never returned
and for years
we who are left here
arrived at the belief that they must have
been dead
swallowed by this big gray whale

but some believed that they have
turned into petals
after a harsh winter when the
most beautiful spring later came

and they they spoke about
petals that turned into shells
that fell into the bottom of the
atlantic ocean and since then

we never heard of them again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Set Of Questions For Beauty....

it is such a beauty,
many are amazed
many idolized what
is beauty all about,
talk of the town
this model, this
epitome of
godly beauty and
perhaps
even wisdom,

the picture is dated
march 5, 1934

and you wonder where is
this epitome of
beauty now?
what is its looks?

darn,
loose, crumpled skin
too much hair loss,
toothless,
furrowed brows
darn
dark sunken eyes
like holes
where crabs live

what beauty was there before
is gone

are you arrogant still?
did you fill your mind with so much pride?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes
I know that you do not like poetry
Like the way you detest
Drama

I know that you pretend you like poetry
Since I sided with you
When we talk we converge
At the junction of our
Likings

You know that I too hold on to poetry
Like a rope on that mountainside
When we reach the top of that
Three thousand steps

Don't bother
I like the way you do not like it
It makes me feel
That some people too are odd
That they are not like me
And that makes a nice tapestry
Of blue and black
White and yellow
Red and green

Like a basket of ball
Peppers
Of mangoes and guavas

Like the way how nature presents itself to us
Some sky some stones
Some birds some worms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Spaces Some Silences

by being not confident
at first you may wear masks
lots of them
in different sizes
and colors

and you face yourself
with mirrors around you
and you laugh
this is very
interesting
I will not be hurt
I will even hurt
Them

Then
Someone comes
She loves you
And wants
The real you

And you love
Her

When the time
To make love
& kiss you
remove the masks
both of you
it is more exciting
than interesting

this time
the pain is stronger
too

it is the fairness
of hide and seek
that tells
about pain and pleasure

wearing masks and
removing them
making love and
undressing

naked both of
you feel something
more is concealed

this time
you go beyond
you peel skins
subcutaneously

the soul demands
no bodies as masks

and as you close
both of your eyes
and see what is
beyond these bodies
these subcutaneous masks

tell yourselves
beyond these bodies
there is still more
as true love so demands

some spaces some silences
between you and him
where God must dwell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Spooks

an early morning hose
spitting orange juice a stream squeezing
the wind to a rest, noxious rain
clouds stepping down
catching the lily without a dew and then
the dots signified the end like this....................

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Stories

some stories
about ourselves
are also the stories of
themselves
and then we write
these stories and
pretend that these are
but some short stories
from our mind

now in different names
and places
we read them and then
we wish that some of
these short stories
are not true at all

sometimes for those
we want to be
we want to believe
them to be true

wishes and hopes and
regrets, what if? what if i
chose that rather than this?

we poets write about pain
and joys and we tell sometimes
that we only fake them

deep inside we are silent
we prefer just to be left alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Tears Cannot Help Falling

When in distress
Through life’s blows
So Cruel
My life
Still sticks with me
In fidelity
And dignity

You may
Say I am brave
and strong
But when I am
Alone
Some tears
cannot help
falling
Breaking forth
From my
sorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Tenses

confused
his sense of time is twisted
how he makes the past sound
like the present sometimes is
weird, others have long commented
is this just plain
lapse of grammar?
he is not an Englishman
after all
but a native of another
lesser country

most of the times
his future is vanished
like some lines
that he just
erased

but everyone understands
this

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things Are Not True

some things are not true
though they all want to adopt the color of truth
they just can't be
because they are false, they will always be
that is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things Do Hurt

some things shall hurt
they are designed for that purpose
by some people
these architects of pain
but we shall not be swayed
into the ways of the curse
and degradation

let them draw the plan
and let them construct what they
want to

they will make doors that lock
when we get in
and we shall have to look for ways
ourselves to get out
from their schemes

they will make windows that will only close
and not open and we shall look for
holes where we can take in air
and breathe

we shall be their pawns
and the experimental guinea pigs of their
pains and distress

they may laugh for a while
and drink to our fate
they may proclaim that they are winning
to their pre-conceived notions
of what they believe as our own
stupidity and gullibility

we shall wait for the time
and that is what we are also designed to do
we shall wait when they all fall asleep
drunk to their evil ways
for soon this darkness will turn the table
and side with us
and we shall have the time to open the windows
and summon the moon to hear our pleas
to unlock the doors and summon the sun
to brighten our twilights of woes

we escape and we shall see that house of pain burned
to ashes
now it is our time
the last laugh, our freedom, our revenge.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things Do Not Meet

heaven and earth
floors and ceilings
fish and fire
the plus and minus

in between is the sky,
air and space
the bottom and
the zero

imagine
you are sleeping
on your bed
and then the floor and
the ceiling kiss

the plus and minus
touching hands
electrically

the fish catching fire
on its tails
without the
the cookware
in between

imagine
the marriage of heaven
and earth

where shall you be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things In Life Do Work

well, it will not be
totally true
that nothing
in this life
works

some still
do, in fact
the way
you handle
reality like
tools before
you: a screw
a hammer
a nail
some pieces
of wood
and some
glue

glued to
reality
hammer the nails
with the force
of your
determinations

you mean
things
and things
may mean
what they mean
when you
mean them
to mean
what they
must mean

feet rooted
to the ground
standing
when you
are right
bowing for
forgiveness
when sometimes
you are wrong

screw life
a little bit
loosen where
everything seems
too tight

and tighten
where there
are loose ends

it is a matter
of flexibility
salt to taste
sugar to sweeten
tea to a certain
hotness
or coffee
with a little cream

and then
watch
a movie

life, and death
funeral and weddings
and baptisms too

sleep or walk away
these are your choices

and in the ocean
of choices you
sail
on that boat
of responsibility

with no one to
blame
or praise

just you
and nothing but you
baby

the little soul
thrown
into the space
of sea

swimming sperm
finding the
right egg

till you are fully human
and fully alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things That Can Happen With A Fish

A fish that drinks like a fish, that is a fish in excess
A fish that fishes in troubled waters, that is a fish taking advantage of another fish in trouble
A fish that fishes or cuts bait, well, to be or not to be, to retreat or to attack, that is the fishy question
A fish that is neither fish nor fowl, is a fish that is neither one nor the other, lacking some convictions
A fish out of water, is a fish feeling left out, no longer in his accustomed environment

Do you have other fish to fry for now?

Is there other matter requiring my attention?

Poor fish,
the lake is finally fished out from his fishy mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Things That We Keep Forever

a handwritten name on a grade one paper
a handkerchief with a name embroidered on it
locks of baby's hair inside the page of a fairytale book
an old wooden box

these are some of the things mother kept for me:
my first paper when i learned to write
my name,
a handkerchief that mother gave me on my 5th birthday,
locks of my hair
on my first hair cut,

mother kept them all,

mother's love, i too,
shall keep it forever.

I love you mama.
I always will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Thoughts Haunting My Mind

i write a few numbers
i have not really read carefully what happens next
but i press just the same
ok,
something runs in my spine
but i know how to stop it
i will create the pain but i promise myself
this will end and must end happily
no, not sadly gone by,
just an end, just an end, it is all that i want
one that ends
well
all my resources drip like rain from a bucket
but i stop worrying since then
for in this house
when i leave
no one stays....

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Thoughts On Scorpio

meaning
exploding into
more
meanings,

as beauty
too
like a single
cell
spreading
into more
beautiful
mass

like islands
of white sands
like sea of
many foams

like bats getting
out of the
cave
on an early
evening

like a confetti
of pink
signaling your
victory

life so many
life
chips

scattering
into more
life forms

like stars
and meteors
and diamonds
upon the
faces of
skies

how beautiful
can scorpions be
when they
begin
to crawl like
one big company

upon a rock
like
you

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Thoughts That Keep On Coming....

a mosquito caught
in a net is happy.

a fly inside a bottle
sealed, is an old story.

gentleness is sought
for it is missing.

back to the leaf riding
upon the passing wind.

back to the cat licking
its fur, soundlessly.

back to the drops of
rain, about to end.

back to the old pool
with one and only koi.

a rainy season spells
a steady foot upon a stool.

glass windows are mute
inside a happy house.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Thoughts While We Pass By The Scenic Mountain

what i have are nothing but the notes of our trip

she expects to renew our ties see what is no longer seen because of routine

i have nothing in mind no fruit but this journey only every step covers a distance and i keep no meaning but only sight

i keep an open eye even if she kisses me as though it were our first time learning about lips and tongue

i do not have the names of the places well, the raspberries are sweeter than the strawberries but they keep rotting every hour before they are finally eaten

i keep the diary of what have flashed in my eyes every sound that resounds in my ears nothing really stays that long
the moment we pass by the images of life die
i forgo the scent of evenings
i leave ego
unto its own care

a beautiful lake is but an image of the beautiful lake
i cannot hold its water in my hand
you see, you have not seen at all,
it is sad, but it is a fact.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Trails Of Dreamy Thoughts

there are times of
sleep
walking, and there is no one there to tell you about it, but you
sort of
remember,

clouds surrounding your hair
rain falling upon your
cheeks
waters rushing under the
bridge of
your nose

dawn is the coldness of your hands
sunlight, yes,
warm in your armpits,
winds, songs of birds,
inside your brain, an island
a moat,
a palace without soldiers
a kingdom of stones
without a queen

there are princesses of
reminisces
old pages inside a room
with candles still
burning
the eyelashes of your
past.

RIC S. BASTASA
Some Whistles

Some whistles do frighten me like
That policeman’s whistle when I jaywalk,
That lewd whistle from an ill-mannered man
Pestering a sexy woman is another thing,
It is so demeaning, unkind, uncalled for
Some mean order like a teacher’s whistle
On a P.E. class to start an exercise in school
Or a kindergarten teacher whistling children to fall in line,
But one whistle really so intrigues me,
The whistle of a young man outside the gate
Of this house, on unholy hours of the night,
While I am writing poetry, this guy whistles
And whistles some curious songs in intermittent notes
Like a love song of a nightingale,
So sensual, so seductive, so magical, almost
Three times a night three times a week,
Till one day, my domestic helper got confused, and comes for my advice,
Why her stomach is mysteriously bloated.

You guessed it right, that magical whistle made her pregnant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someday

someday
i like to taste again the glass of orange juice that
you gave me
on that Sunday afternoon
when we were left alone
in the house
of your aunt.

it was so sweet &
so refreshing..

there is no other glass of orange juice like that
in my lifetime

RIC S. BASTASA
Someday I May Leave You

there will be a time of reckoning
and someday i will have the will to leave
everything like the leaves heaping at the side
of my door, and i will slowly take my
sighs away from the wind beside my window.

do not leave the door half open
for some changes my senses will have no time
for doubts. When i leave, i leave and even if
the monsters and storms in my open sea
shall become unbeatable,

i shall prefer my own sinking
to the deepest part of the ocean

my decent burial grounds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someday I Shall Understand.....

someday i shall understand

why old people wake up at 3 a.m.
and do nothing but wait

why someone travels in a very far place
and arriving there decides not to remember

why a glass of water is put on a table
in the middle of a garden not drinking it

someday i shall understand why thinking
must stop

why the faces of children do not make me
write anymore

on that day i do not bother about myself
about you....

RIC S. BASTASA
Someday I Will Write A Poem Of Tears For You

Our love story was a little bit tragic
Starting with youthful laughter & joys
Some quarrels and disappointments
For a while
On love that never knew whether it ended
When and where
You ask me if I also shed some tears
I did not answer I was gone for good
I have only tears since then
In my eyes
You had tears for a while but then
You have learned to laugh again
Somewhere
Someday I will write you a poem
Where all the words will all be tears
Where the poet has not known
Laughter, or joy ever again.
Because In truth
My years are counted by drops of tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Somehow, Somehow

somehow i feel
cheated

like how fathers
should have
been a gentle hand
to their
sons

somehow i feel
too small to face the
door of the world
and the houses that i
see when
i go in
are too huge for
my
body

somehow i feel that
i cannot
reach the ceiling even if
i have to
use the family
ladder
to touch what
a cellar is
and feel
its
roughness

i have seen the worst
of people
and so i have nothing
but mistrust
and love has become too
nil
to touch and
then
make a belief about
its
soundness and
fragility

I'd like to change
like the way the heat of the sun
surrenders to
the mildness of
an afternoon light

and then bravely
shall i give in to coldness
where i see no one
trying
to love me again
like a
fallen nut

it will be dark and then
i would be
sleepy

and by then perhaps i
can forget
what unkindness was
and how it twisted
my views against the
world

I'd like to see beauty
in tomorrow's morning

perhaps i like getting old
and then
have this fading memory
so i can
start anew: innocent and
smiling again
like the way it was
when i
was once my
mother's child.

RIC S. BASTASA
Somehow, You Keep Thinking, Has GodForgiven You?

a shortness of breath.
something pierces your heart.
the wife is frying fish
in the kitchen.
the houseboy is sweeping
the yard and feeding
the pigs.
every step you make is
another hardship.
somehow, you keep thinking,
has God forgiven you?
are you ready for the next
show?
how does the garden
look there?
what is it that illuminates the
darkness of the heart?

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Greater Than Us

we raise hopes we make dreams we weave stories
we, who were long loveless
we draw fairies, we paint sunrises, we sketch daffodils
in those frosty days, all these warmth sustain us
until this day, we strive to fill this empty cup
when someone greater than us could have filled it with ease.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Inside Us....
	here is someone inside us
someone who is outside the fence
and wants to go inside a house
who keeps on waiting for the right
time to open the door
and then close it again

and there is another one
lurking behind a door
peeping upon a hole and wanting
to see the world out there
always planning a escape but
who cannot
because he holds the key and
then loses it
after so much thinking on how
to really live
while waiting for the light that comes
only from the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Is Alone In The Room....

someone is alone in the room
you know the name and you want
to make love again, but you hesitate
you do not know exactly what is
happening, or you really know it
by heart but the mind has doubts,
as to what happens after all these
crazy thoughts, what settles down
may be explosive and it will hurt
even those who are not here yet
inside this room where love is
alone with you, but you have doubts
if it is love at all.

your heart is about to break, your
arms are lost, your lips dry, and
your nerves are running wildly into
the darkness of what you are now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Is Always In Charge

for instance the driver of this car
whose name we do not know
whose life story we do not
investigate
we are inside this car
and we do not know the mechanics
the name of its part
and how it functions

what is important is that
we will be here only for a short while
since we have an office, a home,
or any place
for a destination

we know what to do, when we arrive there
we pay what is due, then we go out of the car
and that is the end of that Someone
who has taken charge of our life
only for that moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Like My Niece

at the party i chance to sit next to her
on a white covered sofa
we are so careful not to stain it
watching the food that we fork
the orange juice that we drink from a shiny glass
no drops please
her mother warns, she's is my sister
too concerned about her furniture

she likes her hair long and falling
like herself i suppose falling into a
certain despair, her mother, unable to
accept, she pretends she is more concerned
about the fate of her new rosewood
furniture

' i do not like myself' she whispers to
her glass half filled with tequila,
she sets aside the orange juice
too mild, she quips,

' i like to run away from her' she
insists, telling me that no one understands her here
that this house is full of indifferent people

i fix my gaze at the TV pretending i am not interested.
there is this soap opera about a mom who just lost
her son to a war somewhere in Jolo.

how can a mother's love be so misunderstood?
the mother knows how to pretend, and the daughter
drowns herself inside the bubbles of a glass wine

tequila, i am sure about that..

' i like the love story most. The brother takes his brother's girlfriend
and he punishes himself at the end. Tears and death.'
I am evading
her leading questions.
she's groggy. She leaves me and says she is sleepy. She goes to her room and locks the door.

Then i tell myself, this world is fair. I am lucky not to have someone like that niece. I am alone but not sad. Anyway,

the soap opera ends. Something new crops up tomorrow. A twist of fate. But i will not watch anymore.I had enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
someone lives alone
even with a wife and child around him

he can always feel the dusk
even at noontime

someone feels the wind
fresh, even inside a vacuum
of a bottle of wine tightly covered
by its cork

someone remembers
water
in the years of dried river beds

she can feel
still the hands
that pressed her breasts
even if what she has for presence
are just ashes
under her barren feet

someone still knows the
happy meaning
of flowers
beside those silent tombs

someone lives the hours in silence
even in the middle of protests

someone still loves and continues loving
even if he is abandoned

someone still knows the story by heart
because the books are burned

these are the poetic moments
and we have,
we still have all these

we never learn, we do not ask
we do not even search all these
in far away places

or in the foxholes or
under the bed

they are within the reach of the hands
of our hearts

so near, that sometimes we conclude
these moments are nothing

but us, or if you are that sharp enough
like a polished nail

in those lonely days of your past lives,
and still getting stronger and stronger
soon you shall declare

it is, I.
just I.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Must Be Made Happier Than I Am

everyday i promise myself
someone must be made happier than i am
i must not take anything
i have to give something that can hurt me
i am no masochist
neither am i foolish
i just want to diminish myself
make it lighter
like a flame of mama's lamp
when we both
shared the same light
while reading a book

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone New And Someone Old

someone new summons us all
us who are old and
bored us who are not anymore bold
and this someone is filled with courage
and length of perorations
what it is how it was and where we
all shall go
where we once were
how we were patterned
us all of us who are all old and
bored
merely listen not expecting
not wanting
and when this someone who is new
and daring is finished
we who are old and not anymore bold
shall leave him

we are taking nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Out There Wants To Be Free

someone out there
is awake, even in the middle of the night
inside a room
all alone

i know it. i do not see it. i can feel it.
you are with me
one in this, one in this silence, one in this

pressing of keys, without looking at the letters
riding on the memory of our fingertips

someone out there wants to be free, from the walls of his
self-imposed unhappiness

someone out there is asleep, beside someone who is awake
staring at the ceiling, not wanting any light from any bulb

someone out there travels, beyond,
beyond the limitations of dreams, beyond dreams

in chant, repeating, and repeating, hoping to just forget
what is pain in everything.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Reads Me

Just as I think I should pause and
End this stuff
Another one comes and says
Nuts! I like what you are driving at

I, doubt

Lingering to this kind of appreciation
Opulent, she could be
Volatile as passing sweet musk perfume
Eggshell white-pure well meant and

Yes, I may give this stuff a chance
Over and over again, what some sad people in
Utmost need could be, what I can fill in.

Last night
Out in the open space where darkness reigns
Vouchsafe, as I see it I am an
Egregious error to myself

Much as I want
Ever shall I reconsider options to proceed

Take time
Occults may work this time
Over a love that may not come in a lifetime.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Says

someone says the days are chasing
the passing hours
and the locked door waits there
for the arrival of the wind

someone says the song is over
and no one ever notice
someone sees the stars and
says

they are so far away
so tiny

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Says (2)

someone so important
in the government ladder says
that the prison cell of a certain
Ampatuan is so cute
there is so much breathing space
and it is well perfumed
with bureaucratic pretensions

the prisoner she says is coddled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone So Important

myself felt so aggrieved
over this business at dawn
when the world
sleeps when i remain
sleepless

i search myself again and again
all the corners in my mind

how can i regret?
Are you there my God?

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone That I Must Love Without Change

my hands will always try to reach you
my heart shall always feel you
everything i own and shall give
shall always be because of you
there is no other one, just you
someone that i can trust for years
unchanged, and loving till the end:

i speak for you: it's me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone That You Love Very Much

you are into a paradox
of loving someone to the utmost
you give all that you have
you surrender
you empty every detail
you lose every significance
and then
at a certain moment when
you are already nothing
that someone is gone
they say
you never understand
the word
love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Wants To Dream And Be The Beloved....

someone stood at the back of the house
putting water on the naked body

what was more alluring was the one covered
with a black cloth

water flowed like a river on the body leading
to the sea of all desires

someone cannot sleep tonight thinking about water
body and desire

someone wants to dream and then be the beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Someone Who Never Drops You

you want to belong
but they never belong to you

so what do you do?
you go back to a room of your
past, you open that door and feast on remembrances
you make your own coffee
and hold it for your own sipping
all these done
with you alone, but you are never alone
as you begin to know a self which you
have almost forgotten

for years you have taken
this for granted
because you are always
together
and you even think that you are one
and that there is no other

others have learned it before you
did, shaking your hand with your own hand,
answering your own questions,
having a good conversation with yourself,
and finally
discover that, as others have
dropped you,
this time, you have yourself,

someone who never drops you
someone you can not drop too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something

bites like a bee
stings like a bee
but never is a bee.
this is the self
this is the word
the last word
it stings
it bites
it stays.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Absurd Keeps Going

there is something absurd
that keeps on going inside us

this constant craving for what
we do not know yet we claim we want

we feel the need and yet we cannot
really touch it and when we touch it

it gets so painful and we step a foot
backward and then we ponder and

then we go forward we first dislike
it and then we touch it again

there is this feeling that we cannot
describe with the word that we know

it is elating and elevating us one
stair up and then the winds carry us

we do not know what nowhere is
but it is there, it is there, it is....

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Alive Inside

does something so alive inside
it has the eyes of the lizard
there is no winking but it is palpitating life
it sleeps there inside the white shell of an egg
it is waiting for time
to leap to another age
where life is more abundant
where there is no end
it waits for me to go outside and
walk away

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Beautiful

something so beautiful
something so mysterious

excellently something
that i do not understand

this is poetry. sounds
beautiful to me
but to be honest with
you, let me ask:

what do you really mean?

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Between The Reader And The Writer

far from my expectations
never did it come to my mind that you like to read poems,
and that, who would believe, that i, too, come down the plains
to scribble on the sands
which of course, either the wind, or the rain, or the grass
either erase or cover,
it is in my life map, all roads and paths lead to something metaphorical,
which i know, being an avid reader, and which i hope,
you understand, but, still, has not earned that courage to utter,
or perhaps to tell yourself, that we are in this boat together.
the words are all there in your heart,
your mind is as hardheaded as that wall,
and it refuses even to link with a star.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Bitter

something bitter
so bitter
if at all
does not kill you at once
and if you swallow it
and still survive
all the bitterness in every leaf
a day
another day
a night
and another night
till you sweat things out
just like any other game of life
by all means
i salute you

shake my hand my friend
welcome, this is our new world now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Deep Down In My Heart

something deep down in my heart is so beautiful
it is like a blue bird with black shiny bear
one early morning it sings a song

it is lovely
it is sweet
it is gentle

something deep down in my heart is a beautiful poem
that once you have read and shall never forget

it is crisp and fragile
and it is for you and it says deep down from the bottom of my soul

i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Deep Down In My Heart (2)

something deep down in my heart is so beautiful
it is like a blue bird with black shiny beak
one early morning it sings a song

it is lovely
it is sweet
it is gentle

something deep down in my heart is a beautiful poem
that once you have read and shall never forget

it is crisp and fragile
and it is for you and it says deep down from the bottom of my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Descriptive Only For What Is In There

inside a wicker basket
are two red apples
beside three persimmons
on top of them
is a ripe mango

still
there is no sound
even a ripple of air
from the window
covered with
white lace curtains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Different

outside the window
the wind begins to blow
it is colder now
the chickens are restless
the pigs stunned

i shiver looking at the leaves
falling off from the branches

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Easy And Unequivocal

A joke creeps in
like a scorpion to your spine
it bites
but only in air
somehow you expect
something else
more different to happen
like a kiss perhaps
from a spider nearby
which can be deadly
if we allow it

and so it becomes easier
taking things down like
some notes for tomorrows
usual living: a pat on your shoulder
a shake from my hand
a word or two which can either mean
goodbye or hello

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Forgotten

obsessed with
the moon, one night
when it is full,
as it sits on the
arm of the river
i swim towards
its feet
my soul rising
embracing
finally its borrowed
light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Foul And Sweet

you smell something foul and at first you may say at once
' i don't like this! '

and then you feel something thorny
and you will say ' i detest this'

and then you see
the pale color of the flesh
and you say ' what is this? '

then you taste it
lick it with your tongue
and savor every meat
letting it roll inside
your mouth,

enjoy the milky
texture and then you say

'Omg! this is heaven! '

such is the durian experience.
try it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Fragile

something so fragile
when it breaks
shall never be the same again
though you pick up the pieces
and make the rebinding
and pretend
that something is the same
back to its wholeness
on the same placement

yes, i am talking about love
the fragile heart that was broken
it will never be the same again
now, it is stronger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Graceful And Decent....

a poem
actually is a landmark
to a feeling

something happened
and you have no guts
telling it like
a story where the
characters have
vivid dialogues

you are torn
between clarity and
isolation
between that someone
who a while
ago has been stoned and
ostracized
and that important figure
who lies
with admiration
skilled in metaphors
knows how to arrange the
furniture
against the backdrop of
chaos

one poem is a yesterday
the one who was with you
cannot tell if he was
there

you cover a mask with a face
you hide the mole with hair
you give birth to another world
within a world

you write this poem
and you forget whether you have written it
by accident you
meet it again, (was it at the bar or at the
flea market? was it in egypt or israel?)

it smiles at you
gives its real name and tells you

it happened. this is what happened.
continue pretending.
the poem does not betray.
it keeps the fear within.
and what you like most is this:

it hides noise. exudes beauty.
ever forgets. but stays graceful
and decent.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Harsh

something brash comes in the afternoon
life has overslept on the hammock of time

something harsh knocks on the door
you try to shoo it away and it comes anyway

less the courtesy of knocking or greeting
something insensitive sits on the sofa of

the house where life has been relaxing and
the confrontation begins which is actually

unnecessary, but just the same the inevitable
happens. Life has big ears, and the holes extend

from the right side to the left side, like north pole
tunneling its secret passage to the south pole

Life learns its lessons well. Now it does not bother.
It is not bothered. It sits like a young boy looking

over the window. It whistles a song to the sky.
It sleeps well on the ground where the grass

is green and cool, where dew is not a metaphor
for tears, where black birds assume a new meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something I Gave Her

it was something which i gave her
which she cannot really forget
and she cannot take that something again
for i already belong to the arms of another
it was something so beautiful which i gave her
which she wants to have with her again
but time betrays her like any other
and she cannot any longer have that
most beautiful thing which i gave her

and i know this made her angry forever
let me say i am sorry i am very sorry
we were never meant for each other

RIC S. BASTASA
Something I Learned From You....

i listened well when you first told me.
you were crying then, and i placed my hands
over your hair to appease you.

you said you were abused, and the stigma still
clings like clams to a rock, like parasites to
an intestine.

i could have believed you until i have seen
you and the abuser together in the park of your
dreams, still close, and sharing.

was it ice cream? or a bed? or was it the sweater?
i can't exactly remember. But i learned my lesson.
Trust is seldom. Truth is a tooth. I am better

all alone. You lied and i still want to believe you.
You miss your abuser. You love to be with him again.

what an irony of life. How tragic can it be!

RIC S. BASTASA
Something I Remember....

edu's father
left her mom
for an old woman
with
strategy.
with means.
it is for
citizenship
he justifies.
edu's mom is
a republic.
she says she
does not give
a damn.
and then there is
this edu's wedding.
i am drinking
wine beside my wife
and savoring
my salad.
edu's father comes
and opens a
topic.
know what? divorce is
painful
it tears hearts.
longer than you
can think of.
and i answered.
there is one thing about
divorce.
it is also
a reality.
in fact if you really
need it
for whatever purpose
it serves,
it becomes
one sweet
reality.
the music is so loud.
some women are dancing
the wobble.
the children want to
get away from the
watchful eyes of their
mama.
when he left,
i wonder
how and why i say
such
an intriguing
theory.

statistics will tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something In Me Cannot Cry

mother told me once
my boy
cry if you will
do not hide your feelings
men cry
your Papa cried when your
Grandpa passed away
twenty years ago
you were then a toddler
in the row

i have grown
and there were so many pains
like pins
and grains

i have cried not just once
but more than thrice
till the nth time
when something in me cannot cry anymore

got no tear glands now
my eyes are made of steel
like the way
you hammered my heart when
you broke it
once

and never got repaired.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something In Me Does Not Rest

Perhaps it is my soul
It is restless It is up to something else
Something more important than what I am doing now
It is wriggling. It is conscious of something.
To come.
It is up for something greater than everyday.
I do not know.
I really do not know. It is not speaking to me.

It is like an egg. It is the shell and transparent
Something alive is wriggling wanting to be born.
I am wanting to be reborn. I am not speaking to myself.
It is delicate. It is perhaps something holy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Though stepped upon
by all those feet that come
here for no reason but
pleasure

more is found in the sea
than depth
for we come here not for
its mysteries or
what unknowns are there
that it is offering

we who like to wallow in the
shallow
we who says we are tasting
the same salt
all over
we who are talking things lightly
to drive all the demons
that keep us away from the
gentle touches of our
own hands
from the placid shores of our
own eternities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Is Missing Get It For Me Please In That Room

Wait, something is missing With my face I am speaking loosely
Mumbling Babbling Rambling I am not thinking
Wait, get me my brain I left it in class

what? i do not have any?

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Is Spontaneous Within

what i know
and really know is that there is something inside us that
asks to be written
it would have been better
spoken
to someone intimate
or even to someone that we chance to
meet in the park
in the mall
or even in the hospital where we are
waiting for the results of our
blood chemistry results
or even in the pre-departure area of the
plane where we are waiting
for the flight to take us away somewhere
because either we want to forget
or to create a certain distance to distract us
from the narrowness of
our paths which seems to choke us
and even kill us,

there are tiny blue birds inside our throats
and they are singing
there are heavy clouds in our hearts
and they will explode soon
as typhoon
if you do not know how to rain
gently

this is the right place
just be yourself and travel farther
to know it more
to grasp
and be open and no longer be
damned
in the damaging
cancer of
self-doubt, self-pity
and the underestimation of
who we really
are

in places near death
i know it, i can be everything
i can be everybody

and who really is this one?
he is the one that does not mind
the world anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Is Wrong With Silence

So sensitive
is the name of silence

i call

hello! silence! Are you there?

And it is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Is Wrong With The Poor Too

something is wrong with the poor too
snobbing the rich like they are like them.

too sensitive, they shy away when touched
by our attempts to characterize charity,

too sentimental they cry at the slightest
remark of hunger and thirst and they seem

hate water and food that we keep inside our
 cabinets and glasses, we stoop a little to

accommodate their way of seeing things.
we look for cracks, we let in light too faint

too small for that camel to fit, too flimsy
an excuse, we relate, we cannot be one

like them, oh, arrogance, oh selfishness
oh pretensions, oh that usual blame, shit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Like

something like a wet pea
is inside my gut
it moves along my veins
towards my glans
something like a
strawberry candy in my
tongue
i like to spit it out
for a heavenly
relief

how i wish you were here
to see it
and then feel it on the floor

even taste it
as it is still hot like cinder

RIC S. BASTASA
Something More Beautiful Than A Well With Water

we always want a well full of water
like a glass to its brim

there is more beauty somehow
to a well running out of water
the hollowness beneath
the sound of the wind
filling its emptiness

much different than the dripping
of the rain
from a rooftop
where one may feel so safe inside

the darkness of the bottom
the dryness of the soil
beneath

it is in there that some real voices speak
the one that you have not
heard

they are so deep and real that they cannot
refuse to tell you the truth

it is like someone is moaning
and you feel that you are one of them seeking
the voice of God

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Mystical Tonight...

a very sick soul,
emaciated transparency behind a glass door

it manifests itself inside a sore throat a dry cough whooping throughout the night

depression time anxiety grows like five headed dragons

this is no myth this is real

you want to cure the body feverish and thirsty on pale hands a shrinking veins webs of spiders cover the eyes

confess upon yourself be both priest and penitent
be silent
sit down
contemplate upon
the goodness of
this universe

let your spirit
flow
and be washed
anew

it is not late
you can still be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Negligible

like small amounts of caffeine
small doses of morphine
a little sugar
a pinch of salt
a dropp of honey
some other matters
negligible
an out of town date with
infidelity
a tint of light
a shadow of a chunk of
a body of
a quart of solubility
diffusing into a very small space
a little part of water
and sand
a little of everything
until you become little too
tiny like a grain
of iron filling
still attached magnetically
to something
undefined.

RIC S. BASTASA
things are meant not to last
there is always the right time for them to break
into pieces and no matter how we piece them together
they still shatter
like telling you that they are meant to go, to be broken, to be thrown away

a lap top has a time frame of its own
the virus come in waiting and then all of its essence is gone
you weep for things?
don't. They do not weep for you. You are sad when they break? Don't
They don't feel anything at all for you.

a car for twelve years is not your car anymore
the chassis simply take in rust and some wires get meshed up
with tantrums and like nerves they too go awry and die

malfunction so to say from the language of things and tools
now, we see each other. I am human. I am not a piece, a thing.
I am not a car. I am not a lap top with a time frame
for its breaking
a time for throwing and trading-in
a time simply for replacing

Look at me. I have tears. My skin bleeds when you hurt me.
My heart beats faster when you kiss me.

As we throw away what we do not need now
After all the years of keeping, we reflect.

I have this heart that beats for you. I have time outside the frame
of utility. We grow. We commit. We are present.

For twelve years now, You will always be someone new.
Let the sun shine. Let the heart beat for a new meaning. Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something New.....

time has matured
when i arrived here i never thought
of going back

i never think of home
not death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Nuclear...

smallness creates a myriad
possibilities
tiny cannot be underestimated
i agree
the atom explodes

shock is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Plain

something so plain is as obvious as
both of you
very well understand
there is that tinge of
little pains
but on a stormy day like this
both of you
have no time yet to speak about it

you wait
when the day is clear when the storm is over
it is plain and obvious and both of you know
that you really understand it
but you still do not speak about it
like, someone is knocking at your door
and both of you
knows who that visitor is
but you do not open the door
you keep pretending
there is no one in this house
no one
not even the past voices
of children
not even a hand
waving goodbye

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Political

beside the woman with short hair
chinese eyes
plain clother
all black is another woman with
long hair
thick glasses
holding a cell phone
and a black leather bag
which she carries with her left hand

they are boarding a plane
to the central city
to talk the president about a
political proposal

the president has a mole on her left cheek
always smiling....

what is the point of all these?
nothing. The plan is kept as a top secret.

do you feel being fooled?
that is normal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Real

along the street on a sunny day
we met
we have not spoken for years
perhaps affected by a family feud
but then this time
you stop your car
open the window
and greet me
hello
i am surprised to see you back
from the States
for years
and you ask me how am i doing
all these years
and what are my plans
in such a short span
and then she says she is not leaving
anymore
she will be working here
and will be building a new house
for herself

and then she says
so long see yah

she closes the car window and
speeds her way out of town

i know what she is up to
her car is expensive and brand new
the latest model
the only one in town

a show off i think
to make me envious

but i will give her the benefit of the doubt
so long and i will still
see yah
Something Sad And Beautiful...

she puts a red rose in a glass vase on his table and writes a poem

it is her wish that the war the in Syria may finally end so that the veiled woman who lost her husband and son may soon grow the roses in her abandoned garden to bloom next spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Situational

what we write is always situational
and for those who are interested enough
they bring shovels to dig out soil and find the roots
of beauty
which are
in most ways the very roots
of conflict
an inner one

how these roots have penetrated
depths (more than the oceans)

and even broke the stones open
like some petals
of a budding
morning

how these have pierced the ears of
timeso the layers of history
can hear

how these stories have outlived
their
hiding places on
some little lies
in fiction
to give art to pain and make it look like
a scripture

to color its
incoming madness
sufficing
memories with the polka dots
of some
imagined joys along city streets
where others sometimes
take things away from you
stealthily,
those that surpassed hypocrisies and finally land
in the silence
of acceptances,
watching TV news
and at the same time
computing
inner losses
longings that die
on the face
of innocence

i have sailed too far from my shores and in the middle of this ocean
there are no ports visible
the lighthouses have been destroyed by the
recent storms

everything is a dark sky and endless horizons have become our definition
of what eternity is

you see i am about to give up
leave everything
because what is there that grows like grass and weeds
without the fear of fire
is only
anger
regret
arms that raise themselves up
not in praise
but in
surrender

that i should not have entered into that circle
that society have promoted
like a discounted sale
mobbed by ordinary people in the mall

and as you see
i am only moving around inside it and i am already dizzy
i vomit
and i do not clean up
what mess
is there
in front of me
and people begin to question me
about this
unkindness

disgust is waiting to be told
an ugly face is coming from the mold

this numbness that has perfected
the emulation
of a hundred
deaths

this seems to be the bad karma of my own logic
the cannibalized system
full of locks and
security codes
and keys
that sometimes do not work
anymore
where the word fit
becomes
and alien

the object of my affection has
become the object of my regret

i am looking for an opening
perhaps a gate
for an exit

or a backdoor of the dirty
kitchen
where mother stayed for years
wearing no apron
at all

it is not empathy
you are wrong
i do not need it
in fact i have given all of it away
like a political
dole-out
an investment without
any expected returns

what i need is freedom
that white dove with a bleeding heart

it cannot fly
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something So Beautiful Inside Myself

something is inside me
much precious than you think

i am showing it to you
you deny that it exists

you set aside what is beautiful
i do not mind at all

there are so many places to go
you must think it over

why i am staying here with you
why i am not saying a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something So Faraway Finally Reaches The Bridge...

7:25 in the morning
a ray of light
strikes the bridge of
my nose

mummifying
phenomenon

for how long did this
ray of light
travel
what distance
before it
reaches
its unfortunate
destination?

RIC S. BASTASA
Something So Ordinary Can Be Poetic

Something like
NO PARKING
Is poetic to me
You are a soul
Lost to this
Town of indifference
And you have
Been roaming
Around in your
Old car of a
Soul and you
Want to rest
And think
And what they
Say is

NO PARKING

That is actually
Poetic

Or shall we say

THIS WAY TO THE RESTROOM

Oh that is really
Poetic signifying
Relief that in this country
There still exists A WAY TO

A way a path a footpath
for someone lost
someone wanting to empty
Himself like a heavy cloud
Wanting to empty
Its accumulating heaviness
Like your urinary bladder
Looking for a restroom and
Oh heavens
This is the way to the rest room
This is the way to the heavens
Where I can just
Have the freedom of pursuing my happiness
Of a simple poetic pee
So this way to the rest room
Is a feeling of relief

It is a feeling of relief and poetry is just like that
You look for a way to unburden yourself
A way to this and that of relieving your
Urinary bladder your poetic urinary bladder
Discharging a discomfort
A heaviness of unwanted liquids
Which you have accumulated
In time

And you hold your thing in the manner that you
Want it held and in the process that you want it done
Without anybody looking

Without anybody saying you this is the proper way to pee
And no other else that can make your pee wholesome
To prescribed rules

And you point it to the big basin of a bowl
You pee
You have just discharged a discomfort
With all the images of

THIS WAY PLEASE TO THE COMFORT ROOM

To your comfort zone
Because you have been in such a discomforting fit
In complete release
You feel relief
And that to me is very poetic

THIS WAY TO THE COMFORT ROOM PLEASE

when all you want in life is to pee
On that instance
that moment is the best poetry
To the lines and verses of a person
simply peeing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something So Sweet

something so sweet must have happened
between that two of you
on that bench last night

the ants have built a monument
of a hill
and they are all crazy and craving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Sour In my Salad

sometimes i asks
fear
what is your reason
for being here
with me?

it has been long
and we haven't known
each other too well

why are you staying?
why me?

i look at it
straight in the eye
confronting it
with my own bravery

telling it
you cannot stay with me
forever
for even with fear
i too get
bored with you

and then, as you insists,
i accepted you
and let you be just you in me
and since then

we live in peace
in harmony with ourselves

for fear, you too,
are a reality,
something sour in
my salad
yet makes the whole
thing
delicious to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Sour In my Salad (2)

sometimes i ask
fear
what is your reason
for being here
with me?

it has been long
and we haven't known
each other too well

why are you staying?
why me?

i look at it
straight in the eye
confronting it
with my own bravery

telling it
you cannot stay with me
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we live in peace
in harmony with ourselves

for fear, you too,
are a reality,
something sour in
my salad
yet makes the whole
thing
delicious to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Spiritual....

they were just playing games
those kids in all of us
nothing really serious nothing to think much
and here you are
in deep thought in deep sorrow as you go in
this journey thinking where to land...

every minute is a destination
every talk is an offer
every touch is sense, grab each

and just leave it there, for when you begin
to carry each, all these would be too heavy
and as we walk and as they look at you
it would be crazy.

my hands are empty and so is my head even.
i have nothing on. Just as the wind is invisible.

be a spirit this time. leave that body behind.

RIC S. BASTASA
FINALLY you tell me
you like an empty house
something minimal
all white with no curves
just straight lines

your want is small now
something that makes us close
something that shrinks
to make an intimacy

you want a house just
for the two of us
i am thinking if these thoughts
are a little bit late

my dreams are different
i am thinking of a bird-house
i am thinking of grains
i am thinking of water

something that i can leave
something that i can give
something that flows away

RIC S. BASTASA
Something That I Ask Of You....

because of love
i kneel before you
and kissed your
feet

this shames me a bit
but i can do nothing
about it

it is inevitable
love surges into
surrender
for the beloved

you smile and
look down at me
humbled

at this moment
i ask you to please
turn off the
light

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

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palihog
ipalong na lang ko
sa suga

RIC S. BASTASA
Something That I Can'T Do

how i wish i can imitate
the flow of water in my life
that choice of taking the path
of least resistance

how i wish i can have the language
of the rain
that which assuages pain
that which satisfies the thirst
of grass
that which jives with the slow pacing
of the stones

i can't.

i am already born with the language of
my parents
it is the language that i know
the only language of my body and soul
i have to like it
there is no other sound
no other choice
except to speak it
again and
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something That I Have Always Kept Away From You

i keep this love. It will be a secret.
there is no use for you to know it.
it is there. and will always be there.
this smile, this hug, this kiss, do they
not speak enough? and the years?
and the time melting like a candle
thriving on its own light. is this not
enough for you? you cry. i am asking
for reasons, you say there are not
reasons, these are just tears, and i
wonder: what have i done to deserve
this kind of darkness, the enigma, the
mystery of your silence. i move. i stop.
i look back. there is something that
grows, like cancer, there is this death
what for? do you have to know every
inch of my soul? let us stop this guessing
game. i am tired. let us sleep. there is
no use talking. the stars are gone.
and the moon. i am hearing the silent
whispers of darkness. we are alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something That I Have Not Touched With My Hands

while in bed i am enumerating a lot of things
that i really don't know
what they are and where they come from
and what use could they be

in my emptiness i think that something fuller this time
is what i need
like hot water perhaps for a cup for an afternoon tea
but the image is too ordinary for a whim

of this imagination something's got to be better this time
something that i have not touched with my hand
that i have not tasted with my tongue
i know, i know what it is, but i know that i cannot have it

and so i just lay in bed, enumerate the other things
silly and wise, and empty and full, and paths and mountains
and labyrinths, until i am a flash in full speed of images
until i am sleepy and then i forget what is it that i know that i want and yet

i cannot have
and i begin counting sheep and ships and imagine the whole ocean blanket
to my body and
face and then
i sleep

i am tired and when this happens
i do not mind what happens next and
i do not wish about anything

i am done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something That Is Better If Uncertain

if it were an exhibition
disguised as avoiding a storm
upon a steep climb
you somersault
like a circus man
and land upon an ocean
leaving another horrible
mark in a sad story.

RIC S. BASTASA
...because i allow it,
because of the way i keep my hands,
my fingers are falling apart,
and to keep my hands
intact, as i try too,
as i compose myself
as i reinvent my face through your
eyes,
and then, something slips away,
it hurts,
but i know it will not last long,
otherwise,
i will not be true to myself, i will be dead.
and i can't allow it,
so here i am, as usual, too normal
like the sun that shines
every morning
because everyone expects it to happen.

don't know if i feel my own
heat. don't care really. it is not about myself.
anymore. it is about the sun
and the day that it is duty bound to give
to the grasses
and to the rooftops.

RIC S. BASTASA
It happened, the taxi was taken, both of you took the ride
No one wanted to take the front,
Passengers
Sitting beside, no names, just chance,
Together, that moment, there was rain,

Sweat, abundant sweat, the aircon is high
Music was loud and the travel was long
A convention, you did not see malice

Friendship, sweat, abundant sweat
Even when the aircon was set higher
Drink, lots of drinks, until both of you were drunk

You hate to use pronouns now
The verb is untamed, your hair standing, your drunkenness
Suddenly lost, slowly, slowly, caresses,
Bursting you lost everything in your mind

Was the night that long really? Were the curtains
Thick? Were the windows open? Was there a moon
By the window? Were the lights off?

You do not remember, Morning comes, light
Enters the door filtered by the curtains.

You wished you were alone. You weren’t. Last night
Something happened, years ago, you simply could not remember
The face.

It is still horrible. Something you cannot write until now.
Your pronouns are not meant to be visible.
The shadows even not defined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something They Must See

outside the rain begins
and you think
that this may never end

you stare
beyond this window
your cheeks are wet with tears

you undress
and take away every covering of your body

it is dark anyway
and this time no one shall see
what you shall do

you step out of the door
and walk straight to the yard
feeling the grass
on your feet

feeling the rain flowing in your hair
on the sides of your ears
and cheeks

you cry some more
you shout with a wish that your anger
may reach the heavens

you run towards a thick forest
and then dissolve inside this darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Too Personal

among the crowd
myself stands like it were not me
i put one in front
and the other behind
the happy face is there
what lurks behind
is the sad one
sometimes i doubt
or pretend to doubt
which one is real
i laugh and then
promise myself a try
not to cry
mastered this game
of having to lose
and then win
make some imitations
and other selves
and you ask me why?
i tell you
i lost that appetite
to kill myself
and if i have to really
survive
all the other days of
my life
then you must
understand
why there are so many
selves now
claiming to be
the real one

do not underestimate
my knowledge
of who i am
even if i close my eyes
i know
which of me is real
it is the happy self
but never
tells it all

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Too Sweet Destroys

beware my dear
something too sweet destroys
try something
bitter once in a while
this concoction heals.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Uncommon

the little boy cried
last night he clenched his fist
and demanded
in fury that the window be opened
the mother who was not there
talked over the phone
through the elder girl
who was in charge of their
affairs
sensing the danger of
what may happen when the
window is opened

it was simple
i mean the boy's demand was simple

he clenched his fist against the moon
for what reason

i do not really know
at his young age at three

though i've been there once
i still cannot figure out why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Understandable

in your busy life
there is no time for
a puzzle
and so to make things
easier for you
i am simplifying words
i am giving you
all nouns and
adjectives
i am setting aside
all the verbs
like a still painting
you may stop
and find yourself
there
immobile
calm and still
stuffed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Universal

something universal
is not just for one eye to see
but for all the eyes of this
universe, the eye of the storm
the eye of the wound
the needle's eye
even the eyes of those who
are blind for they can
always have the
eyes of their hearts

it is not just for you
it is for us all to feast like
the air we breathe

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Visual

Something visual and so vivid
Are still hard to write

One shot in film
Would have been easy

To picture curves
And tangential lines
That even criss-cross
Using words
Is a big challenge,

Like
Capturing a crocodile
On a fish net, it would even
Be harder using words
To capture illusive motions
Of white milk spilt on
Monochromatic tiles,
Or
The leaping of a fish
On the pond trying to
Eat a moth or a dragonfly
Hovering on a blade of
Grass and what about
Air,
Invisible getting
Inside my lungs, that
Feeling of life moving
Inside me,
And
What about
Blood running in the veins
To remove numbness of
My fingers,
All
These
Are challenges in words
In what to write,
To a jumping fish
Capturing, swallowing
A blue dragonfly,
Or
The air rushing
To my lungs,
Or
To the
Blood rushing to my numb
Fingers,
All these give a feeling
Of relief,
All
These somehow
Return life, and it makes
Us all feel good...

Something visual in words
Motions captured and colors
Brushed in word, in words
Something visual
And life-giving
To be caged in words,

Such will be your big challenge.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something Wonderful

picking
strawberries from
the garden

choosing the
plump ones
dipping each
on mayonnaise

letting each
stay inside your mouth
sometime

RIC S. BASTASA
Something/Someone

something that is so beautiful
that i want to hug, kiss, and even sleep with
something so near and yet i keep faraway
something to touch and yet i will not
something that makes me so alive
and i may kill myself
something that makes my blood runs
wildly inside my veins
something that disrupts and makes
my heart burst into bliss
something that i can only think of
but i cannot speak
someone, actually someone so special
so dear, and yet i must set aside
and let go
something that i love
and cannot be mine
someone with me
but must not even know
that i exist

RIC S. BASTASA
Somethings Become Missing....

the first thing in the morning is not a cup of coffee
it is cold as usual
and the heavy rain last night just stops
that must make me survive
but it is as personal as the
armpits
it could even be the bland taste of my
own saliva
keeping myself intact with my own
resources
nothing about cups of coffee and
melting butters
it is the fingers that we press upon
words that we play with our own tongues
hugged by our teeth

RIC S. BASTASA
Something's Wrong

when there is no magic anymore
the house becomes a bore
we walk around and talk somehow
like zombies on the prow

RIC S. BASTASA
Something's Wrong Really

you went to sea
bringing your fish net and
that night
you caught a lot filling
the boat heavy
towards the port

when you arrive there
you cannot accept the fact
that when they come you
still have nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Something's Wrong With Me

why have i not risen to the higher ranks?
i try to answer that. It is perhaps of my own kind of arrogance
not bending myself on other people's bodies
except perhaps to help
those who have fallen from grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Somethins Is Not Repeated, Everything Is Always New

The one that i see
is a face

eyes about to cry
and those weary feet that cannot
stop walking

i am cold like a stone
covered by too much moss by
time's burying
of all dead thoughts

when you walk away i
say nothing

what else can be covered
by words?

what else can this heart
deny?

i have been seeing
so many sunsets

i sleep sometimes in places
that keep
empty glasses and
charred wood

when i wake up i do not ask
so many questions

i keep watching the sea
and amaze myself again with something new

like another sunrise
which tells me that nothing is repeated and dull
what comes embraces you
not with same arms
kisses you again not with same lips

i am happy
i have no more old thoughts

the stones in my hand are never mine
neither are its empty spaces
between my fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometime Sometimes

on a hammock mid noon
you watch a bird’s feather fall from the tree
where a nest just let go
two birds,

takes time to land
and you concentrate on the falling
until softly
it lands on a gray rock just beside
the house

sometime
you thinks about sometimes
that light feeling of not being you
you don't know what is it
it sinks in your mind like
a word that you cannot forget
because it is so easy
and yet you misspell it

it is an error of flight
and grossly an error of a bad landing
you close your eyes against the light
and what you see is
as expected
all red

you imagine sunset at mid noon
you imagine the end of life
at the midst of vibrant feeling

what a waste! how times passed so fast...
how many more are like you

daydreaming on a hammock
dreaming about the feather softly landing on the rock portion
of your soul
Sometimes

sometimes i feel
so stupid and so stupid
that i like being called stupid
by other stupid people out
there who think that
they are not stupid

sometimes i like to laugh
at myself and call myself
crazy and behave like i
am crazy and then suddenly
a man comes next to me
and asks me

why am i happy?

i think he is not stupid anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Am Not Okey

Sometimes i have tantrums too
like i have
deep depressions
sharper tongues like that of a
Philippine king cobra
willing to spit my venom
my fatal bite
to an innocent passer-by

we all have the breeding of some sphinx
traceable to the lines
of some Medusas and cyclops
and dragons

do not deny the nerves and veins
of the devil still clinging
to our flesh, running and so alive

we have all these sometimes
like some storms and tornadoes
and flash floods and
volcanic eruptions and
tsunamis.... the forces of nature
tattooed in our skins
stained in our brains

just give me time
while i write the poetry of anger, and madness and hate,

do not even wait as i simmer down to indifference
leave me alone
in my destructive destinations

wait, and wait some more
if you have love at all,
let me go, let me vent, let me shout, let me explode

for tonight
when the moon is full, i lay tired on the grass by the 
tranquil pool,
still trees, cool but undisturbed by any ripple

when all these pass,
come, share a drink with me
come, let us again talk in whispers
then some smiles
then a loud laughter

we shall be
always together, when all these bad things are over

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Also Wonder If

sometimes i wonder if
this world is listening
to every word that each man
is shouting against each other

to every verbal abuse
that husbands inflict
against their wives

sometimes i wonder if
this world too feels the harshness
of the sound
of the door that is banged against
each frame
at the edge when hinges
begin to fall out
from each rusted
screw

sometimes i ask if it knows
the pain that nails inflict
upon wood

the decent sharpness of the axe
that cuts across
barks and
trunks
in every tree that falls down
to the forest
grounds

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Am Amazed Of The Magic That Is Done

It all started with something insignificant
Like dust,
Sticking on a window pane, and I want it
Dusted off, it is dirt, it is unwanted,
And I do not even know what to do next
About such
Insignificance and feelings of simply
Trying to get rid of dust immediately,
But then, I begin to think about this
Dust, this me, this dust in me,
Some dusts on my feet, some dusts on
My forehead, and some dusts in my ears,
Some dusts in my eyes so obstructive
Of what I really am, and I know what to do next,
The bulb lighting in my head in a sudden,
I touch the dust,
I feel the dust with my fingers, and I am crazy enough
I taste the dust on my window pane,
And I shiver,
I am shaking to its taste, the taste of nothingness
If was from dust that I really come,
I now remember,
It will be to dust that I shall return,
I am now reminded,
And the dust that I used to see
As dirt, as something so insignificant, is now,
A magical patch, glistening, so filled with meaning,
I am nothing but dust; I am biting the dust,

I am very insignificant, in that window pane, at first.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Am Misinterpreted

i admit
sometimes i am misinterpreted

to have a familiarity and make this talk a little
interesting, let us revise, like

we admit
sometimes we are misinterpreted when we care

when we give a glass of water for instance
they will take it as a form of seduction, Good Heavens

i am through all these, we admit, we are most often
misinterpreted, when we kiss, they think we are in love

and that we are ready to enter into a revolution to defend and
die for love, God Forbid,

time has changed a lot, the river has dried and fish do not exist on scales
anymore,

an old fortress has become a river, and the river on the other side of the road
has become a mount of neon lights,

Oh mY! what we did was just a gesture of kindness
a selfless act of redeeming what we once lost
for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Close My Eyes

sometimes my friend
i close my eyes to see
what i have not seen
inside the domains of
my heart

and then i open them again
to see what blinded me

there is so much light
to some things that i daily see
and have not seen realistically.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Ponder

sometimes i ponder on the useless
things that i think i have done with so much importance
for the day:

ing on a white bridge in Dikayo
and seeing the flood of the brown river
seeing the floating coconuts and
some drift woods

stopping the car.

2. standing beside a bay window
seeing the sea torn into halves
brown on the shore and blue on the
upper portion

stop the reading.

3. setting aside the curtain to
let in the light from the morning sun
turning off the lights and getting
away from the hazards of the
computer screen

stopping, stopping.
stooping.

4. looking over the road from
this two-storey building left by
the Spaniards that once ruled
this old town

aimlessly.

5. stopping for a while. wanting
this world to stop revolving.

wishing.
sometimes i wonder, if all these useless things that i do can change the world

or just my small world.

I am doing all these. Without thinking much if the time is wasted.

i sit back on my chair. Staring on a blank wall that is painted with the color of the chalk.

Back to writing. The chalk reminds. The chalk that resembles the pen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Think

sometimes, (i always keep it to myself)
(i am better than you
how you approach a problem
using a very circuitous solution
as i look at you keeping such a busy day
i sigh and look away
i could have done much better

but you are there
so high, you are put on such a pedestal
of distinction
with more medals and plaques
the way you have danced well
with the powers that be
with the gods of our society

you always wear a smile
and take the posture of obeisance
and always ready with your
yes, sir, yes, sir
and some expensive gifts

(how can i ever do that
without disrespecting myself?)

now you got what you wished for
my master
i become your inferior
and wait for your orders

you cannot issue them
you do not know what to do
they are all waiting for the solution, they are now hoping for you

(i could have done much better
as i wait for your orders
but what can i do?
you are the system
and i am but this silent dissenter)
Sometimes I Think Of Leaving You

One day
I think I must leave.

This is not my
World
I said silently
To myself

i do not belong
to your world
you do not
belong to mine
either: i sometimes
think like this

odd.

As I face
You. I say further
I do not like
What is happening
Between us.

We are trees
Without fruits.

We are ponds
Without
Any moss
Or fish

We are a night
Without stars

We are mornings
Without the sun.

And I keep
On saying
To myself this must
Be ended
For once for good

I look at the road
And they are
So inviting

They narrow down
Somewhere to
The foot of a rainbow
to a promise
of an oasis
in a vast desert
that i am in.

The horizon
Calls my name

I look at you again
A long glance
And your face
Looks so innocent

Asking me:
(1) Where are you taking
Me?
Telling me:
(2) I am going where
You will take
Me

(3) I have nowhere
To go
(4) When you leave
I will die

(5) When you leave
I will kill
Myself.
There are more
Enumerations.
I can recall them.
Always.

And so I am
Staying with you.

I am so afraid
I am everything to you.
And you have been
All too pleasing

For any kind
Of betrayal

that is not worth
its salt and color
of a promise

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Wish I Were Not A Part Of You

My feet are pinched
With needles.
Your hands are not there.

I try to relieve myself from pain.
It is not happening.
There is no miracle.
There is no cure.

The world is a big space.
I can leave anytime and
Take the shape
Of air.

I can be gone.
How come that I become
A part of you
And her?

I do not remember myself coming
Here and sitting on this chair.
Fate.
Cruel fate.
I want to leave but I cannot go
I do not want to stay but I am staying.

How I wish I were not a part
Of this mess:
This cruelty inflicted
From your hand
To my hand.

How I wish I were
Someone else

Here I am.
I am your hair to your head.
Your fingers to your hand.
Your toes to your feet.
I guess. We must learn to live
With each other.
Dislikes disregarded
We begin
Our silent wars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes I Wonder

at this moment, when i begin to write again
another set of poems

(i stop for a while, away from official matters
this business of the mind thinking
clearly and logically, setting aside premises
and dogmas and
theorems, not wanting any proof of my sanity
and reasonableness

i relax a bit, on some matters of the heart
the emotions all colored wildly like a dream
a wet dream, to be specific....

sometimes i ask, if i can still write about
libido, the wanton directionless cravings of the thighs
and the caprices of the fingers...

i get lost with reason and i become as firm as an
iron rod, shunning feelings, oh, how do i like to be a rock?

it is sad to be numb. I detest when this happens
as a matter of everyday business, and i become tense

if at all, i have ceased to be human, or if i have changed
myself suddenly to be nothing but a cabinet or a desk
or a mess in front of my eyes...

i daydream, once i was a young man, once i was so carefree
that was the time when poetry was vibrating like a
man's flesh between my legs...

i miss the river and the baths and the fish swimming under my belly.
i miss the songs of the frogs, how they prayed for rain and how
the celebrate when it comes.

i miss the summer months of April and May when love was as
abundant as bees.
I miss you. Your gaze burns me.  
Your kiss makes me feel so alive.

thinking about you, yes, about love in abundance, and then  
oh, the ecstasy of words.

i have written, i shall speak, when you return.  
I have written the happy poem, tell me when

shall i write it again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes In Our Sadness

sometimes in our sadness
we mistake the sparrows flying
low on a field of grass as dry leaves
blown away by a very dry wind

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes In Wanting To Be Civil

sometimes
in wanting to be civil
i close my mouth
i suppress the
exact words
i prune what is in my mind

like some bonsai
under the sun
what appears are
remnants of
beauty

sometimes in wanting
to endure
our inevitable sufferings
we simply close
our eyes

to the truth
we pretend we like the way
we live
we surmise these do not
last anyway

then we forget to tell the
truth altogether
we even forget
that we are its bearers

simply because
we too want to survive
a flood of lies
a catastrophe
of ingenuinity & falsities

but with you
i am honest enough to admit
i lied
because i am afraid

to lose you

that you must remember

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes In Your Sadness

sometimes in your sadness
the flying sparrows of the fields
are nothing but dry leaves blown by a
very dry wind towards the mountains

in your sorrow the roses blooming
along your paths become nothing but
lumps of mud sticking to their thorny branches
and the leaves are but trash paper
bound for some burning turning to ash

sometimes in your long mourning
you do not see the shining stars
and you wish that the moon and sun
may altogether stop making the nights and days.

you wish total darkness. You like that
everything becomes mute and blind and deaf.
Your friends and those who love you have
became straw men on the rice fields. They
have become to you utterly useless.

Just because the person you love had perished.
Everything has become useless.
The world looks at you and asks: Is there only one
person who is lovable that all those creatures
around you become nothing?

The world understands and mourns with you
only for a while. They have counted the time. They have
waited for so long. They cannot endure sorrow. They
have all other beautiful things to enjoy, joys to savor.
They are impatient now. Sorrow has a beginning. It has
also an end. Sadness cannot be forever. There is no such
ting as overwhelming sorrow.

Now they have contempt for you. The length of your sadness
has exceeded the limits that they have set. The boundaries
of joy, and bliss and happiness have been encroached.
Look over there. There is happiness waiting. There is dancing over the other fence. They are waiting for you.

Do not frustrate them. They have mourned with you.
And it is over. Now you have to be with them too.
They love life. They like to sing. They like to jump with joy.

Now that you have come back to your senses.
Sadness is over. Let us begin the first step to happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes It Is Nice To Be Away

away from the usual colors
today he wears black from head to toe
it is hot and the heat stings and the black color you know
absorbs everything he feels
like he is blazing with fire
from his blackness
a black heart
a gray choice of the part of day
gloomy parks at night
with only one neon

sometimes you are on fire
and Holy Goodness
you do not want to put it off

you are like the burning bush
and your soul takes off
sheds off
its slippers at the entrance door

well, sometimes, sometimes
we like not to understand
we miss the mystery of our own ignorance
and we take pleasure
with what we hide

something like a burning heart
beside a volcanic magma
a different joy and yet so alone
making stones and instant cliffs

no one bothers
that is the ecstasy of it all
when no one bothers
when you become a child again watching through the glass window
on your favorite toy
the red one
with stripes of black
Sometimes It Is Not The Poem But The Poet

how i want to be a pseudonym of a pseudo-poet
all: pseudohematuria
pseudoxoma, this sham shame this
counterfeit eshete, this fake classic
this pretense
inside this deception, false sun shining
on the sand, 'nom de Usenet
best-known and funniest hoax
this BIFF BIFF BIFF
Many flamers/ entities,
that AI program of sophistication

yet to exist
and the exits
travesty generator to simulate

oh! ass!
a significant number of people
like us
fooled by the forgeries
they debate over their authenticity

eventually
settled only when the perpetrator came forward
publicly admitting the hoax.

acidic Ph, test it.
taste it, let us see how your tongue works
to know the truth

i shall now reveal
you have loved the poet
but his poems you despise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes It Is Really Hard To Understand

she works with us as our domestic helper
her father is 35 her mother is 34 and there
are twelve of them in the family in that far
away mountain, 50 kilometers from here

her brother works as a laborer in that
copra buyer a few meters from here and
he just met an accident and he is sent
to the hospital because he finds it hard
to breathe and he cannot speak a word.

her sister is pregnant with a new baby and
the wife of the master drives her away and
she has no place to stay & nowhere to go.

she wants to tell more sad stories about her
family but I tell her to stop. I do not want to know.

I look up to the sky, and I know God is listening.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes It Must Be Me Who Must Say: Sorry

you apply for a job and they are the bosses
who give you the requirements

from 1 to 20 and you comply and then they take a look at your papers
and they say they need another set of requirements
from A to D,

and they tell you the deadline and they leave you the final note
that you comply
otherwise you will not be considered and everything in your life
will simply
be a jeopardy, or even double jeopardy

and they say that they do not want to say the word
sorry
to you
at the final rejection

you finally give up
and make a protest to this kind of injustice

and you write your latest entry in your journal:

' i finally gave up, and sometimes, dear diary,
it must be me who must say:
sorry, you also do not deserve me.
i quit'

love,

myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes Somewhere

time is times when i simply stand
beside a rail
on a platform that looks out to the sea
that does not exist
seagulls of the mind fly like white foams
fishing
for thoughts and digesting what solid resolves
are.

then the mind becomes a cloud that drifts
on another floating orange horizon
then the body becomes a river looking for
its banks
and then the eyes blink undecided
whether to become a moon
or a star

there are times when i simply sit and watch
time going by
and there is no certain direction

but i simply let all these doubts pass
hoping that they all die
like some kind of martyrs
namelessly

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes We Allow It

there are times when
darkness triumphs against light

sometimes we even allow it,
like
when we allow ourselves

to be hateful
than lovable

like
when we make love without
any meaning at all

like when
the touch is not warm enough
to dry the tears.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes We Are These

i am like
a pole

my hands
are folded
like
a letter
inside
an envelope

i possess
height
but i have
never
touched
my tip

i look at you
we are so
apart
and you simply
look
like a trail of
an ant

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes We Are Too Busy Despite The Free Time

along the white sands
on a sunny morning by the sea
i collect shells and pebbles

there are too many of them
but only few are chosen
the only standard is that
'i like this' and there is no other more

and then you put all those few ones
in my pocket
and when i arrive at the cottage
i view them all atop the table

it is the viewing that keeps the mind busy
and so busy that it cannot listen
to each story that the pebble wants to tell
that the mouth of the shell wants
to say beautifully in a song

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes We Know That We Are Here

sometimes
this is what they say
sometimes

we know that we are both
here
together
yet we prefer
to respect our silence

we extend it further
maybe

may be even deeper
like the blue ocean
refusing
to talk to the river

they all look forward
to bluer clouds
and sunny skies

and for these
what is the need of words?

what is the need of
the struggle
to speak? it is the silence that

makes some bonds
stronger

sometimes, they always say that,
sometimes

some time, we may like
it like this way
mute and yet so revealing
Sometimes We Let Go And Then We Become Ourselves

sometimes
we feel so real
when we fall

we feel so perfect
with our tears
cascading

we feel so nearly divine
when emptied
and left out

sometimes we let go
and then we become
more ourselves

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes We Simply Have To Look Beyond Our Sadness

sometimes you give up
and i can see that your sad face that looks somewhere
beyond the window looking for nothing
the world becomes an empty canvass
of futile light

the sky blue clouds no matter how beautiful
the sun no matter how orange-bright and warm
the verdant fields filled with trees and flowers
the blithe butterflies and winged winds....

sometimes in too much selfish pondering
we lose the power of hope-imagining
how life moves by itself growing without your noticing
how the earth silently makes the nights and days
how each day unfolds what beauty all nature holds
how surprises burst here and there like fireworks

because you are carried by the river of sadness
choked by the flash floods of its flounders
all these have become useless pieces
if only... you try looking outside the gates of your preoccupations
you will see a world out there with arms opening, offering
always wanting to embrace you
always wanting to make the best for you

you will never see
your eyes have always been covered with tears
your ears shut up
in selfishness
your mouth cannot speak
your tongue tied to bitterness

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes What You Cover With Your Hands

sometimes what you cover with your hands
if they misinterpret that
is not really intended for hiding
not the selfishness of your very own fingers
but
if they only know it by heart
are offerings asking
if you too are ready and willing to give them
the way you cover things are manners of asking
are you also willing to give
and give wholeheartedly without asking for
anything in return?
sometimes let me tell you
when i cover some lovely parts of myself
which you misinterpret again as
utter selfishness
nay, it is not the way you see things
skin deep
stones protruding on the low
ebbing of the season

sometimes let me tell you
when i cover the most vulnerable portion of my being
it is, in truth, just a manner of my asking
if indeed, in itself, and by itself,

if your love is true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes When I Have Nothing To Say

sometimes when i have nothing to say
like the silence of the closed window
or the nights on the grass
or the twinkle of the stars... i feel so full
and when i get so full, i feel like
vomiting my existence,

i am nauseous to this hiding, sometimes
i want to say it all, and then i become so empty
and when empty i float, i feel like i am nothing but air,
and then i surrender again
to the walls.... talking and talking to the walls
and i do not really care about the rumors that they have ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes When We Emote That Much

sometimes when we emote that much
like some bleeding hearts
blinded by
the colors of the blood and sweat
of the dying sun

we fail to see
that the day has ended

that it is time to sleep
and dream

that it is time to give way
for other souls to
cry to weep to sigh

that it is time for some
other creatures who died
when they were once
children
to play their forgotten games
in the dark

sometimes we must accept
this is not just ours
this is also theirs

and the tears that dry
on the sand may not be just
ours after all

we may meet them
in due time, but for now let me
meet myself, let me drink with it
let me know his name

we are still strangers of the
very shining light.
Sometimes When You Look At The Stars

sometimes when you look at the stars
and there are many of them
tonight and you are all
alone by the window
thinking

sometimes you grasp the reason why
you want to forget a face
glowing at the fireside
of your living room

you want to be free from an enclosure
of love
unrequited, you want to escape as a wing of a bird
from the bones of its body
rotten flesh

and so you carefully place your chin
on top of your right hand shaped like a fist
you open your eyes
to this window of the universe and yes there are so many stars
tonight

you think there are still so many of them
and you regret having loved just one

you think you are foolish
and you are so right
you feel you are wasted.
and you are right.

you feel that you cannot recover
and stand tall to look at things carefully again.
this time
i must tell you, you are wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes You Wish Someone Will Know The Greatness Of A Poem

sometimes as you write a hundred or more poems
you wish someone with taste
the one without which nothing will be called 'poetic'
shall read you and understand the greatness of your words and style,

someone with a long black hair
smooth skin and possessing that intellectual flare
reads one of your poems and says
' i like this and i shall keep this
did you really write this? '

and you are so flattered that you forget that all the while
on the 5,000th poem
you have been writing all about yourself
on some pain of rejection

that love interest that never responded
that one so beautiful and yet had never laid her eyes on you.

and then, you smile, after all on that poem
inside those images, you appear to be lovable
and she, is never one ordinary fan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes...

we need to be alone
but not as cold as stone
it is like that sunflower
standing tall as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes....

sometimes, when i look at the world
through one narrow window
of the airplane,
i shrink about the idea of jumping
off again
(which i once tried when i was too confused
to take another day
of life, during one of those lousy college days,
when life seems to be too
saggy, like a carpet losing hold of
its thick threads,

sometimes, one has to look at the clouds
thick, white, cottons, up there
to know that, well, there is nothing certain
about everything

up there
or down here
there will always be
chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
somewhere you speak of a star
bigger
thirty times
than our star and you say
you have seen it from your
telescope
where you stand
how the star explodes
and then
gone, leaving just a space,
a patch of
black dot
in your eyes,

i do not wish to understand you further
with your calculations
about the risks, the dangers, the consequences
of what happens
in that distant sky

here i am in my daily cares, i remember
feeding corn to the chickens, or cleaning my car, or
frying my cues,
or simply sitting by the stair
and just merely looking at the passing butterfly
hovering
in the summer air

what do i know about distance?
what do i care about distant stars
how they explode and how
the space starts to become empty, and grow another star again?

what i know of is simple enough
i do not know you
anymore, and i think, i am about to explode
and i think
i may become empty like what you are telling me
about that space left by the exploding star
and i am afraid
i am the kind of person
in this place
of the universe
that does not know how to grow a star again
after an explosion

RIC S. BASTASA
Somewhere In The Wilderness

eddies of the travelling mind
downward the ripples keep coming
wading and wading to the shore
and then coming back again
rewinding and upsurging and then
deathly on the sands the starfish

kegs of crabs and squids
over the lushing greens of seaweeds
foams and air and whispers
ingrained and imagined.

love, love, love and always love
over and over again
until death shall claim all these whims
into that abyss

somewhere in the wilderness....

RIC S. BASTASA
Somewhere In An Old City Where He Was All Alone,

what most he talked about
was a record of the actions he chose,

walking under the cover of dawn
cold winds, and silence of the streets
somewhere in an old city where he
was all alone,

buttoning his shirt, zipping his jacket
covering his head with a black scarf
taking his time to think what to do next
under this anxious circumstances

he puts his hands inside the pocket of
his pants, and then moves on....

RIC S. BASTASA
Somewhere In Chicago

health care is not in danger
not affected by recession
because the white people and the black people
all level up
to old age and no child shall ever have the time
to care for each of them
and so here you are
too confident about your future
cleaning the sheets
administering the medication
taking and throwing shits.

RIC S. BASTASA
somewhere in the middle of this journey
is the chaos of our presence
we like to dislodge and vomit of this
nostalgia of where we come from
we like to go back to the womb
and regret having grown our legs

we blame the hands of the midwife
we want to pinpoint who slapped us
we like to hear the sound of vengeance
of our first cries

did we cry for help? did i cry because
i never asked to be put here?
or did i cry because i am just making a lot of nonsense
about my innocence about despair?

i get some names of fathers and mothers and siblings
i write them on a page of a book and i ask what if they were not there

what could have been? what could i be part of?
i shout, i am an individual, i am not a part of this relating places
i am not a connection of the branches and roots

i stretch my hands wanting to touch and get hold of a rope
there is nothing there to put my neck in shame.

we get some comfort to the miseries of others.
we become brave from the stories of their sorrows and misfortunes.
we read the stories and the poems of those who know what is wrong.
what is pain, what is so distressing.

soon we learn this game. This art of shrugging our shoulders and then
putting the payment on the table, not drinking the glass of beer.
Leaving the table and not saying any word at all. And this we tell ourselves,

i am courageous. I am silent. I grow alone. I die alone. I am beautiful.
it meets some people somehow
and then it forgets
someday
what has been a big bother
from that point of origin
it is like shedding off skins and moving on
undressing clothes and
living a new life again in the eyes of pleasure
it is like being born again along the way
and hearing another sound of a cry
that signifies another beginning
somewhere is an opening
a conversation that tells you something
but always incompletely
because you want it more interesting
to someone who has not gladly traveled
beyond
the clutches of one's hands
somehow
somewhere is an open hand
still wanting to hold
and be alive
with someone you just met
giving you
a new island to explore
a shore to walk upon
without a specific direction
free unrestrained and always
not completely understood but still gives
the possibility of love
somehow you have not really lived
transcendentally like a kite above the clouds
like a fish above the water
like a boat without a port
like a bird above the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Somewhere Sometime Someday

carry this dream:
someday somewhere something which is best for your life will happen
the windows shall open and the doors too
without your hands touching them
the hearts of your loved ones shall open and give you another room
they will all welcome you and embrace you
and you shall have tears
of joy
so much joy that you cannot hold with your fingers
all the dreams you have shall come true

that one evening
the sky shall part and you slip through it
into a world that you have never seen

RIC S. BASTASA
somewhere
i will go to a place that no one has ever gone,
somewhere
i shall take my rest and be myself again
away from all of you
my friends and lovers and
halfway acquaintances
somewhere
i will meet someone that i have loved forever
myself and
my God (may He grant me peace
and mercy)

RIC S. BASTASA
silliman memory
twenty five years ago
at the port in dumaguete
my boat arrived
from Cebu
from Davao
and there was a little shower of rain
so fine and
my hair was wet
and damp

and there she was waiting
as i went down the stairs of the boat
lowered down
she held me
by her hand
telling me that her love
was true
and i kissed her
telling her
that my love
was as true as hers

+++++++++++++++++
outside the rain begins
and it will never end
+++++++++++++++++

that was twenty five years ago

for a love that never pushed through
for a love that should have been true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Song Of A Rebel

When I tell you that I love you
Always have in mind
That I am human

I do not have the power
To bring you some faraway
Stars to light
Your highness
Or dive the deepest oceans
To bring you the precious
Pearls
To adorn your
Royal ears

When I tell you I will care for you
Please understand
I am still on earth

Just like your other lovers
And friends
I experience the same pains
And joys
I carry with me common troubles

I am not superman or batman
I am and look at me as I am
Ordinary Human.

I am like the rest who also
Know how to love this country.

I have my own world too
And so when I say that I love you
And if you love me too,

Love me and the world that I carry
Love too my world
Love too my cause
Love too my rebellion.
(inspired by G.G.)

RIC S. BASTASA
Song Of India

we planted the songs of India
just beside the fence
at the front of our porch
and they all see the beauty
of the green and yellow stripes
on the leaves of this bush

so beautiful that a passerby
cannot help but cut the twig
and pretend that nothing is wrong
with being a thief
about something as beautiful
as the Indian song

RIC S. BASTASA
Song Of The Kabuki Player

There is a pain aimless in the air tonight
and it finds me
as I am thinking of you
I tighten my robe a bit
thinking this way I shall be closer
to what I suffer
closer still to all that shame
that once gathered arms against me
then I hum to myself the odd song
of the beggar maid to the storm
knowing that something terribly old and ancient
has been passed on to us by way of this air
we breathe
and it is not saying anything

* Lilia Lopez-Chua

RIC S. BASTASA
i agree songs strike deeper
in our inner cores each note
striking a chord right at the
center of our hearts, the lyrics
spellbinding and the images
create a world of each own
so different from where we
are sitting: your songs have
spoken well and i think i am
beginning to understand
more: we have become a
scale lesser than immortals
but a scale higher than
ordinary mortals, midway
between feelings and dreams
just a note higher than reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sonia......

she left
Israel
flew back
to Mumbai
feeling secure
that God
now lives
still
inside
her heart.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sons Snd Daughters Of My Country...

yes, they all come back,

sons and daughters of
my country
wherever they may have sailed
wherever they may have flown
to search
that greener pastures in their
minds,

after a while
on dreams fulfilled or
dreams that failed

they all come back
and repair what had been neglected
and put back what had been lost and broken

their children lost from the warmth of their love
soon shall find a home in the memory of their minds
their country destroyed
soon shall find the comfort back to their working hands

yes, they all come back
no matter what
this country is their home
the place where their dead hearts shall soon be entombed

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon

soon my girl when the pain
is unbearable
when your heart says
i won't beat anymore
i can't stand this
misery of being left alone
in the quagmire of
your indifference

soon my girl when the night
is dark and crowded with
its thoughts and
cares

soon when the burden
seems to be heavier than the
nine planets

the force is laid upon your shoulders
and head
and so you must kneel to receive all these

in the name of God and all the saints
and all the souls

it is not you who can save yourself
anymore.

Bow and say God Help me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon I Will Write You A Nice Poem

if you can wait
sooner than perhaps tomorrow evening
i will write you a nice poem
a simple one
perhaps about the pigeons roosting
in the roof of the house
or perhaps about a spider spinning its own web
of thoughts and fantasies
or perhaps about a child building his snow castles
in the air complete with his own fairytale
or i can write you a food poem
delicious to your tongue
beef steaks
ice cream and salads and desserts

oh you are salivating
you love food
ok, i'll write you some tomorrow
but for now

i got to go and find my own survival kit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon No One Stays

your friends
some of them your lovers
your light in your darkness
soon they shall pack their bags
soon they shall leave
one by one
like the natural death of some flowers along the way that you pick
there are no goodbyes
no notes no letters left on the table or under your lampshade
you cannot hear their footsteps moving away from you
silently they all leave

and you do not ask why
and you do not cry
you know they will all leave you
as they used to do leaving their loved ones too
like the stories they are telling you
incompatibility, utility, loss of love, waking up one day betrayed,
the boredom of acquaintances, the marriage that did not work out,
the broken home, the love that was untrue, the friendship of motives,
unbearability of having this and that in the house,

you have heard them, you get used to them, now, you do not care
you let them go and look for places where they tell the same stories again
again and again, this human frailty, this inability to stay, to stick it out
this search for perfection where
there is none
this search for the perfect partner
where there is none
this impossibilities of none probabilities

let them go
you have your own peace, at your own pace
your partner,
this imperfection that you sleep with

you do not care now, where they go, what they will say again
and again
you stay, in your silence, you have always stayed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon You Shall Understand

There, there is
it is there, always, betrayal,
it is, it is,
survival, there is, betrayal
that you do not
know,
it does not destroy,
it builds a home,
it does not hurt, it is a secret,
for the lives
of both

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon You Will Be Like Us

soon you will be like us
we have grown our wings not without the pain
for every bone and feather
like the teeth growing on the gums of children
there were cries and sighs

why us?
why only us? where are the rest of the lonely people of this world?
are they dead?
did they kill them?
or are they just there in the nooks of silence waiting for us
for every word that we say

they must be looking and scrutinizing every syllable
appraising every metaphor

they are saying
we do not deserve this loneliness
we have not written much
we have not filled each and every space
the abscess and the absence
we have not fully explained

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon You Will Find Out The True Taste Of My Being

you think of me
sweet as candy
you remember
my young days
of your yore

then we meet
again one night
and i know how
it feels like to
pretend to be
as sweet as you
expect me to be

we talk we are
sober we laugh
we like it
we listen to the
music of the night
and we were so
silent we remember
so many things

and then you kiss
me in my lips
and you know
how tasteless
my tongue has
become through
my lonely years

i know

when i close my eyes
i do not remember
anything at all

the image is like
the wind
and it merely passess
coldly

so swift i never
had the chance
to feel anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Soon, Sometime

soon, is mother's usual word for hope so i may not retreat and lurk by the dark corner and weep.

soon when your papa comes soon when he is finally forgiven, soon

when the storm is over soon when the house is again strengthenened by its walls and scaffolds

soon when you grow up to be a man soon when you are big enough to understand

what really is the matter why the roof leaks why the door is always closed why the glass windows are misty

soon my son she says soon you will have stronger hands to hold on to a pillar soon my son you will have a brain that travels beyond this trifles soon my son you will have wings to fly

and soon you will know
that this life is our journey
towards an uncertain
destination soon my son

you will know that you will
always be going and going
and goind soon you will

know my son, that there
is no stopping that there
is only an overlapping

of waves and shore and
waves and shore in the

never ending ebb and
rise of life and death.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sophistication

sophistication amidst the
hunger of the masses
becomes a curse to your
further progress,

soon no native likes the company
of your strictures
no river is willing to carry you to
the other end of the sea
no moon shines upon you
no sun rises on your brow

how many times shall the black bird tell you
in the plainest notes of her ordinary song
simplicity is beauty
there is no other effective tool
to be loved by your
own people

be with them in the most ordinary even of their lives
breakfast consisting of fish and rice and water
and then a very nice conversation about the recent
adventure in fishing
there is no other effective tool than being loved by ordinary people
as they are themselves, so shall you be yourself
no pretensions
no sophistication
just simplicity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soren Kierkegaard is the existential, who one day reacted against tradition by insisting that the highest good for the individual is to find his uniqueness.

His journal reads,

'I must find a truth that is true for me... the idea for which I can live or die'

i agree. my own morality depends on me and not someone else

my truth is the truth that i see from my very eyes

for how can i look through the eye of another?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorrow And Silence Walking Hand In Hand

it is the sorrow that is always cold
cold as the moist ground
where the earthworms live
it has hands less the warmth of the
callousness

and it is the silence with a veil
nothing to speak about
that keeps on holding my heart
it has no hands anymore
but it has strong wings
and sharp beak

there is a land somewhere
where the eggs must be put to finally
make out
a sense of home

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorrow's Poem

now the letters start to blur
the hands with its fingers turn the page of humiliation.

the mind sharp as a scalpel takes out the pus of existence
puts it on a glass plate for viewing upon a high powered microscope

and in it one sees the realism of the minutest detail
about who we are not what we shall not become.

in simple terms, the dilemma of old age enters the temple
walks steadily upon a bridge and finds again the tears

a little fountain of the eyes
where birds dare not.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry But I Don’R Follow Instructions

so i read
your poem.

fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
but it is not my habit to
find out how you are doing when you are no longer there to greet me
when i arrive from a very long trip with someone else that you do not know
that you are not interested with
since it simply inflicts that pain
that you are getting used to

hello is strange word now.
it is not my friend, neither is the word goodbye

do not tell me that once i have said the word
i get tired of its face
the 'why' embedded in it
is perplexing
if at all i give it a thought
or a piece of my
mind

i like birds with strong wings
those that travel far away and do not come back

it they come back
they only bring memories
and sad stories

do i have to make a pool of tears again
where some 'unfit' organisms for a time swim and then die?

i like birds with claws those that know what wars to fight out there
sharp claws
that promise them to live some more years

do not underestimate my capacity for sorrow
my love for death

besides the birds i also have worms,
lots of worms as friends
they are too sympathetic to our causes
accommodating to our weariness
they know when to eat and rest
and sing the funeral hymns.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry I Do Not Have A Foolish Heart

Sorry I do not have a foolish heart
Loving her when she loves him
Loving her when she fits him
Loving her when the stars made her for him

I keep a love that loves someone who loves me
I keep a love that makes the other grow
I love the love that loves me in return

Sorry I do not have a foolish heart like hers
She loves him but he loves the other
She keeps him walls
she puts him in a cage
He runs he escapes he keeps on calling the other
She loves him but he does not love her and she keeps insisting

Sorry I do not keep a foolish heart.
That indeed makes my love so fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry Love

sorry
love for out of need
and practicality i,

who keeps my heart
below my head

has to feign you sometimes
for reasons that you
cannot understand

when i close my eyes
to kiss your lips
i am thinking of the future
of my world

keeping it away from utter destruction
from its
suicidal tendencies

and so tonight when the lights are off
i shed off
all honesty

i embrace you on another pretense
passionate and firm

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry Sleep Is Too Short

It feels like
i have fallen
from bed

in that dream
when i was about
to kiss you

and then the
awakening comes
too quickly

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry, But There Is No Condom In My Pocket

so sorry, about last night
i didn't have a pink condom
in my pocket. I know pink
is your favorite, and your
flavor is strawberry and
your lipstick is as red as
what i can offer you. But

i don't go for what is safe.
Oh, you must know the
dangers that we are into.
Without condoms included.
I got this ring, you lose yours.
My wife is very understanding.
And we keep on talking that
No one will know, that his is
the best secret place in town.

I drive the red car to hell.
You think that this is heaven.
We eat fire. We excrete guilt.

When will be the next trip?
I am sorry, there is none.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sorry's Face

i look closely at
what Sorry could be
its face:

eyeballs towards
the sky
chin stooping to
the earth
ears thinning
lips
sealed
every tooth
hidden
arms on the side
as hands
conceal the fingers
in the warm
pockets of the
pants

the feet kneeling
begging toes

and then the heart
stops beating like the drums
of the wild hunters
in Africa

then their is
this quiet

sunset in a transition
darkness is sprinkled with
bright stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Sort Of Compliance....

guess you must have noticed
that for the past few days this little world has been sick

nausea as they name it has attacked the
borders of creativity

but just the same the eyes have to wake up
as a matter of habit

and the hands continue to grapple with the keys
pressing the words

sometimes the words themselves ask if they are really necessary
for this morning’s attempts

the mind does not explain
everything must go and each must have a function of this certain

compliance. As days go by, there must be at least a line or two
along the doorway

Know Thyself. In fact it takes only two words
to complete what we sometimes call as the responsibility of compliance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soshana

i have spoken my lines
that is what i am told to do

and you have spoken your lines too
and that is what they are telling you to do

you cannot be my comfort
distance are not arms and distance is cold like ice

your words are mere words like faces without names
i have spoken and you have spoken

now i am going back to sleep
it is done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul

tonight how can i be alone
with my soul immersed
inside a matter of not having
to point the edge where substance
begins where ether ends
mesh and mash and wires and
trenches
the body feels a fenced property
on the other hand the soul feels
this energy of atomic particles
radiating like light penetrating glass
a quantum physics kept
which a want to read and yet
i cannot really understand too well
this intertwining of soul and body
of thoughts and awareness
of laughter and silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul Mate

a day is not complete
without her
and the nights are not
as cold as they used to be
until she takes the
place of emptiness
on your side

in sleep you are
more confident
no one harms
you even when
old nightmares
come

you place back
your hands to the
blossom of
your mother

she places her
hands on your hair
sleeps is as sound
as the silence
of the cotton

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul Mate

your legs do not make me
a waterfall,
your tongue do not make me
a river,
i am static as a rock
amidst this turmoil
i am a rope between two pillars
that do not snap out,

it is strange
i do not delight in that skin and
flesh,
it is over now, and i arrive at the
conclusion
i am not a vampire that needs
your blood
i am no dog to your bone,
i do not wish to taste anymore of
your flesh

it is not over yet
i still love what essence is there

i am looking for what you are not
to me
for all these years

i like you are air to my lungs
as memory to my mind,

i like the conclusion now
my soul wants to feel yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul Mate, Are We

when we meet
we feel like we are complete
i am always half of you
and we fuse

how can we ever forget
old stories and how can we ever stop
telling about new ones?

i like to cut this tryst so i can go my way
and you like to do the same
we have scissors in our hands
the sharp shiny ones
yet we keep on going on and on
like we are children
of old longings

we make the daisy chains
and there is no way we can cut the flowers
no way to butt in with the seasons
summer and springtime
night and day

how do we really mind
these ups and downs of pain and bliss?

they always intertwine
always telling us over and over again
that we are one

that we are supposed to be one
this time, this place, these bodies, these minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul Please Understand

Soul, you must understand
how this body sleeps with you.

Soul, you must remember
it has separate manners with you.

Soul, learn the sensual pleasures
of this body, its twists and turns,
its crooked ways, its perverted ways,
its insatiability, even its evil ways,

Soul, you have all the patience,
when the body is rested before its
time is over, Soul, awaken it,
shake it, let it shed off its dusts
of errors, its stains of lusts,
wash it with fasting, and repentance

Soul, be wise, and kind enough to
save this Body, until it rusts and
to dust it shall return, and Soul
when you go up there, Forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Soul, Life...

no poem teaches us poetry
not an ant

thology of laureated
poets, the books of grammar
teaches only

places and the pauses
like a flower arrangement

do you still have life?

it is the one that teaches
all things and leads you
to all places

grammar and then
metaphors of

what sorrows, lamentations,
grief, greed,

joys, ecstacies.
bliss,

it is the vase with water
the one in the garden that you choose to cut

and aver and adore

not books, not other person's poems
yours truly....

do you have a soul?

it is
Soul/Body/I

body
i have to
use you

soul
stay there
for
a while

sooner
i will take
care of you

body
keep calm
since i am
here
we shall be
together

soul
tell me
when
shall my
angel
come?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sounds

i love the sound of the pouring
of ice cold tea in the glass

i watch your hands gracefully
handling this matter between us

i love the sound of your sipping
i love the sight of your hands holding

i love life
i love everything around me

as my world revolves around you
i want to tell you, i love you so....

just a wish, nothing is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sounds From Kindergarten Kids

Kindergarten kids
Running, shouting, playing, chasing

Wild, cheering, mocking
and quarreling and befriending
In such short span

From where you are writing
And studying, thick files, and big books
And you look into these things
Taking notes

Through your thick reading glasses
You look at time

How time passed so quickly?

Once, the kindergarten in you
and your mama telling you she will always be watching you

and on that first day, you did not cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sour

some fruits are loved
for their being sour

it is their sourness
that reminds of their essence

like the green mango
it is even missed more
than when it ripened

but with you my love
do not worry

sour or sweet or bitter
we will always be together

RIC S. BASTASA
Sour And Salty Taste

to choose between
the sweetest lie
and the bitterest
truth
the way you
evaded me
i guess
you have chosen
the former

my truths
are never sweet
i am also
both salty and
sour

RIC S. BASTASA
South Of The River

how can i forget south of the river?
in May, the flowers are red all over the bend
in April the purple plums are ready for the picking
in March, the river is clear the pebbles showy
for our frolicking and swimming,
we first kissed there behind that heart shaped rock
south of the river

RIC S. BASTASA
Southern California

how i wish to say:

'You are so beautiful
Southern California...

i see
In Southern California
the wine makers
Planting their grapes
in their fields '

but i have never been
to Southern California

and i would be lying
if not bluffing to say
the same,

but let me (see) er, SAY:

Barangay Dos, Katipunan
You are so beautiful to me
the muscled arms of
Filipino farmers are plowing
the brown muddy fields
while the women bow down
wearing their buri hats
planting the rice......

i am watching them
under a tree
the wind blows
on my luxury.

RIC S. BASTASA
Souvenir Items....

one takes a part
only of the whole
to remind you
of everything.

that is the secret
of remembering.

for instance, when
i went to Iceland,
i only pick a pebble
which i got near the
geyser.

a leaf from Vienna
was enough, which i put
between the pages of
my favorite novel.

the most usual thing
which is easier to carry
is a ref magnet.

no postcards this time
but some pictures in my
cellphone.

in the Buddhist temple
in taiwan, i only took with
me within my lungs
the cold air there and many
are wondering if
it stays there

i am sure. For as long
as i live, it will always be
there
for now, all the ref magnets
fell, losing their magnetic grip
on the metal plates

i still believe in air, it
is lasting. Next time i will take
a chunk of Tibet's cloud.

or perhaps sunshine from Mongolia
as though it is like a note which
i keep inside my pocket.

RIC S. BASTASA
'And gradually they're beginning to recognize the fact that there's nothing more secure than a democratic, accountable, and participatory form of government. But it's sunk in only theoretically, it has not yet sunk in completely in practical terms.'

on practical terms
the neighbors are
still selfish with their
words and works

deep in their hearts
they never like
the democracy
that you are giving
them: they still like
to be violent and
kill whoever blocks
their way to their
churches and
houses and
cinemas and
gambling dens

RIC S. BASTASA
'When I first came out - 
I spoke just now about this need for human company, 
but after I first came out, 
I remember that after a few days 
I just couldn't stand so much company. 
It became too much again for me 
and I couldn't wait until 
I could go away 
and isolate myself somewhere.'

did i not talk about 
my wish to have wings 
and be with you 
sitting on a tree 
and be with all of 
you in the field of 
ripe rice grains?

did i not think after 
that i need to be 
alone and wish 
that i have fins 
to be in the silence 
of the depths 
of the sea?

did i not wish at the 
end that i have always 
wanted simply to be 
a stone to be thrown 
to the face of another 
person?

did i not wish simpy 
to be under a handful 
of stars without 
any syllable in my tongue?
Soyinka, At The Tip Of My Hair

I don't really consider myself a poet,

it just came out purely by accident.

i just fell down from a stair down to the grassy ground

and that started the first poem to another poem to another poem

like a stair leading me to nowhere

but there is no fear really just this sense of comfort and beauty

all around the dusk and twilights of my moments

RIC S. BASTASA
Soyinka, In My Body

'I found, when I left, that there were others who felt the same way. We'd meet, they'd come and seek me out, we'd talk about the future. And I found that their depression and pessimism was every bit as acute as mine.'

and i remember the talk
when we simply sit down
on that small space in the
park where all the children
have already left for home

when we face the sunset
and when we were talking
on the same vibrations
same vocabulary
same talk same theme
same outlooks and same
hope for the healing of the
dying light

when we feel at home
with ourselves without
seeing each others' eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Soyinka, Intro

'But the ultimate lesson is just sit down and write.
That's all.'

so with you charles.
and so with me
here i am
writing and writing ang writing

that's all
no questions asked
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Space Between...

there is a space between
the eyes
it sees better the eyes
also of the
observer

RIC S. BASTASA
Space Is Beautiful

i need not teach you
where to escape
the exit is always there
waiting for you
and from a distance
when the tremor of your
sad beginning is heard
once again
you must sing
to conceal what tragic
ending awaits you

i do not point
with my fingers where
you must be happy
you know it

it is always away from home
always it is
out there beyond us
as the chasm widens
we shall notice that space
is not emptiness at all
but beauty
unspoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spam

patiently you weave the mat
put there the design of life
hope
love
and you color it with a special dye
blood
sweat
tears
and when the mat is finished
you look at it with a certain contentment
all your longings are interwoven

a beautiful mat
where my love can sleep
the mat contains the wind
and the coolness of ferns
the warmth
of two lovers not seeing each other for years

what your neighbors say
do not really matter now

RIC S. BASTASA
Spasm

promises
of the
red scythe
now rusty
with
the urine
of the
frog

and so the
eagle
soars
in the sky

because
all the
the good
men
do nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Speak About The Love She Gave You

speak about it
freely given
all of it
nothing left
for anyone else

the love she gave you
is everything
inside her
she is emptied
like a balloon
that you just pricked
deflated

only you
can make her whole again
breathe in
the love you have taken
empty yourself too
and be deflated
for once

how does it feel?
it feels like
you are rising
the more you breathe out
the more air
you too breathe in

it feels like
you are full
you are so light
and now you are flying

RIC S. BASTASA
the night deepens
burying me ten fathoms more
without the stars
i take courage in my silence
speak i not
till the sun comes
till the flowers bloom again
i speak not
of my own sorrow
even to hear them
must i not
for it is mine alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speaking

someone inside me wants to speak with his heart
i know who it is but i am not listening
for he smells like a rotten fish
after all those years of being caught uncooked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speaking Before A Gathering In Marriage

i spoke before a
gathering of the
newlywed
whose faces are
as fresh
as the newest morning
in the village
and this i
emphasized that
for a marriage to work
even when the flickers
of love fade
always resort to
the comfort of having
no expectations
at all

that you cannot change
what you are
and so the only thing
to do
is accept what is there
and not to
question
what we are and
how we become.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speaking The Truth...

simply must you speak the truth,
do not choose the word,
say it when you fell like it,
like the way you make love with me,
no clothes, skin to skin,
no light, windows open,
the moon is our single witness,
the air spreads the news
tonight...

RIC S. BASTASA
Speaking The Words Of Loneliness....

i speak the words of loneliness
it flows with the rush of the river
it flies with the wind from the west
it is blown towards you

who live at the foot of the mountain
under the tall trees

despite the drought

this worm waits when will be the next leaves come
when will be the next bloom of flowers
in the middle of my

drought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spectator

On a Sunday
at nine
he sits by the window
watching
people passing by
bringing their burdens
he is not part
of this
sacrifice
he is the spectator
watching the day pass by

till the next level of
his lazy enlightenment
the sun fades away
and now the moon
he sits by the window
imagining
the night away

it will be the same on
another day of his life
this spectator

RIC S. BASTASA
Speech Of The Father's Bride To The Groom On Their Wedding

tonight i shall be giving away my daughter
to become your wife
i have taken care of her
so well
no mosquito has ever landed on her skin
no fly hovered over her hair
tomorrow she shall live with you
and she will be taking her clothes
and other belongings

please love her
just like the way we love her

but if for some reason
there may be disagreements and you decide to
part away from her
please do not say any unkind word
do not hit her with your hands
just let her return to us
and that will be enough.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Speech To Myself

i do not want to be responsible about what i write
like the way i write some words
on the sands of the shore
where the waves of the sea do the erasing to give me another clean slate again

but it is not as simple as that, i guess

what i write on some pages of this space
is read by a lonely creature who takes everything by heart in order to live for another day

and i like the way how my words may serve as guide or inspiration for the night like some stars distant but giving light still

but what if i had written something too depressing and then the reader puts an end to life

will i still be not responsible?

oh, i must be careful with what i write

there are lonely people out there
like boats without anchor
without ports to go
needing the light of the
North star
or the lighthouse somewhere

who knows? we could be
these lonely people

or the lighthouses giving
the light of home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speechless And Blank Space

a speechless woman
meets her blank space as she
rides on a glass windowed bus
back home

she steps outside
her world
embraces love and hate
both to same degree

she sets aside all words
in favor of thoughts
she sits facing the mountains
and then the sea

it is all in her head
and there is no space for writing

that's why. Yes, that is the reason why
she married
solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speechless.....

it is blank, i do not see anything
but here is everything
spread before me, all, all of it,
tiny little things, with all the colors
in broad daylight,
i simply have not chosen any word yet for it
i am confused, there is so much
abundance, profuse,
opulent
light and dancing leaves
wind, and breeze and colored clothes
hanging there
boats with their rainbow sails,

i am speechless
there is so much and i have no word for all
these beauty,

perhaps, there is no fair word to describe
what beauty is, or
what could i be to them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Speechless.....X X X

I, perhaps
love you
because your
face looks
like the past
that i
love so well

if, you can
read my mind,
i know
that this is
grossly
unfair

my love is
mute

but the word
that i give
you

is
(to please
you once more)

speechless....

RIC S. BASTASA
Speed

rising from oneself
to the highest
sky
alone flying and
diving
and those who
watch
thought that this
is plain nonsense
for that seagull
may finally shatter
its bird's head
to a rock
it is not as simple
as that
the seagull has
learned the trick
of smashing itself
on the water
like a rocket
with a fuel at
its back

to speed to art
to life!

RIC S. BASTASA
Spell Sorrow

you give him the image of the moon as it shines
now without the stars as you gaze upon the sky alone

(you skip the two 'r's intentionally
and you throw away
the 's')

the two 'o's of the moon are there as usual

you keep what was doubled when you simply stand there without any word.

it is you.

RIC S. BASTASA
you will hear the language
that I learn
when I speak to you
it will only be myself
who shall understand

RIC S. BASTASA
Spiritual Nudity

the challenge for spiritual nudity
is not exciting at all,

imagine what are you baring?
what are you daring?

you bare spiritually naked and then
parade your spirit by the pool
and those who expect something exciting
only sees nothing.

i am not excited at nothing.
and Nothing excites me anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spit To God

how foolish of you
to spit to God
who lives in the sky
the spit returns
back to you
who lives on
earth below

and you smell
as foul as your
own dried spittle.

spit to God &
you spit on your face.

as you hate me
shall you hate yourself

you get hurt so badly
and i am so sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spitting And The Principle Of Utilitarianism

it starts with a little agitation inside your throat
the nerves send the signal to the brain
for a clearer understanding of this tiny disturbance
reverberating this tickle
not really pain, this mass of liquids telling you
it is a saliva wanting to get out from your system
and all the nerves now keep telling you
there is no use keeping such a mass
of disturbance inside your throat
there is no need anymore
and the last thing you know
is what you did
without regret

you spit it out away from you

RIC S. BASTASA
Splinters

there are
silent
explosions of
our worlds
which we
keep as
secrets

eye are not
the kind
that fourths of july
speak about

we collide sometimes
explosions occur
again & again
and splinters of
broken selves
lay in space
floating like
spaceships with
consumed
batteries

what is strange is
that we see all the splinters ourselves
and we entertain hope

that soon this will be over
and that our very hands
wounded
can still pick up the pieces
and make
an artistic mosaic of our
bits and pieces
and we shall call them
us.
Splitting Images

often repeated
days are folding
a fault line
an image of land splitting
rivers rise
between us an ocean
in such a short time
yet we never notice it
until we never see each
other's shadow again
two islands
between us boats
going to other places
talking of other ports
my fault
i never told you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Splitting...

now i am comforted.
got used to doing another
and thinking about
another, if only i have
to survive,
i have to split this
self into
halves, one for you
savor it
and one for me
so i can
always
forget.

then we live
as happily as
ever after.

i am assured
this world too is split
into a day and
a night

a face of demarcations
the happy one
and the
grieving one

in their unity
a world is created
yours, mine
theirs, ours,

do not guess
this is more real

RIC S. BASTASA
Sponges Of The Heart....

faces do not matter now
a long time ago
a mole cannot escape
the mention

of an island
that lonely thing that
keeps us agape
about why

faces come like waves
of people that we do not
really care to know

who they are
and what they are apt to

they pass us by
and we pass them too
in that mutuality
of indifference

we are like saturated sponges
all wanting heat
to be empty again

RIC S. BASTASA
Spontaneity

on a spontaneity
i begin to put words,
whatever comes, without much selection process
i put the word
without so much scrutiny as to what happens next
without weighing the possible consequences
i know the law of physics
much more the rules of a good composition
we were taught that in the university
but the the rules true to its standing
are meant to be broken
one gets a style of his own depending on the
kind of grief
the face of joy the state of compulsion
the phobia and the scruples that
crowd the head
the heart,
i sit on the chair facing the screen of the computer
and begin to put the line of words
one by one
like they are vines growing right from my mouth
coming out from my chest
and then
something shows
a face of words, the eyes of the certain mood,
someone moves in there
dancing and then stopping
on a pause
confrontational about what is this all about
and why.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spontaneity...

spontaneity is
when you are busy eating
your breakfast and
suddenly a
chicken egg is thrown
at you and
with all the powers of
your instinct
despite that sausage
stuck in your mouth
you still catch
that surprise
saving it
from crashing to
the floor
thus catching it
whole.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spontaneously

luck
knocks at the door
you ask it
to leave

it doesn't
it is hardheaded
it claims you
as its
new master

then you dismiss it
again
you are still hurt
for many years
you prayed for it
wasted all your days and nights
invoking it

waddled in pain
dreaming for it
it did not come
it did not listen to you

and now?
you shoo it
like an unwanted bird
in your field
of sunflowers

in your garden of
ordinary days
where you expect
nothing
anymore from anybody
or anything
anywhere

this way
you make a conclusion
with or without it
you live
and you are happy
spontaneously.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spontaniety

the kids have it
their ways too easy
on this play, one's offense
so easily forgiven

when they are new
they do not need much time
to befriend their own kind

they do not ask for names
when they meet they become attuned
to their feelings
and the all become one gang
of friends in the neighborhood

there are quarrels and petty
as they seem to be
but they do not fight wars
for that long

peace perhaps shall reign
when we become children again

RIC S. BASTASA
Spontaniety 101

no excuses at this hour
we do what we can do
just that no language barrier
over feelings that gush like
wall clocks and springboards
you stand naked on top of our
sights on that board
below is the blue water of the pool
it is deep and then
you let go of that body
and like a bullet penetrates the
plainness
not painless really but
there is this sense of
i did it
i did it
on purpose and those of you
you see that
embrace regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spoon Feeding

when love is handed
on a platter
one begins to take
it for granted

when love is being
spoon-fed
on a mouth that
is not as hungry
as a lover
deprived of
sex for months
love becomes
so ordinary like
a traffic routine
like brushing your
teeth
every morning or
taking a hot shower
at night

love misses
wants something
like the adventures
of tarzan
the quest of freedom
for a
lawrence of arabia
love misses
those which are
film-like
a movie of the
night
where endings
sometimes
are too surprising
where beginnings
are strange
enough to know
that love has
just began

we must try
this: love unknown.

RIC S. BASTASA
Spring Of The Soul

over there
the flowers are waking
from bud
sleep

open a window
give God a little space
to be with you

put an empty chair of the
heart
where God may sit
and dwell

on the same direction
both eyes
thirst for joy....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sprouting As A Phoenix By Em

does no less than denude its object of the one thing which he has which is of value, and so it degrades him effectively.'

subjectify me?
where?

it is only through our communion
that you make me a subject

when you go away again
you may think
that i have become a stone

you are wrong
you have already subjectified me as a bird with eight wings

did you not see it in the navel of my body?
did you not smell it on the scent of my armpits?
when you were inside me did you not feel that i am someone so different than before
when you only caressed my hair and kissed my neck and licked my butt?
lover, do not underestimate my being
for i am being and you are being
in fact
i am more free than what you are
to your pebbles i am the river
to your twigs i am the leaves
to your clouds i am now the winds of chances
i now own the world
inside my mouth
and my tongue knows how to play your games
i am now a goddess transformed by your love
from the mud that i used to be
it is enough then
as you leave to your world where your heart belongs
i have already sprouted as a Phoenix.

RIC S. BASTASA
Square Minds...

do not wonder
amigo why we think
the same, do not forget
we were in kindergarten
together and the same
ms. old maid trimmed
our circle minds into
square cuts like the
way we look today: square
jaws, square minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Squirting And Whirling

poetry is
sawdust
after you have
sewn wood

it is what
you throw after
you peel

it is the settling
of sand
that you pour
upon a glass of
water

something that i
draw wildly
upon an empty canvass
with paints
whirling and
squirting

confetti during
a revolution somewhere
in manila
after the
dictator left.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ssssssssssh, Please Do Not Talk About It

sssssssssssshhhh
be silent now, do not ever mention my name
the connotations of my name
the one i talk about me about you
and us,
the rumors are always sweet
and you like them and you cannot hold yourself
from spreading them
to everyone who knows the power of my name
its magic spell
its sweetness like a coconut dessert
with you now
my name shall have its stains and i will be in ruin

ssssssssssssshhh, stop
do not talk about my name now,
the rumors may be sweet to the ears of my enemies
and false friends
they will have the dose now, of their own medicines,
thinking that i am down, depressed, or even dead
to the last detail of my own perdition,

i will rise to save myself and tell them all
that the rumors are not true,

i will show them a happy face and some dancing steps
some pictures of my big smile

no, they will not believe me
they will believe you, as expected, i have anticipated all these

today, i will die
laughing....

RIC S. BASTASA
St Anthony The Great

He saw all the devil's traps set upon the earth, and groaned and said, 'Who do you think can pass through them?'

And he heard a voice saying, 'Humility.'

RIC S. BASTASA
St Frances Xavier Cabrini

he travelled
he worked and his health suffered
he met and was weakened by a thousand difficulties
but to him
all those were nothing

this world is so small
the sufferings whatever were they
were just few
to him this world is nothing

the space is too small
imperceptible

because he is accustomed to dwell in eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
St. Catherine

the first time
i saw a Bedouin in
St. Catherine

he drove us in his
old white car
fading with the dust
everywhere

he has four wives
and eighteen children
and four horses

he owns no house
but he has also five camels

he tells his story
about Moses and Sinai
and the burning bush and
the tablets

at twelve the monks will
hold mass
inside the monastery

we have to pay him
30 U.S. dollars each.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sta. Ana Wind

have you ever
send autumn leaves
falling
making a heap
of yellow and brown
and orange
on the ground?

in the same manner
i have not seen
the sta. ana wind
but you make me feel
as though
i am within
the softness of the wind

the falling of the leaves
so sweetly

i love it
when you set me free
finally

my hair
keeping some of the
sta. ana wind
my hands
letting go the
autumn leaves
in my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Stability

when you wake up
in the morning
the night before when
you were drunk

you open same window
beside your bed
you watch the same
clock and you reset it
at the same time

the air outside is cold
and the drapes begin to
dance to the nuances of
what is sad and daily

same thing over and over
again
upon enumerated acts and
things

this is living and there
is nothing new
this is pure routine and
stability.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stabs Of Silences

a word slips from my tongue
slithering to your mouth and
from this distance i look at
you as you oblige a smile which
disturbs my peace for i must
have revealed much of myself to
you who already knew all the
answers to my dead end questions.
these are the moments of you know
me and i know you and we often end
each other with that stabs of
silences....

RIC S. BASTASA
Stage Four

stage four is of course, sure death.
the nerves are swerving and convoluted to utter disbelief.
he says, four months more, no bonus, not bogus, not
a leaf of lettuce that you play with your teeth or tongue
no figure of speech can save this inevitable crashing of cells.
age four, spell four, i will spell it for you. There is no word
to start with about tomorrow. There is no tomorrow. It is clipped.
And cut and set aside. There will be some discussions for a while.
Where to leave the pen and paper. And the basket of daisies
and glossy red apples. The green ones have to be give away
as early as the sixth day of our agony. Less pain you want it?
A glass of clear water. Pills and pins. Touch my hand.
I will tell you i love you (20x) but it is late. The sun at the port
is setting earlier than expected. The steamer has arrived.
No it isn’t. It is an old wooden boat docked by the side
of a very old river. Shadows. Darkness. Ripples of the river.
I hear the sound of the black bird. It is your name now that is called.
A hand with a candle. I see you taken,

What is important now is the peace of this bed.
It will be empty at the nearest hour. My love shall never die.
I whisper it to you. Closed eyes. Another journey and then
That man in the dark, drives us away and takes you.

To the other side of this lonely island.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stage Three

no one enters the house using the door.
The doors close without the use of hinges and locks.
The living room is turned upside down.
The traces of my steps are a myriad labyrinths of puzzles, cross, crescent, moon, sun, stars, and

dead leaves just below the body of a rotting log.
Log on. Say some more. This is freedom.
The railings are roses. The stairs are rivers.
The walls are faces of the one you make love.
The roofs are ideas. Theories live there and metaphors
Abound in the living is an old piano and you
Begin to play: Vienna woods. You dance the waltz with her.

Whispers mossy on the carpets. The toilet is kept empty
And shiny white tiles, glossy to the feel of your fingers.
The bedroom is bare. You too complete the picture.
An hour of sex. Gracious! This house is the most beautiful
House of our neighborhood.

It is not our home yet. Tomorrow we unpack.
The distance is our journey. And it is somewhere else
With someone you still love. It is not I.

I am just a picture: black and white, and dusty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stages Of Discovery

soon the walls are no longer working,
the stairs are not worth the climb,
the skin no longer holds this flesh,
at first, you are naked and beautiful,
then you become those ugly bones,
and then you are gone
the place is without any mist
there is no air, and then
what irony is this, we are both complete
and happier, in this newly found
emptiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stages Of My Own Growing

All the defenses i made
have fallen

i have become vulnerable
and now

waiting to be slaughtered
by the armored

truths of my being, but
i still have hope

that all these are but
stages of my own growing

till i become invulnerable
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Stained And Even

It was only one dirty word
You had thrown in my face
My right eye caught it like it
Were a hand
My tears carried the word
Like a virus to my veins
Infecting all my organs
As I got sick the following days
Of my life

I know what happens next
But I cannot just die until
I vomit that dirty word
That now I throw back
At you, then the rest becomes
History,

Some eulogies are written
As a compromise
Of this hate,
This one is for you
That you rest in peace
As I wait
For my own peace too
In my own time sooner
Than tomorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stalk

some get penalized
for stalks,

stalkers not
allowed here
and you are
warned.

what are stalks
anyway?
why should
we dislike
stalkers?

come to think
of it. Hold the stalk
and let your
fingers run
towards the
flower.
Feel the petals
and smell
the scent.

now you are
a stalker.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stand By Me

on the night that
has come
on a night that is so dark
when the moon
even we cannot see

please stand by me
stand by me
oh stand by me

(do you remember the song?
sing it for me then)

RIC S. BASTASA
Stand Or Even Leave.

please
take your seat.
Sit if you like,
If you don't
Stand
or even leave.

please
i say the word.
please.

but i do not
beg.
i say it with dignity.
stay.
if you like.

when i say
please
i accept
that you are not
at all
completely mine.

and neither i
am yours
completely.

now, since you
are staying
i am thinking
far away.

i mean,
the consequences.
i think
this is wisdom.

Love
always understands.
why.

RIC S. BASTASA
Standing By The Brook One Day

a stone from my hand
ripples the waters of the brook
taking me to the turmoils
of childhood.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At A Word...

it is this spontaneity that
keeps us going
there is no count nothing about
what's next
nothing planned, we are passive
receptors of what this
future brings us
upon a plate of waiting,

chairs may float in the air
the house may sail like a ship
the skies may just be like space
trips and unexplained as they are
unidentified

like the way we feel when we come
again together in
this nakedness of thoughts

flowers blossom no one pulls its stamen
the sun is up at whose command?

the waves move together towards that direction
as clocks tick, and ducks sail as

i try to capture the words to make things
what they are. There is no such thing.

i stare at a word, and force no meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At My Face In The Mirror One Evening

for a long time that i stared
at my face in the mirror
one evening
when the church bell
went ringing

midnight, yes, that was
midnight

i saw my face as a skull
and i was not afraid anymore

i must have been dreaming
i am not sure anymore

was it my soul in the mirror?
i doubt it

it was so white.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At The Ceiling

it was when i was about
to squirt
a useful, clinging idea
between my head
and ceiling
when the lights went out

it is a blackout again
in this ruined country
i go up the house
lay on a bamboo bed
and rest my hands on
my head
opening my eyes
i stare on the ceiling
for more questions on
my mind
this existential questions
like lizards
waiting for mosquitoes
lost
ready for the eating

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At The Dead Mouse

i poisoned that mouse
which ate my cheese
that i left
under my bed,
till now i do not know
the reason,
why that cheese
was there, why
i left the mouse dead
on the floor,
why i stared at it
as though
i am sharing my guilt
with the cheese
and the poison.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At The Monitor

i know i am not alone
experiencing this kind of stare
at the monitor when you think you cannot write
not because there is nothing to write anymore but because
you will not to.

of course you regret such kind of decision
that negates what you are what you do what hardheaded man
are you,

you begin again not thinking what thoughts are shaped of
there is no form that convinces you
everything is fluid like air shaping itself upon every
emptiness of
its container

what makes this void that takes a shape inside our brains?
what keeps us busy thinking about nothing
what makes us so passive
like empty balloons taking the shape of air pushed from the
mouth of our beholder?

ah, you may say
you are beholden to no one
it is the same thing that i keep on saying to myself
we like to think that all are smooth that at the end paradise reigns
again
that we are welcome
that no one shall be punished and forsaken
but i have seen the death of one
there inside his locked room
three days
gunned
foul
his body rotten
the guide was the group of flies
telling

here is the one
who thought there are no rules
even in love

ddy is he
he is dead and those who are alive
has something again to think about
the void that fills the spaces
of our pores
our hearts hungry again for instruction
our bodies
waiting for the next line

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At The Sun In Protest

staring at the sun on a noonday
in protest of what is happening to
all of the honest people
the annihilation of those who still
have integrity

i get blinded with too much heat
and penetrating light of the powers that be

expectantly i must surrender
for there is no other choice
they keep on reminding me
but i did not and i will not

in too much loneliness and feeling
left out in the corner of my choices
i begin to see the faces of my truths

these truths
all these painful truths of
a democracy veiled in the euphemisms
of evil ones

i have no regret
the voice of God speaks
and that is enough for me
my body is torn and rotten

my soul is emerging
triumphant at the end...

RIC S. BASTASA
Staring At You

We sound the same
I mimicked you for twelve years
Like a mynah bird
Your choice of words
Your accent
Nasal like the American guest professor
of ateneo de manila university

To a certain point
I wanted to be like you.

One night I went out
Of my body
Like a wind
I went into you as you breathe
For air

I took the tours
In your mind and detours in your heart
And even in the sensitive
Places of your loins
& groins
To find what is in you
That I love

I stayed longer in the chambers
Of your heart
On a closer scan of your arteries
a closer, careful look

I did not find you there
I did not even see
My picture of my face that you said
You really love

We sound the same I thought
We were never alike
We have never really spoken
i am shaken
Now I am back in my body
To be myself, this time just be myself

Staring at you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stars

the stars
are not just
cozetted
in the heavens

if i trace
my feelings
the stars are
in your hair

down to your
neck down to your
thighs

i gaze at all
these stars
trap them in the
net of my hands
smell them
and even taste
all of them

stars of my flesh
stars of my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
Starting Anew

i touch my chin
and scratch my cheek
there is something
a thought that
keeps recurring with a note
of an old piano
music
i am trying to remember it
but i can't

it is about our love, i suppose,
it was nice,
but i must, i decide, bury the note
in the deep silence
of the sea

i am making new tracks
on the shore
i am passing a river

RIC S. BASTASA
Starving

i may have starved for food
not having dinner with you

but i have seen you tonight
and you smile at me and

you wave your hand
and i let you go with him

my love i am more than full
i may be hurt, but my love

i am satisfied i am more than full
seeing you so happy with him

RIC S. BASTASA
State Of Affairs

there is a stain of
cocoanut oil in my eyeglass
and i keep on writing
and writing
whatever comes in my mind
i am patient
with the vagueness that the
glass is providing me
at any rate
the feeling is that
i am shedding tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
State Of Mind

what i keep on hearing today
are the sounds of your footsteps
moving away from me,

what can i say
i have no hold of you

i wish you a good life
i wish that love like a star shall give you light
to guide your way...

take care
this journey is not over...

RIC S. BASTASA
Stating The Obvious

when i arrive here
she left

there is no note
or text message

i do not have to say anything too

we both understand
what need not be said

i love it here
she goes home without me

home is without her too

RIC S. BASTASA
Statue

for how long can i be a statue in this house

stuffed

afraid to make the wrong move

that you finally discover that i am human too

........it will depend when you finally leave

tomorrow

next week will be quite long for our pretenses

we will be humans again

you are always cruel

in your quest for perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
Status Quo

350 days he studies it
and arrives at a conclusion
that it should be that

(what motive is there? what weather
has changed? the prosecutor is asking)

in 35 days after the careful scrutiny as it is named
there is a change of his mind
it should not be that, the bird caught in the net must
be set free

and so the broken winged bird was freed
no way it can fly
a bone had been permanently broken
and the cage
has been a nice home to it

i am left with this emptiness
a space between bench and door
between a you and I,

I will be writing a short sentence to all these
chaos.

i shall leave things as they are.

RIC S. BASTASA
Status Quo Ante

looking at her in my silence
how i wish i can tell her the sweetest lie that i can muster
to whisper in her ear

i myself cannot tell it to myself
i let things go
as smooth as perfect as it should be
in status quou ante

there is no problem there is no problem really
or if there is any
it will just take care of itself
even if i shrink like a gnat
i will keep my silence
just to make her happy

( Perhaps ) because i have loved her that much
and i do not want to accept it

definitely, it has nothing to do with the charms of an attraction
it is not there
the room is empty of its scent
and the wind is not there anymore

it is the solitude of an empty room
lights are switched off
and the beautiful evening begins anew
no complication no questions
just the two of us
sleeping soundly like the notes of music
on a score that is closed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stay And Die....

others may have
come seeking pleasure
others merely
for the unleashing
of a burden
for so many reasons
there will be more
arrivals
and there will be
no more
leavings
no goodbyes
this is the place to
stay
and die....

RIC S. BASTASA
Stay Put

dearly beloved
my dearly beloved self
stay put
sit and settle upon your
feet haggled upon your
hands upon your fingers
let all things come
upon you
the air caressing your body
the world under your feet
your soul crowned by the clouds
the space the universe
building its castle upon you
this being
hugged by everywhere
and everything

chair offering a seat for you
house offering a roof
stairs spreading before your feet
they are all coming
for you have become aware
and enlightened and
set free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stay, And Let Him Solve The Puzzle Of A Door,

the way to avoid
a silly confrontation is to
take silence as an option,
let the disturbance
talk, provide the words,
follow each thought
walk through it
till the end, if there be
a dead end,
stay, and let him solve
the puzzle of a door,
let him discover the
story of the escapist
who jumped over the
fence, run his way to
the other field, and
declare his own freedom
never to return to you
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staying At Home...

amidst the heavy rain
beneath the roof we built
beside our walls
and on the surface of the warmth
of our floors
we habituate on this house
that with love and compassion
we are humble enough
to call our
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Staying Put.....

because i like to make things
simple now,
or even simpler than simple
i cut edges, prune time, taking only what is necessary
to my hand and not to the eye
less colors, belittling events,
unifying tiny forces
into one
breathless moment
abstracting the least from the most significant
trimming even gestures
chewing syllables to my delight
reviewing patterns
and staying put.

RIC S. BASTASA
Steam

Steam
of the body
letting out heat
absorbing
the kindness of the other
one who does not love you
but gives in because
the other begs even
for a very slight
fleeting moment
of time's
careses.

RIC S. BASTASA
Steam Bath Thoughts

it is hazy, inside there are clouds
hanging on the ceiling,

lots of steam in here,
and it is here that i find what i want

love seems to be
not what i want anymore

it is hazy, but i find it here
it is hot and steamy and it makes me forget

what i am and who you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
things that amaze you
sometimes your hands holding on
to something too tightly yet
you hold not a grain of those beans
spilling all over your feet
the sound of violin playing slowly
at the opening and then faster
at the end
your feet cannot hold the dance
hidden inside your heels
you step and tiptoe on the street
as people gaze at you
a girl looks attentively and sways her head
saying it does not look good for a woman
at 45 still behaving like a
child what a shame she says when she
behaves like a woman
despite the pinches that she receives from
mother and there is the man who dusts off
a tinderbox as he finally finds his
hidden treasure his toy soldiers all stuff
like that taken away from him when
he was once a young boy beaten almost
to death by a cruel father.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stenographic Notes

every word is accounted for
there are numbers
there is weight and probative value
you either win or lose
by the scales of another creature's
subjective mind

good luck
may you not rot
but grow

wisdom is slim and lean
and scarce
it is both hunger and thirst
at the common denominator
you know is pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stenogrphe

i catch her
reading my poems
on the internet

and she could not believe it
why i am writing poems

and she asks me
why?

well, i write because

i have nothing to do

and i like it

when no one understands me

who likes to read poetry

anyway?

you?

drama.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stepping Into Something New This Summer

white sea spreading before me
so silky
tiny ripples of the wind
from a far
bringing some stories
from the other island

some leaves fall from
the pitogo tree
some flowers pink and white
lay on the shore

white sands of silence
and peace
soft whispers of the winds
seeping in my skin
i am barefoot
i am naked down to the waist
i am waiting
for the sun to descend upon the bosom
of the horizon
i am dreaming of palm trees
soft winds
of summer

a door opens in my mind
i get in
stepping into something new this summer

RIC S. BASTASA
Stepping On The Stairs

in wanting to go up
you step on the stairs

on the first step
you have to please this black dog
with the meat of a cat

on the second step
you have to deceive this white cat
with the whiskers of a fish

on the third step
you have to please this pink mouse
with a collar of a black dog

rising on the fourth step
you have to convince the hawk
that the white cat is dead

advancing on the fifth step
the bull demands that the fish
must be caught with its fins clipped off

the sixth step is meticulous
you have to find a way to
reconcile the black cat and the white dog

on the seventh you will be confused
what to do and whom to really please
to reach the eight step

the ninth step has this owl
speaking to you to finally proceed
to the tenth step

and you want to advance some more
trying to figure out what these animals
are asking you to do without
creating all the chaos
you want to please them all
to get what you want

finally you take the tenth step
and you are too weary and guilty
and up there you find
there is really nothing worth
the taking at the end

there is just the wind
blowing your hair telling you nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Stepping Out Of The Door After A Cruel Storm

i step out
of the door

i open a world
of
surviving
daisies

foliate
to find
the first light
of the morning
sun

after the night's
cruel storm

RIC S. BASTASA
Stereotyping

for one thing
the insects work on
instincts

the lone ant
always follow the
other ant

just like the worms
en masse
going to a direction
that they do not
really know

the misdeed of
one cannot
always be the misdeed
of all

a tick
and another tick
how can they
be the same?
for sure

RIC S. BASTASA
Stevens

after he gave him the
money he walks
away just like
that and it was
many years back
then and he
cannot remember
his face
anymore
except
the flowers and
the tributes

it is very cold

of course,
he died.

that is what
happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stewardship

you claim ownership
based on hardship, this land, this house
this car
you touch the skin of your forehead
reminding those who see you
emaciated
of the sweat and
the hairs lost

there is that time
when the car breaks down, the house
foreclosed (as it is on mortgage)
when the land does not bear
any fruit
someone takes it
you begin to read the trend
you ask how is this happening

you can't take this
you cannot breathe and sleep

someone tells you, this is life, welcome
stewards all are we, we pass, we were just visitors here
all these never for all the times
belong to us
we only discover and then
they find their own ways back
to the real owner.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sticking To Each Other Alone

3 p.m. meeting
it starts with a hesitation
to go or not to go
but i have decided to
go and speak
as they listen
offering some solutions
which i should have kept
as mine alone, what is there within me
that opens up
to those that have been putting me into disgrace?
i am trying to capture words
to help me understand this void
hoping that there must be something as concrete as a stone in there
or perhaps a snail
feeling the smooth feel of a plant skin
i drive me way home
imagining the grimaces of those who pretended to listen
and who signified that they will
consider my points
for ponder
a reflection in a mirror as that old wicked woman was trying to say
but i closed my mouth
and did not blink
staring at her saying silently to my soul
'this is the enemy
that i must pulverize'
and for which for years i had no courage
she is here
in a confrontational situation still mocking me with her
yeses.

i look at my watch signifying that i must leave now
as the driver is waiting
my wife signals that she is going with me
we do not ride the car
we tell the driver to wait as we still need a walk
have pizza and start to review matters and talk
about what are we doing with our lives
why are we anchoring it on them

i am silent
i will not tell her that that will be the last
i don't fit there

i am neither round nor square.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sticky....... 

the spanish guitar plays
i love the sounds of strings

they are like Russian ballet
dancers
tiptoeing then dropping their
toes on the stage floors

my fingers giggle like excited
seaweeds on a clear sea

my feet are dancing and my mind
is traveling to Barcelona where

some sticky memories were left
and perhaps with this long absence

must have dried on the floor where
we once rubbed our bodies tightly

knit like silk threads in the pillow
of a recently married princess to her prince.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stiff Like Steel With Nothing To Feel...Or Fear

i am not
doing what i am
supposed to do
today

i am simply flowing
with the tide of
time

i let myself be taken
where it is heading
feeling like a leaf
fallen and nothing

somehow it is giving me
that feeling of this lightness
of my being
where i am no longer in
control

i can control this i know
i can stop whenever i want to
but no i will allow this tide
of time to take me where it
wants to

i just want to know if time
too is responsible for my future
for what happens next
whether i grow or shrink

i feel happy sometimes
when i am no longer in control
for whatever happens
i have always someone to blame
and i am not responsible

but this will be only for a moment
a break of my hard days
a little gift of surrender

let me be weak today for you
must know
i have been strong for all those years

and you get bored with strength
stiff like steel
with nothing to feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stigma

he rose from the ashes
after the fire
he lost his house and
everything he has are
nothing but chars

years the stigma sticks
the trauma continues to rig
his heart

it is not gone
like the way he continues to live
his life rising as a star
though distant but shining still

RIC S. BASTASA
Stigmatic.....

body is bent
the neck is
arched carried by
the head
as the hand begins
to press those
letters on the
keyboard
trying to figure out
what is more
important

the search for
wisdom
on the winding paths
of dawn
the labyrinthine
cries of the boy
upon the trickles of
rain
stigmatic

RIC S. BASTASA
Still A Man's Best Friend

a dog is a good escape
you take it with you
in your arms towards the door of the house
into a garden into a path that leads to the woods
and you walk with it
and you think a lot and
the dog does not speak

you like this
the world listens the dog jumps
waggles its tail and moves ahead of you

always the best of friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still A Taboo....

and i remember
zorba, the great
zorba,

his dance, his
romance,
his life, and then

i wish i were
zorba,

i open my eyes

i cannot be
zorba, i am in

this place where
zorba is
still a taboo....

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Alice....

Love
is still the final word
even
during that inevitable
forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Alive

When I feel that I am nothing,
Empty hands and light head
When I feel that I am floating
Not knowing where to go
Or what to do
Not remembering where I come from
Not knowing why
Things must go and disappear

I touch myself
I pinch my skin
I move and occupy another space
To check

If I still set aside
What Is there and what isn’t

I move to fill an emptiness
I go I step forward
To know where life is

I inflict pain
Just to know if I am still alive

RIC S. BASTASA
Still As Always Flawless

unbroken
that is what ought we are
always unbroken

whole unyielding
bread unsliced
wood uncut

though at times erratic
but still as always
flawless

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Breathless In Disbelief

it is always to see
a world of openness, like the way the fingers open
when you burst in love
like the way the heart breaks loose from the buttoned shirt
to become a sun shining upon the hills and penetrate the windows
of so many souls,

it is always easy to tell that you are the magnanimous
space always occupying what world is there
a relative of air that fills the lungs of those who are still afraid to
breathe

i am always at a loss of words
the reality is too much
a rage of wisdom a profusion of grace a gush of all life
and it is here
in my fingertips

still breathless in disbelief....

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Dark Like The One Last Night

a dark rose growing from a dark concrete crevice of this deserted building on a dark night spreading its dark petals for dark dreams

on a fine morning when darkness is gone the dark rose comes out in the open to meet the sun embracing it with so much light turning into something sort of a blood reddish colored rose something like glowing

but still dark like the one last night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still In

On that hammock
i keep on telling myself

'this is temporary
soon things return
to its original smooth
and proper
dimensions'

i do not pray much
but i pray

that life irons out
its own creases

that i soon know how
to live again
just like that smooth skinned
yesterday woman

that the river will recontain
water on its banks

that my mouth shall thirst
for tongues

that my tongue shall keep
some words till dawn

i pray and i pray some more
until

morning breaks again with
light on its hands

there is mug of coffee on the
rail by the window
and its fumes are showing me
how life breathes in space
there is a vine with more leaves
da flower at the end
da tendril still imitating the fingers
of my longings

everything is alive here
everyone is singing out there

why i do not join them?
why? why in the world will
i say that i do not know how to
live my life everyday?

it is all in the mind
it is all in the mind

decide for now, i tell myself
oh yes, i am still in

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Looking

I am still looking for the taste
of that last kiss

the kind of warmth that the last hug
can give me

the kindest word that can move me into
tears

of joy and the most justifying goodbye
that must be said

so that if i finally go away i may not look back
and turn to salt

like the wife of Lot.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Not Stilled.

Caesar
complains that
he had
become alone
finally

his parents
died and the house
is big

all the servants
are still there

how can he relate
to their fears

and sorrows and
poverty?

caesar must not
complain about being left
alone finally

karma, karma
works in all walks of life

to caesar and the rest of
the caesars

the scissor cuts now
these paper hearts

falling into the sea
and the floors

floating, then sinking
low, lower

and still not
stilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Ongoing...Reforming....Bloody Country

something is going on
in my country

it is this killing of my
brothers and even sisters and
fathers, and mothers too and

do not exclude the children,
and so i went up there in the palace
and ask someone closer to the king
who is a friend of mine

and he said, it is just the beginning
and there is no point worrying for
we are killing the criminals and they
must hide where they are now
for to the utmost we are still pursuing
them, till hell,

pretending satisfaction i left the palace
still frightened, and the question keeps
coming back,

'by the way, who are these criminals? '

simple answer: they are on the list.

and what is the list?

answer: it is confidential.

what a life!

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Searching For Meaning.....

alone you find
a place
a newly painted room
off-white
without an odor
or scent
the curtain is old
orange
with suspicious dust
and recalcitrant
roaches,
the music is the sound
of the air-conditioner
which is not that
cold
to make you alive,
but here you are
writing another
poem
searching for meaning,
and sometimes the meaning
you find
is the meaninglessness
of every item:

a blunt stapler
a stain remover
a pencil without a head
an ear cleaner

a sunless world
a moonless nook

somehow you want a connection
whatever that be
to survive another hour.

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Sleepy (But Cannot Sleep)

a red rose with
sixteen petals
dew on one of those
three leaves
seventeen thorns
a blue butterfly fluttering
and now hovering
proboscis
connecting

dawn, cold air
twilight, light seeping in
my mind
three hundred sheep
i am still not asleep

in my mind
light, warm light breaks in
through the shutters
of my mind ....

RIC S. BASTASA
Still Worth It

his only gift to his friends after those long 25 years in today's reunion is to say the grace before meals

we understand of course his prayerful nature and his stingy ways his greed for money and selfishness were never lost despite the loneliness of the years....

RIC S. BASTASA
Stimulus Response.....

when you feel that you are pushed to the edge
and there is no more possible space for patience

what kind of language would you like me to speak?
what mode of courtesy do you expect?

blame me not for the foul language, the curse and damnation
that i bombard you every minute of your day

forgive me but i am just giving you what i think you deserve.
you violence begets my violence, you ill wind begets my storms.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stinking And Kinky

an aching tooth
is a whetting of stone
with a knife
of steel

it winds itself to
the inner core of the
brain

the pain lingers
like an old memory
no distraction
removes it

by analogy is this
aching heart
making me soundless
in the middle o
this crowd
deaf to the sounds
of your celebrations
lame to the
calisthenics of love
blind to the delights
of romance

an auger to an ogre
sticking to what is
stinking and
kinky....

RIC S. BASTASA
Stinking Fool In The Pool

sometimes
the heart is also heavily loaded

like a cloud gathering mist
and shall in any moment
rain

sometimes
you lose control about what you are carrying
something slips away

and no matter how you pick it up
you can never hold it back

sometimes what is wingless
turns otherwise
a stone turns into a fish
just to lose itself
from its prison

sometimes i fell just like that
heavily loaded and i want to have the wings of any bird
just to get away from
what is here

from what is unfortunate
from what is miscalculated
from something that i can change
and be simply away from it all

sometimes there is no choice
however
except to stay and be numb and be no bird
but a
stone

deep in that muddy and murky pool
stinking like any
other fool
Stone

how is it to be a stone?
how is it to be hard
and unfeeling?

how is it to be still
and immobile
rooted in
its place for years
and centuries
not growing
not speaking not listening
to the songs and sighs
of the river?

how is it to be completely
defenseless against
the moss
that invades and
covers
your body
of stone

the coldness
of the rain and
the boredom of the time
in years, in centuries?

how is it to be just being
inanimate
unmoved
untouched and
untouching?

you
you touch no one and nobody touches you
an island
of stone
you
are the stone
the rock
against
the middle
of the raging river

and i am asking all these questions to you.

oh! i am always the foolish one
petrified
facing you all day and getting
no answers

RIC S. BASTASA
Stone Is Not A Decision

It could be
That i have chosen the
Stone

Rather than the
Tendril

Trees still
Amaze me

But it is still
Me

Stone upon a
Path
When you pick
Me

Not my fault

When you

Hit yourself

I have nothing
To do with any

Bad blood
Shed

RIC S. BASTASA

how well do you know each stone?
there is no dispute to its color, its silence,
its shape. You have taken one inside your room,
and stared at it for long. Its silence captivates you.
Here, silence begins to have a conversation with you.
To another level however, since silence uses not a word,
ot a sound, but there is this
ongoing communication.
The stone asks you: why have you chosen me?
You tell it, you have so many things in common
since birth.

you have been stoned.
you are stone.

and so there must be time to know each other much better.

stone to stone.
silence to silence.
hardheadedness to hardheadedness.

hit me the stone screams. hit me.
and so you hit yourself with it thinking that by doing so
you have followed its
pact with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stones And Butterflies

We talk about stones

Stones can be
Sensations if
We keep on
Talking about
Stones not as
Stones

You have stones
You like them
They become
Diamonds which
You keep

Those who watch
Us feel stupid
They laugh and
Laugh

And we laugh at
Them
And then they become
Stones
Which are
Sensational

I am stupid
I laugh with you
But i never like
Stones

They’re hard and
Faceless and
Silent and
So stupid for me

I like butterflies
And so i set them
Free to look for
The flowers they
Love

What i like in
Them is that
They die in a
Day or two

Without a trace
Where their broken
Wings are

RIC S. BASTASA
Stones And Sands....

i guess we have
never learned the right
use for this
we have not mastered
its nuances
for the sounds of the
wind and the lullaby
of the grass still remain
strange like someone who
left years ago and has now
arrived but we fail
to recognize
for we all have changed
into the numbness of
stones and sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stones From Heaven...

Joy died.

The Spinster sends the text Message which the Flirt reads aloud in the Gathering of the Living. It says:

Dear Flirt,
I cannot answer all of your messages.
I am grieving over the death of Joy.
I refrained using words. But this i must tell you
I am in grief, I cry all day,
and sometimes I think that when Joy died earlier than expected, I think, she must be lucky,
as the Living Them brought the Niche,
decked with assorted flowers, and
garnished with evening prayers.
I wish I had the same death.

I heard this in the Gathering of The Living,
and I joked that I am praying for Spinster's early death
and I will be bringing flowers and some followers
to recite the Usual Prayers.

Flirt says, If the Spinster hears this
There will be another ten months of Non-Speaking Terms.

Well, I admit, there is more plasticity always going on in the Gathering of the Living.
Meanwhile, to lighten the Moments of Grief the Bad Guys are playing Cards, drink their rum, smoke their cigars,
and you say it correctly

They always find Joy in polluting this Innocent World
Deprive it with Fresh Air and claim that they are the proper residents of the Gathering of the Living.
Stooping Inorder To Conquer

to lead you  
i must follow you a while  
to teach you  
how is it to be both  
a leader  
and a follower  
we climb the steps  
to heaven  
we descend the stairs  
to hell  
and when this education thing  
is finally completed  
i leave you  
to follow and lead yourself  
either you finally go to heaven  
or you burn in hell  
it all depends  
on what leadership qualities  
have you finally  
got.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stop

she wants me
to stop spilling the beans
she wants to cook
all of them
with a little salt and seasoning
she begs
that we dine together
and eat all those
jelly beans

RIC S. BASTASA
Stop Is Such A Taboo In The World Of Inspiration

in the world of inspiration where
the fireworks come like an everyday feast
in the world of colors like dusk and twilight
and summer nights and auroras of the stars
and the silvery moon sliding on the shiny river,

the word 'stop' is a taboo, for in the world of imagination
where everything comes and goes
like the snap of a finger or the blink of an eye
the world is a long, and wide, and winding river
without banks and ends
with a mouth always opening to the sea beyond this horizon
where everything that floats and swims along with it
is taken and made a part of the beautiful world
of sights and sounds
and space and sense

in my world there is only the ceaseless flow of freedom
of thought, no one stops me
i may rest for a while and take a look at something that catches
my attention like the burst of red oranges in the sky
and too,
like that creature
that person that takes a mutual look
once in a while, a pause,
a comma, a hyphen

but then, i am back to the world of the river
the world of clauses and dashes,
flowing, floating, flowering

forever flowing, unstopping, unceasing, always going and going
and on and on and on, to the flowing waters of the soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stopping

This morning i did not attend mass

i woke up earlier than yesterday and
i was carried away by thoughts that keep coming like profuse light

outside, and into the window of my soul
i did not think at all

it is like the world is heavy with ice in the sky and then it melted
abruptly causing flood to my
brain,

i felt a cascade of what i cannot explain
i did not even bother what all these mean

when you are carried away logic dies
when you are carried by a flood and you think you will drown
when you see a drift wood ahead of you and you are about to be hit by its weight
you do not scream

what i remember was that feeling of being a stranger
to the world

it is a river taking every piece of us to nowhere
and we are travelers with empty pockets and trembling hands
without right to ask where shall we be taken

it is just this drift. so poetic and formless
taking its shape to what we want to utter but still can't

so i keep on writing, my hands blind on the keys
but punching the letters
making the words, forming phrases

which i do not understand too well,
the same way that you feel when you like me arrive
at the last
word
a word that means nothing but
stopping

RIC S. BASTASA
Storm

stuffed on the shadowy
green of coconut leaves
just below the window

vibrations of green
captured in camera

RIC S. BASTASA
Storm...

i remember
i did not stop the car
as i brace myself
for the well announced
storm

large drops of rain
hitting the windshield
there is no
road visible
lightning and thunder
hitting the trees
with a flash of
ghostly images

i was always
ready
i had no one
and no one
had me....

RIC S. BASTASA
Storms

no storm has a strong wind
that takes the roof
of your house
that levels coconut
trees to kiss the
ground like some
lizards kissing
the floors
on late afternoons

no storm is harsher
than those that
erases a neighborhood
waters rising
people perishing
cattle and cars
stolen from you
on the wink
of an eye

no storm is greater
than this

this storm inside
us that nobody sees
and feels
except the heart
to a time ticking
and soon
will burst and
kill and erase
the whole world
right at the
very cold stare
of your eyes

the tempest within
and you shall be lost forever
only if you do not
hold on to life
you must beg

RIC S. BASTASA
Storms In Our Lives

do not fear the storms
you will always be there
set by time
they follow the cycle of life
and all so temporary
when the damage is done
we will still be there
to repair
when the sun is up again
when the sky is as blue as the sea
we shall learn how to play again
to live and survive
to have fun
to laugh to sing to dance
and when the storms come again
we dig foxholes
where we hide our dreams and aspirations....

RIC S. BASTASA
Storms Just Come And Go

storms come
and go
what is important
is still you

my dove
with a green leaf on its beak
on the
ark's window
pecking

RIC S. BASTASA
Strategies For Living Life

when he goes out into the world
there are no arms waiting
it is loneliness that walks with him

so he decided to stay and close the
doors and windows

thinking that in this way the world
will love him as others expect

the rope of loneliness chokes him
and so he prepares to go back into the open

he dresses well enough to face the wind
and dance with the shadows

they demand that he tells him his real name
and not wear a mask and sing the usual song

he refuses to cater to a brutality
he goes back to his room and reads a book

and closed the door again
and he grows up into a very strong silence

confident upon the soundless nook and
expects no one to call his name again

at the end he learns this game of
responsible loneliness

the one that does not speak when hurt
that does not smile even when seduced by joy

RIC S. BASTASA
Strawberry Lips

her lips can shape
the words
even if we are distant
like star
to the sailing boat
on the sea

her secrets are the
sounds
hanging in the air

i am deciphering
each word
through the luscious
lips
so red
so real and so moist

RIC S. BASTASA
Streams Of The Rivers Waters

the meditations of the man on the river
how long will it take him to his nirvana?

the lotus in him is what i am seeing now
and his eyes do not mind the working of

this world. I see waters running on his head.
I see rivers in his veins. I am silent and still.

I am this pond watching how a lotus grows.
How things are with the toads. How time

falls like a teardrop, creating the ripples of
my it is. Beauty at its core.

RIC S. BASTASA
Streams Of Thoughts

the streams of thoughts are like the locks of the hair
of a woman
flowing with the air one windy day

tonight these streams of thoughts flow like a river
to the sea
to your mouth to the door of your heart
this time
the exit is unknown hidden by the consonants of your words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Streams Of Thoughts Into The Sea Of Our Loneliness....

love has journeyed
to a certain destination
where our bodies
are not needed anymore

our thoughts bloom into
flowers along this road
towards a castle
and we both know the magic
word to open its door

once inside we realize what
love is: you go right and
i go left, and then we sing
the song we love, mine to mine
and yours to yours

for love is respectful of our
own ending songs
i go for the birds you go for
the rabbits

streams of thoughts into the sea
of our loneliness....

RIC S. BASTASA
Streams Of Thoughts...

when alive and young
he teaches what should be loved
telling all the reasons why
the heart patiently listens
and with its slow beat
signifies that it understands all
these and that
it knows what compromises are

for the good of the body
and the society
following the code and giving
honor to the family

your sister need not be ashamed of you
or you yourself humiliating your own kind

time sides with the obedient
and life proceeds smoothly like a road without bumps

soon the heart turns dumb
but too honest with its sense

though not drunk but feeling that it has overworked
its veins and crowded its chambers
with dictated feelings of what must and should be
it sighs for rest and now must stop

where is love you ask? it was never here
the heart had been empty since then
no one so true lodges inside it

in its emptiness the heart sinks and lays flat
on the dry land of the chest

flat, moronic in its stares, lost and never knew
what next to do
Reason tries to resuscitate but it never liked
its air, its lips
it dies, but Reason does not really know the
real cause

it justifies: it dies a natural death
just like everyone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stressed Out

too many thoughts come rushing
each wanting a peculiar treatment
one wants to be a syllable dressed
in the blackness of the
lonely night

while the other wants to be a clause
without a comma
hating the period
it wants to be a mouth open
like the crocodile silent on the bank
of the river
waiting for a fly who is lost along its
riveted ways
wishing to swallow a dropp of the
bucket realities

of course there is this sentence
without a thought of its own
the penalty
that not any of you bothers whether
mankind which suffers
i know
deserves to kill that lost fly in the mouth of this
alligator society.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stretch A Hand

when i stretch a hand
to touch your confusion
thinking that confusion is coldness
and that my clarity is
a hand of light
i am not really counting some numbers
as though i am rehearsing for a
dance
it just happens and as you call it
just the way it is
it is as spontaneous as rain falling
upon those brown grasses
dying on the mountains.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stricter Face

On a summer's day
I look at my face
Into the mirror
Finding Grandpa's
Stricter face

RIC S. BASTASA
String, Kite

i complete something today
dawn, there is dawn searching for
the door to morning
and it is closed

i look at an inspiration
it is not really good for me
but it completes me
this morning
the words that lay open and
never shut
to a conclusion
the one that makes me happier
to another day

there is something like a flesh
and it is pressed like a cloth between two iron sheets
there is heat
and it is not burned

there is a string in my hand
that holds a kite
i will cut it now and release
what all i had
to the air

it falls down
helpless to the ground
and no child ever
picks it up today

Monday, the second day of the year
the kite is free and it has no power to fly again in clear skies

separated from the string
nothing is noted to be significant
the way you see it
Stripped Of Love

stripped of love
a god of love falls

to the ground he
feels anew for

now he must face
lust to make himself

a man, his new face
as a lover glows

a new fire to the hearts
of all the lonely women

RIC S. BASTASA
Striptease

she undresses slowly
like a flower shedding off
her petals

it is this slowness that hooks me
unable to stop
my gaze goes wild like a hawk

until she lets go off everything
that covers her
and then when everything is seen
what is left is this pity

seeing nothing but the emptiness
of my humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
Strolling On The Memory Lane

oh, i went to memory lane
too,

i've seen much already.

i come back to what i am
and what i have become,
i hold on to my vision,
my dreams

i write about hope, and
imagine

my future, another 20 years,
another 30 years more,

i pray,

the memory lane is black and white
and then

it faded like a denim
a murky river where i lift my feet
up above the water

and as i move towards the shore,

i decided, i thought,

the memory lane serves me
no more

it was short, and it will not be
repeated

i wake up, and then i forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Strong And Alone

when i am taken away
and you cannot do anything
but stay

ah, you cannot but learn the tricks
of life's final decision

you live alone
and strong on the waiting
for the next trip

where your name is listed
on a yellow paper
on a bus that has no return
that driver that does not speak
on a name tag that is blank

RIC S. BASTASA
Strong Belief In The Self

i believe in
myself
i believe that
i have
something to
say
i believe that
i badly need to say
what i have to say
and that you
badly need to
hear all these
before it is too
late
and so here i am
speaking before
you in the silence
of my letters
pressed by me
fingers on the
keys

and now i must
rise to speak
twitting like a bird
not a Marc
Anthony to his
beloved Caesar

and now when i
am through i must
bow before you
and then
i leave
fully emptied.

RIC S. BASTASA
STRONGLY worded
the good men did nothing
and so evil triumphed,

well said on that day of
our independence,

after clutching all those six years
the bad men flourished,
crime rates
fly like black birds in the skies,

and all the bad men laughed and
those caught in the national penitentiary
continue with their air-conditioned rooms
spa and sauna, and money
and high tech cellphones,

did you say you did well?

we had given you the chances
and everything
yet nothing has changed.

we voted for that man whom you
call bad, murderer, and
dictator, because you never
did well,

now, do not tell us whom to
choose, because we chose you
in the past and nothing
happened.

STRONGLY worded, you have
to shut up
because you never
put up
now, move out and
let another one
take the reigns
of this country with
a lot of wild horses
and beasts.

Again, we wait,
take a look and
vote again,
after another six long
years.

STRONGLY WORDED, we have no faith
in you anymore.

Goodbye sadly...

RIC S. BASTASA
Struggles...

fifteen minutes of poetry
life.

then everything
anything goes in my life

a struggle for words, and deeds never chosen
but fed
just fed, in this world of work and
survival,

rafts on a sea of rage
stars shining even on mornings

RIC S. BASTASA
Stunning

Such is Singapore
To Him
Cheaper than Australia
And yet so
Stunning

The buildings rise
Touching the Skyline
The air is clean
There is no Traffic

And poetry abounds
Like butterflies
Like Orchids
In rainbow colors

RIC S. BASTASA
Stupid

Honestly, I like the word
Stupid,
I like you calling me
Stupid
In all the stupid things
That you think
I do
Which I think are
Stupid too,

Stupid!

Stupid makes me feel
That I am
Non-stupid
That I am nobody
That I am not
Like you calling me
Stupid
That I am not like you
That I am not
Alone
That I have no reason
To be sad
That confusion is not
A disease
That we all belong to one
Beautiful world

Stupid!

That is enough
Heaven for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Stupid And Warm....

he was too trusting
and stupid and his hands
are cups
of coffee that the woman
beside her
are holding on.

they both make fire
to light the place where
they do not really want
to see their faces....

RIC S. BASTASA
Stupid Cupid

stupid cupid
on that stupid day
hits my stupid heart
with his stupid arrow

stupid blood flows
from my stupid heart
and you are there
stupid enough to
just watch me

on that stupid day
i fall in love with you
and so stupid enough
i never tell you

and you are there
on that stupid day
watching me
and stupid enough
you love me too
but never tell me

stupid day stupid love
stupid cupid stupid us

RIC S. BASTASA
Stupid Lust....

you know that you are
so tempting
and you keep on
tempting me to do
such a thing
which i have not
resisted for the
past times with
you

actually, this i
must say without
much pretense,

you are not pretty
at all
nothing of such
significance
you do not stand
well in a crowd

except that perhaps
you are tempting and
you have been tempting
me that much
teasingly which i have
not really try hard
resisting

i always end up in you
kissing you
and closing my eyes
and i wonder why
i keep closing my eyes
for every kiss
that i have planted on
your lips

(must i be ashamed about
the fool in me?
have i demeaned myself
that much?)

i keep on arguing with
myself as though i am a split
bamboo
one different from the
other
as though i am two different
selves
one for the good
one for the bad)

at any rate i sum up
the experience

it makes me feel
beautiful
makes me fly like
a bird in the sky
you make me feel
a stranger to myself
someone new
in another day of
my life)

and you are someone
which i must keep a secret.
someone that i do
not know about.
someone i put inside me
all supressed
because you are
despite the ugliness
still, i find this hard
to admit,
so beautiful to me)

stupid lust.
i shall never name you
love.
Stupid She Felt

stupid she must have felt
like the way i do
but she must know that
last night was so
sweet
that no regret or remorse
can spoil it

watching the rain
and smiling again
letting
the consequences pass
away
and then move on for
another sweet
mistake

RIC S. BASTASA
Sturdy

above you
you hold the centerpiece
of my existence
you rub love
you throb intimacy
to my pleasure
	his is the feast of
our bodies
no shame
your hands caress my
sanctity

no one understands
where love attaches itself
at the branch
of lust
leaves of desire
roots of memories
dews of glances
falling rain on the rocks
suffuse air

earth satisfied
asleep at dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
Stuttering

shutters when you exercise the word
close open close open
they stutter and begin to make a panid
of its blinds. What are you doing, asks
the window? I am winnowing. I am peeping
to the slits of the rainbow. The colors dance
like a wild flower under a heavy rain,
drunk, and groggy to the syrup of
saps of this tree and that. Shrubs and
blurbs, gather and gargle. Heavy stuff.
I vomit you and you rise from the
slime of my breath. You face me and
things come back again like a welcome.
So it is you. You love me. You love me
again and again. Here you are. Here
i am. I am carpentering for words, from
some pieces of puzzles. That crap. Why
stutter like an autistic savant? All you have
to do is hold my hand. The world becomes
a safe bridge deck. Two strangers their
arms on hold, looking at the pier. Waiting
for names of their incoming solace.

i know you well. You stutter when you fall in love again.
The boat blown by the wind. The moon sinks deep down under.

RIC S. BASTASA
It is only the constancy of
Emotions. Highs and Downs, These things you must
accept with gladness
Like the birth of a Smile.
Hug a reality. Dance with an Illusion.
Settle on a Doubt.
Believe on the Impossible.
Have faith on Yourself and Always take
the Big Bite of the Dust.
Life Moves On. You dance as though it is your last.
You say I am Alone but I am Lovely.
Let the Spirit Soar. Let the color of the Day be Red.
and Slash.
Give way to the River. Have vents. Bend
and Sway and Point your Feet
To Somewhere. Over there.
Love, Yes Love Above ALL.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sub Rosa Affair

it was the bluntness
of clarity which destroys
the suspense
which we equate with the
beauty of a morning
conversation

as i raise my cup of
coffee
the tongue curls
my hand trembles a
bit

you should have taken
the grace of
some metaphors

last night was not
something that you can
reduce as prose

for i still consider
it as magnificently
poetic

our story lies in the
a coded room
where intimacy as a
must
should be another
rose at the door way

RIC S. BASTASA
Subconsciously

at the surface is a roy
could be roy something else
you face him
beneath a roy could be a jerry something
that you have met but could not fully
remember
you are determined not to be confused
and so you focus on the road that the the yellow bus is taking you
it is nothing but imagination
you are in the house
doing nothing because writing is actually nothing
beneath you is someone else and it
(a thing or something) is telling you what to write
you are not alarmed
it is nothing it is nothing but words and words are nothing
as a matter of familiarity
beneath your mind is the heart
beneath that heart are so many things
you try to enumerate names
and more names
and places
until you reach a certain marker, shades of red,
pathways of veins, flowing blood, all kept and contained
within the sound system
and then you look at your hands
beneath it
someone so lovely and beautiful
someone you desired for long
beneath you

and then you stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sub-Language

a lustful desire suppressed
takes a language of its own
at first you disregard it
but soon it finds its own
grammar & syntax in your lips,
you taste it again, lick it, roll it
inside your gum, sip and swallow,
your teeth delighting, your tongue
trembling to such sweetness,
you love it, and at the
end, it becomes your
main language again
this time more subtle
metaphorical, lyrical,
and more responsible.

RIC S. BASTASA
she signed out
without at least saying
gtg
or simply bye

where's my usual
lol
?

as i rest from
other things
of equal importance

as she
appears invisible
or busy
or walked out

i stop
for a while, thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking

about what to do
with my life

so many choices now
but the emptiness keeps invading
every word
i have in my mind, as though they no longer have any significance
at all

i log out
i log in
i sign out
i sign in again

and there she is the snobbish soul still keeping
her own things
matters of greater importance
than myself
who i am?
i still ask, who i am? she rejects my pleas,
her silence so hurting

i feel the pain of
abandonment, rejection and

ignorance,

lapse of time, wasting moments
useless thoughts,
destructive imaginings

i have one choice though....

submit a new poem

a breather.

RIC S. BASTASA
Subtle Goodbyes

I've been practicing how to say
Goodbye

Words are hurting

So I try casual ones
Unannounced like an uncertain hour

A place not named yet

X x x

You put a paid bill or a

Red rose in bed
A well folded towel beside it

A taxi rushes you to the airport
Cellphone is turned off

At the departure area you
Write another poem

It is not sounding sad
It's anxious for the next stop

Planes keep arriving
And leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
Success

success is simply
a matter of how we think
things turn out to be,

born losers are those
whose parents think they are,
losers from the start till they end
until they decide to change
the ability to see through
the mess and rise above
a certain familiarity
away from the crowd
and inside
the magnificent
feeling that i am what i think...

think like a winner
and act like a winner
don’t quit keep moving
for in truth
failure is just
success delayed
a little bit...

RIC S. BASTASA
Succor....

This is also a reality, you can't say
it is peculiar for me, it is
a common occurrence,

A dimming light from an incandescent bulb
in a room dressed up in darkness

look closely! someone is engrossed with a book
that promises to relinquish him from the grip of poverty and anguish

that it will pull out the nails driven to the palm of our daily deaths

Now and again to appease the pain he shall place the sun or
the moon, and the stars or the blue crystal ball on the crimson ceiling shrouded as he begins to write his verses
but when the weary eyes and wounded heart say that it is enough we give up, soon
the windows will open again
letting in the wind
to sing its songs
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Such A Rainy Day

such a rainy day
she comes to my door
knocking for help
for some comfort in the coldness of a rainy day

some winds too strong
dry leaves blown to the other side
some trees giving to a crack to a fall

she comes on such a rainy day
she is wet and so pitiful to look at

her clothes pasting to her frail body of
a woman deserted

her hair uncombed and blown and scattered
she stands by my door

my brother left her just an hour ago

she is wet, her hair, her body some rain still drips

how can i forget her?

my brother did not love her and he left her

she is crying and her tears drip on her cheeks on her body

how can i be so cruel for not telling her

i love her so,

but she leaves, she is crying and the rain starts pouring again

she is only looking for my brother who left her

how can i help her?

she never utters my name
in her heart, i do not exist.

she loves him, he left her,

i love her, she leaves me

the rain keeps on pouring and fate plays so well like a crazy child
on us

on a rain that comes unplanned, unasked, and goes away unnoticed.

i stand on this door.

i have to close it,

fate does it always better.

i am that crazy child playing in the rain, in my brain

i am wet, my thoughts dripping like rain,

like droplets and my tears,

i am glad, my tears are invisible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Such A Short Stay

it is such a short stay
and will always be
so temporary
the moment one arrives
he prepares
for another departure
such is our nature
the moment one is born
he begins to die

RIC S. BASTASA
Sucker

for a poem
to be itchy
it must be
a flea,

Socrates
proposed gnats
those hurting
biting gnats

when i first read it
in the dialogues
courtesy of Plato
i felt
this cow in me

coward,
cow-pea, cowed
in a
barn
milked like
a woman

i dread that
feeling
but it is
real
that i begin
to moooo

nonetheless
i cannot help
but just be back
into a
man without
use to
anyone
in my own chosen
freedom
there is Socrates
with all his dignity
intact

who did not get to be
old enough
to really
befriend death

i too propose
gnats, and fleas
and
lice

suckers of wisdom
from the
head of this
universe

RIC S. BASTASA
Suduko

we love it
this suduko
this game of numbers
but no
there is something much
better than the
numbness
of the numbers

it is the letter 's'
something subsumed
and we who want
this intimacy
once in a while
knows the secret
of happines's'

if you ask me
please ask her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sueno Mama

om mother's day
i prefer the white
magnolias for you,
mama,
white candles
for the five of
us your
children, and
one candle
with a a black
ribbon still
through all
these years,
we shall never
forget
how you have
loves us all
alone,
the hours despite
and all
those respites
beyond graves and
knaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
be happy that you are not like one of us
we call ourselves bards.

others want the grander term, poet.
be happy that you are not one of us, bards or poets or mumblers,

the truth is we have suffered a lot and we shall suffer still.
self-inflicted or not or just givens,

the truth is we are suffering and will suffer still

and words just keep coming and going to ease the pains....

RIC S. BASTASA
Suffering

a word from you
and then you stop
something choppy somewhere
inside your tongue

i like to listen more from you
cut, i am having a hard time,
what is it with you
that wants to hold me
i stop to listen again
some scratching sounds
from your hair
some gnashing from your teeth
i listen still cautiously
there are pauses,
you stretch your arms
trying to reach me
i tap my ears
there is this suppression
of meaning and then you finally open
your eyes
tears are falling

i see
your heart is broken and your
mouth haggles for words
your mind grasps for thoughts
for a love that they always
misunderstand. I see.

blood inside your mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suffering Is Always Personal And Better Left Unshared And Unspoken

my words are waking me up
my hand is ready, the computer beeps
i like to write an email for you

how many times shall this happen?
this urge to let you know

this morning, i again blame myself
because i can't

i am thinking of the consequences
i know how painful is it to fall
how empty can the house become
how a night without a stars can make us cry
sometimes

how the sound of the river when you walk alone
gives you the sound of the cry of the pebbles
they break their silence
they scream

for truths still untold
to rules that cannot be broken

when you enter that empty room again
a ball of silence meets you
you sit beside it
it speaks to you

this is the first time that you have seen
its nature
it is dressed with lips
and when they begin to open to about to speak to you
you close your hands
turning them into fists
and you hit your chest

and the ball of silence moves away from you
it is respect for pain
when silence pretends again that it is just a ball
and that it can go away

for men suffer all alone
on unsaid proportion
with that ability to embrace no
description

RIC S. BASTASA
manny pops out from somewhere
opens the door and begs that we listen
to him sing: i wanna live live live until i die
we obliged of course
just to help him ease himself from
too much
intellectual pressure
and even if we do not like the song
or because we cannot really relate to it
because we pride ourselves
as sane and
stable
we sing the song just the same
he is a toe
and when he is wounded
we are feeling
too the pain

indeed his body shook
like Vanuatu with an intensity 7 earthquake
we expect tsunamis later
but they did not come

and then manny is gone
went the U.S.A and true to his last word
just to be a nobody

and this
philosophically
has made him
happy.

i have to be honest
till now i never really like that song
or that i need to be shaken

i have these poem anyway
and perhaps if Manny reads it
somewhere
i guess i have to tell him
i have enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
sufi music
sunday, the rain
just ceased,
bird singing..

RIC S. BASTASA
Sugar High

sugar high
blueberry cake
sweet surrender

RIC S. BASTASA
Sugarland

how situation changes
sometimes we do not notice

you look at the child's face
you think it is still the usual girl's face

the usual humiliation comes with a name
a old name

you fail to recognize that beyond
the girl's face is a strong woman

that you fail to recognize
you refuse to give way to the changes

look at you
miserable as a rat jumping from the boat

just to save yourself
and yet when you see the girl in that

woman's face
you keep on clinging to what was once great

falling like debris
upon the present citadel of broken pieces

how can you not see the misery in you now?
poor as a rat but prouder still like a lion

without teeth
disregarding the near death

ahead of you
miserable rich, wretched by the price
of your time

look at you
how can you not see that rat in you

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
we think water does not
taste anything,

quite true
for like God
water is in Itself
By Itself

and as mysterious as it
is
Incomparable

you ask for the name of
God

It is.
It is just what
It is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suicidal

all the fingers
point to him

a knife is
beside his
throat

his hand
holds it

blood will
flow

his own.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suicide Bomber

a suicide bomber
is a person
who preaches
life's despair
and lives it
actually
with others
who are forced
to die
with him

RIC S. BASTASA
Suicide Is A Harsh Option

you just don't die here
your vindictiveness still crawls
on the walls of the conscience
of those who are left
for the prayer and vigil
you still have the guts
to make them feel
that they don't deserve you

eyou can't just throw us off
they know their stand
off you go and gone forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suite For Two Lutes, Edward Martin & Paul Berget

I like the dance of a man and a woman
Just the two of them
The man dances always behind the woman
And they mimic the art of wooing

To the sound of two lutes
Edward martin
& paul berget

at first the dance was sweet and charming
the man almost kissing the woman
while he holds her swaying hips

somehow the dance did not last that long
and people are aghast

the woman fell down
hurt her leg and so embarrassed
she could not stand
the man could not help it
he called for medical help
for first-aid

it was not the plan
all the lights were turned off
the curtains fell

it was more than the dance that I saw
accidents do happen even on stage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer

summer is an ancestral house
surrounded with antique trees
blushing leaves
rainbow flowers
nearby the blue sea
white sticky rice and
grilled tangigue
fresh buko juice and
straw hat and a swing
between two coconut trees.

and silence and sea breeze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Breeze

a straw hat on my head
dark sunglasses on my eyes
cotton beach shorts
barefoot i walk along the shore
i stop a while
the summer breeze is so cool
early morning
the sea is peaceful
the trees spreading branches
a shower of yellowing leaves
for the passing air
the sun spreads the first rays
a fine morning
a promising day
for you and me

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Contentment

half naked
he lays his body on a bench
savor the morning sunshine
under him
his guarding dog
getting some sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Days

love the summer days
a farm hut on the side of a hill
a bowl of fruits on the table
roasted chicken on banana leaf
upland rice on earthen jar
fresh water from the spring
a big mahogany tree for covering
your head on my shoulder
my hand on your hair
your feet above mine
under the night of stars
away from them all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Days

a swimmer on summer days
looks at the sea

it is calm and very
lovable

endearing as the arms of
a woman

if he only knows what is deeper
than what the surface is showing him

his summer days
his beach and orange juices

he should have seen how cruel
are the sharks preying on the small fish
not reaching the fullness
of their existence

the seaweeds as usual are silent
never speaking of the dirty linens in their house

ah, these summer days
bright sun and chase of lovers

inside the cool hut
where love is made again

who cares about the story of predators
who cares about those miserable prey?

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Days...

the sun comes up
finally
summer is summer
when it is so hot

we take the sacks of
rice
some have already sprouted
and dry them
on the yard

it is a fine day
you say it while enjoying the comforts of
the roof
inside the house
still watching the soap opera

outside
the backs are deep brown
bare
bowing down to the rigors of
work
lest we have nothing to eat
for the rainy days

indeed
we are like the ant empire
the queen ant does not
work
the soldiers do the chores
everyone has
work to do

i have another important
matter to talk
about this arrangement
but no
i will say it when Berto recovers
from his depression
or when Marta finally returns
from her
infidelity tour...

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Fields

February heat comes too early.
The fields turn brown
And men with bent backs
Harvest the premature
Golden grains
of rice
March should have come
But it didn't.
The grasses wilt, the dust roams around
The wheels of the hauling tractor
Sounds the start
Of another season
Covered eyes and noses
And the silence of the mouth.

It is time to keep memories.
It is this time of the year when sadness goes away.
Another one bites the dust
So to say.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Here

lots of sunshine
in my place of
running hills

temperature rises
at 37 degrees
sweat like dew
on the grass in
my forehead
sliding to my
cheek

under the shade
of the Java Plum Tree
i lick jack fruit flavored
Popsicle.

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Is Here

summer is here again
the sun scorches our skins
this hot summer

black crows flying low
on blue skies
hawks flying high
preying on innocent
chickens

dolphins in shallow
waters
white sandy beaches
children chasing catching
colored frisbees

curves and bulges
strolling on the beach

summer time
i'll get some tan
lots of fun

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Lovers

he kissed
her all over
from her mouth
to her toes

as though
she is an unknown
landscape
that he is exploring

on that day
she knows the heat
of the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Oh Summer

time to keep moving
walk a trail
trek a mountain
climb to the peaks
go beyond mists and fog
go agog
walk the plateaus
volley the valleys
go high on cliffs
hang and jump
and let go
on a pack of
parachute
fall on the deep river
ride the rage
swim and kick
and join the fall
of the waterfall
wrestle the alligator
coil with the snakes
this crazy summer

RIC S. BASTASA
Summer Time

THIS morning we go
fishing in the river
got this hook, line and sinker
nothing much for logic
rhythm and rhyme
just this worm as pawn
and the fading moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
summer has become
an infidel
the rice grains are feeling betrayed
the beach abandoned
the sun is not in its
usual form
and the moon veils its face
with dark clouds
the frogs laugh so loud
the crickets are crippled....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun In An Early Morning.

if poetry makes us
a little bit fit, or when
it sheds off our
much-earned fat,
makes us strong
and in happy disposition,
everyone could have
taken that by now.

you won't take the bite
not the trend
but there is this
everlasting effect

this cause of our
sorrow
and consequences of
all our actions...

i am telling you it is.
and it does.

at the end of the day
one wonders why i still
have this
hidden energy still coming
out like

sun in an early morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun Of Life To Me

after the rain
there is a crack
on the surface
of the soil
a seed in there
begins to show a tip
looking for the first
sun of
its life

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun Setting At The Dipolog Boulevard

the most
beautiful sunset
is here

profusely bright
yellow alamanda
melting into orange
and then red
strawberry until it
fell to the horizon
and then
gone away

the street lights
wake up
blink for a while
and keep the
whole night guard

and the people come
and busy themselves
with their own
versions of
happiness...

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun Worshipper

stretched arms
embracing the sun
too comfortably warm
the morning sun
because it is too far

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun, Sun, Sun

master sun
do not be too harsh on her
for she is a dainty flower
all white and too tiny
for the heat of your hands

let her go
let her petals fall at the right time of the day
just one day
let her be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sun/Moon

the moon always comes alone
sometimes the stars accompany her
cressing
the light of her golden hair
that she borrows
from the sun that
she loves
but is condemned
never
never to be
touched
even for just once.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunbathing

one of the things i like to do really is to bathe under the sun
as though the sunshine is like water raindrops
on my skin

i like being warmed a little bit by these sunrays
as i feel them like fingers on my face
and body
and legs
and toes

i like the sun penetrating my heart
piercing it with its heat

because mT heart is freezing cold
as dry ice
and melting it may help me live some more
direct to vapor

another day perhaps or months
another year will be too long for a bonus

well, i have learned one lesson like what Jorge Luis Borges
the dead Argentinian used to preach

i will have more of the lighter moments
more fun
less serious
and yes more engaged more accepting

yes, yes, and more yes to everything

'I'll try,
- to make more mistakes,
I won't try to be so perfect,
I'll be more relaxed,
I'll be more full - than I am now,
In fact, I'll take fewer things seriously,
I'll be less hygenic,
I'll take more risks,
I'll take more trips,
I'll watch more sunsets,
I'll climb more mountains,
I'll swim more rivers,
I'll go to more places - I've never been,
I'll eat more ice creams and less (lime) beans,
I'll have more real problems - and less imaginary
ones'

I think i like Jorge say some more..
But i have no time anymore

from his final words:

If I could live again - I will travel light,
If I could live again - I'll try to work bare feet
at the beginning of spring till
the end of autumn,
I'll ride more carts,
I'll watch more sunrises and play with more children,
If I have the life to live - but now I am 85,
- and I know that I am dying...

I AM NOT EVEN 85 YET.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday

sundae Sunday
with mommy on the lobby
a boy trying to
get loose
from her hold

a fledgling with untried wings
looks at them
from its mother's nest on a tree
fronting the lobby

the boy looks at it
eye to eye they relate themselves to
fright

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday 4: 44 A.M.

the church bell sounds.
you wake up.
you wash your face.
comb your hair and
wear the best dress
on sunday.
you look again
in the mirror to check
if all about you is well
and presentable.
you take the rosary
and the prayer book.
you read the gospel.
you mumble your prayers,
you thank your husband.
you take the puppy.
you smile again in the
mirror. you thank God.
now you open the gate
and head for the nearby
church and hear mass
and the usual sermon
of the parish priest.

90% of your life
is devoted to religion.
10% is devoted
to anything else.
you have aged.
you still mumble.

i still wonder whether
it is you who misunderstands me
or i misunderstanding you.
everything seems to be
mangled and mingled.
when you come back
breakfast is ready and
everyone in the house
pretends that there is nothing wrong with the table, or the cover, or the broken pieces of the maid is quick in sweeping them away from the door into that thick grass beside the window of this house.

sunday morning is still our morning. A nice one. the sun has come and we are planning for another picnic in the nearby beach. there will be no questions.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday Morning Despite The Hectic Shedule

today the mountains are well dressed
with green grass and trees
the flocks of sheep and goats and cows
crowd with its abundance
the sun shines brightly and the sea afar
is a horizon so tranquil
the birds are coming to feed on the grains
clouds meet on the top of the hill
today all of them are joyful
praising the wonders of creation

today God is felt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday School......

i was drawn into it
a feather to a whirlpool

i try to do something
so that you may at least
see me resisting

everything happens
and i say i never intended it

i swim in the water
i am dressed in mud and
i wrestled all my
days

i let it happen
years and years

and then i am free
from mud
from whirlpools

and then i shall face
and boldly must i tell you

i truly love you
but you have never believed me

i am dressed now
for Sunday school.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday Swim

upon a blue sky
hangs the clouds

upon a blue sea
the floor is light gray

between this two
walls i

put myself
amidst the winds

blowing my hair
as i struggle

against the waves
away from shore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday Thoughts.....

understand that when people are grouchy and
so unkind, it must be, because the world had been
too cruel on them too, and at the back of their minds,
God seems to be nowhere, seems to be not working
for them
how selfish it can be
but
understand that most minds are shallow and most beings
thrive as though they are the sun and the center of this
universe,

which is not so, understand that this matter is hard to understand
and we ourselves sometimes are caught in the same trap
disregarding God
as though he is tool
a gadget
as though we are Gods
that have control
about everything

understand this
that without that root and the tree
where can leaves
and flowers be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunday, Saturday, Friday, Thursday, Wednesday......

when days get reversed
like 10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1

then O

till monday morning,
when suddenly the counting stops

till sunday evening
when i sleep

till then
you run as fast as you can
back to the past
back to recovery

when all the petals
of the roses fall

you only see them all
sleeping
their eyes
without any regret

because you are
still here
in their name

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunflower Goddess

i once wrote a poem for you
and then you were gone

no trace. no whisper. no cue.
no clue.

you worship the sun
always. always.

i am the moon
and tonight i always wait for you

my golden sheen
and my hundred stars are looking for you

when you have finally arrived
you are dead sunflower goddess

i bleed light
and so are the stars

they twinkle nothing but
signals of sadness

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunflowers

sun
bringing with it
in its face
& body
the seeds for
tomorrow's
flowers

RIC S. BASTASA
Sungkilaw Falls

so there were Japs pretending to plant trees
and rehabilitate the place
and with the collaboration of the mayor
the project went through
only after a while when they finally got
what they really wanted
the gold bars hidden beneath the belly
of the mountain
where Sungkilaw Falls
beautifully flow

after that time the Japs left
and the mayor too was rich
bought two mansions
a beach property and three
expensive cars

there are always thieves and
exploiters and
their conspirators

as i watch Sungkilaw Falls
i feel gratified that somehow there is still
something worth seeing in this place
which thieves cannot steal

the beauty of the water freely falling on the rocks below
the fresh air
the song of the birds that occasionally pass by

some decided to stay
and nest their eggs
on the trees
that the Japs planted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunny Day Today

sunny day
mellow light on the leaves
of the
san franciscos

bright colors
trying to please
the pains
of the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunrise

a routine
the most familiar
taken for granted
and sometimes
not admired
neglected by
the mind
for those who
chase time
running a dog
eat dog world

for one who stops
a while
and ponder upon
this event
of sun reappearing
as the night
fades giving
way to day

i say' what a miracle of
all miracles! '

first sunrise
after so many rainy days

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunrise Is Coming....

seeing a movie
is a good pastime, with lots of
educational content it there even if it is
nothing but a comedy,
because some film writers know how to
disguise
a malady from a comedy,
like in a whodunnit movie for instance,
the actor says, he knows the real serial killer,
and he killed it at the end of the
scene where all the cherry blossoms
all white of them
fell like snow to the pavement, like
tiny angels singing a hymn for
the stones,

well, do not attempt to understand
all these,
you cannot, because it begins with a belief
on your prejudices, at first glance,
you look like a professor who knows nothing
about the book of life,
aha, you cannot reach those two fools now,
they are there
in heaven, protected by their gods,
and they are saying the truths of what
is happening underneath
the earth, all cans of worms, all
battered bats, as the dragon sleeps there
dreaming of its long forgotten home.

tomorrow morning we wear our robes, but
look at the right side of this blackness
there is a spot of blood, and it is alive,
deep in those magnifying glasses
are the heads of those who meet their
untimely deaths.

their guardian angels are taking their
swords, and opening their wings, and they are now asking for justice.

it is right, you cannot sleep.
sunrise is coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunrise, Sunshine

time for my sunrise
time for sun shining
spreading the warmth
for all those colder nooks
time for light on my window
time for the songs of the wind
time for the plunge
time for the depths
time for the surfacing of all thing supressed
time for exposing all those hidden

it is time for love it is time for its fulfillment
overheating desire, unquenched thirst, i am taking all the waters,
i am drinking the fullness, i am swallowing the goodness

of all of you, i am drinking your rivers, i am swimming your seas,
i am climbing your hills, i am plunging in your valleys,

i am erupting as your volcano, my hot flaming magma all yours
flowing in your belly, filling all your thighs & all your empty pores

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunrise's Entrance

sunrise is such a lady
with a fashion sense

clad in rays of light
slim between the
shadows of the trees
jeweled with diamond
warm like a lover's hand

sunrise dramatically
arrives full of hope for
another brand new day

there is a fruit tray by the
window
five shiny red apples
there is a base of white
magnolias inside a
golden vase by
the window

there is breakfast on the
table: smiling fried egg
tasty hot dogs, pearl white
rice, brewed coffee and
a slice of ripe yellow mango.

poetry in bliss
music from the breeze

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunset

sunset
weak rays of the sun
not so warm
dying

a brown dog plays in the sunset of grass
taking a jaw bone of
a pig from the farm nearby

a white dog comes to play with
him, but there is no more time
for this silly
thing to do,

this time all quarrels end
it is dimmer
now and all the children have to go home
now,
sunset, the white and brown dogs
find comfort in the dark with their glowing eyes in the dark
tonight

not just the jaw bone, the hind legs and the ears
and the belly of another pig

come astray.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunset (The One We Agreed Upon)

i like your sunset
flaming firmament
hues of fire, red hot iron and orange fruit combined
tasting like salt and sugar and vinegar to me
v-shaped seagulls like fighting planes

and the silence of the vast space
like i am in the library
the librarian on sick leave
and all the books are taken

did i forget the flavor?

(remember we agree on a poem with a color, taste, sound, smell
and whatever)

vanilla, and the sound, i already told you,

pssst, silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunset As I Remember It

It is an afternoon
Walk by the Beach

An orange sunset
Follows me Like
I am closely
Guarded for some
Unknown Danger

I walk alone
The sea foams
surging from
Time to time
Touch my
heels and toes

An alternate
Of sand Foam
And sea
And sunset
Rinsing
My footsteps

I am looking
For some Shells of
My past

On a sunset shore
Retracing It to
The mouth
Of the river
At the Other end

River Meets
Sea as I closely watch

The sunset closely guarding.
Sunshine

sunshine
seeps in
the slits of
my shutters
i am sassy
to a sash
of shining
sun on my
shin.

ssshhh.

shine my
shoe, shy
seemingly
sheepish
sissy sham
soya sauce
semblance
of the shell

this coffin
of the wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunshine And Flowers And Your Way Of Loving

sunshine, spreading sunshine, warming my face
spreading this warm caress to my body, my shoulders,
bathe
take the basins of sunshine in the cups of your hands
feel
close your eyes and feel the sunshine falling in your hair
running to your ears
then open your eyes
to the blooms of flowers, the roses and daffodils in the garden
where a chair is there
where you sit
looking at me, beside you, bathing to sunshine, closing my eyes
feeling the warmth of the gazes of your eyes, the pulse of your wrist
the palm
your hands running
slowly all over me,
sunshine and hands and eyes closing
opening to dazzling color and closing again
to the thoughts of love
of you always loving me

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunshine And Green Fields

it will never be boring
the same sun shining
on the same green field
and the same man
sitting under the same
tall tree watching
a day go by
like it is the last
day of his life

sunshine touching
his face like the hands
of a remembrance

green fields appeasing
him like some
souvenir from
a far away
memory

and there is this wind
always whispering
to his ears:

wait for me
i am coming.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sunshine Friends

develops and weddings and even funerals not because they are happy when i am happy or sad when i am sad

not that they mourn or rejoice with me

it is because of the food served hot on the table and the drinks ice-cold the ice still clinking

some sparkles and glitter only for a while

RIC S. BASTASA
Superobama

FROM the most powerful nation
of this world
SuperObama is produced,
fly[ing beyond the speed of light
the mind that encompasses
the anticipation of the universe
dam of the immense flood
saving each American
from a predicted
poverty
for the next twenty years
or more
perhaps,
the Third World in faithful adherence
shall share the grief
and mourns
in utter
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Superstitious....

it's like
lighting a candle
in daylight
inside your room you
let it stand and then
you tilt it towards
your wrist and you
pour what is melting
in your skin where
some configurations
begin to form
and it is where you
foretell who is harming
you and you deduce
and deduce some more,
saying, this is it,
this is it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suppressed Anger

it is as if the belly of a woman
is pregnant with a very long snake
and slowly it exits its way
through the esophagus
but you cannot see it first
because the teeth is still gritting
and the mouth is still closed
but on the spur of the moment
when restraint gives way
the mouth suddenly opens
the teeth stops gritting
and the head of that very long snake
comes out
showing its sharp fang
and suddenly
without any talk
bites the object of its
affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suppressed Desires

Her only home is herself
her only contact to her body
her hands
untouched by man who want
to sleep with her in the nest
of desire,
she refuses all offers
regardless of color and shape
deep within her
pressure is building
like a tornado
but she keeps herself
composed like a placid lake
like an undisturbed sky
glittering with the beauty of
the stars
a volcano is erupting inside
her breasts
she refuses hands and lips
and mouths
her house is herself
abandoned by the sun
and the rain
she is alone and too lovely
still
the moon tonight by her
open window shall be her lover

she is after all a metaphor
of suppressed desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
Seeing you
I hear my heart beats
Like drums of Korea

I put my hand
On my chest
Suppressing
The loud sound

Like the mouth of a fan screaming
to the sight of its idol

My hand is the rag
That covers it

RIC S. BASTASA
Supressed Love

how you kept that flower
inside a closed jar
and still let it bloom
for 47 summers

how you kept
that kitten inside
a dark cage
for 47 summers
and let it meow
meow all those
years

you must be crazy
and so cruel
to yourself

how did you ever survive
without any breath

you choke all day
i am amazed
you did not even ever ask
for any help

RIC S. BASTASA
he was in grade three, neat and clean
and well taken cared of,
his tv shows screened
kissing scenes a taboo
and sexist language strictly filtered,
movies prohibited and
loose behavior restrained

catholic boy in an exclusive
religious school of st. vincent's in a
small city, where girls are on the other
side of the gate, where the boys
look for them like some hidden gems,

to me that is segregation,
a supression of my right to be me
as a boy and for me to see girls
and have fun with them,

it was not easy, but there was this
incident which i could not really forget
and perhaps justifies my rebellion
for what is evil
in segregation for what is wrong
with supression,

my classmates, all boys, hid themselves
in the compost pit and rolled down their
trousers, their eyes like fire lighting
the centerfold of the Playgirl magazine
sometime in 1964.

i was the little catholic boy
raised in the strictest tradition
neat and clean and feeling
so ousted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sure, A Bad Day Comes

surely bad days come
and they are not just
normal sometimes
there are too many
of them and then you

learn to live with them
just like your ordinary
good days. You say
hell, but then heaven
comes on a brand new
day like this: a perfect
timing: you are here
and i am here and
we have nothing to
do except to talk and
talk and talk and
then finally at last
we find a common
ground: we kiss and
touch each other's
soul, deeper than before.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Surely It Is Not I, Rabbi? ' He Answered, 'You Have Said So.'

Ah, the traitor in history
has kept the answer: It is not me.

Ah, God in his wisdom
returns his stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surfaces

at the surface it may be smooth
like varnished furniture
but then it is not the surface that really counts
the inner layer makes the difference

is it made of steel or plain wood?
what stuff are you made of?

what heart is there? what spleen?

softness of cotton absorbent to failures
the hardness of clay that cracks to heat

RIC S. BASTASA
Surprise

You do not like the crowd
you hide in the darker side of the park
On the same spot
Another figure sits beside you
wow
oh wow
She is the superstar
Whom the crowd is looking
they all adore her
and she is hiding too

And she is asking for your name.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surprise Tomorrow

ala
aldo k.

i am waiting
for God's surprise
tomorrow

whatever,
i shall accept it
as the smiling
child of God

He knows best.
i am least.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surprise Your Mother Today

surprise your mother today
with your

silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surreal

hazy
that is all that i remember
on that trip last night
where a dream like a veil
wraps my head
covers my eyes
and seals my lips
my eyes saw all that
yet i have no words
there is simply none
enough to describe
what really happened
that is all that i can remember
the haze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surreal.....

though
mouthless this
body
keeps on telling something:

'you overdid it'

the mind is scarred black birds hover on the hair
the soul travels somewhere in the cliffs of your dreams

beside the bones there is pain
inside the flesh there is certain nervousness

: 'why are you not listening? ' the nerves keep telling

'you are overdoing it'

tonight the body takes its revenge
thought scramble beneath an overheated heart

the women lose themselves like cars with broken brakes
and you are the man, driver of their woes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surrealistic

lip glossed
lip of glass
cold water
and a dream
your lips
to my lips
a mist by
the window
the widow
dreams at
noonday.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surrender

He is tired and now left alone
After the wars he fought
In broad daylight
Underneath the tall building
This is not the war of Achilles
Or Odysseus
This is not the blinding of Oedipus
Of the weakness of Hamlet
This is the war of his own days
Stabs of light
Piercing of dusk
The confusions of twilight
This is the war
Of modern battles fought
Within the lonely rooms
Of the condominium
Where he arrives and departs
Alone
This is the war that he fights
Against himself
He prays to the face
At the headboard
And talks to the picture
On this wallet
It is him that fights
And it is him that dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Surrenderee

the noise at noon
can be heard
between our
distances

you walk too fast
and so i followed
the procession of
your footsteps

maybe it was i who
was too slow or maybe
it was you who was
walking too fast

and then i was thinking
things over between us
you are too fast for me
i decided to change
my direction looking
for the path who shall
embrace my slow steps

RIC S. BASTASA
Surrendering My Own Voice

Subdued, I lost, I have no choice
But to surrender my own voice
Now I have to go to places
Missing your embraces
I am but just a shadow
In a nook without tomorrow
I walk under the rain
Where I am wet & drained
And cold in the night
In darkness I lose my sight
This is the time of losing
In his arms you are smiling
And you will not be with me
With him you can only be
I understand perfectly what losing is
you are not with me, you are his
This is not the end however,
This is just another fever
I must get out from this wall.
I must rise from where I fall

RIC S. BASTASA
Survey Says

that a short poem as this
is the only one
that you can
afford
to read.

autumn leaves
faster please!

RIC S. BASTASA
Survival

it is always nice to know that how far is the island
of the thoughts of our lust and desire
no matter how endless the horizon is
no matter how moonless the sea could be at night at times
there is always someone whom you believe
to be thinking of you in the manner that the heart keeps beating
no matter what no matter harsh the now is

like the rays of the sun one morning when you stand still
facing the sea thinking of that someone
out there, out there, somewhere, you always remember

at night, on the darkness and the coldness of the room and the pavement
you look at the stars, and you feel

how distant memories can be, how tiny, how surreal....

RIC S. BASTASA
Survival Kit

d the grass accepts death
of all it has, leaves and roots
its color blends with
the dust and parched mud
cracking surfaces
it also knows to preserve
its species
burying resilient seeds on
the cracks
and when it rains it begins
to grow buds
roots and all and the whole
ground is green again

meanwhile on cracked grounds
where once the pond was
the whiskers of the catfish begin
to wriggle
shedding off mud around its skin
the fish begins to swim

RIC S. BASTASA
Surviving In A Rainy World....

it must be raining hard
and you cannot go out of your cubicle
and outside it is muddy
and the children are playing and running under the rain
as you watch happily
how the world is going under the heavy rains
and rumored typhoons....

that is why you write and post a poem
like me.

well, we know how to survive even with
only words as shield against the sins of our idleness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Survivor

we are
here
we mark
a point
we live
for the moment
we do not
look forward
as though
we are on moving
up
towards the
top of the
mountain
we care only
for the latest
thing to hold
on to
we do not look
down
we will be sucked
to the
past,
we see cracks
we feel it
we move slowly
up
we do not know
who is beside
us,
not a word
need be said
in this
constant moving
at this
minute.

RIC S. BASTASA
Survivor Kit....

on his way to the
top of the hill
he traces the path
of slow circular
footage
like a way of
recalling a past
that so badly
hurts,
slowly rising along
the side
of the belly of
this mountain
like an ant or more
of this green turtle
or this dove
this fledgling
wannabe eagle

feeling so abandoned
but coping
saying i am my
best friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suso Sa Sapa Ang Mga Tanghaga

nangalap tag
g mga tanghaga
nga morag
suso sa sapa

pag-abot sa balay
akong gihugasan
dayon gitunuan
gipanakotan giasinan
gitusok gituhog
aron makaon ang
unod.

RIC S. BASTASA
Suspicious Mind

the five dogs
are barking again
against the fence
towards the
road
someone is coming
someone
evil
someone destructive
of your palace of peace
your haven of love
your portal
of insanity
someone as paranoid
as the black knight
of the night
the angel of death
the prince of sorrow
the king of maladies
the queen of deception
the princess of chaos

inside your heart kindles
love that drives them all away
the dogs stop barking
on your feet their tongues
lick you
on your side they yelp
the soul of their master
and then they sleep
and dream like you
the monsters of the night
are gone
as peace of the mind
now reigns
in the kingdom of the self
where privacy is king
Swaggering Thoughts....

I've been writing about
what i have not told you

or never shall it tell each
part of this roving whole

this whale in my belly
these planktons in my mind

at a certain point
there is that predator and
prey page of my life
that you shall not ever read

and this gives me
my dream of
freedom where i am myself
without your
knowing

i am always myself
but my touch to your cheek
shall not tell it

there is always an inside
story
on a writer's documentary
episode

this face that has not given
you the clue
of that brewing revolution
inside the world
drawn by my eyes
into the labyrinths of
my intestinal
anxieties
acidic storms
spasmodic series

soon someone shall tell you
and hand you the maps of my
journey and you shall be surprised
what places have i visited
without you

i fear that hour of
revelation where i shall become
completely a stranger
to you

where your hands shall shake
when your tongue dislikes the
taste of my
existence
my flavor is as bland as
old age

you will tell your friends on
one of those parties-
'oh, he is like that

he is an imagination of my mind
he is a mist in the mountain
he is the fog
that hangs on one of the trees'

and you assure them
this matter will just come to pass
an ice melting
seeping on one of those porous rocks
and then be
invisible to the layers

of rain on a sunny day
nothing is surprising anymore
everything is as normal as
switching light to a room when
the night comes without
any excuse

after denial, you know what comes
next
wholehearted acceptance
no matter how silly
how sinful perhaps

i like it this way-
'i am a thought, you can always dismiss me
as a foam of the mouth
of the guy who
is suffering from seizure

a whiffing cream
on a home baked cake

a dew on the morning's leaf
an orange
appearing with a glossy skin
beside an afternoon
window...'

RIC S. BASTASA
Swallowing Everything....

one dead leaf
has fallen from dried twigs
under the
tree of bones
on a very humid
high noon

you still have many things
to swallow inside
your throat

pride for instance

you take everything
now
without any complaint

there is no sound
no grumble

a book
full.

------------------------

sa usa ka patay nga
dahon
sa silong sa mga sanga
nga uga
diha sa punoan nga
nakalabira
sa tumang kainit sa
kaudtuhon

daghan kag malad-ok
sa imong tutunlan

ang garbo pananglitan

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
tunlon mo ang tanan
sa walay tingog

usa ka librohan

RIC S. BASTASA
involuntarily he swallows something bitter
not perfectly round
definitely bitter
but for now he shall not spit it out
he needs time
perhaps it will be years
he cannot even open his mouth to speak
they call him mute and dumb and deaf
but inside his ears are sharp
his understanding like the seed so bitter

his hope is only that day when by having learned
all the bitterness
he shall spit fire
and magma comes out from his mouth
and rocks
and everything thermoplastic
like he is bomb that shakes all their worlds
into tiny splinters

RIC S. BASTASA
Swallowing The Seed

swallowing the seed
fear begins to grow
the seed sprouts inside
his belly and roots begin
to travel inside his prostate
down to his bottom
unto his feet
immobilizing him

the seed begins to have
buds and leaves
and twigs and
huge trunks

his eyes shrink on the barks
his nose all gone
there are no signs of the original man

he swallowed the seed of life
that no one dared.

RIC S. BASTASA
Swan Song

black swan song
red tai chi
foggy forest
damp swamp

RIC S. BASTASA
Swan, Lake, Leaf, Moon....

Your hands are leaves
Leaves that float on the water
The water is the body
I am the body
Where your dead leaves
Float
I cannot in this
Be the sun
And you cannot be the green
Comforting Grass
of the Hills
Those lonely hills that stay awake
at Night
The moon shines on the lake
Waiting for the Swan
She is the Swan
and He is the Moon
You are a dead Leaf
and I am the Body of Water
We are somehow
Nothing but
Spectators to the Swan
Moon Affair
But sad is this game of Irony
Again some love
more Love have remained
Unrequited....

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet Nothings Of My Being

WHATEVER i am
to me
is my secret
i am the song
and the singer at
the same time
i am both night and day
between all these
are the twilights
of my doubts

i respect who i am
keeping
what properly belongs
to the
chambers of my heart

all these treasures
deep in the sea
buried
without a map

i find joy in this
conversation
where i am both speaker
and listener
at the same time

this is the enigma of my being
always forgiving
gentle, kind and compassionate
about what i have done
and what i have never done

my eyes are two moons
my mouth my cave
my throat the tunnel to my
heart
i hear its beating
low upon the hill
echoing
sweet nothings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet Rumors

Deserted house
With thatched roof
Along the Dicayo River
Rumors are sweet
On a swarm of bees
Who now live there

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet Snow In Korea

December is Korea
lots of snow there

with your family
there is always a

reason for warmth
joy reigns, and

snow becomes
as sweet as Fuji apple

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet Stupidity

There is this ambiguity sometimes
when i think i love you and i want to make love with you
i compress distance in a dream
my mouth is being conquered by your tongue
i am helpless and i surrender to that beautiful gesture of defeat
i am ready
i pack my bags, buy a ticket, and a map where to find you
on that long journey i dream of the moon
i dream of stars caressing my hair
i glimmer like a distant sparkle of a fish on the sea by the side of the boat of the fisherman who just make love with his woman by the shore
when i arrive there i see you waiting and longing for me wanting to hold me like an old jacket during that stormy night
but it is a sad thing
i've seen what you bare
all of it like a nude painting of a woman who had been sitting for hours before her patron and benefactor and lover and all rolled into one
i did not put my clothes on your bed
and without a word i left you.
if you only know, i also shed tears for this sweet stupidity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet Surrender

i had enough of it
enough of you
and i go back to the pages of
my old self

those times
when with a kiss, a hug, of a smile
everything is solved
and ironed

i vomit thinking about
all these
sweet surrender turning so
bitter
stupidity uncovered
made possible
by distance

you are such a distant star
and i too
have become one

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweetest Of All Your Freedom........

i do not give
interviews

when you ask my name
or my number
at most i can only tell
lies
and if you insist
i give dignity to your
questions
by not answering any of
them

somehow i have learned the
value of secrecy
ah, this privacy
this anonymity
and quiet desperation as
he terms it
this solitude of dimming lights
this silence of the dusk
this utter submission to
fading

i like the silence of the leaves
when they fall
which they feel as flying in the song
i like the silence of heaps
and mounds
i like the silence of silence itself

i like the way i meet you
when you pass me by
and pretend that you never know me
that we never had those nights

i like this distance that expands
that later on sees only
a dot
a haze of another horizon

i am this low profile
willing to be forgotten
it is like a prelude to dying

a little cry, and then
the acceptance of a wry smile
and then
the abandon

sweetest of all
your freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweetheart

Sweetheart, in my hand is this bird
Of desire
It sings a song from the bottom
Of my heart
On my shoulder it hovers
On my head it flies
Round in circle inside
My mind

On my hand this bird returns
With so much kindness
And grace
This bird sings again
About the love
It knew It found
Now nestling in the warm leaves
Of your memories

Sweetheart, undress yourself
For love has so desired us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sweet-Nothings

your mouth is
close
to my ear
and you whisper
something
that i really do
not like
to hear

it is your breath
warming my lips

i want
your kiss

stop this
sweet-nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Swift Times

i met her
mom
we were
then co-teachers
in an old
college

now i am
still here
teaching
criminal law

his son
a fruit of
a broken
marriage
says
that his mom
is sending
the best
regards

i must
be so old

that time
his boyfriend
impregnated
her
he was his
student
jobless
and carefree
and
a drug
addict

dthis time
dthis boy
looks very
much like
her mother

too
brokenhearted
too careless
too gullible

i must be very old
time
is too unforgiving

RIC S. BASTASA
Swimming With The Dark Queen

how i wish to swim with the dark queen
how i like it that way
where i make the strokes, set aside the water with my hands
breathe,
and travel a distance,
wading through all the liquids wrapping my body
the coldness and warmth all mixed up
the rhythm of the body sipping through
losing itself to a certain depth and coming out again triumphantly
experiencing little deaths and surging up to life again
i may pretend that i drown and i may resurrect myself with that big lie
and tell myself there is more to life than death
there is more to the struggle than simply lose myself in the depths of defeats and
some uncertainties

Swim! Swim! Swim! Plunge yourself into the wates of Life
That is what my father too used to tell me once when he was alive
and so cruel and strict and unfeeling

and then i met you dark queen writing everything about swimming
how i wish to swim back to life again

and what i like most about it is that it can be done without so much talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Swimming With The River's Rage

when the meaning of water
ceases to be fluid
one fish swims with the rage of the river
looking for sharp stones
to tear off its fins
looking for a crazy fisherman
to catch it
hook, like and sinker

RIC S. BASTASA
Swinging My Neck....

early morning
before diving down
deep to this
workplace
i take time for a tico tico
and a habanera
as i swing my neck to such
simple joys of the
violin strings producing
the music that pierces
the loneliness of
my own soul....

RIC S. BASTASA
Switch On The Light, Please

I always rise from a fall
From the floor I lift my bottom
Up this table
And from this table I stand
And reach this ceiling

It is dark and you simply sit there
Like a blind creature
Learning to live & even love
♥
This darkness

You keep telling me about your
Broken dreams
The walls enclosing you
The wails of the past
Screaming at you

Up here I hold this
Fluorescent bulb
And put it on the socket
On the ceiling and now
It is finally done & ready

To have light however
It is still you
Who must stand
Move to that dark corner
And then switch on
This tiny thing
♥

RIC S. BASTASA
Sycamore Trees....

i don't imagine sycamore trees
we don't have them

i can't imagine the sea-breeze bringing to me
the perfume of your hair

or remembering once that there was spring and that you were with me
not that i do not like spring
but because there is no spring here

and one last thing,
i can't remember you because you are no longer here with me

honestly what for? do i take another dagger and stab my heart again with it?

how foolish can i be- that is what my friends are telling me.

i don't remember sycamore trees, and i have no plans remembering them.
we don't have it here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Syllables

we are here
always
learning how
to capture
the essence of
beauty

our tools:

syllables &
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sylvia Is Dead

all the stages are for her,
she burned her head whole
inside an oven and she keeps the
riddles of the nine syllables
crisp, and firm, and creepy
that is sylvia's best
and look
here comes the rest,
they follow.

intense, so so intense.
painful death and deadly poetry.

my soul rises to the 7th heaven.
i, am, too,
intense, like, you, too, two, the
two of you,
intensity lost
recovered
in a minute or so, so so intense.

i feign death.
i still love to solve the tenth riddle.
the three monkeys are still with me.

they are so cute.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ariel

Stasis in darkness.
Then the substanceless blue
Pour of tor and distances.

God’s lioness,
How one we grow,
Pivot of heels and knees! -The furrow

Splits and passes, sister to
The brown arc
Of the neck I cannot catch,

Nigger-eye
Berries cast dark
Hooks -

Black sweet blood mouthfuls,
Shadows.
Something else

Hauls me through air -
Thighs, hair;
Flakes from my heels.

White
Godiva, I unpeel -
Dead hands, dead stringencies.

And now I
Foam to wheat, a glitter of seas.
The child's cry

Melts in the wall.
And I
Am the arrow,

The dew that flies,
Suicidal, at one with the drive
Into the red

Eye, the cauldron of morning.

P.S.

sylvia and the rest of the girls who know you
send their best regards. Still whole to find the holes?
and stiff and tickling?

musta ka na conejo? good, you’re still with us.
WELCOME TO THE SHOW.

RIC S. BASTASA
Symbiosis

you are the glass
and on your open mouth
i am the water
i will fill every space
of your body
do not feel my coldness
you do not deserve it.
keep the thirst
i shall quench it.
do not be carried away
by my coldness
do not spill me
i need you as vessel
of my directionless fluidity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Symbolism

the black wings of
a butterfly
are on top of the
red slice of
melon

she fabricates
some stories
from there

she says i cannot
say i am not
part of the black wings
the slice of the red melon

fears are embedded
on the red blood and
... finally i resign, she

never knew what a poem
means, to me it is my universe.

RIC S. BASTASA
Symbolism Of A Cigarette Ads
	here is this brown room
with closed windows
two men are smoking down
seven feet below
the soil level
up there is a view of the
priest with violet vestige
spreading the holy water
as they all watch
with shallow sadness

RIC S. BASTASA
Sympathy

i am happy to see you flying
freely in the skies
like you are making a painting
with the wind

go, take time with the friendly pluffy clouds
go, be aware of the colors and scent
of the waft- winds
wait, in a moment,
watch the bursting of the sun
the birth
of a star- it is you
now
the center of this universe

the apple
of my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Symptoms Of A Loser

blurring visions
that see tired tigers
retreating inside a cave

away from humanity,
cracking bones
shouting for repair,

falling hair
lots of locks on the
pillow that early morning
when there is no feeling
of waking up,

a mouth that is shut
munching words
and swallowing pride,

a heart that no longer
weeps,

hands that reside
inside the pocket,
feet that refuse to
take another mile
of tolerance,

poems growing
like molds on
left-over bread

a cockroach proclaiming
victory over
unwashed coffee mugs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Sync....

the hands know
when to take side
with shame
as you begin to cover your face
and run away

RIC S. BASTASA
Synergy

the weak and the strong
hate and love, religion and science,

night and day, sun and moon,
water and fire, heaven and earth

man and God, sky and sea,
the chasm and the abyss,

flowers and grains, grass and pebbles,
bees and butterflies, song and poems,

prose and stories, paper and pen,
cats and dogs and rains, fleas and ants,

water and oil, stone and paper,
scissors and glass and diamonds,

thoughts and actions, friends and foes,
mountains and plains and valleys,

eels and ladles, pins and sands, thread and needles, stars and fish, sheep and shit,

silence and noise, solitude and emptiness,
i-pods and beans, cells and phones,

cliches and idioms, foams and fowls, and
come to think, well, don't laugh: you and me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Synthesis....

we were in israel, then we crossed the border moving towards egypt, we passed by Lot, and then arrived in cairo. Had a cruise in the nile, watched the belly dancer.

we moved back to jordan. heard a lot of views. bathed in the dead sea. roamed Petra.

no, it is not the travel, no longer excited actually but the realization that religion is not that important. Or not the issue.

it should have been love of humanity.
love of self.
or just love.

love could have been
just love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Szymborska 's Miniature Worlds

'You can find the entire cosmos lurking in its least remarkable objects.'

a grain of sand
a speck of dust
a vein of the leaf
little twilights

finally me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Szymborska 's Yearns

'Poets yearn, of course, to be published, read, and understood, but they do little, if anything, to set themselves above the common herd and the daily grind.'

i do not have
the wish anymore
to be understood
by you or anybody

i belong to the
common things
you cannot see
me in the herd
i am in my
daily endeavors

unknown to you
i still write without
any wish that you
recognize my
voice or feel the
longings of my
hands or see the
scars in my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Szymborska, I Am Drowning

'I'm drowning in papers.'

it is all about the poems
that i have written for years
they stay on these papers
and have become an ocean
where i am a little boat
sinking, i am like you
drowning but the gods
have not condemned me
yet to die as they have
given me another minute

RIC S. BASTASA
'Let the people who never find true love keep saying that there's no such thing. Their faith will make it easier for them to live and die.'

that is the problem of finding
true love and having it
in your arms and thighs

you do not know anymore
when and how to die
as easier as you want
it now without the other

RIC S. BASTASA
Szymborska's Getting To Know You

Get to know other worlds, if only for comparison.

I am near, too near for him to dream of me.'

try another word to describe an old experience

try another world to destroy the old world that destroyed you

try another fence jump over another field greener to your eyes and dream with me

try keep on trying let things go let things be let us belong

RIC S. BASTASA
'Somewhere out there the world must have an end.'

and then my wife throws out the last porcelain
out of the window

and then i stop writing an unfinished poem
because the gas stove is not
giving its flame

RIC S. BASTASA
tom took the train
to toledo
totally
tickled
to the
top
of
the
tip

RIC S. BASTASA
T.

t IS the tea party
i have with me
i slice my cake
and eat it
without anybody
seeing me

t is my own tete-a-tete
with my own
temple

my own soul
a
T

Truth

RIC S. BASTASA
every written word  
takes away a part of me  

i am chipped off  
bit by bit  

an eyes is missing  
an ear is cut off  

as i appear before you  
my mirror  

i become incomplete  
because i am always giving  

and i walk away  
my hair is cut and some locks fall  

faraway from misgivings  
i sit beside a clear pool of water  

there are no ripples  
the moon is full  

darkness subsides  
and then i am full.  

RIC S. BASTASA
the green tiles of the garage
reinvent this old house

it is more livable now
the hammock newly washed

the shoes newly brushed and
the table newly painted

this house has reinvented itself
into something more admirable

decent, confident, renewed,
this could be a start

as you must begin to recreate
what you once was too

do not be just yourself
go beyond what is admirable

reinvent your mind
dye your hair, polish your nails

scent your soap and
wash your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
you must have noticed
that in all my stories i am always the hero

precisely that is what history is all about,
the storyteller is the survivor, the victor

triumphant one
the lone survivor shall always tell direct from the horse's mouth

i know that sometimes you suspect
if the king is telling a lie or that the princess is having false teeth

i keep mum to all those suspended beliefs
i have my stories only for myself, on limited edition

not even my wife knows about the emperor's clothes
he is naked, the child laughs

i am in the marketplace and i don't give a damn
about rip van winkle or that rapunzel

what i have inside my room are the true ones
someone is killed and the murderer is a rich man still at-large..

RIC S. BASTASA
between the divine law and
the laws of men

between the id and the superego
the wall and the other wall

between the floor and the
ceiling

between sin and forgiveness
between my flesh and my spirit

lies the secret of my sanity
and like civil law there shall always be compromises

plea bargaining, the golden mean of Aristotle
between right and wrong, there is something

that must make us alive
for the meantime that this journey is not over yet

between my left and right ear
we must listen so we can hear

between two words are the spaces
these are places of compromises

at the extremes of pure solidity
there lies this stupidity.

RIC S. BASTASA
a day goes beyond sunset
lengthened to a few meters
darkness dances under colored
neon lights
there is more to it even
than what i
in fidelity does: teaching a class
of law going beyond
precarium and mens rea
there was something more
in Oedipus and Antigone
the brooch that he used to
remove his eyes from its sockets
and roam the world as a beggar
holding only a staff and his
empty bowl
because even if he once was
king(destiny toyed what he is)
he sinned, and there is no law that
punishes him
he punishes himself.

their eyes turn round
the skies are gray
i hear the rain from the alum roofs
the class is dismissed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Oedipus well demonstrated that
since his eyes did not see the truth
then they are of no use and so
he plucked them off their sockets

self-inflicted punishment with
him as judge

faraway from what this college of law
is teaching: this doctrine of self-preservation
due process, and equal protection
the right of the accused to life to lie
the right of his lawyer to lie for him
the poisonous tree and its fruits
benefit him to freedom

justice is a child without a mother
on tattered clothes, foul and begging on the streets
emaciated, lost and tomorrow
shall die.

RIC S. BASTASA
yes, the news is spread by her
poetess of the northern skies
her book is just out of the oven
buttered bread, glossy topping

i can smell the scent of her poems
and soon i must touch it

shall my brain afford the luxury of
her metaphors? the sharpness of her wits?

shall i write her for a free copy
and tell her that it is the best poetry that i have ever read
in my entire life?

given a chance to decide which to take
fried chicken or toasted poetry?

you bet.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a winding river
beside tall mountains
you must know that we have
crossed this river
ten times already

it is the same river
winding through the banks
of these foggy mountains

the tall cogon grasses
can deceive us and so

are the boulders of rocks
that lie along our paths

we are grasping for air
to reach the highest peak of these range

of mountains and valleys and
plains

at the topmost
there we can see the truth and negate

that we can never step twice
on that same river that winds through the hillsides

snake, boa, venomous circuitous foggy paths
damned, we stepped on the same river more than twice

this is the tenth, and this is the highest peak
the world is nothing but a winding snake.

RIC S. BASTASA
Table Lamp

Sooner we shall forget
that taste of sweetness

take a look at that
oil that sleeps upon a
smooth porcelain plate

it is the coldness that
makes some things hard

that makes us surrender
to the nook and we
cover our bodies with
what memory there is
to make us warm

when we are apart when
nothing is heard of

it is the darkness of this
room

the silence of the floor
the stillness of the door

upon a lock that makes life
so secure
that will lull me to sleep

and then the moon sails
pass by my window as i turn
myself off
like a switch of
a table lamp.

RIC S. BASTASA
Table Manners

i happen to
be in the party of the rich
where each spoon, fork and
knife has a specific
purpose,
the napkin, and the bowl.
you do not have
to howl
the food on the table
delicious as they maybe
and here i am
as hungry as can be,
but there are rules
which keep on
telling,
the way to hold this and
that
the manner to sip
and spit
all eyes on me,
and so
there is no way now
to be just me.

i leave early,
that is not the place
really for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tabula Rasa

this is a blank wall
or as you wish it, this could be a blank page,
or you may consider this
a blank mind of a child and
you will be teaching him
some things for the first time,
go, scroll, and find something,

do you remember now, why the child is still in pain?
why the walls are stronger? why the blank page still have stains
of blood in there?
some sad memories that refuse to leave?
don't lose hope, there are still more blank spaces of the mind
imagine it to be some kind of a sky
now, put the stars and the moon, and try wishing

something nice and beautiful
like a boat filled with flowers and some light and then silently it sails
on a very peaceful sea like a fine silky cloth covering the dining table
to the place that you always dream to live
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Taciturn

Indeed she is different from papa, this aunt of mine
Is reserved, in speech and manners
Inclined always to the silence in grandma’s garden
Her expressions are always silent like a nod
When she means yes, like a waving of her hand
When she wants to leave, she is like
A quiet pond, she is like the silent fish in there,
She is like the lotus amidst the ripples of this
Family in disagreement about wealth and money,

Her reticence, her reluctance to join in the family
Conversation amazes me, her fragility I am bound
To respect like she is a delicate beautiful butterfly

But then, when the extrajudicial partition was
Laid on the table, she cries foul, she wants more
Than what we must fairly get, and we all say that this
Is unfair, oh sure, I realize, she is stern, she is
Silent for some other reasons, she must be thinking

That we her nephews and nieces are morons
Enough not to know the law of inheritance, about

The fact that when she and papa were young
She was always adored and grandpa’s favorite.

In fact, papa died a very sour, shouting old man.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tacloban At The Santo Nino Shrine

what i saw was the luxury of the past
ivory birds, octupus chandeliers,
chekoslovakian furnitures
russian dolls and persian carpets
these are all found here
icons of Christ and the Holy Virgin Mary
in marble chips from Italy
the paintings of Malakas and Maganda
the banig walls that took two years of polish and paste
it is totally a different world
thirty-seaters or twenty seaters
of chosen dignataries for dining
and dancing the wide halls
of this palace

the tourist guide guides us to different rooms
of this country of fools
each with an austrian mirror
polished black and white floors
the chosen hard wood and the glossy varnishes
these
all these
the people have suffered
in poverty and too much confusion of the times

what have we got now?
we have this trauma, of
never again

everything is dust.
everyone is dust

i am going back to the past
perhaps i shall bleed again,

cry...

RIC S. BASTASA
Tactless...

He is tactless
and to punish himself
he reigns in the kingdom of silence

he is condemned not to Speak
but he finds a solution
to this predicament:

he writes
becoming friendly with the word,
he reaches for the other world
acquainted with the high spirits

someone who reads this
writes me one day that i owe her an explanation

i guess this is already an invasion.

i sign off. I fade, until i become
a blank space

she looks for me
not even a dot i am

it is the emptiness that remains
the most loyal friend
in the kingdom of silence
where i am alone but king

not really lonely
but perhaps lovely
and free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tagabukid

Adtos syudad
Tan-aw sa metro
Taas ang liog
Nangita sa iyang
Kapalaran

Sa iyang kaulaw
Dihang nakabuak
Sa baso
Nga baratohon
Ra baya pod unta
Sa dihang siya
Giayog kasaba

Gihandom niya ang
Ngiub nga Langub

Ang lalom nga suba
Sa ilang bukid

Diin siya usahay
Kaniadto nagtago

Ug nagpaharohay
Sa tumang kalipay

RIC S. BASTASA
Tagaytay Note After The Rain

the pines glisten with
what remains of the rain
this morning

someone stands by
his window
thinking about what
he stands for

there will be no change
rain or shine
one sticks for love
despite the weariness
it gives

some black birds come
again
on that same spot
you learn what is a moment
the shortness of arrivals
and the sureness of departures

most of all
the uncertainty of what's next
when the sun shines
when the rain begins to pour
when the road opens up
for you
too, to leave, with no definite
day for your
return

now goodbyes are painless
like taxi rides
moments are just
breakfasts and lunch

RIC S. BASTASA
Taghoy....

nagsulat kita aron
malabang ang kusog nga sulog sa baha.

dili pisi ang atong gisulat. sakayan kini.
bugsay. mga lig-on nga bukton.

nagsulat kita aron makatkat ang habog kaayo
nga bukid. subay sa dalan, hangtod nga
matumban ang kinatumyan, dayon natog
kanaog paingon sa patag
aron mahimamat na usab ang atong
minahal.

dili bug-at nga bato ang atong gisulat.
mga ang-ang kini. dili dapanas. mga kahoy
kini nga lig-on ug gamot. mga sanga nga sarang
nato kawahiran. kalo sa kainit.

nagsulat kita aron maluwas nato ang atong
kaugalingon apil na ang atong mga igsoon.
sa kapit-os sa kinabuhi. sa kawad-on.

dili kini pagpangilkil. dili kini pagkumkom.
abri ang palad. taghoy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tai Chi Chuan

let me harmonize
your yin and yang

let us be passive
and active in this

flowing,
rhythmic,

d

e

l
i
b
er
a
t

e

m
o
v
e
m
en
t

take your stance
take your position

let no master
teach us
the same things
all at the same time

look at me
i am not
looking at
you
exactly

RIC S. BASTASA
Taj

the screen of the computer monitor if it has thoughts i guess may think that i am crazy

smiling at nobody, nobody, but (don't laugh)

me...

RIC S. BASTASA
Take A Pick For The Moment

we meet i only have one layer
we talk and i added another layer
we discuss and i added more layers
we dive to a certain depth and of course
i have to add more and more layers
so i may not drown
so i may not be too vulnerable to pressure

and when we come out of the water
our faces surfacing you do not recognize me anymore
i have layers and layers of myself
that even me
i cannot anymore recognize

the violence within
this turbulence of the self
this storm inside us
this layers and layers of selves
covering the truth

how can i ever uncover
what my depths cover from time to time
when you utter my name?

when you tell me that
i am myself.

there is no self.
There is no us.

There is no future.
I have only the past
and My now

Like a fruit basket
all fresh on top of your table.

Just take one
The apple perhaps.
And fill yourself.

For the moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Again The Cliches Of Ourselves,

i also know how to close
doors, in fact, i have closed so many,
to my own delight,
though, i have to be honest that at times,
closing a door leaves in me the sound
of sad hinges,
nevertheless, i have managed
to familiarize
myself with the sound of
rusty hands, and the rattles of nails,

after all, learning to survive the hazards
of walling in and walling out is the only means
that we use to arrive at survival rooms,
where we feel safe and take the soundness
of sleep

we take again the cliches of ourselves,
the redundancies of our usual beginnings
our modest cruelties, our capacity to escape
and be strangers to places of our lonely hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Care My Dear....

did you forget what
he said? that a friend in need
is a friend to
avoid.

that what you sow
shall you reap
that what foul shit you have
thrown to the face of the heavens
all these
shall come back to you?

learn by now
that your 'foolishness will always go back to your own body'

and so take care yourself
love it, and don't behave as though you two are not united,
one soul, one body,
sound mind, sound heart,

eventually, it is you who shall either
suffer or
cheer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Care Yourself

how you wish that this trip
be long
so we can be together for
long
you like the conversations
and the stories
that make you cry
and laugh
bitter yet and sweet still
you like the sound of the bus
and every bus stop
is a memory
of sorts
you like the comfort of the
seat
and the coolness of the rural
air that
meets the skin of your face
but this journey will not
be long
it will be over
for the satisfaction of all
not just you
and soon you will cry and laugh
again
but this time alone
and no longer in this
journey
for i will be gone away on
a trip
of my own
and so shall you

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Care. I Love You.

i've been attempting to write you a letter and send it through the post.

it will be something that you will least expect: what with facebook and emails and Skype etcetera.

but i miss the ritual of writing a letter on a yellow sheet of paper detached from the pad and then scribbling my thoughts for you as though i am writing a good composition or a poem. i think you will be honored by such a meticulous deed.

i will take time to walk from my house to the post office talk to the officer there and ask how much will it cost me to mail this letter for you. how many days and

i begin to imagine when a postman finally hands the letter which you do not expect at all from me or anybody.

then you will open the envelope and read the letter which i sealed with my kiss (literally my saliva).

i will not ask how you feel about it. i am just expressing my love for you from a very far distance away from my lonely house (not a home).

i won't bother you for an answer. it is a rainy season here and everything is wet and damp but do not worry. i am warm and safe, embraced by my own arms.

i just want you to feel that i still love tradition and perhaps in your modern world, where you belong, i have become out of tune.
take care. i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Me

take half of what
i have
half-heartedly

RIC S. BASTASA
Take Off That Load For A While

I see,
Your problem is heavy
I can feel its load
And I too cannot carry it,
But if you are kind to yourself
Like a friend
Why not take that load off
A while
And take your rest
Breathe deeply as you take
A walk around
This peaceful lake
Try meeting the
Colored fishes
In the transparencies
Of its waters
Touch a tree
Feel the strength
Of brown barks
Climb if you want
And see some
Nests with eggs
Hear the songs
Of birds on this
Hilltop and then
Walk again around
This lake

Let us see if the
Load is really
That heavy
Afterwards

You may come
Back tonight
And see the
Full moon
Sailing on
The placid water
Take The Bad News With You...Sleep Now.

you bring the bad news
and i am not listening

i make my own day
please my own nights

i light my own lamps
hang my own stars

take the bad news with you
i have enough of all these

the nights howl in me
and the wolves are many.

RIC S. BASTASA
Take The Narrow Road

you must take the narrow road
that leads you to freedom

it is the same narrow road
that the camel took to save itself

it the same camel who passed through
the eye of the *needle

* a small, slender piece of steel with a sharp point at one end and a hole for thread at the other used for spiritual surgical sutures

RIC S. BASTASA
Take This Empty Cup

take this empty paper cup
i have in my hand
it is empty
and you will fill it
i ask of you

you think of the hot water
and coffee
so i may not sleep for days

you change your mind
you take the cup
and fill it with coldness
like chunks of ice

no i will not crack
on this sudden change
like the empty cup
in your hand
i am simply made of paper

throw me crumple me
i am prepared and i really
do not mind at all

i have always felt
the same love for you
even in the midst
of a frosty day
on thick fogs
on cold tin roofs

RIC S. BASTASA
Take This Step

take this step
of fragility
follow me
inside myself

my inner voice
shall be
your inner voice

my echo
shall be
your echo

take this
step now
take this
offer of
an imitation

this & this
and that

that which
which makes
you me and
you
too me

this step
to oneness
of silence
and bliss

RIC S. BASTASA
Takes Time To Learn That...

there are too many paths
leading to poetry
at first you like to copy from them
and be one of them
and being like all the rest
you adore each other
soon, you depart from them
and find your own way
and they won't like it
and call you a freak but there is only one path actually
and that is when you speak what your heart says
when being troubled
you listen to your own sound
hoping that from its own syllables
you can find out
the cure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking A Bath

last night stains
of pretensions now gone

soap and water
on an early morning bath

less the whistle
just the pressure and then

anew you come out
of the bathroom

the usual day the usual
activity: always hoping

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking A Glance At You

taking a glance at you
is poetry in itself, by itself and for itself.

there are words in my eyes
they speak in silence. They long to tell you what I feel.

there are hands on my lips. There are fingers there.
They long to go near you and kiss your lips too.

I see you as words too. Your eyes are images of my
own happiness. Your lips are shaping the shapes of ships
and they have sails to take me away to ecstacies.

I feel you as words of love, and lust and desire insatiable.
my fingers want to read every syllable in your face.

you have always been my there are so many of you
in all of them.

words, and images, and ecstacies. faces and compositions.
i love all of them. And this time I take a glance again.
at you. this poem. this is you. Believe me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Advantage Of Her Loneliness...

someone from the u.s.
working as a nurse
has arrived and she will finance
a reunion

a class reunion for twenty five thousand
pesos from one single pocket

and so, all the parasites are there,
eating for free, laughing because another stupid
working gal, is stupid enough
to spend her money to all these lazy people
taking advantage of her
loneliness....

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Advantage Of The Calamity

I sometimes think that in times of calamities the wolves are still there wearing the best sheep's clothes and in packs they go to the places where people are asking help and with their instincts they do what they always do: taking bites and finally taking all of them for their sumptuous dinner.

Not to be outdone are the vultures who are waiting for their own time. The dead are useful too for their breakfast.

There are only few good Samaritans. And they work without any nameplates at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Courage

there is no escape
when our eyes
meet again
on a morning like this

my feet are tired of
running from the
dreams of
my hands
the heart speaks
and my mind
keeps the intricate
tendrils of its
logic

all of them point to
the flower of love
that blooms

finally i cut it from
its stalk
and deep in the
hollows of my heart
this vase
without water
i shall watch
it wilt

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking His Cue On Nike Shoes

i know mr. lou about the story
of the nike shoe
about corporate
imperialism in the world
of the little girl
somewhere in India
stitching
the nike in the shoe
bound
for the ads: made in the USA

AND you bought a pair
of nike shoes
and you are confused
about the thought
you gave
to the little girl whose
hands
bleed the blood
of imperial oppression

we discussed this matter
over a glass of beer
after
a class in economics

it roots down
to this

the poor getting poorer
and the rich getting richer
thing

it boils down
to
i know but what can i do?

that has always been
the situation and it has always been the question asked
since
time immemorial, a cliche of our ancestors who welcome

oppression like a good neighbor
and who thrive in such an arrangement
by reason
of tolerance and just to make

precious peace
a dream about harmony and just being
civil about
economic war and be at peace with everybody
no deal

you are confused, Mr. Lou
about the Nike shoe

it boils down to this:
i am just a speck of dust in this universe,

yes, what can you really do, Mr. Lou?

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Life As A Friend

life knows you

and joins you
in the table
of your

joys and sorrows

give it space
take a chair
give it a glass
of wine that it deserves

- -
and say cheers!

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking The Narrow Path

this is the narrow path
of disbelief
one gets elbow to elbow
with uncertainties
in a party of masks
one talks to someone
without a name
with no place to stay
this is the narrow path
it only you that fits in
and all they say when they pass
are excuses
this is the narrow path of silence
questions hang like stars in the skies
you are a grain of sand
below a full moon
you look for light and comfort
there is so much
but you have none

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking The Stairs

we lift a body
using the legs
and stair upon stair
we breathe
we do not even ask
why are we bent
on going upward?

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Things In Passing

you chide me for taking things
in passing and looking at them as though
they are tiny

ants on a hill
grasshoppers playing on the grass
moths circling around the light
fleas on the rug

i could have told you
that many days back in my youth
i was worshiping the sun
had time with flowers and took more
moments with the rivers

those were the huge things in my life
where i placed more significance
but then they were so hurting at times
and then i shun
what we think are important

i like the dips and i stay on the surface
of things
no longer wanting to swim but you may see me
(not miraculously)
walk on top of the water
gliding on the shimmer of its skin
and then without the use of so many words
i leave and then go away and what you always see
(though this may not be true after all)
is always the happiness subsumed in my
suppressed smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Taking Time

i tried to ask myself what are days for
they always equate it with walking and the nights
always with sleep. Some have taken the courage
to redefine the colors.
black need not be dark, and white need
not be waking,
sleep would be pink at times
and twilight blue.
i do most of the thinking at night
when everyone hides in the darkness of their sleep.
there are colors and sounds and scents.
and i begin to love the variations,
the aberrations have become adventures
and no one in the house knows
no one understands what is happening to my
eyelids, my mouth does not speak
and my eyes,
having seen much, have desired days
to be the place for the dead,
the white mausoleums, the scents of the flowers
for the weary.
i sleep and dream at noontime and
nobody is there anymore to
mind. I am alone and i have began to love
this moment.
my day is dark. my night is light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tal Vez Mejor Con Un Cantante Español. Quizás..?

in fighting
depression she presses
her ears
on the radio in an old house
of an unpainted wall
inside her room
intently listening to a
spanish sonata

and then she dances alone
in her messy room.

RIC S. BASTASA
when you write me
was it with the objective that i cannot understand you?

do you conceal true intent
with words that from time to time i have to refer to
a dictionary
threshing out
a connotation from a denotation?

if you hand me metaphors
on a platter for breakfast
i may be lost
in the labyrinths of the poem
and i cannot be back
home on time
and you will regret
my being lost
because you tell me that you
cannot wait forever

clicking clock
cruel running monotones

next time, please write to me in simple terms
one that draws me nearer to you
so that i may understand how you are doing,
what you are, and
where are you going

because it will be same with me
when i say i am lost, i am lost, i am not into a Greek tragedy
facing the cyclops and looking for the golden fleece
or building that horse
to the enemies

you have a bow and arrow
strike me at the center of my heart
do not talk about the apple on my hair
i know how to wriggle in
pain
with you, just tell me
and soon
this will be
over.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking About The Obvious

it is not hard, i suppose,
to talk about hidden matters,
people do these most of the time,
like what happened behind the scenes
and the real stories still untold,
people know them more
than we do,

what seems to be hard
not just to understand,
but even to
talk about, are
the obvious ones
those found in our
very noses,

we seldom see them
but others will

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking With A Stranger

he says he is in china
teaching, then he says
not teaching only,
he is researching on the
roots of language,
mandarin he speaks
and bisaya too,
a man of the world
from the island
where i live
and call
home,
he is a stranger and i tell him my name, my work,
i show myself with what i write and he takes time to read all
until
he sees something wrong and he corrects it,
my choice of words
my spelling, the do's and don't's in poetry in writing a letter to a friend
in composing an eulogy
a song of departure
a poem of regret, the last thing he says was that he once fished
and that the sea has become his home, and then
i knew him, but i will not tell him who he is.

it is enough that we have become friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To My Own Snakes....

everyone is obsessed with
themselves
when a conversation is
struck
be it in the bus or somewhere
else
a path is mapped out
leading to the self, his kids,
her husband,
his accomplishments, his house,
her cat, some cooking and
family dinner

the door is closed for you
to get inside and feel the ambiance
of the soul

the world of each man is self-centered
all planets and all suns
revolving around this selfishness

and with this in mind i am no longer
bothered
i have accepted this tenet
this rule of engagement and thus

when i talk to you even before you
have spoken the first word
or invoked the first image
i have already forgiven you.

in some deaf moments it is there
where i make a space of my own
in the middle of your forest trees
i also talk to my own snakes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To Myself, As You Think That You Like Me.

i think i will admire you more
for not being like me,

if you imitate me, it might be
funny, or if you insist, i may be
flattered on the illusion that
i am of your liking,

but i do not need it, it is not
that i am bored of myself, but
it is more of saying that i am
more dignified if
there is only one kind of me,
and that you also deserve that
praise that you have become more
of yourself, less anyone else.

i have enough of myself, and
i am not like history that repeats
itself, like an error.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To Oneself

i arrived with a heavy heart
i was dragging my feet home
my arms seemingly lost their bones
i am weakened
uttered the words which should not have
been said
full of regrets
i reviewed every syllable
only to find
that they must be said
because they are
ture

those who listened
behaved like mirrors
reflecting light
to each wall

some have become walls
actually
forming part of the room
shying away from
the eruption of
volcanic truths

i was justifying to the
window of the car
they were not ripe for
those lines

meanwhile i was left alone
at peace
with the noise of the
strong wind
the trees were about
to fall on me

but that time was not
an excuse anymore
it was enough
i said it all.... i said everything
and whatever regret
that this mind kept on repeating
could just be
a matter of opinion
that anyone
to include the one talking to me
now
that must be kept
unto itself
forever...

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To Oneself

why do you follow me?

i repeat
i do not have roses in my hands

i do not carry a bowl of soup
a basket of fried chickens

do you like the contours
of my back?
there are no muscles on it
nothing smooth like the skin of a morning leaf

do you see a map there?
or a pot of gold at the feet of my rainbow?

how can i ever have
a rainbow?
there is no pot of gold
pure myth

are you falling in love with my
tracks?
they are not like the tracks of
gazelles
nothing like the softness of deers

they are all sculptures
of mud
animal dung are its
possibilities of content

unlike all journeys
you must know by now that mine
has no
exact destination
there is no time here
nothing like the calculated arrivals of weathers
nothing like the predictability of the seasons

why do you follow me? why are you always following me? i am a little bit disturbed likely and sooner i will be perturbed

do you love the bounty of my emptiness? it is an empty bowl on the side of the abandoned house

are you not scared by the monster of my nothingness? they are the ghosts who cannot locate the entrances of their rests they are those long dead but who could not find eternal peace they are the restless screams of the unthinkable souls of Hades

i always move away that is the only kind of motion that i know

shadow, oh shadow, why do you follow me? light, oh amazing light, why do you cast it upon myself?

this is the only pleasure that i have i talk to myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To 'Them'

talking to 'them' has become a burden
just lately
i notice it  and my mind travels along the paths
of the streams of its own consciousness
totally detached from every word that
is said...

i look at my heart and feel the running of the river
in my veins
blood flooding in the fields of my mind
i am amazed at this
opportunity of not having to need anybody
to make me think
deeply....

i rise above society now like i have new wings to fly
what they say do not affect me
how i live is my own
lookout
where i go, i go
where i intend to stay and rest and be there
i decide....

i am my own man now and i do not mind what is in store for me.
i guess, this is it.
my life, my decision
my destiny, my own action.

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking To Yourself

you talk to yourself
because you can talk to nobody
because you have talked to the tree beside you
and it is not enough

to unload what burdens you
this thing that fills your head that bloats
your stomach
this hubris
this angst

this thing that kills the beating of your heart
which shames love and which
diminishes your faith

you talk to yourself because there is no sense
talking to them
these judgmental creatures
without ears and erased eyes
those that do not feel
those who have died ahead of you
and yet still pretend
to know and touch you

you talk to yourself everyday
now you feel so light and then you begin to flap your wings
and fly away forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking Too Much

i have said so much
what follows next is regret
why i talk too much

the next thing is
reactionary silence
stubborn silence
chosen option
not to talk for a day
even if it is a case of
an emergency

there is fire in the house
and they’re looking for the
fire extinguisher
and i know where i keep it
but i am not telling

because i have said so much
and i still have much regret

RIC S. BASTASA
Talking Upon One's Self Upon A Resolution Of A Conflict

since i cannot hold you
i let myself go somewhere else
to hold another

there is no one like you
but i can always close my eyes
and find you
there

i can hold you as though you are mine
just that

even in my dream
even in the cheapest of my illusion
you dread me

death looks upon me and smiles
as though
i shall love it as though i can finally
find you
in those dark arms

i do not own my world
neither shall i conquer yours by force
i tend my own garden of sorrow
then
I'll make a gate where one may enter
I'll put a door
where i can be alone

i am also myself
my own faithful lover
without any
repulsion
without any condition
for i can be my own magical concoction
for i must live to claim a world of my own
alone and still be whole

happy and acceptable
upon my own terms and conditions

RIC S. BASTASA
Taludoy

he last saw me when i was
four years old, barely able to walk from
a rare disease,
he was father's side kick
in the farm where flood rises
and they would have to use
boats to plant the rice.
he couldn't believe how i have become
so unlike of myself as a boy,
i have a big body now, and speaks
too fluently their own language,
father spoke their language
from the heart
but he was so cruel then
beating him with
a bamboo stick,
he did not cry though as
expected from a brave brown native
of the subanen tribe
known for their resilience.
Uncle Peping wants him evicted
and he has nowhere to go
only this land that his father
entrusted to him as a tenant
of the third generation.
i said he cannot leave just like that
there is a law
between us, from where i started as
a boy with a sense of
charity and
indebtedness of the past.
He taught me how to ride
the buffalo and
then he let me go fall
into the river
and swim
all by myself, alone unafraid
about the mythical
tale-eating crocodile.
Now his life in in my hands.
And i must not
fail this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tambok Nga Babaye

Itom ang iyang sandalyas
Mobo siya morag
Katasyon sa among
Cabinet nga butanganan
Og kape og gatas

Daghan nag puti ang
Iyang buhok
Mubo usab morag
Lampaso ang
Iyang mga bangs

Ang iyang blouse
Itom nga dahon og
Puti nga mga bulak

Ang iyang karsones
Maong nga morag
Asul nga panapton
Nga nalimtan og
Bulad sa mahal nga
Adlaw kay napughaw

Nag-antiohos dayon
Sige siyag teks teks
Dayon tan-aw tan-aw
Sa unahan dayon duko
Na pod dayon teks teks
Na pod morag dunay
Gipangita gipaabot

Sa kadugayan misibog
Paingon siya sa punoan
Sa nangka sa kilid sa

Dayon og lakaw paingon
Sa estasyonan sa mga
Easyride og habal-habal.
Taming, Domesticating Us...

the fear of having sown many seeds
is here,
upon a storm, a lonely woman, picks
some of the sprouts, puts them on her
skirt, lifting
and cares for all these
inside her house, trying to figure out
what are all these,

there is only little light from the window
she closes them all day
some drops of rain from a leaking roof

it is something so unnatural
what she does she does for herself
her own curiosity
that has killed thirteen cats
some more may die
these seeds
may not grow leaves anymore

how can anyone so sound have disbelief
that the wild is the true niche?
she believes in pots and her greenhouse
she kills all the insects that visit the frames of her windows

that is my fear
when the world dies because the learned
so many of them
have tamed their hearts
domesticated their wild foxes
murdered the
essence of my earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Tan-Awon Lang Ang Moabot

Ang kagahapon nakita niya
Sa gamayng bata. Malipayon
Nga nanghingugmo sa sanga
Sa punoan sa balimbing

Samtang ang iyang nanay
Namilo sa iyang mga habol
Ug nanawag alang sa sayo
Nga pangaligo sa atabay.

Gahi'g ulo ang iyang kagahapon.
Ug nahulog siya kuyog sa nabali
Nga sanga sa gabok nga balimbing.

Sa iyang pagmata, wala na
Iyang nanay. Karon, siya
Mitutok sa kalsada paingon
Sa iyang padulngan.

Gikapoy na siya. Nagpungko sa
Daplin sa karsada. Naglantaw sa
Nanglabay. Nagpakahilom.
kabalaka.

Walay kahadlok. Kon kinsa kadtong
Moabot, dili na siya mangutana.
Kon kinsa ug unsay iyang tuyo.
Ug kon kinsay mopahawa.

RIC S. BASTASA
I do not know if you tried
Tanduay rum 65

i tell you take it
even once

savor the smooth flow
of the spirits inside your throat

running slowly into you
lungs then into your heart

feel it there like a tinder
if you can only see it it has

some spark of flints
and just wait a little until

you remember how was it
that you were charged with rape

and you are imprisoned for
7 years for all the lies that

she peddled in court and
only if the judge himself has

not tasted Tanduay rum 65
when he was 17

he could not have felt so well inside his lungs and heart

that you were the innocent boy
at heart molested by that

27 year old unhappy woman
who really want to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tango

takes two to tango
takes one
to ballet

it may take three to boogie
five or four to do the twist

but let me tell you friend
i am classical and i like ballet most

specially the split.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tango....

life must be a tango
it is a step forward and
another step backward
the woman bends
gracefully
so the man sees
what beauty lies
there
the man stands proud
about this
human combination
one must give
and the other takes
one voluntarily
surrenders
and the other
takes care of
the rest

RIC S. BASTASA
Tarimah

dance with me
Tarimah
do not ask me
about what
time is it

look at me
i have a healthy body
my eyes have
the sparkle of the
morning sun
my scent is that
of the fields in
Samarah
fresh perfume of sunflower seeds
roasted for a morning dish

come dance with me
for i have not danced
my nights away

you need sleep?
yes i understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
scattered hair by the wind
here in the desert you sing
feet dancing like cobra to a
flute and walk and run and
swing your arms raise your hands
to the sky shake your head and
nod at the end, kusu kusu kusu....

RIC S. BASTASA
Tarts And Warts

on a sweet conversation like this
when you open
and i ask some more of this openness
in you,
you become my tart
i like the taste
of fruits and milk and some cheese
to last finger licking
goodness

then you take your turn
trying to open me like a canned
fruit juice
i stick to my lock and key
and you find it hard to
open
you like to drink the four seasons
in me
i refuse
i shifted your questions to something else
like the full moon last night
and you do not like
this one way traffic
between us
my road is closed
i only have
mysterious ends
your thirst shall not be quenched
you should know by now
i am not a tart
i am your wart

and so the saying goes like a road
diverging
i'll take the other one
you take that one
i know
the one less travelled by
you are the poet
i am less

RIC S. BASTASA
it is a matter of taste
years of bitterness
cannot teach you
in a day what sweetness is

years of searching
cannot give you an hour
of a solution to the problems
you are grappling with

you mellow down through the years
what tastes so sweet to them
in your discriminating expertise
is never sweet to you

you keep a glass of your favorite concoction
the one that makes you live
she takes the courage of taking a sip
her face changes and she vomits

what makes you live is always
the exquisite taste of bitterness
the one that strengthens your mind
and that makes a lot of difference

RIC S. BASTASA
Tawo Gihapon Ako

akong basihan ang sulti sa akong lolo,
ang lalaki kinahanglang adunay baroganan
walay daghang pulong
kay ang iyang pulong usa lang ug dili na kani maparog
kon iya nang mabuhian

ug misunod ang akong amahan
ang lalaki dili alang sa panimalay kon dili sa darohan
diin ang iyang mga kanding, kabayo ug mga kabaw
sa daghang sagbot matagbaw

nadungog ko sila sa klaro sa wala pa sila mibanaw
apan bisan sa akong tumang kamingaw
gidasig ako
sa paghatag ug kahulugan kon unsa ba ang lalaki
kon unsa ba ako

tawo gihapon ako
usahay gani mahutdan sa pulong
usahay mawad-an sa baroganan
usahay mabalian ug bukog
usahay magkiang
magsangkiig sa kalibog ug
kahadlok ug kabalaka
kon unsay dangatan sa akong
ugma sa akong kapalaran

masayop usab ako madam-ag maulawan
mawad-an ug kusog
ug sakto nga barog

usahay moiyak usab ako sa tumang
kasuko ug sa tumang kalipay
nasuta ko kini sa akong
kaugalingon

ug sa tumang paubos
 gidawat ko ang akong kahuyang
ang akong kakulangon
sa akong kaugalingon

ug labi na sa tanan gidawat ko
ang akong pagkinahanglan
kanimo babaye
karon nga akong gihalaran

RIC S. BASTASA
Tea Pot

how nice for it
to react under such stress
despite being
heated it still manages to whistle...

RIC S. BASTASA
Teach Me

teach me
in the name of
ethics and morality
and peace
in our family
not to love you
teach me
how to unbreak
this heart
teach me
to leave you
without pain
so i may not
have lived
in vain

RIC S. BASTASA
Teach Them How To Fish

you may give them fish
but for how long will you be giving them fish? for how long will you fish yourself?
teach them how to fish and they will also teach others how to fish.
that is wiser that way.

teach them poetry at first. let them read the easiest one to understand. let them see the beauty of the simplest lines from you and from the poet that you love.

teach them how to write one from the fingers of their hand. love their work and tell them how beautiful are they. there is always beauty in every personalized line. i know.i am telling you. your lines speak what is in your heart and everything inside our hearts are always innately beautiful

let them read their lines. let them speak the meaning that they are hiding in there. that which you have never seen yourself. let them defend beauty and grace and truth in their own work. beauty and truth and goodness have to be defended by its creator too.

listen. open your mind. listen attentively.
teacher. listen to them. they are now making their own.
love each work.

teacher listen. now they are teaching you. now you are learning some more. they have their own wings now.

teacher, see the sky. see them. oh how beautiful are they. they are all flying and singing. do not wish them to come back to you. let them fly them see the big wide world. let them find the other universes.

they are not yours. they belong to themselves. they are now free.
that is your happiness that even the gods cannot give you.
sit back. and write another poem for another batch. some more. some time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Teaching Our Hearts To Love The Right Person

we aim for a brigh future
and sometimes we teach our hearts to love
the right person
at the right time
we want logic
to reign in our hearts
and then
the heart that loves
without reason but only
for the feel of love
suddenly shrinks
like a raisin and
then dies its
natural death

because love cannot
be taught
it is the teacher

RIC S. BASTASA
for you to be closer to
God you must learn to
pray every morning and
there is really no need of
any formula or chants
or creeds or novenas

talk to him like he is
your friend, he likes
friends he has already
more of those servants
and slaves and soldiers
and counsels. Befriend
God, that is prayer enough,
no mumbo, no jumbo
dance the mambo
try the limbo-limbo-rock
with his angels and flock

RIC S. BASTASA
Teachnique In Writing Poems

she asks how to make a poem

she is going to teach the kids to make poems

i tell her just let them write and it is then that they will know how to write one

RIC S. BASTASA
Tears

i want you to fall
naked
i want rain and i
want that when you
fall
it must be with
rain and you are
naked through and
through

they are afraid that
you will die in the cold
i do not fear
this to happen to you

how can you, how can you
be that way?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tears And Pearls

i gifted her pearls
and she
remembers
all her tears

i showed her
my tears
and she wiped
them with
her bare hands

and then she
kissed me

and then i remember
the pearls
that i have stolen
from his eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tears And Storms

on the other hand
the storms simply did
what they are supposed to do,
clean the mess
that men imposed upon themselves
they keep the dust
and dirt and then
go away.

just like the tears in our eyes
the sweat.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tears Dry At The Bottom.....

we keep
the game of
a candle alive
as we
put much light
we burn
that fast and
then gone.

tears dry
at the bottom of
our existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tears, How Can I Refuse Your Tears?

as i was about to turn my back
from you
there was this silence that
never speaks
this void that keeps a
hurting space

you let out a cry
your mouth does not lie
your tongue keeps
the parting words

and the room had become as
lonely as ever
lovers parting
saying the last goodbye
after all those years
of sweet bonding

and then i unpacked my bag
and decided to be back in your arms
' i am not going away'

my hands caressed your hair
and then i wiped away your tears

RIC S. BASTASA
Tease

shall i fly with you on a first class suite
to the blue skies
the soft cottony clouds our mattresses
the moon our bed
the stars our glittering lights and the wind
of the night
our air conditioning delights

how the grass shall envy us
how the earth shall look at us with suspense

as we make love till dusk and as tired as lovers are
we sleep like two white feathers left inside the nest

we like to think that way
but how can this ever be?

night and day, that is what we are, how can we ever be together?
earth and sky, floor and ceiling

two parallel lines running in opposite directions
we shall never ever meet

RIC S. BASTASA
Teasing The Bridge

The summer is hot
He crosses the river through
Teasing the bridge
With his water buffalo

RIC S. BASTASA
Teasing...

do not worry
these are but little teases
of fate

if you take a closer
look at the tears
you could have seen their
tiny lips
smiling for their final
release

if you have listened quite
a little longer
you could have heard the
suppressed laughter of your
eyelids
before they finally close

but you are so tired
and have not noticed
all these
having entered finally
the narrow door
of your day dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Teasing......

the snail loves the
veins of the hands

they are the maps
to its licking pleasures

it feels blood
palpitating to its mouth

sacrifice beauteous
not consumed just felt

the hard house
is always the wall

that keeps it from the
hazards of the winds

from the minding of the
the leaves

from the mocking of the
moon

from the paleness of death
there is always the lingering

pleasure of non-consummation
fluid kept at the middle part

of the pelvis at the center
of the ecstasy of gravity

RIC S. BASTASA
Techonology Versus Nature

rumba music
from an old radio

against the slight rain
from the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
Teething Thoughts....

the white pigeons
find their home inside

the ceiling of this
house

every night i hear their
moaning sounds

they're like the weeping willows
meeting the winds from the far away mountains

there is a packet of winds
trapped in this room

forming a whirl
soon the walls shall tremble

something must give way
to a storm

lest these windows break
frames dismantled

to give birth to a pair of eyes
that will not flicker when it starts

to stare to the sun
or waver to the salt of the earth

these tongues of the twines
these teething thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
Teh Mongo Experiment....

yes, we put the mongo seed
inside a cardboard box and
there is no opening, not even
a peeping hole,

on the other same sized cardboard
box with another similar mongo seed
an orifice is made,

the two sprouted but the one
with the opening finally finds
its exit and we meet the word
heliotropic as discussed by
the late mrs. villasica,

that was years ago,
we were then in grade six
at that time, and
martial law was declared
and there were those who
disappeared
those who finally became
mad, literally
no metaphor intended

then i learned such words
hamletting,
summary execution
government persecution
zoning
martial law babies,

i turn to the mango seed
experiment without an orifice
deprived of light
though given water
and soil to thrive,

the cardboard box and
the dream of the borrowed light
of the moon

because there is no sun
because there is utter deprivation
we go for dreams as substitute
some died in that hunger strike

at least, dubbed as the child of the
borrowed light of the moon,
one still keeps writing and the other
one still keeps reading

call them the surviving
lunatics

not in the literal sense now
but sort of, in a lighter sense
metaphoric.

RIC S. BASTASA
Telegraphic

mountain breeze blowing tree tops
swinging upon cliffs rising from the sea
shores where sea shells abound
maiden walking along the seaweeds
picking some pieces of her past
that dims like a lamp without oil
or gas without a child hands covering
the wick from the harshness of the night
wind..who wants the light dead?

RIC S. BASTASA
Telegraphic Poems...

used to be that
during those old time... mama dead, come home immediately.

or...happy birthday, may you have more birthdays to come...or...
we share your victory...happy graduation... or

papa cannot come home, bad weather... or
send money, tuition....or

those times... communication is...very slow....sometimes, the dead
was already buried...or resurrected...when the telegram for condolences
arrived....

got you poem today...in the same manner...telegraphic in form...
deciphered... like... each word has a value....bill follows.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Telekineses

telekineses:
an old alchemy
of turning lead
to gold
of making
telephone lines
move like
electricity to the
ear
hearing words
greetings
of morning chill

crazy me
waiting to convert
her heart to
love me

RIC S. BASTASA
Teleman, Viola Concerto

We were three close
Friends
When we were young
We go to a river
At the back
Of our house
There is a big
Plank of driftwood
And we all ride
On it as though
It were a big
Boat and our
Hands are paddles

We sail
And we laugh
The place
Is off limits
For us children
In fact
Father says
Beware
A big crocodile
Lives there
And swallows
A child in whole

We did not take
Heed
We are the
Hardheaded
Children and this
Something
Traumatic
On that river
At the back of
The house
Where the
Big plank
Of wood which
We ride on
Carried us
All laughing
To the other
Side

Only the two
Of us
Survived
What we heard
Was only a
Splash
And the river
Was staining
The color
Of blood

It was the splash
That swallowed
My hardheaded
Youth.

I remember
This teleman
Viola concerto
A burial
Without a
Dead body
Twas a simple
Floating of
A candle boat
On the river
And then
All the violins
And the viola
Sounded to the
Cry of the mother
Who never
Believed my
Story of a splash.
Tell Me

Tell me what you wish for
Bring them all to me
I will keep them in my hands
Away from the
Wicked eyes of his world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me How Is It To Live On Tiptoes

afraid to make a mistake and be beaten by grandpa

tell me again about how you ran away from the house
and cried the whole night and slept on the cogon grass on that moonless night

tell me more about how afraid you are to go to hell because they are telling you
that everything that you are doing is sinful

tell me about your suppressed life how you have become related to a
bonsai

how many days have you skipped lunch and then dinner and then wake up in the
morning and looking for a friend to give you breakfast

that time when you were dumped by a lover whom you cannot take anymore
you never knew what love is all about

it is all about survival, and escape and fantasy and monologues
for future revenge

for that coming back and be someone else,
tell me, and i will tell you, you are not alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me If There Is Really A Need For Change

doesn’t there be no changes
any weapons of
survival remain the same

same morning
same nighttime

same faces adore your
space
same words trickle
from the ceiling

same eyes waking up
same moons below your eyelids

if you cannot take all these
monotonous landscapes
and sonorous sounds of
sameness all about us

there can be a little change
like temporary departures
for possible
comparisons

you leave and then you
may come back

tell me if there is a need
for change
tell me if i really have to

love another and then
forget
you forget us

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me Not About Your Quality Moments

tell me not
sincerely, there is no part in me
that is interested

or will interest you about me.
but let me tell you
what i see in the grass and the clouds
and the river

they are all i have and they are all enough.
one moment, one life,
one word. ENOUGH.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me Please Tell Me.

let the whirlpool of
life take you
let me watch
intently and then
i let life be
if ever you come back
from said
vertigo
i will come back
with you
and i will ask a lot
what happened

tell me
please tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me What Am I?

Sometimes I get tired too
Asking some philosophical questions about
My existence, purpose, and life becomes like one
Security guard asking me a lot
As I am about to enter a building

What floor?
What for?
Whom would you want to see?
Your ID please
Leave it,

And I pretend I have a very important purpose in my life
A very important vision for a very important mission
And upon a certain arrival
On the topmost floor
I end up, so this is the floor,

what for?

What am I doing here?
Like a scratch paper I crumple myself
This is not my paper, I have not written the right thing
This is waste for a wastebasket
I crumple this scratch of scribblings without
Any real meaning,
She calls it cranky
I call this a nursery rhyme of my life

Questions which seem hard
But actually there are none of such
But playful stuff of

who am i?

Try these:

1) There was a girl in our town,
Silk an’ satin was her gown,
Silk an’ satin, gold an’ velvet,
Guess her name, three times I’ve told it.

2) As soft as silk, as white as milk,
As bitter as gall, a thick green wall,
And a green coat covers me all.
What am i?

3) Make three fourths of a cross,
And a circle complete;
And let two semicircles
On a perpendicular meet;
Next add a triangle
That stands on two feet;
Next two semicircles,
And a circle complete.
What am i?

4) Flour of England, fruit of Spain,
Met together in a shower of rain;
Put in a bag tied round with a string,
If you’ll tell me this riddle, I’ll give you a ring.
What am i?

5) In marble walls as white as milk,
Lined with a skin as soft as silk,
Within a fountain crystal clear,
A golden apple doth appear.
No doors there are to this stronghold,
Yet thieves break in and steal the gold.
What am i?

6) Long legs, crooked thighs,
Little head and no eyes.
What am i?

7) Formed long ago, yet made to-day,
Employed while others sleep;
What few would like to give away,
Nor any wish to keep.
What am i?

8) Lives in winter,
Dies in summer,
And grows with its root upwards.
What am i?

9) Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the king’s horses and all the king’s men
Cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again.
What am I?

You will answer.

And you laugh, these are for kindergarten kids
Not for me, but honestly I figure out
Kindergarten stuff
In truth, that is what my life is all about

What am i?
What am i?
come play with me

Pin pin de sirapin de cuchillo de almacen
How how the carabao the batuten

Amy Susie and the rosemarie
Amy Susie and the rosemary

Do you remember all of these?
When you remember what do you feel?
Does not life itself
Smile and laugh a bit
Relieved from its hazards
Rested like a head on a hammock on my arms?

Actually, that is what I am all about
Seeing everything thorough the eye of the child

Thru an eye of a needle.
Tell Me What Is It

tell me what is it that stays on the water
the whole night and does not get wet

it is the moon reflected on the clear pond.

nothing is broken.
or consumed. i am seeing it well

and tomorrow i shall see the rising sun
completely in one dew
of the grass.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me Where Our Love Shall Go?

All my sighs, all my regrets spread in space
Back to the air, where air is their nature
The tears are fluids, dropping to the river
Have flown to the sea, its source and mother
But my love, this love that refuses to die
Where shall it go? Tell me, where?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me Why?

you have what you call
a success,
you have a beautiful wife
who fathered
you six healthy children
you have a fortune to waste
a big house to settle
and a circle of friends to
enclose you

you have all that i could
possibly envy
you have it all
what a lucky guy
are you?

it is strange
you come home drunk
you want to burn the house
and you do not want to play
with the kids
and you break the law
and you wish
that you were dead...

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Me, (Who Wrote These Lines, Please, Did You?)

Because it all just breaks apart, and the pieces scatter and rearrange without much fanfare or notice.

Because you can't and don't remember the step that kicked up dust and left this planet—you'd give up even more now now.

Because the body itself—the heart's

not dead but deeper, wrapped up in curtains, a different color, among the railings and the pigeons, the rooftops and walls—

for all you know it's a question of bread

or beer.

Because even love

returns. The city's all brightness

and shadow, deckle-edged, bluer than air—there's no help anywhere—you no longer know how to listen.

And love says, love—midnight to midnight,

already ablaze. And the boulevard—wide-open. And the well-stocked crowdless market, and a lone taxi blears.

Even happiness—the way anger's come back to roost again. And joy, though joy's not in the ear or the eye. On this walk.

The gulls hover offshore and the islands are speckled with fire.

Even love, even because.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tell Us The Truth....

welcome back
my friend you have come
home again

d this is home
d this is our beautiful home
t he flowers know your name
t he bushes miss your hair
the trees keep talking
about you

we miss you from this glass
to the teapot
we have heard a lot about
your past
the present blurred that
much

now sit with us
let us sip coffee and have our
cookies
the ones that we love when we
were once children at heart

you belong to us
tell us the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tempest In The Teapot

it is the tea
not the teapot
it is the air
not the wall
it is the soul
not the body

it is the tea
in the water
its essence
is not the water
the at first
was peaceful
and then
with heat
rages on and on...

RIC S. BASTASA
Temporality.....

nothing is kept forever
each day we lose part of our skin
our feet dissolve
in water
our heads evaporate in air
time
we are immersed in it like
a solution
we diffuse like molecules
of ink
we invade what seems at
first is colorless
then each of us settles
like moss
to rocks
we think that finally stability
is there
the rocks crumple like chalk
turning to dust again
upon our fingers the wind comes
blows everything
we imagine we exist
until our imagination leaves us
we become strangers again
like a migrating bird
upon a tree
in an unknown island

RIC S. BASTASA
Temporary

everything is temporary
passing through is the state
of this human flow
don't get stuck on something
so fleeting
have your wings ready
my dear
for another journey

RIC S. BASTASA
Temporary Moments....

people come and they go

rivers passing us by
and we think that the water is still there

we imagine that it is only the sound of the river that is leaving us.

we sit beside it and always think that it is always the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
Temporary Sleep......

the voice inside
keeps guidance, keep right

write, write, there is so much
to be written

when will this dictation end?
it will not.

for this voice is a journey
and its destination
is eternity

the voice inside keeps saying
listen, listen

no one dies
one only temporarily sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
Ten

ten is my lucky number
ten is the number that i assign
to a poem for
my day
ten is perfect
ten is one and zero
ten is a pillar and a moon
ten is
an exercise of that little child
ten is my count
of when things must end
ten is the number of sheep
in my dream
ten is not eleven
ten with another moon
becomes a
hundred
whatever you think of me
i rate myself
a ten
that is a matter of
personal decision
and if you die because of envy
it is because
ten has always been my favorite
number
even if i wallow
in my own
stupidity, i still cling to ten
because i am not yet perfect
and would soon
become one
Oh God, where are you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Ten In The Morning....

the important thing is that you have done what you think is right

end of the story

not all the good things that we do go to its full use we are relating to some other evils and we cannot do anything if they twist whatever good was done that is now their own responsibility too no longer ours

RIC S. BASTASA
Tender Eternity

we all felt it
we were cheated

what we earned
they all take away

what we have become
however
remains as is

now and forever
has become
the two of us in
one
tender eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Tending Pain In My Own New Garden

When you left me
i did not show any pain

i have no tears
i have no eyes

you never mention my name
to our new destination

you are alone and
you have always been

you keep telling strangers
you were born alone

when you left me
i learned a lot

i can be happy too
tending pain like

sprouting seed in my
own new garden

RIC S. BASTASA
Tendrils

I like tendrils clinging
On a bridge
Towards the other
Side of the
River

Like hands of a girl
Reaching
To the other side
Of her
self.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tendrils In The Dark

THEN You fade
others see you as
a torn denim
a plastic
flower dusty beside
a wall

but your hope
is the sunset
a big, warm, orange
consolation because it
simply

faded as beautifully as it is.

and you silence fruits
with those tendrils in the dark

RIC S. BASTASA
Termination

the sea is gray
the tree on the river
bank is dead

the nipa roof
of a cottage is
blown by the
wind

there is no man
in this place

there is only the
murmur of the
sea breeze

as usual the sands
of course are silent as ever

RIC S. BASTASA
Terms Of Endearment

For love’s delights
We savor
For love’s demands
We labor

That is how it works
My love
This life
My life
And your life

There is no such thing
As a free meal
As love that is handed
Without a risk
And uncommitted

In everything we
Must always
Labor
& pray

For love to be love
Sacrifices are
Terms of endearment.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are times when we fell like
waste paper, that uselessness,
when we seem to be not connected at all
even to our very own self
when we are scattering sheets of paper
in the air
falling like confetti to the ground
and then it rains
and everything is wet
drained
to the dirty canals of our cities
down, down to the
worst of our histories

i let go off these all,
i simply wait for another sun
and rainbow after the rain
things do not last anyway
the good and the bad end themselves
beauty and ugliness
sadness and happiness

then every hump levels up
there is the plain, and then the grass and then the gaze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Th Drink That You Hand Me

the drink that you hand to me
shall take my mouth
watering to your
lips,
the drink that you give me
shall take all of me
to you
the drink shall take another drink
and another drink
from you
and i shall not be quenched
until i am drunk
of all of you
and then you take me
all of me
and then i shall be lost
all of me
lovingly to you

my body dissolving like ice cubes
to your glass
your spirit in mine
our bodies mixing as one
and then we both shall be drunk
so gently
so lovingly as though this glass
owns the night

RIC S. BASTASA
Th Monkey Island....

have more time,
push, like waves on the sea
tickle the legs of the shore
find its pelvic bone
and worship it
like you're a monk for 100 years
still searching
for perfection,

time is like the sands of the shore
can you eat all of them?
have time, drink it and believe in its miracles
be impossible,
swallow the earth
and be that rumored monster
that swallowed the moon

be the impossible
have more time
and be someone else

ah, they will all believe you
and then put you
the first number
and you fool yourself
with all these elation

fool to fool, you create a link
a theater, that it, have peace
congratulate yourself

it is all these craze
to be popular...in that island
where you are king
and the rest of the monkeys
always say yes....

RIC S. BASTASA
Th View From Here

the sunflowers
are nodding, to the last
breath of their
falling petals,
to the
victory of the seeds,

the night is about
to end, and twilight
in slow steps is moving
to the edge of the
bush

a squirrel appears
taking something
hard and round
to its mouth

i sit here watching
how each of
these creatures
crush their respective
versions of
reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tha Pains That Pile Up In Our Youth

When young things are easy
we suppose

that words are what the heart needs
if it loves it can say so easily

manifest what is inside
and then ask if it's okay

and then the pains pile up like firewood and in that campfire the firewood begins to burn

what is left of course is the ash that looks at us direct to eye

we have gotten old and what we need most is the silence

that pays vigil about the feelings long dead inside our hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
one day more
that poem should have been written by you
but as usual you are tired and late and cramped
the man at the other end of the world
has taken it
and a day more is wasted
because you have never believed in the power
of your imagination

a pen in your hand soon shall turn into a snake and bite you.
a soul a mind as numb as rubber.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thailand November 2009 (2)

In Nakhon Pathom
we posed for
the tallest Buddhist pagoda
then watched
The greatest Elephant Show

In Phetchaburi
we sunbathed in Cha-am Beach,
and had
time viewing the
scenic mountains,
limestone caves,
and ancient temples.

Finally in Prachuap Khiri
we went inside Klai Kangwon Palace,
a summer palace of the King and the Royal Family,
courtesy of the ambassador
friend of my father-in-law.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thailand: November 25, 2009

IN Kanchanaburi
we were confessed
nature lovers rafting
our way along the
River Kwai

then
on a trip to Saraburi
we pay homage to the
Buddha's Footprint
there

finally in Lop Buri we prayed in the
Khmer shrine
where the remains of King Narai's
palaces of the 17th century
still survive

we rested in the sunflower fields
extremely beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank God For Not Giving You What You Want...

thank God
for not giving you what you are praying for

when it is not given
it is because it does not belong to you
because if given
it can cause you more harm than God

for God knows what is inside our hearts
his omniscience extends seven thousand years ahead
than your seven seconds

always thank the Lord
for he knows best
do not worry
do not complain
He shall give you the best for you

at the right time
and for the right reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank God That You Are Still Alive....

speak to yourself
offer a toast to loneliness
dance with your shadows
let the moon
cast the light
open your windows
let the air and wind be
your guests
write if you will
do not mind grammar and style
or what language to use

whirl, rotate,
collide with what life is giving
grab, toss, stamp,
shake and tremble on the floor

jump if you can
run around, rest, mimic the murmurs of
those wind chimes

be drunk to the happy moments that
life is still giving you

be human
(if you could, try being
god yourself)

laugh, gargle, swallow,
spit, lick, or be tongue-tied
have those slip of the tongues
tickle and heckle
chew some more, swallow again,
do whatever you want,

thank your God
because today
you are still alive.
thank God for not giving you what you are praying for

when it is not given
it is because it does not belong to you

because if given
it can cause you more harm than good

God knows what is inside our hearts
you really don’t

his omniscience extends seven thousand years ahead
than your seven seconds

always thank the Lord
for he knows best

do not worry
do not complain
do not rush
do not push that much
He shall give you the best for you
soon

at the right time
and for the right reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank Him

for the one who writes
so s/he may not be understood

for him/her who writes
merely to impress and leave us
lost in the crevices of
his mysteries
the labyrinths of his
pretensions

let us all say thank you
for the doubts and
for being part
of our confusions

let us gather the leaves of the laurel
and put that as a crown
on his/her hair
she/he deserves the tile and name

poet/ess
of the day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank The Illusion, It Has Given You Life...

you must thank the illusion
that refraction of your body in the deep

it gives you the image
of a beautiful fairy with gossamer wings
when you are
about to end your life
by jumping
into that water

you should thank the lie that
saves your precious life

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You

thank you
sweet words
sweeter than chocolates
not even like ice cream
cool to the tongue
sweetest to the heart
that the mind will always
remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You Ads

my loneliness
is diminished
because
you are funny
and oh i am so
sorry
if i am making
you angry

i must have
conquered
you

P.S.
oNE THAT angers you
Conquers You

(surf who said
that?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You Again

for being with me
not just once

but perhaps
till eternity....

would you ever believe
about friendship
faceless in a void world?

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You Barbara

sad to know
your love did not last long

but good to know
i am not alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For Loving Me

honey thank you for loving me
you love me for what i am

look at my hands, i am bound
look at my feet, they are bound too
look at my body, bound to the strongest pillar
that mankind has built for all its men
look at my tongue, it is hidden
my mouth, i am shut

you come closer to me and touch me
you give me water you give me bread
you give me hope and will not own me
you kiss me and you do not say goodbye

i am bound, i am not free, and yet you still love me.
thank you my dear for kissing me in my prison cell.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For The Distance

i once told you
about the strong house
its pillars
are having distances
to support
the weight of the
roof and the
beams

like us now
our distance shall support
the weight
of dispositions
this house
this acquaintance shall
shelter
what memories we
have kept

the pillars are stable now
the house is not shaky
we leave it that way
we take chances somewhere
under the stars
outside the door

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For The Light

thank you for the light

i am just the broken mirror
capturing and reflecting
the light to those who
have not seen your truth

thank you for the light

for i am not the light,
i am not with the light
i am in the dark corner
always waiting for your
coming and in your

departure, i am left with
a memory of light and
remain in my shattered
state with all the pieces.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For The Picture You Sent Me

i received it yesterday the picture of two persons
(lovers as you term it)
on top of a hill
you and her
she wears her dark sunglasses and her hat while you
were proud of your thick black glossy hair
a not so receding hairline but
looking still young and
manageable

she looks younger and happy
her hands are holding the rails
a little distant from your lean muscular body
you hide something too in those covered eyes
the usual thick tinted sunglasses

she said
nothing happened between you and her
but you claim otherwise

i look at the picture again scrutinizing the element of closeness
searching for the innate marks of intimacy
the evidence for that usual terms of endearments
at all angles and noting carefully the colors and shapes of your smile
and her poise

and then i jumped into a conclusion
whatever it is, i keep it to myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For Writing A Poem For Me

i am your fan
many years and more years to come
i shall remain
your avid fan

thank you for writing me a poem
about love
and sleepless nights
thank you for writing about the ward
the man bound in
straitjacket
that glass of water that has to be taken everyday
to slide the pills smoothly
in your throat
thank you for writing about the children
who shall still find their mothers
their homes
thank you for bearing with us all these years
when we ourselves
have nothing to write anymore
thank you for being there
always and forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You For Your Lies

and what about your lies?
yes those sweet ones, beside the old wine jug
fermented, so close to the nose
so lively, those honey coated assurances,
for which i have become so alive
(never for once in my life have i danced
under the rain under the darkness of my night)

am i supposed to be angry about the way how you made me live again?
shall i speak the words of wrath
and blame you for all these awakenings?

never, never shall i remind you of those hidden truths
for whatever was it that made me alive
no matter how unfounded
have served so well its purpose

here i am, you lies have freed me
and now, wherever you search for me
i shall not be found but i may give you the hint
i am the invisible song of the sonorous wind
the chime of the star studded night
the whisper of a man's lips to the woman's ears
the silence that sleeps soundly in the middle of your breasts

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You Manolita

a ten
4 my
o ten

(ha ha
ha ha)

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You Tai Chi

for not
including
me
in the list
of the nameless
and
shameless

in some
respects
i am shamelessly
devoted
to you.

salamat po.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thank You....

i have wasted so much
time talking to you, i

could have stopped as
early as this, when my

patience has been consumed,
i could have talked
to someone much deserving,
to someone not as stupid

and as narrow as you, where
you only fit in the

conversation, but sometimes,
i do not blame myself into

this tragedy of our mutual
errors, i must accept with

all humble honesty, that
somehow your stupidity

lightens my load, in
common language, you

please me, and what wasted
time is there, is duly

accounted  you
goodbye. I left a thank

you note, on the right side
of your bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thanking God...

i thank God today
for giving me that
gift to like what i
do.

For what seems hard
at first, after so many
attempts, becomes
as easy as it goes.

i am not climbing a
mountain anymore
i am sliding on its
belly.

I could have stopped
dreaming. I could have
quit reality.

I could not have joined
two opposing worlds,
i could not have
liked myself, i could not
have loved you,

that first glance was
beguiling
imagination is wild like
that spoiled child,
that favorite dog,
the kitten that sleeps
with me at night,
that tolerated spider
that caught a fly,
that destroyed innocence...

today has changed, and
so I thank you Lord.
Thanks It Is Just A Nightmare...

the storms wait
by the window
the sea rises upon
your door
the flood passes
through
your dining room
bats hang on the
ceiling
snakes sleep on
your bed
and cockroaches
live in your
cabinets

what must you do?

wake up!

you are asleep
catch
in a nightmare.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thanks She Says For The Beautiful Scenes

the castles of salzburg
the prairies of prussia
the tundras of russia

the rivers of Arno ang the Volga
the towers of France and America

the snow in Dubai and the islands miniaturized
in his world

all these beautiful places
she says, she had been there

except the place
in his heart. She is so sorry.
She has not seen
love there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thanks To Me

there is such thing as
being lost as others see you
because you are not doing
what they expect you to do
i need not mention all those
passages or rituals like...
but i am more into this
self-discovery thing such
as doing what i really want to
do but those that do not destroy me
those that do not make me fall into
fear but into the comforts of my own
space, my own paradise, and
i guess i have found it,
something like just being myself
without the interference of other's
moral codes or
majority's etiquette
thus i wake up at night and sleep
the following morning
i write more than have to speak
and just stay inside rather than
have fun with what we deem as
friends or kin

this way i am like a seed growing
in my own soil
moving at my own pace
and slowly unfolding as myself
and no other....

RIC S. BASTASA
Thanks To The Black Bird....

i did not
isolate myself as
a fallen leaf

but a seed,

and here i am
in an isolate island
sprouting again
to new life

thanks to the black
bird. thanks to the island.
thanks to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
there will always be compromises
no limit. between the teeth and lips
between my hands and yours, a space.

my right hand on your cheek exclude
the hair. another space. no words.

between your silence and mind, a
space for feigned ignorance. I do

not profess to love you, and you
do    do not know it. a space for a

crime, think, a space for ethical
considerations. Shame and punishment.

your lips are almost there. a space
again for my gaze. A little distance

to stop and overload of gasps, a gap
for contemplation. put a space for fear.

a hesitation of distaste and dislike.
massage, and vassalage, a passage and

discharge. a space for the night.
sleep alone, say goodbye. Thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thanksgiving Prayer (From The Hungry Boy)

Lord You are Good
Thank You For the Food.

Amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Afternoon

i was there again
standing by the side of the old
glass windows
hazy because of the dust
it is hazy, hazy
the sea is linen white
the coconut trees as tall as they are very old
planted perhaps before the war
before the Japanese came
and ravished the spirits of our innocent people
i was there again
standing on a moment
always seeing
that rusty van parked
without its front wheel
nobody from there is asking
what is happening
it is hazy, as hazy as dusts
on that old glass window
then a black bird flies through
it breaking the thin old glass
into shattered pieces

the afternoon ended
on that sudden noise
i am telling you
i am not shocked because
i am not new to this
how can i be? i am as old and as
tall as that coconut tree
i am from this place
and i know each grain of sand
on the shore
of that white linen sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Aim For Success....

i've heard this
music before

i cannot fail
them i have told

myself over and over
again

like some notes of
piano music rippling

on the water where
a boat without a rig

sails on with nothing
to guide it

except the guts of
intuition that at the

end of this journey
you embark upon an island

a paradise that you
shall now call as your own.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Beach Where We Sit Together

that beach where we sit together
beside the sea
where our hands stretch out
to be held again
like yesterday
is actually a vow, a promise
that never shall again
the sea and the earth part
like two lovers taking opposite ways

the sea licks the thighs of the earth
and the earth surrenders
in utter pleasure

RIC S. BASTASA
i am not at all
shock
when she finally says
that this beautiful art of flying
over your body
seeing it then as a piece
of medium log
heavy on the bed
can be accomplished
so well
in such a brief instant
of the gunshot
on the head
or through the
mouth.

plain suicide
as simple as
you can do it
i can do it, but
i am not that
stupid to sacrifice
my own life
for the sake
of this art.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Big Black Bird That Does Not Leave The House...

and there is a big black bird

actually the neighborhood calls it the crow
with red eyes

the children who ask
do not know where it really comes from

it is staying by the window and feeds on
the noise of a couple who discuss about divorce possibilities

it likes the way the children carry on the
confusion about where to go and whether they are loved

the housemaid is driving it away
but it doesn't have that capacity

there is a wound in its heart and its wings
are clipped off from the sickness of
indecision

it loves to watch the way how the housemaids
are stealing stories from their masters

it is quite a long time now and the wound is healed
and the wings have grown to their original sizes

it is ready to fly away but it cannot
it loves the show of other peoples miseries and concealed motives

the black bird's first name is everyday
and its surname is everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Boat In You

when love was an order
i followed it
it becomes a law
i am obliged

courtship, marriage
fidelity,
compassion, sticking with time
through and through
getting wet and getting dry
sleeping and waking up
and moving

you build a house
feel a home
go somewhere and
contemplate

changes of frames of mind from
time to time
wishing as if
as though, as if i could have been someone
else
or it could have been otherwise

summing it up,
you are still there
like a foot
inside the same old shoe

you are a tree
a very old tree
you claim you have tasted the world
residing on the same spot
till rotten
till cut and chopped
till what is left in you
is just
the firewood
love is freedom
be it unrequited
love is redeeming
despite the pain
and love is pain
despite the joy
circle, circle,
circumnavigate till
you sail back
to where you were first
built and
tasted the first
salty water
on that very same port
where every plank
of you
shatters.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Book Of Poetry....

there is no need
to pay
a semester of poetry
from any
teacher of poetry

who teaches whom?
can poetry be taught?
can poetry have
a dictated form?

no one teaches whom
and it cannot be taught
neither can it have a form
for poetry is here
deep in the heart of man
embedded in the mind
felt and then
whether you like it or not
becomes written

RIC S. BASTASA
That Bottled Philosopher

sort of
A fly caught
Inside a long necked
Bottle of
Whiskey

RIC S. BASTASA
That Breakfast In Bed....

i should have known better,
you,
having seen only your name
and what you write, i have read
those lovely lines
that speak about two bodies
of fusing shadows, under the
olive trees,
i should have known better,
that breakfast in bed
does not serve my
woes any better,

shall i be Psyche all the time
and you be
the Cupid in that darkness?

i turn off the candle of trust,
to feel you, but my hands and fingers
do not know what
softness is,
from the harsh climate of the forest,
my manners have become
ten monkeys,

shall i have a nice sleep with you in bed?
you ugly gorilla
thick skin and flabby face,
foul hair and drooping eyes,
old and dying,

for in truth, the only living thing is you
is the thought between the lines
you are as distant as the horizon
as false as the
mythical pot at the foot of the rainbow.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Butterfly Inside My Hand

Inside my hand
i keep a butterfly

it makes me happy
when it stays there

i do not bother asking
if it is

one day i see a teardrop
on my palm

and so without much
waste of thinking

i let it go
and then i realize

i have become happier
than before, ever....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Certain Goodness

two mortal enemies
fight one another and
there you are with your
motives of peace
meeting them for a
win-win solution

no one listens and
so you make a world
of your own distant and
peaceful

and they keep on fighting
until they wipe each other
from the face of the earth

and then you say.
like God, or perhaps
assuming the posture of
God, you finally say,

'hmm, this is good'.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Certain Man Named Belebel

when you call i am somewhere in
Pedro Gil
an hour ago i was in Taft
feeling the crowd of
Kabayan

i stop for a while thinking where
to go next
but then i find myself lurking in
a room
without nothing in mind

it is not strange to me
i am always on the move but i am not
looking for anything

they say that we were born with feet
so we have to use them
it is just this time that i realize
what mother told me once about
a certain Belebel

who is he? mother tells me that he was a
man of God
condemned to walk and never stop
because something in him is longing
for something that
he never once found
until he died and then
God smiled at him
because he walked and then
he lived and
then he died
with all his feet
connected
to earth.....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Child Hiding In One Of The Nooks Of The Busy Kitchen

there there
there is that child that hides in one of the nooks of the kitchen
badly beaten
and crying in silence

for years he is hiding there
and everyone is disregarding him
justifying
he is one of those pasts
and pasts
shall be forgotten

there there
there is that child that keeps on crying silently
and endlessly for years
my attention is
always caught
saying

i am you and you are in me
do not pretend that the years have grown some callous skin in your hands
that you are hard
and impenetrable

i am your father my child
and you cannot just treat me like a shrug on a shoulder
like dandruff on your hair
like some
old uncut fingernails

think some more
for solutions

and if you find it
this trembling room shall stop trembling
your nightmares
finally gone
That Corrupt Woman

what i hear this morning is about the news of her disorientation

she repeats the names of those who left her over and over again she keeps asking for her pills

she has aches all over her body

when she goes to the doctor the latter finds nothing wrong

it is the apathy of her soul the Furies are pulling her hair and breaking her every bone

bad karma is the knife that slices every portion of her skin

she will be returned home now there is no cure

she will speak in ciphers that she herself cannot understand

there is pain everywhere but there is no visible wound

she finds no comfort in air she is grasping for breath

she tears her own clothes
and roams naked in her mansion

her children are asking her
but her answers are dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Day When The Rain Stopped.

all the while you will continue writing,
your voice too flattering
you hear a sound
the falling of a thread on the carpeted floor
the song of those sampaguita
petals white on the veranda of your house
the silence of a black cat on the window sill
that day when the rain stopped.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Dead Man Feeling

i am at the center of your attraction and you make me happy

at night when you are not around i ask myself if this is really true

i rely on gut feeling

there is this ceiling that keeps on pressing me to the floor

it knows how it feels to be inside a coffin

RIC S. BASTASA
That Decision....

it was within my reach
but i keep my hands inside my pocket
my eyes compensated
but soon did they close
and rested upon the
clutches of
Reason and then there
was this quiet
where the immortal soul
sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
That Early Morning

under the trees
you tread upon a heap of leaves
only a few feet walked on this path
the winds came and gave a hush
it has been this way
since

meanwhile some rays of light
begin to pierce crevices between

touchy
the leaves fall like a confetti
you remember
once when freedom first arrived
in the streets of the city
you hear the shouts of joy
for liberation
you remember opening hands
some fists

it is over now
and what you have are the sounds of footsteps
on the heaps of leaves
on this path
where no one likes to tread again

you are
alone again but stronger this time

RIC S. BASTASA
That Early Morning Before You Go For A Walk

you dream about a court litigation,
there was this man, emaciated suffering
from tuberculosis, his bed is worn out, blood stains
on his pillow and blanket unwashed, you can estimate
how this foul smell emasculates him,
he does not sound a complaint,
yet you know he does not like everything around him,
including himself,

don't you care for him, he is left alone to die,
and you see these things above him
you are the spirit of his dream, his son, and he
is your father,

there are unresolved issues between you and him
years ago, you are ambivalent,

did he destroy you? or was it him who placed you
in the throne of your success now?

Hamlet, to be or not to be,
you murmur the lines in your sleep.

you wake up, remembering a friend under the same circumstances.
some of them, too, died in despair,
unable to understand the madness of the Furies
existing in the mind of the weak and
the feeble minded.

things are simple. Doubt is a reality.
Ambivalence is human nature too.
What is important is this: they belong to their world now
and you are on your own
in this contested Paradise.

Why not enjoy it now? Savor, and just be yourself.
Go on. Write about it and be the redeemed man that you are.
With God beside you, who can be against you?

Ah, not even your cruel father. Not even your insensitive self. 
It simple. Life is simple. Do not complicate it with the unnecessary Metaphors. Words are nothing but words.

Dreams are just dreams. The cockroaches are merely symbols. 
The man with TB was never him. Funny, but it could be you.

Meanwhile, you take a walk, and be under the power of the sun. 
Stare at it. Close your eyes. Savor what red is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Early Morning.....

this is what happened
that morning all i heard was the sound of chirping birds
haggling for a home upon those crown of trees
luscious leaves firm branches
tarring twigs

it might be an illusion since when the morning light came in profusion
upon those grounds
there is nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
That Earthquake (A Dream)

the whole building
went down the ground
the earth cave in like a
big mouth
and swallowed
the whole of it

i worry about you
who is inside
that room
alone,

i trust you
and God

then minutes later
you come out of that mess
casually
dusting off your feet
walking down the
pathway towards the house

whistling.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Elegance...

grace refining
itself and propriety
dignifying
hand in hand is
simplicity and
consistency
beauty restrained
in the opulence of
light
a tasteful richness
on furnishings
of a sumptuous feast
the eyes in
yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Element Of Trust...

our foundation is respect
in the house, it is the floor
we all sleep on it, out tables and chairs
are placed on it,
in fact, what we eat, to include the appetizers
and desserts is all based on
that menu of respect
it's when i told you that we may grow
together in this
but you can always take a different
direction perhaps another
point of view another perspective
to see the same object that i hold
and cherish
we go smoothly on this
we appreciated different flowers
on the same glass vase
assuming much that
the fragility may break
and we can still collect the pieces

in one wedding
the mother speaks about trust
as she gives away her
daughter for the man of the hour
and when it was my turn to speak
i speak the same about
respect and she added trust
which honestly i cannot even
mention
because all the while
a life lived in mistrust
from my point of view
always learns
how to survive
find a way when things go wrong
when betrayal as a
common instinct like a tiger
eats the pawn
i have told you
i always doubt and recalling Descartes
i think, therefore, i still exist

RIC S. BASTASA
That Evening....

that evening i smell the stinking truth
hidden inside your rain
clothes
when i get near you i am badly
bitten
by its sharp teeth
its forked tongue
makes me tremble
but because i love you
i swallowed all these in the deepest
layer of
patience
i shall enter the castle of your being
and so i still have to swim
this moat.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling

that feeling of being
a gold fish
inside a round glass bowl
where your world
is only water and
sand

and then hand takes
it and breaks the bowl on the floor
a gold fish wriggles
gasping for air

there is none
do you feel this now?

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling Of Doubt

from her stern face
it seems that she only had certainty
her face is square like most windows
but hers is different since it is always closed
like the one for winter
during summer when the clouds are blue
and the skies are clear
and so beautiful to watch with the sun
and the greenness of the world out there
she is still stern
closed

i may believe her firmness
but i have never known what is inside here
for judging her is beyond the openness of my door

one day she fell in a hole
no one knows who dug it along the usual path where she takes her walk
and she broke a bone and despite the skill of her doctor
she never knew how to walk again

her eyes sank like a boat to the ocean
her cheeks shrunk like a cake dough short of yeast
she fell short of faith
like a candle eating her own body
until it consumed its light

doubt mounted on her like the dust of her furniture
she became more stern
as ever
harsh and hard
and finally the her window was broken
the frame gave in
and fell and blown by this strong wind of change

when she met doubt her world shattered into pieces
unlike others
the rest of us even live in there
though uncomfortably
but without anger and denial

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling Of Honesty And Goodness...

early this morning
when you wake up you tell
me about
a dream: that you were naked
walking along the river
and you ran and later on
plunged yourself on a very
clear water

you fear that this dream
must have warned you about
an incoming
poverty, everything that
keeps you warm is
taken away

will i be broke? you ask

as i see it
it is not that way:

to run naked is to be
honest
you have stripped yourself
of all lies
and in all honesty
with nothing to hide
you plunged yourself
in the clear river of life

and i must tell you
that it must have made
you feel

good.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling Of Numbness

numbness crawls like centipede
on the side of my legs
something hollow keeps it inside
an existential question forms itself
on the womb of my being
insecurity is fertilized
the oblong gets sustenance
fingers touch the sacred place
my crotch
i sow the seed of desire
it grows
and hardens and i thank God
I am still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling Of Self-Importance

indeed sir you are a figure to watch
as you enter the room
a strange air diffuses from the pores of your skin
perfumed with power and glossy with privileges
the gods of fortune have given you more than what
most of us could have deserved
after all those distasteful years of
sisyphus
how we pulled the stone on top
and how it was rolled over and over again and we
ordinary mortals picked it up
over and over again

we do not laugh at ourselves to our generous endeavors
we all tried to please the gods
yet our offerings are always inferior to yours sir

nature has treated you special and we do not wonder why sir
your name is engraved in marble and the letters are made of gold
your genealogy matters most
your roots they preserved with utmost concern
you descended from kings
you ascended as the rightful king to the throne reserved for you

and so this morning as you enter the room
you slid your finger to us dusts of the cabinet and you signified
we deserved to be blown away just like that

you signaled to the guards
we do not deserve to sit on chairs because the floors are ours

the air is dense and your pride made it humid
i am fed up and i rise from my coyness and decided to leave

i am weary of pretenses. i am tired of my silence.
i have wings. i belong to the birds. And now it is my time to fly away.

in our world of wings, we do not keep air, we give them all away.
we are so light, and we fly to our kind of height. we are always alone.
That Feeling Thing.....

there is a sound
within us
which we equate with
music

with texture smooth
and soft
as sweet gelatin and
tasty with milk and
honey combined

there is a scenery
inside our hearts
in mellow colors
tangerine and light
green
and the lovely hues of
orange and
reds

there is a scent of peach
and taste of tang
always alluring the tongue
and the mind
into the stairs of heaven.

this morning, i am
remembering all of them
feeling, feeling and
feeling each thing.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling...

the dews
they are temporary you know

but try looking at them
on an early morning

when they hang
on the leaf

when they are together
and then in a moment

gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Feeling......

that feeling when
you sit on the side of the river
and you put your hook line and sinker
and you wait for a time
until a fish comes along and
swallows everything

hook line and
sinker and you finally caught said fish

and it is yours alone but then
not learning how to cook it you finally
decide to
throw it back to where it
rightfully belongs.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Final Knowledge....

the closest to your heart
was burned, literally, the body into
ashes

from ashes to ashes you screamed against the heavens
and the heavens answered that
it could have been you
but you were spared so that your eyes can see and your ears can hear,

it will only be for a time that
you question all these and find the roots
and perhaps uproot that
tree that caused the madness of revenge

now, look at you
after burying the signals of the times
you are back
in the race of rats
the dogs howl again
and in the darkness you fly again

when the moon is full
another one suffers
from the harshness of your hands
you have forgotten
how is it to be more powerful
in patience
in the tenderness of the human heart

sooner shall the leaves of live bury you
and then perhaps you shall finally know.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Fire And My Friend

Everyday i put myself in fire
not the firewood
nothing about flames

it is an imaginary fire
that burns all day
inside my guts

when you see me i am a placid
lake
green ferns surround me
blue clouds crown my head
and butterflies hover in my own space

the fire is eternal
there is nothing charred
nothing burned

i know a friend who used to be like this
but she is gone
and lost somewhere in time

she writes a lot
and since then
finds no home.

RIC S. BASTASA
boxed
i once wrote about
cells
there was a hole at the
right side
of the top sort of
ceiling of the house
a leak
light filtering in
hoping that
the seed survives
and extends its
tendril
finally to the sun

i think it was
always about
a escape either from
a box
a bottle or some bars
of steel
a high fence
pointed gates

RIC S. BASTASA
That For Now I Shall Be Alone

i do not wish to
see you
like a blank sheet
of paper

i have nothing to
write there
and if i try to
scribble
you may complain
more
and tell the world
that i made
you all the more
unhappier

perhaps i can leave
you in the
contents of your
silence

will you be complete
without me?

will you smile when
i become
a shadow?

i have a long list of
places for
my new journey
and i am telling my
hosts there
that for now

i shall be alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Garde Of Stones....

on Wednesday afternoon
your visitors from different orientations arrived

all were well composed,
calm and at first very silent,

still feeling what is new
but not yet reacting,

you served coffee, others of course
from the East preferred tea

when all were feeling that sense of home

you invited all of them from that room
towards another door

which exited to a garden which they in truth
did not expect

a garden of sand and stones and
then you make them all know
why they are all here and
when are they going to leave
what they have to see shall only for the moment
not lasting more than
the blinking of an eye

you can see the disappointment in their faces
all they imagine really are roses

red red roses
and without thorns....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Girl

That girl
with bangs on her hair
a pink headband, thick lips pure red,
curly hair, mini skirt, and bleached legs
as white as may sky,
the way she sits tells me
that she is a woman now
beautiful to be with
because of her
bad habits.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Girl Sirah....

sirah climbs a mountain  
early morning  
just to watch the sun rising  
from there

she is eighteen, in love, and  
lost  
perhaps the first time for her  
to meet  
a love unrequited.

and then exactly as i traced  
it, she learns  
to write her first poem of  
pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Girl With A Pearl Earring

i've taken a peek
and i know it is expensive.

how did it go that way?
perhaps because of the stories.

we are told she has an earring
of pearl, but at a close look,
as the story goes, and which i have
taken a real peek, is that
she has none, just a smudge of paint
from her maker,

is she going to the market?
is she leaving her husband and the house?
is she coming home after all?
is she pregnant with an unwanted baby?
is it her husband's?
questions are propping

our thoughts are complicated.
we make her complicated, and
a few are getting rich and more
will be getting richer by her
because of these stories.

how about the painter? oh well,
he died in his infamy. Poor as a rat.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Guy On The Side Of The Wooden Door

what is it that he takes pride of?
why are the girls running after him?
does he hold the key to liberty?
is it the key to the door of our puberty?

fool, don't you get any sex education at all?
it is not the key, it is that blunt something that he calls his thing and it is not like your clock that is ticking.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Happiness Of Rest....

how can i escape
the sweet clutches of your
embrace

a chain of flower words
on the walls of my fences

the mind is a black bird
with strong wings and strong winds
taking me to longer distances

i cannot map out my destination
on this journey into uncertainties

unless i cease and be water
i may escape this destiny of fading

it is when the mind wanders like
a wisp that magic comes like greenish

aurora boreales in Iceland
landscapes

where we are lost but had no fear
as beauty catches us

in awe and wonder, in the happiness
of ease and less.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Hatred....

shall being
unloved be the
cause of it all?

you create wars
provokes those
in peace to
fight against
you

you lambast people
with cruelty
wish them all burned
to hell

was it your unhappy
childhood?
has anybody ever
loved you truly?

or is it simply
your incapacity to
change

to try
to understand and
level up with
what was not there

you have to free
yourself from this
hatred

it is not real
and it is killing
you...

RIC S. BASTASA
That I Can Always Suffer Too With Or Without You

..and so i must
declare that
at the end of this day
i have still lived
so well
with or without
you,

... and so i must now have shown to
you,
that i can be my own
best friend,
with or without
you,

the fact is,
i miss you too, but i assure myself
for days now,
that i can be my own
in suffering,
that i can always suffer
too
with or without you

...but just the same
let me say

thanks.

RIC S. BASTASA
That I Have Survived...

i know what it is
to stay in a room and
lock yourself
there the
whole day on the
pretense
that you have to
write poetry

it is prison it is
the strap of lonely metal
around your wrists
it does not tell time
it pays no respect for
norms of
humanity

i know that feeling of
a hundred storms
that waiting for calmness
that seems
to have no end

i know the travails of the mind
its mazes

its labyrinths of
unconscionable
literature

its whiffs of trembling
its twists of terror

as you read these lines
i do not have to tell you that
i have survived.

RIC S. BASTASA
That I Shall Call Mine

to accept defeat is not my cup

of tea to lose hope is my own
impossibility

i believe
there is always a sun for early mornings
always

there is always a solution to every
conceivable problem

i believe time knows how to wait
destiny knows how to draw

and life always beats for a right time
the perfect moment

that i shall call mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
That In Their Happy Wanderings They Are Actually Dying......

at the workshop
i have become another
stranger

i am many strangers actually
to many strangers
those you take a short glance
and walk away

you are teaching them how to write
you are teaching them to like you
you are trying to make more strangers
in this small hall of famers

they cannot be like you though they
may like you for a moment
but only for a moment for after this
free meal and free association
they all go out to become free verses
again
wild in their own surroundings
and would not even know that in their
happy wanderings they are actually
dying......

RIC S. BASTASA
That Incapacity To Remain Silent...

i should have not
said much, i could have
kept my mouth shut,

how can i? how could you?
if we are shut,
we are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Incapacity To Remain Silent...(2)

i should have not
said much, i could have
kept my mouth shut,

how can i? how could you?
if we are shut,
we are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Intimate Dog

she goes near
and lies on the floor
touches her ear
on the soles of your
feet
and then sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is All That I Really Wanted

the path today is dusty
slowly, i walk and you pass by

on the same direction
you walk past me like you are in a rush for something

you're fast that is what you want to tell me
i do not really mind for you do not exist at all

i am thinking of pebbles. They are unmoved.
They are faceless. They are saying more important things

than your speed, your fast paced conclusions,
you think that you are as high as a cliff, and unreachable by the worm

you are wrong, i may have been drifting like a cloud
i gather rain and then i feed all that thirst on the earth

i vanish soon leaving no mark. That is all that i really wanted.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is Another Story.

there are layers of behavior, such matters which are purely relational, like a shirt for work, a collar for seriousness, a button to a closure, a tie for a finishing touch,

you must learn to discern how is it to just pass the night and then end the conversation because it is already dark and the stars have become more beautiful than the lights of the city streets

people come and people walk away, just that, we have mastered these realities we mature, they say, we accept flaws, we walk our own talk, live and relive and die without regret,

when i say hello, i say it, because it is a must, we are here and there is no one else around to hear it we keep those presumptions, and guard our opinions, we simply want a work done, after dinner, and then a walk, if there is a need to touch the heart, by all means do it, a little perhaps, but to immerse yourself in deep water and be lost or be drowned, oh...

that is another story.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is For......My Eyes Are Closed

1

this is for
The soldier who died today

in your unfinished poem
God has heard all

His sighs.

2

Unfinished poems
Are miraculous

They make God
Hear us

They make us
Think.

they make us
write

our own to finish our own
to fill our own
emptiness

3

He is great
He is good

He is wise
He is omnipresent

He is omnipotent
He is compassionate
He is Love
He is grand

He is the Answer
He is peace

4

Let us have vodka
For a drink

The people here are poor
Let us have rice wine instead.

5

Let not the other half of
The darkness that you see

Create the eclipse of your
Light, let the other half that

You claim you own
shine some more

6

I am watching with my ears
Wide open,

because my eyes are
Closed from the beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is Perhaps What Poetry Is All About

a seed thrown on the ground
beside a bush, it grows and you do not notice.
it is sad to say, neglect does not bother.
time is its ally, and it begins to feel its roots
and dreams of fruits.

the seed is now a tree, and it summons children
to play, to climb its branches and to reap its fruits.
that is its only joy. To give.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is The Question

this morning as i wake
up with you still closing
your eyes

i write a question
for you: lipstick on the mirror

do you still love me?

p.s.

just tell me and everything
shall be removed from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is The Truth....

to save yourself you have learned to lie.
your wife does not want you to live
perhaps she hates you
this i think i should know, because on
every lie you make,
she is there to correct it and claims
that it is not so, that this is it,
what lies you make, she is there always
ready to correct, perhaps, she does not love you that much
she loves herself more, and that is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is What Is Happening To You

Ice cream on rainy days
black hot coffee for summer

No saver for the flood
no firemen for the fire

RIC S. BASTASA

it is when everything is fully seen
all details exposed like a grassy plain
like an open sky
that the mystery is faced off
and this worshipful ignorance wakes up from its
hibernation and finally finds the real meaning
to what is seen and felt and fashioned
upon itself.

that is what light does
what air really wants.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is What Papa Said To Me Before He Died Too.

i dread to this idea
of you leaving me and

me all alone in a room
worrying about my
being left out because

you have died of a disease
and that everyone is there
wishing me
to move on

it will be perhaps an
unbearable sorrow but i

remember grandpa who to
cure his wholesale loneliness
wooed a woman who at the age
of 19 waddles in poverty
and now would have a chance
to wed an old man for his
security

grandpa was into such
a scandalous affair for he
was then 75 and still
hoping for an affair to
make last for more years
in such a blissful state

to cut the story short
he married a hooker and
a gold digger which he
very well knew not underestimating
his wisdom and
keen business acumen from
which he accumulated wealth
to himself
but there he was
lonely and abandoned
by his grown up children
with lives of their own

he thought he still deserved
a life of his own
a happiness which his children
could not provide for him

so he took the risk,
chose happiness despite the
swindling and the fraudulent
schemes

until he died peacefully
and we attended the burial
and i was there
all alone too
understanding his predicament

his children talked about his
wealth and whatever was left
all about these inheritance
and share conflicts

i am in his situation now
and just like him
i do not really care.

that is what papa said
to me before he died too.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Is Where Everything Begins.

in a situation like this,
you become a poet. It is
when the jar is emptied
and there is no water and
you are thirsty
and dying,

usually it happens that
way. I was once a child
frolicking. There was
poetry all around: sun rays,
beach balls, shore foams,
sands, and pebbles, soft feet,
and hermit crabs, corals and
seaweeds,

but i was not a poet,
it was beautiful then and
i was so innocent,

now, the road shortens,
my feet calloused, nothing
carousing, my lips crack,
my skin shedding off,
my bones hollow

time has a way of showing
a misfortune, and then you
write.

that is where everything
begins.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Isolation

watching the two of you
in such a huddle
at noon
till nighttime
i can imagine the pain
in those
suppressed silence

i could be too stupid to
dare ask

your face shows the magnificent
pretense
just like the other

when i look to the other side
you show the truth

i do not bother checking some more
you both, are entitled to your own

opinions of the flesh, as i try
somewhere else to find

what ought to be
right what ought to be done

it is after all not a question of
pain or
ecstasy

but i think it is more of the nobility
that dignity in the journey

of solitude, of distance, of
identity in honored isolation.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Kindness Before Death....

he said that at that moment when he knew he was about to die
he forgot those who borrowed him money,

but for those with whom he borrowed,
he kept on enumerating them, with the last request that they all shall be paid
from the wealth that he had amassed for himself when he was still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Lack Of Education...

the multi eyed
creature did not escape
from my
trap of silent fingers

i caught it during my childhood

i took its head off
pulled its red tail away from its body
and cut its wings into
pieces

how cruel indeed is this
lack of education...

RIC S. BASTASA
That Letter

i will be honest with you
i once wrote a letter
for you
many years ago
telling
that I LOVE YOU

but then something
wrong went with my mind

childish, immature
selfish,
fleshy, they call me

i took the letter
and read it again
under the lamp
dim
near my bed

i was hesitant to tell
you what i really feel
because i know
you would not believe me
anyway

(liar! liar! you always
call me that name)

and so let me be honest
with you
i decided not to send
it
despite its truth

i folded it
shaped it into the form
of a japanese crane
(origami, that is the
art of paper folding
and the Japanese believe
that an origami crane
can cure the sick
the loved one
and I believe that
too)

I looked at it carefully
when it was finished
the shape of
a crane, the white one
with letters on it

and then I opened
my window
it was cold and dark
and I sent the
crane into the
open space
beyond me

I never dreamed
that it will reach
you
I did not believe
in love
I did not believe
in you

RIC S. BASTASA
That Life Inside The Dream...

definitions

there is someone inside you
that comes to you like a stranger at dawn
you look closely
and the face speaks like it were you
that noon time
it speaks of an inner wish
which of course you pretend you do not really understand
because of so much fear
that it could be the real you finally
it is on this land of cloudy paths
and glimmering waters where you take exceptions
you compromise a bit
since the strength of your reason is fast asleep
and you operate merely on
the trickles of the sweat on your skin
it is cold here
and you need the pleasure of hot oil
rubbed on your nape
and the soles of your feet
that really tickles you
much

how many years have you lived here?
you know it well and you until now
has not desired any form of escape
there is death of everything in you beyond this threshold
again you are reminded
'i live on compromises'

you finish the dream
and when you are awake you just dismiss the story
as one that you cannot really remove
too lightly

then you dress yourself
brush your teeth
look at your face in the mirror
forget about it
and then move on
with another segment of your life

'this is life' you assure yourself
then you admire the way you have been acting
on your thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
That Little Black Bird

...at first i liked to bring it home
and show to father
but then i looked at its eyes
begging for mercy to be
set free

and i heeded to its plea
i released that little black bird free....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Little Boy

last night
that little boy of yours
for the first time
has learned
to whistle,

he wants to
make the stars dance
with his
new art

but as usual
not a single star heeds
his wish

this is not funny
but i was once like him
just recently.....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Little Pig

that pig you said
is a problem, in fact,
a very big problem and so when it asks to leave
you agree at once,

you are alone in your house
and for a time thinks that you do not have a headache anymore

that little pig
your pain in the ass keeps on coming back in your mind

always filling up that empty space
that you cannot take away even in that pigsty

at night you begin to think
someone shall catch that little pig and keep it

that pain in your ass shall become their
food, a tasty roasted little pig

that will always haunt your lonely mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Little Talk About A Wedding

my wife has this to say
on your wedding day, that i must not speak
about statistics

majority of which
marriages are shattered
how the man has not coped up
with the heavy responsibilities
how the woman cannot accept
the hidden facts

and so i will speak of bliss
of sweet honey and wine
of the miracle at Cana
and everything so divine

my wife is happy now
having looked at the icing of the cake
licked the rosy part
and swallowed the cherry
on her drink

on the other hand she is right
optimism is still the right trait
to keep a marriage bond intact

RIC S. BASTASA
That Lonely Spring Back Home

what i can bring you
is good news
it is like a fresh flower
from Beijing
it has a unique promise
that it
will never change
it is beauty and
strangeness
it is this feeling of loss
this tragedy of having to
leave and
be back again
to your senses
when all strange places
are not at all strange
but imbued with
all that sameness of rocks
and cities
and dust and bushes

everywhere you go
there is only you and there is
nothing
no one else
that suffers for you

it is the universality that finally
burdens you
with
i have nowhere to hide
it is the same face again that greets
you where
you left that last step
and you remember
that old feeling
that you want to discard
but here it
rises again
like spring of water
wetting your face
with
its lonesome
squirt

RIC S. BASTASA
That Lonely World Out There....

draw the line
complete the circle
this is the fence
no one enters
and no gets out

exclusive world
elite

the world of the rich and the famous
exclusive clubs and

a language of their own
well you must by now understand

that is the authentic language of
mess

RIC S. BASTASA
That Long And Verbose Decision

i know it
when you, all of you, are guilty
about what you are doing,
you take refuge in
a long composition, a vine of words,
bushes that you run about,
hoping that
the stain in the paragraphs
cannot be seen
by this eye, this

eye of truth, that leaves
no stone
standing on the road,
but if you accept the wrongdoing
you could have said
a little, or
nothing at all, or you could have written
only a poem,

for words hide, and silence
exposes
what lies, what monster is
there
ready to eat you all
alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Love That You Once Gave Me...

i'd like to think
that i will be the man who waits for you
on that third step of the
stairs at the facade of the
biggest mall
in Asia

there is a certain
kind of anticipation in waiting for someone
you think
loves you

i had it so many times
but all of them always end up
in wanton abandon
each regretting
nothing

there are ships that pass at night
on that not so well lighted ports
they disappear
as usual
but there are ghost ships that keep on
coming back

and perhaps that is the reason
why i keep on waiting
again
at the stairways of the malls
then
to dim ports
out of nowhere

i am a lot of nonsense too
but mind you
i am more alive in this

that feeling that i was the one abandoned
and no one comes back
for no reason at all

for in truth
it is not my love that makes me live
but yours &
yours
alone....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Man From La Mancha

after all, the huffs and puffs,
the drinks and long conversations,
i guess i need rest
and as i lay in bed with you
with windows open
i think i still like to hear again
the song of the man from
La Mancha

i am sleepy please hum it for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Meaningless Abundance...

perhaps i know why you have
come back to this place which cannot
be seen but only felt

d this house where we speak not in
plain language but in images
where others have long left unable
to survive the hazards of
imaginings

you see, i guess you must by now know
how empty is wealth
how valueless are those expensive cars and
watches
how anxiety crawls in those expensive
mansions
how meaningless those books of money have
become and in the midst of all these
bounties,

suicide comes like an unwanted
guest,
you drive it away but it stays
finally robs you whatever is left
in those trembling breaths.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Midnight

She is the only one that moves now

Her soundless feet keen on the floor

Her silence seeps

In empty corners where all the sorrows sleep

She dances in the grace of afternoon petals falling off

Her cold breath hovers

In the roofs that vigil the death of the noisy crowd

A loner

A curious clone of a black ghost

She visits abandoned rooms

And cracks stories concealed by the muted angers

She drops a secret like a feather

Floating and I though awake

Throughout her wakings and walk-ins

Could not recall having caught one

In such slowness

What she really says amidst the silence

Or meant in all these dark passage

The mirror on the wall stares

And glares at me with anger
One must have just died
The killer fled
Hidden by her black capes
Another secret I supposed
And though I thought
I knew
She had already flown away
Like a black bird into the night
I want to make some rain for her
Or offer her a lace of my tears
But by then another morning has come
Gently touching me
With flowers
And dove on my palms.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Morning I Remember Rightly

what was visible then
was only the outlines
of the leaves of the coconut tree
hanging like a pair of pants
on the clothesline

and this tiny boat sailing
away towards an island
that looked like
nothing but
just this shadow
of a horizontal line

reminding me
of my father's
death...when his heart
failed,
the line was straight, horizontal on the screen
it was flat
like the shadow of the island fronting
from where i stand

it was flat, i always remember that. and then after the beeping sound
silence came.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Morning Walk....

in locomotion ideas unravel
as though
when the feet pedal something
in the forehead pops out
the two walk hand in hand
like friends
the mind on foot towards
an enlightened destination
on a boat of darkness
the sails move out to the open
meeting the light

awed we prostrate on the grounds
of our traditions
we kneel and rise and with open arms
embrace the newness of
each thing each idea like flashes of
the northern lights
in technicolor....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Morning Years Ago

the chickens just jumped
from the branches
where at night they are
birds

the white magnolia just
bloomed
such a nice scent spread
in the air

the bamboo leaves start
to dance with the
wind from the hills

the sun is about to shine
we are two bodies
making the river sing
on the crystal waters.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Most Beautiful Star

she comes like air inside your nose
passing through your esophagus
and resides in the chamber of your heart
telling you
you're good, and kind, and the best of the rest
and she makes you feel at home with yourself
until then
she begins to make you feel that the rest should
behave like you
and that this world would have been better if
all people are like you

she makes you feel the arrogance of the mountain
and you become the center of this universe
because you have become the sun
that beautiful star from where we have not gone

RIC S. BASTASA
That Most Candid Criticism Of The Self

things are running wild and not in what you wish them all to be
there is this rage of self against self

some 'selves' are running against you
and some are exploding before your very face indistinguishable untouchable
yet there is this sense of i am i
that one is me too
that i am some pieces scattered
and that there is also another self that keeps gathering and assembling parts into a whole

ugly and not worth the watch these are
your hands spread your fingers just for a show
like a peacock at the peak of its heat

you feel that there are storms coming inside your chest you wait for tornadoes and boats and calls for help then the calm that is the idea of your thesis and antithesis a woman a man a peace of quiet and some chunks of motors chomping on a stretch of day

what for? you are that one too that seeks self-destruction you wait for another explosion to include your whole being you lift the weight of the sighs of righteousness
lost and never found, here is this man,
and yet
you reap anger for those who wait and see

you are smiling still and then moving away

RIC S. BASTASA
That Movie

after that day when she was killed
by harsh men she did not look back
she went ahead to where there is more

the restlessness she left to earth
whatever they did after that
the day after the next day
she did not mind

because in the place
where she is now
definitely it is more than what beauty
speaks more peaceful than what peace
cannot say

eventually justice has no use.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Naked Birthday Cake

the best hour to think
is this

3 o'clock
when it is still dark

when finally dusk breaks
the famed virginity of
a morning
light

it is the perfect
time when your mind
is like glass
with frost

and you write your pains in bold letters
using your index finger

no one reads it
and then the mist outside
as it is still very cold
covers all the letters again

the way you like
the icing so sweet that your dear mother
once put
on your naked birthday cake

RIC S. BASTASA
That Name Was Never Yours

when you arrived here
they never know you and so
they give you your name
which you never ask in the first place
since you do not know the rules of their living
that one to live here
must have a name in the first place

that is life she keeps on telling you
you start with a name and live with that name
and die with that name

when you leave finally as others did
as all are destined to their final departures
you take nothing with you
you leave a name
and then they think that with that name
you have lived a life
you liked.

(which was not really the case,
that name was never yours)

RIC S. BASTASA
That Nameless Island

when he makes a world
of his own
and this takes too little
time and effort

when he draws a small circle
around his world
and then you find out
that you are excluded no matter
how small that circle is

he knows what you feel
you are excluded, at worst,
you feel ostracized

and then you begin to feel
that pain of
exclusion

and then you begin to understand
what it is
to be excluded, a mutant,
an outsider,
the unwanted, the possible
intruder

to be in that circle again
you must make a promise and you must
make it right now

you see
that island that has no name in the
most stormy part of the ocean
when you are
thrown into the vast uncharted sea
is what you need

it is what you badly need
because you are now
in trouble

RIC S. BASTASA
That New Sound Of Silence...

to some extent
where there are no flowers
when the sun
is beclouded
to survive you learn to
paint
combine colors with light
mix them with
your thoughts
until you create your own world

you remember a boy
abandoned by mother and taken
in a very strange place
away from his friends
sitting in a nook playing
with the new sounds of
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Night When My Poem Was Stolen

that night when my poem was stolen
i looked up the sky and saw
the moon smiling and the stars winking
more beautifully than before
and i was wondering
the change

something must be special
about what i told them
my poem was stolen

the wind was in a hurry leaving
a message that i should have been angry
and should have reacted
the way other poets do
report the matter to the authorities
and file the charge
of intellectual thievery

i could have reacted like an angry man
deprived of a priced possession
but on the other hand
i, go beyond what others think,
i could be more kind
and understanding and more compassionate
to thieves
i ask: does he like the poem? does he love it
so as to steal it?
will he sell it? will he keep it throughout his life
and treasure it the way i treasure it too?

in the last analysis, that poem is not really mine too
it is God given, a gift during another birthday of emptiness, another day of loneliness
and in fact, the poem was about a black rose
unfolding its petals on a very dark night
and then coming out of a crevice from a deserted building and then found a way
to bloom one morning
but darker still....

all my poems, anyway, are written for someone
or anybody out there, lurking in the dark, looking for an opening,
wanting to drink the coming light of day, searching for their angels
of light and freedom and happiness

well, that poem that was stolen, could be intended
or meant for the thief, and so, i have come to the conclusion
that i might as well, finally,

give it to him
or her, i don't even know who that shadow was,

there was simply this shadow fading in the ward.
that poem now shall be my gift to whoever shall have it
in the future

i think, i know, how it feels now, to really give, even if it hurts.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Old Streetcar Already Named Desire

blue jasmine
you are not as blue as
that lady who once rode
the streetcar named
desire

and sometimes
there is that question of
beauty
verging on a thin line
of

insanity as it
could be but who would want
that to be

dr this beauty that you are
jasmine bluer than that
blonde in that old streetcar
already named
desire

RIC S. BASTASA
That Old Water Well In Olingan

it is far
from civilization
only a few
have reached
there

it is deep
and full and
my genealogy
source of
survival

i go back there
again
refreshed and
thirst
quenched
for its memories

mother bathing a
boy
horse drinking
from a pail
natives filling
their drums
maidens singing
and men
wooing them
for a night of
love
after

when the needy have
left
to take their much
needed rest

there the well
stays
sighing
but meaningfully
filled

it has served
so well
less the selfishness
of all
men.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Old Woman That I Know....

the old woman
goes to church everyday
reads her novena, spends more time in church
than in the house

she is close to the parish priest
gives sums of money to the
religious activities
noted for charity and
enjoys many indulgences
from the Pope

always she is dressed in the proper
whiteness
her head covered by
the required embroidery
her movement restrained
her poise reserved
holy and
silent

what they do not know
(and this is her secret that i have discovered)
is that
just this morning she slapped her maid
because her coffee was served
and no longer that hot
to satisfy her
cold longings

exactly the opposite of what she is
in society
this old woman takes away the faith of
the maid
from the same God that she adores
in her Sunday church.

RIC S. BASTASA
That One Must Learn To Forget And Simply Move On With The Rest

reality at a closer look
is a cactus plant and if you stay longer
you feel the heat of the desert
at high noon

a little thinking takes you away
from this static existence
when you begin to move your feet
and use your head that
life is not meant to be at one desert only

so many places so many people
that one must learn to forget and simply move on
with the rest

RIC S. BASTASA
That Open-Ended Novel...

is that the way you want to end
a story? nothing definite,
not the usual one, where the hero stands
against the sun
and then his lady comes and kisses him
and then
The End with the matching music
that satisfies the heart
that justice is served
and that once again the good has
triumped.

how did you end our story?
you left me hanging upon a cliff
and the audience did not see how i fell
from a thousand feet
and smash my head on the rocks below
and how my blood oozed
and squirted and
make the sea red.

what kind of writer are you?
you left the last page blank.
the monitor is anxious and the keys
are idle still for hours

until there was a blackout
and the computer's off.

for days the blog is left undecided.
for years the last lines waited.

i guess that is how you wanted it
very much like life

individualist, one can make or unmake oneself
smashed the little bird
or set it free from your hands that hold it
there is this will
this human will

and i the actor of your novel
must use it now.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Other Kind Of Leaving

one is too obvious, folding the clothes,
putting them all in the bag, closing the door
and walking out,
this happens almost everyday
to people i know,
and i see tears, and i feel what they feel,
some claim they do not know how to laugh anymore after that event,

a few are envious, we keep this marriage working,
though they do not ask how or why, we show them
about distances,
the paradox of unions
and dissociation
how two people miss themselves when they are far away
emotionally

i guess i must also tell them about my departure
the art of leaving
vicariously,

you are here, but in quintessence
you are never here

giving no importance
to something trivial like a scar of long ago
still sticking somewhere
at your right foot

RIC S. BASTASA
That Page Of Life

there is this page of life
of my last resort
when everything seems to be
disturbing

glossy and pleasurable
all pictures that makes life
sort of entertaining
and though
not wholesome but for a while
shall make us forget
what pain is there in our bones

we go back there
lift the cover and search again
the glossy pages

the pictures are not appealing anymore
we have graduated to the
next level of unsatisfaction

we move on to another page
not really appeasing but something new
we smell it
and taste it

it is bitter and yet we prefer it now
our age has advanced us
to the level of the cure
to the stage where we recognize and accept
the sickness
of our humanity

we gloss over and over again
we shine
like the spirits of the east
like the ghosts of the christmas future

now we think
if we finally found it.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Pain....

who who lives
without pain
is never alive
even once,

the
beginning of life
was your first
cry,

you did not cry
because you were
happy,

you did not choose
it,
it was not self-inflicted
because given the
choice
you would not have
chosen to be here

that hand that
slapped your
bottom
made you taste it
first

your life was put
to the test
with the sound of
your cries...

RIC S. BASTASA
That Parasite Named Envy

it enters through
one of the holes in your skin
penetrates your
flesh
and then your bone
marrows

it eats
all of you
and yet
you will never
know it

you look for
yourself
it is nowhere
to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
That Part Of A Whole

it is a tiny part
as tiny as a grain of sand
you hardly give it
attention
you keep on saying
what is in this grain of sand
that philosophers
say contain this universe
something so tiny
yet to contain everything
and so you hold the grain of sand
against the light
and revolve it around your fingers
little finger planets
to the sun grain of sand
you cannot believe what you
felt and saw
and so you throw away that grain
of sand to the air
eating it like a big mouthed monsters

you are lost
your world dissolves
like ice
you turn to air
and there you are
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Party....

ey invited me to a party that they know
i will never attend

it is my ego
it was once hurt and it still refuses to be cured

it is the cancer of this society
going crazy over the smell of the masses that pretend to like it
and yet
when the back is behind another one's back
pressed against the wall
and on dead end streets

it breaks out in laughter and says
this man believes us
we were only joking
we have our own agenda
after those lectures
we have our minds and visions
we do not want to be like him
a loser

the fingers of corruption are at work again
the party goers love its caressing flesh sending the sensations
of luxury
rising above the sufferings of others

everyone loves
being well-off
being ahead of the common giefs

one blows the whistle and the party however
goes on and on and on
the beams do not shake a bit
the grounds remain firm

i am out
of the picture
there is no party within me
and i am not drunk
with the perks of power.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Perfect Me....

given the choice
i should not have
gone to school
i should not have
met you
i should not have
loved and
married, given the choice
if indeed given
that choice,
i should have not chosen
parents,
i should not have chosen
to live with you
i should have not chosen
birth
i should have not chosen
life.
i should have been
i had forgotten,
i should not have remembered
what was once
i felt was the perfect me.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Pigeon

Tony just brought
a pigeon
in his house
put it in a cage and
feed it
some grains
beside a bowl of
water

Every night since then
i cannot sleep
hearing always the sound
of a sobbing woman
grieving

i keep telling myself
that it is just
a pigeon temporarily
adopting to a momentary loss
of her freedom

Horrible nights
lots of horrible nights
the sounds of groaning grieves
are penetrating the walls of my mind

until one day
the pigeon died and Tony buried it
beside his house
now the pebbles are giving me
the silence of the dead
the air is so quiet
looking at an empty cage

somehow i feel guilty
not about the pigeon but about Tony
well, the story is quite long
what business do i have there?
last night i was thinking

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what if it was Tony who died
and the pigeon went out of that cage
and buried him there
beside that lonely house?
shall i not hear the grieving sounds of
that pigeon again?

RIC S. BASTASA
That Poet Looking At The Window Of The Train

this is the world that they
never mind
each walks past the other
like bicycle and pedestrian
one is focused on the page of a newspaper
early morning
and the streets slide like flashes of light
as one stands amidst the crowd
transported by a train
to another station looking to the glass window
without anything in mind

RIC S. BASTASA
That 'Poetry Is To Be The Voice Of Others'....

it is midway
between the path of
light and pond
that goldfish
appears
nearer

the tunnel of the
water from its source
to the receiver
who in turn becomes
another giver and then
another

by now you must have understood
what i have been driving at
this nail
penetrating the soft wood
this hammer
banging

what am i to you
is not really what i am
for i am but a messenger
a medium
of the sufferings of others

i am but a hand opening
catching flakes of snow and light and rain and sun and even lightning

i am but a vessel
where water is poured
hot or cold
or not so warm and not so cold

the xylem and the phloem
the trachea
the larynx and the pipe
the flute and
the straw

i speak now for myself
from all those
that have rested
and those who are still tired
those at war with everyone
and with himself

i am the paper where words
are written
i am the pen where the ink passes through
i am not the thought itself
but i am always what others had been
and will be....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Poetry......

it is a part of us
and much of me as it

comes and goes like
a pendulum of day and

night it catches me and
i catch it back

i hold on to it but
i give it up to please

it too, and it leaves me
honestly, devastated

as though much of me had
been taken and not a bit

was ever returned. I cry
foul and it laughs sensing

that i love it more that
it had ever loved me.....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Porcelain Bowl

my heart delights
to see an empty porcelain bowl
on the table

i wish i'd be one
empty and can still be filled

someday you may fill me
again

like a fish
soup.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Poverty

how can i forget your having to play with hunger at the boulevard somewhere in the seventies
when the president declared martial law and we were then scampering for our own safety,
there was this apple vendor whom you entertained with your stories about the struggle of the lion to be freed from the cage of ropes saved by the city rat which got lost in the mountain of trees
and when his mouth gaped to the bright moon at the boulevard
you took an apple and then we walked away and we took turns biting the redness of the crunchy fruit,
and then we parted ways and then what i know was that a man like your face was shot to death by the oppressors of the city and your body was buried on the shallow sand of the river bank and it was your mother who finally came and reburied you with decency.

i heard, and i could not forget, she did not shed a tear.
i think, i did.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Quest For Excellence Against Your Previous Self....

first they welcome you
they like you to be here
they assure you
the rules are fair

the hunger games begin
and you run for your shelter
this hiding game
in order to win

like that film
each one kills one another
until only one wins

you do not do that kind of thing
you run, and the faster you run away
the better for you
to feel that safety

and then finally when you find that
torch of victory
when you carry it with your hands
to light
their darkness

they will say, it is foul, it is not meant to be that way
the color of your skin is brown, it is earthly
and filthy and
simply unacceptable to the royalty of the past
the glorious renaissance of the white and the blue

you give in, you disrobe yourself
and you are naked

the world sees the truth in nudity
how beautiful it can be
and you run as fast as you can
because that is the only way to be human

after all, you add, winning is not what is sought for
it is the dignity of the journey
the excellence against your self.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Quest For God

always
something has been
made impersonal

faceless desire
unresolved thirst
eternal hunger
that no one will
ever satisfy

the silence of
stars
the distance
this longing
for the infinite
a God whose name
you have no right
even to know.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Quest For Originality

others are too conscious
about originality

what they write
or think, if you scrutinize it so well,
is never theirs

they're not the first to have
conceived
what light
is there
what darkness lies
what roundness does this earth
own?

i guess
everything is but a mutation of
an originality which was never
there in the first place

nostalgia remembers
takes in
what was there before

you don't exactly remember
the details
but you know the essence
and you
claim it solely as yours

what a shame

RIC S. BASTASA
That Quick Little Brown Dog

that quick little brown dog
jumps over the fence
near the bank of the river,
it is not your dog,
but you happen to be there when it
jumped,
over the fence near the bank of the river
into the river
that deep river with a overrunning
of the water
the dog was struggling to swim back
to the safety of the bank
but it failed and the dog was taken away
by the river and
it was gone,
you wonder why until now you think about that
dead dog
it is not yours but it sticks to your mind
as though it is yours
somehow you think as though you own it
and that you feel so painful about such loss
and you cannot sleep
and then you dream about that quick little brown dog
that drowned
it is barking so hard trying to be alive again
you wake up
with lots of cold sweat
somehow you think again
inside that dream
the face of the quick little brown dog
that jumped over the fence
into the deep river
is yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Red Rooster On The Stony Ground

the red rooster knows
its place on the stony grounds
it crows three times
and then attracts the
white hen
and then shits its
dirt on the
cracks.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Red Tailed Fish

how i wish to think
that
that red tailed fish
which roamed the
small aquarium world
throughout
its life is
happy

but this is what
i feel

like those sweet slices
of pineapple
and melon chunks
which i kept inside the
refrigerator

how chilly can loneliness
be?

how cold, how silent
but when eaten

still fresh and so sweet.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Reunion Feeling (2012, Marco Polo, Aggies)

the farmer asks:

Father, would you rather have me visit the church and think about my farm

or that i work in the farm and think about God?

i listen attentively and i who have the nerves entwined in my bones and embedded in my cartilages want to speak:

there is propriety in all that we do.

when you are in the farm work like a farmer and think about what you can do with the farm,

and when you are in church praying, think solely about God.

i admire Dodot for raising it before the elders.
But Dodot is still strange, and to those who watch him closely

did not see it.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Reunion On The Merry Month Of May

on a shorter notice we had the reunion set on the merry month of May,
candid,
a spot for the day, we gather the faces again
of youth,
high school scents spreading in the halls of this
room,
agging is late again
(her breast sags, though
she has not been married)
catalina lost some of her
teeth
(she is contemplating of
suicide, had an attempt
but survived it)
ernie, still looks good
with his marine blue polo shirt
(though not well ironed
he split with wife, now in the US
starts anew with his second
wife and a math whiz kid
for inspiration)
fredelita, bony cheeks
emaciated, depressed
(had a baby with this
parish priest)
sir berto, haggardly
high blood pressure
wants to deliver his speech
to an audience of six
mrs. ratilla, still smart and
quick, sits silently and
her eyes are roving
like she is the famous
thinker, i understand,

i got the money to spend
and they order what they
want to eat, i am this
writer, the standard-bearer,
the entertainer, i love
to sing again the songs
of high school to recite
again the poems i once
wote i once read while
they open their mouths
looking for meanings

the rest did not come
perhaps some of them
have died, perhaps some
of them want to die,
perhaps some of them
pretended to be dead,

whatever, it was that
month of May 2007
and i like to think
we were all drunk
and merry,

the high school memories
how can we bury them?

without dying ourselves

i was looking for her
she was not there anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Room

... it was simply wider
for me

i was like a pebble
falling to the
ocean floor of
the Surigao
trench

...it made me lonelier
it made me think of you

that room was a night
of long sleeplessness

the following morning
my eye sockets deepen
like a black hole of
my self
made universe

i am still looking for myself
and i am
afraid

i have not found it still

someone is talking
and writing and i do not recognize
it

it is strange and it seems to be
the truest of my
lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sadness In Your State

an autobiography appears life a blurred picture
you are lost in the tracks of the past
greatness is never spotted
because you have considered each as a mere folder
another item, just like any other number that slides from your fingers
then something bites you
the pain makes you jerk, and you begin to watch carefully the tip of your thumb,
this hurts, who is this? who are you?
and you know the person well,
the one that hurt you makes you remember a name
the face sticks in your brain
somehow, you remember, he is the greater one which you did not mind
and now you claim
we were together in that same school of thought
and i believe you,

why do you have to be like that? when there is no scream there is no one.
when you do not hear the jump into the storm from the ship of prolonged
blot of dark blue color, or that scarlet of bloody discrimination
from the rest of the oppressing humanity
then
that is the only time that you begin to mind
that there is someone out there and he is calling for help

why do you think of help only when you are dying yourself?
why do you begin to think of caring when you are hurt yourself?

you only feel, when the pain starts to take its house in you.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sadness That Irony And That Waste

i still have
Papa's picture
when he was old
and sickly
and dying and i
remember we were
talking seriously
at the patio
of that old house that
he built from
all his sacrifices
and it was you brother
you took that picture
with father's finger
pointing at me
and what that really meant
we both
really knew
and i still feel
the sadness
the irony
and the
waste.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sandwich

as you take that sandwich
i remember 1971

the ham, and mayonnaise
the purple sliced onions
and cucumber
that you slip between
a big sandwich which you
say is too delicious

that is not how i saw it in the 70's
you were too young then
to know the connotation of the word

or the metaphor of being sandwiched
between two warring forces
who wanted to win by killing each other

they were all civilians mind you
sandwiched between the armed and dangerous government
and the armed and more dangerous rebels

the ham, and mayonnaise
the purple sliced onions
and cucumber
that you slip between
a big sandwich which you
say is too delicious

in the 70's they were not delicious at all
they were maimed, and bloody, killed on the streets
and public plazas bombed and brains scattered
on the hot cemented pavements
people kept in hog wires and secret
detention places

brothers all but so insensitive to the
the roots of humanity
Cains and Abels
the ham, and mayonnaise
the purple sliced onions
and cucumber
that you slip between
a big sandwich which you
say is too delicious

when all i need is simply a bitter tasting coffee
without the sugar and cream

RIC S. BASTASA
That Secret Love

love is concealed upon the heart
that is buried in the muscle of my chest
fenced by bones, bound by veins
around a pool of blood

i give thanks to the Lord
for i love you and you know not
for i have sinned and they know not
for i am the only one that feels it
and hears its beat
in utter silence

RIC S. BASTASA
That Secret Meeting...

a voice faint coming from the valleys of the heart  
the whistle of the boy from beneath the barns of  
youth memories surging like flowers lotus unfolding  
on the ponds of solitude  
the voice joins with the other voices from the desert  
places of the lonely hearts  
(how many? finally there are many like sands slipping from  
a crevice of profanity)  
a choir of singing scenes, mountains and hills under the fog  
and mist, trails winding, and trees like broccoli on the  
backyard of abandoned women  

the sun comes out in splendor  
rain showers faint like a smile of the shy maiden  
a rainbow slices the spheres  
between us.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Self-Confidence

i can feel it
the moment i read your lines

just don't be offended
i won't tell you

but i have always told myself
though
arrogantly

that i know, within, with this fire burning,
i can always do

much better
but i will not show that to you

i will read
and i will listen

i won't talk at all
i am full and i am still writing

RIC S. BASTASA
That Selfless Beginning.....

there is nothing
no one is original

some are true, but
most are fake

everything are echoes
echoing echoes

you will notice all
these repetitions when

you are about to lose
your voice

your life, your marks
everything

what makes all these
new again?

how you see them
how you feel them back

to the arms of your mind
to the hands of your heart

one is repeated
but your view is not

that awe and wonder
that selfless beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sense Of Going...

There is pain in the soul
it is invincible
the whole body feels it
and it is
undeniable

You know it when
you start to cease
you cannot tell it to anyone
what you tell them is the joy
of the smile
the stories of
the nice days to come

For you are afraid of the sound of the wailing of the clock
the sobbing of the bedsheets
the cries of the walls
the darkness of the heavens
the pouring of the heavy rain

You are their love
and they have become all your fears
but the hands of the clock
signal the green light of going
and so you must go
silently
you tiptoe like air beyond the threshold of the door

The next morning the pain in your soul is gone
it is taken from the strings of your body
you can see people crying but you cannot hear them
what is the use of this movie you ask yourself
there is no sound and it is boring
like an old Chaplin
and so you finally go

To a place where it is as tranquil as a bay without boats and birds
airy, and as they have promised you
perfect
beyond the arms of the words
beyond the lips of the mouth....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sense Of Outrage....

i would have said something
direct to the point

like an arrow to the heart of the tree
i could have shouted eureka

i could have followed my heart and walked away and find
a home in someone's face

i could have been someone that you have never known
a handshake that you have never felt

we could have been more intimate than friends
contented in the poverty of our souls

but it is not just possible
i don't mind the hardship or the looseness

but it is not just possible
it does not fit, something feels so good but at a distance

it is ugly and undesirable
and for a moment when i search for my true face and find it

it becomes so horrible
it gives me this sense of outrage that i have never lived at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Shame Of The Past....

in the afternoon
of my life
i read my past,

funny. sad.
some happy times,
but there was
also that shame
that i want
kept hidden,

i have no word
for that,
no name, no place,
i erase all the
images,

somehow you know it
and if we see each
other again, you may
make me glimpse
a little, but

i am ready to forget
but if there is
really a need to
recall, i swallow

that fear, that shame,
and i will face you
and i will not be afraid,

i will tell you thanks,
i learned a lot.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Simple Happiness....

of spitting
just a little and once and
for all
while riding on a boat
sliding on the river
and then
maintaining that same posture
moving on
on a journey that will never
be over...

RIC S. BASTASA
That Skinny Past

the past is skinny
it does not speak much
it goes to church
everyday

it is shy, but it thinks
much better, deeper and
probing like
a scalpel to the
gum and decaying teeth

it is what you only know
and you are surprised
how skin deep things were
until you wake up
and embrace the wonders of
change

the past is buried
it is skinny and dead
you want it
it can never be yours again

you meet a face
it is plump, and alienating
it does not recognize you
it is still hurt
and kept its composure
in indifference

RIC S. BASTASA
That Sleep....

sleep too is an illusion
and there are so many of them
the sleep that is cruel
when we needed it
it leaves us
staring to the ceiling

the sleep that rocks us like
babies to loving mothers
who does not want to have them
and remember them
once again?

that sleep that takes us
and never returns us
that rest that we soon shall have
but we keep on postponing

the inevitable
that closes our eyes and never opens
them ever again....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Softness Of Childhood

You must
remember still
how comfortable
was it
when you as a
baby
hugged the mattress
when they fooled
you that mama is
just right there
preparing your
milk in the
bottle.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Solitude With The Stars And Harmless Words

the last night
together our fingers entwine

i keep your love inside my palms
i keep it inside my heart
when i leave bound for home
at twilight

you go
you keep yourself in your freedom
you go alone
where your heart takes you

the last embrace
i leave all that is valuable to myself
on your shoulder

i left some tears on
the white blankets
as souvenir

i will be back in the house
where i am alone again

inside the car
i weep

RIC S. BASTASA
That Something Which Went Wrong

there is a ripe papaya
too ripe for my hold and i climb it
too weak for my body
the tree swings to the other side
and then the papaya fruit falls to the
ground
crushed

something goes wrong somewhere
something that you are about to hold
and yet crushes to the ground
looks like a vomit &
you don't want to eat it
back

RIC S. BASTASA
That Spot....

this is a blank slate.
when i write some words on it
and you begin to read each
something really happens
though you do not know it
because you are too busy with
the reading of the word

either a part of me dies or lives
it depends on where you stop
and when

tomorrow i shall write again
you must learn where you stopped and
when.

it is that precise moment
that you make me begin to write again.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Stage Of Denial....

i do not wish to write about pain,
an artist has to clean the mess and write instead
about

happiness, but it is not here and what is here instead
insistent and forceful is

pain, but i refuse to give in to its demands to inflict
pain to my words,

i smile,
i offer silence,
i like to hear the falling of the pin
on that carpeted
floor,

i hear it,
i walk away, i dabble in all that the trees are singing
on a rainy day,

i do not wish to write about your pain,
i do not feel it somehow,

i feel mine, but what is the use of recognizing the one that hurts you
and destroys you

for when, until when,
i choose now,

i shall write about a landscape of green grass, where trees are tall and huge,
where plains travel infinitely into space

where seas are calm where fish sleeps comfortably on the seaweeds
and corals,

where butterflies flutter like shreds of paper from a building high,

on this stage of denial
i shall dance my mambo.
That Stairs That Must Lead Us Home...

building those stairs
that lead to the gates of the
heavens
in the skies?

how funny can that be
if not
impossible

what about the simplest stairs
that lead us to the
living room of
the house that we may call
as home?

RIC S. BASTASA
That State Of Wellness

WELL, well, well
Here we are again
Back to each other’s mouths?
You and i
Me,
The three sides
Tripod
Talk to me You
I am
(not exactly lonely
But I must confess
I need to talk to someone
Who must confess
To like me
(Silly? But I think we really need
Still
That confirmation that we have
Followed the rules
And that we are
Ok)

Well, well, well
There’s no island
Like a man
Or at least man can be a chain
Linked to one another
That chain that chains his body
To his soul
His soul to another body
A body to another body
All messed up
In the joys and pleasures
Of sorrows and pains
Salad
Days and hours and seconds
And Silence
How many more? How many more
Are becoming dead like
Everyone else
Searching for the meaning of our
Hundred ripening silences
Justifications for pains
Elevating pleasures for blissful joys
How many murmurs more?
At dawn.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Steel Hearted Lady

the power lady
steel at heart
and iron winged
multi-eyed
and fingers closed

hope you noticed
she stoops too low
in order to conquer
you

RIC S. BASTASA
That Stony Feeling...

the storms
and drought
the devastation
of the quakes and
floods
no way
they cannot affect
him
anymore

he is the stone
that hits your forehead

he'd been hurt
but not anymore

he hurts and will
always hurt

in all the times of
his numbness

wasn't it you babe
who told him
not to mind
feelings?

RIC S. BASTASA
That Strangeness

we are layered with years
like skins shedding off
and then
the new ones that you see
smooth, young supple

how many years?
we are silent still to this strangeness

i wonder
how this love sees you always
new to me vibrant illumined

shadow to my shadow
mist to my mountain

waves to my shore soft breeze
constant leaving and coming

i shy away from familiarity
i tiptoe towards the door of our memories

RIC S. BASTASA
That The Chicken Crossed The Road.

when randy
asked me what did
the chicken
really do?

confessing that
he did not really
know

i told him the
usual answer without
much goad
that the chicken just
crossed the
road.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Thing Called Duterte....

once i had a friend
who asked me
why my skin looks shiny
and healthy.

I told him urine
is a good remedy.
I drink my own urine.

Days later,
he came back,
saying his skin
did not improve.
He drank his own urine.

And i laughed,
telling him that i was just joking.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Thing That Happened And It Was So Beautiful

he remembers it
but he keeps it to himself

most of the time when he rides a bus
seeing the trees flashing by the window

in the countryside
there is something crude and even rude

but it is always beautiful
there is some kind of repulsion

nothing about magnetism
some stones perhaps that grate upon themselves

against the water
or a dying moon or a swan leaving the pond

or grasses growing tall beside an
abandoned house and you are watching it with

a self-created distance
it is something that perhaps will not happen again

but definitely
it was beautiful and you always want it to remember again

though you want to bury it
forever

it is passing like a cold wind
upon your cheek that has forgotten the taste of tears....

RIC S. BASTASA
That Tomorrow Morning I Will Be No More

i am afraid i can no longer walk alone.
or fly alone
or be in bed alone,
no
matter how i try to
close my eyes
the heart beats faster
and my mind runs
berserk
like a mad man
trying to extricate itself from
a shadow on the wall
(which by logical
reasoning cannot
really exist)

i am afraid, my feet exist no more
my hands
are watery leaves
dissolving on the river

and so i write you a letter
that my trip to the island where i can be a lotus
is cancelled
indefinitely

even if i shall love death
as i once tell you
yet when it comes near me
with a scent
i shiver
even on the thought that tomorrow morning
i will
be no more

RIC S. BASTASA
That Tryst Worth Forgetting

i see you
and you follow me
my gaze tells you,

inside my room where i have been all alone,
where my loneliness is killing me,
you know what i want, you have a heart,
i need love, more love, and you know it,
and you follow me inside my room, as i undress myself,
and you understand, my thirst and my hunger, my longing and my pain,
and you undress yourself,
and you touch my face, and i touch yours, and then i kiss you
and you smile, and you wipe away my fears, and then we make love
throughout the night, and the morning after, i still see you sleeping, and i leave
you a note, (and some money too) , i know, it will be the last, since deep within,
i found no love from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Tuktuk Feeling

warm
day, sunny
sky

we take the
tuktuk
in going to
Lolie

our hairs
fly away
so much
air meets
our eyes

there is this
feeling
that in cambodia
riding in
a tuktuk

i am king
and you
are my queen

de-stressed
only for
a while.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Unhappy Woman

that is the window
a woman is unhappy and she is always
closing and opening
that window and people keep on looking
figuring out why that window
is unhappy
and they are all happy about the
proclaimed unhappiness of the other
that woman that window
not this woman not this window
not my woman not my window
always looking out somewhere
except this writer
this piece
this one not this one
that one over there not me but her

RIC S. BASTASA
That Unusual Search Of The 'In' Thing

when ideas rule the world
it thirsts for images and so images
are made like shadows and
mirages
concrete mountains where
we put our feet and walk
real rivers where we swim and
drown
stones that we feel
stray dogs that we stare at
and be afraid of
it is always a story of what is not there
and gathering them all
and then the trend is lost and we wish
for something else
that one which is always coming
and soon to come and soon to be
worshiped
another idol another hands that turns
fruits into gold
another hunger of Midas
another dead Sphinx another
myth rising from the ashes of
centuries

delicy

this afternoon i sit upon a white easy chair
facing the blue sea
my search is over
actually there is nothing there
everything is just
hearsay
a rumor passed from one bad mouth to
another
from one moron to another
i need sleep and i assure you
everything is fine
it is enough.
That Voice Within

somehow i am
tasked to write
what actually happened

and they seem to
be not interesting at all

man pushing another man
woman pulling the hair of another woman

the clerk engrossed in the records
and the stenographer with her notes for the day

there are those who leave the court
feeling so victorious
saying, justice is served at last

there are some
who fails to accept what burden is laid on their backs

somehow i sit on an easy chair
on a blurred vision
on that painstaking scrutiny
less the guilt

somehow something is missing
more is yet still to be done
every aspect is like another
stone not lifted from its being stuck
in mud

there is a sound which says
do something more
your best is not enough
and i ain't seen nothing
yet

RIC S. BASTASA
That Was The First Time When I Shouted At You

i was surprised myself
at what i just did
oh my i feel like a real man
shouting at you
the first time in my life
when i think you never understood me
when i decided to shout the words

the words baffle you
about who i am, and what i am really up to
i like the way things are
now you must listen
otherwise, i will keep on shouting
until i will get
my own meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
That We Have Become Free

we accept
in silence the noise
within us
we embrace all their
arms
kiss them all in the
mouth
we signified love
and give
all the understanding
that we can
muster within the lines
of our palms
and then we look at each
other
without posing any
question at all
we open all doors
and windows
and let the cool wind
come in
and then we smile
to the world beyond us
we welcome
whatever is there
shadows and shapes
and volumes and
weights

they know by now
that we are free

RIC S. BASTASA
That We Once Existed That We Once Loved.

i thought that it is easy
something sweet
something passing
something that could be easily forgotten
that which we can just dismiss and then move on and do other things

we are wrong
i am the most wrong
we have wronged not just ourselves but those whom we love and still want to love

we parted but there is a time when we meet again and our gazes cross each other midway between honesty and carelessness

it was not pleasurable we thought so it was pain that penetrates the core of our souls

we can take it for granted now we can pretend that it is over

we meet again our sighs in tight embrace we want to lose ourselves and forget
that we once existed
that we once loved.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Which Is In History Still Unwritten

only if you ask shall i answer
like a wall flower i am a passive
listener
if you ask me to talk, i will, but
it will be brief, a commensurate answer,
they call it justice,
but there is something more to it
which they call love,
compassion, kindness, empathy

you do not have to pay for my words,
or invite me to your party for my talk,
or send me a shirt, or pair of shoes
for what i have shared with you,

if it is a quid pro quo
then what's the value of what i am?
or what we are?

a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye,
until someone gets toothless or blind?

in the same manner that if you always pay
for what i will do,
there will come a time that i will do nothing
because you have nothing to pay me
anymore

which should not be the case

we shall stop this nonsense,
we serve because we must,
because without that we can be incomplete
our essences wasted

that we can never become
who we really are until all the sacrifices
are given:
gifts, serve, with nothing
in return, ideal,
human perfection, that sacrifice that
is still in history unwritten.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Whole Night I Slept Alone

dear self,

i congratulate you
for finally waking
up
early this
morning
without remembering
that last night
you slept well
alone

your snore
was music to
your ears

sincerely
yours.

myself

RIC S. BASTASA
That Will Be The Last Reunion

i assure myself, i was lost,
in that reunion, their faces are no longer the same
their noses are elongated
and their words are
smelling like
death fish their vision about us float like stinging jellyfish

the world has changed a lot, old friends are tied
to broken families
ex-girlfriends have become wild grasses in the forests
nothing and no one is as tamed as that old closeness
that knows
what sympathy was all about
the perfume of empathy
is lost in the air of indifference
nothing good spreads there

i listen a lot and i have heard what i must vomit
everything ends at ten o'clock in the evening
and then i flag a taxi
that takes me to a hotel which shows me the bareness of luxury
and style
i do not stop from there
i have to go somewhere else to appease what boils within
the rage of too much
expectations that fail

perhaps at eleven o'clock a bottle of rhum
while watching a comedy show of transvestites and clowns
something too far
and farce.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Window Which Is Half Open

HE

is still excited by the scent
of an orange peel
diffusing inside a candle-lit
room

SHE

has unbuttoned her
blouse
unzipped her shorts
and sets aside the orange
rolling on the
floor

They

like it here
all alone in their secret
whispers

a tryst of youth and
escapism

The

moon is the uninvited peeping
tom by that window which is half
open.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Woman

that woman, when did she ever learn
not to slap you again?

she will never tell you when she will stop.
and you have always been compliant
a christian

as soon as she is finished slapping your right cheek
you soon ready the left cheek and you give her all the joy
of her sadism.

you are not the are my wife.
and i am teaching you that her reign is over.

my hands have touched your cheeks and healed the bruise
the pain that seeps down to the layers of your skin
to the years of your burden

let me touch them again like i am a leaf to a whorled vine
i have the cure
this love of mine

i have these fingers that can unlock the reason of your pain.
let me open the door for you. let me close it
away from that witch
let the white dove
fly finally to the skies

look at me. now my dear wife
you are free!

RIC S. BASTASA
That Word Of Yellow Corn....

how do you touch
words? how can you
use your hands
to feel each syllable
like a grain of yellow
corn? perhaps change
the question. How do
words touch you? your
fingers are smiling.

RIC S. BASTASA
That Wound Which Was More Than What Silence Can Boast Of....

what justifies
it was that honesty

the feeling deep down
the deepest of your
heart

the world is silent
seeing the truth feeling
you

how love can be harsh
sometimes bringing the truth
of a liberation

twas like a burst of something
hidden from within the
inflamed flesh

the world is silent but it
was that wound which was more
than what silence
can boast of....

RIC S. BASTASA
That You, By Myself, Be Always Worshiped.

I might be unfair
if i say
that God has been deaf
to all my pleas.

For last night and in the
last crucial seven days of my life
he saved me from the harms
that my self could have
inflicted upon itself: those sleepless eyes
the tumults inside the mind,
the uprising of the acids
inside my intestines
the whirling of the thoughts
the storms of the past
the tornadoes of hasty judgments
and all those sorts for which if you try looking at it from
a distance
you definitely have lost control of.

There was that Hand that keeps on guiding
and holding and caressing
even in my sleep even if i do not remember anymore
what happened.

There was that breath that was not mine anymore.
That soothing that came from without
That comfort which i do not know from where
Which i guess, i may call now as
Heaven.

Whatever i am, and wherever I'd been
This early morning, i bow before you Oh Lord

Thank you Very Much. Thy name be forever Praised.
That you, by myself, be always worshiped.

RIC S. BASTASA
That's Life

her only baby
dies, that's life

a man on top of his
promising singing stint
has cancer o the throat,
that's life my dear

the shallow talker
lazy bone but boss sucker
goes up in the office ladder
that too is life

an outstanding teacher
low paid cannot send his
kids to college
that's life

a carpenter without a house
a pedophile priest
a corrupt politician forming
his own dynasty
that's life

a poet without a book
a sick doctor
a nurse dying in her room
these too is what
life is all about

RIC S. BASTASA
That's Why I Am Here With You....

again this is just an outpouring
of rain
all my loneliness dropping like
rain
all my sadness dripping
like rain
again, this is nothing about
anthologies
or who gets the Poet of the Month
thing
in any community magazine

this is rain outpouring
this is a form of therapy
on everyday malady
nothing about art or musing

when tomorrow rains again
i will be here

when sunshine comes and
flowers bloom in the field
when my beloved sings and
sleeps with me in bed

why should i be here?

RIC S. BASTASA
That skinny Past

the past is skinny
it does not speak much
it goes to church
everyday

it is shy, but it thinks
much better, deeper and
probing like
a scalpel to the
gum and decaying teeth

it is what you only know
and you are surprised
how skin deep things were
until you wake up
and embrace the wonders of
change

the past is buried
it is skinny and dead
you want it
it can never be yours again

you meet a face
it is plump, and alienating
it does not recognize you
it is still hurt
and kept its composure
in indifference

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boy At Laoy

the boy is selling charcoal

the teacher marks him absent from school

another boy cannot make it this year for graduation in his sixth grade

his mother is in the house resting as she just delivered a new baby girl

the boy has to buy her food a chicken soup to warm her guts

his father died two months ago lost in the sea

the typhoon came without notice

RIC S. BASTASA
The City And The Town

dthis is what the city has to offer
neon lights, ambulance screams,
loin music, beer and ale,
a small room, a busy life,
a little sleep,
exquisite dinners,
late shows, gags, gigs.
buts I have enough of all these,

I went to the little town
and have this wooden house,
beside a river, there are flowers
blooming and vegetable gardens,
and tranquil horizons,
a beautiful sunset
a brighter sunrise,
crustal clear rivers,
home fishing, and mountain treks,
and fresh smell of green grass,
and cool shades of trees,
mountain shadows,
full moons and singing birds
love calls, and fresh fruits
direct from the trees,
wild chickens, and
horses to ride and carabaos
to pasture, goats to feed
and turkey chases,

a very peaceful sleep at night
under the moon
lamp-lit room and some cicadas
in concert with the frogs
and crickets and worms
and then the rain
starts to fall
you hear the sweet hum
of the nearby river
The Dignity Of My Tears

I will not blame the moon
For bringing me this
Pale sadness
On some pictures of grief
I lift up my face
To present the dignity
Of my tears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Islands....

two islands to keep
that fidelity upon their true natures
must always retain
the sea between them

with only the winds of
chance as bridge
this world can be intact
united.

RIC S. BASTASA
The   Little Things That I Can Do

to be what i am
is first,
to affirm what you are
is another,
to be in harmony
with nature,
to live in peace
to work for progress
to respect others
to love God and country
but God above all
with all my mind, my heart and soul
these are the little things
that i think i can do well
even without my government
aiding.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Trying

the more you try to be pleasing
the more they become angry

they will not like it. Don't try other tricks. Do not force yourself

you are you and they are them.

you are in a quicksand.
Be still.

Or you'll sink
earlier than expected.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poor Rich Boy Named Al

you say, you pity him, he has everything
and today, he commits the greatest blunder of living
killing himself

did he leave a note? did he call you before he took his last breath?
he didn't
he wants to die a silent death, one that can be mistaken as a

happy death, goodbye, pretty world,
i am finally leaving you
no problems

sometimes i may get you wrong pitying the poor little rich boy
who had everything
and who despite everything he has, , , , this everything, these all these
all these that you want to have but couldn't have any
cars, boats, diversified business, real estate,
cruises, money, money and more money
buying happiness here and there
only to find that
he is finally lost and cannot find his way back home
to himself
finding the emptiness of a mother who dies
more recently, because of extreme loneliness
amidst the crowd, the socializing and the
loud music of not belonging to anything
to anyone

he still kills himself, and you
feel this kind of pity, this wastage of human resource,

you are thinking and you have this line of thinking
that those who died by killing themselves are a waste
an epitome of unhappiness
bizarre, a sadness galore, unexplainable

i disagree, they are happier, and have chosen the smooth path
of laying their lives with their own hands in the altar of
the gods of early, handy, packaged death
and i wonder if you feel the guilt of them thinking
i am taking this life, and it is none of your business,
damn, damn, this empty space is now reserved for you

because, who knows, you may be next, my dear jeannie.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pride Of Darkness

darkness has its own merits

like the night giving us
a splurge of stars

the moon alone above the marshes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds Of Jeepneys Are Gone

The sounds of jeepneys are gone
The champaca trees bloom again
This evening beside you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Strait Man

You mislead my eyes
For the strait man you wrote
How this brain works
I am beginning not to understand
The straight man you were writing
Did not have the the gee ("g")
And the itch ("h")

That you etched through the lines
You are indeed witty
Referring to the narrow body of water
Connecting two other bodies
The estrecho, aprieto, knipa, the sikinti
The sor durum, the ciesnina, uzina, prieliv,
The sund, the bogaz
Whatever it was it was so difficult
That distress, or need:
Ill and penniless,
The strait man was in sad straits indeed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun

almighty
the sun continually burns itself
at the center
of this universe to give life

light to everyone
the single cell the widest ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
The (F) Rying Woman....

to pry upon his weakness and to discover
some artifacts from his house is her past time

and every hour when there is a break from the
wanton hours and the monotonous menu of the day

she opens the usual window and watch what the
worm is doing inside the terrarium

she records the possibility that this can be a landmark
of history and significant for what others say as a phenomenon

other people's lives matter
and sometimes the worm that looks at her too asks: why?

the worm, and she does not know this, is also prying upon her
her shrinking breasts, her skin that looks like dry tobacco leaf

her life that to the worm has become more of a raisin
stuffed inside a boxed, with a history of having been dried by the sun

the worm is fair though, in its latest description
she is still sweet though neutral in smell, and deserves still to be liked to be
eaten someday

p.s. the worm remarks, kids will like her.

RIC S. BASTASA
The 23rd Psalm Of The Lowly Snail

the snail shall not want
it shall lie down in green ponds
it shall reside beside still waters
it shall restore its flesh
it shall be lead in the paths of wetness for your name's sake

it will fear no evil
for you are with it
its hand shall comfort it
and it shall prepare a leaf before it in the presence of all the other insects
its saliva runneth over
it shall anoint its snail with the rainwater

RIC S. BASTASA
The 6th Sense

Love has fooled you.
First

so you fool love in return
you pretend you are Love
You are second.

The Third one is the Newcomer
in this game

a tragic play in fact
where both are losers at the end

First there is A hELLO
THEN

The goodbye, The fourth one is
not forgotten

but the Fifth one learns from
Love itself

It forgets, heals, takes time
to ponder

and decides that the only way to live
is still

To love again.
This is the Sixth sense.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Abandoned And Lonely Nipa Hut

then we come back
to this place
where the grasses are tall
and the yard is filled
with trash
of goat steps
and cow dung
the scent is horrible
to an ordinary stranger
who recalls nothing
of what we once
did here
when we too felt
like we were abandoned
by the moon
and the wind
when the stars fickle upon
a black sky
winked

RIC S. BASTASA
The Abandoned House And The Man Who Drags His Shoes To Make The Necessary Sound

when you arrive in the house
(the house that both of you built 17 years ago)
no one is there
not even the three white dogs

you have accepted this face of loneliness
without a mouth

it is its nature now
gentle in silence

there is nothing to talk about with someone else
when someone else is far away and seemingly taking all the hearts out

the door and the hinges have to keep things for themselves
for in truth, those who left the stairs
they still love

you have the key to the door of the kitchen
and that is where you start the journey towards the living room

you scurry on some little memories
it is like putting some words in your notes
in here and there beyond the margins

but it is not that endless really
for whatever it be
joy or death there's got to be an end
that is the truth of the meaning of
this word

it could be a dead-end
a street of walls
& then actually you are caught
in flagrante
where your only choice
is to go back,
retrace,
remember,
refresh
refrains, refrains
of a
love song

you go back to the room look longingly at the bed
the blankets are dusty and the pillows are stained with so much emptiness
or guilt
scrapes
Freudian analysis
Carl Jung's other possibilities
of reconciliation

this is a very soundless world and
every part here is keeping its mouth shut
their layers of concealment are thick
and their canopies of
self-defenses are hard

you feel like this is one kind of a giant shell
and you are inside it
its flesh
all blistering
flesh

you decide to wear your shoes all throughout this scrutiny
this journey into marriage
into childlessness
into what if's

you drag your feet with your shoes on
as though someone is suffering and wanting to die
and you hold the collar
and you hurt the backbone
and in that open window
you imagine that someone may finally
jump like a scared cat

nine lives
thirty-six softest feet
you purposely make a sound with your shoes
tapping and tapping
and tapping
to create those sounds
of the past dances
just to fill an empty room

some thoughts jump out of the window
dressed in euphemisms
as the ceiling creates its own crankiness
its cloudiness

nine cats in you jump out that window
falling softly on the grass below
all thirty-six
dreams

it is nice to see of course
nine unharmed cats like fluffy cotton blown by the wind and gently
softly land on the grass

it is no wonder
why men sometimes invoke the sound of their whistling

indeed it is by this time
very relaxing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Absence

i have long waited
for this time
when
you cannot seduce
me anymore
like no matter what
you do
whether you spread
your legs
at 180 degrees
or lick the muscles of my
legs for
a day
all these
cannot cause a tremor
to my
layered existence

i have long waited for this
time
when i become a wall
and you wilt
as a vine
when you are but a
forgotten tendril still
fighting for a hold
in my trellis

now that time has come
and i am calling some of my friend
to dine and drink with me
and we had
a good time
recalling what you have done
to me

i told them you ruined me
and i was like a house that fell down
on the ground
dynamited

and then they all left me
when the wine is all consumed
when the food is nothing
but left-overs for the dog

now it is just me and my dog
and then the dog is asleep on the rug
beside a door
that i have not closed

somehow, i am back to this emptiness again
and i still wonder
how can i ever be a void to be filled again

like an empty glass still wishing for
the pouring of
the old wine

RIC S. BASTASA
The Absurd

the absurd
lies in the sunless sea

there is no fading
rising or setting there

and having learned
of this rare but occuring
phenomenon

where all time
either is dark
or gray
or something like
a boundary

they begin to suspect
that there is no
hope for the light
though

they retain their last and only
belief
about eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
The Absurd On Our Skins

the absurd lies on the surface of our skins
like a rose tattoo that shirks and shrinks with time

crumpled lines and fading dyes and a story that refuses to die
you ask me if somehow i have obtained some meaning to my life

something that i cannot say i soon tell you
it is more of a growing thing that does not really show itself

unless you wait till the right season comes
the wind gives it a light feeling and the sun warms it a bit

surprise comes like a bud and bliss comes like a red flower
so dainty and beautiful but you know it well: a very short moment

like a breath a sigh like a puff of whisper to the ear
it is a show of life, we gather dry leaves and then burn them

we clean the ashes and we wait for the grass to grow back
we anticipate the coming of hope, the rain, the clouds, the sun

sometimes it is all dark, we are blind, and then things, all things
begin to be real, it is all the same, too much light is also blinding.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Academe...

it is circular in shape
the usual
nothing to start with
and nothing to end up,
it is no longer
open ended like a bowl
of aquarium
with a gold fish
swimming within its
limited
confines,

i am inside it
and you cannot just
touch me for
this world
excludes you
and lots of them

it thrives on its own
and by now
having felt all your
exploitations
rejects your
manipulations

it is a pond
of newly bred lilies
underneath
are supersonic fishes
behaving
like ordinary
commonly spotted
black orange
kois.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ache Of Separation

now we are far
away, the distance divides us,
like torn cloth

there is a purpose,
and we know it, now, the ache
has its own reasons,

for you to bear more fruits
for me
to make silence my best friend

chartering a new course,
we look at the farthest star, we beat

the heart of loneliness, for soon it will
end, and soon we shall never be parted,

love grows in separation,
takes roots, and invisible inside our
bodies,

we shall bloom, we shall be the same
branches again
on one tree

RIC S. BASTASA
The Acing Tooth...

it takes an aching tooth
this excruciating, penetrating,
pain to forget for once
what lust was there, that lust
for sweet moments,
that greed for slush,
that avarice, (would you mention
too, that hunger for fire and
flesh?)

the child in us refuses
treatment, fears the dentist,
shuns away the cure,
this pain endures and those who
know what it is
and how to cure it,
blast in anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Act Of Doing Good...

whatever good that i do
i just do it
wherever that good deed goes
to hell or heaven
whether it falls to the hands of the
devil or to the wings of those angels
it does not matter

the responsibility is passed
to the port where
the ship has docked and
anchored its weight

meanwhile i shall do
another good deed again
simply because it is my nature
my essence
my duty and i shall not be hurt
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Act Of Losing

i am floating today
feeling like
a butterfly
flattering the wind
and teasing
the flowers
in this beautiful
city garden
inside a public
park

i realize
i like living the life of a foolish
blue butterfly
knowing fully well how short
my life span can be
and yet
still busying myself with
things no less
important

like
not deciding what to do
with any flower
or cloud
not having to say yes
to any wind or
cloud
neither saying no
something lies
beyond
any decision

just like it
belonging to no one
not subjecting my proboscis
to the
dictates of the hands
of time
it is a very light existence
without a thought
a direction
not even a clue
of who am
i
really
in this flitting
moment
where i am just another
anonymous
in the mall
in the park

RIC S. BASTASA
The Act Of Wonder

dr. conoce donde empezar
la mañana es un gran girasol rojo
abriendo y flexionando
hacia el sol

y no sabe todavía qué hacer con ello
lo que no sabe es que
al abrir la puerta y caminar hacia el gran girasol amarillo
y mirarlo tan asombrado que se olvida de qué hacer con su vida
o la de los demás que dependen de él

ya hizo todo lo que estaba bien y posible

RIC S. BASTASA
The Addiction

The addiction to writing
Is worse than drug
Addiction to
shabu
Or marijuana

You want solitude
You do not talk
You shy away from friends
And your wife
Misunderstands your silence
As coldness of a lover

“Do you still love me? ”

it is worse
there is no hospital for writers
there are no rehabilitation centers
where they diagnose
you for an addiction for a certain
precise disease

why this man prefers solitude
why he does not dance
why he does not talk anymore

there is no drug prescribable
to this addiction
there is no doctor
there is no cure

meanwhile the symptoms keep
manifesting

looking beyond the window in deep thought
sleeping late and waking earlier than usual

He lives too far from everybody
Kin, friends, lovers, and country
RIC S. BASTASA
The Addiction To Write

THIS is my addiction: to write
my failure: sometimes i write without a direction
and my success: i am writing about everything
that happened here
without missing a thing
thru symbols and signs
when things i met are unbearable
thru stories to illustrate what
misery have others inflicted upon others
and themselves
thru poems that can speak what i do not wish
to tell you
this is my addiction: writing without a purpose
except to spend time with you
descriptive and not judgmental
letting the hours go and not imprisoning them in the
cells of my mind
accepting the fact that i am as insignificant as you
that we pass this way
and we do not really know where we are finally going
we hope that this is not just this
but that there is something beyond
we suspect but we kill it
we live each moment and so we live without fear
we are here because we are here
we step upon a path because it is a path
we think we think we always do this thinking
and it must not be for nothing
we think, we think.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ads....

do your own thing
dance to the sound
of your own drums
believe in yourself
because we do....

smart....not odd..

RIC S. BASTASA
The Adults

inside their rooms
they do in secret what we all know
they do not kiss and tell
they keep to themselves
what this world
tells to everyone
the more educated they become
the more they conceal
the more closed
are their doors
and the collaboration
is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Advisory...Repeate.

come election count

how many glasses of friendship
did you break?

how many threads of connections
cut?

how many bridges are falling down?

you defend your presidentiable and

for God's sake, he does not even know

if you exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
The African In You

Man, forget the African in You
We are all Men
Part of Humanity
There is no more African, Russian, American
and Neither shall i be Filipino
nor shall he be also Japanese

Neither shall there be Plutonians
Nor Marsian
In One Universal Quest
for Oneness
One Humanity
One Race
Borne of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agnostic

the whole universe is
as a grain from a balance,
or a droplet of morning dew
come down upon the earth

and i am nothing but
a sigh from your breath
O lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agony Of The Long Waiting

i understand fully well
what is this agony of waiting

i’d been there
six months, and some false alarms
there were rumors
and bad news

i waited for the good news
it did not come
what arrived was something unbearable
father hid the knife
and mother asked me to listen to her

i know the agony of waiting
i know the pain of arrivals (and departures too)

i was once there
and no amount of comfort was enough
neither balm nor herb
neither drug nor injection
no amount of psychiatric treatment did cure

yet i survive
i am still here with you
silent and strong

it is our agony
and we understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agony Of Waiting

the agony in the garden of Gethsemane
the sweat turning to blood
Jesus asking for the will of God

driving has been dragging
judgment suspended, i am sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agony Of Waiting...

now
when the day is gone
we chase it no more
like those days of yore!

the days flash like game
cards on our faces
then the magician keeps
text them all in his hand
all days are gone

the night has come
and we can do nothing but sleep
or wake up
thinking about nothing
what comes next
simply is unthought of

the nights and days are the same now
nothing is distinctive
in this waiting game of life...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agony....

in the middle of
manila
in the ocean of buses
and cars
inside your car
immobilized by the
endless traffic
you look out the window
blurred by the
rain......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Agrarian Tenant

eddie is the guy
he used to be a lover of women in the town
when his father Toldo died
he inherits

tenancy, and so he married early
got six kids, wife ligated, and lived a
simple life beside a
ricefield, on the empty

fields he can see the black crows
and the sparrows
and the scarecrows, for year and years
he
tilled the land left by my forefathers
as we finish our courses
this time i come back to see him
how

old has he become, emaciated, deep brown skin
dry long hair, cracking lips,
gnarled fingers,
i though he too would not recognize me
we had a talk about the farm and the rice
produce, the cost of fertilizers and pesticides
and the chinese cartel
and the massive importation from vietnam
killing all of their dreams

i have not done my duty, but here he is
surviving on few grains left
on salted fish

all his children gone
domesticated in other homes of the rich
few in Hongkong
one in Dubai the other one opens her parlor
in Vigan

at the end, there is only the two of them
his ligated wife and himself
unbending.

RIC S. BASTASA
as i sleep the airconditioner inside our room
hums a tune to my ear
sounding very much like your
poem recently posted at PH
last night when i arrived late
from the office

Monotonous like the Rural Transit bus
that takes you daily from the house to the city
then back

Silly like a nursery rhyme a la Jack and Jill or ba ba black sheep
There is no philosophical content whatsoever like a very dry well
No water in here no pebbles just plain dust and sand

There is no color like the blue skies and black birds
No motion for wings no notion of movement like our emotions
There is no odor (there is a little bit of rotten fish and wilting leaves of mahogany, like some fertile humus in mama's backyard)

Forget what i said. It is your poem my dear.
And i must love it.

It is like the hmmmmm of the airconditioner and
It is making me sleep soundly beside you. Anyway

I am here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Alien...

it is never the desire
of him
who writes so well to become another poet in the halls of fame,
no, not, and far from it,
all that he did was merely to unload
what was in his mind
on those dark nights
when he felt terribly

either sad, or horrified or lonely,
it is only sometimes when
he felt bliss
or those tiny pieces of happy
minutes that
comfort his mind
that eases his heart
on this long and lonely journey
toward a faraway place
which he thinks he must have been
but he cannot anymore remember
except that feeling
of

missing, that longing that no word has ever filled
that nostalgia that never disappears
while waiting
while standing by
on a train station that takes him back
to a rented room

while sitting on a chair as everything flashes
on him
like lightning
when he sees only shadows of trees
and rooftops

and then the heavy rain
compels him to close the window
though
this time
brave as he is on his own
there are no
more tears...

RIC S. BASTASA
in that dry
desert room
the blanket
sands
fold into
dune shapes
against the
paper wall
horizon

the sound of
the rain
outside this
mind house
remains to be
the soothing
music of
the alienated
soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegories Of That Early Morning

one can
after a
time see
the dichotomy
of the body
& mind

the mind
has its own
territory
it grows its
own garden
plants its
own towers
of ivory

the body
constructs
its rivers
destroy the
fences
and demolishes
walls

in the mirror
you see a
face
and you are
carried
with so much
sympathy

the carriage
with a black horse
begins
to take the body

the mind is the
white horse
galloping in
a different
direction

the peace of your
world
depends on the
power of your hands
to whip and
caress

meanwhile the flowers
in your garden
bloom and wilt
the tower of ivory
begins to
shoot its light
against that
vast dark landscape

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegory Of An Unintentional Meeting

the meeting was incisive
lie the way my tooth is relieved from pain

but he
thought about what i said before
that moment when
the glass was emptied of its black contents
that night inside a cube of ice

when what followed was the transparency
of air
when both sides can be seen at one glance
when goodbyes and hellos
look the same like Siamese twins

when one finally sees through a hole and for a while
glances like a window of rain where you cannot help but just stay as you do not
like to dance
and then he
says that
the universe is there and it is

nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegory Of Good And Evil

i made a cottage
of nipa and bamboo
and rattan
by the side of the
sea

it is not that
luxurious

any common man of this
village may come and
rest

i put the sign that any
tired man may sleep there
any traveler may use it
for free

i was away for three days

when i visited it
the vandals drew a big penis and
a vagina as big as a platter

poured black paint on the floor
and scattered drift wood
in the center of the floor

how unkind are these unknown
vandals?

but we cannot be outdone
we clean it again
repaint it with green and beige
to cover the obscenity

i guess, what devil destroy
God is never tired repairing
because we have promised
to be instruments of good

then we must all comply

now the cottage stands clean again
welcoming still a tired traveler.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegory Of Pleasure...

there is more
to find in this mountain

the snails have not reached here
the birds are not telling the complete view
a vista of clouds
and little white houses beside a river

there is more on top of the trees
you have seen a lot
but there is nothing that can be touched
for the pleasure of the hands

so what is the use?

the feet are ready
and tomorrow is the final leaving

there is no regret
somehow he will try getting into the body of the cow

it will be nice there
there is more pleasure with the grass
and there is no moral
code to adopt

mud is still cooler for the body
dress is but a prison without a key

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegory Of The Cave In Lesser Words

there is an exit
from the shackles of darkness

from the depths of ignorance
to the liberating light

follow the tunnel of your dreams
awaken from sickening sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Allegory Of The Cycle Of Doors

and so there is this door that appears before you
and you open it
and then when you enter the room
another door appears
this is the cycle of doors that keep on appearing and you
keep on opening
but the room still appears from a distance
always distant
from your eager feet to enter
you say to enter the room i must please the door
but the room moves away just the same
and the door tells you
to keep the room
you have to burn it and when the room is burned
the door finally disappears
and then both the door and the room shall tell you
now be happy
for you now have a house of your own

RIC S. BASTASA
The Alligator...

detach the cover
the book is naked
its face is blanked
it has no identity

open the page
there are no changes in
those prints
the letters still make
the command

the sentences end
in their usual paragraphs
in a new sense,
to signify a little difference
there shall be no periods,
as you notice
there are only commas,

there is a meaning to this,
something in us always moves, continues, serrated,
double-edged sharpness of the mind
sometimes, a comma creates a sense of suspension,
like a bridge, a lull, a disbelief,
no one likes it, because everyone in us, trained as we were
in schools with always in mind
completions, and endings, we, do hate, incomplete returns
like a rumor with nothing definite as to
what happened to the
subject,

the scene is frozen, nothing thaws it,
the word is hanging, the journey of the feeling is still at the middle
of the map, the red dot still unreached,
and there is no stopping and this precisely makes you breathless

like you are having a swing, like you are
suspended in a rope still not well tightened,
feel it, do not be horrified, just feel it, precisely, this is the truth about our existence

sword of Damocles up
and the gaping mouth of the abyss beneath
looking like
the more than sign in
basic mathematics

the mouth of the
see you later alligator,

RIC S. BASTASA
The Amazing Grace Of God

HIS WIFE, and two daughters
and son
and his mother were on that bus
that lost a brake
and banged its head on the old
trunk of the big acacia tree
on the road
to Isabela,

they were visiting the miraculous
church of Manaoag
as a family

all of them died except him
who is now
lighting a candle and offering prayers
to five coffins,

and yet when asked
he says
he still feels the AMAZING GRACE OF GOD.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ambitious Guests...

her cell phone rings
she is fast asleep, i

am thinking, what if,
what if,

i cannot tell you,
what is my desire, but

i just arrived, it is useless
to build a beautiful house

at this age, our legs shake,
our bones rattle, it is useless

very useless, to build a
beautiful house, for

you cannot assess anymore
what they really love,

your beautiful house or us,
at this moment when you have

no one to please, except pleasure,
perhaps, when everyone who lives

there looks at the ceiling with
those luxurious chandeliers,

dreaming, someday, this will
be mine, for they are dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Amor Secos.

some leaves and moss
on water and stones at
the side of a river crystal
mirror to the sky early morning
on a walk with your dog
as the wind gently blows
the amor secos.

birds flying away from you
the silence is a memory of a tunnel
until a pebble hits the side of the
metal as the boy looks for the bird
that falls

another bird from a branch above your
head looks in fear.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Amor Secos......

the amor
secos are the dry kind
of grass
which stick to you
when you touch it
and pass by

at one glance they
are insignificant

grasses are meant to
be removed from the
garden and
be taken as trash

somehow if you look
closely as i have done
recently
sleeping on the grass
beside them
they are not that
ugly at
all

they are nice to
look at and when i stand
and leave
some have already
taken a patch of my
pants

they must be lonely.
i guess.

on the other hand if
they could talk, would they
have not said
that they just want to
comfort you
because you are lonely too?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Analogous

everything has
an analogy

for instance these hands
with fingers

are they not rivers and creeks
a source and
tributaries?

for instance this body
this temple
where my soul rests

this eye
this window of the house

the sun
the eye of the earth

a friend of the stars
the wonders of our longings

for instance
the silence
a dash in our talk
a space of our doubts

many more
for instance you and me
two hands in prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anchored Boats At The Pier

noise has become
the subject of his painting
lots of colors in chaos
furiously the red blots
invade the canvass with
the black streaks as
ally
drops of dark blue and
a little softness with mint greens
strokes of ash gray
and the violence of strong oranges
which ignited fire
to the minds of the viewer

it is a picture of pressure
that in a little while you
can even hear the explosion
or the passage of
a cyclone

he looks at it
calmly like an early morning
sea

as he remembers the seagulls
and the anchored boats at the pier.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Angel Of Death

and then the angel of death
flies and stops
beside her, and she who was
prepared with what to say
didn't say much,
she smiled,
raised her hand
to hold his,
as though to welcome her
in an embrace
and she did embrace her
yet how can we not see
what joy she had seen
that moment

and then she closed
her eyes
into an infinite
bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anger In Your Eyes....

THE morning is cold
lit by the angry flint in your eyes

and i, who love you, perhaps love you
more, couldn't care less,

perhaps this is not love at all,
or perhaps it is,

unaffected by what you are, despite
the anger that burns the beauty of

that flower that in early morning
starts to bloom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Angry Sea

a boy sits
behind the angry sea

the artist captures
such anger

it's like a peacock
white
its feathers spreading
behind
the fears of the boy

it is indeed
an anger so beautiful

and unless you see it
then you
can understand...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Angst...

Lament
knows better
Joy dances with
Bliss but as soon
as Grief arrives
Joy cries and Lament
as usual sits down
reflects
writes and knows
the exit towards
Enlightenment.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anomalous...

when an anomaly exposes itself
like a face
when wrinkles before did not
destroy it
soon you will tremble about
what you cannot believe

a man rises from the sea
with a tail of a dragon and his arms
soon turn into the wings of
a giant bat and if you are not
careful enough
because you have been too complacent
or too trustful in such a stupidity of
the foulest of all fools

you can be one of those gobbled up
eaten raw
like the way he had wantonly eaten
his last best friend

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anonymity Of Pain....

...because of pain, one hides,
who wants the sounds of pain to be heard by
people whose concern is not even
equal to a curiosity?
one takes shelter in the privacy of
a room, closes the doors and windows
and then bleed
and shout in pain,

no one hears this tragedy
this private thing
that demands the patience
of an
enduring injury,

one keeps a record of his privacy,
here, he writes, his name is a falsity,
his place faraway.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anonymous Flowers

someone anonymous sends the flowers
all white
and we who receive them are all
in guesses
for whom?

and since we do not know for whom for sure
we leave the flowers
a bouquet of flowers on the table
and no one puts it inside a vase

they all wilt for no one cared
to put water on the leaves
it is like love that you give to everyone
and none in particular

when that love goes away
no one weeps.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Anonymous....

when i look at you for
a long time
i feel pity for you

somehow you do not
deserve this
i am at a loss of words
i want to tell you
everything

you are always silent
and i like you for that

and then i look at myself
a very long searching gaze
and there is anger there

somehow i must have done
you
injustice, and the pity expands
like an oil pollution spilling to the
ocean

many innocent birds suffer
and waddle in
the helplessness of their
situation

i want to be away from you
to pull you out from me
but that is impossible because

you are myself

you are in me
and i am in you

we are one and somehow
we are beginning to be a dichotomy of
two words

it is not the either or of the situation
it is the immersion of an impossibility of a separation

i am you and you are i,

no one has ever escaped on this phenomenon
not even in the syntax of our human grammar
our way of using words as forms of liberation

or escape the way they tell us that you and i can be free in some unknown

or undiscovered formulation

i look at you with pity and you look at me with anger

the two blend together in the inevitable acceptance of who we really are

we are one in two mouths

our hands remain a pair of helpless parts

two people are talking within this one soul one body
anonymous.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Answer

The love you must have given
must have been choking
like a rope ready around his neck

too much love
the other unloving because there is no dictation
for love
it is spontaneous
nobody tells someone
you love me as i have loved you

but love the unbelieving
the unbelieving just the same
and when you die loving
tell him/her the harshest words ever
that you can muster:

i still love you
i love you very much.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Answer From Two Daughters When Asked How Is Their Mom

their mom has terminal cancer.

and i ask the younger daugher, how is mommy?
she says on the phone, ' she is doing fine. we are are the airport
and waiting for our 3 p.m. flight back home'

and the older daugher's answer to the same question:
' mommy has breast c, and she is feeling the pain
...she's not entertaining the option of invasive surgery, , ,
or the costly chemotheraphy.. the doctor is giving her
some options...but she's definit.. she simply wants to be home
and be with her dog and garden... she does not change
her mind... she's definite... God's will...
let us pray for her. Regards to you and Em.'

Got it. Progenies coming from the same source of genes,
sometimes are different. How does one see a tragedy?
or an end to something? how does one treat someone dying?

i may tell the truth. Who knows? I may not too. Who knows?
Tragic really.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Answers Are Too Many To Be Said

i must tell you
about this trip

do not ask about
what's next

look behind us
they already burned the bridge

look over there
the house where we
live
cannot be seen anymore

do not ask where
is next

i am not sad
there are so many reasons
for excitement

you see
we have no more of that past

it is the bridge and the house
we do not need them

you see
we have so many places to go

the mind is our own
companion
creator

and imagination is
infinite

do not ask me
where we are going
the answers are too many
to be said

RIC S. BASTASA
The Answers....

we raise our eyes to the heavens
hoping to find the answers to our nighttime

we see the same stars same moon
twinkling glistening giving patches of light
to our faces

we felt the answers
in the depths of that endless darkness
in the coming and going of the winds...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ant Empire

on the side of
an old mango tree
the ants built their empire
of
soft sand and
porous soil where they
hid their Queen
where the soldiers
heavily guard
where every worker
brings the food

one night
a heavy rain falls
and flood comes
and the empire
in an instant
is gone

the Queen is nowhere to be found
the soft sands level like a desert
the porous soil nothing but mud
the soldiers all dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ant Worm Story...

shall i finish the story of the ant
and the worm?

at the cliff the worm jumps
landing on the arms of the grounded worm

and there and then
willfully, euphoniously, they both lived
happily ever-after

if you only write it yourself
i could have read a better ending than what i have
lazily imagined.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Apache II Scale

Medical studies have demonstrated that most doctors are overly optimistic when giving prognostic information,

that is, they tend to overstate how long the patient might live.

For patients who are critically ill, particularly those in an intensive care unit, there are numerical prognostic scoring systems that are more accurate.

'You still have one week more to go'

That is the best poem so far you have written.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Apology....

i am asking
forgiveness for the things that
i have not done,

not for the things that i
cannot do

neither shall ask an apology
for those that i have
done

for which i have carefully
taken my
stand

if i suffer
it does not really matter
upon myself
i stir.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Apple And The Worm

you meet a woman
she wears a smile

and you pass each other
slowly by

she looks at you
and she seems to tell you

'\text{i know you}'

you step back
and gaze at her slender shoulder

''i know her'you tell yourself
silently

you remember her name
but there is no feeling anymore

you look back again
she is gone

but it does not really matter
the past is rotten

(she is the apple and
you were once her worm
and someone so nice
ate her whole)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Argument

do not ever ask why God should care for you
but ask yourself how you can care for God?

To love someone you cannot love
Is the best love that you can give to God

To care for someone whom everyone has abandoned
Is the utmost care that you can give to God

For God and Man are One.
You are not just Man.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Arms Of Your Beloved

there is a place up
the house

you had it constructed
purposely to
see the stars

it has no roof
it is as open as the arms
of your beloved

the sky at nighttime
so filled with stars!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Arrival

cheat me in all these
endeavors
forget me
tell bad stories
what bad moon is there in my sky
write me all the bad poems
leave me
ignore who i am
do not include me in the list
of your fame and glory
i do not mind
in this world i put a self
and whether it makes a difference
it does not matter
i am into this journey
and i keep moving
nights and days are waves of the seas
the scenes change
all islands come and go
ports are temporary
what we do are left behind
until the ultimate destination
comes before our eyes
and then back to square one
ground zero
and we have only one denominator
for all these

we have arrived
safely and sound.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Arrival Of The Sparrows

at first glance they look like stones raining
on the fields

my surprise is immense

i am stunned

when i get near
ah, these are the small brown sparrows
from faraway
landing on the
rice-fields of the fields of hay

the village sings again!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Arrogance Of Goodness

the irony about money
is that when you do not need it
they come to you and knock
at your door and having been
disappointed about life and its
moral infirmities you decline it
and have your door closed
throughout the night of
your grief and intolerance.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Arrow The Chair And The Falling Star

the chair is silent
it has feet but it does not leave
it screeches sometimes
because you are heavy
with your load (this burden
this baggage of the
soul)

the chair faces the sea
because your finger points to
a falling star
and the chair like you
makes a wish

like you
it wishes that the moon
may soon have lips
that you can
kiss throughout the night

unlike you
the chair never dreams of arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Consonant Cries....

So shall i congratulate myself  
for finally learning  
not to love you?

Does one celebrate the triumph  
of pain  
the death of love  
the entrance to the gate  
of oblivion?

Must you give me a hug  
having conquered loneliness?

I have abandoned a place  
moving towards another abandoned place  
i have no one there  
and shall expect no one too

Shall you smile for me now  
that my prison bars had been cut?

Do not think that i am free like you  
i live in another prison now  
to bars not witnessed by you

You call it doors  
or perhaps fences of my heart  
where i can jump away  
and say  
this is another greener pasture of my life

I have yet to name it  
from the point of view of those eyes  
that have mastered  
the art of consonant cries...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Giving....

AS stressed
the right hand must give
without the left
hand even knowing when and how
and what...

by said secrecy
giving has become a high form of art
the mouth is shut
the eyes are blind
and there seems to be a distrust
between the left
and the right

of course in the middle of these states
the heart will always be at the center
of our universe
always beating....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Killing

he never for once
imagined that he could kill

killing
the simple thought of killing
makes him puke

he tried once
killing a fruit fly
in a snap
reasoning that it infected
its dessert
that whole night
he could not sleep
for he was
worn with guilt

his brother is a moron
the worst in class
makes most of the fame
by killing
many fruit flies

he is the top of his class
but he laughs at him
short of respect
for his fear of killing

'it is a phobia' his brother says
and just like everything else
runs berserk and
becomes an unreasonable
generalization

let me cut this story short
he did not make money
waddled in poverty and
feared the art of killing
helpless n& useless in-himself
his wife
deserted him and his kids
lost that respect
because he will never kill
a fly again

i do not want to make this
story long and
agonizing,

know what?
he killed himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Living

at the center of my room
delight
on fresh roses
like your
red lips

on my bed
soft and warm silk blankets
strawberry juice on the side table
and cherry on the
glass

the window is open
fresh air from the sea
cools the room

silence is gold here
and solitude is silver

every moment is
a moment
every hour is not a rush
but on softer touch

every inch of skin
is a caress
every thought is
beautiful

every reality is true
embracing and embraced

this is the art of living
every second a relaxation

sleep comes on cat's feet
like a cloud drifting away

peace in the corner
privacy in my door

and yes, love is always
air-conditioned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Love Making...

undress
remove those coverings of restraints
undress
wear the skin of desire
touch, kiss, rub those bodies of stone and sand
hug the world and believe in the innocence of
natures colliding inevitably to the
silence of
ecstasy

spill and simmer
savor and favor

taste the bliss
bless this peace

desire culminates at the top of the mountain
saying Oh my God How beautiful Life Can be!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Poetry

To gaze at a river made of time and water
and remember Time is another river.
To know we stray like a river
and our faces vanish like water.

To feel that waking is another dream
that dreams of not dreaming and that the death
we fear in our bones is the death
that every night we call a dream.

To see in every day and year a symbol
of all the days of man and his years,
and convert the outrage of the years
into a music, a sound, and a symbol.

To see in death a dream, in the sunset
a golden sadness such is poetry,
humble and immortal, poetry,
returning, like dawn and the sunset.

Sometimes at evening there's a face
that sees us from the deeps of a mirror.
Art must be that sort of mirror,
disclosing to each of us his face.

They say Ulysses, wearied of wonders,
wept with love on seeing Ithaca,
humble and green. Art is that Ithaca,
a green eternity, not wonders.

Art is endless like a river flowing,
passing, yet remaining, a mirror to the same
inconstant Heraclitus, who is the same
and yet another, like the river flowing.

- Jorge Luis Borges

RIC S. BASTASA
The Art Of Scribbling

this is art.
this is not really just a game or a habit.
it is not a barrier not a bar
or dart.
this is the art of concealment but which hungers for an opinion.
this is the player at the backstage putting a mask, or a thick layer of make up
winks, and practices the movement of eyeballs.

this is the art of conveying emotions
a little bit exaggerated to get you direct to the point
nothing about pegs on square holes.

this is the art of dressing up for the proper occasion.
you pay attention to particular details expecting that he can also
understand the protest of your
color and insignias.

this is what you read and analyze and say perhaps this is it.
that this is what i am and this is all about what happened to me in the past
or that the future is already well drawn and
with your conclusions, then i am what you think i am.

but this is not what i am.
precisely because this is art.

just a dart.

that is the circle where you throw the dart
you did not hit the red zone.

you see, why should you blame me for just being happy
for just living a certain moment?

this is art and this is not what i am.

this is the world, this is what we actually are.

RIC S. BASTASA
to scribble
in symbols, some lines
drawn by the sharpness of
a knife
upon a bark of a tree
or this steel chisel
upon a rock

some dashes of
my stick
upon the sands
i ponder upon these truths

it is raining again
slowly some lines shall be taken away

the sea rises and its tongues of waves
lick the smooth thigh of the shore
romance, and love
lines that are dissolving upon the water
and the gentle rain
that robs me slowly
of what i remember

silence sits upon my lips
longer
and i do not wish to drive it away

somehow
it is making me happier

the deep sea
settles upon my forehead
sinks there
like a boat where all the passengers
scream
only for a while only to be swallowed
whole
by that big mouth
of emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Artificial And The Real

In this world, the artificial and the
Real mix, and sometimes it is hard
To distinguish one from the other,

So here is the gauge:

The artificial man does not bleed,
The real man does,
The real man is not afraid to love,
The artificial does not

The real flower has a dew and
Can be torn apart and gives off a scent
The artificial flower gives a blank
Stare at you
And there is no question thrown
Away

The plastic, the wax, the foam,
The flesh, the blood, the sweat,

The dust, the stiffness, the wires
The feeling, the softness, the veins

But you must beware, I may feel you
And you may feel me, but I can still

Be not real, but artificial in some subtle
Sense, in some secret ways, so what is

The real gauge this time? It is just you,
Be real yourself, and let them be, whatever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Artist....

she cries,
she wants to talk,
she wants him to listen

' i am unhappy' she tells him,
she wipes her tears
her cheeks are red
she bursts

'and so are the millions of us! ! ' he shouts at her

she leaves her
he drinks himself to death

the other woman who really loves him
comes and
joins with him

now they are talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Artists Of The World.....

word weavers
history reveals
pluck-out pair of
eyes

bleeding hands
stigmatic

trembling fingers
home horrors

what a bleak
future
what anguish

yet how sweet sounding
what tapestry is this

painter of woes
sculptor of pains

dreamer of nightmares
singer of sins....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Artists.....

the role of a true artist
is to put order to the messy state of things
chopped lines are interconnected again
colors are categorized to a harmonious blending
a room of scattered old and dirty clothes
bedsheets in disarray
pillows on the floor
d paper scratches and pens and ink spilled
the artist picks them all up
and puts them properly back to the places
where they must be

for at the beginning there was an order of perfection
but then this universe bangs itself against a black space of a wall
and goes into an accelerated entropy
a scattering, a chaos pursuing upon another chaos
expanding litters of planets and stars

and God the Artist gathers them all into One
Harmony, the Silenced Storm, the Wellness and Wholeness
of These All

We are all these Artists, God's Children looking for Peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Asker...

i hear the sounds of engines
running the road, and then the children
holding hands lead by the mother
there are screeches of brakes
a busy street, a mob of people
an entrance to the mall filled with
so many people,
i see a taxi unloading passengers
i chance upon a falling rain
and two lovers running for shelter
blinking lights against a dark night
smoke from the lips of waiters
clicking high heels of women on
shiny tiles,

how can i just be another disinterested
onlooker? how can i seal my ears and
live a world where i am just the only
occupant?

how can i cease to be this one kind
of child asking so many questions?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Assurance

worry not Uncle Miguel
despite the odds
whatever those be
despite the heaviness of
the inevitable goodbye
i still know how to fly

for my heart has wings
and i will always not forget
those flights of days gone by

RIC S. BASTASA
The Atom In You

This is a vowel
And this a consonant

A sound is made
A poem is born
And prose propagates like the people of the earth

This is sand and lime from where we make
A brick that builds the house of stone and palaces of kings

This is you,
And this is the atom that makes every you

It is from this where humanity must grow to become
Your world

For centuries this had always been you all the chromosomal evidence
Point to you, this is you from where the whole universe comes

So please do not deny it, you are the atom the source of all these

The chaos and the peace, the solitude and loneliness, the joys and sorrows,
All these come from you. Stare, some more, take a closer look, it is indeed you.

I see. You are silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Avid Reader

i guess, if she is true,
she will tell me, that i what i write
is a strange black bird
looking for a white home along
the olive green reeds
thriving on the mirror pond
wanting to be a bluish sky
not so blue
but a little shade of pale
embarrassed kid having taken
the bite of a cake
prohibited by mom,

sometimes i think
is she after my body or the body
of the poem?
my conceit again hovers
on the mountain tops
on cliffs
without trees

what i think is that
we all somehow want to be read
even if not understood
for what use is a poem or a word
when there is no one
alive in this
abandoned abalone
world?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Back View

I walk around
an oval path unloading
all thoughts
to the spiral winds

from a distance i see
an man with a faded blue coat
and a boy beside him wearing
a straw hat

they are watching a herd of
water
buffaloes grazing on
a stretch of grass

the morning is calm and
cold

a cable wire connects two
long poles
running above the man and
and the boy

on the cable wire is
a white dove
perching

I walk around the oval
ground
and no one is taking
the walk with
me
this early morning

from a distance i am
indifferent
seeing
only
the back view of
of things

RIC S. BASTASA
he was not fully briefed
about the harshness of the situation
arriving in Sampurna
the search lights roamed like basins
the old woman like the rest jumped over the boat
the two remaining boatmen
have to pull the nets and pretend that they
are all fishermen
meanwhile he vomited and vomited
it was cold and dark and everything that
they know was fear
and the uncertainty of it all made them shiver
to the idea
that at that night they would all be shot and
simply be buried in the sea

he regretted leaving Gulayon
where life is free and not as miserable as they
met their fate there

the religious women called for all the names of the
saints
santiago, santa maria, san gabriel, san antonio
santa felomina

the old man named Toreno who had lost faith
despite the pain as he was shot on his leg
laughed at all these saints saying, ' mention
some more ladies, how can you keep them all
inside this sack? '

it was horrible, it was so horrible
when he told me about this he was crying

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bad Hostess...

she says
come early
we miss you
we just arrive
from
las vegas

asap

7: 30 pm
dinner starts
conversations
roll
like marbles
or pins

and she says
i remember when you
were still so young
you and your mom
slept in our
ancestral house
you were so smart
articulate

and you
called me
dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bad Mouthing....

the president has found his
new tool
to demonstrate his love of
his country and his
people

shaming those who
are corrupt
in public
saying what he feels
at the moment
no holds bar.

he is into war
against terror
he is into the killing
fields
his soldiers in rampage
against the
terrorists

those who are not
performing
receives the bad mouthing

those who pretend
to be clean
shall get the worst
of him

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bad Reality

i spit out the last words

life is unfair
this is a reality that is clear

a number of hands take out the sunglasses
from their eyes

they look at each other now
and they shake their heads

some say they all work hard for it
and now they must claim their just share

others claim their ancestors die at an early age
and they must reap the fruits of their labor

i spit out the words again

life is never fair
and that is very very clear

someone cannot bear it
break into sobs and run for the rest of her life

another nervous breakdown
i count

for another unbeliever
but that is how clearly i see this matter

the unjust wins
the cruel ones thrive
the greedy have more
the oppressor gets them all

there is a movie with a bad ending
the killer is set free
and the innocent gets inside
for a fee

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bad, The Worse And The Worst

THE bad has arrived
how can i refuse it? Then
it gets worse,
i have no cure for it,
and then
it goes worst,
it wants to eat me
but i stay cool
there is no reason
to panic

i hold on to the arms
of reason

the bad is temporary
just like the worse
the worst is simply the symptom
that bad is about end

when they leave
they leave together

so i just sit there
fan myself
and do not mind about
all of them
at all

they are bad anyway
and do not deserve my
attention

in that room
i only prepare
a cup of vanilla
ice cream
for myself
having traveled most
with distances multiplying upon itself like
a replicating virus,
one reaps the fruits of the silences of distances
the
wisdom of the road that is never satisfied upon its length
long longing
for rest
like a baggage that you leave upon the road
asking if somebody
is dishonest to keep it up for good
not revealing
the cruelty of ownership to anyone who comes back and claims
to be the
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bags

the three bags are standing
near the door
of our room waiting
they are full of clothes
they are anxious
what will follow next
the clothes are tired
they want to go back to the
cabinets and sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bamboo Fence

my view
is divided between
the rotten bamboo
fence
and the
blue sea

on top of coconut
trees
are black crows
stopping
for rest

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bamboo Tree Poem

see the coming of the wind
from the prairies
see how it is playing with the
leaves of the bamboo tree

see how a bamboo leaf falls
to the ground
withered by the sun
and now flip-flopping
like an Olympic diver

see how it finally touches
the womb of the earth
silently it lies there
soundlessly it appears
like any other leaf
beside a woman now
sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
The Banana Cake

you bake so well
my dear

the banana cake
is just perfect for me

the flavor is so
banana and the texture
so soft to my palate

it is still hot and
i do not like to take the slice

i like it colder my dear
like my dream of ice last night

i like this black coffee too
harsh like my dream of winter last night

now it is time
give me the best slice for i am leaving

RIC S. BASTASA
The Banana Vender In Ho Chi Minh

as i clicked the camera
she shies away taking away all her bananas

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bananas Of Catalina...

the bananas of Catalina
do not have fruits
the winds here are strong
and the trees all have fallen
to the ground

the bananas of Catalina
still do not have fruits but always
mind you
always they have always
been strong...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Banquet For The Spectator

the table is abundant
like life, but to be happy
i eat nothing,

i watch them all
fill their appetites

after this banquet
i ask them to take away
all that is unconsumed.

when the table is empty
what i have is full satisfaction

of course, i never tell them
i am polite.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Barking Dog Inside Your Mind

it must be noisy
inside your mind
as you complain
about the barking
dog barking all
day long in your
lifetime,

and it must be
also unfair if
as you feel it,
you are always
the wrong tree
being barked
at,

so you are the
tree wronged
and i, this human
being writing
some lines for
a conversation,
shall always be
that barking dog
inside your
mind.

let us talk
let us exchange
places, or let us
settle for a little
compromise,
there is no dog,
and there is no
wrong tree,

on the very first day
next year
at the very first hour,
let us talk,
as new friends,
let us begin again
as strangers
in a new place
wanting to know
what each street
is named after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Barking Dog On The Wall Of The Room

turn your hand side wise
and let its shadow be cast
against the wall of your room
ahead is the light of the
bulb
and again to please yourself
and be a child again
you try to find that barking dog
in deeper silence
in the shadows of the walls

RIC S. BASTASA
The Barking Dogs Of Katipunan House

after a choir of
cicada voices rising into the
open sky
what you hear next early this
morning is the
loud barking of dogs
announcing to your dislike
the arrival of a guest
for whom you are not interested
as you are engrossed grossly
in another not so well fine-tuned
poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Beware the barreness of a busy life.
(Socrates)

bored as barren
a body that is bone-dry,
a walk in the desert,

dry as dust,
moistureless existence
lips parched,
a thirsty soul,
a life waterless

busy, busy, busy,
that is what you are.

beware, for soon
in seeking life
busy, busy, busy,
you lose it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Barrio In The South

the green waters rise
to rinse the roots of the coconut trees

the lilies float
the ripples carry them to a joyful journey
to the banks of the river
where the children play

this is the place that you miss
an island a hut a river
the peace and quiet
of the ipil-ipil leaves
showering when the wind passes

RIC S. BASTASA
The Basic Law Of Survival

when you are so hungry
hungrier than a dog
who cares about the cleanliness of the food
that is available for your taking?

when you are too tired
you do not mind what place is it that sleep takes you
you just dropp dead
and snore

in the most basic instincts
man can be anything

in the worst form of our emptiness
whatever is it that fills us for the meantime
we shall take in

we do not bother if it comes from God anymore
heaven and hell become nothing in the making

it is the basic law of survival
religion, morality, ethical standards
do not matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
he runs
out of luck
whatever he touches
turns into
nothing
she looks at those
who also runs
out of luck
and she smiles
i had it all when
i was young
and still have it
when i have become
older
numbed,
it does not
affect her anymore
she dismisses luck
she needs none of
them,
she is on her own now
and she
advises him too well
what we need says she
are so simple
we breathe
and so we live.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Basics Of The Legal Self

i enter a room
and discuss
law

there is nothing
there
except law

no one sees me
except law

no one amazes me
except law

and everyone thinks
that all my nerves
and flesh and bones
and even my
organ of reproduction
are nothing but laws

what they see is
only the hard core of myself
the carapace of
of a blue crab
and that i must have loved
only sand
and the waves that constantly
erase what
law has written

they want to find if
i have a heart

someone finally asks
if i have any
and where must have i placed it
hoping to find
the soft part of
my turgid
existence

it makes me
egoistic at times
when questions like
these are
asked

i've lost my ego a long long time
ago
and i lost it when
poetry was born

i do not know exactly when
but even if by chance
a memorandum shall tell me

how can i ever tell you?

what you shall see perhaps
is a spatter of water
coming from
a broken
bowl of glass

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bathroom Door

this early morning
you are depressed
you face the mirror
when she left
and you tell yourself
this cannot be true
you rehearsed yourself
again
to a line that you have
long wanted to say
years back
but just the same
you fall short of the courage
that all gentlemen
are said to still posses
you wash your face
with a handful of cold water
and slap your cheek
with that usual perfume
that makes her
love you more

you forget the lines
and promise yourself
to say it some other time
you give the mirror
your silly grin
and leave the bathroom
half-open.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bearable State Of Being

laughter is a mask.
the louder it is, the
more colorful.

wholesome conversations
too. And
social concerns, like
the way you tell them
that you are
sad about the sadness of
others

we show them
these masks. We step out
and mingle.

we get tired often
and fear that we soon shall
forget our names

so we go back to
a room where we are true
and comfortable with
our real nature

we take out the mask
and touch our faces

still smooth and soft
the bones in our jaws
still strong,
the hideous still
bearable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beautiful Bird On A Cage

a beautiful bird
is trapped

a boy transports
it in a cage
in their house in the village

the bird is asking some questions:

what crime have i committed
to deserve this sentence? :
is flying a crime?
little boy, do you really need to
keep beauty
inside your cage?

but the boy of course
in his youthfulness
does not care

he does not understand
his parents have not given him the need
to understand all these

his parents too
do not understand what flight is
what rights are
what beauty is
what cages are

and so life goes on and on
with birds inside a cage
boys devising traps
house having cages by their windows
parents proud of their boys
and boys watching the sadness of birds
every morning
in the little village
The Beautiful Creases

i tried to look at the
 corners of my
 past,

and just like the present
 there are some creases there
 of life's
 fabrics

and you predicted well about
 what i did and what i will do

i am consistent
 i do not want to change anything

the creases of the fabrics
 are beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beautiful Flower

there is a very beautiful
flower
in the garden of life

it is admired by many
and so even before it wilted

someone plucked it
so suddenly

RIC S. BASTASA
'you do not touch
the one you love,'
the soothsayer
tells him, 'you will
turn into a snake
and you cannot help
but bite love to death'.

'but why me' he asks
and the soothsayer closed
his eyes
touched the magic ball
again
and from there had
this to say
'you are designed to
suffer
because your have
a beautiful soul'.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beautiful Soul.....(Revised)

'you do not touch
the one you love, '
the soothsayer
tells him, 'you will
turn into a snake
and you cannot help
but bite love to
death'.

'but why me? ' he asks
and the soothsayer closed
his eyes
touched the magic ball
again
and from there had
this to say

'you are designed to
suffer
because you have
a beautiful soul'.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beauty Conscious Neighbor Of Mine

She walks slowly to the coffin
Bends a little and has closely seen

The dead woman’s face
Her neighbor for 360 days

Then she goes back
to her Seat
beside me, and fans her hair

’Closer’, she whispers to my ear
“she needs a good make-up, dear”

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beauty In You

slowly the beauty in you
unfolds like the petals
of a rose, in slow motion
unfolding on screen,

not your flat nose, for
it will always be flat
despite the passing
of the years,

my dear, it is your kind heart,
they have not seen it yet,
it is your wisdom, growing
deep in the soil,
like roots.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beauty Of Decency

it is when you bare it
tall that
i do not see anything
anymore

and so i go back to
your way of teasing my senses
piece by piece
as you put again the puzzle back

like a tree putting back its
leaves
regaining its crown back
to its beauty of
being dressed

as decent as hills being dressed
to the regal greenness of
grass

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beauty Of Its Unique Design

did i not tell you that sadness is beautiful too?
that beauty is like a fan with many blades
wide and long and
makes you refreshed
in humid places like
us?

sometimes if you note,
we are simply places, not people,
simply numbers, not humans

by all means, do not take pride
of your fullness
for soon, you will be emptied still
like an empty shell you too shall keep a song
like an empty heart, you too shall fill it with sadness
which, i must not lament,
has its own
innate beauty too

they have their own beautiful stories
to tell
that only if you listen,
will amaze you to no end

there are too,
empty hearts and empty people,
who by their own
merit, and style and personal touch
are still imbued with
beauty and grace

there are empty
shells and yet possess still
the beauty of its
unique design
holder of songs still
if you hold them closer to
your ears

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Beauty Of My Own Silence.....

i am an addict
to my own love for
you
and you are there
so cruel
unaffected and so
i have voluntarily
confessed to the
persons who love me
that i urgently need
a rehabilitation

that night he said
to me and i kept my
gaze to the moon and
the stars and has since
then kept the beauty of
my own silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beauty That Resides In Sadness

it is with great sadness that
i write
you a letter,
everything in it is all about sadness
it is not just about us
or you,
it is about the whole massive humanity
that is never drowned
with sadness but struggles in that ocean
of choices and so alone
amidst the
storms and the
other survivors

it is with great sadness that we gather here
and begin to hear
the sounds of all these forms and shapes and
colors of
sadness

i listen to you on an impromptu
and you listen to me
with all patience and with all sadness we embrace ourselves
share sadness with hugs and
at the end
we are filled with so much beauty
feeling so beautiful with
these massive sadness that
never leaves us free

we are bound, and yet when we face ourselves in the mirror of
ourselves
my goodness, we are so
beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bed

the bed is all that matters now
it has become the central solution
to all the problems of the house

I agree with Freud after all he made sense
for all those troubling years of his lifetime
that to all these marital misunderstandings
the bed has always been the solution

why do wives leave their husbands?
simply because of the unused bed
where time has been spent mostly for sleeping

now, i have felt what father used to confide
that the bed, yes the bed, is always the solution
even when both of them are nearing their 60s
and father did all the bed grooming

at my age now i must agree
i must say i completely agree

we always do it on the bed and the problem is solved.
yes, we do the serious talking there.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bee And The Rose....

i may have
misled the rose
to think
that it can sing well
like
a bluebird

i pity her with
the loss of her
thorns

it sings now and
leaves wilt
prematurely

it is all my fault
how flowers hate themselves
now

someone's got to help
take the rose from this
misfortune

let the bee come
let it tell her the fate
of bluebirds....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bees And The Flowers

done
the flowers bloom
and then wilt

nothing happens
in between

t he bees fly
and hover in between

the flowers that bloom
and wilt

again there is no word
because nothing really

does happen in between
the flowers bloom

& the bees fly away
and then the flowers that bloom
that wilt

and nothing ever happens in between
the flowers and the bees

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bees Cannot Live Without The Flowers

in her bosom
the buds are coming out

she nips them all
self-righteous woman

the irony of course
is when she looks for bees

missing their stings
for she loves the pain

rather than the
joy of unfolding

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beggar

i look at you
and i see a beautiful world

it is your soft wind
that makes my heart soar to the sky

i feel like a kite
connected to your hand

i am alive then until you
cut the cord

and i flip-flop in my own
speechless air

someone cries for help for mercy
but then

you are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beggar Of The Spiritual

my body is telling me something
i ignore it
it screams on the street
i am not affected
people who hear and say something about
a complaining body
do not influence me
i am telling my body that i hear it completely
and by saying so
i assure it that i am not ignoring it
and it demands
that i do something about a neglect
but i am not into this anymore
i am not in the mood for a physical cure
that realm of the epidermal
sphere
i am into something more
the parallel divine sphere
that i have not spoken to
for years
as it is ignoring me
like i have the leprosy of the spirit
i am begging and kneeling
before it
it is getting even
it is still ignoring me
but i am not stopping
i am
and will always be unhappy
if i cannot have
it finally
when the door is opened
and then
i am in
at the end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beginning Of Philosophy

i agree
and that will be completely
that the beginning of
philosophy is wonder,

that the beginning of wisdom
is not the fear of God
but love

that the beginning of poetry
is feeling
one that you cannot speak about
frontally
or directly because what is obvious
loses the meaning of
its truth

that what i feel sometimes may all
be too disturbing
to you and so here i am

in the world of metaphors
masking
if only to reveal the true face of
myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beginning Of Understanding

at a certain point when you begin to doubt
every word that i say
i start to believe that you are beginning to believe me
to understand what could have been understood from the point of doubt

you ask what if this is true and what if this is not
possibilities are beginnings

i begin to believe you
if you only know that the foundation of everything is doubt
a la Descartes
to the conclusion that you the doubter exist
and that is
the most certain thing possible under the heavy clouds of doubts.

i think i doubt, therefore i think the doubter exists.
it is the mind after all making a mind unto itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beginning Of Understanding....

it is not the head
do not be misled
it is not the finer thoughts
but the shady ones
where you must find comfort
and it is not
in those neurons of
convoluted matter
that will make the finest
being in you
than the rest of this ocean
of humanity

rest a little
do not think
unload what bias of thoughts are there
be renewed,
anew

feel the coolness of the tree
listen to the song of the
sea breeze
lay your head on the breasts
of this earth
it is where
the heart is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beginning Of Wisdom

the beginning of wisdom
the theologians keep saying is the fear of God
i am afraid it is not at all true
for why should i fear my beloved?
why should i be afraid of my father?
why should i be dumb before him?
the great Plato says
the beginning of wisdom is the acceptance
that i do not know anything at all
inside the cave i am but a shadow
searching to the end of the tunnel where
the exit shows the flaming light

and so here i am knowing none
and feeling so near to God
Thy will be done
for I, this human, knows at all none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beginning...

we try to link drinking coconut wine
with merry making
specifically, alcohol has a way of
numbing sorrow and making happiness
sprout like mongo seeds from
the sack cloth wet with water
it will be cold but the warmth in our
smiles shall start the fire
what next can we do when sorrow
leaves us?
just say it, perhaps i may oblige
for like you i am in deep mourning for i
have lost a part of me
many years ago, sort of saying, sentimentally
that i am incomplete and hopefully
after this drink and another drink
you may see that i am so empty and needs
to be filled again

do not kiss me yet, my mouth is full.

RIC S. BASTASA
...and there
the danger lies,

when you cannot
believe in me when
i cannot too believe
in myself anymore,

i happened. I am
glad, i did not pack
up and leave,

i keep myself
even in my own disbelief,
as you left me
for another, i still keep

myself, even if i cannot
believe in me
anymore, ....

i do not have any
other, if i lose myself,
i have nothing.

this is faith.
To keep this self,
in its lowest ebb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Beliefs Of The Masses

All these have become monuments
Roads always taken and have become so evident
All the while the masses believe that
On this obvious evidence
No one shall be lost no one shall have doubts
These structures of concrete
White paint and towers
There is no more fresh wind
That roam freely on my face
The birds have no more wings
The flowers do not bloom
Pavements smooth and sliding
It is not the road I am taking
I like this one. Grassy, muddy,
There are no footsteps yet
Except mine, I pass this way
I do not live here. I do not sleep here.
There are no certainties. This is the one.
Let me go then, let me kiss this holy ground.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Actress

she stares at her
trophy
the statue of a naked
man
proclaiming her
genius

around her are the
news papers where the best
about her are written
by critics of her times

her head is bloated
and painful

she feels it now
once achieved it becomes
nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Beginning

the time for losing
is not a waste of time

the time for rethinking
is a chance for finding

what you have once written
you read again

there will be changes
something shall be erased

sometimes you pretend
that there is Nothing

Only to find what Everything
means what Someone really is

Churches fall into shatters
Governments are not that kind

Schools perhaps have mis-educated
a lot of us

We do not exist for the work alone
Or the money

We exist for the breathing and
the walking and the daily thinking

We perhaps must have miscalculated us
Our Potentials overlooked

Our Talents and Time all wasted
We perhaps have not known what Us mean

There is a time to erase and undo
This is the time to Unload and Delete
Tomorrow morning after a Nigh's Good Sleep
We go back to the Basics

It is the Waking first and then
The Breathing

Then everything shall be new
Without any name at all.

That i think must be the Best Beginning.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Competition

be gentle like the morning sun
just shine

don’t bother
about the other creatures of this vast universe

mind yourself
compete with yourself if it is necessary

compare yourself to yourself
rise from your old self and be the best that you can be

on that basis alone
let the rest take their own quest

for like you they have to fight their own battles too
for like you their quest for perfection is a fight against annihilation

for like you they carve their own future too
from the sands of time till the explosion of another star

this big bang! this ning nang nang!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Lines Must Not End In Suicide...A Wish

those ahead of us
devotees of the craft have arrived at the
conclusion that the best lines
must end in a suicide,

those that remained have always prayed for them
and for all of us
still in this usual everyday

of struggle, we wish we pray
keep us away from the best lines

give us the wisdom of the divine verses
the freshness of life

the helplessness of the baby
waking up and then crying for help

always wanting of affection
our poems must yield to the pink cheeks of youth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Of Me I Still Forego

this thing called love
how i look at things above
this thing called emotion
how did i believe in a potion?
i have tried to be the best
of what i can be to you
but it is still all a pest
the best of me i still forego.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Part Of The Afternoon

the best part
in the afternoon is

what i have just seen
two white doves

rubbing their beaks
on top of the other

i must have disturbed
them

i am lonely
and they fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Picture At The Reunion

the best picture
I've seen this Christmas
is that one

taken at the beach
for my four beautiful nieces

one in yellow
with two dimples
the other one in
white
with freely blown
black hair

the other two
are growing up fast
anticipating what
we once had

happy moments
at the sea
wanting it all to
be endless
and so free.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Poems I Have Read

click image for more

the best poems i have read have been too instructional

on the road it says: do not enter
no u-turn pedestrians crossing
one way no left turn

at the door of the newly weds on their honeymoon:
do not disturb

and in my house when you enter:
you are welcome

i guess it is all there is on these poetics
i have tried soaring myself
to the skies pretending to be a bird
painted sunlight carefully with the
color and flavor of my words

it did work for a while
sending some sensations to my heart

it did not last long: i am looking for some
doctor's prescriptions

Rx: poetry
one capsule,3x a day
after breakfast

no alcohol
just plain water

to my failing health
it was the best

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Best Teacher

the best teacher is the midwife

she helps you
give birth to ideas

she eases the pain
she wipes the blood
she takes the baby
from you
yet you know that
everything is safe and sound

you hear you baby cry
as she raises him
invertedly up
against the sky

then she leaves
in tiptoeing silence
as you sleep soundly again
closing your eyes for more
sweet dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Time

six p.m. is the best time

to find you, when you sit upon

a fallen tree

drifting upon the oceans

of your self-pity,

six p.m. is my best time too

to feed myself

with hope, when the rest of you

are inching steps

towards the

Dipolog cemetery

the people there are zombies

walking to and fro

like metallic pendulums with

their bob heads

unwavering for the possibilities

of life's

compromises

RIC S. BASTASA
The Best Way To Be

you're correct
philosophically

the best way is
just
'to be'

that is how we are taught
how we think
we thought that 'to be' is inevitable

a clear and calm eye
of the pebble, as he sees it and holds it
with the false warmth of
his hand

lacking the ardor
closing the door.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bickerings Are Over: A Forecast

rocks upon rocks
and mountains upon mountains
of rocks and heaps of sand upon
heaps of sand, red blood
spilling on this soil, and
bodies scattered along
the parths, and too much
writings of hate on the
walls,

the white horse has been
sent and the light from
the great sun has
penetrated every heart

now in the state of grace
each man shall be contented
and silenced.

the weather is fine and there
is food for all on the table.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Big And Empty House...


when you arrive
from church in your usual
everning
mass

the dogs of this house
meet you with all
bravura
wagging their tails
jumping and dancing
and there is one
the smallest of them all
which spins like
a top

i watch these things
happen and
i come to grips with
some reasons for
living

happiness takes its
form in so many shapes

one has simply to
discern from everyday
living

even from dancing dogs
and wagging tails
in a big and empty house.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Big C

those who fear it cannot call it
by its own name

big C for cancer,
but cancer is cancer
no more no less
depends on what stage
then you are taken
as the next
victim by an old
expert culprit
so unforgiving
mercilessly taking the lives
of those
destined to die

cancer is cancer
no more no less

a friend of mine dies
today of cancer of the liver.

period. I say another prayer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Big Problem....

There is this BIG PROBLEM
WE decided not to talk about it
We think that that problem must solve itself
Auto-resolution

So day and night the problem stays there
Like a drunkard in the room
Vomiting
To every nook of the house
The house
That smells like fucking
Shit

But that problem is never considered a problem
There is a room for it to stay
And it can stay
It cannot consume us
It has no mouth and so it has no teeth
It has no tongue it cannot say a word
It stays there like a piece of art
And we begin to appreciate it
Like a piece of rock
Unchanged in the middle of the living room
We eat lunch there
They prepare nice dinners
We drink red wine
We munch chocolates
And sweet berries
The problem stays but it cannot nag us
Because we can pretend
That it is a brother
That we cannot junk but only love
And keep as part of the
Company

There is still this problem
And it did not solve itself
We live by this problem and this problem lives with us
Symbiosis
And so now
What is the problem? Is this a problem after all these years?
It is not anymore
We have learned that it is not a problem anymore
We die soon
And it shall perhaps disappear
Shall it weep over our departure?
That is its problem.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bikini Principle...

the secret of
being readable lies

in the
principle of a bikini

keep it
hide only what is important

use little. remember
time is precious

bask your body
upon a sunny day.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bird And Its Nest

there is no bird
that spends its lifetime
in a nest

there is no nest made
of concrete

the fledglings look forward
to the pain of its first wing

there is always the first push
and the fall

and there is the innate way
of learning how to fly

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bird In A Cage

a bird inside a cage
sings of freedom
a cage tied to a wall
dreams of resurrection
direct to heaven
with lines from a halo
inside a blue bird
with big blue wings
flying away
from here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bird In The Golden Cage

as i watch the bluebird
inside its golden cage i am somehow
 carried by mysterious
 pity

you hear it sing a very sad song
you hear it making a plea that you open the lock of its door
so it can fly away

touched i opened it so it may use its wings
but then this is the sadder part
it has come back
asking for grains inside my hands

now it is making another plea
to open the door of the cage so she can sleep back
soundly than it used to
before

ahh, look what habits are formed
by the prisons of our lives

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bird That Flies Away Without Having To Return Back To Where It Once Stopped

what i have
i already have and
i have never asked for
more because i always
tell myself: what for?

i am not that old
to surrender
i still have tight
skin on my forehead
my cheeks still display
the gold in sunshine
my feet are still agile
like the gazelles that
i often dream
my hands still long
for a curved body
to be traced like
a map
to my fingers still
looking for
new destinations

what i have i keep
for now
what you give
i may refuse
since i always tell
myself: what for?

it is the mind that
keeps an illusion
that this body still
roars like a lion
and loves like
a dog.
i have other dreams
though
a bird that flies
away
without having
to return back
from where it stopped.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds

the birds, sparrows and robins
and some herons
are flying on the blue sky
you watch them
a robin comes near you
and makes a stare
the white heron glides
past your face and flies
away without much ado
a sparrow feeds on your palm
and after all the grains are
consumed it goes its way
north and finally the kingfisher
which is late tries to give
you its catch, a small fish.

you see the difference
and then you go south,
i mean, the difference,
towards another direction,
that one that gives and not
the one that takes,
the one that thinks about
others
and not more about oneself.

you are supposed to be that
a giver not a taker.
one bird has shown you
with a very small fish and
that was enough to feed
you in another long and lonely
journey: south.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds And The Worrier

it is raining and as usual
the worrier is worried about the birds
they have no house of their own
and they may die in the cold she says
unknown to her the birds are happier
flying in the rain
chirping and catching all the prey
that are too worried
about where to stay

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds Are Not Singing

it is nighttime
that is why

the moon is full
and the stars
are brighter as ever

the clouds are thin
as a quick brush of the
Chinese painter

the temple is empty
and the candles are turned off
by the wind from
the sea

the birds with their
dreams
do not sing
the usual sad songs
that you hear

now it is you who must
listen to the songs of
solitude

that silence that
dances
the classical ballet

that silence that anchors
the boat
by the side of
your lovely island

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds Are Returning Home

some birds who migrated last season
to places that i do not really know
come back to the yard of the house
with a new song as i feed them again
with the same rice grains and same
bland water from the old well.

and then i remember home, the family,
a brother, a foe, and my best friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds Chattering Inside Your Mouth...

dic the birds in your mouth
chatter, one bird has blue feathers
and it makes the sweetest song,
the white bird keeps mum over
all these caged noise,
perhaps it understands the language
of the soul,
there is a brick red sparrow
looking out the window
it is speaking in tongues
as i listen attentively and watch all these
within the fences of your face
i feel, but i have to be honest
there is nothing that i understand,
i do not wish to
i have had enough, of those blue, red,
and white birds.

but they must all agree that it is not the song
not their songs, but their
common cage, for not one of them
has uttered the nicest word in the
history of captives,

freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds In Some Angry People

there is a nice irony in leaving

on top of a cliff where there is no other choice

you can kick someone out whom you have not thought of

as having wings and so happily shall it fly away!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birds In The Air

DID they not tell you
about their lightness?
oh, must you forget
that their beaks and feathers
are designed
for wordless existence?
i may figure it out
on their songs
their freedom

Did you not read
that the sing because they have their own songs?
It must follow that they have to fly
because they have their wings
otherwise
what is lightness for
what use are feathers
their beaks and claws

RIC S. BASTASA
they've been under your care for years
you've done much

and then the ripe time comes for them
to be set free

oh, these birds, they belong to the air
and you watch them fly away

somehow you cried like a child
it is not the parting which is fatal

if they only knew how as a child
you wish upon a star to be like them someday

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birth Of Another Seed (Revised)

a bud sighs
throws a
question into
the air

there is no
answer

the bud turns
into a flower

the air has
no answer to the
question that
was thrown to
it

the flower wilts
and then the air
has come up with an
answer

which the soil now
receives as it lulls
the birth
of another seed....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birth Of Another Seed......

a bud sighs
throws a
question into
the air

there is no
answer

the bud turns
into a flower

the air has
no answer to the
question that
was thrown to
it

the flower wilts
and then the air
has come up with an
answer

which the soil now
receives as i lulls
the birth
of another seed....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Birth Of The Yellow Butterfly

on the gumamela leaf
the small cocoon hangs
there for days and
you wait for the
usual surprise in this
garden

it wriggles out and
pulls itself from
a tight house

it holds itself at the
tip of the leaf and
gets a fan from
the wind and then
stretches itself
and spreads its
wings and finally
flies away

how beautiful
to see
the birth of another
yellow butterfly

regally erect and
flutters from flower
to flower like she
were a princess
in her green castle

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bitch

the white dog
with a brown spot on its right eye
sleeps comfortably
on my bed
trusting that i shall never
betray it

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bitter Art...

it was the lesson learned
while fishing for catfish on the river
in that small creek
mossy, and covered with some
coconut leaves
rotten
where the catfish liked to swim
and be caught
for the divine purpose of
lunch for the
poor,

i have learned the bitter art
of waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bitterness Of Rain

making love
makes us wet all over
you sleep because
you are exhausted

i can't
the ceiling is pouring
rain

and i taste a dropp of rain
inside my tongue
it is bitter.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black And White Movement

in the academe
i see faces and
bodies which are
either black or
white

in a sense
what political
monotony is
this?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird

the black bird flies
and loses itself in the darkness of
the night
not stopping going beyond
fog
wanting to find the star

tired it stops for rest on top
of the highest cliff
looking the plains below
house like dots

alone
and lonely perhaps but strong and
determined
tonight it starts again
its journey
to nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird Is Flying Alone Beyond The Horizon

i am naked before you
and i am telling you
you are my only happiness
my hands are empty
my head is light
there no chains on my feet
i smell dust
i have nothing to lose
i am free and i could all be yours
only if you understand

sleep now do not mind me
i accept this nobody and this no one.
good night. I will be gone
and you shall still be in the arms
of your own dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird On The Cable Wire

there is this one
bird on the
cable
wire
connecting two distant
posts

behind is the sun rising like a cape of so much light

below are the green fields of rice
in rectangles

it is the first day of October
and not so cold yet

the path that i am taking stretches
kilometers

tall grasses in random lines are here
beside me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird That Keeps On Flying

the black bird
keeps on flying
over my head

its wing tips
touch my hair

the black bird
weeps
and my mind
cannot ignore
it

it is seeing you
again
and it does not
know
what to do
with its beak

it wants to kiss you
but your eyes
are angry
it wants to land over
your hair
but they are hard
as wires

the black bird
has no nest for
its eggs
you never mind it
your mind
thinks always of
that white bird
in the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird Winging Its Way Inward

that early morning
the door opens and you
hear the rush of steps
going out of the house
the gate opens and
closes once again
and you
find yourself enclosed
in your freedom
of thought again
transforms into a black
bird
stretching its wings
to the breasts of dawn
and then
without so much hesitation

fly away again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Bird...

it was her black bird
first that saw and i never stopped thinking since then
figuring what is the meaning of having
those black wings
flying
and to where is this direction heading?

from my mouth is borne the
blackbird bearing my own name
at the tip of its
beak
and it is flying now too low to touch
the needles of the pines

do you not see that it is tired
and wants to hover on one of those twigs?

how can you relate to blackbirds?
they grown from our throats and comes out
from our lips
and they keep on flying
wishing you can keep it flying still
higher and higher
until you finally give up
and tell the truth
about its
flesh and bones
until you remove all its black feathers
and burn all them
for the gods to smell.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Box

it is there, i know, it has always been there,
and will always be there, even if i shy away from
its darkness, always, i find myself taking the steps
towards its oblong door, i promise myself, and
keep more promises,
attuned, the promises do not mean a thing,
and now i am inside this black box again,
the walls are silent like the starless sky,
the floors are ready to receive me back
to their feet, i lie on the bed of desire,
on the mattress of emptiness, i spit, and i spit
on my face, it does not matter now,
there is no trace of sleep, there is only the stare,
but i do not have the fear anymore,
the confrontation is serious, i sin, and i must
sin responsibly. i hug my own body, and i kiss
my face, the mirror that faces me understands
all these, and now, it smiles, and goes back
to the silence that accepts. I have dues to pay.
My pocket is ready to empty its body.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Butterfly....

the black butterfly  
has again entered my window

circling around the room  
of this old house

as i sit idly on a chair  
facing the garden

it flutters and then  
lands on my hair

and which  
as usual i do not really mind

to catch it is not  
my cup of tea

any preconceived cruelty to  
put it on a frame is out  
of the question

i know what it does best:  
to mystify a believer of an  
incoming tragedy

i put upon my eyes the looks  
of numbness  
and then a little gaze of  
compassion

it leaves without anything  
changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Crow Flies Away

From a leafless siniguelas tree
The black crow flies away
Then the swaying ends
As the rain begins to fall

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Crow In You

soon you shall learn the trick,
such magical skill
picking a stone hiding it behind your skirt
and then coming up
with a white lily, and hiding it again
inside your pocket
and from behind you comes a
black crow
and you want to end it there
and you leave like a helpless kid
unable to retrieve that stone from the crow
that replaces you on stage
saying it is really you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Dog

early morning when
the door of the house is finally opened
the black dog enters
missing his master
the owner of the door of the house
it wants to speak
but since it has no power over the words
it simply wags its tail
puts his head on the lap of the master
and from this gesture
one can see
that everything is well said
by it...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Hooded Man

the black hooded man sometimes
comes and you face him with a stare
he nods down and looks at the list

your name is not yet there
and you ask
why?

he says it is simply written

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Parasols...

the coming of the
rain is so sudden

but they are
ready somehow

in that silent place
of green grasses

above them she
watches the

openings of
black parasols

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Rose

from a crevice of a rock
a black rose grows

it blooms on dark dreams
its petals are the ones that you do not ordinarily
see in the morning

the sun sometimes pays attention
to its being unusual
not being just any rose in the garden

it gives it more light hoping that someday
it may become white

the black rose is faithful
until it wilted

the dews miss it: the black rose is true
to its nature.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Stone Of My Being

i never want to disregard this stone
it is shiny and too black for a stone somehow
and no one wonders
how come i am keeping it and hiding it as a gem
you may believe that it isn't
but it shines and it is black as ever
it is comforting my palm
keeping the lines there at course
like the orbits of the planets
this is the stone of my being
it keeps me sane
it makes all the bones connected to one another
it makes me whole again
and so back to it i never want to disregard this
it is shiny and blacker than any of my sad nights
it makes me feel that i have somebody at hand
i know it deludes me
but it does not matter
no one wonders anyway
if i am still sane.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Black Stool

is the symbol of that ending
you smile
because now you know something
it is sure
it is sure
you tell yourself the doubter
now you are sure
and you stop talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blackbird

the black bird knows
places
it has flown all these years
but it is not
telling stories
what is in there?
what is the reason
for coming back?

the black stone
is its king and comes back
again
to worship it

until it takes it
pebble by pebble
inside its beak
inside its heart

and then the blackbird flies again
not coming back

it has taken what it loves
inside its heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blackbird In You...

the red bird had the same experience as yours

you were told soared to the seventh sky and dove
fearlessly on the water which according to their final story felt like an iron wall smashing its tiny body into mashed meat
like a melon crashing into the cemented street of the city

you are a blackbird and you always know what to do not listening to stories but still learning a lot from those who lived to the full

you perched upon a twig facing the sea felt the breeze fell asleep....

the pain is not gone it is still there, but who cares?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blackbird Metaphor

custom the Beatles had it
as the struggle for freedom of the blacks
that blackbird singing in the dark
wanting to be free

custom the Americans
had that blackbird swirling in Vietnam
that chopper that saved lives
that war that caused them humiliation
in the world's opinion
that lie of Nixon

Steven Wallace had eight ways of seeing
that blackbird
Noah sent that blackbird
that did not come back since it was happy
picking on the rotten flesh
of the remains of the dead
the ninth way
of seeing
disobedience

One writes again about the blackbird
that lives singing the songs of neurosis
in his mind
at winter time
The poet commits suicide
His colleagues bury him
with eulogies and 'what ifs'

One sleeps with a blackbird
The other sings with a blackbird
Someone flew away with a blackbird
and did not come back
since then
So many stories
So many poems are written

Now i have to write about this blackbird too
But there shall be no disturbance
No unhappy ending
I swear to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blank Pages...

each day
we open the pages of a book

each page is empty
this book of our lives

we write some words
we are careful not to hurt

and be dismayed
we always take the opportunity

the somehow
we also know how to enlighten

ourselves and be happy
with the originality of our thoughts

everyday is always an opportunity
to discover the little wonders of our

unique beings
there is no one like me, and this

i will always say.
i love myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blank Paper

den blank paper
is like a virgin
woman,
it is not blank because
it wants to
there is this inner desire
to be scribbled
be it love or lust
or whatever
it is just its nature
to be written
anything that fills it up
with words
for its perfection
or even for its destruction
and soon
it will have its fate
a love letter kept for years
or a scratch paper
crumpled in the
bin
burned by another man's
lighter or
torn by a woman's
anger.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blank Space Inside Us

there are blank pages
some say that it is a must that something must be drawn
words to be written
thoughts to stifle, capture,
stuffed,

there is a day that you prefer
to keep a blank sky
a dark sky without stars
no light

when you close your eyes
you are at home with this blank page
words become
invincible
but they are all there
perfectly correct
well viewed by the eyes of your heart

somehow you go beyond
your every
day fences
move away, jump and run towards
an island of light
a patch of green grass

still no stars
pure blank
it is when you do not believe in the power of thoughts
when what preoccupies you
is nothing when you are finally one with all
space
it is too peaceful to even dropp a word
like a pin on
a shiny floor of tiles....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blank Wall Waits For You...You Must Decide What To Do With It...

from time to time you face a blank wall and you are confronted what to do with it carrying with you the past walls which had become too dirty to read and you have dreams about a wall of art and you have thought carefully what to put on this blank wall

it must be something beautiful and dignified and worthy of an honor it must not contain the regret of what is wasted and abused about what is neglected and disturbing

and this is the problem now note it well

you doubt if this time you will write something on it or not at all because you want to be safe and clean and restrained.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bless Of My Own Silence....

in this place
the first thing that i hear every morning
is the song of the birds
on top of trees
as they prepare to leave
after a night's sleep

as i open my window
and light is still young like some eyes blinking
i wonder
what are these birds up to
they do not build their nests here
they just come
spend a night and then leave and are back again
on the same hour of the same night

i try to ask more questions
that i myself have to answer
but then
something comes up within
the reasons do not really matter
it is their songs
the harmony with the wind
the joy of the trees
the bliss
of my own silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blessing In Disguise....

i hope you have read about the man
who came to the office late
somewhere in New York
on such a blessing in disguise
he never became one of those numbers
counted as casualties
in that tower bombing, and can't we say then
sometimes
being late is a hidden virtue
God's way of having to care for you
placing you away from the
clutches of that inevitable
death....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blind Woman

she will tell us
how to live and perhaps
even
how to end our lives

when we have so much
bread to eat
she will say we have to
give them away
because the bread
are meant for the
children
and for all the children
to come
and feed

when we tell her that
we can build a new house
she tells us
it is a waste of time
because we are
too old to
live in it

as though our feet are not
feeling the smoothness
of floors
anymore

as though are hands
are filled with wrinkles
and must not
hold anything soft & fragile
as the wings of the winds
through
the windows that we
still love
there is so much emptiness in us
and they are
still giving us more
and we feel that it is not only her
that wants us to
fade
but all of them
we are getting paranoid
and we are more afraid about all these
we also have the
capacity to rule
and harm
i am angry at all these
and i am not a fool just to submit to all
her own designs and
wishes
i am prepared for the mob
i have stored time within my arms
i have a mind of my own and i can be
as destructive as
a sting about
somewhere & somehow
but i know how to wait
when my patience runneth over
it will be time to show her
who we are
my tongue is a cobra
a bomb
is my mind
and i will be
venomous
and explosive
at the same
time
for a perfect murder
at a perfect time

and may God who is both Loving and Just

forgive me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blind Woman........

it is brazen
candid, straightforward
there is no wink in the eye
and so you
believe it

to be the truth
and then you decide about
fate
of this
simpleton

who is defended by
another simpleton

upon a crime that the did not commit
but which he cannot prove

your eyes are hiding
behind those thick eyeglasses
they are not responsible
when you
finally speak about
death

the rest believe you
because behind you are the cabinets
of books

old books, filled with dusts
all over their hard covers

you are
a blind woman
speaking
with that firm
voice
like steel
in rusty tones
rabid
as a dog.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bliss Of My Own Silence (Revised)

in this place
the first thing that i hear every morning
is the song of the birds
on top of trees
as they prepare to leave
after a night's sleep

as i open my window
and light is still young like some eyes blinking

i wonder
what are these birds up to?

they do not build their nests here
they just come
spend a night and then leave and are back again
on the same hour of the another night

i try to ask more questions
that i myself have to answer

but then
something comes up within
the reasons do not really matter

it is their songs
the harmony with the wind
the joy of the trees
the bliss
of my own silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bloke Is Broke

The bloke is broke
Takes a coke and lots of smoke
Stroke a joke and leaves the yoke
Spoke and poke and went back folk
Remembering baroque
With a golf stroke
Scrubs an oak with
Another sick joke
Woke and evoke
And even provoke
A gun smoke
Goes amok
With a butterfly stroke
Wild with a James Knox
Towards valley oak
spoke a practical joke
Ending with a choke
that broken bloke

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blood Of This Vampire Too

poetry is personal.

personal is
detailed.

it knows roots
and phloem.

it can trace the
mole in your
asshole.

sometimes you
do not speak at all

but poetry makes
you write

as i told you
creativity runs in
the blood of
this vampire too.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blood That Runs In His Veins....

the way to explain
his brother's warlike
behavior, his friends
say, is because he
got blood from a prisoner
in jail charged with
murder and rebellion
foremost,

blood transfused inside
his system makes him
what he is,

the blood donor is to
blamed for all these
war like behavior, father
agrees,

how incredible, the
doctor screams...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blue Bird

the blue bird
has come
confused with the
blue cloud
it sings
forgiveness
inviting you
to join
to its journey
far, so far
away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blue Jeans I Remember

the blue jeans i remember
after a very cold season
in that coconut farm

tight blue jeans
smelling my swelling
legs
and dirty with saline
taste

unwashed in the corner
of my room
i always see your
warm hands
sliding
inside them

damn blue jeans
spare my sanity!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Blue Roses Of July

when you finally find the blue roses
with blood running in the veins
of its petals
then you must have found
the place where i have lots of friends
where we enjoy the daily games
and drink the cup of our wines
where we become at home with ourselves
because that place is our paradise
complete with cool rivers and
fine trees and electric blue clouds
if you find the place
please tell me
if you find it earlier than expected
then by now you must have know who i am
and you shall understand
but if you find it even with closed eyes
and bound hands
please come closer to me
dip your ear to mine
like bread to wine
and i will whisper to you
who you are too......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boat

i am drawing
this situation, this is the boat, it has four arms spreading
on the wide face of the sea
these arms shall caress
and make love with its bounty

some waters sound a slush
like the sand announcing your safe and soft arrival
the boat has eyes too
just like us inside it
its gaze spreading the vision of where we are going
the boat looks upon us with envy

we are the lovers inside its mouth
the boat slides on calm seas
this peaceful twilight
when the seagulls have gone away

here, we make love again
the boat compromising with a restful state this time
everything is so warm
the fires in our hearts
the boat surely understands something that burns
yet so unconsumed
undiminished

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boatman In Boracay

the muscular boatman in pale red shirt waits
beside his boat

for a customer to be taken to the island
of desire tonight

whatever
sex.

RIC S. BASTASA
When i look at the body
i do not look
for a name
i only see the contours
of the body
looking for the map
and the signs
where i may finally
get in

body to body
just this
no names just places
plain touch
loveless and so careless
this moment
and then the next and the next

no strings no bridge
just the flow of the river
no docking no ports
no stopping

just this kiss for today
and then
nothing for what tomorrow may
say

RIC S. BASTASA
The Body And The Soul

i hear the body speak through its mouth
there is no God
there is no God

i see the body wasting itself
like a tree whose roots are eaten by the fungus

but inside that body is the soul that raises his hands
to the skies looking at God and calling his name

My God why have you abandoned me?

there is only the usual silence and the soul is restless
anticipating to get out from the body that is killing and wasting itself

and the time has come
for the soul to be liberated
to be alone
in itself moving towards the light, dancing in the dark, and singing out aloud

My God here i am back to you
It is only in You that i find back peace and happiness & bliss.

Let that soul be me My Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Body Of The Beautiful Woman One Evening

naked in bed
in shades of gray
lies the body of the
beautiful woman
unconquered yet
by the magnificence
of words

RIC S. BASTASA
The Body Of The Future....

there is this abundance that flows within you
it goes outside
looking for a place
to settle

you have been searching
no one fits
the world is looking for that
magic
about you going into the woods
and finding
the best wild flower
for you to
take home and offer it to someone
who can love you for what
you are

it is absurd
no one believes it
no one can
love you as true as you can love
that someone

even the world accepts its own blindness
it cannot give you
what you long for

the equation for mutuality lies there
upon its half body
without a face yet

the hands are still drawn so that you
can touch
the body of the future

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boholano

You have your camote
I have my kettle

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bomb

today the sun is furious
it brought some needles
pricking my skin
somehow it is telling
me something
this global warming thing
is true
something worst will
come when the
sun shall bring
the bomb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bombing....

to write what is evident
is a superfluity

but sometimes it has to be
done

what is evident
what is too evident sometimes
had become invisible

too much familiarity removes
that thing
from our common view

something trivial is missed
which creates the chaos

what is here is written
what is touched is exposed as it is

the curtains have been removed
the doors and windows are opened

the stairs are repaired and even
a toddler can crawl up here

the lights are not turned off
even in the morning

it shall be seen and it shall
always be remembered

on record 20 are dead
60 are wounded....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bone Of The House

in the house
he is a bone,

not a flesh on
the side

dogs outside are
waiting

he is not the
kind of bone

that any dog
wants,

the useless bone
in the kitchen

mere shadow of
the soup-stock

left-over of the flesh
inside the garbage can.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Book And The Rain....

outside
the rain is heavy.

just the two
of us

beside us a
lamplight

my lips to
yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boredom Of My Days On The Chant Of Ten Numbers

8756
54321

12345
6789
10

87654321
123456789
10
121212
34563456
4567
4567
89
10
89
10

everyday they practice dancing
in the gym
on loud speakers
reciting the monotony
of numbers
my ears are bursting!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bother

there is a bother
and it keeps bothering you my dearest
it is that door where you enter
and then what you find is nothing but darkness
you say hello and what comes back to you
is just an echo

it is not a shallow place
it is a labyrinth
and sometimes you suspect
that with its hollowness it can be
nothing but another
cave

in the dark where no one knows you
you begin to wish you were Medusa
turning all those stones into more stones
devoid of feeling
wanting more revenge

even if it has become too
hard and unjust.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bottle Of Wine And The Wife

my wife is confident
the bottle of wine is always the losing rival
of tonight's competition
for affection

i do not have a cork opener.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bowl...

yes, this is a case of a candle burning itself on both sides and below it on two heads of fire is a bowl full of water shaping what could be the truth

when the final shape is taken as usual we go back to that empty bowl but less the candle
the melted one shedding off lights

RIC S. BASTASA
The Box Of Life

you live inside a box
and a box has no window
people see you as they pass by
and take a long glance at you
it is a glass box and you are
human inside it
and you also take a glance at them
and you smile and then the look at themselves
querulous, ' why is he living inside that glass box? '
and you ask the same question,
'why are they living in that big box walled by air? '
and in such a decent pretension
as though they are completely free
from the reality of boxes.

who does not live inside a box?
who? if you have hands you are now
free to feel it

some boxes are walled by clouds
some by words

RIC S. BASTASA
The Box Of Pandora

most of the time
i tell you honestly
i have not really
understood what the word
means
what the picture says
what the messages are

you have been a wizard
of all sorts
you take note of the murmur
of this tremor
you read what the clouds
write in the skies
you take so much silence
with closed eyes to the
horizon
as the waves of the sea
keep pounding the walls
of this civilization

i have seen a father cry
over the death of his child
i have imagined how boats
capsize
how engines stop
how people scream
and scamper for safety

this world is getting smaller
how can i ever say so?
yesterday i tread upon a path
of tall grass and mountain peaks
and i stand there
at noon
amazed by the vastness of the sky
and the endless horizon

men have always waged war against
themselves
and the children and women are the
victims hapless

d this is what till now
i have not understood
why?

to kill and be killed
to live to die
without a cork to seal this
leak
of bad spirits

Pandora’s box, tell me,
how to close it?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Box....

foolishly i cried
my face opens to you with all tears
so unlikely of my
present position but there is enough time for hiding
and it is already killing
a part of my body
and soul
and so today as you face me i have become less of a man
of this world
as i break open
the divine
that stoops, or even bows down and weeps
asking for forgiveness
beyond all this justice, love,
beyond love
what could it be possibly?
an openness for
the inevitable Lord
when you ask that i finally leave?
i confess my innocence
this unrepairable brokenness
this box....

RIC S. BASTASA
you live inside a box
and a box has no window
people see you as they pass by
and take a long glance at you
it is a glass box and you are
human inside it
and you also take a glance at them
and you smile and then the look at themselves
querulous, ' why is he living inside that glass box? '
and you ask the same question,
'why are they living in that big box
walled by air? '
and in such a decent pretension
as though they are completely free
from the reality of boxes.

who does not live inside a box?
who? if you have hands you are now
free to feel it

some boxes are walled by clouds
some by words

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boy Who Cried Wolf....

you are the boy
who cried wolf

once the innocent
whom we believe

you are the boy
who cried wolf whom

we love just as you
are despite

the wolves who surround
us and whom we

all defeated just for
you because you are the

boy who cried wolf
whom we love despite the odds

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boy....

the boy has turned
into a man
on his shoulders still rest
the scruples
the unforgotten twists
of his mouth
those moments when his jaw
stiffened

i remember what he said
that boy has fathered him
into the man that he is
now,

those little things like marbles
rolling inside the bowl
of his brains

he can hears sounds
which no longer exist,
he can see those smiles
long gone
like mirage to the vast desert
of this past

RIC S. BASTASA
The Boys And Men....

the boys are
playing with guns

and when they become
grown-up they are here
playing with the
missiles

nothing's changed
their play area
is our backyard

mother did not mind
until the whole house
is burned....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brazil In My Mind

where is the last beat?
i should have told you it is somewhere in Brazil,

no, i am not reminded of the soft blue sea
and the white sands
no, it is not the glow of the light in the cottage
on those blackouts of my mind,

you have seen it, somewhere in the pages of the book
that i did not finish

my heart wants to die still in my country
despite its prison bars

but i must give credits to Brazil
whose hands shall caress me with the joys of my imagination
before i die
my heart still utters the word life
despite the
disappointment

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bread That My Hand Made

unlike the bread
produced by the most efficient
machine,
the bread of the human hand
tastes always
better.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Breakfast Of The Old Farts

the old farts
did meet for breakfast
of coffee and cookies
and fish and rice
and a pomelo and camote chunks
and they all fart
and part and meet again
only to fart some more
this lunchtime.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Breaking Of The Dam

silence is the dam,
grief rains nights
lament screams
the dam breaks out
unable to hold
further the weight
of grief

those that listen
and do not do anything
down the plains
must now know what is
extreme pain
what is sorrow
what is unbearable

your flood shall take
some of those who had always
been insensitive.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Breathers....

alone in the night  
below the moon  
you can hear them  
all breathing: the  
trees, grass,  
river, air, and  
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bridge Who Dreams Of Being A River

the bridge finally
confesses to the river

that in every surge of
the water below it

it experiences what human
males call an erection

it strengthens every
cable that runs inside it

the heavy clouds rain on it
and the sun scorches it with heat

every bridge confesses innocence
to this nonsense

the bridge after all is not what
it is, ...it is still going to be

not just a bridge but soon
when it collapses...a river too.

RIC S. BASTASA
think of the laughter of the children
not the weepings of the widows
the blooming of the flower
not the wilting of the leaves
the shooting stars in the galaxies
not the blackholes or the death of stars

plunge into the sea of life and take
the best swim
see the bright colors of the corals and
the fish hiding in the rocks and stones

in the war of our words let us the ceasefire
we're dining and in the middle of things is this red flower
let us wonder about the redness of life
and set aside the blackness of the night

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brigidaire General Speaks At The Wedding

during the wedding at the wedding
in an open garden, about marriage,

that one must marry for love
and no other
because when love is gone
then everything is gone

i look at my wife waiting for her turn
to speak
and i am thinking: what if love is gone?

what if love flies out of the window like a black bird
tired of its nest wanting to go and find another island
a new breeding ground
a direction for another migration
away from a very cold season
towards a warmer ground?

i think, one marries more than love,
one makes a promise
for better or for worse, for richer or poorer,
in sickness and in health

till death do us part: one marries not just for love
but for a promise,
for marriage is more than that, it is more than a contract,
it is a covenant,

that we who love, that we sometime
when we fall out of love
looks at the covenant and
abides by what is found there

that we live together, that we are one, and only death can separate us.
the assumption is: love sometimes burns itself, and is consumed
like our bodies that rot, like our bones that turn to dust,
like the life that dies, that the mind that shuts down
i think, i am falling out of love, i think,
i must abide by the covenant.

after the General has spoken
i shake his hand, and make a nod,
i admit, i still have more to say,
but it shall be my wife who must say it.

she signed the covenant too
inside our heart, our souls know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bringer Of Deaths....

when mother died
she cried
she swore she cannot
live alone

and he called
life is like that
some are born today
some die
most of us are left
alone
to struggle and survive

be calm
be cautious
in the city the gnawing hunger
crawls like a monster
and will swallow those
who remain
inflexible

this world does
not stop
if you decide somehow
to die

the merry go round would
still be merry
children still astray
the market shouts
for buyers to come
the whole year round

everyone is going to waste
everyone always unconsumed.

another layer patches up
the dead
another set of feet dance
on the floor

for life is always welcome
despite the deaths that
it always brings....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Broken Pieces Of The Heart

I've seen her
leaving

four broken
pieces of her heart on the floor

i expect her to pick the pieces
but she didn't

i could not pick them since
they're not mine

somehow i guess
she does not need any piece anymore

learning perhaps
that to live well and survive the hazards of love and living

one does not have to have a heart
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brother Of Talent

IF Brevity be the
sister of talent
then correct spelling
must be his
brother

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown And The Blue...

it is not between blue
or brown
it brown within the
coolness of blue

it is when the brown
is let go
when the blue rests
on the floor

as brown and scarlet
seek each other's hold.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown Leaf Along The Road Near The River

it a brown leaf.
it falls from a tall tree
and slowly it stops
at the bottom of the
road in Bankerohan...

it is a sunny day
for a week and the brown leaf
stays there
for there is no wind...

a beautiful maiden
picks it up one day... so crisp...

it crumples in her very own
hand...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown Out And The Brown Barking Dog

yes, the last poem was saved
from a sudden brownout and yes the brown dog did not stop barking
on the road lined with pruned indian trees where a stack of leaves
are left to dry
on a very hot noon day in my poor country

until the knock on the door is heard and finally the maid opens
the door to the stranger: your brother gone abroad
for work to save money for his six children
to feed and send to school and he brings you some gifts
toblerone chocolates
and californian red wine

hugs and hugs and warmth
and some stories to tell about the united states of america
chicago in particular
and las vegas at the end where one of your cousins made a good fortune
where some invitations are extended
where you may stay for three days and enjoy the casino and the
moving lights and some parties

the brown barking dog now lays peacefully by the door with big ears
listening to a conversation between brothers: one who likes to stay
forever in one place
and one who seeks his destiny somewhere else

some snacks no smoke no lies now just stories and
missing and a promise to be good
to offer prayers for our dead parents
mass tomorrow morning and a coming party for the relatives

little joys, bitter memories, some expectations and hopes for a better future
slice the cake and sip the soup
some thoughts that better be left inside our minds
silence and in between words that like to lurk
inside the walls of our mouths

what do you really expect from me? from what i write, well,
well, sometimes, there is nothing to say, except to tell you
the brown-out is still here, and i am working on a standby power
rushing with my lines
keeping with my word

to save my last poem, and it may not be the last after all
just finishing it
for you, trying to tell you that sometimes in our lives we say nothing on
purpose but just to be descriptive about what is happening
between us
no judgments, no choosing and telling which is wrong which is right
just watching and savoring ourselves and not commenting anymore

just living together sometimes even better with each other on some distance
so when we meet
we say we miss each other: just describing and watching and telling and

yes writing
using some other powers: the standby power till it is finally exhausted and gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown Teachers In Alabama

finally they fly away
from the brown land to teach black kids
in Alabama

then they put their pictures on the Facebook
posing for souvenirs
kissing the stuffed deers
and pretending they like to read the books
featuring Alice

when all the while, what they want is to be back home
to their brown land
12 thousand miles away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown Woman Walking In The Street Of The Town Early Morning

i meet a brown woman
early this morning
walking down the
street of the
town

she wears a transparent
blouse
her tits are protruding
bra-lessly
her hips swaying like a tsunami
her lips are wet with
too much gloss of red in there
her shorts are too short
her bottom is calling
for you to lust on her
she is showing her navel
and her middle
is cracking

i guess she is simply
telling you
that she is ready for
any war
and her tits and
cracks
and nipples
and hips
are her
potent weapons

and you go home
wanting to explode

she may destroy
& defeat you
after all
with all your
hidden weaknesses

RIC S. BASTASA
The Brown's Man's Nocturnal Anxieties

brown man with thick lips
flat nose and bold eyelashes

your face rests on your right arm
you need sleep
you can't

tomorrow is still filled
with anxiety

the night will be insomniac
your eyes are suspicious always

when the lights are finally turned off.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Budget Traveler

somewhere
in the maldives
he's gonna wear
something blue

or bluer than blue
with a friend
who spends for his
round trip
fare

maldives will cost
his lunch $$$$$$ 
so they will be
there for a day
and lots of pictures

then to sri lanka
for a hop then back
to Kuala Lumpur than
back home then
in manila

where realities are
realities
freed from those
tour constraints
back to his lonely
arms again

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes he is so concerned about the facade of the building,
asking if the signage is correct,
the color of the paint,
the metal used,
he walks away,
holds his chin,
takes a look again,
and turns his face
smirks,
he sits on the side of the road
fronting the structure
he is silent
and then comes up with a word
but he does not want to say it,

definitely there will be no changes in the facade
she tells him firmly

just like what her mother did to her dad
whom she always called stupid
lazy-bone
good for nothing
male,

he is different
he sees to it that history does not repeat itself this time
he calls the engineer
thru his celfon

'my own decision finally is to demolish the building' he said
with a firm deep voice
like the ocean
he assumes the shape of
the whale
this time.

there will be no other one,
the land must have only space
nothing but space
no one deserves to be
in this place anymore

she commented though
everything is for sale
at the right price.

RIC S. BASTASA
attuned to the bulk of my poetry
day to day in volumes and volumes
one day she will be missing a poem from me
for on the null days of my life
when the words sometimes are mere appendages
of truths
there shall be no more poem to post
writer's block and a consciousness growing
helplessly screaming for the glorious and the great
One
panicky, and trembling, now facing the greatness of the Light
of the Great One
speechless and awed and bowing to the True One
poetry vanishes
to such beauty indescribable and so sweet and peaceful
tranquility in perfection
no ripples on the river
no stone on the sand
no tree on the road
no cliff no heights no mountain no plain
such is the place i have seen
my lips like chocolate dissolving
my mouth unable to speak
my eyes unable to see

Oh Great One
Take me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Burden…

there are burdens
like sack filled with rocks
at our backs
we feel the weights
pulling us
to the holes of this earth
but those
who underestimated us
cannot see

we carry these burdens
silently
those that watch and humiliate us
shall never know
the wisdom we have
our sacrifices are invisible
our faces show nothing
but satisfaction

there are burdens
that make our lives worth living
in another hour.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Burning Heart....

my heart always sees
you
my heart always feels
you

it has bleeding eyes
it has callous hands
it has scars and it will
still have more wounds
that may never heal
on time.

my heart is always on fire
when you are with me
my heart burns all day
it has no need for help
it has no firetrucks coming...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Bursting Of Happiness.....

now i know why i have been flying in my dreams

why i have those big black wings amid the blue skies

i know why the morning sky gives the light showers

behind it the faintest light from the early sun

i know why the earth is joyous wet by your passion

why the seeds of the jackfruit finally shed off their skin

to give way to tiny leaves in between those cracks of

old rocks that open their hidden eyes to the first showing of

the tender hands of happy years of your unfolding like umbrella

to the noonday sun filtering finally what is hot and stinging....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Busy Man.....

he must talk
to divert the attention of his conscience

he has to laugh out loud
to forget what the past is constantly repeating

he has to sing and dance
to appease the anger of that silence

he has to walk away, run as fast as he can
pre-occupy his feet and arms with all the things about to be done
and say that always there are unfinished business
to convince death
that it has to wait more
that the days and nights will never be over....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Butcher.....

i am so sorry
to hear from you with all
the grunts
and the runts
here you are at the prime time
of the hours
mistaking again
another prose for a
poem
i am so sorry you deserve
something greater than this
which does not sound so well
like a well oiled
machine

sorrier to you my dear
whose taste for nursery rhyme has
not waned
whose love for the limericks
still prick

dear pig, be quite
the butcher is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Butterfly Effect

when you swat a fly
another glacier crumbles
to the bottom of the sea
another cruise ship sinks

when you slap a servant
another economic system in Europe collapses
millions will be jobless

when you abort an innocent fetus
another unknown virus plagues
with no known cure
in China, Africa and India

but if you are kind and compassionate
to the ant carrying a morsel of bread
global warming becomes another myth
there will be sufficient rice and wheat
there will be so much food to eat.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Butterfly In Poetry.....

writing poetry is
such a waste of time

i could have finished
my research on invalidated
contracts

or could have read the
end chapter of my friend's
novel

or i could have sipped
coffee at the veranda while
watching the morning sun
coming out from the breasts
of the mountain

i dislike what i do
wasting my time on this kind of
stuff that most of my friends
do not really waste time
reading

but here it is
we waste time on things that
we love to do
that which we really do not
understand why we love doing it

i still ask myself why?
time runs fast and i am caught
in surprise.

poetry makes me a snail
this time
and a caterpillar too sometimes

waiting soon makes me a butterfly
and perhaps that is the real reason
why.

it is this wonder of flying.
yes, this flying spirit. Yes.

It is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Butterfly

the caterpillar
has been and will always
be a victim of bad publicity
by the bees
and those maggots
until it becomes a
butterfly and
without that sense of
revenge or
demand for rectification
it simply hovers happily
from one flower to another
nibbling the nectar
of its basic
truth....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cactus In The Desert

looking at you
i remember the cactus

no, not the thorns,
you are wrong
no, not the prickly
experience

it has something to
do with
how we survive
in that desert
and how we still
flower despite

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cactus Truth

Truth can be a cactus
and so we sometimes place
a blue sky above it
and in
one extremely hot day
some thorns turn into
tiny flowers that we hardly see

at night we see the moon beside it
and then the wind is so cool

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cadaver

if you ask my opinion about the recent violence
you may not like what i hear
but let me give you a hint

i go for quick justice

i like swift wings of justice
that arrive at conclusions without much
court drama

who was that who said that it is better for lawyers
to be killed?

harsh, too harsh for a thirsty city
for a very hungry country

just let them disappear
that judges after all
are wearing the black robes of hoodlums
who are indebted for
who put them there
and could not render
what is fair

i like to go to the previous states of
tooth for a tooth
eye for an eye

the world is toothless and the world is blind
and you find a situation where you cannot ask anymore

'where to? ' because everything has been corrupted
and the system has become one rotten cadaver
stinking and nameless and
undeserving of a decent burial.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cage....

one can see
an unaffected wire
cage on days when
the lovebirds
are set free

it has no wings
only squares and squares
of the usual
indifference

whether the door is open
or close
what does it matter to it?

an instrument will always be
the usual instrument
there is no imagination
no dream
not even the temporary bliss
of an illusion

RIC S. BASTASA
The Caged Bird Cries...

i do not know why a caged bird sings?
or shall it sing when caged?
or shall it cry instead?
i know cages, and i have met some birds,
i have seen birds on cages
and i have heard them sing on trees
i have listened them when caged
it is not a song, but a cry,
it is not a dance, but a struggle,
it is not a poem, but the saddest prose.

RIC S. BASTASA
we are never
quite immediately aware of what we know
deep in our bones and consciousness
it creeps slowly into little clues
details that finally come to mind and in the considering
of the jigsaw puzzle
premonitions that had escaped us but now
reveal their colors in the borders of
the whole image how we languish
between them and when the truth arrives with us
clutching at the falsehoods in the trick
routes of the mind not knowing that
a falseness can just as soon in another
light can seem to be the truth
but with all the frazzling of nerves and worry
and dementia and discontent one should
realize it is a waste of time deciding what
is true and not although with most
thinking beings it is not possible to escape that
we do so love to worry about ourselves
scared stiff at being outwitted being
laughed at for being such quickly gentle fools
of our imagination
and the fantasies we fill our empty lives with
even my laughter scares me sometimes like
it emanates from some deep euphoric cave
some ancient time complete with mythical dragons
meanwhile desertwise
like a cloud the camel floats

RIC S. BASTASA
The Camiguin Escapade....

on those nights in that island i was confronted with configurations,

curves, strong lines, bold strokes,
opulence, complacency

dark corners, dead ends, walls, twisted paths,
roasted scents, too general for you to really specifically picture,

heat, hot springs, cool nights, bird calls, dewy leaves,
roots of tall ancient trees,

i disregarded memories, i am into creativity, into something new,
what i never had before, falls, ripples, floating drifting wood,
rivers,

i never make a call, and i never receive calls from you,
my mornings are stares, gazes into far seas,

there were some storms that no one ever notice
such is the story behind my escapade.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cancer Notification

there is a time
and i know it has dawned upon you
late that night
that you do not want any pore of your skin
or tip of your hair
for another scrutinizing
scan

cancer is just a cell
that screams and goes berserk
runs amok
in those complacent organs
and chokes everyone that
it meets

soon it will be a time-bomb that explodes
and kills all those
innocent bystanders

you are prepared i know
and there is nothing to worry

cancer is your paid ticket to another trip
this time

the place will be exciting
exotic

or quixotic

since everyone goes there anyway
and those who left earlier

so far did not come back to report
about such an
enigmatic travel

look for a travelogue
there are no notes

enjoy the trip
grab the ticket
it is free

the flight is certain
nothing canceled
nothing rerouted

but this time there are no duty free stores around

you are

alone.....

(perhaps still scared) and you look at the announcing electronic board

there is no fixed time yet

oh yes, the doctor will tell
you approximately

not the travel agent of yours

RIC S. BASTASA
The Candice Theory

something true is smooth
if false, it will be rough
so true love is as smooth as
tanduay rum
and false love is as rough
as sick skin
yet those who are not true
thrive well
and those who are true suffer

why my dear?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Candle As Metaphor For Grief

the white candle must have a heart
not showing any emotion when we parted
much feeling but there is a pretense for nothing
dismissing what is complicated
in the resting place the candle is lighted
shedding tears till dawn

RIC S. BASTASA
The Candy Inside My Mouth

i have this
round and sweet Chinese
delicacy from
shanghai
i remove it from
its cellophane wrapping
and as i write this
poem
it is wet inside
my mouth

i want it slow and sure
savory
and without any
intention for biting
and quickly
breaking it

to my bitter tongue
i must submit

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cannivals Of Serongan....

now you learned
how they were eating those
who died

it is not the hunger
but the love
for here they simply eat
a slice of the flesh to make
those who they love
a part of them
literally.

and have i not told
you that they drink
their blood too?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Capa De Leon...

sticking upon a big tree
you thrive, you have become so huge,
sucking the rottenness
of another existence, until you begin
to wilt, but you have already prepared for
all these,
the spores are ready
all concealed beneath your
cape, and then the winds
take them all

another tree, another fool.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Capacity To Change

the chameleon after all is true
it is not just a metaphor
the way we change colors
depending on those
who really touch us
the way we change ourselves
for the better
because we are loved
despite the odds

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cardiologist-Surgeon

Operates on a poem
with a heart disease

a Bypass
Quadruple in fact

Since then heartless poem is born and
Becomes a trend

metaphor-less
dead poem

hardly beating.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Careful One....

he waits for the flower
inside that hand

one rainy day love comes
without an umbrella

with a flower inside a hand
crumpled perhaps

but never wet....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Case Of A Waterfall

a waterfall can be seen in different angles
different versions can be said
how a waterfall falls from a very high cliff

the first version is the waterfall itself
the second as you turn clockwise
gives you the version of a fog hanging on a cliff
or a horizon of white clouds
the third version, as you turn another quarter
again on a clockwise direction gives you a water fountain
going up the sky
and the last version on another clockwise
or quarter turn gives you the rage of the river
flowing to the sea

that is how reality appears to our very eyes
some points of view

how life becomes depends on how we see it
coupled with our faith
within ourselves

to one who sees a twisted point of view from a dog's eyes
life appears like a tick sucking blood from the armpit of
a puppy

blood is drained and stored on a bloating stomach
of the tick. Life is actually, how you see it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Case Of Mr. Death

Mr. Death you are accused
of stealing live people
and killing them
instantaneously
without giving them
notice and the
opportunity to
prepare
so that at least they
can finish their
business

not only that Mr. Death
you are also doing
some illegal activities
as genocide
mass poisoning
of people
mass killing during
wars, typhoons,
cyclones
and earthquakes
and floods

what can you say
about these
charges Mr. Death?

and Mr. Death says
' I am just doing the
Will of the Lord
I too am His Servant'

and the Jury
The People
understand and
hand the verdict
of Acquittal
The Cat And The Dog In The House Of Their Master

today the cat and the dog of this house
have a holiday of their eternal quarrel
and jealousy
none speaks a bad word for each other
none of them
initiates an argument about whom
of them the master
loves better
none of them
speaks ill about the other neighboring cats
or dogs
the dog does not speak about the bone
the cat does not speak about the rats
both of them are silent and sad
and none wants to speak
beside their master

sick and dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cat By The Window Sill....

depressed you know
what you feel
like a cat
confident about the graces
of its feeder.

by the window sill
the sun comes and rests
beside the cat
licking its paws and
then back to the gentle
laps of sleep and dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cat That Could Not Find A Rat

and yes that is the story
about a cat which could
not find a single rat inside
a house filled with hay during
the harshest part of drought

he keeps on telling her that
always, always, w/o regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cat, The House And The Trees
	here is this cat
that looks like a feline version of batman
though without a cape
and a bat-mobile

it sits on a fence
and waits

the trees murmur
and the house stares at it
curiously without blinking

this cat has one life to live
the other eight it lost to the
years of his giving up
that despair and
psychological confusion

now it is prepared to give
the last one

the house is afraid
and closes its door

the wooden fence shakes
like a bridge losing its hold on the other side

tomorrow the cat shall be dead
yet it is prepared with an epitaph

of no regret, its life is always lived
for another
and this is it that really matter

RIC S. BASTASA
The Categorical Imperative

i could have stayed and
done what i really wanted,

but there is something that i must do
and i didn't like it,

something that we do not like
cannot just be left undone

it is bitter and not too rewarding
but it ought to be done just the same

it is not for me
it is for the rest of the world and the universe
and the galaxies

it does not end when it is finished by the shape of my hands
it leaves me empty

but i am relieved and now i am glad
& so let me begin again from the beginning

i could have stayed and
done what i really wanted,

but there is something that i must do
and now i am thinking that i must like it... it is

The imperative.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Caterpillars

the caterpillars all climb
line per line to claim
the topmost leaf
of the tree
and when they arrive there
they find out
that there is nothing after all
to eat and be merry

like a race for votes in poetry
there is nothing there

just speak your mind
and think of all the metaphors
that jibe with your sadness
or your joys
and your happiness and bliss
if you have them
show them

tell them that all your syllables
know how to dance
and that all your words know how
to sing
no matter where you are
whatever the limitations be

show the color of your lines
let them smell the scent of your stanzas

you may even tell a story
they too need something to appease them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Caution From The Man Who Taught Evolution

he says that any creature which does not use a part of its body soon will lose it. It is the use that makes it exist. Thus, when a fish gets off the water because it likes to fly, it becomes a bird in due time, Thus, when that bird peroccupies itself with swimming ultimately becomes the sting-ray. Thus the moss on the stone which wants to roll with the stone becomes the worms of earth. Time makes them what they want to become. Thus the jellyfish that crawls to the ground becomes another blob. And so on and so forth.

It also happens to us humans. When we start to be complacent and not use our minds to think, we become shrink into stone where the rivers pass by us unrespecting of our dignities, where those who walk upon us, simply consider as us nothing but foot stools.

We may think of the divine. Let us see what happens next.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cave Woman....

i am silent
i listen to you
i smile
and you said
all the words
to convince me
to do what you
want me to
do....

do not
underestimate me
i may love you
and i may say i may
love you forever

but i have a mind
of my own
my head above my heart
and when the
time comes when i
say it is over
then it is over

and i know very well
the way towards
the light in the middle
of this tunnel

i know myself
and without any notice
i go where
i really want to

alone in this journey
i whistle
to the tune of my own
song

away from the cave
the home you love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Celebration

In the morning we shall find ourselves
Many of us
Babies in slow swinging cradles
Still drunk of the night’s lullaby

We shall find out
Waking with poems in our palms
We shall chant together

The sun has come
In the manner of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Celibate

as expected the celibate
has written a poem about a desert
the listener junks it
for it makes her feel thirst and gives
a hint on death

the poem is revised
speaking now about the princess bathing
in the oasis
singing
attracting the black bird perched on
the date palm

she rises from the water
her breasts supple to the wind
she is waiting for the horse riding Bedouin
to carry her
to his kingdom

the reader is overjoyed in this
and sheds
the tears of joy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cell Phone Syndrome

most of these cellphones
are no longer meant for communication

they have become
our hiding places

and we have become so
comfortable within it

that we do not mind anymore
if we need
someone to be with

to love, or simply to
be on our side and give us

warmth, they're
now our safe-houses and
we live there
most of the time

RIC S. BASTASA
The Center Of Our Universe

universe
lies the tongue

warm flesh
moist, flexible
this little
queen
naked inside
our mouths

in our loneliness
it stores the words
and make us
utter

love
compassion,
understanding

it shows forth
how sunshine can be us
and how can we be
trees again
rising from the plains

when we are silent
it waits
patiently

for love to be strong again
until such time
that we are ready
to give
that kiss again....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chair And The Tree

many hours
you sit there on that
chair beside
the tree and had
a monologue
telling yourself how
she breaks your
heart & causes
you so much pain

you go to bed
early
to dream and
hoping to forget
everything
wanting to begin
a new life
tomorrow morning

‘one does not have
to live longer on that
pain
neither one has to
be overwhelmed with
sorrow
life moves on’
you write in your
diary

the whole night
the chair and the
tree have a
very serious talk

and they say
they have all
empathy for yo

the following morning
the ground is all wet
with tears
and what all the grass
blades have
are salt for dews

RIC S. BASTASA
The Challenge Of The Day

on a rush you step outside the room
without a window
thick drapes
sealing you away from the noise of the world
solitude and silence
your treasures
as soon as you open the door
the heavy rains and traffic greet you
with a challenge
'this is the real world, come out!'
there is no place to hide
there are always places to go
and faces to deal with
amidst the crowd find the solitude and the silence
from within your soul
your heart must know and your mind must adopt
lest you shall be one of those carried by the flood of meaningless existence
out there
cold and dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Change....

in life something comes up unacceptable

we are like horses needing more rending

soon we give up the struggle

we stop kicking and punching

we lay peacefully saying yes to everything

a frog wonders and croaks we are not affected anymore

we are ponds now as peaceful as a leaf floating

as soft as rain falling on the water making ripples without sound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes

the ideas come and they do not wait.
they enter your door and they do not knock.
they leave without any permission from your house.
they have colored wings and they simply fly away upon their liking.

they are so beautiful and deep and glistening.
enlightening and you miss them

now you sit there, speechless on the blankness of your world.
why did you not write when they were here beautifully dancing and singing?

you know how is it with the clouds
the more with air
and mists

they always change and they do it
as quickly as a wink

you know what clouds do
the form upon you some stories
the rainy ones sometimes and you shed tears
in the same manner with the air and mists

the air passes and sometimes you do not even feel it
and so you miss the story that it is bringing
the story of a journey
into somewhere

and the mists bring you some notes about what to do
in the darkness of the night
yet you tarry on the grass and on the side of the hill

you miss the essence of our beings
we are ghosts and we do not know where we are hidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes In Her Life

SHE used to sing and dance
play the piano and strum the guitar
and fiddle the violin,

NOW, she is changed
she second fiddles with violence.
she drums the guitar, she pays the pianist.
she hates to sing and detests any dance.

AFTER, he was gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes Of The Garden

was it the time? or was it us?
or was it change itself that keeps on wriggling
through history like a worm
or like a cocoon finally getting into a short-lived butterfly?

i remember green grass and blooming roses here.
there was a pool of goldfish and water lilies.

now when i come back
everything is gravel and rocks and trees without leaves
the clouds are heavy and gray
and the roots are foul and rotten

shall this be a stage of change? shall this be just temporary?
do you water all these with tears?
the winds have turned into
sobs?

shall i believe you? shall i pretend that this garden is still livable?
when shall be start changing the change?

i will sit here and wait for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes Of The Times

when we took vacations in your place my dear cousins we brought you lots of things: sacks of bananas, another sacks of camote, sacks of rice and some fruits from our farm in zamboanga

that was in the late 70s when we truly missed each other and you cooked our bananas and camote and rice and you drank the juice and licked the pulp of our fruits
and you my dear cousins

in returning our kindness
you also treated us for a picnic in the nearby river where there were still lots of fishes and big rocks and crystal clear waters where the wild ducks sometimes land to drink and rest and then fly in flocks where the myth of the beautiful mermaid and her human lover on a forbidden tryst continue their madness on a full mooned night
and we listen and someting magical still rings
like a longing in our hearts

we told lots of stories and time ran so quickly without notice there was no delay at all, no boring moment we simply ate and drank and sang some songs

we surely missed each other on those abundant times

but my dear cousins, times have changed, kindness now not given and if given is not returned you have been too busy and we too have been too busy too looking for ways to survive these hard times

we do not visit your place again, neither you visit us too, i heard the news that the river in your place has dried and all the fishes there die and the mermaid story was no longer told as no one wants to listen to myths and no one believes anymore about fantasies and giving and being kind has become a waste of time
and i no longer hear the excitement of the word
'cousin' anymore
i have seen the changes, and let me tell you,
i do not blame anyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes...

when i was a college student
and as expected of my own gullibility
in search of my relevance
i went to the streets and had a juggling
of such words as
freedom, democracy,
and independence
and due to such nitpicking there
are lots of differences
and semantics work well
with the clubs and bruises and
hamlets

things change always for the better i suppose

bellies protrude, wrinkles grow like grasses,
hears and anger mellow down like melted ice
boiling water cools down,
people settle, marry, have children and
miss picnics and class reunions

no one talks about freedom nowadays and they find
these topics redundant

the state is on the verge of extinction and so is the world
time is too short for brewing and the sipping may not be coming after all

a family sits on the grass with their dog
a baby is warmed by sunshine on the cradle
there are new grandchildren coming from the nearby town
there will be barbecue and beer and apples

grandpa sits on the reclining chair
and looks silently at the sunset on an unlimited horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
The Changes....

alone in your private study
you hear the slamming of doors
this recently happens
and you expect them from hands
not soiled with love
unwashed by compassion
selfish hearts longing for
something that does not always return
you get used to it
and the sounds begin to faint
whispers on the other hand become louder
it is you, it will always be you
in all these quivers
from within

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chant Of Boredom

i repeat words
and i have a chew
of my syllables

love
love
love
love

crazy this mind is
crazy
having gained all the years
and yet can still
mishandle an error
oft repeated

i have focused on the
form
and is misled by its
contours
its lines like labyrinths
of the confused
mind

in willingness
to be lost
to such a ecstasy
that cannot be
easily forgotten

the promises are
rains
beyond the paths
of the gutters
overflowing

there is this
collaboration to be
destroyed
a form of masochism
because of the
beatings of
the flesh

i rest upon
time
and pierces upon
the form
going deeper
into the ramifications
of reason

i sleep upon
the breasts of time
and at the center of
its meaning
i regain the composure
of truth

lotus position
i give a bloom of my flower
arm
to the sky

i chant the song
of the leaves
i simulate the
posture of the
pond

and so here i am with
you
beyond the reach of the
flesh

in peace and harmony
with this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chaos Of Chaos

sun from another universe
to sun to another universe

the planets of the two universes
and even the distant stars

have always feared their fusion
but no matter what: love they say

has its own reasons of fusion
and whatever destruction is caused

to the surrounding planets and
neighboring stars, the wild rupture

the massive explosion, love they say
always triumphs with justifications saying

there is another new smarter beginning
and what is it but love & love just the same

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chase

you chase the numbers
and you are at a loss

how can the numbers feel?
you are in a discomfort
in some fits
and not at ease with yourself

because you believe in
numbers and like horses you
want to capture each
with a rope of your
tired imagination

disregard the numbers and begin
to believe in the words
those syllables
even in the simplest form
of the comma,
the period.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chatter Of My Soul

There is no stopping now
what is done is done and what is going to be done
shall, too, be done

for i am incomplete without having to do
what is in my mind

for i am nothing without having to say what i want to say
what i want to write

puts me on paper, puts me on the go with life's ever flowing river

a paper boat, a real sea, an imaginary self
haunted by what is too mundane, that which regrets for not having
realized

the divine, the God in my Heart,
The palace in the sky,
the universe in my brain,
the chatter of my soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chicken Burrito (An Ad)

she loves guacamole!

Thus
the creation
of the

Lahaina Chicken Burrito.
Filled

with guacamole, sour cream, grilled chicken and rice. Every

bite is full of flavor.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child Is A Symbol Of What Tomorrow Shall Be

the child
is a symbol of
what tomorrow
shall be

what you say
is written in stone
tables
like the ten
commandments

how you act
is embedded in his
skull
and will never be
forgotten

the child is a clean
sheet of paper
what you write
stays forever

so mom and dad
and who the powers
that here be

be gentle, be careful,
be decent, be loving

your empire is here
your future is built.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child Forced To Be A Man

all the silver statues of men
are laughing
and i the child screams for help
as i am new to this kind of arrangement
they're too big and i am too small
upon a slippery road
where the rain does not stop

Mama is not here definitely
to defend me
from all their mockeries

and so i am forced to become a strong man
in such a short time

even without Papa's image to follow
no shadows no light.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child In Us

playful, runs, and hides
this is the child in me
in us, always in the side
of carelessness,
mistakes, and always
changing dispositions,
the incapacity to hold
anger, and the capacity
always to forget,
enemies now, friends again,
no ambitions, just the toys
and always be with
mother, though father
may come and hug sometimes
and produce memories
unforgotten,
the child in us
the innocence that was lost
the imagination undiscovered
how we wish be be children again
how can we be?
we are about to close the door
it is dark and there is no time
to play anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child In Us As Outsider Of The House Of Luxury

the child is dirty
he peeps upon a hole created by him on the wall of a house
where the rich man lives with his luxuries
how he wishes he were inside that room
and be part of the happy people

he is peeping and always peeping
he is tom

now the girl inside the room sees him and signals with her hand to let him in

he runs away
he only wants the luxuries of life inside that room
he does not like the curl of the girl's black hair

when the girl is away on a trip with her papa
riding on a white horse towards the prairies
to gather black flowers

the little boy comes back again
his name is really tom

he dreams of life
inside a room away from all people

even before Sartre has articulated it philosophically
he seems to know that heaven is only the nice room the people inside it are always hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child Made The Choice

when you were a child
you crawled to two choices
one for the life of the
red rose
and another one for the short lived
burst of the gun
you grabbed the rose
and that was enough

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child Who Does Not Recognize His Mother

when his mother comes
he does not utter the word mama
the mother tells him
Me, Mama, and hugs him
but he wrestles her away
he grabs a ball and throws it away
and he chases it
he falls on the ground
and shouts for help

his mother rushes to help him
removes the dirt from his shirt
and calms him down

then the boy utters the word at last
Mama
the mother smiles and kisses him

RIC S. BASTASA
i look at the child
at the farther nook of a old house.
there is no chair and beside the door
is a box, it is empty
and the child in fear
took its hiding there
a favorite place
safety box, safe house,
the four corners are
so silent
and the child is happy
asleep in a moment.....

time travels like horses with wings.

there is a man
with a long bird his toenails
are long, no time to cut them

it throat is swollen
bacterial infection again
or the weather changes
cold this time then hot in
a moment
dusts all over the place
and white painted houses

it is lonely, child and man
at the same time
and not one of him speaks
they become one box
and one flap opens to
a sky

always there are
no extra hands. it is reality.

there is an old man
with words of thread
sewing upon its lips.

there is a very dark night.
the child, the man and the old man
are asleep
inside a box, safe and
silent.

there is no morning.
it is final.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Childhood Swing.....

i do not need much
in so many ways i am
always contented with
what is there for me
with the here and now

the future waits for me
do i have a say?

so there you are
they are having pictures with power
hoping to get some
and take it to their homes

i look at the crowd
and tell life to just keep on watching
for did he not say that
life has a life of its own and
fulfills itself to you
and that all you have to do is
discern
and then nod your head and
make the signal
for

the needed going and coming
like the childhood swing?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Childless And The Anonymous....

we shall be the ones
who once walked this earth
and leave no tracks
no scent

we do not wish to be remembered
that we once were here

we shall be the ones who had everything
when we were once here
and just like the rest (of those who had busts and
statues of their greatness)
we shall lose every page that is written

we love it this way
we are not meant to be here forever anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
The Childless Spectator

dark blue coats
and uniforms are playing
hide and seek
in the school

at first glance i thought
it is like that
but beyond what i seemingly
see i guess
something is wrong

one is closing the door
the other hides his face
and the little girl
wants to leave but her
face looks behind her

someone is weeping
i guess
but look at me
i am not really interested.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Childless State

i shy away from seeing pictures of mothers feeding their babies with fathers beside them it is giving me all fears

it is like i am moving into a place where no one shall meet me

i remember one time getting off the train when a deep silence or vast emptiness meet me

while the people around feast on the chatter of their wives and the giggle of their kids

i guess i simply have to create a world of my own

where i will have no more fears where there are no children as securities
for the future
where families are
not just them
but everyone.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children

let us be careful then
about these children

whatever footstep we leave
they always follow and delve

and if they are lost along the way
we will be blamed for the dismal day

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children Bathing On The Beach One Summer

look at them as they wade in the water
listen to their smiles
and follow the steps of their chase
from the sand to the water
to the depths

our worries are always endless
what they will become

how we did make so much noise
on the silence of what did not happen.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children In The House

the eyelids are heavy
children need more sleep
the rain last night was long
the night was noisy on
the rooftop

this early morning the children
rush outside
they are happy
watching the rainbow

so momentary
before they pointed their fingers
it is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children Of Silence.

it is the unresolved conflict that will make us all
restless. No one wants a solution.
Solutions can be judgments. Do you react about
something terminal?

what will you do when you wait? Think, Think,
it is tiresome, it makes the body a very useless structure.
It shrinks like a deflated balloon.

it is this restlessness actually that makes us creative.
we thank God for this. Our house is incomplete. Who has a house
without stairs?

When i visit an old place, there is this shock
that the river is  did the river go?
Again, the hands of man, let it go.

Disappointed. The child stays in the house of his mother forever.
HE has no dreams. His fingers hold upon a needle and a thread
creating once again a heart of silk.

it is the unresolved conflict within us that makes us whole.
we are so restless, we dream of sand and shore and waves and foams.
we travel with the ocean, we drink its depth.

we are the children of silence. We are destined to write.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children Of Sisyphus

yes your children
to walk
and talk
and more
often
you see
them fall
from time
to time
you take
them
by their
arm
and help
them rise
and let
them go
and they
keep
on falling
and you
keep
on helping

there is
hope this
time

seeing
the children
grow
and then
go

experience
explore
expose
expose
explore
experience

yes, ariel
when they
grow up
and answer
back

you always
know what
to tell them

in this absurdity
you tell
them
to shut up

and get lost
for they
are not

yours, though
they come
from you

you do not
give them
your mind

they have
their own
when
they were
first born

it is Time
in turn
that tells
us best:

we too
shut up
we too
get lost

fair enough

RIC S. BASTASA
The Children Playing On The Beach

poets too have
pride.

chicken's pride
is fried.

oil is hot and
everyone wants it
spicy.

fried chicken is
served on a
flatter.

if somehow you
are hurt
it will, and will
always be.

quite funny
for we are all here
on a beach
under the sun
in a paradise
just playing with
the white sand
and wondering why
the sea
has foams....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Child's Love To Their Parents

it is a reversal of roles
now the parents in their old age
begin to forget
the children grown into strong maturity
begin to remember
how mother sings to make the
child once sleep
because she has other things
to do in her life
now the children too wish also
the parents' rest
for they too have many
other things to do
in their life
besides parenting the old

square and fair, everything leads
to rest in eternity
singing Requeiscat en Pace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chinese New Year

as we welcome the
Water Dragon
enter our rivers and seas
let us not fail to
see
the woods growing alongside
the banks and
shores
slowly growing new leaves
promising us
full harvests of better
fruits next year

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chirping Birds Of The Town

seldom do they come here
because most of the trees are already cut and there is no place
for the seasons of nests

but here comes a blue heron with a white breast and a black beak
perched upon a palm
alone and we find ourselves staring at each other

there is no pond here and there is therefore no fish
there is nothing that shall make it stay
and so after a while it flies away until it becomes a mere dot
and then gone
and what is left is the mirage of distance

on a reflection, i am more like it when you are not with me
in this journey
this search of place where i could have sung a song
the one that you like
when you first gave me that hug that kiss.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chocolate Woman

shapely chocolate woman
firm breasts
body curved like a bow
mind like an arrow
tall like a tree
so sweet
when i kiss you
like the sun
that shines warmly
on the hills

you melt

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choice

the choice
of wearing back
the dancing
shoes tonight

leaves me
with your
implied
admission

you have chosen
to live
like a common man

than die
like a miserable
poet

deprived
of the most common
need

the loss of love
the shortness of words

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choice Between The Two Huge Mountains

in the deepest
part of the night one gets to know
the deepest
portion of
wisdom

it too is alone
and you begin to admire yourself
because it is
also like you

sufficient in the middle of
this darkness
that engulfs all that have known
and had taken
pride of

light and what is it all about
its honorable deception
with its commensurate consolations

about dreams that do not come true
and those realities that
pretend to hurt us
and yet
can never destroy us

silence is darkness
and darkness which had long been equated
with what is not good
has become
false

what we have been taught is only about
white and black
with nothing in between
their
true colors
shallow and deceptive
between these two huge mountains of
given choices
are myriad
plains and valleys
where i have chosen
to reside.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choice Is Within Us

out there
the fields are blooming with
red and yellow flowers
the grass greener
the skies so clear
with patches of
white and blue

why just sit there
and focus on the nails of
your feet?

why count the pebbles on
the muddy grounds?

why cry? when what our God
loves is the smile
of the child in us
when we are molded to his
happy face?

why reserve those tears of
sorrows
when we are meant to shout for
joy and
finally give in to those
happy tears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choice To Be Happy With Other Happy People

it should have been
all about love and family
and home

and places of our
wonders
and friends who are
coming
to join us in this
merry making

we have chosen this place
we have agreed
this time nothing about tears
or bombings
or wars or hatred
nothing about betrayals and
murders or plots
nothing about rebellion and
conspiracies

we choose to be happy
we choose to be one in this spot
we are at peace
we are in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choice....

between dog
and wife, he finally makes
the choice....

come, come,
roll, run,
sit, stand
fetch, go, go, go!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choices That An Artist Has To Make So That He May Not Be Forgotten By His Stalkers

look at this man
alone in a boat
on a journey of his own,

you ask some questions: why
is he alone? where
is his wife? no kids?
no parents?
no paddles? no
game? no sails?
or masts?

is this how an artist has to portray man?
why not fill the boat with people partying in the middle of the sea?
lots of music and drinks and dancing and singing?
some rooms for intimacies people have to make love and enjoy their flesh

how can an artist be so cruel about a man's state?

now, listen, can you do much better than this?
why not art be
a celebration of
life? Put this man
in a cruise,
provide him
the needed luxuries,
ballroom, buffet,
live band music,
etcetera,
then have a twist
that everyone
cannot forget and
remember you
instead
sink the Titanic.
RIC S. BASTASA
The Choices We Make...

AT THE time when the pool
was murky
you decided finally to
bathe

wrong timing i said but
just the same you liked it.

at the time when every nook
of the pool is crystal clear
you leave the place

wrong timing i said, i add
what sadness takes you away

just the same you say,
it is nothing, time is vast
there will be more choices
to make

i like you, but i did not
say it, or if you know, just
the same, it is nothing,

i say, it is better this way
no pain, no glory.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Choices...

he never wished
to be just another contributor
of ugliness
to this world,
in fact, he
wants to be another
great artist
to convert all trash
into a beautiful
magnum opus
to cover all shit
in one huge can
and bury it on
earth
to hide all evil
back in Pandora's box

obviously, another
mission impossible

it is easier this way
let shit be shit
and let beauty be beauty

let them thrive
and let us see who wins
this drive

meanwhile, let us sit
and relax,
we shall just be the
gods and
if not
at least be judges
or jury
or

just another garbage
collector.
The Choir, The Bells The Church

he changed
not attracted anymore to the
angelic sounds of the
choir the tolling bells
or its chimes
the church
that used to be his
second home
has now become
a place where
he merely
passes by
unfazed.

RIC S. BASTASA
now i need not blame the culprit
of this chopping incident: the head thrown from a cliff
rolling down
the deep part of the river below
a taxi driver did it
where blood of some fish
try to conceal
the stink of the the human blood
of two women

their four arms
wrapped in black plastic bags
apart from their thighs
thrown in different
places of the town

the police officers found
some other human parts
under the bridge
far from the others finally located
in the canal
of a distant barrio

i read the papers
the headlines of the city
about a cold murder

the killer said
he admitted the killing and will serve the sentence in jail

all because of the woman's word
demeaning his manhood
all because she wanted him out of her life

the words that finally know how to kill
to chop and throw the mouth, the lips, the teeth, the tongue
the arms and legs
and thighs
apart from each other

i do not mean to side with the killer
we simply have to be careful with the word that also knows how to kill

simple courtesy could have avoided
a cold murder
a kind word could have make a better place
a world of peace

RIC S. BASTASA
The Chosen Silence Amidst The Indifference

you may think that
this world is looking at you
asking perhaps
if you are alright

the sad point is that
it isn't

it is you who must look at it
as though you
have a thousand eyes

and then think that perhaps
you have no tongue at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Christening Of The Poet

blue butterflies come out fluttering
as soon as he opens his mouth

and when he slowly closes it
silence is retained like a patch of green grass of that
faraway home

thus i christen him:
poet

RIC S. BASTASA
The Church Bell Rings Too Early

call the church bell rings too early

call the town's electrician
bald and ugly
poor and lonely
he was looking for his wife
who left with another man
taking with her
his only son

call he could not eat breakfast
skipped his supper
and would not care for any lunch

and then the church bell tolled
for him
though not as early as he once did it

we shall always remember
grief, lament, the sound of the bell
too sonorous
to remember
lost affections, betrayal, death
and lack of
prayer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Churches Of This World

since then the churches of the world
have gone mad
undesigned are they
to mangers and sheeps
and no light from any star
gets in
there is no window where
the moon can shine

its roof is a thick as
their self-made tenets
their walls are impenetrable
by the simplicities of our lives
their seats are reserved
for the kinds and
other majesties

there is no crib in there
for the baby to cry
and sleep

its floors in shining marbles
its pillars in gold and silver
that even God
would have second thoughts
coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Circle That Circles In...

when i speak
i do not really map out home

when the home erases the
paths towards it

it does not speak about
a misfortune

such is the rule of the pigeons
their sense of home is tattooed

on their feathers as light as
a paper where a letter about sorrow is written

as it is
things only become themselves

as air becomes guests of the curtains
they signify what presence is all about

it could be about us
or the others

there is no perfect map
to differences that scatter themselves like fingers

but soon when a prayer is formed
the hands cup like home

where as you see
we first began

RIC S. BASTASA
The Circuit....

before it was like
you are entering the gateway to an island
a paradise in your mind
and you wish all your relatives are there

people meet you and they seem to look the same
you ask for their names and you find out
we all come from the same line
in this island of too much familiarity,
the smallness of a world where everyone
is so interconnected and yet what the heck
they find their own common greed and
selfishness until finally they stay away
from you to eat their own food and drink
what they brought here, and when they start
to sing because they too become drunk with
what they are, you finally find yourself
looking for the boat to take you back away
from them....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Circuitous Route Of Existence

i should have stopped
a long time ago, i should have ceased
like a light feeding upon itself
a candle eating all its
body of wax,

i should have done it earlier, quit and leave
and not look back,

i never did it, and there must be a reason
an explanation for this addiction,
a justification for moving on,

i am not saying that it is you,
neither myself,

perhaps it is this emptiness that is seeking
fullness

this fullness that empties itself because it is not at comfortable
when things are heavy
on a journey,

perhaps it is a circle,
and there is no knowing where to start where to end
nothing marked,
all the same, dance of life, monotonous, consuming,
and yet never knowing....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Circus Of The Grasshoppers
	his summer grass is tall
and everywhere
the sun is hot and the
clouds are clear
and lo, there you see
the dancing grasshoppers
in a circus of a caucus
sounding of the sounds
of mating.

RIC S. BASTASA
The City

the city was once
a forest of trees
when the pioneers
arrive with their axes
and each tree fell
and the river swollen
mothers had to have
more children
and fathers had to
plow more fields
and plant the rows and
rows of corn
as monkeys on top
of the remaining trees
tease
the grasshoppers
find enough sleep
and the ants keep
on building their
empire on mounds
and mounds of
dry land

that was how
a city was formed
my father said

RIC S. BASTASA
The City At Night

oh my
the city at night
is full of lonely men and
women
begging for love

the neon lights
blink without shame

RIC S. BASTASA
The City Lights

when the day changes its color
from pale to gray then
absolute darkness
i start to get into this
little frenzy of sitting
on the roof of the house
and see how the city
lights itself
like a glittering
woman ready for the
next party

accept the fact that
even in darkness
the city too knows how
to please itself
and continue with its
usual moans
and noise

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clan Meeting

we were inside a circle
talking about the past
the years have made us
forget what our old folks taught us

there is always a time for
nothing but free talk until
some of you begins to cajole
and flatter and i begin to see
dogs and foxes around the table
some shall act as temporary prey
lots of words to seduce and entice
but here we are we are no longer

innocent children and we are no longer
giving and as compassionate as those
war times that give birth to mercy
we are numb as stone with unpredictable

thoughts inside our bodies crawling like
snakes so wary about the next prey
no one loses neither anybody wins in this
game of lies and then i look at my watch

it is 4:30 in the afternoon and i really have
to go
i have a sunset to watch
another orange picture to take.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Class Of 2011

i get lost in their calls,
they were so gentle in their pleas
i got swayed into a dance of the masses
i gave in
went down that tower of ivory
and told myself
from now own
there will be no more standards
nothing strict
but simply a camaraderie
a familiarity
a letting go

they shall be judged by themselves
in their own standards
and it will be too sweeping and
annihilating

at the end, it is the self and nothing more
that suffers upon its own negligence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Class Reunion 2010

when i go back there again
riding in the same car that i bought
twelve years ago,
i surely know what happens again
with all same faces and same talks
always remembering those who
perennially are absentees
backbiting those whom we think
never liked us even for once
i know that it will be the same sadness
same old song rewinding

in short, another boring event of my life
and so, to surprise myself, that i am not the kind
of worm that follows what is felt ahead of me,
i decided finally
just to stay put, read my favorite novel
and then take my much needed nap.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clean And Dirty Side Of Our Lives

the clean side of us
is the one we wear like a white suit with a red carnation in a pocket
it is less visited but we like to have it always worn
in practically all occasions,

we are proud of it but deep inside it we detest it
since it makes us tiptoe upon what we really are and what we want

that happens ever since and all of us wants to deny it
but we always understand what is this truth all about
no one speaks from the crowd and when one speaks we do not bother
for fear that we may be identified
and well you know
how this small world can be too private and too cruel

you do not get it perfectly
the situation is tense

the dirty side of us is actually inside that suit
it stinks but it is the most delicious stink that we ever tasted
it is food and we love it
secretly in the dining table of our room

we feast upon it and out mouths and hands catch the dirt that it is bringing
yet we have many tissues or rugs or handkerchiefs to rub away what
makes others uncomfortable specially those who are more pretentious than we are

pretense is a virtue nowadays
and being a hypocrite is being professional with our
everyday dealings

be it the church or the capitol or even
with the village chief

i do not want to go direct to the point for now
i am hazy, the world is grey anyway

and look at you there is dirt in your lips and your fingernails
are uncut.

i, of course, understand this matter perfectly, the norms

perhaps you must have noticed by now why the haze is intended why the fog is not taken from the path where we all must pass tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cleanest Man....

he is clean
he prides about the beard
that he has
just shaven

he is clean
there is no hair left on his head
no hair between his thighs
and legs

he is clean
his chest is bare now
his heart slowly
beating

he is clean as he
is empty
like a room without
furniture and
drapes

he is clean and without
sin
he who has not done
anything
and can do not wrong again...

he is clean now
for he is dead....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clear Lines Of Our Battlefields In The Modern World Of Deception

i have met the bad ones
and noted them

i made a stand
to fight them one by one

i made enemies where they
used to be friends

and here we shall again
make a clear division of our
battle lines.

RIC S. BASTASA
oh,
for the freshness
this limpid river
competes
with the clarity
of the white skies

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clever And The Kind

it is not surprising
that the clever and the kind
do not go together

for one gives the other
takes away

one keeps the head high
the other one keep its heart higher

but when they come together
and be admired somewhere
it is only when both have died.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clicking Of The Camera

you are the guest here cousin
and we do not wish to disappoint you
and show you some pains

and so we had dinners with you
together we are one family with
sweeter concerns for each little
futures: no sutures, no vultures

on the last day that you are with us
yes, this vacation of yours
we will be at the porch sending you off
with your bags and some of our goods

we pose as a family, we all smile and
there you go with your clicking again:

smile! we all smile as you have instructed.
and then you go with our sweet memories.

if you have only seen the nearby mountain
laden with gray clouds, on top of our roofs
these gray clouds shall start to pour its rain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cliff......

even the cliff
has its own way of becoming
like a river

when the wind touches
its peak
it flows and cannot stop
the fog worries much
how to stop
it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cliffs Are Still There Inanimately Intimate Upon Itself Without Any Word To Say

the mountains are there
and with their heights they overlook
the sea and the
plains

one stands at this height
sitting upon a rock
his chin upon his fist
contemplating

if one man jumps from this cliff
and decide to end his life

the mountains are still there
and with their heights they overlook
the sea and the
plain

the cliffs are still there
inanimately intimate upon itself
without any word
to say

RIC S. BASTASA
The Closed Door

on that day i lost the key
to the room
i waited for some solutions
breaking the locks
and open the door
or climbing on the other side
and entering through the window
but my arms for intrusion
are weaker now
my hands tremble at the thought
that once in my childhood
i did climb walls and break open
the window
and was so badly beaten

i keep on waiting for some solutions
until i realized that anyway
this is not my room and there is nothing
in there and so
not being that foolish
i simply walked away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Closet?

everything in there
is clean
folded neatly
that is what you will
see
when you finally open it
it is locked and somehow
you have no key
what you see is not what
you get
what you give is only
what your mind
feeds

do you remember what beast
survives
in that unending struggle of the
good/bad wolf
indian story?

ahh, you got it.
the one that you feed
finally wins.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clothes We Wear

come to think of it
the bodies we wear are
clothes

so wear it well

keep the dignity intact
and walk as though
you own the world
as though no one owns
you

keep that healthy mind
 abreast with sound thoughts
and be always the
light

the moon at night
and the sun throughout the days
of your life

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clothesline

it tells it all
the real score
my neighbor's house
silent as
a dead rat

at the clothesline
only his brief and
socks

her panties are
no longer there
and the nagging
stopped

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cloud And The Wind

back to the basics of our longing
back to the cloud and the wind
and the river
and the grass and our shadows
those were the times when what we need is all that we carry
light and cloudy
less light more shadows
less words more of the silence
there was more understanding then
no arguments about
the winding paths as to where these may finally lead us

to destruction or construction
to life or death?

i zip my pants and then move on.
you stay and settle for more imagination

i am the cloud and the wind
pieces of lightness and shapelessness

you are the earth and the tree
heavy and stuck

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cloud As A Self Floating In Space

I can only think of a cloud
as the only comparison

i think of it, and thinking makes it more like it

thoughts floating, self floating,
no anchor is visible no rope

no reason is enough to hold it and put it
steadily upon an accepted principle
a universal dogma

i am tired of catching a self
it will be futile, night and day,
it is the same trembling
saying i do not know anymore how to live
i do not know anymore how to be calm

perhaps the floating is just the usual way
of things to be steady some other time
after it has spent all that is necessary

no one feels for me, or for us
we are tired too
making configurations

it is the same birds that form in our minds
even boats, even kites, even leaves
what we feel is always the fleet
of flitting moments

let us leave it that way.
Let things simmer down a bit.

Float, float self, do not attempt
to hold on to anything

be like a cloud, go anywhere
be free
until space is traversed
completely, and then at that end
you may be steady again

like a continent of trees and stones and
dried magma

by then when it is through
give a little way to a crack
for our new selves to grow again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cloud Dweller

it is indeed confusing
why you have given more importance
to those which do not give you anything in return

the tree that bore much fruit you have not minded at all

one is asking if you have gone out of your mind why chase those that float rather than those which you can hold and touch

you are living on the clouds leaving the castle of your land

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clouds Of Narcissus

the clouds of narcissus pass by today
along a clear pond by the side of a rice paddy

they stop to get a good glimpse of their faces and bodies
cottony white, shades of blue, pluffy, and soft

they stop and take a longer gaze, admiring every
beauty of its hands and fingers, a longer time

an island of grass some reeds and dry leaves
get curious about what is happening why the clouds

stop and made a longer stare over the clear reflection
of their bodies on the little pond. They talk. They are curious.

and then the clouds finally get done with what is usual.
they left. Slowly sail away from what they are seeing lovingly.

Nothing happens since then. They own no one owns them.
They leave. They do not know how to love. Neither are they loved.

They are gone. The island of grass is silent. The reeds hush.
And the pond has become murky.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clouds Too Have A Way Of Looking

the clouds too have a way of looking
at themselves on the pond
its mirror
for a while they stay there and admire
their puffs and cottons

the reeds standing by the murky water
take pride

an island of grass stays beside them

then the clouds slowly move away
nobody owns them
and they do not touch anybody too.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clown

the blackeye of society
underneath the heavy paints
of faces
the teary eye
and the bruises
the gritting teeth
inside a cup
of ice cream

RIC S. BASTASA
The Clown And Dracula....

welcome both
the black and white birds
often they come
uninvited perching upon
a tree that
fronts your house

meanwhile the stairs
that lead to the road
to the city waits for the
sounds of your
footsteps....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cluelessness Of An Affair

i was there
she said and found it
allegedly she
when she arrived there
she lost herself
clueless as to what happened
to her
but that was it when she saw him
naked in the garden
doing his own thing
which he said was also a way
of discovering himself
and losing it
just the same
they were in this together
and then
they parted without really knowing
why

she was just herself
and so was he

we who heard about it
remained clueless
but who would care?

RIC S. BASTASA
last night
it rained heavily
and in your sleep
you hear the
loud cries of the
rain drops on the
roof of your
house

the cats and dogs
are asleep
the carpets all too
silent

the waters rose
the cockroaches are
flying
it is the season of
their mating....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cockroach's Survival....

i guess the secret of the
cockroaches survival underneath
the filth is its having to accept
the edict that one must only mind
its own business,

of loving dirt and feeding upon
it, and of loving fellow filthy
underground elements and pretend
that all is well for as long as
no one preys and eats another
dirty dozen or filthy fellow,

and when everyone is tired and asleep
and dreaming and mindless, one simply
has to enjoy that beautiful world,

alone in the kitchen and always nibbling.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coconut

the tree of life
this coconut tree
leaves for the roof
midribs for the broom
its meat all around
from food to dessert
to cooking oil to
diesel and even
engine fuel

diesel and even
engine fuel

this coconut poem
shade for lovers
on the sandy beach
an imagery of breast
for sucking to
a man's zest,
a poet's quest
best, blessed

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coconut Tree

i won't say that it is you. I always
hide things away from you. You see
it is the house where we live. It
is happy. You say i am not in my
mind. How can a house be happy?

(how can i tell you that i am
unhappy? i look for an island in this
house, and it is happy that i have
not found it here)

what is that island all about? it is
all about me. It is a small island,
with one coconut tree that i love.
It is touching the sky. And yet
it has no roots to make it stay.
Soon the wind comes and the
cocoanut tree shall be taken. I want
to hold on to that tree. But i cannot
find that island.

when i tell you this, you will say
you're crazy. You lied to me. If you
only tell me the truth

(if i tell you the truth i will find the
island but the tree that i love will no
longer be there. That is the curse.
When i find it, it will be gone.)

do you think that that tree has leaves
of gold, has trunks of silver? do not
accuse of me of greed. It is a tree
without roots. It has wings. And
this saddens me.

A lot.
The Code.....

we know all about it
because we lived it,
we were there, we touched,
we knew every nook of the place
every thread, every hole,
we felt the warmth of burnt wood,
we almost suffocated with the smoke,
we heard each scream, felt envy
for the groans before that,
we knew the hardness of the metal,
the loudness of the bullet,
we knew the lengths of silence,
the right time to go,
the exact time to slip away,
everything must be understood by heart,
no word must be wasted,
you do not have to hear the clicking of the
clock,
mud on the wrist, rain on our heads,
the creaking of bones,
short sighted love, suppressed desires,
unexplained departures,
uncertain hellos,
the life of a vagabond, the lawless mind,
the rebel in all of us,

all the mountains, and the plains
even the rivers, have kept their mouths shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coin Inside My Shoes....

there is a certain coldness of our hands
which we want to feel alone
by ourselves
not wanting to share it because it may destroy
what goodness lies in
our pretenses,

perhaps, yet this time, we are not yet ready
for the consequences that the truth may
bring us

who shall want a house that suddenly destroys itself
like the sandcastles of our shores?
there is a theory that things move from order to chaos
love fades away as always, people go to war and kill
their own kind, trees fall, water surrenders in the
dry bed, whatever that rises, bursts
whatever goes up, goes down, abased.

you know me, i give up, i raise my hands in surrender,
i walk away, and find new paths
new niches, where order and peace finds its new nest

you know me, whatever happens, i keep hope, like a coin
inside my shoes and i can tell for sure now that my
dead mother is still right....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cold Cuts Of God ... 

the night is cold
inside the room
our bodies are colder
our emotions
frozen
and we are
like the cold cuts
of God
served upon a
platter
with no one
picking

but don't worry
for soon
sunshine comes
like some knives
by the shutters of
our morning
windows

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cold Night

calls me to write
a poem

it expects something
romantic
to inspire it

the moon is waiting
and the stars are excited

but i realize
who am i to please them?

and who are they
to be pleased?

and so they all ended
disappointed

and then inside my room
i write the poetry of
my life

it did not inspire me
at all
neither did it excite me
like the way the stars and
moon dream it to be

but i guess i have
told myself
what i have never told
the world
and that is good enough
for me

if the cold night calls me
again to write poems
i shall tell it frankly
i am cold myself
and you do not need me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cold Tea Of Otteri

do i get a cold tea?

i prefer it hot really
and the green one
and a moist butter
cake to go with it.

cool...

the cold tea
or colder, i detest
the trauma is
still there in the coldness

of her body and hands
when she slept with me
she was dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coldness Of Indifference

i watch a bonfire
it spreads upon a bush
into the forest of
dry trees

i watch a conflagration
i am inside it
i am burning and burning
still

i am not consumed
i am fire
i eat the forest of dry trees
i spread in the bush

until all is consumed
and then i stop
i am back to myself
nothing really happened

then we resume the conversation
about fire
you speak about it
your heart is not involved

you never felt any heat
i know because you are cold
there is no heat in you
you, in a few minutes, die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coldness Of Stones

it is good
you have finally settled
not for less

you have found love
stay there

we who are still floating
in the sky
have to move on
and even till eternity
for our hunger is best
when not satisfied

we know who we are
we are more that what love can give
sometimes we are the clouds you see
it is sad
you have not felt the joys we have
when we assume the drops of
rain
the vagueness of fog
the coldness of stones

RIC S. BASTASA
The Collaterals

the collateral and
peripheries of this world
play truant

like a child on the beach
gets a stick and begins to
scribble whatever
thoughts come to his
mind

the woman sitting under
the coconut tree does not
see how silly it is
how meaningless

she is the mother
what she thinks is only love
of her flesh
and bone of her bone

in my stroll alone early morning
i also understand
once a child once i had
that mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Color Of Lust

electric blue
body of a man
muscular and
strong and firm
and silent

he is the backdrop
of the principal figure
of a leaf
whose tip is melting
butter
dripping
like a dropp of
red melon juice
cut
slit from a deep
wound.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Color Purple

a friend of mine is obsessed with purple
she says it's a royal color
fits for kings and queens
and she feels like a princess
on her purple hair
her purple dress
and purple bra and
purple shoes
the walls of her house are painted
the railings of the stairs
the windows
the doors are all purple now
the flowers in her garden
and the leaves of her trees
the grass
all purple too
her speech is purple too
the movies she watch are all in the shade of purple
her car turned purple too
royal color that is what she says

i tell her bluntly, ' You are boring, purple! '

RIC S. BASTASA
The Colors

sky blue clouds
saffron flowers
green green grass
orange horizons
fading afternoon
black starless nights
pastel brown nipples
spreading legs
on white mattresses.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Comfort

there is comfort
in
let it be
let go
let it be done

like you are in a ship
not bound for
anywhere

but death and you do not really know
what lies ahead
what to do at the last hour
when the ship
collides to the closing of your eyes

sad, tragic perhaps
but let it be done

let his will be done
and you rest like you finally decide
to just lay in bed
think of nothing
not even the next step

just being here and wait
till everything is gone away like an evaporating mist

RIC S. BASTASA
The Comfort And Ease That We Embrace In Certainties

there is always comfort
in something certain
basics of life: where to go what to do
when it is finished

there is ease
knowing what a chair is all about
or the exact time when
darkness comes

but there is something more
something that we perhaps all know
there is calamity too
in being certain
in the flowing and the expulsion of the
tight hold of the bud

how can one face the sun?
when wilting is certain sooner than thought
how can one face the mirror
and count the factitious of years
the shedding of masks
the slow showing of the first bone
of the skull

RIC S. BASTASA
The Comfort Of Silence

silence is, and will always be,
comfortable, like a stone, mute to the
changes of the season, and no matter
who takes it, a child or an old man,
the stone keeps the secrets
of their wrongdoings.

the comfort of silence
to the wrongdoer, makes the stone,
the most trusted friend,
no one talks inside the hardness
even if it is broken, into shattered pieces
the stone carries the silence
it is numbed by the centuries
of human oppression.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Comfort Zone

when i let you go,
when i help you pack your things because you need more space
i simply want to impress upon you that i am easing your pain

my arms are not enough
the skies are bluer and the seas are wider
as always

your hands are too small
you lips have shun away the wonders of smiles

this world is a circle and it is circling even without us
it will keep revolving
even if we want to cease

the pain will always be there and i have learned
to master it
like the way i have kept control about what my arms
can do
about what my eyes can
choose what to
see and what
to imagine

you need to understand some more
and i know who can better teach you

go with the waves and let them carry you to the
navel of the earth
let the winds carry you to the
edge of your world
let there be no ill-feelings
let there be memories
let them be children who shall give you tiny voices
urging you to find
home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming Company....

i thought i am the only
person in the room
there is no sound
of a bird chirping
outside there is the
gift of evening
tiny stars hanging and
the glow of city lights
far from here
i thought i was the only
one gifted with sadness
that which by time
i have learned to love
i thought life is not that
fair with me put in the
the utmost prejudice of
a soundless existence

then one day you came
a shadow cast from that
morning light
on the door that i have
never opened.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming Election...

doing the season of good images
the language of our bright future is here
more promises and the usual lies and deceptions
we have first lighted the candles for the dead
and rejoice over a decadent past
we mean nothing now
as we listen for some more

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming Of Inspiration

the likes of you
may have the power
to kick doors
and break it open

but i know you gentle
dog of my premises
you know how to wait
and wag your tail
as you sit there
waiting for inspiration to come
like a mad master who does not know what time is it in the morning to timely eat breakfast

barking won't work either
it can make it angry

sit there gentleness
if you must try sleeping for a while

dreams sometimes come like a fog
cold and hazy
temporarily
blinding

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming Out From The Door Of The House

the excitement came like a gushing water
from the mountain of stone

that moment when you turn off the lights of
the house and you go out of the door
as i wait for you
at the road and then we smile and kiss and

we hold hands to make another stroll to the
night of our lives

for as i have told you there is more to this
world, even at night, the stars still dot the skies
and the air is fresh from the far mountains
coming here just to make us feel how important we
are

how beautiful is life, how meaningful is living,
how the world still needs us for its being.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming Psychosis

the rain falls
heavily on my roof
with all windows closed
where no wind can
be as close
and free,
i hear hoofs of horses
and cows
getting near me
and i just feel
that i am nowhere to
go
with no place to
be....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Coming...

how many dances are there? what is the name of each step?

how many more lines? give me the name of that poem?

i was there.
we watch the dance of death. We stare at the growing

chaos, the mayhem, and the pandemonium, the dogs keep on barking, some one bad is coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Comma That Makes The Big Difference

due the children who walk and pass along the road where your house is facing are always noisy
you pay attention to what they are talking about you call it nonsense and it angers your quest for deep understanding
you are quite sad and very unhappy in your chosen niche of silent isolation
they are carefree and unconcerned about you happy about their nonsense & selfishness

there is a big difference between you and them that i think, you must explore some more

it is the comma that makes the big difference in the sentence that you have duly imposed upon your self.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Commandments Of Poetry

I shall love poetry
For it is the conversation of God
Over my world

This is not a godless art
Though I name no God
I am bearing witness
To Him creating these
Poems

I do not write poetry
To excite myself
I write them
To sustain
My soul

I shall never use poetry
As a pretext
For fame and glory
It is my spiritual
Devotion

Poetry is pure
Virginal
It is not found
In conformity

I shall bring forth my poems
As a mother brings forth
Her children
Out of my own flesh
And blood

This poem shall not be
An analgesic to kill the pain
But it shall be the wine
That puts me to action

Each poem created
Shall leave me humble
It can never equal my dreams
And always inferior
To God’s marvelous
Creations
Always second
To Nature.

Poetry rises from my heart
In these words
And they have no purpose
But to purify

This poetry shall grow
The flowers of compassion
To console
The hearts of the lonely
And those who are lost

RIC S. BASTASA
The Commercial Horse In The Crowded City...

the horse in Quiapo
listens to its footsteps

sets on another commercial
trip guided only by
the whipping of
its master,

the driver
who earns only what
is enough for
a day's survival

it is all about himself only
no one else
not for any horse
or this old horse
with stinking dung

on covered eyes it sees no
danger

the reality that the city is crowded
with ten wheeler trucks
and taxis and
jeepneys and luxury cars,
and people without purpose
at all

a native is bloody lying dead
hit by a car without a plate number

another victim of hit and run
there are no stories of interest to tell

the policeman is smoking at the nearby
eatery, reading a komiks magazine
the horse, back to the servant hourse,
it is cool
it is not disturbed at all....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Commission On Audit

gets so corrupt here
even in audit

commission first
then audit later

try it baby.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Common Ground....

God even
has to cover all skeletons
with flesh
and skin,

perhaps to make
all these ugly structures
appear
tolerable, nay even more
admirable than what they
actually are,

it is this covering that
created that sense of
inequality

all skeletons are equal
all bones are the same
no woman, no man, no rich
no poor,
no straight no gay
no priest no layman
no worker no master

all mountains level down
to the plains of our
commonality

and God is so wise to make
us arrive at this ending

bone to dust and then the silence
of it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Competition

as i wake up
i prepare for another round of
competition
about the day's strategies
the hour's demands
the dictates of the last seconds

i rub my eyes
wake up
carry my body
dragging it like
a heavy metal

i wash my face
check my attache case
taking in
all the papers

i see myself in the
mirror
dressed for the day
an attire
not fit for any embarrassment
polished shoes
oiled hair
well ironed pants
infallible polo shirt

i step out of the door
get inside my car
and now i am ready
to compete against
the previous self
that i had.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Compulsion To Settle For Simplicity....

there is no denying that as a native
i think like a native

am no Englishman from
London Bridge
but a Bisayan from
Mindanao,

as such, i have no choice
but just to be myself,
in the utter simplicity of my language
translating myself
word by word in the nuances of
your Anglo-American world,

there is this attempt to be a part of
your world

did they say that Enlightenment?
that Genius of ideas
is only possible in your world
and not in the
land of my ancestors who know
nothing but only about spices and
spears and arrows and
jugs of wine and tattoos and
barbaric songs?

let me say what i want to say
in a few vocabularies
you may not listen, but at least
i have spoken.

I am thus compelled for that
simplicity that allows me to write this way.

Because i have nothing more
to offer you
Because what i have is only this
insistence to open my heart
and speak
what little love is still
left in there.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Compulsory Encasement

i shall miss the wind outside
how it feels
when i am inside a room
encased inside
a glass window
and a door that must remain closed
because it is
needed...

i shall miss the sound of the city
and i shall miss you
but for the meantime i must find
joy
in the flower by my window kissed by
a butterfly that merely
passes by....

no one stops here, everyone leaves...

RIC S. BASTASA
'The Concept Of The Artist As A Rebel'

revolutionary,
insurgent,
revolutionist,
mutineer,
insurrectionist
guerrilla,
terrorist,
freedom fighter
a person who resists authority
control, or
convention.
nonconformist,
dissenter,
dissident,
iconoclast,
maverick;
informal

bad boy

eye are all
your synonyms.

nonrhymer
unpoetic, heresy,
blank versist,
ugly version

bat, upside down
stilts in the skies
roof on the sea

boats flying int he sky
bridges without rivers

artists without cause
floating, floating like a cloud

against Aleppo skies
you pick up a coin
and you bend for a time
and i have a time looking
at you

for that moment
i begin talking to myself
as you rise
and look at the side of the road
where cars are
passing by

this thought is mine alone
if i share it to you
i may hurt

i have a conclusion
but i will keep it
forever to myself
i have no right to
hurt you with all our
years

you look at the menu
you like
a strawberry shake

i prefer a cup of hot green
tea

i am the one bitter
i admire you for staying sweet

i am bitter and it is not your fault
it will be unfair
if i keep on justifying my errors
for love

love is always unfinished
it will always grow its roots and tendrils and climb upon
other fences

i sip bitterness
how i wish to tell you something else

you order a tiramisu
you offer a slice and you put it in my mouth

how can i refuse it?
in the middle of my bitterness
i still keep that respect
and so i swallow it

'it is delicious' i say
and then you smile

i am guilty. I am.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Condemnation

i am condemned to write
without end
because you never loved me

because i never confessed it to you
because if i confess it to you
you shall condemn love in return
vomit all its contents before my face
and love does look like love anymore

i am condemned to write and many shall read
because of pity
i never wanted to be pitied
i have my own dignity.

i shall be writing forever
about love
unrequited, and the world shall know
about a pain without end.

i shall find hope in reincarnation.
i shall be a tree with shiny leaves.
you shall take shade.
i shall be the bed where you shall sleep
the nights of your lifetime.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Condemnor....

i have forgiven her,
like the saints
i have to justify

she does not know what she is saying

she despised the one i love most
she hates what i like

she is beautiful (but i honestly think inside she is horrible
i just can't say it
i do not really know her to well- but

i have forgiven her and i like it that way

she is not my love
and i am not the way she talks

i am not the way she condemns love and the beloved

i perfectly understand, she is lost in the midst of this honest to goodness conversation, and were it not

for the man she loves i could have hit her with my tongue.
The Conditions Are Clear

the first time i met you
(and you said you like me)

i have already warned you
(that i am good for nothing

that you must not expect anything
for i am no good)

the conditions are clear
from the beginning when we proclaimed

that we are too in love
we promised we look for nothing and take nothing

except what we are and what we have
within the grasp of our hands

you changed, and i too changed
we begin to look for something beyond our grasps

we have become insatiable
and we want to hold the future that is still not there

we realize that this is the end
and so we make a new door with an exit sign

we left a smile and then we parted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Consequence...

she spends most of her time
(she does not know perhaps that it has been shortened)
building a new house
choosing the landscape of her new cottage
at the Mediterranean territory

had some chosen lovers to sleep with
on those lonely nights (and she will still have more than enough, she giggles)
drunk more, laughed louder than before
everything seems to be funny
and the wit keeps flowing from the gutters and canals of her pastimes

that following dawn
it was so cold
(her last, i tell you)

before the first fighting cock in the fenced house cocks

she lies there
breathless....

slashed throat, bathing with her own sticky drying blood

alone

and even those walls and soft expensive bed do not give the clue

as to who and why.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Consequences Of Being Outcasts...

the feeling that what we ask
is not given
makes us
what we are not supposed to be
protesters
we set aside the serious business
of being responsible
we give in
to the seduction of our souls
we pamper ourselves
with all these pleasures possible
why should we be like all of you?
when we are not
really
inside your circles
we are the outcasts now
and with all the disguises of
these blessings
we can now do
what we want
no one tells us
since we do not follow
we do not look for roads anymore
because these lead us to
nowhere anyway
all the places belong to us now
because we belong to no
one

RIC S. BASTASA
The Consolation....

when a leaf falls down
lands on the the face of the river
that flows finally to
the arms of the sea
what is really the consolation?

the leaf has kissed
the lips of the water
and those who say that
a kiss is not sweet is
altogether wrong...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Conspirators.....

ey fit.
one was like
the bullet
to the gun.

waiting in
ambush
for what they
have long
desired.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Constancy Of A Noble Purpose

how must i tell you again
it is not the intelligence but the
constancy of purpose
at first and then
you either do not listen when you
heard me clear or
you simply cannot accept it and
change
you believe always on intelligence
and so i watch you risk everything upon it
trying to explain every grain of sand
and there too many of them
and they invade your intelligence and
they bury it
then
finally killing you
suffocating you because the sands in their
constancy of purpose
never believe what intelligence
preaches and
bragged.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Constant Black Bird On A Wire In My Mind

...of all the things that i see here:
goosed fields of Oryza
needle rains, ice cold air,
Y-paths, footsteps on mud,
murky water, leafless trees,
bald mountains, cracked rocks,
abandoned hut, emaciated buffalo,
naked child,

why you? why the importance of you
going into my head like a leech
and taking what blood i still
have in my veins?

even if you are just a memory
you kick, you push me, you make
me feel the liveliness of pain

black bird on a wire, alone,
ostracized by the flock

or just loving it alone
in the dark?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Consuming Anguish

true,
the anguish is always found in the need
that is not always satisfied
the useless anguish
that consumes us
if we do not mind what to really do
and rightly so
in our next moves...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Contemplative

i rest my chin
on my left palm

i focus my eyes
in you lying in bed

with no clothes on
while you sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Contemplative...

an empty platter left
in the yard of green grass

filled with the songs of birds
as breakfast

to blend with the lyrics
of an
empty mind

an empty
stomach
those idle hands
and these
numb arms

the tranquil soil
begins to say those
prayers

RIC S. BASTASA
you shall hate me
because i pretend that i do not know
and i have decided not
to speak anymore
about
what happened on those
disappearing years
on those disappearances
of whom we put love
so much

for instance about our love
for an ideology
how many years have we studied
the book and put
each page into practice?

did you count the catastrophe
the numbers which have
remained numbers
because we have become so
numb like
a piece of rotten wood

a paddle
not for the boat but for the
infliction of pain?

i hate the details now
and i shall not enumerate the names
of those
that parted without saying
the right word for it

when we meet
we do not know each other
that is the agreement
we forged
upon a rock
we wrote upon the sea
we spread upon those
dusty mountains
without trails
for those who still want to follow

i am stopping now
and that is what i think justice is all about

i am an individual now
i carry a name
i wear a uniform and
fill up a daily time record
i am a tool
as i have told you
and i am not a candidate anymore
for any
disappearances

call me a contented cow
i am numb and i do not care anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Contentment

i delight seeing the boat leave
the smoke is in our side
thick black smoke seemingly like
hands still reaching
for the abandoned land
as though it is
attached to the shore and
the old buildings

i wonder sometimes why i
delight in departures
why i at the same promise myself
that this is the only land i have
and i will be
staying here forever

at night i am in love
too much in love to the silence of
my solitude

from here where i stand beside
this window looking at the shadow of that boat
i am happier

simplifying and filtering my thoughts
sipping the joy of the moment
i do not dream of more
i ask nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Contrast Between The Film And The Reality Outside The House.

at the end of the film
was at the top of the tower
meeting the villain Kenji
telling him that he is nothing
without a wife without a child.

i do not know but it was at
that point when i finally heard
that it is raining outside.

how is it that i am too fixed
at that nothingness.

the world is filled with rain.
the earth is thirsty.
and the leaves are singing.
the cicadas finally keep their
mouths closed.

and then the frogs
merry on the grass, jumping
and swimming.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Contrasts

cemented pavements
green grass

sounds of motorized cabs
songs of birds on the trees
towering skyscrapers
tall old mahogany trees

neon lights on city escapes
stars on moonlit skies

watching the mountains half covered with
morning mists
busy on TV for the serial stories

strolling on the white sandy beach
observing the behavior of seagulls

window shopping at the malls
watching 3D movies

eating deep fried chicken wings
licking very sweet strawberry ice cream

peeling the ripe mango
savoring the yellow juice feeling the pulp

watching the sunset from a high mountain
reading a best seller novel inside your room.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Conversationalist....

he can strike a note on the side of the glass
with his fork and then begin to sing or hum

an old tune and retain the lyrics in his mind
and move on till the last line

he talks about it without any emotion involved
nothing personal anyway he keeps on murmuring

this is pure recollection, those tea and dates when
he had a good time in the desert with her when

what surrounds them are the uninterested sands
when the sun keeps the heat as they cool themselves

inside the car as their lips keep burning as
he keeps on licking what does not hurt

he is a good conversationalist who talks alone
responsive to the demands of his solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cooking Pot

our cooking pot is not made of porcelain
or silver or gold but it is made of the mud
of this earth
hardened by time and fire and too much
waiting

our patience consumed
our waiting had been too long about this cooking
pot, earthen
where we put all our dreams and cook them
like rice
porridge, all of our dreams
fired by the woods of our reminiscence
our longings our loneliness our daily concerns
our future wishes

and then when the time comes to open
and see and smell what rice porridge is

we say we like it we say we love it
only to be repulsed by this visitor in the house

'this is not cooking! This is not good! ' and he stares at us
and says, we need more fire, more wood, more time
to have the perfect porridge

i went out unable to stand this hunger
unable to see what this visitor says

it is our fault we allowed him in
we open our doors and windows and let him sleep in our room

as we lay on the floors and keep ourselves on the stairs.

'this is too much' i said.

'he must leave this house at once' i told you.

this is our pot. this is our porridge. this is our cooking.
and we must eat. we must love what we have.

'get out of my house' i said.

and then i am relieved from an opression.
i am happier now. My pot is earthen. Its bottom is sooty black.

i am blue. And i do not really mind.
This is my porridge. You may take it, if you like.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cool Living Waters

cold living waters of spring
plunge in like a hot rod wanting pacification
flames of fire
cinders of desire
let us be calm and swim in the cool living waters
of divinity

nude we realize there is shame and we stand
and take the clothes of morality
then we rest under the cool shades of green trees
beside the brook
the winds from the mountains refresh what dimples we have
and we reflect upon the words of God

time moves and stays a while and this evil of boredom comes
idle moments craving for more
and then we stand and play under the sun
we run, we play, we sweat and those that watch us
begin to think
that we are sinners on the loose

cold living waters i ask
bathe and wash all their dirty minds

RIC S. BASTASA
The Copy.....

it has always
been that way.
you have never
changed always
wanting for
change, always
discarding what
is here, what
comes next, and
what should
have stayed.

what stars
made you? what
sign? what
discontent is
there
implanted in
your
genetic code.

you invited
this and then
later you tell
it is not.

there must be
this curse.
you never want
fame,
no honor suits
you.

if they only
knew where your
greatness lies,
they would have
copied you.
The Core In Her Being

there is a core in her being
that you must penetrate, that spot

where you also release
all that you have
where your souls fuse
and become free

it is where stones are converted
into birds of freedom

thoughts exploding like suns giving birth
to a number of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
The Core Of Our Being

what i was to the core remains to be what i am today and perhaps even tomorrow: same thirst, same hunger, same longing, this constant unsatisfaction lingers like time and tide and surge and sting,

the skin loosens, the bones break, these feet tremble, hairs fall, cheeks shrink, eyes fail, death comes....

it will be the same to the core nothing changes.................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................

RIC S. BASTASA
The Corrupt Couple

at the dining table
they discuss how to finish
their big swimming pool
fronting their mansion
surrounded by a high
cr concrete perimeter fence

Ric S. Bastasa
The Country

i let you drive
as i sit calmly on the rear side of the car,
i do not wish to speak to you
as i watch the countryside
on a very hot summer

rice fields newly harvested
cracking chunks of soil, brown grass, stacks of hay,
trees with yellow leaves, smoke from the house chimneys,
patches of fog hanging on mountains

behind us on this road towards home
dusts, dusts, dusts.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Couple Sings

evidently, they are a nice pair
both of them
are songbirds in their own
right

ey they had a duet in the party
and we clapped our hands

ey they are old now and yet
still very much in love with
each other

as they were singing a love song
when we clapped
he made chances on her butt
while she touched his face

what a melodrama
and then at the end of the love song
they kissed each other

there is joy
we cheered them

Love so true which age
cannot murder. This is when
the couple sings
their own love song.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Couple...

she is weaving
she has an intricate design inside her mind
and for now
i do not see it
she is secretive and
does not want to be asked
just like me
in my own privacy

i am also weaving
stories of my own
and the plot is complicated
in the manner of
whodunnit.

we are the weavers
inside this room and it is not
so well lighted by the
moon

we seldom discuss
what is missing
we decide not to talk about
what mess we are in

tomorrow morning
we shall weave again
under the heat of the sun
we are never burned
never charred

tonight we shall be in this room
again
we shall weave again
the designs in our minds
our fingers entwine
on matters sanguine.
The Courage To Be Human

have caution
and this is another irony
have caution about what we must say
in whispers
in baited breaths
so the gods may not be offended
so we shall not be hit with their lightning rods
reducing us all
into ashes

it is enough
this cautioning is over
i shall confront the gods and demigods
about this and that
this that emaciates me
that which
makes a scarecrow of me
that which makes nothing of men
but hays and rags
and rotten eggs
and dusty fields.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Craving Of The Flesh

when i write this
i am full, my stomach bloats
i am holding something
inside me
with all restraint and if i do not follow
the law of
expulsion
i may die of this
poison

i must empty
what is here inside
to make me feel well

there is poetry in my head
poetry in my stomach
soon
if i keep them and not let them
go out
i may die

and so here i am
noting this metaphor of expulsion
to let you know
that i cannot stop writing

for health reasons and not
for anything else

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crazy Cat....

when the naught
cat
pushed the
aquarium
it broke on
the floor
water spilled
sipped
on the Persian
carpet
as the lone
goldfish
grasped for
breaths
the crazy cat
took its
delicious bite
and into the
window it slips
away
with its
ten lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crazy Thing That Is About To Happen...

she is tense
i know it from the very start

the house is too big
for her presence

the emptiness is magnified
by the huge windows and
the living room with only
a chair as furniture

the loneliness is creepy
like an old vine by the window
without leaves

she is getting more tense
and i am getting afraid
what follows next

until the moon appears
until light is spread in the room and
in the garden

until she begins to write
her own poetry too

and now i am confident
that with all these changes

no one screams and no one
runs away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crazy Woman

she is a neighbor
they think she is crazy
what we have
we keep

tolerance and
tolerance

she asks for coffee
and cookies
watches tv
and decides which channel to watch

i am about to burst
until she gets away with
sanity

she says
what she has is tolerance
and tolerance for me

fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cream Of The Crop Of Worriers

we thought we know because time has been so kind with us
we were silent though and pretended that what we know cannot hurt us
we were wrong
for every thing learned there is always a price to pay
pain in exchange of some nuggets of wisdom
anxiety for every knowledge that comes our way

those that do not desire to know are too lucky
they simply wait and do not worry at all
things come to them and they explain themselves
they simplify and what they do is just listen
they are not interested and they are not harmed

yes, look at those pigs, they do not know what pearls are
they do not have any worry that soon those who pretend to care for them
shall butcher them and eat them and feast on all of them

now do you regret that we are the cream of the crop of the worriers?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Creativity Of An Artist

from a mere paper
cut out
Jesus is risen
from the
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Creeks Of Thoughts

there is this poetry
that wriggles like a snake
that transforms itself
into a creek
that coddles the banks
of the rivers
the feet of mountains
that mirrors the moon
that serves as map
for clouds drifting
there is this pathway
full of grass
that leads us to
nowhere
but we are confident
about the
happy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
The Creep In Him...

The waitress was fooled by the creep who orders steak and says that her steak is shit and throws the plate to the floor creating a scene in the restaurant and... then runs away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Creeping Loneliness In The Days Of The Beasts....

most nights are haunting
the beasts too
are lonely haunted by
some sickness which even the
forest experience,

the nights go on and on
with its lonely moons and lonely
winds as though the only word
the only reigning message is the
chirp of loneliness from the birds
themselves who just arrived from
their long long trips,

it will not be over the beasts
talk among themselves discreetly
unable to accept this kind of
unwanted calamity,

and loneliness keeps coming
and coming and going and going
until the caterpillar finally got
its own wings to fly
into the open skies, discovering
one thing,

it will pass, it will pass
the preaching is unending to the
forests and the winds but the
beasts keeps it among themselves
this loneliness that has never
passed them,

until they ended their lives
with their own teeth and claws and
tails.

oh how miserable it is
says the butterfly before it dies
one day at a time.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crickets

under the leaves
the crickets are singing
non-stopping
tonight the crickets
will continue singing
lulling me to sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Critique

if he wouldn't mind
for me to believe him
i think, and this i must submit
that he must at least
write a good one
something to
tickle my armpit
or make me salivate
a line to make me
remember
about him that
belittles mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crooked Ways Of The Tiny Birds

feelings are sometimes like the tiny birds
of summer feeding on a few grains

on the wide yards of the garden where the grasses
spread far

some feels being smothered by the indifference of other
tiny birds

separated by the distance of the long lines of
parallel electric poles

imagine the image of tiny birds sitting in there
looking for pecking

one notices the vastness of the sky
the unfinished climb of the hill

the vanishing paths of trails long untrue
feelings like tiny birds fly away

but there is no reason to be afraid on the
facts of nonreciprocating birds

ah, the world is wide and too interesting
to be ignored

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crooked Ways Of The Tiny Birds 2

feelings are sometimes like the tiny birds
of summer feeding on a few grains

on the wide yards of the garden where the grasses
spread far

some do feel being smothered by the indifference of other
tiny birds

separated by the distance of the long lines of
parallel electric poles

imagine the image of tiny birds sitting in there
looking for pecking

one notices the vastness of the sky
the unfinished climb of the hill

the vanishing paths of trails long untrue
feelings like tiny birds fly away

but there is no reason to be afraid on the
facts of nonreciprocating birds

ah, the world is wide and too interesting
to be ignored

on a few grains one feeds upon
and having satisfied sits lonelier on the line of an electric pole

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crown Of Thorns....

if you only
wore the crown of thorns
even for once
you could have known
what a father is

the one whom you said
left you
when you were so young
so hurt...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cruelty Of Fire...

so many fallen leaves
on graveled grounds
less are the worms
and the moss

someone so cruel
who does not have the patience
of water
resorts to the abruptness of
fire
and burns them all....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Crying Ladies Stay Jobless.

he did not hire
an old carpenter out of
pity

it would be too demeaning
and an inefficient decision.

and so the error has
been corrected.

yesterday the old man died
so he was not able finally
to redeem all his tools

he sent the flowers and
the card.

so this is a cruel
smart world.

evidently we outlive
our usefulness

and the smart ones
mercilessly hand the
rejection

there will be no
survivors

the crying ladies
stay jobless.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Curse

the soothsayer reads the lines
in your palms and
she says

you will marry
a beautiful woman
and you will have
a son
you will live a very long life
you will be rich

she continues

your marriage will not last long
the beautiful woman shall betray you and go with another man
your son will be gay
your money will be taken by your partner
your life will be long but it will be in sickness and bitterness
there will be no cure for your disease
and the doctors will give up

you will scream as loud as thunder
but even the nearest star cannot hear you

your life looks full like a bag
filled with air
it will be deep like a well
but without water

your only hope left is death only if you wish for it.

RIC S. BASTASA
as you must have observed,
she speaks, in tatters, disconnected
but transparent, and
transcendent, having that grip of
psychic possession,
witnessing what passed
and what shall come

have you read about such words
as awe, horror and pity?
and the helplessness that follows
next,
those frightened sing and
always will be unable to understand
her,
she goes backstage,
with the fall comprehension of
what's there waiting

her own murder.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Cycle...

the flowers of my youth
have all wilted

but i am ready for the dryness of
these seeds

hoping for the next
sowing season for soon

i will be back again
with all the flowers of my youth

expecting to see you again
my only sun

and soon to die again
for another sad moment

under the warmth of your
hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Daffodils Are Gone

On the daffodils
The morning dews
Dry out slowly

Now, blow if you will
Humid wind
The daffodils are gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Daily Poems

these may just be words
letters that one need not read carefully
as they are not instructions
or manuals for daily living
not something edible to eat
not a ball to play with on late afternoons
when you have nothing to do
not a bar of beauty soap for your face
not a lotion for your skin
not a piece of cake or a fried potato
for your breakfast table
neither is it a cup of hot coffee
they are not necessities of life
yet somehow
the daily poems of our lives
make us live
a day more,
an hour more of promise
a moment of more tolerance
another year of patience with ourselves

a night of nice sleep
under the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
along the way
beside the ditch
are the daisies
to choose

the white ones are
too pure
and the yellows are
jealous
the...

why do i have
to tell much?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dali Bees....

it is a blank
wall. No, i was
not the one which
put it there.
It is.It is there
we never made it.
when we face it
we forget whether
we have words.
We make signs.
You nod your head.
I agree. This is a
white wall. It has
no scent. You imagine

a vine can give meaning.
the last leaf was the
last attempt. You put
winter there. Like God.

we are speechless.
but even then we
think we understand.
There is another world
beyond words.
It is more spacious.
More understandable.

This is not a white wall.
This is a white

then the words come flying
into your head like
bees. Stinging all of us
for not telling the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance

ey were dancing in circles
some with huge bellies
and there was this emaciated figure
trying to fit in
learning the steps of the dance
others complain
for he is not like all of them
the weakest link
perhaps
and they do not want to spoil
the dance
of drunkards

i wonder why, the tall lean figure
emaciated as he is
still wants to fit in and pretend
that he is enjoying the dance
of the drunkards?

again, another astonishing study
of weird human behavior

that liking to be in.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Carmen

that was the last time that i have seen Carmen

her last dance
of the last scene of death

she was wearing the purple tutu
white laced and glittering
on the dark stage
as she lay in that island of light

her right hand
touches the heavens
her left
waving goodbye to
the earth

it was the perfect split
and then she closed her eyes

all the lights faded and what i saw
was this perfect darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life

the steps are easy to follow
if we only follow
repetitive in fact and
numbered and it is the same
music all over again
handed to us

but something happens
interpolations and
matters are interchanged
substituted and prostituted
the steps become harder to follow
in fact unpredictable and surprising

this dance becomes so interesting
somehow i get out from the waiting line
jump into the circle and dance
the strange music that is played
eclectic, exotic, magical

bathing in my own perspiration i signal to you
saying that i am beginning to like it
this is the dance of uncertainty where tomorrow
may not come

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life (2)

the dance of life
goes on and on within the circle
of our
none awareness

time moves like a silent creeper
in the garden
you do not see until it goes over
the field of another
to someone whom you do not know
it is something that you feel
not having even
met once that one and this one
so unfamiliar yet
we nod

beyond fences
and sometimes beyond repair

the dance of life is one which you cannot
refuse
on tired feet still you must stamp
sometimes
even sans the music
and the rhythm

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life (3)

the dance of life
is not loneliness

it is meant to be shared
in a circle of friends
two for a tango
three can be a boogie
five or more
in a disco

shouts for joy
energy overflowing
like a waterfall

the dance of life
the ecstasy
the bliss of everyday
the joys of the many

the dance of life
children merry on the playground
mothers watching
and fathers working with so much
awe and inspirations

the dance of life
grandpas holding hands with grandmas
strolling on the beach

the dance of life
sunshine early morning on the grass
moonlight and stars on top of the roof

sipping coffee
reading a book of poems

the dance of life
stopping in a moment and then
contemplating on an end
somehow there is this stopping for a moment
silence
and then returning to the power of fireworks
friends giggling
over an interesting love affair

the dance of life
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life (4)

square pegs
trying to take the steps of the
circle

holes everywhere
lapses
dark spots
explosions
and weeping on one side

at the other side of this world
is the big party
people laughing and dancing
and children
chasing each other

that storm and time
and still ponds and sitting lotuses

a baby on the crib
and a young couple making love in bed
a window opens
to a beautiful sunset

sadness and truth and lies sprouting like
grasses in an open field

seeds turning into trees
and rain stopping one evening

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life In Circles...

the dance of life
in circles

nauseous...

feeling dizzy still
about those
missteps...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of Life Is A Circle

if the dance of life is really
a circle where
we imagine a fusion of
the beginning and the end

then what are we waiting for?
do you have hands?
let us hold each other and join this dance.

forever comes inside our hearts,

you have no end
and i have no beginning

life's dance of ugliness and beauty holding hands together
of sorrow and joy, of pain and relief,
of evil and good, of black and white, of earth and sky,
of yin and yang, of male and female and those caught in between
the grip of the hands of life
to the stone, to the tree, to the sky, to an infinite space

now if you speak about a beginning and an end,
you are out of the circle. Or if you are wise enough,
You think you are inside the circle.
and the rest of the world, revolves around you.

you are in and they are out, it is still part of the circle.
sky and earth. down and up. your eyes take a look
at the stars, and the stars take a look at you.

you breathed the night air. You close your eyes.
You see what is infinite. You grasp eternity to the farthest
star that you put on top of your pointing finger.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Dance Of The Children Around A Burning House

will you be surprised
when all your children will dance
because the old house
is finally burned?

i will be Papa
but only for a while
perhaps only upon
that superficial level
of self-respect
for those who built the
house from their
own sweat
and died.

and then Papa
i will have to join the dance
myself

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dance Of The Sky And The Earth

there is something
in that dance that
reveals what he is.

his hands try to reach
a chunk of sky

his feet grinding the
earth perhaps to make

them sharp and probing
and so it comes to my

mind that here is a guy
wanting to discover what

the sky can give what the
earth can bury, for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dancer's Feet

the dancer's feet are 
on the air
the body is so light
in extreme joy
bliss like a balloon
floats the body
as light as air

such is the short moment
of flight of life's dance
until the tip of the body
touches once again
the hard and harsh floor
of reality

and then one says
sorry, but this is life
it is all about roots and
anchor
bliss is fleeting like
feet on the air

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dancing Natives Of Cogon

trained now in the art of
tourism
all for the love of money
they change costumes when the white guests
arrive upon prior notice
relearn their old language
practice the dance of their old ancestors
using the wooden spears and shield
as props
on a rehashed warrior dance
or the wedding march
or the symbolic courtship of the
birds

in proper places now
the tourists from America has arrived
like a stage show
or a big pretense as i may call this
(unable to land for employment on their
chosen degrees)
they dance for them
and let them hear an old language
an old song
a lullaby that their mothers used to sing for them
all for the dollars.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Danger About Happiness

happiness can be
dangerous.

It looks inside you
and closes your eyes
to see
a world in agony.

it settles only in the
confined picture of a family.
son, daughter, dad,
dog, cat
household pictures,
coffee mug,
a private letter,
a box,
a slit
a venetian blind
a feather duster,
a line of shoes
a collection of stamps,
an album
a poetry collection,
a fence,
a secret door
just in case.

have a little of it
just enough
to make you live

a san mig lite
some foams for the night
and then look
around you

sadness helps a lot.
it makes you
a bird.
The Dark Days

those were the dark
days, i say i love you
but i never meant to.

those were the bleak
days, i do things that
i do not really like.

those were the saddest
days of my life,
when i am not me because
it was meant to be,

otherwise i cannot be here
now, free, with eight wings
on my feet
the winds in my hands
light in my forehead
thunder in my lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dark Hour.....

now the eyes
have become suspects

of age's betrayal for
what it sees is not anymore

true for what it keeps are
all faulty

which the brain objects the
heart detests

these eyes wide as open as
the ocean

yet as blind as the darkest
hours of our misjudgments...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dark Night Comes, Not For Me Alone, But For All Of Us

Well, I see this moon
And I am sad
My thoughts are sadder still
The dark night comes
Not just for me
Alone, I know
but for all
of us..

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a dark room
in our house
where we stay for
a while
to admire how strong
we are
how beautiful we feel
when are so alone
and quite

there is this corner
of the room where we lay
our bottoms
where we close our eyes
and rest

there is this window that we
keep closed
where we refuse to see the
world outside
where the winds are so cold
where leaves fall and blown
away

there is this self that you
want to meet and shake hands
with
ask its name again for the
nth time
and then you shake your
head
saying you do not remember

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dark Rose

a dark rose growing from a dark
cracked concrete crevice of
this deserted building
on a dark night
spreading its dark petals
for dark dreams

on a fine morning
when darkness
is gone
the dark rose
comes out in the open
to meet the sun
embracing it
with so much light
turning into something
sort of a blood reddish
colored rose
something like
glowing

but still dark
like the one last night.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Darkness And The Storm, ...

i took a deep
breath
facing the high risk
criminal in these
islands
known to have beheaded
the European

our eyes met
and like Obama and
Putin
this meeting
will go be viral

i keep my sense
of balance
like that scale

i will set aside fear
and rumors
and prejudices

and so now
back to the
courtroom
i gaze at everyone

as if i were the light
from that only tower
in the island

still and roaming
the
darkness and
the storm.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Darkness Of The Night ...

it is only in the darkness
of the night
that we really begin
to see ...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dash In The Years

dramatic spans
years and years of waiting
to get exactly what you want
in what you do

you reflect the need to wait for the return
of a particular quality of light,
time of day,
or time of year,
in order to proceed

selecting the mood
waiting for the right
time to unfold

about your struggles
with uncooperative weather
or other alterations in your chosen motifs,
in your effort to record faithfully
what you see and feel

all very impressive
such excessive literalness
your only aim,
devoid of interest

early surrealizing images
to recent staccato cityscape
and suave sculptures
and refined poetry

you were never literal
because at the end
you put the last line

exactly,
truth is never exact as they always
want to see and
write about it

RIC S. BASTASA
The Date

she picks you with her car
and asks you to drive it for her
you are going
to a place where she is known to be a star
a patroness of the arts
there you listen
to independent women singing their songs
of liberty
how they map out their destiny
without their men anymore

at first you like the light beer
and the electric guitar
and the drums and tambourines
you begin to like to the voices
of hope and

independence, and a weary-free life
you begin to love the night
with her
you notice how tight her skin is
how shiny her red lips
like tulips

you tell yourself you love life now
you like nights

then you ask something that you know she also likes to give
she says no
for a while, and you know that she means she loves you too
like she wants
to be back to her heydays

both of you
just you and her

whatever happened? nothing happened
it is late in the morning
and you did not have the soundest sleep that you needed most
but you thank God just the same
you still have
your mind in total peace, unshattered, unbowed, unbeaten

RIC S. BASTASA
The Day Comes When You Become The Center Of The Universe

You sit in the middle of your house
The chairs and table and the trunks
Have become the planets that
Revolve around you.
You close your eyes and keep
Your arms beneath you.
You become the sun and the
Slits of lights coming from the
Leak of your roof and the windows
And shutters and blinds
Become your stars.
The silver basin on the sink
Has become your moon.
You clench your fists.
Your room has become
The empty space of your
Self-made universe.
The world is silent in its
Wholeness. You float and you
Travel alone along the edges
Of emptiness.
The morning comes and the
Dog opens your door
Licking your feet and face
And wagging its tail to
Catch your attention.
It sees you: bald, untrimmed
Beard, stinking skin, loose skin
In the arms and neck, broken teeth,
Bloated guts, crooked backbone.

It is the dog that loves you
You are its truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Day Is About To Close

the light by the
window blinks

may it be a very
tiring day
without any
misgiving

may you be hurt
and yet still be
forgiving

may you have wounds
that knows how to heal
themselves

may you shake the hands
of the night
may you kiss its palms
with all gratitude

may your sleep be sound
may your heart be emptied
of all the fears
of all the worries that the
day has given you for all
its heavenly intentions.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Day Of The Elderly

they gather this morning
at the park
and had a marathon,

and then they shared
dinner with the mayor
having dried fish
and steamed rice

and then they dance
the kuracha and the
tango
as others sing the
old songs

how nice is the color
of the sunset

RIC S. BASTASA
The Day We Met

the day we met
our eyes level

our hands entwine
both full grown
and mature

our heads
are different
mine is bigger
and yours so
hard and brittle

yet we agree
on something
and some feelings

we agree
we do not have to change
you or me
or both of us

we agree
on this love

we accept
everything
what i have you take
what you have i too, take

it is all yes
there is no no

but for our survival
we agree
that on some blanks
we may fill up
and make our own
answers

brief and concise
and no tearing
of pages

no return
no exchange

these are the rules
these are the instructions

now, we may proceed
let us turn to the next page, please...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Day You Left Me

Through my reading glasses
Smears of my fingerprints
I see you blur
With my falling tears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Days Of Pretenses.....

there are always days of
pretenses
no guilt, deep within,
everyone is indulging to
this past time of living
what we are not and what
we cannot become
as the mind compensates
with imagined invincibility
x-ray visions, telekinetic energy,
flight, levitation,
invisibility, and the numbness
of all rocks
the earth combined.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Days Of Waiting

an old man
a black book
a cigarette
and some smoke
a room
a black suit
a table and a footstool
a poetry to read
and then
a sound sleep....

there are dreams that follow
soon
but like his grand
days of youth
he will find it hard to remember..

his days and nights
are nothing but matters of waiting
and waiting
all these
drag.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Fish Speaking For Itself

the best evidence
of that dead fish
is its body bloating
and stinking
floating on the
murky river

the rage of the river
tries to report the sad story
to the deep
blue sea

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Fish....... 

a river has its low tide  
a dry mouth  
in one of those months  
here you can see those buried  
pebbles, and colored sands,  
dressed in mud, and a dead fish  
who had not gone with  
the tide. 

if you are not that cautious enough  
it could be you.  

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Parents And The Prodigal Sons

at this point
of their lives the stingy parents
now dead
shall have no regrets
for then their time shall come
to squander
what was saved: land and jewelries
and whatever
shall be thrown away like garbage
for the pigs,

sometimes one asks
if the prodigal sons are prodigal
because when they
were young
they were deprived of what
is due

kids who were not allowed to play
stored in the room
like some stuffed toys.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Sea

there is a river that is filled with salt
as it takes in
from all tributaries everything that they are giving
it is not giving away anything in return
it is dead,

no one sinks there
try it.

it is dead
there is no fish there
no shell

taste it when you go there
it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Tree At The Center Of Our Garden

a tree at the center of
our garden
is shedding off all its
leaves

the wind at night
blows away all the leaves
away

in the morning
sunlight passes through it

leafless throughout the day

we have become
illuminated

our sad faces are now telling
stories

sooner the tree dies
replaced by a new one

to keep the balance
we do not stop moving

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead Trees

the trees in the forest that you cut
come back
for revenge

the tragedy is that
those that died in that flood with all the dead trees
are the
most innocent

you escape this time
but the trees soon will find you

soon, soon,
i pray.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dead....

he showed
to me the dead
rat
which the cat
cought
last night

quite big
and quite long
and perhaps
notorious
in the yard

he wanted to
throw it away
but i said no
told him to
bury it
near the mango tree

for the dead
like the rat
shall feed the trees
this earth

for the dead
shall feed humanity
like those
martyred by war
those killed
by time
shall nurture back
this earth
to its own life.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Deal Of Being Together

there is this simple
agreement between two people
when they want to stay together
they will not look for something
that is not there
for how can they find what
does not exist
and so they both live happily
everafter

RIC S. BASTASA
The Deal To Make Others Happy

i make a deal with myself
everyday i must find a way
to make other people happy

tough deal
but i must: connect the missing
link of love

find the lost photo album
of the spinster

bring the old man at
the metro station
and described to his blindness
the colors that i see
the music that lies in the heart
amidst the noise
of this world

little pleasures of the hands of children
dipping fingers
on the cool water of the creek
by the side of
the big canal
of an old house abandoned
by the couple
that i must make them
to reconnect
on love letters long gone
i must retrieve
what has been fading

there is a lonely man sitting
waiting
i must provide him with another name

tough deal
but worth it, it is.
The Death Of A Revolution

i was once there
in that island of

questions
all questions

its shores in circles
do not have
any answer

i move around there
and i am dizzy

feeling the spin
and the effects of my own
self-imposed
revolutions

quite a decade

and all the children i have
were eaten by the big
hungry mouth
of the revolutions of my youth
my past

i preach a new
story now

times changed i tell you
and i am not left
like a step that
you have taken

there is exhaustion
there is an end
where our mouths knowing about the dying of the lips
have to tell
the truth finally
and you are not listening
with your gun in your
hand

listen! everything has changed
you must see
the new light of my dawn

i have no word for you
must you pull the trigger now?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Death Of The Liar

you lied
you have reversed heaven
and earth
put yourself in between
and hanged
your head in there
on that line
of fame

of course,
the world clap its hands
the heavens do not cry
the dogs refrain
their howls

RIC S. BASTASA
The Death That Perfects Me

i like the way you show your back to me
i see you and you do not see me
that is the principle of my secret.
my world changes when you face me
in your being disinterested
nothing matters
i do not wish for more,
i do not need some stars
in my heavens.

my gaze to you is enough as
i go home again
incomplete,
like two hands opening to the sky
asking for light
or even rain and nothing

comes
to fill what my palms are longing

i close my hands again to cover
my face in shame.
For i have not changed.

No matter how,
i will never change.
i am this child and
i am the father of this man.

in my old age,
i am still my own child
the child whose mouth not any milk from any mother
can satiate

it is written in the skies
my name.

It is the name of dissatisfaction
and it wants to have a body
which must be reborn
until it finds what it has been searching

where is true love?
have you found it?
if sometime i find it,
that when i kiss i am also kissed back

when my fire is burned by another fire
when all of me is a forest
and consumed by wild fire

what can i ask?
i will not ask even for a dropp of rain
or a pinch of salt
or a syllable for understanding

i have enough.

But i do not have it now.
I know what is enough.

I have long defined it
in my series of deaths.

i know when it comes,
i can recognize completely its face
when it arrives.
when i hold it, i shall die
but i shall not
ask to be born again.

for by that time,
i am rested as a stone
beside a hill

i do not wish to be rolled again
neither shall i ask
Sisyphus to put me back to that same
place on top

for by that time
i am dead and so complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Death Theory....

let us make it simple,

energy is never created is destroyed
it can simply be transformed from one form to another

yes the soul,
from one time frame to another

this is simpler now
the body is left and the spirit goes away

it is met by light and it is taken away
guided towards its real place

and then the silence
no one wants to come back

it is self-explanatory
no one comes back to a place which has become inferior.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Decision To Be Happy

I am watching water
dripping from the gutter

the rain has just stopped
falling

the sun begins its part
spreading soft light on the window panes

my wife has finished taking her bath
and kisses me on my cheeks

breakfast is ready on the table
and the smell of rice and pork grill spreads in the house

the water that drips from the gutter
to the leaves of the fortune plant appears

like diamonds bringing all that gladness
to the younger hours of the day

well, ask me what is this all about
oh yeah, this is all about this decision to be just

simply happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Decision To Stick Together

i know what you know
and i do not talk about it
neither shall you

the usual truth
that hurts
that breaks
our hearts
the kind of truth
that somehow shall set us free

we have no choice
we can do nothing
when faced with these usual faces of diamond truths

but we shall remain as cow herons in symbiosis with Asian water buffaloes

we admire each others' silence
we have glasses and the only thing that we hear is the clink of our agreement to a dignified
silence

'cheers, cheers! '
our hearts are happy

what we have is respect
and what follows next
is hope
and perhaps
love
again

we are glad
despite the pains
we still have each other
in the silence of
our embrace
and the cold night
is cold
no more

RIC S. BASTASA
The Deer With A Golden Fleece?

and then mori became too small
for sufi.
galaxies away, mori had become
a very tiny star
not visible when you are too
complacent sleeping upon a bed of grass
looking up above the stars
sufi shines like a sun
to the sea and the desert
scorching every forest where
hunters bring their spears
still hoping to catch the
deer with a golden
fleece.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Defeat Of Words....

i am lost in the forest of words
i always have more to say, more is there in the thinking
that chokes whatever word i like to say,
and i end up
foolish, before an audience that waits for my
mouth to shape an embroidered
idea,
a dressed woman ready for
the ball,
a young woman undressing
before she bathes in the
river

of time

a word, and then i look at all of them
those who wants to be awed
mouths open, agape
hands

and i ask myself
what is there to be said?

there is so much to be thought about
and there is no
moment wasted in trying to capture
what beauty is there
which must stay as beautiful as it
is never
said., ,

it is more proper
untouched by the fingers of words

just like life, at first i feel that it must be written
sort of

this was it, this was how it felt, what we saw
what be believe in
ah, on an afternoon,
finding those drift woods washed ashore
children pulling their arms

you realize how emphatic things are
rather than calculate, and emote
and do logic,
a circus of numbers,
tightrope equations,

there is more that the stars are saying
there is more to the wide open skies
in all their
silence for they have long spoken
before i
was born

RIC S. BASTASA
The Delay

they had two flat tires,
the river swell like an infected wound,
the road was muddy like mad
and then it rained heavily

time ran so fast, and when they
arrived here, the birthday party
was already over

they explained the delay
about some rebels shooting the soldiers
and they hid behind the bushes on the hills

we were not afraid, our lives must move on
the party pushed through

the music was turned on and the dance started with a salsa.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Demand For Justice...

because you inflict pain on me
and i cannot touch you
then i might as well inflict pain
to the society as a whole
for you said you love society more
than what i am
as your next neighbor....

and then you cry out for justice
to the world
and then you call me
the congenital terrorist?

sometimes i throw this question to the air
how can you love the world
without loving me first
your very next door?

how do you ever distinguish this tree
from those shadows of the forest?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Demands

her demands are clear
she need the money now
because her feet are rotten
her daughter has to enroll
for a college education
she is selling land
owned by her forefathers
she does not need anything now
except the money
there is no importance of memory
of family treasures of blood
of veins
there is nothing sacred about
a family tradition
it is her life, her rotten life
her prodigality, her rebellion,
it her insanity
her own perdition
her hatred
and nothing more
i am perturbed i am shaky
about my very own
sister.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Demands Of Our Poetry....

it looks like a race of letters
there is this old typewriter writing everyday
till nighttime till dawn
and the numbers have become so many
looking tired and
clumsy

it so appears that the words do not experience any meaning at all
what is it to be a word in this
sentence? what is the meaning of such a literal existence?
is there a feeling between two conjunctions?
are the prepositions making the necessary links?
what clinching statement are you trying to
impress upon this
twink? there are no more stars in the heavens,
the moon has faded like a blue jean pair of pants,
the sun looks like a yellow button
and the universe has reduced itself into a plain white shirt
worn by an irresponsible teeter.

where are these evens leading us to? a devastated part of this island
speaks of the logical suicide,
ah, damned, the pigeons are not homing
and the chickens no longer roost on the same branch of the tree

indeed, the word do not entice anymore to live a good life
the whole novel is not new, it is melodramatic still
detached from that tsunami reality, pure soap, pure tearjecker

i wish to a truthful concern
one that touches not just the heart but the hair
one that surrenders and not just win
one that cares and cares and cares and cares
till the end......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Denial Of A Health Problem

tomorrow when we meet again
i will take off my clothes and show you
the tightness of my chest
my arms flexed
my fingers crossed

i'll show you a hundred push-ups
a set of sit-ups
i will do an hour of aerobics
a dance and a jumping jack

you will think that i am healthy
less the tumors and their sealed lips
i am not telling myself that someone is dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Depth Of Patience

how deep is the patience?
how long is the rope
for you to fetch the water
within
to cool the heat
to avoid the bursting
the evade
death?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Depths Are Not Meant For Us...

do not ever let that
submarine of thoughts
go deeper
than what is necessary
or required of
us

those depths
are not meant for us
mortals

and for this which is
made of
inferior metal
and flesh

for in there we shrink
like a paper box
pressed
against all its four sides

RIC S. BASTASA
The Descriptive Approach To Art...

descriptive, nothing but descriptive
uninvolved, spectator, watcher,
unattached, even you to the poem,
surreal and yet so real,
adjecify, non-action, suffering dispersed,
like mahogany seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desert Desire

There is no way to stop upon an endless stretch of a highway on a land without a sea upon a world without water

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desert Likes You

You are dry
acrid, no flower
blooms, here
the rocks feast
on sun and
moon,
winds come like
visitors,
nothing is
entertaining
except the silence
which strums itself
in the cadence of
breathing, no one
like you, except
the desert.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Deserted Fields

seldom do you find this place
tall grasses on the fields
white herons feeding
upon the green frogs gallivanting
on the muddy pools
bluer skies fresh air
trees nested by sparrows
trails of men
there are no houses here
flowers on the pavement bloom

nobody comes here anymore
most of them have left for good for the city
where work is available
where money can be harvested
like fruits from concrete trees
from cemented fields
under the flicker of neon lights
from unfriendly people

i am here, at home, with all my silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desire For Revenge

after the rain
the heart mellows down
like a bush
with wet leaves
drenched in the
freshness of
the atmosphere

the fire that burns
this forest
is stopped

the tongues of heat
are shut to the mouths
of enlightened
ash

the head turns to the sky
the arms opens
the fingers spread

revenge is gone
what comes again is peace
freedom from anger
the soul rests beside
the pond of
solitude

it is
because you prayed
it is not you now
but God

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desire To Eat A Tulip

One day
she
writes about
A poem that looks life
A map
For some directions
To a location
Of a hidden rock
Of gold and i
Who dream of
One day getting
Rich read it,

Only to find
This Woman
Smelling my Tulip

Wanting to eat it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desired Law Of Motion

we are not lost
our feet are merry on the ground
they have the agility of
horses in the wild
we think sometimes that we are
and people wonder why
and we have all the answers
why we think seemingly lost
in our stable positions

they say
those boats safe in the harbor
are no longer boats
but anchors themselves
and the sea
with contempt finds no use
for their sails

their keels rust
and each rust turns to dust
and each dust
become part of the
floor
whose mouth is as big
as a bay
and swallows all of their
history

we are not lost and so we think
when our feet though like those of wild horses
are steady on the ground

and the mountains are angry
and the air summons the storm
and the earth gapes to spit its fire
on that complacency

our world moves
our galaxy moves
and there is no sound reason
why we should not
be moving
with all of them

for it is a conclusion
standstill and you are lost
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Desperate Man....

perhaps you were born with
a certain kind of stigma

not that kind which
bleeds like an eye
of a widow
weeping

the stigma of youth
which found no pleasure
in the river

or that which pricks your finger with the thorn of a rose

perhaps you never had
a happy childhood to make you a man of accomplishments

you have remained to be just a child,
the most disturbed one which fathered
a psychopath

sad, but compelling, true and nonfunctional,
however, as evident as a nail
with its head stuck on the hardest wood,

there is still you in the disguises of masks
in the mirror of life
still, firm, tight lipped,
unwavering, to life, to life,
onward,

less the cowardice of
a thousand deaths which most
of the men
have desperately suffered.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Destroyers Of This Earth....

what do get from all these noise
the shouting women
screaming madness
all the commands of men

we get feed with something
that we always like to vomit
in the streets of this
shattering cities

we will be missing what was once there
a running brook, sunshine softly shining on the green fields of wheat
children cheering one another upon their innocent little games
white dogs beside the working men carrying their spades for digging
the women bathing and washing by the river

we are no longer happy people
having sinned destroying what was once green and fresh and alluring

RIC S. BASTASA
The Details

one gets too particular about the details of
the morning picture: there are two rainbows
from the top of the galvanized roof of the old house
surrounded by trees
its other foot extending to the hazy hills
the rain is soft
landing on the small ponds
below the trees with few brownish leaves
making some ripples
the grass is wilting by the previous summer heat
the wind whispers softly like a woman in love
the horizon gives a gray boundary of the foot of the hills
some houses look like pigments of black and brown spots
too distant for my sight
i sit here
my mind is calm like a pigeon roosting on the steel beam
of the gymnasium

they say
that when one gets too lonely
the details of the world becomes
too visible
one can even hear the flapping wings
of a butterfly lost inside
the room of your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
The Deterioration Of The Word Hello

the indifferent man on the other side
of the cyber line
perhaps has misunderstood my
hello
as a mode of great concern
thinking that i must be a man without means
with ignoble intentions
for his silence

hmmm, hellos are cliches
sometimes you say it
just to check if people are still there
more of
hey i am not alone in this silence
there are too many of us
to be ignored
by that usual indifference
that feeling that everybody is gone
deep to the caves of
death
and that this world is numb
and foolish
hello if he knows somehow
is of the lesser kind
inferior to
good morning i am here
bastardized abused
word that for a time
exists on a faded meaning
in fact
demoted deteriorated to
no meaning at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Devil

one that knows not how to ask
forgiveness for his transgressions
one that knows not what humility is
one that knows not how to accept failures
and offer the sacrifices to the Lord
one that knows not how to pray
and beg for mercy
one that know not how to rejoice
in everything that comes in one's life
happiness or grief
one that knows not what is the difference
between the temporal and the eternal
one that does not hope but lives in the
darkness of his anger and hate
one that knows not how to love
to heal and be well again
one that knows not how to help
one that knows how to hurt instead
and take justice in revenge and retaliation
is the devil

RIC S. BASTASA
The Devil Has Taken You

when you're so good
he tells you, nothing significant happens to your life
you're nothing but a straight line on paper

the devil continues, try me, i give you everything you need
fame, fortune, life eternal

the angel is silent, trusting you,
that you do not take side with the comfort of some deceptive lines

but woe to you, the angel weeps,
you have taken the side of the devil who now rejoices in hell

another one comes
open the gates, give him the best, for now we shall take him

he shall bathe in that ocean of fire that never stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Devils In Law School

there are
devils even in
law schools
engaging others
to gossip
talk in the middle
of my
lectures

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dew In You....

always give a space
for doubt,
spare some people
through a hole
where light still gets in
and illuminate

who knows?
it is someone else
and not you.

you are lovable as
a flower of the early morn
in full bloom
and laden with dew
by the window

no one, not even their doubts
can take it away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dew On The Lower Side Of The Leaf Of Grass

The dew knows
That for a short moment
The sun comes
And they shall be wiped
Out

These pearls of the morning
Somehow glitter
And make my sad self
Sing a song
To the coldness of this
Early season

They know soon
They will be gone

But happy to note
That tomorrow soon too
They will be back
To cheer another sad heart
Lost in this
Wanton garden of grass
And pebbles

These pearls of the early morning
In a short moment

Yet so intense
In the cold their confidence linger

RIC S. BASTASA
The Diabetic

she's actually 40
but she looks like 50

at the party
she is taking a case of beer

drinks like a drum
and eats like there is no more food
for tomorrow

on a frothy mouth
she says she is hopeless
and would not hesitate
if she dies tomorrow
or even today

her husband is younger
by six years
and she swears he loves her even
if she is broke

she drinks more beer
and had more steak
more rice
more spaghetti

at 4 p.m. the waves of the sea
in this island
start to grow bigger
the wind starts to blow

and she rushes the boatman
to take her back
to the city

after all i guess
she is still afraid of the coming typhoon
is she afraid of drowning?

i guess not
she says she is not afraid to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Diary

one day you shall write about a ship
in the middle of the sea
on a dark night

one day you shall write about the man
who was there without any hint
about where he is
and where he is going

you will finish writing about it
and let it stay there
until you close the pages
and declare that this is what life is all about

one day you shall open it again
and write about the man who plunged into
the middle of the sea
to find the message of its depths

whatever happens close your diary for a while
wait until you feel the switch
inside the dark room of your heart
find the sea and find the right hour to plunge just as it was written

RIC S. BASTASA
The Difference Between A Rooster And A Man

on the grass i see this rooster wearing a thick red comb,
tall for its lowly status, and well muscled as may be gleaned from the
thickness of its black, red and white feathers

how can he notice me stopping by to observe it
when its attention is focused on two slender hens
one is red the other white getting near it
and without any inhibition at all he copulated on each
of those two slender hens, quickly as a quickie

i can imagine in a few days, the two hens cackle with
lots of eggs for the owner now prepared with a big basket
to bring the produce to a crowded market

if i as a man does what a rooster does, you very well know
what happens next

it will be the people of this republic v. ric
and his dismissal from the government service

it makes me think however, on the other hand, the happiness of
the owner selling more eggs in the market because the rooster
had been kind and obliging to the two hens and the other hens in the yard

what about it God?

RIC S. BASTASA
at the hospital
i saw two views

in room 306
a father cradles
his new born son
beside the
sleeping mom

in another room
an old woman is
taking her
leviteracetam
and flumucil
as her husband
gives her a glass
of water

i am 56 now
and still trying to
evaluate from myself
where is hope and
where is despair....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Difference Between Prose And Poetry

it is prose
so i followed my head

it is when i follow my heart
where poetry begins.

you dance for a pay
i play.

i dance under the rain
no one is watching me.

you dance in the grand hall.
the clap is deafening.

someone does it for the money.
others do it for free.

as one said it once,
i kill for the money but since
you are my friend
i kill you for free.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Difference Between Us

i

what we know
has scared us
and we can even
predict when
we end our days

we know where it
is now,
it is inside our
veins
and flows like
a venom
from the snake
which bit and
then crawls
quickly into
a thick bush.

we are not afraid
about it for now
nay, we have become
powerful with such
knowledge
we have embraced
wisdom
like Socrates with
his poison.

ii

you are all happy
with your coming days
the summer and the
sea, the ball and
the boat
the foams of joys
where you dip your
bodies for a week
or son

there is something
however that we all know
and which you still
refuse to know
and act as quickly as
we did to ourselves

there is a sword in
above your head
there is a time bomb
in your heart

we are about to see
what you do not want
to be seen

and yet, why should we
be scared about you?

Enjoy your days
Have fun and love
as fast as you can....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Difference Between You And Me....

perhaps we have the same vices,
we write to confuse, but we drive some points,
like nails on sandalwood,
not those rusty ones that make the sound
of 'trying hard'
we are original in these, competing only with
our own syllables,
we may have the same vices
i may have written all those words to confuse
but mine is a series of stairs
leading to the door to the room to the window
to the skies
and then everything i am is gone
but you do not notice it
you think that i am still the chair and the table
the napkin and
the spoon.

my wings are hands
my hands are winds,
my mind are planes,
my soul a boat,
what i write are mirages
you see, you cannot touch.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Difference......

i see your picture
and i remember you
black lipped woman
curly hair and wide
open eyes with tears
about to fall but
i shy away, i could have
been someone else
into the hills i could
have died,
but i have chosen to be
myself among the many
where you think i am
a loser
having lost everything
original about me while
you stay there
as yourself toxic as
usual and cursing and
too honest, i have no regrets
as one among the many
unrecognizable now, because
there are so many of us
and you cannot point at
me anymore,

i am alive. And you are dead.
that is the difference.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dignified Rebel

for you to win, you should have adopted
the chameleon thing,
take the color of who is powerful
hold their hands, and be them
even for the moment that you still need them

you are as hardheaded as a rebel
whose color is blood against those walls of the towers
you raise your hands in the shape of a fist
and shout your freedom in the streets of murder

look at you, you're out now, ostracized, stinking fool
i pity you

but on the other hand, you are true and dignified
a true man in the bravery of a defeat
seldom growing in the fields of honor.

i must salute you then.
you let me live.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dignity Of Words

i agree as you say
that words must still keep that dignity
they used to have
before we meet

after all we started with a few words
took some more
and savored its flavors
the scents of its letters
the tastes of its
sweet vowels

when we kissed if you remember
we swallowed words

when we made love we let go
some consonants
to our satisfaction
the thrill seemingly without end

now while dining we are four seats apart
you seat at the front
i at the rear of this distance
between us

the words are not reborn
only this silence
constricting like a boa
swallowing
the crowd of thoughts in concrete

on walls of words
our heads finally collide

i could have opted for
the mute and deaf
the dumb who loves me for whatever i am

regret is not my choice
it is here and not leaving
it is eating me
like i am a delicious delicacy

i am sorry, i keep my mouth shut.
what will i say? i am back to the silent world
of my solitude

long time ago, this was paradise of clauses
now, you say it, this is a complete sentence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dipping Of The Spoon

the happiness of this world
is summed up
with the dipping of the spoon
to a hot coffee inside a porcelain cup

that lonely tongue that gets inside our mouth
as you close your eyes
playing with your teeth and gums

there is that thought playing inside the womb

a baby is kicking you and
you have pleasure

that love that gets inside your heart
and gives you
a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dirty Linens

now that all the dirty
linens had been
washed neat and clean
she wants
that from this time on
we shall always
sleep together
make love and deny
everything

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dirty Old Man

the dirty old man is eating
his favorite vanilla flavored oatmeal
he is mean and cheap
as he was in his younger days
filled with stories of his conquests
of the many women of the town

he looks at my wife his relative
he laughs and then looks back at me

and he said that it was all about a mother
growing the bones of a daughter
and a man comes along
boring a bigger hole inside her

she did not find it funny of course
something lewd is not laudable

i look at his mustache
some oatmeal got stuck somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dirty White Linen

after the love
you sleep facing the bed
down
you fall in a trance
of a fantasy fulfilled

the room is dimly lit
a glass half empty stands
below the lampshade

the dirty linen is set aside
stained
and ready for another
washing
tomorrow morning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Disappointment Of The Filipino Poet...

we're like seeding a field
at the noontime of our lives

when the sun sets finally
we retire and there are no fruits

a child is asking, 'where's the food, daddy?'
oh we have none, we are waiting for mom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Disappointment...

everyone looks
for changes
those that bring us
for the better
and yet we fail
to find any that
satiates our thirst
for the better
one...we look at ourselves
mirror to mirror
and we find
what we do not wish to
become...us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Discomfort Of Pebbles

The river runs
Cool on my feet
Underneath
I feel
The discomfort
Of pebbles

RIC S. BASTASA
The Discriminated Poet....

she will mistake
art as a form of disorder
it is not unlikely
since fails
in the Rorschach test
where butterflies leave
from the frame of a page
and goes somewhere else
and there will be more
stories of its adventures
no longer
warranted by the inkblots
of her mind

she will degrade you
into a candidate for an
electric cure
some capsules for medications
so recommendations
to another doctor

you are not a poet
but a madman eating words
drinking ink
barking like a dog
at the wrong tree
of this world

you keep you wisdom
shut your mouth
leave the place
and grow your flowers
somewhere else.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dislike Is Mutual

the dislike is mutual
it just happens
there is no explanation possible

time changes the enemy
now old and begging and wants to know why you have disliked him that much

it just happens
there's is no explanation possible

even if the location is changed
from here to there
from there to the other world
from the other world to nowhere
the dislike is still there

it just happens
and there even at the end of it all
there is still no explanation possible

RIC S. BASTASA
The Distance

let these
pillars between
us
maintain a
better distance
this house is
too heavy
and the pigeons
are flying
away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Distance....

when two kinds of delicate matters
come too close
everything becomes molecular
and there will be a hard time
figuring out
what is beautiful or real
or true

there is a need for the proper distance
an arrangement where focus is at its best

in the same manner is love and friendship
maintain that distance
not too close and not too far
balance
so that nothing falls and nothing floats

RIC S. BASTASA
The Disturbing Poem, To A Woman...

you should have known that when a man leaves you,
he will never come back

your tears have no power
even your regrets

your asking for forgiveness because of your
rude manners

has no more power for his strong wings
flying towards the faraway land of his own dreams

without you of course
he can still be happier.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dive In The Depths

take the plunge
dive into the depths
and then
do not attempt to rise
there
is where real salvation lies!

do not listen
for things are weird and
meaningless.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Divided Sea

after the flood subsides
the sea becomes divided
at the tip is deep blue
near the shore is the paleness
of the brown river
still confused
about what to do

somehow
the parting is gone
now the sea
is confident again
in peace
in the depths of its
blueness
in the joys of its
foams
as the seagulls dive
for its bountiful
fish
once again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Divine

i

to understand how is it to be human
he went to the womb and was born
he passed each stage

ii

part of humanity he was ordinary
he bled and died

iii

to conquer death he died
to conquer lust he lusted

iv

the divine experiences how is it be human
humanity makes a glimpse, divinity in morsels

v

a little light shines in the darkness
flickering and then fading and then waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Doctor

dr. cannot hide her madness
at the patient
who has always been gaining weight
despite the
written prescription for the
strict diet
of vegetables and fruits
and less carbohydrates
with a definite no on smoking
and alcohol
and fats....

dr. happens
the oily pork beside the chocolate cakes
the coca cola and rum and
Peking duck
goading, and hoarding
and overeating

he knows what he wants
she doesn't
he has always been praying for that quick
and happy death

dr. is too much
all his life he is the scarecrow in the field
the black birds tease him
the children stone him
the locusts have no fear of him
the golden fields have no need of him
the humiliating days are not over

he knows what he wish
the dr. is foolish

RIC S. BASTASA
The Doctrine Of Self-Preservation

the benefits of doubts
come to help you, and on

reasonable doubt, the kind
comrade of truth, extends

a hand of comfort, and the
eyes see you, compassion as

woman, mother and sister,
pleads, as the hammer strikes

renders a judgment, for your
final acquittal.

deep inside the room of
your conscience, lies

the most evil of your hidden
guilt. The self blindly protects.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog

the dog bites
surely
it has no fists
anyway.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog And The Man

you know
the dog that meets
you at the gate
of the house
wagging its tail
jumping to
embrace you
and follows you
towards the
kitchen
and sits just below
the table
when you dine
alone

it is a question
between the two of you
as the dog
pushes itself
to the level
of the beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog And Your Man

Dog stay and dog stays
Dog run and dog runs
Dog stand and dog stands

Dog catch and dog catches
Dog roll and dog rolls
Dog lick and dog licks
Dog hug and dog hugs

You are indeed a liberated woman
I don’t have to ask if that dog is your man.

RIC S. BASTASA
you cannot
have a custom cut
tailored morning
outfit

not always coffee
and cookie and perhaps
another
banana or honey and
cream

this morning i hear
you strum the guitar
while
i struggle upon a
left over
mashed potato still
cold from
the ref

we cannot keep forever
slaves
in our brains for we got
to row this
boat ourselves into nowhere
as usual

i'll keep the music alive
as i leave

you stay and just be that
dog
in my mind......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Is Dead (Grammar Corrected)

the dog he
gave us
was fed & well
groomed

how can we
tell him that it
died

ran-over by a
Volkswagen in
the street
of the subdivision?

our house is fenced
but it found a way toward
the street

in the middle of the
street it stopped there
and laid its body flat
looking towards the
sea

even dogs know what missing
is and how sometimes it leads
to a casualty

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Is Dead....

dog he
gave us
was feed well

how can we
tell him that it
died

ran-over by a
Volkswagen in
the street
of the subdivision?

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in the middle of the
street it stopped there
and laid its body flat
looking towards the
sea

even dogs know what missing
is and how sometimes it leads
to a casualty

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Of My Father

the dog that my father loved
on that day when they buried him
always finds a home no matter what
it is not going with anyone
and the rain finally took it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Of The House......

the dog of the
house who always
opted to go to church
early morning
with my wife has
finally changed having
chosen the
pig's bone instead of
the morning
mass, and there he is
enjoying to the most
his early morning
choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog On The Wall Of Childhood

turn your hand sidewise
and let its shadow be cast
against the wall of your room
ahead is the light of the
incandescent bulb

and again to please yourself
and be a child again
try to find that barking dog

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Poo

i have a dog whose
vice is to poo in the
neighborhood

its favorite poo place
is mrs. mendoza's backyard
since it is not
fenced

the old woman of course
is pissed
about the poo and the pee
in her flower garden

one day she told me
that that dog must be put
in the dog-pound
if necessary if i cannot
attend to putting it
in a dog house or
leash it

it is my favorite dog
and i cannot afford to do
it

here in the village
all dogs are free to go around
and play with other
dogs of the neighborhood

i must have been too liberal
or lax with the misdeeds of
my dog

spontaneously, with much
regret, i told her that she
better talk to my dog and
settle their differences
i have talked to this dog
and nothing's changed
it is still a dog ever since
who looks at me
quizzically as though saying
' i am so sorry
but in our dog world we poo
and pee
anywhere when we feel doing it
and it is us
without much fuss'

i look at it as it wags its tail
and sits beside me

'how can i ever ever send this
dog away? '

i wish mrs. mendoza should have
a dog too and perhaps later understand
what is a dog poo.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog That Ate The Moon

the dog that ate the moon
beside the cat
who wished for stars
had its own reasons,

it spat the moon into
tiny pieces of stars
making their mutual
dark existence
well lighted

and the cat who wished for
stars
after that moment
understood the meaning
of friendship
and trust.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog That We Love...

and there will come a time
that the only possible living creature to love
on earth is only our
dog.

living only on its needs
not on luxuries or want,
can fight only for a chicken bone
a bowl of milk,
and a little space
with rag for a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Which Gives Its Last Yelp And Then Dies.

your favorite dog senses your arrival
waits at the gate, by the garage, and runs
to meet you
impatient about the meeting and
rushing to you it stumbles upon the path
where you drive your car
which runs over the dog
which gives its last yelp and
then dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this new house
beside Petron

it is the house of a new couple
loving as they
are
they never had
a child

so they keep a puppy
instead

until one day the wife
met an accident
and instantly died

this leaves a man in
extreme sorrow
drinking his
life
away

and this leaves
the dog alone in the house
which was later sold

the dog has no one
to feed it and
most of the time spends
its days
in the Petron gasoline
station

which made the gasoline boys
take their time
feeding it
until it became their
property and friend
soon all the gasoline boys
had to leave
seeking greener
pastures
somewhere
else

this leaves the dog alone
again
sitting on the side
of the gasoline station
still dreaming
for its long lasting
master

of course,
there is none
and this leaves the dog
alone again

unfed, waiting for its
life span to
end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog Who Wants To Get Out Of The House

the Japanese fritz
is brown

the gate is closed
and it waits
for an exit by chance
there is so much
road to run
outside the walls

as i open the gate
it raises its head
and starts to scratch
the cemented
floor

i go out alone without
the dog
the gate is closed again

i carry with me
a feeling that i cannot
yet describe

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog With A Leash

if my goodness
depends on the way
i have followed your
wishes

forgive me in advance
but by now
i shall admire more
my ugliness

what good does it
provide
if the only dog that
you consider
as adorable is the
one with a leash
on its neck?

however intelligent
as you may call it
that parrot in the cage
will always be
deplorable

for as the cliche says
the best singing bird
is still the one flying
free in the forest

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dog, Leaf And Worm

THERE is this dog
and it lives a dog's life
it's life has always been
all for the bone.

THERE is this leaf
true to its being a leaf
lives the short life
destined to fall
blown away
rot or burned.

There is this worm
it burrows itself
in that cold and damp
and then
returned to
its humus origin

BUT there is this fish that
i know
a gold fish that swims
against the tide of
the Yellow River
jumps higher
than the barrier
cliff and
transforms itself
into
a Red Dragon

THE dog, worm
and leaf
do not believe this

They all call me
a story teller.
The Dog, The Fence And The Search For Meaning

this is a room
of ideas
a free country
let the words come
as they come
i am not choosy

' i did not come
to please everyone'
you said it.

'no one likes you'

'how dare you? '

we trek upon a snake
path

leading to the summit
of Mt. Diwalwal

(it means drool
tongue is out
looking for an
adventure

or meaning

what it means to look
for meaning?)

there is a hungry dog
waiting outside the gate
which you have closed
like a broken heart

the dog is angry
and anyone who comes out
shall be bitten
bitterly

if you kill it
it offers you the comfort of
its chosen silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dogs

the dogs in different
colors all four of them
lay silent on the
porch
until you come this
morning
bringing that smile
that they all suspect
is something
wrong
the dogs smell
always
whatever disaster is
coming
even if they already
know your name.

go away, go away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dogs Bark To The Moon

can be a joy to the moon
and the wrong trees
and the wrong trees
and the full moon
they all know have no
ears to listen to their
woes
but they know too that
the full moon and the bark trees
do not and cannot listen to their woes

'they are just our modes of expression', the dogs said and rested
for a while and then the are back
howlin and howling all over again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dogs Of That Place.....

this is the place
of reserved people

the men must be
silent
the women
head bowed

the children
cannot play in
the park

the sound of their
church bell
is extremely
sorrowful though
restrained with
its clanging

there will be no
mass for those
who hang themselves

the only ones who
are free
what to do
and can do it
anywhere
are the dogs

their tongues
lick
the tail wags
and they bark
always at the wrong
tree.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dogs....

because we have
dogs we pretend that
we are their
parents and that
they are our children

my wife sleeps with
one of them as i watch
and then go to sleep

i am not comfortable
with this situation this
life of pretenses but
that is how we are
supposed to survive
and live a little longer

it is a sad truth
that since we have not
obtained true love and
compassion from people
then we proceed into
a situation where we
say we can get these
matters from dogs

it has been this way
and it seems if you mind
asking me that everything
is okey, until something
very bad happens, but for

now i cannot tell you.
to know these you must
begin living with dogs.
share them your house
your bed, your dreams,
and let all these things
in a short while die with
all of them.

RIC S. BASTASA
TheDoing....

in the realm of
doing
you just have to
learn to do it
or just
do it, if you can.

there are no
explanations, there is
no need really.

you get what you see
and you see what you get.

after it is done,
what explanation is necessary?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dolphins Of The Seas Of Apo Island

does the dolphins of the seas
shiny and fast and sliding tossing the foams of the seas
of Apo Island

we are on this boat
and they are on our sides
we are traveling to another island
of desire
where we too can be home
the dolphins
always following our destinations

they are our friends
do you hear them laugh as they play at sea?
look at their fins, look at their teeth
do you see them smiling at you?

they are not asking anything
from us
they are our friends and they have given us
their sea and foams and splashes?

do we torture them then?
do we eat our friends?
do we kill them and make soup of their fins?
do we deprive them of their oils

into our heartlessness?

think my friend, do you kill the creatures who love you?
these dolphins, these friends
let us learn to love and swim with them
today

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door And The Windows

what i shall bring you is a door
of colored glass
behind it is profuse light
the one at 10 o'clock

what i have in my hand is the warmth
i borrowed it from the sun
what i cannot say is not what i am hiding
what i give you is a camouflage

if you listen closely and if you close your eyes
what my hand just gave you is the only truth
if you love me more than enough
you must not mention the need for windows

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door Between Two Worlds

this the door between our two worlds
it divides the inside and the outside
the light and the darkness
the choice is yours

there is no lock
there is only the hinge that holds the door to its place
when you open it
there is no sound
and when you close it
there is only this silence of the air sealed inside our minds

my heart does not sing inside
it is muted by the darkness that moment your gentle hands
close the door

it is patient, the mind

the incompatibilities of the things outside us
are too inviting
they tempt us to step outside and promise us
the magical wonders of freedom

we feel so light like our joys like cottons and clouds
they are no different from our wishes

i am in the middle of this door between us
& you look at me like i am the last man of this earth

your heart opens with eyes too careful not to know
what i do next is the suspense of this uncertainty

your eyes close, my heart bleeds
my hands wilt, your mind wanders like a lost wind

the door closes finally
walling us in
it locks upon itself and
the world sleeps soundly curling its feet on the beds of the heavens

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door Of The Hill

i got nothing but only
wind on my chest
please let me in
open the door of
the chilly hill.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door Of The House Of My Ancestors

currently amid
confronted with an old door
of the old house of my
ancestors,

the rust that eats the hinges
finally frees the door
at last!

it was enslaved by the haunting
sounds of the sudden
slam

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door Of The Stone...

things are not what they
ordinarily seem to be,

it will just take time
perhaps even more
for the stone to finally
admit that it
has a window,
that with my
plea
that i need to be inside it
even for a little while
and satisfy my curiosity
about its century old silence
its empty rooms
its feigned hardness and
sealed domain
shall also be finally
granted.

sometimes i ask
why must i bother it too
with my words?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door What You Wanted To Enter....

oh we wished for
the same door
to open

i invented the magic
words for it
it never opened for
years

by chance the gods
favored me
told me about its secret
tickled the spot
and then the door
opened for me

i tendered a party for
the unlucky ones
those who dream and
fail
we had fun together
as i shared their pains
and their envy

i alone entered the
door and i do not know what
to do

and here i am writing a letter
which no postman could send
and so it is just for me and
not for all of you

i invented words for that
to appease me in this grief and
sorrow

given the chance to go out again
i will be preaching the same thing.
the gods has punished me
there will be no believers anymore.
yes, not even myself
whose only dream now is to move out
from this room.

the door is dark and tight and strong.
it has no ears to ever listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Doorbell

as i wait for you
when it is late on evenings when i am alone
when it rings
i wish it were not another
(just you)
but it is not always the case,

i look through the bay window
it is the same uncared prankster
that child running
away from
an opening door

till now we never know for sure
his name.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Door's Grief

ah, the door's grief is not really brief,
it has been there since the hinges were fixed,
though it does not sound like an old man
grumbling, though its creaking sound
is hidden on a dropp of mechanical oil,
there are those who still slam it
and out of too much fear
its grief lies hidden continually
on every closing

when you open it, it gives a respectable smile
yet you fail to understand
what was suppressed from what was not so valiantly expressed
there is no word for this
even the door cannot describe it
till this moment
when you close it again and again
as it becomes
another wall of the house again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Doors And Windows

the windows would have been more beautiful
wider than the sea
and the doors
are as tight as the cracks
of the cliff so that
the thoughts may fly
and the secrets may find it
hard to escape
from themselves

mas nindot unta kon ang mga bintana
sama kalapad sa dagat
ug ang mga pultahan
sama kakipot sa mga liki
sa pangpang aron dali
ang paglupad sa hunahuna
ug lisod ang tinagoan sa pagpahawa

RIC S. BASTASA
The Doubtful Witness

at first the
gecko
last night
the owl fronting
the window
on the mango tree
and then the cuckoo
farther in the
pond as it started
to rain
that night and then
early that morning
the rooster
at dawn in the house
of the mayor
the twilight brought
the rapid bursts of
gun fires.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dough

canadian dough

alice is not everything

they come always

even sometimes when you do not need them

you put the yeast of your dreams

and soon everything alice will rise

just be patient and always

do not think about those ugly witches

sit by His side say something

i am beautiful this world is beautiful

this is beauty this is love

this is my hand and it is holding on to yours.
The Doves And The Tree

what i first see are the doves hovering on the tree
they are many and the tree looks as though its leaves are plenty

for one thing
the doves when they hover
they hover together
as a flock
and when they leave
they also leave together
as a flock
and the tree can do nothing about it

and thus it happens
the doves all left at the same time leaving the tree to the truth
of its existence

it has no leaves at all this summer
when hot is really hot in here
when all the doves fly away together

the tree
looks like the thin, worn fingers of a very old man
opening, stretching to the skies
praying for mercies

and what about it God?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drag

conversations at night
when you cannot sleep
arrive at a drag, not like
the one we had nights and
nights before
when we still do not know
much about each other
our bodies and
pasts, our way of projecting
ourselves to a certain future,
we begin to search for
the meaning of a present
and i realize
there is nothing much to
meaning, just a drag, to let
the hours pass, without killing us
neither tickling us,
boredom works full time
and we do not ask when will
this last. we are the experienced
class, the category that asks no
more, because we think we know
for sure, we think we already know
what we do not.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dragonflies That Cynthia Sings From Afar

cynthia from far sings about the fluttering wings of some dragonflies

those that i see in my dreams:

blue elongated bodies,
red gossamer wings of dragonflies
flying on the yellow green and baby pink winds

floating softly in my dreams
from a faraway place my dear cynthia sings

her dragonfly songs
those that ease my pains

all about love and its truth
that the hands of the past can no longer ever hold

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drawing

IN drawing my face
you rely on the lines
given by my words

in poetic motion &
on the night when
you are alone you
recall a face of

someone you love
you utter my name
and then i hover
like a dream

what am i like?
am i just a kiss that
gives the drafts of
the light wind

on such a dark night
like this when what
you see is nothing
but a thought of me

close your eyes and
open your heart
and let your hands
fall freely

i become real only
if you still remember

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dread....

who is
next? such

a dreadful
question which
the drunkard
asks to the
woman who detests
him
at the wake of
a neighbor whose
only son
met an accident
that afternoon
from work
his head smashed
without his
helmet on.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream

i like this to be simple.

she was tiny and smooth
like a shell
(not the shell of an egg)
a sea
shell, she has a song
from the wind
it is sad, but i love it,
her, she is the other woman,
on a bamboo bed,
she my time unexplained
i make love to her
she pretends, i am hurt,
but it does not matter,
i am lonely, and feeling so lost,
i am a ship
needing an ocean not an anchor
i have no port
of origin and arrival,
that night, the sphinx
was shattered, and the following morning,
she was dead
asleep, she was so exhausted like a slave
woman, feeding me the love
that i have not tasted,
i was a puppy, yelping for help,
for meat,
and then i wake up
early, for some
anxiety, what time is it,
where am i,
i am leaving, i offered her
not flowers, i planted a kiss,
it was not part of the
contract, but just the same
i kissed her, for she is dead asleep
dreaming perhaps of the
man she really loved.
i put on my pants
combed my hair, and silently
left the room, locked the door,
and be myself again.

it is as simple as that, back home,
i do not need any complication.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream At Dawn

it was dark
and he rushed to the room
where Fr. S. was waiting
for his confession,
it took an hour
for the recollection about

the bad things he did,
and it was completely
recited, after-which
the sentences of hail mary's,
our father's, and glory be's
were recited,

when he came out
the church door was already closed
and it was eerie
walking through that narrow path
that spits a sinner
out of its holy door

outside it is raining
and there are no more people
in the park
with few lights gleaming
giving a scenery of
impenetrable haze
of shadows and
guesses,

he felt light. His feet
began to float in the air
and he rose above
the acacia trees
where in the amazement
of a miracle
he spent more hours
in the air and rain
and darkness
contemplating still

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream For Peace

to dream of lasting peace
to an extent of sacrificing our own dreams
giving away a part of us
is another delusion

for peace is just a nap and soon
whether you like it or not
chaos comes as a matter of rain

when we get wet that is normal
the rain stops anyway

to dream that a piece of paper can make
an everlasting peace
is to wade into another quicksand trap

oh, many died on that same spot already
and history has a complete record of this and that

i learn to walk my day just like anyone else
into that daily road of non-expectations
and so i have peace in my heart and an open mind
that accepts whatever comes my way

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream Murderer

DO NOT think ill of him
this giver of misfortune
this killer of your dreams
for he does not think ill of you

he is the waker of your sleepy nights
so you may be like the virgin
prepared with the oil and the light
and the lamp
for the thief

think of him as a portend
a harbinger
an angel for the coming of your
many deaths
so you can live
forever

think of yourself as the child
who wants to have backbones and wings
and venom

when he is not gone you are ready for your own battles
armored knight of the night
vertebrate manager
winged god
dragon ready with its mouth and tongue of fire
venomous snake
holy cow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream Of Dew

that we are
never satisfied is
an accepted
phenomenon

the other is always
incomplete

the beautiful house
is never finished

this and that is
always possessing the
finishing touches

one's life is always
an unfinished business

that stair is asking
for another step

a mountain waits for
it is never that high

no path is even a dead
end to a vagabond

and so there they are
open-minded

Sahara deserts dreaming
of rain, of snow, of dew....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream Of You Dreaming Everyday

let us take some reverses

let us make the dream dream about us

will it remember u?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dream We Pursue Still Slips Like Fish From Our Palms

the dream we pursue
still slips like
fish from our palms
slimy and wet and
full of life fresh from
its habitat at sea
as you let go of it like a friend you
promise yourself from its
failures to capture at least one for the
moment to make life
bearable to finally make
yourself say that i for once know how
to end a misery.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dreamland Is Fading

on the early years of our union
this marriage
this institution of always being together
we know
we entered a dreamland
of what you and i ought to be
in our own dreams and expectations

we were disappointed
for a time
we wanted to be gods
we will never be
we fall again
to this earth
on the ugliness that opens
to our faces
mocking us
for dreams that never come true

by then we recall our promises
we remember the love
we invoke what we are from the beginning
dreamers in dreamland
now waking up
touching our eyes rubbing them again
to these realities

we are still in love
our bodies have changed
we feel the soul inside us
still with so much life

we hold hands again
taking the slow steps
we will be there
looking to the same direction
we shall be together
despite the odds
the dreamland fades
we shall touch the barks of the trees

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dressed Chicken

father kills the black chicken
and marks a cross of blood
on the temple of the birthday celebrant

he claims life is a matter of sacrifice
a chicken dressed for something

The blood from the neck
of the chicken gushes forth

there is silence in this
bloody ritual

between father and son
inside both of them they

hold that the spirits understand
how they must be appeased

from all ills and bad luck
the son must be protected

a father then washes the knife
that killed the black chicken

he is ready to kill someday
somehow when

another human being just in case
kills a son, that brute that base.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dresser

she is all dressed
sits on a chair
waits for the wind
she is not going
anywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drops Of Dew On A Morning Leaf

the drops of dew
glitter on the leaves
this early morning

how beautiful to see!
pleasing to the heart
that grieves

for a short moment
they shall be gone when the
warmth of day arrives
after dusk

but there is no worry
for tomorrow at the same hour
they shall be back

they will glitter again
to please another heart
grieving on an early morning

=================================================================

ang mga lusok sa yamog sa dahon sa kabuntagon

migilak ang mga lusok
sa yamog diha sa mga dahon
ning sayong kabuntagon

pagkaanindot nga lantawon!
makalipay sa kasingkasing
nga masulob-on

hamubo lang kaayong higayon
mawagtang sila pag-abot sa kainit
lapas sa kaadlawon
apan wala ang kabalaka
kay uigma sa samang oras
sa laing buntag mobalik sila

mogilak sila pag-usab
iyawat makalipay sa laing
maghilak ning dapita

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drowning Silence

i am into this
drowning silence
and i am this
driver of the pearl
of solitude
that even in the
depths of
sadness gleams
even without the
help of light

drowning silence
makes me
admire the need for
breathing

a streak of light
is all i need in the darkness
of these depths

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drum....... 

the drum
clothed with
sheep's skin
is absolutely
hollow inside

it is named
nothing yet

know its power
for it can call
enemies to war

make naked men
and women dance
for love

it is hollow
you open it
it has only air
and yet

hit it with your
fist and it will
wake all powers of
this world

it can decide
war or peace
live or die
dance or kill

love or love or
love?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Drunk Man Falls Into The Mudhole Of The Carabaos

drunk
of power the
rich and powerful
man fell of the road
face muddy
and still wants to rise
walk towards home
but could not find any
walks again and
falls on the mud-hole
where big eyes dilate
ears spread
and noses bleed and
saliva poured
from all those
horned
creatures.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dry Land

dusts reign in the dry land
beneath are the skeletons of our dreams
in hopelessness even the worms
of the dead are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dry Leaf

Look at the dry leaf
And follow the lines of its dead veins

There is song there
It is about death not love
It is about the crumpling of the earth
It is about the toppling down of an edifice
It is an egg without the yolk
A dryness that
Finally crumples like a white eggshell
Too dry
To stand on its own feet

A broken heart
A hopeless dream

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dry Leaves

you have an ear
i guess

for the sound of dry leaves
and voices calling for help
and footfalls
or footprints losing their ways
seeking for the way back home

i see you keeping a heap of them
not burning them but letting them be
humus of the earth

you lead the voices to the green mountains
their echoes becoming a symphony of bird songs

the footfalls and footprints
you give them your home as their home now
silent and sleeping and when they wake up
they look for you
their mother and guide

i wonder what kind of a star are you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dry River

what shall i expect from
this dry river,

it has a bed
but there is no more water

there is no more song
no rhyme

there are stones and sands
there is a desert

there are dry leaves
and naked trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dumb Poem

that which makes you angry
that which conquers you
that which makes you feel
so dumb that which you say

this poem sucks
this dumb poem

but it exists
because you have just read it
and makes you feel just the way it is

dumb.

meanwhile, i am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dummy In The House

i leave a note in the house
you keep it by heart

when someone looks for me
tell them that i am away

i am the master of the house
you are the good servant

when i tell lies
you must keep these lies as truths

if i tell you that i am one of the gods
tell them and insist on the truth of my assertion

and when i am dead
and when finally you are free

find another one
for you will always be the dummy of the century

RIC S. BASTASA
The Duration Of The Show

For how long is this
fashion show of
the beautiful gowns of
hypocrisy?

for as long as they
will love the show of course
for as long as they will
continue paying the
hours
with their selfish attention.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dusts Of Summer

the restless dusts of summer
lay restive on the path
after a blessing of rain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Dying Too....

the bed takes only sleep
it has lessened its variety
before that
years ago
it was something else
it was more than its nature
a playground,
even a sea where boats sail
where seagulls nest
it was a spread of green cool grass
even clouds
it was even an island of paradise
with parakeets
and orchids and singing creeks
or squeaks

a bed ages
those who are in love, and remains to be so
keeps it
friendship starts to seed
flowers bloom, roots widespread

and the bed still becomes a home
of shed skin, white hair,
uncut fingernails
and missing words, and unspoken dreams

it's long partners, the ceiling and the fan
and the bulb that blinks sometimes
still vigil the whole night

time changes everything, it is sad,
the bed wears the blanket in white
dusts accumulate, pictures are removed
from the headboard

the bed also dies, and then waits again
sometime, for the weary, the hopeful
and the like all the rest, the dying too.
The Eagle And The Man...

like an eagle one soars and tries
to scuttle for an island where it may nest
and lay its eggs
hoping for the cliffs and
some sticks and trunks of deadwood
wandering if there is
a monkey for dinner to start with

none so far attracts the beginning
of greatness
there is no height and there is no
sound for prey

the eagle wanders dissolving in
a far horizon

the man stays foot under the big tree
envious of the searching trip
unable to dissolve itself in his
chosen horizon

in his world of fences and walls
safe and yet so unhappy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Early Morning Church Bell

i remember the sound
of the early church bell

but i do not remember
the feeling anymore...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Early Morning Prayer

as the heron
meets the new day
it stands still
looking at the new rising sun
on a clear pool
of water
that its own feet
protects
it casts a shadow
on the clear water
listening, listening, listening....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Early Morning Sunshine

i wait for your caresses
in my little garden
on soft feet you arrive
gently touching
my cold cheeks
my damp body

on my feet the grasses
offer their dews
the calendula its petals
in saffron

RIC S. BASTASA
The Early Morning Verse

Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.

(as i read these lines
i am chewing my new medicine
a black herb so bitter to my tongue
to be swallowed when finally
liquefied)

do you know the sickness of the mind
of the poet out there? Just like you
he is looking for the cure, the madness
to be well again.

it is not the score of the hour
it is the easing of the pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Early Morning Walk

the night is gone
the rains stop

to start with
i take a walk

to greet the early
morning with the silence

of my heart to listen
to the songs of birds

high on those trees
as i tread the grass that

covers the path where some
friends used to walk

someone so active has
succumbed to cancer of

the colon the other with
a white beard gave in

to a coronary defect
the old couple still take

their walk here and when
we meet we smile perhaps

thanking the Lord that we
are still here talking

our usual walk on an
early morning waiting for

the sun to shine upon our
weary minds.
as i lay my body
upon the grass

coldness seeps
in my garment
then to my skin
penetrating my
body
into the recesses
of my brain

it is the logic
and emotion conjoining
like twins

there is this coldness
that i allow
somehow

from the earth
to my spine
to my heart

it comforts me
that we are still connected

the warmth of my flesh
and blood

into the silence and
coldness of

this Earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Earth For Free...

sensing that you do not wish to talk

or engage in

oral intercourse like those previous
free falling conversations
which we
conclude to be honest and candid and free
and agreeable

i stopped talking too

talking is not important anyway because
my fingers
have taken as many mouths as there are

without being loud

i respect your silence but somehow i detest your way of surrendering to the helplessness of

silence

i remember when i was told that tomorrow will be my last day and which happened to be false

i visited friends and knock from one door to another telling them

that i love talking and that talking relieves me from the pain of having been given only one day to live

when i have not gathered the sunflower which shall bloom in February when my book shall arrive next week before i shall close my eyes and cease breathing

we were under a pyramidal roof surrounded by coconut trees
beyond us the sea and some white painted boats

the seagulls are busy catching fish on their beaks
while fishermen arrive with salt on their bodies

and it was that time that I notice that this world is so beautiful
and the people too friendly

and yet
when we leave and be away for good and think that out there
there is more to all these

there is that sense of obligation to comply
this is not our home but just a hotel and we must not be too ungrateful to stay
some more

because we did not pay anything at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Earthen Jar In The Garden During The Rain

it is there
it has a mouth gaping
filling itself
with the rain

this is a rainy
day and it
will rain here
for weeks

the jar takes
all the water
drinks it like
it is a thirsty
woman

yet just like us
it can never be full
even for weeks
or for years

there is always
a spill
of what is full
there is always
the emptiness
even in
the physical fullness

the jar is there
alone
it is raining and it
will rain for weeks

the jar never breaks
it is
alone.
The Earthly Bias....

you are
this man torn between
sky and sea

you belong to the earth
take note

pray
that the sky shall not blind you
neither the
sea to drown you

take the middle

compromise, compromise,
compromise

always have that
compromise

the earth is still the most
beautiful place
to live

give it the bias
that for the meantime
it deserves

RIC S. BASTASA
The Echo

i make a sound
around the sides of the mountain
like walls to my being
the sound comes back to me
over and over again
like a conscience barking
a dog fenced
barking without end
i listened
and i wonder if it is the first sound
i made

what we do and say comes back to us
begging
that it would have been better if we have not
done and said them at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Echo Of The Words

when you say something
i simply copy and paste
and you think i am not ok
when you say something
i simply copy and paste
and you think i am not ok
when you say something
i simply copy and paste
and you think i am not ok
when you say something
i simply copy and paste
and you think i am not ok
but i am ok, i am ok, i am ok.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Echo, The Mocking Bird

to produce the echo
i need one single voice
to make the sound
i need the hill and another hill
sort of wall
where the voice is trapped
and bounce
from one corner to another
and there you have
the echo

you are the sound
i am the hill
and another hill
i am many
much many than you
expect

do you see that tree
higher than your roof?
i am that hill beyond
the grassy field
do you see the mockingbird
sitting on the twig?

please do not mention
any name
do not drag
another one

but if no one admits
well,
it could be me
i supposed so, it can be me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eclipse

you are asking:
where is the sun?
why is the sky still pale
when it is already 8 a.m.?

and this is my answer:
the eclipse of my heart
has eaten it
swallowed it whole
without mercy

it was terrifying.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Editor
	onight
he will read many poems
and he cannot sleep because as always there will be many poems from me. he
asked for them anyway. and everything i have in my mind
will always be poems.

the editor is an insomniac.
and from the hundred that i emailed for his perusal.

i guess. i need only to see one
that he thinks deserves
his choice.

i laugh. how can he ever find that piece of little garbage
as art form?

funny. dear editor, everything is a fake.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Effects Of Distrust ....

the point that the finger of distrust shows
is that you become what you are
firm and unperturbed as others cannot make you
comfortable about what to do and where

you experience this way of looking at things
straight to the eye
and without any question anymore
the way you walk alone on that pavement
where you are too definite where to go
and stop

you have become a horse driving no carriage
listening to no master
there is nothing that blinds the side of your eyes
you listen to the wind and you leap upon its imagination

of a mirage, a desert that you can cross
the oasis that waits for you and the date palms with abundant fruits

there is no one now that deserves your voice
it is you and you alone that must speak and be heard
you alone that live and die
for in truth there is no one that has that ability to save you

for now, being alone is strength
a recuperation from a brokenness
a reconstruction, a redemption....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Egg

the egg
is never a circle
we were made to
believe it
that way
like the way they
twist the shape of
our earth once
the egg at first
was a tear
solidified by
the persistence of time
stretched a bit
it is elongated now shaped
as an oblong
like the truth
stretched to a tip
transparent against the light
fragile
and if not handled with
cautions
it breaks and scatters
the yolk yellow as the
moon at night
stares at you
on a wasted
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eggs In The Basket

eight eggs in the basket-
hopes wanting to hatch.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eggs Of The Blue Bird On The Nest

the blue bird
takes care of its nest
all the white eggs
warm beneath its feathers

all those nights
and even cold days

and then when the eggs hatch
the fledgelings
prematurely spread their wings
fall off from the branch
where the nest hangs

on the following morning
you see the ants feasting on their flesh

ah! the blue bird sings again
readies itself for the rain

it escapes away from its sorrows
and flies away...far, far away

far, far away....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ego

what bursts outside
those that explode and still try to entice
into not believing
what truths lie so obvious
inside the heart
the still pond is as cool as ice
it always tells what
you are
and yet you care not to listen

what stillness has this
that your conscience keeps
there is no equation for
the troubles that we seek
to conquer

there is mother
and grandpa always telling us
to keep right
to do right
to speak the truth
and always triumph

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ego In Meditation....

Many many times i raise my hands in prayer
prostate my body on the floor, and close my eyes in deep meditation

i bite my lips. I hide my tongue in shame.
Many, many times i make promises to change myself, to redeem an old
dirty self and wash it, and cleanse it with all remorse

Many many times the pain comes back and lashes me with its whip.

i enter my room. I lock the door. I keep myself inside myself.
Many many doors become many many doors.

This house, this temple, This self
Always loved, always forgiven.

Many, many times, so many many times.
It is endless. I cannot just stop it.

It is not mine anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Electric Fan

as the electric fan on this third world pleasure
blows its wind beside your feet
spreading what coolness is required of your skin
it too sucks
the bottom part of the curtain
touching the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
The Element Of Freedom

two puppies
playing beneath
my chair,

running to every
nook of my
room,

defecating
when they like it

i don't mind
we're happy
in this pursuit

of little happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Emerald Ship

entertain no
grief over the sinking
of the emerald ship

ships sink
it is not unusual
in this ocean of blue
dark blue
ships normally sink
lots of ships
their numbers
unrecorded

we do not have
to grieve anymore
about the losses
we accept them
as diaries of
the most common
day

when we meet again
i do not say anything
grief is not part of our vocabulary
we can talk about anything
the usual moon and stars and
suns and rivers
those beach umbrellas in
rainbow colors
beer foams, steamy diddums
dim lights
resort huts, starry skies
jokes,
leave law books and
principles

for now
there is only trivial talk
sort of variation
from too much dipping
diving into
whirlpools of
serious doubts

hold on to a glass of beer
take a look at that sexy woman
passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
The Emerging Clarity Of Your Situation

In the midst of all these
it is you
alone in the picture surrounded
by an ocean
of faces and bodies
all fading
into a face of blankness
a body of
liquefied ice block

it is cold and hazy
upon a background of a picture
blurred by the
flow of some tears

you emerge in the most
beautiful texture of
a clarity
that is rarely spoken
by mankind.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Emptiness Real Than Ever.....

i, too was surprised
i, too could not believe
that it is me, that i could be me,
but beforehand, my hands gave the
signals, that that could be me,
detached, creating a mirror to my
mirror, and i have to be just another
patient spider, watcher, and predator,

i touched the image before me,
i feel cotton, then i take a part,
it is snow dissolving in my finger,
but it is me, it will always be me

which i have always denied, spurned,
covered, and pretend to all those
who are happy with me, that there is
only one me, and no other.

at night the dreams are mushrooming
showing all the same faces of myself,
wanting water, always thirsting, and
i wake up to the horror of an empty
glass beside my table, the dreams put
it there, saying, the glass is real,
the emptiness real than ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Emptiness That Eats Poems, And Yet Still Hungry

(my) emptiness is greedy

it eats as breakfast
five to six poems in a day

it will require more for
lunch and
an unspecified number for
dinner

when midnight comes
it complains

it is still hungry.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Emptiness That He Can Only Fill

when you wake up
you know that the woman
you sleep with
throughout the night has
already left for the
morning church and here
you are still carrying
inside your body an
emptiness which she has
not filled
despite....

and you mumble again
forgive forgive me Lord
i make a plea
for You to come inside me
to fill me
it is this emptiness which
no one ever fills
this nest where you shall
hover and stay
to lay the eggs as blessings
for my fading future....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Boat In The Lake

there is a time when you want to be left alone
like an empty boat
left in the quiet still waters of the lake
above you the white clouds drifting on the blue skies
below you the transparency of the clear depths
fish swim beneath you minding only their own separate lives
weeds along the side of the lake growing without eyes and ears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Boat On A Very Low Tide

the empty boat
on a very low tide
is filled
with the light of the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Cup, After...

honestly, it was not the tea
that pleased me

its odor and taste
after all those years
the tea finally bored me
there is no more joy in the sipping
no pleasure anymore
in the vapor

this is a little bit surprising
honestly, it is the emptiness of the cup
the hollow space
around its mouth
into its base
that depth of unfathomable silence

that in no end
pleases me,

amazed, i am intrigued
plagued
into the explanation of the burden
that it has passed
to the fingers of my hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Hole

i think the spring from which this poetry comes is Eros,

desire, suspended desire, one which are like spiders from your belly crawling out to build cobwebs

waiting for a prey, but why should it be a prey? because the spider is not a flower or the sun that is welcome to every green vast field

it branches out into rain because no one is there to make the clouds of a bright day

it is always dusky and the door which is open has no one signifying the coming

Eros dying, speaking in tiny tongues, unheard, and no one comes to listen to love and return love with love

it moans upon itself, day and night, it sings the saddest song of its isolation

the cobwebs have remained empty and then the sun sets and then the spider curls itself like an island in the middle of a black ocean

each day is a moan each day is a missing word that you cannot find to fit to the hole of your final idea.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Shell On The Abandoned Shores

priding on its big mouth
without teeth and lips
the empty shell sings
about its past, and the
abandoned shore begins
to weep, and the
cocoanut leaves start to
fall, and the........

world stops to ponder.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Empty Sky....

now we are divided
you are confident, this shall fade away
it is a wind without roots anyway.

your beard is long and mixed white.
your hand is caressing its tip and you fix your eyes on me.

i am not attuned to this killing.
so many. Now, are those i very well know.

tell me a story of your suffering.
prison. torture. redemption. any neutral and tasteless word.

i know places are exchanged for memories.
avante garde. carpe diem. does it really matter?

two hours is long enough for strangers.
we have turned the cards against each other.
the wall is bricked. each hall is without a door and a window.

i never dream of becoming a prisoner or your slave.
i go down. i take back my i.d. and my freedom.

outside the streets are crowded with taxi cabs and
jaywalkers. I flag down a yellow cab and asked the
driver to take me to the biggest mall of this city.

i eat at kimono ken. ALone. And then watch a movie.
Unmarried wife, and let the hours pass away neutrally.

nothing political now. Nothing to justify the next victims
of this political order. I know you but i am not telling
anybody.

There is God. Judge and Executioner.
Tonight, there is no moon. How can i love
an empty sky?
The Empty Spaces Of The Dark Sky

to what shall i compare
my life in this world?
it is my way of saying hello to you
resounding to your door
and rebounding to your windows
passing through your kitchen backdoor
and off into the empty spaces of the vast sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
all those tiny birds
all the lost cats and
homeless dogs and this
early morning an
abandoned puppy, come,
come, have your good
time in the empty yard
that my dead ancestors
left for me and those
that rest before the
night comes in mournful
embellishments of fading,

come, come to this place
of silence and solitude,

where i too, sit, and
continue on this ponder.

RIC S. BASTASA
The End Of The Love Team...

how it ended  
i was only told  
they split  
in Chicago  
one cold day  

another sad  
reality about  
how a love team  
ends  

i thought they'd  
be forever  
just a thought  
anyway  

at any rate i look  
at their posts  
in Facebook a day  
after Christmas  

the smiles are better  
this time  
the girl has her new Jack  
and the boy has his  
new Jill  

next week the guy will  
be married  
and i got invited  

meanwhile the girl  
still loves Chicago's  
hot grill.  

RIC S. BASTASA
The End Of The Rainy Days

the kid is taking out from the cabinet
his sneakers

the bike is ready, and the kite his father made
out there in the open fields
his friends are waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The End Of The Story Of The Creature Who Feared The Sun And Man

..and so the creature who had feet and skin for fear of the sun learns to live on the water evolving into a fish with gills and scales & some fins and lots of slime purposely to evade the touch of the fingers of the moss and stones

its mouth forever silenced by its noble choice just to be its lonely and isolated self

RIC S. BASTASA
The End Of This Gossamer Dream

The final view
I will not see
It is the end
Of this gossamer
dream

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ending Silence Of Departure

when the house breaks
like a porcelain plate

tiny pieces can hurt
the hands and feet

i know the reason of my birth
i will be the one to pick
the broken pieces

days and nights my fingers
busy on the piecing
tears are glue and
sobriety is the faithful
house help

the ruins stand back
the house takes a ball of light
on top of the
cliff

a lighthouse summoning ships
to take the safe path
collisions are avoidance
and parting becomes new meetings

a hug is the cure for all these
lonely stories, the ending is
the silence of departing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Enviable Family Pictures Of Christmas

the pictures are
viral, family, yes family

a woman who is pregnant
for her second baby, beside

her son, and smiling husband,
in the porch of the house

the sun shines brightly and
the grasses too green for the

season, and you scroll some
more and this is more enviable

grandma and grandpa beside each
other, with all their married

children and surrounding them
ten or more grandchildren

the picture is rectangular to
fit all of them in one happy

picture this Christmas to mark
another milestone of their lives

in prosperity and posterity while
we just look on, turn on the TV

and focus more on what is happening
in Aleppo or in Australia or Germany

we divest ourselves of this happy
moment and divert out attention to

something worth taking and talking
because, we cannot have it, we can't
we simply can't, we reason out, we are designed that way, Period.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Envy Of Friends

we who have everything
if you only come closer
do not have anything at all
you should know that
by now

you do not have to envy us
we just know how to package our faces
in a box of smile and
that hurried laughter
beside the pool where the
party is going

what we do not have
is all you have
what you do not have
is actually not important
ours is mere paper
yours is pure affection

bear the lightness of your load
do not look beyond our fences
sit comfortably within the confines
of your wife and children
on that ordinary but
warm sofa

you know very well
we do not have ourselves
we have an expensive house
a number of cars, a bloated bank account
a network of friends
and super influence
but come closer
closer than closer
we do not have
actually a home
we do not have sincerity
we are not genuine
we are like wax that burn
when the sun
begins to shine

so you see
all is fair and square
turn off that green color
of your eyes
live your life
like you have never lived before
like you have never known us
that closer enough

RIC S. BASTASA
The Error

this is not an ordinary error that one corrects
like a grammatical mistake
that with a slight stroke of the pen
everything becomes correct
and acceptable

this is repeated error
one knows it is an error but one does not correct it
it plunges and pushes and pulls
back to the same error again
something delicious
so sweet to the tongue
the mouth salivates
and the heart pounces upon
a thousand breathings

this is the error that one always looks forward to see
one evening and another
in a room the two of you sharing it
you kneel and pray and soar to heights
without so many words wasted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Escape Door

I want an escape and so i run away
towards a door which has writing hands
overlooking a pathway of oceans where
imagination looks like it, vast expanse of
a dark blue
field
filled with monsters.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Essence Of A Departure

upon leaving
another one passes me by
in fact has already decided to forget

perhaps realizing that i am another wasted time
or a shape of regret

an abandoned house where the grasses have become free
where birds begin to think that they own this beam

how many women slept here and rearranged their hair and looked at their faces
in that old mirror of the dusty room?

there is no attachment whatsoever
each is bound by the compulsion to leave because someone is waiting and
waiting
and expecting for a meeting

falling leaves outside the winds are tossing them
you only hear the usual sound of the rustling but only for a time

and then back to the usual silence
that no one is interested to question

someone is familiar and shakes her head and shoulders
and we do not react because we fully understand

RIC S. BASTASA
The Essence Of A Woman

much has been said about
the essence of womanhood
Miss Bulalacao says it is
motherhood. So the childless
one is not a woman anymore?

one must go back to the basics
of Plato,

the essence of man, which without
it he ceases to be one,

and this applies also to the
woman is

this capacity to think, which
if one surrenders thinking to
motherhood, or to greed, or
even to art, or lust
or luxury,

she ceases to be one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Essence Of The Waterfall

the essence of the waterfall
its beauty
the reason for its existence
is the falling

day and night it falls
and falls and falls
you cannot stop it

let it be let it be
like the way you are falling
from the skies of your dreams

it is your essence
it is the beauty of your existence
it is the meaning
of your being you

let it be let it be
find the bottom of it all

you shall find rest there.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Established One

a rare encounter
tempts, another seduction
(if you only learned
about this art earlier, no harm
could have fallen
in your heart now in pieces
all broken, now blood dripping,
vein exploding)

embrace familiarity
dance everyday let lust hug you
and master the giggles
on your toes,
have a dose of all its qualms
drink every dew that
morning leaves offer
to your lips,

by then, your arms are stronger
your tongue possessing
discriminating tastes,
now the silence gives you power
the stare stable,
you are not shaken by the hair
the touch does not
give you fear
you are what makes
the house a
palace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eternal Chase

since they cannot really live together
the sun and the moon
keep chasing each other

hence our nights and days
hence you and I
hence the rest of those who choose the peace of the night
and the brightness of their days
in this eternal chase

RIC S. BASTASA
The Excesses Of Life....

the heart aches
not always for love
unrequited
the body fails not
always for
food uneaten
it is not the lack
that states the reason for
this
foremost
it is the excess....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Experience With Nature....

you focus
on the paper and put the
rain there
added the trees and grass
and the
wet wide plains

you rust the river of course
and some buffaloes
and the whip and the
leader of the pack
of wolves
and the lost sheep and the
shepherd

you miss the experience
instead: outside, how water feels with your
palms and feet and naked body
the slime on the rocks
the salt in there to your tongue
the snail to your nipples
the moss to your lips....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Exploration

one does not
easily forget

a rose
tattoo
an inch below
one's navel

as one's hands
explore
farther

the meaning of
life
down under.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Expression, Yes, Just The Expression

after all is said and done
one can say
poetry has nothing to do
with it
not the words and rhyme or
whatever
matter
not the rules of what is an ideal form
not the sound
the way that once you demanded that it must be magical
at the end
it is only the expressed emotion that really matter
i feel it
and i exposed it to the world
hoping that too
once i existed just like the rest of all the components
of what we think is
the wave of humanity
what we perceive perhaps as merely the sounds of
dolphins and
elephants or as eels
and that most ordinary dog
that you dub as
barking the wrong tree.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eye Of The Storm

look at you, the eye of the storm
looks at you
and you stand still
and the storm
winks about this game
and the storm
goes away it has no eye for you
who you? who are you?
you are nobody
the storm even detests you
finds you
irrelevant for its meaningful
destruction

you stand still
what do you feel? it is irrelevant
you are but
another eye eying another eye
destructive too
but silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eye Of The Universe

The one and only eye
of the universe
looks down upon all of
us

its laughter is at a
vibration level which
we cannot hear

we are inside it
and we think that we too are eyes
who can see clearly
what is there and what is not there

we argue more than the
dusts
we like to compare ourselves
with the orbits of the planets
that move without
a thought

the one and only eye of the universe
does not blink
it moves and moves and moves
away

like the star ship of our movies
until we sleep
and too pass away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eyebrows

for doing nothing
for simply being there
the eyebrows
are given a higher place
than the nose
the eyes
the mouth

they who feel more important functionally
feel aggrieved
about the arrangement
the hierarchy

and the eyebrows that know the reason
simply
niked wanting to laugh to something funny
that the future
has imagined

you know what jealousy may give sometimes
a comedy
and the inevitable chaos

RIC S. BASTASA
The Eyes Are Not That Keen

the hand knows how to
deceive the
lazy eyes
and the mind pleases
itself with
such a magic

paper shreds turning
into peso bills
the rod transforms into
a bouquet of daisies
the black hat giving birth
to a white rabbit

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fable Of The Turtle, The You That You Imagine To Be.

you see, more are running ahead of you,
they’re taking the shape of rabbits and foxes, and even kangaroos,

and you stop a little bit, drink water from the pond, for you are the turtle of the race,

and butterflies and dragonflies sympathize with you,

the cricket advises you to quit, there is no use for the race, some are simply created to run the speed of sound or light,

such an exaggeration could have made you bow down to defeat and accept the nature of your slowness, or clumsiness as the snail calls you,

one who contents itself with its own path of slime and silence,

but here you are, stretching legs, and nerves
carrying same house,
or heart
of steel perhaps
taking the race again.

The legend remains
or that
fable, which you call
as destiny,
foretelling
as always
your winning at
the end.

'it is', you say,

'it is enough
that i was the turtle
who won
at the end of the story'
and

there you are, in the books of
that fable history
binder, ...

the winner.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of Agony

pale, and abandoned
this is the face i see on the paper
veiled woman in black
lips cracked
teeth protruding
closed eyes
yet she swears
she knows where she is going
what she sees
inside her dream
in that nightmare
are obstructions
of guns bursting
she flees
and they find her
he kicks her
and laughs
he is dominion
she is a mystery
he is the shackle
she is freedom
seeking freedom
he is force
she is resistance
he laughs
she does not die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of Anger

somehow in the mirror your face of anger
has distorted the lines of your face
you have changed
the dark hues of hate in horrible reds
have changed your hair into locks of fire
your eyes do not see clearly now
as they are full of cinders
your words are all screaming and
unintelligible
we like to help you regain the face of God
our waters of compassion are not quenching
our love have been all useless
you try to burn whatever you touch
and leave ashes of them on the grounds
do not blame everyone that abandons you
under the circumstances
it is the wisest and the most practicable choice
you consume yourself alone
hate has owned you
you have become another casualty of evil
and we are nothing
but helpless spectators.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of Guilt...

he looks at himself intently like
he were a stranger,

trying to find out how time, they say,
distorts the personal truths in each of us,

his face is square, used to be, but it looks like
a triangle now, tip extended like a boat on sail,
his lips from reddish cherry have turned into
gray, heavy clouds,
his beard has grown into a forest attracting
monkeys and birds, and so is his hair unwed to chaos
before but lives with such a confused mistress,
his eyelids droop heavy with problems,
his eyelashes do not have the waves of the pacific,
his chin the arrow before has become the
bow,

he looks at his eyes with veins like craters of the moon,
and asks: why did he ever do such a mess?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of Ponder

the classic one
naked, butt on a rock
legs extended
body sits and hands
supporting the jaw
like a pillar
to a cellar

got one today
with my glasses on
i stare to the sea
amidst the storm
with my window
open

i am not naked
nay,
i am fully dressed
without any plan of going
to any place

my hands hold the frame
my feet rooted on the floor
my soul like water inside a glass
overflowing

i am emptying
because i am full.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of The Philosophy Student

the face
does not breed the contempt
of familiarity
it forges a smile
beneath the
logical confusions
it shakes the hand
of the teacher
who now
is too old to remember
what reason
what cause
what knowledge was once
there
on the shoulders of youth
on the crisis of
middle age
on the thrill of what must
finally come
that peace
ever nal.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Face Of Your Anger

the face of anger
stares at you
and you ask yourself
what is it that i have done
that causes this
storm inside you
your cheeks bury the
teeth that gnash
your lips are the prison
wall of past wars
you were defeated there
conquered but was set free
for your humiliation
you hair runs against the wind
wet with the tears
of the earth
your nose protrude like a spear
longing to strike the
kill
she runs away from you
and hides in the forest for safety
all night
she sees your face
there is love
growing in her heart
moss to the stone
wet with dew.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Faces Of Failures

a boy before he can
talk and
walk must be taught that life has two faces

the first face is that of success
the other is dismal failure
the latter has more than five shadows
and they always chase you
to disarm you
and then kill you

a father must train the boy to love
not just the first face
but also the second
lest he can be a candidate for
extinction

when this boy grows to be a man
the faces of failure and its thousand shadows
cannot defeat him
not one of them
even the one with live snakes on her head
can turn him into
a useless piece of stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fact Is, In The World Of Lies, Life Is Fair

accept the fact that sometimes we say things
that we do not mean, that sometimes we burst in anger
and we hurt and then we apologize that we do not really mean to hurt

sometimes we show feelings too that we do not really want to express.
sometime we say 'i love you' and yet we are just compelled to do so

someone is dying and he needs you badly at the end of her day.
sometimes, accept the fact, that time strains us and we become

the liars, the hypocrites, the fraud, and the swindler.
and most of all, we keep it for a time, making some stares straight in the eye.

accept this fact, we are humans and in some harsh times
we decide, to survive, at all costs, no matter what.

now, we shall talk, and you shall listen and i shall write about the truth
of this fact. we are us conjoined twins in the art of deception.

lie to me as i lie to you and then we accept this fact: life is fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fact....

they pretended to be there
and they want us naked

one day, and it is as usual cold
they ask us to undress and hypnotized
we do everything just as they wanted...

they are drinking their cups of tea
and their bodies are well wrapped with their clothes
their heads with caps and their
feet with their socks and shoes on...

we believe what they are always telling us
that everything is all right
that there is nothing to worry about these truths
that when naked everything will be fine and
as the rule keeps on saying
we shall soon be happy and free....

it is nighttime
and there is no star
not a single star in the heavens
and we follow their orders
and we plunge into that cold and wide river
we are like the buffaloes

we shiver
it is so cold in here
and there is no star in the heavens
there is only the whisper of the incoming rain
the stoic silence of the night
the sighs of the air

we think we are dreaming
for when we open our eyes again after we dip ourselves in the waters
they are no longer there anymore
leaving us
with the traces of their laughter
the coldness of their indifference
the acridity of their
hatred

we are fools
we follow the orders and we have never used those innate lights within
our hearts

our heads bow
our feet in complete surrender
our toes protrude in the open

but it is not late yet
we still have time to wake up
and to get away from this cold river
we rise
we dry our hair and resume with the comfort of the heat of our clothes
we take our walk toward the house
back home
and settle in our own fireplace
we take our seats now
properly as we listen finally to the dictates of our conscience
our own songs

as we make ourselves open
to the coming of our own destinies
beside us
is reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Facts

to live
and to learn to live alone
and to learn to live alone with all courage

in peace and in harmony with the rhythm of the rain
and the song of the sunshine
to be what you are and simply be what you are
imitating no one
depending on nobody

nobody but you
nobody nobody but you

it is simple
indeed it is very simple
stick to the facts
be real
stick to the reality of what you are
rather than what you ought to be

too much pressure and you explode
listen to your heart
be calm
be cool

hold your hands
cover your ears
and nose

then jump.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fading Of The Day

God in his usual strokes
splashing the colors

from indigo to magenta
to light blue to saffron

paints another day in the
lifetime of

the black canvass of our lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Failed Tryst

even the moon
would be impatient
on that first date
you were late

even the moon shall
soon
take a star
upon a tryst that
you have
failed

you, you
diamond faced lover....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Failure Of Rhyme

it i were to speak to you
in rhyme
and well thought of metaphors
it will take me
more time

and i do not have much of it
and i cannot possibly tell you
what i have within
completely

i have no dream of perfection
there is no such things as us
as perfect as a cup or a ring

and we will be at a loss at the end
not having said
what should have been stated so clearly
and spontaneously
as river and rain
or as dew on a leaf of grass
early dawn

when metaphors fail
when rhythm and rhyme stand aloof
along the boulevard without rails
the streams of our consciousness is always there
to save us
willing to adopt us in the form of a sacrifice

i am here now and
i am talking to myself
and since you are here not to listen
i reserve this
space for you for the future
for time that does not die

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fairness Of The Choices....

we choose
that is basic

whether to write
about the blooming
cherry blossom
come spring

or the falling
and wilting and
then rotting of
the leaves of autumn

sometimes
whichever way is that
whether to choose
what is inside
and shy away from
what is outside

whether you turn
left or
take the right
side of the two-faced
road

somehow
there is this fairness
of one's choosing

whether there is pain
or joy
beauty remains
unabandoned

truth resides in
both houses
and peeps in any
window

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
it is the same house
actually
the same road
same sky
same river
same heart
whatever, whichever
at the
end.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Faith Of Abundance...

I DO NOT question this universe
about how poverty arises,
I do not have exclamations for
the system,

I LIVE here and I breathe
each molecule of air,
I am sent, and I am
situated, this place, I have
received and I have not worked
for what i am surrounded
THIS OPULENCE, this
body, this mind,
THese are all given
I HAVE NO investment,
i am a fact, and there are theorems,
i am here,

I WATCH, I LISTEN A lot
i sleep and wake up and the table of the world is ready
the house opens its windows
and so are the doors
My feet are taking me to the river
my hands bathe me
The trees shade me
and the ripe fruits fall beside me
I have cooked rice within my reach
I have roasted chicken on my hand
ALL GOD GIVEN

I AM THE CHILD OF GOD
and I HAVE not worked at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Faithful Lover....

you have misjudged the death of that flower which you gave me.

did you not say that a flower dies twice?

once when you cut it from its stalk
and second when you gave it away to someone

i accept the fact of its wilting
but to say that it has died in the middle of the page of the poem that i wrote for you

you are wrong.
this flower lives forever
and you do not even remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fall (An Extension) ....

When i fall
this i must tell you
i am hurt
i will be really hurt
but don't come near me
and insult me with
your help or
sympathy
i am complete and
more self-sufficient than you
i am prepared
and had long prepared for this fall
my own causing
my own fault
my own way of surrendering to
God

and when it is your time to fall too
i will just watch
because i have suffered the same
because it must happen
because you know always what to do too
because you are
by now
stronger than me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fall Of The Honest Man

THIS IS for you
an honest
dignified man
whose word
is steel
whose fire is pure

you shall fall
as God allows it
but it shall
be as gentle as
a yellow leaf
and the breast of the river
receives you
well
for there
dead must you
be
but full of
sweet dreams
on sleep

as tender as
the shower of rain
on the green grass

early
morning
so quiet...

RIC S. BASTASA
hidden beneath the layers of soil
and heaps and heaps of dry leaves
after several dry seasons
is the bullfrog,

it is kept there for good because when
it starts to croak
on such a deep, determined and truthful voice

our little world will be turning into
chaos...

perhaps out of respect for such a free creature
we promise to set it free
in due time
when the rain is heavy, when thunders roar,
when the flood comes and takes away everything
around this little place
this narrow river
so that when it croaks the truth about us
the rain and thunder may still conceal
what we fear the most

that shame of the future
this scandal,
this fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fallen Tree And The Children

all its leaves fell
the morning after the storm
and what you see
are the twigs which look
like the thin fingers of
old women widowed and
bowed by years of
patience and sacrifices

another strong wind pushed
it bending upon another tree
to lean upon
but its hands have finally
given up the struggle to
stand erect with dignity

the cleaner of the town
cut it into pieces to be
thrown in the smoky heap
of garbage far from the
place where children still
remember how climbing its
branches had been a
delight of their memories.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Falling Leaves

it is not the leaves you care about
but the falling
it is not that the trees have become leafless ribs
or that the thorns and scabs have become so visible
it is not

but the falling you want to know
how does falling fall how does this falling feel
the past that pains you
the present that you do not give space
the future that you refuse to dream

i see you falling falling and falling like the leaves
that you are seeing this summer afternoon
for whom you love
they leave like birds flying away from the lonely tunnel
where you have long resided

i see you hugging the fallen leaves
feeling what falling means
treasuring the failures unnecessarily

tonight i see no stars like you seeing none in the skies
black night silent night dead night
i got this last stick of this match
i light this cigarrette i sigh i live some more

i sleep i dream i have this candle still
that tomorrow i may begin to light

RIC S. BASTASA
The Falling Sands Of Time

the falling sands of time
spend themselves like the way you lose yourself
bit by bit to the floors of waste
but you have your hands
and your eyes do not fail to watch
you have the power in your mind
to turn back the sundial
and let the sands of time recover themselves
all for you
giving back that confidence
for rebirth
always always there are beginnings
your heart shall tell

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fame After

what does fame
remedy
the dead body of
a young man
shot to death
by the armed force
without
a badge?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Familiarity And Monotony Of Love...

we both
accept it: we do not believe

that love has something to
do with it

we decide
always we decide what to do with our life
marriage included,

agreements renewed
vows restated,

on the same table
of monotony

we serve love
we slice love and take the bite
we pour love in our glasses
we drink love

we smoke love
we sigh
we converse love in the middle of the night
we are tired of love
and we sleep love

in that bed of monotony
we wake up filled with love
we have love for breakfast
we go to work carrying love inside our pockets
we were love in our faces

there is always that familiarity
in the routine of love

and with so much love sprayed in our bodies
day and night
we forget its meaning
we take it as potable water
we do not notice if it still satisfies our thirst
if it fills our hunger like the food that we prepare and eat

we declare after so many years together
still intact under the roof of marriage

we wear love we do not notice if we are dressed at all
we sleep and we are so tired

love is here and yet we do not mind it anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Family Tree....

as predicted
the dragon came
breathed fire
killing some of
our forefathers,

my father slayed
it, and i was born,

from the body of that
rotten dragon
grows a tree where
in all those leaves
names are
written

as the leaves on
autumn begin to fall
the winds
come singing

a mournful song
a song for heroes

and children look
beyond the glass windows
on cold
afternoons....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Famous One, And His Wish....

i know. You are one of those who aim for the top. You wear a name tag. You study well the way of the jungle, some notes on the labyrinths of fame and fortune. You love crabs. You are flexible, a reptilian by orientation, result oriented and wants always to be first in everything. i know. you got no talent at all. you use another name at night. During the day you drop names of other people. Hot potatoes you suddenly drop. oh i know you, but i keep my mouth shut. star of all seasons. sweet, then sour and then bitter. so what now? keep moving. be sane. change now. you are getting crazy, alone, and yes, dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Famous Pagan Activity

the mob follows the mob
is it faith?

or is it the color and
the vibrancy of the
occasion?

perhaps it is the loud
chant and the sound only of
the tapping of the
million feet on that
pavement

the shouts of the male drums
the grace of the female dancers
the tiaras on their heads
the flowers on their hairs

as the caterpillars follow
the tail of the last caterpillar
so the crowd shall follow
its leader

moving in circles and not
arriving at
anything

ah, what a joy is there
reverberating in the steel hearts
of a million emptiness combined

on the last day the streets will be
filled with litter

and then fading on those darkness
is the laughter......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fan

the fan today is the most inconsistent
electrical gadget in the house
it is raining
the winds from the mountain are profusely invading
every nook of the house and to cut this story short

i am leaving.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Farmer And The Stray Dog

the farmer arrives
bringing with him his
viand and rice
places it in the corner
of his hut,

the stray dog
gets in through its
sense of smell
and finds its catch
the farmer's
viand and rice

the catch is taken
far away

the farmer
is not angry for soon

a woman with a long
black hair arrives
bringing him
his broiled fish
and newly cooked rice

the woman is not
his wife
and there they are
under the shade of
the mango tree

the stray dog watches
as this story unfolds
to the final chapter
inside the hut
on such a very dark night

the dog is clever
and it knows the ending
the farmer is not angry
for dogs. mind you,
ever tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Farmer And The White Herons Of Katipunan

the heavy rain
is the signal of the new planting season
and this early morning
the farmer begins
the task of plowing
his plot

nearby the herons
are feeding on some frogs
those who made
their most beautiful croaks
this morning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fast Ferry

down by the shore
the fast ferry
runs on a very calm sea
like a pen
writing on a very
clear paper
leaving
a trail of some
words, thoughts

about loved ones
who perished
one night

the same calm sea
swallowed
a very big boat
and having
satisfied itself

to the full
like a boa
on bulging stomach
it rests
and closed its eyes
and sleeps

beside the fast ferry
where I ride
are dolphins
accompanying
this
silent merrymaking
of the mind

the eyes
look at them
still puzzled
quizzical
the heart
is still unaccepting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fat Daughter Who Plays Beethoven

facing me
she brags as he looks
at his dad

'you bet, best dad in the world! '
she takes coca-cola for a drink

i am not so sure
but she gestured
a tongue-in-cheek at such
a distance
visible to my
eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fat In You  Triumphs

as usual
the morning is swindled
upon the
intricacies of the
labyrinthine
syllables

the feet are impatient
for the walk
tramples upon a
lost cockroach and
kills it without
mercy

now the odor of
foulness spreads in the
enclosed room
and finally takes its revenge
upon a
cruel writer

the fat in you
triumphs
and the interrogative
is

- - 'who cares? '

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fat Man And His Origami

the fat man one day gets fed up with so much noise.
he goes out and faces the traffic
and with his strong determined hands he folds cars into deers
demented streets into stairways
high rise buildings into cliffs and mountains
traffic signs into sunflowers and electric poles into poplar trees
the smog into some breeze from the sea
the crazy world into the hum of an old Chinese village
somewhere in Shanghai he lives there
as Lao Tzu

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fate Of The Black Bird

the black bird flies alone against the blue sky
it is lonely and that is the truth that lies in every black feather of its strong wings

if only it can change its course
and find a place where there are other black birds like it

perhaps it will turn back and learn to sing the song of the black flock

it is not a way of life that its father had handed to it upon its beak and claws

it is not even a choice and never did it ever imagine that it shall be alone against the blue skies

against the black nights and against the towering peaks of mountains

there is no other way of rationalizing about it except fate,

it is the destiny that chose its path and it is simply following the dictates of the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fate Of The Lonely Woman

life exacts the price
for your cowardice
alone in the apartment
you will be pondering about

how other people took life
using their own hands
that independence of not having
to put guilt on the neighbor

that suppression of what
should have been said
the mouth trembles
the heart pounds upon every atrium

bloods rush like a flood
and so you are drowned
soon another room is forced open
foul odor rushes out proclaiming another wrong

RIC S. BASTASA
The Father Of Man

THERE was this child
whom Mama shooed
away when the doctor of
the village comes once
in a while

he was the same child
whom Papa left home
when he went away on
a hunting trip for days
and comes back with the
head of wild deer

his eyes are lonely peeping
upon a hole of the wall where
the termites live for years
silently consuming everything
that was built there

no one is lonely forever
sometimes loneliness grows
an edifice
and then a fence
where that lonely smile is
kept away
from everybody

when both Mama and Papa
passed away
when the doctor met his
untimely death
when the head of the deer
was stolen away
when the termites came
triumphantly

when everything that hurt him
becomes forever
forgotten
this child has become the father
of man
who now writes you
this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
The Father Said To Me

Last night at
eight
the Father said
to me:

i do not give a
portion of
my fortune and
treasure
of my kingdom
and power

since you are my
child
i give you whole

and this morning
he said to me:

believe always in
me
and you shall have
no worry.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the christian
way of life, it is not
a question of the
self deciding, either
to live or die,
like the way you decide
not to breathe
and say it is the simplest
way to die,
no, it is not that,
our option is to live
and live this life
fully, not of our own
will, but to the will of
our Creator,
we live, till Death takes
us, we live even if we have
no more reason to,
we live even if life is
miserable, because this is
what the Devil lacks,
to push through with the
misery and be purified with
all those pains
and know how and what
a sacrifice is...
the Devil does not know
how to kneel,
to be hanged on the cross
and call for its Father,
simply because
it has none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fault Of The Flowers In Closing Their Petals At Night

it is faulty for the flowers to close
their petals at night
because in the savory world
it is during the night
where the lonely hearts open
the hollow breasts
the pockets of the pants
the tearing of the seams
of those undergarments
and those that are covered

the petals of the flowers will be wasted
not tasting the bunch of happiness

Sipyat ang usa ka bulak nga manirado
sa iyang mga gihay inig gabii
kay sa kalibotan sa mga lamian
ang kagabhion baya maoy pagpangabre
sa mga gamingaw nga kasingkasing,
mga dughan nga haw-ang
sa mga bulsa sa karsones,
ang pagkagisi sa mga sidsid
anang mga pang-ilalom,
anang mga tabon-tabon.

Sipyat ang mga bulak
sa ilang pangindahay nga di mahikap
ang mga pungpong sa kalipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fauns Of Dohinob

this is their game
pied piping with the wind
making songs
sometimes with the flute
under the trees
at night when the moon
comes and shines in full
for their next
trip to the paths of
happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fear

I am confronting
This ghost now
What is really the reason for its coming
Inside this antique room
Does it really know me like a page of my law book?

Why did I allow myself to be carried by it
Like a helpless kid?

This angry man above my shoulder
Shall drive it away
This solid stare shall dissolve it
Like crystals
Of salt that I drop in a glass of water

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fear Of Being Followed...

i am afraid that my words have become your fetters,
so i stop talking
but the more i keep the silence within the frame
like a painting
the more i feel the brokenness of
my face
i touch each portion with the fingers
only to feel the roughness of
my soul

i am afraid i am clearing a path for you to follow me
you think it is a right direction and you write my name in your notebook
i am paranoia
look, there is no path, this is not the path, this path is
merely an attempt
to find my world, not yours,

i am afraid that i may be responsible for another loss,
and so i quit
i still have other places to go
each step i erase like a scribbling of a chalk on the board
there is no scent in my
vowels, no color in my consonants

look, look inside your throat
there is something red there like a sunset
there is no shadow of a tree
in fact, there is nothing there
to fill the thirst
and the hunger

i leave you now,
and for sure, i assure you, you will be happier
without me

if you follow me still,
the rope shall win.....
The Fear Of Loving

by being too religious
you fear the hand of the man
destined to love you
till the end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fear...

my fear has come
i do not excite myself
and you are no longer
exciting too....

how many times
have i promised myself
not to keep
these things from spreading
on early morning?

time, busy days.
longer hours,
flitting seconds....

must i overcome this fear
and learn
to accept my fate and live with you
throughout my
undeserving life?

there are no images anymore
except
the bluntness of light
the numbness of walls
the blindness
feigned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Feather Of Yuri

if a dove leaves a feather
white,
pure,
it does not just tell you that
it was once here
it tells you also of another thing
that there is a good reason
for keeping
something like a memory
the sweet one
it does not tell you
to discard pain
but to remember everything
and learn

like you i am not a dove
does not speak the language of doves
does not have feathers
to leave for some people i love
to remember

but i have some pieces of me
some memories
some pieces of my mind and they are not feathers
though they may
like feathers be

light, soft, pure, and beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
The Feel Of A Poem

the words are there
squatting
not in a position to attack
they're more of
in between
a choice of whether to retreat
accept defeat
or surge and collide and
burst and die

the pen looks at all of them
they're so helpless
like unborn babies
like hatched turtles
that do not know where the
sea is

and with a rash decision
the pen strikes at all of them
the hands are fed up
the heart is broken
the mind is dizzy
and the poet goes outside the house
looks at the garden
heaves a sigh
and then keeps a secret upon itself

it is the feel of the poem
and no one knows it except
the words themselves who finally
opened up
their wings and flew away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Feeling....

sometimes we
feel this waste of having to write on water

something that we never really walked upon
but we never really mind

we know what we are doing
we are these friends of the air

and even if we do not know what happens next
or where we are ultimately going

we simply keep doing and going and going
because we have to, because we really have to

someone is dictating us, what to write,
what word to use, and then the fountains of wisdom

keep flowing and flowing and flowing
i guess, you feel it right, this is the prelude

about eternity, about the unceasing journey
into something heavenly, something noble, and yet just felt

never seen, never tasted, never touched.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fever

the temperature is high
i see mirage in this desert in the room
all sands
i lie on the left side
holding to my own knees
when i close my eyes
i see the volcanoes erupting
it is only me
trying to save myself
from the lava
and the fire

RIC S. BASTASA
The Few

this is a sad flight of people who never knew themselves
now they are dead even in the middle of their lives
the desire has been sucked and the body is empty
the soul is hollow and it quests to be filled again
it has a beginning that was forgotten
it has an end but it has not known it since then
this is a sad flight of people who have chosen death
in the midst of noise
this is a lonely fight of people who have long surrendered
there are no questions and there are no answers
there is this cycle that only a few have broken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fierceness Of Memories...

the fierceness of a memory is carried by the colored flags of this island

it should have been a celebration but it is not

the wind is strong in this low season
and the waves are eating too much of the white sands

i can sense your anger, but i am walking away like a man without thoughts

i have accepted all these anger like the way i am walking away from everything

i sit upon a chair i take a number on that early morning
when chairs are all empty when stores are closed

the money changers have not opened yet
and i wait and i go through these process of surfing without something

definite, there are no questions in my mind
there is only my presence to myself

i am bound, i know, i am helpless
i am still bound to you, and when love comes i close my eyes thinking

about your face and body, and when i burst into a scream
i take the composure of decency by not mentioning even the syllable of your name

it is still respect for love despite its cruelty to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fifth Symphony....

yes, it is the
fifth
symphony and it
is all about
you alone without me
there
begging for you

time teaches well
as taste dwindles until
bitterness
puts the seed for the
inevitable

we all take time to leave
without saying when
to return

most of the time
i do not come back since
turning back is another
bitter pill which i cannot
swallow

i will be in Ibiza
dancing to electronic music
no, not Iceland where
i first met you.

you were the symphony of ice on
my notes of fire....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fifth Woman

She was my sin, because I promised her the sun the moon and the stars.
I of course, cannot comply,
I must say I am joking
I must say, I am cruel.
She was the first actually, and I was her first kiss, embrace,
And first heaven.

We believe in dreams together.
We weave, we make some patterns
With fingers intertwined
We have eyes that look in the same
Direction, hands that clap
We believe in forever

I was her dream.
She need not sleep forever.

I walk away. She looks for the goodbye note
Everywhere in the room where we once made love.
There was nothing.
And so she waited for all those years
Sitting by the window
A man may come running towards her house
That man did not come.

I walk away, I did not come back.
She died.

There is no way that I can attend the funeral.
I am caged in what we two believe in.

This is forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Filipino Poem 1

As written by Bimboy a grade two pupil in
Olingan elementary school section sampaguita:

The sun comes to my barrio this morning
It peeps between two hills and on the side
Is our nipa hut and on the ricefield my father
Pasturing the carabao while mother cooks the
Mudfish in the kitchen while my sister looks
Out the window and waives at me who is
Holding this pen writing this poem on paper.

RIC S. BASTASA
The sun rises in my little barrio in Olingan
And sits on two hill where our nipa hut lies
The sun is like a handsome face looking
At two hills like the twin plump breasts of a
Beautiful maiden and his sunrays are like
Fingers lovingly caressing them with too much
Warmth the coconuts, yes, the coconuts like nipples
Spread on the hillsides and his tongue licks them
his mouth sucking them these young coconuts
while my papa Leads the carabao to a mudhole to wallow
While my mother takes some hot chilis for viand
My sister is not there on the window she
Eloped with her boyfriend so you can find
Nobody looking out the window of the hut.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Filipino Poem 3

The Filipino poem as written by Bimboy
A college student of the Ateneo de Davao
University taking up BS Chemistry on a
Cocofed scholarship grant:

The sun rises on the two hills in my barrio.
You cannot find Papa and Mama there anymore
They always quarrel over their extramarital affairs
And the nipa hut is just too crowded for the two of them.
My sister had two sons but you cannot find them there
Because they live in another nipa hut on the other
Side of the river while the ricefields are dry and did not
Yield any harvest because of drought and the carabao
Is also not there in that scene because it died, butchered
And sold as meat to the hungry neighborhood.
The sun sets on the hills like a bunsen burner turned off.
The two hills protrude like two empty glass flasks turned upside down.
You cannot find me there I am here still writing this poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Filthy Rich Woman Flirting In The Escalator

she met him
at the escalator
they did not talk
but their eyes
were laughing
taunting
for more of this
mutual understanding

there is no
need for elaboration
for what both
people know

there was a certain
intimacy in their
silence
not unusual for this
filth

this way of loving
only in the mind

with a stranger
she looked down
not at the floor
somewhere between
the ceiling and
his shoes

between his legs
i supposed

there is a short
lapse

and they cannot
forget it
that crisp crunch
a steady thump
sweet stud
a thud.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Decision

i wrote a very long
sentence

and i pause at the
spot where i could have
put an end

and then i press the cursor
back

i have deleted you
in there

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Departure

you know what happens at the final departure
you are not allowed to take anything
including your body, your thoughts, yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Destination

in this game of life
i am like a yo-yo
that bouncing thing
that is thrown away and
rebounds always in the final gesture
of having to return
to the hands of its
Creator.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Dot

so here you are
a dot wanting relevance in a long
sentence

no one wants you
they want something that does not end

and so they are bombarded
with lots of question marks

and bombastic interjections
not the fourth of July stuff

but those that tears every nerve
that shreds off every skin and flesh

oh, it is too painful
and they find no hope in happiness
now

now, they pause, they
want you

they want you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Insignificance

to know what is real
you must pass through a labyrinth
of doors
you will be lost
that is the first test
you must find
that key of losing
without having to feel
any emotion
be it gladness or
sadness

after passing that door
you are transformed
into another path
where other lost people
pass at you
and does not ask your
name
or what you are

you become a floor
and all their feet
step upon you
but you will not
know this
because this just happens
as a matter
of consequence

when all the strangers
pass
and there is no one left
you are granted a pair
of wings

that door in the clouds
is the next
no one sees it
except you
and you fly through
it
until you become
a little star
hanging yourself in
the corridors of
space

you have no choice
here
except to give light

you fulfill
what you are finally
one of those
that glitter
and yet no one
really minds
what you have become

for in truth
you are just one of the billions
and hence
insignificant

RIC S. BASTASA
The Final Plunge

i have taken the plunge
deep in the bosom of the blue sea
into the depths of the ocean
to be with the fish and the
corals of this sandy floor

there is no coming back
there are no reasons on the surface
there is this final plunge
searching for eternity

forget me then, creature of light

RIC S. BASTASA
The Finality Of Solitude

I, too, commit the same mistake. I fear being alone as though i was born with you from my mother's womb

as though i was conceived in the the pronoun We

as though the crib was a market with lots of people roaming in there

we are not us. I am i. And will always be in its solo flight from what i am to what i will be.

For the meantime, there is this marketplace, this mall, this house, this home, but at the end, there is always this silence, that of a leaf and the pond without a single ripple....then a hush.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Finder Of The Exit

AROUND us are WALLS,
ALWAYS walls,
all walls, and up our longings
are our longings
like a sky up there
all sky, pure blue sky

we are never birds
by design
we are the geckos on walls
we always sound
echoes, lots of echoes that
return to us
from these walls around us

we are an island surrounded by water
down there
down here
there must be an exit

we must dive and be not afraid to drown
because we are never birds by design

there must be a cave where these waters
get inside us

we dive, dive deeper into our oceans of doubt
there is an exit

i know, now, where. Follow me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Finest Glass

expect later on
that the finest glass
shall be broken

that 's how things
are meant to be

the good die young
the finest shall be taken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fingers And The Eyes

our eyes are weaker
unlike our fingers much quicker in its moves
and hence the eyes
are deceived

but we believe more in what we see
rather than what is done

secretly the fingers keep on its tricks
as the eyes keep its faith
in the canvass where dark shades
dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fireflies Of Puerto P.

we take the boat at night
the sea is having its low tide

we are going to the place where the fireflies are mating
we trace the rivers like blood to our veins

the moon has not come at that hour
the trees along the banks are mere shadows

the fireflies are all there
glistening like stars in the heavens

there is so much silence
what we can hear is only the sound of the boat sliding on the river

i've seen for once the magic of their lights
and there i am but a mere shadow against the trees

the journey towards my childhood begins
where Papa trapped all of them inside a jar for us to marvel

how life gives light and how quick shall death take it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fireflies......

you do not hold the
fireflies in your hands
or put
them in a jar

they belong to the
space
to the place upon
the crown of
trees
to the night where
they are most
beautiful
when they glitter
like
the silent sparks of
the fire crackers
of the
Chinese New Year

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Agreement On Marriage

first and foremost
we agreed
whatever is there is there

no expectations no demands
be content with what i have
and i shall be contented
with what she has to offer

nothing compulsive
or obsessive

second
one must always keep that
personal happiness

be happy first
pamper yourself with yourself
then share

since if you are happy
i can be happy
and marriage by itself
can be a happy union

i guess this works
on our 15th anniversary

no wars except
the pacts of peace

love, love, love
just do it, don't need to
say it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Arrival Of Love In My Heart...

of the many people who got out of
the church
that Sunday evening
of 1985

despite the dimming light
of the passing years
my failing eyesight considered

it was only you, just you, and
nothing but you
that i clearly saw....

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Impressions That Last For A Lifetime

you do not have the
x-ray eyes
to see my real
bones
wrapped by my
brown skin
all over
me, what you see
is my broken lip
my twisted nose
my strict eyes
square jaw
and they are all enough
you say
you know me now
and you do not like
the shape
of my shadow
the glow of my eyes
devilish,

you have not seen my anguish
you could have seen that
in the sea that raged
last night

it sank the boat
ten passengers are still missing

you listen first
how it was like that
why it happened

hear me
then strike, if you will,

i will not mind
the first impressions last
and for a lifetime
injustice reigns

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Long Rainy Night

it is the first long rainy night tonight.
now i can sleep
satisfied about its own explanation
whey the day
had been so, so hot.

i turn the air conditioner off
and listen to the most real poem of nature
the first long rainy night tonight.
the sound of rain on my roof.
the sound of water dripping
on the side of the house

that feeling of being hard and wet
beside her.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Love You Have Made With

darkness
is a mole

the skin
becomes an
ocean

wide wide
wild wild
imagination
like dolphins
and seagulls

a big idea
comes like
a whale

light is a needle
like a pine

a cone is a fruit
of waiting

what i see
is a fireplace

a lighthouse
no one is a ship

not one is a port
on this

emptiness engulfing
a big idea

of a whale and
planktons

sounds of sipping
coffee on my table like a piece of yellow paper like a lake where letters become kayaks where speaking becomes a waterfall hitting rocks where swimmers always find time to laugh like children once, away from books, away from imposing fathers dispensed from impulsive mothers as memories flock like doves upon a wire, a thread of thoughts connecting into something not so significant but lingering like a lingerie of the first love you have made with.
The First Morning Of 2013

at the garden
under the trees
three empty chairs
and a table

dry leaves
still unswept
on the
pebble ground

the word for
this year
is still
solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Morning Of The New Year

and now everyone is back to sleep
last night's revelry was a must
firecrackers, heavy drinking,
loud music, motors honking
and at the last countdown
the clinking of wine glasses
for the toasts

a happy new year
they all promised themselves

i slept early last night
after a silent prayer

waking up at 4 in the morning
another silence meets me

and this silence shall be the same
for another year

strong, and ponderous
trying not to disturb anyone
curling satisfactorily upon itself
like a boa that i just fed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Part Of The Misleading Venture

the poor [ i.e. workers of the farm, 
pregnant corn husker, the driver of the 
pedicab, the smoking tomato gatherer, 
the sweet potato washer}

i am lost in the symbols
of humanity, i am trying to decipher again
the meaning of their visit
and they decision here to spend the night
at the second floor of this house
where my father-in-law died because his
son pushed him towards the stair
and hit his head
on the grinding stone

the bolo is sharp, blood flowed from the
pig's neck
after that scream

there is noise, and some magicians are selling
potions
when someone needs love so badly
and then resorts
of spells

the natives are smelling so bad
there is no water in the river where they come from
they are thin
there stomachs are filled with air
hairs with lice

i guess you know when this happens
and why this happens
because, it is fiesta time and there is no more road for us to use.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Rain

got a good look at the falling of the
first rain
in my town up on the hill where i
am contemplating about
the game of hate and love
and greed and giving
and power and subjection
like bow and arrow
and water and fire all in my head

i wait and then it come
all umbrellas open some windows begin to close
i like most to see
the rush for shelter

another form of in/humanity looking for safety
praying for the rain and confused when to close and when to open.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Scene Of Childhood

the first scene
is white. Against the snow
trees without leaves
beneath their feet
are the fallen
leaves,
red,
the air is cold, and howling
no one lives here
anymore.

do not go there,
it can make you like myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Sigh

i think i have to write this
before i die.

You are beautiful.

I like to be a part of you.
But God has disapproved it.

His people had spoken
and They are his Sole Voice

The Iron Rod that burns
People who renege Upon
The Order,

Because There Must be
One System,

One Color,

The Other Version is
An Outlaw.

Ideas Other Than This One
Are Hanged.

Dead. Infamous.
Sham.

You are Beautiful and
I love you: Your soul & Your Body.

It is sad I never told you
About this.

If I did, I cannot imagine
What's Next.

Let us just forget
I am not what you
Resemble Me to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Time

the first time i see you
i have seen the beauty of the world outside
my fences
such a short time about the little talk
about love
and its possibilities

but then i have come back to my senses
i begin to miss my silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Time As Always

sweet will it always be
the first kiss
the first love making
behind the barn on the hay stacks
sweet as the remembrance be
the first walk by the sea
the first holding of the hands
sweet to recollect all the first pieces of you treasures of the mind the heart that falls in love for the first time after grieving.

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Wave

the first wave is a little cruel
it makes creeps in my spine
but then it sounds its message clear
there is no joke
and there will be no other beginning

the second wave comes
this time everything is well understood
the warning has been duly given
everything now is calm like the morning sea

i say yes and i give a sweet smile
no regrets

we start a journey and there is no coming back
that is the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
The First Woman

She’s old but man she is so powerful
In this block,
Her favorite is black
And she makes robots
Makes them love her with a simple
Click.
She’s chinky eyed, reminiscent
Of china, where she is rooted
And she filters light, like she is
Filtering people

She is never true, she is
Doublespeak and she looks so frail
In her blacks and whites
She stabs you in the back
You bleed and you’re out
You just don’t know.

I do not like her, and she knows it
And she has no way of
Entering my door, I have always closed
It for her, or her friends or even
My mother-in-law or even
My wife.
She has no way getting in
But she manages somehow
Inside my dream

There she says she misses me and
Asks me what am I doing to myself
And that she can do everything for
Me
She can be my robot

I refuse. There is no way that she can
Take even a single hair.
She cannot just pretend to be a robot.
That is never true.
I have known her and made
Her a period. She’s small and insignificant
And I want her to leave at once
Go away.
She is power. I do not need her.
Even in my dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fish Bones

the door is high on the mountain
if a fish swims its way it is more probable that
its fins are torn before it even reached one of the banks
of the river
below the feet of grassy lands

the old wise man once tells the story of the
great fish who made it there flying with the power
of a borrowed wing
a friend to the winds
humble to the reeds
and the fish as soon as its gills become adopted
to the hazards of mountain peaks

suddenly turn into a dragon
heir to the thrown of the volcanic kingdom
how it has learned to breath fire
and spit embers
how it has grown leather like wings
and sharp scalpel nails
is a legend

that old men always want to tell to their grandchildren
with nothing in mind that they shall become great

(and never like them who have succumbed
as mere fish bone thrown into infamous pits)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fish In The Fishbowl...

i see fish in a bowl
the size of the fish is just
enough for the bowl
and water is half-full
the fish swims freely and
breathes
air and lets it pass through
its lungs and three bubbles
rise up
and then disappears
at the surface

outside the house it is raining
heavily
the news of the river overflowing
the banks
is flashed on tv

warnings are given by the government
evacuation is eminent
carry only those which are necessary
foremost
save lives of the children and
the old sector

we are ready
we are not taking this fish bowl
the fish can take of itself

when we left
the fish flips its fins and breathes faster
releasing more bubbles on the surface of the water

it is the only creature i think
that is happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fish That You Caught With Your Fishing Rod

the fish that you caught with your fishing rod
while you were alone at sea

tastes more delicious than the one that you
bought in the market

you have worked for it
you waited for long to catch it and hold it with your bare hands

you can still feel the vibrations of the nylon string
which caught the mouth of the fish

that now you are cooking and eating
the excitement still resounds inside your tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fish Without A Bone....

way back
he had always been
good, the emulated
god
way back, back to his
old ways,
he had catered to
all the needs
and codes
of conducts invented
by those who had long
been dead
and cruel, way back
his thoughts are
copying machines
now
when their consciences
and lives
are gone to the
beyond
he is left with
an empty mind
a fish without a bone
a kite with a wire for
a string
a puppet whose strings
are cut
now lying
inanimate on the
wooden floor

eyour mistakes
he is a duck
this willing target
for the terrors
about
to come
The Fishbone In Your Throat

Something you swallowed
Sticks to your throat
And you do not really like it,
You suspect it is a bone
Of a fish
It hurts
you get a cat to
Scratch
Your neck,
You feel the needle
Pricking your
Esophagus,
Tonight you cannot sleep
The pain stays
Throughout your mind
Your body
And you remember then
The friend who betrayed you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fisherman And His Wife

she waits on the shore
while he goes to the sea

the full moon comes
the seagulls fly on the horizon

he arrives and hands her
a basket of fish
with a follow-up kiss
then he whistles
as he ties his boat
to the coconut tree

then they both go home
hand in hand together

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fists (A Revised Poem)

faced with a blank wall
the mind passes through it
over the fences

it goes beyond
kicks and jumps away

reinventing wings and
sharpening claws
on its personal journey

into the unknown
more real than what can be touched
by the hands

too theoretical
ephemeral

as one wakes up
for another usual morning

the fingers close upon a fist
lays itself upon the navel

one preaches
'what is here inside my fist
is real'

the wings in my head
are upcoming
unable to flap
and resigned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fittest

to see to it that only the fittest survive
we opted to eliminate
we did not mind the pain of others
we have in mind
excellence

when only a few have been left
when the world has become lonelier than ever
we face them

we welcome them in this world of the fittest
this is the heartless
society
this is the logical corner of the universe
less human
robotic
calculating
devoid of emotions
there is no love

no one dies here
always awake and guarding

no tears, no screams
all pressing keys and looking for the solutions of
problems
stuffed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Five Blue Beach Empty Chairs

five blue beach chairs
empty facing the foamy sea
the big rainbow
colored umbrella casts
its little shadow

as usual the sands have
nothing to say
there are no more people here
on this stormy day
this is the day of the haunting
memories like dragons of
old spitting fire

tell me if you have seen them.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Five Petals Of The White Gumamela

i was ready with
the white gumamela
flower in my hand
to give you

i waited

hour by hour
i tore each petal
until all of them
fell to the
ground

i went away

five years passed
got married
to another woman
who live
in the house with me
less my heart

i bled
on a wound

when you came back
from America
you look for me

i was already lost
no one
found me anymore

even myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flame Of A Writer....

if you stop writing
you actually detonate
a bomb

if you explode you lose
your self

and you cannot find you
they cannot

so you keep on writing
to place yourself
under the happy state of
a fuse

you light a room
you have become a bulb
in the darkness

you are so beautiful
the fireflies
shy away from you

after all just like
those moths
eye die when their
wings touch you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flitting Things

be reminded again
on the fluidity of our affairs
look at my body
this is a boat carrying
my spirit
to the other side of
this island

this earth is another
ball
that our hands have taken
hold
on a fickle play

what is this place?
we kneel
most of the times to
feel nothing
but sand and hear nothing
but the songs of
the worms

what is this mind?
it is a temple for words
where sometimes
all prayers are
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
The Floating Feeling

drastic world is
not a boat at sea
where we
wait for the ports
of our
known destinations

d i try sleeping
one day
on the 20th floor
of the hotel
in the city

d i feel the floating
distance
above the earth and
the roads
have become simply
threads
of the needle

d the world has
become
a cloth where i
embroider
all my longings
for the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
The Floor Of Our Beings

To get to the bottom
and savor the floor
of our beings and then
to rise again and be
new, despite the
feeling that there
we have drowned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flower Arrangement Holds True

heaven
man &
earth

the
leaf
shall
take
the
place
of
a
woman

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flower In The Living Room

there is this flower
inside a vase early this
morning in the living room
of the house
when everyone had left
to their offices
and somewhere else

in my loneliness it give
delight

like your poem Meg

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flower Song...

Life is too short

all the petals that bloom
this early morning
begin to sing
the funeral hymn

As darkness reigns
some buds prepare
for the morning
show....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers In Her Garden

sosperos de amor
dama de noche
cadena de amor

the longings of love
the lady of the night
the chains of love

and then
she left him

what grows wildly
around are the

amor seco...

she means it, she has no plans of coming back.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers In My Garden Bloom Perfectly In The Morning

you never
notice the flowers
in my garden

they bloom
perfectly this
morning

it is always
the rain
yes the rain that
you detest

it is always the
rain that
you complain of

and the rocks
scattered on the road

the dead butterfly
the biting ants

my flowers bloom
perfectly still

and they are
the reasons why
we may soon
part

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers In Your Garden

you are telling me that the flowers in your garden
must not be of one and the same kind
or else there will be so much boredom

you are telling me the need of variety:

roses and jasmines
and suntans and daisies, colors and scents all in multiplicity

as you talk your eyelashes curve a little lower than i expected
and your mouth twitches a little bit just to show your dislike
and contempt of the word:

boredom

unnecessary uniformity, that human need of variety
equated with a taste for something new
and even unusual

i completely agree with you.
Let me take you inside my heart
where my garden lies:

flowers of different colors and scents

i have grown them all inside my heart,

feelings of love and
desire, in a variety or sorts
in a diversification of breeds

and if by now you ask me and demand
that i may tell the truth
inside my heart, in my garden of love, you are a very beautiful flower
so sweet scented and well loved and cared by me

but there are other beautiful flowers growing in there,
you are not
just the one and only, as you would like to think
that to be

and i will tell you again,
I agree with you, there is a need really
for a variety,
the one that removes the word

boredom

from the beautiful garden of our vocabulary.

RIC S. BASTASA
i accept
emotions, who can disregard it
without getting
sick and so i accept all emotions as real
as my tongue
bitten by my teeth
and bleeding
as i taste blood
like
nectar from a
a tiny flower that you pull
with your
cruel hands

i am a bouquet of the yellow
flowers of
an emotional breakdown
the doctor who is a poet
writes that
poem

the heart shrinks like a fake
cloth from
the chinks

it is a drowning man who never
knows the hands that swim
in the body of a woman

i accept all emotions of anger and pain and
envy and
hate (that is as crazy as an erupting volcano
wiping out a town
from the face of the province
burying those who are still screaming
in a number of seconds
the town becomes a flattened rock
a steel plate still fuming
mad with
toxic smoke

time sides with me
the saints and angels come
in hordes and hordes

God points his finger to my heart
the flowers of compassion bloom
a new landscape is drawn

i am converted. i am new.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers Of Her Sorrows

The flowers of her sorrows
Grow in the garden
Of her eyes

Tears
And they glitter in my light
And I look at them
Though sad

But oh
They are too beautiful
Too
Like tiny diamonds
In the sky
Of her eyelids

In the sea of her cheeks
Flowing and floating
Like yachts
Like seagulls

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers Of May

the children are picking
the flowers of May
as offering for the
Immaculate Mother

the flowers only bloom
once a year
to meet such an instant
fate
of bloom not reaching
the 30th day

tradition does not think
that much.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers Of Our College Years In Ateneo De Davao University

the buds bloom
into flowers around the world
their fragrances are spread
in every corner
of this universe

the gentle showers
of barcelon
the warm sunshine of
dotterwich
the ardent tillers of
of the
university

we say what most of humanity sometimes
forget

thank you very much

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flowers Of The Nipa Palm

the flowers of the nipa palm assume the color of
the brown, brackish swamp

expectedly, these flowers shine on the swamp
like fists of an angry man

deep within the thick covering, if one tries hard enough
to open what it has closed for all these years

is a white cloud, thick with syrup, something sweet
its fruits, from the flowers of its fists.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flute And Carmen

yes, i remember that night
when i sent you the song
about carmen

just a flute, and i know it
made you cry

i may pretend
and ask you why

deep in my heart
i know

what pain is
when there is no cure

RIC S. BASTASA
The Flux........

the more you understand
the more you accept, and if you accept
things as they are, how can you complain?
what you understand is that everything is in a flux,
and what is in flux, is moving, changing, going, moving,
ever static, and you realize the wisdom that this
whole universe is vending you:

everything is temporary.
the change you want now, is overrun by
another, and another,
and another

until you yourself is gone and you
do not even know who you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Foams Of The Sea

everyday the sea
brings us waves
stopping by the shore
then going back to
its journey again
to unknown shores
faraway continents

the joy, the beauty
is always there
no matter if nobody
is watching.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Foe...

(i must write it now,
lest this be forgotten
when you read this
perhaps by chance
this will tell you
that it is you and
i cannot forget what
i think you did
and that it could have
been disastrous

but i am never affected
and despite all those
malicious intents
i stay whole and
moving towards my
own specific direction)

then this afternoon we meet
again

(you are older now
some white locks of hair
tell me that i must pity you
and hence must forgive
you have nothing to pay
me
you have no debt)

if you ask me
i could have told you
no man can put a good man down
and the evil that you inflict
upon another
always comes back to
you with
twice as much destruction
or even more
the worst has become
your true friend and
the one who orders
you to destroy me
has vanished
in vain
erased from the map
and no one
remembers
or hates to remember his name
it is tautologous with
inequity)

i am inside my white
car
and i open my power
window

and i see you
walking in the rain
like a helpless
wet all over
chick

what a pitiful sight
for one
who was once
very
powerful
(and too corrupt
and very very
cruel!
how many innocent
souls have you
thrown to your
hell?
how many have you
ordered
liquidated?)
i cannot say any word
but then i say something
pleasing to your
ears when i say'

'Get inside the car!
I'll drive you
home.
It is raining.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fog And The Abandon

we know well how is it
to be nothing
we were in that past which
pushed us today
which has nothing in hand
to offer and we look forward
to the future
with fog and abandon
the silence of which is
killing all hopes and desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fog Inside Your Dream

Inside a dream, someone waits for you,
she is crying,
inside the dream there is rain,
she does not run away
she looks like a hopeless woman
there is no sound in that dream
she looks peaceful and patient
the rain falls heavily
water rushes to the the canals that
are overflowing

inside that dream you are helpless
and you cannot touch her

you try touching her and she is gone like a fog
when the sun comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Follies Of This World....

i will be reading
the pages written by
two men who had
died years ago, and
i will scrutinizing
their arguments
about the lives of their
patrons, and those whose
names were written as
judges who too passed away
with no
significance at all.

there are three pages left
and i am now
grossly affected what to
do next.

at the last page i will
write a number.
and then i shall walk away
for a while
to figure out what is wrong

with this world and how come
i still live with all
its follies.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Follower

she was looking for something
direct and clear
something so candid and
distinct
something so particular and
descriptive of her
state, every moment identifying
with what i have once offered
to the gods
to please and appease them
she was looking for that
kind of pain
that inner struggle that sigh
i am at a loss and i say i am sorry
i am reborn and i don't have them anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Food On The Table

sour,
a little sweet
nothing bitter
like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fool

build the strength
not in the pillars of your house
not in the height of your walls

build it
within the confines of your mind
within the beautiful boundaries of your tongue

the handsome face
crumbles on the moronic mind

the dumb finds itself ousted
sooner the fool and his money shall be parted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fool And His Money

build the strength
not in the pillars of your house
not in the height of your walls

build it
within the confines of your mind
within the beautiful boundaries of your tongue

the handsome face
crumbles on the moronic mind

the dumb finds itself ousted
sooner the fool and his money shall be parted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Foolish Monkey And The Spaceship Looking For A Viable Planet

the white man
looks upon the brown man
sitting,

a poem is written about
a monkey with cut tail
sitting on a mountain of gold

the white man has a gun
the monkey is that barbarian

a thesis is written about imperialism
and the destruction of
capitalism

the epilogue mentions about
environmental perdition
about an earth finally committing suicide
about a few on spaceships
looking for another viable planet

RIC S. BASTASA
when you are not there yet
you aspire for it, it is like a magical mountain
the apex of which you dream to step upon,
and every day of your life
you prepare
to be there, every step is carefully done
every strategy studied so well,
until you reach there, and what do you see?

the plains below, just like another scene
anywhere
you hear the song of the wind there
you touch the fog
you feel the rugged texture of its soil
orchids hang on its sides
but they are all the same
in all those places that you have been
there is really no difference

and you come down
and others who see you adore you
and ask you questions
about the song at the peak of that mountain by the wind
how does it feel to be on top?

you tell them that it is all the same
that there is nothing that makes that peak so significant
that you devote all your life
trying to reach it

but no one believes you and you regret to see them
following the footsteps of the fools over and over again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forbidden Apple.

on one hand love. quite heavy.
on the other lust, not that bad.
between them, an office hardened face.
strict and strong. and so
hypocritical.

at the party you tell a friend
that is how to survive a confusion.
one has to pretend. and one must admit
this matter. Like the rest

i am like the rest. An accepted norm.
lust on one hand. love on the other.
and the silence between. an accepted norm.

no one talks about it. But everyone understands.
the pressure, and the angst,
the pleasures and the secrets.

at noon, the lady with a very well kept hair
wears her highly tinted glass.
that capacity to see and yet does not want to be known
to have seen it. or touched it or even

having eaten it. The forbidden apple.
and of course, the secret paradise.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forbidden Fruit Of The Tree In Paradise....

i think I've known love when i first met you.

it happened when my spirit went away from me just to kiss you, while my body in full civilized and shy restraint kept its static appearance like a bowl without its content of water.

it was then that I've known for certain that love does not always take the wings of freedom, that it hides what it feels, that it surrenders upon its chains, sleeps alone in its cage and weeps like no one ever did.

o, i am talking about you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forbidden Touch After The Marriage

watching you somehow
makes me alive, just watching you,
what i do not wish is having to touch you,
for i know the rules of our place,
when i touch you, i am condemned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forbidden You

let me live for another hour
allow me
to take a bite of something
forbidden

you
how beautiful
my planets revolve
around you
sun

just a bite of this
cake of lust
allow me
let me live after this

a lifetime of regret....

am i prepared
for a series
of short deaths?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forest Inside

once i went inside the forest
it was like a cave of trees
the labyrinths are many
islands and slits of lights
drizzles of rain from up high
it is gray world
cold, damp, and very silent
as though
it is the first day of the earth
and i were the first man
created.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forgiving Society, ....

he accepts his dishonesty & by doing
so he has become another virtuous man in town
people embrace him
welcoming a new brother
it was only that little spot unstretchable
that he situated himself but all is gone now
forgiven &
sometimes she wonders how easily was it done
the stains he left on her are still there
enumerable, the children hate him, and time
have been too long to institute the repair
ah, here is society, fickle and amnesiac
over things badly done
rough on sand.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forgotten Thought....

there was a thought at dawn
which i forgot writing
at noon i tried to remember it
but nothing comes out
i waited for the night
with eyes that sees well
in darkness, with hands that
feels well when the noise is gone
and oh, i remember it
it was about us
that we have started
to forget....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Forrest-Rose Secret At 100 & 90

'Take your time and get to know one another.

Get to know if you like all the things that person stands for....

Be forgiving and patient and

say I love you once in a while.'

RIC S. BASTASA
The Four Women Of Your Life Brother

brother it is important to have

1) a woman who is intelligent
   who can correct your spelling
   and help you with some deep ideas

2) a woman who knows
   how to cook
   tasty exotic food
   to fill our cravings

3) a woman who is beautiful
   one you can be proud of
   as you take a walk in
   the plaza

4) a woman who is caring
   affectionate and
   tickles you to the bone
   and takes away the
   boredom in your life

these women are important
but what is most important is that

these women must not
know each other

[that was his joke
before he was murdered]

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fourth Amendment

THERE IS always something
to say,
something that you may not
want to hear
and break the drums
of your ear,
the truths are always covered
and sealed
like pressurized champagne
which when finally
opened
in a surprising bang
bang
all attention is caught
to the scents of life

the smell of vapor from
the pine trees
the sparkles of champagne
on the glass
that you hold tenderly
and slowly
sip

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fourth Of July

she just called
from L.A.
It is the fourth
of July
a holiday and

true
as william
describes
it, the colors
of red
blue
yellow
orange
green
and
even
gold
glow

in the
dark skies of

liberty

fireworks
it is all
fireworks
nothing
but fireworks

she calls
they just
stay inside
the house
where the
white senior
citizen
is sleeping
and they
hope that
she may
not wake
up
and ask
them

what are
they doing?
who are
they
and why
they are
still
laughing

despite
the cold
wind
blowing
outside
the window
panes

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fourth Woman

I am honest enough to appear
As myself to her: a naked man that she can touch
In a dark room, as dark as her hair

She was laughing and keeps on changing her
Form, she is liquid, and takes a lot of shapes
She transforms from bat to frog, to tigress
To lioness to kangaroo to dino
To amazon to samurai to warrior to mulan
To a street protester to clenched fists

She loves me she cannot love me like
I am a man to her, who kisses her and
Licks her, she cannot have anything overwhelming
She cannot be overpowered with anything
Including desire.

Naked, I pulled my brief and trousers and belted
Myself and took my shirt and buttoned loose ends
I am tight tongued.

She looks away but she is back in her form: a woman
A beautiful woman betrayed.

She kisses me. It was too late, I have become invisible
I was no longer in her room, as dark as her hair.

I take some pains with me. It won’t take long, I will be home.
My geisha is waiting. She is always there in the fealty of woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fragments Of My Life....

so many fragments of my life
scattered on the floor

on the skies they were taken
by the wind

to the oceans they were pressed
by the rain

there were risings and fallings
there were so many fillings

i always move on
not bothering to pick them up

i cut myself into pieces again
time after time
into more countless fragments

i do not bother those parts
those sheddings

for they are no longer mine
but for the world

and then the last fragment was taken away
and i am left with nothing

and then the perfection was done
i am from nothing and to nothing i must go

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fraudulent Merchants.....

the merchants have done it again
the scent of the desert put it in your skin the scent lasts till eternity just a drop, buy now, or you regret later

and so we bought, and they say just wait, have your coffee, tea or soda while we prepare your order packed for the plane

when we arrived home it was just oil with a drop of the scent of the desert in one big jug and there the scent did not last long in the eternity that you were promised....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Freak...

all they did was follow
setting aside what light is there on their heads
to my consternation
i have become the freak
the subject of their talks
during meal times

and then one day
like the rats of Hamlin
they followed the flute player
into the cliff
and they all fall to the sea
and drown

you see, this is what freaks do
ey they run against the streams of authority
rely on their own lonely light
keep its fire amidst the storms
and live...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Free Bird

i shall not talk about the free bird
about the cage
judge shall i not about what really
happened after
the fruition of freedom

for the bird may be free and now
flying all the corners of directions

the heavens and the
gardens and rivers of love flowing

yet on the night when it rests
upon a branch

the thought comes somehow
unavoidably

the cage though
to her a prison has sometime

in one precious moment
pure love and devotion

she once felt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Free Captive...

the years
caged me, i am held captive
by the time that
it is keeping,
i keep memories of
captivity,
i peck upon those
grains
and rest upon
a satisfied
belly,
some people are bothered
why i do not escape
when the door is open
and there is no
one
guarding it,
the captor had long died
due to
insomnia

time made me
fall in love
with
captivity and since
then
it has made me feel
that i
am freer
than those who
dive in air
and plunge themselves
too painfully
on land.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Free Dogs Of The Town

these dogs are free
and they move from one field
to another roam the town
play with other dogs and chase cats
and sleep on the grass on summers

and they bark but never bite.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are people ahead of us
and who enjoy their own fame who like to teach us
how to make frames

that there are desired shapes of words
with their own colors and tones
and like light we ought to mix them
to their own
precise delight

when i was new i had always been clumsy
because i always want to think like them

each hour i command my hands to take their
own shapes of fingers

there are always desired sizes and colors and tones
and for years

i have lived in so much restraint that i finally discern
that i am not free

because i must live the way i ought to be like by them
too suffocating
like i am covering my head with
a helmet
so as not to harm myself
from their preconceived accidents

my voice thinned out and my hands
became moles

then too tired to take their commands
i escaped
into the mountains
and i learned the language of the birds and the trees
the songs of the wind and wilderness

my arms become rivers and my feet mountains
my hair the forest and my eyes the sun and moon
my breath is the wind

dthis is what freedom does
dthis is the fruit restlessness

dthis is the poem that you are reading now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Free Thinker.....

dlaw the free
thinker wants always to be left alone in the river of his thoughts
as he swims like a fish
inside the murky water
never wanted to be seen
lest it be caught
and be fried
at the end
for someone's dinner
whose face is as ordinary as a bridge
whose name
sounds like the most common street
of that unknown town
south of nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
the powerful has no visible arms
but it will always make you feel that you are nothing without it
and if you do not take side, what are you?

a leaf fallen.

a used tissue paper with all the dirt wet with the rain
lost in the mud.

they will say you are a loser because you have never taken side with power
whatever that be
whoever shall it oppress
and it should not have been you if only you have chosen to obey the rules
and just be with them
and play

your mental constitution rebels for it has always been
independent as the wind
that goes in and out of a window
and hovers for no
one.

what do you want to prove? that you are better than the rest?
that you are not corruptible?

these are the questions that hang on the ceiling of your
innocent mind
like bats
they do not have cages
like bats they only live on their free nights
because the days
are prisoners
because the common light
is a yoke

you are alone now and so to live you must sing your songs of
independence to your ears
be light like a cloud and have no mountain as master
hang there for a while and then drift endlessly

is this not freedom?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Freedom To Choose

early morning
one rubs his eyes
upon waking up
one goes to the
rest room for
the usual beginning
and then finally
looks at himself
in the mirror and
in there he sees
the wide ocean of
choices in his eyes.

he washes his fears
with the cold water
inside the cup of his
bare hands.

Now
is another day of
freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Freedom To Write And Just Be No One...

another one this morning
is proclaimed prince of words

golden crown on his head
a smile on his face

reflect: do you want the same?
do want to have a crown or laurel?

what he did he so deserves
what you aim is not what you like.

feel the comfort in the freedom of
your use: nothing to a kingdom

no one to princedom, nothing to
prestige, and here you are enjoying

your choice of words, nothing to rhyme
nothing to measure, vagabond, gypsy,

you are king, without minions,
you are prince, without a princess.

RIC S. BASTASA
outside freedom waits
it is not naked like the way they draw it on paper
or sculpt in marble or mold with the plaster of Paris,
in fact it is well dressed, light sneakers,
straw hat, and a travel bag,
ready to grab the exit
from here

it is not the opening of any door
or the breaking of seals and locks

it is the ready heart, the opening arms
it is a pair of imaginary wings

but it is calm, well composed
gentle, and
not outspoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Freedoms

you see it is not the gate of the house
that sets you free
it is not the stairs
not the hole in the roof that gives you
some needles of light
actually it is the breath that you take
it is air that is free
it is the space of green spreading in your
garden
those tall grasses you decide to mow
it is the pebbles that you collect and begin to recall
the story of each fragment
and cracks
it is the clouds that you see when you lay your head
upon the arm of an old sofa
where you father once rested from
too much exhaustion
it is the memory of someone that you remember
you love and who loves you in return
and who was stripped off away from you
like a sticker on the wall

mind you, it is your wise invention
with wings that give you flight when everything gets too bitter
mind you, it is the mind
it is the spirit, never these sets of fingers
these smooth skins
this open mouth...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Friendship Of The Frogs

this the picture of a green frog
with big rolling eyes
like a golf ball

it floats on a lily leaf
beside it a big yellow lily flower
the waters ripple

it is a happy frog of friendship
that my friends sent me an hour ago

and my friend wants it back
in a minute
to assure
that i still want her back

i am thinking like a slimy frog.
shall i send it back or not?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Friendship....

over the rice fields
this hot summer
the constant company of the buffalo
and the white heron
still remain...

best friends forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Frog Of Basho

the frog of basho
made its
jump into the water.

others say
there was this

flash that made the frog famous
not in Hollywood

but in the pages of an old poetry book.

the pond is forgotten.
it was it who said: flok!

not really flash, like light
bending itself to the power of the water.

basho of course
the poet, lives forever.

is this what we really want?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Front And Full View Of Lust...

i have seen the fullness of the glory of the front
i am awed
my mouth gaped
my saliva flowed
the heart has no words to say
there is marvel in every nerve
barbaric in some places
setting aside wisdom
embracing the moment
loving each minute
lusting that may last for hours
thirst that never satisfies itself with water
the hunger that cannot be filled with the wheatness of bread

i ask you to make the the turn
so i can see the past
the fullness of your back
the smoothness of that hidden skin
the curves that have given me the sense of danger
but all these, beauty and desire must prevail

there is glory everywhere
there are songs in every corner
a poem found in every slit
there are treasures shown by the maps of every wanting

always insatiable
always unbearable.
The Frozen Tears Of Silence...

it is at the lowest
ebb of the water
that you see the crabs
and snails and
urchins, and corals
and

mussels and then when
you come for them, and
force open their
hideousness,

you may see the pearls,
the frozen tears of their
subsumed silence

for a hundred years,
of isolation....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Frozen Waves Of The Sea On Canvass

as i look at the frozen waves of the sea
on canvass by a clever painter
there is always that feeling of anticipating
the falling of things, and thoughts
one, the watcher
or the spectator, though stalled
and cramped for the eventuality of
things that come
somehow feels that things like these
though happen
an icy mind, solid and sharp
piercing more
the bleeding heart
that waiting which you know
shall never come
someone that says tomorrow i shall be with you
and yet by this distance
there is nothing that binds

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fruit Of His Silence And Indifference

what he remembers most was that time
when he asks for a glass of water which was denied him

he was angry at first
hysterical about his thirst his view on death that comes like a black horse from far
but he calmed down ultimately knowing that nothing happens anyway
despite his scream
the wind is still the wind that goes out from the hold of the mountain
not ever minding his situation
the trees are cruel too taking care only of their own roots

and so he grabbed silence
he coiled with the ropes of indifference
and take himself for a rock beside a cliff

and then they look for him
regretting perhaps what they have forgotten such a value for a rose

but then he has no eyes as identifying marks and no matter how they search
despite his presence
they could not find him

now they are all crazy like the tribes driven out from Babel
and he simply watched them all

in silence and indifference
they murmur and cry out in the darkness of their souls

it is time now he says to reap the fruits of his labor.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fruit Of His Vine

my own view of
Christmas
has changed

no longer gifts
not even the greetings
oh, i find them
redundant already

now it is my spirit
and the spirit of this season
it is inward
and unseen

it is this feeling that
i am stronger this time
unaffected by some lonely tinge
I've grown strong bones
this strong mind

not anymore about any
envy about that happy
family
beside those gifts
and the tall green tree
or that star and
glistening stars

i have my own
life to live
under God's infinite grace
his will unto mine
am the fruit of his vine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fruits Of Sleep

the real job is to house-keep
what is not knee-deep
one knows how to leap
and go away from the sheep

the mountains are steep
more women shall weep
things simmer and seep
comes the time to reap
all the fruits of nice sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fruits On The Table

I love the papayas
Spread on the table
Reddish orange papayas
Plump and Smooth to my
Hands

And some purple grapes
Sweet pulp
Luscious to my
Lips

Some rambutans
Hairy fruits in red
Tickling to my
Fingers

Pungent durian
Tasting like
Heaven to
My mind

They are all spread on
The table

And I would caress smooth
Reddish papayas with
My bare hands
Put a grape in my mouth
And my tongue
Does the savoring of
Juicy rambutans
My lips close in
To a juicy roundness
As I breathe on some
Red hairs
Of this magical luscious fruit

The durian is opened
And the taste of heaven
Comes to my mind
With eyes closed as
Though I own all the passions
Of this world

When we were young and
Crazy about ourselves
I laid her on the table
And spread herself there
She was all those kinds of
Fruits to me and I was the
Hands, the mouth, the lips,
The tongue
The stomach that swallowed her all

Every bit that was juicy
Every freshness every plumpness
She was all fruits to me
She was all nature giving in, all over
To the passions of this fruit lover.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fulfillment

sadness, becomes
the fruit of the fulfillment of my
desires,
the satisfaction of my wishes
the dreams that come
true...
on one hand, these leave me
dry and meaningless
into the abyss of
a pig contented
no art, no poetry,
plain living
nothing exciting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Full Moon And The Little Girl

a little girl by the window
looking out
to the sea,

the full moon shines
spreading soft light on the trees
and the vast expanse
of the sea beyond her

fresh air caresses her face
scents of leaves and flowers
a taste of salt carried by the sea breeze
hushing sounds

mother is still not home and father is far away

the moon shines brightly that night
loneliness is very much like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Full Moon Shining

Dusk finally falls
Off
I shall look
Up the sky
To see
The full moon
All shining

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fullness Of You In Me....

def:visitor
in:house
mouth
slime
warmth
slither
your tongue

the last thong
did it so well

mornings have turned
into beautiful nights
stars fill the skies
of my heart

i was such vast space
yet you filled it
so well....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Function Of Poetry....

i am that impatient
reading your poem about
a foot long but not to
disappoint you as you
spent hours and perhaps
a week writing it carefully
choosing the words which
sound alike at the end
of a phrase, and counting
each syllable to really make
a fit like the way masons
make a brick house i browse
over them in your presence
and read everything there
aloud only to see you crying
and then sobbing and then
taking pity on yourself and
then saying that you wish you
were never born and that
you have those who put you
here and you still do not know
if God exists and i stop right
there and bluntly tell you to
stop writing because you
are in effect have become so
disconnected and i pretty think
that it is not the function of
poetry to kill you.

i invited you outside to
see the full moon, feel the
cool night breeze and hear
the giggling lovers happily
enjoying each other's company
along the beach.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Functions Of Poesy

mend the anguish
protect the thin line

between sanity
and intellectuality

express in words
what you cannot say

fertilize imagination
with metaphors

you display in some ways
what you conceal

dreams become alive
like dead resuscitated

you create a world
you have the key

to that only door and
you enter smiling

understanding the language
you invented for yourself

freed from the usual worries
of the day released from

the walls of your limits
you fly as a swift bird

uncaught by the hands of
time the cruelty of the

present you stretch your
sight far beyond their clutches.
The Furies And The Fears

the weight of guilt
is horrible
i thought i could not
carry it
until you winked at
me for the
promised silence.

while at the islands
the waves are hinting fears
i look to the horizon
thinking of you back home

will there be stories to
tell and what will i be in
there?
i want to rewrite what happened
the possibility had become
so nil

so here i am and there you are
becoming strangers again
content without anything to say
in order to survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Fusion

i once was flesh
the vultures fed on me
i once had bones
the cold and heat
made a dust out of me
now i am just air
anywhere
breathed inside you
we are one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Future And The Past

give these two shall disappear
when you live on the vertical sphere
The Now

Here the two do not exist.
The Now,
This awareness of a Presence
Time becomes meaningless.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Future Is In Deep Sleep And Does Not Bother....

i look back
(with minor regrets)
a life unedited
asking for some
corrections

i look back again and again
i can do more than this and that
it could have been something else
i could have been someone
more enlightened

i look back
it has become one bad habit for me
until i bump
a wall and it hurts my face
awakens me

it is this present this wall
this soundless pain
this complacency

too much of the past
i know, emaciates the present
on slipping hours
on hands with leaks
on dimming lights
on lazy afternoons and
colder nights

the future in deep sleep
does not bother.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gadfly

the donkey's
tail was badly bitten
by the gadfly

the goddamn
gadfly
made the tail swell
got infected
and the donkey
died

the donkey
has a spirit and it rises
high above
its dead body
above the grass
and the table
where its body
is laid

and when it
sees
everything now
clearly
and accurately
why the gadfly
bites &
why he died
not by fate alone
but for a reason

it knows this:
the gadfly suffers
a lot
from being disliked
by everyone

it killed the donkey
far from making it move
and do
a lot of work better
and faster
far from its motive
of efficiency
it died instantly
causing much sorrow
to its master
its user and abuser

but the donkey
still recommends
more gadflies in
society

and adopts Darwin's
legacy
let the most fit survive
let the weak become
the humus of
the earth
for the seeds of the trees
for the moss
for all those roots
for all future fertility.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gadfly Of Desire

there used to
be a
frenzied
passion,

this rut
and panic of the
nerves

the madness of
the desirous mind
wanting to
eat even if it
full

it craves for
water
and air
when water is
sea-full
when air
is a storm

you go awry
you run without direction
the ass
hole in you rules

you tumble
you fall
regret is all around you
mourning in a funeral
and you are
the star of
the dead show

years shut you up
and you hold a cane
your knees now
tremble

come to think of it
you sit on one of the stair planks
of the old house

you still like it coming back to you
the falling is sweeter
than this
monotonous sitting down
waiting for no one
waiting for nothing

the hours drag you
like you are the defeated gladiator
that soon they will
through
upon a cliff
soon to be eaten by
those hungry
vultures

where's that frenzy
that kills you?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gaiety Of Reflection

'Irony is the gaiety
of reflection
and the joy of wisdom.'

Anatole France (1844-1924)

ON that clear day
on that clear
pond
i see the face of irony
it is myself
and it is not myself
both
in the paradox
of belief and
disbelief

there is joy
in the wisdom
of acceptance
in the domain
of my own
laughter having
seen
what i am
and what i am not
what i ought to be
and what
i want to be
it makes sense
in this
loneliness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Galaxies

the galaxies drift
the stars are swimming in the ocean
of space
it is dark but all the planets are feeling confident
there are laws to follow
there will be no collisions
the big bang was so terrible
some stars explode
on the other hand another galaxy is born
somewhere in space
all these
meteors and stars and earths
paradise
in random chaos
we must all know
is still the best poem
ever

you see? the stars over there
they are twinkling
they agree and do not question

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gambler

the gambler one day
while sitting on a chair facing the sea watching the sunset
looks at the poet
like him alone on a worship of the fading day
wondering what was it that keeps
digging inside his heart

the gambler starts a conversation telling the poet that he envies his solitude
his grace with the use of the words
his beauty and his
journey along the paths of
the spiritual and
the divine communion with God

the poet is not amazed and takes a simple gaze
at the gambler's face
he give the gamble a little smile
telling him
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Game Is Over....

this May
we are supposed to fly
to Las Vegas
visit Hollywood and
Disneyland and

have fun with cousins
Liclic and Rodin
perhaps we will cook
the best adobo
and then we eat outdoors
under the summer sun
under the trees
and look at the panorama
of west coast

we changed plans
we stop in L.A. then
we go to Mexico

i dislike it actually
but my wife insists
she knows that you are
there having married
a mexican, allegedly
happily thereafter

i do not really know
what happens
when we see each other again

my wife wants me to be
honest
and wants perhaps to see
how my face blushes
how my tongue plays with
my mouth
perhaps to give a smile
and how i must say the words
that love is gone or
that the game is over.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Game That You Play....

what a naughty dream
when i have learned to forget
you showed up
naked in my sleep and when i
wake up from said
slumber
you are not really there

RIC S. BASTASA
The Game...

this game of light
and dark
has finally shaped
a body
that i have always yearned
for all these
years

it is not meant to be mine
it is a product of nothing
and nothing
gets it back
like what it owns
it scatters and then
gladly
it disappears
not verifying for once
what one feels

i sigh
some things are meant to be sighed
not meant to be held
for a moment
of caresses.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Garden Of The House, The Trees And The Birds, And The Little Child In Us....

because the birds always
come here
every morning
renders their songs
and stay for a while
because you are kind with
your grains
not selfish with your time
because the trees
offer themselves as homes
because the boy was taught
to just watch
how they fly away
there is no chaos here
nothing bloody
there is harmony
because this is it
keeping each in place and
in freedom
this nook has long
yielded itself to peace
and quiet....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gas Lamp And The Morning Sun...

at night we are faced
with the light from the lamp
that sets itself
off
we are
accustomed somehow
to the
comfort of darkness

sometimes it is
us
that blows the light away
we kill it

we have known the meaning
of death

that morning
we are met with a different light
that lives a life of its own
that depends on no
gas or
fuel

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gathering Of Hurt People

what we had on the table was
finally consumed
all the ripe ones even the raw ones
were taken
there was silence
one looks beyond the window
finally breaking the silence
saying, look the clouds are coming
laden with rain

ah, the one who was optimistic
hums a song
an offering for the rainbow
that soon he knows
will show again the colors
the promise that
we shall never be destroyed
again

then we all smiled
we have returned to our hopes
our senses open
like petals blooming for another
day....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gay Waiter

oh i am happy to see
the gay waiter after work
at the bar
now waiting for his prince charming
outside
to fetch him
at dawn where they will mix
pleasure and love
together.

the cold and the dark outside
the warmth and love entwined in their arms and lips
inside.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gecko

last night there was
a gecko
hiding behind the frame
of a painting
from
ho chi minh

its tail was
visible

when i turned off the light
it came out and
had all the free time
catching its prey of roaches
and mosquitoes

i was relaxing myself on a hammock
at the right side of the house

it was such a night without the moon
the world is still without a windy atmosphere

what do you expect from this?

i guess that gecko was just shy

it knew however to eat and live
without us.

RIC S. BASTASA
as i sit on one of
those veranda benches
at the second floor of
the house
as the moon wanes behind
those dark clouds
there the gecko crawls
on the ceiling beside the
lighted bulb
waiting for its favorite
moth, mosquitoes, and
even lost cockroaches.

tonight it may rain
and the mosquitoes may
not be around to satisfy
its hunger.

it is steady on the wall
silent on its feet or hands.
ready for the ambush....

RIC S. BASTASA
The General's Funeral...

will there be a heavy rain
on the general's funeral?

the family members say, please understand,
do not need your flowers.

they wish there must always
be sunshine and at least fifteen minutes of silence,

that will be enough,
to pay for the last respect, and then
back to chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Genius In Each Of Us

the genius in each of us
lies in the ordinariness of the clothes we wear
and the ordinary walk that we take on ordinary lanes

the genius of air, and sunlight, and wind
the one that gets inside us without notice
yet makes everyone live

the one that caresses us without feeling
so important and yet makes us survive

the one that refreshes us in the shores
along ships that we are in
taking us to our destinations

tell me if they have special names and special
functions

the ordinary air, the ordinary sunlight, the ordinary wind
is that not the genius of the earth

the fire, the land, the sky
are they not so ordinary for us to take and use and love?

they are the strokes of the genius of the Lord
and yet they never have names of their own

they are everywhere, they are anywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Genius Inside Us

genius is just
a matter of playing
games. Nothing serious
when you fall down
no matter how deep
and painful,
just smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gentlemen Of Canivarø

i look at him
as i look at myself, and i know
we have something in common,
that stupidity that is
buried in our
epidermal existence,
but we keep it so discreet within
our own
system, more into the secrets of the
arts,
the functionality of a cosine,
the realm of a stormy
state of
an athletic form,
(do not inject your own
vision, it may be destructive
to the canvass of
what life must be)

listen, this stupidity is
not too obvious on you,
who is dressed in white for the
first communion,
your hair is oiled and
well combed,
and your shoes are as shiny
as an auto paint,

we stand for the show,
and we are decent,
and we walk the aisle
along us the Greek pillars,
and at the end of the hallway,
we are met
by our ex-girlfriends and
our ever patient wives.

(do not interpret the we here
as we)
The Gestalt

knowing that it will
suffer the same fate as
Oedipus
he puts himself inside
a box
puts a hole for a window
enough for him
to breathe and perhaps
live for a while
until this horrible thing
happens, he grows tendrils
all over his body,
with roots for armpits
and nerves,
and what cannot be stopped
eventually is his coming out
of the box
as a vine, at the end
he ends up
craving for the sun

heliotrope, that is what he
is, darkness could have
killed him,
wife of this father,
who he wanted killed.

his leaves are made of wax
all trunks melted... and so he
has become too disconnected,
puzzle pieces, not fitting in
to a whole picture,

jigsawed...gestalt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gift Of Ennui

laugh at me
i want to hear the hardest laugh
from you

at the last hour
i want to see that wry smile
of the monotony

everyday i come to you
for worship
bowing before your
seductions

and everyday i pray before God
and ask forgiveness
for my failures
i pray that He may grant me
the gift of ennui
that at the end you may become
one tedious thing
so i may not come back again
and ask for your graces & mercies

laugh at me
i will say i love you
i will say i adore you
and that i cannot live without you

laugh the hardest
& i will keep on hearing your music
to my ears

i am waiting for the moment
of boredom
so i can finally be free from this desire
this love
that i know is never meant for its fulfillment

the reasons are not on our side
the world and the heavens
do not give its blessing

Oh God! when shall its end be!
Oh Monotony! where the hell are you?

RIC S. BASTASA
we may think that those she turned
to stone

hate her, but how do we know?
we haven't heard yet

any stone talking?

sometimes i wonder
stones are happier for whatever happened

i need to know those stories before
the turning

for sometimes i think
that Medusa is a gift, there are those

who, in reality, have become stones
but never really come out

in the open.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gift Of Privacy

you look at something
where desire is mixed with fear
and that is where
the excitement seems
both near and
far &
you look behind you
no one is looking
the doors are locked
and the windows are
well covered with
thick orange colored drapes

this is the world inside
you and you begin to do
what you really want
discreetly
the privacy visits you
and hands you
the most beautiful surprise
of your life
where you are real
true
and happily left alone
sailing
in the oceans of your
dreams
fulfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gift Of Silence......

somehow i begin
to suspect
blood

we come from the
same mother
it is a fact which
we cannot deny

i do not drink wine
with you
and when we go for dinner
we take the shallow part
of the conversation

we are all dishonest
not telling what we are
really up to

no one is burying any
hatchet
no one is mending fences
got no sealant for the
broken porcelain bowl

i keep on hiding my
fortunes away from you
and there you are keeping
the saying that
a person in need is someone
to avoid

when you got sick
it never came into my mind
that i have to visit you
and bring something that
pleases you

there was a time when
you said i am a coward
but i disregarded it
saying well it is not true
i am just being courteous
to you

ultimately we never ask anymore
why we have not really become
the brothers that we are.

we know what is wrong and
we keep it that way...avoiding
a confrontation
buying peace, and waiting for
the gift of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gift Of The Magi: Wedding Anniversary

she went to the market
then back to the kitchen
and cooked spaghetti

the table is set
green mantle, silver spoon and fork
silk hands

i went to the school and had
a legal lecture on
divorce and its consequences
in Philippine setting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gift.....

i cannot be another
slave because you have
something to give me

i think that in
utter simplicity i do not
really need
anything

if you only told me that
all that you
can give is not
a thing
but your
self
i could have paused
a minute
think about it
and then
resolve to accept
you

somehow you are
still in the realm
of things

and i am in the realm
of persons

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gifts Of Medusa...

we may think that those she turned
to stone

hate her, but how do we know?
we haven't hears yet

any stone talking?

sometimes i wonder
stones are happier for whatever happened

i need to know those stories before
the turning

for sometimes i think
that Medusa is a gift, there are those

who, in reality, have become stones
but never really come out

in the open.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Girl In You Antonio?

the girl in you antonio
must have been smothered
all the red ribbons now kept
secret in your closets but

now the woman speaks
about the porcelain plates
and the scented water
that lay so cold in the tub.

the girl in you antonio
does not die, it creeps
like a lizard in your skin
and faces you as a doll.

if indeed the child is the
father of man, so antonio
the girl in you shall be the
mother of all your desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
yes, yuri, the girl from cebu
whose heart has turned to stone
is not an exception,
if fact she is a general rule,
they are uprooted from
the clutches of poverty
from fathers who are
unemployed from mothers
who earn their living
on the simplest chores
of household keeping
where there is nothing
to keep, of fish vending
where there is no fish,
of selling vegetables
where there is no
good harvest, and so
these girls have to
attend to themselves,
and the internet has
become the tool,
display their wares
seduce the south african
male for an exotic treat
of oriental coyness
and shyness feigned,
enticing the whites
and blacks to pour
their dollars on their
innocent breasts,
these occur so
regularly as a matter
of accepted occupation,

predator prey relationships
thrive, vultures come and
wait, because there are
dead meat offered in our streets aplenty in the internet.....blame them? reprimand who?

let them play their games let them find out who is the prey and who is the predator, because Yuri, they are all big enough and we just mind our own business, let one find his pleasure, and let the other give it to him.

and let us watch who punishes whom, who gains who loses in their own free games.

RIC S. BASTASA
must i tell you that we have arrived
at the same frame? the irresistible force
has arrived at the
immovable wall and then
you, heroine, horse,
goddess, magic wand,
chalk,
whatever you pretend to be
or want to impress
us to be,
the solver of the problem
the conflict mediator
buffering medium

it's been years and we are at a stalemate
invite us, and we shall not attend

if i were the immovable
the other is the irresistible

are you angry? or plain crazy?
this is the old war, as old as a shell
and as crazy as hell
you go between, you are nothing at all,
you have become
our common enemy, now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goal Of Poetry

it is simply to reach
out to people
with our verbal hands
these mental arms
and make them
look

deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
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deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper
deeper

too, within
themselves

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goat

you are the goat
set free on the field
of green grass
and you eat every
herb that your
eyes feast upon

unleashed your
feet jump for your
freedom

now your master
has come and
takes a glance
of your beautiful
body

he stares at you
looking closely
in your face for
that last laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goat Crossing The Moat

The Capote is afloat beside the goat
Crossing the moat to read the note
And keep the quote in its throat

A tote does not vote that is what you wrote
So back to the rote eating the oat and
Smash the mote hidden on the boat

The seas bloat so you devote a bank note
For the seed coat of a wild oat
& scare quote for your strep throat
As Joseph’s coat dote the eight note.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goat.....

you remember how it
was a kind of play with
that goat
in the mountain of your
father

the goat chases you
and you run
like a child to avoid
its sharp horns

sometimes however
you confront this dilemma
of horns
and you hold it with your hands
and test your powers as
you begin to twist its neck
or lift it up to the sky
and feel that you are like
Hercules

when the goat cries in pain
you return to your senses
unable to kill the animal
for it is not time yet

for there are reasons for
killing
there is always a ripe time
to get more meat and cook it
well and share it with your friends
on the dining table

for it is all set
the goat must graze and live
only for a time
for its purpose is but
to be food for the master and
his kin

there is no remembering about
how pleasurable it was
when it was alive
how good looking how obedient
how it has pleased your children
in that playful bout of
chase and run
in the mountain of your father.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goddess Of Justice

you want to have a goddess
of justice with eyes all covered

one hand with the sword and
on the other the scale

you demand somehow that she
will take side always with you

in the same manner that your
adversary wants it to be

to be true to herself she must
stay still at the center

unmoved by all your pleadings
until she finds the law that

fits and then imposes her will
without your farce or force.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Goddess Of Love, Art And Beauty

he meets
the Goddess of
Love &
Art and
Grace
and what she touches
even those
that are so mundane
from the beginning
at the end
transforms
themselves into
the most
divine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gold Laurel In The Non-Human

we are fooled
that one has no
face
no hands
no body
there is nothing
like that
here
but what is happening
he is declare
the number one
human being with
laurels of gold
on the head
and we all watch with
disbelief
and we still ask
why is this?

but we care no more
there is no need for
any explanation
i plant more seeds
and you sow more corn
in these fields of
all our endeavors
soon it will be over
we expect
to harvest nothing
and we leave this place
with a song in our
heart

we do not really care
we were doing it because
we all love to be human
and that creature
who got it all
is none of our concern
we are here
in another place
contented
and self-declared.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gold Laurel In The Non-Human (2)

we are fooled
that one has no
face
no hands
no body
there is nothing
like that
here
but what is happening
he is declared
the number one
human being with
laurels of gold
on the head
and we all watch with
disbelief
and we still ask
why is this?

but we care no more
there is no need for
any explanation
i plant more seeds
and you sow more corn
in these fields of
all our endeavors
soon it will be over
we expect
to harvest nothing
and we leave this place
with a song in our
heart

we do not really care
we were doing it because
we all love to be human
and that creature
who got it all
is none of our concern
we are here
in another place
contented
and self-declared.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Golden Fields Of Rice

soon it will be harvest time
and you will see the women all wrapped in their sarong
their heads covered against the sun
bowing before these golden ricefields harvesting the
produce of their plowing and sowing men

soon it will be another happy hour
of drinking and singing and merry making
some debts will be paid off
the children shall remain in school
delicious dinners shall be served on the table
and happy conversations shall be in place
in the backyards of these working people

soon the fields will be empty again
some dried stalks will be left
some grains remain unpicked
by then it will be summer and the sun
will be so scorching

there will be changes going between the sowing and the harvesting
my faith shall keep staying amidst the cycles of the sun and the rain
the wet and the dry seasons of this tropical place
the mudding and the cracking of the paths

i will always keep going
to walk on like i am bound for a certain destination

RIC S. BASTASA
The Golden Fool

he is foolish
his name Coco
he is like the monkey
who sits
on the mountain of gold
though he owns it
everyday
he goes to town
to beg
for him to live

RIC S. BASTASA
The Golden Rule

mind other people’s business first
before they mind yours
live life that way you want it
and live it well
before they give you their
bad examples
be punctual, be there first
before they talk about you
and don't leave
before they all leave
better talk about them
rather than they talk
about you

take note
beauty gets second place
to an innovative
ugly woman.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gone Lover....

this is what she writes at
the wall,

full moon,
and promises,
shines on a day
and then
fades the other days
until what is
left is
utter darkness,

and then we wait
she says,
for the new moon again
not giving up
those waning hours
shall cause sorrows for a while
but not for all those times
when
one begins to count with her fingers
other memories

sugar coated, and pinches
of salt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good And The Harsh

upon a plate
of steamed rice
and salted
fish

with you
this morning's
breakfast

the day shall
start

as TV news
breaks out with
another
killing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good Men Do Nothing....

when the beetle is smashed
as the child leaves to another game of his
i get a stone and mark another violence
where no one is punished for beetles are just beetles
and children are merely children,

i always have a stone to mark an unforgettable story
wherever i go

it is always a story of a crime unsolved, a violence without cause,
another story of a crime which get laid and paid.

even within our family circle, i also have stones.

stones which i do not throw at anybody who committed the offense
a blunder an injustice against man committed by his fellowman

i have never thrown any stone at them
i only bury them in utter silence, as markers for me to remember

that somehow i too have committed this common mistake
of simply gazing

doing nothing and then somehow move on
either with a guilty conscience or this sense of helplessness

the biggest sin for all those other good men
who did nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good Men....

everyday the strangers come
i have always kept the door open
they do not have to knock
for i understand
why they are here and what
they want to do
the dogs do not bark them
the cats come sliding on their feet
the birds comes to rest upon their
shoulders,

they do not open their mouths
their eyes gentle upon the morning light
and like all those memorable and
valuable moments, these men of art and
honor, and passion

ey do not stay that long
they come and go and come back again
just like any breeze, any wind any hush
of leaves and husks and filaments of
light and shadows and souls...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good News And The Sad News

the little girl
with lots of curls
and two deep dimples
on her cheeks who
smiles at you
early morning giving
you the most
needed hug to last
you for another day

is dead....

a terrorist sprayed bullets
in their home this morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good Ones Die Earlier

cause the good most often die earlier
caused by others' envies & cruelties
and those who are left behind
refuse to understand
why one as good
as this must
die instead
of them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good Poet

For the good poet knows who he is, when asked if he is good

(and wise and beautiful)

he looks up into space showing to you that up there there is an unlimited edition.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good That Does Nothing But Good Perishes
First....

it is a fact to me
that the good are those that perish first
the just are killed
mercilessly in their homes
and those who are at peace
are being dragged into
the war that
others have made for
themselves,

i am good and i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good That You Do Unto Others....

ask, please ask, if you have the heart
every moment that you do good for another
if it pleases her too
in the same manner that we do not really want to hurt or inflict
what innate badness we keep
we must always ask
if the other is enjoying what we do and we keep on doing

ask, and you must know if the good that you do is good for the other
for in truth we do not know where that person is going
his needs and wants, his dreams and wishes,
his past traumas, his scruples
and unresolved conflicts

so please my friend, i have to tell you again
the good that you have done in me has hurt me and that is the truth

when you laugh, you have become the worst person that i have known and met
when you say it does not matter, you have become a worm
a parasite to my body and by all means
forgive me when i finally decide to
deform you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Good Tree

the good tree
bears a lot of fruits

and when it is time
for the picking
of the ripe ones
there are no questions
of who you are
and what do you deserve

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gospel

it is this rebellion
about freedom suppressed
about desire
restrained and
cut
this bleeding that
never stops
this heart that cannot
mend itself
like a lizard's tail
it is this listlessness
this opinion of others that i am lost and
desecrated
that i have abused and
dehumanized what lies sacred within
my guts
it is all these
that have converted me as one of those
hundred and
thousands of
strangers losing their homes
unable to locate
the next address of their
next sleep
restless and now so free
not to read
any dogma not to take seriously
any rule
learning somehow
how to live life
by simply waiting sitting down
standing by

RIC S. BASTASA
The Graciousness Of Experience....

i justify it
before myself.
down into the
caves of death
we walk to know
it much better
to see clearly
its face and listen
to its voice.
of course, it is
frightening.
the thought that
we can go back
to that door
would not have
been possible
until the graciousness
of experience
lays the way towards
it and opens its
doors even without
a magic word.
there is no magic
here. it is the
graciousness of experience
the humility of subjecting
ourselves to his
original mess to fully
understand it.
i was there i only
feel it and to say
that i understand it
is a lie.

i come out as a dove
from Noah's ark
faithful to my promise
to tell you about my
new world which shall
be ours,
mine to write now.
and yours to wonder
whether it is really
ture.

this is the graciousness
of experience
the enumeration of pains
the description of what
is hell
and it is not other
people but us
experiencing fire
and feeling its horrors.

it is not hell as written
it is hell as experienced.

it was you there and
myself. we fathomed the
secrets of our beings.

i come out then as
an open wound
less the blood of
my imagining.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Graft

from a tree without fruit
the one that is about to be an uproot
God did graft
a twig with three green leaves
glossy on the bark
and so
fully alive,

this is what had been prayed
and this is what has been granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grandeur And The Majesties Of Nature

the sea will always be there
always surfaces moving and sometimes
i ask if it is just the wind that
creates in it
that baby's curly hair
between the sea and this mountain
is the neutral shore
white thighs of a woman spreading her legs
to every manly wave
even to the feminine winds from
far amorous skies
love and lust with always be here
these players of the games that nature
plays upon us
when we watch a mountain come out
from the fog
wearing the white hair of snow caps
when we see heights
that move us into an awe
and then we begin to mentions so many names
of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grass

as no one tends them
here
they grow wild
then.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grass And Trees.....

under those
tall towers
following trails
amidst the
crowd of mute
people
the way to home
missing it
is such a
desperate event
as you begin
to feed those
squirrels beside
those duck
sculptures where
the only thing
that is cool and
real is the
grass and some
old trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grass Grows Wild On Paths Unknown

the grass grows wild
along the paths unknown
they thrive and spread
and bloom
with no one tilling
and caring
and cultivating
except with nature's sun
and rain
in some vicissitudes
of warmth
and cold

how much you my love
whom i care so dearly
so tenderly and
and deeply?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grass, Not The Bench

It is not the Bench
that gives me that feeling that i have touched
the face of the sky
grope my hands upon a bunch of stars
or slide my doubting finger
to a fresh wound
of resurrection
I sit there All Day
and finds nothing that redeems me
From Oblivion

It is the grass and the ground
that it has
covered for years
faithfully that have given me
the essential strength of my bones
the tingling feeling
on my heel

the feeling is more than that
i am surrounded by silent stars
cumulus clouds
feather winds
filled with foams

RIC S. BASTASA
as i pass by this place
the green stretch of grass
the sky blue flowers
and the towering trees
all these
know how to mend
the wounds of
the hurt
earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grasses At The Beach

the grasses in the beach
are thick and tall
spreading upon the edges
of the concrete fences
perhaps wanting to go out
of its rectangular cage

it is unattended
no one visits them
the time is only at least
once a week

the grasses are tall and thick
perhaps because
they are all free

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grasses Wilt In Summer

On the hour of my death
The ricefields are empty
The grasses wilt in summer

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grateful Visiton

the ease with which the door opens
the pleasure of a hundred entrances

graceful
and dignified

and hence let me
say: thank you very much

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gray Shade Of Black

For darkness to die
it must fade first
to gray then to the
paler side of gray
until it becomes
lighter than orange
not so much of saffron
but more like your
apron when you start
to fry the egg and
throw the shell away.

RIC S. BASTASA
i have seen those white petals
at the hotel in that big city where we are billeted
as important guests
at the lobby we stop but you were looking
excitedly for the
room with a queen size bed
your mind revolves upon
the anticipations of fun

mine is settling on those white petals
for hours as i was waiting for no one
i am not crazy
i do not wish to be one

on those white petals i was waiting
for gray....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Great Dive

they were talking about the dive
the older woman who talked about it before
had already been duly rewarded
oh, she was grasping for breath
she almost died

people always love to talk about grasping
for breath
a situation where one almost dies
hands grappling for anything be it a shadow
of a coral or even a yellow finned fish
some however do not help one to rise and live
but they bite and make you bleed
inspiring the sharks

we all undergo this great dive
into the dark blue depths
into the blackness that we have never been too
but we have the feeling
we know

honestly i have been there
i am not rewarded at all
i do not expect anything anyway
and i personally do not want to talk about it

never.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Great Man Who Ate Cow Dung All His Life
(Secretly)

everyday
he feeds himself
with cow dung
but this is done
discreetly
for who in this
normal world
would like
to satisfy
himself with
dung
who in this
society would
love a man
who eats and
smells like
cow dung?

of course, he
feared
that soon if
society knows
he shall be
another ostracized
ostrich
electrically fenced
and monitored
and segregated
at Ward 8
for social
rehabilitation

he didn't like dung
reason and logic
so tell him well
but he couldn't resist
the smell of dung
even if it is kilometers away
there is simply this obsession for
cow dung
and he begins to salivate even for the word dung

and for so many nights he prayed that his mind-set be changed so that he can prefer steak medium rare than watery cow dung

life has its own idiosyncrasies for he prefers dung than barbecue despite his genius for good food

and so not to deprive himself of what he really loves in his whole life he eats cow dung stores them in his refrigerator

and eats cow dung regularly savoring every fiber and enjoying that rotten
sticky smell of
rotten grass
and leaves or
hay

how he wishes
that the shrink can
teach him to hate
dung
but this never
happened
he never referred
the matter
somehow
for fear of information
leaks
for modesty aside
he is
a great man
in his field of
endeavor

no one knows this

this is his secret
and i have known this
only about a year & a half
after he died

when i found his
black diary hidden
under the
old creaky bed
because it
smells dung
itself
in his
luxurious house
beside
a river

you know him
he is one of the greatest men
in our history
a philosopher
writer
philanthropist
scientist
artist
sculptor
a genius
who ate cow dung
all his life

well adored by history
a hero for all humanity
the Renaissance man
as they dub him to be
the man who ate
and secretly loved cow
dung all this life

do not bother
let us keep his greatness
history is always right
do not argue

great men
revered the cow
ate cow dung
and become
famous
throughout the life
of history

their names
written in the pages of books
like sticky
piece of dung
but shits
unknown

RIC S. BASTASA
The Great Power Of Silence

it merely looks
takes more time
premeditating
what next to
devour and
you
the great one
complacent
about your fame
does not mind

the hands of silence
grab you
into its mouth

you shout
there is no voice
coming out

you struggle
there is no exit
from its belly

you come out
at the end
as insignificant
as a short-time
fart

RIC S. BASTASA
The Great Void

as i grope for words,
i let go my hold for something so important
as love, and something more important as lust,
i let go off these two, as i grope for words
to give you something more important than love or sex
or even politics,

i groove for something so important.
i look for it, and then seemingly it is gone.

and now i still wonder, what was it? was it a white moth?
or a black butterfly?

was it the void in me? you see, let me tell you frankly,
never in my life has love or sex once ever
fill me,
and so,
i try something more fulfilling than that:
not love not sex
not lust not even
tenderness

but the emptiness
which we have everyday
the one that i  worship

the one that  reminds me
of
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greater Part

The greater part in us is beyond
the legal books
majority of the pie is sweet, decorated with
raisins and cathedral jellies
much of us is plump and bouncy
and glossy
no less than the maple syrup on
a pancake
early morning served with hot brewed coffee

i talk to myself
convinced that much of myself is just myself
in a soliloquy
actually a nice selfish conversation
where every part of my cell is happy
and if a part of it is hurt
i worry
since i only hurt myself and no one else
like those who think that they always
talk with sense

my favorite is a heaving a sigh
as though i am fetching water from a deep well
at least to convince myself
that i am still thinking
and sticking to the essence of what and who i am

i know myself,
that is why.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greatest Book

x x x x
is not the one
whose
message
engraves itself
on the
brain

x x x x
- but the one
whose
vital impact
opens up
other
viewpoints,

x x x x

and from writer
to reader
spreads
the fire

x x x x

that is fed by
the various
essences,

x x x x
until it becomes
a vast conflagration
leaping from
forest to
forest.'

- roland roland
The Greatness In You

i understand
what a butterfly is

when it lands on your
hair
it does not tell about
its struggles
once as
a caterpillar

i understand you
and knowing how was it
on those years
way back when you and i
parted
i never thought
of any
envy

as others make the
applause
i simply watch
for any
applause is never
enough

after this
you fly again

flutter your wings
to change
another planet

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greed Of The Boy At The Candy Store

greed is as young as a little boy in the candy store
whose only dialogue is this and that and that too and this too
he points again to this and this and that and that too
while pulling his mama's shirt
and looking at every jar arrayed before
his eyes all wide open
like a flash of the lighthouse
one dark night
on the vast sea

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greed Of The River

brown to its existence the river as usual is silent
it borrows the sound of the slashing boat and from the time to time talks
it asks. 'where to boatman? '
but the boatman does not answer
he does not know how this river works how this river feels
it has taken people away
it has taken people back to their places
it has swallowed lives
and then in silence it sleeps
its belly full

RIC S. BASTASA
The Green Boat As Spoken Of By Lorenzo

a green boat is laid down
on the white sands of the shore

pointing its tip like
his phallus
to the wide bosom of the
sea

its arms make the balance
between lust and love

the sea wonders
if she is the only one sailed by this
green boat

the green boat
stays on the ground

lorenzo sees
what these matters tell him

sometimes he says
there is this talk between two men alone

in whispers

RIC S. BASTASA
The Green Eyed Lady

described the lady
as you see
is such a grand beauty

gentle, loving eyes
seductive, when they blink
they are like
love calls
sweet to the ears
of hungry men

when she walks
(oh, she walks in beauty
and i am not original on this)
when she passes at you
she makes you grow
your jeans getting tighter
and tighter
they may tear apart
between the legs

the lady with green eyes
is asking for you
your love and nothing else
so love her
like she is the only princess
in the castles of the blooming springs

but beware, be so aware
you pain her
you betray her
the lady with green eyes
knows her ways

fed up, she returns
and be the green eyed dragon
spitting fire
burning everything
and then she flies away with her hurting wings

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Green Grass Of Your Home...

they are the silent witnesses
of my first love
those spreading green grass of your home
away from mine
when we first kiss and when we finally made love
sweet juices flow on such blanket of green
so fresh then warm...

they shall be the same silent witness of my last breath
those wilting grasses of your home
away from mine
when we finally part and when the wreath is placed
above my home
away from yours
the elegy shall be said and the dirge shall be played
and the wilting grasses shall have heard
the sounds of my
final rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greener Field Beyond Our Place

always, it is
it is always the case that the other side of the fence appears greener
and when you sit on the bench inside your house beside a window
looking into the other side
you wish you have a new pair of shoes
a hat and a pack bag
you dream upon a tomorrow where you can be there
with your brown dog

in the afternoon after a day inside your backyard
under the lemon tree
you change your mind
it is dark and your only wish is to stay
and spend the night
communing with the stars in the skies
gazing at your patio

RIC S. BASTASA
The Greeting That Pleases Her Senses....

hello, hello
soft and mellow
hello hello hello
crazy over you...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Grey Areas

you think and teach you
that black is black and white is white

that either you are moral or immoral
that either you leave or stay
that either you die or leave
that there are only choices of either/or

they tell you do not do this
do not do that
they prohibit you and tell you
it is for your own good
as though they are gods
and you are the dogs

an old man with bright eyes
asked me to go near him
and he says: try the middle of things
it is not just black or white but there are shades and shades of choices

in there everything is allowed.
the grey areas. the exceptions. the exemptions.

try them. they are all exciting. like the colors of the rainbow
like the patches of red, and orange and blue and pink

you see, who is telling you that there are no other colors
than black and white?

i am neither good nor bad. In truth, i am just myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
they think and teach you
that black is black and white is white

that either you are moral or immoral
that either you leave or stay
that either you die or live
that there are only choices of
either/or

eye tell you do not do this
donot do that
don only this and that

they prohibit you and tell you
it is for your own good
as though they are gods
and you are the dogs

an old man with bright eyes
asks me to go near him
and he says: try the middle of things
it is not just black or white but
there are shades and shades of choices
in between

in there everything is allowed.
the grey areas. the exceptions. the exemptions.

try them. they are all exciting. like the colors of the rainbow
like the patches of red, and orange and blue and pink

you see, who is telling you that there are no other colors
than black and white?

i am neither good nor bad.
In truth, i am just myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Growing Consciousness

for such is the true nature of our state
the growing consciousness

always the unfolding of the petals to become
the flower
the sprouting of the seeds
the ripening of the fruit
the surprises of the buds like tips of your fingers

for always the sun spreads its rays and shows its dominion for the day
for always the moon shall transform paleness to fullness
to the joys of our eyes
to the satisfaction of our feelings and longings

for always the leaves thicken themselves and they fall
only to grow the greener leaves again

for always my dear from you fall you shall rise
from your silence you must be tranquil
for always you must keep the hope growing
the love stronger
for always you must believe that things will always turn better
that at the end there shall be this perfection
of who we are and what shall we become

believe in this wisdom and you shall begin to hear the songs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Gruesome Murder And The Popularity

i told him about the tragedy of a 63 year old gay doctor
who was stabbed to death by two teens
inside the bathroom of his house in bacolod city

it was gruesome
as it was filmed and the killer winked and smiled
after the murder

the teener feels that now he makes it to the headline
and to the person with whom i told the tragedy

he simply laughed it out
he wants the comedy part of the horrible error

faraway from home
he says, there is no place like america

RIC S. BASTASA
The Guava Parable

i do not know if you realize
what is happening between us

it could be sad for me but
let me try to explain it

there was a child climbing a guava
tree and got all the ripe ones put them
in a basket but never ate one
he gave each stranger
the fruit of his adventure
about what he stole from his childhood
to the old ones
who never had one yet
for dessert
despite the passage of all those
years

we parted and then we meet again

i watch you climb the guava tree again
i could not climb it myself anymore
i have become too old for it
and i am about to give up what dream is there

i could have told you, yes, i was once a child
who had the fruits too
but i never really wanted one
and i am asking myself what trait is this
which squanders and yet knows not the reason
why

i have given much
why i do not desire what i got
why i have this content of seeing the tree die
and why i am happier now
without any guava at all.
The Guest Of Our House

when you arrive here
you sing for us, then you dance and then you
recite a poem
and we listen, we tap our feet, we like your song
we cry for the sadness of your poem
we are amazed till you left us

the same question is asked: when are you coming back?
will you sing for us again? will there be new dance steps to
please us? will the poem be sadder?

at any rate
nothing is changed.

it is the same rock in the middle of the road,
the same mud on all the sides

the dead bird hanging on the tree
has become an skeleton in our closets

nothing has changed
and we never expect any somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Guilt

i know how it feels,
for i also know how to junk someone like a
hot potato,

i know how it feels to reject a certain value
and i know how to come back at it
without its knowing,

i begin to be interested at it

familiarize myself with its pungency
and memorize its color

i kiss its traces and hug
the old unwashed shirt hanging
inside the drawer

i also know how to leave

close the door and
tell myself, i will not come back to this place anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Guilt And The Pain Of The Tiny Flesh

the flesh will always have
its own way of
giving you guilt, there is
always that accompanying
pain with
slow and gentle pleasure
the pressure
to transcend its shallowness
however the
necessity of its warmth
and hair and
surface
you take it and learn
that art of having to rub life
with death
no words are uttered
on some
deaths that beat inside
our hearts somehow there
is something that
diminishes us
after
something that spreads us
like a dirty linen
against the almighty
sun
but the need is always
there
which without out
it
we shall wither
and crumple like
brown leaves without
dew
on cracked
soil

as i told you this is
the pendulum of
compromises of
plea bargainings

we take sometimes
the necessity of having
to plea guilty
on the lesser liabilities
of some
tiny flesh which
however deep we
are we by default
take the option of the
fools
and facing another
stupid being
we give them
a straight face of
i was there and
you have no right
to judge me
you have no
scar.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Habit

the habit is an epoxy
attaching a part of my thoughts
to your thoughts
yet somehow there is no spark
of understanding
like a star bursting

and so everyday as the sun rises
killing the shadows of leaves
in my mind
i keep taking track of what happens
a word stands as a boundary
a punctuation marks
a departure
and there are questions like guards
and sentries of
the parapet

there are birds unable to fly from the
hammocks of the mind
there are works unable to come out
from the hollows of the heart

and so the journey to another desert
with the camel and the
carpet starts all over again

there is no end
this habit has no purpose but to satisfy
what i do not know

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hamlets Of Our Time

early morning i argue
with myself

a la Hamlet: to be or not to be

and i remember one writer
great as he is

who curse himself for having
made
so many Hamlets

who despite the fruits of the years
are still undecided

whether to live or not to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Handiwork Of God

it is this painstaking
choice of words
for a nice handiwork
knitting some fairies
in some
mathematical colors of threads
some butterflies
and flowers in bright colors
using strictly the mandate
of numbers

a painting in cloth and threads
taking her
time
when she is finally
hypnotized
falling into a deep sleep
inside a room
where she is alone
on a dim light
of her loneliness

i open the door
to check on her
inside the cramped room

i see the handiwork of God
a woman so indulged
so engrossed
in her art
so weary
and dedicated

in passion sleeping.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Are Asking You....

it is the same thing
and will always be
the same thing, these hands
that smashed your breasts,
shall be the same hands,
that shall smash theirs
don't you think that
the earthly resources
for maximum benefit
must be shared? these same
hands
for example
don't you find them too
limited if they shall
be exclusively yours?
are you the same selfish
wife of Lot who
turned into salt
because she wants to
see those hands
of the past
misgivings?
look at your hands
how misshapen have they
become
because you never
shared them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Of An Angry Man

a hand ready for action
on the side of the leg

such is the hand of
the man beforehand oppressed

what lies on the other side
of his hate and disgust

the right hand keeps
always invisible to your eye

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Of Fate

in not all instances
perfect as you consider them to be
these hands
are not meant always for taking something in
not at all
there are enlightening moments
when the hands are meant for giving
without having an exchange
or value
there are dances of the hands
clasped in the solemnity of prayer
open to the art of acceptances
the solitude of keeping them
inside your pockets
or the holding of the face of love
bringing it near yours
for the kiss

the heart guides you what to do
with what life likes to give
you and what you must accept
without any remorse....

the hands knows when to take sides
with shame
as you begin to cover your face
and run away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Of Midas

it is this desire
that settles outside the fence
it can get in there
and proclaim itself
he can dare
he'd done it
once twice
but he cannot do it
this time

in all those times
when he tried
when he achieved it
not one of them
has told him honestly
that they were
happy

it was more of giving in
because of pity
it is set temporarily
because it said situation
eternity is a mockery

it is the hands of Midas now
what he touches because he loves
shall turn into stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Of The Clock

when we were young
we do not mind the clock
we are not so sure about
pendulums
we can even mistake the
long for the short hand
or if we mind time
for sometime
it is because we are late
for the dance or the
drinking spree

and then time has a way of
calling our attention
when our hairs starts to
look like seaweeds drying
under the summer
sun

now we are old like tree
shedding off most of its leaves
our twigs are infested with
fungus
and some of the tips of our roots
are rotten

then time begins to have fingernails
scratching our bellies
we begin to grow the seeds of
fear in our palms
our foreheads have furrows
like the pathways of the plow

at night we know how the long hand
runs with speed
it is 2:30 a.m. and then we switch the
light again
and too confused how
the clocks strikes 4 a.m.
we cannot go back to sleep
as we fall on the chasms of the past
we try to drink a cold glass of
the future
and it begins to have the bitter taste
of the love
unrequited.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands Of Whom We Love

what i have been writing is simply
the product of
a big distraction

it is like the blind
writing about light

i hear it and i know it
but i cannot clearly see it
and hence
i have never fully understood it

if i understood it
i shall not bother writing about it

this doubt shall make me live to write for more
i have it in my tongue but it slips the moment i want to utter it

behind me are scenes of my rumored true being
i set it aside for a while to describe it in words

but words are too shallow
i cannot bury my feet on them

and so the same things happen
night after night

sleepless after sleepless hands
groping for a dark and elusive fish in space

i submerge into unfathomable madness
do not get me wrong i am sane as the brightest star tonight

but just like it
there is no intimacy
for clarity
there is only beauty at a distance
like the way we wish to hold the hands of whom we love

we long that much but
we do not die.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hands That Touched Pain

they are your hands
those that touched so much pain
they glitter
with many diamonds
in the dark

RIC S. BASTASA
it does not always follow
that the house where your live
is your home,
that your home is in the heart
need not be what you call
it is. sometimes, it is not just that.
a house can be a home
the home is also a necessity
and throughout your life
you never lived there perhaps
a home need not be here
those who lived better say so
and just like love and marriage and
living and loving,
these matters can be interpolated and
and need not be even interlaced
in one fabric that you make into
a dress for the best occasion of your life
someone you miss, something you need
something you take, someone you dispense
there is someone there who says that his life
is perfect that he has already everything
and he has nothing more to ask for in his lifetime

it is so sad, he is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happily Retired Law Professor

the law professor
has retired

he goes in cognito
in that place
covered by mountains on
all sides

a shangrila
with a secret river
a tunnel
that leads you to a door

into another door
and there he prays
that finally

Death be so kind
to him
that he be fetched
earlier
than what was promised.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happiness Of A Poet

the most divine
thing that can happen
to you

O Poet...is when
no one reads your
enigmatic
creations, ....for

in this way
your secrets are still
very well
yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Beginnings.....

happy endings
are endings and
hence not
really that
lasting

migz, take another
thing

go for happy beginnings...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Child Of God

there is no other
metaphor for the child of God

it is the smile
after the rain
that you show to the
trees and the skies

it is the silence in you
that best speaks

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Conclusion....

you know
that time when my eyes
failed me
when my heart too
was blind
when my hands are
rebellious
when my feet argue
when i have moved
back and forth
when i want to go
and at the same
time
want also to return
to you
you know that time
and i have to tell you
i am torn
i am broken
and you were not there
to mend me
you know that time
when i have finally
opened up
like a clam
when i found out that
the world out
there
did not cheer for my
coming
you know that well
that time when
i too, finally
do not belong to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Drunkard....

he had wine, at first he did not like it, it is strong, and he chokes like a kid, but he takes another drink and true to the saying the drink takes him, again and again, until he feels the comfort of wine, as friend and confidante, a comforter of his uneasiness to life, to everyday, and this he does every night, taking glasses of wine, and making himself drunk, and he becomes an alcoholic, cannot live without a drink, cannot write without it, he is always drunk, and wish he drinks all the wine in the world, and just be a happy man

he writes a letter to his beloved: my dear i am about to die, tell the world, and my enemies, i am a drunkard but i am happy

i never stole money, never had another woman, never had any other God. though a drunkard, i am better than all the sad men in the world.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Ending In The Garden

... AND then as it was told
the princess meets her prince in the
Secret Garden

they sow the seeds of love
respect time
soon the flowers begin to bloom
soon the trees bear the fruit

in the garden of love
so private.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Man....

you think it is a struggle
that is why you are having a hard time

you must remember how a man has not worked in his whole lifetime?
and you must ask why?

he did not go for reason or rhyme
he went outside and played his ball with all the children in the village

he kicked and ran and jumped and danced and even tip toed when needed,

he climbed those trees, and swam those rivers, he slept his nights
and played his guitar,

he plowed the fields and caught the fish, and yet no matter what
on storms and floods and quakes, he merely whistled his way unlike
the usual everybody

no doubt about it, he liked everything and so he never worked
at all. He loved everyone, and so nothing worried him.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Monkey.....

the monkey
is happily eating
a ripe banana,

and you, the
sad one, is looking
at this scene
with envy, forgetting
your essence, you

wish to be a monkey
eating a banana,
happily,

and then a naughty
child passes by
picks up a stone and
hits the monkey
which hastily escapes
flies on top the tree
clings to a branch
and jumps.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Ones

when the one
that concerns them
died that afternoon

when for days she
called them all fools
one by one she called
them names

names that they
never accepted but
with due respect they
all answered her with
the decency of silence

when she died
and they mourned
and they did not sleep
for nights

i will not say it
but i know what they really mean.

when i left them
i am happy

i know who they are
and i left them just
the way they are

and we think we are
the happy ones.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Sea....

The sea is peaceful in the morning.
The gladness of its own kind
That mellowed silence with
gentle slushes on the austere sands
it yearns for no one
complete in itself
the sun comes
cressing what it cannot
take away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Soul

the happy soul thrives upon its own solitude
feeds upon its happy moments
and looks forward to the happiness
of the other days

it does not think about you and does not listen
to your woes
it has its own rhythm and rhyme
it feels the songs of the wind
it sees the colors of the sphere
layer upon layer it understands
the wisdom of the season
it smells the perfume of the red roses
it dances with the trees
and feels the cool comfort of the grass
it relates to the journey of the rivers
it knows the home of the birds
the words of the worms
the fullness of the beautiful foams
it knows where to rest its weariness
it sleeps and dreams
it does not even care if this world
speaks about an end
there is only bliss there is always nothing to miss

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Stars....

perhaps you have taken Lady Freedom for granted so she left you for good. Now

you have to get to know well with the other Lady inside your cell.

She is mean but not that cruel. She will remind you of the rituals which you have forgotten.

You have to comb your hair a hundred times before you sleep. You have to sleep on a flat bed.

Your view to the world is limited, Only through the slit eyes of those steel bars can you see the happy stars

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy State....

happiness rests on my sofa
i am beside it
you paint an image of me
in bright colors
i become the sun
in your early morning
you put the last stroke of the
brush
and sign your name
your name is happiness too
we part when darkness falls
we dress for
another rehearsal
of the dance of life
alone

i have seen so many happy steps
at daybreak
i put a smile and keep it again
and you wonder
what are those things that i have
seen that you have not seen?
i sigh
to the wonders of my secret
my morning rituals
before the monitor of this
word tool

i am happy, i am happy
my soul dances on the mountains
reaches for the chunks of my skies
at the top of my voice
i sing

you will never know why
there is no reason to put on the wings
of my newly found
freedom
The Happy Weaver Of The Multicolored Mat

the mat-weaver of the far place named Star has not bed to sleep on
given the place to stop for rest in the mountain she falls to sleep and snores.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Happy Weaver Of The Multicolored Mat (2)

the mat-weaver
of the far place
named Star
has not a bed to
sleep on

given any point
to stop for rest
in the mountain

she falls to sleep
and snores.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hard Lesson...

before that you fear
their eyes that gaze at you
as if you were the rat
and they are the owls

it is pretty tiring tip
toeing on your heels like
you are a battered ballet
dancer

it can change you got to

and so the day has come when
you arrive as a dragon and the
are owls and you spit fire on
them and the burn.

then back to your mouse existence
again
you just taught them their
hard lesson.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hard Worker Who Never Arrived To The Gate Of Success

the best thing to do
is throw a coin in the wishing well
then wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hardheaded Man

because i am hardheaded
i do not look back,

i have learned from the woman
who turned into salt

and look at what i have done upon myself
i grow errors

i glance at each of them
i shrug my shoulder and then walk away,

or move on as they want to say

i want to live a life that does nothing with what has been
erroneously done

leave them as they are

for me to see that i am not perfect
that others may learn to approximate to the maximum the reality

about mistakes which if left uncorrected
shall ultimately symbolize

who we really are... the perfect example
of human imperfection

God's ally, God's beloved

since it is from us that God also sees
who He really is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hardheaded You, The Wasted Romantic

what we know is
you have loved that rose
for so long so that
even if it had already
wilted with all
the memories of roses
fallen under
the feet of dead trees
what disgust is there
for us who care for the sun
in your eyes
and the moon in your hair
when you still keep that
thorn stuck in your
skin like a nail to the
wall of an old house long
abandoned by the rivers
of the winds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hardheaded Young Poet

dr this morning he finds the last line
he decided to put the last word
there is no period and the image is that of a verb
dr this push and pull without restraint
dr the yin and yang and the moon and sun
i suggest another thing perhaps another verb
like a flowing river
a falling rain

dr but he said he has decided to put what may sound at most
dr pornographic
dr i embrace silence since i know what a poet is
dr this hardheaded creature who makes the walls and doors of stones
and roofs with all the Spanish tiles

dr sometimes i wonder if hearts can be made of platinum too
dr for mine is as red as bricks
with wires as veins
and chest like steel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harmony Man To Nature

she says
the trees and stones and the beautiful landscape of sands and moon
have no words
to say

no lips, no mouth, not even the capacity for thinking
inanimate rocks, indifferent sea, mountains unthinking

something deep inside us speaks for all of them
and we hear it loudly
in the silence of our souls

now you must hear the songs of the mountains
the hushing of the sands, the serene musings of the moon,
the deepest sighs of the seas,
the hardest principles of rocks

we are their friends and allies and we are in harmony with all of them
and they, in their patience, have given us the right to speak

and now, give them all your attention,
they are listening

and if we do not speak for them
they will speak for us

in thunder.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harmony Of All Elements

your mind is the wind
your body is the earth
your heart is the river
your love will always
be sun, fire, volcanic
eruptions,
and so it will not be
defeated by grief
which is rain and
dew, and fog and
mist,
but love is not always
happiness
unless all these elements
mingle as one
in harmony.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harmony Of Sorrow And Joy

oH jOY
oH gRIEf
come sit
beside me
for i am
Real And
we aRe
One.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harsh Truths About Other People

IN ONE of those streetcars
named desire
one shall glean
that truth hurts sometimes
and even kills

it would have been better
if
out of respect for life
one simply should have been more
gentler
about the harsh truths
about others

we can be harsh on ourselves
because we are not afraid to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harsh Truths And The Will To Survive...

it is very hard to accept
what is not here
what does not arrive
no matter how we must learn
to manage about
these harsh truths
the hardness of stones
and the impeccability of
gravitation

about that friend, that rain,
that roof, that silence
that play, that continual laughter
the drink and the
pause
that stare and the nod,
all these

the tree over the other side
of the world had taken much root
you may think that it is impossible
to uproot it and carry it
across the
sea across the continent
and plant it again in front of our
yard where our children play
and put a swing or
hang a rope
or build a tent
or climb for those fruits
that we tell them
have been hanging on the tree
waiting for the pickers

the mind is powerful
the will is steady
this faith has moved a mountain
and that is just a tree
a sea a continent

the door to every opening is the
closing of the eyes
our hands cover all these impossibilities
and voila
the magic of all magic begins
to unfold

eureka! eureka!
we have discovered we have invented
all these

we are naked and we run into the fulfillment
of everything
right inside the water inside the tub
inside the house
inside the darkness where we live

(and for how long shall we shun the light?
the half closed shutters? the violet Venetian blinds?)

ah, for as long as we live

and that is, as always, and will be
happily ever after)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Harvest

from here
where we stand
we shall see
fields of gold

rice grains ripe
from their stalks
heavy with
our thoughts
bending to the
call of the
brown soil

strong men and
women
arrive on the golden
fields of
our heritage
harvesting....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hatchet.....

how foolish
to fall in love with you

so one night i bang my head
on the wall
but it did not work
i still love you and your face
sticks to my heart like
a metal with that
epoxy

metal to metal
sticking that tight
a car can be lifted
to this high

i went away to a bar
get myself a tequila
wanting to quit logic which
did not serve my
wits

there is this feeling that
now you are free to fall in love
and make it
real

if the object of my affection is here
i would have confessed my foolishness
drain my head with those demons
drain my veins with that toxic fluids
of love

at the height of the power of tequila
i cried. I am not myself. You completely own me.
And nowhere at the stage of my princely life
that i have become your
willing slave.
Tomorrow i will kneel before a mirror
and start chanting, asking for forgiveness
to my stern self,
this rock,
sharpened by time and now ready to hit
like a hatchet
to another warrior.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hate That Destroys The World

when hate arrives with silent fury like a tsunami,
so many lives are broken
so many houses are buried beneath the muddy waters

have pity for the little girl who was playing with her doll when your gigantic waves buried her alive,

that little boy was climbing the apple tree to gather the ripe ones

mothers were frying bacon in the kitchen as fathers went to work all day in the ceramics factory

it was your hate that washed and buried them all alive and now when you are at peace on a subsiding fury what do you have to see?

an island of debris a long line of hungry people waiting for food and water slippery roads muddy feet an open ground without shelter lost dogs roaming the streets

an island that is warped in time in utter distress a sudden loneliness the whole world watches with horror and pity

inside you is another world full of guilt
what your hate has destroyed
you can never pay...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hawk, The Hen And The Chick

the hawk masters
the wind

it rides smoothly
its eyes fixed on the chick

beside the hen who having
many neglects one

who goes a little astray
as the hawk in one quick flight
snatches what it can
for now eat....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hazards Of Poetics

i have learned to face the hazards of poetics

when all the bright colors are mixed
everything turns black

just like the brightness of my days
it blinded me

when all have been too indirect
to create these unnecessary mysteries

that i do not really need
when flowers sometimes turn to steel

when dreams become concrete roads
when the house is turned upside down

when the the car turns turtle and falls
on a cliff and keeps on hanging there

when you finally find yourself calling for help
and when you practically do not like

what these fools are doing with words
and stanzas when there is nothing left

but more questions without answers
because life itself is absurd and shies

away from definitions and boundaries
between meaning and feeling

it is then that i bite my tongue and
keep my silence it is then when

my fingers declare that they have mouths
and shout: it is enough all i need are the
simplest of all the simplest things
i only need a yawn to make me sleep

a little sleep to make me dream and
a piece of blanket to cover my nakedness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Headless Man

there is this
handsome
man in the neighborhood who
begins to
stutter when
dead enters
in the conversation

an invited guest
as he calls it

to him it would be horrible
and to some extent
impolite

holding his glass of red wine
against the
glow of the
sun
and munching his greens
as usual

he always feels that life
has so much to offer
and that there must no
space to allow
the dread of sickness and death
in any
talk in order to be
wholesome

i am looking at him with
disbelief
i must be drunk perhaps
because
as i see him
he has no head
at all
i think
he is not real at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Headless Man (Edited)

down is this
handsome
man in the neighborhood who
begins to
stutter when
death as a topic
enters
in the conversation

an uninvited guest
as he calls it

perhaps even a
shameless
gatecrasher

to him it would be horrible
and to some extent
impolite

he can even summon
the police to
arrest it
and have it charged
for violence
in the blotter
book

holding his glass of red wine
against the
glow of
summer
and munching his greens
as usual

he always feels that life
has so much to offer
and that there must no
space to allow
the dread of sickness and death
in any
talk in order to be
wholesome

i am looking at him with
disbelief
i must be drunk perhaps
because
as i see him
he has no head
at all

i think
he is not real

RIC S. BASTASA
The Healling Process....

Those tiny mirrors
are giving you pictures of myself
so many of myself
like a picture of teardrops
frozen into
needles
like blades of grass
posing as
swords

you are giving me the impression
that i know very well how to hurt

eye tell you
i cause pain and if you ask me
i shall tell you
they are all true
so many are bleeding

and so the toxins are taken away
did they not tell you that
with all the pain
they have become healed?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart Has A Longing Of Its Own Apart From The Beautiful

who can dictate  
what the heart can love?  
no one

on that day of  
sorrow  
the beautiful princess  
gives up  
her royal right  
to a shepherd  
that she loved

travels a desert and  
a forest  
crosses six rivers  
sleeps over grass  
for three nights  
just t to be with him

and she enters his  
thatched-roof house  
surrounded with chickens  
and goats  
and asks him to make love with her tonight

she undresses herself  
her white body  
scented by fresh roses  
and precious perfume  
lighted  
by the moon

but all that the shepherd did was to look at the stars  
and then  
sleep
the night is cold
with its eerie silence
and the princess
kills herself

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart Has Always Its Own Ready Made Answer

often i imagine
separation

it starts with
a perfume that offends you
and you decide
to sleep in another room

which does not bother me
since i never drive you
away

you choose
a lifestyle
i stick to mine

the next day
another reason comes about
it will be another
house
for another night

perhaps i imagine
too often
that it will soon be
another country
or perhaps
another kind of
galaxy

it does not bother
me
i candidly admit
there was
never
any intimacy

it is the body that
you trust
perhaps you should
have asked the
heart
and it is ready
with its
long prepared
and ready
made
answer

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart Is At The Basement....

what did i say to love?
that i do not believe in you anymore.
what did i say at the end of love?
i shall find another.
i set aside my heart
and welcome the waking of the mind
for love does nothing but hurt and hide
what the mind does not,
logical, consequential, cautious,
and walks with the head as crown
the heart controlled
still on the ground floor
wondering what the mind
can do next time.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart May Be A Lonely Hunter

thick grass
a forest of trees

a man lives there
and his heart is the lonely hunter

maybe
and may be for a time
when the grass is thick and the forest of trees lush

there is a time
for opening

for going and going back home
where mother and father keep the waiting

and your one and only
smiling
waiting for the warm embrace

the sad one
thinking always for your coming
back home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart That Loses Its Grip On Love

you speak of revenge
for how long will you speak
about it,

your heart beats for something
else for someone
long lost
and never comes back
to you

your heart captured in the hands
of someone you detest
you speak of
freedom you speak of a heart
that wants to see
the end of the beginning

now, i understand, how is it
when your heart
loses a grip on love
its hands must have wanted
to hold on
to a double-edged knife
bleeding
waiting

dreaming of another
beginning to
this end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart Too Asks For Pleasure

do not underestimate the heart
it too shall take pleasure
it is not pure love
as gentle as the softness of the
cloud that merely drifts
upon the orders of the wind
it also know what pleasure is
so appease it with the wildness
of your love: crush it with the strength
of your loving arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heart......

It is all in the mind.
I am comforting a friend who
is dying.
Heaven and hell are all
in the mind.
Death is all in the mind.
Living too, is all in the mind.
And the mind
is just a mind.

We still have something better
than our minds.
I showed her my heart.
I lead her hands to her heart.
It is the one that feels.
It is the one that sees too well,
what is next to come.

It is where God dwells.
And it is there where
everyone finds rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hearts Of Children In The Minds Of All Men.

it is not the blood
that makes us brothers
it is this common bond
that binds us

everyday in everyone
eating and laughing and praying
we're here, you're here
all with care and compassion

this earth as everyone's home
nothing to own but everything
to spare and share
love trickles like rain
to the bold and bald alike

the hearts of children
in the minds of all men.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hearts Of Stones

i do not wish
to hear
any cry on
that
chosen hour

i need you
to keep wearing
that
heart of stone

i want rocks
all rocks
upon the mounds

when the last
shovel is finally put
you can take
all the hearts of
stones

and there peacefully
put them down

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heavy Rain

del the heavy rain makes you stop
and you knock on my door
and i open it, and then we
talk about a lot of things about
us, our family, our lands and
ways of surviving the hardships
of this present day life, i offer
you coffee and cookies and
we talk some more about
the future, politics and economics
and religion and philosophy and
poetry. And then the rain stops.

del the conversation ends. You
say thank are leaving
now. You are like the rain.
I am like the door. We are
like the conversations. And
we know when to stop and
where to begin again. It is
the heavy rain. It stopped.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heavy Rain Last Night

the roofs never had
the time to sleep and
in darkness the fingers
of all nails keep
themselves in the
side pockets of
the beams

the rivers rise like
a platform for driftwoods
and leaves and
coconuts in a
fast parade
as a little boy watches
the show

and then
the frogs' hands begin
to clap

the crickets are not
in the mood for
singing

RIC S. BASTASA
as i watch the heavy rain
by my window
i write this poem
every word is like a rain
every sound
every coldness here is rain
every loneliness is rain
and unless you are here
beside me
you can never feel this rain
as you read each word
you still wonder
what is rain, how does it fall
what is its sound
the word is never rain
as the poem is
never real

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heavy Rain...(2)

when i wake up this morning
the rain just poured bringing with it
strong winds and
noise

have i changed my senses?
have i switched perceptions?

was it not just a while when i thought
rain as a poem of counted meters and
ringing rhyme?

what have you done to me? Age,
are you a cruel friend?

the rain has moved from tree to window
and its drops have stepped on the floor by the open door
and they are not welcome anymore.

have i not revealed to you the secret of my longing?
is this rain hiding something from me?

why have you not arrived from the distance of this love?
i miss the night and the candle light
i wish to hear what you have been saying to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Heavy Rains....

the heavy rains come too
like the usual path of the season
but look
the yellow daisies keep their stalks strong
and tall
and not one is destroyed beside the
sunflowers always hoping for the
sun to come
as usual too like the paths of the seasons
and there you are
all wet taking the bath that you need
under the rain
and sky
wading through the vast air
with dew on your hair
with tongue licking the bland taste of
the rain
on your lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hell Of Boredom

She works as nanny during the day
as call center agent at night
weekends are fully booked for
some other part time jobs

her body aches, her eyes need sleep
but for one thing, and this she likes best
her deep seated depression is gone.

she is like Christ crucified. This time
she saves, not the whole world but
herself, from the hell of boredom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Here And Now

for the meantime take the here and now
what choice do we have?
we are beggars we have nothing
we were taken here
without our knowing we were naked
we were spanked on the very first hour of our arrival
in mother’ bed in that cheap government hospital
there were no fathers or priests or politicians
they heard our first cry
and since then
life begins to have no meaning

what we have is the here and now
but will that be an end? a misdemeanor? will that be a burden forever? a curse?
a suffering that is senseless
a sorrow that is soaring and roaring?
the here and now is in our palms
look at it closely, there are tiny lines there
the directions and instructions are there embedded

we shall trace where we are and where we are going
in the tiny lines of our palms
we locate our hidden fortunes we shall find where the secret lies
the real meaning
of this existence and if need be
we must create and invent what we will be
in the future

let us see from our feelings the coolness of blue
the fires of red
the clouds, the sun and the moon all lie in the hold of our hands
from this here and now

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hidden Agendum....

how can a bee
ever claim that there
is still
nectar on that wilted
flower?

unless it is after
the bud beside it
about to bloom an
hour later.

the earth is not that
young
to know what real motives
are.

the sun is not blind
the moon is not that naive
and stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hidden Furies After The Tryst

you have a situation
where you refuse gentleness

when romancing the river
becomes an allergy to your skin

when you meet
you like to be
just behind
to kiss the neck and then
care all sides of the
body with the loveliness of
your hands and the
wildness of your fingers

inside the room everything
promises not even to make
a whisper
all nooks are giving you
signs that these tiny holes
can seal themselves and
keep a secret

but there is this only chamber
in your heart
that knows the price of cheating
there are Furies there which
stay and keep the silence but
only for a while

for soon after this chosen enigma
after the kiss from behind the neck
and the playing of fingers on the
sides of the hips and the hidden
agonies of the loins
they begin to rub their eyes
spread their hair
open their mouths and speak
to you honestly and with all
anger slap you with that edict:
you have gone astray
you have sinned and you must pay.

RIC S. BASTASA
imagine
one tranquil day
when you can hear
ants moving
under your feet

you lay your body
on the grass
under the old tree
with many leaves
that look like
small fingers
of a baby

you have emptied
yourself of thoughts
you become one
big empty
basket

you are an open
cave
inviting restless vagabonds
to take
rest
one dark & cold night
at least for a certain
while

the days come
and go
and you feel like a river
passing by

leaves blown by the strong wind
far north

on some normal days
a hundred butterflies flutter
and hover
homing to you

migrant birds perch
upon your hair

imagine that
you are no longer you
but a wide door without a lock
an open window that welcomes the moon

an earth
sky
and infinite space

a universe in itself
stripped of
identity and
greed

now sleep, and inside this
chamber
close your eyes some more
time

you have become
a poem vested
in eternity

some call you an angel
someone will dare
calling you one of the gods
beside the gods
in the temple of heaven

what is important is that
you are at peace, happy,
engrossed in grace
so much blessing
pouring unto your heart

do not think about you
you can no longer do that
there is no you now

do not think of contempt
you have become more than what you are
you have flown above the earth
you have crossed the river of ire
and disbelief
	his is
the hidden possibility

the truth that we now see.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hiding Place

you have been here
you must remember
i am back and i shall
have no regrets
this is my hiding place
with no description
it is only you knowing this
knowing me
knowing what is this all about
this comfort of silence
this longing unsatisfied
this dreams unrealized

nature does not weep
it simply grows and blooms
like everybody else

you and i do not belong
to the open
we are not overlooking
the sea
we are inside this cave
deep down in its dampness
we are shadows
we weep because we are alive

we ask when and what next
we wait for there is no answer yet
this is our hiding place
this place of the heart
this beating and pumping
never-ending never gaining
anything
yet never losing too
gazing at the eyes of life
uncomplaining
uncompromising

if nature now weeps
so let it be
soon we shall know
its answer
perhaps after this
heavy rain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hiding Place Of Sadness

sadness when kept alone by you
knows a place where to hide

it is like an arid soil at noon
when temperatures are high
and then an unexpected rain
falls

what you see is this quick
rising of hot air
to the sky

and then the sun smiles at you
as though nothing happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hinges Sound Differently

you are back from a trip
the dogs meet you
the house help serves the usual
food that you like: hot soup and some greens
you open the door of your room
the usual smell of wood and newly put linens
meet you
the trip has done you good
the casualness have changed for the better now
it is an old world right
but it makes sense now
the chairs dance, the table no longer tiptoes
the curtains unfold, the winds are fresh this time
the hinges sound differently
together they make an orchestra for you
as though saying: we are glad you're back
we are sad no more....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hippopotamus

i want to make
no sense and so
i write senselessly
trusting nothing but
this instinct of
being nonsensical
which ultimately
becomes a measure
of how well we have
accepted this fact
that nonsense is
much better than
this hubris of having
to say that i know
everything too well
and yet miss one
very important thing

the truth: i am an
ignoramus.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hoax

when someone emails you
that he has 3 million pounds
and he is giving
all of it to you,

will you believe him?

you ask me
if i believe him too?

alright, i may believe him
and give my name
and address and telephone number
my status, my other
particulars
even my credit card number

and you will say
OH MY GOD
how gullible can i be!

well, it does not really
matter
all these, my name, my address
and telephone number
and other particulars
even my credit card number
and ATM PIN

all these
are fakes too
exactly just like him
and his 3 million pounds

you see,
i was also not born yesterday

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hole In The Doughnut

i am full
eating is useless
my stomach
has no purpose
i have this doughnut
and i raise
it in space
and i look through
its hole

i want to see
what is the reason
for emptiness

the hole has more
content
than the doughnut
itself

i put my finger
inside it
and somehow
i begin to feel
confident

inside the hole
i know
i am not alone anymore.

inside the hole
again i become whole.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hole In The Jar.....

there is a hole
of this huge earthen jar
round and
shaped like a doughnut
which gapes itself open
throughout the night

the meaning of its existence
seems to lie on its
much liked activity of sifting
and sipping air and storing
all of it inside its
oval shaped belly

this it does without quitting
steady and consistent
and seemingly unperturbed by
those surrounding it
to name some the stones and
the vines
even the old trees which are
getting worried about its
meaningless hoarding

air of course is inexhaustible
no one should have been bothered
but it is not the air
it is the sifting and sipping and
hoarding
it is the limitation of choices
the dying as the clouds are
whispering to the waves of the
sea
to the starfish and the sea
porcupines

the stars know what the problem is
at night when everyone rests the
earthen jar sings its emptiness to
the sky
the moon is shaken with empathy
and the inexhaustible space of the
galaxy
tries to comfort its
anxiety
'
dear jar
you are not alone.
Take it for it
is real

sincerely yours,

Galaxy'

p.s

keep the journey
live the moment
keep yourself open.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hollow Drum

it takes in air
and imprisons it
and being both
full and
empty it begins to
recite
loud poetry

the mad woman
naked beside the
church door
dances wildly
like a duck on the
rising tide

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hollow Man

it is the hollow man
who abandons
God.

God waits.
The hollow man floats away.

God goes near him.
The hollow man drifts farther away
from His Bounty.

God understands.
The hollow man does not listen.
Ears are perforated
by his ego and
pride.

Then, the end has come.
The hollow man goes
to hell.
Combustible
the fires of Hell
so easily consumed him.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Home For The Aged

we visited
a home for the aged

we do not really
know why

we saw an old woman
always repeating the names of her three children
where they are now and what they are doing
happy with their kids

she keeps on folding her clothes
and wiping her table and chairs
alone in her room
under the watchful eyes of her caregiver

and there is an old man who keeps on looking at the window
always waiting for his son to visit him

another one is busy with his set of dominoes
places them on the table and then
asks if we have seen his set of dominoes

we do not know why we pity them
perhaps we are just normal beings in a normal situation
and soon shall become like each of them

we are now suspicious of our money
we are sure it can help but we are also sure it cannot save us
from such eventuality.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Home Of My Home....

slowly you lift
the veil
and a face is shown
to my surprise
it is my own

this is the veil
of darkness
covering another dusk
of my own time

there is no word for
this
revelation there is
nothing to
described

what i disown
what i used to disregard
is actually
what i own what i am
what i was
and what i will be

it is sad
the women are sobbing
the boats left
that early morning

i look again at the
clarity of the pond
it is still my own
the face of my narcissism

the pain of my pleasures
the home of my home....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Honest Corrector...

when there is something that is missing
you supply the lapse
and i begin to develop that trust,

words are not the only non-living thing
that are misspelled,
others, who despite, their massive
experience of this
daily world,
do not know how to spell at at times
and we move in places where our heads are
marked for correction
we wear the red of errors
and nobody dares to tell us,
they just don't care at all,

with you i am safe, and no matter how
erroneous my life had been or will be,
i am secure,
you are there to correct this life,
and i go to sleep
soundly

warm inside that blanket
beside you....

RIC S. BASTASA
1. I have to tell you that
In the last conversation we had
All I told you were lies
And with all honesty now
I am telling you
That I am a liar.

2. When you asked me
Whether I am dying
I told you I am not
But I have only
A month to live
That is the truth
But look
I am not responsible for you
I am the one
That is dying here.
It is not you.

3. When we speak
I do not demand that
You tell me the truth
We are talking
Because we are here
What you say to me
Is none of my business
To require that you tell
Me the truth
Is in fact, an overburden
Our agreement is
Simple enough
That we just talk
It is nothing more
But a contract of presence
a conversation.

4. In fact what you say
Is the bonus
And it does not matter
Truth or falsehood
We just talk
For a while
While I am here
I am going somewhere
I am leaving
You will be left
And you still have
All the time to contrive
The choice is yours
I have none anymore

5. so that is it
Keep on talking
As I pretend I am listening
I keep on talking too
But my mind
Forgive me
Is somewhere else
You may not understand
It at first
But you will soon
Understand
This world is not simply meant
For one, for one like me.
Or for us.

6. at this stage
Truth and falsehood
Are irrelevant,
Out there
Is beyond truth and falsehood
It is our place.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Honest Spectator

you feel cheated
you will be sad for quite a time
but just like anything else
that sadness won't last

there is this urge
to cheat another
as a way of getting even

but you are different
you do not make yourself just like the rest of them

you stay there
honest to yourself
no longer sad

now gifted with wisdom
you think you understand

in the silence of that wisdom
you rise above this world divided
between those that cheat
and those who were cheated

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hope For A Reunion...

for one who believes in future reunions
departures are not
goodbyes
but merely temporary separations
for the moment
as soon as the right time comes in flashes of
light and alterations of gray and black
and dimmer
not to exclude the glimmer and the glamor
of some outburst of feelings like
lightning and sparks
we shall have the hope of meeting again
remembering
and opting to be one again with each other
like long lost friends meeting
in unexpected places of the heart
shaking hands
deciding to have coffee at the veranda
of a beach resort
sipping slowly what time is left
until then...

RIC S. BASTASA
for i have aged
a ripe fruit

another time comes
not that long

i will be falling
hope there will be

a child lost in this
place who will pick

me up and find me
a delicious relish for

his innocent hunger for
by then at that moment

my life shall have
another meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hope Of The Desert....

there are points of
no return, bridge burned,
ship wrecked, rain dropped,

i fear doing that but
i did it so many times, leaving,
taking less, and not looking back,

fearing Lot's wife, besides,
there is nothing there when
you leave,

a desert, only shadows of the hills,
and some ghostly winds, what is
in your heart is the excitement of

what is there: do not be negative
you comfort your mind, it is not
another empty place, the promise
of oasis, and camels and date palms,

beyond this vast land of nothingness,
a lake, a boat and many friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hope That Will Always Be There

most of the time
i waited for the final showdown
of this battle
between good and evil

for the moment the bad one
wins and
teases me
for not siding with it

but i am attuned to
waiting
i always hope
that at the end it is only the good
that triumphs

for the meantime i watch the evil one
laugh and dance
and drink
all the luxuries of this
earth

there is this patience of
faith
that never falters

RIC S. BASTASA
then finally, the horse that i am riding,
the black one with long hair and
long feet, flying without wings,
speed nearing the speed of light,
has taken the lead, and the rest follow
tirelessly still,
i do not look back,
i do not beat the horse with a stick
i keep on riding making the horse
feel confident that i am still
supporting its cause, to be first,
to be famous

and then my horse wins,
the owner gets the real buck,
and i the jockey,
merely receives a little name
and a little commission.

the horse gets nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Horses....

i was wrong
i thought i cannot
live without you

now, it is you who
cannot live without me
and you were right
all along.

it was like i was the
horse who jumped over the fence
and found a new pasture of
my own because you locked the
gate and i have nowhere
to rest my body on.

i was wrong since there are
so many places
so many greener pastures
so many horses
who share the same hopes of
grass with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hottest Part Of The Year....

it surprises me
not
this early morning
i see
the empty jar in the
yard
more beautiful than
ever
in an empty garden

flowers wilt upon this
extremely hot
March

RIC S. BASTASA
The House

there is no other place to go
after work
when the darkness of the night
starts to hover
on my roof
this house where I rest my feet
where I put my hands
where I shut my mouth
and you are there
moving from one corner to another
asking where I put some bones
of my body
you sing as you once knew the songs
the ones that I love
that which from where my heart rests
and lulled

this is the house, a mere house
where I put my body
safely
no longer a home
my soul like a little bird had flown somewhere
years ago
I know where it is sleeping
you ask me
but I will not tell you

how will you ever know?
the place
it is so quiet
you are restless and noisy and messy
so loveless
so sad and you keep on laughing taunting
about my loss
my death

RIC S. BASTASA
The House Made Of Glass Door That Overlooks The Garden

the house has a huge glass door
that overlooks the garden
i mean it is a house with a glass door
at the ground floor that is overlooking a garden
where the cock feeds on worms with a red hen
that lays eggs on the haystack
near the back window,

oh it is not messy and it is far from what you think
nothing is poetic here
there is simply a day that drags itself to its sunset burial site.

RIC S. BASTASA
The House Of My Neighbor

no one lives there anymore
all left for good
there is so much fuss about
almost anything, a mess
of who must own it finally,

at night, a man with a striped
red and blue shirt climbs the fence
and enters the room
without breaking the glass window

the moon wants to scream
but it is ruled by its code of silence
there is tinkering bell
and tonight someone touches it
shakes it
to make a noise

the moon wants to scream again
but this time the black clouds come and
with their hands
the moon is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The House Of The Soul

i see
everything fails
everything human and warm and touching
the leaves fall
and the ants all die in winter
the only rose at the door
finally wilted
expectantly
there are no surprises involved in this misery
as predicted
the last living lover takes leave
saying
things end and relationships do not last
like every kind of business
every endeavor simply burns out
like a wick of the candle

i am not surprised why we are all here
no questions asked no answers offered
we feel the wind
and we root our feet strongly on the sand
wanting to have a hold
of this slippery being

'OMG! ' you exclaim
how could you forget your body?

RIC S. BASTASA
The House Story

the fence keeps a happy disposition.
it does not need it. The house does.

despite its disagreement with the door,
somehow, i gives a square disposition,

as though, everything here is tolerable,
the house is keeping so many secrets

shying away from the scrutiny of visitors
but it trusts the fence and can sleep

soundly at night, except the light bulb
which is fixed at the back of the kitchen

it keeps on blinking, wanting to tell it all,
but the master switch of the basement is quick

everything is shut off, and then the silence reigns, it is the queen, it grieves

without a word, it takes in what the house cannot take anymore, and the fence as the

facade, maintains its happy disposition,
deceiving all that merely pass by.

RIC S. BASTASA
The House That Does Not Speak About Anything...

how time swiftly flies without wings of birds
i wake up at dawn lacking sleep

into writing, into deeper thoughts on soundless hours
and how fast, how fast has morning arrived
i am innocent
how stupid can i be
inventing hope and trying to modify the shape of my days

the lights of the door and the kitchen are not turned off
the neighbors are worried

i am home but i am not opening the windows and the door
i am into writing, into the deeper thoughts of my soundless hours

let the neighbors think that i am on vacation again
for weeks

i am into a waking slumber gathering dreams, ripe fruits of sleep
of the waking and sleeping again and again

i love a house that doesn't speak about anything that cannot
remember anybody

the dark loves me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The House That Tiago And Konsay Left

when finally Tiago and Konsay decided to split
they left the house that they once built
by the sea

since then, when time passed
the windows become the eyes of the blind man begging
the doors refused to open to any passerby,
the hinges accumulated rust until they turned to dust
due to extreme coldness and loneliness

the clouds there turned into big black birds
that like the wind simply come and go passing through
the blind dark windows

RIC S. BASTASA
The House With Many Doors

the house i love is a house
with many doors
the usual house you have
a front door and the back door
when one enters and there is nothing
to hide, one simply takes the back door
and be gone to the woods,
i can be imaginative at times
one door must open to the earth
another door must open to
the sky
and now, i must find a way
how to grow wings
or if destiny is too cruel
i must grow sharper claws
for digging the rocks of this
earth
now you must know that i have
many choices

up or
down.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Houseband

tonight to please her
he brings chicken feathers
the yellow one
put all of them on his head
and around his body
covering his thighs and
legs
and then when she comes
home
he executes a
dance before dinner

after that
on such a private entertainment
he makes love to her
to cheer the stressed body of
his working woman

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Being Who Committed Suicide...

what a waste!
oh, everything

everything seemingly
looks
perfect

at all angles.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Being...

a thirst remains a thirst
a thirst for everything
a hunger for everyone
always dissatisfied...

wo/man

RIC S. BASTASA
do not forget
now that you are ready

pleasure to be pleasurable
must be shared

mutually, and that this
must bear the fruits of love

when pleasure dies like
everything else

during those times of drought
and hibernation

another season must connect
like a human chain

the seeds must be ready
to sprout again

winters turning into spring
agony back into pleasure again....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Face

upon his face
the smile floats like
a gondola
on the River of Venice

one can hear the
song of the gondolier

the eyes of his face are windows
opening because the songs are tempting

they are the eyes of women
looking for love

the nose serves as the only bridge there
to connect the ears and chin
in that atmosphere of indifference

the princess is the tongue
salivating

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Judge

AFTER A serious business of the day
when he alters fortunes and liberties and
slays what others conceive to be monsters

he pauses for a while,
looks at the pale green blinders
and sighs for silence and asks himself

am i fair? am i right?

IT IS hard.
The questions confront him
as though he is still a kid
and can be fooled at times by the
orderly presentation of the eloquent
and the shining logic of those who
are trained to be so,
He listens to the
voice within
the one which is
both comforting
and safe and then he tells himself:

i am fair. I am right.
I am doing the best of what i can
do under these circumstances.

Then he stands up to find his old pair of shoes
on the side of the door
arranges his worn collar,
trims his beard,
and glances at all these
cautionsary fixtures
in the mirror.

He closes the books that he opened.
Shuts the computer off.
He leaves the room, 
enters his car and 
whistles his way 
towards home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Race

in this race
everyone is a participant
for no one
is exempted for no
one is special
there is leveling
at the finishing line
where lame or dumb
or articulate and
intelligent
come
and there those who
were ahead of us
do not wait
do not cheer
for they have to go
to another open space
that someone talks
about
there are no winners
neither losers
there are only
finishers
who must proceed
to a higher game
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Human Worth...

But what's the value of you?

in the future how much
are you worth?

yes, this human body
this human capital

i have become another
set of integers

but what is really my net worth?

it depends on
how much you still love me
i am
and will always be
at your mercy
for without your love
i am useless
without your care
and affection
i will but be another
hopeless case

i am but a feather
blown by air
landing on the
sands of my
empty shore
without you....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Humble Servant

learning to embrace
whoever whatever comes
make them all feel the amenities
of your home
their names: Grief, Remorse,
Misfortune
they’re not always dressed
for the proper occasion
and gives you
humiliation
dress them all
to propriety
accommodate and always reserve
a room for them all
they are your constant visitors anyway
when they leave
smile, wave your hands, send them
off with a good heart
and ask them to come back
in the same manner with your
seldom guests: Joy, Bliss and
Hope
after all
they belong to the same family
and you are
one of their compliant
amiable and
humble servant

RIC S. BASTASA
The Humiliation Of My People

my rich brother politician
is humiliating my people
poor people,
never empowered to stand on their
own feet, they keep waiting
for masters
to make them whole again
crippled, and limping
my rich brother's hand keep
pretending to take
them from the
quicksands of poverty
but i know the mind of my
rich brother whose laughter sounds like
the devil
now that he needs all of them
he feeds them and clothes them
but soon these will simmer
and fade and the truth
about my rich brother comes out
but it will be late already
my rich brother has already taken the power
and enriches himself some more
leaving my poor people back in their shanties
again scavenging for food
and begging for clothing
the humiliation will never stop
from time to time all of them shall be hailed
like those in
the Schindler's list.

but soon there will be light and music
and progress

streams of yellow rays from the Sun God
possessed with
Integrity and Truth
and Justice and
Goodness.
i could have chosen
the rhyme
so there will be a song
singing its own
song

i could have taken
the tapping measure
of the mathematical
meter
of the feet and toes
like a dancer

but it simply runs against
the spontaneity of
my sighs
the everyday touch of the
hands loving the
uneven fingers
caressing to the beat of
my hair splitting and
spreading away to the
gentle blow of the breeze
from the
raging sea

the truth of the matter is
there is reality to the lines of
wanton wilderness
the random specks of sands
blown away
by the sandstorm in the desert
every hour of
my day
on a safari
the deer running away from
the lion
the fledgling swallow flapping its wings
jumping from its nest
in constant fear of falling
the leaf flip flopping its way
down to the sandy earth
the grass spreading without
the desire measure of
the numbers

i like to rhyme but my life
doesn't
it isn't and it can't

and so here i am on the freedom of my verses
a fish swimming where it will to escape the teeth of the shark
a bird soaring up the skies
its eyes closed
to the beauty of speed unseen
even for the time being un-felt
by the intentional rhyming of the words
the craft of man
wanting fidelity to the English language
now open ended
to the present questions: quo vadis?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hunger And Thirst Of The Mountain

on a Sunday of a hot summer
i went to the far mountain
where my father used to spend his youth

i was met by his followers of long ago
and they were telling me
stories as i waited for them to cook
the rice and fry the fish
that i brought for them

then we dined and i listened to their conflicts about land
their problems about food, and water
their hunger and their thirst

some of their women offered their ethnic dances with the younger men

the sounds of gongs reverberated and echoed on the walls of the mountains

we drank native wine until the light of the day faded
until the stars arrived and the moon reigned and floated in the nearby silvery river

there were more stories about my father his love and his wife
my mother and some of my other brothers and sisters

we became one people and then we were so tired
we slept and then we had common dreams
i am their new leader now
and they are as always my father's people

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hunger And Thirst Of The Mountain (2)

it is not in the water and rice and dried fish alone
that they hunger
they, the mountain people hunger for more
of our preferential attention

attentive ears, caring hands, understanding mind
to assure them that they still have a place
in our hearts
that we have never abandoned them

i, too, hunger for their stories and poems,
and when we meet this time again,

it will be the city descends
to the river and hills, and the grassy plains.
Halfway between us, is this thin line of

hate suppressed, love rekindled, ambivalence
that seemingly still exist, this doubt, this mistrust,
this humanity trying to be free
and real.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hunger For Freedom

i have this cake of freedom

if you need a slice
i can spare some since i have too much of it
(and sometimes) &
in truth i doubt what to do with it
most of the time.

if brother, you are hungry for freedom
come to my table
i have so many for you to spare

taste it and tell me if it is really sweet.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hunters....

the birds of prey
are here
the hunters are
ready

shedding off
compassion
they shot

some blood stains
the leaves of
wild flowers

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hurry....

to insist, that is power enough.
to rise up, after a fall,
that is cliche that we are not afraid
to use, we are that.
stagnant pools collect,
and they die.
to run, and keep on running
that is cleansing.
to stop but only for a while
to ponder upon the plight of the dead bird
lying on the street
no one lasts long forever,
that is the most basic fact that we take along with us in our long journey.
i collect moments now. I will have more
before I die.
My neighbor wants to go with me for a hunt
i tell him do not bring any sling.
This is different, Totally different.
We are looking for silent nooks.
WE want moons, we drink only dew
and dine only those tips of the green ferns
along the way.
Black birds are overhead.
Clouds conspire with the wind and then gone.
If we stop again, we will lose.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Hurt Ego....

some windows really are kept open 
ev'en at midnight
the moon in its fullness has always been
that welcome visitor
that sense of mystery long gone

opening a window has always been considered
a healthy option

and people who pass the street look at you
standing by the window

in openness
you trust that openness being arms that know the value of embrace
can be redeeming
in fact some children who play in the yard
have a way of looking at you as their idol

they clap their hands and dance for you

it happens almost all days of the year
the open window appears like a warm smile on the face of sorrow

not everyone likes it though
there is a crazy old man and he picks a stone and throws it against
your glass window

your window cracks and your smile become a word
with double meaning

what damage must have the old man caused?
you should know, you have too

wisdom still lies with the old
their discipline is still in the stone
that leave a scar
on the shattered glass

the ego, this self.
RIC S. BASTASA
The Husband And The Wife

he said to her death does not exist
for i am dead, and she retorted, yes
that is a fact now, you have become my
own ghost, how terrible have you become

two black pants are ironed and place neatly
in the cabinet, and there is one thing that he missed:
a note saying, i love you still, i miss you very much.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Husband And The Wife (2)

she is the rain
and he is the umbrella
to the woman
with the black veil

RIC S. BASTASA
once a year i climb the mountain with you. 
the steps have changed and we know it. 
our words too. our way of choosing silence 
as we cross one river to another as we shift from 
one cliff to another as we rest on valleys and take 
turns at gripping with heavy breaths to recoup what 
we lost.

my hands are busy and i have nothing to hold much. 
so i left you busy too with your own ways of survival.

this year we reach the top again and looking at the plains 
and the tiny houses and the winding roads we are stilled 
like a tree without a sea breeze at noon.

we sit on two stones about an arm apart. we do not look at 
each other now but i do not worry for i know that you are looking 
at the very same view that i am making myself so 
preoccupied.

for you were once a child too who played with pebbles 
who miss the sand on the beach, the foam of the sea, 
the shade of the coconut tree, the taste of its water, 
the hush of that old wind, the chimes of silver by the window 
of the house.

RIC S. BASTASA
The 'I' In 'Me'

if i were to change,
i'd keep it in slow silence.
you will not see it, but
i can compromise what you
want to see that is changing in me.
i shall wear different hats, or caps,
or peci, so i can be what
you want to see. But what i cannot
compromise is this face.
it will be always the same.

it is still the 'i' in 'me'

RIC S. BASTASA
to start with
i read what you have written
and then i
think about it
i go beyond it
and savor what flavor
have you
put into it
and then i go on my own
taveling inside
myself
trying to see what
i have not seen
so well
and then i begin to write
choose my words
jibing it with what
i am feeling for the day
somehow
i have some vents
created some openings
for what is
building and smoking
and gasping
inside my system and
then
everything is
confronted
their names are
revealed
t heir shapes more
definite with
the particularity of
their colors
it is getting to know
myself and the rest of
myself
as though there are too
many of me or
us
some turn to be birds
and happily they fly away
as i see them
winging their ways
to their destinations
and then there is someone
who is left
now strong and
quiet
simply
gazing and
forgiving.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Icon Made Of Paint And Paper

eyou cannot see the weights
on your shoulder
and you do not exhibit all
the heaviness in your
eyes

you look good they say
and envy you for being happy

there is a way to make this
world know
that your sorrow is your own
your pleasures too

your hair is shiny
your nose still sharp like
a beak of that eagle
in the high mountains

you only feel the thinness
of your soul
you are looking for gods
to assure you what may soon
turn out tomorrow

here you are again
mild in your silence
warm in your affections
the women look at an icon
made of paint and paper
the men all had left
towards the wars of their own
softly the children sing
the lullabies of their
really tired mothers.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Idea

you come surprisingly
and i am amazed about what you are
you are risky
and gives me the shivers
of the dangers that you are giving me
you are quick
to appear and too quickly you
disappear
you tell me that i must be prepared
to record you in memory
that i must have a paper and pen on hand
ready for the keeping

you are the idea
so much has been wasted
because i am raged with age
too lax
and lazy and
to time has become
a slave
bound for oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ideal One

under a roof
under the rain
under the sky
under one God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ideas Shall Always Be Coming...

for as long as the roses have thorns
as long as the fish bone is in the throat
butterflies inside the belly
worms under the feet
flies inside the bottle sealed
still wanting to breathe and still crazy
over life

RIC S. BASTASA
The Idle Man Who Thinks That Nothing Is The Same
No Matter How Repeated

There is this man
who has become a professional
watcher
of the changing guards of the
horizon

he wakes up when the sun rises
and sleeps when the sun sets

he is amazed

each sunrise is not the same as
another sunrise that lands upon
his gaze

not any sunset is the same as
the other

repetition is a show that never ends
upon a similarity

nothing is the same
in the flow of sadness and happiness

two faces and another face of
nature bringing gifts to the heart

in shapes of warmth and coldness
love, bliss, lament and fears

each molecule
is a fingerprint of someone else

there is this man who is always
amazed

just watching
something familiar which to
him
is phenomenal

alone and
yet so filled with
joy....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Iguana

between me and the city
is a glass window with drops of
rain

below me are tiny taxicabs
waiting for passengers

at the other end is the red planet
and elizabeth

outside do not imagine the noise
of the city
keep the peace and quiet inside
the room of your heart

meanwhile i still remember you
somehow the fear keeps its howling
sound somewhere in the desert the
iguana is calling

i remember the moon, i miss the stars
and the softness of the sands from the
warmth of your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Illicit Plea To The Unresponsive Lover...

love, i have found you,
but i never touched you
as you never know
how i have loved you,

it is now correct to say,
to love the unloving you,

i have always died,
day to day, hour to hour,

have mercy, have mercy
to this thousand deaths,

leave me. leave me.

( notes from the heart of L.)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Illogical Dream

it rains ash on the roof
all the residents hide in fear
and then it stops
a child climbs the roof
opens his mouth and lets his tongue
taste the ash

there is something inside it
the child calls his mother
saying it tastes like shrimps
and so all the people climb the house
stays on the roof and
had their feasts
that whole day when the sun
never shines.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Illusions Are Here

if we trust what we see
that is normal because our eyes always assure us
about what is there in tri-dimension

and we smell what we see
we believe more on what the basic senses offer

we rest on these logical consequences
we even have to trust the structure of numbers
and how they work upon us

we take pride
something is true and something always works
with results, desired and exalted

we fall sometimes to lapses and we begin to ask
about causes, we dig deeper to failures and sometimes
we forget successes

we forget the beauty of having to discover
submitting ourselves more to the distress of failures

we elucidate more on errors
we lurk in depression

i have enough of these illusions
there are more reasons for a jubilation
there is a need for a priority jamming with joy
and creative celebration

i have decided to forget sadness
and set aside the quest for greatness
that has always been nothing but
a mess

these are nothing but peripheries and collateral
at the center of all these decorations is this mission,
this knowledge that this is but a journey that
i am a pilgrim, a steward, and i do not desire anything
i do not own any and i do not owe anybody at all

i have only dreams, and wishes
oh, they are not actually even mine at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Image...

twilight
an old man walks in the park
trying to breathe in
fresh air

morning comes
with the fingers of light
the old man sits on one of the benches
in the park
hold his staff
and looks at the horizon
alone and peaceful
as children pass by
rushing for the early school

RIC S. BASTASA
The Imaginary Piano Player In The Poetry Within Us....

you realize that it is all like playing the piano
this time, it will be always in the early morning while the mind is clear and daring
like a wrestler of the mud,

it is different though since there are no notes to make the music
be heard by someone else like the sad neighbor nearby mourning for the loss of
a son who was killed yesterday by unknown assailants as they term it on the TV
news

the words keep coming and the hands are adept at sculpting them all here and
they they start to state what is hidden beneath those pretenses of the lips and
the eyes which are learning well the art of denial

today is the anger and all the servants are packing their clothes to work
somewhere else

acceptance is still very very far away.

meanwhile this imaginary piano player closes the piano and keeps the silence of
the keys

he has other works to do and cannot all the time attend to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Impeccable...

each word is well chosen
it has a history and significance
each syllable is important
to build the empire
of his poem,

majestic now
people keep on reading
amazed and
awed
by the impeccable,

and yet for how long will this majesty
last?

only for once,
and then the reading is over
and no one talks about
the word, and the syllable is not even uttered

only for once and then
gone forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Impermanence Of Our Lives

what we carefully build
for years and years
like a mandala sand painting
of the monks

we soon shall destroy
we soon shall leave and
had that feeling of abandon
like the colored sands that we
finally sprinkle on the river

of life.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Impression

over a cup of coffee
you begin to talk about social studies

her eyes gaping wide
her pupils dilated

it's about a woman depressed
her husband left her
for another man

crazy, she laughs, she cries
she sobs

she loves him still, despite
crazy, she laughs, she cries, she sobs

we are alone now
as i get another cup

she warns
i may not be able to sleep tonight

caffeine is inconsistent with
contentment

lousy, i am lousy
i said to myself as i leave and close the door behind me

she opens a book
and hides her blush.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inability To Accept Change

we always want the comfort of what is here with us
not taking the risk of what lies ahead
we fear the coming of things new and uncertain
this is what we are, and what we want to be

we refuse change, we doubt innovations,
we are solid as a rock, we are as hardheaded as the stones
we settle as peebles, we stick as moss
and the river leaves us on its important journey

we have never the chance to see the wonders of the deep blue sea
we are the inanimates, we are the unwanted of the earth
the drifting clouds hate us, the changing winds despise us
yet we are the majority, and oh yes, we are very happy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inability To Tell The Truth

yesorno
trueorfalso
whatisit
thatyou
willfinally
believe?

makeastand
decideand
becounted

in taking
the truth
embracing
it, there
is a need
for a certain
detachment
the closeness
distracts

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inability...

i should have gone to the other side

beyond this boundary

where i can be left alone

to speak

to the wind

i should have flapped my wings

and leave this place for good

but what shall that wind have me to offer?

what shall that island give me?

shall it entertain me with all my secret longings?

shall the wind promise me more places for my own

imaginative consumption?

shall there be more strange ideas that i have to embrace

like those whores in my

silly dreams?

i am staying because there is an ear of this page

that is still listening

there is still the hand of your time

that is holding me
so that my tongue can dance so that my eyes can see more

about what is not here

about what is not familiar about what i never hold

like love, like the minutest of affection

for i am telling you

i have become a gong always sounding what nothing keeps on saying

i have not met love

i have not shared affection

i am guilty as judged

by the standards of the masses

by the cruelty of the mob

the gallows of emptiness are hanging me in mid-air

my feet cannot touch the ground

my eyes cannot see the sky

my arms are tied and can never touch freedom

i am as helpless as a dry leaf blown by the desert winds

towards a horizon that is now

beyond description.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inanimate 'It'

Now i know the real reason
why i write

because i love doing it.

I am the It.
We are the It.

We go and get It.

Its Us. Its passion.

And compassion.

Nothing about credit.
Just the It.

And those who feel the same,
Go and Get It.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inanimate Moon......

the moon
is a slave of the rule

despite its love
for you it must go

and here you are with
this routine

you come back at night
and meet her

and it goes on and on
and on...

and on, and on, until
you are gone

but the moon still keeps
on coming

inanimate as ever...as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Independence Of The Self

independence of the self
is an earning. It is a day to day
saving,
no one gives you a glass of water
you get it yourself,
you stand, you reach out for something
that you have to do for yourself,
you travel alone, you make yourself comfortable
with yourself,
you think for yourself, you figure out shapes
reflect upon the kind of sounds that you hear
from outside you,
you sit upon a chair ins silence
keeping that poise
nothing threatens you now
you are at your own pace,
confident,
even without her, you are still happy
you are an island
lots of trees grow in there
birds visit you and then
you are not afraid if they do not come back
you are not attached, you are a flux
a diffusion,
and you fill every space that comes to you
now, you are complete

RIC S. BASTASA
The Independent Woman....

we are in this house
that from our sweat built
there are only two of us
in this house
which we have not really
called as home,
something's missing
you give me a hint
not the glass window or
the ceiling fan,
i know it but how can i
tell you?
i won't tell, it will hurt you,
we continue living
somehow
just the two of us in this house

we have our own careers
and every morning we rush to go on our different ways
the night is the only place
of our tryst
we manage to spend time for love
we sleep together and share
what we can

there will be a time when this house shall fall
because it is not a home for us all

there will be one morning when you will finally leave
and take away everything from me

and then i will write it on the wall
this house is never a home,
she never wanted a child to bear.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indescribable...

it is this flow
remember water, and rain and some
drops from
those leaking roofs of those old houses
in our hearts

it has a sweet sound, no words can
capture it
it has not possessed the power of
vowels

in consonance with consonants
life goes on
our hearts leap, feeling oppressed
with the indescribable the mouth spits anger
what can it do in utter speechlessness?

i have learned it.
i cannot tell you.

watch me watching you.
i am the spectator in you the spectator too.

at the end we are not bound to say
what we have seen
for it is enough that we have seen it all
with happy hearts

have you spoken joy
have you written misery

i am listening to bocherini when
i am writing this
i do not understand a thing
nor attempt to do it to understand it

but here i am happy
to this contentment that i am still here
writing....
i remember bliss and the woman who once
entered the room of my house as she watches
a fruit bowl by the window

she did nothing. we did nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indifference Of Nature

poverty and hate
live in the
little village where
old coconut trees
fence out the
depth blue
sea

dthis place is ravaged by
a tribal war
each kin killing another kin
without mercy

just last week
a father with his three sons
were beheaded
the wife ran away
mad

the house is empty
abandoned

a lonely man lives alone
in the nearby little hut
under the cover of a dark night
filled with stars

he plays his old guitar
strumming his sadness
telling the stars
about this wasteland
this horrible
place of killing fields

of vengeful men
against their
fellow men

this green place
could have been
a paradise in
peace

the stars glitter in
innocence
as the song floats in air
and just like the sands of this
bloody shore

seem to feel nothing
at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indifference Of The Masses....

some have given me
the indignity of their silence
i have asked the questions
hoping for answers
they only respond with that
quizzical looks
something in me is diminishing
but i know how to cope up with it
i know silence too
i have slept with it
i showered it with the rain of my tears
i give it the mouth that swallowed me
my screams are daggers
that has killed it sometime
gone hysterical
i have retaken what voice i had
this confidence
this word that spits to the indifference of their silence
sigh, there is a syllable in it
that produces the sound of my own unique existence
there is a word that is like a bird in my mouth
soon, i will let it fly, soon i will utter it and give it wings....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indifferent Road....

when she was slapped
she did not react
of course the humiliation
is greater than the pain
she did not mind
at all

she continues her chores
all the days have same faces
she rests for a while and
reflects on these sad events
sits on the stairs and looks
over the road
still waiting for that love
to come back and save her

it will be years and years
and she may die ahead of him

the room of the house is getting
narrower everyday of the year
hope is her railing and she is
as patient as the hands of the clock
in order not to stop

the good will always triumph
suffering will be rewarded
and all the lonely people
shall have rooms reserved
in heaven: the reasons are
too many, ...yes too many

she did not notice sometimes
how she falls asleep on the stairs
overlooking the indifferent road.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indifferent Woman

after you build a higher iron grilled fence
round your house
letting the bushes rise
grass untrimmed and letting all the dust
accumulate in your old inherited furniture

after you bought more locks
the house door
and windows all shut

your phone line cut
added another dog to frighten away
possible guests

i said to myself, i don't care anymore
since you don't care anymore too
in anyway in anything
at any time

i guess you'll know the consequences of your acts
when you die you must learn to bury your own corpse.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indirect Communication

You want me to adopt views
Concepts principles where
I stand and be counted, I,
Do not wish this to happen
You must simply read my
Work, my essays, my poem
At their face value, without
Attributing it to my personal
Life, my lifestyle, my own
Loneliness, awesomeness,
I am not an authority I can
Only be your interpretation.
Read this poem and that poem
It is not me, it is a view of my window.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Indoor Poet Is Sick

it would have been more truthful, or earthly, well grounded candid, or exciting if he had taken his way out of the door to the garden and once again see the trees leaves falling birds pecking on some grains bees taking some pollen

here he would be an spectator a story teller a fact gatherer nature lover restive and feasting on what the earth has to offer here he has no waste for words feelings fly thoughts on some unseen wings

things change door hinges are rusting gives the noise when you try to open it like creaking bones

and so he stays in his room focuses on imagination more often sleeps and relies on dreams which are nothing

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but the same emotions
revealing to him
who he really is
psychedelic and more
like psychiatric sessions
with no one but
he himself as shrink
and patient rolled into
one

he follows his heart
into the road maps of his
poetry in adversity
metaphors of
necessity

RIC S. BASTASA
The Infinitesimal

small is
Infinitesimal
a small grain of
rice
contains all the food
of this world

need i repeat when he once said that one must see the universe in the grain of sand

the whole of love and affection in the hands

the magnificence of creation in the mere spark of stone to stone

the magical grace of the earth in the sway of the bamboo tip

of change in the mere blink of an eye

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ingrate

The mirror is not an ingrate.
It is just. It returns what you give.
It reflects you. When you smile
it smiles back.
It tells the truth and patient
about what you do next.
Never does it decide how to please
and pacify you. It all depends on you.
You make yourself and the mirror
looks at you with
clear indifference.

you are not the mirror.
Ingrate. I give you a smile
you give me that frown.
you are the beast in front of me.
I have this spear, and knife.
And a gun too.

By now you already know
what i can really do.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ingrates

sometimes
we are given so much life

all the beautiful flowers
blooming wildly along our usual paths
to the mountains and seas

we are given so much of air
this invisible abundance

we breathe and take every packet
of freshness in our lungs

and we, out of this familiarity,
and routine,

take all these for granted
even as rights
rather than privileges

even if you we do not ask
all these are given

handed like fruits ripe on a
golden platter

and we have all become
ingrates

and so the Giver has become so sad
regretting that He has created us

finally contemplating upon
a destruction

like the way a disappointed writer
deletes his composition
more of myself too
erasing what i have so carefully thought of
and written on the sand

there was once a time
i did not leave it for the waves

i did it myself
stamping all those castles, destroying each letter

leaving everything in a mess
that it really deserves

after all, i am but a man
angry about ungratefulness....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Initial Stage

it shall start on
a compulsion
for there is this lack
of disciple
they were like babies
thriving on milk
like sheep looking for
a shepherd
but all these are nothing
but preparations
for the ultimate end
when governance is
self to self
that frees itself from the
shackles of itself
from the prison
cell of freedom itself

RIC S. BASTASA
The Injustice

power occupies your place
puts up its throne
with glistening stones as crown
and the tail of the man ray
as scepter
you worship it
as it hits you not just once
but for as long as you live
until you die and then it leaves
everyone
as empty as the ground where
all the trees are uprooted
the soil all bald
the grasses all taken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Injustice That Thrives...

injustice is
to an art, too in the
arts, not just in politics,
in governance,
even in family circles,
even within ourselves,
this life in restraint,
in self-denial, at first,
it sounds unfair,
a neglect, an unkindness,
sort of disrespect for
what we are and what
we can be, for what i am,
but soon, or sooner,
the realization comes,
it is all for the human good,
that humanity to make
this race survive, the i, that
one must forget,
so that a name gets stuck
in iron or stone
on the walls, in the skies,
in the heavens.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Injustice....

what must you not forget
was what i felt
that past exclusion when everyone got inside
the bus and i
was last and i was told
they're full and
there was no more seat available
it was that feeling of
being abandoned
that made us brave to move on
with our
journey

alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inner Devil

to be famous
he says
we need sometimes
to listen to
the inner devil
inside our
guts

sometimes i ask
what is fame for?

do you really need it?
don't you like the
privacy inside
the comfort of your
good self?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inner Journey....

i must learn to
enjoy this wave
the ebbs and
tides
like i am riding
this hammock
from east
to west

i must know how
to close my eyes
and travel inside
deep down under
the darkness
in my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inner Me

My aspirations hurt me
I escape from the mistakes I commit
They anger me
The hardships I have
Rise above me
These confusions of desire
Against the walls of my mind
Breaking some well locked doors
Tearing the closed windows apart
The colors that I want to see
Blind me for a while
I float in the air
Over the wide sea
I look for wings
To fly and sustain me
I rest a while
Close my eyes
And listen to this sound
Singing and chanting
Inside me
I am dying to live
And be myself
Sublime and strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Inner Side Of Your Perfection

to get intimacy
you make love

to be more intimate
you need to make love some more
like a string of
buds of
tiny flowers

seemingly you want it without
an ending

eternity & infinity
side by side

but there is no intimacy in intimacy
since after each lovemaking
you return to the
emptiness of your arms again
less the other arms of those
other nights & other nights
before them

a cold night returns
with empty hands
and winds begin to pass
by your face
between your eyes
beyond your
hair
outside all of you

finally you try embracing yourself again
as though
you are another distinct set of arms
unto your
inner arms

and then you become one
without need
of any other

silent and
complete

RIC S. BASTASA
i have my own voice
but i am not a good singer as you

and so i keep this voice
only for myself and i begin to speak
silently

only to myself for i am not pleasing
at all for
the world

it is a sad voice
it is filled with envy and regret

it is a silent voice
and yet so restless as a traffic noise

it is contained and restrained
afraid to displease the whole world

it frees itself from its throat and roams
the confines of the mouth

it speaks silently for itself
on the letters of an ink on the hardness of the teeth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Innocent Happiness Of Children

he's a polio victim
a grade three pupil
walking so uneasy
on what seems to be
uneven floors

we were walking
together and then
he met another
child, soon to be
his classmate,
this harelipped
child not so tall
than him

they were exhanging
glances and then
shared these smiles

soon they were
playing on the
school grounds

a beautiful sight
shared laughters
not minding
what defects
are there

RIC S. BASTASA
The Innocent One...

you present your painting before her
she looks at it with an eagle's eye

the next day your poem is next and she reads it aloud to you

and you are patient as you listen
and you nod your head for all those criticisms

it was her love which you painted
same love that you wrote in that poem

she is too cruel to say that all these are works of the mind all imaginations

you nod your head and you say yes, and she never knew that it would be hurting her most.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insecurities Of Aging...

the more you age
the more you keep things to yourself

can ever experience the palpitations of being alone
you can hear it like the sounds of korean drums
the cascading waterfalls
the horns of taxis in city traffic

I assure you... you can't. So? get yourself attuned

have an empty cup and learn to drink from it
you must feign the satisfaction of thirst, because

it can't be long.
The Insensitive Beast

it should have been better
if he did not say it
he knows it somehow from the tip
to bottom
he's gonna hurt someone
with all the clear intentions
and that is
bad.

everyone knows that it is bad.
the man has sacrificed a lot to embrace it
hides, dives, and holds his breath
just to please the
sightseers
and then after all these years this man
mimics a monkey and says
that he is of inferior quality
funny and
cannot be considered seriously

tremendously unfair
silence is always golden
dignified.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insertion...

the insertion was a little bit slimy,
the Senate says, 'Foul!'
I am watching it for some meanings
perhaps it will be more significant
if done tightly, and
without any inhibition at all,
you think, it would have been real
with all the flesh, and not
with corrupted legal technicalities.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insider

you know there is someone inside me
it speaks

i hate to listen to this creature
it sounds like myself

sometimes it demands something that
horrifies me

and i don't want to give in
because it seems not to mind if i am hurt most

i press it like a marshmallow
keeping it small and almost invisible

but this creature knows how to scream
like a cow and to stop the humiliation

i finally give in and keep myself
running pursuant to its instructions

it drinks some blood from my dog
sips it like soda

it bathes itself in mud and does not
want to be rubbed

it shows itself naked in the mall
what a shame to my soul

but then when all his wants are given
it says sorry and then says that now i am free

it hides inside in my tummy
and then sleeps there all day

now i am back to my senses
on a life of compromises
The Insignificant

they let you in and you feel a little bit elated
it is their party
and they offer you a drink and you like it
they tell you stories and you
like them

and then they ask about you
all about you not just your name not just the place of your birth
not just the name of your parents

what you do and how much do you earn
right there
they will ask about the details
every necessary detail

and then after you tell them your story
take care of yourself

you are now alone
they just kick you out

you should have known too well
it is their party and they make the rules

you bet
you have become the 'it'
the one that bites the dust
another one that has become
insignificant

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insignificant Wall Flower

untouched she is but a
flower on the wall
disguising as a vine

you look at it
she is insignificant
how can desire be
emphatic upon a wall
upon a passive
stalk?

she is looking at you
her silence is her prison
she wants to be taken
you are the senseless wind
passing
simply dashing
like a vagabond

touch her serration
feel the thorn of her hands
provoke her
into a dance of lust

once your lips touch hers
she becomes ignited
like fire
that once started as a flicker
yet with your
love she can be the bushfire
that burns
the whole forest
of far
Australia

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insomniac Is Alive

there is yet no pillow designed for him

to make him sleep soundly
instantly like a click of fluorescent light
or the blink
the flash of hypnotism
or the tap of his hand

then sleep like a dead dog, this insomniac, like you
(it is 2:09 a.m. now, and what blinks it only this power
of the computer and it buzzing sound like
an insomniac
bee in a sleepless garden)

sleep is too cruel and unkind
not even trying to hold my collar and pull me to a soft bed
and give me peace and rest

well then
go, go away sleepy butterflies go away to
the place of waking flowers and be distant, distinct and
disappear, there is no logic in this manner
on a restless brain of the insomniac

sleepless again but taking most of the time
he writes letters to friends, emails to peers, ecards to nephews
and nieces, articles for journals, pause and think, and press the keys
of the computer again,

a rat passes by so afraid, a cockroach flies on my ear,
a dragonfly is lost again flying like a chopper on the ceiling
a lizard waits and lets loose its tongue to engulf an early breakfast
a cold wind, a soul touches my head, my hair moves like a river
my fingers tic tac toe, my mind on an abra ca dabra, opening caves
where treasures lie

and you follow me on this lonely trek in the night in the coming
of morning, looking for meanings in this literary locomotion
stop there, because in truth, an insomniac who is still alive
has nothing to offer

except that you, must tell some other stories, in this mutual state,
your eyes awake, your nerves wrecked, your minds still rambling

i am through
it is now your turn to speak how fast the clock ticks
how time runs without our knowing

it is now 2:20 a.m. in the place of my sleeplessness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insomniac Song Of Myke O.

Another insomnia night
till dawn

in the morning you
finally sleep

there is a bee
encircling a flower
growing from the
mouth of your
snores

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insomniac Who Drew The Head Of A Sheep Wildly
On A White Paper

the insomniac's heart is bleeding. she is in pain tonight like the other past night. she thinks she is dying right on her own bed. changing positions. finding the right way to sleep. she could not find it. she is lost in the darkness of this loneliness. she goes naked towards the refrigerator to get a cold glass of water. ice cubes. water rushing to the glass. clicking sound of glass and another glass. coldness rushing to her esophagus. Coldness multiplying in her burning heart. her blankets burning. She could not sleep tonight. She gets a white paper, a pen and begings to scribble her life: wildly, some lines run. Shaping the head of a sheep. one. two. three. four. five. Five eyes. She stops. She needs five eyes to see everything. Awake. The ceiling where the lizards grow to become alligators on the plywood swamp. No grasses but cobwebs of sleepy spiders. Five Jacks are hidden on the ears. On the ears are hairs of corn. Blonde. On the nose are paper clips. With them, she is cruel. Then she hides a bull inside her pharynx, the one that shits inside her mouth. She stinks. The bull makes a call for desire. For lust. She closes it with the prison wall of her teeth and gums and lips. Her lips are sealed now. All the five eyes are open throughout the night. Looking for love. Love is not found. Her heart bleeds. Stains of blood penetrate the white paper.

She had not slept for five nights. She will add another five eyes. She knows if this happens again and again, she will die. She pretends that she is strong. She will not forget these nights. Preludes to her death. She writes some hieroglyphics all over the empty spaces of the white paper. She will not forget what each line and curve and sharp edges mean. She codes them. She writes the date 9.2.2008.

She does not put her name. It is enough that no one knows and remembers.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insomniac Works Again

It is almost 12
midnight nigh i cannot
sleep

i cannot say
that i am thinking of you
it is just
random thoughts
like tiny meteors
shooting
in all corners of my
mind

i like to simplify
that perhaps
at the strike of the
forbidden hour

a chariot turns into
a pumpkin
a princess loses her
shoe
and i can be back
into a
mouse

the hour has come
i am back to
my nightmares

RIC S. BASTASA
Batog na, kabog,
sa akong tabon-tabon.
Kaadlawon na.

Sa kilom-kilom
Kutob: buwak ug buyog
Sa akong hagok.

come little bat
land on my temple
it is dawn

when twilight
comes: a flower and a bee
in my snore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Insomniac....

the stars in the heavens
shine
brightly

from my window i watch
the moon

beyond me the shadows of
hills

by the side of this house
where i live for a while

a brook sings a lonely river
runs slowly

tonight i think of nothing
my only wish: a very sound sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Intangible...

this moment
a tiny bit of my long day
i find pleasure
on this flow, feeling like water flowing on the river,
a ripple of the sea, wings of this seagull,
woman, woman, wading to a pool,
like a gliding kite, or a drop of water on
the faucet,
a little sound a flicker, some connections
of thought and touch,
little pieces of memories rushing
inside this room of my mind,
i float, this is happiness,
which as you may feel i am trying to capture
through these words,
oh really nonsensical, but there is this joy
of tiny pieces, bites of sweetness,
intangible.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Intervals

you laugh
at the intervals

at the spaces
between
seriousness and
craziness

between lucidity
and insanity

between the interstitial
satire
and the solidity of
desire

this if infinitesimal life
a burst of laughter
between the bangs of the hammer

you guess you made it
he lied
it is someone else
far beyond your imagination

far beyond your control
you look at it again
it looks like you
wearing that hair without
any shampoo

RIC S. BASTASA
The Introvert

poems are hanging
like stars inside
his room on a very
low ceiling
which he can reach
so easily with
his hands

it is always night time there
and the worries outside
keep on knocking the door....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Intruder Of A Family Affair

there are so many
who died taking with them

in their own graves
the lies of their lives,

it is unethical to judge them

the way you wanted to make them
divulge these secrets is an invasion

you destroy their territories
you burn their safe-houses

it is like stepping upon the
sand palaces of the ants
and then spraying their whole population
with pesticide

you think that you have served so well
those who are still living

look at them, they mourn and
still will mourn for the years

they feel being deceived
and tricked into a misery that they do not deserve

because you have taken hold of the truth of the dead
and revealed them to the grieving

(it is none of your business, intruder!
you deserve a thousand deaths!)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Invincible Concept Cannot Be Drawn Actually

i like it simply
because it is simple
and so we make it as simple
as it should &
must be

more graphical
representation of what
is not yet inconceivable?

an empty page
with definite boundaries
it is a rectangular world
with ballpoint
edges

our thoughts are likened to
boats of old
people who believe that
beyond these
rectangular boundaries
we all
must fall
and eaten
by dragons
raised by the
gods who take
vengeance upon us
and our ancestors
because we are
hardheaded

about what?

they say Here, here,
and then There

but where? and then
they say
the blank page is
actually
an elephant's
pachysandra
where we ride

and that the elephant
is carried by another
elephant and another
elephant
on top of each
other's
innocence

i shake my head
seventy-seven times seven
upon this faulty picture
of a contrived reality

is this the way
to explain that we must
survive
without so many
questions?

i must think
that beyond the four corners
of this rectangular world
are birds with a million wings
and they
are invincible

and we do not know
where they are now
we haven't heard
and so here we are in the
middle of this journey
this falling with no one to
catch us
dreaming of
ocean floors
wishing for the
blue skies

RIC S. BASTASA
The Invincible Giant

i am a giant
not a silly cyclop
i have two beautiful eyes
two moons

you are pygmies
ants
am a carabao

i am a tower
of light
you are boat abducted
by a storm

i am a rock
you are the rain
with all these
i only speak

i do not touch you
i only whisper
i am all these
but you shall never see

RIC S. BASTASA
The Invitation Of The Earth To Hear Its Songs....

the earth
if you listen enough
ears on those walls
buried
to each fiber of wood
has composed a lot of songs
for the goodness
of our
souls: the songs of the sea waves
against the sands, such a shushing sound
the thin air that kisses those daffodils
the soft feet of rain tiptoeing on the grass
the whispers of the flowing waters
from your fingers to the
skins on your belly
the lips that kiss
the bodies that meet in desire
rubbing against each
other on
lonelier nights
the flights of bird wings
above the treetops
the fluttering butterflies landing on the petals of a rose

sad is the man who does not hear all these
and love life
sadder is the man who hears all these
but shuts his heart
like slamming doors
locked
without keys

RIC S. BASTASA
The Iron Cables Laid To Sea

the iron cables
buried underneath cement
to create your
pavement

bleed

in rust and lose their substance
to the sea whose waves

lick

like hands of waves as if to assure
that everything here is

fine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony

people who look at me as dispenser of justice
do not know, that i am a victim of injustice myself.

as i wear the black robe, i too, hide within this cloth
my own suffering from the political system that swears that
everything is owned, one must have a master,
that in this small stage, they try to make marionettes

out of our broken bones, their hands are there manipulating the strings
and those who do not follow, who do not dance shall be severely
punished

i keep this irony, i close my mouth and then i bang the gavel
hard, i give you justice, no one gives me the same.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of Delay

what the heart wants to speak
the mouth tries to hide
the teeth grits in anger
the tongue genuflects upon its tail
then the right time comes
the heart speaks
but by then the body has become weak
the mind too fickle
and so when finally the heart has spoken
what true love is there
the niche is ready for the funeral
of the limbs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of It

at first, we start on a very trivial
conversation
what you do
and what you like doing
how we arrive at common grounds
like the places we
have visited and describing in details
what we have seen there
as though we are watching
the same film

then we do not just take glances anymore
i catch you stealing a hard look at me
and i responded in the same manner
that you give that lovely stare

i advanced a step closer to you
my mouth waters
like what a man must do under
same circumstances
i chance to hold your hand
and you welcome it
with a smile

then we leave the place going somewhere else
where we can be alone
to explore the other possibilities of love

i forget to know what your name was.
i guess, you are love, you must be
for now, i again meet the beautiful feeling of happiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of Life

youth

when i had you
i did not have the

fortune
&
fortune

when you came
i did not have

youth

anymore

what can't you both
leave me?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of Life (3)

the wall is blank
this morning
the rain stops leaving
marks of water
still no words but
i wonder
still how happy i am
even without a morning
poem but
ironic is this fact writing
about
a blank wall as the heart
beats for joy how fresh
a world appears before me
as the rain stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of My Existence

when we are on the plains
when i still suffer from those storms
you entice me
into having wings
designed
into a flight to the sky

you lay the rules
and i admit them saying
it's a deal
you have the numbers
and the
penalties

you say there is a mold
to follow
and if i were to succeed
i must obey
down to the last letter of the
law

i agree, &
i suffered more than
i expect

i just want to succeed
i burn my nights

i grow more days
seeding my years with more moons
spreading more stars
to my lonely
skies

and i go on top
breathing the peaks of winds at last
seeing everything
now,
it is beautiful
i am successful
i have achieved
your goals for
me

and then suddenly
you change the rules
you call me
i must go down again
to begin

i tell you again
there are no shapes
no molds

for the heart that strives
there are only
longings

i must tell you again
that i have done more
by not doing
anything

i have seen the truth by
not looking
at the rules

i have traveled more
by merely
staying
at peace with myself

no more wounds to lick
as i have cut my tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of My Society

the liars are well placed on their high thrones
the incompetents and the misfits dancing on their undeserved success,

the filthy rich have power
the leaders corrupted

and yet we pray to the same God
and yet we receive the blessings from the same God.

meanwhile, the innocent ones are convicted and electrocuted
meanwhile the poor gets to become as poorer as they were once

evil reigns and there seems to be no end to this,
the good ones starve and have fears for breakfast
the bad eggs hatch and fed and pampered.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of Our Absences...

it is booming time
in our town

all the flowers bloom
in a frenzy

the nights are perfumed
and the women are
beautiful

sad to say, we both are
not there.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of You.....

here you are
a flower who dreams
full bloom
but only at night

one who wants
to shine but only
upon a borrowed
light

a boat ready to sail
only if the rudder
is cut

here you are
the irony of ironies
wanting to be famous
but without a name.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Irony Of Your Life

so many things litter
empty bottles
wrappers
rugs, slippers with lost pairs
dog's hair
banana peelings,

in the kitchen after you eat
you are always caught up with so many reasons
to leave early

so many things to attend to
words to fabricate
sentences to make at the rush hour

you risk life in the middle of a jammed traffic
of the city streets

and then when you arrive at your destination
you find the irony of life

you are trapped inside the net of a jejune

so many papers piling up like a mountain
and then you have no nerve
to make the climb

you sit there
look beyond the glass windows
your legs are crossed
and then you
do nothing

and that is the final decision.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Island

true the island looks like a crocodile
a protruding mouth
sharp teeth and a very long tail

but at the end be amazed
the women there are tall and white and so free

like the wind and the breeze and the waves
surging on the laps of the shore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Island In The Sea

there is this island
a very small island where i once escaped
away from the death that the crowd has inflicted

there is this lonely island
where the only house i have is just an old chair
and throughout the nine full moons i simply sit there gazing

looking at the small tree the leaf of which is only one
its veins too tiny for my eyes to love

it gets lonely here most of the time but i owe all my life to this very small island
it saved me once from the death inflicted on me by the crowd

my body becomes a geisha of gratitude
my mouth becomes the kiss of the slave woman to the nth power of Abram

i live in this island and on the last dropp of the day
i become forever

there will be another north star in the heavens
and it shall have my own name

there is this island shaped like a heart and it sheds real blood because it is real
i am but a white grain of sand

perhaps, but i have become this grain of gratitude and i have become a star
forever hanging on the heavens.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Island That Anger Makes

because the past is rude
and always angry
at me i also learned to be
one like it

it is always the anger that
energizes me
and day by day the anger grows
and spreads to every layer of
my skin
to every nerve
to every cell of my body

i do not look in the mirror
to see my anger that burns me
it will be too
frightening

time knows
it always knows what to do with anger

somehow there is another angle to anger
something that negates it
consuming nature

it makes an island
that is sufficient upon its own resources

it has strong trees
white sandy shores
virginal in its decision for isolation

one day a visitor comes asking to stay
for a while

all it can see is the goodness of the place
the peace of its isolation
the fertility of its suppression.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Island Tryst In My Mind A Long Time Ago

at first the tip of the boat
shows and then the image becomes more detailed
you are there standing half naked
looking at the far horizon
to an island where we will be spending
the night
alone

the rest has assumed the color of the night
fire at the center
rain in our hair
mist between us
moans reaching the heavens
where the stars
are watching

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jar In The Garden

it is earthen
and bound to the emptiness of the air
that fills it,
it contains nothing but to you
it is important,

more important even to the beauty
of my words,
it easily breaks to the pressures of the weathers
on a quick change it may perish
despite this
you claim to love even more its natural fragility

to me this jar had always been a worthless form
a useless shape
yet its curve and its flattened base
have become symbols of your persistence

it is hollow it is plain earth
solidified by an artist
by the gentleness of its hands
by the cruel tests of fire
and by the silence of its years

your love is like it and you are asking me
if it is time for me to forget you

for us to part ways for i have loved the clouds more
the way they float the way they turn blue and then fade away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jaundiced Eye

to a jaundiced eye the world
appears yellow

and that includes all the details
and shades: the graffiti and
the effete

a society overrefined
turning yellow green with age
and envy

over the happiness of others
those who jumped over the fence to find the unique
pleasures of
violet grass and
purple clouds and
gray sun

one must not be bothered by the latest news of himself
narrated by
an acquaintance from far north
where the buffaloes are butchered

a name is kicked out from the pages of the morning papers
over a cup of cold coffee
another refined destruction of an icon
in you

listen the mesmerizing sound of your name
as you pray to
your favorite saints
do not be afraid
that is what is always said inside your heart
be not confused
in the middle of the crowd
there is the lonely you

listen to it carefully
it is the only true and honest voice
it does not betray you
and so
obey it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jealous Friend

green with envy
is the jealous friend of ours
lurking in the dark
wetting herself
with tears

she has mistaken us
as lovers

her lips are still unkissed
her skin still untouched

her face unwashed and
so is her jealous mind

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jealous Other Woman

when i told her
that we are taking the suite
at the hotel
where we will be spending
three days
alone with ourselves
on a mode of rediscovering
flames
she responded with

hmmmm

as though i am
the liar
trying to make the other woman
envious
about an old love
trying to rekindle
what has long been
and supposedly
been dead

please understand

i am trying to
walk on the path of light

away from the darkness
of our hidden sins

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jejemon In Town

miss candy raised in an exclusive school for girls asks what is jejemon?

how would she know jejemons do not exist in her rich exclusive environment

she is not being discriminated and with the affluence of her parents she can spell correctly and express herself in english well,

jejemons are her exact opposites and they are too many to be ignored and they breed so well, here's an example of a jejemon:

miSzMaldiTahh111: EoW pFuOh! You: Huh? miszMaldiTahh111: i LLyK tO knOw moR3 bOut u, PwfoH. crE 2 t3ll mE yur N@me? jejejejeje! You: You are a jejemon! Don't talk to me, you uneducated retard!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jesuit Father

not one child
has your name

but your name is the name
of all your students

those who learned from your teachings
that life is beautiful
that it has meaning
that it must be lived to the full

not one child
is owned by you
not one child
gives you paternal posterity

but there are hundreds of those
who call you father
those whose lives you touched
those that found a home in your class
those that learned to be one with the world
those that give glory to God

they all have become your children, father.
you have served, and loved them all.
you are their father
and they are your sons, your family.

now they are thanking you and your name
will live and linger.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joke At Golgotha
	ry going to golgotha
and see
if you can find a joke there
	ry your wits and humour
on skulls
and carcass
and crosses and
crucifixions

yes the carcass
funny
you can see her ass.

(ha ha ha)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joke Is That You Think It Is One...

ha ha ha

ha ha ha

ha ha ha

nine itches(es)
and nine a(hs)
bending
for happiness

gtg
i really gtg

goodbye.

God bless you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joker...

there is this little boy
an attraction in the circus
because he does not
have experience
yet...i mean the showmanship
is innocence, and those
that surround him
who want to
say, they want to help him
become like them

contortionists, clowns,
magicians, elephant men,
frog ladies,
jumpers, etc... i am not
really familiar with their names
and what they do

one day, the contortionist
ask him to imitate him
to get rid of his bones
and bend like some
water
fluid and painless
and the boy
does what he is told

he dies
bones crack and
eyes still seeing
pain and terror
looking to the
sky for
help...

he is innocence gone

but the show must go on
that is what they say
and the clown who watches
what the boy does
and how he dies

you bet, continues laughing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jolly Bee...

they say
love will always stay

based on the
experience of the
jolly bee
it is not at all
true

there are chickens
in love
at first they cackle
but then
they do not hatch
their eggs at
all

there are words
that touch
and go

there are options
unthought of

there are
empty
hollow words
without
any weight

there are nights
without days....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journey Of The Self

I've shut my world away
from yours
i have sewn my lips
i am muted
on self-volition
what is the use of
any coalition for this
very personal journey
on a ship without
name and rudder
do you feel my fears
for waves?
there is no captain
or crew here
rules are rules
there are no exceptions
of the self
i am raising my sails
in the middle of my storms
there is darkness
and occasional lightnings
i do not mind
the thunders
everyone claims
they all have them
too

tomorrow
perhaps shall be a bright day
i challenge myself
once again
i tell myself
this boat be better burned

so i will know
how far can i swim

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journey To Self-Discovery

in closing all windows
and shutting the door

inside the silent belly of the room
you are being consumed

in the content of solitude
you shall find your true self

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journey To Your Destiny

on that early morning
just before
the first streak of light
arrives
at your window

you step out of the door
and listen to the wind
you close your eyes
you shut your senses
you unload what fetters
your soul

the wind assures that
everything is now ready
the boat on the side of
the river is now calling

it is time to go
before the sun sees you

you embark upon a journey
that must lead you to your destiny

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journey Towards That Place

You see the place
a haven of grace
an island of happiness

you love it and wish
for it
but there is something
that hinders
you somehow

the pain of the passage
the frightening journey
the path of thorns
the bridge of fire

beneath you feet are the
sharpest nails
beside you are the
daggers of doubts

close your eyes
and dream and then continue
going

now you see the place again
a have of so much grace
an indescribable happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journey Towards The Top...

your wish must be mothered by passion

your first step maybe desire but it will not always be the same

the other steps till the end of your journey towards that highest peak will all be bleeding sacrifices of the feet

you carry with you the heavy weight of silence like four sacks of rice burdening your back

you are no longer fragile as a morning glory your eyes pierce the skin of the ground, daggers all.

you forget your name you shed off masks you do not know a face you keep that spirit

you have become all the elements of nature: wind, sea, mountain, space, meteor, sun and moon, but you are still one as the steel self that you are, a man apart from the rest.

you know beforehand about your ending, you become a stone part of the cliff, kissed by
the clouds, sings with the wind, overlooking the plains.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Journeys Of My Mind

it is always a mixture of this and that
the this that i want to tell
and the that
that keeps on shutting

this is it, and it is life
that is it, and it can be death

so many times the sky wants to split and open up
like a bread that you divide
it offers promises, views of moons and slices of so many suns
but what comes instead is the grayness and heaviness of
these and those
these rains, those cold nights
where we keep
blankets of comfort
in our own liking

and so it rains with cats and dogs instead
and our ears break like shatters of mirrors that we pick
and ask if our faces are still in tact

we have so many and we become so many
in these games that we usually play
we sometimes stay together and watch how the world is going
from where we talk and drink
from our verandas of comings and leavings

we are mostly sad but we never show it
we are often lonely but we do not care

and when we're happy we keep it to ourselves
we differ a lot but our loneliness
keep us solid together
in this boat of misery
where we are taken to the places of dismay

i actually and honestly
do not know where we are going
and so i always keep on talking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joy Of Having Nothing

THE women are dancing in open fields
their veils thrown away into the golden stacks of hay
the children too are carrying their drums and tambourines
The men are singing
The old men and women with all the years stored in their ears watch with joy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joy Of Loving

the joy of loving
is not in that taking but in the giving

i tried taking too much and put them in my hands
oh! everything becomes a mess
there are spills and dirt everywhere

i take the other option
of simply opening my hands and letting things go

like letting five butterflies fly away from my palms
into the garden of flowers

like setting free the two lovebirds spending all their lifetime
inside the metal cage that mother bought

like giving away the last saving of my life
so that you may find finally the person that you really love

i have emptied myself of everything i keep
now happiness comes
and fills every hollow corner of my being

i walk along the shores of my life.
singing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Joy Of Taking Less

i must be a fool
parting more of what i have
and then given back
something so little
and sometimes
nothing in return

my wife says this is too
much and if i do not change
she might as well
leave me for good

people lack wisdom
it is basic
the more you give
more shall be given
it is not an immediate
grace
i know, it happens most
of the time
without my knowing
it,

God's grace in the most
unexpected places
the beggar that i face today
who knows
is God's angel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jump Of Manuelito

What is it inside you,
Must be boiling
Could be erupting
A hollow bag filled with
So much pressure
About to burst

They wonder why
The decision to jump is made
By you at the unexpected hour
When all the rest are sick
Looking for the cure
When most are lost
Looking for an opening

And there you are
Not minding, undefining
What loss is
What pain is?
What everything
In our common ills
Is all about?

I am petrified.

Matter of fact
I stopped asking.

It is your major jump
And there must be a major reason
It must be the thin line
Between life and death
It must be feeling
The great divide

What we see is a major loss.

But who knows
It is not to you
I remember when you first
Looked for an opening
You insisted
You struggled
Only to find out
You don’t need it
After all those years

It is
The situation actually
Getting, needing, wanting,
Then throwing everything
Perhaps just
Going back to beginnings
To start after a backtrack

To be new again
The want to be at a blank wall
Or at
Dead ends
The mind would be
And could be
Once again
And we become
Real?

Disrobed of all the coatings
We accumulated
Now naked, now new
Now facing everything as though
Everything is strange
From mere scratch....
To a quick snatch
I can’t possibly do
What you have done
So far
It is not as simple
As you think
I for years
have taken
Complexity
Preferring the certainty
More than
The real
It is
what makes me
Live some more
And what is
it
I can’t tell you I
won’t really
It is my own
Sphinx...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Jumping Horses Of The Carnival

Do you still remember
the jumping horses of the carnival
when we were yet small?

Do you remember sometime
in July of 1968?
The horses are made of tin
in different colors,

practically all other colors
which are impossible for real horses

Those horses did not jump on their own
You bet
and when you guess wins, you get
either a plastic glass or
a cheap teddy bear

Those horses move with the music
of the record player
and there was a Big Man
holding the microphone

Dictating who shall move next
till your number wins

That is the beginning of my criticism.
Now, i am going back there to obtain more data
Perhaps, i shall then be
Enlightened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Do you still remember
the jumping horses of the carnival
when we were yet small?

Do you remember sometime
in July of 1968?

The horses were made of tin
in different colors,

practically all other colors
which were impossible for real horses
that we knew of
black, gray, white, brown, spotted

there were pink, yellow green
and rainbow horses

(i hope you remember
that you preferred the black ones)

Those horses did not jump on their own
You bet

A hand held their feet

and when your guess won,
you got
a cheap teddy bear

Those horses move with the music
of the old record player
with a harsh and confused voice
like a desert storm

and there was a Big Man
holding the microphone
Dictating who shall move next
till your number won the prize
of your persistence

i called you stupid &

That was the beginning of my criticism
Turned treatise of Reason

Now, i am going back there to obtain more data
Perhaps, i shall then be
Enlightened in black and white, perhaps,
i am not sure anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kamuning Trees Are Blooming...

under the kamuning tree
its white blossoms are falling

i sit upon a white chair in the garden
as petals fall softly like snow flakes from the sky

a wind blows us all happily away from here
i have become one kamuning scented soul

i feel so light
searching for my heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Key And The Closing Of The Door

half open, you signify a little doubt
about what to do,
there is this dichotomy about leaving and entering
at the middle of a decision,
one stops to ponder whether who at the end is hurt

will it be just myself? or someone else,
someone you like to love but cannot

then you go outside and close the door behind you
locking it and taking the key
you own the world now, what is inside that room
no one can take away,
in this case, there is the decision to come back
until the mind
settles for the big thing
whatever is it
you cannot say it
for the meantime that you still have the key in your hand

time passes. You let it simmer
defrost the hardness of the cold

then you come back and open the door again
nothing taken, but this time you leave the key under the rag
and you tell somebody,
the one you love, that the key is there
and it is all
hers.

that is the saddest thing that you can do.
but i know, inside, it is the happiest thing that you have done in your entire life
ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Key To The Door Of Madness

be not confident
and try not to tell me that i should not be driven
by seizures and fits
for just a while i was holding the key
to the door of my madness
an old
they say even reliable key
and that is
our presumption of this given
right-handed sanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Keychain....

there is always a compromise between want and need and so

you take one, just one, just once, and you tell no one but

then this secret creeps and goes into the mall, and begins to be

seen by all those who are cats in their curious suits, and so the

secrets goes on sale with ads and bidding, the need begets wants

and myriad compromises come like peanuts mashed into butter caught

in a bottle for sale at 999.99 per kilo and the lady there sings

like heaven and the the angels come in a plaster of Paris where

the apple of discord is thrown and hence the war and refugees abound.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kids In Us...

it is not because one is fat or huge that one does not fit

it is because one does not summon his senses

and see therefore all the transparencies the shadows beyond the films

there will always be secrets something concealed

but like children borne from the mountain's belly the tiny eyes peep and open wide on those leaks of the walls

they always know what is wonder

it is when the children in us begin to play again and remember those games even how dark the night has become that we see again these fireflies of the hidden world

the tree and the moon resting upon its leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
The Killer Instincts Of Thoughts....

his thoughts are like
tall, untamed grasses
no one lives there anymore
and everyone is
afraid,
even the dogs, they sniff
a story
of a bitch who went in there
and never
came back, alive.

the grasses are sharp like swords
and tricky like
a mad magician who kills its willing
subjects alive
and escapes in the air like a
whiff of
a sigh

the grasses are alluring, and one white dog
thinking of the bone
and the meat of the jackal
one night
slipped in there like a thief

the sounds of one choked fade
like a denim.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Killer Of Poetry

whoever defines
what poetry is and
how must it be written
kills it.

poetry is alive
it is in the fragile wings of a butterfly

it flutters and hovers to the flower that it likes

whoever it favors
shall bloom in full

RIC S. BASTASA
The Killers In Santo Domingo...

it made you feel good
vengeance satisfied,
you keep on chanting
it is good, it makes
you feel good, you &
your friends drink to
that, it is good, you
keep on repeating it
it made you all feel
good, but, and this
is the big but, it
was never right, it
was unlawful, and now
you have to keep on
running and hiding...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kind Of Falling

There is this kind of falling
that is free, and it does
not think of any floor
or end, the trip continues
down and down
and darker and darker

you close your hands
and put them on
the side of your
hips, and you keep
on waiting about the
expected

deadly impact, you want
it done
and done so quickly

for years this free falling
has been with you
and you are into this
feeling always

where to
and when and what
and why

it's been like this from
the beginning
no floors no ceiling
no walls now
and all the doors
are closed

except the windows of course
that you keep on seeing
there is the wind
that keeps on going and going
passing through and through
inside your heart

the freedom of falling
it is here always inside your heart
you are numb
and there is nothing difficult to understand

letting go and just this feeling of falling
the consolation is that

you are always on top of things
explains, thus, this falling

for why should i fall? i ask sometimes.
thanks God, i must be up here, and there is no end to this tunnel

let me see, let me see the light, with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kindness Of Simply Letting Go

the son is too cruel to keep
her 90 year old mother alive
still alive

diabetic at first it was her gangrened
toes which were severed from her foot
then the foot followed suit
the lower leg then finally
the upper leg

the cutting stops an inch below the
genitalia
you cannot cut the large intestines anymore
the doctor says

i once told him that on my part
i live in a shack on top of a hill where i set all the pigeons free
on their wings they finally go with the final wind
i never ask them to come back

the cold winds from faraway blows my hair
o how fresh o how beautiful is their passing

merely passing by, just merely passing by
my hands really never really hold on any of them

letting go, letting go, that is what kindness is all about

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kindness Of Sin

where virtue fails
vice comes for succor
at least for
a moment you have lived
a life
so full (and come to think of it)
look behind
how empty it had been.

RIC S. BASTASA
The King Of The Chairs

no matter how qualified
and competent is the king of the chairs

to the mind of the table
the king of the chairs
will always remain as only one
of its serving knights.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kiss

It is your kiss that makes him a handsome prince again
This croaking toad

Why will you deny that to him?

The book did not say that you have to kiss on the lips
Passionately

you may kiss his feet
if you vomit the slime on his tongue
& you may close your eyes that long enough
you run as fast as you can
till his smell
till this misery is lost in the rushes of the air

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kiss Of The Spider

yours is the kiss of the spider
mine is the touch of the feather
yours is the sting of a bee
i am delighted i am bitten i am inflamed
with love

if you are the sniper aiming a gun at me
i am your most easy target

and when you squeeze the trigger
i shall face you
with all the weakness of an honest man
i shall stare at the bullet
penetrating the softest chamber of my heart

now you must know how to love
as you kill the most willing victim
falling from the firm stand of integrity
into the slums of shame

how foolish! how stupid can i be!
my friends and foes all say
you have the gun and i come near you
now squeeze, look at me, do i look like i need pity?

on your selfishness i have long died
how can you kill me then?
love dies only once and that is courage enough
to muster and be gone for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kiss The Tongue And The Twitting Bird....

when you get near me when you
press your lips against mine, you shall feel the coldness of my dawn,

you keep your mind open like eyes staring at the sun,
yet what you see is still the haze, the fog hanging by the mountain

since it has always been a very cold day,
when you put your tongue inside my mouth, you feel the rain rushing

making a river of rippling waters and it is the force inside that
you will feel

you close your eyes and trace where it is going, and you shall know
that every dropp of rain that makes this river

is always going away from you away from us, and you start to browse
over the silence of the my day, and you shall find that this day is an

empty page where all my words have already been erased because i do not want
you to know anymore what i feel and who i am,

i am detached, i am numb, and i do not wish to know what love is all about and
where it is going,

i just like to hear a bird twitting alone on that old tree.

whatever is it that it is singing, i do not really care.

for what i know is that i am alive, and for what purpose, who cares?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Kites

the kites
take pride of their freedom

befriending the proud winds
and elbowing with the hands of the great sun

they swim in the clouds
and sing the songs of the mighty and the free

they look down
and to lowly places and creatures frown

forgetting perhaps
the strings that tie them to the hands
of children

RIC S. BASTASA
The Knife, The Rock And Grief

grief has
a knife

that stabs
the rock

that breaks
it from where

water comes out
for you

to drink so that
you can have

life again
for you to drink

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ladder

when you climb the ladder
you have become too insensitive
focusing your eyes
upon the fruits up the tree

you have had not the chance to ask
about its own ambitions too
or at least about some of its most
simple dreams
to lean upon a wall

when you step upon one of its arms
you never ever heard any complaint from its feet

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lady At Your Side

moon at
noontime

sun at
midnight

she is
that

beautiful
one
at the
wrong
time

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lady Of The House....

travel has become one form of negligence.

in the house the words are waiting
they become grass

turning into weeds, they grow thorns on their stalks
warning you of a revenge

when you come back the path is barred
you have to cut weeds to enter the door

the door cannot embrace you
it hints you with a door knob to welcome you back

the computers suffer a breakdown
and the fan has become a throttle less the air

you have so many things to tell the room
but the blankets are still covering their ears

your lady who had been waiting impatiently
removes her dress

and you see how wounded are her breasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lady Who Leaned On The Pillar Of The Court

the one who took the shot
must be an artist
he knew how to portray
the state of justice in this country
a sad lady
abandoned by a lover
who murders a maid
and goes into hiding
helped by a powerful dad
and the case is simply left
in the archives
forgotten

i have written a poem for
that sadness
a forced smile
coerced beauty
a leaning that is accompanied
by trembling
that something might fall and
break her into
shattered pieces of
glass
sharp and still vengeful to the
soles of the feet
of the innocent guest
looking for
more names....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lady Who Lost Her Love

there is no love
life anymore with

dthis lady whose
husband left her

she sleeps with
her most favorite
ggranddaughter after
telling her stories

about the prince and
the princess

in that old kingdom
washed by the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lady With A Blue Blouse

lady, you break a friendship

it is like a glass of wine
you drink last night
and drunk you throw the glass away

it lands on the cemented pavement
and breaks
the following morning
no one is in the house where you live
they are all gone
not even waiting for dawn

the shatters are there
no one picks the pieces
alcohol dries up
the sun arrives angrily
on the French blinds of your window

why are you crying? now, you have understood
what is missing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lake Is Silent The Leaf Is Gone.

you are the strong man
taking the calm of the lake

placid waters, still boat,
to the gentleness of the floating
leaf

you told me, keep the storms with
your head
let them rage there
while you sleep

do not use any word to tell anyone
about the chaos
they have their own words for themselves
keep the chaos without your heart
it makes you stronger

you are the strongman
in this world, we never see you again
we have forgotten your name

the lake is silent
the leaf is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lamb Of God

Lamb of God
you take away
the sins
of the avaricious

Lamb of God
you take away
the taste
of sin

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lame Boy By The Window

that boy by the window
had long been gone
it dreamt of snow but there is no snow
here where the tropic of cancer lies
where summer is as hot as burning coal
where pigs are slaughtered and
grilled for a family affair
where the girls dance with their father
where boys run and catch dragonflies
where the river sometimes dry up
where wells need to be dug up deeper,

that boy who dreamt of snow knows
from where it comes
the book that mother bought
from London

he had never learned how to walk
and throught out his life the sourness sticks....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Language Of Anything

everyone
speaks for
itself, the leaf
when it falls always
has something
to say
and says it
painlessly, and so does
the waves that break
their liquid
bodies ashore
spreading
into foams
may murmur
but goes back again
to where it must
go and
then belong

we too
in our own joys
and sorrows
say something
in words and yet
some do not
really understand
what we feel,

the world
knows each language
and keeps
on listening still......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Language Of Intangibility

complacency
sleeps at the yard,
the thief comes
like an accident,
the object of
pleasure is
taken away,
at the breakfast
table is
the blank stare
in this house
every caution
is given up,
the accident can
come invited,
what happens is
what happens.
fate declares
it is destiny.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Language Of Light

when light arrives
welcome it

you who is still on the shade of darkness
move away from fear and anxiety

listen

do not speak
you may not hear

light is not just light
it speaks

it hovers on your breast
bringing you some gifts

warnings and
golden pleas

hoping that you shall remain with it
for in the house reserved for you
you shall sooner rest and
feel what happiness is there
still unfathomed

RIC S. BASTASA
The Language Of The Tree

i am looking for a new voice
it lurks still inside my throat
i want to speak but i still can't
my father does not like it
if i were to speak the language that i know
since i was a kid
my father shall rise from his grave
to stop what i must utter

i am still looking for a new voice
it must not sound like his law
it shall speak the language of the tree
deprived of leaves and yet still keeps all the twigs.

i like the chirps of birds, the whimpers of wings,
the sweet silence of the shells....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Language That The Poor Wants To Speak

do you speak good English?
do you take pride in it and then use it to impress others
and swindle them
into a belief that they are inferior?

they have feelings too
of humiliation
which even in such a sad state
wish that their humiliation
speak good English still

they always think that English will give them
a good job
a better standing in the society
a flare of fashionable tongue

you make them cry
but still they want to speak that cry in English too

foolish!

but can you blame them?
you who hold that power and might
you who have taken all what they once had
and made them
worse within
themselves

despite which,
they still want to be like you
to speak like you
a god

how sad!

you have never known the language of love
the grammar of generosity
the syntax of sympathy
that language that good English
sometimes has forgotten
to utter

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Argument Of The Egg And The Chicken

i will always agree
on this last, that at the end
it does not really matter
which came first the egg or the
chicken because what matters
most
is what makes us
friends again.

take the chicken
i'll have the eggs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Beauty That We Take With Us

it is late for me to know
that you have a ghostly opinion
about
who we are

we have nerves
that explode
and you finally do not
like it

at first you love what we say
you read
our wonders
you are amazed with
the scenes we draw
upon thoughts

then there was something about
having to die
having to sail and be lost forever
in a strange horizon
having to suffer
for the good of all
and you do not like exactly
the possible consequences
of our choices

you tell us
why do we have to suffer?
despite the fruits
why do we have to be injured?
despite the luxuries
and the lushness of
our brains

we do not know
our genes are secretive
we only feel
that what is sacred to us
can be
also so wrong

we end in sadness
we admire the last beauty
that we take
with us.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Day On Earth

shall i say that the last day
of the earth is the last day
of man?

for when man is gone
all the stories to be told shall be gone
but the earth is there
shivering for all the harsh things
that have been done

doo there was an explosion
forming a very huge mushroom
on that last day
of man

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Day....

the last day in your life
is in your mind

when the mind shuts up
then that is it

the last day is at the tip
of the last word
that slips from out of your
tongue
that in a minute you
remember
but in the last second
you forgo
because it is just it

ping!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Donkey

I am gathering laurels
to crown the last donkey
in my town

It is the only donkey which
thinks that soon i will be having
the heydays of my
writing career

I will have this donkey paraded in town
To be cheered by all the nitwits and nincompoops
And then the feast at home begins
All menu based on donkey meat.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Fifteen Minutes Before Leaving

in fifteen minutes you create something
that they will like,
something to think about, not found here yet
it is about someone they want to understand but cannot
because it eludes belief
it escapes routine

it is outside the box, bird-like
wearing light,
and sounds very much just like anybody's
conscience always talking upon itself
and sound very much like
anybody's voice.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Five Minutes Of Your Life

given the last five minutes
of your life
what shall you do?

let the last five minutes
be a waiting
let there be that willingness
to go where the last five minutes take you
let there be a respect
for an ending
let it be as nice as the first welcome
let it be as silent as a cat's feet
on the carpet
embrace the last five minutes
like your long lost friend
tightly
without any tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Flight

denial of what was there a long time ago
it sits there like a statue
 beside the door of the house
 where the window is always closed

there is always a reason why the words keep flowing
like a river
why the river is always filled with running water
despite the drought

you see the bones of cows
the dust of the sands in the desert
it was once an oasis
where date palms abound where women bathe
with their men
where they make love
under the crescent moon

there is always a reason that you know
but you do not tell
but which i will always deny
as truth

it is this denial that keeps my hands going
like soldiers ready for a kill in that theater of war
it is this roaring lion that does not bite
that keeps me
in fear that keeps me speaking inside myself
there is no one here
there is no wall anymore

the winds are waiting with all the wings of the dead birds
it is ready
i am undressing
this is the flight.
there are times when we fell like
waste paper, that uselessness,
when we seem to be not connected at all
even to our very own self
when we are scattering sheets of paper
in the air
falling like confetti to the ground
and then it rains
and everything is wet
drained
to the dirty canals of our cities
down, down to the
worst of our histories

i let go off these all,
i simply wait for another sun
and rainbow after the rain
things do not last anyway
the good and the bad end themselves
beauty and ugliness
sadness and happiness

then every hump levels up
there is the plain, and then the grass and then the gaze.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Item.....

building another house
is diversionary tactic
as life's sands fall slowly
towards its drastic end.

your attention will be
catched between this wall and
that wall, that railing and
another, from one stair to
another, one room, a kitchen
which by its tradition, gives
you a sense of what a smoke is.
the scent of roasted meat,
and removal of fish scales,
and burnt wood, and rushing
water from the pipe. And into
the sale where you will put
again the old pictures of
those who already left you.
perhaps, what is more divesting
is the picture of a baby and
the mother, beside it, a crib,
a gun, and newspaper. Which of
course leads you back, takes you
back for all those well founded
fears. You imagine where to put
the cage of a parakeet, the music
box, the rattler, the guitar,
those dancing shoes, and the last
one, which you keep by heart but
which you can not tell for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Leaf Story

i did not agree with the last leaf painting on the wall last winter to keep love alive

i took the last leaf i simply want that you take your rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Option....

if you cannot be the sea
try being an island
and if being an island
makes it worse
(define loneliness)
try being a fish
live in a coral
leave, swim and be lost
in all directions
if somehow you get tired
of this freedom
try the prison of
your own thoughts
live there like a book
open the pages
like a monk
and wander like a word
and if you want it better
(define what is better)
try being a
syllable
or an
atom or a positron
be gone

if being tiny & lost
or invisible makes you
miserable
or vulnerable
try being huge like a
mountain
spread your feet
to the plains
and be a wide world of your
own making

you see, there is this will
this willingness
that if you really want it
you can be everything
but if you get tired of
everything
(I've been there
i know it)
there is one last option that
you can choose

you know it,
i shrug my shoulder
too,
it is that moment
when we embrace
nothing
its arms tight in
our bodies

perhaps that is the last option that we can take
perhaps that is the only truth
that we are.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Poem For Ramon

from a long trip
he arrived home
feverish,
he said he needed
rest
a very long rest
in the ancestral house
of his father
where the trees are
old and tall
where the air is
refreshing
where the silence
is abundant
for he is tired
and wants to have
his much needed rest

it was too late for him
to know that he has
stage 4
for lung cancer
for which he succumbed
in his death bed
yesterday morning
in the ancestral house of
his father
his home away from
home now
away from wife
and his three children

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Poem Shall Tinker With Mood And Meaning

silence silenced, and dreams dreamt,
and the speaker that listens upon the beatings of his heart
like a little drum inside his chest.
it is this resounding. this re-echoing
that like a spoon and knife to a porcelain plate
tinkers with the meat and beans,
segregating, and choosing little things
in colors and smell, and swallowing some and
throwing out the rest of what we
like to have inside us. sorrow and pain.
joy and bliss. yours and mine. you and i.

these are categories that we see and feel,
and care and care less and choose.
we tinker with mood. we like always to choose,
and discriminate, the spoon is a spoon and the fork is a fork.
and the knife that cuts,
we are careful enough. There is meaning now.
Blood drops out from your veins, and some beans
turn red. You cull out, what you want to believe.
you leave and carry with you
what is painless. That is as simple as that.

more or less, either/or. write the name of the person
that you love. Burn those that hurt you. Close the door.
Open the window. See the sun. And let always the moon
to kiss you by your window. It does not know what a door is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Reminder....

soon he will write the happiest
lines in his life
many times he dreams about it
there was this pond hidden by shrubs
and there the love of his life is bathing
it is vague with mists and fog
it is so beautiful that he does not want
to wake up or

even live his life again
the most beautiful poem that he cannot even
name

because it is forbidden because he would be
descending stairs throughout his lifetime
because if he grabs that dream inside that dream

castles will fall, roads erase themselves
destinations become uncertain
all his roots uprooted and there will be no more
tree for him to mark his very own existence.

'it is an obligation' Life tells him.
You cannot just quite- -that is the rule.
Dreams are not real, that is basic.
There is hell, that is the last reminder.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not waste the last warmth
of my hand
hold it with your hand
do not waste the last warmth
take it
it will only be for a while
and then i ask you
to forget
let me not be
your grief

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Scene Of Sorrow....

in extreme sorrow
over your having departed me
without an advance notice
to make me prepare for a funeral

i have chosen a corner, in fact,
a dead end where no one goes out there,
no opportunity for escape,

this is my art now
the repetitive utterances sounding like the waves of
the sea at night when we sat at the port trying to figure out
where the horizon ends
as boats come again to rest with their big ropes again
tied to their necks.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Season

i now welcome the last season
it is not winter, it is the season of
forgetting, and next to it is spring
not really spring in the manner that
flowers bloom again
but it is the season for us who divided
by a very distant silence
shall begin a new journey
alone, because we want to think some more
without us together
a pair of tracks, crossing a river
a new slate of water erasing what
we have gone through
for we rise from the river and
approach another plain
it is the grass now that conceals
what our feet tread upon
it is the sound of softness
that greenness of
undiscovered ways

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Stage

a crooked line straightens itself
finally with a beeping sound, not once,
penetrating, traveling to an insistence,
it is turned off. A sob from a little girl
beside the bed. A punch on the wall
of a man's fist. A white blanket covering
a pair of eyes. Blankness.

a caravan of nomads, a camel a desert
a dark night, full moon, a distant call and then
sleep and silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Thing To Bring

nothing but love
still,
it is the last thing
that i carry
with me alone
to the other side of this river.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Trip

that was the last trip.
and there will be no more
returning
we only try to imagine
another set of surroundings
there is no coffee here
it is only a vision of us sipping
away what was there
before

there is no more city
nestling on the valley
no more melodies of the
savages, we are now
on this last trip where
there is no more
returning

be glad.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Wish

i have a wish
to make
before you
leave
and it is this:

let the last
word
be kind
and gentle.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last Words Of Revenge

one day more
let us meet again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Last

enough is enough is enough

promises are made
to be broken

enough is enough is enough

however always without finality

words are always words
apart from what is done and undone as always

looking for the perfect step of
the dance in your mind
looking for the perfect syllable
to a poem of your dreams

looking for the last mark
the last metaphor which is not as always there

the last note for my music
the last flower of your spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Late Arrival Of The Promised Life

oH! LIIFE! Why
so late?

death Has tolled
the Bell

and Toil's
a toilet bowl

and Hope's
a Grasshopper

Ah Death
Dreadfully
damned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Late Bloom Of Spring

the beginning of thought
is the
trap where the firefly
finds itself,

where you find a broken
wing of a butterfly or that

wasp, an empty nest of mud
hanging upon a twig

the last drop of rain
and the fading sound of

a tweeting until an ending
becomes visible,

and this is where you start
to ponder

that end, that leaving.

it seems to me that
death is a johnny-come-lately

then thinking is born,
a late bloom new in spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Late Realization Of Eliezer

after so many failures
despite all the hard work
and so many tries
on the promises of another day
the assurances of hope
and the salvos of

no retreat
no surrender

Eliezer still flunks and falls
down to the bottom of
the floors of disappointments

no sooner did he realize
when he gave up everything
(to include his precious life)

that his only purpose in life
was only to
praise God
His Creator

RIC S. BASTASA
The Latest Fear Of Silence

someday you may ask
'how come you have always something to say?'
as though you have always wished
that for a moment
i should have been silent

or say nothing about this world anymore
about you
about the coldness of your arm
and mine

' i have always something to say to this world'

in my silence that i have compromised with you
i could have said
that deep within my soul
there is a place without trees and shores
there are no leaves
that fall and cover my rugged land
no breeze to appease
my emptied wells

or i could have simply told you
that silence can kill me
that without the noise and my voice
i could have already been lost
in the void
that my only link to this world is a word
so many of them
and they wall me out
from the eternal threat of
an empty space
a meaningless vacuum
that has sucked many souls
into oblivion

RIC S. BASTASA
The Latest Of Summer

the tree
is set for another fashion show
this latest of
summer

apple green sleeves
rusty brown trunks
a crown of stars
lace from her twigs and
branches
flowing to the river

RIC S. BASTASA
The Latest Word From You

oh yes, i agree,
when one gets too much love
when one gives more than too much of that love,
one gets crazy
one gets to do all the crazy things
splitting hairs
spreading legs
open arms
narrow mind
blind eyes
traveling fingers
wet lips
silent teeth
trembling heart
ballet of emotions
unbalanced arms
body no longer in
symphony with
the soul

a trip
you trip and fall and
then what?

tears and tears
and sobs and gritting tooth
after so much glory
comes the death
and then wait
comes along what we need most
the redemption
of what died
the moving on
of what wants to cease and stop
and annihilate

buds and flowers again
silent summer
soothing breeze
whispering winds
to love again
without looking at the eyes of regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law Classes

when the semester opens
i usually create a bing bang to those who come
wanting to be lawyers, telling them that the
study of law is not that easy, in fact,
an eternal damnation,
for laws are made by man and man
changes laws everytime he wants to sneeze.

and they think i am bluffing testing their capacity
for endurance, like Louise, i tell them the story
of sisyphus,
how he pushes the stone
meaninglessly
on top of the mountain, and repeats the acts
with diligent efforts,
though there seems to be
no reward at the end,

but how can they ever believe me
when lawyers at every bend
ride in flashy cars and
live in luxury
smoke the best cigars
and take most of the money

well respected in the highest
echelons of political society,

and i tell then again
to do their best, whatever that be,

when the class is dismissed,
they all laugh & tell themselves
what is there in law
that should consume them,
when laws are not really well studied or applied and
only ten percent
shall be faithfully used
or followed at the end,
to succeed,
they say,
law is set aside,
what challenges them more
perhaps
is the subtle art of lying,
without blinking an eye
for truth, a kind of
projection,
image packaging,
psywars,
knowing the gods,
the art of pulling stings
and fidelity
to networks

pointing
where Zeus lives,
and knowing fully well
what thunderbolts to use,

integrity? principle?
honesty?
they all laugh again,
you cannot eat them

just lick them.

and so, i tell them again next meeting, that
sisyphus
is nothing but just a myth, forget it,
meanwhile
the oral recitation shall start
and there they are
their heads fuming
like mad
monsters..

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law Of Closure

day you did not say anything

ing the veranda

got no messages where you are and what you are doing

response and silence is deep and sinister

you do not have to say it

doors half-open and i am here
to completely close it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law Of Nature

the tree is not here to please
us, that will be too much to require it
it is already too pleasing
with its shade and fruits and wood
we are trying to make it understand
it cannot, with
or without us the tree simply unloads
what it cannot keep forever
it is the law of nature embedded
in its barks
and pith
to simply give and not us why
to be all self-giving without asking anything
in return

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law Of Nature Has No Mercy

those who swatted a fly
gathered eggs of birds
torn a wing of the butterfly
bit a bee, clawed a cow,
those who scared the crow
belted a bull, flagged a fluke
be aware
that the law of nature has
no mercy
you shall be punished
and swatted too, and torn
and bitten, and clawed, and
scared, and belted, and
flagged to death,
you burned the grass
you shall be burned
and you shall die under the
merciless law of nature

you shall perish but the
earth has become green again
the trees shall be trees again
to embrace another forest
the rivers become rivers
the sea shall be the old sea again
boundless, wide, and mysterious
for the earth shall remain
and those that abused it
shall perish forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law Of The Few

too many speakers
and few of the doers
too many workers
less of the thinkers
too many visions
so few implemented
so many men and women
yet few are human.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law That Keeps You Intact

he shall betray you and you know it
he is fed up with what you are not
but he shall keep you, not because love is there
on that nest of being together

it is the law that keeps things in tact
and with full maturity, neither love nor hate
can tear what is interwoven

you are there with a headdress and he is there with his pipe on his mouth
smoke rises in the air
continuously
inside that frame of nothing
but black and white

RIC S. BASTASA
The Law.....

the law is the mold
where we are supposed to take shape
as though we are water or air
and it is the vessel, and

the vessel after we have been shaped
to its likeness
from its mouth tries to tell the world
that here we are
happily married to the prescribed form

all, uniform, all so cruelly shaped
to the likeness of everyone
and those who complained about the pain
is met by the adage at the gate

dura lex, sed lex
dura lex, sed lex.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Laws Of Change

i is no you,
there is no me in the permanence
of the firmaments. there is only the
law of constant look
into my eyes everyday, the ripples
are not the same yesterday.
some fish live there in different
colors and you think of rainbows.
feel the beat of my heart. move
closer and make your palms
be like sensors of my pains
and joys. i change. yesterday
moves out like dusk turning
to light in the morning window.
drapes are removed, and new
ones are put on and no, they
are not the same hands, not
you, it is today's face that
faces me and i am always on
the look out for the signs.
your child today may be
tomorrow's monster that kills
your kindness today may soon
transform to indifference, to hate,
life shuts off in any moment like
a switch and you lay in your bed
feeling for once, this is another
day, another me, another tired
body, another soul chanting,
about an end about a beginning
about this cycles without seemingly
any visible crack of light for escape.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Laws Of Life.....

the laws of life
are more than traffic signs
go jaywalking
you get fined.

over-speeding
you crash upon death
your calendar
ends

what more is the law of
life?
the price of greed
the consequences of
promiscuity
the guilt of
cheating
the damnation of
abomination

the Furies know how to chase
an outlaw
that circular chase inside the
mind that gives you
no place to run

in the living of the life of the law
one is safe
protected and confident

there is tomorrow that waits
and promises
that when you are free and
harms no neighbor
befriends the earth and
the sea
worships the sun and moon
adores the beauty of
nature and communes with
its rivers and
valleys

and with a grateful heart
to all these creations

the Creator looks upon you
with pride
because you are its glory
the center of
its universal divinity

RIC S. BASTASA
The Laws That Man Made On Earth

the laws that man made on earth are like sandcastles. and the men who made them are like children playing on the beach one summer's day. each hand takes a mouthful of sand and forms the minarets and walls and doors of the castle. A path for their prince. A stable for their horses. A special chamber for the king and queen. A training ground for their warriors and soldiers to protect them. A court for their counsels and judges. Every structure geared to protect self-interest.

the laws and sandcastles. The men who made them are the children on the beach. And here comes God the Big Wave, and in an instant, on a single wash of its mighty hand, or tongue, or cape, all these laws are washed away.

Then the afternoon comes. The sun sets. The children go home and sleep.

Tomorrow is another play. Another game. Another sandcastles. Nearby the waves keep looking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lawyer And Artist Rolled Into One....

i'd say it will
not be confusing

neither tiresome
to swing from left to right

to and fro, back and forth,
poetry to law
mathematics to language
art to reality

it will not be taxing
nay, to a man of all whims
and practical caprice

there will be pleasure
and feasts and
adventure....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lawyer Is Under Fire...

let it be
rationalize
justify
what you have chosen

but at first
there is always that
decision

to choose: for whom? what for?
why?

you were bashed
you look like an addict
you sound like a used-car agent

then you tell them
it is nothing personal
this is professional work
he is the client and
he must not be refused
pursuant to the oath

now you are wriggling
into that hot oil
inside the pan below you

fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
she lies there in the living room 
on that sofa, 
herself swells, and her husband says 
she is another hopeless case 
in whispers seeing to it that she does not hear any word 
about 
being hopeless, but i think she knows it, she is not dumb after all 
that all these are obvious enough 
herself does not feel anything now 
herself speak a lot 
but her mouth does not release a word 
herself tongue coils inside her cheek 

the room is filled with the smell of death 
urine, fecal matter, 
i say a prayer for her repose. 

the images of a woman playing tennis during saturday mornings 
in sneakers, drinking wine with her husband at the veranda 
a lawyer fed up with life's drama 
their children have lives of their own 
and soon 
he will be facing life all alone 
when she finally closes her eyes 
to see another world 
before her 
closed eyes 

saturdays will never be the same again 
but he is strong, he will always be strong 

he will have another defense... it is too painful an image to see 

and so i shifted my gaze 
to the durian tree 
lush leaves, strong branches, and 
fruitless
The Layers Of My Existence

peel me, not like an onion where you shall cry for every layer, no, i do not require tears here, at most, you may need only to smile, and then be so patient, as you peel me layer by layer, as i watch, and as you carefully peel me with your bare hands, i will allow it, all for you and your curiousity,
you discover the erotic layer and in there exists the desire for an adventure, the disregarding of sin, and then peel me further move on,

find the layer of my intellect, you shall find what i have told you all about, my nerves and common sense, my strivings to go deeper towards my self, and then

peel me further, you see the bone of my contentions, my hardened principles and uncompromises

then peel me further, find the marrow that makes all the blood of my life, my sorrows and pains, my exhilarations and bliss and joys and happiness, and you will say there is nothing more to find.

you are wrong. There is this last peel that you cannot see. It is like air, and it floats and it gets in, it always finds an empty space, and you cannot find it there anymore,

it is now inside you and you cannot get that out of your system

you must accept this:
i have become
an essential part of you, and there is
nothing now that you can do.

you see, in peeling me, you find
no exit anymore. Whether you
you will be happy or sad, it is
already beyond my control.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaf And The Tree And The Roots

if i had to write it again
then i had to, as i must

let you fully understand
the true nature of a vine

the way the leaf swerves
with the wind to give itself

to a fateful fall, the one that
completes its existence as

a leaf to a tree, a part of
a whole, the way it must

settle on the ground and
be with the worms and rot

and fulfills the cycle of its
short existence, and by then

it tells the roots, i am a leaf
i am back and you must now

eat everything in me so i can
be with the bark again so i

can be a leaf again to a tree
that holds me back

and then for another time
lets me fall again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaking Roof

it is raining and here i am stuck
under the roof of a deserted house
the windows are open
nobody has come to close four windows
looking to the street like an insomniac,
the door is creaky like a sore throat
sounding like an incurable allergic sneeze
the crazy wind bangs it from time to time
and i do not mind the routine of noise
for a while a walk to and fro
like i am making a picket
observing the details of how a deserted house
can look like
or feel like: there seems to be a growling silence
abbreviating itself like a scream
cut short by my hands kept inside my pocket
i look up and see the leaking roof
making a rhythm of the dripping beat
of this poem.

i have nothing in mind, i am empty
and emptying still. I take in so much quantity
of silence, the weight of thoughts,
the silly purposeless probe
of what i am suppose to be and where i must be going
after this temporariness of loafing.

The rain stops. I am leaving.
The rhythm ceases.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaking Roof....

there is no use
repairing the leak of the roof
of this
house

it is raining
let it rain
let the water wet this floor
and the furniture

let us wait when will this dark night
end
when this heavy rain shall stop

on the same leak
we shall see the light that falls
on those wet floors
and furniture

it will show us the truth
and shall guide us
what to do next

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaking Roof........

after the rain
drops from the leaking
roof
to the floor
as i lay sleepless
was  mesmerizing

and i remember
that old love poem
which i
sent you
years ago.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Least You Expect It

it is at the time when you least expect it
that things happen in your life
that people come to you

for help.
bad luck, and events come bringing
you all the regrets.

mosquitoes and ants, and termites,
and snakes...

imagine, butterflies and birds and bees and flowers.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaves Of The Mango Tree

from my window
the mango tree stands
tall

proud about the fruits
last harvest

now is the rainy day
and fungus start growing
on its bark

then the falls
for the dying season
start to fall

i watch some of them
falling
as the wind begins
to blow stronger

there is this leaf
that falls flip flopping
carried by the wind
to the other side of the fence

and i can't help but
begin to think
about you too

RIC S. BASTASA
The Leaves Of This Tree Speak To The Top Of Their Voices As Clouds Drift Dumb And Deaf.

i do not
wonder why jason
likes a
bukowski goldfish

his smile is
not the smile of
henry's mother

i guess he is
a happy and contented
cow with all the grasses
spreading on the
backyard of his own
house

something creep
within me and i now wonder
why a man like jason
would like a bukowski goldfish

never mind
i give him the benefit of the doubt
that his life is not miserable
that he did not have a battered mother
that he once had a happy childhood
that he did not have a father
whom he could hate throughout his life
and whom he could have wished
he killed himself

i lied
i wonder why he liked a bukowski goldfish

i know his mother and father
and i have a copy of his
mental state

all eyes gaze on emptiness
as life goes on
with jason and the bukowski goldfish

poetry has roots
and the leaves of this tree
speak
to the top of their voices
as clouds drift
dumb and deaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Left And The Right

the left and the right
they learn to co-exist
numbers and words
poetry and prose
mediocrity and seriousness
money and love
passions and reservations
the flowers and the bees
i am making a balance
of the yin and the yang
the crowd and solitude
heaven and hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lemon

there is no alcohol in
my lemon juice
if you are sensitive enough
you could have noticed
that this poem
is sour

there is nothing that
levitates in here

nothing drifts
there is no image of a leaf
floating in air

it is trying to refresh
the heart of summer
trying to recall the flowers
all wilting
along the paths of
dead desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lesbian Couple

four years
they have been together
in one house
and they mingle socially
in the neighborhood
without much
ado.

life is an experiment
love is the answer
could be the motto
of the two

i have suspicions sometimes
one has the money and the other doesn't have any.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lesbian Philosophy Teacher

i guess it does not really matter
whether she is a lesbian or not
at the university she teaches
the philosophy of man and she
ticks, bites, slashes, and rubs
our minds with the sharp knife
of her understanding as to
who we are, what we are and
what we are apt to
this becoming of being crawls
from her very tongue
the one that she uses to make love
love, to make love work
in an age of hatred and war
her fingers are gentle and i know
how they are used to make
her lover feel the love that much
often real men deny her
outside the doors of the university
she lets out smoke
and somehow she exits regrets
that pleasure and its extremes
can be obtained not inside the book
at the libraries of this world
but in the intimacies inside her
locked room with someone
whose name she cannot even
reveal for fear of reprisals
she has to earn her bread to live
and at the same time
make her life a secret rose
a tight bud, a falling leaf
a twisted twig, a hidden island.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lesson Learned

i have traveled so far
away

but i dare not ask myself
why

what am i looking for?

i know what i lack
i have mastered so well what i need

i have drawn in my heart
what may satisfy me and make me silent

i can grab it from you
and from someone else

but what is the use?

i have traveled so far
communed with the hills
rushed with the rivers
and make ends with the sea

i have come back to tell you that
i am humbled

by what i have done
the past has told me what i must hear

and so here i am
giving up what i need
saying
i do not need anything

i have volunteered myself
for more sacrifices

and my heart is teaching me
what real wisdom is

it is not getting what i want
it is giving
what i can...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Letter M For M.

all letters to me
when i was that smart and strong
and adventurous
are the same, not even meant to be
read, i mean, some letters
are but objects of another sound
all sounding monotonous,
until i met you, the letter m
too small at first had
become capitalized for me
day and night,
perhaps even for the last days
of my life, a secret which
you and i only
know, inside a word the letter
m becomes a divine thing,
occupying the seat of god,
and i let it be,
i flow with it, tasting its
delicate flavor, which i only
keep to myself with you.

too late for me to think
that you are destroying me
without malice, or
intent, and so i set it aside
for a while
for me to escape from the dungeon
of illusion.

i have to choose between the
depth blue sea and the devil,
and i perfectly understand it,
and i do not utter a syllable
or a word, to clear my mind
from you,

your helplessness is my liability.
my education has become my
Achilles' heel
but i made an oath,
i shall not be taken away
i shall not be overwhelmed with love
and its mistakes
i keep my tongue.

you are the sky,
i must remain on earth.
let this division be
clear
there shall be no
ocean in between.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Letter Y

thy letter y is messy
y is smelly
fishy

y?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Liars....

those who lied
you know
can never face the light
arriving

instead of seeing well
they get blinded...

=================================
kadton mga bakakon
sayod ka
dili gayod kaharong sa
moabot nga
kahayag

imbis makakita
mabutaan...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Liberating Truth...

to write the truth
takes a lot of courage

could be that you dance
naked on the dance floor
before the drunkards and
the killer and rapist gang

so you try to write something
nearer to it, in exchange for
self-esteem or fulfillment
as mandated by the gods

the truth is harsh, much worse,
hurting, but it can be told in
the most artistic way, to make
it sweet sounding, a little melody
a little shade, brighter hues,
with all the metaphors of sunshine
and showers of July rain....

at night you are at this ritual again
staring at the ceiling wishing there
are stars, trying to figure out
the right map towards your liberation.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lie Or The Truth?

she'd rather have the lie
that makes her live
even for a moment
than have a truth
that kills....

life is still beautiful
she preaches

and whether you like it or not
that is a big lie....

take it,
you have no choice

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lie....

i steal
a look at you
that is all that i have
done
against you

love has spoken
i remain
as silent
as
a turtle
on
those pebbles

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lies That We Silently Preach

brace yourself
to all these lies
for in the next room
at the next door
and at the next window
and at the next open porch after all
these lies
may be truths
and you are no longer willing to believe them because they too know how to hurt you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lies That You Must Keep On Telling

if i were you
since you really love
her that much
do not tell the truth

do not hurt her with
your truth
keep the lie alive
to make her happy

if i were you
caught in the act of betrayal
i should have told her
i thought it was you
i really thought it was you

forgive my indiscretion
tell her,
it was me who was seduced
i never kissed her
she kissed me

and since she loves you still
she delights upon your lies
and imagines all her life
that it was the fault of the
other woman

(whom you love much truly
than the fat, ugly one)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lies We Make When We Lie For A Night Together

seeing you makes me full
and i am reminded of my utter helplessness in my emptiness
and then i long to touch you
and be with you for the whole of my short lifetime
i put my trust in my blind fingers
i shut my light out
i betrayed my eyes
i have flowed with my heart but this will only be for a while
a day perhaps or just a night
for i too, know how to wake up and then be wise
i may call you love and deny myself that wisdom
but i know where i stand and where i hide and where i die
and where i live

as i know hellos i also learned a lot from those goodbyes
so lie with me

i have no words for now
lie with me

when you speak i put my ring finger to your lips
i bid you
say no more lies for me

i understand how a night can be a gem
how it can be fake

i tell you i know what food is good for me
what is delicious and what kills me

come lie with me only for tonight
tomorrow morning
please don't bother
same with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Life Of A Thinker

you do not know how is it to live as a thinker
literature has portrayed an old man to this art
long white beard, silver hair unkempt
baths sacrificed for the constant write
hands on the paper before him
dawn and night and day
nothing matters really now except those thoughts
heaps and heaps of books and files of papers abounding
the room and wall practically all not just pulp
but binders and paper clips as well

outside him the world changes
seasons keep on changing
light and darkness exchanged vows
the journey is about to end

he knows where he is
a place where time is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Life Of Poets

the poet
finally lost his
job
the price of oil
went low
another one had
to quit his
post
the working conditions
have become
unbearable

ars poetica
what now?

spread your
wings
save them

fly higher
save us

another poet
dies in gruesome
murder
shot by the
bullets paid by
him
with this government

those who know
the ways of the
fox
still sing with the
Crown

black and white
meek and scheming
just like everyone
else

poems scatter.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Life Of The Christian.....

in real life
what we say is
what it is, there

is simply no plan
to a song or order
since we have no
control about how
reality moves and
where it is going,

this is the place
where we cannot say
no, or if you say yes,
or whatever, for it
does not really matter,

things happen, and you
sometimes do not like
it, so you mourn, you
scream, you drop on the
ground and cry, others

who have already
adjusted themselves to
the songs of life
simply live, and live
and live, and live

they wish to die but
just can't...

a few have entrusted
their fate to faith
sailed on their lives
and look happy, just,
that, just that.
The Life Of Touch And Go....

this is a random way
of living
like the way you write a poem
upon a
constricted frame of mind
when time is
raw and thin like an
expensive salmon sashimi
upon a platter of white
fragile
porcelain from nagasaki

this is touch and go
this is the rule of harshness
the law is the law
no matter how harsh the circumstances
have become

when you look at the lines again
some words are misspelled
but there is no more time
and you let that stay

this is the random way of
living
let the wrongs live for themselves
if they grow then they grow

you have a journey to fulfill
and the road is as endless as a number
leave the dead behind
let them bury themselves
let those who know you forget
leave the world
it is here and it was here even before
you have become another seed

go my friend, sail on,
another boat is waiting
The Life That's More Real ... Here It's ....

before you arrive there
on that valley
you think that everything will be smooth
no creases, no cuts,
nothing about dirty paths
or gardens of silence
fruitless trees, brown grasses
waterless spots,
no dew
at dawn

one who is real somehow begins to
accept
all these: expectations tumbling down
a life drawn with crooked lines
people are nothing but shadows without faces
hopes smothered like crumpled babies
a life that you never once imagined
papers burning themselves
poems that scream instead
of sing
birds that crawl
though gifted with complete wings
a twisted world
a dusty room
books without pages
toothless stairs
Styrofoam rails
paths with pebbles
and thorns
roses that wilt as buds

the people that you trust
and love
they all lied.
The Life We Still Live....

you know very well that when i betray you
i also kill myself,
so why should i do it?

i still like to live
the live we have.

somehow i will test the deep waters
not with my two feet.
i have not declared myself
foolish like the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Life You Live....... 

a poem can 
simply be 
descriptive 

fog and mountains 
and trails 
and rain and 
grasses and 
some spotted cows 
inside those 
fences 

life, our lives, 
in simplicity, 
can also be just 
descriptive 

nothing to do much 
to change it 
nothing much to be 
done to 
make it great 
hoping that 
statutes be erected 
so that we can 
be remembered 
from here to perhaps 
eternity 

which is not really 
the case, a sad truth 
which most kings 
and gods 
cannot accept, 

you live as 
a spectator only 
writing what 
you felt and
saw
nothing about
any judgments at
all

you have become
a phenomenologist
in your own right
a matter of
passive philosophizing
until you reach the
ending part of your
life

not having known
yourself
not having known who
you really are
and what you are
supposed to do
who created you
what meaning is there
what purpose to serve
what mission to
accomplish

well, nothing is wasted.
no one really knows
what is best
what is true
what is good

in the safest place
of your home
those who live
shall bury you....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light At The End Of The Tunnel....

to each his own
light
its own tunnel
its own
end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light From The Shutters....

do not say a word
write it.

do not disturb the silence
of the corridors

when light comes in trickles
from the shutters of your window

stand still.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light House Stands Tall In An Island

to storms
that we can do nothing about
the light house
stands proud
tall and unchallenged
on a beacon of
light
it tells the world

the storms have not
bent my light
the mists are not enough
to conceal it
when i save lives
and ships
no one owes
to thank
me

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light Of The Star Embedded Deep In My Mind

its flicker
magical
it sings
a star sings
inside my mind
embedded
a star
like the flicker of the
mind
sparks of thoughts
ideas of
the mind
flickering
thinking star inside
the mind
embedded singing
star of the minds
thought sparkling
sparks kindling
the mind flickering
star thinking of the
mind inside
embedded singing
star sparkling
flicker
sparks of the mind
thoughts
so alive
open fire
fire open in the sparks
of the mind
embedded star

all mixed up
chant chant
coming back
sparks light
star singing
The Light That He Was Talking About

IT takes me months
to realize that
it was him who saw the
light,

HE stayed inside
the cubicles of his wisdom
I strayed
from the doors of my
prison
I chose to become a blue
butterfly
fluttering my blue wings
in the garden
of love (and lust as he sees
it)
I have chosen
a short span,
this perceived quality
of a life
well lived
in the beauty of my errors,
my truths,
my altruistic feeling that i have done
what i must do

They that command me
have found
the uselessness of their
mandatory lists
of what not
what ifs
what musts.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Light Without A Switch Off

one best thing is this:
we write from the bottom of our hearts,
guessing that perhaps this is what others feel too.

we simply describe our state of mind,
in the most simple way understandable by that common man on the street

a fish vendor if he reads that we are feeling like rotten fish
if you tell him, how rotten fish smells and what a wasted feeling is
it when it is there unsold

look at his face? make him understand that we are all vendors of
our feelings, that our feelings sometimes do not sell,
he will understand that,

everything is classified as a commercial act
writing, speaking, wooing,
what a humiliation of what we really are
hawkers of beliefs, ambulant chasers of emotions

what a demeaning purpose,
this must stop, it is not real, it is a prostitution of our
faith,

we write from the bottom of our hearts
and you feel it, that is why you are following the sounds of drums
at the center of the island

where we grow a bonfire, where smoke rises to the sky
where evenings become so lighted, where dance assumes true meaning

our shadows are pure, our bodies own them
and the moon at night makes them all alive

you are telling me that this fire is invisible
and it has not switch for you to put it off.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lighter Side Of Life

do you still remember chasing the bagel
up and down the city street? You were so light
with that red umbrella and you have become
another Mary Poppins flying with the wind

hope you can still recall going inside a room
and then seeing a vase of red roses
early morning against a cathedral window
which let in the spectrum of light
as though they are the shades of your
dreams fulfilled?

It is bliss. Nothing about money or career.
It is the appearance of lightheartedness.
The lightness of being which elevates us
to the category of fog, or cloud drifting
and staying for a while on top of a cliff
overlooking some cars speeding up upon
a road still wet with the morning rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lighter Side Of Things

it happens
when there are no attachments
when you sleep in a room
and you leave
early morning
you leave a trace of the scent
of your body
and you pack all your things again
you walk fast
to another destination
you think of other things
those that do not sink you
nothing metallic
at all
just the soft cotton side of life
a feather
thin air on the mountain top
distant little towns below
and the wide sea at the horizon
clouds hover
fog reside temporarily
mists come
and everything just leaves away
when the sun
gets in over the shutters of your window
you dabble on
a far sighted view
these things
do not settle you
you float on them
on the wings of the winds
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lightness Of Being...

unloading,
this is the plan
book-less is the bookworm
in school empty handed
she wants to be as light
as a spider's web
as slick and thin as
the tick's feet
sliding on one of the bristles
of the Persian carpet

unloading
she slips through the crowd
in anonymity
one grain of sand
in the shores
of the common man

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lightness Of The Useless Wings....

a butterfly
what for you ask?
something
that you cannot
fry
and eat
what use is this
fluttering
soul?
these fragile wings
this
floater?

find the value of
something
when you do nothing
but just watch

write that feeling.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Likeness.....

THE MIRROR
limits what we are
there is no shadow
behind us
only the face and the likeness
of it
flat and staring
and clear.

THERE IS
another face at the back of our mind
opaque
silent
and deep
seated sockets
and wavy eyelashes
and well kept hair
and smooth skin
and glowing

WE HAVE NOT
seen much of it

But we shall always feel it
yes,
at the back of our minds
wanting
to find us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lily In Your Mind (For Susan)

be thankful that it was quick
love suddenly skinned out from your bosom
like a vaccine injection
and then you realize everything is gone
like a wink and then
what you see is an empty room a bed without a shadow
of a man against the moon on an open window

i do not send flowers nor cards
they cannot help drown the grief

i leave you alone with the memories of the lilies
white lilies and soft winds caressing your hair one night

sleep now Susan, dream some more, do not wake up early
tomorrow comes and you must know another name

soon.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Limbo

i see her
putting the left side of her face
flat on the working table

she must have been tire of life
but i cannot blame her

or she may just have been trying to
recover the pieces of her lost self

which i may admire like the way how
broken people pick up the pieces and

assemble a new courageous self ready
for the next morning of their lives

and i see her
with closed eyes in the middle of the rush hours
lost in sleep

and no one minds, or if they notice, they
care by just ignoring what is this all about

i leave the place where she is asleep
i do not want to be there again, that old self

weary of its own cares, once unable to move on
awakened by shock, and finally regaining hold

for life is meant to be lived, never
sleep, never let this limbo take what you are not.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Limitations Of The Body...

sometimes i forget that i have a body

it is only when i eat that i remember i have one
but most of the times

i am full and so i almost forget all about this body
i am feeding it with wrong things

ideas, more ideas,
i am covering it with mysteries that it cannot relate because
a body is just a body
earthly, mundane
clay,
stick, creepy
skin, hair
sunken eyes,
trembling hands

it is flesh, bones, cartilages,
and

nerves, and when all these nerves take revenge on me
i shall finally lose this body
which i welcome somehow
because i have not experienced it yet fully

i live in the mind,
my castle is in my imagination,
and i eat nothing for the day
but words
and i drink nothing for the day but ink
and i touch nothing for the day
but keys

the body is forgotten and so are my chains,
my prisons, my
dark rooms,
my body, this fetter,
this
ball and chain that hold me
in hunger and pain and
thirst and
constant urination,
disturbing
defecation

sometimes i like to become nothing but air
so you cannot see me anymore so i can go places and be lost forever

because i am not this body,
and i do not want to be caught in here
a little longer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lingering Concerns

some books open up
and show their pages
like tongues
and you watch them
as you begin
to salivate like a
mad dog,
there is nothing new in
there
except the ears and the
words that dissolve too
in a distance
those that you like to go
back again
and grapple with
or perhaps even embrace
and shed tears again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Literal Pain

with due respect to
poetry
let me set aside
you,
to the comfort of
your rhyme,
let me try prose this
time
so i can make my point
clear,
dearly beloved,
let me confess to you
my enduring
pains, my inviolate
resolve
to go away far from
all that is
sweet and adorable,
let me bleed this time
in the most
accurate description
of a narrative
dearly beloved,
now you must
understand that pain
is not
a metaphor,
it is literal,
it is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Bird That Was Eaten By The Hungry Cat

it is alright now
you feel freedom too
in such a very
short,
delicate moment
setting a little bird
free
from the hold of your
hands

it is hopping still
unable to fly and from such short distance
between you
and it
you see this hungry cat
snapping it
from the grass
taking its lifeless body
towards
the alley

you regret
you have miscalculated the
need for freedom

by analogy
you have miscalculated
you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Black Bird And The Wooden Railing

it is a black bird with a shade of red
on its upper wing
that perches on the wooden beam
cracking under the sun
last summer

below the beam are the tall reeds
i forget whether it was the black bird
or the tall reeds
which was singing

but i am sure i heard a song
so sad like a dying note from the throat
of a mad man.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Black Bird: A Poem For The Other Woman

the little black bird
go home in a cave
just below her belly
between
her legs

it sings about love
that she always kills
for nothing

before midnight the
blackbird flies
seeking the warmth
of other blackbirds
it is cold and
dying
in her keeping

now she sings alone
like a blackbird
cursing
the trees and the flowers

she wants to disown the
blackbird
in exchange for the
earthworm

she likes it that way
wriggling
without any feet at all
pointed and
penetrating

the curse continues
it can never be hers
and the blackbird
keeps coming back
mocking her like
an old man

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Blue Bird

do not feel
the importance of you
hands,
the blue bird has always
ready wings
to fly on the right season
you may think
that it cannot survive

you are wrong
the wings know where their home is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Boy And The Father

the little boy cannot understand
why papa is not buying him toys,

when he grows up
he will ask his papa where did he really come from

was it from the slit of the giant bamboo?
he will not cry
he had knows suffering since then

soon he will doubt what fathers are
whether his papa comes from the womb of a boar
because he had been so cruel

time fills the gaps
assures that the wrongs are forgivable

a man rises from the head of the little boy
all questions are wilted flowers for soon he shall start his own
journey with another woman

to his mind he will never be like that man from the womb of the boar
and he will have his own images, his children and kin

the cycle repeats itself
there will be little boys who will doubt where their papas come from
and they will utter the word boars in their hearts

and papas die and memories crawl like vines looking for water
and the world shall weep and soon shall be keen observing
what silence had been
what screams are
whose faces are scarred
whose limbs survive

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Boy In My Hometown

a little boy
finds the house too crowded

his father beats his
mother in the kitchen
where fish is
grilled

his sisters pull each
other's hair
in the living room
where he wants
to read

his brother breaks the
chair and throws plates
over the window
when no money is
given

it is like the house
is always on fire
and there is not even
a pail of water

and so the little boy
wants to run away

but there is no other
place
as the town is also
too crowded for itself

people are shouting
and beating each other

the park is neither
a peaceful place to
stay as bullies too
overcrowd there

and so the little boy
climbs a tree and
finally
finds a very cool place
to pray.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Brown Boy From Luyuran

he is the eldest of four
age is 7
he quit school

his mother is a
drunkard and
lives with another
man in the village

his father is
killed by the
lover of her mother

that early morning
four of them
are fetched to live
with his grandma

they buried his father
and his mother
is nowhere to be found

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Brown Girl In Estaka

as early as
six a.m.
this little girl who stays in the house of
a stranger
faraway from her family

as she eats her morning porridge
when a fly perhaps too hungry like her
landed on the hot and moist
side of the
plate and the only conclusion she
arrives at is:

this fly also wants to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Cycle Of The Flower And The Caterpillar

the flower may curse
the caterpillar at first glance
consuming its leaves
greedily
rushing for the next stage
of its life

then the silence of the cocoon
where the flower
doubts

and then the excitement
of the birth
of the yellow butterfly

the hope of the flower
and when
the flying begins
the flower unfolds
blooms

and the consortium begins
the nectar flows

and the flower
turns into another fruit
back
to its seed form
as the butterfly
nears its span
like a glimpse

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Girl In The Middle Of The River

she is looking at us
passing by the river
she has no fear

she is attuned
to her mother's beatings
her father's fists

that little girl in the middle of the river
stares at us
simply passing by on a wooden boat

she does not know what sympathy is
or even pity
she does not know what happens when
finally she jumps from the raft
to the depths of the river

she does not know what death is
where she will go

she does not call for help
even in pain
she does not know what it is to call for help

we never taught her
what sympathy is
what help is

we just left her as she stares at us
and we merely passed by her

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Girl With Curly Hair

there is this little girl with black curly hair
flat nose, thin eyelashes, wavy goatish eyelids,
sitting on a bamboo pole
(the common furniture there)
with bare hands and bare feet
staring at me,
for I am new here and I have a big tummy
and I am white skinned, and I have candied
inside my pockets, she knows that soon
I will throw all these candies in the air
for all the other children

but there is something strange about this
little brown girl with curly hair sitting all alone
on that bamboo chair

her father and mother were killed in the last rebellion.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Girls On The Road Waiting For The Bus To Bring Them To School

on their green uniforms
and red hats
to what shall i compare
them three
to be like?

i remember my wife's nasturtiums. Very pretty.
their smiles
like the tiny leaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Shy Grass Along Your Path

the little shy grass along the path
the one with thorns and hairy leaves

stepped upon by the hoofs of cows
and carabaos and goats and pigs

has taken the patience and courage
to grow three red flowers on its branch

as i see them bloom under the hot sun
the shy little grass has a word for you:

the three lovely red flowers are for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Talk

it is the lull
of the night
that little talk
about
a silly thing

nothing heavy
everything light
and senseless
	night passes us by
we are its little
things
its tiny thoughts

we too are the
passers-by
the night our
silly friend

RIC S. BASTASA
The Little Things That Make My Teeth Clean

Of course, the champion is the toothpick
Always the wooden, bamboo toothpick
Or could be the fine dental floss
But I always need a mirror to use that
And eventually I find it more expensive
And time consuming

And then I can have a little twig
Of guava,
I like the odor and I have the
Last chew and
Oh my
I can chew the same and swallow

But without the toothpick or the floss
And when I am in a bus and there is
No guava tree

I simply have my tongue and the
Nail helping it to get rid

Of
You know what.

Life is like that.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Littly Irony About Love

he always keeps the line
bold and drawn between their
two intimate bodies
no matter how near there is always
kept the distance of
a certain space that gives him
the comfort of his
own mystery in this anonymity
of feelings like
some cover of a nut that is hard
and thick
the other knows this of course
but keeps his mouth shut
she likes it that way
the mystery of love dressed in husks
and shell
hard so hard outside but soft and
meaty inside
milky when grated and squeezed
like coconut

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lizard

there is this friendship
between this lizard
and me,
one day it lands on my nape
and crawls on its cold
tiny feet on my nape
to my head and
stays as my watcher
on my hair
and then i slept so tight
forgetting about
everything sad
and depressing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loan

what you do is always a form of a loan
after a certain time
the collector comes and reminds you
of the capital and the interest
and the corresponding penalties
for every delay,

if you do well enough
you shall get all the incentives
and the loan shall even be forgotten
and if there be penalties
the same are condoned.

what you are is a capital
your body is the medium, the bridge where you walk upon

time is of the essence
to all these transactions
to some extent there will always be
unfinished businesses

but the owner of the sky and the mountains & the seas
the owner of your body
and your soul
knows everything

he tells you
time is up
then
he lets you see
a candle that is about to consume its wax
the fading light

and then the darkness that you have been
familiarized with

but do not lose hope
the end of the tunnel is true
the light at the end
is never false.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Logical And Relevant Professor

How can you explain
The sure serenity of a silent shadow,
The malevolence of maleness
The expenses of expectations
The fairness of pain?

We think of those hidden in
White winters, and those appearing
Blueness in blue skies, or just
Plain jealousy of the seasons,
Strummed and stung
by reason dung

We blow all those soap bubbles
Off to the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lone Dissenter

he stands firm
his mouth is an inch away from the microphone
his words of dissent
reach the roof
and he sees pigeons
free from their cages
he wants to tell them all about
these white birds
but the audience whose faces are serious
like lockers
only see bats and crows
the lights went off
and he finds himself all alone in the silence of his darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loneliness Amidst Everyone...

at night he comes home
he is sleepy driving his car
the classical music on

somehow the angels set him
away from malignant collisions
he has more things to do
ah, these unfinished businesses

when he arrives home
as usual he is alone
and feels like is simply dramatizing
his unique situation

alone in the middle of
everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loneliness In You...

a lonely soul
speaks
the sweetest

like a bird
that you trapped
with the sap
of the jack fruit tree

now caged
inside your
mind

so must you
sing now

shy away from prose
onward

the language of the music of
your soul

how lonely must it be
but how sweetest

so must you speak no more
about
where you are
and when and
why

you are what you are now
oh! lonely self

speaking with the silence of
the deepest ocean

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loneliness Of A Fisherman Of Ideas....

you fish at night
the moon is fading

it is when the night
is so dark
that you see the realities
of fish

squids having neon lights
around its body
a school of fish
appears like a diamond
city

you fish alone
in the deepest part of the ocean
where all the stars
have all gone into hiding

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loneliness Of A Homecoming

the man older than me
(by 20 years) writes about his
going back home
(after 30 years of working
in the U.S.) AND he was
talking about
changes: the old house where he
spent his childhood
was demolished giving way to a new
mall,
the creek was reclaimed
for an italian restaurant

the park is still there
dotting with the younger generation
who cannot recognize him
neither him knowing them

he is a stranger now in his
hometown
all his friends are gone
some dead
some went away to find greener
pastures abroad

canada, new zealand
dubai, malaysia

others have gone underground
wanted rebels of the
system

he is practically alone now
perhaps regretting why he
came back

what made him do that?

he has no home now, he has no country,
no people.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loneliness Of The Untiring Writer

with equanimity i write for this audience,

deaf,
blind,
mute,

....imagine some monkeys and rats, and worms and squirrels

mute, blind, deaf,
i have no regret at all,

their hearts are bigger than the islands of paradise,
the mute claps with three hundred hands,
the blind sings with all the angelic voices in tens of hundreds
the deaf dances like some kind of a wiggling worm
vitally replicating its numbers geometrically

there is still this
wanting to be caught by a hungry
black bird

it is the silence of the mute that speaks so loudly
like a speaker of the house,

it is the restlessness of the deaf that shakes me,
and i tremble like a cymbal clanging ceaselessly

the chants of the blind, mystifies me,
scented cinders, lighted candles, fireflies on the trees

conclusion: we have become one happy family
and tonight, i will be writing some more for them

I've got no other valuable audience anyway.
and, let me finally add,
it is only my dead mother who still loves me.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
a man was sitting on the road
and this woman who is always the incurable churchgoer
passed by and the man asked her
why
what is in that church that attracts her
like a magnetic field

and she answered with an ironic twitch on her face
because i worship God and God is in that church

(Is God not everywhere? the man asked his heart and soul
but dared not to insult the woman
whose life is enclosed on those four walls and
old pillars

none of his business anyway but as he looked on the woman
who is not that old to still love he arrived at the conclusion that the
woman needed more love from
a lustful man than
her memorized prayers

but of course, it is none of his business for he is a lustful man
and lived in his silence and
loneliness too)

both are junctions and both have successfully traversed
their parting ways

sad world indeed, people not discovering the truths about
their longings

could have been perfect
but never.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Bird And I

my little bird
is still in its cage
for years
i never hear it tweet
a happy song

i know it has kept
that song for years
but i never ask
it to sing it for me

i like to set it free
but it has learned
to love its solitude
in the cage

birds from the fields
on early mornings
seduce it to come out
and fly with them
but it is loyal to my
company

i have not asked it
about any desire for
freedom
sometimes i tell it
something about the
blue sky and the
fresh wind
and the beauty of some
far places
that i have been
to

there were many times
when i left it alone

and when i come back
it does not say anything
about loneliness
at all

when i think that it must
be dead
it stretches its wings
rebutting my theory
that it is possibly
a dead resurrected

for indeed it is alive
and in loneliness
have learned to thrive

it taunts me sometimes
that we have so many things
in common
but it kept things the
way they should be

always in secrecy
always with self-respect
about our own self-inflicted
choices
about our honest acceptance
of who we are
and of what have we become

you ask me about loneliness
and i have all the answers
but try asking my bird about it
it still remains in its chosen
field of
dignified silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Black Bird In The Crowded City

in the crowded
city there is always a
lonely black bird
which has no place
to land on and
so it keeps flying

ultimately making all
its wings strong and
then it accepts the fact
that its house is
the air
its only friend no one
and nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Cat By The Sofa

A white cat with blue eyes
lays its head on the arm of the sofa

it is a sunny day again and it has not smelled something fishy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Heart.....

the heart is a lady
in the forest lost and guided
with nothing but the faint light
of the moon
it finally finds its way towards
home with no one
but the coldness of the floor
again
at the close of darkness
a ray of light lands
upon her skin

dry as a desert
lonelier than the sands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Hearts Club Of Ibsen

i do not like it
it is barbaric
words are becoming acidic
full of tricks
and such a maverick

for years survival
stuck
at Innsbruck they
all got
starstruck

such a huge truck
and the bric-a-brac
covering much track
and the whole block

oh we are here
not liking everything
lonely even in the
Spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Man

he finished reading a poem
by frost
sips his coffee
and looks to the sea
from his window
inside a room
with a locked door

alone
in order to forget
he begins to caress himself

he begins to do
what he does
with his own
flesh

his imagination
must save him
from the wrath
of his
failure, his guilt
his sin.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Man...

he stands at the fourth floor
all the walls are made of glass
and he can see the people going in
and out of the mall
he is alone now and the other people here
already left
it is 5:30 in the afternoon and
the sky is getting dimmer
he is comforted by this idea
that life is too short
and those who enrich themselves
always at the expense of the
gullible and the
ignorant
raking money from those
stupid believers
should never be envied

he must go out from this enclosure
walk his way towards home
where everyone is happily waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Moon

one night
the moon sits on
the clear pond
and sees
how beautiful she is
shining like
a mother pearl

she begins to sing
with the wind
and that night
the moon was never
lonely ever again.

alone perhaps
but so lovely!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Poet

again i tell myself
if i have one reader left
though ugly and
old
i must write the poem
still...

RIC S. BASTASA
a lonely professor of law
has cracked lips for lack of a kiss
does nobody love him?
no ugly girl in class? no hooker in town?
travel somewhere and pay
love, disregard emotions, and say
what's love got to do with
need?

he is an expert in his field
well admired in fact
respected and
idolized
what they do not know
is his state of lifelessness
a new word
for being another lonely stranger
in this unruly crowd

must he find a home? a wife waiting?
kids laughing? a garden of green grass and
a scene of mowing
and replanting flowers
after a cold
winter
far from it
there is no home even
no dog by the door
no cat by the window
there are no cups and saucers
for a coffee moment
with someone else
in a room filled with books
and notes

in such a way that the writing
of a diary is
completely forgotten
or that unfinished poem that
he once started to scribble
no way can he finish it
the theme is love
and he has no more trust on that word
it hurt him so
from the very beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Room

to give me company
i look for a friendly word
because there is no one
somehow
available here
someone
even to be present
with not
even talk

i choose a vowel
something that can give me a sound
to put a little
presence in this room

the O comes
then the Y
and then
U, which i try to spell
as You
but then i have already forgotten
how you sound to me

it's been years
and my memory has failed me
and then
i had nothing but
Me

it is enough
i am at home now with all the consonants
in this
room which has already forgotten
the joys of
sound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Woman And The Man Who Predicted His Own Death

The lonely woman
took a liter of costly perfumed oil
made from genuine aromatic nard

and anointed his feet and
dried them with her hair;
the house was filled
with the fragrance of the oil

If you are with me
Then you will know at once
who the woman was
for whom
we identify our own
loneliness
who the man was
who died for all of us
nailed feet
bloodied hair

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lonely Woman And The Sea

tonight the lonely woman sits beside the sea again
her feet are too small and her hands too gentle
she speaks about what is missing and she recalls what she cannot find
she likes the song of the empty shells
the hermit crabs are too clumsy for her
her hair falls on the rocks and she begins to shed some tears

the sea keeps on waving, signalling as though sending the message
' please don't i have so much salt inside my belly'
but the lonely woman keeps on crying and she cannot be stopped
the sea is mute and the lonely woman is deaf

the tree says they make a good pair and someone says further
they can, who knows, without a hitch, live happily ever after

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loner

she smiles
when provoked
when she is angry
she seeks a
corner
where her mind
cannot speak
when she loves
she keeps it
when she dies
she prefers
not to be buried
but just to be
cremated
she is as silent
as her ashes
on her
final departure
she owns the earth
spreads
far and wide
to the ocean
to the trees
to all the hearts of
beings
she is not
a stranger
anymore
she speaks now
truly
for you
and me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Long And Winding Road

we were there on those long and winding roads
i got dizzy
and you talk about them
like you talk about a love that is still to come
a tryst, a night designed for love,
a honeymoon, after a woo, a worship,

honestly, i do not love these long and winding roads,
i get dizzy all the time,
why should roads be long and winding
who ever fixed it that way? who ever ruled the earth
with long and winding roads

why can't roads be straight like the way we long
and look at the sky?
i like bridges, those long and straight ones,
my gaze is fixed, my travel determined,
you drive the car, and i sleep all through our journey.
now, i don't get dizzy at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Long Journey Into A Recalling

actually
he did not choose to be here

he was told
he was thrown here
when he was a baby
when he had no sense at
all
about time and place
and people

just like everyone here
with a mind of their own
as they grow older
they begin to entertain questions
handed to them
by grief
and confusion

it was confusion
that made them think
it was grief that
ask them what happiness
is and how
illusive it seems

time gives them
those philosophical robes
that remain wet
with rain

someone who has outlived
all these quibbling
closed his mouth
and took the journey
with all calm

it is the silence that
after all
give them wisdom

it is the peace within
that pacified their storms

then they claim they
understand that they are not supposed
to be gnats
in the world of carcasses

that they should walk peacefully
and look at the stars
at night when they take their
temporary rests
on this still long
journey

into that longing about what once
was there
but they cannot
completely remember

RIC S. BASTASA
The Longings Of My Tongue

I promised my eyes
that i will love them all

like the way i cared
for the longings of
my tongue

i have given them all but bags
of burdens

sore to the mirror of my
morning

tryst to myself and to myself

what revenge shall they
give me?

ah, this blindness to what is
near to my touch
to what is pleasing
but so distant

what i touch is rough and ugly
far from what
i imagine things to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Look Of Hatred And The Innocent Man

he gazed at all the eyes
that gazed on him inside
that smoky room

there was one eye which
looked at him with the gentleness
of the man of compassion

he knew it
as it was devoid of
the usual cruelty
that all of them inflicted
upon his
innocence.

he knew it
because it was fake
in fact in truth
it was made of marble

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loopholes Of Our Laws

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lord God Has Given Me A Well-Trained Tongue, That I Might Know How To Speak To The Weary A Word That Will Rouse Them.

even after all the years
tongues from the skies of blue
skies of clear waters
tiny lights hanging
like fireflies on the trees
in multitudes

drips of light hovering
resting on the hair of my head
unlike the disciples
i do not speak
those tongues
i only write them
from here
where i sit
miles and miles away from you
i, trying to make
a connection
to
you, empty hands to empty hands
in space
we have never all meet
but we are beginning to understand
the wisdom of interlinks
that fence that separates my house
from your house
where a morning glory
climbs, hold on with her
roots
reaches to a sky
with its tendrils
and greets you
with the sweetest petal of
a very simple
hello
The Loser

the loser is ruled
by anger
it is licking the blood
oozing from its
wounds
it is like a dog
yelping
but there is no
master around
to help it
it is looking for a house
but it is far
the loser looks at
you now
as its enemy
it refuses any memory
of you
it rests under a big rock
taking the shelter
of the shadows
of its past.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loss Of Contact

without contact
there is no flare

no electricity for
months
and you scream

that you will be
dead soon

it is like night
without moon & stars

like a dried river bank
all bare stones

an abandoned well
waters stinking

veins without blood
cracked lips without

clue of water without
gloss and shine

talk to me
if this is all about sex.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lost Dog..

the dog was lost last night
the houseboy made the search
and found it
in the town cemetery

we understand why.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lost Meanings...

two nights dance
to their lustful ways
each step
a miscalculation of
happiness

morning has its cup
of coffee
spilled on the sands

the hammock rocks
to and fro to such a
monotonous direction

meanwhile the sun shines
faithfully
both to the drunk and
the sober
the praying mantis and
its prey
those who are still asleep
for those
lost meanings

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lost Mothers...

not all mothers nurture
some have also lost their kind ways
their children neglected
others given away

nature has a way of creating
deviant mothers
those who prefer their men
rather than their children

those that slap innocence
those that sell those buds of beauty
before they ever bloom
those that lead them to perdition

but just the same
all are forgotten and forgiven
mothers too commit mistakes
humans as they are
too like everyone

happy mothers' day just the same
from your faithful and forgiving children

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lost Power Of The Rain

it has been with us
for so many years

despite its being there
we do not anymore mind

until remembering dies
we think it is lost

we do not desire finding
it back

we get homesick
we are dying

we miss it
but then it is no longer there

we pray it comes back
it won't

it has no more power
to become the rain again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lost Self Of Possibilities

I AM learning
mind you, to be alone,
it will take time,
and you too,
it will perhaps take a
little longer,

a poem helps me cope up
it has wings and claws

it can transform itself into
a landscape too

everything is possible here
and i am finally found.

RIC S. BASTASA
there were three of us in the room
you could not forget that Meryl look-alike
transvestite (who did not mind your coming) and
this oozing-sex-appeal bra-less (not brainless) law student
who was spongy on the
receptive mode of
a listener,

i sat on a bench wearing my black shirt from Singapore
(perhaps for want of a little sophistication
with the motive of making myself distinct from those
local brands)

this shallow conceit that is
tucking that book in Evidence
earmarked on the subject of judicial notice

you forgot obviously to comb your hair, but the plunging neckline
saved you from
the humiliation of neglect,
upon a little flair for
fashion and
taste but it was sheer honesty
(and i admire you for that)
when you finally declared that

you are lost.

whatever that means, figuratively or literally

i am telling you,
you are never alone in all these.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Angle....

wait,
conclude not
that early,

so much talk
crawled on the
grape vine

one says
its political
the other says
it was the
drug, the most
common
excuse

the manicurist
for whom we do not
give much importance,
lowly as her state
has presented
another angle:

the love triangle
still exists
he was murdered
by the husband
himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love In Your Eyes

the love in your eyes is blue, and so the world thought
that lovely eyes are blue,
we look at you with awe
your eyes are blue like the sea to the sky
boundless love borderless on any shore
spreading love like all the arms of mankind
opening to the heavens

soon, we shall meet each other
after the storms and deaths of many
thousands buried in mud and poverty

my eyes are black
mourning and shining with anger and tears
the eyes of the storms of these orient seas
find love in there
gaze at me with the blueness of your eyes
the blue sea the blue skies
they are all yours

you own them
my eyes are black
i am in those storms
how can you see me crying?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Lyrics Under The Shower

it may be nice
after a hard night
pouring all over the
papers
waking up in the morning
naked
going to the bathroom
and she is
there ahead
with the shower and she
sings
the lyrics
of love though you cannot
exactly figure
out the exact words
since you cannot
sing it yourself

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Of God

by his omnipotence
his love pervades my whole being

but there is nothing more godlike
that a human body touching hands

kissing lips tight arms around my body
bodies intertwined

eyes closed fluids mixing
sweat and saliva all ablaze in ecstasy

until both of us utter, Oh My God!
we rest and then in sweet darkness

we see the face of God
we feel his love complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Of Light....

upon the window of trees
i rest my weary eyes, the aches dissipate on the leaves
my forehead rests on the hands of the wind,
i lean upon the walls of this house
the comfort zone of the mind
the roof beats like a heart and opens its breast
to the soft touches of the clouds
happier in blue
and then the black birds come with the sweeter sounds
of the flapping of their wings
how happy is this state
of my soul
sitting upon the friendly bone of my body
the light of the sun
lands upon my hair
i am as always and will always be
its respecter and
friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Of Self...

i
always love
my own
scent

my own
dirt my own
spit

i too
must love my
own
defeats
my own short
comings
my broken
dreams
my dimming
years

it will
be a happy
ending
because it is
my own
ending....

the flowers
that wilted
in my garden

the stars
blocked by those
dark clouds

the river that
runs dry
and sun which
faded

ey are all mine
and i
do confirm i all
love them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Of The Fog

on top of the mountain
she sees how the fog loves
the breasts of the hills

all gently covered
tenderly at night till dawn
with the linens of
the white
fog.

RIC S. BASTASA
mankind has invented the love of the unknown.
unknown has no face. Or if it has, it is masked.
only the eyes can be viewed, and the one viewing it has no emotions.
it is honored. Loving the unknown is fame.
The mask is glorified.
One does not reveal
what love is, no one has it anyway.
the whole face is wrapped
the other stands without a heart
by the door.
the only sun there is the bulb
and shadows make their show.
Pity looks at you with pity.
This the hour for giving and forgiving.
You take a body, like you take God.
It is given with another cup of blood,
and then the ceremony begins.

at the end both are satisfied.
names are not called. The bulb is turned off.
The time for departure has come.

The rule is still: secrecy,
this is the meeting place of the mundane
and the divine,
the giver and the recipient,
respect and honor is there
leaving a door and then locking it forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Of The Work....

one who loves his work
like the way one wants to search the truth
never falls short of the excitement of the child
who still wonders
what dragonflies are made of

what if, the head is taken from the tail?
what if all the legs are pulled? what if what is left
is only the broken wing?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Poem...

the poet who
writes a love poem
cannot but be filled by
awe
when the woman
whom he does not know
thinks that the poem
is for her

miles apart
the poem is a
universe
in itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Scene

he goes behind her
kisses her neck and slides his hands under
she faces him
kisses his lips and pulls his body towards her
there she opens as he closes in
she is shut like the night as he appears like the glowing moon

there is rain
the leaves sing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love That I Do Not Deserve....

i want to link with you
in a manner that it would be metaphorical

well, we are completely not alike. The contrast
is beyond their understanding. Nail and jel.

button and mushroom.
electric eel to a percolator.

opera house and a cancer hospital.
comfort room and space lab.

we are too far. I am from pluto and you are
from venus.

i hate mosquitoes you live with them.
i love letters you like fritters.

but (i really like you and i feel so irrelevant
and i look at myself in the mirror and i begin to
hate myself. I will be another moron.

another jackal. Much like an ash after the
holocaust.

i want to have you but i vomit at the same time
at this thought.

i may close my eyes and for a while dream about
what i imagine you to be.

seeing you, i feel this stupidity.
but what can i do? i like you. and i am feeling
so helpless about it.

i'd hang my qualifications upon an onion tree.
kill myself with sugar and chocolates.

i told that kid, i will report you to your dad.
and then I shut up.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love That I Have For You....

outside i watch you

you are inside yourself
a room
a wall but there is window still
that allows light
to come in
and dress you like
a night without the armor

i am the light
and i like the way things are going with us
you just do not know
what is it
to be just light
without a body
what is it to have so many fingers
& yet
without a hand

the room is darker
but i know what it is to be a tiny sun

you fan yourself with your
innocence
your hands are callous
and it is a little bit colder
when by chance you touch my
rays and sheen

when i meet you
like i am water bathing your body

as i dress you once again
with the cloth
of my silk
soul
i quiver like a soft wind
on the reeds
of the moonlit night

i love it this way
this invisible presence
this nameless light
this desire that fulfills itself
without you
feeling it

must i be selfish?
or must i be the one that does not let you suffer
because you cannot love
light
because your coldness is uncertain about the gift
of warmth
its truth beyond all truths

when i am done with you
i summon the rain
& bathe myself again
to wash away
the dirt of guilt
the scars of pain
though
remaining

look at me
i am the morning light that spreads on the garden
of your thighs and
legs

as you watch
with all delight
you only see the wonder of light
and its accompanying music

and then
satisfied with all the caresses of thoughts that i have always loved you
i go with the herds of rain
and what is left to please me more
is your own
fading face
like those ripples on the pond
that the lonely leaf
had given

the shape of love that i carry with me
as air embracing the heavens
again....

RIC S. BASTASA
that old song
no matter how far
and faint
against the dying
light
in that afternoon
aftermath
is clearly heard
by the heart
that loves.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love That You Can Offer To The Broken Woman

you see this broken woman
outside the house outside the fence finally
under the noonday sun
she walks without an umbrella
looking forward to another day
on weary feet
she takes the path that carries her
to her freedom

i wrote a poem last night
and i knew she was able to read it
i did not see whether her hands tremble
but she asked me
if i have this kind of love to offer
to make her live to make her dream

she is free now and in truth
i do not really know what i have
everything i have is in the house
and there is a woman there
who owns the letters of my name
who keeps the key
to the door that is locked
and she says
i am chained there and she brags that i am
the willing victim

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love Unremovable

setting poetry aside,
let this poem state direct to the point
what it wants to convey,
it is all about you
(no names, nothing personal)

i hate loving you, but just the same, i am a fool
always loving you,

the heart is foolish
the mind is powerless
it keeps strength
at noon
steel but when the evening comes
when the rest leaves you
abandoned
it confesses upon the weakness of snow
melting flakes
surrendering to the love of your soil
self

hate you, love you, hate you, love you
crazy indeed
but what can i do
it is true. it is always true.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Love We Had Behind That Door One Sunday Afternoon

the love behind that door
one sunday afternoon when all of them were gone to church
we were silly and hot and
thrilled to the tempest of our flesh
the passions that burn like a wildfire in the camp
we closed the door
with our two bodies in fear
but the heat was even more
tempting we set aside
possibilities in hell
all we thought of was
heaven and the songs of angels

we banged the door together
we were afraid no more of consequences
we had thrown clothes and underwears
under the chairs
the world and its rules did not matter
we were making a stand of
teen-age love
the supple youth that must rule
the world of unfounded fears

what we remembered most
were the volcanoes
they all erupted and we closed our eyes
and the magma flowed
all the lava moved
all the fiery fires and sounds of
cracking pyroplastics
the sweet explosions in our ears

then we listened afterwards
the mellow songs of our hearts
we take our calm seats we hold our tired hands
and then the sunday door opened again
as though nothing important really happened
we assured ourselves by the mutual silent gazes of our eyes
the scented air came in
and we were refreshed again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Loveless Self...

behind you is the dark
the dark is also in front of you

there is a sound of the
bling bling and the blang blang

and the scenery of the
fling fling and the flong flong

you are confused
and you ask
what are all these?
these should have been understood
by you since
you are not deaf and blind

by all means you are healthy
and perfectly sound

your hands know how to grasp
steel and smooth and ready

all these must never be told
it will serve you right if they are not at all understood

(lest you will die laughing and say
that all these are nothing and do not
serve any purpose at all

all too trivial and do not deserve
the dignities of your responses)

these can never be understood
since no one owns you...

.... loveless self...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lovely Animation Of The Mouse....

oh look at you, so demanding.  
Firstly, the moral of the story is still the original  
.. the story was peaceful  
(as you can see from the background music)  
and the lion wasn't a 'softie'

you power hungry piece of crap.  
He was majestic and calm.  
As are most people who are truly secure of their power.

The animation style was beautiful and in it's own style,  
more natural.  
That's why the trap was of  
vines.

my god! you sound so lame screaming over nothing  
and being so&#65279; demanding  
over lovely animation.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lovely Encounter

if you could only see what
i have seen as i try to write these lines

how many times have i told you
about seeing love and then
writing about it?

love is not just an idea
there is flesh, younger flesh on strong bones
there is that softness of the hair
the scent of magnolias
there is this sound of the sea breeze

there is color like the yellowness of the fabric
that covers desire
there is this taste of a little salt from the sea
the sweetness of cherry
and the flavor of rum and
the sound of a hum

if you could only see what i see and feel and taste and touch
what i have here beside me

i know you

shall forget writing these lines
... you shall write everything about all these
after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lovely Medic

i am not drowning
she applies mouth to mouth
resuscitation
i am not dying
i have much air
in my lungs
but i am not the kind of person that refuses a nice offer

so here we go again
mouth to mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lovers And The Fly That Dies In Ice Cream...

death is no threat, not having to help someone
is not a problem of the mind
people die anyway, like flies,
people talk anyway like lovers mindless about what happens near them
eyes fixed
hearts beating
the world spinning
another day
another numbness....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lovers' State Of Mind

tell me who makes you gentle
it is you she confesses
tell me who makes you graceful
it is you he says
tell me who makes this world a better place
for us to live and not have any worry at
all what is next
what is tomorrow
whether we falter or fall
it is us but they are not uttering it
they only hold their hands
now without fear
treading upon a path
of thorns

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lowly Men...

we are these lowly
men of the plains
and you little gods
on the clouds
have no eyes for us

we feast on shrimps
and coconut wine
we butchered swine
and feel divine....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lstone In The Middle Of The River....

it feels like i am drained
of all my running water

the fishes in me are jumping
gasping for precious breath

i have this mouth but it
cannot speak

after all, she says, i must
be a river

always, she continues, without
more water

how can she love me forever?
she is the stone in the middle

of my pool, and when i run dry
on a hot day of summer

she will just be another stone
of this death-bed beside a mountain.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lucky Cat

i've seen this black cat that walked at night amidst the busy city road passing straight one speedy car to another without fear and never crushed

i've seen her eyes unruffled her feet so nimble and light like a flash of lightning without the sound of thunder

i've seen her sit upon a rail up on the 13th floor of this building without any fear of falling at all

i've seen her without any worry at all where to eat her next meal where to attract a prey and take it at bay

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lust Scare....

my hello has now
become a scare to you,

after all those years
of myself spreading my arms open
for you

i regret having hinted that
my legs can open too....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Lusting Heart

the old places
still tickle from the
toe
to the hair old places
of the
lusting heart
in between an outburst
of fire flowing like
magma
on my thighs

RIC S. BASTASA
The Luxury Of A Certain Privacy....

it makes life better
the word is livable, sort of
hey i am just around but
you must not know about me a lot,
i am just mr. private,
that nobody that you meet on
the faceless street
that somebody that you look for
a while
but not fit to be with,
things are better if one knows
what momentary is,
a shadow that disappears
because everything is dark
because the season fades
into a twilight,
cold and indifferent
because there is no need really
to know what happens next
where and
why.

because as i once said it
it is none of one's business
because it is unethical to ask
every detail
because as one aptly says it
this is my life and
i am not interested in yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Luxury Of Privacy

so many things should have been given away
so many words could have been written
so many secrets should have been thrown away

many friends are waiting
some people that you have not met for once keep on expecting
the walls are there waiting for your hidden words
ears are adrift with their wings folded and ready to fly

your grief is girdled
and you sorrow is a cool man
smoking its way to the labyrinths of living

your bliss explodes
happiness too can grow like weeds that neighbors want uprooted

privacy is a treasure
and so you keep all these things to yourself
by all intents

your house is having a gate locked
glass windows are not see through
and you have no stone to throw to the other house
which is made of glass too

privacy is a luxury
and you enjoy it to the most
like a cowboy sipping tequila

enjoying how soft orange can a sunset be

RIC S. BASTASA
The Luxury Of Silence...

in the luxury of our silence
we still refuse to spend a word
for that is the irony of
luxury of the rich
when they have more in words
they keep them well
always having second thoughts
releasing them into air
or woods
or into the comforting numbness of
the listening ears
of the mob
or the

other people

which
Sartre had long defined

as hell....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mad Electrician

i heave
a big sigh
to compose
this,

this is the story
of the death
of a mad
electrician

he electrocuted
himself

and the sad thing is that
nobody
minded.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mad Man

there is this mad man on
the street carrying a lighted lamp
at midday
he screams that this world
is about to end
and people do not listen
he sometimes laughs at the top of his voice
when all of them are all gone
in the middle of the night
he sings the song of chaos
he gives the warning
but then the world is asleep and numb,

the following morning you ask me about the mad man
how come that he screams, and lights a lamp during the day,
singing the songs of chaos
foretelling the doom of the world

i have no answer of course
but there is one thing i am sure of
it is about us not having understood him
a bit.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Madnesss Of Your Metaphors

here comes the madness
of your metaphors

an elephant for a world
elephant upon another elephant
ad aeternum

money as water
life as that of a cat
sky for roof
stars as fish in the ocean of
galaxies

whales are galaxies
man not even a memory

an empty page a blank stare
a mug of beer
beside a cuban cigar.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magic

sitting down and looking at the menu
turns miraculous when i have the closest chance
looking at you
by a dim candle light

i see a sparkle in your eyes
that i have not ever seen before
and you too glance at me
and you stop for a while
close the menu
and touch my hand
atop the table

23 years pass us by
and here we are looking at ourselves again
as though we have no names

i know what you will say but i need not hear it.
i am full.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magic Crystal Clear Pool

when i look at the pool
in its tranquility
i only see myself

my storms cannot disturb
the peace of this pool
i am not powerful
enough to disturb its
peace
with all the twisters
inside my mind

my heart envies at the image
that the pool reflects at me

in this amazement i have become
a loud sound
without an echo.

i am mapping out the cause
of my sorrow
hoping that in this
maze i can still find the
lost treasure
in my face.

the pool whispers that i am
a weary soul
that i have aged and mellowed
and that wisdom
is just near in the grasp of
my breath
held hostage inside
my lips.

the pool stares at me with all
forgiveness
it understands the plight of
many
who have approached it
and left feeling
triumphant again
despite
the odds.

the pool is a mirror
i am human.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magic In You....

what magic is there

when i touch a bit of you

i ooze with so much life

that i forget the sadness

of my own past....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magic Of Our Own Creations.

in a world of delusion, 
the tongue learns 
another language 
apart from 
that of the hand 
and the eye 
and what appears 
beyond all these severances 
is the magic of our own creations.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magic Wand Of The Too Familiar

it happens all the time
the most familiar things and events and people
come daily and they become so ordinary

and then
you wonder
somehow
something

unfamiliar begins to strike you
making some furrows in your face
it becomes magical

a wand of the familiar
turns you into a prince
a sword is handed to you
a horse for you to mount
upon

a heart that begins its journey
on some adventures
that were there once
in your youth

you become alive
then the world changes its colors
and you realize

you never notice
something had long been put here

how foolish you have been
for not noticing such a familiar thing?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magician

he thought they like him
and he asked them what next
would he like them to do
like handkerchiefs transformed
into roses
this man was honest enough
to tell him
to immediately disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magnificat

do not try seeing
hear it
and listen to it so well
on the last dance
of your life
leave everything
now
leave everything
now
to the
spontaneity of your
feet
your
hands will be the
very ones
who shall guide you
what to feel
it is the light
that will
tell you
what to do
and where to
finally
go

RIC S. BASTASA
The Magnificence Of Distance And Silence

it is not the title
not the fame not the name
not the prestige
not the popularity

all these do not excite me

in search of meaning
the tall thin sorrowing man
searches his path
in the middle of this case
the same man
searches the light at the and
of this tunnel

the bat may rely on sound
but there is no sound
the snake may rely on the
smell of the stones
but there is no scent
and there are no
stones

i cannot rely on my senses
i still stick to the logic of losses
the logic of locating
and the consequences of finding
what i have lost that i may
soon find

upon reaching there
i shall surrender this noise within
if the stars permit
i will join in the magnificence of their
distance and silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Main And The Peripheries

sometimes i am amazed at my own irrationality
i set the bread and butter aside today
telling myself i have enough of the ham and the bacon
in my freezer,

there will be no office, there will be no class,
there will be no conferences, no discussions about the future
of my light and darkness

i take the slipper and set aside the shoes
i fold the tie and the white underwear
the coat is hanged, and the wool is returned to the sheep

the leather is promised to the crocodiles and the snakes
the fur to the fox and the gold back to the holes of the earth

i leave the slippers and the hat and even the polo shirt
i change my mind and i do not care

i go naked to the fields of my youth
and then i rest my body under the morning sun
all exposed to the light and air

and think of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Majestic Halls Of Silence

years and years tradition marked these halls
with the power of its own silence, not a dropp of needle is heard here.

there is this black robe with velvet ropes
there is this hat of the academe
there is this discipline that outlasts lives of men

suddenly, all these are engulfed by the conspiracy of the minds
in protecting the house with a clean and white fainted facade
the interiors have not become well tended

a faulty wiring that may cause the fire soon
infested walls, termite territory this has become
no one, no one, expects the crumpling of the structure

one day all will be gone
who fiddles when the fire begins?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Majority

the majority votes
say we won,

and i the minority
say i abide

and then to drive
the point
they say bye.

i was not given
the chance
to say welcome.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Male Bird Praying For Freedom

When will he be free? says the male bird with blue wings
it is eating its claw like a bread stick
it is trying to remove all feathers with each breath

to the Sky it begs, to the clouds it is asking intercession
but darkness closed in and the clouds have long vanished.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mama In You

when i go berserk
always the mama in you is there
to save
my shattered pieces

when time get rough
there is the mama in you that calms down
those that are violent

when i go crazy over matters
there is the mama in you that becomes
my sanity pills

i am sleepy, where is papa anyway?

p.s.

baduy ba?
ha ha ha

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man And The Doors

two doors open for you
at the time when you have no more liking for doors anymore

and then another one opens, and so does another
you have no more feeling for any door

and even if slighted
the doors do not close
they keep on teasing showing half of what is inside the room

but you are no longer interested whatever is inside
and then patiently the doors close

and now they all believe you
that after all, they are not important

and they look at you through their peeping holes
wondering what you shall do next.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man And The Woman

a man and a woman
meet for the first time

their eyes meet and
understand

but both of them are not free
slaves of their past

and still subjects to the whispers
of the hazy future

their paths crisscross
and they admit they're only there

for the moment
each takes the ride to nowhere

and shall only remember
and then of course, forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Behind The Scenes

the best fruit is produced
by the tree
the man behind the scenes
did the watering
and the cultivating
it is the tree
not the man
it is the fruit that counts
to your taste
the one at the background
fades
there is no name
no history

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Beside Me

now we are sailing on a bamboo raft
floating on a silk river
bound to the other side

except for the man
with a long bamboo pole
to touch the floor
and push us more

there is this man
beside me murmuring
his face is covered
by the shadow of his big straw hat

the natives respect
him thinking that he is god sent
knowing the words of the mountain gods
who give them rain after the drought

he chatters the song of the cicadas
he murmurs the heaves of the rain
finally he stops and hands in the silence of the rocks
that protrude in the middle of the river

the waters rise
flood rages on
and i begin to hear another song
of the incoming storm
then we arrive at the other side of the river
this time we have become one in the fold of the fury asking the protection of the mountain's belly
the morning news shall tell about two men who are fuming the seeds of discontent of the plains and the city
we have no names here just coincidences

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Named Miggy

Others have finally given
up on him
he is not what they
expect him to be

he is a broken glass
who wants to drink water with him?
no one wants a twisted path
he too is.

cleaning the house is a waste
of time he says
let the world clean itself he says

mother was too worried about his future
and of course he never cared
and so mother died but he never cried
'what's the use? ' he said, 'mother died
and she must know', he continues
'i am different'

' i do not want to change this world
in the same manner that i do not
want the world to change me'
his philosophy

' i live the moment, the sun is setting
and i only have a month to live' he writes

and then he died young and then that was the only
time that they all missed him.

except his dog who had always loved
him for what he is
without any questions asked.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Of La Mancha

if you mind
he lives in his own mind
he has his
Dulcinia, the bartender
who slept with
a lot of drunkards,
he has his windmills
to conquer
he has his impossible dream

when he begins to sing
we cry
when he was gone
we remember him

and then we laugh again
for what we have not become
after all
we are too impossible
every blood is
thin
like the cowardice within.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Sitting Alone At The Cafeteria Of Perpetual Succor Hospital

he is black, native Filipino
wears a coat, white polo shirt
fat and big tummy
sipping coffee and alone
a book on the right side of his table
he is not reading it
an attache case is on his left leg
he is at the side of the glass window
of the second floor of this hospital run by nuns
below is the garden of palm trees and
grass and perennial violets and vietnam roses
he is not taking any breakfast
perhaps he is waiting for someone

i sit over a corner fronting him
i am observing the details of his existence
i know it is another sad story
but he is not talking about it
i know there is no use
what for is sharing another story
about life's tragedy?

will it be another story of a husband
contemplating about his next move
what to do with a wife stricken with
breast cancer at stage 4?

i look around
there is another man in shorts
riding on a wheel chair
pushed by a woman in her forties

an old woman, a child crying, etc. etc. etc.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Smoking His Way Heavily On A Rural Bus Back Home.

most of the world is too cruel
not to mind the grass on a hill
the flower on the rock of a cliff
the tree in the middle of high mountains
the fish swimming in a murky swamp
the man smoking his way heavily
on a rural bus back home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Under The Sunshine At 9 O'Clock In The Morning

one day
he takes his walk
in the
Oval

it is a
sunny day

he is half
naked

he is taking hours
sun bathing

people are
curious and
looking

it is 9 o'clock in
the morning

is it not easy
to imagine

how sunshine
can also be
water?

he thinks
there is something
wrong with
the people
here

they simply
lack
imagination
they think
that sunbathing
is obscene

9 o'clock
should have been
used
for plowing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Who Climbs The Highest Pole Of The Bridge...

at the highest bridge on the city of
Cebu a man in his twenties
climbs the pole and sits there overlooking
the city
the City is in panic
for he must be saved
his name is taken: Juan
Molina, 32 years old,
a thief, jobless, and without
any known relatives
and he is so hungry
and it is so hot at the top
and he is coming down
if there is something to eat

they thought he is going to jump
and kill himself

which is not the fact of the case
he simply wants to see
the whole damned city
of leaders who cannot understand
that he too needs work
to have money to buy something to eat to pay for the rent of his boarding space,
his bills, and his toothpaste and soap

all the while the city is angry
this man must be sent to prison
we are so disturbed
and he creates the massive confusion

sad, sad city.
suicidal masses
luxurious lifestyles of the rich and
the famous elite

most of the poor and the
lost do not ask anymore where is God?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Who Dipped His Fingers In Salt And Lick Them All

he dips his fingers in salt and licks them all

people look at him with all surprise
he is weird and they do not like him
He is detestable they say

he does this everyday all the days of the week all the weeks of months all the months of those years

the people shut him away they close their doors they vomit when they see him they look at him with contempt they throw him away from their cities they ban him from all other countries

he keeps the salt all to himself he eats them and drinks them all he has become sick very sick like one rusty nail

he died and people did not mourn for him good riddance so to say the city dances in jubilation the world turns into a fourth of july

if they only knew him well that i know him to be
they should have known how
he disliked salt
how all his senses revolt
against this instinct
of having his fingers dip
in salt
and of his having his tongue
lick
and how his mouth eats
all the stuff that
destroys his body
how every night he vomits
how his system fails
how he knew that with all these
he is actually killing himself

people do not know
there are things that happen
without his control
there are times when one
has no choice
but to dip the fingers in salt
no matter how bad it turns out to be
until he dies

society denies instincts
conceals the existence of vampires and gnomes and
parasites and ghouls
society keeps its own beautiful face
hides the scars and the disease

who wants to eat salt all his life?
who wants to rust like a nail and die like a brown dust on the ground?
who wants to be a scrap of iron and melt in salt?
who wants to be a robot? a man of hay?

nobody. i repeat nobody.
He never liked it himself.
Society has not asked
it never cares
The Man Who Had Forgotten How To Cry...

i do not weep
i must be weird
for i do not know
how to cry

when my loved ones
died
i buried them &
some have to cry
for me
to satisfy
our tradition

people who notice this
talk
and they talk behind
my back

i pinch my cheek
and hurt my eyes
there are no more tears
the mirror
speaks

i must be that boy
who had forgotten how to cry

i could be that man
who can never cry

for what use is crying?
will it save papa from
dying?
will it heal a
bleeding heart?

will it change my
predicament?
will it make flowers
grow?
will it turn these stones
into bread?
will it save me from
falling?

will it pacify a storm
will it still the
whirlpools of my
mind?

i have no one to cry for
i am not that selfish to cry for my own self
i am not a masochist
i have no pity for my own misfortune
i do not blame myself for all my failures

i don't have a place to let my tears fall
there is simply no time for it
anymore....

RIC S. BASTASA
another man and this is usual
has imagined that he is loved
because he had loved the most
boasting
that tonight that love will be forceful
to sink him
to unfathomable depths
melting him with all
sweet gaze

tsk tsk tsk
another foolish man bites the dust
filling his lungs with sand and soil
burying his body and his lust

tsk tsk tsk
the lover is pretending
closing his eyes in order not to see that ugliness

tsk tsk tsk
when will he ever learn
that that someone has never loved him?

for he is dust
all dust and nothing more.
The Man With Three Wives...

you ask,
how can did he manage to
have three wives?

well, he always buys things
in three sets:

three kilos of sugar
three bags of rice
three pieces of fish
three pinches of salt
three sachets of native coffee
three coffee mugs
three dresses with same design

and so everyone is happy
ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Man Writes A Poem

did a beetle which
bored a hole in his head while he
was sleeping and then the hole seals
itself,

"heal thyself" says the wind passing
by his hair and since then
he has changed with the beetle still inside
his head,

"the pain is too much" says the butterfly
riding in the air that took away its life
in a day's span,

he never knew what is happening but he is
not the telling kind and so he keeps everything
to himself and from that pain he learns
the art of using words to describe his pain
in so many ways:

' i got a butterfly inside my brain
imagining the brain as flowers in the garden'
he intimates to the wind

and the wind keeps on going and passing
and the moon sees a happy man

'everything is in place
this world is beautiful to live a life
and i am a happy man'

the man writes a poem but never used
a word that sounds like a beetle..

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mango Tree And The Children

the mango tree
blooms on the month
of May

fruits are heavy
soon

on all its branches
is opulence

Comes June
the children come
with their sticks
and slings
and stones

the mango tree is
hit once again
and all the fruits
fall to the
ground

the children
have all the fun

saliva flows from
tongues
dipping in
salt

as early as that
they know what fun is

by hurting those
that fruit so well

by taking the fruits
beyond
what they actually
need

RIC S. BASTASA
The Manipulator

Dance, dance
Mister ordinary
If you won’t
I shall junk you

Sing, sing,
Mister ordinary
If you won’t
I shall leave you

Obey, obey
Mister ordinary
Listen to me
And follow what I say

I will trample you
I will tread upon you
You will do what
I want you to do

I may even humiliate
And tamper you
Because you allow
It to be so.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Manner Of The Flowing

what i like most before the drink
is the flow of the wine from the bottle to the glass

the hands that gently hold the tip
and the gentleness by which the wine if poured

slowly like love enjoying the
foreplay
before everything begins to be
uncontrollable

i like the sound of caress
smooth as it flows down to my throat
to the veins of my heart

on one such lovely evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Marsh

i know how the marshes smell,
used to have the smell of fish and mud
untouched by the body of a boat,
a wooden boat
definitely without the noise of the machine
and the gun
and the bearded men that carry the guns
less the children
and their mothers who have never come
and stayed an inch deep in the water
i have gone there once
i was a virgin, a fresh mind like the lily
of the marsh
i was the pure air of the lilies, i breathe
and they breathe with me
until i become like some of the bearded men
who come with the noise of the machine
and the guns
i do not like the smell of the marshes now
there are dead bodies of children and women
and unaccounted men
rotten, time and the waters finally buried them
less the usual ritual
of good men.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Marsh And The Moon And Myself

i always love
the coolness of the
marsh

the moon has chosen
it as its
bed tonight

between them
i am the worshiper
of silence
bathed in that
sheen of gold

upon the humility
of a borrowed
light

RIC S. BASTASA
The Martyr

you built the house
and there they live

you planted those
what they shall reap

you bought all these
and they shall use

you write the poems
they earn the credits

you cook the food
and there they eat

and then they kill you
so they shall live

RIC S. BASTASA
The Martyr....

from the blood of his wrist
and his neck

are borne scarlet butterflies
and some purple ones

and like a short moment
their wings last only for a while

as they migrate
to eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mask

yes, there was this man in the village
he was happy.

yet, no one know who he really was
even until death.

all his life he wore the mask of the happy man
dignified and praised.

when he lived till 60 he wore the mask through and through
he was famous for his love and charity.

till his funeral the people cried
there i saw the mask, smiling and always willing to help

always empathizing, always willing to understand
the plight of each and everyone

and he was buried a happy man
time buries all including the mask of the happy man

if only they had taken time to dig him out from his grave
they could have seen the rotten ugliness beneath the mask of happiness

let him go, those who knew later said
he was a happy man, he served us so well, let him be, we pray.

i know the ugliness of his true self
but i guess, no one likes to hear what it is.

my lips are sealed
now we must praise him again: posthumously.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mask Of Respect...

at the heart breaking ceremony
i have seen to it that i must be absent
it will be a great shame
& folly
for me not to shed any tear at all
that the mask of respect
for all those with broken hearts
in this universe
must always
be
at all times
worn.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Masochist Culture....

this incurable fanatic is condemned
every morning it opens the pages of its own realities
as though it is opening a wound
and lets the blood ooze

it finds joy in this kind
opening those which have healed and had been closed
for years now

this is the culture of masochism
manipulating the past giving it is unnecessary presence
perhaps
because there is nothing to see at all
nothing to do
perhaps to lessen the absurdity of what is here
there is nothing to touch
except these pages of
pain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Masses....

they did
not like it

the ugly
duckling

these insensitive
mass
prefers her
roasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mastery Of Familiarity

it is a matter of
familiarity

the caresses of the
hands of time always

give us the mastery of
what we take and give away

the windows let the winds
come and go
without so much
hassle

at first the stairs are
adamant about the steps that
come up and much often go down
and never make the footfalls
stay

it is a matter of use and disuse
you master the common art of abuse

the sense of coming and going
of arriving and leaving becomes

a way of life and so where is
sorrow? the sound of sighs?

at the train station
there are no more sad stories
about the coming of the train &
about its synchronized leaving

these are daily occurrences
anyway
and there is nothing
significant about them anymore
in the house where we live
we do not talk about these matters
as they have become so repetitive
and hence so boring....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Matter Of You And I

The garden
where we sow the seeds of love
has a wall

so high it reaches
the clouds

the gate is locked
and the door is closed

it is so silent
as it is just a matter

of you and i.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mayor Of The Town

at first he offers you a basket of bread
perhaps he knows that you are hungry not having eaten for a day

you touch one, tear it, and have yourself a fill
it is fine

you exchange ideas
laugh at matters which both of you think funny

he offers a drink and you take a glass
thinking that this guy must be sincere in helping you away from hunger and thirst

you sleep soundly the whole night
and the following morning he comes to you again

bringing some strings and you think this must be a way to
strengthen bonds

then he speaks about a puppet and you do not like it
and he burst into anger

that is the end of the political affair
you do not want to be that puppet on a string.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mazes Of My Life, Of Our Lives

we are mazes,
and some people who take us as
important, follow us in that maze, every turn, every
quizzical path, scheming mind, and at those corners where
there are celebrations, they scrutinize, the reasons,
and in the loopholes of our disappointments, they begin to smile,
embrace the comfort that they are not alone in all these
miseries, that we are all one race, one experience
of leaps and bounds, of manholes and mounds, of hills and trenches,
sometimes, i look at this maze, and i say with all confidence,
i have mastered these secret passages, i have no fear,
i always arrive at what i desire
i don't jump for pains, neither joys,
this is just a path that i have to walk on
and go through, and finish, and when i arrive there,
another maze opens itself, like some kind of doors
which lock and close themselves the moment i enter

for what life is exactly? it is personal, it is i who must
wade through its water flow to its river fall from its cliffs,
rise to its skies, explode to its jubilation,
rain to its drought, fill in the cracks, conceal its cancers,
survive its hurdles, drink its poisons, and
then die with all my colors

flowers on my sides, sunset at my back, their tears on my palms
their whispers passing through my ears
end to end like a wind gushing through
my windows......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meaning Of Distance

i think i understand now
the meaning of distance

it is a way of avoiding
how to hurt you once more

what i can offer is only
a shady memory of this and that

a shadow in the night walking away
because there can be no permanence in us

we touch and go and the pain lingers more
and this is what distance can do

it can very well heal us both again
and make us live life perhaps a little longer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meaning Of My Name....

'forever or alone,
ruler;
peaceful ruler;
powerful leader'.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meaning Of My Sunset

i know what a sunset means

you always equate it with surrender
and defeat

i have a different version though
it is the flaming

the burning of the last cloud
the spreading of my blood to the sea

the blackening of my horizon
an end that deserves

a commendation
for its bravery

still glorious till the last
orange light, the last fight for light.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meaning Of Our Lives

the meanings of our lives
are not laundry clothes waiting for the sun
waiting to become clean and dry

the meanings of our lives
are on the women with dirty hands
surveying the stains and putting bleaching agents
and taking care of everything

the go where the real action is
they’re not lazybones
they make things done
they know what a nice finish is all about.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meaning Of Those Three Words....

the sun had set
then we too turn off the lights
i still do not know why
we count not stop
playing with the meaning of
those three words...

x x x x

misalop ang adlaw
gipalong ta ang suga
ambot nganong di man
kita makaundang sa
pagduladula sa
kahulugan sa tulo
ka pulong....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mediocre In Class Who Made Good Money

class reunions serve no purpose
other than advertising yourself at the end of the year
that you made good.

you are there not because you are interested
about the welfare of those who failed
you are there to be acknowledged
that the teachers did you wrong by not putting
you at the top on those years
you are there to prove to them that you were no nonsense
never a nincompoop,

you are going to spend a lot of money to drive your point
and you shall be at your pedestal of success

the most honest of all the teachers
who is old and retired still is not convinced about you
you were the cheat in the class
and you are still the worst cheat in the city

sometimes the cheat wins
you just proved it now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meeting At Shakey's Davao City

i know why
you did not come
as invited
at the Shakey's

after 35 years
it would have been another
opportunity for knowing you

seeing you
and perhaps hugging you and
kissing you for another
goodbye

are you afraid for the
ugly change? we suffer the same
destiny

the wrinkled hands
the memory loss
the long sought and
chosen door in that temple
of silence

we had the courage
to be there
eating pizza and drinking
soda
and having fried chicken
and mojos
and for once not talking
about our medicine
and diseases

we have seen our ugly selves
and we are not afraid
the mirror and the glass
the crowd and the noise
we miss all these
we were once young and
we had no regrets

onward we say after that
meeting
to the great divide
we will work out for this
belief
that we shall still remember
that we still recognize each other
despite the pains....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Meeting: A Monologue Of Elizabeth Bishop, His Translator

'I didn't know him at all.
He's supposed to be very shy.
I'm supposed to be very shy.

We've met once — on the sidewalk at night.
We had just come out of the same restaurant,
and he kissed my hand politely when we were introduced.'

RIC S. BASTASA
The Melting Snowman

crhistmas is
coming and the snowman
is here in the
tropical country such
as the Philippines

a carrot for its nose
mangosteen for its eyes
and white soap suds for
its body and face

a home made scarf will
do to give it a feel of
winter

when i was small i imagine
how nice is snow how
good looking is the snowman
how a sled feels
how fragile could snowflakes be

as awareness grows
extending boundaries
from the north pole to the
south
from iceland to dubai
imaginations fall
realities are stacks of
boxes in the warehouses of
the mind

now, as i see it
in the middle of the heat
in this third world state
a snowman would surely
melt....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Memories

the memories have become brown leaves
with the slight touch of the wind
this summer
all of them fall to the ground

some will be blown far away
some will stay and crack
and become dust
in a little while,

i will hear the sound of everything
the wind blowing,
the falling of the leaves
the cracking and
then how the dust
whispers

that it still want to stay and wait
even longer
for the next season of rain
like some seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Men Are Killing The Life Of The Air....

this early morning
i take my walk
on the path leading to the
rice-fields

the men are killing the worms
with Japanese pesticides
the white herons feed on
poison

what else could that be?

the national geographic makes
the news
that eggs of herons easily cracks
and fledgling do not survive

agricultural teachers die
of colon cancer
and the causes remain
undisclosed
there is no cure

for men killing air
for companies making poisons
the herons still fly and catch and
eat the double dead worms

the air is foul and
turn back from the walk
i cannot carry my heart
it is heavier than
steel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Men In Tabon

in the mountains of
Tabon
the folks are into
a revolution

even they cry, 'we want to
take our land back!
this is ours!' 

i remember once as a child
when father took me here
riding on a horse for three days
before reaching the old
shack i have only seen the monkeys
mocking at our presence

grandfather hired the natives
who only love bananas to plant
the coconut trees as they make
love with their many wives
morning till night time wanting
to seed the earth who had more
to give for their generation

now they are crying, ' we want
this land back! this is ours!' 

it is too late, the land is bald.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Men Of Hay

the Board has declared
that men of hay
are curse to society
and that
this society cannot function
that well and strong enough if men
are put there and
they are all those kinds of
stuff
that hay is made of

so they burn all men of hay
and they think that is the right move
for society to survive

laws are made
to ban hay

i look at their fields
i go inside their backyards

there they plant hay
and make breeds of them

there they mold the men of hay
and give them names

when you look at their creations
they never look like hay anymore
never smell like one of them
those that they once
decreed to be burned

when the men of hay that they breed
and give names
are all ready

you introduce them to society
they are now the leaders of their new games

for in truth they love their own men of hay
for they follow orders from them
and give them fame and fortune
and make them believe that they all shall live
in grandeur forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Men Of Her Life

a hundred or some
men of her life
coming and getting
out of her mind

names of men
yet not one of their lips
and tongues and hands
or a finger
has taken hold
of her single nipple

the evenings
are figments of her
imagination
the bed has not
sounded
the squeaks
the moans
never, the legs
still fathoms apart

bodies of men
piled like boats
one after the other
with their names
on each, burning
falling, ashes

the sea clear
and silent
like patience
merely staring

not a word
shall insult

RIC S. BASTASA
The Merciful God.....

his revelations
about his past gives
me that feeling of
awe, that feeling that
you never expect him
to be so,

if you could have only
known
that course of life would
have been different
not thinking that you
were in the same
boat with him and,

what you had in mind
was like moon gleaming
at noon, like sun
setting at the wrong
hour, like stars that

keep on falling without
that regard that a
dark night would be
too grievous,

now everything has
changed, appearances
turn off what used to
be a spark of those
moments, he keeps

enigma as you keep on
writing about what could
have been, thankful that
what happened to him,

did not happen to you
and God must be as always
at your side
always ready with his
Mercy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Message

o master, i get the point
i must write, and must make them
understand about a place that
is devoid of houses and trains.
o master, i get the message
i must write a poem about
a mirage, things that seem
to be, but are not,
i must take them to that place
of haze, and yet the flowers are
so real, that someone did not just
smell but take some petals to eat.
all of these ransom faces
they take for granted what reality
is all about.
It is the understanding that
things are better be left alone.
They grow without us, the grass.
They spin, without us, the planets
The sun stays in place, even if
explode our minds.
This the message, we are here
to drink the water
why do we have to make one?
why do we have to
explain why?
O master, let us live.
We have taken everything
for granted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Message Of The Wind

it is your
coldness
typed in
sighs
in the
wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Message Straight From The Heart

i wonder
how you love a friend?
what message is there
from your
heart when you
do not even know
how to say
hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Metamorphosis Of F. Kafka

one day
he finds himself converted into
a giant cockroach
he does not know about it at first
until he wakes up
and looks at himself in the mirror

he changes his taste for food
now attracted to left overs
dislikes water and
light
dislikes people and
events
and cannot relate to the morning
news on TV

his door has now remained closed
and no one is allowed to enter
except his dear sister
who feeds him
morsels

in time he begins to understand
how is it to be a cockroach
how humans have been too cruel
to their state

and then
he writes about Kafka and
The Metamorphosis

that is the real story
until the cockroach dies
until Kafka recovers again
away from
Ward 10.

RIC S. BASTASA
i have descended following instinct.

i shall rise with wisdom totally changed.

and then the pain diminishes and then the grief is gone.

silence reigns the heart is confident as steel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Metaphor Of Himself

what are you saying in what
you paint? the wall clock in your head
your left eye is closed
your right eyes stare to the wind
the big lizard flies in the canvass
of yellow and the louse is made
gigantic than the
sun that lies beside a tree
without leaves
the frame is a window
and it looks out to the sea
it is not there
the big water
are you trying to say
that time heals?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Metaphor Of Madaya Hunger

that emaciated child asking for
food for his younger sister
is but a part of the bigger picture,
beyond this frame is the
complete story of the powers that be
whom we do not see
but who can stop and make go of
everything
they who hold the switch of even
day and night, war and peace,
two faces of civilization: one that they
destroy on screen and the other that
they build on sand,
the sky is broken, buildings like chalk
 crumple and children
are murdered.

The one that asks for
bread on winter time
is you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Metaphor Of The Pigeons Cooing

pigeons live inside the ceiling
taking the entrance at the broken side of the gutter

i can hear them coo

some eggs hatch and some fledglings
are cooing

one day i have not heard of them anymore
and the rats are singing

like pigeons cooing
these rats wanting to get attention

tomorrow i will take away the gutter
so the pigeons will know that we are missing them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Metaphoric Garden...

all the while, literalism
is wished. Why bother with some
allusions? One can be direct
to the point and be
understood point-blank,
no holds bar, black is black
and white is white,
a spade is a spade is a spade,
the cause is that which the cause
is caused,
bluntly, candidly,
what the heck is this
going around the bush
and figuring out
what is hidden through
symbols and
concealed through some
metaphors....

but my dear, this
is the realm of what we want you to know
and on the other hand
we also want you not to know
so well....

and that is, precisely
this thrill, remember those imaginary
toads in the
real garden?

or those real toads in the
imaginary garden,

feel them, they are all here,
hear them, but my god, by god,
you cannot see them
here... not yet....
The Metaphors Of My Morning After A Nightmare

you have misplaced yourself
and regrets are here abounding

the white monkey sits upon a
red rock dreaming about the white crows

the spotted panther runs in the desert of
chocolate and got stuck upon a wish of

sandy stars in the dusty galaxy where
the pink owls are building a home

most things are misty and dew is a place
where most of the lost ones put their hopes

the blue school of fish are happy with
your torn nets with the eyes of panda as mesh

your boat though confident with its rudders
and rigs bleeds upon a hole in its heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Midnight Song That I Hear

tonight i know something so lovely
your midnight song
speaking of someone who cannot sleep tonight
because tomorrow
he will be burying his beloved
who died of cancer of the breast

tonight i know something so sad
and meaningful
it speaks of departure
of someone that he loves
now resting
in the arms of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Migratory Birds....

singing praises
to God
early morning
before the birds roosting
on the tree
begin anew their migration
towards faraway
lands where you yourself
have not gone to....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mind

all these are in the mind.
Without the mind, what can i be?
or You be?

Tonight, i shall sleep alone.
I enter in my mind and embrace happiness there.

It is free. IT is delightful.
Just me without any complication at all.

The mind.
It is all in there.

Why should i waste my time with you?
I am fed up.
You don't make any sense at all.

You are a tapestry
Unfinished with my hands.

You are the sun
Yet i am no longer within your galaxy.

Out of orbit
I QUIT.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mind Always Returns Home...

the mind as usual is at its selfish tour
it says after a hard day’s work it deserves to be pampered by such experience
it goes to places where it has never been
and meets what in reality should not have been
it wears the uninhibited wings and arrives on such prohibited portions
hopping and hoping to find what it thinks it must find

upon arriving there it looks around and finds desire
mostly lust to be blunt about it
the one that it cannot hold when time is sane and sober
when it is at the embrace of logic and reason

it loses itself in some dark nooks
and meets the characters of this fiction
the dances begin
the drunkeness is bottle by bottle
and the unimaginable wildness is from one forest tree to another

then a hand with the faces of some shadows tries to pull his body
and signals where and how insanity must be
fulfilled somehow

at that moment
he stands still and remembers
yet not removing the masks and fingers
he ponders
that this cannot be
that this has gone beyond what it can take within
lest there will be bursting and
later on the scattering and the eventual dying
of the spirit

there are things which are too beautiful and yet cannot be touched
&
so

he backs out and flies away

coming home the mirror sees and does not say anything
but the welcome gestures are clear
the house opens its arms
the windows greet him about a beautiful bright day
the self who is king and sane is now in
breakfast is ready and
the morning news on TV is on display
there is no murder
and there is nothing about slander.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mind Of The Wise Man Is Life A Roof

the mind of the wise
is like a roof

it welcomes everything
rain and sun and snow and
hail and sand and even
cats and dogs
and even the rumored rain
of fish
and spears

and like a roof everything
slides, and falls and then become gone

below it the house of life
stays
the dining table and the candle lights
the glass of wine and the lips of the
beloved

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mind That Is Inside Your Skull

it is small
your stomach i am sure
is bigger
unlike your feet
it does not travel
unlike your eyes
it does not close
it is there
even in your dreams
your imagination
travels like the wind
to lands unknown
when you are hurt
the mind finds shelter in reason
unlike the heart
that weeps until all the tears
run dry
the mind is here but its essence
is out there groping in the dark
dancing with the winds
of change
sunbathing like you
wanting also
a little
tan.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mind...

travels and travels
some more
non-stopping at
junctions
disregarding
the intersections and
intertwines
even if you say
that all those forty years
are faithful to your
side
the mind knows no
bounds
except the limits sets
by our own
hands
we should have let it
go and even be
gone without any
regrets at all
because it is its
nature
it is beyond our body
our hold
we should have
set it like our souls
ephemeral
infinite
always grasping for
what we have not
met
what we have not
tasted
that which shocks us
for a while
and yet
rightfully ours.
The Mindless Skies.....

far from it
love has
nothing to
do with it

i take your
body
you take mine
we do
what is
shameless to
them
which we
enjoy most
with all
the feelings
in our
fingertips

i told you
do not turn
on the light
because what
you see
will be harsh

i whisper
close your eyes
my dearest
if possible
imagine
all other things
besides us

the sea
the chasing lovers
the silent sands
the musical waves
the mindless
skies....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Miniature Universe

the space is your mind
every blood in you is a journey of
water
every bone is land and flesh
a home
you are a universe of your own
why can't you see
the glory of your stars
the haven of your moon
why can't you shine as
the sun?
your heart and your mind
are your gods.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mining Story

they scraped the hills
with trees
the green grasses of homes
are gone
they dug those big holes
looking for
metals

manganese, gold,
for your jewelries
and other accessories
coal for your
fuels

the natives are dislocated
the children lost their birds
chickens and pigs are butchered
for they have no place
to stay

the hills are like criminals
their heads cut off
the trails here are like
intestines
penetrating the
belly of this
earth

listen! do you hear the drunkards
the government and mining firms!
listen! do you hear the sounds of guns
and the last living screams of the
chieftains
the mayors whom they voted
betrayed them

listen! do you hear the explosions
of bombs
the mountains are cracking
skulls
brains are spilling on the
rocks

listen!  do you hear the guards coming
with their M-16s
and barking dogs

Run! Run! Run for your lives
Lest you forget
We are the last chickens and
pigs alive

Do not look back

Those  are the children and wives
of the chieftains
Those  are the hungry natives
begging in the cities

Their Homes gone
Their Hopes shattered

RIC S. BASTASA
The Miracle Of Psalm 23

played on the You-tube
psalm 23
letters synchronized with
the notes
of the piano music

somehow
the days become confident

drops of water
knowing what rivers are

perfection comes
in a heart that is full

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mirage Beyond

what is in your mind?
a house to build,
a path to make
that which brings you
to a home
a clear pond
where you soon must bathe
and cool your skin
a tree full of leaves
sturdy barks and
strong trunks
a place for you to
rest

perhaps you are thinking
about death
and all of those who find
you still useful
shall knock the wood.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mirror One Night

Last night I stood before
Lolo Enggoy’s mirror
When he died in April
I never cried
In the holes of my eyes
I jump
Into the suicidal cliffs
Of his death
Carrying with me my fingers
My hands
I travel where I come from
Where there are no footprints
Into blindness into nothingness
Into vast dark silences
I return to the surface
Of my eyes—
The mirror breaks to the floor
In a hundred bleeding piece
RIC S. BASTASA
The Mirror Self....

and the day comes
when you finally write this one
it looms here
inside the heart for such a long
long time
until it finally comes out
telling you its name
its origins
its hang-ups and dreams
and you gaze at it all with pity
and it smiles at you
full of understanding saying its
name so sounding just like you...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mirror That Never Breaks

here i am
feeling abandoned

those who face me
stab me at my back
and i am hit
badly but

then
i leave them
all
smiling,

i shall not tell
the whole truth
about how i feel

it's all mine
this world
i have conquered it
with a
wry smile

there is no use fighting now
or
arguing about who i am
i found a place
where i am at a complete
rest

there is a mirror there
that receives no light from anyone
it has that inner light
that speaks
that i am doing right

it is this mirror that
matters
it never breaks
The Mirror....

it is the one that shows
the back of my back,
and the front
of my front,
it is not the normal mirror
that you see
that you can buy anywhere
or just have somewhere

it is the mirror of art,
the pathways of the subconscious
the credible lies of the
obvious

it is art, it does not die,
neither does it live,
it just slips away for no known
cause
there is no need to explain
it only demands
a little
feeling.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mirror.......  

i check myself.
One way, and i think the best one
is seeing myself in the mirror.

Close-up.
Touching my mustache.
Staring at my own eyes.
Following the lines of my cheek,
down the chin,

opening my mouth,
my teeth are not that white
my tongue is not red
something is hanging
inside
like a bat, it can make the
sound

eyes are wrong
i am not ugly
i have not gotten old
like my contemporaries

some died early
i do not blame them
perhaps life is not
that promising

majority says it
is a misery
always sorrow here and there
and disappointments

if it is a painting
there is more smudge
of black
and deep red
boldness in the strokes
and lines
i check myself
feel my temples

i am alive and that is good enough
for me.

i guess, like you,
(as you read this)
we are still lucky

do you have a hand?
shake mine.

do not ask me if
i have lips
because for sure
i still have them

and the only possibility for
it to still be lips
is to share them

if you like....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Miseries Of Men...

on this meeting let us avoid
talking about miseries

what for? what is the use?

for sure, we have the same
common denominators

why talk about us? there is only
this fear, this falling out from the wings
of the plane

dis this ship without anchors
dis this sinking without a floor

let us be drunk and make merry
we are into this and we are too many

RIC S. BASTASA
The Misery Of Others

there is fun when one talks
about the misery of other people,
there is joy in the realization
that others' miseries are
far greater than yours,
there is this celebration
of lesser pains,
there is this misery in us
in not grieving for the misery
of those whom we have
not known so well,
those whose beatings of the
heart are slowing,

we do not think that we also
slowly die upon the death of
another

we have not seen such link
between our misery and theirs

it is the thin line that divides
the true man from the least of the
the animal kingdom

there is this comfort
that the worm cannot say anything

RIC S. BASTASA
The Misery That Seeks More Company

when failures
fall down
they decide not to rise
from the place of
their perdition

from where they fall
hardly surviving
on hands grappling
and breaths grasping

they simply sit there
silently
looking for
more of their kin and kind

like some kind of
bus passengers waiting
for their trip
to nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
The Misery That Seeks More Company....

if there is something wrong
i console myself with, oh,

it is just a state of the mind,
a matter of perspective, nothing
to worry about, but then things
are really going wrong, blood
pressure rises, anxiety sets in,
loneliness gets wacky, and
emptiness spreads like a mantel
on the table, but oh, i still
assure myself, it is just a
matter of feeling, of looking
at these things, we are miserable
because we allow ourselves to feel
miserable. But, let us get this
straight, we are miserable, and
then the last defense comes, to
save ourselves and just survive,

and this is it, so what? so what?
are you not miserable? ows?

RIC S. BASTASA
what i learned was not
the case of an instant coffee with
readily available cream.

no, it isn't.

i walk for five days.
pass a river eight times.
climb a mountain for
a week.
i tell you
there is no rest.
not a second.
it is not prohibited
it is not
not just available.

it is not a race for
time,
it is just the inevitable.
something you cannot
avoid.
a life time
a life style.

oh it was an arduous
task, a very hard journey
and it is not
worth telling.

however, when i begin
to write,
it cannot be avoided
it shows itself.

unnecessarily.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Misgiving Of Alessandra

alessandra
though a poetess in
her own right
still entertains
misgivings
against paul who brought
her in an isolated
island
taking a boat
just the two of them
for there
he only asked her
to gaze at the moon
which had shown
brightly that night

love did nothing
to wipe the wetness of
her lips....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Misplaced Poem Of Gluck

The Wish

Hi There!
I see you're enjoying the site,
and just wanted
to extend an invitation
to register for our free site.
The members of old
poetry strive to make this
a fun place to learn and share -
hope you join us! -
Kevin

the wish of
Louise Gluck?

surely, something is missing somewhere, the wish is suppressed.

anybody, find that wish for me?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mistake

it was a different thing that you see
from that you feel
a war between the bulge of the eyes
and the pumps of the heart
the lines of the palms are clear
nobody wants to mind now
in the middle of too much desire
it is the heart that wins
slashing the blinks of the wondering eyes
the lines of the palms are clear
there is no doubt
the heart bleeds upon its mistake
and begins to remember the veils
and the sonorous sounds of the funeral bells of
the little town

the lines of the palms are clear
there is no doubt about it
at the end every part shall accept the fate
no regret
once again the self rides upon the wings of destiny
until the final word of the years rest

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mists Of The Mountain

we sit here facing the mists of
the mountains
this November as we escape
city life
we catch a glimpse of who we are
what we really are

the mists slowly fade away and we stop
to ponder
we exhale we inhale we taste a moment
of life
we feel a little of death
we prepare for the next step

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moan Of Man....

on an island
he escapes
hoping that
he can sing
hymns of praise
harping on a
helluva
halleluiah
halleluiah

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mob

it only takes the
touching of the tail end
and the nose of
one caterpillar
to form the
unthinking mob

then the motion
in circles begin

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mob Detests An Obstruction

the mob has no tolerance
for obstructions, a rock for instance

in the middle of a river shall soon
be removed, by force and

later what you see is a vast river
flowing endlessly.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mocking Bird

she is new here
and she does not know that on the roof of this house
beside a big tree
under the blue clouds
lives the mockingbird...

she is the butterfly
fluttering over the flowers
defaf
she never hears about two mocking birds talking to each other

in perfect understanding
without the use of any word

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mocking Bird On The Tree Fronting The House...

a mocking bird
sits on a branch of a tree
that fronts the house that
papa made

papa is gone.

a mocking bird left but one
sunny day

after the heavy rains for months
the mocking bird comes back

it is bringing silence
unlike all the other mocking birds
in town

the mocking bird is dead
a boy abandoned by his mother
stoned it

now the window if you walk a little
distant from the house
and sit on a bench across the road
looks like a Cheshire cat
giving Alice that fable smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Model

feelings are here
guests on my breakfast table,
in the dark they are crazy dancers playful like disco lights,
this is a bright day for me
i set aside feelings, choke love, and even murder it
i want to appear like a king to my kin unblemished by the alterations of feelings,
i am a model of restraint my polo shirt is white and my shoes are shiny black
i put my suit and my tie
i pocket my smile
and
go inside my office
stiff-necked
and hurt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Model Couple Of The Century: We

We are angry and so we decide to take a walk today
She carries a knife in her pocket

But I will be ready; I am taking her for nice walk
On a cliff.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Model Of The Community

inside a man in my stomach speaks
and it is drunk as can be heard with the use of
words hastily spoken and i pretend that i am listening,

when i pretend, actually i hear nothing
i am listening to another voice outside my ears
it is the song of a bird at nigh time
when all birds are supposed to be asleep except
the bats which do not speak to me but busy with
what they catch for eating,

to survive this ordeal of having someone live inside you
you are compelled to be a pretender forever
and people who do not understand and who mistake your silence
as a virtue, will always like you for by then to them

you are a man of peace, you live in the house of your silence
you disturb no neighbor, you raise no eyebrow,
you spread the gospel of contentment, and all around your houses
are the doves that you feed everyday without fail.

i tell you, i am about to crack like a glass
with hot water boiling inside my fragile emptiness
but i have mastered this art of silence, and to a certain
extent have learned to live with it like anybody else
who like me for what i really am not.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Modern Critic

You are the coolest
Monkey
Jumping on my gullibility
I tried to put on my ears
Back alive in my head
Reviewing my raucous listening
Of your underpinning
I put on the face of the gargoyle
To frighten you
Yet you keep rolling
On the vines of my hair
I try to be academic
But I have become moot
And so hypothetical
I tried Victorian poetry
To repel you
But you are still there
Teasing me
In fact, you are laughing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Modern Martyr In The Kingdom Of God

i've just seen the picture of a man
devout catholic
gunned down in broad day,
falling to the ground,
and declared another martyr for
mother church,

sooner he becomes a saint
because he died
to the hands of the fanatics
the unbelievers,

sometimes i ask myself if this is the only way to become
a martyr, the only way to be a saint,
(does it really matter if one becomes a saint?)

i guess, there is another happy child of God
who has worked for the church
who cooked faith, who served beliefs,
who traveled far just to show how good God is,

the happy child does not have to die
for God wants him to be with his side,
smiling and alive,

He too is a saint. He sowed happiness.
He did not plant guilt. He did not grown scruples.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Modernity Of Technology Perhaps, Disowns It.

the church bell rings
at 5 in the morning

the door in the kitchen
makes the sound of its opening

the brown maiden starts
sweeping the leaves on the streets

last night's howls of the storm
still haunts

silence is precious
so nil, so rare

the modernity of technology
perhaps, disowns it

and those who dislike it
grow the madness inside

their minds, like cancers
without cure

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moment

..and then i discover
what a moment is

it is like a stair
each time when i take the step
when i hold the rail on its side
when i savor what
warmth and hardness is
when i gaze upon a step that i put
upon another
wood
and then on another
looking only whenever i take it
no longer beyond
or after

and without knowing
i have reached the door and into
my room
i enter where i am met by
this chair where i sit
for a while
where a bed covered with blankets
and laid with silk covered pillows meet me
and then
seduce me
to soundly sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moment Has Come

the moment has come when i have to leave everything as is

d this as is where is basis of mind frame
where an object at rest must remain at rest and that object in motion must remain in motion conception

it is. it was. it will be.

d this tree i promise it
i will not cut it i will not pluck from any of its stem any leaf

the shoelace remains tied upon its tip
a toe shall continue with a nail uncut

there will be no trimming until a forest tree fulfills itself with its wish to kiss the cheek of the sky

this is the moment when i leave everything to themselves because i will not be around anymore

it is a happy moment
d the one who leaves smiles towards its place of destination
and the one who is left nods to the ground that is holding its feet

the sky shall be well lighted by the sun
d the rivers glow and the shorelines run into that distance of eternity

this is the moment that i have been waiting all my life
d that for once you shall be happy because i have given up all rules and have set myself free from all your sorrows.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moment I See Your Face

i can steal some more gazes
beside you
i will not be bored in this trip
sliding across the foamy seas
crossing longer bridges
hopping from one island to another
seeing old ancestral houses
made of hardwood
recalling the ormoc disasters
with thousands dead
floating bloating on the river

i see your face again
i have always seen them all over again
i am alive again
i should have been dead years ago
without you

i hold your hand
you look at me
there are no words
on these wanderings
these travels
of thoughts and cares
inside our hearts

the tourist guide speaks
'this is the house he made for her
the shrine and these walls
to protect her from harm'

we are holding each others arms
as we listen
i do not think of walls
neither will i in the future
build them for you

your face is beside mine
the camera clicks
and another picture is taken

now we shall go to another room
the tour guide speaks again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moment That Love Is Gone

when the heart is
too far away
the mouth begins to shout
so the ears can
be heard

two people whose skins
touch
yet when the hearts are
too distant
the sounds become inaudible
between them
imaginary mountains
wide seas
and newly created
monsters

RIC S. BASTASA
The Momentary

a busy life
stops for a while

like sipping coffee
inside a restaurant

facing the road
merely looking

passing time
staring at the
moment

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monkey In The Neighborhood....

i love that monkey

it asks food from me and when given it hides it all inside his mouth tongue-in-check if you have seen it

and then it asks some more begging like a pitiful child without a mother

and if begging does not work it charms you with its tiny hands its fingers mapping for lice in your hair while its tail tickles your armpit you feel that and remember something before when you were once as young & horny as that imaginary gazelle
it is this
begging game
that you like most

you are not
a monkey

stop it

it does not
look good for you

you lose your charm
and even the monkey
thinks
that by imitating it
you have
become detestable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monkeys

and after he cut the grasses
plowed the farm and planted
it all with corn

the monkeys simply watch
and keep on playing
on the branches of the trees,

and when
the corn grew and showed
their big ears and
golden hair,

there and then the monkeys
came and made their claim.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monotony Of A Vicious Circle

when you run in a circle
you arrive at nowhere
you pass by the same
lane over and over again

so to kill this monotony
you build your own set of
fences and walls with the
end that even if you pass
on the same lane over and
over again somehow the
walls may create the
illusion of a border the fence
an illusion of height so
that you may then claim
that you have hurdled an
obstruction passed a
hard test survived a
certain difficult trial
which you have
freely created yourself

you think you can
deceive the circle?
sorry but
this circle will always
remain as a circle even
if the walls reach the heavens
even if the fences shut you
away from the neighbors

who live on the same
lane with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monster Of Nothingness

As we grow older
the monster of nothingness comes with very sharp teeth and thick skin
and tongues of fire

many are swallowed by it, feeling so useless that they lose their names
and identities, nowhere to go on addresses forgotten

the monster of nothingness has claimed lives and lives on islands not connected
by
any bridge
no boats sail there
nothing to connect meaning to another meaning
losing the fulness of life, the succor to sudden deaths
to the chasms of void cliffs
falling, falling, fading, losing every sound of
life which can only be heard in youth

now, i am too confronted with this monster
but i have already prepared my defenses

i turn into a rock obstructing its path
hard as steel, its teeth break into glass fragments, its thick skin pierced by
the sharpness of my walls
i shut my eyes, memorize my name, kept a home
the address of my being

this is the Rock, i am it, and i am perfectly protected.
For now, to be a rock is to be alive again
and defeat the monster of nothingness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monsters Within The Earth

Be not harsh to me
and be not quick
be gentle as a cat
fur, softness, whiskers
pliant to the tips
of my fingers
be kind
be so compassionate to
my plight
for i have lived in the layers of
my skin
to every pain and struggle
in every bark in every
phloem
be so deep as an ocean
in understanding
what love i have buried
inside my bones
you do not know how secretly
i have loved you
how i sealed my lips and
closed my eyes and open
then again with the salt of my tears
how i have hidden
from the world my protest against
its unreasonable rules
its skewed definition of love and
its terrains
where some have stayed instead in caves
rather than run naked
in the open
fields where reeds sing above
marshes
where birds lay eggs on the waters
where monsters
hide deep in the earth not knowing
that they too
know how to love
and care
for what the world have never
known much.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Monument Of All Our Wrongs

i build a house
no one likes it.

the house is empty
i put some chairs.

someone comes and says, this house is

lonely, it needs a sound

it is boring and needs a paint

i put a tree beside its stairs

i grow another fence

i put a lone bulb on a post

and leave the house for good

that is what the house is made

there is always missing

something is always wrong

this is the house of regret
it is the monument
of all our wrongs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon And The Frog

the frog had some regrets
marring the moon
that forever in its life
as frog
the moon it can never swallow

tonight they will talk
under the shadow
of its majestic light
the frog
croaks about
this final resolve
this separation
for good

let the croaking begin

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon And The Window

it is the middle of the night
open the window
let the moon in

yes the moon always
gets in through the window
not the door

did you not notice it?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon And Us

'Now and then
it is good to pause
in our pursuit of happiness
and
just be happy'

tonight
we shall sit
on one of those
benches in
the park

we'll just be
silent
upon the touch
of our hands

as the moon
showers us
with its
golden light

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Chasing That Sole Shining Star

how sad to see the moon
taking the shape of a ship
chasing a single shining star ahead
between them
a huge continent of
black clouds,

and when it rained
finally
everything is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Comes With Dignity

and all the trees
standing still on the mountains
greeted her
with sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Is Full Tonight

calldred by the crystal

sea and the waters
are so calm like the silk

robe that you undress
before me

life is too beautiful
for the sadness that we bring

to desires we must fulfill
to love we must death till

the moon is so full tonight
let us embrace that lovely light.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon On The Veranda Of The House

the moon tonight
is a river of light
slowly flowing on
the wooden floor
of the veranda of
my house...

i bathe

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Over The Pond

the moon sits over the pond
her legs refracted
in shimmers

her gown spreading love
all over the grass

the grasses seep every delight
satisfy their blades
and then soundly sleep

the little blue bird high up
on the tree
looks with all wonder

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Realizes The Importance Of The Sun

feminine moon
fearing the masculine sun
preferring
the presence of the
friendly
eunuch stars

halfway in the darkness
of its night
the moon realizes
the sun is missed

badly enough
it wishes for the break of day
but then the curse
has been made

there is no way for feminine moon
to be with the masculine sun again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Sighed

perhaps the moon
sighed

how could i have
been so cowardly

not to have kissed
your lips

under its golden
light

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon Was An Orange And So Full.

it told her
that time when we were sixteen
that there is a place where the moon is orange and full,
and she believed me
and so we went there and she asked what do we do here
and i did not answer.

so many things happened then
time is and had always been another magician
the illusionist in us
cannot but love it just the same.
we thought we have forgotten our own chosen madness
which was too delicious on something too sumptuous
a party for two, a drink for one, and a smoke in circles
inside a room of secrets.
someday we shall master time
make it come back and then make us see how sweet we were
that time when we were sixteen
in that place where the moon was an orange and so full.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moon, The Sun And The Fire

to the moon
i gaze the whole night
at the balcony of
this house

to the sun
i raise my arms and
close my eyes
to its power i see
red

and to the fire
within myself
i keep always
alive

to all these i
thank durga

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moonless In You...

so many
yes so many
and so insignificant that sometimes
you think
what for? there is no meaning there? there is nothing
that i cannot understand in what you are saying?

you challenge the world
tell me directly
why all the winding ways? why all these concealed destinations?

you are blind
and yet so fully awake

you are here at the center of this universe
but you are never
the sun....

RIC S. BASTASA
The More Distance There Is The More People Become Wise.

what happens when you create a certain distance?

blind spots are slowly disappearing and what used to be really exciting had become so very very boring and even, create more space and distance and slide a bit to another block of time nay, it gives out what once used to be subsumed as detestable.

the more distance there is the more people become wise

give me space then give me more time it is this isolation that makes me think some more and find all the reasons why should i be wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
The More Of Me In There, The Merrier It Would Be

i am happy
i am telling the mirror
who is always silent about whatever i say
since it only reflects me
a silent movie,

i am happy i reasoned out because
i do not care.
because i do not mind what hurts me.
because when you hurt me i always respond
by deleting you from my world
and then you do not exist and then when you
are in pain
i always say i do not know you
i haven't heard about you.

and that is what is peace to us.
did i not get you right when you said that
i have nothing to do with your decisions
since it is yours then it will always be yours
whatever it means.

and i always repeat what my teacher used to say
hell is other people.

today i write something personal.
it has nothing to do with you.
it is indeed impersonal, it has
nothing to do with me either.

you see, i only get what i see.
i do not even say a word to avoid any judgment.
i am amazed i am telling myself in front of the mirror.
i am curious. You see, i have no feelings at all.

for now i am the mirror myself
reflecting everything away from what arrives on me
they pass through me and i do not hold anything.
i let them all go, as i delve deeper into the silence
of my own glass.

birds sometimes mistake me as a window. 
and i really did not mind it when they hit me and then die. 
it happens most of the time. 
i expect it and it means nothing at all. 

and so i always talk to myself. 
and i am telling you, i am happier that way. 
i do not need you. i do not need anybody. 

if a stone, by chance hits and breaks me into pieces, 
do not worry. i become many, and as the saying goes, 
the more of me in there, the merrier it would be. 

RIC S. BASTASA
relationships are
inversely proportional, like

what we say sometimes
we do not really mean, like

when we are angry, we curse
even the people we love, and

then, but then, when they die
their horrible deaths, we cry like

a river, and we miss them, as though
we too like to die tomorrow,

when we love, we put a break, sometimes
not to collide, in such speed,

and kill the innocent ones, who think
that we are careful enough, but

this is one thing, when by chance
we see our faces in the mirror, their

eyes, speak much about our true
natures, and then we begin to

filter, to sift grains from gaff, or
seeds from dusk, tasks from ask,

what i finally love most is my
freedom to lie, when i also have

to protect myself from you,
and in my sleep, i think how funny

this world has become, dignifying
fraud, loving shallowness,

lording it over, keeping hearts from
pains, making more mysteries, and

the more things are not understood,
the better it is to be likable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning After By A Room Window Where We Sleep

one thing with light
is its beautiful muteness

it comes bringing silence
and lands on the pillows and blankets

not even the cat's careful feet
not even the soft feather of a sparrow

the curtains open and everything is still
someone leaves without the use of a word

i must stop thinking for i too must keep going

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Chants

ty they are like
)cicadas
chirping on the dry
seasons
trying to harmonize
the sadness of
the fallen leaves
every morning
when the winds are dead
when the chimes
are silent
there the chants begin
to fill in the spaces
of this dying town
my heart listens.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Chill....

it would have been
a nice, easy walk, in the park,
or in the mountain trails,
or on the shore,
or just along the countryside
pathways, leading to a river,
crossing it, and taking the
walk on deserted lands,
it would have been more healthful
with sweat coming out
taking away the toxins from this
sedentary lifestyle,
but here you are facing the
screen, pressing the keys,
into a more pondering state,
deep thoughts, winding and rewinding
some tapes of regrets and
disappointments that most of your
friends do not know or if they
know, they won't bother, for this is
what it is about, living your life as
they also live theirs, taking
your burdens with you as they
also lift theirs,
for in the actual state of affairs
we only have to care about
ourselves, learning how to live
how to survive, how to project
that image of happiness hoping
to help them too.

the convolutions of thoughts
in the brain, going somewhere,
far away, returning still at
the break of morning,
steady on a chair.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Is Full

The morning is full of storm
in the heart of summer.

The clouds travel like white handkerchiefs of goodbye,
the wind, traveling, waving them in its hands.

The numberless heart of the wind
beating above our loving silence.

Orchestral and divine, resounding among the trees
like a language full of wars and songs.

Wind that bears off the dead leaves with a quick raid
and deflects the pulsing arrows of the birds.

Wind that topples her in a wave without spray
and substance without weight, and leaning fires.

Her mass of kisses breaks and sinks,
assailed in the door of the summer's wind.

(a pablo neruda collection)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Is The Poetess

as you relax
this early morning
you meet it ... and
greet it,

saying hello to its
newly arrived light
from the window of your
soul
from the gates of your
temple
from the warm arms
of your room
you hug
a very intangible
lover .... this morning

this cool
beautiful morning

dressed in light
golden

you do not compose
a poem for it
it composes a poem
for you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Lights Outside The Kitchen Door...

must it be habit
that makes you turn off the light
outside the kitchen
at the break of day
when the birds start to
sing their songs

you save on electricity
in the same manner that you budget
your time and
money

i've tried it once
not putting off the lights from morning
till night

some early birds that pick the early worms
passing by the house
with closed doors and windows
with lights not switched off
think that i am
dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning Sun In Your Body

your veil is blown by the
morning breeze
and your head shows
a flowing hair
touching your protruding breasts
inviting me
to see the fullness of the
morning sun

RIC S. BASTASA
The Morning World

this morning world of mine
used to be calm and peaceful
like my secret pond
where the only guests are
the blue kingfisher and the
yellow fish
on a predator-prey relationship
on a stalemate of who's gonna
eat who at the end
of the day
don't get lost for i am not through yet
i may be lost myself
these few days but i still have a hold
of the rope that they hang
on the beam of the ceiling of my
house

drun this morning the world is giving
me the sounds of thunder
with flashes of lightning like
a disco house enclosed to
rock loud music,
i prefer to be naked again
and go back to sleep.

the signs are bad and i do not want
to be part of any rage
any anger any pain anymore
i do not want to be a part of this
conspiracy to inflict
to eat what i cannot swallow
to digest what poisons me

i prefer to make love with you
rather than scream and be one of those
bad souls in a devil's party.
i hate conflagrations.
The Moslem And The Christian

by mere chance one day
the christian and the moslem become neighbors

the moslem fenced his house
for fear that the christian may squat a part of its porch

the christian on the other hand
instructs his children not to befriend his children
for fear of betrayal

the moslem too instructs his kids to watch over their sleepers
the christians mind you steal from the moslems he said

the christian is cautious too
on the thinking that moslems are terrorists

on these set of prejudices
they can never live happily ever after

thus the christian-moslem story never ends.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mosquito And The Star....

out there
on top of the tree
the mosquito prided
that it has
flown above the star
inside the moon
its shadow
in huge proportion
a gigantic feeling
on the reeling.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mosquito The Wall Clock And The Lonely Rose

imagine today that
you are one of those wall clocks
and your business is just to hang
on the wall
ticking and ticking

or just a flower vase with a rose
filled with water
not lonely though with a living
mosquito wriggling
for its freedom

and so if you ask me
at the stage of my life when everyone
seems to be away from me
i still wish that i would still be
myself
still human in all my endeavors

i can't imagine myself hanging on the wall
ticking and ticking
or that lonely rose on the vase without
its feet
or that wriggling mosquito not even knowing
what it will become
when it gets its final freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moss Sleeps On The Rock Beside A River

how serene
the moss sleepy on the rock
beside the river
as rain gently falls

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moss That Loves The Stone

It is the moss that loves the stone
Most. No matter what or when, the
Moss somehow manages to stay
Even without a why, they say.
But the moss keeps on sticking
To the body of the stone that
Keeps its nonminding stiffness.
It is cold, it is hard, it is unfeeling
At all. It is the moss that keeps its
Love. It sticks with it, rain or shine.
It rolls with it. It stays with it even
In the desert, even it if means its
Own death. It is the moss that sticks
To the stone. It is its true lover.
In the river, the water has ordered
The moss to leave. It ordered the stone
To crush it. The moss cannot be
Removed. It covered the stone.
It is loving it stone has
Become the moss, and the stone
Is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most Famous Poem

don't worry
be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most Normal Thing That Happens In The Mall

an ocean of people
inside the mall
many people are talking
within themselves
no one listens
to each his own minding
the most normal thing
that happens
here in the mall

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most Reliable Boat On Earth Through The Ages....

i've seen the shadow of
a boat coming
it is still far but it is
getting near the port
where i live
in one of those houses
lining the white shore,

at night i dream of its mast
and its oar and some men busy
with their tasks
of keeping things smooth
and in order

a dream is a black and white
affair of silence
like a charlie chaplin movie
and the one sleeping is always
its interesting watcher

one cold and foggy morning i take a walk
thinking that everything is still all right
but whatever happens my dear
(i may have not told you about it
and hence i am so sorry)

at that moment when i feel a prick
in my heart
i just keep calm and tell myself
this happens normally
everytime to every normal man...
(i assure myself there is nothing to worry
God is kind, just and reasonable)

x x x x

this boat is decent
may be old but it has always been the most reliable one
through the ages and eons
passengers who take the ride here
always arrive at their destination
safe and sound
and always on time....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most That We Can Be

ah, shy away from
imitation
there is no one
worth it

see yourself in the mirror
what fine hair you have
what sharp eyes
what big beautiful body
what strong arm
what long and muscled
legs

you are the most beautiful
man that you are
there is no other
be the most of what you can be
there is no other
you anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most Usual Evening

ingrossed again
to the pages of the book
you keep that
silence
contemptible silence
unnoticed by
this poet
lost in the pages of his thoughts
into the labyrinths
of barriers

forgive me
but it will always be like this
the wings of
ponder
never rest

RIC S. BASTASA
The Most Visible Mask

you have loved the most visible mask i have
my face

everyday, this face, tomorrow this face, yesterday
this face

you are proud of my nose, and you tell all your friends about it
aquiline, conquest of a nose, occupying almost all parts
of your territory

not even the hands but this face
the mouth that eats you

the eyes that close when
i kiss you

the tongue that maps out
what has to be found when lost

this face, the most visible mask
inside
is the real face, the face of my mind

it is thinking something else
all these years

the invisible mask is silent
tomorrow shall be the scorn

you must bear it,
you are fond of the most visible

though not really enduring.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moth And The Flame In My Own Story

just this morning
i look at you seeing to it that you shall not notice it
to be honest, i look at your legs for they excite me making me a flying bird inside
my small dark world
a night of myself

for if you notice, what has it get to do with you
anyway

just this morning i keep an image of your pair of legs
and they will excite me the whole day
as though i am
victorious

i do not wish that you will recompense me for being foolish for being true in
loving you
i do not wish to make myself stupid to make you love me
you see
there is this big difference this distance that i have measured and it is so near
to my destruction

and so i keep it simple and segregated
just your legs and my eyes, nothing more and nothing less

beyond this two shortest distance
are the restrained movements

i know, if i go beyond this, i become a moth getting too near
to a flame and then surely i will be burning my wings,
fall to the ground and die

or to be honest with you
i become wingless, and the lizard nearby shall swallow me whole
mercilessly.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moth Story

what saddens the moth
was its loneliness in the darkness
that covers its world
it says that light is lovelier
this nook is killing me
and so it takes flight to its
suicidal journey
that it never knew was
until
you know what happened
attracted by light
it bathed itself in fire
it died
what we did not know
and this we were not told
was that
it had lived happily ever after in its next life
as part of light itself
what we only saw
was ash

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother And The Little Child

there is a feeling sometimes that there are two of us
in one room,
when one talks one hears an echo
but there is no surprise

this happens most of the time
one must stand corrected

there is a war being waged
the other one is dominant and calls the other stupid
who after all does not listen
and simply does what is felt what is wanted what is needed for
the time being

there is a wolf there and there is an white lamb
there is a witch and there is a trusting traveler of a child

one feels that this is just a cottage and lodging thing
something that you can stay for the night and then leave early morning
tomorrow and then
shrug your shoulder and forget what happened
on that dark night

when one cannot believe it and hence simply thinks that
it is just a dream
or even call it a dismissible nightmare
something that is inevitable

and as one pinches his arm
that thing
that horrible thing is simply forgotten

one goes on a usual journey
taking with him two shattered faces within him
the dominant one keeps talking and talking
like a nagging mother
and just the same that little child inside you keeps its games
not minding everything.
For as long as the toy is in the hands
and for as long as it is not too dark to stop playing

'who cares? ' that is what is being muttered.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother Of All Errors....

she regrets
having to split with her
she wants to restore
what was originally
theirs, but, , ,

there is this big but,
there is no way that she can come back
and take her hands again

it is simply impossible
the world as affected shrinks into
a valueless
cent, and those who surround her
will never like it,

she went into a tantrum
unable to read the name of her medicine
her own dose of
her own poison

bad karma, she finds herself in a situation
of a dilemma

she is cursed to be alone now,
crushed by her own loneliness

defeated by the power of her own guilt
Kim.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother Per Fr. Orbos

SOMEONE SAID that robots will play a big role in the future—
they function for hours,
they never seem to run down,
they are low on maintenance,
and they do everything without praise,
acknowledgment or attention.
Actually, robots are nothing new.

They used to be called mothers.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother Sparrow

the mother sparrow does not
know about a funeral
how can it hold a white flower &
entertain meaning
using its black short beak?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother Sparrow Grieves Upon The Untimely Death Of Her Beloved Fledgling

today, there is no grand funeral
like that of the death of
a statesman

or that simple funeral fit for
a laborer in the world of
mankind,

the mother sparrow grieves over
the death of her fledgling

there is no burial
they do not know what are white flowers
their meaning

the torn wings are carried by the worker-ants
some useless feathers are left above a sand mound

soon there are skeletons of frail bones
baked throughout the year by the sun

soon only dusts
the mother sparrow as we knew it from science
does not keep a memory

they keep on their far journey
nest from nest to nest on those seasons

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mother Who Hid Her Psycho Son

You drugged him in your house

The friendship was fine but what you did
Was not right what you did was cheap

You bragged that everything is safe that
Everyone in the house is sound that the

Weather is fine that the state-of-affairs is okay
What you did was cheap, you gave him

The drug for him to sleep the day long
He swallowed what you gave him
Hook, line and sinker
While we
Party and drink. eat and laugh he was

There inside with all his tantrums & nightmares
He was screaming and wanted to run away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mountain And The Snake

a long black yellow snake with stripes
arrives hissing
looking for a prey
a rat perhaps
but there is none
not even an ant for a snack
and so the long black yellow snake with stripes of green
slides its way to a dark, moist cave
tight on its door
pushing its long slimy body
to the tip of the
cave's orifice to the end of its
intestine

it was a good tickle
and the whole body of the mountain
gives a tremble
a moan and from the slits of its sides
to the tip of its feet
and toes and trees
the whole body of the mountain
moans
happy with the long slimy body of the
snake's skin and bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
the double cab climbs the road
for hours

our purpose is only to
see the highest
mountain in Asia

when we arrive there
it is cold
but the sun is shining brightly
the panoramic view
is clear and
accurate to the eyes

it is Li Po
drunk who is
imagining things

the mountain is not staring
at me

it is me that stares at it
i am not speechless
it is the mountain
that is speechless since
it cannot really speak
naturally

this is not an issue
anymore
it cannot be something
debatable

and then i am taking pride
talking to myself
giving my hand a handshake:

I am sane and i am not imagining things
i am seeing this mountain as it is
 treating it as
 it has to be

inanimate, still,
 lifeless and
 stuck upon its
 foot

it has no feelings
 and i've read
 that there were times
 when it was cruel

(the tour guide keeps
 on talking)

taking lives of men
 who want to give the impression
 that they can
 conquer it

when it cannot be
 when it is not

and does not
 know
 what war is all about

in truth
 all these conflicts are
 simplistically speaking
 man-made
 and self-inflicted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mountain Lovers

See the winding path
Like a thousand connecting boas
Frozen in false stillness
Leading to the foot of the mountain
And there
Hear the quick fall
Of a ripe mango
And the stringing
Of the bamboo leaves
The cracking
Of a bamboo stairway
Antiquity
Leading to a cogon-masked
Door
Walling in a masterpiece
Of a man
And a woman
In love

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mountain Of Malady

in the mountain of malady
the sharp fingernails of probity
on the hands of faith
dig the wells of whereto

time as usual is so patient
no stone is left unturned
layer by layer of fossilized moments
upturned and the quizzical look of
mercy continues to please

the stabs of light sometimes
hurt like murderous intent
but the quest has to continue
we all look for what is inside this
centuries of mysteries

time is cold. trees are felled.
it rains all night. the winds are angry.

at the bottom of it all beyond the thick layer
of lust and desire,
pain and betrayal, shame and fall?

what did you really find?

chunks of golden silence. platinum gaze.
diamond existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mountain Of Poverty

this is what i can tell you:
the children are running in the hills
looking for their favorite butterflies to play
chasing dreams, i suppose, who knows
what they really know and
feel, i was once a child myself, perhaps i have the right to guess
what simple wants they have,

freedom, but i can tell you about something else,
their breakfast today is only brown sugar and rice,
and they have not taken their baths in the river because
the water is dirty, and there is no water system in the hills,
primitive, and still undeveloped, the grasses are not cut
tall and wild, and the coconut trees are not bearing much fruits,
there is drought, and the tenants do not have a good harvest
of their upland rice and there are rats infesting the rice fields,

it rains so hard, the road is slippery and we all have to walk slowly
to keep themselves warm, the men drink wine and smoke
the women do not weave mats anymore, they're sold cheap
and they are so disappointed with what they are getting

sugar is a precious commodity here, no coffee,
salt is expensive, salted fish is a luxury,
bread is like gold here and children do not know what is bread all about
cookies do not exist here

stone age, this is stone age in the midst of an expanding world
the children here are left out
i stare at them as they throw stones at play,
dirt and foul smell, but on the other hand i look at the pictures
that i took on that day

less the smell, less the dirt on their faces,
they are so beautiful, and the mountains are still hopeful.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mountains

you feel like a leaf steady on a pool of water,

around you is thick fog
and beyond is the haze of a misty morning

the house on the river bank is deserted
and the boulders of rocks are gray and hard

the grass is nil dipping its tongue on the shallow waters
ripples of the wind bring the shadows of shimmer

the mountains stand still
merely looking without any hint that it is curious at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mouse In Me Is Back Tiptoeing In The Unwary Kitchen

sleep now my dearly beloved
let me hear the music of your snores
let me turn off the light of the room

let your sleep be so sound and
and comforting for by then when
everything is safe and secure

the mouse in me is back tiptoeing in
the unwary kitchen to eat what is so
luscious and delicious and so forbidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mouth Of The Sea

the sea this afternoon
is divided into two halves
parallel to each other
the brown part touches the shore
the one faraway is the
bluish one, deep and
silent,

once again, the mountain has reached
its destination through its river
swallowed by the mouth of the sea
into the depths of its silence
on this cycle of life
and then
unto death.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Movie In Your Slumber....

at night
in bed the ceiling
puts a movie
in your mind

the wings of an
angel
flaps around the
light bulb
stars hang there
like jewels
space of darkness
expands
and you are on your
own
as you travel in the
labyrinths of
slumber....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Movies And Us

back to the thrill
in the movies
we are caught in
the web of its
transparent truths
we stop for a while
like posts
when electric lights
begin to
blink, when we
finally see ourselves
in the characters
when we wake up
and find that we too
fall short
of the measure
for goodness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Moving Train Of Thought

people are busy
untangling knots
thinking about how
much time to spend
and money to waste
on setting themselves
free from what binds
their hands

is there a need i ask?
what makes you free is
ultimately the mind

even if you have untangled
the knot
or one by one destroy the
link of one chain to another

if the mind is stuck
like a fly to a sticky trap
the wings still cannot fly

there are no forests
no trees
to a moving train

RIC S. BASTASA
The Much Abused Stars

speaking of stars
sometimes, speaking of sometimes
the moon
why always the moon? what crime in poetry
has it committed
to always accuse it of being
too silent?

screeching cars, searching for scars,
breaching brakes, couched screams
ice cream on rocky road flavors
tongue twisting on a trip for tarts
for a start

i guess, things are alright with us
here waiting for the bus.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Much Needed Rest.....

the day
is ending and here
you are
too exhausted for
the long day's
toil,

you stop for
a while
looks at the sky
and tells God
i've done it,

with a little
conceit though
saying, "God you
owe me lots
of the deprivations
today." (and

i hope that you
pay it with
all your love
and compassion,
that when i
finally meet my
end too
just like this
ending day,
i may find
my rest in
You.)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Multiple Selves Inside A Conversation

you want to catch me
and we talk
you propose i accede
they you are into a conclusion
and i agree

and then when you are about to
leave i say the last message that
i only give you back what you had given me
within the framework of your mind
everything taken by us is enclosed
and i look for myself there
there isn't any.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Murmur Of The Sea

you look for a company
it is a strange land
the sands there do not have footprints
it is what you like
uninhabited landscape
rocks with small crabs
huge eyes
it is the sea that murmurs
you have been
junked.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Muscles

the muscles shrink
the fats bloom like fertilized flowers
uglier now
to the brain that does not stop thinking
to the feet that do not know already how to dance
to the abdomen that does not bend
what have you
when you look at yourself in the mirror
you become a denial
of your true nature
a freak ballooning on a baloney of
the future that does not bring you
a tray of fruits
a bouquet of flowers
but it has a gift for your handwork
a niche
and six feet under

RIC S. BASTASA
the thin, tall man, is looking for those words,
that he must garnish on his short story on the making,
for he leaves poetry for the moment falling short of metaphors,
he seeks advice from me, whom he thinks is taller, and thinner,
and already at home with the words that he thinks i have chosen so well,
but i without hesitation tells him
pointblank, like killing him with those empty bullets,
that he must not believe me, as i am only inventing myself, recreating
every part of me from a long time immersion of a drowning experience,
lucky, i have not died, and on fortitude, i have learned the art of breathing
through my mouth, my nostrils uncooperative to this endeavor of living,
it is the experience that reinvents us,
redefining our borders, sorting out those conflicts unsolved by wars,
not living in peace most of those times,
the struggles keep coming,
and describing those words with bloody bodies lying on the road
deserted, and feeling all completely abandoned,
i ask him if he sees those poems naked and dead
those short stories buried and without titles yet.

he is blind because of the money,
he is lost, because he is trying to satisfy his own hunger and thirst.

and so, there he is, without poems, strapped of sentences to start
his short story: the journey is canceled.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Museum In Calbayog

what could be inside these
burial jars,
some souls of our dead ancestors
perhaps
restless in our ignorance
these log coffins
and jarlets and cups and howls and saucers
and dishes back to the
14th century

coins, heirlooms
our wooden saints
the altars they constructed
chalices and monstrances

how can i not know?
how can i be an alien
to my own country?

they have plates
and saucers and spoons
how could they have
eaten on bare hands?

they have their God
and religious chalices
how could they be
pagans?

hey, i am thirsty
i need more drink
about my history.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Music In My Mind

orange notes
fading for the
yellow sun

RIC S. BASTASA
The Music Of The Moon

THERE IS pain in my eyes
but the glisten like glass against the
light,
there is pain in my arm
but my fingers make a circus
show
to cover the pain
inside,

there is pain in my heart
but my mouth speaks about
other things
and true enough
no one notices
what suffering is all about

Will pain be more painful if it
is known?
Or will it do good for the rest
if we keep this pain
silently as our own?

Soon i shall know
that people are just moving on with their lives
Pains kept secret
Disappointments remaining unshared

Perhaps none can help
There is no balm that usages

I tried telling a friend once
and he's saying It's none of his business

Pain is beautiful
In the silence of the room
Where the sound of sobbing
becomes music for the moon.
The Music Of The People....

there are times
when we lose control
this time our necks
are tempted
our feet are mindless
our hearts beat
not for us but for that
which comes- -

this music from the
streets, the music of
the people
and the children at
the park
the ladies at the museum
and the men on
the farm

our necks swing like
the beatings of our hearts
our mouths scream with
joy
our feet do the gangnam
and we are freed from
the restraints of the
system

sometimes we even shout
the name of our
idols, or even the name
of our God.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Must To Listen....

i am listening to a piano music

it is cheap, there are no hands playing the piano keys

there is no piano even, and there is no pianist
no chair where the pianist is supposed to sit

and there are no hands to make the much needed applause
no one judges here

whether the notes are perfectly drawn
or the musical score appreciable or light

that is not the concern, there are no concerns whatsoever even

it is just the listening pleasure
without people listening without a hall

no exits and no entrances
nothing to enthrall you, but this short pleasure

of just being you alone and receptive
paying attention to loneliness that is shared by many if not all
of these creatures who claim that by being alive they must listen...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mutants Of Mole Hill

it is the nature of your kind
mutants of mole hills
not to feast on repetition
not to eat a bore
the first glance is enough
once is always over
it is always a craving for something new
there is no one, nothing about fidelity
the scatter is love,
life is just a wink of the eye
the other world is just a theorem of a philosopher that does not deserve a second of your time.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Myriad Stars....

never mind it
may be too late

at any rate there
is no use being like

them. you have yourself
somehow and it is

enough. feel the
comfort of your

uniqueness and do
not look to the

right or to the left
some are much better

or some are worse better
look at the sky

be enthralled with
the myriad stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mysteries Of The Night

after the rain
you go back to the garden

below the rustic palms
and the old mango tree

you sit upon
a bench

the air is cool
you contemplate
deply

now the trees are
speaking to you
and they are grieving

you listen
to the footsteps of the ants

you feel the softness of
butterfly wings all over your skin

your mind scatters
like fireflies

the night makes an
agreement with you

you shall be muted
to keep the secrets of this
silent moments

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystery Of Our Faith...

the seed
has to be buried
and time
careses it
silence mourns
the sky cries
sheds rains for
tears
no one minds
this symbolism
of our faith
until the seed
cracks
the top of the soil
as one begins
to see the sprouting
bud

it is alive
it is alive!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystery Of Silence Deep And So Intriguing

sometimes we are misled
illusions are too many to detect and delete

the way objects appear to move in circles
when they are not
it is so hard to convince ourselves that the movement is straight
stabbing the dark secrets of the weaker mind
and the sluggish hands

the way we generalize and forget about the accuracy of a detail
like the lines on the tails of the slimy fish swimming upon a brackish water
that in a moment disappears from you leaving you only a ripple of waters

and then the mystery of silence
deep and so intriguing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystery Of You

it is the mystery of you
that mystifies me

as i worship you
you turn into light

as i chant before you
you turn into fire

as i fuse into you
you become this blazing

fire of the world
not consuming it
like a big nuclear
destructive explosion

you become again
the light and the warmth

you burn us all in love
and we become the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystery...

it's the mystery that you have invented, and she loves you touching your ear with her tongue....

time tell the truth,

and love is gone it is gone, just like that....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystical

ALL that i want
that i dream about is that
i shall occupy
that place that rightfully belongs to me
the seat at the last
the floor at the bottom of the sea
the edge
where i am no longer myself

all i want is to be lost forever
not remembering anything

it is not that chair where we know what sitting is
or the bed that we have learned to recline and take sleep

it is not the sky where wings of birds fly
it is not the sea where fish as we all know swim

it is always something else
that we all yet have to know

RIC S. BASTASA
The Mystical Boat....

what was most
valuable, even
memories of
mother, even
memories of myself,
i have always
and will always
be ready to throw
them away,
the function of
forgetting is
to prepare you
to another dimension,
for if you cannot
discard them
or if you hesitate
the binds become
stronger and you cannot
jump into another boat
in that mystical
moat, it was as simple
as he says it,
discard, throw away,
shed off your skin,
leave those eyes
cut the tongue,
remove your feet
and hands,
where can those
shoes be?
for at any moment
the boat without any
rudder arrives,
without anchor too
and you are never
told

where to?
The Naked Body In The River

i put you in the river
naked,

perfect body for my
feast at night till dawn

and then i sleep in
the morning

too tired
these loving eyes

still dead about you
someone beyond

the touch of my fingers
naked body

so beautiful but
it has no eyes

and hence
cannot see me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Native Of The House

he mistakes joseph
as the shepherd
and the thought the
sheep are goats
he does not know
what the star means
or what does Mary do
or what is the significance
of the baby at
the manger

and yet the world
claims that it has
educated already
all the people....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Natives Of Tabon

they sat on a
mountain of gold
and ate
wild ferns and
beetles
sometimes they
blame the gods for
their
misfortune....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nature Of Freedom

freedom is
movement, the flying of arms
the winged hands
fish fingers

we look at it from the severance point of view
the possibility of coming back
for another wholeness
is nil

it is the union with another one distinct from us
like a star to grass

like ships without anchor without any definite port to land
like meteors moving to an uncertain destination

freedom is not a wall
never a pillar

it is the wind always the wind no matter how you try to hold it
with your hands

its escape is its nature.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nature Of Tyranny

blood has flowed
so much of it
under the bridge

life is wasted
in future's name

tyrans are
overturned
replaced by
heroes who in
due time
shall become
themselves
tyrans in their
own name

RIC S. BASTASA
naughty kid.
mother did not take
him to the neighbor's funeral
on a very hot day,
naughty kid
kept in the house
wanted retaliation by
pulling all mother's
African daisies
to die under the sun,

naughty kid
wanted mother to buy him a
boat which costs a week
salary of papa
broke all papa's chairs

naughty kid now that
you have kids of your own
feel how is it to have
naughty kids too and
a hard-headed mom,

keep the generation intact
do not complain
dance the cha-cha which
mother taught you
when she was alive...

you really have to...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For Affirmation

how i tried to be just myself in the corner
like a stone
but it is not at all possible
i am not just a stone
i am a worm

how i wish just to wriggle
and live in that
small leaf
but it is not at all possible
i am a butterfly

how i wish just to flutter
from one flower to
another
but it is not at all possible
i am a bird

how i wish to be just a bird,
a cloud, the sun, the moon
or the thousand stars

and then i become
a man

and it is enough
you just called my name
and it is perfectly a good beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For An Institution And A Philosophy

do not be too proud
to say that you do not need temples
and houses and
philosophies

I've been there and it does not please
me at all

the rain was heavy
and the night was so dark
i miscalculated it

the air was so cold
and the foxes are many

the snakes are still
assessing whether to attack and then bite
and take what is good
for their bellies

i am going back home
for good.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For Drama

let us say, Goliath, finally realized that he really loves Bathsheba who is now in Chicago finally taking care of the old woman. Bathsheba sent the rumor that she is now living-in with somebody and that is the end of their marriage. Goliath isn't huge at the last, and Bathsheba isn't that pure anyway. They lead their own lives now. As true individuals.

The journey of separate souls is a big drama. One does not really like it. But this happens.

Crying, and then of course at the end, one gets used to it. Behind two kissing lips, the sun rises after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For Emptiness

a door's way
to welcome you is
simply to open
itself

the living room
outdoes it
but letting you
breathe
more space

the common
denominator of this
entertainment
equation is still
the capacity
to contain
emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For God

sometimes we deny this need.
most of the times, it is more of
forgetting, because there is so
much fun, so much noise, and
we are drunk, and always when
sober, there is someone beside
to provide the heat and the smoke.

then you fall, and badly hurt, then
you find yourself alone in the room
and you are having seizures, sick,
and poor, and no one answers your
call for help. The bankbook is empty.
The clouds are dark. There is
thunder. Lightning strikes your
roof. The fire burns your house.
No fireman is water.

God comes in. You did not even call.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For Poetry

Poetry is not
social climbing

its stairs somehow
are not easy to make

hands are trembling
and body is having
its uncalled for seizures.

when i am lost
poetry is a map.

when life is messy
it becomes a mop.

when life becomes
harsh, unbearable
or questionable,

it becomes my
saving grace

although poetry does
not provide the answers,
it creates an ambiance
for solitude where life
smoothes out like a
flatiron to my crumpled
shirt,

it's a hammock
where i can sleep and
a checklist what to do
for the rest of the
fearful hours.

poetry is therapy.
it embraces those who
belong to the category
of the injured,
the confused,
the stricken,
the bleeder,
the crying loser,
the depressed
and even those on
the verge of
insanity

those who go out of the
herd
jump over the fence,
steal the moon,
sifts the light of the sun,
deant poison,
concoct
a potion, and

like those goldfish
or salmon or koi
run counter the flow
and rage against all
odds
of the masses

to become enlightened
to be cured,
to be whole
again,
to be integrated back
to life,
to the pulse,
to glory,
to Light
to God.
The Need For Sleep

What we watch pushes us
to leap
some to death but i prefer
faith,

a leap of faith as soren calls it

what i watch i soon conceive
and deliver birth to baby
ideas

birth, rebirths, lovely
blooms of roses and

thorns but these are just
but hazards to
growth

what i watch pushes me to write
what i love what i feel with disgust

i keep these eyes wide open throughout the darkness of my life
gazing

i am not looking for answers anymore
i am just trying to enjoy the view
savor

what lesson can i take
back into my sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need For Tolerance.

when that frog wants everyone to be frogs, when it says that everything watery belongs to it, when rain is the only solution to all the problems of this world, or that the tongue is the most powerful tool to convince how life must be lived, the love for that slime, ruling that each intelligence is measure by the length of one's jump, or that eyes must rotate a hundred and twenty degrees,

i shrug my shoulders, twist my nose, i raise my hand and for the last time says, it is time to say goodbye.

my world lies on the brink of a disaster and the only way to survive is to make tolerance official.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need To Be Broken

we may never realize the need
to be broken, to be shattered, and be scattered into fine pieces
like a pod, like some seeds with wings
from fruits that ripen and rot and dry and ferns that wilt and crack and turn to powder,
that the wind takes and brings to the far corners of the world
in grafitti,
like the pores of mushrooms shaken by thunder and lightning
during a very strong storm and spread like dust and grow again
like white round stones on fertile hays and on the side of banana shrubs

because it is only thru this breaking
and shaking that some lives begin to grow and flourish

like us

when we are broken when we open like basins
trapping and saving and drinking the pouring rain
nature's wisdom seeping to the crevices
of our brokeness and our openness

as the expulsion begins

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need To Be Faraway

it is only when
i am far away

beyond the reach of
this civilization

that for a
little while

i quit
writing because it is this
distance
that keeps me
sane

it is the nearness
of all these
little things around me
that keeps
my hands moving

cultivating a garden of
words
to hide
the weeds

to please what has
been
creating havoc
in that warring
hole of
my empty being

RIC S. BASTASA
The Need To Be Shaken

a novice
somewhere in Tamontaka
one day
was asked to take leave and
advised to live his life
outside the silent walls of
the old seminary

he is sad of course
for in his whole life
all he wants is to become
a priest

i ask him the reason
why
he was junked, (a word
too cruel for him
to hear)

he was told
by his superior
'Manny, you need to
be shaken! '

i know what it means.
He didn't

but just the same
i left the place where he wanted to stay

all his life

RIC S. BASTASA
The Needed Change

we lived a life, repeated over and over again
on one code of restraint
coupled with the taboos of our traditions
made by no other legislators who are
humans like us

those ahead of us lived a very lonely life
sticking it out even on verges of depressions and
on the thin boundary line of sanity and
cleanliness

we are taking the same road, tired and helpless
and so predictable and those who swerved and
delineated from the line are turning into
ostriches with their muddy feet and useless wings
soon they will be slaughtered
their bones chopped into pieces
their flesh eaten by the bastards of our times

i am the suspicious man at the back seat of the car
i doubt the driver and i have questions for the man beside him
i like the view outside: green mountains and roadsides flowering
and bird flying low over the heads of hills
searching for their prey

soon i will demand that the car be stopped
i am getting out and be the master of the winds
i protest and summon all creatures
for the needed change.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Neglected Pond

i may have neglected this pond
some fish are no longer swimming
eventually die in the water
their same burial place
some moss float and the lotus
has not borne any flower since
that day of mourning

someone as i leave may take
notice of this pond
and have pity and pour
everything there
to revive it or
take more perhaps for the
replacement

a new koi or
a gold fish
white pebbles and
a janitor fish

it does not matter for i still grieve
and grieving does not know what hope is
what a new house means
the trails to San Antonio
what are they? but same vomiting mud
and i won't take it
for an answer

RIC S. BASTASA
The Neighbor

it begins with
a bouquet of white flowers
beside the red
carnation in that big
house by the sea

listen to the sound of
the water fountain
it greets us welcome
with a song

then the white car beside
the yellow road
closed and too private

on the other side of the road
someone looks at us
in confusion, smiles a bit
and shows disdain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Neighbor In A State Of Depression...

he had the bad motives
she knew it
when they make love
he overdoes it
she suspects something wrong
the more
when she is sleepy
he keeps touching her hands
saying i love you so much
she picks him up from the ruins
of his bipolar self
he was nowhere to be found
broke and broken
she knew it from the beginning
this man is her gold digger
she cooks for him
she washes his clothes
and keeps his secrets until one day
she burst into utter sadness
depression is back
she lost her fortune
and he is nowhere to be found.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Neighborhood

in this affluent neighborhood
noise is a stranger
it is kept away by the fences
that keep taller
every year
by the bushes that are trimmed
like pillars
by the vines that stick like
epoxy on
the walls of their houses
by the turrets that look to the road
always with suspicion

there is always the feeling of
fear and loneliness
on every gates
which by the way are mostly
painted blue.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Neighborhood At Night

at night
the cats on the roof

in heat.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Arrival

back to the room
the silence keeps sticking
on the curtains
unmoving despite
the breaths that
he had brought along
to make the
lonely room envious
of his
becoming.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Hero....(A Parody)

Killing is a way
to telling that society has
exceeded the limits of
tolerance

it is an invitation too
to kill the killer

but, somehow, no one has
picked the
challenge yet

the non-violent has grieved
buried the victims
and prayed for peace
released the doves to the sky
instigating once more
the killer
to kill some more until it gets
bored
with its
dastardly act.

there is a time for boredom too
killing included

the good man has not even tried
killing a fly
or a mosquito

so what's next killer?
we have a crowd for you.
Feast on them
We will count the dead and buy the coffins
we will sing the funeral songs
praise the heavens
you have served as the best terminator
of other people's suffering.
good job, Keep going.
You are a hero.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Journey

it must have been the fruit of a trance
i must have spoken about a truth
that upon waking up (whatever that is)
i do not remember

it is a stranger that i face that insists upon a name
and address
hoping that i will soon remember it and give it
a temporary home

what was it? i still do not remember
i tell it i do not remember there is no exactness about this
remembering game

i resign into a chasing game, look i could be you and you could be me
i am certain now, there is something else between us that we love
to identify with

ah, it is you, i can feel it, there is no longer a bridge there
the river rises and overflows

someone at the other side of the bank calls your name
with missing letters, with some syllables that you have to guess

and then you walk away, and you know where it is now
and whom.

RIC S. BASTASA
any new 'lady' in town
has always the right to claim
the crown that she is
a professional virgin
much to all paying men's
ironic chagrin.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Light Has Come From On My Jalousie Windows

the first thing i do in the morning is write my new poem
borne of the night
too weary to dream
but this poem keeps on stalking
always wanting to be written

write,
stare to space and let that stare linger for a while
like gathering some dust in air
or spraying the air with your shower of thoughts
speak
to yourself
like reminding yourself with words that have become too unfamiliar
because they are not spoken
words too get impatient and jealous
because of unuse
and furious too because of abuse
words too have lives of their own
and even feelings of their own
so you are telling me

be cautious be too patient and considerate
be compassionate
be strong
be happy be prayerful

i write the words again
on the positive side of things
the happier
hopeful categories

i open some shutters
slide some thoughts
inser my gaze and
spread some scrutinies

i am seeing a new light
from the jalousies

it is the soft morning light
and i really like it

i stand still and look
above this room
down to the things
below me

i see people moving
wearing the uniform
to their offices
they go

i almost forget,
it is a working day also for me.
the morning light has enticed me again,
i repeat, my friend, i still like it

here.

RIC S. BASTASA
on those younger days
when i went up to the high and lonely mountain
i wrote about a young emaciated brown girl in the faraway hill
thriving on a chunk of muscovado
sugar and a handful of off-white steamed rice for breakfast
there was no dried fish on the plate of a banana leaf

i had written about an unjust social order
and i dreamed of immediate reforms

it was when i too was struggling then
over a loss of an identity in the city
over a poverty that struck us like a plague
of the century

now things have changed a lot
i cannot trace that girl
and the place where she once lived had been all erased from the map
the road had been closed
and the hill flattened to the ground

and i do not long for change anymore
my voice has mellowed like a cat with a wriggling fish in its mouth
it is silenced by my own social sinfulness
this contentment from within
because the social order now has fed me well

i have become a man stripped of its restless soul
masked and displayed as another useful tool

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Poet In Town

the new poet in town laughs
at his finding
that when he write
his poems
his only purpose
is that the poem
must not be understood
by anybody
because it is only
through this way
that they will say
the new poet in town
is deep
with his sorrow
and panicky with his
pain and
lamentable with his
foment

the critique
scratches his head and
proclaims
the glory of the new poet in town
saying

'this is the best poem i have read'
(because he does not understand what it means
though sounding like a hollow pipe that you sling with a stone
saying ' ping, xing, tsing, ting, tang tong, oinnk., , toinkk'

'excellent' the last critic with a tainted glass declares.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Room...

as i open another door
and enter the room, i see
a different world, but i guess
this is it, it is destined to
be mine, and i am faced with
challenges now, what to do,
with what is at the command
of my hands,

i sit on the chair, which i
think had long been reserved
for me by destiny, and i begin
to think, 'what can i do with
all these?'

the inner voice says, 'you are
going to be different',
'you can do much better'
'you are going to correct the
errors of those who
committed the wrongs' in this

room, in this sinful table, on
this shameful floors.

'shall i call in the priest
to bless this room again?'

'there is no need', the voice
sings, and you merely have to
listen.

and i tell myself. I shall die
here, and it will be in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Routine

dinner at six pm
blackout comes at 7
so we sleep as early as that time
and with nothing to do
we make love in the dark
and too tired
we oversleep till 5 the next morning
when electricity resumes

we sleep without air-conditioning
pre-conditioned now
to this long lasting emergency situation

i content myself to the sound of silence

some chirping birds sometimes
and crowing cocks at dawn
and screaming chickens landing
on the ground

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Scary Thing About America

i am told
about the new scare
and i am scared
and you have to start moving on
somewhere
here back at home
with our nipa huts
and morning glory salads
less the winter
and the chill
we are waiting

welcome back
my old friend
the river is not as cold
as you think
and the trunks of the trees
are not as rotten
as you once wrote

the road back home
is not bumpy
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Stone In The Hallway

what he did
was indeed notorious
hiding himself
on different names
using his
expertise
on hurting
an innocent bystander
like you

what adds injury to
insult is when you
meet him
he is as gentle as
a lamb
coy as a puppy

at your back
he is the fire dragon
by which if you
are careless enough
you get burned
in seconds

i've heard him
laugh
in one of his
common
occasions

if only
he had known
that you are
descended from
the lineage of
Medusa

he could have
not
turned into
a stone

as he
deserves it
so

he gazed at you
fearlessly

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Story In Town...

ey they thought
all of them that no man can ever step on the moon
this is outrageous!
impossible!
they all think
love never blooms in the world of soldier ants
those that are
hungry for themselves

that night there lived a writer
somewhere in those misty hills
i do not know
whether he is talking about himself
or someone else
but it is a fact now
the characters are true
and still alive

they who raised violets in the desert
one moonless night
they put a star
their last hope
that morning
a tiny flower blooms
so tiny
that it escapes the attention of camels
and their riders

from where waters rise into the sky
building a new river
majority of course
despite having drank a glass full
still
do not signify belief
they all claim
we are still asleep...

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Teacher

he prides himself about
this job
where he is all wise
and his students listen
he drives the points
like he's the hammer to
his nails

somehow the old teacher
listens

it is not supposed to
be

he picks a snail
a house actually where the hermit
crab lives

he whistles and the crab comes
out
learning the song of the
master

the wind, soft as breeze
the openness like the wide gate
of the morning sun
between the breasts of the hills

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Trend...

there is a way
to be direct, even in this

you tell the truth
not wrapped in metaphors

you let the world know
using the right word

in bold statements and
then you disappear

somehow there is another
way to be indirect

about our personal truths
which should not ruin

others, or carry them into
a contagious affection

now this is it
your truth sandwiched by

delicious similes
and comfortable metaphors

you may use a fable
or even a fantasy

you drive a point or
a nail

not using hammers but
that hush and whisper

your flowers are hands
you touch a tendril
The New Trends...

we keep on going places
now
the places take us
into forgetting
what calamities of the minds we have had
what lapses
of the common experience
the black and white color of life
assumes the
rosy cheeks of delights
the daffodils on the mountainside
the cottons in those clouds
the vastness of the plains that we pass by
the ranges of mountains that
amaze us
we are conquering the limits of our
daily wishes
we are trying to reread the signs
and find
new dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
The New Venus...

all wet
this morning
at the beach
she rises
from the water
like a new born
Venus
from her
shell

RIC S. BASTASA
The Newly Adopted

he is happy about
his first born

a girl, a beautiful one
but he cannot marry
the mother since
he is still too young

then he comes to us
crying for help

now we shall have
another life in the middle
of our emptiness

this is the filling up
of the void
and this will make him smile
for another day

RIC S. BASTASA
The Newly Found Love For Isolation

i am going
for the lighter side of life
i pretend
that i am recently born
with a mind of
my own

i promise myself
that i can stand alone
and behave like an
island of the
vast ocean

the irony happens

people come
they become interested about
the meaning
of isolation

they search for what
is virginal
they want
something original

and then they will say
they will miss me a lot

that they really love me
and it is late that they realize this

the come in hordes
bringing with them their boats

when they arrive however
i am no longer there

RIC S. BASTASA
The News About Tony

when i learned the other day that tony my classmate in philosophy has become Jesuit provincial i did not take that as something that must be envied as something that must make a man greater than himself or anybody else.

what he is is what he is. a stone is a stone. birds shall always be birds and sky changes nothing every fading every rising of the sun.
every run that runs is still nothing but run.

running is running in the run.

the basic man. simplicity nothing more like a petal that a flower owns it cannot boast anything of it to the sun who knows every second.

shedding off. wearing clothes. going to another place.
putting bags in a hotel room after a plane ride.

all these are but fabrics of time in our body.
i am into a choice of oblivion. Every track i have i keep on erasing.

each day is a note. Like a magnet decor on the ref.
Like a word that i say to you. Like this poem that you read which shoots like a sigh in the air.

what do you see? nothing. What have you heard? come to think again.
Nothing. Nothing.

Come on. Come to the conclusion. Everything here is nothing.
This is not the er is this the hour.

Tony is not happy. And so Am I. That is the truth that the empty earthen jar has been preaching to the mountain when we left it there sipping rain, keeping sunshine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The News On TV

the news on TV have given all the illogicality
of the present times
thus she says
the innocent go to prison
the guilty are set free
the rich become richer
the poorer becoming poorer
to each his own
no one cares
this is her country going berserk
over selfish interests
the early morning news tell it all
she fasts
she feasts on sighs
and numbness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Next Boat To Ride

Another strong typhoon on the brink
It is asking
Which boat is next to sink?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Next Life

In the next life
you will be a tree
grounded,
immobilized
but fruitful still

next is you,
you become a turtle
with a finished house
to live and carry

next is you,
always having light
a firefly

and you
shall be the crocodile
you can live
well both in land
and water

and you
shall be the star
so beautiful and
yet so distant

and you
shall be the stone
hard and so
unfeeling
no worries
no angst
no pain
no joys either

and you
who has suffered much
but survived
without any word
of protest
shall become one
of those
gods
in your chosen sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Next Monday

i wonder what Monday
shall give me? what shall
i amount too?
but soon it will come
and i am trying to
explain to myself,

what dying can possibly
mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Next Poem
	his is the next poem that i am telling you about.
it wants to tell you something, but not in secret really,
i am open, and i like open fields, like open ideas
wanting to embrace and be embraced by the world.

absence too, is open. The open arms wait for the coming
of absence. Absence is a wide space wanting to be filled by
love, and love is elusive, and love is unresponding to the
emergencies we are in.

but let me not talk about it. Let me tell you and take you back
to what i have started. I like the mirror in the living room broken
into a hundred pieces, all in the name of love.

i like to have as many mirrors as i can have. Tiny broken pieces.
I will take one. And all i want in this short life that we have,
the life of a fruitfly inside that experimental cupboard,
or that transparent cellophane, let death come.

i have this piece of broken glass. I want to reflect my light.
Do you like it? I want to reflect the light of God, do you like it?

Take it for what it is. Each piece has a reflective index of its own.
The face value of things. Do you like it?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Next Sunrise…

mother died from diabetes
and father too lonely to bear
the loss
followed soon by drinking
his way to
the other side
finally he died
from a heart attack

it was only a year
of difference
when he put mama's
picture always on his
cHEST as he watered
life with so much
tears

he did not like to live
anymore
as he removes those
dextrose from his
veins

now you are feeling
sad about your mother's
death my dear cousin

be sad but be brief
and be concise about what
you want to happen
next

put in mind
they have finally taken
their rest
as we still continue
this wrest

today is a beautiful day
do not be lonely
if you are going to be sad
make it brief
more days are coming like waves

if you are not that quick and wise,
you may not see the next sunrise....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nice And Responsible Crowd

it is not human
oh, the ocean of people at the mall
though without waves
can drown us all into
anonymity and oblivion
they are not the choices
of the hour
the isolation amidst
the crowd
the scream that only
the buzzing sound of the
masses
can ignore

there is more to these
books, poetry, history, law
science
the novelties of thought
the lonely flights of thought
deeper
and deeper into the jungles
of truths

you discover what they cannot
find
these responsible crowd of
leaves and
pages
or indexes and
and streams of ideas
long asleep and
never awakened
by the daring
knight
of the isolated self

i imagine sometimes
the purification
of mud into the filters of
sand and pebbles

there is no speech much nobler
that the gushes of
the air and water
and the firmness
of land.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nice, Good Feeling

Love like all knowledge
Is a remembering
It has its own wisdom
Its forebodings in
This individual, I,

I shall travel this
World, not on the pages
Of your book, to find
This place, in you,
That which I lack,
That which my being
Points always points
Towards you, till you
Are next to me, so near,
Filling me; this emptiness,
I am transfixed; transfigured
For my real self, this feeling,
It is nice to be here, at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nicest Theme

What’s is the nicest theme to write about?
Girls with blue dresses coming out of the red car
Without panties
The cooperative wind
The onlookers
In their wildest dreams
The excitement of having to see
Reds and blues
And blacks

White too. Shades. Grays and pastels.
Nuns praying the rosary. Priests getting out
Of their habits.

We read a lot. Anything. Magazines.
Comic books. Serious novels. Nice themes.
All about them. Their getting out into the open.
Their darkest hours. Those empty rooms.
Cloud nine. Thirteenth floor.
Whatever.

There is also the nicest thing about
Myself.
Not arrogance. Not self-pity either.
Not the usual secrets. Motels and hideaways.
Islands with white sands. Or having to fly
Kites in the rain.

There is something nice about myself.
But I know you will not like to hear about it.
I am not telling. I am not writing.

There are images. In-between. There is this
Murky river. A painting with nothing but a river.

Think seriously. I am there with you.
I know, you won’t say something.
It is not over yet. But it is not worth any sense.
Forget about it. Let’s move on.

RIC S. BASTASA
I remember pretty well
As I write these
Poems, these unlikely
Unbecoming poems
Of a legal mind
Wanting still
To craft
A bridge poem
To connect
Two untalking
Worlds

Nick Joaquin indeed
Wrote so well and
Won the hearts
Of Filipino
Literati when
He gave them
The Portrait of
A Filipino as
An Artist

In fact the story
Was made into
A play and Nick
Was invited to watch

An actress who
Played a minor role
Was so irritated
About this drunken
Old rugged
Foul smelling
Alcoholic
dirty
Man,
And seeing him
drank as
Usual with lots
Of beer,
she shouted
omigod!
shouted at
At him

"old man, this is
a nice play, so please
do not watch it drunk
and disappoint us
with your unruly
behaviour!"

she felt he was just
kind of rude
uncultured
and disrespectful
to the content
of the play
of the portrait
of the Filipino
as an Artist.

she
agreed
the story
was grand
the play grander

what she did not know
she was shouting
at Nick Joaquin
the author
of the story
the
mighty author
of the story
that was made
into a grander play
of the century

Nick Joaquin left the theater
The actress did not really know
What she was saying about
Authorship
and
behavior.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night After Love

it makes me guilty sometimes
that i prefer
to be alone
early in the morning
but the happiness of simply being myself
embraced
in the silence of my own arms
transmutes this
stone into
a sunflower

i guess you have felt the
magic
that solitude brings
when lovers finally part ways
after
that ecstatic fusion of light
and motion.

RIC S. BASTASA
on that night i slipped on the cold field
and fell upon
a certain hole
with the depth
of a thousand silences
and then
i experienced the pain
so much pain
that i heard a certain
howling
of my soul

nobody hears
perhaps only the ears
with the wisdom
of nothingness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night Deepens

the night deepens
silence shares its
solemnity
more felt than seen
teaming up with
darkness where light
in the form of a wick
from a burning candle
reminds you
about self-consumption
the way
a path ends itself
in losing

the way a view blurs
as it joins
an endless horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night Has Come

i am like an empty cup
the tea i have has been sipped
by you and what i have now is air
specifically
i agree it is your sigh
left by the mark of
you lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night In The Mountains Of My Birth

the usual day here
starts with the songs of birds
waking us up

and then we continue
what we do
gazing and lazy with
what this paradise
is giving us

fresh air is not a bowl
clear skies is not a just a roof
white sandy beaches at the other
end of this open window
chants with the swaying fronds

outside the children are beginning
to play
chasing goats and chickens
jumping and running
to the vibrancy of life

there is no hurry for life here
one is confident about what is enough
cooking potatoes
and roasting young chickens
and fresh vegetables from the farm
serve as salad on the table

the night ends with a handful of stars
and a saucer moon
and then the silence of contentment
where love fills the night
upon those sleepy eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night Is A Good Listener

The night is a good listener
How I wonder how huge its ears are,
How deep its patience in the silence
Of an ocean floor, how wide its embrace,
Like a cool thick forest, like a coiling river,
As though time does not even exist,

The night is listening to me
Intently, like I were her only son,
Because the rest of her servants and mistresses
Are all asleep,
She is so silent, in tiptoes, in a hush,
This night, I can hear how the ants crawl for crumbs,
How the lizards run and play & catch its prey on the ceiling,
How the prey on the other hand, struggles to escape,
How the air gushes on the window pane,
How the whispers of my heart sound like
Some dews dropping on some soft green blades of grass,
Indeed night is so patient, so ever silent,
Though sleepy, it gazes in me, trying to
Understand what all these silent conversation is all about,
The night understands, lip-reading my thoughts,
Listening intently, the night sits, and
Now, signals for an embrace, with arms and heart wide open
Some of her tears are starting to fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night Is A Morning Song Of A Woman

after the night of love
the morning is becomes her song
perhaps even a secret hum
inside her heart
at noon
she perfects a symphony
the kitchen sings with her
the spoons and
grindstones and even the
knife and glasses and plates
she whistles to the
stove
in the afternoon
she is ready with a dirge
at night the funeral hymn
begins
it's  a drag
towards eternal peace

life is like that
in its quest for perfection

RIC S. BASTASA
The Night Is Over

the night was filled with rain
that fell through dawn
it was darker as the stars
and the moon
were kept in the bins
of the loneliness of
space

but nothing lasts forever
a night of storm
calms down in due time
the rain exhausts itself
like the tears of widow
mourning over a love
gone to the other
edge of time

this is our hope for the cocoon
sleep seeds
in time transformed into
full butterflies
of maturity and responsibility
sorrow finally does not overwhelm
death is never an end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nihilist

today i am reflecting on
that usual human trait that he must
be treated as special
someone important
as though the world dies
without him
as though everything alive
or moving stops
when he does not participate
in the process
of living

only to realize that this world
is inanimate
it does not care because it cannot care
it has no feelings at all

how can a road feel your feet?
how can those railings feel your hands?
how can the sun feel that you are having fever?

this is but realistic
man/woman you are not the center of this universe
you have invented the soul
you have taken pride in your imagination
your calculations and measure
your literature and
love and hate and romance and celebrations

what have you now?
that humiliation because even if you die or suffer for years
the world still continues its
daily routine of spinning and revolving
of making days and nights
of making waves and ice
and blowing sands and
flooding cities

at the last moment
before the end of the hours
when all your eyes close
when they say you die and live again
somewhere
come back please and tell me
that what i am telling is not
ture.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nihilist Guest

when you come
we welcome you

faceless and
voiceless yet
you fill the
room with
sounds of
restlessness
with faces of
all our fears
and despite
the years we
still have
no name for
each ripple
each disturbance

and so
what can we do?
we must take you
as guest
welcome you as
part of us

you sit on the
most important
chair and dine
with us
and we hesitate
what to say

we serve you
smoke and
drink and you
leave them
as is
unconsumed
you roam around
each part of the
room
we guide you
with our
helplessness

i spread petals
upon your path
there is no word
still from you

i keep my word
i stick to my
comforting logic

no one lasts
forever
nothing lasts
forever

i am calm and
i stare at you
cluless as to
what is your
purpose

why do you come
and make us
uneasy with what
we are?
and what we
are about to
become?

you have become
part of our lives
and the more we
think the more
we know that
people suffer and
without saying
a word just keep
on moving on
with their lives

misery is universal
it is a purgative
and we who must
accept what is this
all about
less the necessary
denial
have learned to live

each day a struggle
without the bugle.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Noise

the people of this world has produced so much noise
the honk, the fan, the sirens,
all these machines that pierce the ears of silence
all these restlessness
making holes in our hearts

i know, you are not loved
and there is so much noise from your pains
the miseries that seek the company of more miseries
i know you have loved much
much greater much painful than you can even afford to give

the babbles, the ramblings, the rattling of the bones
stripped of their flesh
the restless mind looking for the cure
these aches in every corner of the mind
drink some glasses of hard liquor
take the analgesics of other friends
on the same boat with you

the noise is too much
unbearable in fact not only to our ears
but the protest of all our senses

but wait, try this, this sacrifice
that sits on the corner of this nook
silently talking to itself
the irony of loving and being hurt
the tragedy of the smile
that you force upon your mouth
the upper lip that kisses the lower lip
your hands may caress all that you are
your mind shall rest
in the soft comforting bosom of your heart

try this unprotesting silence
and the noise dies
then you have triumphed
the contentment of your loving arms
embracing no one
but the self that you have accepted
as your friend

the noise leaves, the silence lies
like that beautiful lady waiting on your bed

RIC S. BASTASA
The Noiseless Patient Spider  Of Walt

after reading walt's poem
on the noiseless patient spider i,
tried to verify it outside, i,
stepped out the door and sought
that spider
or any spider for that matter and i,
found one
hanging
motionless on its web
between the jack fruit tree and
the wall of the tamarind
and with my camera i began
clicking
i, want to catch what
is noiseless, and patient
and motionless

i, must, have been too careless
or impatient
when i fed the shot in my pc
the patience cannot be seen
the spider
even
is missing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Non-Believer

between a party and a
book, i choose to write.
between two words, i
bridge our meanings.
upon a heap of rotten leaves,
i ask a prayer of worms
what to say at the end
i never say amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Non-Conformist

Sorry
says the non-conformist
i can't do the
rhyme
does not do
it
will not and
ever won't

it's my life
and thread
my web
like a black spider
in your
nape....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Non-Conformist...

to survive
the art of compromises
sells better in the market
of ideas
the best seller of
course
are those pirated ideas
imitations

to conform is still
the code of
the all time winner

does not convince
me however
i still love the art of sacrifices
confrontational always
with what is right
and true

everyone avoids my products
i stay inside a small house
and it does not matter
i only need a little space
to breathe
and live comfortably
i feast only
with the sights that my eyes
have learned
to fully gaze

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nonsensical

IT IS 11: 46 p.m. Philippine time,
i wake up feeling so congested,
messy, perhaps it is all about the dream
i just had,
climbing a very steep mountain
to take something
that i have forgotten
and then i go down
only to remember
which way, whichever
the feeling of being exhausted
so unlike the washing machine
or the egg beater
and the blender
all mechanical without complaint
of being overused by its
master
so unlike me, oh, here i am again
complaining about my
existence, the worm that waits
smiles
wanting to get even with me
there is something wrong i know
in this monosyllabic monologue of the heart
empty like a soccer field after the game
one shadow left
still looking for the ball
the noise fading in the horizon
light is taken back
yet the sigh is still insisting
that something is left
like a coin or a cigarette butt
nonsense
he strikes back, stupid foolish
sigh, and arms
emptied of content like a
soft drink bottle
left out waiting for the garbage collector
to pick it up
nonsense, now i must say
waste of time
loveless still.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Novel....

divide and the one that you started many years back
about your hero
that you regret writing

now you want to change him
his vision and what he is going to do
in the next chapters
something that he cannot do too
because of what he is known already
to the other characters
they do not expect him to do that
the twist of his character is simply
too unexpected
and they are getting apprehensive
that this novel may not have
a happy ending after all

you think about it for days
you ask and even beg him to understand
that he must fall and be humiliated
and be condemned
but he definitely disagrees and warns you
that if that is the case then
he better be killed and simply be
ended in Chapter X of the novel

you feel pity for him
you think for more days
you give it time tonight
and you decide no to kill him

the novel will not be that good
to kill him or not
that is your eventual decision

at dawn you start typing the
next chapter
you keep him alive
but the novel shall be damned
the other characters of course
shall continue adoring him
till the last chapter.

there shall be no other sequel
on such a bland and usual novel
of that happy ending
that saddest ever-after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Now And Then

we do not remember anymore where we come from
as we all gaze at the endless space of the night
we cannot figure out
how to return and what we once were
we do not remember anymore how hurt we were
we finally decided to stay,
here, this moment,
now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Now In The Noise In The Ripple

It is this interest in the
now
in the
noise
In the ripple of the concrete splash
As the stone is dropped
in a running river

It is not the tomorrow or even the tonight
Of our wishes that is making me live,

In fact our wishes about another nice evening
In the garden’s candle lighted dinner
Is what makes me leave, that will be too much
Honesty for me, it is the life of my lies

That supplies blood to the veins of my existence
I do not have life since then, living has been so
Miserable, your touch is pain, your gaze is pain,

Your asking me how am I, is causing me pain,
I am not true to you, I am not yours anymore,
It is pain, it is this pain, that must decide,
To live like a coward or die once like a brave man

I am a shameless man, and you are too honest.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nth Time....

the slim woman
is licking the ice cream
cone
as though it is the only
ice cream cone in her
whole lifetime

the ice cream vendor who
had been watching her
is urinating for the nth time

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nuclear Jets

Quiet around the aquamarine park
In Clarin
I see dolphins playing
Up to the skies
The nuclear jets are roaring
Toward Iraq moving

RIC S. BASTASA
The Nuclear Thing

the giant mushroom
that mankind grows on
the sea

erushing rushing all of
us to
an abrupt
finesse

how lucky the cockroaches
are
this world has become their
own kitchen
restroom and bedroom
all rolled into one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Number Is 4.

The tiny capillaries of the gumamela
I see. I like to open my palms
Somewhere in snowy Vienna.
Nordic walks

On this month of the year.
No coffee. Just green tea.
Just lasagna and pasta.
No rice. Red tomatoes.

Strictly English, but my little german will
make a little fun. Danke
schon. Yes, gratitude counts wherever
we go.

I do not wish to waste myself away.
I must travel now, or if I don’t
I may not find a glimpse
Of eternity. I like to call a friend
In Calgary and crack a joke and stomp
My feet and make the hardest laugh.
She must hear it.
Soonest. I don’t like
To tell her, I don’t read in my room.
I don’t eat much either. I don’t pray.
I left my rosary in Sto. Rosario.
A child must have found it, there
Is no sign that it shall be returned.

Got tired finally of listening to
A young priest’s sermon. He needs a new
perhaps a boyfriend.
Could be a sugar mama.

I recall the names of women
I make up in bed before I sleep.
There are so many. So untrue. But
There is one name she knows. I like
Her buried there. In her conclusions.
In this memory, tears fall inward
Like a movie played in reverse.

I don’t really like life.
But I still breathe air, like
A hungry man
Grabbing with all hands
Pizza and iced tea. Not minding
Young girls on the other side
Of his table. The number is 4.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Numbers

i think i am beginning to know the numbers
their meanings

inside the big dome the dancers are practicing
the steps are numbered
and the whole day the leader keeps the count

one two three four
five six
seven eight nine ten

eight seven six five
four three
two one

four three two one
five six seven eight
eight seven six five four three
two one

the whole day for the whole week for the whole month
these numbers are counted like

one two three four
five six
seven eight nine ten

eight seven six five
four three
two one

four three two one
five six seven eight
eight seven six five four three
two one

i am standing by the door
looking at the dancers jump to the count of

six five four three
two one
	hey run and stop and run again
and stamp on the left and on the right
and point and slash
and jump and
kick and sway and
stand and kneel
and kick and slash

eight seven six five
four three two one

four three
four three two one

numbers indeed
are numbing
	hey make us numb	hey are making us dumb

five four three two one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Numbness Of Being

sometimes we feel
we are trees
birds roost on one of
our nights
and early morning
even before the sun
shines
upon our leaves
we already experience
a series of
departures

and because these
departures come in so many
forms and
colors
soon we become so attuned
to all

pain becomes a natural thing
like rain
like leaves falling
like winds coming
and then going somewhere

and we have the courage to say,
'who cares? '

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ocean Of Animosities

you just do not really know
if the happy faces you meet on
the street of this holiday reason
are truly happy, or they just
feign it, smiles here and there,
greetings too, to cheer you up
and not to contaminate you with
the deepest sadness of this
humanity: alone on christmas,
save money for the rainy days,
cannot be with family in faraway
places, heavy working schedule,
broken relationships, trying hard
to cope up, and always keeping
that thought, to keep things to
themselves, mind their own life,
and struggle hard just to survive.

oh, it's a concrete jungle right here,
a maddening crowd, an ocean of animosities....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ocean Of Choices

in the ocean of choices
ships sometimes collide
and you become one
of the fatalities
a part of yourself becomes
a passenger unaccounted

you become one of the fishes
in one of the myriad corals
you become part of the
one of the sands of
the ocean floor

in the ocean of choices
you are one of the yachts
racing for a prize
against the storms
and betrayals

then you never become a bridge
you are always one of the islands
in the ocean of choices
you try to swim and
then you drown
to become one of the
tiny stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Octopus

it is enough
that you know
about an octopus

eight hands
with lots of suckers
and a black
spray to lose
you on
your way

do not
associate.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Oedipus Complex

to this lonely boy
the father image has gone blurred
like a fog and so the boy
runs wild in the forest never fears the rain
no monsters in his brain still looking for father's face and body
in all the nooks of his fellow men.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Tree And The Mad Dog

you barked
like a mad dog

i stood my
ground like an
old tree

with what you
did
i became stronger

and here i am
thanks to you
i love myself
more than ever

do not leave
me
if you only knew
beforehand

you should have
stopped
for i have no ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Dog That I Met This Morning

its right eye is missing
there is no eyeball
to see, it is blank and
black,
its left eye looks at me
asking for
a master

to feed it
and take
it away from
the long
road
that takes
it somewhere

i am helpless
and proceeded
to take
my own direction

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Door Of Ancestry

it is an old door,
the jams are eaten by termites
the lock is not working
the hinges are rusty
and without the frame of my hands
it will just fall
as pieces

i imagine the house back
to restore
our ancestry, and i travel to places
to gather
what memories are left

the old men in those far places
are telling me stories
my notebook is swelling like
a river of tears
about to flood the banks of my
heart

many have abandoned
what the house of ancestry has to offer
there is nothing to eat
there and no one is cooking
some
noble concoctions

i am the son of Gregorio and my
grandfather is Domingo
who is one of the five children
of Juan who was married
to Rosa

they sailed away from
Maribujoc
and it was Modesto's rebellion
that carried them
away
to the island of Mindanao

and they cut the trees of the forest
built their homes
and cared for
their families

now i am moving places
into some other places of
no interest

the hours are fading
and the heirlooms are forgotten
i am looking for my roots
for i do not have what i call my own

i knock at the old broken door
of my ancestry
asking for pity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Flame Is Finally Gone

there was this old flame inside the house made of wood
it is alive supported by a wick and a bowl of oil

it is a comfort for blackouts and we all look at it with wonder
we keep it from the wind and the rain and it stands still

one day we find ourselves in great grief
the bowl of glass is shattered and the oil is spilled on the ground

the wick is gone and we searched for it for days
someone so cruel destroyed what we looked up to

then the night comes in without electricity we grappled
the house is silent under a sky without stars

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Flame Of The Heart

i still wonder why she
doesn't want to talk to me
when i broke her heart
25 long years ago.

shall i think that she still
love me?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Flower....

there is only one flower that i have
i am hiding it behind my back
and it is not for you

it is for someone else..

i am hiding it behind my back
so you may not see what it is
so you may not quarrel about it

it is for someone else...

i have only one flower in my hand
behind my back
it does not have complete petals
it is wilting and does not have any scent
it is dead
it is a dead flower and i am hiding it behind my back

it is for someone else....

this is an old flower that i have taken
from my antique trunk
tonight i shall burn it
and it shall have the smoke
which shall tell my story
to the cold moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old House Of My Grandfather

sometimes as i walk early morning
when the suns starts to climb up on the hill
i think of grandfather's house
old, and spacious on top of a hill
overlooking his farm where his carabaos graze
his goat and cows and ducks teem,
oh, those were the years of bounty
and there was no worry,
about what to eat what to do
where to go,
times changed, and now we are always on a race
taking much work, and buying lots of things
sometimes we regret, taking and throwing
going and then returning
apparently, for no purpose and without meaning,
we live in a new house now with glass windows
and iron grill and high and thick walls and fences
we speak less, we move more,
we laugh less, we discuss more,
the old house of grandfather was burned in 1968.
this new house burns all day, and there is no fireman coming.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old House.....

after arriving from the u.s.
dodong went straight to the ancestral house in milad, it

is quite big, with two storeys,
made of hard wood, and nipa roofed.
it stands upon a hill overlooking
the sea far away from the city.

he opened the front door which squeaked wanting to perhaps greet
him and tell a horrible story of what really happened before they
left the place for good after ten long years of wanting to forget.

it is a shame of the family his father said before he died. This
must be kept a secret, something which he carried to his grave.

dodong understands that pain is always there, coming like a stab
in his chest. He can hear the cries of her two sisters, the loud screams
of his mother. He was then a small boy before those three monsters.

it was the time of their fall.
He was tied to a chair where mother was killed. The whole town knew.
But it was still kept a secret.

Happiness is a hypocrisy. Silence is an option. Leaving things slipping
like water from one’s hands.
Now he is back with nothing to do but to pray and forgive. This is not
home. This is a graveyard of family's
tragedy. After a few minutes, he is now ready, to burn this house.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Houses Of Vigan

the old houses
claim their right
not not be changed

they shiver when
you touch
any of their
walls

they fear that you
may soon change
your mind
and proclaim
that beauty lives
in new
creations

you ask yourself
if truth is truer
when tested by the
fading of time

or its ultimate
disappearance upon
the cajolery of
recent promises

the truth frowns upon
you
you are late
and you walk upon the
shallowness of
those reddish bricks

the old houses are howling
with the winds of
change

they have outlived fire
and played on those
earthquakes and
floods

you walk away
and you simply let them be
beautiful in their own ways
magnificent
in those dresses of
cracking paints

they still look regal
on those faces
framed by stones

surely, they have the right
still to be here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Lady

i am saddened by her disposition
she takes side with her word
and honor and she makes it clear

she is with
my enemies,

her name is
mother-in-law.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man

sits on the
hard wood chair
beside the door
facing the
road
always always
waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man  In Our Minds...

we have seen
the same old man
sitting along the
sidewalk smoking his
cigarette
not feeling the pain
perhaps
when that red glow
touches the
skin of his finger...

did he count the
cars passing by?

did he have any
thoughts at all?

we cannot go inside
his mind
neither can we probe
the labyrinths
of his heart

we pass him by
and we face the
world again

we will soon be
like him
and we shrug off all
these fears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man And His Chair....

the leaves of years
swiftly fall

the winds of change
the summers of acceptance
are quicker

the branches of time
have turned bald

a man is alone
but not sad as you expect

it thinks of a boat
sailing
it knows of a place
beyond his chair

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man And The Young Boy

don't do this, and don't do that'

the young boy, unable to understand
asks, ' what is this and what is that? '

the old man beats him with a cane
and makes him kneel
before God

the young boy still does not
understand
why he is being punished
for not having
understood at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man Beside A Huge Tree

i have seen the picture of an old man
beside a huge oak tree

the picture is old
black and white and the kind of one that is strong
for it will last another lifetime

i have not seen the old man
neither the huge oak tree for real

i have the picture of the old man and the old oak tree
and the younger man sleeping
his smooth skin caressed by the fluffing grass

there is a story there and it is all about
gods and dogs
a film about a director who lost his fame
and fortune
about a young gardener who captures a heart
and made it bleed

at the end the old man met a happy death
the old oak tree was gone
but i have not really seen what is real
i have seen only the picture of what i thought could have been real
black and white

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man Friday Of Our House...

dr. ric s. bastasa

The Old Man Friday Of Our House...

dr. ric s. bastasa

the old man friday
is back with us leaving his wife
in the mountains to keep her
sense of home and now he is here
mopping the floors of this
ancestral house which in the coming
years shall be empty too as we
definitely proceed to the journey
without any promise of return,
and where shall he be after this
torture of life and living?
he will leave no child as he is
into another oblivious fathering
into the nothingness of all human
endeavors just like what is happening
to us who were here ahead of his
bickering.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man Has Found True Love Again

If you see him
you may not recognize the old man
whose hair is black as
asphalt
whose nails shine like the new moon

his face a little bit stretched by the magic
of dermatological advanced technology

as a young woman, 19 to be exact clings
over his arms like a sexy leech lifted from
the nearby creek

and he struts this news about his new found love
in church and in the plaza
and most of the time
at the mall
while he takes charge of all the bills
after a hectic shopping schedule
of his true love

a young man looks at them and then from his
face creates a grin
as the young woman winks at him
as though saying

'tonight at ten'.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man In Greece...

somewhere in Greece
now i remember
because of your letter
there was an old man
who holds a piece of
a shattered mirror
that he carries everywhere
and those that he cannot
confront
or say
see directly he does
with his mirror
and he had since then
seen them all

whatever light he captures
he reflects it to those
who are sad like him
and he tells himself now
i understand
now i am no longer afraid
now i can proceed to
the ways of
being alone
what road is left
he must traverse
what thought is there
he must think for
himself
and before he died
(because he died in truth
alone in his bedroom)
he wrote his view of the
world
in that shattered piece
of mirror
still reflecting
whatever small light
he stored
from within....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man Is Bitten

the little boy says
he misses you

and then whispers
he needs money

you are stung but
keeps your calm

'boy' you tell him
' it is bad to ask money
from an old man'

' Grand pa' the young
boy argues

' what will you do
with your money? '

the old man is bitten
by Death who appears
as a young boy
to him

RIC S. BASTASA
there was this old man 
and i always remember him 
tenant of the family for years 
of the vast coconut land 
we own 

he was poor and lived in a very 
small nipa hut 
all house to him 
no sala, no furnitures, just this 
soil kitchen and dirty kettles and 
unwashed tin cups and 
and firewood and pail of water 
from the nearby river 

he got two sons and 3 daughters 
all gone to the city 
also becoming as domestic helpers 
and he would bring a chicken from the farm 
and a goat and some fruits 
to grandpa and 
grandpa would scold him for being too lazy 
that the chicken was thin 
and the goat was small 
and the fruits were not ripe yet for harvest 

and what i remember of the old man 
was that no matter what verbal abuse or 
(even physical abuse) that was accorded to him 
he never answered or frowned or 
complained 

he had that smile always that i saw 
and i always remember 
always with a sad heart since then 
even if i had already become a lawyer 
and tried to defend the poor 
peasants of our 
little town
where the vast coconut farm has thrived
and still conquered
what little injustices still
left unsolved

he died years ago
and i could have died with him
if not
for the reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Man Who Comes Back To His Old Hometown

the days indeed pass by swiftly
the seasons are like the flaps of a bird’s wing

our moments are like the movements of billiard balls
we hear sounds of collisions and then some colors are gone

the boy that mother coddled before
died a few years back before growing his fingernails

mother shrunk like a deflated balloon
and what is left is her scent of milk

the sound of the cradle turns into a creak of an old door
the footsteps of Papa on that pavement
are like the steps on the sand dunes easily blown by the winds of changing times

when you come back to a previous place
the faces that meet you give you the blank looks

not even quizzical for no one knows you or any member of your family
your heart is an empty home looking for anyone

who can remember the sounds of children
who can identify the games that once were played under the moon

but there is no one there anymore and so you take the bus heading to the new place of your existence

you are like an old woman gathering the white cloth and the needle and the colored threads

beginning another design for another embroidery
and mo matter how sweet are the memories they have to take their exits

giving chance to the incoming ones which to your mind are not really that exciting anymore
The Old Man....

there is this garden that you tend
you put the seeds and they all sprout in time
time waters it
the changes take place
soon the flowers bloom and
you watch all these
with patience
there is this light feeling that comes
like butterfly wings
white against the dusk

there is nothing new in that garden
you are sick and takes the rest
you sit by the window
the same window all these 50 years
time is you boring attendant
independent from your grasp
it can exist without you

you sit and watch the world passing by
like a flower slowly unfolding
and you never notice it
you go out
you have recovered from a disease
you
take a walk
visit some friends
come back in the afternoon
you watch the view from the window
again
this you do perhaps for another 50 years
of your life
setting aside fears of not having to
step upon 60
life is short for those who have no one to love

it is the same field same mountain
bald and brown
same clouds
pale blue and drifting
same fog
fading like a magical show

same window
that you close again
because it is dark
and cold inside
your old wooden bed
that you have
inherited from your
forefathers

as usual
you take your sleep
time passes you by
the room is so silent
as though
it is the home for
the dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Miserable Woman....

you must understand
and please do not be hurt
that between you and
and that old woman
she will choose the latter,

forget your wit, hide your humor
discard your wisdom, throw away
all confidences, --keep your money
make more, save, hoard,
do not spend, do not talk,
keep that tree of abundance grow,
make it tall, let all the green
leaves of summer come about,
keep the mystery, live privately

for soon, when you sit again
beside that old woman, she will
finally choose you- -

and then do not mind her,
she will soon die, and be forgotten,
live your life fully
erase her completely and do not
ever compare yourself

to that old woman, how she caused
so much misery to you,
how you have learned, to love yourself,
follow your ambition, and fulfill
what you wish you were not.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Nipa Hut In Shambles...

in the middle of the rice field
after the harvest

March, wet days, the nipa hut
stands alone

the grasses have grown tall
no one arrives neither someone leaves

abandoned, the heart sometimes
cannot anymore remember

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Place Of Sin

you already left
for days
laundering your soul
far away

things settle
stones sink

you try to hold your hands
and your feet
but no
they have no minds of their own

eye all take you back
to that old house of sin
where you
do not sleep

and honestly you must admit
you like it
too

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Poet

he speaks of the sea
the vastness of space occupied
nonetheless by water & salt

suddenly he says
a door appears for him to enter
for me to see

he enters
and the door closes in
as i watch
his grace and grandeur

then he is lost forever
while i reflect on what happens also to me
the next time

this time
i prefer more windows
this time
i like to study more
the air & mountains

for i am new
and the ocean will be too much
and this door thing
will be very hard to understand

a black bird comes to me
it speaks of freedom
i look at it eye to eye
i say i like it more sitting
flying is still the future
today is still mine
without wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Poet And The Young Poet

a young poet complains
the life of a poet gets too boring
when there are no readers
or hands clapping
perhaps he is searching for
fame or honor
the old poet believes otherwise

the years of silence
bury him into oblivion
he had those hands clapping
in the passions of his youth
the summit of fame is the mountain
he worked for

he once lived on top of the hill
the naives think he is the cloud king
it is when you still love to write
even if no one is listening

that the life of the poet becomes
a perfect volcanic cone
on the day of the eruption
red magma not lava flows on the river

no one screams
there are no more hands
asking for help
no one no one
tells any story

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Soft Pillow To Rest My Head This Christmas

an empty room is
still a room, and it has
become mine,

to accept that it is
empty and it
shall be like that
for the coming years
is freedom
from too many
expectations
or bridles

all i had is a soft pillow
to rest my head
and it made me
feel so good
that i overslept that
night

RIC S. BASTASA
Fr. Finster administered the Body of Christ
in the Davao City Jail
Perhaps he thought that humanity is still found
in the cell where whorled souls are kept
One day the disciple of the Devil
stabbed him
The murder was done
And no one was there to help him

He died with a note that he had forgiven
the Malefactor

The hall of this university is named after him
This is where I reflected on the meaning of humanity.
This is where I think of Doubt
That strips me of Faith
This is where I left and this is where I must come back
To redeem what was lost in me.

This empty hall
This hall where shadows lurk
Where there is no door that closes when one
Leaves for good

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Wisdom Of Grandma Oris

if you do not wish
to get burned

do not go near
to any place of
fire

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Woman And Her Loyal Maid

the old woman is very rich
she has two children, a lovely daughter and a very naughty son

the lovely daughter dislikes her
and the naughty son wants to kill her

she slaps her often and the more the daughter wants to go away from her
the son is disturbed and furious because he did not know his father enough

the daughter married a gentle man
and the son went away with no know address no known destination
he never came back
while she lives her own life away from the rich woman

the old woman has a loyal maid
who has no memory of humiliating words that the old woman more often
inflicts in her person

the old woman is dying
but the son and daughter have no respect anymore for such word
as mother.

meanwhile the loyal maid keeps swallowing the pesters of the old woman
expecting a part of the wealth
as her pay and legacy

well, this story cannot have an ending yet
the old woman is still alive and the son and daughter are still making up
their minds

what to do next.

Life is a comma. The ending always waits
for something that will be a happy one.

But who knows, except this one, something tragic may happen
at the end. Who knows?
I will for sure.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Woman Beside The Nipa Hut...

as i walk away
she calls my name
i am not related to her
and exactly
i do not her too,

she calls for help
and mentions names of
his children

and her husband long dead
years ago

i walk faster and not looking back
and i thank myself for all these contentments

everything is fair
nothing diminishes me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Woman In That House Of Hate....

she makes a
scarecrow out of us

the girl on the yellow
road has turned into
a witch

she only knows the tin man
and the hay stack

does she ever forget that
beyond the story is us?

we were shaped as swords
you the strongest jagged edge
dagger that i know of

she makes a fool out of us
and we retaliate for we know how

all the while and in the coming
days of her remaining life
she has died, when she rots, there
is no need for any ritual
no flowers, no funeral dirge
we know what not to do
to make us alive, her bones when
the turn to dust, shall be given
to the winds. She was never with
us and we never belong to her.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Woman Of The School...

she believes in you
and that was the most important thing that happens
to the life
of the student...

the old teacher
who had taught you well how to speak English
and write a story using
that language...

the importance of feelings
and how you made the other people feel

she had made you competitive
and ambitious not forgetting the
value of

poetry and the humanity that lies
embedded in the great
literary works
of the masters

she gave you wings which remained
invisible
she created you a world
which you only know and where you still live
with dignity and pride

when she died
you recited an eulogy which could have narrated
the best about her
when she was alive and so inspiring

but your tears and sobs
did speak for her more
and those who attended the funeral
understood so well.
The Old Women In The Village Where I Live

The old women
at 4:58 dawn are
in the streets
again

with lighted
lamps on their
hands

they walk the
cold pavements

and chant
their old prayers

round and round
the kiosk

until the first
morning light

arrives warming
their

wilting hands
the furrows on

their foreheads
their worn cheeks

and slowly like
turtles

they converge
inside an empty

chapel of this
quiet village
where i write
where i live.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Women Of The Barangay

i feel quite uncomfortable
to the old women in this barangay
on a mumbo-jumbo of memorized prayers
like a playing tape recorder of those old times
reading a nowernario
from page one to twenty.

after then they walk their way back home
from church
talking about other people's lives
condemning, laughing,
and too judgmental

they're happy & contented and sure of their own rooms reserved for them
in heaven.

i envy their own certainties.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Old Women Of The Water Village

i

they are singing
paddling the boats that we are riding
following the path of a river
that shows us
old houses made of stones

we pass the bridge
where once the famous
Chinese painter
brushed
water colors for the
emperor

ii

for a fee
we have given them work
we are the tourists and they are
singing

if only we can understand the lyrics
of their old serenade
a la Venice

we could have realized
how stupid we are...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Om

three slices of
fresh philosophy
existential

a half ounce of
law on family
conflict

a pinch of a childhood
sour grape

another slice of
sweet lemon at the
age of 16

ground bitterness
like pepper
still hot in my throat

a little milk of
my first love

six of honey from my
college friends

make my salad of
my critical years

i sit on the table
facing an ocean of possibilities

i contemplate of halting
the days

and escape Time
and find refuge in perhaps

Death with an expectation
of A surprise to
Reincarnation, i can
chant for now the Om

i am silent
There is no one Here

It is good sometimes
To be Alone

Holding my Pulse
Listening attentively

If i am still here
If i am myself, My true Self

and no Other.
I am listening. I am listening.

Om.

RIC S. BASTASA
The One That I Bought....

the first painting is a lushness
of deep red and black bold lines
a mournful of deserted houses
people having abandoned them
a long time ago due to terror

the second one is a crowd of
women carrying baskets of fish and
men landing their boats on the shore
beside a market place of the most
ordinary village where trade is booming

the third one are five children resting
beside a water buffalo and there was
that one child with a hat reading his
book while the other one is whistling and
the rest are sleeping

you are dismayed with what i chose
i bought the one with a white boat
and an orange sail back-grounded by
light blue clouds and coconut trees
and you told me that the fisherman
is not there and i responded that
he is with his wife inside their
house making up with the time lost.

RIC S. BASTASA
The One Thousand Herons

you have sent a thousand
herons in the blue skies
they will be landing on
some places you have not
been to, meeting races of
men, at different times
even when you are already
gone. These herons will
always be alive, even
when the blue skies turn
gray, even when the places
become hazy, even when
all the races disappear.

congratulations!
i hear the flaps of their wings
their songs and silence sometimes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The One Who Notices The Earthworms

if you notice how the earthworms
die and you you hear their
last sad songs
the night before
they all perished
on that pavement
at the last hour
when the waters
rise
when you hear
them scream
after their
saddest sighs
the last one

when you
finally hear
their silence
like a
period
of the
long sentence that you have written

i know your name

you are
the poet
from the
line of
issa

RIC S. BASTASA
The One Whom Karen Interviewed...

i envy this woman
who is running for a seat
in the senate

she makes a mark
in our history: that a human being
can still be admirable

even if she has no brains
even if her answers are out of touch

now, she has become a possibility
and then well, we applaud her

for being too honest, candid
and too empty....

RIC S. BASTASA
The One You Fear  That Which Finally Makes You Unknown....

i perfectly understand
sir
i was once there

i tell you it was not
that fulfilling
never did i dream about
that thing

i love the plains
the grasses
i rode a horse towards the edge
i did not fall as you expected
the world is never flat
just the rest of the riders
i become a dot from far into the horizon
the one you fear
that which finally makes you unknown....

i am so sorry
but you missed the real point of the whole story

what you think is wrong
but keep it just the same
i am happy with the thought that you are happy... do not quit
soon you will find what i found,

air in my lungs,
water in my hands
sands in my feet
ash on the hearth
fire in the sky
foams of the sea
song of the desert
a crack of a nut
the breaking of
glass
the blindness of
the window
the jamming of the door
tears on the floor

be happy, do not ever
ever think again.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The One...

the one that you meet
and at night
always remember
and can't forget

the one that cannot
stay with you
tears your heart
bleeds you blood

you shake hands
kiss cheek to cheek
and say those words
that only the sea
understands

since then you wander
heartlessly....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Witness....

she alleges she was raped
that night by the man who was drunk
beside her
three-month old baby who did not cry...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Fish In Your Lake

it is beautiful
pure heart of gold
inside you
it is a moon surrounded
by stars
a face veiled
hair laced with
white flowers
it is a lake
and in it
swims the only fish
of your life
that without it
everything in you
dies

you love it
yet you never touch it
you never had the time
to kiss and hug it

if there is
only in a dream

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Point Of The Story....

inside the room
there are two pigs
the black one is
hungry
the white one is
always thirsty and
they make a
good pair for a show
on a Sunday
fair

the room is a chapel
and the priest is making
a sermon
why pigs are tolerated
to become clowns
and why clowns are different

instead of making children
laugh
they keep on making them
cry
for their heads have horns
and their hands are
thorns

the shoes on the floor are dogs who
keep on barking the moon
whose face as usual is blank
like an unwritten letter to an
old grandmother
who lives seven seas away

solitude is all over the place
like the light of the moon
over the roof and the esplanades
and the garden where weeds
begin singing the
silence of the stones and the
twigs cut by owls who are not
looking wise anyway

up there is a boy on a tree
running away from home

actually that is the only
point of the story.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Rose?

i sit here
away from you
city...

little prince
decanting...

only rose?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Way To Do It With All Respect Is To Leave....

all these rusty things,
door knobs, and keys
spoons and
tin plates
gates of iron and
lamp posts
the stove that mother
used
the knife that father kept
rust that smells
failures
and falling and
hitting
the bottom of the truth
the one that sinks
and settles
making you see all those passing
moments

rusting relationships
sour or salty feelings
you jerk
for the first time but you cannot just jerk and jerk forever
no one must tremble permanently
one relaxes
and the only way to do it with full respect is just to leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Only Way To Understand What We Have Been Talking About...

let me write about peace then.

the irony is that peace has no use of words,
like silence,

when you utter it, it is not there anymore.

let me paint peace then, ah, the very sound of the brush disturbs it,
the way we choose the color, creates an argument

let me have a camera and take a picture of peace,
disregard the click and the flash

just imagine it,

early dawn, a fisherman casts his net on a noiseless sea
all the fish have gone to the other side of the island.

the earlier you accept that you have been rightfully abandoned
the easier is it to understand what we have been talking about.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Oppressed Frog

a frog
who is never given the pond
that he deserves
cannot appreciate
what beauty is,

and the white crane
whose beauty you
adore
who takes frogs
for dinner
of course
shall never be
his goddess

RIC S. BASTASA
The Oppressor

the oppressor comes
with a smile
your mother has already
been bound
by the sweetness of her
words
tied to the tree of her
deceptions
from a distance you
see the slyness of
her tricks
the quickness of her hands
your eyes are puzzled
but as you are trained
in the silence of your
solitude to see the worst of
others
whose hearts are black
whose breaths are foul
who mocks the pure
and kills the innocent
you stare at her
the oppressor and stabs
her with your
honesty
that look of the saintly
that judgment of the god
who tells her
of the eventuality
the penalty laid in the
pages of the hearts of
good men
she falls on the floor
of her madness
her bat wings clipped
her fire
reduced to smoke
her body
to ashes
now you are feeling better
in this poem
that must punish her
kill her! kill her!
it shouts in all the kingdoms
of the air

RIC S. BASTASA
The Option

i do not have to believe you.
there are limits to what we can be.
to beliefs
and to my upbringing.
i cannot be another murderer
and take pride
in what i have done to a humanity
that kills and
never feels any guilt
thereafter.

i cannot be with you in the belief
that robbing a bank is a protest against
the ownership and
oppression of the
the few
those who believe that they have
the right to
own everything and leave
nothing to
anyone.

i cannot swim to your pool.
i am no swimmer at all.

you should have noticed that in my hunger
and humiliation,
i have only resorted to the
nothing
but the lines of my
chosen poetry.

beyond these words,
i desire nothing anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Option In The Middle Of A Very Sound Sleep

the poem is a dream
it arrives in the middle of my sound sleep
it wants to wake me up
it is severely disturbed
it wants to be written

i am so tired
and i ask it
why it does have to be written?

i do not have the answer
to fabricate its purpose
i know it has
so many reasons

but i respect it somehow
and i leave it
undeciphered

at the last hour of my
sleep

it leaves me perturbed somehow
but when i wake up and gets myself busy with the ordinary days of my life
it becomes
another item forgotten

perhaps its reason is that
it is in the middle of a very sound sleep
and so it has all the
option to tell the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Orange Cat With One Eye

lazy cat
the rats are playing again
on the cellar
can't you catch
for once
their mother?

do not ask me again
about the possibility of you having to read a poem.
an eye
can be so dangerous
without a claw
to catch
a single mouse.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Order Of Our Personal Universe

the head comes first
then the heart
and then the hands
and then the feet

micro, macro,
minute, cosmos
this order shall
be followed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Origin Of A Poem....

eventually words do not just come in the air which you catch as a butterfly and which then shall lay helpless to the caprices of your fingers

that cruel and senseless hand that stoic indifference of mankind,

there is such thing as an origin like the way how eve came about from the ribs of adam,

it was the long deep sleep which made you forget how butterflies were born and how each fragile and short story is forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
The Origin Of Greed

it started when we were yet children
playing marbles and rubber bands
play money and toy guns
and gunpowders

we hoard them like some kind
of treasures

then we move to food
and other goods

to houses and lots and
money,

it does not end there
we move to other matters

like time and places
and diamonds and islands and planes
and even submarines

then to power, how other people's lives
have become mere words within the touch of the tips of our fingers

we like to be god,
God,

but God has His own mysterious ways,

today your life has End.

to God, you have become the flower of the day
taken by the wind and gone dust you shall return,
and there is no more name left for that.

You are nothing. Nothing.
The Ostrich....

the child in you
still stays within your guts

unspoiled you tell the spade
that it is precisely what it is,

unsolicited. You look at the
leaking roof and tells everyone
at the party

about what it is really, as it is, despite everything, how

the roof can sanction you to live
with all your storms
forever, outside the house, where

the yard keeps you in its corners
ostracized, as you begin another ostrich

life out there in the mountains
with your head up high chasing all

storms and leaving them all behind you
as you reach the placid lake, wishing for

some fish.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Other

i have long known
that without the other
there is no us,

the familiarity begins
words bind us
the us becomes the i
the i recognizes
the better we

and so the song begins
to sing upon itself
the song of life

the dirge fades out
like a rocket at night
flickering
dissolving in such
vast space

RIC S. BASTASA
The Other Greener Pasture

that is the usual case
when you look over the fence that you just built
your eyes gaze to the other side
greener than yours
i mean, the grass, not the greenness of your iris
if you could have built a higher fence
so that you can narrow your gaze
within the four corners of your walls
and live this life that is all yours to own
you could have been happier here

but life is not meant to be
just that
four walls, a higher fence, taking all that come
sitting down
and breathing the air inside
the lungs
which until now have not seen the
rays of the sun

play the game
climb a tree
try jumping over your fences

it is only then when
you realize
that after all
your grass has always been
greener
your air more fresh
your fence most stable.

after all you got a poodle
a rose, a butterfly, a bird,

and this PC
that knows how to write poetry.
The Other Now Speaks

i love you
secretly

every night
you in my dreams

every aspect of you
is precious

you are gold to
me

but what am i
to you? i dare ask
now.

(you answer)

i know what
a pain in the ass means.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Other Side Of Imagination....

fear is the other
side of
imagination

a barren land
a monster lives there
feeding on children
and women

the skies are black
light is hurting
a house is on its
ruins

on the other hand
one can always reinvent
wings and hops
and scales and rudders

one can always gather
all the winds
and puff and

bluff to take back
that life in confidences
that heritage
which those who had long
died before us
had long wanted to hand us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Other Side Of Self-Centeredness

no one believes
that the earth is the center of this universe

or that our universe is the center of
all other universes

insignificant, that is a fact
i am insignificant

but this insignificance
can kill

what is meaningless hurts
the most

this, i, for instance, and so
we go on faith,

i am the center of this universe,
and i have the right to be so

there is a bulb that lights
in my heart

spread throughout the darkness of
my nights

there is paradise inside my body
there are skies in my eyes

and look, the colors of my world
change

blooms, and shines, and blinks,
i am at the center of it all,

alive and meaningful....
The Other Side Of The Coin Is Rusting

after you have seen it all
you commented
that the other side of the coin
is rusting
while the other side is gleaming
like shiny silver ware

and you ask the question
what do you wish to do about it?

you will say there is still hope
i am saying now as i told you once and i will tell it again

life is what you make it
life is not fair

just do what you think is best
under your own
circumstances

RIC S. BASTASA
you make things vague for me and
i respect you for that
sometimes
i feel it is better that way
where i can see
most of what you are
not and having seen so
i know more
of what you really are
sometimes it is the dark side
that we live in that makes us
love more
the coming light
it is in those vaguest terms that we begin
to embrace the value of things most certain
that we have long taken for granted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Outcast

as i see it
from page to page
it seems
that he does not like you
to write anything at all
be it prose
or poetry
minute by minute
every second
he puts the words
and on every line
there is no vacant
space for you

where do you insert
your thought? there is one space
for you
and it is outside his
big circle.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Overflowing Heart

in a place where you are
no longer welcome
what will you do?

you may go there but
you are no longer there

it is the mind that takes revenge
the heart however stands still
with patience overflowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Overseas Workers

we are empty people
like sacks, like rubber balloons
we like to be light in air
so we seek being filled up

it is not helium or hydrogen
it is this need for a talk
a chat,
and we are here for this
a missing you and a missing me

we talk about places, work, masters,
discrimination, then we end with we have no choice anyway
we remain patient and callous
and we conclude with
we are the survivors of this chasing game
we are happy and
we want to stay for what can we do in those places which we call home?

no one lives there anymore
and when we arrive at those doors we are simply met by rats
and bugs

i miss the flowers, they are all gone now
the furniture are old and the gloss has faded
the house is for sale, and my bags are always ready to go anywhere
i do not really know

we are your overseas workers, your heroes and heroines
we have no home for now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Overwhelming....

once more
you have written
a group of lines
without a vortex

waters are spilled
all over
into a desert of sand
so much sun
nothing is worth seeing
nothing drips or
trips

you wait for the night
when all the stars come out
into the open
darkness of the sky

the glittering lights of
emptiness
the overwhelming silence
of impermanence

RIC S. BASTASA
happiness has five fingers.
to each its length, at some
degrees, or intensities,
how i feast on you and how
i read gluck on the other.

the pages of life are not
the same, unsynchronized even.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pain From Which The Soul Dances With So Much Joy

to be a poet is to be a soul
to deny the body of its place on earth is what the soul asserts
to be a body again when you fall short of something divine inside you that undeniable force that drives you crazy when you write

in that trance the body whips upon itself the pain from which the soul dances with so much joy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pain In His Heart

If you only see him
Holding his heart with his hands
Trying to stop the bleeding
The flow of blood
Under his feet

You were there
You were so beautiful indeed

You were like the gushing wind
Merely passing him by
Not a glance
Not a sense of even a little
Touch of compassion

You were gone in such a very short moment
Like the wind rushing to somewhere
The edge
The shore the endless horizon

Some screams are heard on the earth
These are the blood from his heart
About to turn into stones

RIC S. BASTASA
for one thing
if you finally see me here
in the exact location of where i am
you will find me surely
inconsistent,
for i, this peritoneal complainant
and protester
is sleeping with the pain in my ass.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pain Of Carrying A Basketful Of Guilt

somehow i have not given up the need
for hiding places
my choice of words has always been that of
discrimination

i want to spell things correctly
except that you have the habit of bringing in the wrong word
definitely i still go for secret
gardens and of those caves that appear like waterfalls

i still adore them
for what they are not for all their deceiving appearances
no one is as open as a field of corn now
even the ants have their own secret labyrinths and unusual destinations

to the secret places of the heart you always brag about that
to each her own woman to each his own masculinity
the sharing is but a flash, a flask of feelings discarded like wastes
people meet, make love in the dark, put their clothes own and walk away

it is as simple as that
if you ask for more, the problem of what is right and wrong comes along who
shall carry a basketful of guilt for you?
no one, but if you want it, by all means carry it in the parks in the wild
let us see, let us see
how painful can pure be

RIC S. BASTASA
The Painting Inside The Court

so there was this prisoner on a drug case who's rather watch a painting than hear his lawyer argue his case for all those ten years

perhaps so tired of the drag and the lull of legal delays he finally gives up the hope of his freedom claiming his innocence all along angered by the way the police officers planted the shabu in his pocket while being handcuffed

the painting was put there by the judge as a way of making the room alive which looks like a doomsday to all those who had been there

there is this man and woman harvesting the golden fields of rice in summer beside the hills is a nipa hut and by the window a little girl is looking at them

above the hut is the blue clouds the sun and some migratory birds heading for some unknown destination

RIC S. BASTASA
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the window
a little girl is looking at them

above the hut is the blue clouds
the sun and some migratory birds
heading for some unknown destination

RIC S. BASTASA
The Panther With Red Wings

from childhood

the mind
gives you a black panther
with red wings

piano music
flies like white doves in the air
alone in a faraway island
you stroll
no tree for a shade

the black panther with red wings
lands
on the spot of your solitude
staring at you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradise That Was There Which Our Blindness Had Not Seen

here we are
we dream of this journey
we conceive
a destination of

paradise which is
not here.

we cut the bridge
back home
we burned our houses
in that old place

now we construct
our own houses of
more dreams

create another path
that must eventually
lead towards us

we do not like it here
but we have no more options
because we were so
hardheaded
and stupid, because we did
not listen to

what truth lies in the
present state
the good it has given
the promises it fulfilled
the paradise that was
there which our blindness
had not seen.
The Paradox

my being here
and my being there too

things that go up
and yet stay down here

a thing and yet
a soul

a body and yet
light as air

i will go there
you're late

and yet we're there
together

so the same
and yet so different

is that what you mean
and didn't mean at all?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Between Us

I'm back to my comfort zone

it is an island
inside you where i live
when you look at it
carefully
like a telescope to the star
farthest from you
i am actually outside
everyone

your hands can touch me

but it is only my pair of hands
there is more to my fingers
that drip like rain from a leaking roof
which falls on the floor
and goes down the drain

until it is lost and no one can find it

not even myself who proclaims that
i know much better than anyone else

i am not true and that it is a fact.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Christmas

whatever was it that we value in our hands,
with so much love, carefully closed inside our fingers,
saying ' this is mine totally now! ' my dear friend
to make these things yours forever
you must know, must always be given away

you must have seen, how they are taken away
from those who wanted them selfishly.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Giving

Whatever you hold in your hands
so carefully, wish so much love,
yours so totally, my companion,
you must give away
in order for it to become yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Giving....

i was looking
for happiness
just like all the
rest

it seems that
happiness is in hiding
and seemingly
very hard to find

something you want
to reach somewhere
like a bird on top of
a glider

like a nugget of gold
underneath
this earth

or a star far far into
the darkest sky

i stopped looking for
happiness
and it somehow looks for
me

could i be happiness
too?
and i cannot be found
slippery like
an ell

into the deepest sea
of my mind
i linger

till you come and tell
me
happiness lies in the other
which we must
find through giving

what i have is in you
and i must give it to you

the paradox of finding
for it is only in the giving.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Hunger

half the melons
flowed red
and much of the oranges
are sun-drenched
all guavas glowed
like moons of the nights
of June
roasted calf rolled like
scaled thunder
on May longings
the hunger is there
but for now
satisfaction shies.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Summer

summer is here
and i do not have
plans,

morning
for the sea
a stroll
a dip
a splash
a sun bath

noon
for my favorite
resto
lots of sashimi and
sushi too
and green tea

nighttime
is dinner with you
red wine
pork steak
Arabian bread
candle light
Mozart music
carrot cake

stargazing
leaning over a steel rail
at the 10th floor
of the hotel

holding hands
talking about anything

no plans really
letting go
whatever
reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of Wish And Want

you insist to see it
all night you long to touch it
it is in your house of dreams
every space is filled
you salivate and
hunger
you think nothing else
except that
it is an inch away from the touch
of your fingers
a sigh away from your wish
it a hair that rises from your
skin
a blush a blink of your
sleepy eye
it has been this way
for all those passing years
until one moment
this moment of a lifetime
you hug it
it is there you kiss it
and lick it
and move away as though
you now own it
completely

only to realize
it is not what you wanted
it is something else
and your heart weeps

RIC S. BASTASA
The Paradox Of You

i learned a lot.

by not saying so much i realize
i can say everything

by only showing you the tip of the iceberg
i know
that you will always remember the sinking
and everything follows
like a wholesale
of emotions

i learned a lot from you

that in silence the noise gets trapped
it screams but no one shall hear it and no one shall be disturbed anymore

i learned a lot from your surrender.

i know, you win.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Parting...

let the parting be as formal as
an invitation card
let the date be specific
the rituals well defined
let us forgo the waving of the hands
try the flying kiss as you embark
on a trip
back grounded by the deep honk of
the boat
let it be said
there are no final goodbyes
just like
temporary hellos
people change and like the seasons
follow the cycle of
here and now
and see you later

as the iguanas shed off their skins
so must we in our beliefs
in pain we molt but in due time
we are smooth again
rebounding

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Parts In Relation To The Whole

te the parts in relation to the whole are hard to muster
i get lost somehow
confused on this seemingly unrelated part to another part
like seeing the legs of this millipede
when it would have been easier to think of it
as a worm,

i remember being lost in a forest of trees
wild growing trees where i can no longer figure out the shape
of a single leaf
because it is too dark
and damp

too many little things, too many details, that hinder us
from grasping the wholeness of
things
and people and daily events,

i get tired of all these, parts and parts and parts and some more
miniatures of parts, a letter to the word,
speaking in cut phrases

how can i ever understand this and that?

show me the whole
be whole to me as i am whole to you
touch the parts later
relate it always to me

this love is whole, it was never meant to be chopped
like some garlic and onions
this love is an apple that you see and pick from the tree
take it first
in its appleness, then start to bite

every part is sweet, every part is me,
this love

this me, this whole world is me
it must be first to you
then love becomes us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Party Is Over

when the party is over
you will be alone again
on some leftovers
and stained mantels
empty wine glasses
with some respect
for drops unconsumed
tables with some
morsels and crumbs

her perfume
sticking to the curtains
his smoke
clinging to glass
ash trays

the feigned affections
cliched by this
outdated display
of overused hugs
and kisses

the laughter that
reverberates
practically nothing

when they all leave
one by one like
trickles of moderate
rains

you are still asking
about your relevance

you are very drunk
and so you sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
The Party Of Masks....

in the party of masks
names become a taboo
you do not ask for
addresses or numbers.
the rule there is
take each as he/she is.
serve yourself, gaze.
mind your own business.
keep doing what you want.
if you dance, then dance.
if you leave, you may.
this he says, is reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Party Of Masks.....

you are into this party of
masks and concealment

unaccustomed to this crowd
and perhaps unprepared to

something strange and new
you are the only one who wears

your own face, unconcealed and
they all look at you

with mockery and even contempt
why you are you in this party

where everything is concealed
to get more fun and without

any responsibility no attachment
no past, and perhaps no future too.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Passing Away Of Orange Shades

you gather symbols
the metaphors confuse you but just the same
you take a stone, a rose, a knife

chunks of clouds for a dinner
of loneliness
the night appears like a steel pipe
singing the songs of the winds
on empty holes

the rust are many and the powder of
regrets stumble upon the circular edge
of day

south of the moon's directions
against the coldness of the walls
you listen for something that you do not like to hear
you grapple for the touch
of looseness
dripping sounds from the bottom of
the orange sun sinking on the line of
black horizon

until you see nothing but the humming of the soul
inside your brain
nothing seems significant
except the murmur

that old murmur that becomes a chant
to survive the havoc of the day

you paint a sigh using some
fixtures of the firmaments dissolving while a meteor passes away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Passion

how can i be too stupid not
to know the power of attraction
which for years my body was starved
my throat strangulated by the hands of
my denial
there is slit of light outside piercing
the foulness of my room
my body aches for more of this
light
this pouring of light in the bowl
of my head
how i not know the passion of the body
from the strains of my constraints
the pain is over now
when i have awakened from the sweetness of sleep
i will touch you and kiss you and make love with you
at whatever
cost.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Passion Fruits

there were too many passion
fruits in the garden
of my Papa
it is a vine that climbs
atop trees
covering them

ey all fall this summer
these ripe passion fruits that most of our neighbors
know nothing about
how they taste what is their use
&

as a consequence of that ignorance
no one takes a passion fruit
for a cold refreshing juice this summer

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past

I still carry you
With both arms

They are strong
And will carry you for long

I kiss your forehead
And you sleep

I dream
That you are gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past Beloved

Beside the wall
is an old mirror
framed with
wood designed
as flowers
carved
in petal and
sepal on accurate
details
so intricate that
you forget to
see what you want
to see inside that room

below is the floor
of oft-white tiles
so clean and
tidy that sometimes
you have second thoughts
stepping on it
mistaken instead as
a dining table
due to the food
and fruit designs
embedded on each
surface

there is a window that
sees you like you were a
camel and it behaves more
like eyes of
mother's needles
and you begin to shiver

it seems that all that you
see are misleading you
into something
a mirror that makes you
forget your intentions
a floor that makes you long
for dinner
and a window that makes you
remember your sinful
nature

you pause for a while
close your eyes and breathe
some air and when you
are composed like a song
or a poem
you open your eyes
again
to see a door before you
which is open

it looks like open arms
wanting to have you
but now you doubt all these
things
and you hold your feet
deciding that you stay
that going out is not
what you really wanted

you feel that home is here
and not over there. Arms
wide open which you
cannot trust because there
is no body out there
shaped like your past
beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past Haunts

the past haunts
like poems on repose

do not read them again
but you are not following

your heart bleeds again
and they will have more time laughing

you go back to places of pain
and lick your wounds again

this is your ritual year after year
back to pain again

oh, i see, i know, i get the point
you gain the strength, learning the lessons

of your failures
rising back from where you are falling

nothing kills you
all these are here again, i see, i know

always making you stronger.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past Is A Faithful Reminiscer Of The Heart

into the lake the past
takes a slow, silent breathe
bathing with the swans of time
engulfing air and releasing
bubbles of the water of memories
swallowing spitting
not only what is necessary
but something bittersweet
and expendable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past, The Present And The Future

a blanket is neatly folded
and kept inside a cabinet

you wake up, open a window
and you see the road leading to an endless horizon

you go downstairs
sit on the floor and listen to the sound of the day

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past

it is when you
are alone in the car
driving from dipolog to
zamboanga

seven hours drive
when you hear nothing but
only the usual rantings
of your mind

at the middle of the journey
you cried
you stopped for a while park
your car on the road’s shoulder
and shed all your tears

until finally nothing comes
out and there you feel once more
that empty basket which Mama
filled with ripe mangoes

the good memories come rushing
into that empty mind
and you start the car and continue
on that journey
back to your one and only home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Past...Now, It Is Just You And Me.

i speed away from the past,
it has no use
i tell myself the future has more to say
i scurry for the present items: a pen and paper
draw a leaf, imagine the sun, and a little space
for something that is yet to come,

last nigh the dreams take revenge
it is the past that i choke and bury and they are too many
a gun aims by the road towards the glass window
piles of books in the dormitory still unread
the lights do not turn off till morning
the food in the platter is light and i so think is deficient for my hunger
there are those who stay in the house laughing
about what i am doing....and the car is missing..

i am quick to this. i wake up, turn on the switch and face the
fluorescent light,
the magic has always been
a simple glass of cold water,

then i am back again: it is only between you and me and the rest?
mere peripheries.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Path Is A Respecr Of Fate....

the path knows
whom to respect

those who leave
the path does not
follow

and those who stay
the path holds
like a house
and grass

those who want to quit
the path waits
makes a hollow space
where to put you and tries not
to put a mark or trace

for the path respects
those who are coming
to tread life
and leads them
to somewhere
to meet a dream
come true.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pathway Of The Tear

the pain is unbearable
sorrow overwhelming
the world's roof falls on my head

a tear flows from my eyes
more tears flooding my cheeks
the pathways now untraceable

RIC S. BASTASA
The Patience Of A Man Playing Spider

i am not afraid if soon you will miss the dogs earlier

and i will be left as a hazy background where the dogs play with you

one will bark at me as though i am an unwanted guest trying to please you

i do not mind
i promise myself that in your lonely moments i must take every inch patiently

up the tree i can behave like a spider weaving my own kind of cobwebs

i must meet silence with silence
peel upon layers of wisdom like a geologist figuring out what really happened in the past

such stories, such interpretation
such love which once found its existence among the rugged rocks beneath those buried ruins
of a kingdom or an old church long vanished by the forgetfulness of time by the cruelty of the seasons

RIC S. BASTASA
The Peculiar Situation....

Under the pitogo
tree
in the shores of
olingan
trickles of light
fall from the
space of leaves

a black butterfly
hovers around looking
for her own
place to rest

there are no flowers
here
and i too ask
if there is still
a nectar or if it still
exists under this
peculiar situation

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pendulum Of Time.

i do not really know
why you have to cry every time
you come here

i know it has always been an
uninvited arrival

and we have too become attuned
to said crying

and as often as this matter
happens we have too become numb

not like you always a stranger
to births and even to deaths

as for me i have learned living
and dying to all these

so here i am writing about it
numb, and stoned, and my only

consolation is having to live
and die with all these truths

and just like everyone else who
arrive and leave we too have become

just like ordinary waves of light
and sound and other natural occurrences

we have one thing for sure: we come and
go and swing like the pendulum of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
The People In That Place....

i explained to them
what cruelty is
how savage can savage be
how monsters each one
another
how fortunes come
behind those
crimes
i keep on explaining to them
the unreasonableness of having too much
heavy burdens of fortunes on our back
like turtles afraid of losing their homes
how uneasy life becomes
how wary we can be

i travel lightly
carrying only this body
and the mind
this spirit soaring
leaving all of them
in their
crowded land
spilling blood
eating their own flesh
drinking their own
urine
munching feces and
dung
stinking people
loveless and
lavish in their
greed and
avarice....

RIC S. BASTASA
The People In The Park

a white child
is held by the hands
of a mother
beside them is
the father

quite a scene
about a happy
family
to start with

two lovers sit
under the shady tree
one steals a kiss
the other holds the face

the place is
filled with laughter
and teasing

inside is the
turbulence that
they all do not know

it is inside
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The People Who Wait For Your Arrival

sometimes by the sound of the clock
you know when the last hour ends
you see yourself there, hands bound,
feet dissolving, and body thinning out
like the last breath the you give to the
wind,

you look back, you have really wasted so
many hours, since you do not know what
to do with your future anymore,
it is there where the road bends into
a certain depth and now one waits for you,

dead is no longer interesting, and weeping
is out of the question,
the maps in your palms blur,
there is no rainbow from your head
to the road,

it is certain as a day that unfolds tomorrow,
why should there be darkness?
light is also a symbol of endings,

you live in a cave, and you keep concentrated
on the shadows that dance before you,
you walk on that tunnel, climb a hole and
inch by inch you arrive at the inevitable,

that door, that opening, that gives you light
and you are surprised, there is no crying here,
but only the silence of those who arrive much
ahead,

and they tell you, you have possessed the wisdom
of lightness,
a property of light,
and they smile, and then laugh
why they have done so much struggling
when there is actually
no need

whatsoever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Perfect Tryst....

it is the mute
room where the perfect
happening of love
begins
and ends there where
as soon as the door
breaks open
nothing is said
about it ever....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Perfection Of A Dance

the perfection
of a dance comes
only
when you begin
to dance with
me, when you finally
too sing
with me when you
rise with me
like white smoke from
the fire
of our hearts
rushing its red hands
to touch
the highest
part of
the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
The Period In Your Long Sentence

there comes a point in your life
when you simply do not care

you give love and yet you still do not care
if they give you the same love in return

they give you pain and still you do not care
you have no pain to give them you have actually

nothing at that point in your life when
pain and love too become nothing at all

equate that with that point of no return when
you do not look back not even afraid that something

may turn into salt or stone you simply do not care
because there is nothing to really care because

you are nearing the endpoint of your existence and your
mind and heart are focused on that something

that you do not know but hundred percent sure that it
is something that you cannot exchange with what passed

between the grip of your hands between the hold of your
fingers: nothing snaps, something completes itself

you are full and you long for nothing anymore
'it is there! it is there! ' that is the only

proclamation. The past fades. The present shrinks.
The world becomes a period in your long sentence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Persistence Of My Memory

i am looking forward to see
molten clocks on my table
elongated days like rubber
heated with the fire from your
eyes
dripping silver spoons from
my porcelain cup
of coffee
i expect the flow of lava
in my bed

you say you are hot and
about to erupt
into a multiple orgasm
on my linen

well said, but not well done.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pessimist In A Poem...

the sickness of humanity
is looking for a cure
and trusting about the herbs of
words
humanity keeps on writing
until it finds the
cure,

there seems to be
nothing,
there is no remedy
on the sickness of our humanity
it begs
nothing is given
it is thirsty and remains
to be one
it is hungry (for love, for compassion
for warmth, and understanding
for food
and shelter and embrace)
and it so remains to
be one
hungry world

there is no cure, its sickness
remains forever
until you come in
to tell the world that it is wrong

you are the savior
of this sickness of humanity
when you cease to be
one of them.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poverty Of The Masses

i have already stopped wondering
why the rivers always leave the forest
proceeding to the sea
emptying all its contents
as the sea bloats itself with all the silt
salt and brownish water

it will always be
and you know that fully well
the sea is, and will always be rich
and yet
it is giving nothing back
to the river to the forest
to the village on top
of the mountain

the people there only dream of fish
and boats
what they eat are their own bare hands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pharisees....

The strong hands of strict rules

bend the spirit of the law

towards more wrongs

and after doing so there is no bother

if forgiveness is in place

it is done and the rocks of this earth

shake the waters rise

and the heavens come with

thunder and whirlwinds and

once again the cleansing begins

RIC S. BASTASA
The Phenomenology Of Giving

when you give you give because your heart likes it
your abundance flows from a container filled with so much
you give because having so much is also painful

the tree with many fruits too ripe for the season
gives them all away to the ground
the passers-by shall pick them
and have their thirst and hunger satisfied
the tree gives because there is no more reason for holding
the stalk gives up the weight that it is carrying
the tree has to shed leaves for another cycle
when the picker comes, the tree does not ask who is it
or for the reason why, whether it deserves it
it merely lets go every fruit
lest it be its own burden
for in truth giving away is also a form of relief
a cure of our maladies for greed,
a way of unloading our guilt
a way of erasing our avarice,
the final end to our disgrace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Phenomenology Of The Sparrow

you have seen a sparrow
on a twig
pulling with its beak
a ripe guava

you have seen how it flies away
after a very short fill

do you feel the freedom of its wings?
do you hear the wind beneath its feathers?

do you wish to capture it on a trap
using a latex sap?
do you wish to catch it with your hands
and feel its softness with your fingers?

when you put it in a cage
is it beautiful
to see it sad and
be not able to fly and to sing
on a beautiful morning?

or is it more beautiful flying with the wind
singing freely its own songs of freedom
rather than be silent
and sad in your very own hands?

have you ever felt
once in your life
that you are a sparrow
too tiny
too soft
too innocent
for another
creature's
cruelty and cunning?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Phenomenal Loneliness

the song
the dance
and the circus of
loneliness
will always be here
and when you speak
everyone
says: i am not alone in this.

RIC S. BASTASA
so many of them
parading naked in the memories
of nights and days
lights of smooth flesh
flashing
on the walls
soundlessly

one is good at first
and then the other tastes lesser
one splashes perfume
to lighten
the load
this search this thirst
this hunger
that arrives at nothing

the mind wanders at night
restlessly
there is a whisper from the faraway wind

and then
the ear listens

it is not any of them
not one
it is you and your restlessness
forever
hand in hand
this thirst unquenchable
this hunger
that feeds upon itself
insatiable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philippine Justice System...

he had trial the whole day
and the stenographers are dying

he is cruel and the world
loves him

justice is more cruel
demanding and sending them all
to oblivion,

the world does not actually
honor those who work hard for it

those convicted
shall condemn and those acquitted

to easily forget
damn the speed and the errors!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philosopher Dying Young

do not worry about going into
80
your way of imagining how we may sit at 70
somewhere in the park in the middle of that dark
part
like Simon's bookends and
Garfunkel's rock
is too hazy for me, for i have always said to myself
i can't grow old
someone saw my palm and the lines of my future
and which i, gladly accept,

I'd rather die younger, than suffer that loneliness
of my own uselessness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philosopher, A Novice

the fly
inside the bottle
is caught
without a
possibility of
escape,

it is not
dead yet

here is
the start
of its
story, a

story that
he wants to
tell

but cannot, here
is the beginning
of philosophy
the spectator
says.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philosopher, The Box, The Fly And The Bottle

do not go inside a box
it is dark and you may be lucky if there is a breather in there
if you go there
it will be sealed and there is no door
for an exit

i am in here
and i am telling you
it is true.

i am like a fly figuring out the weakness of a bottle
wanting to break out from glass and cork

somehow how did such a fly learn to live in a vacuum?

i am the philosopher that you know
who can melt also with the snow

Now, look, this is the box and it is now
inside my hand....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Philosophy Of This Journey.....

one leaves...........takes a journey...............far.............farther away........

alone,

not stopping, longing, looking for more, but not really definite on what to look for,
it searches, passes by every town, takes the road, sees a row of trees,
a line of coasts,
it rains, there is flood in the river, you do not stop........leaves again,
it shines in one place
sun is good,
clouds are as beautiful as one notices from time to time
by the window
of the bus, of the plane....... 

one leaves, takes another journey, one knows what he is searching,
a glimpse, but not really definite still

along this journey
life becomes what it really is,

it is a passing wind that blows your hair
but none is taken away from you

not even a lock of hair, not even the scent in your skin.

RIC S. BASTASA
and i of course
remember you, Maning

spanish mestizo with
nothing but flesh and torso
as human investment and

here comes Naomi, lonely
woman in her forties,

filthy rich and loveless,
meeting Maning, willing

and healthy physique to
fill her empty life to

the brim, but lust does
not last, and at the end

of this menopausal love,
comes boredom, a teller of

life wasted, use and disuse,
discard and throw away what

was once just a toy to
play with. Out, you dog!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Photograph Of You In B & W

i keep it in one of the pages of my
favorite book, a love story that is never
finished, i keep on reading it till the
wee hours, like a dream cut from the sound
of the heavy rain, cats and dogs,
i keep it there and kiss it all night long
and when i sleep i place it on top of my chest
my heart beating like a drum to a dream:
making love with you is a routine and i
have not heard about my heart complaining
about a deprivation, no more, no more,
there is this phenomenon of being fed-up,
routine that makes a familiarity and arrives
at the conclusion of forgiving and forgetting.
i look at old letters. Your picture in b & w
the photograph of you looks like an old stamp
of a letter that i have no plan sending to you
anymore. Got these tired hands. this scissor
this matchstick, this trash can, and the final
solution. This is the end of pain.
The dispositive portion. No costs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Photosynthesis Of The Mind.....

what i have inside my mind
is converted into
food,

the mundane
into divine
bits

in the same manner that we have accepted
how these leaves
take in light and
live....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Piano

it used to play the music of love
on the shores of the sea
it used to be

it was thrown finally in the deep
and then gone
her legs got strangled intentionally

but she changes her mind
struggles not to be drowned by her sorrow

finding a new love
a new beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Picture

beside a tree
he talks and confesses
he touched the bark
absorbing energy
from the sap of the living
leaves and the
twigs

it used to be that he was
the dog that barked
the wrong tree
at the time when Cleopatra
was finally set aside
by Caesar

his first life.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Picture Of Mona Lisa In The Internet

until now
i have not really fathomed
the meaning of your smile

was it sadness
or the anticipation of bliss?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pieces Of Self....

everyday i see myself
first as the wholeness of the egg

its whiteness ignored
cracked by the fork and
scrambled and fried

those pearls of white rice
cooked and handed over
on white porcelain plates

breakfast is not strange
otherwise if i ask, i will be

strange to all that is expected
to be familiar

in the bathroom i turn on the light
and see the miniature of sun
after the pee and the poo i feel
the softness of tissue and the
cleansing of water

flushing is such a relieving sound
and everything is in order now

the brushing begins and the
mirroring and the parting of hair

the shower gives some songs
life is cool after all and then one

gets used to the usual grooming
putting on socks fitting on belts and

shoes and buttoning shirts and
zippering

one gets outside finally and see the
real world feel the real air and hear
the real sounds of the traffic

one who reads this finds nothing
spectacular

after all
what is spectacular about routine?

and life is just one of those
routines in all your pieces of self
that you scatter all over the office,
the streets, the house
the room

and in all places of the heart and spleen.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pigs And You

what you thought
was a pearl, then
a diamond, which
you treasured for
years,

the pigs those pigs
keep on
eating, preoccupied
with left-overs
and chaff and grains
muddy but not muddled,
and they

(if you only know)
pity you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Piles Of Folders

today i am bringing another folder
at home
i am supposed to read them
ah, all these lives of people that i do not
personally know, the things that they keep
on doing against each other
these cains and abels
these black sheep and fauns
these sphinx and sea monsters
i will be learning their minds and studying
how to read them
how they speak and how they
justify evil
how they explain like magicians
taking rabbits from black hats
and converting newspaper cuttings
into money bills
it will be fun, i suppose, and i will be spending
more time than watching The Piano
on tv,
i will be lost in these labyrinths of motives
and acts
people kill sometimes for no reason at all
i am taught that
and some people admit what heinous crimes
other people do
for nothing at all
there are subsumed stories
exceptions to the rule of human behaviors
and there will be exceptions to the exceptions too
ah, my mind is strangulated by these criminals
my thoughts becoming too convoluted in
a tunnel of plots
but i will not be dead
neither shall i be intimidated
i will not quit
in fact, i will have my last laugh
giving what is due to the other
clapping for the innocent
giving justice
letting the criminal go on the basis
of reasonable doubts
crying with the widows
and consoling the orphans
talking to God
and making judgments for the poor
and then at night
i sleep without any pillow at all
too tired
i sleep on my hands
on the headboard light
unswitched
off.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pillars Of Our Society

see the pillars of our society. 
the church, the provincial and municipal halls, 
the university, the house of the family,

try to hold these pillars and feel their 
strength and width, you think that they are 
too strong to protect you

try piercing each pillar with the questions 
deep from your heart 
ask if they are that strong to make you 
strong too 
and protect you till the last breath 
of your suffering and pain

ask more questions and find out the answers 
from all these pillars 
lean on them, and touch them and 
shoot them with the bullets of your 
quizzical looks

listen carefully to the correct answers 
and stare at all of them

slowly, these pillars will crumble 
and turn to powder for in truth there is no 
other pillar stronger than what 
they have constructed for you through all these years

except the pillar that your body built 
on your legs from the bottom of your feet

it is you ultimately that you can only lean on 
you to protect you 
till the last breath of you is finally taken away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pink Pussycat

The pink pussy cat
lands on its four feet
on the blue floor

what you have not seen
is her way of scratching the cheeks of air
in the middle of her somersault exhibition

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pink Slip

At the bottom of the files it was kept there
April 2, 2002
Remember the exact date
A pink slip
Among the yellow sheets
Inside the big brown envelope

Life does not complete the cycle
Without it
You want to forget it
You bury it
On layers and layers of sadness
Like sand and gravel and leaves and grass and rocks

It never dies
It shouts the truth that there was this coward
Inside you
Crying for justice
Looking for a redemption

Today you take that pink slip again
Touching the edges and
Rereading the story that it is telling
The words there are painful

It is only you who knows what it means
It is both freedom and vengeance breathing
Life again saying

Tomorrow, yes tomorrow that star
Out there shall soon fall
And your laughter shall be last
Reverberating
Beyond the four corners of
The pink slip

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pitiful....

the biggest
tree

what cannot
be embraced
by a chain of
ten natives

the tallest
tree here

how the moon
pities it
when the cold
nights come

it has no leaves
no fruit....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Place Of My Birth No Longer Recognize Me

the land where i was born
mother tells me
is a land of mud and rain
they always go together and cause
the coming of each other

once when i have already
learned to talk and walk
we visited it

there were trees then
and some canals and fields of
green, ricefields and patches
of potato gardens and corn
and cassava

the men there are thin and the
women bent and mishapen
and they always complain
that they are hopeless
with sick children

they wanted to move
to our place where father
has prospered

there were no compromises
no transfers and no promises
we left all of them
towards our own home

and then there was this war
and many were killed
we read that on the news
and heard it from relatives

and then i become a man
and in peace visited the place
of my birth
the place has changed

everything is barren and burned
and there are no children
and women
either they died and buried
on shallow grounds
or they left somewhere else
for good
those hopeless men

i remember the dead trees
and tell them my name
who my mother was

it is sad the place of my birth
no longer recognizes me

RIC S. BASTASA
The Place Of The Damned

please understand my friend
that to keep your sanity here
you need not scream
or kick or run wild around
the four corners of this
closed room of loneliness

between us there is nobody else
except perhaps your theory about
holding hands with your soul
the reflection of yourself in the mirror
you worship as though all these things
are holy and if holy must be true

this is the world of the damned
the inability of accept what is rightly there
staring before us
truths, truths, these are inevitable truths my friend

that we have been born lonely
and all the circumstances are nothing but laces
of the basket that they fill with fruits

and then we go back to the emptiness
and this we must face, this is the most reliable truth
of our being: we come here all alone, and alone we shall soon go.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Place That She Cannot Find

you trust her
she has a gift for the gab
she talks about
those flowers that bloom from June till November
she draws a world in the heavens
she comforts you that you belong
and that you need her

later she demands that you worship her
as a gesture of respect you compromise a bit
prostrate on the floor
bringing her gifts
and praises

you know her
you keep silent
when she begins to destroy your life
you escape

and she will not find you anywhere
you know yourself better
you know a place
where you are true just like the rest who live there

how can she follow you on that path of truth and righteousness?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Place To Be...

when we arrive there
finally
we shall not dance

it is the place where
words have no place
anymore

just the gaze of quiet
the blending of lights and
colors

you don't look for the
possibilities of
taste

i'd wish i could have
said

perfect!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Place Where My Heart Lives

it is on top of a cliff
it is an eagle's nest
there is a red egg
in the middle of those
blue eggs

there is no eagle
anymore that flies there
anymore

the blue eggs spoil
there is nothing there
the blue egg
-cracks
my heart still sings
the blues

the clouds listen for a while
then they cry
the way the rain falls on the plains
then they drift away

the blue egg cracks
and shall be silent for a while
until the black eagle comes
and takes it back
to the place where it must be

RIC S. BASTASA
most of the time
they talk about the coming of death

medicine as a highlight fades
like dusk to morning

the matter of evidence has become
rays of morning light

the series of travels from nepal to calcuta
to kuala
are not exactly the denials that most of them
thought

and when the talk has become one routine
like a train from pedro gil to edsa
it becomes another uninteresting view
at the Luneta

well it ends like everyone else
Life is like that and will always be an imitation

when death comes
one holds his cigarette puffs a smoke into the air
and then puts a stop to a stare

RIC S. BASTASA
The Places Of Arrival

WORDS come like rain
upon the road the wetness runs
upon the head the rivers come
always running
nothing remains always going somewhere
nothing is left
as always the silence of the numbness
the self that is king
without land without a castle
the nudity of man
the insufficiency of his mind
the bareness of the soul
barren as sand
the dust of the bones
the air of the flesh
the catacombs of our existence
somehow our footsteps insist
about a direction
of a place
it is not there like fate that we
imagine
like aims
like visions that fade like mirage
when we arrive

RIC S. BASTASA
The Plain Citizen Of The Republic

the government for sure
cannot survive without you plain citizen

you are taxed
that is the most certain thing that happens in your life
as plain citizen
of this republic

the property that you own
is subject to confiscation

from womb to tomb
you, plain citizen is bound with a lot of other responsibilities

you make them rich
and give them power
you let them stay for more
than expected and they all laugh
like mad men

you do not make a stir
on the fold
the law chases you just in case
and the prison cell is crowded

so plain citizen of the republic
be good
lick them
as they suck you
pamper them
as they spare you

plain citizen you sell your right to be king
in this republic
now you sit there
and you will be next!
The Plane

when it starts to fly it is being met by this rain.

there is this strong wind ahead of us and some dark clouds
the stewardess announces said state and we are 30,000 feet
above the mountains

yes, these are the bumpy skyways.
i close my eyes. i think of you, the house, the garden, the room,
and the two dogs you are caring.

(will we crash? will this plane fall to the ground? shall we die in an instant?)

i close my eyes.
then the plane steadies. i open my eyes.

there are clear clouds. below is a wide expanse of the blue sea.
i look at the wings of the plane.

and then its wheels touch the ground.
the door opens.

it is another world for me.
i feel the importance of the ground. Its glory. Its reign now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Platter

You know, death doesn’t exist, he said to her.
I know, yes, now that I’m dead, she answered.
Your two shirts are ironed, in the drawer.
The only thing I’m missing is the platter.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Playboy In Town

his beautiful life
as he claims begins

one day with a cup of
arabica coffee

some hundred bills
in his pocket

a certain obsession
from Vogue Magazine

and a few flavored
& scented condoms.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pleas Of Participation

to be brief will mean
a little bit of choosing silence
rather than hush
or breathe

to be silent in the rhythm of
the breathing nostrils
to be still like a post
with a light on along the sidewalk
of the night of the city

to be nothing but a tree
to be not able to go with the wings of the wind
to be nothing but a rock
to be not able to splash with the water
to be a nail stuck inside the force of wood
to be a watcher of the birds
to be an ear merely hearing what sounds arrive

how can this be? when i have a set of feet
and hands
how can this be when my mind keeps on
beaming with thoughts?

only if i allow it
only if i allow it

shall i? shall i love you and kiss you? shall i make love with you?
shall i be the bed? the cover? and the window?

allow me to be a part of your life
allow me

will you?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pleasure Upon A Window

upon a window sill
the body lays
the hands strokes
every pleasure that the
skin gives
ecstasy is hard upon
its veins
bursting finally
on clouds
softness follows
sleep
on a weary heart
high
upon a dream
of a wet
forest grass

RIC S. BASTASA
The Plow Of My Papa

today is the last day to sell the plow of my papa
it is a necessary part of his lifetime
in fact
his lifetime is the plow itself that made the lines
of his own poetry in the fields
of rice and corn
today another man shall have it
at the price we all wanted
we have sold all that he had
the land, the house, the trees he planted
when he was still alive
when he was still strong and cruel and so imposing
	his is his only plow
and we have decided to dispose it finally
to any man

we are now at the stage of reconstructing our lives
and the plow of papa must go

we shall have our own fields now of rice and corn
on a white canvass we draw

the new sun, its color shall be warm, something new really
to the feel of our skins

the darker ones shall be replaced by the flowing color
of the clouds like feathers of birds always ready to fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Plunge Of The Child In The Old River

i hear the splash
of the old river

i was that little
child diving from

a bent coconut tree
i dream of crocodiles

waiting their mouths
wide open

my body so frail
and pale and

in one flash of
the wink of an eye

the little child was gone
and there came back

the heroic man in me
not magic just being stoic

RIC S. BASTASA
when you read my poem
you begin to say that i must have been confessing
about a past and it is my subconscious who is always speaking
apparently you
notice the coming and going of a soul
to its favorite place
talking in the first person
sometimes you begin to piece the different forms
of metaphor: an image of mother, a naughty son
a flock of sheep, an old house by the river,
green hills, ripples of the sea,
leaves falling,
you connect chain to another chain
always bearing in mind
that one who tells the truth cannot forget
a story.

i used to believe in what i write
and chose those which i must believe in
but somehow i have changed: i now want to write for
those i do not believe anymore.

a black book, an access code,
a blue bird, a caterpillar, a cat on top of the
dog's head.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem As A Treasure

for whom it is not dedicated
there is this laughter that belittles
the poem
as a treasure
and for one who cannot relate
for lack of sensitivity
or imagination
the poem is nothing but a rock
along his path
a pest in his garden
a wilted leaf
another part of his garbage
a burden on his back
a howling sound
in his stomach

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem At The Tip Of Your Tongue

tell me about the poem at the tip of your tongue
wet with wisdom

tell me about it and tell me
if you have finally written it on paper

tell me if you still keep it in your mind
while you busy with other economic ideas
the one
which make both ends meet
the bread and butter thing

tell me if the poem is still there unwritten
or if written in haste still unfinished
or if finished so sketchy
like a quick scratch
to an itch of this flea

tell me if you have the courage of writing the lines
to beauty that you always ignore
to gentleness that you set aside
to grace that you dislike
to God whom you have offended

tell me what your silence means
let me decipher what you think what you still refuse to write

tell me, i know,
everything is gone like a whisper of the wind
far away from your deaf ears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem In A Trance

we are bored, we are like nails
we may forgive ourselves and be silent snails
eking our way out through our own fluids
we somehow fall short of the words
and in our bed we look away like strangers
i thought we can make a poem together
the one about love and
freedom
what we have instead are black birds pecking
on our wooden windows
red ants in a parade of their pheromones
looking for an empire beneath our dreams

we are lost when we finally covered our faces
with the blanket
and when you finally switched off the light
on our common headboard.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem In My Mind

you cannot steal my poem
it is in my mind
you cannot put an end to my poem
it is alive
it has the wings of an eagle
flying high
nesting on a cliff
a very high cliff
beyond the grasp of my hands
it is wild
as wild as the cobra in the forest
but when i recall it back
in my memory
it becomes gentle as a dove
as tamed as
my dog
wagging its tail behind my back
it becomes a tamed horse
waiting for my ride.

RIC S. BASTASA
now you must
learn what poetry is
alright, you must
agree that it gives
sometimes a sense
of pleasure
where emotions begin
to play in the dark
in the park
it becomes the hallmark
of your freedom
you must have noticed
how the words chosen
are tilted in your favor
because now you are
the master of this
game of truth
and purity
you must know by now
that poetry somehow
is a escape
there are exits in
its structure where
you design your
freedom
your tunnel from that
prison wall of
closed structures
without windows without
light
this is the sense of
selfishness away
from the crowd
away from those
that humiliate you
from those that
knows nothing of you
except your madness
your introversion into the
silent (yet colorful world)
of metaphors
the frogs there sing
the rain does not stop
falling
the rainbows come
bridging that gap
between your
illusion and your
reality
you must know
by now
what all these means
in the most simple term
this is your
kit for survival
a box of words
the most private room
of your
sexy metaphors
your women and your
dreams
your treasures and
your island
your house without
a roof
because all night long
you always want
to see the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem Not The Poet

she makes a mistake
having loved my poem
than myself,
she arrives at this
that i am more real there
than what i am
she loves making love
with the words
rather than my body
my torso she sets aside
my poems
the arms and legs
my metaphor the best
tongue ever
that licked the bare
shoulders of her soul

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem That I Love....

After being away
for the last
five days, here i am
again
making love with you
in
eternity....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem That Makes You Alive

from the office the paper works pile up
like a mountain where you walk only a few steps
where it is so steep
and you want to rest on the grass because you feel like
you are dying in a minute
and they understand why sometimes you have to stop
and get some air from the window facing the sea

when you go home for lunch
with your wife
your shoulder hangs a little bit down
like a hanging plant from a branch of an old tree
your eyes are drooping
and you lose your appetite
not the food but for life itself
you have been doing things by compulsion
this bread and butter thing
this normal course
this work that is dictated upon us
society moves like a clockwork
office like a jail
the world like a cell to you

you keep your computer open
after lunch you sit in front of it again
punch the letters and tell the screen
this is my life
this could have been my work

writing poems, this poem and the rest of the poems
this makes you alive
without milk without the cradle without the bottle

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem That Makes You Cry

Why did he write the poem that makes You cry? Did he intend to make you sad For the whole day?
He didn’t. He is simply talking about Himself. It is not about you. It is about his Own sorrow. The dead ants, the shadow Of the sun folded and kept in the corner. The goats that have to go. The lines of your Palms that you follow. The stars in the Heavens. The fact that ultimately there Was no pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. They are true. I have seen how they happen. With him on the grassy plain. There is Always a story to tell. This time you come. And you find yourself immersed. You are Like us and so you cry. It is you in us. It won’t last long anyhow. We shall soon Part ways, as he once did. Earlier.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poem That The Little Child Recited To Papa And Mama

ma
ma

pa
pa

(giggle)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poeming Of The Flea....

because he will be
away for long
the wife has allowed his
dog to sleep with her
in bed

and then she infects him
with fleas.....

RIC S. BASTASA
so i have written
and you have read
and you say you understand
but i say: no you don't

i will hide in all the images
and you will see something
so different

you will learn later
when everything is deleted.

so what is the head fake?
the poems are not for you.

but just for me.
all dreams end.

i was alone
and there were no trees.
i got no world.

i face the brick wall
and then pass through it.

i will be there and
i will leave these all.

you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poems As Diary

to know me
there is no other but this poetry
to know poetry however
please do not read
my diary
for this diary may fail the standards
of your poetry
but at any rate everyday poetry is a diary
what makes us fume like a mad cow
what makes us whistle like a satisfied lover
what makes us surrender in defeat and shout victory in triumphs
little things and big things
all summed up
in this new thing: diary as poetry
and poetry as diary.

we do not even have to rhyme
does life rhyme at all my friend?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poems Everyday In Your Life

it takes a lot of frustrations,
a little inspiration
but more of melancholic clamor
for someone like you to write
a poem sometimes only
once a year or nothing at all
not a poem even
when they read it or when
you read it yourself

it is a matter of just surviving
less the poems which you could have written

everyday in your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
on that day
pain comes
for you failed to pay the rent
of your room
and so they take away everything inside
and lock the room

it is a pitiful situation
but you never cry

silently you take away your possessions
towards the road
as you wait for a ride

your overused toothbrush
your Colgate toothpaste
your red slippers
dirty jeans and off-white shirts
some collections of poems
and secondhand books

and then the rain pours
suddenly
you try to cover the books with
your dirty clothes
but the rain pours mad and heavy
and everything gets wet

this time
a flood of tears rush from your eyes
the pain has become
unbearable

RIC S. BASTASA
one summer a poet writes about
true love
and happiness
and this lonely lady
chances upon the lines of this poet

and she has tasted the sweetness
of happiness that love can bring

she loves every word in the poem
feels the ecstasy of every line
and every night
she says she cannot sleep
thinking, feeling,
wanting to be lost and be held in
his arms

she decides to love
the poet
ultimately
she travels to the place stated in his address
hoping to see him
so she will finally know
his love that touches her
in the bottom
of her heart

only to find out
it is sad
that the address does not exist
and the poet does not live there
and does not even
exist
perhaps only in the imagination
of those who want to love
and be loved
she is so sad she jumps into
a conclusion that love is a
lie
that the poet is a
liar

since then, she stops reading the poems
of that poet
(or any other poet)
who never dies
because he for once never ever lived
in the first place

except the poem
perhaps
which to date still convinces lonely ladies to live and believe
to love and be loved

that which defines
what love is
where love is found

and find it somehow in the arms of one
who is real, like it is alive, like it is true
to the one beside her
who touches her
with his
warm hands
who melts
her in his eyes

because
even unwritten by any poet

this love is still so beautiful....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet And The Reader

the poet writes his lines
they are all dead
unless the reader comes
and resurrects them

then the poem becomes alive
and begins to read upon itself
the meaning of its existence

there is a bond between the poet
and the reader
a familiarity comes into play
one says> this is what it is
the other says> i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet As A Flatterer

he loves bukowski and e.e. cummings too,
and he colors his world with their shades and hues
and the souls of other poets come to him
love us too
we are too lonely in here
our poems have turned dusty
read us too

and out of respect for those who are dead and lonely
he takes them all inside his room
lights his lamp and burns his eyebrows
(literally dissecting each flesh and vein of those
poets departed)

he writes at the break of his day
i love you all and honor you

but sorry, i have my own poems too
and like yours... forgive me...
they're dusty too and need my reading company.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet As A Pornographer

without the contours of the body
where shall the poet be?

without the feel of the palms
skimming through breasts and thighs
where can his poems be?

he cannot live on those clouds alone
he has no words that must dwell in air
his rhyme and rhythm are on their prime
on the hips and legs

that which lies between and not beyond
creates the meaning of his lines

the hair and nose and tender loins
the lips and tongue and cheeks

the poet takes some flowers and smell them
but with her something crawls in his head forever

do not judge him for he is happy and
he does not really care about what you say

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet As A Thief

the poet travels from one stanza
to another
he utters the syllables like he chews
a bubble gum and then he puts
air and makes those
films and rainbows in the air

like a thief he is amazed by all these wonders
he takes some and discards some
and slowly he builds his own
bubble on top of another

he sees his face constructed from their own
and he feels this elation

i am from you and you and you
and you cannot deny me too

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet As Mere Spectator

and so there was this child
left by the mother who was washing
her body in another
room

the child crawls and walks its
way finally
to the dining table
and pulls the table cloth
where a cup of hot coffee
is put

hot coffee is poured on its face
and the baby screams
and screams and screams
at the top of his voice

i hear it but what can i do
i am the poet
and you give me this job of
a mere spectator

next time, tell me, i am more than that
i can be superman
to that child
only if you ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet As Politician

every hour the poets knock the door of my senses
if you have time my dear
please read my latest poem
i have read yours and they're good
(what does he care? he has his own cares to care for)

and they keep on knocking
and i keep on lying too with my grin as wide as the cheetah
your poems are great
just perfect for me.. oh i love this one too

how hungry can a poet be as a politician
hungry for praise
lusting for honor

wanting to have a name where there are none
except perhaps in tombstones

yes i will compromise with an epitaph

here lies the poet as a politician
he is read upon his own request

Requiscat In Pace!

i place the star after his date of birth
i place a cross after his date of death.

and of course at the lowest portion
upon his request

RSVP.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet Friend Of Mine

the last time i saw him
he wore thick glasses
but it did not deter him
from being interested
with what he cannot see
without it.

he uses his hands to feel.
he embraces all those that he love
he keeps his imagination alive

from far
i only read his poems

his words are all alive
like water
filling in the cracks of life

like clouds
taking subtle shapes
and always transient

his spirit spreads throughout
the universe
his mind my mind too
after that moment when a certain light
arrives
and flickers and then forever gone
in the vastness of air

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet Is Looking For Love Deep &#304;N The Night

sometimes you may find
sincerity to a poem as to
the date when it is written,

the hour particularly tells you
that a poem is written when
everyone in the house is
fast asleep, and

that someone
cannot sleep, because he
has to write some words for
someone, who

too, cannot
sleep,

not really because they
are insomniacs, much less
vampires looking for blood,
but perhaps someone

who is
looking for love, even in the
dark, even in the wee hours
even when love

is no longer
there, even when the night
is dead, even when there is
no one alive in this world
to tell him that he is alive
and must by all means and
at all cost, deserve to

be happy.
The Poet Laureat

did you get his message today from across the sea?

that life is short you need to take a stop along the way and smell the roses

in here to be candid the men and women and children know that too well

and look at them the men drink tuba the women spread the rumors and giggle and laugh and the children still play even in the dark

as i dabble in poetry there are no
roses anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
the older he gets
the fewer the words
until such time when
nothingness struck him
in bed alone
he merely mumbled
a single syllable
and that was the best poem
i heard from
him ever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poet’s Prayer

Lord forgive me
That I have chosen to become a poet
Forgive me for what I write
The poems of my life
Grant me such devotion
To write the poems that I love
Grant me the love of poetry
That must not distract me
From tenderness
Make my desire last long
Make my disillusion short
Uproot from me these impure desires
From those poems that trouble me
Let not some images confuse me
Let not some metaphors numb me
Let not my dullness sadden me
Let your radiance descend upon
The modesty of my poems
As you once gave radiance
To the prophets who cannot speak
For themselves
Let me be a strong poet
Able to love and defend
the poems for the
women and children and land
Grant me the talent to make
The poems that they may still
Recite and remember
Even when I am gone
In my weakness as a poet
Make me strong
To scorn the poems that are not pure
To shy away from the fires
And flames that do not light
The lives of other men
And women too.

RIC S. BASTASA
This is the place where money has no value,

where work is always free because it is loved,

because love is always one with its beloved expecting nothing in return

loving without measure

always priceless
more than a gem
beyond gold
transcending the fences of our being

despite the tiredness of our hands, despite the drying of the rivers of the mind

imagination always flies

like birds outside the matrix of the boundaries of migration

a diaspora of metaphors clinging to nothing but its faith to the ecstasy of the most common words the diaphragm of syllables the bugle of sentences
press the keys
you can write some more

face the screen
and
bleed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetic Experience...

i had always been faithful to you.
my arms are numb and my fingers are quiet.

every morning i give you some lines.
i listen to the whispers of your songs.

i get nothing actually not even a kiss.
ephemeral and illusive you and mirage.

this is the desert without an oasis.
there is a camel but it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetic....

when i sit down
and begin to think
i become so light
and fly
like an atom to my
mind

addicted to the wind
i flow
slave to the sky
i float
beside the stars
i hang on....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry At Night Time And Beethoven's Piano Music

dr this is like playing the piano pieces
at night when everyone in the neighborhood is already sleeping,

ey wonder if there is a ghost in this house
someone that cannot accept death someone that claims
an unfinished business
still roaming in limbo and plays the piano at night

ey are all disturbed and will close their windows earlier
turn off the lights and retreat inside their thick blankets

the piano is heard and it is playing some pieces of Beethoven
the story of his death...

it is not the same with your poetry
all night long, you write, and there is no stopping and the neighbors think
that everything is all right
that the lights are on because there is a baby in the house

it is you that sob silently inside the limbo of your dreams
that refuse to die
roaming the streets at night
breathing the cold in the darkness

the following morning, nothing is changed
the neighbors as usual do their normal activities
the street is heavy with traffic
people are busy chasing the hours
and there is no stopping anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry Circle

ey all meet under the moon
under the palm trees of their desert
beside the flowing river of an oasis
where the camels sleep

ey form a circle and look upon
the sorrows of their hearts
and then one begins to sing
as the other joins with a hum

after that song which serves as
an opening
the leader of the pack formally
declares:

let the poetry begin
let the rains fall heavily on the desert
let there be a flood of tears
let there be an emptying of the hearts
let all the hands of the soul open
let us all be, as we all wished,
be fully alive

and then one of those who weeps so hard
begins to disrobe and dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry Group In Andibas..

you are funny
i guess you are taking
this matter
seriously

as you see this is
just past
time, a pasta, a time
in a pasta,

beside a spicy aroma
of hot chili or if you
are just too lucky

there is a party of
happy-go-lucky fools talking
a lot
about simple nonsense like

well, we are here and
we have nothing much to do so

we write. Nothing serious like
if it is not done then this world

would stop revolving or that
fish would be over-fried and cannot

be eaten. You are funny and
most of us are laughing. There

is nothing serious here. We
as i repeat, are resting and

no one is talking and so we
relax and

write. There is no purpose really.
Nothing noble. we are bored.

or if you ask enough, we are overworked. Our right brains are exploding, so we take some sips of coffee, look at the sky beyond the blue sea, in that one line horizon, and sometimes reflect on this journey of fools sharing notes on nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry In The Heart Of Hazel

far in the hills of cancainap
she feels poetry like the winds of the mountain
like the forest trees
and she writes them line to line
each syllable keeps on dripping
like the raindrops from the
roof to her footsteps

i have read what she sends me
day by day through the internet

i could have told her that the metaphors
are still looking for her because she did not put them

i didn't. Finally i did not tell her. In her lines i have seen
how her heart is burning like the wildfires in the forest
and no kind of criticism has the right to put it off.

i know, perhaps after four summers, she and her metaphors
soon shall meet. And there will be a big feast.
A truce, perhaps between feeling and discipline.

Art is always a patient listener

and in such slow
touches and brushes it paints more beautifully
than the warm hands of reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry In Us

it is not
in the metaphors that
we invent from
day to day
those that we see
in things that
we dress for ourselves
those that we
think can speak what is
unspeakable in
our beings
which in any way no matter
what we do
remain unspeakable
because they are.

the poetry in us
is not the poem.

do not ask me
it is nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry Inside All Of Us...

it's been there
from the beginning

perhaps even before
you give birth
to your
eyes

it's been there
embedded in the linings of the
heart

it is experience
it is the past

from the past lives
from previous
existences

you are awakened and reawakened
every day
or year
like a morning

you remember the orange color
of your sunsets

the scents of the flowers that
once were with you
mixed in the water of your
many baths

you remember so many hands
that caressed your
hair

it is the light from the sun
that strikes your eyes
that sometimes makes your remember
and then you piece them all
into a pattern of
an understanding

the shattered pieces unite
into a form

and then you remember
that is why you are always writing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry Inside Us....

we have not mumbled
like bees
all seeking nothing
but nectar

we are singing like
those birds
after the nest after
those grains

we are building rainbow
bridges
only for a while but
so beautiful

and then gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry That Binds

i want to escape from you
how can i? i am bound to every syllable.
your words no longer laces
of red silk but chains of stainless steel
around my wrists

how perfect is this slavery of words
inside this cave of emptiness

others boast of the bliss inside
the cornucopia of your promises
the taste of every consonant
ambrosia of sweet sounds
the harmony of hollowed halls
the blissful rest that every comma provides
inside an array of images
breathe breathe breathe

i want to escape from you
but here i am stranded again on an island
of metaphors

for today she sends me a message
that she feels that i am down and i need to reconstruct
every pattern every path of this
labyrinth for me to find the final exit
of my own freedom

however

i am glad that inside this loneliness
there are many of us
hanging on clinging to the taps of our fingertips
making good at the wings of words and we begin to learn to fly
inside the little space of blue clouds and shining sun and blowing air
in this cozy corner of the heart
this poetry that binds us to bleed and yet
so blithe so light so free
The Poetry Train...

you have taken this
non-stop train to poetry

at a certain destination
you embark just to feel the
rail and touch the soil but
then the train runs again
and you are still in

the destination is unknown
the journey is endless
and what is riding is not just the body

but the whole soul.
this is your poetic damnation.

feel the grace, keep this place,
always, always in locomotion

there are no wings, but you take flight
there is not much food, but you live forever
there is no money, but man, you are rich....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poetry Vendor

in the market you sell your
poetry, the ones that you wrote
for a span of
forty years, and it is not selling
no one buys
you advertise, you dance,
you sing to be noticed
this vendor in you
has become too degrading

i must have written the worst ones
those bleeding words
those crying letters
and without any intention of
infecting those who
are dancing on the streets
strolling on the parks
those kissing under the trees
i keep them all in a bundle

bound with a warning: not fit for
your reading.

they better be my own
secrets lest they all offend
this happier world
where you claim
you live in....

RIC S. BASTASA
Toreno
we tried. That is the main point.
We tried the best we can
To save ourselves

IF we failed do not dismay
Time heals a failure
Leaves nothing later but
Only a scar
& scars do not really last
Or if they last
They become our landmarks
So we will never be lost
Again.

Toreno the hills will always
be there
The mountain peaks are always
Pointing to the Skies
The plains are always filled
With rivers and trees and
Ricegrains

Things are not always dead
Some though lifeless if we try again
Shall live again

Now Toreno i shall forgive you
For choosing the lifelessness of the stone
But for you
Each of us can be moss too
To be friends with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Point That You Are Driving At

of all inanimate
you say you want to be a fruit
a mango
luscious, sweet, and
ripe

i know, your point is that
you are ready,
ripe for everything, an end
for itself,

and of all animate,
you say you simply want to be this
mosquito
of the female variety, one that sings
one that tells you

that life sucks

RIC S. BASTASA
The Political Law Class

it is avatar like
i am growing roots all over my body
my eyes
through its pupils
are giving you
pathways
to another dimension
beyond the
threshold of the law
of this land

i tell you about sandcastles
that we keep on building
and how every hour the waves of the sea
are destroying them

faithful to the law
we keep rebuilding these sandcastles

eternal damnation but
for a cause
we never let ourselves be drowned
by the depression of
the hours

survival of the fittest
so you have to memorize the faces of
those around you

they may not make it
after all

i spread my roots
to all your noses your hands
fingers
every orifice of your
bodies

after three hours
i have lost what i have for that day

going home
driving alone
on a dark night
i am surprised
why i have
become
stronger....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Politician

i see you holding a baby, smiling,
father of affection
hurling speeches for us all
for the good of humanity
public welfare and public good

for the people
by the people

inside my room is the absurdity about you
taking a shower standing on the bath tub
with your black suit and white tie
silver cuff links

watches that stop
and a secret journal containing the real you
at the end it has these notes

poor the people
buy the people....

in revenge, the mountains grow
the grasses spreading lustily on the plains
hiding the arms of those
who are really hungry, hopeless, raped,
and murdered by your promises and words.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Politician That I Just Met This Afternoon....

When i look at his
face, he was looking
at something else,

i like to capture
his eyes,
to see how truth
was,

they are wild birds
migrating
to a faraway land
and he cannot promise
to take them all
back to my home

there is nothing
and i know that this

politician true to
his nature

has again lied, and
which to me

is the only truth
that he cannot hide.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pony

come little preza
the pony
is for little preza to play
the great ranch in her mind
the large patches of pastures
of her memories
the little white pony
with spots of brown
is for little preza
to hope for
something nice to erase
what sadness lies
on the surface
of the table without linen
on the plate
without food
on the floor without any
carpet
the little ponies of our minds
play for us
the game that are badly
needed
in these times
of utter adversities

come little preza
come
the grass is cool
the skies are blue
the ponies are
playful

ride on one of them
and be happy for once

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poo.....

the sea is calm
i stand and watch
early cold morning.

a fat man with white
hair is sitting on one
of the rocks facing the
sea
beside him his white
dog.

the slow sound of the
waves are soothing

an old woman carrying
a pail leaves her house
throwing what is inside
the pail to the sea

she is disgusting but
she says the fish love what
is inside it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pool That Once Was Clean

it is the mirror
of your clean shaven face
the image of grace
and beauty
was once yours

until you put
the ripples on the clear pool
until you throw
the first stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poor Children In The Municipal Cemetery

the poor children
in the municipal cemetery
are rushing to the
mourners bearing the coffin
of their departed

one kid is left out and
keeps calling the rest who
are far away

'come! come! hurry
hurry! our much awaited
lunch is ready! '

one weakling with Chinese
eyes stands beside me begging
for my jolibee chicken

' please give me one sir,
i cannot compete with the
rough and the strong'

RIC S. BASTASA
you are in a situation
that is utterly uniquely yours

you love much
but no one loves you

you make all of them happy
but they only hurt you

you want true love
there is none for you

they will love you because of your money
that has always been the curse from the day you were born

you have all the luxuries, the fame, that honor, that position
you have all the money you can hold

but there is no love for you

well i guess, you must have accepted it
it is but fair: you have it all, except love

on the other hand, there is this guy who is stripped of everything
poor, uneducated, jobless, no house to live, no land to own
no money to spend

but someone loves him so truly
he is silent, but (i do not have to guess) he is absolutely happy

tonight, she is his.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poor Woman

she once
received same amount as mine
equal shares
of our inheritance

he trusted people that much
now she's as poor
as before,

i am closing the door
now my charity must know the name of people.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poorest Guy In Town Is Here

Christmas is
indeed

for children

for family

and here he is
spending Christmas

without any.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pores In Our Skin Are Too Many

no one shuts us
up
when they close our
mouths
our hearts open
some more

no one shuts us
out
when a door is closed
more doors come and wait
outside
waiting to be opened

one one shuts us in
and leaves us
in fear

the pores in our skin
are too many

for emergency exits
at any time
anywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pose Of Desire

the right arm
sits on the
left arm
the right hand
lands on the
left side of the neck
the left hand
situates itself
securely on
the right armpit
you embrace
yourself
the eyes focus
on the object
that they have
not seen
it is not necessary
that a wrinkle
be an accent on
the forehead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Possibilities

they all surround me
and they all ask me to follow
but i did not go
they throw feeds in front of me
but i did not take any
i did not peck upon any grain
as though i am a chicken
the skies rain
but i did not go outside
i did not meet anything or
anyone

those snakes
those nails
those spears

at the end
the only judgment is this:

it is me
it is only me
i am
my only possibility

nag-alirong kanako
apan wala ako mikuyog
nagpasabod sa akong
atubangan
apan ni bisan usa
wala ako'y gipunit
nag-ulan sa langit
apan wala ako migawas
wala ako'y gisugat

ang mga halas
ang mga lansang
og ang mga bangkaw
ang hukom sa
kataposan sa panahon
mao lamang kini

ako lamang og ako lamang
ang posibilidad
sa akong kaugalingon

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pot Of Gold At The End Of The Rainbow
	onight she takes us to Dubai
the place where new dreams are woven
from sand

ey they left the lands of their birth
to work in the land where
the color of gold is black

my friend writes:
the pot of gold is found right here

come, come and be with us
there is nothing in the land where you live

the promise is broken
there is no token

come, come and be with us
let us partake of this sadness

from the sand and sun of Dubai
you must say goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poverty Of The World

the poverty of the world
the hunger of the children
will always be here
no matter what
no matter when

now, tell me
what makes you different
from their hunger from their poverty?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Poverty Of This World.....

poverty will always be there.
it will not leave
there are reasons for not leaving
it gives you wisdom.

poverty is one of the colors
in that painting on the wall
a smudge of dark black, pitch blood,
scarlet,
when you go nearer, you want to
suggest to have it blotted
but as you stand away
and see that color in harmony
with other colors of the landscape
of the mind
you will see how it blends
to create
beauty.

the poverty of the mind
the poverty of the spirit
the poverty of this world
will always be, and ever be,
there forever.

without it, where can richness
be?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Attraction

mind over matter.
that is a consistent theory.
what i perceive shall become
true, in a moment, time
hands over
what my mind wishes
on a basket
filled with flowers
like my dreams

the power of attraction
you infect me
you seed in me this positive
perspective
of making my life
another happy one
driving away my misery
because i do not think
properly
bad things happen
bad luck is a reality
no one is to be blamed
for this

i guess we must stop this.
let things be.
let the sky and the ground
meet
let time take its due course.
i like it
when we simply
wait and see.

that is my trip.
that is the thrill.
i just receive
God gives.
The Power Of Context

the rainy days
make you dream
of umbrella

you are not just
what you are
you are also your
environment.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Emptiness

in a conversation
between an old friend
and myself
who too has aged
a bit
with so much
anxiety about what the
future can
bring

i utter the word
emptiness

it came as a big bubble
of air
from my mouth

it escapes and floats in
air
like a dirigible

we become too tiny
for the vast emptiness

and we are carried away
and we wander

it is too huge
and silent and we have
never returned
home since then

our journey has turned
black and white
in a silent movie
our actions repeat themselves
the boredom
is eternal
we struggled like
paper bits in a room
of fire

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Hope And Imagination

no matter how other hands
enclose it
imprison it like a pebble
in those callous fingers
it escapes still
like a burning fire through
thick smoke rising
changes itself into a swift
flying bird
into some border-less skies

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Imagination

you fly
on your invented wings

you settle for a while
in an imagine place

you arrive at new beginnings
without endings

you like it somehow
where facts come and do not arrive

at any conclusion
where questions remain as they are

hanging stars in the heavens
gleaming without

mornings where people live
on forever

i am telling you
what imagination really is

invented wings
unnameable places

an eternal line
of words always unspoken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Imagination Is Here...

when the rain hits the
water of the canals

spider webs are formed

to make the spiders
crawl and make you feel

the soundless hairs of their
feet

somehow you must seek the
aid

of an original thought
the magic of imagination

to see the needles of the pines
on the rain

you must learn to plant those trees
on the linings of your iris

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Mighty Silence

to stare and be unmoved
by any blocks
of inhumanity

the silence to violence
the ability
to be in place where others
stone you

the capacity to endure
the bleeding
when others slice your flesh
and eat them
like bacon

to stand your ground
when you
are right
to be unmoved in silence
when others
are laughing
and mocking

to be simply christlike
and look up
to the heavens
when the skies turn black

to give in to death
and feel the power
beyond it

why not?
why not?

be passionate
and be dead
and then
be too resurrected

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Prayer

You pray a lot and take pride
That your prayers are granted

And you pray some more
Like a monk like a priest,

Sometimes I think about
Prayerful dogs, what if their
Prayers are granted too

Bones and more bones
Would surely rain from
The heavenly skies.

Oh yes, I pray, but if my
Prayers are not granted,

I still know that God loves me
He thinks my wants are not the best

For me, and he reserves the rest.
That really suits me best.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of Repetitions

repetitions, you say are
reinforcements, a promise that
there shall be no forgetting between the stalk and the leaf
once upon a tree.

there is this river that runs through us
and i am at the other side of the bank
you do not see me
alone, am i as usual without the song

i gaze upon the leaf and the stalk
i cut across barks
i rub the knife and sculpt the pain
reshaping it for something so practical and
useful
like a statue of the town god
that i everyday
worship purposely to erase the pain
to numb the nerves

of my being, alone, am i,
in the repetitions, i have learned how to live
and then scribble

on those surfaces
debarked and cleaned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power Of The Mind

From a lemon peel
Rises an iguana

Your hands with
A sharp knife makes
It

From your own thoughts
Shall rise
Another green iguana
Smelling like
A real green lemon

Your mind with a sharp
Scalpel shall
Form it

RIC S. BASTASA
The Power.....

i am not so particular
about who this Power is

who really knows His Name
and what He does?

it is something very Personal
we talk

sometimes i argue
but He does not answer in
categorical Yes or No Lie
sometimes
I do not even know if there is an
Answer

but there is this feeling, this
fleeting feeling that He is here

i do not know much
i have not seen it well enough

somehow a boat must have
an anchor
a world must have a light
a way must have some steps

an anthill to be an anthill must have
ants
this essence of my mind trying to grasp

the ungraspable, a cup with an ambition
to take the ocean inside its cupping.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pragmatist

the popularity of the sun
that comes day to day is not the issue for now

it is the light that it carries
feeding the leaves that
feed the cows that feed us too

it is not even beauty
that golden sheen of its hands that reach upon the
breasts of the hills

the thighs of the plains
the lips of the waves of the seas

it is the food that matters
the survival of all who rely on the satisfaction of every hunger

it is not which
came first the egg or the chicken

it is that which satisfies the hunger of each stomach
that matters for now

never shall you write about
a sunset
or a sunrise

it is the frying pan and the oil
the egg
sunny side up and the fork and the plate

how long has this been
that you have become another selfish pragmatist?

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Prayer Of Elf

it is a unique
prayer you have there
Elf,

that God may grant
you a shorter life
to live

that
you may not be a
burden to
others

a peaceful death
a happy one, O Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Prayer Of Doña Loleng

Doña Loleng
celebrated her
95th birthday
yesterday

she is a widow
ten years ago

she had ten children
25 grand children
and 8 great grand
children

the party was
grand and well
attended by the
neighborhood

two cows were
butchered
five pigs and
wine flowed like
a river
and desserts like
hills and
mountains

food was superb
and the entertainment
was more than
magnificent

singers from the
city were hired
and there were two
clowns for her
grandchildren

how thankful
could she be

that night she
could not sleep
she prays that
she may be granted
finally her much
needed appointment
with her
very kind Creator.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Presence Of The Night

ladies,
i did not invent these nights
my eyes are not their switches
i cannot turn it off and on
even if i close and open
these weary eyelids.

ladies
on nights like these
when twilight cut us short
of the weird things that we
tickle upon our bodies
i never drove those nights away

these nights have their own lives
they carry their own capes of darkness
their own pleasurable surprises
they know how to kill and save
they know how to give us
either ecstasy or pain
but they never force themselves upon us
we are simply made to choose
we must therefore think wisely

and so ladies,
why do you curse the darkness?
why do you blame the night?
why do you cry unnecessarily?
what a waste of moments

ladies,
come with us,
we are your merry gentlemen.
the nights have been made for all of us
and nobody must take them all away from us
nobody because now
we have the right to own them.
The Present Is Still The Best That You Can Have

Time is a good reminder.

for instance, you want to jump
out of the window
time tells you: it is cold outside

or you want to sail away
and time says: there are big waves out there
they can swallow you
like a whale

you want to back to the past
time says: what for? don't you smell
the foulness of the dead?

you want to rush yourself to the future
and time says: speed is scary
you may explode

and so time says: embrace the present
savor every hour
every minute
every second

that is the best that time can give you
no palpitations
no fear, it is there right in your hands
like a helpless bird
wanting the warmth of your palms
looking forward to be fully alive
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Present State Of Spiritual Negligence

we feel sorry
everyday to the right God
because wrongly we
have feed our body
and soul
with the wrong food
and we have not become
healthy children
of his house
when we only try to
find the mirror of righteousness
we could have
seen how
emaciated our body has become
how pitiful is our
stinking soul
defiled
cracking skin and flesh
infested by worms
and soul
thinning out like
a desert air.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Press Statement

46 million Filipinos
Go hungry everyday
3.8 million Filipino
Families experienced
Having nothing
To eat in 2007
Now, the price of rice
Has increased

So?

I am just writing
Upon Ariel’s prodding.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pretender

At the party
He is the bashing type
Gorgeous
Fashionable
Renaissance man
With a taste
For flare

Ask him about his
Business in the u.s.
He gives you the
V sign

'Business is good!
Lots of perks coming!
交替; do most of the traveling
The board takes care
Of its complexities' he said.

The sparkles of champagne
And the artistic smoking
Expensive communication
Gadgets
He got it all

But this i have known
The truth: his wife left him
Business was lost
Mortgage house foreclosed
And for sale
His children hate him
And divorce is in the offing
Nothing about
Properties now

None of my business somehow
Kept my mouth shut
Except this
Poem: my confidante.
It can keep a secret
Uphold the truth and cannot
Hurt...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pretty Lizards....

damn,
we work so
harder,

even the hardest
way possible

we cut trees
gather wood

we cut stones
made into blocks

we even have
to carve the stairs
step by step

we look forward
to getting up
on the top

we even shove
other bodies to
clear our way

someone is blessed
God made an elevator
and now he is
on top of this building

effortlessly, and
so special
he is resting to
view us

ants, worms,
pretty lizards...
The Prey

early this morning
when i go out of my room
into a garden of trees
and stones
there with all fidelity
the spider is
spinning its web again
in the most usual
and visible manner
connecting a transparent
line from a twig
to another twig of the same
tree

soon another fly
or mosquito shall be caught
as its
unworthy prey
the victim never learns
a thing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Price Of Hardwork

well, look here,
my dear,
you will start at
the bottom
of these all

crawl, prostrate,
bow, look down,
you have no right
to stare,
budget your
gaze
they are gods
and they are too cruel
if you offend them
and they get angry
they will make
you disappear
on a click
just that

work your way
up the traditional
hard way
learning your lessons
like you are a man
bound to
death row

time is forgiving
and triumph comes
always at the end

and when you're on top
do not mind
all of them

for now it is your time
to take the crown
of utter emptiness
did they not tell you that it is lonely at the top?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Price You Pay

we pay a certain price for our
lies, these lies which are suppose to protect
us
from so much realities
(they trouble us and so we cope up
in order to proceed to another day
of joy and pretense)
others pay the higher price
of isolation
others have stiffer fines and penalties
that island of abandon
that river of tears
that misty mountain of oblivion

on your birthday today
no one remembers you because you have written
the wrong date
in your autobiography

on our guilt you tell the date of your birth
and so here we are
(on the spirits of Ariel, the gleams of a Gem
and the rest of the happy company)
singing: happy birthday friend

may you have more lies to come! (lol!)

ha ha ha typo error, may you have more
birthdays to come!
alright, blow your virtual candles on your virtual cake
and close your eyes and say your
virtual wishes....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Price You Pay Of Course, Is Loss Of Some Parts Of Your Individuality,

the sooner you
learn that you are
not alone, the better
your standing will be
in this communal
living, the price you
pay of course, is
loss of some parts
of your individuality,
for you see, this
world is a motion
of compromises,
not a win-win situation,
you win some
you lose some,
from his viewpoint
you are a boat
moving at sea,
and the way you
advance, you also
shoo others away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pride Of This Body

the sickness of the body
confesses upon you that you have
done something
wrong to it,

and it won't tell you
in straight language of
silver

it speaks in pain
and you will feel it
and you
shall try hard to figure
out
what is it

you ask for the cure?
the body too has its own
pride

it won't reveal
it has secrets of its own
that it will bring
even to its
garde...-

RIC S. BASTASA
The Prisoner

the afternoon
sun shines upon
a row of
iron bars

the temperature
has subsided

heads of unknown
men begin to
appear
like shadows of
mushrooms
upon the dark
mouths of caves

they are some
of the questions
still unanswered
by the
claim that there
is justice
in humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Privacy Of The Home

there is a party
but i am not going
i choose
staying inside the house
not watching tv
but just thinking and
lying low
listening to the silence
of the four walls, and then
i take the exit
outside i go
into the garden at night
under the trees
the scents of some
flowers pervading
and then i take a seat
on a big stone
and feel the hardness
of the earth
i am soft in the middle
of this garden
i like it
this private dwelling
just the trees and the
flowers
in the middle of the night
when everyone is
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Private Rooom

dthis is a universe in itself
with all the planets around it and stars so distant

unlike before you scream alone
no help comes
be it the fireman or the medical aide

now the fingers run
to places where we have been hiding
to thoughts where we have once surrendered
because of debilitating weakness

now courage is silenced but inside
its throat
thoughts shape themselves like dough
and then the yeasts of memories make them rise
you smell the sweetness of the past
that wafts in all the corners of your room
and so
with all these shortcomings and refusals
to see light
to open the shutters you shall still live
and reap the fruits of your isolation

these are white flowers that bloom
in lonely nights
scented and still proud

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem

the problem with us is that when we open the computer and begin
to read poetry we cannot stop, we do not know when and where to stop
we get carried away like a paper boat on the river and we do not know
where we shall be taken
and not only that
in some mysterious ways we too assume the hands of the poet his mind
his emotions contaminating us
and we (oh let me just talk about myself)

and i begin to write myself some lines
honestly not knowing where these line come from
and like ants they invade me and begin to eat me like a chunk of chocolate
or a broken biscuit or a grain of rice that they all carry like a good catch

and then i pride myself with the belief that i must still be sweet
as chocolate, crisp and tasty like a biscuit, and white and unblemished
like a grain of rice

not because i am writing poems
but because the ants too, like the river have carried me away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem Is..

the problem is that
you believe that there is meaning
to every encounter
that nothing happens by random
that there is always a purpose
why two people meet
fall in love
and then decide to part ways

you always have a reason
to rationalize your pain
and that makes me love you more

granting that you love me too,
what could be the possible reason?
tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem With Lust Sometimes

the problem with lust sometimes
is structural

there is this rod looking for an
orifice
an orifice wanting to be filled
with sweet hardness
and stiff lengths
its depth utters a name
a longing

everything fits and
so happiness radiates to each nerve

there are other 'incoherences'
and lapses of the world of creation
on the verge of
insatiation

orifice to orifice and the rod
striking another rod in loneliness
bells and bells
no one penetrates and no one is penetrated
like plate upon plate
of pillar side by side with another pillar

each looks somewhere else
anticipating much
doing a lot of sensing out where is that and
where is this

there is nothing but a tree of loneliness
on a desert landscape
accented by a skull of the wolf

without leaves and rotten roots
trying to reach for the moon
the dead moon, the scorching sun
the useless days
the dragging hours of the bloodied gladiator
the amazon hanging dead
on the tree
at the tip of her braided hair

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem With The Problem

the problem with sorrow
is that it eats tomorrow

the problem with our problem
it does not believe on a dream

the problem with lamentation
is that it thrives on its own

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem With The Wind

classic Poem

the problem with the wind
is its senselessness
it comes it goes and it seems
it does not even know where it is going
you think it feels you
it doesn't
it simply moves around and
comes back around like an accidental whirlpool
it is numb it does not even know
what a rock and a cloud means
the earthworms fear it
the birds too
whose wings it breaks without even feeling sorry
for the caused calamity
the problem with the wind is that it is like silence
not because it woos it and carries it away sometimes
but because it is cold
so cold that it numbs and shatters
what was once whole and heartfelt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Problem With You

is that
you are too normal for a man,
what normal is, i define it
you are too formal
like a chair
there are other chair possibilities you have not tried
for instance
having only one foot
and still be proud to stand as a chair
on a chain of possibilities
the problem with you is you rhyme like their poem
and you become just like them
a factory made word
another boring mechanism
like a wooden panel without beauty
without the
aha! or
what is this? is this man? is this a chair?
is this a poem?

try something else
wobbling, whirling

a tornado, you haven't been one yet
a storm, an eye
a vacuum, an eclipse
a waste basket, a moon let
a planet, a sunrise without light?

do not just be stanza
be a word misspelled

be an error uncorrected
be a dog with feathers
a pink niche, a broken pen
an expelled  meteor
a fallen angel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Process Of Selection....

on the other hand,
if everything is fiction, then what could possibly
be not?

the possibilities of words
they are not just in random picked by some foolish gods
and given a form
and the slightest idea connected to a certain
belief in
meaning

well, there will always be the justification of an experience
that something like this once happened but that the recollection is
not clear anymore

part bird, part lion, wings or hands,
did it have a horn, or a halo?
the images argue among themselves and
as a matter of compromise
the mind puts everything in a collage
a jigsaw puzzle
until a picture is formed
and from a distance you take a look at it

a little bit true and a little bit false
but still sending a message

something happened a long time ago
you fear remembering it
you abstract

take only those colors that you like
those words that please you
those faces that give you love
those hands that once caressed you

you throw away those that hurt
what is the use of keeping them?
unless you are the masochist god

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
the object of the furies
the numb flesh
the dead fly
the carcass, that dung, that scar.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Process Of This Manner...

groping for the metaphors
to illustrate the dark, light, and
twilight,
going back to the days of
childhood trying to see if
adulthood is well deserved,
the process is tedious, and
so much time is wasted, and
all for these, in these trying times,
the essence of what to really say
is lost.

to save this species of speech
from extinction, i gather all
dusts, equate that patience,
raised so many spiders between
the frames of my windows,
as light is let through, as though
there is a saint kneeling on
the floor, i must, give this language
what mystery it deserves, learn
the art of wanting to speak but
not speaking at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Profanity

the state of the body
is wavering
to the rocks of the wind
and there is this shaking
that mistakes us
for what we really are

there is the pillar
that you cannot touch and see
but you can feel it

could be the heart
or the soul
could be the whisper of
the truth
it is there
and there is nothing
that we can do
to deny it
of its existence

only and only if
we do not make profanity
of the words

those that we do not really
mean
and those that we constantly
keep on
not doing

what a pity
for one to go on flaunting
what should not
have been
in the hands and the palms

RIC S. BASTASA
The Professional Virgin

'i should have
deserved much more than this', says the loser

packs her bag and takes her stuff
to a new city

there she begins life anew
as a virgin again.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Professor

engrossed in an ocean of thoughts
drifted on the pages without edges

one swims through thick letters
his ears drowned by syllables

there is neither sun or moon there

but alas! there are so many stars against the darkness of his soul

he is space spreading like wings of the phoenix amidst his thirsty students

RIC S. BASTASA
The Professor...

in the classroom
i offer words, i stand and make a point
and write an accent

this is it, this is important
this is above all

i have strokes, all BOLD
i bang the board with

emphasis, i am doing this
not for myself, i am solid.

liquefying all of your dreams
letting you see shapes

i sit upon a load of stars.
i stand and touch an orbit.

all of you are my children.
i have none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Progress In The City

life was so simple
then: papa plowed the field
mama cooked sweet potatoes
water was inside a bamboo pole
plates were banana leaves
we rode on carabao backs
picnicked on nearby rivers
climbed coconut trees
no one minded us
whether we were right or wrong
we were happier then

then everything changed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Prologue...
	his you must understand
that even before they started
they were already looking
at different things...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise

she was alone
in that nipa shack
for her children
were gone
seeking their own
destinies
in the city

this was her farm
this muddy place

we met this morning
as i was taking my walk
passing by her
lonely place

she was there
and we talked
she was talking about
how her medicine
made her dizzy
and was asking for
herbs as
substitute

she died
an hour ago
before i came back
to bring
the banaba leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise (After Tracy Chapman)

if you wait for me
then i will come to you
if you think of me
then i will be back to you
if you miss me
once in a while
then i will return to you
i return and fill that space
in your heart

remembering your touch
your kiss, your warm embrace
i will find my way
back to you

if you dream of me
that i dream of you
in that place that is warm and dark
in that place where i can
hear the beating of your heart

i'll find my way back to you...

i long for you
and i have desired
to see your face
your smile
to be with you
wherever you are

i'll find my way back to you
please say that you will be waiting
together again
if it feels so good to be
in your arms
where all my journeys end

i'll vow to come back to you
if you say you'll wait for me
The Promise (Tracy Chapman)

The Promise

If you wait for me then I’ll come for you
Although I’ve traveled far
I always hold a place for you in my heart
If you think of me, if you miss me once in awhile
Then I’ll return to you
I’ll return and fill that space in your heart

Remembering
Your touch
Your kiss
Your warm embrace
I’ll find my way back to you
If you’ll be waiting
If you dream of me like I dream of you
In a place that’s warm and dark
In a place where I can feel the beating of your heart

Remembering
Your touch
Your kiss
Your warm embrace
I’ll find my way back to you
If you’ll be waiting
I’ve longed for you and I have desired
To see your face your smile
To be with you wherever you are

Remembering
Your touch
Your kiss
Your warm embrace
I’ll find my way back to you
If you’ll be waiting
I’ve longed for you and I have desired
To see your face, your smile
To be with you wherever you are
Remembering
Your touch
Your kiss
Your warm embrace
I'll find my way back to you
Please say you'll be waiting

Together again
It would feel so good to be
In your arms
Where all my journeys end
If you can make a promise if it’s one that you can keep, I vow to come for you
If you wait for me and say you’ll hold
A place for me in your heart.

RIC S. BASTASA
do not doubt it
the promise is clear
he said it
do not doubt it
he said it long, long years ago
when ears were deaf
when eyes were blind
do not doubt it

you shall live forever
but you must first
die

to yourself, you must bury
your ego
under the soil
of your unbelief
the coffin of
emptiness
you must first stay
and then
after the mourning
you rise
as smoke
from a fire
that consumes
itself
until they see
not a trace
of you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise Of The Healer

i must understand by
now that
since you did not arrived
as promised
then you too must be dead

you promised to heal the
sick man here
and he too is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise Of The Healer Less The ' D'

i must understand by
now that
since you did not arrive
as promised
then you too must be dead

you promised to heal the
sick man here
and he too is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise Of The Past

shall we run again to the sea
hold each other's hands
and plunge again
deeper into ourselves
until we find what we lost
a long time ago...

make me remember
what i was once to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise That Love Always Triumphs In The End

it has been a quite a time
sorrow was here
it has departed
i am glad

it did not leave
casualties here
in the road there is
a woman bathing

with sunshine
walking towards the park
on an early morning wind
meeting a friend

(could be a lover
the way he kissed her on
the lips

and held her hands
like a fragile
glass figurine
of a princess)

then the rain has put
a gentle shower
the rainbow shows
unexpectedly above

the poplar trees
poised in the beauty of
such a promise
that love always triumphs
whatever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise That Nothing In Us Here Is Wasted....

define next journey is when we carry nothing

although we want to carry a basket of flowers

or a memory of love & friendship

the rule says it clearly: you carry nothing with you

we are light as air passing by a flash of images of all time spent

the past that we let go with a smile (or perhaps some sighs)

the present drips from our fingers like water from a faucet

and the future the comes with wings and light and faith

that nothing ends without any meaning at all

that somehow every inch of our existence is justified

in the shores of eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promise To Love You Forever

if i cease living
or loving

i promise you
i do not sit lazily watching the fading of the sun

i will take this journey
to the last edge of the horizon

searching for love and life and meaning
and purpose

and then when i living and loving ceases upon me
seizes me into silence and nothingness

or when death embraces me so tightly

i shall still take that last breath

exhaling

still what you are really to me

RIC S. BASTASA
The Promised Land......

finally we arrive
in an island of hospitable
trees
and accommodating sands
our shadows
they accept as part of their
brotherhood
and then under the moon
a feast of songs and
drinks
has just began

in this manner the memories
of storms cannot exist anymore
we get drunk
and soon forget that journey
of tsunamis
which on the other hand
were blessings in disguise
without which
we could not have possible
arrived
to this promised land

RIC S. BASTASA
The Proverbial Forest

if you do not have me
when you do not touch
any of my fingers
clinging to my
hands
despite your pleas
the flow of
tears
without me
no sorrow is felt
no sobbing is heard
for without me
loving you
there is also no you
to speak of

RIC S. BASTASA
The Psychiatrist In You

where all eyes feast
on the sexy woman walking down the street
you look the other way around

your eyes
look at their eyes and they do not notice

perhaps only I
notice it, i know that you are different

and i guess it takes one really to
know one

you are so beautiful
you are so mindful, and that makes the real difference

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pure In Heart...

the pure
in heart arrives
at the door
of the hall

it brings not
a word
it does not even
smile

it simply passes
away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Purple Crocodile

remember how daughter lost her
purple crocodile purse
how mama goes to the counter of the hotel
reporting the matter
how the receptionist asked her to fill up the form
and come back three days after
when the purple crocodile purse was just right there
visible in one of the counter's table
but which the receptionist took no action
saying three days is three days
nothing more nothing less.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Purpose

depth in my heart i know
roads always lead us
to our destinations, that

dreams are born because
they are meant to grow
and to bloom and become
flowers in our midst, that

our wishes shall become true
that rivers always arrive at the
sea of their destinies that

someday i shall be the perfect
self that i shall become that at
the end i will be beyond what

i am today.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Purpose In Life Is To Find Its Purpose

it does not matter
really who is at the top
the one who shines
like the sun
the best and most
useful
the most important
and even say
indispensable
like air

it does not really matter
to me
whether you are the
sun or the
moon
whether you are
king or
god

the place does not
matter
any name for the matter
does not
really matter to me

i am here because i
want a cure
and what matters most then
is

where is the cure?
or even just
that temporary relief
from these series of deaths
that we
are experiencing
The Purpose Of Metaphors

you like to be candid
and yet no matter what honest words
in the most simple terms

they still
refuse to understand what you really
want to mean

to say
you shall meet metaphors
those that go inside them
their tone and color and shape and scent
what you have

obviously
you begin to hide what they refuse to believe
dress them
and give them a new face a new set of arms and feet
and these all get near them
and shake hands with them
and then

they relate and begin to understand
you

how can they ever think of something else
beyond what you do not understand

you keep the emotion inside you
you give them a fragile butterfly from your mouth

and awed
they start to believe what pains you

in your hiding things
something new opens

a door, a window, a heart, a mouth
The Purpose...

i have never explained to you
what goodbye meant

when i left you, it was raining
you want to hold my hand, but it was slippery

there was running water in my palm
my eyes were blinded by mist

i have still all the explanations
but still i must keep them and

bring these all to my grave
buried there with me...

it was not that i lack the love
that was all reserved for you

always remember that....there is nothing
that fulfills me

my emptiness is an ocean without fish
inside are the glaciers of cold thoughts

your boat on fragile sails deserves a better sea
calm and clean and clear

where corals nest where fish are abundant
i have no regret having loved you and left you

you are happy now, my departure has served
so well the purpose with which it was done.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Pursuit Of Happiness

the irony of this pursuit is this:
the more you pursue it
the more it escapes
away from your grasp

you think your hands
finally catch
happiness, and you
hold on to it
tightly like you
are a bird with claws

like an eagle holding
on to the monkey
then blood drifts
on the holy mountains

the paradox lies
not in the taking of happiness
but in giving it away

and then the magic happens
the mountains dance
the caves open
and the rivers sing

it is clear, when you take it
you simply release it

then you are happy
and the pursuit is nothing
but
in simply the giving
the patience of waiting

like a tree whose fruits
are ripe where children
climb
gather the fruits
and chew and swallow
every sweetness of
the pulp,
the fiber
juice sliding smoothly
inside innocent their throats

RIC S. BASTASA
The Questions In My Mind....

i send my my hands
free, so many birds in air

they are questions
for you to answer, yet you

whom my heart claims a rock
for friends, where they can lay their bodies

and rest, have chosen silence,
and i look at you, with so much

understanding, knowing that you have
chosen the comfort of your own

safety, i nod, i may agree
that your chosen side shall give you

the best for the meantime that i bleed,
and now, i write upon a stone the names

of my true friends. It is you silence that
has become stone and sling for the birds

that i have set free from my hands.
They fall one by one, all dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Questions You Ask

the questions you ask
are subject to their suspicions
of who and what you are

the answers you give?

they simply
junk as an immaterial
irrelevant and impertinent

to what they already
believe in.

tell them: fine!

RIC S. BASTASA
I.
Summer twilight slices into two
Halves of a sweet cantaloupe;
At table, the speckled stargazer
Opens its fragrant petals windward;
At my foot, our old cat dreams.
Nothing here betrays the grace
We speak of at each meal, together
Or alone. Today, while one of us
Sits under the tamarinds,
And another wades the golden river,
I alone sit at table, a mother
Attending to the core of fruit
Cleaving to the knife, the fuchsia
Flower sundered by summer’s heat,
The cat purring its ninth life away.
II.
Yesterday night after dinner, we told
An old story, pausing at a part
We did not love but could not
Gnaw off. It is your hurt fathered
Into child’s shape, vulnerable
To faithlessness. As the story twists
In the telling, you speak of a new-born child, whose limbs could break
Or neck snap. were one of you to hold
The tender heels and swing against a wall.
We need to put this story right.
III.
Long, long ago on a fevered night,
A mother sat by her child’s bed,
Damp cloth soothing flame of forehead,
Limbs. in her vigil she vowed
On pain of death, to beg the life
Or health back into those cheeks.
The fever broke, she held her kind
And knew the gods had ears.
Son, Daughter, take this story-child
With care. In the curve of your arms
Your father’s fruit survives the fall,
Becomes your bruised but living grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Quick Funeral Arrangements In Accordance With His Wish.....

two lawyers
father and son
were shot by
a security guard
in cebu city
the mourning widow
is a judge

the whole community
mourns
the dead body was
buried within
24 hours

no frills whatsoever
Just the muffled sound of mourners
underneath
the pained sobbing of a woman

The mood was somber and quiet,
as dozens paid their last respects
to the man they all fondly
remember
as very simple and
mild-mannered.

And just like him
his funeral was very simple
with no memorial service
before the casket
was lowered
into the ground.
There were no songs, no floral offerings.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Quiet Inside Your Poem

it is there
quiet on the sofa
beside
a white cat
sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
The Quiet Storm

A young girl breaks away from her petit bourgeoisie home and her piano lessons to lead an entirely new life, as one of the personnel at an institution for juvenile delinquents in a remote part of Northern Iceland.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Quivers Of The Heart....

THESE ARE our quivers, we have arrived at a dead end, and we face walls,
we look for the outline of a door and then a window
there is no sketch of a rectangle
or square
or a hole
we are praying for a leak of light to this dark room
existence
they say the sun does not shine anymore
the flowers are shy
and kept themselves locked in the tightness of their buds
these are the quivers of our imagined endings
our hands are shaking
the world is suffering to an earthquake of
values shattered

we like to speak only when we are far away from each other
our display of affection is well demonstrated by our constant hiding
we have devolved into shadows
and invoking words cannot take the substitute of the flesh

i am a stranger now arriving at a new place where people do not know me.

as i speak, they continue looking outside, waiting for the right train.

i sit on a chair behind them. I sip my coffee. I pay for what i eat and drink.

i am lost, but this is what i want. I too, look outside, waiting for the right hour to arrive.

these are our quivers. We have no exact hold. Our hands are blistered with so much heat from inside our guts.

temper stored. anger contained. sorrow concealed.

one day, i shall write the poem about an annihilation of us.
when you read it, and that is the right hour, i am already gone.

nowhere. where is it? i also do not know.
RIC S. BASTASA
The Race...

i like you, is a runner too,
i hold a torch to light my way
but soon i will pass it on to you,
and you too, must run as fast as you can
but for one thing, hold on to the light,
run if you can, but keep that light burning.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Radio Talks About Corruption

As i take breakfast
The radio speaks
About the recent scandal
On corruption
Of school funds
Ghost Gyms and
Ghost schools somewhere
In the South
2.5 Million in their pockets

Time has changed
Corruption has become one big cliche
In My own society
Nothing will change
Except how i view corruption
It is a way of life and I shall learn
To live with it.

Meanwhile, i change the station
To classical music
That lasts its purity and kindness forever
Relaxes my soul
Strenghtens what weakness
Wants to die

The radio talks of corruption
Nothing's new and I turn it off.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain

There will be rain here
We normally run for shelter
Who wants to be wet in the rain
And look like a helpless chick in the drain?

There will be rain
And we will be seeking shades under the trees
And run towards waiting sheds where the rain
Cannot harm our sensibilities,

There will be rain and more rains to come
In our lives, and we always run for secure
Shelters, and we always have umbrellas in our hands,
And raincoats, and closed cars, we hide to places
Where The rain cannot harm us,

But today will be different,
There is rain, and I will take
Another action, I will not run for shelter,
Or take shades in trees, or be in waiting sheds,
I will not even open my car, get into it and close it,

I am not afraid of rain now; I have no fears getting wet somehow
And look like a helpless chick, I will run in the
Middle of the rain, I will play like a child in the rain, I will
Be with the rain throughout its pouring,
I will be wet, and it will rain and rain,

Oh! Let it rain and rain and rain
You will not see my tears falling,
My tears hiding in the pouring rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain And The Blood

what the rain does
symbolism for tears

is to create the walls
between us

you're like needles
falling

without sound
we see nothing hurt

but we see blood
mixed with water

and then we take the shelter
and we keep on saying

we're OK
we are just wet and we are going home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain And The Dry Earth

for the earth is
dry and the
clouds have
compassion

that noontime
the clouds
shared their rains
for the dry earth

thirst satisfied
so wet so sweet
and wild...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain And The Farm...

i stop after a
morning walk

it is raining and
i take shelter
in the gym of
the old university

i sit on the bench
and watch the rain
and the farm

fog creeps in
and the panoramic
view looks like
a wet chinese
brush painting

the colors
begin to blot
down the frame

i write it here that
i did not cry

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain And The Girl

i just met a girl
who does not carry an umbrella
because she loves
the rain

i do not dare ask her
if she is crying,

if she cries
i am afraid i do not have the right to ask her why

when she gets near me
i have not dared looking into her eyes
i tell myself
it is none of my business

she begins to speak
but i who love the sonorous sound of the rain
has no time to listen

the sound of rain
is more than enough for me
to know
the meaning of pain

this time
after all those long years of listening
i do not think much

the rain speaks
actually for itself

now, i am
writing it
and then the girl is gone...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain By Chappel

love it is enough
that i have touched your hand
do not i, must consume
what longing is there
left,
for now i must go outside
of this self
and brave the rain
the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain Falls To This Pond

What I see is a dead frog
For years there was drought
And today
A raindrops are falling on this pond
The frog is alive again
Jumping Jumping

Overjoy!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain Falls Tonight

the rain fall tonight
on our roof and it
brings no explanation
and we do not ask
too for any reason.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain Is Gone

You got wet clothes to dry
A face to wipe some droplets of rain
Some stains
On your breasts
Kissing stains
Some bluish marks
On your thighs
You always say
These things, stains and bluing
Happen
Because of the rain
The rain that refuses to leave at once
And you are caught to his embrace
You always say the rain
Is responsible, one season to blame
Why these things, these stains cling to your body
The thoughts of rain
Leaving
Saddens you now

How you wish the rain comes back
The stains caused by him smells and
The scent of sweat makes you sway, gives
You the feeling of
Stay, I love you, stay, do not go away.

Wonder, how the rain could have removed
The stains, smell, sweat, but you say
The rain causes it, he cannot leave you

He still has the fear of getting rainy wet.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain Is Like A Man

the rain this early morning
has an accompanying wind

i look at them by the window
my inner world divided by a thick glass

the trees are swaying and some leaves
begin to fall like some kind of a dance

the rain like a man carries the wind
on his arms and the wind leans down

i catch a glimpse of how they passionately kiss
it is sad and lonely and then the rain stops

the morning sun comes and the leaves
are at the feet of the trees kind of wet with tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rain On My Roof Tonight

the rain pouring slowly on my roof is the best poem ever composed by you for me tonight

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rainbow Illusion

yesterday i opposed
the system of
the rainbow

i no longer worship
its bright colors

at the back i drench
my body with rain

and then i stab the rainbow
because of my anger

those who watch
say that the rainbow is bleeding

as though
the rainbow is true

===============================================
kagahapon
misupak ko sa sistema sa
bangaw

wala na ako
miluhod sa mga bulok

nagpaulan ako sa luyo
niini

og gitagbas nako ang
bangaw sa akong kalagot

sila nga nakakita
miingon nga ang bangaw nasamdan

mora bag
ang bangaw tinood

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rainy Days Inside My Mind

it is a summer day
but the rainy days still exist inside my mind

it was a Sunday
when the rain was falling softy at the pier
the M/V Alfredo was about to leave
bound for Manila
and there was you
my love
waving your hands
for till then
we never saw each other again

dthis afternoon i am standing on
a pavement on the same pier
the M/V Alfredo had long
sunk
and i do not know anymore where
you destiny placed you

i am hiding my eyes inside this thick
sunglasses
no one knows how i feel
for outside
i am still smiling and then another boat
sounds its call

i guess, i have to leave them all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rainy Memory Of You....

oh how many times shall i speak to you  
about the rain

of my youth and now  
of my older age  
us, in this that the rain always sings  
sorrows

how many time have i told you about its many names  
in patters  
each as unique as an ice crystal  
as a child springing from his  
mother

it is this rain  
that always reminds me of you  
it amazes me  
how sadly it falls  
ever rising  
how pure it hits and joins  
with the  
garbage in the canals  
perhaps  
hoping to convert  
what dirt was  
into something  
new

the sound of moving  
the hint of a destination  
the scent of another going and  
disappearing

today  
it is raining again  
and i am staying  
pondering  
whatever memory is it bringing...
The Rape And Murder Story

on top of
a hill is
a house lighted
by a lamp

since the window
is open
and the night
is dark
something looks
like a firefly
in the sky

along the
footpath a naked
woman
is lying unconscious

inside the house
the man is
washing his hands

he closed the window
puts off the light
and in the darkness
begins his
journey to the world
of the wolves.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rapist....

the high school
student was charged with rape
by a married woman who was
unhappy with her old husband
who is bald and
ugly but rich and landed
and tired,

she said he turned off the light
and went wild with his lust
and gobbled her trust
and that she was ruined

he said she seduced her to have his
first flesh
and which out of fear he refused
and

scorned she became a dragon spewing
lava and breathing fire

seven years he suffered in jail
until a judge filled with wisdom
set him free

justice still served though
late

and he cried after
justice delayed is no longer justice
that he long deserved.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rashness Of Your Youth

your morning opens
with a popping out
mechanism
as though you are
the soda yourself
with all the bubbles
from your mouth
the froth from your
rashness

be calm, why should
there be a rush
for noon? why should we
be too worried
about nights?

let things come
let events savor their
existence
wait, stand still,
think,
ponder more
do not run.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rattlesnake

i see to it that i read a poem a day,
like an apple,

or a sunrise that i must but watch quickly
because i have to go somewhere else

what you have to offer is a litany of your
pain, that rattlesnake that hid somewhere

and which you cannot find despite grandpa's help
you molt

i do not have much time left as i too have to chase
my own snakes

that make the sound during the night
but so silent during the day

that no one hears them
or believe that they all exist

i make it up for you
that there is no snake that cabinets are only for our clothes

i eat smiles for breakfast and save every morsel of it
when the night comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ravine

the black raven
flies over the ravine
hovers and
shits on the
bovine
as two pigs
are makin'
their usual lovin'

RIC S. BASTASA
The Razor

sharp
& shining
it serves its use
only on
eyearly mornings

shaving my
gorgeous
mustache

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reader Takes The Burden Involved As He Is.

touch and go
i leave all my
mistakes behind
and even if i notice
it i leave it
there

the reader takes
the burden
involved as
he is.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real Enemy...

it is not late
the wind finally knows its enemy
it was not the tree that it uprooted in one of its storms
not the clouds that it had blown with rage
not the sea whose waves it tumbled in a tsunami
not even the boats it sank
not pitying the passengers and crew who were swallowed
its whirlpools have been wrong
upon itself it must know
its winds its own storms
its enemies all
at the
end.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real Feast Begins The Doors Of Heaven Suddenly Open.

what did we have
last night?
nothing
what do we have
this morning
nothing

we can just be honest
about these nothingness

talk about it and feast about it
spread the wonders of these realities

the paradox comes like a bird missing its own
cage
wanting to peck upon the seeds on the master's hand

and then the cup fills itself
water begins to move in the river
frozen shoulders become alive
eyes wake up
hands begin to caress other hands

the real feast begins
the doors of heaven suddenly open.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real House Where We Ought To Live

the real house where we ought to live
have no pillars
and walls and fences
no kitchens and sinks
and toilets

do not grumble, that is the truth
no wind destroys it
no sun scorches it
no rain seeps

it is not the house of nothingness
discover it yourself

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real Name After The Fall

you fall down
upon a hill just
like any john and
jill

you just love
also the spilled
pail of water

the best part
however is when
who rise up from
the fall and

then they still
call you with your
real name.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real One

i know what
is the real one
i know that well
enough
it is the one which
makes my blood
rush to my brain
stirs my soul
into a whirlpool
makes all the stars
in me
burst
vanishes old rants
creates in me
a silence towards
a new world

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real Person

even if waltz is the dance of the day
for the dictator
there are those who dance
the tango
to his dismay

y they reason out
that brave people only die once
as cowards die
a thousand deaths

y they know how to dance the impossible
they are rocks that obstruct
the rage, the flow

we call them men of principles
they
who die earlier than expected
mark a name
in the fame of stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real Reason....

one writing to another
maybe ten thousand more
not until you hit that mark
of fame, not even that
Nobel prize, which is out
of my mind, not a bob Dylan
to me, but until i fall out
of love from you, until
i am cured, until i feel
safe with myself........

RIC S. BASTASA
The Real You Falters....

you cannot
keep smoke
it always finds
its own
exit

for the meantime
you can hide
this or that
but you cannot
hide it forever

from all those
layers
cover to cover
the real you
shall falter

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reality Of Sisyphus

for truly once a misery
is declared dead for all intents
another misery is born

crying its way towards your heart
this baby, yes, this baby with tears in her eyes

and blood on its skin and
wet hair and closed eyes struggling
for an opening

by all means is still beautiful
and so, welcome misery,
welcome everything, say yes, say yes,

baby sisyphus is here giving you
another strength for another push
for the big stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reality Of These All

at night she tiptoes to the doors of
our waking thoughts
we are amazed at the images of light
eaten by the mouth of darkness
the Muse stares at the interplay of
good and evil
there is simply no word for who shall win
and then we are tired
our eyes begin to fail and our body gives in
buried in the darkness of the night

then we are taken in the world of dreams
where everything becomes possible
what we were not in those waking days
the dreams hand them all
broken hearts mended
fortunes flow
luck is abundant as the fish in the oceans
there is a crowd of success and bliss
but you know the limits of all these
soundless worlds

and those who refuse to wake up
simply die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reality Of Touch

not everything can be imagined
lest your words become the 3D leeches

that do not really exist
pure breeze from a mountainside of nowhere

it is safe to open the door
go down the stairs
walk along the street
feel the sun on top of your head

swim in the air of this city
dive into the crowd
hear their open conversations
listen to the horns of the cars

create more distance
tire your feet
sweat things out
making thoughts more sensitive to the twitches of the faces of all the people that you meet

carefully evaluate
the lines of the tongue in cheek
scrutinize
slips of their tongues

follow the lines of the curve body of the woman that you love
using the soft tip of your tongue
the power of taste-buds

one cannot really just survive on the theoretical wings of angels
the feet of the dragon phoenix
the prancing hands of the wooden saint

shallow and deflatable
as toy balloons are
do not draw the street and alleys in your mind
with a
wind pencil

walk upon them and feel
the water and the mud
and pebbles and sands
to every pore of your skin
feel the tickle of the bacteria of the
mind

RIC S. BASTASA
The Realization Of Our Basic Needs...

the one that we love for
we care so deeply
we turn into sensitive worms
finding for that green leaf
not for us but for the beloved
a butterfly, striated wings,
rainbow proboscis, gentle to
the air, fluttering before us,
amazed, awed and wanting to own
completely until we find out
as we wake up from this dream
that it is a butterfly, just
a butterfly that we do not touch
that we cannot case inside our
hands, and until then when it
reaches its unknown death the
night before we dream of it.

it is gone and finally we realize
it is just a butterfly and we
cannot even use it for breakfast.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Realization That I Am Different

everyday in a sense
is not really horrible
no one is.

frightening yet
not that prolonged

every moment is a surprise
like a birthday

expected yet there are
still outbursts of

emotions they call it an outrage
because life can be so much

sometimes raging like a bull
with smoke in its nostrils

friends, excuse my dust
i am fed up and i vomit

what is unnecessary like
crab meat

i bought a pail and pair of
slippers

i have the sea with me and it
is free

the trees that i have planted
have become robust

i climb upon each
feel the world with its leaves

and on top of the branch
i begin to see myself
much different from all of you
all angles considered.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason

drug reason
why i do not
eat alone
and sleep
alone is not
my handsome
form or my
innate wit
and choosy
sense of humor

it is just
that i am
meant
to be shared

my hands
open
wanting
someone
to hold

my arms
open
always needing
someone
to embrace

i am designed
for hugs
my lips
for kissing

and i think
i will never learn
again
the pain
of learning
how is it
to be alone

and feel
that i am
dying

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason For Light

the law is
there for always

the reason for light
is only to
reflect who we are

what we are not
is never there

except the fear

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason Why I Am Here

people.
the reason why i am here, people
is people, satisfied people, looking for more
to tickle their tongues
for more satisfaction, the reason is people,
people who become restless because nothing
seems to make them people anymore,
people who love people
are the reasons for being here
people who miss people
people who question about being people
people who offer answers
they look for the content of the poem as answers
but there is really nothing
contentious about this
a poem simply pleases
puts forth what is in the heart of people
one that teases
and yet cannot be held by the hands
of people
one that slips like a fish in your hands
one that flies away
the moment it hears steps of men
coming on its way
birds are the reasons, fishes are the reasons
the sea, the depths,
the drowning feeling,
the rising and the falling the coming back and forth
of waves, are the reasons,
so many reasons why we are here
at the end
we look at each other, hands akimbo
eyeballs rolling,
without an answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason Why I Am Still A Part Of You

from one tree springs the trunk and the branches
and it seems to me that each part of us always wants to branch out

leaves fall inevitably leaving a
bald space

sort of, i want to go this way and sometimes
i want a
clear butting and
i want to cut you away from my life
so you can grow on your own

independence is a dream of all living
creatures

the strangers look at us: one tree, just one tree
and so pleasing to their eyes

giving shade is enough comfort for a passerby

and hence, i know the reason why,
you are still part of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason Why One Resorts To Poetry

imagine you have a world
a government
a neighbor,

the world too cruel for you and you want to hurt it too
but you cannot,
the government that makes you poorer and deceives you
and persecutes you and you want to be one of those rebels
but you cannot
a neighbor that closes its door and talks against you
and makes higher fences
and yet you cannot complain because
you have no power
weak and helpless and you too
lost in the labyrinths of a complex lifestyle
no direction, no vision, no hope nothing to lean upon
or hold unto

those are the reasons why you go inside your room too
and begin to write, and somehow, you say

i am free, i am happy, i am living,
and my house is not burning.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason Why Pain Is Inflicted Sometimes

Feeling the need
To have pearls
Around your neck
I will give you pain
To make you cry

Now you have all
The pearls gleaming
In your eyes, cheeks
Then around your
white slender neck

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason Why The Stars Are Too Many

the stars are too many
each of us shall have one
there shall be no regret
the sky is too wide
the stars glitter and each
hand must take the share
i have mine and you shall have
yours too, well, maybe,
not at the same time, but
at the right season for the
right person, soon, soon, soon.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reason...........

he knew now
why his Creator has put him
at the foot of the lonely hill

no grass for goats
no swamps for ducks
no prairies for horses
no flowers for butterflies
no bees

it is a simple existence
of a cloud upon a hill
of wind just passing by the door
a ripe guava by his
window

the usual sun and moon
and sound sleep at night

he knew now why
because there is so much to be written

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reasons

sometimes
tired of the buzzing of the word
he gives flesh to it

even wings
and so the bees
come

often
the words are empty like
a vacant room

or an abandoned
cottage in one of those
untamed forest

one can do
something as he does
after so many
experimentation

when words are just
wind or air or static space
he plants a tree
and leaves become
inhabitants

flowers arrive as buds
and butterflies
of variant colors
arrive as
colonies

must you remember
how the void is filled
with light and there was light

how the islands come
dotting the seas?
who likes a void, an empty space?

even God
dislikes it

we are here
because of that.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reasons Of The Heart...

the night is
in our heads
the heart has
only a bright
summer day
to offer
the head collides
and breaks
the heart understands
and mends...

that is why.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rebel In Our Own Bodies
	here is a rebel
at the back of each one of us
always complaining

discontentment is this
backbone which can never be strong enough
to carry a burden
there is speech in every pore of the skin
talking about a hairy
revolution
about undressed geese
flying in the skies
mistaken as
ghosts

there is this hunchback
complete with a head and sharp eyes
without hands
and feet
it always speaks about the defects of
any system
predicting the eventual destruction of
anything that is
stable like some kind of pillars and
pavements
leading to the old churches
where icons are posted
like advertisements of a
box office movie

when we get tired
we resort to prayers
meanwhile hiding this rebel
with a red hood and we pretend as monks
walking in the streets
spreading forgiveness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rebel On Christmas

i have lived that long to
once and for all know
that there is beauty in sorrow
like the way the rugged terrains of
mountains after days of walking
and carrying metallic burdens
often, and less imagined, lead us
to a hidden garden of dahlias
behind those walls of antique trees

RIC S. BASTASA
he is tired imagining those villages of yore, hamletted natives, authorities telling them how to live, where, when,

that is the bitter part of the question when do you cease living? the gun is telling everyone the answer follow or you die, not the natural way, they will kill you in an instant and bury you the very same day, without the christian rituals,

he is tired of the running and the convincing, taking the chickens of other people and passing through the seven rivers,

he is tired of being numb to the consequences of the uprising his ears are painful his arms are failing him

he wants to retrace his steps back to the fold but he cannot return and the equation is simple and this he must understand fully

no metaphors are needed for him to know that the uprising is unnecessary irrelevant that he himself has become impertinent but the harshest is this he has become the most incompetent decor of the system

discarded.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Recent Case Of The Dead Librarian

yhey relayed the bad news
of the strict librarian.
each of the reader who uttered
a word of silence was severely
scolded, humiliated in front of
all the books and the bookworms.

today i am informed that she finally
succumbed to lung cancer, a disease
which consumed most of the cells of
librarians. The dust is the culprit.

All those years the library is tense.
Visitors have to step with all hushes.
The dog's tongue had been cut and
the termites are exterminated.

she was a different librarian. She
treasured books more than the readers.
A dog ear is a crime, and any page
which is torn is unforgivable.

Today she died. Many pretend to mourn.
I want to, at least, for a remembrance.
But i cannot, and i wouldn't. She once
slammed my brain with book as though
i was a door with no feelings at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Recent Fall Of Icarus

i was busy talking to you
about poetry and too sad
we did not bother listening
to the recent fall of Icarus

what i heard later was that
Icarus did not die

He is alive and so thankful
of his melted wax wings

the radar did not detect him
and so here he is knocking
at my door
asking for a little time
to be with us in this
safe house

it was his father who was shot
because he was shouting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Red Ant And The Dead Leaf...

all i did was to protect
rights, i tackled the corresponding obligations.
I am a model citizen.
I teach laws.

a group of giants laugh at me
there is no trampling still, i wait.
their feet are heavy and one foot
one stamp is enough
to wipe me out. I am an ant.
I have not anthill to live.

it never saddens me
and i got enthralled by one of you.
ready to offer
everything i have.

i know how to climb trees
i challenge on of those ivory gods.
the tree gods wait and become curious.
what is this red ant up to?

i will have a good ride on a dry leaf
feel the fallen state
and write about it.

i could be human only if you want to.
she says, don't... we hate humans.
we are ivory towers and we do not feel.

i will be a red ant. The dry leaf is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Red Ant In This Labyrinth

it hard to accept
the truth that the one who will guide you through this labyrinth is a mere
red ant, the one insignificant red ant, the one you have always killed
by the nail or your thumb when no one minds when no one ever knew
how red ants die their ordinary deaths and how they are not buried
how they die their skin and two main bodies all bursting under the sun
how they turn into mere dust
you do not
even remember

this is the red ant
this is insignificance the most ordinary of all ordinary creatures
in the labyrinth
of zigzag paths, and rooms closing and opening and deep and down
and up and side to the left to the right,
the blind red ant sees

leading us all to the light
away from arrogance.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Red Ants Under His Feet

a man at peace
with himself under the
shade of the
lush mango tree
does not think of
killing the red ants
under his feet

RIC S. BASTASA
nothing
is important about
it,
everyone
detest
the built
in superstition
the world
gives it up
except
the hinges
trusting that someday
it's entrance and
exit
becomes
a fad,
until now
the black widow
is not
satisfied about
the reality
of the red
doors
she hates the fire
that she had
long lost
to someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Red Gumamela Flower On The Yard

for we are just
like a gumamela flower
that blooms only for
a day

there is no bud
no seed
it is beauty destined
only for a day

RIC S. BASTASA
The Red Suntan In My Wife's Garden

she keeps cutting the stalks of the red suntan
as i watch with disdain
since there will be no more suntan flowers
to view this bright morning in the garden

she notices my obvious disturbing action
and she comes with a clear reaction
saying they must be pruned regularly
for them to give more flowers for the day

it is more like the way God prunes us
albeit there may be pain and even bleeding
but that's the best way for more flowering
the secret to the blooming is in the cutting

and then i ask myself deep in my heart
i must have caused her so much pain
since she has bloomed so well in fact
like the red suntan flowers in our garden

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reddest Roses

he had seen
d how the roses bleed
at night

d the following morning
d all the petals
d are bloody red.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Refusal

you refusal to hold my hand
is the worst form of
indignity
that a human being has
extended to another human being
like me

how can i blame you
you have never felt the warmth of my palm

is it true that all you know about the human hand
is the slap from your husband?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Refusal To Use The Nouns

the Malayan writes
admirable poetry and
becomes a favorite
there are messages
of friendship
and after a while
an invitation is made
for a meeting
the one concerned
whoever that is
refused
saying that the face
or the body is not
as beautiful as the
poems
and there is a standing
respect for the verb
disregarding the
identities of the nouns
or the substituting
pronouns
one must only exclaim
without knowing
why...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Regret Of The Snow Princess

i do not know if you have heard
about the story of the snow princess
who is destined to be paired to the
spring prince and come valentine's
day they are set for a date in that
castle cloud inside the love garden

it is said the snow princess has nothing
to tell coz that night the spring prince
only pinched her ears, no piercing ever
happened, and summer may not come
joyously and earlier as you expect it to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Regrets Of My Youth

During those early days of youth
when we were so vibrant and energy-filled
we, upon the advice of those experts of emotion,
suppressed, what made us so alive

our kicks are halfway
eyes not widely open
our hands timidly kept inside our pockets

we could have done much better
spreading our seeds and see them grow on the different sides of the hill

we are at a loss now
age has arrived bringing all the goods which we can no longer eat all the excitements which we can no longer bear

i regret, i could have run against the tide, i could have evaded all those masters of emotions, i could have run like a child on those long shores of my youth i could have made my
deep dives to the sea
i have not seen the corals
i have not gathered a clam
i have not touched a mussel
not even seen the famous
basket of Venus
deep deep down in that
voluptuous sea.

Liars! Oh those liars of
my youth!
You have triumphed
and tricked me into
this pit
of unwanted unhappiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Repentants...

the thoughts too
pollute what clean slate was once there
spotted creatures
we become and yet
still as beautiful as we were once
children of God
cleansed by his mercy
silky white
fluttering in the air
back to His arms
pure.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reproductive Bill

to argue with you at what point
shall life start, call me dumb
write to me that i am nonsensical
but to all these
bickering between brothers
i prefer to sit on the grass on a hilltop
view the sea
and be silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
in truth i have learned just to be an echo.
though you sound hoarse and sharp, i keep mine
deep and pleasing. i just want you to be happy
and you will never hear any negative comment from
me. Not just you. It is for everyone here in this
room, though, with my status, i too can go back
to my nook and prefer my own importance. This
i did not do. I see to it that everyone of you
here must realize your importance. I try to
justify your errors, smoother the rough edges
of your visions, sometime without you knowing
i give better words for those cliches. when i
go out of this room into the wide windows of
the porch, i carry my silence, and mutter to
myself, what could have been more frank and
mindless. What you heard of me was true, but
i have changed. I am old now and hurting all of
you to make you better people will serve no
purpose. It is almost nighttime and i will be
late for home. The children are not there and
i have no one to talk to. Only my self, sleepy
and tired, and no matter how i justify, the
loneliness creeps in, wanting to announce rest.

case is closed. and no one is to blame.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Restfulness Of Death.

why is it
that to a pinch
of happiness
you get a slap
of grief?

why burn a house
to find
a lost coin?

what idiocy is
this
taking all the risks
finding so much loss
for a taste of
such a very simple
pleasure
which everyone had
taken

oh, you heard it
find love and let it kill you

find happiness and
die, find pleasure and
regret without measure

is this the meaning of life?

not the quantity but
the quality
not the length but the
shortest of the best
pleasure in there

why do we shy away from
the gift of pain
the trail of purity
the holy grail of mud
the reward of strife

the restfulness of death.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Resting Place

behind us are rivers and
rocks

flowing water making a song
soaking coldness
upon a bed of leaves

we make love
we sought silence
we are separated from
the rest
who thirst and hunger too
and search
for the warmth and
understanding
of universality

the love is done and
we rest upon the thought
of memories
in exhaustion

and i ask myself,
then what?

what is the fruit of happiness?
wave upon wave
comes
the meaninglessness of all endeavors

i am searching now
for a place where i can rest my head
and say: this is it

without humanity's bedrock
in the simplification of who i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Restless Soul....

the soul that is restless
wants to stop and say everything
sort of
last confession before it finally
ends its journey

but it cannot stop for now
it is taken by this disease of obsessive-compulsion
propulsion
like a meteor into space
not having met the wall of space that must
explode it
and scatter it into pieces
of nothingness

it is a wind without a break
not into a placid worship

RIC S. BASTASA
The Retaliation Of The Chickens

dead
rotten on the gutter
worms
live inside its
guts

the heavy rain
this morning
pushes it

it falls
upon the pebbled
garden
where the grey hen
and its
twelve chicks
find it
and feast upon
its
delicious
flesh

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reunion In St. Vincent's High

We come back one time
at the end of this year
to the room where we
spent first year high school

we wend inside that room
of 30 empty chairs
we
remembered the brown paint
and the litter of crumpled
papers and we again heared
same words repeated for
the nth time which we
refused to memorize and
we focused our attention to
the blackboard where our
names were once written
but now completely erased
by them as new crazy voices
emerged replacing our
monotonic cadences fading
in the hallways enclosed with
those rusty iron grills.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Revenge Of The Poem

you are my enemy

i have a gun hidden in this poem

i get the gun and pull its trigger

in front of your face

bang! bang! bang!

i hit you right at the center of your temple

you fall dead

in front of me

you are not dead?

who cares?

from the point of view of this violent poem

i just shot you and you are dead

you are my enemy

and you are dead

i am relieved

from the point of view of this violent poem

you are my enemy and you are dead

now i can go

and live in peace
this violent poem

has done its purpose

i will have another one to compose.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Revenge Of The Short Poem

got this black moth
inside my mouth.

i won't spit it out.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Revenge Of Time

narcissus
has a big
oblong face
with black thick
curly hair
and a beard
to keep
thin lips
and everyday
he looks at
himself in
a mirror my
eyes to thine
and time takes
notice and
so envious it
made us all look
old and dumb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Revenge....

because you are too small
you become invisible
you are of no interest
and you are shut off like
a speck of dust in the lock door
of air and space.

when you are hurt
you are the only one hurt
when you shout
you are not heard
you become a mutant
with a nuclear
warhead

you aim your anger
to those who do not see you
when you explode
the world is annihilated

and from that time on
you have become one satisfied anonymous
the world is destroyed
no one lives

you now find yourself alone
and so wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Reverse-Learning Of Dreaming

i dream
inorder to forget

on the table
are unopened
letters

it is enough:
the more
that i know
the more
i become
afraid, the more
i become
less

in sleep
all the ropes
are untangled

it is best
that i
should not know
how

RIC S. BASTASA
The Revised One: Murky

and you tiptoe and wriggle and sing for i am winding
you take the plunge and you search for my heart

the warmth of my floor and the comfort of my banks
the tickles of my fish, the power of my pebbles

you feel that i own you now and you want some more
wanting to stay and savor the embrace of my foams

at noon the sun comes at the height of its brightness
you realize the mistake & you stand and dress yourself
you never want to be a part of me for i have become murky

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rhyme And The Reason

you rhyme
it is nice to hear that
you're sweet
and people love to hear that too
you're reason itself
arriving at conclusions
based on solid
premises

but my dear
you are human too
despite the reasons
you choose not to rhyme
sometimes
you choose to bleed
and even choose to die
and people with reason
knows how is it not
to rhyme sometimes

when a loved one dies
when a beloved
betrays you
when fortunes are taken
at the wink of
the eye

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rhyming Poem That You Ask

aye! aye! aye
did you watch the ballet?
at the bay between the beltway
of the green beret
who did not betray
on her birthday somewhere in Bombay
she threw the bouquet
after the broadway
ran to the bikeway and had buffet
by the way is there a cachet?
did she do the crochet?
at the chalet and the chambray?
did she love Dante
who dare say on that day
was it tooth decay
of the deejay on its doomsday
by the doorway? why delay
and not defray
right away?
find the dossier read and no
downplay at the driftway
and enjoy the fish fillet
and the flambe
use the footway don't go astray
fly away! hate the folkway! □

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rhythm Of Ritsos

family
tragedies
reflec
ted in the mir
ror
no error

a nice
stay in the
tuber
culosis
war
d.

a political
engagement
against
a dictator

periods
of deportation
and arrests.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ricefield After The Harvest Season

bald the field is
empty of its grains
like a no man's land
there exists
this feeling of
satisfaction after
the season

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich And The Poor

dr. rich shall enjoy
dr. the long queue of
their funeral march
on the motif of
dr. yellow and
confetti and it
will be on tv for
months, they have
it all: honor, glory
and fame, and luck.
we are the mourners.
pretending to be true.
we are the poor
grass under their suns.
we are always the
worshippers of their
heroes. we are
poor as always and
ever shall be, forever
and ever, amen.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich Bard

hey bard, i have read a piece of your creation,
i am sorry but it does not pass my taste.

and the rich bard answered,
hey dude, i am sorry too but i am rich and popular
look at you, don’t you pity yourself in anonymity?

and the dude answered,
i may not be rich and popular and famous like you
but hey bard i am honest and true.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich Brat....

i got short changed
you are enraged and about to kill
someone whom you do not
know so well

i go crazy, and what what you and I,
OH, THERE IS STILL something left
us, is there us?

dance to the notes of the piano alone
in a dark room
a record of wrongs, played over
and over again

jump over the window, end the dance
if you will, jump over the window
catch the butterfly of your last dream

how i wish that the ending would not
be as bizarre as reality, but it is the
inevitable, but let us see, well this is it

you say you are short changed of love,
oh, there must be so much hate now in your
heart, fiery, and reddened and fussy

there is this little girl with open hands
in the market place, left by her mother,
she is hungry and abandoned.....there is
no need to jump over the window, go there.

feel her, and have life, give it to her
she does not want to die...to young to
know what is death from you, miserable

rich brat.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich Man And The Poor Young Woman

it is a world of
symbiosis
when an old, rich man
meets a
poor young woman
lonely as he is
he offers her
romance
the moon and the stars
to her bosom

the young woman smiles
and too kind enough
to answer him with
some smiles
and welcoming
affections

he says he will marry her
and she takes him
for a husband
he needs love
she needs (so badly)
his cash

and then they live happily
shortly after

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich Man...

he is always laughing
even when alone

this far i can still hear him
twenty years ago before he died

no one dared
to call him mad....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rich Speaking....

the way it was worded
justifies poverty, as though
the poor people have not faults
too of their own, you

envy the rich, the way they flaunt
wealth, and you say, you have not
seen them cry, or if they cry at most
it could only be once a year, you

wish that they too must cry their
rivers, groan like galvanized zinc
tread by the lost kids in town
sniffing methamphetamine
you want to see their eyes as red
as inflamed bruises after a brawl

the rich too must speak of the
poor's lack, their hibernation for
all these years, for what they only
know to get rid of their sufferings
seem only to be a bloody revolution,
or that they have not devoted
their bodies to dedicated work,
that patience of the yellow skin,
those eyes that must wake up
as earliest birds in the field of hay,

for what we are is not found in the stars
or the lines of our palms,
we are what we make of ourselves,
that poor man has spent all his nights
in drunkenness killing hope
he had wanted the easy way out
robbing those who earned their pennies
in the hours of so much waiting and
hard work....
The Riddle

it has a name
in seven letters
three are vowels

the moment
you call
its name

it simply
disappears

it only requires
that you
meditate
upon it

when you
shut your
mouth
when you
stand still
when nothing
falls
even a leaf
when no one
walks
when no one
talks
when no one
bothers
the world

be it in the city
or on top
of the mountain

this state
of being exists
(the answer
is silence)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Riddle For The Night....

it bites
yet you see no
teeth
or mouth

it holds without
hands
it speaks without
words

though omnipotent
it cries
for help....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Riddle Of That Small City (For Singapore)

in that small city
i promised myself
i can take whatever it is
in one day

whatever it is
is still actually undefined
and what is undefined
is always exciting
for it amounts to
anything goes

what falls on my head
like a Forest Gump feather
in that small city
is always welcome

and what was undefined
and what was so exciting
was finally
done

you'll never know what it is
because you have read this
to understand and best
understand the undefined
means you never have
to read whatever it is

it is after all
undefined and yet
i must assure you
it will, and will always be exciting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Riddle Of The Hand

a river
has five tributaries
of unequal
lengths

they end upon
a dead sea
where the five
faces of
narcissus
stare
blankly at
you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Riddle Of The Matriarch...

clueless
everything in the room is made neat
you feel what clean is
those cup boards and
plates
not a dust
not a mark of dried water
just perfect

clueless i think of you
but there is a distance that knows
how far roads can be made near
how a house can be
reachable despite the length of the hills
the height of skies

you have know
the stained spot
no one bothers to call it its own name
everyone has that inkling
to clean it by itself
even me
there was never a time
at dawn
and evenings are too visible
and mornings are too preoccupied
and busy

it is like a rock in the middle of the road
cars change directions not to hit it
people who see it
do not have the power to remove it
but all wanted it removed somehow
a pain in the eye

no one dares and it is always there
and it will always be
a bruise on the cheek
even during your death
when you give that last smile of concern
you did not mention
a syllable about it

i know you were so hurt
it is me all those times beside you
and still you never said a word about it....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Riddles

stay:
some words still dance inside your ear
they like it there

departure:
some fruits are ripe for the picking
but you are not there
they are falling even without the wind

go:
how do you interpret my silence?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Right O Choose

laugh out loud
today
do not worry
let death worry
about itself
let life reinvent
its scarred
face.

you are free
to choose

choose laughter
the brighter side of the
night's world

warm early morning sun
on the shiny locks of your
hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Right Self

Years shape many forms
I, face, many faces of me
In this mirror, one way,
I am, finally choosing
One, which i like,
But, which, i am not so happy about,
But i like it. I love it,
Myself, square faced, serious, and
Above all, keeping
Things right....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Right To Choose....

sorrow's eyes look backward
the useless
past, it has toyed us well
it is a mere ploy
to a play
close all of those eyes
better put them all aside
in darkness
how can we heal these wounds
when these eyes
keep on shedding tears
a sea of salt
it is too painful and we swim in
these pains
enough, i've had enough of these
futility
there is a garden
above it are clouds and birds
the flowers bloom
and too inviting us to a feast of scents
and colors
life, vibrance, vigor, zest,
bees
and butterflies and beside it
brooks and creeks
a choir of falls between the cliffs
this right to choose what to see
is here again...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Right To Own A Gun

i have a gun

i need a gun
not because i need to kill
but because
i need to defend myself
from the
intruders

do not deny me
then
of my right to own a gun

you own a gun
many guns
and you are the government
and i am the plain
citizen Kane

do not deny me
the right to own one
you are the government
and you cannot protect
me every moment

inside the walls of my house
i am king
enter without my permission
and i must kill
for inside my house
no matter how humble
are the beams and doors
and windows
in here

i am king...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripe Fruit In Paradise...

that part that you are holding
the ripe fruit in paradise
is so delicious, i cannot imagine
how can it be a source
of discord? all of us can eat it
we can share it, it is too many to
be consumed
i want to hold it and give it
all the compassion that it needs
the tenderness
the kindness of my spirit
this part of me
that understands you
now, in submission to love,
i let you touch it
and caress it,
to make it a part of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripe Guavas

on top of a hill
beside a cliff
the branches of
the guava tree
are filled with
ripe fruits

a bird with
small wings
flew and
perched on
one of the
branches

it is pecking
on the biggest
and the ripest

which at any
moment may fall
right on the
sharp rocks
just below
the cliff

where the hands
of death keep on
waving

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripe Sound Of The Gecko....

sorrow is not fond
with words,
it sticks like a gecko
on the
old wall of the house
and when everyone
retires for
sleep
it starts to create
that sound
where you soon shall
start
counting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripeness Of Unthinking

and then
everything turned ripe
yellow and
soft and sweet,

and fallen, and we
who watch
what happens just
keep on watching
for there is no space
for thinking and
oh my God it is so sad
and beautiful....

RIC S. BASTASA
there was this little
indonesian girl who
played hide and seek
in the Soekarno Hatta

we were there as early
as 4 o'clock in the afternoon
and we waited till
0030 hours when the plane
arrive with its flashing
lights

the night is cold and the
silence outside is visible
in its emptiness

it was the same girl who
cried all throughout the
trip from jakarta to manila

i know all the other passengers
were disturbed
death to all the lives of our
ears

but what can we do?
she was but
a little girl and can therefore
do no wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripple Inside The Plane

there was this little
indonesian girl who
played hide and seek
in the Soekarno Hatta

we were there as early
as 4 o'clock in the afternoon
and we waited till
0030 hours when the plane
arrive with its flashing
lights

the night is cold and the
silence outside is visible
in its emptiness

it was the same girl who
cried all throughout the
trip from jakarta to manila

i know all the other passengers
were disturbed
death to all the lives of our
ears

but what can we do?
she was but
a little girl and can therefore
do no wrong.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripple Of That Last Leaf....

like the leaves falling from the trees
yellowed and light
blown by the wind to the ponds

like a last sigh
from the muteness of its capillaries
this last leaf
as it lands on the pond
shall make the ripples
in your calm
atmosphere....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripples In My Mind

the ripples of my mind
reaching that distance faraway
into the sea of your desire

and here we are
mutually sleepless to the darkness
of loneliness

unable to open the doors
of our dreams
unable to unlock the secrets
of our caving hearts

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ripples Of The Sea

the sea ripples
take me to a journey into your
cove of love
arms open and lips wanting to kiss me
i am into these ripples leading to the bay of your body
i am a wave raging into your paradise
there is chaos but there are no screams
there is this silence of lovers that no one can palm
or enclose with the hands
but will always be understood in secret
and will always be reminisced with another
beating anticipation oh, this romantic palpitation
countless releases of vivid emotions
always enraptured by the lack of vowels...
The Ritual

the ritual is simple
a little bird is
trapped in the fingers
of your hand

you decide
to open your fingers
and let free
the little bird

it is you
on that little moment
on that ritual
that has been
set free

you inhale
and then exhale
and feel
a relief
deep in the chamber
of your heart
where your
soul sings

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ritual Of Leaving

leave before you
decide to say the words
unkind

say not
the words that hurt
they have no hands
to hold you

let leaving be simple
let goodbye
be the sigh of love

if you have a single tear
hide it inside your eyelid
if you have some regrets
keep then in your pockets

as you step out of the house
let the bangs be on
your hair
not the door

put up a little smile for the road
feel the falling leaf from a tree
cross this threshold
and then wave on the coming bus
step in there immediately
sit on the front
and never, never look back to
the face of the past

leave that wound alone
and let it heal with time
in the solitude of
its own understanding

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ritual Of Morning

I went out early this morning to take a walk and see the world
At its unfolding, Skies grey and moving slowly away from light,
The dim lights, Pushing away dark clouds vice versa tugging each other Perhaps
not wanting to part (Whatever happened last night? Nobody wants to recall)

Towards an edge on the right corner of the gym, Everything is shadowy (Like a
dawn tryst In a tight room so foul
Filled with cheap perfume Beating warmth like Pink baby rats)

A black outline of coconut trees, Some houses appearing as smoke
Rising to the skies Like men smoking, Letting go off The sighs inside
their hearts
They are huge and keeps a chest full of Frogs wanting to jump
Into the pond, their dreams croak and croak
Throughout this hot summer Pleading to the white heronFor rain and more rain
Lest they die

What arrived instead is the plow, Their territories cut into small pieces
And some will have no place to live, I am referring to the frogs
like men And the children Of the little space This pond drying itself
To death. The air is thin and sharp to the feel Of guts
Gathering the early dusts of the south bound road, And few raindrops
Fell on the chalky pathways some two or Three farm children running for cover,

I walk fast, trying to outrun The children, the frogs, the men,
And the shadowy coconut trees, Fast and faster still Like my thoughts running
and running In circles Oval to this gym

The first ray is coming out From the edge of a grey cloud Pushed towards a
darker side To my eyes Lights stab and light
With more light Gushing forth from the stomach
Of dawn.

Someone just performed The ritual of morning The birth Of another day, I walk
past time And must go home on time
I have my lover for breakfast Waiting And some thoughts
Running and running thoughts wanting To stop.
The Rituals Are Man Made...Love Is Born

love conquers all
man gives the rituals
like marriage
and fidelity, and love is conquered
by all,
loveless, the journey continues
guilty, the mind holds on
to nothing,
lasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
The River And Her

in the slow history of the river flowing
she wants to mark her own name with her fingers

religiously she goes there on a ritual of her own
naked she dips her skin on the water

so soft are her feet on the bed of pebbles
depth down the fishes ask for more of her toes

touched the river begins to sing a song for her
the bamboo leaves keep watching what happens next

will love dance on the surface of flimsy reasons?
will passion appear and last forever?

the banks want to close in on them: the river and her
the sun is worried what will happen next

it did end, but it was sad, as sad as the butterfly that lost one of its wings.
the river loses its name as she plunges deep to the tight arms of death.

RIC S. BASTASA
The River And The Snake

your mind has the power
to create and judge what appears
before your eyes

the river can be a snake
a huge and long one that swallows villages
or it can be a mother
that provides all the thirsty people
with the necessary water

it is not only us that looks upon
them and judge them with
how we perceive

they too look upon us
they can even make us prisoners
stones or birds
children or ticks

so we too must be kind
as kindness begets kindness
praise the rain
pay homage to the spirits of the trees
talk to the river
dance with the clouds

RIC S. BASTASA
The River That Runs Dry

shall you worry about the river that runs dry?
when the fish all die
when the moss all turn to only nothing but
dry green patches of the past?

do not fret neither shall you worry
from the sands too shall rise another city

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rivers.....

an old woman
catches the attention of the middle aged
corporate worker

deleans you she says
trees disgrace the crease-less shirt of yours

gress hinder your feel of economics
butterflies are irrelevances

corporate man leave this place
the rocks want to hit your head
the rivers rise eager to drown you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road Leads Back To You Girl....

alone in
an
evening at
least
here is still
the great
ray charles

jazzy, jazzy

the road leads
back to you...girl

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road On The Other Side

first there is the glass jalousie window
misty, that is what they are,
no one opens it
but soon i will to see the bushes
and then beyond this is the road
a cemented road constructed by
a Korean Company
the name is Hanjen,
and then i hear two things
the thumps of a buffalo's feet
there are four
because it is tied to a big tree
and then the sounds of leaves falling
and this is a feat
of awareness
hearing the sound of the wind
interacting with the veins of the leaves
the stalks vibrating a sound
to the leaves
on the ground
the songs of the ants
love calls
of the robin on the twig of the gemelina tree
its roots slowly crawling
against the light
seeking refuge in the hollowness of the soil
hearing still the silence of the worms
asleep and full.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road To Dohinob

it used to be a narrow road
fit only for the buffalo
muddy during the rain
and dusty during a sunny day
but today
the Road to Dohinob
is the one that leads to
heaven

along the road the flowers
sings
like the angels of his dreams

from where he is now
he imagines the long narrow path
expanding a bit
giving way to more space
for his new life
with her

at the tip of this wider road
he hears
the baby laughing

the skies are lighter than the usual blue
and the sunflowers are brighter than the stars at night
his heart cannot muster a word
for this newly found
happiness

overflowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road To Greatness.....
	here is a point
that greatness is not planned
fame not actually chartered
for instance
bob dylan, what about him?

he simply writes, sings,
and that's it, without his knowing
and expectation
Nobel Prize got in.

it is not dark yet
continue my dearest, in whatever
passion you are in.

it is the passion, not the prize.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road To Sergio Osmena...

beside the long and winding road
the rivers flow, the hills all green,
the forests crown,
thick fogs hang
on the shoulders of mountains,
birds are migrating
and showers of rain pass from time
to time... and then sunshine
and glossy are the leaves
and sunflowers are
blooming on the
countryside.

'this is still a very beautiful world'
i am telling myself again about this conclusion.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Road To Something Better...

you have to throw it away
to get something in return

it is not hard to understand that we all have to die in order to live again

find the map connect the route of that dusty road to the cabaret.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roads Have No Ends

we shall take the road
to San Jose
we only stop there
soon we shall start
our journey again
to a road that has no end
everything we are
are circles
the road the mind
the soul

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roads...

all road must lead to you,
(myriad options, pretty dilemmas)
days are thinking days, and the hours
are restless too, what the body can
do is always a question, what those
mouths are on the leaves
and bushes, i am
not persuaded, the roads are
illusions, and they put you there,
as though waiting...

days are thinking days and nights
are restless creatures,
i am,
a silent pond, looking at the mirror
without ripples,
i suspend time and go into
deep sleep testing if
i can meet you inside
the house of dreams

you are not there, and all along
i am right.

your arms are empty holes
in galaxies like ships always sailing
away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Robins And The Rats

the robins are the most
visible feeders
of my rice which i have put
beside the house

but the rats underneath the pile
also take their share
of this bounty

i envy them all
because from you my dear neighbor
you have never shared anything

you have fenced yourself so high
as though we are your rats and robins
that you fear.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rocks And The Cliff In Front Of Me

the rocks in front of me
are layered like sheets of paper works
a load i must suppose for
centuries unread
the grasses of the desert
have come to cover
a part of the history of their
shale
i am the shadow at noonday
asking
what these rocks can do for me?
or shall i say
rocks, rocks, boulders of rocks
tell me the heaviness of your
burden
tell the secrets of your
strengths
the echoes keep on rebounding
sounding like the
laughter of a madman
asking the questions and
figuring out the answers
from the same sound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rocks Want To Hit Your Head The Rivers Rise Eager To Drown You

an old woman

catches the attention of the middle aged corporate worker

this place demeanes you she says these trees disgrace the crease-less shirt of yours

the grasses hinder your feel of economics butterflies are irrelevances

corporate man leave this place the rocks want to hit your head the rivers rise eager to drown you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Role Of A Metaphor

you shall love me as a metaphor
i fear
that when this metaphor becomes
untangled
like a riddle solved,

how can you love me then?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Role Of Grief Via Silence....

for as long as grief
does not leave you

silence will always speak louder
than any

shouts of joy or whispers of romance
silence is that brick on the road

cars are disturbed by its red elegance
women find it not just for the house

little in-significances
life is more chiseled this time

refined garments
perfumed feet

shiny white fingernails
drops of rain beneath the soiled feet

for as long as grief hovers on
unrequited love

there will always be more to tell
not in words not in words

it is the silence
that dwells on the wounded lips

it is the silence
that creeps in the heart

deadens the tongue
glowing soul, winged spirit without wounds

now, pure joy like light dispersed
in black skies
The Role Of Resistance

the bow must be strong
and so must the string be
but with more flexibility
and the arrow must be
sharp and smooth and
to the air it must know
its ways like the river
to its own winding tunnel......

dhe hand pulls the tail
the resistance works
the arrow against the bow
and then you shall see
something is gone in
such a sudden way
far, far, farther away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Role Of The Flesh When The Mind Breaks Away...

one does not have to condemn the flesh
it too serves some purpose,
when the mind goes beyond our fences
when we cannot take the pressure anymore
there the flesh waits for temporary reliefs
it gives you warmth
the pleasures at hand
when the intellect abandons you
in the middle of your
miseries.

the flesh beats us to a dance of life
like wine it can make us drunk and we become wild
there is that fire in the heart
that the flesh can easily so provide
there is the laughter and the ecstasy
that the flesh only knows

when the storm is over, when the night breaks into dusk
when light comes again in our eyes
the flesh is there beside us

it is there, when the mind breaks
it is patient to all our desires.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rony Of Your Life

so many things litter  
empty bottles  
wrappers  
rugs, slippers with lost pairs  
dog's hair  
banana peelings,  

in the kitchen after you eat  
you are always caught up with so many reasons  
to leave early  

so many things to attend to  
words to fabricate  
sentences to make at the rush hour  

you risk life at the jammed traffic  
of the city streets  

and then when you arrive at your destination  
you find the irony of life  

you are caught up in the net of  
jejune  

so many papers piling up like a mountain  
and then you have no nerve  
to make the climb  

you sit there  
look beyond the glass  
your legs are crossed  
and then you  
do nothing  

and that is the final decision.  

RIC S. BASTASA
The Room As A Metaphor

the room is
a metaphor for an enclosure
it says
i keep you safe here
i am a field where
you grow
your rows of thoughts
i am your home
away from everyone
here you are my only beloved...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Room Is Stoic Playing Blind And Deaf As We Begin To Play The Forbidden Music Of Our Love.....

you wait there too
at the usual place of
that secret tryst

a dark room
that smells of our past sweat
unwashed linens
and the antiquated silence
spoken of by those
who love
so discreetly

the room is stoic
playing blind
and deaf
as we begin to play
the forbidden music
of our love.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Room That Was Locked

we talk about nothing last night
and for the past few nights about the room that was locked.
long time ago, even the mere mention of that room
they remember, the old folks always reminded us
of the penalties, for the mere use of words,
and there was fear and there was the suppressed silence
that eventually bothered each of those who thought about it,

except for one man, who one day, with all his anger,
got a bit piece of wood, the one left by the termites,
and hit the room that was always locked, and when its
doors were broken, they all went in, to know what secret lies
inside the abandoned room that was forbidden.

to their aghast, there is nothing there.
except perhaps, the mere fear about its being forbidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roosting Of The Pegions

i did not have the time to appreciate
the pigeons roosting on a tree

and the way they took flight
away from me
i did not mind at all

i am also here on my journey
towards a place without a name

PAGBATOG SA MGA SALAPATI

wala ko makahigayon pagdayeg
sa pagbatog sa mga salapati

ug ang paglupad nila palayo kanako
wala na nako matagad pa samtang

ako usab nia sa akong pagpanaw
paingon sa dapit nga wala pay ngalan

RIC S. BASTASA
The Root Cause Of Insanity

the root cause of insanity, i begin to sift it
from you and her and the last one to say he suffers
from the meaninglessness of his indescribable quest for the
justification of existence after two suicide attempts

i look at the mirror of their eyes and i think, i must not be be mistaken,
it is this self-centered being
this inability to see the other as the most important other
this selfishness that like termites keep on
eating the fiber
until everything becomes nothing but a hollow
space of bad air

there is a need to see how a flower opens its petals to meet the rays of
the morning sun and say
hello.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Root Is You....

YOU watch a TV show
a night soap,
with lots of new discoveries
and twists
lots of tears and
slapping
overtures

You wonder why you
are watching these kinds of
junk

You know that all these
are not really true
and the writer is a fag
receiving his pay
and spend them to his
pay-for -love
one night stands

You become angry at yourself
You could have spent more time
on productive input like
trimming your dog
or feeding your white cat
by the window
or giving grains to visiting
sparrows under the mahogany
trees

But this time
there is no one in the house
for they have left you

It is not the TV show
Your anger is You.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Root Of Unhappiness

when the reasons for living
leave you
you will be left alone groping
for religion and sooner
you will ask
what faith is....you feel like
a glass
used and left on the sink
dirty and
empty.....and you ask where have
all these reasons gone?

the mind promises you: i can invent
reasons
i can find a book of life for you
and the heart too says: i can find
you another home
there is a garden of love
somewhere where you
can rest
there is a house of pleasure
and i have a key
to its door.....

sometimes you give up
not really intent on putting a stop to light
switching off and
letting go and
just staying there for
nothing.....

you empty everything from a pack
and put nothing back
but you are not leaving to any place

this happens and you have no more reasons
no explanations
because all of them
have left you and you are tired
creating them all again
the cause of all lies
the root of unhappiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roots Of Light

falling star
it does not matter
in truth
i feel for you
from the wishes
of my heart

in the darkness
more stars shall
twinkle

now you belong to
earth
no one knows where
you are

fallen star.
you have become like us
down to earth.

grow your roots
of light.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roots Of My Papa....

the mountain man
named ronnie once invited me
for dinner in his
hut up the Bulawan Peak
and we walk the whole day
as i manage every five steps
upon such a steep walk on
the cliff
resting once in a while gasping
for air and this
made the difference between our
two lifestyles, as he attuned
to the ways of the wild
and the silence
has learned the patience to
take me there
as i figure out how i must
have forgotten
the roots of my
father.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Roots Of Violence

Time is always
wasted in our local
wars

money spent not on
food
but mortars and
bullets

lives most of all
wasted for nothing

she says
'this greed for money
and power'

the roots of
violence still unfathomed

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rose As The Point Of Reflection

always
we look at the petals of a rose

beaming with fire
soon
wilted soon ashed

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rose Is You

there is a rose
in my heart

and it has so
many thorns

i bleed and i look
at the mirror

so beautifully
the bleeding goes on and on

years and years
how can the thorns be so hurting?

it is the rose that matters
and it is you...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rose Poem

when i was young as a petal
of a rose
i love the hands of the sun
cressing
my stalk and thorns and leaves

time has betrayed me with
wilting gifts

i am not as old
but i am feeling the changes

the petals fall away
and my thorns are dry and not
as sharp as
any kind of reliable defense

there is this beautiful feeling
though

that of letting go
that of watching the sun set
gracefully
and finally saying upon my
innermost

that Life is indeed short
and that foremost
it has been so exciting
so beautiful
and one that last day
still

to the extreme....amazing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Routine

the routine is the path to
a prejudice
the stones there becomes our ordinary stones
the colors are the same everyday
and stopping becomes a stranger
the world rotates upon itself
and there are no questions addressed
to the passing wind
and even the fire that puts itself off
without your asking

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ruins

time tiptoed at the church ruins
in Camiguin Island,
scrutinizing every detail of
the burial
of the past by the massive
lava flow
of Hibok-hibok,

Death resides here for a time
but travels once again
to find a new place
to sit and laugh,

Life comes with a revenge
of green mosses covering every stone
Until the soil wakes up
With a sprouting seed of corn.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ruins Of Your Facades

you are right
Nicole
given the chance

or the option
you could have
thrown it
and taken
another

but it is there
sticking like
a permanent mark
of your body

a mole
a black islet in your
heart

given the choice
you want to be someone else
somewhere else
where you can
be very productive and
at ease

the strain is
stressful
it took you years
to accept
the irremovable

and since it cannot
be taken away
you must learn
to take it
and love it will all
your heart
i am referring to
yourself
the best that you
have for now
from the ruins
of your myriad
facades.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ruins, Lacson House

THE fountain
gives the sense of spring
on this abandoned place

the ruins
somehow, despite the
emptiness
provides a home
for
completeness
as you begin
to fill in what is missing
inside
your mind

d this is greatness
remaining
despite the
horror of time passing by

as i touch the pillars
i feel a world
beyond us
as i walk the stone floors
i know that there is still
stability
to what we were once
after
we are finally gone

i sip brewed coffee
on one of those antique tables
as Mozart sonata plays

actually it rained when we
arrived here
and it did not stop

and that explains why
the pictures were blurred

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ruler

the ruler
gives us an edge

where we
shall trust

to make
straight lines

from him
we make

houses and
landscapes

the ruler
this mere instrument
this tool
this wood with numbers
a measure

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rules Of Their Games Must Be Yours Too

there will always be rules,
a system of weights,

the hands of judgment are always
carrying the scales

that may tilt against you
sometimes

and you wait and see and trying
to think deeply
accurately, balancing
and taking so much time
and distance
and even force
if needed
and even ruse and
pretense
if necessary

how to sway the scales in your
favor
is always a dream

how to score with the system of
weights is always the
most important question

how to meet the rules of the games
the games that must be yours too

so that you can finally win.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rules Rolled Into One

i never want to argue with her,

it is just a waste of time
we are a busy couple
we sit for breakfast, talk,
in between sips of coffee,
chew, swallow, wipe our lips with a tissue, talk again,
nothing is wrong, we assure ourselves, we can't waste time
on something wrong,
we move, we keep on moving,
we keep believing that both of us can be right, all at the same time, we come home at night,
not at the same time, we take dinner, candle light, soft words,
rewind the day, talk about other people of our lives, we make a rule, nothing bad must spoil this moment of our togetherness,
time is short, we ponder upon the last light of the candle, and never forget how its perfume smells.

then we sleep together. tired, so tired.
even in dreams we like to talk about ourselves. we never waste time arguing about differences.
it is just a waste of time because we are a busy couple trying to love each other than take in hate.
and these are the rules we make for rules are rules.
Rolled into one. Love

RIC S. BASTASA
The Rumor

the stone of
discord that
you throw
in the beehive
daring and
divisive

RIC S. BASTASA
The Runners Of Time

the fact is
you are short of the hours
but you keep running just the same
hoping to
be with it shoulder to shoulder

the days are Olympiads
they zoom out

you give up
sit on the grass and let
the sun
burn you down

those that pass by you
too
are caught red-handed by
all the fears

RIC S. BASTASA
The Running Waters Of The River

running water on the river
despite the boulders
it finds itself its way

to where all the waters meet
in that destination
of everything and everyone

running restless souls
towards the same destination

it is not divergence
it is convergence

it is the oneness of all rivers
of all souls

i run and flow
i become everything and everyone at the end

from this flow on this journey
towards everything and everyone

i am gone i am found i am lost i am the drop
becoming a part of the ocean's universe

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sacrifice

i've seen you
thirst

i feel what
thirst is

you look for
water

or whatever
that satisfies

the dreams of
your lips & tongue

i thirst for
thirst itself

but i do not
look for water

or even if there
is this pool

i still do not
wish to drink anything

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad And Painful Truths.

most truths hurt.

they are not guests.
they stay permanently.
they have needles and threads and fingers.
they sew your lips.
there is blood in your hands.
you cannot complain.

no matter how you shake your brain
to forget
these sad and painful truths stay.
they are bats on the branches of your trees.
aphids on your leaves.

soon these truths kill you.
and then
they all set you free.

grateful comes at last
before you even say it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Bird Who Went Voluntarily Inside The Cage
And Sang A Song

i have seen a bird
which went inside a cage
and sings a very sad
song in there
for his dear beloved

it once died there
on a love unrequited.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad House

the children are locked inside the house
if they go out once again
they shall be chained like dogs

once the hyperactive one
fell from the window
but its bones are strong and it knew how to land
like a cat
on the hard floor

spoiled kids says the mother
who is out of the house most of the time
they deserve punishment
says the father who is sick with lung cancer

stuffed toys
these kids without necks
they were never allowed to play
they have to go direct
to become
cruel men later
and no one is to blame
no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Life Of The Imitator

you mock me
i bite my lips
i keep my
mouth shut

i have met life
perhaps
but not love
i have not kissed it
to the full
not touched it that
much
genuinely like a
lover and a wife

do not mock me
i am just learning how to live
how to love
how to be just me

for i have never been me
i have imitated everybody

if i were myself
i must have been shattered
like having been bombed
or shelled out

i have lived this life
and shall live it for another
hundred years if you wish
the life of another
always in the shoes of another

always empathizing
as the heavens fall
as the gates of hell
opened.
The Sad Man...

at first what i have in mind
as i wake from sleep
with all the freshness of the
memory
should have been what i must say
to you
or to everyone here but what incapacity
is this

the moment i start
i get lost and no matter how try to be back
home to
sincerity
or to the genuineness of human affections
like what i want to do now
i always end up with
nothing and

so i guess this must be the most natural thing
to happen
to a sad man,
wordless in his world
orphan to his longings

simply because no one is there
no one waits
no one comes and

i am not, much to my disgust,
not going.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Month Of February

you may disagree:
since it has the heart
it keeps what you
idolize
as the valentine
red heart beating
symbolizing love,

like cats meowing
on their heat
or the dogs yelping
for another round
of procreation

it is indeed a hot month
they arrested
those whom we know
as health workers
and the world is now
complaining
yet the president is
doing nothing

the saddest month of the
year
when freedom is killed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Plains

because i feel you
you have become as beautiful as ever

the seasons come and go
winter and summer

and then i feel you no more
and silently i see that ugliness in you

but because i love you
and because i made a promise to love forever

i do not summon words and take shelter
among them in the reality of
the sound

i stay on this temple above a mountain
and beside the cliff

i talk to the wind and gaze forever on the
sad faces of the plains

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Plight Of Progress...

then everything we have
is worded separately, not just
two cups, or the usual
toothbrush, for now it has
conflagrated like an australian
forest fire

separate beds, separate dreams
separate ways, separate expenses
separate houses, separate cars
separate vacations

how have we changed since the time
we have learned to know that we can
be on our own with our separate money?

we have not grown so well
we have not learned our lessons well

in poverty and need we once were one
united in despair
companions in sorrow
best friends in grief

what has this riches provided us?

there is no more pillow for two heads
no common light for one book
no common handkerchief for our own tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Reality Of A Poem

between your poem and the picture which you posted in Facebook simultaneously he 'likes' the picture of the face of the body of a woman in bikini strolling on the beach,

your poem? it shall enjoy still the dignity of your silence.

probably, he did not like it or perhaps he does not have that imagination or perhaps he is into the body rather than the word.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Truth Is

oh yes
i held your hand
i remembered the warmth
i heard every beat
of our hearts
but
the warmth did not last
like mornings
it faded at the end of the
day
the heart beats
mellowed into the
comfort of
the bosom of
silence

the sad truth is that
at the final chapter
there is only
one man
walking alone
as the sun sets
as you welcome the night
as you finally
arrive in your house
turn on the lights
and cook for yourself
and dine
alone
with your own romantic

hands do not last forever
heartbeats stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sad Woman Of The Othe Side Of The Fence

i sometimes wish to see you
upon a chair
knitting a pattern of flowers
upon a cloth of
silk,

or perhaps mixing the flour
and eggs
and finally baking a cake
with chocolate
dressing and
rose icing

or perhaps spending more time
tending the flowers in the garden
under the morning sun

it would have been a beautiful
view
of a complete woman in my mind

but you never really tried

what can i possibly write about you?

sitting idly upon a sofa
watching so much tv
smoke on one hand and
a glass of vodka on the
other

the room is littered with ash
and there are tears in your eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Saddest Fact Is

i admit my friend
the saddest fact in this place is this:

i know everyone
but no one knows me

the happiest moment however is this:

i like it that way
no one solicits for my donations

the sadder part is
the town too is unknown

the happier part is
everything happens by reason
of mere compliance

RIC S. BASTASA
The Saddest Thing That Can Happen To Love

in his journal
two weeks ago
when she was sick
and hospitalized
he wrote an entry
which by accident
i have read:

there is joy in
your absence.

time is on the
good side
it is this letting
alone
that makes one
alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sadness Of Other People

when i see the sadness of other people
those that walk without aims and look beyond what they have
at the hold of their hands
something inside me says
all is fair in this world

to each his own now
each man carrying his own burden
his cross
and as i too carry mine, shall they too carry theirs
without asking when will this myth of suffering end?
when will this sadness last?

dthis misery that looks for company
their load that lightens mine
the feeling that
theirs is heavier somehow tell about the comfort
of this situation

everyday to each his own and in order to have hope
one says
mine is lighter and
i always have the reason
to move on with my life and just be silent

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sadness Of The Real Queen

the Sad Queen
has killed her lover

her kingdom demands
that she has to be alone

Power is always a jealous
companion

the lover is buried
in her darkness

today she shall visit
her People

Walk with her powdered
face

thick with her laces
seriously enough

she is the Queen of Power
the Symbol of her People

No lust can keep her
Love, she does not worship

Friends she could not keep
Kin she must disregard.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sadness Of Your Eyes....

today you set aside books
and notes, there is no frenzy
about those page turners,

Friday is flying time. Tomorrow
must be a diversion from all the
days of the boring week.

you choose. You really have to.
there is an island a boat shall
take you there. There is a floating
house. If you call, a woman shall
be there waiting.

You share a conversation above
the sea till nighttime. The moon

comes out from the breasts of
mountains. She will shed off what
is not necessary.

The night is all shed
off what you think binds you.

The sound of chains shall liberate
you. Fading cranks. Into buzzing life.

there is no much to learn inside this
boat. No one shall teach you what to
do. This is the instinct of beasts

inside you. A monster that eats everything
in her. And she submits knowing that

all these years you have been lonely
forgetting about dance and kiss.
Saturday is a memory. She disappears at night. And in the morning the boat takes you back home.

You must leave right away. The boat cannot give you another chance.

The waves grow high and the island disappears from the sadness of your eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Salt Of The Earth

what are we
without the salt
we seem not to
understand
we were asking
what are we
when the sweetness
is gone
is it really the salt
that really matters
or is it the bitterness
that wakes us up
and lets us know
what this life is all
about

RIC S. BASTASA
The Samal Connection

this is the second
time
compare me to the
black bird
that comes to your
island
and bring you nothing
but you are
all excited
to see what kind
of black feathers
do my wings
have

it's been a year
and then
another to recall

because we are
distant
we see all the good
that our
minds are
indulging with
all anticipation

the moment however
when the chickens were
released from
their coops
the misunderstanding
began

back home
how can you all be
strangers

same faces i bring
here
same faces i leave
there

and there is no
difference to
scale

at any rate i
thank all of you
for giving
birth to
all of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The San Rafael Excitement

now i am waiting for a roro
bus beside a store with no customer

the road is silent as ever
and i ask the store vendor what
is the time for the next
bus to pass

later a green bus full of
passengers arrive and i flag
it for me to ride

it stops farther and i have to run
to catch it

when i enter it there is no space
for me
the ladies are looking like men
standing while the men have
their hard faces clinging to their
seats

no one knows me here and i like
this liberty of anonymity

now i am what i think i am
while no one is looking

the bus speeds its way to the
intestines of this earth
and i feel just like another
food swallowed by it to be
transformed as another fecal matter

i am immersed to this world
and this is more real
The Sands Of My Past

on a long holiday like these
days i am swarmed by bees of
thoughts and in my head they form
a colony of memories
i am taken in as a prisoner
of the past but as usual i
am the most willing victim of
these nostalgic moments
faces meet me
luscious lips in red
strawberry flavors pout at me
and telling me
how much have i wasted time
on nothing.

what i have is a mirage and
what i tread upon is a desert
dry and so barren.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sands Of The Times

i watch you
with a burden,
a big stone and a rope
your neck is thin,
the skin is white and smooth

over there is another
pitiful creature
with another burden
a sword hangs over his head
dwindling

we are watching one another
on a Thursday noon
we are all three
Sufferers

our mouths are gagged
we cannot speak
if only our eyes can speak
the language of the
helpless and the
maimed
the world's ears could have
cracked its
drums

the world's indifference
conceals us
and when we die
we are erased like bad marks
on the sand

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sands That Spill From My Fingers

so there you are again
why do you come inside my room
at the hour when i am so empty
and needy of
affection

you tease me with that smile
and you put your finger
between your lips and
show your tongue like a bud
of a very red rose

i am amazed and ready like i am
a water escaping from
the hold of this dam

you laugh and then you go outside the door
without even closing it

i have learned a lot from this
and i will not follow

you are simply one of the grains of sands
spilling from the hold of my fingers
i watch and then
i let them all go.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Santol Seeds Against The Morning Sun

last night they sat under the moon
two lofty souls
and thrive upon the sap and pulp
of the three santol seeds

the following morning
at 5
the seeds lie emptied
of its essence

but their hopes are as tall
and long
as their shadows cast
on the arm of the
chair

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scarecrows

i have been wanting to say
everything
yes everything from the most trivial
to the most important
those subdued
those concealed
those that beat in protest
those that can even kill me
or us
because we have been too meek
because we have been to subservient
to the dictates of restraints

look at us
emaciated with suppression
too guilty about unused freedoms
of tools shining inside the cabinets
of some disguises

look at us
we are less human
our mouths thin out
our ears sealing the orifices
of truth
our minds are nothing but plains
without grass
ourselves
scarecrows in the fields

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scars Of Lovers....

a sharp sword
sharpens itself against
another sword
metal to metal
to the sound of the gritting teeth
one wants to imagine
an ecstasy of
a wound
blood dropping from
a slit on the
hand
there is none here
for this is but an affair
of a sword to another sword
thinking that
there is no war but love
in the air
sweet sounds of birds
sex moans and
calls for a mating
of the season

there is this hate that hides
inside the chest
where there is no option but
to sleep with
the one that never tickles you
not a bit
where love is feigned and
subdued
by need by survival by
pretenses

that man understands it
one can see the scars
not the stars......

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scene In Black And White

the sickness of our existence on the last hour
looks at everything as a movie trailer,
one scene to another flashing,

when these flashes end, you put your hands inside your pocket
keep your mouth closed, and then you look up, verifying if there is a new opening

an entrance where you shall begin anew
because in truth you want to live some more
live again

forgetting the first trauma years and years ago in one corner of that old hospital
in black and white

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scheme

the scheme is concealed and you keep
it for a long time now
you murmur deep, deep inside you
like
you know well
how you sound
inert, inward, secretly whispering self
unto self
it is a pact between the heart and the mind
a fusion of the bodily and the spiritual
inside your sweet being
you take a deeper breath
whole and fresh
so slowly like savoring
a soul
this time you plunge yourself in the magnificence
of contented silence.
there is so much beauty
when light is finally turned off.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Schools Of Fish

there is no way to call the fish
to swim to your shore
you are never the sea never the ocean
you are an island
and they are not part of your place
in schools they come and in schools they go

they are always gone
unlike you, so much unlike you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scissors

in your poems tonight
the fabric audience is cut into
sheets

those who appear in porcelain
bodies
broke into pieces on the floors

but there is someone
who is not touched, not cut, not broken

tell me, i am waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Score Of The Gate

i never counted it
it has escaped
the closing of the gate
and its opening
the heavy sound of the metal lock
the moment it slides again
to close
the episode of going

if i really have to note
how many left for good
and how many came
bringing hope
i know how scary shall it be

sometimes my fears
haunt me
those goodbyes without
promises
those leavings
untimely

i close the gate again
i listen to the sound of the locking
somehow i am glad
it is still the two of us
comforted
by our sense of
privacy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scorpion That Bites...

how could
you ever tell a
scorpion not
to bite?

and how many
times will it
answer you that
it is never easy
to have
such kind of
hands?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scream Of Edvard Munch

i look at it again. I have read the story
how the scream came about as an important piece of
art in our history.

it was said that he visited his sister in
a mental asylum located at the foot of a hill
in the nearby creek in one of the far towns in Norway.

he was sad and had all the pity for his sister.
He felt inside his heart the eruption of Krakatoa
her saw the picture how 2/3 of the island was missing
by the thickness of the lava.

He saw the mummy of Peru. It was another sad story.

He pieced them together. Fused them all with his own kind
of misery.
He was on a small boat heading home.

Nature screams. The volcano. The mummy. And the misery
raging inside him.
He screamed.
There was no sound at all.
The two shadows behind him did not bother at all.
The fires behind him are threatening to burn the boat
him inside it.

No one hears anyway.
Except us, who keeps on seeing the
painting.
It was stolen sometime.
We keep on recalling too.

Somehow we see
our own miseries
and we too scream
silently
in front of our monitors now.
In a cyberspace that is too empty
and huge

and again, no one hears.
Try screaming.
Now.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Scream That I Have Seen And Cannot Forget....

we were in that boat
behind us is an erupting volcano
vomiting lava

we have to jump out
the sinking boat and there
is that man

without everything, eyes, nose, ears,
hair
teeth, except a huge mouth like
an inflated balloon

then nothing but waves
and silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
Who wants to show pain?
no one wants to show it and be pitied

pity can kill
makes you shrink like
dough pressed
with a hammer

everyone wants to show a happy face on the road
people walk and
each smiles to
everyone

and when the back of the body
steals a distance

everyone is back to their serious faces again

twisted lips, crashing teeth
misshaped jaws
gnashing fingers

early that
evening

i show pain in the mirror
like the palms
of my hands

the mirror laughs
it is telling me it is not me
and i look funny with it

it says i do not fit well as a beggar of affection
it teases me
the way sissies sashay on the
shiny tiles of the
malls
that when in pain i look like a liar
an old Pinocchio
with a broken wooden nose
reaching the door
from the arm
of my chair
to the hands of the
railing

i insist that this time it is true
my tears are rolling like a river on the tributaries of my cheeks
the mirror
they are boulders
now

the mirror
finally screams for help
of some nearby shadows

i am another movie.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea & The Anonymous Traveler

for every step
that i travel
your liquid tongue
erases it,
when i look back
all i see
is another clean
and empty
slate of sand

you cool my
weary feet
you refresh
my body with
your breeze

i am traveling again
somewhere
into another exciting
unknown

IT is you again
always a mystery

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea And The River....

the dialogue has its twists and turns
it is like a river winding its way
to the sea, and those who pass by
do not really notice that they have
stepped upon the running water
for eight times already,
just like our talk, it is going round and round
less sounder,
so trivial, it is always revolving around
a mountain, wanting to
escape into the sea
and meet the salt of its body,
but until when?
there is so much delay for our real purpose
until it rains
and the river bloated its body
and the sea showed
a tsunami and everything we have
and adore
are all in an instant taken away
because we do not really know what we want
perhaps
that is the way we really want it
not meeting
always going....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea And You....

we're big enough
to make a decision like
this

when we finally find
it more comforting to be
just with this self

the chatter of the birds
become disturbing
the cares of other people
unnecessary
memories serve no better
old friends fade like old friends
there is no need for words
in solitude

you float in a silky sea
above you seagulls

the winds are your friends now
and so are the patient sands
and so are the coconut trees
the hammock most of all
tempting you to close your eyes
once more

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea As An Erotic Form

you see the waves as tongues not for talking because the sea
for centuries have been deprived of words
it hums and suffuses you with its rhythm like it is a heart beating
the heart of a woman deprived of her own love stories
you listen and and then the sea with its vast patience
molded by a hundred years of storms and tsunamis
shall listen to you, and then you love it and then you bathe
with its salt and silence
you go deeper trying to find its heart

there is none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea As It Reaches The Shore

it is the art of the waves
that fold and unfold
unnecessarily by its nature
joyous about its arrival
from the depths to the
shallowness of the water
to the silence of the sands.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea Grass And The Waves Of The Sea

i went to the beach this afternoon,
the coconut plants that i have planted months ago on the shoreline
have grown taller,
the grasses have spread,
and the shoreline has increase its size
as though the sea is avoiding a confrontation
between sand and
roots,
as though the sand is finally winning against the tide,
the waves are calm,
as though, they miss the leaves of the sea grasses,
unperturbed by the beauty that it has not seen
on the depths of its being,

i wonder, if the feeling is the same
with you, i am the patch of land wanting to own
a part of the sea
you are the sea, and i think, you miss me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
in my study
today i am given the rules
concerning the
mouth of the sea
how it sends the waves
like tongues
to deposit some corals on the shore
which to my imagination
has become the lap of my lustful
creation
on the other hand the two rivers nearby
meet the sea
and too give their gifts of soil, sand and
silt
all offerings to finally
create an island
that all the parties now
dispute
as exclusively owned
by either
never neither

sometimes it is Mother
Nature that creates the problem
and people die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea In The City Where The Boat Sinks

in the sea of the city
the boat leaks and you are inside it
there is no fear
for inside you is a lifesaver

you swim to
the shore of your comfort zone
and take a look
finally at the boat
that sinks
gobbled by all the mouths
of the people
whose faces you cannot
recall anymore

they are
taking nothing from you
as you have none
to boast anyway

when you go home
you tell her about it

she says nothing
knowing you
from the very beginning of that
page of the novel
that you have written
which she has read
after your
wedding

the house is warm
and the air from the sea
begins to blow
the light in the room
is switched
off
and shadows
recently gone begin
to moan

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea In Us

i am talking about
water, always there is a shortage
of what we have
in the mountain

the terrains are cracking
and the buds
and roots have always been thirsty
and strangled

we sit on the floor of this house
with big windows
looking at the vast expanse of hills
overlooking the
very wide sea

it seems that everything in our world
is sea, or
sea -ike, everything so deep
and blue
and so silent with all the
mysteries
something we still do not understand

and then you begin to talk about love
that we do not have much
something is lacking and something in us
speaks about
this hunger and thirst
this emptiness that all these resources
cannot fill

like the sea i am so silent
i am like an ocean not making any sense
of waves
like you
we shall also be like the sea
silenced by all these
mysteries
The Sea Is My World

the little world
in symbols
becomes a comfortable
pillow

years coiling like
the chambers of
the nautilus

secrets abound under
a canopy
of leaves

green eyes brown hands
silk palms

i thrive in
symbolism now i
tell allegories
to you

it is best for me
that you do not
understand

for by then when light
comes
i shall be hurt again

how can you
understand a smile atop
a giggle

the loudness of your
laughter shall
drown me

and i become a boat
deep under
the sea is my world
i eat silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea Is Still So Far Away....

a stare has to end

it jumps into a river

you touch a nipple

reflecting the face

of love and now you

are mesmerized with

the feeling of rivers

running on bodies of

rocks on edges of cliffs

the sea still far away...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea Is Very Calm This Morning

the sea is very calm this morning
the talisay leaves are not disturbed by the breeze
my mama is sitting on a bench
combing her long hair
saying nothing
under a tree
beside our little nipa hut
facing the horizon

on the other side is a big house
whose iron gate is painted red
a big man comes out
rushing as though
he is chasing someone
holding a stick on his hand
shouting at the child
playing with my small brother
inside the yard
of our house

the child of that man is frightened
and runs as fast as he can
back to their house
his father catches him
beating his legs
with the stick on his
right hand

i can still hear the cry of that frightened child
from the very beating of his own papa

what a mess!

i could have told you once again about the peace
and the calm and the quiet of the sea on a morning like this
but it is not true anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea Of Words

he could have gone to the sea
and start collecting the shells again
bring each to his ear
to remember

he is stuck in this sea of words
picking some syllables
to hear a not so distinct sound and

to hear a song
from his youth
he arranges the words again
like some old furniture
in the home

in the sea of words
he splashes
drinks the salt of this earth
and begins
to drown himself

sooner shall he breathe again
and swallow
the whole of the sea
and the continents
of this world
as one of the atoms in this
vast expanse
of nothing but space

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sea This Morning.....

drastic this morning is
mother's silk the one which
she used in her wedding which
grandma treasured
the boats sail peacefully
the fishermen cast their nets
for the morning catch
a white dog is still sleeping
on the warm sands
the boy is waiting for the
strong wind for him to fly his
new kite made by his father
who left them last night
to find work in the city
the seagulls are not in the sky
some dead fish float in the water
there is not footprint left on the
sands of this shore
the waves of the sea keep on
erasing them
what is this fear about things
that do not last?
this fear of not having loved
that much?
even thoughts are messy
and one who reads what you have
written
are always asking: where is the sun
what is the point? why are you
making things scatter in the air?
a caterpillar pretends as a snake
for fear that another crazy creature
may share on its leaf.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seagull And The Koi

'are you the
koi who wants to
fly?

go back to the
yellow river' the
seagull reminds
the koi

and with a
wiggle on its
beak, the seagul
continues-

'you will never
make it here'

and with a point
finally
impresses
upon the koi

'because
the sky is ours'

RIC S. BASTASA
The Search For Peace Is Never Ending

the search for
peace is never ending

the way the white doves
are thrown to air
is never a perfected flair

our peace is just
another temporary arrangement

as they gather more arms
and take more territories

their mind is fixed
to take us all and then shout to the world
that they have finally attained
their independence

and what is independence?
it comes only when we all die
for it is only at that moment
when they all live.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seasons Change

the fields remain the same
the trees are taller this time
the seasons change
same stones on the road
from time to time on same mornings
you meet faces whose names you forget
you keep on listening to an old song
as you walk your way alone
home as it will always be
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Second Gargoyle

You were at the window
When I left you
In anger

I looked back
Someone projected
From the gutter
Of that same
Stinking building

Throwing a spout of rain
from a
Mouth not
Really grotesque
But it was more
than an animal,

no doubt
it was you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Second Lover...

there are mountains
with the power of air pockets
that suck planes
and they are
surprisingly not ever found
not a doll or
a shoe,
somehow everything is given
in the losing
somehow you are like that mountain
and i am that plane
that gladly falls on your lap
happily dying

RIC S. BASTASA
The Second Part: Misleading An Idea Like A Blind Man

my left hand touches the right side of my neck
rubbing it and then slides its fingers to my ear
i open my mouth to signify that i long for sleep

i put my hands on top of my unwashed hair
the day’s schedule is hectic like the way a juggler pleases our eyes
i open my mouth letting the wall see my egg white
teeth and then i close my mouth again
sipping air inside my lungs
my eyes are like heavy clouds low to the ground
becoming fog to the grass

i am sleepy
but i do not want to sleep

i am teasing time since it has no
underwear

RIC S. BASTASA
The Second Poem

the woman wears a long gown
covering her toes
she veils her face and neck
there is no way that you can see
her veins
her back is covered with
fox hair
she wears gloves and her
mouth is covered with
silk cloth
she looks like a mummy
though fashionable in some sense
less the context of
death

get nearer she has a very
important matter to reveal

RIC S. BASTASA
The Second Woman

When I first met her, she was coy and meek
And too kind
I like her, and she likes me too,
And she was aging and needed comfort
For her waning days,
She brought along a younger woman
One with whom I can
Truly make love, and where we can be
That is her motive,
Productive.
She is happy and waits for the gift
A child to be frank
But God must have something against her
What she does what she is
There is no baby for her
There is no gift
From heaven

Her anger is super, and she plans to take
Away from me,
Feeling defrauded, she wants to
Take back everything: this house, this car, this
Chair, and slowly she carts away my parts: my hands
My heart, my arms, my toes, my chest, my head
And we struggle, I cannot allow this thievery, I must
Not allow this misery; I am taking every lost part back.
She must be stopped.
She says she owns the younger woman and she
Must be returned back
At once.
She takes her
And she will die.
She does not care.
She takes what she wants to.
She will be coming back to take what she owns.

She takes one step inside my door.
I have a gun and she is not superwoman.
The Secret

the knight in full armor
sits by the side of the window
facing the dawning of his time
his honor at stake
as the morning sun peeps at the black shadows of the mountain

must he tell her now?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Of Our Relationship.....

if you want to find me
search yourself first
and it is only when you find yourself
can you find me too.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Paradox Of Giving

you hold it in your hand
tightly, your hand like a ball
somethings is crushed and
lost, turning to dust, i must
tell you, the secret of keeping
the one that you love most,
when you hold it, does not
breathe, it cannot be yours
totally, you must know the
paradox, to make it yours
completely, you must learn
to give it away, carefully,
whatever that be, wherever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Place

i only have the key to that door.
i can open it anytime and stay there for a while

away from the crowd
away from the daily occurrences

it is a closed door
conference with myself where i talk and listen at the same time

it is dark but it is peaceful
it is small but everything in me is there: whole and intact

i only have the key
and i am not opening

or when i open it
i keep it closed that way

it is sacred
as sacred as my secret

it is holy
as holy as my soul

it is a mystery
for all the things that i worship

it is mine
and you are not welcome.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Pond

you know the way to the secret pond of my heart
meet me there
and stay there for a while

do you not notice the wild grass growing there?
think of me as the unintended
think of me as the wanton beauty of the grass
that plans nothing to spread anywhere
think of me as a free vine
bringing soon a flower to you lips

do you notice the grey stones blunt and the pebbles black?
think of me as a certain hardness uncracked by the pain
of infidelities, think of me as pebbles that you through
after some sweet confidences after some utility
think of me as a stone that may kill a mocking bird

do you notice the stagnant waters there?
still, and quiet, and not flowing
it is what my love is all about, no noise, no words, no transferring
from one brook to another

do you notice my absence? be patient, wait for a while.
soon i may come but like a cloud above that secret pond
i may just be a drifter, a passer by, a vagabond, a wisp of air, a hush
a ghost, a phantom, an image, a shadow, a mirage.

yes, it will still be sad and lonely.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Sin, The Concealed Pleasure

what appear outside
the body
this house of flesh

mostly are the acceptable
& at least
what the eyes can
tolerate, at least expense
of repercussion,
the conformity
parlance

admirable, kissing the woman you
say you love and marrying
not only her but her
family as well, the banquet and
the rituals, all perfect

a sir, a madam
no turbulence of the heart
nothing to
a ripple,
in the hidden depths of
human vacuous
longings

those that you cannot say
but ultimately giving you
indescribable pleasure

you hide but soon
like a second personality
speaking during the
night
a shape takes you
silently into the place
where multiplied
ecstasies
spread a view
invites you
to drink and dance and
sleep with
it
not sleep really
if sleep be just considered
as another
obvious metaphor for
something
obscene

by recklessness you
give in
of course
hypocritically
allegedly coerced
by the set of
circumstances
beyond your
restraints,

and indeed
those that have not lied
begin to
concoct whatever possible
beautiful
excuses that abound
like a bouquet of
assorted flowers

saying i cannot imagine having
done it

(i can still imagine the
magnanimity of the
intricate and
detailed design of
embroidered pleasure
in that
expensive water-bed)
saying how on earth
have i done this
exclaiming
trying to eradicate the stain
of bliss
(or sin and asking
how can sin exist
on such a beautiful feeling?)

it was good, it was extremely
beautiful
i have experience heaven
i have seen the face of God

in simple prose
you go home devastated
though no one
knows
except the one who also
live in another
island
the one who slept with you
and licked your
armpit

you ask: Was it worth it?
conscience, shut up!
that is now how you end up like.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secret Visit Of The Old Self...

i cannot leave
the point of my origin
the place and person
that you want me
to erase like a bad
memory of my
youth

i compromise leaving it
and think of another
the one that you always
speak about

days, years, until i have
seen my white hair
and felt the tiredness of
my arms

but i shall return to it
again
for it is my home
i should have told you
that without it
and without you knowing it
i could not be here
with you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secrets Of Our Love....

it is enough
that the secrets
lay there
inside the coffin

the shreds of our
flesh
the sanctity of our
broken bones

it is enough
that those who do
not really know
shed their tears
as offering for
a good ending

the silence of the
flowers
as adornments
the final steps
feeding towards
the grave

do not tell what
are those
what we did
how we did them

for what they do not
know
shall not hurt them
let those who are alive
and happy
remain to be so
before we are finally
forgotten
The Secrets That You Keep

it is when everyone leaves the room
when everyone goes to their respective places
that one gets to account for the secrets

the fingers begin to count
the heart to beat and the body undresses its own skin
one faces the mirror
and sees the skeletons

in the closet the new clothes are wary to be given attention
'me now? ' i need a structure for my clothes so i may have the shape

you choose, as one by one you take the cartilages and flesh
some toes and nails
to compose yourself again

one takes the mask
the one that they shall love
and the clothes acceptable for the next party
and when they come
the conversations begin

'how nice have you grown' and you compliment too
'well this has always been me' and then you sip the tea

both of you are suspicious
but who cares? the party begins.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Secrets We Keep

we keep secrets, i keep mine, like some jewels inside my heart,
they glow in the night even on a very slight stab of light
and i keep on hiding them, covering them with so much tenderness
like silk cloth and cord keeping a love letter that i have written
(unmailed) many years ago,

i keep my secrets like i keep my life, like the way i keep my friendship with you
for years and years,
these secrets keep me alive, giving me the desires to live a good life
you sometimes ask me what these are
and i give you the hint
about my oceans of choices, and you say, these secrets must be anything

and i am telling you, no, they are not anything, because there is no such
inghting as anything when you know how to love and be still true
no matter what, even if you get old and no one remembers you
and cares for you, when what is near you is nothing but just the grave
and some flowers for the dead,

sigh

you have yours too, keep them, these secrets, treasure them, more than you
treasure yourself,
these secrets are the meanings you put to your life
not really figments of your imagination, or illusions, or air, or vapor

they are something beyond that, let us say, these are the spiritual ones
ask me more, nothing in particular, these are those that exist in the ocean
of choices, and they are more than anything, if fact they can be
everything, but for one thing, let me assure you

all these have this ingredient, this element, this main part:

it is still love in there, and the rest could be anything in your mind,
that is the secret.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sect Of Our Own Poetics

we were never the poets in their list

at their dinner party they shake their heads

they rule and they lay down the rules

their laws are theirs and we are the outlawed ones

but who cares? there's too much war

on words already there's just too many

who died and who pretended they died

as we sail on our waters we continue to sing with

our paddles our boats arriving somewhere on

a land where we put our feet again and run and run

around this island now which we name as our own

here the sun shines for us and for us, too, all alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seduction

down
the lake is
silky
happiest morning
after
the night's tryst
with the moon
and stars....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seduction Of The Married Man

you evade me
but then i suddenly
look at you and
you smile and
then turn your
head away and
then you walk away
towards the place
where i first
met you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seed And The Fruit

sometimes the seed
wonders
after it has seen its fruit
if the same
has come from it

sometimes the fruit
is more luscious
sweet and
crunchy,
well loved and
sought, and
expensively priced

than what the seed
has expected

for all we know,
mortals as we
nature also makes
the surprises
of its genes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Seiges Of Dusts...

too tiny to be seen
yet on their one final storm
all is covered
the surroundings
breathless
the towers of eyes
cannot see
the grasses nothing but
a desert sand
in one siege
the whole world learns
the powers of dusts
and their returns

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self In The Mirror.....

the best and most
solid oneness
actually is not the family
that you always
take pride with,

Cain and Abel
they are real disappointments

you know what i mean

take yourself
and mold it well
solidity it like
a fortress against
the pirates

stand your ground
face the only enemy you
have and then
befriend it

look at yourself in the mirror
that is the best
answer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self Within Myself

the most terrifying part of course
was when they all left the hall,

a friend with his wife carrying their
son,
another friend who just got married
and intimate with his wife,
and some people whom i cannot remember
anymore
perhaps those who serve the food
and drinks
and those who clean the mess
after that
early dinner

the silence is catacomb-like
i can hear the wind
i begin to notice the leaves of summer
falling from the branches of
brown trees,

it is as though the funeral is over
and what is left is just the silence
of the dead

i take a deep breath and then another
i do not want to leave yet
i want to check what happens next

i am trying to find out if i still live
within myself and if we can still talk
as friends
when the rest of who came hereleave
or when all of them
are dead too....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self....

it does not take one day
to make it,
neither is it a product of
pure invention
it carries with it the years
like an age
concentric on the inner
tree
it cannot just be ignored
it will always be there
the heart, the mind, the soul,
how can one hate it?
and how can one so love it well?

no one thinks
the perhaps there is none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self....(Edited For A Clerical Error)

it does not take one day
to make it,
neither is it a product of
pure invention
it carries with it the years
like an age
concentric on the inner
tree
it cannot just be ignored
it will always be there
the heart, the mind, the soul,
how can one hate it?
and how can one so love it well?

no one thinks
that perhaps there is none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self-Depreciated One.

what they
all hate is
self-deprecation

all as usual
want to give you
what all expect

same happy form
one reproducing the
other using the
same formula all
over again

who wants to
laugh at himself?
who want to
stab one's heart?

unless you are
the subject of
a mental study, unless
you lost all hope
unless all you want
is to die

here, we are in
a party and everyone
wants to be the
center of attraction
it is normal

rejection however
is massive. No one's
talking.
Everybody knows
however
this fact of life
millions of love
unrequited.
billions of people
hating one another.
a few feeling the
superiority of their
own race.
trillions want to
destroy
those who are
greater than them.

the self-depreciated
one is the humblest.
here in an island
he thrives in peace.
dried fish. Yam.
and lots of sea and
sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Selfish World

oh, you did not notice it
it was just all about you and nothing about the other

absorbed in your own vacuum
the other does not exist

even the flowers in the field passed spring and yet you did not notice how they bloomed and wilted

why just you? did you not see the bloated body of the pig floating on the river washed down to the sea

yes, why was it just you? and what about the mass graves of those whom you might have known somewhere in that university?

you are all moisture absorbed by the pillow
of that window

you are all tears
confined in a hanky
your sorrow is not
theirs
and yours is yours
too alone

it is fair you say
in this selfish world
what matters most
is only the self, i and
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Selfishness Of Kindness

the truth is
i do not think of you
even when we meet and you hug me
i do not think of you
even when you make me live again
or so you think
i do not think of you
when you think you carry me as a burden
and that you are in suffering
i still do not think of you

do not ask me why
it is you who thinks for me
you have carried away everything from me
that goodness is choking me
that kindness is killing me
since i cannot move
alone by myself
since you think of me as helpless
good-for-nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Selfishness Of My Own Privacy.....

anywhere i go
i promised you
that i shall write
a word or two

for me, just for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self-Preservation Instinct Of Poetry

it is in poetry
where you can finally say what you do not want others to understand

doubt saves us from the pain of the obvious
and confusion creates an illusion of a rainbow

it is a monologue
and all the words that turn into sentences

are for myself alone, it survives me
for another day, and another hour,
indefinitely

it shortens my agonies
and the more i talk to myself the more i understand myself

definition makes limits
and it is comforting to an unaccounted distance

when you read it, you become too far from me
which serves my purpose so well

i become intimate to myself
and love is grown, relationship bonded

it is just between me and myself
unloading the heavy stories that accumulate like

stones in my chest
i have ciphers, i have landmarks, i end somewhere

where you can never see me
as me, but as someone else.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self-Realization Of Dr. Ex...

dr. ex
subdued himself
he has mastered
to keep his
mouth shut,
his hands are
well placed in
his belly as though
he is constantly in
prayer,
since then after
he mastered himself
he ceased to
talk about himself or
other people,
dr. ex
knows that he is about
to die and so
he travels around
the world
trying to know
that is there that
he should never
regret
while being alive.

dr. ex
is dead but he never
really died...

how can he die?
he never lived
somehow

RIC S. BASTASA
The Self-Righteous People In This World

it is indeed
disappointing how other persons
who claim to know what love and care is, preach
and dictate us, humans as we are
on the same category, humans too as they are,
he is,
and like me, all limited minds,
what to love, how to love, and when,
'to be more loving,
kinder' or
'change for the better'

haven't they looked at themselves how in this manner
they have caused so much disappointment on the other
who knows himself much better than all these loving, kinder,
self-righteous wolves-in-sheep-clothing
animals

in fact, they have become my own demons.
How unfair
how sad!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sentence

We are all loved
by God.
There is no fear
We are all loved so well
by God.

When one feels unloved
We are all affected
We do not hurt those
who still feel unloved

We are all loved by God
The same love
That we share for those
still untouched....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sentence

as you are praying in the altar
i am urinating in the CR
and then you fix the bed
folding the blankets and dusting off the pillows

i stop there for a while
for i have been thinking about dust

you think that i am catering in
to these deadly thoughts

or granting that they are not
why think of rest
when every idea of this world is always labeled
with activity

you run away
that is a good idea connoting always an action
you cry
that 's drama still watched by the masses
who like to shed tears for the star
of the show

there is no choice you tell me
except to surge
to invade
to move on

yes that is the sentence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Separation And The Freedom

when she finally decides to leave him
he thought that the world ends

there is no pain like this
he talks to the mouth inside his chest

when will this chaos leave him?
he asks the wind and the rain

he walks upon the grass spreading free on the gentle hills
he rests under the forest trees and

spends a lot of his time talking to the full moon
till it is eaten by the dark sky

he sleeps in caves and makes alliances with
the stalactites and the stalagmites

he eats the worms and borrowed some drops
of the honey from the bees

he talks to the trees and the clouds and worships the sun
and has become a part of this universe

he becomes strong like the rock and stands tall
conquering his pain like the cliff

then the right season has come for him
to fly for he has grown wings and traces his roots

to the genealogy of birds, he is finally free
at the end, the gods free him from the pains of his humanity

his love unrequited has died.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Serengeti Spotted Beast

spots like giant big black lice
all over his body
specks of long whiskers
claim the dominion of
his mouth that hides
the power of his sharp teeth
spotted as sin
yet well revered in the jungle
of lawlessness
where restlessness for sure
is virtue at its
topmost hierarchy
to kill, and eat, to be full
and still bloodthirsty
very much like to the dovetails
of my society

RIC S. BASTASA
The Serial Lover....

you first utter the world love
and you take hold of its bounty
like a flower still on its stalk
by the morning sun, until you pluck
it and then you carry it as your own
and along the way the beginning of
cruelty as like a child you take it
away petal by petal until what you
have in your hand is a headless stalk,
and then you utter love again and
then another and she comes across you
thinking about love, about you,
at first love and then the beginning
of violence, you grip her and she
is choked into the last word: love

love still, love forevermore until
she is gone and you continue this
journey of guilt, one flower to
another, headless stalk, and here
you are: a stranger talking to another
woman in this village.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Serious Poet In Canada

she pays attention to the details
what happens after the storm
she even follows where the geese
are migrating
listen to their loud sounds
and begin to write about them
the problem is
she cannot find the words
to describe reality
like a fog that settles downtown
which from a distance looks like
a mirage floating in the desert

but really, nothing is more real
that what we feel
even though we were not there
even though things are not really
what they appear to be

emotions become rivers
anger becomes rock
confusion becomes clouds
cities become dots and
hesitation are dashes

whatever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sermon Of Fr. Edgar A.

at the wake of atty. M
there fr. edgar a. preaches
about the fact
that when one dies
one does not hold
a bankbook
in her hands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sermon Of The Priest

He is kind. His life is all ruled by the Kindness of His Embrace for those who are Rejected. She is cruel and strict and claims That this is what morality is all about. Virtue is not equated with Kindness.

He loves the wounded kid and to Her Whose basis for the Accusation is her own Certainty

She knows people she proudly says. aND dESpite the Doubt she claims That he is the Priest and the Boy is the Molested One.

How unkind for Certainty to Thrive Sans the Proof Without the Sight and Smell.

At the End she sits under a Tree. The Snow Falls. And then she cries.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sex Molester

so it started with a hug
and we who were innocent then
took the hug as nothing but a hug

we do not remain that
stupid enough not to feel the dirt inside the hearts

of sex molesters.

so the next time you hug me,
prepare your face

i have fists.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sexy Neighborhood...

summer has changed
it is wet
but not as wild as you,
you never change
always wet
despite the summers...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadow Of Doubt

all the faces of great jurists
fall
except those favored ones
who know
what right is
and how this right is applied
in the correct context
of independence

i am shocked
and has just recovered
got to move on
like a man whose wife left
recently
for another drunkard.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadow Of The Stone

at the end of the day
you fall in love with the shadow
of the stone
you want to take it with you
in your mind
it is not the stone
not the one with so much weight
it is the one that fades with darkness
that was too beautiful in the light
in the middle of heat
that captures you
not the one that you can touch with your hands
not the one that hits your head
that makes you bleed...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadow Of The Unknown Past

a shadow rises from the sea
that night when the moon was weary

the shadow drips and comes near me
and without any word touches me

i offer a glass of wine to keep it warm
to keep it bold so that it may soon speak the word

the word that i have never heard before
when the sea was calm when the place is deserted

the shadow tries to show the face i love
the body i long
the memory i had been for long wanting to
still keep

because i always remember
and then the shadow does the trick
which i have long embraced and accepted
it still leaves me
in this darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadow...

it lives upon someone
else's reality, it cannot call itself
the self,
this shadow thriving upon
the light of the moon
outside
the mind...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadows Of The Hills

the shadows of the hills
cast themselves upon the body of the running rivers

they hope to run with them
they wish to escape to the boundless sea

the hills are unmoved
they are all silent and numb

the sun comes angrily at noon and
then decides to annihilate the unwanted

someone so fat and ugly under the tree shows
with all glee about the death of the hills' shadows

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shadows Of The Reeds

at night, upon the light of the moon,
the shadows of the reeds
float on the river

it shivers
but as usual can't
move away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shallow Grief

perhaps your
grief is not that deep
when the stone is
thrown
it hits the floor
and makes much
sound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shallow Ones....

do not underestimate
those trivial ones
serve you
when the most important ones
desert you,

the sins sometimes
you commit
simply because
there is no better use
for the
quest of holiness
when divinity leaves you
in doubt
you cling to anything
that can help you leave
because self-annihilation
is not a choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shallow Waters

on an afternoon
you swear you want something light this time
you want to be like some clouds
those happy ones
those that change faces and shapes and
colors every second
something slippery to our senses
you dislike permanence
and stability
you opt for the floating flimsy things
a leaf floating on the water
a boy wading on the shore afraid of the
depths like the way his mother watches over him
you say
you are tired of these philosophical pursuits
as though thinking hurts
as though every word becomes an argument
you like something fashionable like gowns
and the latest creations of
some gay designers
i am firm and i stay
on the depths of my thoughts
and i am drowning and as you well see
i do not need your help
i like this pain of fathoming
whatever is there
is mine alone and now
step out from the yard of my life
get out of my fence
i live here and this is my territory
this is my loneliness
and i am proud of it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shams Of Charms....

i always come back to you
surrender all my arms
as you embrace me
like all those nights when
you keep on telling me that
someone too loves you
truly, once, twice
many years ago
or about a month
recently, one is simply
uncertain about
love's itinerary

(or is it love? who minds
what words are, what they mean?)
same story with me
and i keep repeating them
and i know
you do not really listen well
enough
thinking that i am one of those
congenital liars
composing poems for
the nights

and we ride on that same boat
to fantasy
dreamboats of rainbow colors

after which we
disembark as strangers again
as we whisper the usual
nothings
we know
we know how to manage
these kind of
pretenses

a masked party of naked selves
on the the bed of roses and
(sins)

did we call it sin and in such
a whimper?
what is a whimper?
a whim? capering whims?
caprices of
mending wounds

something is good and it is neither bad
or good
it just makes us
more human like white breathing
newly born
worms scattered beneath the rotten
roots of palm trees
surviving

but anyway
this is it... goodbye and take care
for we shall meet again
whatever name we call ourselves

i am Gregor and you
are Jenny
and we do not know where we live
and where
we are going...

(shh, aren't we charmingly
sham?)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shape Of Our Faces.....

do the silence
was like the empty
glass that
you broke on that
tiled floor

and once broken
it can not be repaired

you gather the
pieces of that silence
and finds the shape
of our faces

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shape Of Solitude With The Red Ants

it is easy to become
a cloud

a mist and then even be
part of the dust

it is the shape of solitude
assuming the bursting of some past joys

it is this feeling of leaves falling
from a dead tree

silently reaching the dry ground
where the red ants are waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shapes Of Dread

I've known some shapes of dread,
someone tells me, i can always decide
against dread, or erase fear,

that i can be a magician, and then
be confident again,
as easy as waving a magic wand
where rabbits suddenly come out
from my black hat,

i confront dread, i paint fear
i have them all in canvass
with all the colors that i choose
mostly shades only of black and white
and too preoccupied with the
circles of the mind
like the scream of the mouth
the shock in the eyes
the breaking of the ears

i put them all in the gallery
of my days and someone comes along
glossy with youth and vibrant with
inexhaustible energy
surging like a waterfall
from the sky
a tornado of force

and with calmness and perhaps paying
respect for my efforts,
a scrutiny is made with gentleness
touching the texture of the paint
and admiring the etches of
gray and spots of emotions still
on the cloth,

he quips, ' amazing pain,
what grace! what bless! '
there is this sense of humility in me
this regret why despair is there
when in fact, it would have been unnecessary
and i could have moved on with my life
with so much ease, verve and like a tornado
i could have destroyed them all
and never come back for anyone or
anything else....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shaping Of These Pots Of Mud

friend, we still decide
what we become
though what we are
is shaped by
them
there is a time when
we awake and have the sharpness
in our senses
we sculpt a face a body
we articulate a soul
we use this will and we will it
we become because
we like to be
there are things-in-themselves
within-themselves
that grow and become parts of us
but that is not all
neither is it the end of something hopeless
our hands shape the pot
our mouths say the words
at this point
let us say
we are fulfilled.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shell Castle.....

i am obliged
to live in this castle of
an empty shell

my mind, the sun lights
till nighttime
for i am moonless in
my roof...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shell For A House Of The Flesh

A SHELL hides its flesh
away from the flesh that thrives
on the flesh of others

hard stubborn house that keeps
something so fragile
soft and sweet
not because it keeps all these
wonders
to itself like a narcissus

but because it has the power to destroy
what lies so peaceful

what is placid and innocent
it shall not divulge it shall not devour

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shell....

i once had
a beautiful body
many beg to
touch it
many want to
sleep with me
even without
any responsibility

i look at myself
in the mirror
grateful for this
body

i had conceit
like a prince
of arrogance

time is my enemy
my body wears out
skin is loose
and bones become
brittle
there is a squeak
when i walk

sometimes i
regret having this
body
since i never had
used it
the way others
want it
if they had it

i tell myself
that it would have
been better
if this body
is the body of the
one i love

it would have been
more useful
perhaps lovelier
and i would have
been happier

my body is silent and indifferent
it has no independent mind of its own

it is one of those shells
where the hermit crab dwells

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ship According To The Gospel Of Arsenio

A ship in the harbor is safe
But that is not the reason why ships are built
That is not what ships are

They are made to sail
To go not to stay

They are designed
To float

“Safety, security and survival
Are not the goals of our lives”

“Life is an adventure
Not maintenance”

At its end
The ship is always for
Sinking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shoe Argument....

there is this connection
his feet are too small for the shoes
and he is having a hard
time fitting in

what he expects is something
different
something that someone may
find too usual

the shoes are always thought of
as smaller
than that of the feet

i am thinking of another point
what if we have no feet at all?
and the shoes are all too expensive?

same thing perhaps.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shoes Of Life

Now i will be wearing
those shoes

mother wore it first
then father
it knows no gender
bound by no time
most of them say
those shoes hurt

now that i am wearing
one of those shoes
a black pair with mud
on its soles

i shall eat my words
and happily shall i dance
(they hurt so bad
but i must be true to myself)

see me dancing
day and night till i fall
(sleepless in pain)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Short Story Of The Droll

a droll little man
with a quiet
tongue-in-cheek kind
of humor

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shorter Version....

make it shorter
sort of a surfer,

when to cut
from the gut

time is an eagleake is fickle.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shortest Moment That The Butterfly Tries To Speak

how many flutters of its wings is its lifetime? not a hundred, this butterfly with blue shaking lines on its wings some dots of black on the lower tip some flaps of dust as you hold it.

we love to see it freely hovering from one flower to another blending with its colors, it is not trying to hide anything beautiful, it is showing itself, beautiful butterfly,

how gentle, soft to our hearts as we watch it there is no sound of its wings and its graceful feeding on the nectars then it rests on a leaf. we leave it there.

the wind last night was strong. we see the leaf where it stayed on the pebbled ground. there are no wings. there is no trace where the blue butterfly is.

how many flutters did that butterfly make? such a brief moment, yet so beautiful that is the message of the life of its lost wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shouts Of The Maddening Crowd

on this day i hear them
the maddening crowd shouting inside
an enclosure of the town
betting on who wins this time
the winner that takes it all
and the loser
who cries alone

it is the same crowd who tells you who you must be
what to do
what to be
to be just like one of them in greed and gamble
they have a thousand eyes and their mouths speak to you
in unison

dare not run against their wishes
lest you be an outcast with all you possess stripped away from you
your name your past and if you stay a little longer

your future

today, it is all over, i am planning my escape
to the place of my silence

where i can speak and hear what i am speaking
where i can be brave where at last i can just be myself

there i am an island that even you cannot touch

RIC S. BASTASA
The Show

i have seen this
dalmatian, dancing, and
taking rightly all the cues of
his master.

he adds three plus three
equal six. Six barks.
and his tails waggle
for the correct answer.

the people get excited
watching the dalmatian,
trying to speak the language
of numbers and a human
display of his emotions.

at the park a woman kisses
a man. Lips to lips. The man's
hands holding her butt.
The hard bone protrudes.
The palms are wet.

the dalmatian stops his acts.
and people too stop watching him.

they are watching the real show.
to lips. Hands and hearts
Bold at the park. The grasses
are clapping their hands. And the
clouds laugh and do not sun
pockets a smile. Thumbs up
The trees signal.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Show...

in this Act, of this Scene
you are not the Actor, you are
the Spectator,
they will use the language that
you do not understand
it is not the first time that
they do this,
 neither is it the first time that
you will hear them,
they have been here for so many
years, but you were then so busy
and you speak the language
of the restless, and the
fenced,
the world of cubicles

you are not the Actor, you are
the Spectator,
the language that
you do not understand

it is not the first time that
they do this,
 neither is it the first time that
you will hear them,
they have been here for so many
years, but you were then so busy
and you speak the language
of the restless, and the
fenced,
the world of cubicles

either is it the first time that
you will hear them,
they have been here for so many
years, but you were then so busy
and you speak the language
of the restless, and the
fenced,
the world of cubicles

when the Curtains fall and
when the other Spectators clap
when their eyes close
and when there hands are put
crossing their breasts

then the Show begins to unfold
and then Everyone will be
lost.
The Shrink And The Brink

he has always an explanation for what we feel
what we are he says have roots and he can always trace
the reasons and from where we must listen
and then we can start living whole again

he knows how shattered are we and he has always
his incantations: Freud says this and Jung and Erica
and Erickson, and Watson and Pavlov
i sit on the couch and we keep on talking
i am in a trance and i go back to my childhood
and there he was the hand guiding me in this play
a reenactment that points where the real problem lies
incontinence, instability, bed wetting, sexual fantasies
unsolved fixations, the phallus and the vulva,
the fingertips and biting of the nails
slip of the tongues, he is so unforgiving
and then he scribbles a lot of things on paper
prescriptions for the day: a stroll on the beach,
a conversation with someone who died
a journey to a dream, a soliloquy, a dialogue
of the spirits of the trees and the mountains
the sea goddess, the nymphs on the flowers,
the fawns and the gorgons, the dragons and the cyclops,
medusa and the stones, i have all them in mind
my hands tremble, my feet are shaky
and here comes the shrink handing me the tablet
and the drink: you just don't die, you suffer, you must
embrace divine light, and be patient, prostrate,
sleep more on the couch, follow my hypnosis.
i like the composure of the shrink,
he is patient with my pretenses, ... at the brink.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shrink Of The Lonely Household...

she will mistake
art as a form of disorder
it is not unlikely

she fails you
in the Rorschach test
where butterflies leave
from the frame of a page
and goes somewhere else

and there will be more
stories of its adventures
no longer
warranted by the inkblots
of her mind

she takes a closer look
at your nose
and count how many
breaths are you
making in
a minute

she will degrade you
into a candidate for an
electric cure
write the names of
some capsules for your medication
and a letter of recommendation
to another psychiatric doctor

you are not a poet
but a madman eating words
drinking ink
barking like a dog
at the wrong tree
of this world
you keep you fragile wisdom
shut your mouth
pack your belongings &
leave the place
and grow your tiny flowers
somewhere else.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Shy Flower...

you are a very
shy flower
isolated,
one day you cannot
excuse yourself
from gratitude,
early morning
you carry one dew
for the sun
thanking it for something
that you
cannot reveal...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sick Man....

that early morning
bath
triggers it all, and
so without
having touch a part
the whole day drags
like a sick man
to its bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sick Man....(2)

that early morning
bath
triggers it all, and
so without
having touched a part
the whole day drags
like a sick man
to its bed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sickness

he cannot imagine himself
now
swallowing from pill to pill
his stomach
becoming more like
a pharmaceutical
storage cabinet

there is a pill for his
numb arms
another pill for his
acidic stomach
more pills for him
to sleep
another pill for his
throat infection
another one for his
allergies
side effects of some
drugs that he had been
taking

this sickness into death
until one day
he refuses any pill
not that he cannot pay the bill
he is ready for
the thrill

RIC S. BASTASA
The Siem Reap Experience

the ruins of
siem reap

tell a lot of stories
you get
tongue tied in wonder

your mind wanders
to the stars at night

how could it be
so cheap and lousy?

the roots start to
grow on your feet
and you feel like
a temple yourself
venerated in
antiquity

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sigh.....

i really do not
know
how far has the sigh
of a hornet
gone?

it was planted somewhere
here
beside a stone silence
below
a scattered sky
upon the drifting cloud

a butterfly once flapped
its wings
as expected wings got
broken
something is gone for
good

to the amazon river
till the danube
into madagascar from
belgrade

how did the sigh turn
into a song
sang by children with
drums and bugles
inside the palace of
a dethroned king?

RIC S. BASTASA
talking has become a surplusage
when thoughts are like a gathering of
old friend in the university where
we finished college

there is always an ongoing exchange of
what if's
or oh my God
is that you?
what happened
to the standard bearer
of 1981?

the lips are like tombs whose openings are
closed
recently because the dead body is there
resting in eternal peace

the room has become a very big ocean for the two of us
boats without sails

in the middle of darkness going nowhere

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of Borders

there is no escape
in this room with both of us
all too
willing victims of
lust and desire where love
has become such a cliche
that we do not mind
uttering it
anymore
in this lost world words
keep their own borders
of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of Stone (Revised)

take a stone,
from the beginning it was
a stone in form
and color and smell

and stone to stone
it shall be stone
unless you take it
in your hand
and keep it warm
in the hold of your palm
and take it home with you

you talk to it
and then it becomes
beyond itself

now
it is not just a stone
but your beloved
your lover

you will discover
that its silence also speaks
in tongues

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of The Beauty Of The Flowers In The Middle Of The Storm

we are in deep trouble
we do not
however make it worse with the use of any word

there is nothing more effective
as a solution
except this enduring silence

our eyes speak
and shall determine if we are still worth
our salt

we follow always the principle of the flowers
noiseless in their beauty

even in the middle of the storm
you can never hear the panic of their sepals

the petals may have fallen to the ground
yet lips sealed & definitely fate is accepted.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of The Morning...

in the land of truth,
no one writes and no
one reads,

one simply knows where
love makes its own fire,

one simply knows where
the spirits meet,

the words are not experts
eyes become closed to these

glories, morning light
shy cheeks, pale lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of The Skies

the silence of the skies is as old
as the presence of space
expanding
engulfing what it sees
familiar as they are
to chaos
resolving to disorder dissipating
into another
separate universe

the same silence that i keep
to everything i have to everything that i give up

there is no more keeping
secrets dissolving life unfolding and then gone
to join the masses of history

the presence is always there
the future always as always coming

we stand here we stand here
we are not waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of The Snow

tio peping walks with his grandchild
six inches of snow
above their feet

it is cold, i suppose,
but the smiles of grandpa and grandson
thaws the coldness
inside their hearts

outside
at night, the fires of tiny stars give
enough warmth
to keep some tiny creatures going
till the next spring

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Of You....

silence is
a big help when
the time for
fate comes upon
thuds of the loud
noise of the
two horses

in the middle of
it you become
invincible

your heart becomes
a rock
which cannot be
penetrated by its
arrows

at your back two
wings begin to sprout
and without any
sound you fly towards
the sky
to the beatings of your
sigh

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence That Is Mistaken As Arrogance

noise speaks
to silence

silence keeps
itself

noise leaves
grunting
about arrogance

silence stays
its dignity intact
it sits
alone by the window
looking at
the road

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence That Is Still Raw

from a tree rooted to discontent
the silence is still raw
another season of cold
is needed
to make it ripe
make all those leaves turn yellow
and then that silence simply
falls to the ground
like all those leaves
rot and
become forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence That Was There...

it is the silence
that i love most
it is worth it
lady-like, reserved,
cool as they
name her,

on the other side of the
euphemism
is the muteness of
that mutiny of sorrow

they all come and leave
at the same time

but it does not matter
it is this that remained
wholeheartedly

sincere and healing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence That Wraps

it is the silence that
wraps the noise

it is the leaving that
puts the knot

we know which is
hanged by the beam
of this house

of words,
heavy, and dripping
tapping like a rhythm
of the measured sound
of your poem

as though
someone is sobbing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence Was Like This

it was the kind of silence
that even the
steps of the ants
can be heard
the flutter of the wings
of the butterfly
the falling of the leaf
from the tree
touching the blades of
the grass
it was like the last
ever closing of
the eyelids
indeed it was so
peaceful
but he was no longer around
to tell it to you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silence......

try loving
the most beautiful sunset
of your life, it will always
be yours

and then when you are
into the dark side of it all

let them imagine once more
the color of your fading

the silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent And The Invisible

the atom
has since then
resisted
visibility

when you probe
it
you can see it
dance

in such a
beautiful randomness

that mathematics
cannot measure

it bounces like
happiness

it does not talk
about it

neither does it
demand that
there be meaning
to randomness

i guess it has
something to do

with the complete
silence
and its invisibility

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Atoms

what we know is that
we are already tiny shreds

independent atomic particles
neutrons some, others positrons

from where we come from
oh, it gets too complicated

the shattered ones too admit
they do not know clearly

they simply have no information
nothing accurate whatsoever

and then what happens is that
there is a void that attracts us all

where we gather but not necessarily
voluntary but just the same attracted

we may call it random coincidence
but it is evident to me as a scientific fact

that there is an innate magnetic force
and all that is metal in us, iron or whatever

become convoluted like a cosmic ball
and we like it since we feel the invisible fire

and there is this rock & roll in vast space
that makes us all orgasmically excited

we talk a lot we ask questions and
we become inebriated and so loquacious

that we do not notice anymore the
eventuality that happened to all who
once were here: the explosion
the big bang bang bang bang

and we are scattered again back to our
sad, sorrowful particulate state

somehow i have learned how to define
what loneliness and scattering is

or solitude as i may call it now
it could be, on the other hand, my

4th of July, my own fireworks where now
as a tiny piece, i have become an individual

free, though dust, watching the stars
and all the other suns & meteors, too dusts

of this vast moving universe, this space
that accommodates us all: all silent atoms.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Care.....(Or The Silent Scare?)

early morning
she goes to church
that night
there was silence
something wrong had
been going on

the rain suddenly
pours heavily on the
roof

he tell the housemaid
to bring an umbrella
to the church for her
to use in going home after.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Hardworker

he arrives
one hour before the desired time
opens the door himself
without his aide
opens his computer
and tunes in for
some jazzy music
then to something
classical
he goes to the sofa
takes the pillow
and lays his head and
then he closes his eyes
this he does
privately inside
his office.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Letters....

it did not
and it will definitely not
matter if
you have read the letter
it will stay there
always waiting
it cares for no one to come
by and stop for a while
busily thinking about what
may come
oh, that letter stays silent
and hidden in one of those
drawers
in an abandoned house years ago
and those who once lived there
died peacefully
got the best burial ceremonies
in town
with all those flowers and candles
and crying neighbors

it does not matter
if the burning house eats all those
written words
and leaves only nothing but ash
and the sighs of the past
about a love
unrequited.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Majority

today i tell myself
that the cover of my favorite book
needs a change

perhaps i need some thickness
something much like the
darker blue in
Atlantic ocean

the wings of my imagination
can be clipped
hide them within a cloak
of the pages of
this book

i can be like any other
normal as they say
silent, deep, and alone
on a shelf

the dust may come like a
desert storm
and just like the rest of those
who have been here
we can be numb and
mindless
and all accepting

and i guess we may become
likeable
which we may find disgusting
but only for a while

disgust is our real content
but who shall like it?
we are original in this kind
of endeavor
but we cannot proclaim it
lest we be burned and then
be all forgotten

so for the meantime
enjoy our silence
savor our concealed presence
we are the pages of the book
that you read
and we have no page
not even a single page
for a complaint.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Old Woman

she is unthinkable
i still think so
for in her hands
lies the bomb that
she may throw
at her enemies
yet she didn't

she stays in the house
reciting the prayers
offered for
her dead ancestors

when she opens the window
it is because she likes light to filter
warmth between the fibers
of her orange curtains

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Water That Runs Deep Inside My Eyes.

you have a way
with the metaphor of your affections.

orange and green.
smell and touch.
warmth and peace.

did you eat what you
love?

love could be the root
of that cannibal.

did we ever think of
this?

eating someone to make
everything there your
everything too

deep inside your mouth
into your heart and
flesh and blood and bones.

does it matter whether
it is wrong as they perceive it?

tradition is a veiled woman
having pain inside her head
and always wanting to hit with
a hammer the merry dog on the beach sands.

and the law is a blind woman
striking its sharp sword to anyone
who comes along
wanting to simply drink beer
and eat hamburger.
is our view a little bit twisted
look, the sun is begging on the river.
the moon is driving away the stars.

look, the mountains are running loose
the forest trees are flying away.

look, oh take a look, you are turning
into a cliff and children are falling off
from your forehead.

be silent for now. Listen, silence is
speaking to you. Noise is rubbing your
ears taking away the earwax stored for
years.

i like the lake without a boat.
just the white swan.

a white swan beside the moon.
and the silent water that runs deep
inside my eyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Silent Workers

we did it before
we did not explain
they did not like it
we keep silent

we keep on moving
and doing what
we think is good
not just for one
but for all

we will do it again
and we will not explain
we know too well
that soon they will
understand

and at the end
everything turns out
well
for all of them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simme And The Big Ouch...

the rainy nights &
the rainy days
36 hours and more
and they all warn about
a blackout,
expect landslides, let not your children
go to school,

the figures of speech for the
heavy rain,
outside this big house, the strong smell of paint
shares the pride of the patter

actually, one shadow tries to make sense that
it is owned by another body,
for how can shadows exist if there is nothing
tangible as flesh and bones? but the light says
i own you, i only reflect you from that
perceived owner of your existence
for without me behind this mass,
you are nowhere to be found

alas!

the rain keeps mocking the road,
striking each corner with a hundred hammers
proclaiming alliance with clogged canals
and broken bridges
and chipped off
hills,

how does one make sense with metaphors of rains
and heaviness of feelings? overflowing rivers and
the embracing arms of the seven seas?
a moment of grief
a few drops of silence....

how does the rain pour and be relieved of the
problems of that great space, dark and limitless
horrible to the understanding of the sandman?
how come we are all scattered thoughts unable to form a dissertation? life is simple. Life can be simple. As you must like it.

how do you like life? You are complicating the equations threatening calculus without solutions.
how life must be liked? how unreasonable do we really become?
how cowardly do we embrace that sometimes there is nothing more that we can grasp any more any further

and then we
say: Lord, i love you with all my heart and soul and mind.

we are limping. Lame, broken bone. Feet of different lengths Tipsy boats. Uneven universe. Twisted bridges of life's codes. Blind, and Deaf structures.

We believe in one God.
That is our chant against the wizards of Ouch.

Forgive me
I am a simmer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simmer And The Big Ouch...

these are the rainy nights &
the rainy days
36 hours and more
and they all warn about
a blackout,
expect landslides, let not your children
go to school,

these are the figures of speech for the
heavy rain,
outside this big house, the strong smell of paint
shares the pride of the patter

actually, one shadow tries to make sense that
it is owned by another body,
for how can shadows exist if there is nothing
tangible as flesh and bones? but the light says
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Tipsy boats. Uneven universe. Twisted bridges of
life's codes. Blind, and Deaf structures.

We believe in one God.
That is our chant against the wizards of
Ouch.

Forgive me
I am a simmer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simple Life I Live

An afternoon walk
Seeing the white birds again
On these green ricefields
And the carabaos wallowing
Refreshing their skins in mud holes

It is the beginning of the
Planting season again
The weeds are uprooted
The plows run again
To make this land arable
The rain comes and too
The sun and the wind

The hills are greener
The trees are blooming
And so are the flowers
Along the footpaths

My dog walks with me
And his friend dog too walks with us
The wind so cool touches my face

The man nearby pastures his carabao
The woman washes some clothes in the river
The waters are still clear reflecting bluer skies
There are no sounds of buses in here

Far from the city in this little village
Where people are still innocent about greed
And grief and self-made confusions
The complications, the sophistications

I can live on a cup of rice, this mudfish,
This glass of water from the rock’s spring
This big banana leaf on my head
And the moon above everything else
And some stars lighting this lovely darkness
The Simplest Bliss

the night as backdrop
an easy chair to rest my legs
a soft pillow where my head leans
an orange glass vase
a bud of red rose
a single leaf

hushing wind from the sea
my hands on my thighs
i dream
my heart beats always
you know

for you,
far, far away
like a distant island on the
shoreless sea

how i wish my thoughts
are dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplest Joy...

one day
i gaze upon the window

it is raining
outside

and the Santol tree fronting our house
is laden with ripe fruits

like one
Christmas tree...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplest Reason I Can Give You

i wish to build a house
away from here

i have stored the necessary
colors of the paints
on the walls of my mind

i wish to stay in that house
alone

i will be in the company
of paper and
pen

i will fence it
it will be high

simply because
our house is not
my home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplest Things To Do For The Love Of Country

vote wisely.
обey traffic rules
pay your taxes
work honestly
corruption is a No.
Obey the rules.
Do what you can
for this government.

Nothing new
really. Nothing
so silly.

My college political
law professor
suggests
a critical mind
active citizenship
question some rules
be not blind to
what the government say
analyze,
suspect every leader
trust no one
but be kind, and gentle
for this government
that derives power
from the voice of the
people.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplest: Hello, How Are You? Are You There?

affirm my existence.
are you there?
is there anybody here?

i am human.
i am alone in this universe.
i need a confirmation
that there is another human being in this planet.

hello, hello, hellllooooo!
i am human. I am here.
I just arrived here.

is this my home?
do you understand what i am saying?

i am human. I am alone. Unless, i hear from you,
then i exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplicity Of Doubt

the absurd is not
actually sophisticated,
hand in hand with doubt
both stroll the park
of the obvious: the children
on the boat on the pond,
the mothers beside them,
the trees carrying
leaves with the dignity
of their roots,
the absurd laughs
at these pictures
of man made realities
and doubt smiles
about these illusions
since
what it knows is always
subject to the test
that these things the
following morning
may simply be
shadows
carried by too much
light
in a sense,
like a magician
things in themselves
volunteer for
their disappearances.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplicity Of Nature

reeds on the side of the lake
ripples of water
sand over mud
a green island on the other side
shades of the horizon
blue and darker sometimes
blue skies and fluffy white clouds

how this view sings in harmony
with the heart of a man
sitting in solitude under a tree
on the grass

nature is indeed simpler than man
more beautiful even without him

but who shall know? when man becomes
extinct, who shall know?
when man is finally excluded, who shall tell?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplicity Of Thoughts

thoughts are simple
i see them without color
we dress thoughts with words
so the other person we love can see
we add a little touch of the hand
so the other can feel that she is not lonely
that i am can also feel
that i am not alone
but whether we are here or not
lonely or otherwise
thoughts still roam this world
looking for a medium
the tree, the cloud, the moss and the rock
it is my theory have thoughts
the rock is numb the cloud is lifeless
the tree is deeply rooted to the earth
the moss too green sticking to a rock
remembering the rivers that were with it

for centuries, they get tired
and they do not believe in words anymore
too many lies
and verbosity
we are the only ones who still have faith
and too foolish.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Simplification Of Her Death

she sits on a train
the final horn blows
she closes the
white curtain
and sleeps

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sinful Lover

you kiss a stone
the river has dried a long time ago

no one lives on the river bank anymore
all the moss dried like a pocketed silence

you kiss a stone hoping that something
may grow like another island of moss on its cheek

you pray for rain hoping that someday a river may
be born again at the junction of two paths

the stone sleeps for years mistaken as a dead memory
the river dries itself losing its patience to the sky

your kiss could be fire and your prayer for rain may be heard
and the sky could be kinds someday

who knows? you kiss a stone because you too want to be alive
to give birth to a new world, but for whom?

who knows? but i will trust you for this
the stone may just be pretending, and you must kiss it some more

it may still have the heart to love you again
shattered world, unjust stranger, sinful lover.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sinner.......Is Gone.....

something repeated
becomes boring and
so you keep on repeating
the same sin
hoping to escape it
just the same

it did not happen that
way. The alligator has
gobbled that boy in you.

the fires of sin ate you.
too late to admit that
hell exists.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sixth Woman

All the women must envy her.
Because she is the woman that I truly love.
I have surrendered every atom of my being.
All my time is hers.
She takes away my education, my career, my past
My present, my future.
She takes away my soul.
My liberty, my thoughts
My feelings, my rationality
She is everything,
I mumble before her
And I tell everything
There are no secrets

There is only beauty, truth, and goodness.
She is regal.
She takes me whole.
She is eating me whole.
She will break me, she will kill me.
I have nothing left, and she can make me take
What belongs to others so I still have something to give her
To cater to all her demands
Whims
Caprices

She takes my books, my rings, my watches,
She takes my house, my car, my attaché case
She takes my savings, my fortune
She takes everything away from me
And I cry before her
I laugh like crazy
With what is happening to me
And she does not mind
Unmoved, unthinking
Unbreakable
Undone
Un-self
Un-real
To her real-ness
Unbecoming of me
She is unbecoming of me to all the other women in my life
She is forever
Omnipresent, omnivorous,
Omnipotent,
She is
Goddess

All the women say,
I am finished
And I deserve her
And they all wish
My eternal damnation
My eternal suffering
To a hell of perfection

Through her the retaliation is complete
The vengeance perfect.

I am helpless
She is the sixth woman,
The sixth sense

She is poetry and I am her slave.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Skeptic

politically he is
correct
saying wealth must
be distributed
to the poor

except his
own hacienda
for a start
there lies the
stain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Skies Of My Youth

Blue birds sing
blues
in the blue
skies of
my youth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sky Is Limitless

Limitless the sky is
All its lies
Spread further to the universe

Limitless the sky
Is and I do not know
Where to start or to end
The sky is one big circle
Limitless is
Its deception.

I really thought the sky
Is blue and orange
I proved it once
The sky is dust

Limitless is my misunderstanding
Of the sky

Limitless is the sky

I have been deceived the sky is
Limitless.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Slave And Pleaser

i will only tell
what you want to hear,

tell me what is it
what is it that makes you whole
and i will
utter it,

tell me what is missing
and i will fill it

i do not play with hints
it will leave you hanging

like a frozen tear
to your cheek at winter time

i like the summer in us
in full bloom

if you want me to utter love
surely i will not waste a second

if you wish upon a star
i will make more

you will not regret having me here
i am a slave and i shall please you

do not ask for the truth
i am a slave and i shall always please you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Slow Happy Death

what he is watching
slowly
kills him, bit by bit,
shred by shred

at first his voice was taken
then his feet
his mind
his emotions
lastly his hands

but his eyes keep on watching
and they are the ones taking
all the joys

his mind did not bother
they will all be taken
in slow but happy death

the emotions calm down like
a storm fading
forming a spread of silk
in that far ocean
quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Slurs Of The Blurs

i can't have you back
for years i have died in the name of love
and love in return with its sympathetic potions
redeemed me alive,
for love is kind, i know, and i want to still
live in the illusion that you are love yourself
and that you can also be kind
to understand what this is all about,

shall i tell you again about the hidden ship
underneath the thousand folds of the ocean floor?
shall i take you back to the island without shores?
shall i rename the creatures there which
you have not even seen?

this place where i live is unseen by civilization
its ways are noxious to the priests and nuns,
the people who live here are not puppets
no hand can make them live as moppets on a strain
of new viruses on the academe,
there is still a language unlearned by you
a food which you have not ever tasted,
a pool where you have not dived.

so i can't really have you back
i fell like your wishing star
i lost my light
i was shattered on the desert sands
no Bedouin finds me
no camel saves me.

i shall forget you
that is the simplest sentence i can mete upon
my self,
this prisoner of hopeless desire
put to bars by the judges of fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smell Of My Emotions

these emotions are scents,
they long, for your perfume,
that time, when you were
beside me, i want to hold you
and kiss you, nothing metaphorical
about a kiss, like lips, like
tips, tongues, are tongues,
tasting like you, and your emotions,
they give me a trail,
domesticating me to your
heart, a home, but not
for me, it is you, and i know,
i cannot have, but just beside
you, in this car, this journey,
that i mumble, for how long,
i know, it will be forever,
this longing, this dream,
of one, of wholeness,
i remain, incomplete, i have
hands but they are still,
like posts, with lights
on an evening, and you
are below me, as i provide
the light, and then you
walk away, just like that,
just like that, just like that,
there is no breath for me
there is no place.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smiling Children...

shallow waters
where we sometimes
sink and
fail

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smoke Of My Handgun

this 10 mm handgun made in Austria
is in my hand.
My coming days are curious
say frightened about what i shall do next with it.
My temple is calm.
My head is full like a cup filled with hot water.
There is no taste of coffee
It is 4 o'clock in the morning
And the streets in this town are all empty
Of people.
There is the possibility of using this handgun
To kill those insane witnesses
Dragging me to a crime that i have not done
Though deep within i want to do it.
Kill! kill! Kill! Shoot them with all the bullets
Of this Gun
This is what my mind is screaming.

My cousin is afraid of the possibilities of
My life.
I am not. I am certain. There is no way that a smoke
From this gun should come out
Without a Reason.
It is fragile, and so light, and Like all truths
No hand can capture it
And hold it forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smoke Of Truth....

from fire
always comes out
smoke
	his is the one
that tells the truth
when it goes out
of the window
it tells the skies
it shows
the telltales
to the earth
intertwines
with the rays of
the sun
bearing witness
then
gone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smoke Spreading Under The Trees

the smoke spread under the trees
from a certain burning firewood
on the house not far from where we talk

it spreads far
and this evening as i get too bored
we look at the hazy subject matter
as it moves farther to a certain visible distance

and despite the pollution
i imagine something more artful than this damage to my lungs

under the trees
the smog is beginning to shape itself
into a chine painting
of the dawn and its mist
like a poem written
by one of the poets that i love to read

Tu Fu, Li Po,
or was it Kulafu?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Smooth Life Of G.E.

Every picture is see is what you describe
as perfect. A new baby for the family. The mother
looks and smiles. The proud father begs to
carry the baby even for a few minutes.

There were pictures of the marriage.
Black and white, old as the ancestral house
where the big family once lived.

There is this garden full of perennial flowers
It is as though your life is nothing but Spring.
Nothing of the winter
Neither the autumn.

Summer is well spent. The grandchildren
are not sickly and grandpa is not drinking any liquor.
The house is well kept. Every object is in order.

The chickens have always the correct feeds.
The cow is fat and the turkeys are ready for Christmas.

Sometimes i think
I must be  is not my family.
What i had was messy.
I need not tell anybody.

But on the other hand,
I think that something so ideal cannot be true.
Like a fairytale.
Like a story fit for kids...ending
with And they all live happily ever after.

That is not really true.
That is just an illusion.
I go for something that i have.

The tears wet my pockets.
The novel is too interesting.
The hero falls and dies.
The tragedy like the one written
By Sophocles
always give me that
catharsis.

Not yours. Not your family.
Not your success.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Snake

sometimes
i feel like i want to shed off
all my skin
and molt like a snake
perhaps
to feel what the snake
does

one time there was
a snake under my
bed

it was helpless
as it was molting
i could not
bite

i did not touch
it
i did not mind
it

perhaps
it is the same reason
why people
in the house
too does not mind
me
and never for once
ever touch
me

RIC S. BASTASA
The Snake.....

we will be
soon forgotten

how will they
ever remember

reality bites
everyday and

this pain keeps
them busy

looking for a
cure when there

is none, when
this sickness

unto death is
such a snake.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Social Climber

yellow is the color of the social climber
like a vine
with yellow flowers
the dancing lady variety
that thrives on the rotten
barks of trees
that looks for the sunshine
at the top of the trees

the calumnist of the Stars
its food
the rotten lives of other people!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Soft Rain Today....

how i love
the rain today

ain't heavy
soft and gentle

falling on the grass
and on the side of the hill

this hair of nature
babe's soft whisper

hushing and dashing
like the sound of a young river

how i love the first rain
of the year today

comforting, indifferent
a sound of its own

whispering tears
allying fears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Softness

the softness amidst the hardness
of things
the forgiving, the compassionate,
the tender silence, the comfort,
the mediator, the coolness of home,
the warmth of arms, the lullaby
the song in the middle of the night
the flower that blooms forever
the garden of my heart
a memory not forgotten
the moon inspiration
the silvery pond
the grace when everything seems harsh
the love without attached conditions
everlasting goodness

she is mother.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Softness Of Imagination...

how soft is this ray of sunlight that daft its way to the dryness of my cheek

how fragile wings are butterflies hovering in air which we only feel when it travels like the way our fingers sleep their ways on the table cloth made of silk

how soft and beautiful is life how unanticipated

only because i have never never really touched you

as i in this poem only imagines

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sole Intention Of This Creation

The creative genius within
empathizes with you
which you have mistaken
as the bleeding me

whatever that is, just
keep what pleases you.
That is the sole intention
of this creation.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Soliloquy Of The Agnostic....

why do we say that those who take their lives
earlier than we do, and with their own hands deserve our pity?
no one has ever come back and tell us that they regret
what they are doing
or what they did was wrong
why do others say that they must have died a heroes death
and welcomed well by those guarding the gates of heaven?
or are there such gates?
or is there such a place which they call as heaven?
or it there hell?
why do you say that the books are correct? who wrote them?

all we know is we are here
we do not know where we come from
and where we are going

the fact is that is the only fact we know:
we all do not know.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Solitude Of Man

Like the planets you take your own orbit
away from the rest
eluding this fatal collision
you travel alone keeping on your own gravitation
balancing the forces of your being
outside inside
near and far
coming and going
centrifugal centripetal

that is the way you move
to be alive
then the moment comes
when you complete
one revolution

how time trickled
like some drops from a rock
you flow
bit by bit
you are so busy then
about almost everything

on the other side
the clear pool of water
mirror of the sky and sun and moon

it is you
you have earned it
it is you
on your birthday

RIC S. BASTASA
The Son Of The Father

HE'd seen it all
felt it all

but never touched
anything

simply because
it is prohibited and

he is
compliant.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song

it was there. You heard it twice. 
At first, it was nice 
And then, it was painful 
something sour like
lemon, you bleed and there 
was that lemon from 
her eyes. 
the song becomes a song. 
fainting like a faded denim
it was like a sinking boat and 
someone is trapped 
and the storm was as big
as a house of 
cards, how it be a figure?
circles and circles all over
my body, like whirlpools in
your mind, wanting to forget and
yet something multiplies like
a factory made sandwich.
forgive me, but it is still the song
of my heart, your song,
the song for all those years
when sands lose the hold
of water.
there is campfire
it shall burn a city of lovers.
there is school where children
recite rhymes
there is this sense of
propriety where the dogs
tease you with a fake howl.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Is Not Sad....

he once was a wild bird
who lives in no one's forest
always in flight
to an endless journey, until

he was caught in the cage of
civilization
where he was taught to sing
and what to sing
and when to sing the
prescribed songs

he had always been a sad black bird
for years and years and years

until he gets freed because the lock is
finally broken and the rails all turn to dust
because of rust

when he goes outside with his wings
he does not like it anymore
he forgets what he was once in the wild
he comes back
constructs and reconstructs his cage
exactly as it was once
given to him by force of circumstance

locks himself in
and then begins to sing again

do not tell me that it did not happen to you

the song is not sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of An Old Man

i

his song is sad
a white man in the nursing home
his children sent him there
and they did not bother

ii

the Filipina nurses him
everyday she takes care of him
as he pees
as he poos
she needs the money
she sends her children back in her country
to school
she needs the green bucks to pay her debts
she too has a sad song

iii

and there in the nursing home
the Filipina and the old white man sing their sad songs
they have broken hearts
one waits for his happy death
another one looks for her sad life

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of David

it is the song of the little stone
taken by the slingshot
and killed our fears
of anything
that is Goliath.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of Don Juan

and let him say that he knows the ways of the heart of women and he shows them how big is his heart loving all of them fairly and thoroughly (or is it truly? not really, for there is this truth inside his heart still about to unfold to be freed...)

and he loves many of them, ladies longing for his love ladies in reds and blues, ladies in stilleto shoes, lovely ladies in a row, and he kissed and made love to each of them, without regret,

to the envy of other men, but what is it really inside this magnificent don juan, so handsome and so virile like one loving machine?

pity. love. sympathy. fame. glory. fortune. sex, desire, lust, the magnanimous don juan shall have it all and enjoy what the hands of lust have given him freely and abundantly like a bunch of sweet grapes on his mouth

at the bottom, of all these pleasures, once, beneath the moon, in the silence of his room he stares at his masculine body, his thighs, and strong arms, this fucking machine

to his chest, there lies his broken heart still wanting to be held, and still wanting to please them all

he never had what he loved most
that someone buried in his past, that someone
crying in the grave still calling
for his name

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of 'save Me'

A Lot of turmoils
in English language,
and the keep on saying
'Save the Queen! '

Long Live America!
they say that too, why?
Is America short lived?

In our Country we say 'Mabuhay! '
Oopps, Are we dying?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of Selfishness

i've seen the truth
and heard its sound
i've seen its light
surging and strong
i've touched its softness
caressed its directions
i've seen it leave me
because i have always
said to myself

&lt; I am not ready&gt;

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of Solitude

one cannot hear the lyrics
of this song
one can only feel from the tips
of the fingers
when all the light is gone
when what is left
is nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of The Bedouin

how lonely the desert can be
under an orange moon
without the bedouin's song

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of The Dedicated Househelp

in London
and in Italy
the domestic
housekeeper
(euphemism
for Filipino maid)
sings
her song:

cleaning another
person's house
taking care of
another mother's kids
cooking for
the master
mopping their lawns
dusting their
carpets
wiping their
furniture
washing their
dirty clothes

all for the money

in her home country
her son has become
a drug addict,
her house sinks
in the water
there is no food in
the refrigerator
her husband is living
with another younger
woman
her papa is sick with
cancer
her mama is dead
she sends money
for the casket and
the wake
she prays some more
for her daughter
in school

in London
in Italy
she is not
a human being

in Hongkong
and in Singapore
some of them
become crazy
and kill their
master's kids
(who knows?)

the news headlines
says
Pinoy househelp
hangs herself
in the bathroom

another one jumps
from the 15th floor
crashing to the
ground
like a crushed
watermelon

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of The Tantrum...

the suffering that all wars caused
did i hear that only the dead knows?

displace all those who suffer
and like water they shall soon seek

all the common levels
they all seek the path of least resistance

and they will all come to you

the maps of this world will change

there will be no more boundaries

all land, water, sea, belong to all

no masters, no warlords, no emperors
no kings and prime ministers
no government, no city, no province

no nukes, no ships, no guns, no schemes,
no double talks, no pretenses,
all children now looking for their parks
all kindness seeking for their thresholds
all humanity without distinctions

all roads connect, all continents move
now in place, all trees and fruits,
all goodness, all cries, all misgivings
and love, all love, all love,

all tantrums all trauma, all prayers,
all senselessness, ...and nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Of Where Were We

Riding on a boat
They sailed One Night
Three of Them
Singing
Where Are We?

And then when the MOON
came full above their Heads
They begin to Sing
fULL mOON i SEE you Standing There

And then the MOON
RESTS on the leaf of the banana
Like a little Bird

And then they came out from the Boat
And drank Wine
And then They sand and dance
Till Morning

The NEighbors simply
Miss them All

They all love the charivari
And sympathy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Song Unheard Of By Everyone....

it has always been
and will always be
what you wanted from
the very beginning:

walking with the crowd
in the middle of those
trees below the clouds
heavy with their carried
pregnancies of grayness

and when it rains when
all the women open their
umbrellas and the men
ready with their caps and
the children hold on to
their fathers or mothers

you continue walking alone
this time whistling a song
unheard of by everyone....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Songs Of Birds Early Morning

the songs of early
birds are like
light

transcending beyond
my mirror
feelings

inside my heart all
the nerves
begin to dance....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Songs Of Miseries

the songs of miseries
of the east
are theirs alone

the west have doors
of steel
all shut
so the ears
may never hear

RIC S. BASTASA
The Songs Of The Canadian Canary

got a friend and i named her
my canadian canary
she is caring
and sends me some gifts
perfume
for my body
fish oil for my heart
some haiku
for my day
some emails to remind me
some pictures
and paintings of spring,
and some winters too
and oh, the summer
and the worm
and the peony on her table

cement friendship
from my canadian canary
and how can i not return
what she has given

she never asked me

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sonorous Sounds Of The Gentle Rains

definitions
the rains are not heavy
but gentle
like the soft hairs of
a two-year old
creature
it gives the sound of
the sonorous earth
there is no tapping on
the roof
there is only the dripping
of a water flowing
from the gutter
to the stinking canals
there is this weakness of
the paper getting
wet and then laying flat
on the cobbled street
the waters walk like an old
man without a hat
without a coat.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sons And Daughters Of Farmers

when we were children
in that poor village
while our parents work
so hard in the fields
for food (and not for
our education) we learn
to count the hours,
to measure the length
of sticks, and entertain
ourselves with our own
games.

We were dirty,
and left alone to feed
ourselves.

we were so happy then
that for that time
we were not beaten.

That
our fame was measured by
the number of our scars
and bruises
our fall from trees
our stumbles on
stones,
our skin rashes
and insect bites
how we destroy the
kingdom of bees
and how we run as fast
as we can
to avoid being
stung.

we were so happy then
that we were not boxed
that once upon a time
we thought
on our own thoughts
freely
without codes
and orders from
our present
masters....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Son's Curse...

keep the weaving
my dear
his mother said

until his father died
with all
the disappointments
in this world

and he said when he
had grown up fully
what
he is
pursuant the immensities
of mother's love
for him

'to hell, papa', i have
this one and only life
and i like to live it the
way i love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sooner, The Happier, Perhaps

we have finally arrived
at letting you go and hence
from now on, your name is
a family taboo.

during breakfast we shall talk
about all things,
our travels, our shortcomings,
our songs, and poems and our
tragedies. Your story is out.
Your colors shall not be seen
in the other things
are thrown away. We cannot give
them space.

and so, here we are, living in
peace.
savoring our own kind of
happiness.

at night we sail in this small
boat
the moon above us
the ripples of the sea below
singing its own
glimmering interchange of
sound and light.

if we remember you in the loneliness
of our lives,
we only have regrets, and sometimes
no matter how we get rid of all these
they stick like stains of
blood in our garments.

but don't you worry. We have known
this art of killing memories too.
perhaps, we have to perfect it.
the sooner, the happier, perhaps
RIC S. BASTASA
The Soul

subsumed in the syllables
of the conscience it speaks
at dawn,

'this should have been this
the ought and must'

the body feels its softness
afraid of its purity the body declares

' i am human and i have needs
you must understand'

poles apart, one sleeps the other wakes up
upon a disagreement the mind suffers

the body wanders throughout the night
uttering a justification

the soul listens attentively
the eyes of the heart now speaks

'there must be a compromise somewhere
a middle, the mean, what must, what is'

time plays the game
the body is the boat, the soul its watcher

RIC S. BASTASA
The Soul Is Sick

It is sometimes like releasing bees from our hands
since we bite sometimes

and the people who are listening scatter like children
in fear and trembling bitten

and they come back with their injuries now looking
for you

and talking becomes war where the talkers become
all victims

but talking can sometimes turn into prayers when we
begin talking to someone invisible but whom we trust

and those who see us have only empathy why now
i talk only to myself after releasing all those terrible bees

i understand it somehow, this need for an elocution
since the soul is sick and badly it needs the balm of

words, a dressing of prayers
and more time for waiting so that the healing may complete itself
in that litany of confessions.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Soulmate

You amaze me
your scent has taken me back
in years i cannot completely remember
it is hazy
and the trees are misty
as though there is a glass window between us
and there you are
still a shadow in the dusk

i do not even know your name

i have only seen your eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound

the sound of your speech
the way you enunciate your vowels

create the impression of whether
you deserve power or not

the hands must not be clumsy
but gripping sort of strong

and hard and clinging like a vine
like a chameleon

change the color of your skin
instantly as change of gear in a car

to get to the destination
and arrive there with so much pretense

for grace and success,
where are we now? do not ask

show a definite stance
this is the place of my power

our castle of virtue
our paths to enlightenment

there is the sound of contentment
alone but not lonely

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Argument Of Logic

ALONE for quite a while
without a choice
grabbing the horns of a dilemma
i quiver
its sister, Loneliness
the other side of
its face
which has the power
to threaten
everyone
to dissolve in space
and be
gone

you have underestimated
yourself
king of this universe
prince of
flexibility
precious child of
Cheers

Who is Alone? Don't you know that its
family name is Everybody?

The true name of Happiness is
Nobody,

Come to think of IT.
IT is nothing yet How can you ever let IT
control you?

YOU are strong. You have the stars in your hands.
You have the sun in your palm and if you close it
The whole world will be dark as
Pitiful.

How can you allow IT to close Paradise?
Grow, make a web, let no Fly
snatch the magical gossamer of your
Logic.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Images Of Innocence

bathing bare on the river
the kids of the neighborhood
they have never seen
the crocodile

and then the go home
together
spreading laughter
along the path of mud
beside the
wild flowers

they pass upon a forest
and climbs some trees
tease the monkeys
and gather the ripe berries
and imitate the wings
of black birds

the chase each other
without the numbers
never mind their shadows
until it gets dark

and then they are home again
their mothers singing songs
their fathers telling stories
about how the tigers roar

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Bye Bye

i feel at the last moment
the weirdness of the situation
time hangs itself
but you never smell the stinking dead hour
you see, i never had that snorkeling
it was too cold
the see blurs the fish
the rain comes heavily

and so i simply sit the whole day
on one of those rattan chairs facing the blue pool of water
beside the purple bougainvillea tree
i can't say i am sad
perhaps i am just too sleepy to remember anything

or perhaps i fall upon a chasm of the hours
and so i never remember the pain
the hours pass gently
it is already five in the afternoon
the boat arrives and
i am taken back
to the place where i do not belong

i keep on moving for motion's sake
no agenda, no place of destination
just an itinerary prepared by someone
who thinks that money must be saved
as i willing throw them all away

the boat sails upon a silvery surface
the boat has an eye
it is simply doing what must be done
under these peculiar circumstances
slicing the water
making the sound of bye byes.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Children

it is their sound that makes
this world lovable still
under the mango tree
when the wind starts to blow
when the ripe mangoes fall
to the ground and the children
starts to scramble for their
share of the ripe ones.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of First Rain After Drought

A poor village
Covered with dust
Then the sound
Of first rain
Comes from
The mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Morning One Summer Time....

she goes out leaving an empty bed

and you are still heavy with your head.

the window is open: the silence comes

faint, like the grey color of stone,

the world attracts you with its wonders,

the birds have awakened from their sleep

now fly in the skies, hop from tree to tree,

swarm the spaces, look for worms and grains

and feed their young, how small are their nests

how they not know how to store food in their

stockrooms which humans construct for themselves,

how humans like us build a future, and yet how

still insecure, how unhappy, and how tense

the tread upon life, how their brains must have

mistrusted, the Hands that made them.

how sorrowful the sound, how fearful the steps,

how sleep is unsound, how the rain is disliked.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of My Footsteps

i open the door
i enter this house
its windows closed
its chairs set aside
along the corners
of the corridors

the sound of my
shoes making
footsteps
reverberates
in the living room

it is like the lonely
poem you wrote
for me

footsteps taking
the stairs up the
second floor leading
to an empty room

nobody lives here
anymore
you explained
one day
this was a happy home
until all of them
were shot

dead, by the lone
gunner,

what was his name again?
you told me once
his name is loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of My Silence

we arrive at the end of the road
and there is a single pebble
there staring at us
smooth and round
and too light for our burden

i decide the fate of two souls
yours and mine

i lift my eyes to see your sorrow
and mine
i lift my foot to walk away
leaving an awkward cloud
beneath the sand

i run away and you vanish from my mind
you take your gaze towards the horizon
i pack mine towards the sunless sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Poverty In My Country

Whooping cough
From morning till night

There are only herbs
Some leaves of grass

Soaked in water
Inside a tin cup

That is prescribed to be taken
as Medicine

The sound is reverberating
Throughout the town

And no one seems to mind
What to do about it

It cannot be stopped
The people simply wait

For another wailing sound
Someone bedridden

Just passed away
Another cough is on the way

Today and it will be
From morning till night

And as usual the people just wait
There is nothing that can be done about it

as the sounds of poverty reverberate
throughout the country with nothing but faith

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Sadness

it is not the crackers
crisp and
deafering such that
you cannot hear
a movie script
such that you cannot
figure out what the lead says

it is the sound of the wind leaving
the treetops
passing through a door which is already closed
it is the hush from a mouth
sealed forever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Sand And Gravel

it is the wheel of this caromata
that makes the grinding sound of
the sand and gravel spread on the
road that shall lead us all to home.

i miss that sound now that i have
this innova car well closed and
air conditioned with the sound
of the cd's rock music says that
i must forget you.

you're my home. and i cannot
just forget its warm pillow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Sunday Is Not Holy

Mauro Giuliani’s guitar
Is played

Sonata erotica
I hear it
As I bow down

My head

My right hand
And all five fingers
Supporting
Like five pillars
To this temple
Of an unwashed
Face

Attentive to giuliani’s
Sonata erotica
On a Sunday

I face a road
Sliced by sounds
Of motorcycles
Without any
Silencers

Sonata erotica
Flamenco guitar
Entering my ears
Resting on my head

My guests this
Sunday noon

Flamenco notes
Dancing
With dainty feet
Stamping on
My brain

Erotica on Sundays
Flamenco dancers
In pink

My eyes follow
The hands
And the hips
And the feet
To this surging
Dainty Desires

In a sense
Sleep is a stranger
Whose name
I have yet to
spell.

the face of prayer
is a little bit
sketchy

its eyes
closed
its nose
blocked
by so much
phlegm

i breathe
something
erroneous
to my heart

my sister
the religious
&
the piety
as usual
is angry.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Sweeping....

early morning
what i hear is the sound of
sweeping

when i look out from my window
i see this old woman
sweeping the ground
stooping

finding the dead leaves and
some grass
making a heap and then
burning all these
into ashes

she sits down under the mango tree
waiting for its fruiting

soon, soon,
somewhere her gaze follows the smoke
which finds its way into
the heavens....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of The City

ten the sound of the city is all noise
like a hammer destroying the walls of my
soul
a church, a dome, a mountain
hallowed by pigs
and squirrels
there is this mind that conquers all
the imagination that
converts the noise
into a song
there is this gut that is strong
and it is mine
alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of The Rain

donot mislead me with the point-of-view of the frog you croak and you say this is how something beautiful sounds, how ugliness feigns i tell you i like the rain and the frog likes it too, i am one of those frogs bathing and jumping on the pond, but do not mislead me with your sound, it does not sound like the hush of the wind, it has no color of the moon, i am one of the frogs of this pond, but i do not wish to sound like you: i am in love with the sound of the rain, and this is the one that makes me stay. It is not you, your sound is not gentle, it is rough like the skin of the teething toad. I love the rain, the way it sounds, and that is enough for my suffering.

Dripping.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of The Rain One Day In July

you know what year was that
it was one day in
july
it was raining hard
and we were wet
you left your umbrella
in that big house
where you lived
once

you ran with me
and then we told them
our love
had just began

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sound Of Your Poetry

i watch the color of your words dripping
on the still pond
i am up on one of the clouds hanging on
a tree without leaves
i see your last syllable falling from your hand
like a silver coin
going through a layer of the water
where it falls upside down
(you have seen it when we were once
on the boat watching the Samal children
chasing your charity on the sea)
until it is gone
like a fish taking the deeper part
of the ocean floor

then you begin to travel with the last remaining ripple
to nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Soundless Event

when you were given so much time
you simply wasted it
you asked questions which were too unnecessary

when the hours finally are about to end
you suddenly shut your mouth freeze yourself
and make a better feel about what to happen next

this time you are a piece of wall
listening trying to absorb what next shall bombard you

when the last second of your life comes
you finally close your eyes and welcome such a soundless sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds

i heard the sound of the clock ticking
some things come
i am remembering these some things
burnt, and melting in my forehead,
i like the sound of the ticking of grandfather's
clock at night, i hear footsteps
and drippings of water
from the gutter to the floor

the window is closed and the wind makes
the sound of someone caught between
door jambs, creaking sounds creeping
on the wall, something is terrible, really terrible
and i turn my body to the left side,

there is this storm, and the strong rain comes
with the grunting wind, and trees are falling
unto each other, i hear leaves and twigs,
and the roof wanting to leave the house,

something is terribly happening on this night
of the suicidal darkness, the shimmer of the river
looks like a stainless knife

who's there? i ask the door. The mirror on the other
side answers, how dare you?

it is nobody. it is just myself, my mouth answers.

RIC S. BASTASA
as i flex my muscles
and raise my hands and
stretch my legs
as you begin to dance
and hum a song
as we make each day
different from the rest of
the days of the world

so must our poems be
so must our lives be

we have decided
when we have typed the first word
upon those symbols
the syllables have given birth
to the much awaited
sound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds Of My Day

it is four o' clock in the morning

this computers hums the loudest
the dogs howl on the road seeing strangers pass that early
i can hear the winds of dawnbreak
the engine of the bus
on the highway going to faraway zamboanga
the first trip i suppose

the clock is ticking
the door is clicking

some footsteps
on the road going away from me

they are all
sounds of departure

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds Of Summer

it is the air that blows the song of summer  
the birds chirp and the sky is ready for their wings.

the sands of the beach are whiter  
and the waves of the sea are bluer.

the mountains lush and the paths are clear.  
someone waits for you on the other side

the coconut wine is bubbling and the  
dance with the wind shall soon start for

a thanksgiving. The rice cakes on the  
banana leaves, the pork barbecue,

the raw mangoes with shrimp paste  
and the relatives from the cities are coming.

News, stories from far, bits and pieces  
and poems, and more merrymaking

i heard that she is coming and i am waiting.  
This time, we shall explore a new avenue

just friendship, and a lot of reminiscing  
no regrets, a little glance, and then we part.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds Of Sunday

i hear the sound of the cold wind from the sea
i hear the waking call of the roosters
the scratching feet of the dog on some disturbing flea

and i hear her steps towards the door as she opens it
she goes to church
and i hear her gently closing the door and the gate too
closing in on me

i am alone now with all the other sounds of the house
this sound of the growing silence
some voices
rushing to fill my mind
some poems
for the day

it is this silence that feeds me
the trickles of my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sounds Of The Jackhammer

today i shall hear the sounds
of the jackhammer
as they start breaking
the hard cement of
this old house’s foundation

for soon they shall build
a new stair
for the second floor
of this new house
that we are constructing

we earn twelve years
of the peaceful life
love still dwells
our communion strong
our vision unwavering

this is our answer to
their questions
this is our way of
resolving the doubts

up there there shall be
no walls and no roof
it is the stars and the moon
at night that we all want to see

we shall have tea
and our company

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sour Cat

cat looks
at the moon
admires light but
it is too far
it cannot touch it

sour cat
grabs a ball of thread
and lets it fall
on the window
as though showing its
disgust
for everything round

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sour Grape...

the old
grandfather's clock is still alive
standing on the corridor of the house
swinging
making most of the time despite its
steady position which perhaps i cannot
do unless i am inanimate just like it.

a child soon shall come and hit it with
a baseball.

history is made here. Others who want to keep their mouth shut
left and will not be returning.

a generation of geckos
and dogs and snakes and ticks and mites...

RIC S. BASTASA
Actually it is not me which is the source.

It is you.

I merely mirror what you are saying

and behold, you flatter yourself by

saying that i am beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Source Of Inspiration

i do not
wish to
reveal the
source
of my inspiration
to you

i know that
you will
always call it
pornographic

and you tell
the rest
that i should
have been
condemned
since
childhood

RIC S. BASTASA
The South Pacific Dreams Of Youth...

the long road of sorrow is never vacant
with truckloads of grief

beside it a desert of disappointments

sometimes there are no trucks during the hottest part of the days of the past
but what fills up the road is the coldest air coming from the mountains of regrets

and where is the happy part of this landscape
ah, there is a migrant bird, small and with frail wings trying to cross the sahara desert alone
imagining that somewhere in this map is the south pacific
full of majestic islands and dancing natives and monkeys and coconuts.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Space Between Us

the space
between us is separated
by our own
self-made
pillars

in there
i breathe
and take my chances
of defining
all over again
what love is
what my
existence
means

in there
i sigh and stare
and look at you
from a distance
what you
are beyond
my intimate
touch

we agree
on it, the need for space
and traveling
inside ourselves
trying to figure
out
if we still belong
to each other's arms
if our kisses
still have the
warmth

the promise and the vow
that we must question
in order

to survive

love and its hazards
that only time
and space
and emptiness

can tell

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spanish Guitar Song...

gives me that needed break
the Spanish guitar playing making me rise
from stupor of the
computer screen makes me raise my hands
my feet stepping out from the floor
to the veranda
makes me dance the
malangueña....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sparks In Her Head

do not envy the sparks
above her hair
you mistake it for wisdom
she is having a short circuit
in her mind

admire her instead
of that grace under distress
that peaceful focus
as she carries her pains

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sparrow

from the gutters
the little sparrow
sings her song
opening her way
to the beauty of
the human heavens

she flew too high
she wanted to burn
her very own wings!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Speaker Of Truth

he's got fire
in his eyes and they all become
 candles
melting in the coldness of their nights
until what is left
are the weaknesses of their wicks
coiled on the pavements
of their naked
selves

not one somehow
calls for help
not one
shows remorse
not even
guilt

RIC S. BASTASA
everyday the fathers escort their kids to school in this place where i live
fronting my house where the kindergarten school is built
the fathers talk a lot while waiting and i am listening as the distance is
just near the window where i sit and observe where i keep on writing a lot of
stories and whatever is coming inside my brain...
the talk travels on their orbits in circular fashion without a specific direction
just passing the hours consuming every minute while waiting
then the bell rings and the kids go out from their rooms rushing to the arms of
their fathers who pick them up and put them on their seats on the motorcycle
it is 12 noon
the motorcycles one by one leaves the place and proceeds to their houses
this happens every day except during Saturdays and Sundays where the place
is so silent and empty except for the rustle of some leaves that fall from
the mahogany trees on windy days
which is not always
i am faithful to this scenery.
i am the spectator watching the fullness and emptiness of some days
figuring out
relevance.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spider As My Analogy For You

the black spider
with a yellow mouth
and invisible tongue
eyearly in the morning
on the jack-fruit tree
webs its house, so
beautifully transparent
against the sun
it is art and functional
at the same time
a house of beauty
and a trap for prey

a fly is trapped and
breakfast is ready
at the center table of
its creation

full, the spider basks
in the rain as i watch it
still thinking about you
and your house of lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Splendid Silent Sun

'Give me the splendid silent sun, 
with all his beams full-dazzling.'
Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892)

i have seen what
you have seen
and it is too much of
a good thing
to be called
wonderful,
the dazzling the
silence
the resplendent
sun amidst
the breasts of the
hills.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spoiled Kid...

mother had always made him special from among the six siblings he was the only one as always taken to the pizza house.

the other children are envious but what can they do mother has always loved him more than anybody else...

sorry kid, you are spoiled without mother where will you be?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spongebob In Law School

what i do not
know does not hurt me

it does not
scare me either

and so shall it be in
class
this evening

i am not scared of
anyone

and i do not know
about anything that
can hurt me

and so from all of you
who listened

i have known a
lot... really

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spontaneous Death Of A Writer....

we want to last
forever
and so we write
we want to recall and
keep it there
like some statutues or
sculptures of beauty and
solidity, yet nothing
lasts forever, and we
know this, yet we still
want to write, perhaps,
we only express what
has been subsumed, or
suppressed, something
wants to come out, something
wants to go into the open
without being known, without
being exposed, and so we
see birds in the air,
stars in the skies, moon
at night, and fish with
mouth open in the pool,
or flower blooming and
then only to die,
we keep doing this, until
there is no more meaning,
until we go on writing
for writing's sake, to keep
the hours pass by, and not
knowing how we die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sportsman

he joined the run
not really just to win
but to show them
at the end
that he can be decent
and be clean

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spot Where We Find Ourselves....

perhaps we are here
on the same spot away
from them

you they that make most
of what we do not have
they, who are who in the
world of whos

here we are as clumsy
as ever
despite the commendations
i myself recognizes
the inferiority of my
being

this is the spot where
the sun does not shine
where the moon does not
pass
where the stars fail to
twinkle

RIC S. BASTASA
The Spring
	his afternoon
i watch the coming of a
water spring
from the rock that i
built
two years ago
it was not intended
to be concealed
a staff hits it
and water flowed with
extreme pressure
rising
looking for the finger
of the sky
i am not surprised
things like this
happen
like a spring wanting to
rise above
the river
i am the river
and it shocks the sense
of my water
to find a droplet of rain
rising to the
sky

i slew it
like dew at dawn
from a leaf
and i smash
whatever its nature
is

disrespect to the
highest degree
behaving beyond
what justice
was there
that i thought of

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stages Of Marriage

marriage is indeed
relational

at the first part of it
she gives you a lover

later the lover becomes
your sister and

later the sister turns
out to be a mother

it is only when you are
dead that she becomes a wife
again

she cries for a while
she takes all that you have
and if she is still too young and desirable
another man
steps into your room and weaves love stories
in the conjugal bed that
you once bought

that woman is now
a total stranger.....

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Stairs Shall Fall To Be Part Of The Dust Again.

the correct rule is
non-attachment

this room cannot
be mine forever

i must know as
early as this

that soon times and
things and people
change

like you and i,
not much intimacy

let there be distance
like pillars of a house
to make
us all stable

that when the time
to say goodbye happens

there will be no tears
there will be nothing
simultaneous as death

of
one and
then the other

for by then the room
will be perfectly empty
and the stairs shall fall
to be part of the dust
again.
The Stairs....

the stairs show us
a door, and we focus
to the moment when
we arrive at the very
doorstep
anticipating about
a day of an opening
and see finally what is next
what is there

we step upon each
plank
ascend every next
stair
each stair
and the next stair
all the days of our
lives
spending time
with little rest
and sometimes with
nothing at all

sooner we feel
so deceived
having spent so much
time already
ascending
habitually

but not really getting near
that attractive door

and when we notice that
it is too late

our faces have given birth
to all the wrinkles
our heads have grown
all the white hairs

and silences by all means
have sewn our lips

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars Are Brightest

i
the stars are brightest
on the deep blackness
of the night

ii
not on those brightest days
can you feel the glitter
of a single star

iii
no on the deep scarlet of our grief
can we for once
change into stars
show that our hearts glow
like diamonds
in the ocean floor of our
sorrows

iv
twinkle, glitter, glow
there is also meaning and beauty
in this sorrow

v
we do not have to be mud
others have turned to the god of the rocks
we can be stars
meteors shooting brightness in dark space
galaxies expanding
to build a new world
we can be suns of glory when others explode
and be gone for worst
The Stars Are Not Beautiful In The Morning

darkness
you deceived me
with those
stars

this morning
the stars have become
so insignificant

this is me
sitting on a chair

on the table is
my cup of coffee

a slice of bread
and a German sausage.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars Are Out Tonight

the stars are out tonight
glittering like diamonds in the sky

dthis, tiny firefly
tries to fly high glittering too

the stargazer asks,

'who is that nobody? '

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars In The Heavens....

i was the praying
mantis on the grass
when we first met
here in this
spot of mud and
water

we talked
and i made promises
like turning
dusts into butterflies
and stones into
birds
and birds into
stars
in that black sky above us

now i am watching
all those stars of you
once stones
without minds of their own
once dusts without
meaning
once birds flying without
directions

i like the way all of you glitter
as i sit upon this strip of grass
covered by
black skies

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars Of Our Lives....

upon a dark night
let me shine as
a star

when you decide
upon a bullet and shoot
i may fall

have no regrets
you may keep on shooting again
upon another dark night
more stars come
hang themselves upon
this vast space

be glad
upon a dark night that you
watch
more than a million stars
abound
in the most beautiful silence
to life
again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars That You Have

who cannot love
the stars
in your hair?

you all glitter
the magnanimous sparks
of love
that you are offering

to the darkness of my
nights
my soul rises from my
body

who cannot love all
the stars
in your eyes?

i close mine

who cannot love the stars
gleaming in the corners
of your heart?

gentle as i
bleed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stars The Stars

at night
the stars shine
and then early morning they fade away
deep within my heart
i know
they do not die

RIC S. BASTASA
The Starter Of The Chaos...

now i have seen it
you, the native is also on the
side of aggression

you take what is already
taken
and you put the sign
of exclusion
and when the other is at
the brim
and uses his gun for protection
you take it for
granted

you promise to kill when
necessary
and when that necessity comes
you get killed

and then they say that
there is injustice
but i have seen it all
how you
started it yourself
how you teased
this domestic
war
into a dance of shadows
and blood

it is your arrogance which
started this
and now they say that you
are not at fault?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Starting Line

it is when air feels like
glass
which looks like a mirage
which flows like
rivers
which branches like hands
which touch no one and have
become
walls which
negate itself and turn
into a
sky
which regret not having become
birds
which
hate wings and flights

it is so crowded like a forest
and beneath are worms
eating
rotten wood
which has become more of
a boat which
wishes that it were nothing
but an
ordinary human coffin
which shall be buried
under the grass which
without change shall rule
the earth

RIC S. BASTASA
The State Of Non-Meaning

so many sands
long term plans
so many grains of sands
on the beach on the mind of man
oh, i guess
so many poems composed
each poem has become a grain of sands
so many grains
from my mouth
to my hands to my feet to the beach to the sands of time
in search for meaning
when actually there is none.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Steps Of My Life

i did not bother
actually to mind and count of
my steps
as i move forward as i climb upwards
those hills and even those
cliffs
as i go down the mountains and
slip and slide and roll and fall
as i cross rivers and sail on those
seas and hop from one island to another

how many steps? what steps?
to Life to Life
always to Life busy with life
drunk with life

you sleep on a hammock tired and
dreamy

how many steps? what steps?
how can i look back and fall again?

how can i look back and be filled with
fear from the height of this mountain that i am in?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sting

countess is right there
in the head
the imaginary bee
the lion and the elephant
and the pomegranate seeds
turning into
a hand grenade
it is scary
for the big fish with sharp
razor tooth
swallowed the elephant
that spit the lion
and give you the
necessary injection
and then you sleep and
wake up
without remembering anything
except that pain
in your back.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone

there is something about the stone
that i have been complaining
for not being able to understand
its choice to be silent
and hard
and numb and uncommitted
when it is thrown in the river
it makes no sound of protest
when it is ground
it does not scream
when the rain comes it seems
to be contented with being wet
just the same when the sun shines
and heats it
it makes no bother

until some naughty boy takes a stone
and hits my head
and when i begin to bleed
seeing the very stone used
staring at me without guilt
for any responsibility at all
on the ground
that i begin to understand all these things

what a stone is, how come that a stone shall always be
a stone
no matter what.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone Again

That night i humbled myself,
bowed down to the image in the mirror
upon a stoic silence
i admit
that i have been a shadow far away from my body
i prostrate on the carpet that you stepped upon
gave up my own name and then called myself the idiot
happy and much solidified
so real that i can feel the stone again inside my hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone In You

It is your silence
That is full, and dark and deep
Impenetrable
A vast desert
Spreading in a mirage
Dry, deserted, so lonely
To ever conceive
There is no music of the dunes
There are no palms, no trees
In your wordless existence

I am giving you
My full attention
You’re being alone in your deep darkness
The dawning may not come
I have not heard the sound
Of the coming of the sun
Because of your ego
Thick and tall
The silence that blocks you
To have life
In the stone that is you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone Looks Up To Heaven For Light

It starts as a lump of soft soil
The sun scorches it
And for years it has become this
Hard stone

It has no face
Just this blank flat and smooth
Edge
And some corners that the seasons
Shaped

It is strong now
Facing the sun looking for more light
Mustering some courage to afford
A stare
Without being destroyed

Indifference makes it
A name for itself
Hate it shuns out
Love, it still has to know
Perhaps in another season
The rain may send the message
When

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone That He Was Looking For Which He Found And Knocked Him Down

HE IS looking for something
years and years he is looking for something
which he found and which he cannot pick up and
claim it as his own

it is a stone and the stone wants to knock him down
it is the stone that he was looking for
years and years until all his hair have turned into silver
and this very stone that he found
that he love
is finally knocking him down

the stone has become its marker
and may he rest peacefully
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone That You Love

you are unique
for having loved a stone

how did the stone
entice you?
are you seduced by
its silence?
are you tempted by
its solitude?

you take the pain
poking the stone to
your heart
and you bleed
you rub the stone
in the skin of your body
hoping that someday
the stone may have
feelings and
love you

but this is all useless
the stone is a stone is a stone
and there is no love
in its blank stare
there is no softness in its
belly

i ponder upon this
and come to think of it
you and the stone
are the same
on this hardheadedness
this futility
this numbness
this suffering without end

the stone can never give
a part of its cracks
it will never part with its
dust

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stone Thrower....

and why did you throw
that stone into the sea?

ah, i remember
you want to please the child in me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stones Under My Feet

sometimes the stones amaze me
as i tread upon them
they hurt and they look at me
as though asking questions

what is it that hurts you most?
i like to answer but they are all too numb i think
to understand any word that i say

sometimes i like to hurt them in retaliation
but i know i wouldn't work
there is no way that they will say they get hurt
there is nowhere
where i can hurt any stone that i throw to the sea

a stone is gone but not forever
as though it has its own feet and comes back to me
asking the question again: what is it that hurts you most?

i know this vengeance
there is no way that i will tell them
my secret too is like a stone and it will come back to you
without any word, still, silent, sagacious.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stopping By The Mountainside

i am taking more time
going over it
and i probably will not
understand
what you are really trying
to tell me,
as you
have chosen the words
as carefully as
grains for seeding
in such a way that i
am at a loss at
what to say
to interpret
the images of your language

some are hazy as fog
and i am the driver of the
car that stops
for a while
so i may not fall upon a
cliff
off-road
exhausted

i get out of the car
and wait for the fog to go
and vanish
until the hills appear
as they are
and not as something else
as sister of
mist or
cloth of nakedness

yes, the things as they are
my language are no longer hands
no longer eyes even
there is no word to match
what beauty lies before
me
what truth that is never said
but this
time only felt
and unseen
because the eyes
are open.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stories We Long Want To Tell

it is all about stories.
stories we know by heart
but still untold
we have fears you know
that truth may be too much to
take
something may burst
explode and there may be
unnecessary deaths
truth like war has to take also
a form of chivalry
this sense of humanity and
grab or destroy only when necessary
the least
of harm, justify later that
all is done in the name of a long
and lasting peace
love of the world
survival of mankind.

the stories are true you write at the end
but the names, and places and events
have been
elevated as art, as fiction, as seats arranged
to make it look like
that we are having a fine dinner
all casts dressed
regal and dignified.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Storm In My Sea Finally Subsided...

the storm of my sea finally subsides
i am a chinese silk spread on the tranquility of the salty water
seagulls leave because there is no fish to hunt
and take upon their hungry beaks

i have no regret, i have finally seen the sun
across my whiter horizon
i see boats and nets spread on my surface
i am a very calm day

soon the children will come and play
throw balls on my white sands
fill this space with laughter and not one of them will ask

what a storm was, where there was a house here before but was
taken by the rage of the wind
gone,

the children have nothing to do with the past
they are not meant for that

an old man arrives with a grandson, being helped to sit on one of the chairs in
the shore under a shade of a big old tree
he is the thinker of this storm this place
he knows everything, but he is silent as a dead leaf on his feet

he rests his head on a pillow puts his feet and hands in the fold
wears his dark sunglasses and stares at the far far horizon

i will join him when the sun finally sets, when the color of the horizon turns into
orange and then black

as i turn off the light.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Storm Last Night

that storm last night
was a matter of life and death
for both of us
we could not sleep
we clung to our hands
we keep each other's bodies
and for the worst hours
we intertwined like the vines

the morning after
there was peace and harmony.

i like that storm last night
it would have been perfect for us if it did not stop

RIC S. BASTASA
The Storm Passes Us By....

the storm comes
we let it pass
upon the strong winds
our hair are disheveled
but we do not really mind
the comb is there on
the table with a glass of
water and some gel
we just let it there
the storm passes us by
we take a mirror
to see it on its eye
how beautiful are these
disheveled hair
in their natural state
most adorable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stormy Sea

that boat was too small
for this trip to the other island
the ladies sat next to me
and they were all silent
to the sounds of the waves
just beside us and i knew
that with just one mistake,

one mistake from the boatman
that boat would have sunk
but lo, how the boatman took
the boat was kind of a very
skilled skipper of the waves
of the stormy sea like he was one
surfer in California taking sides
with each wave with so much
art and beauty carefully scaling
where safety lied and where
danger waited for an ambush

i was looking at each side
of the huge waves until
we reached Crocodile Island

of course the ladies knew that
it was no longer a joke but
a matter of a skilled boatman
making a choice between
life and death.

we chose life and the ladies and
the boatmen very well knew it.

the waves were too big for the
small boat but our silence was
even bigger. we survived.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story About All Of Us....

in the rock island
all the blind witches
are dreaming of eyes

you used to have two
just like us
but whatever they see
turn into stones

to lessen the damage
one eye is removed
yet they keep on looking
not resting even during
nighttime

for that is their power
all seen by them turn to
stones and so there was
nothing to eat

they too die because they
have nothing to eat anymore
and so the gods remove all
their eyes and now they
are all blind but those who
know the story still wonder
why those who survive still
dream about those very eyes
that too turn them into stones
despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story About Having Two Navels...

could have always been
even before navels exist

that you have two, and it is
really funny, but you always

do not mind stories, you like
everything alive in you, even

for stories which were never
true, you give it life, and so

until now, the story, seems,
and all stories, seem always

to be true, but that, you think,
how stories must be...alive always.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story Behind The Fire This Morning

before the house was razed by fire
the old man visited the house and cried
telling me about a young man who promised
that if he ever loves another woman
the house shall be burned
to strip it of its meaning

at 6:30 today early morning the firemen
called it a day. The house is gone
The old man gone. The young man gone.

i like to write the story behind all these
misfortune
but i am afraid that some parts of it
may not be true
or that if true, it may not be fair at all,
or that it be totally unjust
so that there is no use
writing it anymore

The old woman died a year ago
She floated in air
suffered vertigo
she gave up finally
the young man to the world
heard the promise of the old man
who could not do anything
when the house
got burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story Of The Mad Man

at midnight
the old bell of the church
roars

there is no
funeral
there is no
birth

people imagine
a world that is ending

a child cries
mother is dead

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story Of The Piano

because his papa
loves her that much
at 12 he gifted her
with a piano,

time passed
there were many
stories told

at 50 she sold the piano
to someone we do not really know

there is no way to redeem
what was lost forever
what we all do not want to remember
we simply let go

at 60 her only trusted friend
is the sunset
her only hope
the long and lasting horizon

so much feelings lost
until finally she turned numb and restive

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story Of The Sharp Tongue

with the repetitive sound of sighs and symmetrical silence
the tongue has become sharp and it stabs hearts

it breaks open what has been closed all along and hidden
birds start breaking out from cages

and feathers are left as memories which somehow the one who is left
empty takes it to his heart and becomes his pen

the lonely man writes

with blood from his bleeding heart stabbed by the sharpness of his own past

the sound becomes even more demanding like routine that you cannot refuse

and somehow the silence becomes irregular, asymmetrical taking the shape

of a scream, which the tongue most sharpened now
slices into dust

and this reaches to the conclusion that no matter how sharp the tongue can be

it too shall in the end turn into
dust..............................

RIC S. BASTASA
The Story Of Utility......

take note
from the symphony of
the letters, because
sometimes we shroud
the literalness of metaphors

and metaphors too become too
literal in trying to
camouflage
an obvious intellectualism
of a fox,

remember the quick brown fox
(it was not brown at all,
neither was it a fox)

and do not forget that they
were telling you that it jumped
over the river on the side
of the mountain, (for i went there
myself

and there was no river at all,
neither a mountain)

in a sense it was the freedom of the mind
its capacity for convolutions
that makes the difference

we throw what we take
and we take what we throw away

it was all about the typewrite
strictly speaking
austerity measures fully considered

how on the first day of her secretarial
dream
she has to press the keys
without anything in mind, and there you are

in an overkill, writing the story
putting the milky way in its
traumatized place.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Straight Jacket

i am trying to shape
a world
with my own private thoughts
away from the mob

i am situating myself in a room
on closed doors and closed windows
except the light that i allow to enter
on glassy blocks
the walls will always be there
air comes through the ceiling
on tiny holes

i tried to forget viewing the stars
i must survive even without the light of the moon
it is less romantic
and i am no lunatic

but then she hints on what am i
saying: the fish is meant for the sea
the dog is always meant for a walk
the sparrow cannot live without flying on its wings

and she asks me: will you just be a poet?
or will you be the man for the seasons?

before she left, she left a note stuck on the fridge
magnetically: you are more than the fish, the sparrow, the dog

must i be? i sleep tightly like a straitjacket.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Stranger In The Mirror.....

the people around you make you doubt
your goodness,

they are well dressed, ride in their expensive cars,
defend their own causes,
at other people's expense,

it is always a case of self and vested interest
there is no such thing as benevolence or
that genuine concern for the welfare of others,

when you look at them again with their
twisted values which are so unlike their well shaped faces
their smooth skin and polished bearings
matching well with their maintained luxuries

you feel that you are this giant among the elves
at the first impression of the moment

these ants bite you and you feel so uncomfortable
you give back their world
of deception and oppression

and you retreat in your own private room
where your mirror lies,
and you look at your face carefully,
map out the terrains of your skin with
your long fingers

you are a stranger in the world outside you
you soon shall forget your name, your real work,
your vision and your claimed mission

you shall miss your roots
you shall not find again your origin

RIC S. BASTASA
The Strong Hands That Touched Four Breasts....

alright, it is just a matter of liking that i like to be with you.

beyond that, what it is?

it is but a liking to be with you, but
no, in this real world, liking is not hard like a commitment,

words sometimes do not tally with actions.

she says, the house where you live does not tally with the address that you have written.

She is absolutely misled.

he says, this is just being me. To survive the hassle,
I must lie.

and you who is so sweet like a pink rose, so gladly embraced it,
like my strong hands to your four breasts.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Strong House We Built

When you marry
you just don't marry the bride
not just her
but everything connected to her
her family
her past
her previous sins and her
often told
glories

most of the times you close your eyes
and say
let life take me
let destiny do the work
let the stars of the heavens
manage all these things
let the zodiac
do the telling about what
tomorrow may bring

the road is not smooth
there are ambushes of surprises
there are no more explanations
they have become too tiring

the house has many windows
it has four doors
it has three stairways
but no one leaves
no one leaves for good or bad
the promises stick like paint
and the house is always repainted

the distant pillars remain distant
carrying this house this room
and years upon years
layers upon layers of memories
have made this old house strong.
The Strong Links Of The Seasons

in the chain of our seasons
the links must be strong
a silver present linked to that
golden past and
perhaps a titanium future
connect them together
and then
hold on to all these links
and climb the mountain and cliffs
of life again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Struggle Is Endless

after the years of struggle
the fighter now savors the spoils of the war
he sits on a rocking chair
with coffee on one hand
and cigar on the other
looks at the road in front of his house
and cams himself down with the view
a car passing by
a woman with a green scarf driving
her hair free to the directions of the wind
some children playing in the park
chasing and riding the seesaw
on to the swing
and the slide and grass
he hears laughter and mothers' reminders
and fathers fetching wife and kids
from work and school
now he is unto another struggle
he got peace and progress
he got wealth and work and whatever

tonight when the day is over
he sits again and watch the neon lights
sipping wine and puffing cigars
sleeps with lovers for rent
and comes home drunk and tipsy

this time it is the struggle within
remorse, guilt, loveless
forlorn, alone
lifeless, bored
waking up in the morning
swallowing alka seltzers
and other pills
having breakfast with junk
and watching TV
on another unsolved murders
and scams.
RIC S. BASTASA
The Struggle Of Light And Darkness

the struggle of light
and darkness is just
like the changing of
day and night and
night and day where
matters are just the
routines of nature
changing its face

there are no winners
there are no losers

like a circle without
a beginning without an end.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Struggle Within

you want to shoot the dog
that bites your friend
but you have second thoughts

there is a rumor going on
that the owner of the dog
is your grand master.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Struggle Within Ourselves

the war within rages
it is one battle
where the enemies
and friends are one
where the antagonist
and the protagonist
are the same person
where the answers
and the questions
look the same

RIC S. BASTASA
The Students

and so
all of you
are trying
to kill
yourselves

and here i
am
composing
all the
doubts

RIC S. BASTASA
The Subanen Tribal Elopement

he is seventeen
and she is sixteen and
they are all
tight in their
glowing skins

and they are so
attracted
their eyes glued
to each other

and they left
looking for a place
where they cannot
be reached

no need to worry
tell the parents
they are too young
to start and manage

another seven kids
for another native house
where parents cannot
be blamed for what they
too did when they were
so young and very much
like all of them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Subconscious

inside a dream
it works its own way to you

you are as wild as a vine in the forest
beautiful as an orchid
on the tree top

it is the dancing princess inside your heart
the butterfly freely hovering from one flower to another
an overflowing river
without boundaries
or banks

when you wake up
you rebuild your fences again
making them stronger
higher

the light of the day creates the impression
that you are as strong as your forts
as protected as your moats
feeling so secure with your forces
your soldiers are all there
your honor intact

at dawn you are happier
the early morning begins in grief
but there is so much strength
and stronger defenses
of your ego

the id is murdered again
the super ego folds your arms
and raises them for your greater glory

you mourn the whole day
there is no smile in your face
there is only
that well kept dignity
you post a poem
it is not that you believe in the integrity of the site,
or the blog, you do not even attempt to find out
who are there and what causes are they supporting
you make a poem
because the words are there
and you do not even choose which word to use
whether this rhymes with this
or not
it is just a matter of a word coming out from your fingertips
and then
they are there
no filtering of meanings, no sifting of significances
it flows like a river, it runs like a creek, it settles on some ponds
it rains, and then it overflows
and you make it run again like a flood, over reaching
carrying all driftwood and all lost things
you go under bridges, you even go on top of canals
the words are terrible
now on the streams of consciousness and then under
the commands of the the subconscious

actually you do not know what is happening
your hands are merely riding on a wave
your sight relying on the ripple
you do not even feel that you have wings

but Of God you Swear
you are flying
the clouds pushing your heels
into Space into the sleepy emptiness.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Successful Guy In Our Neighborhood

you see i know how to make a story
i am good at inserting myself in the picture
do not be angry
stories become more emphatic when we put ourselves there

as though we are the characters themselves
as though everything is true
you may think that all these that i am telling are lies
that will be fine with me

you do not live in the place where i am living
some people here tell the truth using all their possible lies
and i believe them and feel them
i am infected and i am contaminating those who read me

and i tell myself
what a success i've been

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sucker

finally you give up a load
from your shoulder
the pleasing one that elf
that used to flatter you but you did not know at first
it has the mouth of a leech
the face of the boa
the skin of a porcupine
you see how it has hurt you
you dislodge it like a louse
and with your fingernails
you press it against the wall
it bursts
and so you go away satisfied with
your last laugh
here
revenge is sweeter....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Suicidal In Him

too much intelligence is dangerous
my friend
too much idealism
detached from reality
one gets restless
searching for the Shamala
and the Shangrila

with a little sense of humor
the ability to be
one less of a perfect self
the capacity to laugh
at our errors
to dismiss what is so important
and just take things as they are
dabbling on the
prideless
unselfish away from a self-centered
universe

i guess, he could not have taken
his own life.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Suicide That You Think You Deserve...

when you put that bullet
in your heart,
we, who heard the news,
at first listened to
the wild noise of the jackals, and
then we pretend that
no one left
that nothing happened
we are reading the papers
we are focused on the news

we, who are innocent,
do not receive any blot
of guilt,
as usual we do what we have
to do,
slowly, still as gentle as we are,
less still in life, and always well accounted,

we, who are still here,
at the living room,
savor the just taste of your
well chosen silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Suitor And The Spinster

and so
he sits beside her on that
velvet sofa

she, on the other hand,
careses
her great dane

the window is
overlooking the hill
and the chill
is nothing to count
as a spell

the great dane seems
not to like this
situation, barks at the man
as though
telling him that he is a pachyderm
and hence must leave

his love is not true.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Summary Execution

we are talking about changes
of this country of this self of this and that
and i like it

changes for the better, selves shedding off old skins,
countries washed away, cleansers and cleansed,
wave upon wave of something new and exhilarating
those who are taken away we forget easily
we the survivors keep on talking
there is sense to being here, there is reason why we are still alive
there are blessing in disguises

then we begin counting off from one to ten
to twenty to a hundred, we are seeing a network
of cobwebs of people trapped in the matrix
of fireflies extinct, and flies still wrapped in
the sleep of paralysis, as soon we shall decide
whether it will be life or death

do we know too that someone bigger than us is watching and
deep in his thinking about what to do with us finally?
He says, he can decide, and he can make or unmake us, too?

it is a case again of man dreaming to be a butterfly and
butterfly dreaming to be man..., and i get confused, and they say
it is a normal happening, it is in fact, a fact.

as the words continue parading during the utterances i remember
a forest, and i was inside it, and there were killer chimps and
chimpanzees killing each other, eating each other's flesh and saving some of the
bones in their safe houses and hideouts,

there is a chill in my spine, there is winter in my heart
howls of jackals reverberate in my ear, and i am afraid of my
own lies, and multiple identities,
A-bomb of the class, Bombastic in my youth, Coward in my middle
years, and Drunkard in between, and finally Deaf, and
turning Eloquent in my near end years,
I am change. I travel everyday. I grow stories in my fingertips.
Budding into old age. Forgetting and De-frogging. Kermit, Super Steel.
Soap Opera idol.

Lying low later, and in the heart of the matter, Still judging other le as a worm,
Milk spilled over a Heart Breaking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun

it is basic
the sun shines brightly
even if you have
to condemn it

it is public knowledge
that when you spit
to the sky
you spit at your own
face

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun Center

for the meantime
the sun center
is the self where
all planets revolve,

there is comfort here
a self shining sun
without that push
outside only the
eternal bursting
inside of gases
and fires,

the wars inside are
myriad like cells
multiplying upon itself
in masturbation form

despite all these
automated explosions
outside is a calm space
where what you see
is the beautiful light
gently glittering in
a faraway darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun Does Not Shine Sometimes...

the sun does not shine
sometimes
paying respect
to the gloomy mood
of the day
when it rains and rains
till nighttime
and some of us who
are in the same mood
as a grieving earth
fully understand
the reasons for
a lamentation....

as we listen to the rain
and sit alone in a room beside
the window
somehow we are relieved
on that
great feeling that
we are not
alone in all these
tribulations

and then we cease
the sorrow
as we share a smile
to the passing wind
which too reminds
us

that everything
everything
sorrow or even joy
is simply
a passing...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun, Sun Shines Now

the
sun shines now
the

sky
is giving it to the
surfaces of
leaves

the leaves say

it has trapped it
it has taken it
inside its veins

the sun goes away

the man says

the sun does not
know everyone

it has not
penetrated
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sun's Refusal...

tried to buy you a sunny day
but my gosh!
the sun has no need for money

RIC S. BASTASA
The Surfaces Of Noise...

INSIDE the car
on a night like this
when you go back home alone,

you turn off
the music,
to listen to the
sound of the engine
and the
air-conditioning

you feel the way
how the gentleness of silence
is being
covered by a layer of
the noise that
technology has made

without which
the innermost longing that was never
satisfied

screams.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Survivor....

the inner struggles
have been
not just few

the thinking
is like going to war
and massive
killings along the
way

the mind is a survivor
the body stands still

people see you
like a pillar

the house is strong
the beams not trembling

and the garden
is simply beautiful

clouds hang on the
roof

air goes in and out
this constant
visitor

the doors are open
here

the windows are
enigmatic

worries are like
urine
flooding the legs but the mind is quick like a diaper

somehow the self is as elastic as the rubberized path like the one at the gym

one goes back to the couch recalls, relates, a boat waits to ferry you back to your throat and heart

there you spell the words perfectly and there the blood corpuscles have hands and you hear them clapping

well done wait for the next journey outside the veins

RIC S. BASTASA
The Survivors...

it is another December
we never look forward for change
it will always be the same
wind, same veranda, same road

all these repetitions if we
were to mind what damage could
have it caused in our minds?

but look at us? seasoned souls
burdened bodies may be, but have
always coped up with what hammering
is hurled against us.

as this year ends, let us drink again
to this survival. It was never easy,
but as always, we are okay.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Survivors....

they say
we did not promise you a rose garden
we here are devastated
but only for a while
we know that promises even when made
are always made to be broken
but they must know us
they should have known us better
we know how lies are concocted
we understand the beauty and
necessity of untruths
for us to survive
we ride with the wind
dive into the sea
learning that power not to breath
and yet
live for years
growing gills somehow beside
our throats
just below the bones of our ears
they should have known us
we had been there
and we keep on going
we keep the chunks of clouds
under our armpits
sunlight in our hearts
under the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
trance.
chant.
focus, the white flowers are blooming
on the rolling sides of the hill,
the trees are lush with leaves
the skies as clear as
air, blue clouds hang
and then keep on moving
along the same direction
with the winds
trance,
chant,
focus,
lotus position, the mind as crown
the heart beats
so faintly,
the ants are waiting
the worms are calling
attention
the grass creeps
as the tomb-keeper
carves a name
on a slab
it has the same letter of your
first name..

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetest Lie

when i arrive there
the window is closed
i know a shadow
lurking behind it
i sense desire
you peep and i see you
your eyes speak
that i may come inside
the door that
is half open
i do not think that much
i enter the door
and close it behind me

two shadows fade
when the lights are switched off
we feast on such
a beautiful silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetest Pillow Where My Head Rests Tonight

that i have done you no
wrong
is the softest pillow where
i shall rest my head

tonight when the goddess
of sleep and dreams
shall lie with me again
forever friends respecting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetest Songs Of Peace

the angels have come this early morning
in the little room
in this little house
in this little island
in my little time

now they are singing the sweetest songs of peace
while i am sleeping

i must be dreaming
pinch me, pinch me

the islands line themselves like boats
like men and women in an array
in the order of things
lining up in this system

they are listening
i must be dreaming
pinch me! pinch me!
wake me! wake me up!
i must be dreaming

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetest Sound

i hear the rain
pit-pattering on the roof

after six months of
drought.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetness Of Us

the sweetness
lies
when the two of us
simply wish
upon a single star

when we look forward
in the same
direction to one sky
no matter
how dark

when we wish
for the moon
to shine
upon us

when we do not have
time
to look for the speck
of dust in each
other's eye

when we close our eyes
and dream
we we lose ourselves
in us
without asking why

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweetness Of You.

do not ever forget the sweet
sound of your own
voice.

it is yours.
And for a lifetime, it will always
be yours.

Who in this world has created the standard of
what a sweet
voice
can sing?
nobody.
Trust your instincts.
Live the nights.
Listen.

Even the moon is saying,
' you are so sweet with me'

learn to love yourself.
it is the beginning of everything.
By all means,
God understands
the sweetness of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Sweeping Sound Early Morning

early morning the sound of sweeping the street
catches your attention,

you have just taken a bath, undergoing the
require cleansing of the body, combing the hair,
checking the nails for dirt, trimming your mustache,
wiping the wet portions of your body,
perfuming the side of the ears and the hands,

it is a ritual, it is like cleaning the body to give
the impression that you have also cleaned your soul

praying, talking to yourself, grasping for any message
from your dream last night, listening to the voice of God,
your conscience whispering what to do for the day

you take the last button, look at yourself in the mirror,
you take the deep breath, open the window, and then

face a new day. It is still you, along with you, talking to yourself.
You are brave, and now ready to face the demands of the brand new day.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Swift Wings Of Time

haven't you learned
your lesson? you call a friend
he is busy attending to a new born child

you call a cousin
he is getting married and busy preparing for
his wedding

the last one you call
had already gone to the U.S.
on a care giving job

a niece has just flown to
Canada
bringing with her
a family of her own
now

you accept it as a fact again
you are on your own trail again
left out by the swift wings of
time
wondering if
you have something to hold on
and
survive...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Swing At The Balcony Of The House

WE have changed.
I keep an eye open.
My hands are on my lap.

Patience always knows
How to wait.

You sit beside me.
You place your hands beside mine.

You lay your head
Upon my shoulder.

We sit looking towards
The road
AS the sun fades slowly
Inside our
Silent hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Symbol Of My Clan Is The Frog, But Why?

it must be because it is tailless,
aquatic,
semiaquatic,
or terrestrial amphibians
a smooth moist skin,
webbed feet,
and long hind legs adapted for leaping.

or is it because it is wedge-shaped
and can very well
be taken as a
horny prominence in the sole of a horse's hoof

did my ancestors mean
a loop fastened to a
to hold a tool
to a weapon?

what if they hinted on
an ornamental looped braid
or
cord with a button
or knot for
fastening the front of a garment?

well, a frog can also be understood as a
device on intersecting railroad tracks
that permits wheels to cross the junction

or a spiked or perforated
device used to support
stems in a flower arrangement

or the common nut of a violin bow

or the hoarseness
of voices
the phlegm
in our throats
or something so disparaging
for one who looks
like French,

you see, in our reunion
today
with the rest of the clan members
they all arrive at
one conclusion,

why did our ancestors
choose the frog
of all the creatures
in the river
nearby
where they once thrived and lived?

i still suspect
it was meant for

survival

the ability to live in both worlds of
land
and water

because in truth
they were once doves
escaping
from a very far island
to free themselves
from the snakes
and crocodiles
and dragons

and they were
almost annihilated
in the air
there
oh! how they hated
the fall
from the air
oh! how they disliked
air since then

now, they have
evolved
into frogs, and i feel like
i am
a very interesting tadpole
since then

RIC S. BASTASA
The Symbolism In A Painting

There is an stiletto shoe hiding at your back
You ponder upon this Looking at a shadow
That is taller than Half of your body
There is a stone that Marks a place
That you wish was not There.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Symbolism That You Gave To The Poems Of Pablo Neruda

your feet hangs on the sand
your body flat
the poems of Pablo are contained in a book
Five Decades of Poetry
on top of your belly just near the center of
your swimming trunks
wet and white

your navel is surrounded by masculine hair
and the book slides just below there

beside is a dark tainted glass
and a bottle of mineral water from Nature Springs

your feet are shaped like the wings of a dove
shielding you from the faint horizon of the sea quite far away

blue clouds faint like hues of sky blue
Half of your body without a face

RIC S. BASTASA
The Symphony Of Nature In The Mountain Where I Am Stranded

rains fall
and a bird chirps

the rain stops
and the world is silent

clouds drift from one
mountain to another

sun creates a shadow
on the hills

a wild deer runs towards
the forest

a flock of black crows
hover on a tree of berries

grass spread gently
a cow grazes upon it

up there a jet slices the sky
perhaps wanting to cut it

this is the place
where i can hear my self

tomorrow i shall leave
carrying with me fullness.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Taiwanese

when we are chatting i am also chatting with a man
from taiwan
who claims he also knows the games of life
what games
he says anything from love to weddings to baptisms
except....

(and he does not want to mention this)

but i tell him, and ask him,

death.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Talk

since you did not come
for the much needed talk

the old man talks to his horse
the spinster talks to the tree
the baby talks to its crib
the little girl talks to her doll
the mother talks to the picture of her daughter
the father talks to the bicycle
grandma talks to her rocking chair

and then i talk to myself

like the way i write another letter to you....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Talk By The Door

they were all prim and proper
these preachers in town
complete with bible on their hands
and leaflets

i meet them at the porch
and they all smile
for i welcome them

and they talk about Jesus
my friend
and they talk about the afterlife
my objective too

and then i serve them coffee
and pie too
and then i say i am tired and
wants to take
a nap.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Talks Of The Souls

the spirits talk
last night about their regrets over
the bodies, neglected by you

look at you
your stomach is bloated your
arms are thin like
stirring rods
your mustache like some uncut
vines in the forest
you stink like a skunk
your lips crack
and your feet are muddy

soon the souls come to the
inevitable conclusion that
they do not deserve such a body
as yours and
you shall know what happens
next

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tall Edifice That Is Built On Our Land

ey they all look
at the tall edifice
build on our
very own land
they forget
that no matter
how tall the edifice
is
how it has become
their god
it is still subject
to the limitations
of our
own ownership
and so soon
we shall not even touch
it as it begins
to crumple itself
like the dust in the desert
blown
by our own
lawful wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tango And The Finale...

the symbol of our
years is the tango

as i advance my steps
you retreat

people clap
we are as beautiful

as a pair of
love birds inside a
cage of silver with
gold engravings

containing the date and
the exact hour of

our union, going back
as you advance i too

retreat, that is the
rule of fire and water

i touch you, you twirl
the eye signals

powerful, as words turn
inutile, we walk with

with pomp and dignity
and you bend to rise

and be with my arms
again finally and people

clap because we are
having that perfect timing
the grace of this union
the pomp of counted steps

until we get exhausted
as i let you go

and then i find you
looking at another direction.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tango Dance.....

it is not your
own fault
alone, we danced
the tango
together, and if
i stepped on your
shoe
it was because
i was no longer
thinking of you
and if you too
did not complain
it is probably of
the same reason,
you too were thinking
of something else
or someone else or
that you have been
not thinking
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tango That We Dance

as i walk towards you
you move backwards so i cannot step
on your toe,

i pull you down to the floor
and you lay yourself open to my kiss

i did not.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Task Every Morning Before Breakfast

maybe it will just be once
every dawn

or just once
every weekend

or if you ask
may just once a month

because the body maybe
is so exhausted

but no
i will not stop

i will still do it
twice or even five times every morning

even if the body is tired
even if you do not like doing it anymore

it is delicious
it is wonderful

it is as though i had just an ejaculation
it is as though I've seen heaven

so here i am with this craft again
even if you are no longer around

writing poems religiously
every morning.

bisag kausa lang sa
matag kaadlawon

bisag kausa na lang
sa matag semana

o kon mohangyo ka
bisag kausa na lang sa matag bulan

kay basin og kapoy na kaayo
ang lawas

dili mahimo
buhaton ko lang gayod gihapon

sa matag buntag
kaduha kalima pa gani

bisag kapoy na kaayo ang lawas
bisag dili na nimo gusto

lami man god
mora kog magawsan og kadaghan

lami man god
mora kog kakitag langit

bisan wala ka na
mosulat lang jud ko gihapon og mga balak

RIC S. BASTASA
The Taste Of Blood....

father has a square jaw.
so did grandpa.

when they get angry
it is like the earth sliding its plates.

earthquake of fear
and regrets of the flower opening to a sky.

i inherited a square jaw.
how can i deny this?

both hate poetry. i am deviant.
i love poetry.

both hate me. words are cheap.
and metaphor is sissy.

when i get angry, i take refuge in a cave

of silence. i listen to water dripping from the outside world.

i see roots of trees falling and
i know where the river is underneath

this existence, this life is
a tunnel where a red water runs,

who knows that it is red when it is dark and flowing?

except perhaps this tongue that knows the taste of blood.
The Tattoos

his arms are filled with tattoos

a dragon crawls over his body

an eagle on his chest
a rose on his back

i have to study more
if he is significant at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Teacher

The teacher must know
As Plato once
Well said it
Years ago,

A teacher is but a midwife
But the disciple
The student
Is still the one who
Gets himself
Impregnated with
Ideas

The teacher simply helps
In giving the birth
Of the ideas that
The student must himself
Conceive

When the ideas are born
The teacher cares for them
Newly born babies
Now having exciting lives
Of their own

The teacher watches them
Very well pleased,
Excited for something new
Greater than himself,
Rising above
Almost all else, then the teacher
Claps his hands & then
Happily dies,
His mission is accomplished.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Teacher

be happy
for the one you tutored
made it to
the top
you are the teacher
your heart
must rejoice in this
having set aside yourself
for someone
to excel

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tears From Your Eyes....

even the
earth had
to rain

do not deny
your eyes
of its tears

soon you will
be attuned
to all these
and then
perhaps you will
like the
saltiness of
its taste
sooner

RIC S. BASTASA
The Teaser

So you are alone?
What now, what about your being alone?

You write a poem about it?
Let me see and read it.

(reads like reading an
electric bill for January)

there is nothing here,
everyone feels like you do

except that you write about
it, and you call yourself a poet,

I don’t think it will make a difference
Do you drink san mig beer?

Do you smoke 2 packs of Marlboro
A day? You don’t? Why not try it?

Let me see your choice of words,

(reads the poem again)

There is nothing in here that

Makes you different from the rest
Of us, smokers and drinkers and

Gamblers. What makes you think
You are not like us? Huh?

(crumples the paper where the
poem is written and leaves,

he picks it up and smoothens it
folds it like his blanket and slides
it in his pocket like a paycheck)
The Teasing Moon....

sometimes to
complete the woodenness of the floor
you simply have to close the door
make the planks
exclusive to
its beams
with all the nails
sleeping

the windows with open eyes
beg to be exempted
from the hassle
of privacy

the view of the sea making love to the sky
is simply irresistible
the moon is teasing you to take the boat

but to do this you need to open the door of the house
where no one lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Teddy Bear In My Room?

i write a poem 
for you, and for a time,

after a poem or two,
life begins to bore me,
a writer,

and so i decide to go out 
from this cell, and
i open a door and step outside 
in the cold

afternoon, and i take a stroll 
hoping to think some more,
why life should not be boring

after all, 
and i think about nothing and 
just let my senses go where 
they want to go, 
the eyes to the end of this

road, the ears on their 
interest to the sound of the 
wind and some gossipy breeze, 
my feet are complaining 
and so are the hands, 

and this body is not united 
like this country where i live, 
and i promise myself to write 
another poem after this 
wandering, perhaps about 

nothing at all, for what is there 
that has substance? 
what is there which tells me 
about the contentment of 
content? that which must be
snatched from the beautiful

hold of this universe
and be stuffed like a
teddy bear in my room?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Temptation

youth is tempted to step
on the island of light
of fame
and it pays the price
of shedding off
its raw skin

the old corruption of the
furrowed flesh
laughs the hardest

those who died and
forgotten
all know
that at the center of the stage lights
there is nothing there
except some
hurtful shadows
air and sighs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Temptation Of Marvin

there is an apple
hanging on the tree
there is woman picking it
and biting it
there is no snake
it is dark and the place
is just lighted by
fireflies and up in the sky
the stars are silent

you are naked
bathing with the light of
the moon
there is this heat
between your legs
that you feel

she says' the apple is sweet'
and wants to
share a bite with you

RIC S. BASTASA
i watch a beautiful body
sprawled on
a white carpet
floor

the floor is sturdy
in age
reddish

it looks like fire
as i gaze for long
salivating

milk lots of it spilling
seeping on the cracks of the
aged
planks of red hard wood

i salivate like a dog imagining
a set of bones
with clinging meat
glistening
under the sun

what a beautiful taste could it be

only if i had the courage to be
a dog mad about bones

kneel on the bed
prostrate my self on the floor and

lick a milky way into my
mouth into my body which is hollow
in its bamboo-ness
like space without its planets
in loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
it is like a brick
just some bricks
day by day
and day by day
i lay those bricks
some on the brink
of breaking days
day by day
but know what
i do not get tired
laying those bricks
as always i think
of building
our future
cathedral.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tenant

the tenant bought the land
owned by my father and
he comes here behaving
like my father who thought
the land is the only world
where he can portray him
self as a master, ohh,
this is not the case any
more that what you know
i know. The land is gone
and so shall my father be
ohh, i am very happy, the
kind of opression we all
tasted is over now. We
shall rejoice for this loss.
This is freedom and this
is victory. At last i am
free. The curse shall now
be his own, not mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tent

actually, i do not
go for your tent
as a definition of
what marriage is
not,

i still think that
my marriage is a big house
with the convenience
of five chambermaids
a butler
and a driver.

with a last note,
we have fire inside the
chimney
we have smoke
for the atmosphere
and we have warmth
even in summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tenth

the tenth is always my ending
the tenth of a day
and the tenth of what i am

the rest shall not be yours
for the universe owns it
the rest scatters itself
a no man's land
a place for all air and dusts
a place for all the shining stars

there is light, and space and
eternity
like the longings of the heart
like the droplets
of memories

the tenth as gift
and nothing more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thou shalt not covet
thy neighbor's poem;
neither shalt thou desire...
his metaphors,
nor his similes,
nor his oxymorons,
nor his ironies
his metalepsis
his paradoxes
his anthimeria
his litotes,
ellipses,
zeugma,
anapodoton,
epizeuxis,
anaphora,
pleonasm
nor anything
that is his.
etcetera etcetera

The tenth poem
forbids
coveting the poems
of another.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Term 'Visitor'

i am trying to delve deeper
into the meaning of the word 'visitor'

a term once used by him,
to explain why he lives

on a rented house and keeps
just a bed, a table and a chair

and some books and poems and
stories that he keep on telling

nothing more of any sort like
a refrigerator or a personal

computer, simply because he
is just a 'visitor' here, and

then there came a 'sickness'
for a 'visitor' in the house

and that is precisely the moment
when i begin to understand

what this word really means, why
we do not need much, why

we discuss nothing about land,
or money, or even friends

as permanent possessions, as
hindrances even to our next

journey, why we should not have
mansions and flashy cars, why we should not

talk that much during dinners, or scream or
laugh when either a child is born
or when a lighting strikes and hits
the one you claim you love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Terror In Paris

the terror in Paris
spoils all the breakfasts and
dinners of humanity

still rising the number
of those who are dead
and who will die
like flickers of light
from a fire cracker at night

there is no need to know
what is the philosophy behind
all these?

there is no justification for terror
there is never, never, never one
and a thousand rationalization

this world shall grieve
all those responsible shall be cursed!

RIC S. BASTASA
good morning i am here

who's this please?

i am rest.

Rest who?

Eternal Rest.

Eternal Rest Who?

I am death.

Death Who?

I am silence.

Silence who?

Please do not deny Me.
I am Death. I am Real.
I am Coming to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Theater Is Still There.

manuel has been
busy all the while
preaching about
how this world
shall end soon

i wonder how he still
copes up with daily living
somewhere in
uptown chicago taking care
of the old people
for a fee

i remember those sunrises
and sunsets in the philippines
when we studied in one of
those religious universities
getting honors for ourselves
until we parted ways

i go for the world and gets
flexible with its ways
while manuel retreated to
the tenets of religion

i guess the world does not
end. My wife says it is we
that end. Curtains fall.
The actors are out. The
stage remains.

The theater is still there.
As the city lights flicker
deep in the nights
where people walk and talk
not so conscious of their
endings.
The Theory And Remedy

Time in a billion years after
Shall cease
And everything grinds to a halt,

Do you not feel the distant stars
Moving faster away from you?

Things move away rapidly
Stars explode
On the fringes of this universe
Shooting through space

Jump then to another
Universe
Before ours gets used up

The luxury of worrying
About our age

Shall now dissipate
On a rundown universe

At any rate why
Worry? I do not intend
to go 60
33 was just perfect.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Theory Of Order And Unity....

in lack in the shortness of our lives
and breaths
when we have vacated what we are
when we have given everything
when we have finally divested ourselves
with what is borrowed
we start to sense the completion of
this mission
letting go those birds from their cages
opening those doors
breaking all the locks
letting in the winds of freedom
erasing the shadows because we have embraced
the light
we we are finally lost into the ocean of this universe
reunited with that Being
then we are perfect
so complete that we do not touch any part of us
because we are part of them
the vastness of
eternity.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thief

IT IS
still far better nice
to hear the sound of the
black bird with red eyes
eating
one of the ripe bananas
that hangs
upon its trunk
in my orchard.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thieves Of Youth....

love cannot
thrive that long
stealing

were we not
once kids stealing
eggs from
bird's nests?

we cannot be kids
for that long
how can there be
birds?

did we not feel
excited over another
neighbor's mango?

they will understand
how kids are
but we are not kids
anymore

we shy away from
stolen moments
we take glances and
walk away
because now we have
understood fully
what is not ours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thing In Itself

a white chicken
egg
on top of porcelain
saucer
beside
a silver spoon

the mahogany table is
one legged
with a big
round base keeping it
balanced
amidst this elliptical space

up the ceiling
is a round 220 bulb
lending light
to the room

the white egg stands
like a zero
above a underline

we let our gaze
stroll at the bridge
of our nose

we listen
how these things in themselves
relate to us
without words.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Things In Our Hands

In the nooks of silence
we keep things in our hands

not in the shape of a fist
but that of a dove

which coos
in the light redness of a rose

we drink no water not even dew
and be still

with the best of the few
the windows that we keep closed

one morning shall open
upon themselves less the hands

of time less the
mind of the skies

lights burst but not
with the sun

bodies are buried not with
the earth and

without the niche that
mostly life expects to see

RIC S. BASTASA
The Third Letter To Mac

dear mac,
this is what I have to tell you now, I retained for my own everlasting keeping
this poem

of death

death
death
death
death

do not read it with your lips
it may cast a spell on you

don’t say creep
it is true it is real
who can argue about it
who can argue without it

if it is giving you shivers
then you are not real
you are an agnostic who
doubts everything even yourself

bye bye bye mac

may we have peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Third One

The three of them sat before the window looking at the sea. One talked about the sea. The second listened. The third neither spoke nor listened; he was deep in the sea; he floated. Behind the window panes, his movements were slow, clear in the thin pale blue. He was exploring a sunken ship. He rang the dead bell for the watch; fine bubbles rose bursting with a soft sound - suddenly, 'Did he drown? ' asked one; the other said: 'He drowned.' The third one looked at them helpless from the bottom of the sea, the way one looks at drowned people.

-yannis ritsos

RIC S. BASTASA
The Third Part: Loose Talk

because we have so many things still
to be done,
we have lost our sense of time
the capacity to grow affections
have become nil, in fact, shrinking
like the way the speed of light twice
its speed has shrunk my eyes into
a mongo bean
my heart now a tiny part of a
red pear that hangs itself upon
a very loose talk

RIC S. BASTASA
The Third Witness

he said instead of the warrant of arrest
the police officer aimed a gun at him
and so he looked at the sky
called upon God and then he closed his eyes
and bowed and knelled on the ground
and kissed the sands
and then he ran away
to nowhere.....

he did not know what happened next.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Third Woman

She is the offer whom I accepted.
My heart and my head were bartered.
Such a price that I pay, I have less
My heart and my thoughts, but I manage though
For all these years

Oh she is beautiful and my flesh trembled
And I surrender without conditions
I am helpless
I am despite,
I am dumb.
But I assure myself, things will turn out just fine
As planned
As patiently planned

She will not talk and she will not answer questions
About her past and what the future brings her
She lies before me, she will be beside me
Her mind somewhere else, her heart not on her breast
And she tells me she loves me
And will do whatever it takes to comply with the contract

She also surrenders
She is helpless
She is despite
She is also dumb like me.

Sometimes I recall, have I ever invited her out for dinner
So my friends will know her?
How unkind, she is always designed as a woman-object
Fit for my bed.

We are miserable. What we need is a little time to stop this.
We shall figure it out sometime
When all the two women are dead.

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
The Third Xanor

coffee cannot help
it keeps me awake
but that is not enough
to conquer this
lousy feeling

tonight the ants
are busy carrying
the gifts
the lizards stare
at me
upside down

the window is open
i let the wind come in
to join me
in this loneliness

i sit staring the darkness
i turn off the light
there is no moon there
are no stars

the second pill of xanor
shall take me
to another true encounter
with you

you that i cannot defeat
nothing conquers you
this love, this surrender
this stupidity!

RIC S. BASTASA
now i have seen your world
tumble
it is reversed now, the roof has
become the floor
and you suffer and here i am
comforting you
that somehow you are a strong woman
who can endure all these
you can build a new house again
sooner
you can put the windows in the number
that you want it
some doors of privacy
a garden of red roses
a trail of green grass and you can put more
stars than what you
had before
i am silent somehow about what you did
when you were one of those
heavenly bodied
before everything fell off
the sky where you lived once was
filled with the arrogance of your
meteors
the greed of your spaces
the deceit of your looks and
the inhumanity of your acts
have polluted
what once were clear rivers
where all used to drink
for life

so many died because of your
hatred
so many were maimed because of
your indifference
and now
the gods must have rewarded you
with what is due you
and you now complain about
an indescribable pain
this suffering that seems so
endless

you are weighed by the Furies now
and you have weighed
less than expected

i only have pity for you
but to bring you to my world
i must not perhaps tell you
but i must admit
i can't.

because you now deserve
to suffer
for another hundred years
the gods
are thirsty...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thorns

did the white rose know
that the thorns
on her side
just below her petals
are the ones that make
her appear
pure and beautiful?

it is the logic
of contrast and the
art of elimination
that work out well
in making us
give the most
of what we are
and not the idealism
of the category
which only says what
we ought to be
we become because of
constraint and
necessity
and so here we are always
on the reconstruction
not because of the fulfillment
of desire
but because of the
prosperity and intensity
the industry of pain

RIC S. BASTASA
The Threat In Mindanao

there is no need of a crystal ball to see what is really happening
and why
we shall all predict the next event

it starts with a mild attack and there will be so much
talk over tv and the radio
where the ears of the masses are stuck

they will hear about some ears cut and bodies of children mutilated
buses burned and mass evacuation of
innocent civilians on the hinterlands
of known places

mosques and churches shall not be spared
surely these will ignite religious hatred
and stir the hearts of all
good men

it will take days and days of violence
muslims and christians killing one another
ignoring their faiths within their hearts
that they are brothers
under one roof

if we only listen to the laughter of the lying woman
who plans all these things
to prolong her life
for another set of six years or more
like the old man
who died of lupus
many years back

she learns from him and will work the plan layed beforehand
it does not matter who dies and who kills
what matters most is power

we must not lose track of our belief as brothers
keep us in your mosque
as we too shall keep your women and children in our churches
in our houses and places of peace
we shall remain as children of one God

let us pray that her lies shall not cause the annihilation of us all
we are the true owners of this place
and not her or her cohorts
her own devils spread wearing the faces of gentle men

RIC S. BASTASA
The Threat....

the river today
is clear, slow in its flow,
monotonous

the cloud above it
looks for its
face
in today's river

it is this blur that
makes it drift

the river rage is not
totally gone

tonight it shall tell the
moon
what are some possibilities

of anger

it is this anger
that makes the cloud heavy

and it is this heaviness
that makes the rain

that finally makes
the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
The Three Gifts Of The Magi

gold symbolizing virtue,
frankincense symbolizing prayer,
and myrrh symbolizing suffering

gold
kingship on earth,
frankincense
of priestship,
and myrrh
for death.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Three Lonely Faces

the rain
in trickles has arrived
at the right time

jibing with the three
lonely faces of women
arriving
in one car from a
distant city

in a few minutes
the entertainment shall
begin

breakfast is served
at the back of the house
just behind
the dirty kitchen
where a native
chicken is
roasted

i am sleepy
with my dirty clothes
on
my pants smell like
a dead rat

i am the usual
insomniac
coping up with
early morning's demands
and these
visitors too
i must
cater

and these lonely ladies
noticing my discomfort
or inconvenience
this tipsy posture

i think
do not mind at all

for they know me
and i know them well too
for quite
a long, long time

tonight
we will drink hard liquor
and talk about
the miseries of other
people

& then
we will be merry
we will be happier together
as we start
all over again
backbiting the moon
quite far
from where we are
falling
drunk, wishing
for something much worse
than death....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Three Of Them Last Night...

nice watching
it is marcelo and his friend
and they both work
for the pay

gina watches them
last night and she writes a poem
about it
last night...she begins... last night...
she met

love and makes it leave
marcelo and his friend walk away

because gina loves the poem more
marcelo is no writer
to understand what is this poem all about

gina the fading night and marcelo is the
morning and the friend
is a tree carved in the
room of their memories.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Three Women Of My Life

morning, noon and nighttime,
the girl, the woman, the mother.

beauty, wisdom, and truth
the true, the good and the beautiful

the gourmet, the philosopher, the sexy lady
heaven, earth, fire

water, fire, earth,
the word, the phrase, the sentence

the doctor, the nurse, the poetess
charity, joy, and hope

love, lust and both.
dream, reality, fantasy.

sadness, happiness, indifference
ey they are all there in the shores of my life

i am the wind, the wave, the sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Three-Day Spree Somewhere Somehow Someday

Three days is well planned

but the execution turns out a little bit odd

on the first day i had Hawaiian pizza and Greek salad and tomato soup

and the night goes smooth like a tequila

the second day gives me a bitter tongue

nothing sour everything bitter nothing for sugar

the night has become a horror

air con is full but the body still heats up like a turbine

electrifying yet nothing about light and breeze

the following morning i pack up

takes the boat and despite the storm still heads for

home

still you, still you, i surrender,

i am this toothless tiger for your extinction

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thrower.....

i am always ready
to throw away everything.

something that you call love,
i can throw that away too.

faith, i can throw that away too
if needed

hope, the last one, is hope, do not
ask me, but i have thrown that away too
many many times, countless times

ask me what makes me a survivor?
well, simple, i am a thrower.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Thrownness Existence...

there are no compromises
no talks about survival kits
in this
we are into this 'thrownness'
and we simply evade what is important to our lives
we never discuss what tomorrow will be

when we meet we only inform ourselves
that tomorrow each
will be in another place

places that have no junctions
not parallel
universes that go extinct because we simply do not allow it
to move and be free

well this is it, we never understand how we come here anyway
where we are going
and what we are really meant to be

you clean the garden and then leave the plants on their own
whether they wither
that is for the next occupant to do

we come
we go
we do not come back

in essence, what for?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ticking Clocks

all my cells
are ticking clocks
like ticking
bombs
about to explode
like
stars losing their
own lights.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Time Comes......

the time comes
when you begin to lose

that belief on yourself
and you give way

you walk alone outside
without any door to open

as everything is spacious
filled with myriad choices

a line of trees, which tree
really? synchronized benches,

all white and heaps of dry
leaves, mothers watching kids,

which lad? lovers kissing on
the grass, and then it rains,

people run for shelter, mothers
taking back their kids,

car windows close, and you
are left alone, remembering

how to dance in the rain,
to be finally unmindful of

the rest and what happens
next, or when the rain stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Time For Hovering....

The Time Has Come

the time has come for the arrival
of this stranger
from a very faraway land. you meet him.
make him sit. ask him if he needs a drink
and you give him
gin, beer, whatever that pleases him.
you make him comfortable
at last
in your home. make him find his room.
the pillows and blankets
all to his choosing. the dinner that you serve.
the shower that he has to take.
the nice conversations you will have
for a while
with this stranger. you care for him
you assure  tell him
you miss him. you bring him to the mirror
to see how beautiful has he become
for that time that you have been
taken apart
you embrace him tightly.
you cry.
you wipe your tears and sit at the center
of the living room.
you look carefully how distance
must have destroyed
the closeness between you and him.

you shake your hand.
it is you now. this stranger is yourself.
you welcome him home
to your very arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Time Is Always Now

we face light
and leave darkness
behind

we have these two hands

each one can
for the meantime
hold
all these things
together:

doubt and certainty
hope and despair
past and future
i, you and
others

now is always
the time for juggling

RIC S. BASTASA
The Time That Slips On My Hands

the time that slips on my hands
splits through my fingers

so fast like a dream that cuts
itself before dawn
when i wake up sweating
and feel the need of a
glass of cold water

slowly the sands of time fall
on my feet

the winds of change blow it
and then
i feel the emptiness of its
departure

the heart is left wondering
what is it that is left undone

the mind has answers but as usual
it fails to consider the
reasoning ability of feelings

you look at fate in the eye
feeling so guilty and wasted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tinge.....

i am testing
my own sound

voice from deep
within, a little

pain, and trickles
of happy moments,

i let a voice go
bouncing upon the

side of a mountain
cliff and it comes

back to me, trying
to convince me that

i am one of those
that own a vocal

chord with some
poetic, ah, tinge.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tinker Of Words The Imagist At Work

early dawns
are stressed frogs
they cannot sing
their croaking throats
there is simply
no rain here

they change themselves
into poets
to demean you and
what you do

they swim in the
air (as there is no water
here yet
as there is no rain
and that is
logical enough
to understand)
and the birds
laugh

their tongues are as small
as a punctuation mark
of their
poems
that croak like a frog

as i watch all these
from the hammock
that mocks
i fall into a deep sleep
like Alice
into the big hole
of my
indignant indifference

pure imagination
seeking the support of logic
yet hollow still
because there is really
no one there

nothing human
like a friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tiny Bird Has Learned To Fly Away

THE meeting is
a surprise.

Very brief.

Twas like you were
a cliff
and at the tip of your
head
i was a bird

Tiny like a
sparrow and then you
asked me to explore
the abyss of
your body

i was a little bit
suspicious

Going down there
means i have to
be careful with my
wings
since the excitement
was too much

with the last alibi
that
my wings are too
tiny
like my claws

i flew away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tiny Bird Indecisive On My Lap

there is a tiny bird
on my lap that wants to fly away

i can be an edge
of a cliff for a start

and then if it is indecisive to act
swiftly on a certain
doubt

i can be a finger that makes a snap
and tell it

what exactly is time all about

time is not time
unless we are in it

when we speak and when
we become so silent

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tipping Point

you do not need everybody
to be yourself
life is too simple and what you
need is only some
important links to get your
message across

beware, the rest are nothing
but surpluses
and yet they have the nerve
and the impulse
to feel so important.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tongue Of Albert

of course, i am confident.

You have seen the
famous tongue of
Albert Einstein
after he wrote the
e=mc2
you think he is original on
this
nope, he copied it
from an unknown chemist
who believed that man has
a soul
not the formula
but the moron
tongue.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tony Encounter At Myrna’s Coffee Shop

I really admire him giving me his time
For a good coffee at nine
Matched with choco-raisin cake

Bespectacled tony
Jesuit priest
White barong
Still slim
And walks
With counted
Composure
He looks at me
With a eye
For a mistake
Keen eyes
Frisking my soul

“You’re flourishing” he said.

I am fat
Tall and pumpkin cheeks
I can say
I have a basketball
Inside my
Pink polo shirt
As gift from an
OFW
I sip my coffee
Sliced my choco cake
With a fork
And take a
Big bite
I am flabby
After I left
The seminary
Where we were buddies

“you’re strong” I thought.
I could not be stopped
Asking him:
how did you manage to stay as Jesuit?
Did you have a lot of struggles?
You like the solitude, do you?
Do you have a strict routinary prayer?
How is you religious life?

How’s your sex life?

"It is a grace, a gift", he blurted.

"We live in poverty
All our salaries go to the Jesuit society".

He gave me the sad news
About sonny leaving the novitiate
Years ago
About Roy leaving the priesthood
A few months ago,
And Fr. Mac pulled out
From Arvisu and now
Chaplain of the PGH,
A sore.

“What could be the possible explanation
Why priests are leaving? ”
“Has the Jesuit society studied the trend
And found the explanations? ” I asked him.

“We are a few now”
“We will have a new campaign
For vocations” he answers.

“I will be leaving for a consultors’ meeting
Tomorrow for an early flight to manila
Then I will be in Davao for another
Important meeting.
Just his afternoon
I met with a benefactor who will give
65 dollars a month for our scholars”
still tony talking.

What I cannot forget, as he cancelled my Room reservation at the Jesuit house As I decided to stay in the hotel instead,

“You saw the light, and we are still blind”, he said with a rush.

It was ironic, I know, and I will be thinking About his answer, for nights and years.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Touch You Give Me

the touch you give me
is the feel of silk today

the color is pink
and the scent is this link

between you and i
sweet and high

you are so soft
how can i be aloof?

you are so beautiful
naked and full.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tour....

the good poets
are here singing along
the stone roads
passing by the pyramids of giza

starting from the cobbled stones
in jerusalem
sailing in tiberias
floating in the dead sea
and contemplated on the parting
of the red sea

the songs are just perfect for me.
around the poets are the merchants
along the temptation mountains

most of those who ought to listen
bought fake perfumes and scarfs
and imperfect mosaic
of those faces of our
revered saints and
goddesses

the good poets are silenced
by your unbeliefs
your faiths have gone cold and
bloody

children watch and then die.
icons multiply like mirrors.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tourist Life Of Nineteen Days....

in those early mornings
we all rise
always chasing time,
the crippled fat man from
Cuba had to do the same

we all want to see all the
corners of the earth

great canyon, yosemite,
fisherman's wharf,
the portolas and the
gondolas
the casinos and the shows

what did we get? what did we see?

when we arrive home
after miami
we want to tell what was there
what happened
we want to talk and keep the rest
silent

and they wonder
what have we become: selfish from
the first hour
till the last

nothing has changed
we left and we have arrived

rude and mean as they call it
like a certain jay

speak it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tragedy Of The Man

for years he followed the fool
idolized that foolishness even
he lost himself and could not recover
back his real identity
was he able to drink that
witch's potion?

one day his eyes open
to the other possibilities
realized that the witch is eating him piece by piece
until only his bones were left
it was too late
he is only a set of bones
without any cartilages
to link one
to the other

that i think was his tragedy
and so we pray
may the witch die
may our potions expire
may we know how to graft
flesh
may we know how to
wrap with skin
our bones

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tragedy Of This World...

the tragedy of this
world is not mine alone
this is our greed
our very own selfishness
we all have a share
of this violence

do not underestimate
a poor man
do not despise the rich
given the chance
to interchange their seats
they will do the same

do not feel obliged
neither you shall feel blessed
when you laugh now
expect later the equal
weight of sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Trail

the trail to the secret house
she marks with stones

she is old and depressed
she has no home and there she hides

from what? i ask
she murmurs

how can i ever understand
what is thought from what is done?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Trail Of Light

no more shall i count
the days
mind them, i stopped
they pass
that is what they are
markers of
time,

inexhaustible, it is i,
who is
diminishing, but that is,
of course,
not the end, the diminution
is but
a stage, for something that
speaks of wings,
of the vastness of
anonymity
that most of those
who here
have mistaken as nothing,
it is a hazy door
which when
at the right time, opens,
becomes
a trail of
light, and we,
happily
shall follow.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Train Poem For You

if i were to write a poem for you
it should not be sad,
i guess,
it must be something like a train

you are inside it
and you look out to the window
and the destination is getting near
and the train stops and then
you see the man waiting and then surprised
he sees you
he waving his hand
happy
that finally you have arrived
finally
for him.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Traitor Was A Need To Fulfill History

it is the story of betrayal but the
betrayal has to push through
with or without the condemned
man, with or without the notoriety
of history, fate, as it is written
a dirty piece of the puzzle is put
if only to complete the story

RIC S. BASTASA
The Transformation Of The Selves....

the lives we make
like woven fabrics
make a good design
of how we appear
in public

a silky cloth handwoven
with intricate designs
of our fantasies and
fascination about life
and its challenges

and in the river of life
where i am a part
look at me there without
any surprise
sometimes a leaf submissive
to the quite
surface
or a turtle just silent there
looking wise with
its sleepy eyes
and sometimes a rock
an obstacle
in the middle of the rage
and when provoked
changing into a black bird
agile and strong
betraying both land and water
to become a new ally
with the
tricky winds....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Traveler

alright i did it
upon your wishes
i went to San Isidro
i hate the place
there are no trees

Papa died
even in that last moment
he smiled for me
i am his guy
i followed him
his every wish

not mine of course
i love San Francisco
my friend all live there
they made themselves
to their own images
nothing
is a mimicry

alright i need not
regret it
i have life too
i can buy my own bed
and sleep
the rest of the day
feeling
so invigorated
not a bigot
or an
ergot

the years are flashes of
lighting
one gets attuned to the heavy rain
and those who are dead
have become mere numbers
you shift channels and
choose
to travel

alright i am now in San Francisco
the gate is not
golden
it is only in the mind

i never calculated that it is
even colder
than the cold that i imagine

my friends are no longer my friends
time spent for waiting has become
an anger

alright i walk alone
but know what? i have no fear
i love being alone now
i am enjoying sunset

red orange, flaming yet
mellow to my eyes
the sun is inside my heart
and it is burning

RIC S. BASTASA
The Travels Of Thoughts

time flies
too fast

the hands that
i once left
have become
rivers

the thoughts
that i
buried
years ago have
become
oceans

ships sail
there

and on those rivers
families
journey

into other territories
on the swifter wings
of time's
progenies

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree

when the big tree falls
hit by lightning
roared by thunder

when the big tree finally falls
and i was there
a big sound
of a giant old tree
falling finally to the ground

the arrogance
that used to be

by that big old tree
we all looked upon
it was so high
and we did not
climb it anyhow

for fear
and
perhaps respect for its grandeur

and today this big tree falls
hit by lightning and roared by thunder

the universe claps upon the
fall of arrogance and pride
and a tree's belief about
its hugeness and
strength

now this tree falls
and i am here watching it

you are not here
you are in some foreign country

how can i tell you
that this tree has fallen

and there is nothing to fear anymore?

when a tree falls and you are not there
your logic tells

there is no tree
there is no tree of such strength and posture
there is no tree like that

that can ever fall
all because a lightning hits it
and all because the thunder roared

without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree (A Repost)

the tree

when the big tree falls
hit by lightning
roared by thunder

when the big tree finally falls
and i am there
the big sound
of a giant old tree
falling finally to the ground

the arrogance
that used to be

of that big old tree
we all look up
it is so high
and we do not
climb it anyhow

we fear
and
perhaps we too pay respect
for its grandeur

and today this big tree falls
hit by lightning and roared by thunder

the universe claps upon the
fall of arrogance and pride
and a tree's belief about
its hugeness and
strength

now this tree falls
and i am here watching it
you are not here
you are in some foreign country

how can i tell you
that this tree has fallen
and there is nothing to fear anymore?

when a tree falls and you are not there
your logic tells
there is no tree
there is no tree of such strength and posture
there is no tree like that

that can ever fall
all because a lightning hit it
and all because the thunder roared

without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree And I

dancing leaves that fall
and touch me

my skin that wrap my fingers they rub and arrive at a beginning

they stay for a while they do not talk

they stay longer in a while a dew comes out from the pores of both leaf and finger

a glow arises from a glance and then they all look up to the blue skies

their gazes long and they are lost and they all sing the praises about these feelings of eternity. They had long been asking what is their beginning and now they are asking if there is an end to all these bitter barks and
sticky saps and
happy tendrils and
hoping seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree And I....

the tree in the forest is real.
i know it is. It had always been
the tree to my hand. Some leaves
fell on my palm and i keep them
as memories since then.

One day i met it finally in that
forest. It is real. Its bark feels
me. And i feel it too.

We never talked, lest the stranger
shall think that i have finally
come out of my senses.

i move out. It cannot.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree And Its Legacies...

the tree
full of fruits
oblige
with the seasons
and as time
dictates
it shall fruit
in abundance
and when children
pass by
with slingshots and
stones
it will be hit
and defenseless
over this early
greed.

soon it will
loose its leaves
soon it
will die
and you shall never
see
mourners
for all its fruits
and seeds
there will be
no remembrances.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree And The Branch

the tree looks
upon a branch
where a ripe
fruit is hanging

the tree says
it is mine
the branch say
i am holding it

the tree says
the branch too
belongs to it

angry about the
tree's greed
the branch lets go off
the ripe fruit

a hungry child
picks it up
and goes home
with a happy heart

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree And The Butterfly

what i love to see in you
is when you become a huge tree
rooted upon a
muted grass hill

above you is a black cloud
making rain

your leaves are all wet
and your roots are drinking so much water

your bark is thick and your
trunk so hard and strong

and she is there the frail butterfly
clinging softly

beneath the big leaf
fragile and steady

what i love next is when the rain stops
and then the butterfly leaves you

helpless and sad and so poetic.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree Is Shedding Off Its Leaves

do not be surprised
to see this tree shedding off leaves

it is the season
for it to become a skeleton
it is like
that

giving off everything
what it gained
from the soil which gives it life

the tree is returning
heaps and heaps of leaves
for the wind
to blow and scatter to the earth

until what is left
is the bareness of it all

the one where we are now
a destiny into
emptiness

the glory of nothing
the splendor of being nothing at all

welcome! welcome!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree Of Life

its leaves
money
its roots
savings
its buds and
flowers
all investments
its virtue
none
the social impact
is gone
it is all vice
avarice
or call it
greed
its creed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree Of Us Together In The Pursuit Of Happiness

and then
we are satisfied

we invite more love
between us

and then we
open a new door

and now
we are three

let us begin
by not asking what
we can do

there is more
to this sharing

humanity is not
limited to intimacy

with us three
let there be more clapping

let there be
a celebration

you shall be
at the center and then
we shall be
tender and gentle
and surging
and loving
on your side

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tree Without Fruits

the way they handle
a tree without fruits is
crazy

it is as though
the leaves do not matter anymore

or the roots
or even the wood itself
or the living rings
within
that tell about
a certain
age

they are thinking about
a fire

they are cruel
and i think they deserve
to be
burned in hell

the value of the tree
is not just its fruits

mind you
trees also present memories
of their own

their roots too have
beautiful stories to tell

their twigs and lentils
too have dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
The Trees Without Leaves

when was the first time
that i have seen a tree completely
without leaves?

and then
i had the impression that soon it
will be dead
and then it will be simply left
there
with no one to bury
what is left of it
by time

no one shall ask about why
the roots
might have rotten

in all my years of familiarity
such trees have become
a common sight and i do not ask anymore
whether they are dead
whether there is a season

when shall they learn
to grown leaves
and even show that they can have flowers
and then fruits

i dream of a night when these trees shall exude
their fragrances
even it it may have only the bland smell
of emptiness

or that some stars may come from a lost journey
and simply rest at their tops
and pretend that
it is Christmas

tonight i think of all these trees

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
without leaves
which have learned the way they should be
a lifestyle so to speak

they gave themselves their own names
and then they die
in peace
without a slight disturbance to the
sight of
others

some natives have become so lucky
and they know what good fire-woods are
from those dry
twigs
those cracked barks
those soundless trunks.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Trees, The River, The Skies And The Sea

the trees that we cut, the rivers that we pollute,
the sea that we abuse, the skies that we cut from our sights,
the explosions, the wars, the blunders

that man inflicted on his world
this is felt and everything destroyed once wriggled in pain

on this misery. what have we done? what have all these creatures
and landscapes done to deserve our cruelty
and insensitivity?

we may be gone at the end, when they take the vengeance
the sea opens up and swallows everything
the skies spit fire and thunder
the trees all die and the land fumes all the lava hidden underneath

we will lose every breath
and they may rejoice about our deaths and dissolution

there will be peace
but there will be no more meaning

for in truth, whatever we do, on these miserable events
they all exist and have meaning
because it is still we who give them, their meanings too.

why can’t we live in harmony? the sea, the trees, the land, the clouds,
the skies, the rivers, they all want to embrace us

we belong to them
and they to us.

let us stop this cruelty, they are all our allies, our lovers.
as they worship us, we too must worship them.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Trigger Called Emotion

when emotions run high
poems come like
a tornado,

when emotions run low
what is happening
to you?

when emotions become
too suspicious
what is next to do?

will you pull the trigger of
the gun and leave
the handwritten note:

because i love
you so?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Triumph Of Evil

i will always remember the lie that society and religion
embedded in my brain
that crime does not pay
that the good always triumphs at
the end

i am forty-seven years old now
neither too young neither too old
but i have seen a lot of events and
read and write about them

that evil triumphs too, and i thought it is temporary and
just a passing thing
it is not,

the corrupt ones are crowned, the criminals are the cream of the crowd,
the ogres are given the golden medals,
the good die young
and the bad grows and spreads like the grass on a very fertile land

RIC S. BASTASA
The Triumphant Ones

those who live in the privacy of their rooms
are those who have mastered the art of peeping

their lives are sheltered by the house of darkness
and the world is nothing but a window of the blinds

they do not speak much, they have nothing to say,
when you pass by, they have seen you, and
feasted at you, but you do not know this,

what is in them that makes them know much better?
they keep all the stories to themselves, and then
when they come out in the open, they insult what
light has been bragging. Those that take pride in the
light are charred and take the helplessness of the dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The True Motivation...

most of the time
the reason was heart ache
it is only seldom when
the reason is the joy of freedom

most of the time the chains clank
the letters
and it will be long and labyrinthine

seldom will the reason be the flowers
blooming along the hills
the crows taking nothing and the
fish settling on the lives of the
corals beneath the belly of the
sea

seldom does happiness spark
most of the time is the darkness of the night
that howls
in you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The True Ones....

they come
like birds and you become
the tree
where they are roosting

and they leave together
migrating to nowhere
and you are still a tree
standing still

you were never a poet
they who leave are the real ones.

much truer to their calling
not staying for anything for no one
for nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
The True The Good And The Beautiful

They go together
& so even if you are good but not true
then you are not beautiful,

and even if you are beautiful
but you are not true then you are not good

or even if you are true but then you are not good
then you are not beautiful

always remember that
they always go together so for you to be beautiful
and really beautiful
you must be also good and you must be always true,

this is the goodness of truth and its beauty
that all depends on you, now i can go, so please be

the true, the good and the beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth About The Good News

I AM thinking

i agree with what the wind is telling
that from afar
some good news are waiting

and i bloat myself with hope
feeling like cotton
soft and useful

the wind left

and i waited for days for the coming of good news
like a cure for instance
for loneliness

or a miracle for the healing of a friend
who is dying
beside me

hands clasped towards heaven
for the skies to listen

I am thinking that the wind may have simply pitied our situation
and lied

and will not come back and stop
for we will always
remind about him about the good news

I am thinking

there are times when out of pity the ones that come here
say words
that they do not mean

and then
i sit again holding the hands of the dying friend
giving him
the good news from the warmth of my hand

it does not speak of healing
i does not want to remember anything

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth About Us

'I feel an
indescribable ecstasy
and delirium
in melting,
as it were,
into the system of beings,
in identifying myself
with the whole of nature.'
Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

i am not alone
for i am a part
to every grain of sand
to every sand
in dunes
to every particle
in the wind
to every molecule
of water
to every atom
of your being

how can you
deny such truth
in us?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth About Your Fiction

the truth about this fiction is your struggle for the release of your bad self from the chains of so much iron clad realities

and thus releasing yourself from said clutches you become more of want you want to be than from what you are

you close your eyes, you name it and you become it and then you enter that door of fantasy where you are the one who only holds the key to that door, or that password to its secret lock and when you are there take all the possibilities that you can muster

have all the fun.
fantasy is not a cruel provider
definitely not your greedy neighbor
or your strict grandfather or insulting professor

take all your time but there is only one thing that you must not forget

do not forget the password, do not lose the thread into that labyrinth that leads to the old door of that fugitive which you closed and if the world of fantasy has relieved you of the pain and the sorrow

you have to come back on time, use the secret password again, use the key, and then open the door again

in the house dinner is served,
your servants are smiling, and the chicken soup is just as hot as you desire it, the steak is as you like it cooked medium rare, the red wine not so sweet, and the conversations are ready for your cracking of those same old jokes, those old memories the songs come back like your invited visitors from far

oh they all come back, but this time with beautiful faces, sweet perfumes
the ones whom you will always love and so your heart floats in the clouds
overjoyed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth Always Comes Out

Sometimes, two people live in the same house
and they behave like posts
always stoical in their maintained distances
just to make the house stand just to make
others who are there
live.

what the passersby hear are the sounds of
children chasing themselves in a game of chances
sometimes there is strumming of a guitar
but it is dark there and you cannot see someone singing

what you will hear are merely speculations of the song
the shadows on the walls also peep at you by the window
and they know that you are confused too
wanting to find out what is really going on in there

'there is a happy couple there making love perhaps'
that is what you suspect and since the house is always
closed and you hear the singing of some voices
in the dark, you often make the conclusion that
'they must be happy, they must be happy'
and happy people have a world of their own
always to the exclusion of other

you feel you are an exclusion, but don't you worry
the truth always comes out, and whatever that is, i am
telling you
'it is beautiful' always beautiful like what you can
always be

if you just believe it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth In Her...

to save yourself you have learned to lie.
your wife does not want you to live
perhaps she hates you
this i think i should know, because on
every lie you make,
she is there to correct it and claims
that it is not so, that this is it,
what lies you make, she is there always
ready to correct, perhaps, she does not love you that much
she loves herself more, and that is the truth

(you are jobless, and old,
and ugly, and coping,
you are drunk, and sick,
you are broke, and lonely,
you are sinful and foul

that is the truth, now,
can you manage all these?)

i must make you understand.
i can tolerate your lies, and i do not want you to just die.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth Is........

I do not like hamburger for breakfast
I do not like eating apples
I do not like the snow
I do not like to be put in this freezing situation
I do not like to eat wheaties for breakfast
I do not like so many chocolates
I do not like Nike shoes
I do not like the Golden Gate Bridge

I do not like to be a citizen of the United States
Of America

I like it here in the Republic of the Philippines
I like being brown and small and chinky-eyed
I like the tropical climate and the white sandy-beaches
Of Boracay, I like the chocolate hills of Bohol
I like the stalactites and stalagmites of Palawan
I like the SM malls and the Jollibees

*(When the truth is,
The consul denied him a US visa)*

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth That Kills

the truth that kills
that which Oedipus brings me
i am the Sphinx
and i made the promise
the riddle
he solved it
he laid the truth before me
i am speechless
and i meet my fate
i am shattered
and he gets his due

he married his mother
he killed his father
he is faced with rage
too of his own truth
that blinds him
he removes his own eyes
from his sockets
he is ousted by the rage
of his own kingdom

the truth that kills
what freedom is there
what comfort
what annihilation
what grief eternal

RIC S. BASTASA
The Truth That Lies Hidden On The Arid Plains

2nyt when we sleep
with our backs against each other

our bottoms not really
meeting

i will see to it that
i shall become
the winner of this coldest
war of my life

i shall not face you with hate
i shall
curl my body in my indifference

i will hold tight on my pillow
and set my mind high in the air like a big butterfly
kite

for me to fly away
I'll cut the string with my teeth
so i can become
a hawk

with my wings now i shall soar higher
than the cliffs
of your
numbness
(or even your
betrayal)

perhaps, with this distance
this height
and this extreme coldness of the mountain peaks

i may now be prepared to finally see
that
hidden truth
on the arid plains.
The Truth The Whole Truth And Nothing But The Truth

the freedom to write
what is in your mind
without names and places
masked with xxx and yyy
where now you can tell
the truth and nothing but
the truth without the
threat that you can be
guilty of libel.

here is bravery to the
utmost. no names no places
no exact dates, but all
that is being said is true
without having to account
for the truth.

he was the guilty but his
money has spoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Try....

the goal
is to forget
to finally get fed up
with it. The tryst had been more
often. The whole thing is wrong, you know it.
the repetition is to get used to it and then dislodge it.
you ask yourself, why is this rotten thing loved, is it really love? but it is there
and it is disturbing the orbits of your universe and there may be a crush at the end of this game. You are
into it to get rid of it. You design a trap, you entice it only to kill will be a murderer of whatever is desirable to to. You
want to justify that this is the best course of action.
the goal is to be bored and finally avoid it.
to know exactly that it is not good.
that it is destructive. that
it kills you too.
you are into
it now.
go.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst

to Thailand shall i go
on a Monday and you
shall leave on
a Thursday
Friday will be perfect
as we begin
understanding what
lovely pretense
can do

in bed i shall not utter
your name
shall you too must not
forget
what name i have

we are strangers here
away from their hatred
we meet in the same room
like a planned accident

we choose no word
we do what needs to be done
in an instant
knowing the value of each passing hour
i shall drink the juiciest in you
you shall eat the tenderness in me

and then on a Sunday
we pact and be back to our routines
no calls
just remembering what feelings were.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst And The Trust....

the usual. wine glass on
table. a cigar from cuba.
a black shoe.
smoke rising to the air.
dreams.
you go naked to these
ambitions.
glass to glass fragility.
someone is too willing.
like you.
one says, do not mention
the word love here.
it does not exist.
frame to frame. numbness
to numbness.
the story of a slave to a
pharaoh. up there and down
below. humanity is leveled.
fair fields now.
the ciphers and dippers.
hieroglyphics of madness.
boat in a storm never capsizing.
arrival at ports.
no one is meeting anybody.
no one calls a name.
then the sad departure.
with a note: you do not know
me and i do not know you.

what happened in vegas
stays in vegas. it was not
in vegas. No one is surely
telling

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst Of Light And The Cliff

when the sun is
up the hills
and light is strong
and hot
the tryst with
the cliff begins
surging light
piercing through
a slit in the cliff
vibrating the
tiny bodies of the
sands of
desire
the moment
is enduring
but not that
ecstatic
like us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst Of Two Survivors

you're wearing glasses
and drive your car

there is this address
that makes you thirsty

a door opens and you
disrobe all your fears

someone waits in bed
and there will be no more words

you remove your glasses
and take out everything you have

you see what you are
and you know you shall cry

but for now you set restraint aside
you need this in order to live

one day more
soon you will be devastated

who cares? you tell yourself
you take the bite to give

your heart a mouthful
of lust of love or whatever

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst That Never Was

you hold the map to my feelings
i put there the markers of my joys

some lines lead to an island
where desire thrives like a flower

there is enough rain and air
love breathes and lust sprouts

we agree on a date
when the moon wanes to give us

the fertility of the darkest night
to give birth to a hundred stars

i waited for the last cycle of the sun
the heat scorches me and when you arrive

on the day of the tryst agreed by our hearts
you will find the dust of my feet the sighs of my songs

the imagination of the flowing river
and the grassy bed, fragile light, firefly flame

these matters of the heart
they all go away like the flicker of the mind

the tryst that never was
that faint flint fledgling foam on the night water

what was it? where did it go?
how shall i ever know?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tryst Under The Full Moon

how can
i forget the
full moon
on top of
me on top
of you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tsunami And Basho....

the tsunami comes suddenly
taking away everything along the way
houses, cars, boats, men,
women, children
as though it is a thing so mad
so angry without a mind of its own

exactly the opposite of the poem
of Basho

the one that recreates the life of the
pond
extolling the stillness
the quite

and if there be a little tolerable noise
for sure
it is only that classic splash of
the green frog

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tuba.....

what i am offering you
is something organic

a glass of fermented wine
from a coconut tree
time makes it
it gives bubbles even without fire

it is riddled
the one how answers it rightly is the drunkard
a happy drunkard
one that knows what love really is
that all giving love
that all open hand

i offer you a glass
which you refuse and i am ironic

'so you are class, huh? ' you like beer,
you like red wine?

you don't drink
it is all right
nothing is wrong with thinking
that if you do not drink then
you are a nice man
you are class A
you are healthy for society had equated a drink with drunkards
which is not the case really

(deep within think you are an idiot)

but never mind, i am still a decent man)

so how is life? how is your job?
and you begin to complain
life is hard, my job is making me a robot
i am not justifiably paid
and you begin to talk about your papa
who now lives in another house with another woman
who pleases him
your mother is a witch
a religious witch who believes on the priests rather
than the dream of a husband

i offer you again this drink
and you grab it.

nice.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Tulips In Our Minds

the tulips are
growing in our minds

the brightness and
redness provide
light and color to
our souls

to make these tulips
very real

give it meaning
by picking them and

offering them to the
one you love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Turtle And The Rabbit

you know the story
and i need not tell
it to you again
without necessarily
insulting your intelligence

(pause, chuckle, breathe
and wait
for your turn, let me continue)

but there is something you
still need to know
because i think you did not know it
their story did not really
end the way we were taught
with the ending
moral of the story

(don't raise your eyebrow
like the nike emblem
of the shoe,
relax, and you may
divert your attention,
as this is not important
anyway, but let me continue
still...)

well, this is it
the turtle is really a female
and the rabbit is a neuter
and know what?

(don't mind, this is still not important
you may read another poem
because this does not sound one
but let me continue
alone to say the usual ending
of this story...)
yes, the rabbit is a neuter
and the turtle is a female and
yes, they lived happily everafter!

RIC S. BASTASA
i was once a turtle
but i wish i were a rabbit

and then i become a rabbit
speeding my ways
to the ends of the world

and then i got so tired
and sit below the tree
watching the clouds
and then i wish i were a
turtle again

back to my home that i carry
anywhere

that is it: the home is where the heart is.
not the wood and the steel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Turtle And The Rabbit.......  

you know how the story goes  
about the modern turtle who defeated  
the arrogant rabbit in that proverbial race  

what the turtle did was save money  
engaged in business  
took risks and maximized profit  

then he  
bought a Mercedes Benz  
and the rest becomes history.  

p.s.  
the turtle has remained  
humble  
and he gave part of his  
fortune to charity.  

RIC S. BASTASA
The Turtle In Us...

a rabbit never
shames a
turtle,

for distance
is not
a tragedy,

it is the patient
persistence
that
wins,

it is not in fact
wisdom

neither speed
nor
perfect
frame

RIC S. BASTASA
The Twins, The Thesis And The Antithesis....

she is free at last
but this she did
by accepting all those that wait
and all those who
come now
inside her house: failures and
successes
sadness and its twin sister
happiness
fears and confidences
wins and losses

the truths are here
all in two's or pairs
listen to grief as its partner joy
tells her stories
come, come, this is the boat
that Noah built
before the great flood
arrives
the pair elephants
come on, are but metaphors....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Blind Men And The Elephant

you are at the
tail of the elephant
i am at the
head
and we are two blind
men
trying to kill each
other
with what we are
preaching as
absolute truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Enemies Inside My Flesh And Bones

inside me
there are two people
always
arguing

there is this
black horse and
a white horse
and there is only
one carriage
to speak of

everyday they
quarrel over a lot
of nonsense
as i call it
but i can do nothing
but listen

after all
they are all essential
parts of
my being

one day
someone so beautiful
sits in one of those
chairs
in the cafe

sipping coffee
and
steals some
looks at me
which
despite the distance
sort of
touches me into
responding with
a smile
as hot as her coffee
on that
very cold
rainy day

the two enemies
inside
suddenly
for a moment
stop their
word war
and teases me
to stand
cheer up
and go near
that
thing of beauty

we start a nice
conversation
i give my number
and there is this
promise
to see each other
again

the two enemies
who live inside my
flesh and bones
finally
end their stripe

united they
say. ' go, go go,
go
for love! '

and then
i think, and i hope it
will last
peace has since then
reigned
between them.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Faces Of The World In One Body...

as i see it now
each has a share of what we all have
a chunk of caprice
sins and sorrows
disheartening diseases
to each his own
others are as silent as the sand
agonizing under the scorching sun
others chant their pains
to the gods and
lords,
asking for relief
no one is exempted
from all these cycles of
human tragedies
i sit upon a mountain
top upon a view
to look at the eyes of sorrow
to hear the songs of
grief
to contemplate upon
some joys
and happenings

the world has two faces
in one body
joy and pain are one and the same
like sun and moon
like day and night
like ebb and tide.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Of Us

and then the black soul
finally takes its last ride
on the whitest of all white
cars, it is singing a song
and i am figuring out
what and how it sounds
could it be heaven or
hell? could it be nothing
but swell, oh well....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Of Us (Emoting)

now the two of us meet again.
i am behind you.
I see your neck, it is bloated.
i see your black hair
i know they are all white
you dye them just this morning
before this meeting.
you refuse to look at me
i do not mind.
you look to the other side
where the day is young.
i am always behind you
always willing to tell the truth

if you emote, i will, later.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Of Us Back Home

I SHALL search it in your armpits
just like the way the tongue
masters its teeth

I'll whistle when i find that
hopelessness in not finding it at all

i pretend to be happy
as do others in their most truthful stances

I'll look for it in the sky at night
like the way one finds direction through the stars

soon after i will be silent in my own despair
but tonight when i come back home and

find you back into my arms
i will show the best in me: smiling and happy

and then i will get a glass of water
drink half of it, and share the other half with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Of You....

the two of you
are a scenery
of a lake and a
yacht

clear blue lake
white silver yacht
up there the sky
watches with envy
and the sea
finds joy in your
melodies

i watch
without asking if
there is love
there

i said sorry for myself
i do not want anymore to be interested

i like the farthest distance that the horizon is making
i feel for the dry leaf that it has sadly taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two Women...

dual woman
are actually extremes
one is the sun
and the other is the moon
but there is this
moment
when the day is
brighter
when the sun and moon
meet
and they as usual
do not
ever speak
about their own worlds
with the same
sky

and then what these two
do not know
is the existence of the
nightingale
the one that sings at night
and flies away
the whole day

it is the one
that i love.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Two-Headed Guy....In Us...

well that old man
was right,

take note he was
way ahead from our
dreams,

our nightmares arrive
earlier

i got a mountain
on my back and there is
a monster there

i live in the lighted
island and i look good there
to the boatmen
and the native women

i have a cloak and a hood
and i keep hiding my twin
brother

in that mountain where
other monsters too live

and that is the scariest
thing that happened to
both of us

you want my head and you
demand that i should offer
it to you in a platter

and you keep assuring
kill that monster head of yours
all are painful you see and
perhaps i cannot tolerate this
pain of severances

i live in the lighted place
i turn off the light

and i drive you like a bird
strong to your wings

i promise i will shoot you
and kill you if you insists

i am at peace here in this room
my two head play

and they agree, to live in peace
and harmony in the secrets of

my self. No one eats the other.
If one dies, one must abide.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Typhoon Last Night

the typhoon last night
was devastating
it was strong and prolonged
the roof almost gave way
the windows about to be flown away
the floors shook
and the walls about to break
we hug for comfort
we prayed together
and curled together
we intertwined like vines
on the tree

that morning after
i am thinking about our intimacy
tested by storm and darkness

and i say to myself, perhaps i need
another storm for proof
i still could not believe how we made it

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ugly Duck's Independence

and so the story goes
the ugly duckling turns out to be a swan
to regain its
independence from those
contemptuous
ducks.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ugly Picture

yes that man

who is not home
and has no time
with his lovely wife
and beautiful children

indeed, Aldo, you hint,
and I shall take it

is the ugliest picture of
my very own father.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ugly Truth

the last time that the kid
saw it
it was uglier than ever

and he sees it again
when he gained reason

(he has become a handsome
prince and soon to inherit a kingdom

with the same usual package
of a princess for a queen)

it becomes less uglier
but how can he simply throw it

away when it is all the while
an essential part of him?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ultimate Message.

my dear heart
try to distinguish
bias from prejudice.
study well the hawk
and the eagle
or the worm and the
glowworm.
fireflies and fireplaces
matter a lot.
uuance and accent,
moron and oxymoron.
to an ostrich camels
do not matter, bird is
a prejudice.
camel is not necessarily
a meal. or male, or
mill.
you have a craft of threads.
could be life, a thread
outside the eye of a
needle.
my dear soul, keep calm.
this body is
temporary. You do not
need it. You are eternal.
i pity that woman who
says that today she is
driving her car without
a known direction, a place
to stay or hide.
men are monsters hungry
for his story.
upon equality, same brains
and hearts, why should
one claim the inferiority
of being lost? the caterpillar
with its feet finds it hard
to understand.
yes Alice, wonderland is
a fact. Cheshire is real.
watch a movie yesterday.
found another Alice.
and some tiny shoes.
do not tell me about Cinderella.
it will make this
poem lengthy.

i would be cut short by this.
in here nothing is
worth saying.
no one is worth the greatness
of his claim.
it is a moonlit night.
all girls are beautiful
all boys are in a hurry to
become men.
parents are worried.

grandpa is dead.
wife is still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unconvincing Lady

can't
write a poem about death

unconvincingly

it is too theoretical and
her words are filled
with
smileys

she rushes
some words which could have been
said
truthfully only after
an eulogy has been heard
about
her second husband

RIC S. BASTASA
The Underdog And The Stranger

sometimes we simply have to be vulnerable
to be mortal
and it happens when we extend a hand and let the other feel
that your hands are real
with blood and veins and flesh and bones
that when someone gets a sharp knife and slices your wrist
you bleed real blood
because you are not a ghost, a virtual image of somebody else,
because you are not a mannequin or wood,
or someone else appearing in another person's name

vulnerability is humanity, it happens when you walk alone and you
wear your face without a mask, a veil, a hat, a head dress,
it happens when you expose yourself
to someone and you tell him that you are lonely and you need a friend
that the weather is cold and that you need someone to be with
simply to talk without any self-interest at all

then someone laughs at you and even tells that if you keep
following him he will kick you in the ass
that there is simply no possibility of a connection between a hand to another
hand
anymore

vulnerability is when you finally accept that other people are strangers too
and they do not have time for any other intrusion
for another stranger like me

vulnerability is simply letting the other person know that you have no other
name except your name that you have no other reserved spare tire for
yourself except yourself

that you are yourself and that you are hurt is vulnerability
but that is not the end of it all

vulnerability is also realizing that you are finally human
and that you have learned to live with this humanity
despite the strangeness and the weakness
as others keep the wall within themselves
fortifying fences and excluding
others till the end of night
till another day
and another
night

RIC S. BASTASA
The Underwear's Reply

you are welcome
Lord William

for quite a time
your balls will be safe
on cottony stripe

your hairs
shall not be wasted

and the bulge
need not be shamefully exposed

with one request
Lord William
i need to be relieved

i too need
a little soap
and some detergent
clean water
and more sunshine
and lots of fresh air

RIC S. BASTASA
The Undisturbed Spectator

I Get off the room
late bed to meet a perfect day

i sit alone
on the seventh stair facing the road

it starts to rain
gusty winds from the sea are arriving

hair is blown away
some dreams too

there is this joy you know
by simply watching

busy people rushing for shelter
waters beginning to rise on the road

you are not disturbed
nobody touches you

you are no less than that railing
that corner of the store

that road sign
that because of too much familiarity in the street

nobody asks
no one minds at all

RIC S. BASTASA
to the heart there is never a blank wall
the fences do not work
they always fail, the bulls of Manawan
are at it again, breaking free from the ranch
and going back to the Mountain
just as the sparrows that by chance entered
your room through an open window
though there were rice grains on that tray
soon shall fly away after every grain is consumed
the beasts and birds unlike you do not have a house
neither do they know of any home

so tell me, how can you understand a vagabond
mind like mine?

the bulls always want to break free
the birds migrate to distant lands
the whales inhabit no permanent ocean
every path is a passage
and if there are stops, they are just temporary resting stations
after a while
the journey takes everyone on their feet, their fins and wings
again....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unexpected....

there are things that we cannot
but accept

bitter pills to swallow because
they say they make us well

and there are things too that we must throw away
because they are too sweet
and can kill us

sometimes in doubt
because of too much noise in the diversity of opinions
and we have become exhausted of those ever busy hours
making our own
and listening to all the chatters of the air
we simply stop doing anything
we sit and take the quiet

at this moment we become too light
as we empty whatever we think we have
and we realize
this is good this is another beginning
we have become new
and young again

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unfinished Business

things would have ended well
and the best goodbye could have been said
in a smile the wave of the hand and the letting go of the sigh
something perfectly orchestrated by the hand the lips and the feet

but something outside holds you to stay and your hair
brush against each lock
not wanting to go
because there is something that was left undone
still tangled on the twigs of the burning bush
there is a voice there that wants to utter your name
telling you
wait, i still love you, please don't go

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unforgiving

you must have thought that others
keep on thinking of you

perhaps you are wrong
they are too busy then with their own
state of affairs

you think ill
and can't forgive
you get sick
in return

what have you got then?
this cancer of your brain
this sickness unto your own death
the grave that you dig
your own body
that you throw into such
a resting place

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unfriendly Woman Next House

i met a woman
at the cottage by the beach
with a daughter
who by her acts love being
unfriendly

i must have misunderstood her
right to privacy

i understand it now
for like me she must have been nurturing
a wound

rubbing it with the balm of grief's silence
leaving it to the cares of time

believing that no word from another can heal it
no concern can cure it

that what hurts should better be left to the care
of themselves
automatically healing without
anyone's unnecessary intervention

when we meet i look the other way
as a sign of respect for her chosen indifference

perhaps it works for her
so many times over and over again
perhaps that is the same reason
why she is in this place
isolated but never ostracized

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unhappiest Moments....

times when you are
cconcerned more about yourself

what you eat and what
you spend

times when you become like an
account ledger

computing where you gained and
where you lost

are the unhappiest moments of
your life....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unhappy Soul

the unhappy soul
waits upon those with broken hearts
on the corridors of jealousy
and without mercy
ambushes those caught
unaware by her own wiles

in misery she takes you in
and taking revenge for what happened
once to her
the roots of her unhappiness taking
the depth of darkness
the hollow recesses of
her own madness

she leads you to the whirlpools
of sorrow sucking you in
until you cease to breathe
and lost to the bottom
of another madness

and when you're gone
she laughs harder than before and
waits again for another soul
for another submission

the unhappy soul unmasked
is the devil within

look inside you
be honest

is it you?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unhappy, Miserable Ones...

ey say
a full stomach cannot make the brain
think,
ey say too much thinking can be dangerous
for the mind
is one labyrinth that does not stop
the exit is hidden
and all you meet are walls
within walls
ey say
in this world there are so many unhappy people
some for a lot of reason
a loved one taken so early
a home that breaks
a love that is wasted
hearts bleeding stabbed by the cruel dagger
of the playful
there are those who say
some people grieve over nothing and this is the saddest part of all
when reason is shattered
when that naked body runs away
a mad man
ey say there are those who lie and kill and rob
in order to survive
ey say there are people without conscience anymore
too many of them

i agree
completely. We have been included in what they have said.
And i can be one
among the rest....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unholy Hour...

the town is always noisy at night,  
the drunkards are singing in loud voices  
off tune, without the sense of  
compassion to the piece  
or respect to the great composer,

at the other side is the basketball  
in loud speakers, the referee is  
eating his words and castigating  
the syllables at this unholy hour,

as i write this piece, perhaps literally  
i feel unperturbed. To each his own  
noise, to each his own way of finding  
peace for this indeed is an unholy hour.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Universe

the universe
in a grain of sand
yourself
inside the
last sigh the last
beating of your
heart

think small
it is beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
The Universe As Tortoise

when that old lady says that the universe
is a big tortoise
and under it are a series of turtles
one above the other
swimming in the pond,

well, do not say it is being stupid
no, not at all,

the old lady was simply poetic
she knows that the absurd can only be understood
in metaphors.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unjust Woman,

you had been unjust
as we too carry our loads
of stones
you stopped carrying yours
complaining that you do
not deserve this and we
who cannot refuse any load
have to carry yours while
you sit there in your house
wondering what
party next to attend
what church to visit
and speak and
brag how you carried the
burden of your lies and take upon
you the glory that you never
for once ever ever deserve....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unknowing Giver

someone struggles through life
inch by inch upon its own slime upon a leaf

someone is a worm beneath you and you
have no mercy at all stamping it with your feet

but you have not realized somehow
death can be a gift and you have become

its unknowing giver.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unpoetic Stage

when you have become too busy
reading between the lines of other people's truth and lies
you become unpoetic,
you do not see how enticing the world becomes
you are preoccupied extracting which is real and which is not.

truth is unpoetic. It is bland. It has no friends.
It is blinded and how it sees is a matter of logic.
the eyes become useless. It is the mind. It is the numbers
that run your world now.
the distance, the measure of what is really there.
There is no more beauty in quality.
It is the quantification, the weight, the blackness and whiteness
of squares and circles.

to become poetic once again, one must not believe much on truths.
There is imagination which defies the ugliness of this humanity.

One rearranges beliefs. Put things together. Design
beauty and then say all the good there is.

i am in this stage now. And they say that i have served so well.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unsaid Word.....

the consequence of this
poem is always:

there is still time.
tomorrow never ends.

i am into this poem
which gives me nothing at all.

i am the giver as always
subservient to its whisper

i sometimes took over the window
into the line of trees
from this oblongated soundings

the birds keep on chirping near
the house pecking on the unwary worms

the cars on the road are noisy with
the usual second hand engines and

then the children stopped playing
because the rain is profusely pouring

the time has changed, as mothers
overprotective of their kids no longer
want them to play under the rain

spontaneity is shut inside the mouth
as the esophagus still wants to spit it out.

here comes the lazy tongue still unable
to say the word: ............

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unsolved Puzzles....

inside the bus
we simply are huddled in

we pay and service is done
by chance we oblige for a talk

we visit a lot of places and
had our pictures taken

these matters are not meant
for intimacy, all are casual

we walk in and we walk out
in that long trip, more thoughts,

the last dinner was served
tomorrow we all leave and go

our separate ways, though emails
are given, there is no bother

at the end, we are back into
our real nooks, reading, typing,

thinking again how to solve
the same puzzles which we left.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unspoken....

there is a way to speak
without speaking
there too is a way not
to speak
but you have spoken
much

you are the one who
can read between those
lines
another one reads what
was written
and comes up with what
was not there

ah, love even understands
without the use of words
as words conceal
what we detest just to
please
the one in power

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unused Punctuations

it is with painful
eyes
that i end
this
line

they are the punctuations
that you
have been looking
for in
this poem

RIC S. BASTASA
The Unwritten Poem

in a garden of
air
i pick up words
well chosen
like ripe berries
in that forest
of empty space
and they i put each
word inside my
mouth
a very private room
where
some treasures
are kept

i love the taste
and i am not
spitting any

RIC S. BASTASA
in a garden of
air
i pick up words
well chosen
like ripe berries
in that forest
of empty space
and then i put each
word inside my
mouth
a very private room
where
some treasures
are kept

i love the taste
and i am not
spitting any

RIC S. BASTASA
The Urge The Longing For Satisfaction

to scratch an itch
to caress that which gives us pain
the fingers play a song
on the body on the hair
deep within
the lost purity of my soul

there is always the satisfaction
after the scratching of an itch
there is a smile on closed eyes
lips wet and body sweat

there is a dream
a fantasy somewhere

without you
my thoughts of you
my longing about what you are to me

there is in my body a black bird wanting to fly away
without you

RIC S. BASTASA
The Urge To Write

it is when there are butterflies in my belly
that my hands become pens

and when all these butterflies have flown away
all the words retreat in the sockets of my eyes

i become blind with all these thoughts
i am neither myself nor yours. I am no one now.

I am nowhere too. I am lost and cannot be found.
Asleep, just tired asleep in my dark room.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Use Of Laurels..

and talking about regret,
it is a word that i have deleted from
my vocabulary,
i have had it before
about to marry it and live with it
and perhaps have kids with
such a word...

lucky me, got noodles for
summer, ice cream for winter,
and cigars in my
silence

oh, you see, we need fans
sometimes even in the coldest seasons
of the year,
we need fire in the desert
sometimes
we must need what we do not need
sometimes
we must accept what we cannot
accept sometimes
and just be at home with all these
otherwise
what is the use of laurels?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Use Of The Word 'And'

How did you use the word 'and'?

Like part and parcel
Like twins, same faces
With no meaning at all.
In all likeness

But I see how it is
Used in your country,

Liberty and equality,

How come? Did you not
Shiver with the way
How they are paired?

There may be liberty
But where is equality?
Or is it not an irony
That both in the context
Of “and”
they do not exist
at all

As free and equal?

can
liberty and justice

for all

i am
Just asking.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Useless

this drift of having to
write
without anything in mind
or purpose
sometimes
is actually life running like
blood in my fingers
in my brain
igniting nerves into
tiny fires
magnetic sparks of
electricity from
insignificant stones and
thrown away
twigs

RIC S. BASTASA
The Useless Poem

He knows that his poetry
Is a useless endeavor
As you put it,
There is no money for a poet,
Not even fame when he is alive
Or even dead, perhaps for some,
Whose lines are judged for greatness

His poetry is nothing but a way of laundering
His emotions,
Not even read
Nobody really cared
How many nights did he spend to make a poem?
His heart bleeds
For more pain, his stomach acidifies for more
Harmful corrosive liquids rising to his brain
Through all his intestines and veins

And he goes groggy
Nauseous,
Till dawn breaks he makes his lines
Like a fool
He wants to stop and put an end to everything
He is suffering
He knows the end

Cannot refer to this poem
But to his life
He ends it
His poetry may live on some pages
But (again) not even read because nobody

Nobody really cared

Perhaps someday when another useless poet
Comes accidentally along
Surfing
Or
 Writes the same useless  
 Lines like the way he wrote his  
 By a slim chance  
 He shall then  
 Be read for once  
 Through this poem  

 Again  
 And again  
 Because in fact  
 There are many of them  
 More than you will expect  
 Rereading the useless poems  
 Still bleeding asking for care and even forgiveness  

(The vice of asking for attention  
The uselessness of recognition)  

 Another one reads it this time  
 It is, I will not mind, You  

 RIC S. BASTASA
The Uselessness In Arguing About The Proper Use Of Words

those that discuss much about words
and how properly they must be used
how grammar is murdered and
sentences dis-edified must have no talent
to pursue into
actual use without complaint as to what
must be and could have been

in fact words are not pillars
where buildings stand and become castles
words in truth only serve within that curve
beyond this fence
and walls
words cannot go over and
penetrate

those that you think and remember
and keep forever
no word has ever conquered
sometimes
mouth-less it cannot utter
speechless in air
unrecognizable anymore in the word of those
unspoken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Afternoon

we sit facing an old garden
we have tea and some chocolate cakes
we have the usual talk
some jokes and some mindings
of some neighbors
their quarrels and their conciliations

we notice some changes now
the flowers are wilting and the air
is hot and humid
the dog is sleepy and the car is rusty

we keep on talking and talking
as the world keeps narrower
as the skies get greyer and greyer
it must be the way we chase time
how we were left out
how we wanted to be with it
and love every minute

we keep on joking and joking
yet our eyes are ripening with some
drops of tears and our hands
cannot hide the trembles

there will be a time to admit defeat
loss of faith loss of love loss of life
it will come and we will all be silent
as silent as the air is hot and humid

by that time we will no longer be afraid
we shall have decided already
the exact spot of our resting place
soft grasses and a dark cold night

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Afternoon Walk

Flying sparrows, worry they do not
About what to eat about what tomorrow
Shall be, God tells us, so that
We humans, his servants, his children,
His friends, need not worry too

We know that we are spoken of that
God’s love and goodness
He feeds the sparrows from the grains
Of this field, he makes them drink from
The rain, he gives them all the sweetness
From the fruits of the trees
He had given them limitless skies
Where they can all fly
He had given them nests
For them to call home in all the nights
And storms

I walk today on this path, after a hard day’s work
I like to think
Reassuring ideas as these
God’s love and kindness
I like to see
These birds flying again around me in this
Usual afternoon walk
When the sun is about to set
On these walling mountains
How wonderful to see this scenic view!
How good the feeling to see the sparrows again
Though I cannot hold and touch them
The softness of their feathers
The agility of their small wings
The lightness of their bodies
Their quick soars and dives and light landings!

I guess. Now, I am also feeling fine
This light body, the small wings of my soul,
The flight of my thoughts, soaring and diving and lightly landing
to the hands of my God
In the twilight of these dusky skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Choice

after the rain
comes summer
something wet
dries up
the pain ebbs
like a
hidden creek
without an
exit

remember
those playful baths
the chase
the fun and
unsubmerged laughter
we were once
young
and unpredictable
so much
joy
no thoughts
no rules

forty seven summers
and we learn
the meaning of rain
odds and evens
wrongs and rights
being still
like a tree without the
wind

summertime
it will be fun
but not for us
anymore

spectators of
the stars
hiding bodies from
midday
light...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Find....

you cross the sea
arrive at a port
on a land where you
were never for once
has set foot on
its rock
you carry your bag
traveling lightly
you follow a road
that winds upon
the mountainsides
you cross more rivers
down the valleys
and when you arrive
at what he is boasting
you actually find
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Happening

and so it happens
that he finally went to the wilderness
because his heart is bleeding
and he is in need of the cure

the silence in the desert
the extreme heat of the sun
the hope for the oasis
the dream of camels
the mercy of his beloved

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Human Situation

it rains today
the dogs are inside the house
resting their heads on
beige tile floors

outside the roads are
busy with cellophane covered
pedicabs

women with colored umbrellas
men with their hats on
some children are playing under the rain
and as usual
i am in my own comfort zone
watching

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Loneliness

for five years
already they are sleeping
with their backs facing
each other
upon a molave bed
which their parents
gave as a gift during
their marriage

the windows have
been kept open
every night as the
winds come and go
with all its
coldness

when the moon comes
no one sees its beauty
anymore
in the house
what is felt is the
usual loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Night

filled with stars
fresh air
songs of leaves
sighs of stones
lights turned off
sleeping with a lover
tight in her arms
open windows
flying drapes
murmurs from the sea
envious moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Protest And The Unusual One

the usual protest is when you
say something for the person to know
that there is something that you do not like
and that you want that something to be
corrected or at least be improved a bit
but what you say falls on deaf ears

the unusual one comes next
you pretend that there is nothing wrong
that nothing is unusual
and that everything is smooth as usual
and you do not tell anymore that something
is wrong and both of you goes on with your lives
as though there is nothing wrong
and that you are well and
too submissive
and of course this pleases her
to her core

the other one asks if you're ok
in the middle of a cold weather
and you will say
everything is perfect
despite the shiver

and then she will find out that
one day you are gone
an empty house shall not
even tell her why

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Questions In My Mind

we choose the grains
carefully
we throw the chaff
and keep those that
can satisfy us
those that can grow
again
to make us see
what was the past
all about

in the same manner
when we love?
or marriage?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Song At The Bathroom....

'i'd like to run away from you
but i never will

i love and hate you and love you hate you
but i can never live without you

for whatever you do
i never never never fall in love with anyone but you....'

(it is raining outside and the temperature is cold
i'd have this hot shower in this beautiful world.)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usual Story...

and then the problem comes
after the meeting of the
the turtle and the rabbit
after the winning and the losing
to each priority
the rabbit to the bushes
to the river the turtle goes

there is no saying that
after all, the warning is given
personally, the rabbit will
always remember
and so does the turtle
there is no point of reconciliation

the facts of life are here again
nothing to lose nothing to gain.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Usurper

THE MOON
was crescent shaped
the star in between floats like a jewel
hanging on the ear

what appears to be
a hungry mouth
eager to swallow
what does not
belong to it

and then
the war started
atrocities justifying other atrocities
violence begetting
genetic violence
TV ads says
propaganda keep on
saying
there is no one to
blame

right fighting for rights
body burying another body
the ring
the circle of injustice
without beginning
without end

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vacuole Of My Life

i went to a forest
it was years back

on the flowering of
my youth
The forest taught me
Love

Something is missing
in my life
so i went back to the
forest
hoping for a filling
of this
vacuous thing

the forest is dead
all trees buried
building rose like
toothpicks
roads wind like
scribbling of an
overactive child

they tell me the answers
are written by the
neon lights
i must immerse to the noise
of this new civilization

i have not adjusted to the
change
and so i went back home
to this place where i sense
i belong

the vacuole of my life
grumbles like an empty stomach
it has learned to live
emptiness upon emptiness
it greedily eats

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vacuum Cleaner And The Cotton

what is it that the vacuum cleaner
takes from you? dust and dirt and scattered pieces
on the floor
in your room and in your kitchen
from the carpets

and what is that the cotton takes too?
or the sponge? or the rags?
they will take in water, moisture,
and stains
from the walls
and your ears

and what does my heart take from you?
it will take your gaze
your smiles
your breaths and your whispers and your kisses
and your warm memories
it will take even your rivers
your sea
your world your universe
the stars and the moon
even your suns

RIC S. BASTASA
do not give me a name,
i got one, do not mention my name,
i like its silence,

do not give me a seat for i like it better when i stand

do not give me an address i am not going

do not mention a place i am not staying

do not give me a list of friends,
i do not have any i will not be wanting any

open the door
it is what i like, for i

am always leaving.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vagabonder

it is a long trail
it rains so hard
you are wet and you come
upon a home of an
abandoned house to shelter
you finally
amid the tall trees
and wild grass
and darkness

the house has
a door which is closed
and a window
without light

you try taking the stairs
but the snake is there first
and it has become its
territory

it is tiring
the night is deep
the rain falls so hard
you are cold
but by then you have to
move some more
to find
time
whether it holds
a place for you
whether luck
is near
whether life still
cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
I am the body, and you are the soul. I let you in. You are my guest.
Inside my body, you feel what I know.
What you like I too must like.
What you disgust I too must disgust.
We have become one. Ideally, we go. I go where you go.
I let you stand on my feet
I let you touch the persons and things that you love
Through my Hands.

I am the body and you are the Soul. Inside me
You are my guest. They say that you are more important.
Holier. More wise. Filled with Understanding,
As I let you stay, I have become of lesser importance
To those who worship you, through me.

I am the body, and I have become secondary
to Your importance. But you are just my guest. I have let you in.
Now I demand that you too must respect my flesh,
My bones, My blood. I bleed. You don't. I feel the pain
You don't. I now demand that you too My Soul
Must understand my simple needs. My need for warmth
and Desire.

I am the Body and You are the Soul. I demand respect
and understanding otherwise I may use my power
to Oust You. I still have the power to put an end
To this Body and it is you who must leave.

You must understand me. When I end the life of this Body
As I very well know I can, then you Leave.
I will be left. I may rot. I may turn to Dust. But I have done
what is within my Power.

Respect my little lusts. That is my compromise with You.
Have a little understanding to my confusions.
Bear with Me too. Be my Guest. Be the Good One.

My Soul, My friend, My companion. I am your Faithful Body.
The Value Of Each Present Moment

soon you will learn the wisdom of living only for today
as though is it the last day of your life

you begin to like the way the dragonfly hovered on the branch of the flowering
calachuchi tree than the numbers found in your
bank account

you savor more the rich flavor and taste of the cooked banana ground with
coconut shreds and brown sugar than your anticipated profits of a land deal
somewhere in Alang-alang

you shall learn the value of today, this moment, this hour, than the future which
has promised you a basket of happiness the camarin of glory the innumerable
promises of life yet to come
and which is still not here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Value Of Having To Write A Poem Or Two

don't you know
that i always feel so alive
after writing
a poem or two?

it is as though
i have not exhaled for years
as though
i have only learned to inhale
at this moment

cool fresh air fills my lungs
a dance song in my heart
aerobics for my veins
a view of the landscape of rivers
and hills and a house beside
with chimney
blowing its smoke for
the breakfast menu

at night the moon is full
and the birds are tightly asleep
all these are in my mind
after a poem or two.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Value Of My Life...

and this is the paradox
says the monk in saffron
the value of life depends on
how you value too
the life of others
the higher you put others
on their pedestals
the nearer you are to yourself
and to God
much closer even

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vanishing Years....

there is actually
nothing repeated after the segregation
after one's body is pulled
and all the roots are taken

someone disappears
and everyone that loves it keeps looking
in all places
asking all the questions possible that may lead
to an answer

but nothing repeats itself to make a trace
and leads you to a finding

at one final moment
one must accept the reality of a disappearance
a banishment
from the hell that other have inflicted upon each
one that we long and loved
and we sit upon this longing in so much
silence

remembering
and always remembering the smiles of every vanishing face
their touches
and embraces
until all the pain of separation is gone
until what we have
is ourselves
lucky enough to be still in the room
dining with the rest
and conversing what we used to speak about
because
we have finally forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vase

the vase where
your flower is put
is filled with
mosquitoes

doyou still want to
put it there?

in this lousy metaphor
my body is the vase.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Veil That Covered Her Face

That veil was the first symbolism
Of her lies, it covered
The truth of her origin,

Her face underneath, you never really
Saw the truth of her eyes,

You were blinded by the cloth
You were tempted by the part that was still covered,

When the veil was lifted
It was then that you saw, the truth, of what was felt,

You wanted to back out,
And stop the ceremony of a commitment

But there were lots of people in the church
Ready to clap their hands, after the much awaited kiss

You kissed her, and the people clapped in
Jubilation of your beginnings

You did not really mean it,
But it was too late; you have already sealed the contract

With that kiss and all the people in the church clapped their hands
The rest in your life to come shall be without the participation
Of your senses.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vengeance Of The Earth....

can the peace of the earth
as man ravaged its forests
and poisons its seas and rivers
the earth does not say anything

can the earth welcome every destruction
for a time
and then it comes with its vast vengeance
take care.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vengeful Poem

you ask if you can burn
a house
then to answer it
you burned one

the family house
where your mom died a week ago
was ashed

you father left
unable to stand you

you handed your arms
they will not take it
they confess
they still love you

when the police officer charged you with arson
they put you in a place where no one knows you
they still protect
as their own brother by blood

all that you have in mind is an escape
you want to burn another house

one day

you told the man next door that you can kill him
he told your brother
who asked you about your scheme
of your first premeditated murder

you said you want to try if you can really kill a man
with your bare hands

you have become uncontrollable

now a lesson must be given to you
you will be captured in this poem
it is inside a rectangular perimeter

there is no exit

now our world shall be calm
and it will be peaceful upon its bed of grass

because
this poem also knows how to kill

RIC S. BASTASA
The Versions Of Our Humanity

there are so many versions of our
humanity
and those who strongly believed that they are right
come before our table and
tell us what to do with our lives.

everything has become do this and do that
don't do this and don't do that
these rule makers never think if they could be
(possibly) wrong
their eyes are so stable
focused and i have not seen them blink for a moment

sometimes i wonder if they can still see the stars in
heaven
sometimes i ask if they also have nights in their homes
since all they speak are about light
and fullness and happiness

they only have days and preoccupations
there is no more room for air for space for possibilities
and i wonder if they also know how to breathe

RIC S. BASTASA
The Very Wars They Inflict Upon Us

history remembers names
sculpted on white marbles
of soldiers who died
in their own valor

the very wars they inflict upon
us perhaps history too must not forget

the civilian, the innocent children, the crying women,
the mosques, and churches in ashes, the playgrounds missing,
the markets all blown up,
the trails erased one day, the forest flaming, the art museums gone

they planted the mines
and those who may have not forgotten
still clearly remember

on some days while they sleep on bed
some explosions still come alive

the dead still keep on dying

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vessel....

if i were here
as air
and i left as
air
who was i then?

the vessel claims
me?

i take its shape
and it thinks that i
am it

i live in there
and it thinks i am it

funny vessel
claiming me now in
grief

for mistaking me
as its
identity....

indeed, it is miserable
not having learned much
what air is....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Victim Of Bad Journalism

One morning he comes to you
Introducing himself as the journalist from the city

And he comes to interview you about this little conflict
About you and the mayor of this town

What can you tell him, except the truth
In good faith you say you do not want to be popular

And be likable by the mayor’s taste like you do not want
To be his stamp pad maintaining your independent stand

On the issue of life and death of his enemies
On the issue of you as the pillar of justice and the mayor

As another pillar of his own, vis-à-vis the people’s will
The voice of this miniature democratic society

He jots down every word that you say as he asks
More questions which you answer with all candid honesty

Like you have been this judge for the past 12 years
And the mayor simply dislikes your being passive

To his programs for justice (in his subtle way
Of telling you what really pleases him)

You tell you live in peace, in independence
Free from any dictates, except your conscience

Tomorrow morning the paper headlines read
“Town Judge calls Mayor a Stamp Pad! ”

Your wife asks you what is this all about?
And you are silent; you sip your coffee carefully

You read the paper again, you breathe some more
You are silent than ever, you ponder some more
These powerful people around you do not deserve the
Dignity of your answer and you do not want to see the face

Of that journalist again; He successfully made you feel
That in this town, honesty can be very serious offense.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Victor......

the waves of fidelity

faithful to the years

smoothed the sharp edges of broken glasses fragmented cliffs

into soft sands in the spreading fingers of time the victor

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vietnamese Hat...

from dried buri palms
she weaves the Vietnamese hat

all for aesthetics
her soft hands make it

despite the hot day
the hat is only for the pompous display...

RIC S. BASTASA
The View At The Top

it is 3000 steps from the ground. You begin climbing on an early morning when the grass are still rich with dew and then the sun starts to shine and then the birds start to gather the sweet sap of the fruit with their tiny, and long, black beaks along the way.

it is not strange to see a variety of colored butterflies hovering from one flower to another. They too gather the nectar from the wildflowers along the way.

you climb slowly each cemented stair of this old shrine you tackle each station of the cross of this catholic rite.

finally at noon you reach the top and see the whole of the city below.

a river winds like a snake. It is the same river that you pass seven times before reaching the ground of this peak.
you see the sea beyond
like a basin with still water.
you see boats like
floating petals of a
white flower, and those
biggers ones appear
to you like leaves
that had fallen to the ground.

you see clouds and clear skies
and you feel that up here
you are both king and god.

do not look down on this cliff
the feeling that everyone pulls down
your feet is still there.
you have felt it before in the office
where you are working and you
want to quit.

just like the butterfly that gathers
the nectars or the birds that gather
the sap of the ripe fruits
you come here to gather
your spirit. You want to be strong.
You want to be whole again.
You like to move on.

There is so much silence at the top.
There is no noise except the comforting silence of the wind.
There is so much to gather here.
Harmony. The unity of the universe in the
palm of your hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
The View For The Morning Show

the sea is pastel gray
at the horizon lies the shadow of another place
misty blue mountains
little boats like dots
and dashes of foams
towards a distance
dissolving images of
some journeys

RIC S. BASTASA
The View From The Judge's Chair

down

down

ric s. bastasa
The View From The Watcher's Face

He was looking at it
with all relish and if you were looking at him
you will find yourself
the way he put his chin on his right hand
his face leaning
away from the light of the table lamp
his knee upon the arm of the black leather covered chair
he wears his glass
like a writer of a film
which hits the market
and destroys
whatever moral fabric is left
by the termites of his time.

RIC S. BASTASA
The View Of The Beautiful Hill

upon a hill
covered with green grass
a white tower stands
beside it a house with
two big black windows
a red roof
and whitewashed walls
above them are clouds
a comfort of the view
like the wings of
an egg-laying chicken
embracing beauty

RIC S. BASTASA
The Vindication Of The Man Thought To Be Mad By Them...

how late was it? it is five past one.
not dusky yet, but it is lonelier. I can
hear the soundless pavement now.
i sort of know for now that it has nothing to do
with what the word means. It is the sound.
It is what i have not heard. It speaks.
It is not the word. But it is the sound it had been
keeping throughout the day. It is the humiliation,
This being not believed at. This ignorance
The way you are being ignored despite the truth of
your prophecy that at the end there will be destruction.
It is not the meaning now or the coherence
Logic has no place here. It is the unheard sound
of your impotence. You are powerless here and she
is there laughing at you.

There are cars. There are too many of them
and they are going to the cliff and they will all fall
and die.

it is five past one. The gecko does not make the sound
at this hour. It has nothing to eat.

The night is without stars. There is no rain.
The trees are still. The creek is dry.

now is the time for my redemption.
Tomorrow the bank will be closed. That will be enough for
my vindication.

i told you so, but i will never tell you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Violence That You Inflict

The violence you inflict in the boy
Is the same violence that he will
Inflict with his peers and
Even friends through and through
From the small petty matters of
His childish games to his
Affairs in school and then to
His fellowmen in the bigger
World and it will go on and on

And then you read the papers
This morning and feel threatened
By the violence that the world
Has inflicted to itself to every
Famine stricken country with
Bullets and asphyxiating gases
And weapons of mass destruction

You ask me and I will tell you
It started with you in the form
Of some discipline sticks and
Mongo beans that you impressed
Upon your little boys and girls.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Virgin Flower

a moment
when a white
flower receives
the first drop
of gentle rain
feeling heaven.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Virgins Of Artemis

She meets soulmate

and that is final & irrevocable

she writes dear husband dearest

the last letter which says 'goodbye and have a goodtime'

soulmate is her woman for seven years

they were all the virgins of Artemis

RIC S. BASTASA
The Virtue Of Self-Reliance....

i wait for no one
and no one waits for me

copy: i am an island
i touch no one and no one touches me

does this sound like poetry at all?
does this sound like an existential angst of one who wants to hold on the hooks of words
fished out from the confused waters?

for one, i haven't heard the cries for help
there is only the sound of feet and hands flapping like the fins of a fish
as though
someone is short of breath
and about to die

i like this,
this way to the door of the music room
sitting on a bench
facing a piano
as i begin to press and let my fingers travel distances
each note
takes me to nowhere, relying only on the sound of its longing
no destination, no purpose

ah, like a cocoon hanging on a leaf
merely passing the time away

without the dream of a butterfly
inside its darkness

ah, everything blooms,
everything opens

let us see how can this happen to me
watch me as i too watch you

this must be life then, surprises all surprises
how can boredom be so real?

how can jejune be June?
what about the numerical ennui on the month of May?

listen, listen
drink the silence
savor this inner peace

<.................>

RIC S. BASTASA
The Visit

Cousin Salud, this visit is brief
We would rather be concise about what we really want to say
But there is no way to be blunt
About our common miseries, your children not bearing any
Children while we too, have survived the years without
Knowing how a baby cries, how the diapers would have to be
Changed, how we blamed our past and forefathers about their mistakes their sins
imputed to us
So we have our present state-of-affairs
Pasted on our skins and foreheads

I’ll take a bottle of beer in exchange for the joke
Of infertilities, how the egg and the sperm never meet
And how the uterus does not want any organism to sleep
On its bed, well we do not really mind
The misery that we think we have
It exists only in your mind
This visit will be brief and we would rather be concise
With what we really want to say
We are not miserable, we live the life of the sojourners
The palmers the pilgrims we travel a lot with nothing to carry
In our back, except this digital camera that clicks and clicks

You see, we always wear our smiling faces
Behind us are the shadows of green hills
On the side are the blue seas and coconut trees

If you can only see what is facing us
You will be glad
They are our friends cheering us telling us always
To smile and say Cheez!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Visit On The First Week Of May

when you arrive
the doors do not open
by themselves
the locks are asleep

both of you get inside
you find that the air is still
not really tranquil
there is simply no hands
of time
that welcome both of you

the bed is ready
yet you only put your bags
and then leave

the field of loneliness is fertile
yet not word has ever grown
the seeds rot
and the rain never stops

RIC S. BASTASA
The Voice Of The Crying Child.....

here is still the voice
of the child
still alive beyond
the boundaries of
midnight

i want to close it
switch it off like
an unwanted light
like an unnecessary
fire

it is still haunting
though well fed
it is not hungry
it is not thirsty
but it is still the voice
of the crying child
beneath the sought
silence and the peace

here is the voice of
the child
it is still chanting the
harshness of truths

how many nights
how many days
it has not tired crying
it does not die

this voice of the small child
for centuries
never stopped, never quenched
never dead....

RIC S. BASTASA
You are always beyond
collection as in truth there is no
duplication of you

your voice is the voice of the desert
lighted by the moon at night when all the jackals
and foxes are awake looking for their prey
and you are there
silent upon the sands
warning those who have come
with all their
confidences

RIC S. BASTASA
The Voice Within

Alright
there is a voice that
speaks
to me at dawn
which does not
use words

and so
i too hear it
without the use
of my ears

for even my hands
for years
have not knowN yet
how to
receive it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Voices Within

careful
they ask if you have a
menagerie of words
a place where they can be filtered
into stanzas of beauty
and you assure them
you are a studious man
learned of the art of
expression and that you will not fail them
of their message
you tell them you are not color blind
that your sense of smell is
not destroyed by
the foul smells of this nook
your room that
becomes the stock of dirty clothes
and underwear
unwashed for weeks
your empty coffee mugs
your dirty linens spread on the
dusty floors
your twisted window frames
your urine persistent
you smile at them that all things
are simply manageable
and that they will not regret the
consistent efforts of a man
worshiping
transshipping extrapolating
tons of words
into another understandable
language of the
island
they smile
and then you are taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Void Which Is Not Vague Anymore

we were trained to
confront
what was not there yet

our ancestors warned us
to be always prepared
for what it not there yet

we do not know what it is
what is this all about
yet we followed every word
every instruction

some have lost faith in this
and they begin to drink and be
drunk all night
and wake up late on the days
of their lives

one night
what was not there yet
arrived
in the silence of the tiger's feet
on the grasses

it was clear as i have seen it
the emptiness that devoured them all
in the vast silence of the
fields
in the darkness of the night
in the hopelessness of dawn
which did not fruit to light

it is vague to me how all these
thing happened
but it happened just the same
that void which ate them all
like rice noodles in one sipping
with nothing left finally
on the bowl....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waiting For Some Answers

we have dreams  
they are seeds  
some have not  
grown  
there is simply  
no fertile soil  
there is no rain  
to feed them  

some bushes  
are beautiful still  
destined as they are  
flowerless  

we have dreams  
without leaves  
vines that have  
not run  
because there  
are no walls  
for them to lean  
on neither  
trellis or  
rooftops  

but just the same  
we take baskets  
emptied where we  
must place them all  

we march through these  
aisles  
these paths lead  
to the same  
direction  

at the end we bow down  
lay prostrate  
we say those prayers of
thanks
and like the rest
shall keep on
waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waiting Of What Comes Next....

cannot as yet be explained
the wind knows what ripe time is
every golden grain counts and mounts upon a stalk

telling a story to the humus layer
of this soil
the master is seated facing a wall eyes closed
it sees well what comes next comfortable now
every bit of an atom has a carried explanation
every vibration is love
the wind goes to another place leaving silence satisfied

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waiting....

The waiting has been
all agreed upon,
not too early and
not for long,
when it is time for me to leave
leave i must,
the opportunity is over
like time
it slips and finally gone
there is no worry
when you by all means
late you've come
by then i must and should have
been gone

but look,
what crazy man could i have been
still,
all these days waiting...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Walk

i had a walk at the Great Wall of China
last few years ago
i do not wish to remember the exact date
it is not important though the place is
though each brick of the wall told me of
so many deaths and so many unceremonious burials
because the wall has a way of continuing its trek
despite the thousand deaths
it is destiny the great wall says and keeps on saying
that time when i made my walk with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Walk Of Faith

it is at the time when
there is nowhere to go
when all you see are fog
and mist and
dead ends
when God makes you
see the
bridge under your feet
and then you go
walk on it
crying with
joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Walking Foot Pen, The Spreading Legs Of Paper

and why should the pen keep walking
and the paper keep expanding? why should they
all become human, soft and fragile,
and too accommodating for all these
restlessness of the spirit?
they are our friends, all these poems
they are our circle of acquaintances
passengers all, waiting on the train station
for another transport,
to where? that is the surprise
today.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wall Clock And The Stairs....

all the sad and lonely people
they are all here
gathered,

all the sad and lonely people
they are all here
and i listen, listen all too well

and i ask myself, from where do all these lonely people come from?
and i ask some of them, from where do you come from?

all the lonely and sad people do not answer
they are well dressed, and square and straight and prim and proper

their lips are sealed and their gazes are deep
all the lonely and sad people with their wits on, their wisdom kept

in the silence of their boxes
that thorax, that ax on their backs
no blood at all, no sound, nothing so bad to see

from all these sad and lonely people
who have gathered here

knowing perhaps that we all look the same,
and behave in the same manner

of the wall clock and the stairs.

RIC S. BASTASA
always this wall
this wall, always, this,
wall, always
i see, and face, and
grasp, and feel
with my palms, and touch
with my fingers

never love it
but i am in here surrounded
always, by this, wall,
this, wall, this wall,
always, i dream of
overcoming this, wall
this height,

i dream of ladders,
and tall feet, and i always,
look beyond this,
this wall, this.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Walls Around Us

there are so many walls

in order not to fully understand

a wall of rain
a forest of trees

a river up the floor
a cloud on our eyes

between us are thick walls

inside us a garden of flowers

we hear scents
we taste nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
The War Of Colors Is Here Again

in my seven thousand islands
and some more
rising islands
the war of the colors have just
began and soon will end

there is the green of the
raw mango,
there is an orange of the
the sunset
there is the yellow of the sun
there are purples
and reds and whites

pearls and emeralds and rubies
multifaceted diamonds

soon this will be over
but i have a nice dream about the yellow sun
emerging
dissolving corruption away

shine yellow sun shine
fade orange fade
fall green, fall like a premature leaf

i could have loved the pearl
but it is deep down the ocean floor
where it is destined to be

mustache go away
please come back another day!

RIC S. BASTASA
The War That Artists Wage Among Themselves

desert
where a seed of discord grows
showered by artists
with their poems
amazed am I
for the seed has grown
into a bush
despite the absence of rain
despite the promise of oasis
that never came
the time for flowering has come
upon the usual drought of human emotions
bringing forth the flowers which are too beautiful to be ignored
and henceforth shamed
our chosen silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
The War Within....

there is a way to look
at the situation logically

you say this is not good
it won't lead me to anything
this is paving my way to hell
it will only be for my destruction

somehow you test yourself
open your heart and give it eyes
then a rush of feelings come
and you keep on saying

this is not good
it won't lead me to anything
this is paving my way to hell
it will only be for my destruction

there is war within
and you watch who wins...

RIC S. BASTASA
The War...Within And Without....

we are numb.
we pass by the boulevard
at 5 p.m. and people there
enjoy the silence of the
setting sun
spreading the soft warmth
of its fading....

perhaps we have transcended
the need for slowing down.

perhaps we are carried away
by our own crowded minds.

perhaps we have not time for
this,

for there is war and we are
called upon to fight it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Warmth Of The Will

the days passed
they all rushed
as though someone is
dying and we all want
to save him

we do not notice the
markings on the walls
the strips of paper on
the pavements
we all rushed
because life is waiting

when we reached there
the gloom is growing
and we begin to ask
why and where and when

the moment came when
breathing stops
like an edge of a ruler
where measure is cut

we paused and that was the
time when we all begin to
stop thinking
about the where the when and the
why

what was important has become
insignificant
like air or sunlight or dew
or grass for the goats
or river for the horse
o twig for the dragonfly

the reason has gone like mist
upon the hill
it has surrendered to the
warmth of the will.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Warning Signs Of My Body

got colds today
warning my body
the i have less immunity,

i will take rest
and drink plenty of fluids
there is a rush
for being again healthy

lots of work to do
lots of deadlines to meet
for the meantime
i need sleep

but this i cannot miss
another poem for me and for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wars Within.....

BORN in the forest
raised in the city
learned and trained
now you must lead

did we not say that
diplomacy is just
and extension of our wars?

did we not learn
that we shall always
be at war?

peace is temporary
war is permanent
that is how this world lives

now in hibernation
soon the explosion
deep within the hearts of men
are the molten lavas of dissensions

around this world is
a terrain of unseen volcanoes....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Water Lilies Of Knas

ABOVE the water lilies
of KNAS
is the whole body sculpture
of a national hero
in black suit, well defined hair,
tight white pants
nice mustache on the face
of his bravery
on his right arm is the heaviness
of books
on his left his famous
clad taken from the city
of Brussels

below this history
is a pond of goldfish
bubbling
knowing nothing about
heroism

RIC S. BASTASA
at four o’clock in the morning you wake up.
blood is boiling and you look for water to quench the fire.
there is no water in the kitchen.
you go upstairs
no one is there.
you open the window
there is no rain.

it is just the silence of the world
that becomes the water
to your soul.

you drink every moment of this silence.
every dew
in the leaves
of the tree of
solitude

you are refreshed and from that moment on
you know where water
is.

what dew is
what leaves are.

there is a thirst that you have just
defined.

it is not their water
neither yours.

it is beyond the ownership of everyone.
and you know
now
where to find it
because you
also know
what it
really
is

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waterfalls And Rushing River Drown Them In Their Boundless Bliss....

you made love
by the rock
water from the mountain
fall on them
in trickles as they
moan with too much
pleasure

the waterfalls and
rushing river
drown them in their
boundless bliss....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waters Of The Pond Are So Silent

the waters of the pond
are so silent

i can hear the ripples
of the boat of death

coming at the side
of this river that bridges

us to the other island
there is feasting over there

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waves Of Change Are Coming...

the waves of change
are coming
and those who have
nowhere to go
shall be taken

oh do not blame me
i have told you
years ago to read all
the books
and prepare for all of
these

these crests and troughs
these ups and downs
these foams and whirls
and all those girls.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waves Of The Earth As Analogy

time is like the waves
of the sea carrying some season in between
the folds of our consciousness
burying some and then after a while
taking them back to the
shores of our being and we think that there is an end to all these
but the folds come back
recede and go somewhere to another shore
and another shore and another and another
and on the limitations of our
seeing we do not anymore remember but our
hearts still
our mouths no longer speaking
our tongues however
like our noses somehow have the glimpse
of the taste and smell

RIC S. BASTASA
The Waves Of The Sea

i launder my whole body to the sea
with a bamboo pole i float and facing

the horizon i meet every wave every foam
i touch an endless coming and coming and coming

this must be what the sea is all about
everything is coming and yet nothing gets filled.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way A Window Closes Itself At Night In Conspiracy With The Stars.

as he begins to write
she was telling her stories for the day

of course
he cannot do two things at this time
just like the way
how one man cannot serve two masters at the same time

in an important quest like this
the ears and eyes and mouth collaborate
like string to a kite

and she could not resist it anymore
she stands from bed
goes hear him and kisses him hard
like a stone hitting a wall

of course
he understands
the way a house admits
a stair
the way a window closes itself at night
in conspiracy with the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way Guilt Teaches Us Not To Do This And That

it is the guilt
that mothers us all

not to repeat what
we like and later abhor

it is this guilt
that behaves like an
old spinster
teaching a bunch of
kindergartens
that this playful thing
is not that good
at all

when she comes to me
bothering me
i finally decide to
offer it a
cup of my tea

and freed from her
tingling hold
i face her
feeling confident
about myself
stronger this time
about my next
decision

balancing between
this toe and that toe
i walk along this
rope
high above the air
feeling no fear
about falling
The Way He Paints The Sun And The Trees

He paints the sun in black bold colors
Flaming in black smoke and the trees
Are tiny and thin all in black like
Charred sticks from a huge fire
He did not place people in the landscape
The black rays are like the hands of octopuses
Crawling and perhaps eating the landscape
I look at his eyes, they are all red
Blood spurting out from his capillaries
With this huge fire of anger
Burning the painting the canvass ashed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way I Begin To Miss Home From Boston

what you have
are buildings, tall ones,
and i keep on walking
lost in those streets
with new names,
and outmoded maps,
and what i have are
anxieties, trying to find
a way towards a
public garden where
i can sit on a chair
watch the squirrels
and feed them and
feel relaxed for a moment,
and i begin to miss home
where beaches abound
where horizons are here and
there
where trees are tall and
leaves lush and
there even in the fall
of those
dead leaves
so much music
still abound

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way I Have Chosen Myself

i choose an old man
i choose his hand that feeds the pigeons on the plaza

i like the way he keeps his cane inside his armpit
the way he holds another memory of youth on his right hand

i love him more with his uncut beard
his mustache untrimmed

his shirt and his beret all black from the moment i met him
till he died.

i chose him, the way i have chosen myself
to meet you soon, when you come back to ask where i was

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way I Want It

as i told you before
and i will tell you again
and again
lest you forget

what i was is not
what i am
and what we did
is not what i am
going to do
to you

what you remember
as a nice memory
need not be mine at all

my world is always new
to me
and nothing is the same
as always

what you are
i may not remember
as i have this
phenomenon of
going and flowing and
fluxing

even if
as time needs it
like
a fire
fly

at night
phosphorescent

the way
i want it
RIC S. BASTASA
The Way Life Lives....

it may have no
meaning at all

it is just a way
for the water to
drop

or a surge of the river
to pass

or a cloud drifting and
then gone

or just a way of
gazing at the cow grazing

or just letting your
foot touch the grass

life is here and you
realize

with or without meaning
it stays and goes away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way Nature Makes Love

a woman spreads her legs
like the mouth of a river

man is the water that runs
through it without so much noise

the sea in the open waits
for silt and then creates

another fertile valley
a bank of rocks and

a blanket of pebbles
a bed of sands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way Pleasure Finds Its Own Ways....

so this is pleasure
your mind is very creative.
and you are limp, helpless,
devoted.

despite the fact that
this very pleasure is someone's
pain

you are limp, helpless,
devoted.

mathematics has not solved
it yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way That Kid Thinks (Taken From Somewhere)

What’s Happy Day, Buddy? ”
“It’s a day where everyone is happy. No fighting. No yelling. No work.”
“Sounds good to me! What are we celebrating? ”
“Jesus died for us and rose again, so we should all be happy.”

RIC S. BASTASA
he was careful in looking for the words
to make up his thoughts
he hangs his head on the railing of the train
closes the glass window
looks at the flashes of each passing scene
his eyes cannot wink
wide to the realities unfolding
against the speed of pictures and events
the sound of the honks and the ambulance
the trains on the byways of his mind
the destination finally arrives at the station
where everything becomes still
where everyone goes out takes the exit
to every door
and then he raises his hands to the faces that meet him
five just five of those sea of faces
and he wakes up
and he knows this is but an imagination on one of his journeys
for they are all dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way This World Is Going

the way this world is going is not really that smooth.
in space, in the emptiness of a vast space, there is only darkness

the stars may be there to light some portions
the moon and the sun
the only sun
lighting only this earth but beyond and beyond

our imagination sometimes becomes weak
our vision marred

and then inside that passing black hole
we are all sucked in

on a very sad ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is nothing
wrong with
believing that when we
die
we simply return
to our
original nature

atomic particles
reduced neurons
roving neutrons
simply
untangled from
a body

it can be harsh
it can be truthfully harsh

but i am given
a choice
whether to be
literal or
figurative

whether to see
a landscape
or simply an
array of
random particles
floating in
air in silence
meaninglessly

what makes me distinct
is my imagination

as of now i am
a body
with all my senses
on

when i die
i can still be
a flying spirit
unseen
and still as
beautiful as
i think myself
to be

even if death
reduces me into
atomic particles
i can still
dance in the
mystery of
my own
fantasy

i refuse to be
simply
a meaningless set
of dust
beneath the
feet of
this earth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Live And Die

to be without a shadow
or live without a mirror
to be an island without
a bridge or a city without
lights, or a boat without
sail or rudder, or a sky
without a star, to shrink
a seed in the smallest nook
or a door without a knob,
to have a window without
a curtain, a clock that
cannot tell time, i tell
myself, always, that is not
my way how to live my life
or how to convince you that
i for now, shall deserve
an untimely death.....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Live....

each step
each step on the ladder

each layer of
the stair

each lock, each
opening, each reachable

star, each level of
rising and falling,

mind it. Mind it.
Always mind it.

Do not look up.
Do not look down.

there is no vertigo
here, either of triumph
or defeat.

one step leads
to another. until

the end. and you
are there
even without your
knowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Mend A Broken Heart

first get a knife
slice a part of her breast
enough to take
away the bleeding
heart from
her

second get a needle
put the thread

third with the skill
of a dressmaker
mend the broken heart
a little sewing
there and a suture
over there

fourth return
the heart back
to its place

and then you may
leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Survival

since the world is too wide for my
dust
i have learned to spread my own
private emptiness
in a way that can still carry with it
a certain gentleness and
grace

to every speck is a purpose
though it floats and does not know yet
where to specifically land
it has imbibed the joy of floating
in space
meeting light and emitting it
to another corner of
your world.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Survive.....

the way to survive
is to keep calm, do

not say a word, do not
heave a sigh, do not

worry, do not fret, do
not ask, do not wink,

do not quiver, it is
unnecessary, when you are

noticed you will be shot,
there are so many of them

around you and their arms
are strong and long, and

from a distance you hear
bursts of emotions and guns,

the way to survive, after
that mass killing was simply

to play dead, bury yourself
among the dead piles and bathe

yourself with blood from all
you companions and friends.

(this he did, he played dead
so well, no one noticed that

he is alive, no one hears the
voice of his fears, no one

evies the power of his breathing
no one, no one, kills what one
thinks is dead. No one, No one)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Tame The Words....

tame them
do not quit
be ready with
the tenderness of
your hands
water them
with your thought
make them a house
a bed,
a stair where they
can sit and
view the road
where cars pass by
make dust
and leave that mark
of another emptiness
again
the aftermath of which
shall be
order.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way To Write The Truth

it is when you write the truth
that words become accurate,
you become so touching, and those who hear them
identify with them
in the most sentimental manner

perhaps because truth is a sentiment
something that strikes the heart rather than the mind
it is something so personal that someone does not even want to speak about it again

it is not spoken because no words can take it from its clarity
every detail is an obvious and
intricate design
in fact there is a map there
that connects you and
the speaker & the other listener
over there

the bridge becomes so strong
that all men in all walks of life with their women
begin to cross
in silence but with the full understanding that this is it
it is us

sometimes i tell you that i am lying
that is the best truth that i can give you
for a while that the pain is not that strong
for fear that it crosses that path that leads to you
and then
i will be too unfair
to give it to all of you
like a Trojan horse
or the seeds of discord

it is when i write the truth
that i feel rested, because by then you will confirm what i feel
what i say, what i did not say that i feel
and then i become a part of you
and then i am not lonely anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way We Hear Them It Seems They Know What They Are Doing

the cicadas sing upon a summer
the heat hinges from one forest fold to another

the world is suffering but just the same the cicadas keep on singing

the way we hear them it seems they know what they are doing

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way We Leave...

and so you learn too
being on your own this morning you have
already your itineraries
where to to what to do without
me and without you i too have my
own whattodos wheretogos

life has since become smooth and easier for both of us
when we have parted ways
though we still cling to the same vine of hope
the same house to dwell since our meetings are only at

nights when cold comes flat on the floors and
open windows and there is no moon and there is nothing to
talk about.

i like it this way. Two huge pillars supporting a house
distant from each other and yet still feeling responsible

that this house may not fall and break everything inside it
glasses and dreams
hopes and plates and
pages of the past
and scribbling of the future

we meet again and i do not ask for more
you stay as you are
my name is the same
and i am not sick and ugly

we sleep together
you belong to the side of the mountain
i belong to the side of the sea

our words are plastic.
our dreams are not that fragile anymore

i do not ask for any touch
or retouch
i want you be a bird with large and strong wings
like mine

i am thinking of bigger mountains and higher cliffs
try thinking of storms and ships and deaths

it is this way. The way we leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way We Look At Things At First

the way you look at the woman
the way she walks and bears herself along a narrow alley,
the way she bends when she picks up
a coin, the way she blinks an eye,
or look at you when you stare at her
white face, black long hair flowing like silk in air,
hers lips pouting at you
you think she is seducing you
her hands on her hips and her legs landing on the ground
like a wooden boat at the pier,
the way you look at first on the first impression is always on the
flesh
not on the shape of her bones
or the strength of her arteries and veins,
not always what is inside her guts,
or the brains in her
that you will not see unless
you go towards her, ask her name
take time together
and ask her what she thinks about
loneliness and pain

by then you will know if she is really your woman
and it is only you and time
to tell the world that the days are still worth living

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way We Were

sipping one coffee
licking same ice cream on the cone
spraying same perfume
drinking one coca-cola
eating same slice of pizza
bathing together
sleeping in one bed cover
one fried egg sunny side up
seeing through
one empty hole of dunkin' doughnut
laughing on grin jokes
holding hands while walking
on the boulevard
admiring the sunset
sitting on the bench
under the moon
your head resting on my shoulder
kisses for the night
we made love....

how can we ever forget?
the way we were

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Are Trying To Complicate What Used To Be Just A Very Simple Life

why do you
complicate life with
your philosophical
interpretations of
life's most simple
routine

louise is not in
a deep mood for
contemplation

the other one behind
that tree is
nothing

someone is just there
trying to pee....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Describe Greed

I LIKE the way you described greed

a continent conqueror
warring over a morsel

planets colliding
over a grain of rice

humanity exploding into
nothingness

because of the void....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Have Taught Us A Lesson...

those who are supposed
to be close to us have not
shown in any manner how is it
to love and care,

so,

unwanted we too have created
a distance which is that far enough
that even forgiveness cannot
connect,

so,

as hinted we have learned to live
within the confines of our house
how we close our gate how we put
down the blinds how we close the door
and lock each one.

we have all learned it thoroughly from
them.

now we have mastered this game of numbness
we have gained this notoriety for independence
this non-indulgence and non-involvement
and then here they are trying to tell us
that we are

wrong.

it is too late. we have created our own
sense of confinement
and as we do our own thing
water our own plants
clean our own backyard
dust our own feet
as we have worn already our own
tinted sunglasses
do not ever ever knock at our door
or come up our stairs
or enter our gate

we have put the bold marks there:

NO TRESPASSING
WE ARE PRIVATE PERSONS

NO TRESPASSING
THIS IS A PRIVATE LIFE

THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY
IF YOU COME
WE WILL SHOOT YOU.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Live Your Life

it was never easy
never a soda
quite a soft sofa
but never that
sleep like,

days in dark nooks
you want the sun
but it is night
most of the time

you live it clean
and short

less the unnecessary
scream

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Smile At Me

as we get near
at the junction of our new directions
i could not help but notice your smile
i understand perfectly what you are hinting
you will offer something that i dream of
like your heart on a golden platter

i would like to take it
with my own hands
and keep it whole
i want it forever

but no
things do not just stop in there
there is also an exchange
a price that i must pay
you will also take everything i have
my soul my body
it is there on the curve of the smile like a scythe
i am not ready as always to part with what i treasure
my body my soul my independence my mind

and so i turned back
to the old ways of my home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way You Want Things To Be

you want the sea to have waves
and you say that they are more true that way
or the leaves to have the wind beside it
or the skies to have clouds

how i wish however to have crystal clear seas
leaves so still as though they only have the sun as companion
clear skies
undisturbed blue

do you think that there is something wrong with all these?
i know you will leave me with a blunt answer

but let me tell you
crystals are virtues of the sea before it was disturbed
clear skies have always been peaceful
and leaves have always wanted the solitude without the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
The Way Your Mother Once Rocked Your Cradle

i wonder how your mother rocked
your cradle. Now that you have gained
manhood, you still thrive on the cowardice
of did he ever rocked the cradle
when you were once a lovable baby?
You have become the prince
of cowards of this town.
You shrink from the challenges
of our domestic wars
the wars that we fight daily within
our lives.

Go to the grave of your mother and ask her why.
Bring him the flowers. Say the necessary prayers.
Light ten candles and pray that she may answer.

If you still do not know, try looking at your face in the mirror.
Ask yourself, how gullible have you become.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Ways Of The Heart

i am told to always
follow the dictates of
my heart
papa and mama and
grandpa
when i was young
they always remind me
follow the
paths of least resistance
that the heart
gives you
because what is
important is that
at the end or
in the middle of
your existence
you have always
been happy
you have always
given priority
to happiness as
you grab it
and as it tries to
elude you

and so you followed
the heart
that gives you pain
in proportion to
the happiness
that it gives you

all is fair now
you must agree

there is really nothing less
and nothing more
the heart is exact
it's measure to happiness
two faces of women
day and night
sorrow and joy
it is the same woman that
you kiss and make
love with

she is life and death
inside that body.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Weaking...

because you have
not taken cared of your defenses
look at you
when that big bully has taken your
islands
all you did was murmur and you now
resort to going back to your
old ally
which you had discarded years ago

you should have strengthened your backbone
stored arms
trained your people to take arms when
provoked
(flex your flesh and bones
like an eagle
so that you can eat those
monkeys
making trouble in your backyard)

you cannot even kick a stone blocking
your path
in your very own home

RIC S. BASTASA
The Weary Old Man

weary, the old man from his garden
goes inside the house
with unwashed feet all muddy
rests on that bamboo bed,

he finds no meaning
why he must still live for another day

weary, he closes his eyes
forgetting supper
prepared by his granddaughter
who mother left her
under his care

weary the old man is
now asleep

as the moon which used to be full
fades completely
in a very dark sky

on that open window of his room
the cold winds are getting in

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wedding At Sylvia's

she says she likes it here
fresh air, outdoor, one can see the grass and trees

and then the bride and groom finally arrive
as the guests wait in excitement

perhaps just like everyone else one thinks
if ever happiness can be contained in the limited spaces of the heart

ey they all have a nice set of teeth she quips
too young to be happy the other woman cannot hide her envy

the white doves are released from their golden cage
and there is that usual sharing of the cake and drinking of the wine

life and time dance and the whole event is fast enough
our grasp lets go of some memories that we want to recall

the wedding is over and people start to leave the place
the table covers are left with stains and empty glasses

always we do not have ample time
always we fall short of what we really need to say.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wedding Ring

this ring does not fit my finger anymore
emaciated time and wrinkled promises

the tendency on this looseness may soon
make this wedding ring fall from my bone

& flesh but there is this bond that ties us still.
It shall stay though the hand feels nothing anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wedge

the wedge lays there
openly
your hands are moving towards
the center
your mouth brings rain
your fingers bring a quake
your eyes fall
and yet you still see everything
it is so beautiful
but it can never be yours
it is owned by it
and there is no more giving

RIC S. BASTASA
The Well Sought Happy Ending

desi

that i was once
a flagellum,

beside a paramecium
that in one flick of the finger of time

i have risen to be a tuber,
and with some little rains, i have grown

a tail, lost into a fish,
evolved into a turtle

and on a fast ambition with
the passages of more summers

i accepted the gift of wings
then feet and hands

and then in one glimpse of
the cold seasons, four or five,

i found myself in bed
as a man reading the morning papers

but i do not remember all these now
as i stand before another door

ready to enter another room
i hear a voice of someone that i

think i was with a long time ago
and for which

we shall be together again
in a new place

handing me a book for me to
read at the first hour
of another morning
beside a stranger who shall
tell me that love is actually
and still is, everywhere
and that until i feel it and
touch it and sleep with it and
live with it, then there will
be no more doors,
there is one, and it opens to
a garden, where i shall never
leave again, for when love is found
life shall be enough
when true love is found that
creeps in all the nerves of your spine
you decide to stop and stick to
where you really is
that is the end, and like all endings
it is the happy one.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Well That Becomes Dry

your rope and pail
shall find no use now

for the well that used to give you water
has gone dry

utter a word to it
and what you hear is nothing but an echo

dropp a coin
there will be no ripples anymore

a fish lives there
now dead buried on the cracks of the soil

inside is the emptiness
that it will keep till the next rain

the rope shall accumulate
dust
the pail shall have its own
rust.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wet Blankets Of Childhood

he is tired
drowsy

in the middle
of this stage
he finds images of
melting
memories

same as the old metal
wall clock
dripping on the
wall

floors like
brown sugar mix
with the
carpet and the
shoes

you smell black
pepper
and steam rice
you see
scalding fish
skin
fins separating
like
locks of hair

the feeling is
liquid
flowing like
the usual
river
that you have
been picturing
since
childhood where
you can still
hear the
dissolving laughter
on that
early night earthen
bowl

when darkness is like
a cloak
finally covering
your eyes

neither hot
nor cold
until
you fall asleep

as pain
too
diffuses
like drops of
rain from
the ceiling
to your
bed

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Bird In My Hand

I LOST A bird,
it is a bird with white wings,
i shape those wings,
and give it strength,

in the wink of an eye
it flies away,

it never sings for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White China Flower Blooming One Morning

outside the fence of this old house where
some flowers grow in the wild
along the rugger path
i see this little boy cutting the stem
of the white china flower
all in bloom this early morning
and i feel this sense of innocent cruelty
which he did
to destroy nature's beauty
unprotected by the hands of the uneducated
young creatures

i could have told him about the phenomenology
of the real beauty
of things untouched and uncut from their own branches
their blooms facing the sun with all
unhampered freedom

but the little brown boy already run away.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Heron

flying low
it circles a spot
thrice
it flaps its wide wings
retreats its head
stops a while
then lands in perfect
silence
on the rice paddy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Herons And The Black Buffaloes

dinner of fish and rice
the family eats as one

how close can a family be
in love and friendship

the black buffaloes graze and
then wade in the muddy waters
above their heads the white herons are flying low
gracefully hovering and landing
at their backs
some stand beside their thick skins
pecking for lice

how close can these creatures be
on friendship consistently
symbiotically designed
by nature's hands

sometimes i wish
we can be like all these
on a friendship without vested interest
on love platonic
in sickness and in health
......

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Horse

from a bottle
alcohol all consumed
the white horse
come flying
low and stands
beside me
all willing to take me
where i want to
be

but then i refused
i like it
its wings most
but i stick to that part
that i still
have so many
unfinished
business

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Horse...

on that early dawn
they arrived. I will not tell you
exactly how many were they.
they brought the wild horse again
this time it is white and coy
they did not speak to me
my attention was focused on the
beautiful horse
i did not show that i liked it
i did not talk too
then they brought the horse inside
the house
and then the windows and doors
were closed
and then the white horse started to
dance
and i liked it more

it was then that i realized
what are they really
and why are they here bringing me
a beautiful white horse

will they take my antique chairs
made of rosewood?
will i bargain my house
for a horse?

just for a horse
and they whose names i do not really know
shall laugh
after they had finally taken the whole of what i have

just for a white horse whose talent is just
to dance?

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Kitten Beside Me....

beside me is this
white kitten with mellow
eyes
and sonorous purring

perhaps she thinks
(if ever she thinks at all)

her
constant
cressing of my
arms
must be
pleasurable

her claws and
teeth
are sharp
and danger lurks in
her dirty
tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Lady In The Dark And Narrow Room....

she tells you
this is a sad news
something in you
is not functioning well
and it must be
removed

invasive, he has to think it over
for weeks
without telling anyone

he goes back to the past
pages of his life
he had lived well enough
and there is nothing
to be changed

he did not come back to the white lady
(how can be so sure of what life
is giving
and for her to simply
eradicate it?)

there is this sense of waiting
for nothing
except that feeling that
sooner
it must be approached
calmly
and gently like a fragile
egg that is handed
to your hand

and then suddenly break
it and end it
quickly

simply because you are too eager
to begin anew
on a clean slate you write your name
you age,
a new place now with someone
you can love

you always believe that there is always
a new beginning
for an old ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Man With His Dalmatian

a white man goes fishing
to the sea
on his white wooden boat
bringing with him his
dalmatian

wherever the man looks
the tongue of the dalmatian also follows
at the other side
the island looks at them
the mountains as usual
so big
for this kind of friendship
envious

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Painting

the white painting is
actually a white canvass with
white paints and white frame
which sold for two hundred u.s. dollars
and one asks what foolishness is
this when i can very well do it
myself but the white canvass stares at
him who dislikes it
saying, 'then why did you not do it?'

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Pearls From Me

as the gray, thick clouds
of Jose Dalman bring forth
the wild, heavy rain and as
the blown mahogany leaves
look for life on the grass
and the plain

as the intensity of the storms
of the Marupay's fierce winds brings forth
the strong pleas of  the
workers of the land
proud of the green orchards
asking to be spared

and when the eyes of the typhoon
meet the eyes of the
monkeys and the parakeets and
python

so in me, shall come the  arc of the rainbow
the subsiding side, the stopping of the rage, and the
cool white pearls of the morning dew.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Poodle

the white poodle rushes inside
the living room
this early morning when i
first open the door
for the air and light
to come in

as i stand by the window
to see the world again
it wags its tail
asking for a little attention
which i so willingly give
and then
with all affection it sits
near my feet

i put my hand on its head
and it rubs its head
warmly on my palm

as usual
we mark this day
with friendship

and then another day unfolds
like a bud blooming for happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Saucer

if i only see
a white saucer
on the table
it always spells
to me
the word

incomplete

without the
white
porcelain cup.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Thing On The Street

When i arrive home this morning
she is already there waiting by the gate

she has grown old with hair uncut
and she is stunned
for a moment when i get down from the car

perhaps she cannot believe that i am home now
not having seen me for months

she finally verified a scent of myself
from a distant air
and she dances wildly on the street
like a bagel upon
a whirlwind

happy to see her again
i take her inside my arms
and in this friendship
deeper than
a certain level of humanity
we keep things to ourselves
this joy and bliss
without having to waste
any word.

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Triangular Iron Grills Fronting The Burnt House

the safety you planned
did not work out
outside the danger
did not come
between the two worlds
separated by iron grills
you thought that nothing
ever comes your way
you have not anticipated
that the monster was inside
it spurted the gas
and the flint caught it
and the tongue of fire
came out licking everything
you own burning everything
you stored for the future
dreams and all
and fantasies and hopes
now everything is gone
what is left is the charred bone
a broken Achilles' heel
smothered face
and a twisted view

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Winged Pegasus And The Dreamer....

writing most likely as felt (by me) is more of a travel in the past,
you reminisce, your nostalgia bloats like a trouble in your kidney
you wish to filter all dirt from clean memories, hoping that what finally must be
written are only those good and health ones, those that can propel you to a
better destination,

sometimes Pegasus comes and lands on your writing table to the size of a pen,
blows his nose, waggles it tail telling you that he is now ready to take you to that
wasted patch of your past,

and you take heed, ride on its back, taken by his wings to one segment of your
life

with mother, in her birthplace, somewhere in Mindanao, before the war broke
out,
she was with your Aunt Olang, whose U.S. army husband succumb to the bionets
of the Japanese platoon,

and who for just a short time finds the substitute of the local guerrilla named
Magno, who sharpens his bolo to gather coconut wine,

in the kitchen you cousin Panit is opening a can of sardines to be cooked with
some yellow noddles for supper

wood is scarce and so is water, but laughter is innumerable,
it seems that people laugh for no reason at all, in the middle of that war

you look at the roof with leaks, rain comes at night and everyone is transferring
places since the pillows and blankets are all wet

there is suffering then, but laughter is always there to cure all the
lapses and insufficiency

harshness, hardships have no place for people whose hearts are attuned to being
contented with what is available for the moment

you want to settle there but the winged Pegasus is already restless
he has to serve other clients who still want to go back to their pasts
you wonder if this white winged horse understand people who want to live and bury their future in the past, accepting the fact that in there they are happier....

RIC S. BASTASA
The White Woman At Sunset Boulevard

she was the woman who left me.  
She hands me the back of her bones.  
she does not bother looking anymore at the past.  
she hates me. she detests  
every word that i say.  
she will not answer my call.  
She says i am a liar and had always been lying to her.  
The dirt in my arms are terrible, she says, these arms  
that used to hold her too tightly that she cannot breathe  
are broken branches of the rotten tree.  
She walks away towards the dark side of the sunset boulevard, that place  
unreachable by the night lights. Beyond the hold of my arms, beyond the grasp  
of my lips.  
she already loosened all the screws and bolts of the bicycle  
that we used to ride together every afternoon on this sunset boulevard.  
all the parts are scattered near the shore of the sea.  
The waves reached them and they all get too rusty.  
She does not talk to me anymore, this white woman at sunset boulevard.  
She walks fast.  
She runs.  
Her eyes sharp, and flaming with anger against the rage of the dark,  
avay from the city lights, away from my lies, away from the  
warmth of my whisper.  
I am her wrath.  
I am the source and cause of her anger.  
Her pains, her sorrows for years and years when i left her  
without leaving any word.  
When my name was finally eaten by the waves of the sea in  
sunset boulevard. When she drowned.  

she left rushing like a storm towards another island.  
she destroys houses and  
fell the trees.  
She goes away just like that, as quickly as suddenly  
as a gnashing teeth of the cyclone.  
I whispered her name to calm her down.  
She hurriedly left.  
She did not see that tears too that fell to the sand. They are mine. Salty, fresh  
tears. Hidden inside my bags for years. Twenty-five years of solitude.
More than that for my loneliness on an unknown island where i was stranded beyond my power. There was not a single boat to take me to her.

She did not
look back. She would not believe me.

But she is right.
My tears are not as salty as the whole sea that she swallowed when she drowned on that very day when i left her.
I have not
given her the reason. I have them ready from the bottom of my heart.

She tells her friends:
She does not want to be duped again. One of me, is is gone.
I happened to her once in her lifetime. She, is likewise.

RIC S. BASTASA
at the end
of the day my
hair are
scattered and
i go back to the
mirror and let
the comb gather
the locks back
into their places
and when they
find themselves
i tell each lock
i am proud of you
you did not leave
me then
in the whole day's
chaos.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Whole Universe Exists.

in contrast to palatable
political talks, lies the crispiness of
a romantic talk.

in fact it is your smile
that breaks it.

in fact we set aside all
the things in the world looking only
for a very small space
just for the
two of us

behind the bushes
the whole universe
exists.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Whole’s Always Greater Than Its Parts

Thank you
for disregarding the
tiny,
unlikable pieces
in me,

Thank you for
seeing me whole
throughout those years
as i have become
a beautiful forest to you
apart from
those dead
rotten trees

RIC S. BASTASA
The Why In You...

when you get old with no one
to talk to

because everyone is living their own lives
lighting their own dark homes

brewing coffee and indulge in the most trivial arguments
about life

it is proper timing that you begin to scribble
recall, recoil, rebound, reverse, modify

scramble the letters of your past life
and write

your own tapestry in poetry,
and you do not tell them when in the next morning

you are wearing a smile
something that they cannot figure out

why.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Widower

it is sad, of course, you lost a wife,  
buried her, and now you are still mourning in  
black clothes and black pants and black shoes  
and even your visions must have been  
blackened by such overwhelming sorrow,  
how can I comfort you, my friend?  
how can I tell you that you are eating some  
slices and chunks of sorrow which are poisonous?  
try me, listen to me,  
I want to lose a wife, I want to lose not just her,  
I want to lose myself, I am losing in this war of emotions,  
I am not eating chunks and slices of sorrow,  
I am being engulfed by this monstrous eclipse,  
This total eclipse of my heart, my own darkness  
I am digested by this darkness, I am acidified.

So you see, Melvin, my dear friend  
there is such thing as a muddier, blacker pasture over here.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wife Of Our Chinese Neighbor

She is strange tonight walking outside their house alone
Towards the dark plaza wearing a face that cannot be drawn

From my window I look at her edging her way slowly straight
To the other end of this concrete road along a line of trees

What is it that the china man this time did to her native sensitivities?
She was taken from the mountains away from her humble beginnings

Only to find herself in this red big house; bearing him children
Giving him the citizenship and when everything is taken from her

The china man now hits him with a hard slap that she is nothing
But a used rag, a dirty doormat that all must stamp upon, including her
very own cannot believe it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wife Of The Busy Man

she turns the air con
on

pulls the curtain to
shy away light from
the window

then she sings a
Carpenter song,

was it the Last
Waltz?

meanwhile the mason
keeps on breaking an
old wall

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wife With A Sharp Mind

then his ear
was detached and
then she
whispers all his
vileness
and then he says
he can clearly
hear it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wild Horses

the wild horses are here again
grazing on the grasses of my land
always distant
and untouchable
they run free after
roaming the mountains
resting on cliffs
breathing the air of freedom
to my envy.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wild Horses And The Snow

last night the horses were there again
black, brown, white, gray horses, spotted ones
on their furious breaths they ran wildly on the
white snow
white as the fleece of a lamb
the feathers of the parakeet
the hair of the albino hamster
they are making the sounds of freedom
exploring the distance of distances
roaming the earth
and the mountains and the plains

all in my head.
subconscious desires waiting for the Freudian explanations.
as usual.

RIC S. BASTASA
The William Challenge

steel cabinets have always been
closed and cold
that's where treasures are kept
and dandruffs are what steel
cabinets are made of,
rusty feelings, exclusions of
the hairsplitting documents
and last wills, they all belong there

you get dandruff from so much
worries, afraid to take the plunge
the warm bath, and steel cabinets
are pretty much like that,
afraid to open, keeping things
to themselves, locked in their own
selves,

now you must write about
something not about love
if you're not convinced
about the worth and
necessity of writing
about it.

try hate.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Willing Victim Of The Justice System

The two of you
watch me
how i meet death
how i look at it
in the confidence of
my eyes

there is no need for
both of you
no testimony shall be
taken

a dead man cannot file
his case in court
he had chosen to seal
his lips

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wind Against Your Body

BEHIND the bold lines
of black and the
alternating yellow fabric
is your body,
the winds against your body
the fabric shows well
the curve
the pointed breasts
the valley
of cleavage
i cannot stop looking
longer this time
and i

exploded into a firework
of golden lights
to the skies
to the seas.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Winding Road To Diongan

the winding road to Diongan
leads me to all of you

your teeth are grinding
your feet stamping
your mouths shouting
your tongues hissing

the winding road to Diongan
leads me all to you

you ask for justice and they have nothing to give
you ask for food and the make promises as always

the road to Diongan had always been winding and winding
leading me to all of you and when we finally meet

we go somewhere at the summit of the mountain
a volcano erupts and those who are not with us shall be dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Winding Roads

canva runs
for hours on this winding road
climbing mountains
we see the green forest
beside us
we are on rocky cliffs
we see the rivers wind
down the mountains
we are inside this silence
awed
overlooking the world
somehow this break
shall make us ponder
how we wasted time
on some nooks
of depression
and unnecessary worries
about tomorrow

climbing up this mountain
we look back seeing
the same winding roads

you say
there is no use going back
we look forward
the thrill up there
we do not discount
there is a valley somewhere
where we soon stop
and relax

then we shall talk
about this life
about these winding roads
that seem endless
to our gazes
The Winding Ways Of Gried And Insecurities....

....that grief is, 'like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape.' (c.s. lewis)

...we have walked for quite a time
in this winding path,
we settled on plateaus
and then started again on those winding
paths of
mountains high
crossed rivers for the nth time
and rested on
grasses with our back
dirties sometimes

...the rains are heavy sometimes
and we feel the cold and some of us
get sick,
hard coughs that seem to take away all
inside our lungs,
pains that stay on our legs for days
the anxieties in our heads
as to where is this journey taking
all of us, , , ,

no one really knows,

but the hope is there,
somewhere is a rainbow
somewhere is a totally new landscape

we imagine what kind of happiness
awaits us there

they are not telling us.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Window Gazer

(window gazing)
pamintana

lingkod.(sit)
lantaw sa unahan.(look farther)
atua ang lapad nga dagat.(the wide sea is there)
ang iyang mata mao ang adlaw.(its eye is the sun)
paminaw.(listen)
awit sa hangin. lantawa. lutaw nga panganod.(the song of the wind. gaze. the clouds drift)
hilom ang tanan.(everything is silent)
dih, diha, nakigsulti nimo ang tingog(there, there, the voice is speaking to you)
gikan sa imong kasingkasing.(from your heart)
gikan na ko diha.(i have been there)
ug gusto pa nako kining balikbalikan.(and i like going back again and again)

RIC S. BASTASA
The Window That Finally Blinks

There is something in me that wants to be true
like a window that stares to a road where women pass by
covering their mouths from a dusty road
there is no blinking
every detail about the color of each woman's scarf is duly taken

but there is a boy who comes from the bushes and carries a brown ball
and throws it at me and then i close this window in me and i turn into myself
coiling like a wounded snake

that snake within us
it does not hiss anymore but in this hurting hours our eyes are like lamps glaring
in the dark
thirsting for vengeance

the hurt is long and winding like a road to the cliff
and it has no ending except an abyss

from then on
one takes the truth lightly like a feather plucked from a hen
twisting a neck and planning for a fried dinner

from hence
i laugh
i laugh out loudly so that you can hear and think finally that i am all right
and that i have survived
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Window...

smile,

show that little window
in the mirror make yourself feel
that you are at home
with your heart

smile

open the window
of your house

only when necessary
must you close

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wined

sorry
but I misspelled it again

the wine
not the wind

taste it
it is sour.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wings Of Faith

you meet
a road which has the
dead
end

you face a wall
there is no
exit

you sit down
look upon your feet

you are not as hopeless
as a perpetual
convict

what you can do is simply close your eyes
and

on the wings of your faith
fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wings Of The Mind

faced with a blank wall
the mind pass through it
over the fences
it goes beyond
kicks and jumps away

reinventing wings and
sharpening claws
on its personal journey
into the unknown
more real that what can be touched
by the hands

too theoretical
ephemeral
as one wakes up
for another usual morning
the fingers close upon a fist
laid upon the navel

one preaches
what is here inside my fist
is real
the wings in my head
are upcoming
unable to flap
resigned.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Winner Poet Speaks

you reap the most coveted award
this year, you won in Asia, and the Pacific is
listening attentively, and when you speak during the
awarding ceremony

they all clap their hands, and even stand and
give you the necessary ovation

in summary this is what you said:

you hate the war, and you sometimes feel that you are alone
in hating the war and you want it stopped, and you feel so alone
you cannot stop it, the high tech guns keep flowing and the killing never stops

and you say further, that when 'i hear and empathize' with your
loneliness, you cease to be lonely for we have become two in hating the war,
in wanting it stopped,
in vanishing all the conflicts of this earth

(with a magic wand?
or with the sleigh of the magician's hand?)

and then you end your speech with:

yet, how can we, two lonely poets
have the power to stop the hate,
to stop the war,
to change what is already fixed?

and i too clap my hands,
and i too, stand,
and i too shall give the
much needed ovation for you.

there are only two of us in this dusty room.

The rest are the chairs
empty,
and looking for those who have not
seated yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wisdom Of Eustolia

i
it is not really important how big the salary that you are receiving
what is important is that there is always something
left in your pocket

ii
the golden earrings and the diamond rings
are not the gauge
whether you can hear and touch
what others have not felt

iii
do not think of dusk and the coming darkness
they will always be there
but think of the twilight that announces the
coming of light
and there start your life

iv
forgive and have always the gratitude
in forgiving
build your face on the foundations
of your smile

v
love always love much
never tarry, never be lazy on loving
always be the giver
do not be the receiver, go! go! go!

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wise Giver....

this is your rice cake
i am handing this to you
this is all yours

on these conditions:

you will not eat it
you have to guard it against
the flies and ants
take care of it
do not eat it for i do not allow it
it gets consumed and
then be gone
and that is bad for you
& me

at night
guard it still from mosquitoes
for they bring diseases
see to it that you heat it
in the oven
lest it gets moldy and
become spoiled

against the light
by that oil lamp
the rice cake casts a shadow
on the table

that is what you can eat
that alone
now partake
of my kindness
satisfy your hunger
on that shadow
slice it with a knife
and on small chunks
feed your mouth
nourish your body
till that rice cake is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wise Man....

he considers himself wise
in indulging in
poetry, you see, he explains
it once to me
he saves on expenses
of therapy
and he sometimes sees
in his poem what he had
not seen before
and he starts from there
repairing some broken
dreams
fixing the missing items
of his life
taking some space for
growth and
with all his words as wings
he travels to the places
where his soul and heart
can sleep and
take the needed rest

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish For A Duet With You

mine is hoarse yours is flat
but we as friends
wish to sing a duet for them
and they will laugh
the moment we start to sing
don't be mad
we will still try and we give
them the fun
that they are after

but keep the faith
whatever happens
since my voice is hoarse and
yours is flat
we still keep this friendship
it is not the duet
that counts it is this
day to day companionship
your arms on my shoulder
as we walk this
life together.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish For Simplicity And Beauty....

just like you
i for
game's sake perhaps
also
threw a coin at the wishing well
at the Eden

i do not
have to make any
sophistication here

when we have arrived
at he place
where we are supposed to take
the good night's sleep
i got only one wish and you very
well know it
this wordless thing
this just being
be...

life is simple
life is beautiful....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish For Violence....

a boring day
calls for a drama

push a button
drama unfolds

a man with a black robe
appears from the left nook

kills a child lost from the
south side

and then runs away

at night you
regret having pushed that button

simply to
take away that boredom

you wished
for violence....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish Of A Cat

a cat's wish
is to live in a great meritocracy
where cats are recognized
purely on the basis
of their great work,

though,
this is not reality

once in a blue moon
a lucky cat wins in
a purr competition
but it must cultivate
itself
to preserve its
feline fame

otherwise
it will lose it
and henceforth
choose the
career part
of the dogs.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish That Is Always There

this afternoon i arrived too early
at the third floor of the building.
i did not enter right away to the room
instead i stayed for a while at the bay window
with opens to the view of the mountain and the trees and the far-away

sea, which gives me too much space where i can perhaps lay down
the weariness of my ideas which to me appears like

soldiers of war whose only wish is to quit all these fighting
pack up, collect all the letters inside the bag, leave the guns
and ammunition, and have peace at

home, the heart, the fireplace of winter
the sun of the summer day, the beach
and

sand, the lovers delighting about each other's
touch, talking about nothing but food, company, incoming vacations,
camping, bathing in the river
pasturing the cows,
herding the sheep
fishing and

sleeping in the privacy of the house
with all loved ones.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish To Be Serious In Writing Poetry

i wish somehow that i
be a serious poet,
the one that you must like
as though i am
one kind of philosopher
and statesman
rolled into one,
but i am not
never been to their
rightful places
i have only been to myself
in the park at
night or the bar
till dawn, i do not wish
to pretend that
i only go to church on
Sundays,
i am not really that
religious or
even political
i like my life
it's my own and it
is petty upon
its own frivolities
one however that does
not hurt anyone
or make others crave
for what i cannot give
it is just a wish
i like to be Whitman
or Blake but sorry
it will take time
but for the meantime
i will just be
what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish To Be Wrong....

i've been looking for myself
i know where
and so i went in you
where i can be home

i feel this frenzy
of heart bursting into flames
i dare
look longer to that place where
i am truly me
there is this tension that swings from
ecstasy to ecstasy

there is this call to go back and be at peace
it is from faraway now

i dare not to listen
i am now at home and i gaze at that which makes me feel at home
on the night where i never sleep
but is never tired till
the next light of my day

there is an outburst
of emotional eruptions like geysers from a pool
i watch it
long enough and dare myself to be just there
standing
in such stillness of
a post

now without feeling anything anymore

it is then when i wish i should have been wrong

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish To Change Your Lifestyle

against the cliffs of high resistance
your habits shall never give you the chance to change

you make the resolution to change every word
of your sentence

but with the fast palpitations of your pulse every morning
you doubt whether these travails have an end trail.

dthis morning you wake up beside the grave of fear

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wish.....

at dawn
we talk about what we
have become

we inspire
each other to the idea
that we have not
rooted like them

they have amassed
much as we have given
they have fortified their
walls and locked their gates
and we are outside
all these houses
uphill we sit together under
the rain
as we see with comfort all the
big waves coming

all set to erase them.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wishes Of My Widowed Aunt

it is not warm enough here
to go to Baguio and buy another
deep red sweater

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wishing Poem....

poetry had always been
between your legs

you feel it
only that you do not
speak about it,

perhaps it was the fear
that worked most in your lifetime

a lifetime perhaps,
a lifetime sentence that has not earned a
period for itself,

one day you will find poetry between the
cleavage of your breasts,

supple
firm
and so juicy and you wish a man comes by and notices it
and wish that he will feel how is it to be

bountiful,
ripe,
luicious,

perhaps he will take heed
and eat, and suck and
lick
and say that this is what a lifetime is all about
and finally
take for himself

that poem of yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Witch In The Old Castle Nearby...

as you, foolish dog of my life,
my life in utter peace, a pond of less ripples,
as you, stupid dog of my life
barks at my feet, and tries to distract my own
solitude, that of the candle still in the middle
of my room, the blankets soft on my bed,
the pillows all too silent like flower petals
on a dew filled morning leaf,
as you, twitchy wicked witch
calls my name, i finally give up and
face myself, and leave you, all cracked up,
and i go inside my room and lock my door
and tell my windows, to shut you up,
do not ruin my life, do not ever attempt to do
that which creases my blankets and
stabs my pillows,
for i shall return to you and burn your
furrowed faces, dissolve you in the acids
of my test tubes,
erase you like some misspelled words,
i am a man of peace, and i am stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Witness

my innate obligation to tell the truth
begins
when your capacity to tell a lie
ends

my innate obligation to tell the truth
and nothing but the truth
ends
when your capacity to tell all lies
and nothing but lies
begins

RIC S. BASTASA
The Windmills

i visited the
windmills of my
mind,

the winds are not
that strong
to move
the hands of
power.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woes Of Our Times

The woes are deep
seated, not on the softest sofa
that you imagine,
their emotions are well-contained in those eye bags of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woes Of The Common Worker

we shall all share
the fruits

one for you and
one for me
and then for you
and for that someone
we do not even know

these, the fruits of
my own labor

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman

d the woman that i slept with last night
is singing this morning
while taking his cleansing
bath in the
running river

she is my wife.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman And The Flower

sa balak ang babaye
mao ang bulak

for a poem the woman
is the flower

sa bulak ang babaye
dili babaye
dili niya kini masabtan
sa iyang pagkabulak

for the flower the woman
is not a woman
it cannot comprehend this
in its flower-nature

sa babaye ang bulak
halad sa iyang kasingkasing
pako sa iyang kalaay
haploy sa iyang aping

to a woman the flower
is an offering to her heart
a wing to her boredom
a caress to her cheek

bulak ang babaye
og ang babaye bulak
mao kana ang hukom
sa balak.

the flower is the woman
and the woman is the flower
that is the judgment of
the poem

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman And The Moon

i have seen this woman
one night bathing in the
cool waters of the river
under the full moon &

she was all alone &
that night i got her name

hidden inside my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman In The South...

the woman i think is lost but when i talk to her
she is the most definite one, direct, candid, and knows
what she is doing,
she is an internet preacher of her causes,
the rivers are polluted now, and the mountains bald,
the green movement is on
coal is passe, mining is evil, the corporate lords
are killing everybody,

there must be change,
there must be change
there must be change

we can change the system, she shouts, she carries the flag
and waves the red colors in the air,

she is not afraid of death, she welcomes it anytime.
she is a friend, but i am not with her.

when we are near, there is something else,
not the causes, not the effects, it is something else.

and i have not told her yet.
i am irrelevant, and perhaps it is better this way.

i have no inkling. i can't.
i have to say no.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman Next Door

dthis woman is beginning
to grow white hair

her hands are rough and the skin there
are loosing from the
fingers like
hand gloves made of
cloth

she has to wear sunglasses
even during the rainy seasons when the skies are gray
when the world is too cold
and the parks are
empty
where she finds herself alone
strolling under those
old trees

she is losing touch
of other people who seems not to see her
her presence disregarded

to hide her disappointments
she goes to the mall and buys things that she does not like
a matter of compulsion-obsession
pulling and pushing her from one corner
to another

quite a pity
she feels miserable and people avoid miserable people
they think
that misery is contagious
and who wants misery?

i am intimately involved with this woman
more in the line of pity
more on the aspect of empathy

there are many things that i must tell her
but it will not be for now

scattered atoms inside a glass of muddy water
need a little settling before one must describe to her
what really happened and what to do next

who knows? perhaps i really love her.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman That Descended Fromt The Moon

she is still
there with no one looking
at her anymore

i keep on asking
when is this woman gonna leave us
all alone?

when shall the lady from
the sun take over?

there's got to be
a change of the scenery

but no one is minding
the page has become
one still morning

no wind
no sun
no flower
no bee

just the routinized green
the pale letters
and the boring silence

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman Who Did Not Analyze Anymore

what she had now
are only skin and bones
all flesh rotten
smile is a stranger
and hope is dead

we look at her
and she submits
to our judgments

she uses no logic
anymore
not even feelings
for they are all
ephemeral

she surrenders
in sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman Who Waited For Your Confession....

to the woman who waited that you tell her all
the love you have inside for her
at the bus station when she was all set to leave,

you never really said it best
because you never said anything at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman With A Cat In Her House

she lives with her
cat,
they are not talking
a cat
is a metaphor for
grooming and silence and
that murmur,
she murmurs all day
why no one loves her
visits her
and reminds her of
those wholesome days
where laughter
flies in the room
like some
butterflies,

we do not blame her
she was born with paws
sharp fingernails
scratching
the faces of those
who decided to
abandon her
finally...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Woman With A Fever

here i am instead
sleeping soundly
cradled by
your heat

for i am tired
and cold when you were
hallucinating

RIC S. BASTASA
The Women...

developed color
over the official color of their dresses in conventions,
scrutinize every rumor, confrontational in the most irrelevant and unimportant details,
you talk much over nothing,
change dresses in almost every occasion,
you are given the chance to lead,
backbite, and lose themselves in much ado’s about nothings.

i watch all these chaos
trying to understand, and respond to all their confusions
in the secret silences of my smiles.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wonder Of The Tear

from among the liquid forms
of this earth

the tear is most unique
it knows the meaning of pain

it keeps the salt
inside itself

and does not thirst for more
for those that are
clear

itself it does not compare.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wonder Of You...

i do not wonder
anymore why in the middle
of this summer
you wear winter apparel

i know what you mean.
you are irrelevant.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Word Death...

while driving
he was telling me about
the mishap which happened
to him and Paul
yesterday at noon

ty they were riding
in a motorcycle when
suddenly
a glitch in the brake
came and they were thrown
away on the side
of the road
and by luck there were no
following vehicles which
could have
killed them both

he has not changed
a bit
while telling me about
such a horrible
story

loquacious as ever and
sometimes
with his behavior i think
that he should not
have been
taken seriously
for taking such a
sensitive matter
with a grain of
salt

on the other hand
i think he is right
for what can you do
when finally death
knocks at your door?

Paul who is a handsome
middle aged man
with a family of two
kids and a beautiful wife
until now has appeared
pale and
fearful and promised that
he will never ride again
in tandem with that
short and ugly guy.

and i have come to
a conclusion: those who
have more to lose
in life
are the most fearful
people in this world

to an extent
the word death should not be
spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
The Word Goodbye...

i listen to the rain
it rained the whole night
it still rains this morning
and i am listening still

i am studying it well
this song of the rain
this monotony this sorrow
i am learning from all these
drops of rain, this meeting
with the roof and the tears of
the sky

and so i have finally decided
to stay here
your party is not important to me
your friends are not my friends anyway

i have learned this game too well
patterned from the persistence of rains
this solitude this independence
this island of awareness: who i am and
who you are.

i am still trying to hone my spelling skills
for until now, i have not spelled it so well

the word goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
what i remember is the word space,
and the image of a train that speeds its way towards home,
it is always crowded and most eyes are sleepy
and the hours whisper about things to be done next
and next and tomorrow which seems

that life is always unfinished business as there is always
something to crowd our mind with and i remember you holding
a book about a love story which ended upon a tragic image,

ah never mind, i like the way you create space between you and the book and
the way your head leans on the wall of the train as though telling you that soon
there will always be that
inevitable happy ending

RIC S. BASTASA
The Word, 'we'

we understand
that everything is personal

we like you to know
but we have reservations

reality is dark, stark,
most often, ugly as we call it

we invoke art, someone that
arranges a scattered room
into a good looking house
from the point of view
of the road and the
cars and those that merely
pass by

we call on someone reliable,
to calm the dog, to call the bird back
to its cage,
to mow the grass
to make all things neat and clean
and presentable

we all love beauty, and smoothness
we like sweetness, and pine scented outdoors
gentle winds, morning lights,
sea breeze, a peaceful neighborhood,
trimmed grass, well painted doors,
a system, a ledger, a well kept note,
a record of what happened

we understand that everything is
personal
on the other hand we too understand
what privacy is

do you want us to tell you only those
that you want to hear?
do you want us to lie?

here we are waiting at the outside of
things, waiting, and waiting,
we are from your ribs, we do not want
to hurt.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words And The Pen And The Paper

in loneliness
he
does not know what to do next

all plans are suspended
what he attempted to do fails

upon an empty table lies a
sheet of paper

it is blank

he holds a pen as a matter of habit
he begins to scribble

words begin to enter in his mind
they are his usual guests and
companions for now

the moment he writes them
the paper begins to speak

the pen becomes a boat
the words become friends

and away into the shores and oceans of the
empty paper
to a picnic of new adventures
they all go

later the pen becomes a surfing board
as words too become waves

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words As Bridges...

in a true relationship
a word is a bridge that can connect
two distant cities,

it will take just a syllable to get to know
each other and cling like vines
on the trellis and give a flower
to the passers-by,

others have destroyed many bridges
with just one word, the harshest thing that can
happen to
syllables, like

saying bye. And it ends there like
a shadow of the
western movie against the sun
and then the curtains
fall

and we all leave and carry with us
the story of
guilt and forgiveness....

on my own experience
the words are always bridges to old cities
and though rusty
they still hold the missing gaps
and the river or the
sea below
will always be hungry for some
morsels of lives
to fall

in my own world
no word destroys, no syllable cuts
an umbilical cord,

i place it there. In print.
and time is powerless to erase it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words I Cannot Say

i have kept the words i cannot say to you
because i know in doing so you will
die,

how can i say them? how can i say them now?
i am lost,
they are throwing stones at me
on the roads that i take
i want to break this silence
i want to speak

but you are always beside me
your hands, you think you are embracing me,
i am choking, i cannot breathe
your love has been much
beyond what i can take

how can i ever tell you
the word
goodbye, the words, i have changed, the sentence

i am going away, this place is not for me, my heart has no home,
i am heartless, i am empty, i am shattered, i am loved but i cannot love
i am dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words In Abundance...

i always have use of these words, 
ever consumed, always multiplying, never enough, 
they're like the money that comes inside my pocket 
with hate, i spend all of them 
ever retaining a part, 
because that is what they are meant to be 
to be scattered, wasted, 
always slaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words Of A Liar

your words
are strange
they have no
place to live
you do not
have a house
for them
and you do
not live
with them

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words Still Unspoken

day are words that need not be spoken
like you telling me that i care for you
for how would you know what i feel for you?
it would be too self-assuming
for you to say that i really care for you
what if i do not? what if what i do is nothing but
an obligation of one human being to another?
what if it is not love at all as you would want to impress
me with it? what if it is just a projection of yourself?
you loving me and me not knowing it
me not believing it, simply because you are also afraid
to love since i may not return that love with its face value,

there are words that need not be spoken
matters of the heart, presumptions that good deeds
are shadows of hidden desires, vested interests,
blessing in disguise, wolves in sheep skins

in love my friend, you just don't make assumptions
at the end, you may regret it, for despite my emptiness
my ugliness, and my loneliness, i also know how to choose.

it is something that i have never spoken
but if i speak it all, it will only be to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words That I Have Not Written

for the words i have not written
i accept i have been a coward
the moment these words become transparent
in my mind, i always tell them gently
i have not the strength to write you
you have become subjects beyond
my power and please understand
the consequences of having to write
all of you: waiting to be printed and read

like the Sphinx and its riddle before
Oedipus, if i were to write all of you
i may be able to save a kingdom in distress

but please understand what happens to me next
for like Oedipus i may be compelled to pluck my eyes out
from my face
and i may roam the earth begging for forgiveness
throughout my life
because i have been blind by fate for all those years

writing you is honesty
and it is this honesty that may at the end kill me
and so
i am very sorry

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words That Rhyme With Orange

IT IS not a challenge
to find a word that rhymes with orange
remember the relief of Lozenge
try the cool plunge and the wet sponge
don’t attempt to scavenge
there’s still the lunge

RIC S. BASTASA
The Words That We Do Not Say

how can i say

i hate you, when i need you
how can i say i need you when i love you
how can i say i love you when i do not love you anymore

how can i say stop loving me when by saying so you will die
how can i say i want to be free i want to go away

when it will mean the destruction of another world
tonight you will hear me singing
this song, in fact, a classic one

please release me, let me go,

you must continue singing the next lines... i cannot just say those words

RIC S. BASTASA
The Workers Of Art Without Content

a work of art
without content

the one which
you think has no use

it cannot change
the world

the old path
remains muddy

the house is as
dusty ever

the kitchen
still shows the same

smoke same charred
situation

how come however
that we have survived?

today we shall bury
another overused soul

another substantive
hardworking animal

he thinks we have
done him no good at all

RIC S. BASTASA
The Working Woman

the woman is loaded
carrying her little girl
on her shoulder

her right hand
carries a basket of
unsold fish

her man is drunk
as usual
cursing her

RIC S. BASTASA
The World

the reason why the world
is round
is that there are always
reasons

circuitous in
fact where the premise
sometimes
becomes the
conclusion
and vice-versa

where
the end at the
end seems
to be the beginning
of another
beginning

endless
perpetual
eternal

that seems
to be what
this world
is all about

failures strictly
speaking
become successes

and seemingly
enough
successes also
become failures

we just don't know
what is this
all about
then and now

and where this
world is really
heading
or tailing

and that is what
is this world
is all about
now & then

the surprises, the excitement
of what is next
to come to follow

calm down baby
let's get moving

on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on

it is the journey itself and the feelings
not even a thought

it is this
moving

on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on and on

so calm down, baby,
go, go, go, go

be always on the go
there is always something to say
about it
words cannot enclose it
it is beyond
spelling
it is beyond utterances

it is what you feel
inside that keeps on sound and
resounding
and your tongue merely repeats
it and transfers it to your
lips

hence the speaking
and you keep on saying it over and over again
because
it is never heard
because it never arrives
at the chamber of understanding of the heart

such is your pain
that you keep on saying because you have never fully
resolved it

time is you patient teacher
it is the silence that it preaches
its home is always the
calmness
the plenitude of
solitude

the consciousness that there is only you
in this universe
in your hands is the future
in your mind is the moment
in your heart always the understanding
that there is no other you
except yourself
the world is so calm
it is listening to your qualm.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World At Large

when you feel pain
you justify it that the world is like this and that
that most of its parts is pain

and you take every pain as part of you
and shall never refuse anything that comes
like uninvited guests of your house
when you become a voluntary prey
to all these parasites
and predators
host of all hosts you welcome
the code of stupidity

but soon you realize that there is no use to all these
why pain?
why inflict it upon a self that knows
the freedom of choices?

you go away and find the ways of having another life
to the world at large
that shows to you the vastness of the skies
the wideness of the oceans
the myriad islands and the unexplored continents
the mysterious universe

all these tell you, why not try wonder? why not take the side
of the happy moments?

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Changes Itself Without Myself

i know that there is something wrong
like a stain of black clouds in the sky

like a shattered glass on the floor
or the white paint in your hair

but i, just like those days, never mind
those wrongs, - i just watch them

hopelessly, upon the idea that nature
itself shall correct it, - that changes

simply come like rain to drought, like
mist upon the grassy hills, - i leave

things as they are, for who am i? who am i?
to change this world, to love and change you?

i know that there is something wrong here,
but i just do my own thing, - i am

this spectator, this traveler, and i do not
stop in order to waste my time upon all these

the world spits its lava, the tsunami comes
upon a clear day, quakes tremble this earth

storms rage, fires burn, the world crumbles,
and when i come back, i shall only see

a clear pond of water, a calm river, a cooler earth,
a green mountain, a sunny day, a peaceful night

myriad stars come again for their twinkling
the moon shines and casts its sheen on the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Dislikes A Change

it is painful
to see the face of
denial

the guy with guts
does not surrender

laughs it out
and takes in what should

have been vomited
at once

he omits failures
and begins anew

the world has to learn
more of this art

it is harsh to any
change

unable to open
its hands to something

new and beautiful
innovative

the world dislikes
an innovation

but it is going there
sooner

one day it wakes up
embracing you
as its hero
its unnamed savior

your death
cannot pay it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Is Alright With Me.

my body takes me
 to you
 as my soul rebels

then you wait for me
 there
 in anticipation as i
 imagine it
 to be

i make my own lies
 and plunge into bed with
 all desire

it will be short and in
 a while i go back to my shirt
 move away and pretend that
 the world is alright with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Is Boasting Now We Are Nobody.

in the dark
we know we both are
awake

why have we become
tolerant

why the silence?
are the stars more beautiful now

the little glitter of
far away

we have grown old for the
poetry of love

as i hold your hand
words do not exist

i forget your name and
you forget mine

but the familiarity is
still there

on the grass under the stars
we feel that much

my back is one with the earth
my eyes glued to far away

how small are we
how insignificant

the world is boasting now
we are nobody.
The World Is Numb...

i had my hair cut short

went to a clinic for a skin peeling

had my fingernails cleaned and treated for a glossy look

bought a new pair of shoes blue jeans and white polo shirt

on the first day of the office after i got sick for two weeks i want

that they may see another personality in me

nobody notices it never was there a new me

everyone is as busy as ever and the world is numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Looks Upon Us With Worried Eyes

look at us who want to really finish the work
this afternoon
look at us being looked at the world with
worried eyes
it is reminding that if we finish this work
on time
the work shall soon finish us
earlier than expected
look at this world that looks down upon us
it is not sleeping
it keeps reminding that there is no apocalypse
of earth and rock
the sun will always be there until it finds us all gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Mistrusts Your Freedom

to choose between
sorrow and joy
one chooses joy

you think you can choose
you choose

the world however
gives you sorrows
and the choice has become too
limited
there is only sorrow and sorrow
and no other

eventually to live
one must accept what is given
you say i want to choose
now you must give me the choices
for i will choose
what pleases me

but the world knows you better
which you do not actually know
you have chosen the joys
that have destroyed you and since
then
the world has not
trusted you

for with your freedom
you will
on the claim of not knowing
destroy
everything

even yourself
your family
your kin.
The World Of Either Or

you cannot have the best of both worlds
when you have all those chickens
you have to sacrifice your flowers
these chickens eat flowers for breakfast
on the other hand
when you keep those flowers
you must first kill all the chickens

as i once told you, this is the world of

either or
not both

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Of Eli

i am in a world
where i am the only one
walking

no one speaks to me
and i have seen
no one

no shadow, no hint that
somewhere over there there must be another creature

a butterfly
or a little bird

or perhaps a fish
or a pebble

or perhaps a sprouting bean
it gets lonely

when one speaks only to himself
because the rest have taken the stances

of being gone into nowhere
without a location

i am in this world
too big for me
soundless, empty,

i am in the world of
Eli.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Of The Busy Bee

a flight to the petals
of roses
the mission
of the nectar
with codes
of hormones
and grab
and dab
and tab
and gab
of stings on parasol leaves, discharging tangerines and
greens of chlorophyll

orange lights from the sun
in voltages
and gliding
high and low

bzzzzzzzzbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbb
The World Of The Silent Blooming Lotus

floating like a lotus
red concentric petals stretching
wanting to kiss the cheek of the sky

i am the monk in my own
spreading kingdom of a still pond

beside me are the frogs listening
surrounded by a soldier of tadpoles

beneath me is the stock of dirt
i keep my purity on top

the sun looks at me with pride
at night the moon smiles

such is the world of this silent lotus
calm amidst the night, clean atop the mess.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Out There....

i look at the room
where we once shared
happiness,
it is the same room
now
that shall make us live
the
season of
sadness,

nothing's changed
nothing will be changed here

white walls,
white tiled floors
same fluorescent tube
same switch
on the frame
of the door

the cabinets are still brown
though not glossy
with age

how many years?
20 years
swift as the flight of
seagulls

white winged birds on
sky blue seas

the matrimonial
bed is losing
its soft cushion

our backs endured all these
roughness now
when we make no more
demands
for life to give us
more

ah, how many years more?
i do not need much
5 can be a surplus

what do i need
of 10 years more?

i am a simple man
willing to explore
what lies in the unknown

this present
is all revealed and i
am satisfied,

there is more out there
the stars are not
telling

the moon is still secretive
to the
bounty of calm
and beauty

i shall be there
in due time
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Simply Laughs

the single step
of the thousand steps
the world
laughs at
it

it is the beginning of a
world in a cliche

the world cannot be intimidated
by your howl
it has silence so many
howls
before the first howl
came in
the cave of
illusions

the world will love you for your silence
your friend
in your solitude
your buddy in your fishing
your company
in prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Simply Laughs (Edited)

the single step
of the thousand steps
the world
laughs at
it

it is the beginning of a
world in a cliche

the world cannot be intimidated
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in prayer

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Waits For You...

saturday, there are so many choices
the hammock lies waiting
swaying,
the green fields have trees
teeming with the ripeness of their fruits
they lack harvesters
the pathways are like open arms
the junctions are like vendors calling for
more customers
the clouds are umbrellas opening
without hands to hold them
the rains are planning to create
more rivers
the valleys are giving in to the
clarity of the plains

all for you.

Still asleep on last night's
hangover from those
wild merry-go-rounds.

RIC S. BASTASA
The World Where You Want Me To Live

the day you met me
you claim it is a beautiful day
blue clouds, cool green trees on the meadows
some mountain mists hanging still like dreams
you ask for my name
and you said you will like me on that beautiful day
you want me flying kites on the wind
i flew kites with colors
you want me to run with you on the soft grass
towards the sea where the breeze plays some games with the locks
of our hair
i obey with a smile and always cater to your wishes and dreams
whatever wherever whenever you feel like going and doing
you ask me to tell stories
i tell you stories that please you: fairylands, prince and princess in the
castles in the clouds, and you really like me, you want me to stay

i thing are are a lie. i am a lie.
we live on what pleases, we live in a world without pain.

it is not my world,
i live in the world of pain, this darkness for years, and this
you must know
all these are what please me, this world that you do not imagine
this world that your mind thinks
does not exist

i have long accepted, i am human

RIC S. BASTASA
The World's Indifference

when the river runs out of water
she sings the sweetest songs still at the side of the bank
no one convinces her to give up the hope of
the coming rain

when the sea comes with a storm
when the wind becomes one rebellious form
she sits calmly under the palm and patient with the foam
she knows what price is there in the waiting

she knows the ebbing flow of the tides
the colors of the fading sun
the magical show of darkness and the moon
the stillness of the waters in the marshes
she, like the sleep of the migrating birds
on the lilies,
contains the boldness
of the stork
firm in that resolve to
loneliness

'nothing lasts forever' she gladly accepts,
offering her smile to the world that has remained
indifferent and cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worm And The Flower

and so it happens
that each kept each nature
unique to itself
even in their own terms
of loving

the flower bloomed
the worm ate it
petal by petal

time justifies the consumption
upon the wings of
a beautiful butterfly

the wind still loves the sound
of the flutters

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worm Deep Down And Under

because you look at yourself
from the point of view of a worm
you fear then
any bird

you wish you have wings
to see the earth from above the clouds
to master air
and soon be proud

if you think that you can be anything
or anybody
or be someone else more powerful
than a bird or a machine
if you think that life is fair
that others are just
if you believe that it is what you get
because of what you are

by all means you must have been misinformed
those who get the laurels are not necessarily the best
those who win may have their own hidden schemes
those who sit on their thrones are kings
may have committed all the sins
of power and capture

learning from this
you go back to your own simple existence
still pure and honest

a worm in silence deep down under
unmaligned undisturbed.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worms

Do you wish to ask
what are the worms for?
these tiny ones
soon shall change into
black and brown moths
they will find light
amidst the darkness
and burn themselves
to ashes

But first you must know
the reason for their existence,
they are here for you
maggots to your flesh
and soon
they'll get you

Your bones shall be
their witnesses
Their triumph
the inevitable.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worms Climbing The Ylang-Ylang Tree

this is the season
for the worms to
climb the ylang-ylang tree
rain or shine
the seemingly endless
quest begins

i sometimes i think
do they ever believe
that somewhere
at the top of the
tree is the largest
and the greenest
of all the leaves?

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worms In The Graveyard

the worms in the graveyard
are boasting that the moment
they finally sign your papers
you will have nothing to take
except your hair, your bones,
your nails your teeth
and they leave such a
threatening word

you are a man, and
you can do nothing about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worshipper Of Stone

until now
he refuses to tell you the object
of his affection

the god that he worships
on top of the mountain
his golden possession
that looks at him without any affection at all

if only you could see it
it is nothing but the most common stone
any ordinary urchin of the street
picks it up and throws it at anybody

some bang their heads on it
those suicidal fools
others merely pass by and
sees it without any serious consideration at all

look at him
he is wounded by the one he loves
he is scattered like dust
and falls upon the places that he never wanted

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worst Choice...

(1) do you do things that you do not like doing?
or
(2) doing those which should not have been done?
(3) or not doing anything at all?

feel me, this day,
try the third option.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worst Enemy...

you were behind me and
i looked back at you
you evaded me like we were
two ships in an inevitable
collision.

I am not afraid.

Got no lighthouse or
Port to land this small ship.

You have a continent
Scattered islands
You own lighthouses
Fierce lights and
Friend of the storms.

I am never afraid of you.
I have nothing to lose.

You walk ahead of me
And i hear your laughter.

You are the tower
Her God, and she is my wife.

I am still not afraid at you
I can look at you direct to the eye.

Soon you will die.
That is His promise.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Worst Part Of This Democracy
	he worst part
of this democracy
is always
manipulation,

image packaging
popularity
and stabbing at
the back

the usual if you
cannot beat
them, lick them
strategy

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wounded Hands Inside Our Pockets

i've been trying to figure out the cause of your sorrow.  
it starts with so much love. It takes a step. It whispers.  
No one hears. So you grow a set of four hands. Two for you.  
You keep them secretly in your pocket.  
The other two are birds. You set them to a flight looking for  
Love. There is no island where their feet can land.  
They become the change from time to time.  
Hoping that someone may like the shape that they are assuming.  
But no one likes it. Weird they say. Your wings are not soft.  
The songs are different.  

And then your hands come back to you. They prefer the other two hands.  
Hiding in your pockets. Shrinking.  

They confess. They scream. Love has been unfair. It seeks sameness.  
It separates you from the rest of the world.  

You spell loneliness to the emptiness of space. It is shapeless.  
Looking for a house. A container.  

i have figured it too well. And you are not surprised.  
We have the same wounded hands. We like to love everyone.  
Inside our pockets. Dark, n.  

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wretched

feel wretched and u become one pity urself and u become dead and i in my confidence shall bury ve that u survive and u become a e don't let them bury u alive

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writ Of Amparo

when you leave this place
everything finds no use for me

the home crumbles into a house
doors lock themselves like silent lips

what can i do with a house or an empty chair?
it loses me and i drift like everyone else

moving from one place to another not finding
the seat of comfort

where is rest? it is not found in the map
there is no church
no cottage

all the people that i meet do not speak
'no english', no word, no syllable

their heads turn, their arms fold,
their feet dusting me out from a lull,

when you leave this place
it will be gone and when you come back

what you will find is the darkness of the sea
deep within its womb of deadly coldness

its unfathomable silence
its cruelty in the depths of sleeplessness...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writ Of Execution

THE lady has
a long, black hair,

she is not young
and not married
she brings her
little girl in court

and tonight they
will be homeless

she is crying
and the man stood there
doing nothing

he is the owner of the
house
and he is not moved
anymore
by her tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer In A Trance

disowning everything
he says these are all incoherent pages
there is no logic
there is no metaphor
to explain

you agree,
this is the one...

tomorrow, there will be a trance again
how can you understand? of no importance
is this one, not even a poem
i can hear you complain

this is the trance of
a compulsion, i myself cannot explain
this is all too human
god’s way of shaming our
own humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer In Me
	here is silence
in my struggle
there is dignity
in my suffering

cloth and tie
flawless fabric
of my
existence

there is secrecy
in my quest
there is no sharing
of my misery

i have only sorrow
as company of my sorrow
i have only some tears
for my joys

i always have
open arms for Thy Will
I seal my fate with
a kiss
i always take the
incoming as
a form of hope

i keep this silence
i write these words.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer Of Everything....(For Sammy)

they tell you
that you cannot write
but just the same
you write

a voice within you may
say 'you cannot write
a poem' but you do not
listen

everyday you write what
they call as doggerel
but just the same you wake
with a poem in your hand
a poem in your mind
and then you write it
everywhere: walls, sands,
water, clouds, skies,
space,

you write it on waste papers,
you write it against the light
you write it against everyone's
thoughts,

you silence the voice of
unbelief, and by all means
you have become one writer
in your time

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer On His Oath...

write you must
write you must
blow the dust
blow the dust....

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer...

IT is not the books
not the words neither is there an
expert way of fishing for
metaphors,

IT is the life lived (and for some
cut so shortly like an unfinished tapestry of
fallen leaves on top of the
flowing skin of the silvery river)
IT is the life that is lived to the fullest extent
no shortcuts, no surrender of the last glimmer of hope,
Till the last day, IT IS our lives that write us
and it that unplanned and
unexpected death
that says the
last words at the last page
of this unpublished
book.

IT IS LIFE
the writer.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Writer.....

i am just a watcher

i watch how people run
how some kill some how
they scream and bury their
dead

i am just this spectator

i watch how the powerful
drive away the weak
how the liars win how the
murderer escape and find their
own shelter

i am just this by-stander

i look at how time pass me by
how rivers run dry
how clouds thicken and then rain
how this earth is flooded
how children turn into men

i have done nothing for i can
do nothing, except...

to write these lines and leave
them for those who know how to read
and act on what they know...

you are not watchers, you are not spectators
you are no by-standers of these times

you will be heroes soon and
monuments will be built in your honor

i am contented in this,
i just keep my mouth shut
for this i do, i write.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wrong Choice...

you must think that he
had been feeding the wrong wolf

for now he behaves
like a pig escaping from its pen
running without any definite
direction
hitting the ground with his chin
destroying the melons
of his master

who finally decides that tomorrow
it shall be butchered for good

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wrong Occasion

you arrive in a place
it is familiar
the chairs are in your
memory
and pillars know you
well
enough like a mother
to her son

you look at yourself
you are wearing the wrong dress
for the occasion

where it calls for a suit
and a pair of glossy black
leather shoes
what you have is a lousy
loose shirt and
cheap sneakers with untied
shoelaces

you want to take the exit
but the door is too far away
from where you are seated

you want to say an excuse to
the woman beside you
but she is busy with her prayers

then the bride comes with
her veil and
white gown

she is being wed to another
man
and the people are not talking
about it.
The Wrong Question

this morning
you cry and with sobbing you report about
a child being mauled by the police
at the dead end
of Del Pilar street near the
municipal cemetary

the child was running away from
five policemen who kept on chasing him

and they caught him
and asked his age, his name, his father, his mother

and he said he is 19, Kiko, his father is Pepo, and his mother Karing
his father a fisherman and his mother a vendor
and he is from the far mountain
and just arrived to the city

and since he is frail and pale and looks like a sick child
he reaped the suspicion that he is a drug addict
and they mauled him almost to death
and he was hospitalized and charged

resisting arrest

Someone asks, not bothered at all by an imagination
of blood and broken bones and abuse of authority

'But why did he run away, in the first place? '

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wrong Way To Idolize A Famous Writer

there are people whom we adore
and the danger lurks where we can be lured into imitation
and we slowly become
fake, lost out into a world where our originality melts like snow
muddy.

with mouth agape, we follow, eyes fixed on what he says, our hands more wiling
to undress our bodies only to follow the colors that he is wearing

he is always older, he had become wise by his years of experience
and you mind every word, every written sentences
amazed by what he has to say
in every moment

what have become of you? a follower, ready to take the paved paths
and you will forget about your own scythe
giving up the power of your hands

it is a pity. You have become an It.
The light in your forehead is put off.
You lose your form.
Your content is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Wrong Woman For The Man Who Feels He Is The Right Man

it happens all the time
when the right man feels
that he has wed the wrong woman
when the wrong woman too
feels that he has
wed the wrong man,
mutuality of affections
on errors

i sometimes feel that too
and i ask again
have i married the wrong woman?

have i been the right man
claiming all along that i am
the right man?

why? did the trials not work
for both of us?

twelve years
the feeling about right and wrong is over now

i wake up early dawn
still sleeping beside her
at least in the silent lonely hours of my life
i have this companion
and she is warm beside me
and then i think again
she can be right
and i can be wrong

who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
The X And Y

You're own your own now
Touch and go
Like an old proposition
You cover distances
Looking for the right angle
Or way by which you may complete
The equation
To solve the unknown

The equation is like a long river
Without banks
It appears calm but cold

You are an irony
Warm at night
Cold at noon
In the brightness of the whole day
You cover your face with your scared hands

RIC S. BASTASA
The Year Of The Rooster....
	he first day
of the year of the
rooster
no cock crowed
at dawn
we wait
we sharpen our ears
it rains
on the very first day
do not be surprised
if the following days
there will be a rain of
tears
for all the needed
salt of the earth

RIC S. BASTASA
The Years Just Keep On Passing By....

another year shall pass me by
without any excuse
i shall not mind it
i do my thing it does it.

to one who loves his life
time passes by
without much noting,
for there is always
something more important
to do, than counting.

the years are just falling
leaves blown by the wind
and we are the spectators
from the bus window going
must faster to somewhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Yellow Love Bird

that early morning
the yellow love bird
perhaps tired or
perhaps lost
perched on the
steel railing of
the veranda, and i

approached it
with my arms stretched
my hands open

i flew away on a rush
perhaps thinking
that i will catch and put
it in a cage, it

got me wrong, all
i wanted is to see it fly

yes, i want it to fly away
where it must really belong

RIC S. BASTASA
The Yellow Magnolias

and in keeping
yellow magnolias alive
for more dark nights
amid some
unexpected storm
we do not grown them
in our pockets

in the garden
amidst the wooden fences
we attempt
to keep them forever

only the heart knows
what real keeping is
there are no roots
neither
buds and leaves
but my yellow magnolias
live there
forever

did you not say once
before
that eventual leaving
that it is only
really the
thought that matters
most?

i know
you keep telling me
magnolias are
always white

and you never believe
my yellow ones
who can forget the yellow ribbon
on that old oak tree? tell me.

tomorrow, i shall wear my yellow cap
my yellow shirt, my yellow brief,
my yellow pants.

my jaundiced eye, my golden yellow ring.
tomorrow, in my country, the sky is yellow.

all steps lead to the yellow brick road.
all fruits are ripe and mellow and yellow.

Tomorrow, the country is yellow.
Yellow for integrity, Yellow for change.
Yellow for justice. Yellow for truth.

One day more, and the sun shall rise
Yellow as w forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Yes In Me

my yes is cautious

it starts with an if

if i say yes then what will i give

what will i lose? there is always a but now

unlike before when my eyes were young

and too sheltered for harsh lights

i know how to give now without losing

if i say yes and if i give something

i always take back the silence of

my own consequences in a box

when both of us leave there will be no word

not a word shall be wasted for it is expensive
perhaps just a glance
and then you hear footsteps

outside the door
some children will laugh

and then the rain
yes just the rain on the road

nothing more
not even the clicking of an umbrella

unless
you decide to follow like a kitten

but by then
you will have no name of a street

and i too will be
another coat wearing passenger

in that train
going elsewhere to an address unrevealed to anyone

RIC S. BASTASA
The Yes Man...

say yes,
do not misinterpret
say yes
only if you want to...

RIC S. BASTASA
The Yogi Has Turned Into Stone.

there is a need for
us to be shaken

you were told a long
time ago before you
were dismissed from that
exclusive house of
contemplators

you are holy, you are
good, by all means you deserve
a shelter of your life

you need to be shaken i laugh
it out only to find its meaning
just now

i am shaken and i may lose everything
i have. I must keep my cool.

perhaps, like you, i needed it too,
before i get finally dismissed from this
house of life, this house of the unknown.

we wait as you have waited before you
were finally lost, until you found yourself.

the yogi has turned into stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
The You In You

what is in you that hides?
what is in you that runs and yet comes back
to stay a while?
you keep things like a miser
and spends them all in one day when your beloved dies
and squanders them all like the rain
when the right time comes
when this is over
you settle like a wilting flower in the
silent city.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Young Boy And The Sea

the young boy sees the sea
as the sea
what else could it be?

a giant breather in front of his
little eyes
the rolling arms that want to
catch him in his
breast

the boy remembers his mother
and runs towards her
the big body of the sea stares at him

'soon i will catch you my boy
until you become the man
who shall search for the pearls
inside my belly! '

the boy lays his head upon his mother
he closes his eyes but could not remember his dream anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
The Young Lovers

the young lovers
close their rooms too early
and they open
their rooms
too late for lunch

ey they keep
on hugging tightly
to their bones
and marrows

exploding
their ecstacies
and we understand
how is it to be lost
in the labyrinths of
passion

i have tried it once
and they all
understand what
we mean by
our actions

they were once
lost too
in the embraces
of their arms

and the rest
too understand

what humans know
what human do

they fall in love
and they think
they will never be
separated
ever again
from this sense

melting away
from shame
and being a stranger
to modesty

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Self-Defense

When the incident happened
Three of them took turns
Mauling the victim
Using firewood they hit
His nape, using their fists
They hit his face and arms
And back and when he knelt
For mercy, they still kick him
And spit on him, until he fell
To the ground
Losing his view of what
This world is all about

Is this world all about hatred?
Is this world all about violence
Inflicted by a brother to another
Brother? Is dialogue not a
Possibility to settle this war?

That night, he saw dead stars and blood
Not the beautiful stars in his poems
But the stars of pain & grief when he
Lost his consciousness
When his eyes were forced to close

Now he invokes the law
Against them who almost
Killed him
He invokes the law of the just
On his lacerated lip and
Multiple injuries around
His human body

And I listened to the defense
Of the three accused
They say they were only
Defending themselves
Because he wanted to talk
To them on the dead of the night
And wanted an explanation
About the grudge of this world
Against him and his kindness
He stared at them and they
Did not like it, his eyes
Stabbed them
With so much light and it
Was also painful
The stare was grievous

I looked at the eyes of pain
On his complaint and today
I made a decision

The verdict, of course
Is Guilty.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Baby

whatever happens
when you cannot forget that
innocent smile
those fragile fingers holding
on to your hand
always think
that baby can never be yours
and that
you can never be
their eternal slave

go, find your own
take time
but first find a man

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Deaths....

an ant, an anteater,  
a termite, a bird, a  
whale, a caterpillar,  
a fly,  

their lives differ.  
when they die, we  
care less, we fear  
our own, we stop to  
ponder.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Fences And Yours

it is a rainy day and you look for
that nearest
available shade, this time, your neighbor's house
it is fenced and about five steps away
their closed door
some bushes hide what supposedly should have been
an open space
like a warm embrace of the arms

the door bell does not sound and you have no other choice
you change your mind and walk away back to your house
it too is fenced, like what they do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Gifts

the first child boasts of his gift from his papa
a remote controlled toy car
the second cannot be outdone with his
toy gun with matching laser
the third shows his toy chopper
still on remote control
the fourth one says her mama
simply told her
that she loves him very much

his jealous eyes crave for the toy car,
the toy gun, the chopper,
and he is sad, thinking that his mama
has no gift for him

except love.
just love? he is so sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Golden Wedding Anniversary (For A Couple In Chicago)

she wears
two platinum bracelets
on her
wrists

dressed in golden
yellow

her reading glasses
on

she poses as he takes her
picture
against the yellow leaves
falling

the wind passes
another year is marked

in the autumn of
their years

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Love Story

she could not bear it anymore
she took her life away
he easily accepted events
managed to cry some tears for her funeral
wore black
and would not eat for days
but he has a life of his own to live
after three months
he meets another woman in his life
takes her to another place
to begin his life anew
forget her altogether
and live happily ever after.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Love......

the two took
refuge in the dark
where they feel
each others' souls
fitting perfectly

the light outside
is blind
as to what love is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Marriage: Phase 2

ey they sleep early
and wake up early

to the splendor of odor
the magic of skin all gone

back to back with time
they have nothing to share

except their promise
to complete the journey of marriage

sailing on mutual affections of pity
and sympathy less the excitement

silence holding on to silence
love shrinking to its essence

understanding digs deeper
to souls intertwined longing

for that final resting place
the same God as their witness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Own Circle

i like to
join them
in their circle
without
much thinking
whether i
fit

lots of
courage you say
wanting
to be in simply
for being
in and be
one of
them

they keep the
circle too small
and i am
having a hard
time looking
for the
entrance

i cannot even
see the exit

at the last look
i feel a little awkward

not to boast
or be arrogant but i just
feel
that i am too big
for all of them

and so i stayed
in my own
rectangular
wall, four corners
no roof

no other occupant
just myself
sleeping well within
my confines.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Own Interests Most Of All.....

the little boy is
dead

there is dust on
his forehead

from the rubble and
the trouble

the world condemns
the horror

the newspapers are
putting the head
lines

meanwhile the
powerful countries
who hold the future of
the other little boys
still keep discussing
how to protect
their own interests....

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Precious Indifference

because you have written so many
they will hear nothing but traffic

have nothing but impatience
earn nothing but that familiarity of boredom

they will read nothing but many
pedestrians crossing the road and
will not recall any shoe or tie

because they are too many
they will see no pearl but only pebbles

that they all throw away in the mud
until nothing is left

but their own precious indifference
which they will treasure as gold.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Shore-Less Hearts....

I ENVY you
i like the way you hold your
tool
like a garden shovel
that takes
almost everything
to make the flowers
of spring
bloom

i envy you

you have taken
what i long for
and you
have enjoyed it
to the full

i like the way
you dip your tongue
to the petals
and on that nectar's
taste
a bee dances in the
sky
in ecstasy

i watch all these
events passively
like i were an electric
post that lights
the street at night
and still
stares endlessly
to all those
who are lost on their
way to
finding the island
delights
of their shore-less
hearts.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Soft And Young Bodies Against The Wall Of Poverty And Indifference.

the best gift i gave to the little boy
was the toy plane. I want him to learn how to make it fly.
he need not fly.
it will be another
defeating illusion.
i want the boy to dream
about the sky
and the wind
and he will become another mythical creature
in the slum

the best gift i gave to that little girl
was a stuffed puppy with lots of curls and big eyes.
she needs a hug from the softness of the body of the puppy.
her nights are always without her mother.
her brother is too hard for her wishes.
her papa is dead.

then they become happy. They will dream all night.
Gentle with their sleep.
their soft and young bodies against the wall
of poverty and indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
Their Way To Freedom
	heir way to freedom is not that easy
and simple, they will tell you about what their histories tell them
blood so much blood was shed
some important people died and they become more important
in time, they were worshipped and made as icons
immortal heroes
where the young must learn what was in their minds by
compulsion

and that is the irony of it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Theirs

too much convolutions like layers
of threads and interfering light

don't know. I can't pinpoint. Which is which from whom is whom?
too many to hold. Myriad memories.
I cannot grasp what is what.
When is when. Why.

too many bombardments. Less and lesser close-ups.
Woos delayed. Mass growing under the skin.

nothing touched. Distance dissolving. Time melting.
It is better this way. We like it anyway.

It is just watch. We understand nothing.
The meteors do what they deserve. They just pass away.

RIC S. BASTASA
Then we destroyed the fence
and we have become another open house
we thought it would be just perfect
sharing what we are what we have
until everything is taken
until we lose whatever privacy is left
we have misunderstood openness
we have misunderstood who they are
and what is this place really like
we are never the same and they are
never us.

and so we reconstructed the fence
made it higher and stronger and we look
at them down below us
for we have learned our lesson so well

we give only when necessary
we part with what we have only for a reason
we are different
and they are them...

RIC S. BASTASA
Theme Song

we had it
we were serious about it
long time ago
we listened attentively
we felt it
stirring our hearts
whirling with
so much love
we look at each other's eyes
full moon

ah, but that was long ago
we did not much have of that free will
to overcome those obstructions
we never hurdled them
completely

we embraced the weakness of
all those fears
we said, we were not meant to be
there were other plans
that must fulfill
destiny

i went back to that place
where they still play that music
i still enjoy each lyric
but i am already different
the feeling has changed
and i never felt the urge
to dance again

RIC S. BASTASA
Themirrorandthelullaby

ilookatmyselfinthemirror
findingafaceaverysadone
indeedandiamnotalarmed
anymoresitisexpectedwith
alltheburdeningyearsigetused
tothissomehowconcealing
whatisfeltwhatispain? what
isthereasonforthisphenomenon
ibegintowhistlemother'slullaby
stillinmyheartandihearmother
herselfsingingtomehersong
whatislove? isitlikethesunthat
shinesinsidemyheart?
helloiamconcealediamhiding
inatrainofwordsdoyoustillseeeme
doyoustillwanttoreadme
without
theneededspaceforyou
tounderstand
whatisreallythere? whatishereforth
moment? cryingonthepillowatnight
thereisnomaginanymoreandidonot
meananymorewhatasisay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Then I Am  As Lucky As You, Restless Soul.

you wonder,  
what is the point?

it is pointless  
all these are but exercises,

looking for  
verbal sufficiency

this articulation of  
smoothness like

strong liquor to  
my throat

how does it slide?  
like life.

however, if in  
this journey, i stumble

upon God, or  
Love, then i am

as lucky as you,  
Restless Soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Then Love Will Not Sell....

it would have
been easier if
you love me and
i love you.

nothing obtrusive.
all is well.
smooth as a shell.

but who would
like to follow it
line by line?
if love is well,
that will be swell.

no one likes it
and your book will
not sell.

humanity loves
the cathartic.
the tragic,
and at the end,
that magic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Then Move On

NO one comes here to vend wares
we are bringing nothing for sale

We have arrived because we want
to bring more life

we will not stay somehow to make
us fixed

there are paradoxes to cross
myths to either amaze us or
destroy us

No one comes here to make a show
far from it

what we want is to silence the scream
to settle for what is less and what is only essential

and then move on...

RIC S. BASTASA
Then She Asked Me If I Had Had Dinner Already

love can be twins
and i can also be double-faced
but not really untrue
or insincere

love multiplies
upon itself when one misses
what love truly is all about

isn't love sharing?
isn't its essence charity?

i am ready to share my body with you.
but you recited all the codes of morality

tsk, tsk, you miss love and
it is such a pity....

RIC S. BASTASA
Then The Fish Story Begins To Be Told

POETRY is something
that you do
which most of the times
others do not really
share doing, for one thing
for most, it serves no purpose
perhaps, except to baffle

somehow i keep doing it
just like dropping a tiny stone
in that sleepy pond
to make a ripple where ripple
makes more ripples

and then a child begins to see
and asks
if there is a fish that swims
in it.

then the fish story begins
to be told
until the child has grown up
to be a man
ready for more ripples

RIC S. BASTASA
Then The Tears Shall Start To Fall

Another year has ended
Summer has come for us to bask in the sun
In sandy white beaches with friends,
But I must now take leave
My time has come
Alas, the ylang-ylang trees in our garden
Without me
Shall still bloom and spread its scents
When the wind comes again
Tonight
Then the tears shall start
To fall

RIC S. BASTASA
Then We Have Changed From Quizzical To A Certainty

we look at ourselves
after we run for miles and stop
for a while by the side of a
peaceful pond along our way
back home where we have
seen the lines in our foreheads
the curves of our jaws
the sunken features of our cheeks

and then we have changed
from quizzical to a certainty
as we begin to carve our
hopes on that mirror:

not all bread cures our hunger
not all water cures our thirsts
not all in us can be sold like some
kind of properties that can give us
a profit for the day

we reflect back then when
all experiences are teachers
when fear of everyday life has
actually made us live for the better
when certainty is finally abhorred
when life becomes so real
as it slips from our fingers when
we finally dip our finger to the
body of that water that
finally erased who we are
and how we look like
the rest of those we knew.

RIC S. BASTASA
Then You Ask Me If I Am Angry

after betrayal
of trust you have the
nerve
to ask if i am
angry

i am not
i am
hurt and that makes
the difference

between you and me
there shall be a chasm

an abyss
but you will never hear
me shouting

RIC S. BASTASA
Then You Go Inside Yourself.

Excited.
You rush for that
travel. The clouds amaze you
inside the plane
manila bound.

You like it now.
Alone. A walk at SM
Night stroll at
Roxas boulevard.

You need this.
Go out this room.
Take this walk and that.
Eating alone
Seeing the people
passing by.

Then you go
inside yourself.
No one really knows.
How deep
and silent you have
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Therapy.......  

it is not Sigmund Freud  
this time sitting beside the sofa  
as he rests his head  
while questions are asked taking him  
to places of his youth where he is going  
to take the answers,  

it is not about sex, it is about poetry.  

at the ceiling the stars  
on the walls cling the silence of space.  

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Just Too Many Unfinished Business

if for a time you get bored
for all sorts of reasons
try being busy avoiding all
the resting places of idleness

there are just too many unfinished business. Reinvent yourself.
Change the world.
Plant the trees.
Sow the seeds.
Clean the rivers and
Sift the seas.
Try the herculean side of things.

after which you wish
you have the nine lives of a cat
or even
the ten heads of the dragon
where finally you find
a cave to be alone
to restore
your fire.

or a fence
where you can sit
in the manner of a cat
watching dogs pass by
and feeling
safe that you are
on a high place.
Safe and sound.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Many Roads To Take

at this point in my life
there are always many roads to take
the options are limitless
the roads looking like hairs
and fibers and swirling octopuses
so confusing
so tempting to take those
that make me happy

but i have decided
to take this rougher road
with you, my love

i have taken your hand
i have given my word

that is the difference

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Many Ways Of Killing Oneself

a rat poison is cheaper
a double edged knife can be good
on the wrist
but it's gonna be painful
sleeping pills a can full sure
fits your mouth
and just as good for the
stomach
that is the usual way
actors and actresses do it better
jumping over the highest building
either in Dubai or Chicago
is expensive for you still have
to pay entrance fees
or better yet you can take the gun
into your mouth
and have that relaxing feeling
of a sudden bang
your brains scatter on the floor
and the police will come later
someone innocent may even
be implicated
because of your action
and perhaps that will make
you feel better
someone's life is choked
by the FBI.
A hunger strike is dramatic
on social implication
you die on purpose like
Gandhi the great Mahatma.
Killing yourself is also a responsibility
and must be done with
extreme caution
like when you cut your wrist
staining the carpet
or you bed linens
that would be a hard job
for laundry and
dry cleaning.
These are just the ways to kill oneself and if you are really determined
to kill yourself
do it well with art.
We cannot come on your funeral
So my dear, just dig a hole beside your
garden, and when you really like
doing it, just drag yourself
an inch away from your self-dug
grave and on the last
breath
throw yourself in and be gracious
enough to leave a note
that you are happy and contented
now in your
self-chosen world.
Feed your dogs, so they may
poo and by chance bury you
when they scratch the soil.
Nice ending isn't it?

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are No Finishing Touches

in reality no matter what
the usual work is always undone
you want to finish it?
it finishes you instead
look at the pile of books
don't you see the fangs on
every page? the blood on
every chapter
each word the taker of the
little flesh left in your mind?

you try putting the finishing touches
like a varnish on the well sanded chair
you blow your breath
and stand at a distance to look at
what a finished product should look

shiny, yes too shiny
and then you miss the sun
because what you see is always the
mirage beyond
your feet still are no master
as paths move away
as distance stretches itself like
light to infinity

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are No Permanent Friends

such is politics
there are no permanent friends
or enemies
only permanent vested
interests

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are No Pre-Requisites To Friendship

genuine friendship
is nothing but just presence
there are no per-requisites
no demands
no expectations just the
honesty of being myself
and being yourself
nothing much just the feeling
that i am one like you
too, in this, in that, that
we belong to the same house,
on the same journey
inside this ordinary boat
with us are paddles and
rigs admiring the same
orange sunset between
the shadows of the hills.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are No Slaves In America....

ricky is pleasing the master of the house.
early to bed early to rise
makes a list of what to bring to the beach
Saturday morning,

a white bench, a sharp bolo (for cutting the grass)
a bowl of salad, a big storage for clean drinking water
a big blue beach towel, six red painted chairs,
a kettle of Japanese rice,
ten live fish, my favorite dog is already at the back of
the pick up,
the hammock from Cambodia, life jackets for six,
dates, and ten bottles of coca-cola and a big ice bucket,

no beer this time no cigarettes,

'everything is ready, Sir'

She writes an email from the coast of Costa Rica,

' dear Uncle,

I am feeling lonely here. I miss Ricky and the beach.

Love.

Tina'

well, it is a Saturday and i am exclaiming to the door and windows,

' What a life! '

and the United States of America can wait.

There are no slaves.
There Are No Standards At All.

there is always a person standing by, nitpicking and critically saying: (takes one
this one
does not meet a standard, you are writing this?

and i answered yes, and i stare at him and sort of asking,
who are you? but i let this pass, i do not mind, this is mine and
this to me is the best that i have done,

it is not for sale, and it is not for praise.

ms., this is not every for your consumption, it is not consumable,
it is beyond: commerce, even beyond
death.

it stays here, it is rooted, and i do not intend to bring it there.
coz, everything is inferior there, ..all that is found here.

all these do not meet the standard, because there are no standards.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are No Stars In The Sky Tonight

it is dark and there are no stars tonight
the sound of the waves from the sea has been
as harsh as it was this morning
the trees swing to the dictates of the strong winds
and here i am sitting on a chair seeing things
move and listening to the sounds of their being

how can i just be an ordinary spectator all these years?
seeing all the phenomena as they all come and go
and not staying even in the memory of my mind

i know the reason why, i know it from the very start
i am letting go all that confront me
not touching them even for fear of interfering
what nature wants to accomplish
for what each creature deserve to be
to each strand of its DNA to each destiny

it is the mere seeing of letting nature do what is best
for each of us
that makes this life alive
it is the flower that must open itself with all spontaneity
that i must see and feel
without the slightest touch of my fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Only The Two Of Us

life would have been simple
with just two of us
but as simple as we want life
to be
it isn't that way
life becomes a house without windows
and furniture and kitchen
without the other people
who eat with us
when we are too lonely
when simplicity is equated with loneliness
because the house
has not learned to laugh like a kid.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Only Two People In This World

the best slave
and the worst master

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Parts

there are parts in the figure that we deny,

and denial can be painful

for instance in order not to hear the bad news one can deny that he has ears

and so on and so forth

if you are into survival like having experienced how is it to be left alone at sea with only your hands to make you swim

you can relate how is it to deny that you have a mind that can delve into what can happen later

sharks can be there to eat your fingers or swallow your heart

there is only the moon that you can convent into a goddess hoping that this time it can save you and make an island ahead of you so you can land safely and have some coconuts to eat and drink

one can be an expert about love or hate and with ease deny the existence of all nerves
just one heart
one heart
which you can easily hide with a piece of cloth
and then tell the guests
of your party
that you do not have one at all

or that if you have one
it has assumed the nature of steel

and for a toast
you say, Long live love! Long live Love!

but deep inside
you swallow this truth
There is None at all.
There is No One at ALL.

aND it is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are People Who Tread Upon The Sands Of This World Leaving No Footsteps

there are people who tread upon the sands of this world
leaving no footsteps
like you they stop somewhere where birds sing no more
where Lot's wife cannot look back because there is nothing to love
nothing to remember

some who own the footsteps upon the sands and the rocks
who can remember the songs so well look back and then cry
but like Lot's wife despite knowing the risks
turn into stones.

people always love footsteps, the work hard for legacies to leave the earth, some
carved words on the trees, some pictures that should not fade,

they want to leave their names in glory, their houses firm and tall on the cliff,
their tombs secure with epitaphs that everyone must ponder and remember that
once they were here.

how useless. The sands speak and then rest in  remember the fingers whose
emptiness they pass as they fall quietly back to the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Reasons

there will always be reasons
as there are leaves from the trees,

why, this word never goes extinct,
it is famous, and always gets the
good ratings in the scoreboards
of our interrogative history,

why did you leave me? why did you
forsake me?
these are the top questions of
those who are in pain, of those
you have betrayed, and you

hide, wanting to grasp the most
convincing answer, like the leaves
of the trees,

falling, rotting, decaying, and
wanting to come up, rise
to the trunks, to the clouds

still wishing to explain, to exude
the sweet smell of humus,
dead is sweet
decay is cool, in rotting
shall come the sweetest flavor of the soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Shadows

some nights
those colder ones
when i am alone in bed
watching the favorite show on the ceiling
of shadows
on an aircon musicale
listening to the comforting whispers
of the humming birds inside
my mind
i decided to fear
nothing

the shadows of my past are here again
my hands do not touch them
my hungry eyes feast on their
restlessness
my body and soul
all unaffected

after all the dead
cannot harm the living
even when they are
all sleeping....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are So Many Of You Here

But only few will be chosen
The rest of them shall survive

They will live another Year of grief Of strife.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are So Many Ways Of Loving

you know that.
you lovely woman, you know what love is.
you know much better than me
for i am a bitter man
the one who loved so well and yet lost
that love and never found it again.

there are so many ways of loving
you know that
and i will not tell you anymore
i have loved you once
and i think that was all enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Some Questions

there are some questions
that at first glance
bring you nothing
like an empty basket
with nothing
but wicker spaces
all around it

like: how do you do?
what time is it?

but change these questions
to something
that slaps us
that makes us think about our existence?

like: how do you do with cancer?
what time is it that you will die?

tragic, but the truth runs like nerves
howling for help in your flesh
berserk
but then like anybody moving
it stops to rest
and stares to a world without questions
just plain
stare and acceptances

some manage however to let hope
come inside their mouths
to say:

how do you do mother? what time is it when the next baby comes?
when we will be a family,
a home, when we will face the new born babe
like a fireplace
near the breakfast table
where conversations about baptisms and weddings
flourish like some flowers
starting to bloom
in spring

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Stories

there are stories and there will be more
coming next is the love story
between a crocodile and a
butterfly

did i not once tell you about the tragedy
of the ceiling and the floor?
oh, until now, they haven't really kissed
despite their pronounced
love for each other
with the walls as their sole witness

i have more stories for you to tell before you
finally leave
for that place called oblivion.

i wish i can rewrite the Arabian Nights
not in thousands but in millions now vis-a-vis this electronic technology
and there you are
listening like grass to the soil with all ears dipped flat on the pebbles
and the sands

i understand i will be your entertainer for the next hundred years
silly! but that is what we are meant to be

an old Spanish church where you are the head priest
beside a convent where someone's got to be a nun exempted from the age
of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Those

that sleep during the day
and wake up
at night,

they do not hurt
they hurt themselves
and find solutions
on neon lights

they smoke their nights away
they drink till the flesh is numb
till speech is free
till the soul clears itself
from the burden
of the body

they are not like you
hope fettered around the walls
of the office
entrusted to the company
Inc.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Those Who Irritate

in the same manner
there are those who are not irritated
they know how to maintain
poise
despite the storm
to be sensible despite
the plagiarism
they become more of themselves
as others
go beyond their nature
they are silent when you speak
they remain silent
even if you are silent too
oh, they are just themselves
despite the
volcanic eruptions
oh, they remain calm
even if
all are screaming
running
even if the world is dead
they remain
growing like moss
like lichens
like cockroaches like flies.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Thousands And Thousands

there are thousands and thousands of poems
written everyday in this world where we, whether we like it or not,
still continue living, breathing, writing, sighing,
whatever that we do, singing, bathing, playing, mourning,
there are thousands and thousands of poems
thousands of us, doing the same boring things in this world,

you are one of us, we are us, us, us, us,
thousands, and trillions, we are us,

despite, i have my ears for you, my eyes,
all for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Times

when you lose grip of
something poetic
when the moon is just a moon
when a bleeding heart does
not occupy any significance
when a vacant lot is just another empty space
you lose sight of the possibility
of someone coming to save you
someone that smiles though
you do not know who that person is
there are times when everything is bland
when a hamburger does not
satisfy hunger
when you lose sight of what once
was beautiful
when horses pass your way
and you are not moving
to feel the ride
when you just sit there and
do nothing
these are the times
when you begin to think
you realize
you are still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Times When The Sun Does Not Shine

who argues
about the rainy days
when the sun
does not shine
like a child hiding
on the skirt
of her mother

who disputes
lean times
and hungry days
when we simply
bite our tongue
swallow our saliva
and say we
just had lunch

when this happens
we can do nothing
we let all these times
come and then wait
when they finally leave

for like the sun that
does not shine today
tomorrow it may come
and shine again so brightly!

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Walls

i just learned
that there are walls that want
to be gates

there are windows
that want to be skies and birds

there are birds that want
to become stars

and there are stars
that merely want to be themselves

just the glitter
for the night

then fade away
on the first glimpse of light

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Walls Between Us

brother, there are walls between us
needles of rain between our faces
when i touch your hand
you seem so far away
like an island to another island
without a boat
just a telescope.

you expect too much, like the way you want me
to devote all the attention you need:
every need,
every discomfort,
every uneasiness,
every asking ungiven seems to be unforgiven
i resign.
i stop
from this unfair brotherhood
that you
impose upon me

there are walls and walls that you are building now
and i cannot see and hear you anymore
you built them
i won't destroy them and i will not ask the reasons why

we deserve a distance, a far away distance, perhaps
for us to rethink
what brotherhood is all about

it is not a one-way traffic i suppose so
you must understand it as i do

i am going inside this road with my own car
you take yours and we meet halfway

keep those walls, they are yours
i keep this road, this bridge, this open space
There Are Walls There Are Ceilings

there are walls here and there are ears who listen so well
and eyes who see too clearly
you,
there are ceilings too
there are limits to what you can do
there are floors
between
you
now the cup has overflowed the dams break out
a flood
will cover you, the floor meets the ceiling and you are sandwiched
like a witch,

see..how you crumple?

RIC S. BASTASA
There Are Weights On My Shoulder

time knows how to manage burdens
and weights and
pain, and so here i am before you

as you read the last line of my words
i am finally attuned
i have taken the scales of
equivocation and wandered along the spaces
of ambiguities
and ironies and paradoxes

in such a way that whatever side i take
on whatever wall i lean
on whatever river i cross
and sometime even dream of flying across the
boundaries of this human fence

i have learned the art
this trick of picking up meanings

yes, i have understood the meaning of my life
i am lifting the lightness of the weight of my being.

i have wings
without feathers.

RIC S. BASTASA
There At The Cave Door Of The Old Church

there at the cave door of the old church
you shall enter

move farther. move some more until you reach
the dead end corner
where the windows are little squares
lighted by the small fingers of the sun
shining all day

find our some truths of squares
lights and shadows of the past of this old church
on its window and door

have you gone to the old church in Baclayon?
have you seen this old door and window?

tell me if it is true that there are no more choices
in your life.

what they are saying is not really true.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Comes A Time

there comes a time
you least expect
when hiding your
true feelings within
becomes more painful

than when you let it out
open to the sun
letting them wilt
like some raisins

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is

there is beauty in smaller things
a single red petal of a rose
in my pocket
a white pebble hidden
in my shoe
a lock of hair of my beloved
inserted
in a page of my favorite poem

a little space where i sit
in my garden
a single tree to shade
my head
a little bird singing above
my hair

a small rock where i can
just sit
and feel the slow
movement of this earth

in here
there is peace and quiet
in here
i am king

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Bird Inside My Mouth

there is this blue bird inside my mouth
and it is singing
and so i decided not to speak
lest i cannot hear
its beautiful song

it is love song
and it is calling your name

would you like me to stop the bird
so i can speak to you about the sad story of a man
who just lost his desire for love?

whose heart is broken because you have not kissed him?

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Choice

there is this void
that i think, remains to be
a void forever

no matter how you
fill it up it remains
a void, a chasm and
you feel like falling
forever on a bottom
that seemingly is not
there at all

there is also this joy
that remains to be a joy forever
inside our hearts and it rises
and rises forever
you feel like flying up forever
and there is no roof
of cloud or sky

there you are
at the middle
of these two contrasts

look up and look down
you choose

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Connection Between You And The Beetle

there is a beetle
inside your tummy
it has been eating
the left side of you
and you wonder if
there is a connection
between you and the
beetle

when it bites you
you think about itself more
rather than you
wanting and decided to kill
it at once

but it knows its place
and has its reason when it
declares with a
challenge that
you cannot afford to accept

'when you kill me
be careful
you also kill yourself'

(it is
a stalemate)

to live for another day
you smile
and the beetle smiles
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Distinction Between You And Me

It is a basic
classic distinction
between you and me
is a big chasm
a black space
they call it a hole
of a doughnut
no one understands it
completely
except myself
that center of understanding
that which accepts us
for what we are
that on the circular edge
of substance and sweetness
chocolate or orange
there is a place i call
i own
that domain of having known
nothing

between me and you
lies my own acceptance of my own
ignorance
that is where i start
my birth

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Need For Us To Talk

there is a need for us to talk
i am facing a blank wall and
i am left with nothing to write
nothing to say, so, i pray,
talk to me, and when we begin
this oral intercourse, i will be
amazed, to a new world before
me, as the walls become skies,
as the skies grow stars, as the
night grows deep into the woods,
the mundane and the divine fuse,
something ephemeral comes at me,
and then i find a door into the world
of words, like this.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Need To Repair The Hands Of The Clock

my days are turning into nights
and nights transformed into days

when you switch on
something switches out and you
seem not to understand
how the hands of the clock
are running
counterclockwise
not the usual clockwise clockwork
of the tic tac toe, this ticking of the stick
like a beating on your feet

it pains
to know that you are not asleep and then
all of them are soundly sleeping
and snoring
on the other side of your room

you take something to drink
and then you dream that your are dead

you run away from life
no one stops you no one tells you
stop, stop, stop this untimely demise
because we love you from the bottom of our needs

not funny anymore
you wish you do not wake up anymore
you wish you are transported in the world
where no one dies where no one lives

something constant like a straight line
and some blinking sounds

you swear you love the silence
you swear everything needs to be quiet
and so you will take it now.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Point In Your Life...(For Mother Earth)

it comes as a surprise
even to you
when someone looks upon you

how you spend so much money
on what they call as useless
profitless ventures
and all their eyes show the worry
of a loser
much like a son first meeting
the prodigal shape of
a face

for you

at this point in your life
spend much of what you have
in viewing the majesty of a waterfall
the trip on the hidden hills
the foot-walk and
the silence of the bats hanging
on those forest trees
the springs of water below
the foot of those hills
and its virginal
rocks

then

you say nothing
you give a smile to yourself to this triumph
when what they have viewed as non-essential
have become too pleasing
to your soul

and

you just know it
at the end there is no regret
you are merely admiring the beauty of this earth
following the curves of its body
burying yourself in the coldness
of its arms

and telling it

that there is no love greater than this
knowing mother
earth
telling her that you want a space
between her
breasts

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Reason For An Empty Space

papa's carabao
has a favorite mud hole

mama's parakeet has
a nest

God has a crib in the
in one empty space

in my soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Reason For Everything

nothing happens by random
like the atoms
there is a central axis
a point where
everything revolves
and spins

in our case we call it
God
without Whom
there is no meaning
to this
revolution
to this circular wham
without beginnings

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Secret Garden In My Heart

where i grow
some weeds
and flowers
with colors
and scents
not of your liking

i hide them
there
only for me
to see
and smell
and touch

you do not
know
i am more real
in this garden

my home
away from
you

where i can
be a weed
a grass
and not the
flower
that you always
love

in this garden
where
i am alone
where
i can be myself
away from
the clutches
of your choking
gaze

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is A Way To Write To Make You Understand

there is a way to write to make you
understand
like pointing a way and walking through it
with us together

but the way to that is dangerous since
many have become posts and markers only
and those who follow it do not really
make it to their known destinations

lost, and sweating, and wary where to go next
they sit under a tree and begin to talk about
themselves instead using such trivial words
like the way birds simply fly and roost and then
fly again without having to worry about maps

i like to state it directly: there is no way for
understanding the reasons why we are here
and where we are really going: and as pointed
by the sage ahead of me, we must understand
that we cannot understand, that what we know
after all, is what we do not really know.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Also Beauty In Monotony

a cacophony of the sounds of the waves
of the sea
on our counted steps leading to a hut with a single light
from the moon

there we shed off our worn out faces
without eyes we can now sleep soundly

it is the ear that reigns
but when the nightmare of images comes inside the dream
it can be shut off
like an old radio of the ancestral house.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always A Place

there is always a place
where i can be myself
without fear,

there is always a room
where i can be myself
and just sleep,

there is always a space
where i am at
home

there is always a spot
where you are blind
where i am shut
where you finally do not know
where i am

i am still and rested,
like a moon resting on a mountain peak
one nice evening with my
ever silent stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always A Resolution

the conflicts are the
sand castles
they won't last that
long with the
waves
leveling everything
to the shore
the waves take
what is due
them
the sand castles give
way
and then there is peace
a blank piece
a tabula rasa
that nature offers
to the mind
persistent
on the truth
the open space
the freedom of the
air
the pigeons
moving home
to roost

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always A Time For Reckoning

those with black conscience
shall take all the time to laugh
they will have their own time
the deepest ocean knows how
to listen

there is always a time for
reckoning
that is our hope
we do not inflict the pain
it is the pain that inflicts itself
upon themselves

that is the law
it is harsh
and it shall prevail

we who have white souls
shall wait
we do nothing to stain our hands
with blood
to dirty what clean skins we have
we shall wait
for always the day of reckoning comes
it is harsh
it is the law
and surely it will prevail

they shall grind their teeth
burn themselves
eternally in hell

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always Hope

After the rain
there is always sunshine
Behind the clouds
are the rays of the new sun
And the rainbow promises
A world so new
After that flood
is the flower and the bud
For as long as we breathe
Hope is there bequeathed.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always Hope, Mind You

perhaps i shall now
figure out
why i always dream of
flood under
a bridge where i walk upon
with all fears
because the bridge is
weak and
trembling

perhaps i can now jibe
it with a tsunami
that is chasing me
as i run
as fast as i can
towards the top
of an old mountain

perhaps i shall be wiser now
warned
as i am about
an impending
chaos or
calamity

or perhaps i already know all these
like a
Cassandra
tortured more on the imagined
consequence

rather than
what actually happened

who knows that, by luck or
by the grace of
God or by the power of prayers
or with the intercession of the saints
and Mother
and all the angels of heaven
this misfortune shall
be finally
averted.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always Hope....
	here is hope
in everything
for as long as
the rain stops and
continues
to make as a
rainbow, for as
long as the
seed opens us
and then
begin to grow

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always Less Time....

creativity also says with both hands
banging its chest
'there is so much to do but there is
less time to do it'

living is always only for the moment
tomorrow is just a thought just like yesterday
a moment not remembered
the other one does not like to remember

'we mellowed down' quips the ripe
pomelo which has only a minute more to go
before it lands on the grass below.

'we didn't even have life' concludes the stone
stuck on the ground

'we are human beings, spare us some
more time; we have unfinished business'
thus pray the senior citizens
at Abbey Home.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always Something To Write About

for as long as
there is experience
there will
always be something
to write

for as long as you are
sensitive enough
in such a way that you
can see a needle in the sky
or a grain of sand
in the deepest trench
of surigao

for as long as you keep
on living and noting what
is happening each day

not just what is there but
what is missing
not just what is said
but what is not uttered

there will always be something
to write

even if it is not
poetry at all, even if it is
nothing

there is always something
to write about....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Always This

greed, that sometimes rationalizes itself that it does not exist, and yet when you sleep at night when the room is so silent and it refuses to talk and tell you the truth you soon will discover it to be a part of your being and then you finally admit that you belong to the genealogy of the dragon spitting fire and taking territories and damaging the humanity where you once belong, this soliloquy for instance is a manifestation of greed's guilt,

tomorrow, another war is done.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is An Error

You cannot enter
There is no access
There is a problem
You get disconnected

No problem
I’ll change my face
I’ll take some fingers
From my hands
I’ll take the eyeballs
And take yours
I will rearrange my
Hair and nose and mouth
And realign my teeth

I’ll get your thumb marks
And gee!
I look like you in almost
Everything and
Gee!
I now appear like I am thinking
Like you

Now I will enter now I will get access
There will be no problem
I look like you and think like you

Welcome progress welcome peace
Welcome to uniformity welcome to loss of identity

Welcome to your definition of democracy.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Fire In My Head

there is fire in my head
i am burning
there are cinders
under my feet
i am glowing

i feel the heat
all around me
more fires are
seeded
in my eyes

i am hot
and wild with
free ideas

i am ashamed
of myself
how i have
forgotten
the mechanics
of crying

water,
tears,
sweat,

i want to cry again
and recover
my true worth

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is More Between Us Going

in that island
we had it all
our hands grope
with what is more
our bodies rub
the heat like flint stones
making fire

in a few days
and night
under the light of the moon
we shall find that there is something
more going between us
something that we cannot forget
beyond the flesh
and the bone of our contentions

i hate to say it
but it is love and i hate to accept it
that i am weak
on this particular aspect

i must pack and leave
the soonest before my heart breaks

RIC S. BASTASA
mind you
there is something more to pain than happiness.
first, we always relate to pain, we all have it and there is no need for a doctor's certification that we suffer pain.
second, pain always heals itself, like a lizard rebuilding its own cut feet.
third, whether we like it or not, pain gets in our system telling us that there is something wrong. we are warned and we must take heed and act.
and so mr. failure. ms. dilemma. mr and mrs misfortune fasten your seatbelts in this plane of pain
we fly to higher altitudes to destinations of relief, and we land later on the island of happiness.
this is the anticipation
after the rain is the rainbow
after the pain is also joy
after this misery bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is More To Unhappiness....

because there are too many options
you become speechless

you fret, you fingers are restless

what now? you are undecided
what to choose,

the thought of
consequences come like rain

you are drenched all over
feeling cold
and so
alone,

you try to figure out
that from among these million choices
you have to take only one
and be happy,

and if you are wrong
and become unhappy throughout your lifetime
you will be blaming yourself forever

and it happens to most of us here
who think that this world is unfair,
that people are insensitive
that the future is bleak
the past nothing but recklessness
and the present
a tragedy, all about regret and waste

and throughout our lifetime we choose to be
unhappy because we think we made the wrong choice

there will be a review, an evaluation,
there is more to unhappiness, it is not just that.
There is much weeping
Because you have taken so much wisdom
Take only what is necessary
That which cannot make you weep

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Never A Home For A Vagabond

you arrive from a long trip
you take the stairs back home
the sound of the jet plane
still hounds your ears

you step into a garden
and the grass tells you
with each blade that you have not arrived
at all

it is always strange
always
you miss home but there is really no home
when you step upon the floor of the house
you plea for a home but there is really no home

no little boy meets you and calls your name
no little girl dances for you

what you have are the dogs
and they have their own language for missing you
but they are never enough

when you arrive
in a moment after putting all your dirty clothes in the bin
you pack again for shirts and shorts and rubber shoes
the long way behind the kitchen door
gives you another map for escape

you forget home
there is never one
There Is No Choice But To Be Simple

lest i make you confused
as others want you to be,

like seaweeds spreading at
the bottom of the sea,

i have no choice then
but to embrace the simplest words ever

got less of the vocabulary of the
rich and famous
just this way to make you understand
that in life there is no choice
in fact, we must finally know
there is nothing here.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Comparison

there is no comparison
between you and
me, there is no similarity
or difference

for you are you and i am i
in the comfort of ourselves
we are parallel lights
moving forces
strong and
alive

to each direction
each is
and will always be
intentionally
free

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Debate About Love

for love does not argue
upon itself
it is patient if you remember
it sits and listens
and holds your hands
and warms your palms
it embraces you
on winter time

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Direction

i admit, there is no direction
to follow, my feet keep walking,
my mind runs out of control,
imagination is an octopus
with tentacles, black is the color
of its defense, shoots and
moves, hides inside
a cave of stone,
getting away from
everyone.

where to go?
follow me, says The Feet.
a weak mind
easily submits to be taken
anywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Direction On These Fears

a trembling hand
shows to you that there is no specific
explanation for fear
the directions of the veins
bluish
do not give you the specific
symptom

for like fear
everything goes and spreads
you want to cite
a specific explanation
there is none

some let their bodies fall
at heights that will not warrant the hint of survival
but some knows the trick
the let fear pass
for all fears pass
and wait for the calming of the storm
wait for the boat
that takes you back home

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Envy For Joy...

finally vanessa gets
her visa
and her lover mitchel
awaits for her
in Japan

now the two are
reunited

for him there is no end
to happiness
joy is immeasurable
now
nothing really matters
except
love...

i do not feel the envy
that others feel

i am in the same state as
him

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Forcing Oneself On The Other

love is a democracy
it does not force itself upon other people's hearts

when it is welcomed
it enters the door and expects to be cared for

when it is time to leave
love knows how to make that graceful exit

it goes out the door of mutuality
leaves the room
leaves nothing

it closes the door slowly
there is no banging of anything

the words are kind
when it says goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Going Back

the boats were already burned
the bridges all cut
the river floods and so we all go
to where we shall
end,
there is no turning back
there is nothing in there
not even a memory
of throats,
there was only the thin slice
of bitter taste
there is no you and me
we were all
like salt dissolved in the
blandness of
our own waters.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Moon Tonight

She asks permission tonight to go out for a while 
To get some fresh air 
She feels her lungs flatten like a damaged tire

I take a peek to the dark skies by the window 
It is so dark tonight the trees look like ghosts 
The road appears like a black inkblot 
That you can read through different interpretations

i look at her face with so much pity 
She really needs air she takes the look of a ghost 
i don’t doubt it she belongs to the dark now 
And to darkness she longs to darkness she likes to live

There is no moon tonight that may be nosy about 
Her own personal misery, only the night wind can comfort her

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Moving Out Nowhere

at night the socks
sleep with the feet
and the feet sleep
pretty well with it

in the morning the
socks keep staying
there, there is no
moving out nowhere

she sees this situation
and says 'it sucks!'
quivering on such an
unhygienic thing

on unwashed feet the
socks smell, but who
cares? their love is
strong, their bonding
pure, sticking it out
together forever....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No One There

in trying to forget he escapes from the house of pain
time teaches him about doors that he needs to enter

time leads him to the doors of pleasures and one door
leads to another,
different lights and warmth and glitter
different scents and dance steps of love
lust as he must say
later in his life,

some names and places
soon he is undressed and he sees his body and face in the mirror
his hollow eyes
his thirsting heart
his emaciated soul radiating the inner glow of what is about to be lost completely

he takes the exit and turns back
to the familiar places of this heart

under the tree the bark where two names are written
a heart carved, an arrow piercing

there is no one there
there is no bird singing anymore

the clouds drift and then go away

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Poem

there is no poem that can stop
this mess
this furniture of the room are not in place
the table is under the rain
outside
the chairs are crumpled like paper
in the drain
the books are opening their pages to the skies
the pens are shooting like
arrows in the air
no one can stop the dead
not this poem that only counts
those who want to be buried
no one can stop the grief
not this poem, not that poem
no poem can stop the flood of all emotions
no poem can resist
the burden of carrying all these
like a carriage like a coffin.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No River

there is no river
anywhere here on earth
which will
not accommodate the
widest hulls
of our sails

there is no sea
so crowded with vessels
there is always
a space for
whales and
sharks

there is no space that
can't hold a spaceship
there is no cloud
that is ever overfilled
with rain

there is always a space
for us
always a corner to rest
there is always
a star for everyone
to name
to become even our
own
if privacy is a must

why quarrel? why do you
make war on
anybody?

at the tips of the poles
there is always
a resting place
There Is No Sense At All

just like you i sit on a rock beside the raging waves of the sea
some salty water spattering on the foreskin of my head
turning into crystal under the hot sun of March

i think of the falling leaves from the trees of an old forest
i recall the sound of the hush of their departures so much like
the constant leaving of the waves that come and then go on the shore

there is this drifting so common among us that we are no longer
distinguishing one from the other
all things taking so many similarities and then someone is lost
with no difference

the seagull lonely in its flight towards a distant island
is just like any other seagull singing its lonely song within its feathered body
the man remembering and hearing again the old songs of love broken
shattered pieces of self trying to resemble again an old self
is just any man on the street looking for something he can hold

perhaps for a lifetime, he picks up something and tries to make a difference
a pebble from other pebbles, a cellophane sheet landing on his hand from
the air and looks at it against the sun. Something flimsy and so trivial.
He throws it away and continues walking along the lonely streets at night.

There is no one there. There is nothing there. Something unknown still.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Sense At All. I Say

coupled is no sense at all figuring the truth
coupled is none to boot
nothing to say, in this world where words
do not exist,

as you go out from that door where syllables
are functional
you enter the gate of the truth of all.

in perfect understanding without words.
in perfect harmony, without the scales.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Sense Following Me

i am going to a place
i do not really know what and where it is
i have fears and so i talk to the grass
to pretend that i have someone to lean upon

some people mention about a resting place
there
but i cannot really imagine what rest is all about
i may have so much of this and that
here
and i cannot really relate well

what is that
somewhere

i like to say that i like it here but someone tells
that this is not the place meant to be
all fingers point there
and all thoughts think that it must be there

if i sit a little longer the eyes of my father stare at me
he says if i do that i will be his lifetime failure

those long dead give me dreams to walk and take the long journey
back home where they are preoccupied with waiting

i like it here my heart speaks trying to dominate this conversation
the mouth wants to inser what it has long wanted to say

and then you arrive and wait under a tree
you say you will follow me that you will always be nearer to me

i rise from the grass and then my feet take the faster pace
this time

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Sense To Cleansing Or Removing

on that morning
down there is no water
down the face
needs washing
and you did not
wash it
down you feel
down like not doing
down anything about your
skin
down you actually fell like
down you have
down many layers of skin
down on many faces
down that you become so
afraid to see the mirror
and find out
down what is really wrong
or if there is
down at least one aspect
where something
right can exist
even for
a moment

eyou let time
pass away
you do not hold
a part of its
skirt
you are not in the mood
for a skirmish
with the seconds
or any single
minute

you let everything go
you have no hold of
anything anyway
and you keep yourself
still
as steel
unmoved by that feeling
of unbecoming
that situation where
you feel the
mud drying all over
your body

you dream of water
and rain
something to drench
the wall inside you

you are helpless
there is no sense to
a cleansing
or a removing

you continue with
your task
the one that does not
pay
like a crime

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Sound Sleep As Sound As Home

In the foreign land where you live
Where the snow is cold and slippery and smooth
You say you cannot sleep
And all alone not feeling safe
In that house made of steel and fortified walls

Here in our country
Where walls are weak where beams are but coconut wood
Where the sun is hotter
Where the dust spread like blanket on the bed
Where the noise is simply intolerable
Where beggars come asking for food
Where poverty and calamities abound

Here in my country I sleep so soundly
Because lady, this is my home this is where my heart is
Because lady, I am safe in this place that I call my own
Because lady, there is no place like home
Where sleep is sleep and will always be sound

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Space For Sorrow.

one day i write and feel that i am all hands
just hands arising from the little existences of my fingers.
i write about anything and i don't really bother what is it that
bothers me that bothers you. This intellectual itch that keeps on moving inside
our brains our hearts, this restlessness, this
spacious injuries that reach as far as the next universe imagined.
writing is groping in the dark. You are trying to feel your body.
when you close your eyes you see most in fact, and feel the
rudiments of your soul.
morning is a basket heavy with smooth ideas like fruits and scented like flowers.
It is a beautiful day.
i like to write about beauty. The things, the scenery outside my window. But
these do not last for a long time.
My eyes focus back on the monitor which also monitors me.
How is honesty? How honest have we become beyond the
flashes of the camera on the smiles we give to people.
Life is a tragedy. All lives are.
But who wants to spread tragedies to those who are already suffering the
tragedies of their lives?
we do not want to hurt. We are hurt already.
To hurt the world further would be too much.
There is a mission to writing poetry.
Or the stories that we write.
We re-arrange the mess.
Early morning after we rise from that sleep we comb our hair.
Fold the blankets. Put the pillows in place. We wash our faces.
We flush the toilet. And so on and so forth.

We open the window and the door.
we go out the room and we close the door behind us.

The room is neat and orderly now.
The house is big. And the backyard is waiting.

Hence, there is so much to do.
There is no space for sorrow.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Stopping

a bud
blooms

a car
crashes

hairs grow
and fall

got wrinkles
and forgetting

watching the beautiful sunset
not with sad eyes

sitting on the sand
and feeling the fineness of the world

plunging into the sea
and holding the breath

rising and walking back
and laying down

without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Substitute For Presence

the promises of promises
are nothing but promises
it is absence looking for
the perfection of presence

when you leave i shall not
keep on remembering you

i shall close the door and
ring the phone for by then
she will come and take care
of what you have not done.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Substitute For The Now

he is choosing NOW
he will not exchange it for something else
he is gripping it like a wrench
it IS.

BECAUSE he is tired of promises
most of them turn out to be empty shells
chicken eggs without yolks
yellows have become mere illusions

he goes for NOW.
IT is what he can hold, he feels it
and seemingly
it cannot be taken away from him
until it is taken
until he gives it after he held it
for the moment

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Substitute For What Is Present...

to view an apple in the internet
or climb an apple tree with many ripe apples
in cyberspace

ey are nothing
compared to the ripe mango in my hands

to a virtual love that is described as true
love making vicarious
that is nothing compared to a kiss
that i planted on your
cheek of
peach

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Power

there is no such power
that will exist
for a lifetime
there is none of that
kind
for everything is just like
the wind
it comes and if it is so strong
and powerful
that some trees are carried
away
like the hurricane scare
yet it will just be
like everything else so
temporary
it goes away
and what remains are us
still strong
with our feet rooted to
the grounds
of our own
integrity and morality

we are strong
because our hands are clean
because our hearts are pure
because we are the
the well shaped stones
and not the
corrugated grafts
of the
corrupted culture

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As A Meaningless Poem

there is no such thing
as a word without meaning
each word has a shadow
it has its own moon
and marsh
each sigh calls for a word
to give it a sound that you can hear
inside your heart
each moan has a memory beside it
warm and
so gentle
each touch is a syllable that you
keep in silence
as a treasure inside your skin
hence there is no such thing
as a poem without meaning at all
there is always a body
a hand
at night there is always a whisper
a love call

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As A Toxic Friend

there is no such thing
as a toxic friend since

you always welcome
everyone and give them
the proper attention that
they deserve, as each one

is as important as the other,
and come to think of it,

how may christs have
visited your home and you
have given a drink, a talk,
a feel of another home.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As An Unchanged I

THERE is not such thing
as a stagnant self,
a flowing river,
a waterfall,
a pouring rain
an evaporating dew
a gone away mist
sunshine falling
a seed sprouting
tendril curling
the winds blowing,
there is no such thing
as an I,
THAT does not change its form
it is the growing I,
THE changing me inside this
ever changing body,
you cannot touch me
only once
and i who is touched
cannot react in one
and the same way

this being, this is not just
a form and a shape
but a process, a journey
in constant movement
in changing ways
never, never fixed.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As Pure White....

there is no
such thing as pure white
accept this
learn this when you begin
to paint the wall of
your room

and then be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As Wickedness Only With The Rich Ones...

once he pitied the poor
wanted to take them all from
poverty
like weeds from a garden
where he dream
only of flowers

then he mingled with them
lived with them
immersed in them
only to find out that they are
no less different
than him

they are kind
and must be understood
beyond that
kindness

at some point
as in any other case
familiarity breeds contempt
and he becomes
like anyone of them

suspicious, insecure,
greedy, and always
discontented

and they rob him
and killed him and he was
not able to tell
what was it that he hated
with the poor

i didn't know too.
i don't want to be one
neither do i wish to live with any one of them
nor immerse myself some more
into such a distress

we all have our share
of the chunks of this valley of tears

again that is fair enough
rich or poor
same human weaknesses are there

this avarice, this greed
and to some extent
this capacity to go beyond all these
in due time

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Such Thing As Writer's Block

i am part of the
lousy writers' club
restless people
with nothing to do
but write

hopeless cases
of paranoia
biting their pens
speeding their fingers
on the keys
without much thought
whether
people believe in their
causes

we are part of this
useless endeavor
the objective of which
is only to express
and not really to impress

i am part of the lousy people
our business is to write and write
and writer's block is
a crime

we write not really to impress
but only to express
we are depressed
we are oppressed
we are obsessed
to a fly and wasp and
termites and trite

we are not afraid of our
own self infected cliches.
There Is No Swan Song

in my world
where the sun always shines
every morning in the islands of the Pacific

there can never be a swan song
there will always be some chirping of fledglings
in the nests in the trees

there is nothing that lasts
there are only those firsts.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Us

frankly, there is no us.
there is only me and there is only you.
that is the truth,
the bitter truth, but there was a time
oh, it was rare
when i tried to imagine,
oh, imagination goes everywhere i think,
there is no limit to imagination they say
but thinking has

it has walls and fences, thinking limits
where tolerance lies,

there was a time when i imagine us
hand in hand, arms around arms,
forgive my imagination, but there was a time
when i imagine that we made love beside the river
that we were so exhausted after and that we made a promise
to live forever, us, us, together,

but as i told you, in that dream, imagination has no limits
it is crazy, but thinking is sane, it puts a limit to my illusions

and my own delusions about love and togetherness,
about us, but thinking says, and it says with straightforwardness
of a man decisive about an ending

and so i ended it, because i agree, and i definitely agree,
our situation is sky and earth, floor and ceiling,
we do not meet, even halfway on some compromises

there is no us, really, just you and me,
at the end, i love myself much better than i love you,
and so here i am,

gone for good, away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Way That You Can Look At The Mountain

Mountain high
say Hi
To its silent heights
To its deep forest
To its hidden treasures
To its undiscovered wild orchids
Say Hi
To the mountain High
That is the only way to be There

And then You
Start the Climb
Looking inside your Feet
Then Focus up to the nearest Cloud
Through the Fog
and Mist

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No Word To Describe Us. No One Asks What Love Is.

the dove with the purest of feathers
is in my room, white as snow,
aive as a roof, easy on the rain,
soft on itself, wordlessly,
as i caress it, and kissed its beak
and hold its wings, and then i release it as my secret to the world,
and in the morning, it comes back again, to be my secret once more.

there is no word to describe us.
no one asks what love is.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is No World, No Other World For Me

today, mama, i will tell you
now that you are dead
today, papa, i will tell you,
now that you have long been
dead and buried
and rotten and
dusty

i have no other world for me out there
not the law, not the magic of
your wish for the sciences,

not the purse, not the gun, not the house
or the land, not the scent of money,
not money, not the cows
and carabaos, not the cottage
not the beach

this is my world now
within the confines of the coffins
of poetry.

i am bound. i am caged, i am free
at last.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Not A Path...

listen
there is not just one path
remember
your hand is not just a finger
your hand is not just
a hand
there are other paths
listen
grab yours and if you follow it
congratulations

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing

there are no blue skies
no shining sun
there are no birds in the air
there is no wind
there are no trees on the plains
no forest in the mountains
there are no seas
neither shall there be islands

without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing Much That I Shall Take Away From You.

now that i have
seen and touched
you from the tips of
your hair
to the tips of your
toe
now that i have
tasted each drop
and savored each
time
when we were
together i shall
now leave
with all my confidence
for i am now
strong
and peaceful

there is no beauty
that can tempt
me
there is no lust
which can
defeat me

all i have is
this memory of your
love for me
and now that i
have decided to go
there is nothing
much that i shall
take away
from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing Much To Go Deeper Into Life...

everything has a synonym
life has
a synonym for good food,
sushi,
uni, atami

a platter of jasmine rice,
beside a
hot chocolate
sardines with lots of
tomatoes
fried

in fact the synonyms have
become substitutes

for our definition of something
good and beautiful
less the garnishing of truth
to make
a synonym of a perfect day
just a pinch of sunlight
in my forehead
and then a bigger shade of
the penumbra of trees and
horizons

less the butterflies
that flit and then gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing Perfect

basic is the rule
there is nothing perfect
in this world: no perfect person
there will always be lapses
no perfect planes
there will be crashes sometimes
no perfect clothes
for summer, some colors will still be hot
no perfect friends, there will always be
betrayals from time to time
there is even no perfect time
sometimes we caught in a whorl
with the whore
in a black hole where we do not know
anymore what happens next
there is nothing perfect even
in moderation
no perfect life
neither death,
ask God, he is not either
he was once in error
when he became
man.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing To Boast, Young Man...

be not proud young man
your achievements are nothing but
trivial matters to God

your many years of keeping
is a second of spilling

what you built are nothing but
sandcastles

you cannot keep eternity in your head
you will lose all your hair

do not count your greatness with the rain
in a minute they're all gone

be not proud young man
pray, pray always that you shall be forgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing To Learn From Poetry

There is nothing to learn from poetry

if there is, perhaps nothing much
but one somehow feels that

a certain restlessness is cured
a certain light is seen and then felt

and when you leave a crowded room
heavy with despair

you feel so light like an inflated balloon
and you rise to the sky

and then you see every house, every road
every mountain

and the horse that you want to ride
looks at you like an ant

on that tiny hillside where you want
to escape

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing To See

there is nothing
to see
from this window

a shovel
and a hoe
a farmer without a bolo
a puppy taking
a muddy shoe
a boy
sitting on a red wheelbarrow

a little girl
running naked without a tomorrow

so much
depends not on you

helpless cow

but on them the owners of the black dye
the builders
of the wonders of Dubai

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing To Sigh For

because he cannot have one
he forgets it
but others are showing so many of theirs
that makes him
so insecure that sometimes he feels that
he is
an alien in this planet
and hence perhaps belongs to another

he copes up
recovers his composure saying. 'i am different' and
' i don't belong here but i am here somehow'

and hence must make the best of what he is
and what he can be

anyway, time runs and times runs so fast
what they all have they must give back
and since he has nothing
he does not have to carry anything to give back

traveling so lightly
like a butterfly floating in air when the ending
finally comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Nothing To Write

WELL, FACE THE BLANK WALL
STARE TO THIS BLANK WALL
THERE IS NOTHING TO THIS BLANK WALL
IT IS BLANK
IT IS EMPTY
IT IS A HINDRANCE TO WHAT I WANT TO SEE
IT IS AN OBSTRUCTION
TO WHAT I WANT TO BECOME
THIS WALL
THIS WALL IS MY JAIL
MY PRISON
MY BLINDNESS
THIS WALL MUST BE TORN
THIS WALL MUST BE BOMBED
THIS BLOCK
THIS WEARINESS OF THE HEART
THIS TIREDNESS OF THE SOUL
THIS MALADY OF BEING NOTHING
THIS HAVING NOTHING AT ALL
THERE IS NOTHING TO WRITE
THERE IS NOTHING
THERE IS

now i will write about something
from above

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Peace

in an early morning
walk
along a path
winding through
the hillside

just the wind
brushing with the leaves
of trees

and some interfering
cicada cacophony
this hot summer
day

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Really Nothing Hard

there is really nothing hard
to write a poem
from the deepest chamber
of your heart

the words come
naturally
like tendrils from the vine
always seeking the light
of the sun
to hand in its flowers

without being taught
without being fought

RIC S. BASTASA
now, there is so much familiarity between us.
when i wink, or when i wiggle a finger, you already
know what i mean.
i know too what you mean, what you really mean to me.
(there are times however when i
with malice disregard your signals.)

I get bored sometimes.
And in this nauseous state,
i set my eyes on other far islands.
i vomit but i do not have to tell you.
what is the use?
we keep on breathing same air.
Cleaning same room.
Sharing secrets.
Brushing our teeth on same stories.

there is a plateau where we live.
There is an edge.
When we go beyond we fall.
the story must end simply.
We keep the fence strong.
The boundaries are in bold strokes.
We have taught our feet first
where to step
secure and sound.
You may go away.
You didn't and i didn't.

Hence, we still hold hands.
Keep same table.
sit on same chairs.
Breakfast together.
Eyes fixed on the TV.

Morning news.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something In Her

something that i cannot understand
her own emptiness
she felt it when the old house burns itself
for no cause at all

at the other side of the road
i can't help but hum a song
whistle within

for i own nothing
and then i dance my way back home
along the paths of sharp stones

this is my poverty here
that no one shares

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something In Us Always

there is something in us always
that closes and opens like fingers
there is something inside that watches
for love, and waits, and anticipates,
something that feels home, and
goggles for familiarity, and when it
finds it, it opens so confidently,
unmindful of any pain, expectant
of the excitement, promised and
betrayed, and mourning, and then
there is something in us that closes,
no matter what, it is still closed,
despite the death of time, it still
closes upon itself, curling, thickening
unwilling, wanting to die, but couldn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something In You That I Want Stopped

This moment of my life
I joke about love
In you, but the moment
i am dropping it
Like that famous white handkerchief
of leading and deceiving
You pick it up and then you tell me
Love has bloomed
Into a very lovely flower that now
I must take and smell and
Claim as my own

You know very well that my hands have chains
Daisy chains of love
Put gently around my neck
By you-know-who the woman
I call my own, my possession, my home,

You insist that nothing is wrong
With loving and anything loved and adored
All these are true and sublime and worth
The demands of our time

You are wrong there my darling
I sometimes say words without my heart involved
Words that I just want to say and
Do not really mean
Look at you, how can you ever believe me?
Look at me, how can I ever believe you?
With our chains, melanite chains in our hearts
We have long ceased loving
We have long ceased living
That is something in you that I want stopped
Do not believe me
I am not worth it, not anyone like me is worth it
The fight
The trouble, this man, this mannequin
This bulge, do you still dream?
your hands are smirking
Or even the plain thinking at night when you are alone
When you are nothing
But just yourself

You are still so beautiful! Oh! You are still so beautiful!

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something Inside My Mouth

there is something inside
my mouth
coming from my heart
moving out through
my esophagus

it is inside my mouth.
my tongue cannot hold it anymore.

i spit it out. it is a worm. it is turning into a coccoon.
it is a butterfly.

it is fluttering.
do you think that it can be the poem for my
busy day today?

it falls. It is dead. It has turned into a leaf.
dust. another dust that i have bitten.

tomorrow, i will swallow another worm.
but i will not bite it again.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something Inside My Mouth (2)

there is something singing inside my mouth
but i keep my mouth closed
i decide when shall the opening be

when shall i hear this little thing sing again
in the open

for now i have closed whatever is it that opens
that sings

it is time to mourn
to be silent
to die

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something Inside Us

there is something inside us
that we love in the same manner that we cannot love
but it is here
always inside and won't let us go
and won't let us free
and we have this struggle within
like wanting to shake off
this thing
but it will always be here whether we like it or not
and so i arrive at a concession
that will be good for me and that bad thing
learning to accept it
as part of me
and not shaking it off
like a finger
to my hand
like a parasite
to my head
like a wart
to my butt like a
splitting hair
at my tip

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something That We Must Write

we must write about the language that they are using
in the common places such as the
market
or the barbershop or at the playing fields or even in the
zoo
we must write nothing new
nothing to invent
or to make from our very own hands and minds
what we must do is simply to look around and discover
the shape of the wind
and its soft fingers
there is nothing new in our making only this sensitivity and this discovering
of what is around us
that which grows by themselves and blooms and lingers and extends
like some tendrils of this flowering vine
slowly moving
unnoticed by all except you
becoming aware of that was not there

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Something You Need To Know

in my lies
are hidden truths

in my fiction
lies realities

the characters
are real
speaking their lies
and deceptions

the plot
goes awry
the tone
a monotone

and i,
as the author
still thinks
about
a happy ending

there is
something
you need
to know
more

i am always
there

but keep on
reading
and understanding

after
all, i could be

yourself
There Is The Moon And I Have This Boat And A Paddle

there is this full moon tonight
and i have this sailboat and this paddle
the river is still and the night is silent
on the glassy water this boat slides
and this paddle moves me slowly
on the other side where you are there
scented by the sampaguitas and
for me patiently waiting.............

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This And There Is Also Always That

there is always a star
and there are always trees that want to reach it

there is a cliff that knows the void up there
there is always a river that sings for it

there are grasses that spread
too there are goats and cows to graze over them

there are seas that rage with big waves
there are rocks waiting for them at the shore

there are dreams that do not come true
there are those who listen and write about them

there are those that die
there those who are newly born

there are ends
and there are beginnings too

war sleeps and peace is awake
this world spins and revolves as the sun looks unblinking

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Fire
	here is this fire
it has not burned you yet
	here is this rain
it has not drowned you yet
	here is this wind
it has not blown you beyond death yet
	here is this earth
that dries and cracks and opens itself to everything
	here are four empty spaces inside my heart
all these are there undivided

no one, no one, no one, no one
ever, ever understands it, not even this body this mind this soul

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Island

there is this island
a very small island where i once escaped
away from the death that the crowd has inflicted

there is this lonely island
where the only house i have is just an old chair
and throughout the nine full moons i simply sit there gazing

looking at the small tree the leaf of which is only one
its veins too tiny for my eyes to love

it gets lonely here most of the time but i owe all my life to this very small island
it saved me once from the death inflicted on me by the crowd

my body becomes a geisha of gratitude
my mouth becomes the kiss of the slave woman to the nth power of Abram

i live in this island and on the last dropp of the day
i become forever

there will be another north star in the heavens
and it shall have my own name

there is this island shaped like a heart and it sheds blood because it is real
i am but a white grain of sand

perhaps, but i have become this grain of gratitude and i have become a star
forever hanging on the heavens.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Man Who Does Not Know Where To Go

there is this man who does not know where to go
his wife left him
and his children had already disregarded him

there is this man who does not know anymore how to live
no one cares
about his baldness, his wrinkled skin, his rambling thought
gnarled, whorled,
his arms do not know what to hold
his soul has no anchor
his mind whirls
his hopes all burned
he is ashed
but not gone

people laugh at him and twist their faces at his back
there is still a place for him in the roof of my empathy
he takes shelter here and on this last threshold his fears
at least, are gone momentarily

we shall touch him and we shall watch how he shall quiver

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Pain...
	hat goes on and on
and on and on
and even if you offer all these
to relieve yourself
they still keep on going on and on and on
as though you are a fool
not having learned a lesson at all
there is this pain
that justifies you own way of becoming one
hardheaded poet
i stays with you and you begin to like it
because there is something
poetic in its bleeding
an elegy
for its death.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this poet who writes his fear of death thinking that he has been lonely here and that when he dies, the possibility is he might be lonely there again. Eternal loneliness, damn.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Rain Between My Thighs

there is this rain between my thighs
there is this cloud inside my abdomen
it is heavy with something
that accumulates somewhere
and within there is this
tickling and tingling of everything
i feel for you

in your absence
the clouds get so heavy and my abdomen
gives in

the rain falls under my feet
and then i know
it is the ripe time for sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
there is this sadness that i want  
to give to you  
but of course, you shall not accept it

for who is foolish enough  
to welcome sadness when all hopes  
of our humanity are pinned  
on happiness?

but there is this sadness that makes us silent  
and responsible upon our own shoulders  
there is this sadness that makes us  
fully human, and fully alive,  
there is this sadness that brings you literature  
and poetry  
and then all those fame and fortune that you  
have been seeking  
there is this sadness which has another consequence  
the purification of the soul  
the everlasting happiness  

shall you not take it now?

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Secret Room Of My Life

there is this secret room in my life
that will always be closed

it is mine, and no one gets in for in so doing
they shall find me

and if they find me inside this dark room
without windows

as they open and i am there and there will be too much light
to hurt my eyes

have pity
for i shall die.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Tiny Voice Inside Us....

there is
a tiny voice
inside
us, it is the
voice of
light,
it is warm
and alive
it moves
with the
wind,
it spreads
that perfume
of our
soul,
our being
here and
there
and everywhere.

listen to it
feel it
then speak
its true
language

it is a faithful
voice
it wakes you
up at dawn
when everyone
is still
dreaming

it leads you
to a hearth of
that fire
that never
dies.
There Is This Voice Inside

there is this voice inside me
that screams
that this world is hopeless

there is this voice inside my heart
which whispers
go, take care of yourself,
walk gently, and do not ever look back

there is this voicelessness now
it is silent, and it does not mind
it does not matter

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Voice That Always Speaks

inside me there is always this little voice
that always speaks
everyday

it simply sings
a song
that i barely know

like a little bird
inside my chest
every
morning when i just wake up

it sings of freedom
and love
it sings of being
true

it hints
about love
and
happiness

everyday
like the air i breathe

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is This Worm

there is this worm
as usual slimy and long and despised
that gets inside your skin
and you cannot just dispel it out from your system
it asks for a home
and you give one of the pores of you skin
it asks for food
and you become all too willing to share a part of your flesh
and it stays there
and you allow it and you begin to talk like friends
and you welcome it
simply because you have been all too alone
now despite this parasitic relationship
between you and this worm
you keep on keeping it
and they are angry at you and always pester you
with their own philosophies and one day they become silent

you tell them: what do i lose? i have long been nothing anyway.
i don't have any. Not even a lock of hair from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Is Way To Tell It With A Difference

there is something
buried within
it is not dead
not yet
it wants to speak
it tells the truth
but i am
into a compromise
into a filter
trying to screen out
what is mine
and what is his....

it can wait
soon, sooner, and perhaps
if no compromise is
made, then
never.......
There Lies The Difference

there is no difference
between us
when we went down
the stairs
of the night flight

our bags are black
eyes sleepy on that
unholy hour

the difference lies
at the meeting area

he is met with his
wife carrying a baby girl
soundly asleep

i hurried myself
to the yellow cab

the driver is asking
me the usual question

where to, sir?

RIC S. BASTASA
There Must Be A Reason

there must be a reason for everything
a reason for sadness and joy
a reason for depression and recovery
of the senses
a reason for laughter and tears
a reason for leaving and meeting
a reason for grieving and celebrating
there must be a reason for all these

but for the meantime that i am having
this little fun with you
this drink of beer
and little silly talks about failures
and broken dreams
a little variety
a shying away from harsh realities
talks about other people's miseries

let me forget first about reasons
either for anything or everything
let me feel how is it to be unreasonable
unexplainable and
unfathomable
let me unbreak what i made whole
let me speak the unspeakable
let me forget the grounds
let me be drunk
and unthinking
let me be not myself on this hour
on this short moment
of my failure
let me have this needed
laughter

a toast to misery.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Must Be No Words Left For You To Say

i guess you must be full,
everything in you, first your mouth
it must be full, since it is not talking,
shut, or filled with the sweets of life,
so you feel there is no use talking
like you are a very loud drum sounding
Tarzan's sound proclaiming the emptiness
of his own forest kingdom
without a Jane. I guess your eyes are filled
with all the wonderful scenes
of your life, you do not see me anymore.
I guess your body is full of all the happy
moments, i have not seen it move
or dance, i have not seen it take
another chance to touch my body again.

i guess you must be happy now.
you never call my name again.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Must Be Nothing Complicated

life is simple
directions are simple
up and down
left to right
the middle is there
but it is not and must not
be considered
a complication, and so is doubt
at the middle of our
beliefs and so is faith
the disregards
what should have been doubted
life is simple
like your dimple when you smile
when you see me
loving you.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Shall Be No Blank Space Of This Jalousy

she broke a piece
of the window, a plank of glass
and the cat gets in at night
and sleeps on my favorite sofa

i never like this
i don't like a blank space where a cat slips in
and takes a portion of my sofa
this is strictly prohibited in my world

today the plank of glass is delivered
and there is no emptiness left along the lines of this space
where the wind is free to
to get in and then move out like nothing happened
between the cat and the sofa.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Shall Be No Changes, Despite

i make this note

that when the boat was
about to make its anchor

i did not hide the book
that i am reading

neither shall i change it

that everything is just
as fixed as they are

arriving there i disembark
and shall wait for the next

bus that shall take me to
my own destination.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Was A Time When I Got Drunk

there was this time when
i got drunk and looked at
myself in the mirror to
check if the image was
really mine. I stared.

I liked what was in there.
I liked to stay something, but i just
passed by.

The mirror in the
comfort room happened
to be so silent, and
i was sort of like
a word misspelled
uncorrected,

just passing by,
unhampered.

Was it really me?

How handsome could i
be when i am drunk
and lonely.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Was No Dance With My Father

ah, father really never danced.

if i learned to dance it was from someone else,

and father never liked it for a dance is just a hindrance to the work in the rice fields,

if father danced, it was because he was drunk pretty tired from hard work dark brown skin caused by the Asian sun

and we simply watched that kind of bad taste perhaps even detesting why we are here all chained by work and struggle

perhaps i wished i had a dancing father like yours

but you have never learned to dance too despite the dancing father that you had

and so i cheer myself today and say: Life is fair.

now i have grown up, and try to recall if father loved me even for once even if he did not dance with us

the land and the money the house and the rice & corn fields the coconut farm and
the fishing boats and the beach

they dance before us
and it is enough proof that my father
who never knew how to dance

did love us too.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Was This Man

and there was this man who
blamed himself for not making good
in his life

fortune seems to be elusive
his home shattered by a quake
lest he expected it
his family vanished in the plague

the dumb makes it on top
the mediocre thrives so well as leaders
and the childish makes it to the throne of greatness
others whom he thinks are lower than him made it to fame

he is good and wise and well educated
surely luck was not on his side
or perhaps he did not pray enough....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Were Whispers

there were whispers
coming at dawn
near my ears

it is colder
when i am away from home
and the whispers
are a little bit louder
like some birds
wanting to enter
inside my heart
and make
their nests there

the room is dark
and there is no chance
that i will ever sleep

there is this voice
always telling me

home, i will be home
and tonight is the longest
dark night i shall ever have

it is the sound
of the plane, the clutters
of back packs

it is the sound of
the taxi
going to an airport

it is the view of
clouds up there
and some landscapes

some sea caps
and tiny boats
and then the
touchdown

some hands are
waving

it is 7: 00 a.m.
and the smell of home
is as sweet
as the odor of
an old shirt still hanging
on a chair
beside my door

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be A Time

there will be a time
when you will be
just yourself and

no other and none
other but just yourself
not even your name
or the work that you do
or place where
you live

it is about a light
that comes only once
in your room
and there you float
beside your bed
higher than your
body

they will be talking
and you will just
be listening

some will cry
but you are just yourself
in perfect peace
looking at all of
them with your sad eyes
and then you leave
without even sighing

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be Images

in the mirages
amidst the desert heat
there will be images
fifty or so
for one real tiger
multiplying all the
fears of being
devoured
in the hunger of
its mouth
and the sharpness of
its fangs

this is the hunger of the mind
amidst the heat of the quest
for knowledge and truth
in the rush
what is open for viewing
is the scenery of lies

the key to the door
is the night of peace
the moon in full view
to the eyes that weep

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be More

there will be more things
coming inside me
staying there
and day by day i carry more weight
perhaps something
that i can no longer carry
the furies of the uncertain world
they come too
inside my brain
there is no more love that my heart can carry

i will have some ankles broken
and i may be compelled
to kneel before them

there will be more loads to carry
do not think
that i am unbreakable

beyond the limit you will see me vomit
you may even see me
dissipate into air
with no telltales

of who i am and what i have finally become

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be No Laurels On My Head

there will be no laurels
on my head

please do not offer
any laurel leaves
on my head

i do not deserve it
i am not a slice of pork
i am neither king
nor poet.

just give me a dew
for i am a leaf
just hand me a little
moss
and give me that shade
of wet and green
a little moisture
for i am
also a
stone.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be No More Flowers

you finally decide to leave the garden
the grass are taller now
and the little flowers are drowned

there is nothing worth the keeping and the cultivating
the rains have becomes useless seasons
like the sun and its sunny days
now is the season of departure

the packing and letting things go
the trees wildly growing
the mud sticking and the stones silent
living with the moss and the rotten leaves

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be No Words So Accurate Perhaps...

my wish is to simply tell you
what i was, am
and can possibly be,
i do not wish that you extend your hand to me and take me to your place
i am here
and that is the only fact that i am
i can manage myself
just like everyone else
i do not know about helping hands
i have mine somehow
my wish is simple enough
to find the words to give you the picture
of what we are
who we were, where can we be
and what shall we be,
the words have not been well enough
they are shorter and inaccurate for
the size of our dreams
i still wish to find the words
and i am getting older
and older

sooner shall i realize perhaps that
there are no such words,

that what we are
are but dreams and aspirations
and that there are
and there will be no words
exact for all these

when we die, they will bury us, and then they will give us
the perfect sigh

and if you take a closer look, they speak through the
flowers and the stones
their tears and their hands
and then
finally on the marks of their footsteps
away from us....

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be Rain

There will be rain here
We normally run for shelter
Who wants to be wet in the rain
And look like a helpless chick in the drain?

There will be rain
And we will be seeking shades under the trees
And run towards waiting sheds where the rain
Cannot harm our sensibilities,

There will be rain and more rains to come
In our lives, and we always run for secure
Shelters, and we always have umbrellas,
And raincoats, and closed cars, we hide to places
Where The rain cannot harm us,

But today, there is rain, and I will take
Another action, I will not run for shelter,
Or take shades in trees, or be in waiting sheds,
I will not even open my car, get into it and close it,

I am not afraid of rain now; I have no fears getting wet
And look like a helpless chick, I will run in the
Middle of the rain, I will play in the rain, I will
Be with the rain throughout its pouring,
I will be wet, and it will rain and rain,
Let it rain and rain and rain
You will not see, my tears falling, tears hiding in the rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be Substitutes

and for him to be alive for another year
he takes the substitutes for such absence

he justifies
this absence shall make my heart grow fonder

he looks at himself in the mirror
and feels the gloss of the glass on his face

the pain is there and it may subside a little bit
but it is there and it has always been there

and it will always be there
always

the substitutes heal the surface and makes a scar
the real pain inside keeps piercing
to the bottom

always and it has always been there
like a cancer of love always, always creeping, growing

there is no cure

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Be Words Kept Unsaid

that i have decided to keep

they have become so beautiful unsaid, keeping the grace in silence, their faces veiled in secrecy, their bodies pale

they smell the whiteness of fresh mountain flowers, if they keep their hands, you can feel how cold they are, breathing

the cold and trembling hushes of dying mountains.

RIC S. BASTASA
There Will Soon Be Another Tree

when you go to church
and you find out that no one is there
what do you feel?

if you ask me, i feel nothing.
It is just one of the facts that i have to accept
concerning religion.
Shall i demand an explanation from the parish priest?
I may ask perhaps
but to demand what cannot be provided anymore
is too much of an asking from humanity.
Religion has always been voluntary
And its death is voluntary too.

There is nothing wrong with natural death.
It can be even enriching
If we think about it.

Like rotten leaves. Like humus under the heaps of rottenness.
After a certain time,
Do not be surprised,
Something sprouts from there.

And a ray of light welcomes it.
There will soon be another tree.
Another forest without a name.

RIC S. BASTASA
There, There The Land Of Bounty Lies

Many fingers point to the land of bounty.  
All feet lead to it.  
All hearts cry out  
and are satisfied.  
All thirst quenched.  
All needs catered by the  
Owner of the Land of Bounty  
He who also owns  
the skies and seas.

You are a sad man.  
Why?

Why do you always  
shy away from the Man of Bounty?

This is something that  
I cannot really understand.  
Sad man, you must tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
There’s A New Breeze Coming

There is a new breeze coming
It is whispering to my ear
There is a new morning coming
There is a new sun
There is a new breeze coming

It is so so refreshing
Making all my burdens lighter
My heart is not heavy
My thoughts are happier

That this new breeze
Everything has become light
Like the weightlessness of a butterfly
Fluttering to the melody of
This new soft breeze

There is a new promise
There’s a new breeze coming
There is a new morning
There is a new breeze coming

From my home, sweet home.....

RIC S. BASTASA
There's Gonna Be Eternal Life Not Just Recycling

how candles
consume themselves
is not really
dramatic, it's normal
for candles to light
themselves
eat themselves
and then
just like that
melt and just be
nobody or
nothing, and

kids pick them up
again
remelted and shaped
into new
entities for sale,

and the buyers
too are like candles
consume themselves
in routine
buy what was
wasted

move on with their
lives
borrow light
and then too
die not in
hopelessness

there's gonna be
eternal life
not just recycling

RIC S. BASTASA
These All Entice Me

the sound of a bus leaving the city
the picture of a highway
and the old town far away from here
where i am seated and
not waiting for someone to love

the sound of a jet plane stabbing the
sky for an asian destination
the white beaches of Thailand
and the old temples of Myan Mar

the sound of putting off a television
that last clicking sound and then the silence of the room

all these are so enticing.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Are All Of Us

what i hear is a life
that does not rhyme

i write what i hear
to your chagrin

and then i draw the beauty
left of the chaos

upon the mounds of the
earth
upon the sands of the
desert

you must see what we
have not seen
you must start to hear
the beauty of a slur

these are real and
these are all of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Are All Questions

who you keep a twisted view
of your world? you ask me?
why do you ask me if i have a
twisted view of the world?
have you seen how i have seen
this world to be twisted?
did you say that living if just
a cliche? how did you arrive at
that answer?

do we keep going now?
what time do we leave?
and be apart? for good? for life?
for death?

what time is it? what shall you do
now? do i have to keep bugging you?
and you bugging me too?

what day is it? what mood?
what decision? what is your decision?
why? why? do we always have
to ask why?

RIC S. BASTASA
These Are My Hands

full of scars
calloused
beaten and
still
unforgiven

RIC S. BASTASA
These Bits And Bits....

i have forgiven my eyes.
and my fingers too. They

seem to have a grudge
against each other. And

i am the one at this loss.
a letter is missing. But

you, yes you, are an intelligent
reader. I forget the word again.

in a space, what is missing,
fits, and it is you, that supplies

it. There is an emptiness that
you can fill. It completes the pattern

and i make it and you are there
to make a whole. These bits and bits.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Books Are Damned.

once
when you start
learning English
i give you
the warning that
this language
knows how to hide
evil intentions,

if you learn it
well enough
you will be like us

mastering irony
not getting direct to
the point
euphemisms are tools
of our
modern exploitation

soon you will speak
like an English gentleman
ethical in manners
restrained in expressions
admirable
to

when you grow up
you will be like us
at first we were eager to
change the world
how time must have
betrayed us
we have done nothing

we surrender
we raise our hands against the sky
some out of pity
massaged our brains
our feet
our fingers are worthy to be
cut

we failed. you must
try some more.
perhaps we were just
focused on the blind spots
of our education.

in our libraries
these books are damned.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Cold Hands

cold hands
shall remind me of eventual
endings

such are not necessarily happy
you cannot prevent
some to cry because they love you
even if you have ceased
loving life
itself

you ask me sometimes why my hands are too cold?
i am winter i said

winter in the midst of our summers
when all the rodents are gone

i stare at these cold hands
remembering the story of cold murders
somewhere in those
hidden mountains
where tracks had been concealed
where names have long been
erased

i cannot remember i once told you
when, how, where,
the why is as deep as that ravine
where the wolf howls
for the blue moon

i keep these cold hands
inside my pocket
i walk as fast as i can hoping to forget
what is following me.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Goats.

at this hour whenever i
look at the shadows of the mountains

the way the fog covers the tree
like a blanket to my body

as i begin to speak to myself like the way
the wind speaks to the ears of the skies

i must admit it is you that i am thinking of
the one that i always hear in my chosen silence

you are like the dream that children tell
to their moms after they wake up from their sleep

no one hears me except these goats.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Lazy Mornings, Thi Lovely Self...

there are mornings that are very much like us
lazy, do not want to wake up, light spreads in bed, and fresh air
fills the air and sings in our ears
yet
we cover our eyes, we refuse, we
curl our legs, and bury our eyes on the pillow

these mornings are nameless and they are many
some of these mornings are fruits of those sleeping pills
because some nights are cruel insomniacs that hide from us
the gifts of sleep,

i like to hate mornings like these
and i may hate it till evening

but i have already made a promise to understand all these
stupid mornings and
just be patient and let go off them

i write once, that i may hate everything including these lazy mornings that shy
away from light and air

but i must spare this self that
after all i do not really exclusively own.

and so this is it:
i hate this lazy, stupid morning, but i shall never
hate myself:
i am sleepy, i am beautiful, i am lovely and witty after all.

you may sing tonight with me:
this love of self, this greatest love of all.
Do not misinterpret it for arrogance, pride or conceit,
albeit, i must tell you,
this is just a good gadget for moving on
into a sweet and kind survival.

RIC S. BASTASA
These Little Things

ants that show
an empire of
discipline soldiers
and prolific
queen,

wasps that
fly like
nuclear planes

paramecium
that show us
how neglected
little things can
be that damaging
too,

ponder upon
a little love
withheld affection
miser lover

RIC S. BASTASA
These Memories Of The 80's

i
Teacher entrusted me the key to the classroom
I lost it
That night I could not sleep
How to open the room tomorrow morning
My friend called he has the duplicate

ii
A lanzones tree full of fruits
I am up there
Eating all that I can

iii
On the beach I forgot to bring my trunks
I finally decided to dive
All naked with you.

iv
The river is deep and murky and muddy
I am riding on top of this big black
Carabao
i am
whistling i am humming a song
i also hear the wind singing with me

v
In the dorm I do not know how to play the guitar
My roommates only asked me
To sing
A birthday song
we drink some wine
i write some poems in my heart
and then we take
our sleep
under the stars
our bodies tired on soft green grass
after the final exams

RIC S. BASTASA
These Red Strawberries

red as love

more than the roses

cloying

my sense of taste

and smell

to such an attractive

fruit

ornate luxuriously appealing

enriched

desire of strawberry

days

your lips and nipples

touching my lips

savor this

delicious feeling

of love

i could have forgotten

but not
brave enough

strawberry fields

spreading under the sun

on cold days

of my wasted youth

RIC S. BASTASA
These Three Adjectives And A Question

slow and tender
and then
everlasting

how can you
ever forget?

RIC S. BASTASA
somehow a gust of wind
passes by your ear and you begin to remember

you are light,

there is a hint of
wings, but so unlike
the ordinary
wings of
a bird

you are given the hint
of the rachis
to the quill and
you link it to a nostalgia
of the universe
where you were once taken
from
power

you are
mud, and bound to the
river but the sound of the flow
of the water
day till nighttime
when the moon arrives again
floating
like a soul of the earth
touches
a tree top and then
leaves again
making you remember
what it was
before the years begin
to roll
like the waves of
the eternal ocean
kissing
an endless shore

RIC S. BASTASA
They Call It Family

not one less
of this family that must stick together and always save
one another, be it
whatever, a financial distress
emotional stress, societal imbalance,
technological displacements
the family shall be first
even in crime
passion, the family is one
in all conspiracies
not one less, each must be saved from shame
from destruction

i am tired of this,
i am getting out, i am now a stranger, alone
against this family, i speak my mind, i blow the whistle
now, kill me

i am a corpse, i have long been dead in the dark chambers
of this family
the secrets too deadly,

kill me now, i dare, only if you can....

RIC S. BASTASA
They All Pass Away...

i have nothing to keep
what i have had always been
the courage to give
i mark the treasures
not for keeping them anymore
i put the time
when the ripe time comes
for giving them all
away

one must realize
there is nothing that we can own
wood? termites eat them
iron? the salt rusts them
stones? oh they break
and those precious ones
if you keep them
and treasure them
shall only give you that
little sensual pleasure of
seeing
the stress of robbers
will be there
for all nights and days

time? it just slipped away...

me? i am just another dust
and you are another wind...

RIC S. BASTASA
They All Slip Away Just Like That

There is an exhaustion
that spreads to the hidden
nerve of our lives

when we think of nothing
but just the blanket and the bed

we experience this cold
that is not brought about by a weather
which clings like a leech
in our skin

after the seven storms
we have earned enough defenses
we have learned that
all these are but illusions
shadows on our walls
which we try to hold checking
whether it is real

they slip away
they all slip away
just like that

RIC S. BASTASA
They Always Ask...

someone yet have to ask
why young man do you talk and talk and talk?

the years weigh heavy on our shoulders
like ploughs and steel balls and iron chains

we grow old and wrinkles grow like
onions in a row

someone yet have to ask again
why all these deep silence for all those years?

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are Afraid Of The Ordinary

they are afraid of the ordinary
so they stand still, stare at an object that long
to really take all the details and put them all again,
the target is the beautiful
that which gives the awe and the wonder
the flame of curiosity
towards a certain perfection which they can put on the table for you
perhaps to cause an envy of what you have not seen
and written

i do not fear the mediocre
the shallowness of a memory
the fun of what is not so beautifully crafted
and so i do it every moment
i please myself and that is purpose enough.
in a second, it will still be my own imperfection.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are All Dead....

you wish to see them all again:
there was Tessie
that time always on a necking game with boyfriend
grandma was so angry
she closed the door and she had gone away instead
of stay

there was Oliver
he was fed up
upon a daily scrubbing of the floor
too shiny on everyone's feet
some slipped to death

and there was Sonny the
faithful peeping tom
who dreamed about a hole on the wall
where he can see
Dulce bathing

and there was grandma
her rules are too strict
you violate one and you violate all
one stain
and you are finished

you wish to see them all?
they are all dead.

you miss them? open a closed door
break the lock
enter if you can
it is not your time yet

you are bound to suffer
so suffer well
and then you enter again
the door may open
and there see them
all waiting....
They Are All Here With You

jalouse windows
shut up like a woman
finally stopping to
speak and
nag

a little blue fan keeps
giving you air

you breathe
you think
you exclude and include
you deduce and induce

apostrophies. and commas.
you take the freedom
of syllabication.

something is wrong
in this house and
we are not talking.

a bonsai plant
on top of your table.

a cell phone on a silent mode.
the letters on the keyboard and your fingers
make love.

a poem is born.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are All The Same

can all fishes grouping
and scattering on the depths
of the dark blue sea

can white flapping wings of
birds within the circle of their
species, poised to fly far distances

can leaves falling from a tree to
the ground then blown by the
wind towards the desert and
the immeasurable mirages

oh, they are all the same
ey are going somewhere
ey are taken by what their
instincts and their hearts say

like us here, we are packing
we are always leaving so what
is the use of crying or even
laughing and merry making?

we are destined for some place
higher than this one
we are meant not for this or for
us but for some planes of
mystical existence that for
now we cannot really understand

prepare for that destiny
you do not have to carry a cent.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are Just To Sharp For My Liking

we had been together
in one house for years
and you take pride of the
fact that you know me
that very well

when you tell me that i
am a good man
i feel like a cat licking
my tail
soft and silent on the railing
overlooking the road of this
city
and i look down at my claws
afraid that perhaps they are
just to sharp for my liking

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are Not Just Words.
	nthis is a normal
	world
	they say
	to live we kill
	if we don't
	we get killed

	you take pride

	in God having made
	man
	a ruler of his

creation

	in the city
	you know a jungle
	where a dog eats

	another dog
	and you think

there is nothing
	wrong

	with it

	as it is just a
	matter of survival

	in fact
	the survival of


the fittest

	is the only law

	possible

	it is a rat race

	honor this

crab mentality

	you have to pull

	in order not to be

	pulled


to be numb
	to be unforgiving
to be quick
and not stupid

is there no choice
left?

there is.
and you know it.

the golden rule
is still golden

like silence

like promises
that were never
broken

like oaths

like gentleness
like honor

they are not
just words.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are One....

SHE knows how to keep rage
inside a silky pouch and He does not notice
any change at all

SHE is a storm well contained inside the
refrigerator
HE keeps the power off.

SHE goes to places and asks the housemaid
what is going on inside the house
why there is so much silence

HE steps out of the door like a fog escaping
the hold of the cliff upon his collar.

SHE is the omnipotent goddess who loves
and takes care of his affairs.

THERE are no wars waged.
THERE is only the secrecy of keeping and storing
nothing dissipated neither is a scandalous matter
find any page of the gossip news.

HE and SHE, they deserve each other.
TO keep the bond intact, they offer their little sacrifices to
their gods.

THE goddess of restraint.
THE god of concealment.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are Poets Too, You Are A Poet!

THEY ARE POETS TOO, You are a poet!

THOSE who misspell
And those who are still coping up
With their metaphors
The techniques
Of rhyme & beat
Those who think
They do not
Know how to
Write poetry
And those
Who fear
What to say
What to write
What the others say
About their poetry
And those that doubt
Their writing
Abilities
Their thoughts

Their feelings
Their feelings
Their feelings
Yes
Yes
Their feelings

Or those who simply
Fear that they may only
Be displeasing
And disappointing

And those whose
Sense of confidence
About this thing
This poetry
This poem thing
Those that still
Hide what they
Feel to what they
Think

Is prose

Those who think that
Their life
Is not worth
Sharing in the
The beat and
Rhyme of poetry

Behold
The mere thought
About life
About a beating heart
The pulse
The eyes that blink
The fingers fidgety
That type the words

Of feelings
Of feelings
Yes
Yes
About feelings
It is all about feelings

The genuine feelings
Of your life
You type them
Each word
To another word
A chain of words
A long chain of words

Like playing the music
To the piano keys
Like strumming
The strings of a
Flamenco guitar

A certain music
A certain beat
To the sound
Of your computer keys
Hear the beat
And the rhyme
Of your computer keys
Each word
To another word
To a chain of words
To a longer chain of words
You are running a chain of feelings
You are chasing a chain of feelings long chained in your hearts wanting to be free

To be free
To be free
Yes
Yes
You, feeling to be free to run free to be all free

Like you were scattering red rose petals to this pedestal
Like you were sprinkling waters to this garden
Like you were splashing waters in the sea
Like you were bathing playing dancing in the rain
Like you were humming a tune to a trek on a hill
Like you were making love with your beloved the whole night

Behold
A poet in you is born

Behold
You are typing
A poem

You are
Feeling
And you are
By all means

Now a poet

I hereby baptize you
With that name.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are The Anonymous

they offer
everything
nothing is left
every trace is
erased
no one remembers
and that is just
perfect
they like it

RIC S. BASTASA
They Are Waiting

let us not be defeated by
silly matters
those that make boats sink
that swallow souls
of men
into the deepest crevices
of hell

we are not destined to be losers
sing again: we are the champions

float for a while
while the ports are not visible
to the eye

sight the better destinations
islands teeming with coconut trees
white sand beaches
look out there
there they are the dancing ladies
clad in yellow
soft and slender

they're waving their hands
to embrace us

neophytes of love....

RIC S. BASTASA
They Ask Me

they ask me, as they have finally arrived from this long journey
they are resting and sipping tea
their feet on a stool
their fingers with cigarette in between
smoke like memories began to rise on the ceiling
the wood and the walls start to remember
there is this laughter of the intellect
there is this humiliation of base desires
they all meet here but it will not be long
their world is not us and they keep on asking

where are the good men? why have evil triumphed for that long?
they look at me again
quizzical and now seemingly angry: where are the good men?
where did the good seeds go? why do you have all the healthy weeds
in your garden?

i ask them, if they still need more tea.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Ask You And You Are Not Answering

there is a journey where everybody is going and they keep looking at you
because you are staying and as they see it you are not bothered

at all.

and they ask you and you are not answering and they scream at you and you
remain silent. There is simply no

Point for discussion. There is nothing dignified in letting them know

why, and how.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Begin To Put Up Portraits

in a landscape of words
the disciples finally get tired

and so they begin to put up
portraits
of their faces, put a patch
of grass,
some drops of rain,
scents of roses,
sounds of brooks,
the swiftness of wings of
robins

one disciple who is faithful
to the last letter
says that this is a betrayal
and offers flowers to the
gods so that they may
be forgiven

the landscape of words in
black and white
has changed

it is not paper anymore
but a prairie where children
and dogs begin to play.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Cannot Harm Anymore

mother was writing her lesson plan
and i was watching her
beside a lamp, that was then when
there was no electricity yet available in the barrio
the sound of the cicadas were loud and the
lizards keep eating the moth on the ceiling
i touched a wall eaten with termites and asked mother
if termites could do us harm or the wood
finally giving in to the hollowness of their skin
all substances she said have their terminals
wood surrender to the greed of termites
and termites build their own empires under the earth
so she said do not complain if this house
that we live in soon fall to the ground and be nothing
but flanks of rotten memories
the law of nature is there
we are all temporary
nothing lasts forever
those that eat and those that are eaten
are but part of their
paths to destiny.

fate cannot harm, they serve the law
and everything has a purpose unique on its own.
i look upon my blank sheet of paper
and then i begin to write again.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Crucified Him

He did come for the sinners
And those who thought they have not sinned
Crucified Him.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Did Not Say

that in the other side
of this world
what we will miss
are: blue skies
ski and surf
and ice cream
and beer
and hot dogs
and mozzarella cheese
and the scent of
apples
and the red in strawberries

deprieved of our senses now
we try to devalue
eternity
and peace of mind
and quite.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Fall The Hardest

those that fly the highest
are those
that fall the hardest

unless one adapts to the wings
of angels

or those of the fallen ones.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Have Already Taken Away The Sharp Knife

it used to be
beside my seat
that sharp knife...i cannot recall anymore...
something happened
that i like... but all of them did not like it...
some cried like one important member of the family just died...
some are silent like stones
some have accepted that things like these happen
almost everyday to all the people in this world
no one to blame
no one...it is a phenomenon...the desire to put off the light..
the wish to end the day...the frightening moment of
shying away from something life-giving...
i am not talking...i have so many things in my mind..
the desert, the noonday sun.. the sunset, the closing of the doors
and the shutting of the windows
the darkness, the utter peace that do not give shelter to words..
and even thought..the elimination of phrases
the dislike of sentences, the inability to make a rhyme
and rhythm
one sleeps with the aid of medication, there is this slumber induced
to cure the errors of nature
white blankets, some cotton
in the trash can,
stained with blood, now dried and shall again be thrown away
to forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Have Changed The Rules Of The Game....

if you, by their own
made rules, become the lead of
this boat race,
surely, they will begin to
think,
it will be ugly to hear
what can the world say?
they cannot accept
that honor that you
should have
deserved,
and so they change the rules
and they will say
you've made it
as one of the links
but you cannot be
first, for that would be a shame,
and they cannot
like a poisonous bait
swallow it.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Have Not Slept

i slept early last ached.
Dreams i cannot remember.
Woke up early to read the cases
I missed. Lots i missed.
I opened FB only to find other friends whom i thought are early wakers too.
They have not slept. They can't.
Chat.
she is playing chess on the internet.
she says she is crazy.
Lover is not in the house.
Alone, she must cope up.
Chess is another escape when Love is not around.
How bitter can life be.
Love who knows? It may be found within the four corners of the chess board.
Other people do not sleep.
They keep the reasons for themselves.
This is not what you think it should be.
Scribbles. Notes. The life of others.
Too, my own.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Just Wither

Surprising
The grasses
Are flowering
So seldom
Do we
Notice

People
Pass and
Step upon
Them
And they
Just wither

RIC S. BASTASA
They Kill For Money

up there
the gods live
and they tell
those down here
to kill
anyone
just anyone
without names
in any place
anywhere

this is the
verse of terrorism

RIC S. BASTASA
They Last Forever....

it is not good to see
an old man
begging for fame.

or becoming a preacher
on some pulpit how to be
popular.

King Fu or Tu Fo
had only a jug of wine
a mountain as sole audience
a sky as blanket
and stars as inspiration.

i guess in their loneliness
fame had become so irrelevant.

a crown of laurel is
nothing but herbs.

the earth murmurs the pains
the poet hears them.

there is no fun in this game of
laments. If there is any it is but
a coping mechanism to catapult dreams
for another day.

one has a shadow for a companion
in this journey and talking to this
shadow is poetry.

they are dead. their graves no where
to be found. There are no children to carry
their names.
no wife to mourn for a while.
no government to own them.
no state to honor that demise.
no paper lasts forever. the pen breaks.
inks do not last. but they are memorable.

and i believe them
and they have to last forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Laugh At Me When I Told Them

that the best sex i ever
had was with my wife

and they laugh even
harder when i said

that it is still true even
today.

am i funny?

RIC S. BASTASA
They Love  But They Were Never Loved In Return

and there they are
inside the room of beauty
and lonely conversations

they roam the world
unable to learn the art of permanence
the lessons
of staying in one place and be sober

they love that much
and give themselves all in the name of love
yet they are never loved
in return

the reason why they go from one place to another
like gypsies
looking for love on dark nights till dawn
till the weary morning
till noonday
and till the night comes again

howling and teasing them
loving so loving
and yet so unloved

it is nature's curse
a spell not broken till the end
and so i see them in this room of beauty
and lonely conversations

they cut my hair and clean me
with powder and their brushes
until the floor is filled
with what i am shedding off
and then i leave them again
and visit them
as often as i feel dirty
and unshaven
missing the lonely conversations
the hush of loves always unrequited

RIC S. BASTASA
They Love You.....

you always think
that if people know you
then they
will soon not love
you

it could be a fact
from your own point of view

but take it from
my way of looking at the mountain

i do not love myself that much
for i am but a child
playing with my own
feet
stamping on the sands
and feeling each
grain
like the last day of my
life

the mountain is always
at home with its forest
and the path i take
always leads me there
not for the losing
but for the communing

the mountain loves me
and the rest have become mere
beliefs that i toggle
with my fingers
and when they fall off
i can only give
a little sigh and then
let go
without a tear
to signify
a cry....

RIC S. BASTASA
They Miss You

there is always that feeling
of wanting to go
somewhere
rushing

*
only to be overtaken
by that feeling
of wanting to go back
again
to the same place where
you just left
a moment
ago

*
simply because
they miss you
& you miss them too

*
that is never a
matter that you
complicate
like some jigsaw
puzzle spread on
the table
&
you piece them
together looking
for your face and
the faces that
surround you in the
background of
everything

love and loving
loved & be
loved in return

bliss
& overjoy
are the hands
that now gather
the pieces

fit them together
with tenderness
until the picture is complete

all faces wearing
smiles telling you

welcome home honey
we always love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Never Know His Name

It is hard to write this
I am writing this with a challenge
That i have not forgotten
The father in me
The child that remains inside myself
Who for years have lived alone

They shall never know
His real name

RIC S. BASTASA
They Pity Me....

i like to take
back my
parrot. Yellow one
with
broken beak, but smart

at least, it knows
easily how to mimic me
and i am so
flattered,

i feed it well,
and it got so fat that
it cannot lift itself
into flight so

it stayed just right there
on the railing where
i put it

parroting everything that
i say and i am
so pleased
and taken proud of this
yellow feathered
creature
with my neighbors

and then for all i
know
they pity me.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Remain Beautiful To Behold

dr. Richard S. Bastasa

there are trees without leaves
there are those
that do not flower
that do not give you
any fruit at all

yet these trees remain
trees
and i do not entertain
any idea
of an ax

RIC S. BASTASA
They Say

to be a better poet
they say, i must take a cat for a pet
as though the cat
has rhyme and rhythm
just like a beautiful poem

i took the advice of course
and i agree
that with a cat for a pet
i have written about ten poems
with the necessary elements
of rhyme and rhythm

it was smooth and good
until you brought your munchkin in the house
& since then
the war poem started to be composed
there was chaos
& nothing pious.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Say No One Can

there is an urge
inside me
to let something out
and free
it so i can breathe
a little and
live fully
alive

i want to see
your face
i need it
for me to become
who i am

but there is another
landscape in my
heart
that opens a path

logically i do not
want it
but my feet are already
there
treading upon
its grass
so green and fresh
so lovely
and airy
and much to my
desire for lust

i hold you with
finality and then
leave you

there is this urge
that the mind
cannot control and which
the heart is
really fond of

this is the one
that i want to understand for now
i wish i dislike it
but i can't

ey say
no one can
and that is what
old literature
has been
declaring

RIC S. BASTASA
They Say Nothing.....

we are the inferior ones
who still remain in that old age of
words,

those who are like us still admire
staying in the same old place
smelling like old rotten rosewood

slower than worms or snails we have
remained here, the old ways that never
die, the old painting that still
captivate our weary minds

we think death is a door towards
a new world, a new liking, a new
way at looking ourselves,

perhaps, perhaps, how we wish all
these would come true, to the same
spontaneity of the old, to the same
naked expressions, defying the norms
and rebelling a morality,

those who are ahead of us, are muted,
perfect in their new found silence,
never returning back, and laughing at
our ineptness, and then they move on
to the place beyond our imagination,

it is like being a tourist taking
nothing back, taking nothing going out,
and then not returning. They say nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Say The Gods Are Here

on earth
they say the gods are here
and i look at
each on each face
and they do not
look at all
different than me

or you and i touch their skins
and feel that they too have
bones much like
our own brittleness

but they say they are gods
and i am but a very
insignificant flicker

dust
atom invisible to the
importance of themselves

i get lost
and they get lost &
at the end
i have no respect left
or sense of awe
or ardor
for adoration of whatever
sacred name
they put on their breasts
or name tags
on their foreheads

holy cow! i tell myself
what the hell! i curse the wind
what a mess! i type at the end
of the haggle
must i be wrong
correct me if you may

for i have mistaken them
as myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Tell Us About The Triumph Of Light

they tell us about light's conquest
over a dark night
when dawn breaks into
a full day,

there is hope they say
for every bud that blooms into a flower
for every cocoon that turns
into a butterfly

sometimes honestly i think that
these are but stories
told by a fool.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Tell You This And That

day make the rules
day play their own games and they decide who's in who's out
day's it....

ters we surrender in the nook seeing them play the games
day try to understand the rules and abide

day sometimes, yes sometimes, just sometimes
day feel there's something wrong with their rules

just them inside the circle and just us outside their circle
and they all laugh at us

outsiders, barbars, strangers, aliens

got tired about names and labels just like you
and i make my own circle

circle of friends, circle of principles, circle of rules
where i am in and they are out and i also learn my own kind of laughter

side by side with them
i make my own world with my own kind of building blocks

step by step, inch by inch, block by block
i make this circle

i am in now and they are outside forever
i am free and they are in their own prisons now

i laugh and they cry.
this is my world

this is my confidence
and from that time on i said to myself

i am unique i am indestructible i am no copy cat i am original
in my own way i am king and in my own place this is my castle
i am myself now.

RIC S. BASTASA
They That Destroy

They that know how to destroy
surprisingly, i must confess, as
i have seen,
are those that do not really
want to create
are those that do not know
how to begin anew
those that do not know the first
cry for life
they that roam the world without
purpose
they cut and when you ask them
to connect
they run and away like mad dogs
on the loose
carrying sharp knives
cutting branches again of trees
not understanding what roots
are
what leaves.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Too Were Dubbed As Morons During Their Harsh Times

Reading the works of those who died
and risen from their commonality makes me
feel that i am
after all, an inferior if not a mediocre
clown juggling with my own kind of lousy choice of words
and priority of ideas,

i pause, i sigh, and has come to the brink of simply
perusing the tenets of chosen silence,

but i keep the faith, i am different, and i belong to my own age now
upon a style that they have not taken
upon a choice that is lighted by the torch of my own idiosyncrasies

i read some more, down to the last details, they too, were dubbed
as morons during their harsh times.

with this, i write another one, and since then
cannot stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Who Know How To Get So Much Money

ye just stand there and see,
wait and see, you work day and night, and pity you
while you sweat it out
and bleed with the blood from your brains,
ye always know how to wait and see,
where the money is made
and then stored and then they always have a way
for you who earned it
to give,

smilingly..

that is the rule of this society..

RIC S. BASTASA
They Will All Wear Out Like Cloth, The Moth Will Eat Them Up.

The Lord is my Help
i have said my pieces
in my daily trances
there are angry men
who shall not forget me

but shall i worry then
if sometime i fall and
then they will tread upon
me with their furious feet

i shall not be destroyed
for the Lord is with me.

His moths are ready
to eat them all
rags to his face
rotten clothes
inside canals

RIC S. BASTASA
They Will Just Come And Open Themselves

it is enough that we are all here.
need we need more than our respective presences?
the clouds appear above us, the simply pass and we see white skies.

Departures have their own way of leaving,
in the same manner as arrivals.

why look for things which we cannot yet find?
time ripens and become so sweet
for us to gather and savor

we are all here and we just wait for the seasons
for those that come
they are all for us
reserved and offered and soon shall be opened.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Will Not Be Seeing Each Other Anymore....

so she worked it out,
love, in some secret codes

when she says she is angry,
that merely says, i miss you,

when she says you leave, or
get lost, she means, please stay

she had a different way of life,
a work which she cannot divulge
	onight she is finally leaving
to another country and she calls

i love you, i love you very much,
and he knows what she means.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Will See A Desert Of Carcass Where Vultures Wait For Their Double Kill

your desires
are yours secrets
if they become
visible
they will see a
desert of
carcass where
vultures wait
for their double
kill

what is said
is superficial
these are the
norms and the
dictates of good
behavior of our
present time

when we arrive
in the house of our
best friend
we sit on his chair
inside the house
we are free
to sip coffee and
talk about anything
but mind you
we sift, and limit
our drift
' this is not our
house' you say
we cannot really
be ourselves
like cows on the
pasture
like a pig on
its sty.

RIC S. BASTASA
They Will Understand And Hence Ignore.

here comes old age,
where you shall miss a word,
skip a letter,
make mistakes as to what you really mean
where love can be
left out as funny romance
where what used to be exciting
be it in the attic
or the garage or a nook in the public park
no longer
gives that libidinal click,

here comes old age
dressed in strict civility but loses
its ardor its memory

you even forget
it's valentines day

but take comfort
they still have the hugeness of that heart

they will understand
and hence ignore.

RIC S. BASTASA
They......

you always
wanted to be straightforward

in language
even in lifestyle hoping to

be direct, concise, no
beating of the bush

to be understood, yet,
you are a failure, they

still do not understand
you, in fact, they despise your

being straightforward saying
what they love is the curve

the enigma, that deep, deep
blue part, something that they

cannot figure out, to make them
restless and cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
They'Ll Find No Use Of You

one stops digging for roots
so much soil will be shoveled
you gonna sweat it out
dirty yourself sometimes
only to find out that when you
trace a branching root and
know some names, birth and
death dates, and even some
details, and then you tell a
tip that you come from the
line of Juan who was born in 1896,
they may nod without argument
but then they'll find no use of
you and so they continue going
deeper
and for years they had been
doing the same things over and
over again
without you.
they have their own darkness
to keep
and there is no use for whatever
light you are bringing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thighs And Bottoms

i switch on to
desire
watching the thigh
and the bottom
of a human being

dance of love before
me as i open my eyes
for clarity

curves and shapes
contours of a landscape
where i have been
for quite a time

there's cliff
and i plunge it

liberating
i close my eyes
my hands shout
for joy

this is bliss
my abdomen says.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thine Own Eyes...

my eyes are asking:
hey dude, are you not wasting your sight?

you should have watched
bay bodies
rather than look for words,

hey eyes, i own you
and if i want, i can waste all of you
on words.

where am i? the eyes are angry
but there shall be no tears.

i am the owner of my eyes
and i have always wasted them on
words.

till they close forever
but always without tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thing Is...It Is...

i pray,
do not take me seriously.

do not take this page
seriously, i also pray

i pray more, please do
not take time reading this
writing.

they are not serious.
as all the world is.

i pray
if you read this, eat your burger.
continue with the french fries,

put more tomato
catsup. consume your pepsi cola.

the real thing is this.
i am not cuteness overload.

what i write is just a break
from my realities.

pile of papers to read.
cases to decide. deadlines are

spitting cobras. i am alone and
no one does anything for me.

thing is. it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things As They Are....

IT WOULD have been better
if i went outside
watch the stars at night
and walk barefoot on the grass

i could have heard
so well the songs of the wind
felt the coldness of the earth
and seen the glorious glow
of the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
Guilty was I,
With you, oh how my heart beat
Like a drum, with you, but
I was wrong, they will always
Say without doubt

I am wrong, I
Can never be
Right with this

They will judge us
Always with conviction
And I go the prison
Of my conscience

A thought of you
Is like a rusty bed
Squeaking to my
Humiliation but
It was something
I always remember
With a titillating
Armpit & sleepy eyes.

I lay there after
Wards with eyes
Looking beyond
My feet hung on
A rocking chair,

So sweet and yet
So guilt stricken &
There shall nothing
Be like this again.

When I see you, I
Begin to understand
My own limitations
I love you I always
Will love you, always.

That is threshold of
My ecstasy & the
Fence of what is
Mine & mine alone.

You are enough, you
Were so sweet but
Better be forgotten

Now, forever you
Pain me, you pain me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Do Not Seem To Be Them After A Careful Seeing

a spoon
and a fork and they seem to appear
with food on a silver platter

when we talk we talk like poets now
after years

a spoon is no longer just a spoon
and neither is the fork
and neither is the food the food that we
eat on the table
and neither is the silver platter a mere
silver platter as it seems to be

for a spoon may be me and i may also be
a tongue and i could be a tongue to your
fork, a protrusion that stabs me like a knife
and the silver platter could be our mind
a garden where we put every seed
and the table and the cloth that covers it
with leaves and flowers
myabe our worlds, covered and uncovered
with some intricate designs

this could be our world now. a world of poems
where everything is a roll of sensitive skin
a mind so fertile with its array of metaphors
and similes and

exaggerations, and these make us so happy
we tiptoe, we choose the word, we equate
every object to a meaning, we dance to a lot
of its nuances, and then we touch and then

we are so silent. we choose not to hurt.
Things Embrace You

things are there in the open field
the greenest grass, the reddest rose,
the bluest sky, the brownest earth,
the coolest wind, the clearest brook,
the purest wings of the whitest of birds,
the tallest mountain, the rollerest of all hills,
the featherest cloud, the sunniest sun,
the moonest of all moons, the starriest stars,

look at them closely, feel them all,
hear what they are all telling you,

embrace them all, and they will embrace you too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Go... People Die...

mother
sun, center of your planets
revolving and spinning
orbits holding
upon the imaginary
poles

distances make
memories more
apparent

hospitable thoughts
come to the rescue

what you must know
is this:
there is more beauty in
your own
sorrow

mother
sun, soon fades,
darkness in your
universe
reigns,

but the stars
still flicker for you
when,
as expected, mother
sun is
gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Happen Even If You Do Not Manipulate The Edges

things happen
light burns
solids become soft after a time
you do not need to touch
anything

eye have their own clocks
and alarms.

nature keeps its own
history, and makes things happen again
we cease
and so we do not notice the master plan
of the universe

those that survive
for whatever reason
understands.

eye watch and how dry their mouths are
the amazement is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is the hitch of this relationship,
i whisper my secrets and you pay me with a kiss
the kiss we like so much
our tongues rolling like lovers on the grassy hill
and we feel we have a very good reason for sticking it out together,
i trust you,
the next day i see you with another man and it is the same kiss that
you offer
again in exchange for his secrets
the next day you write in the local paper
the different kisses a man gives to a woman
how each kiss can be categorized
how each man trusts a woman because of a kiss
how a man can be fooled by her kisses
kisses that mean nothing to her
but just a means to an end
to explore and to tame
to domesticate the crazy men and educate them
about women's brains
their wits and wiles
and their quest to be equal to men and be treated with respect
and awe

well, we men have a way of our own
in all the kisses we are just working for a compromise
and most of the time
we are bored and well
crazy for nothing at all,

but sometimes, we really love deeply, but we do not say anything,
when in love
we have nothing to say, it is a serious job needing much attention,

less the words that you women, want to be said and spread
in your foreheads.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Pass You By In The Most Simple Manner

sometimes i feel so guilty
knowing that
things pass me by without
so much complication
no fuss
no complaints whatsoever

like when the leaves start
falling
on a windy summer
on a very hot day
facing the penultimate moment
of their
unnoticed existences

like the way the sun sets
ending itself
surrendering to the power
of the dark night
as though it is being eaten
slowly

or the pond drying itself
giving all its water
to the greedy sun
the king of the drought
taking away everything

no screams
no suits
no letter of protests
no hunger strike
no wars
no violence against civilians
or bombing of markets
or mosques
no taking of hostages
or exploding trains
and shooting pilots
in the air

the world spins slowly
completing its journey for the day
many things happened
since dawn
but just the same i never heard
any scream
at the top of its poles

and i wonder
how i sit here all day long
staring at the horizon
and beating the rails
with a stick
figuring our so many complications
when things would have been
simpler
if i did not use my mind
or wish that things should have
been this way
or that way

things are simple
event are simple
and i begin to realize
i, must be simple too
less the pain
less the thinking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Sometimes Do Not Work Out The Way You Expect Them To Be

familiarity
to failure is not a easy
task, you get entangled
to a confusion
and you lose reason
sometimes

emotions pour
like lava
you have become this
erupting volcano
and time
solidifies hot magma
solid mountains
of rock
on beautiful formations
from a recent fury

like you
like what you feel
in the middle of anger
let all these make
a free flow
and simply wait and
watch

patience brings
the most beautiful
shape in you

sculpture of angry
thoughts settling
in the contours
of your peace and
quiet

then solidified
understanding
rocks and boulders
strengths and
principles and

a self newly forged
strong and bold
an edifice of
yourself now
like this new mountain
silent and daring
to nature imposing

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That Are Not Already There

things that you finally realize
you miss
but are not there anymore
either they are taken
or lost
either because you have taken
them for granted
since you did not mind
when they are gone
you start to think
and miss them but

is it really late?
go and find them
for there is always time
if you really love them

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That Happened

There is a connection between
the tree and you
between a space of cool air

There is a spark
that short moment that shakes you
because it is too beautiful
and then gone

You have always returned from far places
hoping to see it again

The tree had been tall and proud and someone
that you hate cut it into pieces for firewood

You have seen the smoke from far away
you are mute

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That I Cannot Forget

there were lots of
dry leaves under the
mahogany tree
distant from the house
where we live
away from the people
who are against
our relationship

your hands inside my
pocket
your tongue inside my
mouth

i cannot forget the story
you told me once
about the prince
who finally died
in the battle against the
dragon
as the princess waits
finally to be
taken away

today, 45 years after
that tryst
i gaze upon a mahogany
stump
the wind is strong
my hat is flown away
i do not chase
anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That May Greet You One Day

a faucet that leaks
a computer that shuts down
a cell phone on low batteries
a flashlight that does not light
a dark bathroom
a malfunctioning vcd
a car that does not start
a study lamp with a broken switch

some things broken
you wish they were not

but just the same
you go on with what
this broken day has to offer

you relax on sad thoughts
you mend what you can
such are your days
and she never knew

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That Slip From Our Very Hands

water drips from our hands
no amount of cupping catches it

air escapes from our mouth
whatever lip closing you make

no matter what you do
memories slip like water like air

things precious friends so dear
love like diamonds

no one keeps them forever
the reality is in the cascading and losing and disappearing

i could have loved you more and keep you forever inside my heart
reality is not with us like air like water like memories evaporating from our human senses

nothing lasts forever
the eternity you talk about when we kiss
the promises after love

we call these all lies
mystical mythical, that my love, my darling, is the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That We Can Change, And What We Cannot

i choose the
color of my shirt

perhaps

i can also choose
the color of my
mood

i guess i can
deny a present grief

hide it from myself
and then

tell myself that
for now

i have decided
to be happy just like

the way i set aside
a black shirt because

i can choose to wear
white

a friend of mine
laughs at this

for today it is
raining

and he asks me
if i can change the
rain

and have a sunny
day instead.
RIC S. BASTASA
Things That We Cannot Leave

those that we love
we bring them with us
but sometimes i think
they better be left
where they ought to be
from places where
we found them
where they grow
better naturally

RIC S. BASTASA
Things That Will Be

learning not to trust
for things that will be
something to hope for
they will not always
last for a lifetime

the seed you bury
the worm sometimes eats it
the bud you mark
remains tight and falls

this you must know
as early as you are born
see the light
of everyday blunders

for sometimes when
you close a door
it does not mean
that the window opens

oh well, it is not easy to learn
realities damned
dreams broken
selves bursting
a world in your eyes
annihilating

but of course you may start anew
be positive you once say
light a candle in the room
let no one burn.

RIC S. BASTASA
Things Were Born So Simple Please Do Not Complicate Them

eggs white
a hen keeps them warm
with its feathers
and patience
looking at the busy
worms in the garden

the ants as usual
are not arguing with
the grasshoppers

it is a sunny day
and nothing spoils it
with words

except this one
building stanzas
word upon word
like a tower of babel

expect the scattering
of tribes
of thoughts that
cannot get well
along even with
its own same sound

RIC S. BASTASA
Things With Stories Of Their Own

overused
lipstick, abused plate and spoon,
molested carpets,
a breakdown of shattered
glasses in the living room,
wasted wine,
roasted pork,
over fried chicken legs
egg broiled
with black sulfur
smoked chimney,
candle floors, oiled skins,
dyed hair
snake pit, outgrown shoes,
dry leaves, crying babies,
foul socks, suckers,
milestones, limestone.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are things though small
that we cannot leave because they are ours
they belong to us
and we belong to them
that without them
though small
we cannot really live some more

there are acts which they call trivial
so unimportant like
a sigh
or a whisper
but we are so attached to them
that without them
we become nothing

they are a part of us
and when they are gone
we become
blanks unfilled

there are so many things that we can afford to lose
and when losing them
we do not even notice

simply because we never want them to be
a part of us
neither do they wish
becoming too
a part of what and who we are

we discern
and to those that pain us
we finally avoid
and disregard

to those that we miss
that makes our hearts jump with joy like kids
with mothers bringing favorite gifts
we always remember

they are the ones that usually
are earlier
gone
lost

those that we love to stay but
as early as dawn before we wake up
had already left...

RIC S. BASTASA
Think Like The Sea
	hinth like the sea
be deep
like its oceans
be thoroughly wide
like its domains
arrive at every continent
and welcome the
newness of their
shores

do not just be like any man
staying in one place
digging his own grave
with no lover
crying over his
passing
like any other wind
a gust
a push, another
unwanted pus.

RIC S. BASTASA
Think Trickles

if u think in trickles
it will just be trickles

thoughts trickling like
a trick
the mind tricks itself
on the trick of
the trickles

think about a rush of
the waters of the rain

think about a mountain
a river
an ocean

think about how wide
can this space be
how high can the sky be
how deep
can this earth be

think about you as a
speck of dust
on this universal hollowness

all things trying to fill
up this vast emptiness

to no avail,
think about you as another
insignificant atom
vibrating in random
with the rest
of this molecular world
always in flux
changing and shifting
and moving
now, u r as humble
as the leaf about to fall
from a twig

now you are as
weak as a fading sun
as gentle as the
waning moon

as silent as the star
about to die

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking

Your elbow rests on the table
Your chin tangent to your
Fist your ears steady on some
Hints your eyes focused beyond
This wall this common obstruction
Of emotional camouflage
Your face is the façade
Of this serious edifice
Your nose smells something
Pungent and offensive
Your mind opens
Your heart tries to understand
Some winged and flapping
Gains momentum and then
Flies away to heights
Your mouth is as usual
Closed and your teeth grinds
There is no food or grain
Just air in between

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking About Your World That Disappears Before Me

in your vast world
i see clouds shaped like a very long river
in the sky

i see houses far for each other well lighted
upon the shoulders of a mountain

the moon has just disappeared and so are the stars
and then the lights of the houses are turned off one by one

until what remains is the darkness of the night which has
swallowed greedily the river in the sky

i drink the rain that takes away the dust from my lips
it is a long lonely night and i am not asleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
soon i shall break the news
about a failure
about scattered selves
like litters of the city after
a rally of the
oppressed or who think they are

i shall give the details
how the famous man died on top of his
chosen luxuries
you know him well
and you love him still

shall i see tears about to fall from your eyes?
i expect you will enumerate all the excuses
and i will pretend that i am convinced
that i sympathize with you
that i am after all a kind man

i have long released you from my hold
but i shall not rejoice over this
did you see stones inside my heart?

i have learned the art of making faces disappear
baking my heart until it assumes the core
of steel

you see
if you only care, you should have known
you were never mine
as i was never yours

i have already finished my own house
and it stands firm beside the vultures in the arid desert...

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking Process..

i go back to the pages
and i know i am shocking perhaps to all of you
having written much on some things that
perhaps i have not thought of so well...
but they are there and they confront me
that i own them and i feel a little bit awkward
when and how have i written these
matters of the heart
and soul and affection and
(well,) alienation and
stressful situations, not counting
the reality of depressing
expressions in the form of
concealed metaphoric devices,
at any rate, i accept this kind of ability to
just be writing for no purpose, except to express,
for simply writing what i must say
without so much thinking that in the future
i may regret what
ought not to be written...
well, this is it, this is life, and this is what is it
all about...a river simply flowing to the sea

what more? what should it be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking To Be Happy

we begin with a basic proposition: i decide to be happy today
then we go to such deductions as: happiness is just a state of mind
so today, you proceed to something personal: i will be happy
i will smile, i will not be interfered by those who are sad and disturbed
i will decide my own mood, i will not be influenced by those who want me
to be sad, and down and depressed and anxious and dissatisfied,

i want to enjoy nature's bounty, appreciate the flowers blooming in the field
in fact, i have to pick some of them and smell and imagine all the beautiful
things around me, the trees, the clouds, the sun, the rivers, and at night
of course, the full moon sailing on the sea, and arrayed with a broom of stars
a shooting star, a distant glowing planet named Venus and try to see
the zodiac and the greeks gods and goddesses posted in the heavens

i like to dance and spend my time in ballrooms and bars and drink my favorite
beer and talk to my wonderful friends, i like to spend a romantic
night with my lover, and have sex and enjoy the warm body and caress the parts
of the human being that i like to feast with my hands and fingers and lips, and i
like to sleep after a night of passion, and dream and wake up
on a beautiful morning, and have coffee and breakfast and have the lively
conversation, and i like all the days of my life to be like this: HAPPY

i like to think that i am happy, i decide to be happy, i make my moods

but let me be honest and frank with you, let me ask you this question:

why am i still NOT?

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking Too Much

the whole day there is so much thinking
and something that i cannot understand
runs inside my spine
it is like a very thorny vine
a porcupine perhaps
or some kind of a new breed of
an urchin
the whole night they will all be running
over my head
under my hair
the conscience who is not a stranger
shall listen like a child to his mother
the pillow cannot help
on this matter of an indecision

to be
or not to be me

to hate much
and set aside love

to play and
forget the rules

to sleep and wish
death
to wake up
early and then
regret

please slay me with your love
that which this hate
plans to achieve
too quickly

RIC S. BASTASA
Thinking...

it is it that thinks that we think
works most
too convincing
just as it is elucidating
trying to give all the answers
yet at the end
what happens? dead ends
inevitable,
gates locked and there
are no keys,
the labyrinths are leading
us to nowhere
and then we sit under the tree
unthinking what has been
thought
merely receiving air
engulfing it with all the rooms
of our lungs
breathing and savoring
coolness
and gazing at the spread of grass
the trips of clouds
and then as light dims to make a night
we rest on our beds
less the thoughts
but only the prayers
that all is well
because we have finally get rid
of the belief
in thoughts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wiener Schnitzel in vienna

aunt gomolka
serves a speciality originating from the Italian
'costoletta Milanese' -
breadcrumbed
and fried veal escalope,
frequently served with
Erdäpfel Salat

RIC S. BASTASA
Third Week Of December

the winds are cold
the sun is shying away
from the skies

the paths are wet
and muddy
the houses are
crowded

the rains are not
stopping
the leaves are singing

these longing songs of the
heart
on windows open

RIC S. BASTASA
Third World Democracy

that little brown boy which picks
your tennis ball
has grown up to become the
court judge of the town

that son of the dried fish vendor
who always borrowed money from your mama
and didn't pay
has become the undersecretary of Finance

that littly sissy who plays well
the rock-a-bye-baby game in school
has become the brigidaire general of the
4th infantry division of this island

that woman who always goes to church
everyday and cross-stitches the whole day
in their house
has become a spinster
and every night she goes surfing in the internet
at the facebook or friendster
still dreaming about the white man
his prince charming to take her away
from this
malfuctioning democracy

RIC S. BASTASA
Thirsty Glass

IT IS indeed surprising to hear
from a glass that is filled with water
that it is thirsty still...

RIC S. BASTASA
At first, this is the face I will show you
Shallow, thin, smooth
Then we feel each other, like some kind of
New found friends, I
Take another layer, and tell you, this is my face,
Some scars, and lines of age, and furrows,
Then we write many emails, and remember
Common things, like a certain familiarity,
Another layer is taken and exposed,
The face of a sick man, with some
Disappointments in his mind,
Some wounds, wrinkles, and so you
Think, are there other layers of faces still
To show,
Deeper, deeper is there another layer to show
Another face of this man?
Yes, there is another layer, more faces
Hidden underneath each layer,
As we go on, learning from ourselves,
And me learning from myself,
I will be digging for more faces,
Because I am never static
I am growing, and for each growth
Like molting
Another face comes out

Soon, I hope, I must come out
With the most beautiful face
The we can be both proud of,

It is just a matter of time
Depending on how well you have loved me

RIC S. BASTASA
This 1 S 4 U

be a model
when you speak
of suicide

be brave
and be a man
when you lecture
about suicide

be cool
and be strong
and be candid
when the theme
is suicide

be truthful and be
kind when you lecture
about suicide

do not leave
us all guilty
be fair and be just
when you write a poem
about suicide when you say
there is nowhere to run
there is nowhere to hide

be clear and be not hardheaded
when you speak
about this goddamn suicide
be sympathetic
have a little empathy
compassion
and be honest when you
begin to touch
on suicide

have faith
and be specific about it
when you speak of suicide
say who
fix when and what means
what end
and be reasonable about
why........
then do it, if you will
if you won't
don't ever speak about it
again
if you speak
then you will be
dead
and if you are silent
then you
are damned

RIC S. BASTASA
This Afternoon

this afternoon
three black birds hover
steadily on the sunset sky
beyond my roof
i am looking for the fourth
it is not flying
it is staying inside my
bleeding heart

drinking blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Afternoon By The Sea

slept on the sand
the wind was cool

under the old tree
between those
leaves

skies in
small pieces

like
a jigsaw puzzle

RIC S. BASTASA
This Afternoon While Relaxing At The Porch

i see a little bird
coming out
from its nest

a fledgling

wanting to fly
testing the power
of its young wings
flapping
and flapping
feeling
the wind
keeping

it does not manage
after a brief stint

it falls on the ground
now limping &
limping

mother-bird tries
to rescue
diving
wanting to save
the
fledgling

but to no avail

she cannot carry
it back
high on that tree

it is heavy

a cat
comes along the way
and swallows
little birdie
for dinner

predator-prey -world
this is

nothing sentimental
nothing personal
just a matter of survival

RIC S. BASTASA
This Afternoon....

you see a black bird
moving opposite your direction
there is no identification for any intimacy
and tired perhaps of
means to get to know you
it flies away
northbound

perhaps someone with the
capacity for intimacy
waits there

who knows
what the language of the black bird is
its beak does not
woodpeck

RIC S. BASTASA
This Afternoon's Experience

We face each other
I, the judge, and he, the priest
Accuser,
He claims he had been swindled
And he was furious
And he could have hit the swindler with his fist
Or kicked him
The twist comes
Our souls shifted
I have become the priest
And he becomes
The judge
I have seen the fury in his face
His eyebrows positioned like spears
Ready for a kill
It is shameful
Some tears fall from my eyes
And he does not notice
The shapes of
Compassion

I have long looked to the skies
For answers
And this afternoon
I guess i have
Found some
I tell him i do not really know
Compassion is always
A mouth gagged because there is nothing
Worth saying.

RIC S. BASTASA
This And This And This...

to see more
deeply beauty
beloved
close your eyes

i have no name
you have none

light cannot be
this alliance.

this substance
inside our flesh

is beautiful.
it is the one seeing
the truth.

when i turn on
the light
i struggle.

this body chides
me in the mirror

it says i am
ugly
it says i am
horrible

the truth is here
in the heart

a flower in the
sky
a moon in the
reeds
a beautiful word
you put inside my
mouth

that makes me live
for the moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Art....

it is just a matter of having it in
and it gives the usual
pain or joy, no choice, the feelings
are always there
and the sense of knowing and
being too analytical seemingly destroys the
beauty indescribably
setting

she gives a sigh
when nobody seems to be clapping hands
when no one is bowing
or saying a name at least that one makes it right
and rhyming

'at last, i do not really care'
this is autonomy
of indiscretions of feelings and all these are but
streams
of consciousness the usual candle tears taking shape
in a bowl of cold water

'we let it go'
we tell ourselves mutually about the release of what had been kept
for years
and we know no one understands what is these all about
a sewing machine
a pillow, a veil, a pin, an injecting sting,
a rope, a blanket,
an authority, a cushion, a bluffer,
a clown, and so on and so forth

you are finally misled about all these things
a scissor, a triangular cloth,
an umbrella,
a starfish,

the usual moon resting upon the trees
the sun peeping between two mountains early morning
the kid in town
finally planting the rice seeds
and the buffalo still enjoying the day in mud

there is plane that lands at the airport at 2 o' clock in the afternoon
when you are still taking your siesta by the verandah
and you are irritated and you tell yourself

'oh yes! ' this is all about it.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Belief Of Coming And Going

since i have not
found true love
since i have not
tasted the perfect
flavor of the kiss

i wish that death
comes earlier and
i promise myself that
i will be back again
in another body

searching for the
soul mate
that perfect kiss
that love that sends
me to the
perfection of my
being

and when this happens
i shall wish death again
with another promise
that i will never be
back
in this human form
again

for i am tired of
this pain
i am tired of this
longing
this imperfection that
makes me
want and crave
for more

this eternal damnation
of dissatisfaction
This Book Has 20 Chapters

this book has only 20 chapters
filled with suspense, romance,

and some tragedies at the
later part, chapter 12 & 13 at

most show how weak the
character is, but it does not

really matter. I am now reading
chapter 19 and i am about to

finish the witty ending at the
last chapter. I am waiting at

the predeparture area, looking
beyond the glass door where

the plane bound for Thailand
is unloading cargoes and

passengers and then the rain
starts the pour with some gusty

winds. Umbrellas start to unfold.
i sit straight like i have a new idea.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Candle

there is this candle in my heart
and it is burning
like my yearning
that is empty and wanting
to be filled
like a basin wanting
to have water
from the rain

there is this void
that can not be filled
there is this mouth
that speaks about
my beloved

i like this candle
i like this fire
and see, i am burning with
desire
i like too the rain
that falls on my basin
see
i am a candle burning
with desire
swimming on the water
never dead
never quenched
never stopping

see, you are with me
never sleeping
wanting some more
see, we are dreaming
we are alive

we are these candles
burning
turning into a wildfire.
This Christmas

hospitality has its own fire
kindle it this season of mire

in the hall of the king
let us keep the flame
of charity burning

RIC S. BASTASA
This Comfort Of Invisibility

astounding is this comfort of
being invisible of this having to see you
and you not seeing me
wetting my eyes
with tears...

RIC S. BASTASA
This Coming Valentine's Day

what can i tell you now?

you always had it in your mind
that i betrayed your love.
i have nothing to say to defend
my own self.
i have long been punished by
my own lingering
loneliness.
i punished myself like
Oedipus.
Blind i walk the lonely alleys
of my life
grappling but still
surviving as i do not wish
to drag this precious life
to my own
self-willed destruction

life has its place
i too have mine
we are living separately
but we are still one
in this
quest for resolution

i cannot offer you my heart
you know the reason why.

i cannot offer you my thoughts
they are owned by someone.

i have nothing to offer
but i have only one request

you may not forgive me
but please, try forgetting me

ask me if i have forgotten you
how can i?

this valentine's day
i kiss another lips hoping to forget yours.

time is too cruel for us.
let us blame it.

time deceived us
let us ask it about the truth

time is elusive
still we cannot catch

my heart does not bleed anymore
falling short of blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Country Is Ours, The Philippines, For You Brother Pinoy

And we shall not leave
This country we shall build

Because it is ours
Throughout the golden hours

Here we belong
For quite long

Our great forefather
Was buried here

And though in poverty
We must stay

As we enjoy what we have
Under the sun we love

The coolness of the moon
We all swoon and don

We shall be proud as a tree
We enjoy our liberty

We shall live we shall die
There is no reason to cry

RIC S. BASTASA
This Daily Poetry, .. Or Is It Really?

it has become just
like everyday: dusting of
furniture,
washing the plates
cleaning the car

or cutting a daisy
putting it on a vase
on the table

or opening a window
to let light in

or untying the drapes
to create a privacy

or mopping the floor
putting perfume on the room

we do it everyday sometimes
quickly like turning off
a faucet

or killing a fly or
releasing a dragonfly

or just spitting it out
or defecating, a form of release

our poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Day

music and poetry
bon jovi and
pavarotti

staying put
to art and making
the most out
of music

ears and hands
a mind that floats

ballet in thoughts
tip toe on the soft grasses

of the mind
taking it not giving up

seeping and absorbing
the nice things

singing and then
dancing

this is life
in happy suspension.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Day Is Always The Best For Me

day is always
the best i got
it does not think
of tomorrow
does not speak of
regret of the past
it stays in its solitude
silent on the river
where the moon
nests.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Day Will Be Another Exciting Day

I see how the sun rises today
A faint glow crawling slowly
On the gray clouds of dawn
Making a hole on the blackness
Of disappearing night skies

Some white birds still sleep
High above the treetops
They wake up and fly away
On this young horizon

On this golden silence
The morning starts to unfold
Rays of light like needles
Piercing the colder winds

Some leaves fall gently
The grass receiving them
A sparrow has just taken
This green fat worm on its beak

The sound of the wind
Whispers from the far mountains
It is a nice sunny day for me
Exciting Saturday, no work just play.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Distance

distance is killing me
and you confirm it
for it too is killing you and
we mean
that there is something going between us

distance kills but let me have some
bird-lips lots of birds-lips with wings
flying towards you
tonight in our mutual dreams
wet with rain
petals still dewy
warm fingers
and saucy lips

distance cannot kill us now.
entwined in our dreams
i'll burst like a very ripe plum
to the ground
your mouth opens and catches me
and then
inside that dream you swallow me whole
digest me
and i become some kind of a sap
running like red corpuscles
all over you.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Drunkenness

The rain dripping from this
Old nipa roof
Wakes me up from
This drunkenness.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Early Morning

this early morning
we are talking about
something

somehow you are the curious kitten
coming near my bed
wanting a little warmth
from my hands

and i perfectly understand this need
on the cold days
of our lives

a nice morning conversation perhaps
something not hot
just warm to rub some sparks in our thoughts

i begin to talk about some treasures
i keep inside my heart
how often i open my trunk
and simply glance at them

they are more than diamonds and gold
and certificates of some
deposits

for they glitter not in my eyes
but in my soul
they make me see clearly the meaning of my life

i become young again
i can even fly to distant lands where some of my memories
are buried

all these make me live and live life the way it must be lived
always giving and not taking
something somewhere

oh! you will never know but soon you will understand and see
when you close your eyes in the darkness
and remember too the treasures of your heart

RIC S. BASTASA
This Early Morning With The Lord....

i tell her early this morning

' my dear, do not focus on your
problems, they are the works of the
devil'

' why not focus on the Lord, our God,
for He is happiness, and Love and
Goodness, and Peace? '

and she agreed, and so our mornings
are happy ones, and we laugh and
start doing all the good works again.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Early Morning With You Talking And Talking

regret, it is with deep regret that i tell you
that i regret sitting on this
computer chair
and facing the screen
and i am here writing for you
as you talk and talk
and talk and talk
like a quacking duck

oh Adam did not lay eggs,
or have the temerity to hatch them and so the chickens came first
how nice of you

regret that is all i feel now
i could have gone
out and take my walk
i could have read
the most wonderful poetry
of the trail
the line of green mahogany trees
blooming with their summer leaves
the sun finally coming out
with an array of clouds
and white herons
gliding and landing
on ricefields
and grasses creeping
and covering
the mud and the stones

indeed, it would have
been lovelier that way
and i should have
been happier
than simply sitting
and writing
and feeling
what poetry should
not be
this early morning
with you

what a hell!

RIC S. BASTASA
This Early Morning./.....

this morning
thoughts come rushing
like
passengers of
a train on a
rush hour

yet everyone inside
either reads
a book

makes a blank stare
on the window

avoids seeing one
another

and no one is saying
a word
or two

it is like this
at this hour

i am in a journey
and i have no word to say
to everyone i meet

we are on the same train of
silence
we adore silence
with all respect

RIC S. BASTASA
This Election Thing....

all the frogs
have always wanted
the white heron
to lead them

and for all these
rainy seasons they chant
and sing for
their chosen leader

after six years or so
the singing lessens
both in prosody and
timbre

there will be a lesser number of
them now
and they wonder where the
others are

for the rain have been
long and strong and the floods
come and

the great heron and all the other
herons
have all become fat, lazy
and too greedy

and all the good frogs still
do nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Evening

this evening is another lovely evening
i see stars. i think of some memories. sticky ones. sweet ones.
mouthwatering ones between us. in the room dim and cold. warmed by our
two s. hugs. touches. caresses. whispers.
indeed, this is a lovely evening.
i have a glass of mild wine in my hand. an orange. an apple. some spices
of mint and chili. to make me feel hot on this lovely, cold night. the wind blows
from the sea. i hear the waves. but they are sounding so gently
reminding of a boat where we ride. kisses. hugs. touches. caresses.
whispers. making love. the boat stopped in the middle of the ocean.
both of us.
indeed this is a lovely evening. i have another glass of wine. an orange.
some chili. some pepper.
i like it hot. these memories. i have your picture in my hand. your last letter.
i have the picture of you and your husband. and your children. they all have
grown up. your daughter looks just like you. some smiles. hugs. kisses.
embraces. your family on your last wedding anniversary. in maryland.

indeed this is a lovely evening. an honest one.
everything is accepted. everything is true. and i wish you all the happiness.
for indeed this is a lovely evening. with myself. still strong as ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Ever Foolish Fool...

it is not the body
that i see,
its form and lines
and flesh of hills and
mountains

it is that which
makes me remember you
in it,

that makes me love
again,

it is not that body
of the other,
but the memory of you
in it,
that makes me live some
more....

for now i see you in
everything, in every shape
in every form
in every color and
in every fading....

i forgive myself.
this fool.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Ever Lasting Void Which Makes Us Do What We Still Do Not Know

we are looking
for goodness and kindness
in the body of another
who thinks that a hand
is out of the sharing
the hair exclusive for
her head and those thighs
are only for display those
feet serve nothing but
locomotion. Yet everyone
demands kindness which
everyone does not give.

i would have asked for
a kiss but your eyes flame
in anger, your fingers close,
your lips are bitten by your
own teeth.

were these signs of an
unhappy childhood? was there
trauma still hiding inside
those layers of molestation?

if you have only seen
how the birds fly and live
in those forest ways
if you have only felt the
freedom of the blood inside
your veins
you could have learned
to give love even if you
do not feel like giving it
you could have seen
how distress strikes in
the eyes of the other
meanwhile the dogs
are howling because you
closed the gate
taking their madness to
the moon till noon

i've seen rivers
i've seen skies
i feel a free universe
floating in a never
ending space

it is this smallness
that is still unable to
contain all these
joys
these fears
this ever lasting
void
which makes us do
what we still do not know

RIC S. BASTASA
This Facebook Reality

Oh, how people post
their happy faces

happy families, healthy
bodies, promising careers,

everything good is on
Facebook

and you begin to
fear about your own health
your own life
and your worsening
condition
your fading career

oh, know the truth
they're struggling too
to keep up with lies
you can just surmise.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Feeling That Keeps On Coming...

the shrinking happens
you cut a story, you sharpen a bolo,
you say no to some friends,
refuse some invitations,
you prune a tree, you clip a note,
you turn off light,
you shorten a pole,
you put a dead-end to your alley,
you say, it is enough,
you tell them, there is something
wrong with the system,
and the world knows it literally,
the best is yet to come,
that sense of pride is evil to some,
who is there? ah, a mediocre,
a monkey eating its own tail,
why are they clapping? there is no
one there, it is only a show of
rain, it stops, and the forest is
at its silence again.

you tell a friend, ' do you like this? '
yet he does not see what you are actually holding.

it is like shedding leaves,
you feel like a tree wanting to set free
all that is attached to you, you let them do
the cutting of twigs, until what remains
in you is the root, nothing but roots
all these, the passers-by never see
to that dying tree...

what is this feeling all about?

it is like going back to the seed form
to find the essence
of yourself.

It is necessary.
One has to grow
from the basics again...

one shies away from the show of the clouds
from the blinking stars,
one goes inside, like an urchin
back to the sea,
down to its depth.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Fun

it's fun
in fact it's more fun
being here

i am thinking
a lot

about people that
i've met
that i barely know

there are only
glimpses
outlines of their lives
in such
a short conversation

it makes me feel
so elated
comforting me that
i am not alone
in this...
say,

sorrow joy
sweet-sour memories
like fish and sauce
on a platter

this fun thing
it's more fun really
on these islands

i am taking more
hours of my life
on the plane

hopping from one island
to another
threshing out stories
of real people
that i met
and talk with
in such a short
witting hours

i do not care
anymore
if what they are
telling are true

does not really matter
sort of
short stories themselves
that they are
weaving
like spiders
in the far corners
of the cities

it's more fun
to be frank with you

merely listening
somehow
the words that travel in my ears
make my senses full

i am not alone
all of them
are telling me

this world is a place
of stories
sounds and colors

it is real
they are all telling me

how come
that i did not really know that?
must i be dumb?
or was i just sleeping for all those years

or simply pretending
to know a lot
from books and pages of the newspapers

i am seeing a big river
i put myself inside a wooden boat
take the paddle
and start my way
in the water

i stop a while
to touch the ripples

and then
we are going

into something that we have
never know

under the moon
my shadow speaks

RIC S. BASTASA
This Game

this game of doubting
sleep
whether you are the butterfly
inside your dream
or the dream inside a
butterfly
whether it is you
dreaming about a butterfly

or the butterfly dreaming
about you

this game of the mind
flowering
wonders
fluttering sighs

we like it
we do not want this game stopped

because for the meantime
they make
this stay
memorable, dream and reality tugging
like a game

on the beach one summer
you and i, this dream and this reality

time and sleep
bosom and blossom
measure for measure

drag and lag

RIC S. BASTASA
This Gift Of Independence

think
of the happiest Christmas you ever had,

it was when you were once a child,
sitting on Santa's lap, and he told you
you were such a good child,
and that you deserved
all the gifts you received
as rewards of

an obedient servant

think about it and then
compare what you are now,

one, who just had his own wings
flapping in the air
of your own
confidence,

you dive at sea, somewhere in the pacific
it is all sea,
no island, even a shadow of land,
nothing

and your wings are tired
and it will be Christmas,
tomorrow,

this is what you get
for getting away from
society

an ocean
and sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Girl
	his is the girl
that you kissed ten years ago

she was touched
and now that she has grown into a woman

she comes to ask for your name
and plans her own revenge

she wants more from you
something real and true and as beautiful

when once you kissed her
when you thought she never had a seed of feeling

inside the heart of the girl
did grow the flower that bloomed and now wilting

RIC S. BASTASA
This Goldfish In A Small Bowl For An Aquarium...

at 34 degrees
summer comes here

the roads are fuming
like hot rods
of a machine

it is making flints
with the metal of the shoes

the city people
abandon their small rooms

for a beach in the village
white sands, and cool shades of the palms

i stay here
writing a poem
like a goldfish
lurking
in an aquarium

it is cool here
in my little world
of silence.

i shut out with
a glass wall
buffered by
a bowl of water

when i speak
it is only me who hears
it.

i bubble
with happiness.
This Heart.......Right Here Within

if you look for happiness
you cannot find it
it is not something to reach for
it is not far away like
a star like an ocean
it is just right here inside
this heart that loves and opens
and gives and hugs
and beats and sings.....

RIC S. BASTASA
This House This Home

in this house the music of the night
is the soft rain from the sky falling upon the grass

like tiptoeing mothers watching their young children
sleeping and kissing their foreheads

there is no burning fire here from wood
and there is no smoke from a cigarette

it is dark as usual but it is desirable
even darker as there are no stars tonight

i am not sad
i am at home with myself in this house

i hear the symphony of winds and whispers
from the leaves of trees and the chants of earthworms

it is cold and so i have closed all the windows and doors
& then i curl beneath my blanket of roses

RIC S. BASTASA
This I Do Not Care Attitude....... 

i received your text
' you and your family
is in the airport waiting
for the flight back home'

'sorry, we were not able
to talk last night, we could
have discussed the future of
Pluto.' a braggart.

in my state now, a graduate of
grief, i do not really care.
To every event, whatever that is,
be it your death or resurrection,
i am not really interested.

i heard the same statement from
my wife. She is also not interested.
Hell is other people. They have
become walls where i bang my car,
my head, my existence.

I am not interested anymore about
death, or the death of other people.
The death of loved ones already
occurred many times, and i am actually
numb, for all these nonsense.

Goodbye, take care. If your plane crashes,
let me say, oh, i am sorry. Death as
usual is a big surprise, preemptively.

RIC S. BASTASA
This I Tell With A Sigh

THERE IS a name
alright
they baptize us with
a name
we had no choice the
but to be born
and then die
if we must even if we
do not allow it
but in between this
spaciousness
of life and death
there is an existence
of myriad possibilities
that give us
a sense of freedom
i am at this place
now
thrown in this situation
and i am doing most
of what i can
to call myself free
tomorrow when
the same sun that set
rises again
i proclaim without
timidity
that i am still here
with all my
options

to live and to live again
never to choose death
that kills
all my possibilities
the door that closes in
saying that it will open
again
but you see
it is different there
altogether

dthis is it
i must devour all
to be whole again
to keep the pieces
intact
within my soul

RIC S. BASTASA
This I Will Say Unto You

we need a walk
early morning under
the woods

we need to swim
and free our body
with toxins

we need a friend
to share our stories
to comment on
our poems

is this not a
beautiful world to live in?
how beautiful and warm is the sunshine!
how cool the winds that touch on our skin!

RIC S. BASTASA
This Indestructible Faith.

then they will take
our land
what our ancestors planted
have already
borne the desired
fruits which we cannot
harvest anymore

when these are taken away
to be given
to the lazy tribes of
Tapolandia
we comfort ourselves
it is just land anyway
and we are hardworking
and can thrive on
other equally rewarding
evergeavors

our ancestors are angry
but they are too
dead.

well we comfort again
our incoming generations
that was just land
with diminishing returns
we are here
on temporary basis
and hence must not feel
the grief

now what is the measure of
our true worth?
you say it is money
the other one says a high
government position
shares of stocks
investments
gratuities and insurance

well, you must know
it is this soul, this independent mind
this God, this indestructible
faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Boat

this is a boat and it is in my hand
the hand is the sea
and my fingers keep it wavy

this is the boat and it is wooden
and it is loaded unevenly on its left side
and so it leans on the heavy
edge like it is a man
with a shorter left foot
and walks like the
floor is uneven
and imperfect

this is my body and it has become an ocean
and the boat sails on without the sun
my eyes the moon and stars
and they are closed

this is the darkness where the boat sails
and this is the silence
of its journey

this is my mind
and everything: the boat, the sea, the ocean
the tilting, the weight of the load,

things exist because i let them so
this is my hand and this is the sea of waves
these emotions

this is the mouth speaking
without any sense at all like a woman nude
running for life away from the atomic bomb

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Discovery

i may not tell you
that in this island
where i take my
long walks in the
morning, i discover
something nice,

i am at home with
myself and i am happy
seeing the vastness
of the white sands

white cotton clouds
resting on high cliffs
trees on top and birds
and a light tower

i think of myself
as another island now.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Funny Poem

HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Lonely Day....

this is my
lonely day

at the back
of this house
is a clothesline

three long sleeves
hang there to dry

the rain pours
heavily

the sky is not
giving any sign

for the sun to
appear

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Picture Of Me

it is your body
that makes a steel feeling of my drifting presence

i become present
totally beneath you

when i see the wetness of your hair
i feel the earth and grass inside me

there is rain in my head
there is mud on my feet

do not walk away yet
i still have many items to offer

there is fire in my eyes
there is a commotion in my belly
i love to dance with you
in my life
tonight

no, nothing is eternal

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is A Rush

this poem is a rush
it is meant to be made in a rush
in fact in a second
because dinner is served and i have become a very hungry man
thinking about you

and him on that faraway island where love was born between you
and him

i said i love you,
i am not meant for you

it is this dinner, that she has prepared for me. now
we are at peace
and i shall be in her love kitchen forever.

i think it is but fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is All About An Expression The Main Ingredient Is Freedom.

This is all about an expression
the main ingredient is freedom.

everyday birds land in your hair.
eggs are are the nest.

sometimes a lion takes a bite at you.
One rib is missing. Pain takes residence.

there is a day of a miracle.
There is a window in your eye.
Light has wings. It hovers in your
eyelashes. You blink.

on one sunday, you are a blank
sheet of paper. you are the old man
waiting for a final pronouncement.
A funeral passes by you and you
are sitting by the window.

Thursdays are the usual throwbacks.
You open a box of black and white pictures.
You cannot help. You cry alone.

there are days however, as loneliness
can also be so boring, that you feel that
you are a fountain of water.
You surge. Children stop by and want
to touch the drops you make
in the park. You can hear the songs of
their laughter.

so many events. so many people.

that is why, this is all about an expression
& the main ingredient is freedom.
This Is All About Like

the world where
we live, and which we say
we love is all about like,
we operate on the likeness
and the unlikeness of it all,
forest like an emerald
crown of the head
of the mountain
love like ruby ring
in my finger
death like sunset fading
into darkness
life like bursting waves
in the sea
birth like a tight rose bud
unfolding to the
sun
and growth like dough
becoming bread on yeast

like cocoons to butterflies
we go and fly
to the next level of our
existence

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is All About Us, Our Beings Lost, Dissipated

the ideas come and they do not wait.
they enter your door and they do not knock.
they leave without any permission from your house.
they have colored wings and they simply fly away upon their liking.

they are so beautiful and deep and glistening.
enlightening and you miss them

now you sit there, speechless on the blankness of your world.
why did you not write when they were here beautifully dancing and singing?

you know how is it with the clouds
the more with air
and mists

they always change and they do it
as quickly as a wink

you know what clouds do
the form upon you some stories
the rainy ones sometimes and you shed tears
in the same manner with the air and mists

the air passes and sometimes you do not even feel it
and so you miss the story that it is bringing
the story of a journey
into somewhere

and the mists bring you some notes about what to do
in the darkness of the night
yet you tarry on the grass and on the side of the hill

you miss the essence of our beings
we are ghosts and we do not know where we are hidden.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Art, This Is Love, This Is Desire...
	here is no race
and there is nothing to chase
nothing to work for
nothing to cope up
it is this love for art
itself that pleases
that works for itself
the colors blend
the shapes shaping
you look at this canvass
this sheet
and you begin to fill each
with love and
candor
desire which has become
insatiable
there is no ambition
nothing to please for
the stars above the trees
the skies and seas
wings of birds and fins of fishes
man's hair, woman's breasts
fragile hands of children
horses fast the meadows
cows grazing on the grasses
on plains and valleys
where is the race? who is being chased?
no one. This is art, This is love.
Desire always insatiable.

who is tired? the dancers never
raise an arm.
The painters never say a word.
The poets keep the words
which tomorrow may, if it loves to,
may utter.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Happening

this is happening now
your eyes stare in an open field
burning like newsprint
it happens as duly predicted
from this room the spilt milk
cries all day
the cows are disturbed
and moving away to the
other greener pastures
the avid listener fed up
and stands to walk away
the cabinet full of unhappiness
comes into the open

you pretend you are sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Home Now

it would have been simpler
like a spoke
to a wheel like
a needle to
its eye to its thread
to the mending
of a cut
a mess

but it is you who made it complicate
so so complicated
that reality has become a bird chasing
its own wings
a dog trying to catch up its tail
a body
wanting to be a mere shadow

how many moons do you really want?
why think of another planet?

dthis is home now.
supper is ready.
we all waited for you.
please, please be comfortable.

even if you have forgotten our names
please, please take your time.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Home Now (Revised)

it would have been simpler
like a spoke
to a wheel like
a needle to
its eye to its thread
to the mending
of a cut
a mess

but it is you who made it complicated
so so complicated
that reality has become a bird chasing
its own wings
a dog trying to catch up its tail
a body
wanting to be a mere shadow

how many moons do you really want?
why think of another planet?

this is home now.
supper is ready.
we all waited for you.
please, please be comfortable.

even if you have forgotten our names
please, please take your time.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Home- This Is My Home (A Mantra)

this is home
i chant this is home
i repeat it many times
this is home
i clasp my hands and
open them in prayer
and then i rest my hands
on my chest and
keep on repeating
i am home i am home

and then i fall asleep
for this is home
this, quite, i call
home, this self
steady upon
this quite, this
quite,
this home.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is How Life Is Lived

you may think that
an ant
is not that important
small as it is
and soundless until
it bites you as you step
upon its
hill and then reinforcing
more your
belief of its insignificance
you crush it
at once smashing its body
with your fingertip

and you move on with your
life doing what has to be done
forgetting the bite
of the ant
and feeling nothing

in here guilt is killed
and a conclusion is made
this is how life is
lived

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is How To Survive Life....

focus on yourself
you are a planet
spin your own axis
make your own kind
of revolution, ...

then move with all
of them as one
galaxy in diversity.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is It, This Must Be

in looking for the gates of heaven
i find myself in the room of hell

in looking for myself
i find nothing within me

i pass through all fires
heating and charring me but i know

the reason for all these
i know i had always been nothing but dust

charred, cold, and flat on the ground
i am and will always be dust

to the gates of heaven, i rise myself from dust
i am blown by the mercies of God's breaths

His grace his kind arms lifting me up
molded again to the shape of the angel

back to where i must be and must become
and then to his arms i am finally rested.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Just A Hobby

this is just a hobby
pure fun, nothing serious, just a game
i play
after a hard day's work, sweating my body,
purging all my intellectual juices out
to save a life, to free those who are detained
without just cause,

this is just a variation of the monotony,
it surges, but i keep it stable, still like a wind
that i invite inside my room and then i close the window
to hear a buzzing sound of
consistency,

this is nothing but a sigh, a snore, after a heavy meal,
in bed, silenced, finally, plunging into a world of dreams.

this is but a dream, and everything is allowed here.
no rules, all colors, all strokes,
this is but a sideline, no money involved, nothing bread-like
or buttered,

this is but the time in between the serious muddle.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Just An Exercise

this poem
is a morning poem

i write it when
the sun begins to peep
between the two hills
where my house
stands

i write it when the dews
are still alive
glistening with life
on the green leaves
on the white petals
of the flowers

i write it when the birds
start to chirp
and in flocks start
to leave the trees
where they
sleep for the
whole dark night

oh, this poem is nothing
it is just an idea
just an exercise of the mind
this morning

just to assure myself
that i am still a rational being
in touch with art
honored to the skills
of humanity

oh, this is just nothing
but a prelude
to my day
a day
when we wish
we are not thinking at all

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Just Nothing

he said they were together for days on the island
of their desires
just the two of them
enjoying the nights there
as lovers

she said she remembered all those
lovely nights with him
her hair watered by his kisses
his weight all over her
and she was helplessly
in love

he said she was part of his past
now that he is old
and ugly
and helpless in poverty
with another woman
caring for him
and a child
to be cared
by him alone
as he is weak
and dying

she said she had forgotten him
her first love
she said she lives alone in a wintry land
and knows how to take care of herself
she said she is happy
and now so free

i told her things may be lost and people may be hurt
but chances are
there are rainbows sometimes that reconnect hearts
bridges that dissolves distances

i told her that some missing pieces are found
some chains of love become a necklace of reunions
and reconciliations

i did not tell her though because it is so hurting
that
he did not really love her that whole
and true
when he made love to her on that island of desire
he was thinking of another one
his true love
that once broke his heart many years ago
when once he
was whole and true and young and
honest and real

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Just One Of Those Places

the pond is gone
what took place was a change
that replaced it with
concrete pavements

the lanzones trees totally
vanished
i can still hear the cutting
machines
shouting victory for change
what the sowed instead
are low cost houses
thriving like mushrooms

this is just one of those places
that the heart wants to remember
but who cares?

many may not have known that from
the heart of this ruined place
once bore the great writer and poetess

when once a child
she bathed in that pond
gathered ripe guavas from those trees
rested under the shade of
the mabolo tree
composed the great lines
that we still love to read till these days
of our great depression

many will not remember anymore
but once there were dwellers here
in peace and harmony with
nature and themselves

oh, all of them have gone to other places
and we who have turned to stone
have no way of finding once again their traces.
This Is Life

we leave not because there are reasons
departures are silent
most of the time they do not speak like storms
they are like lovers
more like dust on the railways blown away
simply because the wind
always comes
simply because the wind exists
and winds by their nature do not stop
to blow away what is there that settles
but never
never permanently

this is life this is the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Love

iths si ovel
levo si sith
tihs is voel

ok...

love is really hard to spel....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Mumbling This Is Rambling

do not care to read me carefully, just skim over
some words that may call your preferential attention.
do not mind the smaller ideas, or the images that
you find hard to imagine. They may not be images
after all but just blotches of my stains, the negligence
of my trembling fingers, the lapses of my brains,
the slip of my tongues, the cliches of humanity,
seeking meaning in the meaninglessness of words.

don’t ever mind what i am writing. this is not about you.
or myself, or the society that like sheep simply graze on the grass
not knowing that on the next step is the landmine that kills them,
or why look for the meaning of loneliness in words or lines or poetry.
are you going home tonight? on a train. sit there. look over the window.
see the line of trees, do they shout at you? No.
and move your eyes, as though you are scrolling for names on the
cell phone, like roving camera, you do not have to look that far on the
20th person sitting across the other side.

someone is sitting next to you. listen to his silence.
feel the vibrations of all his problems. try to unmask the cover of his face.
are there words covering his face? none.

or if words cover his face and body, try reading them all silently.
most of the truths are not said. Not even written. You always see them
next to you. Be it on the train, the bus or the plane. Or simply when you
walk along the cemented paths of the park. Here comes another
lost soul. Talk to him. Do not write poetry.

don’t speak poetry.
write them and let them cover your face. That is the best way to speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Must Ask Of You

do not try to be too near
my breath is warm and acrid and acidic

it is so dangerous just like
the mind of this wounded
man, whose dreams are
buried in his heart,
unfulfilled, untouched,
for many many years
in the silence of the desert
in the dryness of the sand
under the fury of the sun

please do not try to listen to the
sounds of dreams exploding!

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Body

This is my body that you see
It is beautiful carved by God’s hands
Smoothened by His breaths

You will love it and want to have it
To touch and caress
To be feasted upon by the hunger
Of your eyes and thirst of your lips
To be rubbed by the coldness of your body
Seeking the warmth of my flesh

This is my body that you will first see
But there is more in me than my body
This soul that seeks your soul
This beautiful soul that seeks the beauty of your soul
The hands of my spirit reaching out to your invisible hands
They have all for years been longing to clasp
My soul longing to be with your soul
So they can be together
To be fused with each other as one
To be happy and calm and perfect
To that final place where this body
Shies away because something more beautiful
Inside it shines and glows and becomes
So beautiful in all eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Hiding Place

as a child i was hurt
hurt so deeply with nowhere to tell how hurt i was once
with no other place to bury my tears
to shout my fears
there were no skies above me
there was no moon to confide
there were only walls

i have grown up
through layers and layers of silence
thick silence thicker than the earth of million years
strong and big and always
keen and piercing the walls that i have been used to
i have seen more about life's pains
and felt the dangers
that i have escaped and survived
i have become a man
and found this hiding place

my poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Life

Life defines in Metabolism,
In reproduction,
we make our miniature selves,
our look alike
In the power of adaptation,
like what is in now,
What is fashionable,
how I blend with all of you
How I mimic you,
how I become a clown to you,

Life in being nice
This is my life A short and a merry one
This my life In the middle of my own life
To life,
a life,
in the hope of discovering the meaning of my life,
My speech my poetry
Come to life with me
To the life,
for the life of one like me,
Not taking this life in my own hands,
Never,
never,
To life,
this is life
As big as life
as large as life is large
In resiliency,
in elasticity
Animations, cartooning, animate,
I vivify
I vilify
I quicken
I liken
The life force in my life’s functions
Drawn from life
to life drawn
Dream to life a life full of dreams

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
This liveliness, this sparkle
This effervescence of life,
this bubbling life like wine
This sprightliness like soft
Drink like energy drinks
This verve,
this vigor
this vivacity
Of life to life as big as life
My life
This is my life
This me I am life
I am energy
i am in this poem trying to run
away from everything in my life,
running in life
to life and life,
because of life,
for life.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Life (2)

ON the bed of roses
On the floor of thorns

Under the sun of caresses
On the pathway of splinters

This is my Life
And I am living it.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Naked Self

this is my naked self
what you are seeing is my naked truth
i am not ashamed of my flesh and body
you desire it
you touch it
let my senses live
wake me up with the slightest kindness
of your touch

this is my naked self
i am seated beside the open shutters of my green bay window
little touches of light from the early morning light sketch my shadow
i am here
long waiting for you
just you my love
my only love

kiss me
touch me
let me live for another day

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is My Voice

This is my voice,
Sad, prolonged, fever pitched,
With some intermittent turbulence
In between a concentrated discourse
But
Still in a slow, smooth, sailing like
A canoe on a very clear silent running river
And
Some rapids, and rocks somewhere, may distort,
This voice
Of mine,
Or
At the edge for which a waterfall rages,
This
Voice
Of
Mine,
May sound like a violent fall of a hundred heavy waters,
Not a drip, but a hundred heavy, heavy falling waters,
As though the whole word is falling down
On your
Shoulder,
This is my voice, sad, on a prolonged agony,
But somehow, when tickled may move into
A mystery, not discounting the possibility of
An ecstasy,
A fantasy,
And you, my love, my beautiful reader, may hear this voice
Speaking to you in a hush of silence,
This is my voice; hear it for what it is, that is all that I ask of you,
I am myself speaking. I am real, this voice of mine.
Listen to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
This is my world, small as it is,
It is a planet by itself with very
Small moons, and tiny stars,
And so tiny, you cannot just
See me there, I am hiding,
But I still live here just the same,
Breathing atomic air, and drinking
Molecular waters, so you see,
How tiny I could be, how tiny
I could get, but this is my
Small happy world, my smile
My laughter so tiny, that you
Cannot hear, you cannot feel,

And that is your world as big
As the sun, with comets and
Meteors, and so big and so
Wide, with oceans and rivers,
And continents, and gigantic
Arctics, and snowy lands, and
We are then so different, and
With me, there is no problem,
I, in my small world, can fit
In yours, but you, you cannot
Fit in mine, that we must
Accept, I am a small world,
And you are a space still expanding,
Now, do you understand,
why I hide?
why I shy away from you?

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Not A Case
well, let me be frank
like the sun
oh what about the sun
what's the sun got to do
with us
or this
this is not a case of a poetic
exploration
neither is it an exploitation
nor a molestation of any
metaphoric experience
this is a cause of slaughter
i won't tell you
it is a crime that you have done
against me
you rob me of my heart
you suck my blood like a vampire
heartbreaker!

RIC S. BASTASA
time marks me
i am
11: 40
nearing midnight
and i am no
prince and she
is not Cinderella
i have no palace
no father as king
and she has
no fairy godmother
this is not
a tale of love
this is
a madness in
time
when sleeping
seems to
be a burden
because
you are simply
not enough
for yourself
there is more
to words
more to poetry
but look at you
madman
with blue eyes
the blue of
a fistfight
the fight of
meaning
the clash of time
and humanity
where death
is uninvited
where life is
a must
but what for?
what for?

no answer.

even my wife
is angry
impatient
restless
for i am nowhere
to be
loved.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Not Home...

there is really something wrong

a hand misplaced in the ear
a head below the right foot

there is a wrong note
in the song
the ear is about to
go crazy

something is missing
we know it
the good man is in prison
no one minds

the hammer falls on the
wrong corner of this building
one sleeps soundly
mistaken as another dead bully

there is really something wrong here
but i do not mind it anymore

there is nothing to understand
this is not my place and i am
bound for another train tomorrow.

i do not mind, this is not home.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Not The Pipe....

this is not a pipe.
i know. it is just a picture of a pipe.
there are two pipes here.
one which you have kept
and the other which you have shown.
you have shown what is not a pipe.
it is another world of this pipe.
we who are tired of real pipes
and you who still make the most smoke of
that hidden pipe.
we who want to take hope back to our
nose, and our tongues,
take what is not a pipe. What is real
to us now is that which is not a pipe.
we shall survive.
we travel inside us and we shall not be
lost.
we will survive.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Only The Beginning

when steps proceed to
another journey making marks on the shore
the sands are not without understanding
what is happening to the waves
and the pebbles
the waves arrive on an infinite
folding and unfolding
on such a monotonous acrobatic
of foam and air
and hush and push
coming back and going away
i have the courage to say
well, what could all these be
but always beginnings...i have not seen
any ending at all, where?

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Poetry

leaves of jack fruit
like operatic singers
their lips singing the
song of the wind

sun, moon, and stars
steady not on your canvass

rivers flowing and when
you touch them they
are wet you.

not the cheese inside
the toilet bowl
not the sound of flushes
not the odor that kills
the sensibility of
art and beauty

not spoons on poos
not forks on fecal matters

the mockery of poetry
holy mackerel, you love it still

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Pure Fun, A Play, A Dollhouse, A Stack Of Cards

nothing serious, no one dies seriously in this war of words,
not really, just plain clean healthy fun, a mahjong game, pong and
ping, a ping pong ball thrown to the twilight zone, a dot dissolving in air,
and yes, the full moon, and the hide and seek of the trees, pulling seams
and putting back the dresses
caresses and buttresses
no murder here, just plain, clean healthy fun
pun, and wits and not tumors, humors, not tremorous but
fabulous, marvelous, garrolous, just plain, clean, healthy fun
no offense, no malice, no pubic hairs,
i like your dollhouse, the dolll has wavy eyelashes, and
her panty is clean and neat and white, i like the stack of cards,
and the tarot and the cubes, the dice of my luck.
just pure fun really, we say, we choose happiness, and desire
and shall i say lust? skip it. this is pure fun, clean and healty and wise.
the birds recite the prayers. the worms their novenas.
the frogs the hymns of paradise, the fishes spotted
are all chanting praises, basically gregorian.

a dollhouse, a dole out, layers of dresses.
it is so hot and so warm she goes out to breather some air.
there is so much dressing the lettuce leaves are buried
six feet below the main dish.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Game We Play

we have letters,
we spread them in our thoughts
and we form words, sometimes we like these words
to be not understood that so easily, to make a little suspense
of our game of words,
and we utter some words sometimes, so sweet sounding
our saliva pours from our mouths,
honey tasting words, a la black forest cakes,
we go beyond eating and licking and savoring,
we form words of love,
(setting aside for a while the evident
lust)
we play this game too well
no one gets hurt
plain sheets of white linen
we spread our naked bodies
we put words
using our tongues as hands
cressing hands

this is just a game of words
why do you palpitate that much?

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The House Of My Father

The termites eat every wall
The beams fall
And the roofs shatter
And the ceiling splits with the gutter

I come back today to remember
The past
And here I am to reconstruct better
The future i must

The present
Shall be this condiment this complement

Now, these hands shall be the hammer
To every nail in the mind of this dreamer

This house shall stand again
Proud against the wind & rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Mind Another Brother Always Preparing To Forget.

I am here
I have this body
This is my soul
Immersed

I am a soul
Bathing in the river
The river runs and runs
It seems endless

I am a body now
Forgetting the soul
Because of time
& pain

The pleasures are pieces
Simmering like trickles
Of light
Like soft needles of
Rain

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Next Page

try again.
like you
i haven't
marked
what the next
page is

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Picture Of Us On The Hill
	his is the picture of us on the chocolate hills
that was the time when we passed by Carmen
you hugged me tight since it was raining
very hard
that month of June six years ago
on Fridays the
13th.

i got no raincoat
and you got no black umbrella.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Politics In My Country....

every one is fond of puppets in a string,

one master puppeteer throws mud to another master puppeteer

a watcher never likes a puppet on a string and wants to see the face not of the prince puppet but the manipulator of the puppet behind a stage in the dark,

no one likes to be a puppet, but everyone here is a puppet

no one likes to be himself then but everyone here is themselves all puppets in a string

the king that you see there has a puppeteer

the king who loves a queen is not really the king but the puppeteer

i like not to be anyone's puppet so you see

listen to me, it is really really bad to simply be

a poet.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Tree Where My Eyes Are Hanged.

10: 41

I mark this hour.

This is the tree
where my eyes
are hanged.

i mark this place.

There is no time here
There is a fish. No scales.
No bone.
No flesh either.
But i smell it just the same.

This is the fishy hour.
Where i speak about a rumor
and it is all about
myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is The Village Of Happy Idiots....

the subject woke up
earlier
something unusual has
happened

the object had gone
to church for the morning
mass

everything happens quickly
between two subjects
with which to keep the
secret intact
no pronouns are used
only verbs that do what
they do inside
a locked room

the prayers are long
the sermon of the priest
even longer

when the object arrives
everything is already set
for a well arranged lie

check the chairs
they are well placed in the
order of their
importance

the food is ready
on the table the scent of
bacon and sunny side up eggs
and steamed rice
permeates the senses of the
old room

in this village
infidelity is the rule
faithfulness is just
another pretentious
story told by dirty old
men to their
hilarious servants

dirty linens should not
be exposed under the glare of
the mighty sun
keep your mouth shut and
let the peace and harmony
reign

this is the village of
happy idiots....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Think I Know

that when you are holding
a thread
and you know that the end of the thread is this..

then you don't mind giving up everything
whatever that was hidden
a hundred fathoms down
whatever was unsaid because you have been muted

at the end of the last dot
you don't mind who listens at you
a priest or a prostitute
a snail or a snake

you tell them all
you let go what winged creature stays in the nest of your hair
and then
you smile

close your eyes
totally
embrace the darkness and expect
the meeting of another light

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is Third World Speaking....

the recent footage is shown
while we were eating our usual breakfast of

salted egg, ripe red tomatoes, steamed rice,
hot coffee, and some slices of wheat bread and
homemade cheese,

what we see is an explosion of light, things run away,
black shadows scamper for safety, they do not really know where to go

children are crying, mothers keep shelter,
one human being explodes itself using the most common pharmaceutical drug as
explosive,

we are warned about the images, but here, in this town
which is sleepy like the islands,

they just look at these things as mere stories, nothing to talk about,
when i ask the driver, have you heard the news? have you seen it on tv?

and he answers, sir, i have no tv in my house, and there is no
electricity,

the other one, perhaps has tv, and you ask, if he saw the sad news
on tv last night, and he says, Sir, i work hard to earn a living
i have three kids in school and my wife has no work,

this is third world, speaking.
and i am acting as mere reporter....without pay.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is What He Knew

this is what he knew:
his dad never slapped his mom
never kicked her and
never for once ever leave her
he never spoke about
the most sensitive issue about myself
he never asked because it will be useless
to look for answers that could just hurt
both of them
his dad never disowned him
and that really hurt her the most
that when she died beside
her is his dad and there was
only this ocean of silence between them
and he was at the middle looking at
their faces
without really understanding the
essence of truth

but this he knew later when his dad
was dead
and he also traveled on that ocean of
silence
a lonely boat
without a shore.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is What He Said...

der i am
stuck bathing on the same river
wading on the same
early morning water

thinking, thinking
exerting force without
moving

t here is no distance
covered

on such a work that
is worthless

got the energy but there is
no place for me

here, here is an earth
without a tree

here, here is a river
without a ripple

there is a fish over there
the only fish i see

i see, i see, it is floating
it is bloating, it is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is What I Can Say....

when i climb uphill
you know what i do over there,
when i go back to the plains
and spend more time walking
you mistake me for
the flower gatherer
or the child at play
cutting flowers and
segregating petals
giving them to the
blowing winds...

what matters to me is
what you know but what matters
most, is what you guess...

i am no flower gatherer.
i am no longer a child either.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is What I Really Mean

when i said to the wind
do not enter and try this sordid game

i did not mean that it must go away
and leave me here

struggling for another breath
grappling for something to hold

a pole, a stalk, a twig, a tree
imagining the beauty of the sea and a blue boat

the sun at noon and the moon sickle on the sky
why do you always misunderstand

my quest for reaching something far away from me
like a star so distant from my wishes?

when i said do not enter i mean it
watch me and be with me do not touch me

i am fragile as a new born rat
pink and helpless and so lovely

i should have told you i need you please
stay and sing me again the silence of your dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
This Is What Life Is All About

In reality
things really are
not that good

most of the time
there is no system
or order

for instance
you worry about
a broken glass

or that the bed
is in a disarray
as the pillow
is on the floor

the kitchen is a
big mess
catsup stains
the white cover
of the table

the cat is licking
milk from your
morning cup

and the rat is
taking the cheese
which you forgot
last evening

and there are
so many more
disorderly aspects
&
beyond all these
little things
missing or broken
or destroyed and
even forgotten

you regret being
here and you want
to be lost somewhere

you do not want
to make any repairs
or amends
and you get sick
and you want to
go on being sick
without going to
the doctor or
take the prescribed
medication

but despite all these
you begin to do the
things ought to be done
you follow procedures
you invent a system

perhaps all these mess
are not just yours but
also include the rest
of the world

and when you are gone
they too shall feel
the loss and grieve
for your unexpected
passing

at any rate you begin
to clean and arrange
messy things in your room
in your bed
in the kitchen
and invent a system
and take a list of
those missing ones

and then you get tired
and sleep,
and then you have so many
dreams to recall
and tell your wife and
some friends,

this morning you make
your own coffee
and sit by the veranda
and look out to the sea

now, you think about
nothing at all
nothing about the mess

for this moment you are
one with the world
and then with one sip
and another
you taste what coffee
is all about

you stand after a short
while, and
take a walk
and conclude that this is
what is life all about....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Isn’t A Poem

how is life treating you
is not the correct question
rephrase it
have it reformed into something
more active and
responsible as this:

how am i treating life?
it will make a difference
really

RIC S. BASTASA
This Kind Of Burying Feeling Without Having To Molest Others Of Their Precious Time

there is this feeling
that i am a kind man
for daily
i dig my own grave
with
poetry as
my shovel and when
it is deep enough
(in fathom thoughts)
i without so much
trouble simply stop
there
lay myself like a
bundle of sticks
or a bouquet of roses
(if you want it
beautifully put)
and i let gravity
do the trick
with soft soil falling
upon me
and then
bury me absolutely like
a logical
category.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Life

I
this life is a borrowed one
i did not wish to be here and wan

II
but here i am just the same
Let me not put myself in shame

From God I am sprung
And to God must I return not as dung

If I have not Loved You
Who must I be? Duh?

RIC S. BASTASA
This Little, Short Journey....

at first we may like the show of human figures, the content of their dialogues, mostly arguments and reason, there is beauty and excitement in all these, we soon, get bored of these human bodies and their words, and sentences, we begin to like only their shadows against the walls inside the caves that we create for all of them

then the shadows begin to fade, meanings diminished, we only like to hear the sound, after all, the sound of their fury, less their arms and heads, the sound of their joys, less the glasses and the wine, less the cigarette puffs, images of opulence and affluence,

then we realize, we do not need the sounds of the outside world which we have already put in that little box. we only need a room with a window a view of the infinite space above us the sail boat within, the ferry without the machine, the last ride to the other border, the fog kissing the water.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Lonely Train....

into the clarity of
dawn
alone
in this train of
thought
this stream of so much
subconsciousness,
enjoying the ride
of this illogical
journey
soundlessly on the
tracks
of my convolutions..

RIC S. BASTASA
This Mask

this is the mask you love most
and it is you who always ask me to wear it
the happy face
the look of a rich man to save you from your financial distress
the look of desire to save you from loneliness
the penetrating eyes
lips hungry for your kisses
smooth skin for you to feast upon in your caress

i will wear this mask today and tomorrow
i have nothing to hide
i am honest and you have loved me
inside this mask

how can i blame you? you also need to relax and feel life
even for a moment
of this illusion

anyway, reality is always there
why bother

RIC S. BASTASA
This Moment In Time

moments come in an instant
one click of a finger and
then gone
irretrievable

that is why i grab it
and keep it
this moment
and with a snap of my finger too
i let it go

it is not really mine
this moment
it is not yours

not for anyone
it is flash and it disappears

and those who are sleepy
and tired
do not notice it

and if they ever
they say it is a dream and
they do not anymore remember

RIC S. BASTASA
This Morning

The hills are filled with daffodils

This morning

The sun shines

And the little boys

Black and white

And brown and yellow

Are playing

On the green patches of the fields

Catching butterflies

Meanwhile the snakes

Are watching
This Morning While I Was Standing By The Window

you step on the river
once and twice
you go to and fro it
like the pendulum of the clock

you wish that the waters shall stay
no they don't
you wish to trap the wind within your hands
inside your mouth
to keep things intact
no you can't

nothing stays
everything is in flux
to make things saner
we go with the flow
the rising and ebbing
of the rides of life

we must belong to a memory
to survive the hazards of constant departures

RIC S. BASTASA
This Morning....

light braves the shutters
like knives
stabbing whatever darkness
was left
under the bed
behind the brown curtains
my eyes shun
what glow comes from
outside
without the windows
fearing their own wooden
frames
this is a bad day
waking up at nine
and not knowing what to really do.

RIC S. BASTASA
This My Papa Did.....

the old man
makes a choice
leaves the city
and retreated to
the mountain
which once
gave him birth

he plants trees
raise pigs and chickens
and buys a horse
and builds
a small house
beside the
foot of the hill

every morning
he gazes
at birds migrating
leaving songs

the view of fog
and mountain peaks
make him feel so light

meals are simple
fish from the
spring, bamboo shoots
green leaves
steamed rice
from the pot

now he discovers
a new reason
for living
away from the
choking demands of
the city
from all those
forgeries of living
now
into the honesty
of the wilderness
untouched by the
fraud of
what life had been

classic
this my Papa
did.....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Mystery

it is easier to say what it is not
than to say what it really is.

it is easier to tell your friend
that a cat is not a dog
and that a dog is not a gnat

it is easier to say that i am not you
and you are not me

than to say who am i really

for i the self is like the deepest ocean
where i am the lone diver
and have not really gone there myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Need For A Hiding Place

there is a need for a hiding place
where you can keep yourself intact
like the way you keep your old shoes
which you reserve for future use
hoping that someday you may change your
mind and wear them

on what occasion? there are coming
events in your life, no, it has nothing
with you wearing them, but them letting
you wear them again,

and they keep you hidden for a while,
thinking about redemption day, about an awakening,
they think that you are asleep that you need
a break in your life, like going away and then
coming back, when?

who knows? someone will know and give you
notices. They think you better be dead than alive
than being angry or depressed.

and who decides that? oh, they know better,
and so you go away, in another hiding place,
where you can always wait and decide whether
to see them again or not.

preferably, Not.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Nerve.....

oh, so here you are with a broken bone.
do not tell you you broke the bone yourself for that is not true.
they broke a bone and they are not returning it and you are not looking for it either.
for who needs bones these times of the year?

all the people leaving here are nice and soft deboned by the cruelty of the days, and living without a backbone is now the trend

and who dares to wonder whether are still living or dead? ah, it is not impossible anymore to be famous and comfortable without any bone at all

is this flesh, this mind, this heart (which has no bone in the first place) that gives us more reasons (now the heart reasons out as a new beginner)

more years shall be harsh and there will be more compliant minds, complacent hearts and ultimately, bones are useless, and must not be remembered anymore

so this is a cartilage, this ear. so this is fluid, this tear so this is, watch out, too painful, this cut nerve....

RIC S. BASTASA
This New Year...

outside there will more explosions
what they say, the evil spirits are driven away,

by the bridge of our desires,
colored lights and magnificent display
shall all these fireworks achieve

i will be inside the room with you
not watching any TV
we love somehow, more than we they explode
inside our hearts
we shall give more what July 4 can ever achieve.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Nothingness That Makes Us Full

the world grieves
for nothing

i work hard
to an extent there
are days which are so busy
that i have no time
to wash my face

or see myself in a mirror
plaque builds up inside my gums
my teeth feel like
a rugged rock

i sweat
i am humid
most of the times
i hurt myself pushing it much
like a dagger
to my own arm

and i know i get nothing
for all these

it is indeed an honor
when i finally get nothing back
with me

for it is the essence of
our existence
this nothingness that
shall make
us full

RIC S. BASTASA
This One Instead

i wrote
a very short poem

and then
i deleted it

it is not
striking like lightning

neither is it calming
like moonlight

nor is it
of value like burger

so i deleted it,
and you got this one
instead.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Picasso Imaginable Thing...

two faces of a woman

ah

picasso

mooo

ah

is that what it is

pain and happiness?

wa ko kabalo ana

picasso has a painting of a woman with two faces
I have seen Picasso's work.

Have you seen it?

Never realized that.

Yes, Cubism.

He explained that to me while we were in Barcelona, Spain.

(Har har har)

Hahahaha

Good one.

Poor bald Picasso.
travel jud ang mind 34 AM
still having lots of erections despite his ugly legs 34 AM

mao ba? 35 AM
hoe did u know that/ 35 AM
how 35 AM

the indefatigable picasso 35 AM

wow 35 AM
we were in the brothels of paris with alexander pope

hahaah

mahilig jud ang artist no

honestly, i have the book

good

the writers in europe sometimes find themselfed in reunion and communion with whores and drink red whores beer together

yes! Edgar Degas too

my fav
This Poem

this poem comes
from a cold room
popping out
from a worn-out
wall

do not
read this poem
aloud

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Assures You That....

this POEM is not
a product of a philosophical quibbling
not a part of guidance
and counseling like what sometimes
nagging mothers do
not a scolding like what fathers do
to their sons who are feeling lost
and unwanted
this poem shall not ask you to confess
your sins
like what religions do
calling for this and that
for absolution and deliverance
or purification
neither will this poem be a doctor
giving you the cure
for whatever sickness you have
this poem when you read it
till the last simply assures you
that you are not alone

when you read even if you do not try to understand
there is this comfort
that in our loneliness we are never alone

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Badly Needs A Title. Help!

oh yes, Mr. Shaun, the bible was not written in english
but in aramaic, hebrew and greek
now, let your big brother go,
get him a free fish
and ask him
why go for danger?
when the truth is
these unicorns are day dreamers
going crazy about the daisy
asking for compatibility
wishing to hear the sound of my innocence

see me? this soft and sensual mouth
coated with chocolate
taste, but go beyond what you can see
there are hugs and kisses

spare me, because i am your best friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Is Disturbed

it is written on a hungry stomach
a gas-filled brain

it knows no law
it has only raw, cheap passion

it has but
emptiness for a tutor.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Is For You Miss Sophisticated

this poem is for you miss
sophisticated
on stilleto shoes
(is my spelling
correct and how
is my diction?)
and painted face
fires of red
and sparkling
diamonds all
around your
dress and expensive
perfume and
branded gowns
that flow like
a manmade
waterfall

this poem
is bad, bad,
nothing
classy at all
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Is For You, ... Forget Me?

you have that rose tattoo
on your arm
there is a bleeding heart on the side
and when we bathe in the sea
the sun shines there
and i imagine how things bleed
and heal
and get immortalized somehow
on your tattoo of
love and hate and devotion and then
gone for good

you like to retain somehow the lessons
of the pain
the memories of the ecstasy
and the moment
of final separation

i told you last night when we made love
i don't keep memories
i let them drip like a rain in the gutter and they are kept
better be
in the canals buried deep inside the earth

i like to grow and touch the sun
i am this flower that blooms only once and then die

i don't have a tattoo
i know what i am, i just pass by like a hush, like a sigh.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Is Just A Poem

This poem shall remember
The port of Dumaguete
The gentle waves of the boulevard
Where we once walked
Under the moon and stars
Where the wind was fresh and cool
Where time was once eternal

To your children and husband
And to my wife
And even to our friends
This poem is nothing
After all we never made it

But to me
This poem is more than significant
This is a love poem
To be recited again
In Dumaguete

The moon and stars
shining at night
And the waves of the sea
Bouncing on the boulevard
Still so excited

Like how I feel today as I write
This poem

I am not sure
Somehow somewhere
sometime
If it is still
With you

***********************
and if by chance
you read this
do not blame
me or anybody
or yourself

do not even
blame the stars
they are just
taking their
own course

***************

this is nothing but just
another poem, candice.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem Is Just A Report About What Happened
Here A Night Ago

and so this young man from the mountain arrives on an unholy hour of the night
knocking at the door asking for the name of his sister, a housemaid of the family,

he brings his eighteen year-old wife carrying a bundle of old clothes, and a baby
still on its third month,

it is raining, and they are all wet, the baby is crying hard
looking for milk and warmth, and she lets them in at the backdoor near
the kitchen, and i am on the second floor merely watching them
in a hurry, loud words, blames, and cautions, the master may get
angry at this unholy hour of the night,

warm coffee and some left-over bread, bare hands they like it,
chicken soup, and milk for the baby, and warm rags,
i am watching them all from the second floor of this house
just being this spectator, of a certain phenomenon, this poverty
this unequal distribution of wealth, this inability of the state to provide
education for its people, this unfairness of this universe,

the lights in her room is finally turned off, the baby's cry dissolves in darkness. I
do not think that the young malnourished couple still have sex
in the middle of this heavy rain, so cold, so unholy, so unjust.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poem This Afternoon

this poem
has nothing much to give you

some words
discarded that i
keep again
on this monitor

perhaps garbage
or dust or pieces of
scratch papers,

but somehow
i go on writing,
without any purpose
at all

in mind, just
to let the hours pass
by
the minutes wasted
for having to wait
on something else,
the next scene
another event
of my life
a meeting in
another room
a riding of
a vehicle to the city
and then
wait again for the
students in the
university

i talk much
and write too
little
for hours and hours
until it gets so dark
at the late hour
of the night

and then i go home
drive my car
no talking now
just paying attention
to the road
meeting my face

and the faint sound
of the aircon
of the car until i
arrive on the side
of the house

the gate opens
i turn on the light
and go inside the room
to sleep
on this chilly evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poetry

this poetry is a hiding place
the only nook left for me
running away from
every creature of the
party,

i take my time
and i do not really mind
what i write
whether i rhyme

this is another monologue
something i keep saying to myself
how can i like this and that
how can i tell you
about what i want to say to you?
there is no way
no place no society
there is no other entrance
or exit
from these tangles and
strangles

it is strange i mumble
i scramble and dabble
talking to myself
and pleasing myself
this is my corner
i keep talking and talking
you watch the tv series
you cry alone and i do not mind
if tears flood in this room

this is my place this is my silence
this is the poetry of escapism

i assume the shape of the bird's wing
i keep on flying without having to find any place
any island any sea any shore
the words keep coming, they do not go anywhere
anyway, that is how it is intended to be
nothing for nothing
talking and talking
somewhere everywhere
alone and everybody

the rain pours heavily on me
no one gets wet no one runs for shelter
no one really cares
halter swelter

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poetry, This Conversation

facing you i begin to say words,
this poetry,
this conversation, i do not really know
what i'm gonna say
i just keep on saying
i never plan it and when i step outside
the house to be with the clouds and the sea
i get very silent

i do not know what to speak about anymore.
this poetry.
this conversation. this talk about
nothing at all.

whoever put the words into my mouth
owes me an explanation tonight.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Poetry....Hence.

the problem is
we love much and we love more
we still love those who lack
those who fail us
even those who infuriate us

we want to correct a wrong
we want to iron out a mess
yet how can we be candid and
hurt? how can we alienate those
who we still desire to be with
us?

hence this poetry, this metaphor
this indirectness, this thing
that we want understood but in
some other compassionate form

it is this mercy, this love
that makes us create, makes us
all weak, and still go on
waiting

we are one, we are still in the
midst of this chaos
those who are lost we still want
to find
and those who are angry we still
want to appease

RIC S. BASTASA
This Puppy In My Heart

you have a bird in your heart wanting to fly
you said
you keep it
closed your heart and you are too soft for that

mine is a puppy
a black one, coy and gentle and
wags its small, short tail always when i see it
i open my heart and set it free
since then
i am so empty and as you see i become so tough since then

RIC S. BASTASA
This River

this river is a wide and long stretch
of brown dreams
it is silent its ripples are like moving threads
it has a song of its own
that only your heart can sing

we sail this river again
this ealy morning when the sun still hides itself
in the nipa palms

we sit side by side as the boat takes its time
we hold our hands
we are still lovers throught the years
we look forward to the same direction

it will not take that long
at the end we will see again the cascades
we will hear the flow of the mountain springs

we will again remember
the harmony of what we once were
do you hear that cascading song of the water?
that is the song of the river that in my heart i always treasure

together and forever
we will cascade, my love, like this long, brown river to the sea
of our daily affections

RIC S. BASTASA
This Self On The Other Side Of The River Without Any Tracks At All

to demonstrate diffusion
a drop of ink is dropped in a beaker
dark blue turns into light
blue
slowly, the color turns pale
and occupies the
whole beaker like white smoke
into a blue sky

what science is doing to us
is to go into the predictability of a situation
so that whatever happens again
given the same situation
we may react as expected
thus avoiding danger and even
foreclosing the possibility of loss
and destruction

but that is not actually what we are
going into
we are more inclined to surprises
the unpredictable
the one that makes us live again
as though we never knew
what happens next

and i want it that way
i want to live a life
do not predict me
i am into the metaphysical
and i want to take you to something that
i never know
to someone that you have never
touched before
this self on the other side of the river
without any tracks at all.
This Self This Home This Now.....

i know
with the thousands i
have
you smirk
for at the end
i have none

not even
a rubber band

not a hand
or a finger

i know
now that you are gone
i have none.

it is better now
now that i have
really none

i am freed of
people
i broke the door
and all the windows
flown

it is home
this self.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Sphinx Kind Of Love

to love you
is to keep a secret

a rose under the bed
an unread letter under
the carpet of the floor

to make you know it is
to ruin myself

to fulfill it is to die.

to explode like a grenade
not to recover any of the splinters

to love you is to deny myself
to make you happy i must be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Stone...

i am a stone
rub me i will give you
a flint,

takes time before
we can make
fire

but rub me again
you'll see
the burning bush
in Sinai
sooner

RIC S. BASTASA
This Sunday

this Sunday i will be with Tony
my cousin with one arm left,
a machine ate his left arm,
his wife left him and his only son
does not recognize him anymore,

oh, it's a sad story, and it's
pity in real action, but i let him
express himself,
he is a good mountain
walker.

this Sunday, we agreed on a trek
in Tabon, where the trees are still trees.
The path is narrow, and
the grasses are taller.

we do not hunt for birds,
we simply watch them.
we do not speak that much
we agreed to simply listen

the sound of the forest wind
the shadows of the hills cast by the setting sun
the mud on our feet
the sweat on our brows

at night, when we are all alone
we begin to tell our stories again
those where wives are not interested to listen
those which do not make husbands cry

over a cup of hot coffee
i recite a sad poem that i have not the courage to write for once.

now it is not about love
it is more about death and revenge

Tony will like it.
This Surprise....

even if you are no longer here
by my side
i still do what i think
please you
my love
my darling
my valentine always
for what you love
is always and
will always be what
i too love

your absence has
become my eternal presence
your loss is my triumph
you fading has become
my sunshine

for this is it
i have learned how is it to be
just myself

with no one else i have
learned this art of
survival

my duty my pleasure
my mission
to take this gift of life
to unwrap and be
excited
with what is inside
this
unknown this coming
this
surprise....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Surprise....(2)

even if you are no longer here
by my side
i still do what i think
pleases you
my love
my darling
my valentine always
for what you love
is always and
will always be what
i too love

your absence has
become my eternal presence
your loss is my triumph
you fading has become
my sunshine

for this is it
i have learned how is it to be
just myself

with no one else i have
learned this art of
survival

my duty my pleasure
my mission
to take this gift of life
to unwrap and be
excited
with what is inside
this
unknown this coming
this
surprise....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Thing Called Discrimination

it is when you walk together
with someone you barely know
towards a place
where there is a door still closed
to open at 9 a.m.
and both of you wait
for the right hour
and then the right hour comes
and a strict lady opens the door
carries a folder and calls out a name

just her name
and she smiles at her
and she smiles at her too
and then she lets her in and
she looks at you
without any civility
and she closes the door and
you do not see anymore
what is going inside the room
something so private
the door tells you that

you feel the pain
and yet you are not leaving still

i am telling you
you're the craziest Asian that i have ever known
in this whole cruel white world.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Time The Heart Wins

there is a choice
between order and disorder
when you enter a room
you just have to choose what door
the mind knows what is good
scaled to what is much better
but it simply cannot decide
about all these alone
the heart is silent but
when it is hurt
it screams the loudest
like an ambulance
speeding its way to the hospital.

who does not want order?
who is the kind of creature that shuns peace?
who in this world does not want to be happy?

it tried to say that it is a decision
a choice
but what choices have i made so far?

where am i? this is not the place
in my mind
the heart is laughing
most of the times it lost
but this time
it is winning.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Universe

this universe, my friend,
is nothing but myself,
you tell me once,
the universe is seen as a grain
of sand,
now, i am truly a grain of sand,
not for the smallness of it
or the numbness of the
sandness of the sand,
nope, my friend, this universe
is nothing but myself,
when i go, it goes with me
when i close my eyes
everything disappears
you must tell me that it shall remain
as your universe
i shall understand

RIC S. BASTASA
This Vileness.......

the passion
that was just recently shown
boils my blood
evaporates my whole
being into the open
space of the room and
hangs itself in the
ceiling of this lettered
room
behaving like a bat
the point of view is
that which
turns this world upside
down

sometimes the slippers
need it
becoming not just shoes
but bats

black reputation
infamy at its worst
this vileness in all of
us
always kept hidden
as though
a precious gem....

RIC S. BASTASA
This Void, This Sorrow....

ah, i know this
void,
it is here waiting only
to be filled,
ah, i know now more
about this sorrow,
it is myself
for all these years
waiting for
you.

i have this candle
inside my heart
ready to be kindled
by you.

RIC S. BASTASA
This Was My Response

that the younger daughter of
Xenon recently has been caught
on video

sex scandal of some sort
that made her drug addict father
so mad

and that the mother was so
embarrasses that she does not want
to go to the market again

the whole week Nena closed her
door and sobbed

i am still wondering if i really like
that fact, all i can say is this:

we are not supposed to intrude
into the bedroom of other people

it is none of our business and
so we must shift the topic:

let us talk about how we can move on
with our lives

it is 2012, and there is this Mangyan calendar
and it will be weird
and hmmm, not really that interesting

end of the world again? shift topic,
let us talk about money instead.

RIC S. BASTASA
This We Have To Know

we sow seeds
but we never come back
for the future fruits,

that is not the reason
for our sowing
we sow the seeds
as we travel along
the paths of our pains

we may have sown
the confusion and those
that follow us always wonder
where we are heeding

we are heeding to a place
we have never been to
so how can we ever know
oh, we too follow

the beatings of our heart
as we fall part by part
as we keep on the start
always carrying that dart

RIC S. BASTASA
This Will Be Another Boring Day

you wake up
with no one on your side
it is still very dark
as you open the window
you see
a garden with plants
wilting not watered
you see stones
and a concrete fence
without vines

you wear your shorts
put on your socks
and shoes
your sweat shirt
your first decision
this early morning
is to walk

you need to think
things over
about what to do
best on this sort
of, kind of, boring day.

RIC S. BASTASA
This World........Is Floody

i
in cagayan de oro
cars float on the flooded
parking area of the mall
and the people watch on
the higher floor
wondering what's up with
this world
for this is the first time
that this happened
the cars look like toys
taken away by the murky
water towards the sea

ii
in Manukan the farmer is
taking his pig out of the water
the chickens fly away to
the higher land
the houses though tied with
a rope finaly give up with
the rage of the waters
the wife of the farmer wonders
what's up with this world
this is the first time that this
is happening in their place

iii
in Roxas the people were rescued
by boats from the high waters
which already went above the rooftops
they too wonder what is going with
this world for this is the first
time that this really happened?
now i too wonder and ask if global warming 
is really fictitious?

last night we were not able to cross the 
road with such a flood. 
First time too for such a road to become 
impassable.

No longer impossible. Really. 
And i too wonder. What is up with this world?

RIC S. BASTASA
This You Must Know

dthis you must know

it is not just the
feet below you
it is not the face
not the eyes alone
but the soul

the memory
the touch that never leaves
my skin
the scent
that will always remain

this you must feel
for i am not just a body to you
i am a soul
to your finger tips
a word to your tongue
and you must
speak
even when i am gone

RIC S. BASTASA
This....
a mouth that thirsts
not for water
a heart that is hungry
not for love
a stomach that does not
murmur for food
a soul that thirsts
not for any heaven
a solitude that
stays not in peace
a confusion that
is not confused anymore
a paradox made clear
a conviction that
fades
this war in peace
this stability that scatters
itself
this mind that has
become
an eternal prison
this escape that
wants to
run forever and
still hoping
to find the
unfounded shelter
this longing that
remains without a name
this name discarded
this oblivion
that settles for
a boundary
this and this
who knows
what man is?
or what god
was?
Thorns

to keep a rose
garden
one must learn
to live
with
the thorns

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Hands Joining

Great grandma’s hands
Grandma’s, mama’s,
sister's hands
Aunt’s and niece’s
Hands, they join today

An epic telling the stories
About touch, about prayer,
About reaching, about the years
Of caressing and holding on
To love, persevering and
Resting the hands on the
Hands of the other hands
Those moments of silence
When the hands speak more
When the mouths accept
The loss of the power of words
When even the hearts give in
Because the hands are warmer
And so comforting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Beautiful Things Inside Our Hearts

what are beautiful are those
that still live within our hearts
no matter how time attempts to
get rid of them

the heart shall always be
a basket full of those everlasting flowers!

these are the lightest things within us
lighter as clouds that when we try to stand and walk
we too begin to float

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Below Us
	here is only one possibility
for those below us
they go up the ladder of this
illusion
and we who are up
bears all the fears of going down
the drain or if we are not vigilant at all
resting on our laurels
feasting with the angels
soon we find ourselves
falling
finally crushed by the trains of
our thoughts long
insecure

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Better Years

the farm yielded
more than what the
storehouse can
ever hold

the mangoes ripen
with no one to
pick them up

the birds feast on the
grains and the butterflies
feast on fruit juices
dropping to the
grassy ground

the rivers are clean
crystal clear creeks
with fish teeming

the seas have white
seagulls over them
the bottom all filled
with corals and
fish crowding

the crabs bite us
when we pass the river
we never pick any

the geese abound
and no one uses a gun
to kill anyone

there were no cities then
no tyrants no conquerors
there was peace
and progress

until the discoverers came
and named our lands
in the name of their king.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Born In Air

those born in air
have already mature wings
and we who belong here
below them
have nothing but all feet
that you scorn
were we to fly with those
whom you admire
we shall regret
we are not meant
for the air
we are meant just to be
your ordinary brothers

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Burdens...

sometimes inside the hotel when
you are with me and you open my bag
and check on my necessities
when i lay my body in bed and
stare at the ceiling when the noise
of little things can be heard as
chatter and when you do not stop
talking about us: our direction,
future, visions and destinations
etcetera....
i begin to think of regret having you
all the way here
sometimes, though i will not tell you,
i miss my being alone
with myself, without uttering any word
and yet feeling so complete and
relieved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Changes Of The Heart

there is a better grip on all those
that we have not seen

we hope for what is not yet here
strange matters of these hands

the past had always been different
the future doubtful

what is here always teaches us
mixed up, we cry we smile,

sometimes we are frozen
then thawed and so fluid

then we are happy we are blinded
moves on with nothing but feelings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Classical Ones

these are the bitter pills
of our sad existence
what sadness plus bitterness
what existence is this
but these classical ones the moment
they are played
at those times through the radio sets
of our neighbors
as though the world stops revolving
and flowers from the skies
all petals fall
our bodies buried beneath them
not dead but
resurrected
our hands reach the stars
and we become so alive
like new sprouted beans
offered by all the cracks of
the dying earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Cold Hands

his hands are cold
forget ice, it is inferior
imagine the hands of
the dead
touching you on one
of those blackout nights
at 3 a.m.
where silence is like
a stainless knife,

he feels death is near
but he is arrogant
he has no fear for his heart
is a drum
beating and beating memories
of his sex-filled life
the cat is inferior
upon his shamelessness
he will both die and not die
he lives
and that is for certain
to the eyes of his unbroken
seeds.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Cruel Days Of Our Youth

when we were children
when father beats us
thinking that we become
angels when thoroughly beaten
and prides stepped upon
we never really screamed
neither did i remember that
we went through an extreme
silence for a long time
as two or three hours
since you must perhaps
recall that we easily forgot
the hurt and when father was gone
looking for money
we rose again from where we lurked
and start to run into the
playgrounds of our house
and the neighborhood
reunited with friends who
climbed trees swim in rivers
dove those cliffs splashing into
deep seas bluer than clouds
like slippery fish with
scales as hard as turtles
sooner did we realize that
we carry the house of happiness
on our backs like knapsacks
ready, always ready to go
somewhere else where we
cannot be hurt where our prides
are never never stepped upon

and father was proud and
then he died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Days Of Grief

the heart is the moon
on that night of my grief
it is raining blood and
i am under it
helpless and naked
foul and stinking but
never dead....

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Dirty Minds

Those who think like everyone else comes with a definite conclusion that we could not have entered the room of the motel and then we chant the mysteries of the holy rosary

honestly, you may not believe and we don't really care

what we had was a very lively oral intercourse

not what you have still in your dirty mind

Fools! we simply had the best conversation ever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Empty Hours

those are those
when we want to make love
and yet we
do not dare touching each other
when our elbows
touch and then when our
skins start to have
shivers
like a very cold night
that spreads itself on the top
of old and shiny
wooden floors

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Empty People...

for in truth how can days be empty
with the sun up high
and grasses green below
and clouds of blue
in between?

those hollow men
chests filled with air
and words
without clarity and direction
words without meaning
spoken
without flesh and bones
promises and promises
nothing real
shattered principles
broken glass

indeed there are only empty
men speaking their
empty words

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Failing Eyes.....

my fingers
have failed my eyes
weary after too
much scrutiny
over words and
landscapes

too much watching
finally overlooks
the more important
thoughts

the child in you
is dying
wisdom comes forth
in wrinkled
states

black lines under the
eyelids
vigilant hands still
groping

tonight i am throwing
away
what you think you
needed most
which i think are not
essential anymore

the night howls like
a wolf
the rain drops like
cats and dogs

the roof is strong and
the house is unmoved by
all these rattled emotions
this earth, this sky
that moonless night
those stars gone by.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Feelings

i

the first exhilaration was when you were issued the visa.
in your mind is 'America! America! '
here i come, 'America! ' as though you are going to heaven.
the family butchers the 60-kilo pig and the whole village rejoice
over your success.

America is your gateway to what you perceive as an escape
from poverty. This country is a haven of corruption. This country
is not offering you opportunities to rise to a higher level of existence.
The politicians here are good for nothing but promises.
You keep telling yourself. Patriotism is gone.

ii

Then you are in America. You have your first taste of snow inside your room.
Outside it is cold, and you begin to say, this is not what i dream about.
You are one of the jobless. You only fill in for work. Those who promised to
help you avoid you. You have become another useless number in the world
of perceived lock yourself. Money is hard to find here too.
The parties are not helpful hints about your quest for survival.
You go unhealthily surfing in the internet. No one remembers you.
No one is giving you. Everyone is asking for the money that you promise
to send back home. Your mother is sick. Your father is a drunkard.
Your brother is a drug addict. Your sister is pregnant.

iii

Then you begin to feel so alone.
You begin to think about going home.
Back to your country.
It is what you miss. The simplicity of life there.
The sun. The rice field. The fishing on the picnic on the hills.
Under the mango tree. The bath in the river.
The Sunday gathering by the sea.
A game of chess with a friend at the plaza.
The Jaycee activities.
The novena of the Holy Rosary on Wednesdays.
Sunday church.  
The loafing. The hammock tied between two coconut trees.  
The song of the gentle waves. The coolness of the nipa hut.  
The anchovies. Salted fish and raw mangoes.  
Coconut vinegar and the raw fish. Chunks of tangigue.  
The sweet smell of the pork adobo.  
The humba. The rhumba and the tango and the boogie.  

The humility of your people.  
The carabao ride towards the mountain.  
Your friendly tenants. The spring on top of Saluyong hills.  
The tuba. Dakak beach and floating restos.  

iv  

the Dipolog airport is wide and long.  
You hear the song of your going back home.  
Soon. Soon.  

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Few Weeks...

i may be a surprise
you seeing me strumming the strings of an old guitar

and i shall not fail to remember on the first few weeks
after our wedding day
what a guitarist you are
strumming my smooth and glossy guitar

cautiously you made my my ribs sing
as i trembled with all joy

and perhaps you must remember too
how i caressed your hair
like i was finding some lyrics of my own song
for you that night
when the sky was young and the stars
were newly born

ey were all flickering like some fireflies
we must remember....

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Friends Of Yesteryears....

there are some friends
of yesteryear
that you accidentally
find in Facebook,
you are excited as if
you miss them,
and you send a message
of 'hi, how are you? '

there is no response,
you back out of course,
not your type
to push or force yourself on them
perhaps
they think that you are lonely
and want some
company in that imagined
misery,

you are not, you are just
excited,

'hell! ' you say it again,
'hell is other people'.

and so you write poems
it is better this way
you touch no one and no one touches you
at least
on the personal level

you wonder
people have always some motives
an agenda in mind
thinking that if you greet them hello
that you might take some parts of them with you
selfish!
i am complete and had always been sufficient
survived those college years
without talking to anyone
during breakfast
at the dorm's cafeteria.

it is better this way.
an island. NO boats allowed here.

From now on. I like doing it alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Gloria Days

People of the Philippines
the Gloria Days are over
Now it is Noynoy and Binay
for a facelift and liposuction.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Good Works

it is the good decision
the countryside
those works and not the words
the silence and not
the fight
the arms that embrace
not the mouth
that argues
it is not a question actually of
winning or losing
it is the making of the bridge
between you
and them
no one says who triumphs
when the good is
finally done

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Greater Ones

we do not compete
who is greater among us
our shadows are the same
they are black and moving
trying to find the best light
where they can be
more like true shadows
to reflect the truth
about us
these bodies
trying to keep
the comfort of
our souls

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Happy Bees

tyey wallow in the
sweetness of their
own honey

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Happy Flowers Along The Road

There are flowers
along the road that i did not pick

when i finally left
farther than i think

the flowers bloom from dusk till noon
and then they wilt happily

falling to the ground
on that hazy afternoon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Happy Times

i agree with you Benny
most of the happy moments we have are those
outside the house
when the big heads and the righteous old ones are not looking
they were our prison guards
and they were treating us
like convicts of the crimes we did not commit
but we maintained the silence
because of the respect
for old age not really wisdom

i agree the rivers and the seas know us better
than there mouths
their beating hands
their gritting teeth cursing us the day we were born
poor like they way they lived and survived their own wars
their own fates
there was not attempt at all by them to learn
to reconstruct old broken selves
to heal old worn hearts
to free the mind from those that fettered them
their parents of course
our grandparents as we call them
those insensitive looks
those shoulders as broad as their indifference

that was the farthest place we lived once
we live with
i am sure of myself
i am liberated
i have freed my minds from the shackles of poverty
and prejudices

i am sure
indeed i am sure
i cannot live there anymore
and coming back
to me would be murder
as mortal as death
as crazy as suicide

well we can send them letters
or emails
we can send them chain letters
and pictures of saints
or the Pope or
Mother Teresa
but i guess with their senile minds
and cracked bones

everything is now too late
it is dark
and remember
we were children once and they never let us play

under the full moon
when the stars glitter when we first learn
the magic
of imagination
when the air was fresh
when romance first showed
under the bush
when it rains and then we do not run
back for shelter
when we dance and laugh
and chase
dreams and ambitions
images and colors
rainbows and bridges
fairies and kingdoms...

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Helpless Epitaphs

know well these:
not all days are sunny
sun does not say sorry

if you love the rain
it will not come again
sometimes life does
not run as expected

it walks slowly
and then it stops
why life stops
of course they grieve

but know this
the grief is not prolonged
the next day
they are at it again

living their lives
like the way you once did
days and nights
and seasons

and there you are
forgotten like the rest of the names
of those who passed away
on helpless epitaphs

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Illusions Of Love....

all the while
he is preoccupied with the real thing
that fences his life
his sweet prison cell
where love
still reigns
a love of the self to self
shared with
no other

and then the sting of pain
starts to pinch him
and away from his senses
while waiting
he begins to write the lines
until another real thing
comes and
deceives him
again

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Ingrates.....

as guests the welcome is made
after the roasted chicken and
the rice, come the fruits on
a silver tray and the cups of
red wine,

the conversations link from past
to present,
laughter decorates the veranda of
the house

glasses clink and the sound of
happy sipping pleases all
ears

music is played, and a bed is
offered for the night's sleep

ey left two days after and it
was perfect free accommodation
and entertainment for them all

they said when you come to their
place, just make a call,

and indeed on that sunny month of
May where you want to make merry
you come to their place and make
a call,

their cellphones are off, or that
they cannot be reached, or that
the lines are busy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Killed...

there is always something to say
to make things live, to give life to words,
it is like a trip to an unknown destination
a kidnap for ransom
we keep on talking to assure ourselves that
we are still alive
some even whistle and then they were shot
they were mistaken for a code
asking for help.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Lips

i see you today and you give me a smile
no kiss is planted in my lips but just the same i made some notes of our meeting

i believe that your spirit is carrying your body like a mask.
and so i disregard your body, as it is the one carried because what matters to me
is the carrier, the holder, the mover, the real life.

then we meet face to face
  . I disregarded the face.
I like to feel you as spirit.

you should have disregarded my body too.
and there lies the difference

you take me as a body,
a face,
a hand,
a navel.

and you are telling me,
that with just one touch from you,
hand to hand,
i am real.

i must have missed something.
i must have forgotten.

those lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Litany Of Goodbyes

at the end
he is prepared to present the emptiness of his hands
and be thankful about
those tiny pinches
which the present has sounded
beautifully like
a siren song

the way he has learned to let go
everything oh how the soft white sands drift from his hair

and not looking back
like a salt woman of yore
that you have
read and forgotten

for tired of so many goodbyes
he has finally decided not to make any.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Little Birds In My Country

one is red
up the tree
one is blue
down the drain
one is white
at the center
of the house
the others eight
in all
on each window
one sun
with eight rays
no stars
this time
not one
stripe
the Filipino people
has learned
to hate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Little Birds In The Yard

yesterday i did not report for work.
i told myself, i am fed up and i want to be left alone.
and so i stayed on the yard
taking with me a seat
for a companion and i focused
my gaze on the grass
until those little birds arrive
struggling to eat most of the
rice grains fit for
chickens
they were noisy and
seemingly on top of their arguments
and i listened

and then there was this orange cat with one eye
silently sitting on the
side of a tree
trying to catch a bird
for breakfast

how can these creatures be too like us?
astonishing, and then as predicted by your
usual experience,
i begin to write again
this time perhaps
an article
on sociology vis-a-vis
bird-cat
relations.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Mad Dogs That We Feed

decay there are mad dogs
but still dogs you say
and you feed them
in the name of humanity

a mad dog bites you
and kills you and it will bite
again
for another day of its mad life

still you tell them to feed them
as a gesture of your humanity

the mad dogs live
like bombs in buses
in parks, in malls, in churches
and mosques

humanity may be diminished
but it will always live and thrive
like love and hope

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Missing Links....

at times, as you are all wrapped up,
in this anxiety, about what you know not what
actually, in a word you write, a letter
is missing, but they have learned to read
somehow, not asking about what it means,
they relate, like empty spaces in a cabinet,
where a glass is there, broken last night by
an unrepentant culprit, but as always, the
glass will always be there even in the dark,
it glows and shines in our minds,

in a sentence, a word is also missing,
in the rush of emotions, the thought is taken,
no one is complaining, the sorrow is a group
undertaking, no one is exempted, everyone is
in the unity of misery, the story is complete
but no one is telling.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Moments

as you begin
you make decisions that end
a certain moment

something escapes like a bird from your hand
but that is what it is going to be
wings are always wings
and the hands and palms are but what you claim you have

there is a satisfaction
of flight for those destined to fly
in the same manner there is more to a home
as it is too destined to stay

there is no gauge to all these but the heart that sings
during those moments of cold rain
there is no point of return
for one who has finally decided to be just oneself

a home a sofa and a window that you close
because finally it is dark ....

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Pains

we finally situate
beyond the threshold of pain
we sit on a chair
look over the window
extend our view to the sea
till the horizon
we familiarize with what
pains too do
with the shores and the
forest
the trees and the
grass
then we look again inward
like the entrails of
the chicken
we feel nothing anymore
those pains have
become a part of our skin
they don't do any harm
anymore
we don't even notice
whether they are still here
or they are gone
for good forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Pictures...

the pictures do not serve the purpose anymore.
you want to go beyond, there is no beyond.
you look for more of those pages, there is nothing there.
you miss the heart. You want to see that man stepping down.
Because there is no love at the pedestal.
You wait for him to admit that there is something wrong
among the choices, that nothing is right, even from those
all of the above.
Nikki is right after all. You wait for the heart to come
and please you.
When?
The time frame is an illusion. The humiliation is not over yet.
The kneeling starts.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Pigeons Inside My Box…

...nevertheless
do not attempt to call this
art,

not actually nonsense
because these are all landmarks
of sorts,

friends without names here
but when i scan
i always remember what they did with their lives
and how they wish
to reshape them to reinvent what broken lines are there
furrowed on their faces

people that strike me with disbelief
lives like the flash of lightning
making so much thunder
a community bewildered
losing hope
expectations crashing down
like earthquake
productions

ah, these moments of truths
there are all here
captured like pigeons inside
a box of wood

they will not be killed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Pink Orchids Wilting...
	here is more to get
than what we just see
on the surface of those
petals
one can deduce what
life is

the wilting for instance,
the shortness of time
that is left for all of us
sometimes
one must suspect that
all these
are but farewell
speeches.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Raisin Dreams....

remembering those raisins

ah, those dreams long exposed
to the sundry suns
& the
myriad moons
untouched on dreadful days and somersaulting summers

so dry, dark brown, wrinkled,
lacking the gloss
of those
happy days of yore

and yet when tasted are still too sweet
the soul
salivates......

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Ripe Grapes....

this morning they arrive as
bunches of ripe violet glossy grapes
and i am constrained to receive them
with all grace
though i made a promise not to
eat a piece
i only draw them on a piece of
paper
someone may paint them for me
so i can keep them all
like loved ones
and then after this short moment
i put them in a basket and give them
all
to whoever pass me by...

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Ripe Guavas

do not be sad today

when you wake up
open your window first
and see
those ripe guavas
hanging on the branch
of that tree
that your mother
once planted
in front of the house...

it is only when you remember (mother)
that you begin to forget (misery) ...

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Rivers In My Mind...

what we remember
we must too forget

what comes must in any
moment go

what arrives necessarily
must depart

too, too, these are the goings
and goings and comings and
comings

despite the waters flowing
in the rivers of our minds
these are the banks that never
stay stuffed forever...

ebbing and
overflowing

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Rumors....

the talk of the town is like a river
it runs to the banks of the rivers of other towns
and fills in every openings along the way
it floods and does not ebb away
until it finds the sea with a very big mouth
and swallows everything

like a whale to all the
species of plankton

along the shores of time
there lies peace and cool sea breeze

and varieties of lovers once again
make their usual forbidden trysts
under those tall coconut trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Sentences On Those Yellowed Papers

at first glance
a word is just a word

but soon you remember
letters

those yellowed ones
winkled by age

there are sentences
there that you can no longer avoid

serving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Shadows....

shadows
are the most loyal
friends we
can ever have

faithful during
day time
but at night without
the moon
they're lost in their
own preoccupations.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Simple Words That I Speak To You

many times i want
to go away from simple words
those that you can easily understand
and hence take for granted

words which you think have
no life
which means that i have too
to go away from you

which i cannot
because without you i cannot breathe
i cannot speak
i may die and perhaps i may only

speak those words
that will understand only themselves when i am finally taken
into their bosoms
filled with eternal emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Die And Wilt And Wrinkle

those that die
like the flesh
and wilt like
your skin
and wrinkle
like your hands

text

these are not
i love
these are not
the reasons
why i am
with you

these do not die:
wit and humor
rumors, stories,
thoughts,
memories at the
park
disco nights
and candle-lit dinners
and strolling
at the boulevard
and pinches
and kisses
sleeping with you
and waking up
with you

these do not die
and these are what
i love with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Faithfully Remain....

you think that it is only
the sea whose waters ebb

and rise, and waves move
unceasingly on the sands,

or perhaps light, that
dissipates, that fades and

appears, receding and ceding,
and spreading colors and hues.

our feelings too, now here and
there, and then gone, but there

are those which faithfully remain,
the coconut tree beside the house,

the dog on the stair, the stone on
the hill, grasses, and trusses too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Have Seen You Never Came Back

You must notice by now
Those that have seen you
The birds that once stopped by your window
The vine with flowers climbing the walls
Beside your house
They have seen you
My happiness, my love
The birds have flown away and the vines have long wilted
After a glance and they have no way wanting to see you again
But I, who has seen you, shall come again
Even to kneel again before you
On a sunset behind your antiquated walls
Because I love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That I Accept That Can Never Be Mine

i dare not see
much more touch
those that i know
can never be mine
for i must not be
too cruel to myself
and let it suffer
some more
for when i start
to glance i then
desire to touch
and when i touch
like some shreds of
iron fillings i become
magnetized
and when magnetized
who shall take me
away from such
mess?

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Merely Wait And Unmoved

walking, just walking, sometimes just this
no thoughts, no decisions, just plain walking

you see the light of the day
striking on the trees and plains and the daffodils

you are not part of it, you are just walking it
you are met by the wind from the mountain

you are not talking you are not interested about
what this wind these trees these daffodils are bringing you

you do not show any interest at all about some leaves falling
the light spreads and sprawls on the grass and sand and pebbles

you are not dazzled you are not completely covered by light
you are just walking, stepping into God's own creation

spectator, just plain walking in, not involved, not commenting
just plain watching, those that crawl and sprawl, those that stay and leave

those that simply lay themselves as plain receptors, grass and sang
mountains and trees, and daffodils, those that merely wait and unmoved.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Must Make Us All Alive And Well

i can always go back
and retake what belong to me.
On the other hand
what is it? some lousy papers,
some molds of memories
i suppose those other things
that i want to bring back
are all but dead,
carcasses of some cheap
marsupials,
pouches that contain nothing
but foul
flesh,

and so i have decided to go with you
on this flight
of all the lighter things in my life
those that i have forgiven
those that
i look forward to
a sunlight, a bird song,
a reflection of a beautiful soul
a tranquil lake
a burst of joy

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Passed Away

Ricardo was the biggest guy in the class.
He was too tall for Grade Six.
Roberto was the smallest but too smart.
Ricardo, the silent guy
and Roberto the noisiest,
all of them the spices
of those years in elementary grade.

In an update of people for the class reunion in 2010,
it is sad to know,
both of them passed away that too early

Ricardo had STD, Roberto had hepatitis.
One had too much sex, the other had too much drink.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Pretend To Help The Poor

the hypocrites
of the Help the Needy
and Deliver the Poor
& The Oppressed

you are Thieves
disguised as
Solicitors

They say We care for the Poor
and We who are filled with so much
Guilt
Upon our abundance
waddling
Parted with our Surplus and
Say
We have done our Part
we have given
what is due them

They are Fat and Drunk
Drinking and Making Merry till dawn
We fast
and Reflect
We give and
They all Steal

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Say No

those that say No
to the Establishment
bring with them a conviction
an integrity that must
withstand the pain
of dissent
the bite of the snake of
resentment

and those that say Yes
parade themselves in the
wide roads of acceptance
display their cards
and celebrate what is thoroughly
acceptable
they are given chairs and
glasses
they have their bread and steak
and accolades of greatness

those who merely watch
those who clap and stand
they pass by and survive

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That The Almighty Want Him....

the young man
dislikes untidy people.

there are lots of them
in the market place,
at the sidewalk, in
places where hope
does not bloom into
a flower,

he cleans his ears
and nails and
washes his face and
feet and hands
as regularly as he
could
even gargles anti-bacterial
fluids for
a cleaner breath

how did time change him?
his hair is uncut
his breath foul
his feet muddy
and into so many unhealthy
habits
he lives alone in his
world
away from the crowd

into the realm of the mind
away from the physical surfaces
he is lost only to find
himself
taking care of those
other much important things

those that the Almighty
want him.
Those That Walk With Us...

let me see, let me count
those that walked with me
those that will continue walking with me,
it is dark, i can only count them if they make a sound
saying yes, i walk with you
we are all blind somehow
we are bound
to the shackles of the goodness
within us
we are not free
we are shielded from the powers of evil
for which we have long surrendered
and now
saved.

we are the weak and we stay
within the shield of
His Goodness...

RIC S. BASTASA
Those That Work Till Midnight

there are those that work till midnight
even beyond it
when all are asleep and busy with their dreams
when all the lights of the houses and even the streets
are turned off

there are those who cannot sleep and make their
nights days
there are those who know what their mission in life is
not counting the hours
not minding the sacrifices
like a candle they burn both ends

there are those who die earlier than expected
these are those who do not complain and
not say a word
for what they have done

they give all that they have and that is what only matters
they do not even care if the world remembers

you read this poem and it is 11:24 in the evening
in this silent hour, you are one of them,
i salute you, my dear friend and companion.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Times

you never knew
those times were my hardest
i was bordering between
two walls, the sane and the insane one
at night i climbed a tree
to see the world below me
i sat upon a fence to see cars
passing by
and the nocturnal people
who kiss and go separate ways

those were my hardest times
i tell you again
when God faded like a mist
when blessings were like dew
at noon there was nothing

i had all the pretenses
for i knew how to sing and dance
and compose the most read poems
in the university

it was a form of survival and so
when it was over
when i got the praises and the approval
i packed up my back
took a few clothes
and left a note that i would be coming back

but you knew too well
i have my father as a good excuse
and mother too
who cried for me

i went to the mountain to teach the
natives how to live and be independent
i gave them a play
and they recited well the lines
i gave them what i got
all rhetoric, and sophistry

i have gone back to plant camote
catch my own fish
sail my own boat
dive my own waters
and hate to remember what drowning was.

when we see each other again
i will tell again and again
i never belonged there
i became free and now oh well, i am happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Traces Of Us...

we started as a form of darkness
then light leaked and water was formed
more light entered the system
giving birth to one celled organisms
putting on membranes
multiplying upon itself
moss was born and flagellates
and paramecium
until then the plants that learned to move
like vines and jellyfish and
turtles to chameleons and tarsiers
and civets and deers and lions
and monkeys and gorillas
then us....men and women
what is next in this
evolution? sharpened minds into
spirits
into gods?

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Unsaid And Untouched By My Lips

my hands shape what you desire
in willingness my thoughts form the petals
of the flowers of your longings

i cater to love i submit to loving
naked i stand before the judgment of your eyes
you touch me and i become alive
in the days of my famine
my hunger is satisfied
in the days of my thirsts
my tongue seeps the dews of dawn

when you sleep beside my body
your head above my arms unfolded
i look at you and i regret not having said
all that i have seen in the dark

there are images still unspoken
there are still feelings unfelt by your innocence
i look to the sky beyond the windows of our beings
i gather silence like leaves under my feet
i walk away feeling triumphant about what i kept

the treasures of my heart
these i own, and these you must never know
for whatever happened
for all those years.... i have always been alone and happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Were The Times

those were the busy bustling days
of the cities
where people have no places
to go home
and laundry themselves in parties
of friends
and friends of their friends
till the wee hours

got fed up of those days
of smoke and beer
and now i am back to the silence of
this little town of
my birth

the trees are shedding off their leaves
the cows are giving birth
the birds black and white fly on the skies
and perch on a tree
enjoying the ripe fruits

today i am going fishing in the river
my sail boat is waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Those White And Red China Roses

The summer breeze
Rises on the shore
Of Olingan
And those white
And red china roses
That you see
Are they really flowers
Or not?
Or only your
Usual dreams
That fade out
On the beach
When you wake
Up?

RIC S. BASTASA
Those White Pearls Around Her Neck

those white pearls around her neck
all come from him
he was up her face
her tongue circling on his being
he begs and kneels
for more
till the much awaited explosion of love
gets in
on the mutual hunger
he gives her all the white pearls
she puts the circular lipstick
around his veins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Are Dying

those who are dying
have most of the courage
and so like a molting cobra

eyed off
everything that is old
and with all pain wears
a new body

a shiny color of themselves
shining bravely against
the sun

and do not get near them
by now they know how to make the quickest bite
and make a new kill
instead of being killed
by you

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Are Ungrateful...

if only you can see the face of
suffering
right in the deathbed
completed

if only you can hear the last
groan of the
hopeless cancer stricken
woman

you could not have sided
with the pleasures of
ungratefulness
the hypocrisy of your confidence
the uselessness of
believing in the selfishness
of your time

if only.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Called Them Apes In The Jungle

those who scramble for food
and steal and
(as you term it) have behaved
like apes
in that human struggle to be alive
are what you see on
TV

You have judged them wrongly

Go there, in the Land of the Rubble
walk, take your time, smell the stink,
taste the mud,
do not eat for three days,
no food, no water,
no friends, no TV,
no cellphone,
no roof,

beg for a transportation facility
then come back home

Tell me then
all about it. Let us hear
if your anger will be the same
Let us see, if your judgment is
correct.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Know Suffering And Still Suffer....

to live in a gooseflesh
is not easy. Mind you, it is
horribly cold and traumatically
ugly.

well, not knowing it is a blessing.
the thing that you do not know
cannot hurt. But that place of gooseflesh
is always there and you are always there
living in its horror and trauma.

be glad that you have not known about it.
at least, for the meantime you are safe.

you are happy, unlike us. Here we are
shaking in this coldness. Traumatized in
some ways, at most, in most of all times.

you are very lucky. Your ignorance is helping
you a lot. Your world is sealed without wisdom.

you are very lucky. I will put this in my heart.
For we who have seen the horror of the light
are frightened till the end of your numbness.

we are these humans in the filth of happy pigs.
we are the pearls thrown into mud. You are blind.

Happy as you are, we will not touch you.
Be glad. You are not one of us. We live in the
silence of our grief and we are not saying anything.

We shall see you dance. We shall hear your music.
We are not dancing. We are only listening.

The children will look at us with hatred.
The old people will dismiss us. We are cursed.
Those Who Score Themselves

i agree, perfectly, deserve
a ten.

why not? why wait for others to praise us?
they set standards, we don't
we welcome every word without questioning that

oh this is proper this rhymes this is a poem
the critics like this and this is just perfect for the next coffee book
the next year's anthology

all giraffes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Truly Loved

they say that those who truly loved
have become so vulnerable, euphemistically speaking,
they have become so foolish to surrender everything

do you remember the lion king who had his sharp teeth removed
his claws cut and his roar suppressed? they say it was a fable
about love, and they say that the moral lesson of the story is
as simple as being so stupid about love and then be defeated
by the pretentious lover. Ouch! You're dead.

they say those who truly loved have become the characters of
the romantic movies, the famous figures of the opera house,
the unforgettable tragedies, the stigma, the catharsis of life.

today i am offering flowers for those who truly loved and offered
their lives. They are silent. They are dead.

Ask me. I am alive. I am not a pig.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Who Witnessed The Fire

the doctor was on the other side of the road
the house was helpless
the fire was like a hundred tongues
red and sharp
murmuring death for all those
who are soundly asleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Witches....

he puts his fate
again in the hands
of dishonest
authorities

masochism again

when the paper is
sent it will
be blackening
his vision

he will be shaken again

vain hope,
lessons learned
numb

and he steps again into the open
fields of
new opportunities

flying kites,
releasing pigeons from their imaginary cages
running away

the sea, yes the sea, the wide horizon
the moon at night
the singing leaves of the trees
silent sands

fool!
you have subject to the dictates of
dishonest
concocting witches....

RIC S. BASTASA
Those With Fruits And Leaves

what then is the purpose
about those who have no leaves
or fruits
those bald ones
those dried twigs
brown leaves
and broken stones?

you are part of the choirs
of nature
each has a gap to fill
a place to rot
to shine
to hit and awaken.

RIC S. BASTASA
those years of closed doors,
they must be over by now.

the days start to come in trickles
of light this early morning
bringing sweet memories of the moon
and the stars

the venetian blinds are dusted
molecules dance at the center stage
on such an immense light
as you sit and stare
and ponder like a new seed
breaking its own
shell

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Years Of Separation.....

years separated us
when we meet again there will
be usual questions like

how is life? did you marry?
how many kids? how old are they now?
where do you work?
where do you live now?

i am tired of all these questions,
frankly i am not interesting and nothing interests me
perhaps
i was made sour by all those years,
but sometimes i may compromise
(but not a civil as you may think me to be) and
so i have my answers now, like

life is not really that miserable.
i got married, no kids only dogs in the house
(not applicable),

oh i work with a gavel,
and i live in my navel.

perhaps i am just dissatisfied with what
life has given me,
and you who claim to have kids like grapes
work like heaven, house like a castle,
and you who is like a story with a
happily ever after ending,

well, thank God, you are like everybody else,
you own a wife, and kids and house,
yourself is multiplied, your face is xeroxed,
your wealth is not just well preserved but
progressed like
hell,

you have chattels and servants and perhaps slaves
and submarines and nuclear weapons,
you have a brand new car,
an excellent paycheck,
by all means, to my mind, you are a superhero
and you have everything
everything

and yet, oh well, just like rest of the people in this world
you are never, never contented, you still ask for more

how much? how long? how wide? no one knows.

RIC S. BASTASA
Those Younger Years.....

those years
when we were young

we take no malice
naked bathing in the river

we bask our bodies
open to the sun

we feel the flatness of
the rock bed in our backs

when mother called
we have the unison of silence

we rush dressing up
leaving our underwears

we did not like school then
inferior as it was to the wind and the sea

to the cliffs and fog
to mountain peaks and waterfalls

we are all misshapen
into the cruelty of the literal

we are the stuffed toys of
this working world

the marionettes
of skyscrapers

when we meet again for the reunion
we will not mentions how we have become aliens to ourselves

so ashamed that we begin to drown ourselves
inside a glass of champagne and whiskey and
shallow and silly and superficial conversations.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thought One

i think every word about ourselves
is a poem in itself
we simply have to re arrange
and re-invent
and there we are
always a foundling
never named now matter how specific
how distinctly said

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts

my mind drifts
in the space of
thoughts
passing by
some trees
i gather thoughts
bunches
of gloss and
refinement,
every morning
i take the pleasure
of putting them
here, lest they
go away, like
fading light
like a voice
suppressed
in silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts About The White Bud Turning Into A Lonely Flower..

outside the
white bud blooms
alone on an array of
heart shaped leaves
how pure
how undisturbed
how lonely
shall it be
under the clear
white linen sky

(perhaps,
my thoughts alone,
but nothing
jibing with what
it really is,
as usual)

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts After Sex

after sex
people sleep

that is the
usual exit that
people who want
to escape seem
to know and do

they sleep

the routine keeps
going like
house, office,
office, house
roads, doors
doors, road

after sex
the usual exit
is closed

you look at the
ceiling trying to
open another
door

but there isn't
any.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts And Thoughts

day the monitor
multitasking, whatever is always
whatever, and nowhere,
and somewhere,
surfing, and writing, whatever
word comes inside my brain,
linking, i like linking whatever
with nowhere, nothing definite,
like simply sitting on the shallow
part of the river and
rinsing my feet, nothing to clean
in particular, just looking at
the flow of the water,
like i am a part of everything
yet i belong to no one,
just it, this and that, and
nothing specific,
this is what i like doing now.
i am no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts Before The Much Needed Sleep...

one wonders, at times, in the middle of
(nowhere)

of the room, where books scatter like chairs
after a wild party, that class reunion after

25 long years, (back to the main point)
of wonder, when pushed at the edge,

whether, the things done, year after year,
polishing each, like old shoes that do not break

priding of their crocodile skins, are right
correct, and justified, whether the conclusions

arrived at are, true, useful, and normally
good, one lays his head against the tip

of the easy chair, supports the neck with both
hands and look at the ceiling for answers that

do not come out easily, but appear like lizards
still waiting for their cockroach and favorite mosquitoes,

this office has mosquitoes and cockroaches,
and, as the answers are not ready made, but

slimy like fishes on the river Kwai, one stares like
a blank wall, eyes closed later, fall into sleep and

dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts In Disarray

like threads
entangled
in themselves
like hair
crowded in the
temple
where
you have no
way of
straightening
the confusion
where
you have
no time
putting things
in their
proper places
or thoughts
firm in their
aligned perspectives

you expect
much about
my sanity and
system,

i too have
times
of losing and
being somewhere
else
where you
cannot speak
to me
where i am
furious in
my silence

i do not wish
to hurt you
baby, so please
please
go away

before unkind
words are spoken
please please
go away
before another
heart bleeds
before another
world shatters

let it be
just me
without you

you do not deserve
the cruelties
still thriving
in my heart
like viruses
and worms

now, go away
and do not be hurt
do not even
dare think
about me

i am lost and i am finding
ways
to finally find myself
from the wars
of my thoughts
from the rubble
of my perdition

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts Of Issa

on the surface
of my river
early that morning
a moth
rides upon a
fallen leaf
and then on the
flow of
the streams of my
thought
they are carried
faraway
until nothing
is seen
until nothing is
heard
about all of
them

and then the
the battles of my
heart
shall soon begin

RIC S. BASTASA
Thoughts While Watching A Still Painting Of Pears And Cherries

upon a tray
are the still orange pears

below are the three cherries
and the wilting leaves

i like the way the pears'
way of seducing me into biting it

the cherries compete with
the enticement

the leaves wilt with envy
and here i am watching and not
even allowed to touch anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Threads

something about threads
amazes the balls
how they trace origins
and histories of their beings
how one is previously that
and then upon a flow of
thought
becomes another
more important and useful
but less recognized
than what it must be
at the end

RIC S. BASTASA
Three

How can I ever explain poetry?

To a child it would be easy

Eenie minee minee moe
Catch the monkey by the toe

Jack and Jill
Went up the hill
To get a pail of water

Is a poem easily understood by
A child

But to an adult
How can I ever explain poetry?

Can I explain it with a straight
Look in the eye
And I will tell him
Poetry Is looking a person straight in the eye

Yes you have only one more day to live?

Can I explain it to him
Like I have a gun and point it straight to his head
And say
Yes poetry kills and it kills you in a minute
And for free?

Or can I explain poetry to him
Like I am on the tenth floor of this building
And I tell him I am so problematic
And all I have to do is
Jump and kill myself
And he would be there
To tell me
Life is beautiful
There is reason to live
That I am loved
That many people still care
That I have a mission
That I have lots of good things to do
That this world has meaning
That I am the child of this universe
That I am no less than the trees and the stars and that by all means

I have the right to be here

That poetry can save
That poetry is one saving person holding one back to his senses
that poetry is hope, love, kindness
it has no word for hate
it does not kill
or enslave
or annihilate

Poetry is a decision
Not to jump.

That is poetry to me
And as an adult he must understand
he must understand what i am really trying to say

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Black Birds High Up In The Air

three black birds high
up in the air
flying
playing this early morning
on their
swift wings

i heard a single shot from the
hill and one black bird fell
the other two birds continue
to fly away
so frightened

they continue flying away
from that hill

a man with a brown cap emerges
and picks a dead black bird
on the rocky ground

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Characters

you are the hostage of your past
demanding a ransom

a huge amount of your present
to be debited as payment

your future is furious
there is so much but it will not yield

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Dark Shadows

Three dark
Shadows lurking
In the dark park
On a dark night
One leads
The two others
Follow wearing
Black raincoats
On a dark road
I lead
I tell them
My name
My work
My place

The two
Did not follow
Since then
They realized
Perhaps that
With what
I tell them
I am blacker
Than black
On a dark
Raincoat
On a dark
Park
On a dark
Road
&
In my dark
Mind
It would
Be so hard
For them
To follow
Through &
Through.
They quit
They split
&
So I
Walk alone
In the dark
As one lonely
Shadow
Darker than
Dark
&
Now
It is you
Here
Following me?
In fact
We change
And it is
You
In effect
Who is
Leading me
Through
These lines
Flowing
Slowly
Gradually
Getting
Darker than
Dark

You have
Indulged &
Surely
You are
Involved
Deeply
Long enough

You win
& lose...
Three Ladies Dancing In My Mind

the first one was white and smooth
baby lips and natural black hair
the second one was aggressive
like my mother telling me every details
to be done in my life
the third one does not speak
lurks in the corner and waits.

tyey all dance in my mind
not having chosen whom
until they all stop and then
leave me alone
in my indecision

the three women dance in the world
taking their other options
throwing their legs
in crazy steps
mechanically less my love
and affection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Lovely Flowers

inside the vase
there are three lovely flowers
delightful accents
this morning when the sun
arrives
by the window

i do not wish to be a butterfly
neither a bee
i simply want to be plain
water.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Lovely People

oh LOOK
AT THE three lovely people
God and Aldo
and Lo!
the third one is
of course

Me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Oranges Inside A Wooden Tray

three oranges
inside a wooden tray
at the center of the table
still amaze me

the smell and the color
and the shapes of
hemispheres

i still find you there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Things

three things
three balls of fire burning and burning
before me

1. sex
2. love
3. power

i cannot grab all
i may burst and burn and burn and burn

i had sex this morning.
and it is not trite.

now i can have power,
and then who knows i may graduate from the bickering of the
parts of my being

who knows i can have you finally in the form
of love,
not, a thing, not a thing, not a thing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Three Women Are Talking At The Veranda Of An Old House

a sick old dog walks at the center of
the road

three women are talking at the veranda
of an old house beside the
same road where the sick dog walks at
the center and stops there

a big reckless truck speeds its way towards
Zamboanga and
runs over the sick old dog which died instantly
its intestines and blood scatter all over

the three women keep talking and then they
all burst in laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
Threesome

you ask me
about my birthday?

i have a birthday of course
but there will be
no party

i am tired feeding
people who can eat for themselves

this time
it will be those hungry children
in the slums
the innocent prisoners
in jail

the flood victims of iligan
and cagayan de oro

this time it will just be
me, myself and i

i will toast wine for myself
merry, merry
us in three

threesome and so
wholesome...

RIC S. BASTASA
Thriving Upon An Accepted Illusion

The fruit of the
center of this Paradise
One that i see
One that i always love to see
Feast always to my eyes
Without failure
One that i gaze upon
A touch on the gloss of the
Paper
Closing my eyes and feeling that it is real
But it isn't
These images live only inside my dreams
They die with the coming of Light
They escape on the hours of
Waking
I am faithful to these images that do not feel me
Do not know me
They are all dead a long time ago
The first time i ever knew them
But i insist
ON this illusion for without it, i die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Through The Eyes Of The Child

what we old folks do
if what we do are all wrong
and pretend they are not
to the eyes of the child
the wrong becomes right

RIC S. BASTASA
Throwing A Coin In That Beggar's Bowl

i throw a coin
in the beggar's bowl

i hear the sound
of angels
filling the universe
with such a very sweet song

RIC S. BASTASA
Throwing Away

i have thrown away
some memories of the past

it is the distance that makes
us see clearly
what we adore before
has nothing to restore
what we claim we dearly love
now we abhor

there is disgust that
like some things too
exist forever

distance creates that sense of balance
gives us that feeling
of wasted time

i shy away from the nearness that blinds me
into caring for you

now you are on top of the hill worshiping your sun
i stay on the plains
looking at your small, fragile body
casting a sharp shadow
on the other part of the hill

there are no more echoes to hear
for i have closed my ears
i put on my shoes and take my first step
towards an understanding that all the while

i had been wronged.

RIC S. BASTASA
Throwing Away Pain

i look down my feet
passing by my navel

i am naked

i touch the old flower of my youth
with the same stunted fingers

i wish i am as warm as the palm of your past

i am not disappointed
i am real

i feel the coldness of a stem
the hopelessness of a rock

i know the day is short and so i throw away pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
this is the picture
of you
a past black
and white
glossy
image of
how lovely
a woman can
be
and so
beautiful still
you are not
mine and
i am not
yours

fate
says so
what can
we do?
i am so sorry
i cannot be
bound by this
blackness
& whiteness
of history
that
may destroy
the rainbows
of my future

one rainy day
is enough for me
i have promised
myself about
the sunny days that come
and i must
make the most
of my short life
under the
sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Thrown Into This World

he may have been thrown into this world complaining that this matter is without his consent and he may walk like he does not belong and would not speak their language or adopt to their dance and songs. He may just stand there and watch and tell that he does not like everyone and everything and not gain any confidence from anyone and he may just be a nobody but a protester. Sadly, he is thrown into this world and Gladly, he shall be thrown out. He reaps what he sows. He sows dislike he shall reap disgust and that is fair enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thrushing The Depths Of The Woman

the man is helpless
in this strength and for this
he needs that support
of that depth
the one that he can reach
and meet
the one that he can grieve
because it so
beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Thursdays......

for all those that we have not done
and tarried and
procrastinated we go acidic
and our intestinal linings bleed
like hell on
Thursday nights

and for all those that we have done or claim to have finished
on Fridays before we sleep
we say after we have prayed for the judgment
of our creations
we have so justly
died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Thus The Distance Speaks...

we have freed ourselves
from your goodness
we were mum at first
and we never talked about it
we walked away
traveled the needed distance
climbed those hills
and found a valley where we could rest
to get the whole view
we turned our backs against each other
i went west
she went east
and we went beyond
the frame of our
social conventions
the causes of the distortions
of our own images
of ourselves
and theirs too

we have scene the view upon
our own truths
you were all blessings in disguises
all of you
with what you did give
have made us
love ourselves more
we were rip van winkles
awakened from a very deep sleep
and now that we have seen
all the angles
we have decided
it is better this way
the distances speak so well
and we must listen
like this
earth...
Thy Faith In Me...

...and there
the danger lies,

when you cannot
believe in me when
i cannot too believe
in myself anymore,

i happened. I am
glad, i did not pack
up and leave,

i keep myself
even in my own disbelief,
as you left me
for another, i still keep

myself, even if i cannot
believe in me
anymore, ....

i do not have any
other, if i lose myself,
i have nothing.

this is faith.
To keep this self,
in its lowest ebb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tian 21

i guess, it has something to do
with the fountain
it is running out of water
and the birds are waiting
the seeds have turned into flowers
and the trees are running
praying for leaves
i watch and run too and i fall down
life is not comfortable
the sun expands
and the world is getting to be
one big bomb

RIC S. BASTASA
Tianmeop 01

i do not compromise
with what the government does
neither shall i deliver coffins
on a buy-one-take-one promotion
i do not compromise lives
i live inside a bottle sealed for years
what do you expect me to say
do i have to tell you that i still breathe?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tickle

something is so tickling on my abs,
furry, soft, like a rabbit's tail
but it is not white

RIC S. BASTASA
Tickle The Skins On My Feet

tickle the skins on my feet
with the tips of the hair in your head,
i will smile
you will matter

bow down as i spread my thoughts on the floor
like a geisha
you shall pick them up
like sesame seeds
and offer them with some steam and tea

tonight
i will be your samurai
without a sword

i have this cherry blossom to put in your breast
you shall kiss my neck
as i am your vase

in the morning
some more cherry blossoms hang on the tree
like tiny butterflies

we watch in silence still

RIC S. BASTASA
Tidbits

tidbits and more tidbits
to the tongue
some bits and pieces
of desire
and lust
discriminated by taste
and prejudice
the love for money
the greed for time
on such wasted hours
on grief and
grumble

RIC S. BASTASA
Tied Down

all the happy faces
tied up in a frame
from a click which
made you stick it out
in Badeling, China
where the Great Wall
appears
to be most beautiful

beside you was the
beautiful Canadian who
accidentally held your
hand
perhaps afraid that she
might fall down and
die

your wife was on the
left
preoccupied with what
to project with her
friend in that
not so famous town
in the Philippines

you doubt everything
since then
but to cut the story short
and to stop all
the ambivalence

you crop the picture
and you deleted
the one who is more
beautiful than her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tight Lipped

tight lipped
a bud
opens
a little mouth
a petal
and sighs
then
you smell
the scent
of a rose
a woman

and comes
a man
the wind
swallowing
a petal
a woman
in his arms
away
to the dark
night
like
a horse
you hear
sounds
of hoofs
and
yes
i hear
it too
the moans
the moon
and
the shadows
of the bud
in full
bloom
well to tell you frankly
i had my days
of walking on tight ropes
under the careful watch of my grandpa
and i was so frightened then
when i was a child
because the moment i fall
he beats me with a
very hard stick
from the guava tree
and i cried alone
in the attic
where the black birds
are staying steady
with their claws on
the power lines
and they never get electrucated
and i learned
from them sometimes

and i stopped crying

and the ballet dancing did not stop
under the careful watch of
grandmother who too held a stick
and beat me when
i fell on my broken toes

and again i cried in the attic
many times when i was once a child
and i look over the window and see
the clouds drifting near my
hands

i touch them and they are so soft
and gentle and i learn too from them

and soon when the tears finally consumed themselves
i had the wings of the black crow
and the puffy touch of the clouds
and then i fly
and then i drifted in my dreams
my imaginations

kindred spirit
rising to the heavens

i once dreamed. i once died.
i learned.

i am alive. and i am writing
poems

for myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Till these eyes pop out from its sockets
Drop like marbles on the floor
Roll to dust and sand and be gone,
Till my back aches no more with
A thousand needles pricking me up higher
To my neck, my nape higher all over my head,
Till my arms break into quarters of bones
Till my hands disjoin from their fingers
Till this heart burst to segregated chambers,
Till my solid self disintegrates into meaningless pieces
Till everything in me returns to dust flies to air,
I will never cease composing all of you
Words without sounds, sounds without images
I will not
Stop giving you the image that you desire, the sound that would be musical,
To the ears of this world, to the farthest celestial ears of this universe,
My dear words, You all have the right to become my poetry, the poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Till My Life Ends

After one brief tryst
A night as short
A blade of grass
Briefly cut
In Silliman-
Must I long for her
Forever
With my whole heart
Till my life ends?

RIC S. BASTASA
Till Next Year.....My Dear

i know where all the lonely people come from

i can tell the shapes of their faces
their shadows are too
revealing

what is expensive wraps them and conceals whatever is
in the offing

i know what they want to say when you meet them in the streets
the kind of drinks they take in parties

the way they hold their glasses like the way they maintain their
pretenses

it is not easy to be lonely i tell you
one gropes for solutions which are not always at hand

the nights are knives and they stab you right at the
center of your heart and you bleed and you bleed some more
alone by yourself
in those large empty containers

i know their feelings
their longings and their hopes for a cure

i know some more and i know you are listening about
what i want to say
further

but for now let us keep going
mind our own kind of lonely business

and in tonight's party with all the crowd
of lonely people
let us listen to new jokes,
updat ourselves with new songs,
and be attentive to the latest rumors in town
savor the multiple miseries of other lonely people
out there
buried in the smoke of
cigarettes
in the loud music of
the exclusive club

do not lose hope my dear
keep the strength
murmur your prayers
think positive
choose suffering
sing lament

share the passions
(of Christ)

then perhaps who knows we can be happy again
understand this matter to the fullest
interpret its hidden meanings
remix the nuances of the nooks of silences

and live life some more with all the cheers till next year.

RIC S. BASTASA
Till Now, You Still Confuse Me.

you actually confuse me.

i know what giving is.
it is taking a part of me,
a skin sometimes, but most often,
a chunk of my flesh,
it hurts, i bleed for days,
and the pain is sharp and
excruciating,

but that is what precisely what giving is,
a part of me is always taken away
by another and sometimes i do not know
even who,

i do not ask questions
why a part of myself has to be taken away,
whether you deserve it or not
it does not matter anymore

for a giver has no questions to ask
he just gives and feasts upon the silence
of that grace.

you actually confuse me.

you have not given anything yet
and there you are, saying that you are hurt the most
why i have given much.

i almost have nothing now
why do you mind me?

you are whole, and burning with desire
you are complete and self-sufficient.
you have everything which i do not have.
but you have never decided to give an inch of you.
to anyone else.
you actually confuse me.

You keep on saying that you are unhappy
and that deep in the night when you cannot
sleep
you actually like to kill yourself.

i am a giver. And i do not ask any questions.
Neither do i have the answer for your sorrow.

that is why, till now, you still confuse me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Till The End Of My Own Time

the tree that i love
is gone
someone cut it
i did not mind at all
my fault then

what i have now are
the stories of the tree
i see shadows of its leaves
and they dance
with the wind till night time

to appease my longing
i see that tree in
everything be it grass
or stone or
river or
even those walls and
stairs

i am sick my friend says
but i am gone
someone took my real self away
and i did not mind
at all

and then i live every moment of
my life
in my shadows in my hands that
dance with the wind
till the end of my
own time

RIC S. BASTASA
Till The Next

farewell
i have to go
it is 1:06 in the afternoon
and i will be in court
trying
all the accused
whose destiny
shall lie
on the evidence
in the hands
of their
lying lawyers

till the next
my love
my poetry
we shall be parted

but i will be back
soon

when i am sane again

(ha ha ha
just a joke)

RIC S. BASTASA
Till Then

till then when this is over
when this face is reshaped to your pleasure
i shall face you

till then
when my eyes can see well again like a new sun
after the storm
i shall meet you

till then
i shall not tell you anymore about the history of a love rejected
there is no use

you have a home
you are a bird with a nest at your comfort
you have a place
like a stranger stopping for good having found a wife

till then
i shall confront you with the silence of my mind
i am at peace
and i am ready to leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Till Then When I Will Say Finally...

you hurt me
and i do not voice it out
and everyday you hurt me
every minute
and i become more silent
more silent
until then when i shall finally say
that once in my life
i have loved you...

and then in an instant
that love is gone.

i do not blame you
neither shall i blame myself
it is the silence that ought to speak
but there is no point in your life
that you ever
signified that you have ears

i blame the silence of the ants
they keep on working and then they all leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time

time has always been with
us and we have learned
to trust
its wisdom, its power to
heal, its power
to lead us to where
destiny waits us
with surprises

time rusts and time shines
time kills and time resurrects
time gives birth and time
gives death and time knows
the memories of cycles

time makes the promise

and so here we are asking: when?

RIC S. BASTASA
Time After Time

time after time
block upon block
brick upon brick
we build
what we dream

time after time
light till another light
darkness upon darkness
moment upon moment
we grab
what is offered before us

we have no choice
layer upon layer
of this consciousness
opening before us
we awaken
to see what is shown before us

phenomenon till another phenomenon
i watch what opens before me
awe to awe
wonder to wonder
i wander i walk i take the distances
of time
to perhaps clearly see

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And Distance

time forgets
the pain, it travels
without really
getting any inch
of distance at all

distance on the
other hand
pretends through
space

but always with
time beneath
its
cloud.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And Eternity

YOUR smile is old,
and time has changed a lot
even a hundredfold

you snob me
you smirk, you tighten your
laughter into
a frown,

it does not work
ditto,
it just does not tick anymore
you've got to change
somehow

i do not really know how
or what or when

time has a way of changing
what it needs,

it discards expectations,
it hates the monotony of never changing rules

it has a style of its own
and no one knows what is really next
taste of passion

i like time,
i like its way of experimenting
moments,
with all of us, its subjects
and objects
of its hours and
days

i do not wish that it may like me too
on such a
vested interest of
a mutuality

i hate to accept this
but time is with me

(booooo! do i hear boooo?)

it likes the way i dislike it
and it dislikes me for liking it
and claiming that it is with me

there is fire in my coldness
there is fame in my persistence

let the rain come,
i am ready with my own
cracked dryness

let time pass, i like its opposite
anyway:

ahhh! eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
you like time that way
clockwise always like the hands of the clock
stopping is prohibited
like you are broken
a disease

you are time
you move with accuracy always at a certain point
no past just the future
not staying longer with the moment

that is what people are supposed to be
always moving on
no crying over spilt milk
nothing overwhelming with the past

sometimes i just sit in the corner and watch
merely curious of what we are and what am i for real
i let time go and i stay and i relax myself a bit
unmoved, unmoving, i become an object of your disdain
theirs too

a clock without hands
what can i be? a man without feet
with hands but never using any finger

i look at the world like i do not belong here
i sit obeying no one
i deny the sun and i am not talking with the moon

and i see a time bending before me
begging for me
praying that i may go with it or i be left out dying slowly
i am staying and i am waiting

they ask me why i am doing all these
for what reason? under what justification?

and all that i can say is that i am no longer afraid
i have enough of what i really need
to know to have to hold to cherish

and finally to give everything away

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And Leaves And Heaps

time runs
leaves fall
the ground is filled with heaps and heaps of them
the world too
is thickened by the leaves of time
heaps and heaps of what man once was
we bury all of them
time
leaves
heaps of leaves
so many times

we fall too like leaves
the world is thick of those like us

fair enough.
fair enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And Light And Human Memory

Time is revealed. Sand used to keep it in a glass vial.
Now time escapes and flies and seeks
The help of light
Takes it to space and travels so fast
To cope up with its longing
She is somewhere out there with the comets and stars

It is overtaking memory
Failing, falling short
Human forgetfulness
But there is such a fast catalyst sensing like
A magical nose

Love, passion, longing, belonging, seeking, wanting to be complete
To be perfect

Memory smells the sweat of her love
And sticks to
Faith: this is her, this is her, and there is nobody else
I cannot be mistaken there can no one else this is her

And time bends
And time stands still
As human memory begs for another meeting for another understanding

Though so short, brief,
It will be a memory of some light years

Smelling sensually sipping the sweat of someone
Somewhere now. Here. Here is forever.

Time travels so slowly with the person you love,
Light infuses, diffuses and intensifies
Pain forces forgetting, letting go what used to be important

Now everything yields, everything must go as destined.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And Love....

time is the hand that carries love throughout those tests,

it is careful not to break it but even if broken

it mends it again as though nothing happened clear glossy glasses

against the sun on midday without the scars of any wound

love rides with the wings of time comforted

in loneliness love sings what is past well written

RIC S. BASTASA
space is like an eggwhite
enclosing a
yellow yolk of this
chicken egg,

time grows and becomes
the chick

and it may become a hen or a rooster
but there is this element
of growing up which we call time,

time too dies, like that rooster
ran-over by a car,

the car is fate, and
fate is always acceptable as a
comfortable explanation,

the explanation becomes
your key and you switch it on
to make things move

time moves, and this time
becomes the key that strikes
the ignition to make the engine move and so

and the engine becomes your life,
and your life moves to places and travels on events of history
and sees the strips of a film of trees and post
streamlining your forehead
against a glass window

but your life can be so stagnant inside
a prison, this emptiness and this hollow space

becomes your garage, you stay put
you refuse to be free
and you are the door with lock and key.
there are many more, but this
time, time becomes so short, like

a yelping puppy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time And You

time escapes
your notice

7 turns to 9
and then 1
and you find
yourself in the
middle of
darkness
it is 3 am and
you thought
you were still in
a dreamy 5

inwardly
nothing changes
there is no clock
in feelings

which misleads
you into
thinking that
you are not
human

wrinkled hands
memories forgotten
aching joints
failing sight

time hands you
the wisdom of
death

the silent exit
unto the other wall
where no one knows you
and you know no one
you escape time
and it did not notice
you either.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Beside Us....

time has always been beside us
and we know that it does not talk
it does all its tasks
and having been with us since birth
or even before that
with them
we had all taken it for granted until it
is consumed
until it lays us on a niche filled with white roses
until what we hear are the cries of those who love us
then time closes the lid
and takes us to another destination
on that imaginary boat
without the paddles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Does Not Make Me Notice

been away
and been busy
the usual answer
to any inquiry

this time
i sit upon a chair
facing the sea
on the porch of the
old house
that papa left me
when he died
five years ago

the bamboo
on the side facing
the big mountains
has grown tall
and its leaves
are outreaching
the trees

i feel so small
like a sparrow
and i feel the
wings unfurling
feathers on my
sides

i have long
wished for this:

    flying away from here
    and not coming back

now it is a reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Does Not Sleep This Time. The Window Does Not Close Its Eye

time does not sleep this time.
the window does not close its eye
even if the sky turns gray warning us
of the rain,
the floor spreads a beautiful silence
waiting for some shoes to come.
the curtains the other day shed off all dust
promising to be light and give that ambiance
of an accommodating hostess
ready to serve a listening mode.
i have given rest to my tongue.
my mouth naive this time.
i look like pouting lips.

my wish to a sleepless night is too simple.
talk to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is time for light
shine, shine
and take away the little dark corners
drive away the shadows
on the fullness of your day

and then we will dance
and sing and make merry
under the fullness of your grace
and your loving warmth

come light, come
take away everything
that we are not
and we are not supposed to be

come light, come
light our paths so we will see
the truth
that as children of God
we are meant to be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Heals

that is the most important nature of time
the rest
whether when it was born
or when it dies
whether it shrinks or expands
whether it is a woman or man
or plain swan
are nothing but trivialities
things that may confuse us and
make us forget that
it exists at all

time heals the wounds of our birth
that is enough for us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Heals...

IT IS still the dog inside us
that tries to impress others with
the waggling of our
invincible tails,

The dragon that spits fire
and destroys houses and gardens
within us
still hides and never defeated

Outside our hearts and minds
The face shows the glow of the moon
calm, gentle
No sign of an earthquake or typhoon
Reserved like a table for two
Like lovers hugging on the lane
by the boulevard

You must admit
IT is a matter of keeping the balance
Molten lava inside
Yet a garden of roses and olive trees
Outside

One still has to figure out
The outcome
Time heals, Time judges.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Is A Hand....

when the desire conquers you
it may leave you
and you worry a lot
and in effect
destroys the peace in yourself,

what must we do to eliminate this sorrow?
we get rid of desire that comes and enslaves us

Time is neutral
It has no taste of grief and happiness
It is a hand
That opens and takes you
It does not promise anything
If you do not go with it
It may close and just be silent....

RIC S. BASTASA
that early morning when the dews
are pearls on the leaves
you appear
as a lovely brown woman with tight skin
too naive even for a white rose
more innocent than twilight
i was speechless like the grass
i was sprawled and all of me looked up
the coming of the skies

the sun comes up like a chariot of fire
that is how they name what god was there
i am amazed with what is going on
someone is riding on a horse and charging
someone is taken away but not crying
someone says, well, this is nothing but a circus
there is no abduction since the beloved was too willing
to be taken as a hostage of ecstasy

then there is the time for surrender
the white rose wilted and all its petals lay crushed on the grass
i was the grass sprawled on the sun
the skies all shut
the chariot pass that way and the horses fade like a mirage
then you lay there alone
your skin too loose, in fact, hanging on your bones
your teeth are no longer white as pearls
no dews on your lips
you are alone now and you wish for death

meanwhile, there is only darkness there is so much silence
my heart so empty my mouth utters a word

how can i ever forget your name
you too fade like time like a betrayal

RIC S. BASTASA
time is cruel
i have seen how
rashly she ears off
every page
of my calendar

my hair turns white
got more furrows
on my face
my arms are slow
my feet like dough

at the last hour
i wait on one of the benches
on the park and i shall

fade like a
premature sunset

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Is Slow For Those Who Wait

time is so slow for those who wait
too swift for those who fear
too long for those who grieve
too short for those who rejoice
but for those who love
time is
eternity..............................................................
..............................................................
..............................................................

let me not wait some more, let me not fear, let me not grieve, let me not have eternity....

let me just rejoice, because my time is too short

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Is Too Short For Sadness

a leaf falls on the ground
the poinsettia turns brown
from red just a week ago
the snow melts and the
sun sets for another day

the rain stops falling
it cannot be forever
nothing lasts forever
happiness like a guest
sleeping in your room
only for a night or two

and takes the road on
the following morning
transfering to another
place another time

a bird with bleeding heart
stops for a while on your window
and gazes at you with pity

the wind cannot stay longer
it has no love story to really tell
these boring sad tales about
love unrequited about love lost
and never recovered
i have no more ears for them

another seed of the peanut
grows, sprouting to see a
beautiful morning sky

you see all these changes and
locomotions of wind, earth and sky
of man, his heaven, his earth
his heart, his legs, his muscle,
his skin, his mouth, his lips
his thighs, hair, his bulge
he is everyday growing for you

you ask what are these all about?
it is all about love and time and
temporalities, swift passing days
like that wind and bird on the window
it is about the irrelevance of sadness

they all gaze at you with pity
and they move on without sympathy
in haste reminding you: why waste?
why fret? why not sing the song of love instead?
why not munch, chew, swallow all desire?

i can feel your heart palpitating asking for more.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Makes Trust Thinner

time is like
a flower unfolding
if you are keen
to its revelations
this you must
have felt
(as i feel it
but perhaps i could
be wrong)
time makes us
see
what people keep
on denying
what history hides
what the writes
hint on those
pains
inside you see
dead bees
the ants ruling
on their claim
for more nectar

i let my mind
flow like a river
traversing dams
and taking all the routes
towards
the last sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Passes So Swiftly

for indeed
time passes so swiftly

despite this morning i was just a very young boy
holding to the virtual hands of mama

tonight, to my dismay
i have become a man with gray hairs

trying to forget every sad memory of my life
emptying myself

for this last trip for i shall travel with the air
and dissolve myself again
to the arms of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Proves It, And Time Shall Prove It Again

this will never work.

a tooth
for a tooth
and an
eye for an
eye.

it never worked.
all suffered much
the grief will never be over.

in the land of peace
the great joker cannot laugh again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Runs Fast To A Person Who Loves

when you love
you give it all, like you take all your senses for the one you love
and then you surrender
love takes all you have
while you just wait and see how everything in you is taken away
you shall experience pain
temporarily during the taking of everything you have
and when everything is taken away
you become so light and so empty
again that is temporary
time runs too fast
the clock ticks
its hands run like an overspeeding car on the freeway
then love comes back to you
full of longing and full of everything
for you

you become so full again
feeling better
and you want to give away everything again
on this day
on the other days to come

because of love, you love and always you have known
what giving is
what giving everything away means

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Runs Too Quickly

i wake up at four
and start dribbling
words like balls
without so much
thinking for i do not
really care what
you say.....

it is 8: 36 in the morning
and i have not seen
the sun yet...

this is life
busy bee, and yet
let me frank,
well, i am happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Runs Too Slowly On The Lines

how slow
can time run on the lines
of electricity
that which is generated
by that poem
that prefers the silence
of the lips
that which does not speak
but screams
in every letter in everything
in between

how slow can time choke us
and yet we still refuse to accept
its intentions of death

we look at the other side of
our melancholy
there is a bridge and there are trees
below
and there is a creek
more likely to be empty
before the
next summer's day

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Shrinks...

in the kindness of our beings
lost in the labyrinths of love and good works
we begin to learn
what prayers do
when we stop because we are too exhausted
when we are hurt
and feel the pains beneath our bones
within our flesh
because we have loved that much
and there is nothing
returned.

RIC S. BASTASA
lull of a hammock,
arms free, thoughts rest on hair like petals, a book is set aside, beside an eyeglass,
another day shuts itself,
nothing in particular is accomplished,
you are growing seeds of silence amidst the bustle of the season,
you remember a child crawling in bed, and then grows its strong legs to walk alone on the floor,
as mother watches as father hears the first sound of youth,
this is the same house still alive and so old, with nothing to boast.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Swiftly Passes By

this morning
i see the child that
he carried
at noontime
the child is a man
anchored to his arms
a pregnant woman
at night
i hear the coughs of same
man same child
same memory
ah, time swiftly passes by
my poem about
him
has become
a brown page
the letters fade
the words
crumple turn to dust
and blown
by the skirts of time
to a never ending horizon
to an open ended
question
of where to
and why

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Teaches Finally On What Is Really Right...

technology that you are trying to show
in authentic colors, and which thru time
i have so well scrutinized

faded, green turning gray,
violet to lavender,
nostalgic, heading towards the
shore of
better to be forgotten like a very old memory of you,
i have taken a second look, and my heart weighs it too well,
logically,
the heart convinced by the pleadings of the mind,
has come to the inevitable decision,

'it is not worth it', and so i quit gently,
my fingers close,
regressing into another page of this book,

it is not pleasing anymore,
neither can it hurt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time The Culprit, Shit, Has Changed You...

last night
after the meeting
i was thinking if it was still you
perhaps
time, the culprit has changed you
transformed you into
another
new-born hypocrite
denying a language
that we always speak
the eye contact is less
the hands are moving
that fast
meaning is murdered
but i
even in that dimming light
had a closer look of you
it is not you anymore
i am facing a
stranger
with sad eyes
but trying to borrow the glow
of the sun
the moon weeps for you
and then it rained
the candle light
on the table in the middle of the
green yard
beside the palm trees
died.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time Ticks Like Death Crawling In My Skin

at 6: 15
twilight,

darkness chokes the neck of day
i hear nothing
i tell the fence, steel and rusty, feeling death itself
on its rails,

that death makes no sound, it is only the time ticking
like the dripping of the water from the gutter
to the rocks
at the foot of the house

it is only its hands that move
round and round my body
feeling the irrationality of my wrist,

the mind closes like a window at night
the thoughts are turned off like the lights of the village

the self loses itself in this darkness
you hear nothing of its insanities

no one talks no one listens
at 8 o'clock in the evening all the eyes pretend that sleep is just nearby

in bed my hands argue
there is something wrong

the feet stamp against themselves at the foot of the bed
there are no changes without a bloodshed

that is still the philosophy of life
this world is not a playground for saints

this world spins upon its own foolishness
at the center is the hub of all selfishness
Time To Be With Myself, This Self, This Self, This Self

I put my hands in the side pocket of my pants
Tuck my polo, gel my hair, smooth and stiff
Put on my shoes, my wristwatch is tight,
Zip my skin to keep both bones and flesh
Follow the narrow path and walk
Without looking back
It is now this time
For myself
To
Where?

RIC S. BASTASA
Time To Close The Cover Of The Book

at this page
i put the ear of
the dog

i close the
cover of the
book

and set it
aside my head
board

i turn off
the lamp
shade

there is no
one to say
goodnight

they are here
darkness
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time To Drizzle

'Black clouds
In her eyelids
It's time certainly
To drizzle'

eyelids
on dried tears
chili eyes
dreaming
sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
Time To Rest For A While

the letters
on the screen glow
like fireflies

my fears come out
like bats from
a cave

there is a sea urchin
on my nape

some flies hover
on the key board

a bee is circling
on my head

RIC S. BASTASA
Time To Sleep

The day is over
You have come back from your escape
Of the devouring fangs of routine
You are tired
Your head lags like the ink of
Gentian blue
You loosen the hold of your flesh
You undress you change your skin
You wind up and coil in the corner
You close your mouth
And keep your tongue in cheek
Slimy snake you shall now sleep
In my arms
In our dreams we shall not be enemies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time To Tear A Picture

i find your picture
inside the page of my favorite book
and today i look at it again
and i feel nothing
anymore

i fold it into two
and then i decide
to tear it into fine pieces and
throw all them away
into the big
murky river

i guess it is time
to bury old memories
to blow off old flames
old feelings deep
down under
the cold
soil

of forgetting

RIC S. BASTASA
Time, Space And Light

you ask
for time
i give all the
time you
need

you ask for
space
no problem
there is so much
space
that i can still
give

what more do you
ask?

let me suggest,
this is interrelated

ask for light
yes light

this time
i do not have
it

i am so
sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Time
you who is the
teller of truth
the finder of the
right path
at the end of this maze

why are you so slow?

your days are
tortoises
your years are the
growth of
trees
your changes are like
high mountains and
cliffs

the moment you change
the face of the earth
no one is there anymore
to tell

the bones have turned
to dusts
and all the paths
covered with
rocks and grass

RIC S. BASTASA
Time's Passing

a red bird flies low
passing by

i walk alone with nothing
in my hand

lightly i do not carry much
thought

my feet are dusty since it is
the middle of summer

the river flows with a song and
the grasses are growing wildly
with flowers at their tips

the clouds above me drift endlessly
casting shadows on the hills

time travels so fast and it changes
everything
without even touching anything

people pass me by
i am heading towards my fading

compare me to an afternoon
it has no choice but to be with the night again

i am with the night but i am not sleeping
i am on this journey

always going but with nothing definite
on where to go and when to stop.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tinkering Folding Keeping Scattering

tinkering
it is something that you like
to know what really is there
inside the complications of things

folding
how can you spend so much time
folding clothes
that you never used

and keeping them
again in that closet
that you seldom open
like a party that you tender only once in a year

and scattering
what is it this time that you want to do?
what is it that must take you back
something to do
a reason to live after another tinkering
that have caused you
sorrow

fold them back and keep them
they are useless
and there is a need for you to be open again
breathe some hidden perfume
inside the cabinet of old clothes

come back and tell me
what did you see there?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tinkering....

what was hidden shall remain
there, on the grave that pain,
these pearls wrapped with tears
no moment wasted, life stirred,
the rivers flow, forever slow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tiny Leaves Falling From My Hair

these tiny leaves falling from my hair
on this day warm and fair

are yours
all yours

you shake my body
this tree of energy

your fingers run through me
i moan, i am happy

i close my eyes
and time slowly flies

you kiss my lips
i die in dips.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tiny Moon On The Big Boulders Rising From The Sands

deer the
big stones
from
Mt. Iraya
climb
the walls of
an old
church whose
faces of saints
are copies
from the very
faces of the
common
people

hope clings
along its sides
vines of
sturdy veins
skins of
the dead

i am awed
by the violet
bloom

tiny moon
on the big boulders
rising
from the sands

RIC S. BASTASA
everything above the world where he lives is gray,
it looks like the dogs and cats are coming.
the euphemisms inside the leaves of new journals do not work for his
suppressed silence
now it is time for the circus of cliches
in the kiosk of the town
comes another exhibition
the one who can make the longest distance of his pee
there is nothing about those hours of wee
the houses of whores and resting places of the plebes
some hands are as usual cruel
touching nothing but the selfishness of the uncut nails
broken lives of the common cranes and ordinary drags,
sighs falling to the cobbled stones like trinkets
the gypsies still dance for the money
on unmapped journeys
towards unknown boundaries

here in this little Asian space
there will always be one thing that i miss
the white heron still peacefully on top of the thick faced water buffalo
relaxing on his muddy moments.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tip Of The Iceberg

what you know of me for the whole year
when you read my poems are not at all true.
they are all lies.
words pretending to be hands
and feet.
Lines pretending to be faces and bodies.
i do not wish to tell you that you must disregard them
you want them to believe to be true.
i cannot stop you.
the women and their names are lies.
the white horse
that father rode was also a big lie.
It was father who
gunned the horse down, and he even sold all the meat and bones
of the poor animal in the streets of the town where we live.
the places and events and other
sighs and moans, the squeaking beds and mournful
moons and crying stars: they are all lies.
they are but tips of the icebergs of my glacier
of lies floating in the middle of the arctic.

you always follow me and
i do not wish to stop you.
and i will tell you wrong directions.
i will tell you about
the wrong places that i have not ever been to.
i will tell you about the errors.
the wrong things about me.
i will tell you exactly the opposite of who i am and where i am going.
you may be lost as i will mislead you.

But, IF you really want to know me, i will compromise.
You must remove your clothes.
Everything.
Even your skin.
Your face.
Your eyes.
Tighten every screw and bolts that hold your bones.
If you want to really know me, not just the tips of the icebergs about me, you must be naked first. Undress everything that covers you.

Then we must swim together. Let us dive under. Let us go deeper together. It is where my soul lives. Deep under the tip of the iceberg.

Do you see me now? I am bigger and wider under. Do you not fear me? Be not afraid, I am the one that you always followed for years and more years to come. I am huge, deep down under. Do not fear me now. Hold me. Do not leave me. I am your truth too.

For one thing, there is no exit going up. Now we must suffer together. IT is forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tiptoeing Moon

THE moon can be as beautiful
as its silence
as she tiptoes on the skin of the river

or she can be cruel
stabbing you with the sharpness of its stainless light
your guilt conniving in killing that innocence
of your
original mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Tiptoeing Through Life

to please the power
of the season and to dance

with the music of those
who make the corridors of

fame
you throw away the true self

and be the face of the person
on the frame

of their carving
you lose a lot of who you are

and all through the years
you keep on your toes

too careful not to displease
them

what a pity
you have turned yourself into

this ballet dancer
who forges a fake smile to the crowd

only for the applause
you lose your world to our dismay

it is time, i guess
for a little lift, take back your life

and come back
with us

RIC S. BASTASA
Tired

she undresses herself
and lays naked
on her bed
her body is lighted
by the moon
she faces him
and he swallows
his promise
not to be promiscuous
this time
she is beautiful and
his body has no right
to deny
what is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tired Father

coming home tired
one night
they are all asleep
and i said nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tired Of The Rules Of The Game, I Sit...

i like to think that i owe no one a favor, 
and so i refuse every opportunity 
that i may derive when i give favors too 
to another, 
it is this way that this world looks upon 
an investment 
say of emotions, when one scratches your back 
you too must give 
her itch a scratch from you fingers 
i hate this arrangement but this is how this world operates 

mind you, i get tired too, having no one scratch my back because i 
refuse scratching the back of another 

at one time, i sit on the grass of a busy park, 
looking and so blank and dumb, feeling that i am not a part of 

this world, its rules not getting fit for my wholesome existence 
away from independence into a world of flattery 

and utilitarianism. 

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Budding Writer Somewhere In Cebu

it was not him who placed the beautiful flower on your head and so when it wilts it is never his concern, or hers,

she lives alone in her own circle, she tries to get some flowers, but they are all already reserved for you,

and so when they make you stand before them and they begin to ask what makes you think that you are a goddess for your little poetries,

their eyes are flaming with madness. Do not mind them when they tell you that your flowers are nothing but the rotten petals of the lesser breed or variety.

It is your heart that must be followed. It is the mandate of the higher goddess that must be obeyed through and through. So take good care of the flowers that are still growing in your head, the vines from your fingers the buds that are still tight-lipped wanting to bloom for you.

do not let the flames of envy stop the flow of springs from your very see very well the beauty that has arrived, and the courier says, it is now all for you.
Not for him or her. Not even for me. I am just anyhow carefully watching.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Certain B.

we start
with a laugh

get to know
each other

what he writes
his choice of
characters

his stories i
ask
whether they
also
reveal him

and then
straight i ask if
he is gay

and that is
where the music
of silence
begins to
play

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Certain Group Of Truth Seekers....

a school of fish
is freed from my nets of logic
now they are free to search
for their own
safety in their own corrals
underneath this
sea of democracy....

there is no need for another
briefing or a gathering
i am safe now too
within my own niche
i am rested for once
not having to say
any word
at all....

for in truth you are armed to your
teeth now
ready as always to face your
inner struggles

there is no use of me now
as you swim further to fight your own battles

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Certain Point

each foot leaves the floors
of this hall
some had their faces
pictured and they display
the best pose of their bodies
the best smile possible
to display the image
of happiness

you sit there at the corner
away from the crowd of hands and mouths
and you look at each body in silence
as though the wire is disconnected

a frightening air hovers around you
but you refuse to be threatened now
you imagine the sounds of their smiles
coming over you

you forget somehow that you are alone again.
someone comes beside you and smiles
and you oblige with a smile
and then you begin to talk to her
some words about
anything else

then they all leave one by one
until you are the only one left on this hall
you do not know what to do next
or where to go

but somehow your feet begins to walk
and you do not argue anymore
to a certain point
there is this
craving
for contentment.
To A Classmate Of Mine Who Thinks She Is A Failure

i must admit that when
i see the picture of your two kids

you beside your husband
on a hug

i feel something empty inside myself
despite what

with myself posing beside my
new villa and
flashy car (the recent model)

i feel just like you
this inability to appreciate what lies

in our hands
these eyes that do not see

what we have become
always lesser than 'them'

we have been fruitless
above the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Country Of Infinite Dawn

to a country of infinite dawn when everything you see is grey
when mist is the color of their day

sunshine becomes a luxury
the sun its God

and when they come to my tropical country where sunshine is everyday
they say

this is paradise, this is what i have been missing in my life
the beach, the green fields, the natural springs

these white old men, on retirement, on vacation to this country
they say

do not be fooled

when it gets dark, and when the neon lights start to glitter
they begin to ask some names: linda, rowena, baby, celestina

oh you know what i mean, they are looking for our women
cheaper and cleaner

and wait there is another, he is looking for the brown boys
the ever younger ones
even the uncircumcised

welcome to this paradise, this island of desire,
destroy this home

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Dear Friend

when i am silent
do not accuse yourself
of crimes
you have never committed

when i am silent
i am not gone

perhaps, i just writing another
sweet poem
for you

always remember that....

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Discordant Note

when everything seems so far away
and there you are just sitting down upon a chair

despite the undeniable fact that they are all there within the reach
of your hands: family, friends, co-workers

and despite all the noise in jubilation
the cheers of victory the laughter of lightheartedness

i tell you something is wrong because you feel like a stone
so lonely like the sole string of a broken guitar

amidst the symphony of humanity's songs
amidst their well accepted norms

you are a discordant note, and it is painful to the ear
of this earth and by all means beware

because nature has its own laws, and soon with full force
it would have you eliminated.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Dying Friend...

nearing death he posted in Facebook
this picture of a barbed wire
against the setting sun, and then

i clicked the word Like.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Fellow...

i am reading every writing on the wall
the letters are so cold, like the arms of a dead man
defeated,
nothing interests me really, except myself, after having gone into same wars
with you,
the self above self, that seems to be the golden rule now for survival
the mind must circumnavigate its own world,
convoluted upon its intestines
its own trails
it is you that i am worried about, the moron, the destitute,
the loquacious duck on the pond,
there is no map, and so you have no direction at all,
circular in motion, arriving at
no train station
i give you time, a cup of hours, we drink it,
i watch every syllable that your mouth is mumbling
because i am worried about what the child in you is saying
i hear every vowel there and pay attention to the power of
your consonants,
that which you cannot say, or that which cannot be ever said
fool, God’s fool,
we are, and you the moron that mumbles what you cannot really understand
is king,
the wise man, that baby crawling under the bed
in the middle of the bridge as we watch
the tilt
if you fall, we all die.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Flower

It was painful when
You bloom

But come to think of it
It was more painful

I think
And you know it

When you remained
Lurking
In the dark
As tight as a bud

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend

you are on your own now
show me your wings

fly away as high and as fast as you can
see the world

fly the heavens and the continents
you are on your own now

fly away and tell me more what is there to see

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend From Far

actually
i am not surprised anymore
about the waves
that you send
to my shores which
has repeatedly
resounded
its own sonorous
weeping
which to me is nothing
but identical to mine
and when they fuse
oh my
they make such a happy
blending
together like a
heavenly choir
of innocent
angels

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend In Chicago

i may neglect
you for a while
my friend
for i am speaking to
a neighbor
just a stone throw away
from where
i am standing

it is different
when i speak using
my native tongue
i feel my roots down
under my feet

on the other hand
how it feels is like
seeing my old mother
again
back in the house of
our childhood

outside the guava
trees are bearing so
much fruits
heavy on its branches

tomorrow perhaps all
will be ripe
but the sad thing is
this: there is no child
anymore here
who is for the picking

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
To A Friend In State Of Doubt

do not try to understand
there is nothing worth understanding
nothing understands understanding
in itself, it longs for the unquenchable doubt

for doubt makes understanding a fake princess
of the castle on the clouds
doubt unlike understanding does not beg
doubt scatters and understanding loses in this game
of reconciliation
it keeps a heap of leaves only to dry in its stockroom
it smells rotten and becomes rotten

do not attempt to understand
you will be at a loss in this search for wisdom
live in the ocean of doubt
there is a lot of space for the swimming and the sailing

look at them
who claim to understand life and death and rebirth and declare that they have attained
the state of nirvana

they are all drunk, they live in a crowded room,
oisy, boisterous, and so insecure
their mouths babble, and they speak so loud
the room has become too narrow
and there is no ease for breathing

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Long Buried By Time....

(1)

one night
the four feet of the bed
moaned

it was something
that we were
crazy
all about the bed
and its
moaning feet

(2)

the years flew
away
with four wings

things change
houses demolished

new waves of people
come
hordes left

rivers change course
buildings rise

fields turn into
footballs
cars rust
highways widen
into gulfs

(3)

one day
we meet
our memories
rush
strong as muscles
of
healthy men

we remember
the moans of the four feet of
the bed

we remember
the song of the night
each note
like the beating of our
long lonely
hearts

(4)

we try to savor once
more
what was tasty to the
buds of
of our tongues

yet our arms are no longer
ours
our heads are full
of present
worries

(5)

we meet and then we say
tiny little things

they are designed to be
discarded and then
be
intentionally forgotten
it will do us good
we must suppose.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Maddex

...so this is it
even in the wrapper of a Hershey chocolate
you see the faces of demons
batman, and
goats

and in some visions
you see the
Archangel

and from the fifth floor
you see
tsunamis and
sinking lands

so where is Paradise
and where is
Eve and the Apple
and Adam
and the snake

my friend, it is time
to take two options
you either see the
Pope

or your
Shrink.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Named Sheila

grab the day, seize what is here now
it is never less neither more that what is not there yet
what is the past? it is useless to quantify
neither is there a need to qualify, for it is gone
i have the present, it has space, it is certain,
there is even no need to imagine
what is it.
I bid you, seize what is here
it is opening its arms
to embrace you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Of A Friend

a friend of a friend
has been a widow for 20 years

this she reveals when
she hitched in our car

my wife's face is twisted
and she does not speak a lot

we cut the story short
she gives the direction where she will be dropped
like some garbage

i pity her. i really pity her.

at the red gate she waits
no one opens the door
it is 10 o'clock in the evening

the car backs out
finding itself passing again by the same red gate
she sits on the pavement and holds her bag as though it is her only possession

i don't really know if that is her house
does she lie still at this age?

my wife lambastes me like thunder
unable to hold her contained temper

we cut the story shorter
we leave her on her own
whatever that means

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend On His Critical Moments

you do not touch anymore
my aquiline nose
red with blushing blood

are you not bored
talking about sex and blowjobs
with me as your
impatient audience?

please read to me a poem
about love and
affection...

RIC S. BASTASA
you write and i listen to each word.
you are faraway. You speak in repetitive lines.
there are standards of art.
a poem must be so and so. so does a short story.
unity of plot, choice of words,
fixing the mood and
fortifying the contextual feel.
you are mumbling poetry in winter
inside a train that travels on a speed greater than light.
tomorrow it will be at ten in the morning
when the bullet arrives at its destination
you write.... breathtaking views, flashes of memories.

i listen to a chant. i chant myself.
speaking to speaking speaking.
we are all alone. yet we cope up without any
help from them, damn carpets and
dripping roofs.

whether what you write is poetry or prose
it is not important anymore.
you are a poem that i care for.
i do not know you but there is a shadow
it is enough for me.

damn biters. damn arrivals.
i do the same. Sit back and write.
senselessly. desperately seeking what we still do not know.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend This Moment

you ask me if i am
nowhere to be found

why am i nowhere
to be seen,

whether you lose me
whether i am lost

no, my friend,
i am always in this nook
mysterious as i want it

silently watching......

i like staying in this
corner where my
silence is comfortable
like some mildew

allow me to grow.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Out There....

keep going my friend
we are the verge of hours not wanting to talk
silence creeps in our spine
like a spider
we do not mind
sleep is given more attention
dreams reign
but we do not really remember
as day
breaks out in the open
tightly on some
invisible ropes we walk our way
we utter life is life
and it goes on and on and on
like some
irresistible refrains of
a very old song

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Posing With Her Happy Family Last Christmas

i go for family
as you have yours
all smiling for the season
and missing each other
after the holidays

i vote for family
a home
a home away from home
a second home
and even a third one

a home in an island
another one
continental another one
global

but, and this is
is the big but
i do not really have
to have one
necessarily

i love the world and
still love this world
and then i go roaming around it
its islands its continents
its oceans

and to accomplish it
with speed
as life is too short
i, may, if you are
interested to know,
fly alone by
myself

sail, trek, run,
walk, dash,
rush

alone by myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Somewhere

te the seeds you sow have grown
and trees have they become
flowering and fruiting and now
ripe for us to gather,

when will you come back?
come springtime?

we shall wait for another winter.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Somewhere In Chicago

In your hands you have the sun
In my heart I have the moon & stars
We fold this wide distance like
A paper, a letter where we have once written
Words that rekindle some old fires
Long, long time ago

I sleep in the dark and there you are
Lost and finding your way out
From so much light

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Somewhere In Vienna.

a poem is just a poem
words trying to make out
a certain significance
wanting life, yes, life.

you want me to accept
that i am there, that i
am not just a magician
that in every thought
something about me is
squeaking, like a rat,
calling for help caught
in a trap with cheese
unconsumed, taken,
silly, silly. Life. yes.
it is life, but it need
not be me.

the world is composed of
all of us. I see you there.
I see us. I learn from it
and then i write. Just

this morning, my body is
weak, and to choose between
waking up and sleeping till
noon, i could have chosen
the latter. But who shall
wake up for me? for this
world? it is only me, not
you, not them.

no one can do this, except
me. And so i sing my cough.
I stretch an injured leg.
I wave my hand and tell you
i meet the morning as usual.
There is no sufficient reason to surrender. Death can wait.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Taking Care Of A Dyslexic In U.K.

Eustess is
ease, summer, so many
sunsets,

we have not spoken
Manuel is

what he is, while
Eustess does the Mona,

Desde, ante,
memorati, qua
nenti,

we always have
codes for what we did
and what
we cannot utter,

three shadows fading
away
in the darkness of
this

school of thoughts,
this pack of wolves,

dawn is thinking,
nights pass

i always remember
i always remember

i have risen from my
mistakes,
it is not pretense, it
the right way
the right word, the right life,

Procrustes, Hominem, 
Ebinem, Rhinitis, 
Tonsilitis, Diseases,

you stop dancing
choreographer, find

more money in U.K. 
leaving, and leaving

back to your smile, 
mystical, i could have

asked you the right question, but i did not

dare, for soon you will despise me, and

i will detest that, 
my friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend That I Cannot Forget

my congratulations
to the person that i admire most
the one
who writes his name in air
signing
as a cloud
the one who sings
with the wind
the one
who walks under the moon
friendly to
a cold night
the one who lays his body
upon the grass
stars seeping
like memories
to his eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend That I Have Only Felt

if i shall not hear the sound of the wind again
i shall think of the shell

i shall imagine the flesh that once was there
the taste of my own tongue

i shall for a while remember but i cannot assure you
till when

for i am but a shell myself and time shall wrap me too
with emptiness

i shall be carried by the winds too and my tongue shall
not remember the taste of flesh the taste of water

and my skin shall not feel any coldness of the wind
my eyes cannot see what light has been in that previous darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Died As A Poet

i have seen the power of your poems
those that
make the blind see
the mute finally speaking about beauty
the deaf hearing the songs of love
and the crippled finally dancing to the
rhythm of your
lines

i am amazed and so convinced
about the magic of the poems that you wrote
when you were once alive
before they buried you on a shallow grave
with their anger
and hatred

they were not able to cut your tongue and tear your mouth
and break the bones
of the body of
your poetry

now let me ask you
if these poems come from the deepest chamber of your heart

are its roots your pains and unfathomable sorrows
or is it grown from the seeds of
your bliss
that when summer comes they bloom into
sunflowers?

i see you in your images smiling and i can hear that suppressed laughter
on the lake on a clear morning

what is this all about my friend?
tell me,
for they do not like
my sadness
neither do they share
my joys and
happiness

for what i write is nothing but air.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Had A Free Lunch With Me...

it's been long,
actually, i have forgotten, that place where we used to be,

i changed, i have told you i know myself,
i changed, i will not tell you that i have changed,

it will be as bitter as a detachment,
of a clover foot, divided into two pieces,

it will be still soft, but it will be more of slipping white sands
between my fingers,

i do not understand myself, so how can i ever understand you.

you sit on a table fronting me, yet, i do not see you completely
in the same manner, that i put my body here, but my mind is flying

like a kite somewhere, while my fingers pretend that i still have
a grasp about flying strings and wings and thoughts,

it's been long, and i talk to you, but i never mean each word,

actually, i do not like the color of that plate, the way the spoon and
fork are put parallel to each other,

the tea tastes like hell.

i could have told you, the tea really tastes like hell,

i have changed,
now i am dishonest.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Likes To Have Beauty In Her Hands

you do not gather the flowers
that easily from the sides of the hill
where you were never there
once
planting the seeds

nothing comes by chance or random
nothing sprouts just like magical seeds
using the lighted wand of your
fairy godmother

the flowers grow and bloom there
because someone took the burden
of seeding, transplanting, watering
and pruning them
these flowers are taken cared of
by loving hands

do not think that there is no sweat at all shed from the brows
for something so beautiful to land in your hands
or even by an accidental gaze hovering in the
retina of your eyes

he spent the sleepless nights watching the flowers
he bowed down to earth as though asking for the mercy
of the gods
he prayed and worked hard then beauty comes
in the grandeur of its petals in the dignity of its perfume
arrayed by the pearls of the dews
and salted by the power
of his tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Says She Loves God That Much

a friend is fond of putting God
in all areas of her life

God has a plan
she always stresses that
Nothing happens by accident
There is no such thing
as Random

when she eats God is in every
bit, the icing in the cake
the sugar in it
every grain of rice
every shred of fish
every molecule in the cola drink

i find her amazing
how could have God so entrenched her every cell
with faith?

i couldn't help comparing herself to me
and i guess i need a lot of grace if not pity
or sympathy for my apathy

She is naive, and she is always prayerful
wherever she is
be it in a bus, in a ship, on a sled,
or a horse, a mule,
or in a magic carpet
perhaps

her mouth always mumbles for God

God is sunshine, God is rain, God is the sea
God is land, God is air

...until we talk about money.

The world suddenly changes.
Prayers stopped.  
Suspicion, like sunshine spreads  
to every nook of  
the heart. And now  
the language changes from rough  
to harsh.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Says That She Does Not Know How To Write A Poem Anymore

it is sad, when you think that you do not know how to write a poem anymore a simple poem as simple as you what does it take for humanity to write one poem? does it take that much from those who claim they know the way? shall blood be shed to drive another point?

do not lose hope in the power of our ordinary words, for as long as we quiver, poems are written for as long as we lose the consciousness about our beings the metaphors always come and build upon themselves their own meanings

take your time, breathe the air of poetry, and let the molecules enter your lungs that long to see the light of the sun, just be patient, keep on waiting, savor the silence, shower yourself with the light of the moon, on another lonely night, sleep soundly, and listen to the sound of your snores, in your dreams, the poems write themselves.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Thinks That I Always Win

my dear friend,
you always think that i win,
and you hide away from
me in the cloak of your
jealousy.

is this all about winning
and losing?
i am for you.
And all these are for you.
The red rose, the blue sky,
the flowing river
the cliffs, and mountain
the trails
are all for you.

i do not have any bag
where you say
you do not fit.

shall i have the desire
to put you there like a
sackful of potatoes?

you discover a secret trail
you smell the scent out there
you want to find me
you are searching for me

but my friend i belong to the wind
i am a dropp of rain to the sea
i am the grain of sand on the shore
i am but a speck of the dust on that
cloudy sky

how can you ever find me then?

listen my dear friend
this is not about winning or losing
this is about our journey
the destination of which is still open
like an entrance to a cave
without light, damp and dark.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend Who Wants To Borrow Money From Me....

use me
like a carnation to your
breast

a tulip to your
lips

use me like a mona lisa
to your frame

avoid the van gogh
in me
i want still to keep my
ears

use me like a fan to
your face

or an eyeglass to your
blurry eyes

nothing about beggar's
cup

or a hat to pass
please, don't talk
about money

i would like to be
useless on that.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Friend With Lgbt Dreams Of His Own

too dreams of the beauty of
nudities

bareness, smoothness
of lines and
curves that take you
to the places of your
heart

you are the man
chosen to a dreamland
of the body of
the woman

you feast upon
normal delicacies
and you invite
that friend for a drink
and a show

he is suffering
his mind flies like a lonely hawk
in the desert

most of the times
he feels the horror of
the vultures

preying upon the rotten
flesh of dead lovers
the stink of his
unrequited experiences

love is bitter
happiness so slippery
he can only hold the
tails of the fish
the tips of bird's beak
he buys a painting
that touches his heart
and makes him
a bleeding pigeon
throughout the night

if you know him
too well
you should have
cried with him

from far this friend
writes
a very sad letter

it is all about longing
it all about being unloved
condemned just like
the hands of Midas

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Great Writer

you started with a mask
as you assume the name of the anonymous
on something so serious
as love
and as thrilling as the procedure
for betrayal
you explore the religious and the mundane
making a mockery of
the sanctions
you fly away like a bird and come back
as a snake
like a transformer
you turn yourself into a truck
a jet
a chopper
in the acts of love on the tracks of lust
sipping dews
and bathing on the waterfalls of sexy
desires
and you do not mind what they say
you are happy anyway
in your anonymity at the end of the day
you die
and then early morning you resurrect yourself
on the greatness of your solid
and long flesh
you weep when you like it and you
laugh the hardest when you want to retrieve what
you have lost
you are the modern man of our age
as you question their pillars and thrones
you sting the king
and you made love with the queen and you get away
with the princess
into the castles of your air
into the death of anonymity you live and then you vanish

there is no name but you have become great
like all the rest who only wanted to think
not speaking and still unable to write

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Happy Man......

to a happy man
(one had it last night
on the basement the
two wine glasses, a blanket
and a pillow and some
stories about sweet nothings)

to a happy man in the morning
the rain is a song
a statue of venus smiles
the trees outside are in
a symphony with the wind
from the sea,

even that rock at the center
of the garden
sings,
the hot water on the kettle
whistles a tune
the carpet on the floor
lets go its well kept
silence....

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Heartbreaker

Do not look for the wound
I am not hurt
And I do not bleed

You know
You injured me so

Worse
Than you think

But look I still know how
To carry myself

I look well
I still wear a smile on my face

I won’t show it
I won’t shed a tear
I won’t make you happy
As you want it to be

Look
I got no wound no bruises
Look
You must be surprised
I still keep myself alive

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Little Bird Out From Its Nest

and so
your on your wings now
flying low yet
flying still
to where must you go?
your wings shall lead you
do not look back
for the nest had long
been destroyed
for the winds have no mercy
but the places faraway
have open arms
islands out their
have warm hearts
fly away
little bird
your destiny is waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Long Lost Relative Somewhere In Kota Kinabalu

when papa died,
and then it was followed by the marriage of Milagros
a year later
the son of Betty was baptized
in the catholic church

i do not like that when i see you next time
it will be the funeral of another important figure in the clan

let us toast this time
let us have more divorces and marriages and baptisms and thanksgivings

we will miss you wherever you are

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Long Poem

to a long poem
title it
a litany

to a short
poem as this

give it
a little space
where it can simply
be quiet

let it sleep like a flea

RIC S. BASTASA
suffering is an unseen
ghost
it haunts me in my
forest
the worms sometimes sing
and it is
more often than not
disturbing

specks of light sometimes
come in
like a drizzle of rain

it does not wet me
but makes me smooth and
glowing

a halo of bubbles
often comes out from the locks
of my hair
but i do not really mind

that indeed in every aspect
of everyday suffering
these bits and bits of miracles
do constantly happen

like some sort of givens

we sit upon trees like monkeys
deprived of our tails
eating the ripe bananas in the middle
of our lamentations

provided from nowhere
and we often ask ourselves

how come we have survived for years?
To A Love Poem You Twitch Your Face

This time,
As a critique of a love poem you
Read my lines and twitch your face
You cannot believe
What I write
that I for once was true
That I can now be true to you

For once I make this plea
Dust off the fleas
Of sin and prejudice

It is me, I once loved you,
And you knew
It was true but you never believed it,
it is me now, ready to love you again

My love,
Love changes everything
And that does not exclude me,
Do stamp your feet now
Crush all those fleas
And do not twitch your face,
hear me, strike me, i deserve
the punishment
having left you
long time ago

This is me
Ready to love you again, this is my plea.

please listen, spare, speak to me

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Neighbor

hot noodle soup that's newly cooked
outside the night is cold
as stars begin to twinkle, the moon to hover
on top of the banana palms
the sound of bamboo leaves shall serve as music
to a choir of cicadas singing

can you share your time for a cup of noodle with me?

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Nephew

it is upon my calling that you are here today.
i am very happy.

i am seeing a very tall man now
towering like a tree.

look at this place this island
the flowers no longer bloom
and the trees are shedding off their leaves
the corn seeds that i have sown a month ago
have not grown
and the river on the other side has dried up
the sun scorches this place
and the moon does not like to rest on the hills

let me take you to the window of this house
for you to see the rainbow connecting this island
to another island

this is the bridge between us
and i am giving you the power to cross the sea
of this rift

tonight in this harrowing darkness
we shall cross to the other side and leave this island for good

you shall own the island and sow the corn seeds again
the trees shall bow before you and the flowers shall bloom again
the rivers shall have their water and the hills are ready for the moon

and then i will be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Nephew (2)

you are already lost
in the woods

you climb a tree to
situate yourself

you hope you'd find
your way back home

daddy is mad and
mommy is crying

the clouds are dark
and it is raining heavily

how cold your life
could be?

you'd wish you were not
alive
for as you tell me

life is loveless
and the path is a haze

life is a maze
and you have not found

the exit to all these
nuances of vibrant anxieties

i wish i could teach you
where to find the correct door

i have taught you once
but you never listened

i can do no more
i am helpless as a cat
outside the house
under the rain
i comfort myself with
the idea
that Life is the best
teacher

and now it is Life itself
that does
what is right under the
circumstances
uniquely you and

i wouldn't mind anymore
what happens next

for the meantime
i am taking my own journey

Life too is teaching me
Mindlessly....

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Nephew Newly Born

the most absolute beauty of course is your tiny hand
i want to put there the warmth of my sighs
the roundness of a peeble, the green minty scents of herbs,
the little ponderous glances,
a sunray, a whisper, a hush
at the tips of your fingers

wrinkles are always strangers there
your skin so tight and magical

not this callous hands of my
sunset this
roof without the moon and stars

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Nephew Who Dislikes Education....

at first my goal is to
educate you, even without books to read
since you hate
pages.

i take you to travel with me
and i answer all your questions.

taste is a matter of
cultivation. it is not born it is made.

you are born. I want to make you
sometimes
i am tempted to sculpt you into my own shape
to draw you
into my own image. It is defeating.
I am only one.

You are the product of
the masses
the tendril of technology
copied
and pasted
without original
thought.

who sculpted me?
i cannot point to a single name
but i take
pride in my
shape and
sound

you say there is so much
angst in
my face
and you ask where is
beauty there?
for now i have no answers.  
i am taboo.

i let you go.  
let us see how the storms  
will shape you  
how the fading light  
shall  
color you

unfinished painting with  
no  
fixed value yet

you have become my new  
excitement  
as nature shall take you  
as another  
experiment of  
mankind

next to suffer.  
watch out.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Nephew Who Wrote That He Is In A State Of Depression...

first, know
what a self
is,

put this matter
clearly
at the entrance of
your door

second, know what
selfishness is
by nature we are
that
truly selfish

draw a bold circle
around your bed
sleep well
there

third, expect nothing
sun neither moon
nor stars

sit by your window
when you wake up
at 3 a.m.

breathe, breathe
the fresh air of
loneliness

grow your wings
let night be not a hindrance
for your flight.

p.s.
you are too early
for sorrow
do not skip that
stage
of confusion

it is good for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A New Found Relative In Facebook

if your wish is just to live in peace
or even just to be alive
then you are just like anybody else
in that old abandoned town
where the only sound that you can hear
is the sound of the bell
of the church announcing another
death.

tell me something more: what do you really want to be in the future?
do not tell me that you will just be a vendor,
or an ambulant worker,
just like your papa, or a shoeshine boy like your grandpa
when he was young,

you know, one must have a dream
call it an ambition to have hope
dreams are free, you do not need to pay
that is our freedom
do not deny yourself that

you can be a lawyer, a doctor, a fireman
an engineer,

or even just be a lover,
a man,

do not just exist, or live, think some more
there is more to life
than just sitting down, waiting, and all too boring...

RIC S. BASTASA
To A New Poet...

he who writes a poem
marks a road with many stones
gathers leaves and
does not burn them
plants a seed and leaves it
to grow
wild as a forest
lives for a while and then goes away
in a faraway place
without any inkling
of coming back

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Niece Living In The Mountains....

how i wish
my distant niece
writes
another poem
for the
dry land?

how flowers
still grow
despite the
drought

how the mudfish
buries itself
and never die

how free is the
hungry dove
flying in the sky?

we never pay
for the cost of
the kindness of
our words

how clouds
play well when
sunset comes

how endless is
the flow of the
river
who never dreams
of sea

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Person Whom I Do Not Like To Speak....

i do not wish that you should know this.
the truth for instance,
the question about the truth which you
have also kept to yourself because
perhaps knowing the answer, you refrained
from asking. I also know the truth, but just
like you i evade from it. I am not drunk.
we are here anyway in one house, talking and
living, without mentioning the word about
this truth. We have assured life that we can
live even without confronting it.
we are not denying it, neither are we opening
it. It could be a wound, or some cancer cell.

everyday wants to be the same everyday.
to live is to continue doing the ordinary things.
no delineation no deviation, unless we are
prepared to be shaken, knowing that experiencing
this we may not be together, i.e. we may finally
decide to part ways, which i think, under
the usual circumstances, we still not prepared
to embark. We are not drunk. Or if we are,
please remain calm, maintain the composure.

is it not a beautiful day still?

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Poet

Poet

how can you mistake a plane for a bird? a mote for a fly? a tattoo for an eagle? a leaf for a butterfly? lament for a romance? reality for an illusion?

poet,

how did you heal a wound? through a balm of mere words? through a promise of after life?

poet

how can you be so kind in the midst of a war?

how did you put order in the chaos of your room? in the randomness of this universe how were you able to build an edifice for a purpose?

poet

how can you love someone who does not love you? care for one who does nothing but harm you? love and still love despite the penetrating pain of indifference?
poet

how can you make such a beautiful poem
in the middle of your pain?
how can you have faith
in the falling dominoes of doubts?

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Poet Who Writes More Poems When His Poem Is Published

when a poem is published more poems will be born
that is the trick of an inspiration
at first

this is the philosophy of confirmation by publicity
for a beginning

later, you will grow
and this is more beautiful

it is not anymore a published poem that inspires you to write more
but your own spontaneous reaction to
that feeling that despite everything
you are still alone

you gaze around you
you look up to the heavens asking if the gods are there

you are dying
to live

there is a star and you become alive again

now you rely upon a distant star to write another poem of your life
there is a better time
that suits us
and

that is when you write even if all the stars in the heavens are dead

when we ourselves
are darkness fused in the darkness of space and the universe

when our silence and the silence of everything dead
become inextinguishable

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become inextinguishable

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Poet....

Ah,
while you were reading
your opus,
i did not listen

i am a fly trapped in a bottle
and i am preoccupied with my own
problem

i am not looking for an exit
i am not asking for help

i am buzzing
and i will just be buzzing
in this short

very short stint....

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Restless Friend

My restless friend
If only you were here
Seeing the limpid river
Sleeping
On top
Of Malindang Mountain

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Reverberating Sound

must i have a defective ear
that you have to repeat for many times what you have to tell me?

i have heard them all
and i wish i can understand the meaning of echoes

these words that vibrate like a rattlesnake in the desert
these waves of radar that detects a floating ship in the middle of
the storm

when will this hypnosis end?

i have heard them all, and i think they are still so beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Rose

a rose
for whatever reason
may change
its name

its petals
could be hurt
its sepals
abused

a rose can hide
beside her
thorns

it is hurt
and it can
hurt

a rose
wilts
how can it
prevent it?

whatever
happened
the
rose is always
a part
of my
being

for whatever reason
that it changes its
name

a rose will
always be
a rose
to me
RIC S. BASTASA
To A Sacred Place

on the last day of June all the petals have fallen on the ground
but there is a hill in the place of sanctity where flowers begin to bloom
i am walking up there to see this diversity
when the petals go and leave no trace
when in another place flowers bloom without our notice

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Sickness

on a few steps one grasps
for breathe
and stops awhile to rest

the doctors laugh
there is nothing that says
that a part of your body
is sick

you resign for something
embrace what cannot be possible
in your matrix of beliefs

here comes an old woman
with short hands
gnarled fingers and cannot even
understand English

she looks at you
her gaze penetrates the layers of your being
and touches your soul

she lifts her head to the sky
and talks to the sun
and says that there is a needle sticking to your left arm
you cannot see what it is
or where it is

she only asks you to believe
and then you are well

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Swindling Distant Relative...

the reason why you come is my money.

you come limping like a frog whose hind foot is bitten by a snake.

you show a face of failure. you lose some teeth. your hair is becoming grey.

you have always lied to me. But i never tire giving you what you want.

when you leave this room i am relieved.

a thorn is lifted from my brain.

i am happy i am not like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Teacher/Poet Named Fred

i know Fred
and i remember him
he always wrote
about the rain

there was no flood in
his rain
i mean
there is no rage or anger
in him

just the gentle
shower of rain
a soft spoken kind
of rain

a patient shower
cressing fine sands
on many dark nights
when he was always alone

watching those stars
those silent stars
he loved loneliness
and loneliness loved him

he did not live
that long
he died
at forty

the rain remembered him
and in his grave
that day when he was buried
the rain, as gentle as

the early morning wind
fine feathers cotton soft
sings the last
hymn for him

it was sad & it was lonely
the flowers and
the butterflies all sighed

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Wife

he thinks
going nothing to say tonight.

it is better that way
than cause unnecessary pain.

the silence stabs.
cuts deeply than what he expected.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Wife Who Is Taking Things For Granted

i am an examination
and you fill in the blanks
and i decide
what answers are right
if you fail
you know what teachers
can do

please pass
please.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Woman That I Think I Know

tonight
i shall climb the old mango tree
that papa planted
when i was still too young
to understand
the fading of the moon

i shall cling to one of its strong branches
but due to my weight
it shall crack and given in and fall

i shall fall with it
straight to the mud hole
where papa's carabao
is wallowing

then i shall ride upon its back
hold its tail
and it shall run towards
a creek
where i shall plunge
and clean myself and
then rise
from its waters

and then i shall meet you again
and you shall tell me
how interesting things
have been

i shall ask from you

which has been so interesting?

is it me? or my falling?

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Woman Who Wants To Write To Be Someone Else

hello don't be someone else
listen to your voice
do not borrow their tone
take your intensity
just be yourself
listen everyday to the sound of your soul
it will always have something to say to you

why wait for his door to open?
you have your house
its door is broken
and it will just be you doing the repairs

it will just be you and no other
listen some more
hear the harkings of your soul
now it is whispering

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Young Man On His Maiden Voyage At Poetry

i am confronted with a very long
and wide shore
filled with sands and pebbles
though the waves are gentle
and the clouds so blue
and the far horizon as peaceful
like a line drawn by a pen
on a piece of yellow paper

everything seems very familiar
nothing new
except you little blue bird
chirping and i am amazed

you are more beautiful
than the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
To A Young Writer

i surf the faces of young writers

this one: bites his pencil and wanting to smile at the same time
(how could he do both?)
the other girl on the right side of the hall
with bangs is fat, chinky eyed,
wear blue jeans
and collarless white shirt
she stares at the PowerPoint

four stones above each other
and on top a butterfly, a metaphor for transformation
each stone is a virtue
to achieve a pillar
soon,

the guy wants time to have wings
the girl breaks into laughter

he says he imagines feathers around his body
she breaks into laughter again

her point is: birds are not metaphors anymore
his point: she is numb, and she does not think anymore

awareness, silence, stone silence
pointlessly thoughts are useless with what is there

it is there already and all we can do is just see, feel, observe
and be touched by the hands of time

the body of language, the fingers of compassion, the strangled hair of doubt
spangled stars and running stripes
the eagle that ate all the stars
the apple that did not like the eight rays of the sun

i am tired this early morning.
Breakfast is served.
To A Younger Brother

it does not matter if you shout at me
or even plan to kill me
it does not matter if you leave me
or take all that i have
it does not matter matter if you lose
whatever you take from me

if you come back i will still be here
waiting for you
to give you what you need
to heal what is broken within you
to cheer you up
to let you stand up again
and be a man yourself

for i have given my word to Mama
for i will not lie before Papa's grave
for i am your older brother
and i was born to take care of you
my younger brother

RIC S. BASTASA
To All The Disciples Of Pain

come to me, for i will be your teacher
of pain, and lots of its kinds,
uANCES and
variations,

come to me and i will teach you
how to dissect pain
identify its flesh and bones
muscle to muscle
cartilage to cartilage
nerve to nerve
to the tiniest cell of this pain
in all of us

we study this pain
we learn what is it really
this pain, like the way how we dissected the
frog nailed before us still alive
numbed & dead in chloroform

we see how the frog breathes
how we skin it how we see how it ceases
to have pain

after all is done
we throw the frog away in some trash can
after we have deprived it of its skeleton
bleached like a blank stare

we ask ourselves how do we
look at it eye to eye
without pity
as we prick it with a long shining needle
deep to its backbone

and then we remember
how pain dissipated in strong chloroform
how we ourselves inflicted it
without any feeling at all
now shall we blame ourselves
having pain ourselves when we ourselves love to inflict them

in frogs in mankind in the person that we also claim to love?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Always Be The Self Amidst These Cacophonies

to always 
reconcile the myriad 
sounds 
within

a rock cracking in extreme 
heat 
a chirping bird calling 
for help 
a rushing water on the 
river 
looking for home

to always reconcile and not 
to leave any 
sound unattended

when the mundane sounds of the 
dusts 
finally reconcile itself with the 
heavenly songs of 
clouds and fog and 
dew

to always be the self 
amidst these 
cacophonies

RIC S. BASTASA
To An Acquaintance In Facebook, Whom, I Could Have Blocked First.

The moon did it
the earth came late
the eclipse has begun.

RIC S. BASTASA
To An Enemy Who Still Keep The War

it is quite a long time already
all the flowers that bloomed have already wilted
the water in the river
ran dry and the pebbles have kept the same silence
of the tombstones
shall you still wage this war against me
my silence had long conquered you
and there is nothing to talk about anymore
all the words erase themselves
there is nothing to swallow anymore
yet you are there
fully dressed in rusty armors
i do not know how to approach you
but today i shall keep my mind open
i could have laughed
so loud that the planets can hear it
your eyes are sharp as your sword
but they find no relevance anymore
if you only know
before me and long time ago
you have been pronounced dead
by all my senses.

RIC S. BASTASA
To An Ex....

what we told them that we did
was all those games of catching spiders
rested in their spun webs on the trees
beside the mountain river

we we really did they knew so well
but how can we ever ever tell?

that what they knew was not all that happened
as it was something else more that what spiders are
on their transparent
webs of illusions upon those trees
that in the first place
never existed

what we had were more than words
and thoughts
and so how can we ever tell ourselves
truly
that we have already forgotten?

RIC S. BASTASA
To An Old Friend From Utah

even if what you have are mere desert
flowers with nothing but tiny blue petals
less the dead yellow butterflies and gray grains of sand

let me still say thank you for opening
my mind towards deserts and dry winds and starless nights and faraway places of the lonely heart

you have met freedom as i still have to know what its name really is

RIC S. BASTASA
honestly
i do not write to impress
you
with what i have in mind
or what i am
to you or the
rest of those
who are reading
each word

i write because
i have to express myself

it is like a
pressure cooker
you know
trying to make the
hard meat
soft to my
eating
that steam being
let go
on those vents

simply to avoid
an explosion.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Avoid Rejection

take a part of your
pelvic bone

close your eyes
let someone take
the flesh

and bone to bone
of your own bone

let it grow
smoothly

to get rid of the pain
and start anew

bone to bone
of my contention
following yours
nothing
opposing
blood following
the flow

RIC S. BASTASA
To B. Who Called Me My Name

you are my mirror
it is easy to understand
did you not notice when
you look at me
when we finally see
each other's eagerness
to finally keep things
to ourselves alone?

you finally utter
what i do not want to hear
and i blurt it back
at you and then we finally
erase each other's
existence on facebook

there is a decent way
to live a lie
and live it fully well
as though it
is the most beautiful
life that we can
ever have

i never explain a thing
about myself
for there is no need
really

what you see what you
hear
what you feel is all
that i am
and there is no use
of any word for that

who can trust this world?
you play a game
that i too well play
the names we got
are not us

finally i throw back
what you said
in your once beautiful
face....

RIC S. BASTASA
it is easy for me to understand
why you live in the darkness of your poetry
time does not live there. There is no morning light
to mark the day, and darkness thrives
like a tunnel, without any hint that at the end
there is light.
you live there. You live there for a long, long time
and you shed off your eyes, and hands,
and eventually you lose the sense of a face.
you like it there. It is all emotions. Strong
as a river inside the cave. You may have
lost your eyes, but you have seen more.
You may have lost your hands, but you
are feeling and touching more.
It is the darkness that has provided
you the sense of eternity. There is no
time here. It is dead. And There is no
sense of remembering what had been
there before.
You flow in this darkness like a river
inside a tunnel. The only sound you hear
is the journey with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be A Writer

They say, when you have nothing to say
Do not say anything
They say when you have nothing good to say
Do not say anything
He is not convinced
He wants to be a writer and to be one he must write
What is in his mind
To be a writer he must write and write and write
Even when there is nothing to write
Even when there is nothing to say even when nobody listens
Even when the word is dead even when there is no sense at all
Even when he gets blind and deaf and mute even when his fingers are cut even
when his mind is blank even when his consciousness is lost
Even when you are angry even when you say what is written is nothing
But trash, dung, cadaver, corpse, poo, pee, even when there is nothing
Anymore,
He writes because he is a writer and no one can stop him now.
he is
he is writing
he is writing always
he is writing always whatever that needs to be written

and here you are foolishly reading. thanks to you, audience of one.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Alone....

and then he said
at the party that night
at the veranda
overlooking the fronds
where
two lovers are kissing

' i hate it here ' he declares
drinks more glasses of
hard liquor
drunk, ' but why am i here
still? ' he looks at me

i have a drink too,
' perhaps, you have to leave
since you do not like it here? '
the logical me speaking

' i am staying ' he is tipsy.
' i hate it here that is why
i am staying ', quizzical
idea

'do you like to die?
jump over this building
and be gone ', deep inside me
but how can i tell him?

i am still strong
and i want to be alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Always Ready....

to be ready

till the end, to

be ready when

that end

finally comes,

not to worry,

no one to blame

not to fret,

nothing to give,

to be always ready

like a bird

hit by a bullet,

like a flower

cut from its stem,

like a glass

broken, all pieces

scattered

on the floor.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be And Not Be....

i am not that an old
man yet and so i cannot
tell you that i have
taken the prize of wisdom,

i may say i am still at
this stage of denial trying
to hide my white hairs with
that black dye my old smell
with spice and my weakness
with laughter and wit,

i want to be true to myself
and relieve it with the comfort
of these lies.I say i miss you.
I say i cannot have you. it
is an accepted impossibility.

i have long accepted this.
i set you aside like a
flower that i love where
i keep saying i do not
need flowers and i do not
love what delights me.

i say i am content with
restraint. I am happy with
limitations. I am surviving
with the code of my own valor.

this is the hour somehow
that i give in and here i am
savoring my own presence in the
silence of my own chosen hours.

i now give you the reason
for writing. Because you cannot
love that much, you write how is
it to love and be not requited.
this is the sacrifice of all
lovers. To love and be not loved
in return. To be silent and yet
not rebel. To live and just be
happy in the slow death of all
emotions. To be and not be.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Bold... And Be Naked To The The Body Of Truth...

actually
i may be candid
with a lie
or pragmatic with
this truth
that in these lines
along a series of
words linked by
some chosen letters
sounding like some
monotonous syllables
like the calm waves of
the sea at night
that i am actually saying
nothing like air
or sea breeze at night
lighted by a cigarette
that you you puffing
to air
that this is nothing
but air
nothing logical
nothing symmetrical
nothing fleshy
just air
and you nod and say
yes it is air
nothing but air
but somehow makes you
feel the cold
and it is really cold
and it is
something to
be bold.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Brave....

a cat can scare
two buffaloes, or
a chick can make
a crow fly away,
when you simply
try to be brave.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Candid With You....

everyone is looking for
that secret garden

with a fountain or spring
where eternal youth can
be taken

everyone is finding a clue
to that perfect hue
something to subdue, and only for the few
that perfect chew

everyone wants to write
the perfect rhyme of a poem
that gluttony of fame
the avarice of shame

today, i take courage in
facing everyone
to tell them
candidly, that there is no such thing
as a secret garden
or that eternal youth of fountain or spring
nothing about a perfect clue to
a perfect hue,
no such thing as a perfect chew

no such thing too as a perfect poem
with that perfect rhyme

there is only you,

always searching,
the imperfect one, always looking for something
that is not you
that is not here
you are you,
you are not perfect
you get old,
and then you die and
then you're gone

that is the truth,
and there is no other.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Carried Away Just Like All The Feathers

THERE IS nothing to argue
i have discarded that chicken and egg thing

i have feathers which i spread in the sky
from this cliff it will take much time before they
all arrive in the river

and then when on the river these feathers will be
taken by the water flowing into different places of
the heart and the mind and the dispositions of all
those who like us still search for homes

there is nothing to argue for i do not argue with you
i am carried away.....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Content About What Is Missing

i rush to pluck words
from the twigs of memory trees
lining on the avenues
of my mischief

words are flowers
and thoughts are colors
my lips are hands
with open fingers

i think of you
as always
i feel you like air
inside my lungs

i see nothing but
i am content about what is missing

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Courteous

to be courteous
to this society where i live
i pocket my smile
i swallow my pride

you see me chewing a gum
and you order me
to swallow it
because you don't like seeing me
chewing this mint

i swallow it
in your name
and behave as though nothing happened

no i will not tell anybody
i will not tell about you or your name
i will not retaliate

i will just write
this poem

if you call this a poem at all
this shame
and this shamelessness of you

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Drifting And Airborne  And Then Be Gone

he got neither speed
nor direction, what he got
is truth with him,

that sometimes
like wood on the river
fallen from its
sturdiness

man floats too
and does nothing about
his situation

perhaps fed up or tired
or simply enjoys
it that way

to rely on the universe
its waters and air
to be drifting and
airborne

and then be gone

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Empty All Over Again And Move Like The Wind

if you decide to live in the kingdom of
the clouds
learn the tricks of the learned
skies

to float like a dream is a must
there is no settling there
like the dust

to master the art of silence
no chirping birds
no rippling of the water

to take all the heavy ones and
keep for a while
and then to burst like thunder
to flow like rain

to be empty all over again
and move like the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Faceless To Be Loveless In A Crowd Alone

tell me honey
how does it feel to be lonely
to be faceless
to be loveless
in a crowd
of people, thousands of them walking
roaming this earth
all looking for love and not finding any
in a crowd of namelessness
always looking at each other
in short glimpses
without saying
hello?

tell me how does it feel now
when he left you and when you told him
i do not need you

when your heart
calls for his name saying
i still love you,
but you didn't

tell me how to tell myself when i have pretended too much
not needing anyone
when alone in my room now
i wish
i in an instant dies,
begging for company
for someone
to touch
warmth

tell me how to breathe now
tell me how to live
tell me how to love and keep love and live
this broken
heart
in this faceless, loveless
locomotion in a
crowd
where there is practically no one
to say
hello

not even goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Faithful With What We See

perhaps let us
just be faithful
with what we see.

it is a green sparrow
perched upon a brown twig
on a tree
without leaves
on a sunny day
beside a river
where a white dog with black
spots
is watching.

do not say that the dog
is longing for the sparrow
and wants to catch it with its paws
or
that the sparrow regrets its green feathers
and since then
had lost its appetite for
flight
or
that the tree is so depressed
losing all its leaves
to the greed of the
river
punished to flow
till eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Frank With You

i've read all the answers
to your questions and to be frank with
you
not one satisfies my discriminating
quest
the words are bland
the deductions are not that logical
enough to appease
my boredom

but i will not fail you
i will let you survive and move on with your life
it is your honesty
that makes you live
it is your persistence
that must punish you
and when your prayers are granted
do not ever think
that the gods are all pleased.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Free

i am made of dreams
free to weave them

i am made of hope
free to sigh with them

i am made of love
free to be hurt

i am made to be free
and like the wind

i am condemned
away from everyone.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Free....

to obtain finally your freedom with words
unbound from their clasps
you must not mind
the claps that you all long to long
to hear
and yet to distant like the usual stars
at night
when you are alone standing high on a mountain
trying to reach
what you cannot take into your hands into your house.

to be free is to be owned by nothing
to long for nothing and to write for nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Free....(Revised For The Clerical Error, 'too Instead Of To')

to obtain finally your freedom with words
unbound from their clasps
you must not mind
the claps that you all long to long
to hear
and yet too distant like the usual stars
at night
when you are alone standing high on a mountain
trying to reach
what you cannot take into your hands into your house.

to be free is to be owned by nothing
to long for nothing and to write for nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Fully Alive.....

to a certain
phenomenon one
need not really
understand, one
must only gaze,
feel, flow, and
float, one need
not say anything
to be fully alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Happy Altogether

yesterday the used plates and stained cups and saucers and spilled coffee and bread with molds disturbed me
i was thinking about the bugs and the rats and the bacteria and the disease and death,

the whole night i could not sleep i am bothered about the negligence of other people their lackadaisical attitude and how i should have remedied situation and cure the diseases of our society

it is a matter of social responsibility and environmental if not political maturity saying there is a time for making a difference

this morning my eyes sink inside my sockets like marbles inside a black hole and i entertain the idea of the possibility that i may finally go blind because i think too much about what to do and how to do things to make this world a better place to live in and yet i have really done nothing and the possibility that i may have bad karma in the last analysis is not a remote happening

i realized that i am not enjoying my life anymore concerned as i am about the disease the cockroaches the rats and the emerging sharp edges of the sickle that death is carrying in my fields of hay

i make a conclusion that this is not good for me after all i am part of this mess that cockroaches infest that rats crawl and dirty with their tiny feet and stinking tail and that all these bacteria despite what science has been doing still thrive upon their new shapes and wise mutations
that virus love this earth and will always be here to stay
and kill so many

and so....

i tell myself: stop the worrying
learn to accept what is here and then be happy altogether.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Honest With You

the christmas songs are played
and i do not remember anything anymore

these songs come and go and my years are shorter.
last year
is just like today.

there is no meaning anymore.
and i am not giving any chunk of me anymore.

i am sealed. i am a house with doors and windows closed.
i am sleeping inside it.
and it will be years before i wake up.

don't worry. i will not tell them that you are a
part of me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Just Human

i have no wish but just to be human
to be before you and we talk and then
i say something that is wrong
and then you all laugh and i too laugh
the way you laugh at me and then i tell you
thanks, i am just like you, my brothers and sisters,
i ask an apology for my frailty.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Like Them

now is the time to change
you said it well
you simply like to be yourself
and they are so pleased

they call you angel.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Loved...

when i come back
it will not be this
me, ..unloved, i have
loved much,
greater than yours,

i will not be you
i will be another,
whatever that be,
i will not be this,
unloved...i want
to be whoever and
whatever,

someone loved by
another, much greater
than mine,
or i could be something
you can love,
and even if i too in
that state
cannot love you
in return, i just want
to feel

how is it to be loved
that much.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Nobody One Lonely Christmas

to sit in silence
in one corner of the mall
inside a flood of
people

no one knows you
and you know no one

you put both arms on
the side of the chair
look around
and sip your coffee

it is only once a year
that you find yourself here

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Read With The Playing Of Mozart's Clarinet Quintet In A, K 581

I ONCE will remember you
entering inside my life like a view from the hills

a black bird perched on a branch of mahogany
there for hours staring at me

tried to shoo you away
you stayed like i am this man that owed you something
and i have not paid you
what you deserve

i closed my door and peeped upon a hole of light
you are still there

there was rain and storm and thunder and lightning
i closed my door and windows and checked the roof for leaks

blackbird you are still there
staring at the house unmoved by my injustices

you are the black bird undying
you are the song insistent upon itself

inside my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Real

to be real as a man
to be more
of the man
in our humanity

one must fall
into sin
and feel
the misery
of our ancestors

one must
experience what falling is
in sin
in guilt
in falling from grace

only then
can you feel what Adam and Eve
felt the first time
only then
can paradise be so
meaningful

only then
can the snake and the apple
be so real

the hardness of its
flesh right
in your own hands
the crispness
of its taste
right in your teeth and tongue

only then
can God be so loud
that you cannot
but hear Him
only then
after the fall
that you can feel the gentleness
of God
whose hands caress
the entangled hairs
in your head

it is in the falling
that grace comes
and mercy and compassion
so real
and so understandable

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Real I Have To Be Nasty Sometimes

i

I don’t smile
You may think I am giving you
The permission
To think
That I really do not mean
What I say
With this grin on my face

ii

I stand my ground now
No backing off
On a wishy-washy
I give weight
To my prime intentions

iii

I tell the truth
I will tell you what I feel
I will tell you that I am not comfortable
With what you are doing

iv

Tell me I am silly
I will agree
I am not a little bit touchy
You are right I am
Now take the wind out of your sails

v
I do not have fingers 
To point 
To make you more defensive 
I have only my heart 
To tell you how I feel 
Who are you anyway 
To be blamed?

vi

I will make up a list of handy excuses 
To see what is clearly going on 
Before I put myself in the fray

vii

I am not afraid 
To change my mind 
Whenever I want to 
In a minute or two 
I may still have time 
To tell you 
That sometimes I do not 
Honor commitments.

now, i will be happier 

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Red

i may blend with the red sky again

clouds colored black
Rising from the earth
Floating on red skies
The sun Is gray
Rectangular to the
Earth shaped like
An ovum
a sensate object
splashes in the sea
Like an inverted comma

He is Icarus
He just drowned

They do not think
It is I

The sea is not green
It is black

I am trying to be
Off-white

for you
To see

But you can’t
You did not try
seeing hard enough.

You have no time
For this
For me
Or anything else.

Sometimes I think
I should have
Grown myself
into a suicide bomber
And then explode
Inside you.

Perhaps you
Will notice me
Finally.

My
Color must not
Be red.

I may
Blend with the
Red sky again.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Somebody

it is nice to be somebody
like that great man

but it is too sad
too harsh and annihilating
to lose myself just to be somebody

now i like being nobody
it is me and there is no other

i can sit
and just be alone gazing at all of them
panicking

to be that great somebody.
i smile. i am cool. i am myself

and you still love me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Be Strong To Be Brave And Be Unique.

when you speak
everyone listens
no one speaks back
there is fear.

in that yes world
everyone becomes like
you in uniformity.

it is a sad duplication
of just you and you
and you.

all the food there
tastes the same.
there is so much salt
but no one is
complaining.

all shadows are the same.
all fading at the same time.
no one is in a hurry to
be oneself. To be strong
to be brave and be
unique.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Become A Part In The Harmony Of The Whole

sometimes you feel
that you are a driftwood
arriving at a river
with no one
living there

you stay for a while
curious
like a bird resting upon
a twig
upon a long migratory
journey
towards a warmer place
of this earth

then you have to go again
drifting
because you have no choice
but to drift
hoping that someday
when this flooding is over
you shall find
someone who will make
something out of you

a furniture, or a decorative
piece of art
in the interior of a
beautiful house
where children shall ask their mama
what kind of art
are you?

you like to answer
i am an abandoned driftwood
once i was a part of the great designs
of trees in the forest
but i was cut off
and left out
to rot

now someone gave me
significance
a motif, a purpose
a piece of an
artwork

and then you like it there
you are the center of this
theme

art and love, a part of a whole,
a mess  fabricated into
a harmony of a family in
a house

someone plays a violin
and then you begin to listen

RIC S. BASTASA
To Begin With

to begin with
he smiles and they begin to like him
because he is contagious
his smile travels from one place to another
like the way the butterfly hovers from one flower
another flower in the garden of
peace and quiet

to begin with
he keeps a hold on something that makes him happy
despite the odds
despite the fact that it is his own house that is burning
despite the fact that all the bridges going to his place have all been broken

to begin with
he is naked and he has nothing to cover himself anymore
to begin with
he is foremost his own being
and it is only this that all of them cannot take anymore

and so he keeps the promise
to maintain this emptiness so they may all become full
and guilty and sad.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Begin With.....

one way to begin
is to rearrange a set of
furniture

done this time you want more
light from the window
more space in the dining area
and a blank wall where
you can hang a painting of
flower fields and a river where
a woman brings her body
for the bathing

someone is coming back home
and you want to show that there are
changes

the motif is welcome
and colors are as bright as sun rising
scents of lemons
curtains could be light as they
could still be warm too

and your dog looks at you
waiting for another walk on an
early cold morning

perhaps you have not forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
To Belong

Upon a toilet paper
i wrote a love poem.

as i pooed and pooed
i read the poem
with all love

i emoted, and
emoted some more
with no one
watching
crazy.
after the release
comes the
sanity and
peace

short reality.
short time really.

i folded the tissue
and cleaned my ass.

the poem went
happily
into the bowl

happy to where
it rightly believes
it belongs

RIC S. BASTASA
To Build A House

to build a house, a beautiful one,  
i just do not need land and nails  
not just wood, and grass  
not just beams and roofs, for they

are but necessities, projections of  
the house upon a hill  
of the mind,

to build a house, one needs the soul  
of the home,  
the words of memories, the gutters  
of our emotions,

unlike you, my house requires the fences  
and walls  
keeping away the ill winds  
of publicity, the rumors of who i was,

a slope, the steep one, inclined  
towards no other  
than the whiteness of the sky

RIC S. BASTASA
To Buy Tranquility

i watch at the
errand boy sewing an
old pillow case

i left an instruction
to close the mouth
of the pillow and
then cover it anew
with another green hue
of silk cloth
from my wife's cabinet

in this case something
so old
is sewn and given a new
dress

from young hands
a new body is sculpted
to buy tranquility

RIC S. BASTASA
To C. Who Posts That His Sunday Is Lazy....

ducks here
and dogs, you prefer

the yard has become
your Sunday

zoo,

another Sunday
alone with all these
animals

i wonder why you have
not taken an Eve
in this Garden, Adam?

RIC S. BASTASA
two opposite time zones
we know it but not so different geographically
we must so suppose

you have forgotten to write a poem
for me
but i still write one poem for you
to remember
that someone from one of the islands
in the Far East
still cares for you and worries much
when you start to have
insomnia

i will never be cold as a snow there
there is not such coldness
here in my heart
i will be always as warm as the sun that
you first saw here
soft as the foams of the sea
where you first learned how to swim
gentle as the marshes
floating on the river where we tried
to catch fish on a summer day

it is a promise. Good Night.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Change Me?

when you arrive here
you change the paint of the house
you like it pastel blue on the door
white on the walls
and green on the windows

you change the landscape
except of the wanton garden
you opt for a manicured lawn
and some of my trees
and shrubs have to be
cut down,
some flowers have to go
you bring in
the violets, and lavenders
and white champacases
you like a scent from around
you
specially during the night
when we simply sit
on the lawn

now you begin to demand
some changes from me
the time when i wake
up or sleep
you like soap i like sports
you want me to enjoy
love stories

the color of my socks
my tie my polo shirts

i give in for a while
but there is an end to all these
tries to change me

you cannot,
i am me before the landscape
before the paints of the house
i am me before the lawns and flowers and socks
and shirts and soap
i am already me before you arrive
to my house
to my life

you cannot change me
because
i love who i am what i am and i know perfectly just what i want to make
myself
even without you,

make some more attempts to change me
and i will ask you to leave at once

RIC S. BASTASA
To Change Or Not To Change That Is No Longer The Question For Me

I Like the way
how things remain unchanged with you

i must like them
for i have no choice

you really do not change
and i have no one to talk to

if you leave me
that could perhaps be the only change there is

and who knows?
i may like it that way too

for i am but a practical man
to change or not to change

that is no longer the question
the night has come and what i have

is only its darkness
my bed shall only be its coldness and silence

RIC S. BASTASA
To Choose Unhappiness.....

it is complicated, i must admit.
 alright, i must admit, for it is true
deep from the heart of me,
i like you, alright it is not that much
i cannot say i love you

there is a time of indecision. And honesty.
like to have you with me, in a room for a night.
but to live with you is a no no a cannot be.

alright, i may like you forever, but i cannot love
you this moment. i like to kiss you and hug you and
make love with you.

but it is not that easy. i have a face. and this body.
i know what shame is. The fall of almost everyone.
thrones broken. Lives falling apart, homes broken.

lives shaken. Despair and hope combined. Another
tragedy strikes the home. Leaving and leaving and
with no apparent homecoming.

i decide not to touch you. I am strong. I have an
A for restraint. I am cool and i am not just a
hormone dose.

I am a person and i choose. I choose integrity.
ce and strong suffering.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Connect Himself To God

to make this divine connection
from his human
ity

he writes a poem about a kite that a child makes
from sticks and paper
and some paste
to stick them in together
like a symbolism
of body and soul

and the child puts the paper tail
as rudder
of this kite and then he runs to the field
to find the wind to give his kite a lift
to the skies

high spirited like his soul
and his body
wanting to be with
God up there

after this i will ask him,
the child
(or the child in him)

or simply him the man who who writes a poem about a kite
lifting itself up with the wind of his beautiful words:

do you feel something divine?
was there something divine in this poem about a kite?
did you feel God?
did you see him up in the skies above?

you tell me about angels, now tell me, my friend
about the presence of God

tell me more, about this kite this flight this wind
do not mention anything about power

i am always this suspicious believer.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Correct An Error

an error is an error
and errors exist for the main reason that
they are meant to be corrected

it takes the eyes of the loving person
to correct the errors
of his beloved

gently and
carefully away from the mob
and the crowd that love
the mockery
of errors corrected in the middle
of the public halls

inside a closed door
i hold your hand
caress your face
and your hair
and kiss you and then tell you

you taste like a rotten apple.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Create Nothing....

to measure
my responsibility
you leave it
blank for me

a white sand
i have become a wave
and i always
erase what is written
destroy what is
built

you measure my
responsibility to put
everything in place
again

i always arrive
to erase what is there
wave upon wave
tongue after tongue
every word there
is deleted

white sands
foams and foams of
sea

it is my responsibility
to you
for you created me
to create
nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Cut The Thread......

give me
if i cut the thread

it is not that
strong anymore

and so
nothing is really wasted....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Dance And Sing

what do we need
to be happy?

no props
we can always dance
on bare feet
under the rain

no microphones
we can always sing
the songs of our
hearts

we live, dance and sing
naked deep in the night

the moon watches
on the river
waters splashing

RIC S. BASTASA
To Death...

decath is not a surprise
when it comes, one feels the coming
inside the heart

you must have heard people
telling you a language that lands beyond the moment
the one that you understand
the moment you arrive there

it is that..
because they know, they speak
and because you find it hard to accept
they utter it in such a way that for now you shall not figure it out
completely
a puzzle that seems to have an answer
at that point
when they have all been gone
without having to tell you
goodbye

why should you quarrel about death?
decath is just an errand man
following orders too
from the Great Man

when the time comes
do you run away? where? do you ask that you carry your
prized possession? or a loved one?

absurd, you can do nothing but be in that boat
your mouth sealed, your arms bound, your heart stops
your brain blank.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Depression

when you are
tipsy
i know what
you will
say

you're not
drunk

i do not ask
because
i have respect
for those
moments
when we need
alcohol
most

RIC S. BASTASA
To Die Is To Live

what you can take
from me
take it now
for i am destined
for another

to Live with You
is To die
and To die within Me
is To live
Again with
Eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
To Die....

a white butterfly
on a yellow leaf
a brown centipede upon
a gray pavement
black and white pebbles
on a pink coral beach.

soft winds from the hills
golden sun slowly rising
showers of rain from the sky
what a beautiful day to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Different People

it is about to rain
the clouds are dark and heavy
along the road
two people are quarreling
about their having forgotten
the umbrella
the goat is tied on the tree
and the cow is looking
for escape
when the rain falls
the driver of the car that got
stuck on the canal
is cursing

on the other side
the children are playing and shouting
they all love
the first rain of summer

RIC S. BASTASA
To Distinguish A Farm From A Forest

the child in her cannot yet
distinguish a farm from a forest
that having seen for the first time
a bunkhouse beneath those coconut trees
she told her mommy that
they are now in the forest and that
she plans to write about
tarzan and jane,
and the monkeys and tigers,

sometimes i miss kids and sometimes
i think i could have been a better teacher

RIC S. BASTASA
To Do Our Duty....

it is 1:05 pm 
and it is very hot 
outside this 
air-conditioned room 
and there are 
two old men waiting 

do not tell me that 
it is not time yet 
or that you need sleep 
or ask that question: 

why are they too early? 
what is it that they want? 

open the door. Let them in. 
Share the luxury of your position. 

Give them air. 

RIC S. BASTASA
To Do The Things That You Do Not Like

you set it aside
on the left and you take
back what you like to do
scribbling a poem or two
on the wide blank monitor
you type a syllable
and tells you a sweet sound
and inspired you write a word
that starts to sing a song
and more words that
sings to you a melody
about love and departure

some loves of course
remembered
those that ended happily
in bed and

marriage and sweet surrender
and living happily ever after

this is the fantasy of your fingers
and your salivating tongue
and your lips biting upon each
other: love, love and its memories
they keep asking about you
that you must speak them again

then pain, the twin sister of love
gets inside your system
your heart bleeds and blood drips
from your chest to your abdomen
staining the carpet of the floor

sad, how sad is this life when
one says she is leaving and will
not be coming back, that there is
and end to this film this fantasy?
now it is too much and you decide
to take back what you just set aside.
now, you swallow the real pill of
bitterness, mother says it is good
for your health. You take a folder
of a case, and then you start reading
their stories, their pains and hopes too.

now, you must do what you do not like doing.
i guess, let me tell you, it is time to be responsible.
not to think about yourself. how about them?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Dong And Jamila

Soon you will be joined
As one
This marriage of two worlds
Apart
Extreme worlds
Moslem and Christian
Beyond religion
Beyond culture
Beyond what your families
Prohibit
Your love must be true
Tested against time
As both of you shall say
Yes, I do
The man now takes this woman
As his wife

Back then to the free world of love
There will be no differences
Or if there be any
Your love shall provide the patch
Her love shall provide the needle and the threads
And both of you shall sew
What was torn with
Such tender and loving hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Dr. P

Sisyphus my friend
what rock shall we roll
tonight
on this hilltop?

tell me, what size of rock
fits my size today,
i am big and my shoulders are broad
i have a happy disposition
i am used to all these
burdens and they all seem the same to me
i get used to rolling rocks
and i like them all
they all feel the same to me

RIC S. BASTASA
To Dream....

this Christmas i shall give love
i shall dream
and i shall share with you
whatever i love and whatever
i dream

i am freeing myself from money
because what i shall give you
is free.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Drive A Point, I Collect Pebbles And Leaves.

to drive a point i will not use a hammer.
oh i like avoidance. Your gaze for instance.
I do not exchange it with mine.
I go to the sea, write on the shore and let the waves
do the hiding.

To drive a point, i collect pebbles and leaves.
And then i throw them all away after a hard effort.

You ask what is the point that i am driving at.
I leave a space. I put nothing there.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Each His Own

i've seen this guy
and read his works
all centered towards
sex: oral, and whatever
nothing about missions
and i've heard about
this girl
new sprouting writer
in town
focusing on religion
and God
i think they make
a nice pair.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Each His Own...

that is life.
the mother is breastfeeding
her baby on the bus,
the father is holding the
back pack of clothes.
the driver is looking beyond
towards a common
destination.
an old man holds to his
cane.
his grandson holds on
to his toy.
the man beside you
soon shall get out
of the bus.
and then you are left
on your own
figuring out next what
to do with your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Each His Own.....

because the birds always
come here
every morning
render their songs
and stay for a while
because you are kind with
your grains
not selfish with your time
because the trees
offer themselves as homes
because the boy was taught
to just watch
how they fly away
there is no chaos here
nothing bloody
there is harmony
because this is it
keeping each in place and
in freedom
this nook has long
yielded itself to peace
and quiet....

and this is where home is
to each his own
to sing each song
and wander long....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Each Own Uniqueness...

as the grass grows
unique on some serrations
the soil too
recognizes the uniqueness
of its own
striations

the one on top
learns to respect the one
at the bottom

that's life says the
drifting clouds

RIC S. BASTASA
To Earth

i am not here as a guest
i am never served and nothing is free

i pay for every
service of yours
i pay the price
for every inch of
life

i do not eat a free
meal
i always pay the price
of anxious hours

i give my skin
i shed off

i barter my mind
i am left blankly staring
at the
sunset

i traded my future
for all your stars

and what i have is
just this
moment

say the word
i am always willing to give it back

when i leave let no one say that
i owe someone something
that i carry what once was borrowed
by me

i do not claim ownership
i only have my burdens

i am dignified
i always have this freedom

to go and be with no one else
i do not own anyone
and no one owns me

i know the law
which i have pawned for nothing less
but equity

i paid the price
i give everything away

now i am all empty
and as uttered by that old and dying poetess
i have also become so ripe
so full

falling becomes my own
perfection
my pulp and sweetness
and even all my bitterness
is enough
to pay the price
of every inch of life

and when death receives me will
both hands
i say nothing because i owe no one
and one one owes me

nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
To Ease The Anger Of The Hands

let the hand hold
the grains of
corn
let these hands
form the
knife
to stab the water
to feel the
slipping of
the sands
to caress the
cottons from the
summer fields
to hold an egg
of the black bird
to touch
the petals of a flower
that blooms
this month
of June

RIC S. BASTASA
To Eat Or To Be Eaten...

that morning when
we were watching the
sun rising from
the horizon
the white seagulls
arrived and like a
swarm of bees
dive into the surface
of tiny waves and
we who are not that
strangers to each other
know fully well
that they are there
because of those
fish, their prey
and this is what it
is all about it:
everyone comes for
a reason, either to
eat or be eaten.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Emily...(And Alice)

As the coldness of the night
Comes over my window
I know deep in my heart
Your loneliness in the big city

RIC S. BASTASA
To Empty All Today To Catch Up A Tomorrow

To break away from
Those rules
Even your own
Waste money and time
Squander a self
Scatter all kept memories
To empty all
Today to catch up
A tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
To Feel And To Think....

oft repeated
what pleases you
before
pleases you not
anymore

to finally eradicate
what destroys you
you must listen, go into
it, and soon feel
the numbness that you get

it must be you
who must be convinced
foremost
that it is not giving
you the goodness
that you deserve

listen to your enemy
bond with it
go where it pleases
feel...

and then think.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Feel Humanity...

i have to see
the face of God,
to touch His hands,
to be with His
side
to long for Him
All the days of
my Life

i only have to
see and feel you,
humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Feel, To Be Present, To Be Real

do not stretch your mind that far
you should know the limit, a border,
a fence, an edge,

if you snap out, it will be your end
and mine too for i care

do not go that far, enough is enough,
what you shall know shall kill you, what

you do not know for now is this comfort
that here i am still in love with you.

do not even talk about an after-life, for
as of this moment, when you are around, when

my arms wrap you, it is this moment that lives
forever. Do not even think, for here we only have

to feel, to be present, to be real.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Ferdie Who Says That He Cannot Write

do not live behind
a writer's block

if it exists seek the
aid of a pole or a wing

of a kite, or even the
easy flight of leaves

or summon the help
of your legs

jump over it and
learn the tricks of birds

fly away
that is what i do

most of the times.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Finally Rest

to be a child again to see the sunny side of the hill

to walk back and regress to that moment of the first swim
until you learn it and master the feeling only to forget

to finally rest and then recall the picture of the hills
running into a very small plain where someone waits for you
with her all white hair and that weak smile
that softer touch, gentle and dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Find Out Where I Am Really Going

I leap from
this shallow
River
To the deep
To find out
where I am
really going

RIC S. BASTASA
To Find The World

to find the world
is to find your world

that is it, this is what is
it all about
it is about you and the world
you finally find
at first in your fingertips
spinning and then
inside your heart
you spinning
inside your world

the world spins
finally inside you
and you and the world
you finally find
become one

to find the world
your world
finds you and you are
not surprised anymore

the awe and wonder
inside your heart
where now
the world lives
in peace

you and your world
in harmony
like body and soul
sleeping together
in twilight

RIC S. BASTASA
To Find What Fills Me...

beautiful creature
i will be with you in your
loneliness
but as you are pure
i will not touch you
i am different
i belong to this earth
you cannot love me
as i cannot love you too
i will be invisible
not even the mist and fog
i will just be a gust
of air
in my eyes of emptiness
in this hollow self
i will watch you until you
find the rapture of you
loneliness
watching you in all bliss
and when this is over
when you finally walk away
to find love that suits you
i shall leave you too
to find what shall fill me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Fleur De Sac

this is what i learned
from that struggle

i won because i fought
i did not beg

the old masters taught us well
no one gives you things inside
a silver platter

there are no clean hands anymore
neither is there a need to shed blood

you make me win because i deserve winning
you have been convinced

i know how it is not to bow
not to stoop

with dignity i demand what is due me
the years are on my side,

my solitude is my sole guide
into the place where i must wear my laurels.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Fold And Keep

a few lines
two words

a poem can be
you

or an
alter ego

or your
ego

or letting go
or just plain going and going

like being,
but everything is quick and
easy

this you may disagree
where
what we seemingly
want
done is

simply to wash
and wear

and if you have
something better

just fold and
keep.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Follow It...

i will pursue it

tired as i am for
all these years,
i will follow lust
till the edge
i will follow love
till it ends.

if i will not,
how can i tell you
what it is
how can i tell you
what i am...

RIC S. BASTASA
To Forget.....

i let the strong monsoon
winds caress my face
the waves of the sea
sing to me the lyrics of
our past and here
i am
still struggling
to forget
you....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Gather Moss And More Of Moss

to gather moss
be a stone
to gather more moss
be a very still stone
be a stone still till the end
of time

you stand still and think
you want to be the moss
rather than a stone

to be all moss
you must betray the stillness
of stone
you must even forget
the importance of
what a moss can be

then you think some more
to be completely this moss
you need to be friendly
to the water and to the river

then you decide to be the water
instead of the moss
to be more than the water
you wish instead to become the river

and so you flow and learn the rush
and become the running river
until what you want really
is just to flow
to rush and run and then
you become nothing
but the motion itself
until you are lost

and then
you become what you are now
lost but real
always flowing, rushing, running

where nobody owns you
not even the river
or the stones or the moss

you have become
this running, this flowing, this being
so real so free

RIC S. BASTASA
To Give And Leave.

you have a bunch
and you give it all
i only have a petal
left. Take it.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Give You Away....

i am going back to the fields
of grass
cows still pasture there
and the flock of sheep still silent
and hardheaded

the past as master has lost
control of the staff
and the trees have gone untrimmed
for years

this is the forest of our future
no one minds where the paths
are growing
what mountains move somewhere
and whether abu comes back again
or not
the women really do not care
as they bathe naked in the river

i am going back there to recollect
the rules of my games
for i have lost them

that innocence that has kept me so alive
the swim in the old river
the strength of my legs
that excitement about those which were new
and so uncertain

i am going there to regain what
i once had
now that i am already ready
to give you away

RIC S. BASTASA
To Go Deeper

is to skin out surfaces,
each layer, each
new state, from
hair to skin to
something subcutaneous
like veins and blood and
then the bone
and the marrow of our
core existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
To God

MY lines are to GOD
scratches of the cat's claws
on a wooden pillar of the old
deserted house.

To God my silence is noise
he hears them just like any
ordinary noise on the streets
where dreams are dumped
and stamped and left behind.

To God, my poems are rotten
and he would not care giving
them a second of his infinity.

To God i am just like you,
the anonymous, the leftover
of humanity, the leaf upon a
heap of leaves, the sand among
the oceans of sands in the desert,
a figment of a ray of sunlight,
one of the drops of rain in
the storm, a dust in the galaxies
of planets and stars.

To God, i am nothing.

Deep in my heart however,
I feel that He loves Me.
And so now He listens
and Touches truly me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To God Who Is Not Speaking

to God who has not spoken
i give the benefit of doubt that he is there glancing
to God who is merely glancing
i give the benefit of the doubt that he is all loving
to God who is all loving and not interfering
i give the benefit of the doubt that he is simply waiting
for the right hour for the right timing for the ripe season
to God who is there waiting and all knowing
i give the benefit of the doubt that all these sufferings of mankind
shall soon end with all his beneficence and magnificence

to God for God and by God, i drink to that
Cheers! God is coming! Cheers! I have always drank to that.
All night and all day, my heart aches in worship.
To God, Through God, and By God
May he speak, and touch, and save us.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Grab Hope...

we have lost
we have fallen to the enemy
let there be no disgust
and quarrels

let the phoenixes in us
rise from our ashes
let the lessons be learned
let us live again
to the full for another
hundred years
of our own chosen
bliss.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Hate And Not Mind

peep into
a room little

child to time
compressed

inside a cube
where

oh this, oh
that

how can they
ever let

this little
child see

how adults
love

to hate and
not mind

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have A Balance

to create
a balance
does not mean
equality,

it is more of
a hammer and
gavel
arrangement

roof to
floors

pestle to
mortar function

ah, like the most
common
scene that we always
have
from the beginning

to achieve this
balance
somehow
there must be a
heaven to
an earth

there is no such
thing as
a flat
river
otherwise
what can the
sea be?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have A Feel Of My Food

To have the feel of my food not just the taste of it in my tongue
I use my bare hands, the rice I fold between my palms the fish
I touch with my fingers, and then my mouth opens to swallow and savor

Just like you tonight, I feel you with my bare hands I taste you
With my tongue because you are the food of my soul and my soul
Feeds on you as you also feed on mine

We are bare all over, not just our bare hands
We touch we feel we lick we breath with our noses
On our skins, we feed on our flesh, we go deeper
Into our souls, our eyes feast on the food we lay in front of us
The lights of our eyes open in our room the festivity to a beginning

We feed on ourselves we are hungry & greedy & we are never full

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have A Happy Marriage

the tipster
married for 42 years
and staying married says
that to have a happy marriage
foremost you have to be happy yourself first

so?

RIC S. BASTASA
THINGS that i own
are not bound, even books
they have pages
open, dog-eared
some even torn
i own these stained
margins
i put my signatures in
them

i own a red bird
because i planted a tree
beside the house
a branch has become
intimated to my window
and the red bird
sings there

i own the morning song now
but for me to learn
to fly
and own the sky too
i must
let the song go

i do not make my hands
as the house
of wings

neither my heart
the the treetops for
drifters

for in truth to own red birds
is always premised
on the respect for their
own freedoms....
To Have Sex With An Aids Infected Person

such an adventure
i say i will not regret
for i shall have the chance
of sharing their pain

like the way the
Enlightened one
lived with the lepers
the blind, the mute
and the sinners

just a wish somehow

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have Suffered Long Enough

Do not equate morality and holiness
to priesthood

a priest is no more no less like everyone else

seeking for the light and
still not finding

if you find the light, do not tell me your name, where you work, where you are, what is your name, or even why

do not tell me how, i like to find it myself

ey say i have mine but i do not really know where

if i had it burning in my head
i should have been burned

if it were inside my heart
my veins would have been charred

i do not content myself with light alone
i am asking for fire

the one so huge, the one that burns the house of my ancestors

the one that must burn me alive
because

i have suffered long enough

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have You Without Any Name

it will be better soon
after this brief meeting
when we meet again
that i will not call
you with any other name
but to have you and feel
you, and only you, in my arms
in my lips, in my tongue
in my veins....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Have You....

i

we streak molds
to find a behavior
a lifetime

in the same manner
we only take a
pinch of our realities
to introduce our true names

ii

i do not have to drink
the whole ocean to know
what salt is

tersely put
i do not have to know all the details
to have you for love

an hour shall be mine
and you are mine forever

just one slice of you
and i shall be full

iii

even if you leave me
i shall have everything of you
in an atom of a memory

i am not as selfish as this
universe that gathers in her breasts
all the stars and planets
all suns all galaxies

iv
just a dropp of you
is already the whole ocean
a whole century of rain
a continent of space.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Hide This Love Of Poetry, And Into Pottery

forgetting finally
that quest for the rainbow's
pot of gold,

oh, forgive me my dear
i have wasted so much time
all for the love of
this craft- - this

pottery....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Hold You Close

to hold you close enough
closer than close
negating the powers
of distance
we smell the smell
of our souls
we taste the taste
of our desires

we are so near
skin to skin
soul to soul
i penetrate you
the center of your being
i fall upon
the crater of your longings
i lose myself
in this darkness
as i close my eyes
and perhaps forever lost

without despair
without regrets

RIC S. BASTASA
To Honesto In Going To The City

as you pack
your jute sack
containing your
personal belongings:
a pair of pants
an old dirty white shirt
a pair of rubber slippers
a hat
(leave your bolo
you can't use it there)
do not promise me
that you will not
be coming back
to this poor little
town which has not
given you the
opportunity for
a higher wage
as a houseboy

ah, Honesto the city
if you only know
has no pity
it had long forgotten
feelings
and those who
cannot adapt to
its cruelty
may simply die
beside the sidewalk
of its cold streets
and when the flood
comes to clean
its waste
you may be lucky
carried for free
by the big water
to be finally eaten
by the wild fishes
in the murky river

RIC S. BASTASA
To Huff Or Puff....

i huffed.
now i do not know
how to distinguish
puff from huff.
perhaps i puffed.
you see, we all
have doubts.
we sometimes
do not know where
to go, or what to do
with our own lives.
A long time ago,
i was focused.
I have only one
way to go. I know
definitely what to
do. The people
outside my room
are envious.
I huffed.
I do not worry
about myself.
I have given it
too much concern
already.
I now worry about
soon it will
be over.
You really have
to take charge of
yourself.
All people will not
be here
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Ignore The Pain

to ignore the pain
like there is nothing between
us,
on this critical time of our lives
either one must leave
or one must shut up
away from
the other, closed like all the fingers hiding something
but it is just the beginning of something bigger
something
is gritting beneath, underneath the thickness of the flesh
something gnashes
it grows
expands and multiplies and branches out like
cancer
the pain with roots and tendrils
there is a time
for reckoning
the mounds protrude from the bones
and your mouth can no longer swallow
everything
fed to you
you cannot be ignored anymore like a bomb hidden
under the floor
you explode
lives will be claimed
the people will mourn for a while

and there you are
saying
justice is served

RIC S. BASTASA
To Infinity

to infinity
i will not promise you
my love may last
but i will
not...

i bleed and then
i die
and then i am gone
forever

and the soonest you realize this
the better.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Its Loveliness.....

i must, write
you this one,
which i call,

a poem, which
of course, you
cannot read, because
simply
you cannot,

we could have
relied on speech
which you
disregard feeling
that it is
unnecessary because

this thing that
happens need not
be spoken

or be heard or
be seen
as we preferred
finally the secret
of the dark

i, must, write you
this, our poem,
intertwining, one is
the need,
the other is the
giving,

there is no love
here, i know, you know,
there is no love
between us,
we are not
designed for this
we cannot utter
what love
is

just the same
i write you this,
my poem,

it is not about
me, not about you
either,

it is the silence
of understanding,

the time has come
when we do not mention
what we shared

we long for another
for someone else
we are unsatisfied,
i am, insatiable, i turn
my back at you,

you look at the sky
trying to find an angel
i hold your hands

tonight, i sleep
soundly, and you too,

tomorrow, we do other
things,
we do not look at
each other's eyes

for life is more
horrible than love,
a vengeance we give
to its
disparities,

to its unfairness,
to its loveliness...

RIC S. BASTASA
To Jazz.......

to write is to open
a bottle of champagne

to savor the sparkle
to taste the spirit

to have another glass
to share and jazz...

RIC S. BASTASA
To Jeff And Company

the world did not
end Jeff

you missed the
party
last night

the milk-fish was
everlent
the roast pig was
just
perfect
and Caesar's salad
was just as
succulent as
i expected.

i just hope that
the mountain
trail was not that
tedious
and slippery
since the rain
was damn long &
heavy.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Joy......

a bouquet of white
roses which you catches
from the bride
in that grand wedding
lies on the table
because you have forgotten
it, after those laughters
and joyous
conversations

the lucky one who found
it is the waitress who
carried it back to her home
hugging it in bed
closing her eyes to its
rosy scent
bringing back to her some
dreams which never come true
just like yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Just Let Secrets Live Their Lives The Way They Like To.

there are so many things
which remain as secrets

ey are more beautiful
that way, in fact, more peaceful

in their closed containers, despite
its airless and airtight existence

for we are better looking when
blind or blinded or blindfolded

for we feel much better without
them, I assure you, they do a lot

of harm when you set them free,
from butterflies there, they turn
to bats, and vampires when you
unlock them, and if you remember

Pandora, then, I must warn you,
you better keep the silence, the
capacity to just let secrets live
their lives the way they like to.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Keep A World Revolving

what i need is a stick,
a shadow, a clock
a chair.

what i do not need is your mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Keep Moving And Then Be Happy....

she left
perhaps she did not get what she deserves
or what she thinks she really deserves
a name,
an acknowledgement perhaps of her presence

i stayed, because i do not need a name, because
i have a name that i gave to myself.
because i deserve to be here
because i still look for something greater
than myself, that a name, because recognition is not the reason
why the sun shines
why the sea keeps the blue
why the moon is soft upon the night skies

there are no reasons what we quit
we are born to keep on going
and soon when we return what was given
we rest finally satisfied that we did our best
to keep on loving

it is lonely here
but we are here and that is enough
we are felt
and that is more than enough

last night i walk alone in the middle of crowd
i hear the talks without me involved
i've seen and heard a lot and these too
are more than enough
to keep moving and then be happy....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Keep On Dancing.....

at the last hour of the
day
when everyone leaves
and you are left alone
to figure out
what to do when you have nothing to do anymore,
tired of thinking you have to dance.
even when you finally sleep, you have to dance inside that dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Kill Time

it is always that
when i speak to another
stranger that i meet
i ask the same questions
i anticipate the same
answers
same fun same laughter
as though everything is
safely repeated
in the same place like
flower to a stalk
like shoes resting upon
the first stair towards
the floor, all in place
now, and then i find out
that it is the other
and i am just a person
reflecting myself
and expecting that it
will just be myself
repeating who i am
over and over again
which i cannot anymore
explain; whew! what
is happening?
i am not lost. I am
just creating a game
and i am both
the hero and adversary
killing time.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Kiss Her On The Rain

to kiss her on
the rain
with one raincoat
on, i think,
it will be
better.

throw that
black umbrella
away,

the other woman
needs it
badly

at the other
end of the
road.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Kiss Your Lips To Say I Love You

you are in bed waiting for me
transparent cloth tempting and
you close your eyes you signal
my body that you are ready for
this old time ritual of sweet sweat
surrender and worship of the
deepest sighs of the marrows.

somewhere inside my heart is
this thirst unsatisfied, this insatiability
of a bulging rock, the towering cliffs
unreachable by your giving in hands.

to kiss your lips, to touch your body
once more, to say i love you, all these
i cannot anymore do, i leave no note.
i find no justification to explain this
art of leaving, the intricate threads
of goodbye, the feared art of the
scissors, cutting and then so clearly
there is no blood, just air moved and
hearts skillfully split into two, painlessly.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Know Nothing Too........

know by now
and of the past and
the future
know each side
know what is up and
what is down
know everything and
like the river with
both banks
like the coin with
two sides
like a diamond with
multi-faces
know also nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Know What Is Real From The Unreal

when they finally
sleep together

and they did this for years
and will continue doing so
for all the years to come

she finds him walking on a bridge
as the wild and unreasonable waters rage under

and then he jumps into the river
and he is gone and she wakes up
profusely sweating as though she too
is about to be taken

and

to know what is real from the unreal
she holds his hands

now more tightly than ever

RIC S. BASTASA
To Learn To Live Alone...

it will take time
like mastering the lyrics of a song
but when it comes
you realize what joy is there
hidden in
such solitude
what bliss is there
in silence
when grief is well understood
when longings dissolve
into scented air
like while cherry blossoms
what perfection lies
in such a completion....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Learn To Live Without Anxiety

it is all in the shallow part
the valley and the flowing river
it is in this plateau
where the trees are not remarkable
where stones are mere stone
where sands slow from our hands without so much thought

it is not about what happens next from here

just here
now nothing folded
no projections

dreams and goals melting like ice

giving way to another summer

and so life is smooth
so simple

like the way i pretend that there is nothing wrong
like the way i
tell you that
there is no problem

life is smooth and
simple
that is how we must
think it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Learn Why You Say Nothing At All

light is blinding like joy
when it arrives right in our eyes
we begin to see nothing
except this feeling that reigns
and wraps our whole body
our senses like sunshine
spreading on the hills and valleys
i understand you when you say
that with happiness you begin
to learn why you say nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Let Go What Clots Inside

How can fun
be alone? how can one finger
clap?
how can love be just
a man?
how can this earth
be a mere stone?
how can i see this universe
as a grain
of sand?
how can running be just with
one foot?
how can i be happy
without you?

i can be.
sad in a room.
alone in a bus trip.
sleepy on the plane.
lost outside the hotel.
i can be.
myself, but it is
too
tight, and the pressure
gets too high
that i have to whistle
and then walk in the middle of
the night
to let go what clots
inside

RIC S. BASTASA
To Let You Know

it is raining tonight
there is light inside my room
i sit and watch the darkness outside
there is no moon
there are no stars
there are shadows of trees borrowing light from street lamps
they keep on moving
there are winds coming from the sea
they are blowing a while ago
they just subsided
and then i close the glass windows
i sit and watch and listen like i still want to learn
despite my 48 years here
i still do not know what in essence
is loneliness
how to cope with its grip how to set my self free

the chairs and tables are dusty
outside there is this contrast of coldness and darkness

i read some poems and i begin to write my own
nothing new not that old either
the same feelings the same flow of thoughts like a chain of steel
a rope, a big rope, a long rope
i bind myself again and i look at my side
just near me

there is this brown dog
native and too loyal like your own dog
or any dog for that matter
it is sleeping peacefully as though the world is safe
there is this rain
it does not seem to stop

to let you know, there are also tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live

to live
just breathe and when you breathe
you become a breather

live your life
be a liver.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live And Love Some More

we open our eyes
must always
open our eyes for
new surprises

we do not close it
for the twists
and turns of life

everyday is a disclosure
every hour
an unfolding of buds into
flowers

spreading scents
pleasing us with its petals
and bright colors

handing us more of
those memories
nothing is discarded
everything is embraced
and kept
and treasured

but like the petals
subject to time
and the seasons
we arrive at the alleys
of wilting
and drying and
crumpling

we too open our eyes
for all these
familiarizing ourselves
with the cycles
of endings and beginnings
the shalls and musts
perhapses and maybes
and all the other
potentials and
possibilities

ah, life is exciting
who does not like to live and love some more?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live In Language

it has been quite a time
and i question myself

why all these years i only
use

language?

my language has been a tree without leaves.
a house without roof, home for the rain.
a mountain without a trail, no man is coming for a visit.

all weeds, bushes,
i comfort myself sometimes with all the stars that hang
at night and despite the distance

i feel that i am so near them
and i may be crazy if i have to tell you that
the stars are talking to me

about heaven

that this place where i live now
is not what
is meant for me

and so i miss each night
finding romance and wisdom in its darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live In The House Of The Word...

it is easy to spot the word
even easier to give it meaning
what it is

what is hard really is
our courage to live
inside its shell...

x x x x

dali lang makit-an ang pulong
mas dali gani usab
ang paghatag sa iyang buot
ipasabot

ang lisod niini
mao ang atong kaisog
sa pagpuyo
diha sa iyang balayan

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live In The Kingdom Of The Clouds

if you decide to live in the kingdom of
the clouds
learn the tricks of the learned
skies

to float like a dream is a must
there is no settling there
like the dust

to master the art of silence
no chirping birds
no rippling of the water

to take all the heavy ones and
keep for a while
and then to burst like thunder
to flow like rain

to be empty all over again
and move like the wind

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live To Die

in desperately seeking you
i am actually
desperately seeking myself
because U and I,

Because we have long
become One
in This
& That

Because One cannot live
Without the Other
Because we had that Vow

To live
To die
Together.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live To Love

It seems that
to live is not the same as to love

look at you who had loved
unrequited
you are killing yourself
with what you can
never have

to live this time is to learn to forget love
and move on with your life

take life, grab it, leave love for a while
take a walk
breathe some more

it is life
it is life that makes you find love again.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live With The Thorns

the roses learn to live
with their thorns, now they all recognize
them
as protection, from the hands of the
mad woman
cutting roses as offerings of her
nightmares,

why can't we learn too to live
with the thorns?

the pains and bitterness are in fact
our protectors too
from too much complacency
from the dangers of
familiarity.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Live You Must

to live
you must learn what is
every day,
which is nothing
but a day and

another day,
there is nothing

special,
it is just the closing
and opening,
the darkness

and
light,
we learn something
new
and a little old of

living
just this moment
this moment
and nothing

more.
this is it how to

live,
do not spread
that much

try
settling a bit.
RIC S. BASTASA
To Live.....Yes To Live....

your chickens are scattered on the yard
oh, how they have multiplied too easily

and your pigs, how fat and happy with their
noise even before their food are served

you have many sacks of rice still not dried
under the sun, oh, how rain can be so hard
headed these times of the year

you built a big house, strong and mighty
in the old neighborhood, but despite all these

fortunes and luck as you claim, you have
been overwhelmed by your sadness, you claimed

all the loneliness for yourself, you wish to die,
you keep on being sick, eating less, and

keeping things alone by yourself, upon a pain
that you cannot describe now. I see your tears

in bed, you never care to wipe them now, as
though saying, all these are useless, you

succumb to despair, saying you surrender,
a decision you make, and then in that house

with a big window, when you are gone, another
woman shall face the road, wave at strangers

saying that she is the winner now, and your
husband says he is happier now, without you.

p.s. please do not give up. Others fought to live.
others kill to live. yes, live, live, drink life.
To Love And Be Not Loved

to love and be not loved
i accept is crazy but that is the whole
story of my life,
there is no sequel

perhaps in the afterlife
when i am at home
on another realm
another body

another story, another attempt
to find a home for this lonely heart
this self unloved

RIC S. BASTASA
To Love And Then Die....

i am stricken with grief
knowing that when you finally
found love, you also die.

in the little corner of our
diatribe, love works, like a
devil cooks, like a chemist
mixes, herbs and nuts,
unto a concoction of life.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Love Thyself. ..This Is The New Law

ah, forgive me
at this stage of my
enlightenment

after i bent my knees
after the begging
and asking for a little
of your gaze

the mind soars and
transcends
all fences
all walls penetrated like
light to glass

this is the time
of waking
the sun, and everything
heavens
do not matter

the mind is opened
like a crater
everything is expelled
and nothing matters

ah, forgive me
but now i do not recognize
you anymore

i do not remember
if ever i have loved and lost you

i am freely breathing
and there is no more obstruction in my
throat

i love this life
and you do not matter

ah forgive me
i have become as selfish as
any self could be

this time
i only love myself
and no other.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Love Without Measure

when i say i love you
there is no meter to it
no scales
from one to ten
no scores till the hundred
there is no depth
nothing about height
there is nothing to measure
nothing to price

for love is as light as air
and fills every empty space
for love cannot be weighed
and beyond what is heavy
or burdensome
its depth is beyond comprehension
its value is priceless
its measure
immeasurable.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Love You More

i must learn not to
exist, i must drown in the world
of the unfeeling,
i am painless
and i will surrender
everything that i have
for you

to love you i must diffuse
throughout you
like an ink to your
flask of water

shake me, shake me more,
i become an integral part of
your whole being

you see, i join you and i cannot
anymore be ejected by you.

this is my love, a diffusion,
an effusion,
as osmotic as you feel it.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Love You More I Must Cease To Exist

i must learn not to exist, i must drown in the world of the unfeeling, i am painless and i will surrender everything that i have for you

to love you i must diffuse throughout you like an ink to your flask of water

shake me, shake me more, i become an integral part of your whole being

you see, i join you and i cannot anymore be ejected by you.

this is my love, a diffusion, an effusion, as osmotic as you feel it.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Lucasta From The Modern Day Richard Lovelace

Lucasta my love
the best of all is the love of self

honour not anymore
outlawed is war
and to go there
i shall not

go shall i
to the softness of thy rosy-pink breasts
lick shall i
your white body & thighs
love that is all that
to thyself give
this lust and thrusts

what more?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Lucasta On Choosing Peace

i am kind, tell me now my dear
i shall not go to war
i shall have a distaste for arms
i love your breasts
i love this peace of mind

Honestly, i do not have any mistress
not a foe anywhere
what for is the gun, the tanks and the nuclear warheads?

I will be consistent in my humble stand
and you shall adore
i love you so much
and i hate all these wars.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Make It More Beautiful....

we comply
putting all the spaces

that is what they need
what they also want

do not say it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Mama

I thank God for having given you
To me
When I was a little child
With you, my mother beside
I have first felt
My great God
Above.

God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers.
(Jewish Proverb)

RIC S. BASTASA
To Marina After Giving Birth To A Baby Girl

now you are complete
your husband and yourself
and baby marina
that you named maria after
your great grandmother,

your world is a circle closed
and we cannot get in there anymore
lest we are nothing
but planets losing our own
orbits
clashing with the privacy of
your own galaxy

do not be disturbed
as we close our own circles too
alone by ourselves
we become stars

distant stars in the skies
from your room
as you begin to sing the
lullaby

we are different
our glitters dim like dying lights

RIC S. BASTASA
To Mawe In Chicago This Winter

hello mawe, if you are still there
alive and listening
if you still have the shadow of
autumn and spring
if you still stand there beside the glass
walls of malls
staring at the thick snow beyond you

mawe, my friend, please tell me

'what does the snow of chicago tell you? '

please tell me what is it
that still bothers
the calm waters of your heart?

merry christmas.
happy new year.

why are you more silent than the snow?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Meet Forever

when i decide to go back to
the nooks of the past

i do not just go there for
no reason at all

i bring a shovel and bury
those which still bleed

which still scream i shut
their mouths and which still

struggle to be saved from
oblivion i make them sleep

forever.

and then i dust off what is
found on my head

put my sleeves in place and
proceed my way to the exit

door where light meets me
without its quizzical eye

and then i close that door

forever

for i have more doors to open
more suns to meet

to meet forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Mother Earth From His Earthling

i am away
from you
earth

i am
absorbed
by the
company
of the
clouds

i am light
and drifting
but i am
not lost

i am exploring
you earth
from
a higher
perspective

i cut
my umbilical
cord
like the
string
of the kite

after this
i shall
land to your
bosom
again

but i will not
be you
i will
be as unique
as not
anyone else
to be
separate
is
life

i have
power now
in this
independence

look at me
not with anger
but with
understanding

i come from
you
but i am
not yours

RIC S. BASTASA
To Mr. E....Who Thinks That He Is Alone....

how can you be alone?

with earth as your mother
with sun as your father
with moon as your sister
with wind as your brother

keep that love burning
soon it will find its sky

how can alone be alone?
with so many of them....of us....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Mrs, J. B.M.

someone close to our hearts
dies today
after three days of struggle
to be free

i am saying my prayers
i am sending my condolences

two hearts are deeply spliced
one inside and the other outside

she was so young and so beautiful
on such an early waste of spool

may the gates of heaven open
let her go where she'd been.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Ms. S

Do i have to step down
and use your
language of abuse
so that i can
understand your world?

I may have been
air
you may not have felt
yet my
water
you have not yet
landed to
my island
yet this does not give
you the power
over my soul
and call me just like
any person that
you have conquered
by putting
them within the confines
of your
being the worst idiot
i have ever met

i am sorry too
for having met first
the devil in you

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Creator....

THE RESTLESSNESS of my soul
has no shore,

the cravings of the heart
has no sky

wave upon wave of time i am this wind
without any anchor

till You finally hold me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Dearest Beloved....

my dearest
i have read your
letter
and the poem you
composed
for me
let me be frank
you have
wasted a night
for they are
just words
and i have not seen
the lives
of all emotions.

i have imagined
how dark must the room
be where
you composed the lines

there is no
spark of love's light
between
those syllables

let me be candid
and take my advice
that you must from now
stop
writing at once....

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Dearest....

i have forgotten morning walks
on these hard times
morning walks become a luxury

i miss the coming of the sun
from the breasts of mountains

i have forgotten morning walks
as poems pop out like popcorn from
the frying pans of
these hard times

outside the killings continue
outside the numbness of the minds of the citizens
has multiplied into geometric patterns
oh the Pieta had a lot of replicas already

tears have become shy or restrained like nuns in the convent
the trembling is hidden inside the houses like guns
on closed doors and windows the child's cry is heard

i have to postpone my morning walks for a while
miss the sun and the trails
miss the rain and the flowers along the way
miss my friends in the club
miss my mother and father in their graves
miss my brother in the ship
miss my sister in the far country where happiness lives...

i have forgotten the good times
missed the opportunity to love you even
miss the moment to remember you again

till then, till the next life, the next world
the next movie, the next scene, my dearest.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Dearly Beloved...

i am not the obvious
could be someone who is odious
i hide
that remains a fact
i speak but do not mean
my word
the syllables are fingers
pointing to a cloud
where a part of me
drifts and lives

i hide
i could be inside your shoe
i feel
what you feel
but i do not make you know it
i do not cause you pain
i am pathetic
and sympathetic

i do nothing
that is what i do
i speak nothing at all
that is how a conversation is
started
silence creeps
and then holds you
i sting

but that is not my point here
i have no one and no other
just words
where i put faith
for me to live

i am always a slip
asleep most often
at the tip of your tongue
goodbye is a letter i write
and kept hidden
under my bed....

RIC S. BASTASA
To My First Love

you are the weaver of the dreams of the earth
and i am the herder of its cows
and how the river of life has parted
us

is not just a myth, it is a fact

and now that we are still so many light years apart
we grieve
but we were given the promise of the gods
that one day we shall meet again

soon after the rain
even when the flower of our youth is gone
soon after the rain
we shall meet and make love again
even in our mind

that my love,
we must always remember

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Love...

love
a luscious
strawberry
freshly picked
from the
farm in
Benguet
inside my mouth
in those
long hours
while you were
picking some more
of those ripe
ones
as i wait under
the shade of
the palm tree
waiting
for you....

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Loving Wife

when i fail
i must tell you
i do not hide
my weaknesses
i reveal to you
the inner wars
that i have lost
many times,

i do not pretend
that my love
shall triumph in
everything in every-way
there are lapses
shortcomings that
at first i could
have kept within me

we love each other
and in my strengths
you shall love me
more perhaps but in
those situations that
i utterly fail,
i must admit to you
with all courage
that i am down, and

yet you still love me
kiss me, and hug me
like a child that has
come back to you
after having been
lost in the park

i am weaker now
so tired and about
to lose hope of the
promises that i can
be....come with me
sleep with me and
make me feel that
i am the hawk surfing
the skies for its
night stars
once again.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Muse

there is no way
to tell
when

but i know
how to wait
like a dog
on a doorstep

i may sleep and
dream
but i always know
when it is time
to rise
and start to walk
and
play and
when it is
dark
to gaze upon
the promises
of your
stars

there is always
no way for me to tell
when is the right
time
for the teasing
or the
cheering

or perhaps the
weeping
and the wailing
(God forbid)

but i have always
mastered
the art of waiting
i know not
how to wage war
with you
i am always
at peace with
myself
comfortable
with the patience
of my arms
the gentleness
of my fingers
the sound beating
of my heart

and so i keep on
waiting
and sleeping and
dreaming
like a prophet
on the dungeon
or the desert

when you arrive
even as the lightest
waft of the wind
i will always know
when and why
and what to
do
exactly

this is a little
bit touchy
(or dramatic perhaps)

i only have eyes
for you
i know your scent
i read your mind
i can see your soul
i have and will
always
love you
even if...
you will not come
for me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Nephew For Him To Learn

you want something to hold on
i give you my hands
and i will hold you
and you will grip it to prevent
you from falling
and hurting yourself

do not be too confident
for there will come a time
in fact
a moment that you will never forget
in your entire life
for i will loosen my hold on you
put grease on my fingers
and your hands will slide
and you will fall and hurt yourself
that much
that the pain will not just disappear
in a day
you will blame me
and tell me that i betray you
but that will only be for a while
by then
the pain and what you think as the betrayal of a trust
has given you the hardest lesson in your life

you will suffer the way i suffer
you will learn the way i learned life from the harshness of
your grandfather
and that same betrayal too
shall not be forgotten in the entire life
of
yours truly.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My New Neighbors

on this morning chat
she says she will be arriving on time
for the halloween

she will be lighting candles for her dead parents
and other relatives of this old town
offer them flowers and prayers that she can muster

she will be bringing her middle child
who starts to write his poems in his notebook

she tells me he is the silent type
the one who can thrive without a conversation

she shifts the topic about the color of the rails of her new house
the verandah is not pink now, it is painted white

and she is asking what flowers fit into the picture
i suggest the bougainvillas, the flowering ones already
sold in the nearby farm by an old lady

she is excited, she will be having us, as neighbors finally
our fence shall be a line of daisies

our yard evergreen, our trees shall be the ones with
perfume: the champacas and the ylang-ylangs

and expectedly, there will be a lot of laughter and
nice conversations of cultured and educated people
whose sense of morality would be high

the chat is quite long, and i decided i have to end it.

i have still other poems inside my tten.
What bothers me, and for which i am really interested

is the poetry of his middle child. I like someone who writes
like me. And i do not need a lot of conversations too.
i like my silence. I love the talk inside my silence.
I will burst.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My New Object Of Affection

it does not really matter to me
if you tell me a lie
if you tell me more lies
i will not listen
i will not be feeling betrayed
they will tell me
that you are dangerous
that you have fangs and claws
and that soon like a tigress
you shall eat my body
alive

it does not really matter to me now
i am in love
and i am ready to die

just one night of love
an hour of passion
a kiss

it does not really matter now
kiss me and kill me
and gladly shall i comply

i bend my knees
and admit my own foolishness

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Only Brother In Distant Seas

brother
the distance between us has become too wide

we have become two islands
separated by seven oceans

bridges and boats and even wings
have become impossible....

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Peer In Philosophy Class Circa 1979

i mark that day
with the ending part of our
conversation:

it has
something to do with the
face of the criminal who
bugged you with
a silver knife at the subway
station and you were so shocked
and could not forget it
your money taken

and then you came to the
irrevocable
conclusion that
humanity is divided and that
some are simply of the
irredeemable kind
and must be put to sit
on electric chairs
for good

and i ask you to look
carefully at his face
at that time
when he was mad and
so needy

and find finally that he
too wears
the same face as yours
when you shall be
deprived of what you own and
have and keep and protect
for now

you are enjoying the world
that loves you
you are eating the expensive cuisine
on its table and
drinking the best wine from Italy
and staying at the Shanghai
hotel with a window facing
the Bund
savoring the beautiful
motion and lights of the river

look at him carefully

did you not see that he
has the face of God?

and then we stopped
right there
and you did not say a word
which i think
was the proper face of silence
of one who cannot
believe the truth

and i have never heard
from you again

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Self This Christmas....

GOT NO expectations
Let them all be merry
Let them ring those bells
Let all the children have
their carols and gifts
Let the family be united
In one dining hall in one
Sala exchanging their gifts,
Let the lanterns be lighted
Let the streets shout for Joy

Meanwhile, i listen to the
Silent Night
As my wife is asleep
Soundly in her bed

As i type the letters
to this note: Hello Self
I admire you for
Being Strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Silent Sufferer....

to make me love you more
i strain this evolving relationship with
actually unnecessary
separations, ... remember my trips alone in the big city?
how i dislike a big empty bed that makes me feel in in a highway
riding in a small car,

i bleed of course like a cactus,
but soon the noonday sun knows how to dry the juicy cut
and comfort me with a tiny scar
hidden by my thorns,

i heard nothing from you, you keep secrets to yourself,
and you have become so beautiful to myself,

how i wish that i can be back in the place of my youth where i will miss
no one, when i can dive in the river naked, and without any malice to
anyone who sees me

i have uttered so many words, and written this experience in a journal,
and you continue with that silence,

that silence in suffering wanting nothing in return for the love that
you have always given

like clouds making rain, like seas faithfully making waves
like words always there to the picking of the tongue

my silent sufferer, i love you more,
i suffer in the countless words that i am saying

in such way, that i begin to doubt everything,
this silence that i surrender, this loss that i have trusted to the
company of words,

at night, i wish upon a meteor that all my thorns be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Sister In L.A.

and so you have learned
how to take the train
and be silent along the way
seeing the trees
and green patches of grass
and buildings and houses
rushing to meet you
through the glass windows

for how long shall you grieve
and heal that bleeding heart
for how long shall you go away
from the clutches
of pain
inflicted by a loved one

time simply waits

out there
far from us in that foreign land
you shall find your
balms

take care my dear sister
do not let your heart be weakened

let it be strong and kind

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Sleeping Princess...

food for the mosquitoes
that is what
i am
at this very moment

when i
am trying to compose
these lines
for you

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Students

with all of you
i have found a family

on a sincere dedication
to teach
i have felt compassion
a belonging
beyond the scope of things

beyond those unblinking eyes
like mouths opening
hungry for knowledge
i have found love

with all of you
how can i be alone?
with all of you
i have felt the confirmation
the worth and meaning
of my own existence
beyond all these
i have confessed to God
there is meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
To My Surprise

to my surprise you have found my place
a house in the middle of two mountains
a green valley with ricefields and a line
of mahogany trees covering a pathway
towards the sea where the sand is as
white as your thighs and porcelain back

why are you here for? need i ask? i must
be foolish not to know. You look for the room
where you think i write my poetry, dimly lit,
warm and scented with musk and orange.

i have tequila, your favorite. I have this
candle shaped like a heart, i light it up.
I keep a jar of peanut butter, and some
marmalades from fresh guavas.
I have green tea if you like, but you
take a glass, put some ice and poured
your vodka. You like tonight to be chili hot.
It is dark, and you say you are not leaving.
I am cornered, and I still know what to do.

This not the place of a love disappointed.
This is your place now and you shall not regret it.

I am stacking all my clothes and underwears
along the stairs. You know that i am hot and naked.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Myself

to myself
be myself
and
none other

know myself
and just be
myself
feeling no regret
but pride
having no arrogance
but humility
in abundance

to myself
be kind
be more understanding
to my limitations
be loving
no matter what

because there is no
other self
than myself
because my best friend
my true lover
is just this self
and no other

to myself
i am thankful.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Not Know Anything And Be Thirsty Once More....

i understand you precisely
i left because there is nothing more to know

you still pursue me what for?
have you not learned everything from us?

i am short of beliefs i look for more
i fall short of faith but i do not regret it

i am more of into an open world
where i get over with what is fixed

to see everything new again
and feel it more to not know anything and be thirsty once more

RIC S. BASTASA
To Open The Eyes Of The Blind, To Bring Out Prisoners From Confinement, And From The Dungeon, Those Who Live In Darkness.

we are all blind
on wide awake eyes
we are the suns
that cannot see what
we lighted

we close in
those who have not
committed the crimes
we imagined

we are those who live
in the darkness
of our mid-noons

we are here
waiting for deliverance
we spin
around an orbit
that arrives
at no specific
destination

RIC S. BASTASA
To Osky On His Birthday Today

Like the planets you take your own orbit
away from the rest
eluding this fatal collision
you travel alone keeping on your own gravitation
balancing the forces of your being
outside inside
near and far
coming and going
centrifugal centripetal

that is the way you move
to be alive
then the moment comes
when you complete
one revolution

how time trickled
like some drops from a rock
you flow
bit by bit
you are so busy then
about almost everything

on the other side
the clear pool of water
mirror of the sky and sun and moon

it is you
you have earned it
it is you
on your birthday

RIC S. BASTASA
To Our Brothers/Sisters Out There...

we must always see the
greatness of our
brothers
we must always acknowledge
the efforts their time spent
their dreams
which even though unfulfilled at times
the struggle and the pitfall
must always be appreciated
we must always hope
the prayers all intact
within our hearts
the longings kept
burning like fire in the desert
like moon in winter
like comets and meteors
dashing forth
though sudden
in a very short spark of the moment
for it is who we are
and what we are
all fickle and quick
soon to wither like a leaf
soon to dry like a creek

RIC S. BASTASA
To Our Readers

let us pause for a moment
in a three-minute silence
for our dear readers
who passed away.

let us pause for a moment
in another three-minute silence
for our readers who are dying
to read us again and again

may they keep on reading us
for without them
we shall soon be parted.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Our Youngest

in leaving this place
I shall recall
You wearing your Sunday’s best
With mama & papa
Still holding hands

RIC S. BASTASA
To Peck Upon The Hands Of God

what i see
every morning
on the same
time of
this
wrecking hour
is what pushes
me
to do
all these
writings on
the wall

i pity myself
but what can i do?

it creates all
the drum sounds in
my heart
and i am dancing wildly
in this forest
without the light
of the sun
yet

it caresses my
skin
like the massage
that one cannot forget
and so keeps
on returning

there is nothing
wrong here
nothing evil
it is
the mouth of heaven
speaking
there is no guilt
anymore
but after all these
wriggling
what hovers
in the fields are
the birds of
boredom
and the air of loneliness
keeps
blowing

i pity myself
this bird that flies high in the sky
without the fear
of falling

far from the mountains
wanting to
peck upon
the hands
of God

RIC S. BASTASA
To Pretend That All Is Well.....

the hands i love
so much
touch me tonight

i close my eyes
and feel
the tenderness of

numbness. I understand
how is it
to love and be not loved
in return
to pretend that all is
well

feel the warmth and not
believe in it
tired and then i fall
into sleep

satisfied that i have
not asked much

from life and its
complications.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Recall To Recompose

there is a time for recalling
what good times are stored in the heap of those emotions hidden
in your chests like some petals of dried flowers
in your perfume box

there is a time to recompose what used to be an old you
molting like a snake and coming up with a new shining
skin and good confident hissing

and there is also a time for throwing
and junking and spitting
and vomitting what destroys us

then in your heart there will be no names anymore
except the whispers of your desires
to dusk

RIC S. BASTASA
To Reminisce

to reminisce is not to surrender
to the past
and be defeated

it is to indulge
in what you had been with the people
you loved
and who loved you truly in the past

they are the everlasting flowers
from Baguio
that you put in your altar

to make your prayers warmer
so that the morning in its coldness
may also be delighted

RIC S. BASTASA
To Remove A Boredom

anxieties live in the hair
like the number of locks
the white particles in scalp

someone suggests that to remove them
one must try loving a goldfish

that you put in an aquarium
one that you can love and yet cannot love back

one that you speak with
and yet cannot answer back

it is a love in silence where
silence becomes a necessity

or to see an aggression
one need put too little food to so many fish

and see how they all display
actuation in the middle of their hunger

sometimes one feels it too
walking under the rain some people are looking

yet we cannot look back
somethings like what they tell us

and caress us
with all our hands tightly tied

RIC S. BASTASA
To Rest For A While...

from secrets of the labyrinths of the heart
upon a thread of your own goings
springs forth these poems of remorse...

as i write this, i crave to understand who i am,
where i come from and where i must be going...

at the end of the line there is always a pause
there is meaning there, there is really, but which
i still want to know....

the confusions are like fur, some distracting hair,
long and tangled, wanting me to unlock what puzzles
are there....

i would be lying if i do not know about this and that,
but simply to whom shall i tell that?
the labyrinths are mine alone and i have become another
godly goat, my horns are powers, but you must never see them,

for i am still my own man, with a beard and thick hair,
and strong hands, and tall built and sharp eyes....

at the end of this line is a pause...i am resting.....

RIC S. BASTASA
To Rose, Ms. Wounded

Rose, do not be lonely with your wounds,
do not cry,
there are too many wounded people in this world,
and as they are too many,
they have formed indeed a one
big, happy family
and their leader if you must know
is the most wounded of them all: Jesus Christ.

Join us then
in this celebration!

RIC S. BASTASA
To Save A Marriage

you do not
you must not
expect
that to save a marriage
i must lose myself

here i am on this journey
trying to trace the footsteps
of my old self

i am moving forward
to knowing what to keep and what to throw away

if at night you are no
longer on my side
then i might as well talk to myself
love myself more
and survive
the tests of life

alone in this contest
i take the hurdles
at the end you may think that
i could be the winner

no dice
if we lose sight of this common destination
we both
lose.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Say That I Am Miserable Is To Say That I Am Like Them

my friends will have a hard time
figuring out the real compass
of my north, for i make the impression
that i am bound south,
slow and not so sure, i keep walking
and they do not really know if i am with
them or against them
when they begin to talk i
pretend that i am their best friend
and when they laugh
i do not really join them
they always suspect that there is something
wrong with my capacity for
honesty or they simply leave me
for what they think i am,
secretive man, always keeping things
to himself, only wanting to survive
life's harsh treatment of himself,
i do not tell them, actually of some
miseries
i fear that i will just be another one
like them.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Say That The Man Is Harmless

to say that the man is harmless we dig
stories about his past,
first, how was he educated, and you find
out that he finished college with honors
in a Presbyterian university somewhere
in the most peaceful island of the
archipelago
second, you find out that he is a prayerful man
goes to church on Sundays
makes the sign of the cross
and takes the regular communion,
third, you also take refuge that he has
a family of his own
raised his kids in a way that
they all live a life in peace
and harmony with all the other
children,
finally, you keep track of his services
how he serves the poor
and the underprivileged
the marginalized sector
of our community

the last story that you know is that
the military arrested the good doctor
who was there in that mountain
of the poor people
curing the sick and
giving them medicine

now, he is dubbed as the communist
and the rest of the nation
is silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
To See A Kite Fly In The Sky

you may say it is beautiful to see a kite fly in the sky
it is like a cat wagging its tail
a picture of joy perhaps but you should have tried being a kite
floating
do you know how is it to float? that feather without wings
you do not know how is it to be a cloud or a fog
how was it when you are skinned out of love, when we were young and your best
friend leaves your place?
there was crying, and then the floating begins
you are the child without a mom, a stranger without a definite
destination
a man scraped of any purpose
that student who changes course every semester
that woman shifting from one man to another
that businessman always losing money from one investment to another
you know what i mean. There are so many metaphors of failures. So many
stories about losing love and life.
you have your own.
and you know what i really mean.
it is hard when you float and so it is good to know how to root.
know this soil. grab the fertility of its secrets.
make roots, the more roots the better life can be.
grow deeper, stab the silence of the earth.
grow more feet and arms and fingers.
hold tightly to what this earth can give you.

live.

RIC S. BASTASA
To See Grace...

a white cat
by the window
licking its fur
and
paws....

RIC S. BASTASA
To See Love

to see love
pure grace
and beauty

to be seen
by love
and be not
heard
and felt

to leave too
soon
still untouched

the pain lingering
for a lifetime

the wind passing
love is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
To See The Moon Sitting At The Center Of The Heart Of The Pond

To let go
Off the nights in my heart
I will go around this pond
To see the moon
Sitting at the center
of its heart

RIC S. BASTASA
To See The World...

another day is coming
the sun is up
and a new wind is blowing
from distant lands

the trees have shed off
old leaves
the stones are washed by
the rain

a few old men have died and
have gone to the other side
of the great divide
the grandchildren are here
and would be burying them

it is Friday and soon it will
be another weekend here
a few neighbors are leaving
seeking some fun somewhere

we too are leaving for Jerusalem
then to Amman and Cairo
to see Gaza, and Bethlehem
to feel the sands and the olives
to renew what's old, to see
the world.

RIC S. BASTASA
To See You Again

we shall meet again on the shallow banks of
the running river on mossy rocks greener
and water drenched by the constant rain
darker horizons colder air and shivering silence

we meet again as wrinkled skin and white hair
bent and weak and surrendering to whatever that comes
and finally goes passing us by

we will just take a glimpse and confirm the reasons for
what happened and why it happened
it is enough, we shall take the last look of ourselves
and then we close our eyes and die

RIC S. BASTASA
To Show Flare

no one is
totally free
hence there
will be compromises

you share a room
you cannot just go
naked

you work
somehow you learn
to swallow your
pride

there is a place
where you are
not allowed to stay

a house where
you cannot sleep and
a chair which you
cannot sit

always there are
do's and dont's
you have to eat
even if you do not
like it

you say words
which you do not mean
and finally you
say, Life is not fair
but just the same
you got to show
flare...

RIC S. BASTASA
To Silence A Loquacious Woman

he is right
give her a book
so she may read
and be silent
for a while.

the problem is
she asks for another
book again
and to irritate you
using her wisdom
for revenge
she leaves the kitchen
and the marital bedroom
and read the book
somewhere in
a beach resort
sunbathing.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Sit And Not To Stand To Write And Not To Speak.

it is their nature
for rain to fall
for clouds to drift
the rise and fall of the sun
the ebbs of the sea the seems of the horizon
it the nature of the river to take
the path of least resistance, the winding
here you are this is your nature too
to sit and not to stand to write and not to speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Sleep Soundly Upon A Late Night

there is a promise of enjoyment
about utility
measured in just a few moments

you have to pay for the intimate hours
and then be silent
no images, nothing about love
nothing about memories to share
and remember

we want it to be brief and
explosive
but we never desire that it should
stick to our skins and bones

another fantasy
another longing for something that folds and
unfolds
for something that opens and then closes
without attachment

i could have grabbed that moment with you
but light is too much
and i am not blinded

i let it go and i am weary
so weary when i arrive again in my room
finding nothing but myself
with its dignity intact

i can sleep soundly now though it is late already

RIC S. BASTASA
To Soar Again

inanimate one can soar like a rocker on a fuel at the back
the falling cannot do any harm
for things fall and falling is natural

one sometimes soars like a bird on real wings on feathers
that cannot withstand the storm
the waters hurt and the falling means death

but just the same one must soar and fall and die
nobody minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Soar Upon An Aria

to be a bird again
once again
from that very distant
past of
your evolution,
to have wings
and lots of winds and skies
and dive again
back into
the nostalgia
of nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Some Of My Ever Selfish Friends

you fail me..
and i am very sorry for myself

last night i have fed your mouths
i never worry about money
last two nights were feasts
the evening was my entertainment
for our overdue engagements

i have parted a lot from my memories
hoping that on the third night you will
reciprocate my kindness

it is the same selfishness
that mankind had given to the past dead gods

i am very sorry about all of you
the next years will be better

the path towards your house are now erased
i am going somewhere else

to those places where i am reciprocated
where i am no longer alone

in my own abundance. IF i had to talk to myself
i will

my diary is closed. you will never read any part of my
again.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Someone Who May Claim As The Subject Of This Poem

when you die
i shall not cry

i shall not have
you my tears

i will just wave
my hands
like the sea
to the land
where it does
not belong

i shall not smile
what relevance
is earthly joy
to heavenly bliss?

i will give you a wink
like a lover
signaling our
future meeting

RIC S. BASTASA
To Someone Whom You Love...

before this ends
i will write you
a letter,

a frame of rain
in a canvass of red
and black
shadows of our
past
hear the beatings
of our hearts

i will leave it
to someone whom
you love.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Stand Before You And Talk About Being Just And Good

when you let me talk
i fear that i may not stop talking

after all
the topic is about an eternal quest
for what is good
and just

i get inside
an opening and then i start the
walk inside a labyrinth
and i feel like i am
a lost child
looking for an opening
again
sensing that perhaps there is
another light
beyond us

i sailed
and chanced upon an island
of uncertainty
and then i disembark from
there
only to find
that there is nobody there
except myself
talking

it is so strange
i see mountains and the world
is so silent

RIC S. BASTASA
To Stand Tall

all it takes to stand tall
is to believe
that you are tall

and feel and
do what it takes
to be tall. You do not need
kin or friends or relatives
or politics or religion
or sorcery

what you need is only
to believe and then
the length
of your dreams begins
to grow
and become true

this is just a matter
between the heart
and the mind

and of course,
the determination to be
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Start

to start you are tempted
to throw
everything away

love gained
trust reposed
honor
and a name

you view yourself
bathing
under the rain

scrubbing your
body
with something
that you think
cleanses

soaping it
hard and wasting
so much water

it is all in the
head
not with your hands
or body

it is all in the mind
this being
to itself unto itself

there is no use
discarding
everything

they know when to
leave
when you just
say it

and soon you will
hug regret

RIC S. BASTASA
To Start All Over Again

i would like to start all over again
i will not change anything
i only have to add
what i did not have once

it will be someone
not to your liking, it will be someone
whom i can share my life with

it will be someone whom i could care
someone that i could die for
someone who can make me live again
and make me feel complete

i shall hear someone babbling
struggling to talk with me
it can be laughter, it can be a cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Start All Over Again....

it does not really
matter if i do not matter
to you,

though i still care if you
are in pain too,

we had always been detached
like candy wrappers,

my sweetness to your blandness
my kindness to your indifference

it does not matter if
i do not matter for i have

declared before this mirror,
that i, matter, that i have

this mind, this mind, that
to me, thru its independence,

still matters much. When it
is over, that is how i begin.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Stavro....

there is
something chilling
in the question

and so the answer
should have been hotter
than expected

it was a pity
the fly wants to be
another spider

what was normal to
the spider
has become its own
chaos

there was severe
coughing in the sea
and the rocks
keep steady

i want to take you
somewhere
from that state of
decay
into something more
than

life. you laugh
it is not funny.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Still Have The Courage

to still have the courage
to go on living
despite
all the odds of a life
that seems
to refuse life's
limited offers
of survival

to dream of you
and still keep on dreaming
of you
when reality
on the other hand
flatly tells
that you were gone
that in fact
you were gone
23 years ago

i wake up
only to find out that
life is cruel
and insensitive

courage tells
to go on
living life
both as a duty
and a right
that life is beautiful
that courage
is indefatigable

RIC S. BASTASA
To Sunshine Which Just Landed In My Skin Today

how many years did it take you
to travel in space just to reach me and
warm my skin?

do you have a story to tell too?
if you do, please stay a while and
tell me, for i am here with nothing
to do but listen.

oh you still have so many light years
to go? so many surfaces to touch?

you are bound to keep that secret with
you. I know how hard it is to take the
load of warmth and stay on nobody's
skin.

so you are going. Tasked and always going
and always taking with you something so
confidential.

So go now. I shall not disturb you again.
I shall not ask you to reveal what belongs
to the sun and the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Support A World

we must be two opposite poles
repelling one another
to support a world
distant apart
we maintain a certain space
where we can be strong...

RIC S. BASTASA
To Support This House Of Love

to support this house of love
we must be strong pillars
lifting these burdens
high upon the clouds
space and distance apart
to each our own silence

RIC S. BASTASA
To Survive

to survive i go for the golden mean
not so tall and not so short

the tastier, meatier part i suppose
is the middle part of the sandwich

the smoother flow is the middle
part of the river

the safer part is the middle in every
location

at the extreme right what do you get?
or at the extreme left?

i sing between
you extreme joy is killing you with arrogance
your extreme sorrow is killing you with hopelessness

you see,
i live in the middle of everything
not so hot and not so cold and they always call it

this paradise.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Swim Today

What i love most
is a beautiful morning

when ideas are fresh
like red daisies still wearing the
pearls of dew

when we feel so invigorated
like new bodies coming out from the wombs
of our mothers

i look outside
the trees are taller
leaves swaying to the whispers of the winds

beyond me the sea with white foams on their tongues
white boats sail with fishermen fishing for the food of the day
their wives waiting for what shall be brought inside wicker baskets

some kids are playing on the soccer fields
goats and cows graze at the other side of the plains

more reasons add up to living
and i repeat the same phrase to my sad friend in Minnesota'Don't give up. Life is beautiful! '

i do not wish to end. But i too have to go.
Today, i shall swim and have my date with the blue sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Take His Hand.....

Death
comes face to face
with you

you, who demands that
all these crazy people
must die

you, who shouts that
all these terrorists must
go to hell

you, who claims that this
world is overpopulated
and hence
birth must cease
even for the meantime

now you are here
face to face with death
and he is asking you
to take his hand....

let it start with you,
he says.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Tell Something Original.

She says, you are not original in what you are telling me

Any janitor in your office can always say that seeing that

It is different. I am original in this. I am feeling something.  
I am original in this feeling and you do not feel it that way I see these things.

I am leaving you. It is the first time I am feeling this. It is this first time  
That I am telling you. I am original. I have long searched what words to use  
To tell something original.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Tell You The Truth Of This Wrangling

...if and
only if

i have what you have
i could have chosen
silence

if i tasted what your
taste buds
have flowered
i could have stared
at the clouds
and do nothing

i chatter like a box
of fine metal
chips
and you're so dumb to
give it
a variety of
meanings

if only i
had your bed
i could have
slept
soundly

i wonder why
you follow me
when
i have nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
To That Little Bird In Pain

Something in me is stirred
for i can still be unhappy if among
the 99 who are pleased
one is still there
angered by the word that i have
uttered

nevertheless there is still time
to recompense
either that i be silent for a while
face a blank wall
and stare at it with wonder
looking for a leak
for the light to get in

i may go somewhere else
reinvent myself and come back
with the gentleness of wind
come the first day of august
when i have to rethink
what word is proper
what seed to give
to that little bird in pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Academician....

how pitiful
for you to have learned
all the theories
and techniques of
swimming yet when
you were
thrown to the sea
you still do not
know how to swim

you sink and drown
and all we can do is
pray

the unschooled fish
know best.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Aggies Of Ateneo De Davao Around The World

nostalgia is the word for all these now
we have the urge to look out the window and find
who we were: the joys of the college years that will tickle us
old friends and their memories like innocent children
coming on our laps asking for our embraces
old pictures make our hearts shrink a little only to grow
bigger like a bread from the pan
fresh and fuming with the flavor of wheat

nostalgia is the word for it
and time is its mother that nourishes with its milk
the past comes to us always with something greener
and a breather of mint and rosemary
some peppers and honeyed lemonades

nostalgia is the word for it
when our wings have gone far beyond the lands of our births
dissolving in the horizons of other lands
when our chirps are gone

nostalgia is the word for it
when we come back stronger this time and lovelier
with our wounds that healed
with our pains that lost its trick

nostalgia is the word for it
such is she a beautiful woman still even though the hairs have turned gray
and the breasts sag and the bones rattling like brittle sticks

nostalgia is the word for it and no matter where the winds of this world
and its cyclones and waves have taken us
we are back looking for the glitter of each other's eyes
and then we laugh and then the world has heard us

yes, nostalgia is the word that people seldom use
as they move on with their respective lives

but we are here once again
nostalgia is the theme, it is here and soon it will leave
we are once again full even for once

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Aliens Who Were With Me In Sedona....

to all those
where goodbyes and hellos
do not mean
anything anymore
i salute all of you
in your toughness
i have not learned and
so here i am
still shivering in the coldness
of all your hearts.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Ants

their anthill
is the most powerful
territory
they ever built
for months now
their knows what
real business is all about
being fed
and then
reproduce for the
greatness of
their anthill
empire

the anteater comes
wanting to disprove
this fact

the truth is
everything is nothing
but predator-prey

without
exception
even your
religion.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Artist Of Endelicio

i

the tall man in his sixties
when we enter your house
says that shattered glasses
are bad for feng shui

ii

your garden chair is a mosaic
of broken glasses matching with
your lampshade of broken bottles
and your floors of broken tiles

iii

it is cruel to hear that they
view you not as an artist but
a mad man

iv

you in your gray hair and thin
structure and old skin
looks decent enough for me
and struggling with all your
art works, paintings, sculptures
paper mache and stuffed animals

v

outside a gray cat is basking its
body under the morning sun
on a stone bench beside the
banana trees

vi
i take a lot of pictures of all your stuff
and this is the first time that i have met you
having heard of your name and your cafe cum gallery
a long time ago

vii

back to the shattered glasses and broken bottle and tiles
and sculptures of mother earth and man and emaciated natives
sometimes i ponder that if i were in your shoes will i do the same?

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Childhood That I Love

how many times
shall i promise you that i will not preach anymore
the good times
we had together when you were once
a child
like me?

but i must remember
in order to live some more
and i cannot
but do it again
like i am a beggar to this world
to grant me more days
to pump red blood
to my veins

ah, the fresh air of home
there are no factories there
no tall buildings
but green hills bumping against
the breeze of the sea
bringing the songs of shells

ah, those rivers
transparent silky cloth
showing the
fancy colors of fish
swimming upon
a refraction

i must tell you about all these
again and again
so you will not be lost
from me

ah, we were not once
we will always be
young forever even on that
day when i shall pass away

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
the departure though real as
rail of the tram
must become some kind of
smoke from the
fireplace

i love you and i will not tire saying so.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Curious Friend....

of course
we know what we love
yet we also know
the limit of
what we can
do

we know how wide the
field is
yet you know
how fences can be
made
to stop this
chaos

do not ask us
we always know what love is
we shy away
from hate
we discard indifference
we find no use
of them

do not ask if we
are happy
we know what happiness is
do not utter the
word
sadness
we do not use it
here

we know what we cannot have
and we do not wish
to give you any

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Dancing Faithfuls Of San Vicente

i do not really know what was it that made me cry.

I stopped somewhere in the middle of the crowd
who were dancing to the gong beats of
senyor san vicente in olingan.

how can a very disappointing life make you dance?

there were stories of course.

that woman cannot bear a child,
that man had three kids who died in a car accident.
the hunchback of this town has a wish for a healthy spine.
the old lady has no place to live.

and so on and so forth

these are all people with lamentations.

i am only knowing things on the surface.
they never allow me to go deeper because if i have to

they will bleed some more and their drops of blood
become dry on the pavement

not everyone has eyes that see

meanwhile senyor san vicente keeps spreading its plaster of Paris wings, white with its new paint glossy and decent.

the dancers perhaps do not know the story
that he can be in many places at the same time.

what they know is that this saint is miraculous.
something amazing will happen in their lives
after the saddest sound of their dance steps.

sonorous, monotonous, by analogy it could be like
a scream for help,
for justice,
for understanding of what
is happening to
their lives.

and the eventual acceptance of their fates.

i do not know why i am crying.
I really do not know why.

i too, have a lamentation of my own.
Perhaps.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Disciples...

he always tells them
you are not just horses that are led to the brook to drink water
to satisfy your thirst,
not just empty glasses where hot water is poured
where some goes into an expected breaking
you are not just shirts and pants to be buttoned and unbuttoned
not just headgears to be worn and displayed in school
not just any knife to be sharpened
or pencils

you are not my things
not the objects but will always be subjects with minds of your own
with destinies already reserved at the end
there is nothing to worry, even if you do not believe it,
everything is written,
there are already maps, and what we do is merely to read them
and find out where those treasures lie

as Socrates once in his short life emphasized
he is just the midwife and you are those pregnant women
you shall bear the children
move them out from your system
hear their first cries
and feed them and see them grow
ah, not to be really like you

i am just the spring and you are the great rivers
i am just the spectator and you are the actors of the show
i am the shadow and you are the bodies
you are all suns, and i shall be the moon that will cast that borrowed light
into that earth.

so long, be good,
take all the chances
till we meet again
adios.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Editor

after the lightning and thunder last night
the mushrooms begin to grow
under the banana shrubs
on those wet fields

you will see all of them
as i see them
and i will bring a basket to gather all of them
to offer to you

i trust you to choose the edible ones
the ones that we feed to those who are hungry
i trust you to throw away all the poisonous ones
outside the kitchen

but then i will go out again amidst the rain
and even deep in the night
to collect those that you throw away

i will look at them again
bring them in my room and try to see why
their lives are too short

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Eyes Of The Newcomer

a green plain
a series of hills
some big mountains
tips reaching the clouds
the sun shines
the wind blows
a leaf falls
the first touch of the hand
on the petal of a white flower
whiteness
and blueness and scents of flowers
and trees

cool, warm,
in solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Flower In The Desert.

First, you tell me that this must be done.
I commented, yes, that will be nice.
Second, you suggest that this will be nice in Riza's place.
I suggested otherwise.
It will be better at Nicco's since the trees are taller and the grasses are greener.
Later, you spread the news. It will be at Nicco's.
Ten answered. They will be there.
Then I got sick. Mother Nature says,
I am not good.

The ought was not done.
The Thing did not push through because as you said,
I was not there, and that
I told you that THIS MUST BE DONE.

I am just wondering why the OUGHT cannot be done without me?
Am I the wheel of the truck?
Am I the steer of the ship?
Am I the owner of the place where Nicco's trees are growing taller and his grasses spreading greener?

I am not. I am not the Ought.
Then you said this no time to discuss this matter.
You are in a meeting with God.

You lied. I am not the OUGHT. You schemed me out.
You want be to become the river where your boats will be sailing.

You lied, It is unfair. I am therefore cutting the water.
I cancel myself. I do not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Foolish One

ah, look at you
you have finally entered in the net
of compulsions
you stepped upon
the snake pit
and they all bite you
and you feel
no pain anymore
foolish perhaps but

you are still alive
the venom has immunized you
and the snakes are but
worms
the net is but the tangles
of the spider
as you destroy them all
with one
slash of your
left hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Fourth Year Class Preparing For The Major Exams

we are all dead
tired and we are trying to
cope up with each
page and fine prints
of political law
so taxing to the eyes
and so damaging
to our brains,
my dear
class, let us take a
break, we go to
the pizza parlor
order some mugs
of beer and choose
those giant Domino pizzas
with mushrooms, 
large tomatoes,
and lots of
shredded mozarella cheese

good luck this sunday.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Frog Clan

This shall be the symbol of my clan
The slime of my ancestors
For those whose claim for life and prosperity
Is as prolonged as the length of the list found in the clan’s tree

This frog is your frog
It is part of the multitude
Taking the power of the ten rivers
Its croaking
Is the uproar against the loudest blur of the reigning rains

You are the frog like us

From water to land to grasses to marshes to trenches
Of this earth
We shall remain as the true descendants of the great frog

By our nature
We shall not go hungry
By the power of the longest tongue
By the secret poisons of our skins
By our rounded views
By our slime
By the strong clinging of our ties
We shall all be saved
From the great flood
May our dead ancestors
May the great frogs
Lead us to the most secure pond of our future lives
And may the frog in us
Give us the great leap
The great jump
Taking us to our dream
Our clear cool waters
Teeming with mashing marshes
And there
Dear loving frogs of this clan
Let all our croaking be one.
Let all our croaking be true.
Let our croaking be love.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Full Time Student In The College Of Law...

as you were taking the midterm examination
on double jeopardy and
search and seizures i was looking at you
closely,

you are so lucky to have with you
supportive parents, friends,
you have all the recent books, the
latest car, the personal computer
the laptop that you carry,
the complicated cell phone

then you were swinging your head
rolling your eyes and scratching your head
on such a hard examination as you claim it to be

beside you is Dan, working student,
poor family, dead father, mother is a plain housewife,
and why on earth is he doing well
in fact, excelling in this endeavor....

such an irony, but i am not surprised
i've been there.

seeing myself in Dan.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Gifted One...Or The Lucky One..

here you conquered our world
in just two,

just two, do not ask me what it is, just two..

i have a thousand and perhaps a thousand more

this is do with love

i have these sands in my hands yet i never had a grain

not a sand dune, not a hill

nevertheless, i regret nothing

you are the gifted

the lucky one

forgive me,

but i don't really mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Goddess

every day i visit you
i kneel
and look for thoughts
matching them
with words
i shower the ground
with some tears
i genuflect
i scrutinize every nook
of myself
it is intense
it is a deep experience
there are whirlpools
and there are hands that pull me down
to drown me
i struggle
grap for air
into the basics of my
experience

everyday i worship you
because i too
am looking for a cure
into the sickness
of my own
humanity

i make this plea
love me.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Gods

to the gods
i honor them
with the humble
entrance to
my abode

my batting
eyelash
my dead
eyelid
my wry smile
my knife of
loneliness
that can stab
anybody

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Hand Painter Who Goes Offline When I Go Online

i lied
when i said i like your painting
it is a pity
no one
buys it.

the truth is
what i saw in that canvass
was a man deprived of happiness
craving for
sex
but cannot simply accept
that his body
needs it

warmth is not all jacket
it is better
done with skin
to skin
inside a room where you are naked
and so private
with another body looking for that much
needed intimacy
in the middle of this city where
indifference
seems to be the mother of mankind.

i wish sometimes that you better
do a portrait of yourself
in black
and while
sketches
from a sharp charcoal
on a
very white and thick
canvass.
To The Heavens....

what really happened is that i burned bridges. I leave so many boats at the other side of the island. I stop what i have begun before.

i sold phones. Keep the money for my needed silence.

i put all the books inside a box and i sealed all of them. There is no more air.

I refuse appearances. They are too deceiving. Myself deceived included.

The news that they receive is that i got sick, but they refuse to believe it.

I keep my old room. Dust my personal computer. Check the old wires. And i start thinking my own personal thoughts. I am reinventing a self, reconstructing what i do not believe.

I blast my own port. Leave the house built by Papa. And here i am. I write only for myself.

I ask more questions now, and I am different, I expect no answers. Because the world does not have them.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Hypocrite

i

Many kiss the hand
they wish cut off

ii

we despise the pleasure of pleasing people
whom we despise

iii

The lips are smiling,
but is the heart?

iv

A hypocrite is the kind of politician
who would cut down a redwood tree,
then mount the stump
and make a speech
for conservation

v

The value of an idea
has nothing to do
with the success
of the man
who expresses it.

vi

It is with pious fraud
as with a bad action;
it begets
a calamitous necessity
of going on.
Every man alone is sincere;  
at the entrance of a second person  
hypocrisy begins.

The wolf was sick,  
he vowed a monk to be-  
But when he got well,  
a wolf once more was he.

It is a trick among  
the dishonest to offer  
sacrifices that are not needed,  
or not possible,  
to avoid making

For neither man  
nor angel can discern hypocrisy,  
the only evil  
that walks invisible.  
those that are required.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Indifferent One...

you think
i will miss you?

you think
that i gonna die
when
i won't have you?

i'll make it
clear
i'll state it
categorically
clear

i don't
i don't

i don't
i don't

i didn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Intelligent Woman

i like to tell you this
when you bragged about your intelligence
mocking me
like i am the only moron in your world
of ideas and
poetry

save yourself
if intelligence has that record of survival
as far as i am concerned
so far
as i remember fully well
there is not 'a word in the gospels
in praise
of intelligence'

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Lady In Power

i thought
no mother in her right
mind would give
a snake to her child who
is asking for
bread

d个项目 time an
aberration had
taken place right in
the road
where the hungry children
flocked
to ask for rice

the force of the law
was used
against the very ones
who put them in power

instead of rice
they were given bullets

three were killed
the other hundred wounded
some disappeared

what a mess!
do they not know that the
murderous
shape of bullets are
not the same as the gentle grace
of rice grains?

they ask for life
and you Madam
gave them death

you have no moral right
to continue being their mother.....

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Misogynist Brother Of Ours...

i understand
the struggle of the
misogynist

i am his brother
and i comprehend
how hate was a
seed how it had
grown roots
how it became a
tree
in the midst of
new york

to cope up
to recompense
what and who he
hated
for whatever reason
we have learned to
love
and love so well

to level the field
we have built a statue
for mother
a memorial for sister
and gave an honorary ball
for wife.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Missing Bell Of Dapitan

to reclaim what was once yours
lame, your crutch is the silence of
this night,
the conscience balm is what
is right

soon you will hear the most sorrowful
sound of the church bell in
Dapitan

stolen from the masses
taken to the U.S.

The prayers of the natives are
mountains and rivers seeking the ocean
of revenge

soon you will find yourself alone in the park
still walking in the rain

this is the time of drought
the grasses are dying

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Modern Creature Of Troy

before you do it
you have to count
ten thousand ships
and a hundred thousand
waves

everything resonate
to an end
some are catastrophic
irreversible

now you are beside me
my hands are waiting
my heart is excited
everything in me is anxious
for the real thing
this action for a hundred
explosions of this
emotion

i have counted ten thousand
and one hundred forty three ships
and three hundred thousand waves
and after a while
i have come to the inevitable conclusion:

you are not worth it.
you have not launched a thousand ships
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Monkey Year....

it is the year of
the monkey
nevertheless i am
still lucky
as a buffalo i
still have a chance
to let this
playful monkey
ride on my back
gather the fruits
of my labor
and on my hard future
savor my fervor.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Moon And Come Back.....

what we did
was done
and it cannot
be undone
no matter how we
wish it
undone

what we did
we did so with love
and then we
parted

what we did and
what we want done again
we cannot
do otherwise and so here
we are
wishing and remembering
just nothing
but reminiscing

but all is not too late
if we will
we can
we could have done so
only if
and only if
we love and we really love
to the hilts down to the bones
to the moon
and come back

RIC S. BASTASA
To The New Zealander Who Climbs The Topmost Rocky Mountain

Rocky road
leading to the rocky mountain

up to the top
is the cross that spreads its shadow

to the deepest blue sea
below us

and you climb the rocks
as i close my eyes

imagining how is it
when you fall

and die....

RIC S. BASTASA
mama had favored you.
we were humiliated.
set aside like wastes.
we embraced silence.
no choice. how can we
hate mother anyway?
well, it is all about
money. Something we
never really need.
we only need enough.
we had it somehow.
you shall amass what
is unnecessary and we
just stare at all these.
you are old, no one lives
forever. the days are running
fast like a rabbit.
we are contented with
what is in our hands.
we travel to places.
we talk to strangers.
we had enough pictures.
we only had ourselves.
Light is free, so is air.
The road is long and wide
and winding. Myriad
choices whom to be with.
Even in funerals of
friends, we avoid you.
Evil spirit. Crazy woman.
Avarice and greed combined.
may you not die.
may you be eternally damned
to life and old age.
may you belong to the
earth forever.
may you not know where
is home.
To The One I've Known When I Was Younger Then

there was something in the past
that burnt me

you were there innocent like someone who does not belong
to earth

you never had he wings of an angel or even that of a bird
the chicken in you shames me

you were telling stories that i had no right to listen
because they hurt me

you did not know, you were a stranger in my heart
i was shattered with the news

you laughed at me, that was my first shame,
i fetched water from the well, repaired the leaking roof of the

house of my father, did not talk to mama for days,
regretting that i was born

with a limp on my leg, a black mark on my face,
a weakness on my heels

i did not change anything, it would be impossible
i must live all my years, and you shut your mouth up

you know very well, that despite everything
i am human and i have the right to be here

and you went your way, and i avoided the cross-crossing of
our paths

i live my life well, and that is your shame.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One On Top...

knowing that
his having reached
the top
was an injustice
one learns
that the top is
not important
at all.

after all
just like you
he is a nobody
too.

RIC S. BASTASA
'To The One Who Cannot Drink, Do Not Show Water'

FAIR lady, be fair to me
tonight do not show your naked
body inside
my room,

when you knock my heart
is a an empty box

when you kiss me
i am a wall without
framed pictures

when you make love to me
i am dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Cannot Read Anymore....

there is always that faith
in the silent nurtures of your heart that

i can be better than this
that i can do much better than that
the i am great

though you do not say it lest others
mistake it as arrogance

or conceit, or the hubris of the roots
of adamhood

the sin of confidence? the pride of independence?
the conceit of pandora?

there is this confidence that we keep that
we are good, and that we could do much better that we

are the best so far, but we do not say it,
we do not even write it, though

we show it in some subtle ways, a trick on ourselves,
a hidden truth, always not ready to be uttered,

but here i am, as always, i am,
without pretense, without a song, without a carpet,

proclaiming, i am alive and that is best enough for me,
and i still write

i have never told you and you will never have a chance
reading this.

it is my sympathies.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Feels Superior...

above us
stars

if you can
be above it

i will vow
spaceship.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Gives Me Pain

expect this
domino game of pains
what you give me
i give to all of them
in return
and surely there will be
a collapse
of all emotions
the last one to have it
may inflict upon himself the
worst
but who cares?
this is a well connected world
the moment a butterfly flutters
a storm
somewhere is created.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Keeps Looking On Those Walls

you shall hear no sad word from us
we are silent because of you
we are watching a clear pond this summer
away from you

do not ever think that we entertain anger
we have long set that aside like rags
come to us, we are forming a circle
we are connecting our hands like a perimeter fence

we are praying for understanding to come
like droplets of lights from the skies like meteorites
talk to us, look straight to our eyes
there is no reason for an embarrassment

look at all of us and see how you can manage this journey
you must win this game of weaknesses
you are looking at those walls where you cannot pass through
come, look at our eyes that love you still: you shall win this game

you must, what is the use of our presence here now
when you dissolve like ice on a hot desert day
come, look at us, we had been there, and we shall not return
look at our eyes now, and take the power:
you must win this game, you must!

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Recently Left The House Of Love....

and i will be missing
your massage
soft and gentle to my
chest and i will
be regretting throughout
my life
for what which i have not
done
lovingly unto you

i shall be teased for only
piercing your ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Says She Is Reading My Poem

let us have a compromise,
after reading the first stanza
from my magic lines
i will give you
youth, and on the second stanza
i will hand you
beauty
on the third stanza i will promise
you fortune
on the fourth perhaps
intelligence
and on the fifth perhaps
fame,

i have this magic wand
given by fairy godmother
the one used
for Cinderella and Snow white
and Rapunzel

and Shrek, and so on and so forth,
tonight then you must read my poem,

but don't you be disappointed,
it has only one word.

Fool.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The One Who Was Taken

it does not fit you
you're too young
bound to commit
same errors over
and over again

since you persistently
prayed for it
and so it was given

you do not deserve it
now you must spread
the virus of your grief
you will kill without
your knowing
you will condemn
the innocent
you will be honored
and respected
but only for the meantime

the time comes for reckoning
and you will lose what is most important
you will lose everything
everything and yet without your knowing

you should have known better
that sometimes the gods grant your prayers
purposely to punish you

and still without your knowing
without your knowing.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Oppressor...

there are those without choices left
but to live in the comfort of the cave
you burned their houses and the only bridge
that connects to us

the river swells and crocodiles live there
there is no more way
for home,

there are those who commit the crimes
because a jail is home
it has become a shelter
where food is free
where peers are kind
where choices are none

there are birds which you put is so many cages
to your delight
they have no choice but to stay there till death

i have seen their bones and feathers
i have kept them all
in my home

sooner shall the Furies come,
bringing you the cage
the jail,
the cell where you shall dwell forever

then you shall know what songs are there inside the teeth
gritting
what bitterness is there
drilling pain to a tooth decaying
and you too shall have no choice

i shall see you pass,
i will keep your bones.
To The Other World

try standing naked by this mirror
see yourself to every detail
look closer to your eyes
count the waves of your eyelashes
open your mouth and see how many teeth you have
all white, pure white lining up on your pink gums
feel your lips with your fingertips
feel the pulp the flesh of the lower lip
to the upper lip
touch your hair
do not imagine them all black
closely they are not at all
move a little bit closer and see your body
this beautiful human body
flesh, contours, curves, some muscles
the whole of your skin wrapping
everything in your body holding them all
nothing falls, on this erect body, this
god before you, standing steel-like with dignity
in front of the mirror
do not claim you have seen your soul with your eyes
do not lie
be honest to yourself now,
alone, you are alone, do not imagine
any god, any soul, any spirit,
just be honest,
touch your body with your hands
feel the joy of having this body
your body, pinch a part of it to feel
not pain, but just to feel that you are alive,
do you ever ask what made these parts stay as one?
look again at the mirror of this stature
your body, it is you, touching your body
take a hammer, and destroy the mirror
shatter everything to pieces
this is the world without a mirror
there is nothing to reflect you now
nothing to imagine, it is you, the real you

do you ever ask now, where is that other world?

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Outside Guy

from here
we have the intentions
of telling you about ourselves
you do not see us
in this place

there is no winter here
we have never felt ice
there is no autumn
we never see the sadness of the
leaves falling
we either have rain
or shine

it is only them
who tells us that this is our
paradise lost

we wish for something else
on sad faces
as said the far pastures are
always greener

i've been to places
and this i tell them
this is where i belong
this is here where home is
where there is no winter
neither autumn
but just rain or shine

you are wrong
we have no regrets
neither are we
envious about
skis and
snow balls
To The Person I Love

the person i really love
i have not
said
i love you

the sentence is so enormous
i love you
no promises are enough
and thinking
about its immortality is too much

we just live
according to its import
moment by moment

at most
uttering i love you

destroy the essence of its purity in silence
it the quiet
where it thrives where it reigns in the kingdom of its gaze

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Poet Who Writes About The Inverted Point Of View Of The Bats

it is unfair.
the bat has chosen
privacy
and has not said
anything
about us
humans

upon an inverted
existence
of having days as nights
living in caves
and cracks and
dark nooks
it has the right
to put on those
signals:

do not disturb
please do not disturb us
we are bats
we live in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Poet Whose Poems We Should Not Have Read

i anticipated something horny
all i have was thorny

i was excited about the title
but up to there only because the
whole body was ugly

i promise myself i will not read
any of his work again
but i must be stupid for i fall
on the same mistake again

it's alright, we are fools somehow
asking ourselves what do we gonna do
to make his quit?

to survive i must be numb
to be more stupid this time
then i will be number one.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Poor Woman I Love

I bought you a dress
Wear it
You are so beautiful
In it
You stand
And I will look
At you
You turn to the left
And to the right
And then
I ask you
To raise your head
With dignity
You will speak
To me
The words
I write on the letter
I sent with the
Money
You must say
You love me
Then I will
Bow before you
Inside this room
I will ask you
To take out the dress
Again
I want to see
This time
If you are
Already real
But you may
Not
If you don’t
Really like
It, so I can
Now take
my honest
exit..
RIC S. BASTASA
To The Rocks

for my youth
i heard all the music of the rocks
it was hard but it was good
it was rough but we learned to like them all
nothing destructive
just the surging and the hilarity
of the roller coaster
ride to
the present stage,

and now,
to the rocks shall everything be,
i keep the career
and i cannot keep both,

soon, i shall shy away from
any contractual obligations
i have my own reasons
so shall the other party,

and the judge of all time,
God, or man, or everyone one,
shall say,

we agree, the binds are too strong
but somehow there is a word
to loosen it,

they are right,
they have called it by the name of chains
iron locks,
nightmare clocks,

at night, you see a face without eyes and ears
and there is that big scream

on those days
you keep on watching how the wind is robbing
the trees of their leaves

and then
at the end, you realize that there is nothing that you need

the nothingness engulfs you
and then happily
you embrace its arms, you rest, you are gone

you leave a note to the sands,
forget everything
leave all as they are.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Sadness Of Everyone And Everywhere.

if only i could love
you, i should have done
that years ago,

i only said the words
which my heart never
really meant,

i am only copying the
humanity angle of that
novel which you wrote
years back,

i never loved you
i was never honest
never that daring to
tell the truth,

your love was always
greater than my lies,
your pain much deeper
than my hypocrisy,

you are such a lovely
and passionate woman
which i had taken
advantage of, for as
always your love was
always greater than
mine to the other whose
name i have never
revealed to you,

the heart is as always
unreasonable, my mind
wants to love you yet
my heart had always
vehemently refused it.
i am so sorry for all
this mess, i would have
asked for forgiveness,
but you had already left
for good, always carrying
with you the sweet memory
of me,

now that you have settled
on your own chosen path with
a family of your own, i say,
i am happy for you, now that
i have remained lonely throughout
my life, let me say,
let it be, for i so deserve it.

in weighing the scales, i have
not lived well, a life in a lie,
a life without passion, a leaf
floating on the river, carried
by the current to the sadness of
everyone and everywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Six Furies Of My Mind...

we,

who are being attacked by
the Five Furies

mine now Six

have no other possible defense
to protect
our minds

but to write these lines

so do not ask me
why i am writing th
ese

i am being chased
and so i am running away

i have to run away still
because i am being chased like wind to another wind

like nothing
to another nothing

i am
perhaps still afraid of

the death of my
mind

the death of the wind
the trees will die too

the fireflies turn off their lights
the birds fall down the trees
i, who want
to still think and think to think some more
has no other option

i write
to make the Six Furies know
that i also know how to protect myself
that i am
a survivor

i do not speak here
but the Six Furies must stop a while and hear

they must listen
lest they shall die in their own noise
like fire on their long hair

i make
my plea,

i am guilty, i am guilty
i know i am guilty of all the lies and deceit

but give me more time please
to choose

a happy
death.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Stars On The Wings Of A Pig

be not hopeless
because my dear even with the wings of a pig
we can still reach the hands of the
stars...

just have that heart
the good one of course
the one that redeems the
coarseness
of humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The State...

distance between two decisions
is heaven and earth
am situated between these two extremes
belong to that spot
where compromises are made
am but
compromise too
my nature speaks a lot about this and that
and this space in between
live here
in this place where people wear two faces
have four hands
and four feet
but we do not display them
we fear you.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Sunflower Goddess

i once wrote a poem
for you sunflower goddess

each word is tainted
with my blood
each line is drawn
within the perimeters
of my aching heart

i look for you sunflower
goddess
i am the moon

you are destined for
the harshness of the noonday sun

tonight you will be mine
but you are dead
sunflower goddess

i will bury you in the embrace of my golden sheen
tonight
my witness shall be a hundred stars

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Thief Of The Night....

it was not what you
took away from me
that i cried about
it was you
for you have not changed
still
for the better

we're sorry for
this
we are saddened still
for we could
have given you more
yes, more than what
your hands can
steal...

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Traveler

may your travel be smooth
may your guide be kind
may you arrive on time
with the Lord shall you dine.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Turle Who Shall Live For A Hundred Years

It is true
i am at loss
if age be the gauge
for you can live
for a hundred or more years
while i can only
have less

it is true
you are slow and patient
and persistent
and silent
and in fact you have defeated
the rabbit
in that classic race

but if i were to carry my own house
at my back
and anywhere i go i have to hide my head
against a war
for my sure survival
and if in these struggles i simply have to be silent
and meek for another hundred years
just to live

forgive me Turtle, but i must tell
that
i'd rather be myself still-

a man, vulnerable in love and war
still in my humanity
at par.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Two Unknown Women....

to both of you
i shall not be at the middle
of this mess
you do not have to quarrel
over nothing

the song that you shall hear
from the bottom of my heart
is for someone
who is not here with the three of us

(she left me a long long time ago
and i am still teaching myself how to forget
her face)

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Untouchable

every idea
is garnished with
a personal touch

every touch
is warm

the night is cold
as indifference

you have always been
only an idea to me

despite my touch
in high noon

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Virgins

my mistake was
shattering
virgins who did not make
use of their time
until i was
shattered myself
guilt laden
in sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Window

if you are closed today
and i cannot open you
because you are definite
on a holiday
or plain protestation

i open another one
i have this key and
i can open this anytime
and then like a bird
i fly down there
to the tunnel of the cave
where no light
at the end
is visible

inward i can find
some more of what
outside has to offer

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Woman I Once Loved

i have this morning seen
this picture of a teen-age girl
in facebook,

she carries your chinese eyes
and your rosy lips

i am bothered by her nose
it is not yours as a matter of prose

her eyebrows oh i will always remember
black birds which we watched while we drank beer

when i was yet your truthful lover
when your head once rested on my shoulder

when we were seated on a bench of yore
facing a row of boats docked ashore

i am nurturing a broken heart
and so i understand how is it to be hurt

this teen-age girl who wears this sweetest smile
takes me back to you my dear -in a certain while

i smile to myself, i admit i have been so wrong
and too must i admit, i am still so strong.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Woman That I Love

i am tired
with time

it is the black
cat that bit me

and i cannot anymore
recover
i am rabid,
my saliva is flowing
like a leak
in the faucet,

i am not Adam
so please Lady
in my nightmare
if you understand
what love is

kindly return back
my rib
so i can complete
myself

to meet death
nicely.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Woman Who Is Always Asking For Cybersex

i am tired
on this virtual reality,
the truth is
i do not ejaculate
with words and images
we can do it somewhere
where we meet
and do the thing
but sorry
i never love you

and even if you think of me
as nothing
but a condom
i also know
that beyond all these things that
we never do
there lies this space
beyond eroticism

you have never been there
that's why

i regret having known
an imagination as you

a mirage without
the desert

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Woman Who Slept At The Library Studying Law

as i see it
your left brain has been left out
it is that part of the boat
without a passenger
or a cargo

your right brain is fully loaded
with almost everything
bread and butter thing
career, studies, plans,
it is even carrying the future
of all of you there
son and husband and dreams
what to do next in the next
dr months

the boat leans on the right side
and it is about to sink

do something, now.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The X Chromosome

if i will be made to choose
between you and the stone
i will choose the stone
for it will not make any difference at all.

if you replace it with a flower
i will choose the flower
i always wish that everything will simply be temporary
at wilting time i will be free
from your thorns and tendrils

if you offer me silence
i think i will accept it immediately
i like its simplicity i like its being a prelude
to something much higher

rest, could be, but think a little more,
i will give you a hint, the silence of the widower.

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Young Man Who Is Gathering All His Poems In Chapters....

you're too young
like a seed still covered and without yet
a face,
and yet you have started so well
deeper than
Vulcan
in fact hotter than the
fire suppressed
within
the magma of two earths

you're too fresh
to wilt and tell the world about it
i am worried
at this moment when you begin
to put all your poems
in chapters of a book
like you are telling them
all that
you are finally gathering them
all
in order to quit

young man, rest for a while
do not hurry
this world spins and in our smallness
like ants
we shall never notice
any change
until we see another sunset
another faded day
another darkness of the night
where we are told
to take rest and sleep...

RIC S. BASTASA
To The Youngest Brother

in your rage
i am not a cage
in your wasteful manner
i have seen all the danger
in you hysteria
i am but a listening hyena
i understand all these
without any malice
young brother
i had been there
and for the last i shall this tell
i am always your mantel.

RIC S. BASTASA
To These Lonely Shadows

tHERE is no reason for such
an elongated grief
the days are getting shorter
and the sun is losing grip of its own rays
the winds are talking to you
and i am wondering why you are not
answering them?

RIC S. BASTASA
To Those Who Manipulated The Scores

buddy
we are always at a loss
we have written
so many
we have done all the
scratch and have shown
the way to the land of
the itch
and the hitch
and yet look at us buddy
we are ignored and left out
sinking at the bottom
of the sea
like ships losing the battle of
Manya

despite our
(well sad to accept really)

genius.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Travel To Wander To Be Away From Anything

today i leave on a journey beyond the sea
i shall wander to see the other face of this earth
somewhere
i will be away from anything
it is my decision
it is my need,

away, i will wander, away, i will ponder
i will be hgher from this place
so i can see better from this far
i will be silent i will not write
i will not make conclusions

the wandering will be long
i will be alone
to the wonders of God's creations
unspeakable
unfathomable

i will just watch the flow of days and nights
i will be silent still
this spectator, this wanderer

this worshipper,
these eyes will just feel
unspeaking
because there are no words equivalent
to these wonders
that now i will begin to see with so much beauty
that will surely
shame me

RIC S. BASTASA
To Truly Love...

must i kill myself to love you
truly? i guess that would be unfair
to the utmost

shall i not too try to love myself
who loves you most? i am afraid

i must wake up from this horrible
nightmare of having

to love you the rest of my life
i am crazy

but not for long
for tomorrow morning i will be ready

to sing my first song
my love of self my having to begin again

to try my luck on someone else
to live my life somewhere

where love can love me
where hope can still grow

RIC S. BASTASA
To Understand My Life And Live It To The Full

At that time
she concluded, 'this matter is not our bread and butter thing
and we can do something apart from these
somehow we
are not the literati who make those split-ends
scurry, hurry and bury'

and looking far into that island behind us
where we are seated upon a beach bench
comfortable with our pizza and beer and coffee and that background music of jazz
and wind and coldness of the place under the trees

our feet buried on the sands, she finally blurted 'we must be kind and patient
we shall encourage those who have yet to start their life
in poetry and let them explore some more the world
where we do not intend to live for a while and then die unnoticed'

this of course, i do not very well understand.
i dare myself, i have come this far
to understand my life and live it to the full.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Understand You

it is like i am studying a new subject matter
to teach for another semester because that old professor died
 cancer of the prostate and i am the substitute,
it is time consuming, but for lack of will to refuse
i am back again to something that i hate,
to begin, to read what i have long forgotten,
remembering is always painful, there were less happy days to reckon with,

you, i have long dropped the idea of this dead tree
growing leaves again, roots not deeply rooted, the bark coming out,
but this is an obligation, to be with

you, again, to live in a house where life nests
time, where the ought becomes a code,
as i open the pages for my study, i stopped and think of other ways to really understand

you, i gazed at the ceiling and then shifted my strategy to the floor,
something flashes,
i must start at the end, and then go back
to that previous poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Vanessa Mae

after the fiddle in the wildest harmonies
of your classical violin
please come to my room and fiddle
the best of all the best songs
the base, the tip of my top, the
giggle of the gigs inside my
underwear, there is this fire
that damns me to an eternal longing
this madness not anymore bound
to a second fiddle. play me, please.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Want To Be Liked

to want to be wanted
to want to be liked
to want to be needed
indeed for one to be indispensable
hungry for praise
seeking attention
grabbing the glory
of whatever shall be

to be loved
to be wanted
to be liked

to love
to want
to like

this is man and this is woman
mortal

there is nothing divine
in this self
in this self searching self
that in loving to be loved
destroys itself in return

to God, is the giving of self
outward, opening like fingers spreading to the skies
hands that open and never shall close
because love so divine always opens
unconsumed unexhausted undefeated

RIC S. BASTASA
To Want To Do To Perfect An Art

this is the secret
passed from one mouth
to another
about the greatness of this
art

first is to want
then to do
and then to do this
and that over and over again
because you want it
and you want to do it
and so
this is the greatness of this art
to want, to do, to perfect
the art of fitting words
like pipe to pipe
where water runs
to quench the thirsty mouth
out there

you and i,
art and fidelity
technique on
the opaque
optics of options
wordiness and worthiness
you and i
love and devotion
sun to day
moon to night
hand to mouth
eyes and lips
body and soul
the soundness
and the soundless
bursting of my
emotions, tonight.
To What I See I Close My Eyes And Then I Pray.

there are so many doors in this world
you are gifted
you see what is unseen
but we are all the same
that in this freedom
you are allowed to only take one
not both
not many
but just one door to freedom
just one door to do good
but you may choose the bad door which appears
attractive to you
you choose
and then take it
you are gifted
you know the consequences
and so be wise
what i do you have seen me
to what i see i close my eyes
and then i pray.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Where I Am Seated

i am seated and from where i am my mind travels on my eyes that are closed

and i see places where my heart hovers
and i taste the salt of tears and i keep a bowl where i keep emptiness

i am at rest but it does not mean that i am rested you must know this
when you come to the house asking for pieces of my advice
i only give you
what you deserve and what you are and i tell you about the places where you can be

all from my own point of view and you say you are hurt and you will never come back

i am seated and i am at rest and i have no plans moving my feet to where you are going

i deserve this place and this place deserves me and i ask no more questions for my longing

my eyes are closed, and i keep this voice.

RIC S. BASTASA
To While The Hours Away

Without you
I lie among the grasses
In the backyard
Listening to
The twinkling
Of stars

RIC S. BASTASA
To Whine Or Not To Whine?

to whine or not to whine?
but first ask,
is there someone there
listening there?
is there someone?
someone?
who knows what
whining is
who knows

someone who
understands
that there is nothing
wrong with
whining?

is there? can his listening
change your world
for the better?
can your whining
do something good
for this, well,
rotten world?

then whine.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Withstand The Crowd

if all of you shall dance
to be noticed
i won't, i would be still like
a post
i would stand tall like a wall

if all of you go right
to be noticed i will go wrong
and if all of you wear yellow
to be noticed
i wear black

and if all of you are so silent
like zombies
i will scream and to be notice well
i will dress like an angel

if on the stage the three of us are
displayed
you two tumble
i will make bubbles like a fish
as you tumble like the weeds

i like to stand in the crowd
in the sea of conformity
i would like to be the black urchin
of your discomfort

if i must bite you i will
only to be noticed
for you never really care
you never really really love me truly

that 's the reason why.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write A Poem That Hurts Somebody

to tell the truth
that hurts a friend
how to make a poem
like that?
something runs from my fingers
to the keyboard
about a friend that i never like to hurt
or you
the reader whom i do not know much
but expect much from me
i shall write the truth of a suffering
monk, a human body misshapen
by centuries of tradition
of women veiled unable to drive their
own cars
of children molested by priests
of an apologizing Pope
about airplane crashes involving
your loved ones
about boats capsizing in the island
off Mali
volleyed by pirates
about love that betrayed love
about life that cuts itself
in one instance
about the blink of an eye
and the slashing of the wrist of life
writs of censure
and lust

i will continue writing about the other truths tonight
one involving you
but i shall not finish it
but keep it
i wish no pain
never again.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write A Poem While You Are Mumbling

while you mumble
about the lives of other people
those that i am also complaining about
knocking at our doors
at early dawns
while we are still feeling
what the world
will be
today

i decided to
simply think about myself
what can i do
to make a silent exit where no one
cares to notice
that i am rushing to
for a trip somewhere

i remember
when the door bell rings
because she is depressed
about the world
what it did to her
that she cannot just forgive

i hide myself and pretend
that this world is dead
and keep my own life to
myself

writing poems
and thinking about more
metaphors
about how to be strong
and kind and gentle
and compassionate
about
a lost soul
screaming to be taken
to our arms

tragic,
ironic,
what i do
is not what i want to do

and then she screeched her motorcycle
away
leaving me

writing another poem
and feeling so empty

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write About Life….And Love...

i will write about life,
upon those eggs that cracked
when the chicks start popping up
like mushrooms sprouting beside
the banana shrubs after a night's
heavy rain,
there will be sounds of hatch-lings
and fledgelings inside the nests of
seagulls and hawks,
i can hear the cries of baby whales
under the sea,
spawns of corals spurting from their
new trunks and protrusions,
there will be bulbs of onions,
buds of roses slowly starting to bloom
to give to the world the
transformation of reddish to
deep red,
a sunrise, green grass groping for a hold
on the sand,
vines extending tendrils,
a new born baby's first cry to the world,
ah, i feel life like blood rushing in my veins
once more filling my heart
with the abundance of love.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write About Light And Openness

let light fall upon me
let my hands open to Thee

let my mouth sing
the songs of love and praises

let me worship you
let me bow before you

My Lord, have i forgotten you?
You have not ever
forgotten me

i know.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write About Pain....

it is when
a bug bites me
and i could not
find it when
i remember
that i still have
to write
about pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write About The Tree

to write about the tree and the sun
how do they ever stand each other?
is it the need? is it the love?
i cannot really write about it.
i always see them there as i sit under the tree's shade.
as i scorch myself under the sun's heat.
i could have written about the unfolding to the red flower
and the wonder of the grass.
i am helpless now.
i am addicted to something else inside the room.
on a dim light. on a warm bed.
do not say a name. do not mention about the shape of
the human body.
yes, it is. and will always be.
the human anatomy speaking about itself.
love is not a word there. it is a view. it is a touch.
it is beyond what is good and what is wrong.
it is the silence. it is the swallowing of what we are.
it is the rubbing of skin. until the universe
ejaculates what it keeps.
until the earth reveals what is in that womb.
it is the unreasoning of life's rules.
it is merely the flow.
nothing else.

RIC S. BASTASA
i do not just write from a scratch of an idea from anywhere
like i get a pen and a piece of yellow paper, a blank sheet of
bondpaper, unperfumed like the love letter sent to sensuality,
it is not a matter of switching on the light of the lampshade
early dawn, rub my eyes, tap my middle finger on the table,
and breathe deeply and say,

i will write this
emptiness, with no one inside this circle of emptiness,
like an empty set,
zero, nothing inside some domains,
no,
writing starts with someone in mind
not really something lovely that excites my hormones
my lust and desire for another sexual fantasies
it woudl be too selfish
and ignoble,

writing starts with you
the concrete you, the once crying inside the room
on a wintry night, the one who needs the comfort of my
thoughts, the warmth of my concern
though distant
like the sun to another sun to another star to another star
of this galaxy to another galaxy,
i think about your worries
i reflect upon your quest to be alive again
i ponder upon your thirst
for love
something specific
something i can touch with the fingers of my mind
something that i can bite and check if this something is still
tasting the salty taste of the blood of life,
as i grow somehow
i shall think about the great spaces and places of the other worlds
beyond you and me
beyond us,
my mind gaping like an open mouth of a baby
opening to the freshness of this world

i will start with you
your sad eyes, it will start with the question

how can i ever wipe your tears
how can i ever make you smile again

and then the sadness of the world
its miseries
how can we ever heal it,
how can we ever make it green and alive again

from the very beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write Truthfully About The Rain

i must be here when the rain falls
heavily and when the waters rise
above canals and manholes
where what i see is water everywhere
when the rain does not stop
i must cross this street to another
street taking the middle of this flooded ways
without an umbrella
without my clothes on

the rain falls in all freedom
to the pores of my body
penetrating the thickness of my hair
my mouth drinks its drops
my ears take some more

i may be blinded and even be deaf
let the rain fall freely & heavily on my body

only then can i truthfully write about this rain
this walk this wetness this freedom this oneness
on the world that cries on these drops these tears

RIC S. BASTASA
To Write Your Poems The Easy Way

down the rhythm is in the huff and puff
down the inhale and exhale
do of your life, the color is in
down the hues of sunrise and sunset
do of the taste is right there
down in your tongue
do the kiss of your lips
do sweet and sour
and sometimes bitter

down we swallow all these
and you hear
do how smooth all these
in your ears
do like the hush of the wind
one day
in your life

down moment by moment
every minute savored
like you have
never lived before
like
tomorrow does not come
like you
loving the person
who loves you
like a push and
down a pull
like both of you
engaged to a touch
of eternity

do that is the ease
of my poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
To You

to you
i come as a gnat
and your black tangled
hair
is always my favorite
niche
well, there is love
who can deny it
i was a gnat
but not that long
i hung like an elephant
tusk
a tail, a very long tail to
your dreams
your fantasies
of clumps of waterfalls
thuds of
feet-like creatures
on your thighs
there is this crunch
that we cannot forget
how can we? we always love
it somehow
like a trek on morning
on the mountain trail
to the top
comes the sun
busting between us.

RIC S. BASTASA
To You I Am Just A Voice

to you i am just a voice
there are no hands to rejoice
no lips to press
yours to mine
on such a distance

yet even if distance dissolves
and what you see is this empty glass
still your hand cannot hold it
to a mere touch
the glass breaks

i will just a voice in distance
i will still be a voice in your head in this presence
for i am a slave of air
and to the iron rail i am but a train that is passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
To You My Dear Reader

to you my dear reader
my words may appear like some exercises of thought
like some briskwalkers and joggers on the park
on early mornings
wanting to be fit for life
as they stretch their legs and use their muscles
and shake and whirl and
bend and stand and
push up and sit and
split

to you these words may not mean anything at all
something to be read
without the involvement of any feeling

sensitivity kept like a pocketed smile
buried significances

try looking at it from my viewpoint
the misery of keeping things to oneself
the ability to hide things in symbols and images
because they are too hurting
to be faced in their real forms
because they cannot be tackled
and be trampled
because in any manner of confronting it
there is only defeat
loss
surrender and even death and so you are left with nothing
but simply see them as art

ciphers, and representations, and codes
and then when i become so strong
and determined

my confidence shall unravel them
and then i shall have moved
from poetry
to prose.

RIC S. BASTASA
To You, For You

I am human. I am skin all over hiding
The stark reality of bones and veins
I keep my blood as rivers inside me
My mind as the air and the sea
I am human. I am a continent. I am
An island hiding this passion and desire
Inside my territory. If by chance you come
And land on my shores, I am the port
The path, I am this garden, I am this grass
I am this cloud, I am the sun and the moon,
I am human. I am all the changes that you see
I am earth, I am water, I am fire. Come!
Enjoy the amenities of my mortality.
I am human. Take everything in me.
It is all yours because You are my God.

RIC S. BASTASA
To You, My Oppressor...

dis-edify me
it does not matter
i am no god.
discredit me
i am not affected
i am not famous.
kill me, take the
honor, you cannot
destroy me
i am not just
human either.
there is someone
inside me that
knows how to fly
and having no issues
with the earth
i go away with
having to return.
and mind you,
you are forever,
alone, in that
kingdom of despair.

my oppressor.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Your Ears....

you are air.
your name is air. I know you in some other variations.
aerated, ariel, aerophogastolic,
air balloon,
tear gas,

what ill wind brought you here to me this morning?

i could be an ill wind myself to bring sickness to the minds
of the sleepy people,

but i did not. I stay here, alone and steady. I like to be still.
Still as a steel pipe. Birds may come and check if i am really steel.

i do not mind. I have no more time.
Throw a stone at me, and i will make you some music.

RIC S. BASTASA
To Your My Beloved Upon A Lonely Night

i cannot open the door
i have not seen any window
there is no backyard to
where i can gain entrance
no backdoor either
the kitchen light is off
and the veranda is
kept away with a higher fence
this time

i will try next time to enter
your world
but i guess this time
you are happier being left alone

you shall have the moon somehow
beside your glass window

RIC S. BASTASA
To Your Own Voice.....

i won't tell you that things are not okay
in the island

the storm has no intention to leave
and the trees have long been gone

i won't tell you that the children are buried in mud
and the women are wailing looking for their men

i won't tell you about the faces of suffering
the horrible sounds of needing without any sign of help

i won't tell you about all these wrongs
that you keep on saying we have committed ourselves

brother, wherever you live now, we have only one thing to say
good luck, keep your conscience intact,

listen to your own voice, it is all you've got.

RIC S. BASTASA
To....(Never Mind)

bright sun
white sandy beaches
hammock

pinacolada
rhum

soft breeze
a little salty air
coconut trees

faint music
mozart

later reggae
and dance

would have been
perfect

if
you were here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today

dwell on the left side of your brain
learn the art of everything,
of winning and losing
of giving and taking

learn the art of loving
emote, denote, connote
appreciate what this world
is all about
rotate, collide, vibrate,
revolve, evolve, devolve
involve, indulge,

drink what dew and nectar is there
be happy
if literal must i be
join the bees
fly with the wind and the butterflies

why not? you are young
and the world is not that old enough
not to understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today As A Present From God To Me

today
is God's present to me

a cue
from Habib
a present too
he accepts
from God today

we open the present
today
and we see the sun
and a garden
of flowers
and the wind
and the
sea and the mountain
inside it

we marvel

and then the clock strikes
the bio-rhythm
of hunger in our guts

it is breakfast time
and there is
still nothing
to eat on the table

today is just a present
and we still
have a lot of work to do

RIC S. BASTASA
Today As I Leave Kk

I see a single stork
standing still on one feet
upon a lake
beside a busy road
leading to the
Terminal 2 of this
airport

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Give Pain Its Freedom

i will be a little lax today
setting pain carefully and letting them go
giving them wings to fly away from me
and telling them not to come back
for a while, giving them a break

i open the entrance at the front door
with some streamers and flowers
some bees and dragonflies and butterflies
on the stairs of the house
beside the door and the windows

welcome happiness, welcome home!

RIC S. BASTASA
today let me tell you i read about falling
contained in your poem which sounds like
zen,
something metaphysical from the point of view
of taoism
which likely you must have learned so well while you were in Tibet
when you studied in Thailand
when you spent sometime contemplating on the ruins
of Myanmar

you tell me that not everything that falls
reaches the ground
some of them simply dissolve in the air
and the hands and palms of the earth
waiting
actually receives nothing
like snowflakes overrun by summer heat
like your sighs simply dissolving in the clouds

but at the conclusion you were honest enough
to admit that some are simply falling
and keep on falling
and falling
to some depths
of infinity
on an eternal abyss
that even time
has no power to catch
and hold them

they just keep on
falling
it is their nature
agape, askance,
behold!

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Say Thank You For The Silence

thank you for the silence
when you tap my shoulder without saying a word
that was all that i need

thank you for the smile
without uttering any word that smile has spoken more than
what i need for the day
when i finally hit the rocks at the bottom

thank you for the company
it was more than the flowers and the money and the food
even for that short moment
way beyond my longer days of sorrow
you have given me comfort

now, in my solitude, i need more of the silence
thank you, you also know how to leave me
always at the right time
when silence becomes so precious
when we call it
golden

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I See You

today i see you again
you are near me and
i can smell the sweat
that i love, our hands
touch and our gazes
meet and i stop the
world from spinning.

you do not know
Sisyphus is my friend
and i know what i am
going to be and to do.

my role is to love you
yours to feel nothing.
you do not know this
how you break my heart.
you do not know how
from the beginning
i have always loved you
how your eyes are blind
how your hands so unfeeling.

i am happy to see you now
your angry eyes your
indifferent gaze like strong
light stabs my beating heart

i have a reason not to love you.
i was born not to love you.
i know, that is the law and i am
here not to complain but to follow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Shall Give You Congress

this is what congress all about
lawmakers
lawbreakers
about 250 of them and by their own laws
they may increase their
number and their salaries and their junket trips abroad
with their families and personal staff

we feed them
we pamper them
and they give us laws
to make us poorer
and more miserable

they are all learned men
and we adore them

at the end we make them our honorable oppressors
and to honor them some more
we kiss their hands
and for what they say
we listen
and applaud them

i suggest we abolish them and put an end
to what must not be
but you say on some justifications
somewhere in our country
we need a grand edifice
an institution

at least, something nice to see
something to believe and dream

and always at our expense
so we always keep them

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Shall Have Three Faces

today i shall have three faces
on one neck
like a peculiar mask in a play
that you have never seen

two faces wear the eyes of tragedy
while the last one shall wear
the smile of the century

you only know that last one
since it has been facing you all day

the two others
i keep as my dual realities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Shall Remember Grandmother

she knows what fine clothes are
and how jewelries are worn
and shown on special occasions
she knows what parties fit
for congressman as guest
or the mayor of the city with
their first ladies liking the
food and dances and socializing
in the big, old house

the symbol of her peak times
when her name rings
when her social graces
are accepted as rules

i guess she likes the shape
of my face, the color of my
skin, the way my hair curl
the bridge of my nose
the sharp blades of my shoulders

she handpicked me away
from mother, whom she despised
as a woman without culture
and taste, she brought me like
the son of a man with class
and gave me language and
pride and disgust for the
ordinary and the nonsensical

away from mother inside
my room of comfort and style
it was sad and tragic and something
that i cannot forget and which i

too despised, and from then on
i think i learned what hatred is

my first lesson of a family feud
the fight between mothers and
daughters-in-law and the grandson
captured in between wanting to breathe

run away and thinking things all over again

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Should Have Told You

today i should have told you
something so true
something so painful

something that can make a twist
of our universe
the planets may fall
and stars explode
the meteors may regret
their long tails of light

today i should have told you
about you and me

i could have told you about a river
that changed its course
and left an island of loneliness
at the middle of that deep blue part

but i changed my mind
there is something in you that is not prepared
you are the flower still blooming
at the height of this drought
and i am the cloud that simply vanished
i do not contain any rain
i am afraid you do not notice this
i am nothing i am useless

RIC S. BASTASA
Today I Try To Pick Up The Shattered Pieces

today i try to pick up the shattered
pieces of myself and yourself

every piece, and color and shape
compared and analyzed
to make each fit and be the whole
as us again

i put the bond to fix the edges
to make them stick as though
nothing was ever broken

i do not wish to blink and then fall asleep
the hours run like there is no way to tame them
they say they are always on a rush
and no one has ever stopped them

i tremble on some tiny pieces
and have a hard time solving the puzzle
where do they fit so well?
to deceive our eyes
to give triumph to the healing of the hands

i am a failure on some interstices
there are leaks of light
& tiny holes
there is so much emptiness
this hollow wholeness

i have failed and i am lost and so here i am
back to your arms
wanting to be a definite part of you

to seal what leak is there
to put off the tiny lights
to reconstruct the smoothness of the edges
to love you and be loved by you
Today Is The Birthday Of Ph Poetess, Candice Salazar

let me wish you
a happy birthday today

may you have more
haikus to come

may the good Lord
gift you with metaphors

may your life be happier
than ever

may you continue living
a good life

may your friends be many

may your poems multiply
seventy-times seven

may you live
happily ever after

RIC S. BASTASA
Today Let Us Devote A Moment Of Silence

to the art of poetry
two hours dead ahead of schedule.

and you are late.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today Of This Year

850: Novelist and short story author, Guy de Maupassant born in Château de Miromesnil, Normandy

1858: First transatlantic telegraph cable completed

1906: Academy Award winning screenwriter, director, and actor, John Huston born in Nevada, Missouri

1930: First human to walk on the moon, test pilot, university professor and astronaut, Neil Armstrong born in Wapakoneta, Ohio

1946: Actress Loni Anderson born in Saint Paul, Minnesota

1962: Marilyn Monroe found dead

1981: President Reagan fires 11,359 air-traffic controllers

1983: Divestiture of AT&T

2010: Rose and Arvin posted poems at Poemhunter; Candice Salazar is busy with her work.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today The Body Tomorrow The Heart

pain sometimes
behaves like a tourist
with all its caprices
moves from one
place to another

today the body
tomorrow the heart
the next day to you
and on the last day
to me, at last, i, have
learned how to shoo
it away, i am raising
my tolerance for it,
and then it does not
come, it fears expensive
charges, with costs
chargeable to none.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today While Walking Along The Seashore

i realize
that departures are lovely
like arrivals
they are too
beautiful, more beautiful even
than the contentment
of having to stay,

i have seen a group of white
seagulls feeding upon a fish on the
shallow cheek
of the the very calm sea and then
i am joyed to see them in groups
leaving

as they fly away from me i wonder what
relief is left inside my heart

i have seen and felt freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today

i need to travel to an unknown
destination,
i need to practice what next
uncertainty there is,

will this be exciting? will this make my life
more interesting?

i need to tread on new paths,
see more people, talk to other colored skins of kids on streets
breathe the dusts of the other world out there
swim another sea, ride on peculiar steepness,
buses without cards and numbers,

today.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today's Beauty  Seems To Be Painted In The Most Horrifying Colors

the hummingbirds are gone. following next are the bluejays.

welcome these eagles and crows. the vultures too their play field is the desert.

mushroom smokes nuclear rock races racing against races. here comes misused religion again.

today's beauty seems to be painted in the most horrifying colors

blood thirsty diplomats are busy with translations.

the hummingbirds are gone. Crows in, vultures dance the zombies.

following next are the bluejays. the sparrows are reborn.
rice out. Bullets
grow. fields crack
in extreme heat.

in these deep
chasms, those unwanted
shall escape and
hide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today's Blank Wall

just this day
i face a blank wall

it is enticing
its white hand is signaling me to write my thoughts on it

it is empty and wants to be full
just like myself perhaps who knows

i will disappoint it in the same manner that you have
disappointed me

i will not go near it
i will not say a word

i will not write anything
but i will tell it

'you are beautiful'

untouched, unwritten
pure, blank, mute....

RIC S. BASTASA
Today's Empty Thoughts....

today
he is unable to focus upon a certain idea
it is a waterfall.

he likes to grab a droplet of rain
his hands are filled with holes

he decides to lay his body on the grass
focus his eyes upon a star at night

there is no star, his eyes are closed
there is this kind of suspended feeling

like a frozen river, a fish got stuck on ice
a dragonfly trapped upon the web of a spider

there is this feeling of: what do i really think?
not what i want, but what is in my mind

there is this desert where everything that you see is sand
no camel, no moon, no oasis, no date palms, not even the shadow of a sand dune

the sounds of sighs come
you hear your self breathing for emptiness

you pause, rethinking, what is this?
you go inside it, trying to find if there is anybody there

it is empty. Yourself is not even there.
It is so real that you now doubt if an illusion exists at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today's Prayer

I will praise God
And praise him with all my heart
I will sing praises to God
And I will sing praises to him at the top of all my voice
I will bend before him and lay flat on the ground
I will not look at him straight in the eye
I will offer all my heart
I will offer my entire mind
I will offer all my soul
I will offer him everything
That I have
I will offer all that I am

I will make another covenant with him
I will make another set of promises

I will sign a new agreement
I will execute a new set of promises

I will close my eyes and think of him
I will join him
In his silence
In his patience with my broken promises.

RIC S. BASTASA
Today's Reflection...

what seed
are you?
what bird has
devoured you?
did you
have joy
without roots?
did you live
with the
thorns?
or that fertile ground
where you shall
bear fruit
a hundredfold
or just
thirty or just
nothing
but rocks
and sand?

RIC S. BASTASA
Together They Are All Happy...

Madam X says that the latest
military corruption saddens her,
and boasts that all these money
can never be a source of pride
and neither shall it cause her envy,

May God curse all of them, says
Madam X, her hair is white and
she still moves actively despite
her being 76,

on TV i watched the generals and
the accountants not blinking any
eyelash when they say they do not
really know what happened inside
the envelopes that contain the
millions now considered irretrievable.

they have square dignified faces.
smiles lurk inside their cheeks,
and on stress therapy, they will
sometime spend their beach picnic
somewhere in Miami.

RIC S. BASTASA
Togetherness....

when we are happy together
it will be healthier
no one eats when one is hungry still
no one goes
when one is left out
when the sun fades, everyone goes to the house
and sleep together
when the morning breaks,
everyone prays and cooks together

where shall bickering be?
when can a revolution start?

brother, it is in this togetherness that we become
bonded,
one in heart, in spirit and in body
one vision, one mission
one love, one God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Togetherness........

for once
just for once
we are
having no fears
a chain of hands
like daisies on
your hair
a link to another
link
like roads all
connecting
like rivers all
surrendering to
one
common sea
to one common
dead-end

no one weeps
no one laughs
no one is left out
and no one comes
out first.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tolerances...

accept
we have different tastes
a myriad of
interests
what vomits me
satisfies you
what salivates you
detests me
what is sweet to you
is bitter for me
yet what can we do?
we are in this
dinner together
we are in this civilization
table
our manners tolerate
these differences
so i take a cup and you
take yours
and we clink the glass
and say
cheers!

RIC S. BASTASA
Tomorrow

I said

Maybe tomorrow
Yes tomorrow

Tomorrow for a new brand day
A new burst self
A flat balloon
On the floor

Maybe tomorrow
Yes tomorrow

Be there.

RIC S. BASTASA
tomorrow always comes.
the sun is confident. always tomorrow
comes with all the usual baggages.
bringing a back pack of your past,
some bags of your future still
bound with the strings of its secrets.

tomorrow always comes. do not deny this
fact, that it always comes with the
people you love and so with all the
people you hurt, and who in turn hurt
you in some ways. It comes with hammers
and nails and ladders and chairs.
Tomorrow always comes and so
do not just stand there and look dumb
and stare and think that today is the
end of your world. The moon knows.
And so are the stars that tomorrow
always comes with baggages.

Help yourself. Face them. Embrace
the day. Love the people who love you.

Love too those that do not love you.
Love them. Tomorrow always comes and
who knows that like caterpillars tomorrow
they become these beautiful butterflies
that now seek the comfort of your loving hands.

Believe me. Tomorrow always comes.
Have hope. Relax. And be confident.
Like the sun, the river, the sea. They
all know that tomorrow always comes.

Be happy then. Promise you. Tomorrow comes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tomorrow I Will Write It In Prose.

i tell you when i was away, i went to places that could have lost me,
everything was delayed,

the bus is old, the window is a glass with a crack which i do not touch afraid that
it may cause injury to my ring finger,

the roads are muddy, and workers are repairing one wooden bridge,
we stop from time to time, a child is conducting traffic, the town is
crowded, and the street at night has no light,

i mix with those passengers carrying so many baggage, old men carrying fighting
cocks, students with their ears stuck on cell phones,

i talk to no one because no one talks to me, and then the rain pours heavily, and
then the world gets darker,

my silence is choking me, but then i want to be alive, and so i breathe
deep and hard. I realized something. Tomorrow i will write it in prose.

RIC S. BASTASA
when you arrive tomorrow
i will not be there
the key of the door is found
just beneath the earthen jar
at the porch

there is an orange cat with
one eye
it is not ours but
we have become friends
after i feed it
with a fish that we have not
eaten for 3 days
we have not seen each other
since then
after we made love in
the kitchen

i will not be home for a week
you know the reason
if you have some questions
talk to the orange cat

it will tell you some important matters
that i haven't told you

listen to every meow that he says
it is rich with metaphors
about lust and longing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Find me a tone for this poem
I am having a hard time
With putting the proper tone
Though I am pretty sure
Of its form
What form to use
The shape of the swan
A white swan
On a lake
Alone
Give me a tone
That conveys what I
Want to convey
To you
A language
That really means
What it says
Something
Creative
A path
That I must
Follow
Leading me
To you
Give me a tone
Please
A tone from
You
The one
I really love
The one
That must
Love me
Too
Truly,
Tell me
What is the
Tone now
Of this poem
Is it begging?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight

between two steel poles upstairs
on the level of the trees that surround the house
i will put a hammock
where i will put my body to a rest & with
some little swings to and fro
i will create a sense of journey

a slow lull
as i watch the glitter
of the distant stars

and to the moon just above the roof
i shall whisper a wish

for you
& me.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Tonight At Ten'.

If you see him
you may not recognize the old man
whose hair is black as
asphalt
whose nails shine like the new moon

his face a little bit stretched by the magic
of dermatological advanced technology

as a young woman, 19 to be exact clings
over his arms like a sexy leech lifted from
the nearby creek

and he struts this news about his new found love
in church and in the plaza
and most of the time
at the mall
while he takes charge of all the bills
after a hectic shopping schedule
of his true love

a young man looks at them and then from his
face creates a grin
as the young woman winks at him
as though saying

'tonight at ten'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight I Will Have A Nice Sleep

we had nine years of nightmare
with the dwarf and the witch
with a mole on her right cheek
now the nightmare is over
we finally won the war of words
now we have power
another six years of reforms
in the castle of the sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight Is Another Night Of My Self-Proclaimed War

i will now present my evidence
some exhibits beforehand marked
and you will be surprised, there will be no such exhibits
as

the moon, the stars, or comets or tails
or the fireflies,

tonight, is the night of my argument
a life lived without passion
a life dedicated to the dictates of reason
and bedded to logic

this is my war, i proclaim it against myself
it is myself against myself and myself arguing for both
opposing selves

why do you invoke poetry? why do you maintain a self
torn between softness and harshness
between objectivity and confusion
between light and Grey

enough of the hardbound books
of those sandcastles that the BiG sEA
destroys from time to tide
ebbing and rising and here i am waiting

for my verdict, i am guilty, i have always been guilty
and i pretend
i never knew.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight Something Hot Is Going On

outside the
fence of the house
the dogs

the bitches are
doing it tonight

in heat
they bark at each others'
lust

who can fence
lust?

no one stops
a river

no one can keep
the rain
from falling

look at us
how pitiful have we become
because
of civilization

we are inside this house
with safe windows
with well locked doors

high fences
thick walls

how unhappy
can restraint ever be?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight Taj

when you sleep tonight
rub Vick's Vaporub at your back
and around your abdomen
so you will not dream of the
stinging lion again

brush your teeth well
so that no piranhas will ever bother
the truth inside your gum ever

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight The Air Is Filled With Love

i cannot sleep tonight
i will not sleep tonight

for tonight is the night of love under a full moon
sitting on top a placid lake beneath the treetops
the air is filled with the scent of love
there are no birds as they are all asleep
but i can hear the songs of all the angels
the leaves glisten the stars glitter  the pond with its gentle ripples
they all mention your name to me
and i am hearing it and
my heart beats with all perfect joy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight The Night Is Mine

because i thrive well
in darkness
i bought a night
of my own

it is mine and i will spend
it wisely though

definitely not with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight Tonight

tonight i am a tree filled with leaves
and you are the bird looking for a nest
i have my branches for you to perch
to rest and stay for the whole night
agains the cold and damp and dark

sleep little bird, feel my loneliness

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight With The Half-Moon
	onight
there are stars
sailing with a
half moon
that looks
like a boat
lighted against
a black sky

they appear
to smile
but their shimmer
has some streaks
of light with
some colors
of blood

at the back of
the moon is
the wound
that wants to heal

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight, Tonight, Another Love Another Promise

i have given you the key to my room
but despite that
i have decided to leave the door open
despite the danger
that thieves instead of you my secret love
shall come in...

there will be fears that sooner i may fall asleep
without you
but the anticipation is greater
the beating of my heart even louder
than the sounds of the rain and the croaking of the
twenty frogs combined

tonight yes tonight my love
shall be another tryst with you
i am waiting
naked to the truth of my being
that love is not confined
within the chains of
fidelity that love's essence is its variety
a multiplicity of desire
a showering rain of affections
a flood of kindness and sharing
unhindered by any code
of marriage
unbound by the chains of
the cruelty of the law...

tonight my love
i shall live another nine lives
in the heat of your embrace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tonight's Feast Under The Full Moon

the biggest and
tallest tree fell today

she thought he was just
a cute little boy in the picture

with her a week ago but he is
the man with a saw and a gun

the big rock beneath got crushed
with the tallest tree

ants and rats and snakes
got crushed too

you wonder what is this
place all about

to the deaths of them all
the village is rejoicing

tonight there will be dances
and drinks under a very big

moon and the music in the
air reaches as far as Iceland.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tony And Tita

tony,
widower at 76
just found a woman
of 18
and they are in church
holding hands
kneeling
beside each other

tita,
widowed at 78
has something new to talk about

concealed is
envy, i suppose

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Close Too Sweet

i know what too sweet means
it destroys my teeth
and i think what too close also means
it gives teeth to contempt

the familiarity that kills
without notice without knowing

so not to close please not too sweet
let there be distance let there be bitterness at times

between us inside us
so we may survive this promise of togetherness
too close your hands choke me
too sweet you may bite me

let their be suspicion too
let psyche bring the lamp
to cupid's sleepy eyes

now we have a story to tell
this love this tragedy so our children may learn
what true love really is

bittersweet bitter and sweet
something tragic something blissful that we must ferret

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Common, Like Nothing At All

there is such thing
as quick poetry,

it is magical, and
if you are so meticulous
about form
it becomes so familiar

too common, like nothing
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Early

it is too early
i guess the nights are longer now
it is 4:56 a.m. it is cold
the air is cold
and the windows are still closed
the rooster at the yard
keeps on crowing
while other roosters of the neighborhood
(i live in a rural town
with dusty roads still at the other
nearby kiosk)
keep on crowing too for an answer,
how i wish to make you
a lovely,
happy,
gentle,
peaceful poem
no one screaming on the road
not a motorcab screeching
neither a bus overspeeding
and spreading dust
how i wish to write you a poem
about love
or about that only peaceful star
hanging on the
early morning sky
just a wish
but really
there isn't any
it cannot be
what with a heart that is grieving
a soul that is lost
a body that trembles
a mind with thoughts live leaves
heap upon heap
without a match
to burn them all
this hot days of summer.
Too Far Away

I live next door
and i know you live next to mine
sometimes we meet
and i look at the floor
hiding from the beauty
of your eyes

i do not have the courage to say
that love exists in me
and that its life
is all for you

how sadness slowly kills us both
hiding inside the comforting
darkness of our doors

i live next door and you are next to mine
but we are so far away like star to sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Flimsy A Fling A Swing

too flimsy, her flings, she swings
to air and back to his arms, like a pendulum
less the house of a grandfather's drum,
good girl, good dog, good days of god,
log in, and click to an icon of images
emails malling on the screen of screeches,
scream, did you hear the scream of those
blogs? I am writing them. Lots of poems,
blogged logged and then
left for those cleft-lifts, once in a while
a smile flashes, and then a reminder: where are you?
i am here, he says. It is dark. No, come here, there is a ray of light,
This is the tunnel. There is an end somewhere and see the sun
I am here. Come back to me. She listens.
too flimsy, this fling. She wings back to him, on a dirty swing.
They meet and mate and then trying to figure out

What is the meaning of regret? Why did Johnny come so late?
He is coming. She is coming.

This is not the Library. But there is so much silence.
Only a little after.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Foolish?

must i be foolish
how can i not figure out the correct spelling of

love, when you are there
undressing and perfuming your bare back
and putting puff powder on your cheeks

when you let all the curtains fall
when you say you are finally sleepy
and on a dreamy state

as i still face this blank wall
looking for the word
the right letter
the next color of my imagination

have i not known bridges of steel?
pathways of the flesh?
have i not felt once the lusciousness of
your lips?

the softness of your thighs
and the the spasmodic gestures of your
abdomen?

i must be foolish to stick to the word
love and lust
i still misspell

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Late To Be Children And Play

HE HAD BEEN too serious
laughter is seldom and it is a tool only when badly needed.
This and that.
Hands too busy for all the days of its fingers.
The mind is sun and moon. Routine. Categories.
Structured lives, like city buildings with all the rules
of This and That.
The House comes. The car invades. Meetings are like filled calendars.
Nothing to interpolate like a picnic, a river sail,
a beach comb, a mountain trek,
all days are Mondays. Nothing to Friday
Sundays are stripped of their holy vestments.

IT is too late. It is late in the evening and we have ceased to be
children going home after a play
in order to pray beside
Mother, who had long been dead
and buried without much
needed ceremony.

Now, it is dark forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Late To Know That

...you stoop
to conquer

a la The Shrew
of that English
playwright, i know
you know his name,
and i won't ask
you about the
obvious

plain simple
stupidity, but i am not amazed
by this
event,

i have long known
women
49 years, two butts a month
four legs a day

women who love
to kill
lice and women who like
to be licked

with man's old weapon,
who cares now

too late to know
that i am

(be surprised)

i wont say it anymore,
i am tired.

49 years, of dumb
bells.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many

too many
yes too many
and yes
too meaningless at the end

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many Of You

too many of you
scattered all over
my cells

the tissues of this body
call for you name

my mind is a whirlpool
taking you inside my system

my lips utter your name
my mouth wants to taste your being

all these
you are unaware like the sun

shining on the earth
the earth in ecstasy to the unknowing sun

it is here
i want to be there outside this whole mess

i cannot escape this prison of love
rising above my head like a moon of the month of March

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many Of You In One Body

there are too many of you in one body
in one truth
too many faces
jibing with different names in different places
at first you may deceive
and even create surprises
but there is a time for discoveries
islands have been given
their names
marked with specific numbers like some specimens
of stuffed cats and dogs
and preserved amphibians
in the bottles

and here you are again
enticing me with a

wow

on another assumed name
i know it is you
and for what reason you wear so many faces
and have taken so many hands and feet
and so many pairs of eyes

i cannot guess anymore
but this i can say
from the deepest chambers of my heart
i care
i also know how to love
and it does not matter even
if you are one of the thousand illusions in my life
despite

there is only one you in my life
and i know
you also care
you also love
and that is all enough
my dear

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many Stars Did Not Spoil The Heavenly Skies.

too many and too
rubbish you say but
you just didn't know
how all these can
help decompose you.

too many stars did
not spoil the heavenly
skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many Words

too many words
instead of filling up the gaps

multiply the empty
blank spaces between the lines
where the words
try to rule and conquer what thoughts
are trying to occupy

i like to make a point.
and this is it.

what do you need?
what do you want?

make the difference. think.
please do not write anything.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Many Words Too Many Forms Of Rashes

words have the bad trait
of bombarding us
not with meanings but just
utterances
at some point we select what
is necessary
the usual chaff and grain method
that the winnows teach us
with the winds of
time and change
and it happens to me many times
as i stand waiting for the plane
that shall take me to another new beginning
or the bus that leaves the dust behind the wheels
of misfortune
or the boat that vomits the water at its back
where you want to stand and reflect
on the dimming of light
words can be wars
and there you go
pack you bags and walk your journey
without them.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Closeness Is Blindness

the familiarity between us
has come face to face
eye to eye
like two lovers
cheek to cheek,

i of course do not loathe it
as it does not mean anything at all
the distance considered
in too much
closeness, somehow has made both of us blind

perhaps, this is what we want to happen
to keep this
bond

both of us must be blind
like cows and horses
with covers
on their eyes
and for sure, they do not sense any danger
beyond

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Familiarity Breeds Contempt

Too much familiarity, all the questions answered not just by yes or no
The explanations as demanded all enumerated, and there are no extrapolations needed,

At the last notice, I think I have spoiled you like my first lover,
In giving everything, everything is totally lost, and parting has become inevitable

With you now, I have given trust, but now with limitations however,
It is not selfishness, it is something else, it is to keep you because there is something in you

That makes me alive somehow, you make me breathe, and you have given me a space
Somehow, I must withhold a little bit about myself, to make this love work,

Now when you ask, I will either make some white lies, and later some big lies or be silent
So not everything in me is taken away, and you will think that I am not at all consumed

I am sweet, I will be sweeter still in some measurable unknowns, and you will taste these,
With a note, that not all that is sweet shall be given, some will be bland and even bitter,

I want to keep you for a while; we will be talking some more, like sweet lovers
Whispering nothings, I will confuse you a little bit about some beginnings, I will swerve

Away a little bit, away from your closeness, this too much familiarity that is slowly
Breeding contempt, this familiarity that destroys and has no power to recreate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Freedom...
	he irony
of having nothing to
do and
having much to
accomplish:

when you have
nothing to do
the void
expands and you
feel like
a drop of rain
falling into
an ocean

when you have
much to accomplish
the void shrinks
and you become a
mountain
high and strong
equal to the moon
and sun

it is true
it is this idleness
that leads to sin
this emptiness that
kills itself
this too much freedom
shackles
us instead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Knowledge Is Death

the gang is here.
the cluster meets tonight,
about your name.
you know too much
about the conspiracy
your lips are not
sealed
they are afraid
and tonight they
will hand the judgment
that you shall be killed.
you know much.
and that is very
dangerous.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Light Is Blinding

too much light is blinding
know that, you close your eyes
to feel its fire,
and there was that time when
you like being burned
you get near
and you do not remember
but you did not die

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Love Kills?

how can love kill
you? how can so much of
it can be
murderous?
how can love be
death?

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Poetry

so much light
so much of this feeling light
bouying lightness of being
flying lightness on dancing steps
on the clouds on this night near the stars
so much poetry to write
and read and spread
too much feeling and life
pulsating to my veins
this love

this poetry tonight
even without the wine
even without the full moon

like what Li Po tells me
this world on this glaring monitor
alone with my fingers and thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Talk

there is so much talk
on TV
this morning on some
bleak news of
the crash
of the financial market
the crash of
an Indian plane
the crash of the
whole world
turning glaciers into
water
the extinction of the prakees
and the parakeets
the journey of the tadpoles
on higher places of
the mountains
there is so much talk
so much talk
i turn the TV off
and savor the taste
of my
breakfast of
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Thinking

you are like a window
half-open
still in a crisis of whether
to close
or open
or perhaps simply sifting
what wind
shall be allowed to enter
always indecisive
as to what really must be done	onight

perhaps i am thinking that
much
about you
underestimating that all you wanted
to have
in this sophisticated minding
is just the soft light of the moon
on that window
that is always half-open

and that really
there is nothing much to it
to debate upon

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Thought...

i rake the boat
going to
an island

the trip is long
the sea is calm

people look towards
one direction

i close my eyes
lost in the labyrinths of
thoughts

the boat arrives
people disembark

i regret
philosophizing so much

i regret
closing my eyes

a man with his
camera
has taken lots of pictures
of the sea,
the islands that we passed
the trails of foams
that we left behind

with too much thinking
i agree

i missed life
i lost earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Much Truth...

when we arrive here
we carried with us our own lies

we keep them
and we survived

when they come and see us
for the first time

they keep wondering why unlike
them we glow with happiness

we did not tell them the truth as usual
we believe that it is not necessary

from that distant place where we left
we have seen how too much of truth

has killed the land and its natives
how the lies were driven away like flies

they swat what are some of the possibilities
those white ghosts

those black birds that guide us to places
that we never once imagine

what we discover are islets of desires
those that they shy away from

we have masks that protect us from so much brightness
we have boots from mud

we have words
and with their pretensions we have learned the art of

hedonistic euphemisms
the artistry of phrases the promises of incomplete clauses
some periods are angry
but our commas still smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Old

too,
run, too old,
to run, to run too,
old, to run,
run, to, old, too,
too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Old For Love

it is no longer
you whom I
wait
by my window

time passes....

my beard
all white
reaches
the floor

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Tired To Notice The Storm Of The Earth...

i wake up early today
i open the windows and the door

the ground is flooded
the trees shed more leaves
the chickens' feathers are
thoroughly wet

some branches are cut-off
from those old tall trees

our dog is not wagging its tail
the lights at the kitchen are not turned off

by the looks of it
there was a big storm last night

i did not notice it
i was dead asleep

too tired of my own inner storms
my door is closed,
all my windows are shut.

RIC S. BASTASA
Too Unlucky

unlucky girl
Rebecca
who died
after slamming
the door

Poor girl Rebecca!

I must be a very lucky man

for i have lived
all my life
slamming
many doors behind me
and look

oh my!

I am
still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tools Of Love And Hidden Desire

an empty mouth is the best speaker of love's secrets
the hidden tongue that masters the art of lingering licks
is the most beautiful princess of the softest syllable that wakes up the redness of cheeks of love's newest adventures.

RIC S. BASTASA
Toothless Little Girl

to the toothless little girl
she smiles
it is not enough
to show to you that
this world is alright
that there is still more
to this earth
that hope is alive
that life is contagious
there is more
to what we are
and what we can be
the possibilities are
endless
and then the
child
laughs and runs
and chases
her own version of
her dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Top Quote For Today...

let us stay in the house
and make love....

RIC S. BASTASA
Torna Y Surriento

come back
come back to me
to Sorrento because

because i miss you
so
no song of the river
so song of the man in the boat of life
can appease me

come back
come back to me
let me whisper to you again
this song of
a man in love

come back come back to me
in Sorrento
let us feel the torrents of love
the caresses of the winds

wait not
for me to change and find me not
in the bosom of
another.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Tossed

purple onion rings
lettuce leaves
italian dressing

RIC S. BASTASA
Total Abandon

i

the snow on the roof
does not mean necessarily
that there is no fire
in the fireplace

ii

contemplate on the woman
with white hair
dancing the rumba on the
street

in total abandon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Touch And Go

nothing to think about
come what may
i put my foot forward
whether it is better or worse
nothing matters
i just do what i want
welcome the errors
do not correct anything
let them judge
as you judge them
keep going
do not ask for directions
let life take you
let life take its due course
no safety pins
no compass
just close your eyes
and ride the clouds
for free
hitch upon a dream
like a hook to an eye
keep going
alive
flow
oh!

RIC S. BASTASA
Touch Me If You Still Can.

tomorrow perhaps
when you finally find the
correct answer
of my Sphinx

when my house fall into
ruins
when my bridge burns itself
when the last boat
is taken by the flood
when what remains is the stone
in me,

i know what i want to say,
shattered, i guess i cannot be
silent anymore
and i have to say it to you

i am what i am
and you know it beforehand

all clothes gone
i am naked, touch me if you still can.

RIC S. BASTASA
Touch Of Class

oh well, i hear you
speak english to your dogs
spanish to the maids
and french to your business partners
on the phone,

you write your poems in german
your essays in portuguese
your menu posted on the ref in italian

cultured, educated, that is you
with a touch of class

but for one thing
now that you have fallen
drowning in the sea

oh gosh, you do not even
know how to swim!

let your language save you then.

RIC S. BASTASA
Touching The Soul

reading a book
writing a poem
talking to you
and listening,

lots of differences
really, one is a monk in orange
walking with his
beggar bowl
lighthearted smile,

one is a god sitting on the throne of his own feet,
others begin to pray,

the other one is
cleansing yourself in a river
and regaining what sanity is left

and the last one
is a window that you open to let sunshine in

touch your hair,
cheeks,
soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Touching You

i do not wish to see
 tears when you say i touched you

give that smile
so i may also live
another day
in my life

RIC S. BASTASA
Tourism....!

to become a tourist
he took up AB Tourism,

the other cannot be outdone
he took up Criminology,

to perfect his sole ambition
of becoming the well sought
criminal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tourist Bus 2011

a little world of
pleasure seekers
on wheels
where people
meet without any
intention
of really knowing
each other
greet hello
and
then leave as usual
saying
bye bye guys
have a great
time....

RIC S. BASTASA
Tourist...

how short is
short and for how
long is long?

tell me, passerby.

RIC S. BASTASA
Towards A Decent War.....

at first
when you first saw it
you were
electrified
your bones rattle
your veins expanded
blood rushed like people
on a black friday sale

then after a while
when boredom strikes
you only watch it once in a while
only when you remember
but not that you seek for it
and really find it

then just like the rest of
the men in town
normal as you despite the illusion
you do not like even to watch it
even if encouraged
to make you alive

then it is over
you detest it
realizing that it has
humiliated you
ever since and
without end

and you think that you are
elevated
from man to demi-god to god
but of what?

you tap your head
it is giving you the sound of
an empty can
or just another drum
wanting to sound like a march
towards a decent war....

RIC S. BASTASA
Towards Home...

it can be beautiful along the way
riding a bus in the countryside going back home.

flashes of ricefields, and shorelines, on one side and
on the other, then some forest trees and flock of birds
migrating to the other country,

on some bus stops, you buy delicacies and hear
another language of commerce
feel the pulses of humanity

you sit there in silence not talking to the man beside you
just gazing as the bus begins to move faster

towards home....

RIC S. BASTASA
Towards The Hatch

veils are those days
mists at dawn
foggy afternoons
soft white blankets
at night on the
mountains far from
the city lights

eggshell as white as
as the purity of fear
on an albumin protection
the yellow moon slowly
grows

RIC S. BASTASA
Towards The Right Attitude

we learn
sooner and better

to accept what is
on where is basis

without choosing
life embraces us

and sooner too
without much word

death takes us all
and nothing matters

since then
since when

RIC S. BASTASA
Towhom it may concern

towhom:

Around The World War Is Raging And The Mother Grieves For Her Dead Son And Her Dead Son Can't Be Replaced Because He Is Dead Neither He Can Be Brought Back To Life Because He Only Had One Life To Live That Ended After He Died Fighting In The War

That He Did Not Know That He Did Not Cause
Why why why why why why why why why why why why?

The mother is grieving the mother is asking why?

it may:

Across The Galaxy That Is In The Sky

You

Found The Beautiful Moon

And

She Sat On Top Of One Of The Stars

That

Had Formed The Galaxy

Then The Galaxy Moved On

like A Big Galleon in an Ocean Of Space

Iuttered a Single Sound that Reverberated an Echo

Through The Layers Of Light Years Looking for You.

concern to whom:
Go
To
Heaven
In
Peace

And
Be
A
Soldier
No
More

itmayconcerntowhomitmayconcern:

My FoolishHeartIsLyingInTheRiverAndTheCurrentPushes
MyFoolishHeartAway
&theRiverHadalwaysBeenasUsualHelpful&Practical&Wise

RIC S. BASTASA
Tractitus

I will no longer speak much with you,
this is what he says today
for he is going back
to where his
father lives.

the word is fulfilled and now
we must begin what he began
we too must know
the incontestability of his words
carved in stone
buried in the magma of time
that the future must find again
to decipher

RIC S. BASTASA
Trading In And Trading Out

he agrees about choices
life is a matter of compromises
win some lose some
taking in and then selling out
as simple as
inhaling and exhaling air
everyday every minute every second
nature comes cramping with
a tray of choices like fruits in an array
like rain falling on the roof
like waves rolling and rolling
on the shorelines of our
destiny

take one or take all
it is your decision and that is all that matters
we become responsible
by then

who suffers? you
who jumps with joy? it is still you.

take it. lose it. for one thing
always choose to be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trading.....

my nights
are trading fireflies
to a tree

and in the morning
the tree pays

a ripe mango on the grass
to a hungry stranger
on the road.

RIC S. BASTASA
Traditional Panorama

cows spotted thick
skins grazing on the green
field with golden rays of
sunshine
early morning
birds flying hovering
on tree branches

fences, and boundaries
cottage of a farmer
blue clouds now starting
to hover in place

a girl singing butterflies
mother milking the cows
and father beginning
to plow the corn field

no plane above the skies
no rockets

at night some meteors
fall,
wishing stars and
zodiac escapades
from the numbing routine
of traditions

no one escapes
the panorama is closed and
strict
the characters are born
marry, beget children,
and then they die
and get buried

years and years
leaves fall, there are no questions.
Tragedy...

what i have grown
for years and years
till date
are the arms of the
lustful lover and we
have always been
together without
words,
voiceless, and i have
tried to identify with
the voicelessness
of our voices
only to be misled
and be
humiliated for what
have you are
platonic breasts
ready with the milk
for kids.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tramped

we all hear the
sounds of the stamps
of your children
traveling on foot
from the wombs
of their mothers

they are all gone now.

we shall kiss the lips
of the flowers
of the umbilical cords
that set them free

RIC S. BASTASA
Trance

falling into a trance
his world curled into a huge wall
his arms are too short to make an embrace
the house too wide like the sea
and the stairs lengthened its rails
to heaven

those who watch him in pity
of course cannot understand
he does not belong to their
comprehension anymore
neither does he
desire to be a part of their
too narrow world where his lips
are too small to paint a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tranquility

always
tranquil, a maple leaf
floating on a
still pond
mirror of a white cloud
a ripple vanished.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tranquility Of The Mountain And The Fog

the way
fog hovers on
the mountain
side

facing it
above a hill
on its dew dressed
grass
you sit and
watch

RIC S. BASTASA
Transcend

transcend fame
there is more beyond the sound
of the clapping hands

transcend even your way
of looking at yourself
for when you begin to close your eyes
and even be blind
with what you can see

it is at this moment
when you begin to see what everyone
has not ever seen

it is everything now
not something not someone
not where not when
not what and not even why

wonder and wonder and keep
wondering
that is the start and the beginning
and there
there is no time even

RIC S. BASTASA
Transcend What We Once Believed To Be All True

like the way horses do
jumping over fences

Like the way fledglings
overgrow nests and fly over
the trunks of trees

so shall we
who are learners of this craft
of living

must transcend what we
once believed to be all true

we were taught how to think
like fire from dry wood

like heat from sand that offers
mirage for real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Transcendence....

in that pit of sorrow
shall one descend

until his head is seen
no more

what is seen is the plain
a desert if you know

the sun is cruel
as seen on the skulls of goats

and men
but one cannot just descend

forever into the
grief that is so overwhelming

that is not the end
of this matter for soon one who is scarred & scared

with so much sadness
learns so carefully and the heart

that is broken soon shall
heal the strings that snapped

from its guitar body
and one's trembling fingers can still

figure music what just two strings
or even one

down to that grave of darkness
where shadows speak

one day an eye looks for a leak
of light
and finding an opening
wings its way
to the world of light where it
once lived
for it shall remember and rise
once again
as spirit as scent of calmness
and gentleness

the scars listen and the broken limbs
reshape what the spirits
reinvent: you see, you must have
felt it, because
it happens and we are still here
all willing
to speak and listen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Transcending

lisod
apan kaya na nakong buhaton

ang pag-ambak sa bintana
mosirko sa hangin
tugpa sa yuta nga morag
iring

latas sa labat
nga morag irong buang

morag kabayo
tigidigtigiding ang dagan

dayog lupad morag
langgam

RIC S. BASTASA
Transformation

A bud sighs a question into the air
The question
Diffuses
Layer by layer
Into another sphere

The bud
Blooms
Into flower

Waiting sadly
It wishes to wither faster
To trace the question
Gone away

RIC S. BASTASA
Transformation (2)

at first i was just a mere word
so i transformed myself into a sentence
and then not contented with what i am
a mere sound and syllable
an idea, a conceived meaning
i opted to have some cells
i learned how to make myself many
so i got duplicates and multiples
until i began to have a body
some hands and feet until i began
to have a definite form like circles and
squares and cubes until i became a man
and then i regretted all these
i went back to what i was
a mere word
now looking still
for my own meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Transformation (30)

i have gone beyond, and i feel so secure
there is this feeling of satisfaction about how this un-satisfaction had been conquered. No feeling of remorse.

no feeling of want, not having to want, desire lost.
sitting down, unloading, jumping over the fence,

finding another uncharted territory
something strange, but something that is always amazing

to rise beyond the self, to feel a little bit about being god. To forget that i have a body, to know that i am not that completely.

to sit and then be lost
to explode and yet still be whole

RIC S. BASTASA
Transformations

THEY Wait
the caterpillar, the flower bud,
time is like a hand that does not compel
them, because by its unnoticeable grace
the process goes on and on

the caterpillar is caressed into a cocoon
in still air
stiller hours
of petals falling one by one
giving way to seeds
existence

the buds have no memories
what to tell
how one morning they all turn
into flowers
then wilt
upon the conquest of
sunset

some things too
have wings that flutter
happily
but only for
a day

RIC S. BASTASA
Transformations Of Our Being

at first, no matter how trivial
each dust becomes special
since it comes from your tongue
wet with the sweetest saliva of your love,
we always want it that way
that rainy feel
that wets us all over
running down our spine
into the hidden nooks of
our being
that we do not wish to share
with any creature
in this exclusive spot that we found

dee
you say it once
and i join you
in this harmony
of our
differences

wow is my other word
for these ordinary dusts
that go inside me

i become a part
of the boulevard
where lovers
want to spend the
night
with the winds
that change
the arrangements
made by
fate

now to dust
shall we to dust return
but when that time comes
we too
have assumed the body
of the wind
the soul of the earth
the dusts
invincible

RIC S. BASTASA
Transitions....

at first the house is one kind of a party
more friends are coming
you even let the mailman to have a drink
and stay for a while
though he has nothing to say just like
the masons and some carpenters

then the house was almost burned
there was so much panic that day
the whole village talked about it for weeks

of course, the house as usual is silent like
most rocks
to regain its solidity
it listens to the refreshes of the sea breeze
it resumes its pacific nature
facing the sea and learning from the past storms

then something so horrible happens
but no one in the house is telling about it
the pillars shook and some walls gave in
a part of the roof was taken by the hurricane
but the house is still in tact

changes come into play
the gates are closed
the mailman is having a hard time pressing the door bell
the mail box is broken
and some thieves are anticipating that someday
they can get in and make their presence felt
perhaps to take
what is essential

what they did not know is that
no one lives in this house anymore
all the memories are put into boxes and kept in the cellars
the house has become one mummified pharaoh
a pyramid that points to the sun
the village only talks about the built-in mysteries

it is one kind of a cadaver surrounded by flowers
whose heart has been removed a few days ago

and then the talk stops
and that was only when the last prayer was said.

RIC S. BASTASA
Translating You

You are from us
Ribs, remember
You have flown away from us
Blackbird, remember

You never return
Saying, i am happier in the desert
Where the sunset is blood red
You left us
Some footprints that
I am now busying with some interpretations

You nod
And i move on with some fun
Trying to enjoy what is there examining what is it really that you left with us
I am digesting gold
And with the precious metals, how can i ever be full?
I should have eaten rice and salted fish
As once my mother wished?

RIC S. BASTASA
Translations

do not be lost in the forest of translations.
we live there once.
we live the word of the soothsayers
focusing on
crystal balls,
do not be amazed with those that we
do not really understand
those that we categorize as mysteries
we suspect after all that they do not exist
and now i can glean from your silence
as you fathom a deep void
inside my heart
dipping your tongue with something
that tastes bland
a little sour like rotten apple
you cannot hold me
perhaps only on the side
like the icing of a cake
at the middle
i am one kind of a doughnut hole.

i am not slippery, neither am i thorny
(do not spell it as horny)
with all regret when you try to find the house
where i live
i am not a forest, i am not a tree even

i have the body of that whisper
what is it? you know it. i have no one and i am nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Transparency

a egg shell
white as
clear skies
on a cloudless day
i hold it
against the sun
to see
if something
alive is
still there
to see
if you still
love me
opaque love
transparencies
of feelings
concealed
pains buried
like egg yolk
inside
this fragile shell

RIC S. BASTASA
Transposition

on the dry pavement
summer stones
and pebbles
and grass with dews

early morning light
pearls and diamonds and
yellow mantle crawling
spreading

RIC S. BASTASA
Transubstantiation

I NOW EAT
a slice of this flesh
this bread
i now drink his blood
this wine

yet what do i really see?

it is not what i see
stupid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trauma...

having heard that you had trauma
falling on the busy street with no one helping
in a bit, i cannot really relate,

but i remember in that big city where i once lived
trauma is everywhere
even in the restaurants where new lovers dine
even in boulevards where yachts love their rest
even in bed where love is invented

trauma has become a way of life
like breakfast and special dinners
like waking up

in some ways when another person jumps from
the 13th floor and then you hear the ambulance screaming
you simply dismiss this as another daily routine

and so you close the window
and watch the soap opera on TV
lying on the sofa
your thoughts focusing on the most trivial matter

that is more of
another trauma.

RIC S. BASTASA
Travel

the fast craft slices the oceans
of our passage
from one island to another
day by day
we see the sea foams
and the skies
that we cut through

the sea gulls and the sun
meet us on the shore lines
of the port

another destination
of this travel
this wandering

another arrival greets us
smiling faces telling us
welcome
welcome
we are offering you this paradise
white sands
cool shady coconut trees
sweet queen's pineapple
crunchy to your teeth
pamper your tongues

beside the blue pools
reflecting the clouds
and our faces
we splash and take
what the jacuzzi offers

the sweet conversation begins
you are beside me
your legs touching mine
we make whispers
the water so cool and relaxing
you are warmer than the morning sun
we confirm again
distances
we confirm again the power of nearness
we affirm us in our arms
we close our eyes

the world is still
and it is indeed beautiful
inside us

on soundless splashes
the waters in our minds run deep
we fall in love again

RIC S. BASTASA
Travel And Life

there is a saying that we travel not to escape life but that life may not escape us and i ask myself if honestly i do as i always want it to be done.

when we were on the beach one Sunday morning the sea was crystal clear and we both see the fish feeding on the weeds.

i went to the deeper part and since you do not know how to swim you only went with me upon a lengthy gaze without speaking a word as it was unnecessary.

the envy was clear since all your life you always wanted to learn how to swim.

sometimes i want to tell you that traveling is like swimming. and that we are the fish and the sea is the world and we feed on seaweeds and no matter how we wanted to be deep, we still remain as shallow as our shortcomings

time strains us. and some people like you only gaze and never learn and only stay though they really want to go somewhere else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Travel Diary

The Centre of France
is the most quietest part
But the great treasure
of this region is the Loire valley,
with many great castles and beautiful towns.

& of course Chartres with its famous cathedral
we prayed
for ten minutes

& we went to
The Alps
great for skiing in winter
(though we simply
looked at the skiers
for i have not even
touched one)

Aunt Meggie remembers that Albertville,
Grenoble and
Chamonix have
all hosted the Olympic games.

we proceeded to the
other nice towns
Chambéry & Annecy.

i fell asleep
and missed the
view of
the countryside.

RIC S. BASTASA
Travel Lite...

when he leaves
he brings nothing with him
except the scent of
the passion
fruit

when he comes back
he brings nothings with him
except the faded scent of the passion
fruit.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Travel Poem: Finland

vast forested wildernesses
Lemmenjoki National Park
and Oulanka National Park
wings of hawks and eagles

treks among the pines and
lakes in summer
in far north

It's a golden,
sunny season as Finland bursts

into life with an explosion of festivals,
good cheer
and optimism.

the towns are buzzing,
but it's also a time to head for the lakelands
of Mikkeli & around and
Lappeenranta.

Sit on the veranda of a waterside wooden cottage
and watch the summer sun shining
low over the trees,
and you'll have experienced
one of Finland's ultimate treats;

a real Nordic peace
that eases the soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
Traveler (Edited) ...

how evasive has fate been with me
now that i have given up what i have in mind

i have become a traveler without a destination
i have no intention of stopping somehow in this confusion

all those years are just a matter of intuition permeating
as
i, the passive weaver, denied,
still keep on
waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
Traveler, Vagabonder

if you only know
why man has to take his
endless journey

you should have known us
too

but i prefer that you do not ask
i know you know that on this aspect

i have only
lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Travelers On Light Weight

one place to another
shifting
another day another night
drifting

what more escape doors
do we really need?

the winds are too kind
for drifters like us
twirling in the air
as leaves of
summer trees

we shift paradigms
we move to more places of
our hearts

wanting to cure what footprints
of loneliness have been left
in the sands of our shore-less souls

slowly we travel and scenes
of cities and towns flash before our weary eyes
trees along the roads
have become flowing rivers in our minds
stopovers are giving us names
of people that
we know we do not have to remember

this is the journey
this is the metaphor of who we really are

pilgrims of the shrine of life
vagabonds of seasons
travelers of light packs
trekkers of temporaries

and we never ask
when will this really end?

RIC S. BASTASA
Travelling

a travel is a metaphor of a journey
and a journey is always
what life is all about

arrivals and departures and i see it well
at airports
and well, so well, at pre-departures

then we move inside the plane and
the doors close and we are lifted to the skies

for hours you are beside the clouds
but you never have the courage to open the window
and touch each fine cotton beside you

crazy but sometimes i think that way
opening closed windows and think not of the
prohibitions and the consequencies,

there is so much silence up there and it is the mind
that does much of the talking and you listen
always for the reminders of the stewardess
and the captain telling you that

we are 30,000 feet above sea level and out there
you see Panay Island
we will be flying for one hour and a half
it is a fine day

and then the seat belt sign is on for the
turbulence but you do not mind

you look forward to an arrival and the another
opening of a door to a destination

touchdown, the plane lands perfectly as always
no plane crash, no headlines for the daily news

but i do not really think about these matters anymore

the stewardess announces an arrival, fifteen minutes earlier than scheduled. Fast plane. My thoughts unconsumed.

we step down. we take our bags. this journey never stops.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trembling Hands Of Sick People

Actually there is nothing to be afraid of.
If you deeply know everybody here
and if they are honest to admit, most of their lives have been overspent on fears.
the majority is afraid. 
the minority of the minority, seldom discovers that there is nothing to fear except fear itself. And you do not even know who said that.
it is funny when all the fearful people come to an assembly
the whole people's park will be filled with trembling hands,
scattered minds, out of focus,
always, always, it is the future that seems to be the preoccupation
spilled milk, money that was lost and beyond recovery,
budgets, uncertain goals,
so many termites eating wooden brains,
aphids on illusions of leaves,
worms on rotten projections,
if you put them all together
it is not a very healthy picture of what we want to paint society to be
in a canvass of hope
trembling hands of sick people
fit for a mental asylum
dump trucks of daily medications
those every young
who could be children of yours
surely would not like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trendy

most of my friends who went to Chicago
on care giving jobs
finally left for good the marriage
they had in the Philippines,
just this morning i had a chat with a
close friend whose husband had her
declared presumptively dead in court
so he can marry another,
she says it's a trend
marriages are bound to be broken
vows have no meaning
she did not mind at all if she is
'dead' to him and to the law,
she too has a man of her own now
a work to attend to,
another summer vacation in California
and in Paris sometime
this April,
and then she enumerates other names
who marriages are
dissolved,
it is not that time is cruel, it is just that
with money now,
they are free to find love
(and lust).
so long, i may meet other names.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tres Pension

how big is this
room
but
how small is
this world i live in

RIC S. BASTASA
Triangle....

x looks at y
and y looks at z
and z
looks at nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Triangular

a happy family
is triangular

the father and mother
and the sun

divinity is triangular
the father and the son
and the holy spirit

nature is triangular
heaven and earth
and air

we are sitting on the
the quiet patch
of our affections
and we are triangular too

you and i
  and
  God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trickles....

the wilted leaves
are falling

the wind is
strong and fast

so many memories
trickling in my mind

unscented petals of
red and orange

days without dew
happy days are few

RIC S. BASTASA
there is an open hole
inviting, and you get inside the hole
and there is no coffee there but it is great
warm, and soft, and so enticing, you want to stay for a while
and there is so much mutual liking, you are the peg on that round hole,
no, you're not the pig and she is not a bitch,
she's beautiful like a flower less the fruit
or the frost, and you are beautiful too plus the grease
on her stalks and sepals,
she is the open hole and you're the round peg,
and there is this war of the roses and the bees
and there is this language of love
that both of you wish to truly speak.
it ended like the wings of the butterfly
slashed from its body
it is sad it is beautiful
brieflessly
& breathlessly
devoted to
you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trimming The Distance Of A Sigh

learn the
style of the pocket

ey say
on a reservation one somehow
pockets a smile

as though it is something
that you can hide like

a pebble in your mouth
and pretend that happiness does not
exist
and cannot exist between the lips

beneath the teeth,
but these principles are true

restrained are our hands sometimes
our bodies not losing its own orbit

in this journey towards a
brighter and much orderly universe

one day i too must learn
to trim the distance covered by my sighs

as though i am
taking a breath beside you

your nose touching mine
your nipple begging for my tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Trimming The Trees, Pruning The Twigs....

on the tree of life
there will be more leaves
and twigs and flowers
on spring
and more luscious fruits
for eating

there is somehow a
need for trimming
what excesses are there
twigs that go awry
leaves that lush for too much shade
and so we do just that
cut some twigs
take a look and cut some more
remove some leaves
for sacrifices
for us to some more
and some time
see heaven for once.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tripping...

you go places
riding on a bus
transferring to a boat
sitting for a moment
on a port
seeing people disembarking
on a plank of wood
outside a launch
you see children lifted by their fathers
mothers with umbrella
sunny days
a line of green trees along the
seemingly endless road
more days to
circumnavigate an island
of white sands
night when you are alone with
everyone
staying for a while
checking their bags and
clothes
days are going fast
passing you by
on wish not to hold on any hour
you flow
like a river, yes always like a river
not a part of you wishing a clog
a barrier
you are like a rubber stretched
nothing snaps

RIC S. BASTASA
Triste

My smoke
as usual floats in the air
much lighter
than your
whisper

RIC S. BASTASA
Triumvirate In A State Of Bliss!

in taking the cue
from
Jean Paul when he says that-

'Hell is
Other People'

i have since
then
avoided People
to include
you

and almost to include
Me

but at the end, how can i
avoid

Hell?
or taking another
deeper
reflection upon such cue

why is

Other People
Hell?
or

Does Hell exist really?

People are People
and they shall always be people

these people of the world
you, they, me

How can i be Hell?

so I now declare: i am bliss
i am paradise

goodbye Jean Paul
now i live here, in this paradise

me, i and myself

triumvirate in a state
of bliss!

RIC S. BASTASA
Trivial

sometimes, yes, sometimes
seems to be my favorite word of the day,
i like (another favorite is i, just like most of us,
i, i, i, i, i)
to trivialize a lot of events: funerals, baptisms,
even marriage,
sometimes, i ask why, why all these events and things
and people (oh yes, the people)
have become nothing but images, nothing to be
taken seriously about,
i don't grieve at the dead, they are all gone,
i don't wonder at new births, nothing to be amazed
there is nothing new,
and i don't get excited about other people's marriages
don't like to see about the slicing of the cakes
or the drinking of the wine, the releasing of the doves,
the first kiss, or the lifting of the veil,
and the much awaited catching of the bridal bouquet
of red roses

they bore me,
i don't itch and twitch,
i am numb but i am not dead yet

are you happy now?
alright, there is pain, but let me tell you
these are tolerable
and don't hurt that much anymore

with constant practice, i suppose.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trivial.....

the way
he measures territories
with his
ruler

deleting some
with his erasers and
wanting
by marking this and
that
with x's

this coniferous mind
conquer here and
there

kill, kill, kill all
obstructions
drop the bombs
drop the bombs
use only seconds
quick is quick
deceive this world
with law and reason

the way to think
of this world
as a figment of your
imagination

measuring distances
with thumbs

speech is a manipulator
words are daggers

humanity is just a compromise
men as tins women as cotton
children as gums.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trois

when we make love
tonight
between our bodies
and minds
as we kiss and
hug and moan
and groan
i shall not tell you
that between us is
a memory of her
and so when i start
to close my eyes
and feel the rapid beating
of my heart
i shall hear a rush of the
waters
i shall feel the gushing of
the river
inside my mind
and there she stands
still waiting for me
and there i shall hear
the sweetest song
of love from her

and then i explode
like the sun
on this big bang
to create the meteors
and the stars

i live in the universe
of my own imagination
in there there shall be
the three of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trois.....

we are all the same
towards the destination
that island of
desire
tree of us in this
boat
body

we do not mention names
what for?
the elements of wind and fire
and hands and thighs
and tongues

making memories on sands
and picking time like pickles
licking the
toothpick
and opening the

legs of what they do not
beforehand
understand as the three of these
who are here

unwind and in freedom
discover
the secret of
what cannot be uttered
here leave the hands
and mouth
open.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trouble In The Backyard

with only one
rooster
and five hens
in my backyard

since then
everyday has
become nothing
but trouble.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Colors

time only time can give us our true colors
we start as bright colored stars
others as full golden moons
some are silvery rivers running
to the morning's dusk glowing to the most blue oceans
others as pale as fear
and finally some
as black as death as red as blood
bursting from the fountains of the violence
of this earth
we smell the stink
the foulness of
all realities
then we shy away from what used to be just black and white
and the promise of something so colorful
and adopt the compromise
of gray

we have grown and have matured
we think the colors are nothing but what we simply fantasize

RIC S. BASTASA
True Fascinations.

Follow your heart
it has no destination
for one thing
journeys like these
are true
fascinations.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Happiness....

true happiness
is an ocean

if is filling the
whole world

fluid and taking
the shape of
every void

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love

for love to be true
it must be an open gate
the lover comes
and she may stay

and she is free to leave
when the love
is gone

and i shall wait
when the lover makes up
a mind of her own
to a love that endures
and no longer
held by time

a love beyond our bodies
beyond thoughts
beyond us

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love

man
can't believe this one from you
to the many places you have gone
australia, las vegas,
austria, and the rest of europe
asia,
oceania, arabic countries
deserts and
oasis
african safaris
the rivers of thailand
connecting malaya
at mid 50
you come back
set a party
have so many drinks
and stories
with an ending cry
that you are still
in love
with the same woman

and she is already
married with
five lovely
kids...
you finally divorced
the filler
left the conjugal house &
now
back to this country
that will still break
your heart...
man! what a soul!
what a hardheaded creature
self-inflicted
pain again!
True Love

let her go
set her free
let her find another one
perhaps not like you
the one that she says does not excite her anymore
her senses numb

let her go
let her know finally that your love
is always greater
than all her past and new loves combined

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love Finds Its Own Way

like a river
true love
finally overflows
and breaks
with its stored
force
the huge dam
along its
way

you prohibit it
it cannot be.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love Gives Way For Another Person's Happiness

ture love at the end understands
that there is no use for it to become true
because
from the beginning it has always been
true upon itself
and even for its non fulfillment
it thrives upon the honor
that truth sometimes gives
way
for another person's growth
and happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love Sometimes Gets Unrequitted, And It Is Very Painful

how the moon and the stars
truly loved the sun

how the sun
with its arrogance keeps busy all the day

how the moon hides sometimes
on the nights when the stars
are away

the moon
feeling so lonely
till this day
her true love for the sun
still unrequitted

and indeed it is very painful
the moon bleeds
her tears
and blood flow like her
shining moonlight

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love....

hold my hand
take my hand
i hold your hand
i will take you
to the river

our love is fire
that waters cannot
kill.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love?

i know what true love is.
i had it once. How many times will i take pride in this?
NOT once i assure you
There will be another time that i will tell you about it
its language is only between
the two of us, i fully remember when we were together
in church and people laugh and we did not
because we know
what we feel.
I assure you, it is true love.
It makes the world real, hands that get hurt,
hair that gets burned by a lamp,
lips that spit blood sometimes
but not everything in it is pain
there was a time when true love was born
inside the car
we had it, we never felt shame
we felt so right
and wanted a repeat performance
we did not speak about it
but we always remember it
like the full moon.
True love, at the end i tell myself
I don't need it
For me to survive.
And indeed, i survive, it is not always painful.
But it is, once, it was
very painful.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Love? Is There A Need?

there is no such thing
i now declare
there is no need
one can survive without it
this i have learned
in my short years of experience

children are born
even without it
marriage couples
meet anniversaries
less the love
death comes
still without it.

RIC S. BASTASA
True Or False

either you become true
or you become false

if you are true
there is only pain

truth does not offer you
happiness

if you keep on hoping
no one comes

if you become false
a platter of joys is served

that is how they work here
falsity has rewards

truth's place is elsewhere
it can be eternal

but when is such a question
that demands a quick answer

truth does not guarantee
temporary solutions to your grief

falsities are here
and if you do not dance

you will be a wallflower
& i know you will not like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
True To Myself.....

i thought i could be you
now. I must have been too eager
to deceive
myself. I think about you and
that kiss,
that night, that short moment,
i thought you understand
i though you know how to love.

you cannot. I leave all these thoughts
behind me.
i leave you.

i wake up in the morning renewed.
Tired of deceiving myself to this
illusion.

true to myself, i must say goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Truly Human

if you screamed
and became silent
if you jumped for joy
and chose silence
you have understood.

RIC S. BASTASA
truly i love you
and i keep it all these years
i will not be telling you
even on a sigh
when you are by my side
in the car
in the room
in the movie house
truly i love you
when i touch your hand
electricity runs in my head
in my heart
and i tremble like a man so in love
lighting the whole city
truly i love you and i will die without you
but you are
a star that in the literalness of this
science
too hot and too huge to burn me
to death
and so
using this logical mind
i must go away
stay there in the sky
as beautiful as you
are
i am the man in the desert
beside my camel
watching you
like a
a distant memory.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trust

let yourself
fall off
from a very high cliff

there are no angels
in sight

do you trust
God?

commom,
do you trust
God?

you must be sober
now
i know
you are trying to
take the side
with reason

and reason
trusts no one

now be serious
do you
trust God?

you are leaving
this poem
like
a trash, it will not stop asking you

do you
trust God?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tusting A Self

like a turtle
i carry myself on my back
trusting no one
on my snail-paced journey
to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
you wrap my body with your breasts
and i face the pillow my body presses
on the softness of materiality, you run
your fingers on my arms looking for
the secrets of my flesh, and i keep my
hands steady on the railing of the bed.

you whisper to my ear the tradition that
in true love there are no more secrets.
i smile to the white linen and i close my
eyes back to the horrors of my pasts.

you put your chin on my shoulder and
you kiss my hair and you caress my
head and neck down to my hip and butt.

you kiss me again and you signal that i
now must face you in this intimacy. And
i look at you and gently i kiss you in return.
I am Cupid and you are Psyche. I must tell
you again, i trust no light. Love exists

by itself, through itself, for itself, & in-itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trusting You

it was when you
passed under the
tree that i finally
let go off my hands
gripping on a
a hollow branch.

RIC S. BASTASA
Truth And Pain Finally Departed.

you take a second
glance at to what you
once saw was
beauty and love

it is not dark anymore
morning light came through
the window and there
the truth lies naked before
you

it is not that beautiful
anymore in fact a certain
pain comes with it glaring
in a little while as you
begin to cover your nudity
in front of the mirror

you look at what used to be
love with pity and regret but
just the same you are forgiving
to yourself and the other whom
you have endeared with being a
beloved

meanwhile the crock crows
the sun comes forth
the wind blows from the sea
your hair begins to dance
with the sound of this
realization: how enslaved
you were now left without
much justification.

ah, freedom comes with
an announcement: it is never
too late to be new again.

Love and beauty in another
day of your life.
Truth and pain finally departed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Truth As Quiet.

they say that truth arrives,
leaves  and comes back again
to let you know,

sometimes, it is late, to some
too premature,

i have heard some sobbing,
others go to the extreme scream,

others deny, they say they have not
seen any,

truth is just around, inside the heart,
and those who feel this

lives in the quiet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Truth Beyond Words

So he refuses to talk
He twirls a flower
Instead between
His fingers

Then the other said
I must speak
For words to be
Passed on

Then the heavens
Speak by
Changing the seasons
A hundred more
Are born

He fears
That when the heavens
Speak some more
There will be
No more justice
To the words
Of Men

RIC S. BASTASA
Truth In Deathbed

if you brought the truth about me in your deathbed do not worry

i am not interested to know i make myself i weave my lies too

i am the spider weaving my own house that traps all my prey and i have learned to eat them all

sleep well mother do not tell me what heaven is all about

RIC S. BASTASA
to make my sister happy (and foremost confident about herself and be without fear facing other people)

mother makes nicer comments about her almond eyes, (how beautiful are you my dear daughter!) which i hear and which

lie of course reverberate like an echo of untruths throughout the room but i never made a comment about what is really true

for even as a child i understand how mothers love their daughters, to such an extent that they have to lie about disasters.

truth is, my dear sister you owe a lot to mother for what you are now, , ,

confident as ever and how you have grown to be such a beautiful woman starting from mother's white lie...
you ask me to choose
between truth
and consequence,

i rather have
all the consequences.
you are the truth
and you begin
to hurt. I face you
again, i have no more
tears
attuned am i
to these blunders
and sorrows
and pains, , , ,
to all these
redundancies

a thesaurus of
lamentations,

i open a page
of this truth,

i still hope to find
this word....

happiness,

i still have faith, that this word
is not lost, among the pages
of your stories,

some bookmarks
are thrown under the bed,

i remember reading this page.
there is this fingerprint
of my laughter,
it is still alive and smiling at me.
I still believe, what mother said: keep the marriage there are always threads and needles for whatever is torn.

Father was lucky.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Trutify' The 'I' First

so you want it
simple, free, quiet, true,

why not? but first
love the 'i'
in you

free the 'i'
quiet the 'i'
free the 'i'
trutify this 'i'

f'i'rst.

RIC S. BASTASA
Try It. It Is Good.

the room can be another prison for one

who remains a bud tight as a cork to the bottle

necked, and undecided to open up into

a complete flower, for years, this is going on

and on and on but there is no worry now

one gets attuned to the sound of loneliness which

has become another nice music over this radio

this room, has become one radio, one lasting music

for a self loving self unto this self, his individual

feudal upon itself, delving into the wholeness of one's independence. Try it. it is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is inside you
try listening to it because it talks
just like you
so there is familiarity
and do not stop there
move inside it
and see for yourself
it is you
when you begin to hear your words
time stops
when you see your face
(this i can attest to you)
the world becomes too beautiful
to even think about
and you do not even have to think for any moment
since time stops
you shake your hand
it is yours after all
but you feel more warmth this time
because when time stops
running
when you give it time
to feeling and seeing
that is the time that the self is assured
of the love that you have denied
for years.
you must feel
there are no divided selves
nothing split like
a second,
it is one whole self
talking and
listening at the same time
and only love
can make this happen

your love.
Try Love

try love and see for yourself
the dark sky used to be
without a blink
is now dotted with a thousand stars
the moon walks
like a model on a catwalk
of glistening clouds
as i watch
my hands couldn't help
but clap

RIC S. BASTASA
Try Painting Something In Two Colors Only

the duality of just red and black

red for luck as the chinese sees it
and black for goodness
(remember good guys wear black
as the americans
put it)

but i do not really believe what the chinese
or the american believes it to be
to the French
in Les Miserables

red is the color of despair
and to us
Filipinos, black is the color of mourning
equate it with despair
when idealism dies
when our ancestors pass away
when we do not think of them anymore

black, death and red,
blood,
and

something thicker than water
darkness, and coldness, and being lost because

'you are drunk and you are standing
on the edge of the roof'

RIC S. BASTASA
Try Sipping This

ADVICE TO A LONER

I will attempt not to misspell loneliness

at any rate let me inform you that i have always correctly spelled it during those times of extreme depression

to spell it correctly i need to see a flower blooming in the desert that i created myself and since someone asks for its scent i have to make the necessary concoctions

it could be jasmine or cherry perhaps but i know it all depends on me and my way of imagining people and places

colors spring from the rods in my eyes and scents are sensed by the sensory of my nose

if you are lonely why not join me in my cup of tea

sip this it is good for your tongue.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying Hard...

the mere possibility
that i can have you
even for
one night, shall,
make me live,
but you are telling me,
as fate
is firm on its stand,
it is not
possible at all,
never,
and then to live,
some more,
one day at a time,
i tell lies to myself,
no one's hurt,
i have no regrets,
i must live, i must,
no one kills me,
and neither shall i kill
myself
because of you, because
of that
mere possibility.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying Seeing Loneliness

Try to see loneliness
On a mango tree
With just one leaf

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying To Make Something Invisible Immortal....

if you close
a bottle
and air is trapped

so with the fruit
fly in there
which, by its tiny
size is
so insignificant and
at most
is not visible to the
naked eye

but somehow this is the
test of your
poetic sense

the one who sees the
dead fruit fly can write
first

the elegy of the
insignificant
trying to make something
invisible
immortal....

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying To Really Forget You......

it is ten o'clock in the evening
and here i am listening to Beethoven.

i imagine ten goats running on evergreen hills.
stopping for some herbs.

my eyes are hazy, and i am getting numb and lazy.

piano keys and rats' feet, and this peace
in between

where i insert myself and reflect in a place
where there are no mirrors

a river perhaps, clear and cool and blue skies.
a glass of red wine, no, please, no memory of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying...

if your coldness at dawn
cannot tackle the
morning sunshine
try some amount of
time convincing yourself
that you also know
how to outstrip that coldness
that you also know
how to win sometimes
that your love for sunshine
is a prize that you have to win

because if you do not
then who will?

RIC S. BASTASA
Tryst.....

the night
is finally gone
and here i am
still undecided whether
to rise
for another morning
in my life

your scent still
inside me....

RIC S. BASTASA
Tryst

the first to arrive in that safehouse hidden in the suburb was the traitor snappy and emaciated but still looking perfectly fit

he went inside the room and smoked his cigar and took a nap with his shiny tool

later the liar followed knocked at the door and went there too they knew each other for quite long they drank hard liquor but are not talking

he went outside and lay himself on a hammock hang between two trees surround by the bushes and the flowers

then the third came bringing nothing but the usual song and never stopped singing and then the three met inside the room which they locked and which i, who is the storyteller cannot peek since the windows are also well closed to keep the secret sealed forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tsung We Wie Chiao

the Chinese bard went to
Mountain Tao Tsung Long
wanting an absolution
for his malfunction,

along the grass of Wieng Ywi
his naked feet tried
to feel the vilified

took him forty days to climb
the steep steps of Wong Jeing
Shrine where the goddess of
Shing Jing Tong lives

forty days he fasted too
eating nothing but bitter herbs
and drinking only dew
until he finally died in
Fling Flong Dong

and that is the story of
Tsung We Wie CHiao
nothing much to complicate
for his simple death certificate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tuesday Evening

AN EVENING
AFTER MONDAY

IS ALDO KRASS'
FAVORITE EVENING

IT IS TUESDAY
EVENING AND
IT IS NOT A BUSY
EVENING AND

ALDO LIKES IT
TO BE NOT
A BUSY EVENING

WITH HIS JULIET
AFTER WINTER
AND SPRING

IT WILL BE SUMMER
ON A TUESDAY
EVENING AND

IT WILL BE A LOVELY
EVENING
ALONE PERHAPS

RIC S. BASTASA
Tuesday Nights....

Tuesday night
is not your Saturday night
it is all the same
Tuesday nights

words from my mouth
falling on the ears
of those who want
to sit on tomorrow's chair
of power

what do they have in mind
money, honor, glory
and Tuesday night is one
of those nights

where they work for what
i have all despised
and set aside

inconsistent here i am again on
Tuesday night
assisting, guiding, letting them see
the light of the
door that opens to
where i have once closed away

like you, i do not know what to do with
my hands anymore
it is holding the gun and not aiming
at anyone

RIC S. BASTASA
Tugpahanan

puting kalapating misulod sa akong lawak
mas puti pas kahayag, balahibong mas humok
pas lumot sa panit sa kahoy,
gihimashimas nako ang iyang dughan
gihagkan ko ang iyang sungo, wala kami
nagtinutukay, lahi ang among gigikanan
lahi sab ang among padulungan, akong
gibuhian ug milupad kini sa gawas sa
akong balay, usa ka tinipigan nga akong
gihatagan ug kaluwasan, ug sa kanunay
gihandom ko ang pagbalik niya sa akong
abli nga bentana, aron unta mahibalik na usab
siya isip akong tinipigan.
walay hisgot kabahin sa gugma.
walay hisgot kabahin sa ugma.
ang karon lamang, ang karon lamang.
nga among gikalipay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tuhoi Ang Mga Pako Sa Imong Mga Damgo

ang kaanindot sa kalibotan
nag-agad sa imong panglantaw

ayaw saligi ang imong mga mata
kay dili kaayo kini kakita

adunay mga lugar nga wa pa sukad
matultuli sa kasingkasing

kini ang adtoa
tuhoi ang mga pako sa imong mga damgo

RIC S. BASTASA
Tuliang's Wisdom

remember my fried
that when he kicks your rear

it is but obvious
that he is at your back

you are still leading

so relax.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tulo Ka Bitoon

ang usa alang kanimo
ang ikaduha alang kaniya
ang ikatulo alang lang gihapon kanimo

walay akoa
nianang tulo ka bitoon sa langit

sa akong mga panganod
naandau ko na ang kangiitngit
kadtong walay bisag usa ka bitoon

RIC S. BASTASA
Tulo Na Lang Kaadlaw Pista Na Usab Sa Among Lungsod

1. milabay ang sikadsikad
2. milantaw sa duha ka tawo
3. nga punay og katkat
4. mga haligi nga ilang
5. hinayhinayan og patindog
6. ina bay mga buho daan
7. nga bongbong nga
8. mga letra og numero
9. suot ang mga tyorka
10. tuyo aron mahaom
11. niwang og opaw nga
12. tamtong nga lalaki
13. milantaw sa ilang bag-o
14. nahuman nga tolda-tolda
15. ahh! Piyasta na usab diri sa
16. among lungsod
17. duna na usay dagan sa mga
18. bayong walay kinabuhi
19. opusta ko og dayon makadaog
20. og baso, monyeka og mga
21. sa sardinas.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tun-i Pag-Ayo Ang Gugma Nga Matuod

Tun-i pag-ayo ang imong kaugalingon.
Ilha kini siya pag-ayo. Kon masabtan mo
Na siya, angayan ka na nga mahigugma.
Kay sa tinood ang tawo nga mahigugma
Sa tinood nga gugma magsugod sa
Pagsabot sa iyang kaugalingon.
Gikan dinhi, sugdan na niya pag-tan-aw
Ang lagyo nga mga butang, sa tumang
Pagsabot. Kon nganong gisapot ang adlaw.
Kon ngano nga luoran ang bulan. Kon ngano
Nga uwagan lang gihapon ang mga bitoon.
Ang tamsi ug ulod dili na magpanuko
Nga moangkon nga amigo mo sila,
kon ikaw tinood nga nahigugma.

Ayaw ug too nga dili gamitay ang gugma.
Gamiton mo ang imong kaugalingon ug
Ang mga butang aron molambo ang gugma.
Aron mahinog kini. Aron mangalimyon kini.
Dili na gani makwenta kon kinsay gamit kaayo.
Wala na ang kwentahay. Kay kon ikaw wala na
Kasabot, apan nagpadayon lang gihapon sa
Paghigugma, ikaw ang tinood nga gugma.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tuod No? Unsaon Ba Pagkaon Sa Impyerno

ningala siya sa imong mga pulong
gahisgot ka man gud ug impyerno

makalilisang nga pulong, midugang sa ilang
mga kahadlok, kay ang ilang mga pinulongan

kutob ra man unta sa dagan, bakwet, tago,
hipos, walay daghang alingasa, dili magpasagad
ug lakaw sa gabii, basin ug adunay spray sa bala
sa armalite diha sa videokihan ni letecia

aw hinoon, wala sila kahisgot bahn sa langit
dili nila 'feel' kay wala sila sugod katilaw anang
langit sama sa kalinaw, kaasenso, kaedukado,
kalimpyo sa balay, kinabuhing haruhay, saktong
panginabuhi, steady nga pangita, piskay nga lawas

apan, kwidaw, paghisgut mo sa impyerno
mitaas ang ilang mga kilay, nanglimbawot ang
ilang mga balahibo, mibahag ang ilang mga ikog,
apan nagpugong lang sila, morag dedma lang,

kay para kanila, ania na kanila ang impyerno
nagbaga nga uling sa ilang tugkaran ug ania
silas sa ilang talad kan-anan ug mao kini ang
ilang mga sud-an: napago nga paglaum
hilaw nga mga damgo, gisawsaw sa ilang
mga luha, gisilian sa ilang mga kahadlok.

mao kana, cindy, ang ilang pagkaon sa impyerno
ug sakto ka, walay tinidor, walay kutsara, ug ako
pang idugang: ang uban wala na gani mga kamot
kay giputlan ug gitadtad sa ilang mga kapalaran.

RIC S. BASTASA
Turning Hate Around

IF YOU got no love
let it be, love shall find a
way back into your
angry heart,

i got no love too
and those that seek it
finds nothing
and they come again
staying hoping
to find a shadow

I got none. I have hate
that i wish i can turn around
the other bend,
waiting, i keep waiting for you
my buffer.

RIC S. BASTASA
did i not tell you
that the sun did not really
like to shine today?

but it did. And the moon
tonight had sent word that
it does not like to be in
that lonely sky? But soon
it will.

they cannot refuse doing
what they are made to.

same here with me to you.
can i refuse to love you?

but why do you hesitate to
do what we are born of?

the reason, yes my dear the
reason for living is here.

turn off that heart. It has
become one such nuisance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Turning Off The Lights

you say, you love light, its brightness
that reveals what had long been denied to you
by darkness,
you take it, and raise it and put it at the higher place
for that should be how it must be
everything is now obvious and you begin to see
the truth, and you say, at first, that this is beautiful,
and good, and you preach about light, its brightness,
you want all those that love you to have them too

time changes, seasons come and go, tastes not just sweetness
but bitterness, this is also truth, but this is not good,
this is ugly, and all the scenes pass before your eyes,
your parents, and brothers, they are carried by this rage
of the river of time, there was thunder and lightning at the background,
there is too much lighting, and you begin to dislike
what light has given you, brightness has become too harsh
for such a short life,
there is panic and fear now, you want to run but all the doors are closed,
and the windows refuse to open,
the clouds make the rain, and rain does not stop,
the sun still shines, no promises are broken, all for your love of light,
its brightness, now getting too sharp and too jagged, they hurt

you sit alone, you let the rain flood over you, you dislike water
there is too much of it, just like light, flooding over your senses,
they are no longer good, they are so ugly,
but what can you do? you wished for it and now it is given for free.

forgetting has taken your beloved away. Such a cruel goddess.
Now you are alone. You remember the night of sound sleep.
You remember when you said, once when we were small,
You want all the lights turned off, light hurts, and you cannot sleep.

and so, i turned off  all the lights now. I shall not tell you anything.
You need sleep and dreams shall be there to comfort you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Turning Point

she was taught nothing but straight lines
and her life has always been like the way she was taught
a straight one

no curves, no angles, no secants,
nothing to decant, nothing foamy, everything is settled
like some mathematical principles
solid, stoical, hard, sturdy,
devoted to nothing but study
laughter is strange
the frown is welcome, and
like a stuffed toy did she become
in one of those cabinets
she bathes in the antiquity of her silence

until she exploded, she was shattered into
concentric pieces, tangent minuscules
her mouth foamy, her eyes all too hazy
her neck strangled, and we took turns
looking at her scattered limbs.
on this turning point of her life,
the straight line travels dissolving as air
in a distance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Turtle Or Bird, Who Cares?

no one

(please enter at least 20 characters in the field)

i have
nothing more to say.
i am A
nobody to you
and you are no one to us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Turtles And Rabbits

for my sweet memories i like them to be turtles
i like them move so slow
as i recall them, i like them to linger
like soft fingers caressing the
cotton fields of my mind

for the bitter ones, i like them to be rabbits
i like them to jump away from me
i do not like them to pester me like a flea
i want them to be doves i like them to fly away
i do not want them to have a home
i like them to be rivers to flow into the sea
i like them all gone
to the bottom
i like them
rot in the ground, i like them dead
and then forgotten

i think, i am feeling better now
with turtles swimming in a pond
with green leaves on my bed
with rose petals on my head

RIC S. BASTASA
Tv Morning News

mostly bad,
if you take it seriously
it will be
too depressing as
though the
world
is not livable anymore

what with
markets crashing

new middle east rising
leaders toppling
down
icons burned
stone monuments
shattering

what with floods in
Thailand
earthquakes in Taiwan
and turkey
tsunami in japan

eternal strife in Israel
and Palestine

demonetization
devaluation of the
the mighty dollar

china rising
japan and Russia
conniving

change of guards
off-white
yellow sheen
black gleaming
brown buffer

you shiver upon
a scrambled egg
and cold coffee
and oily fried rice
at the hotel that
accepts only
the local currency
as mode of
payment

credit cards here
dishonored
we accept only cash
the sign flashes
again into
your mind

change, change
there will be changes
on this trip to
Jerusalem
game

choose well
where you're in
and when you're out

analyze the fence
master the north star
rule
do not be too convinced
about the
normalcy syndrome

be cautious
take the leopard's eye
the talent of the
chameleon
do not follow the pack
of wolves

cover your nose
before you jump

the storm is coming
umbrellas have no use.

RIC S. BASTASA
Tv News Tonight

it is all scripted

it is just a game

we all play it.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Twas The Twilight

‘twas the twilight
that we hate during
those moments
of our secret tryst
beneath the trees
when darkness and
light fuse and
then dismember
it is the departure
that begins to put
the tinge of pain
the bitterness of having
to say
when.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twelve

a woman in an early morning sweeping some trash
away from the house

a heap of garbage
thrown on the road for the garbage truck to pick it up...

whistles her way inside the house
locks the gates
enters the door
and opens all the windows of the house
meeting a brand new day
filled with warm sunshine
and cool air breathings
from the yard’s green trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twenty

This is my world, small as it is,
It is a planet by itself with very
Small moons, and tiny stars,
And so tiny, you cannot just
See me there, I am hiding,
But I still live here just the same,
Breathing atomic air, and drinking
Molecular waters, so you see,
How tiny I could be, how tiny
I could get, but this is my
Small happy world, my smile
My laughter so tiny, that you
Cannot hear, you cannot feel,

And that is your world as big
As the sun, with comets and
Meteors, and so big and so
Wide, with oceans and rivers,
And continents, and gigantic
Arctics, and snowy lands, and
We are then so different, and
With me, there is no problem,
I, in my small world, can fit
In yours, but you, you cannot
Fit in mine, that we must
Accept, I am a small world,
And you are a space still expanding,
Now, do you understand,
why I hide?
why I shy away from you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Twenty-Five Years

Strong must these teeth be
Gnashing for twenty-five years
And yet whole and unbroken and sharp

Still willing to bite the dust
To chew pride
To masticate pieces of prejudice
And let the throat know
It must swallow and swallow still

There is so much still to be taken in
There is this thirst of the tongue
This hunger of the mouth
The craving of the stomach

The eyes study the art of waiting
The feet prepare to kick and the arms are ready
For the ambush
Of the enemy

RIC S. BASTASA
Twigs In Black Sky In White

trees without leaves
trees which are all but twigs
reaching for the summer
sun
like Egyptians
in worship
a monochrome of
black veins
and capillaries against
the gray background of
dying light
off-white on such
a bleak day.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twilight

twilight bids
night goodbye
dissolving with
the first lost
dew in the
morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Twilight...

it is still hazy
but we are so sure
about the breaking
of day

the arrival of morning
on time

it is still a long waiting
for the passionate
night

that we still anticipate
with hours and
hours of
desires....

RIC S. BASTASA
Twilights Of Our Lives

Twilights, dim obscurities of the seasons,
An opaque morning, our diffused selves in afternoons
We entwine, we have promises in these uncertainties
We see a hundred more sunsets and sunrises coming out
From the slits of our folded hands,
The morning twilights the afternoon twilights of our lives
We always love the glow; we ride in the dusk that slides
Over night skies, we descend to the lights of morning
The two of us ushering as pure as the clear lights of noon,
Whole and lovely still, then we heat & burn and then
We shall, the two of us still like twilights, finally dim then die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twin Mountains In Marawi

the twin mountains in Marawi
from a distance as you sit calmly
in the sala of your house
your window overlooking
the misty morning
you shall see how perfect
are the breasts of the
virginal native brown
mountain woman

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist

when he was a bad boy
you stick to your being a good girl

and when he converted himself
into a good boy
you claim you have become a bad girl

the twist is,
bad girl still loves the boy
good or bad

well, the good boy waits
when the good girl surrenders

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 10

what we have thrown away
as garbage
or extra baggage
or unused luggage sometimes
come to us asking
why

and since we are definite
as eyes that never
blink on truth
we respond to all these
in that respect of
silence

deep inside we swear
we owe no one an explanation
not even
to our very selves

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 2

understanding need not be imagined
injection of what should have been is useless
we are the players and the strings are on the air
the spectator does not show how much it controls us

at first we think we have the anchor and the steer
we think our paddles are strong our engines well fueled
nay, nay, we are not even shadows of his power
when he says we step out we step out

one feels it now when one becomes weak so weak
as all the forces are removed from within
there are compasses of our mere existence
we do not think finally that we have the right to live at all

days are tricks the nights are magic
the hat is black and what comes out is the white rabbit
it is the usual story of a magician deceiving us with the speed of his hands
our sights have always been losers

Friday, when others fly away he is pushed on the wall
curls in bed, chants the words that no one understand

RIC S. BASTASA
there are facts as vivid as the writings in a book
nothing changes in black and white
they come every morning and stay at nighttime
the familiarity of old places and to and fro pendulums
one takes a look at them again
they never rearrange themselves like furniture of a woman
who is still searching for her place in the house
one is surprised sometimes as they are seen in another light
one that you have never seen before and you think it must be
the only one that is real as real as a cemented wall as tough
as pillars of the house
tomorrow another angle alights from their shapes
and you change another belief again
until such time that you realize
and these they realized a long time ago
truth is relative
facts are angular
nothing is permanent
every thing is an atom in constant
flux in never ending vibrations
and as always
invincible.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 4

do i have to explain to you that
i do not stay forever young? that i was not
always righteous?
you do not have to promise me that you must
love me forever
i am old and getting older
another day another year another night of my life
another dusk another breaking of my bone
and wrinkle on my skin
you do not have to explain the coldness of your hands
the silence of our presence
we do not owe each one money or feeling
when we first met and when we decide to love each other
we made a pact: we do not look for what is missing
we do not remember what is forever
when we leave we leave nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
he lives in two worlds
he has one body, his hands
break when he changes places
his heart is tough
his mind always finds
two explanations
two worlds never reconcile
it is this
neither nor situation
whatever his eyes see
are beautiful
his hands cannot touch any one
when he touches it
there is death

somehow for all those years
there must be a compromise between
water and oil

and so he lives in two worlds
every morning he rises to live
at night
he sleeps to die
and it has been happening
since then

in the house everyone like to love
him
in one condition that there must only be
one world
and so every hour he lives in fear
every minute

but like a dog he learns the tricks
he is young
two worlds live within him
one body one imagination
Twist 6

it hurts him to see you lag behind
when you are much better
the way you write about evil

his way of putting good becomes a tail
the horns of the stag are always beautiful
on the head
it runs as nimble as needle
and the threads simply land smoothly on the eye
passing the labyrinths of lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 7

now back to their old argument
Tentorio you lose this time
how can you argue about that last dash
that moment when they force your eyes
to close

death has and will always be
the last and only argument of the wicked
it did not work on Jesus Christ
neither shall it work on you Tentorio

Now the tentacles of truth are numerous
shall they argue again on the heads of ten thousand tentorios?
jean shall be tentorio
i shall be tentorio.

i will be an honor to be a tentorio
what we wish to close a long time ago
you shall be given the honor to do so.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 8

if love you must
me, you must imagine
someone else

not someone less
than me,

love deserves more
than what
we should have been

as i have
loved you

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist 9

i give up
everything so
you can
have
nothing

they clap
their hands for this
they all deserve
what i have what i treasure

not you who never
really loved
someone
like me

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist And Turns

on the twists and turns
of my life, when i tumble and i fall,
when i rise and claim
my due, when i do not surrender
even a toe,
when with dignity i raise my head
and keep my arms
on my side
when i decide to calm down and
simply watch the flowing day
like a rush of the water on the mountainside
or the creek
when the ferns keep on creeping
on the side of the trees
what silence is there
left for me to sip like a strawberry juice
inside my glass

i lay my fingertip on the side
and try to hear
if the song of the wind is still there

RIC S. BASTASA
Twist Of Fate.....

she might have been disappointed
when i stopped crying for justice

how many are dead? many are unaccounted
they have no names, heads are severed and
bodies are missing
some hands have only two fingers left
some feet have no ankles left

how many shall be added to the list of those missing?
the numbers keep rising like a high tide on the river

minds are murky, memories blur,
bonds are cut, traditions are gone
a brother is on the other side of the fence
mother is still grieving for father
killed in those daily wars
without end

she might have been disappointed why i changed my mind
why my tongue does not speak about injustice anymore
she will disown me and call me many names: traitor,
deep penetration agent, scum, slime,
unwanted, dead, erased,
dirt, cancer,
wound, a disease,
skunk,
a malfunctioning robot,
a rotten pig

whatever,

i am alone in this journey now without a gun in my hand
without a load in my shoulder

i am going home where there is none
and i am making another one

i will not disappoint foremost my one and only self...
for now i will be selfish in love,

between myself and my one country
silent in the meadows of my peaceful dreams
in love with grass and clouds
content upon my own regrets
having not love much what solitude shall secretly offer
without blood, without bruises, and another scar.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twisted

most people now have a twisted
view
of what charity is

when i lend a helping hand
they think about the hidden agenda

when you give them a treat
they think something wrong is going
at their backs

after all the years
of use and misuse
charity has no face anymore

when you do something good
they think you are into something

benevolent assimilation
convinces no one anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Twisted Dialogues

with you twisted sister
i indulge in twisted dialogues
reconnecting one word
of irrelevance to another
that is so insignificant from the foot
of the rainbow to the tip
of the masculine bluntness
to the center of feminine
madness

driving is a rainy afternoon after all
and i am going no places
even in that sacred
hearth of the heart
even in heat
i cool myself comforting myself
with my own rubber hands

i may not have said anything at all
something that may shake your booty
or what not or what else
but i have time
so much time to spend tonight

not wanting anything because i know
myself, i found it and there is nothing in it
except perhaps

an assurance that if i wriggle my fingers
to check if my nerves are alive

then i must be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twisted In Some Sense....

once, i was
a philosopher,
and by chance
i met an ex-disciple
in air
who says
that i was too
cruel to
twist her brain,
but i still
talk to myself
becoming proud
that at least
she still keeps
her brain,

though twisted
in some
sense.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twisted Memory Lane....

IN SIEM REIP,

rico rides on
the elephant's
back with matching
red cambodian
umbrella,

after a while

having finished
whether to be or
not to be

rico decides finally
to climb the steep stairs
of Ankor Wat,

(what the heck)

leaving
rica behind teased
by those
slim monkeys...

RIC S. BASTASA
Twisting

true,
true happiness is just
between us

usual,
the usual stroll in the park
holding hands
sharing cotton candy
and
relaxing later on a bench
under the poplar
tree

later, when you go away
for your
privacy and i am left alone
too in my room

from 10: 30 pm till
3: 00 a.m.
i say another thing
to myself:

at least, i can also be happy
when i am alone
with myself

thinking, thinking, about
not thinking at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twists 1

what i do not know
does not hurt me
do not let me then
know what i must things

invade me somehow events
simply come uninvited flowers
may be omitted it is not
hurting anymore when it comes

by the door on a solemn face
on warm gentle guiding hands
what is expected does not surprise
acceptable always is the natural

there must be no questions neither
must there be answers on this fact

RIC S. BASTASA
Twists And Turns Of Our Lives....

it is not seldom when we meet some
twists in a the state of
things,

you must have heard about a pig
who was more of
a dog, and the farmer loves it more
for that

you will continue hearing about
some incredible surprises

or perhaps i have many things to hear from your
own experience,

we all have these twists and turns and we swear that by God
we are happy
that we have conquered guilt and
that we are ready for some more
fun,

i called a friend today, and we have set so many meetings
to discuss about these matters,

but we never did it, not because we have no time but because
we decided to leave these matters to time, the maker of history,
the sealer of fate.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twists And Twisters

ice breaker
show us some more of your
sense of humor

from a handful of
insignificant bricks and cement
build us a house
a sculpted shape of
wits

splash us with the
coldness of your
indifference and then
horrify us
with our silly expectations

show us how we look
this time
coated with that sense of
pride
we are stripped of our
eastern sensitivities
on some learned so
called soft skills

shall we throw now the lotus
on the pond?
the frantic frog that fiends
sleep to catch the
unwary fly?

honestly try looking down
a bit
your fly is open.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch an Arab by the toe
If he bombs you let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a Bush by the toe
If he bombs you too let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a musharaff by the toe
If he shoots you let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
Catch a GMA by the toe
If She lies you let her go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Now it is your turn
take all the fun
still take the pun
still hop and pop
and fart and dart.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Aggressive Lovers

with tattoos

one has the eagle
the other a snake

a rose on the pelvis
a leaf on the hand

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Beliefs

on the belief that too much sunshine
makes us a desert
we shy away from play

when we were small they showed us Jack
who worked and worked and forgot to play
making him a dull boy

which way: a dull boy in the desert?

oh, these beliefs are mere advices
try thinking on your own
weigh things and
decide on your own

play when the dogs are away
and do not bark on the wrong tree

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Chickens And A Stone Colored Rooster

this afternoon
the two chickens on light wings
roost on a tall tree

the stone colored rooster
stays grounded.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Close Filipino Friends

two of them in a tow
on top of a rock
a mountain
somewhere in the hidden forest of Mexico
behind them are the shadows of
tall unexplored mountains
misty, around them is the coldness
of this tapestry
of boulders, and fog and smoke of the
breath of the earth
fronting them are the mountains again
behind and on the sides of their
twin existence
being, uncertain, true, insisting,
growing, mysterious
after this short rest, they move again
to complete their journey to the other side
edgeless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Continents

between two continents
across the vast oceans

two souls still long for
what they always want to hear

the songs of lonely birds
migrating to another place

looking for love trying to
find out love's best offer

the songs are too lonely
the glaciers begin to melt

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Deaths In The Wooden House

father was
cleaning his
cal.45
on the ground
floor of the
house
made of wood

son is playing
on the
second floor
with a
ball

suddenly a gun burst
is heard

the son is dead
how can father bear this?

the police officers come

father locks himself
in his room
crying

suddenly another gun burst
is heard

and father is dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Different Worlds

most of the time
people who love each other
take time
to be with each other

holding hands and
hugging
and taking time just
to listen to
sweet nothings

there is something however
which compels me
to create the distance
between us

sometimes to love and
to love truly
one must leave

embrace the wisdom
of solitude
making sacrifices so love
may have
time to grow so that the world
may have its peace

this is us, in two different worlds
gazing between
light years

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Different Worlds, Spinning, Spinning Not Colliding.

he is weaving words,  
the fabric is thoughts  
there he is sailing on the river  
of his mind  
on an early  
morning's sophistication

the words are beautiful  
compact as a disc,  
heavy as dumbbells,  
well written like an embroidery  
of a computerized  
machine,

he is happy after it was finished  
and he reads it to her

she is flabbergasted, unable to believe  
what she hears,  
unaccustomed, she shows her disgust  
about such a waste of time  
which could have been used for  
other equally important  
matters of the office,

she is mundane, he is out of this world,  
he claims he is into divinity  
she protests, that it is a comedy,

two different worlds inside a room  
walls rising in the middle of the bed  
round in a cycle of conflicting views  
and style and vision and acts,

but this world spins and spins and  
revolves upon the corners of everyday  
and bound, being so much bound,
to that untarnished reputation of
how the community sees it to be,
the journey continues, round and round
like the way each ring sticks it out
to the fourth finger.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Distant Worlds

who does not like to put some
yellow daisies on your black glossy hair?

you become so beautiful with a chain of yellow
daisies in your hair

where i can possibly touch them and caress them
and how would you know that this is more than just putting a chain of
daisies in your black hair?

you shall never know and that is good enough for me
for i am the simplest man that puts those chain of yellow daisies in your hair

no prince charming for you, nothing special
just another common friend putting those usual yellow daisies in your hair

when our hands touch by accident
how would you know that i have become a forest burning?

this burning fire that is softly killing me
how would you know? your world is open and mine is closed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Eyes Gazing To Eternity

an empty space
in my heart could have been filled
by another empty space
in your heart

somewhere in that pool surrounded by ferns
some fish live
isolated by mounds and mounds of earth
we felt them

i could have touched you and make you live
you could have grown into a tree
where i could have taken shade by now

by my hands had always been cowards
in love's sweet battles
unable to defend
what could have been true and
necessary

my mouth not speaking
my feet had taken that walk away from you
and since then

nothing has been heard, not even any hint
that you had died in that war that we once fought
our misunderstood restraints

where are you now? i have already convinced myself
death is a wall and we are runners jumping beyond it

wait for me as i wait for you
let us connect those broken chains of our unfulfilled dreams
of loves unrequited

and perhaps when we find ourselves again
back to our arms
who knows? we can live again
two creatures
under a tree
with happy eyes
gazing
to eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Faces

there is a god with two faces
one that faces you is a man
the other who turns away concealed in the dark is a woman
well, they do not talk together
for it depends on who is it that they are talking with

it is actually an experiment on gender
since people are too conscious of it
not on the the truth that all these faces
are persons
who can thrive without the identification of
their sexes

that at the end, man or woman, the face does not matter anymore
it is the psyche
and the Cupid that rule at the end: the trust

others call it faith, or hope, but i prefer
what i believe in

the love innate and pure.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Faces In My Mind

there are always two remaining faces
that dominated my mind,

the first one has the face of the body that i want to sleep with
but which i cannot really live with
it is a cruise
perhaps only for three days
then i disembark looking for the next face,

the second is one that i want to spend the rest of my life
but which does not make me wonder
my imagination is shrinking
into a barren land, into shores without waves, into skies without
the stars, into a night deep into the woods
where jackals live

in both faces, my blue butterfly of love and affection
does not hover, as it merely flutters from one flower to another
unable to decide which one

i know the reason why
my soul is restless
my heart had long been dead

in both faces, i fear death no more,
where shall i go somehow is not my worry

i have placed my hands in the hands of God
let Him write everything, i shall face Him weeping

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Faces Of Justice....

HOW cruel could they be
those seals of the seas
burying a dead man's body
whose left eye is a hole
into the Arabian Sea

IT is not according to the law
and customs and religion

This is foul and horrendous
To the hearts of the faithful
The sorrow is and must be
Tremendous

YET how most cruel was once he too
burying thousands of screaming bodies in a split second on a building
exploding into dusts
as planes hijacked crashed on its side

Thousands and thousands of other lives
sacrificed for an ideology
of terror
still nameless on the roll
call of
Untimely deaths

And even the those still living
They who live everyday in Fear
Those who travel in air
In a hundred anxieties bear

Still the unfairness reigns
One body swallowed finally by the sea

On the other hand
Some thousand hands and eyes or so
still unrecoverable
From the terrorism of
history of the bombs

Those nameless still hungry for justice
Those grieving to the more
Because the losses are still unbearable

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Forces

while one builds a bridge
the other takes its time destroying it

while the other grows the branch
the other cuts it

one concerns itself with life
gentle, tender, sympathetic

the other concerns itself with death
cruel, hard, indifferent, hateful

opposed, true
but they go together in the eons of time
hand in hand
like two parallel lines moving in infinity

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Friends

she is too tired to write
i perfectly understand this
i must tell
i know what tired means
or the exhaustion
to say the words
i know what dying is
i have to tell her about this

and then she realizes perhaps
that she is not at all alone

we have to see each yet
face to face
and then i know how a smile looks
like,
how misery is shared and how
it becomes one
fusion of bliss

two people dying
and not one is scared.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Frogs

two frogs
agree to take shelter
on a lone leaf
under a heavy rain

they swear
to croak together
after a storm

they swear
to always live
and love
together

what is perfect
is just between them
on a very small pond
just fit for the two
of them

and they both
live happily ever after
and then
the tadpoles
come

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Ideas, Two Flames, Two Mouths

two mouths that kiss
two lips that burn
inside our minds

two flames
from our hearts
burning together
fusing in fire

two ideas shared by us
sprouting together
like two flowers blooming

this is our love
the fusion of two ideas
of two flames
of two mouths

now one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Internet Detached Professionals

this is the time
when we converge
in space

internet hands
eyes
pretending to hear
mozart's serenade

not only that
claiming to watch me

masturbating.

as i too
not to be outdone
or outwitted

claim to hear
her laugh out loud
her own

immeasurable
loneliness.

quits.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Ladies

to describe the two ladies
who are closer as friends now
i shy away from a word which
sounds like the screech of an
old and out-modeled car and i
joked that the common ground is

lovelessness,

which on the
other hand, after a while,
as i recoup my senses, though
she laughs on the other line,
instinctively
and hence without much
careful thinking,
i realize that it is more painful
than that word that sounds like
a very long screech of that
old car as
a chosen metaphor,

i listen to it
again
it is worse than
a scream.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lonely Little Things....

we cannot really help but mind
the little things

a falling leaf for instance
or a butterfly fluttering
riding upon a ray of light
and finally hovering upon a
petal, inserting its proboscis
to sip the much needed nectar,

you may remember how tired
we were as we stand by the railing
of a house, a veranda overlooking
a vineyard, and i hold upon a glass
of dry wine, and i look at you,
with such a short gaze, afraid that
you too may notice my much kept
and well concealed loneliness.

i too cannot help but mind the
little things in you, same sadness
perhaps, as you sit on the sofa,
and made a selfie shot perhaps
to keep the self also intact.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lovely Birds

there were two lovely birds
kissing in the air
hit by the windshield of my car
on that summer day

oh God! how can i be a lousy driver!

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lovers

it is highly suspicious that two
would-be lovers shall soon end an affair
which they never really started
in the first place
by not talking except writing
each other
offline messages

she writes' i am here'
and he replies ' i am just right here too'
and both agree to just keep it that way

deep in their hearts they know
what next to do

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lovers Engrossed....

you know this by heart
that when you are in the middle of that journey
to love

a boat between two ports
sailing
in the quiet history of the silent bursts of ecstasy

you never mind the impending sickle of death
beside the busy bed

the eyes are closed
the bodies giving off heat
fire so much fire in the hearts
no one is running
no one is running for help

this is love, this is love
that no one wants to share
with anyone else

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Lovers In Their Happy Silence

morning
shower
oh the gentle
baby fingers
of slow
rhythm

breaths of
a virgin
touch of
new spring

love shower
upon my groin
how can two
be lonely?

how can silence
be threatening?
the silence of
two bodies
crawling upon
each others
arms, breasts
thighs

sea waves upon
the laps of the
shores
foams on top
of this
turbulence

love erupting
skies opening the
gates of
love songs

upon the calm face
of the blue sea
when the sun fades
sleep closes
in those smiling eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
since i am
grappling in
the dark
and you too
lost inside
this room of
less air
and we are
all alone
trying to figure
out where to
take the
exit
the possibility
is
you may soon
touch me
and i may soon
find you
we are anxious
our fears are like
worms inside
our guts
but if i may soon
hold your hand
and touch your
face and your
body
who knows
if there is a switch
there
where i can
turn on
light
so much light
that will guide us
both
to another
world
find me
who knows i
am a switch myself
who knows
if i also own
light
so much light
untapped
undiscovered

discover me
i am waiting
in fear.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Old Friends

when we were children
we were already friends
in the middle of our own poverties,

we struggled to rise from the lowest
echelon. Years passed. And now

we see each other again.
His fingers are filled with diamond
rings, as big as a fist of a child.
His coat is expensive.
Everything in him is expensive now

His car. A picture of his beautiful wife.
A corporate lawyer too in the
city. He will be taking the bill
tonight in this expensive restaurant.
The finest wine. The exotic cuisine.

As usual, I will do the talking,
as always, since then, he had
always been on the side of silence.

Ask him to tell a joke, he says
he has none. Ask him to tell a
story about himself, he says
there is nothing nice about
his past. Ask him about his
present, he says there is nothing
worth talking about himself.

He has all the secrets hidden
inside his silent gazes. He smiles
to every story that I tell. He
likes my company.

Inside my mind, I could have
asked him: how many persons
have been killed in your name?
How many assets are taken mercilessly from the hands of your economic foes? What brain is this that keeps on acquiring and scheming and killing who obstructs his way?

He is my friend, as always and i do not have the right to ask.

The night is over. It is time to go home. We are on separate cars now and he tells me, 'take care!'

Sometimes, i ask myself if i understand what life is all about really. I am home, And i decided not to preach, even to myself. I honk the car, and the gate opens.

It is 3 o'clock in the morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Options

after the anomaly
she bought a thick nylon cord
and tied it around her neck
upon a chair she jumps
and kills herself
instantly

the other one who bought a new
pajero and a house somewhere
in Mediatrix using another
name is already gone

you see two guilty people
exercised different options

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Parallel Lines

The teaching has always been
That two parallel lines never meet

Which is not so with lights
Two paths of light
Tracing the same darkness
Bends finally in the distant space
And then they meet
And in a bang
Another star is born

Two people in darkness
Falling in love
Seeing light where there was none
The impossible happens
Two parallel outlooks
Finally meeting in a kiss
Bursting emotions
Like a comet’s tail

RIC S. BASTASA
Two People

two people
when they get married
at first, they cope up
to be just exactly what the
other is
what he is becomes what
she is
even what she was
he also wants to be what she was
the bed is busy for the first
60 days
they become exclusive
the towels and under-wears
and even the kitchen utensils
but soon
they must be ready for
little changes
what is natural comes back again
asking for the costs
of compromises
he will begin to be what he is
and she will now insists what she is
they may still be together
in bed
with their bodies but their thoughts
begin to insist that they are different
that they can never be the same
inside their dreams
soon the problems come up
like alien invaders
in their so called honeymoon
which they say is over
one makes an issue of an underwear
that is left on the floor
it was not an issue before
soon there will be debates
without end
some have children whom they
believe are epoxies of their union
they are not
some will have no children
and their ways so easily part
like the way she parts her hair
as a new mode of her fashion
then the parting begins
with a new poem
how hard will that be
she will say
he will too say
how this can become a necessity
of their union
aching for separation
like a tooth that must be extracted from the gum
because it gets too painful everyday
some had it
some will have it
at the expenses set by the lawyer not the dentist of course
and the silent battle begins
people talk you know
who is the culprit
who are the irresponsible
childish bitch
or monster
and then it is granted
i mean the annulment
and then the celebration for freedom begins
and then there will be another
prison and another one and another one
beginnings and endings only to begin again
simply because it gets too lonely at night
and one has become the risk taker
of his life
stealing happiness
and other peoples' hearts
like the chicken of a neighbor
whose house
is not fenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two People In Love Inside A Room

when he is in love
no door is strong to be opened
both are in love
and so the door is left open
throughout the night
the bed squeaks
the curtains dance
the floors are listening
as words from hungry mouths
flow like cats and dogs....

RIC S. BASTASA
Two People.....

in the
name of love
genuine love
i have always
lied to you.

i beg for your
understanding.

i know
you love me much
better than
anybody,

you have seen the
truth
and i thank you
for keeping that
blind eye.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Reactions...

when you finally
concluded that life is beautiful

and that it is
worth living all i did was to give you a big hug

and then
you winked...

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Rocks Are Speechless.

Buddha
you sit there
the usual silence
lovelier
always lovelier
ever
to the utmost
solitude

i am incensed.
i keep on burning
with a flicker and
then i thin out
until all the smoke in
me is consumed
by air
that permeates the
whole empty body
of this room

this is my sweetest
loss

i empty myself so
that i will be gone
into nothingness
so that i can be
an incense again in
my own
sacred place of
silence

with Buddha beside me
two rocks are speechless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Seasons

as the city makes sunshine
the mountains and plains here
make the rain,

i am wrong. I am talking
about umbrellas. I should
have told her
that she is having another
season
different from mine.

i could have let her alone.
Her age must decide what
must be done.

She is fine between her
choices: fire and water.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Selves: The Black And White Horses Of Plato

what you remember
is that time when you look at yourself in the mirror
inside a room you lock the door
you hear voices you suspect there is a demented spirit
with you, ah, the usual
closing of the eyes, to start with, it is like you are in a position
to start the race, like a gazelle hurdling a forest, you hear a bang
it is a gun, you see smoke to the sky,
you hear people cheering, there are no colors, just darkness
it is twilight and then
you open your eyes, this is not real, there is no crowd
there are no cheers, you only hear voices
and now when you are fully awake
you see a face,
and you feel so much pity for it
how you have harmed it
caused it pain that it does not deserve
there is a wall between two people
you do not penetrate it, each wants to leave each other
but there is no segregation, there are no departures here,
no sound of planes or trains, no horns no bells
it is just the plain silence of pity
enveloping the room locking the room
your face still wanting to escape
those bars
in the mirror.

you repeat, 'What a pity! '
you only have sympathy for the self
that you have never completely
become

this is the reality, you are not
and never shall be the perfect you.

pockmarked, scarred, twisted
gutted, ashed...
Two Silent People, Dying

you are silent
more silent than the stars above us
this mountain of
sorrow does not know the songs of sighs
it is as silent
as you
more silent than all the stars above us

i join you in this silence and i take a journey far from you
my thoughts are wings and they will not use words as vehicles
from my mouth there will be no sound too

what are we contemplating for? i ask myself.
you think of death, i know, but you have not guessed what i am thinking
i am tired of death, let it come when it comes,

i am thinking of those tiny things in my life
how they happen, how time flies too fast
and i am here with you left behind it like a hundred years

i go back to thinking about us bathing in the river
since we do not know how to swim we take hold of a driftwood
from nowhere

it teaches us how to swim
that driftwood from nowhere
and it is when that driftwood left us
that we struggle for our life
and then we have learned
how to drift, ultimately how to swim

we are here in the middle of this silent struggle
it is when it hurts best that we begin to learn how to think
how to think well more than the rest of those
who are not conscious of the shortness of the time left

it is here in the middle of our sorrow
that we become more intelligent, wisdom sprouts and grows
into a tree
in our heads, and we are soon carried to a height
where we see them all
away from us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Slices Of Apple

THIS time is am seeing what i
detest
it is about ourselves
those secrets

on one hand we are split like
an apple
one slice always misses the other
saying
without you i am an incomplete
apple

we fuse again and think that we do not
pretend

an apple hanging upon a branch
as though it is part
of it
and will never fall again

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Slices Of Apple (2)

THIS time is am seeing what i
detest
it is about ourselves
those secrets

on one hand we are split like
an apple
one slice always misses the other
saying
without you i am an incomplete
apple

we fuse again and think that we do not
pretend

an apple hanging upon a branch
as though it is part
of it
and will never fall again

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Strangers In The Middle Of The Night

creature of
my dream
you stand there
in the middle
of my
darkest night
patient
about the scrutiny
of my
tired eyes
i want to live
my body murmurs
i want to
touch your hair
i want to
eat your
lips
beautiful creature
of my dreams
i love
your compliance
to all
my wishes

after all these
longings
and
bargainings
and compromises
without
the use of
any word
we set ourselves
free
we have never
known
who we are....
Two Things

a blue bird on a black bough
a watcher by the window.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Things

There are two things:
meaning
& purpose.

One thing:
Birthright.

Always remember this.
You only have to remember.
You do not even have to work for it.
It is there already.
And all you have to do is open the door
and let the light of the morning
spread on the floor.
The sun is there above the trees.
And all that you have to do
Is walk below it.
The world is here already
And all that you have to do is
Look around it
Savor its beauty
And enjoy all the days of your life
Here and
Then.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Thoughts....

in bed this morning before she wakes up
for prayer she looks at the calendar at the side of the wall
and says that the days are running so fast
it will be March and she is looking forward to a trip
in Thailand

all the while my mind is focused on those leaves falling
from the dying tree on the yard
i am thinking of the fungus and the rotten barks
the roots unable to hold anymore the tree's crown

she wakes up, dresses for the church's first mass
definitely, though i do not have to tell her
we're still bound (there must be a better word for this)
we're still on everything together....

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Tongues...

i confess i am a man
with two tongues
kept on my closed mouth
my head is bombarded
with dual thoughts
one likes to speak like
a native
the other wants to impress
others with
the twang of my foreign tongue
there are two things in mind
to swim deeper and
just keep the world inside my brain
alone on the ocean floor
or to grow wings
transform myself into a bird
and fly
towards the group of stars
in the skies
or i just be another meteor
shooting into space
and be gone
to a certain destination of
another
endless quest...

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Travels

i've gone to more places
hazy ones like shadows still not fully boldly outlined
by those dark lines pitted against the outbursts of lights

from these half-opened windows
while simply sitting down
flat on the floor
looking for nothing

the trips on those long hours of jetting in the air
and trekking on those cobbled streets of kota bahru
and the scalding heat of the sun
on Poring

still imagining the winds on the canopy walks of kinabalu park
on top of trees
and just as when my feet lands on
those untrodden trails

i feel short of those unsatisfied longings
still hungry for breath
still thirsty for something beyond water

now that i am home
the travel is deeper inside
beyond what my heart
can beat

perhaps what i have been searching is just here
beneath my feet.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Women

She had taken my heart and my soul
Another has taken my flesh and mind
What is left of me? I may ask now
I have nothing more
You cannot accuse me now of keeping
Something away from you
Can I give now what I do not have?
You see, I have already given everything
You see, everything has been taken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Women (Revised) ...

the first is always inside
my mind

the second i make love
with every night when i feel so alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Women...

an ex-priest he took her
as wife,
well, she was once slim
and well poised,
then 15 years
no kids, medically
confirmed,

last night, i also took
someone beside me
very much like
her in all aspects,

same history, same ex-boyfriends,
and when they met at the
resto bar where we were trying
to have fun
or a break from the monotony
of this institution

i noticed they did not talk much
i guess, their language, which they
understood fully
must be different

short cuts, and
clarity, words limp...

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Worlds

as he keeps polishing
his poem
she also keeps
polishing
her porcelain wares.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Worlds In One Body

two worlds are here within me
one is this bread and butter thing
the other is
this kind of bird flying
inside my mind
like i am
floating in air

two worlds: law on one hand
and poetry on the other
strict order and logic
on the right
and chaos and touch
on the left

at the center is myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two Worlds.....

I've seen how fragile
a white butterfly floating in air

gently stops on top of a red flower petal
and then gently again backs to its
floating beauty

what a beauty and i float too
like a butterfly

that night in the same garden
i've seen one broken wing on the pebbles

the other wing and the body of the white butterfly
is taken by the red ants

what a feast perhaps inside their sand empire

got to accept this fact of life
here today gone tomorrow

one's misery another's reverie
one's loss another's boss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Twosome....

you follow me because you know the path
you have no questions

you do not talk because we think the same thoughts
and talking about all these
will be

echoes of redundancies

when i write you read me simply because
you are anticipating the same thing from my hand

and then you will say
'that is exactly what i am thinking'

when i begin to walk
you stop

i have become too restlessly boring and any mimicry from you
shall not cure it

and then when you are left alone, you run to catch up with me
because that feeling of emptiness has become unbearable

and then you tell me with confidence
my misery is your best company.

RIC S. BASTASA
Two-Way Traffic

i am shying away for a while from you.
i've been good, i think, i followed the rules.
i talk to you but i feel that it is only the air talking back to me.
i offer flowers they all wilt without being smelled by you.
i offer food like what the chinese do to their dead beloved.
they get moldy even untouched
cockroaches feast on the rice and fish.
i visit your place
no one is around
there is no note where you are
there is no number that i can possible contact you
i retrace my steps back to my house
and they tell me that you are a spirit and everywhere
i must be crazy talking to the air
the trees the grass and the clouds
i am so empty
you are not here with me
my heart is as hollow as a cellophane back filled with my own breath
i ask all these questions to you
at night when i am all alone
i sleep on the rooftop
hoping that you will see my despair
still you are not there
sometimes i ask
is it really true that others besides myself
have seen you?
i want a personal experience with you
where are you?
where are your hands?
where is your heart?
where is your mind?
O, Lord.

RIC S. BASTASA
Typhoon

typhoons are not that strong
sometimes
they behave like
critics, passing by an
island, saying, hey you
are not an island after
all, you are just a hill
fit for a Bollywood
scene

I am in that island
feeling some itch
of its breeze, but i was too
busy then
climbing one
of the narrative trees
there

and he asks
is there such a thing
as a narrative tree?
i crack the nut
and drink the clouds
there
and he is filled with
so much
awe,
he gets itchy
and scratches
all the skins
and even the bones
he rattles like
a snake
and wants to bite

the narrative tree
has everything
to offer
gentle, and soft
and conversational

but he wants to deny
this kind of tree
saying
there is no such
thing as that
and this

oh my, what a man
he is
structured in his cage
not knowing
that he is meant to
be free
from the shackles of
his verse
from the narrow alleys
of his
rhyme

goodness, we do not
even try
grafting the metaphors

i love it here
this island where i touch
him not
but he touches me
i guess
that is envy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Typhus Feathers

a woman
in far away
land sends the
signal
that on a specific
day she
gonna be an eagle
scanning
horizons

she must tell
me what she
can find there

i know
what is there

i am this
retired eagle
with a broken beak
and typhus
feathers.

RIC S. BASTASA
Typically Filipino

a woman is picking lice
from her son's head

beside her
another woman breastfeeds
her newborn

our taxi passed there

the fat woman beside me
wished
that she had her camera with her

a man plows the nearby field
another man fishes on the river

the fields are green and the skies are gray

the road is muddy and the rain seems
to be forever

the hut is too small for two families

RIC S. BASTASA
Trying To Be Smooth In Speech

this morning i read
some notes
about myself and i notice how i tried to be
smooth
in my speech as my notes still want to insist

ethical considerations
the motif of my day, the struggle to be always
calm and cool
the war against the tendency
to hurt another without our conscious knowing
but
all seems to be
a kind of futile attempt to be kind
and gentle
like a dog wagging its tail when you meet
along the doorsteps
of your house

i open some pages again of my
diary
or journal of the day
on a cup of tea
and two pieces of cookies

at first the language flows like a river
clear and
i even tasted a cup of its water
smooth to my
esophagus
and cool to my gum and i think
sweet, even sweet to my tongue
and i can feel
it flowing again smoothly
to my intestines

and then here i am finally
vomiting
i suppose nostalgia
is nothing but
nausea, the speech of loneliness
about a memory
long gone and very far away
the words are smooth
and then
somehow they kill

i close the journal at once
i open the window
let the air come in

as i wait for the morning sun
to shine and then
warm me a bit

RIC S. BASTASA
u
unconsciously
unleashed

unsatisfied
unzipped

RIC S. BASTASA
U & I

to be true
i must start with the
i
in my poetry

i
am i
ncomplete

so
i
can be whole
i
must relate to
u

as the cliche goes
u
complete
me

so next time when
u
always see the
i
in my poetry
do
not worry

it is just my way
of searching the completion
of the

i
in
u

i
am just being true i
accepting the fact

that

i,

without u,
am n
nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
U & I (Updated)

You burst first
and then surrender
to the soft pillow
of the bed

i didn't have that
magma
the volcano in my
mind
sleeps and the
eruption
was just a word
that came out
unrestrained so
you hear it giving
you the pleasure
of some stars

i wake up
looking at my own
body
the terrains of my
abdomen
show an abandoned
land

my eyes are clouds
hanging on the black sky
and then it rains
once again satisfying the
thirst of grass
the longing of the river
the bareness of
land.

RIC S. BASTASA
U & The Night

Night is a private affair
between sleeplessness
and pain

the sockets of the eyes
are repositories of
regrets
the pillows soften
trying to comfort what
pain inflicts

sleep is forgiving
as it comes and then
at least for these hours
you are rested
in such slumber of
forgetting

RIC S. BASTASA
U R Different

u R different
simply because
u luv me.

d lonely seagull
that vanished to a distant horizon
becoz of u
is so beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
everyday
the sin of omission looks like
an expanding hole of the
ozone layer

you get
ultra-violated.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ugh!

ugh is not an ugly word,
say it, and
then move on
with your life and the
forget

ugh!
ouch!

got easy now
it is just a state of the mind

a mirage in the desert
as i told you

nothing is important
nothing is necessary
nothing is needed

less is beautiful
the mistake is mistaken.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ugly He Was Born

ugly he was born
even her mother had second thoughts loving him
his father disliked him
junked him from his
masculine affairs,
but he learned a lot
from being unloved
he keeps on knowing
what love is by loving
more those unloved
around him,
he sketched the faces
of those who were always set aside
or left out
those whose faces
do not matter
he learned all these
sufferings in his heart
kept the feelings
inside him like a big
book to read
when he is lost
in pain,
he did not stop loving
and those unloved
felt him, so real

he is real,
he is real
they call him real

somehow, he felt the
comfort of his real self

ugly, yet by now
so confident

to be himself
and not be somebody else

RIC S. BASTASA
Ugma Na Lang Gayod

sayo sa kaadlawon ikaw nahigmata
apan ang imong lawas anaa buot pang
magpabilin uban sa habol ug ugnan
nanghawid pa ang imong galamhan
sa imong mga damgo nga imong
gihinayhinayan og hapyod

sagad gayod nga ang imong matutokan
mao ang kangiob pa sa lapad
ug duol kaayo nga kisame
nagapos pa ang mga pulong sa imong baba
walay litok nga buot mogawas
ug ang imong mga hunahuna
nanggimok ug nahikot
sa imong nagkatuagsa nga buhok

unsa na pod kaha ang mahitabo karong adlawa
balik sa trabaho sa matag adlaw
balik sa mga kisaw sa ordinaryong kalihokan
sa imong mga kamot ug mga tiil

wala nay mga pako wala na
ang mga paglutawlutaw
sa kawanangan ug sa mga bitoon
nga gitinguhang kuhiton lakip
sa bulan nga buot nimong pakigsultihan

sa imong atubangan anaa ang mga nagtubo
nga mga papeles mga folders mga basahonon
ilubong mo una ang imong kauugalingon
sama sa usa ka tinagoan nga sulat
nga ugma na lang nimo basahon pag-ayo
unya na unya na lang
ang kabahin kanako

sa pag-abot sa laing gabii
ikaw mahanaw sama sa usa ka gamayng bato
nga imong gilabay sa tunga sa kangitngit
nahulog didto sa tunga sa mga kakahoyan
apan wala kay laraw nga imong kuhaoon pagbalik
ug kon imo mang sulayan pagkuha anaa diha
ang imong mga pasumangil
ugma na lang uga na lang gayod

RIC S. BASTASA
Ultimate Solution

for things beyond the grasp
of our minds
beyond the hold and control
of our hands
beyond the help of our trusted
friends
beyond the confident powers
of science
beyond the patience of time
beyond the tolerance of space
beyond the reach of light

we can only pray.

RIC S. BASTASA
Un Amor

like a cliche
i must discharge
un amor

prove to me something
beyond the
ordinary lies beyond the usual excuses

let my heart beat some more
it is dying.

resuscitate me
this breathless existence

love dies too
and indifference may find a chance to grow

revive me
kiss me now and hug me and make me feel

a certain warmth
that is true not imaginary

make my fingers move
my body sway

tickle my sadness
and make me soar

find me wings to fly again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unable To Link...

your inability to link
even to the simplest vowel
have given birth
to more consonants
and being so
the world cannot anymore speak
and now no one hears
what ought to be said...

it is always a series of departures
a train not stopping
and without breaks it falls on a deep ravine
without the vowels
you shout for help and now it comes back to you
the misfortunes that you are giving
the consonants bury you
soundlessly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unacceptance

dyeing his hair
this morning and
putting on a new pair of trousers
a supporter
he attempts to play
basketball

somehow he cannot shoot
the ball
he fails again
on the next attempt

he sweats it out
drinks his lemonade
and whistles
Inamorata a la
Dean Martin

RIC S. BASTASA
Unaccounted Like Everyone Else

he would have been happier if the world was flat
and that when he sails at the edge he falls and
be no more. Unaccounted like everyone else.
He would have sailed earlier at dawn and then be lost forever.

Neighbors worry. But they do not worry that much.
They do not mean what they are worrying for.

Like you
you are like everyone else.
Nothing of equal importance.
If you are gone then you are gone.

Things end.
People die.
And those who are left soon shall wish the same.
Justly so.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unbecoming And Tasteless...

Sometimes i wonder
about the invincible people
they make you feel
that they’re here and touch
your hair and back of your
feet,
cold, as cold as dawn
and gray
as blurred as eyes failing
to see,
and then they leave the message
that we have become
too tasteless
and too unbearable...

envious perhaps that we are still here
caring and loving
and writing and
praying...

pity them, and offer some prayers
light the candles and
burn the incense
we thank ourselves too
they can never be with us again
just as they deserve
the fate of oblivion

RIC S. BASTASA
Unbreaking Hearts

wiping tears
kissing loneliness goodbye
welcoming forgotten desires
speaking of loved ones
and strumming guitars
again and again
and singing
in the rain
and
reembracing what is there waiting
mending hearts
alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Uncaring

uncaring for words
rhyme or rhythm
you step into this
world of freedom
anything goes
just self-expression
where the rules
lay at the background
watching everything in
you grow like wild weeds
of the west.

RIC S. BASTASA
Uncertain

no one knows what is waiting
behind the darkness of the veil
amidst the strength of light
one stands in the middle of the road
wanting to decide which way
until the horrible thing happens.

RIC S. BASTASA
Uncle John

Years ago you climbed the mango tree
On an alibi to see both of them

They talked in the sala of your house
And went inside your room
After they kissed
You did not wait for reason
Before they
Can undress
You shot him dead
You spared her
Your wife because you loved her

15 years in prison
You were released to find yourself

In this bigger prison
Without love

All that you can find in her
And her children are barbed wires

Uncle John, tell me
Which do you prefer now?

RIC S. BASTASA
Uncompromising...

what is this all about?
Time is asking.
What is this rush all about?
These series of silent
and prolific outputs?

Symptomatic of
what? Cramming examinees
to Time's ultimate Quiz

Choosing the best answer
In such a short time
Making the best essay possible
hoping to get a perfect
Score.

Time, why are you too short?
Time, why are you so brief and concise
and so cruel?

There will be no blanks.
Every choice is made
Every empty hole is shaded
Filled and
Submitted.

Time is time.
All pencils up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unconfessed...

a blue motorcycle
parked under the coconut tree

just near the shore the sea
is calm

the sands are off white and
the breeze is soft on the skin

there were broken rocks piled
and silence and a shadow

a shadow bears no name and
it does not matter anyway

things are better as secrets
the place and what is done

poems are happenings and
they are deep as unconfessed

RIC S. BASTASA
Unconsciously

one night
beside me
my friend
you touch
my body
with your
fingers
you kiss
my lips
with your
warm lips

i let you
unleash
feelings
perhaps
long buried
like an
ancestor

the morning
after i ask
you why
and you say
you were
unconscious
you ask to
be forgiven
saying sorry
so sorry &
that the same
may not be
repeated

i touch
your mouth
with my
hand &
tell you
you have
nothing to
be afraid
of nothing
to be sorry
about

i perfectly
understand
how is it
to be
unrequited
this body
is yours
this body
is meant to
be shared
by another
who loves
to touch
who loves
to kiss
who loves
to be in love
who loves
to be a part
of the flesh
who loves
to be just
the man that
you are
consciously

RIC S. BASTASA
those that die young
do not give us the lasting impression,
if at first we feel so sad
not having fully enjoyed the value of their company,
soon,
like everything we have
lose itself in time,
time like a constrictor gobbles
every value
of our presumed greatness
we have always been a matter of
time’s consumable
perishable like a fruit
a biscuit
a letter yellowing and become
another waste,

i think about this and one day
i see light
on something within that cannot be
consumed

you know it
i will not tell you and you do not have to tell me.

it is light, it is so light.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unconventional...

it will not start with the usual
hello
well goodbye is another usual word
people use it every moment
sometimes even
permanently convenient

some start it well with a
'tell me the story' or
'tell me the truth and nothing but the truth
then we perhaps
can help you'

others don't. They do not start it all,
you start it, that is their demand
you must be the first one to open up
like a parachute
like a child's inquisitive mind that
always asks about the moon
why it is round
basics, you know

others are unconventional.
no word at all. plain touch, sometimes no touch even.
they pretend they don't mind.
or honestly, they do not mind at all
because they also have their own battles.

sometimes, i like it this way.
silence. closing of the eyes.
relaxing on a beach king of david thing
letting people have their own choices.
letting events take their own due course.
like a compass pointing to its own direction.

sometimes i want to break the compass.
what is it to be lost and still be strong?
no fears, no hang-ups
no pent up emotions.

back to silence. sea breeze caressing my body.
leaves falling softly on the sand.
waves monotonous on the shore
hypnotic.

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Acacia Tree

that afternoon under the acacia tree
the irony of life confronts them

she is beautiful, a single mom
with a chinese lover
she's lonely and does not speak much

he is married and his wife cannot bear him a child
he weaves a conversation
words allure him more
he appears happy and sometimes he sings alone
the sound of the whistle delights him
in the bathroom

the night came
they kiss and then they part ways
looking for their home

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Banana Tree

under the banana tree
juan
waited for the
magic pebble
to fall
for him to swallow
on the belief
that
he will turn
into
an invisible
juan

the whole
night
he dreamt
that the
magic pebble
landed
on his mouth
wide open

by an unknown
spell
juan
turned into
a banana
tree

and all
the neighbors
his parents
mourned
for him

at least
one thing
sure
happened
he floated
turned
himself
an
invisible
juan
and he
looks
at all of
them

somewhere
from the
top

they call
it
heaven

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Big Pitogo Tree

under the big pitogo tree
i lay my body on the sand
put some leaves on my head
and then i close my eyes
to listen to the wind from the sea
feeling the rhythm of life
pulsating in the air
beside you

RIC S. BASTASA
under the cover
of the blanket of darkness
we feel the beating
of the fears in our hearts
and our mouths
mumble the need of
hands

however, lonely as we are
we like the beauty of the
silent island

not wanting to touch
the cloud the wind

simply because there is
nothing there

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Cover Of The Night

living so enclosed
like a dead man inside a coffin
there is no choice
but to sleep and inside the dream
pray more,

the man keeps reciting the prayers
on his fingers
to dispel all fears about death

when he wakes up however
everything becomes a different matter

it is not something strange
but it was the most certain thing that happens

dead upon death
dead of death

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Mango Tree

i like the idea
of doing many things under the mango tree
like
watching time go by like it is a stranger
and i
am a stranger too watching time pass by
like i am so interested
with what time
can do to me

making me old
making the mango tree bloom and flower and have fruits
and they are so many
that the mango tree bends
to the ground
and time stays for a while and ripens the fruits
and make all of them
in time
fall one by one to the ground
like some kind
of withered flowers

luscious, sweet, fruits of the mango tree
falling
by the slightest passing of the wind
and then the children
come and with all joy
pick them one by one
putting what they can
under
their shirts and still rushing
to keep
and take some more

under the mango tree
all the people
are so much alike

the rushing, the taking, the joy
of always having more

and it will never stop
as i watch time slowly go by

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Rain....

no one sleeps under
the rain

if there is no shelter
or a partner

to share the blessings of
water

there is only one option left
run, run, play deaf....

RIC S. BASTASA
tired of the race
i let the wind pass by my shoulder

i sit under the olive tree
and watch what you cannot see

you wonder why the earth sounds
less than what the stone speaks

i am tired of the race
and i let the winds pass by me

i am happier now under the shade
of the olive trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Shining Light Of The Moon

with a guitar on hand
my lady beside me

oh, i wonder why the frogs
are so silent this time?

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Sun

there is so much to do
to talk about
to learn and judge and
tell
to forget and forgive
to decide to move on

like the grass and the
grasshopper
the ants and the butterfly
the hill and the
river
like the clouds up the
tips of the hills
like the atom and
the molecule
like your lips and your
teeth
your eyes and
your heart

like the fish on the water
the mice on the trap
the cheese and the dough

an open mouth
a tongue
a word of thanks
of hands waving goodbye
the last honk of the car
the speeding jet plane in the air
the darkness in space
Venus and Mars
Jack and the beans

so much to talk about
under the sun

why lonely still?
why so empty still?

yes, you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Tree Beside The School Building

on a certain break
one sits alone under a shady tree
on an afternoon of
Saturday

ey left for a certain purpose
filling up too
a certain emptiness of their
minds (& bodies)

somehow
the wind provides a joy to cool a face
calming a mind in chaos

the leaves fall
too gently on the grass
and they are too graceful
too simple
for any deeper analysis

the grass speak for themselves
always a busy day
spreading
expanding its territory

the pebbles as usual mute
but always with a desire to speak
to move away

there are cars
waiting as the rain begins to fall
some have to run
and escape being wet

these are everyday occurrences
and because i am too sheltered
inside the four corners of my study room
they have become too unfamiliar
and too new
there is a longing to belong again
to a world without thinking too much
something just
to occupy a place, the feet to walk
the hands to touch

it 's been a long time now
i have not seen the world to its practicability
like an axe to a firewood

mud to my shoes
rain on my shoulders
some birds over my head
a butterfly stopping on my hand

to rest is also an ability
i think, i have forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
Under The Trees

under the trees
a shadow is lost
above it
some chirping birds
below
the pebbles beside
the red ants.

RIC S. BASTASA
Understand

Soul, you must understand
how this body sleeps with you.

Soul, you must remember
it has separate manners with you.

Soul, learn the sensual pleasures
of this body, its twists and turns,
its crooked ways, its perverted ways,
its insatiability, even its evil ways,

Soul, you have all the patience,
when the body is rested before its
time is over, Soul, awaken it,
shake it, let it shed off its dusts
of errors, its stains of lusts,
wash it with fasting, and repentance

Soul, be wise, and kind enough to
save this Body, until it rusts and
to dust it shall return, and Soul
when you go up there, Forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
Understanding

We are here
To understand, not to condemn yet
Anyone.

I perfectly understand
Darkness
My companion since then
Has always been
Chaos and Confusion

I agree it is hard to write
What beginning there was
To point out the opening word
And to start writing
Sentences

But take love
First, Above All

Just love and take more pondering
On compassion
Take the teachings of Empathy

Whether you end with Sadness
Or you end with Happiness
Whether you arrive at Nothing
It does not really matter
Anymore

Just take love
The rest shall follow
The pen shall begin to write the word
Itself
And then, mind you
The sentences are too many.

RIC S. BASTASA
Understanding Myself

To be tough on myself and always go
For perfection
And be strict and rigid and self-righteous
There is so much sadness in here
Unnecessary pain

There is always a time to pamper myself
With my own foolishness
To laugh at myself and humiliate it
Before my eyes
To see how it can be humble and be
Simply itself
In its own smallness and madness

Behind this faith I must have doubts
As a way of self-measure
Behind this morality I must have my own
Taste of private sins
As a matter of discovering what lies
Behind me inside me outside me
This personal humanity

When you see me again I shall wear this smile
This understanding
Of what I am and what are we really
Double-faced and double-natured
Body and soul, spirit and flesh
Feel me as I feel myself
Touch me as I too touch myself
I dive to earth as body and flesh
Then I soar to the skies
As soul as spirit as finally limitless and forever free

RIC S. BASTASA
Understanding The Lack Of What We Are

what we sorely
lack we do not
talk about, afraid

that this may lead
only to the destruction
of our bridge

our love knows
that time always
keeps its hands
moving, and we

soon accept that
this lack is part of
the house of love,

in fact, what we
lack built us the
spaces for windows
to exist for doors
to be real, and so

here we are now
still one, no one is
a shadow here,
a true soul cannot
project it...

RIC S. BASTASA
Understanding Art

exercises of the mind,
this morning chill and the waiting hours,
i open the window
to see what they call is another
ordinary day,

a vine hangs in the garden wire
freely it gives three flowers
which the wind takes away,

i take time
this is the moment of conversion
when the ordinary day becomes
special when the three flowers
symbolize the trinity
of faith, hope and love,
the ordinary human eye
seeing the whole world
in such a short time
such beauty,

art plus
sensitivity and
humanity

RIC S. BASTASA
Undiscovered Skill

we were sitting upon the edge of a cliff

it is time

we spend years worrying horrified on the thought that we soon would fall and die

not thinking

that when such moment comes we have already flown.

RIC S. BASTASA
Undr A Dictatorship

to be or not to be
that is no longer the question
hamletting is the answer

RIC S. BASTASA
Undress Me

my hands are tied
my lips are useless
speech is strange
undress me
i am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Undressing

beyond the undressing
of the fabric
lies the naked necessity
for living
beyond the skin the flesh
lies some more
of what cannot quench
thirst
beyond all these is
an orifice
a wound a penetration
of the human skin
vessels of our undefined
sorrows
the cartilage of our despair
not finding yet
its true name
beyond all these quivers
something that i confess
i still do not
really know. I like it here for
the meantime
licking ignorance
savoring my temporary
presence
on something so obvious
like your lips
the tickle beside the ears
i am here so i must be here
this is fulfillment
at a certain stage that i must
not regret
i cut and slice
at the half of what i can hold
i sigh at night
having taken what i could
i stare at the stars
still asking.
Unexpectedly......

the juror
whispers to another
juror
which is heard by
the friendly wind: that
guy, over there,
the one at the last
yes, the one
wearing the black shirt
and worn out shoes.
with uncut hair
and sharp eyes
and brown skin
i like him to
win

RIC S. BASTASA
Unexpectedly

sometimes on days when we are crumpled like
waste papers or
drafts unfinished and thrown or set aside for a while
when life seems to be nothing but a desert guarded by the angry eyes
of the sun at
noonday when others seem to be islands set apart by storms and oceans
when we feel that we are dried river beds
with stinking fish attacked by gnats and worms
when everywhere is dark and
lonely and when we start to compose words for all these
phenomena describing in detail
why things are or what are they
in shapes and colors and scents
drawing from there and then
images of shadows and sighs
surprisingly when we all keep these inside our hearts
and wonder
a moment comes like a shining star
giving that little spark of our own genius
that we are never defeated
that we know how to rise above and beyond our
self-imposed limitations
like a seed that we throw because we cannot eat it
and sooner we
see something tiny is growing in our backyard
that past
into a tree bearing fruits
luscious and
giving us the extended days
in our lives.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfiltered By Mist

when i appear to you
one of these days

what is it that you want to see?

my hands are hard
my ears covered
my eyes in haze
my body in trembling

this is not what you want to see i guess

you want greek pillars as my feet
my eyes as gentle as a roman saint
my ears attentive as a echoing mountain
my body strong like an old castle

but let me tell you how is it to grieve
for someone that i have loved and lost

how is it to cry and yet not wanting to have tears
how is it to be lost and pretend that he has the mastery of the ways
that he has the manners of a man mastering the art of cultured restraint

tell me if you all know these
if you can relate to these miseries

perhaps one day when the world is ready for me

then i will show myself filled to the brim of reality
like a glass emptied of its contents glistening to the rays of light not filtered by the mist

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfinished Business

an unfinished business
a reason to live and shy away from the
courage to die,

at twenty, you ask for a little time
longer, at thirty, you beg, another ten years
you pray, another more,
for an unfinished business

an house that looks like a face
wanting still to have eyes to see
what was not even started

others passed away at ten
and then just the same, even at sixty
all shall be forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfinished Business (Revised)

and so you walk so confidently finding your exit
passing the blue guard looking at you
without any question,

you wish the path is not crowded with people
you wish there is no vehicle at the parking lot
you wish there are no children at the playground

there is no thunder to hit you, you are confident about this
there is no accident, there is no gun,

there are no killers to shoot you now.
you are confident. You still have an unfinished business.

deadth has no power over you. and so back to line one
yes, you walk confidently, finding not the exit now,

but the entrance to another risk, another threat, another escape.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfinished Conversation

You stutter a bit in this conversation
In twilight,

You do not wait for her to complete the words

I
Love
You

It is you who cannot wait because of the anticipating quiver
The coldness of the night

You close her lips with your lips
she is able to utter only

hhhhmmm....

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfinished Quest

day by day
a revolution of years and scores
looking for destinations unceasingly

even inside a dream when i see a river
and when i undress myself and go naked
when i plunge myself
and find nothing but filled space
and water everywhere
asphyxiated

i rise again to an atmosphere of air
grasping for breath
always
looking for something that must last forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfinished....

when you are finished with love
you move out
wearing another dress code
you open the same door
which you have just closed behind
and you leave nothing
except perhaps a little shame and
some regrets
but just the same you are into this
mode of picking up the broken pieces
saying this is love after all
and i shall heave no sigh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfit.....

does this mean
their names and
they have
their own group
their own kind
and each year
they meet
put garlands
on their necks
and sing
praises for
each other.

even if you
are not
exclusively
too small
and i do
not exactly
fit.

RIC S. BASTASA
everyday is the same
the sound of the pigs from the farm
and the cows from the pastureland
and the ducks and turkeys and
the bushes and trees
everyday they make the same sights
nothing is new
the skies are there making their blues
and the winds push the clouds away
those drifters without the constancy
of a face and color
everyday is the same and you are thinking
the same just like everyone
and everything

how boring is life you say

but it is not with me my love
because i still care

and the world becomes too interesting
the clouds are travelers to the interesting journey
as they see fields and rivers and mountains

and the mountains eagerly wait for the sun
and the pigs roam the bushes
and the turkeys are learning how to fly
the ducks finding their new rivers as they float
on the joys
and the skies close and open their windows
and the stars give a new glitter for their
new night show of lights

and i say how interesting life can be

as i wear a new pair of eyes
as i begin to unfold a new set of wings

this world has remain unexplored
its mysteries begin to unfold

RIC S. BASTASA
i too, must not content myself with poetry
it becomes routine
and boring and not challenging
at fifty poems a day
there is no more ecstasy,
i loathe this kind of fantasy
i must try another assay
yes
perhaps acting
like Clint Eastwood's Unforgiven
where i shoot
the wild beasts like tin cans
firing them with bullets
one on one
and where i make love with the women
agains the setting of the sun
and some background music
of the winning man

i can be this actor in fame
i can get my hollywood name
Ric Bastasa, Still Unforgiven.

waiting for my next film
Unpretending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unforgiven Unforgotten....

she will not be talking about me
i understand
i am the unforgiven
i will be the most patient sinner
she will be the most
living memory
she is unforgotten

her hair as black as ever
no age, no time whitens it
i am getting older
and in pain
soon, i will embrace
another truth
a must
i must learn to forget
even though
perhaps i am still
unforgiven

my silence in ages
must appease the storms

RIC S. BASTASA
Unfulfilled Dreams

Unfulfilled dreams
Become freckled rice
To produce
The foul wine

RIC S. BASTASA
Unhappy Endings....

softer as 100% cotton
scented pillow case
Chanel 5 your fave
cooler as Iceland
whispers of glaciers
changing courses.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unholy Hour

my pants are under the chair
my brief on the john
my polo shirt on the cabinet
my watch below the bed
my shoes scatter on the floor
my socks no longer pair
we're here united
at the most unholy hour
of the day
with all regrets
for nudity

RIC S. BASTASA
what you love is the gift
the giver has gone away taking away what
you want to keep inside you
leaving you empty and despised
but you must let it be
letting go, because what you care most
now, is the gift of love
this unico hijo, this, one, who is with you
in flesh and blood

he too shall take what you have
what you keep inside you
you open like hands and he will grasp
what love is there you have reserved
for tomorrow

he too shall take your time, your essence,
your future even, and willingly you shall give them all
all the love left
all the fortunes that you may still take
you shall give them all
this unico hijo, one, who is with you

he has his father's eyes, and even smell
but you love him
he is the reason why your life moves on
why you must keep in touch
even go on top
and still be defeated, well, he is the one,
this unico hijo, he is the one, the only one left
your reason

and it does not matter now, if the giver is gone
and what is left is his eyes
staring at you, this gift, grabbing you again

this time, you are more than willing
you have learned to die and be dignified
standing tall
in love's greater name

RIC S. BASTASA
this love of God
always and forever
uniquely mine
too personal
like something
from someone
somewhere...

can't say it
always mysteriously
inexpressible...

something that sleeps
and slips.

RIC S. BASTASA
United In Pain

my fingers
are not mine anymore
they are running
out of control
i do not wish
to write some more
to infuriate you
but my hands are
rebels
coming out from
my arms
into their
fingers
writing these
lines

i am detached
severed
from the rest of my
parts
i have no more control
about
destiny in the making

birds of blue
feathers
are coming out
from my mouth

and they are not
coming back

my fingers are
automatons
writing now on
their own

i am not
responsible for your
anger
i am a useless man
and my fingers
are not mine anymore

my C5 chokes a nerve
i am numb
my fingers are at war
against
each other now

thoughts converge
without much meaning
united
in pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
United, And Whole Again

a secret lies there on my bed
as always, mine, and mine alone,
it is beautiful, as it is mine,
as i am, too, beautiful, at least
to me, it is mine, and i am myself,
as beautiful as one can keep it
forever, it lies, on my bed, like
an intimacy, it breathes, what i am,
what i breathe, what i have neglected
for the past few days, while i was
away, in that dessert, in that room,
in that isolation, and now i am back,
stronger and renewed, reinvented,
renamed, redeemed, and this secret
lies, beside me, and then, we fuse
as one, united, and whole again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unity In My Country

three islands
one people
on May
10

RIC S. BASTASA
Universal...

a dropp of rain when it heads your head
is no longer a dropp of rain

it becomes an idea and an idea is always
for the universe

it is not at you, neither shall it become yours
it becomes an ocean

there is no trace of my name neither yours
there is not a hint of any title
ownership is strange, it cannot be understood
in this realm

what love is there is not just for you
it is not just you
it comes, it touches, it changes
everyone
everything

do not claim it as exclusively yours,
it isn't

RIC S. BASTASA
Universal...(Revised)

a droplet of rain when it hits your head
is no longer a droplet of rain

it becomes an idea and an idea is always
for the universe

it is not you, neither shall it become yours
it becomes an ocean

there is no trace of my name neither yours
there is not a hint of any title
ownership is strange, it cannot be understood
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what love is there is not just for you
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it comes, it touches, it changes
everyone
everything

do not claim it as exclusively yours,
it isn't

RIC S. BASTASA
University Woes Circa 80

of university schedules
subject loads, the rush to the room,
the rainy exits,
the crams for the finals,
horrors of the night recitations,
it was more of a nightmare
the professors only talk to themselves,
there was no eye contact possible
the people there are indifferent
the grouping rests only on their own class,
i was isolated
lonely and drunk
to my own poetry and the quest
for the best
literature

they keep rushing back at me
these university woes
perhaps i need another round of
lying down with freud and jung.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unless We Become Children Again

no one dies
from the viewpoint of our
eyes
as children

everyone is alive
and too remember
when his papa died
he only sees him
sleeping

surprised why his mama
is crying
why clothes have to be black
why there is
nothing but sobbing
and patting of shoulders
and arranging
flowers and
saying a very lengthy
prayer

bored and
feeling so strange

he leaves the wake
goes outside and looks
for his friends
and then they busy themselves
with their
games and laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlike All Of You....

we keep
the big difference within us
we two

we are destined to just
pass by

we are conditioned to leave
nothing

not even our footstep
no name to be known

unlike you and the rest
you leave a trace
you have grown a tree
and you leave it
towering in the place
where you
once lived

all your names are carved
on the bark
we cannot find ours
some of your names are
listed in stone
you shall be remembered
in every land

we do not condemn ourselves
on this
we do not blame even the gods
we are designed simply to
be that

air, space, or dusts
we are invisible
when we are gone
no one remembers
they may want to trace
our beginnings our end
it simply cannot be
done

fate seals us
our identities our histories
forever blocked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlike Marlon.....

how young could
marlon be
how bold and
daring
to take with him
a girl
from that far
flung
Serongan

ah, love is blind
and unreasonable
takes with it
nothing but this
whisper
these usual
sweet-nothings of
the ears

on early nights
two heartbeats
on the grass beside
the hoppers

i admire his courage
and will
for in my youth
i never fought
as i, like hamlet
took no action but
doubt.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlike Them

unlike them
all they need to write are only a few
to become the shining stars of the heavens
the greatest of them
does not even have to say any word
to become the sun
the brightest planet shines
on the midnight sky
even without a hush

you must learn as early as now
that they have inherited their thrones from the gods
and goddesses
those that do not work and earn their merit
through hard work and sacrifices

they do not have to burn their candles on both ends
for their lights are inside them
like living fireflies in automation
innate and essential for their own natural existences
they do not have to show off to be
heavenly and glorious
for effortlessly they are victorious

but no regrets for we are the ants and the pebbles are on our side
in the middle of the thick grass above the sand dunes
we look up and we wonder
we thirst and we wait for the drops of rain
we are empty and we breathe the air at night to be full
we are small and insignificant
yet we are what we are
no promises

in the simplicity of our dreams
in the fatigue of our work
in the salt of our sweat
we earn this essence
we are what we are in the smallness of our hidden worlds
the gods are sleeping the goddesses are dancing
we watch them and we are pleased
we all worship and adore them
that is glory enough
for all of us

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlikely, Unbecoming

envious of the dog
the buffalo begins to behave like one

when the master comes
it waggles its legs and dances like a puppy

the master is angry
'this is unbecoming of you! '

the master about this is not happy
and whips the buffalo away

RIC S. BASTASA
Unloved

i always tell myself
i have to love
something else
the one that no one
loves
but everyone somehow
is loved by
someone and so
look at what is happening
to me
forever looking
for someone
unloved
and there is always
no one
there for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Unlucky In Love

i dread thinking
about the way i rush home
confessing
how i miss you,

only to find out
that
you confess the same
to another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unmoved

i wish i am an object
unmoved by uneven
unequal forces,
i wish i stay as cold
as ice
i wish the night keeps
the darkness
the moon still full
i wish that we be
together
a little longer
that when we part
i shall be unmoved by
sorrow
and that loneliness
this uneven force
within
unequal to my
state
my heart now cold as
ice
i wish there is no sun
no light
no warmth to melt these
feelings away
i wish time to freeze
when you are
inside my arms

RIC S. BASTASA
Unmoved........

the best art
of the self
is its being a self

the icon of
numbness, the memories of
lost longings,
the stone under sun and rain
remaining always
as it is

unmoved....

RIC S. BASTASA
Unnecessary

we go exploring
the Malindang mountain
they were speaking
about cobras and
black widow spiders
we walk and cross rivers
and climb cliffs

we only met
white doves.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unnecessary Complication

they were taking
so much time
discussing the egg
that i have already
fried and eaten for
breakfast

got to go
find another egg
for tomorrow

i pass by them
still on their heated
debate

which came first
the egg or
the chicken?

RIC S. BASTASA
Unobstructed...

one thing is fine
thoughts will always be thoughts
as boys will always be boys
naughty and

so innocent, one thing is finer with me
my thoughts have that fingers of light
writing its commands on some tablets of stone
a la Moses
whew!

don't care much, whatever it is, it comes, it comes,
unobstructed by style
words keep on walking, sounds of wailing, or
screams of joy, it does not really matter
thunder sounds, upon the mountains
lightning strikes upon my mind
i am awed, i am
saying, life is so interesting so beautiful
so unconsumed, am i.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unpoetic

got to the usual walk
today
seen the stone and
landmarks of this
place
had my time looking
at the trees and
the clouds
it is a bright and
warm day
and they all have
nothing to
say to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unpolluted (Samal Island)

i stand on the boat's
pulpit

at its tip
i watch its keel slice the
bluish water

beneath it the
school of
clown
fish

and the deep green
seaweeds
huge ivory
clams
and tree-like
corals

RIC S. BASTASA
you think you know me
every inch every color
since you have read
every poem i have written

you equate what i am
with what i have written

and your equation goes
through and through the lines
of logic like a telephone
pole connecting two islands

every sigh is learned
from every syllable of my lines
every yawn is discerned
from every sleepy letter that you
meet and see

are there no strangers there
that you meet? did you not
care to ask for his name?
are there no oceans there?
if there are, there must
be some oceanfloors
some sinks sinking
some whales occupying
so much space for your
kind understanding and
you may find yourself
hard of breathing, like a
diver whose oxygen tank
is leaking. You don't die
with me. You don't like my
sickness. You don't like to
get this infection beyond
my own solitude.

you unravel a poem you
discover that i have become
more covered. A voice tells
me, i am not my poems, i am
more than them. I am not just
a syllable, a word, a line.

I am more than what you have
tried to swallow inside your mouth.

i am blood and i am flowing.
you dip your finger once and
taste a dropp of my blood and
then in a second, i am no longer
there. I am a flowing blood and
what you have are stains, yes,

only stains turning into scars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unreachable Star

i am tired of you
unreachable star
my hands are numb
my fingers surrender

i am tired of dreaming
you
unreachable star
you are always
very far

tonight i am telling you
i quit

there will be a place
so quiet

and there i will bury
everything

to include you
my
unreachable star.

RIC S. BASTASA
'And only now when his head was grey
he had fallen properly,
really in love -
for the first time in his life'

- from Anton Chekov's The Lady With The Dog

i look at my hair now
and they are grey
and then i ask myself if i really love her
i like to be true now

i have always been distant
from every human being
even from her
from the very first time
when my heart was broken

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited Love (As Usual)  For Meggie...

she
could have kissed him hard
as a lover
all night it is him that she
thinks of
all days of her life
she entertained the hope that
he would take her away
from her loneliness
she could have done more
than what is necessary
to be with him
she had offered her body
bared her soul
she will die for him
and will give up everything

and so
on that moment her lips landed on his
but his lips are so cold
like rain
so dry like sands in the desert
exactly the opposite of what she is
she is life
and he is death

another stone
where her seed of love
sadly landed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited Love Of An Old Man

the sun shines on the hills
spreading on the plains and into
the vastness of my seas
this body my earth
this mind my space and sky
this love confined
to death befriend.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited Love, Lovelessness, Broken Heart, Hopelessness

there is no wound that you can see
by all means you will see no visible injury

in this place the people that you meet smile at you
and they will say

' he's doing well and taking
more fortunes and luck and prosperity'

but there is a pain that only your heart feels
that which their eyes cannot see
that which their hands cannot feel
that which their ears never hear

there is this pain
without an open wound

there is no blood dripping
but there is pain throbbing

there is no bruise
no inflammation
but there is this pus aplenty
boiling inside but
without a possible exit

there is this voice hidden
inside you
screaming

there is this threat of a
sudden eruption
at any moment

there is someone inside you praying
that now it must perish
degenerate and then
altogether die and
disappear forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited Love: A Metaphor

early that morning
the sun shines spreading
itself
warmly upon an island
in the middle of
nowhere
the water is dark and
deep and
so cold
and you shall see
black birds flying away
until
they are all gone

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited....

not everything that shines is a fluorescent bulb

there is also an incandescent heart that we point into

when we get so mad because we are rejected by the one we love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unrequited: Eve To Adam

she gave him an apple
and he took the bite

he did not give her anything back. Except guilt.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are days when i ask,
how come my arms are empty still?

despite your hugs
despite those whole nights
with you beside me

sometimes i ask
how come the bed is not that warm
anymore?

an empty glass has become
more like an empty earthen jar
which sometimes
becomes one empty room which
now has turned
into an empty world
and empty universe

the stairs that i have taken
have dissolved in
air and what confronts me
is a space of
stairs

these are questions still
unresolved

and sometimes i come to silly
conclusions
that perhaps these are but
realities themselves

empty houses do exist
like these empty arms like this
empty glass

and always for a reason or perhaps
for no reason at all?
Unromantic Maybe

the teats
and tongue need not be
romantic
but it is something
that the hands
and fingers
always remember
when love breaks
the nerves
cope up with touch
without names
easing
the mind the heart
teasing
each vein
with something
to make us
forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Unruly Concoctions

oh yes the
unruly concoctions

of greed and
avarice are here again

feasting all
the seasons

the feeding of
what is not

the wild sweetness
pours in every
glass of
unthinking

and so many shall
die

slapped by the
ill wind

stabbed by the
knives of disaster

the earth sympathizes
with

the herbs and
fruits of its bosom

ready for the
harvesting

to bring back life
again
to erase what misery
we have brought

upon ourselves
with so much regretting

RIC S. BASTASA
Unsa Kahay Imong Ikasulti Bahin Kanako?

unsa kahay imong ikasulti bahin kanako
kon masayan mo nga ako nakaangay sa kamatayon sa uban
unsa kaha ang imong hukom bahin kanako?

kon masayan mo nga ako miingon nga 'igo nila' samtang gibalita na
usab ang laing mga numero nga gipatay didto sa Tondo, ug sa uban pang mga
lugar diin gibalita ang pagkatag sa mga adik ug druga, sa mga tulisan ug mga
kawatan, unsa kahay imong ikasulti bahin kanako?

kon mahibal-an nimo nga ako dakog pagdumot sa mga politiko nga hagbay rang
nangawat sa kaban sa atong kalibotan, ug sa mga gamhanan nga midaog-daog
ug nangilad sa katawhan, unya sud sa akong kasingkasing gusto nako nga unta
gipangpatay na lang kini silang tanan, unsa kaha ang imong ihingalan kanako?

ikaw, oo, ikaw

nga hugot nga miingon nga bisan kanus-a, ug bisan asa, wala gayod gihatag ni
Bathala sa atong mga kamot ang pagkutlo sa kinabuhi

bisan kon kini mao ang kinabuhi sa nagkutlo usab sa kinabuhi sa imong minahal?

sayon ingnon nga ang pagpanimalos dili alang kanato, apan, sulayi lang, kon dili
ba usab ikaw sama kanako nga sa dihang milantaw ka sa TV unya gipusil ang
giila ug gibantog nga 'killer', unya samtang nanihapon, miundang kag ingkit sa
fried chicken, aron mobungat nga 'da! igo na niya! gaba na na, gituaw na gayod
sa mga kalag! mayra! '

dayon nimog tungab sa imong bugnaw kaayong coke

unya imo nang gikalimtan nga ikaw usa sa mga maayong mitubag sa akong law
exam kabahin anang pangutana kon unsay ipasabot sa 'due process'.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unsaon Ba Paghinuktok?

Molingkod ka
Sa usa ka silya
Nga tapad sa usa
Ka bongbong
O haligi nga lig-on

Idap-ig mo ang
Imong ulo diin ang
Imong mga buhok
Walay sudlay

Misamot ka kulong
Kay wala kay
Kaligo og kagahapon
Gipalid kini sa
Hangin daplin
Sa baybayon diin
Ikaw naglakaw
Nga nag-inusara

Iliraw liraw nimo ang
Imong mga mata
Hangtod mohunong
Kini dapit sa imong
Agtang nga morag
Dunay gidudahan
Nga daotang
Mahitabo sa imong
Likod

Apan moabot na
Ang pagsugod
Sa paghinuktok
Diin ang baba
Matulog kay
Ang imong utok
Magsugod na
Ug panaw
Paingon sa usa
Ka layo nga
Dapit kadtong
Dili na nila
Maabot sa
Ilang kabalaka

Hunong kadyot.
Ang kadyot
Mahimong dugay

Mamati ka
Sa usa ka
Classical nga
Musika
Dayon imong
Pahinayan
Ang kakusgon
Sa mga nota
Sa piano
Ni Mozart

Modagan ang
Panahon nga
Morag hinay
Nga huyop sa
Hangin

Hangtod ikaw
Mahikatulog
Og mawala
Diha sa sulod
Sa imong
Mabulukon
Nga mga damgo

Ambot og
Makahinumdom
Ka pa ba.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unseen

something's wrong with mother always cleaning the house
and father complains for she does nothing but sweep and scrub
and dust and wipe and rub,
the floors are shiny and father does not like it
he may slide and the children too
and each may hurt the body, but mother cannot be stopped
and we complain like what father does, but mother does not
really mind, for she has become so hardheaded because father
slaps her and we make her deaf with our grumblings

until then when mother died and father cried and we felt we had all our
lives wasted, but there was one in the family who smiled
someone who thought that mother simply did what she liked best
clean the dirt, mop the floors, get all the spider's cobwebs

someone sees the beauty of mother, she's doing her chores still
but now unseen

RIC S. BASTASA
some things need not be spoken
they serve no purpose

no use, like peripheries
of a used clothing

anger for instance
not just any kind of anger
but anger for love that was never there
in bed, in the first place, when what you
offer is only your body

your mind goes somewhere
in one corner of your self, like a ball
of thread
a blue ball of thread rolling on the floor
and stopping beside
one of the feet of the lonely table

you try to pull the thread
endlessly wanting to find the end of this
misery,

there is no end to the bad colors of your
dream, there is no light in this darkness

when the morning comes
you tell yourself, this is another day
another awakening

you go outside and look at the garden
and around the fence
carefully surfing each pathway

you pretend again to like the flowers
that bloom for the sun
you pretend some more that you are
sad of its wilting
at noon
you stop on a shade under a tree
and then you begin to think
and tell a story to yourself....

once upon a time, there lived a princess
far away in a castle on the clouds....

RIC S. BASTASA
there are letters where some stains
still stick, like some fading drops
of water color on a very clear
sheet of perfumed paper

you have read them not just once
but over and over
for years and years

you still cry. You blame your mother
whose genes are sentimental
about some broken hearts

you check the trunk again
and open a bundle of papers
sensing those perfumed ones

a dry petal of a rose
black bold strokes of
a pen, some words that you
still want to read:

i will love you forever.

you are taken back to the time
when you were a smiling
lover beside her

along a boulevard
holding hands and talking
about sweet nothings

you hear the sound of
a boat leaving

and you see some
lights flickering
dissolving far away
from you
on a
black horizon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unta Karon Na

giisa nako ang akong
duha ka bukton
gitagbo nako ang
duha ka kamot
sa akong alimpulo

duha ka alimpulo
didto gitagkos nako
ang akong mga tudlo

ang akong duha ka
ilok morag duha ka
mata sa akong kiliran

sama sa duha ka buta
gisulayan ug guyod
ang usa paingon sa
laing lugar samtang

ang dughan nagpunsisok
nagsiging antog sa
iyang mga pangandoy

'unta karon na, karon
na, samtang wala pa
kaayo mawala ang
imong gamayng paglaum'

ang pag-ampo usahay
kontra gusto
hatag-dili, sulti-tak-om
hawa-balik.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unthinkable

when you feel that
there is a subsumed
trouble, when you
have in mind a certain
doubt, like doubting
me and my existence,
like you have only
questions for all
the answers.
when you think that
the world will stop
revolving,
please try to
rest a while, these
things are
unthinkable.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until Another Published Poem

i like waiting for another
day and look forward for
another night, sitting,
just sitting, and staring
at a certain blank wall
waiting for another
shadow lost in the
coming of a light
from the moon and
then another shadow
and another and another
i look at myself in the
mirror of my words and
i embrace myself in the
tightness of my solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until I Am Yours

until i am yours
My God
I shall not
rest in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until I Find You Back

i am attuned to silence. get used to sadness.
learned to take a walk alone. no one is here.
and no one will be there to meet me
at the edge of this longing.
i get used to other people leaving.
amused sometimes at your coming.
i also celebrate with some things
that stay. but i am always prepared to face
the sorrows of departures. i leave too
without looking back at the door. i also
fear turning my body into salt.
i too have some regrets.
and wishes, and i too learned the need
to hope.
but this time, without you
i am giving up everything in me.
until i find you back, i will be lost.
until i see you, these eyes shall be blind.
this is our picture.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until I Touch A Peony

i agree
life is dull, except,

until, i touch
your peony

RIC S. BASTASA
Until The Silence Reigns

and so it happens
the clock strikes seven

you dream about curtains
catching flames
the house screams
and you discover you
are but a wall of this
structure

you look at the clock
on your side
it is seven

but seven what?
you get up from bed
and proceed to the CR
wash your face
feeling like a wall still
you rub the soap
and feel your cheek
you slap it

you feel like a wall
and the curtains continue to burn themselves
the house scream at its loud voice
you are still this wall
and you do not really care

to ash from ash
and to ash you shall return

there is no hurry no fright no panic
let death come with grace

the wall is flat and inanimate
let the curtains burn let the house scream
until the silence of the ash reigns
and so i just learned that you learned the trick
albeit after so many years of crying and kicking and
running on the road till you reach a dead-end, ah, yes,
it arrived when you have nowhere to go.
hope came when everything was hopeless.

and so you are a magician now. a dream come true.
but i agree you are much better, more potent than poison.

you take black rabbits from your splitting hair.
and rabbits turn to money.

people clap their hands and the earthquake came.
there was silence but brief. Earthquake is gone.
the shaking did not live that long enough to be
minded by the great minds.

your eye sockets turn into irises.
believe me i could not even believe it
how did you do it?

and your feet have become gondolas in venice.
and you got all the money. Boatloads of them.

the audience clap some more. Fame reverberating
on the walls. The grandfather's clock almost broke
its hands.

and time is forgotten. The hours lose themselves in
awe and ecstasy. There are no children on the halls

only beguiled women with their lonely husbands.
only miserly elderly statesmen with their secrets.

i want to end this magical show. And here i can outwit you.
I end it myself. I end myself. And so everything is gone.
Did they not tell you that this is not your home?
That everything here is not real. That what is real is out there
always waiting for us to change, to shed off our clothes, our skins
to throw away all our bones?

what is real is not mystical. No swindling for now. No deception.
Now is just the two of us out of the hall. The audience all dead.

Hand scatter on the road blown by the wind like litters of
tetrapacks, and hamburger wrappers, and banana peelings.

this is the place and it is not here yet. Meanwhile, our cars broke
their engines. We walk we keep on walking until we can feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until What I Am Is Just You.

it is that feeling
which guides the mouth
where to put its tongue
and let it rest there
it is the same feeling
which makes this world
stop for a while and
learn what love is
it is this feeling which
makes me shed off myself
of my body, my hands,
my mind, my soul, until
what i am is just you.

RIC S. BASTASA
you submit yourself
to the judgment of the gods

they look at your work
and they dislike it and you agree

and since then you think you are
not that good, the gods say so

there is something which you are blind
of and which they deny from you

if you have gone to the top of the mountain
and confer with the wind and the stars

you could have heard the truth: you are more
than the gods, and they do not want you to know it

you are in this body, it bleeds,
you are in this mind, it is limited

beyond all this is you, inside the body
inside the mind, until you are set free....

RIC S. BASTASA
Until You Run Away From Me ...

i must have
been a tiger
and yet i
did not know
it until you
hinted that
i have sharper
claws
that i roared
in your silence
that i look
so hungry
and you
are the
innocent prey
i have not really
known it
well until you
decided
to run away from
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Until Your Favorite Cat Comes

It's what happens after the party
which haunts the most.

the left-overs litter on the table
the plates are like faces of people looking at you
saying 'what now? what's next?'

you will be keeping memories
of those people who leave you
because they have their own homes
away from yours

the table will be empty again
the chairs too and the veranda
will be very silent

you go out of the room and lean
on the railings of the stairs
you look at the heavens
to find out how distant are the stars

how beautiful are those which you
cannot touch

until your favorite cat comes
and rubs her head under your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
animus

it is what is inside that makes us move
the intent
that either makes us guilty or innocent
the love we feel
or the hate we bear
that either makes us an animal or a man
a woman or a bitch
a bug or that bed
grass or rock
heaven or hell

it is what grows and grows inside the mind
what dwells in the heart
that make us human

it is what we take inside
which is foul
that spoils us

guilt or love

RIC S. BASTASA
nothing more about euphemism
can hide the truth
that you are not with us
do not try to misspell
our intentions
so they may become popular
to those who by
our standards are the great
morons of our society

no need to tell that you are not one of us
we are finally leaving

we come with nothing
we bring nothing

our journey is far
and the place has no name

RIC S. BASTASA
to abandonment
i am already at ease
these happen all the time
and it has no effect
on my blood anymore

these blood that keeps on running
without an arrival
these blood that pours
when i have no more tears
to show you

RIC S. BASTASA
untitled 12

mere touch
it passes like a stranger
nothing interesting
on a hot day

the tongue twists
asking for water
the teeth grits
asking for more

tonight what shall i be?
a wolf? you will fear me
i could be the moon
that embraces all of you

i can be the grass
where you sleep and dream
a touch from your body
makes me a tree
a sky, a world, a universe

i become a meteor
living through
an infinite space

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled 13

instant coffee for you
hot and
sweet,

an offering for a very
hot day

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes i find comfort in my silence
i am listening and
then i pretend i am listening and then
i continue pretending until then that the talker
sees that i am already showing that i am no longer listening
that i am no longer interested in whatever is said
that words sometimes have no use to ease the pain that we have
that we have inherited from the leaves of our family tree
from all of them down to the last and true source of our sorrow

when Adam gave the apple because he says Eve asked him to do it
because Eve was ordered by the Snake because they were all innocent
and dumb.

sometimes i look at a space
where there are no more trees, no sky, no sun
sometimes nothingness becomes the real thing: everything.

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a mountain of words
an ocean of words
a continent of words

there is a rain of words
a flood of words
a river of words and true to their being words

ty they also disintegrate as syllables
on the other hand some form the clauses
conditions and terms
some make sentences and paragraphs

a world of words full of words
i am not a word and i am buried in a mountain of words
a sea of words i drown
a continent of words i am condemned to walk all the days of my life

too may words my ears do not listen anymore.
my eyes do not like to read anymore.

i like something not having to do with words.
what about a touch? what about a picture?
what about a kiss?

why don't people just make love without saying a word?
let us start touching the hearts of people
to avoid this war of words that lead us to our own perdition.

RIC S. BASTASA
i know what
is inside me
it is beautiful
it is more
beautiful if i
have you in my
arms
but this can never be
i have my own world
you have yours too
we are distance doubled
by our beliefs
you may lie to me
but only for a while
and then the truth comes
and you must leave me
and then i will understand it
but i will be in so much pain
and then i will be dead
then you laugh and take
everything from me
whatever i have
must have been given

RIC S. BASTASA
i am in no position to
put you in pedestal
though i love you i love
myself more and if by
chance i may put you
there i know the consequence
you will love me
and then someone will die.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is within my power
to change my shape
and be what pleasure
is there to give me
but i cannot, i won't.
the shape you see
when we first met,
shall be the same
when i will finally
leave you. It was
not pleasure that
was the reason.
It was also something
beyond shapes
In fact, the shape
does not matter anymore.
It is temporary.

RIC S. BASTASA
i think a little bit
what is in you that i love
what is in me that you cannot love

logic tells me
you are never worthy of my love
you are not the kind and quality that i am looking for
i detest this unexplainable feeling
if i think some more
i vomit with what i see
and see carefully

crazy heart
illogical self
every moment i long for you
every time i see you i become lost thinking about you
i cherish your face
i desire your touch
i want to fuse with your body
i imagine the warmth
and the throbbing heart
singing in bliss

my mind says i am crazy
but this heart says i am right
with you i become a bird with swift wings
i can fly to the highest skies
with you i can be complete

there is no word fit for this
this is a river flowing without a mind of its own
and yet it has song
it has life
it has love.

RIC S. BASTASA
She was very strange, and beautiful,  
as the violet mist upon the hills  
before night falls  
when the hoot owl calls  
and the cricket trills  
and the envapored moon hangs low and full.

She was very strange, in a pleasant way,  
as the hummingbird  
flies madly still...  
so I drank my fill  
of her every word.  
What she knew of love, she demurred to say.

She was meant to leave, as the wind must blow  
as the sun must set,  
as the rain must fall.  
Though she gave me all,  
I had nothing left.  
Long I smiled, bereft, in her receding glow.

RIC S. BASTASA
i envy you
you do not have to write anything
to create meaning to your life

i envy you
you enjoy life without thinking much
you love and you are loved in return

i envy you
for you belong to someone
you never belong to me

here i am
moving in circles
nauseated.

RIC S. BASTASA
the first time mama bought me a jockey

the first trip to cagayan de oro city
the first plane ride to manila

the first kiss
first bed

first love
the first broken heart

as i sit empty handed beside my window
the first time in my life

i begin to smile thinking about all these things
the first time.

RIC S. BASTASA
been quite a time
i stayed inside of myself
probing what i am, and then

the time comes for change
i must go out of myself
and find who i am, i must

answer the questions of my heart
without the help of my mind
letting go what i feel, and

not telling, just like puffing smoke
to the air, alone, without you,
not saying anything, to the sun

it is like sitting on the side of the road
where all others stand and wait, and
you ask me, 'what are you doing? '

and i tell you, 'Nothing! ', and then
you go your way as i stay merely
looking, loafing, nothing to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled 23

i stab
the fried banana
with a fork

pieces eaten
with joy in my heart

i stir coffee with cream
hot water inside the cup of white porcelain

i hear the ringing
of the door bell

and i do not mind
who is it what is it

i expect no one
this early morning

as i begin to piece together
broken glasses of memories

i dare love no one
and i dare no one to love me

there is an island of coffee with creams
inside the cup of porcelain

no one stirs it
except myself

i feed myself piece by piece with
a fried banana stiffened with bread crumbs

deep fried and well cooked
self, selfish upon itself

on a Maunday Thursday
the silence creeps like soft feet of a white butterfly on my arms
the windows are open
the air is free to go inside and play and be wary about its own molecules

the door is closed
no one is allowed to get in at this hour of my reflection

a day as mirror
a self as shadow cast upon a self upon a self

there is no language from the body
this time

only fools, only fools,
rising above themselves

saving life on some memoirs
a biography of another bigot begotten by this ghoul.

RIC S. BASTASA
outside the window
this early morning
blue clouds hover
on the green hill
like the curly hair
of a little boy

on the guava tree
a twig without leaves
a bird sings
with blue feathers
the kingfisher
below it a pool
of rippled waters
a fish is seducing
its black beak

RIC S. BASTASA
morning wakes us up
with the gusts of the
winds from its
whispers,

loneliness creeps again
inside our bones
we quiver to this
we like to harvest reasons

the grains of wisdom are ripe
we take the chaff and
let them go

we are here with the purity
of what is left
and on the table now my love
we share
this grace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled 26

flower petals
hands
trying to reach
out
for the clouds
the sun
meeting at
the glimmer
flickering
like dragonfly
wings
forgetting how
to fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
to understand how this world works
where the stars are kept
how this earth intervenes on the affairs
of the sun and the moon
why the frog sings when it rains
why the geese are noisy on their
v-shaped migration,

to me, is plain, crazy,
we are here not to understand at all
we are given gifts to accept
we are here to wonder and appreciate
why worry? enjoy what you see
taste what's so beautiful and delicious on the platter
on the table
we indulge in conversation
we toast a drink to this beautiful universe
we are amazed by the stars
and the heavens
we are caressed by the sun and the moon
what more do we have to argue about?
such a waste of such a short time span
i like to spend it some more bathing in the pond
with the swans.

RIC S. BASTASA
i have to be honest now
despite the first lie
that after i have slept with you
something in me becomes
real: i am real, i am alive
i am whistling at midnight

when you wake up and
look at me and kiss my lips again
i know what it feels
the world becomes real too:
this bed, this blanket,
this window and the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Life, friends, is boring. We must not say so.
After all, the sky flashes, the great sea yearns,
we ourselves flash and yearn,
and moreover, my mother told me as a boy
'Ever to confess you're bored
means you have no

Inner Resources.'

I conclude now I have no
inner resources, because I am heavy bored.
Peoples bore me,
literature bores me, especially great literature,
Sandro bores me, with his plights & gripes
as bad as Achilles,

who loves people and valiant art, which bores me.
And the tranquil hills, & gin, look like a drag
and somehow a dog
has taken itself & its tail considerably away
into the mountains or sea or sky, leaving
behind: me, wag.

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled 4

last night shall be the last kiss
we made love
and we were like inside that Shakespearean play
the midsummer's night
too elusive
and...

we were acting love like it is true
i sense it when you close your eyes and shut yourself inside that darkness
it was another man's face inside your mind
and your heart uttered his name

i left earlier this morning
and you knew it

i will not come back anymore and i knew it
you are like a bird freed now from your own cage.

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled 5

upon itself the thought
reflects
upon a thought

like an image in a mirror
my face looks upon
itself and my hands touch
my hands

upon itself the self
breathes and catches life
to itself

there is life and there is motion
there is this emptiness
that looks upon a sky
down upon itself

like a cup still dreaming
of the rain

there is this air that moves
in space
like an infusion of breath
upon your mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
now the questions are asking you
what now? quo vadis?
where to? what for?
why?

yes, why above all.
the questions are asking you
and you must answer with the very same questions to the questions

you beg, and they beg too
the answer to the questions

but you have no answers really
you have learned the art of wisdom
its own ways
its own manners of not answering with answers

who knows? no one knows?
oh, ahh, i must start from where wisdom
was born

gulf i am and i know nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
nothing is planned  
words to say just come with ease  
there is no purpose  
everything becomes light  
and even if something true  
and hurting is spoken  
no bad feelings come  
since trust prevails  
that trust that the friend  
intends nothing but the good  
the better things ahead  
for both of them

RIC S. BASTASA
to abandonment
i am already at ease
these happen all the time
and it has no effect
on my blood anymore

these blood that keeps on
running
without an arrival
these blood that
pours
when i have no
more tears
to show you

RIC S. BASTASA
something is heavy
i cannot lift it myself
on such a tense
situation as this
when everything seems
to be pointing at you
with all disfavor

your sigh
heave it yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Untitled One

early morning
it will be the same sound
of cocks
crowing,

harbingers of
a new day

up on the tree
their only guide whether to
take the jump
to the ground is the
sun,

she is safe in sleep
as i take the usual journey
again
with all the cocks
crowing

the trees have black leaves
roads and fences are bold strokes
of the Chinese brush
from a painter in Vietnam
i remember
his feet are cut

one wonders if we can be whole
again
when the fragile glasses of our arms
are all broken

early mornings when
the hens are silent

when the ref murmur
a nameless song

when i sound like an empty
gong
love emaciated
like a malnourished
African child

one exhibits the boredom
of his words like
one malling without anything
in mind to buy
nothing specific except
the will to kill time
that does not serve
any use

at the pasta room
where the tea people are not around
on one table the two lesbians are drinking beer
while the two queers on the
other table near the rest room
are exchanging some pleasantries
of notes
they are not singing
but giggling

a man that they call as dark and handsome
passes by
it is strange because he is not wearing anything
his face is covered with black cloth
as though he is bound
for the gallows

there is yet no food on my table
the waitress is busy biting her nails
the mother beside a kid is slapping herself

it is strange here and i put some money on the table
and leave

i need some air to breathe
this world is suffocating.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Unto Life....

life knows always
beginnings

diapers and sucklings
no-neck monsters he gripes

life knows
where to mark its head-start again

surging like the first wave
of heat
from the morning sun

ten thousand light years away
a new bud unfolds
a leaf glistens

hear the first cry of dawn
that mother earth cradles with its grass

teeming zest
colorful awe

RIC S. BASTASA
Unto Sickness....

unto sickness
cheers
unto death
sometimes life makes the cheers
to death!

know what is next,
of course,

redemption, that is our only hope
to the next
eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unto That Sea Of Fear....

when i was a child
walking along with Papa
holding to his big
hands
i felt the fear of the sea

it is so wide and so vast
as we sit
upon a stone
i hear the sea breathing
the sea breeze humming

i see a big tummy inflate and
deflate upon its blue body
it has a wide mouth
always ready
to swallow us
both

RIC S. BASTASA
When i arrive i see you
and there is this silent grief
which i cannot tell you
it will be too much for words
to shape
and assume thoughts that
i think must wear only the white
veils of holiness

i embrace you like any day
telling you how 'tight' can speak for itself

how actions can speak separately
from the usual letters
and yet so clearly and straight
like your hair
underneath my hand

RIC S. BASTASA
Untrammelled

i try to evade the shore
i want to fly away and never stop flying
but i end up
upon a branch, gazing on the valleys
and the plains and the houses grouping like frogs
the wind is singing
i end up listening

i try to evade the things that i like doing
those that spoil my bread and butter days
the way i try to hone my claws
and sharpen my beak
but i always end up doing what i do not like doing

how can i end this obsession-compulsion thing?
how often have i asked that question and i always end up with a wrong answer

enough of these, bickering inside me, this internal debate
that has leashed me

unleash the binds, i eat that stone, choke myself
and then i fly

wingless,
a wind in the air,
crossing the spheres
unto that untrammeled horizon

RIC S. BASTASA
Unwilling Witness

i have seen a black bird
high on the leafless tree
and i hear a shot
once twice thrice
and i see the face of the
boy and he runs away
he takes away the black bird
that falls dead on the
pebbled ground

and i follow him
erasing every trace
of his footprint

RIC S. BASTASA
Unya Ang Libat  Sipat Sa Iyang Kaanyag.....

dili mo na
paluparon ang mga
alibangbang

dili kini tabanog nga
imong idagandagan

ang mga buyog dili mo
did-an sa pagpamaak

ang mga kanding dili
na kanding kon walay
sungay

kataw-anan ang mga kabaw
kon walay ikog

dili mo mabato ang hangin
sama sa dili mo malud-an
ang bulan

kadtong miingon nimo nga
mamukot tag bitoon
nagsulti sa iyang mga tinood

nga bakak, kadtong tiguwang
nga gihigugma sa batan-ong babaye
baga ug

bulsa, unya kadtong dakog abaga
nga lalaking taas ug bungot walay

sapi, kadtong bata nga walay
tingog-tingog makahadlok

ang babayeng ganahan sa pusil
pusil og kote, pinangga ni tatay

ang punoan sa balimbing karaan
na kaayo, daghang mga politiko

ang naapsan niini. Sayop ang
imong panglantaw tungod kay

bungi ka, unya ang libat
sipat sa iyang kaanyag.

RIC S. BASTASA
Unya Gitulisok Mo Ang Salog.

sa dihang mipakpak
ang tiki sa kisame
sa dihang nagdungan
mog panahalog sa
salog gikan sa higdaanan
papkabuntag,

gibasolan sa tiki ang
pagpakpak
unya gitulisok mo
ang salog.

RIC S. BASTASA
Up In Baguio

at the Mirador
on top of the hill in Baguio
there we all lived
for a retreat of thirty days
in silence and prayer

at 6 p.m. before dinner
i sit calmly beside a glass window
overlooking the plains below

the pine trees and trails
winding are all gone now
covered by the fog

as though i am now
a resident of the clouds
i hear nothing but the
sounds of gongs
of the natives played
to please their
gods

that was in 1982

when Alan got so hysterical
that the doctor had to inject him to silence him

when Louie stepped out and run at midnight
under the rain crying like a child

when i started to write
the verses of my life because i have forgotten how to cry
how to run away how to be hysterical

when the fog has then become a secret friend
in those thirty days of silence and discovery

RIC S. BASTASA
Up In The Air....

in the sky
another night plane
takes me
slashing through
passing by some
stars
there is the full
sphere moon

the rest are sleeping
my window is open

a silent world
and i am just passing by

RIC S. BASTASA
Up In The Middle And Down Under

As it is in the sky
it shall be too on
earth and it shall
be too underneath.

The analogy is in
the roots of trees
and your hair-tips
and follicles.

It shall be in the
fungus of our
existence. It shall
be in the nerves of
mankind.

Heaven, Man, and
Earth. Planes and
cars and submarines.

RIC S. BASTASA
Up In Those Mountains Somewhere In Bulawan

mark this
place

you are tiny
here

your problems
tinier.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Up There If You Mind Are The Stars

in the dark
shines the moon

dark is not just
dark as the moon shines

do you hate this
darkness? see the moon

see the lights of the
city from this top of the hill

the dark is not dark after all
a firefly is here

up there if you mind
are the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
Up There The Little Gods Are Speaking

Up there i worship little gods
dressed in their golden clothes

shining like little suns and
exuding little sparks of divinities

we here must bow and listen.

disregarding contempt i open
my ears to hear, my eyes to see

i hear the sound of the barbars,
whispers of power that i honestly
cannot understand.I do not feel
the warmth of their tiny lights.

My feet are tired kneeling.

I have to take a walk and ponder
Whether i still deserve to be human

sane and unfettered by the mandates
of old divine codes so inapplicable

to my present state of affairs
my despair, my imperfectibility

RIC S. BASTASA
Up There, Up There

we feign happiness
sometimes because we long
for that moment when we
were sad and yet
so fulfilled,

we made enemies and then
we befriend them again
because we cannot stand
the pains of being alone

we have mood swings
leaving and comings soon
become more like each other

and soon love and hate do not
make any difference
loneliness and sadness all in
one face of a woman
that we sleep with every night

it is a circle and we do not
know where to end and begin
we search for pleasure and
catch each moan with another moan
but at what level of satisfaction?

repeated, always repeated and
what do you feel? it is this numbness
not happiness, not sadness
not hate not love not hope not despair

up there, up there perhaps,
the mind begins to scream

RIC S. BASTASA
Up There....

Life and I

we were holding
hands together

we were having fun
and playing under the sun

people think that i
like to have more years
with life,

but i understand it more
on a shorter scale

and life offers her hand
so we can walk some more

stroll and roll and
play the ball

but i told Life,
i have had enough of you

and you are making me hostage
here, in this place not meant for me,

and so i refused Life
and embraced what beautiful truths that

Death has yet unspoken to me

Death and I,

There is no worry,
Let them bury,

Happy is it to die,
Bluish sky.
Upheavel Of The Heart

the lighter
softer things occupy
their own places
the veil of orange silk
above the black long hair
concealing
the face where the
softest of all lips
hide
the air occupies all
the space
of this empty heart
always longing for what i love
years ago,
years back and yet
cannot be touched not even in
those tender hands
of my own dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon  A Beautiful Journey

This is the river and we are on the same boat heeding towards Kalipay.

To each bank, old tall trees, the home of birds migrating.

The mangroves are thick on golden water.

The moon above us, and we are speechless.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Grey Day

on a grey day
the trees are still
i thought their leaves
died
when the world stands
still
when the air feels like
frozen
when we do not know
if we have sinned
if we have failed when we do not think
anymore
what to do with our lives
for the next moment
since
we are happy anyway
doing nothing at all.

on a grey day
when the sun promises to come
when the rain pours instead
when we are cold
inside our homes
when we do not plan
to move

when we simply look
at each other
contented with what we are
since there is nothing
sought
nothing wanted
nothing demanded

on that grey day
when we know we will end
and so what we do
is just to wait.
Upon A Bed Of Rock

got a bedrock for my being
not the usual softness of the pillow that mothers usually
give to their sons
it is hard on my head
it can smash if i meet it headway
and so i am as careful as you
not to break the rules
of engagement
the ethics of conduct
the code of life
this is the rock on my head
above it the rope
and your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Chair Not Reserved For Me

to sit in a chair
not reserved for me
is disgrace
at the utmost
to poetry,

in truth
the house on the clouds
and winds
and seas
a life dedicated to the
flitting moon
does not have
a chair
neither a feet
nor root
of hair...

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Day Of Reckoning

it is always i

who cleans the table from morsels
who throws away the trash of what is unconsumed from the kettle

it is always i

who wipes the spilled milk on the floor
who takes all the shit on the sink
who kills all the bedbugs on the pillow

it is always i

and on the day of reckoning the table and chairs will be smooth and glossy

the windows look to the other side without blinking the door shall be mute forever the hinges and frames all numb on the last slamming.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Dead Tree

this morning
i check upon
a dead tree

there are
no leaves
what i see
are birds
looking like
leaves

the tree is still
dead
and then the twigs
are all empty
when all the
birds

fly away

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Distance Of 18,000 Miles....

at last i have arrived her

let me put a mark
let me kiss myself

let me clap for myself
let me rest for a while

what place is this? just the wind and the range of mountains a road that will never end

a mirage out there and this rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Happy Mind

a bare life
who wants a desert? a desert is a bare land
a metaphor for a bare life: sands, sands, sands beyond imagination
a mirage, summers, all heat in there
you dream of oasis, palm trees, birds, wind, sea,
you wish for grass, the greenest grass in your mind

a bare life you say,
an equation of emptiness, a bowl of air transparent
all wind, nothing about drops of rain,

it is sad, this is all about a bare life
you say,

but one learns to live in this barrenness
at night when the sands are gone in the silence of the world
there is a cold wind singing
to the stars in the sky
to the moon
that sleeps on the dunes
shadows flying
hovering somewhere
upon a happy mind

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Harsh Environment

how can words be as soft
as flour
to make a dough
of bread that is hard
enough
to break your teeth?

for how long shall the sifting
be done
on such a very fine mess

soft rain on the rocks
silk scarf on the white slender neck
of a woman
waiting for her man to pick her up
along a dark alley
towards the city of
hope and dreams

i remember i once wrote
about a red rose
growing upon a crack on the wall
on such a rugged environment
and yet
this summer
blooms

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Realization For Having Been So Dumb For All Those Years

time pierces what thick wooden illusions lie there
it is like a metallic drill that goes right to the nincompoop heart
there is a hole
a tiny one, where blood begins to drip like tears
the pain is unbearable but it will only be for the first time drifting upon your innocence

soon the lessons are learned the eyes open like the sun on a bright morning where lights act like pins piercing upon a numbing skin

one evening when the rain is gone when the world is as silent as the feet of the cat you mind makes a conclusion: how dumb was i? how unreasonable have i become all those years when i entertained a wound? how unjust was i to myself and to the rest of my kin? how chronic were my lies cancer of my heart on love that takes pride and romance on being unrequited?

night gifted you with the wisdom of its horrible silence those insomniac hours have become your true friends
the following morning
a white bird lands upon your shoulder
tamed and knowing
what to do

back to work,
sanity regained
what a shame!

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Rock By The Sea

another body
sits upon another body
on ecstasy

the sea rocks
upon the laps of the sandy shore
little waves of
glories

the skies watch with envy
the sun ascends
upon a joy multiplied

love, oh love,
on such a glorious morning
a kiss worshiping upon a kiss
penetrating
love's pleasures
upon such
blissful depths

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Serious Matter

draw perforations
upon a plastic sheet which you touch
with your finger and you like the manner
by which each shall burst
you like the sound and it pleases
your mind
this is a serious matter, this explosion
in some ways
also misunderstood as taboo,
as something that only the mouth of
your bathroom
can tell,
for instance what happens in bed
what was sucked then like
one vacuum cleaner though there is no sign
of dust or dirt but only some kind of a flirt
and skirt on the floor,
it is getting complicated far away from
that promised simplicity
that there should only be two things to
be done,
entering the door and then
switching off the lights.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Song Of Maria Tanase

the time for fame is over, and if we start owning everything
we have denied written over here spread like linen on fields of gray
sand, what have i got? what have you got to be ashamed of, there is
nothing probable, after all, we have nothing to lose, some things
i need, something i must decide to forget,

Nothing. probably, NOTHING,

I HAVE nothing to be afraid of finally,
for i am fine,
into the restlessness of my anonymity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Tower Of Red Bricks

The way that poem hypnotizes you
is as simple as having parallel lines drawn one upon the other repeatedly until you get tired about the eternal repetitions which numbs your mind into a surrender of jejune, as though what is happening is nothing nothing nothing nothing but a blur in a line of events marring your capacity to imagine disrobing whatever butterfly or flower or vine that hovers, that blooms that clings upon a tower of red bricks....

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon A Yellowed Page....

what i need is only
a drop
i do not need that rain
what i need is just
an atom
so i have to discard your
molecule
i need what i cannot
see
what i cannot touch
what i cannot
conceive
for at this stage of
my loneliness
what i need is only to
be blasted with
feelings
after which i shall savor
the silence
sweet as age
upon a yellowed page.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon An Empathy...

upon your sorrow
this glass of silence breaks
its shatters fall upon
the floor of my peace
contaminated by
sharp pieces
my feet tiptoe upon
those empty spaces
avoiding
steps that hurt like
pins and nails

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Being Numb

at the end
one sees what matters

nothing really
matters
one finally says yes
to everything

whatever comes
without question one embraces
as part of
its existence

whatever is taken
one nods
and admits that it is always
rightly taken

at the end
you arrive at a dead
end

it is destiny
it is always that fate that tells you
you are here and you have
arrived
always at the right hour

there are no more questions
and so
as a matter of consequence
there too are no more answers

it is empty as light and space
it is an erasure of everything that is written

at the end
one really can see nothing at all
nothing matters
nothing taken
nothing given

at the end you smile
what a wasted lifetime!

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Gazing At The Cut Sunflowers Of Vincent Van Gogh

upon seeing the cut sunflowers of vincent van gogh
i cannot but think about the tragic moment when
he cut his ear, when blood oozed
when at the end, finally he took his life away,

this thing happens when one knows much about
the life of another
this familiarity that breeds contempt,

and so gazing again at the painting of vincent,
i start with real sunflowers in my mind, the one that mother
planted in her garden when she was alive,
i think of the sun and the sunshine touching my face
i think about warmth and life and oozing verve
the vivacity of all things around my little world,
the field of sunflowers and the bees and the butterflies
and birds

i pretend i have not read about the life of vincent
i pretend i have not heard about the stories of mother

i just gaze again at the cut sunflowers. just that.
now there is joy in my heart. The suicide story does not exist
in the bold yellow petals, on those three huge sunflowers

look at them again, they are the symbols of our smiles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Hearing That A Lawyer Dies Of Tongue Cancer

i sent my sympathies
and notes of condolences
some flowers and
a big wreath for the
death of a lawyer
suffering from cancer
of the tongue

the delivery boy who
carries it to the place
where the dead body lies
tells the other delivery boy
carrying the flowers

his tongue deserves it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Her Graduation...

Upon her graduation from law school
i see that picture
her husband beside her and the
(adopted) child wrapped in her arms

time mends everything
like a grafted branch of a tree
the leaves grew from buds
and soon
the flowers bloom giving its
sweet scent to the air
for everyone to smell

the force of life knows always
where to go what to do what to fill up
and when

no one notices anyhow
the smiles cover what once was very lacking....

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Knowing The Death Of A Friend

long lost friends
time's way of letting us know
that it is in-charge
and can make us forget
and then remember
the way old friends were
and when we finally
find the entrance to
a reminiscing
we in sadness remember
some as
our dearly beloved
on the other side
of this world.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Learning The Death Of A Dedicated Algebra Teacher

the obituary reads that mr. cruz
my algebra teacher in college
died the other day
i am saddened
and my mind travels back
in time when he taught
us how to find the x's
in relation to the given y's
that a value assigned to
some givens can lead me
to find an unknown
with the simple way
of finding the right
connection

it is all in the mind
and soon you will find
the solution
to a given problem
he once lectured it

bedridden for years
he always lived a very
simple life
(poverty
the poor professor
thriving on a meager
income from the
university supporting
his children to earn
a college degree)

and now that he died
my classmate who
becomes a practitioner
of medicine and earning
her big bucks for her
living says 'i have pity for him'
she is correct, but from far
i am saying too my prayers for him
that his soul may rest in peace as he was restless once with the odd numbers mostly they are not even.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Leaving Arvisu House

the last message of Tony was this: you have finally seen the light

we who remain here are still groping in darkness

it is hard to understand what Tony really meant by that

years passed, 15 years more Tony became a Jesuit Priest

then we met in Zamboanga and we talked we avoided this thing about light, we have nothing to say about it, he said 'You are fat'

i have nothing to say much i hid the light inside my fists

Tony is correct in this world where we live, it is a big circle and he hints about something, it is light there is no visible end and there is no visible beginning we only inhabit we fail always to explain

RIC S. BASTASA
When I leave here, I leave without regret, I do not come from here and I have nothing in mind that suggests that this is the place I am meant to be, you know that, and so I go, and when I go, I wed possibilities which are never in my mind, I alliterate, I swallow my pride, I have fluent lungs, I listen, I move fast, I slow down, I exhale air, and take back land, I belong to the untied, maybe always less, but I am prepared, I fall on quicksands, and I am still.

I may come later. No one saves me anyhow. Except my own self.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Our Common Grounds We Shall Speak What We Already Know....

you who have not learned to fly
but cannot fall as you are fire treading its
steps upon a narrow wall
towards the ceiling sky,

you whose wings of dawn are broken
by the waking of the light

you shall teach me how to live again
how to furnish these ends with tendrils
at the tips of death
at the falling of the last leaf

upon our common grounds we shall speak
what we already know....

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Reading Kazu's Tanka

it's like i plunge myself
into a pond

it is raining and so
cold but

i decide to swim anyway
there is something beautiful

hiding behind the cold and
trembling

the rain is heavy and
does not stop

kazu's tanka is warm and
comforting

deep from his heart
glowing like diamond in the mud

sorrow feeds beauty
and beauty never gets fat

Time knows where
the heart must rest

Kazu shall soon find it
Sorrow in winter

looks forward always
to Spring.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Reading The Poems Of Lesbia

de attempt to say
what harsh feeling was there
was well said on those lines that float like leaves on the river
very usual
nothing sophisticated
there is that twirl that would have made me dizzy for a while
but the heart that knows pain
cannot fall on the malady of nausea
there were many empty spaces
i just watch not having the duty to fill them with my thoughts
for mine
are in packets and always lacking
in content
and style
i move around the parks and winding ways of Lesbia
weird but not saying anything
impressed but there is that lingering desire
to move out
somewhere
black birds without islands
bridges that fall
boats without anchor
a love that has to be spelled
still correctly
as you all look at me with anticipated fury
this incapacity to
raise my thumb and say
everything is alright
what business do i have writing this poem somehow
the lines that throw up
the feet that runs away from them all
i have this world
in my fingertips and it is mine and mine alone
small and tight

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Receiving The Wedding Invitation

i once told her
marrying the one you love is not just a matter of luck. she has to accept
it is not always beauty that wins
the updated ones get the best news in town
and those who have taken the first move
gets the is getting older, and not as beautiful as the rest who already
married and sired their man with many children.

the early bird gets the worm.
the beautiful woman loses to the flirt and the daring.
it is not just the wisdom, it is also the scheme of things
the way she arranges her hair, puts her best foot forward, lying sometimes about
age and experience,
or whatever, she must know better than i who was also caught in this web
of deception
where love suffers, where a woman sometimes has to take a man
because it is getting darker
not the kiss but the child,
that which time secures her the days of her wrath
the time of her
sunset,

when the flowers finally wilt because the roots
have never spread their tips farther

now he has to lose because she stoops for no reason at all
but to conquer

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Acceptance Of My Chains

upon the unconditional acceptance of the chains
wrapping my whole body

upon the acknowledgment that i am bound by you
from the first time i saw you
till the last day that i lay there hopeless
in my prison cell

upon my wish that i have to end this sadness
somewhere else
in the place not known by you

i, my love, has declared that i am free.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Blades

upon the blades of rice plants
the light of the sun lands

completing the silence of the
red dragonfly

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Great Monument Of Dr. Jose Rizal

upon his great monument
early this morning
some tiny needles of rain
are falling

lush grasses below his feet
untrimmed
around him are the mango trees
unpruned

the white paint is looking old
motorcabs pass by
some women with black umbrellas
rush along the sidewalks

the rain falls heavily now
each rushing to take their chosen
shades and then stop for a while

nobody cares what he really
said
nobody reads what he had written

he is past.

RIC S. BASTASA
it is about to rain
but i insist on staying on the ground
i lay my head on a rock
look at the trees
leaves spreading
everything is green
these are what i miss
from the ground looking up
seeing only leaves and twigs
and barks and trunks

and then it rains
i have no time to run
i decide to stay
and look at the same view
now wet and
mournful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Islands Of Compromises

look at that
that is the island of compromises
see its shape?
it is irregular
land in there
you can find everything
in perfect co-existence
if you look at the map
there are so many
corrections
all tolerated
and there are so many hands
that draw the lines
to reflect its
rugged topography
of large rocks, layers of
disagreements covered by the
sands of flexibility
storms come
tsunamis pay their visits
earthquakes make the
mountains dance
alcoholic drinks are served
people smoke
and make merry

at first you find it
hard to understand
how can this be?
but stop it
ride on and
feast somewhere

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Shadows Against The Wall.

like you
i do not have enough time to read a long poem.
at first glance
it gives you the feeling that you are climbing a mountain.
you gasp for air
your feet tremble.

a person who doubts has the tendency to write a long explanation
until he grasps the essence and pauses and says everything only in
one line.

a few words can say what we want to point out.
you give time for all the tired people to take their rest.
sometimes
we opt for not saying anything
and yet
be still understood

one time i put my hand against the light
and make the shadow speak through a dance.

we understand then how happiness can be put inside our
hearts

upon the shadows against the wall.

succinct self.
prostate in silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Silence Of The Pond

there is no futility
in the silence reigning upon
the pond
for the lilies too know
how to please
those silenced and
those who choose to be silent
in here the tiny tadpoles
dance with their
cute tails
beneath the spreading leaves
on beautiful choreography of instinct
the clouds reflect their changing faces
the lotus blooms
a dragonfly hovers upon a blade of grass
and rests
its weary transparent wings

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Sofa Of Cleanliness

I've been to myself
entered its deeper recesses
and there
i find someone whom i know
is living in peace

and so today let me write about
a peaceful pond
no ripple disturbs it
it reflects the face of the sky

it is listening to the serene song
of inner peace

and so the bleeding stops
like a journey which has found
its home
is this heart resting
upon the sofa
of cleanliness

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon The Wings Of The Sparrow

upon the wings of the sparrow
shall i be swift

upon the gentle coos of the dove
shall i be tranquil

upon the patience of the spider
(despite you calling it a cliche)
shall i always wait
for you....

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon This Promise....

we were in love.
we thought we are love.
or the world as we
exclusive and strong.

one day love died.
we cried. we brought flowers.
we said prayers.
we buried love in that silent city.

we looked at each other
trying to understand that love which died
and which we buried.

you covered your mouth. i put on my sunglasses.
too much light is glaring.
and your tears had to be kept in that
white cloth.

we left and arrived at home.
we sat on the the chair facing the sea.
then darkness came and we had dinner
we were speechless for a while.

love was gone. It will not be coming back
we buried it.

we realize, love is not us.
it is different. Distinct. that after all
tomorrow we can still move on without it.
we did not marry and live with each other for it alone.

it is gone. and we are still here.
still strong without it.

upon this promise.
Upon Visiting A Dying Woman In The Hospital At Room 108

actually the barbecue
is more than what it appears to be
its scent of meat
and the hotness of the spice
and delicacy of
the sauce
it is the front of something
that is hidden
there is something behind its shape
and odor
i cannot speak to you about it
so i offer you that
pork barbecue
i know that hunger that
does not want to be fed
time fills that
grief
that cannot be appeased

the barbecue is cold
set aside in one of the corners
of the table
grease is solidified
no one
not one from those who see
the emaciated body
of the dying woman
wants to take
the bite

someone does
but eventually there is that
obstruction in the
throat
and so the tongue
expels that piece
of pork barbecue
again

what a waste!
yet we can never voice
this matter out

the eyes speak a lot
but you know then
they have no voices

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Writing This Poem

you see, everyone is asleep
and the rain pours heavily on the tin roof of this old house
the white dog lays with its four legs facing the ceiling
feeling so contented
i closed the glass windows
and let the brown curtains fall
on the floor
as i begin to write the words i am not thinking of anybody else
is there someone still who is special to remember
during a heavy rain on a night like this when i am already alone by
myself?
i still have a suspended answer to all these questions
or perhaps they have no answers still
for the past 30 years
now with some white hairs and extended forehead
i am at home with myself
and no rain how heavy and how long
can instill in me the fear
of its monotonous sound
my feet have roots and my hands have tendrils
my head is a big sunflower
and the void out there is such a beautiful greenfield
on a limitless horizon
this world is an open window
this earth is a big boat
and i am now the sailor expectant of islands
and welcoming ports
bustling cities
diamond lights
starry skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Your Request

it is
upon your persistent request
that they all learned to
speak to you
the floor of course keeps its
deep voice
like the voice of the cave
and the well
and the windows have mastered
the songs of the soprano
aided by the wind
the ceiling keeps the alto
tickled by the spider and the
lizards
but the door keeps itself
mum
treasures its silence
closed
with hinges that never budged
that keeps the impossibility
of this harmony
as others sing that single door
shows its protest
you kicked it once
on a Sunday.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upon Your Thoughts

upon itself the thought
reflects
upon a thought

like an image in a mirror
my face looks upon
itself and my hands touch
my hands

upon itself the self
breathes and catches life
to itself

there is life and there is motion
there is this emptiness
that looks upon a sky
down upon itself

like a cup still dreaming
of the rain

there is this air that moves
in space
like an infusion of breath
upon your mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
she stands outside the house
leaning on the post of the gate which is painted white
it is raining

she is looking at the roots of the palm tree which she had just
caused to be uprooted
because she is weak and cannot even cut one of those
which was planted here
many years back

she demands that all the roots be taken away
not one root must be left
so she can sleep well tonight

i think i know what she wants to drive at the state of things now
she is filled with hate and longs for the time that love again shall fill her up

she is no longer the same
her eyes are red but they are no longer crying.

RIC S. BASTASA
Upsurge

i walk down the stairs
meeting the honorable mayor of this little town
i imagine
i am the salmon upsurge the river
against the tides
and he is the grizzly bear
i look the other way around
evading a clash of
angry eyes
somehow i am not afraid
of claws

perhaps, i know who i am and
i cannot give in to what he wants.

RIC S. BASTASA
Urinary Tract

You think of a poem
And you try to write it
You doubt
How to start it
You wait
Until you feel like urinating
You think this is just a dream or something else like you are lost or something
You stand up
Go outside the door
You run somewhere else where no one sees you
And there
You empty what is full.

RIC S. BASTASA
you urinated
on the side of the road
where the red
rose grows

not a good site
you are such a man of
bad taste

this morning the
red rose blooms again
much better
than before

as i see it it likes you
and your filthy urine

not good to look at
but it is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Us

The river in you moves
Taking the least resistance
You shall be the water
That seeks your own level
In calm and still moments
Let me fish
In your moments of rage
I shall be the rock
In the moments of your dryness
I shall be the river bed nearby
We shall be always here
I shall be the bamboo grove
And you shall be the waters of the creek
Slowly passing, gently flowing by

RIC S. BASTASA
Us

what was said
that was sad
if they turn into dust
because we left them
in that forgotten corner
of the room
soon we shall discover
as part of the furniture
that once
we sit upon again
and we remember all of them
not with sadness
anymore but with courage
because
we survived the turbulence
of tears
the unceasing coldness in
the rain
the madness of mud
and
we look at each other
again
we are still pure
and imbued still with the
beauty of our
age.

RIC S. BASTASA
Us And Our Dreams

we have enough
firewood
to feed a fire
for our
long night
together

now we must
sleep and dream
about firewood
still?

RIC S. BASTASA
Us To God

Who does not love
the Lord?

Who does not love
the beautiful sadness of a
sunset in the
boulevard?

The luscious strawberries
that the tiny hands of the vines
offer to your
solitude

The coolness of the clear river
that soothes your naked body
wrapped by the water
facing the gentle sun with rays
as fingers to your
skin

Who does not see the Lord in all
these?
We are but the smiling children of God
who in awe and wonder
shall praise Him in all the days of our
lives

For who are we?
Ants crawling shamelessly under His feet
biting the soles, his Heels?
Parasites to the goodness of the Host
sucking every good blood and spitting the bile?
Flowers to crown His Hair
Birds above Him singing songs for his Divine Ear?

RIC S. BASTASA
Us, In Our Own Visions Of Cowardice

what is in us that
makes them fear
our visibility?

though we have flown
like hawks in their
skies

they seem not to want to see
how we have taken the shape
of their conquerors

we now like to be seen
and be felt
and it will not be terrible as
they really expect

on the other hand
we have remained hopeless in our
longings
we struggle to be freed
from this invisibility
we know the key to that door
and it shall open if we will

but we are the coward beasts of the rain
we like to wade in water
but we never dare

and so here we are in this again
being heard but shall never be seen

possibly forever

RIC S. BASTASA
Usa Ka Pula Nga Rosas Sa Kilid Sa Bungtod

nakita ko ikaw, bag-o
nga mibuswak didto
sa tiilan sa bungtod

buot nakong kutloon ko
ikaw aron akong dalhon
sa akong balay sulod
sa bulsa dap-ig
sa akong dughan

apan sa imong katahom
giwakli nako ang kamatayon
ug gitanom akong kaugalingon
sa imong kiliran

buot kong motubo
ug mobuswak usab sama
kanimo bisan og ako nasayod
nga kini mahitabo lamang
su'd sa usa ka adlaw

RIC S. BASTASA
Use And Abuse....

when you are hopeless

when misery is inside all your bones

you become so beautiful and humanity looks
at you with so much pleasure

so much lust
and you give in

you give what is no longer pleasurable to you
for all of them

you are exhausted and dying
they do not mind

they take pleasure in every chunk of your flesh
your eyes dilate

when you die in the middle of that moment
they call it your misfortune

they have nothing to do with you or
your pain

when all your bones fall to the ground
when your lips crack like dried leaf

they leave you
they will hate the place
and look for another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Use And Disuse

the one who wins the seat
and wears the crown
declares triumphantly that

he is used
as he uses
that is the
rule of the game
there is
the law of utilitarianism
it works

he laughs at me
the loser
who shies away from
the law of
winning to be used
and to use in order
to make
another winner

RIC S. BASTASA
Use Your Mind, Activate Your Instincts

those that know how to please
go up the ladder
when they are there
they too shall dance for the
sky
flatter the clouds
and even
make lies to the sun
and mislead the moon
with their
mastered smiles
and rehearsed
conversations

they do nothing good actually
they do not shine
their own light
they only borrow
the faces of those
that please gods

they have their own motives
hidden agenda
to grab what power is their
inside the moon

when they finally have it
they shed off their masks
their clothes
and fake skins
their tails and fangs become
evident

and soon those who believe
them shall become
their slaves
even eaten raw
in their hunger for power
you should have
done better,
respect his privacy,

it shows that
he was more than
willing to use
you too,

that early Monday
morning you had coffee
and smoke,

and then he lets you
inside his room,

shows you his pair of
pants on top of the
cabinet with a note
that last night it
hanged on the
wall, and he was looking
for it and he found it
with you

and his cabinet lock
was broken
and forced open,
and some things scatter
on the floor
documents perhaps

and his diamond ring
and cellphone are gone,

how late for you
to know that he is going
to use you as a witness
to a robbery which
actually never happened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Useless

the scissor trims
taking only what is necessary

for the design
the excess becomes

useless, thrown away

and those which are meant to stay

stay, and become a part of

a new landscape flowers

and leaves and stones

in her own kind of tapestry

and those who are thrown away

shall keep the faith of next time

nothing diminishes the importance later

of what she deems as useless

that night
she thinks that something
is missing
yes, the grass.

RIC S. BASTASA
pity, sympathy,
illwill, backbites,
fear, rage, anger,
envy,

need you utter them?
to the man drunk with his failures
(or even success)

do not, they serve no purpose
but to make pain more serious,
intoxicating
seeping, penetrating pain
grief,
lamentations

just a tap,
a hug,
an embrace, a gentle gaze,
a shake of the hand,
or just sitting beside him

in silence, , , , , , , , , , ,

RIC S. BASTASA
Using The Word 'Insert'

You read a book
and since there is this bee that hovers on your hair
and for fear of any bite
you stop for a while and insert a book mark on that page

you stand
go to the kitchen and drink you cold glass of water
you just have inserted yourself in that spic and span kitchen
mother's gift to your
lonesome existence

you have a busy day
you look at your calendar
one event is missing
you insert
what you think is important
and was inadvertently
left out

you dress
you admire yourself
you go into the garage
and drive your car
in the city where the crowd lies
traffic, pedestrians like mushrooms
you insert yourself
and be part of the bustle

in the office you enter
you meet a pile of folders
and you insert your
hands to begin what you are
called for

and then back home
it is dark and the lights on the streets begin to flicker
you insert yourself in the darkness
and mix with all those
islands of light
back to your room
this time it will be more lonely
feeling like dumb
because this time and like the other old times
you insert with no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Usual

when they saw me
they closed the door
and then you came
late and they saw you
and you did not have
to knock
and they opened the
door and
you gave them
flowers.

what shall tempt
them with
my these big stones
in my hands?

RIC S. BASTASA
Usual Meetings...

meeting is euphoric
tracing roots and looking
at the leaves
and marveling at the fruits
then what happens
next are the expectations
of what one can do
where the scrutiny begins
there will be demands
unsatisfied
prayers remain not
answered

that serves as a
sad ending
and there will be no more
surprises

plainly, too human
yes all too human and that
is what exactly happened between us
long before we even started
deep within the soul says
it is over.

RIC S. BASTASA
Usual Questions 2

de old places of the heart
have grown the trees of
guilt, its roots spread in my
bones
the fungus of nerves
are consuming my flesh
sad consequences now
for which i am left without choice
but take them all
slowly
i vomit them and you see
how i suffer

must you be happy by now?

how cruel too are those vines
of your revenge
choking the visions of your
eyes
green with anger
your tongues on fire
too consuming your hair
and body

who wins? the ashes on my feet?

RIC S. BASTASA
Utilitarian Point Of View

as the gray hen cackles looking for a place to lay her eggs
the red rooster looks for another white hen to shuffle on the ground,

we who see this does not condemn, nay we never think of morality
or codes of ethical conduct, as the rooster is just doing the work that nature and
man have assigned to it

no hen ever complains that the rooster has copulated with the other
six hens around the poultry in the backyard and in the garden

neither shall we reprimand the rooster for being so restless and
cocky and prolific or as we call it engages in promiscuous sex

all that we are thinking on that moment are the eggs that each hen can lay, our
minds looking forward to every morning's breakfast, when we shall choose, the
usual delights: either scrambled or sunny side up or perhaps a hard-boiled egg
for our personal consumption.

RIC S. BASTASA
Utilitarians

You mislead me into believing that I am invited to this
Wedding party, I do not demand that i be furnished a copy of the wedding
invitation
With my name on it, trusting you that the invitation is true,
So when I handed my gift to the bride and the groom
their
Eyes ask for my name and well,
thank me for the gift

When the truth is you are only interested for the free
Ride that I have given
for all three of you, liars!

the bride and groom do not even know my name

RIC S. BASTASA
Utility And Futility

a man in need somewhere
in poverty
can always sell his body &
even his soul if necessary
only to live
down to the basics
of having to eat
a square meal

a lonely lady in opulence
in the middle of his turbulence
makes a sigh

of which the man in dire need
hears and so he comes to her

with both needing each other
for complimentary reasons
they sleep together

inside a room
there they keep on saying that
they love each other

that is love in utility
life in futility

RIC S. BASTASA
Utopia

laughing at
the Establishment
not believing
in any system
sitting around
not moving
keeping sanity
intact
on skepticism

RIC S. BASTASA
v-shaped
vandal
viagra
vanished

validated
voltage

voyeur
vanguished

v-shaped
vanity

variegated
vent

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacant Space

this is the vacant space
of my room, you may come

this is the vacant hour
you may barge and talk simply talk

this is the vacant lot of my being
you may build your home

this is vacant
fill it with space, drag your hours here,
start watering the roses in your garden
beside your house

this is a vacant hole in my ear
talk simply talk

i am always listening
this is my vacant line, please fill in the missing word

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacation Galore

lying on a hammock
under a blue umbrella sky
between two coconut trees
sea breeze fanning my body

each sweet grape luscious to
my lips thinking of you
i swallow each
pulp

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacillation

for matters where
indecision plays rook with time
one resorts to
vacillation, suspend what beliefs
are, walk a mile, count sheep,
spend a night in a boat alone,
sleep in a hammock, ride a horse,
bathe in the river, sun bathe on the cliff,
sit on a Persian pillow
chant, hush, and finally
God forbids,
die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacillation Galore

as usual
i am not doing what i am supposed to do,

somehow, all these unnecessary things are
filling me with what i do not crave for,

what i crave for
i do not have anyway

and so the retaliation comes
this way and that way where everything levels up
to fair and equal
unsatisfactions

what is the use of all these
you cannot understand anything about my everything

there is this thirst that does not ask for water
there is this hunger that does not talk about food

there is this home where there is nobody
there is this love that hates me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacillation In Writing A Poem About Happiness

he promises
to write a poem about happiness
and he will title it
'Tomorrow'

she whispers upon her ear
'Tomorrow never comes? '

what if?
can he?

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacillation, Sleep, Dreams...

when things get worse
stop for a while and sleep
there are times when dreams
talk and give you
directions like a mother
to her son
listen
decipher the scenes of
mists
observe the shadows
trace the source of light
learn that the waters get through
here
because there is a way
an exit because
there is an entrance

why hurry? delay because
death sometimes comes too
early...

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacillation....

we refuse to talk about it
how many invitations are extended
availability is negated

the wound itself refuses
the temptation of the cure
everyone is silent
on the incoming
chaos...

RIC S. BASTASA
Vacuoles....

sometimes you write
without thinking, whatever images come
you paste, you copy, you post,

it happens, and you let it be,
this stream of consciousness, this
letting go,

the stars in the skies are writing
us a poem,
the universe is singing a song, and

the earth keeps spinning memories, and
the days are warm and bright and lovely.

the rivers of love keep flowing under
our feet, and the oceans of understanding
goes beyond the borders of our soul.
it is the exhaustion of love that moves

us away from all these trivialities.
we engulf each other: vacuole to vacuole.

RIC S. BASTASA
sometimes you write
without thinking, whatever images come
you paste, you copy, you post,

it happens, and you let it be,
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RIC S. BASTASA
Vagabond

i was too small then
chinky-eyed
my hands still like
buds of roses

i did not remember
thorns only leaves
and roots

the sky was as clear
as cellophane
and the the ceiling
hangs high
on the roof

and i did not remember
that the lizards
kissed the ground
on that sad afternoon

i remember you
as the tower
your hands big bells
your feet like
pillars and your
mouth like a boat
blowing like a horn
for the final leaving

what i remember most
was what you left us
before you faded in the
haze far away
on the path towards
a dissolving
horizon

you left only us.
Vaise Sentimentale

RED
petals from the blue
skies

o bright day
upon a rain of red
roses

o bright day
bloody red on the plains
into valleys
of the dead in
hundreds

o bright day
gleaming in horror
of those
rampant shooting

each calls a name
violence upon violence
justice, religion,

o bright day of the
few chosen men
strong, mighty
and so blind....

RIC S. BASTASA
it is easy to say that i do not know you,
really, likewise much easier for you to say the same,
in a party, where comparisons feast upon
each other, where insults are hurled without so much minding,
sometimes we feel humiliated, belittled like nitwits,
how the world becomes too bloated before us
where we are but pins, and even mothballs, or nails or
some, though still feel like hammers and wrenches and
steel balls, or even fire,
but in a thorough scrutiny, in deeper thoughts, in our
pondering moments as wannabe philosophers of our tiny times,
honestly, we too are trapped inside this cave of our
ignorances, long before we have entered this winding darkness,
we, having not really known too well the mysteries of our
lies and deceptions, our surviving skills, our kits of
pretenses, our chameleon genes, flexible though not that
intelligent to the highest degree of our humanity,
adaptable, and always fitting it like some dado joints on
that wooden existences at times,
thus forgiving our selfishness at times,
we say, i am sorry, i still have to shake hands with my self,
need more time to know it, master it, restrain it,
filter its words, wait for time, and learn what love really is.

the point is, we are better, much better now,
left alone with our idiosyncrasies, our uniqueness,
to each his own misery, to each his own joy.

perhaps, the right time comes, when the genuine sharing is
felt, and having felt it, the intimacy begins.

RIC S. BASTASA
Valediction....

it was never me
there is never a part of me that was there
you have misinterpreted the truth about those characters of the novel,
the words in that poem
the metaphors are outdated

refer to another reality,
the reality that i have carried upon my shoulders

i am the horse, not that horseman,
i am not the star, i am just the asteroid at the background

i am the silence between your sighs,
do not read my silence,
you will find a word that cannot stand for me,

i am not even that tail of that great meteor that comes to your life
once in a century

it is not me that you see in those flowing words,
they are those pieces of undecided driftwood that i pick from the great flood

those dry falling leaves that land on my forehead
from the great tree of life

do you really have to find pieces of myself in those lines to make
the write-up interesting to you?

i am so sorry
call me a liar, but that is the truth

there is truth in empathy
there is truth in putting our feet in some other people's shoes

that is what literature is all about
read some more and be discouraged

fathom and then
be enlightened about the sufferings of others
their miseries that soon shall provide you company
when you sit upon a chair with a smoke in your left hand
and a margarita (or black coffee) on your right

upon an empty table
facing the sea
witnessing the beautiful fading
on another sunset
in your life

do not wish that i shall be there
oh, i have long been gone into another island

do not attempt to find me
i am not there anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
Valentine Bites

for entering the forbidden
yard the woman with long hair gets
her due from my dog named sam

three deep bites on her long legs
and here i am paying for her valentine bites

RIC S. BASTASA
a hand on the side
of my pants
a thumb that is
still hesitant to
go with the
pointing finger
there is a suspense
whether to get the
gun and then
squeeze the
trigger
time is an element
of waiting
the spur of the moment
makes the decision
to kill or
be killed
so when your ground
is right
stand it
pursue that instinct
of self-preservation
you reason may
explain later
of course, with the
help of your
expensive lawyer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Valo Eguah: A Reversion

i am the wind
without a boat.

you are the boat
what direction will you take?

with a wind like me
would you care for another direction?

RIC S. BASTASA
Vamos A Bailar

a spanish guitar
playing the flamenco

vamos a bailar
i cannot imagine

why are we still
all sitting here?

RIC S. BASTASA
Vanishing Into A Vacuum...

you gather each hair
of time
pulling each lock
to the tongue of your
fingers
savoring the delicacies
of pleasures
possible on this earth
perhaps
the do not have a hint
about what is happening
around your
universe
that from a distance
dims like the star
dissolving
into space dust
soon each planet
shall understand
why a star for
sometime
had been restless
for the face of vanishing
comes
soon another vacuum
is declared
another emptiness
back
upon itself
cupping no a drop
of time

RIC S. BASTASA
Vanity

let us urinate together
let us see
which urine reaches the clouds

mine reaches only
the mountain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vapid

Blah blah blah
that is what i hear about you,
a bland taste of life,
kind of bromidic
attic,
tongue clichéd,
becoming a conventional cornball,
what have we become but
dull as dishwater,
feeling so dumb,
an everyday humdrum,
you feel for flat-footed,
an expression so hackneyed,
ho hum
insipid insect,
more of mundane,
d- noplace,
an old hat of grandpa,
papa's pabulum,
plain pedestrian,
partly platitudinous,
a square-faced tribesman
a check that has gone stale,
a well cut stereotyped pattern,
laughing stock,
stupid cupid,
tired, tripe, trite,
unimaginative,
watery eyes
wishy-washy
panty.

ok, just go back to vapid.

RIC S. BASTASA
Variations Of A Structure

graphic that is the word
there is a concrete structure
a bill of materials
a sketch of what must follow
there is a salable syllable
consistently uttered by
the demanding market

poem is actually
an architecture
of beams and roofing
sometimes you throw
away stars
they have become
the most abused
cliche

there must be
a variation
black bricks
silky white clouds
like shampoo conditioner
pumpkin rooms
rat horses
they already had it
books and houses
shoes and brains
bed and bread

surprise the mind
with what it thinks
do not really exist
and then we can
claim that we
are really alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Variations Of A Thought

when a standard is set
when only the acceptable is accepted
art dies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Variations Of The Word Cry

Wailing, keening, moaning, sobbing, bawling, whimpering, yowling, clamoring, vociferating
Screaming, shouting,
The bellowing, the loud cry of a bull, a moose,
The roaring of a lion, that deep, hoarse tumultuous sound of the jungle
That yelp, that bark of a dog tied to a tree under a heavy rain

The infant who cries itself to sleep in these times of insurgency.
The lamentation, the grief the suffering of widows whose husbands
Die in the war
The scream of a painting now costing millions safe in the museum
The cries over spilt milk by a nagging wife to her henpecked husband
The daughter who cries out when her favorite kitten dies
The vendors who cry their wares at the flea market to fool you to buy what you
do not need
The cry to arms for all oppressed people of the world, the slogan of the
revolutions to come, the grievance of the all the people crying for redress
The government that cries down, while we, the people cry out, while we cry
havoc,
The government that cries out the promises, the dishonor of compromises,
The church to cry on, the military general who cries wolf, the people the masses
who will now cry out loud,

For the meantime
On the other hand
In the most private manner, you
Ejaculate, while she gasps for breath, whimpering for your mercy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Veggie Poetry

steamed okra
round, red, shiny tomatoes
violet onion, some white spring ones
and hot chili
with black pepper
some olive oil
and rosemary herbs for flavoring
a little salt
a little sugar
suit to your exquisite, exotic asian taste
add some more other
herbs and hot spices

mix them in a bowl
shed some tears
for summer salt
add some green lettuce
and black olives
and pickles to taste

pick some
then chew

do not swallow yet
take your time

enjoy your veggie poetry
do not take any meat
or poultry

now take your time alone
eat

RIC S. BASTASA
Veiled Woman

I understand fully
how you dislike light
through your
everyday veils

when we speak
i do not mention about sunrise
for there will be tears

the windows are always closed
the doors open only
when there is a need
for air

i know how it is
when someone you love dies
taken away by
too much light
without your permission.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vent

inflamed
mound of flesh

burst out in
the open

freeing pus

RIC S. BASTASA
Verbosities

too many words
taking the essence
of the real
thing.......like leaves of
touch me not

stay, satiate
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vers Libres

at the park
i feed pigeons
and they gather around me
and then
having consumed all the grains
they all fly away from me

it is the flapping of wings
the sounds of departures
without so much
fuss

RIC S. BASTASA
Versions

1
it is just a matter
of the solid sodium
reacting with the
chloride gas, just this
chemical romance

and no one is
to blame for this crystal
salt, this sodium
chloride

2
my goodness!
this is not just
a chemical romance

this is a relationship
this is a commitment!

3
no, this is just a matter
without my heart
this is just a matter
of my body to your
body, my flesh to
your flesh

4
no, you must know
this is someone and
another someone
someone's joy
someone's pain

this is about two
hands holding on
to love and to
cherish
this is about love
and care and
knowing and living

5
don't be foolish
i never said
i love you

6
you don't have to
i am seeing it
through the eyes of
my heart, don't lie to me
you love me too

7
i am leaving
i want to be free
i have other places to see

8
go, go where you want to be
fly away fly away

i will wait
and when you come back
i want to hear you saying
i love you too
i want to live with you
i want to die with you

we are meant for each other

9
departure, footsteps,
lights fade, and then silence.

10
an open door.
darkness gets in.

a yellow moon appears
above a lamplit window

a woman's shadow
a very quiet night

and then some stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vertebral

on a vertebral impingement
a nerve learns to shout
the meaning of pain,
recurring, excruciating,
penetrating every marrow
of the bone, sometimes
the whole arm becomes numb
like a bored man
assuming too much of the
chaos and having learned it all
assumes nothing, no responsibility,
not looking for any cure,
letting things as they are
inviting, welcoming and
accommodating, soon there
will be no problem
the guests are here
these pains in the asses...
silence is responsibility
do not inform anyone
let the pain be as casual
as walking without any limping
at the lobby of the hotel.

RIC S. BASTASA
**Very Sartrean...**

he had only one choice
and he takes it and survives
at the end

he sowed more choices
but eventually in order to live that simply
he discarded the other choices

'sacrifices, cuts and trashes' he declares.

and then she who was born with all
the fortunes and good genetic lineage
is bombarded with a million or more choices
as though she is a tiny boat
thrown into the Pacific Ocean
tossed by all the possibilities
which she had no power
to ignore

she sinks and drowns herself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vesame Mucho

there was more of us
in the knowing
that we had the wrong steps
we laughed
and it was here where the loving
strengthens
on for the next practice
forward
to the best dance	onight

RIC S. BASTASA
Vic 1

THE boat is ready
you hold the paddle
and you step on it
and take the ride
there is this peace
that the pond offers
there is this solitude
of the heart
that speaks the silence
of the water
the boat wades with
you
then you let everything
float away

beside the river bank
a tree grows
with lush leaves

you lay your head
on the side of the boat
you close your eyes
and then dream

RIC S. BASTASA
Vic 10

And to our enemies
let lightning hit their boats
let all thunders destroy their ears
let there be holes in their hulls
let there be fire on their sails
and let their boats sink
let the big waves drown
all of them

and then you pass by with wings on your feet
laughing.

RIC S. BASTASA
IN the morning
she wakes up
kisses you on the lips
caresses your chest
and then
goes back to sleep

nothing vicarious
it is real.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vic 3

There is this blue cloud
floating in your head
and your brows try to
shake it off

and then it rains
and pillows get wet
the room is cold
and the floors crack

There is this sun
glowing in your heart
and light enters
in your eyes
the eyelids lose
the shape of shutters

There is this landscape
in your mouth
with the contours
of a bay
impressing that big
smile
for the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
OUTSIDE the house
the rain pours
heavily,

nothing disturbs
the settings on the table
and on the veranda

fronting the window
is the tree filled with
fruits

you gaze at it
you hear the loud pouring of the rain

inside
the setting is still perfect
now you don't really care
about how the placements
affect you

you feel the slow movement
of the red blood cells in your wrist
the fingers relax
the heart rests upon
the closed door
of the bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vic 5

IT IS getting dark
and you do not switch on the light

at the veranda of the
second floor of this house

you lie on a couch
and start speaking to the full moon

it is the light of the moon
that caresses you into
a very sound sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
SOMETIMES i wonder
why i always take time
watching the journey
of a star

on the sea of black sky
without the noise
of its waves

silence has a way
of contaminating me with its own silence too

it heals the heart
and lulls my soul
like a baby on the cradle

the wind sings
and the chimes join
in faithful harmony

RIC S. BASTASA
ON TOP of the mountain
the fog serves as
blanket
to the naked trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
AND THIS is what i can remember
about Papa,

we go to the farm
and harvest the lanzones fruits
and put them on big kaings
and bring them all
home

nothing is for sale
the family eats together
thanking the Lord for the bounty

then upon invitation
the neighbors come and eat the fruits with us

what God gives him
he also gives in return.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vicarious

you're off to Mindoro  
on a night flight from Davao  
to Manila  

i am bound for Manila  
on an early morning flight  
for a conference  
in Faura  

we're heading finally to  
a new direction in our lives  
to start this new year  
with a lot of missions

you go for the smile  
i will try, but for the meantime i keep  
my mouth shut

i like you (i doubt if this is  
love, it is just a very sensitive issue)  
i may follow you  
and pursue you (till the end of my  
life, but when? and where?)

the hands of morality grip me by the throat  
giving me the signals  
that it really means what it says

you know what i mean.  
i still have fences to mend.

there will be a nice hello.  
hot and sizzling barbecue.

the goodbye will be as cold as  
frozen meat  
who knows, i will eat it raw.
Vicky's Valentine....

valentine's is
more like
vicks vaporub...

rub me, make me
warm,
vaporize me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Victims Of The Search For Excellence..

the eyes are always
the innocent victims of
this search....

the minds are tunnels
searching for more light...

the hands are the miners
digging for nuggets

the fingers are the slave
drivers....

the quest is always an
anonymous mistress...

the finding is not a thing
it is a manual for another journey...

the diary at the end is a blank page
there is no word which says...END.

RIC S. BASTASA
Victoria, You Lose This Time

You lose this time Victoria
And you hide yourself in a room
Like a puppy frightened by some
Firecrackers,

Is this your first time
Losing what you wish
And love?

I see you shrink in the park
On thick black sunglasses
Your fingers fidgety
Beside your hips

You were walking fast
Almost running
In steps rushing like
Elevator stairs,
Away from everyone
Who knows you,

This must be your first time,
Losing,
But you will soon recover,
Tears will dry
And the trembling will soon be over,
You will calm down
On some anti-anxiety drugs,

Relax,
you will soon recover,
But there will be more
Losses to follow,

The thing is
We cannot avoid learning this art
Of losing & recovering,

This is life, Victoria
Welcome, and learn with me,
I will lead you and tell more stories
About myself,
When I was your age
Of questioning and resistance
Like a little child
So confused.

RIC S. BASTASA
Viene Sul Mar

it feels like
hearing mother
sobbing
fearing that father
must be gone

into the forest my
mind like a black bird
is probing
hoping to find something
truthful
no matter how sad
what counts
is the arrival at what
must be said
sternly

into the sea, back to its
arms
i have to be a whale again
sending songs
to earth's unknown
edge...

RIC S. BASTASA
Viewing The New Day

as you begin to open the shutters
letting light in
letting them land on that soft white pillow
that which comforted your doubts
last night

become interested on the sparrows
that dance on the twigs of the tree fronting you
lush green leaves
a new nest, light of the sun caressing the barks
dews diminishing in numbers
on a time for surrender

listen to the usual sounds of the day
exaggerate, sensitize, imagine
those that are not there but must satiate our sense of journey
the excitement is here
when finally the lover is gone for another absence
when your heart finds your hands
cressing your body again
on this tender moment
of another solitude.

RIC S. BASTASA
Viewing The World After A Calamity

when you step out the door
the rain stops

you walk avoiding the patches
of water

the trees are still in their
solitude

the wings are cautious
even in the making of its whispers

the skies are clear, white
stainless

the sun shines moderately
upon the cold pavement

you climb a mountain and sits
on a rock

from the top you see
how beautiful is this world still

after a storm after a 6.9 quake
if it ends as they predict

surely you will always miss it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Views From Here....

the afternoon sun
leaves its last light cast upon the dusty leaves of the mango tree

the sea is calm and from a distance it hardly moves
as though it has given all its waves away to the passing winds

a red truck parks beside a cemented fence
below it so much of gravel and unwanted fragments of rocks

as i finish another work deciding upon the
liberty of this man wrongfully accused

of a crime which he denies as always
as not having committed it

i am pondering now how to see the truth beyond all these views.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vincent Van Gogh

when Vincent
cut off his ear and
gave it to the
prostitute
he was not
at all selfish
and stupid

he was kind enough
to leave the other
ear
attached

he's still one great
artist....

RIC S. BASTASA
Vine

on a sunny day
the vine
on its tendrils carefully
cling
on the trellis
like some fingers
holding
a prisoner
in his jail

i look up
and i see some stars
i close my eyes
and you are always here

RIC S. BASTASA
A poem is considered vintage if it was made from 1919 towards the end of 1930.

However, there is debate on the cut-off of the vintage period. The British consider 1930 as the cut-off, while Americans prefer the year 1925, as defined by the Classic Poem Club of America.

There are people who think that the vintage period overlaps the classic period, while others consider the beginning of World War II as the cut-off date for the vintage period.

Most of the poems written during this period are more practical and convenient.

Metaphors such as radio and heating were introduced while the introduction of antifreeze has allowed water-cooled poems to be useful all year round.

A much more reliable four-wheel poem system using a foot pedal and hydraulically-actuated figure of speech were also introduced in this period. Fuel quatrain rating, which allowed comparison between sonnets, and the brief haiku, was among the innovations in this period as well.

RIC S. BASTASA
at this time
of uncertainty
when the head is bald
when the pain cannot be pointed where
when the locks of hair
rests on weary pillows
we begin to know
what living is: it is today, not tomorrow
not before this
not long after that
it is the word between my lips
my air inside my mouth
the breath in my nostrils
it is the uneasiness in my fingers
it is the closure of my
eyelids
today viola
life is life, there is no other
the promises fall out
from their hearts
the warriors in us
step out from the chariots
the wings on our feet
become skins
and callous harshness
today viola
i embraced the day
because there is no other
actually.

RIC S. BASTASA
Violating The Tradition Of The Village

it is the custom of
this village

we have to visit the
dead
console the bereaved
and bring the flowers
and offer the prayers

my wife complains
there are five who are dead now

but i do not really bother
i ask her: when i go there
shall they wake up and
live again?

RIC S. BASTASA
Violin

a voice
an incredible soaring ability
incredible emotions.

a pet with a cuddly
and affectionate feeling
she was a child

a partner
in the music business
the storm
and
red hot
vanessa mae

RIC S. BASTASA
Violin In Tokyo

comes a blue
butterfly in this garden
without leaves

neither buds
as they refuse to bloom
into flowers of

May how come how daring
shall this blue butterfly
turn into a tail of
a dragon turning itself into
the passive
tendrils of cadena de amor
vines
along the rusty trellis to
one of the fences of
an old city where

imagination turn fools into
red dotted
coy kois silenced in the
smallness of
the pond

this city was bombed
and all the dead children and
women
offered in the name
of peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
Virgen La Purissima

virgen la purisima
virgin most pure
a family icon brought from the rocky island of bohol
to the promised land of mindanao
by my great, great ancestors
on a wooden sail
facing the rough seas
for nights and nights
as they all ran away from the their oppressors
who compelled them to make those big churches
of rocks and lime
using their free labor
or face death,

or face the drowning death of the uncertain seas
if luck did not side with them
if faith they did not have

they arrived on this island of mindanao
and cleared the forest to
build their farms

they married
and built their houses
and farmed
and marked their territories

that was a hundred years ago
the family still lives
the tradition alive
the children and grandchildren and greatgrandchildren
had since multiplied like the sands of the sea
and they all prayed
and they still prayed
with heads bowed, kneeling
in silence, in song, in novenas, in dance,
in merrymakings where food is shared
where a new child's name is added
to the list of this huge family tree
where everyone has a name
and a responsibility
for centuries
mother mary most pure
virgin most pure
virgin la purisima
you have showered this family with intercession
some blessings from God
the protection from the rough seas
the strength of the wooden sails
which once sailed from Bohol
on that dark night
and for more dark nights
when there was no light seen ahead
when there was no hope of finding land
it was you
most dear mother
mother pure
virgen la purisima
our Dear Mother Mary, Mother of God
Who interceded for Light
Who gave the direction
For this clan to survive
to find land and to find anchor of its restlessnes
We are here again, and as always
Praying for your guidance and protection.

RIC S. BASTASA
Virgin Flowers Of May

virgin flowers of May
late for the showers of April
still dreaming of the white bouquets of June
till the carols of December ring
too early for buds of January
but still on time
for valentine's day

RIC S. BASTASA
Virile Male Image

holding his shovel
upside down
he pulls his pants
up without yet
zippering in what
is in there,

he is half naked
looking around where
to bury next his
sacred tool.

RIC S. BASTASA
Virtue

unsaid
but well done.

RIC S. BASTASA
Visiting Hiroshima

1> Peace Memorial Museum.

two buildings
the museum surveys the history of Hiroshima
and the advent of the nuclear bomb.
main focus August 6; the dropping of the bomb
and its outcome in human suffering

personally it upset me

aph for the A-Bomb Victims

Between the Museum
and the A-Bomb Dome
an arched tomb
for those who died
because
initial blast
and then
of exposure to radiation

3. The Register

Below the arch is a stone chest
holding a register
of these names,

there
are over 220,000

RIC S. BASTASA
Visiting Something Previous

you take a trip
back to the place where meaning was once
there. An empty room that you left.
Now someone lives there and he does not know your name,
there will be a brief introduction
of who you are and what you do for a living
and he will ask why you have come back
you say that you are just passing by
you are looking for the word
the spark in your heart
somewhere on the study table
or on the book shelf
a poem, some little notes on the wall,
there is nothing there anymore
exempt the scent of the nearby comfort room
beside your room
that stink that made you leave
it was that which made you pass by
as you were telling the new tenant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Visiting The Wake Of My Teacher

today i visit the wake of
a 98-year old
retired school teacher

i watch her face inside the coffin
she is very peaceful

i begin to remember
when i was once her grade 3 pupil
in that old Miputak Elementary
School

she believed in me
and that is what made me today

she made me believe in myself
and that made her the best person in the world for me

she will not die
she is living in my memory

goodbye dear teacher
you have done your job too well.

RIC S. BASTASA
Visitors

They visit you sometimes
Emptiness’ entourage stares at you
With faces of
Blank walls and slimy snake hands

They bite
But you do not really die
Though you feel a little numb
Irritated

So you think of that as something
Only scary,

Just like ennui slumping
On an old hunchback’s body
Touching your face and squeezes
You to some semblances of
Pain,

But you are not
Even scared a little bit,
You learn as early as a
Naughty school boy, that

These two and others more
Visiting you, lots of other shapes
And other weird forms
Fire trees burning, and
Sea breeze with spikes
And grenade fruits hanging
Machine gun fences and
Plum dusks and grey metallic
Twilights & fire breathing dragons
Spitting bullets,
Soon,

By the constancy of
Their visits, they, after all
Are not that scary or damaging to you
Any more, than you
Scaring them with some of
Your fits and
Seizures

As always they come without
Warning and they look at you
With their broken shapes and
Twisted faces, sometimes

Louder in their
Inventions of noise
And psychedelic hysteric
And fanged

And horned
Tailed and tasseled
You look at all of them so tired
Turn

To another side of your bed
Pull a blanket to your head
Wiggle a little bit, and slump
Your legs on a bigger pillow
With

Now, your back at them,
You ultimately
Don’t give a damn, you’re tired of
These scary boring visitors
Uninvited and rude
Then comes the time
Snubbing,
You become rude like them

“Go away, leave me alone! ” you mumble

Sound sleep steps in
Your room, the weird
Visitors can harm no more,
And they leave, or if they stay
So what
You are very tired and so used to all their bearings.

“Who scares? ”
nobody, anymore, after all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vivaldi Early Morning

vivaldi
i am telling you
that finally
i am going
to New York
to feel what
sleepless nights
are all about
in that city....

RIC S. BASTASA
Vivaldi On Two Mandolins

as it starts to rain
on the greenfields
of this rural town
the frogs are busy
dancing on the pond
without their tutus

seemingly the
synchronized
swimmers are
not yet ready

RIC S. BASTASA
Vivaldi, Concerto For Flute

Children playing on a green playground
Mothers watching
Closely watching
The faces of children
Smiling

Cool air
Green leaves brown leaves yellow leaves
Soft wind
Leaves falling down to the slow soft wind

Children running
Chasing each other
They are playing

A mother feels the soft wind
Cool air
And sees the trickles of leaves
Blending green brown yellow

With sunshine as canvass
Nature and human figures of mothers and children
Blending
Amazing
What a beautiful painting has God
In quick short brushes
Effortlessly with perfect strokes did make

The frame is laughter of children.

I am taking the whole picture for home.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vivid Images

five brown wrinkled fingers
coming out from an arm of age
ten in all
when in loneliness i lay down on a rock
and count the years
and months
and the toes are added and the tongue
forms a word from my thorax
i
love
myself

that is the declaration of my being
i stand and raise my arms to embrace the
morning sun
i look down
and see a worm
singing
its loneliness too

the leaves are falling
like my hair

the fingernails demand
the cutting of extremes

the silence of the night
sews my lips
seals my mouth

i remember mama
and i take an old picture where she is too young
and beautiful

things are always moving like an age
like a helpless wrinkle

what do i learn from this world:
nihilist, i leave everything as is
no explanations
just a signal that we are moving forward
and there shall be stopping
until the last breath is
given

off.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Vivien, This Looks Like Something The Lord Made.'

genius
does not have the fence
of color

doctorates
are not books
perfect sutures
are not
names

i cried a river
when i first saw
it

how vivien hid
from the palms
as bartender
as blalock
speaks about
his success
in his heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Vocal Chords.....

your eloquence
has not served its
purpose

the forest fire is
not stopping
waters did not spring
from rocks

your mastery of the
law has not saved those
fated to die
has not inspired those
who were ordered
to continue living

you erudite speaker
what word is surgical
what sentence is
livable? what have you
to make a silent city?

we have enough of you
soon we shall pass a
law to abolish you
and make us free from the
cudgels of your
well chosen craft your
filtered words
your vocal chords....

RIC S. BASTASA
Volcanic Silence

dr the fact is that
no one reads you.
the persistent fact
is that you are
unstopable, you keep
on writing still.
most of the hours
are written, not much
is orally said. There
are no friends anyway.
Even in the market
or at the bus station.
the silly silence seeps
into your system.
the fact is that you
are hardheaded. What
do you get in return
for all these writing?
the fact is you keep
it to yourself, and like
a rain you keep on pouring
not knowing that soon
you will be causing a flood
and even a destruction
for those who are not
reading, or not listening
at all.

you are blind now to the
world
your eyes are looking
within you.
everything is confined
and contained.
restraints are
everywhere.

within the breasts of
your women
are migrating birds
singing for themselves
only.

within your heart is
the selfishness that
you have learned.
a seed turning into
a tree with roots
deep, deep into
your lungs, your gut.

the fact is i am
like you. And the fact is
the world is getting
to be like you.
looking within and becoming
too heavy.
the fire within, and this
volcanic silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Volenti Non Fit Injuriae

did you not let me enter
your door when i simply pass by
looking for my
destiny, did you not call my name
when i was thinking of someone else
that one so beautiful and yet
did so much harm
to my heart
and then you kiss me when i was drunk
with pain
promising to heal my wounds
and then after so many years
when i was awakened from such stupor
i took the courage of telling you
there was never a pint
of love
never, never, never and then you ran away
and jumped into the raging river

shall i be then be made responsible for such
a true loveless locomotion?

RIC S. BASTASA
Voluptuous Magnificence

if only they have seen your loneliness
when they have all gone to their respective
settlements,
how you too settle for what your hand
can hold and rub
alone,

in voluptuous magnificence
letting out what you let go

in such selfish sensualities

RIC S. BASTASA
at a certain point
what happens is that

i take too much of everything
so i may savor this art

of vomiting things
all things

without exception
love and hate and

indifference, things that i
embrace like i love all of them

and things that finally
bore the heart and spoil the soul

i give them all up
and wish to go back to the start

where i am full again
by being empty-handed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Vomit Your Love

try learning to vomit
love
white foams coming out
from your mouth
some green
phlegm
excluded from your system

and then you will know
it is true love
when you decide
to eat them
all again

you swallow your pride
you take in
what you have taken out
perhaps
you were reckless
perhaps
your were imprudent
on some
indiscretions beyond your control

now you want
to take in
to be back
to where you think
you were once

happy and determined and settled
and stable like a post
a pillar

a tongue finally resting
within the walls of your teeth within the strong confines
of your mouth

in comfortable silence
Wa Ka Nako Basola Sa Pagpangahulog Sa Akong Buhok

gibasol nako
ang sudlay sa pagpangahulog sa akong buhok

basin sab ang
kaisog sa shampoo o kaha ba ang
kapalpakan sa
conditioner

sunod ayaw nag palit anang
baratohon, ha?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wacky

I am 52, reserved, refined, and serious.

i am more of a teddy bear
in your cabinet

but when you said 'go wacky'

like the rest i jumped
and stretched my arms

forgot the teddy bear in me

and well, i was wacky
and wants to be wacky

for once. But tomorrow
i want you to do the same

'shout at me, GO wacky! ! '

i guess at 52 i can still
jump a hundred times

but how about you,
Mr.70? Can you go

wacky too? How about you Ms. Broken Heart

Ms. Forlorn, Mr. Insolvent
Mrs. Unpaid Credit Card

Mr. Failure, Ms. Cauldron
Mr and Mrs. Casserole
Do you like to go wacky too?

at any rate,...hmm
'what is wacky?'

RIC S. BASTASA
there are so many things that attract us
when we are alone our skin begins to nibble
we try not to be noticed, some taboos still exist
things that we think can do more harm to our hair
they had been falling like shreds of light on sunsets
when we speak we do not really pay attention to words
our eyes look beyond the garden fusing with a horizon
that marks a line between the past and present
sometimes i keep looking for the future like something
that i do not really believe that it exists
sexists, so many of them around us but we always miss
its real definition, we grapple for what we think is reality
you hint that it must not be something destructive as
unwanted fire in the other side of the room other than the kitchen
that it must be as smooth as the edge of a happy thought
as constructive as a plane that is so sharp cutting some
rough edges of the unwanted wood for the cabinet
somehow i like to write in-order to mislead you
guessing that this is the only thing that may give birth
to an interest in life, to drive you away from a disaster of sleep,
to make you skip the harsh trees along the road that draw mishaps
people do love what they fail to understand
equating it with mystery, with the selves that they want to delete
not knowing that it cannot be, because it simply can't be.

a stone no matter how extraordinary at the end
becomes the best sculpture carried by the soldiers of the emperor
to become the centerpiece of the empress' garden.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wait

wait.
a word.
wait.
sorry.
gtg.

RIC S. BASTASA
you always tell
me to wait a second
because there is
something that
you forget and you
want to remember
it again
it is only when we
talk
when you remember
it is only when we
see each other
again
that you begin to
forget
and when i am gone
you say
yes you remember
and tell me
with a sense of cruelty
that it is not you
that it is not me
but someone else
someone so far away
hidden by the
blanket of time
something that you have
yet to understand
because in a second
as i wait
you again forget

we have become old
we are not perfect we are
not eternal
do not forget
we are just human
Wait For Years Before You Pass A Place Again

wait for years before you
pass a place again

what used to be a seed
has become a tree

the vacant place has grown
too many houses

the children have married and
hold the hands of their children too

you remember now
the years that pass like a dream

when you wake up
it is totally a strange place

you look at your feet
as ashes of memories

and you wish for now
that everything be better forgotten

the heart is full
and it cannot carry something more

love has become a burden
families merely black and white pictures
mirror faces fade, promises just air,

and you hear again
the falling of sands, soft and
too cruel.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting

I wait for the cogon door
To lay your name on the floor

After a time you transform into a cloud
wearing that crimson shroud

you like to gleam
Like my new dream

Regally dressed in my sleep
As I fathom words so deep

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting And Waiting Still.....

at the last
minute
we are still
what we
are

we keep
on writing for free
and you read
us for free

it does not
really matter
we always lose
anyway

what winning shall
we remember?
losers, losers
we are and will always
be losers

not sore anyway,
be keep on losing and
dying

much as we welcome
death
the irony is,

it does not come
much as we expect
its entertainment
the reverse is
true, it is getting
cheap

and illusory, and
so we keep on writing
losing, and
waiting.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For Someone

you arrive too early on the tryst
a room with a number that you do not tell to anyone
thirty minutes
you have already brushed your teeth
and taken a bath and sprayed musk oil perfume
all over your body
your heart beats
desire and you pretend the love is here
you turn off your cell phone
you do not want to be disturbed on this hour of the day
on this tryst

you hear something coming near your door
you peep at the hole if
fulfillment has come

it is just this gray cat looking perhaps for its fish.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Light

time is running wild
and fast
my heart is beating like
a drum of
the natives

the sands are consuming
their own
grains

i do not know where is the
door

all windows are closed and it is very dark

it is a night without stars

it is a roof without a leak for rain

time is jumping to another
side

light is coming and
i have a hint where i must go
for now

i am in complete
ignorance
about what happens next

and this is
the happiest part of my life

uncertainty in the darkness of my night
waiting for the light.
Waiting For The Madman

silence has been
waiting for the madman to sleep.
it has been
so disturbed,
distressed
with so much noise
for nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Metal Ride....

At a certain age, a certain point, 
one gives up what is important 
what was inherited 
what was learned,

now everything is taken for granted, 
if they come, they must go 
if they arrive they must leave 
if something really important is being raised 
we simply nod, and if there is a disagreement 
we also shake our heads, 
i am telling you this the gateway to absurdity, 
the lounge of all honesty 
we sip tea, we sit cool, we look by the window 
we see metal wings, we wait for the final call, 
we show our boarding passes, 
without a word, we take our ride

back to nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Rain

dead grass
cracking face of the earth
cinder stones
parched paths
thatched roof of the house
at the foot of
the tired body of the hills
dried creeks
rivers that run dry
wells without
drops of water left
hands in prayed
angel without wings
all these chant in prayer
waiting for
the first rain after a long drought
of summer

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Results

did the lump grown bigger?
what could be the cause of this?
what is next to do?
shall we just go home
and then do nothing,

these are the questions of
another woman who is stricken with cancer

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Right Time

up all night too
i wrote something too personal for you
i could not find
the best metaphor for it
and so
i went literally
on the
consonants of my
grappling

the following morning
i look for
beauty

there is none
and so i deleted it

there is no sense
of the divine

there is only that
mundane grasshopper

singing under the sun
nothing about the sacrifices of the ants

or the redeeming quality
of the turtle

i am not impressed at all
about what i am

i am waiting for the right time
to find the reason why i must

open and bloom
why i should not take the pain some more

in the tightness of my
bud.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting For The Time That I Have No More To Say

i am simply waiting
for the time when i have nothing anymore
to say and
then i will just sit there
in the corner looking at the sun
that will no longer rise or set,
not
really static,
it simply passes,
as though nothing happens.

and
when i have nothing more to say
it simply means,
goodbye,
i have freed myself
at last,
from the bondage
of speech from
the oppression
of words,
from the anxiety
of the syllable,
from the demands
of certain
letters to finally form
a word,
from the
mandate of a blank slate
searching for
its own meaning
in whatever i speak.
and write

RIC S. BASTASA
Waiting.....And Waiting....

he writes with
a heavy heart
and it is shown
how his words are
pulling him to
the ground, like
ripe rice grains
pulling the stalk
towards the mud in
the paddies.

from a distance
however he is a mole.
and farther away
he is dust, and as
we walk farther, he is
nothing.

he still writes with
a heavy heart.
still honestly, hoping
that someday one may
go nearer, view him with
pity and make him
die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waking Eyes

you cannot name
what does not exist out there

you will never know
what is inside: the storms that you cannot fully feel
because there is no name yet still to call it
the rage within that you write about
but which none of them has ever seen

you thrive on this
solitary confinement of a soul
which they read in every word you say
but which they discuss with myriad interpretations

they cut one head of your dragons
another one grows
but you still master all these
to every pill that tames the wildness of your waking eyes.
Waking Up

waking up...
waking up for the music...

music, wake up, wake up.
listen to the music waking up
from a deep sleep.
sleep wake up.
listen.
music. wake up. up. up. up.
music, sleep.
waking up to the music
lullaby, mother, it is still nighttime
in your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waking Up At 3: 19 A.M.

hungry and thirsty
i am awakened
i switch on the light
and look at my watch
it is 3: 19 a.m and i
am feeling the
unholiness of the hour

hungry and thirsty
i look for food and water

for how long shall i conceal
the truth of my hunger and thirst?

it is not the water and the
sandwich
it is my soul
hungry and thirsty for
God

deep within i am moving
away
like a ship in the middle
of a storm
yet not wanting an anchor
not wanting an island
even a shadow
of the shore

for when will this hunger
and thirst stop
i do not not really know
perhaps
God shall soon
tell me

again about Job.
Waking Up Early This Morning

i do not switch on
the table light
as i leave your rested body
on the marital bed
i go to the other side
of the structure
wandering what to do next
with all these
mess.

thinking and thinking
what if
i do not come back anymore
what if there are no more
mornings for me
what if
i lose this sense of balance
and collapse
without you
knowing what i really feel

damn, damn, damn
rivers restrained

repaint the masks and leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waking Up One Day...

it must be funny &
ironic, for all the days of my life,
my mind acts like a sponge
absorbing all
about you: the past, the present
and the future, all but
ghosts,
my Christmases have all
been rags,
and valentines days kitchen
sinks,
all the while i am sinking to the
bottom of the madness
of oceanfloors
when you are there cruising
enjoying the horizons, the crushing of the glaciers,
snow bears catching fish,
eskimos welcoming you
in a party somewhere in the
farthest pole

and then i wake up and begin to sew
a tattered piece of my shirt
on needle new on golden threads
hot tea on my side
black forest cake
on the table.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waking Up Too Early One Morning

when i wake up today
too early this morning
when the cocks still crow
and the lizards still make the usual sound
as though saying
this world is okay yet my heart still
beats this ticking clock of
pain longing for love this thing that until now
i do not really understand
we had sex last night and we slept
and had our own sweet dreams
in fantasy land

there is still this emptiness that carries me back to you
and i ask: Who are you? Are you God?
Is it you?

There is this loneliness despite
the sunshine and the little rain of hope
that trickles like a caress of thin air
so cool in the garden out there

There is this doubt about the source of the voices
from within
this conscience which has a mouth and knows
how to speak the language
of truth

Have i forgotten you? Have you forgotten me?
Such questions
shall be my breakfast for this morning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waking Up With Pain In My Head

a pain in my head
wakes me up

reminds me of
my dream last night

falling from the sky
like a meteor

suddenly hitting the
ground

breaking and i see that face
'twas me

how can that be?
how can someone fall
and crash so hard and stil find

its own face
whole

its body
whole

its mind
whole

its spirit
so unbroken?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wala Daw Tay Buot Pa. Kon Maghisgot Ug Gugma

. naulaw ko kaniadtong
misayaw kog lambada
diha nimo. Pasko kadto
unya ang imong gisuot
binurdahan nga blouse.
Itom akong karsones
unya puti ang polo.
Gisura ko nga murag
si jose rizal. Unya ikaw
kuno ang akong josephine
bracken. Abi mo dunay
kagilok ang gibati sa
akong ilok, labi na adtong
gihapohap sa akong mga
kamot ang imong bukton.

duna tay larawan nga
akong gitagoan. Black
and White. glossy, unya
ang kilid gikitkitan na
sa ok-ok nga seguro
wala nahilo sa camphor
nga akong gibutang didto
sa aparador ni Tatay.

wala pa daw tay buot
kon maghisgot ug gugma.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wala Kaila Ang Kalibotan Kon Unsa Ang Kasakit

ngano kaha nga
hayahay man ang
pamati bisan ikaw
lang ang anaa
naghandom sa mga
milabay nga sakit
pa kaayo
apan kadtong dakong
bukid nga imong
giatubang nga
nag-ambo sa lapad
kaayong dagat
dayon gipayongan
sa mga panganod
mora mag nakaluag
sa imong dughan
unya ang hugot
kaayo nimong kwelyo
wala na
naghatag og
kahasol kanimo

nakita mo ang nawong
sa kalibotan
malinawon gihapon
wala kaila kon unsa
ang kasakit

RIC S. BASTASA
Wala Ko Damha Ang Ulan Sa Oktubre

Ang ulan sa Oktobre wala damha apan
miabot kini. Mabisibis sa sagbot
nga dugay rang nangalaya,
nangluod. Midapig na gani kini
sa hulaw ug andam na
nga modawat sa pagkawala
sa iyang mga dahon nga gitayhop
sa hangin sa kasadpan

Miabot ang ulan sa Oktobre.
Hinay. Nipis. Mapailubon. Mihimas
sa aping sa yuta. Misubay
sa mga ugat sa napiang nga
mga kahoy. Mihilot sa nabali nga
mga sanga sa mangga ug santol.
Mihapuhap sa mga bulak
sa antulanga ug mga pangadlaw.

Miawit kini sa usa ka pag-ampo.
Mialam-alam sa usa ka gugmang pakyas.
Miyubit sa mga pulong kabahin
sa pag-antos sa likod sa mga kapa
sa itom nga mga panganod.

Nagpaila ang ulan
sa iyang tinood nga ngalan. Luha
nga dugay na nga nagpahipi sa aping
sa langit. Siya unya ang suba
nga mohatud nato didto
sa dagat, sa kagawasan, ngadto
sa kamatuoran, ngadto
sa imong kaugalingon. Balik
sa panganod. Sa langit. Sa yuta.
Sa bulak. Sa mga sanga
nga nangasumpay sa mga gugma
nga misaad nga dili na mapakyas.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wala Sa Wali

Kinsang paria
ang gaingon nga ang mga anghel
walay otin? Tan-awa ra god.
Naunsa ba kining ilang
gipangtudlo nato.
Dili man kumpleto.

Nakapangutana
ang usa ka sikat nga pintor
nga miampo sa Diyos
sa Kamatuoran. Ug isip protesta
anang mga bakak ug kakulangon
sa gipangtudlo sa simbahan,
nagdebuho siya og usa ka pak-an
nga gahawid sa iyang lagay
aron ipakita niya kon unsaon ba
ang pagpangihi sa Kamatuoran.

Ambot kon unsay tinuod.
Ako igo lang tighatod.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walay Mga Ulo

dimalas ka
wala mitoo ang mga langgam
ang mga hulmigas anaa
nagpadayon
sa paghakot sa ilang
pagkaon

patas lang
nakit-an sab kas bata nga
di kamaong mamakak
naglakaw ka
sama nako nga wala nay
ulo

RIC S. BASTASA
Walk Down The Street Of Life

walk down the street
like a good child
walk and walk
like you are
enjoying every
walk
in this road of life
where you
do not know
where you
are going
and where
you are
from
but deep inside
you
like a good child
you always
have a sense
of home
a sense of
direction

in you
the good child
time does not
exist
and the world
is nothing
but a place
lived
for a moment

nothing permanent
nothing worth staying really

RIC S. BASTASA
Walk The Moment Enjoy The Talk.

beneath us
magma

we are on
the surface

we think
life is earth

above us
skies

beyond skies
space

everything moves
and we feel it

how we live
is simple

walk the moment
enjoy the talk

sip coffee
crack a cookie

sleep in a room
soundly

let all worry
be gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
where do you live?
i ask him

' I live there' he says,

pointing to a far place
it is a greenery, a forest opaque to the mist,
there is a path that leads there
on bare feet, and without any burden
to carry on
your back,

he says he is an honest man
and shall live with it for many years to come

he says he comes from a family of honest genealogy
and he thrives on simple living and word of honor

his face has a very gentle disposition
like that of the
common lamb
his words are soft
like a rose that you enclose with your hand

before he left for his intended journey
i had a bowl of rice and a
dried fish in my kitchen

i almost believe him
until my bowl of rice
and dried fish are all gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Along The Halls Of The City Hall

i like it when
i walk alone
along the hallway
of this city hall
when no one minds me
and i mind no one
when i become an island
not because i am aloof
and selfish
but i just want to have my own
peace in this little
independence

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking And Fishing

an early morning walk is like
a fishing venture where you sail with your boat alone on the waters
you wait and some ripples come
and then you remember

you catch fish, you stumble upon a stone
you take hold of each, and then the ripples are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Back Home

walking back home
this summer

left and right

moments of pain
and happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Down The Stairs

she walks down the stairs
on a symbolism of
relinquishing power
he holds her arms
and guides her to her
perdition

such is our society
the losers of the past
shall spend their last term
in jail
and the same prosecutors
become their freedom fighters
what they take in
they take out in return

such is this society all made up
of plastic sheets

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking In The Rain With You

with you
walking in the rain
shall turn to singing
and dancing
and playing with the rain
we get wet
of course, and even off course,
we forget what home is
or what the sun is all about
drops of rain to our lips
like bunch of grapes
or strawberries,
we go jumping and hopping
and the shades under the trees
do not matter anymore

and then i ask, shall we go naked this time
under the rain?
you smile, for now, you are prepared
for freedom, for love, for truth,

for the coldness, and the birth of our spirit,
and the death
of our bodies, how sad, and oh, did i not tell you

that this is so beautiful to
think on a second

thought, hands clasped, then we part, and go our own ways,
the rain stopped, and we grope for deeper thoughts

to the sound of the rushing waters, where to?

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Is A Way To Trap Some Fireflies Of Wisdom

some thoughts arrive
when you are away busily
walking down the trail
somewhere in cogon

the trees are lining the trail
and the air is pretty cool
as the ferns sway their bodies
to the eddies of the winds

somehow you must believe
that walking is a way to trap
some fireflies of wisdom that
come once in a while during
the nights of your life.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking On A Tight Wire

upon the urging of his girl
he walks on a tight wire
to prove his love for her

the girl watches him
as he balances himself
on the tight wire
from one coconut tree
to another

he finally reaches the other side
without much effort
and when the task is over
she comes and kisses
him on his cheek & lips

if you were only there
you would have laughed the
way the task was done

the tight wire is just
laid an inch on top of the soil

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking On Top Of The Cinders

the secret to this walk
not to hurt
the soles of your feet:

walk casually and look
forward
do not push your weight
do not look down
or behind you
do not mind as others
watch
looking for the pain
in your face

just like love
concerned only with loving
not minding the pain
just the thrill
and the burning fire
within

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Out

i like your way of telling me about yourself this morning.
you walk out of your job and you are saying
now you are free

i know the feeling
when i first had my freedom

i faced my superiors
looked at them straight in the eye
and i told them

i quit.
i turned my back at them
i took the last nine yards
and slammed the door at their faces

like a bird i flew away
i did not look back i did not have any regret

i am brave, i praise myself.
i am happy and free and live in simplicity.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking The Baby Early Morning

early morning when the sun
shines mildly still behind the
green trees when the dew
still hangs on the blades of
the grass when the road is
still wet with the rain last
night

it is at this moment when
you walk the baby and you
hold his hand and you hear
him giggle

such a lovely picture of love
and a new beginning.......
Walking The Truth...
	his we cannot do
otherwise
all dressed in white
as we run
through the grasses
of reminiscences....

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Through Life

at four o'clock in the morning
you wake up and begin to take
your walk with life

the wind is cold and the path
is rocky and you are walking on
bare feet
your clothes are useless

you go on not minding
the thin thread of life that
you are treading upon
you hear the screams of those
who fall recently into that
abyss of oblivion
you are not disturbed
you already know what is happening

if you fall you say that is natural
it is not bad luck
if you don't that is alright & understandable
for the time being
neither is it good luck

it is at this moment of your life
when you say yes to everything
you ask yourself for once
if you have the right to say no

you don't have really.
they tell you to move on
and you ask them
where to?

there is no answer. Their silence
confirms too, their search, their own isolation.
their unloving distance

it is at this moment that you feel so strong
because now, you are all alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walking Under The Morning Sun

the trees line up to you
like you are a very important man
the sun lights your
way
like you are a celebrity
the winds of fortune sings you
your favorite song
your thoughts prop up
like mushrooms
the path unfolds before you
you walk on your feet
with a very personalized dignity
in this walk
all the grass look up to you
their lord
all the bushes talk about you
their anonymous
master
their guest uninvited
the stones as usual are silent
keenly observing
what happens next
and how long will you last
in this monotonous
Monday.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walky Talky

we take a walk
walky talky
hanky panky

RIC S. BASTASA
Wall And Wall And Wall Upon A Wall

This is my world
And I live here alone
Thick with walls
Walled with walls
Now I am at last
Untouched
By your unwashed hands
Now at last
I cannot see
I cannot hear
You and your impurities.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wall To Another Wall

wall to another
wall

two pillars that
must not get too close

our feelings, our fleeing,
each as strong as the
other

so that this house of
love may
not fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wall To Wall.........

we were together
but still far apart

this situation never
change
and it will not change
us again

we are back into the
reality of our situation
which upon acceptance
sets us both free

into the arms of another
we find at last what repulses us
and like some thrown stones
we find the turning point

back into each others' arms
we ask: what is the next choice?
and we look at each others' eyes
concluding: there is none.

back to living now, this is
the house.
back to our reality: this is
what we are.

make me coffee, bring it to me
sit beside me, we talk
about anything else under the
sun.

you see, we have no other.
you must feel, how is it just to be
us, and nobody else.

soul mates. our bodies have parted.
it was not the kiss which bound us.
feel me. you are also another stone
by now. the winds are cold, but we

are here for each other. wall to wall.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wallflowers

count the wallflowers? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6... you can't count these wallflowers

they stick their lives on walls
not letting go
their deepest desires
lying on their teeth
covering their faces with
thick veils
and hats and masks
heavily tinted sunglasses at noon
and

funny, even at nighttime
at the bars
their bodies wrapped with leather
and wool

they do not dance with life
they fear taking the wrong step
or be laughed at
they are the spectators of the show
they say they are enjoying it somehow

no, they are stuffed toys,
on their comfort cabinets.

RIC S. BASTASA
Walls

I know your name from what they are telling me.
They say that cruelty is born. That cruelty has a tendency to stay.
It is you. They mention the name of your husband. He died with a forlorn heart.
It is you. They say you never mentioned his name. Not even once. You are cruel.

We meet today in this room. I am not afraid. I am prepared. I will not be fooled when you call me. You mention my name. You appear sweet. Like some candy bar. I cannot be fooled.
I tell myself. I am a wall. I am inside a very thick wall. I cannot hear you.
I do not wish to be a part of you. No matter how sweet you call my name.

They say that cruelty repeats itself. And that I can be a fool sometimes. I am a wall. I do not believe this to happen to myself too.

You look at me. I am about to leave.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waltz

I develop’d into a healthy,
strong youth (grew too fast,
though, was nearly as big as a man at 15 or 16.
Our family at this period moved back to the country,
my dear mother very ill for a long time,
but recover’d.
All these years I was down
Manawan more or less every summer,
now east, now west,
sometimes months at a stretch.

At 16,17, and so on,
was fond of debating societies,
and had an active membership with them,
off and on,
in Dipolog and one or two towns
on the province.

A most omnivorous novel-reader,
these and later years,
devour’d everything I could get.
Fond of the theatre,
also, in Ateneo de Manila
went whenever I could -
sometimes witnessing
fine performances.

in 1991 work’d as credit chief
in a national bank, moved to
legal circles, in many cities

Then, when little more than thirty,
and for a while afterwards,
got to teaching law schools
down in the south, in some islands
and travelled well
given the chance

This latter I consider one of my best experiences
and deepest lessons in human nature
behind the scenes,
and in the masses.

I started and publish'd some of my works
in my native town, Katipunan
. Then returning to the city,
work'd on as a judge
and writer,
mostly prose,
but an occasional shy at

poetry, till today

waltzing with life

RIC S. BASTASA
Wander....

sailing in space
gathering stars

walking under
the trees
gazing on fallen
leaves

the mind does all
these
and the heart lies
silent on the nest
of peace

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanderer's Lust After Midnight

exciting, mouth watering
hot and nameless, no strings attached,
no asking about backgrounds,
no numbers, no words,
nothing to stare, there is worship
and no singing, just silence and
temperamental moans, and grasps
and gasps, no buts no ifs,
it's a plain hurry, a deal,
sign languages as simple as
a nod, and a thumbs down,
desire at its peak, lots of stripping
dressing and undressing, and
opening and closing, at the park
or at the corner of this dark building
they say it's the thrill and the frill
the price does not matter.
at twilight, everyone turn to leave.

i have never been there.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanderlust By Tita Lacambra Ayala, 1998

A formal formlessness
provinces of thought
denied due process
lines tied up in knots
recurring in dawn's wet trees

somehow also
landscapes are empty
full of water yesterday's
footprints the clouds
in them

how can you believe
you are not found
having lost footing
to the elements
splintered
everywhere you look

and you must hold
your breath
and keep away
from cloistered ravines

it will be raining when you
get home
there will be lights
in the windows

RIC S. BASTASA
Want

he wants
or at least wishes
that everyone in the family
be intelligent,
but he knows, of course, this is
not possible at all,
some come out as morons
others turn out later to
be nincompoops,

some though with the way
they speak and write
spelling the words
correctly and
choosing the right words
under the proper
context with which they
are said
and meant, ...become
too promising
to appease what he calls
as bad karma to
the family,

they later give their
ture colors,
yes, intelligent but
very corrupt,

at the end he leaves
everything to God,
asking though,

it this really what
it has to be?
a family of wrong
people
and hence somewhere
along the line
one must settle for
compromises

or just leave genetics
as is
and let evolution do
the selection
of who in the family
becomes fit
to survive

well that 's it
i get away from my
wishes
i simply watch the family
go by
like a story without an
expected ending.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanted

1. a tall well built woman with good
ation, who can cook frogs
, who appreciates a good fuc-
garden, classical music and tal-
without getting too serious.
please read only lines 1,3, and 5.

(taken from a News Ad)

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanting To Dance The Hours Away...

there is no music
in this place
it appears like a
desert
without a caravan
of camels

but just the same
i like to dance these
hours away
like crazy

independently
i must invent the music within
and live fully
without.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanting To Go In, But Not Really Staying For Long

there is a way towards a closed door
without using the key
and without knocking or
breaking it down

there is no use for diplomacy sometimes
worse is violence and worst is deceit

there is a way to it and it is the most trivial
and most effective: entice the door with a senseless talk

it cannot ignore it, and then tell it about a window
how sad that it had remained closed for years
sunless in the Bahamas and
dampened in New York

sometimes something trivial works, something like a
feigned sophistication distracts it
from what it is locking out

one day i tell a joke about a ladder where some steps
are missing
like some decayed tooth which fly away from the gums
and the door laughed
since it has no teeth too

and so it let me in but to appease it i said
i won't be long. I still want to stay outside and play with my life
under the trees.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanting To Say Nothing At All

a time for silence
the mind is full
like a heap of leaves
unswept for days
by the lazy wind

a day of silence
inside the room

a door shut
curtains and windows
stare
giving little mercies
to a restless soul
inside a
sleepy body.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wanton Imaginations.

You like boxes
where your ideas
take shape
you like air
to be contained
in the shape of
a balloon
water in the shape
of a bottle

i have ideas as birds
flying in the air

as bullets hitting no
bird

but songs seducing
the moon

tempting the stars
to be meteors

again merely passing
by
to put in flames our

dry woods without the
fire of

wanton imaginations.

RIC S. BASTASA
War

war is a business
and the men engaged in this business

are all accordingly at a loss

Gubat

Ang gubat negosyo
Ug ang mga negosyante niini

Puros kuno alkanse

RIC S. BASTASA
War If You Know Is A Good Business

War if you know is a good business

mortars, guns, tanks, choppers,
bullets are expensive

we do not manufacture it
so we buy it

no arms sales so far for the past few days
and this is not healthy and wise for business

the gunrunners of the worlds are worried
why there is so much peace in town

they met and discussed these things

in their business war is a a necessity
otherwise they will be so lonely

so you have wars now,

the gunrunners
are busy and they are so happy

they party somewhere
as deaths and
destruction rise in
shocking number

RIC S. BASTASA
Warmth....

MY favorite puppy is on my feet napping

my head rests on a memory pillow

stars hang on the ceiling

i sleep with the comfort that you are safe and sound

i look forward to see you tomorrow morning

RIC S. BASTASA
Was It For The Love Of The Flame?

attracted by the flame
the moth
flew in there and
got burned

given another life
it will
go there to be
burned again

was it for the love of
the flame

definitely not the love
of life

could be the love of
death

or could be that it is
so stupid
not having learned
the danger of fire

that unforgiving flame
that eats even something
nonsensical

RIC S. BASTASA
Was It Something Wrong?

and so the moon
in its fullness finally kissed
the face
of the river

and the river
shimmered
as though it felt the coldness
of the rain

the moon asks the wind
if there is something wrong
with love

the winds hushed
as though something happened
as though
kissing is shameful
when it is done with the fullness
of desire

the grasses
who buries everything
past and future
as usual, are as silent
as though
nothing is memorable
like the indifference of the stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
Was It You Who Wrote Some Poems?

it happens in a crowd
or a party or a reunion
to be exact and short of
any dialogue
you ask,

was it you
who wrote some
poems?

and i say
yes
and i ask why?

and you say
oh i like every poem
there

and i ask
which ones?

the one about love
or passion
or compassion
or was it the poem
that hurts
and makes
one feel the
urge to kill oneself?

and you say
i like the
sad ones
those that
make me cry
and think
of my broken heart

and i say
i never wrote
sad poems

and you say
you swear

i have read
the sad ones
and i really cried
alone

and i say,
i never wrote
them

they write themselves
and i do not really cry anymore

and you say
really?

and i say: i am numb.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasted

how big is the house
how beautiful it is
under the big, shady
mahogany tree
and its surrounding
garden of flowers

but no one lives
there anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasted Emotions

silence has a certain depth
i've been there and there was really no
complete measure of
the phantom's haven

noise comes as a traffic jam of
feelings

the soul of the night howls
and the limping grasses over the fields
of memories scatter
like a crowd bombed
into pieces of scars

there are no ears
the wisdom loses itself in the hollowness of
wasted emotions

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasted Life?

it's home
school home
then home
office
home
office

no other places
to go
no other places dared

some white sandy beaches
for sometime
a trek on a steep mountain
sometimes

visiting old folks
no questions asked
but only feeling also their
sense of
loneliness

or lostness in this vast
field of humanity

poetry
walk in the morning
poetry
noontime breaks
siesta

dinner with wife
and sleep

dawn breaks
stunning thoughts
arresting the self
on what next to do
home
home
home

a boring life maybe
but i think
it is not wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasted Mind....

at this time  
i pause

wanting to  
find an answer

to the question  
which slips at

the tip of my  
tongue

i find the answer  
takes time

but then  
on the other hand

i finally dismiss it  
unnecessary

always this happens  
well sought  
well thought of

but at the end  
so irrelevant

sick and dirty  
fake and temporary

pleasure of  
these hands

the heart furious  
the mind  
wasted.
Wasted Moment Of Our Past Lives

you held my   
hand tightly   

you want me   
to hold time   

but time is   
just like the   

water of our   
dreams   

they slip away   
the moment   

we gaze as   
though life   

is air as though   
verily wasted.   

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasted Proposition

love is not a student.
and you are no teacher.
you cannot teach me.
i am om is
an incurable jerk.
I jerk off, alone with my
nerves.
In the house, this door
is closed.
The windows gossip.
my shoes are growing
moss.
my shirt is eaten by
snails.
the stars on my roof
are fake
earrings

mother is beautiful
she is a faded picture of
a family memory.

they avoid this kind
of confrontation.
it is not essential.

what is essential? i ask that too.
all i have are branded
as accessories.

that was a good movie.
the line ends:

do not ever think about loving me.
i am wasted.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasting My Time

seeing a stack of books and paper works
on top of my table
i decide to have a break
and shy away from all these
legalese

i face the screen
of my life and let some intermittent lights
flash before my face
i put my fingers on the keys
and think some more
and imagine some images
about my past
and how like a blob
a monster
it has eaten both my present and future
quite scary
but the wizard says
that to defeat this malware of my mind
i must start to write
and keep on writing about
this malady
until then
when everything gets resolved
when the present
breathes life inside my deflated soul
and the future like a baby
begins to crawl

RIC S. BASTASA
Wasting The Hours

got some hours on my hand
and i spill them all like water dripping
i am not wet
i get so hot beside you despite the spill
despite the wasted hours
i don't regret
spending time with you in a place
as far
like mirage
like an illusion of time and space
deny us
what truth lies in the metaphors of light
and shadows
veils and drapes and grassy paths

RIC S. BASTASA
Watch Out Mr. Martin For The Jihad At Poemhunter

In Islam,
a holy war; a war ordained by God
The Koran
teaches

that soldiers who die
in jihad go to heaven immediately.

go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.
go to heaven  to heaven immediately.

a holy war waged by Muslims against infidels

a holy struggle
a striving by a Muslim for a moral or spiritual or political goal

Islam
An individual's striving for spiritual self-perfection.
Islam
A Muslim holy war
spiritual struggle against infidels.
A crusade

The war against poetry
turning into a jihad
against people who hate poetry

detonate the metaphor
blog!

RIC S. BASTASA
Watch That Which You Do Too

watch what you say
the spirits of the trees may be hurt
and soon
you shall suffer the consequences

of a bloated stomach
and chilling and vomiting

but watch more
that which you do
the people around you
are noting

and they may not believe you
soon
when what you do does not jibe
with what you say

RIC S. BASTASA
Watch That Which You Do Too And Say

watch what you say
the spirits of the trees may be hurt
and soon
you shall suffer the consequences
of a bloated stomach
and chilling and vomiting

but watch more
that which you do
the people around you are noting

and they may not believe you soon
when what you do
does not jibe with what you say

RIC S. BASTASA
Watch Your Ass

somehow you must
graduate,
to the topmost layer
of unmindfulness,
do not be bothered by
the silence of others
they have their own
jigsaw puzzles
to put together to see
the whole picture
of their existence,
do not wait for their bother
rest assured
they are still your brothers
in this circles of
cycles

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching

this is plain watching
two souls
two bodies making what they
are supposed to
do inside a room
beside them the white silky curtain
caressed by the wind
from the sea
salty and soft and sapphire like
in feeling

there is the bursting of stars
inside your heads
there is the celebration of what
you have become
so intimate
discovering
what long seeped
between your arms
and legs

slowly, love is reborn
the moon

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching A Shooting Star

i like the silence
of the shooting star
i like the wishes
that my heart whispers
to my ear
i like the emptiness
when the shooting star is gone
i like the silence of my heart
when now
it is full.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Again The Count Of Monter Cristo

the classic revenge
using the sword, discovered treasure,
and a memory of a friend, now,
taking back what was his.
mercedes tells who the real
father of her son
the marriage was for
convenience,
he was not a pleasure
but a temporary cure for
her shame.
finally, Dantes has the world
in his hands,
now he is willing to throw
hate on the cliff
embracing God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Everything Go And Leave

I let my emails accumulate like
Paper stacks
Unread. I just let them be themselves.
I let the hours pass away.
No questions asked. I let people go by
No reminders.
I let the roads take their curves and
Take their own travels.

I let things grow by themselves.
Above the sky expands.
Like a notebook, like a canvass.
I let the night come.
And be the mouth
To eat the stars out.
I let everyone arrive, and one by one
I let everyone go.

I let the wave come ashore and
Curl upon themselves and then
Disappear.

This is the season for just being myself.
They watch me and I watch them.
I take my deepest breath.
They let me go, I let them too.

This is not the time for reasoning.
This is just the time for simply watching.
This is the
Phenomenon.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching From A Distance Two Lovers Kissing In The Dark

how sadly
can i be watching two lovers kissing
in the dark
from a distance

my hands are inside my pocket
it is cold
the night is lighted with nothing
but a
lone star

now i remember her again
alone in the dark
waiting for me

i offer no explanation for my absence
i have nothing on my hand to wipe her tears

i have no more words
25 years ago

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching His Transformation

did he start
from an egg
hatching into
a worm
then hid
in a cocoon
and then
turning into
a butterfly?

did you see
him
spread his wings
for the first time?

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Love Dies In Selfishness...

i watch love
making love upon itself
and it impresses upon me
that sometimes love
is not love at all,

when it takes upon itself
desire and decides to
keep it for itself
unable to think that someone
else needs it badly
ever,

when having taken it all
it keeps upon its closed hands
whatever is wonderful
walks away
and denies that somehow
thirst has been quenched
and hunger
all filled up

for love keeps its mouth shut
and arms folded
and then dies, sadly.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Love Making Love

makes my armpits alive again
makes my blood rush back to my brain
makes my body dance to the tune of love's rock
makes my eyes blink wild like a bird
hovering from one tree to another

like a pornographic movie
but i really like romance much better
that gentle kiss penetrating inside my throat

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Porn

lots of skin
no conversation

you watch
attentively

(at 60) it is
all in the mind

all fake
there is no love

too hot a fire
it burns your soul

strange, strange
the head is shaking

it is nauseous
good, good,

you vomit
this alien in you

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Sins

i sit alone watching sin passing by, i ask it to stop for a while so i can hug it it obliges and there we were dancing, drinking, sleeping on a limited hour sin has to go after i tasted it so many demands its sojourn, hug it, kiss it, sleep with it, but again only for a while, for sin is also like us, it moves and if you allow it it devours, digests, dissolves defecates, what you allow...

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Something Else...

i spin some letters, mostly consonants
for fear that so many vowels can be too noisy

sometimes we dwell more on the algebraic
x and y
z comes in to add more anonymity to the equations
that we grapple with everyday

looking for answers
with already prepared quadratic equations

to simplify life we offer simple equations
we reject too many complications and lessen the variables

eating breakfast, drinking the water
mastering the daily sequences and shying away from new innovations

there is no need for more vacations
they are all the same roads and seashores same malls and
delicacies, routine, colors of those items are not really changed,
the taste of that chicken is the same all over the world

be it in Austria or France or
Punta or Galas or Talisay or Sinonok

what matters is the compactness of your belief
inside no one can convince you no one can take you somewhere else

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching The Chickens

the strong cock
struts its way
towards a
group of hens
and as there
are too many
of them
hens, the cock
in confidence
does what is
of most service
to its master

he fucked them
all
for the eggs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching The Flowers

i open the window
and look out to the garden below
the rain just stopped
and every leaf had the share of the
morning shower

dewy, each leaf smiles
each flower opens each petal anticipating
the sun

fingers of sunlight arrive
and there is touching and hugging
and kissing
light to dew to leaves
flowers to the rays of the sun

such a joy
like an early morning chat with a friend
you haven't had a talk for days
and you discuss
social studies

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching The Rebirth Of Your Star...(Repost)

when your universe breaks
in the same manner that other universe does
the most natural thing
that must happen

i, in my own, planetary motion,
watch the shattering and the bursting
of the bubble

it is not that i want to see
how you destroy yourself
i am not that
sadistic, the stars know me by heart
and the moon likes me for that

it is this
within you, after, shall be
the birth of the
new star

and this happens
all you have to do is just wait
because
as always stars are born
after an explosion

tell you what?
it will be the best stage to watch
the nicest thing that happens to you
also happens
to me

and once again the universe
celebrates again

each, happy again,
following each own
planetary orbit
with Sun as God
with the other planets as friends.

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching The Sea And The Rain

from this window
of glass i watch the rain
and the sea

the rain falls gently like
a woman
the sea dances like a
man

when they embrace
there is always this joy in my heart
remembering some happy
moments of my past

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching The Temples

these temples are build so high
their tips wanting to reach the sky
like what the heads of our dreams
are made of
for what is life without any dream anymore?
what is a life without any aspirations?

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching Tita With A Little Girl On Top Of Autumn Leaves

she holds her hair
on extreme fragility that a grandma
does to a grand
daughter.

two years ago she lost
her husband.
it was sudden and at first
she could not believe that such
parting as abrupt
as that could
happen.

she was fragile too
like a porcelain Austrian doll
about to break into
pieces
thrown on a stone
pavement

she didn't
she chose life, to move on

now holding on to the
glowing hope
of her grand
daughter's peach cheeks

on top of
the drying leaves of autumn
i can hear
the cracks of the heap

RIC S. BASTASA
Watching You

as you were
counting the seeds
left after the storm
i watch you
closely as you watch
closely what
things
what memories
are left
for both of us
i must have been
so unkind
to cause the furrows
on your skin
it was as smooth
and firm as
a child before
i go beside you
kissing your
forehead
hoping to repair
what damage
was done

the seeds are many
your counting slow

RIC S. BASTASA
we are leaving
for Jakarta
my wife is uneasy

i tell her
this is not a vacation
this is a mission
to see
how mankind
manages
the fury of
water

it always seeks
it proper level

RIC S. BASTASA
Water Seeking Its Own Level

oh the waters have wisdom
for they always know how to seek
their own level

they do not mind
what name is given to this
mountain
or this plain
or that creek

they all know them all
and they travel
and sleep soundly on their beds soundly
without any murmur
or complaint

RIC S. BASTASA
Water......

soon
it will be
free flowing

that is what
i really like

flowing water
making less fuss
about its
liquidity

it has always been
my dream
that i too must flow
like water
to the sea finally

it is where
i become part of everybody
where i become
a nobody

soon it will be
myself freely flowing
like water
to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waterfall

i like this
rush
of waters

falling
down
looks
like a
race
w/o

a winner
a loser

just the
fun
of
falling
rushing
as though
all the
waters
are
just
taking
a plunge
in
all
laughter

do you
like
the sound
of playful
falling?

RIC S. BASTASA
Waterfall Photoshop

A child catches a waterfall
in his white cup
as though
this matter
of a waterfall on this earth
is nothing
but a cup of tea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Waves And Foams On My Feet

when my feet steps on the sands
and pebbles of the shore
i feel the life
stood upon by my whole body
when the waves
come and go like a pendulum on
my legs
leaving some sea caps
and foam on the hair
i begin to understand
who i am,
arriving and yet not staying
going away and yet coming back
in a matter of time
between storms and
clear days, and i agree with
the seagulls singing about life
and fading in a distance

RIC S. BASTASA
Waves And Foams On My Feet (Revised)

when my feet step on the sands
and pebbles of the shore
i feel the life
stood upon by my whole body
when the waves
come and go like a pendulum on
my legs
leaving some sea caps
and foam on the hair
i begin to understand
who i am,
arriving and yet not staying
going away and yet coming back
in a matter of time
between storms and
clear days, and i agree with
the seagull singing about life
and fading in a distance

RIC S. BASTASA
Way Sapayan

sa tanang
panghitabo
tagaig
pasalamat

bisag gamay
lang god
basta pasalamat
lang gayod
ghapon

kon gisagpa
kas too
salamat kay
wa maapil
ang wala

kon gitikbas
kas likod
maayo lang
gihapon kay
wa maapil
imong suwang

kon gikawatan
kag bugas
pasalamat kay
naa pang
kaldero

sa tanang butang
sa tanang suok
sa tanang panghitabo
pasalamat lang
gayod gihapon

ayaw iapil
pagpakawat ang
luna sa
pasalamat

o kon moapil man
ghapon
ayaw nalang pod
iapil ang
makanunayong
way sapayan.

RIC S. BASTASA
Ways To God

at five in the morning
the church bells sound
and she wakes up
dresses up and
there she goes with
her religious rites

at the same hour
when i am alone
i open my computer
scribble some words
to make some poems

whichever is the way to
God's heart
i do not know
i still have to figure out

perhaps, perhaps, perhaps
poems as prayers?

RIC S. BASTASA
We

we build the stairs first
stair upon stair
wood and nail
and hammer
and hands
and some
determined thoughts
dreams to reach the skies
focus
and look what have be done

we have reached the door
of the room

it is here where we shall hatch
all our dreams

like eggs to our warm
hands
like chicks to our cheeks

time and stairs and hopes and dreams and nails and hammers
and hands
and eyes

be awake and always be vigilant
for dreams that do not die like night
stars
are we

RIC S. BASTASA
We All Pass This Way Again

there are categories of our existence

others wish for
a perfect living

life harmonized with nature

love and bliss
and a perfect poise

of the flower
dancing against the sun

we stay for the moment
we wilt i any minute

those that believe however
make a wish

and the wish become true
mind over matter

and then like a boat
we pass this way again

dissolving in the mist
reechoing a song

that we first offered
to the most beautiful maiden

that you have seen
her smile fading like the

shadow of the mountain
against the darkness of the night
RIC S. BASTASA
We Always Care About You

there is a little girl
that i still remember
who keeps on hiding
away from her friends
so she covers her eyes
with her hands and then
asks if she has become
invisible to all.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Afraid To Ever Tell This Story

we are here upon a page of a book
like ears, marking a restful minute since the eyes are aching,

we are in this room of a space filled in the order of words
systematically placed by a careful writer whose reputation is respected by all
his colleagues at the university,

we are wary, aching ears, rough skinned faces,
drooping eyes, lousy hands, hanging feet,

the chairs at the other northeastern part of this room are restless
but cannot speak what they feel
and they cannot be stopped
as they start running towards the balcony jumping into the ground floor
of this very silent nook

the table starts an exhibition of a circus act
tumbles like an acrobat and shouts to the wall and the ceiling that it can fly
like a winged fish that no one has ever seen

the ceiling fan loosens its neck and falls to the ground screaming
the pillow cases escape from their pillows saying it is all over now
the carpet rolls upon itself like a man rolling its sleeves now ready for a fistful of
bouts

it is midnight and the light bulbs are blinking like an ambulance
there is an emergency but everyone in the house is asleep
and must not be disturbed

we are afraid we are witness to this unruly behavior of things that should not
move or scream or tumble or run or jump or brag about some imagined wings

we are very silent and the following morning when they all wake up
we keep our mouth shut afraid that they will call us crazy

or if not, paranoid because the whole night we guarded the house
and never for once close our eyes and taste the sweetness of sound sleep
We Are After All, Human Skins...

fOR The meantime tHAT
tENderness has not arrived yet
the Truth is
we survive with what is present
and Available
The one not felt but well used
We claim the right still to enjoy
The temporary wrong ones
Until the upright comes
The ONe THAT liberates us from this
Madness
This ticking flesh, this mirage in the
middle of our deserts
Until we feel the
coolness of our Oasis
It is the aridity that is here
That makes us drunk with Air
NOw, when the promised truth comes
We too shall drink to that

They must understand what we are made of
We are not made of wood
or steel
We are all flesh and blood and bones
soft cartilages, elastic veins,
hairy skin, nails that do not feel
pain
a little of that,
but more of the vast skin that
feels the prick
of the bodkin.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are All Into This....

for into the bridge of flowers we all walk and stand there and wait as the petals fall on the surging river turning into ships towards all the cities of our mundane dreams....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Alone

in this silence
before we sleep
we are alone

amazed on the note
that despite this silence

we still understand
who we are what we are
where we are heading

in silence
love speaks the most

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are And We Cannot...

and why do you
persist?

no one hears you
and no one cares

and why do trees
keep growing?
why does autumn keep
on falling?

look at the sun and the
sea

feel the vastness
this ceaseless flow

this eternity this
madness for goodness

this faith to life
this death this door this
entrance to the unknown

how can we ever stop?
we are
and we cannot...

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Both Suns.

now i must understate
you. Mere pleasure. A toy doll.
A toy gun.
fantasy play. One that i can take
and throw away.
a game. and we are children on
the sands of time.
there are no days in this plays.
nights do not exist.
time is a hush. i make love to you.
you make the same thing.
expectations are taboo.
today you are on a trip to the
hills. i stay in the city.
i watch black birds migrating
to another island.
i imagine boats and clouds.
as i begin to write
a letter to myself.
this is my universe.
we are both suns.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are But Mere Paths

we are but mere paths
where their shoes tread upon us
their umbrella tips their staff
they all touch our surfaces

during the rain
the waters run the drain
and we become not just the paths
of their stamping and running feet
we become their canals

we move through histories of men
we are their paths and their canals
we let their blood flow through us

we remain faithful to this tasks
taking glimpses of the face of God
we face the heavens
we believe in the falling of the stars

we are but paths
all histories of men's feet walk upon us
we are but the grasses
we bury their carcasses

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are But Winds

it is a fact,
love and trust
and lust and
faith,

these are
separate entities
apart from us,

and they live
forever,
and they
are still there
even when
we are already
dead

so why
grieve for
them?

they are
their own
republics,

and we are
but winds.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Considerate Only If You Give Us A Chance

give us a chance to know you better
read us too
do not attempt to please us
we will not require much for you to stop writing
if it is your cure
we will have the patience of reading every word
from you
every murmur
we will dip our own feet to every creek
that you create
we wish you happiness
please understand
we wish no ill
we ask no questions
what ill wind too has taken us here
to be with you

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Drawn Towards The West

we are drawn towards the west
we are from the east

we have many reasons to stay in the west
we have more of the many reasons to go back to our
point of origin

the east, yet for the time being, we cannot.
the east will always be an enticing art form
inside our hungry stomachs

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Fast....

the fast mind does not wait for your arrival
you are as gentle, and slow as a snowflake
we are the wind, and the unfrozen river,
we move and transfer and go elsewhere
we have no purpose
we have no specific place for that destination
we are not part of you
we are those that you see and then gone
in a short moment
we do not belong here neither there
we do not understand
who we are

sometimes we think we are cursed
perhaps punished so wisely
we do not stay we are not held
we are dews, we are mists, we are merely sounds
always faint.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Fine Here Too....

we are fine too
here we are upon a fine
day at the balcony of this
beach front cottage built
years ago by papa, where
we remember the songs of
conch and colored shiny
shells, where as one
family we dip into the sea
and rise up with our dreams
again on a noonday,

we are fine here
away from the wars waged in your
home, where what we know is
only the news that
appear in CNN or AlJazerah,
where we know only about
distance that does not really
hurt us that much as you are
in those bombarded places,

we are fine here
under the moon at night
sharing stories about our
youth and about our departed
ancestors who had taught us
well how to live in peace
and harmony with all.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Fixed....

can't see the way we love each
other today has gone beyond
the walls of words

no fences of promises
nothing about sweet nothings

can't see the air con is timely repaired
food is on the table
coffee is ready when you need it
and clothes are clean and ironed
for your suiting

no more flowers and chocolates
no more unnecessary exhilaration
the way we love is anchored on
the reality of our accepted limitations
no need to change now
we are fixed.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Floating Like Kites Under A Storm.

when we talk you become one of my diversions,
like, i do not really mean what i say, so i will tell you
my day is loathsome, a kitten made love with me in
the kitchen or that a dog gets rabid and bites all the
railing of the stair, seeing to it that it does not kill
anyone,
there will be more, but they are parts of one fictional
inventions, a red horse full of bubbles, a carabao with
its magical horn that moves towards its brains which
we have to cut at once,
words move in different directions, forked and leading
us to nowhere.

i still live alone, and i do not have you really for an
intimate matter. I have nothing to confide, and you have
nothing to please me.

here we are floating like kites under a storm.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are From The East

we are from the east
our clothes are saffrons
we smell incense

you are from the west
on metal clothes and
piercing lances
you bring to us the sound
of our horrible machines

we are amazed how we
see your power that sounds
like thunder
dehth tolls in numbers increasing
we want to like all of you
but for now we can't

we are still burying our dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Going Flying With My Wings Of Fire.

i am a black Arabic
horse wearing a heavily
tinted sunglasses
in a summer resort
somewhere in
Mars

and you are?

an ice woman serving
me orange juice
with your two hands
holding
a silver glass

i don't drink orange juice
and you don't like a horse

so what happens?

we are here somewhere
in Mars
and we have no space ride
to take us back
to earth

so?

we might as well enjoy
this moment

leave that orange juice
ride with me

we are going flying with my
wings of fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
we are here again

gathering around the secret of the rose,
society's silenced few
the dews of the darkest nights,
flowers of the scarlet leaves,
here we are
shunning sleep
away from the mob
we are robbed
of the gob-
lets of wis-
dom, we too take the stances
of the philosophers, the murderers of
common thoughts, we shape the future of
our poplars, so unpopular are we
so misunderstood but we are not bothered,
here we are again
poets of the morning star

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Here, And That Is Good Enough For Us...

i never have an inkling
to sit beside the greatness of a

Maya, a Langstone, a Pablo
or Robert

i am but a simple blogger
in this age
of facebook and twitter
and email encounters

let me get it straight
fame is not my cup of tea
all i need is just to be me.

it is all about loneliness
all about arriving home with no one to talk to
or taking your dinner alone
under the light of a bulb
and the chatter of TV series

it is not about romance even
there is none

it is the other side of reading books
and dog-earing a page
because your eyes are tired
and you need sleep because tomorrow

is another routine, of a walk to the office
filling up forms, disrobing yourself of
the excitement of earthly existence

lunch, and the quiet of officer dividers
and taking naps like cats

evenings without meanings
blankets without human warmth
pillows like clear consciences
guilt like fecal matter flushed  
on the morning bowl

we all live this way  
we do not complain because there are no solutions in sight  
we do not work for a fulfillment  
we work to pay our bills and be just like the rest of this  
wave of humanity  
arriving and leaving like foams of sea on the shore

then like you, we write, poems or non-poems  
we keep holding to words, hoping that there is a cure  
to this paper existentialism

we write for nothing at all  
we know we are duped by websites that earn money for themselves  
we do not care  
we are passionate, we contribute the success of others  
we make them happy, we do not count how much feeling have we invested

we do not know, much less do we really care to know.  
we're here, playing our noise, we do not crave for responses

we exist, we make you feel that we exist.  
who knows? we are not alone, we also have the rest

wave upon wave, sunset upon sunset, all the days of our lives  
till we die, and this page shall be blank, and then we are deleted.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Into This

it is not just an ordinary
swim on
shallow waters where
our heels
are attacked and
we are not
a bit bothered about
any possible
consequences,

we are into this
form of art, where we expose
a face and at the same time
cover
our eyes and nose
and keep on saying
that we are
unafraid to be
finally our own making
a sculpture of ourselves
in words and
images,

we are into this
not as adept as a magician
removing a rabbit from
a black hat

until such time that
our audience who are children by
heart
finds this art
so cheap and no as amusing
as what we used to be
doing
what they have not ever seen
because
we keep them
sealed, tight lipped,
vacuum,
restrained, cool, civilized,
and unhealthy.

we are into this,
tell me, what is this really?

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Moving People

it is this traveling
that perhaps can make you
forget

roads are the roller coasters of our minds
trees are trickles of green on each side
always moving
on and on
without exhaustion
viewing everything that is always
new to
our own liking

i do not have a specific destination
each place beyond me is a question

the sad past like the wind that meets our faces
becomes another place of the heart that we leave behind

we are moving people
seated on our couches
still in deep thought
as scenes change every moment

our eyes are always strangers
trekking pathways
consuming roads
without a definite end
on an unknown duration

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Moving To Places Where Our Hands Still Touch

What you did was make this yard of cement
Some hard posts and high fences and barbwires
You call it safety; you call it clean to see
There will be no shrubs, no trees, just this
Big house and empty rooms, a garage full
Of cars, some phones and TV walls

We move to other places then since we disagree
We leave this place of cement and fences and walls
We move to the hills where we still have our trees
Our long winding rivers, the rocks and grass
The winds and skies, we move to places where
The birds are not caged, where they sing the sweetest songs
Where we and the rest of us are free
Where on mountaintops and cliffs and drifting clouds
Our hands still touch & shake the Hands of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Never Birds...

to the other
side of the world,
i ask,
Leave us.

They flock together.
For with all
these feathers,
they are warm.

winter is not
a threat. And with
all their wings
combined, the
world begins
to spin faster,

and time flies,
and changes come.

I still prefer,
this Nook. This
self is all I
have and you must

know my dear,
we are different,
and we try
and no matter how
we try
we cannot meet
the rules
and by their
standards
we fail.

there is no use
flocking.
we are never

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
birds.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Not Really Meant For Each Other.....

what we did not agree
was when i invited you
for a bath together

in the secret river of
my love
for you which you have
not felt
how cool is the water
how clear how clean

and so i bathed myself alone
waiting for you
and you never came and then i

lay my body on that rock
i am beneath the sun as i dry
to be warm again

if you only came here
even for once or even for curiosity's sake
you could have felt what love is
how is it to be loved
cleanly and clearly how to flow towards the
sea and be lost into love's
tremendous power

it is when we fuse when we are one
that love comes to take us both
into an anonymity

the rain to the sea
the light of the moon on the grassy hills
the wind to the leaves of the trees
the sands from your hand
falling to the shores of the thousand grains

i am alone now but not seeking you.
i am complete to myself, whole to its solitude
happy with the truth
that we are not really meant for each other.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Not Stones.....

i see it
i heard what was said
in the midst
of the most infidel act
lust for love
love lost and love found
in bed with another
that slap makes
an answer: no one is
a stone here.

when someone leaves
humanity struggles to
fill the absence,

whatever, whatever is
done, is justified by this:

we are not stones.
we are not stones.

our nature is to be intimate.
with whoever is free and
available.

despise not, the flower that
still blooms under the sun
despite the rocky waterless
state of affairs.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Pathways

when we begin to think only for the moment
we become like a pathway.

there is solidity on its face and even though
people walk upon us and leave we become so unaffected.

it is the moment that we seize and then give away
all the while
accepting that this is another fact of our life here.

some flowers begin to bloom
seeds sprout.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Ready...

your nipples
and breasts and
soft arms
are telling you:

it is time to love,
time to quit thinking
and start doing what
love so humbly requires,

your lips and tongue
and fingers are into
this

love where are you?
we are ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Riding On The Same Boat

we do not have to tell really
it is useless to say so

that we are riding on the same boat
on same destination

i lie, if i tell you, that i do not suffer.

i have a Pandora box with me.
i do not open it, You have suffered enough too.

For you to listen to mine
is but a cliche, another monotonous redundancy.

let me differ somehow
i still make fun, that is my inner core

for Fun defeats whatever face of misery is there.
IT is light in darkness, it is sanity in madness.

Do not be solitary. IT is true it is deep and
stuffed with so much wisdom. But what for?

Tomorrow may never come.
And today, is the only moment, i still have with you.

Suffer the song with its singing.
Learn to love death, with what Life is still there.

The only dew to the Leaf soon dries.
The sun, how big and warm, soon sets.

This is a message of Joy.
This is the word of Today.

Every second, i savor. Life is nothing but
a breath, it is not a curriculum vitae.
We Are Ships And We Have No Anchor

you do not like change
life is a big gamble
everything is always going
towards change

you are afraid on the future
your hands grip the present
your comfort zone is in this corner

i am not afraid of change
i deny everything
the present is not permanent
yes it does not have to

i throw away the past like
a scratch of paper
all the experiments are there
i always name each moment gone
my waste

life is an experiment
there is no need to think
life comes here like somebody else
you cannot name it.

i have no names to mention
no chants to mumble
no magic to assure me that
tomorrow with be all right

when you wake up tomorrow morning
i will not be here anymore
i am destined for new places
for my mind is the wind

you must like it here
just the way i feel but,  
ad and there is this big but  
we are ships and we have no  
anchor

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Silenced....

in a sense
i was never
your poet, for

no god am i,
none of those
that
try to change what
is there

i see and feel
and leave

that stone remains
to be just
another stone

when i touch it
it does not change
when i put words
into its roughness
nothing happens

just like gratian
we only describe
and leave things as
they are

we affirm our
humanity
we accept this
frailness
this shortness of
breath

this loneliness
and this
limited grasp
of what is there
we see light
we are amazed
we are silenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Sorry...

sometimes to survive
this daily ordeal
we must realize that
we sometimes say
what we do not mean
we hurt because we are
lost and when we find ourselves
it is only this time
that we must admit
we do not really mean it
our nature, our real nature
has always been as soft as water
and never cruel...

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Still Living

scorching sun
burning the skin of
our bodies
here
in the tropics

dehydrated
and broken in spirit

ah, no one cares
and so we
must care and move on
to his
harsh journey

ah, we live
that is good enough for us!

we are still here
that is gift enough

live, sing and dance
no matter what

that is good enough for us!

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Still Safe With The Rain....

ey are not convinced. we had secrets
all over the house. and even in the garden.
she even plucked her secret from one of
the trees in the park.

is it a secret if one pretends not to know?
it is still. We agreed.
sad secrets specially are kept with a will
to deny it even if a friend makes an appointment
with her in the church, and revelations are made
after a prayer, or with the priest.

i guess love understands secrets.
love even conceals what we know.

we had secrets in the roof and we never
really mind.
new secrets are found in the pigsty but we
keep on feeding the pigs.
nice roasts sometime.

i strictly keep a secret inside my pocket.
smaller than a pebble, but it is my life.
it is my sphinx, and there are questions
which if my love answers at the end of
these pretensions

my world shatters into pieces
like a nitrogen frozen dead body.
and when i am gone,
all the secrets go with me.

it is hard to justify this enigmatic
probabilities and realities.
but it is here. we are happy and we
live in one roof.
and so we are still safe with the rain.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Still The World

amidst all these
collisions
when planets shatter
into
insignificant pieces
when space
eats all of us
dusts to dusts
we shall return
yet we are still
the world
just the two
of us

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Stunned At The News And The Rain Never Stops.....

today i remember
mr. fred
my professor
in one of those
english
electives,

he is a poem
of rain
of hair and rain
between us
barriers between
barriers
rain that blurs
trees
and glass windows

inside the
theater he reads
a poem of rain
those who listen
cry
but he didn't he
kept on reading until
it ended
and those who
listened intently
carried by the
sound of the rain
never felt that
end

he has a beard
uncut
a fat body
he walks slowly
slower than a snail
people who do not know him think that he is a sick man
today i remember him he died at an early age
his only daughter at four leaving a beautiful and lonely and mourning wife
we are stunned at the news and the rain never stops.....
rain is beautifully sad it haunts us inspires us to live some more and be beautiful at most....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Tested We Must Pass....

a cloudy sky
we agree to be just
silent about
what we are seeing

that this is the sign
of an incoming decision
something is obstructing
what we ought to see

we have agreed fully well
we must do nothing
we let it grow to its fullest
doubt
let all the cirrus realize
the value of all this
nimbus

we are about to engage
in the darkness of our dance
we must indulge
we must not avoid
we are tested we must pass....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are The Poets, The Miners Of Gold

we go deeper
into
a long tunnel
we look like
miners
with lights in
our foreheads
we are looking
for nuggets
of gold
it is damp and
cold and dark
there and
we may die
there
when the earth
caves us
in
we can be eaten
with what we
are feeding.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are The Puppets Still Moving On Invisible Strings

sad to say
i mourn for all of us here
we claim we shape our own destinies
our hands as maps
our anticipations as compass
of what we must become
to places of
the hearts

this is the irony:
we are still puppets on our
invisible strings

on purple clothes
we boast
we are on our own now

our feet
shamed by stones
who preferred
the dignity of their being
mute

in that silence of leaves
upon heaps
of those molds and moss
stories told....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are The Realities...

we do not deny the greenness of
grass the blueness of the clouds
the airiness of space the silence of
the world
we conceive them we think
we reflect we are the mirrors
and through us they must speak
through us they must live
that greenness, blueness, that air,
that space
when we are gone what do they have?
ah, they are nothing
they turn into nothing
we bear them in the basket of our thoughts
when the basket is broken
they too are broken
for who can tell that the flower has bloomed
except our mouths
when this mouth turns to ask
no Phoenix shall from ashes
rise...

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are The Roots

for we are the roots
penetrating the wombs
of mother earth

and up there we
see God as the Flower
of all of our longings

the sky between us
is the stalk
the clouds are the leaves
and the winds
are our whispers
to one another

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are The Unknown In The Equation Of Mankind

in the dark
we do not need to know each other
we do not have to make a sound
we must only listen
in so doing
we see a flicker of light
and we feel that sense of humanity
that was lost
we are but shadows of the facing light
if we are in love and lonely
we offer our hands to touch
a shoulder to lean on
a body for warmth
because in the dark it is cold
and even eerie

we shy away from light
because too much of it blinds us
we are the new creatures
that thrive in our unique greatness
in dusk and
twilight

we are not evil
we are those who believe in anonymity

RIC S. BASTASA
We Are Witnesses To View These Deeds

we are here
the living witnesses
to view God's
creations,

the compact grain of sand
containing the whole
of this universe

the drops of rain
his blessings to the earth

the wings of birds
the flights of flocks

we are pilgrims
we come naked
we go home naked

we take nothing
we bring nothing

here we are as witnesses
in awe
in wonder
to God's wondrous deeds

Praise Him
forever

the 'hands of my heart are clapping'
my lips are singing
my heart is jumping with joy

Praise Him
Our God forever....
We Become Strangers Again

your hands are cold
and so are mine
the night is not as interesting
as what we want to say
i look to the sea
you look to the mountains
when i begin to say something
you come up with more words
to this dismay
i begin to look for fireflies
there are none.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Begin To Really Know

we keep on blaming them
those who steal from us
whatever we have given
all by heart and mind.

we scheme for another
revolution and forgive ourselves
for our past losses

many lives, a river of blood
a broken bridge. a house burned
an explosion at the wrong hour
killing those not intended

vengeance is blind and terror
is so unkind. There is no name
for hatred. There is no address
for violence.

we lose sight of who are are
we sit on the river banks wondering
where this water comes from
and why is there streaks of blood
on the rock and sands

old age creeps on our brows
white hairs taunt us to stop
our legs are weary and our mind
start to forget where we are
heading

some new faces are learning and
will want to follow and ask for our
old maps

we look at them with pity
we cry for our misfortunes
then we have decided to move out
to secret islands and unknown caves
they lose contacts of us
and there we begin to write
what horror we have inflicted
upon our souls

weary now, we begin to really know.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Build

we build new windows
framed with strong wood and carved
with flowers and birds
we build new doors
we let the vines grown their tendrils again
we watch and we keep on building some more
new floors and ceilings that know how to sing
chairs that are learning how to embrace our hips
we begin to see new clouds
we busy ourselves to make life click and tick and pick up
from where we think we ought to have died
we refuse this call for dissolution
there are meanings coming up
for new beginnings

we build a new house simply because we are uncertain
beyond these broken pillars.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Bury Our Burdens

we carry a sack
full of everything
the trivial and not so trivial
to the others
which we sometimes
deem to be
important

we start cramping things
in a small pack
a pair of shoes, a plaque,
a bat, white polo shirt,
underwear, the certificates,
some poems even
a book about
romance with some
molds on the hard cover

where shall i bury all these things?
for i am moving to
another place
this morning

i wait for the high tide
or which comes first
the dusty early morning
on the road
this cranky motor vehicle
bound for the
dry mountain
where a hole is ready
tagging a shovel

RIC S. BASTASA
We Can Never Be....

without them
we can never be
it is us
not me.

i have been searching
myself and found none of it
until i immersed myself in them
until i become not just a raindrop
but a part of the sea

until then i have lost every part of me
only to find it
joyous with the rest
of our humanity.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Cannot Live In Your Place Together, Can'T Breathe

in a world veiled by
jade silk
i know what is there
i enter the
door of tassel and
feel cotton
wall and you see me
thinking that
i live there too
sorry
but i live in the other side
on floor stone
with my bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Cannot Really Be Ourselves

your desires
are yours secrets
if they become
visible
they will see a
desert of
carcass where
vultures wait
for their double
kill

what is said
is superficial
these are the
norms and the
dictates of good
behavior of our
present time

when we arrive
in the house of our
best friend
we sit on his chair
inside the house
we are free
to sip coffee and
talk about anything
but mind you
we sift, and limit
our drift
' this is not our
house' you say
we cannot really
be ourselves
like cows on the
pasture
like a pig on
its sty.
We Complicate We Simplify We Complicate

eyesterday's conversation was a pendulum
of grandfather's clock
we were there swinging to and fro
it was complicated and we discussed to simplify
what was complicated that we made
so complicated.
we planted such simple seeds on the ground
time made it grow
into a vine. A squash seed growing into a crown.
A coffin, a carriage. A wreath.
Then back to the crown, and laurels, and trumpets.

you like a simple life, but there isn't baby.
you said you do not want to complicate.
But life has become so sophisticated and
Cannot confront simplicity with a short, concise smile.
There are tears. Rivers of tears.

You shy aways from convolutions.
But life is convoluted baby. The turbulence within that you
Refuse to state with dignity.
The storms raging inside us.
They shake us and we pretend there is none to speak?

What a mess! What a life!
Repeat it. What a life I have!

I am merry. I am happy. I am whistling. I am singing. I am dancing.
You are the newly crowned fool
of this division.

Congratulations.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Could Have Been Someone Else....

sometimes accept the fact that
we want to be someone else that part

in us which we dislike or hate, we
want it trashed, if only we

can skin it off from our bones, we
could have done so, but in so doing we hurt

each nerve, which creeps to the deepest
part of our soul, and the pain is so

excruciating and we learn this lesson
of pain, which we cannot endure and

so we just let it be, we just let it
be, like those thorns in roses, those

prickly things in cactus, those needles
in porcupines, those shattered glasses

on the road after Christmas, those
nails exposed in a broken house.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Decided To Cut Some Trees

we planted the seeds together
we were thinking of fruits
for our children
we were thinking of the shade
where they can
in the future play

then the fruits in bounty came
mangoes loaded
and some water apples
shining on the twigs

the fruits ripen and some birds
came and ate them
the fruits ripen and some fell
on the ground and some
worms came and ate them

the trees get tired finally of the
seasons
flowering, fruiting, falling and
rotting and trying to
repeat the cycle all over
again
for years and years

we got old of waiting for something
new and exciting
we got bored of the fruits
the children of the neighbors
got married and left the place

we got old and tired and this day
we decided to cut the trees
some for the first time
we are too shaded
we want to see light come
we want to know what sunshine is
again, after all those years
of coldness and darkness under
the shady trees

perhaps, this is something new now
light and sun and another way to look
at our lives
something exciting something to open

to see blue skies to see the full moon
to feel warmth to let the worms sing
to see some precious stones
hidden all these years in our common paths

RIC S. BASTASA
We Did Not...

my father is dead
i miss asking

him asking this
old question which

i had been keeping
inside me for all

those years: why do
we hesitate to say

we love each other?
what is wrong?

today i bring him
flowers in his grave

i light three red
candles and i still

keep in silence how
we could have said

those words but we
really couldn't.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Did What We Could To Make Love So Real

Thank you for the night
its coldness and darkness
had serve us rightly
we did what we could
to make love so real

that moment when we part
i to the north
and you to the south
we fall short of courage
to leave the word
on that empty bench

the world remains
what it is
the blue ocean
the green mountain
steady stones
as usual
indifferent and
unaffected

to two lonely souls
converging and then
be diverted.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Disconnect

we disconnect because the link is weak
and the burden on the shoulder
is too heavy,

we carry an emptiness
like a cape without rain

we disconnect only to find other links ready
we lose and we shy away from regret
the fingers weaken
and the mind gropes for more like hands
wanting to touch another soft body in the dark

we disconnect only to fuse again
this time more cautious
whom, what, when
and why

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not Bother Finally....

it is the blood in you that
is in him too that makes you believe
otherwise

did you not say that this place
has changed that much
that it used to be peaceful
that it used to be beautiful
and that now it is as ugly as you
detest it to be
in such a way that you do not want to
return here anymore and if you stay
it will not be long as you only wish to
visit a dying mother
and that after the funeral you are going to
fly away like a migrating bird to the melting west

let me tell you that people change too
we also change the way we see you
and you do not belong with us anymore
which we have accepted since then
when you write no letters when you did not make
a call,

this is our only country
our mother
whatever it is we remain here
loyal and faithful
willing to die
for whatever reason
selfish or
false.

now who are you?
and who are we?
strangers now to each other
we do not bother
finally....
We Do Not Have To Speak, They Have All Spoken

it is all there
at night the stars
then the clouds and sky
sometimes the rainbow too
and the dew and mist on the grass and glass
and there are seagulls and cliffs and dolphins and seas.

to understand ourselves and the parallels
all isosceles and ice and tips of icebergs.
we do not have to speak, they have all spoken.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not Know Yet Where To Stop

in this journey
we do not know yet where to stop

no one stops us
and there seems to be no final destination yet

some stopped suddenly
threw themselves overboard this ship

somehow we think otherwise
as the excitement never ceases

what is there? we keep asking
we bring nothing and so we give nothing in return

we keep an open eye
and so we have remained awesome

just that
why do we have to ask for more?

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not Make A Difference At All

Some of us who do not know
anymore how to live
find the issue of wars irrelevant

if it comes, it comes,
we are dying slowly anyway
and tomorrow's instant death
because two powers blow each
other by a nuclear annihilation
does not really make
a difference.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not Make Things Hard For Us Baby

well we choose roads
separate ways
we decide to end
an affair and leave
nothing along
the paths
we summon the rain
and the wind and
the rush of the
waters
to erase any stain
to ease the pain

shadows dissolving
naturally inside
a dark night

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not Really Need A Lot Of Things In Our Life

we mend
something that is
broken
or torn
we know how
to heal
when we are
hurt
we walk away
when it is
too crowded
we always
know what is lacking
we always know
what we discard
we do not really need
much
to be alive

only if we
try the fullness
of simplicity

RIC S. BASTASA
We Do Not State The Obvious

we do not state the obvious
redundancy is ugly, what we see
we keep on saying, and we do not
spoil it with a
mention. To keep peace and love,
we do the samba, we toast a drink,
we offer a smoke,
we just talk about something else
unrelated.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Dream Of A Soul

technique roams the earth
searching for a place to call home
each door that he knocks
shuts him out
the world does not have any space
for him to be
at least
this man for another chance
in change
for the better

we tell him
he has a soul
we tell him
he must rise
from his body

so one day he dreams he has one
he believes what we had been saying
he has a soul
he has a spirit to embolden his body
one that rises above his curse his adversity

did we not deceive him?
leaving him in such a dream
redemption, resurrection, those fit for gods
and the chosen ones?

look at him
wandering again, knocking from door to door
moving from one place to another
looking for that bishop who must adopt him

Jean Valjean, in your misery and the coming miseries
where can this bishop be?
this century, where beliefs are given
where nothing that satisfies your belly is still hidden.

we dream of a soul
we negate this body, this flesh, this daily dying

RIC S. BASTASA
We Filipinos Have Also Our Own Nationalistic Pride

like you we are also nationalists in our own
brown right
try discriminating us and we also know how to discriminate you
(of course)
in our country (Lang) only

if you are hospitable to us we are even more hospitable to you
we have roasted pigs for dinner
fresh cocoa, hot with gelatenuous rice (suman) and sweet ripe mangoes
served on breakfast
and some delicacies of fried frogs, snakes, eels, and dog meat,
wild boars,
(sa mga bukot bukot lang pud noon)
and coconut meat (butong palana ba?) and pork (adobo nga gasinaw sinaw sa tambok tambal sa highblood)

we provide you free board and lodging and free ballroom dancing
in our barangay with the town mayor even as emcee
for your welcome party

and lots and lots of free entertainment and it will only take you
with little american things to flatter us

giving us chocolates
and some key chains and books (nga dili pud namo basahon noh kay daghang trabaho sa bukid or book marks
to reciprocate us

but take note, if you insult us, the whole barrio shall be against you,
and some cannot hold their temper
(ag mga adis adis ug mga ilaga kaniadto nga mokilaw ug atay sa tawo kadtong dili madutlan ug bala)
they will eat you raw and you embassy will have a hard time tracing your whereabouts
or your bones and other body parts scattered in some parts of this philippine archipelago

see? welcome to our country. Behave Baby.
No one will skin you alive.
so? be good always, and we will also be good to you.

These are our keys to open our country’s doors.
(galot pud ang pinoy? noh?)
And there are no closing hours.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Fill Again With Our Laughter

I'd sleep for hours
and you worry why
at noon i haven't
awakened

i am a fish hibernating
in the winter of my life

don't you worry
come summer I'll be
with you again
alive and human still

by that time the ice has melted
and a pond is made and
we shall wade in the water
that we fill again with our laughter

RIC S. BASTASA
We Find New Things And Compare The Old

year by year
we scrutinize tradition

we sort beliefs and
well, discard some

we find new things
and compare the old

we know some are
wrong and we begin

to accept what we think
is right, we ponder,

it is still about us,
how we must survive

how to play the game
and enjoy it more

i like it, that photo,
when we all look up

to the sky, to the heavens,
to what is beyond us.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Go Out From Our Closed Doors

we go out from our closed doors
we watch
from their windows

not just a dropp of rain
a frozen fern
a haggard stone
a cloud of doubt
an iron curtain
a broken tendon
a very thin man
a hard pair of gloves

we shall see birds of the same feathers
men of character
women of passion
flowing rivers
wide mouth of the seas

we shall see a choir of angels
we shall see the face of God

RIC S. BASTASA
We Got Sunshine In The Philippines

we finally got sunshine
after the rain
it is a beautiful showering
morning after a
night of storm
we got yellow brick roads
and confetti
we are a happy people
now
the voice of God
has spoken

RIC S. BASTASA
We Had Lived And Died And Survived

The best people in this world
are those who underestimate us
these people, bring the best in us

you say we are tiny people
and we tell them that we really are

and we say we like attacking and questioning
and even harming the big people out there
and that most of us are either dead or
or badly injured, dying and salvaged and
kept in detentions and solitary places of
their wicked hearts

they keep on humiliating us and we keep on
blooming as though the insults are water and
fertilizers to our beings
we become seeds growing underneath their
cruelties
for long but they won't last like everyone else
like us

and that is fair enough i suppose

when we come out from here perhaps
we see each other again
not as priests, or doctors or lawyers or
politicians but as naked souls

heading for our own reserved places
whatever that be

we who had been subjected to the hell of this earth
are not surprised
if there is hell or heaven
we do not care
we had the former anyway
and we had
lived and died and survived.
We Hated Goodbyes

i too wish of the wine,
the drunkenness, and the togetherness
that night, when we have become
free-willy, no thoughts, just our bodies,
no restraints, nothing about tomorrow,
when we were lost, and yet so happy,
and when we wake up that morning,
we did not really know what we were doing,
we're all wet in dryness, lips cracked,
bruised bodies, strangled hairs,
satisfied navels,
and then, that which we hated,
yes, goodbyes.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Arrived To This

Ruin. We say we have no more reason to stay. We have no other place to go. How did we ever think about ruin as the last word of our sentence? Now, we are here Breakfast is ready. No one is taking the fork and the sun facing us is nothing but this egg, scrambled.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Arrived....

the way to survive
this ordeal, after 54 years
of intimacy, as the rest of
the remaining moments, detest,
what is here, and what comes,
is to keep the silence,
this fragile flower amidst
the rocks, at the top of this
cliff, the strong winds roar,
leaves have no more ears,
and the feet of shrubs no
longer creep, it is....
this silence that we keep,
that promises us, not to touch,
a wound, our blindness heals,
our numbness assures the years,
it is this institution, this door
which we freely open, and this room
which we without haste, enter...
there is no time to talk about it,
we have split, like
wood, we are ready for the fire.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Been Keeping Too Inside Our Minds

Someone reminds us about our shadows on the wall someone hears the music but no one is dancing

someone remembers what we were when we were still small where no one minds where no one takes us seriously like a nail to the hammer

someone hides away from us and leaves a note that he is collecting shells and gathering leaves

someone misses us so badly but we are drinking to the noise and dancing to the beat of sticks and belts

we don't remember that someone anymore his name does not sound like the names our parents gave us

yes we forget because we do not agree about how life should be spent in a closed container

someone says he is contained and soon shall be exploding like what we have been keeping too inside our minds.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Been Silent

we have been to silent and they
think we are but a pair of sad stories
always being told at bedtime

i do not like this silence. Deadening
my ears have become caves
for bats (who cares? i care now
i want to see the world with all its noise
and troubles)

why? (common let us make all the noise
we can muster, let us shout, scream,
jump, stamp our feet, hit the walls with
our fists, and run wild into the forest,
splash our bodies to the rivers
of time..

why? oh why?
(simple. so we can forget our own
miseries, these silent murderers
shooting us
for nothing.)

let us not be too silent.
are we not mistaken by them as
dead?

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Changed We Cannot Distinguish Anymore Which Is Which....

we are getting
older
and we have changed
a lot

at the store we
are not buying anything
at all

the house is full
and there is no place
for another
furniture

the grasses have
grown tall and the flowers
are choking
but who cares to weed
what is evil now?

it is like we're at
the pre-departure area
leaving for russia

or any place where we
have never been before
we like to feel this
excitement and leave
all the sadness behind

we have changed we cannot
distinguish anymore
which is which....

RIC S. BASTASA

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
We Have Decided To Start Anew....

under the moon
when talk is less
where poetry is more
like gaze and
touch

where words are
set aside as flowers from the vase
petals plucked
thorns and stalk thrown apart

we have decided to
start anew
with what prose is left
upon another
first kiss after fifty-four years

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Known What The Universe Is.

i think i become.
on that stone page, it says what i think i become.
it is the mind that shapes the eventualities of this and that
that body, that stone henge
what is justice and what is revenge
i become because i think.
this is not just the play of words,
there is no confusion but all fusions
that is what they think
and they become. recall that one evening
when we lay our bodies on the sand and watch all the stars.

we have known what the universe is.
and the stars sing, and meteors shoot
and silence sits on its throne of darkness.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have No Right To Tell Them How To Live..

yesterday we visited
the mountain
we walked for hours and
hours
until we reached this
small village of
natives who do not speak
our language

they say they are free
to roam the mountains and the forest
and kill animals
and eat them for food
they say they own everything here
and no one tells them what
to do with their lives

they hunt: kill and kill
they do not till the land
they say they own all of these
and they are not responsible
for any degradation
for any consumption

this is paradise and they do
not have to work at all.

we stayed for hours listening
and watching their world
their mountains and forest
we who have no right to tell
them how to live: the

road smells blood
the room of the house is a mess
children are left on the grounds
without their mothers
men smoke their pipes
women sit on the stairs
pulling some lice

the old men drink hard liquor
with the old women
when they die they are buried at
once without those long rituals

this is paradise they say
they spend it the way they want to
and we merely watch without saying
anything: we just pass by and it
will be soon that we leave and perhaps
forget that this is paradise for them.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Not Met Yet

as you read my poems
you imagine what my face would be
given said facts and thoughts like
the way i spend my nights writing
and facing the computer till twilight,
i must be thin, and since i have
lesser sleep, i must have dark
deep, sunken, almond eyes
like the insomniac's night,
my lips may have cracked
due to many coffee cups
giving liveliness to my lines,
my shoulders may have fallen,
due to extreme exhaustion,
my skin may have dried and
my hair may have been scattered
by the strong wind
like those poets who no longer
care for their health and hygiene.

i am sorry but you are wrong.
You have to see me to know me.
You have to touch my hand and
feel the warmth of my palms.
You have to touch my hair to
feel the softness of my soul.

i will that poet who orders plain
mineral water instead of beer.
I may wear a black coat but
there will be no white carnations
inside the pocket of my chest.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have Ourselves Still Intact Through These Years

she was adamant
confused
what good is left
what reason to keep
her alive

it is dawn
the world is still silent
there is no
light yet outside
the window
there is no moon
no sun

i caress her hair
'my dear
when did the bad
ever triumph
over the good?'

have hope
keep the courage
trust God
believe in you

and then we kiss
sorrow goodbye
and then we keep
peace in our hearts

what do we have?
we have ourselves
still intact through
these years

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have The Key

the images
tickle the skin around
my thighs

and they always
keep telling me
my name

and then i look
at them
and they look at me
and without
even the sign
of my finger

we simply understand
we belong here
we are happy with each other

this place has a name
but we are the only ones
who can utter it

we have the code
and you shall not see
the key
that opens the door
to our freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have The Storms On Time

We have the storms on time
in time for more stories to tell

A ship sank carrying a load
of 600 passengers lost and
unaccounted,

A loaded boat
lost in the middle of Surigao
Trench, 40 passengers lost
and unaccounted including
a new born child and a sick
mother and the expectant
father:

More stars are shining
tonight and then fade against
the black clouds and the strong winds.

And in the morning
a fifteen-minute silence
for all those that perished,
we say all our prayers in solemn silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have This Hope

that crime does not pay
that at the end the good will be triumphant
that the good shall be rewarded
the bad punished

we have this hope
inside our hearts

we insist on this hope
as though we own it

i guess my dear
we must also have some reservations for all these

as you said
in your hometown the bad guys win

RIC S. BASTASA
We Have To Live And Move On With Our Daily Lives..

at first
the killing calls
for attention
and attention is poured
like champagne
to a glass closely watched
by the customer

then the killing becomes
too rampant
everyday here and there
broadcast over the radio
tv, and rumored by
everyone in the city
and finally

it becomes a routine
nothing strange and people
get attuned
acclimated to the bloody
rain to the sounds of gunburst
to the harrowing nights
of being caught and shot

and those who at first
watch with curiousity
finally give up giving all
these attentions

busy with their lives
the do what is usual for
survival
home, office, church, market
back home, watch tv, eat
dinner, brush teeth, change
clothes and make love and
sleep tired of the whole's days
demands
and so the dead does not care
for the dead
and so the night passes away
the morning comes
the day ends
with nothing worth telling
anymore

and so the dead bury their
dead
and so the living says
we have to live and move on
with our daily lives....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Just Have To Make The Best Of It...

these are the lines of
a 90 year-old widower just put in the nursing home
trying to put the pieces again
those past parts
no longer fit as she agrees with her son
that she does not serve
any purpose
at all in that old house
with a closed door never to be opened again
how she resigned from the usual cooking and baking
and putting the flowers in the vase
half watered
as she talks to another wrinkled woman sitting next to her
she mutters, 'Lady, we just have to make the best of what we are now'

Then the other quipped, 'Do i look ninety? '

Outside the nursing home,
the snow begins to fall.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Keep The Pain Inside Us

we keep the pain
inside us, we feel happy too at times
but happiness seems to be
a bad teacher
whatever lesson is found there
we always easily forget

pain is magnificent
when it comes we really feel it
down to the last nerve
to the last marrow of our bones
even rattling
with the sound of its groans and wailings

and so here i am again
writing, learning, exposing
the poet of pain
unswerving, and you may not like this

i, am, this, poet,
this, pain, this, universe
where, you, also, revolve,
take, orbit, where,
you, are, a, part,
of, this, poem, please,
move, on, we, may, have,
this, needless, collision,

let me have
my way, i am about to
explode

RIC S. BASTASA
We Keep You Going

not just me
but we, we keep you going
riding on that train
the images meeting you
in a flash
of lightning
without the sound
of muscular thunder

the white wings
of solitude
heigtened in your haiku
the clouds of the
dry land
the rain trying to
make a new river
on that dry
bed

RIC S. BASTASA
We Know So Well

that things are seen
much better when
they are not so obvious,
more beautiful in
silhouettes
in the opaqueness
of the rain
glass,
in the indirectness of
faith,
in the depths of blue
when we learn
to dive.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Land On The Softness Of Home.

I am sitting on a stairway
just sitting here

i am not waiting for someone
just sitting here anyway

i am watching dusts and birds
flying low on the trees,

you know what? i have found peace
in all that come and go

watching all these make me feel
like what i am seeing: dusts, birds

too light with their own kind of wings,
and always moving or drifting

and i imagine how serene can nights
be when finally we land on the softness
of home.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Like To Be Reminded Of Our Presence

we get tired and try to take a nap
on a soft sofa in our sala

we lay there in silence
we do not want to talk
we simply want to close our eyes
and see things inside us

we remember a lot of things
a cup of coffee that we sip together
on a roadside cafe somewhere in france
we remember little things
like a pin, a ring, a handkerchief
then we move on to something
that knows what rotting means

a dry leaf, a mossy side of the pool
a dead tree, a rolling log, a cabin

then we get too engrossed in silence
and hazy places, a room dimly lit
by this halogen lamp creating a certain
warmth that we remember
some arms and hands and lips

we want something delightful
we begin to speak to someone beside us

how was your day? have you eaten your dinner?

then you transfer to your bed and then
you sleep and dream
with her beside you. You turn off the light.

Outside, it is dark like the color
of a woman's hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Like To Change Somehow

between our two houses
is a high wall and what
we see are only
the tips of trees when
we climb the stairs
and stay on top
between us is this old
feeling of envy
the anger that we have
inherited from our
origins and then we
claim that we are too busy
to resolve them we do not
bother talking about them
and so the houses stand tall
and proud as they are
our defenses against
our craving for
oneness
the walls are guards
of our weakness our
longing to call ourselves
with our very own
names

RIC S. BASTASA
We Like To View Reconciliation

great movies always have common themes
how the weak have become strong
or the poor
have risen above the levels of their poverty and
the defeat of exploitation
how mortal enemies after the years of war
have finally settled
for a reconciliation

the triumph of the good
above evil
how love conquers practically all
obstructions
how peace defeated war
how we have opted to hope rather than be lost in misery

in reality
there are more untruths

you tell me that these are possibilities
as i begin to be brave and silent
and then move away

RIC S. BASTASA
We Lose Sight Of The Face Of The Blue Clouds

as we step into the
clear water of the river
we create the ripples
we lose sight of the
face of the blue clouds
we find for ourselves
an embroidery of
drifting leaves

we dip our bodies to
the coolness of the water
i search for serene love
at the bottom where
you are waiting

we kiss and embrace
beside the slippery stone
the moss is green
each step as slippery as
an ell
each kiss and breath a
bubble we send
to the surface of the river

the water flows farther and farther
until we begin not to see
what happens next.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Love Them...

we give them pork
and let them drink milk
we give them superb baths
and thick towels
we offer them our beds
and let them have tan
in our beaches
my wife loves each of
them
and keeps them nice
company
and instructs them
english grammar

these dogs!

RIC S. BASTASA
We Love To Do Bad Behind Walls And When We Go Out We Like To Be Seen Unblemished

out there you are an angel and they always love the softness of your feathers
the innocence of your angelic face
your coyness
you make them feel so good and holy,

then you go inside your house, close the door and the windows
you remove your pair of wings
lay them on the corner of your resting place
you unlock the secret cover that keeps your holiness
you remove some parts here and there
and you look at the mirror and smile
how you fool everyone

you rub your body with the usual throbbings of your truths
comes out the sap of evil that your real body secretes foul
dirty
pungent
and all these things
you really love to eat when you are left all alone,

the body of a wolf, the face of the demon,
the tail of a snake
the teeth of the shark
the poison of the tarantula

it is you and your liquids and sap
inside you
everything is evil

tonight you will think of other new thoughts schemes, ways and manners of projections for your future
you sleep and dream
accustomed to evil you have killed your conscience

tomorrow, soon,

the people will know, something deep within you
keeps whispering.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Move On No Matter What....

at that dead end
we let things go
we let people be
we narrow down to
what is here and
what we are and
what we will be.

and so if cesar
does not know how
to live or if papa
by his own hands
removes all the
gadgets for life
support or if the
old neighbor who
is abandoned by all
his children does not
open the window of her
house what can we do?

we all let them be.
we all let them be.

and we shall bring
flowers for the dead
and we light candles
for their souls and
we say all the prayers
that we can muster
during those long hours
of mourning

and then we move on
with our own lives
always learning new
things new tricks
new ideas and we
make a promise
we go on, we move on
no matter what....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Move On, We Have To, If We Do Not, What Are We?

the eye for beauty
has malfunctioned

what used to be a sharp
color has become a blunted
dullness

there were no blinks
the stares are stabbing right into the
heart of the matter

what is happening to you?
why did you succumb to such a stillness?

idol of the sculptress
the new prince of the trees?

we move on, we have to,
if we do not, what are we?

RIC S. BASTASA
We Need All These

we need some flowers to ease the dimness
when darkness shrouds our thoughts

we need the moon's sheen to assuage the sickness
that invades our spirits
after a hard day's work
we need to unwind and relax and sit and watch
from our chairs the trees below
the winding paths
the fading of the light

we need the conversations
after the meetings
the closed doors that we finally open
the sound of steps leaving

we need the walk with someone
hand in hand
between the needed silence

we need the sound of spoons and forks
the sound of hot water from the teapot
we need all these to bring us again
to our youthful memories
about whatever good we once did
about whatever faults we have mended.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Need Not Complicate

in our simplicity here
when we ask you if you need dinner
we do not allow you to ask for choices
we cannot afford it
we merely want you to answer
either yes
or no.

RIC S. BASTASA
We No Longer Have Cookies This Time.

that capacity to
not agree but still
tolerate a
discussion which
gives you that feeling
that something's wrong
but just the same you
continue sitting on
that chair fronting
his as both of you from
time to time
sip hot coffee, black
and strong
to make both of you
wake up for another
acceptable bitterness

Life is always a taxi
that you have to take.
You pay every for every
ride. Every meter is
money.

Still waiting for the
spectacular, as you watch
beyond this glass which
keeps the silence decent.

now we like it as always
hot and bitter.
black and will always be
black.

we no longer have cookies
this time.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Offer Fifteen Minutes Of Silence For The Japanese Victims......

(R..........................) ........................................
..........................................................................
.........................................................................
........................................................................
........................................................................
........................................................................

RIC S. BASTASA
We Once Had All These

bridges that fell down to the river
roads that end
dead,
ships that sink and touch
the bottom of
the ocean
abandoned houses
forests and murky waters of the lake
misty mornings
foggy nights
floating states and nowhere thoughts
fists clenched
sewn lips, bored teeth,
bound legs, and tangled hair
bruises and wounds
scars and fluffy eyes
deaths in November
a December that failed to connect.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Prefer The Mystery Of Our Faith

we always want to like
what we do not understand
what we understand most
becomes too familiar
and true to the saying what is
too familiar
becomes contemptible
we prefer the mystery of our
faith
and to keep us alive
we begin to refuse to understand
afraid that soon
nothing is interesting anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
We Pretend We Play With Words

to soothe the choking effects of the day,
and those days that come to us like two walls
while we lay helpless in between, we pretend

we pretend to play with words, like we are simply
children scribbling words on the floor beyond
the ambit of paper

we pretend that this writing is nothing but little games.
we like to be just light feathers floating in the wind
looking at the petal of the flower
trying to choose which patch of grass to land,

we pretend this is just that
doodles, noodles, needles, needles, doddles,

we pretend that this writing poetry has nothing to do
with what we are: feelings like words in a crossword puzzle

we tinker with meanings, we like to experiment with moods,
like handpainting on the walls and spraying paint
at the fences of our bad neighbors

trying to evade laws, of falling and flying and rising and dropping,
this is just a play of words, do not ask me again if i am in between the
lines if there are tears there, or that laughter and mockery is hidden
underneath the cover of heavy sheets of sentences

we pretend there is nothing to all these.
when we stop, when that right time comes

it will be dark, and we like children all stop playing and shouting
and running and kidding and calling each other names

when we stop it is always dark. The fear is lost. It is time to go.
Home. Where we are united with our loved ones. Where we begin to
speak the truth about us. Where we sleep. Where all the lights are
turned off.
We give way for the moon to shine above our silent roofs.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Quit Because Words Are Just Hindrances To What We Become.....

we have long
spoken
our biases are
speaking
we have long exposed
what we feel
how we choose words
how we arrange them

sometimes we reject
too much thinking

could be destructive
and we embrace
spontaneity

writing as we please
leaning on first impressions
on first thoughts
not sifting
not even sensing what is here and there
just this and then go

in the long run
we write because there is something in us
which we cannot say bluntly
and bluntly to others

there is no fear somehow
but who knows if we could be wrong?

i've seen sunsets and sunrises
i have no thoughts there
just the plain viewing of their
natural transformations
how scenes change without the use of words
how light comes and break dawns
how morning is here without a greeting

it wont be long
when we do not use words anymore
when we say
we quit because words are just hindrances
to what we become.....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Rock

whatever it is
political, social, physical,
metaphysical

flesh, spirit, evil
good, air earth
sand rock
bird or stone
hammer or nail

keep writing black white
yellow brown

we rock.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Shall Give It Sense...

an empty jar
outside the house

it is raining
and the glass windows are
misty

the waters begin to rise
clouds are still heavy
and dark

outside the winds are strong
and it is getting colder

the coconut trees are dancing
and the leaves are flying

doves roost in their umbrella house
and chickens and roosters keep
strict company in the pens

an empty jar is filled with
water and there is no hole inside it

there is an overflowing
and it is what i am feeling

i am giving it sense
we shall give it sense

this emptiness, this rain, this cold,
this umbrella house,

there are no holes in them.
doves and chickens and roosters.
pens.
We Shall Meet Soon

we shall soon meet
and i shall wear the best of what i have
an off-white shirt
the khaki pants, clear reading glasses
i'll sport my shortest hair
i'll wear my black shoes with mud on its side
no socks, no wrist watch, no cell phone,
nothing to smoke, nothing to say
no word from me when we meet
i will sip my coffee beside you
no promises no talks about heaven
neither hell, you talk i will listen,
you tell me stories i will be patient
tell me more about hellos
skip the sad stories about goodbyes.
let there be no time that runs
you keep on talking
i shall listen. And if you wish
kiss me and we shall not mind
what they will say.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Shall Return There Again

kini ang wala na nimo makita
gusto nimong ilubong
ang imong hulagway

this is what you have not seen
you want to bury
those images

diha sa likod sa balay nga nipa
sa kilid sa punoan sa nangka
nga wala na mamunga
sa layo dili na nimo

at the back of your house made of nipa shingles
beside the langka tree
which did not bear fruits
at the distance you cannot

kaayo maklaro ang usa ka iro
nga puti nga dunay puntik
nga itom sa iyang wala nga mata
gutom nangarol bahong
patay nga baki

anymore see clearly that dog
with a black make on its eye
hungry and sickly and smelling
like a rotten dead toad

wala na'y tawo kining balaya
hagbay ra namong gibiyaan

no one lives in this house anymore
it was long ago that they left

ang nagpabilin lamang
mao angmga handurawan
nga nagpunay og hinuktok
sa kilid sa bintana
nga hagbay rang nadugta

what is left here are only the memories
which are restless
by the side of the window
which was also rotten

gibilitik ang iro
ghimong sumsuman
sa mga palaignt

the dog was trapped
made as viand
by the drunkards

ang lubi nga tigulang
wala gyoy mga pulak

the old coconut tree
did not bear fruits anymore

ang kabaw gikitlan
ug ilang gipaambitan

the buffalo was butchered
and they shared the loot

ang dalan nangliki na
gumikan sa dakong hulaw

the path cracks
because of the drought

kini ang dili mo
gusto nga mabati apan
sayod ko sa pag-abot
sa saktong panahon ato lang
gihapon balikan
this is the one that you
do not like to feel but i know
that the time will come
on that ripe moment
we shall return there again

RIC S. BASTASA
We Shall Soon Be The Same

we shall
be one
for sooner
because
you keep on
following me
wherever i am
you shall
sound like me
and
then when you
look at the
mirror
you shall look
like me

misery
has only one
face

now it is
ours

misery has
one
familiar sound
distinctly

ours
now.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Shared The Same River

we shared the same
river
same youth but we
parted just the same
like everyone
who knows what a river is
how it branches like
a tree
and yet seeing the same
sun
how rivers part like the way
we divide our hair
still situated on the same
face

i always remember this
and i despise regret what we did not
do when we could have done it.

RIC S. BASTASA
we sit inside this lonely train
on a trip
that we have chosen
i look at you
writing on your laptop
but you do not mind
when our eyes meet
i evaded you by looking
over the window
the trees that pass us
and the mountains
like game cards shuffled
before us
in such a fast speed
as i see it
you look
like this poet wanting
to be alone by himself
i am a poet too
in my own right
in my own far place
away from you
i want to ask you some
existential questions
but you are so busy
and so engrossed
in deep moving thoughts
sensing our irreconcilable
differences you close
everything and transfer
to another room
wanting to be alone
with no one to talk to
except yourself
and here i am
talking to myself
like a cheap copycat
We Start

we start
as usual and as
what they always tell us
and what we also do
from the beginning
like a lazy waking up
in the morning
and we stretch our arms
like a cat yawning
and we move through the
day till noontime
and we work so hard
earning our bread and butter
and leaving so many
other important things
behind us
until we reach this
darkness of our lives
where our flesh
surrenders
and the bone gets
lonelier each hour
and then we reach the
end when we ask
where are we
and why?

sadness
seals what we
once left open
locking in
everything we
should have done
that early morning

RIC S. BASTASA
We Still Do Not Really Know Where

do not be
tempted to take this
matter
as a game of words

words are merely tools

boats where we take ride
for a while

wings which we wear
so we can be in places of
the heart

we do not wish to be birds
and be birds

neither do we take strengths
from rigs and
paddles

we are singers here
chanters

we are bringing with
us the clarity of
our destinations

we sing because there is
a need
we speak because our
silence needs
be broken sometimes

to comfort us
to bring us to places
we long
but we still do not really
know where
RIC S. BASTASA
We Still Have Love...

we start with the tradition of life
we begin as bodies
tasting the fire of the flesh
savoring each moment
of skin and bones
and hair

time has a crucible
it tests us
about what we are
what are our intentions
what is in our hearts

our bodies are taken
the flesh weakens
the fire subsides
the skin loosens from the hold of the bones
the bones crack
the hairs have fallen
into surrender

we have become mere minds
intangible intentions
our hearts lose the sounds of the drums of life

we have no more hands to hold with each other
we have become the wind
we breathe into each other
the love that shall then be forgotten

we have become the sighs of the earth
into the darkness of its nights

what then my love? must we transcend the havoc that life
has caused upon us?
tomorrow, the eyes of death shall stare at us

we must decide
let not any stone of earth
be disappointed

we still have love
beyond and above.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Take Joy And We Set Aside Sadness

what we share is time
but greater than time are the memories
that we make and
what we mean are the great times of
our lives
both of us having always a good time
savoring sushi in saisaki
or merely sitting down our faces
facing the wind and the sun
on that beach island

but greater than these
great times
are what? there could be none
but that which takes us back to square one
or ground zero
where is that place
and what time is it
whom are you with

and then we do not remember
but here in this tropical place
we have no time to cry
we take things lightly
we take joy and we set aside sadness

if we cannot remember
they know what we do
and we also know what they do
we just laugh it out...

RIC S. BASTASA
We The Busy Ones

we proclaim
we are the busy ones
they call us the
bees
we work all day
extending our arms and legs
to the night
we work till dawn
we too make love
we compose ourselves
arrange our faces
like flowers and leaves
and twigs
we work and work
till we find that
rest....

don't think of death

go find another date
gather the ripe dates
in the desert
have a big plate
savor the taste in your palate.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Think Life Stops

life stops
like the way we hold each other's
hands at dawn
and then we simply feel nothing

like the way i put my right leg on top of your
thighs and
you say nothing

life stops when we think there is nothing
significant about ourselves anymore

there is nothing
in your belly and there is nothing
in my veins

we think life stops
like the way we keep on going
because we cannot stop to keep on
moving

we think
life stopped

but actually life never stops
even when we think it stopped moving

even when we
actually stop loving

RIC S. BASTASA
We Trace Our Roots

depressed

there are ways of tracing our roots
where we come from
why we are here

how our forefathers braved
the seas and survived the big waves
of uncertainties
the cold, dark nights of their fears

how they all believed in dreams
how they trusted the direction given by the stars
how they solidified their hearts
with faith and hope
and love

as i listen to all of you talk about the stories
of our ancestors
my mind begins to to grow and travel
like roots
deep down the earth
tracing some humus
where i must live again
perhaps ever braver than the pioneers

they are our ancestors
and i think, they still believe that since we come from them
we must all be like them,

my dear cousin, now we have become the roots ourselves
and another child shall come
in the future
and listen some more, wanting to become branches and leaves and flowers

RIC S. BASTASA
We Two Together...

i do not wish to change you
when we met, we already have minds of our own,

i can only love you,
&
it is a love that is so strong, and it can change the course of your river

i can only care for you,
and it is so cautious and gentle that it can make you rethink and perhaps change the way you look at things and events,

i can only kiss you and hug you and make love with you
and it is so intense and intimate that it can make you forget who you were once

and can make you know that in this place of earth
we two have become one
our eyes now looking towards the same direction....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Two, Still In This Together

we sleep too early
we must be getting old

then we wake up at 2 o'clock
and we are not surprised

we feel the need to talk
about almost anything

we feel thirsty and we go to the kitchen
we are the only people here

taking emotions till dawn
no one hears us in this isolation

we are fenced with so much privacy
we lose time

we have forgotten to synchronize with the world now
when they are asleep here we are waking up to take our meals

we shun television
we go for sitting together and remembering

we must be old, and even older than we think
we do not talk about love

we support each other's need to be with the other
we face each other and once again discern

about how lonely could this world be
if we parted ways and live our lives independently

we exchange feelings like gifts
and always excited what we can find

hidden beneath our hearts
opened by the careful hands of our minds...
We Walk Naked In The Rain

we walk in the rain, we walk naked in the rain
we like the shower in nude, we like the droppings of rain in our nudity

dripping in our curving naked bodies, in eroticism
to all the waters slowly crawling around us to all the dainty showers from above us

the droplets the heavy rain, the coldness dripping in our chins, our lips, pelvis, legs and toes
and the warmth now enclosed between us.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Want To Cage Something That Flies Away
Thinking That This Makes Us Happy For A While Until
It Dies And We Mourn For Our Own Wrongs....

i must admit
that my eyes are failing me

but the mind is still as
strong as my ambition

the hands too which in outsmarting
the mind and the heart
opens up to hold the air
and enclose it like a blue bird.

we want to cage something that
flies away
thinking that this makes us happy
for a while until it dies and we mourn
for our own wrongs....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Children Once....

a little girl in the
office is a subject of
the complaint by the other
members of the staff,

a sore presence
a disruption of office work
she creates mess
and dirties the furniture
with candy wrappers

seeing all this i have
to decide
i opined, ' she is only
a child once,
so let her be'

how can they object?
to the truths of what
we once were
perhaps even worse....

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Crazy Enough Not To Believe Them

we had
in ateneo during those days
of our youth
that crazy day where fr. finster
wore a basketball net
and he did not smile at all
while we watch at him
wondering why can't we do
the same
for he was a man of stature
a priest always in the service
for others
in fact he died while
administering God to the
prisoners.

oh ask us, we were crazy too
and we could not forget that
when they told them that we
shall arrive at nothing.

we were crazy enough not to
believe them
those we believe in themselves
too much
that they had not doubt
whether they were right.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Once There Before

on a moonlit night
the shadows of the coconut trees
and the grasses
and the hut come to my mind
again

and i exclaim
how beautiful are these simple things

above them
purple clouds like a cape
beside a pearl moon
above it
a tiny star like
diamond

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Talking

about failures and i told her
i am not afraid of failures
they do not kill me
they are but postponed successes
in our lives
that i am no longer bound by failures for long
that they do not harm me
that we are incharge and things and people harm us
only if we allow them
we are the kings of our thrones
our territories are within our grasp
we breathe and we give life to what is near us
we are the doors
and we only let in
those that we love and who can love us in return
we shut ourselves
from pain
and we make each pillar of our kingdoms
strong

we were talking about love
and we like to be silent from then on

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Talking Under The Talisay Tree

we were talking under the talisay tree
about our future
one summer
when the leaves are brown
and falling to the ground

where the red ants
are busy taking their food
under a heap of
dry leaves

we will be there
to reach our destinies

but we may not be there
together

there is always a season for me
and for you
the wisdom lies in the waiting
the goodness in the waiting

and the beauty that we will see
lies in the content of our eyes
the tranquility of the pond
where the moss begins
to grow again
in stones.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Were Their Makers...

and then i told them the
truth of this and that
and they will not believe
that we
who have taught them
what life is
and how it should be spent
that they have to be somewhere else
beyond the limits
of themselves

shall simply remain
on the chairs beside the
table outdoor
sipping the usual
hot green tea
amidst the cold mist
of morning
not being ever tired
of watching the
last stars to
disappear having
shone so well last
night
when we were so silent
and simply
being sensitive
and carefully
watchful

RIC S. BASTASA
We Who Are Patient, We Who Are Silent....

keeping what is due us
has always been our noble art,
sometimes we are counted as the
foolish few, not having anything to brag
except our not much spread
diary on integrity,
we have not multiplied much and
most of you hint that perhaps our lineage
is cursed, but we do not mind much talk really,
our revered silence is another noble
outdated technology,
we also give what is due to all of you,
keeping in mind, that the Goddess of Good Karma
is not asleep, but just sitting in patience,
slow paced, and cautious not to harm
the unwanted harmful grass.

we are patient too, and spiders inhabit
in the webs of our overworked eyes,
we are mocked, and we lower down our gaze
to the feet of the earth
we always get rain with the rain
scorched, nevertheless by the sun
but we are still thriving, despite.

one day, we shall hear about the death of laughter
and what we can always show and still be proud of
is our restrained smile.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Who Keep These Realities In Our Hearts Are Not Hurt Anymore.

taste buds change
times change a lot
people change as often
as the weather of the
day
changes change
change changes
we are all open doors
some arrive some leave
the door too
has a way of closing and
opening itself
sometimes the wind does it
the heat though
has its own influences
leaves fall, buds grow
cocoons simply let go
what is kept inside it
things happen
as they happen
i know all these
we all know these
and we who keep these
realities in our hearts
are not hurt
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Who Keep Thinking

look at us
we who keep thinking
whose days run
like undecided metaphors
our bodies are bloating
with words
fattened with what we
grope and
cannot fully understand
eyelashes bent like
Nike
eyes that are strangers
to blink and wink
there is no more care
how this world goes
we, who keep thinking
stand on feet dissolving
on fingers that become
keyboards
we, are, reduced
to nothing but
your thoughts.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Who Want To Do Things Right...

there are many of us still
roaming
finding another opening
after a series of exits
there are less doors
for us
who still want to do things
right,

and we keep on looking
and we are not finding anything
we retreat
in a corner and close the door again
open the window
for thin air
and here again
back to the lines that comfort us
poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Will Be Ready.....

writing upon the surface of the water
foams of the sea sprung from winds and seagulls
hovering for some fish from the grey clouds
upon a cold morning by the port

out there the silhouettes of fishing boats and horizon fill our view of this earth

while we wait we take coffee and little talks about what happens when our small world is taken away from these terrorists

how are we in this waiting contentment our inability to carry arms and be like them willing to kill and die if necessary.

we dread blood and we cannot afford another bloody revolution which caused the disappearances of our forefathers.

when pushed against the wall what can be done? we look at each others' eyes and arrive at the same conclusion: we will be ready.

RIC S. BASTASA
We Will Go Inward To The Mind's Intimate Intricacies

i will be sad today
a new road is constructed
sort of shortcut leading to my village
direct to the veins of the city
gloom rules my day
the sun dips below the eaves
no tree is spared
old
and many of the new ones too are felled
in the name of
progress,
i revolt to this
but i bow to that

i am helpless,
i will be one of the steps going away
back
to that old road
where the trees shall grow freely, taller and proud
on this long and
winding road
intense going inwards to the tranquility
of the mind's
intimate intricacies

RIC S. BASTASA
We Write Because....

we write
beyond their frames of reference

we write because we have traveled so well
this journey of life
seemingly without end

so many things to see still
so many places to traverse
rivers to cross
skies to fly our hours

so many bridges of this world
so many black birds dissolving in fading afternoons

so many waves that sing of folding times
so many mountains gummed

so many sorrows and joys
kids begging on the streets
prostitutes strutting their bodies on long and lonely and hungry nights

so many decent men and women nonspeaking their ways
on airport halls
lots of sounds on the malls
sipping silences on private beaches
exclusive hotels

blending colors
mixed scents
intriguing dialogues
colliding bodies
salty sweat
cranky faces
all sorts, all sorts
of intricacies
and idiosyncrasies

a very interesting
world
indeed, indeed!

so many people with their mouths eager to tell
the stories of their lives

i walk, i listen, i keep my mouth shut
i write

we write because there are people who want their stories to be written

we are all ears now,
and fingers too

must you ask me when shall i stop?

let them all shut up.

RIC S. BASTASA
We, Here

water on our toes
we look down the minutest detail
of this
wandering

moss and pebbles
sand and
foams
and clouds and
winds

up there
we shall not be shut
like night

RIC S. BASTASA
We, Here,

we, here,
we are like stones

there are no hands
that clap
no mouths that make
the praise

we are like the stones
of the shores of the sea

about to be annihilated
by the convolutions of time and thoughts.

RIC S. BASTASA
We, Here, Together

we all die
the goal is not to live forever
but to create something that will,

but even though
then or
that you have not created something that will last forever

well,
nothing lasts forever,

so just stay cool,
if you die, or i die, and we do not really know when

well, it's cool
it our nature,

we don't last forever
we can't last forever,

so, what then?
you're here and i am here
that is what really matters

for the moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
We, How Can We Be Lonely?

We. How can we claim that we are lonely?
We raise their skirts, we grow among the wild flowers
We are taking the climb of mountains and trees
We make windows, and raise brick walls, and
Slide on wooden floors
We are sustained by our laughter and whistling
On those threatening days
Until this day
Not thinking that we end, or that days fold up
And lay hidden in the cabinets of silence
This cup
How can this be empty? How can life diminish?
We fill this up, we make it overflow its brim.
We make life the way we must.
We are strong and determined.
We believe in ourselves.
We believe in the force within us.
With God, who can be against us?

RIC S. BASTASA
We, The Quantities...

they shall search for one
for only one
and take pride in it
as treasure of a
lifetime

i am not that one
for i belong to the many
those series of
words like trains like
ordinary public commutations
boring whirring sounds
others call it pollution of
traffic sounds in the city

i am not the one
i am the many and no one loves this kind
the faces of themselves that
they hate
in the quantity

the ordinary foulness
that's left in the canals where dead rats
lie
those that they avoid
reminding them of their own
lousy selves

the ordinary air that everyone breathes
and yet have
taken for granted
for air is quantity like the sea and the oceans
they are not the one
they are the many
the masses, the crowd, the ants and
beehives and

the pebbles of the rivers
whose faces are all the same
not one unique
for the altar of fame

we are all in these
the quantity....

RIC S. BASTASA
We...

we are the ones
whom they record in their history books
as weak
for we are the ones who took sympathies
as friends
we are the ones put in the final chapters
of their novels
as the losers
for we are the ones whom they kill at the
end of their page
we have loved that much
even to the destruction of our own images
the annihilation of our
selves
we are the ones whom they decide
to be erased from their bill boards
they think
we are the cause of the failure of the earth
the explosion of the star
and the melting of the glaciers
we have flooded the rivers with unnecessary
whimpers
we are the cold ones who have lost the fires
of our existence
because we have given everything
because we have been foolish enough to
lose what we have earned
because we have loved more than we can
afford
and they think that we deserve
to perish from their plans
and visions

but we never blame them
and we do not worry more than they are worried about us
we know what we want
and we do what we feel we can
what we think is just and right
yes, we are weak because we have loved more than what is required
we have given what we do not even own
because we think that this is not the place where we bury our hearts
that there is another destination
higher and more beautiful
more stable
in fact permanent and truthfully
as promised
eternal.

RIC S. BASTASA
We....Are... What We Are...

we feast upon words
plate upon plate
and in magnificent
courses from the
Chinese chef

the words are
salty and
the sulfates are
somnambulists

we showed bloated
heads
and they begin to laugh
we look like
cheap poets making it
on
not so well attended
blog-sites

we wish we are bombs
killing some
racists and
pigs and
pachyderms

the days are over
we are into this sickness into this
common death
like whales finally finding
their destinations into some
bloody blobs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Weakened

weakened
he finds a
place for himself
where he
can be out of
touch

he begins to
remember
'so long'

'hasta la vista
con dios'

RIC S. BASTASA
Wear Wigs

Conceal yourself in wigs
Sunglasses, false eyelashes
Colored lens
Wear a mask

And let us kiss
Like
Mannequins

Let us see how we feel.

Wait, this is good, I am not
Feeling anything. This is very good.

Who wants love, who wants to get hurt?

RIC S. BASTASA
Weary Hands Weary Feet

you long for something intact
like a cover of a jar
sealed and where air is
trapped with
the cookies,

something sweet to see
the tongue salivates upon
of dream inside
a glass

you wish upon something definite
the mere yes or no
nothing about a sophistication
a labyrinthine
scheme into a escape into
somewhere

what you have however in your hand
is a pool of thread
a circuitous distance concentrated
within

when you spread it it rolls
and you leave it there
gaping into
somewhere

and then
losing hope to find
what is at the
end

you walk away
just that

RIC S. BASTASA
Weaving Stories....

i am a bit
weird, mostly suspicious

the usual questions i 
ask

are you married? how many
kids?
what do you do for a living?

and then i begin to
weave my own stories

and people feel how kind
i am

putting them there with
that usual ending

and they all live happily
ever after

and as you all know
most of these are not really true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wedding Notes (Planta, Bacolod)

i

from the heart
she sings
her passion to
the groom
who
surprised in
such joy
profusely
tears fall
like pearls
on the
floor

ii

the food perhaps
fall short
the simplicity
was
enough
to quell the
longings of the heart
it was her passion
above all
that made the occasion
more
memorable

iii

when passions reach
the heights of
flames
when the heart burns
like
a ball of fire
we have no more words
we can offer
only bouquets of magnificent silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Weekend To Remember

please don't look at me light that
don't gaze at me that long
i have a weekend to remember
i cannot yet tell you
about the excitement of the place
the sun there and the sea
one day it rains and then the rainbow
on time came
i smile and take the walk of my life
on the white sands and
calming waves
the sounds of folding and unfolding
palms of the water
the shells singing silence in the winds
thoughts taking wings
and flying to the high mountains
trees that know how to dance with me
dews on early morning so pearly
don't take a hard look at me
just understand
i am on my trance again
on some things that i want to become true.

go away and understand, i know how to manage
my life, i know, i know,
i can still sit and stand and dance and sleep.
these basics of living
leave them all to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
We have Become Small Suns In The Darkness Of Our Nights

what you see
was simple half of
the visible

the rest lies in what
we usually want to forget
not wanting to
see clearly

we bury what we cannot
fathom
we throw away what we
cannot hold for long

i too was awed by what
you claim by heart
you know

when i go there again
i saw the same thing
i do what you do
in the silence of our
wrongdoings

when we meet again
we keep saying
about the midnight candles
that we burn

we too have become small suns
in the middle of the
night

we take light and we shall
never die
Weighing The Dolors From The Glories....

he got a measuring tape
and measured the length of possible regret
the volume of remorse
and the chapters of tragedy
all possibilities that his personality can
afford
all that conscience can buy
and he found out
that the amount of happiness obtainable is obviously
lesser compared to the risk of
isolation, the insomniac nights
the cost of psychiatric sessions
and the prescriptive drugs

the wide ocean of guilt and the storms of the raging furies
of myths
him against universe, the humanity,
how can he ever survive?
and so he stopped,
went back home, sat on the chair facing the window

half-open
his eyes are empty
his words are choking him
he is gagging
to the last scene that it was him that used the gun against himself
he did not do it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Weight

uneven weights
struggling on the broad shoulders
of the heart
and the slimy forehead of the
brain,

the body suffers with no one
helping

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome

welcome
brother
i will take you to
a succession of images,

my thoughts,
about
this family
all our
emotions passing through
the ancestral mind

during sleep
we will be the
objects seen
involuntary  on this
daydreaming

the reverie.
an aspiration
do you still need
A trip to Europe
your  wild
and vain fancy?

we summon
unreal beauty,
charm, we strive for
excellence.

oh something
in a very remote way

I wouldn't dream of asking you
or them
to reconsider
things and options

suppose,
what if?

i dream away the afternoon.
ideal? hmmm, not really

do not turn me off
i am real
touch my fingers
they wriggle

i sometimes
dream up
the most impossible
plan.

those with
unusual vividness,
clarity,
order,
and significance,

do not be turned
off
i am real
i am the one that rambles and
rumble
and mumble
and bubble up

like a gum on your cheek

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome 2009, Let Happiness Come, And Sadness Too.

you welcome happiness and success
then you must also welcome the ugly ones
and sadness
with equal lengths of your arms

i think, in life, that is fair enough.
there shall be no forced happiness
there shall be no denial of sadness

welcome all, say yes to everything
what is there left for us to choose?

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome Back

welcome back brother
now back to this place
you must change the clothes you are wearing
you must talk in our language
you must now feel what we are
with our longings
for peace
with our common vision
for our future
you must sing our songs and learn the kind of march we do
you must listen to our poetry
you must learn the prayers of our ancestors
and our heroes

now, this is the cup of blood
you must now drink it in one shot

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome Back To The Philippines

nice to hear that you're coming home
for a vacation
i am (shall we say) overjoyed,
is it not an exaggeration of the
anticipation, or just an over reaction,
but just the same

we welcome you to our little abode
the maroon painted gate will be opened
and dinner shall be served: possibly
dinuguan (do you still eat a bloody menu?)
or ginataan (remember the coconut milk
and gabi leaves and some anchovies?)
or pork adodo (we will make it crisper)
and of course, the lechon de leche
(baby pig roasted and crispy to the tongue)

just a little feast and some stories to tell
with some friends, a little reunion, and talks
perhaps about some wounds
(that want to heal) and some miserable things
(i think i must keep them buried alive
in my heart, or these matters may spoil
the party, but i know we have them in some
ways, and the darker the night, the one without
the moon and stars, the more silent and deep
the night becomes, when perhaps we get
drunk a little bit, sad stories become so
relevant and realistic and possibly everyone
will have the desire to talk and be honest and
just be candid about the realities of pinoy soap)

i look forward to your coming, we wait, in fact
we are excited, of course, i will tell susan, and the
rest of the other happy (& lonely) people of this country

that, well, you have postponed your climb of Mt. Fuji,
because your guide met an accident, and as an option
you have decided to visit your country and your father
and his new wife, (something to scrutinize, later)

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome Home

welcome home!

papa is dead, mama is dead
grandpa is dead

welcome home!
this is your home now
all for you to own

the sad memories are gone
this is home, this is your house
now you can be yourself..

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome Stranger To Another World

it is almost dark when i arrive
at this place,
beside the cemented road
a garden of wilting flowers
petals are filled with dust
the trees along the way
towards a bungalow
are shedding off leaves,
sonorous, the place is getting
strange to me with its own
kind of quiet
the door of the house is half open
the swing on the side is not moving
the air is strong
and leaves begin to be flown away
i enter the door
dusting my shoes on the carpet
scarlet in hues
light is filtered by dark green curtains
i remain standing
and you are there waiting
for this final talk
it is strange for i feel
that i do not belong to this place
anymore
i am taking away all my stories
and a book of poems
there is only one thing
i like to say to you
we make an agreement
there will be no more elaborations
no justifications for our past actions
nothing hurting or unkind
we are tired of the pain

i am leaving.

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome The Sweet Sound Of Silence

i choose
less but i think
they're better
now.
i set aside
the noise of
glib.
i welcome the
sweet sound of
silence.
minimize. prune.
cut.
leave only what
is best.
i am not alone
in this.
you are with
me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome To A Safehouse

this may look like
the house of a dove
for it has but one
pillar

for it has many windows
without an enclosure

it towers above them
almost touching
the hands of the wind

the sounds of cries
are as gentle as the early morning waves
on storms that fail to come

not much words here
just signs and
gazes

this the house of my mind
the doves of my thoughts
on the pillar of
privacy
on the windows of openness
no dogmas here
but freedom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome To The Concrete Jungle

Tarzan and Jane
Are you now ready?

Welcome to this
Concrete jungle

Be prepared to kill
Without knives and stones

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome To The Door Of Freedom

dthis is the door of freedom
you just got in
i have a room beyond this room
no one has entered yet
between this door and my room
is a space
this is where some pieces of my are left
but soon they will be taken back
to be kept inside my palms
to be hidden once again from you

when you get in
you will be introduced to the ritual of knowing
what you do not know
what you cannot know
what shall be hidden forever from you
and you shall be a little bit
disappointed

but you must insist
you have to repeat your name many times
you will sort out the letters
there are onions and chilies
they will make you cry

and then you will wish upon another door
this time it is your door
towards your own room
you will doubt about breathing
about windows and exits
and then you begin to ask
if all these are worth it

you decide.

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome To This Place Where Brother Kills Brother

volcanoes erupt
and magma flows and
all the sea and land
becomes covered
with stone

earthquakes come and
tsunamis are born
and another race of
humanity shall be effaced
from the faces of this
earth

cataclysms
orgasmic violence
raptures and departures
brokenness of landscapes
rigged beauties
plundered floors of
oceans shun

structures and men
nature and humanity
man and earth
and sky and mountains

do not be amazed
violence is a stair
you simply have to step
and rise and arrive
to the room of our
final destination

sleep and rest and
be prepared for another
day of violence.

it is normal and they
do not deny that so must
we accept without any
feeling of remorse

welcome to this place
where brother kills brother
where every line divides
a territory
where gates and fences fail
to solve what is in and what
is out.

RIC S. BASTASA
there are always two sides
one must rationalize that everything will always turn out right
inside out
when it is too far and tiresome on the other side
it makes you see what you have not seen
from the nearness of
blindness of this side of life

you begin to realize there is no end on the other side
it always extends and then extends further like a pi and
returns again from where you are sitting like a comma of a sentence

and from what you have written, tired and lonesome,
wanting to put an end to your self defacing sentences
you feel like
another line has to be made
since another door of lengthy thread of thoughts opens for you
as soon as you close
another paragraph like the way you seal a vent
in the wall of your boredom.

always it says: welcome
welcome
welcome and so you rise and tell yourself

i like it
i am alive and each moment is as precious as
a grain of sand kept in my pocket
after that bath in the midnight sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome, Welcome.

welcome, welcome,
welcome back my friend,
says the room that readies
the bed and the dimming light.

welcome, welcome, take your time,
do not reflect much, it is not necessary.
hug the bed and talk to the cat.

be sensitive. be kind. be so understanding.
to a confused self, be always a mother.
welcome, welcome.
you are home now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Welcome...

one must always
decide to be
happy

i always tell myself that

others have no time
deciding for us
that way

i always do it
giving justice to my
existence

if sadness comes
it is not mine

if it stays
because it loves me

so? i am always a lovable person
loving to a certain extent
what i do not have and cannot own

sadness
is an alien
i have all these
curiosity to know it well sometimes
& so
it stays with me
comforted by my decision
that i welcome
everyone
everything that comes inside
my house
my heart

life is a house where i live
welcome guests, welcome!
Well, Anyway....

they keep saying
God is not a set of teeth

which we of course laugh at
for we understand the point of
his sarcasm

the lady senator did not jump out
of the plane to fulfill your wish that
she better be dead

she died anyway and now you must be happy

then another guy is challenging the not so innocent
fat lady for a duel of their bar examination rating

he would not resign anyway

there are many Pinocchios in this world
and Peter Pans too

and prophets and MOseses and Eves and Adams,
and if you join the band, there will be
too many of you in this wagon

i am as guilty as you
but you can always deny it.

i go unpunished and you are sad.
You keep on criticizing but you did nothing
just the same.

well, anyway...

RIC S. BASTASA
Well, I Told You Once

do not blame me for this
i have already told you once

some things be better left buried
under the stones under the grass

the earth is wise, it knows what
and where and when and why

you insist somehow to know what
is underneath and here you are

drowning in tears asking for help
i am watching you carried by this

river of repercussions where the
flow of rage carries you and now

you know very well, i can only watch
i am stripped of any power to help

i am at loss with the use of words
now you must help yourself from

the mess that you have inflicted
upon yourself. Don't blame me for

i have warned you and you did not
listen. I told you once, take charge.

RIC S. BASTASA
Well, Injustice Works Like That

injustice works that way

you who works day and night burns the candle on both ends passionate about what you are about what to do with all the mess rearranging ugliness into a pathway of daisies and connecting clotheslines to hand souls and dry bodies with molds against the sun to cure an illness of the city

the boy at play and irresponsible to his sick mother the shrewd business man inside his luxury car passing by the majority in poverty

well, injustice works like that

in one corner the dying gets to be still dying

the fake one gets the limelight the guilty becomes the most innocent a beautiful butterfly removed from its wings

a dog's tail is cut and the mad woman becomes president
of your crazy republic

RIC S. BASTASA
Well, Injustice Works Like That (Corrected)

injustice works that way

you who work day and night
burn the candle on both ends
passionate about what you are
about what to do with all the mess
rearranging ugliness into a pathway of daisies
and connecting clotheslines to hand souls and dry bodies
with molds against the sun to cure an illness of the city

the boy at play and irresponsible to his sick mother
the shrewd business man inside his luxury car
passing by the majority in poverty

well, injustice works like that

in one corner the dying gets to be still dying

the fake one gets the limelight
the guilty becomes the most innocent
a beautiful butterfly removed from its wings

a dog's tail is cut and the mad woman becomes president
of your crazy republic

RIC S. BASTASA
Well, Say It As You See It

it is nice
yes, always the feeling is nice
when you call a spade a spade
lets your heart out
nothing tightens
or chokes
nothing to vomit
at the end
nothing hidden

well, they laid the principle
of candid honesty
say it as it pleases you
not as it pleases them
always, yes, always
call a spade a spade

that is rule # one
honesty, that lonely word
well, i learned it by heart
learning to say
what is in my mind

but what do i get?
nothing
everyone is displeased
with my honesty
that i am one tactless
form of shit
this monstrous mammal
this elephant with a tusk
this snake with a venom
this mischievous child
laughing at the
naked emperor
without clothes

well, yes, i still say what i see
calling a spade always a spade

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
and what do i get?

yes, this one,
nothing but this one
this poetry

RIC S. BASTASA
Well....

not to frustrate any of the horses
of Plato
i take both rides
first on the white one
and then the black

and both are happy
except perhaps myself

who got kicked on my ass
and now

i have to carry the chariot myself
and play the role of
Oedipus

in trying to unmask the reality of
the Sphinx.

RIC S. BASTASA
Weltschmerz

my hands are always small enough to cover a weeping face, my body too frail to stay at the corner of one hospital where one by one the friends of friends are dying...

my heart too tiny for grief, the universe is grief, and the stars are too small to appease the tears of rain...

my feet are always not enough for the thorns the rocks

my brain is a tiny speck of dust to the howling storm of misunderstanding

i wish i had enough space to scatter whatever i have till i am finished with this struggle for emptiness...

RIC S. BASTASA
We'Re All Alone

hope you can remember this song,

outside, the rain begins,
...
close your eyes,
long forgotten now,
....
we're all alone
we're all alone
...
let it all begin
learn how to pretend
...
once the story is told
it can't help but grow old

RIC S. BASTASA
Were There Really Diamonds In The Sun?

THE night is
diamond studied

we refer to the stars
all glowing
in the vastness of space
as we lie
rested on the rooftops
of our restlessness

AT noon
i look at the sun
i am blinded by the fury of its light

You must be wrong
i have not seen diamonds
in the middle of the strongest day

THE sun at night
is so faraway
for by then it regains its true nature back

it is just one of the stars
at night
as we have long
misconstrued it
at day

RIC S. BASTASA
We're Very Lucky Indeed

he says we are still lucky
to have the
blue skies and
green fields and
clear rivers and
wide seas and fish and birds...

i agree.

Despite the burdens,
all these beautiful things
surround us
and make us feel so light
and yes...

very lucky.

tonight, i shall count the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Were We Not Tricked At All?

on the day
we learned to love
and speak well
about love

we bare it all
give it all
and not counting

on the day when
love is gone
when it left us
without much talking

we wake up
eyes wide open
asking for accounting
what have you given
and what i have taken

which one was real?
love or
the unloving?

were we not tricked
by Schopenhauer?

RIC S. BASTASA
Werewolf

The german
Has "wer"

Say "vir" for virility
"wer" meaning man
"wulf" meaning wolf

a vir-wolf
a man-wolf

a man taking the shape of a wolf
retaining his virility, his man-ness

his madness
about his prey,

the brute that wears
my form and face
the werewolf
of my race

RIC S. BASTASA
Westernized Neighbors

the house has a garden
at the center is the fountain
beside the walls
are birdhouses
she loves to accommodate and
feed them
the house has two parts
and there is a steeple chase
and a tower
which he painted white
at the top is the cross
symbolic of their religion
there are only two of them in this house
which they built using
their retirement funds
at night all the lights are on
any robber can have doubts
since there is a dog beside the gate
made of steel

they are so enclosed
and no one gets in
the neighbors say, (and i do not
like saying this either)
they have become
westernized which if translated simply means
(no racism intended)

selfishness, arrogance and
'it is none of their business! ! '

which means that
they are no longer part of the whole
estranged from their own color
their very own
roots, their village.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wet All Over

people are running,
trying to find shelter,
you watch,
you are in the middle of the road
in an island,
and you stop
you do not want to run like anyone of them
you are wet
and it is raining very hard.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wet And Wild

she is wet and wild
in the river and she plunges
and swims into the depths
looking for the
golden fish, her dream

she detests my longings
for once i was the moon
and the night was sad
and the whispers of love
had all been gone
eaten by the mouths of the wind

in love with her
i have learned the art of the transformers

what she does not know is this:
i have become the river
because i love her.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wet Still With All The Love

in fact,
the mind says
with candidness
about this
matter, or this
mattress
of words sleepy
on the blanket
cozy on the
pillow, same question

is it really poetry?

who knows? who tells you?
keep on running and running
and one asks, is it really
running?

and as you pack your clothes
compact in the bag,
a bottle of water and
a towel,
are you going for a swim?

really? oh really?
i love listening to mojave 3
drifting and
drifting
surfing and surfing
on bigger waves begging for
more bigger waves
having so fun with what we
notice
suddenly everything turns fine
peace and solitude

the people have a chance seeing
us all alive
are we really? really? oh really?
alive?

feel the pulse of my wrist
my temple

or cut my skin
make a door into my world
taste my blood
and kiss my lips

our tongues are fine
wet still with all the love.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Are We? What Can We Become?

We can be just snails if we want to,
But we can be sparrows too,
We must choose, we cannot just be silent
& undecided

Forever,
If we choose to be snails
Then we will know what we want
We want a river and some palms
To plan our slow travels,
If we choose to be sparrows then
We at least know what to do next,
We shall grow beaks, and wings, and
Soon we need the sharp claws too
To defend ourselves

At least we also know what we need,
Just nests to lay our small eggs,
Twigs of trees to rest upon
Our weary bodies,

We choose what we are
To become what we can be,
We start on that decision, and then
We will see what suits us
To be the best from the rest,
Who still ask

What are we? what can we become?

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Beautiful World Under....

it is when you
lost the desire for air
that you decide
to jump into the deep sea
from a cliff

you want to drown
yourself
and be gone for good

but the rainbow colors
of the fish
the corals that look like
flowers beside the
hill
the greenish blue color
of enchantment
of where you find yourself
simply
negate your
desire to end it all

you pause, take your final gaze
then you begin to rise
up to the water and take
a grasp

of precious air....

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Coincidence! Love Is Calling Me Too

this will be my last poem for tonight
in here, it is 11: 32 in the evening.

someone is naked inside my room.
she is a beautiful bird making her love call.

she is a flower, and i will be her only dew.
she is the only moon, by my open window.

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Happy Naked Life! ! !

it is nice to know
that they have parted ways

at least they are finally
honest
on such an irreconcilable
differences

neither is true
all is falling out of love
everyone wants to find
love
all over again
as thought there is really
any, true and everlasting,

which of course, i never believe
to be so,
but just the same, just like all of
them i took the gamble
of being married,

at first happy, then a little bit pissed off,
but i took side with silence
tolerance, tolerance and more of that tolerance
after all, who is perfect?

the formula is know yourself, get to know yourself
much better, until you begin
to understand the other,

then you know how perfect is it just to ignore,
focus on yourself, love yourself, love more
of this self,

no expectations, yes no expectations,
born naked, die naked as well.
what a happy naked naked life!
What A Love!

To cast fear aside
on a night when you are left alone
sleeplessly

you resort to an imagination
rooted to a muddy
ground

it is an imagination of
twigs and lush leaves where
birds come
and perch and then
sing with you

some friends of shadows
against your moon
come and begin to
whistle

and the night becomes so lovely
that you begin
to remember what life before
was all about

what a feast! what a love!

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Mess

two turtles
compete
how to
fly

and some
monkeys
dream how to
be
much better
than
birds

some birds
regret having wings
envying
turtles in the grace
of their
slowness

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Shell Of A Room!

the nude says

her feet flesh rolling
on a white floor

i am happy in here

the sea slides in through
the door and licks at her hand

her happiness tosses itself
to the walls
she catches its fall and swallows
it all.

she drowns
where she stands.

that was their story.
i am telling you now.

RIC S. BASTASA
What A View Of The Sea Today

it is such a beautiful sunny day at the beach

a man with a muscular body rests on the white sand
beside a blue boat under a tall coconut tree

a woman with a beautiful body, pinkish skin arrives
and removes her transparent skirt and plunges to the sea
on a black bikini

the tiny waves of the sea glisten
like some eyes peeping

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Waste

sometimes
time
spending it here
with you,

i am lost in my thoughts
where to go after this
what to do from here

somehow
the wasted hours
fade
in this
ecstasy

forgetting you is an impossibility
i am hooked to love you
this lust is a reality
your lips your breasts
your thighs
the smell of your sweat
the sweetness of your voice
enthralled
i am your slave waiting
for the further instructions
of your hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
What A Wasted Look

you groom yourself
put gel on your hair
spray some perfume
on your whole body
and you wait
she passes by
not noticing
the way you look
the way you smell
you curse yourself
on this madness
she is also eaten
by the monsters
of her own sadness.

square and fair
right?

RIC S. BASTASA
What About Us?

I have told you everything about myself and i am willing still to tell you more if you ask, if you are still hungry about what you want to know about me,

i am stupid, i am like a woman who spreads my legs to any man who want me in bed, but i can also be a very kind woman who opens my arms for every weary man,

i am not stupid, i am kind,

I reveals everything From a to z No secrets now From my family
No stone Left unturned No story Untold
If it makes You happy Or if it makes You sad And you regret Having listened
I am sorry you ask for them so i give them all to you like a basket of flowers and fruits,

(are you sick in the hospital why with these basket of flowers and fruits?)

I have done My duty As the messenger I have achieved What was Left for me To do And It is all Enough i am happy now

The truth is Told and it Has set me free.

(The lies however keep on saying, what about us?)

RIC S. BASTASA
What About You?

yes, i see you
what about you?

you, who once hurt me
yes, what about you?

yes, what about you?
are you there?
doyou exist?

prove it to me

i am whole
i am strong
and too i can
cause all the pain
that you have
caused me

but i am greater
i heal
and pain is no longer
this power

i connect again
but i shall not destroy
i shall not cut a branch
but i shall only
sow the seed
to grow again
and show the flower
and the fruit

both in our worlds
apart

RIC S. BASTASA
What Am I?

it is you that is eating me
everything i own
you take away
slowly, the flesh and then
the limbs
and they the bones and then
the spirit
after all these what do you
think shall i become?

nothing. nothing,
precisely, that is what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Am I? ....

do not blame me for
simply telling you stories
i am nothing
but a storyteller
in my own time

do not blame me for not
having to hold your arms
i too, am air, like you,
too temporary
arriving now and soon leaving
in a span of seconds

do not blame me for forgetting you
as early as now
do not be angry
for i am like you,
the one that assumes a name
shakes your hand
and then goes away
shut out
from any enclosure of
a memory

RIC S. BASTASA
What Anselma Fished Out Of The Sea

when Anselma's husband who was a fisherman
was swallowed by the sea and was gone
she says she cannot be outdone
by extreme grief and sorrow

she went out to fish one day
and fished out a man from there

and she explains
the sea took out her man
and so the sea
must pay back with
another man

and since then
Anselma lives happily ever after

RIC S. BASTASA
What Are Friends For? Really?

ey are not goods, neither are they chattels,
neither are they investments something that you
sell, or buy, or make as a security for
an undertaking,
ey are not taken for some schemes,
for some needs, like the need to be in
or just let the hours pass by, beating boredom
and fatigue,
ey are not puppets where you pull them with
your strings from your fingers
neither are they muppets that you put
in your hands
ey are not your tools like shovels and
pliers, neither are they your utensils for eating
like spoons and forks,
ey are not the notes in your diary
or the dog ears in your book
or the things-to-be-done

ey serve no ends, they are not measures,
when they come and you share your time with them
they make hours irrelevant
they make life livable, they make you belong to
a beautiful world where the birds are singing,
where the clouds drift, where the rivers flow,
where the skies are bluer than blue

ey make the sun smile and they
make the moon speak and they make the
pond teem with fish

and foremost, as they all say,
they also tell you who you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Are We?

1) Two legs sat upon three legs,
With one leg in his lap;
In comes four legs
And runs away with one leg;
Up jumps two legs,
Catches up three legs,
Throws it after four legs,
And makes him dropp one leg.
What are we?

2) Old Mother Twitchett had but one eye,
And a long tail which she let fly;
And every time she went over a gap,
She left a bit of her tail in a trap.

3) Thirty white horses upon a red hill,
Now they tramp, now they champ, now they stand still.
What are we?

We have nothing to say today
We are being asked
What are we
And we think we are bullied
Because
Because we think we know what we are
Because we think we are the obvious
Plain like blue clouds, blue seas, blue kingfishers
Blue, blues, blue bruises, blue flag,
Blue crayon, blue surplus cars
Electric blue, shades of blue

We are black and blue
We feel blue
We think blue
We are blue.

And the obvious is like the biggest mountain ahead of us
And they ask: what is that?
And they see us
And ask us what are we?
Aren’t they all crazy?

We respect them and tell them nothing.
we have nothing to say forevermore.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Are We? A Monsoon Wind

we are just the monsoon wind
that comes and then goes

what we have here
what we obtain with labor and store and adore
we leave them all here

the trees and the fields
the gardens and the flowers
the roof and the rail of the stair
the carpet on the floor
the rings in our hands
dates embedded on the tombs
we all leave them here and they may not
even remember

we wish change and change may come
and the world may even be more beautiful to feel and see
we may catch the glow but then in a moment we are all gone

all, all gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Are You Doing With Love?

you wake up
in the middle of the night
not really knowing
what to do with
your time

it is not unnatural
you assure yourself
most people do this
most of the time
great writers and music
composers
and lovers too

haunted by inspirations
of faces and bodies
whom you loved but have
never never never
really touched...

RIC S. BASTASA
What Astonishes Me

beyond words
this astonishes me:

despite the drought
when all the grasses turn brown

when the road gets too dusty
with just a bike moving

passing through
a path where feet are tired

there is this wild resistant
flower blooming amidst

the ruins of the season
a white butterfly hovers on

no one notices it
except myself

RIC S. BASTASA
What Bothers You

got a new car
and you are driving it
at the road
towards the boulevard
on such a clear day
and then suddenly
another car comes
rushing
from the north of your
direction
and then the inevitable happens

bang! the collision occurs
the car is smashed
like a paper cone

what must bother you
you are still alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Brings Him To The Top

it is not his innate speed
for in truth he
has none, he traces his genealogy
to the turtles
those green ones the slowest of
the species
it is not his intelligence for there
is nothing unusual about
the shape and weight of his
cerebellum
there is nothing exceptionally
artistic in his habits
all old dog's tricks nothing much
about the brightness of the colors
of his choice
it is just the consistency
the everyday life he spends
without much highlights
each step well accounted
each sigh well heard
and then he reaches at
the top of the hill
above the cliffs
he rests and savors all
the wonders
within and
beyond.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Can A Hug Do In The Eastern World?

this is the Far East
no one hugs anybody.

in these islands
the sun shines with all warmth
the moon glows perfectly on our skin

this is my place
no one needs a hug.

this is my healthy world.
hug is not a pretension.

hug is not needed.
there is warmth in every grass
at night
with my beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Can I Do?

i got
25 years of education
denied myself
of fun
and thrived on the
termites

now the foolish people
come for advices

how to solve the stupidities that they are into,
lining up the streets

i surrender
i am not the master solution of their very own problems.

i walk away
step in an island
alone
i
sit on a chair and sip gourmet coffee.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Cannot Be Said Directly

so you are in that stage of
having to dive like Adrienne
in the ocean
finding the wreck,

more interpretations about reality.

you climb the ladder and see
another world,

and here you have written another story
about something that you cannot say directly

the mermaid and the jellyfish
the hands of the merman stronger than yours

and the death of one
the name of whom is not written elsewhere

the sand, the sun, and the silence of your
deepest wreck.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Changed Here?

except for the new landmarks
the erased bank of the
river, a new route
a new name of the street
another mayor of this town
and a few of his
selected council, a new market
cemented roads, and
a purple colored mall,
new faces of children
a set of migrants,

nothing really changed here
the town still bears the mark of torture
silenced screams, disappearing souls
still seeking the hall of justice,
bodies in pain, faces shrinking,
disfigured bones
unaccounted names of children
used for the choked revolution

despite these matters still hold the truth
in both hands, they still exist and hound
and howl
and haunt us.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Comes Here Simply Moves Around And Then Goes Away

what comes here
does not really stay that long
it may move around
like the whirl of the wind
but only for a while
it packs up
some leaves go with it
and carries itself
like a past whisper
then it is gone

somewhere you know it is there
waiting for you
but it is so far away now

RIC S. BASTASA
What Comes Next Is Yours To Imagine

a pot of flowering magnolia
beside a window below it
a man walks
innocently

i who sees what happens next
closes my eyes
in utter invocation of what must be
only a simplicity.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Could Have Been An Answer?

it is there
you do not really know why it is there

and it is doing you two things
it is indifferent
you like to touch it and make love with it
it does not know you
and it dislikes you like a food that is inside its mouth
and it wants to
vomit everything

that is the truth
the paradox of your self-proclaimed relationship
to yourself

love hate love hate
you want it to stay but you cannot hold on to it
it gives you
that feeling that this world is unending
but it ends
your world
the moment you mind it
even for a second

do not expect to understand

its wisdom is in not completely understanding it
if you know it well
it can kill you
because it is so sweet and to a certain extent
it becomes your own
poison

you remember it
you want to always remember it
because it makes your heart beat faster like a jumping gazelle

but it you remember it quite long
it becomes sharp as a knife
and starts slicing you heart apart
skin by skin

and so you give it away
set it free like a blue butterfly from your hand
you become so sad
tears are inside your eyes
wanting to burst like a dam of tons of water
raging upon rage itself

you are sad now
in fact sadder than sad

and no one can help you about it

you cannot tell anyone
because shame shames you like a reflection of your face in the mirror

and so you talk to yourself as though it is
another talking shadow beside your shadow

from the light of the moon
tonight
you want to confront each other
drink lots of hard liqueur
and challenge it

what about dying together
this moment?

this second.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Could Have Been Forgotten

what you have
is not forbidden

a white porcelain cup placed on
top of a glazed saucer

the jasmine tea that
you sip slowly
as light fades away

the decent decorum of
well numbered
propriety

eye never taste
that good

they are what others
are used to do
without so much thinking

it is the everyday
routine that
has taken away what
makes life
so alive & interesting
like some games that
we recently know
and begin to play

mornings are same
mornings

nights even with
all the stars
glistening
remain boring

the air tastes bland
its coldness is getting to
be scary

there is something
to what is forbidden

that is what we yet
do not know

others who regret
all those that they did
for once and for more
broke their hearts into pieces

when they sit beside
the window
watching cars passing
by
one by one
watching people
en masse
busy going and
going
like the ticking of the
hands of the clock

they will not tell
you
that despite the
brokenness
despite the still uncollected
pieces

the excitement
of what was forbidden and which
they did with so much
haste

still reclaims upon
itself
the untold
glory
the climax of a series
of existences
which time buries
so deeply in the dust bins of
personal histories

so that they
can all be
forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
What Could Have Been Unreal

there is a sorrow that i do not want to speak
it is something that i cannot give away

there is time that keeps on going and if i stay
i will just be left out and buried in this delay

there is a grief that cannot really be spoken
there is this pain that goes on and one

there are empty parks and empty cafes
there are closed doors and locked rooms

there is this self sometimes that does not open
there are fingers that remain closed upon themselves

there is a song that i can only sing inside myself
there is this poem that keeps on evading what is it that could have been said

all these are mine alone and all these keep me moving on
remembering, loving in silence, keeping the tears frozen, creating what could have been unreal.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Could Hurt We Refuse To Say

we sleep because we are too exhausted
not really because we are enslaved
by the king of working ants

but we are
we have become the masters
of too much worries
preoccupying ourselves with this state of unfeeling
this loneliness that has dawned in our days
widely awake to an unacceptable reality dressed in such a fashion of denial
afraid that we shall be the first breakers of the law of tradition
people shall mock us at the sacred places scared and scarred for soon
we shall be ostracized like over-sized ostriches
our heads cannot be contained in closed cages we want to fly but we are too big for flight
we sleep because we are too exhausted with the sameness of our faces years have made us twins
and we do not really like it
we need more moments of silence to make a wall

to ship us away from an ocean of familiarity that is killing
what we want to want in love

there is no fire where we sleep
we are cold sculptures heavy in our bed

dusts have accumulated on stuffed arms
teddy bears that need to be thrown away back to the forests

our words are enough to promulgate its judgment
we still like it when we hesitate to say and choose not to say

what hurts.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Crucifixion Was

it is time to drive a point
i nail it.

it is time to see who the hammer is. i make a loud sound.

she hears it.
I drive more nails.

One after the other
to connect.

I want to make her recall

what crucifixion was.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Delights Me No More

peanuts roasted on a white saucer
and a glass of coca-cola
bursting with bubbles
mixed with crushed ice-

prepared by you
one summer

RIC S. BASTASA
What Did That Comrade Say?

comrades he declares
while then on the mountains
our enemies are our enemies
if there be friends
categorically they should be
if there be a ceasing of this
struggle for peace in the
name of diplomacy and
democracy let that be nothing
but an extension of this war
for comrades he declares further
peace is not given on a silver
platter but made meticulously
upon an embroidery of blood.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Did The Wind Tell The Rose?

what the wind tells the rose to make it bloom
what the sky tells the mountain
to make it more green?
what the clouds tell the sea
so the boats can sail smoothly
what the birds sing to the sun?
what the leaves tell the ground
in utter peace?
what all this world give
to make life more
with life?
it is found here in my heart
singing
a song to my God.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Did You Say?

did you say that you married for the wrong reasons?
he, for his handsome face and bulging muscles
beneath that corduroy pants, her pleasure
she, for her delicate curves and porcelain skin
and silky hair, his heaven

and the days of marriage drag like someone so heavy
and sickly is carried away at bay,

conversations lapse, and caresses become boring,
and sleeping together has become nothing but routine

review what was there, each moment, each time of togetherness,
my oh my, both of you smile, feeling so happy...forever?

'this is marriage', you say it. You must say it again.
a happy marriage, because there is no other option, no choice.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Have Now?

on the topmost of the mountain
higher than all the rocks beside me
what do i have?

clouds on my feet
air that cannot speak me its message
where it comes from
what are the warnings
or the good news?

i stand here
my arms opening to the sky
i do not look down
for fear of the height that is
sucking me down
inviting me to jump
like the goddess with
a broken heart

what do i have here?
i gaze
and all i have is this view
of the sun finally
going down
to surrender once more
to what is dark
and cold
and silent

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Have To Do To Make You Like Me?

what do i have to do to make you like me?

sorry,
seems to be the hardest word
to say
seems to me
to be the hardest word
sorry
so sorry
that you can never forgive me
i am sorry
i am so sorry
for not having loved you too

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Know......What You Do Not.

i know the spring.
i have traced the source of this water
that i drink everyday
that which gives me
inspiration because all my veins
let through the blood

and the water seeps through
the softness of my skin
the labyrinths of my intestines

i know spring
the source is here
not in the heart where drought
lies, not in the convolutions of my brains
where confusion reigns at times
overpowering the stillness of
my secret pond,

on the darkness of my night
i know the source
it is not evil, it does not have horns
but there is fire that burns me
like a bush and i am
unconsumed
it is eternal
not this damnation that kills the lives
of those who remain to be alone
in their messy rooms
on their windows that do not allow
the light of the moon
the advices of the breeze
the comforting messages of the
newly hatched eggs on the nests
of the trees

it is not in the heart
it is right here where my hands grope
for meaning
where my fingers glide
where my solitude rests
the hammock
of my humanity
as i run to and fro
because i do not want to be detached
to leave
it is here where i stay
and write some more
it is where where i do not want to be understood
by anybody
this secret pond
blind fish mute moss
bubble free
an insect with undeveloped wings
walk on the mirror
water.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Really Feel?

this is the most important
question that i ask to myself
in everything that i do
in everything that happens to me.

that is never your question.
Yours had always been a different
version.
In your philosophy you are more
of a practical person
and you take pride in the
usefulness of each
a bucket, a wheel, a plate
a car, not that kite,
nor that mural, they are not
necessary for the movement
of things to progress.

You are the opposite of what i own.
I own nothing, you claim that everything
is yours. To hold, to have title.

what do i really feel?
you laugh. What is the relevance of that
question to your profits?
You are like my doctor
Who does not mind my pain
but minds his fees.
When a man gets cured
There is no place for sympathy.
It is the money
stupid. You grin.

here we are at the junction of feelings.
I go this way, You go that way.
I will not look for you
You will not look for me.

We then say
How long did we realize that we are still making a beginning to this long pretentious affair?

I am an existentialist but i have never wished you dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Really Know? ......

even then
we do not need that bed
or that pillow

that blanket may
be given away

or this room or this
carpet

or even the floor of
this house

or even the house
or even the land where

everything is situated
or even this
island

or even this earth
or even this universe

what we need is only
to be happy
just us here

or even if you go
away
or if you are
gone and
i only have myself
left

or even this self
even it it is gone

what do i lose?
what do i know?
a fly is here. oh
never mind,
i'll open the window
i still let it
go....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Really Need?

upon a dining table
i too, ask myself,

what do i really need?

one fried dried fish
a cup of steamed brown rice
a pinch of salt
five drops of coconut vinegar

a glass of water

and then the much needed
rest for the night

& with you
my bare hands

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do I Want From You?

i do not want you in the past
neither shall i desire to meet you in the future
do not be mistaken
there is nothing too to make you mine
even today

i have made the choice
just myself sitting at night in the park
the post unlighted
the air is cold
i keep the fire burning in my heart
learning to live my way through
this darkness

there is so much to learn
and so many things to accept
there is so much to unlearn
recall and then forever forget.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do We Do To Aldo Kraas?

i have poured
a bucket of cold water
to wake him up
so he can finish
his poems
that we love
to see
in full
whole

he didn't
he holds us in super suspense
our feet could have danced
all night
our hands could have touched
the world in so much
thrills and freshness

but he didn't
he caught us suspended
frozen and
almost dead to extinction

what do we do to Aldo
to finish the poems
we want to read?

i am afraid
hot waters cannot
make him finish
what ought to be

i am afraid no one
can

because Aldo is Aldo
and just like me
Ric is Ric
that is how it goes
without saying

let them be
let me be

the freedom to be
unfinished
the freedom to be
finished

and perhaps be praised
or just be scorned

RIC S. BASTASA
do not burn
let the leaves fall to the ground
let them stay there
layer by layer
heap upon heap
let mother earth
hug all the leaves
let the affection be
strong and heavy
let the leaves die
and rot and become
water and become dust
to dust
let all of us see this dust
we shall do what mother earth
and nature loves best
to dust we shall return
and be its permanent part
close to the bosom
of mother earth
forever

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do We Really Wish To See?

dthis is a nice, cool place,
we decide to stay a while
a thatched nipa roof
covering some benches
rounded for us to sit
awhile, then we see
how the sun glows to
slowly meet its death

sunset, yellow, orange
red, then some black patches
we sit for a while
for a time we reflect
on this loss of light

we welcome darkness
we sit beside each other
then the lights of the resort
are switched on

tthere are no fireflies this season
electric lights hang on trees
the air comes like a cold feeling
it whispers loss and surrender

somewhere some hearts are cold
our hearts may soon relate
but we cannot be just defeated
this time, we really wish to see
love hanging on the air
we wish these things
these treasures of our hearts

we really wish to fall in love again
we see, we wish to see this love again,
we work out on it under the rain
our hearts are in flames
we burn with desire
we get what we wish to see
we make what we wish to be

i guess, that is simple enough

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do You Really Expect?

what do you really expect
from the horse that you have
seen accidentally on the
wilderness? it is black and
wild and has no name to call
as master, and it runs as
fast as the wind, and lives
on top of cliffs and grazes
only on secret places where
the grasses are thick and
so green,

it knows the secrets of the
dearth and knows where to
find water and food in abundance,
you expect to catch it
and caress it with your hands?

it is impossible! this black horse
is one of the horses of Zeus
and takes orders only from him.

tomorrow the black horse shall
be gone forever, and you
mortal one shall not forget
the griefs on the casualties
of the war in Troy.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Do You Really Mean By That?

seeing the face of your lover  
(the one whom you have not yet  
revealed what you feel  
deep inside you,

secret love, suppressed  
desires, concealed emotions,

on a moment of distress  
for love unrequited, you have been  
indulged in an  
inaction, what do you really mean

when you say, your world stops  
revolving?

fool! you're at an age  
where love has not place to hide,  
where one cannot be stupid  
enough to be silent

a bleeding heart? is there such  
a place this time, for a bleeding heart?

situate yourself. be fair.  
speak your mind. open your heart.  
unzip that fly.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Does A Hectic Schedule Do To You?

makes you
feel young, alive and kicking

you set aside
religion and politics

you chase the words
of skill and
embrace a higher wisdom

you feel your blood
rise on your head

your feet dance like
a madman

your hands keep on
pressing the letters without seeing

the pc has become
your god.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Does Hope Tell You?

Hope
will always tell you
as always that the bad ones out there
when they arrive at the edge
shall be burned like grasses
of the long drought
even if you tell Hope to
be silent
it will always whisper
this to you

even if you do not believe in
Hope
it will always believe
in You.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Drives Poetry...

an old 
man is driving 
his car 
of loneliness 
in a street 
named metaphor

it went well 
until he meets 
this simile 
lady 
and they kiss 
and kiss and 
hug and hug and

then poetry 
crashes 

without brakes 
in that 
forgotten cliff

RIC S. BASTASA
What Flicker Is There

what flicker is there
in the darkness of my soul
what light must
continue against the night
what flame must
throughout remain eternal

God's.

RIC S. BASTASA
What For? If Only The Goat Can Tell.

O! The silly goat could have been a dove
White and meek
Soundless in the journey to air
Dove to another dove
Satisfied from among its likes
The horns could have been feathers
In a bird’s body

Another completing dove could have waited
Only if the silly goat knew
The transfiguration of its feet to claw
Its whiskers to beak
The goat’s life would have been complete
And fulfilled
But this the silly goat will never know
& learn and untie
& solve the crazy knot
That it has never untangled
Never has he learned from all the ages
Of his grass life
The seeds that the dove peck
And keep on its throat down to its guts
Its tummy

The goat stays
In the open field
Preoccupied with grass
And grass alone
Abiding by the rules of his master
Imprisoned in its cage
To the rules of their games
Suffering
But never understands the same

RIC S. BASTASA
What God

what God takes for granted
such as
gold and silver and diamonds
which he buries on the
dark and deep places of the earth,

man has taken too seriously
to his shame, because what is really important

is the heart, fresh air, clean sea, blue clouds,
pale moon, rising sun, cool grass, a smile,
a bond, a touch, a hand, an embrace
a word, a whisper.

RIC S. BASTASA
What God Says To All Those Snakes...

this afternoon some snakes come into the house
(literally not those snakes with slimy skin
and without feet)
for there are snakes that walk like real people
complete with heads and
other usual parts like the way your friends look like
when you dine
and you pay
when they tell you stories and you listen
and you know
that these are all not true
but because of respect you nod just the same
and say, ok, ok, i agree

this afternoon these snakes come to the house
and we had coffee and biscuits
the usual afternoon talk and bonding
i may not have changed, but they do not know that there is also the fox in me
but still considerate and forgiving and patient and kind
all giving

they ask for rice and viand
and they talk about their undeserved poverty
and without questions
i give them what they ask and pray for
no harm
nothing big for such a kind man like me
i am not an angry man
my hands are open, my fingers are spread
like tributaries from the rivers to the seas

sometimes my fingers ache for these friends are snakes and they all
love to bite
blood flows from my tips
and the carpet gets stained

but i am not an angry man
and i am as patient as ten spiders webbing from one wall to the other
well, normal as i am
i get fed up sometimes and tempted to shout and drive them away
but i look to the sky
and talk to my God and then i begin to ask silently
all those questions
how to deal with snakes
and God says: 'my son, these snakes are your brothers and sisters
feed them well, please me
for i am the owner of the sea and the land and the sky
yours is but a coin
a patch, an atom
and so negligible
in fact, my son, you own nothing, you only manage what i own
and give you
feed them all, make them comfortable
do not argue, do not say a dirty word
look at me, they bit me too
but did i say a word? you haven't heard me
for like you, snake or man or god
you are all my children....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happened When The Lights Went Out

early that evening
there was a total blackout in the city
for an unknown
cause again, and

this happens not just for that
lonely time
only but for the nth time
when the hours are lonelier
than usual, and

to make use of those dark hours
since we see nothing
more important to do than read,
we spend the hours, and hours
talking,

it is you who is doing most
of the talking, choosing the words,
and arranging them
to perhaps please me, but i was
not there anymore,
i was then, and am mostly,
a wanderer amidst the forest of your
sentences,

and i feel like your are sentencing
me into a listener imprisoned
in those bars of
senseless words, and i

as i once told you, always escape
as a swift bird,
and you as usual do not notice it
when i am already
far away into my own
kind of personal homeland
where you cannot find me
or catch me
naked and innocent like a native,
and i do not hear about you anymore
and when i come back
and take the shape of a man

you are already fast asleep and then
i step silently inside the room
via an open window
slip on the bed wet with your tears
and then i gently sleep beside you

and i cannot sleep that night
as i judge myself guilty of an injustice
which i have inflicted against
love and trust

a la Cupid to
Psyche,

and then i, before my own
sleepy eyes,
blow that stupid candle
away

and then it is so dark
deep into the night i journey
burdened
like one of the Furies
into the
cliffs of Sisyphus.

RIC S. BASTASA
there were sparrows
they hovered upon the mansanita that i planted
they did not stay there for long
they left
even before the dew on the morning grass has dried

that was what happened
and what stayed was only the white rose in my garden
but sometimes i think
if it has also a pair of strong wings
and a close ally of the winds
in the same manner
it would have left me for good

things are not as smooth as you see it
things like these happen
learning always from departures
but just the same
still finding love where tracks still remain

i gaze upon the little pond inside my heart
there are no more ripples
the leaves that fall there recently
are sleeping.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens After

i insist
i must go there
you warn
that i will have to
pay
the higher price
i am hardheaded
i go there
it will be long
and blissful
i take the shape
of a big stone
i fix myself
defending myself
always
so i cannot be hurt

there are tremors
i shake

when i come back
we feast
on the realities of
the square jaws
of our
silence

you still love me
and i do not blame
you

now you are a stone
yourself
imitating me

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens Instead Is That We Remember

we take a walk
since we like to forget
what happens instead
is that
we remember

imaginations fly like birds
like dreams
becoming unbelievable
growing roses in the skies
flying kites during a storm

i admire your courage
getting out of the house when
the rain pours
taking a boat without a paddle
alone
when the waves are getting bigger
you sail out there
not fishing

you have read about Jonah
swallowed by that big fish
you want it
you check it out
you look for the sea,
the fish
and now offers your own body
your faith.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens Next? …..

for now i do not go to church
and hear Sunday mass,
i am coming back as always
early morning
and late at night and between
my busy hours
to savor this forbidden place
with no other objective and wish
that i be finally bored
in this kind of hell
choice and find this place later on
to be horrible
seriously, and sincerely
from the inner conviction of my mind
so i may never find myself
back to this place again
and then finally i tell myself
now i am convinced
now i win
now i must leave
and i will never come back again

but when will this really happen?
only when i am dead?
when it is too late?
when it is already irreversible?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens On The Discovery Of Fraud

to hate you
is to slap you with my heavy fist
in your shame you leave, you swell
you disconnect from things
through your bruised arms
a blue breast
a black sky
it takes time for me to really know
you are not there but
soon you will know how i am tasting this

drought, darkness spreading in the sky
my hand shall not take yours
it is too much to hold
because my heart does not beat and
say what should not have been said
when i
close the door forever

you are no longer here
and everything is liquid with
a flow of freedom

you shall be the bitter half of this
break-up

you must remember every word
and cover your mouth
what to declare is certain sorrow

when to summarize
you hypnotize
to see the house falls without its feet
on the grounds of char
and smothered cinders.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens Then

an early morning walk
as we both talk

as our hands hold
amidst the cold

under the new shining sun
on a pathway of fun

with trees and flowers
we breathe their powers

we sit and talk
we are not choked

we face the world
our truths unfurled.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Happens When I Go...

so many times will i watch this
there is no way that i can stop watching this
show of a
beautiful body

when i was about to go, i feel the loss
and the grief is like rain at night
there is no ceasing
of the sounding and pounding of the
pain

i have hesitations of course
i am not the familiar kind that goes into
the house of
the mundane

must i bury myself in the terse tension
under my bed?

i cannot betray what myself has been praying
for
to be free for a while and make the most
of what time is left

and so i go
into the familiar places of the heart
meeting everyone
nurturing the wounds and trying to
erase the scars

when i arrive there i feel the shrinking of
my body
my hands are touching my feet
the door when it closes suddenly becomes
a very tall man

i am looking up
to that artificial light
i am lost again
and defeated

RIC S. BASTASA
What Has Been Missing?

here you are again
i know
reading me
every morning

i have become
coffee to you

i am another page
of a paper

my face is a cover of
a book

and what you read
are nights

i know it is dark
and cold

and here you are again
sure of yourself

in the dark in the
cold

accepting what is
there
what is read

someday i shall ask
you

what is in me that
escaped me

what is in you that
catches
what is there
and what has been
missing

RIC S. BASTASA
What Have We Become In This Technological Advances?

what i always remember from the old times
is trust
a family solid on giving
personal interest set aside
all for the good
of everyone

technology on one hand
despite the good that it has done
shrinking distances
storing time in a disc
and compressing all memories
in miniature containers

family bonds are cut off
nephews tell lies and sisters and brothers
not anymore connected
disintegrating into the self quests
forgetting roots
and discarding values

so many of us now rely on our resources
selfishly thinking that
we are all islands in the middle of the sea
confident that no ocean can destroy us
that sun shall be consistent
and that moon shall still be romantic
on dark nights
on those busy hours of the day
as traffic in the city jams
as doors are locked as people accept
their fear upon themselves
voluntarily

RIC S. BASTASA
What Have We Learned

we have learned to be alone
savor the grace of solitude
silent as the moon rising and dawning
untangling the shadows from the twigs
we have learned to unlearn what others
usually do in similar situations
we have learned to forget
and then continue forgiving
we left jealousy on the hedge
to slide and fall with the sledge.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Have We To Give, Anyway?

everything we see in this world seem pointless
we begin to be like ordinary routines
everyday, this everyday, so dulling and lulling
the boredom that becomes a kingdom
the pointers that do not work
what they say have become lies
and so useless
we want to prove that we make the difference?
when we arrived here that circle is already a circle
and triangles have always remained triangles
the clouds cottony and always drift
and the roving rivers always flow to the sea
never to itself and be so salty and bloated

what is the point then of my being here?
i have nothing to prove to myself
much less to you whom i do not really know
you have been a secret to yourself
and i have also curled to myself
like a comma to my phrases

i never asked to be here
that is the point and that will make the point pointless
there were no conditions attached
there was no contract that beforehand i signed
and so? What is the difference?

come let us play under the sun
let us plunge into the river of life
it is meant to be fun
there are no bills to pay for this life
freely given and must freely be returned
there is only this play and we take the games
the masks we wear if you flare and dare
and then if you are really honest enough
with nothing to prove with nothing to be proud of
take this nudity plunging into the river of life
without guilt without shame because we were all
born naked and too innocent
because we are the children of God

and like fathers and mothers
God only wants us to run and play and smile
and be with him, what more can we give, anyway?

Proud self-righteous one, do you offer now
Your righteousness and morality?
Does God need them? Or does God love you?
May God have mercy. God has always been Love.
Why worry brother and sister? Smile and be happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
What He Did

as law professor teaching civil and political law
he did not tell his students that he writes poems during some
breaks of their studies.
as the students hurdle a legal problem in marriage
he preoccupies himself with some images: an old weary man
carrying an ax, debarking a tree without leaves.
it can carry him far away to some hills in his mind.
clouds and storms dock on his forehead.
he shakes his head, and goes back to the legal words
right on the page of his book. Finds himself again, strong willed.
A student raises his hand and recites a solution the problem.
He listens and claps his hands.

The class is dismissed and he is left alone in the room
It is 8: 45 in the evening.

Images come again. The tree is finally cut. The barks turn into paper.
He knows now the cause of the decay. Some termites.

The old man is dead. Cut by the ax. The ax is gone.
Who did it? Why?
These are his mind games.

He opens the door of the car and begins to drive himself back home.
He has a poem to write again.

It is about that old man who died beside a tree that he debarked.
It is not more of the ax or termites.

It is the tree. A tree without leaves.
A very lonely tree which is cut.

He is happy now.

RIC S. BASTASA
What He Did....

what he did, he did his best,
when asked to sing, he sang
when asked to jump, he jumped
he did not only become a singer
he became a juggler as well,
this is because he wants,
and all he wanted was to please them
not just her
but all of them,

i pity him, he became a clown at the end
of those crazy years of yearning to please
the people that he loves
specially, that woman

because he loves her that much
but what about her? she becomes the devil,
his devil that consumes every flesh on him
every bone she scraped
for seasoning

and sometimes i ask myself
upon looking at this ghastly situation

how did he become a clown
and how did she turn herself into a devil?

i don't think love was the reason.
i think, it is something else,
and we still did not know it.
until now, accurately.

RIC S. BASTASA
What He Has Is Only Words

FOR THE first time at the top
of the mountain
he feels that from now on
he rules as king

and he now wears a crown
and a scepter and now he shall have
his own kingdom
complete with a queen and
princes and princesses
and soldiers and
castles
and canons and balls

i hope he does not miss the essence
that what he has is only
words.

RIC S. BASTASA
What He Likes In Her

What he likes in her is that she had his instincts:
He remembers he has strong arms and strong strumming fingers
His fingers sing like a man and
With a voice so penetrating to the notes of
Bold and pure love
Determined and purposeful

To her feminine softness
Scrupulous inquisitive lips

His boldness to her inquisitive softness
His strong fingers opening her scrutinizing lips
And they always
Like said meeting of curiosities
Almost childlike, playful.

He surges on her softness as she lay like a helpless white defeated woman
He claims victory
But later he surrenders every part of him, his buttocks, his abdomen, his torso, and his legs
And even that which
Makes him importantly as a man conqueror

She receives him like a weak woman, helpless now
She stoops, she bows she crawls over him, in a change of positions

She keeps him strong.
She now conquers him, with a total surrender of everything she also owns
Her breasts, her neck, her lips, her hips, her mouth,

Both are lost, and both are looking for their important parts, afterwards
There is nothing under the bed, or this sofa.

It will take them a long time to recover the parts that seem to be
Unrecoverable.
Once, one part was inside her. Once one part
Deluded her mouth disguising as a hot food for dining.

She did not really mind, and she would not tell anyway,
Her mistake is intended for the pleasure of both, and there was no feeling

That something was wrong or even dirty.
It was so lovely, both concluded.
What he likes in her,

Her tight tonguetiedness.
Delights and more delights, for these coming nights.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Her Crystal Ball Says

dark clouds hovering
on the hills of mid-March
and murky waters on the
rivers of the last days
of April,

a platoon of people
comes to your house
asking for rice and
fish bringing with
them their empty
bowls

five cows are thin
seven piglets die
and emaciated
black horses drink
on empty ponds

moses wearing his
rainbow colored coat
perspires under the
sun on a very windy
portion of the dessert
alone and still looking
where the oasis are.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Am And What We Are

it is not the wisdom
for i have none

could be some instinct
for i have some

i bring you something
that i do not understand

you listen attentively
we become your singing birds

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Am Seeing Is Beauty

what i am seeing is beauty

beauty is subjective, this is my happiness

my medicine, but take it it will be your poison

it will be your way of vomiting what beauty is to the beholder. what i see is a passing black bird

on my horizon, it is always a case of leaving

and putting back where my soul lies,

what i see are colors of sorrows and hideousness

this you cannot see because i have a wall for myself....

what i am seeing is beauty, it is the upsurge of my ecstasies... you are curious, you want to be counted it to what beauty is. It is boxed and what is there is the beauty of darkness.

black as the night, cold as the mountain fog,

glistening dew of leaves, sparkles of stars,

sounds of leaving boats, and the song of the swan.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Am To You

you want to forget me, brush me aside like some thing that you have no use of,
like a broken comb
or a shampoo wrapper
or a used toothpaste, and for all the other reasons that you may conceive

i perfectly understand it
the words we use shall tell exactly what logic wants us to portray
a broken monument
shattered pieces of glass
a stone thrown away
a used clothing where my smell may shout a very sweet memory
of us

a perfume that someone sprayed on the body
a body
a hand
a nose

lips and face and caressing fingers, the fate of all these shall lie
on the judgment of the brain

we tell them to go away we tell them to hide themselves
to forget
but look at them
they all refuse
they are still you and forgetting seems to be illogical

they have become some parts of you
and destroying them has become impossible

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Am To You

who are you?
i am not the sun
i do not have light
my hands are not
rays

do not worship me
do not look down
look at me straight in
my eyes
i cannot blind
you

i am a river
come, come to me
plunge in me
flow with me
in my own sorrow

do not stand there
and raise your hands
trying to reach me
i am not a cloud

i am a tree so
come, come, come to me
climb in my branches
pick my fruits
have some to eat
i am the kindness of the hill
the shade of the tired
traveler

do not create a distance
i am the grass
sit upon me
lay your body
i am soft and i am cool
make yourself comfortable.
What I Believe In

what i really believe in
is this thick wall
where no human language
no matter
how filthy

no matter how holy
has ever penetrated

try it, you will be
disgusted

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Can Be To You

i can be
whatever you want me to be
i can be a whisper
to your ear

on storms
i can be the lighthouse
of your lost ship

when something sinks
give me the sign

i can grieve
and turn off the light
i can offer
the consolation of darkness
it will be so dark
it will be, it will be

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Cannot Write

what i cannot write
is the answer of the riddle of the sphinx
to me.
i know myself.

hence, i know the answer very well.

i cannot even say it.
thinking about it
shakes my being
like an earthquake
to the foundations
of my house.

i cannot say or write it.

because if i will
everything in me crashes
like September 11.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Could Not Forget

what i could not really forget during that time was the rain,

it fell at the wrong time
when we were still walking
in the middle of the road
on our way back
to the dorm

i forgot the color of my coat
the color of your blouse
the umbrella in your hand

i forgot whether there was
a boat at the pier
or there was none at all

what i could not forget was that kiss
that landed on my cheek

when you said goodbye
and i was standing alone
waiving

still hoping that we might
meet again

somewhere,

i still do not know.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Did Next

and then i went to the rest room
to touch the coldness of water
my fingers want to feel
what numbness is in my head

i see the woman crying
i see the child inside the niche
everyone is looking for the comfort
in each others hands
a hold, a stare, a word

to date, there is still none.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Feel Today

what i feel today is this

i am scooping some ice cream for you
five scoops of vanilla flavored
ice cream with marshmallow toppings

i hand them to you
with a very sweet smile
and you start licking and munching
marshmallows

inside my mind
is this pain inside my heart
is my aching tooth

but i am not telling you
or anybody
i am a very considerate man
trying always to please you

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Got You Got

what i got surely you also got
these hands
and eyes and mouth

now, what if i ask you to surrender
all these things to me
because i am poor
because i am needing help?

you will.

and you will be another poor man another man needing help

the cycle of poverty and
need, tell me where you are at this precise time?

be still and be contented
and be happy and just be where you are

do not ever move do not ever extend your arm
you will fall on this wide chasm

where everyone finally dies

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Hate About Reunions

people always keep
recalling my old shape

and they always give
reminders

change your lifestyle
as though telling me

that i must stop writing
poetry and start
jogging the earliest hour
of the morning
which is my only hour
for reflection

ah, work too much work
rushing rushing blood in my veins

the man is right
it is time to slow down a bit
and savor
the scent of the moon
at night

with my beloved.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Have In My Hands

What I have in my hands
Are few petals

Of flowers in different colors
Some pure white, without odors

What I have in my hands too
Are little birds with some dreams

Wanting to fly to heights
Wanting to erase frights

What I have are some things plain
Something direct nothing to explain

Call them an essay or prologue to a play
No metaphors inserted nothing to display

Wisdom plain and simple
A tribute to a child’s dimple

There is no complication
There is no sophistication

Who makes them a poem is you
What makes them alive is you too

There is no other
There is no bother

There is no other who gives them a feel
Except you and one long electrical eel

What I have in my hands are all yours
They are not mine they are free they are all for free

They are meant to be
To be free for you
What I Have Not Ever Seen

what i have never seen
does not bother me, it is felt
and it gives me all the comfort
the stillness
and stability, it is like the hand
that holds my hand and gives me
warmth
during the harshness
of the rains

i have never seen the fingers
and the palms and the veins
but i have felt
the heat in the coldness of my
winter

sometimes there are those unseen
yet more real than what is visible
to the naked eye

i do nothing. i just believe.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Have Now....

this beautiful feeling
is a conqueror...

it has conquered pain,
transcended religion,

overcome fears, erased
boredom, disregarded shame.

endured and has ignored
restrictions. Freedom. Love.

Isolation. Peace. No regrets.
this beautiful feeling

conquers the self. Builds
a home. Creates a self again.

and here i am
holding it, holding you.

living, i am living.
Heart beats. Silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Have Written

i have written about
it

thought it was beautiful
it mentions
of you and me

when we sleep together
and then

when we wake we tell ourselves
that we no longer
remember

when we dream no more
because there is no more space
where
we can place our pieces of
happiness

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Have Written About The Why?

is it like filling an empty space? or making an opening to a closed box? or is it
gasping for breath because one is drowning? or is it diving in the water looking
for the pearl? or is it finding the universe in the grain of sand? or is it just doing
it because we have nothing to do? ....or is it living life to the full? or is it because
it is?

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Have Written Before And What I Want To Write Now

those were the rage of my youth
i was so political
and wrote all those protest poems
damning the government
for all its atrocities
i lost. The government won.
Someone, most of us, went to prison
but then
times change, situations go for the better
and then we were free
the trauma seeps inside the veins
of our brains
we learned to love silence
mellowed like orange
on a wooden tray.

not everything is over yet
we age, like you, we get old and old
and weak
and strong in wisdom
i suppose, and so i go back what i left before
unfinished
i am rewriting an old flame
feeling its heat that was there before
i am putting back those dead characters
in their strong determined dialogues

love is patient, love is gentle
love is strong, love is eternity
love goes beyond
time

i put the dialogues which i deleted before
when you left me because i was so crazy
about reforms
when i was so hardheaded about raging
in the storm
'i love you. Will you marry me?'
'Yes' she says yes this time.

The is now the ending.
And i will not change it again.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Keep Reminiscing.

for as long as twigs grow buds
and buds turn to leaves and flowers

for as long as light leaks out between
the slats of bamboo on our walls

i shall continue writing
like the way i breathe like the way i
keep in touch with every journey that
every cell of my blood takes

back to my heart
settling back to mind
what i keep
reminiscing.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like For Now...

i like direct statements
candid words

few
nothing curved

fire
shrapnels

murder then
vanishment

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like From You

i like to think that you think that i am not at all serious about memories. memories are not like seeds they do not grow anywhere when thrown memories are selective for instance in our minds these memories think that they are special and must be treated in such ways like an important guest to be fed and pampered

there were memories that i killed say i am cruel say i am one of those savages in the mountains killing innocent natives direct to the eye

bull's eye bullshit bull's eye the man fell straight to the ravine without the benefit of any doubt

at first we shiver but it will only be for that first time and there is the second and there is the nth time and we become numb to ourselves to our own words we embrace the silence of the

whatever whoever whenever the who what where and when

there was that woman naked bathing in the river and there was that monkey did you hear the sound again? i wish i have no ears i wish i have no mind at all

what have you made out of me? a doughnut, a black hole, a grass a cloud.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like In You

what i like in you
is that you know how to sing the notes

of a whisper
on the side of my pelvis up to the
tip of my tongue
to the tip of my hair and then back
to the tips of my toes

i lie down and bare it all for your
lovely gaze

salivating love
tickling the tips of my soul

i give in
and so you win.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like Most About The Falling Leaves Of Autumn

i like most the sound of the falling leaves
of autumn

just right after we make love
when my eyes lay wide awake on the ceiling

my mind travels like a falling leaf
it is asking: what for? where? and why?

and then i hear the hazy sound of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like Most Is After The Act

this is not my room
neither
is it yours, in fact this room too just
like us
is a stranger, we open it and then
we close it, just like what we do to ourselves

hungry, we eat, thirsty we drink, and restless
we do things that our minds do not ever think
of
or even remember, it is dark here, and
there is no music to
lighten the mood, it is hot and we are even
hotter
feeling the heat
within us, the intertwining and the
changes
and exchanges of top to bottom
and bottom to top
you have such a nice hair
sometimes
they cover my face and i long
to a space where i can breathe
but you do not really mind,
you know i like the way you make me
quiver,

we are listless and restless and we want to discover
everything unexplored
in our unknown universe,

planets are we, losing our orbits
and both of us
explode

a big bang and then the silence of the cigarette smokes
eyes looking for some
crevices on the ceiling
you take a drink
and i lay on your side facing the wall

and then you start a conversation
asking me for my name

i like to sleep
i have no answer yet, maybe
in a minute

when i regain my confidence
to be my real self again

i beg that you understand my predicament
i just like being so silent this time
i like it more if we have no names forever

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Like On Early Mornings

THE trees that surround
this house
are teeming with birds
the early morning
chorale

the winds from the
sea
are violins
without visible
performers

the hush of the leaves
are the usual arias

some stones on the
feet of trees
are audiences in their
respectable
silence

the garden is the stage
of all these
showings

since no one is in the house
i sit on a rock
the best bench there is
contemplating on some
peaceful thoughts
and i feel like someone
who is
an honored recipient of
all these graces

i conclude: God is Here.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Lost And What I Gained In Return

i lost it
i am asking my it
what did i get when i lost it?
i do not have to be sad
i learned that precious lesson
of a loss
and that is enough
gain for me.

(sigh)

for sometimes
the Greek god grants your wish
purposely
to punish your illogical
persistence!

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Love Most Before The Rain

it is that point
where the rain is about to fall
like a woman
blushing
when the clouds turn gray
and heavy
when it is about to burst
and yet it still
waits for the first
dropp to fall
it is that point when people
are not running yet
for shelter
at that point i am at ease
sitting on a bench
waiting for the
pandemonium of steps
and hands covering heads
and women losing
their grace and men showing
their rage
and people scattering
like ants
that you spray with
insecticide
it is that point when people
begin to
protect themselves

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Need

a rising sun between two breasts
of mountains green and lushing
trees and a blanket of daisies on
grasses soft and rivers with waters
flowing on a bed of rocks and stones
and sand, a hushing sound of a song
a maiden young and wondering if i
this man shall kiss her lips tonight
when the moon is full when the stars
are glistening like diamonds in the skies.

RIC S. BASTASA
idealism was the first thing i believe in
that the good triumphs
that the bad at the end is vanguished and buried
the corrupt is hanged and the people shall clap their hands
while the flag flies
in the free air, while the women dance in our liberties
while the men take pride
in the wars that they have fought and won,
that justice prevails
that the criminal is always caught and put to jail because
crime does not pay,
that the rich may soon become poor because in accordance with the
cycle of fortunes
no one is poor forever
that the only possibility of those who are up is always to go down

then one day i notice some white locks of hair in my head
my lips crack, my cheeks have wrinkles and my forehead has
a number of furroughs
my skin dry, my nose falling on my chin,
the changes, oh, the changes,
in myself have become the
inevitable,

and then, all of the sudden, the idealism is gone,
like how government is toppled by another government
like how a charismatice leader is shot and another
seemingly charismatic leader takes the reigns,
only to find
one robber displacing another robber
and this keeps on happening for years, until one day

i find myself standing in one corridor staring to the space beyond me
to the far mountain to some grey skies
it looks it will rain all day in my life

i look at myself in the mirror
to find this ugliness in myself and in everything else
it is dark, it is what we call a nice evening and then we do nothing but turn off the light and sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Project

what i project in all those years
is what you get and you swallow
me hook, line and sinker
and you get so nosy with all
your questions leading you
to all your self-framed answers.
what i am inside me
you must know is what i am
just between my body and my soul
my left hand does not even
know what my right hand is holding.
the shadows in that cave and
the real body that you may touch
bathing in the river
you must have known by now
are two different kinds of
illusions. What i have in my
hand is the real one: it is
alive and it is jumping
and flying and i am chasing
it now, so please, excuse
me, i got to go, i still have
many things to do, so many
questions to make so many
answer to fabricate, so many
quests, i do not even have
to take my rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Really Needed

so sorry, let me be candid,
what i need, is, not you,
you are here already,
what can i do? at times
i need the past, talk to it,
and feel the home that was,
but past is past, the dead
sleeps with the dead, and
there is no waking up, you see,
and so i try to embrace
the future, but it was too young
then and not prepared to
understand, and i take the quiet
and the lotus
positioning of the man
refusing to be lost
on a train of thought
into oblivion, i want to quit,
but you know i can't,
we have a house and a farm,
an apartment and a brand
new car, we have a life,
we have learned this hate and
love and hate and love,
this i can never leave without you
script, sans the aria, and the
long breaths, the notes of
agony dissolving
over the brilliance of
the sparkles of wine.

what i need, i must agree,
is here, and it is you
still.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Really Want

te the whole truth comes to me
te the vast continental ocean to my thirst
t don't just ask for light
t ask for the sun and the galaxy
t will give you a hint: the earth, the space,
a flight of birds V-shaped in the horizon
not just a wind, but the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Remember About Her

it was the first time for me to
see a sunflower
the first time really despite the fact
that in the barrio where i live
my mama had a sunflower garden,
and

it was Tita who made me see a
different sunflower, the one which
made me open my mouth wide as
though i were a kind of a whale,
sifting planktons in the deep,

the world is a sunflower, it is another
sunflower that van gogh painted,
it was so touching, as though someone
died in the mountain, killed without
mercy, waving a white flag for a
surrender,

and Tita spoke about a sunflower
and she was not looking at us, but
at the window, where a big wall
shut us all from the trees, a meter
away, a dead end of some shallow
interpretations about life, about who
we are, when we are not waking.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Saw At The Temple...

in the buddhist monastery somewhere
in ho chi minh city
an old tourist who travels alone
though a roman catholic by option
and tradition
lights his incense
buys a blank paper
writes his unfulfilled wishes of his
long gone youth
submits it to the famous Lady of the Sea

the monk in maroon
lights the paper and the the smoke goes up to the sky
as the gods
begin to deliberate whether this old man
deserves it

a young boy left by his mother
(as she busies herself on the altar)
leans on the
300 year-old wall
wondering what is this all about

twitching

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Think

what i think is what you get
this is all i have
a finger, a thought, a tongue
i can offer you a hand
if you want
if you stay, i can offer you greater
than all these
you may have my body
and if you care for me more than
enough
you can even have my soul
but if you are true more than enough
that you take time
burying me when i die
then i can give you
more than my soul and my body
but you may not like it
so i may ask: won't you take my poetry?

don't laugh, i am a serious writer.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Think During That Time...

it has not rained
for a week
and nights are
humid
the women are
using fans
and see through
dresses

that early morning
the rain arrives
in grandeur
taking glory of its
opulence

the trees are drinking
and the grasses
are taking so much
pleasure

it is like the sky
and earth
making love exchanging
pleasures
of their variations

i have seen their
mutual pleasures and
i think i am hearing
their moans

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Think....

i think i can write
i always think that way
and i listen to nobody when someone
starts to tell me that i am doing
well in this and that and

not this, it is too low,
too humiliating for one like me
to delve into this illogical

and free flowing fronts something
like a strained though flowing like
a water damned, but i always think

that i can write, words keep rising
from my throat and i watch
how each letter goes into the sky and
forms the clouds of

this oblivion, when they start
dissipating into rain and i am
left gaping for more water

which were just words before
and which water has always made
me thirsty more than
ever what water is this?

i ask the well and there is
no answer. It too is craving for
water literally
drying up like a woman in her
mid forties
trying to figure out what life
shall be
without being wet.
What I Think.....

actually we like that some words are
better be unsaid,

that some nuggets remain in
their natural state

like diamond unpolished
like gold that remains united
one with the rocks and deep underground

nothing about mercurial segregation
or nitric acid detachments

to make them more pleasing
and yet too
artificial

their value so enhanced
that people soon begin to kill
one another

actually things are better
if they remain buried forever

in fact that is what grasses take pride
that is what volcanic eruptions with their hot lava
after having cooled in time
achieve with hidden dignity

no one remembers the horrors of the past
no one recalls the cruelty of
those who were very much ahead of us

actually it would have been better
if we have not met even once
had that talk and drink and shared those stories

i guess, my life would have been much better (off)
without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Told Mama...

i know mama
for me to move on with my life
i must
travel light,
like a feather
and i must accept
everything
that comes my way

to say yes
and be too pleasing

.....forgive me mama
i do not want to move on with my life
i am staying
like a navel

RIC S. BASTASA
What I Told You

I will be sad
Having told you everything
Those that I have weighed
And kept
Like my hidden gems

Yet I shall have no regrets
Some words are meant to be spread
And said
To please some lonely hearts
Though they may deceive you sometimes
Like mirrors reflecting mirrors
And you shall have a hard time
Pointing where I am
My words inhabiting
You like ghosts
They may stay inside you for long
Their dark colors
Their own shapes and sizes
Pointed, insistent and sometimes
Conspicuously hurting

You may return them to me
I am waiting and you shall be
Relieved and free

RIC S. BASTASA
What If

what if?
i ask you

no ifs
no buts
your answer

RIC S. BASTASA
What If I Have Only One Arm?

if i have only one arm left
i still take the pleasure of using to the utmost
the remaining arm
i will take my coffee one at a time
open a jar with sugar
take a spoonful
and take the cup
and pour hot water there
i prefer the right arm
rather than the left
if one arm be lost.

just that, i am right handed
and you are left handed
we still complement each other and that
is the most important thing that
can happen to me.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If I Took The Road Less Travelled By?

there were only two choices,  
that was during his time,  
the road less,  
and the road more,  
whatever that means,  
you know it  
and i know it  
and i have chosen the road more:

more people, more opportunities  
more laughter, more entertainment,  
more and more  
the more that we can conceive in our  
 minds,  
less the soul, more in the body  
on an imbalanced  
trichotomy,

what if i have chosen the road less traveled by?  
less the lust,  
less the fame,  
less the money, more pains, more grief,  
less the acceptance of the family,  
and less the looking up  
smiling faces of society,

i could have been dead by now,  
betrayed by all of you,  
and so, thank me, fate, thank me luck,  
for i am here with you  
in this party of rivers of drinks and mountains of food,  
in this luxuries of lust and  
favors,  
here we are in this ballroom  
of music and dances

we all smell like rats  
feel like crocodiles  
and spit fires like dragons
inside the walls of
our extinction.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If I Were Not Born?

i know,
if i were not born

there is no world
there is no now
there is no you

there is nothing
it is all in my mind
and i have none

there is nothing
nothing can exist
without my knowing
without my mind

i, am, the, mind.
i, am, my world,

without me,
there is nothing.

you exist, because
i think, you exist.

you love, because
i love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If Time Travelled In A Straight Line?

the hands of time travel in a very small circle
of our watch.
the sound is minimalistic, only the wrist is disturbed.
or the wall. or the bed.

everyday round the clock. Faithful.

i like it to travel on a very straight line. Have an edge.
I will push it. It will fall. I want it dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If You Died?

i have become another wretched creature in this corner of your hidden universe for i, adam like, have swallowed half of your poisoned apple,

tonight my left hand shall be refuted. my right shall protect me my mouth shall remain silent for this conquer.

there are inconsistencies of the self which the self may right itself

here you are telling me that i must use my heart this time having been tortured by reason and knowledge having believed much on myself rather than the maps of fate

i told you people change that i too
knows how to
and what change is

only this time
when you tell me
that i have had
hurt you
and all these years
you have carried
it
in the carriage of
silence

what if you died?

RIC S. BASTASA
What If You Were Wrong?

you are using
a human mind
limited as mine

why are you so
definite?
what if you are
wrong like the
way it was with
myself when i
first met you and
told you about
a definite right?

sometimes i can
be wrong
i told you that before.
you never told me
once

you're not the wise man
that i must respect.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If?

what if? what if?
man, that is too hypothetical.

try it. plunge. get wet.
soak. get burned.
touch it. feel it.
love it. hate it.
away.
stay. go. and be
yourself.

now, this is for real.

RIC S. BASTASA
What If? ....

What if
there is nothing
there?

what if beyond
is just an open
gate
a
broken fence?

what if
as we see it
there is
nothing but
dust and
wind?

shall we
but laugh
about past
sacrifices?

how many books
are there
how many pages
how many
words
deeds
go into the futility
in time?

cheers! i have this
glass and
drink all it has
and then
i shall be content
perhaps
with only
the remaining
emptiness

which
by analogy is
still
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
What If? ........

this morning i just read
from her who is so far away from me

(we only know each other by name
we have never met for once)

that there is no 'other' but it does
not mean that there is just a 'self' either

it is this oneness that makes us what we are
and so there is no other

no self, like the way how things grow
side by side, the tree and the snake,

the moss on the rocks, the wind and the sky,
the sea and the rivers,

there are no boundaries now no fences no walls,
this logic of absurdity: what if you do not exist?

what if this world is not what it is?
what if there is no force of gravity? no air?

what if there is no one? what if?
what? what if there is no word?

this morning i realized that i am alive
and that asking questions are more beautiful

than having the answers, which are
where the road ends, and then there is no forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Imagination Does After Reading Your Poem About The Amaranth....

this pen that i am holding
is black
it turns into a snake once
i leave it
and then after we sleep
and drink tea at the veranda
facing the sunset
i go back to where i left it
to find it again

and it turns into a pen again
black and inanimate and i imagine
it as a tool that i shall use
against you

white paper which turns into
a floor of an eggshell where
anything delicate which i have
kept as memories for years

and which i have not yet fully
grasped shall be laid and
written.

you who sips tea with me shall
become my mind
thinking about what i am not
and which after a thorough
sifting i shall accept as my
oblivion.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is A Good Poem?

It is like a traveler
with no fixed plans
where to go
and is not intent of arriving
at its undefined destination

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is A Lonely Woman?

when you greet me first
and say hello and ask if i am ok
when i also talk to you
and it will be long
and we are not tired
honing words like cleaning a bottle
or making a
glass figurine shine against the light

when i listen, when i stop doing other things
giving you time,

and then inside myself i make a definition of you
and then
i say, 'oh i perfectly understand the situation'

and it doesn't bother me.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is A Writer's Block?

i am looking for a writer's block?
what is the number of its street?
what is its name?
what is the number of its block?
what landmark fronts it?
is it near the chapel? is it at the side
of the marketplace?

i have never been there
condemned, i shall write
without stopping.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Blue?

blue is
when you were young
and you could not eat the candy bar
because you had no money to
pay for it

blue is
when you become old
and save so much money
and you can now afford the candy bar
but you cannot eat it
because it makes you sick

blue is
you have the candy bar and you can eat it
but then
you are already dead in your bed

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Fair?

soon this restaurant shall close.
the customers are not satisfied
discriminatory food is served
the waitresses are arrogant
and the soup is bland and bugged.

it will be very lonely here
the bar will be colder than ever
the table dusty, and the chairs empty.

soon i'll pack up too, leave the place
and go somewhere else for good.

i shall not leave a word, i am not saying anything.
i shall choose what's next and what is fair.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Friendship?

let me ask that today
what is friendship to you?

me always at the spending end
and you always the bill
me as the hospitable host always
and you as the demanding parasite

let me ask that to you now
what is friendship to you?

you do not really care
about how i feel
it seems i am always the blanket
and you are the cold one inside it

could be that i am the mat
at the footsteps on the door
or the rug always ready for the floor
or the handkerchief
always obliging to your sneeze
or the cap
covering for your needed nap

watch me, for soon
i will take your definition

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Good About Silence?

when you enter a room
you are full and when you leave it
without any word wasted
you are still full: nothing more
nothing less, you feel the goodness
of keeping things within yourself
like some hidden treasures
still undiscovered: you look at them
again inside your heart
you belong to no one else
and no one else belongs to you
like the beauty of venus glowing
like a star from where you stand

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Happening To You?

I find it strange how we stopped making new beginnings
With our two hands we grope no light, with your ring finger
You snap a fly and there it dies with nobody mourning,
With your eye you touch a stone
And throw it to the sky. How strong are your thoughts today?
How crazy, how messy.
In the kitchen with your knife
You slice more onions amazed that you will shed no tears,
Proud about your long stares
Staying on the stairs

Just beside your apron a cockroach is crawling
On used tissue paper. And a fish is leaping like a frog
Like a dove just struck a window and
Fell to the ground. Soiled bleeding heart. You are always busy asking-
Why is this why is that? There is no end to your murmur.
You’re making heat where ice is frozen, making
Pancakes when there is no electricity in the oven

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Hard For You...

do i have to tell you
what is hard for me all these days?
I have been suffering but
i never tell.
The days are hard, and the hours seem
to be desert on my journey
hammers in my head
and my ears have not heard the songs of
love and youth,
i will not tell you how hard is it for me to live
life this way.
I am on your side, silent.
Dignified by your death
years ago,
i will not tell you how
hard has this all become for me.
It is getting late.
And the hour may finally come
For me to be rested
like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Home?

so do you mistake
your hotel as home?
or is home a feeling?
a fleeting feeling that
is here today and gone
tomorrow?
is it the lapse of time?
the multiplication of
your family?
is it the sense of
being away always
from a house?
is home nothing but
the heart that always
shall long for
the presence
of God?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is In A Hello?

all the roses in full bloom
and i feel like a new broom

and i can't help saying
hello to you, simply because

you have always been my sun
and my moon
my song and my life

hello to you
your silence is killing me.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It About Distance?

i

it is like the silence
of the pebble
contemplating
on the the
wisdom of the
distant star

ii

it is like two hearts
beating
for each other
far away
from the bosom
feelings growing
fonder

iii

it is like moving away
towards the top
of the cliff
trying to see
the village below
from another
holistic point of view

iv

it is the healing of a wound
taking the form of a scar
hoping sighing
soon, soon, soon....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It All About

We try to talk about many things
Petty and not so vulgar
We try to overwhelm ourselves
With so much words as I choose
What to put to make you marvel
And you pretend you marvel
That I make sense, but in truth
That is not the point of this meeting
Of two souls, it is the meeting of bodies
Of two bodies, needing each other’s warmth
And wrath, as I tell you about something
Interesting, you know that I am just
Pretending, my eyes are looking at every
Corner of your skin, the tip of your fingers
Wanting to touch me, too,
The softness of your body, the lines in
Your curvatures, swaying towards
My lips, I stop, I kneel before your
Gentleness, as you close your eyes
As you hold my hair, as you caress
My neck, my arms, my chest and you
Have sympathies for my gentleness
My humiliation, you ask me with the
Signal of your hands, and eyes, and
Lips that I rise up

To kiss you, it is all about it, and
We have no chance saying words
Again, we breathe each other’s longings
We fill our mutual emptiness, like we
Are all cups now filled with air.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It And What Caused It

it was a good seed
after all, -
it is the soil
it is the bad one

it is a spirit pure
never adulterated
it was the wrong body
the rotten flesh

there is no one responsible
no one is worth the blame
Heaven is always a feast
a celebration

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It Like...

these thoughts
are like the afternoon
beside the sea
there is a storm and
the waves are
as big as my rage
against a rock
that is never cracked
despite

my head keeps on
banging something that
is unbearable
indestructible

my love is like that rock
and so lies my rage
like the waves.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It That Makes Us Stop To Love?

is it too much familiarity that the other
sounds like a blabber
and looks like a blubber
and smells like a tuber?

is it the hustle and bustle of the daily worries
that takes her away from a mystery
and you have nothing mystical
to maintain that fantasy?

so much reality
this everydayness that shuts you out
from the interest of life

it must be the desire turned off
the will surrendering
the heart dying because there is no more blood
rushing because the ecstasy had long left both of you

staring at the ceiling
and waking up as though there is nobody sleeping on your side
and closing windows and opening doors
stepping out
finding the air of freedom and smelling its new scent
feeling the wind
and wanting to play even if it is dark and cold and damp
on a moonless night
on the soft grass under the lushing trees
waiting for your dream
to come
where someone will be there

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It That Must Matter Most?

it is easy to answer
that for a believer in God,
it is written, and there is an answer
there, Love of God, God's Love
His Mercy, His saving Grace
Salvation of the Soul
safe answers, Melvin,
answers handed from Adam
to his Cain and Abel
to the present generation
of X's and Y's
and even Jejemons,

but what about Melvin-

for those who do not believe in God?
What about these brothers?
What should matter?
What is the answer to Atheism
to paganism
to nihilism?

I am interested. Somehow.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It That You Like?

don't you like this sweetness
of my words?
you are bored with this sugar
and honey
and cream?
you are afraid you have become
sick of such
sweet tongue
such sweet indulgence?
oh, you want something bitter
something sour now?
some bitter herbs some sour
species of green lemons?
try me,
 i am a bitter person
 i am the latest delicacy of
all that is sour
and
decomposing.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is It?

What is it that looks like an ant?
Walks like an ant, falls in line like an ant,
Smells like an ant, eats like an ant,
Crawls like an ant, and thinks like an ant.

Of course, nothing but

An ant

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is 'It'?

what is it that must live
on? that which neither life
nor death cannot destroy?

I have it too
inside myself.

But like Sarah
I won't tell you.

Surely, you must know by now
that

'It' is a secret.

You figure out
in between the lines

You search it out
in all my poems

But i will tell you
You cannot find 'IT'.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Lacking

been thinking
what is lacking ah this one
been thinking about it
the whole day
wanting to write it tonight
i almost forget about it
i want to forget about it
and then i forget about it

but there is a reckoning
like a clock with its two hands
running counterclockwise
and so i remember and now must
write it somehow

it is like this: there is an apple
the apple of my eyes
and i have a tongue and fairly
sharp line of teeth like small gods,
and i bite the apple
and savor its taste and flavor
i go to heaven
but i leave the apple
that sin
that apple of discord
turning into a snake with forks
as tongue
spurned and scorned like a woman
now turning into hell
with the fires of the dragon
running after me
passion, yes passion,
you take it, and it won't let you go
it will consume you
eat you
and you regret it
but it is too late
heaven has closed its door
and hell is here
but can love be hell?
can something which feels so good
be that poisonous venom of the snake
that apple of your eyes
who says
it loves you forever?

heaven, heaven,
please understand
open your door
i am coming

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Left Of You....

can you make me
come to you

can you make me
come to you

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Life?

a dedication of all seasons,

wet or dry
winter or spring
autumn and summer
there is forever

lights on and off winking
windows and doors close
and then soon into an open

fingers to the hands
rivers to the sea
oh, flitting clouds shaping and re-shaping
oh, there is no ending

our fickle minds
our flapping feelings
our body our soul
one with space covered and silenced.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Life? ....

along the trail
of this mountain
passing through
the same river
that winds its
way among the
rocks and trees
one finds a makeshift
to rest
the night and on
the following morning
packs up
all the essentials
and then moves
away again.....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Love?

as i see you
weeping
and wailing

i comfort myself
as i relate

love too must not
stop. It must travel

it needs to.
to forget. to vary.

love too, like
life must be

a journey. Let
us take a walk.

let us take a
deep breath.

breathe. breathe.
that is what
we can really do.

love too must
have some
escapades.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Making Me Sad?

here i am reflecting or

perhaps grieving for the happiness which i just attained

i have to say it just like what you said before in the sky some clouds look twisted

in the river some fishes are dead in the road some signs are lost

here i am wondering what is it that i just had which i wished for nights

what is making me sad?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Natural Is Best

i built a chicken house

but the chickens still prefer
to roost
on the branches of the
kamuning tree

last night it rained so hard
the chickens are silent

all wet they
peck on grains scattered
on muddy ground

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Natural Is Best And Yet Most Neglected

the best part
is left unplanned

it comes from the
unexpected

like light falling
at the back of your head

someone not preoccupied
with itself notices it

saying, ' happy morning
everyone! '

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is New And Tougher

we wake up
rise from

our positions
of defeat &

we proclaim
incessantly

i shall soon
forget this

it was not me
i am not a loser

you move forward
get a mask for a while

wear it
assume another feat

you invite yourself
here's another feast

for new challenges
and muster what changes

are there what
is new and tougher.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Not Natural Can Not Be Felt As Beautiful

draw me a horse
do not put its four feet
make me a boat
without it usual sails
hand me a butterfly
without its wings
find me a bird without
its claws and beak
build me a house
without a roof
make love to a woman
without her hair

this i tell you
everything is possible
but what is not
natural can not be
felt as beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Our Worth As A People?

we have not moved
as one
we have always noted
differences
it has been that way
always
we have not focused
on our similarities
our common bonds even
if they be chains and
locks and knives,
we should have been
more patient about
our shortcomings,
we were not born perfect
we all have defects,
now you have the guts
to ask why are we poor?
why are we scattered?
why are we oppressed?

we are worth the hundred
deaths that we are suffering.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Painful....

upon a love
unrequited

silence is triumphant

your silence
and mine
joined together

to hide from all of them
all

what is painful.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Permanent

who you are when you are born can be permanent

a boy another girl
a chubby baby on the crib
the thin one
barely breathing in the cradle
the sleepy one
sucking milk from the mother's breast

sometimes you know there are no choices with what the genes gave to the spine and the skull these are permanent shapes

what we can choose is either/or

love or hate or both
peace or war
leave or stay
compassion, understanding hope

matters of the heart and the soul
that only us can sift like flour from the bugs.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Poetry For Me?

it is not the form
not even the rhyme
not even loneliness
or fear
it is not the meter
there is no need
for a ruler
it is not even the
metaphor
no technique
is necessary

it is just you
at this moment
speaking

RIC S. BASTASA

perhaps you have taken Lady Freedom
so she left you for good. Now

you have to get to know well
with the other Lady inside your cell.

She is mean but not that cruel.
She will remind you of the rituals which you have forgotten.

You have to comb your hair
a hundred times before you sleep.
You have to sleep on a flat bed.
Your view to the world is limited,
Only through the slit eyes of those bars
can you see the stars

what is really
most important is
what you have not seen before.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Really The Gift You Give Me On My Birthday?

what you hand is a box with a reb ribbon
you say it is your gift on my birthday
and i open it
it is an orange cake
with sweet mango slices as toppings
and a lone cherry on top of
a mound of chocolate
and some green candles
telling me my exact age
and this matchstick
to light the wicks

the cake is on the table
and i stand right there surrounded
by all of you
singing the birthday song
and the time comes for my
making a wish and the blowing
of the little flames of my age

after the party you all live one by
one like stars fading at dawn
and i am left alone with all
the litters and the laughters
that stick on the walls and
curtain and the giggles that
spill on the table cloth

the gift is not the box
it is not the cake it is not the cherry
it is not the little green candles
that speak of my age
it is not the flame because i
blow them all
it is not even the wish that i make
for myself because they are all mine
secretly seeping in the crevices of my cranium

what is the gift really that you give me on my birthday
i know it and you know it
how can we not tell each other sometime?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Right Can Sometimes Be Wrong

what is right can sometimes be wrong,
like the right of a state to kill,
that to me is wrong,
like the right to have slaves
that was wrong, but they once
thought it was right,

something that feels so right
may, sometimes, be also be wrong,
like feeling love, and too much love
for a neighbor or yourself,
it can be intoxicating at times,
and it can kill you,

because what is right exists only
in our human minds,
limited, too narrow, too
confined in our flesh and blood,
in the context of our culture,
in the frames of our time,
to the dictates of religion
the liberality of our education,
to our biases and prejudices,

what we believe in, what we
touch with faith in dark places
what we try to light with candles,
or see in microscopes or see in
telescopes, or see with our eyes
and hearts wide open,

may still be wrong, or

still be not right,

so what is right after all?
Possibly, this can be right,
But possibly this can also be wrong,
We can always pray. But the doubt
Is always there. Cogito ergo sum.

Who can really be sure?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is The Cloud To The Sun?

For what is the cloud to the sun,
It is nothing. The wind has always
Driven it away and the sun does not
Care. For want of love and care, the
Cloud plays with the fields and the
River and the sea. Impregnated it
Has conceived, and gives
Birth to the rain. The fields and the
Sea and the rivers feasted. The fields
Grow the grass and the flowers.
The sea and the rivers have
Seeded its waters with more fish.
The cloud does not like it. It has
Always dreamt of the sun but the
Wind has always blown it away.
At night the cloud talks to the moon.
And seeing the likeness of its light
To the sun that it loves, the cloud
Makes love with the shining moon.
It has given birth to the stars.
The following morning, the cloud
Is exhausted. It floats with the
Chastisements of the wind. There
Is no more direction. It still dreams
Of the sun. It dies and becomes
Taken as part of the wind. The
Cloud has become a white, clear
Sky. It is nothing. It is what you
See, when love is unrequited.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is The Remedy Really?

at dawn
i palpitate
and then
i anticipate
something
difficult and
unnecessary like
some questions of
why can't i really
get out from here
how long had i been
here
hibernating in utter
fear of what
i cannot really fully
explain
only if i know it
completely perhaps
i can find a way
a cure
only if i know the
real cause
or if as i have predicted
i must have refused
knowing it despite
the face i face
despite the nearness
of what i can really
touch
or is it simply
because there is no
known remedy for

unrequited love?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is There

a worm inside the home
of its hollows
at night it sings and i can hear
its joys of
home and family

a bird rests on a twig of a tree
it sleeps beside the
quarter moon
the leaves are calm
respectful of the
silence

inside the room
i contemplate on this
perfection: nature in harmony
with the self
there is joy
indescribable
there is sorrow shared
in our solitude

there is this silence that
respects the earth
like the stars
in perpetual twinkle

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is These All About?

at 9: 18 p.m.
the head gets the pain
another relief
swallowed

finally you go back
to where you
started

page one
when you said
you do not miss her

page two and three
empty

pages more pages
until you reach
that page where you cried

dried tears at the middle
of the blotted letters

you quickly run your fingers
close the notebook

you stand by the window
at par with the moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is This All About?

i remember you want
everything silvery
the songs, the river
must be silver
never gold, you do not
like gold, never about
gods, you do not like
being a god,
i remember you do
not like popcorn
with cheese as flavor
you want
no popcorn
in movie houses
you like to simply
hold my hand
and lay your
head as close
to the beatings
of my heart
you pretend you are
so absorbed
in some dialogues
or the scenes
the action
the hero winning
at the end
all the the others
finally dead,

i remember you
yes, this is all about
it, i remember you
always, and i know
you always remember
me, always,

memories like
passing scenes
like some movies
the plot
and the actor and
his lady hugging
at the end
behind them the
sun set

unlike us, we
have no ending still

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is This All About? (2)

some surrender
a long time ago
they made a good
start
today they mark
a bad ending
and it is sad

it is not having
or giving
this is all about
becoming
and becoming and
becoming
and simply
being

here, there,
being everywhere if you
really want
to understand

it is not the cutting
of the stalk of that
beautiful flower

it is not the catching
of the firefly at night
and then putting
it sealed on a jar

you are killing time
you are killing what is beautiful to be simply freed

some have already surrendered
some have freely killed themselves

it is not about them
this is something for the world to feel
for the world to live
for mankind to survive

it is once written
it is not about the hammer but the snail

how beautiful it is for us to be slow
savor every step of this journey

celebrate the solitude of every soul
in the most beautiful peace of our existences.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is This Life All About?

as i walk today
the sun has not yet shone
there is no brightness then on the horizon
this is the boundary
between light and darkness
gray,

the black buffaloes are still resting under the mahogany trees
the chickens start to hop
land on the ground and begin to feed upon themselves
the rain last night created small ponds on the side of the pathways
the nipa hut of the old dying woman is still closed

there is a possibility that no one shall open it
not even herself

abandoned

the grasses are wild and lush
there is enough for everyone

space to thrive
food to eat but i guess there is not much desire to realize
what this life is all about

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is This World Made Up Of?

what is this world made up of?

nothing but us.
nothing but us.
just us, just us.
just us, just us.

earth or sea or air
they are not there
without us, here.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Wrong With You?

you miss the trees
because you were looking at the forest

you miss the journey
because you were looking at the destination

you miss the smile
because you were looking at the body

you miss me
because you were recalling all the memories

you miss the present
because you live in the past and you keep on thinking about the future

you miss life
because you always contemplate on the harshness of death

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Wrong With Your Poetry?

do not sound like a treaty
with terms and conditions
penalties for violations
much more
do not sound like your are
sort of a philosophy
the heart would not be pleased
with prolixity

be like a bird in the air
playful to the emptiness of the sky
be like the fish
agile to the rages of the current
sleek and smart
it a second it escapes and is gone
an illusion to your hands

it is after all the emotions
that we are dealing with here
grief, anger, bliss
happiness, joy,
it is the fireworks that we see on the 4th of July
less talk
more of that awe
and wonder

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Wrong?

what is wrong
with seeing stars in the afternoon skies?

the poor guy is asking
what is wrong with my seeing stars naked in the afternoon skies?

i love stars and i love whatever star is there
imagined or real.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Your Choice? .......

there is this desert
which is full of love
there is nothing in there
except the ostracized
ostrich
you like it somehow
saying, ah, love is still
the answer

there is this paradise
full of greens and reds
fenced by the rules
loveless,
you do not like to live there
despite the
comfort of the
apple trees
and the scents of the pines
and the coolness of
the blueness of the
coves and
the clouds

now you must make the choice
which one? i have chosen mine.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Is Your Name?

you are well fed and all your complaints are well taken
from cough to fever to even the simplest symptom of boredom
they are ready of their medicines and good accommodations
they protect you from cold and from heat
and then you become big and fat and beautiful

tonight, they are having a drink, and your name comes out
in their happy conversation

tomorrow you shall have your last meal
you are the next to be butchered

what is your name? Mr. Contented Pig.

RIC S. BASTASA
What It Is Really?

somewhere our words take us beyond

somehow we write because we must rise

some build ships
some of us have to create an ocean to make these ships sail

some of us must know each feather to make us wings
some of us must assure that we too can fly

for we are part of this lonely planet looking for a cure of humanity’s universal sickness

this emptiness that no one feels
if i must, if need be, we too have to create God to create us

it is said He created us in His own image
and we who are lonely and fearful must accept and simply believe

we pay nothing for this
we only have an imagination

some of us has to settle in that bottom of faith
some floors must hold us as we float in space and need to land

we create floors we recreate the meaning of floating and settling
we are tired and what we need most is this peace

the calmness of everything is our dream
somewhere somehow we are and so we keep on writing

some of us has to imagine that we are at rest
some mock us because we seem to be always in motion

eternity, infinity, this somehow this somewhere always taking us away from us
somehow somewhere we think we understand
we grope we feel and yet we are unable to hold any

and so we keep on saying and saying and saying
but what it is really? what it is really?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Joy Is This That Remains To Be A Failure Of Words? ....

the time has come
when we set each other
free.

i set a dove free
the joy is immense
winging to the sky

the tree lets a leaf
fall and the grass
celebrates with the
hoppers

light surrenders to
darkness
and the night is an
embrace

the waves come idolizing
the cliffs
the shores bare themselves
like legs to tongues

why joy is this that remains
the failure of words!

RIC S. BASTASA
What Keeps Us Alive Really

there is this sense of rottenness
we keep it
but we do not want to be outdone by it,
it stinks deep within us
but we keep always believing
that this cannot harm us
we go on
day by day on the common routine
the ways that make us
livable in the house of our heart

there are nails of the past
and the hammer that keeps on
bogging
we are never destroyed somehow
but like stairs
we are built and heightened
to become a big house
where others too live

there is this sense of brokenness
somehow
we start from there
and on and on the casualness
the smile that you see
every morning that we meet
we keep telling
i am alive and i am still intact

RIC S. BASTASA
What Lies Over There?

What do you see in everyday?  
books piling against its other like layers of  
geological metamorphic rocks  
age, and hardened by the volcanic eruptions of the  
beautiful  
mind,  
(self-proclaimed beauty of those  
incomplete clauses demanding  
sentences, and periodic disturbances  
of unmindful commas,  
somehow, one feels dogged,  
tail concealed between the legs  
because of these towering masters  
who even in their uttermost silence  
since they were not created with  
mouths and tongues  
own claim the dominance of  
masters)  
you listen to the songs of Solomon  
the dreams of the singing ABBA  
dismantled by the intricacies of  
their islands of  
loves  

what is in store for the wanderer?  
the lust that subsides like uncertain ebbs  
what lies there over the green pastures  
separated by fences  
of restlessness,  

you grope thoroughly through some kind  
of syllabic fingers  
you have lost the ability to quit.  

RIC S. BASTASA
What Loneliness Did....

he builds his wall
to protect himself

he is safe inside
this lonely chamber

like a monk he sits
calmly and chants

the words of peace
and compassion

and then one night
when he completes

what he wants to be
he transcends the

wall and flies away
like a bird and

opts not to come
back inside the walls

where loneliness has
claimed another death.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Love Does....

because you
are sincere
and you too
hate evil, in
the same
manner
because of
you
i have been
clinging to
what
is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Love Have You Offered To Give To The World?

you say it is love
and you touch the world
saying it is love
it is love
you give what gesture
is there in gentleness
begging
worshiping
kneeling so that you may
take love in
return

all that this world
can give you
is the usual
quizzical look
unable to accept what you
have to offer
still asking you: is it love?
is it really love?

RIC S. BASTASA
this morning, you are talking about love
and how you think it is a feeling that sometimes hurt and make you not
easily forget
how time heals and leaves a scar just the same
how you were stoned one time by an uncaring lover
on your head
and since then no hair grows in there

you start with feelings of tenderness shaped like a very white ball
pure and hanging on some ceiling with a very sensitive string
always ready to fall
and fell
always willing to die
and died
how each thread of suffering, that feeling of finally being junked
have become a cloth, a veil in your face, and how you finally covered
yourself with its blanket and how you walked away
to get over with
such an overwhelming sorrow

others tell you that you have been wrong because love too is
a choice
a selection of this and that, a filling of the blanks like a test of life
a quiz
where you get scored and rated and judged and declared either to be a winner
or a loser

lest you forget, one poet who said, that love is not a noun, but a verb
not even just a silly adjective
or some sort of an adjective to another adjective a decor on your thought
or just an idea to be conceived of
from an accident of love at first sight, the giggle and the crush
for after all
love (again, i must tell you) is a responsibility
the capacity to look at the apple of eden and not eat it
the patience, not just the pleasing or the appetite
the way to obey a commandment: to always want the other to be happy
and put yourself last
in the line of those hungry and thirsty and those who want to find meaning
in the other
the beloved, above all yourself, the lips that want to kiss and refrained
because love is always the drive to be strong
and right and
survive

RIC S. BASTASA
What Love Is ...

love reminds
soon, time lessens me
emaciates me, and you
begin to ask, why is love
like that? is it not supposed
to be eternal? oh yes,
only in thought,
in spirit, but not this body
its dead cells lose the
luster the gloss
but if you love and
truly love, nothing
matters, there is no
worry, affection blooms
in wrinkled skins,
trust sticks on arthritic
bones,
companionship stays
like bark on trees ...

RIC S. BASTASA
What Made The Success Of The Swindler?

in the last analysis
it was not his gullibility
because it could have been so well learned
and the swindling avoided
as early as possible,
frankly speaking
it was his greed, and nothing but his greed,
which made the
swindlers have the last laugh

greed allows
everyone to come and
take everything
everything

RIC S. BASTASA
What Makes The Tongue Feel The Divine

i've seen what i
am dreaming
no hold bar

i've stared at
taboo
long enough
than you
thought i can
not do

i've flown on
prohibited territories
stayed
on dangerous grounds
where life
may be wasted

and you decide to leave me

i've not sinned
i've not done anything to
suppress life
and quell its
forces

i've made the world see
how love
can be so nil
and deprived

how those public eyes can be so
humiliating
when you die
without having tasted
love
what makes the
tongue
feel
so divine

RIC S. BASTASA
What Makes Us Close

it is not the gold
or the silver
it is not related to
something metallic
it is not the grass
or the tree either
not the whiteness of
an eggshell
not the blueness of
the sky
not even the soothing
sound of the calm waves
of the morning sea
not the soft winds
not even the wings of the
afternoon seagull
it is not fishy not even
avian
it is not the air or
that big blue whale

frank let us admit
it is that itch.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Makes Writing Hard

what makes this writing hard?
your insecurity that they may not like
the poem from your heart.
don't mind them, this is not a race.
not a contest. this is your precious right of
freedom of thought.
it is free, unlimited texting,
it cannot kill you
it makes you live, free from the chains
of your past.

writing is as easy as defecating.
it is bowel removal. it is the electrocution of the wart.
the shaving of the beard.
the cutting of your hair and making you feel renewed
like hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Makes You Happy Then?

you feel so normal
(mind you) if you commit a mistake
despite
the best that you have shown
with what you
are

you feel uneasy with
excellence
you feel sorry for the shortness
of others
you are disturbed because at the top
the winds are colder
and you are
alone

you want to be happy
being one of them
the people of the mall
the stranger at the park
the common player on the
leveled field

when you become the sun
and planets revolve around you
what use is that light
and fire that creates all the storms
of hell within you?

they will never know that every hour
you burst
that all that you take
melt
and that
there is not a thing that
you can ever
keep
What Matters Most Is Love And Peace

you keep on saying that
what matters most is love and peace
and then we manage to eke out
a living for ourselves
then what matters
is hunger
we listen to the sound
of our complaining bellies
asking for rice
and fish
because there is only water from the river
odored foul
by these dead mudfishes
now my dear
find me a place where i can sleep
where i can chant
my pleadings to our gods
so they may answer
our little complaints

love and peace you keep saying that
please prove that to me
on this hunger
and poverty
convince
me

RIC S. BASTASA
What Matters To Me

what matters to me
definitely is not the family

for i do not have any, and i
like to think that what should have mattered to me
is a good education

but i have it anyway and all those years
that good education has not really turned me
into a perfect person

and so i think of something else that must matter
could be money but it has turned me into a slave
could be honor, but it amassed in me more arrogance
could be class and rank and societal functions, but they are but
parts of my day to day existence

and then i go into other matters that most people think really matter:
God, divine light,
prostrate, bending and begging,
humility, prayer

and i tried all these things, inside and outside, the holy grounds,
my sandals left outside the door,
kissing the soil, and raising my arms all for the embrace of God,

nothing happens, i am still in the chains of my flesh, in the sinning
of every hour, in the darkness of my soul,
in the middle of my sorrow,

and i think some more, and more and more,
what matters most is that i must only be patient and i must wait

things are here, things are there, whatever is here, whatever is there
and they are always unfolding, revealing and always telling

what matters most of all, at the end, is always the beginning
watching the days go by,
vigilant when they come and go
and as they once said, what matters most is the journey
just the journey
just this journey
just my own journey

to where? who knows?
what matters most is the question not really the answer
to where? and why? who knows?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Meaning?

you were with someone before
you were friends

though, somewhere there is that
wish for an intimacy

the impossibility is obvious with the
way hands held each other

then you went to different directions
as expected

you search for meaning and did not find it

you meet again
you remember but everything everything is totally different

of course, you forget, and proceed you way
into those other differences

you say, well, life is like that
you meet a friend, then a total stranger

no regrets, you keep that statement
you accept, there is nothing to find, same question:

what meaning is there?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Might She Say

when i left her i left no note
she was in that state of suspension what to really believe
there were words on the table but they were vague
she had kiss marks but they were confused
and she had reasons to be sad at first
then she was lost and then she said she was angry
to the laziness of time to its withholding of what could have been
easily said and should have been
well said and well meant

life was not easy and life need not be clear
to be blunt and be understood with so much pain
it is better hanging
like a leaf waiting for the gracious wind to pluck it off
and fall without so much knowing as though it was merely riding
on its puff and huff and then dry, and rot and be gone

we shall meet again when our minds are calm and strong
when our hearts are toughened by extant sorrows
when our faces have thickened when our smiles are smoothed
i have already prepared my self with what words to say
for 25 years or more that i too have suffered
and what she might say i have rehearsed my ears what to hear
and be not guilty and be not pained anymore

life is easier now i have enough space for guilt
a stronger heart to carry them all and then leave
and move on with my life as though nothing really happened

RIC S. BASTASA
What Mistake Are You Talking About?

when i see a sunflower
van gogh comes into my mind
then the fear
that i will be next to commit
the same mistake as his

i divert my mind for something else
perhaps a very red red rose

well anyway, what mistake was that?

RIC S. BASTASA
What Mother Tells Me

she is always the first to wake up in the house
as she prays the rosary
and father follows to check the carabao on the side
of the hill and transfer it to a greener pasture

while we their children are still asleep
always wanting more sleep on those cold days
curled in our bed covered with thick blankets
and soft pillows on our heads and our ears all covered up
against the sound of the kitchen
our eyes hiding from the light of the morning sun

and mother pulls my blanket
and takes my arm and hugs me and tells me

wake up! wake up! the night is over
go to the river and take your bath

there is no one on your side now
the rest have gone to their respective tasks

wake up! wake up! my son
go and clean yourself and face the day because
the night is over

and these words still cling to my ears:
the night is over
and another one will be coming

RIC S. BASTASA
What Must A Heart Be?

Confined in a room
with no window
how do you expect the
heart to sing?

it goes berserk
looking for the good
view of the palm trees
and the flowers and
the grass

you deny it

and then it goes crazy
it has become a mad, mad
heart
looking for love
thirsting for
affection

now you have to spend
money
find a doctor and
then be too
lonely

the heart must be
you should have known
a dog playing in the field
a bird flying in the sky
a ball rolling on the hill.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Must Represent You

a stone for the protection
against the wind and sun,
numbness is not what you asked for
but it has always been there
and you get used
to what you are, just being there
and not being a witness to anything
anymore,

you could have stopped right there,
but beside you
is this seed, tomorrow a sprout
a leaf,

you begin to open the orifice of light
seeing clouds,
and then feeling a little rain,
the flood and then the dryness

you know the river
that runs back to regain time

the stone, the river, the bud
this time

RIC S. BASTASA
What Must You Do?

oh, those little things

like the brown grasses of summer,
a flower that blooms in the middle of those rocks
the worm that crawls its way slowly to the humid part
the black bird that stays alone on a branch
the tree that keeps on shedding off its leaves
the dry wind, the post in the middle of the rice field
a banana leaf torn on its sides
a concrete fence surrounding the university

these and those that people do not mind
are mine to write about

we make out our links to all these
we make our own definitions of the self
with what we also mean to them

the black bird staring, the concrete fence of indifference.

RIC S. BASTASA
What My Hand Is For

fallen leaf
at that moment when
you are
floating
and not having
tasted what
a rocky ground is
i have already
captured
you in my hand

RIC S. BASTASA
What My Mama Utters In Her Deathbed

She is dying of diabetes, all her organs
Malfunctioning
On sugared complications,
Except some portions of her brain
Still asking questions,

Where is Leonora?
She is in the office mama still working
And where is Betty?
She is on your bedside mama and she is crying
Why? Is she sad? Did she pay her debts to the china man?
And where is Marcelino? Mama he is in Nigeria working
On a foreign ship and he has no way of coming,
his company is
Not allowing him to take his leave,
But his wife is here.
I don’t want her here

Who are you? Mama, I am Ric your son,
I am your favorite, don’t you
Remember me anymore?
Hold my hand; I am seeing some ghosts of your grandpa and grandma
And they hated me, hold my hand and hug me, I am cold, get me a blanket
And where is your papa? Mama, papa will be coming in a minute, but he
Is still drunk, but he loves you mama,

Who are you?
I do not know you; I was never a part of your dreams,
Leave me.

Mama, I am holding you, you are not cold you are warm,
Mama, just sleep

And she goes away just like that, sleeping on a travel, just like that,
And Betty cries,

Did she love her? Did he also love her?
when she died, some of us were there,
but i know she would have been happier left alone
to figure out
death herself

RIC S. BASTASA
What My Neighbor Says

not having money, he says
money does not matter really

having a little education he says
education matters a bit

for it is something that does not
tarnish like silver
something that does not decay
like organic flesh
something that termites cannot
eat like the walls and
beams of the house

not having any land he says
what is land but just enough for him to stay
something that is at most
only about six feet that he really needs

not having any intelligence
(i think he is a little dumb) he says
what matters most is just good deeds
the morality the ethical
the religious fervor of his being

i think he is wise enough to admit
(on this aspect, i may be ironic)
that what matters to him is only those
which he has

and since we have much
as a matter of sour-graping he says
at all, to be frank, to him
we do not really matter

RIC S. BASTASA
What My Teacher Once Said Was This

and those who cannot do it
come and be like
me
study how to teach.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Not To Give What Not To Say

to an old
man do not
with a mirror
gift

to a house where
a man is recently
executed
never mention
a rope

RIC S. BASTASA
What Now Little Bird?

What now little bird?

You look around you
The nest is empty
And mother bird is far away
And siblings
Have taken the first jump
To the pond
To learn to float
And then
Fly

You think that mother bird
Comes back
to feed you with another worm?

No, little bird
No one is coming back for you
You do not even
Know if you have a father bird
to save you

No, little bird
Do not wait
Do not waste your time
The sun shines
And it is time
For you to go too

Fly now
Little bird
Find the real meaning of your wings....

Ric S. Bastasa
What Now?

now the questions are asking you
what now? quo vadis?
where to? what for?
why?

yes, why above all.
the questions are asking you
and you must answer with the very same questions to the questions

you beg, and they beg too
the answer to the questions

but you have no answers really
you have learned the art of wisdom
its own ways
its own manners of not answering with answers

who knows? no one knows?
oh, ahh, i must start from where wisdom
was born

here i am and i know nothing....

RIC S. BASTASA
What One Does Matters

as the butterfly
somewhere in china
flutters its
wings

the sea of Japan
starts to grow the biggest
tsunami

when the butterfly hovers
upon the hair of the geisha

the waters recede and once more
finds
its need for nest

RIC S. BASTASA
What Panic Showed....

do not misconstrue
panic

or hysteria

do not underestimate
schizophrenia

what is buried
come out as a set of hands

looking for
the pair of eyes

so it can see and feel

do not underate
that laughter or scream

it was that big boat
and behind is that volcano

erupting
your silence was then at the loudest

the answers
to all the questions sit on the bench

at the dark kiosk
proud like a pillar
dignified like the bust of the hero in copper and lead.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Papa Do Not Like To See...

a jar on an edge that with a slight push
falls and breaks into pieces,

a sparrow's egg on its nest between the twigs
of the guava tree

a coke bottle put inside the freezer (for he
knows that it will crack, and he does not like to
see broken glass and spilled colored water
inside the frozen floor)

a watermelon on the table with all the possibilities
that it will roll and crush itself on the kitchen floor

a little boy in the middle of the road's curve and there
is a high speeding bus coming...

my papa is not weird after all.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Paradise Is?

when he was a child
he dreams of snow
and always love the
scent of apples

he hates the rain
and sun in his country
he dislikes starapples
and mabolos

his parents are poor
and all those days of his life
he thought he suffered

one day he escaped to America
and transferred to Canada
and true enough he had lots
of apples to eat
and heaps and heaps of snow
he met

whatever happened to him?
he comes back to his country
misses the rain and the sun
and the taste of starapples
and mabolos

he asks himself, why have i not
realized
what paradise is?

i guess the world does not
end. My wife says it is we
that end. Curtains fall.
The actors are out. The
stage remains.

The theater is still there.
As the city lights flicker
deep in the nights
where people walk and talk
not so conscious of their endings.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Past Lives Are.....

actually it is all
about self talk

a self talking to yourself
which makes you wonder

how many selves do i have
as you face a cloud of
doubt, a shade of blues and
reds and blacks

and it may seem too
confusing until you get hold

of your hair and hands
holding on to your hands

and you feel discreetly
concretely what is here

what is left of you after
all the winds blow whatever

is not true, whatever is
consuming you

the bitter part is left
and all too enduring

all the sweetness of you
is gone, and you wonder

where to mix again, where
to start, how sweet is sweet

what sweet is sweet,
what past lives are.
What Put Us Together In This

what put us together in the getting to know
and liking each other so well
are our common miseries
and as time would have it we exchange
stories of our failures and how we are able
to cope with each,
to our amazement we have shared the techniques
of sorrow
the art of sadness
the procedure for grief
the poems of lamentations
and the finishing plots for our novels of survival
we put the words so well
as others so well praised it
on that epilogue portion where we keep on thanking
each other
for the success of our failed endeavors
the irony, the paradox
of our mild existence
our solidifying persistence
the elasticity that has not been exceeded by the extreme
weights of our
burdens: to include those that we realized to be also
well, self-caused, self-inflicted
we love it: our blindness sometimes on some spots
where our Achilles' heels lie.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Really Happened

at 80
the monk who left the monastery in Utah
and who gave me a book about The Preacher's Daughter
always remembers names

like fr. Fabian
or fr. Lucas or
fr. Damian

when we arrive there
and i am patient as he is deaf
and
agonizing & he asks me to call and check if fr. Fabian is still there

he was there in 2000
and the year after fr. Fabian sent him a card

the cellphone rings and fr Bruno asks who am i
and i pretended to be
Ron, the old monk who is with me now
tracing his past

trying to look for fr. Fabian who died in Polomolok
and he wants to know the cause of death

fr Bruno says
nothing about asphyxiation but that is the lie that
i told Ron

and his face changed like an afternoon
and i can feel
that it was heavily raining

that is what happened

RIC S. BASTASA
What Scares You?

it is not the darkness
perhaps the light
too much light
that blinds the eyes
of the persistent

it is not the series of lies
they make you cope up
make you live some more
without fear

what scares you?
it is the truth
the face beneath that mask
something
for all those years
remaining
unacceptable

so what scares you?
it is the rejection, the unacceptability

what can i say?
you are wrong for these are these that we cannot change
cannot get rid of

at the end
hell is other people i agree
i am what i am
i accept what i am

in my solitude i am king
alone i am happier

RIC S. BASTASA
What Seemingly Is Vis-A-Vis What Really Is

at the shop all the while what you may see is that
the two are merely haggling on a piece of cloth
a woman customer quite long asking for the right color
always asking the man that she does not like this and that
she feels the cloth silky on her hands above the man’s hands
between the sheet as their mouths keep talking about the price
their eyes are speaking about something else hidden beneath
what she is really after all, she at her 40's widowed for 2 years
he at his 20's looking for a a sugar-coated mama.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Seems To Be

what seems to be
need not necessarily what it must be
sometimes in too much
anticipation
what happens is an erosion of
the mind
it soon forgets
what it is,

what a thing is
in it-self
unfolds before you like the petals of a rose
so slowly
as though time does not exist
and so
in the middle of your sorrow
you fail to understand
its chili essence

beauty in full bloom
lies wasted unnoticed by the eyes
until death wait not
such is the salt of goodbyes

RIC S. BASTASA
Civilization,
what shall i bring as an offering to you?
One that does not bore you
with the passage of time
One that makes your blood rush to the
veins of your youth

Civilization,
They must have offered you the white flowers
of purity
They purest blood of their revolution to cleanse
your land of the evil spirits of their minds
Their own minds
Their own pollution
Indifference to the feelings of desire
How did they kill the beats of the heart
the beat of heat of the pulse of love for one another?

Civilization
How many shall be killed more in the name of morality
And official religion?

Civilization
I humbly come before you and offer you love
Lots of love
Love and love and love
That one which the basket of morality can no longer hold
That one which the hands of religion can no longer touch
That one which the arms of their gods can no longer embrace

I shall take you to the place beyond common understanding
It is love and love and love
Beyond what you can take.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Shall I Rhyme With My Life?

shall i rhyme my life with a fife?
nope
or with a fyfe?
nope
or a greiff, rife, slife, streiff, ?
no, no, no.
what about a strife?
definitely not.

i rhyme my life
with my wife

and not with the knife.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Shall The New Year Bring?

oh, i don't mind anymore
even if not minded, they always bring
what they want to bring anyway,

what command have we for the days
that sometimes bring us
all the grapes of wrath?
those apples of discord?
those serpents that multiply their
heads and fork their tongues?

shall we pretend that all the days
are feasts?
and that all those hours shall bring
us pleasures on food, and the
smiles of health?

let us simply be what these days
give us, whatever, we must accept,
no grudges, no complaint whatsoever
for ours is just to obey
and bow and worship what is given.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Shall We Do When Confronted With Beautiful Circumstances?

beyond us is the long line of
high and steady black shadows of
the mountains
between us is the shimmering
dark blue sea
we stand on the shore where the
waves keep on teasing us
with its foams and sways

we are in love with the view
we are in love with ourselves
now we must do what we must do
love me as i have loved you
kiss my lips and fill my emptiness

RIC S. BASTASA
What Shall You Do Then?

three fingers shall
touch a wooden box

for a time
this box is closed

but you are told
of a surprise that
this box shall
give you
the moment you give
in to the temptation
to just touch it

try it and be amazed
with what it will give you

there is no name
that i shall give to that which
gives you pleasure
when you agree
to touch it

it is pleasurable
i have seen it
but i will not tell you
until you touch it
first
with your three
fingers

i will give you another hint

be responsible
for what you decide
specifically for what you
touch

for in pleasure there is
always that accompanying pain

like the two faces of the woman
that you once loved

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Does Not Know

she thinks
he is sissy

he does not
mind her
advances

she touches
his

he looks at
the moon

she kisses him
he turns his face
down

she is mad
for his evasions

what she does not
know

he already
erupted

when she gazes
on him
that very first moment.

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Left

bereft of the cleft
and not deaf but deft
heft of a thief and
weft
and never right
axite on a backbite
claim of his birthright
what a bombsite
with a bobhite
pure calcite
at the campsite
how many bytes?
is the backlight
all right? it looks cordite
but really ferrite
and cannot excite
my dendrite despite
the dogfight and
the backlight
not a good foresight
not forthright like Dwight
finite, fistfights and a blight!

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Likes About Pain Is That...

what she likes about the queen of pain is that...
she has more things to show that makes us more
real, something that is touchable
not just another kind of colored imagination
like rainbows and auroras that the king of happiness own.

the more she sheds tears the more the lands become
more visible to the toes and the feet confront themselves
with rocks and pebbles.

for after all counted from the very moment she had first seen
light,
her hands already felt the coldness of the floors
the ticks, the prick of the thorns of her hairs
all over her body

then one day, after day one, till kingdom come,
she becomes the princess of pain herself
worshiped by many
liked by most

an icon, candles are lighted in her honor
the day when she died.

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Must Seek Forgiveness

she wrote
an essay about her mother
who met an accident
on the road
about how she died
instantly

there were signs
and premonitions but she did not really mind them

she cried
of course she knows how to cry
and write a poem
about death and
redemption

i understand
i know the feeling
when mothers are gone without the needed goodbyes

life moves on
like time it does not wait or tell anything important

i just remember
and now like everyman entering the halls of old age
i begin to reflect
like that mirror absorbing light
showing some faces
and bodies
some leaves that twirl and tumble
and then
takes its own little space
upon the
silence of the burial grounds.

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Said When I Said I Love Her

it was on the phone
long distance of long time ago
six years
when i called her and
told her
i still love her

(there was silence
and i guess she was covering the mouthpiece
with a handkerchief
and then she answered-

'who's this please? '

and i think i know what she meant.
i put down the phone
and rang another number

this one, perhaps still remembers...

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Thought

what her thoughts are
he does not mind anymore
what is important is that he is still intact

a whole man despite the years of rage
and misunderstanding
that after all the deceptions at least he still keeps himself abreast
to his own beliefs,
not rattled, he keeps some words hidden
inside his pockets, he keeps some old pictures
which have become invisible
and permanently useless, he did not throw them just in case
someone so special remembers him again
on his last years

he is tired about her thoughts like some cyclones
on his peaceful island
inside a hill, deep down under is his tunnel
of identity, something that no one,
no storm, no earthquake
can ever destroy

he is not in hiding yet
he is in the open for the meantime that is it spring
the birds still please him
and the clouds with so many images to tell
still comfort him

he steps forward soon
and draws an exit using his stick
soon, soon,
that has always been his kind of dream
a monologue

it is the hope of the stones.
it is this love for a shadow.

RIC S. BASTASA
What She Wrote Was Beautiful

The way she writes
Is like the way she carries herself
and
Indeed she writes beautifully
Words like tendrils
Tenaciously clinging to
Barks
Of trees where blooms of orchids
Abound,
Like her way of swaying and
Sitting on an easy chair
Her white long legs resting
One
On top of the other

She chooses her words
like
She’s choosing pebbles
Of
Different colors
segregating
Those pearly ones
From
The ordinary
And takes only what
she thinks
Is perfect

So she puts only the best
To make her
personalized
Composition and
it will take her
Days and days
To make
one

Eclectic, exquisite,
Her work is diamond
studded
Indeed she puts
all her life
On it

In that work which
Indeed
Is so beautifully
laid

I am so
awed
It is so
beautiful

Perhaps
because

I cannot
understand it
anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Should Be Forgotten Next

nothing in you is diminished
at least
something in the core always
persists

that pebble in your hand
which you kept since childhood
after mother left

even if your hands shuts like a fist
or opens like a petal
of a flower during your kind summer

keep the hardness and let on the other
hand
show the softness of your glow

the orange softness of sunset
the scent of yellow lemons in the basket

the lingering perfume of the handkerchief
the redness of a plum
the whiteness of the wall around your past
the last kiss planted on your cheek

nothing lasts as you have accepted
that pebble in your shoe which makes you feel
the pain

that which makes you remember
what should be forgotten next

RIC S. BASTASA
What Should Have Been Done...

To kill someone with all
the sweetness you can give
To make everyone at home
and forget theirs
To love and ask for nothing
in return
To surrender and yet
belong to Everyone you care
for
To live and let live
To die happily
and Not really knowing....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Sickness Is There Unto Your Own Death?

there is a need
to really reflect
go deeper and find
out what was wrong

here you are sad,
for love unrequited
but do you remember
the one you love and
ran away from you
who came back wanting
now to love you?

you refrained, you refused,
and you say, you have
not really love at all.

it seems that you only
love those who cannot
love you. It has become
a fact of your life.

ponder why, why can't
you love the one who
loves you? what makes
you turned off?
wonder why you only
want to love whom
you hurt?

go away, find no one
to hurt, don't tell me
that you are hurt.
you are hurting the
other, you are hurting
yourself.

what sickness is there
unto your own death?
RIC S. BASTASA
What Silence Can Offer

when everything seems to be crowded
when everyone speaks
in such a chatter
gibberish
and this room becomes
a narrow space
filled with nothing but
noise

i will be silent
this silence that offers me
refuge
a blankness of the mind
where i can rest and start all over
again where i can think
of nothing
but stillness
where i become a closed mouth
a blocked heart
where i clench my fists
and say nothing

then they all look at me
and begin
to open
this silence demands
that it is now my turn
to speak
and they will listen

but it is too late
something has began to tick
and so i must
leave at once

they must know
what suffering
in the noise means
soonest
What The Body Is Doing For The Meantime

what he did is only to give vent
to the building pressure inside which if
by indolence
if
he stays within the silence of his cell
continually

something in him might burst
and destroy his existence,

like a volcano giving rise
to another lava island
somewhere in Iceland

so tonight that is what he is doing
precisely

and you who is reading this piece
expects
a flesh,
a destination,

an outburst
of autumn

or perhaps the coldness of winter
and the death of some immigrants who still
do not have a home

who has not discovered
the hidden monastery at the back of this
huge mountain
where a living saint
still feeds on
spring

be dismayed
for he is selfish and scheming
a wounded snake who is looking
for nothing
but just a cure
to a sickness
within

stop reading,

this piece has no use
but to be just

an exit
from the imprisonment of a soul

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Fallen Leaf Said To The Broken Hearted Man...

'\ndo not watch me
as i
fall down from
this dying
tree,

do not touch
me
i can hurt
your
bare hands

my sharp silence
can
stab your
heart...'

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Fireflies Must Mean

according to Urias
the fireflies
are the ideas that we let
go on a dark night
and they fly
and we do not
catch them

they must go
searching
for other fireflies
their own kind
of flashes
and blinkings

we are here
watching them
in amazement

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Moon Does To You

at night the moon simply does
what is expected from it naturally
as you stand
it is showing you
your own
shadow
afraid that you may see the whole
truth
which in some details may be
gory
it simply casts you
in the general view
of a man from
a distance
a silhouette
with fingers less the nails
a face
without eyes
nerves
lifted from the darkness
of your skin

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Mother Sparrow Later Found Out...

under the jack fruit tree
the young sparrow's wings
are torn apart

caused by a well rounded pebble
fired from the slingshot
of the laughing
child

among his peers
he is called The Hunter...

because the young sparrow
which just alighted
from its nest
could not really fly
that high enough

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Mother Sparrow Told The Young Sparrow

fly high
the children here
are cruel

t heir slings
and stones
have no
reason

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Mountain Said To The Squirrel

that it cannot
crack a nut,

but it cannot
also be moved.

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Mute Uttered

what the mute uttered
you must not have heard so well

because your heart
had always been closed for the other.

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Oracle Said About My Love For You

and so i consulted the oracle of Delphi
about my love for you
that such
must only be felt
not touched
because the moment my skin
touches yours
like the wax wings of Daedalus
i may fall and
drown myself and then
i die

tonight when i have the chance
to be near you
i will hug you.

RIC S. BASTASA
What The Rat Said To The Lion

hey lion
do not belittle me
someday
there is no one to save you
but me,
says the rat

hey lion
do not underestimate my power
of destruction
my wisdom of retaliation
for i am rat.

RIC S. BASTASA
What The White Owl Does Besides Flapping Its Wings

The white owl flaps its wings
Deep in the night
Hovers on the trees
I think the leaves
I hear the sparrows chirping
In the morning
Some dead feathers are falling

RIC S. BASTASA
What Their Dreams Are...

it is the time
not to speak about how many
ripe pomeloes are there

how many is your share
whether you have
the sweetest of them
all

you are in your bed
beside you a glass window
you can see strangers
passing by
that road farther

upon counted breaths
you no longer wonder
what their dreams are.

RIC S. BASTASA
they say what is it that i have seen
your eyes are too ordinary
but i see them as warm suns
rising with time for my lonely morning

they say your lips are like any other mortal lips
but no, they are the luscious sacred flesh
too sweet too ripe for my tasting
my tongue always dream about fibers
and flesh and dripping drops of juice

they say you are just one mortal walking
on the common streets of this village
but no, you're so divine, a goddess,
a progeny of light descending
from the glory of the heavens
to the profanity of my distant world

they say i belong to the genealogy of the gods
and i must not defy the law that gives justice to our kind
but no, i love you, and i am descending from this throne

i now sleep on the grass, naked without my crown
disrobed, undressed, i am alone now, away from them,
yhey that mock me, i am alone now, long waiting for you.

how can you be so unkind? you send the message
you are not finally coming to be with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
What They Say We Cannot Do, Actually Can Be Done

and the formula is:
believe in yourself
no one believes for you
have faith
determination is a river
taking the least resistance
of the cliffs
and mountains

pray for wings
pray for the gift of the wings of the winds
have silence in the solitude of your heart
be calm like a sea after a storm
be good like a monk waiting for enlightenment
be fair
like a water leveling on the contours of the hills and plains
be like the grass
always spreading its own understanding
of the world
at hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
What They Think Of The Rich.....(Revised)

the way it was worded
justifies poverty, as though
the poor people have no faults
too of their own, you

envy the rich, the way they flaunt
wealth, and you say, you have not
seen them cry, or if they cry at most
it could only be once a year, you

wish that they too must cry their
rivers, groan like galvanized zinc
tread by the lost kids in town
sniffing methamphetamine
you want to see their eyes as red
as inflamed bruises after a brawl

the rich too must speak of the
Poor's lack, their hibernation for
all these years, for what they only
know to get rid of their sufferings
seem only to be a bloody revolution,
which most of the time fail,

or that they have not devoted
their bodies to dedicated work,
that patience of the yellow skin,
those eyes that must wake up
as earliest birds in the fields of hay,

for what we are is not found in the stars
or the lines of our palms,
we are what we make of ourselves,
that poor man has spent all his nights
in drunkenness killing hope
always desiring the easy way out
robbing those who earned their dues
in the hours of so much waiting
and thinking, and years and
years of hard work and suffering.....

RIC S. BASTASA
What They Were Looking

what they were looking for
are the answers to their questions
the food for their mouths
the progress of their future
a home for their children
a work that pays them well

what they were looking for
is the cure for their sickness
the lame to walk
the blind to see
the deaf to hear again

what they were looking from God
is their own
sometimes they miss what they should
have been looking to find

but God understands and God compromises
He gave the fish and the bread
He made the lame walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear

and even if they did not ask
God gave them faith, hope and love.

RIC S. BASTASA
What They Write About

what they write about
are so poetic, and sometimes i feel
envious, and think all nights to also
write everything poetic like the way
they write about the moon, and stars,
and sun and clouds and hills and
valleys and blooming flowers
about summer,
but honestly speaking, i think every
poetic imagery has only become too
routinary, all metaphors conceived of,
are nothing but simply variations adopted
from one poet to another like an
uncaught plagiarist on the loose,
but somehow, i also like it when i think
that writing is just a hobby, a diversion,
if not a deviation from what
we really want to become.
well, i may be a sour grape for
staying just to be myself,
an imaginary toad in the real
garden untended by its owner.

RIC S. BASTASA
What This Either/Or In The Future Brings

Confronted with an either/or
early morning one must choose.

you think that choosing is easy
and a privilege.

one sometimes is given a he or she
but not both
now you have a problem since
sometimes
you want both

do not give me that wrong notion
by all means
you need a peahen and a peacock
a lock and key
a peg and a hole
you cannot just have one
to really be
complete or successful

a race may die and then leave all
behind its tracks
humanity is an endangered virtue
without the yin and yang or both
in one empty hand

now it is either you or her
but not both
that is the human condition
but we can talk and bargain for time
and energy

money talks they say
and the ways and means of fate are always unpredictable
for in the end
it all depends
upon the agreements of hands and mouths
for in this world it is all about you and me and us
depending on how
we really understand the fans of happiness
the forks of despair
the furloughs of chaos and order
we, for most, may conjure, injure and
perjure and then
if we have the courage
all these, endure
what this either/or in the future
brings.

RIC S. BASTASA
What This Poetry Is Trying To Achieve

nothing and no one
saves us

from this life
death situation

now you must
realize the purpose of
poetry

it does not save us
from death or
hunger or
pain

though it can lessen
this misery
like a pillow in our
heads when
we really badly need
to sleep
& rest

poetry never promised you
redemption
they are just words to say the least

somehow
it changes the way we look at life
and death

i love the metamorphosis
metaphor
of that caterpillar, cocoon
butterfly thing

this is not a case of a sinking ship
where rats are
raging furiously out of the mess
to save themselves

this is not a house burning
where our only dream is an exit

or a prison cell where we always
speak of liberation

a cave, a tunnel, a pit
where light becomes a dream

this is but a realistic approach
to an existential nihilism

we are but spectators of this show
and participants as well

we all live and leave and then
be all silent because we have then
decoded the mysteries of our
innate truths

again i am into this Rubicon of words
trying to untangle and in the very process
captured so well in my own
imaginary cave, a prison, a darkness

which i very well know is just temporary.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Those Closed Rooms Tell

past memories are strong pillars
they were different when we were there
we thought they were all wrong
we detest what they said and what they did to us
and we promise to take revenge

until they died and we are all left here to
feign for ourselves what is left
we manage to mend the broken stairs
we repaired the roof with leaks
the floors are changed and some windows
have to be closed

when everything is done we look at the
house again
from a distance from where we can see it whole
and we remember them, those we thought did not care
those we hate only to find out that they only want
us to build a much bigger house and much better
doors, a stronger door, a happy window

memories are coming back
like old friends and we begin to understand the meaning
of those which we have misunderstood
and then we learn what love is
what ancestors are
what old houses mean
what stairs are for
what those closed rooms tell.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Those Roots Forget

Those who have roots
sometimes forget that
we soon shall be uprooted
because we are not meant
to be just roots

we know that

our proper metaphors are wings
our home is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Those Who Leave First Really Leave Us

let us start with an empty bed
they leave us
warmth there
one that has
heat in our palms
so hard to forgo
to forget

and they leave us
black and white
pictures of their
faces, not ghostly
but lovely faces
of those we still
love

eye never want
to leave us
in the first place
they really want
to stay, but they
were taken just
the same

and that makes
us sadder really

then the cabinet
where their clothes
are: silent and you
smell them and closer
closer you touch them
and feel them in
your heart: pain seeps
a little closer

and then you walk
through the door that
you just closed and the
windows that still refused
to admit the fresh air
in the morning: you are
still mourning in black
and not talking much

and on and on
to the backyard the flowers
wilting and to the comfort room
where their sweats still
linger: figments of mildew
sketches of their faces
still there
some finger
prints on the mirror when
they were still brushing
their teeth

after all these
we ask again
what are these people really leaving us?
come to think of it
they are still here and they haven't really
left us yet
the love is still in our hearts

come to think about all these again
is there really leaving?
i guess, there is none because for a person
who really loves
no one leaves
everyone stays together like eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
What Time Do We Leave Tonight?

what time do we leave tonight?

we can start at six
i will fetch you
and take you to the place of your wanting
we shall dine
and have a lovely conversation
under the stars
by the sea on a restaurant
the open air
the one we didn't have when we were young
and always in hiding

now our white hairs speak a lot
some wrinkles
tell us of our dignity
our words are carefully chosen
woven not just by our hearts
but by our steady minds
disciplined by time
and agony

there is a lonely flower on the table
the accent of an affair long forgotten
by time
the food is served hot and spicy
white glutenous rice
and hot green tea

we do not like to eat much
we like the talk
we are like peeling
some potatoes
slicing some onions
and some tears
fall from our eyes
then we laugh

it must be the spices and the onions
not the past
now hidden, buried, and dead
the way we prefer
them now
as it is
not as they once were
unruly they all say
but really
still very exciting like the chase
of children
playing in the park one night
when the moon
was full

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Account For The Morning

when i wake up
plans begin to sprout like
mongo seeds in my bed
and i like a blanket
or sack
wets again with
the unnecessary moisture
of the day
to come

anxiety about what
could have been done for
another day
rules this game of life

worry about some
necessities which were left
forgotten
and now i sit here on a chair
beside my bed
on the altar of my illimitable
greed
my eyes searching
like a tower of light
in the sea
of illusions

there is nothing out there
and so to make
something

i decided that i must worry
and then
there is meaning sprouting
from anywhere
else
even from my armpits

and i guess
that is all enough for me

now i must go searching again
what i have missed
what i have forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Do

you get a handful of mud
put a little rain
and then you begin shaping
a face

carefully you put some
tenderness
sculpting forgiveness
you mold your vision
of integrity

you stop for a while
and contemplate on what is
it that is missing

your heart is heavy
it is filled with the burden
of love

you pour love
more of it like a basin
of water

the mold is so thirsty
until
it is finally broken

your hands after the
error
must begin again
to shape the mold
of regrets
until love reassembles
your face

a beautiful face so full of
hope &
courage
What To Do Next?

that is the question.

i do not really know.
that is the answer.

please tell me.
this is not a request.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Do With An Empty Cup?

the presumption is
you have consumed the hotness of the tea
and now the cup is cold
and empty

at the state of emptiness
shall you break it? or shall you keep it instead
and not wipe it
because there is a mark of the lips
of the beloved

some do the cleaning
wipe out everything
the empty cup shines together
with the rest of the
utensils, spoons and forks and saucers
in the cabinet

the door of the cabinet is closed
and then they all do what has to be done
they move on
with the other more important events in their lives
from an empty cup

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Do With What Is Happening?

What happened?
Tell us what to do
I am just wondering about
Jeramie
Goodbye

What to do?
Check all
Delete all selected messages.

Here’s the story:
Three friends named Nobody, Somebody
And Everybody say hello in the internet.
Somebody says he loves poetry
Nobody likes to read it
And Everybody ask Tell me What to Do.
And I was the Fool saying I’ll stay.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Do, Do Quickly...

on the lean years of our affections
the dreams have drawn for us
on that piece of sleep
this canvass of the night frame
twelve emaciated cows grazing on
the desert

what shall we do? if you still have your eyes with
you
kept in those sunken sockets
open them
slowly

the sage of Femagas has given you the most practical
prognosis
you are asleep and all you need to do is wake up
you still have 24 hours
of regret.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Do?

paint the night
with your lullabye,
daytime, oh, just
sunny side up.
egg white
and coffee,
black, w/o sugar.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Grow And What To Cut

the room is dark
light passes through a slit
of an old dilapidated wall
it is like a visitor that
comes uninvited but
i do not make any qualms
this house seems to make
a decision of its own
what to allow and what to
block

somehow thinking starts
here like a burning bush
where i, as prophet, takes
off my sandals of dust

when i close my eyes
just like the way you once
showed love to me
deep in the darkness of
our hearts
i see another world

uphill we climb the silence
and then at the top we finally
find ourselves looking
at different directions

and i do not make any qualms
at all
for like the old house this
new world too makes a decision
of its own
what to grow and what
to cut
what to throw away
and what to keep forever
What To Really Do?

as you go back
looking at the pictures of the past
you are caught
into a choice: whether to stay there
and be frozen
like sepia covered with dust
or to move on like a lizard
which just caught a mosquito with its
tongue
and then wait in ambush again
beside the
ceiling light bulb.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Say To The Early Day...

four in the morning is usual
it is still dark in fact
and what surprises is that usual darkness has to offer?

the chickens are not making sounds
the pavements are empty of strangers
the road is wet with the whole night raining
there is this newness
of what to do for another day

and i say to myself, with all courtesy: good morning.
have i said it before? i must, but always to someone other than myself.
it is unjustified.

at this early hour i have no one to talk to.
darkness is always silent. Twilight is still far.
the morning is not saying anything.
but always time moves, darkness fades away
and so
we always welcome the light
it happens.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Say When You Are Hurt

Do they hurt you today?
In your mind? In your heart?
What is the color of this blood
Flowing from your mind
This bleeding heart
Because they hurt you again
She slapped you he kicked you
And they insulted you
You knelt for mercy
They laughed and they left
You alone in your pains
Do not clench your hands to
Form these fists
Do not let your heart be
Conquered by anger
Do not let your mind be poisoned
By the thoughts of revenge
What did God tell you when you are hurt?
Forgive them for they do not know
What they are doing.
Do you remember that? Do you understand that?
Now you must stand and be counted.
You have the name, you are God’s child.
You have something again to tell him
Why not? Now rest your head on his arms.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To Say When You Have Nothing To Say....

keep them
enthralled by the golden sheen
of your silence
let no one break it
because you are made
of steel.

RIC S. BASTASA
What To You Is Reality?

some people find happiness on closed doors
tall gates, so many locks, and
hard to get access,

the glass doors and walls
amaze them
no end, and they listen to the clink
of their wine glasses
drunk with their own definitions of
success

from here where i sit i see them all
on this crystal ball
each creature an ant
each world an empire
when i decide to break this ball
and shatter it against my own wall

just that
their worlds are gone

if you ask me how is this possible
i will give you a wink and show you how beautiful is it
to close both eyes
and then
be there, just that, just that

their world is yours
your eyes control them
reality is relative
it is you that close
and it is you that open it again....

RIC S. BASTASA
What Truth?

you hold the truth
and show it to me as early as i was six,
you had it molded like a sculpture of
a well shaped egg,
a chicken egg, showing the fragility of a shell,
that when i fail to hold it with care
it breaks and cannot be
the same again, no matter what
or how,

the truth is a model
something that we have to imitate
but my palms have lines of each own
and i was born as a scorpion
with scissors in my hands

you want me to be your truth
and it will be painful and so i must go
somewhere where my kind of
truth will be respectable

there is no place yet for me
and so here i am with you
exploring all the possibilities of harmony

and so i must lie to live with you
and be with you for the meantime that my
castle is not yet a reality

must i tell you the truth? i can't
for this spells the death of harmony
even the view of your funeral
where i can be the pretentious grief
the laughter subsumed
on the face shedding
crocodile tears

i have more to tell you
but i am safe now in my silence
safe with you and the world and the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Truths Are?

in trying to find them
the paradox is
they keep on concealing themselves

in shapes you least expect it:
you turn into a clown
to let them be children and
with their smiles
you find how innocent
truths are

but as you grow older
you get numb and you become less interested
and they too get worried about this dryness
this aridity
this stoicism
they pinch you and you do not mind at all
you pretend you are not hurt
there is no visible grimace on your face

then day by day
they keep on opening themselves like wounds
begging for a cure
but you get no medicine at all
in this familiarity
this contempt for them

you have already said yes
to everything

they come they go and you do not waive your hands anymore
they arrive and shake your hands
you are no longer excited
they are not invited guests

your eyes do not speak about who they are
what are their names
their roots their origins
now, they want to befriend you
what for? you ask them
you have already caused me all the pains
you promised to set me free

look! i am faceless
look at me! is this what you are all about?
the truth is
we get tired we only want to rest we do not need them much
too much of them is poison
and no one wants
no one wishes to die as such

RIC S. BASTASA
What Was It That She Was Thinking?

sleepy
since she says she slept last night
at 2 a.m. already

what was it that
she was thinking?

i won't surmise.

i also slept at
12 midnight

i am not thinking
of any Cinderella

i wrote many poems
last night
now i cannot remember
what was each all about

i am pretty sure they are
all about boredom and
emptiness since the void
has become my own
goddess thinking that
perhaps it is more
beautiful than being filled
up with no space left
for me to move about

in this i can say that
emptiness has its own
indescribable weight

its own length that
can measure the depths
of the foxhole of my
soul
i am thinking a lot
unloading uploading
with only one thing in
mind that something
that is still hurting and
giving me fears shall
disappear

that perhaps hope
still lurks somewhere
in one of those hidden corners
of this empty heart

a fly hovers on my hand
i must have been smelling
like a spoiled fish because

i have not taken a bath
already for days and
breakfast has been so
irregularly eaten

i like it now, i am getting
thinner, and deeper now with
this dipper of hardly obtained
wisps of wisdom.

i am talking to myself.
and i like this clarity now
amidst the noise of my
academic screaming.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Was There Then?

next time be cautious
you have to wear the feet
of a cat
you must step upon a red
carpet
then if you must enter
a room
please do not knock.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Are For The Meantime....

and what did we do?
we simply stand there
and we said we have
nothing to do with it,

we are just the spectators
we write what we see and

we do not judge why all
these things happen

we never arranged the facts
like colors in a painting

we never chose the subject
or the place, they are there

we are in there but we are not
theirs, we do not belong.

we write with our own hands
did we claim that we have our own minds?

we did not. we are just the spectators.
we just record what we see. Our minds

are imprints of before and now. We
try to detach, we cannot. we just feel it.

soon this will be over and we will be
another kind of spectators, rising from

our bodies, like vapors from the heat,
we are not yet the rain. we are unseen.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Are Now To Both Ourselves

we are two blue clips of the clothesline
we cling to a rope
hold on, hold on
lest we fall to the ground

behind us is this blur
of trees and leaves and twigs
above us the clouds
heavy with rain

then the shower begins
hold on, hold on to the rope
lest we fall to the ground
dead and then be gone

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Are Really Trying To Achieve

what are we really trying
to achieve in a page?

it is like a room with all things
out of place,
towel on the floor, misplaced pen
in the bath tub
a cat inside the cabinet
behaving like
your skeletons,
your glass is on the window
like a crazy dog wanting to get out
from the frame,

what we have are misfits, pieces in chaos,
times interpolated, interlaced fabrics,
seemingly without a design
improprieties,

we have art, we put things in order
make them beautiful again
back to its ordered beginnings

in the midst of these storms
tornadoes that dispel our belief systems
we go back to work, back to art and
system,

we are tying to piece things
threads into a fabric of beauty
of thoughts in grace
of gentle dreams, of peaceful places

these are...and i
am.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Can Do Is Only Pray

things get complicated like strangled hair. The comb does nothing to straighten what used to be smooth and shining. we get lost in paths. we sometimes do not know where is the point of turning and returning. we just go, anywhere, to any place where our feet take us. Without the mind. we still think of our souls. we move on. things get so complicated. sometimes we do not think like sane people on the mall, drinking beer and eating hamburger.

i stop walking for a while. i am silent and still. what i can do, at this moment, is only to pray for you. May God bless all lost souls. May God find them. We are waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Can Remember On Sunday Afternoons

when everyone is gone
to church
we find ourselves alone
as we lock the door
and then begin
to have that silly
talk on the sofa
as our hands begin
to compose
the symphony of
yes, love we call it
love
as our lips begin
to search the wetness
of the feelings
as our necks entwine
like vines
as our bodies fuse
like a nuclear
phenomenon and then
we know the beautiful
power of explosions
below the pink boundaries
of our two bodies
something that no one
can hear
except our two ears

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Did At The Beach House....

it is freedom day for me
it is Thursday,

we enter the gate to the beach
fresh winds, green coconut palms
sea grass and white foams,
sea waves and slushy sands,

the octagonal cottage and the
bamboo tables and chairs,
stone silent on the table
collected by you,

we are here for no other agenda
except to feel the freshness of air
recounting those younger years
and then savor our sweet silence

i rock my body on the hammock
you lay asleep on the sofa.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Did In Bed

If only the bed has a
tongue of its own and can
speak the words

it would have spoken
endlessly
all the stories about us
always
unfinished

if it has a tongue
i’d cut it.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Did In That Place Which Can Never Be A Home

after love
we soften a bit

i do not smoke
and you do not read

you stand up
to dress yourself

i stay for a while....

soon the room will
be so silent
i can hear the wind
slipping by the window

i will listen
i will give more time
for silence to
whisper
its sound
to me

in a while,

i will stand up
and start to cover
my nudity

it is a metaphor
for an icing on the cake
to conceal
an emptiness
a bitterness
of what i have not
done when
i was young then
when i was so alive
and candid

then i talk to myself:

this is not my house
i cannot call it a home
and so
i must leave to search
who i am
again

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Did Last Summer In El Nido

Easier said than done

but when it was over

it becomes harder to say

there are no sane reasons

nothing worth remembering

sad matter vomited in air

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Did The Whole Day At The Beach

we pruned the
trees
there is so much
leaves
we sacrifice the
branches.
by all our windows
we have to see
the clouds

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Do Not Know Do Not Hurt Us

can hurt you
but which i keep away from
you is what
you shall never know

that which you know but never
tell me does not hurt me
too

that which we all know but we never tell
never hurt us

that which hurt us but we never tell
we never know

we stay in this together
and people do not know and they are never hurt too

you see
how happy can everybody be?

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Have Become

in the shallow part of the river
we decide to play: life is a game
we like to believe that
our arms drip like cold water
on the side of the glass
that you hold when you have felt
the first thirst

i shall not satisfy you
and so i have become the bait
of the fish
you have become more interested
on what i have to say

not to be mistaken as trivial
i have also taken more glances at you
i believe you
and so with this trust i ask you to go with me
to the deep part of the sea

i swim first then you follow
you know how to swim and you swim well in fact
like a fish

at the shallow part
i told you that nothing is hidden
nothing signifies anything
the stones are stones
and nothing else
your questions are just ordinary questions
which i have answered to well

and you believe me more until
we dive deep
deeper into the ocean floor
where the sands though silent
have more to say
than what i can tell you
the stones on the sides of the deep
now are telling you more
and you begin to understand
why for all those years
on that dry land
i have kept my silence
my distance.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Have Not Yet Understood Because It Still
Not Within Our Power

there is a flower that
you did not pick because you did not find it
to your liking

'there is a standard for the picking
there are rules for what beauty is', you tell your friend

the stone is not beautiful
you use it for hitting someone's head
that moron

there is a poem and a non-poem
a combatant and a non-combatant
self-executing and non-self executing
there is a none for
fullness

i have confidence
and soon even in a hundred awakenings i shall prove you wrong

there is a song in
a chant

there is a chant
in a sorrow that is silent

there is always light
in a candle even if
it is not lighted

tastes change, rulers are ousted
the ants become kings
the winds turn to ice to stone to fish

everything is possible
you must watch out, but you shall not reach that point
you do not live that long
like a layer of histories
hidden in a rock
in the lines of
a tree's trunk

there is poetry in narration
there is poetry in chaos

there is beauty in the ugliness of things
in the madness of men there is still a hidden humanity

there is a song in wood
there is a lesson learned in paths

you just not have the power yet to see all these
there is a tomorrow in the past

there is a story in the blank wall
there is grief in a smile

there is life in the bones of men
there is still an undiscovered law in mass murder

there is at the end
peace in a nuclear destruction.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Have Written Here

what we have written here
stays here and makes a carving
of a and mine.
oh, there may be no use of them anymore
what is past is past and every verb
you have put in any line has
thawed like frozen cubes
turning into liquid, something that
describes us, we are past our age
of another year,
all these poems become nothing
but adjectives
simply stated, another part of speech.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Mean....

it is when you are too serious
that this land dies, that this sea dries,

try making things in a manner that gives you fun
learn the games

ride upon the wishes of the ordinary
enjoy the ride like a cowboy upon his red horse on the prairie

do not close the doors of possibilities that this world is
but one playground for all children

that we are after all the children
the results do not actually matter

it is the journey, the fun along the way
the picking of the flowers

the gathering of all the ripe fruits
that the trees have been giving for free

you have overworked yourself
and that is bad enough

try the power of laughter
forget the tough times for they can never be yours forever

look at the waves of the sea
they keep on playing the highs and downs and they arrive at nothing

have fun and then pass the fun for those who have not
reflected about this

the journey is too exciting
the scenes flash like one paradise to another

for we are the children of God
and He did never mean us to cry.
What We Need

a vent.
something windy like a fan.
an orifice
an exit, oh not yet,
let us say just an opening
where we can enter
and still be together
okay, you want an exit,
let us do it
open it, i will get out
first, then you go next,
i will not wait for you
i am rushing this
and you are rushing to
where?
i too, don't know.
cool.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Overuse

what we overuse
comes back to us
with revenge
of non-use and if
we do not
mind the sound
of their gritting
we end up mourning

eye're dead
and not speaking

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Really Are

i cannot stop
do not ask me what cannot be stopped

feel it yourself
we cannot stop we cannot be stopped

we are unceasing
energies of this limitless
universes

always transforming from one
state to another

into another place another stage
another dimension
fusing, diffusing, infusing
suffusing

never consumed
we cannot we can never stop
no one can

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Saw....

and this is what we all saw,  
he likes her long hair and she  
holds her forehead and she looks  
up to him as she likes his navel  
and her hands embrace his legs of  
steel with veins of wires where  
electricity runs like the one  
found in the city where every nook  
is lighted which from a distance  
shows what romance does in the  
night of emptiness that summons  
love to make everything back to  
life again, stuttering to say a word.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Should Have Forgotten

there is a spider
in the vortex of
my mind

it dwells there
and every
day and every night
it is weaving

from its mouth
its food
its choice of words
a house
of poems

a kingdom
of images
where i shall live
where you shall
read
where you can become
another
figment of
some imaginations

there is another spider
in the vortex of your
mind
that weaves that hunger
that thirst
that longing
that feeling of imperfection

its moving
like a pendulum
it is revolving like a planet
to an eternal
circumlocution
these are the spiders in our minds
that make us all human
always missing something always remembering what we should have forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Understand Fully

it is a matter of
experience, and common knowledge so
to speak, that

for those we do not understand fully
we say, - oh great!
and for those we half understand we say
- something is wrong

and for those we fully understand, perhaps,
because they are too obvious and
easy to grasp, we proclaim,
boring!

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Vomit Is The Saving Grace

what you take in
is the error of the matter
which makes you dizzy

gastritis you say or
perhaps amoebic contamination
because you have swallowed
what was handed by your dirty hands

to save yourself from death
and which you did not really realize
the system stimulates itself
for the needed cure

you vomit
and this i can say
sometimes it is not the intake
that matters most

it is what you spit out
that makes you live.

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Want To Become

we say life has many things to offer for us
a name, a birthstone, some signs
and we believe it from the start
birth, and growth and satisfaction
we keep on breathing
promises, and some visions of
opulence like a bunch of ripe grapes
sweet and pleasurable
we love to continue
we still have to become
whatever that is
but most, of course, is love
we put so much about ourselves on this miracle
this thing
this feeling of elation
we become hopeful we like to become more about
what we are not
we put more on what we are supposed to be

there are times however that make us think
someone comes with bad news and this happens
almost everyday
we want to live and become what we think we are

do not be discouraged
just be realistic: these do not really happen
there are too many illusions, the desert is filled with mirages
guess what? just be realistic and learn just to be
what you are
from the beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
what we write are all about those which are still alive
worms wriggling on their hollow places of the earth
mudfish hibernating on the parching, dried mud waiting for the rain
the kingfisher perched on the tree without leaves
thinking where to fly where to dive and make its beak useful
the snail pacing slowly from the rising river up to the smooth edge
of the nipa palms
this little brown boy replacing the bait of his fishing pole
waiting for the catch on the pond
these dragonflies hovering on the soft reeds where the ants
are finding new ways to reach to the other end of the pond
the frogs croaking anticipating the coming rains and hoping
to catch and swallow the grasshopper or the cricket resting on
one of the blades of a tall grass
the butterflies coming out from some cocoons taking the
first air of their new wings and then flying away
to the new blooms of flowers nearby

this is the pulse of my pen in this my heart beats
my mind remembers and then imagines
what if these are not true? what if these are not real?
what if my eyes are but another illusion not seeing
that which grows and breathes and spreads and flies away?

meanwhile, a mosquito bites me, sucks my blood, fills itself,
i hear it sing, i feel the pain, the loss, the deception, and then

i am convinced, all these must be true and real

RIC S. BASTASA
What We Write Sometimes Strike Us

after a day
i read what has been written

it shocks me sometimes to see
a different picture

bearing another interpretation
of these realities

it is like a tree bearing new surprises
of leaves and flowers

not on its proper season yet
June is usually the month of its fruits

there must be error for the month of May
something strikes me

things pop out, a word a phrase
losing their meanings

faded, and scratched
sometimes i ask, what is this?

this is not it, not me,
how come that it is here?

i drag it in a socket of the bone
to keep it

it protrudes as a fracture
a story with a plot of its own

a poem whose metaphor
anymore, i cannot decipher.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Were You Once?

have you forgotten how it feels to have nothing?
when we were nothing at all
when you beg that someone listens to your grief
because you are about to become another cracking glass?

let me remind you about the past
this is the mirror: you go from house to house looking for breakfast
a bread will do, coffee is a bonus.
you were so thin, the wind pities you because it can blow you away.
you had dark, sunken eyes, your hunger and thirst cannot make you sleep.
you have the ambiance of a cemetery
the smell of a corpse
the creaking bones of the abandoned
body rotting in a nameless
place.

you were a leech, a numb parasite,
you have mastered shame.

now you are on top of the situation
like a fly on a buffalo's back
you have no time to listen to other people's lament
you think of them as pests
you have no bread to spare for the hungry
you think it is their fault
you have forgotten about the cracking glass
and you have a stone and you break it
you love the sound
because you have forgotten.

May God remember you once again
May He forgive you. May He love you in your worst form
as He had loved you
once formless in the cruel space
where once the sun exploded
and the earth crashed
like the ball of your imagination
in those
wars within you.
What Will I Teach For A Start

this semester is about to begin
another set of faces meet me in this
closed classroom, these students who swear
they want to be good lawyers

ambitious minds
their tongues in cheek
their mouths pocketing some
ancient motives
how to get rich quickly with the law on their fingertips
how to move ahead and pin the rest at dead-end streets
of their finicky, cunning, twist and turns of logic and
fraudulent flings

at their age of suspicion
they look at me with a scrutiny
this demi-god must teach
where the pot of gold lies where the rainbow ends
the map must be laid
the details verified correctly on the spot

the rules and exceptions
the exceptions to the exceptions
the laws of property and family relations

there is no law about who gets hurt
or who gets killed in the process
there is only the law of winning
the code of the loser is simply not found here

today, as an introduction
i will lay them the true cards of the study
for a start

everything starts with the rule on compassion
the code of humanity
the true law is love, and mercy and verisimilitude
the palimpsest shall be presented
i draw the shape of their hearts drenched with blood
they also must learn the value of hope
the art of patience
the devotion to the law
and fidelity to the truth

there shall be no disgust
no schemes to defeat the other by guile and ruses

i will teach love
and they may laugh for a while
afterwhich they can search some more
and be fragile like this white chalk
crumpling to the solid blackboard
questing for correct answers
this legal truth
from moral ones torn apart
in a wide chasm

by all means they can justify as the days go by
why they must love the law why they must be human too

RIC S. BASTASA
What Will You Do With Pain?

Keep it for a while, it will not go anyway
Let it stay with you and let both of you talk awhile

Give it the warmest bed and the softest pillow
And pray that it will have the soundest sleep for the night

Both of you will soon understand each other
Why it is here, why it is painful, what is the rationale of its existence?

How it is that it must be with you, and how is it that you do not understand at first,
You and pain become friends now, it explains itself, and hugs you

It will sooner understand you and you will understand it
Then it leaves gently, and you wake up the following morning

You cry, you have understood it completely and crazy
You miss it somehow; you even wait when it will come back again.

RIC S. BASTASA
What Words Can I Say?

i make life
i want to make life for both of us
the one filled with cheers like the sparkling
champagne on a thin, fragile, transparent glass
so we too can have
very careful fingers to hold it
or it breaks
shatters on the stone floors
and you weep picking up the pieces
your tears cannot ever glue them
whole again

i want to make life and love with you
on words
no no no, not on words alone
on actions and concrete hands that touch your face and make it
warm
i put the sun
and let the water run on the rivers

i want to make love with you
let us leave life for a while
let us close our mouths with words and letters and lines
tonight, i will put the moon and the stars

i like the windows closed
it is too cold
and my bed is small for both of us

RIC S. BASTASA
What Worms?

the strings of the violin are tightened, i guess in your mind
a hole deepens on a distortion, it seeps right through your teeth
gritting the devil's wisdom, and never stops vibrating inside your brain

and from your chair
all the faces of the trees seemed so thirsty
with an unbearable misconception

from where they stand, you seemed so far away
silent, and introverted and praying

in truth you were a frog inside croaking
praying for the rain
and you plunge deeper inside your heart
until you tasted pungent blood
and talked with the ruling worms that loneliness breeds

RIC S. BASTASA
What Would You Like To Be When You Are Old?

i ask the old man
of our neighborhood
sitting on a chair
in his yard
just in front
our house
as i water
the plants
in my garden,

his answer
is simple enough

'well, i like to die
because my friends
and classmates
are all gone, and
what use will this
life be? '

i agree.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Are Saying

you once said
you are unhappy
you live on this hard shell
of a tortoise
and your burden
is such that you cannot
really move freely
as a bird with its wings

you wish the burden
melts into your skin
and it is done

then you say
the skin binds you
and the flesh and bone
are burdens too

you want something
lighter like the feathers
of a free bird
something light and easy
and verily free
and it is done

i am happy to see
you flying in the skies
doing some acrobatics
in space
chirping some melodies
under the trees
diving in the sea
teasing the rivers
and this hovering
on the cows

and today i hear
a different song
a sad song from a bird
by my window
it is you
you want to return
to the hard shell of
the tortoise
you miss the silence
and the privacy
of your hiding

now, you have doubts
what burdens are
what freedom is
and this cannot just
be easily done

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Are To Me

a glass of
an ice cold
orange juice
on a very hot
day of summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Are To Me?

You are freedom, you are my bird
Flying and hovering to any place
You are power, you have the power
To destroy every cell in my body
You are decent, you like this and that
To be clean and right and bright
You are kind and gentle you are
The shoulder that I always lean on
You are respectful of my weaknesses
Understanding of my human frailties
Above all you love me, you have mercy
You love me for what I am and you
You have already saved me. My God!

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Can Always Misspell

you misspell the obvious sometimes
precisely
because they are too easy
because many always believe them to be
notions
prejudices
like the fact that leaves are supposed to be green
or that sickness be pale
or that life always has an ending
sometimes we make right on those difficult times
we escape
jump over fences
and breathe inside vacuum containers
and you say
this must be a joke
this cannot be true

but how come you spell what used to be hidden
correctly?
you spell hardship correctly
and since joy is too easy
you do not even bother pronouncing the word

you exclaim
baloney
but you are sometimes correct in that way

life is sometimes a play of words
a game in uttering syllables
of course
very much different than the suicide
that most of them
chose.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Can Do....

dearly beloved
promise yourself not to forget poetry
you cannot say that, unless you are prepared to be another congenital liar,
your lips miss always the metaphors that please your tongue
that tastes the sweetness of nectar words
inside the receptacles of your flower-mind

come, dearly beloved
for the meantime leave the daily cares of your search for comfort
forget the greenish look of the almighty money
come with me
let us sing the songs of our perdition
let us ring the bells of of our death
to art, say it again, to art i must live and die and live and die
and die again

only to be redeemed by the powers of its beauty
its grace that saves us
ultimately from the evils of boredom
of too much familiarity to the insignificant
and the worldly,

dearly beloved we set free our butterflies
into the infinite skies of our
immortal existence.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Did Not Say

what you did not say
was the most important part of the meeting
it was something
that i really understood
it was painful
but i respected it
because it is
the truth

what you did not say
was this love between us
that we keep
and take with us
to a certain distance

it may be right
but it has grown in the wrong place
it may make us feel good
but it says that it may be bad for everyone

who are not ready
for what it really feels

this shame of our time
as i see it will be the glory of the coming time

it is coming my love
all we have to do is just wait for the changing of the seasons
and the guards in the parapets

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Did To Us...

you gave a little girl
her cake
with a caution, 'little girl
you cannot eat this
you simply have to look at
it'

you gave her a doll too
but you said' little girl
you cannot play with it
you just have to keep it
not to destroy it'

there is this cozy room
in the house
with soft pillows
and scented pillowcases

but this you told them

'you cannot sleep in
this room
this is reserved for
guests next month'

you have to sleep on
the floor
take care of the dogs
and feed them well.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Did When Mama And Papa Were Quarelling

A boy hides under a table from a family fight
A fried chicken
Falls beside his trembling hands

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Do Comes Back To You

this is always the case
of karma
what we do always comes back
to us
with a lot of surprises

we greet them with a hug
and sometimes with a lot of tears
some of them become strangers
whose names we cannot recall
but they smile
others come with sad faces
giving us
their revenge

it will be painful but we deserve
them just the same
we open our arms and feel the pain
we gape our mouths
and swallow the bitter pill

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Do Not Expect....

you are on your
way to the tenth floor
go inside
the room and closed
the door
open the window
and get some fresh
air from
the sea
you sit on the
window sill
and the people
down the street
go panicky

you are whistling
a song
and all the while
they are praying
that you do not
jump
from that
high....

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Do Not Understand Seems To Be The Most Beautiful....

i have a bad voice
so do not expect me to answer your call

what you will hear
will be the sounds of coarse sands
clashing with pebbles
not the slushy sand that
Matthew hints
on his tryst with Eliza
on the secret bank
of the lonely river

albeit
what i ask of you is just read my letters
(or have time
with my poems
concealed symbols lurk there
like an old church
scroll

you will meet an old man
who is cantankerous
who drinks Tanduay all day
and night
and then forgets everything
nasty
and sleeps)

i do not ask for more
because i cannot stay that long
here
or somewhere

the more i put my feet on something stable
the more aches i have
i become sore like my toes
and they scream like
hungry puppies

the chickens feed on dung
and dung becomes justified
as a need
somehow

do not find
or look for consistency
that is passe
have familiarity with one that
is so unrelated like a metaphor
but strikes deep
in the heart of the most logical
connection

for all you know
what you do not get
or understand
at least for the moment
seems to be the most beautiful item of your life

and then the misery comes
when you finally understand it
and it is
bland, it is numb

listen to me
please, read my lips,
that is what the old drunkard
said to
the triumphant
and
startling turtle.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Dream, Earnestly, By Shutting A Friend, Will Not Come True

someone shuts you
out temporarily from his
world because he is
writing a poem which
he dreams, must win
him an award that he
really needs to fulfill
his self-esteem as a
writer,

he misses the point of
inspiration, as, and this
i must stress, the source
of poetic inspiration
is always the other,
not the lonely swim
within,

nevertheless, i look
up to the sky, and pray
to all the gods,
i take a walk under
the trees,
to pray to all the
fairies, that he wins
the prize,

but deep within, i am
pretty sure,
he will not make it.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Got Are Lies

what you got from me are lies
and it was a test

wrong informations were passed
by you to all my friends

and they will now ask me
if these are true

i will tell them
about your lies now, not mine

and now
it is you who is in hot water

as i relax in my bed
figuring out what to do next

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Have

What you have is silence
and you will listen to everything I say
and you will absorb everything
like a sponge

what you have you shall take with you
even malice and self-pity
in anonymity

take all the love you can get
while you are here
with me

soon, I leave it all to God
may He bless you
may He always love you

I am Noise

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Have Never Known At All

what you have never known at all
the song of the soul

the labyrinths of the mystical
and the pluperfect

lead you to
nowhere

what you have felt is simply the air
passing you by

get to know the absurd
it will not tell you its name

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Lack Is The Simplicity Of Reality

my hands on the keyboard
on ten fingers
my eyes do not look for the letters
the letters find
me, i am amazed by this kind
of arrangement
on the simplicity of reality having
a life of its own
letters like bees having a cell
of its own
syllables having a mouth
speaking about what they can do
in a poem

i take this matter lightly
there is no rush
this is not a matter of life and death
but merely a way of letting time pass
beyond our
boundaries

i give in to what is beyond me
i empty myself of its contents
the mouth of my bottle
sings of emptiness

this is the simplicity of reality
it speaks
about nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Love Is The Whole Of It

what you love is the whole
of it
every part and bits and
pieces
every shatter
and chatter and all of these
really matter
but you must learn to accept
the law of nature
it is not at all that beautiful
at all
the ugliness of its horns
meet you
face to face and you bleed
right at your forehead
skull crushed and yet still taking
time to smile
to recover.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Must Know, Lies At The Last Signal Of His Hand.

not everything shall be said
know that,
not every entanglement is
bound by words,
takes time to know that,
so many things shall be
unsaid,
and this you must begin
to understand
the books are not hanged
on trees
the letters do not fly in the
sky
for you to know what a bird
is what life is,
the old do not write what
they want to tell you,
you stay beside their death
beds
and know that,
what you must know,
lies at the last signal
of his hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Really Like, Or What You Are Really Like...

it is hard to understand
what you really want, for

yesterday you said you like
meat, balls, and now you say

you vomit even the thought of
it, and you say you like a lettuce

and then when the lettuce came you
said you hate it, and you like

a rabbit, and i put this black
magic, a rabbit in your sleep

and you said you are dying with
the rabbit, a white rabbit, and

then the rabbit dies, and you say
you hate rabbits, and you like knives

and i stop catering to what you
like, you hate rabbits, and i know

for now what you want and i really
do not like it. I have no knife

to begin with, and i do not like
knives, or blood or dead rabbits.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Remember....

discover the truth
that what turns you on
is not what you sleep with
whom you touch
or kiss and hug, these
are not,
it is what is deep buried
in your soul
which you cannot touch
but which you will always
remember, it is the semblance
of the past that you love
that makes you live the moment
it is the propulsion of a
past life, a love unfulfilled,
which makes who alive
that flitting
hour.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You See Is What You Get

what i mean
is what you say

and that is what
you will really get.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Should Be?

Be the mind in the act of finding
Not just what will suffice
But one that will be nice. Find the place
Without a script, the one that gives you
Something
With spontaneity, one that changes you
Into something else, one that transforms
Your present
For the better, and the past that must become merely
A souvenir. You must be someone that is
Living
Not just something else, one that learns the
Speech of the scenes around you
The men and women and children that you meet

Construct a home of this world
Like you are a flower at home in a garden
Have the delicate ears of
The sentiments, the sensationalist expressing
His emotions
As thought there are only two persons
In a very silent room,
Random emotions becoming one
Singing the songs of grief and bliss
In unison,

Have the dialogue of the metaphysician
Twanging with his tongue, uttering the words
Of righteousness,
Holistically,
A mind condescending
With a will to rise
Above this commonness,

Finding satisfaction
Where there is none
Gripping the slippery
Tails of hope
Like a hunk surfing on a stormy sea
Or a woman belly dancing through the night
Or a mother combing her daughter’s hair
Or the father teaching his son a skill,
Be what you are be what you can be
Find some more
Those that may satisfy you

The living

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Unlock

she had it once
unlocking
a box

it was enough
to give mankind
eternal chaos

her name
was Pandora.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Want Is Yours, I Take My Peace.

delicate to live without any glitch
is to ignore,

hence the sun has ignored the
unruly segments of humanity

the moon ignored the noise and
hassle of the nights

the morning continues to be cool
and easy despite the grumble of the
motors and the engines of
daily hustle

i too must ignore everything.
what you want is yours, i take my peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Want To Still Remember.

been to eleven islands
in Puerto prinsesa
all white sands and
a bright sun
and calm blue sea
with some adorable fishes
scattered on the shallow
nooks of seaweeds and
red corrals...

you see i am driving you
a point, live life, have fun,
go places, and you will even
forget what you want to
still remember.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Want To Still Remember.....

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a point, live life, have fun,
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RIC S. BASTASA
What You Will Miss Here

sinugbang tuloy in sicayab beach.
tuba laloy in the local market.
smooth ripe mangoes.

raw mangoes dipped in ginamos.
the spanish sardines of the montano's
the bibingka

puto cheese. dinuguan.
san mig beer and pulutan of pork pata.

smooth to the throat is the tanduay rhum
asia's best.

a stroll at the boulevard.
seeing the sun set there.

eyearly morning walks at the plaza.
hearing the church bell ring.

a call to prayer.
the sound of the motorcabs on market day.

a hideaway in the farther hill.
early morning chill.

visiting the grave of your mother and father.
getting to know new nephews and nieces.

meeting old classmates and reminiscing
those high school days.

you were so thin and dark and naughty.
you're great now, with your white hair as crown.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Will Miss Here Baby

...the ripe bananas
the coconut juice and young meat
the local wine
the rice cakes
the fruits that you can pick from the trees
the lone line of beaches
surrounding practically the whole island
the fresh air
the wide expanse of green fields
the peace and quite
the hospitality of the people

we have it just name it
and it's all yours for free

because we care.

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Will Say Does Not Matter Anymore.....

WHAT you will say
does not matter anymore to me

you are
what matters to me

the winds come
and refreshes me
i am not listening
to its howls

the dogs bark
with so much noise
i mind the tail
that waggles for
my presence

you do not listen
to the sound of the spray
when the perfume
lands on your
neck

we do not care
in the same manner
the dying silence of the
night
neither do we notice
the idiosyncrasies of
our moans

we did what we did
we all moaned for nothing
but love

RIC S. BASTASA
What You Write

hey man what you write
last night was brief
concise and direct to the point
you were grappling on a metaphor
that was not there
but i always understand the feeling
i've been there
and staying, cool, effervescent like
sparkling wine, they say it was horrible
like a witch riding on her broomstick
i say it was romantic the moon was there
it has musk on its ears
and something dirty was there at the
portion of the right foot of that poem
they say it was filthy
i say it was real and cocky
it was stiff they was it was hardheaded
i say it was real
got the brains and grasped what we mean
about last night
the woman was singing in her sleep
i couldn't help but laugh
but you were there serious about your stuff
if no one says that what you wrote was a poem
you bet
i say, i will.

RIC S. BASTASA
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last night was brief
concise and direct to the point
you were grappling on a metaphor
that was not there
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RIC S. BASTASA
What Your Dreams Tell You

a smile from the person
that you meet along the
road confirms a welcome
of your arrival,
the entrance to the
door and the
sign of the hand to
make dinner ready
is their affirmation
that you are part of
this family, and you sleep
in one of their rooms
for the night,
you are safe and
cared for, but then
tomorrow you leave
again, your dreams
tell you that somewhere
else, far away, is
your home.

RIC S. BASTASA
What?

Beside a multi-colored beach ball a young man lies on the white sand on a beach
A tall, suntanned woman hides herself
On the other side
Changing her pink bra
and you were there
thirsty
looking
completely finding what you have been looking

tell them

RIC S. BASTASA
there are many things still to write
i should have written it directly like pen to paper
without any winding ways
i like to be blunt and candid and
spiteful and they will call me an angry man
a raging sea
a bully,
i stop short of this attack
it is not worth it
what shall i get when they will know about my
complaints?
they will just say, i am reflecting what i have
not achieved
that i am just spitting to heaven
as i am spitting to my face
i am tired, and i have transformed strength to
weakness
i am lost in what i want to see
i forget the beginning and sometimes i cannot decide
where to end
and what to say at the end
it is like this: i am mumbling, i do not really mean what i am saying
it is deep in the night
and i am sleepy and may be
hallucinating and you keep on reading because you are too
reflecting on the
inevitable,

you expect a wise retort? an ending with a clinch
or something?

there is nothing to this. Except

what? ? ? ?

RIC S. BASTASA

is it your last word

but mine was different and you know it
whatever that means

i said 'hello'

and what is it that you mean by 'what? '

do you mean ' what you did for love? '

i mean it, my love for you is always a hello
and there is no word for 'goodbye'
i know how to always begin
right from where we started
when we made the doodles
when we combined the colors
(of our longings and wishes)
when we painted the flowers
and cats and dogs
when everything seems hormonal
did we call it a chemical romance?
or just connecting chains
from time to time, those chains of
love
(i am sounding corny) , yes, the chains
of the past, connecting to the present
(there we stop to ponder and)

i guess, there is no future
there is no us, out there
but is it not that love is only concerned
with the

now? the moment, the day that we must seize
(carpe diem, touchee!)

if and if the future is nothing but this word
'goodbye', i will not proceed to go there
i stay here, and savor the moment
of today
this 'hello', and your 'what? ' a question
an open one

like your arms always willing to embrace me
again
(oh, you never really embraced me)
i guess

you must delet the word 'again'

let your arms be open
embrace me, i am cold, and let me say this over and over again
(without shame)

i always miss you
and i will be with you again
even just to see you and not hold you in my arms

my love.................................................................(sigh)

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatevah

write
till it does not hurt anymore

write
till all the happy moments are consumed.

write
till all the aches are justified

write
till all your revenge is dissipated

write
till all angles are examined

write and keep on writing
till all of you is hidden, till all of you is folded back

write and keep on writing still
because you are your writer and there is no one who knows you well

except yourself, and what they know shall only be
skin deep

because you want it so,
you are the king in the jungle of your uncertainties
the Tarzan hitting his chest before Jane came and ruined it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever

soon you will find
by analogy
in the kitchen
that like life
finally one realizes
that there
is no recipe
for the food that
you decide to
take. You may not
like it
but you have to
swallow
as a matter of
compulsion
what is being fed
to your mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Happened To The Marriages Of Figaro

she says it is sad
the first marriage flunked

the second has become
two stones in the desert
listening to the howling of the wind

the third is worst
it is the ocean of emptiness
burying ships
and passengers are swallowed
alive.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Happens

whatever happens
i always care for you

wherever you are
whatever you do

i see you are crying.
i want to hold you but

i cannot. My hands are
frozen with the coldness

death of distance. My lips are
sealed with the threads

death of absence. My heart is
death, long long time ago,

when i erased your name
from the bark of the tree.

I could have tried carving
your name in stone, but

my dear, you are not God
and I cannot be Moses

forever. I am alone, but
i am still as strong as the

day you left me for another
thanks, but i am a survivor..

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Happens To The Matters Of The Heart

this early morning
whether the egg
is sunny-side up
or scrambled
or plain messy

i do not really care
for i have more things to do
matters to think
complicated problems
within the cubicle

than the matters of the
heart. I told you
i have long given up.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Happens, I Made A Promise

whatever happens i have made a promise
not to self-destruct this self that i have been with.
you may humiliate the inner core of my being
you may finally declare an end, i am ready

long ready, to leave everything and to go to where
i must belong. there is no other, this is all i have
and whatever it is, whatever happens i remain
loyal to what i am. humiliate me but you cannot destroy me.

i move away, and become whole again.
that is my promise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Happens, Move On, Pursue That End

when we begin we already know what distance is
we see it in the stars we hear it from the Siberian winds
we were telling the trees that our beginning was the smile of the snails
that the moss have always been faithful to the stones

at the middle we learned the games of the waves and the seagulls
there is always the happy chase between respect and dignity
like the moon how it sits on the black horizon how it lightens the silence

you want to know the intimacy of the wind and the cliff
how they have become almost the same in sonorous sounds
sometimes you sense the semblance of surrender
not wanting to go on and be the roots of the trees and the grass

i have touched the tips of your hair, though short, but that is enough
my wings have fully grown and the winds are waiting
i am destined for something else beyond the touch of your hands
i do not know how my story shall end, but the voices are assuring

whatever happens, tell me, for once, that you too shall find yourself
do not turn back, pursue the end without the trembling, the remorse of pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever He Said

whatever he said to the mountain
he got it back through an echo
he said we are all fools and the
mountain gave it back to him

we are fools, we are fools,
we are fools, we are fools

he nodded and worshipped
the mountain his true teacher

the echoes have said it all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever She Says

whatever she says
be it about sadness
or peace
or war and unhappiness

he did not mind
he is in the mountain
thinking
how the mosquitoes
are pestering him
and he cannot sleep

soon she will
be silent and then
he begins to write

his shorter poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever That Be...

we drove
toward the curve
where once
our old house
was,

we view dilapidation
as we stop
for a while

the garden has turned
into a wild grassland
the trees became so
tall and thick
depriving the flowers
of the much needed
light

this is not ours now
and you know the feeling.
what we have, becomes
what we had,
you know the feeling.

you must have learned
by now, who and what we
are, what we become and
what we still could not
accept.

we ask ourselves what is
it that must remain.
at the root of this problem
is still us.
we cling to each other's arms
like vines to a tree
which is dying actually.

we feed on what is rotten
thrusting so well
under whatever circumstances
whatever that be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever Was Spoken Was Already Spoken

whatever was spoken was already spoken
and in my state today, the words are no longer
retrievable, the car hears them through its mirror ears
and i know it understands every word.

it is silent and then it speeds away ashamed of its beginnings.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever You Do

whatever you do
try doing it for free
for love

and try waiting
for some fruits

feel the lightness
of your freedom

feel the warmth
of this light
inside your heart

see an illumination
of holines
slowly moving
on your skin

do not look back
there is a halo
behind
your head

RIC S. BASTASA
Whatever You Sow You Shall Reap

that is the law
you sow a sigh
you reap the deepest breath
from the guts
you sow the seeds of discord
you reap the poisonous fruits
of chaos
you sow the wind
and comes the fruits of your disgust
the seven storms of
hell

RIC S. BASTASA
Whattaman

i ask him if he owns
a field
dumb,

he is growing all those
corny
jokes at the party

since he is new in this country
everyone
obliges with a smile

and tongues-in-cheeks.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whe Lovers Lose Their Cellphones?

hmm,

they buy a new one.

eddie.

RIC S. BASTASA
When A Beautiful Singing Bird Comes Near You

when this beautiful singing bird comes close
to your heart
prepare to open right away what you just closed

prepare the place where it must hover
give it the best twig
let it lay its eggs and let it hatch
give it more time
to stay on its nest

when it begins to sing, listen
savor the pleasure found in its songs

it is something so beautiful in your heart
savor it
you know that this bird seldom comes and when it leaves
it leaves without your notice

RIC S. BASTASA
When A Bird Flies Away From Your Hand

when a bird flies away
from your hand
without taking the little
grain of corn
let it be
for in time it has something
to tell to its nest
and sing on the night
when all the world is asleep
about love so sweet
so pure and yet so sad
because like those that died
love most of the time
is unrequited

RIC S. BASTASA
When A Friend Goes Away....

harsh, but true
when a friend goes away i will surely die

i am my only friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
When A Star Falls

when you said that a star falls in your home
i beg
to be clarified that you are just in any manner
speaking
poetically

otherwise
in plain, simple understandable language
what you are speaking
will mean a catastrophe
that will not just be in any way particular but in the gross sense
a universal explosion not just of your house
or home
but of this rotten world where you and i both live.

RIC S. BASTASA
When All The Illusions Are Gone

stripped of our illusions
what are we?

stones on the river
dry leaves on the pavement
rusty fan on storage bins
dilapidated cottages
abandoned houses
desert, bush, turtles
with their backs taken
rabbits without ears
crocodiles without their
teeth

if we let that be.

but there is no need actually of an illusion
because we are real, we touch ourselves,
feel the warmth of our bodies

i try it by simply being myself
less my caprices and whims
less the ambition and the dreams

reduced in the most simple of simpler terms
to the core of it all, i am a happy man
knowing now the limits of my
domains, settling for what is there
nothing more, nothing less

it can be done, illusions are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
When At Night It Rains

a rainy night
deprives me of the view of the stars.

the moon is hidden
by the clouds

coping up
the ears grope for the song
of the frogs

the soothing sound of the
the song of the rain

love's hugs, and kisses
love making love warm and
memorable

now it is fair
you are sleeping in my arms
my nakedness split open
to the mirror in the ceiling.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Beauty Touches You....

There is something in the walk
after we talk,
i see it in you, how faithful
can you be?
how beautiful!

now i am seeing flowers blooming
in different colors along the way,
the clouds are bluer, and the grasses
are greener,

birds are hovering on my head and hands
and then they fly away in a short while
dancing in the air like a confetti
of leaves

it is you that make these things
possible anew
and i have become one grateful soul
now as beautiful as you!

RIC S. BASTASA
When Confronted By A Lousy Poem

After reading another
lousy poem
(i guess it could be like
mine, in the strict sense
of your standard
master academic
poet, multi awarded
poetess)
i decided to pause
for a while,
reflect, meditate,
cogitate,
blink, wink,
think think
Give the writer the benefit of the doubt
due to his feelings
he must have these
within him/her
asking myself what prompts
him to write

i think it is not for fame,
for he will never have, he knows it
the world is filled already with a million famous men
and women
and there is no place anymore for one
like him
(or me, i know, don't bluff me
i know, don't ask me)

i think it is because he is like a snake
(Nothing bad about snakes
nothing metaphorically treacherous)
bitten by another snake, bleeding
and sliding his way in the sands of the
desert
looking for an oasis
a date palm
a branch of an olive tree
(is there an olive tree in the desert?
i have not gone there anyway
yet)

looking for a cure.
i then make a conclusion,
he deserves to be commended
for this bravery
of writing about
pain
at least writing about it
since he still does not know
of any cure
for pain, or if there is
i know, he knows, it is only
temporary

like the pain in our
hearts

(or asses if you will)

RIC S. BASTASA
When Confronted With The Unknown

you dislike what i am,
but you cannot tell me, i know that,
one day, you take the courage,
with the power of your
hidden self, and i have engaged in
the word war, with the unknown,
very much like it, very much like you,
and i have no regrets, having known,
what worse reality you have seen
what you cannot have spoken
what is revealed, and how i deal with
what i do not know, and i, afterward,
learned, how to win,
even with an unknown, which seemingly,
seems to be the truth,
you are cruel, i tell myself,
but thanks, i have become wiser
by then, even an inch higher
than my toes can handle.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Creativity Dies.....

someone will make the rules
many will obey
and so
they have become all the same
similar in all aspects
the world has become one
uniformity in
boredom

someone tells me how to do it
dictating the taste of the structure
the colors to place
the tone
and even the scent of the piece

but i am not into it
i am listening to the voice of my heart
it is restless
it is traveling like a vagabond
with no place to call home

thus, i do it the way i want it
and someday
i will be that someone who will tell
this world how to do it
but i will not do it

the world will return to another place
for bored people
and since then
creativity dies
all of them shall bury it
without their knowing

RIC S. BASTASA
When Darkness Comes

when darkness comes
the hands must account for
what they have done with
the kindness of light

the eyes must close and
see what darkness shows
apart from the clear
showings of the the
realities of brightness

the heart must start to
sing another song
perhaps lovelier this time
for some comfort
that there is nothing to fear
that darkness is not the enemy
but just the resting place
of those who want to rest
and get some sleep
and then float
so perfectly in the world
of dreams

RIC S. BASTASA
When Darkness Reigns

when darkness reigns
there is another choice
to submit myself to the
newborn lights of the stars

RIC S. BASTASA
When Dreams Are Born

for what we cannot touch
we simply watch
for what we cannot hold even
for the moment
we can do nothing
but let go

we stay put
sit idly upon a rock

dreams are born.

RIC S. BASTASA
When East Is East

The brown man in saffron
Another one in red
Some in pure white

In prayer in meditation
In lotus in kneeling in
Bowing positions

Bending to the earth
Kissing it worshipping
Nature, gods, God, and
Venerating fellowmen
In contemplation of the
Zen and peace and
In mystification and awe

And wander in wonder
The sound of a dripping
Rain the smell of incense
And candles the sight
Of mystery and innocence

When east is east
In the grandeur of simplicity
And heavenly peace

now, in orange sunset.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Everyone Has Thrown The Last Stone

it was meant to be read aloud
as it will be as beautiful as it sounds
it was meant to be power
the beauty that is found in thunder
but i purposely desist you
as i detest what you want me to become
and so i read it silently as though i have
denied myself that power that lies in
my teeth and tongue
i prefer it this way, slow, dragging,
soundless, for i have taken the cudgel
of the deaf and mute and it will be for
years, and years, and you will be mad,
as you want to know me only in words,
in the loudness of my being,
i have chosen what shall destroy you
this silence, the way we watch how
funerals initiate themselves till the
end when everyone has thrown the last
stone, and then the covering begins,
just like the way how it should end.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Everything Goes Wrong

when it is dark, why not enjoy
the darkness? think that she is just beside you.

when the door is closed, why not
think that all the while you want to spend
your lifetime under the sun and sea?

when the air is hot and humid, why not
say that you like it and it is just perfect for
your nudity?

when you're sad and lonely, why not take
these hours as simply perfect for
another volume of poetry?

enjoy what you have and make the best
with what is there in your hands and head

do not look for what is not found there
you may simply be frustrated. Think and be wise.

love what you are, and do the best you can.
there is no other way, and if there is, please tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Everything Is Empty

the fire is burning within
a body of fat
it is a niche favored by
heat and goes into a journey

of melting and flowing
into a conflagration
into a chaos that consumes
everything

where one is finally lost
and gone for good into the air
into limitless space
after which, all the fears are gone

and what is left
is only that relief
a calling for the annihilation
of what was built

and when everything is empty and
soundless
another beginning begins to breathe
and once again

this earth grows some petals
of land
leaves of mountains
lovers find themselves back in their arms

into the pond
sounding the first splash
and i shall remember
the legend of the frog

RIC S. BASTASA
When Finally I Wanted To Rock

at 49
i surprise myself and the rest of those who are watching:

i want to rock
i want to seal my ears with bass and drum music.

i want to bind myself with the electronic guitar strings.
i want to jump and stamp my feet on the solid

rock, i wan to be deaf and be dumb,
and be the subject of their talks

in the market and in the church,
i want to be shamed, and be the object of their

ridicule. i want to laugh the hardest like a
big rock falling from a cliff

and crushing hard on the sea with
splashes like cyclones but then

at 49, it is too late,
it has gone beyond the page of the calendar

and it is too late.
Solitude found me. And there was only Mozart
with his soft piano
his violin on a wintry day.

i sit on a
rock and keep on waiting.

RIC S. BASTASA
When God Accepted Me

and then there was this meeting
it was dusk yet
and the trees are still shadows
and He embraced me
and said that He accepts me
for whatever I am
There was nothing said about
having to change myself
or that I have to do something
or make up with
what I have not committed

It was the embrace that
I cannot forget
for it was warm and sincere

I marked that day when
God accepted me as
I am
and that day has become
Forever

A day of Thanksgiving
A day of Love.

RIC S. BASTASA
When God Created Us All, We Were Not Left Alone

it is true and i agree completely
when God created us all
we were not left alone

he created the rivers and the seas
to tell us that we must flow and be deep
and be wide with compassion

he created the skies that we may always
look up to the wide expanse of this
unfathomable love, this universe

he created the earth where our fellowmen live
so we all become coals hot with cinders
unsegregated from the fires that burn
within us, lest we become cold and nothing
but ash, blown by the wind and then forgotten.

RIC S. BASTASA
When God Speaks To You

it is nice to see you
praying and praising God

that is what we are supposed to do
in fact, everyday of the rest of our lives

we must whisper
and talk to Him inside our hearts

but when God starts to talk to you
it is time to see your shrink

I've been there in the land
of schizophrenia.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Happiness Arrives

they say happiness comes
in moments unexpected comes one early morning
knocking to your door and you least expect
such a face
bringing you all that happiness promises

years of pain has alienated you from her
disgusting you say
and you do not feel anything anymore about her
she comes and you look at her
happiness

you tell her she is not welcome anymore
happiness
does not work at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Happiness Comes...

at the other end of the world
when my morning is her night
she just wrote some notes, and
reminded me...

about another casualty,
the failing light, the fading sunset
the shrinking spirit,
the falling leaf, the broken twig,
the rotting trunk
the muddy ground...

i cannot sleep that night
this is always the negative thing at the other end of this border...

somehow i fly away from myself
to have a date with some fireflies
above the tree that has so many leaves
strong twigs, invulnerable roots
fungus free, hard barks,
strong, tall and proud

beside this is the river
lots of ripples and such a comforting sound of flowing water
it is leaving on a long journey
and i am left

there must be something positive about life
those stars speak a lot in their distant silence

the moon is so beautiful tonight
and the sky has freed all the dark clouds

somehow
i must speak of love and its seductions
its progeny of hope and courage

life has so much to offer
how can i contain these stars in a bowl?
the refrigerator is too small for
frozen happiness
the window is too tight for those that are coming
the door too narrow

the floor does not have that width
the ceiling that length

how can one compress happiness in
just one page?

is there joy in one syllable?

RIC S. BASTASA
When He Goes Fishing In The Sea

during summer
his fishing time begins
a loner
he is always alone in his boat
and think as deep as the sea
he doesn't care how time runs
how he looks sometimes
his mind is focused on the fish
and his loneliness
he didn't know that someone out
there with a telescope
cares about his
butt

naked he swims in the sea
diving for fish
and cooking his catch right there
in the shore
at night building his own
bonfire

someone out there
sees his naked beauty
dreaming that someday
his loneliness shall also be
her own

someday, she knows this man
shall need a woman beside him
to make fire for him
to make a man out of his
butt.

RIC S. BASTASA
When He Is Lost He can Be Everything To Anyone

he accepts everything and everyone
anywhere and whatever
when he does not know what to do with his life

he can be in any religion
with any person a lover a friend an enemy
or a stranger
in any place be it in the plains or valleys
or oceans and nooks
he can be a slave or master or
cook or shaman or even a woman
whatever that the other does to him
will always be acceptable

he is the sea that takes everything
the boats that float and arrive at certain ports
and those that sink
and forever forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
When He Talked About Love It Was Almost Midnight

when he began to talk about love
(but to me it was mostly lust)
it was past midnight and i was already sleepy
(or was it drowsy)
for i could not believe every story that he was relating to me
it was something miserable
(and perhaps too unbelievable
why all the pain? where could happiness and her myths be?)
but

out of civility i pretended to listen
for deep within me the man in him is crying
begging to be listened too even for the last hours of the night

then he was asking some more
beyond what i could possibly give him
(i was thinking of someone else more deserving
love as higher than pity
empathy as more noble than sympathy)

and then i decided to cut short where the sobbing is
(i expected more than that
perhaps

the silence would have served us better
and the pauses like a comma between two long sentences

perhaps respect for feelings and then
i finally cut short where he was wanting more

i still have tomorrow to take care of
more things to do of equal importance

like love, family, society, public welfare,
like morality and decency
and obedience to authority
like religion and faith and
order and law and justice and tranquility
of the human mind.
When He Thought Of Storms

She was thinking of
Bridges

He was thinking that
The bridges fell

But she was quick
To make the pieces

Turn into ships on
The sea

He was quick with
A storm to sink them

She was always saving
For the ships

Were always
As empty as they can
Be

From the beginning
When she thought

Of bridges when he
Thought of storms

RIC S. BASTASA
When He Was A Child

When he was a child
He did a lot of sketches
Boats, Stars, Moons,
Mountains, Clouds,
Seas, Shadows,
Mama, Papa In
His Sketchbook,

He opens them now
As tears flow from his Eyes.

The past becomes a bird
Alive hovering on his hair.

RIC S. BASTASA
When He Was Insulted, He Returned No Insult

some questions i will ask for you today,

did you show your left cheek when your right was slapped?
did you walk another extra mile when you were ordered to
walk the required mile?
did you take his eye because your eye was taken away?
did you take his teeth because your teeth were removed by him?

did you insult him because he insulted you?
did you fight him because he started the fight himself?

did he oppress you and you remained silent?
did he steal from you and you tell the police that you freely gave the
stolen thing from you to him?

please answer me.

Did it now occur to you that it is hard to be a christian?

please answer me.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Hell Is Hell

if you keep on hiding
your skin gets too dark and like the night
it will be
accompanied by that unnecessary
coldness of
stone that knows what numb
what silence
tolerated

so many of them
those who have faced the harshness of opening
tell you, open up open up
since you are a closed gate
a locked door
a tight bud

even they tell you
open up or you die
or you have no meaning at all
or you are
a brittle bread
a tick afraid of the light of the bulb
in that old
Persian carpet

and so you open up
to the grass to the sun to the clouds
and you are badly hurt
skin burning like paper
bones lighting up like firewood

you run like hell and hell is hell
(what do we really know about hell?)
and fire consumes you and they follow you to check
what you have become

it is too shocking to tell for now.
and they want to tell you that they are sorry for you.
and then
they forget

you were such a fool
to believe those bunch of fools

RIC S. BASTASA
when her mother died today
she couldn't care less
for she is
like everyone else in the house
mourning

there is something though which
she cannot forget
the harsh words, the unkind hands,
the long hair pulled to an end,

and this somehow lessens her pains
she looks behind
and then give a sly smile

in this funeral she hides the
honesty of her heart
there is more to life she promises herself
there is more to mothers
and fathers and husbands and children

it is someone that she misses a lot
herself, a bird flying free from the hassle of family
from the branches of the tree
she longs for the sea
the sunless one
the island in the middle of the ocean
the moon without the marshes

something so private that no one understands
even myself
she is now the veiled woman shying away from light
those that hurt her eyes
like stabs of the knife
silver in
the dark,

RIC S. BASTASA
When He's In Love Again

the clouds are so blue
the sea so calm and
the night so serene
the leaves have forgotten
to say a rustle and the
skies are whiter
the mountains silent
the trees tall and dignified
the grasses crawl
with the usual determination
the birds are singing
and the grasshoppers are
jumping

inside him rages a very
sweet storm

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Am Alone

now i learned
what they want me to understand
when i am alone
at least i need someone to talk to
someone who listens
and when i am as silent as cigarette stick
lighted
at least something knows
where the smoke may go

i smoke now
but not because i like it
it is a necessity
the smoke at least talks to me
and the light in the cigarette
gives me the eye of the
cinder
a word of light
a comfort of flame
in the dark

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Am Down And Feeling Lonely

i dress up for the day
and prepare myself for a walk
and leave a message on the table
for you to read

there is nothing between those
simple lines

I have to carry them with me
I always manage to carry the unseen weight
As i do not have to add
What i have to yours

I walk at the boulevard
Like anyone else
Taking more air, exhaling what is
Not necessary

It is simple as that
There is no need for more complications

When i return home
You are there waiting for me
We kiss

And as usual
Nothing happens
Because we keep our own lonely matters
Responsibly
On those strong cabinets of our
Maturity.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Am In Love

when i am in love
my feet dance the tango
alone in the park
even without the music

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Am Nothing At All

sometimes i have vacant days
days without content
days removed from their usual implantation

these are the lazy but happy days
days without poems, without a word even
days that i do not syllabicate
because i claim to be happy
on a day without
thinking

too much of it chokes me
and they say those who see me thinning out like air
that i am punishing myself
and it will be unfair to my
being

so i embrace vacant days
days like windows
vase without water and flowers
trees without leaves
twigs without buds

a door emptied of its dog
floors without shoes
books on their closed positions
rooms without people
streets without horses or cars

oh i love these days, when i am nothing at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Arrive I See You Half Naked

when i arrive from my journey
i see you half naked
and you are sleeping

i do not wish to wake you up
i want to see you in that state
where you are what you are
without motion but just the form
where you cannot say anything
to all that i long for

i sit beside you and look at your
body
i am feasting i am motionless
i am speechless
to such a beauty of the one
i love

it is new all over again
the world stops right here
and i do not want it to move
to rotate to make its orbit
to complete its journey

all i want now is a suspension
of time and form and place

because you are with me
because i am with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Arrive There I May Give The Best Smile

i will not wait for the flowers to wilt
before i go

for i may bring with me the dryness
of every leaf and flower

the sound of their cracks the sadness
of their deaths

when the flowers are in full bloom
when the butterflies are crazy about them

when the dew are still on the leaves
glistening from the light of the morning sun

perhaps i will go and henceforth
i shall bring with me all the good times

and when i arrive there i may give the best smile
the best story, the last hope.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Arrive There.....

even if i have not seen your scars
they will always be there

you do not have to say a story
how each scar was once a wound with all its pains

our instinct is always to hide them
for who wants to be reminded of those stabbing nights?

when i arrive there it will be another full moon
the sea will be as calm as silk and silver

do not serve upon that tray some pieces of broken dreams
there will be a proper time for all of them

it will be good if we deviate sometimes on those memories
of laughter and child-like innocence

when we were young climbing upon those trees
gathering the ripe fruits and then eating all of them

luscious pulp, sweet juices upon our tongues
freed for the worries of old, dead anxieties, alive on some hopes.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Ask Her If She Likes To Write Poetry

when i ask her
if she likes to write poetry
she says
she does not like to go
naked

and when i ask her if
she likes to read poetry
she answers
with clarity
and with the directness
of a cold stare
at a high temperature
of her heyday

neither do i like to
see naked people
bathing on a sunny beach

she prefers living
in her own privacy

inside the discreet pages
of her diary

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Become Wise And Numb

when you become
storm #1
i remain as a simple
cottage
at the foot of the hill

i draw my own
blue butterflies
fluttering
on the purple
bushes
of my garden

when you become the
darkness of
my night
i invent a hundred
fireflies
on that tall tree
in my mind

i tell you
i am wise and numb
and has become
too creative

because of you

i can be anything now
and you have become
nothing to me

when i take a glimpse of
what you are doing
you become a black fish
on the bowl

if i want to
i could have pushed that bowl
on the edge of the table

and you should have been
a minute part
of that
tragedy.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Begin To Fly Without Wings

when i look
at your eyes
when you touch
my hands
when i kiss your lips
when our bodies
rub for each other
when we talk and
take a walk together
when i am beside you
when we dive together
inside our dreams
fishing our fantasies
these are the times
when you are mine
when i begin
to fly without wings
with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Begin To Read Poetry

when love gazes at me
and when i expect its pleasures
i surrender my crown
and bow upon its
whims
& caprices

lots of pains here and there
a little of bliss
some shares of
ecstasies
subject to the frailness of time
the vulnerability of
change
the temporariness of
thrills
a firecracker
of giggles
that in seconds
fade
in the darkness

i am tired of love
and its teases
got lots of scars
that i can never
be proud of
through the folds of
time

in this gamble i am
always bound to
lose with lots
of sores

in these lovely wars
i am always
left out
loveless upon the
twisted arms
of my fate

and so i shift to books
venture in politics and
hide in the quick blankets
of my philosophies

'i am safe' i proclaim
but not until
i see you again

'here comes my foolish heart!'
i wish i can
rewrite feelings

'but i cannot'
i look for that page
that shall make me
dumb again
that which does not make
me understand
even erase
the basic foundation of
my being

i run to poetry
asking for help
hide behind her skirt
sit down there
with her
and then
i begin to read.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Came Here

when i came here
i find beauty, wanton beauty
one that spreads and blooms
uncut
the pruning unknown
forests of green
vines climbing each branch
leaves outreaching for the sun
and then falling freely
to the cold feet of the earth

i simply sit on a rock
and do nothing but watch
and indeed
it was beautiful

the sun the moon and the stars
and even the winds of the night
did the same

even the most powerful hands
of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Cross The Last Bridge

my dear wife
when i cross the last bridge of this marriage
let me tell you
that i will be speaking in my own language
not yours
because it is so beautiful
so coherent
and so untrue.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Die

when i die, what shame can i have?
do not take the blame, neither all the shame
you may bury my body with dignity
a coffin made of mahogany
with a glass cover and white carnations
all over my body
there will be a make-up of my face
like i am a freshman of
a class A university,
but i pity you for that will be too expensive
to add the parish priest's fees
and the the food and prayers
plus the songs of the choir
and the cost of candles
not to count the wreath
and the drinks

oh, you will be buried in debt and you will have
all the hard earned years to pay,

so, take it easy, it is more for our advantage
that i will not die or you perhaps

but i have no shame
and i take no blame & grrr
i don't care about what people say

if you die
i will make you a coffin of coconut wood
sprinkle your body with flowers from the grass
that i can pick along the goat's paths

i can pray and sing myself
no one eats snacks and i will not invite the parish priest,
hire no choir or buy ready made wreaths
for i know and you know that these will be very expensive
and i have no money or if i have some
i will not spend a cent
for all these no-sense rituals
useless prayers and out-of-tune choirs

so we will take it easy now,
you can't take it? then fake it

let us live and just be ourselves
let us survive all these
or suffer those consequences.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Die

when i die
i do not choose
whether my coffin is made
of coconut planks
or metal casing
i cannot choose but only those
who mourn for me
if they ever will
shall choose what they think
must fit me: the color and size
of my niche
whether flowers be skipped
or snacks be served
or blessing be made
i do not choose: what epitaphs
must they write
or sculpt on marble
or gold

i cannot choose what funeral rites
shall be
what church? who the priest shall be
that sprinkle water
over me?

in truth i do not care
for by then i cannot feel
in fact
what they have
in truth is only
my shell

joyous then
shall i escape somewhere
an angel guide
perhaps
or what if there's no one
there
or nothing dear?
what do i really care?
i still can't feel.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Die (A Deadball Poem)

when i die,
they promise me, i would be given
a tour
a travel for free

as i leave my body
for those
who want to water
it with tears

so many tears
like rain, a flood of rain
a chant of my goodness
a concealment of all the bad deeds
i have inflicted

when i die
those you love me shall weep for nine days
and give a party in my name
on the 45th day
of my departure

when i die
those who pretend to love me shall weep with them
and assure them
about my goodness
(their tongues on their cheeks)
and too they will eat the food served on the table
and drink and be sorry
for me

when i die
i have this assurance that i will be free

and who cares
about sincerity and plasticity
around my dead body behind my memories

i am gone
and let them take care of their troubles

i am taking this complete tour for free
on wings
that still they do not have....

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Do Not Have You...

skies turn
black
sun is out
grieving
seas become
frozen
a cold world
throughout
flora and
fauna
dead

the whole
universe
stops

call me crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Fall In Love The Second Time Around

when i fall in love again
happiness rains on my cheeks
and my mouth becomes
a well full of water and my tongue
becomes a garden
blooming with red roses

music comes out from my breaths
rushing to your bosom
my eyes become two suns
making the bright days for me

my eyelashes become the clouds
and at night the stars hang there
the green grasses of hope
spread before my feet
where my promises lay

my fingers turn into ten rivers
and my hands and arms become
long and wide blue oceans

my love for you is immeasurable
your arms cannot embrace it
your eyes glimpse on the length of eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Go Fishing

when i go fishing
i am always reminded
of the fish in the pond
and the hook, line
and sinker

the bait is this worm
this shrimp
and objective is always
the fish

in there
one drinks so much silence
by the pond
i see the ripples
i see the shadows of fins
i drink so much silence
i fathom so much depth

i might have missed the elusive fish
losing my worm and my shrimp

what i bring home is this inner peace
and so i never mind the shadows of the fins

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Go Out And Play Under The Sun

when i go out and play under the sun
like a child i run and not minding if i fall

i always know how to stand back
and hold myself within a frame of bones

sometimes without restraint i force
myself upon the fingers of light and warmth

and then when it is over when darkness begins
to claim its rightful share i too know how to surrender

i go back from where i come from and take shelter
on a roof and close my door and windows

i am back in my little nook taking some sleep
always remembering the good old days of sun

the summer in my mind the darkness and coldness
within i keep them all and they all become a part

of me. For i am both darkness and light, both
child and man, both evil and good, both sun and moon.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Kiss You

did i not tell you
that after each kiss
i always think
of the next,

dead.

(but i do not stop
from there
life does not end
of the four corners
of the niche)

the last kiss i had
i begin to think of the next,

resurrection.

and then perhaps
we will be together again
pure spirits
no longer remembering
what kisses are.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Leave You

when this is over
and ironed out when
saying goodbye becomes
so cordial

i will be the one to
first open the door
and leave

i won't walk away
I'll run.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Look At The Time That I Have Wasted Years Ago

i feel like a frozen glass filled with water in the freezer
when i look back to all the years that i have wasted
doing the things where i can never put my best
because that is what father want me to be
i leave all the traces of what i love in those years
that still ask me where i am
where i live what i have been doing lately

when they heard that i am into law they all laughed
and then sighed
that is not the name that they first know me
they have a word for me
written in the poems that i once wrote
my name was lust and love all bound together
in one piece
my name was written in the cover book of the literature book
in the maiden issues
of the poetry collections of lilia and tita

i look back again and they all raise their hands back
as though to embrace me
back into their bosoms again
they are calling my name

you are e come back to us.
i know the reason why i am sad.
i have forgotten my real name.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Look At You Naked In Bed

i have to be honest now
despite the first lie
that after i have slept with you
something in me becomes
real: i am real, i am alive
i am whistling at midnight

when you wake up and
look at me and kiss my lips again
i know what it feels
the world becomes real too:
this bed, this blanket,
this window and the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Look At Your Lips

i have always remained silent
like a dead man
but deep within there is always
this love growing
wanting to kiss your lips and
hold you
i close my eyes to dream at noon
your body and your soul
fused into mine

it is this oneness of us in the dream
that makes me write the poems and make me live
it is this separation
of our two realities that make me die
every moment

i am the coward of our time
i am the one that you can never love

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Love Someone

there are no
if
there are no
but

i just do it, like you must,
wordlessly under a spell

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Make A Decision I Try To See The Universe
And The Ant

when i make a decision about your life
your liberty or your property
i always try to see the universe, the paths of the planets,
the way they orbit around the sun
near and far, bright or dull,
the whole
of this universe in motion like a fluid of fire
i look up
for a sign  a symbol of what ought to be
and given the situation how the planets would behave
then
i look down the smallest of the ant
its tiny feet its capacity to bite and eat and swallow
the universe
into its mouth and belly,
the smallest
of all shall be considered, the details of its possibilities
the intricacies of its
wishes and dreams
tiny
and its relation to the universal, to the great view of the
giants,

the forest and the trees, the shadows and the shapes,
light and darkness,

and then liberty may be taken away, property may be forfeited,
and life may even be shut out
because the law has become the god
on that black and white
the booking sheet.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Make Love Tonight

when i make
love tonight
with another
body, i close
my eyes and
dedicate
my next
ejaculation to you

does that
make you
happy now?

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Move A Step Forward

there is something that i notice with us
when i make a step forward
you do the same
when i make a turn, you do the same
i don't think that you are my shadow
because you look so real
that i am even tempted to touch you
though i am afraid sometimes
that you may not like it at all

now i stopped doing a thing
and wanted even to stop thinking
and here you are still doing the same thing
i am definite i am not you and you are not me
for we are two different entities
facing each other and perhaps wanting to
be the same and fuse as one

are you my dream? are you my wish not to be alone?
why can't we talk? who knows if we have the same mothers?
who knows if i am your twin and mother did not tell us?

when i die, please, to complete this story,
will you also die with me?

I doubt fore, you exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Read Your Name

when i read your name
it is enough to remind of all the arrogance of the world
it has become a symbol
of the woman who refused
to be with me
because she is used to being lonely
and rude

she has become an island to another island

they wish
to be glaciers, cold and floating, always wanting to move away
from everybody
only to sink when the sun shines
when the earth
warms itself and tells about the rule of life

warm sunshine
love of humanity
interdependence
cooperation
unity of the universe

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Rush Upon A Poem For Lack Of Time

it is when i rush upon a poem
like an acquaintance
i
feel this surprise

a
word comes like someone
that i do not know
but it strikes softly on
my face
and i ask: do i know you?

the syllable snubs me
and says

'of course not! '

then i go on my own way
thinking:

what was that?
like the way the seam of
my shirt
has been touched
by the famed finger
of the miraculous
just once
but it has lingered
throughout the night

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Said I Tore The Picture Long Hidden

when i said that i tore the picture of you long hidden
in the pages of my love book
i thought i have found the escape from this ancient longing
and that i am already free from this
old flame

yes, i tore every fiber, every print of your face only to find
that tonight your face lives forever
inside my heart

when i sleep, i close my eyes only to see once again
there and i gaze at you in total surrender

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Sit Here And Try Writing My Lines

i sit here again
trying to repeat what it is necessary to be repeated

face the screen
think about the past
rekindle
make more light
come inside me
adjusting the shutters

i am retracing what i had
the peace and the
quiet of my being

i just lost it
and i am trembling trying to explain
what happened
why my guts have become so emptied
and drained
why my thoughts are scattered like
machine gun bullets
not hitting any point
any pole

perhaps something
or someone will come along
and carry me
and help me find the map
towards
my castle my paradise

my resting place
my home again

i sit again and write some lines
perhaps they will have the courage and wisdom to tell me

why and how
When I Talk And Think About Albert

sometimes
(did i tell you that this is my favorite word?)

i am shocked by my own ingenuity
(sometimes i equate it with shallowness
a loquacious mouth of the river falling upon
a rock and smashing its hands on the floor of the earth)

i blame myself for changing the meaning of a word like the way i am changing the meaning of my life

(or perhaps the lives of other people around me)

creating landscapes
putting trees where there are no mountain putting talkative women in the house where the house is still a thought

(a student wants to say i am crazy but there is also a doubt whether i am one she has the wisdom of
keeping her
mouth in the silent
mode)

i am not stupid
not crazy i still know what right
is,
i can still tell you
who are those in the left
side of the
equation

one day
i redefined a poem
it need not be a house
with a door and
windows

i can simply be stairs
or path
it can simply be a star
on the roof

it can simply be a conversation
without a direction
like a Freudian dialogue on
the sofa
where comfort is actually
moving the paths
of meteors
with a broom and
light

(do you always talk
to achieve
fulfill a mission?
what is your mission?
what is your
purpose?)

women go to the market
buy some things
for the kitchen
they do not linger upon a

men go to their work
thinking about their kids
most of the time
they do not bother about
work really
they also dwell in the bodies
of other women
about those nights away
from the eyes
of their wives

people have scattered minds
unto each other
they pretend that they are devoted
into something
worthwhile

kids go to school
carrying bags filled with books
that they do not bother really reading
if they have to be honest
about who they are
the only care for the games of their
minds in those
playgrounds and
play stations

what kind of world is this
there are only so few
that live
so many people are going to
the places of death
without really knowing
each step

the famous man (you know his name)
discovered the bomb
and from then own
they own all these countries of this world

he is the real meaning and so they claim him to be
the only meaning of this world
a nuclear god
who cannot die in that history of pain and misery

may his soul (if he has one) rest in peace.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Wake This Morning

last night i had
a single pill of 'x'
you know what
it is
do not make any
pretensions
it did not obstruct
a word
it slipped right though
smooth and easy
and then
the usual things happen
i am into this garden
they call Eden
and there is this Eve
and the apple
and of course the snake
i still doubt whether
i was God or
i was simply
the sinful Adam

when i wake up this
morning
my body was as heavy
as the Titanic
which as you well know
sank.
my mouth is sewed
with invisible thread
and i can feel
the pain in my lips
my teeth are imprisoned
soldiers
i want to eat some of
my words for
breakfast
but i cannot.
you see? this happens sometimes
and so what we can do
is simply sit on one
of the chairs drenched
by last night's rain
at the porch
and just be silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Wake Up In The Morning

i accept
it was all me that makes the bed warm

i remember
it was only me who turned off the lights

this room has no mouth
to speak about love and togetherness.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Was A Child

when i was a child
i used to fish in the nearby river
there was silence
i can hear the songs of the reeds
and the whispering sighs of the nipa palms
i sat and waited
until a fish swallows my hook, line and sinker
and the with one pull i got the fish
off the water and into the soil
it grapples for death
for taking my bait.

now, i have become a man
and i have nothing to do with the fishes anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Was A Kid, Grandpa Hurt His Head

we are riding on a seesaw
i am the kid and you are the old man

now you are up

watch out
for i am getting out!

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Was In Rome

take this note
when i was in Rome
i did not become a
Roman
neither did i wish
to become one
i stayed put
and pat on
who i am
and what will i be.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Was Sick

i was thinking about a lot of things
messy things like
a pool of thread being played
by the kitten at the
living room and the dogs
were flying kites
the mice are taking all the
cheese,
i was thinking about a lot of poems
with gentle faces
wearing straw hats on the beach,
a lot of stories with eyelashes
curling
and lips lusciously
biting each other,
when i was sick they tell me i was sick
my mind is sick
and i am not aware about the sensitivity
of the situation, which i always
consider
as nothing but another form of
temporary
sensuality,
i was thinking about
my favorite dish
and those who dine with me
their hands
inside my pants.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Will Meet You Again

when i meet you again
i will not use words
i will not utter your name
i will look at you and go closer
my lips closer to your lips
my hands caressing your hands your hair your body
i will have no use of words
they will be unnecessary and time so short shall have no regrets
for i shall have your kiss your sweet caress
i have no use of words for i shall make love with you the whole night long.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Write

when i write i do not wish to please
anybody
it is more of a selfish endeavor
i am lonely and i want to please myself
to get rid of this feeling
so i can function well
in this society
when i write i am engaged in therapy
looking for a cure
of this sickness of humanity
this void inside our hearts
something that asks
always asks
and we are left without any answers
but we go on
because we have no choice
the world spins itself
even without us
this search for meaning
this self wanting to be full
i write because there is this sickness upon ourselves
it is lovely
beautiful and true
feel it, to every syllable, every letter
every poem
at night when the loneliness becomes deeper
when the stars become too far away
when the silence stabs
when the pain becomes too unbearable
the mind opens
the words build themselves
like stairs, and
this is it now... another poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Write About Beauty

when i write about beauty
i always have the
sunflower in mind
and the sun
and the soft winds from the evergreen mountains

i will add some chromatic butterflies
and a very beautiful morning
like some petals of
red roses

and i will also think of tiny round leaves
like drops of rain
showering
falling on
the spreading patches of glimpses
of grass

and then when everything beautiful is in their proper places
with matching colors
bright
and scents all pleasing to my senses and emotions
like to dance
with the wind and rays of the sun
when feelings are so tranquil like a very calm sea
on an early morning
when everything now is so lovely
there
then
will i invite you,

come, my friend!
come, my love!

i will be here
waiting for you
it will be beautiful indeed!
When I Write Another Poem

for another head start
i read your poem
reflect on what you say
and what you really feel,
and then i look upon
myself, searching
on a link to my
soul,
searching the recesses
of my heart
looking for a leveling
field
where you my peer
can also feel what i
feel,
and then i realize
we are all one in this
journey
one boat sailing
on a vast ocean
one sky filled with
stars
and storms
and eventually
at times seeing
auroras of light
lightning and thunder
and emptiness
inside a cup of
consumed coffee,
i ponder upon
this humanity
of words, and right
there and then
i write this one
for you

respecting the flow
of thought
linking to the river
of your
expressed
feelings
the rage of a waterfall
of emotions
the settlement
of ideas
flashes of light
reflecting the self
that was there
even before
we have attempted to
write.

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Write These Lines

when i write these lines it is as good as
thrown paper, some words are written but
they are meant to be discarded because they have
occupied much of sadness
worn out memories
overused mumblings

they are meant to be crumpled
and thrown away

this one, this one is not meant to be kept
it is written
but meant simply to be deleted

some words are meant to be said
and be forgotten
because of pain and because they do not mean anything anymore.
goodbye lines, goodbye
take your time, there will be a little waiting
until another fool takes you in
another poet in the state of an inevitable
writer's block

RIC S. BASTASA
When I Wrote The Words I Love You I Miss You I Want You

you will by chance read these ordinary lines that a lover says to another lover faraway,

oh! My God! you really tore your heart out of your chest and threw on the computer stand when you write these lines

they are ordinarily said, let me tell you again, i love you i miss you i want you on my side,

the musings sound like you and i have met and kissed in the subway of strangeness as i hold your hands like you are a train bar so i may not fall away

and die like a stupid bum, but i write lines of love and missing as i am born to love and miss those unloved and unfound, what for too is my loneliness and being messy,

got to go now, you did not tell me your name, and i did not tell mine, we do not find any importance about knowing each other at all, we just meet, i say i love you i say i miss you, and you listen attentively and pretend you like each word,

we recall the rules of our game, for those who believe there is heaven for those who don't keep your little space of earth,

and live, wiser, cautious, and better adjusted this time, easy come, easy go, there is not much pain, there is no bargain, and well

what is the gain?

now you are learning now you are saying when i go away i miss you i love you i want you and i will not
look back at you, your tongue is so adept in your cheek.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Ice Meets Fire

when ice meets fire
expect
too much water

when an ice-cold heart
meets a fire-hot heart
expect
too much tears

perhaps
a little persistence
in patience
gives birth
to love

this mutuality thing
seems to be

force times distance

RIC S. BASTASA
When Imagination Comes True

you read a book
and the night is deep and dark
you insert
a marker and then you
feel that gift
of sleep

dreams of rainbows
seep in your brain
the heart is an apple
beating with
the wind-chimes

somehow there is warmth of
this chill
feel the softness and the
smoothness
of scented oil

a kiss lands in your ear
and it is not a dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
When In Pain

when in pain
i prefer silence.

but i keep on writing.
and writing.
and writing.
and writing.

when in pain
i prefer always the silence
of the stars.

makes me feel like i am a star.
this silence, this pain.

when in silence, like the stars,
the pain gets too peaceful
like the stars

and then the pain subsides like
an ebbing tide

like an anger subsiding into
a still undisturbed mind

when i shine like a star
i remember the pain and it does not pain anymore.

silence kills the pain
like a distant star on a dark night like this one.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Is Enough Enough

enough is enough
when you just don't say
enough

just take what is
within your reach
& you're
rich enough

sit down and
gaze into the
hole of your being

and be lost
in your own
infinity

RIC S. BASTASA
Sometimes he asks in the middle of his sorrow where is that soul mate that must appease longing

Upon a cliff one sees layers of time's scars

Upon cut timber lies epochs myriad circles yet missing that center of the soul

That is the journey of the boat looking for its right port

It longs for the right time to lower finally its stable anchor at the bottom of the ocean floor

The storms are here but who shall care?

RIC S. BASTASA
When It Comes

when it comes
it comes
and i am ready
to go

what place is that
i do not really know

but it is definite
there is no coming back

when will i see you again?
i will never know

you see, i realize
everything has always been

uncertain
what they give us was

exactly the opposite
of what is here with us

everything has always been
an image of what is

and what ought to be
was not what was ever done

you see i am leaving this place
without regret

you see this is not my place
that is not really my house

that is not my garden
and that tree had never been mine

even from the moment
when i planted it as a seed

that flower that i love
i only touch for a while

its petals fall from my fingers
and then what i have is nothing

but a stem and a leaf
and this old ruined self

RIC S. BASTASA
When It Is Just Lust....

i've eaten you
taking you in
but shall take
you within myself
for a while,

i doubt it if
you are love
yourself so
you have to stay
for a while in my
mouth
not in my heart

it is too
discriminating
i am telling you
time is its ally
it gives me
this chance
to hold you for the
moment

you are not love
but lust and so i have
to spit you out!

RIC S. BASTASA
When It Is Not For You

when it is not really
meant for you
though near to the touch
of your fingers
it slips away
like a mud fish from
your hands

like light
refracted on deep blue water
things become
crooked
deflected.

RIC S. BASTASA
When It Rains On The Month Of July

the world if you see it
in the garden, in its simplified forms
of leaves
wet with rain
of birds resting below them
of waters running from the gutter
and spurting
like a vomit of the past
and the surging of the rain
like the memories
like the ramblings of the day

if you only see the world
when you stop
and put your fist on your chin
when you sit
alone on an old ancestral chair
and simply be silent like
a rug on the door

away from the dog
and the wagging tails and the
cats and the noisy scratches on the walls

if you only begin to see the world
you will know that it is sad you will know further
that it is more
beautiful

that way.

RIC S. BASTASA
When It Was Over, You Did Not Tell Me Where It Really Ended

you show me a scar
in your heart,
you assure yourself it was once the wound
of things that ended
years ago

of the wound
that i inflicted

you had anger and
now when we meet again
you are smiling
you now
have happiness beside him and your children

i look deeper inside your eyes
showing you also my scars
in my own way of telling you about
my loneliness for years
accumulating like layers of mud and rocks

this loneliness
that never ends like doors that always open
to the night skies
without stars

on the surface of my skin
lies a wound that never heals
you caused it too
but i did not tell you

let them believe that i am the guilty party
the fault of your earth
the murderer convicted but was never heard

i smile at you this day
i am happy on this casual meeting

it will be the last
i am dressed but i am not prepared to go anywhere
on the surface
how can you see what is on this deep
sinking eyes?

the sharks, the pointed rock, the deaths on the ocean floors
the corpses there rotting
unearthed unnamed.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Justice Fails

when justice fails because the constable has blundered
do not be surprised, do not even be discouraged,
proceed in procuring justice still with the way how you are trained
to do so,
get the fingerprints of your thoughts and present the same
to those who doubt and wavered, show them the intricate lines
of your own determinations
this is how it must be done
there is still a map of this destination,

when justice fails because the judge and justices have also lost
their sense
what justice is and how it should be dispensed like a blindfolded lady
that you misunderstand with her scales on one hand and a sword
on the other,
do not be shaken, do not lose hope, heave a sigh and breathe
the remaining clean air,
there are still those who in silence still remain steadfast
holding on to truth
and keeping their hands clean and hearts pure and minds active
to the pursuit of this eternal approximation
of fairness
there are still those whose eyes still daze to the glitters not of gold
but of truth, beauty, and goodness,
i will count you in
please count me in too

and how about you?
i ask, please be counted
we shall stand on the good side of things
we shall look for the brightest star
the ideal from among the blunders in the darkness of our nights

let the hammer fall and let it fall everyday
let those in the dark side have their houses full

RIC S. BASTASA
When Kindness Should Not Have Been Told....

i did not
inform my right hand
with what kindness
my left hand
did

but as always
any light
spreads itself
in darkness

the right cannot
be outwitted

it tells everyone:
feet and knuckles

in this
rumored world
there is no
secret

RIC S. BASTASA
When Labyrinths Were Lovely Too.

have respect
for the phenomenon of
presence
for that which is here
and for that which we have conceived
to be true and yet to come.

do not say any word for
that dignity of silence
do not disturb the peace
of the faded past, its soul
rested, its last soil covered
with stones.

have respect for what appears
and for what disappears
just stay there and be seated
like a guest
keep your eyes open
keep the secrets of those
labyrinths,
and if you leave for some
other place or for someone
that you think you can love
and value forever,
close the door
and leave the key
in the same spot
where i first know
you
when i first kissed you
when i first
shared the
intricate veil with
you
when labyrinths
were lovely too.
When Light And Air Were Born

When light and air were first born
Man came,
And woman followed,
So filled
With awe & wonder,
What is this light that makes them see?
What is this air that makes them breathe and live?
Definitions were made,
In awe and wonder, What it feels when air gets
Into their lungs what it feels when they Walk in the light and not stumble on stones?

The years accumulated like layers and layers Of earth and fire and rocks and earth and sea
Came then some cataclysmic changes While more and more
Men and women and lots of children came
Inhabiting this earth
And awe and wonder
Were lost, More changes came that kill and annihilate and
Men and women and children were so preoccupied with saving themselves,
Forgetting how air first filled their lungs Forgetting how light first guided them
not to stumble to stones,
Now air and light
Have become so ordinary, & no one really remembers about how it was at first
No one really cares to recall what first was,
Men and women and children are so busy
Preoccupied with darkness,
these choking blankets darkness
These poisonous packets of air,
so debilitating, so deadly &
some of the children Simply dropped dead on the streets, and fear so gripped the men and women
gripes and grimes geometrically hurried in their hearts,
Night’s darkness
The darkness of insensitivity
buried them and indeed things change and
everything goes from bad to worst

What was it at first, is now not felt anymore, what was first
was taken for granted and finally forgotten,

Where is the awe? Where is the wonder?

Men and women and children, where are you all going?

RIC S. BASTASA
When Love Ends

it is not surprising
how things can go wrong
how tastes differ

i set aside this one for you
i take time so much time to make it
it is the most beautiful one in fact
i suffered the whole night
just to make it for you
just for you

when you see it it is nothing to you
when you touch it
it breaks

it is as fragile as dew
as glass
it can crack easily
when dropped
it is as temporary as mist
corrosive as tears

it is the point of breaking it
when my love ends

RIC S. BASTASA
When Love Is Gone...

it is at this moment
when i ask you
not to say any word

it is enough that you
set aside my hand
and refuse the rose
of its vase

i know how to close
a door
and close it
permanently

i have done it so many
times
and always without a sound

like air that gets in the
window
lift an embroidered drape
and leaves
smoothly

the trees outside
do not have a hint
a leaf sometimes
fall off
for no reason at all

love? shall it be redefined?
in how many words?
never mind

the words will find themselves
on paper
again
the pen can always wait
and the hands
tired sleep like sands on
the shore
undisturbed by
ebbs....

RIC S. BASTASA
When Lovers Lose Their Cellphones?

hmm,
they buy a new one.
eddie.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Luck Comes It Rains....

there is a new
failure club in town
and i am one
of its pillars

we always think
that failure is simply success
delayed

because it is not the ripe time yet
because you are not ready yet how to handle the drunkenness
of a successful man

if you think that you are a loser
it is but temporary

mama says there is always a sun that shines for everyone
a moon as witness

the sea is too wide for another sailing adventure
there are still more continents
for our experiments

so baby
don't fret
carry that ball of failure
in your hands

drag those chains of sorrow
and satisfy your heart with all the possible regrets

papa says
time runs and it soon catches with you
bringing you
a bunch of success

because when luck comes
it rains.
When Man Writes His Life Away

when sadness comes like
an uninvited guest
and when it stays longer
than you can
have it

just be silent

for silence are like seeds
that sprout on the little rains of
your patience
to grow the flowers of hope

when man writes his life away
overwhelmed by so much sorrow
God steps by the door
waits for you
to open it and then when this is done
God embraces you

the sun shines by the window of your house
the birds chirp again on the surrounding trees
the clouds of baby blue
cover the grasses as green as the pines
scented as perfumes
of your love

RIC S. BASTASA
When My Handsome Friend Writes

when he scribbles his feeling on paper

The women get
Hysterical

Half men too.

RIC S. BASTASA
When My Time Comes

when my time comes
i welcome time

when i die
i welcome death
like a long lost friend
of mine

when i am born again
like what they always do
babies
we start our life with a
big cry again

don't you see these
occurrences in your skin
birth rebirth

don't you see how
culture comes in all
things and lives in
cycles

from fly to
butterfly
from turtle
to myrtle
doves

from cell to
you
from a mere thought
to enlightenment

from a touch of my finger
to the fire of
your soul

from the atom
to the big bang
of the universal explosion

choose belief
have faith in the undertakings
of the stars and planets
in the sparkles of your
mind

everything comes and goes
and entwines and
climbs
ladder to ladder
cloud to cloud
space to space

unknown to known to unknown
have
and not have
none and full

you do not understand them
now
until one night when you
gaze to the heavens
and see the distance

between you and them
and then you close your eyes
and all of them are
just right within you

brothers and sisters
and kin and parents and
ancestors

one big world
in the most intimate moment
of this and that

i, will, choose, rebirths
a thousand times
i, will, choose, pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
When My Wife Quarrels With Me

when she steps upon the Gaza
and prepares her rockets and shells
fully dressed for a war
on for a real killing
and desire for an all fight,
globalized war
and annihilation
of my own
kind,

i run away and hide in the original
paradise where Adam remembers
how first she was tempted by
Eve together with that Snake
with a very sweet apple
that now sticks
inside his
Throat,

when she follows me
all ready for an all out war
i open my arms, raise them for a sure surrender
kneel before her and kiss her feet
and then i go for the real kill

in paradise i shall make love with her
as the Snake watches and
smothers its slimy body
with that suicidal Envy.

RIC S. BASTASA
When No One Is Watching

i like it when you stop working
when no one is watching,

i guess you are just being true to yourself
alone, you are lazy.

alone, you are thinking
what to do next with a broken heart

alone, you embrace the truth
of this endless pain that you have inflicted upon yourself

accept things now
alone, alone must you be till the end of your life

till someone comes again and watches you
wearing that smile, sour as vinegar.

RIC S. BASTASA
When No One Really Cares

my role has always been
to fix broken stairs
to oil the rusty hinges of the door & wipe those misty glass windows of their haze
to plant the runners along the stony pavements of the house

i like it when it is green and covered as things appear cool and vibrant against the walls beneath the sun

i replace old lamps
i like it when the room is bright with light at night

i like it when everyone of you
in this house
is comfortable with
warm soup on the
table
when the cold nights
of November
begins to
shiver

when you look
for a candle
and a lighter
i always have
them with
me

what i think is
hurting is that
i am not fixed
myself

i am a broken rail
a malfunctioning lamp
a dark room
a cold soup a
rusty hinge
a missing stair
and yet
no one
no one really
cares.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Nothing Is Handed To Us

when nothing is handed to us
we learn to acquire what we think we really need

this is the instinct of survival
and we do not depend on the power of the sun

or the mercy of the moon
we may ask the tiny stars to lend a little of their light

for the darkness of our nights
but when there is none even a flicker from

the stones will be enough
we learn to burn the dryness of our hearts

to create this innate fire
and when we realize what we really are

we begin to find for ourselves the truth
we create our own light and we share the warmth

we become ourselves and then they look at us
we gain so much courage and we do not mind them anymore

when nothing is handed
we learn for the first time that we have our hands to move

RIC S. BASTASA
When One Begins To Feel Death Coming In His Nerves

one time he felt that he was dying.
he wrote so many things.
he never thought that
they are poems

it is like everything has no use anymore
and that the only thing to do is simply to sit down and wait and
then die, ...or wait for someone to pick you up and leave

the house will be empty, and no one shall open the window
and the stairs will be filled with dust and then you ask who shall
live in this house?

the plants will not be taken cared of
all the flowers shall wilt

all the remaining things will be taken
or sold at public auction

he thinks all these things but then
nothing really happened

so many things were already written
so many ideas reflected, but he did not die

he lives, and he laughs at himself
unable to imagine, how he did all those

seemingly, almost, an episode, a script, a drama

an emotion....

RIC S. BASTASA
When One Chooses Evil Over Good...

how did one man choose
evil from good?
was it a matter of decision
to choose one that made him
feel right?
i've seen one man choose evil
over good
and he did not end
that well enough.

were he to be born again
and start at square one
will he choose evil just the same
and meet the same
tragic ending?

i guess he will choose it
again
because he always
remembers that feeling and
it made him feel
so good and so right
that he never thought it
even for once
to be evil

RIC S. BASTASA
When Pain Is Anticipated What Can Pain Be?

after we talked
i already know what you wanted
i toyed with that idea

and then when we finally meet
each other at the agreed
time and place

i already know what to say
but i only listened
to what i already expected you to say
to me

i toyed with that idea
as always
as i have always done with the past
with all of them
and they all like me
just like the way you like me now

at the end
you say, this kind of thing won't last
these toys
won't last longer than we think
we both toyed with these ideas
and we
since we know already this kind of pain

we did not pain that much
(perhaps a little like that
grain of salt
like the way we toyed with
one another)

with tongue-in-our-cheeks
we part and we do not use any word
any longer

when pain is anticipated
what can pain be?

obviously, the one that you already know
does nothing to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Papa Gifted Me A Chopper

one day
papa bought me a
toy chopper

the body of the
chopper
spins with its
chopper and i
wonder
how if the passengers
would feel
well?

i wonder if papa
is just drunk why he
made such a choice

i was then five or six
at that time
and i think perhaps
i. more of,
needed a gun.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Reality Is Too Much

when reality is too much
like a vodka
that you drink
you become drunk
and tipsy
you fall and sleep
and you rise
from where you fall
and enter into
this world you dream about

this is my world
welcome
to fantasy welcome to dreams
this is where
everything comes as easy
as it goes

when you finally wake up
the following morning
needing cubes
of ice and another
time for silence

RIC S. BASTASA
When Rivers Run Again Like Children

your doubt
cannot be erased by the loud music from the fm radio
or the non-stop tv
or the addiction that you put on facebook

not even poetry
can cure it completely

there is one thing
about
peregrination

these walks at night under the moon
passing by those owls

the walks following morning
upon grasses still wet with dew
day slowly unfolding
light curtains
blades of rice plants
worshiping the sun
birds migrating and finding
places to feed their young

it is at this moment when you finally
locate those missing items

remembering those that trigger the
finding of meanings

hope in another light
inspiration rushing like a waterfall from the top
of your hair
your head full again with memories

rivers run again
like children
When She Did Not Like It Anymore

it is easy
she pretends the leaves are all dead
in the middle of spring
when he comes
she did not like it anymore

it is easy
she pretends there are no more flowers
that it is time for mourning
when he comes
she is dressed in black and
silence
her lace around her lips
veiled
and stony.

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Died At 16

when she died at sixteen
that early morning the rain fell

you look at the sky
on the limitless horizon

at the infinite possibilities
that she could have become

the clouds are darker
than you expected

sometimes you do not like the rain
the darkness and the scream inside your heart

you like to deny them
their sad existence but they had always been there

even before you learned to defy
inside your thoughts crying

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Dies

with all that she did
denying to her children what they ought to deserve

she will not get the funeral she asks
no one weeps

but for civil society's norms
for a while she will wear the black veil

he will wear black sunglasses
and then he will be back to drinking at night

she will we wailing in the desert
the moon shall hide behind the dark clouds on a cold evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Dies (Edited)

with all that she did
denying to her children what they ought to deserve

she will not get the funeral she asks
no one weeps

but for civil society's norms
for a while she will wear the black veil

he will wear black sunglasses
and then he will be back to drinking at night

she will be wailing in the desert
the moon shall hide behind the dark clouds on a cold evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Falls In Love

when she falls in love
she gives
a hundred percent
of herself

not even demanding
one percent
from her
lover and this goes on and one

one betrayal
to another, one lover to another
from one pain
to another pain, and then the time comes

for her
to sum up her ecstasies and orgasms
vis-a-vis the pain
and she says
she had the scales
of pleasures
in her favor

she gets what she
wants
she licks what her
tongue desires
and she likes everything
that happens in her life

and she concludes: she gets used to pain
and too
it has become pleasurable
till the last

she gets used to
thrills and risks and miscalculations

and all because
she knows what love is and how to always live for it
till the end

my mother

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Fell In Love To A Young Boy

first she lost her
work
then her husband died
untimely
she mourned
she is overwhelmed with
so much grief
and without any direction
she moved from one
place to another
until she finally found
him, a young boy who loves
her too
and i just hope that with
her depression gone
against all odds
that they may both live
happily ever after.....

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Makes Love With Him

when she makes love with him
she always takes a good look at the ceiling
as though she and the ceiling are in love
at the height of his muscular frenzy
feasting on her flesh
she is asking help from her imagination

she is not in love anymore
she detests this obligation

the walls are wordless of course
and the bed squeaks in pity

when he is finished she turns her body to the other side.
death whispers its name. Death is too inviting.

she travels far into the distant fantasy land of her imagination.
her prince is now waiting in the castle of her dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Says Goodbye

when she says goodbye
waives her hand
and sort of cry some tears
like she will be missing
us all a lot,
	ry not looking at her
let her be
if you must
climb some stairs
or feed the chickens
or busy yourself with the pigs

let us see
if her goodbye is honest
if she does not have some crocodile tears
if she comes back
again on the same
ship taking her away
let us see
actually, i do not have any plan
welcoming her back
i have found
my life and she is not a part of it anymore
even a doorknob
or a button to my
shirt or a cuff link
her hands are never
true.

RIC S. BASTASA
When She Stopped Circling

desirous still of
changing
what ugliness is still
left
by lousy time

she wakes up
ahead of him and
walks
around the house

same routine of
boredom
circling until

she stops and looks
at the gray sky
where night stars
still hang
and glitter

so many things
she missed
and it is still
up there

perhaps she had
looked down
upon herself upon
time
and too earthly

there is more up there
that hints
about the mysterious
and the divine
RIC S. BASTASA
When She Tiptoed

when she tiptoed
she was inside her locked room
when she tiptoed and danced the ballet
she was inside her locked room & she closed all the windows

outside the world sees her as a limp

and she likes it that way
she is the princess of hypocrisy.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Silence Speaks

when silence
speaks
we know
we must
listen

it stabs
right
at the
center
of the heart

RIC S. BASTASA
When Solitude Stumbles....

solitude is a
dignified lady
but when it
stumbles in the
dark
alone, as solitude
actually is,
soon you will
hear the screams
of a mad woman
in extreme
paranoia
calling for help and
when you go there
hoping to save
her with your
hand,
you will go home
with only one hand
left.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Someone Speaks From His Heart

imagine a big dome
it is filled with people
and the sound system is so good
that you can hear a child
over there
sighing.

imagine the world
filled with trees and occupied
with running rivers
and engulfed by the biggest belly
of the ocean
imagine that there is a silly urchin
chased by a star
fish
finally crunched and powdered
and gone
you hear it
when it uttered the last word
before it
was gone.

those are those times
when a man begins to speak from his heart
when the world though big
and too busy
begins to listen

it is the time when you notice
a sea urchin from the bottom of the ocean's belly
when words become
another relevant and important subject matter.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Someone Tells You That You Are Wrong

he stands there
with a pointing finger
telling you that your
skirt is too short
and your legs are
too long,

whatever, he thinks
that you are a mistake of
this universe
and that God perhaps
lost attention
when nature tried to
give you shape

be confident
shy away from people like them
turn inward
find that light inside the
secret place of your heart
and listen:

did it not tell you that you are the precious
child of the universe
that you are no less than the moon and the stars
and the trees
and that by all means you have
the right to be here?

desiderata, right?
recall, and then look straight at that
magnified critique
don't say anything
dismiss him as nothing
but a mistake of
the magician's illusion
he does not exist
it is only you
and nothing else
who really matters

RIC S. BASTASA
When Summer Is Gone

she reads to me
the story today as
i lay on my bed
waiting for her
to sleep with me

that:

there was this old
man holding the
hand of an old
woman and this

young woman was
curious about how
they were able to
keep their love
strong and glowing

and the old man said
i am holding her because
i do not want her to fall
down the road that we
are walking together

and she said to me
darling how lovely
would commitment be

and i said come my
love sleep with me

RIC S. BASTASA
When Tears Flow From Your Eyes

always remember my friend
that when tears flow from your eyes
no matter how far you are

like the distant stars
my heart beats in sorrow too
like the worm wriggling
bitten by an ant
under the thick grass
inside the hollow earth

RIC S. BASTASA
When That Flower Wilted

on the path
one late afternoon
that wild flower wilted

its life was too short
yet it bloomed in full beauty
that noonday

no one noticed it
except the sunset
fading in pastel orange

then the world turns
into a black sky
that flower remains so true
inside my mind

RIC S. BASTASA
the old house of their parents is sold today

the chinese businessman who bought it shall take it now
it shall be demolished

another high rise building shall be built

seven of them are all grown-up with families of their own
most of which are already citizens of the united states of america

this is the house of their childhood they were raised here by their parents

the veranda looks out to the city road now crowded with cars and trucks
traffic is heavy and noise has become intolerable

the youngest of them in the family is still mourning for the death of his only daughter
a juvenile diabetic who also wished to die months before

the eldest of the family shall receive his share and after a day leaves back to the U.S. as a retiree

a sibling takes time taking pictures of the house, the white fence, the veranda, the huge windows, the grass of the yard, the red roof, and much to my surprise

the orange cat grinning seemingly unaffected
by this diaspora of old feelings

unlike people, cats do not make drama,
nothing about nostalgia, they stay and leave
and one day at a time, live their nine lives,
without much fuss.

there is sadness of course giving up a family house.
all the children leave. Most of them have gotten old too.
Some are is very sick. And money is never enough

No matter. Even if an ancestral house is sold,
nothing is solved. At most what we have here is change.
And it is constantly occurring.

A friend of theirs who saw the picture of the sold house
in Facebook wrote, 'we had happy memories in that house'

so far, no comment is made. If no one does, I will,
and it will be about that orange cat.

eternally grinning.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Anger Is Gone

there is anger
plenty of it like ticks of a dog
like caterpillars
crawling upon the twigs upon the leaves of the trees
it is consuming everything that is green
and edible,

the night is a night of too much labor
until everything is eaten
and nothing is left but skulls and
skeletons

it is this anger that you do not know
that creates all the emptying
upon a night filled with so much patience

when the morning bursts with its own borrowed light
the trees are bare
everything turns into skeletal fingers
and too the worms are gone

it is this annihilation that i have been waiting for
i leave nothing
not even footprints since i leave none
since i have never been gone

but you will see no one
you will hear none at all
when this anger is gone

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Blue Bird Sings

oh! the wind cries with it
when the blue bird begins to sing
when the night is so cold
when the moon hides behind
the clouds

oh! the leaves begin to hush
and sympathize
but the blue bird does not stop singing
and then it stops
at dusk
it is no longer there

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Boat Sinks

when the boat sinks
all the rats
have already transferred
to the other
boat

the other scheming
snakes
have already taken
their loot
in their lifesavers
if not submarines

as others scream
and shout and die
they are drinking their wines
singing their songs
and laughing and counting
their gains

and then they start planning
for more

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Body Is Bound

when the body is bound by an
invisible rope of morality and decorum
how can the arms and hands scheme
and make the discreet meeting
with the lustful desires of the feet?
the heart is full. the mind empties itself.
The tongue wants to talk, but the mouth
does not open.
the pen writes, and keeps on writing
what is never spoken.
that is what happens when age comes
when the spirit is willing but the body complains.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Body Starts To Go Broke...

you complain of flu
time has now asked for an accounting
how your body is used
how is it abused
with so much work
and thoughts and stress and
waste

you think about drugs
and the possibility of a vaccine

i say there is more to it
we don't live by drugs alone
or bread
there is more to this tired body
this restless mind

go deeper
ask your heart
and listen

there is more to this sickness
the symptoms shout
asking for help
the prescription is right there
on those
vomit and allergies

sleep a while
let your dreams tell the story
let that voice tell you where you are
and where must you
go
next time

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Cell Phone Was Born

Something happens
When the cell phone was born
Beyond sex and gender
Beyond race and religion
Beyond economic status
Each hand holds
This thing
And says

hi!

Hello, how are you doing?

To every extreme end
Of this world
From the north to the South Pole
Passing by the equator
The world now is
Too small
Too near

Your cell phone is ringing
Then,
This internet thing.....

Write it.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Conscience Speaks...

a beggar arrives home today
bringing her story
and she talks and talks
and convinces me that
she deserves to be
given food and money...

an intelligent beggar
with wits and wiles, and she wins
i am parting with
some charities
that only God can pay...

well and good,
that is what this feeling says
this conscience is not
dead
after all....

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Day Is Over

when the day is over
you walk your way towards home
and keep the silence
about what happened

your lips, and they say, they cannot help themselves,
shall try to mumble and move like a wounded man
asking for help, yet, you keep the promise to yourself

be gentle, and be so careful
let your silence reign
let there be no talking pain.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The End Almost Ends

as the end approaches its end
i see, some scars become wounds again

some pains arrive
and it makes me remember that beginning

that babe's cry and mommy's lullaby

ey will tell you, this all about
parkinson's disease.

it is not so. This is when you think
that you are about to die and some pains
inside your heart starts to
give you names...

each name
a pain in my ass.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Eyes Look At The Eyes

the room is crowded and the chairs are fully occupied
what i see are mouths
strange but i know sometimes how to

make an abstract,
sometimes i like to see the eyes as fishes
swimming and silvery
the eyelashes as waves
and retina
jellyfish, trying to cope up with the change of the seasons
blue to pale
peace to this entangled points of views

one day
i am caught unaware and i see eyes as eyes
and there is this meeting
that shakes my whole being

it is joy and i savor every minute of it
there is this smile that seem to last forever
and i look at it
for a very long time like i have known what eternity is

infatuation with youth
that must be that, i am melting before some feet
my hands wanting to reach for another set of hands
asking for help what to do with love
disappearing to the face of my small earth
thin air
i am breathing it i am breathing it mercilessly

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Flowers Bloom

when the flowers bloom
do not wait
till they wilt
their petals falling
on your feet
do not take much of the time
witnessing such death
for at the end
of this cycle
when all the petals have fallen
and what is left to see is just an empty sepal
and a very lonely stalk
you shall be reminded of your own

you shall be next, the season waits

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Fulfillment Of A Dream Is Inside Another Dream

when the fulfillment of a dream is inside another dream
who wants to wake up?
do you?

i don't,

just like this morning, when i wake up
finding myself hanging in the middle of a wet dream

such sweet dream
almost like another lengthy foreplay
less the
ejaculation.

the whole day becomes so bad
like the winter inside my dream
and i am not having anything on yet.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Heavy Clouds Of Black Come

when those dark heavy clouds
finally come on my roof
i will not think anymore
of any lamentation
i will not think of the threats
that a heavy flood may
come and take away my house
and everything

i will change my point of view
this angle of sight

i will take sides with the way the
trees and the flowers look
at its coming

i will think about the growth of leaves
the spreading of the roots
the blooming of the buds
the fruiting of the flowers
and the ripening
and the lusciousness and
the sweetness of life

beyond the dark, heavy clouds
beyond the rain and the flood

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Last Petal Falls

the cloud turns pale
when the last petal falls
the sun signed out
darkness becomes a blanket
to bury
the dead
scarlet then gray

the wind from the sea
sings the song of the conch

my ear hears the saddest song
about another love
unrequited

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Lights Went Out

finally when the lights went out
i see you
dissolving in darkness like a very faint light
moving away from me
a firefly
and then simply a flicker

and then i forget
everything
and then i close my eyes
wipe a tear
and forced myself to sleep

because you are no longer by my side

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Lonely People Come To Your House

remember
misery seeks
company

sorrow shared
is half the
sorrow

happiness shared
is twice
as many

so welcome all
the lonely people
into your house
a lonely soul
taking shelter into
your happy soul
is not the lonely soul
anymore

loneliness adopted
becomes a happy kid.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Love Is About To Melt

for the things that
you conceal
i console

for those which you
want to save
let me help conceal
let us help them heal

i've seen your latest
post in facebook
a picture of one hugging
the other
arms tight around the body
of one who is choked by
love

i like that smile
full of hope like beer
bubbling to life
in a mug
cold as ice

it is alright
i understand how is it to feel
that love is about
to be gone

i was there
i can relate but i survived
somehow
i think i know now how

i will join you in that
fantasy
how can love grow so cold
despite the
tropical conditions of the
heart?
tonight i will wait for you
in the usual place
i got beer
Red Horse ready to kick us
out of our
mutual sorrows.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Mad Boy Hurls A Fist Of Stone At

the sparrows fly together like a
big boulder of rock
from the barren rice field to the
other side of the road
and like a big brown blanket
hover on a patch of green bushes
beside a dilapidated house

there little birds are so strong and
i have never seen them splintered like
a window glass shattered when the
mad boy hurls a fist of stone at the center
of its shadow.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Magic Is Gone

when the magician is gone
(hence the magic goes with him)
when the magic is gone
it is easy

leave, it is not your show
they will close the room
and it will be dark
there will be no one there

it is simple,
why don’t we buy another ticket
and be back
tomorrow night?

you're not available?
me too.

when the magic is gone
let it be.

it is that easy.
face reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Meek Hits The Bully Straight On His Head...

let us all
clap our hands
for the meek
who has learned
to shape his
hand into a fist
and with a determined
spirit
struck hard the head
of
that bully that
blocked his way
towards
home.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Morning Comes

when the morning comes
and you wake up first
and i am still left naked
beside these white
stained cover sheets

you know i will follow
you in the kitchen
where breakfast is
ready prepared by
your own hands

we look at each other
again this time
new eyes new memories
new anticipations

new love, new selves
new covenants
new promises

old memories,
revivals, reminiscings
we remember last night
when the hugs were tighter
when the sleep was sounder
than ever

what word will i say?
what word? will you tell me?

you hand it my coffee
and you sip yours
no cup is cold
and the brew runs wild
to the top of the ceiling

what word will i say?
our eyes speak.
we sip each other's presence.  
the words are useless.  
they must remain unspoken

we confess our love  
this morning. the words are useless. 
they must remain unspoken  
our hearts are full.

and then we smile. we sip our souls.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Morning Comes, And We Are Still Alive With Hope

it is dark but shall we be afraid forever?
do we not know the promise of dawn
the glory of the opening of morning?

it is dark, but it will not be dark forever
we know that inside our hearts
and we must stand with that hope

Look! darkness is fading and
Oh! touch me i am still alive with you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Ordinary Man Proposes Love To You

when the ordinary man proposes love to you
and you say no
for sure he does not insist
he quits
for gone was the time when he will promise you
the moon and the stars
no one will believe it anyway
for gone was the time when he kneels and
worships you like the queen of the night
honestly he has no time
for such a sentimental romance
you know very well
he cannot afford you even a brass ring
he simply has no money
he does not even have any work
neither can he find any
so if an ordinary man proposes
i love you
just say so if you love him so
for time is of the essence
and the cab is waiting
you are bound
eloping.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Pen Sits Beside A Paper Doing Nothing

there is this time of the day
when you sit and stare and think about nothing
and so the pen merely places itself idly
on the table beside a paper
bland and blank

there is this emptiness that does not even speak for itself
you cannot write it
you cannot also write it off away from you
no one speaks there
except your thoughts

somehow you want to remember love
it smiles at you
and then you spell the word regret

always, and as usual,
it comes late, makes you chew a memory
it is bitter
and of course, like what they do, you spit it out.

to where it lands, a beautiful flower grows

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Poet Speaks Of Injustice

inside the board room
i tried to speak the voices of
discontent
that somehow there is an injustice going
on
served on white platters
everyone pretends to listen
and i am confident
no one shall add to whatever is said
and one may say this man is not credible
this man is saying something that we cannot comprehend
and i give up
close my mouth and let all these injustices go untreated
like cancer

at that time when no one listens
one feels
true, i am but,
just a poet...

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rain Comes

this i can tell to my nephew
that when the rain comes
all we do is listen to the rhythm
of its own sound
there is music to every dripping
rain at the gutters of
our soul
there is this feeling of having
to be with the cry of the
world
to be wet with its tears
to be divine
and pure

when the rain comes
there is the urge to dance under the sky
to be one with the earth
and rain as the link between the earth
and the sky
our limbs as paths
our feet as thirsty roots
our hands stretching
for more
of what is yet to come

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rain Comes......

the rain comes suddenly
it is the least expected and
we have no umbrella and
we curse the day, the sun
for not coming when needed
we stay indoors, savoring
silence instead, and time
is a walking stick, we want
it to fly, but its wings are clipped
like paper bills,

what can we do? we do not own
this situation. Our suffering and
impatience change us, we explore
new ways,

you walk into the rain, and i follow,
you look at the sky and drink drops,
and you start to play and dance,
and we begin to like what
we are doing,

we befriend what we think are
our enemies, we cannot go away
from them, we join them, but
we create a distance, a space,
and we show that we are enjoying
events despite,

we are wet, and happy, and the
rain stops and we go back indoor,
change clothes and

make peace, make love,
make the most
of what is there.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rain Stopped

it was when the rain stopped
that you left me: i own the umbrella
that you do not need now. You return
it. It was when the rain stopped
that you forget my name. My name
is need. And what you need is love.
My name is necessity. But what
you need is the luxury of honesty.

it was when the rain stopped that
you were honest enough to say:
i do not need you. I do not love you.

and then it rains so hard again
and you come knocking on my
door. You are wet. You are cold.
You are shivering. You are
trembling.

I look at you inside my house
looking by the window. I hide
behind the blue curtain. And i
tell myself: I do not believe you
anymore. And i ask myself:

How can i believe you again?

And then the rain stops.
And then you are gone.

And then i open the window.
And then i see the white dove flying
and hovering near a tree beside my window.

And then i set my heart free.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rain Stopped Falling

there is this heavy rain
falling on top of your roof and it is so disturbing
that you wake up
and lock your windows
to shut yourself away from the sounds
of falling

but you cannot help worrying even when you cannot
literally hear the sound of the falling rain

you still imagine how they fall inside your mind
as though you can hear every syllable that every needle of rain
is pricking in your brain
your ears
and your eyes still have the image of these
series of fellings

that even if the rain finally stopped
and you open your window to check
in the middle of this time
when morning cracks fromt the shutters of your windows

you still think like crazy
you hear the sound of the wind and it is like the sound of the falling
rain
and even if the wind has left like a leaf flown to the eastern side
of your house
even if there is no shadow of the leaf anymore
you hear your heart falling from your chest

now you must accept
leaving.
now you must accept the pain.
do not deny it.

it is you that is falling out
from the grace of her love.
it is you.
cry it out!
shout it!
it is you.!
it is you!
it is not the rain, it is not the wind, it is not the leaf that was blown away
towards the eastern part of the is not the design of the house.
it is not the purple curtains. it is not the lonely courtyard
it is not the red bowl. it is not the tower.
it is not the blank sheets of paper.
it is not the bell.
it is not the winding stairs.
it is not the dirty garage.
it is not the scaffold.
it is not the white paint.
it is not the doorbell.
it is not the turbulence of the plane.
it is not the slap of the hand.
it is not the blue fan.
it is not the cellophance floating in the air and whirling in that corner
a dead-end.

it is you! and that is the truth!
be calm now. wipe the tears.
try sleep and dream.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rain Stops

when the rain stops
life becomes more miserable

for those who are stranded
with you and with whom you

had already established the
art of conversation

soon shall leave you and you
are left with the memory of the

rain which had given you company
and now it stops and you are

stricken with grief and this sense
of being alone again

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rat Finally Entered The Trap

it is when the rat
finally finds itself
inside the trap
figuring out how
to outsmart the
incoming death
and torturer, it is

at this moment
when philosophizing
begins to begin.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Right Time Comes

when the right time comes
i will tell you
that i love you

even when all our hairs
have turned to gray
even when all the gray hairs
have gone away

but now my love
my lips are sealed
my hands are chained
i am inside this cell
my feet are gel

wait a while
i am setting myself free

help me find
my claws my wings my eyes

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rivers Run Dry

when the rivers run dry
the fishes die
the mosses turn brown
the sands and pebbles
enslaved by the sun
stare at the clouds
looking for the mercy
of rain
the ferns wilt
and those birds and
pigs that used to come
and stop for a drink
are gone

whatever happens
on such a dryness
i keep faith
on this presence.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Romance Fades....

boredom finally
arrives
laying itself in the
blue sofa

still dressed
from the usual party
it does not spread
its legs

the blanket covers
the rusty arms of
the bed

the shoes are sleepy
on the carpeted floor
silence is
at this hour of the night
comforting

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Rooster Crows Again And Again

When i hear the cocking-crowing sounds
of the rooster
nine or more times
earlier this morning

of course, i remember St. Peter
and i remember Christ and
i remember myself
and i remember you.

i am not saying that we belong to the
category of liars
neither
shall i say that we are
ever faithful to the second name
that i we must not forget

as above-mentioned.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Runners Stop I Keep On Running.

when they are fed up,
i still munch.

when they declare everything
as tiresome and telling me that
i am one kind of impossible
(lost and vengeful guy) i
still go on being
one raging and
surging self like
a storm

for i don't really care.
I move and keep on moving
for if i stay, and be still,
i know what happens: i will
fall &

tumble down like a test tube,
and if it is not my lucky day,
i break into pieces and all of you
shall
look at me with all dismay:

he is mad, he breaks when he
is doing nothing. He is silent
when everyone screams.
He leaves when everyone
has arrived. And on a very
cold day, he goes naked and then
write a poem for summer.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Sacrifice Is Over

and then the time comes
for the end
of all our sacrifices
when we decide to go
to the river
remove our clothes
and dip our feet
on such coolness

when we finally
take the last breath
and then plunge
ourselves
to its depth

when we
see nothing not even
ourselves
as we close our eyes
and face
the murkiness
of darkness
trying to find
a little
light

shall we find
eternal peace in the drowning
under the
cold water?

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Smoke Comes Out

when the smoke comes out
they are there to say that there is fire
on the chimney
when the smoke is black
they all say i have decided
when the smoke is white
they keep on praying since
no one is chosen
to lead the lost flock
without their grazing ground
during winter time

what if the smoke comes out
from my eyes and the smoke is black
and there is no fire in my heart?

what if i am lost? shall you care?
please don't. I must tell you i am happier
when left alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Son Makes The Mistake

when the son makes his mistakes
the mother is always there to comfort him
and lessen the pain and tell her son
to continue what needs to be done

the mother tells him the world is so big
and wide and it will always understand
the world is so big and so wide that
there will always be a space for him

and from there the son understands what
love is: it starts from a loving mother
and the son moves on to find a wife
whose love like that of his mother

must make him a real man since then.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Souls Come In

then we remember
i
too remember how grandmother
was left home alone
to care for herself

cranky, brittle bones,
moving like a snail
serving herself
with her own
porridge on such
a cold
rainy day in
the village

i fully remember how she
fell on
a big basket
unable to rise from
that big hole
of a casket
seemingly

but mother did not really
care as she was also
with her business of
daily living
on how to make both ends
meet
with her five
children

as father drowns himself
with his
heavy drinking
somehow someone must make
us all live
to draw a future
and this my friend is
my version of
what happens to our thoughts
when some
souls come in
on this
rainy day
of November

we light a candle for
sadness
and it is not just
one.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Storms Come

when the storms of the day
come your way

hide, and be safe
save yourself and be calm

they will just pass away
they're temporary

when the storm is over
come out again from your hiding

go out and smile and let the world
be envious of you

you face the new sun
and bathe again on the calm, blue sea
sleep on the grass, gather the flowers that bloom
along the way
watch all the butterflies fluttering
listen to the songs of the birds
and roam these patches of peace
and savor every piece of serenity and beauty

they are all yours
you own them you can hold them

you are the ruler
at least, for the meantime that you are here

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Sun Rises Today From The East

what i will do
which i badly need to do
is to go naked
on the rooftop of my house
for my
much missed
sunbathing

oh i like to watch the clouds
watching me
i always have that feeling
of lustful mutuality.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Truth Is........

There is no place like America
It is not hot like Manila

The parks are bigger and
Clean
The food is cheap and
The snow is smooth
To my cheeks

I like the work here
In dollars I earn

I like Disneyland and
Las Vegas

I like the independent lifestyle here

*(when the truth is he misses
the Philippines, the paradise, the maids who
cook for her, the tropical weather, the
easy lifestyle, & he has yet to earn more
money in the US to pay off his debts home)*

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Two Faces Of Life Is Revealed And We Are Numbered

we are always together
in this estrangement
there is no entanglement of
necks in fact
there is the freedom of the
ten fingers
locks of hair can fall any moment
and without
any regret at all
we are always together in this
numbness
(do we have any choice?)
we do not suffer
neither do we have that
innate and
genuine joy
we are always in this together
a journey
to nowhere and when death comes
gladly
shall we welcome it
what is the use of
this life
when neither sadness nor joy
befriends us
there is no fear in all these
case closed.

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Well Spills Out Its Water

the well spills out water
what was beneath
rose and everyone
even children touch
the surface

when once it was dry
the hollowness
plays mystic to the wind
the deep voices
sing the notes of
what was once interesting

now we play on its waters
as though there is nothing to know
so unimportant

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Wings Are Gone...

it was never
the cliff but the
rage of the storms
in the ocean

not the tower
perhaps you missed
the air that travels
from end to end

do not be a star
you are not meant to
be twinkling or on
top of the black skies

it is the river
the one that you cannot
hold in your hand

the worms climb the
top of the mountain of
worms
one worm above the
other

a butterfly rises
above this mess
live for a day and
become perfect when
its wings are gone....

RIC S. BASTASA
When The Zipper Opens

when the zipper opens
a red bird comes out into the open
but would not leave him

it loves the nest of black weeds
attracting a tongue

a pair of lips, wet with raindrops
and honeydew

last night there was a reunion
of shadows
the moon by the window was
silent as snow

the following morning
his smile is as wide as the zipper
of her bag.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Their Baby Came

we know what happens next
they cut the bridges
stay on the island
fortify their house
make their fence higher
and add another room
and put there the cradle
lullaby is heard at night
and after a year
they all light the candle
sing the birthday song
have their picnic
so private and so alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
When There Are No More Stars At Night

your routine
catches up with you

you sit on a chair
one night
you stare at the
black skies

and there are
no stars

you imagine
that fireflies
may soon
come to please
your dream
of lights

you imagine
that a moon
shall soon float
on the river

there is none
nothing happens
with your dream
for light

and then you dream
of another

drowsy you dream
you are asleep
you dream you
are dead

and true enough
you never thought
of waking up
because there is
so much
there to be
explored
to be understood

why some people
dream of sleep
dream of dying

why some people
do not talk anymore
and inside that dream
you dream you are
a poet and you see
yourself: writing

simply because
there are no more
stars giving light
to your dark nights

RIC S. BASTASA
When There Is No Help Coming...

(are you looking for the miracles that the skies could possibly give?

do not gaze too much to the stars
they can make you cross-eyed
for that is what fantasy does to its follower

do you consult the zodiac animals?
what can a lion do but bite its prey

where is the sun?
it is not there anymore
it is not an all time giver
it gets fed up to when afternoon comes
it will stop comforting you
not even a streak of light
to guide you through the night

and what about this darkness that sits beside you?
is there help coming?

the moon is not there yet
it is still mourning for the recent death
of its lover of light....

RIC S. BASTASA
When There Is Nothing More To Be Done...

got a call and she is dying,
whatever that means
dying to see me
or dying to die
it does not matter to me anymore
now that i have burned all the bridges
and made holes of those wooden boats
and broke all the paddles
what then is going to be done
as a matter of
last resort to save what she thinks
is still valuable
inside our hearts

we are like those burned houses
early dawn with nothing saved
we see all the ashes and some smoke
still clinging on the charred pieces
of furniture and beams
of the past

'there is nothing anymore'
and i have not opted for those memorized prayers
those usual offerings of
chicken blood and pork
or the newly hatched egg with a squeaking chick
hoping that perhaps someday
the root cause shall be known
how the tree falls off and how the worms
begin their feasts
on our own stupidities.

RIC S. BASTASA
When There Is Nothing To Talk About

We feel, yes we feel each other’s thoughts
And there will be nothing to talk about,
We understand what we mean with what
We see and how we feel it, we do not
Talk because words would be so empty,
In such situations as these when we love
And still love, words are unnecessary,
With one glance with a little gaze,
And blink and quiver of your eyelashes
And how I flash a sudden wink,
There is no need for words, we always
Understand, willing to cater to what
The other needs what to do this time
Till the next, our hands still feel exactly
Our wishes granted our dreams fulfilled
So what is there to talk about, my love? .

RIC S. BASTASA
do not refuse a chance to be a hero,
so on this day,
or tonight, when they call your name
go,
do not tarry, be ready with the raincoat
and the flashlight
you just do not know what happens next
they will take you to the place
a house on the side of the forest
at the foot of the mountain
there is no fire there
no smoke
nothing is cooked for supper
there is a bleeding man
and he is groaning in pain
and they open the door and you enter
with your black leather bag
and they call you
doctor
there is no ideology here
nothing to talk about
and you begin to take away the bullet
that pierced his strong flesh in the arm
and on his belly
there is no anesthesia and so you put
a red cloth on his mouth
until he faints and then there is silence
no song for the dead even
you cannot sleep over this calling
until you find light
penetrating the holes of the roof
it is already morning
and they all left and you do not know
where they are going
a child with sharp eyes calls your name again
he lead you to the exit point
back to your
old house in the subdivision where you live
where your wife is waiting
your breakfast is ready, your coffee cold.

RIC S. BASTASA
When They Got Married

he was 35 and she was 33
he confessed and she said yes
they preferred a small chapel
so there will be lesser guests

enters the lady of discord
hmmm she says this marriage
will last for only two years
the two will surely split

reasons and more reasons
but the lady has a story to tell
she had pre-marital sex
lived with her man for only a year
and since then she hopped
like lady grasshopper from
one shrub to another

today we are on the twelfth year
of being married and being just
together
and we think about this love
that we want to last

this is not about time anymore
or marriage as an institution
or what our friend and relatives may say
this is not about the bed and board
this is not about sex
or compulsory support
or the fear of having to face
a family court for a legal separation
or annulment of this union

no, this is beyond all the predictions
and patterns of
a broken home
of today's phenomenon
where separation had become
a rule and we
are but the few exceptions

this had nothing to do
with battered wives
or henpecked husbands
or flying frying pans
and shattered wine glasses
unanswered emails
lonely breakfasts
late dinners
concealed bank accounts
unaccounted expenses
dreamhouses
and car change
and shortchanging
and hidden motives
inheritance and succession
dislike of poetry
and thrown plants
and broken pots

dthis is not about desire anymore
of bodies that wrinkle and shrink
tthis is not about modelling
not about a vision even of looking
at ourselves with fear
and forcing our eyes to a common direction

dthis is about love
it lasts and it takes us
through time that trickles
like rain and we do not even
know for how long

we just love
being together to places where we have not been yet
and back to places where we made memories
and to this place
where we are at home again
this heart
us
today we invited the lady of discord
she will come
how i like to see her smile
and i guess it must be dry

RIC S. BASTASA
When They Learned That Their Mother Has Cervical Cancer

stage III
and the son says let us all do what we can to save her
we take her to the best hospital in the city
have chemotheraphy
some radiation
ask for second opinions
have the operation

and the daughter says
let us try some quacks too, and the herbs and
invoke the spirits of our ancestors to heal mother

and the son-in-law has no word for this
but in his mind he thinks: there is no hope for this
let her live for the remaining moments and let death take her gently

let her kiss her grandchildren a very gentle and sweet goodbye

say something.

RIC S. BASTASA
When They Made Love Inside That Cramped Room...

when they made love
that evening
they heard the sounds of
the jungle: tiger mating
birds on love calls
under the trees
above some
elephants screaming
with joy
snakes hissing upon
each body
rubbing rubbers

inside their ears
sounds of new winds
fresh upon each leaf
on the forest trees.....

RIC S. BASTASA
When Things Are Too Obvious Like Grass On The Plains...

something that cannot be said is well contained too visible as obvious as grass spread on the plains as shining as the sun on the top of the hill why do you ask about something that you have already seen and even touched? what are you? are you a redundant phrase?

in times like these the stare is the star of our show feasting eyes on the surfaces of the skin on silent arms we rest our restlessness

in here no preachers are allowed only spectators with discriminating tastes only those who are willing to die and redeem themselves with a raw smile sly and yet so full of the radiance of that first awe....

RIC S. BASTASA
When Things Become Ours Again

Whatever goodness you hold in your hands
so carefully,
when you wish so much love,
yours and all yours so totally,
my companion and friend
and lover for all seasons
rain and sunshine
stare and dare,

you must
always give away
without regret
in order for it to become yours
again

RIC S. BASTASA
When Things Go Wrong Babe

when things go wrong babe
keep the code of silence
do not trust the words
that want to get out from
the panic of your mouth
take the safest step
swallow your pride
keep the utmost vigilance
of the walls and fences
grip the rails and stay
within the limits of your boundaries
descend the stairs of vanity
and open the doors and windows
like the way you open your mind
when things go wrong babe
think of me, close your eyes
hold me and feel me
for in me arrogance is estranged
in my heart is love unchanged

RIC S. BASTASA
When Things Which Should Have Been Simple Become Too Complicated

sophistication is investigation.
when things which should have been simple become too complicated because there is a reason for it

you either have misunderstood it or it cannot be understood at all.

you probe like a pin to a flesh.

you bleed.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Time Clicks Upon A New Point Of View

if you think that poetry is free time,
that is, you only do it because you have nothing to do

you are wrong. It is at the top of the busy day
when pressure becomes too much
when you see the two hands of the clock
in a race
when not one hand knows how to stop
when it is about to have a broken knee
when the numbers become like
a gasoline meter

you stop a while
touch your neck
rub a little balm of balsam
or vick’s vaporub

you massage what hurts
with the gentleness of your hands
you run your fingers
as though your vertebral column
is a piano
you make music now
so gently

you free your fingers from that tired body
face the monitor
free your mind
let loose the blue bird inside your mouth
and let it sing

now, you have it
it clicks
the words begin to come out
like hermit crabs from their borrowed houses
made of rugged shells

RIC S. BASTASA
When Time Shrinks...

i have had
that round faced
stone in
my hand

i felt its potential
for perfect
roundness

it was smooth and it
could make
a difference

it could be something
greater
beyond itself
beyond the concealment
of my hand

i see time shrinking
like a drying bubble
of rain
on the ground

and so i threw the stone
away

no one knew it
i was not that interested really
about potentials
or about
perfection

time shrank
what is the use of hope?

RIC S. BASTASA
When Trust Is Gone

the self sometimes
becomes a prison sometimes
to a solitude that
is bitter
alone with sad thoughts
and bitter memories as
constant companion the mind
that cohabits
a social skull soon becomes
an alien upon itself
not knowing each name
for soon
what hurts rules
and deprives those that
still want to be whole of its
parts
i, who is set aside,
finally say farewell,
i, who has no more place
in this circle,
bid adieu
i make my own world
now fenced
away from you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Two Beards Converge

when two beards
indeed converge
tonight, at least
i have already
a hint about your
name, the place
where you live,
and the kind of
tongue that you
use. and just in
case my lice
land in yours
and yours in
mine please be
considerate.

RIC S. BASTASA
when we are far away from each other
at continent's length
we want to reach each other's arms and
when we cannot we always have someone
some other cause to blame
like the zodiac, or the alignment of the stars
and the planets, or the society or even
the structures like some falling pillars
and blasted walls

but in truth when we meet and become
so near like a dinner for two
or a dance where our cheeks lean over
each other we soon realize this feeling of

i detest you and you detest me
we soon realize, that this feeling of indifference
has stayed within our hearts

for truly we have identified with the world in pain
and to take revenge for a sickness without cure

we pretend we are humans missing another likeness.
it happens, right there where we exchanged words
we must accept, another relationship has ended
and we in fact, really do not care less.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Are Frozen

you know about things
unspoken
not because we have not seen
or touched them
but because we have experienced
how our touch
destroys them
how our stares seduce them
into us
how we have drawn them to our sides
how they wished they live with us
only to be left out
under the rain on that dark night
when cold begins to
freeze the magnanimity
of our hands.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Are In It Together

when everything in you is complete
when every hair, bone, cartilage, nail,
skin is in place
you do not anymore mind what is happening
outside you
be it the crumbling of a hill into one vast plain
be it the eruption of a long extinct volcano
be it the rising of the oceans and the covering of all earth
be it the horrible scream and the fading gradually of silence

you stand still
watch everything and then
be one with the chaos
and the pandemonium
be one with peace
and the eternal silence

when we are in it together
will something ever matter?

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Are Left Alone

it was in macau
when we were finally left on our own
waiting till three o’clock
with instruction to proceed
to gate 11

no one was there
except the two of us
waiting on cold seats
and i was figuring out
where to go
while you simply
hold my hand
lay your head
on my shoulder
and then

you start to whistle
a love song

it was a little dark when the
boat finally came

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Are Left Alone In The House

just you and me
i am 48 and you will be 45 the next day
and we are left alone because they all have to be in their homes
her mother is sick and she must bring money
on the other hand, she is quitting her job and leave us for good
to join her lover in the city, her last chance to be married at 36
these domestic help helping themselves
to be not like us, loners
consumed by the weariness of our flesh
for years and years the hours filled with emptiness
i can hear the sound of the clock ticking so slowly
like the fins of an old goldfish in the glass bowl
i bought for you on the day of our marriage

today we are left alone in the house
you keep yourself busy washing the dishes
drying the laundry in the yard figuring out that you may rush again
the next minute it will rain
the cloud darkens
i keep choosing my words, thinking the idea of this union
us for 24 years, just us, just us and nobody else
in the same house, the same furnitures unbroken feet
and unstained in the living room, where the same color of
drapes are changed almost on the same months, the same seasons

boredom, too much familiarity, the wear and tear of our gazes
i call you from the kitchen, asking you to give me a glass of cold water
and you complied like the woman who loves her man more than him
loving her

i have more words to choose, more ideas to think, to trap, to keep,
to smoothen and polish like a piece of wood sculpted to the form
of a woman's beautiful body

thank you i said, i thrive on cold water, all the days of my life,
i take in the water that slides on my throat
smooth like red rhum down to my soul, i could have asked you again
if i had the courage, i ask myself if my love is strong if this will survive us,
through the boring years that come and yet to come
i did not have the courage to ask, if
you still love me
with my balding head and wrinkling skin

i got colder, i am sure, it is the water, half of the ice in the glass
is completely melted.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Are Parted

i finally said that i am going away for good
and silence fell like a heavy stone
on the tiled floor

you did not look at me
but then you started to cry
your heart could not deny what we both felt
you heaved a sigh
and i heard the loneliness of the room
it is too obvious to ignore

i could not take the last step away from you
i could not close the door
of parting
and so i went back
retracing my steps back to your embrace
i caressed your hair
and kissed your cheeks
and wiped away the coldness of your tears

we are meant for each other
and no one shall ever divide us again.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Ask For Nothing More...

it is not that we all have what we
want in life,
that will be pride and
arrogance
it is just that
we no longer look upon ourselves
but in the world
like meteors merely passing by
and looking forward
to its uncertain destination
but not anxious anymore
as to what
happens next.

the world becomes a distant
piece of blue marble.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Cry

when we cry
i see the image of the candle
burning itself
to illuminate what is left
in darkness

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Do Not Do What We Ought To

because you do not love it
you carry it as a burden
you promise yourself tomorrow
this thing is done
this feeling is gone
but because you hate getting over it
it sticks like a leech in your skin
and you are
drained.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Do Nothing, A Philosophizing

did he tell you
that even those who stand and wait
also serve?

which means precisely that those who do nothing
(also does something)

that by doing nothing
they also share
what you are thinking right now

do we think that writing is doing something
that thinking is also doing something?

what is it that which is nothing that we can do?
tell me.

everything is everything and it includes nothing actually.
everything embraces also nothing.

so when you do everything you also do what nothing is.
there is nothing that we can do.
everything is here, including this 'nothing'

do you really do nothing?
try thinking some more. try doing nothing, if it is possible at all.

i tell you, it is not.
really, it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Feel So Weak....

at that moment when we feel so weak
we do not remember anymore
how warm was sunshine once
how refreshing the winds
how cool the leaves had been to the weary eyes that we have

as far as i remember
all that i am thinking is the way towards home
that home in my mind
where i once have never been to.

RIC S. BASTASA
THE MOST important thing is the birth of that child. Unlike the rest, when it arrived here it only offered the happiness of its own silence. It came like a footfall upon a soft grass on the hill. THE SUN SOFT in its glow hid behind a castle. When the moon came that evening The stars danced. It was you, that child in the mother's arms the only moon in her eyes

BETWEEN all these hallowed layers of affections is distance, always distance, like pillars not meeting because if they do the House shall fall into bits, so many bits, like sands in the shores of your mind.

Time is always unforgiving. The sentences of wrinkles loosened our hold for each others' affections.

Goodbyes are too many. Pains are unaccountable. We pray that we must become forgetting species.

There is only one tomorrow left and we keep on asking for names, places, and dates.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Get Old My Friend

when we get old my friend
when our mustaches and beards
and hairs are as white as snow
we meet on this part of the plain
beside the red palm trees
at the foot of this mountain

we sit on the soft grass
and i get my guitar and
we sing a matt monroe song

we shall serenade the stars
and the moon deep in the
cool night and we shall feel
the brushes of gentle air
on our skins and we shall
smell the scent of the night
flowers and the salty breeze.

i'll take the first voice and
you take the second voice.

let us not talk about Rosario
or Alicia, or Rosa or Maria,
none of them has learned
to live with us in any way.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Go To The Mountains

when we go to the mountains
we always feel the ease of our pains
the lessening of our burdens
the loosening of the ties
that bind our necks
and choke our throats

we shall be at the foot
of the hills and feel the rivers running under our feet
we feel we do not need
the buffers of slippers
our skins missing the touch of freshness
the massaging of the stones
the tickling of our nerves

the green grasses spreading on the plains
the cows grazing
the eagles soaring high above us
the goats smelling us like aliens
the water buffaloes sniffing
our city sweats

the natives dance an ethnic number
some roasted pigs
and yams and brown rice

we speak of the wilderness
the silence and the peace
and the mountains are still
listening to our stories: lost souls, destroyed habitats,
the rape of nature
the murder of innocence
the robbery of everything that used to be beautiful

pure and simple

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Grow

when we grow
we actually change

we are like the sprouts of
a bean slowly crawling
wanting to see and
touch the sun,

we pretend not
to notice because
time runs so slowly
like cells unseen by
us but keen and keep on
gaining length and
width like the way
we grow eyelids

and we extend our sights
and smells, we find
love and we embrace
lust and we mix them
like a kind of
a bloody Mary drink,

or scotch on the rocks
and we face walls and
we mumble as we begin
to meet loneliness,
the spaces that spread
like a disease; you and
i, in all these, after a
lovely night in a
tangle of hair and
intertwining of fingers

we face darkness
and walls and we
begin to ask: what for?
we let the rain fall
our roofs leak and our windows begin to open

we find separate paths
and we argue and then we decide to take what we really want:

i long for this and you long for that; we take separate ways, and we say goodbye.

we write letters day to day until such time when the silence becomes like a boring hour and the letters are unread and we throw them on the river of time: floating, all the letters dissolving in the cold waters of forgetting.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Grow Old

when we grow old
when our hands begin to lose control
to everything that we want to hold
there is one part that refuses to go with the crowd

it does not flow into weakness
it is not silenced by indifference
it does not succumb to hopelessness

then all of them complain
about its hardheadedness
its irresponsibility

when i grow old and when i begin to forget
it listen to its song
it centers me to life

i lose myself
it mourns

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Grow Up?

we look down the road
and remember
all those things that used to tickle

we giggle and soon we wake up
the smiles do not serve any purpose anymore

the stares and silence now control us
we are numb

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Have Nothing....

as there are too many
tiny little things
dripping from my hands
like sands,

like time seemingly
without end like a road
heading somewhere
and we are having no
gasoline

where can appreciation lie?
where can worship be found?

it is only when there is less
when time runs out
when there is no more food
and space is cut into pieces

that we learn,
and learn that well enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Hide In The Open

i hide in the open
you see my body, but you will never see
what is in my mind,
we speak, i tell you what you want to hear
and the world is perfectly at peace,

what is fought is what is inside
the monsters are there
the unknown furies are in the heart
what we cannot understand and what we cannot name
reside there and
have become inseparable

or that they have become us, and we are threatened
we tease them with sleep
and we assure that sooner we shall forget and be happy again

they face us and tell us
we have been there even before you think
every before you walk
we live in your genetic codes
and you cannot escape because we are embedded

so i keep on hiding in the open
that is where the grasses and the trees live
where stars group at night
where the moon floats on that silvery water

i hide with you, and we hold hands and we kiss and we make love
and in those deep moments
we see the face of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Kiss

When we kiss
I hold your face and lift your lips
To my lips

We close our eyes
To see the place where we have not been
Once

We plunge in the depths of the oceans
Of our emotions
The two of us
In the ecstasy beneath
On the surface of the silent floors

The place where we have not been
Once
There we shall be free
From the chains of ourselves
There we shall be one
Heart beating for love

For life
There our pains are ours
There we shall meet again
Not knowing
Who we are
Our names now forgotten

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Leave The Comfort And The Ease

The comfort and ease
are what these windows
and doors and beds of
our house

we have all of these
these comfort and ease

but the time has come
to close all these and
move towards mountains

far towards valleys and
hills and cliffs and
ravines where our feet
are tested
where our
minds are tortured by
by our self-imposed
loneliness
by our
self-chosen hardships
to purify what is
decaying
inside us

this is the only path to
holiness
the way to light
to freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Made Love

i made love to
a doctor of medicine
in cyberspace
sort of floating and
swimming in black space
feeling this black hole
within us
i felt like
a stethoscope
hearing the beatings
of my heart
but she loves most
and opts for
this colonoscopy
thing
after the
endoscopy
prelude
i complained
because
what i really
wanted
is something like
a bikini cut
something frontal
not this pedal

whatever
but i felt lousy after
when she said that even
in cyberspace
i must wear
condom.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Made Love This Morning

it was hormonal
brief
mechanical, no words are wasted, no lies, no promises
no imagination at all about
what is eternity

no fireworks, it was not a celebration of something else,
we did not even kiss, we evaded any gaze, we pretended the usual
eyes closed, not a moan, just plain rubbing and pressing and
holding some parts of me and some parts of you
tightly

and then we loosen the hold, you fall from a height, i stay as is
keep my posture looking to the sky without stars

light comes it from a hole of the window
it is the beginning of day

earling morning, and we are still the lazy ones feigning sleep
as the maids tinker the kitchen &
soon the sound of breakfast shall be signalled by a bell

we do not care anymore
when shall we ever learn not to keep pretending

frankly speaking, i still have this pain
of not ejaculating

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Make Love

when we make love
someone surrenders
it could be me
at the prelude
as i promise you
my thighs and arms
my everything

you pretend you
believe me

and you take everything
i have

i pretend i have nothing
left
even my dreams
you shall take them
even my last hope
you shall have them

when everything is over
i give you the last kiss
i leave
you with nothing.

you surrender
pretense
i take with me
your truths.

you will say
you love me
now it is my time
to say

i don't.
When We Make Love (2)

when we make love
i remember a fruit blend
of strawberry
and mango and melon
i like the ground ice
inside my head
when i close my eyes
after we make love
i see blue skies and white herons flying

i hear the songs of angels
i sense the world slowly revolving
and then dissolving
into a very hollow space
in perfect silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Meet

when we meet and we talk
i sit down with you
not as your teacher
but now i listen to the magnitude
of your sorrow
as your student in the realm of
your emotions

i become a child wondering
how you have grown
in the bitterest of the conditions
so full of regret
still feeling the impact of the fall
and yet
you are still so beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Meet Again Sometime This Summer

i tell you, i do not like winters, and i do not wish
to go where winter lies. I am intolerant of anything
that freezes me, that thaws, that gives me frost,
that bites like an ant, that solidifies me like
refrigerator ice.

i like summers. Flowers blooming. Green grass
spreading. Butterflies in different colors in the garden.
Bees just enough for the buzz. I love trees. I love
rivers, and springs and creeks.

Bamboo trees beside the rocks beside the pebbles
beside the river. I like the songs of the rivers. Lots of rivers.

When we meet again, i like it to be this summer.
of the hearts of the young on summer time.
Under the cool shades of the trees on summer nights.

I always remember summer g summer winds.
Flown hair. Drying pants and underwears. My legs exposed
Beside the brook. I like being naked. I like being on top of
everything.

With you, on you, by you, within you, in your mouth all over your face.
Oh summer breeze. See you. Feel you. Love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Meet Sometime In Your Island

when we meet sometime
when the Great God so allows
in your island
in that house with
blue windows
i wish to tell you
that i do not wish to understand you
i will ask no questions
neither will i demand a reason
for this and that
all i want is simply to be with you
feel you
stroll along the shore with you
hold your hands
look at you without being
querulous
for in truth i only go
for that which is there
though it may not be marvelous
or humorous or even
hilarious

awareness and feeling
a curiosity that need not
kill the cat
that old sense of awe
the oneness of wonder

for i am myself and
i do not demand anything

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Reach The Mountaintop

3000 steps up
we climb
we take the rope
beside a cliff
we keep our feet secure
we keep our grip strong
climbing this trail
toward the mountaintop
when we reach there
both of us
we see the whole city
cars running like ants
on its belly
people walking like
small worms
the sun like a bulb
the trees like some
feathers and the
other mountains
bald like brownies
the sea is so blue
from far
the horizon bold
like a departure
the boats sail away
to another island
the plane on a
touchdown on the
cemented pavement
near the shore
some green palms
on the river
look like leaves
of grass
some clouds we touch
cold to our hands
3000 steps up
one hour up to the sky
just to feel
this loneliness
we see what we want to see
we feel what we want to feel
then we go down again
without a word
for ourselves
too tired
we console ourselves

that was solitude
we shall now talk about.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We See Each Other Again

away from the crowd  
we step beyond the jambs of this door

beyond the sills of these windows  
we stretch our minds

and we in order to survive this madness  
shall pretend that we have never met

i shall be in the hold of another arms  
and we shall kiss as we have long been lovers

you will not glance or if you will you must pretend  
that you have never seen us

you walk further and take another direction  
we too, shall do the same, but she will never notice why

we take the same ride on the plane  
and you take the far look into the clouds

and then it rains and i close the pane  
she is asleep and i begin talking to the nearby wall.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Shall Meet Again

i have storms within my head
some thoughts are flown away and i am left with this usual emptiness
that scares me no more

must i tell you about it? i won't
i know that you too have tornadoes inside your guts
and i may prolong it with my own agonies

to each his own, to suffer and then to be redeemed again
by the strength of our silence

when the calm day comes when we all walk with dignities intact
perhaps we shall meet each other with a smile

we sit upon a chair beside a round table facing the far horizon
and we tell ourselves, 'oh we have traveled this far
and we know we are still doing well'

and then we sip our hot coffees and partake with our cookies
over a very cold evening.

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Soar

our spirits sometimes soar
we feel the wings of birds
inside our hearts
we feel elated by the most
simple thing
of having seen
a white butterfly hovering
fluttering upon
some tiny yellow flowers
of the narra tree

when we close our eyes
when we see nothing at all
when it is dark
we begin to see how
beautiful can everything be

oh, i do not have to travel
far and wide
just to be be, just to be with us
it is at the moment when our spirits sour
into the vastness of
our beings
that we become the universe itself
wider than space
longer than time

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Thing That What We Think Is Right

It's skewed
our view sometimes
selfish

we think the other
is in love
with no other but
me,

silly, i've colored
a world

which in fact
is colorless at all

black and white against
the odds

super bland and
scentless

after all, it can rain
even in the midst

of a drought where plants
die because of

shock, because it's skewed
when we think

and think that what
we think is right....

RIC S. BASTASA
When We Visit Him

when we visit him today
he says his heart leaps with joy
and we hug him
old man Gil
and he tells me
about my poetry

about the anonymous
the house without a resident
the world without color
the reason without a cause
the nothingness of space
and death

he says i am morbid
though beautiful
he feels it
and tears start flowing from his eyes

his Mechong is dead
his one and only beloved

since then the dead poem of mine
written a long long time ago
has assumed its desired shape
and now he understands it

RIC S. BASTASA
When West Is West

The noise of your traffic
The acid in your rain
The hole in the ozone
The murders in your malls
The politics of your doubletalk

The wars you rage outside your borders
The threats you think you have

That you inflict to violence with violence
The consumerism the commercialism
The capitalism that is always capitalism

You are the west and will always be
The west the west in haste and noise.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Alone You Become A Thinker

when you are alone
you become a thinker

and then you begin
loving it when you are alone

and deeply you sink deeper
into another depth and you

feel not like a river anymore
but an ocean where a stone falls

silently and remains silent
throughout a finished journey

nothing is there but you are
not drowned in that nothingness

albeit you feel like a filled
well with water overflowing

no one hears you but
you never ask.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Appreciated

you are alone
under a moon
and the wind keeps
passing by
not minding

blue moon
you talk to the moon
you sing the blue moon
but the moon does not listen

then you hear a whisper
from the farthest star
the tiniest star there is

the whisper so faint like its glitter
hinting that you may be sad but you're so beautiful

just that just that
then you feel that she's beside you

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Back With Us Somehow

the night's rain
was heavy
no flood somehow
in the morning

i wake up
step outside the door
to see
our wet earth

dew on the leaves
of trees
gleaming stones on
the yard
cold air and
cleansed world

this feeling of newness
a rebirth from tears
you should have
felt it too well
when you are back
home with us
somehow

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Gone

it is only
when you are gone
when you
cannot be reached
anymore
that they begin
to know
your presence
as an
irony

a field of absence
they now think of you as the wind.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Gone I Must Survive

when you are gone
i must find a way to find myself
another way
another way of looking at
an old house
another style of opening
the same door

shaping my lips to utter
the same word
in a manner
that despite the pain
another lovely poem
must be written

i shall wake at a different
time and open the window
that you used to open for me
i will look for the stars again
on a brighter flicker
on a sweeter twinkle

i must survive
i am still alive

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Hiding Something

you hear
a clicking of the knob
someone
is opening the door

and then
you rush to save yourself
you suddenly
close all your windows

when everything appears
to you
you pretend you are doing
nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Lost You Are Not Alone

the tension lies in isolation
when you take things all alone
and there is no knowing that out there
when you are lost
and so preoccupied with the fear of being lost

with a little light
even a flicker
you could have seen a hundred or more
faces looking for themselves
you could have known
that there are too many of us

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Near Me

when you are near me
i become tongue-tied, and i am lost
in the maze of
my desire, my groins
pulsate, wanting to move
nearer, my hands are ready
posing to hold, my neck bends
a little giving in to the
incantations of my mouth
move closer, move closer
smell, kiss, taste, caress,
hold, embrace, do not shy away,
be the man you want to be,
brake the law, there is always
a kind and gentle justification,
love has its own reasons,
the heart speaks & understands
the mind becomes so silent and giving
my blood rises my cartilages
stiffens, my arms grow strong,
my lips are wet, my teeth
wanting to chew, my throat
swallows a load of fluid,
i am thirsty, i am hungry, for you

what a shame, my whole body rebels
my eyes are shedding tears, my hands
slap my cheeks, my calf surrenders and suddenly runs,
with my ankle and my knees
all my feet walk away

this is not for me, and i am not me.
my will is strong, my head stands high,
i go away, breathe deeply,
and heave a s, i say at the end.
i am strong. I did not do any wrong.
When You Are On Top

when you are on top
you see a very tiny world below you

people are dusts
lands are patches of colors
roads mere lines

you realize how foolish you are
to believe that
it is the best place you
can ever have

you learn
to forgive the hazards of distances

you accept there is more to
land or colors
or pebbles

what strikes you most is the
dusty feeling
of humanity

the wind brings you
a layer of brownish softness in your skin

something lands in your
arm
but then you
dust it off

there is a hope that
you can finally understand
what is this
all about


time always makes
hushes in your hair
you comb
doubts with your
fingers

but your ears are stubborn
listening to
the noise in the moistened
lyrics of
their songs

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are On Vacation

here i take a walk in the morning
by the sea

the talisay trees are booming
with green leaves

at the roof tops of the resort
is a backdrop of mountains with
fog as dress

the horizon is light blue
the kayaks are colorfully alined

a white child rides on a swing
a thin lady is talking his white poodle
for a walk

sea breeze touches your cheeks
the sound of the waves calm and soothing

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Rejected

When finally you are rejected
Just go, don’t feel busted
Find another place
Be with someone else
Forget the scar
Whatever you are

Go to a place
Where you are an ace
Where you smell the air
Of love everywhere

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Sleeping

i look carefully at the restive pose,
hands on the side, the head inclined towards the window
the breathing breast is as calm as the sunset sea
the eyelashes like a silk skirt on the side of the eye
nothing covers you except the soft breeze
your hair spreads like the gentleness of the night
your naked feet rests on the white pillow
your lips curl like a bow to its arrows

love hits me again and i am vulnerable
to its caresses, as i stand and hold the frame of this window
out there is the wide wild world of my dreams
where i do not belong anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are Too Tired

the mind does not complain
if the socks and the shoes are still stuck
your toes without air keeps on breathing
in the darkness of your
early dreams

sleeps takes you with your clothes on
someone beside you
keeps company and in the middle of your
conversation
you do not remember if a kiss is planted
on your forehead or your hair
or your neck

or was it on your lips?
your eyes close
you do not mind if the lights are still waking

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Are With Them

the guy beside you
is cross-eyed, and he is
lonely, and he lives alone in his house
with his puppy and he asks you where he can buy
the best dogfood in this little town,

sitting beside this guy is a short, fat man, and he
is a philosopher, and he is ugly and his belly is as big
as a baby whale, and he is asking if there is a way to find
happiness along this famous beach resort

both of them are projecting the idea that they are not happy
and that they are looking for a way to get happiness
to know where it can be found,

he did not find it with his puppy and neither did the other
one find in the complicated philosophical precepts

we are seated inside a bar and it is six o'clock in the evening
we are looking over the sea separated by this glass wall

i remove my shorts and shirt, i keep my white swimming trunk on
and i told them: let us have a plunge in the cool waters of the blue sea.

i do not have a puppy and i am tired of any philosophical discussion.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Arrive Late In My Life

i was in the garden
chasing some butterflies
my hat on my left hat
the sun was about to set

you called my name and i fell down
the hill the butterflies escaping free

i rose up to see my whole world change
i am limping but i am happy.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Arrive Today

when you arrive today
there is no surprise except
for the reason that i have not
taken any lunch simply because
i still have more poems to write,
not about you or her,
it is all about an emptiness
that lingers so lovingly
inside my ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Ask About Her Sorry But She Already Left

your question must fall away without
an answer
she already left two days ago

or perhaps she knew about your question
and she did not like it

i guess so, but i never asked her
she was too fragile for anything like your poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Ask Me To Read Your Poem

There is this gleaming brightness
Inside my mind
This momentary flash of light
A short flicker
My eyes are shiny looking wet with tears
The page glistens
The words move
To and fro and I have predicted where they all stop
Frozen and steady still like mannequins
I throw my glance like a ping-pong ball
Bouncing back
I only peeked in fact
I have not seen anything interesting
The two poems
The poem you write that you ask me to read
Is the same poem I wrote recently
How come?
There is a tiny, quick flash of light
Inside my mind
Did it come from the same God?
We need to sit and talk
To discuss the sameness of our boredoms

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Ask Me To Utter The Words

when you ask me to utter the words

i love you

i only say yes, the three letters mean a lot
to me they must only be said once the rest

who must say them over and over again shall
only be my kisses, my hugs, my way of making love

with you morning noon and nighttime
till death do us part

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Ask Whether I Am Okay

when you ask that question
many things come into my mind too

'are you okay? ' such strikes my mind
and i retort
with 'why do you ask? '

we live in a mirror world
we project

who we are
what we are
where are we going?

your loneliness mirrors
mine
you reflect light
to my mirror

i like to shine like diamond
but i am not

i am dawn fading
and the day does not recognize me

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Become Rare...

perhaps it is because of that feeling
that you are rejected
or jilted that makes you a sort of a
rare appearance to the limelight of my
cares
and my attention

perhaps it is the realization that love is not at all present on those times.
that what was there was only a temporary knowing
to let time pass, to while the hours away, to seal those emptiness,
to cover a mistake,
to escape from a harsh reality,
to break some promises
to hide,
and for the meantime molt
hibernate
like a mud-fish
waiting for the correct season
and be plenty and
present all over again

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Become....

the big wide plate
unblemished

emptiness spreading like
blanket upon a green patch

under the trees below the
heavens

beside the clouds you dance
samsara

you look beautiful with those
laces

as the air blows your hair
as the darkness begins to infiltrate

nerves sing
flesh retires on the floor as you become my roof my window.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Begin A War

when you begin a war
and start it now
do not discount the possibility
that you too
like any other human being
gets hurt
captured tortured and even die
without any name
to the vulture in that desert
eventually
as an unexpected eventuality,
an added casualty
to the war
that you have just began to wage
on this page
of history who shall soon solely decide
the guilty
without discounting the possibility that i could only
be you
the guilty one
the sore
loser

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Begin To Speak With Your Heart

after dinner my wife leaves
to pray inside our room

you have no plan leaving
the night is deep and dark

outside we sit on the grass
and you are trying to cope up

with softness looking for
some tiny stars above us

you talk i have always prepared
myself to listen to your stories

and your poems
always sad and dedicated to

those who are dying but still
wanting to breathe

you sigh you talk about a name
he is your son and your minds

are two poles apart
you want to touch him like

a very dear friend
but he already lives in another

world in a mind he calls his own
at such a very young age

you remember a big river
meeting this big rock in the middle

they parted ways like
a paper that you cut and crumple
you have more to reveal
but my wife has switched off the light

in her room and you understand
this place is not yours to shed your tears

now you must go and find
your son again his heart his mind....

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Cannot Find The Reason Still How Can You Sleep?

tired
the whole day
works
me like a horse

facing the monitor
for a poem
i rest my hands
close my eyes

still facing
the monitor trying
to survive

when you cannot
find the reason still
how can you sleep?

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Cannot Put The Cigaretter Butts Inside The Ashtray

BY now you must
realize
that it is time to
change
for the better
you must
quit.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Come Back

before you go
you put three things
just three things
on the table of your room

a red rose, a yellow mongol pencil,
a nail cutter,

a nail cutter is nothing
but when you come back you find it missing.

you think about the nail cutter
that ordinary nail cutter that you can buy
at anytime
in any store,

it is not there anymore, the red rose wilted
and the yellow mongol pencil is untouched.

you still think about the nail cutter
where could it be? who took it?

your world revolves now around
the missing nail cutter.

it is like loving an ordinary person,
who is now
missing.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Come Back What You See Are Trees

Flowers

the seeds you sowed sprouted
the cracks of the soil
gone

when you come back what you
see are trees
flowers

on the bark clings the vines and the
orchids
their roots sticking which used
the years
well

the idle woman from her sleep walks around
the place and notices that there must be changes
for what she does not like
roots and trees and vines
all these
are the possible ruins of her past

she makes the decisions now and everything
you work for
those seeds and stones in their places
uprooted

in this world the madness continues
the destroyers prevail
and those who work hard keeps on going away
to start anew

sowing the seeds, growing those trees, letting the vines
grow the roots
still wanting to touch the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Come Inside My House

you come without knocking
the door is closed and i am lying on my bed
the windows are open
and to my surprise you are here
sitting on a chair beside me
you look at me and i look at you too
we do not talk for you are very silent
they tell me about you long before
even when i was younger then
now i agree about how you look
your eyes are gentle
your presence comforting
to my aches and loneliness

it is our first meeting today
and i have nothing to say
you come upon authority of my Creator
and so on your wide black wings
i shall take my first and last ride
gently i must go and fly with you
to the place reserved by my destiny.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Cry

when you cry and when you think
that there is something wrong with life
you throw away everything from a to z
you erase every writing on the wall
you want to lose yourself at the end
yet somehow you achieve nothing
you are still here and even if the walls
have become blank still they stand
on certain heights before your feet.

you still have to stare at them and
figure out the reasons of their manners.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Cut The Branch Of Lust

it is when you step
out from that road of desire
that you feel
nobility

when you cut the branch of
lust
and throw it away
that you begin to grow like
a bud

when tendrils finally find their
way out to a tunnel of a window
and rest
on the arms of the sun
light
this morning

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Decide A Case.....

in deciding a case
you remove the colors of
a painting
until what is left is the
sketch of pure lines
curving and
then straightened
in a tightjacket
you capture the truth
which once had
gone mad.

you synthesize
throw away all those
from where
the real sap comes
from.....

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Decide To Be Just Yourself

when do you decide to be just all alone?
when the rest are out on their own
seeking pleasure
and their vested interests
veiled by their supposed kindness
you give up
friendship and camaraderie
following instead your own light
like a star
alone on its dark paths
still lighting itself
despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Define A Thing

when you define
a thing, you limit it,
it is like fencing
your garden
the garden becomes
a set of exclusive
flowers, and anything
not like it becomes
a weed, and anything
that moves
becomes a pest

it is not that you
do not define, we do
it sometimes
only to understand
the limits of
understanding,

but we must be open
to other possibilities
of a garden,
a garden of stones
a garden of sand
of mud, of water
a fountain, a garden
of winds, of clouds

a garden of memories
like a poem
for instance, a garden
of words,
words with arms open
to the magic
of further creation
words still trying
to define themselves
in the garden
of the unknown
When You Die

let nothing bewilder
or surprise you
let no one worry about
what happens
after the last stone is thrown
when the first grass
creeps above you
she has a job of her own
the benefits of insurance
the house and the lawn
and the nice garden
she knows now how to
forget

you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Do Not Talk To Me Anymore

i can always pretend that i am one of those leaves
on that big tree
not missing the coming of the wind
merely hanging in there
thinking that soon
with or without you
everything falls off
anyway

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Dream They Dream With You Too

when you rest
everything seems to be at
rest with you
too

the bed is so silent with the blankets
and the pillows are at home with the cases

when you dream
you dream with you too
the ceiling has a gift of skies
blue colors diffusing in your mind
the windows open themselves
eyes waking inside the dream
taking you to places
that you have long desired
ah, dreams make possible
what you were not
what you never did

and then you wake up
refreshed
like a shrub receiving rain
on the summer days
of June

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Exhort On A Certain Reality

it is this early morning
when you begin to recall what you
want to say last night
it was something horrible so you
decided after all
to keep it within yourself as
another secret
but then like a smoke from the chimney
some things simply escape
from their form and shape and show
themselves to the open skies
this very early morning you write
what you refuse to say
and then things reshape themselves in automation
like clouds and then they drift away
floating and there
you let them go
you let them be themselves
and here you are unattached
like a button removed from its cloth.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Feel Nothing At The End

you come to hurt you
and you allow pain to
penetrate you

you grieve for a while
to your helplessness
blame yourself
blame the world

they come to hurt you
again and again
and pain at last has
no more meaning

you take your revenge
you show them your numbness
you expose your palm
you show them your body
so they may hurt you some more

someday they will find you
with your new skin your new frame of mind

unshattered
unbeaten
unbowing

then they will ask you your name
and then they will know how you managed to smile

and live like nothing happened
you have redeemed what they have destroyed

you win.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Feel The Coming.....

there is a time when you feel the coming
of the end of time,
mind you, i may be subjective
too subjective on this,
i may ask you to pause for a little
understanding
like: we go naked in bed and i do not feel anything
and you sleep soundly and the rain comes in
through a half-open window and i do not close it
but i open the door and naked
still i go outside the yard
and it is too cold and i let the rain fall throughout my body
and i know it is very cold at this hour of
the night
but as i am telling you
when you feel the coming of the end of time
you disregard cold
and warmth and yes that is it:

you feel nothing anymore
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Fight Your Own War

there is a vision that haunts you
that is,
that moment when you see yourself pushed against a wall
against all
you are one,
you are whole, against all,
and you are pushed against a wall,
so you defend yourself,
dislodge what they force upon you
that you are weak, dumb, and insufficient
that you succumb to a
dismal defeat, all your Waterloos showing,
yet, you face them
retaliate, injure, harm and hit
so many shall be wounded
and some shall realize
that you do not just take oppression for granted
somehow you know what defenses are
you have a spear on one hand
fire on the other
you shoot, you put fire to burn
the windmills,
the donkey, and those strong feet that obstruct your way
they will have second-thoughts
this man is a fighter
this man knows his ground
we leave him alone
he is good.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Decide To Write …

it is when a bird mistakes
air for glass smashes its head
forcefully falling dead on
the side of the wall of the house

it is when you watch death of a
bird and you are so helpless like
two broken wings

it is when you know you can fly
but you cannot
when the door is unlocked and yet
you decide to stay in that room

it is that fly trapped in a bottle
in an open mouthed bottle but still
could not figure out where to go

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Find Your Hands Empty

on the day when you find
your hands empty
and you have nothing to
touch or
grab when you feel
nothing
to say when you are more
delighted on the silence
of your solitude
there is no other choice
but to close again
all your fingers like
a baby curling back
to sleep
because now as you
breathe
you have become full again.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Find Your Peace Of Mind...

always remember
it is when you have nothing to write
that you have finally
find peace,

a tranquil river
does not have any fish
to cause a ripple

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Have Nothing

the soil has gone barren
rivers run dry
blue clouds fade
the horizon is gray

your hands have nothing
and it is this time
when you can discern the
ture color of
your surrounding

when your eyes show the
sleepless moment
you see them moving away
from you

you thank that moment
when the pool becomes crystal
clear

even the dry leaves
that leave sooner
shall tell the truth

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Reveal What You Feel

the time has come
to tell her
that she is hurting me

she didn't know

and when she knows finally
she offers her hands of silence

she wants to go for a while
and know some more what has been wrong
with her

when she comes back i am ready for
all the consequences of my
words

the doors are open and so are the windows
the world is too beautiful to welcome me again
to her place

i do not care anymore if it rains
when the right time also for her to decide

my shoes are ready and it is rocking itself to
a new beat

i like to dance but i still
have a little restraint

respect is still there sticking like a moss
which will still miss the wetness of the stones

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Finally Said No

IT IS you sobbing at the end
saying NO
that this is enough
that there is no way that you would push through
with the suit

Your rights are violated.
On two counts of indignity
you surrender
to the Hills and find there
your much wanted
peace.

case is dismissed.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Find It, Burn It....

even when i
die, i will
see to it
that you
will not find
the truth

the truth is
mind alone
for my keeping
and i shall
carry it
to my grave

i will not
be hurt
anymore

and i do not
wish to hurt
you with
the truth that
i shall
carry into
my grave

when you find
it
destroy it
burn it
do not attempt
to know it

it is you
that i am afraid
of

because i
love
you and i did
not show it

and i did not
tell you.....

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Find The Code

when you find the code of my secret
do not tell me about it. Be silent as i have been silent.
it is not my own making, it has been there.
i have nothing to do with it, it has been embedded to the inner
skin of my birth. Blame me if you will. Tell me i am the dirt of the earth.
it does not matter.
it is my duty to breathe. I take in the air and fill my lungs.
I nourish this body. This is all i have.
I am not mine. Neither do i belong to you.
Someone put me here and he does not tell me who he is.
Or where i come from.
I grow like a tree without my own mind.
I spread like the moss, without my volition.
I have no direction like the monsoon wind.
I have no light like the sun.
I do not borrow any like the moon.
I float like any cloud. And i will not complain.
This is myself. I do not even know now what this means.
I am alive. That is what i only know.
I will die. That is what i can see with the rest of those
who like me are innocent of our own crimes.

Judge me. I shall have no ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Give

do not let
your hand
know

when you
forgive
do not
even give
hint
to the protests
of your mind

touch
the malefactor
with
the slightest
sigh
of your
forgetting

and let
him go
like he
never did
any wrong
to you

and tell
him
he must
do the
same
to the one
who also
harms
him

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Give Up Everything In The Name Of Love

here the heart reigns
the mind shuts up
the soul rises to the sky
and what is left of me is nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Go Away

when you go away
be fair, be frank, tell us
why you leave us
tell us if we deserve
to be given this silence
of the dead

do not leave us with guilt,
leave us with dignity and pride
leave us like we are your equal
your brother your sister

we have no more tears
for all those
and these years we suffer too
we also dread
we also fear
we also have tearglands that become
dry like the well where we all take
our drinking water

we have suffered so much
and here you are leaving us simply because
you too do not like it here...

thanks, wish us peace and love wish us to go on living
we still love you just the same

in fact, we still know what forever means

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Grieve

when you grieve upon the death of your beloved
you only grieve upon yourself

if you only try to look around you
they do not believe in the sorrow of your grieving

the birds still play with their wings and sing
their fledgelings take a bath in the fountains
and preoccupies themselves with the art of flying
the flowers still bloom and leaves greener as ever
the seeds sprout the twigs grow another inch
the trees still look for the rays of the sun
the sea remain faithful to the accommodation of the waves
the winds still blow the sails of ships that arrive and leave the port
the seagulls keep their gaze on the school of fish
the fishermen keep watch for the spot to throw their nets
the children on the beach play
as their mothers watch with glee

do not be overwhelmed with what you feel
soon the sad feelings on fleets
shall flee as flitting as they must be
take your time watch the world in locomotion
prepare your heart, i know, i wait, for your emotion.
for soon, it must beat for me, to you i pray.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Done Your Best

when you have done your best
and they all begin to like
your art
your ways and what you want to become
when they also want to become like you
when you tell them now where to go
and what to do
when they are now at home with themselves
in their own chosen climates and houses
when they have understood their fears
and learned to live with their longings
when they have learned the power
of laughter
when they have learned to dream
when they have learned
how to talk to a tree,

it is time for you to go
you have freed them all from their shackles
you have taught them how to fish

it is time for you to go
your presence has become useless
it is now time to go
human reconstructor.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Finally Parted....

when you left
  to the Great Divide

the house had since
  become empty,

the toys for the grandchild
  were taken to the other house,

the carpets folded
  and hidden inside the storehouse

those who were left
  felt that there was no need
  for more chairs

two or three will suffice
  some tables were sold

and so are the extra knives
  and spoons and forks

classical music has become
  a no no,

the drapes had become so heavy
  and they too had to
  leave,

  yesterday i flew in there
  like a sparrow

  and witnessed the sadness of
  practically everything

the orchids wilted
  there were no more flowers on the
  side of the house
the pots kept nothing but
dessert sands

i asked the youngest there
and he said

that it seemed the heavens
are angry

and they could not nothing
about this
tragedy

soon there will be battles
in their minds

and it will be endless
he said

and then i left
taking only pictures with me

those that bore
laughter when you were still
their working queen

when everyone were once
kids beside the magnificence
of your ruffled skirt.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Nothing At All To Say

there are days of drudgery
hours that drag, months that you think are too long
like mountain trails that you feel you cannot really tread
years that look like tall buildings without elevators

you are stunned by all these
you hold the railings of the stairs and wait and then you decide
to just sit there
the passers-by look at you
could be something like disdain
you let them stare at you and you do not stare back
you look down the dusty floors
this is the time when you have nothing at all to say
hoping to find that peace within

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Nothing To Pay For Love At All.

early morning
you grumble
about love
saying that if it
is given because
you beg for it
do not receive it

it is not love but
pity and pity is never
love

such a pride you
have there
beggars do not choice
they cannot
they must receive
what is given

if pity is given
take it
when love is not
there
do you have any
choice at all?

take compassion
it is mercy's cousin.
take pity
it is love's neighbor.

if you need love
and it is not there
take other options.

pity at least helps
when tomorrow is
uncertain
when psychiatrists
are nil
when you have nothing
to pay for love
at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Nothing To Say But Simply Look At Things

you feast upon facts.
and facts dance around you
showing the best that they can be
though not as beautiful
as always
for at times facts can be so
damn hurting.

and when hurt
you feel the uselessness of words
that like daggers
may have only the function of stabbing
you more

you bleed and you look at yourself
so helplessly
bleeding

you have nothing to say
you remember only one thing
and this they notice
with glee

you keep on looking at the injury
your hands busy wiping
the blood

your mouth blowing the pain away
hushing
soothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Nothing To Write About

the reader
will notice it
you are
flat as
flooded rice field
bland as
burger without
meat and salt
but you must
write
there is no choice
to make
to cover up
nonsense

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Have Only Twenty Days To Live....

the numbers become
bold and
black,
each number
at first counts
a lot,
they diminish
until
you reach zero
but by the time
you reach
that number
before
zero when you
count in reverse,
you have already
grasped the
full meaning
of each day, and
when light shuts you
out,
you tell yourself
it does not
matter, and you
recall,
what do i really have
here?

a body, a pair of
hands,
a face, a set of
teeth,
food, sex, love,
relationship,
filial pity,
properties, house
cups and saucers,

if they do not break
they rot, or they
degrade you, or
they break away with
you and you have spent
so much time
repairing, forgetting
and excluding,
popping out and
shrinking it,
weakened by all these,

zero becomes so
beautiful
it takes you off
from so much hassle
from so
much misery

upon summing out
everything, everybody.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Hurt Me

when this happens
i shrug my shoulder
i do not mind
you, who hurt me
for you are too small
to be noticed
i am too numbed
to be hurt
no matter how hard
the blow
i cannot mind you
for you are as small
as a flagellate
floating in the bacterial
river
i am a whale and
i go everywhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Ignore Someone You Love

you keep a busy day
a long list of things to do, some travels to make,
some friends to entertain, barely there is no time for self,
caring for people that you barely know,

just to forget,
you ignore the feeling you have for this someone
to discard him like a letter you do not want to read anymore,

but you cannot really, this someone that you love,
you cannot just ignore, wherever you go, whatever you do,
she shines in your heart like the sun

where you hide in darkness so nobody sees you bleeding
someone that you love is still the moon
and the more you hide
someone that you love becomes so many
like the stars in the skies

do not ignore someone that you love
show your face show your love
surrender and suffer let this someone that you love
now take control
feel someone’s hand
you shall be the water to drink
the air to breath
the soul to someone's body

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Insist That There Is Nothing Wrong With Me

i wriggled and tried to loosen what grips my neck
your hands are too strong for love
and i get choked at times wanting to breathe
the fresh air outside
but you assure me this is how to love
and your manner of loving
terms of endearment you say
deep from the heart of you

i asked some questions to the stones
and i must be so foolish waiting for the answers
i tried the power of the birds
and i got some answers slowly from their wings

flights are good schemes
one gets to meet the clouds and they tell you what drifting does
what changing shapes are all about
what freedom is there with the winds that come and go
painlessly from west to east to north to south
and sometimes not coming back anymore
from where you once came

i like wings and i do not want any stopovers since then
i like their stories and i am listening still

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Leave The House

i have known a lot of reasons why
you leave this house, you want to go shopping early morning
when the malls are still closed, but i do not really mind,
i think i understand (how is it when love starts to wane
like a diminishing moon last night, giving its final light
for the month)

you say you want to visit your mother you claim she is sick and
dying, i do not really mind at all (you are afraid to face
what faces us, this evident eyes of boredom staring at us
like we are convicts of finally wanting to cease to love)
still i will not mind, you leave again today
the kitchen falls short of shrimps and fish
there is no more lettuce and some black peppers
and red juicy tomatoes, (you are now fond of enumerating
things to me, you count your fingers and your toes and you
do not see straight in my eyes)
the olive oil is gone

yesterday, i spend time alone watching the sunset
on the boulevard (you are not with me)
(i know you want to be preoccupied with something else
some things that do not interest me)
you are not coming home
for a week or two, just a family emergency
in the city where you live
(did you tell me it is very noisy there?)

i watch the sun die finally
it is very peaceful outside
i wait and take my seat calmly on the cold bench
by the sea
there is no moon tonight
there is only this cold wind from the sea from that distant island
on the other side of this routinary existence
touching my heart

it is the longing of distance, the past coming back to me
the sea breeze still salty to my taste
so cold, that i finally shiver and leave at once
i cannot withstand this longing
this night unlike the other nights is darker
but i am still seeing the shadow of your beautiful face

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Let Out That Laughter

when you let out that
laughter from your mouth
tell me where it finally
landed? did it fall on
the clouds
did it finally fall
on the river?
did it fall in the
hole of your heart?
did it hide in that
old well where
we once whispered
the validity
of our love?

let me see,
it in your palm

is it falling
and falling
still?

you are not
holding
it yet

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Lie

when you lie i choose not to notice
i look at the surface of things
all your parts
become little things to me

your eyes roll like marbles avoiding
a one-on-one collision
with my eyes
your tongue roll on your cheek
like the creaking wheels of
the pushcart
your hands do the martial arts
kungfu, karate
or judo

you talk about curtains and veils
and drapes and long gowns

but still the skeleton on the closet
makes some rattling sound
escaping
like this snake that i cannot
even imagine

i do not stop you
keep on holding the pillars of your lies
tonight
Delilah, the other liar
of your equal caliber
shall cut your hair

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Love

when you love
always anticipate that somehow all things end

the sunshine that comes after the rain
the storm after a very peaceful morning

some things do happen
unexpectedly, if there is no leaving

for sure there is also death
have always a margin of error

human as we are
perfection is a big denial

you make love to the full today
let it be and then when things change such as

an iced melting or a glass of coffee getting colder
a touch not as warm as yesterday

or the kiss that turned routinary
a hug not so revolutionary

as to degrade itself to something that is so ordinary
do not be shocked as though you are into your first earthquake

learn the ways of the wise
take love as good as it lusters.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Love Me

When you love me

Do not talk about immortality

I am just a man

And like any other men

I make some lies

I have lots of alibis

=========

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Love You Do Not Lose If You Only Will To Keep It

when you love
when you love deeply and truly
like you have placed everything in you inside a small bowl
so fragile, breakable and perishable
shiny piece, porcelain white, unstained,

or a fruit glossy for the moment
or a flower blooming only for a day

like the way he loves you like the way he changes his mind
after you have given it all

when love is pronounced dead on arrival
do not weep
do not scream do not ever utter a word fit for sorrow and departure
keep the love that you still want everlasting
depth in your heart that love still clings and still works for your delight
be selfish on this, and be so private
do not give that up as a nightmare keep it as a dream always

and deep in your heart
you have so much to gain as a memory that shall last forever
and in this way
you have never lost

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Love, Love

when you love
love, do not think of any other thing
like a disease
HIV, cervical cancer, hepatitis
STD,
when you love
love with all your heart
kiss the leprosy in her heart
hug the virus on her breast
love, love, love with all your heart
make love with love
and savor the moment that love has offered
every drop...every moment...every ecstasy...
ever

when i love, i always love, i set aside the mind
i take everything at heart
i refuse to think
about the hurt
the future mess
the possibility of errors
i am blind
i just touch
and feel my way all through this maze

and when love is gone
if ever be
i take all the hurt, the blame, the regrets

it is love in me, it is this self-annihilation
this dying upon oneself for the other

this death
that gives my redemption, my resurrection
it is love
and not the thought of love

the love that is real that dies upon itself
only to be born again
When You Move Into A Place

such a lapse
happens, when you move into a place
open the door
and without asking any questions
you finally find yourself
estranged.

the server of course does not know you
but just the same
out of ignorance serves you tea
and then you awaken of that fact

this is not my place i am meant for some other else
you finish that tea
look outside and then pack yourself like a cassette
and then you move out
and you find at last
what freedom means.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Read A Poem Do Not Expect Too Much

when you read a poem do not expect too much
from every word

my words too falter and fall short
of strength like the runner who always wins his sprint
and now in his worst state
mourns for his knee
which is broken

my images too wilt like some red roses that
a lover offered once to his true love
but now deserted
and looks at them in the state of dryness

when you read this poem do not therefore expect too much
this is just a sigh
looking for an opening in the crevices of an understanding heart

this poem is just a mirror and you will be the face who must
give your smile
the light from the window that shall provide the glimmer

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Read This

when you read this
poem, i am letting you know
that i still care,
when you continue reading on
the next line
you are letting me know
what i still know
that you still care for me too
and then you are angry
about how presumptuous can i be
and so i make another line
and another line and if you continue reading
more of these lines
in this poem
you are letting me know
that you are still angry about
my untimely departure
that moment when love was
still strong
when desire was at its peak
and then you think things over
how you have been
unwittingly betrayed by my words
and you keep on
reflecting if these lines still
say the same
meanings and i keep on writing
more lines
hoping that you will understand
what i have not said
because i cannot say them
because my self
cannot lie by saying them to
you because i do not wish to
hurt you because i still
love you and then i write lines
that ask
if you still love me but then
i must put an end to all
these useless writing
time has spoken
as the lines of fate and
destiny still have it
we were never meant for
each other
the love is there
the bodies still alive
our hands never reach
till then
perhaps in the next life
at the right moment
perhaps when
our parallel lives meet
at some point
of convergence
and as you read let me put
the last line: goodbye
May God make us
meet and love again.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Read This Poem

when you read this poem
silently like a prayer written
on the wall
of an ancient structure
and then when you pause
upon a word and begin
to ponder
like ' what is this poem really
trying to say? ' 
or ' does this poem have in some
way something to inform me
or touch me
or simply waste my time? '

rest assured this poem has
made you phrase some questions
not about you
or about me alone but
whether you believe it or not
this poem has become
a bridge between us
taking the shape
of a rainbow between two islands
and in a moment before you
begin to figure it out
or even know it
it is gone like a sigh passing you by
without any significance
and not worth remembering
but once
after you have read till the end

once there was this poem
and it seems to have no meaning at all
except a task
a journey that you have taken
arriving at nowhere
and giving you the essence of nothing.
When You Receive No For An Answer

i have seen how some people react when they receive no for an answer. The child, he cries so loud, and runs amok, and puts himself on the ground and dirties himself with the grass and mud. Vengeful of his mother who says no he cannot have the toy gun.

The teen-age boy who receives no for his love proposal goes to a certain joint and smokes pot and drinks hard liquor to forget. He whirls in space and loses himself. To forget. To numb his senses. To kill the pain.

The middle aged employee who gets fired. The job applicant who never gets hired. The loyal employee denied of an promotion. They get no for an answer and they roam the streets. They go fast and bang themselves on hard walls. They are in the normal bad moods and get hard to deal with. Outbursts of anger. Denial. Depression. Shut. They shut their doors. They do not open other windows. They do not find the light at the end of their dark tunnels. They do not see birds that fly and lead them to another island. They do not bother about the comets and the wishes of the star that sometimes falls out unexpectedly on dark nights. Lonely corners. Surrender.

Cold and damp. And defeat.

Some however still manage to jump over the other side of the fence. The greener pastures of other dreams hidden by the line of mountains. The hidden lakes on the valleys. The rainbow that comes when you experiene the rain.

Some however simply wait. And while waiting for the right season for them

They just sit there. Gaze at the stars. Paint the clouds. Some still bother to write Poetry.

And they really make a difference. Like now. You read. I write.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Return

when you return
you are merely a thought
that at any time
i can always ignore

time is my ally now
and with the magic of its wings
i can fly with it
away from you and it is

only when i decide to come back
that you too
shall return to me

time is teaching me
to be in control now
what goes out and
what comes in
now i shall decide

a long time ago
i was in the prison of your hands
always following the dictates of
your whims

i was lonely and
miserable.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Said That Revenge Is Not Your Cup Of Tea

i know what you simply mean:
revenge is a jar
for you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Say Diamond

when you say diamond
i do not imagine the luxuries of the glittery
world where you live
it is all yours, through and through, and somehow
i have never been there
and i do not wish to dream to live there
for once
for that cannot be in fact, i live in the world
of the tatters and the pebbles so silent and deep
in their cursed slumbers,

when you say diamond i imagine faces
those that i see everyday in you
those that deceive and those that pretend not to hurt
but those that kill us all slowly
to the happy death that you wish to inflict upon us

i never like it, and i never like you
but here we are, under one roof of the world
they shall proclaim the greatness of your value
and i shall keep on keeping the lies about your truths.

for why should i be a hero? mortal am i,
and
i am not yet ready to die.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Say Goodbye

as you say it
so shall it be done
the word shall speak
for itself

res ipsa loquitur

you shall embrace
a new self again
like a creature's way
of shedding its skin

like the seasons
like the way everything blooms anew
like the flowers

like the wilting of the petals
and the rotting of the leaves
the fungal deterioration of the roots

like life
like us

we shall venture anew to another world
finding a new path
where we shall not be hurt
we shall have learned how to cut
and cut clearly

no regret
you bet.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Say Yes To Me

when you say yes
to me
and i say
hurray!

ah! my world has become
my world and your world
has become my world too

the mountains move
the sun brightens and dances
the moon keeps on smiling
the stars keep on winking
the grasses fill the emptiness
the rivers sing
the seas keep on waving
the clouds are not nimbus

ah! whatever that be
i know, that our world shall be
as beautiful as we are meant to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Say You Love Me You Need Not Mean It

when you say you love me you need not mean it
i do not demand that the love i get be pure
nothing about its sanctity is a condition of my flesh
i always understand how this world works
how each creature finds a way to survive
that is why i do not really demand much
i do not even pay attention
i do not weigh words

because words are just words
and sometimes they hurt
purposely

i do not demand that you mean it
for there were many times when i also say them
without any meaning at all

let me tell once again: what 's love got to do with 'it'?

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Say....

when you say
i am yours
i shudder, and
i make you know
it with my
goose-skin, for
even from the
beginning when
i compromised
you with a kiss

when i made love
with you
after that night
i have always told
you: i am free and
no one owns me

the sun and moon
and the stars
and all the planets
and galaxies
know that.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Speak In Whispers

when you speak
in whispers

to me

like some
kind
of vespers

like some
code
of the cicadas

i have
actually
second
thoughts
listening

i am
afraid
i always
remember

the kind
of deaths
fit
for my
godfather

lots of
little deaths
and i
ask, which
one

which one
is the
happy death?
When You Start To Dance

when you start to dance
infront of the mirror
reviewing all
the details
of your longings

i feel alive too
now that you are with me
asking me
to dance with you
to the music of
life

of desire
of passion

to life to all past cares to all that we embrace
of what
is still left behind that we can still cherish
no matter how slim
the chances
no matter how
small the world that we still keep
even if what is
meaningful is nothing but
our very own
sorrows

for tomorrows hesitant
and trembling

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Start To Talk About Nothing

the moment you start to talk about nothing
mind you, this nothing becomes something
and this something becomes something more
like a raindropp falling becoming a worm
the worm becoming a fish
the fish becoming a bird
the bird becoming a man

smaller ones taking bigger shapes
until it becomes a part of you
until it becomes you
until it becomes something bigger than you

all it takes is just a simple beginning
and you making meaning shaping bigger things
more than yourself
more than you can ever think of at the end

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Step Into My Garden

when you step in my garden
of earth
water
and fire

you are the woman there
looking softly
daintily whispering to the
cherry blossoms

that now they must bloom
because love is here
and for the moment
it will be full
whole,

stay there
and let the cherry blossoms
take a moment with you
in excitement
some of them dance with the
wind and sadly
now you shall watch them
softly
daintily falling like some
tiny white butterflies
still learning
how to flutter......................

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Touch Me

when you touch me
something in me grows
like a mustard

and then as Jesus once said
the mustard
becomes a tree and i am here
on top of everything

flowering fruiting
blooming ripening

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Touch My Body

when you touch my body with your trembling hands tonight
i choose to simply close my eyes
too, i am trembling to this passion
this desire i have been waiting
all these years, when we are nothing but
passing glimpses, until one day,

i tell you my name, i touch your lips i caress your hair
and you are awakened
by this kind of love
this total undressing this total nudity
even in tears and untold quiver

in this room, you are with me
there will be silence anticipating
our joys our confessions our opening up

hands to hands and soul to soul
we will be losing ourselves
tonight i am revealing all my skins and longings
i am naked
i am yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Transferred To Another House

When I ask her
If her love will
Last forever
She does not
Answer
Now, my thoughts
Are in disarray
Like your books
When you
Transferred
To another house.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Unleash The Dogs That Early Morning

when you unleash the dogs
that early morning having first
tasted what freedom means

ey they rush outside like gaming
horses without jockeys go
hurriedly to the road leading
to the public plaza and there
drench the bushes with their
squirting fountains of urine.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Unzip Me

when you unzip me
the zipping sound climbs up to my chest
and then
it opens my heart
my mind wanders in fantasy lands

and then
my heart goes singing in springtime
my thighs trembling
my toes dancing

your fingers crawl all over my body
you lips your tongue......

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Walk Away

do not walk away
when the rain stops
walk when it is still
raining so hard
show them that
you are not afraid
of the rain
and the wind
walk away with
integrity intact
like a scar
in your heart
like a wound
still bleeding on your leg
when blood
still mixes with water
and when everything still
knows how
to disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Walked Away

the door is still four sided
still standing like a firm rectangle
the locks are loosened
key is still below the flower pot
the only flower by the window still blooms
the stairs did not decrease its steps
the grasses greener
and the clouds do not change its usual drifting
nothing's changed
not even me...

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Want To Forget Love

your picture had long been
taken out from my pocket
i have thrown it
in the river that flows to the sea
who knows where
it may be

i care not to know
i have long forced myself to forget you

but then true love no matter what
even with forceful forgetting
comes to you again
whispering her name

it seems that even without your picture
you name is still
embedded in my brain
your face is a memory
that cannot be forgotten
in the deepest crevice
of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Welcome Me

when i go to your place
do not welcome me
with flowers

not with a streamer
i am no
v.i.p.
not a star of the show

the flowers are for the dead
and i am coming home
alive

welcome me
like i am a nobody in your heart
like i am a new stranger
in your town

welcome me like i am a new beginning
that is how i want it

i am a beginning
i am alive
i still want to live by your side

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Whisper In My Ear

when you whisper in my ear
you must know that i am not really listening
it is this warm breath of yours
that tickles my nape and my hair
my neck is sending erotic signals to my pelvis

i like to turn back to you quickly
so our lips may meet and then
i shall know what do you really want
candidly and spontaneously without words
do not tell me for i always understand.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Will Tame Me

You want to tame me
This wild beast
In the jungle
Intractable

Do you say
You want to soften me
To harness me
To control me
To make me useful
To cultivate me
As one kind of
A plant or a docile
Kind of an animal?
Domesticated and
Submissive?
Will you make me
Savageless?
Deprived of zest
And spiritless?
Serviceable shall
I be to you,
Harmless and
Rendered useful
For any master?

Tame me,
You cannot
I am born a lion
And I shall never
Be as tame as your
House cat,

I live in the wild
Now and you have
Known me by the
Same name when
We first see each
Other eye to eye
On the roof, I have
Assumed the
Fierceness of the
Mockingbird, and
No one has stopped
Me mimicking all
Of you- shy and coy,
Pusillanimous, gentle,
And so manageable

Insipid and God forbid,
Dullish and insipid

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Wish That We Stop Thinking For A While

your life must be messy,
like your room with books scattered on the floor
dirty socks and shirts and underwears
everywhere in bed in the sink in the cabinets
open when they should have been closed
like a mouth and mind
with nothing good to say
but just the same still muttering
some words which are not necessary
for the day
which should have been
beautiful

you think that what makes the mess is this
ability to think to classify and to prefer
what must be
what should have been
the standards and some things ethical and proper
and restrained

perhaps, you think, if you stop thinking
life would have been nicer and easier to manage
like simpy being attuned to the mess
and living with what is simply there
no ifs
no buts
no 'i wish this were this and this were that'
just wallowing and sleeping when sleepy
and eating when hungry and leaving when there is nothing
worth staying

to cease thinking when you want to
and life would have been one wonderful state

wo/man is a rational animal
rationality, thinking, is its essence, and when you cease to think
even for a minute
you must suffer the consequence
no ifs
no buts
you too cease, you die, your eyes wide open
those that do not blink, like a fish you think is not sleeping
or dead

you wish you were unthinking
what you wish is after all, the death that lurks in your mind,
ask yourself, in truth, you wish for it, but you do not confront it

so, why not just live, and think some more, and just let it be
do not die,

open, open it, it is raining now, open it
do not close it, in your hand, this umbrella lies

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Write A Poem For God..........

you write a poem
for God
and He must be very happy for you
and you go to Heaven
for this

God never wrote.

God never wrote for you
even a single line
even a syllable

you know it
He shows it not in words

well said, the mellow sunset
the gentle sunrise
every leaf every grain of sand
a bubble in the air
fingers of sunshine
feet of clay
every nail every lock of hair

God is here.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Write Poetry

Do not be preoccupied
With writing one
The thoughts
Will be disturbed
And will not settle
With the words
You are choosing

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Write.

When you write
You hunt for words
Capture them and put them where you
Want them to
Symbolize
An idea, words are symbols too
And these words can be more than that,
Like the word love
Symbolizing how you feel
About her
It can be more than that
Love as a word can go beyond
Its symbolism of
Affection
It can be demanding
About other words
Time
Money
Effort
And if you are true enough it
Can mean vulnerability
And nudity
One by one you remove every
Cover of yourself
From shirt to pants to brief
And there is more to that still
What you write
Any word for that matter
May demand that you remove
Your mind
Your eyes
Your soul even

So that in the end what you write demands
That you become completely
Nothing. Try it.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You Wrong A Person

when you wrong a person
and you do not think of any reparation
when you think that you are happier
in your situation

beware
for at the end
the furies come to take their revenge

beware
for the right hour comes
for that foolishness to come back
to your very own body

beware
do not laugh do not be overconfident
no one may come to take back what you have taken

but soon
your hands shall go against your commands
and your fingers shall soon begin their take on you

self-choked
you take your own death
through your own hands,
your tongue shall hang out
your eyes escaping from their sockets
looking at you
with all guilt

take note
it is the self that becomes your own enemy
and it is this self that at the end
takes you
away from yourself.

RIC S. BASTASA
When Your Hand Of Friendship Is Brushed Aside

say thank you

try extending your hand to another hand
to the other thousand hands in this world who need other hands
those with love in their hearts those with minds still believing in friendship

tell yourself she does not deserve your offer
assure yourself she is another ghost
another virtuality
another waste
a junk

without a name without a soul without a face
extend your hand to another hand with real fingers on them
and try seeing yourself in the mirror
you still have that reflection and that ghost does not have any
be glad
you are real and she isn't

does she think that you have pain and that you need her friendship badly
such that you want to bow before her like she is the goddess of beauty
and wisdom and truth?

let her be. She is not a part of you.
why bother?

be yourself and keep that hands of friendship warm
for another one who needs it too

let the gods reign in the heavens. They live in their clouds
stay on earth and be the river for the fishes to swim
for the strangers to drink with the cup of their hands for them to quench
their thirsts

let your hands of friendships be the seeds of springs
the flowers of summers
that bloom forever
let your scent spread for those who still need them
and let these gods remain as gods
because they shall always be worshipped as loveless strangers of this earth

RIC S. BASTASA
When Your Offer Is Refused.....

a peacock
spreads its colors
on its feathers
the other one
its plumes and
calls
on the trees in
the mountains
and we know what
flirting is
even without having
to give
any number...

there is no need
to confess
nothing to say
in the same manner
when no is said...

when that offer for
love or sex
is refused, you should
know perfectly....

RIC S. BASTASA
When You'Re Alone

it is like a tiny flower
with lavender petals

under the full orange moon
blooming on the desert sands

no shadows of camels
no date palms

no wind blowing from the north
just a star and yet very far away.

RIC S. BASTASA
When You're Hurt And Then You Also Hurt Others

you speak about justice,
taking the law into your own hands
the penalty is just too harsh,
you become one like them

it is when you're hurt that you still love
when you become one so unlike them
you become one nearing perfection
it is when you're hurt and not feeling anything
when you don't hurt others in retaliation
when hurt is no longer even a word
comes then, perfection.

RIC S. BASTASA
When? ..... 

i bring nothing 
and i take nothing 

give me nothing as 
i ask for nothing 

leave me nothing 
there is nothing to take 

accept nothing for 
there is nothing to receive 

what i give was the 
first cry 
what you heard was 
that first cry 

then the smile 
that one which you wish 
should have 
lasted 

nothing is forever 
nothing remains 

the smile is just a 
whisper 
and whispers dissolve 
in air 

take nothing 
leave nothing 

that is how we are 
what we are 
and the only thing is 

when.
Whence Do All These Come From?

each drop
of rain from the leaking roof
rhyming
with the words coming from my thoughts,

each hush of the wind
cressing my face each kiss of the sun
on my hair my lips
each road that is offered to my feet
my fingers holding
smooth thighs

each love, each silence,
all from You

to where shall i then go and call someone
a home?

you.

RIC S. BASTASA
When you Are Tired And Simply Want To Be Home

as i drove the car last night
i passed by the thick crowd of people
in a big circle
the old yellow bus stopped and
some motorcycles were
blinking their lights

the ambulance finally arrived
in short seconds

two bodies of bloody unconscious
males were hauled away

blood flowed again on the floors
of the night

i did not know who they were
what they did and what they dreamed
from where they were
the women that loved them
... i am not interested
i am tired of this routine of
deaths almost every night

i guessed another alcohol caused
mishap, perhaps

i always wanted to be back home
and it was already late at night

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Am I And Where Am I Going

those are not questions now.
and i do not need to answer them.
for you.

where am i, i am here, my hands
owning a set of fingers. fingers that
grope for words. for us.

i like to think
i am groping for
the words of love. for you.
i like to see how a leaf sways
caressed by the wind that
loves it. gently. for us to think about

for a time, being, here.
where am i, i am beside
a big box. a house. i am inside.
this big empty box, where
a loud music is played
and my ears are dying
to be sealed by fate

to deafening indifference
of you. from me. i am here.
saving on words. scribbling
some meanings. for us.

i am in the middle of
an overuse. i am in need
of a recluse. for us. to fuse
again.

some birds tweeting
the sound of departure.
is this the mating season
of the wind and the water
and the river and the sea?
where am i going?
i am going nowhere.
i am staying i am loyal
to this seat

i am warm like
a palm. i am going,
let me tell you honestly,

i am going to make a difference.
for us. we shall never be the same again.

you grip my hand. I escape through the fingers
of my watery self.

as usual, you will see me: a river, and then i am

the sea.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Am I Heading For?

i've gone to Ireland
stopped at the United Kingdom
slept in the Virgin Islands
and left U.S.A for good
after a week
of jet setting
there is no Disneyland
in me anymore
no Golden Bridge
nothing like Spring Flowers and
Autumn leaves
I search for summer somewhere
in South Africa
almost had the sting of
Salvador's Dali's interpretative
painting rendition
of what life has for me to offer
Got laid in Mexico
and had zip-less memories
in the train bound for Zurich
took my bathe in the French Riviera
with some women of means
and shallow sensibilities
what more do i want of this life?
where am i further heading?

My problem not yours
Let my poems solve
what miseries i have
what doubts
what empty space filled with
Nothingness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Am I?

from a stack of papers
and folders inside my room
i take the chance
of taking my
rest in the comfort room
thinking about
an unfinished poem,
i have stored
so much urine
in my bladder
to feel the
flow
of poetry when
i pee.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Am I? I Am In The Middle Of An Idea.

i am in the middle of an idea.
it is like a river always flowing.
at the top are blessings like rain
on a clear bright day, and on the
ground are glistening dews,
like diamonds. On the right side
are trees filled with ripe fruits,
and below them are bushes
filled with yellow flowers. On the
left side of this river, are stones,
and cliffs, and crevices, and
at the height of all these silence,
is the call of the west wind.
There is a confusion somewhere.
But there is also a certainty like
the brightness of the sun. I am torn
between these two choices.
I am in the middle of this idea.
Like a river, i continue flowing.

Like the driftwood, i no longer care.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Am I? Tell Me Lust

i am not you
and i am not with you
neither i am with
myself: there is no
home there is no
sense going
or running away
i am not at all
ready to be.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Are You Going Little Girl?

the wooden boat
on one end the little girl with her paddle
a little longer than her frail body
then her mother and her younger sister
under a yellow umbrella against the sun

i can feel her firm tiny hands that hold the paddle
stab the river and stir to make this murkiness
she holds it on clear directions she struggles to push
the water to move the boat
as the sun scorches her brown skin

shiny and thin and yet so unfrightened
i am asking the philosophical question

to you elvi where are they going?
and you where are you going too?

do not answer me with the name of a place
it is the usual answer, tell me more about what i do not know

the one that stirs the river that one that pushes the boat
the one that must make the mother fold her umbrella
the one that must make the little girl stop her paddling

the answer that exhausts all options
the one that must make us shift our paradigms

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Are You? .......

you know who is
at fault
but you cannot just
tell it

you know how in love
you are
but you cannot just
say it

God knows what Adam
did, and all he asks is
'where are you? '

the poetry that
attempts to find
its writer
would surely
ask the same

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Do We Go From Here?

after 70 years
of so much planning
nothing exciting
really happened in
his life,

he concludes everything
is wrong
because he is actively doing
everything
for him

he did not give fate a chance
to shape his own life

it is life that takes us
where to go

and life is a silent friend
it does not tell us
anything

we simply wait
for the surprises

a boat may arrive from a far horizon
and waits upon us at the nearby pier

we shall step inside its body
& it will take us
to a place
intended for our own good

a black bird my hover on the window sill of our house
and sings
and we who listen to the sweetness of its song
shall learn
about the most beautiful thing that can happen
out there
the next day shall be another adventure and fun

for we are life's children
and she is our loving mother

we simply have to open our eyes
alert our ears
and be sensitive to each and every sign
that life
everyday sends us

we simply must enhance the trust

and surely it will be good
and beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Do You Find Me?

if you search me
if you love me that enough
you will find me in the rain
without an umbrella
you do not find me rushing
i have no reason to

and take the safety of a shed
you will find me shivering
my hair wet and uncombed
you will find me cold
my lips are pale
my arms are shaking
you will find me helpless
and weak and almost dying

you have to find me
i have no reason to live

please....

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Does God Live?

God does not live in Rome
the Pope and the celibates are there
and they are too many
too crowded
and very intelligent

sometimes i honestly ask
if they are still generous and holy

or if they still have the hands
that stretch
to the poorest of the poor

sometimes i am confused
and disappointed

but then sometimes too
i look inside
my being

open my heart
and there i see God living in there

speaking to me
Do not fear Do not be confused
Do not look for me somewhere else

Do not travel too far
I am just right here

Resting in your heart
sometimes hiding from the crowd
sometimes taking time to be silent from so much noise
sometimes sleeping because I am so tired

and so here I am
amazed to my God dwelling inside my heart
my body as his temple
my eyes as the windows of his soul
on this theological revolution
my soul rests my ears listen

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Father Is Buried

tonight
you take the courage of
breaking
the promises that you
give to father

you will break the
backbones he
gave you

this will make you
kiss the ground
honoring more what
this earth has
promised you

where father is buried
where his bones are

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Fire Does Not Exist.

there is fire within me
which is well
contained, though every night
it wants to burn me

or eat me, but which i have
domesticated for years in such a
way that with one word i utter
it stays on its place, sits like
a dog, and dances when told.

if i did not have that skill
i would have been burned a long time ago.
i would have turned into ashes.
and the fire would have devoured
you too, one who thinks that i am
the happiest man in the house
where fire does not exist.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where I Am

I am at the second floor of this building
Glass doors all over me
Overlooking the sea
So calm and peaceful
Blue sea without any ripple
Or wind and there is a blue, white boat passing by
Slicing the sea like a pizza

Between me and the Sea
Is this Road
Near the shore is a deserted house
The dwellers have long transferred to another barrio

There is this fence and trees
Beside the road enclosing the deserted House

This is my office and I am inside it.
The rest of the staff left earlier
To buy something for the coming Christmas party.

I am alone. I am writing.
And here you come.

At poemhunter. com
Your name is Poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where I Live

i've wanted to clothe myself
with the shining armor
i made myself choose masks
worn some and faced the crowd

somehow i did not like it
for who wants not to be one's self?
after the event i regretted having spoken
for others said what was best
but i didn't or perhaps i couldn't

so now is the time to be naked
and display the mole behind my chest
for them to remember
that i was and will always be different
that i was born not to be admired
but just to be dispensable
to be dismissed as nothing but a mere idea

on this new understanding
perhaps i can dwell satisfactorily
in the silence of this tower.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where I Live....You Know It.

a house is built
made of bricks, red as blood
at the center of the island
black as a mole
at the middle of your right cheek

it is fenced by the locks of your hair
it is guarded by the cautious tongue of your face

at the other side
bounded by a big brown river
is a cottage
no living room, no kitchen
not even a restroom
it is just a square cottage
with roof leaking
where i can see the stars

if you know me well enough
for years that i have been with you
and for days that i have left you
you shall know where i live
and if you love me well enough
you'll take nothing with you
to follow me

and i know you will never be lost
until you find
the place where my heart sings

RIC S. BASTASA
Where In Hell Is Heaven?

if i judge him and tell him that his life is wasted
on those beds with all the kinds of women
and drugs

what have i made of myself then?

another equal another push to another equal pull
i must be best in the form of my silence

if i tell myself that i am happier with all the white vests
of my self-imposed restraints of moral codes and
ethical considerations

what must i have possibly impressed upon you?

that i can be another listed name in the roll of liars
of those who have embraced the messianic sickness?

we are in this same, old, rotten world
and i am trying to imagine a garden of roses, a clear pond
a set of trees, a line of bushes, some rays of pure light

we all still ask the same question: where in hell is heaven?

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is A? (For A)

he sent me a video
of himself humming in
Greek

not the literal Greek
language that you understand

it is strange and
(my heart cries perhaps
there is this
indescribable sympathy for
one in pain)

i may be out of frame
attributing pain to one who has not
experience pain
outside this small world of
indifference

it is the distance that understands
and i am definite about it

i dream of someone who fell upon a cliff
deep into the blue ocean beneath
and for one thing
i have not heard any cry for help

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is God?

after all those walks
in Bethlehem and Jerusalem
even in Horeb or
Sinai

after the sail in Galilee
and the Nile

having seen the wall and
the separated people and

the wailing of those faces
on the walls

from the faces of the young
soldiers of Israel and

the hungry Bedouin children
in St. Catherine

this i tell Elias, and also
to Anas

God is not on those stones
and the walls

God is inside the hearts of
men and women

and wherever they are
within their hearts there

God Lies.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is She? Where Is She?

Your voice I have not heard for long
Unseeing, you have shun me away
Relentless, I shall find another way
Inside your heart, I shall sing a song.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is The Cat?

in the quiet
there is a bird
that i
cannot catch

there is loud
thump
on the beam of
the ceiling

i do not
own a dog.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is The Entrance? Where Is The Exit?

the price you
pay for the years of
patience:

people think that
you should be feared

that your absence is
a festivity

that you are sky
and earth at the same time

that between all these
is an empty space

what you bring is
compassion

and they look to
every pore of your skin

where is the entrance?
where is the exit?

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is The Love?

where is the love?

you ask me when i kiss you
you doubt the warmth of my lips
the truthfulness of my arms
the civility of my fingers
the trustworthiness of my hands

where is the love?

you look into my eyes
like you are a woman swimming in my river
you feel the coldness of my waters
the silence of my stones
the calmness of my sands
the coyness of my fish and snails

where is the love?

you ask me
you find the lotus without a flower
you find the driftwood on the water

my love, try finding love in the sky above

do you see love in the sun?
do you feel love with the moon?
do you hear the love from the tiny stars?

tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Is The Prince?

lady, there is something wrong
with the story: Cinderella asking for her Romeo?

What can Juliet say
about this
interplay of fate and chance
light and darkness?

Wait, till Mercurochrome
meets Paris
at the Hilton or
Waterfront?

How sad, such sweet sorrow
in the balcony of the broken mind.

RIC S. BASTASA
some people are focused.
there is always no time for something else
except that focus on what
is relevant and
important (as to what it is
you are the one in the most fitting
position to know)
like a glass of lens that receives light
from the sun and then
burns the paper
where nothing important
is written.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Only The Few Can Cry

her father
hides his tongue
and when something goes wrong
he bites his lips
and grits his teeth

his feet run and his
hands grip
what should not have been
in the course of
life

i like him that way
always misjudged
and i keep seeing him
doing the right
thing

and so i write about
him
after he died in that
funeral
where flowers are
refused

where only the few
can cry

RIC S. BASTASA
Where The Crowd Eats Some Parts Of You

you step inside yourself
create a home
complete with a window
and furniture
flowery drapes and
cotton sheets
a bed and a side table
you are into some
kind of dimming lights
a little of Mozart playing
softly

dthis is how to dream and
regain what pieces of self
you lost
outside where the crowd
eats some parts of you

you must be happy now.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where The Heart Is...

her voice was soft
as the cotton inside the pillow
her words
no more than the lowest
intensity of the
whisper
she feels so right
there, there is where
her heart is.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where The Home Is

In analyzing fear
i look at my heart
if it is empty or
full or if it is still
there at all,

and this is what i found,
it is when it is empty
that fear comes in
and takes residence in
there,

for how can fear come
when the heart is full of
love
(or even hate or
whatever?)

and then i check
the existence of the heart
and ask myself

is it still there?
ah, it is there at home

for where the home is
there the heart too
dwells

and home is still you
and this house and this
garden
this bed, this
blanket
this floor
this face...

RIC S. BASTASA
Where There Is Darkness....

while the sky
become dark
slowly stars come
sailing by
with the moon

and you reflect
upon all these
while sitting on
the bench

where there is
darkness there
are also stars
with the full moon
as bonus.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where To Stop?

where to stop?

stop right
there where
you want

when to stop?

stop when
things are over
when
you cannot handle
what
to start

but why stop?

life is always a beginning
it is death
that ends

are you alive?
then do not ever, ever, ever

stop

RIC S. BASTASA
Where To? ......

the skin of my neck
is tight
and my C5
and C4
are not that passable
and neurons
are working hard

it feels like a rope
and people talk
and i am not listening

i don't understand
what next to do,
and the Cheshire cat
grins
and says

'does it really matter? '

shit.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where We Are Going.

may you always remember
that above us will always be the stars
and below us
earth, stones, grass,
leaves

we can look up and be amazed

it is us, and us only who knows
what to believe

and what we believe ultimately becomes
where we are going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where We Could Not Find You Anymore

we tried hard enough
to please you
to make us sound like
the poets in
your mind but we couldn't
we are into deep sorrow
which turned into a rage of
a river
taking us to nowhere where
we can no longer find you.

and we keep on moving carrying
that lesson from the rage that
we were never born to please
you or

anybody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where We Sleep And Dream Again

we walk together
along the shore

you hold my hand
and feel the comfort
of who i am,

you see the
sadness of a sunset
and you cry

i smile
remembering
the memories before
that sadness,

i still carry with
me the scent of morning
the kiss it gave me
the hugs of noon

and sunset is just
a passage
that takes us into
the night

where we sleep and
then dream again...

RIC S. BASTASA
Where Were You?

where were you when
i needed you?

i spilled some lima beans in my bed
and my wife shall gather them all to me
and i ask her
how many are these beans specifically

it will take her time

i spilled ketsup in my white shirt
and my wife will have to clean it for me
she will wash it
with soap and water and dry it in the sun

it will take her time

so, let me tell you i am thinking of you
while she picks the lima beans and counts them
in specific numbers

so let me tell you that i am thinking of you
when she washes my clothes and make them
all clean for me

so i will look like a decent man

let me tell frankly that i think of you while we make love
you are the bulb lighting in the darkness of my mind

i am so unkind
i am thinking of you

where were you when i needed you?

you are always in my mind.
that is your place, only in my mind

my wife is beside me.
she is concrete love to me.

your place is only in my mind
and you
cannot touch me.

like a cloud you will be here for the meantime
the right wind comes
and drifts you away

and you will no longer be in my mind

i guess things will turn out right
when the right wind comes along.

you are just a blue, ephemeral cloud.

RIC S. BASTASA
Where You Go

When we finally part ways
I like to see where you escape
From the clutches of my hands
I will follow you
As you go to green, cooler fields
Or to the white cheerful foams of the sea
I shall know
To always follow you
In bliss

If you escape however
And take flight towards the recesses of your heart
And the secret paths of your veins
I will not follow you
Your body now has walls
Impenetrable
I shall be blocked
By the coldness of your heart
There are no doors
Or windows where I can possibly enter
You have shut yourself
With all your skins
Where no white bones can ever be seen

RIC S. BASTASA
Where You Really Live

integrity has
to start with a house
and then you
utter a word which
lives in that house
that you
consider too
as your
home

you have one word
one house
and then they know
where you
really live

RIC S. BASTASA
Where's Loneliness?

and you heard it how i told her
she must free herself from her own depression she is too old for it
fifteen years, twenty another ten and she is not worth it anymore
sorrow overwhelming can be wasteful, sadness seeping is simply a sagging
surge of a salvaged symphony,
quit, it is quiet, quite a quilt of guilt,
quit, now, depression does not deserve her, she is too weak for an escape,
going down to your own knees and beg that you must be
lamenting forever, when lament knows how to lament by itself alone.

where's loneliness? is it inside you always and alone with you?
girl, this is not the rules of the game.
nature says, everything is temporary, nothing is permanently prim
nothing is permanently prime, someone goes down and another one
goes up, you are down under, and it is surprising
why,
your only tendency now is to go up, why deny yourself such a right?
go girl, go up, opt for sanity, be dandy
be groovy, take the new haircut, the sleazy one,
buy yourself a new dictionary of life and find the words
fit for your style this year. You're the ox and it is your year.
where's loneliness? it is no longer inside you.

I swear.
Gladness also knows how to steal you from the cruel
fingers of your foes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whether We Are Dogs Or Men

whether we are dogs
or gods
or men
it does not really matter
if we believe in nothing at all
if we believe
that there is no reason why the wind blows to the west
why the birds build their own nests
why glaciers exist

why we write poems
it matters. why we always want to say something
and open our hearts
for them to see the white doves
flying there

it matters. why we wake up and wash our face.
why we ask. why we look for answers.

whether gods or dogs or simply men.
it matters now when we begin to believe
about eternity.
this sense of being incomplete.
the want to be
completed. it matters now. whether we are dogs or gods or simply men.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whew! !

i was told, not to worry

when i was yet a one-celled body
i died, and live again
as another complex organism, a tissue,
a seed, and then i sprout
and turn into a plant and then
i die again
and turn into another more complex body
a butterfly
metamorphosed into a bird
and then i die again
and born into the body of a cow
and then i die again
and born into the body of a man
whew! it is tiresome and
so hard to remember
what i did as a man,
they say i was once a king,
and then
into, a semi-god, and then i die
again and i turn into
a god, and so on and so forth,
with a point,
i should not fear death
because it is taking me into
perfection

a hundred and another hundred years.

RIC S. BASTASA
Which Death? Which Death? Somehow You Have To Choose.

imagine
how painful would it be

for the bee not to sting
for the snake not to bite
or for those scorpions
underneath the earth
not to take their trek
on the rocks
on the nights of their
hunger
not to eat the prey
which is reserved for
them

would you believe
the promise of the bee, the snake,
the scorpion
not to sting and not to take
the bite

why do you pity the prey?
which death would you
sympathize?
which foot would you take
into empathy with
you?

which death? which death?
somehow you have to choose.

RIC S. BASTASA
Which Dog To Discard

too many dogs
are barking the wrong
tree here

i guess it is time
to decide
which dog to discard
which dog
to retain the one which
has gained your
trust
all year round.

i still prefer the
silent one
that which looks
at me with a wagging tail
sits peacefully beside
me and takes me back to
my childhood years

i breathe and then
finally sleep in the
cover of sweeter
dreams.

RIC S. BASTASA
Which We All Want To Call Reality....

you just don't
know that poets are
so many

that one is
a postman
the other is
a drunkard

that one is
a consul
the other one
is a teacher

that one is
a psychopath
beside him his
shrink
both of them
are poets

one is a lawyer
shifting from
law to poetry
from left to right
from truth to
fantasy
all rolled into
one

which we all
want to call
reality.

RIC S. BASTASA
Which We Still Refuse To Speak....

here in this
house
i think i know
what
Antartica is

how cold it
is perhaps

perhaps, just
perhaps

when love is
gone
when we still
continue living

when we still rock
in a rocky
marriage

well, this is it
tradition, tradition,
sticking it out
like stain to a
white shirt
like the bitterness
inside our throats
which we still
refuse to speak....

RIC S. BASTASA
While Driving Alone At Night From The Law School

the rain starts to fall
and so i close the window and then
meet the face of
silence

it has sleepy eyes
pale skin and a tiny mouth like a scar

since it is dreary
and i feel like a prisoner inside a moving cubicle
i begin to talk to myself
as though
i have someone other than myself

the more i talk
and the more i answer my own questions
the more i have become enlightened
who am i
and what i can possible do under the circumstances

the night is solemn and i have known
a friend
and we now know that we like each other's company
and we love
to be home again

for sure.

RIC S. BASTASA
While Driving My Car Late Evening From School

while driving my car late evening
from school
when the rains fall heavily
on the streets
looking like deserted
i talk to myself
unceasingly
like we are very close friends
and now for the first
time in 20 years meet
for this historic reunion

i greet myself with such a warm
hello ric
this is ric meet ric
how you have not changed for years
you still look wonderful tonight
and how are things doing with you?
i am fine and doing well
and i am at home with myself
progressing in my career
and happy with what
i have and what i am
looking forward
to more excitements
of my life
like you do too
with your life
ric to ric

the talk goes on and on
and then the rain stops
and then i finally arrive
and honk my car
to this house
where the gate opens
all too quickly
with anticipation
like this joy  
of an emotion

the lights are all on  
brightly they shine  
on the glass  
of the car

i am home  
at last

RIC S. BASTASA
While I May Be Too Busy With The Letters Of The Law

i received your letter asking how am i doing
you prefer the paper with scent not the emails
you find them too impersonal,

i am fine. I am bound with the rigors of the law. I am stronger now.
I am focused to what is right and rigid.

thank you.

But while i may be too busy with the letter of the law and its spirit,

i sneak sometimes on the little window beside me

it looks out to the sea, to the seagulls, to the boats, to the port, to the sands, to the seacaps, to the wind, to an endless horizon beyond me.


RIC S. BASTASA
While I Am Sleeping

what we learn
is we are the ones deciding what happens

experience proves otherwise
natures speaks the reverse

that flower that i have never touched
or designed
this morning unfolded from its closet buds
blooming without
my consent

and so does others, sun, moon, stars,
sea,

wind, your hands unto mine touching me
while i am sleeping

RIC S. BASTASA
While I Was Driving The Car Back Home

while i was driving the car back home
the town suffered a
blackout, and all that i can see before me
is a sea of darkness but i am not frightened anymore
for i have light within me
or the car perhaps is well conditioned to travel
the tunnel of darkness
without people or in places where everyone is asleep,
somehow
i begin to think what if i am the only one left
in this world
where everyone finally left somewhere to a place
where i have never been to....

and then i begin to think about you.
how can i be so cruel to forget such a lovely person as you?
how could i be so indifferent?

and then i stopped the car and veered my way
back home to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
While I Was Walking My Way Back Home

a fat woman
sits by the alley
with a blond hair
dyed
not natural for her
race
her eyes are
chinks
and her built as small
she is the usual Asian
woman
mindful of
who passes by
cannot resist talking
and putting
in contempt
a fellow Asian
like her.

i wave a hand at her
and call her
sister.

RIC S. BASTASA
While I Watch You With Desire

in bed
as you sleep
all in the beauty of
light
your body's lines
explaining art
and sending me
back
the delights of
desire

i stand by the side
of the window
looking at all of you
painting you
with words in this

early morning
poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
While Jean Is Typing...

sometimes we want to talk to someone just to fill in the hours
but people want always to be taken special
and cannot appreciate this casual need
but no one is really special in this universe
it seems that each one is nothing but a speck
of dust
and this disappoints someone somewhere
who conceives the idea that
the universe needs him and that it would be
incomplete without him/her
we have wandered for a long time
we invent a universe
religion
we want to rationalized always our importance
i expect the truth
that after all these we are nothing
but a product only of
an evolution
without any significance at all

RIC S. BASTASA
While Others Are Eager To Go

with their selves waiting on line
waiting for their trip
without anything to carry
you are there
gathering garbage
at your pleasure
those eager to go look forward to
their trip
and they look at you with all
pity

RIC S. BASTASA
While Praying...

he is in church
attending the Sunday Mass
trying to close his eyes
in solemn prayer

at the front row
three rows ahead of him
is the woman who defrauded him
in a land deal

(money is not that important
but the fraud pinches
his soul)

beside him is his debtor
who just arrived from Dubai
on a three-day tour
and he did not pay him
his debt for two years
now

now the question is:
how can he keep his peace
in the middle of his
mumbled prayers?

before God his traitors
and swindlers
sing their hymns

RIC S. BASTASA
While The Law Sleeps

there is a new trend
in the city since the law has been too slow
in catching what the people think are the culprits

everyday satisfies itself for a new kill
another notoriety is summarily executed
the people see and do not mind
their hearts which are too thirsty for justice
make the common nod and the law

smiles thinking about how the people have become
responsible

while it sleeps.

RIC S. BASTASA
While Waiting

while waiting
be it in the bus
or in the rest rooms

for something more important
for something that shakes my world
or twists my fate

i look inside myself
killing the impatience
battling with ennui

i write this poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
While Waiting For You

I sit on this desk like a schoolboy
Waiting
I tap my fingers i keep my feet
Underneath
Nobody is watching
I am looking
Outside from here
The green football field
The trees pruned like boys
With new haircut
The chapel,
It is where I pray everyday
Before going to the usual university quibbles
Two hours passed
Still there is no you
Or your shadow
Sometimes I think
Most of the time I don’t

This relationship
What am I to you?
That you should make me wait?

I take my notes
And begin writing

Who am i?

I quit this chemistry
I am ready for philosophy

RIC S. BASTASA
While Waiting For You Inside The Car

Two kids are
tumbling

their bodies
light as feathers

swift and agile
like cats

on an island of
light on the city

that is about to
sleep

my eyes negate
exhaustion

envious of youth
contemptuous

of the past
unfulfilled about

who i am
without the why

RIC S. BASTASA
While Waiting On The Bus

inside the bus
we are all strangers

bound for the same
direction but will be doored
out in different
stations

sometimes we share
stories
most of them here
have their mouths
shut

there is an old woman
carrying a pack of clothes
unable to hold her sorrow
she speaks about
the house that she just left

i see eyes looking
outside the window of the bus
by all means
everyone is disinterested

finally the bus is full
and ready to go
the engine begins to start

on open windows the air
keeps cooling the cheeks of
those who have impatiently
waited

the bus starts to run away
from this chaotic city
and these hearts all weary
are feeling such indescribable
relief.
RIC S. BASTASA
While Waiting....

she has
no love life
in Melbourne

nothing
significant
to say
that love burns
and it burns
like the sun

she is
celibate and
smart
and she says
they now
go together

in such
a loveless
insignificance

they have chosen
no one.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whimper

a whisper can
lead to a whimper
and one thing may
lead to another
like some whining
when the liking is
not the inkling, and
then you stay out
and not be counted
like those still lining
for the paining, and
then claim
you like the Mesmer.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whirlwords

when you enter this room
you will meet us

you look at our faces
wearing different masks

when you smell us
you begin to think of dog's hair

you will be confused like a swirling door
we anticipated that from the beginning

scents interchange and
manners well studied get unpredicted

each gesture is mastered but
switching hands become a habit

you try the way we sound like moooo
listening carefully we waver for another idea

we anticipated that too
we have exchanged our tongues for some lips

not to be outwitted
you listen to the beatings of our hearts like native drums

you have heard everything from 'asshole' to 'zezbomba!' now you have known me but who knows if

i have filled myself like a hot balloon
and then i am no longer there except the grass and the heat

RIC S. BASTASA
White And Pure

the man is white
bald and wearing a pair of glasses
a la Mohandas

the woman is brown
young and confused

yet knows what to do
in this kind
of tense situation

she is
(forgive me) like a mouse
jumping into that big white cruise ship

heading for a storm
a la Titanic.

RIC S. BASTASA
White And Red

white and red
meeting halfway
between
love and lust

on compromises
something bursts
midway

and it was
too nice.

RIC S. BASTASA
White Hair

i let the years pass on my busy days
this and that
those and there and here
contemplation is a monk and he has not come
my door is open
and the crowd came in. Leaves of years keep
falling like it is caused by the cyclone
of my moving forward onward
this and that and those and there and everywhere
until one moment when the last white hair fell
and then i shudder
to all these and that and those and there and here
and nowhere
and nothing, until the monk in saffron cloth came
asking me
if i am finally going.

RIC S. BASTASA
White Hair, Gnarled Flesh, Dirty Fingernails,

it was a wrong beginning
it starts with a thing you like but you cannot have
and so you begin with a lie inorder to survive
and you are confident
at the end they will always understand and then forgive you.

you are not afraid of wrong beginnings
since there are so many of them to begin with
there is fear somehow at the middle
before the discovery until such time that time like any fruit
too becomes ripe

and juicy and as usual falls to the ground as a matter of necessity
something that no one can prevent
not even your hands that know how to catch a lie and hide it like a butterfly

and so the end comes and so many eyes come out
to look at you
as though you are a stranger from a faraway land

white hair, gnarled flesh, dirty fingernails,
wilted lips, bent bones, and unable to say anything
dying as you have to admit
who has the courage to curse you?
or tell you that you owe them an answer
but as they look at you
they have to admit, there is no need anymore.

RIC S. BASTASA
White Herons

As usual
these white herons
gather
on rice paddies
too many of them
and yet so
silent...

RIC S. BASTASA
White Sea

white sea spreading before me
so silky
tiny ripples of the wind
from a far
bringing some stories
from the other island

some leaves fall from
the pitogo tree
some flowers pink and white
lay on the shore

white sands of silence
and peace
seeping in my skin
i am barefoot
i am naked down to the waist
i am waiting
for the sun to descend upon the bosom
of the horizon
i am dreaming of palm trees
soft winds
of summer

a door opens in my mind
i get in
stepping into something new

RIC S. BASTASA
White Turtledoves And Marriages

she remembers
on their wedding day when both of them
cheerfully set two white turtledoves free

now, still on their second year of staying together
on one roof
they know what a steel cage is
and they are sure
they are these two white turtledoves
whom they must
finally
set free

another bond is broken
for freedom

RIC S. BASTASA
White Walls

painting the wall white is what is done this morning.
removing the stains and the marks of wrongs
some spits and phlegm sticking
and we wonder if this shall please him
he who had died a long, long time ago
who wished all the walls are white and neat
and clean.
who wished that it will be like his body
or his soul, but then there was not enough time.
he never wished to die
that early and so dirty.

RIC S. BASTASA
White Wine

after the flesh of
the fish
we drink together
the white wine

still wet with wine
we dip
lips to lips

this time we taste
like sushi
more like that
Japanese geisha
lost in Manila

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Am I

i am not what you
think, i guess, that is not
what i want myself
to be,
i am what you
can touch
i am presence to you
in the same manner
that you must
be present to me
to be real
for i do not want any
drama
a self is not a play of words
an opera of songs
and dances
for you to be real
to me
i must touch you.
ditto with me.
i am my body so must
you be.
To be souls, don't mind,
we can be
later.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Am I Around You?

you revolve around the biggest sun of this universe
where i am not a star
or a planet
or even a meteor
in your skies

i like to be one of your moons
but i am not
and will never be

you look upon the rest as nothing but stones
rushing in random
to find their places in the universe

i look with disgust in your arrogance
someday i shall be the biggest blackhole
someday you will know me the force i have
the power i may soon hold

someday, i stick to this dream this dust shall create
the whirlpools
to become the blackhole giving you the death
that you must deserve

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Am I?

I am a good mimic
Loud and vocal
I sing through
Your nights
When the moon is full
I have repertories
From 50 to 200 songs
I sing the loudest
In the twilights of
Early mornings
When the sun is
Still lazy on the horizon
I can communicate
Specific information
Harsh, raspy,
Shall my sound be
When I drive you
Out of my territory
I can make that
Wheezing noise
That chuck note
Some very piercing
Series of notes
When I defend
My family from
The hawk or the
Fierce Falcon.
I am always
A brave defender
Of my home-nest.

I am your
Mockingbird.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Am I? ..... 

in the island of Mindanao  
papa said it was raining when i  
was born,  

it was cold and so they wrap  
me with a thick blanket  

i became papa's guava's eye  
sweet as it is ripe  
and juicy to his liking,  

the family was strict about  
work, and so there was no play  
and all are serious  
towards earning the fruits of  
our labors  

i went on my own to the university  
finishing my chemistry degree  
and then proceeded to law school  
where industry and intelligence  
wit and logic are daily tools  

the government is too kind  
to appoint me as judge of a court  
of law where the fate of other  
people has become within the  
tips of my fingers within the  
maps of my own palm  

got married then and loves life  
more than ever and has always time  
for a nature trip and communion  

here i am, enslave by the magic  
of poetry, a therapy for our sorrows,  
a cure for our madness,  

i am what i am, for i am not my name,
i am not my own possession, i am not
a tool, i am human, and everything i am
is humanity's opening and closing.

RIC S. BASTASA
in the island of Mindanao
papa said it was raining when i
was born,

it was cold and so they wrap
me with a thick blanket

i became papa's guava's eye
sweet as it is ripe
and juicy to his liking,

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i am not my own possession, i am not a tool, i am human, and everything i am is humanity's opening and closing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who And What We Are And What We Do

you are the witch of the night
and i am the wizard too
and so here we are
roaming the night with our black wings
on half bodies

we are looking for words
and metaphors
to eat

we have separated our minds
and bodies

there will be more insomniac nights
and more bloody encounters
among ourselves

some blood and flesh will fall on the ground unnoticed
tomorrow morning
some flowers with red petals grow
the passersby will smell the
odor of our lives

we are the poets and the poetesses
without our names in the books
of their collections

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Are We Anyway?

on a dry season like this
arid as cracking lips
we wish upon a dream of a rainy night
we can be playful again like children
watering plants for mama
she died ten years ago
without tasting a rain dropping from father's skies
we were groomed for the gravel
our world is a stone
till now, we wish there were more of us
despite the pain
and the horror of falling rocks from cliffs
the sounds of pebbles grating
against the sands of the shore
it has a very indifferent face
the one that does not care
the one that swears we were never humans
but stones and
carts and rusty wheels squeaking upon
those drifting clouds
those that move to no direction at all
we sometimes think we are the wind
we are those that howl
like foxes in those crowded mountains
we are the friends of worms
still wandering in the hollows of our silent worlds....

RIC S. BASTASA

and he would say
let not the killing stop
my idol is speaking
before some dignified people
somewhere in Singapore

statistics runs at 6 thousand
or so dead countrymen
it will go higher and those who
favor the killing
are not tired of rationalizing

they who do evil deserve to die
that is our law
on the other hand, i sometimes, think,
whether i like it or not,
it is them, my brothers and sisters
who are put to death.

they who were born out of love,
they who were taken cared of from birth
no mosquito shall bite,
no fly shall land,
no humiliation whatsoever,

'they do not deserve to live'
and who are you speaking?
are you not human too?
are you not made of flesh and bone?

i will get a mirror
see your full body
i will get a magnifying mirror
see your face
find the craters of the moon
the landscape of Mars
the darkness of Pluto,
everyone is worth dying for,
someone said that some years back
and he is a hero,
and here you are now, speaking,
everyone is worth killing for.

i have killed a fly. I will kill a cockroach.
But i have never killed a dog.
And given a chance, i will never kill one.

Can i kill a friend? How much is my brother?

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Are You To Judge?

she had been living in sin
that is what they say

who are you to judge?
she alone shall be the jury
and judge of all her actions

she is old to discern
she has to decide

what prayer does she
say at night? for all those years

until one day her man dies
and some say she is now free

free from what?
from her guts she must know
her heart shall tell

we shall be in the funeral
and watch her tears fall
upon the glass of the dead

when everything is over
we all leave one by one

and she will be left again
alone

only to be joined by another
beloved

will he be his new-found
freedom or will he be his
prison cell forever

meanwhile i too shall face
the consequences of my own
self

and this will make me silent too
and at night some prayers will be said

too private, more personal
for i like her, am, too, an individual.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Are You?

and the worm
that looks like
a set of thorns
on a glossy leaf
asks the creature
above it with
some wings..................who are you?

and it answered him
i was once in your body
wriggling to be free
asking a lot of questions
to the air and the tree.............i am what you will soon be,

a butterfly...

and the worm does not
believe it greedy as it is
with the sap of the leaves
somehow it feels
something new it is
feeling some wings
growing, some possibilities
lurking inside it.........................how can this be?

it is the same question
that you have been asking

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Can Love And Who Is Loved?

creation is relative
same with our our
idiosyncrasies

and idiocies

sometime you get uneasy
and even impatient with the
dumbness

or the hardheadedness of the
other and you want to show
the real thing
inside you

if you care to listen
the other has the same feeling for you

same impatience
same rebellion

but what holds you both into taking
the calmness of silence and acceptance is that idea

one cannot exist without the other
and without the other

who can love and who is loved?

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Can Take This Longing?

there is always a longing upon the mouth of an empty bowl

the one that you place beside the house that gapes its gaze towards the sun

when it rains you hope that this longing may be sealed by cold water
dropp by dropp throughout the whole night when the world is not seeing
anything, any ripple in your river

body,

no water can fill it, no rain can boast about its power
to level things with its pouring

there is one thing though that you wish to happen
that a child with a stone hits the body of the bowl so that it can be
broken into pieces
that finds no semblance from anything whatsoever
that it can be beyond repair

so that the longing shall be taken away by the pieces
now with its shattered voice

into the void.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Does Not Like A Dog

a poodle
a very loyal one
that wags its tail that looks at you as
God
that stays with you in bed
and sleeps with you
in so much comfort
that provides you the needed
warmth
that company that even a lover
has not given you
proof of
something everlasting

who does not like you?

a dog, as dogged as you
as pleasing as a poodle
always a dog
forever yours and who does not
speak the words
you speak.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Does Not Really Want To Write The Best Poem In The World?

yes, a five-star poem.
the one fit for first prize
awards, the one that will
make you famous
worldwide,
who does not like to
go on tv? read that famous
poem personally.

me? sorry i don't.
i am tired writing the best poem
of my life
been writing for years
i can imagine
trying to fit in
with the most famous ones
dead and alive
but i know i can never write it
because i can't
because i don't
because i do not have any reason
to write it.

i love to write.
AND that is foremost.
that is final. nothing ambitious.
nothing to change your world
or this world or that world
nothing to influence another
indonesian or turk
or swedish or
anybody or anything

what advantage do i get
when i say i just love to write
when i say i do not want to write the best poem in the world?
nothing, except the joy of having
to make the deep breath
in my life.

air that fills my lungs
and make me dream and make me sleep
longer than you do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Greets Her?

she prays hard in church
since it is her birthday today

and she arrives and opens
the red steel gate of the house

and i see her coming with
a black umbrella as it is raining

and i ask her who remembers her
on her birthday today? who greets her
a happy birthday?

i guess merian, i expect genie,
or momma, or gerry
or any name of the good
neighborhood

and she says, candid and true,

'oh, the ants and flies and
cats and pigs! '

i guess. like me,
she is just in love
with metaphors again.

i imagine the pigs most.
And i will
surely invite the flies who
are at war with the ants.

and the cats
are already here, as usual
licking their paws
and taking
their naps again.
Who Is Foolish?

when somehow you decide
who is the fool around here
another fool
fools himself into such
belief

there are no fools
there are only decent human beings
lining up
wanting to be wise.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Is Someone In Your Mind?

when you write tell me
who is someone in your mind?

i know there is someone there
perhaps you love to hug and kiss
but you cannot really do it
for some reason

then you picture a place in your story
all filled with walls
you are groping for an exit
you look up
it is dark
and there is no sign of light whatsoever
and you figure out that to find
a door
you simply have to close your eyes
and wait

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Is The Best Among Us? ....

i dont ever think about who is best i agree theres no one who deserves the title. nobody no one
who is here is an internal struggle others may pretend they know happiness forget the past do not mind the future
carpe diem grab what is near you and live for the moment even only for an existence of a second like a mythical moss the flowers that bloom today tomorrow shall be dying
why do you worry about who is best is that important is that the gauge of what we are doing is that the temptation the reason the raison d etre for scribbling lots of words and befriending phrases for praises absolutely one who stays longer here agrees that it is not simply because we are here because out there nobody care nobody hears our scream on that not so well painted boat against a lousy pastel horizon beside a nearby volcanic eruption

do not read why do you go find another place where you think the best and the mufti-awarded where the laureates exist and be the clapping hands buy tickets for their reading sessions and care to listen

leave us we are free to be dumb eager to be idiots lusting to be morons happy to be nincompoops

see the world is a wide ocean limitless space and full of the anonymous those great spirits live in heaven as we try our best to thrive in what perhaps you call rightfully as

hell.

RIC S. BASTASA
i am the real problem
i Do not have anything to do with my Life, it has only lonelines as the real cause of its misery.

i am the real problem
i Have figured out the real issue
Of the problem and
it is not capable of exact Definition,

That seemingly is a problem apparently
Appearing to me as life but there is
No life in it
The right to call it life
Cannot be true, this is just to be frank about it.

I refer to the expertise of sorceress
She put some aluminates in cinders
And she figures out the illuminated forms of my Problem,

a snake is the illuminated form of my misery

There is a snake in my house
Or
could be in my office or could be in my world.

The real problem is i
Do not believe the sorceress
And I am left with nothing to do but figure out the real Problem in my dreams

Planes taking off and exploding in mid air
Rivers rising flooding and making a town disappear
Bamboo poles with lots of coconut oil rubbed on its sides and I cannot climb
My way of jumping into murky rivers filled with goldfishes floating dead
A brook filled with feces and I am there swimming
A snake chasing me and I cannot run as fast as I can
and it bites me
And I

Wake up
profusely sweating and trembling

i get a glass of water and
ThankGod that everything is simply
a bad dream

The real problem really is,
On the other hand,
I waking up
and well,
Honestly wishing that all these dreams be true,
nonetheless

nevertheless
Real true, so I explode with the plain in mid-air
And they cannot find an inch of me

and I will fall to every climb to that oily bamboo pole
Down to my graves down to the deepest part of this earth
And I will drown in that big flood and disappear with the town
and lose myself in the murkiness of the brown river
And I will die suffocated in that brook of fecal matter and the snake
Finally bites me
and consistently
in reality
and I will be foaming saliva in my mouth frothing like one crazy fool

Dying in an instant.

That is the real problem apparently.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Is The Son Of Man?

as he has
eyes covered by
a green apple
to me
he is a window
closed.

mouth shut

still as a pole
all dressed
for the occasion
and yet
going nowhere.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Knows?

so you go places
it is always a case of getting inside
a vehicle
and stepping out
checking in a hotel
and checking out
walk a little,
run a little
and wanting to stay
and rest
but really can't

you ask for a reason
and it is always there

you beg and you always beg
for time
for a variation
you want to always go somewhere else
to find what you always want
the one
which you know you wanted much
but can't touch
and own

now in those places where
there is no cure
you beg for something else
you beg to forget

just to forget and nothing else
you want to take back
what was new before
you hope that it will be exciting
as it used to be

who knows?
Who Knows? It Could Be You...

it seems to fit
when without reason

all the senses
make a call that it is
you,

but i am not a fool to
all these senses,

my eyes were wrong and
my nose cannot tell what scent
was that

and hence to sum it all
i cannot trust desire

i invoke distance
and your absence for at this moment

i can not think that
much

i leave for a while
and see other places of my heart

when i come back

who knows? it could be you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Knows? She Must

her true name is
Gloria Villa

in english she is
the house of glory

at an early age
she was called
Bangengak by
her folks since
she is not white
and bucktoothed

when she grows up
she may continue
believing that she
is ugly and hence
she may act like
from an ugly duckling
to a full grown
ugly duck

if Gloria however
reads a lot and transcends
how people thought of
her

she may become
what she is in her mind

she may transform herself
into a beauty
from inside her guts
to outside the boundaries
of this world

who knows? she must.
Who Knows? Who Feels? ..... 

AT a different sound level
you do not hear the elephants making
their calls for help

only they can hear what they are saying
as you watch only
silence

and so it will be with the trees and the sands and the sea

you stand there thinking that this world is a silent garden
but it is not

there is a language of the leaves and the branches
there is a talk of the sea and the sands

you just could not hear it
for you too has a language of your own
in your heart
that you
and only you
hear and understand

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Me?

you, yes you,
sly as a fox
insidious, marked with a skill
for deception
you, yes, you
cunning woman
often passing
for wise, deep
machinations
on such schemes
ready always
with your slick
evasive answers
to questions
prepared overnight
sly, tricky Lucy

who me?
not me, you,
yes, you,
yes, you

how dare
you say

you love me.
Attorney Wily

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Says That Life Is Fair?

and so it happened
that one day
i told her
frankly in class
that life
is not really fair

the rich gets
richer
the poor gets
poorer
the killer
is on the loose
and the
heirs of the
victim still
grieving

justice
is not in the
hands of the
innocent

and with a stare
i look at her

and tells her

who says
that life is fair?
raise your hand

and indeed
she raises her
hand

the following day
she kills herself

i guess,
she proves it
slapping
me on my face
with her
untimely
death

RIC S. BASTASA
it is a scary world
this earth trembles a bit
for every rotation
which somehow you do not feel
because also of your own diversions, like

building a new house, buying a red car,
kissing a girl mistaken as a daughter of yours
no malice, just for fun, like the way sometimes
you do not act like your age,
licking ice cream in a faraway place
like Turkey, like strolling along the banks of
the river in Venice,

or buying another pair of expensive shoes,
spending money on risky shares of stocks
taking the behavior of a rich man
who does not remember
death

we die everyday
it is the truth
but who cares? the hurt locker
take off every protective gear
unlock the bomb
cut the wires
take a deep breath
and say

to die is an honor
everybody dies anyway
live the days as though you
die next early hour

such a feeling
now comes this happy fact of acceptances
like a speech you prepared last night
pleasing to all
who still dislike the reality
of terror.....

RIC S. BASTASA
Who The Hell Is Charles?

wrinkled and unshaven and foul
charles takes pride
that two women quarelled
over his underwear
just this
morning after he just
woke up
from his drunken sleep
last night

he smiles in a corner
and prides
himself about these crazy women
competing
for the big bulge
between his hairy legs

he is 58
and his abs are gone
his legs shaky
and his chest
looks like empty

he laughs
at these women
pulling their hair
and tearing their blouses
and hitting each other
with stilleto shoes

(common charles
how much money did you pay
for each whore
on this
midlife crisis of your

what the hell
is this charles!)
your wife
left you, and there you are
padding
your brief with fresh
eggplant and throwing
your money
to these cheap whores
at the pub)

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Wants To Live In The Desert?

no one wants to live
in the sands of the desert
even if
the sun tells you that
in there
you and only you
finally owns it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Who Was That Bird In Your Poem?

and who was that bird in your poem?

she asked
you answered
it could be me or her or him
or anybody
and she felt that we conspired
against her

such a poor bird
what a rich poem!

RIC S. BASTASA
Who You Are And Who I Am

who you are
depends on your choices day by day

calendar by moment
and so too

as to who I am
depends on what I take and what I spit out
from my mouth

it is this responsibility of choosing
I make and unmake myself
I love and unlove
I assemble and disassemble
the parts of me until
I find myself whole again

you too, and then we,
we take the responsibility of taking the risks
of a commitment

something that we can say
this is worth living
and this is worth dying for

RIC S. BASTASA
Who You Are To Me

if you read these lines this morning
these lines that miss you
these lines that say i love you
these lines are dying to touch you
to hug and kiss you
these lines that know every inch of you

if you read these lines well enough
then you know who i am

RIC S. BASTASA
Whoever Brought Me Here

must take me back.

my permission
was never asked.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whom You Think Had Fallen Short Of Love

anything comes here and
goes there
just a matter of entrance
exit, door window, open space
sky, air, and tree
tops, then fall into the
grass, to join with the rest
of those that keep moving,
ants, hoppers, not, not detesting
the caterpillars, and
well, you know the story
about those that finally get
their wings back, as butterflies.

there is this feeling that
you have been there, been there
been there, nothing astonishing
as before, when you first saw
a gnat, an ass, a dumb nitwit,
a bee, that piece of sting sticking
in your navel,

a pin falling on the red carpet,
a burst of a gun, contrast of dark
and light, and words and silence,
and memories flashing in your mind,
black and white, oft white and
tangerine, mystical in your mind,
half asleep, half awake,

half-dead, but so awake, beside
someone, whom you think had fallen
short of love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why

there are reasons why
we have gone to other places

eye mistook us as hedonists as
people who have no pity for money
squandering time and lusting
on the views of the lakes and yachts

despite the hunger of other people
somewhere in Africa
and the recession in America in Greece
the workers are striking

people pretend that they know our hearts
and they condemn us
that they know the language of our minds
and they make conclusions

ah, we live our lives the way we want it
we know our hours
and they are short.
but we do not mind them

RIC S. BASTASA
Why A Love Poem Is Always Relevant...

i plan to write why a love poem is no longer relevant, tried to figure out the rationale for trying i stop i pause and then i raise my head went to the mirror and find myself again, and i have arrived to a place where i once left, and where i was once left out, a place where i should have cried but i did not because i simply couldn't let a tear fall for no valid reason, and this is it, a love poem is always relevant, since it never moved a mountain, never consumed the sea, never stopped the clouds, and this i concur, as i have just recently read yours:

it is nice. as always love unrequited blooms like a cactus with red petals above the thorns in the same desert.

over and over again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Are We Here?

there is this sickness that comes
and you have no power to block it
it is like a monkey that comes at your
temple door and you have no way of driving it
you leave leaving everything important to that monkey
spreading banana peelings on the alter of your sacred nook
you watch at a distance where the monkey plays monkey upon itself
you are sleepy, you fall into a deep slumber
the monkey comes inside that dream and you are helpless
without your hands and feet
you cough, you struggle to vomit
there is no cure for this sickness
nothing comes out
and you are feeling toxic

does that is why we are here.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Are You Against Freedom?

and so
are you this Aladdin
saying
ABRACADADRA
to the wind

look, in this new age,
of freedom,
that cave of despair
no longer
listens

say the dabadabodabubibi
shamamimimommu, kalabashibashashi

perhaps,
it will.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Are You Ignoring Me?

friends, we call ourselves friends, used to be
whatever i have
we share, always you get half of the burger
i eat, always you share. we always move together
on borrowed time, we always read together
on borrowed books, those times when we were poor
and wretched and disregarded
by them,

i guess, you have learned the tricks of distance
its fruits, indifference, its ways, hectic schedules,
and the flow of which is
rapid, like the Niagara, the falls of affection
and remembering

you have always ignored me now
my hello
muted, what has happened then, tell me?

we always shared half of what i have
you have taken
half of what i am, shall i continue living
on this
incompleteness? you have ignored me
always
like you are always, offline, offline,

you have challenged me enough
after 26 years, i have also learned the tricks of
a hundred
indifferences,

i am taking this road, you have taken that
you have been silent
i beg, i bet, i cannot die
alone, i want to live, i want still to know

why, my friend, you left, why my friend, you have
not spoken? all those years
on a cross-eyed point of view
or plain sadness out there?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Are You So Stressed?

it is surprising why
you are tense all day

stressed to the full
when we caught the culprit

i could have asked you
if you are the mastermind

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Be A Bukowski Or An Emily? They Are All Dead

hey friend, dear poet
why be an emily dickenson or a charles bukowski
or a walt whitman or an ezra pound

look man, they are all dead
they're great, they have given themselves
extraordinary fames
commensurate to their extraordinary works
but they are all dead
and they have no more possibilities

they are all impotents
and faded and (forgive the word)

gone, gone, gone, gone.
let them be but part of our memories,
nothing but maps, guides, to the roads that we must now take,
ghosts, famous ghosts, but ghosts just the same,
spirits, their poems are here with us
as a legacy

but we are alive, we are the possibilities
we are more than miserable with our
search for meaning
our quest to justify our insignificances
these little cravings for light
and scent and color
these little lives we have

if true to our miseries
as they were true to theirs

we can even be more
than what they had in their own time
in their own lives
have become......

sail on man, sail on, in the ocean of possibilities
in the vast space of our potentialities
we can be ourselves, truly ourselves,
that to me,
is greatness enough

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Can'T They Say The Word?

a group of ferns hang
on the side of the cemented wall
of an old building
long deserted by its
inhabitants

too dusty to ask for drops of water
too wilted
too hopeless

when the wind passes by on a rumor
of rain
the ferns snob it

they have learned to accept
the reasons behind their fate

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Can'T You Love Me?

Lady, why can't you love me
like i were
that Belgian Blue?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did We Laugh?

upon a crazy day i laugh at myself
and i congratulate myself for being healthy

but the guilt somehow lies when i laugh at
other people's miseries, understandably because
it makes our less miserable, ha ha ha

on the other hand, i too, laugh at my own mistakes,
i just can't help it, for no reason at all, ha ha ha

which calls to mind that i may also be justified in
laughing at yours, ha ha ha, makes me feel more

at home with ourselves, laughing at each others' mistakes
and miseries, ha ha ha

i guess you must remember, ha ha ha, we are friends.
if we fall, we fall together, if we rise, the better ha ha ha.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did God Close That Door?

He closed the door
and touches you but
you do not understand
why.

You silently cry.
He hears it.

You still do not understand
why that door is closed.

Until you find smoke
in the sky

Until you hear about
the dead people
in the room

Now you know why He kept
on closing the door

And here is one that He
opens for you

He says Welcome
This is the home reserved for you
Beloved.

Inside it is a garden
Flowers bloom

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did He Choose Ida Bauer As Her Theme?

ALL over i watch
the story on film, a woman
is waiting for the train to arrive
at noon
and asks what time does it leave
and she always gets the answer
3 a.m.
and she waits
then the train trails slowly disappear
from her eyes
and the haze in front of her
takes her back
to her youth in the house where
her mother died

the story may not be true
as later on it gets too twisted focusing
on suppressed desires
that of Ida

i read the poem
his later doing and i begin to understand
why he writes on something
using some images
that i can barely figure out

it is the haze
it is always the haze that dissolves the rails
of the train
that takes us back home to the place
where our
roots lay rotten

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did He Lie To You?

because you cannot accept the ugliness of his form

because you are unable to swim to the beauty of his thought

because he is deeper than the ocean where the blue whale lives

because he loves you much more than the night loving the moon

because what you do not know may hurt you at the end

you must understand now that on this situation he must make lies

to make love survive to make his world a habitable place to move on

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did He Not Ask?

when he sees
you holding it
he thinks
you are the thief

when he sees
you giving it away
he says you are
the briber.

why did he not
ask?
he should have
known why.

to me he has
become the most dangerous
man on earth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did I Buy It?

it is not because i need it
not because i like it
neither that
i love it, but because
i love you,

and through this sale,
i make my plea
that at least
you remember me
sometime
when you begin to
add me
as one of your
persistent
profits.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did I Choose You?

given the choice
i will not have you
given this freedom
i will never choose
you,

look at me
laugh at me

i have this freedom
this mind
this free will
this multiple choices

why did i choose you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did She Cry?

she is having
high fever and
yet you ordered
her to wipe the dust
on the glass walls
of the house

how can the
housekeeper tell you
about this?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did That Lawyer Read The Same Poem Over And Over Again...

you are
the same lawyer

whom i caught
reading

a poem and
you keep on

reading it over &
over again

and i wonder
if you are tense

did you lose
your case today or

did you find
a law with lots of

loopholes which
web catches only

the lesser fish
cheap and insignificant.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did You Burn That Boat?

try living in an island
just you and the coconut trees
hear the sounds of birds
migrating
sounds of flocks
fading in a distance
what is left is the
song of this river
the changing hues of the skies
the coldness at night
stories that you repeatedly
tell upon yourself

there is a boat that is ready for your exit
towards the city

what did you burn it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did You Not Tell Me?

it is Jenny,
why did you not tell me?

the baby girl
lies all wrapped in cotton
warm in the hands of
mother

and it is you Arjing
in your newly found beginning
gone shall be the gallivanting days of yore

now you are no longer a kid
but a father like your father
before

it is a happy day
on the smile of the little girl
the universe and this galaxy
i tell you
always starts from there

Jenny in the night sky
is your moon
and Reyajen
is your one and only star

can you just be an ordinary
spectator?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Did You Stop Dancing?

i wonder
what made you stop
dancing
with the words

did the music stop?
did all the other
dancers leave
the hall?
did the hall close
earlier than
we expected?
was there a
blackout?

the world somehow
does not stop
revolving
around the sun of
beauty
when one
chooses the slumber
of nothingness

it may tell you
that one quitter does not
destroy the beauty of
the quiet that still
reigns in the pond where
the frog keeps
splashing
with its hind legs
and then croak happily
after each
jump

on top of the lily
rising with a flower
from the mud
of its past

somehow
the heart of the earth
feels
the waste of a fallen
leaf
and there is no exact
connection for this
that one
can point

but soon you will
discover
that in one corner of this
universe
a star dies
another black hole is born
and so many
floating creations
too shall be lost with it

sucked
into that darkness that we
know still exists
but we are
still uncertain as

where and
why.

RIC S. BASTASA
'Why do I love' You, Ma'am?
Because—
The River does not require the Clouds
To Rain—Wherefore when the Buffalo passes
Surely she cannot keep Her Grass

Because He does not know—and
Will not You— In the biblical sense of the word
And We know not—
Enough for Us
The Dumbness be so—

The Eyelids—never asked an Iris
Wherefore they shut—when She was by-standing—
Because the Heart knows it cannot speak—
And reasons not contained—
—Of Murmur—
There be—preferred by Old Volkswagen—

The Dark Nights—Madam—constrains Me—
Because They're dark and cold and damp —and I smoke and drink—
Henceforth—Then—
I must pay thee so tenderly—

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do I Write Today?

same question
but a different answer

a matter of point of view
a compulsion
a sickness unto
life
a beggar of
words

everything
are glass stirring
mechanisms
they stir us into
further stirs
whirlpools
me, i am another
one

black and white
the gray areas
they are worth their
own shades
disregard the colors
that do not exist for a while
here

faces and faces
my face
in the mirror
bulging tummies
oh
how did i neglect
my years
pamper myself
with the fats of this
world
this sickness now
into death
Also, (forgive this mimicry)

following you behind
nothing to see beyond meaningless gestures.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do People Look Back?

they look back because it is important
perhaps something so important was left

there and there is a need to take it back
to make life move on and be normal again

they look back because the past is worth
the simmer, the sound of the past must have

been so lovely to the ears, and recalling
emboldens the weak to become lion-hearted

but i am looking back for some reasons
i left a part of myself in there and here i am

bringing my body without a soul, taking an
arm without my fingers, a chest without a heart.

i must look back because she is there and she
is dying, and i still have other stories to confess, .

because there is still a need for me to be forgiven.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do People That We Love Die?

because my son
they too need to rest

because my son
they are subject to the law
of nature

because my son
they have already loved
you, now it is time for you
to love
another.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do We Always Have A Home?

we were there
when the sakuras bloom
when the volcano
spews smoke and we were there
when the winds of the lake
blow the sails of the old boat where children wonder what is this all about,
we were there and we took the view of aliens,
you have not seen it when they were real

actually, i did not like it,
when we are far away,
we miss as always the old and familiar

why do we always have a home?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do We Write The Poems?

for as long
as the words are here
with us
then we must write them

for as long as we still rhyme
or even if we don't
for the time being
we must write
the poems

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do You Close?

after i have written
the words,
why do you close the
door?
why do you tease me
with this?
as i come in
you become dark
when i knock
out of respect
you return me
silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do You Post A Poem Posted Days Ago?

i notice it
you keep on posting
and reposting poems
days ago
like wares
in the flea market
left unsold
last sunday

on a monday
i see your
poem again

looks like
a commodity
and you the
poet becomes
the cheap
vendor
shouting
for the
possible
victim?

i see, poems
too are goods
that you display
over and over
again

and reading
them makes
me feel
like i am
this shopper
repelled
by this
persistent
hawker?
ok, today
is another
poetic market
day

excuse me,
how much
is that poem?

yes the one
with lesser words
the one that
is worn out
yes, the one
that never
sells
yes the one
that is
outmoded

discount, please.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do You Think That I Am Ambitious?

you met me a long time ago,
20 years ago, i counted the passing years
i did not know what your impression of me
was.

when our paths met a few days ago
you wrote me a letter
telling me that i am an ambitious man

there is nothing wrong with ambition
it is a positive trait
to go forward in life

but i am not really ambitious
i live a very simple life

not that kind that Basho lived when he was once here
on this very place of a simple dwelling
a leaking roof where drops of rain serve as count
for the rhythm of
a poem

banana leaves to five space for something green
a perfectly opened window the one that does not close even at night
because we all want to see the hills and trees
the landscape of flowers and grass

we even want to take the roof out
so we can see all the stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do You Think That This World Is Not Interesting?

everything has a reason, that is the tenet, nothing happens by random that is a restatement, perhaps an accent, and emphatic stress for those who still doubt.

every reason explains itself, whether you know it or not, they have mouths and minds. though they do not speak to you, or think of you, they think, they speak. A premise.

the fire tree blooms today, and there is fire all around the wildlife part. Warmth is intentional. Fire for summer. Warmth on a hot day. There is a reason. The petals speak for themselves.

an old pedicab under the mahogany trees, the driver pedals its way on a dusty path. a child wearing an orange shirt sits restlessly wanting to jump screaming. Noise in stillness.

the trees are shedding off yellow leaves and the ground accepts a good cover. There is no sound. the grasses are starting to wilt and the moss on the pebbles are dark brown. Time to die.

the joggers are here feeding an activity to this oval the silence of which is finally broken. Summer. This is rest for most. The holy week and time to reflect. Meanwhile the sun shines on top of the world, the clouds are cottony and so white. The wind blows on my face. There is a reason for everything. That is tenet and i know nothing happens by random.

I scribble some notes on my mind. Stating what is not spoken by the sun, the trees, the mountains, the joggers, the dusty path, the child in orange shirt. The pedals squeak and

I am watching and listening. There are too many reasons wanting to be written.
Anger, and
pain and bliss and company and solitude. Why do you think that this world is not
interesting?

Are you not amazed with what we still do not know? Did i not tell you the color
of the daffodils? Or that the man pedaling its way under the mahogany trees
is an old man feeling so useless and that the child in orange is his grandson?

Life need not be what we think we do not have.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Do You Want To Imitate Me?

do you like
that other half
of my
melon face?

don't you think
we both
are boring?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Does God Make Me Awake Throughout The Night?

i know.
He wants me to be a bulb
that glows
the whole night.

i know.
He wants me to be a star
beside the moon.

i know
He wants me to vigil
over his Sorrow.

i know
He wants me to be different
from the rest of you.

i know
He wants me to write
a poem about the night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Does My Dog Whimper?

se he doesn't want to be in the crate so he whines and whimpers which is kind of like a child crying if they don't get what they want. Ignore him if he is whimpering because he just wants attention and to get out of the crate. That is one of the ways of teaching dominance to a dog.

Give him attention when he's not whimpering and whining that way he should stop whimpering.

buying a baby pen or something and some puppy pads. Litter it with some toys so that when you don't have the time to play with him he will have something to do. I assume he pees in order to get your attention and get him out of the crate. He whimpers cause he's sad.; (No one likes to be locked up. You can buy him some puppy bones too. ;) Try to keep him interested and he won't whimper anymore. After he pees, you can let him out for like ten or twenty minutes - best time to potty train him.

3. If he only whimpers when you put him in his crate then it's can be a sign of loneliness or anxiety. Associate the crate with good things E.g. give him a treat when he's in his crate and make sure he has lots of toys in his crate too. To get him used to it you should put him in little but often. Start with 2 minutes giving treats, then let him out. A few minutes later try 5 minutes with treats and a lot of 'good boy' etc, and gradually increase his time in the crate.

him time to adjust and fall into the routine of the family. Don't pull him out and coddle him when he whines, because that reinforces the behavior. At night when he's kenneled, let him whine. As hard as it is to ignore the adorable puppy whine, you have to.

is lonely. Make sure you are not using your crate more than one hour for every month of the dogs age. Crates are useful tools but not a jail. Make sure you are giving your puppy enough of your time.

now, let us ask the dog.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Does This Body Negate The Soul?

it is simple
this sorrow is caused by a body that does not
follow the divine instructions of the soul

you blame it sometimes
but it knows its answer
it cannot follow the dictates of one
who is not its master

RIC S. BASTASA
Why For So Long?

I am falling
Falling to the bottom
Of what I
Do not know

Feeling so empty
I long to be
What I was once
Myself seeing
My own eyes
In the mirror
My ears listening
To my sound
In the sky

This is my heart
It is beating
You make me wait
You make me wait
Why for so long?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Fredo's Son Knows How To Play The Piano With Feelings...

fredo was shot
to death that
Sunday morning
inside his office
in his house
behind the catholic
church
by an unidentified man
who casually walked
outside
after the murder

his child who was
there
saw the killing

blood oozed
and squirted

some landed on the face of
the child
whose small and fragile
hands
washed his face with
blood....

RIC S. BASTASA
Why I Am Cold At Night And Having Chills

the antibiotics have become useless

and so the medicine man
(quack doctor) came and burned some herbs
to cure me

they say that there is nothing wrong
if i believe
i have nothing to lose

and he said
my father long dead is angry and wants to be appeased
his soul
i have not offered prayers
his resting place
i have not visited

and so every night
his cold spirit comes and sleeps with me
missing me
embracing me

i have nothing to lose if i believe
and so prayers were offered
and a visit was done

today the coldness is gone
i feel the heat
of the memory

of papa and his promise to always
protect me
and my family

memories rush like sunshine on my face
and the sickness is gone

i see
the quackdoctor must be right
Why I Do Not Have To Ride In The Same Boat With All Of You

i do not wish to arrive on the same boat
with all of you

when you are all there
there will be hugs, and kisses from children and
well-wishing of the family

the grandchild will shout for joy
as grandma descends from the planks

there is this kind of drama that i cannot withstand
my envy is stormy
and i think i can't stand it without its accompanying
sinking

what a poor boat, sinking to the bottom of the ocean
as you all depart towards some happy homes all waiting

RIC S. BASTASA
Why I Do Not Have To See You...

somehow our roads must not meet
i prefer that they remain
to be so many distances apart

there is no need
you are on your own path of bliss

there is no need for you to confront me about my own choice

i am dusty
and i have no story to tell about sunshine

perhaps there is a tiny thing and it will be about the last rain that fell upon the arms of dead wood

there is nothing there except the hollowness the fibers that give you nothing but meaningless lines

RIC S. BASTASA
Why I Love This Surging Feeling Of Massive Destruction And How Things Are Washed Away To Leave This Emptiness Behind Me

even i

am surprised
why i like the orchestra
of a heavy rain

a rain that
does not stop for days
to accumulate
a flood

a flood that sweeps
away houses
that overflows the feet of bridges
that takes away
trees

these things
make me remember
how mother cleans
the canals
the house
the old deep well
the room
where dirty clothes
are in disarray

how father arrived
one day in the place of a broken family
how he
removed the yoke that bounds the neck
of the buffalo
even i

am still surprised
why i love this
surging feeling
of massive destruction
and how
things are washed away
to leave
this emptiness behind
me

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Is It That Your Only Option Is To Move On?

the one that you kissed
was a stone
the one whom you slept with
was a dead wood
what you once touched
was already cold ice under the
sun,

the house where you lived
had ashed
the fences flew away like leaves
the yard where you once sat on grass
and smoked Marlboro
had become a pool of mud

the way going there had turned
into a snake ready to bite you
when you turn back

there are no more reasons
to make a case
no arguments are strong enough
all the conclusions are wrong

the dog i had did not remember me
anymore
it had become rabid and died

the cat could not wait for i
am not a fish to its liking,

all those ingrates and
traitors grew like mushrooms
nearby

mother had her hair cut and
she left as another vagabond
in the desert.
i had not a word for father.
i do not want to remember that
smells like him.

i too just like the rest had
turned to dust moving on to the
next endless road....

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Is This Dog Making Me Happy?

the answer is simple
it always believes that i am right
that i am always its friend
that there is no betrayal
that the feeding gets to him
on time
that i do not bark like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Must I Fear?

i clearly know my stand,

and i am afraid about what happens next,
at first

i do not have
that feather in my hand
to tickle
you,
man of authority,
i do not have the book
of pleasing you,

man of wisdom, man who can make me into a stone,
power of the wand
who in one sway, can turn me into
nothing,

i am not afraid,
i am nothing.
i have always been nothing
and no one

so what must i fear?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Not Be Drunk For A While?

to be drunk must
be worth trying imitating
Li Po somehow
and feeling how the world,
the night, the moon and
stars can be laid
so peacefully inside
the heart immersed
to majesty of the bubbling
margarita.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Not Eat With Gusto An Unbuttered Bread?

at an age
where bad cholesterol reigns
the kingdom
of your veins

do not ever
think of butter
and cream
or jellies
or margarine

eat some unbuttered bread
one that is bland
and even tasteless

ey too serve
the palates
of the brave

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Not Elevate The Appreciation To A Higher More Delicate And Softer Shade?

higher than the eagle
softer than the cotton

higher, higher than the cliff
softer, softer than the clouds

higher, higher, higher than the highest mountain
softer, softer, softer than the dust of the galaxies

do you feel it now? do you know where the apex is?
do you hear the sound of that vast empty space?

is that what you are looking for? now tell me if i have to go back inward, inward, inside my heart, inside the molecular structures of my blood corpuscle, the intricacies of my nerve endings, the neurons, the positrons, the smallest particle possible inside us

do you feel it too? what do you see in there? is it not the same emptiness that you have seen out there? now tell me where to go next? now, miss, tell me what to do next? and i will always do it for you with all my love with all my human kindness, with all my innate gladness.

tell me if i am lost, tell me if i have to give up hope, tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Not Me?

Look mama I can draw the same
Mouse
The same cat that he draws

Why do you like him?
Why not me with you in that old picture?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Not?

we will never know unless we try?
Here we are, in the limited now, let us try it. Who are you?
what are you? You are warm and pleasing.
You are whole and human. What is your name? From where are you?
You are whole, warm and pleasing,
I am human. Discard the questions. They do not matter. We are human, we are warm, the night is cold and we are too pleasing. Why not?
The night is cold and it will not be that long. Come.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Poetry?

'what is in poetry? 'sometimes you ask me,

'you can always love me without poetry,
why bother about words?
your kiss is enough,
what is the use of the metaphors?
we can always make love all through the night
and words become all too useless
and images become too superfluous' you ask more that what i can
muster to answer.

And this i say:

'i agree, poetry is is useless but like the monk who was asked
one day about something that he does
like sweeping the floor
like climbing the stairs
like praying and contemplating…'

let me say
'we have poetry because they are there to be written'

my heart smiles.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Should I Be Like You?

you there. Why do you watch me like a stranger?
you there. Why do you offer me silence?

look at your face in the mirror. It is very similar to mine.
Scars. Bruises. Pock marks of youth.
Black heads inflicted by time. Furrows of sorrows' ways.
Some spots, red and white. Little imperfections
Inherited from our ancestors. We say we are not happy.
These days do not bring us anything. Even a tiny flower.
We twitch. I flex a muscle on my chin.
You bet, we have many things in common now.
I am speaking to you.

You there. Why are you smiling?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Socrates Did Not Write....

he believes in what must be said
thrusting in the recall of what is important
you should have paid more attention and
kept everything dear inside your heart
he never believes in the written word
he knows that time keeps on changing
and words in print do not, and like
Heraclitus, he had always invoked
that he can never step on the same river twice

i am no Socrates, neither am i Plato
i keep notes, and write, but i shall not always be understood.

i trust in the written word, and i must be foolish though.
i believe in epitaphs and tombstones, the tablets,
the bytes, those that i leave and soon may rise like the dead
must they redeem me soonest
that i can perhaps hope.

the words can go on, without me, i keep on murmuring
may my words protect me, may my letters make you believe my truths.

may i traverse the right path, and forever, not be punished
to be back, here, these valleys of tears, these thalwegs of no return.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why The Pain?

i said i know what love is
that we can share the same
that i know where to begin
and when to end,

love states at me, straight
in my face
shaking its head,

'Geee! , that is not the way
how love works' love tells me.

No one knows how to love.
No one knows where to begin it.
No one knows how to end it either.
Exactly, no one knows, what exactly
what love is.

coz, it you really know, then why
is there pain?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why The Shells Sing?

what does the shell sing
as you put it
near your ear?

and you listen
attentively
to the music

how does it sound?

so hollow
it so lonely so deep

you will tell her tomorrow

RIC S. BASTASA
Why There Are No Seeds Growing In The Garden Anymore?

because the trees
have grown so tall
and the fruits are many...

because the flowers
are blooming
and there are no more
spaces for the
seedlings....

because the beach
is so calm and the blueness
has become so inviting...

the seeds can wait
always
for the next planting season...

RIC S. BASTASA
Why They Are Not Into Laughter Anymore.

well it's been years
and here we are gathered
again on the beach
with relatives and some
close friends.

been from a long journey.
one from madrid, the other
from london. Yes, the one
from singapore is sleepy.

what is happening here?
everyone is busy with their
cellphones and the roasted
pig is getting cold. The wine
lost the chill already.

i am trying to take you
all back into each other's
conversation, perhaps,
reminiscing childhood
and the common bonds.

Susan is still the silent
type, keeping all things
to herself. Just saying
Madrid is losing grip with
its economy period.
And Cely is going back
to London, not as a tourist
but as another domestic
helper part timing as
caterer to the rich ones.
She did not marry. She
does not have a child either.

Mimi is with her daughter.
She just finished her
accountancy and will be
taking her board exam this july. Her other daughter married early, got a baby and she did not like her happy-go-lucky husband so she drove him away.

what is this all about? times indeed runs so fast and it changes us. Now we are escaping thru these cellphones. Unable to connect back. Or does not really like to be connected.

someone is taking pictures of the trees which had grown taller. Leaves and heaps of it are gathered on its roots. Rotten ones. keep it healthy.

we know what she is suffering. she told us she can eat anything she wants despite doctor's advice. Roasted pig and medium rare steaks.

the doctor says she has only six months to live. stage four breast cancer. who cares? she said. she has no one. No husband No child. Somewhere in London she lives alone, and she is no longer going back there.

now i understand why are they all busy with their cellphones. Why they are not into laughter anymore.
Why This Poem Is Born

this is my only chance
to be alone and be myself
again in the middle of this
crowd, where all voices
speak, and no one is heard

this is the voice inside the
bottom of my heart
beneath the layers of my
thoughts

in the forest
there lies this niche
where i can be so
at home and so silent

this is the craving of
the restless soul trying
to find a place to be
in the peace and quiet
of its solitude

RIC S. BASTASA
Why Worry?

About the past, it is gone
About the future that you hope for, it is still absent
Now, be yourself in this hour
It is you in it now and there is no other

Why worry? Did not God tell you that
Everything happens for the best in you
Everything happens to bring the best in you

What you need is a sponge to wipe out your past
A red rose to make your present sweet
And a kiss to salute and meet your future

Why worry then? Relax and take your deep breath.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why You Should Not Stereotype A Slum...

went inside a dark alley
in that poor slum which
far from what we thought is not
that gloomy and glum
there are children there without a home
and with the music from their empty tin cans
they all sing and dance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why?

why should i carry a heart that hates?
why should i have a smile that fades?
why should i touch inorder to hurt?
why should i have friendships that fail?

the heart must love, the smile must never fade,
the touch must not hurt, this friendship we have must not fail

are you stil there, my friend?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why? (How Can We Understand Why?)

looking at what inspired
the man
is not that really good and smooth
and flowing

there are rough edges of wood
imbalanced perspectives
some parts are not really in place
there are places that sow
the seeds of envy
and lay the grounds for
death

somehow you are put there
(without your permission) and you
wonder for a while

why?

there are no answers
there are echoes of the mountains that do not know you
the clouds are less interested
and the sea as usual is noisy

why?

you mend some broken hearts
yours is not
you walk away looking for something undefined
you pick up stars that evade your gaze
you follow rivers
looking for the outlet to the sea

why?

you concoct answers you
lay on the grass rest your body
and put your hands on your forehead
it is nighttime
there is no one here
and you are longing for something undefined

and it is always, same,
same, same, query

why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Why? Because....

some asks me why i write poems well,

i can afford to waste my time.

RIC S. BASTASA

why do you prey
on the lowly?
why do you
argue with the poor?
why do you
mock them with your
education?
why do you
kill their aspirations?
why do you
not give them the slightest idea
of hope
its flicker, even just a flicker?

what is it that you are telling the Lord
when you go to church everyday?

i am just asking you
whose anger does not know
what subsiding really means.

RIC S. BASTASA
Why? In Loneliness We Keep Doing Things

like lima beans,
loneliness ripens and from its pods
things begin to drop
soundlessly on top of the grass

the season change
and the pods rot and the beans dry in the sun
and gets wet in the rain
and then something sprouts again
another form of lonely lima beans
grow on the soil

loneliness begets loneliness
and forever keeps the cycle

the world knows this
in fact, it is this that keeps it going.

RIC S. BASTASA
Whynot?

why do we always
have to fish
here?

did we not have
enough of
these and those
and that?

why not have
some sundays
where we just sit
watch the water
and leave all those
fish alone
enjoying their swim
and their
freedom?

RIC S. BASTASA
Widowed Justice...

i,
demand justice
says the widow to the people
who mourn for her
the flowers wilted and
the niche is buried deep
down six feet
under, like a movie of sorts,
the people left her, alone,
headless, veils black and
hairs spangled, like worms
like she is the rotten body
now bare bones
inside her room, sleepless
till dawn

there is no justice, time
is narrow like a door that admits
no one, like a window closed
against any air of
possibilities

RIC S. BASTASA
Wiener Schnitzel In Vienna

aunt gomolka
serves a speciality originating from the Italian
'costoletta milanese' -
breadcrumbed
and fried veal escalope,
frequently served with
Erdäpfel Salat

RIC S. BASTASA
Wife...

she is the most important lady of the house
all the dogs that she is feeding well
come and meet her at the door
as she is showered by the hairs of
their wagging tails.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wild, Wild Heart....

i simply hate
it when you want to become
myself

you tell me
you sacrifice your identity
because you love me

how cruel can i be
to hate you when you only
wish to love me?

perhaps is this not a form
of revenge
for the past loves that i had

that time when i confessed love
and then
i was simply
laughed?

i need time
to iron out this cycle
of hate,

give me space
let me move on with my life for a while

perhaps
i can tame understanding

(o, how can i tame
this wild, wild
heart of mine?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Will Always Be For Our Own Good...

these are all
scribbles of my mind
i have something
inside
wanting to fly away
for years
i struggle to set
this bird free
i pity its
sad songs
but it is staying in
the nest of
my emotions
my brain does not work
that well
enough
how to get rid of a scourge
but know what
there is nothing that
analysis can really bring
a cure
a comfort or this compassion
for what is understood
but which cannot be taken away
for good
well this is life i tell
myself over and over again
we are inside a high fence
and we do not really know
what is over there
a green grass
a blue sky above us
what we do
we stay, we live, we pray
and believe
that what happens next
will always be
for our own
good.
Will Do.

the way things are going to be running smooth is to write without a comma or even a period which we hate most since it signals death as comma signals sleep or rest the way we want things to be eternal to sound like a gust of air passing by the tips of our hair the way where we think we are going into weightlessness that subtlety of language perfecting itself into nonspeaking

because a touch or even a glimpse or just a sigh

or the final closing of our eyes

will do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Will It Be Solved Sooner?

tinkering
on luck one hits
carelessly an
oil lick,

beyond control
oil spreads farther than
your eyes can see

birds soon bathed in
oil, algae no longer growing
corals are dying

a marine world destroyed
with man’s
reckless imprudence,

will it be solved sooner
before it reaches you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Will It Be Too Late?

will it be too late
for you to know that you really love me?
now that i have learned
not to love you
anymore
will you come and read to me the poem
that i composed for you?
sorry, but that poem has become
a stranger to my
paradise.
i do not anymore recognize the music
within it
it is sad, it has always been that way
but when i hear you reading it for me
it ceases to be me.
there is no more flare in there
you have turned off the fire
that burns that used to be
day and night
even if you kiss the flame
it is as cold
as the waste water at the
the lawn
the one that i throw at dawn
i guess, we call it
urine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Will Love Be Gone Too?

when the anger
has left

when fury is
gone

love is now
asking

if it still
has the

right
to return

& forever remain?

RIC S. BASTASA
Will There Be Pain In Freedom Finally?

i am happy about this.
this morning, i opened an obsession.
a body, a face, an arm, a leg.
the rule of the game is not to touch
but only to think, or imagine.

one can choose, to open your eyes
or close them, whichever pleases
you the most, you must take.

i open my eyes wide, i keep my legs
on foot. Imagination is an eagle searching
for its prey. High above the sky.

i spit a part of myself. That is another
rule. Swallowing is as hard as swallowing your pride.
Not fattening you say, but it is hideous to me.

what makes me happy is that i am through
with this. It does not tickle my armpits anymore.
I am done.I am full and i do not feel that
need anymore to be there with you.

i reviewed the images. The colors have turned
to black and white and with this colorful life
that i have, i have began to dislike it.

i travel a lot. That is color and images.
seas, shores, skies, islands, people, men and women
poor and rich, children and servants.
Palaces and gates, and lakes and hands and boars.

there are extremes. You know that very well.
There is an obstruction, we jump over that.
i repeat, perhaps, tomorrow love will stop.
Lust will disappear. God will come beside my
bed and He will be pleased.

I do not wish to be in said position and do it
myself. I have wanted something to happen at random. Fate shall have hands to touch me and make be
new like a sprout of an old seed that history itself
with its wiles and caprices had long forgotten.

dthis morning i hear a servant sweeping the yard
of this house. The rain had stopped and the wind
ceased flying.I mean, the fog is here.

and what i like most about you is that now
you have turned into a fog. Fleeting feeling.
You will be here with me in a short while and
then be gone.

It is my happiness. Someone i love finally departs.
Will there be pain in freedom finally?

RIC S. BASTASA
Will You Believe Me If I Speak Of Love?

If I speak of love, it is because love speaks
To me, like we are having this conversation
About love itself, and I ask love that if I speak
Of love, will love believe me?
And love sighed, and finds this question
Too self-serving for itself, for love could
Be biased too, telling me that if I speak
Of her, she will believe me, oh, that would
Be too unnecessary of love, to speak about itself,
For love to believe in love from love itself
Who is asking about love,
About me and telling me, she will believe me,
In fact, this would be too confusing, too confusing,
But I speak of her today, and I speak of myself
Too, believing about this love of mine,
And so confused we see each other eye to eye,
The eye of love to my eye of true love,
Talking heart to a true heart,
The heart of love talking to the heart of true love,
and finally, though confused, and still taking breaths,

love, she finally,
Said, yes, love believes me, love believes my love,
love speaks of love, love believes in love,
In my love, and there is no other. Love begets love.
That is what human history had always told to itself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Will You Still Write A Lonely Poem?

if the tree is there
and stands tall even
without leaves

and if the empty
bench is unmoved by
the coldness of the
wind

will you still write
a lonely poem?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wilted Flowers

my dreams
are flowers to start
with

there is no beauty
in these dreams

oh they will not be
of any interest anymore

all wilted flowers
dusted in the attic

dead in the loneliness
of cold silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Wilting Time

it's is wilting time
says the flower

seduce the sun
let there be conflagration

on the leaves
let all these yield to

the drying of veins
and dehydration

the sun comes
and the flower bows down

it is wilting time
& Love says

it's a lovely day
just perfect for me

RIC S. BASTASA
Win And Not Lose

As we talk about the bad things,
The crimes people commit, and how they are caught and punished
There blooms a flower of hope
A satisfied thirst, that crimes do not pay,
That in the long run
The good triumphs over the bad,

But that is not always the case, you know,
Though not written,
The bad triumphs too, and they live in their
Castles of crimes
Uncaught,

We see all these, and we are convinced,
We cannot be like them as we ought not to be,
We choose sides, we make fences,
We gaze, and then

We say, something must be done,
We can, i can.

And then, after all these,
Some can start writing about us,
We have chosen, and we are good
At the end of the chapter,
Sunrise, not sunset, light and not darkness,
Win and not lose.

RIC S. BASTASA
we do not get everything
some things simply are set aside
when the other is taken
we choose
we take and cut and take priorities
we decide
which to give and take which to throw away
and keep
for now i have chosen
this speechless joy
i have sewn some noisy letters
and keep things serene like a lake
without rain
this purification of pain
this savoring of longing
love clinging
like oysters salivating for pearls
to choose words
those joyful chords

RIC S. BASTASA
Win Some Lose Some Babe

win some lose some
that is life
who said that i can have all
the candy bars in the store?
nobody
who said that i can be all
that i am?
no one
i have the power of choice
the free will
and so
let me tell you
i will celebrate on my winnings
i will forget all my losses.

a toast to my success.
a silence to my losses.

RIC S. BASTASA
Winding

winding rivers
like snake enclosing
an island

we tread upon the path
of the cow
on this dry season
we sweat

we lay our bodies
beside the water

the water moves on and on....

RIC S. BASTASA
Window

a curtain is half-open
to have a view of the sailboat
alone in the sea

a reflection of that feeling
within your
empty sea
your breasts like ports
without boats coming
to anchor
away from the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
Window Shopping

You walk up and down the stairs

and then look into the glass windows

you pass from one store to another

without buying anything you have the card and

even the money is ready to buy what you want

but you know the reason why you are here

you choose just to gaze purposely to please

yourself for a while and then perhaps forget

RIC S. BASTASA
Winds Of Change

i throw my sigh
and then it came back as
part of the
the winds of change

with some brown leaves
and wings of birds
and butterflies
the winds of change
has come

with the rays of the sun
with the songs of the day
with the hair of my woman
the winds of change
has come

with the yellow sunflower
with the humming bees
and soft rains
and rainbow
the winds of change has
finally come

take me to the magic
of this moment
my winds of change

RIC S. BASTASA
Winged Are We

we are flyers
in our own right
we have wings
hidden under
the thick cloth
and skin on
our backs
we can fly
we know it
since birth
we won't
	his is still
our time
to be humble

soon the right time comes
we shall fly soon when the right time comes

our mothers are seagulls
we shall hide these wings and fly only soon when the right time comes

RIC S. BASTASA
Winged....

the haunted
house i have escaped

the gates of glory
i have
gone away with
took away the key
and
finally decided to
throw it
away in the river
that i tread
and passed

i raised a fist
and lowered my hands
opening it to
a certain transcendence

the castle of fame
i left
the mountains of ambitions
i left
into the plains and rivers
to the skies
my mind winged.

RIC S. BASTASA
i hold a thread  
you call it life so i hold it tightly  
not to let it go  
not too strong for it may snap  
life must not snap  
it is too fragile for my hold right now  
i keep on softness  
a little hardness sometimes  
depending on the need  
and whatever is necessary  
you are looking at me  
i am not almost moving  
holding this thread like butterfly  
to my hand  
wings clip between my fingers....

RIC S. BASTASA
Winning The War

when you know what to lose
and accept the
anticipated defeat
when you finally take your
retreat
and then learn the lesson
when you rest for the night
and move on
to another edge where
the train of morning
takes you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wiping The Sweat

you wipe the sweat
on my brow
with your white handkerchief

do not ever think
that i will feel the comfort
of this dryness

you must know the cause
of my sorrow
you must press your warm
hands
on my weary heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Wisdom

i accept that we begin this relationship with wonder
and when we part
i like to end it in the same manner that we have started it
that even without you i must still know
what wonder is

but how can i really begin again without you?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wish Me

Wish me happiness
Wish me good health
Wish me peace
Please,
Please do,
And I reciprocate it
With happiness, good health, and peace
For the world,
Through you,
May, all your dreams come true
Wish me
May you all have these, peace & happiness & good health
The world surely
Misses you
You miss the world, in fact.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wish To Hold

Wish to hold
And to cherish
For better or for worse
For richer for poorer
In sickness and in health
Till sex do us part

RIC S. BASTASA
Wish Upon A Star

falling star
falling star
i am short of wishes
on your next fall
bring me one
at least

RIC S. BASTASA
Wish...

i wish that the one
i am chatting with shall disappear for good

i need a magician
to make me disappear

RIC S. BASTASA
Wishes

i wish i do not have wings
come Pegasus
i wish i do not have hoofs
and horns
i wish i do not have the shield
and the sword
i wish i do not kill any dream
i wish i have not loved your smile
i wish i have forgotten your kisses
i wish i am lost and that you cannot find me
i wish i have space i wish i have more time

all these have been granted with the slight movement of the wand
of fantasy
i wish you have not known me.
i wish i have not written any poem at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wishes Of A Love-Hungry Man

beautiful women cascading like
Maria Christina Falls

a rain of rose petals from the skies
to cover my naked body

a crystal clear river flowing against
my mind

you. But i am waiving this wish.
You are painful.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wishes That Remain Ungranted

we thank God for those wishes
and prayers that till today remained unanswered
there are reasons
he knows all these reasons and we fall short of our limited explanations

we do not have to pray hard for something
that we do not deserve
for some things that may after all be not good for ourselves
the very reason why they remained as not ours to have and to hold

those who insisted and those whose prayers are finally answered
God says
have been duly punished.

we only pray for what God wills
that is wise enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wishful Thinking

reality comes with
an attribute
that what you wish
becomes true

and you are
called upon
to justify
tenuously
what you want
to believe

in the comfort
of your wishes
thoughts shape
themselves
as though
your hands
made them

RIC S. BASTASA
Wishing That I'D Stop Thinking For A While

your life must be messy,
like your room with books scattered on the floor
dirty socks and shirts and underwears
everywhere in bed in the sink in the cabinets
open when they should have been closed
like a mouth and mind
with nothing good to say
but just the same still muttering
some words which are not necessary
for the day
which should have been
beautiful

you think that what makes the mess is this
ability to think to classify and to prefer
what must be
what should have been
the standards and some things ethical and proper
and restrained

perhaps, you think, if you stop thinking
life would have been nicer and easier to manage
like simpy being attuned to the mess
and living with what is simply there
no ifs
no buts
no 'i wish this were this and this were that'
just wallowing and sleeping when sleepy
and eating when hungry and leaving when there is nothing
worth staying

to cease thinking when you want to
and life would have been one wonderful state

wo/man is a rational animal
rationality, thinking, is its essence, and when you cease to think
even for a minute
you must suffer the consequence
no ifs
no buts
you too cease, you die, your eyes wide open
those that do not blink, like a fish you think is not sleeping
or dead

you wish you were unthinking
what you wish is after all, the death that lurks in your mind,
ask yourself, in truth, you wish for it, but you do not confront it

so, why not just live, and think some more, and just let it be
do not die,

open, open it, it is raining now, open it
do not close it, in your hand, this umbrella lies

RIC S. BASTASA
Wit

it is the wit
that makes the tweet

it is not the phrasing
or the singing

it is the wit
that makes the lit

it is the rhyme
that is prime

it is the wish
that does not piss

i keep this bliss
without a miss.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Me Darling

let us let the kiss
seal our differences

do not put the fence
of indifference

let there be no wide chasm
between our glances

a rainbow of understanding
the bridge between us

when the rain falls
find the warmth in my arms

dwell in the house of my love
sleep peacefully inside my thoughts

RIC S. BASTASA
With A Happy Face And Standing Back Bone.

then dalila meets
ernie in new york and

there is no dull moment
with a long lost friend

who had remained a mystery
as he does not exist

in the memory of one
named gras

who loves pinky who
leaves danny for

a diony, and the
rumor goes on and on

about other people's
lives forgetting that

we too have our own
lack, misdeeds, omissions

but for the moment
we feel lucky

blessed, to the fact
that our miseries are

definitely less than
theirs

at least that is
what we think

to live a better life
to move on
with a happy face and standing back bone.

RIC S. BASTASA
With All Humility

i accept
i am empty and i am a cup without any tea
i am a sack
without sand
a house without a child
a monitor without
the colors of landscapes

but i am just a man
and it is God that makes me full
the call for the divine
the movement out of the bovine

RIC S. BASTASA
With Caution

it is with caution now
that I look at your face
and figure out the
real meaning of your
smile and frown

how you appear
like a dove and in
a minute change
into a fox is a
phenomenon that
I have learned to
live with

how you devour me
like you were
leviathan and then
spit me like I am
the modern Jonah
is a miracle that I
must not forget

how you have become
a god of demigods
how you manage to
make and unmake me

these I have learned
with so much pain
and humiliation

now, I am invisible
with all caution
I have also learned
the art of the chameleon

what color do you see
when I turn into someone
not me? what ill wind do you
feel when i also turn
invisible, divisible, and into
someone impossible?

RIC S. BASTASA
With Foams In Our Hair Seagulls In Our Lair.

well, nothing's gonna
change us,
come to think of it,

our wrinkles have
multiplied
our hands are
sometimes trembling
we have lost control
over what is
happening

receding forehead
falling hair
drying skin, lousy
memories

you see, nothing still
changes us, the way we
feel and think

we are still the children of
the shores
with foams in our hair
seagulls in our lair.

RIC S. BASTASA
With God As My Ally

with GOD as my sole ally
in this quest for the
poems of my life

his voice speaking
in the ears of
my heart,

i have never been
to that
writers' block.

do you know where
that block is?

RIC S. BASTASA
With God As Our Friend

in God's garden
we are his children
and he comes and sit
there calling our names
and he caresses our hair
kiss our cheeks and give
us our gifts: innocence,
angelic, pure,
and always giving.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Love

with love the stone turns into
a rose
with more love the rose turns
into a butterfly
with love some more the butterfly
turns into a woman
a beautiful woman

with betrayal the woman turns into
a very sad moon
and when it dies
it becomes a stone again
at the end
hate turns it to dust
then grief blows it away
until
it is seen no more

RIC S. BASTASA
With Me

there is no more
transient silence the one without a
home to call its own
for now silence assumes a
permanent position
as the doorman to my heart
no word is allowed to come in
unless necessary

remember what necessity is?
it is your mother
of invention.

RIC S. BASTASA
With No One Around

just in case
you come home
and i am not around
sit on the
porch and call the
orange cat with one eye
and talk to it
it is not as insensitive
as you.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Nothing In Hand.

early morning wakings
are fine with me
what with a fuming coffee
on the table
and this outgoing silence
of the kitchen
what with all these unfolded
blankets and
pillows with your hair still
un-gathered from the hell
of our unguarded moments
last night and more nights to
come?

sipping coffee is fine with me
in front of this personal computer
where my fingers traverse
a labyrinth of words and sentences
trying to satiate what this
thirst has long provided: an empty
throat,

a bloated thought, this sense of
trying to gather everything inside
your arms, and then

realizing that nothing is kept
forever, that each moment is just
a passing breath,

that no matter how deep you plunge
yourself into the abyss of your longings
you surface again

with nothing in hand.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Nothing In Mind

it is always good to start with nothing in mind.  
some people kill without motives,  
with nothing in mind.  
they kill just for the heck of it.  
Nothing to do.  
And everything hurts.

in poetry it is also good to  
start on that premise.  
nothing to do.  
nothing to say.  
just for the heck of writing.  
no motives.

Do not ever think that with poetry  
you can change this world.  
without poetry this is still the same world.  
a world which has nothing to say for itself.  
nothing to do with you.  
nothing in its mind.

That is why we are taking the initiative.  
we put our minds to its round head.  
we pour our misgivings  
including our amazement

and we pretend that it is listening.  
poetry in fact is nothing but a murmur.  
a chant if you elevate it to a higher level.  
a bird if you make it animated.  
an ocean of mysteries if you want a little depth.  
you sit there. you press the keys.  
you expect a miracle.

nothing comes.

you imagine images.  
thoughts come spontaneously.  
do not manipulate it.
Just write.

you look outside the window.
sunshine arrives on the flowers.
in your window pane.
there are no words which you can see.
you feel. there is warmth.

The leaves of the china flower are
eaten by caterpillars.
There is a nest of sparrows.
The ylang-ylang blooms are gone for now.

And then i say goodbye.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Nothing On....

when you enter the
room you never mind when they
disregard you: after all, who are you?
what are you?

you are just a nobody.
when you die no one notices it.
after all what have you done?
will you tell them that
you have written poetry?

oh they will laugh.
the most nonsensical human being is
here who thinks that with his poetry
the world will never end
that his life will be eternal
that his name will be carved not only in stone
but in the oceans

how foolish of you
but since you are here
let me sit beside you
hoping that two fools can
make it right
and become noticeable
by that lady who passes by at us
with nothing on.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Only One Dead.

at the last hour
it will be absurd that with
all these
late things you still have
to ask for a pen
and paper and
write the last poem of your life.

know well, at the last hour, everyone
becomes a haze, no one is amazed,
and you situate yourself into a maze
of your own
hidden labyrinth. No one says this
clearly. No one sees it anyway.

mother's last hour was spend holding
my hands
that comfort her that she will be met
by an angel carrying a
light in his hands

and with a nod they walk together
towards the open door which closes finally
admitting no one

the last hour is silent and then
a burst of cries come in
like a bomb inside the room
exploding
with only one
dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
With The Trees And Vines

with the trees
surrounding the death
of a grasshopper
and the sorrow
lessen
with the grass and
vines and the breeze
grief shortens
its stay

RIC S. BASTASA
With Them

with me is an emerald mountain
below the turquoise blue sea

with me are the trees
and the sun that cast me a shadow

with me is a glass of wine
and a stick of pork barbecue

with me is the night that covers me
with stars and a moon colored gold

how can i be lonely then?
how can i be so alone in the middle

of all these treasures
these beauty these graces?

RIC S. BASTASA
With These He Mocks I Am Out Of Touch.

we are confronted
with paradoxes

i always take that
seriously

the more you talk
understanding diminishes

more is not grasped
in those writings

the higher you go
you’ll have less air

the more you move
you feel you sink

the more you try
to save yourself

you become so lost
you forget who you are

with these he mocks
i am out of touch.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Thoughts Provoked, How Time Swiftly Flies

Thoughts and feelings, they all come
Like undaunted memories
When you face them there will
Be lots of hugging and pleasantries
Exchanged, like long lost friends
Meeting in a cafe, some even
Shout with joy, tap some shoulders,
The usual gimmefives, the
Lighter and lighter conversations,
Like how you are doing now,
Where have you been all these
Years, I have seen Rose and Dave
In Chicago, while we were going
For a cruise, and so on and so
Forth, it was still morning, thoughts
Of friends, and long years, so well
Provoked, some coffees do get
Cold, not sipped at all, and you look at
Your watch, it is dark, and
We have done nothing but talk
And get so excited still at all these
Thoughts and feelings, & what we
All used to say, we all miss you
Yes, time swiftly passes us by.

time, time, swiftly flies, and
we still do not have the wings.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Us Under the Light Of The Moon

do you wish to understand?
what is it that must be understood?
the stars?

situate yourself on the grass
and feel its softness

under the moon
feel the warmth of its distant light

open your eyes
to the beauty of this night

with us together
there is nothing that must be understood

we feel it
and that is enough

we love
and that is complete.

RIC S. BASTASA
With You

With you I have dreams
And I follow them
Guided by the warmth of your
Soft hands
With you I talk about
The goodness
Of humanity the light
Winning over
The darkness
With you I have
Connected again
To the earth
And to the heavens

With you I have become
A friend of the gods
With you I have become
A man complete

RIC S. BASTASA
With You As My Starting Point

he laughs at me
finding perhaps that it is funny
that you are my
starting point

of what i asked?

a launching pad of my
rockets
a field for my crash
landing
a garden for my seeds of
flowers
a nest for my eggs
a hole for my emptiness
a window for me to see
the world out there
calling for my name

RIC S. BASTASA
With You Babe

how can a dark night be dark and damp?
how can a day be so hot and wild?
with you babe,
soft white skin
smooth thighs
button nipples
strawberry lips
eyes telling me
'come here baby
get me get me! '
conquer me!

how can a dark night be dark and damp?
how can a day be so hot and wild?
with you babe,

another day or month
another year perhaps

how can time be so cruel
choking my dreams
pushing me to the edge
of my existence?

hold me make me live
i am tough i am hard.
love me! '

RIC S. BASTASA
With You On The Cliffs Of Love

with you on the cliffs of love
with you on the top of this
mountain beside the winds
of all our desires, with you

i cannot let myself fall
no one down there for sure's
gonna catch me

for how can you catch me
too? you're blind and so in love.

RIC S. BASTASA
With You...

to live in a world
with just a few syllables
and yet
in so many chapters
of the novel
we strive
such a state of
few words
in so many cares
and whispers....

RIC S. BASTASA
With You.....

hello morning
i make this greeting

it is
a beautiful day
and it is nice
to be still
with you

my mind is like a petal
still drenched with
dew.

RIC S. BASTASA
With Your Big Mouth

with your big mouth

Silence--

Devour me

Whole

I want to be eaten

And be peaceful

Inside your belly

RIC S. BASTASA
Withered Leaves And Grasses Finally Burned

Summer loneliness
In my mountain
Grows lonelier
When friends
Are gone like
Leaves and grasses
All withered and
Finally burned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Within The Circle....

within the circle
there will be always
rules,

prescriptions of
actions
what not to do
what to do

you have bizarre
thoughts inside you
and you cannot just tell
them, those who rule
over you

you cannot do what
you love doing, within
that circle
where you are circling
are those rules

which you cannot violate
lest you be
punished to death

you behave just like
everyone else
all stones of you stoning
each other
until you all crack
and shatter

RIC S. BASTASA
Within The Confines Of The Rules Of The Game

as children again
we can keep playing our favorite games
we run and chase and jump
and hide
the whole day under the sun
away from mama & papa
but there is one rule
we should not break
no climbing over the fence
no trespassing over
a neighbor's backyard

when we have grown old
the same rule applies
no crossing fences
no trespassing over others'
privacies
keep on playing
within the confines of the rules
of the game.

RIC S. BASTASA
it was dawn
when you went back to
sleep
after saying your
prayers
you must be very
tired about what had
been happening
i stand beside you
gazing with all pity why
you chose to love me
i went my way
opened the door and stood
on one of the stairs
that look out into the
road without a car
without a man.
the trees line up
along each side without
the wind....
RIC S. BASTASA
sitting on an easy chair
sipping ice cold lemonade

at 9 o'clock in the morning
Christmas air is blowing
my hair

there is nothing to think about

it is all just gazing
lazily on the surrounding

the ylang-ylang tree has
flowered well

last night the scent spread
inside the room

the ferns are thriving under
the tree

a spider lives there spinning
its web

the mind is emptying and
some images are getting in

i guess this day will be
perfect
just perfectly gliding
without a hitch

RIC S. BASTASA
Without A Promise.....

much of it
are markings of
life

milestone and milestones
of nothing

mistaken sometimes
as forms of confession

rather than mirrors
about what was seen before

which nobody is telling
because in reality these

are all harsher than true
than truth,

sometimes we speak
in order not to be understood

because that is what life
really is

more of what we have not
understood but just felt

in between those sought
clarities are those foggy

afternoons where we stop
because we cannot see beyond

words are maps leading us
to nowhere

which we use simply because
we have no choice
we savor the silence
we nod we make handshakes
to the future that meets
us without a promise.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Affection....

and that is
what happened

at first it
was a case of mutualism

then parasitism
and sometimes
iniquilism

until we finally
live in one house
with boundaries

and then we become
martyrs
not minding each other's
affairs

the policy of non-intervention
to maintain
a catholic marriage

me, husband, you wife,
one house,
without affection.

and we wear the saddest
smiles of our lives

and as promised we close
our doors
with a line, ...and they live
happily ever after....

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Any Backpack

Riding on the moon
I am bound to the stars
Without any backpack

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Any Dream At All....

you were alone when you found me alone
you pick me up like a pebble on your path.
you imagine me as a petal, then a bee, then
a butterfly, then a dog, until then when you
begin to think that i am human.

when love dies, everything goes back. human, to
dog, to butterfly, to bee, to a petal, back to
a pebble.

then you throw me away, for i am no good to be your
human partner, and then i become my real self in the
silence of the pebble on the path of my existence...

i do not hear footsteps moving away from me.
i am embedded in my own solidity, the very foundation
of what i am, what i was and what i will become.

there will be a time when you will feel that way,
being thrown away, and then become yourself,
alive without any dream at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Any Shore In Sight...

babe
we will no longer
tell you
to move on

we cannot make
you move
on

babe
we are inviting you
for a swim

on a Saturday
far from the city
into the
faraway sea

we jump at the
bottom part
of this ocean
we all swim

without a shore
in sight.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Borders In Space

We shall fade
as the sun too accepts the eventual
and natural triumph of
darkness

this loss of light is not to be feared
it will come as a matter of law

and so does fading whatever it is
be it the intellect or the ordinary light in the room
where you spend the hours staring at space

fading is always dying
and for those who think more than this
or for those who have something beyond the grasp of the
narrow alleys of the mind

those that do not just have palms and zodiacs
or those who fingers do not just feel the cold but also the
meteors losing their tails in that limitless horizon

there is always a room for falling without any floor
rising without reaching
there is always an excitement
which can never be contained

it oozes beyond time
without borders in space

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Bothering Anyone....

your head
lies on my arms

the plane moves
smoothly in the night
sky

at dawn it touches
in Los Angeles

you smile at me
and i know what is this
all about
for the nth time
when the pressures of
travel lands on all
of us

and so i did not
bother asking your name
where you live
and what you do with your
life

cause i know
that song, 'what's love got
to do with it? '

and i pick up my
back pack
move on with my life
trying to tell you
that i travel in style
too
without bothering
anyone....

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Direction

Long journeys
make the mind forget a while
what is missing
to the eyes

long bus rides
grappling with winding
roads

bumpy boats struggling with
big waves

planes that
seem to feel the casualness
of air pockets

time is a stretcher
where we lay our bodies
like patients
on the wards

we can be positive
though
about the feelings of
going back home

where there is
jubilation for having
arrived at last

this sense of being
back and being
comforted once again

by the arms of home
by the softness of pillows
and warmth of beds
and blankets
all these
to and fro
pendulum like
swinging from here
and there

killing time and
burying it decently
folded neatly
in its niche

and i shall love it
when we sing
the final hymn....

RIC S. BASTASA
Without It Usual Sails Hand Me A Butterfly

draw me a horse
do not put its four feet
make me a boat
without it usual sails
hand me a butterfly
without its wings
find me a bird without
its claws and beak
build me a house
without a roof
make love to a woman
without her hair

dthis i tell you
everything is possible
but what is not
natural can not be
felt as beautiful

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Measure

measure my love
i will love you without measure
there you shall fail
this love has no number
unquantifiable

your measure cannot measure
this love immeasurable
this love so
unbearable

you measure me again
this love like a flame on your oil lamp
shall then die

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Much Fuss…

i wish
i write without so much thought

like a dance of leaves
like the passage of water
like the arriving and leaving
of a breeze

i wish i could have written
with nothing
deliberative

i want to arrive at a point
with nothing to declare

i wish i have nothing to say
for i have always wished to be absurd

let nothing be logical let nothing
be understood

i wish everything is a mystery
not a misery

i wish i am just sunshine
and for a day
consumed until i become another sunset

fading without having to utter any word
dying in a moment without much fuss.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Question This Time

in our noise
we sound like some chirping birds
hungry for worms

then time comes
with anger over our selfishness
our hardheadedness
to respect the wisdom of dusk

impatience
annihilates us
with that big mouth of silence
devouring us all

they learned and simply watched
without questions this time

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Religion

without any religion now
except love
i am ready to embrace you

you who possess nothing
except faith

about some petals blooming
about the essence of withering.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Resolve

inside a rumor
we delight at the
misfortune
of our neighbors

i feel guilty sometimes
and i want to quit

on the other hand
it is their miseries
much greater than ours
that make us
feel so happy

we start all over again
over another cup of
coffee
watching time go by
like another
unfortunate guy

i feel guilty sometimes
but i cannot really quit

it is always the misery of
other people
that makes mine so
lighter

i guess, this is nothing
but survival.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Strings

if only there were no strings
there would have been no puppets of us
no marionettes
no domestication of our births in the freedom
of the wilderness

there are gods and if you see them
you also feel that there are monsters

(deep within one asks
for once, why can't we just be happy slaves?
contented pigs, singing cows, lapping dogs,
sleepy kittens? caged birds?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Tears

the way i take an onion
is no longer the way my old hands do it.

there is a new technique which i have developed
after years of practice

how to slice it half and not peel it
how to think that unlike us it has no heart at all

and with the sharp knife that i have whetted for years
wasting so much water under that bridge

i have done it without anymore shedding
any drop of tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without The Blackouts

without the blackouts
he could have been first
for he also loved so well
light,
without the darkness
light would not have been
too visible
at the beginning of
twilight
without the air
the wings find no use
without the waves of the sea
the winds
would not be felt
without my mind the heart
will not be
important
and without feelings
reasons will have no place
to stay
all things are of use
to one another
no one is complete
everyone is
interdependent
a word uttered
can also
describe your
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Without The Use Of Words Your Minds Meet Towards Same Destination

on the same path
weary you take rest
seated on the same
stone

preoccupied in your
mutual silences
you restart a journey

without the use of
words
your minds meet
towards same destination

what is awe to all
is none to yours
same stars, same moon
same pains

RIC S. BASTASA
Without The Windows

without the windows
where can the frames be?

without the space
where can air be and all those who thrive

because there is an emptiness between
arms and lips and bodies

without my emptiness
what is the use of you?

without this space between us
where can we be?

this nothingness makes us meet once again
let us love it, embrace it and make love to it

do we have a choice, my dear?
maybe you, on some uncertain terms, but

i have to be honest, i have none,
i have only you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You

without you
i can go on
it has always been
this way
without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You By My Side

Whenever I’m sad
Don’t leave my side
It makes me more sad
If you’re not there

You make my problems go away
With just those simple words you say
You know exactly what to say
To take it all away

I’m very grateful to have you in my life
Because you are my angel from up above
I don’t ever want to leave you side
Because without you nothing else matters

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You From The Beginning

something was nice without you
the one for whom my love professed
the emptiness is the fertile ground
of growth for all those seeds
of poetry....
the time has come to detest your
presence and given the choice
by the gods
poetry or your love and your
face to kiss
i have chosen the beauty of words
the life of my emotions
the conversations with time

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You In My Life

dr the clouds are brown
dr the sea black
dr the sun blue and the land gray
dr the apple violet
dr the air rusty
dr
dr everything seems to be
dr in disarray
dr the colors not fitting
dr life too biting
dr & gone is the rainbow
dr my life without you.

dr RIC S. BASTASA
Without You In That Big City

away from you
i am inside this big
city
trying to please myself
with its lights
and busy streets
some exotic restaurants
and night
spots

i fell like i am
a car
with a leaking
gasoline tank

i have seen the
path that
i have walked
and there is a line
of the leaking gas

i am afraid that
another crazy guy
with a matchstick
shall put it to flames

inside my heart
another war of fire
another
conflagration shall
happen
and i have no other
place to run
for shelter

who can help me
this time?
Without You On A Broken Day

i can live
on a day without you
on a broken day

but i cannot live
on a wholesome night
without you

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You Tonight

all i need
is a pebble inside
the cup
of my palms

there is no need
for words even
not a syllable
or a vowel
in my tongue

i need the full moon
above my head

pleasing to
my eyes, this time

my heart sings
alone

RIC S. BASTASA
Without You What Are Dreams?

They say
without dreams
what are you?

He says
without you what
are dreams?

RIC S. BASTASA
Without Your Permission

some things are meant to be lost
others thrown away
just like that

the people you trust, sometimes,
are the people taking them away
and you begin to think,
i am wronged.

trust can be misplaced, like a
love that you want to give,
but never taken,

like a seed that you throw away
but grows not in your soil.

like a person you leave in the house
while you take a break somewhere,

and when you come back
you notice that some things are missing
very important details
of a landscape

but out of love, or respect,
simply that way to buy peace,
you simply ignore, and move on
with what is next,

because those things
are meant to be taken, to be lost, to have
been given at the right time,

but which had already been taken,
always without your permission.
Without.....

the sun without
the moon less
even if the rain
does not arrive
on a windless
day on a cold
night even with
out you,

the river still flows.

RIC S. BASTASA
heard of the man
who after writing a treatise
about the
philosophy of language
regressed into
teaching kindergarten
because he wants
to discover
how language is learned
by kids

perhaps in learning how to live
we shall do the same

RIC S. BASTASA
Wolves....

there are those, as usual, wolves, in sheep's clothing, but we who live in the castle must learn to distinguish we know, but we shall not act, we dislike, but we shall associate, we are kings, and we pity those who are slaves of their envy, servants of their disappointments, still hungry of their illimitable greed must we, still, be gentle, and meek as doves, as we hold the breathes of fire, beneath the restraints of our tongues.

RIC S. BASTASA
Woman

Eve
Priceless diamond
Bezel of Adam’s wedding ring

She has that look in her eyes
Of high-
Spirited balloons

Soft hands like cotton
Slender fingers-two guitars
Fashioned for old love tunes

Hair like
Dark bedrooms

RIC S. BASTASA
Woman And Poetry

writing poems together

with that woman is so much fun

i write mine, (i am much better than that woman)

i ask her to read my poems she obliges with her spectacles

as she opens her mouth to syllabicate

i gulp some saliva to my mouth

this woman is terrible

she makes me giggle

i have her word for word i have her metaphor per metaphor

there is no time to discuss

i like her to undress this time

i'll take the magic of her word

this time i will open my mouth

this time i will read all of her

i will not discuss i will not understand

i will just feel these metaphors

this mouth this tongue this body

this most important poetry

this love this lust this moment

after we have written
our poems together.

RIC S. BASTASA
Woman On The Other Side Of The Fence

it is nice to see
how you left your soul to dry
in the litany of the clothesline
hanging there
under the sun
over the fence for the passing
air to take all the
wetness of your sins

and here i am
too judgmental for you
and possibly out
of God's graces too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Woman's Fury

you must remember the sweetness
of her: her smile and the touch of her
soft hands
recall: the green hill and the blue
clouds, and the dinner together
candlelit and outside the kiss
by the door

long ago, twenty three years to be
exact, she went ahead and you
promised to follow

it did not work out and then she
comes back with a mask
she writes what you cannot
relate, not a hint of what really
happened
when things did not really work out
between the two of
you

she is emptying herself from anything
about you
it would have been a sweet love story

now the phantoms and gargoyles
are staying in her house
she cannot leave
she never outlived what was it that bound her.

this time, love means a lot if you would only say
I'm sorry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Women Sometimes

women sometimes
are a handful, a breastful,
a body beautiful,

you think they are so easy
to handle,
cutie pie, sweetie pie,
pity pie?

sure. they're a handful
of pretty pretty breastful
pretty, pretty petty bodies..

fondle, coddle, and
lots of doodles...

but oh, without them,
what will this world of mine be?

a desert. a dry pond.
a well without water.
drought the whole year round.
cracking lips.
labyrinths without an exit.
tunnels without light.
dogs without a master.
birds unfed and dead.
skulls without a skin.
bones without flesh.
blood without veins.
nails without fingers.
pen without a paper.
milk without water.
bed without blankets and pillows.
hands without fingers.
face without eyes.
and so on and so forth.

let me have them all
in my crowded room.

RIC S. BASTASA
Women United...

there is a common ground for all
the women that i love
and that is friendship
love
may come later
but friendship must be there first
as a rock
of all relationships
because when love breaks
friendship is still there
as a chain
that never snaps

RIC S. BASTASA
Wonder

early morning when
you open your eyes
try seeing the newness
of everything: wonder.

it is the beginning of
wisdom. it is the first
day of your life. it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
wonder, everything i have
is wonder, every time i have
is supposedly wonder,
each time as i watch
a star, so lonely in the sky
swimming in that vast
space of darkness,
in an unmediated life,
i stumble, and curse
what stone is there,
muddy, i shall rise again,
like that lone star, so
distant, and yet i know,
so faithful and real

RIC S. BASTASA
Wonder.....

under the stars
focused on the wonders of light

one stumbles
too gladly to the mud
of the earth

RIC S. BASTASA
Wondering...

there is this wonder about
what is really happening and

what is really said, as the words
keep pouring like rain in a summer's
day, like sunshine amidst the
darkness of the room with a

roof leaking, like smoke going to
the sky, like fire from the heart,

like chimney, soothed by soot,
like lights turned on at dawn

like steps sounding its nearness
to the door, like leaves that fall toward

the south, like birds resting upon a
tree after a long journey

things are scattered, and there is no
stopping, the winds move in different
directions, like thoughts, unstoppable
by our grammatical restraints,

litters, finally collect themselves like
crabs inside a pail of full of water.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wooing

I sit beside
You, I am getting
Nearer to your
Breath
I catch
Some wafts
Of your
Glow
And I whisper
Let us talk
About
Sense

Of touch

Feel me
In the
Beatings
Of my heart

Hear the sound
Of drums

Listen
With your
Lips.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wooing Summer

because you are lonely
you woo for summer to come
you ask for the swing
and the breeze by the sea
under the coconut trees

but summer is hard to please
and what comes instead is the rain
bringing its mournful sound
the falling tears of the clouds
the heaviness of what it is carrying

but because you are lonely
and nothing seems to be of remedy
you accept the rain as it is
you accept its condolences
and you begin to understand its sympathies
and then you dance and sing with the rain
seeking the company of its miseries
and then you write: my life is lived, not in vain.

RIC S. BASTASA
Word Play

love is wasted is so much
word play
when what should have been
needed is
a foreplay.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wordlessness....

in the afternoon
after a walk uphill
exhausted
i sit down and relax
and do nothing

and then i formulate the
questions
and usually they remain to
be
as there are
in truth no possible
answers

it is this kind of acceptance
that makes life
so exciting so real

complacency subsumed
in uncertainty

the openness of the doors
of this tiny world of the grain
of sand
creates the necessary
space for breathing

the ocean of beliefs
chokes us essentially
the myriad choices
freeze us to a series of
mini-deaths

you shall be like the earth
receiving rain and sunshine
without communication

RIC S. BASTASA
Words

please remember
my friend
words so unkind
come and go
and so do not mind
what do not remain

pick up the pieces
scattered on the
floor, they are all yours
now,

go and start anew
find someone
who loves you true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words

words comfort me
like fairies in my forest
at night
when everything is dark
and cold
and lonely
words are like fireflies
on the trees
perhaps
on this therapy
i have become a slave
to words
everyday they command
that i write them
forms of worship
terms of endearment
and for such love
and affection
i have become a word
myself
man of letters
sounding like
syllables

RIC S. BASTASA
Words And Words

let us have an illusion of words
mesmerize ourselves with the movements of its verbs
and pretend about the beautiful feeling of its adjectives
let nothing be too personal about nouns
let us not be too excited about some interjections
let us shy away from so many questions
no orders, no imperatives no coercions

for tonight let there be only demonstrative pronouns
lips kissing, arms embracing, neck petting,
thighs making on top of each other hands entwine
fingers running, abdomens ebbing

let all be not just wishes, let it not just be on subjunctive moods
let there be verbs of romance, let there be sentences of lust

let us forget for once the word much abused by all:
i do not wish to utter it, let not love be feigned.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Are Hiding Places Of The Heart

words are hiding places  
our intentions fit in  
to the sounds of syllabication  
and most often people mistake us  
for what we say than do.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Are Useful

in times of breaking up
words are useful

gently the words must be uttered
like some fruits in a silver platter

nothing hurtful
no one to blame

words become memories
flowers that you pick and then throw away

just like that
as easy as i once know you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Words As Excavation Tools

the blades of the electric fan
are making the usual noise in a very warm room
where air is nil
where loneliness reigns like a queen
of sorrow

its chatter seeps in the green curtains by the window
where a bowl lies there empty because the gold fish died
because a cat hit it with its paw but did not eat it
and it lays wasted on the floor

it is noisy
gyrating like a body
it is boring a hole in my
ear
but actually i do not mind it anymore

my noise is louder
and i am trying to figure out what it is really
by writing about it

are words tools of excavation
can it exhume a dead idea buried a long time ago
because it has been painful?

RIC S. BASTASA
Words As Flowers

ey they let you in and you feel a little bit elated
it is their party

ey and they offer you a drink and you like it
they tell you stories and you like them

ey and then they ask about you
all about you
not just your name not just the place of your birth
not just the name of your parents
but about
what you do and how much do you earn
if you have a car
a house
a business

ey right there
they will ask about the details
every necessary detail

ey and then after you tell them your story
take care of yourself

ey you are now alone
they kick you out of their doors and fences

ey you should have known too well
it is their party and they make the rules

ey you bet
you just bit the sand again

ey i mean the dust and you feel like an
unnecessary humus of the earth.

ey see? i told you. I like it here. In my solitude with the stars
words are harmless like red flowers
do you remember the red carnations?
Words As Metaphors, Thoughs Too

METAPhors
also exist in the most simple
word
those syllables still
unspoken
without grasses
in the fields
the brain still manages
to imagine
those lilies on the pond
need not be real
for in our adversities
we can
always make them
grow
even on the walls
those cemented pavements
even rain
can be made to pour
on deserts
only if we will them
faithfully

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Follow You And You Do Not Catch Them, They Catch You.

as soon as you begin to write
from the bottom of your heart

fire arrives and you are inside
fire that engulfs your whole body

but you are never burned never consumed by its hearth by its illusions. And there you are writing like you have never written

before. Words follow you and you do not catch them, they catch you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Like A Forest Hide Me

words like a forest hide me
and you will not see me crying
because my eyes have become leaves
without tear glands

words like a wall of rain cover
my weeping
with the sound of its heavy rainfall
and you cannot hear me anymore
except the tender sound of a shower
and the rolling of the accompanying thunder

now i have grown words like a garden of grass
and some seeds are groomed to become trees
now i have kept my words like wild vines
and climbers and they cover everything
my grief and lamentations

now you ask me where i am,
ask my words
oh they will not tell you.
You are my pain.
And there is no word
equivalent to your name
anymore in this forest, in this grassy garden.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Like Bombs Do Explode

this poetic terrorism
is my jihad
words like bombs
shall now explode
detonated
manually from the bottom
of my heart

RIC S. BASTASA
Words Live Deeds Die.

those who said they will help
and serve
those who say they hate darkness
those who say they will come to save the earth
to love us all
those who say they will care for the poor and the oppressed

well, let them be
let them be
let us see them do it

on the verge of truth

for sometimes things are better done than said

words live
deeds die.

RIC S. BASTASA
There are words that need not be spoken
like you telling me that i care for you
for how would you know what i feel for you?
it would be too self-assuming
for you to say that i really care for you
what if i do not? what if what i do is nothing but
an obligation of one human being to another?
what if it is not love at all as you would want to impress
me with it? what if it is just a projection of yourself?
you loving me and me not knowing it
me not believing it, simply because you are also afraid
to love since i may not return that love with its face value,

there are words that need not be spoken
matters of the heart, presumptions that good deeds
are shadows of hidden desires, vested interests,
blessing in disguise, wolves in sheep skins

in love my friend, you just don't make assumptions
at the end, you may regret it, for despite my emptiness
my ugliness, and my loneliness, i also know how to choose.

it is something that i have never spoken
but if i speak it all, it will only be to you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Words, Oh, They Come Later Before The Explosion
Actually

words are not just words
she cries sometimes and i wonder
if i have said something that makes the tears
and let them flow like the waterfalls
of Maria Cristina

how i still wonder
if i have written the words that know how
to pierce the conscience
and burst the bubble
and detonate and explode
the grenades and the landmines
of the war grounds
and theaters of
war

what simply exists there even the word
is uttered.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wordsmith

i build
my own fire
and keep
my own
anvil

everyday
i hammer words

eunuchs
turning into fairies

beasts
into princes

stones
into flowers

a grain of sand
into something
universally divine

RIC S. BASTASA
Work In The Room

THERE are whispers
sometimes i think there are ghosts
of my past
am i getting to be a scrooge
in this line of work
that i am submerged in like
a submarine
on a broken machine

It is time to go
The work is eating us all
giving us no meaning.

RIC S. BASTASA
Work On That Smell Do Not Remember Anything

then you must
learn
adopt to live
only
moment by moment

as you climb
a mountain
you do not look
down

you do not look
up
the sky
for it is too far

you hold on
to what is here
to what your
hand is
your eyes seeing
a rock
a vine a few
inches to your nose

work on that
smell
do not remember
anything

RIC S. BASTASA
Working On Some Symbolism

lately i have been working on certain
symbolism of his poetry
and some paintings: an old man without a foot,
a nude woman inside his open stomach,
stuff pegions fishing for a parachute
or an air balloon and a fish in air
a red jacket without a body
a man with the head of a big chinese fan
a secret exit where a hand feeds
a hidden Ernst your painting pains me.
I am lost but soon in your symbols
i shall find the entrance
of understanding the world within the four corners
of your brightly colored canvass.

RIC S. BASTASA
Working With Your Idioms.....

the cat's pajamas
are hanging on the clothesline

the bee's knees are bending on the floor
at the bar's end

the clam's garters snapped out
after the little boy stretched it out

the eel's ankles broke into pieces
due to hurricane maria

the gnat's elbow is a little bit twisted
after a thorough scrutiny

the pig's wings are gossamer like much likely to
fool the black widow spider

the sardine's whiskers remind me of a national hero
who painted the Spolarium while in Spain in the 18th Accenture

RIC S. BASTASA
World Of Wordlessness

ang kaanindot sa kahilom
sama sa dagat
nga atong gisalom
daghan kaayong masud-ong

the beauty of silence is like the deep ocean
we dive
and then we see a lot of things in there

ang mga mabulukong mga bulak
ang mga bukid ug ang mga walog
ang mga nagkadaiyang katahom
nga dili matukib
ug dili na masulti

the colorful corals
the hills and mound underneath the valleys
beauty that we cannot comprehend
we cannot say

kay wala na ang mga pulong
nga nakagapos niini

it is the world of wordlessness
where everything is set free

RIC S. BASTASA
World On A Sunday

On a sunday
i create a new world

my earth is the hammock
it is the breeze of the sea
that breathes in me
my lungs are the orchards
its branches my veins

slowly and gently
i sleep with the hands
of time.

RIC S. BASTASA
World's Worst Poetry Sold For $12,840

now, mine shall sell at
$15,000 per line.

EDINBURGH, Scotland – The vocabulary is poor and the rhyme excruciating but a collector paid $12,840 Friday for original works by William Topaz McGonagall, internationally celebrated as the worst poet ever to assault the English language.

Up for auction was a collection of 35 poems McGonagall self-published in the 1890s, in which he rambles about everything from a theatre fire and the life of Robert Burns to women's suffrage and Britain's imperial wars. Bad as it was, it did not reach the top estimate of $15,600 at the sale, conducted by Edinburgh auctioneers Lyon & Turnbull.

Still, McGonagall's work outstripped a collection of rare and inscribed Harry Potter books by Edinburgh resident J.K. Rowling, which fetched $12,000 at the same sale.

McGonagall's lack of talent was matched only by his delusion and ego. Along with the 35 poems were a portfolio of posters and two copies of his rather short autobiography – 'dedicated to himself, knowing none greater.'

RIC S. BASTASA
last night after the usual
three-hour lecture of the law
i arrive late in the house
without the lights on

it is a blackout of some
metaphors
but the heart has been
numbed
and the mind has been
shut out
from having any contact
with any object
of affection

the hands open the car
and the feet move on
to the room
where the bed waits

it is dark in here
and the window is closed
and the air is thin
and the walls are damp
with all the
mildews still clinging
on the white tiles of
the bathroom

as though in a trance
i have thrown all the books
on the dusty floor
and without having to remove
my shirt
and pants and socks
and shoes

i retreat to the nooks
of a very sound sleep
i must have been dreaming
hearing my own
snore

RIC S. BASTASA
my wife worries
about the dream that
i told her about
this early morning while
we are taking breakfast

it is all about a boat
alone
waiting on the bank
of the river
under a shade of trees
on filtered light
through the leaves

it worries her to know
that somehow soon
we shall be that boat's
passengers
that accommodate only
one of us
and not both

the other side has no name
but it is a place so certain
and acceptable

RIC S. BASTASA
Worry

the polo shirt
no longer fits
the pair of pants
needs to
be repaired
everyday the line
of the
weighing scale
moves further
right

quality life
perhaps

RIC S. BASTASA
Worsening A Bad Condition

hardheaded, and enraged
to the makings of his own
misfortune, created by him
alone, but always blaming
another, the world and
others that care for him,
he worsens the condition,

he asks for the verdict of
death, and he seems to
imply, that those who wish
him alive will feel that he is
such a kind of wasted value
and they would soon feel
guilty and finally unhappy.

he's wrong, behind his back
he wants him dead, exactly.
soon when he is buried,
the will toast for a drink.

RIC S. BASTASA
Worship

worship the word
as it is an offering of your
deepest feeling
to God

have reverence
feel the awe
of His Presence

His words are now the words
of your new creation

You, Poet,
God.

RIC S. BASTASA
Would Today Be Happier?

what if
i have let you touched me
if i have closed my eyes
and simply
worked on the feeling

what if
i simply let time
cress my
emptiness and
had it filled by
your
love

what if i just let the feeling
flow like a river
and never thought of the
the obstructions of
the conformity

what if i went with you
towards the deepest ocean

could i have made perhaps
a difference?

if i did not refuse it
would today be happier?

it took me years
to know that you have this space
inside my heart
reserved for you

my heart was then made of
stone.
Would You Like To Write The Most Beautiful Poem Tonight?

The beauty of
a poem is directly proportional
to the pain
you have felt

the choicest words
are those which are
sounding like
lament

the cuts of each line
are griefs multiplied
like the geometry of
ice
feel the chill
and the trembling
in the winter of
your soul

would you like to write the
most beautiful poem tonight?

RIC S. BASTASA
Would You Like To….

would you like to ride on a ship
without a well-defined destination?

would you like some games of cards
the result of which is unpredictable?

would you like to embark in an experiment to find a cure
to an illness that has killed many people?

would you like to walk in a path filled with fog
and you only hear some sounds and yet you see no one beyond?

would you like uncertainties? do you believe in the excitement
of a box of chocolates? do you chase butterflies?
do you like the silence of the colored fishes beside the corals
under the sea?

would you like to wear a monocle? do you find space walking fun?
do you imagine yourself taking an adventure in another planet?

you do not have to answer each question aloud.
Keep it to yourself. Rate yourself afterward, if you like life

If you still like to continue living
If you really understand what life is all about.

Set your scores and have your own standard.
It is you and no one else.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wounds

wounds of the heart
bleeding but which cannot be seen
yet you feel the agony
the pain that seems to permeate
the intellect of one
who keeps pretending
not hurt but burned
that feeling of a house ashed
one standing
to be counted as a survivor
of another love
that failed.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wow, Philippines

this country
is blessed with lush rainforest
harboring
a variety of tropical
flora and fauna
huge ferns
multicolored birds
fishes and
butterflies

crossed by multiple navigable rivers
san juanico bridge
mc arthur park
clear waters
crystalline
bluer clouds
shining sun
blooming flowers

pocked by mysterious caverns
and refreshing waterfalls
atop a wooden raft
some ropes
and splashes

how could i ever ignore
this country

my country
my town
that now i am traveling
always like
a stranger
saying

wow, wow, philippines!
come my friends
we must try again
remembering the fresher times
of rivers and seas
and clouds and skies

wow, wow, philippines
i have never been
and yet so near
the islands of my dreams
now these realities

RIC S. BASTASA
Wreaths...

in sleep
your mama
comes

in her middle
age
she is still
strong with
lots of money

your younger
brother who married
early
comes with a
toddler and begs
for money

you stare at
mama
and the fear is
there

she has to choose
whom she loves
and she gives money
to that scoundrel
who laughs at you
and leaves
you with all
contempt....

and you wake up
to this lies
at 2 o'clock in
the morning
sweating and
grasping for breath
wanting to buy
wreaths....
Wrestle Them Out
	his is the puzzle of the wrestle.
no, it is not the mortar and pestle.
not the usual metric matter, but something
beyond what your eyes can see,
a fusion and diffusion of arms and legs,
muscles and cartilages, you look for
the abdomen hidden by an abdomen,
there are no mouths, strictly no tongues,
but there are lots of fingers and toenails.
whose face is that? it is twisted.
Whose mouth is that? it is twitching.
whose faces faces whom? Butts
and bottoms. Could be robert's?
Could be ric's? Two bodies wrestling
fate. The stars bet their light. The moon
is awed. The night gets darker.
No one wants to go home. Everyone
is watching the wrestle. All flesh.
The pressure builds like a muscle.
My neck is bound by an elbow.
The elbow is bound by the thigh.
There is prison and bars and rings.
Knobs. Locks. No keys.

We struggle to be free.
We hold and then we loosen.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writ Of Amparo

my love i am lost
give that writ of Amparo

give my shelter
for i am homeless

open your arms
where my body can rest

let me be restful
in the warmth of your thighs

RIC S. BASTASA
Write A Poem For Me....

1. Got a giant (literally) heart shaped balloon from Jude
2. & the kids with inscription,
3. I LOVE YOU TODAY, TOMORROW & FOREVER.
4. It is now floating in our living room.
5. I wish
6. they could just volunteer to do all the chores
7. &
8. the driving errands.
9.
10. Ha, ha, ha, ha.
11. Valentines is FUN with all the roses
12. &
13. chocolates (even in the office).
14. We are lucky and blessed!
15. 'grateful & appreciative

(I am entertaining the possibility of myself being relieved from writing a poem.

Copy and Paste and it is originally from
the bottom of the
prose of your
heart.

why not?)

RIC S. BASTASA
Write A Poem In Utter Simplicity

do not complicate
what is obvious
to our senses

our sense of touch
does not require
so many words

feel and write
do not ever think some more
it will just be painful

watch the images
pass
just a glance
do not stare much
there will be so much
glare
so much light
injuring your eyes

in a moment
of truth
close your eyes
and then
open your heart

it will be restful
like a good night's sleep
a nice dream
where harsh reason
cannot have
dominion

RIC S. BASTASA
Write About The Desert Rain

canary yellow sand

the lonely man walks
on the sands of the desert
one evening and whistles
to the dying sun

and then as the moon
comes out
from where the sun
just left

he stands still
and looks for the missing stars
the desert rain
has come and his eyes
are teary
and blurred.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write Erase Write Erase

d this is what happens to this poem
when you have nothing to write
tonight....write, erase, write, erase

you are waiting
for an inspiration that does not come

you keep on waiting and then something comes
you write it, you think about it, you read it and you find nothing
worth the letter you assign to it
then you erase it and you are honest enough to admit that there is nothing
beautiful
not even a purpose, and then you write the word again, you ponder, there is
nothing worth its existence
there is nothing to grow in that word chosen
you erase it again, you write it and then there is this space of thinking,

what is it? you ask. what is it really?
it is this denial.
this negation of
what you are
that keeps you writing.

you stand by the window. Look out
the road. You see a dog, and it is howling again
to the moon
and to the wrong tree
it is barking.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write For Someone Definite

if you write
an old writer says
(who never got famous somehow
but left an imprint in
you)

write for someone
definite
someone whose name
rings to your ears
like a church bell

pretend you are talking to
a god
and you are offering
your thoughts
and heart and
even your soul

do not say you are here to save the world
that would be too much of a burden
and you cannot carry it yourself

say you are saving yourself
and there is no other way except to state this message
to the one greater than you

it is accepted
this is something divine
too solemn to be uttered
to sacred to be
revealed

and thus the metaphors
come in
like masks to your face
the words are said
not for what they mean to be
and so the world grows
flowers on the hills
and the rivers flow in all directions
and thus springs
freedom

and beauty too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write For Someone Definite, ....

if you write
an old writer says
(who never got famous somehow
but left an imprint in
you)

'write for someone
definite,
someone whose name
rings to your ears
like a church bell'....

'pretend you are talking to
a god
and you are offering
your thoughts
and heart and
even your soul'.....

do not say you
are here to save the world
that would be too much
of a burden
and you cannot carry
it yourself

say you are saving yourself
and there is no other way excep
t to state this message
to the one greater than you

it is accepted
this is something divine
too solemn to be uttered
to sacred to be
revealed

and thus the metaphors
come in
like masks to your face
the words are said
not for what they mean to be

and so the world grows
flowers on the hills
and the rivers flow in all directions
and thus springs
freedom

and beauty too.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write It Still...

at noon
the voice comes

the usual
uninvited guest

this time when
you are about to

float upon a siesta
when you are too

tight upon a thorough
morning scrutiny

of what lies open
before you

like an overused
sofa.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write Me A Poem Which Has Nothing To Say...

why should
something so important
be said?

or why should....
will that matter?

i am tired of all these
bickering

a drop of blood
a dew, a tear
some sweat
drops

a spit, a venom
from your snake,

a smoke, a gun burst,
a bomb, a drop of water
from the sky

a speech of denial,
an euphemism from a well-rounded
ambassador of
deception,

a divided country
a dumb herd of sheep,
a fleeting school of fish,

a red rose on a glass vase
by the window
facing the sun rising from
the hills

a frame of a window
and you sitting there as another silhouette of art.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write To Me In Simplicity

Simple words
Put them there
Black and white
No colors no laces no tendrils

“love me”

is enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write Your Word And Whirl And Whorl

now is the right time
to write your word and whirl and whorl
are you sad? tell me you're not
are you happy? think about it
when someone leaves you
you find it hard to accept and you fetter yourself
with avoidance and denial and anger
now write what you feel on a clean slate
of your new beginning
it is not that you need a drink or a potion
of instant forgetting
there is no such thing honey
there is only that gentle acceptance of the fact
that people do not stay beside us forever
that goodbyes are necessities of life
that deaths are tests that arrivals are just palliatives
that after all, life is here with its sister death
that nature is doublefaced
with nights and days
with stupor and fervor
learn the ways of humanity
for after all that the kind of stuff that we are made of,
bluntness that injures, sharpness that kills,
gentleness that cures, love that heals,
and death that ends and redemption that promises
eternity that hopes.

RIC S. BASTASA
Write, Write, Write

Write in the language you dream in.
But this had never made sense
as far as I remember, I’ve never dreamt in nouns and verbs,
but always in huge boxes,
or dark abandoned malls,
or long flights
where my slippers are lost and my baggage,
missing.

Perhaps i should write in the language
that wakes me
That keeps me restless,
that feeds my hunger,
that reminds me that
i am alive.
it’s a matter of hearing
the heartbeat of one’s words

I can’t wait for more writers to write
Perhaps if the work of critics and teachers
will eventually bear fruit,
it will not be too far off that the streets of my town
will one day be filled again
with the lyrical lilt of my own language

I also can’t blame those
who continue to write in English
and live
in English

which is easy to dismiss as snooty
and elitist,
and alien—
even if it is the same village street,
the same home
that is being woven into words.

A tongue only becomes alien
when we keep it at the gate,  
at the door.  
The stranger is only as strange  
as when we do not know his name,  
and he does not know ours.

the job of the writer is not really  
to master his language,  
but to make it his own.  
Not just to study its syntax  
and shape but  
to invite it into his home.

To kidnap bored English from the court offices  
and banks  
and schools,  
and bring it to our beautiful messy rooms.

To tell it our stories,  
whisper into its ear  
our dreams,  
and if the timing is right,  
and the intention is clear,  
then to show it our hearts  
and we’ll begin to write.

Really really write.  
Without guilt.

* reflections by L.L. YPIL

RIC S. BASTASA
Writer's Block Again?

i
read my lips
i have lots of words in there

open my heart
there are more

ii
do not touch
my fingertips
you may get
burned

by the fire of
my words

please do not
i told you
you see
you are bitten

iii
be gentle
with our distance
touch me
not

i am this little
butterfly
let me flutter
over your head

RIC S. BASTASA
Writer's Block? Here's The Address You're Looking For

201 East Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Open: Monday - Saturday, except Federal Holidays
Hours: 10 AM to 4 PM
Admission: Free

RIC S. BASTASA
first of all
these considerations
i do not really take writing seriously
i write when i feel like writing
whatever it is
essay, poetry, novel, or
plain comment and notes
on the margins of my
empty diary,
writing is not my bread and butter
i make money in my own
little way
having inherited property and business
from my affluent ancestry
my parents specially who left me a house
a farm, a beach, an investment house,
frankly speaking
i can live even if i do not have to work
because others work for me
accountants, real estate agents,
jewelers, bankers, butlers
professors, construction magnates,
etcetera etcetera
to cut the story short, without much
circuitous explanations not to waste
adjectives and expletives
i write because i have nothing much
important to do
and this is it
i am spoiled i do not edit
much less i do not read anything
after i have written it
i leave it as is
and i do not intend to hire editors
and publishers
for poetry is not a bankable business
poets are bankrupt and
beggars
they crave for a name, honor, and
fame
but that is far beyond my simple intentions
i write because i am bored
filthy rich that i am belonging to no one
genuine affection
poor man that is what i am
despite the money
and this very very lousy poetry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing A Few Of The Paradox Of Life

when we are too near
more is left behind

when we leave
we carry less in return

we either leave or stay
it is neither less or more

when we are full
we are speechless

when we want to speak
we think less

then we regret
it would have been

the other way around
the culprit is this silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing A Poem Using The Speed Of Light

she thinks i am writing poems using the speed of light
could be
if you speak of fast as fast

but it is not that really
i write because you feel light
or just so right
because i see
a certain light
and i do not want it
to pass me by
just like that

like the light that i see in the cyber eyes
of a friend
from a very far away land

canada? is it far away?
not really
it is just a click away,
even like a wink
from an eye that would be so friendly

believe me
close your eyes
and i am there
in a speed of light
laughing
with you

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing A Story Of A Lifetime...

at first there was darkness,
(there were lies) and then there was light
(then the truth)
and then there was this sea
(you were given space and water)
and then there was this land
(stay put and be rooted)
and there was control (now you must rule)
and there was man
(now you are born) and then there was woman
(they say there was chaos) ....

and then the story of the lifetime is written:
open the possibilities
and move towards the journey
we are in this together
always questioning: why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing About The Rain

one who writes about the rain
true enough on a sunny day makes you shiver
the way he writes makes you feel cold
and as you read further believing in him
the roof of your house begins to leak
rain pours down to the ceiling into your head
and it is not just magical imagination it is
real and you get wet and happy to the idea
that you yourself is crying and your mother who
was dead ten years ago comes back to you
not noticing now that you are drenched
to the liquid of your own tears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing About The Rose

i will be denying myself
this talent
of writing a poem about
a very red rose
without having to include
at its last line
the sharpness of the
thorn
this ending pain

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing And Talking...

there is nothing to write
for the meantime that i am chatting with you
there are lots to say and share
it is different on this sphere
we are more human
on this openness for
talks... no motives, no direction
just for the sake of
having someone to talk to

and then perhaps from there
there will be more metaphors to find
more poems to compose
more words
more of us.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing As A Form Of Exit.....

writing is a way of finding
an exit
you feel choked in your
own prison fingers
the night is as cold as the hands
of the dead
five days ago, stiff and
out of this world,
you are helpless
your calls
and pleas for help
are wilting weeds
there is no rain coming
if there is
it washes you off
it is when you can do nothing
about the situation that
you opt
to write, feelings concrete
and sharp as nails
hammered on paper
stuck, and when it is finished you view it
oh, how so unimportant
a thing that does not deserve a time of your worry
something that they can laugh
when you tell them
they do not even give it the dignity of
their ears
it is a kind of worry about
nothing at all
and so you are opened like a tanzan from
a coca-cola
bubbling, effervescent
and then
gone, it is all air trapped in
a short lived
bubble.
Writing At That Time When You Were Sick…Or Dying

when you write
when you are sick and having fever throughout the night
there is no one beside you
there is no electricity, and there is a storm raging on your roof
the house is shaking

you feel that in a short while this house will be blown away
and you just do not know what happens in mid-air

when you write these lines
you hear voices asking for help as though they are buried by the waves
twirled and taken to the bottom of that deep and dark ocean
some bodies
of children and women
some still holding each others' hands
lay dead beside the black corrals and the sea porcupines and urchins

finally, you are carried by this horror
your body shakes in terror like the house shaking its beams and walls in mid-air
you give up the pen
let go off the paper
you give up that consciousness

what you have and what you are now
is air,
strangled like a throat
all breaths finally
sucked
in a vacuum

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing For Writing's Sake

all i have are sighs
no ideas popping out
i don't feel like
a popcorn, sort of
i am feeling more
like spilt milk

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing In A Way

writing in a way is like
taking a spoon of mayonnaise
and you brush it on one side
of a sandwich
and you take another
clean sandwich and you
join them together
into one edible sandwich
to fill your empty stomach
and then you
regret having done such
a meaningless routine
when you could have
talked instead to a friend
waiting for you at the
porch of your house

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing In Thin Slices...

it is like a big tuna that lands in the shores of your mind,
you view it and it is too big for your keeping
you take a sharp knife then have a thin incision
you open the think slimy skin and slice but a very small and thin portion
of its raw flesh
less the blood

dthis is sushi poetry
your wasabe is the clear sea
your chopstick your skinny fingers
your long tongue savors the rawness
of this delicacy

in real life we do not take much of the fish body
only thin slices
and then we make conclusions
without causing much ruin
of what is big and unaccounted for

you set the big fish free
into the deep ocean

it has its own destiny
you have taken the sample of what it tastes

of what it is all about &
that is surely enough

then you go on with a stick in your hand
you scurry the sands
for those tiny diamonds
under the midday sun.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing Is Like

One that I had in a dream
I was a bird flying high
Smooth air on my wings
Then I suddenly
Fell down
I did not experience any
Cut on any of my wings
They simply stopped flapping
And the air slipped
Sucked by some
Monster in space

It is like writing
I fall down today
From the heights of
Inspiration and
My mind simply
Breaks down
No thought
No dictation
From up there

Every word is sucked
Into nothingness

And all the boredom
That I have confessed to you
Once twice and always
Such that
You believe that I am
Simply inventing things
For attention,

All these are true.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing Is Never A Race

writing is never a race
no one minds who wins and loses
a true writer does not mind if there are laurels on his mind.

one writes because there is something inside you that blooms
and wilts and dies and grows
some seeds without names yet
some leaves serrated and veins protruding like pathways
to your sorrows and pains and joys and bliss
comets carrying their own tails, stars exploding in their own energies,
suns keeping themselves at the centers of their universes,
snakes molting on their seasons, cocoons turning into butterflies.

writing is a round ring without an end
no one quits, no one can, and if you say you quit,
you only quit for a day, for tomorrow when you wake up
your hands start to miss the keys again
your tongue filled with words, your heart filled with emotions
and there is no one in your house who can listen.

writing is such a bad neighbor. It is aloof and never thinks what others
think of him. It is self-sustaining and survives and thrives on its own.
Like the light of the sun, it never fails to shine. I mean, this inspiration to write.
It does not quit. It does not quench itself with all the waters of this world.
It is this insatiability that takes us all here.
It is this human nature with its incomplete divinity that keeps us writing.

it is this boat that sails towards infinity that keeps me always waiting.
I write because I am.

Quit and you lose the essence of your being.
I am telling you, when you quit, you accept the judgment of death.

The penalty is banishment.
I heard. Total annihilation.

RIC S. BASTASA
Writing Off Debts

writing off debts
crumpling the list
of those who owe
what should not
have been buried
and forgotten

opening a window
letting in air
spread a white sheet
unfold the crumpled
feel the silk of seams
knead the dough
more to grow

to write and not
to say the word

RIC S. BASTASA
Written On A Friday

i must admire you for keeping traditions, each page of the religious book, each text down to the last letter, all obeyed, since it makes you feel guilty if you do not prostrate yourself, kneel, genuflect, do the usual incantations, as a form of communicating with our ancestors and our God, the Creator, Provider, Omniscient, All Powerful, Lord and King, etcetera, etcetera....

It has been fifty-one years of my life, and i have traveled and tried to understand religion, and there are so many, ours have become just one of those thousand official beliefs sanctioned by those who lead and (milk) us....though it boils or amounts to only one thing, that we are inferiors, servants, (or even slaves at their caprice and mercy) , that we have no right to be arrogant, or selfish, that we are not private beings, but a part, always a part of this whole, this universe, this harmony that shall be achieved...this heaven and hell, this rottenness and wellness, Evil and Good,

I am given days, with names, such as Maundy Thursday, Black Friday, a Holy Saturday, and a Glorious Sunday, but with all honesty, these are all the same days to me, call me an idiot, faithless, infidel, nonpracticing roman catholic, but i am at peace with myself, and all these days, i romance myself with the silence and holiness of a searcher, the restless one, dissatisfied, outrageous, groping for words, paving new paths, cleaning roads, questioning rules, asking for more and more and more, etcetera etcetera...

to fill my thirst, and hunger, beyond the altars of candle filled lighted corners...

O, God, I just want to be myself, beside You, away from the crowd, who years ago, have crucified and cursed you to a dishonorable death.

i do not claim complete understanding. I just want to be left alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wrong Anticipation....

burdens without
visible weight
not even seen
without scent
not foul even
and yet you complain
that it is
unbearable?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wrong Construction...

he says
he likes lechon
better than his wife...

prove it.
probe it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wrong Premise

the last leaf
fell off
from the branch

he did not
die.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wrong Timing

when you got in
i went out
such is the wrong timing
of your
compassion

then we talk
about the proper timing
of our desires

you set the time, the place, and the mood
now it is not just desire but
love

yes, love,
but sometimes i still wonder
what love is
when two people meet at the proper time
the proper place, and the proper mood

when everything seems right
and yet
feels so wrong
when everything is supposedly proper
and yet
there is still this
feeling of impropriety

i am 48 years old and you are 49
and i am just asking
when we all want to be inside the room of
ecstasy

and yet
they all want us
out

just because they also feel
that the timing may be right
but it simply does not
look all right

and then you are a little bit irritated and you ask
finally:

why do you talk too much?

RIC S. BASTASA
Wrong, Wrong, Wrong...

love sometimes
is unrequited, and the best way to respond
to this matter
is to say that it is not love at all,
that this is just pure lust,
and every night that you cannot hold what you love most,
you always go into the labyrinths of
rationalization,
this is not love, it is not love
how can love be like this?
at the end you arrive at the threshold of pain,
where pain is not pain anymore
but a lesson learned,
and you still keep on saying
proving to yourself that you are right
it was love, yes it was the purest of love
felt,
but it was wrong and wrong is wrong
and nothing but wrong,
and you rest your head upon a pillow
beside no one,
declaring yourself as King
as survivor of the greatest misery of all,
love unrequited
as the king of love clapped by the pains
of the majority,
well, you ended it well,
you have a face, a body,
everything in you is intact
nothing diminished, nothing gained,
whole, and
still full of love, despite.

RIC S. BASTASA
Wuss

feeling like a
wuss

the feeb
in her

seems to be ineffectual
now
amidst the
shrubs and bushes
she breaks away

walking under the sun
bowing her head
hiding her eyes
under the shade of
her gray fedora hat

she is not
a quitter all she wished
is that she becomes
another
Bob Dylan

and i know
all the wimps
cannot hold her
back

she simply decides
to be otherwise
beginning
this day

RIC S. BASTASA
in this house of mine
there are many rooms and windows and stairs
you are invited
to take your rest and mind each piece
of myself
displayed and open for view
and even for touch
and even
for your tasting
not even for a moment but for a long time
for as long as all these shall last

but there is one door that you cannot open
one window that is closed
one room which is dark

there is nothing there except my secret longing
no one opens it for no one can
no one sees what is inside it for no one can

there is this fruit in my tree of paradise
that you cannot taste
and touch
and even see

it is only for me and i do not really like it.

RIC S. BASTASA
the conversation last night
was the beginning of our own claim
that after all
our words do not really speak
for ourselves,

that what we are, shall,
remain unannounced,
we keep it, like an opinion,
we have diaries, with black
hard covers, that every night
we open and
make some more
Notes,

there are surprises within
without, there are only the boredom
of routines

i am not responsible for
what you believe,
i am only, a limited territory
for what i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
finding the self in the self
    gives you the wrong path

do not look to the stars
    you are never there

look at the ground and
    touch the hand of the blind
talk to the mute and be
    the ears of the deaf

only can you find your eyes
    in their eyes
your hands can feel the
    warmth
that is not found within the
    lines of your palms
only then can you hear
    the sounds of your longing
that you can only understand
    from their hunger

yourself is not in yourself
    it is in the other
your heart is not in your
    chest
it is in the emptiness of
    another.

RIC S. BASTASA
one's fixed finally
like a fly
on that sticky paper
unable to remove
its legs from
those limitations

the wings are useless
the winds are of no help
the wings of the the mind
cannot uplift
where the body is stuck
with the connivance
of the pelvis
and the hands

dichotomy...
that gap between the
flesh and spirit

must be dovetailed
by a prayer of mercy
the faith that makes
us sleep
when the eyes are
too weary

RIC S. BASTASA
must we imagine
a place away from what our hands
have long held as home?

must we still dream of those
islands
with white sands and
exotic rainbow birds?

the feet have rooted and
our bodies are old trees

the fruits are teeming
and ripe for harvest
the migrating birds are
here to be catered

happiness flows here
like springs without winters
everything here is the
fun of summer times

on domestic dreams
sleep have i,
climped wings, bubble
world
here is this chosen
earthly eternity

RIC S. BASTASA
there is a moment
for standing still and
just be here
listening, there is more
to what listening
gives, it is the emptying
of all gas,
it is the shhhhh
of this
existence, it the flat
tire and then
the filling up of all
that is flat and
empty, and then
it goes back
on page one which
has the theme of
moving and
bouncing and
flying and
be lost again to the
greatness of finally
finding the self that is
not actually inside
you....

the wind, the sea and
the width
and the length and
the unending and the
unedited...

RIC S. BASTASA
the manner of perfection is always
the meeting of what is up there
and down here, for instance...

man &
God, and that is on the higher plane

but there is more to this kind of
philosophy,

even in the basest manner of making love,

the fusion of two lips
the collisions of two pelvic bones

tongue
to tongue

in and
out

body to
body

soul to
soul

more likely but
the point is

there is more ecstasy

for the lips to
reach down the tips
of the toes

God
stepping down
to crucifixion
to find
Man

heaven's tongue
to earth's
feet,

the sharp rods of
thunder
piercing the
crevices of
the earth

the fingers of the sun
cressing
the roots of grass

the man
bending between
the legs
of the woman

on the floor
the carpets crawl
on the carpets
the ceiling drops

undressed
the moon finally
rest on the marshes

how a goddess
resigns
from its
cloud throne
to have a tryst
with the horny
faun

RIC S. BASTASA
Xeric

i've seen lichens
of men
thriving on a dew
of available
water

desertic
some have to make do
with what is there

on some
climax
vegetation
aridity
is virtue still

RIC S. BASTASA
of all the letters of the alphabet
it is you

that has never been satisfied with an answer
the questioning mind
uses you like

there is nothing more important in this world
except an explanation

always searching for the reasons
and justifications

always asking
if it is worth it

if this really matters
if this is really true

and guilt ridden you stumble upon a stone unturned,
blood stained the knife that fooled your hand:

why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Y.

of all the questions
this one is the hardest to answer.

Y?

RIC S. BASTASA
it is summer
do not just stay there

what will you do when
the beach is blue
when the winds
are cool?

what will you do with
so much heat?
when the flowers wilt?
when the fields
are turning brown?

lady, do not just stay there
go, go,
wear a piece
fall in love

and if you must
grab, and if you will
be the crab!

RIC S. BASTASA
Yann Tersen

It is an afternoon
Walk by the Beach

An orange sunset
Follows me
Like
I am closely
Guarded for some
Unknown
Danger

I walk alone

The sea foams
surging from
Time to time
Touching my heels and toes

An alternate
Of sand Foam
And sea And sunset
Rinsing My footsteps

I am looking
For some Shells of My past

On a sunset shore
Retracing It to
The mouth Of the river
At the
Other end

River
Meets
Sea as
I closely watch

The sunset
is still
closely guarding.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yard Setting

tall tree
a blue recline under
brown leaves on my feet

RIC S. BASTASA
Yawning

the letters blur
i am not chewing
the word anymore

each letter slides
in my throat like
a slimy jelly

the lights in the
living room
sleep

the pillows are
calling my name
in whispers

some dreams
are waiting beside
my blanket

they will again sleep
with me tonight

the depth of the
night is too much

i am sleepy
i am yawning

hmmmmm
it is time to
close

everything
is dark,

RIC S. BASTASA
Yearning

when i think of you
today, i feel the black hair in my armpits
moving in one direction
like a sponge twirling whirling
all over my body

RIC S. BASTASA
years and years of order,
a century of
system, what have all these made out of me?

have i become a piece of law?
solid stone?
a bar of gold?
a thread of silence?

have i become so less of myself?
that seed growing and suppressed
inside a plastic pot?

where are my tendrils? oh, they have all been pruned
and i look so prim and proper
like a manicured lawn,

i have always loved the sun and
all my leaves wish for
its rays, and i have always adored the moon
and all my flowers
exuded the fragrance for the night

but look at me
inside the box of civilization
the walls of propriety
the house of morality

look at me? i am whorled
i am misshapen
i am bleeding and i am dying
to be whole again

to be free, i am evaporating
into a madness that all my senses are craving

a night nude, a day glimmering
a ball of fist,
a stab of stares
a burst of a gun beside my butt
a scream for love

look at me, do i look so ruined?

RIC S. BASTASA
it is a holiday today, officially the President celebrates the National Heroes' Day
with her soldiers offering flowers for Dr. Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Juan Luna, etcetera, etcetera

(sounds of trumpets and gun salutes release the doves that symbolize purity and freedom and peace to the confused and polluted atmosphere)

i sit and write this poem and the other Bisayan poems for my bisdak friends remembering the past and how we must be angry about the present,

let us not talk about the future, we may become revolutionaries again,

i stop. i stare at the wall. i open the window, Look at the dry fields of rice, and some sparrows

yes, the sparrow unit, still killing some policemen and raiding far municipalities and

i remember the moslems, their agongs, and malongs and clean rivers and silent determinations to be free...

brothers killing brothers? oh too normal, too sane to kill another brother in this country and the
government soldiers, yes, they too kill, as a matter of fact if you are too candid,

like me, oh, they may not hesitate too, to kill all of us, but
do not take me by mistake, i belong to the government and i still support it, even if is too hot yet to be hot

again.
Yellow Daisies Along The Path

yellow daisies thriving along the path
how full they bloom!

a muddy footpath
some pebbles
the silence of this moment

footsteps moving away from the house
words dissolving from the door

the windows close
and lights are put off

tomorrow another name cancels itself
from the page of the family bible

another child's name is added
his father is unknown but the mother is brave

shameless they call her
silence is her only answer

RIC S. BASTASA
Yellow Flower

Pak fah yeow. Yellow flower Scent on the nose
Unable to sense The necessary
Throw the gold And keep the reason
Let her know There is more to Pak fah yeow There is more
To reason why the gold was thrown
Instead of the yellow flower Pak fah yeow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes For Those That We Cannot Say

yes, my love,
for those that
i cannot say
i leave to the
gentle care
of silence.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes He Went In Hiding To The U.S.

the sultan did not like it,
his girl, a princess in their
lineage shall marry
a christian

an insult to their beliefs
but the princess loves
him too, in fact,
she got pregnant
to show her rebellion
over tradition

i told you about it,
and i agree,

it's crazy.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes I Too Remember Primary School

that time
mama asks me to sell some chocolates
but i did not really bother
about the sales

i was my own customer, my best
and ate some of them, then hide the rest.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes Januar

at a loss of words
one can only give
silence,
broken
this mind that relies on words
reality pointing to another
reality
one at a time

yes januar
i do not stop
i am sharpening my tools
to smoother
the x's and
y's.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes Like Real Life

yes the poem i write sounds like a real life, more like it, sounds very well like it. In fact, it is real.

the man is dying and all that the woman does is watch him, and the baby cries like a piglet asking for milk, and the mother sits there.

we too watch with pity, just this pity. there is nothing to be done, nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes Mama

got you mama
yes mama
i must move on
above splinters
and tacks
and nails

yes mama
who knows
that at the end
of this darkness
is this tunnel
of light?

surprises of life
mama,
on a box
of chocolates

yes mama, life moves on
and i am
yes mama, all carried away

like that leaf
fallen from a tree
taken by the great river
of our lives...

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes There Will Be Troubles In The Future

yes, there will be troubles in the future
these, all these, we see in our crystal balls,
more problems to come
planets aligning against our paths
the stars are blinking
an image of boat sinking
another loud scream
more dark enemy schemes
some traps to avoid
some lessons to be learned
more failures to come
innumerable disappointments
expect lamentations
list the incoming burdens and
harrowing horrors

these are tiresome predilection
another unkind prediction

let me have my own day now
I still have the grass to mow.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes Tony You Are Right

that the problem with poetry is that
it traps us at the end
this morning
has turned to night
without our knowing
until someone
calls us to eat
to sleep
and yet we feel we are not hungry
and yet we feel
we are still not sleepy
because the last poem
is still not the last
and the last line
is still hanging
looking for the
right word
for such a very strong
emotion

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes We Are Brothers

YES WE are brothers
we come from one gene from one
body and we are born in the same house
where we all live
we admit our umbilical cords were tied
on the same beam of the old house
where papa and mama died

time is unforgiving and strange feelings
are giving us miles and miles of mountains of
series of distances of hills where we can no longer see each other eye to eye
with honesty
and longing

yes we are brothers but like the rest of the brothers of the world
our worlds are torn apart
ripped by our very own hands
and we have become rugs and tiny pieces of papers
shred and thrown away from shut windows of our
sinking worlds

yes we are brothers by blood
but in spirit no more

now we are strangers not knowing anymore our real names
not able to trace our roots

somehow we end this strife
by closing our separate doors
our hands are knives
our minds explosives

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes What About Jojo?

the kid
just like words also need space
to be understood

yes, what about jojo?
he is just a kid

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes You May Paint My World

be ready
paint my world
be patient
it is not as white
as a canvass
to start with

i am spotted
like gerard manley hopkins
with his cow
and this trout

i have some
red marks on
my heart and
some stains
in my brains

i am dark
and you will need
nothing black

paint me
with the color
of gentleness
and the color
of your concern

i am not really
lovable but
you may paint
me with the colors
of your love

if you have doubts
don't worry
make something
abstract about me
i won't bother
i am your brother

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, Let The Sleeping Dogs Just Lie Peacefully On The Beach

yes, mr. clark,
let the sleeping dogs just
lie peacefully on the
white sands of the beach
let them sleep well
to the songs of the
sea breeze

let the waves be
gentle and
let the one who
thinks so well
have that clear and calm
eye

let him pass
his way and let his footsteps
every footprint
be erased by the winds
by the waves of the
gentlest sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, My Poems Are Imaginary

these poems tell about despair
and who will ever like despair? you grumble
why can't these poems have
happiness as its theme
a poem that like a belly dancer must entertain
weary Bedouins
oasis to the thirsty camels
cool green palms to travellers whose feet are dusty
and even blistered
grass to some snakes
and trees to black birds
rest for the night
tent and wine and bread and lyre to our passions

but do not worry my friend
these poems are imaginary
like a garden existing only in our minds
we transport some toads and butterflies
and clouds and sun and tonight
let us have the moon and some glasses of strong wine
let us put our bed outside
in this garden where the moon shines
and creates the silver sheen in our happy faces

we love illusions, we can have all the illusions we need
when we are drunk, when we dance when we are finally drunk
when we even want to make love
when we are drunk & when we make love and we do not choose
whom to kiss and caress and touch an unknown body
with our hands and lips and choose

what we remember and what we do not want to remember
now i want to write
about illusory gardens and imagine despair that despair
has no place and must leave right away
let me
do not hinder me write what i want
about what i can disown
but i assure you, whatever that is, these poems
i am talking to you, as a friend, and even be a lover at the end,
even if the rest are imaginary, and fiction and illusory
i am still real amidst this grumble and rubble

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, Simply Gaze Even Without A Thought

do not tell me
art for art's sake

everyone has a
purpose
everything exists
for a reason

absurd is absurd
and it cannot be
understood

we did not meet
at random
the plan planned
it

why this day?
what that night?
why this moment?

i am not in vain
and so you are.

what makes me alive
is this sense of purpose
i once lost it
and it was never easy
living without it.

i know what a living
dead is. I felt the zombie
in me, once, twice, thrice
until i found you,

this and that
and compare here and there
and one and everyone, and
love and lust, and guilt
and redemption...

this sense of purpose
this doing what must be done
regardless of who we are
and what i am.

to sit upon a stone
beside a rose, under the sun,
and simply gaze

yes, simply gaze even
without a thought.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, Soren, I Agree

What this age needs is not genius
We had enough of them
We need an awakening
Of those who inorder to teach
Must first obey the dictates of death
We study again this
Intriguing machine
Of this person that I am
This individual this you
Never forgetting how God
Has helped us in the hours
Of our needs, the last wish
Everything is nothing but
For his honor and glory.
We speak what we do
We do what we believe

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, The Sands Of The Desert Always Remember

it was taught
to know the roots
of its suffering
the sands still
remember the
sea it once owned
the salt and
the cover of
water
the corals and the
fish
yes, the sands always
remember
they always hope
to recover
what they lost
to the sun

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, What If God Does Not Speak English At All?

you were not born yesterday
and probably heard it before

that if your God does not speak english
then he must not be God

of course, something arrogant
hangs in the air
of this effortless superiority that
'englishers'
'english-plongplangs'
claim, which, of course, we
always oppose and dub
as pretty dumb silly

but anyhow, yes, we are asked again
what if?
what if, this God, does not really speak English?

well, of course, he is still God
and he must not have considered the english language
that important

and i agree, even if i speak it,
i still have this language
of my soul,

albeit, in english, for you,
who does not speak my own language,

yes, of course, for you to perhaps
understand,

but i like it though, this thought
that God does not speak
the english language, lest, he may sound

so englishly, oh well,
arrogant.....
dear God
do you really...not speak english?

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, What's Love Got To Do With This?

we're here in paradise
the view too alluring
a sunrise bringing warmth
touching our cheeks
sending comfort to our
dwindling minds

do not ask so many questions
it will be a waste of time

plunge and be wet
rise and be naked
come! sit beside me
i will shower you with kisses
i shall make you forget
what love is all about

this is a matter of survival
a touch, a hug, a kiss
a busting of colors in our mind
in there we never need
names and ranks and categories

colors combining
love a nowhere
this is my body
take it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, Yes, Yes, We Got Everything.

what do we get in return?
nothing

what are we really doing?
we are doing nothing.

what do we expect?
really, we expect nothing

can we do something about this?
there is nothing we can do about it.

here, here, here is nothing and at the end

well, take it, it is actually everything.

yes, yes, yes, we got everything.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, Yoonoos, The Mother Moment

The problem is you write
What we do not understand, what we do not even want
To think and yet so necessary, so universal
As air
As water

The existence that wouldn’t last
That which cannot be reborn
This division from one to thousands and millions
Spreading in the skies
Diffusing to all the fluids of this universe

The mother of creation
Fifteen minutes of guile
Then to
Fifteen hundred years of suffering
Who can stop this Yoonoos?
This pessimism of man
His hopes that die sooner
Than a petal of a rose that I just plucked today

Nature always comes and goes
Taking anything and yet leaving everything
To grow
Vanishing and yet still so abundant
As far as our eyes can see

Was it just yesterday
There was this heavy rain
This flood and everything was mud and water
And now look at this sun rising above all the grounds
I see the glimpses of grass
Worms wriggling, I see life again
Always undefeated, always surging!

RIC S. BASTASA
Yes, You....

the whole night
the dog that they tied on the pole
exposed to the rain
and trembling in the cold
was barking too hard
it did not rest to call attention
for help
no neighbor came to save it
and transfer it
to a sheltered place
afraid that it may bite
as dogs are
by their nature

the following morning
the neighbors are complaining
and they ask you
about it

you are blind to all these
you are deaf
you have no dog to own
you want to be angry
you have no time
yet you have nowhere to go
and does not want to speak

RIC S. BASTASA
yesterday was a wild wind
it blew me everywhere and i was but
a mere leaf not knowing what a direction is going to make
out of me
i hope though that soon this caterpillar
shall become another
monarch
butterfly to own a chunk of
blue sky
a capillary of a red petal of a rose that blooms
on the month of May,

yesterday was crippling and there was not crutch
no screeching wheelchair and i was helplessly bending
to a certain pain
i was wriggling and i fall upon a river raging towards a cliff
i had become a victim of a waterfall.

the hope is that soon after the wind shall have blown
and finished with its rage
the leaf shall then become free
to fall on the ground where it shall wilt

what option has it, when cut from its branch
and deprived of roots?

today is the hope of the seed
it knows what roots are, what fruits can be
today is the grains of the silent sand
light and glimmer, look over there
there is this dance of the prince and the princess
in the castle of the clouds

there is this heavy silence after
where we shall be again together
there is this smile that keeps us alive for the moment
there is this hold for a lifetime of hands that grip the softness of our being

we must agree and remember and believe
there is this tomorrow that never dies
there is this sun that we do not know how it works
tomorrow it will still be shining
there is still us i must suppose because we are tired of options.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yin And Yang

the tall cliffs
and the rough stones
and boulders
by the sea

the males

the waves bashing
and dashing
with tongues licking
the bodies of stone
and rising cliffs
towards the skies

the females

yin and yang
in nature.

the feet that the sea licks
the waves as tongues
and the tall cliffs as
symbols

the phallus and the tongue
the rocks and the waves

male and female
and then the outbursts of morning light
spilling

RIC S. BASTASA
Ylang-Ylang

Tonight the ylang-ylang blooms
amidst the darkness and the rain
spreading its scents
still sweetest to my smell

you are still the ylang-ylang that
i once kissed.
In my rain and darkness
you still bloom best.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yogi

it is when you enter
that door of silence that the sun
begins to
believe
in your chosen place
of dignity

the sun never talks

the mouth must surrender
to the greater value of its
suicide

you settle upon a floor
clap your hands
focus on the the garden
through the
glass window in front of you

to enter the gates of perfection
you must

hand your eyes gracefully
into the depths of
the wisdom of
silence

RIC S. BASTASA
searching for clarity
the best of which is an empty slate

that which we mistake sometimes
for clarity actually is one that contains nothing

as though
emptiness is one of those that has
nothing inside it

as though when things are in their fullness
like a flower in full bloom
as though
fullness is mess and must be avoided

as though fullness is pain and emptiness
is unloading and must heretofore
be marked as the ballroom

happiness so to speak
messy is noise and the empty window is clear

but the pool of water without the disturbance of the wind
is full and yet
mirrors some clarifications

that you can see your face unadulterated by grief
undiluted by any dropp of lamentation

one dives farther to see what is real and perhaps
sleep for a while

drowsiness of reality
illusion is a little bit tipsy because of so much thoughts

unthink, undream, unmind.

www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Yolanda

a stranger, even suspected as
man-made,
devastating woman,
mass murderer,
a thief, a plunderer,
the queen of destruction,
derestimated,
no cry woman,
irritating, champion of
all evil,
tormentor, cruel,
unmerciful,
most hated, most feared,
stripper of properties,
ravisher of hopes and
breaker of all our dreams

on the other hand,
as you realize after
she leaves you
penniless, broke and
downtrodden,

she is your first and
best teacher.

and in the hardest way
you learned more than
well enough.

RIC S. BASTASA
You

he says Fate your parents
left the Genes as the Masterplan
of the kind of Life you
will live
You ride on the Body
Your Boat in the Sea of
Your Possibilities
The Port of Your Dreams
Your Destiny
You may not think about It
But Death shall be One of
Your Points of Exit
As Birth was your Entrance
To this Door
Called Earth and Every Conversation
Or Promise you Make
To yourself and To Your Fellowmen
Air and Sunshine are They All
They will Tell you that Your Final Home
As you are but a Transient Visitor
Here
Above is God

For the Meantime
Eat and Drink
Time shall make the Lead

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Meet Her

you shall soon meet her
without her bandana and

you will open to her your
longings and you shall ask

why she remains single all
those years when she was

such a beautiful maiden
with slender arms and soft

hands, and you shall have
some confessions about

some matters of the heart
about women who savor the

loneliness beneath the
deep sunken eyes and

you shall tell me there is
nothing to be afraid of

about loneliness and
lovelessness, you relate like

two old best friends to the
notes of the piano playing

in the dark. There is no
reason. There is no demand

for an explanation. You kiss
each other cheek to cheek.

RIC S. BASTASA
You (For My Little Dog)

why so sweet to me
you follow me where i go
when i go to the kitchen
and have my dinner
you are down there under
my seat beside my feet
you do not ask anything
except my company
when i rise up to go to
the bathroom and poo
you are there watching
and lying down the tiled
floors listening the sound
of my being.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Advise Me Always To Imagine

when i am sad and i walk alone on a road leading to the sea
you advise me always to imagine

i follow it. And i imagine people in the market as trees.
the vendors who keep walking here and there are boats

the road is a big river and i do not wish to cross it for fear of drowning
but you keep on saying that to have courage i must imagine and imagine

so i imagine myself as an necked, a conger, and vibrant with
my electricity moving and sliding and swimming among the corals and weeds

and so i cross the street and you wave your hand with a thumbs up sign
and you meet me there with a hug and ask me how is it? and i say

oh well, i like it, and without your knowing, i imagine you as a port
with a lighthouse, and then i have to go, since i still have to imagine, a home.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ain'T Seen Nothing Yet

when you say
that life is beautiful
live it well
and spend it well
some more on
those days and nights
and listen to the rain
and drift with
the clouds
bite a sunset
savor a
sun rising from
the breasts of
the earth

say it again
life is so beautiful but....

actually, you ain't seen
nothing yet!

RIC S. BASTASA
You Always Have The Poor With You, But You Do Not Always Have Me.'

these are the most abused word: the poor and oppressed the masses, the crowd and mob, the people, always in the name of the people for, by, in,

how many crimes shall be committed still for, by, in,

how many justifications are built like bricks upon a wall

a wall that walls us all out from their exclusivity in stolen luxuries

that man robs us all in the name of the people that man who washes his hands upon a basin of water

there is this man who was murdered suffered an injustice as it is written all in the name of the people

the people that kills him
the same people that he saves

RIC S. BASTASA
You Always Know Where And When To End

KNOW when to end
this familiarity of self
even without any sign
on the road or in the sky
you always know
where and when to end

and that makes it
look like
a planned event
nothing surprising
nothing for grieving

it is like going there
arriving
and being still

RIC S. BASTASA
You Amaze Me

drunk always and always drunk as ever
vomiting your life away in every minute
you let yourself wasted on the floor
and on the sink where all dirt take
their proper place

when you wake up i feel sleepy
all the pity i have for you
taking seriously what the university never taught you
failure from being true to the words
of the jesuits

honesty is the best policy
be honest when others are not

college was your idealism
accolades and honors you reap
and then you were thrown to the world
where the dog eats another dog
where your poetry does not serve any purpose at all

then the tall building where you live collapsed
you are inside it
you have no lies, you do not live in lies to cover you
at least to protect you for the meantime
that the world is not yet changed
you are helpless like the rat caught in a trap
the cheese is even small as a crap
and you cannot take it

this deception this illusion of what is good
and what is bad of what is true and what are lies
what to do in the midst of this interplay
between darkness and light
you have not fully learned
the gray area where i live
this in-between where most of us thrive
you amaze me with your death
there are no flowers and there will be no eulogy fit for you
the idealist, top of the class

RIC S. BASTASA
You And I

while you feast upon the good things in life
i run away
from everything from everyone,
and you chide me enough
what am i? this runner, this shy shrinking form
melting to the sun and freezing to the moon
i always run away and you keep on chasing me
assuring me of your love
yet i have no ears to listen, always running away from everything
from everyone,

till one day
you push me to an end where everything is walls and walls
you push me hard enough where everyone is hateful and unjust
i have no choice but to face these walls and these injustices around me
i summon all strengths and call upon my good thoughts
i gather all within my means
whatever wits and dreams
i still have
i take my defenses
use all my senses
this little confidences
i still have
whatever is left
i save

ready for combat now,
you and i, must fight these wars together
then perhaps
we win

we shall drink our cups again
and by then, i shall never run away again from everything
from everyone, from you

i am strong enough, you keep on telling me
i am.

RIC S. BASTASA
You And I In This Little Nook...

your life is never an
empty page, every-days are
scribbles
figures and landscapes of
hills and buffaloes and
waters making
the usual turns on the hillsides
there are blue clouds
cressing treetops,
birds never rest, and the air
keeps on blowing beyond
the edges of
your margins
i am putting sounds, music,
strings, colors,
i am letting the ears of your
books hear,
i am speaking in some chapters,
want you to
to be be bold and firm
like me
hard cover, book bound.

RIC S. BASTASA
You And I Together

I see a glass
Half empty
And I see your hands
Filling an emptiness
That I have
Invented.

I am empty now
And then
You fill me
Up to the brim

I am overflowing
And here you
Are
In the full blast
Of your lust
That you
Invented
Licking me
From the
Bottom
Beyond the brim.

RIC S. BASTASA
You And Me

you and me
we like to whisper
the ripples of the wind
we like to touch
the gossamer wings
you and me
in our blissful scarring
you and me
on this twisted dream
we bend to meet
what fate wants us
to be
you and me
wanting to be
beholden to the
reigning silence
of our distance
you and me
finally engulfed
in the silence
of our sorrows
you and me
now and then
how can we ever
be tomorrow’s
loving reality?

RIC S. BASTASA
You And Me In Some Metaphors Of My Mind....

you stand
and tower
in such a beautiful
pose like
the sun
radiating

i will be the
silent admiring
green
green
green
frog
waiting for
the rain

at night you be
my moon
i will be the marsh
by the river
floating as
your bed

this morning
i will be the
window’s shutters
waiting for
the light coming
from your fingers

tonight
be my anticipation
feed me more
of your illusions
for i am a dream
gasping for more
i am this
shortest moment
that is about
to die
You And Me Making Music Together

i am a violin
play me with the gentleness
of your
disposition

you must hear
the sadness of my music

you are my guitar
i will strum your strings

it will not be sad

RIC S. BASTASA
You And The Butterfly

the butterfly measures
its life span
in just a very short moment
and it has enough

you measure yours
in years and years yet there is no moment
when you said
you have enough.

why? do tell me.

RIC S. BASTASA
i have written some
poems about
children

not the nursery rhymes
for them
honestly i do not like
to hear them
reading them to me

do not ask me
i am saddened

these children are never
mine
they are yours as you
have taken cared
of them
from the very beginning

from the womb
of their mothers

you must still care
for them
till the tomb of
time

i accept i am of the lesser kind
you are the mother
of them all
when their mothers left them

you are water and fire
and flower and cloud
and the sun

and the moon when
darkness came
RIC S. BASTASA
You And The Flower

you will have a hard time seeing
the pain
of the flowers in the xylem
for
you are always
preoccupied savoring
the pleasures
of your senses to the
majesty of its
petals

the flowers have this
message
for
you

better not taste the bitter
fluids
running within its
system

you take pleasure

and the flower understands this

you too
have all the bitterness
within you
which the flower
has read
in the labyrinths of
your genes
for

it was here before you
come and
then begin to
smell
the scent of its
temporariness
it
secret you
shall not
fathom

RIC S. BASTASA
You And The Keyhole

you sleep in bed till 10
o’clock in the morning
the room is closed
the only hum you hear
is the electricity
of the aircon,
light from the keyhole
strikes at your leg
it hurts
your eyes half open
you want to set it aside
you move a leg
and the light is still there
sticking to the wall
you close your eyes again
there is nothing to do
yesterday you get fired
and there is no
rumor about another job
this is it
let somebody worry about you
there is nothing
you can do about them
tonight mouths will scream
at you
the light in the keyhole
is gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
You And The Rain That You Have Been Praying For

the rain that you
ask has arrived

do you love the
sonorous sound
on the grass?

do you think much
clearly now?
does the rain make
you feel luckier?

look at the rest of the
creatures they are looking
for a place
where they do not get
wet
where they can have
a little warmth
where they can
for another moment
live

do not ask for meaning
the rain cannot give it to you for now

RIC S. BASTASA
You And You And You And You... But Just You

now i remember about what he, the poet without a comma, once said:
too near yet i cannot touch.

it is you.
i open, yet i must close
i am too near you, yet you cannot see.
i want you and i love you
yet i cannot be the love that i want to be.
to forget you i must find you in all the lips
in many bodies, always i am an earth unsatisfied
with a flood of rain,
i love you, yet you are not love, i want to hate you instead
but i will be denying you and myself.
i have been to places wanting to find you
but i always create the distance.
it is always you, even when i die.
they will get me wrong and tell me the name of another.
it is you and will always be you.
i love death more now.
but what can i do? i must live to have you still.
hope against hope,
at the brink of what finally perhaps
may shock you.
that time you may hate me, but that is the truth.
i am the truth, i want you to be a lie.
but you are the truth too.
too near in my heart, but which my mouth
must deny.

RIC S. BASTASA
You And Your Words

does not anymore waves of the sea

because you never mean them
and they who hear them
cannot even think of birds winging
on the park
pecking on some grains thrown
by well meaning citizens
of this country

the words that you flaunt
have become black and white peacocks
and the frogs who live on the fog
stopped croaking
confused about an evolutionary change
that they do not expect
coming

simply put
because you never mean what you say
you have also become nothing to them

you are mean and
so
you mean nothing at all

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are A Human Being

You don’t float because
Your father is a carpenter

He floats well in water because
His father is a duck

On the other hand, he flies
Well in air, not because his
Father is a vulture, it is obvious

He looks like a hawk and acts like a hawk
It is obvious,

He is a hawk himself.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are A Part Of This Poem

You read it today
You sleep
Then you wake up
There is wart
In your heart
Some warts more in your soul

Like grains of sand

The poems become
A part of your being

As warts, spiritual warts
Irremovable.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Afraid

To write in English is your burden
You fear the grammar of the white man
You are afraid of its intricacies

why?

because your heart is not?

don't mind it, you simply want to share with full respect
to use their language

you could have used your own and be smooth with its facilities
but you also want to be a part of this world

to think american to speak english

who know if
He finds your poem good
Enough if
He feels the beating in your heart that
There is a flow
Of gladness
In your own way of being a part of this humanity that
There is joy
In your outlook that
You have a certain projection
About love sickness death redemption life

who knows?

Honestly
Now go
Write the language where you are
At home
Write the meaning of your riddles
At your convenience
Do not be afraid of English or Indian
Strictures
do not be afraid to commit mistakes
do not be afraid to go to prison
You will speak your language
You will sing your own song

you have been in this prison

for how long?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Always Beyond This And That

at dawn
you wake up
with
no one by
your side

silence
in its irony
begins
to syllabicate

there is
a caress that
makes
you
turn into
a sea breeze

you float
into myriad
possibilities

you become
so many
metaphors

that you can fly
wingless
that you can dive
to depths
without fins
you become an
eternity

one is up there
looking
at one who is
down there
meditating
some matters
escape you
into the folly
of deep sleep

one thing is sure
despite the
doubts

you are never alone
and you can always go beyond
this and that

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Always Electrifying

by the simple touch of your fingers
accidental intimacy like bumping on the street
and then quickly
parting ways like you don't know me and i do not know you
this pretense of strength
of white cranes suddenly in motion to the skies
as i clap my hands near the lushing cogon grass

oh they fly, oh they fly like white pebbles thrown to the sea
and then they are gone

i get electrified the moment i see you
(how can i ever tell you about
this secret that grows like a cancerous mole on my face?)

sizzling simply sizzling this feeling
of loving with the loved one not knowing anything
why flowers bloom and then die
why the leaves are falling

the white cranes in the rice fields this June
oh how they flap and fly like white pebbles thrown to the sea
perfect flight of silent love
my eyes are so delighted
my heart sings
it has never known how to scream

in silence i gaze at you and then you walk away
the street where you walk narrows down like a throat choking

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Always There

I am far away from you
I intended it to be
I want to travel this journey alone
I am throwing away my crutches

Arriving at the point of
no return
There is someone who wants to talk
About us
Those rainbow days

I do not like this
What I know is that
I am ready

I like to turn off myself like a conversation's
Demise
Like a cellphone without a load
A battery exhausted

But i can't

You are a scar
And will always be there

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Always Welcome

Welcome, my friend!
Your arrival is my pleasure
i give you this usual embrace
cheek to cheek
this bear hug that Russians make
with this kindest courtesy

i am tendering this
humble reception for you
we shall welcome change
the way we now see things
the way we treat the events in our lives

there shall even be a welcome
of hisses and to some extent
some catcalls
but friendly still

because you are my most welcome
visitor
take some rest we shall dine and dance later

we have accepted you to our fold
you may stay that long
and longer still
my welcome is never worn

my home is your home now
that is my first vow..

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Asking Now For A Metaphor To Understand

i heard you when you said you find it hard to understand
my scribblings on the sand
words seem not to be related to the next word
illogical
not having a connection between their close distances

how can you connect a star to an ant
or an electric eel to a ladle
the sea to a cooking pot
something too far and something too near
the universe to a grain of sand
the wilted sunflower
to the screw of this motorcycle,

make the link, that is a challenge and you complain
i am just confusing you
there is no meaning to all these bickerings of thoughts and
anti-thoughts, you tell me

but let me ask you my friend,
how do you relate to God?

is He the same as You,
far and near
thoughts to anti-thoughts
matter to non-matter
flesh to spirit

you want a word always to correspond to an object
at first
there is no problem here but go beyond what the word
should be
or what a word must be to non-objects

you need the help somewhere
you are asking now for a metaphor

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Beautiful.

white butterfly fluttering
and hovering one moment
to another moment,
to the flower of time,
sipping a little nectar
to wet its proboscis,
tasting sweetness and
then dying in another
minute,

in another parallel universe,
she goes from one mall to
another, windows shopping,
men, lots of men, tasting
each fluid muscle and
solid arms, and then dying
in another minute,

you are beautiful.

Her coffin is pink.
Her hair is fake.
Her face is reassembled.
Her body now filled with
noxious preservatives,
her mother attends
to guests who, a day
before despised her.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Carved In My Heart Of Stone

you are lost
like a composition inadvertently deleted
but it is not wasted
no one can take you away from me

not even my own negligence
because you are in my head
time has carved you in my heart
of stone....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Crazy

is that your last word

oh i see,

your sentence.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Dressed

you are dressed i see
like me
white as snow
and well ironed like
a kimono

i ask you
where are you going from here?
and you said
a question for an answer

how about you
where are you going from here?

and i ask too
a question to another question

do you know where you are going to?

and then i tell that man in white: i am staying.
and he went away without telling me where.

when i tell mother about it
she says

good my son, you did not go with him
by now, you would have been dead.

mother i know, as always, is superstitious.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Going For Good

this meeting will be brief
like twilight we will talk agree on departures of

hands waving in the port the ship blows a big sound

the ears of the shorelines are
deafened

you are going away for
good like twilight

on that ship
all your promising mornings are taken away

take the noontimes then for your survival and evenings too,

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Gone For Good And I Yet Have To See Your Wings...

to do sometimes
what you do not want
doing

like mingling with
sinners

feeding the poor and
the oppressed

praising those who
do not deserve
a word

living with dogs and
rising with their fleas

talking with nonsense
and embracing what sometimes
is undesirable

you have stooped to the level
of the mediocre

living with the dirty kind
and getting their own stinky
feelings

immerse yourself
you keep asking me

immerse to the bottom of
humanity

feel them and live with
them
these are the works of
God you say

and here i am still detached
from you

wondering: for how long will
you compete with God

for how long will
this blasphemy last?

you are gone for good
and i yet have to see
your wings...

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Here

you are here
at this point
you read
these few lines

do not panic
about what you will be

that is the business
of the future

you do not go there
where it will still be
they come to you
slowly
do not panic
do not ever be excited
do not even think

it will just come
to you
for you
you do not change
it will change
you

you have no feet
to walk in there
no mind to think
about what will be
it is futile

the future has a mind
of its own
its rules
and premonitions

it comes and be open
it has its own arms
and will soon embrace you
for whatever it brings
be glad

things happen
because they always will
do not begin
it will always be futile

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Here, Alone.

you are here again
where planes land
where another load of
people is transported
to their chosen destinations

you are one of them
now. A set of hands waiving.
Some kiss each other
cheek to cheek

you talk to yourself.
you take a walk.
you want to know yourself better.
and you know you will come back
again from the beginning.

the sun sets. it is dark.
you go where your mind takes you.
it will be strange, but it will be beautiful.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Into A Relationship

You are on a ship
In a traveling crowd
Alone
And you look at the sea
You have no direction
And seeing you lonely
The sea says
“come into me
my love for you is boundless
my resources for you are limitless”

and you look at yourself
on a ship
you have no choice
you have nothing to lose
you take nothing with you

and you jump
into a relationship
with the sea

the sea makes love to you
you feel nothing
you sink
you sink deeper & deeper
into a relationship
and you feel
you are all wrapped
all over with its waves
your arms bound
your hands can not move
you can not help yourself anymore

you sink
you sink deeper & deeper & deeper
you see everything about the sea

the sea loves you
with all its resources
with all its love
you feel nothing

you sink
you sink deeper
you feel nothing
you are dead

you were already dead
a long long time ago

when you were
on that ship
you did not make any scream against your own shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Its Garden Of Eden

someone is hooked
on you

you avoid a hooker
as though you are
a clean sheet of
paper

someone is madly
in love with you
and you refuse to
understand it

do you think that
the hooked one is a leper
sick with you and
you want to avoid?

gracious! what the hell
has happened to you?
selfish, and aloof
behaving like a wolf

take that love
close your eyes and
feel

in loving you lose
nothing
you give, and the
world becomes yours
forever

give love a chance
let it live and bloom
you are its garden
of eden
You Are Leaving I Just Got Into

you are leaving to another higher level
on that plane
of consciousness where i have never been to
and you are not laughing at all
i am smiling
you are not responding there is that sense of awe
that i have not felt
and you look at me like i am a small pebble
i feel like a grain of sand
to your rock to the heights of your cliff
and then in the blink of my eye
you are gone
i am left scratching my head
asking questions
that i know you think i am very qualified to answer
there is this pinch of fear
i shake i admit
i am building this bridge made of rope
you once said
it is enough for my use
the sophistication of iron and still
is not the answer

i will remember some more
the best word is my word for it
the most useful tongue is the tongue of my comfort
the only journey is to return to myself
i am here i point to this mark
i am going there i point to that mark
i know what to do i know when i start i know where i am going

back to you
back to where you were gone from the beginning

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Looking For Me I Heard But You Are Finding Me In The Wrong Places

it is sad
but let there be no tears

you are looking for me
i heard
but you are finding me in the wrong places

you think that i am but a body
and so you look for me with your hands
as a body has
arms and as hands look for their arms

i am not what you think i am
the premises have all been wrong
i am not a place that you can find
i am not a date that you can remember
i am not even a why that you can reason out
correctly and then
if you think that you can find the one that is reasonable
and logical then
you can declare that you have found me

but i am not logic, i am not a number, i am not a reason

if you say that finally you are uncertain
then you have become so beautiful to me

more likely i am.
for i have never agreed on something so certain

it deceives. And i am not a deceiver.
let me be the most beautiful uncertainty in your life
and if you love me
be uncertain about us

and that is where we meet.
You Are More Important

we make food wait
on the table
even money
we make it wait
on the terrace
they think we are
rich and
spoiled

that is not actually
the point

we are more important
than the two combined
food is not our
idol
neither is money
our master

let them both wait
while we talk

you are the point
and more important

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are My Little Flower

you are my little flower
still growing
in my garden

blooming for me
for eternity

and it does not
really matter

if i die
not just once but a hundred times

if i live only once
to have a glance

to your
shy petals

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Neither Changed Nor Diminished

You let time pass
you by

you are neither
changed
nor
diminished

nothing added
is felt
somehow

the worst thing that
happens
when every part in
you stand still

an island in the
middle of an ocean
a rock on
a cliff

a tadpole could have
served you
better

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Never Mine

It is the moment when you kiss me
And hug me that I feel the pain
Thinking all the while
In said close, tender moment
The shortness of space
Between us

The acceptance that the kiss
The passion shall be short
Time kills

Time buries me again
On the widening space of emptiness
We left behind us

When you close your eyes
And without a word
You shall go
And be in the arms that own you

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Not A Dream

last night you are the woman undressing before me
beside the brook with bamboo trees swaying on its side

i am told that you are just a dream
the fruit of my weary mind

i have seen the waterfalls flowing from your hair
i have touched the full moon of your breasts
i laid my body on the cool green grass of your body
your hands are soft and perfumed like the orange flowers
cascading on my face

i feel the rain dripping on my cheeks
when you left me

you are not just a dream my love
you are real from the very beginning of my sleep

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Not A Fixture Inside A Lonely Room....

the wonderful times are gone
but soon they will come,
they too, like us, are going on a break
a vacation that
they too badly need,
somehow

you enter the door of the lonely house
when the wonderful times are gone
you sit on a chair, listen to the carpets
talk to the paintings, and take a cup of coffee
you look around, stare at the ceiling,
read the papers, and then watch the news

it is evening, you light at candle
at the dining table,
you cook and you eat yourself,
and then you undress yourself
look at your body in the mirror
it is still beautiful and then you
take a shower, wipe the water,
spray some perfume, drink a glass of water,
turn off the TV and the lights at the lawn
and then you sleep alone.

you dream.
so many dreams to still dream
but you do not wish to remember
each episode of this dream
too many loads to carry
so much to think about
so much imaginings
and you do not need them

time is too short
for so much sentimentalism

when the wonderful times were once here
you had a nice dance with her
you made love in the morning,
you smoke her cigar,
you drink and savor the taste of the
sweet and sparkling wine
you remember the joys of ejaculations
intellectually on the romantic stories you have read
beside her

the wonderful times are over now
you had it, you once had it all,
savor the memories
and then you must forget to begin again

you leave a house,
go on another destination
meet another love,
for love is the cure for love
when the heart breaks,
it is but of essence that it must heal itself
because that is life,
a thriving, a revival of this heart of fire
it beats a pulse, it makes you run
and never does it make you stay
like some kind of a fixture
in that lonely room.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Not A Worm

and the worm asks the bird: why do you like me?
and the bird says: you fill up my hunger

can't you like me for some other reason?
worm, i do not think, i only eat

so when you fly, or when you decide to take me into your guts you do not really think about me?

i have no time for it, i do what my instincts tell me
i fly because i have wings
i use my beak because i am a bird

but why did you take me when there are other worms on that tree?

common, you are the most visible worm the most accessible one and so i had no time looking for some other worms

no, you have taken me because you love me and you eat what you love and hence you are so cruel

you are not a worm, you are a woman. i am a bird, and i could be a man.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Not Happy Yourself But It Does Not Matter Anymore.

there exists a pretense
that very serves the purpose of this world
and for which this world thoroughly admires
since it suits well
everything for the survival of what is today
for the future

the suit is well worn
gleaming with pride
a white carnation in the pocket
natural and alive
an orange necktie
a white polo undershirt
a pair of shiny black shoes
a leather belt
a new pair of pants

you make a speech on a hill
everybody listens to you
you are well suited for
all their dreams

it is not you but you have to sacrifice
for everyone's hopes and the realization of all their dreams
you disregarded feelings
you set aside personal desires
you restrained what could have provided you happiness

you are the leader of the flock
the pride of this community
your parents smile on their graves
your ancestors carve a name for you in the other world

you are not happy yourself
but it does not matter anymore.
You Are Not Like The Cat Who Has Seven Lives

you may have seven or
eight faces
just like your emotions
they’re so many
but you are not like the
cat who has seven lives
always remember that

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Old Now.

when i step into the room  
i could have told you  
but you are the one always speaking

'the king can do no wrong'

i look at the pile of books  
silent damn books

i am following your footsteps  
into that  
hateful anonymity

when time brings us all here  
we are told  
we have not really done anything great

the books of our lives  
will be consisting of empty pages

you were so engrossed in speaking  
and i am lost in my  
boredom

i was thinking of those that have not arrived here  
those who have also given  
hope like me but they are still in some unknown places

i turned off my cell phone  
this time i must confront the void  
into speechlessness

into my failures  
for what i have not done

before i left the room i took one book  
it is not that the king can do no wrong

there is no king.
You Are Old Now....

...because others had it
you want it too,
you work to have it, work so hard,
connect, have a network
you push
you pull strings,
even at noon,
when the heat is
painful,

(deep within you you do not need it
you can live without it, you are different from all these
ambitious
selfish, power takers)

then, you finally get it

but then, when you prepare to go
dress yourself well, comb your hair,
put some smile in your face,

you finally face the truth that this thing is giving you harm
and never good
this arrogance, and
conceit,

and then, you surrender,
throw away
that which you have worked so hard for

you are old now,
and there is no more time left for you to be
real.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Prometheus

the hormone
signals you to go
and make
you leave and choose
what stirs
you like
a rippling
water
on a pond

once the ripple
finishes itself
into
a crystal clear
surface

you mirror
yourself in there
and find
for the meantime
the narcissus
in your
face but sooner
as mud settles
on the floor
you shall see
the beauty
in you

Prometheus!

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Right

DARKNESS, i want to be left alone
inside my room.
You knock, i say, Leave me.
My heart is bleeding and there is no
sign that it will stop
that way.
I am embraced by grief.

You leave me and I Keep time
as company inside my room
DARKNESS.

Time kills me. I am alone as i want it to be.
I kill time,
utterly confused, i keep saying and writing,
i will never love again.

You are right. Your love is breaking my heart
and there is no cure.

I will bury it. Soon. Leave me alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Right Bodoy

you are right about your song of the armalite
and its baby
you are realistic about the power of ammunitions
these bullets of the times
these domestic wars
fought between us
brothers
and
countrymen

the widows weep, the children are lost,
some strangers look for their bags of clothes
others for their arms and legs
others lose their senses

while on the negotiating tables
the sponsors of the war
are drawing the lines
in bold strokes
in percentages: how much goes to the supplier
of the armalite
and the baby armalite
how much goes to the mercenaries and the soldiers in the field
how much goes to the brokers
the spokesmen

and how about the civilians
those who lose their loved ones

you are right Bodoy
there is nothing for them
except perhaps his lousy poem

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Still The Glittering Gold In That Mud....

..and then
through an adversity
when life and its
pulses are
at the lowest,
that you shall know
who your true
friends are,

there are only very few

pearls left
in the box,
be glad, accept
this fact,

if you continue
on weeping, soon,
you shall not see
that there is still
a glittering gold
in mud, and it is

you.

RIC S. BASTASA
you are still you on that dimming
fading light in the room where we softly talk
the years did not diminish you
your hair still curly, black and shiny hanging on the side of your ears
your forehead did not give in to the furrows of your sorrows
no wrinkles reside on your cheeks, tight and smooth on the light
of the small gas lamp
your gaze lands on my eyes like soft hands caressing my face
i gaze in return like the way how we understand each other
when we were so young and playful
when we tried to defy authority only to end in submission
you are still you in your undying love for me
as i have unlearned what we have taken as memories for ourselves
i, now, in my indifference, accepts what life is
the coldness of reason, the grip of necessity, the confidence
of being stuck and not moving to a new direction
looking at you with pity
holding firm for tears not to fall, and then opening the door
closing it again and moving away
feeling the weakness again
running to the streets and not looking back at your face
realizing how the years fell heavy on my back
how i have betrayed myself

you are you, firm and so beautiful
leave me, for i am no longer strong, so ugly like a heart that no longer feels

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are The Cloud

the water droplets in you
the dusts in your hands and feet
you carry them
up with your wings to the heavens
there is pain
and disgust on your neck and
ribs

to those who see when you hang in there
lifelessly
you are a reddish cloud
as beautiful as a bouquet of roses
against a desert sky

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are The Eyes Of The Words

hey, you are what they call
the eyes of the words,
seeing thoughts and traveling
the paths of feelings,
beyond this place the trees
and beyond the trees the forests
and beyond the forests the hills
and horizons beyond ourselves

our souls,

i am fixed
on the fetters of my flesh.

hey, you are what they call the eyes
of the yes,
the serious seer of my truths,
humanity's homunculus

hey, you are what they trusted,
the eyes of the world, the word beyond the whorled,

tell me, please tell me,
what do you see inside my eyes?

what is the color of pain?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are The Moon

i shall walk the streets alone tonight
there is no life at home
i must get out to watch the prettier ones
i want to talk but they don't listen
i want to live, i want to love

You are the moon, on a stormy ocean
full moon, uncaring space
bright moon with all reservation

i must be what i must be
for no one's the same
Roving streets libidos flow
Forgotten Sky, alone you're Dry
I want to live, I always want to love

You are the full moon bright on the Sky
Hiding your feelings Alone you Cry

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are The One

you are the chosen one
fronting the sun
you cast no shadow

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are The Unreachable Star

You are my Everyday.
A cup of Tea. A glass of Coffee.
You are a window. The mirror where i
See myself Grieving.

I look at You everyday
And I always ask you to Go with me.
Almost anywhere.
I want to tell you something
That may shake my world
I decided I won't.

I am your Silence Now. And You are my Only Smile.
We are together in this.
You are the farthest star. And here I am The Sun
And the Moon

And the river and the trees. I am everything Now.
Beside You.

You are my tiny star inside the circle of my two fingers.
My eyes are the center looking.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Translating True Love In The Language That You Like

it is amazing
here you are translating the meaning of true in your own language.
i am amazed.
you love poetry after all? you still love true love

i hear the cracks of your broken heart
i pretend it is nothing to me

i see how you bleed
your white shirt bloody
and your hands
cupping some drops of blood
from your bosom

i pretend i have not seen such a pitiful sight
i have my own broken hearts too
but you will never know that

you have contempt on my lost loves
because you never understand that true love can also be

more than what you expect
it can be more than one
it can be many

the way i love are like ten fingers
the caress of ten fingers

they move like a tribe of love
on the thighs of my beloved
on her breasts

how can i be so cruel living with just a finger to love just one?

now i make a poem about true love
the one that uses so much of myself
to love not just one
but all

yes, do not be surprised
to love all of humanity and humanity
has not just one set of breasts and thighs

oh, there are hundreds of them
and from their milk a thousand children shall live

RIC S. BASTASA
You Are Wrong

you are wrong.
you were never ugly.
you are not ugly.
you are beautiful
as ever as anyone
can be. who can be
so ugly with us?

tell me, what is
it that makes
them
only
beautiful.
who cannot be
beautiful as
us?

who can ever
be ugly
when we
are in love?

no you are
wrong
you are not ugly.
it is only him
who thinks
so. I love you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask If He Is The Kiss And Tell Type

and i said no
and you easily believe me
taking always my words
at its face value

he kissed you
that is true
and he told me
that is also true

but there is more to that
no big deal really
what do you care

and here is the pain
he might have kissed you
but he never loved you

no big deal really
what do you care?

if you did not really love each other
why did you keep that picture
of two lovers kissing
on the hill

a long, long time ago
ask me if he keeps it still

that picture of two
lovers kissing
on top of
the chocolate hill

yes, he sent me through the email.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Me If I Am Sad...

I know why you are asking me if I am sad
Like Pablo Neruda I have written most of the sad lines
The saddest even if you paid
The closest attention

Sunset, dimming nature’s lights
Departure of my dearly beloved
Drying riverbeds, wilting vines on the fence
The well of the house that finally ran dry
The grass that promised to grow some flowers
The sadness of the eyes trying to hide in the curves of the smile
The breakfast on that lonely table
The river flowing all alone towards the sea
The birds stopping on this silent tunnel and then flying away

All these you have been reading
Every word seeping without a quiver in the bottom of your heart
They fall like dead leaves from trees without buds

The silent sands covering the shores of your memories
All these you have been seeing, figuring out
My sadness and perhaps from your sadness too you begin to ask
Why? What could be the reason for all these?

Tonight, I am looking at the moon
I am not looking at my wound
I have no quibble I am simply seeing things the way they are
I have no beginning and I have no end
I do not die; I only live every moment of my life
I may be shattered but I make myself whole again

Tonight, let us not ask the questions
Let us not care about the answers....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Me If I Change

you ask me if i change
i tell you, yes i always change
don't you notice it?

some hairs on my head
are whiter now, and some
have fallen without any
sound, my wrinkles move
and they beget wrinkles

my eyes fail, my hands
tremble, my feet dwindle,
my memory of names and
places are wanting of
particulars

i change. Everything in me
changes beside you and
how can you not notice it?

i know, we are too near
and we are always together
in this familiarity where
changes are everyday and

yes, how could we not notice
all these, my dear?

you are laughing, a lock
of your hair is falling too.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Me If I Miss The Place

you ask me if i miss
home, and i did not answer you
i go out the door and see
a line of corn growing
along the field
that i plowed

the rooster cocks
a long call

and up there
the hawk
circles us
beside a
dark cloud

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Me To Confess

bewildered about what's going on
outside your world
beyond those veils and curtains
you beg that i confess

what you see in me is what you really are,
and this you ask that
i must confess all my sins
so i can be saved

from what? my silence is asking.
as a friend there are matters to be reconsidered

saving my soul is never any other person's business
i even have to find a location for it when it wants to rest

my silence is a rock in the middle of the river's rage.
there is a black bird there that sings under the whiteness of the clouds
drinking every raindrop
that we do not expect to fall in the middle of a bright day

i need not confess
there are so many poems written and scattered everywhere
that i made

they have mouths and in the corners of the lonely nights
they all sing my own madness

both on sadness and joys,
they have said everything that you badly want to hear.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Me Who Am I Really?

You have seen my face
You have seen the way I smile the way I bend my back
My shoulder leaning on the door
As though greeting you
A nice day a promising future
The glow of sun
The coolness of the moon
The splash on the clear blue waters
By the pool
By the sea
The sail boat passing by
The ship on anchor
By the wharf
And the cotton clouds hanging
By the green mountains

The poems I write are sad
You read them and you cry
You say you relate
You say you feel
The sadness of my lines

Now you ask me
Who am i?
Was I the butterfly dreaming about the sad man?
Or was I the sad man dreaming about the butterfly?

You are confused
I am not; I choose what I want to be
I am what I am
This moment,
And the moments that you imagine me to be

I write what I want
I am what I am
The lines may be lying
But read them again
I may be somewhere in the lines between
You Ask Me Why I Am So Negative In This

a bee died
and a flower died
a marriage broken
another heart is broken
a friend walks away
another girlfriend calls
that it is over

i am negative
because everything around me is

if you are not on a rush howeve
i can make you
a lovely poem
tonight

this is my room number
at the seventh floor
of this hotel
Room 99.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Ask Yourself Today

we look for patterns of success
and we look at their lives
those who made it
to the top
and those who amassed what fortunes
are there
on this earth available to all those
whom you think
deserve

the efforts and strategies
the patience and hard work

you find yourself without a dime
homeless and
deprived

there are not patterns
not even luck

there are only those who are there and do nothing
and yet they get all

fame and glory and fortune
you ask yourself today

what have i done to deserve all these?
God has no answer.

kneel and just pray.
Your fate will always be yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Become Like The Rest

To be really free is to be nonsensical.

try being reasonable, what do you have?

you become like the rest, bound, and frozen to something that is reasonable

what is reasonable is something that is always expected

and those we expect are the most disappointing of all

what disappoints us makes us depressed and angry and

imprisoned to our own cells of discontent

what makes us free is what makes us open

a closed door may be safe, but who likes to live in it?

when the world was born there are no locks no doors to open

our hands have fingers that are not meant to be fists

but tributaries where any fish can live where any

fallen leaf can drift

our eyes do not even close in the dark

they see better there than in the light which we

know has blinded us

this is the path and it does not even look like a path

we are the first to arrive here

and so we cut and keep on cutting the grass
overthrowing stones

paving

RIC S. BASTASA
You Believe In Laughter, Do You?

since when have i seen you laughing?
twelve years ago?

really? you don't believe in laughter
anymore. I will take you to places
where laughters are planted
and grown. A stroll at the park

seeds of laughter are sown
by all the children. They run
without direction. Life is a
play, a game. Life is not
a thinking, but a mere

being there. I will take you
to these fancy restaurants.
See the lovey-dovey teeners
over there? They are engaged
in whispers-at-nothing really.
Cheek to cheek. The guy is
handing a spoonful of macaroni
to the girl. And the girl chews.
And the guy takes a glass
of coke, so she does not choke.

Laughters are made here.
And they are everywhere.

Do not follow them home.
You may not find the laughter
anymore in their own
lonely rooms.

Why should our room be
devoid of laughter?
Let me make them
for you. I start with a can.
I will open it. Don't look at me.
Do i look like a guilty jilted lover?
Now you are laughing.
I told you. It is true.
That affair is over.

We start anew. This canned laughter. Try it.
For once. Please.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Belong There, You’re Out Of Here Anymore

I am glad; you finally found your steps
Carved in Japan
He loves you the moments are there
In every festival that you learn
In the family that you have
Created for yourself
You are happy there
And that is enough
I can sleep well tonight
The stars above my head
And the moon
Give a smile
The wind whispers your name to me
Your name is no longer new
You have always been

Happiness

For the meantime, I shall gather some
Dreams
I have more stories to tell in my sleep.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Bet On Another Day

yes, you must live for another day
bet this day bet on another day
until you find this love that love
that must make your days whole
your nights still so exciting
you may fail again
on this sad day
on this despair of being alone
and still murmuring about the pain
in your soul
about the night that rains
so cold and becoming so unbearable

you want to sleep you cannot
the lizards keep bugging your thoughts
another failure
another fruitless turmoil
you get attuned to these feelings of
being low and meaningless
this day that day that coming day

you bet again for another day
you wake up, wash your face, go to the toilet,
clean your bed, dress yourself, and look at the mirror
to comb your hair and say
i'm ok, and this day will be ok
and they will all be ok,
you keep on entertaining promises
you maintain a number
a certain faith
who knows? you may hit the jackpot
it is near

wipe your tears, wash your face
prepare for another sleepless night

RIC S. BASTASA
You Bring Me Closer To The Lord

i am lost. But they say, one who is lost
is ultimately found. Be it here.
Or there. I will be found.

by you. You will catch me
red handed on a faith
that is lost like a sheep

and you shall come with
your staff and call me
by my name. You say

You are mine. You are my long
lost child. And you embrace me.
Like the way my
father once embraced me.

and i will cry. and i will be
comforted. You tell me again

You love me. I love you.
Then we walk hand in hand.
And then so weary
i get tired. and then you pick
me up and hold me with
your arms. and then you carry
me.

and then i fall asleep.
and dream of you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Can Have Everything I Have

you can have everything i have
my clothes,
shoes,
socks,
house,
car,
shirts
my lot, and lots of
things i own
you can have them
and you may take
them all
everything
i say, you can have them
all that i treasure
because
i love you

i like your
face and it is so sweet
and i like to kiss
your cheek
but if you
still do not feel
anything
for me

it is alright, i can wait
forever
take everything then
and leave
me empty like the night
without the moon
and the stars

without you

RIC S. BASTASA
You Can Sleep, Sleep In My Arms....

Like a baby bird.
Like a broom among brooms...
in a broom closet.
Like a tiny parrot.
Like a whistle.
Like a little song.
A song sung by a forest...
within a forest...
a thousand years ago.

(the unbearable lightness of being)

RIC S. BASTASA
You Cannot Make Me Forget Who I Am

from the beginning
when my roots fused to your roots
i have always detached
my thorns
from your thorns
my tendrils are cautious
not to harm myself
neither yours.

i am different and will always be
one
apart from you
when you kiss me as i close my eyes
i always think
of myself

soon all these illusions will be gone with
the sunshine
and i won't regret it when the rains will start
to pour heavily
as i am always ready

i keep a boat ready on the river
when this time comes
i can always paddle
to the other side
where i keep my roots my seeds
where i am a tree
of old

always myself, yes, you cannot make me
forget
who i am

RIC S. BASTASA
You Cannot Own Me

i do not mind if
you are away and i do not know where you are

if you wait if i ask that will be a waste of time and you know it
as you know myself too well

when you come back, if ever you change your mind,
i am still myself in the same house, same stairs, same room

i spin, and i am spinning, not silk, not ideas,
i move with time unceasingly

as always, i am expelling all cares, all loves, all hate,
all indifference

i am not from here. And you cannot own me.

RIC S. BASTASA
you, the unknown planted all the mines.  
you invented this war and exploded your bombs.  
Inside myself, I am war torn. I am the child  
running away, and then my brain spilled on  
the pavement. My arms are no longer connected  
to my hands.  

you created this scenario. Blood and amputated legs.  
armored cars and nuclear powered planes.  
Mushrooms in space. Fireflies without fire.  
you draw violence. you paint abandon.  
you instill fear. You brushed havoc on the clean canvass  
of humanity.  

you committed genocide, and hate and classifications.  
then you tell me, this is it, and that is that.  
There are justifications.  
Philosophies, and Ethical considerations  
all from your own  
point of view. The view of an eagle. The elimination of the  
the earthworms. The destruction of the mountains.  
The splintering of islands.  

i have long disappeared. Now, you invoke my name.  
To justify yourself.  

RIC S. BASTASA
You Changed

you changed
i know i see it clearly

you begin to like this room
surrounded by curtains, white curtains
you light a candle
and then you close your eyes
you travel inside the labyrinths
of your thoughts

you will be lost for a time
deep, deep into the sea of your being
gently you sail
arriving to the port of your heart

you changed
you are better now
you have known the haze
you have touched the opaque covering of the self

welcome we have been waiting for you

RIC S. BASTASA
you come like morning light
i have nothing to pay for
you come like a routine
i have no surprise anymore

you come like a spontaneous
friend, we talk without a script
we worry none for words to speak
we suffer none of this unnecessary
silence between breaks when
God is supposed to pass between
us: we have more imagination
than realities, we touch more
what our hands cannot hold.
we have nothing to lose if
God does not know how to speak.

you come like the wind
so unexpected like the sea breeze
so natural
you arrive without a consideration
nothing of the asking if you are late
or early like a friend from abroad
there is always that feeling of joy.

my friend welcome, please sit down
and be at home. I am more of a soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Come This Morning And Touch My Weakness

you two come this morning
searching the secret place in my body where my weakness lies
you gaze at me, like both of you are siamese twins
you scan my skin, you listen carefully to the beatings of my heart
you move your nose trying to figure out the smell
of that secret place

you frisk me, you strangle my hair hoping to find the secret
between the locks of my hair
on top of my forehead and behind the skull covered with
thick skin,

you try so hard to find what i am
what you find is what i am not because your hearts are hardened
by what you are not, in all the years that we have parted

i also listen to the beatings of your hearts
and in there there is no more sound of compassion

this time you must leave, i am locking my door.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Complain About The System

i agree there are so many things wrong about the system
i agree when you complain about it
how it smells like a carcass of a stolen goat slaughtered in the field
how it executes without any question at all
the dragging of due process in the streets of nowhere
you have no name for it. it does not deserve any christian name
at all. The priests are too compromisings anyhow. Blessing it.
and pouring it some of its holy drops.
the lords are too many for its slaves.
there will be nothing left for your children who will be born tomorrow.
you complain with your clenched fists. Locked jaws.
you have unlearned tears. You are drawing anger
in the walls with your blood and sweat.
look at you? with all your doubts, and anger and fears
and curses

you are like a house burning
and they are not calling any fireman.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Cry Baby And You Cry Alone

you are right. No one is ugly.
each one is as beautiful
as one thinks s/he is
to be

everyone has always
the possibility of being
beautiful if one thinks
that s/he is ugly

we are moved by our own
thoughts
how we conceive ourselves to be
how we carry our crowns
how we sway our arms
how we sit with dignity

the mirror speaks but we
need not listen
we must insist on who we are
from the bottom of
our hearts

remember what they always
tell you
you cry baby and you cry alone.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Define A House With People

to have meaning
you define a house with people

a park with lots of them
or a mall with more

sometimes i wonder
why you do not like a conversation

it gives a living room its own sound
why you do not like an interaction

of men and women arguing
and laughing and flirting and
sweating things out

it gives a veranda a smell
of vodka and beer and smoke
that fills the air

do not worry much about death
or noise or petty quarrels

i assure you, whether you hinder them or not
for sure, they will always come

do not hate that apple of discord
it is an honored myth.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Did It First

It pains me
indeed that you have lost me.

i never lost you
you are here inside my
indiscretions

it pains me much
that you did it first

you cut the umbilical cord
and i am the baby
floating in my own blood
grasping for breath

but still very much alive
with only hope as food
for my darkest night.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Did It...

understand
though that the beginning
of wisdom is
fear,

you just cannot take
it, how can love be
feared?

how can one be so wise
and fear what
he is seeing?

how can one do something
with all fear?

this sickness and trembling
this leap
these fearful ways
how can you not stop
living in the house of
fear
and yet still whole
and unbroken?

you did it.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Die Cousin And They Are Not There

Today cousin is the day you die
Your wife is in Japan and your kids are out there
In the care of your mother
Your sister has despised you
Your brother does not bother anymore
Now that you are nobody, with no money
With nothing to make you look like
A gentleman
Everyone has deserted you cousin
What have you done?
When once you were alive
When once you can offer them everything
Your kids their education
Your wife a house, a car
Your sister and brother your money and attention
You were so important then

Times have changed
You are down and fettered
In alcohol you drown yourself to forget
Finally what you wished has been granted

Death, you wish for death

Goodbye cousin, the stories are always long
There is no time to tell
There is no use to reveal
The great heart you still have
The generosity that was
The love that you have that was always greater
Than they all keep for themselves
I know,

Your final rest and your silence
You shall now make the final justification
To the Great Lord, the Ultimate Reason
Why you never build a home?
You, on this lonely tomb
You Do Not Have To Capture The Best

do not capture the best

neither shall you say i am

just keep on gazing and

moving into the journey of

that soul within which till

date you have not really held

with your own embrace

you do not have to capture

the best and say i am the best

for it is the best that captures you

and then it says: i have the best

and of course, you will never know.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Have To Hear What The Woman Said To The Guy In White...

at the clinical laboratory
i have seen how a beautiful woman with long blond-dyed hair
stings the guy seated next to him

she calls him not with his name but some other word
that is so degrading

the man's eyes changed from sun to moon,
his mind wants to howl like a jackal but he keeps his restrained silence

he loves another anyway and she will just be a waste of time
for another useless argument.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Have To Kick It.....

you do not have to kick this love of mine
to kill it
i kill it myself even without kicking for you
shall never know for i shall never tell you for
i know you will never understand it anyway you never
feel it in this strange world of mine where butterflies
and urchins hug each other in the orange sky.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Have To Love Me Forever

i do not demand much
i only ask you
to love me now

forever is just a wish
a mist

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Have...

you do not have to
read me
for me to become
another poet

i am
and i can be
and i will be
even without you

and you are
and you can be
and you shall be
even without me

i am a poet
because i have decided to write the poems
and the poem shall be there forever
until the right reader comes along

the one who loves
a poem even without me
even without you
even without the world

this poem and that poem shall be
even without us
for these are words
and words shall be words even without the world

for it was the word which came first
and shall remain
till eternity.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Know It

when a door finally
closes
and you knock again
pleading
'sorry, i am very sorry'
it shall not
open and
tell you 'please come in'

it has its own reason and
you cannot say that you do not know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Make Me Bleed

i place my heart
you do not know it where
that is my secret
now
you look at me with suspicion
what i have been
doing with myself
hiding from you the most important
part that which
wears the
wedding ring
i am hiding my heart
it is not where i told you once it is
i am a failure
to love i am a murmur now
of the night
do not blame me
we are part of this
heavy drama
do not make me bleed
i will not
i have no heart now
just this empty
chest
filled with the air of my remorse.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Notice The Genius Of Other People

in your vanity
in the tallness of your price
like the tower of babel
you stand disunited
and scattered soon
you shall be like leaves
blown by the winds
of change

you do not notice the genius
of other people
you have looked so profusely
inside yourself
and you have not only become
one meaningless tower
but a cave digging more
confusions towards
the darkness of your
feet

try opening the eyes between
your eyes
try using the ears embedded
in your ten fingers

hear those who have no spoken
listen
see those who are like shadows
living
in the twilight of your life

perhaps you can find yourself
the paradox keeps upon itself the truth

your heart thrives somewhere
your hands have not been holding

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Own It It Is Not Yours  Keep Going Hand It Back To The Giver That Owns It.

going over with
that is what mother says
when i am down

father used to hide
knives
and keeps another key
to my room

till now
i weep for mother
i pity father
who had underestimated
my tolerance for
failure

failures are simply
successes delayed
human personalities
as always
remain mysterious
and unpredictable

those that survive know
much better
those that remain in the
old house
die their early deaths

if life can be lonelier
it can become stronger
if life is not taken
it can be more

you do not own it
it is not yours
keep going hand it back
to the giver that owns it.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Do Not Really Matter Somehow....

i am not
humiliated when
you
underestimate
me

i sometime feel
the exclusion

when i extend my hand
to yours
i only see the blankness
of your eyes
evasion is your good
answer
to this indifference
which has become
too mutual for us

but i do not really mind
long before you
come into my world
i have already built my own
complete with walls
and moats
every tower with guards
in armors
and i always have a boat
ready
in case of emergency

i have another island
reserved for me
in case of an inevitable
escape
from a defeat

and so you do not
really matter that much
i have freedom within
freedom
each stacked like
cards of our
gambling game....

RIC S. BASTASA
When you are exhausted
to even write a letter
do not be afraid about
losing yourself
into an abyss of
perhaps having outlived
your usefulness

This is a normal occurrence
when you have given up what
does not rightfully belong to you

Because you only live on
a borrowed house and what you
have is only the body
of the sea hermit

Because you bring nothing here
and so when you finally leave
you ought to bring nothing too
with you

But what place are you going?
do you really know?
what do you have here?
do you really know?

When you are tired now
because there are no answers
bear in mind, always bear in mind,
that that is the only possible truth
of our earthly existence

Deep in our hearts
we know of a country
and inside it
is a paradise

It is certain but we do not know when
it is true but we do not know why

just be patient
just be patient
just be patient

here comes the wind
and you do not see it....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Don’T Have To Read This Part

i never liked
honestly enough
those fidgety leaves
those nerves
that fall short of the
translation of
the word
in my native language
yours too
but
which you must have
betrayed
for something lesser
than yourself
do not tell me more
going away
i know what nerves
are too
last night
i could not sleep
thinking that
for all those years
i wasted
myself on you
blackbird...

RIC S. BASTASA
You Don'T Stop Writing Girl, Go Girl Go

You don't stop writing girl
You cannot stop, It is part of your nerves now.
Each vein looks for the proper word.
Each red blood corpuscle has become a syllable
For an imaginary poem in your mind.

Each beat of your heart recites a rhyme
Each curl in your cerebellum thinks of
An imagery. Another metaphor comes
And you grasp them with each breath.

You are alive girl. Go girl stop watching
The snow and make your imagination
Run wild like a snowstorm.

The sound of a snowfall. A snowflake
Layering on the side of your window pane
Speaks to you about this coldness
This beautiful sound of a very lonely song
Harking for Love.

Far away from your homeland
You weep for a while and then recover
Compose yourself and see your face in that mirror.
You are strong. You are as vast as the ten thousand miles
Away from us.

Go girl. Another poem knocks at the door of your heart.
Write it. Write about a chaff. The grain. The wheat germ.
Go girl. You are one of us, chosen not to speak
But to write.

I am waiting for your next poem. Gladly, I am.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Don'T Want To Play?

i have been playing all
the mornings of
my life,

and this evening
i quit
it is time to
go home
clean myself
and sleep

it is late.

you don't want to play?
then sleep with me.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Dream Last Night

that you undressed
before me
and that i touched your
whole body
with my lips
from the tip of your
toe to the tip
of your hair

and this morning
you ask me
to interpret that

i may oblige
but first i must
see first
the kiss marks
in your
legs.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Fall In Love With.

it is the fall that
does not hurt at all.

it makes the sun rise
the moon shine
the night though cold
makes you stay outside
the house with someone

you fall in love with.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Found My Way

you cook so well
and i am so
anticipating about
the new menu
on the white
porcelain plate
beside the
silver spoon
and fork
and the corrugated
knife fit for
the medium rare
steak
more rice please
more lemonades
and lots of
lettuce for the
salad
a ripe mango
and alligator
pear
on a platter

lady, you found your
way into
my belly.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Give

you give not because you have so much
no one has such

you give because you like to give
because it makes you feel
that you are full and oozing

because of no other reason that you
like the feeling

makes you high
removes the sigh

RIC S. BASTASA
You Go Beyond

there comes a time
when you go beyond
praise and censure

when reward or punishment
does not matter
to you anymore more than
a slap or a kiss

you are not dead yet
you simply become a
lotus on the pond
undisturbed by the rain
or sunshine
unperturbed by the mud
beneath you
unamazed by the blueness
of the sky
above you

when you are you because
you are not you
when your eyes do not open
to see
when your heart does not beat
to live

when seasons pass
and you do not know that they are there passing
when you are engulfed by so much openness
when you do not know
if some doors close if some windows soon open

and when there are some more coming and going and leaving
that you know that you do not ever know

RIC S. BASTASA
You Go Where The Wind Takes You

i write this with painful eyes
and it will be the same pain
that sends you off
where the winds of change shall
take you and i do not ask any questions
when you are coming back
or where you are going

this is the journey of freedom
the journey of a leaf which has fallen
from a dead tree and now shall take
the course of the river to the sea
to nowhere

you shall take it now as i have taken it before
until you find the center of your universe

i do not even ask that you shall remember me.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Become A Bone In My Throat

have the conscience
set me free
for you have become a fish bone
inside my throat
clinging to a tissue that starts to rot
and smell

i sound as harsh as a stone grating
on the banks of the river
raging to be free

i gnash my teeth like pebbles
thrown upon the tiled floors of the house
where no one wants
to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Been Kept

you have been kept so beautiful
inside the darkness
of the cave

i, this worshiper
bowed and promised to have
you inside my heart

the obstacles are many
sharp rocks and snakes and
big trees on the forest

i am hopeless outside
my desire shoots like a meteor
beyond the skies

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Never Really Learned How To Live…

you are into
defective situations

how come these dusts
are not wiped out?

oh, these dead rats
are not buried yet

at night you cannot
see stars because of
the rain

you live with someone
whom you cannot change

everyday what you think
is wrong is kept repeated

you take a deep breath
and you keep on adopting

you keep on forgiving and
forgiving until you're about
to go insane

there is a way to keep light
the load she smiles

befriend dusts, why don't
you bury the rats yourself?

do you have someone else in
mind who can also live with
you?

if you have not met
madness if you have not
felt numbness

then, she smiles again,
you have never really learned
how to live.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have No Particular Reason For Being Happy

you are happiest
when you have no
particular reason
to be happy,

you do not
look for it
you do not
find it

it finds you,
and you
pick it up
in your hands
this bunch
of ripe grapes
hanging

falling
direct to
your
luscious
lips

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Nothing To Read

worthless
are my days now

so do not wait for me
for you you will get nothing

when the 7th day arrives
i will tell you something

from my sleeplessness

=================================================================
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walay nada
ang akong mga adlaw karon

maong ayaw ako paabota
wala kay mahagdaw kanako

inig abot sa ika-pitong adlaw
diha pa unya ko mag-asoy

gikan sa akong pagpulaw...

(translated from the bisayan poem of hazelen cobol)

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Nowhere To Go

you have nowhere to go
your heart is trapped
locked in the gates of her cares,
your eyes are covered
by the gentleness of her gaze,
you are now caught in the truth of her love
you hands  bound by her desires
your lips  lost in her sweetness,
now you dwell in your weaknesses,
now you surrender to her longings
you now belong entirely  to her,

with nowhere to go
you are doomed
to die in her bosom
as her chattel
her prized possession
her love mind you
has turned you
into a thing, a property

but you did not mind
your heart is made of wood
that which was real at first
was already taken
and this one does not matter
anymore anylonger
there is no beating.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have The Soul Into Your Words

you may have the soul
into your words
you may have the oil
and the canvass and the
shapes and forms
to immortalize
what have you

something
for posterity for your immortality

but what use
is posterity
what use is this immortality?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have To Think Very Very Well...

i had been trying to teach you
how to think
like the way i am teaching you
how to walk,

it is not the substance but
the process
it is not the rocks on the way
but the motion itself
where to and when
not the what

for i am a teacher and i cannot teach
you anything anymore
when i leave there is only one thing
that you will be forced to do

to think for yourself
and with what i have given you
that you think well, very very well

and not be taken the surface of things

RIC S. BASTASA
You Have Travelled The Distant Places Of This World

your work is confrontational with
a lot of faces and races
you have a hard time with the black ones and
the yellow ones
and their accents you call as barbarians
of your age and taste
you struggle to move to the top
to control and be the master
it is like
everyone is an enemy and
there is always the suspicion that this friend
is here to kill you
for he too must go to the top
without you

you are getting bald
on the side of your head the white hairs are popping out
you need a walk by the shores of the sea
you need this Confucian walk for a hundred years
to think and be whole
amidst the wars you have created
or imagined

you have travelled the distant places of the world
and you are holding the globe
with your hands
the red dots the stars marking the lines
the shapes of cities
are all in your head

and then you confront me and plainly say
you are unhappy fighting this
kind of war this tugging of ropes
among countries

on a Sunday morning you call me by your cellphone
you are back to your father's ricefield
the one he plowed when he was still alive
the mud that grew the rice grains
the one that sent you to the national university

you say you want your feet bare
and be muddy you say you want to learn how the farmers work
what their hopes and dreams are
you laugh with them
you are learning now

you are whole again you are telling me
you finally found your home this place where they do not know
how to write
and speak english

your brothers like you now
you are eating rice with your bare hands
you are walking their soil without your rubber slippers

then i said i have to go i too have lots of things to do

RIC S. BASTASA
You In Your Closed Bleeding Hands

The palm that closes
Cannot hold anything
Just like this narrow mind
Unable to grapple with
What is newly given

I see your fingers are closed
I tried to tickle you so they may open
I tried to tell you something puzzling
You closed your fingers some more

What is it that you are hiding there?
It is causing you so much pain
Your hands bleed, please open them
Is it the nail? Is it a broken glass?

You are not nodding still
Is it something so important?
That even with death you still refuse?
You are not nodding still
You shake your head, you keep mum
And numb to what I am asking

So be it, close your fingers
Hide the lines in your palms
Let your hands bleed some more
We shall wait what happens next

RIC S. BASTASA
You Just Can't Remember

you have
never been to hell

or that Sahara desert
with the skull of the
camel beside those
vultures
in your dreams

neither have you gone
to heaven

that paradise island with
lots of coconut trees
and blue seas teeming with
fat fish

somehow you know these
words: hell, heaven, desert,
paradise
but you have never been
there

or perhaps you were once
there but
you just can't remember

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know

you know very well
that i cannot live without you

and you capitalize on that
belief
that i keep telling you

and so you are so confident
taking me
for granted

not thinking that i as a man
of my senses
one day
may have the courage finally
to give up
everything
including that belief that i cannot live without you

and then one day
you will find an empty cabinet
all my polo shirts taken
transfered to a new home
away from
your misplaced confidence

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know Better

you know
the real score
my dear
#2

YOU'RE
60% less prettier
and
40% less
intelligent
than her

and there you must
understand

cope up with what
you do not have

your long black hair
scented with
peaches

your watery mouth
and long
soft tongue

you must get
even with her
for she is always in
my heart

and i sleep with
you
on the bed
mechanical

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know How Is It To Be Blue

you know how is it to be blue
you sailed once on top and you plunged
depth down under
the rage of the river

you know how is it to be inside
a certain darkness and silence
you know how is it to be just a river
this will haunt us forever

you know how is it to be inside the cave
filled with water and rage and rampage
of stone and waves

you know how is it to be a river
flowing and going away
you know how is it to be bluer than blue
and foamy and angry

you know how is it to be deep just being deep
and it is enough for me and then you go away.

let me stay on the depths of these mysteries
i like the blueness of blue, the deepening of the deep

i like it here, deep and silent, even without you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know How To Mix The Oil And The Water

between the oil and the water
put the soap
or the common detergent
that is how they do it

in poetry it is not easy
to mix the oily feelings with the watery ones
and it is hard to check
which detergent to use
what is it that is having poetic sense?

between them and you
how do you get well along the lines of poetry?
who is the water and who is the oil?
and who is the detergent among the metaphors
and the similes?

takes time really.
at first we keep on writing these nonsense comparisons
trying to tell which one is best, better and good
which one is worse

but sooner you realize that this has nothing to do with comparisons
it has only something to do with the clicking of the right switch
to give light
to the dark room where we live, to give the sound of the singing bird,
to give that hush, to make us sleep soundly
on a soft pillow, and then dream in another world
where we do not talk but merely observe how the colors float
how they pass us by

and we are nothing but spectators always wanting to have no part
in everything
and that precisely is the light feeling
that makes the click

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know That It Aches A Lot

you know that it aches a lot
my dear
so why take it and
venture some more
with the exercises of
pain and sorrow
and strict discipline
like kung-fu at dawn
on top of the cliffs
and mountains

you shy away
and tell yourself
this is the proper time
to quit and hide
away from this
wasted time and
unnecessary trouble

you justify: i have other
better things to do
like licking sweet
strawberry ice cream
or drinking my
favorite light beer
or simply strolling
in the park with my
favorite dog
or having fun
with my younger
friends and singing
the videoke with
them on lazy afternoons
or visiting gardens
during holidays

or making money
and taking time to study
and evade with legal
validity my taxes

oh well, you make your choice and it does not matter. it is your life and this is my life.

but oh well, wait. when it does not ache anymore, the joy is a hundred times greater than the pain.

you see, i am always feeling it... now in thousands

this bliss of expressing myself in the art that the gods have handed years, and many years ago eons, and eons, and so many have really forgotten.

i just love this and i could have taken you to the place of the burning bush the holy ground the love of my life and my way of communing with all the gods.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know That Well That I Do Not Edit My Poems

there is no aim for fame
there is only this gut, this push, this inspiration
to write a poem
every morning,
even at noontime when there is so much to do
a poem is an icebreaker
it is cold to my tongue like a refresher
or even at nighttime
when everyone is fast asleep dreaming
when i am sleepless over a word
that strikes in my mind
like a bowling pin
i write put on words like a hat
and hold it there
like a staff for now i am an old man
with no one to talk to
no where to go
no one to sleep with as i think about the memories of my youth
summers and
rainy days
barefoot on the river
socks in my hands
crazy on a covenant
as death begins to whisper
the last word
for the last poem.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know What Happens When Love Is Gone

she knows what happens when love is gone:

the sun turns black
and the moon becomes red
and the trees become like
some grass in the
brackish water of
the marshes
where the air
stinks like a pond
where all the frogs
are dead
and rotten

where the dragonflies
are headless
where the wings
of the butterflies
turn into threads

the sea is gray
and the sands
are pins hurting
to our feet

the leaves
are skeletal
and the stems
are spikes
of bicycles
without wheels

you know what happens
when your love is gone

but take a look at me
when you finally decided
to throw my love away
i still bloom
as a mushroom
after the thunder
the lightning
and the storm

RIC S. BASTASA
You Know Who I Am.....

if you curl your hair
and make it short like that of
our poodle
or if you change the positions of
the chair and the table
or make this room more light and
easy
like the way light from the moon
is admitted with
all liberality,
will you expect that i change to
the way you change things
the way you like it?

you know who i am.
i do it my way. And most of the time
i do not change what you can see outside
as it is the inside
which matters most.

i am still thinking how to do it.
That is why i left.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Like An Unfinished Business

you like it
when it is not yet finished

life like
like life perhaps you like it before it ends

perhaps at the middle when you smile
and then you stop it short
when the cold air comes to touch your brows

you like an unfinished journey
before you reach a certain home of old pictures

i paint a path and you like it when it is just near a river
which we are about to cross

you like it when i touch your lips
and then i leave without letting you taste the kiss

i understand how painful endings are
like departures

you like an unfinished business
perhaps because you like someone to come back to you
and give you
forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Long For Silence

you hide
white hair
you want to
keep wit
forever
you bury sins
you grow
hope
you throw away
what you cannot
love and hold
you catch up
what you miss
you sing again
you long for
silence
when you go back
the party starts
noise tells you
'i got much'

RIC S. BASTASA
You Look Pretty

you look pretty in the mirror
and you keep on telling yourself that you really look pretty
and you turn around with that pink dress
a long red ribbon on your waist
and a flower in your ear
you hold your skirt and take a closer look
on your face
narrowing down to your lips and nose
you need the strictness of silence
and you stare at yourself for a long, long time

it is the mirror distorting your reality
and it takes courage to utter the sentence: i am not real.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Look So Light And I Want To Take You Back Into Your Human Form

you drift as a cloud
you look so light and
i want to take you back
into your human form
as another brother
but how can i make
you stay and be back home? shall i tie you
on a tree? shall i make
a kite of you?
i watch you all day
drifting. At night i may
see you as another star in the sky.
i am so quiet.
Perhaps, like you
i never know what
to do.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Lost....

i could have told you
about the dignity of silence

how victorious always
is it in the turbulence of
the daily noise
in the market of the
multitude

those screaming hours
the maddening chatter of
the crowd

but then you were too busy
feeding the noise

RIC S. BASTASA
You Made Me Choose

it was a case of choosing
a stone, a snail, a hammer

i chose the hammer
just that
i never used it to drive a nail
to smash a snail
to break a stone

i chose the hammer and kept it
just that
i left it in the house
(bought a house five years ago)
i walked away
and then i whistled my way
in the woods

just that

RIC S. BASTASA
You Made Me Happy Too, What Is Wrong?

last night you have shown me
everything i love
shall i enumerate all your
body parts
the color and taste
and smell

shall i tell you that i have memorized
every detail
you may tell me i am so sensitive about
those things
parts that bore you since you have them
all the days of your
sad life
sad?

i have quivered in hell
i swallowed every vomit
for each breast and arms and
hair
and lips and tongue
i sighed

you have shown me every part that i am
and honestly
after what happened
i hate to say this
but i had a year and so many years
of regret

it is not me, it was never me
i am never like that
but what can i do
here you are smiling at me
teasing me
and piercing my brain
shouting to the layer of my conscience

you did it man
you did it
stop pretending
you made me happy too
what is wrong?

RIC S. BASTASA
You May Borrow My Eyes

you may in due time
if you wish
borrow my eyes
so you may see
what is inside
my soul

and my heart too
it always beats for you

RIC S. BASTASA
You May Float For A While

when you are feeling like a butterfly
float,
you may float for a while since you know very well
that you have only one day
to live,

you will break a wing and then dive to earth
and have peace,
no one sees how you struggled with just one wing
and then
tired you give up breathing
and the ant sees you
happy that they have your body for their
feast

then you are gone forever,
you think that way
but one of your atoms from your fragile body has been
absorbed by
a root

and that is where you are taken
up to the trunk and then twigs and then leaves
and then into
a flower

where a butterfly by chance happens to like you
in the petal and
sips the nectar and you with it

and then you have become a part of the butterfly again
you want to remind it about what happened to you

but you have no words anymore.
you have the force, but it is as tiny as the ant.

RIC S. BASTASA
You May Start Seeing The Dead Earthworms

for a start you have seen dead earthworms
along a muddy pavement

you theorize about their deaths
the reasons
perhaps the waters in the canal rose
and drowned them last night
when you were asleep

perhaps the sun was so hot the other day
while you were working
hard in the office and so they
were scorched
to death

i like it when you reason out
but i like you more when you were sad
and wrote something about
these dead earthworms

and then i slept for days
and dreamed that we hear the earthworms
sing their own songs
in the notes and lyrics of their own

something strange really but
i am so happy
the earthworms too do not just die
they also rise
and they also sing

it will be another beginning for us,
a happy one i suppose

RIC S. BASTASA
You May Strike But Hear Me First

start with a
board of
premises

sound premises
facts verified by all
the senses
possible

look around
stretch your hand
then if you are definite
that no harm
is potential

jump then
into conclusions

RIC S. BASTASA
You May Strike, But Hear Him First

Is it not wise and kind
To ask first
Why?

Hear his side
And listen
Demand always
An
Explanation
Or a
Justification

Then

If there is reason enough
Strike! Strike if you must
With a club
Or a fist
Or a very harsh word
A stab
Or hack or shoot or bomb

Be always fair
If you fight as you
Think you
Finally must

Let him know
Let him
Also prepare
For his
Defense

Let there be fairness
In war
And in peace.
You May Walk Ahead

on a dark night like this
you may walk ahead and we shall follow you

along the streets of loneliness
and people who see us will say,

'there, the prince walks along this road
moving towards his date somewhere
followed by his
moron friends'

they're honest, and we like the way they see us.

RIC S. BASTASA
For a start of the day
Write a poem for me
I am weary I am unhappy
I make no sense at all
After the learning and
The knowing, I learn
The senselessness of it all,
This is not my world
This is not the world
We all yearn to live
I quit I stop this thing
It is your turn now
To believe to be awed
To be human to be alive
Make me a poem
The best poem you can
Read it to me, let me
Hear your voice,
You who also ask, you
Who also want to be dead.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Meet The Tempest Headon

do not be a coward
meet the tempest
headon
have a collision
and get ready
with your
convulsion

RIC S. BASTASA
i hinted that i had dinner alone
for she had gone somewhere
i will not tell you but there is a reason
for separation sometimes
this happens i guess
to all couples and copulation is missed
the caring and loving
the tender moments
and then you blurted that i must loved her so much
because i cannot live without her
in my bed

you got it wrong baby
i can't sleep without a body
whether its hers or somebody else
for in bed
strictly speaking
i am Aristotelian.... i am
a social animal
and i cannot live without
someone else
beside me.

are you jealous?
come with me and drink my tea

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Accept As I Tell You

you must accept as i tell you
that your absence for days
did not made my heart grow fonder
inside my imaginary garden
all the real toads are croaking.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Assume Other Names

you must assume other names
as i too shall assume

a lot of numbers
this is the comfort that i still want to enjoy

numb numbers
poems without a lot of words to make you
remember me

what do you feel now?
i know. You feel like a page of a book.
A torn page.

You feel like you are walking past
The numbered rooms in the hospital

Finding your way through same faced halls
Left turn, right turn

Until you find yourself at a certain dead end.
You see a bench. You sit there.

There is no window. There is no door.
Just the length of the hall and then the silence
Of this corridor.

It is. Indeed, it is.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Be Dreaming Within A Dream

at this hour,
you are dreaming within a dream
writing what you do not really mean
perhaps what you do not even understand,
tomorrow when you wake
up
you will check again

something strange
comes up
what is it, you still do not know, but it is already written

that dream within a dream
still sleeping but wanting to wake up with you...

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Be Lucky To Have Found It

they say
one finds true and
mutual love
once in every thousand
years

you must be lucky
to have found it

some are not that
lucky as you

one day they find it
and then do not really know
what to do

they fear touching
thinking that it could simply be
another mound of
dust

or if they touch it
it may just go away just like
a wink of
an eye

or it could just be right
inside their palms

but they just forget
already
how it feels

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Dropp The Seed

i am the field, plowed fertile field
near the river
some dogs are buried within me
some snakes live here
i know their wishes and desire

somehow i wait for you as the rain
and you as the sower
of the seeds
pour some sweat of your brow
and let your arms swing
let the seeds
fall

that is all i want
that is all that i am waiting for
just dropp the seed
and i will let them grow

then you can leave

i will take care of the snakes
and i will always remember all the dogs sleeping here

now you must leave
the seeds shall grow spontaneously as i watch the seasons change

t

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Know I Only Uttered I Love You Once

speaking of love, yes, love, what can i say about love,
i cannot speak it without using the word
you,
it is always you, because without you, love cannot even exist
as a word,
or even a thought or even a waft of air to cool my senses,
without you,
love cannot even exist as a blood cell in my heart
or a vein or a chamber
where love usually sleeps,
it is you,
always it is you that i will always equate with love,
you must know
i only uttered i love you
once, and it was true, and it is still true,
the rest
are the words of the drunk man, the broken heart trying
to relive what was once truly uttered,
reenacting,
imitating but always falling short of the truth
years ago
again the words kneeled before God in an old church
with you
our hands may have clasped in prayer
if you remember
our hands finally found each other
touching and holding tight as i said

i love you

as you said

i love you too

that was many years ago,
truth does not know how to die,
true love lives in that

i love you,
forever, always,  
you,  
i love you,  
wherever you are now,  
you  
must know,  
that is the truth that until now  
i live  
that until now  
i am living and thinking still only of you..........  

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Know The Fences Of My World

my world revolves around a fence
of 'nots'

not this, not that,
think, think a while, no compromises
do not stain a white cloth
do not display a dirty linen of the house
a dropp of ink can make your world dirty
a white sky, pure white sky, why should a black crow fly in there?
don't you make a waste of this clean life you have
this is the world i live in, a planet revolving to the mandate
of its orbits, no deviation, no running away, no escaping
not this, not that
don't do this don't do that

and now i have travelled that far and all wanting to see you
and look at you and hold you
despite the odds despite the rules and the prohibitions

and i ask for a kiss, just a kiss and tell me if you remember

i ask you why?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Learn To Set Me Free Now

you must my dear learn to set me free now
it has been time that i have been inside
the cell of your self-made light, inside the
shackles of your own illusions, i have been
free all my life and i can continue to pretend
that i am inside your own kind of predictions.
i want you to be alive, i want you to be free
like the way i free myself from my own shadows.

learn the ways of the clouds unleashing all its rains.
cry if you will, grieve if so needed, then take in what
is there left from your eyes, breathe your own soul.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Remember An Open Door

The world becomes too tight.
Crowded inside you.
Who likes to live in this kind
Of asphyxiation?
You must remember an
Open door.
That house with a garden.
A veranda.
An open back door when
A child can just
Go anywhere.
You heart aches. You unbutton
A shirt. Breathe.
You learn too well from a river
Without doors.
A mountain made of all
Windows.
A cloud that drifts like you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Must Understand The Mockingbird

at night
the mockingbird still
haunts her

it's nature is to mock
to imitate
it cannot get away from it
otherwise
it dies
otherwise it ceases to be
one good mocking bird

you must understand
nature
there are those who live
to copy
because they are born to be
that way

if you get irritated
by the mockingbird
that becomes
your own responsibility

pity,
soon you will cease
pity
the mockingbird shall sing
a funeral song for you

if not write an elegy.

RIC S. BASTASA
You My Dream

i only like to be a shadow
but i know you dream of me
so i begin to like it to become
my body and i wish this time
that you are not a shadow too
that you wish to be a body too
that both of us become bodies
sometime in a moment
realities rubbing each other like two
dry stones looking for the flint
making a huge fire in the forest.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Never Had A Heart......

you have not seen it
for it is not a ball
or a gadget
or your valuable gem
like diamond earrings
or that golden necklace

how can you see care?
how can you hold friendship?
how can you ever weigh
tenderness?
how can you ever buy affection?

you have the gall
or the eyes
and the guts or the butts
but you never
had a heart

RIC S. BASTASA
You Never Love Me, I Know, But Comfort Me Just The Same

As you sit beside me
You become my right hand
As if you have become
Another reliable part of
My body

Touch my face, caress my hair
Sit down with me on my chair
Comfort me again
I have been hurt
By the absence of your being
The heart that was never there
Beating

RIC S. BASTASA
You Never Really Learn

watch for quick changes
like the latest smile after a week
a year of humiliating smirks

watch for her nice hello
on a moment like this
what follows next
is what you discover

perhaps it is too late
as usual you have been trapped
deceived and
wasted away

you never learn

RIC S. BASTASA
You On Top Of Me.

Despite my 
varied escapades 

despite the numbers 
in my mind 

the nights and 
dawns 

the drinks and 
the see through glasses 

the mirrors and 
shadows 

i keep telling myself 
i have so many things 
to do 

but to forget you 
and not miss you 

is still not possible 
i need time 

more time more 
time 

to make you 
fade 

what a night 
on such a short hour 

i never regret 
though that once 

i had you 
on top of me.
you only feel me once
your feet dipping on the rage of the water
of my river
it is cold and it is running
always running and you keep on looking at my face
on the ripples
it is as hazy as the sand falling on the sea
trickles and too many
you do not recognize a map of who i am
in this land of mystery
clouds and smoke and haze and mist
and shadows and fog
always moving away
you only breathe me once
i get in and follow the contours of your
throat
and then i enter in the chamber of your heart
like air
sort of a strange perfume and now the bitterness
stays

you say you cannot forget me.
i move on and like corpuscles of blood i spread
i laugh and this will be my last.

i am the lover of loneliness. I am dying.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Only Need The Heart The Soul

to be a poet
(what they think is needed is the
discipline to fully master the craft)
one needs (however)
only the heart
the soul, the rest when summoned
properly
comes without much
hesitation, for in time, when you are
true and faithful
words come like servants
and arrange themselves like furniture
the chairs walk in
to form the dining set
with the center table
the curtains hang themselves
on window borders
to form a frame
a perfect perspective
to view the sea
of art.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Open It....

i forget
but one thing
i remember i
forget

i dont remember
what i have
forgotten

i feel insecure about
this matter
and it makes me think
more
why i am always
forgetting

i am old
i have too forgotten
that old key
to your heart

i can't get in
but thanks just the same
you open it
and so i am entering....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Pour Your Mercy.

draw my face when
i arrive home at night.
it will not be good to look at.
You pour your mercy.
You ask

why are you doing this?

you open the cover of the cold soup.
There are islands of solidified grease
on the plate.
Sticky rice and fried fish
beside each other.

some things are simply done
as obligations.
It is not a question of whether
another sad person
is made happy.

we seldom talk.
we keep the balance of
space and presence.
There are taboos here.
There are questions
without speaking of answers.

you hand me an exhausted face.
Rugged existence.
A simple life.
A hard bed and an open window
to see the moon.
I sit
quietly in
my own nook.

And then i write you a poem.
It will be kept for
future reference.
Death has its own careful hands.
But you will never know it.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Pray

that you cannot be caught
off-guard
in your unguarded moments

oh, the hypocrite in you
is deeply religious

so much depends perhaps
your life in lies
your ways in deception
your tongue forked like that of the snake
woman
you body twisted like your mind
your soul long lost
in the fires of hell

RIC S. BASTASA
You Promised To Stop Loving

and so you promised to stop loving
and in trying to ease that pain
you change your name
you shift some place else
you wear another mask
you take the side of silence
you choose the future
and shut your past

you cannot escape
the landscape of loving

your heart still speaks the same voice
the same words

it still wears the same smile
the same eyes

and anywhere you go
his eyes still see you

his ears still hear the sameness
of you

and the world in its wisdom still
recognizes the beauty
within you

your pain your sorrow

the flower that blooms
even in the snow

the grass that remains green
even without the rain

RIC S. BASTASA
You Received Flores Para Los Muertos?

maybe because
you want them.

i guess. i just guess.
maybe you have masochistic tendencies.
and they are not so obvious.

or maybe
you deserve them, or maybe
you have the wish to have them

just maybe. come to think about it.
why did you allow yourself to receive
those
flowers for the dead?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Respond To The Call Of The Blue Whale

i

and for this reason
you shaun
too shall
live,

ii

live too
shaun
you and for this
reason

iii

the whale is blue
and lives in the ocean
blue
blue whale
in a blue ocean
deep
whale

iv

shaun blue deep
blue whale
ocean blue
we are one
i am also
blue in deep ocean blue
whale

v

s, there is so much
to do when blue
when whales are blue
when oceans are blue
when everything is blue
blue, blue, blue, blue,
yes, thank you

RIC S. BASTASA
You Rise From The Ashes To Become A Star

i see you rise from the ashes
to become a star

up there in the skies
you glitter
in the deep black night
you are glorious in your light

the distance between us
this separation
stone am i in this garden
star you are to the heavens

there is only silence
and up there you do not see me
you do not even remember perhaps
the significance of any stone

or dust
you were once just a dust
on a leaf
you once were but a patch of me

oh, i watch you tonight
oh, you glorious star in the heavens
you have been given a place with the gods and goddesses
but in a sense
i do not envy you
in truth i may have missed you
and i may have followed you
the ways and means that i have taught you

how to be a star how to be a shining glory
but i didn't
i like it here
i love it here in this little garden of earth
where i am but a stone
for these little ants where they are building a home
You Said It

you said that when you get rich
you will throw a big party
and invite the flies.

if you invite me,
may i invite the worms?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Said Let Time Fly Its Own Wings

time flies so swiftly
and you say

don't worry let her be

can't be my dear
we are taken by the wings of time
and we are with her in such a faraway distance
where we cannot look back anymore

we fade and then we are gone forever

RIC S. BASTASA
You Said You Cannot Write

Beware of its consequence
Soon you will
Stop
Thinking

Soon the poem intended for you
Goes away
Feeling betrayed.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Said You Fear Love

you said you fear love now
for yesterday it has betrayed you

and you almost died
alone and bleeding
not healing quickly
like what others do
with their wounds

you fear love and you promised
not to hurt yourself once more

you're extra careful
you learned your lesson and true
you shy away from love
and when it gets near you
you shoo it away like a little bird
calling your name by your window

you refuse the rose i sent you
you close your door
you wear a veil to hide your eyes your tears
you always walk behind me
and then change your way
simply to avoid me

i am tired and lonely and sick of your evasions
i write this letter and leave you a note:

my dear try hate, why not try having so much hate?
or jthese slices of indifference
taste them all and swallow them whole
try all these reverses
and then tell me what is the difference.

RIC S. BASTASA
You See, You Really Never Know Everythin

g.

i know and i accepted it
there are always blind spots,
the sullenness
the impact of the rushing desire to plunge between
the breasts
land in the middle of ecstasy

then it stops. then there is the stare
some things begin to emerge that you do not like

you do not really like it.
the honeymoon is over.

yet the love-hate is still there
you cannot leave
on that stickiness of not knowing how to live without her

the pair is perfect they keep on saying
they do not know what is inside
rotten and foul

but how can you tell them?
and you?

you have invested much.
divorce is unnecessary.

you untangle? then you die.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Shall Be Different

you shall be different
from the rest whose business is it
is to destroy

you shall create
some wonders
you shall be beautiful
you shall plant the seeds of flowers
you shall make the songs of the world
you shall make the poems that will make us ponder

you shall dwell on the light
you shall propagate the silence of peace
you shall make the bridges of distances
you shall be the mediator of their conflicts

you shall smile amidst all the adversities
you shall have no doubts

you are the beloved child of God.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Shall Be True To Yourself....

Most people
are untrue.

fact # one,
and you too

by circumstances
takes that fact

as a necessity,
and so

you become
one people with

lots of other
people: untrue

and once
you accept this

as fact, comes
fact # 2,

you can choose
and remain

true to yourself,
as others too

are trying to
be true,

and comes fact
# 3:

you learn to
trust yourself
the self that
you know best.

your best friend
ally, and

whatever,
whenever, and
whosoever.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Shall Only Be The Wind

we understand that you as the wind
shall pass only for a moment
and so you like to help us
whenever you are here
by accident or chance

wind comb my hair and free it from
the dirt of the earth
softly and gently sing me your passing song

when i like
this momentariness, wind, oh wind,
i shall go with you

later.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Should Have Finished His Unfinished Poem

the poem was panting
when he left it, it was wounded and blood
flowed from the veins
of its own words
the poem was choking
and you pity it
on its last breath
it was saying
i know you did not love me
but i still love you

you should have saved the poem
at least from the
death he himself inflicted

by finishing it because
if you don't
you know what i can do
under said circumstances

i'll have to finish it myself,
i will put

the question mark
and it will always be
open and endless

in fact, with a question
as an ending
that poem becomes
a line
ad aeternum like a star on its
journey,

never ending

RIC S. BASTASA
You Should Have Known Him In The First Place

he is not what you think he is
he is not a bridge, neither is he a river
though he claims himself to be
but it is not what and how you understand it
a bridge of a rainbow
a river of souls
it is not as literal as a collection letter
neither is it a fantasy of the Cinderella shoe
you are given a hint
a foreword
a cinder, a hoe, an ere
it is not like the kind of thing that you hold and grip
it is something that you see and slip
like a kiss on the hair not on the lips
nothing is committal but more like the life
of the transmitter
something blurs but becomes clear sometime
but not for long
something that you doubt after you are made so sure of it
something that you find and then lose
classic yet cheap
harmless yet at the end causes you
an excruciating pain
cancer that you think benign
but so much of a malign
a tough thought that those of that
which kills and
yet redeeming

you are lost i know in pondering
but that is what this game is all about
i pick you up and then dropp you
like the way you dropp them all too
hot potato.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Should Have Not Bared It All...

to see a part of you like droplets of water from a pipe
is anticipation in short takes like scenery in puzzle
then you undress before me
and i have seen it all: the world

the suspense of a meltdown is gone
and you fade away like a mist in darkness
it is as if someone has arrived
and there is no joy of waiting anymore

RIC S. BASTASA
You Should Have Noticed...

delight in his blurred speech
the waning sun in his eyes
the tongue that surrenders in darkness
the silence of his night
his last word, and then the end....

it is sad, but it is the relief of the inevitable
every letter spells backward
it has periods at every corner
it was all air that i feel.....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Silence

i would like to believe
in your silence you preach it
between us
sometimes i think it must
be your nature
born to it and shall die with it
you are promising
in your life's career but
there is this silence that i
cannot understand
what for? so we may listen?
we have been trying to listen?
but you do not find
value in the use of words or
even symbols

i accept you brother,
there must be reasons of your heart
that our hearts do not know
i agree with you brother
in silence perhaps there is a cure
for this disease
whatever that is
i make a promise
we love you and we accept
whatever you are
wherever you are.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Simply Have To Go.

we look forward to say
'the day is over and i have
done my best'

say no more, smell the flowers,
listen not to their woes,

bring nothing,
do you have any choice?

you simply have to
go.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Simply Have To Take One Direction

a tip for baking emotions

to have consistency
you simply have to take
one direction
if counterclockwise
then just the counterclockwise
do not violate simple instructions
always have the correct measurements
and the specified procedure
do not innovate
that will be dangerous

but if you want to have fun
well, do it your way
and enjoy the
consequences

include that recipe
of how to suffer with grace
how to still grieve and yet with
poise.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Sing And I Write

you sing and i write
you sing louder
and i write some more
as i do not sleep
as early as you
want to

to sleep with you and keep you warm
and keep you happy
and so secure

and then you stop singing
as i still go on writing and writing and writing and writing still
without minding that you already stopped singing

and you wished
that this house burns itself
that i too burn myself with it
that i may finally become ash
that i finally be blown by air as nothing but dust

and then she may finally continue
her singing and even dancing
and learn to fiddle the strings her new violin

RIC S. BASTASA
You Sit On The Car And Call Yourself, Stupid

you sit inside the car
as i drive on this busy road
in the city, on some dangerous
intersections, and you hold your hair
with your left hand
leaning on the mirror
seeing the flow of people
on the pedestrian lane
and you quip,

why do you love a stupid
woman like me?

i focus myself on the road
and it begins to rain
and people are running
everywhere seeking
for shelter

you ask,
do you really love me?
i am sorry
putting you on this mess.
i am really sorry,

tears begin to roll
from your eyes

the rain goes heavily on
the glass and i cannot clearly
see the road

it is dark and i turn on the
front lights and drive
the car slowly on the side
of the road. I stop
for a while,
it is hazy, i said.

and i just love to kiss you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Spend Always For Company

it is always the case

this money that you spend to lavish your friends
with anything that you can think of just to keep
company alive: a buffet yesterday
a dinner by the beach

pizza at the yellow cab
and some home made ice cream and some light beer
some like it better with tomato cream soup
and others ask for a can of coke
one orders a bottle of mineral water

and then a nice conversation is shared
some stories pass from one mouth to another
about a friend whose life is messy
about a wife who can no longer endure an unhappy marriage
with a violent husband to boot
making her a punching bag and the latest decision
to petition for an annulment of marriage

some discover about a two friends finally having a gay affair
and the talks become so intriguing
you listen, the hours pass, the nights get darker, the music gets louder
you just listen, you look at each face facing you
without any significance
your mind travels far away from them

you get a scoop of vanilla ice cream
and they ask about you

and you tell them that the ice cream is so good.
It is not so sweet. just enough to tickle your tongue.

then one gets so sleepy, yawns and you say that it is such a
very romantic night.

you foot the bill. everyone is happy with you.
a pleasant company.
good night, they say, and again you are left alone
walking at dawn, and then the lights are slowly turned off.
the beach gets so white, with the coming of the morning sun.
some shadows start to vanish. another set of walkers
and blank faces and you say: the night is over.
good morning boracay!

RIC S. BASTASA
You Swear To The Stars That Soon You Are Going
Away To Become Someone Else

this place has become
too familiar
you keep telling yourself
with so much
contempt and so each night before you sleep
you swear to the stars
that soon you are going away
to become someone else
unlike the rest
of those who live here
without pride

one day you pack your
necessities
you put into action what you have been thinking
for quite long

you keep on walking
but you do not really know where you are going

and you remember a friend's father
who rushed early dawn to go to the place of his dreams
that which the night has always told him
and when he reaches there
he rushed again to go back to this place of origin

and he tells his children
'you can't help it
your feet always want to come back
to the place where
you put your contempt'

and for what reason? they'd ask
the father gives a shrug on his shoulder
goes outside the house
and takes his carabao
to plow an old field again.
RIC S. BASTASA
You Taught Me...Love

look at me now.

you should have not
taught me
about love,

i regret having met
you

that tryst under the moon
under the heap of the dry leaves
of summer

May 1989
when i stumbled upon
a scent of magnolias

it was your
silence

it made me
human.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Tell Her To Look At The Sky Instead.

the moment
a question is asked

whether she is
loved

and if so
how deep is it

you take her
hand

you go to the
sea

lay your bodies on
the shore

you tell her to
look at the sky instead.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Think That I Am Hurt?

the years solidify pain
they turn into stone they become more silent
unmoved untouched think of them are strong
and self-sufficient,
unaffected, they watch everything pass
time and turbulence
of the seasons
the overflowing of the rivers
they live and survived
stones as they are
they do breathe they do not speak

so you think that i am really hurt?
i am stone. And it is not my new name.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Underestimate Pain And Its Thresholds

i understand fully
why

you underestimate pain and its
thresholds

you look down upon persistence
equating it with
a compulsion

why you underrate pain as a character
trying hard to be felt
by an indifferent audience

more interested in ball games
politics
and business and today's weather

why you pay lip service to
a struggle
a cause

why you consider religion as a set of mores
a conduct
nothing but a Sunday show of
compliance

why you consider depression as a form of
dramatic training

why sorrow is a script of an opera
that has value only when it registers
huge sales in the theater

do we share these same events?

are all these present in our old houses
as old photographs
as memoirs, as a scrapbook
of family secrets

a bible of our nights
a clique

a novel that we set aside because we have been
reading all the pages

ever since childhood?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Understand Your Reflection In The Mirror

and then you face the mirror again
staring at the reflection
touching the image
with your hands
trying to feel
the coldness
of it all

somehow you begin to understand
the meaning of a reflection
you go inside your door
not shutting it
you travel
the hardest journey of your life
trying to understand
what is it inside you
that does not befriend you

you experience the loneliest adventure
sailing the river alone
without a paddle
a map, a compass
a rudder

there is that light that guides you somehow
inside the cave of universal darkness
you feel like one of those muted
tiny glittering stars

RIC S. BASTASA
You Want An Answer?

this new shirt which i have never worn
which i have outgrown
which i just kept in my aparador for years
since then,
i let go...
and what did i really let go? and what did i really give up?
since there is no pain in giving it up, then i have never
really given up anything.
it is just one happening where you have done literally nothing
and hence i have no right to say that this world owes me
something.
a little higher now.
this body, i have worn it for 53 years now, it is just kept within my skin,
i am outgrowing it as always, it has no use somehow, and humanity,
and civilization is asking, if i too can let it go?

you want an answer?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Want Answers. Take Doubts

You want answers.
There are no answers.
You want some questions.
There are no questions now.
You want something,
There is nothing.
You want this.
There is that.
This and that, they do not
Always come together
And wanting this
You only get that.
See? See.
You want to live in peace
No there is no peace
War has always been with us
You know that, not this.
Oh yes, you want certainties.
You just want to be sure
What is in my hand
Tell me, and I will prove
You wrong, always, I want
To prove you wrong
About certainties, there is
Nothing certain. They just come
When they like coming
And they tell you
You dream, we give
What is best, it may not be what
You are dreaming, or we punish you
By giving what you want
You prayed so earnestly
Oh! These lords these gods
This fate this destiny
They always wait for you
Always hazy, and taken as
X, y, and z
You, it is you that assigns the values
And you can be wrong and even
Still be puzzled.

There is nothing certain.
So?
Well, take the doubts
They are the only things certain
Because they are real.
We live with them everyday.
They are mothers and fathers
And yes, they are gods.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Want Me To Simplify My Life..To Be

to be just
simple and say clearly what i what you to understand
less words perhaps
no signs no picture even
just a glance or a touch or a tap on the shoulder

to be direct, candid, straighforward
to tell the truth, this truth and nothing but the truth
no words

how can i tell you? how can i give you the signs
how can i be direct and candid and straightforward
how can i ever tell the truth

when all these years i do not know anymore
about anything

when what i know is only to survive
at all costs

do you think that i still have the truth or the courage to tell you
about it

the truth? do you really need the truth inorder to live?
tell me, why and what?

learn first and teach me how
let us perhaps begin again from the time when we were born
from the time when we first give them our

big cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Want To Help Death Take You Earlier

you want death to take you earlier
you take in fat and salt and sugar
in extreme doses, you worry a lot, you drink
vodka and tequila
you quarrel with everyone
how you wish this angry someones shoots you to death
with his bullet
you sleep late you take in drugs
to finish you off
sometimes you even start to stop breathing
you want to wake up one morning and walk straight to the sea
without looking back
you like to imagine how is it
if you do it on the 30th floor of the building
you are crazy
you abuse yourself
despite your talent your gift in thoughts
your capacity for good

you want to die but death has been patient with you
biting its tongue
closing its mouth unpronouncing on you

there will be time
death says there will come a time
when death shall come
and then you run away because at that moment
you still do not want to die
and then death takes its revenge
on the hush of the wind
without any warning or sound

dead shall take you

RIC S. BASTASA
You Want To Last Forever?

there are those
who want to last forever

all efforts are towards
posterity

you dream of a long life
seven houses, seven children
seven times seven grandchildren

you store a fortune
you need a bigger storage
you save money
you make more money
you buy land you buy more land
you invest and invest and invest some more

and one day
the Lord God says it is time for you to go
and there you are

gone. gone. gone. gone. gone

ozymandiases
oh common, no one lasts forever

even the stones, the rocks, the cliffs,
the monuments

kiss the gumamela
and the woman from Guatemala.....

RIC S. BASTASA
You Were Amazing Just The Way

The first time
then the second
then the last
that second to the last
you were amazing
just the way
you wear me out.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Were Once A Girl

i remember you: once a girl whose hands
hold on to mine in school,
my first year of teaching then
in the university and your mother
was there teaching too,

how time must have passed!

now you are a lawyer
pregnant on your second child
and defending a case
of your classmate in my court.

how time must have passed!

swiftly, so swiftly like a bird
falling out from the edge of the horizon

like a gaze falling out from the seams
of our visions

how time must have passed!

yet i feel nothing that i have to worry
there is no one in my house to stay
when my time to leave shall finally come.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Were The Passing Wind Of Our House

you pass by the house
like the wind
cold at first we felt
we thought we gonna miss you
but by then
we closed the door of the house
let one window open

we breathe
to regain what was warm
and comforting
once

then we sighed for that wind
we are not hopeless somehow
the other packets of winds
are coming
from all scattered directions
myriad
all eager to feel us too
our arms are true
our hands softer in our accepted
weaknesses

we do not ask anymore
what passing must be
and where those winds are really going

we understand that birds have to migrate
to far places
in order to survive

some people simply have to go
to map out their own destinies

we still live in this house
where we weave some dreams
in some little ways
we embark in the embroidery of
the delicate flowers
of our souls

and then we look at everything we have
been tasked
we nod, there is so much passion still

so much passion
yes.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Be Keeping Memories Of Those People Who Leave You....

it's what happens after the party which haunts the most.

the left-overs litter on the table
the plates are like faces of people looking at you
saying 'what now? what's next? '

you will be keeping memories
of those people who leave you
because they have their own homes
away from yours

the table will be empty again
the chairs too and the veranda
will be very silent

you go out of the room and lean
on the railings of the stairs
you look at the heavens
to find out how distant are the stars

how beautiful are those which you
cannot touch

until your favorite cat comes
and rubs her head under your hands

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Feel The Loss,

the usual sands slipping from your fingers,
love's departure, much painful than love's death,
a dog run-over by a car, your dog,
not much about a bad debt, or a friend betraying you,
or someone you have not even met but
somehow you have felt from far,
silly matters make you feel it too,
opportunities not grabbed, doors you have not
even knocked, a would be lover whom you
have decided to forgo,
so many losses, yet one thing that you must
never lose,
yourself, because when you lose it,
you will never feel it again.

you feel the loss of a falling leaf,
say to yourself, it is usual and it is just a leaf anyway.
or that key which fell on the canal, that bird which you let go,
that food which you did not eat, that
new shirt which does not really feet because you now
have a big tummy, and so on and so forth,
yet one thing i must tell you, be responsible on these losses,
ignore, and forget, you must learn
this choices.

otherwise, you will lose yourself, and that will be the last
thing to lose and never find again

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Find This Comfort

come, and be with me
find comfort in my strangeness
as i too, shall find the same in you.

we did not know where were we
when we were children
now we find ourselves in such
attractive strangeness

come, come and be with me
let us learn to love our own strange ways
let us embrace our own uniqueness
let us see how love and friendship surprise us.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Get Over With Elation

ah soon
you will get over with elation

a feast cannot last for long
it becomes another boring explosion of
joys repeated like a song
played over and over gain
painful soon to the
the way how our ears are pierced
by nails

ah, soon you
will find a comma for a clause
rethink about success
and conspire for another failure
for in truth
it is the failure that makes us move
towards
greater heights
uncharted courses
and more eureka for
exhilaration....

a red carnation in your head
wilts in time
and your hair is back home
dry again and need water like
a surprise for
rain

the one that makes you think
that you shall dance again
the happiness of grass, the joy in mud,
in those open endless skies

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Not Feel A Love Like Mine

i look at you
i want to tell you
that you cannot
have another love
like mine

i want to tell you
this
but i won’t

you're not just
too good
for my own kind
of subjugation

can you be
my slave driver?

RIC S. BASTASA
You Will Sing Again The Songs Of Love

as you cook breakfast today
for him
thinking about the menu
that he loves most
you will sing again
the songs of love
that you once sang
only in the bathroom
when the summer
gets so hot when
once he was not
with you but in some
other person's arms
in another's warmer
embraces.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Won'T Like Me Man

look at me
i do not give you results
for i am a man
of reason
i do not believe in
compulsion
i believe in the democracy
of thoughts
go where you want to
in the same manner
that i do it myself
i swing my arm farther
from your nose
as you swing yours
not touching my ear
for in truth i believe
in your light
same as the light
that is freely given
to my mind
we are in the same
situation and i
respect you for that
man, i am the kind that
do not give results'
i have always respected
all people's freedom
a la Voltaire.

RIC S. BASTASA
You Write Because Of A Certain Purpose

writing with a purpose.
like everything and everyone
always with a purpose...

beauty, and hope and sadness
and death and redemption...

all these have built-in purposes
but whatever that is

the things-in-themselves
without mouths speak for what they mean

outstretched tendrils looking for the ray of the sun
blooming petals wanting for someone to adore

pathways seeking themselves on a certain destinations
seas covering the earth giving way to the existence of maps

and so i write, i keep the purpose within my letters
my words that you read

this poem that shows arms opening
to embrace you and also to keep my cold heart warm.

RIC S. BASTASA
you, the beautiful one
why have you become
prohibited? i adore you
in silence

and all i have to give you
is just this

glance. Everyday has become
a suffering

something so beautiful
that makes every nerve of my

body quiver for you
something so beautiful that

i want to touch. My fingers
are dying and my lips

as shrinking to the dryness
of my unfulfilled dreams

my love is strong and
so beautiful too but in your

world of self-restraint
all these, all these beautiful

feelings are simply meant
to die and vanish

and never shall
they ever be thought of again

ashes, dusts,
dry leaves, and earthworms
and graves and
silent silky veils.

RIC S. BASTASA
You...

you have this body
see it in the mirror
you have this soul
see it in your heart

feed the one that
makes you live
forever....

RIC S. BASTASA
You....... 

MY only
sin today is having
talked to you about what i do not
really like talking, say,
i, perhaps, just want to please you
so that, well, you may
like me, sort of,
an admission on my part
that i am
a lonely guy and i need someone
to talk to
be that one
a simpleton, a moron, or a mongoloid,
definitely not smart, yes,

you.

RIC S. BASTASA
You’re Still You

The same hair curling on your head
At 49, you look younger,
There are no wrinkles on your forehead
The cheeks still smooth and tight
Your eyes still glow
Like fireflies reflected in the mirror
The moon against the sky

The way you talk defies the years of your absence
The way you look at me
Your way your gaze flies like a butterfly
Hovering back to me like tender hands
Of a woman
Caressing my face
Like golden yellow wing
Fluttering on the petals of a flower

Indeed, you are still you
Loving me
In gentle restraint and
I am deeply saddened
By my own kind of same
Usual indifference
Of the clouds drifting
Without even the thought
Of stopping by the
Peaks of trees

As you open yourself to the sun like
A tight bud opening its petals
Finally exposing its true gentle colors
A flower blooming
To the kindness of sunshine
And the freshness of the air
That this world can offer

I spread my wings like a yellow butterfly
Fluttering away to another garden
Young Dog

crickety teeth
my left slipper
gets taken somewhere
my right slipper bitten

urine on the sofa
poo poo on the garage
sliding through
the kitchen door
chasing in the yard
scattered books
in the living room

licking my feet
playing bites with my hands
this young dog
is the star of the house

no kids, eh.

RIC S. BASTASA
Young Poetess, Ignis Fatuus

come with me, come with me
we shall be silent under a skyful of stars

come with me come with me
and be so so silent like me

we will be seeing a dark sky full of stars
we shall be silent without their wars

we will only be the wisps of the winds
whispering whims and hymns

RIC S. BASTASA
that bamboo is muted until you
bore a hole for its existence
until you give it your breaths

your confidences
until you keep it beside you
your hands softly holding it

until you kiss it like your lover
then it sings spontaneously
like the breeze to the waves of the sea

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Body Aches

your nerves are too tight
and pain grips your fingers
in between your moans
relax your muscles a bit
the tongue can do its task
pleasing sounds of gasps and groans
the palate knows what the heart misses
take this thing as a piece of cake
sugar coated and brightly colored
pink and red and less of the green
bluish and its smells of orangeness

and then have that dance,
yes, the belly, and why not?
it is just the two of us, why not?
why not try, being not you, for this moment,
this truth, this salvage of lost emotions,
why not? yes why not? just the two of us
and no one is watching
except the stars and the moon
these paper designs, glistening
with artificial pride.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Breasts

a bunch of grapes
purple magnified
dew on its sides like
the gleams of the moons
of Jupiter
too luscious pulp
to my tongue always
luscious to my tongue
like your breasts
like the gleamings moons
of my Jupiter

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Dance My Love

you are so beautiful when you start to dance
when all the leaves fall off from your arms
naked, i have seen everything that your earth has to offer:

your hills and trees and forest, your creeks and rivers,
your clouds and seas, your grass and flowers

i have seen them all and touched them
your hills i have climbed
your trees with sweet fruits
i have gathered them all
and bit and sucked and savored each sap and juice
its flesh and fiber
i have slept on your grass
i have smelled your flowers
i have gazed on your clouds and have taken the dive
on your seas
i have sailed on your rivers
i have bathed on your creeks

i have done everything for you to please you my love
yet why are your eyes so sad tonight?

you are like a moon fading in the dark
you are like the song of a bird dissolving in distance.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Escapades And Your Having To Wear Red

So you have gone to Burma
Blending with the natives in the jungle there
You trembled in East Timor
Afraid that you cannot return home
You were like a louse
Hiding in the eye of the storm
In the middle of their war
In your escapades

Shocks!

And all the rest were also shocked
Mr. Takahashi
Has become your new name
While you bade goodbye
To the French journalist
At the airport
If the plane somehow crashes
Your name on the list is
Takahashi

"it is no longer funny" you said

Now you are wearing red
Your way of supporting
The oppressed monks of Burma
Who were tied on the posts
In Rangoon
And gunned by the soldiers there
Balding themselves
Pretending to be monks

And some were cremated
Alive

And you quipped
"Hello, what I am doing
Is both a political and
Fashion statement"
A joke and
Something serious
Like you and i
Just like chatting
Could be true
Could be false
I have no trust
What if the person beside me
Is only faking
Cheating me
What if what he said
Were all lies
We are just playing games
Hide and seek
Catching flies because
Everything is merely
To cover
Boredom

Sandwich fillings
Closing and opening
This lust
Close open
Close open
A baby’s game
Could be also because of missing the
Feeling of having to love again
Returning to the past
The shells long ago broken
Near the white thighs of the
Sea..

“Crazy”
“Fool”

That is actually what life is all about
True and false
Playful
Fate
Sometimes we travel to far places
East Timor, Burma, china, united states of America even the sierra madre, the malindang mountains

Got urinated by a tarsier
Got pecked by a monkey-eating eagle
The white cobra spat on me>

I have always flown away
On a plane
Always riding on a bus
On train, fast crafts, chopper and even
On a submarine then take the pick-up
On a pedicab on a motorcycle
Went down got on my worn-out sneakers
Walk again for hours and hours
Always crossing rivers
Eight or the ninth crossing the same river
Winding on the same mountain and the same forest and valleys
Then again crossing the same river
Sometimes too shallow on my heel then deeper up to my neck and chin and sometimes I have to swim
On the murky river and trip on big boulders
Walk, swim, and walk,
Trek again on the footpaths under the cogon grasses
Climb the cliffs
Take narrowing footpaths
Sharp stones
And then comes the muddy paths
Places which had much rain
And get flooded
Because of the rain
But there is another rain
I tell you
The rain of bullets
The rain of screams
For those who died here
Rain of sighs
Rain of cries of brains
I have seen much of this sort
Of rain
Shouting, crying, running, hiding,
Catch, hold, squat, dropp to the ground,
Jump, fall, run, catch, run,
Tie, beat, tie, and beat,
Slap, questions
There are no answers
Threat, ask, threat,
Convince,
Hit, box,
Wounds, bruises,
Inflamed, blood,
The wide expanse and the deepening depths
Of silence
Diffusing
All walked away
They left, they journeyed
And what was left on the river
Was the sound of a crying child
Looking for mother and father
And his three siblings

The wind caressed the leaves of the ipil-ipil
Stained by blood
Sticking
And diffusing on the roots
The Nipa huts
Are dead
Muted by all the sounds of pain
A while ago its doors
Were kicked and forced open
And there were holes on its windows
Where the bullets went through
With sparks

I have seen many of those who cried in my journeys
The cry of the widow sounding like cows bridled
Cries of children sounding like goats caught by their own rope
The cry of the beautiful maiden
Tears falling on her cheeks absorbed by her long and thick black hair
Sometimes with the many cries I heard and saw  
The constancy and the frequency  
Seemingly endless

And other ambiances or funeral senses>

Sometimes sometimes I begin to hear nothing  
Sometimes I do not see anymore  
Even if I have to face them  
I seem to look much farther  
And see nothing at all near me  
My thoughts have gone to a very far journey  
Away from them  
Just like you  
My thoughts will be traveling far, far away  
Away from all these that face me

< I HAVE BECOME NUMB TO ALL THESE  
MELODRAMA OF STRATEGIES AND RETALIATION  
THIS ENDLESS WAR OF IDEOLOGIES  
THESE MEANINGLESS STRUGGLES  
ALL THESE  
CRAP>

I am now in the faraway jungles of Burma  
In East Timor, in the United States of America  
I always have this dream  
I have always traveled in this dream

I have to journey towards myself  
I have to get inside my own brain  
And I ask

For everything, for the places I have gone,  
Have I gone to myself?  
Have I ever gone to myself?  
Where is this place?  
Where is this going to be?  
What ride will I take?  
Going towards myself?
Hey pedicab driver,
Pedal me, take me
Towards myself
Please take me there
And dropp me by.

AND so in wearing red
And for those, those which you want to do and say
And the other thousand things you want done
Surely, There are, surely, still many of them
That my fingers cannot count and the other toes included

I will see you and your dreams
And your hopes
A face complete with a nose, a mouth,
Eyelids and ears
Cheeks and lashes &
Hair

I HAVE UNDERSTOOD NOTHING
I AM SEEING FARAWAY THINGS
YET I HAVE NOT SEEN ANYTHING
I HAVE TRAVELED FAR
YET I HAVE NOT ARRIVED ANYWHERE

These are what I have cried for
The cries
I have heard
More horrible than the cries
I heard on that river
On that river
Where my friends were gunned
And killed
Worst

WORST THAN THE SOUND OF THE SHOVELS
THAT DUG THE SHALLOW GRAVES
For ALL OF THEM
THE SOUND MUCH LOUDER
THAN THE BULLETS THAT RIPPED
THEIR HEARTS
THAT TORE THEIR CHEEKS
THAT PENETRATED THEIR SKINS AND FLESH

Had the chance to bite
Because mother and father
Had kept watch
Throughout the night>

This is my cry
Loud cry
Loud crying
Tears flooding from my eyes
Like the flood from the mountains
Where the tornado fell
But in that thunderous
Loud sound
Nonetheless

It is only I
Who heard it

This is
This is
This the cry
Of myself
I am
I am the only
It is only me
Mine alone
I am the only one hearing it.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Eyes

we meet we sit here together
on a green grassy
grand gig

we look at each others eyes
our mouths are shut
but your eyes speak a lot

it is all about love
and history.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Eyes In That Picture Insist On Asking Why

well, i was yet 15 but i already keep a photograph of you in my pocket,
you are the face of my heart beat in black and white
i often kiss your tiny lips and put you on my chest as though i feel you one with me
in my sleep,
that was long time ago and the picture suffered with the way i was keeping it
inside my old poetry books in those pages eaten by bookworms
some scratches ultimately are inflicted in your cheeks and even your lips
have become empty spaces blurred by time
what keeps insistent however are your eyes stripped of a nose and lips and even a neck thriving on lesser hair and thin ears

they float in that picture still looking at me asking

why?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Face

your face
it is not beautiful

but nonetheless
your face
fills my mind

you do not mind
everyday
you see not even
me
in some eyelash

yet why?
this love persists
i cannot explain somehow
this foolishness
of my dumb heart
unrequited

my brain is angry though
but nonetheless
cannot do otherwise

to kill this love so true
that you
today did not for once ever see.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Face Is My Face

your face
is my face
how could you not see it?
your face
is my face
how could not not have felt kissing it?
your face
is my face
and it is the face of God
how could you have hated it?
your eyes
are my eyes
and they have long been blinded
on bouncing stares
like pingpong balls
rebounding
reverberating the sound of nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Face...

stay still, do not turn your face
to the extreme end, , , this is the right angle
i click the camera,

this is the side of happiness, keep your cool,
do not move, do not change the angle,

now, try moving to the extreme left,
this will be the same face, but the extreme one
on a 190 degree turn, shows the other

side of you, and this i will try to take too,
this face of sorrow,
this angle of lament, , , , you see, it is the same face

with just one turn, a little change,
at the extreme, i can see both of you...

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Faith To The Letter Of Poetry

your faith to the letter of poetry
(not the law) is measured
by your fidelity to its life, today, you keep on writing
even though there is really nothing to write
even though there is nothing
that comes from inside you
like you vomit with nothing coming out anymore
you mimic what children do when they do not like
their parents
feigning sickness and breaking toys and
not eating much,
this is it hear the buzz of life
but you are not a part of it anymore.

there is this leaf that keeps falling
in the abyss of darkness

it is different now. There is no bottom.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Fear

you fear
writing poems
thoughts coming
in your mind
that you cannot
reduce into
words?

fear not
reality

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Fear Of Getting Old

your fear of getting old is taking
its toll on you
your preoccupation to be young
again

look! how fast have you become
the witch
of this honorable community!

it is the fear
and nothing but the fear
of getting old
that made you appear so old
like a whorled peanut

like a paper that gets crumpled
because of too much
keeping

fragility lost
cracks like the eggshell
that you conceal and
tightly holding
to your fingers

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Feet On Top Of The Stone On The River

you put your feet
on top of a stone
on a clear river

you want to feel
the stability of
love
the hardness of
a foundation

you want to be on
top of the
situation where
the water flows
and you
on that stone
becomes
unaffected

you let time flow
like water
you let yourself
steady like
your feet unmoved

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Friend....

i told you once
this is all easy
too easy in fact
for you just have
to feel and not
even think and you
close your eyes and
think of all the colors
and scents and listen
to the sound and
take note of all the
landscapes and people
there whom you so love
inside that dream and
then when you open your
eyes you start to
remember midst this
real world
a wall here and a window
over there
and then towards a
row of trees and
a very long pavement
where children play
and whistle

you see it is just
plaint talking to yourself
and then listening
what you are saying

and voila you have
another creation
of your mind
a way to relax and
feel that you
are not alone
because your sound
is another person
and you
when you hear too
is a friend.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Gauge Is When You Begin To Learn How

as always
there is something left
unspoken

there is no word
for it yet

you are still not sure
whether it can be
poetic

your gauge is when
you begin to learn how

to fly, to go away,
to be nobody.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Gaze

I was naked
and i love it
when you clothed
me with your
gaze.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Gaze Has Always Made A Difference

i wonder why your gaze makes
a lot of difference from all the gazes
i have seen in my lifetime

i look at you. I steal a moment to
look at you. I am not afraid. I am silent
about this gaze. It is true.
Your eyes are different. They speak
They sing a love song.
Not necessarily for me.
But i like it that way. For me?

then you gaze at me. I pretend
I do not understand the language
of your eyelashes. They say,
why are you avoiding me?
Don't you know that my eyes
did not sleep last night because
you were there kissing my lips
in the metaphors dancing
in the ceiling?

I stop thinking. This cannot be.
How are we speaking in the midst
of this crowd without using
a word, or even a syllable?

I walk away. No, this cannot be.
This is strange. This is impossible.
Two gazes speaking a language
of their own. Saying: this is love.
This is desire. And the night is
waiting. It is short. It not demanding
in knowing a true name, or a place, or
a space in the future.

I close my eyes. I open them again.
I walk away. Now, I am telling myself
I cannot hear you. I am safe.
Your Goal....

same poem
with a different title.

same man
with a different name.

sometimes it happens.
your own making.

this is freedom
you do what you want.

if they say it is wrong
or it is bad
or it is not beautiful

so what?
this is freedom.
you commit a wrong.

you want to correct it?
oh, let them wait.

freedom is simply minding
your own business.

this ' i don't care'
and ' i do what i want'

let the house fall
it is your goal.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your God

there is a big difference of course
between a marble eye and a real eye

one does not cry

and there is too a big difference between
your heart and mine

you out-beat me in this run for life
i have weakened and i have long rehearsed the truth of my lines: (that i do not
love you anymore)

but you keep on coming back to resuscitate my mouth
kissing me, kissing me again,

and then thinking that i have already died
you screamed to the heavens and even cursed
God

i feel so guilty. I resurrected. I take back my cross again.
Telling you, that God is kind and he did not mean to
kill me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Grief........

you try to squeeze your heart
with your hands
to deceive pain with
another pain

but the pain is still there
persisting

so you try to sing
under the moon
the wind accompanies
your song
so does the breeze from
the sea
like a whistle

the sleepy cicadas hear
all these

they really want to join you
but they have second thoughts
they merely listened
because the pain seems
to be
unbearable

the following morning there were
many dead leaves
at the foot of the big tree in
the forest

even the snakes felt
the shock...

..........................................................
ang sakit sa dughan
gisulayan og kumot sa kamot
aron ang sakit
malimtan sa laing sakit

apan nagpabilin ang sakit
sa dughan

busa misulay ka og awit
diha sa silong sa bulan
giduyugan ka sa bugnaw nga
hangin sa kagabhion
mitayhop og apil ang dagat
sama sa usa ka taghoy

nadungog kini sa mga nahikatulog
nga mga gangis

gusto unta nilang moapil apan
nahingawa sila
nabati nila ang imong kasakit
og namati lamang sila

pagkaugma
pagkadaghan sa mga dahon sa naga
nga nangahulog
diha sa tiilan sa usa ka dakong lasang

pati gani ang mga
bitin
nalisang...

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Guests, The Moon And Stars........

i knew you
since then but
then
i mastered the
art of
concealment, which

is too beautiful
with all the masks
and sudden
invisibility,

it is a thrill
to see and not be
seen

to say and not
feel,

to be there and
not there,

soon, you take
light, and then flight
and then settle
in solitude,

it is the silence
which you got but
this time

you give up light
and embrace the
darkness expecting

your guests, the moon
and stars.
Your Hands As Truths..

when you say you like me
i know
you meant the opposite
and then i say that it is over
which you
of course fully understand
that i still need
another beginning

in this game, i opted for
consistency

a tooth for a tooth
an eye for an eye

look at us, look at us
i need to find your hands and hold them
as truths.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Hands Have Become Adept At Doing It Until Your Arms Begin To Feel Its Skill As Art

you have been attuned to setting aside matters then things then people then the world

your hands have become adept at doing it until your arms begin to feel its skill as art

you turn around and move forward and there is no looking back

because it is too unnecessary because there is no one there anymore

it is a lonely place and no one hears you when you begin to cry.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Incompleteness Completes Me

tell what time
is it that you come

for i will make ready
myself as an empty
cup

tell me what time
that you are sad
for i will
turn myself into
syrup

the moments are all yours
and i your
pleasant servant
of love
must have nothing in mind
but love for you
your happiness

it does not matter what
shall i become
an empty cup and then
a sweet syrup
a knob of the door
a kettle or a floor

for i am nothing without you
your incompleteness
completes me.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Innocence Sometimes Irritates Him

your innocence sometimes
irritates him to no end
when one day you were
bitten by this one-eyed snake
and you keep it a secret
because you felt this ecstasy
that you do not want to share
or even say something
not a name but a place
you find so exciting

look at you
your mouth is bubbling

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Intent

what is your intention
writing in the language of your own,
not to be understood purposely

shutting yourself
inside your mouth
your words

you chew and swallow
and hide some treasures
circuitously inside your large and small intestines
in time
coming out like the lines that you still like to own
now on the ground
dried

your name and
your shadow

rained hopefully some little
flowers shall start to grow

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Jackfruit

your jackfruit
is sweet and juicy
and i could have
eaten it with lots of
gusto
but come to think of it
and i have reflected on
this matter
for quite a time
it is hard to remove
the left over latex in
my hand
and so i have finally
decided not
to...

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Kite

you have the most likable kite
the one that casts no shadow on the ground
the one that flies the highest reaching the cheek of the sky
pulling the strings there for rain

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Last Picture

you in black shirt
wet with sweat
on a blue train
in the city
you are holding
a bottle of beer
on your side is
the dalmatian
without the usual
rope in your hand

things run smoothly
like the train
like the round body
of the bottle of beer
like your dog
lying on the floor
of the train
one night
when all the
passengers
are gone.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Last Word

your last word is obscene
what? i never loved you.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Lips

wet
like a morning red daisy
drenched with
dew

a door
half-open
waiting for
my lips
for you are incomplete
without me

at the height of this fantasy
you lips become
the door of the castle
that i shall bombard
with my
canon tonight
my tongue to
your tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Man Demands Virginity

a chain of daisies on your hair
crowning you
like a queen

and at the end some nail-like flowers of
white champaca

perfumed
now he must kiss you

and you do not refuse this ritual

on a chain
of love

somehow not to offend him
you must
produce

not just sweat and tears of joy
but blood

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Mandate

you do not like the image of the bird with a hundred eyes
and he follows you because he loves you
he exercises restraint on his fingers and sketches a petal
you want more of it and so he draws a rose with lots of red petals
just to please you but

deep within him he wants to be that bird with a hundred eyes
on a hundred wings to fly the thousand filaments of winds
but because he loves you he stays as a hand waiting
for your orders

time knows how to make a solution and
it takes you with the hard grip of its hands
your breath is taken away
and he buries you immediately deeper than you expect
to the dampness of
the earth

now he becomes a bird with a hundred eyes and a hundred wings
so free so delighted
he does not even want to mention your name ever again
despite the fact that he still loves you

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Mimicry

one day
you get tired

mimicking the
mynah bird

you only want
it to know your language

and to bait it
with your own style

you mimic it but it does not
learn from your
mimicking and you stop and one day

it looks at you
with pity and it speaks its own language

from the forest, which is
if you listen well enough

sad and lonely
and even dying

it speaks of a desire to be returned
to its own place

it is drawing to you a forest
a dark spot,

a hounding sound of its
niche

one day you
see the light of its night song

a red moon
a drift on the black marsh

and so you take it
and release it from your mimicry

and both of you
are finally free

and the forest is
one happy family

and the cage of your expectations
becomes empty

life has arrived returning back
your own tongue

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Mind A Landscape

a farm of coconut trees
and horses and cows fenced

a buffalo wading in mud
beside the river filled with fish

a woman naked
enjoying the cool waters

a man watching hiding
behind the thick bushes

birds above their heads
clouds shifting places

lights fade
the curtains fall

and then we all live
and not talk about it

all these
still disturbing our minds

we figure out
how these can end

what murder
what prison cell!

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Name....

of all the names,
yours stood among
the crowd in the malls
of my confusion,
it must be you,
i hear you laugh
once, and you sound
so well, like you, in
the hidden meaning
of your words,
of all my friends,
i know, it is you,
who knows how to
stab at my back,
hide behind the
curtain, slip in
the darkness and come
back with a smile
and say
ho ho ho,
santa.

RIC S. BASTASA
and so
what is the difference?

compare the moon
and the stars

imagine a fall
a moon falling on the lake

some stars follow
what do you hear?

there is only one
only one moon in your heart

when some of these stars fall
the loss is negligible

but the moon
how can you endure it?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Own Fears...

it was your own
fear which ended you

the devil swore
it did not even touch you
with a ten-foot pole.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Own Universe....

regarding this matter
good manners are out of the
question

to say you are excused is
irrelevant to say you are sorry
is immaterial this matter

of the heart and this matter of
survival on one hand are private
pursuits inside some dark and

hazy rooms where the hands are
groping also for such definition of
terms such as: what is happiness?

such as: is this freedom? is this
good? or fair? amidst the ocean of
personalities, one faces the other

glum and plum and grim and prim
and bull and ram: so be it, take
flight, let go, cry alone, be bitter
but not for long? you learn to

mumble and talk to yourself, nonsen
sically, and bruised and framed and
rising up like the sun again into

a window, glassy and transparent,
at first without meaning, but then
grappling with all these realities,
one builds a sky again, a universe,
one sun, one moon and lots of stars.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Paranoia Is As Good As Mine

They say that
this little mess in zamboanga is
a stage play written
by a man who has something better
for the future of our
country

it is scripted and rehearsed
and to make it appear real
some people have to play deaf
and blind and mute

and those unfortunate ones
do not have to play dead

they are
dead,
they have to die
needlessly,
and must be buried
at once

lest they will rise up from their graves
and speak
the truth, the whole truth,
and nothing but
the truth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Patience And Understanding

for you to satiate me
i only need the silence

speaking destroys the
taste of desire

i do not need words
i do not need to know

we are here to feel and
perhaps for you to sacrifice your being

i do not invade into your domain
not even in the kingdom of your stare

i am here only to be here
i do not speak a word neither do i entertain a thought

you are here as a blooming flower
i am autumn.

we belong to different worlds
our situations clash

there is no need to fight
what is needed is just being beside you

the night has been unusually cold
and i am a very heavy and dark cloud

my being does not rapture
it wakes up from deep sleep without a capture

you shall never understand
how twisted has love become.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Philosophy

you make it candid
nothing of the non-transparent twists and turns
direct to the point
no holds bar nothing to hide
you say what is in your mind
you call a spade a spade a square is a square
not a queer queer queer ideal,

you don't write a poem it is pointless to write any
you live your life
you rhyme
you count every step like a meter
a haiku
a sonnet

you like it crisp and short and
always saying less
to anything

a trek on the mountainside
feeling the ways of the snake
rather than talk and talk
duck quacking

you say, 'plunge!' '
live life
do not let it just be written by them

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poem Is Young

dress it up
with an armor
and a helmet
let it go to the battlefield
and fight its own wars
do not give it tranquility

that is not
its real color

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poems

home
i click home
i double click home
and there
your poems are found

how can i ever read them?
robot-like i am

i dream of home
this double-clicking home
addicted
i am not doing anything worthwhile
i am not dead i am not alive
i am pressing keys
i am not thinking i am not feeling
i am taking everything
i have nothing

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poems About Love Revisited

the first poem that you really find it hard to write
is to write an image which must tell her
that you love her truly from the bottom of your heart, and then
the most beautiful poem comes from her when she admits that she
also loves you with all her heart and soul and mind,
and then the saddest poem
was not written.
it was when everything ended.
the years passed.
and you do not even know
where she is.
it is always the saddest poem,
when you do not know where to find love
anymore.

All corners of the world are looking for it.
They seem not to find it,
and all these corners will only stop writing
and talking and speaking
when love is found
when their hearts are filled,
when their mouths cannot utter a word,
because of so much abundance,

bliss, joy, happiness, these shall make
us mute for another hundred years.

for in making love,
words do not have use,
except to call its name again
on the intensity of feeling....love.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poems Are Long And I Have A Hard Time Memorizing

come with me
we shall be holding hands
we shall walk under a sky full of stars
we will feel the soft caresses of the wind on this hillside

we close our eyes
and we kiss

there is no word that we shall waste

in that poem
the memory does not need any utterance

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poems...

addictive
enslaving, compelling
eccstatic
northern lights
halo
a vent and running
electricity over our
bodies
nutritional, redeeming
scenic
imagery, a painting that
speaks to you
a sculpture that seems
more real
a running river
a deep ocean
a singing shell
a banquet alone
a Bedouin riding on his horse
towards an oasis
fantasy land
yet so concrete and
touchable

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Poise

in that boat
amidst the crowd
of so much noise
it is you that is
 unaffected

your sorrow is
deep in the
south pacific

how come that
ey they never noticed
that?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Question...

i am confronting you
with a life&death
situation, i remove
the life part and
straightly death stares
at you, and you
look at me, and you
ask:

what can i do?

when i will give you my answers
even in the split of a second
i know, it will be too late,
and i will ask you too,

yes, what can we do?

and then both of us are gone
riding on the wings of
eternal sleep, for in truth,
when confronted with this
last and decisive situation,

we surely, can do nothing.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Questions For A Moment May Emasculate Me

after this universe
in orgasm, the space opens itself
to an ejaculation of stars

i float like a planet sticking
to its orbit
asleep soundly in the usual
revolutions

you step upon a black hole
forever lost

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Right To Choose....

a poem is just a poem
it can also be just another
number,
you can choose a letter to
start it with
a vowel perhaps so you can
make a legible sound so that
you can be heard at once
like a cat on heat,
or you can choose a consonant
which can be more poetic
with its moan,
or simply a slur of a roof
where rust begins to
conquer the surfaces of
the house's soul,
or you can choose a number
which you
just did, in fact, some numbers
too draw some meanings,
a choice to create a form
in our mind,
a body of a woman another
body of an old woman,
we can choose depth or
settle upon the shallowness of
a surface,
whichever makes us
comfortable, for in truth,
i have this theory in mind,
we indulge
because we simply want
to be comfortable,
it is like getting a chair
and then you sit there.
if someone comes along
and pulls another chair,
it will be merrier,
and then we choose again,
to talk or just be silent.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Self-Centeredness

is this world all about you?  
if is not about your book it will 
be about your trip  
or about your family  
your roots and  
ambitions, and... i am dizzy  
about these matters  
for you make me revolve around  
you and you are never such  
a glorious sun anyway, and i wonder  
why you do not have so many friends  
why you lurk in the dark and cry over  
your past and fear the future, and  
when i start telling you that this is  
not going the right way you show your  
real nature, a hungry beast wanting  
to devour anybody who comes your way.

your depression is getting to be infectious  
and i do not like it. Sorry but i must go and  
find someone else. Take care, be happy. So long.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Shadow Again....

i am tired.
you think that i do not know
how to draw your face
from only a few pieces
of evidence: an eyelash,
lips, a few locks of your
hair,
and a bowl of
water.

that is what you
do,
blackmail.

a shadow waits,
and it will stab you
too.

it is yours.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Silence

You stand on a mountain taking a view of the vast space
Like any other men and women you have the right to stand in the middle of these
Hills and the rolling sights of everything like some big waves
On this forest,
What you cannot stand like the rest is the sound of howling emptiness
You are on top of the situation I suppose
You are very near the clouds
You talk to each of them that drift and pass but you have not heard even a single

Word,
The birds that pass and go away from where you stand know this
Each has shed a feather or two as tribute
They know much better and they have flown away and lived their ways
They know much better and so they have no reason

To complain. Look at you, your silence is growing like cancer in your ears.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Silence Does Not Drown Me

how can your silence
drown me
instead it vivifies
what spirit is there
left entwined to
every nerve of my
body

i live

because your
silence
smiles a lot

i know
love still dwells
inside the pout
of your mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Simple Dream

you have traveled far
and studied in different
universities and these
did not really make you
happy,

your dream is so simple
as having to caress
a shoulder
brown and wide
enough to fill
your emptiness,

and tonight you fulfill
said dream
your palms land
on the patch of your
simplest dream
to love and
simply be loved in return

and your eyes look
with such a lovely blink
like a dim light
of the bulb teasing
the walls and the ceiling
and the window
and doors now all
shut because of you

they must die in
envy with you

and you let love
swim in your swamps
fly in your clouds
and walk on your
mountains
you let all the birds
sing and the earthworms
burrow

there is no patch in
you that is lacking
each is full and filled
with scent and color
and texture

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Skin Melvin

your skin melvin you must accept can never be
the color of the clouds
the sun
the moon and the stars

but do not be dismayed
your color is
the earth where all the
other poets
of this universe
write
breathe
and thrive

it is my color too
neither is there
a shying for shame
nor a need for pride

i am just comfortable
by just being
myself.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Smile

your smile
does not have any story
if it has any
it speaks of
how it is
owned by
the power
of silence

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Sorrow And My Sorrow

your sorrow and my sorrow
are not really ours to keep.
They belong to the earth,
to the heart of the earth
inside its beautiful bosom.

let us leave them just right
there, secure and honed.

we are leaving now to
another sphere, the one
that we see in our dreams
the more colored ones
feel the excitement, keep
yourself poised to something
more lasting more divine.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Stone

Now Loneliness bites you
and you go out of the house
alone

You will ask the fresh wind
to cool you
perhaps trying to find out
where happiness
can be found

I am not going out and
i shall be content with what
bites me
which can no longer hurt

after all these years nothing
pains me anymore
no one can inflict
Not even the dreaded Loneliness
of the House

i am no longer human
you feel me rightly so

for i have become your
stone

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Story

children are prohibited
to attend burials
death is taboo
in their young minds

once there was a child
who was in vacation in Mexico
and saw murder, death
and injustice

the child went crazy
seeing such a reality

in our place however
children already know what
a revolution is
they are trained to fire the guns
and aim it at soldiers
their parents are proud of them
and when they die
they are hailed as the new heroes
of this goddem republic

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Struggles And My Own

we climb this cliff
and up there let us see
what is best for us
you think about something else
like jumping off
while i stay and ponder
about the meaning of the
climbing the significance
of cliffs

if you jump off and you
think you fly away like a bird
just like that
that is your choice

if i remain here like
a stone or a vine or a worm
and think that there is something here
worth the stay
that is my choice too

oh, you fly away like a bird
and i am left
with all the guilt you are leaving me

how can you be so
treacherous and so unkind?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Stupidity And Gullibility

who can love still
those who betray you?
the relatives take
advantage of your
goodness,
you lose
and surrender
to their
fraudulent fancy

who can still love all of them
despite
the odds?

you are never tired
i envy you
for you still love them
truthfully and

so God in his
Infinite Goodness
too does not tire
giving you all
this blessings

for you can love you
still despite
all your gullibility
and stupidity?

Only God loves
a Forrest Gump.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Thoughts

your thoughts
are keys
to the locks of my
doors that i closed
a long time
ago

you open them
one by one
and give life at once
to the dusty floors

your thoughts
make mine open to the wind
to the sun

i could have been
a broken house until your
thoughts
came like hammers
and saws

now i have a garden of flowers too
roses bloom
because of you

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Three Words

you write about
three words, and i predict
them from the
beginning,
i look at how your
name spells
letters arranged
so easy to remember
and you hint
about the three words
that i also know....

i know you mean
i love you..
cute, tickle me, like
high school sweethearts
you like it
giggling words
i love you

but grow a little
bit, grow the length of my arms
and muscles on my thighs
grow the nails
in my fingers
some dirt in there
some stains
in my hands

grow some more
yes, have white hairs
and wrinkled forehead
and trembling hands

and some sad stories
as you go along
some griefs
that you cannot contain
move on
with such words as
i quit
i am fed up

move on, grow, let time eat you
bloat in silence
store everything
inside your chest
and hit it with your
fists

do not cry
toughen your jaws
have a rope ready
loosen it a bit
for a while
on the benefit of a
doubt
something that
is reasonable

now, think deep
thoughts
and inhale more air

then exhale
tell me, what are those three words
in your throat?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Unmatched Holiness........

to bow my head
kneel down
and admit that
after all
i am as human
as you
erring in the
dignity of
our humanity

after which
we understand
those who live
and die before
us, those who
never said a
word, those who
merely gaze at
the faults of
other people,

our frailties
are our crowns
of glories
our way of
keeping the stones
under the house
not throwing them
to the new
adulterer in this
worn out village

we understand now
the meaning of dusts
the implications of
our common sins
we cooperate now
with the union of
forgivers
we know, we keep all these things unwritten, untold, uncomplaining

and when we face our God we are ready with our simplest answers: we have sinned and we are always the undeserving worshipers of your unmatched holiness.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Way Of Ignoring I Tell You Won't Work

you hide there
oh i see you, you leave
oh you cannot
you are so silent
i hear you you are so
sad and lonely and
so unpredictable
these days and i always
see you where ever you
are.. sorry, so sorry but
all road lead to me now.
you cannot deny me
i have become the air
invading your lungs
and kidneys shaped like
the beans we eat everyday.

how can you ever evade me
when i always remember you?
don't you wonder why you
always bite your tongue
everytime you say you like
to forget me? that you love
him and that you are getting
married on the month of June?

how can you ever forget someone
who has told you that love has
still meaning even in prolonged absence?

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Window Is Open And You Gaze Into A World Abandoned

outside the wind howls and the skies are dark
and the roads are empty
your window is open and you gaze into a world
abandoned and then you create what is not there

the stars appear and some birds are late for their roosting
pass you by like a group of leaves blown by the western wind
and then you make the rain
in your mind, as the frogs begin to croak as the fireflies
take shade around the tree facing your house
and the crickets too, on the bushes, make their songs.

RIC S. BASTASA
Your Words Are Here

your words are here	hey are waiting for you	hey are asking where
you are living now

they are told that
you live in that far house	hey went there walking
from morning till night
only to find out that
you are not there anymore

they are now asking
for justice and the fulfillment
of the reason why you
released them from the
prisons of your mouth

RIC S. BASTASA
i can't explain why i did not utter the right word
to sum up my years and all about me to you

my lips trembled
my teeth gritted
i begin to lose sight of you
the fear is there after an earthquake

the honesty could have started its journey
into you
there is only one word i need
but i never uttered it
i simply can't

for many nights i think about it

what was murky begins to clear itself
like i am a strainer

light switches in my window

if if were really for you, why should my lips tremble
why should my teeth grit and make that harsh sound of distrust?

now i understand
it is not you yet, there must be another one
yet to come

where i can look at myself and you straight to the eye
where i can easily utter the word for all my years and passing

if it were you, i do not even have to tell it.
if it were you, there is no need for any word.

we could have touched our souls gently, easily,
without any effort at all.

RIC S. BASTASA
You're Right

U travel alone
Everyone's busy

When u aryv there
U recall some names
& then u text
Them
One by one

There's no response
Even from ur
Close friend

u realize

It is right
U travel alone

Ther's simply no one out there
Who
Is true to u

RIC S. BASTASA
You'Re So Hot

my love is like fat
and you're so hot
for me
day and night
you burn me with heat
and i am
melting away

RIC S. BASTASA
Yours Is Too Crude

i felt the surface
yours is crude, too superficial

but i do not mind
i keep touching it and slide

my hands around
the edges of your thing

and then i reflect upon
what i have been doing

yes, yours is more like mine
crude, superficial

straightforward, and
flowing

soft like sky blue linens
and cheap for the mindless public

but we continue doing it
day by day

truly, sincerely, and
therapeutically

what we do
does not kill us anyway

in any way
we have found expression

in words
and pity (and love perhaps?)

yet look at us
we do not appear as beggars
wearing dark glasses
and holding a tin can on our hands

we are here
to speak but i guess

we never beg
for ears

we have legs to stand
throughout this agony

and then the children
come around us

wondering if we are humans
confused if they too shall be like us

everyday we keep repeating
what we are

and then the world knows
but keeps on spinning

the morning light still lands
on the lines of our open palms

RIC S. BASTASA
Yulita

she is coming home
in bagong silang to claim

what rightfully belongs to
her as a birthright

the coconut land of her
father who never married

her mother who eloped with
a much younger man

in the village where the
sound of geckos outlive

the songs of the cicadas
the silence of the mayas.

RIC S. BASTASA
he passes by the house
though there is a doorbell he calls my name
(in fact, he is shouting that there is a man
with a covered face overtaking him and
takes refuge in the flowering bushes beside the fence)
i compromise and pretend that i agree with him
he is drunk, his wife left him, his children too
and lives in the old house
all alone,

and so where is the man? he says it is a shadow
a robust one, and it is running too fast past him
he is tipsy, his curly hair is glistening with oil
i mean it is unwashed for days
he is with a gay friend, a transvestite and
more beautiful than his wife

there is no man, there is no shadow,
i know, that he is lost, there is nothing to fear
but he has all these fears
of insufficiency, the incapacity to know what the real problem
is.
My house is fenced. I cannot invite one like him and have a drink.
I give him a bottle of whiskey, and tells his transvestite friend to take him
to the old house,
now at least, he is not alone anymore
someone is warm, someone loves him now, perhaps
higher than his dog, that waggles its tail
as soon as the front door is opened.

RIC S. BASTASA
Yvette

what we like in her
is her naivete

she snobs you
when you are not needed

yet all smiles when
she has a request

brought in the strictest
principle of utilitarianism

sometimes you feel
that you are nothing but

a used
or second-hand thing,

after she
drops you like that hot potato
her fingers
fold

today i meet
and i am ready for once

to slay this monster
with all my own fire.

i will burn
and vanish her forever.

RIC S. BASTASA
he steps out the door of the house
it is late and he walks wherever his feet carry him
he wants to be irresponsible about what to do with himself

he bathes himself with the light of the moon
sits under the tree on the grass
it is always this way
solitude and loafing of thoughts

he looks at the moon and once again stares at its craters
its round smiling face glistening in the middle of this darkness
all veins of rivers and cliffs and creeks

he loses himself in these thoughts
so faraway as distant as the stars are tiny

these excruciating details of his pain
he goes wherever these pains take him
he does not mind anymore

but soon all these will be over
he will be oblivious about what happens for the moment
he takes his hands and open them before him under the light of the moon
he sees the lines of his palm
he wakes up from the moonlight stupor
he traces now
where
for God's sake, where is the trail that now must lead him to joy

RIC S. BASTASA
Zamboanga

A spoiled brother
who gets what he wants
as always
has made you a ghost
town again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zanny On Top Of Her Hill

zanny stands on top of the hill
faces the sun
and makes a promise

never shall poverty harm her
again
never shall her lowliness
humiliate her

she holds the money now
from whatever trace it comes
it does not matter anymore

she knows the principle now:
she who holds the money
holds the power.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zapped

i had to
zap the system
and completely rebuild
from backups

back off.

RIC S. BASTASA
and then he
asked about all these things:

must you
have heard about the
ten deaf
dwarfs of
the islands of Acidophiles?

the sound of one hand
clapping on the
hills of
Pedophilisimones?

in his innocence he
prostrates himself upon the ground
and listens
to the ears of the earth
the hands of some roots
buried underneath

it is Zen
and the doZen
and the
froZen moments of
ZenO

He shakes his head
rising up and that is what happens

when he finally gets
his much deserved
Zero, the illegitimate brother
of Zorro.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zen Going And Coming And Going

it is just the coming and
going

nothing affects me in the coming
neither am i touched by the
going

i watch, i stay, i leave,
i know where to go but there is no way of telling

RIC S. BASTASA
the sound
of one hand
clapping
cannot be
written
it can only
be heard
as your finger
points to
the moon
at night.

RIC S. BASTASA
Monday through Saturday
recreation
vacation
cruise
camping
nightlife

and on Sundays
morning church
for an hour
and then back
to the pick-up
picnic on the beach
white sands
and warm sun
in this tropical
island of so much
fun and run

cocoanuts and
rice cakes and pastries
and mild drinks
and barbecue
and steak

this is our way of living
letting life slide smoothly in our throats
like Tanduay rhum
nothing obstructed
no hang-ups

and on Sunday afternoons
time to fold
the tent and keep
the good and useful things
and throw the garbage
of our lives

nighttime again
on our beds
with our loved ones
sleeping
together

snorkling in dreams
love of togetherness
and being just one family
without wasting any sofa
or wood

we just like it sticking
together
through thick and thin

without any cotton
or foam

RIC S. BASTASA
he does not like to use numbers and so all his numbers are letters and all his thoughts in numbers are written in letters including the date when his poem is written making it the very title of the same and all his emotions are in letters even though he knows that each feeling has a corresponding number and even the colors are numbered in letters. Blue is the number four. Nine is class. Forty-seven is pride. ninety-nine is not perfect and one hundred is too much for an old aging man like him who likes to arrive at zero and then enjoy his much needed rest. He likes to be happy and wants to sleep, so he begins to write, one, two, three, four, five, six.... and so on and so forth.

autistic savant, they all call him.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zeroing....

back to the desert
finding out that the only dater palm is dead
the oasis is gone
the caravan of camels and Bedouins
fade in the distance
the woman in silky veil
rides in her black horse
in the opposite direction
the howling sound of the night
shakes the full moon

RIC S. BASTASA
on the train of thought
in the middle of darkness
at the height of the hours
at the apex of longing

i am zipless

at the center of my universe
on the hardship of my days
on the length of my nights
at the thickness of my loneliness

i am zipless

on the nudity of my dreams
on the warmth of my hair and skin
on the gentleness of my fingers
on the taste of my tongue

i am zipless

come, my love, i am open
there is no lock to my heart
there is a space on my chest
there is rest on my pelvis

i am always zipless

RIC S. BASTASA
this place is not a room for sadness
sorrow is a stranger here
and cannot stay that long
there are no sonorous eyes here
not a place for emaciated cheeks
and unshaven beards
this is not the place for mourning
no one comes here wearing the black shirt
of fasting
this is the place for passion
(not promiscuity)
this is a private place for our shared whispers
the zip-less reunion
of two souls not wearing any name tags on their bones
when you come here
it is because
you have decided to be free
from morality from the mortality of your prisoners
welcome, bare yourself, brace yourself
for another experience
someone you love shall be summoned
to completely make you
home again.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zipped

short,
sharp
hissing
whizzing sound

zip.

just a passing bullet

RIC S. BASTASA
Zipped Winners

because i am hurt
those who see what happened
give way
for me to leave

i walk miles and miles
until i dissolve at a distance

they will gain an empty space
that someone may fill again

a little boy points to a disturbance
there is an ache, there is something that does not fit

no amount of rotation, nothing sort of replacement
can cure the twisted view, there is no bone on the neck

arms fall to the ground, eyes float in air
fingernails are removed and buried on the ground

here comes the mockingbird
singing a man's song: the black birds fall like dry leaves

the winds stop going,
the clay hardens into stones

here comes mockery, the winners lack the ears
theirs mouths sewn like zippers on a bag.

RIC S. BASTASA
Zopped

rhizopod

rhi-zop? ? ? o·dan

(-zap? ? ? d? n)
rhi-zop? ? ? o·dal

rhi-zop? ? ? o·dous-d? s....

com/rhizopod - 10k - 2008-05-03

rhi

zopped

zop

z

(go to page 6
for more details

pass the mooncake

do nt

dnt antng.)

RIC S. BASTASA
Zorro's Face

it was the mask
that you identify Zorro with
his whip and his black cape
his swiftness with his sword and
his faithful horse

me too
i have sometimes mistaken
the face of sorrow
with the mask of Zorro

the whip and blackness of his capes
and his faithful horse
his wars and losses as mere metaphors

RIC S. BASTASA
did he sing
under the moon?

was she there?
did he stay
longer...it

rained, how
cold is cold

when love is
not there?

did he still
sing?

even if he
has died?

RIC S. BASTASA
it is 9:08 in the evening
here in this sleepy town.

though i like the silence
sometimes you miss the party.

and so to cope up i watch
a Greek merrymaking in You Tube

a bearded man is singing and the
ladies which blonde hair dance
in circles and their hands are
joined into one ring of happiness

i wish i were a part of the circle
another link in the line of joy

i do not understand a word but
depth within i know what they mean.

RIC S. BASTASA
to embrace this kind
of thing
first you have to throw
away your
education out of the window
as though, after all those
years, it is something
to be dreaded,

then you throw too
your future and so you
eventually have none
but the present

what past do you have?
nothing, since you have
to deny what really
happened on that indian summer

now you are an empty
glass, and what are you
waiting for?

the hand that pours the
wine
the lips that must touch
the edge of your
glassy existence
the tongue that must
taste you
the mouth to drink you
into the night

what if you finally break?
so, you have to know,
how passion works....
abundance
seeded
boredom, and

there is this
opulence
crushing grapes
on its feet

taking finally
the gun
into its mouth.

RIC S. BASTASA